

DRAFT

CARLOW GRAIGUECULLEN JOINT URBAN LOCAL AREA PLAN

2024-2030

Volume 1

Draft Carlow-Graigucullen Joint Urban Local Area Plan 2024-2030

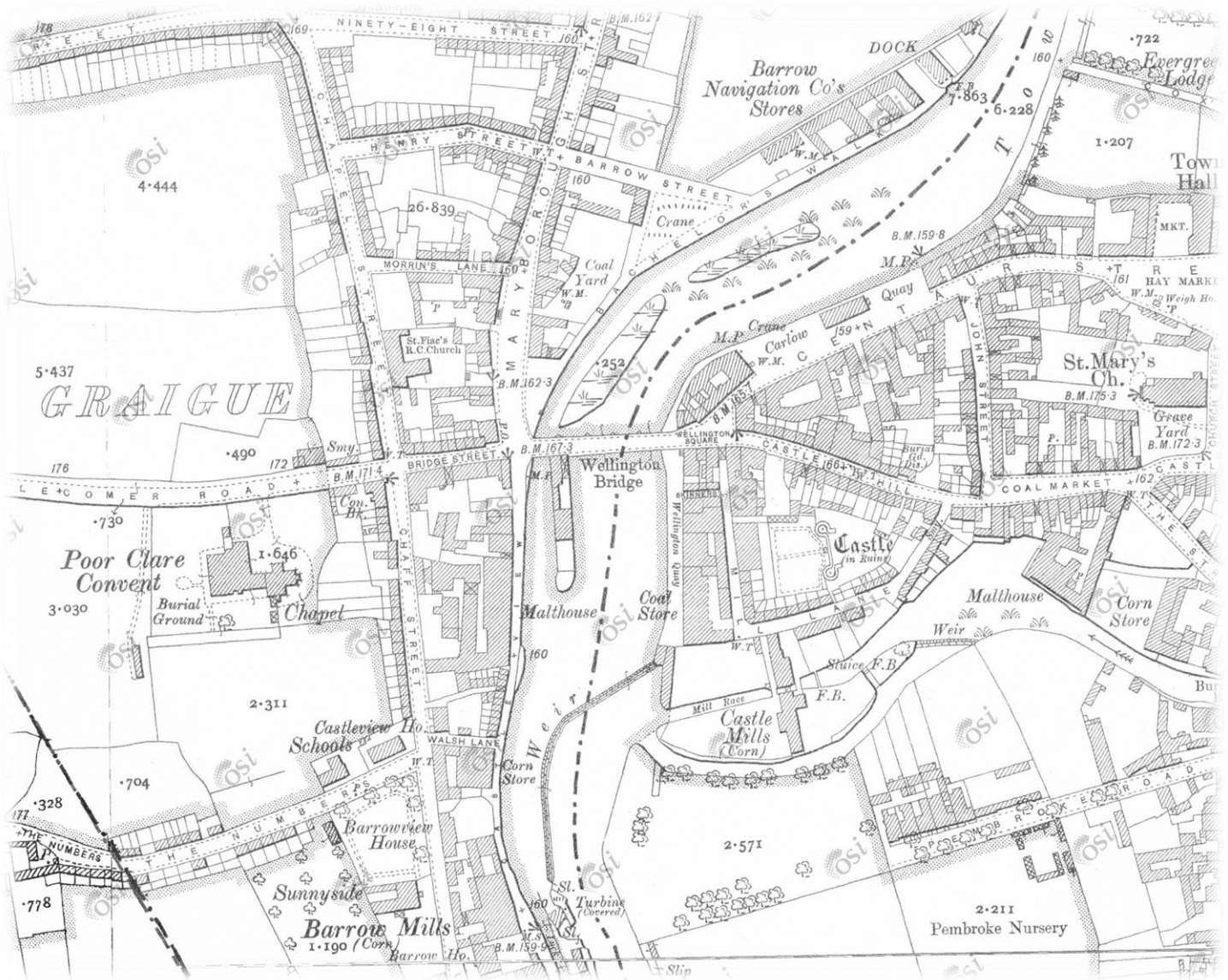
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Chapter 1

Plan Review and Context

Chapter 1: Plan Review and Context

1.1 Introduction

Carlow County Council and Laois County Council have worked collaboratively to prepare this Draft Carlow Graiguecullen Joint Urban Local Area Plan 2024-2030. The plan once adopted will replace the previously operative Joint Spatial Plan for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area 2012-2018 (as extended).

This Draft Joint Urban Local Area Plan (JULAP) addresses spatial planning in the Carlow-Graiguecullen area and identifies the various social, economic, and environmental issues of relevance. Policies, objectives, and related provisions are outlined to guide future development in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

1.2 Legislative Context

A mandatory Local Area Plan is required for Carlow-Graiguecullen having regard to Section 19 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), which states that a Local Area Plan is required to be prepared in respect of an area that is:

- designated as a town in the most recent census;
- has a population in excess of 5,000; and,
- is situated in the functional area of the planning authority which is the county council.

Carlow-Graiguecullen is a designated Key Town with a recorded population in excess of 27,000 in 2022.

In accordance with Section 18(2) of the Act, Carlow County Council and Laois County Council are collaborating in the preparation of this Joint Local Area Plan.

1.3 Local Area Plan Process

The Local Area Plan process, including timescales, are illustrated in Fig. 1.1. The process involves consultation at three key stages with the public, prescribed bodies, and other stakeholders, as follows:

- 1) Pre-Draft,
- 2) Draft Plan, and
- 3) Proposed Amendments.

Pre-draft public consultation, including the publication of an Issues Paper¹, commenced in September 2022. The Issues Paper was placed on public display for a period of 4 weeks, both online and in hard copy at the offices of Carlow County Council, Carlow Central Library, and at the offices of Laois County Council, James Fintan Lalor Avenue, Portlaoise. Two public information sessions were also held in September and October 2022. Thirty-two submissions were received in total during the pre-draft consultation period. A Chief Executive's Report summarising these submissions and outlining recommendations on the content of the Draft Urban LAP was prepared and issued to the Elected Members of both Local Authorities. Council Meetings were facilitated with the Elected Members of both Local Authorities to identify any strategic matters for inclusion in the Draft JULAP.

¹ [Carlow Graiguecullen Joint Urban Local Area Plan 2023-2029 | Carlow County Council's Online Consultation Portal and Carlow](#)

[Graiguecullen Joint Urban Local Area Plan 2023-2029 | Laois County Council Consultation Portal](#)

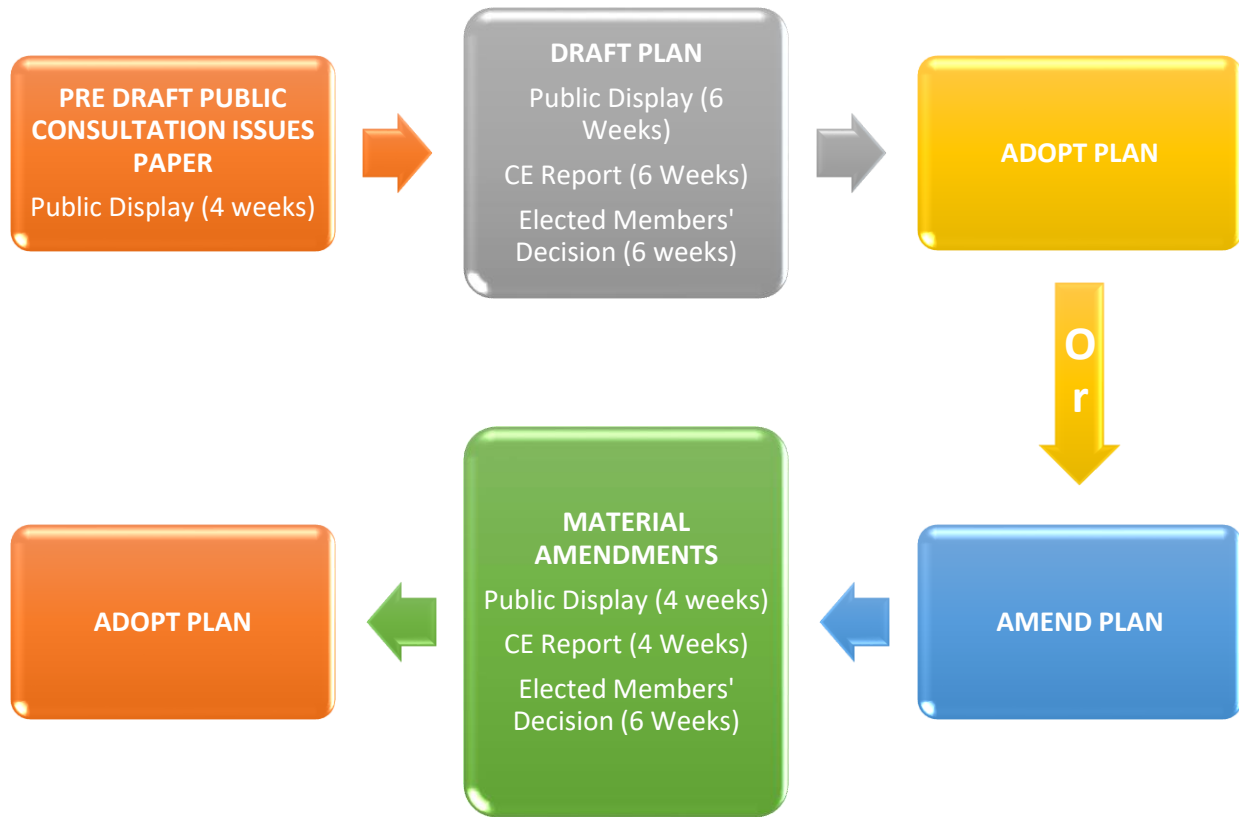


Fig. 1.1: Local Area Plan Process

1.4 Purpose of the Plan

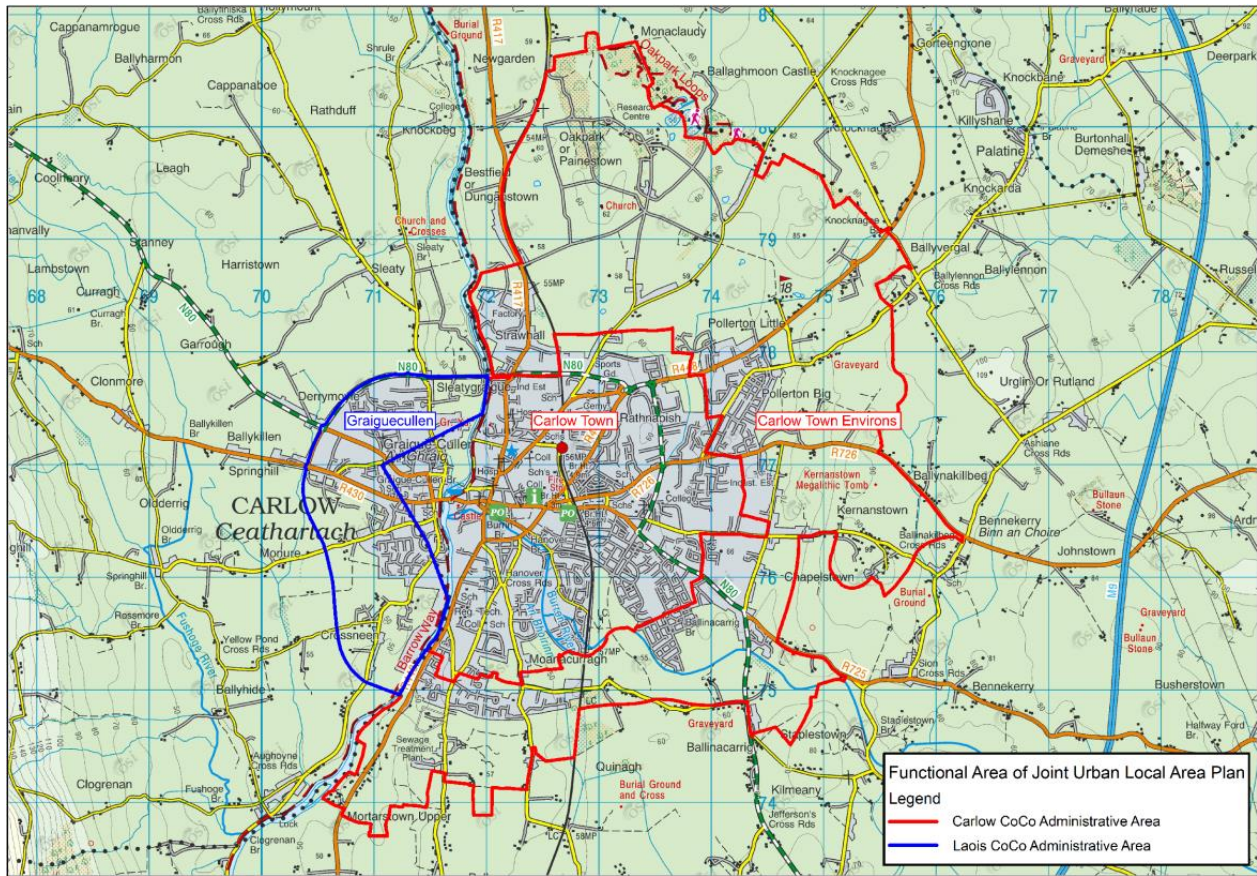
The Draft Carlow-Graiguecullen Joint Urban Area Plan 2024-2030 (the ‘Draft JULAP’) is being prepared in accordance with the requirements and provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), and in particular Sections 18 to 20 of this Act. The administrative boundaries of Carlow and Laois County Councils as applying to Carlow Town, Carlow Town Environs and Graiguecullen, are shown on Map 1.1.

The Draft JULAP sets out a coordinated strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Carlow Town, Carlow Town Environs, and Graiguecullen.

The Draft JULAP has been informed by:

- Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework 2018 (NPF);
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region 2020;
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midlands Region 2019 (EMRA);
- Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028; and
- Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027.

These policy documents are discussed in more detail in Chapter 2. The Draft JULAP has also been prepared with recognition of the role of climate action as a cross-cutting theme within the wider framework and role of spatial planning (See Chapter 11 Climate Action)



Map 1.1: Functional Areas of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council as applying to the development boundary of the JULAP

The Draft JULAP seeks to build on the previous successful collaboration of both Councils in the preparation and adoption of the Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area 2012-2018 (as extended). This collaborative approach acknowledges the unitary functioning of the joint urban area in terms of land use planning and the day-to-day activities of the local population, moving beyond a traditional focus on local authority county boundaries. This approach seeks to ensure that the future growth and development of Carlow-Graiguecullen is addressed in an integrated and coordinated manner, with strategic sites and regeneration areas to be delivered for the entirety of the urban area taking account of the compact growth and physical, economic, and social development requirements.

1.5 Life of the Plan

The Draft JULAP once adopted, and any subsequent amendments to same, will remain in force for a period of six years from the date of adoption or until it is reviewed, or another plan is made, and unless it is otherwise extended under Section 19 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

1.6 Form and Content of the Plan

The Draft JULAP comprises a written statement and combined land use zoning map encompassing Carlow Town, Carlow Town Environs, and Graiguecullen. The land use zonings for Carlow Town (i.e., former Carlow Town Council area), were adopted in May 2022

as part of the preparation of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and have been reflected in this Draft JULAP.

The written statement and supporting maps comprise the primary policy document for the Draft JULAP and is set out over 12 Chapters.

Chapter 1	<i>Plan Review and Context</i>
Chapter 2	<i>Carlow-Graiguecullen Strategic Planning and Vision</i>
Chapter 3	<i>Core Strategy and Housing</i>
Chapter 4	<i>Economic Development, Retail and Tourism</i>
Chapter 5	<i>Urban Design, Town Centre and Regeneration</i>
Chapter 6	<i>Sustainable Travel and Transportation</i>
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Chapter 10	<i>Natural Heritage, Green Infrastructure and Landscape</i>
Chapter 11	<i>Climate Action</i>
Chapter 12	<i>Land Use Zoning Objectives and Implementation</i>

The Draft JULAP includes appendices and associated environmental reports i.e., Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Appropriate Assessment (AA), and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). A Local Transport Plan (LTP) has also been prepared for the Urban Area. These documents complement and contribute to the evidence-led approach to the formulation of the written statement and supporting maps.

In the event of any conflict or ambiguity between what is contained within the Volume 1 Written Statement and the supporting maps, the Written Statement shall take precedence. In the full

interpretation of all policies and objectives for Carlow-Graiguecullen, it is essential that both the Carlow and Laois County Development Plans, as overarching policy documents, are read in tandem with this Draft Plan. Where conflicting policies and objectives arise between these County Development Plans and the JULAP, the policies and objectives of the County Development Plans, as they apply to lands in the functional area of County Carlow or County Laois, shall take precedence. It is a specific provision of this JULAP to ensure that all of the provisions from the County Development Plans identified in the accompanying SEA Environmental Report and AA Natura Impact Report shall be complied with throughout the implementation of the Plan.

1.7 Environmental Assessments

Pursuant to requirements of the Planning Act and EU requirements this Draft JULAP is informed by the requirements for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Appropriate Assessment, and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).

1.7.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the term which has been given to the environmental assessment of plans and programmes, which help determine the nature and location of individual projects taking place. It is a procedure that ensures that the environmental implications of decisions are considered before such decisions are made. SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a proposed plan or programme, in order to ensure that these effects are adequately addressed at the earliest stages of decision-making, in tandem with economic, social and other

considerations. All plans and programmes to be adopted by Carlow County Council and Laois County Council shall comply with the requirements set out in the SEA Directive (Directive 2001/42/EC) and transposing Regulations.

The SEA process was integrated into the preparation of the JULAP, and the SEA Environmental Report is contained as a separate document accompanying the Plan (Refer to Appendix I).

1.7.2 Appropriate Assessment (AA)

In accordance with requirements under the EU Habitats Directive (43/92/EEC), the EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) and Section 177 of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010, the impacts of the policies and objectives of all statutory land use plans on certain sites designated for the protection of nature under European legislation, must be assessed as part of the preparation of the Draft JULAP. This process, known as Appropriate Assessment, is to determine whether or not the implementation of plan policies or objectives could have negative consequences for the habitats or species for which these sites are designated. Appropriate Assessment was undertaken as part of the plan-making process and a Natura Impact Report is contained as a separate document accompanying the Plan (Refer to Appendix II).

1.7.3 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

The national Guidelines 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management' (2009) state that Planning Authorities are required to introduce flood risk assessment as an integral and leading element of their statutory plan functions. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is an area-wide assessment of the existing risks of flooding and the impact of those risks arising

from proposed spatial planning decisions. Plans must establish the flood risk assessment requirements for their functional area. The Guidelines further state that flood risk management should be integrated into spatial planning policies at all levels to enhance certainty and clarity in the overall planning process. In conjunction with the SEA process, Carlow County Council and Laois County Council carried out a SFRA of the JULAP. This SFRA is included in Appendix III.

1.8 Infrastructure Assessments


1.8.1 Infrastructure Assessment

Appendix 3 of the National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out a methodology for a two-tiered approach for the zoning of land which is informed by an Infrastructural Assessment, and states that '*The potential for delivery of the required services and/or capacity to support new development must be identified and specific details provided by the Planning Authority at the time of publication of both the draft and final development or local area plan*'.

The NPF places an emphasis on the need for compact, smart and sustainable growth and requires 30% of all new housing to be within existing urban footprints (outside of the five cities), thus reducing the amount of greenfield land required to meet future housing requirements.

The NPF defines Tier 1 and 2 lands as follows;

- '*Tier 1: Serviced Zoned Land, comprising lands that are able to connect to existing development services for which there is service capacity available and can therefore accommodate new development; and*



Tier 2: Serviceable Zoned Land, comprising lands that are not currently sufficiently serviced to support new development but have the potential to become fully serviced within the life of the plan.'

The NPF requires that where lands are identified as Tier 2 lands, the potential for delivery of the required services and/or capacity to support new development must be identified and specific details provided by the Planning Authority at the time of publication of the draft and final local area plan. The Infrastructure Assessment is included as Appendix V. See also Chapters 6 and 7.

1.8.2 Local Transport Plan

As part of the requirement for an evidence-based approach to planning, as set out in the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES) for the Southern Region and the Eastern and Midland Region, a Local Transport Plan (LTP) has been prepared to inform the drafting of the JULAP. The purpose of the LTP is to place the integration of land use and transport planning at the centre of the plan-making process for Carlow-Graiguecullen. The assessment examined the existing and proposed transport infrastructure and service provision across all modes of transport including sustainable means such as active travel modes (walking and cycling) in the joint urban area. The assessment provides an understanding of the existing constraints and modal share, and also identifies the proposed interventions within the plan area and in the wider context in order to facilitate a shift towards more sustainable travel and transportation options. The LTP is contained in Appendix IV and also forms the basis of the policies, objectives and related provisions included in Chapter 6.



Chapter 2

Carlow-Graiguecullen Strategic Planning and Vision

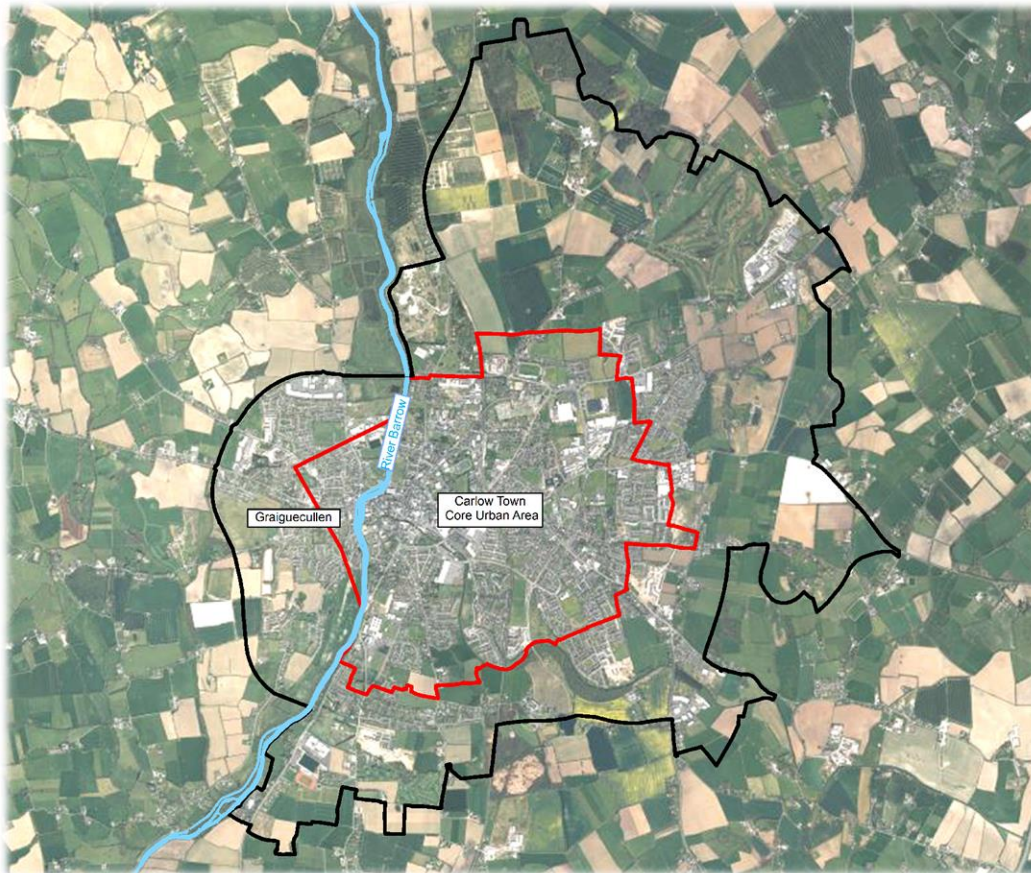
Chapter 2: Carlow – Graiguecullen Strategic Planning and Vision

Vision

To ensure that Carlow-Graiguecullen maximises and builds on its Key Town designation, strategic accessible location, regional and inter-regional connectivity, and existing inherent strengths, prioritising quality of life considerations, the economic and employment potential of the town, town centre led urban regeneration, focusing on a low carbon and compact pattern of development, while seeking to conserve and enhance the town's existing natural and built heritage assets.

2.1 Carlow-Graiguecullen in Context

The combined urban area of Carlow-Graiguecullen functions as a key regional centre for economic activity, education, healthcare, public services, retailing, arts, culture, and recreation. The core of the urban area in Carlow-Graiguecullen (i.e., Carlow Town) is located to the east of the River Barrow and within County Carlow. A part of the urban area comprising Graiguecullen is located to the west of the river and is partly located within County Laois. Being strategically located c.90km from Dublin and Waterford city, the joint urban area benefits from strong ties with the Greater Dublin Area, the Midlands, as well the Southern Region.



Map 2.1: Carlow-Graiguecullen Urban Area Context



2.2 Spatial Planning Context

This Draft JULAP has been informed by a number of strategic spatial planning policy documents. Fig. 2.1 identifies the key policy documents in this regard, from a national to local level. This Draft JULAP seeks to combine the strategic ‘top-down’ policy framework at a national and regional level with the more detailed ‘bottom-up’ approach to policy development at the local level.



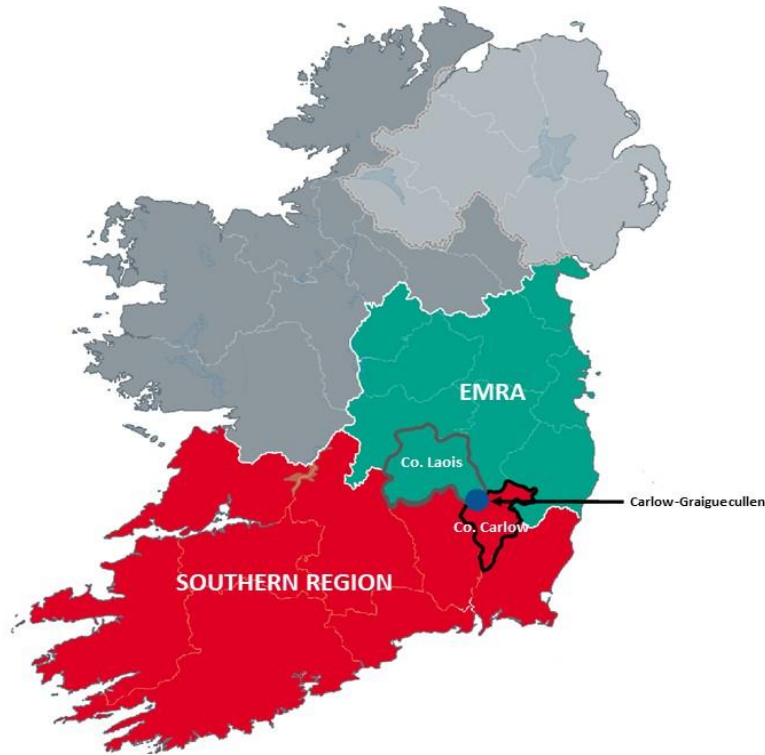
Fig. 2.1: Spatial Planning Hierarchy

2.2.1 National Planning Framework (NPF)

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out the Government’s high-level strategic vision for shaping future growth and development in Ireland. The companion document, the National Development Plan, provides the investment strategy that aligns with the strategic objectives of the NPF. The NPF, through National Policy Objective 7 (NPO 7), includes specific support for the implementation of a coordinated plan led approach to the development of towns like Carlow-Graiguecullen, which straddle the functional areas of two local authorities.

2.2.2 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES)

Carlow-Graiguecullen includes the functional area of two local authorities and two regional assemblies. The area of the town around Graiguecullen in County Laois is in the functional area of the Eastern and Midlands Region (EMRA), while the greater area of Carlow Town within County Carlow is located with the Southern Region.



Map 2.2: Carlow-Graiguecullen within Regional Strategic Planning Areas

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES) for the Southern Region and the Eastern and Midlands Region (EMRA) seek to implement the NPF at a regional level. The designation of Carlow-Graiguecullen as a Key Town is a strategic issue for both regional policy documents and is recognition of the population, and the economic and employment scale of the town. These factors contribute to the town's role as a self-sustaining regional driver and its inter-regional role due to its strategic location in both regions. At the regional level settlement hierarchy, it is a function of Key Towns like Carlow-Graiguecullen to ensure a consolidated spread of growth beyond the five cities.

The key attributes of Carlow-Graiguecullen can be summarised as:

- Road network connectivity to Dublin, Waterford via the M9, and to the Portlaoise, the midlands and the Southeast via the N80.
- Rail connectivity to Dublin and Waterford.
- Direct access routes available to Ports of Dublin, Waterford, and Rosslare, and to Dublin and Waterford Airports.
- Regional centre for education and research with third level institutions at SETU and Carlow College, St. Patricks, and Teagasc Agricultural Centre.
- Diverse employment base including pharmaceutical, engineering and finance sectors.
- Strong retail sector.
- Health and public services provision, including St. Dymphna's Hospital, and educational facilities located in Graiguecullen.

- Attractive destination for Arts, Culture and Heritage.
- Recreational assets including the River Barrow, Burren River, and Oak Park.
- Sporting facilities including GAA, soccer and others as detailed in later chapters.

National Policy Objective (NPO 7) in the NPF as referred to in the foregoing has therefore translated into specific regional support for the preparation of a Joint Urban Local Area Plan for Carlow-Graiguecullen. This is through the Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) contained in the RSES', namely RPO 14 for the Southern Region and RPO 4.75 for Eastern and Midlands Region.

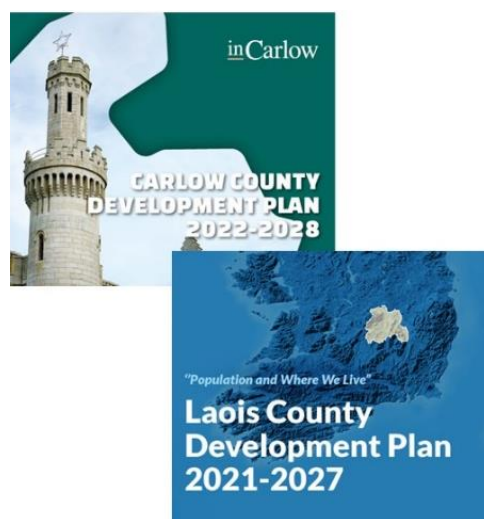
2.3 County Development Plans

The Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 provide the overarching spatial planning frameworks for both counties. In accordance with regional level policy, the settlement strategy in both County Development Plans identifies Carlow-Graiguecullen as a Key Town. The Key Town designation for Carlow-Graiguecullen is defined in both development plans in terms of the town's:

- Self-sustaining economic regional driver role
- Sub-regional influence
- Large population scale
- Large economically active service and/or county town
- Employment provision
- High-quality transport links
- Capacity to act as a growth driver

Carlow County Council and Laois County Council both recognise that Carlow-Graiguecullen must be in a position to leverage its Key Town

designation. The national and regional level support for the preparation of a JULAP for Carlow-Graiguecullen is therefore further underpinned at a County level in the policies and objectives included in the adopted County Development Plans for Carlow and Laois. To this end, it is a policy/objective of both County Development Plans to prepare a JULAP for Carlow-Graiguecullen. This is specifically reflected in the provisions of Policy CS. P3 in the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and Policy Objective CS O9 in the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027.



2.4 Climate Considerations

Climate change forms a key basis for policy development at a national, regional, and local level. The current Carlow and Laois County Development Plans both incorporate a suite of policies, objectives, and related provisions to ensure that climate action, including adaptation and mitigation measures, are integrated into land use planning policy. This has been in addition to the finalisation of Climate Adaptation Strategies by both County Council's and more recently the preparation of new Climate Action Plans. Climate change and climate action considerations are therefore at the forefront of

the preparation of this JULAP. This includes support for and requirements in relation to compact urban growth, town regeneration, active travel, reduced car dependency, a decarbonisation zone, and the protection of natural and built heritage assets. Further details in relation to the aforesaid can be found in Chapter 11.



2.5 Carlow-Graigucullen History and Evolution


Carlow-Graigucullen has a rich and varied history. The town was founded by the Anglo-Normans and developed under the protection of Carlow Castle, which was built in the early 13th century. The town was granted a charter by the Earl of Pembroke towards the end of the 13th century and walled by Lionel Duke of Clarence when he established the exchequer of the kingdom in Carlow in 1361. The medieval town included Dublin Street, the western part of Tullow Street, Castle Street, and Charlotte Street, the layout of which probably have remained unchanged since that time. During this period the urban area was confined to the north bank of the Burren River, with the castle isolated from this area by a marsh known as the Moreen. The castle is the only known surviving medieval building in the area. Its original form survived up to the early 19th Century, during which time an attempt to remodel its interior as an asylum by using explosive charges to thin walls and enlarge windows almost led to its complete destruction.

At the beginning of the 18th century the original core of the urban area had extended little beyond its medieval limits, with the exception of Graigucullen and Burren Street, whose development followed the building of bridges across the River Barrow and Burren River. In this regard, Graigucullen Bridge over the River Barrow (formerly Wellington Bridge) represents an important historical and present-day link between Carlow Town and Graigucullen that dates back to the 16th Century. Graigucullen developed as a suburb of Carlow Town along what was essentially one long street running parallel with the west bank of the River Barrow.

The establishment of third-level education in the urban area dates back to the 18th Century, when in 1782 Carlow College, St. Patricks was founded. The college has the distinction of being the second oldest third level institution in Ireland and was established following the relaxation of the Penal Laws. As part of the 1798 Rebellion 600 United Irishmen were killed in the town in an attempt to free their fellow countrymen. Those killed are buried in the Croppie Graves in Graigucullen, and the battle in the Potato Market was commemorated by the erection of the Liberty Tree Monument.

Advancements in architecture came in the 19th century, visible today in landmark buildings such as Carlow Courthouse, Carlow Cathedral and St. Dymphna's Hospital, which emphasised the importance of the urban area as a county town and regional centre. The mid part of this century also witnessed the arrival of railway infrastructure with the opening of the Carlow Railway Station in 1846, thereby enhancing the social and economic life of the urban area.

By the 20th century there was a new era of development that greatly impacted on the social and economic activity of Carlow-Graigucullen.



This can be traced to the opening of Carlow Sugar Factory in 1926. The factory dominated the commercial life of the area, providing employment and training for almost 80 years until its closure in 2005. By the 1970's international investment arrived in Carlow-Graiguecullen in the form of a number of manufacturing industries. However, by the early 21st century some of these industries had also closed. Today, the growing pharma industry is one of the largest employers in the area, following the opening of the MSD factory in 2008, with manufacturing / engineering industries growing significantly throughout the urban area.

2.6 Socio-Economic Profile

The future development of Carlow-Graiguecullen requires an understanding of the attributes and key challenges for the area. Like many comparable regional and county towns throughout Ireland, Carlow-Graiguecullen faces challenges with regard to town centre vitality, retail competitiveness, employment opportunities, infrastructure (road, rail and communications), public transport, and town centre living. The urban area however has many assets as a place to live, as a regional and interregional centre and as a tourist destination. These assets include a critical mass in terms of population, a central role in hosting arts and culture events, quality of life and as a key centre for educational / third level educational facilities.

2.6.1 Demographics

The study of demographics enables an analysis of population change over a period of time and can include population size, composition and spatial distribution. Limited data has been published from the most recent census of population in 2022. Where data is yet to be

published under the 2022 Census reference as appropriate will be made to the most recent Census data available in 2016.

In addition to the details provided in Sections 2.6.2 to 2.8.2, the infographic provided as Figure 2.2 on the following page provides a high-level overview of key socio-economic data arising from Census 2022.

Carlow-Graiguecullen Population in 2022
27,351
 +3,079 (+12.7%) from 2016
 +1,052 (+3%) 2022 to 2028



82.3% in Carlow
22,496
17.7% in Laois
4,855

Carlow Town and Environs in Co. Carlow accounts for 36.3% of Co. Carlow population (61,968)
Graiguecullen part in Co. Laois accounts for 5.3% of Co. Laois population (91,877)

Jobs and Commuting



Resident Workers (11,409)
Local Jobs (9,231)
 Jobs located within the Settlement

0.81 Jobs Ratio
 Jobs to Resident Workers

Getting to Work*

- 9.8% (910)
- 10.6% (1,212)
- 2.2% (256)
- 2.8% (234)
- 6.4% (724)
- 53% (6,033)

Note: excludes not stated

CDP Population Projections



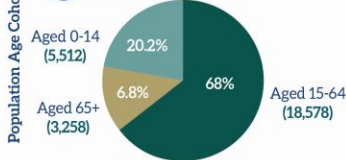
*2016 and 2022 population is based on Census results. 2027/28 is based on Carlow and Laois CDPs.



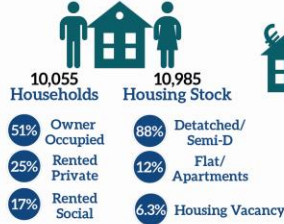
Commuting Flows (2016)

Live In & Work/Educate In Settlement = 62%
 Live In Settlement & Work/Educate elsewhere
 Rest of Carlow = 8%
 Rest of Laois = 4%
 Other Counties = 26%

47.2 Age Dependency Rate
 (Pop 0-14 + 65plus / Pop 15-64)



Data sourced from CSO Census 2022



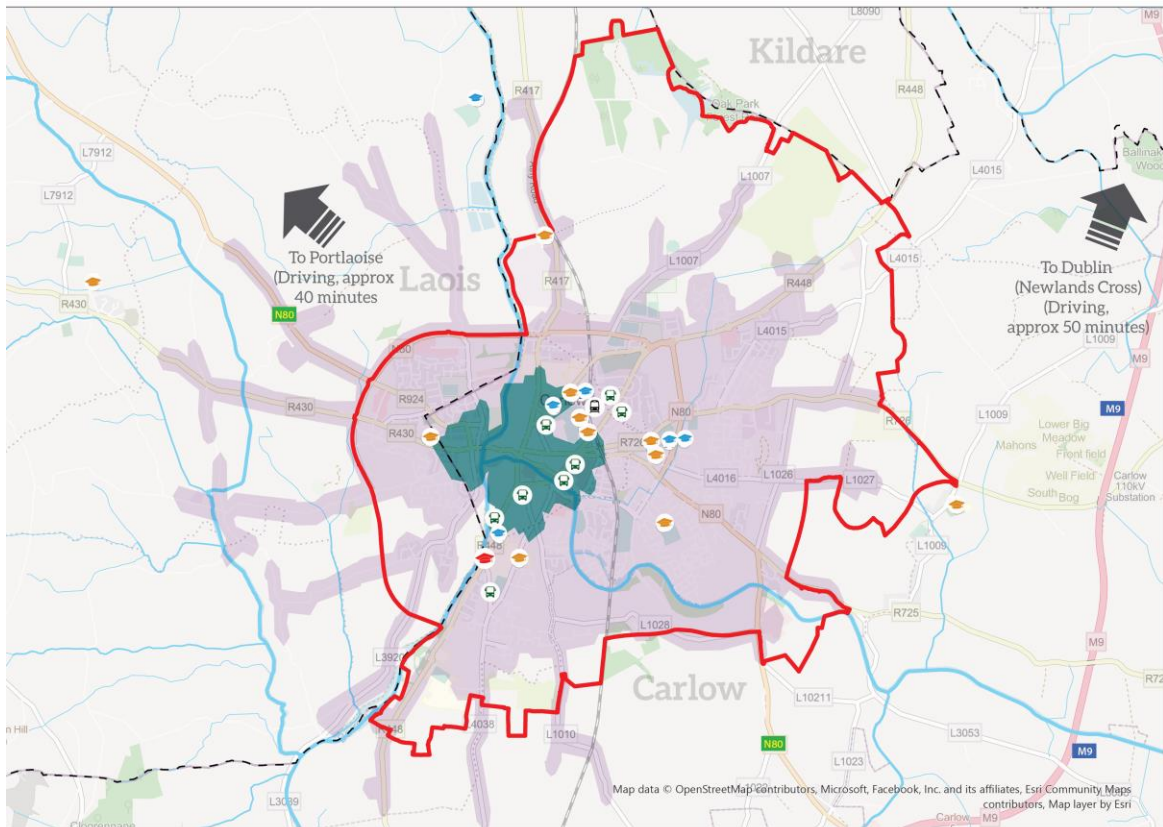
Sales & Rental Prices

€245k
Median Sale Price
 All Dwellings M10 2023
 (R93: Carlow)
€1,080.27
Average Rental Price (PCM)
 Q1 2023
 Carlow Town

Pobal HP Deprivation Index, 2022



21.9% of population are living in disadvantaged areas (Small Areas)



- Carlow-Graiguecullen Joint Urban Local Area Plan (JULAP)
- Local Authority boundary
- Rivers
- Trainline
- 10 Minute Walking Catchment
- 15 Minute Cycling Catchment

- South East Technological University (SETU)
- Secondary Schools
- Primary Schools
- Bus Stops
- Train Station



Contains Irish Public Sector Data (data.gov.ie) & OpenStreetMap licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CCBY 4.0) licence (www.peoplandplace.ie)



Figure 2.2: Carlow-Graiguecullen Key Data Infographic (Source: Census 2022 SAP Statistics)

2.6.2 Population Trends

A review of historical trends is an important consideration in understanding future growth targets. The population of the joint urban area has continued to increase as illustrated in Table 2.1. Over the period 2011-2022 the population of the town has significantly increased by over 18%. Excluding the five cities, Carlow-Graigucullen now represents the seventh largest town in the Country.

Year	Population	Population Increase	Inter-censual period	% Increase in the inter-censual period
2002	18,487	N/A	N/A	N/A
2006	20,724	2,237	2002-2006	12%
2011	23,030	2,306	2006-2011	11%
2016	24,272	1,242	2011-2016	5%
2022	27,351	3,079	2016-2022	12.7%
2011-2022		4,321	2011-2022	18.7%

Table 2.1 Population Growth Carlow-Graigucullen

2.6.3 Population Structure

An analysis of the change in the age profile between the 2016 to 2022 Census shows an ageing of the population, with a reduction in the number of people aged 0-14 and an increase in the number of people aged 35+.

While the 2022 Census shows that there was an overall increase in population in the joint urban area during the intercensal period from 2016 to 2022, this was not universal across all age cohorts, and was distributed as follows:

- The number of children aged 0-4 decreased by 329 people (-17%), representing c. 6% of the population in 2022 vs c. 8% of the population in 2016.
- The number of children aged 5-14 increased by 340 (+9%) to represent 14.4% of the population in 2022 (14.8% in 2016), contributing to 11% of the population growth in the settlement.
- The number of people in the 15-19 age cohort also increased, by 450 (+29%), making a c. 15% contribution to the population growth in the settlement.
- The 20-34 age group decreased by 175 individuals (-3%). This decline, coupled with the previous c. 900 individuals decrease in 2011-2016, is a key challenge to be addressed to ensure that a greater proportion of this population group is retained in the town. This trend is evident across the State and as a result of long-term demographic cycles – this cohort is due to

increase in population as the decade proceeds.

- The 35-64 age group increased by 2,023 individuals (+22%) contributing to 66% of the population growth in the settlement. This is a possible indication of the return of people who had moved away earlier in their lives for education or work-related reasons.
- The 65+ age group increased by 770 individuals (+31%) contributing to 25% of the population growth in the settlement. This intercensal growth is the highest amongst all age groups and is consistent with national trends on an ageing population.

As a comparison with the age profile of the state, with a rate of 27.5% the town has a marginally younger population (0-19) than the State average (26%). A higher percentage of those aged 20-34 was also recorded for the town (20.3%) in comparison with the State average (18.2%). The high proportion of young people in Carlow-Graiguecullen may be attributable to the presence of two third-level educational institutions (SETU Carlow and Carlow College, St. Patrick’s) and more affordable housing prices, making the area more attractive for students, young professionals, and young families.

Although increasing in both number and proportional size, the percentage of those in the 65+ retirement age group in the town (11.9%) is significantly lower than the figure recorded for county Carlow (15%), county Laois (13%) and the State (15.1%).

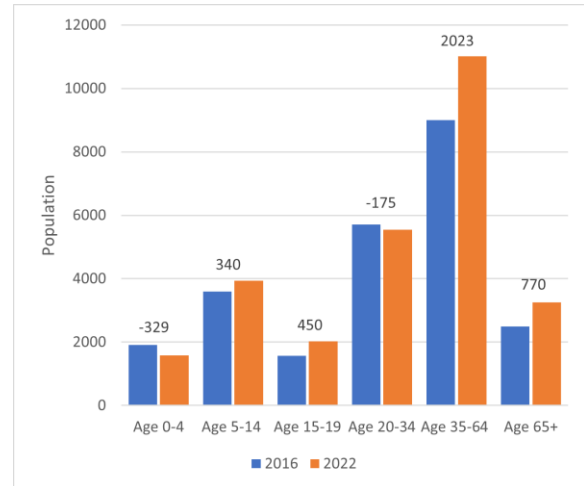


Figure 2.3: Population Profile Census 2016 and 2022
(Source: Census 2022 SAP Statistics)

Age Group	Population	Carlow-Graiguecullen Population %	Carlow Population %	National Population %
0-4	1,578	5.8	5.7	5.7
5-14	3,937	14.4	14.2	13.9
15-19	2,020	7.4	7	6.6
20-34	5,540	20.3	17.4	18.2
35-64	11,018	40.3	40.7	40.6
65+	3,258	11.9	15	15.1
Total	27,351			

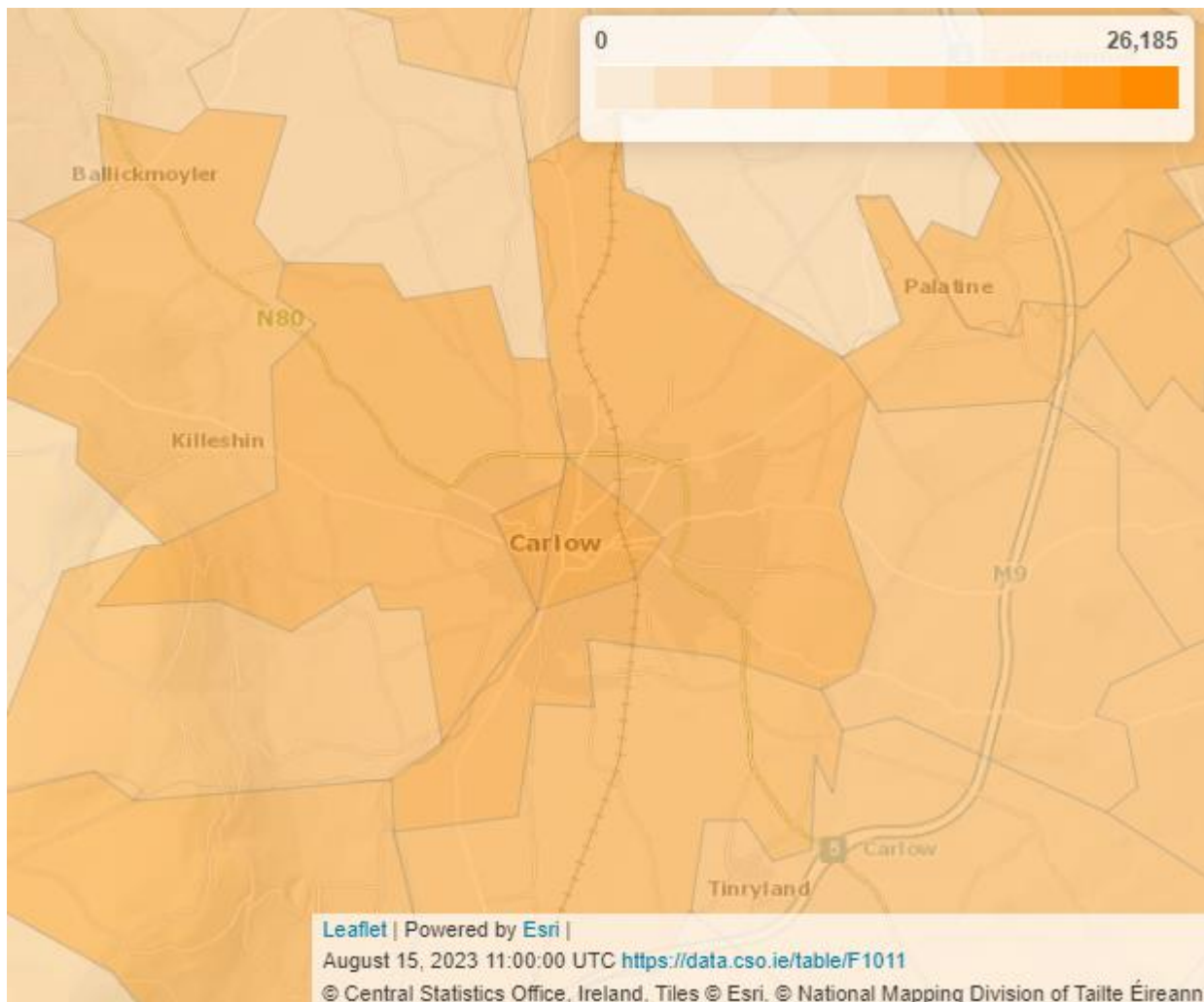
Table 2.2: Population Profile Census 2022 (Source: Census 2022 SAP Statistics)

2.6.4 Spatial Distribution and Density of Population

Map ref. 2.3 below indicates the population densities around Carlow-Graiguecullen as recorded in the 2022 Census. In Census 2022, the population density of the State was 73 people per km². Within Carlow-Graiguecullen the population density was 2,334 people per km², an increase from 2,100 persons per km² in 2016. As shown on the map, population densities vary from approximately 2,735 (Carlow Urban) to 3,180 (Graigue Urban) people per km² in the town centre, the focus of commercial activity, and from between 300-700 persons per km² in

residential areas outside of the Town Centre. At the Small Area (SA) level, several areas to the east of the town have densities in excess of 5,000 people per km².

The spatial distribution of the local population generally highlights the effects of urban sprawl and represents the challenge in addressing the future urban development of the town in a way that supports and promotes climate action measures, compact growth, town centre living, urban regeneration, and the protection of the town's vitality and vibrancy.



Map 2.3: Population Density

2.7 Housing Profile

2.7.1 Housing Stock and Size

A total of 10,055 private households were recorded in the joint urban area in the 2022 Census, an increase of 1,017 (+11.2%). Of the total figure, 8,869 (or 88.2%) comprised of houses / bungalows, which is reflective of house types that predominate across the state and in other county towns. Conversely, only 1,180 (or 11.7%) of the total household figure was accounted for by flats / apartments, an increase of 311 units (+35%) since 2016.

The predominance of houses / bungalows is also reflected in the high percentage of 3-4 bedroom households (6,574 or 65.4%) in comparison to 1-2 bedroom households – (1,781 or 17.8%).

According to the CSO New Dwelling Completions database, between 2017 to 2022 a total of 647 new houses were constructed within the defined CSO settlement boundary for Carlow-Graiguecullen. Over half of these (52.2%) were completed in 2021 and 2022.

2.7.2 Household Structure

In 2022, married and cohabiting couples with children comprised 3,021 (or 30%) private households out of a total of 10,055, which is below the figure that was recorded for the state (33.7%). In comparison, the figure for one person households amounted to 2,436 (or 24.2%), which was higher than the state level of 23.1%.

2.7.3 Housing Tenure

According to the 2022 Census 51% of households (5,135) in Carlow-Graiguecullen were owner

occupied - below the figure for County Carlow (64.8%), County Laois (71.1%) and the State (65.9%). Since 2016, owner occupation has declined in all areas across the State with rates declining from 52.3% in Carlow-Graiguecullen, 68.7% in Carlow and 72.7% in Laois.

In terms of the proportion of households in rented accommodation, 24.9% (2,500) were renting privately (up from 24.2% or 2,190 in 2016), whereas 17.5% were socially rented i.e. from local authority or voluntary housing body combined, an increase from 15.5% in 2016 (+352 households). Occupancy in the socially rented housing sector was made up of 70.6% local authority properties (1,241 – down from 1,257 in 2016) and 29.4% voluntary housing body properties (517 - up from 149 in 2016).

The total share of the households of the town that are in rented accommodation (private and social), at 42.4%, was notably higher than that for County Carlow (28.7%), County Laois (23.6%) and the State (28%). The rental sector as a whole has increased in all areas since 2016.

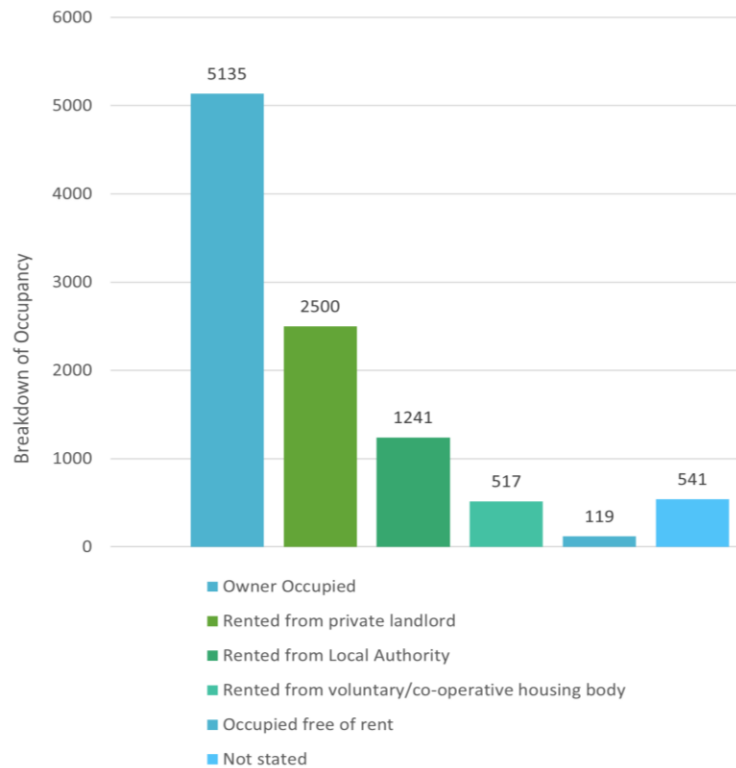


Fig. 2.2: Housing Tenure Carlow-Graiguecullen (Source: Census 2022 SAP Statistics)

2.8 Economic Profile

Census 2022 revealed that Carlow-Graiguecullen is a significant employment base. The economy of the joint urban area is driving and shaping the economic profile of much of County Carlow, and particularly the villages and rural areas that adjoin it, including those settlements proximate to the urban area in County Laois. While Carlow-Graiguecullen is a predominant driver of employment, it also has above average unemployment of 11.9% in 2022 (State is 8.3%), and the traditional core of the town has been negatively affected by the suburbanisation of commercial activities. Census 2022 also revealed that many workers, particularly those in higher level occupations, opt to commute to and from the town. Access to motorway and national road routes, as well as the Waterford-Dublin railway

line, also contribute to workers’ abilities to access employment further afield.

The 2022 Census recorded the labour force participation rate (active working age population 15 yrs and over) for Carlow-Graiguecullen at 59.7%, which was below the state figure of 61.2%. In terms of the proportion of the labour force at work, the average was 88.1%, below the state figure of 91.7%. The spatial pattern that emerges for an urban centre such as Carlow-Graiguecullen is that it has below average levels of the labour force at work, indicating that people who work there opt to live in surrounding villages and rural areas.

Census 2022 recorded that a 11.9% (1,554) of the labour force (At work and unemployed) was unemployed (down from 2,245) in Carlow-Graiguecullen was well in excess of that of the

State 8.3%, County Carlow 9.5% and County Laois 8.9%. The figures reflect a spatial pattern of unemployment that is one of urban concentration, with high levels in Carlow-Graiguecullen despite it being a main employment centre.

2.8.1 Education and Training

The level of education in an area is often a determining factor for businesses when assessing new locations for their operations. In order to grow the employment base of Carlow-Graiguecullen and build in resilience to external impacts, there must be a drive to upskill in terms of educational attainment.

According to the 2022 Census, 41.9% of the population aged 15 and over had a low level of education, upper secondary or below, a decrease of 8.5% since 2016. The 2022 rate is relatively high compared to other settlements such as Kilkenny (39.6%) or Dublin (34.7%) but is similar to the State average of 41.1%. The proportion of university graduates (bachelor, postgraduate and doctorate levels) at 27.5% was also low compared to other settlements such as Kilkenny (35.3%) and Dublin (41.6%) and is notably lower than the State average of 33.7%.

In contrast to the above, the proportion of the population in Carlow with an intermediate level of education, technical/advanced/higher certificate, at 21.8% is greater than in other settlements such as Kilkenny (18.9%) and Dublin (14.9%). It is also higher than the State figure of 18.7%.

Encouragingly overall is that the 2022 Census indicated that the number of people with a low level of education tended to decrease, while the

number of people with a high level of education increased.

Carlow-Graiguecullen is well served by educational facilities at primary, post-primary, and 3rd levels. There are a total of 10 primary schools and 6 secondary schools serving the urban area. These are detailed in Table 2.3 below, along with their total enrolment numbers for 2022/2023.

Carlow-Graiguecullen has the significant benefit of having two 3rd level education institutions, SETU and Carlow College, St. Patrick's. It is estimated that the third-level student population in the area is in excess of 7,500.

	Name	Enrolment 2022/2023
Primary	Bishop Foley NS	213
	St. Joseph's NS	118
	Carlow Education Together NS	413
	Gaelscoil Cheatharlach	466
	Askea Boys NS	286
	Askea Girls NS	312
	Carlow National School	127
	Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál	367
	St. Fiacc's NS	550
	St. Laserians	153
Post Primary	Gaelcholáiste Cheatharlach	359
	Presentation College	803
	St. Leo's College	944
	St. Mary's Academy CBS	449
	St. Mary's Knockbeg College	478
	Tyndall College	794

Table 2.3 : Educational attainment for the population of Carlow-Graiguecullen (Source: www.cso.ie)

Further education and training beyond secondary level is also available in the Carlow Institute of Further Education. The Institute is a constituent of the Kilkenny and Carlow

Educational and Training Board (ETB) and is the largest provider of further education and training courses in the region. It has in the recent past moved to a new 10,000sq.m. campus with a state-of-the-art design that provides realistic working environments for students.

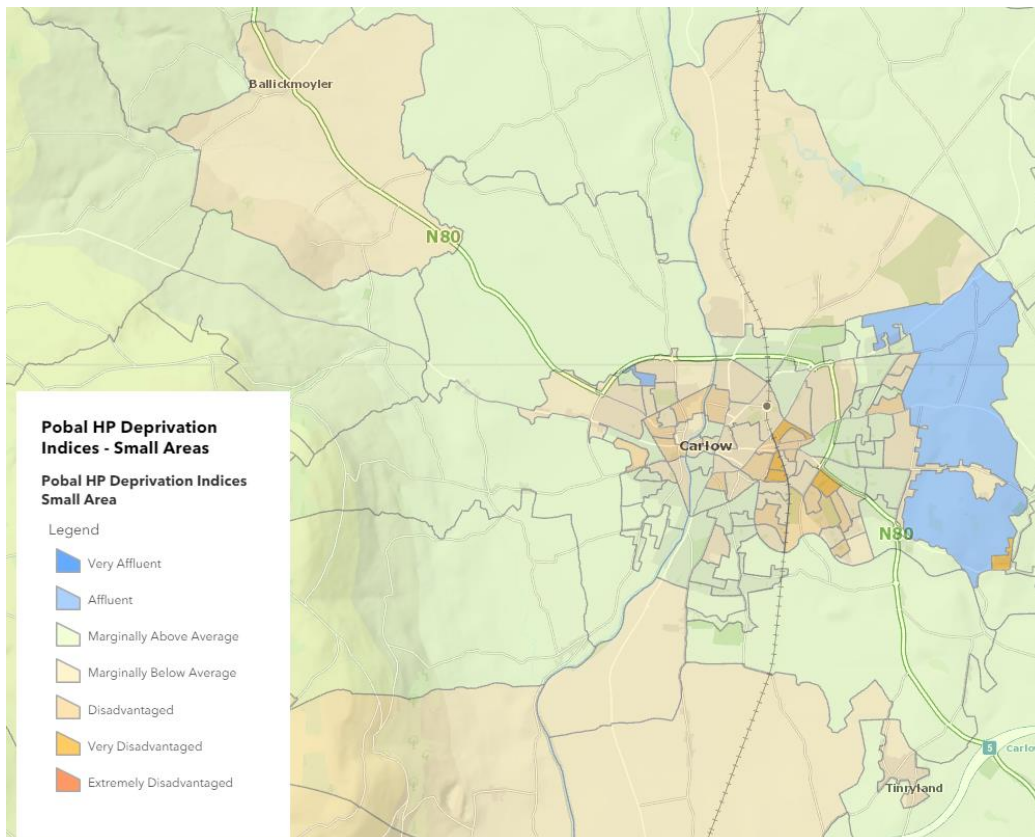
Education and training are considered further in Chapter 8.

2.8.2 Social Affluence and Deprivation

The Pobal HP Deprivation Index 2022 data is available from Pobal Maps. This is the primary dataset on social deprivation in Ireland and is a key indicator for all local authorities. The available mapping for 2022 indicates (See Map 2.4) that most of County Carlow and a large part of County Laois, in particular the rural areas in both counties, are classified on the Pobal HP

Index as being either ‘marginally above’ or ‘marginally below average’. It is notable that only three small areas within the JULAP boundary are identified as being ‘affluent’. Parts of the urban area classified as ‘marginally below average’, ‘disadvantaged’ and ‘very disadvantaged’, also appear to outnumber those classified as ‘marginally above average’.

Within the settlement a total of 21 of the 91 Small Areas are classed as ‘disadvantaged’ or ‘very disadvantaged’. As such, approximately 21.9% of the population in the settlement are classed by Pobal as residing in ‘disadvantaged’ areas. In contrast, the relevant rate in county Carlow is 18.5% and county Laois is 15.4%.



Map 2.4: Pobal Deprivation Index 2022

2.9 Transport and Movement

Carlow-Graiguecullen is an accessible urban centre, with good access and transport infrastructure that includes road network connectivity to Dublin and Waterford via the M9, and to the Midlands and South-East via the N80. These main road routes are supplemented by a network of regional roads further linking Carlow-Graiguecullen to surrounding towns, villages, and rural areas in both counties. Together with this road infrastructure, the urban area is situated on the Dublin-Waterford railway line, with Carlow Railway Station located proximate to the town centre. Services from Carlow are infrequent, with an hourly frequency at peak times and gaps of up to three hours between services during the day. Improvements to frequency and timetabling would improve rail connectivity for Carlow-Graiguecullen with the wider eastern, midlands and southern regions.

In terms of bus transport, JJ Kavanagh operate on the Dublin-Waterford route, with 13 daily services from SETU Carlow and Carlow Coach Park to Dublin Airport. Bus Eireann – Expressway routes 4 and 4X link Carlow-Graiguecullen with Dublin Airport as well. Other services to regional destinations such as Wexford, Portlaoise, Tullamore, Athlone, and Naas, are less frequent. Local Link runs a number of demand-responsive services that connect the urban area with towns and villages in its hinterland. More recently and following a lengthy period of consultation between Carlow County Council and the NTA, a local bus service in Carlow Town became operative in August 2023 (See Chapter 6 for further details).

An analysis of Census 2016 data (Census 2022 data not available) on morning commuting for work and education travel patterns to and from

Carlow-Graiguecullen provides a number of insights:

- Over half (62%) of all work and education trips associated with Carlow-Graiguecullen stay within the town’s Urban and Rural Electoral Divisions (EDs), including Graiguecullen. This is due to the combination of commercial activity within both the urban and rural areas and the high concentration of schools within the urban centre.
- 8% of trips are to other areas of Carlow County. 20% of trips are external to County Carlow: 5% to County Kildare; 4% of trips are to County Laois, 3% to Dublin City; 3% to Dublin County; 3% to Kilkenny; and 2% to County Wicklow.

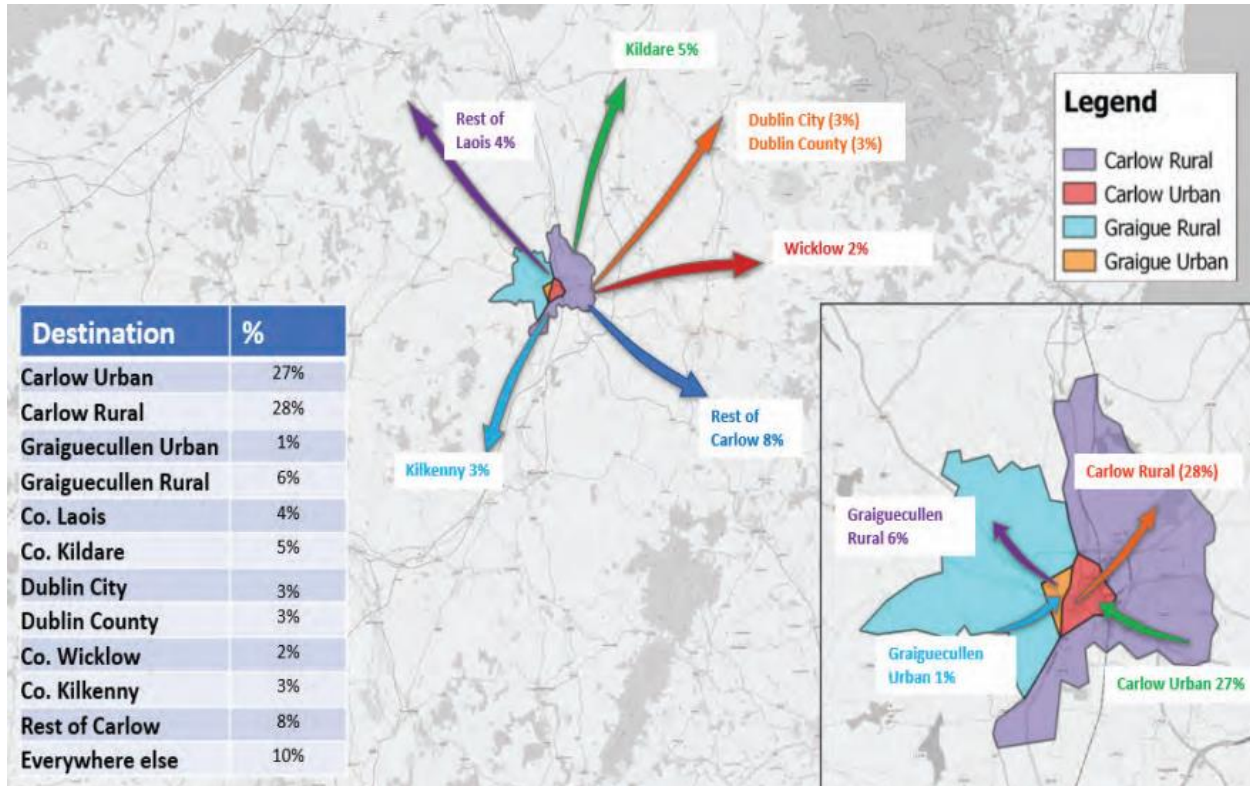


Figure 2.4: Trip Destinations from Carlow-Graiguecullen 2016

In terms of the modes of travel among the local population and particularly active travel (See also Table 2.4), Census 2022 revealed that:

- A considerable percentage of people (17%) walked as a means of transport, which is higher than 13% figure for the state. This reflects the substantial level of local trips made within the urban centre and its environs.
- 2.5% of trips were made by bicycle, which is slightly below the State average of 2.7%. High volumes of traffic and limited cycle provision in Carlow-Graiguecullen means cycling within the urban area is not currently an attractive option.
- There are low levels of bus and train usage within Carlow-Graiguecullen. This is typical of a regional town where the private car affords flexibility for making trips and where

public transport routes and frequency options are often limited.

- A high number of people rely on car usage (driver and passengers) for commuting and education trips (56.6%) which is above the State average (53.8%).

Mode	Carlow-Graiguecullen	State
On foot	16.8%	12.6%
Bicycle	2.5%	2.7%
Bus	3.2%	9%
Train	1.3%	2.4%
Car (Driver and Passenger)	56.6%	53.8%
Work from Home	4.9%	7.4%

Table 2.4 : Modal Split CSO 2022 (to Work and Education)

2.10 Water and Wastewater

Uisce Éireann is responsible for public water services (water supply and foul drainage),

including the delivery, integration and implementation of strategic water and wastewater projects and infrastructural improvements. Carlow-Graiguecullen is served by the Mortarstown Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) which has a capacity of 36,000PE. While Irish Water confirm through their current capacity registers that the WWTP has spare capacity, improvement and upgrade works are planned to bring it up to 58,000PE, with anticipated completion towards the end of 2025.

The public water supply for Carlow-Graiguecullen is provided by surface and ground water sources in the Carlow North Water Resource Zone. This includes surface water abstraction from the River Slaney at Rathvilly Water Treatment Plant (WTP – capacity of 11,500m³/day), and from the Burren River at Sion Cross WTP (capacity 3500 m³/day). Groundwater abstraction is provided from a borehole at Oak Park WTP at the northern end of the joint urban area (2,000 m³/day), and from a borehole at Derrymoyle WTP to the west of Graiguecullen (1,205 m³/day).

2.11 Strategic Objectives and Priorities

The policies, objectives and related provisions contained in this JULAP have been formulated to facilitate the planned and co-ordinated development of Carlow-Graiguecullen in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development. This will facilitate balancing the needs of local communities in a manner that addresses the key social, economic, and environmental issues facing the urban area.

To contribute to the delivery of the vision for Carlow-Graiguecullen as detailed at the beginning of this chapter, and in order to maximise on the designation of the joint urban area as a Key Town a number of cross-cutting

strategic objectives and priorities have been identified. These are intended to guide the future growth of the joint urban area in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development. They have been formulated to reflect and build on the town’s attributes, while also taking account of key issues and challenges into the future.



Fig. 2.5: Strategic Objectives and Priorities to Deliver Vision

2.11.1 Town Centre Led Urban Regeneration

Carlow-Graiguecullen is a key service provider and growth driver at a county and regional scale. The town faces a number of challenges in relation to vacancy, dereliction, and the underutilisation of sites and buildings. It is therefore critical that the principal streets and spaces that comprise the joint urban area are functional, attractive, and inviting. The joint urban area also has a number of key locations and sites in need of regeneration, which can deliver enhanced connectivity within the town, improve the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors, and promote compact growth and sustainable activities such as active travel.

Strategic Objective

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

SO. 1: *Encourage and support town centre led urban regeneration for Carlow-Graiguecullen, focusing on the appropriate redevelopment and reuse of key derelict, vacant and underutilised sites and buildings, the consolidation of the town through the use of brownfield, infill and backland sites, the conservation of historic building stock, and the implementation of streetscape and public realm improvements.*

2.11.2 Economic Development and Employment

Like many regional and county towns, Carlow-Graiguecullen faces challenges with regard to issues such as town centre vitality and retail competitiveness. Equally, the town has many positive economic attributes such various levels of employment opportunities, third level education provision, regional transport connectivity, tourism, arts and cultural facilities, and many others. Overcoming these challenges and developing these attributes is central to the future economic development of the town.

Strategic Objective

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

SO. 2: *Encourage and facilitate balanced economic development and employment opportunities in Carlow-Graiguecullen, ensuring a vibrant local economy that maximises business and investment opportunities and the existing economic attributes of the town, and supports the*

development of a diverse range of economic sectors.

2.11.3 Urban Design

Renewing and improving streets and urban spaces is a constant feature of urban development and it is essential that each time changes happen that they bring benefits that realise a more accessible and pedestrian friendly environment. However, towns like Carlow-Graiguecullen, have increasingly become less people friendly places that are dominated by the private car. With a 'people first' approach to urban design and planning, the public domain will be given back to the people residing and visiting in the town while still ensuring high levels of accessibility.

Strategic Objective

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

SO. 3: *Improve the public realm and attractiveness of Carlow-Graiguecullen through the delivery of high-quality urban design outcomes, taking account of the need to respond to the social and physical characteristics of the existing built environment and those features that should be protected and/or enhanced by, and inform, new development.*

2.11.4 Sustainable Travel and Transport

A well performing transport network will underpin the economic, spatial, social, and environmental success of Carlow-Graiguecullen. It will also facilitate the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient local economy. Failure to deliver an efficient transport network that supports sustainable and active travel, acts as a

barrier to economic growth, reduces quality of life and has a negative impact on the environment. Building on the town's strategic location and existing assets, the prioritisation of integrated transport and land use, supported by investment in public transport, active travel networks and shared, low carbon mobility options, will improve people's travel choices and support safe, sustainable, and healthy lifestyles. These issues are further expanded upon in Chapter 6, including the Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) prepared as part of this JULAP.

Strategic Objective

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

SO. 4: *Prioritise integrated transport and land use, supported by investment in public transport, active travel networks and shared, low-carbon mobility options, which will improve people's travel choices and support safe, sustainable, and healthy lifestyles.*

2.11.5 Housing and Communities

To remain an attractive place to live and retain its high quality of life, the joint urban area needs to plan for diverse, inclusive, and healthy communities through the provision of affordable and accessible housing, education, community and health facilities, and access to amenity and recreation spaces.

Strategic Objective

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

SO. 5: *Promote Carlow-Graiguecullen as a priority location for regional level community and social infrastructure and*

support the expansion and enhancement of existing community facilities, the provision of residential development, and a range of new community facilities in tandem with population growth to meet the needs of future residents in the joint urban area.

2.11.6 Climate Action

Climate action is integrated into the planning system to support national targets and objectives for climate policy mitigation and adaptation. Measures that focus on issues such as compact growth, urban regeneration, active travel, and the protection of natural heritage, will contribute to the delivery of a sustainable low-carbon and climate resilient future for Carlow-Graiguecullen.


Strategic Objective

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

SO. 6: *Transition Carlow-Graiguecullen to a low-carbon and climate resilient town through a combination of effective mitigation and adaptation measures, in addition to maximising opportunities for energy efficiency, renewables, and decarbonisation.*

2.11.7 Protection of Natural and Built Heritage

The natural and built heritage of Carlow-Graiguecullen is integral to the identity and image of the town. This includes but is not limited to, key natural assets such as the River Barrow, the historic built core of the town, and recorded archaeological features located throughout the joint urban area. As well as being tangible representations of the history of Carlow-Graiguecullen, these assets and features



are a key element in ensuring that the town is an attractive place in which to live, work, and visit.

Strategic Objective

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

SO. 7: *Manage the development of Carlow-Graiguecullen in a manner that protects, conserves, and enhances the natural and built heritage of the area.*

2.11.8 Arts, Culture and Tourism

Carlow-Graiguecullen is a centre for arts and culture, accommodating significant modern arts and performance spaces as well as hosting renowned events such as the Carlow Arts Festival and Pan Celtic Festival. The many arts and cultural festivals that take place in the town every year also make a positive contribution to the local economy and to a strong community spirit. The arts and culture offering in Carlow-Graiguecullen, in addition to its natural and built heritage, are the key assets upon which to develop the town's tourism industry.

Strategic Objective

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

SO. 8: *Support the development of, and investment in new and existing arts, culture and tourism infrastructure and amenities in Carlow-Graiguecullen.*



Chapter 3

Core Strategy and Housing

Chapter 3: Core Strategy and Housing

Aim: To direct and facilitate appropriate and sustainable levels of growth and development throughout Carlow-Graigucullen over the period 2024-2030, with a focus on compact growth, urban regeneration, sustainable travel, and healthy placemaking, in accordance with the Core Strategies contained in the Carlow County Development Plan and the Laois County Development Plan.

The designation of Carlow-Graigucullen as a Key Town is a strategic issue for both regional policy documents and is recognition of the population, economic and employment scale of the town. These factors contribute to the town’s role as a self-sustaining regional driver and its inter-regional role due to a location to the north end of the Southern Region and adjacent to the EMRA. In addition, in the regional level settlement hierarchy it is a function of Key Towns like Carlow-Graigucullen to ensure a consolidated spread of growth beyond cities.

From the preliminary results of Census 2022 the CSO settlement boundary of Carlow-Graigucullen recorded a population of 27,351 people (See Table 3.1). It is evident that the population of the joint urban area has been growing steadily since 2006.

3.1 Function, Population and Scale of Carlow-Graigucullen

The Core Strategy for County Carlow is included in Chapter 2 of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028, and for County Laois in Chapter 2 of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027. These Core Strategies designate Carlow-Graigucullen as a Key Town in accordance with the provisions of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES’) for the Southern Region and the Eastern and Midlands Region (EMRA).

Census Period	County Carlow Pop.	County Laois Pop.	Carlow-Graigucullen Joint Urban Area Pop.	Co. Carlow Population Resident in Joint Urban Area	Co. Laois Population Resident in Joint Urban Area
2006	50,339	67,059	20,724	41%	3.7%
2011	54,532	80,458	23,030	42%	5%
2016	56,932	84,697	24,272	43%	5.5%
2022	61,931	91,877	27,351	44%	5.8%

Table 3.1: Population growth and proportion of county populations residing in the joint urban area

3.2 Future Population and Housing Targets

The population and housing targets in the Core Strategies included in the Carlow County Development Plan and Laois County Development Plan were set by the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Implementation Roadmap for the NPF (July 2018), and Section 28 Guidelines ‘Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning’. The policies and objectives of these County Development Plans require that the future growth and spatial development of Carlow-Graiguecullen is in accordance with these Core Strategies.

3.2.1 Carlow Town and Environs

The Core Strategy (Table 2.7) in the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 provides a projected population increase for Carlow Town (including Carlow Environs) by 2028 of 3,107 people. The housing target to accommodate this population growth is identified as 1,330 units, 900 of which are allocated to the former Carlow Town Council area. The allocation of 900 units was arrived at following an analysis of the potential residential capacity of appropriate infill, brownfield, consolidation and strategic lands and sites in the existing built-up footprint of the former Town Council area. Overall, the total figure of 1,300 units represents an allocation of 42.8% of the projected housing target for County Carlow to Carlow Town (including Carlow Town Environs).

Applying the Core Strategy housing unit target figure of 1,330 units to the JULAP results in a projected requirement for 1,663 units to be built over the life of the Plan (See Table 3.2). As the 2024-2030 JULAP period is 2 years beyond the 2022-2028 period of the current Carlow County Development Plan, the overall unit requirement

of 1,663 units has been calculated to take account of:

- The addition of a projected allocation of 444 additional units to cover the additional 2 years. This projected allocation is based on an average per annum calculation (i.e., 1330 units / 6 years = circa 222 units per year).
- The subtraction of the estimated number of 111 units constructed since 2022.

Carlow County Council – Functional Area	Units
Core Strategy unit allocation to 2028	1,330
Plus 2-year projected unit allocation to 2030	444
Less units constructed since 2022	111
Carlow Town and Carlow Town Environs total unit target	1,663
Less Core Strategy unit allocation to former Carlow Town Council area	900
Carlow Town Environs unit target	763

Table 3.2: Housing Unit Allocation to Carlow Town and Carlow Town Environs

3.2.1.1 Carlow Town and Environs - Estimated Residential Land Capacity

As referred to in Section 3.2.1, the current Carlow County Development Plan Core Strategy has allocated 900 units to the former Town Council area, taking account of residential land capacity in the existing built-up footprint. This results in a remaining housing target for the Carlow Town Environs area of 763 units (i.e. 1,663 less 900).

The quantum of ‘New Residential’ zoned land in Carlow Town Environs is circa 27.53 hectares, and extant permissions exist for circa 92 units. This ‘New Residential’ zoned land can deliver an

estimated 688 units, utilising an indicative density of 25 units per hectare in accordance with Chapter 3 (Table 3.3) of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028. It is considered that there is sufficient zoned land in the environs area to meet the housing target figure of 763 units, taking account of the combined development potential of ‘New Residential’ zoned lands with lands zoned ‘Existing/Infill Residential’ and ‘Commercial/Residential’.

3.2.2 Graiguecullen

The Core Strategy Table (Table 2.16) in the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 identifies a projected population for Graiguecullen by 2027 of 700 people, and an associated housing allocation of 280 units. This figure of 280 units represents 7% of the projected housing target for County Laois to Graiguecullen.

Applying the Core Strategy housing unit target figure of 280 units for Graiguecullen to the JULAP translates into a projected requirement for 276 units to be built over the life of the Plan (See Table 3.3). As the 2024-2030 JULAP period is 3 years beyond the 2021-2027 period of the current Laois County Development Plan, the overall unit requirement of 276 units has been calculated to take account of:

- The addition of a projected allocation of 141 additional units to cover the additional 3 years. This projected allocation is based on an average per annum calculation (i.e., 280 units / 6 years = circa 47 units per year).
- The subtraction of the estimated number of 145 units constructed since 2021

Laois County Council – Functional Area	Units
Core Strategy unit allocation to 2027	280
Plus 3-year projected unit allocation to 2030	141
Less units constructed since 2021	145
Graiguecullen total unit target	276

Table 3.3: Housing Unit Allocation to Graiguecullen

3.2.2.1 Graiguecullen - Estimated Residential Land Capacity

The quantum of ‘New Residential’ zoned land in Graiguecullen is circa 17.65 hectares, and extant permissions exist for circa 106 units. ‘New Residential’ zoned land can deliver an estimated 441 units, utilising an indicative density of 25 units per hectare in accordance with Chapter 13 (Table 13.4) of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027.

3.3 Compliance with Core Strategies

In order to align with the NPF, the RSES’ and the Core Strategies, Carlow County Council and Laois County Council will utilise all policy avenues available to ensure the optimum delivery of residential units, ensuring a focus on compact growth and providing housing within the built-up area. Provision of housing will also focus on creation of successful, well designed, and sustainable communities where new development successfully integrates with existing communities.

The quantum of land zoned ‘New Residential’ in the joint urban area has been based on applying estimated densities per hectare. It should be noted that any planning application for residential development on these lands should adhere to the *Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas*, DEHLG (2009). In addition, the density of development proposal and number of units permissible will be determined at detailed design stage based on a

full assessment of site characteristics, local conditions, design sensitivities and the overall quality of the scheme, and having regard to the development management standards in the Carlow County Development Plan and Laois County Development Plan, along with the relevant Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines.

To ensure continued compliance with the Core Strategies of both County Development Plans, it will also be necessary to monitor the number of residential units permitted and developed on an annual basis. For example, if housing density was to be significantly increased a potential surplus of zoned lands could be generated which, if developed within the lifetime of the JULAP, would result in a greater population than the Core Strategy provided for. Monitoring the number of units permitted and constructed enables a closer alignment between the Core Strategies, the population projections, development activity and all the associated necessary physical, social and community infrastructure in the joint urban area. Refer also to Section 12.2 in Chapter 12 Land Use Zoning Objectives and Implementation.

3.4 Housing

Carlow County Council and Laois County Council acknowledge the need to provide an adequate supply of quality housing to meet existing and future demand in Carlow-Graiguecullen. Housing will be required to cater for existing and changing population requirements, such as:

- Social and affordable housing;
- Renewal/upgrade and replacement of existing stock;
- Student accommodation;
- Smaller families;
- An ageing population; and,
- Accessible homes.

These changing population requirements generate the need for additional housing

responses. For example, student accommodation in the joint urban area has come to form an increasingly important part of the housing sector with the expansion of campus facilities at SETU.

Housing supply must also be informed by the need to create sustainable communities and neighbourhoods with a strong emphasis on quality design and placemaking, and this is reflected in the provisions of Chapters 5 and 8 of this JULAP.

3.4.1 Housing Strategies and Housing Need Demand Assessments (HNDA)

The housing need of Carlow Town and Carlow Town Environs has been evaluated in the Housing Strategy and Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA) adopted as part of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (Refer to Chapter 3 and Appendix IV). The housing need of Graiguecullen in County Laois has been evaluated in the Housing Strategy and HNDA adopted as part of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 (Refer to Chapter 4 and Appendix 3).

The preparation of the Housing Strategies is a mandatory requirement under Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), and they play a key and evidenced based role in translating NPF and RSES housing policies to the local level. The HNDAs underpin and support the Housing Strategies through the provision of long term-estimates of future housing needs and supply and are a requirement of the NPF under National Policy Objective 37 (NPO 37). Further details can be found in Chapter 3 of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and in Chapter 4 of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027.

As identified in Sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2, this JULAP must cater for an overall housing demand of 1,663 units for Carlow Town and Carlow Town

and Environs, and 276 units for Graiguecullen in County Laois.

3.4.2 Social Housing Requirement

This JULAP will make provision for social housing within the joint urban area in accordance with the Housing Strategies and HDNAs adopted as part of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027. During the planning application process, social housing will be provided through the application of Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), and through local authority and voluntary housing developments.

Housing – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- HS. P1:** Ensure that housing is available in Carlow-Graiguecullen to meet the needs of all people through the delivery of an appropriate mix of housing sizes, types, and tenures in suitable locations.
- HS. P2:** Provide for existing unmet housing need as identified by the Carlow County Council and Laois County Council social housing needs assessments through the provision of social and affordable housing using a range of delivery mechanisms.
- HS. P3:** Provide social and affordable housing to meet forecasted future housing need over the period of this JULAP as identified in the HNDAs adopted as part of the Carlow County Development Plan and Laois County Development Plan. New units shall be delivered having regard to the aims and policies of the Core Strategies contained in these County Development Plans and the needs of local communities, including

the need to deliver sustainable development, compact growth, social integration and an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures. Social and affordable housing shall be delivered through a range of mechanisms including provision directly by Carlow County Council and Laois County Council, by Approved Housing Bodies, Repair and Lease Scheme, Buy and Renew and through short- and long-term leases arranged by the Councils with private landlords.

- HS.P4:** 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 Carlow-Graiguecullen, including the needs of older people, people with disabilities, and including social housing, and affordable housing.
- HS. P5:** Encourage the reuse of upper floors above commercial premises in Carlow-Graiguecullen for residential accommodation, subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental criteria.
- HS. P6:** Promote measures that encourage the reuse and refurbishment for residential use of underutilised, vacant, and derelict buildings and sites within the built-up area of Carlow-Graiguecullen.

Housing – Objective

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- HS. O1:** Promote the provision of social housing in Carlow-Graiguecullen in accordance with the Housing Strategies/HNDAs and Housing Delivery Action Plans for Carlow County Council and for Laois County

Council, and Government Policy as outlined in 'Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland' and any future strategies.

3.4.3 Specific Needs Housing

There are a number of groups with specific design and planning needs including older people, people with disabilities, the travelling community, and the homeless/emergency accommodation. This JULAP, along with the overarching County Development Plans for County Carlow and County Laois, places an emphasis on providing for these groups and on universal access and design. The mix and design of new housing for specific needs in Carlow-Graiguecullen will be influenced by a range of factors including:

- Consideration of the nature of the existing housing stock and existing social mix in the area;
- Desirability of providing for mixed communities;
- Provision of a range of new housing types and tenures;
- The need to provide a choice of new housing types, suitable and adaptable for all age groups and abilities; and,
- The need to cater for groups with specific housing needs.

Specific Housing Needs – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- HS. P7:** Support the provision of single storey units in residential schemes in Carlow-Graiguecullen that would provide older persons with the option of downsizing if desired.
- HS. P8:** Support independent and/or assisted living, respite, and residential care facilities for those with a disability in

appropriate locations in Carlow-Graiguecullen, including provision for live-in care where required, when designing adapted housing units.

HS. P9: Require development to be in accordance with the Principles of Universal Design and the National Disability Authority's publication 'Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach', and to have regard to the Government's 'National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021'.

HS. P10: Work with relevant agencies and voluntary groups to support the provision of accommodation for the homeless and for those in need of emergency accommodation and crisis facilities in Carlow-Graiguecullen.

3.4.4 Student Accommodation

This JULAP recognises that the provision of appropriate student accommodation for SETU and for Carlow College St. Patrick's will enable Carlow-Graiguecullen to continue to develop as a regional centre for education and research. Purpose built student accommodation is generally of a higher density with a range of ancillary facilities appropriate for student living. Student accommodation should be located convenient to the educational facility by foot, bicycle, or public transport and generally, either within the college campus or appropriately zoned and located lands within the joint urban area. Applications for purpose-built student accommodation in Carlow Town and Carlow Town Environs shall comply with the Development Management Standards in Chapter 16 of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (Section 16.8.15). Student accommodation proposals in Graiguecullen County Laois may also be considered on their merits, taking account of Chapter 13 of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 (Section

13.2), and subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.

Student Accommodation – Policy

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

SA. P1: Facilitate provision of high-quality purpose built and professionally managed student accommodation in Carlow-Graiguecullen. Purpose built student accommodation should be provided on campus or in suitable locations which have convenient access to the colleges (particularly by foot, bicycle, or public transport) in a manner compatible with surrounding residential and environmental amenities.

3.5 Delivering Compact Growth

Delivering compact growth is an overriding objective of the National Planning Framework (NPF), and of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES') for the Southern Region and the Eastern and Midlands Region. As required under Objective 3(c) of the NPF at least 30% of all new housing units must be delivered within the existing urban footprint of Carlow Town i.e., former Town Council area. In satisfying this target for compact growth, an analysis of appropriate brownfield and infill sites with potential capacity to deliver new homes was carried out for the town to inform the completion and adoption of the Core Strategy (Table 2.7) in the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028. The Core Strategy estimates that 100% of all new housing units in the former town council area can be accommodated on brownfield/infill lands. In underpinning this support for compact growth in the Core Strategy, the policies, objectives, and related provisions of this JULAP support:

- **Active Land Management:** Including the key role of the Town Centre First Policy, Town Regeneration Officers, Croí Cónaithe (Town), Vacant Homes Officer, and the Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT).
- **Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration:** Including vision, guiding principles, regeneration action plan, and six intervention areas.
- **Settlement Consolidation Sites and Regeneration Sites:** Including their potential to deliver wider regeneration benefits to the town centre and significant housing provision.
- **Densities/Increased Heights:** Including potential to deliver indicative densities of >35 units per hectare and increased heights at appropriate locations in the Town Centre subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.

Refer to Chapter 5 Urban Design and Regeneration in this JULAP for further details, and to Chapters 3, 12, and 16 of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 as applying to Carlow Town.

Compliance with Core Strategies – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Councils to:

- CS. P1:** Deliver compact and sustainable growth in Carlow-Graiguecullen with at least 30% of new homes delivered within the existing built-up footprint and to promote a town centre first approach through the development of strategic brownfield and infill sites.
- CS. P2:** Support the continued growth and sustainable development of Carlow-Graiguecullen, including its role as a regional and interregional growth driver,

and to fulfil its role as a Key Town with a focus on sustainable development, quality of life and economic investment.

CS. P3: Encourage and support urban regeneration in Carlow-Graiguecullen, and in Carlow Town through the implementation and delivery of the objectives of Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration and pursue suitable funding mechanisms as they arise to bring forward the realisation of the Strategy.

Compliance with Core Strategies – Objectives

It an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

CS. O1: Implement all land use planning policy objectives, and standards in a manner which takes account of and is consistent with the Core Strategies in the Carlow County Development Plan and Laois County Development Plan, in order that development over the period of this JULAP shall strengthen the role of Carlow-Graiguecullen as a Key Town and deliver compact growth and sustainable development.

CS. O2: Monitor the scale, type, tenure, and location of constructed and permitted development in Carlow-Graiguecullen during the lifetime of this JULAP and apply appropriate development management standards to development proposals to ensure compliance with the Core Strategies in the Carlow County Development Plan and Laois County Development Plan, to achieve the delivery of strategic plan-led and co-ordinated development within the joint urban area.

CS. O3: Support and facilitate the delivery of the necessary physical and social infrastructure to support all residential development.

CS. O4: Focus new enterprise development into lands identified for Enterprise and Employment, Industry, and Warehousing uses.

CS. O5: Prioritise the development of town centre lands as the commercial core for the joint urban area with a mix of uses to ensure the vibrant and balanced development of the town centre.

CS.O6: Support the transition of Carlow-Graiguecullen to a low-carbon and climate resilient urban area through the promotion of sustainable development patterns, sustainable and active travel, and sustainable energy use, in accordance with the NPF, the RSES' for the Southern Region and Eastern and Midlands Region, and the National Climate Action Plan.

CS. O7: Support and facilitate development on zoned lands and consolidation sites in Carlow-Graiguecullen based on the policies, objectives and related provisions of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 as appropriate.

CS. O8: Promote and support the role of active land management measures in the redevelopment of buildings and land in Carlow-Graiguecullen in need of regeneration, including the use of statutory powers available through the Derelicts Sites Act, Housing Act, Urban Regeneration and Housing Act, and Residential Zoned Land Tax, together with the role of the Town Centre First

Policy, Town Regeneration Officers, Croí Cónaithe (Towns), and Vacant Homes Officer.

development within the identified settlement.

3.7 A Tiered Approach to Land Zoning

The NPF requires this JULAP to adopt a tiered approach to land use zoning to ensure a co-ordination of proposed 'New Residential' land use zonings for undeveloped lands with existing and planned infrastructure and services. In accordance with this requirement an Infrastructure Assessment (IA) has been prepared alongside this JULAP to assess the suitability of lands for future development. The IA, included as Appendix V, has been carried out utilising a standardised Tier 1 and Tier 2 methodology termed in the NPF as a Tiered Approach to Zoning (TAZ)¹. The TAZ can be summarised as follows:

- **Tier 1 - Serviced Zoned Land:** Comprises zoned lands that can accommodate new development as they can connect to existing services and there is service capacity available. The NPF states that these lands will generally be positioned within the existing built-up footprint of a settlement or be contiguous to existing development lands and will be within the footprint of or spatially sequential within the identified settlement.
- **Tier 2 - Serviced Zoned Land:** Comprises zoned lands that are not currently sufficiently serviced to support new development but have the potential to become serviced during the lifetime of the development plan. The NPF states that these lands may be positioned within the existing built-up footprint of a settlement or be contiguous to existing development lands or Tier 1 zoned lands, where required to fulfil the spatially sequential approach to the location of new

¹ National Policy Objectives 72a-c and Appendix 3 in the NPF



Chapter 4

Economic Development, Retail and Tourism

Chapter 4: Economic Development, Retail and Tourism

Aim: To support the sustainable economic development of Carlow-Graiguecullen, by leveraging its strategic location, accessibility, and Key Town designation to build a competitive, innovative, and productive urban economy, and by protecting and enhancing its tourism product and its role as a regional centre for retailing.

4.0 Introduction

The National Planning Framework (NPF) identifies a strong economy supported by enterprise, innovation, and skills as one of ten National Strategic Outcomes or goals which can be achieved by building regional economic drivers and leveraging the potential of places. In line with this national policy the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES) for the Southern Region and Eastern and Midlands Region (EMRA) have designated Carlow-Graiguecullen a large-scale Key Town based on attributes including:

- A significant population scale.
- An urban centre functioning as a self-sustaining regional driver.
- A strategically located urban centre with accessibility and significant influence in an inter-regional context.
- A large economically active service and/or county town and regional economic driver.
- A diverse employment base.
- A higher order retail function and strong retail sector.

The Economic Strategies for the Southern Region and the EMRA are based on several key principles shown in figure 4.1. The challenge for Carlow-Graiguecullen in this regard will be to ensure that the conditions to support its Key Town designation including a competitive, innovative, and productive urban economy, are embraced, and developed. Central to the future economic growth of the joint urban area will be support for placemaking, for enterprise and for employment, through the implementation of Project Carlow 2040 and the delivery of the six Intervention Areas set out in the regeneration strategy. Co-ordinating investment in placemaking with the development of existing economic attributes such as third level education provision, a proximity to Dublin and Waterford, the River Barrow, retail and tourism, cultural facilities, and the identification of locations for strategic employment development will also be critical in ensuring future economic competitiveness and enterprise growth.



Figure 4.1: Economic Strategy Principles – Combined details from the RSES for the Southern Region & the RSES for the Eastern and Midlands Region (EMRA)

4.1 Economic Assets and Employment Profile

The economic landscape of Carlow-Graiguecullen, given its resources and strategic location, has the potential to maximise the formation of new enterprises and business and the continued success and development of existing ones. Table 4.1 below outlines the key economic assets of the joint urban area.

TABLE 4.1: ECONOMIC ASSETS OF CARLOW-GRAIGUECULLEN

Scale	With a Key Town designation and a population of 27,351 Carlow-Graiguecullen has critical mass to be an attractive base for employers. The existing employment base of 11,492 jobs based on Census 2022 is significant and diverse across several categories including manufacturing, commerce and trade, public administration, transport and communications, and professional services.
Function	Carlow-Graiguecullen is strategically located on the boundary of the South-East and Eastern and Midlands regions, with a pivotal inter-regional role and with strong links to the Greater Dublin Area, all supported by good access to transport infrastructure. Carlow Town is a regional centre for education, healthcare, public services, shopping and arts, culture, leisure, and recreation.
Human Capital	The availability of higher education is an important component to attract enterprise and employment to an area. There is a long history of higher-level education and research in the joint urban area, with two institutes of higher education comprising Carlow SETU and Carlow College St. Patricks, and with Teagasc Research Centre in Oak Park. Further education and training are also available through the Carlow Institute of Further Education and Training, which is the largest provider of courses in the region.
Placemaking	Carlow-Graiguecullen is an attractive place to live and work, offering excellent quality of life, affordable living costs, a range of amenities and distinct natural, built, and cultural heritage. The implementation of Project Carlow 2040 through the delivery of the six Intervention Areas set out in the regeneration strategy will be central to supporting the development of the local economy.
Enterprise Ecosystem	A number of significant enterprises such as MSD, Netwatch, Unum Ireland, and more recently NUA, have a strong presence in the area. These enterprises present



opportunities for further clustering and for new spin off sectors, ensuring the area becomes an attractive destination and a driver of business and innovation. The opportunity also exists to build on and develop synergies between Carlow SETU and Carlow College St. Patricks and existing and future enterprises.

Connectivity

The joint urban area benefits from road network connectivity to Dublin and Waterford via the M9, and to the Midlands and South-East via the N80. Carlow Railway Station also provides rail connectivity to Dublin and Waterford. There is also strong international connectivity with direct access routes to the Ports of Waterford and Rosslare, Dublin, and Waterford Airports.

Telecommunications are also a critical component for digital connectivity, connecting people, places and ideas through digital networks which are vital for continued economic growth. Carlow-Graiguecullen is well placed with a network of communications services, ensuring both high speed and resilient connectivity.

Natural Capital


Natural assets such as the River Barrow and Burren River contribute to healthy placemaking as green and blue areas for leisure and amenity, and also provide important ecosystem services which adapt to climate change. Project Carlow 2040 recognises the potential to better utilise these assets in a way that fully realises their amenity value, and in a manner that will improve connectivity to the town centre and enhance the public realm.

Critical Infrastructure

As a designated Key Town, Carlow-Graiguecullen has the necessary key infrastructure and services to support economic development. In addition to the road, rail and telecommunications infrastructure referred to under the section 'Connectivity', the Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) carried out alongside this JULAP also identifies a number of strategy options to support new and improved active travel infrastructure, and to enhance connectivity between the town centre, residential areas, and key employment sites.

As already discussed in Chapter 2 of this JULAP, the economy of the urban area is driving and shaping the economic profile of much of County Carlow, and particularly the villages and rural areas that adjoin it, including those settlements proximate to the urban area in County Laois. The key employment data revealed from Census

2022 is outlined separately in Chapter 2. For the purposes of this chapter Figure 4.2 illustrates the type of occupations/industry that the residents of Carlow-Graiguecullen are employed in, based on a comparison of Census 2016 and 2022 data. Commerce and trade represented the highest employment sector with 2,762. In view of the



commercial and retail profile of Carlow-Graiguecullen, it is unsurprising that the combined commerce/trade and professional service sectors account for almost half of the working population. Below commerce/trade and professional services, manufacturing industries accounted for the next largest working population in Census 2022. On a positive note overall, a comparison of the two Census periods reveals an increase in the working population of all industries from 2016 to 2022, and most notably for professional services, commerce/trade, and manufacturing industries.

Traditionally, Carlow-Graiguecullen had a strong manufacturing and industrial activities which provided a strong employment base for the joint urban area. The town was home to large employers such as the Carlow Sugar Factory and its sister company Erin Foods, in addition to Braun, Lapple and Hydro Hoist. Companies such as the Sugar Factory and Lapple were committed to the upskilling and education of their workers and this also left a lasting skill base and a wealth of entrepreneurs in Carlow-Graiguecullen. The legacy of these factories has created the basis for the establishment of other industries which have developed and are located in Carlow Town such as Burnside Autocyl and MSD.

The growing pharma industry is now one of the largest employers following the opening of the MSD factory in 2008. Other significant enterprises operating in the area include Netwatch Unum Ireland, and more recently NUA have occupied the former Braun factory. The former Lapple factory on the O'Brien Road is now occupied by Moore Environmental and Central Engineering, and the former Hydro Hoist site is occupied by the REL Group. All these existing enterprises have developed as important

employers, ensuring that the area continues to have a strong employment base. They also present opportunities for further clustering and for new spin off sectors, contributing to the joint urban area becoming an attractive destination and a driver of enterprise and innovation.

In addition to the foregoing, the IDA have recently completed (in 2023) the development of an Advance Factory Building on the Dublin Road at the northeast end of the joint urban area. This building will provide light industrial, office and ancillary support areas, and has been designed to provide the potential for future expansion and flexibility in use. Carlow and Laois County Councils and the IDA will continue to promote the availability of serviced industrial sites and buildings to appropriate industries where available.

The public and semi-state sector also makes a large contribution to the economy of the Carlow-Graiguecullen area including significant employers such as Carlow SETU, Carlow College St. Patricks, Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment, Carlow County Council, Teagasc, and the HSE.

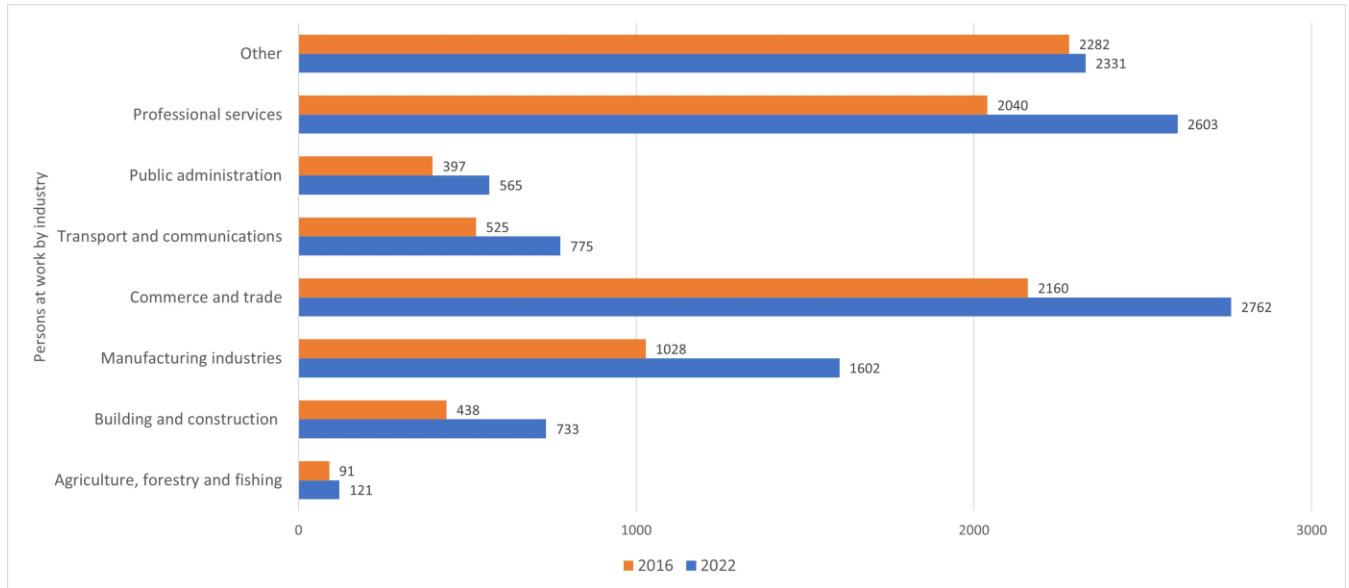


Figure 4.2: Persons at work by industry in Carlow-Graiguecullen (Source: Census 2016)

4.2 Economic Development Strategy

Carlow-Graiguecullen has many positive economic attributes as already outlined in Table 4.1. These attributes are grounded in its Key Town designation, strategic regional location, significant employment base, transport connectivity, and third level education provision. At the same time, the joint urban area, like other comparable regional and county towns, faces challenges such as town centre vitality, vacancy, the underutilisation of land and buildings, and retail competitiveness.

This JULAP therefore recognises that key to the economic development of Carlow-Graiguecullen will be the ability for it to maximise its existing economic assets and overcome those challenges that could inhibit economic growth. It is also recognised that one of the key enablers in attracting new investment and employment to Carlow-Graiguecullen will be the availability of appropriately zoned lands. In this regard, Carlow County Council and Laois County Council will aim

to ensure that sufficient land is zoned to accommodate and support a diverse economic base.

The strategy to support economic development will be achieved by:

- Providing the infrastructure and zoned land necessary to attract economic development in recognition of the status of Carlow-Graiguecullen as a Key Town.
- Protecting zoned land for employment generating uses from inappropriate development that would negate future economic activity.
- Promoting Carlow-Graiguecullen as a self-sustaining regional and inter-regional economic growth centre.
- Recognising the strong and functional economic ties between Carlow Town (Town Centre) and Graiguecullen.
- Maximising existing economic assets as outlined in Table 4.1.
- Prioritising sectors likely to support significant economic growth in Carlow-Graiguecullen, including construction and manufacturing, commerce, professional services, and retail.
- Supporting all forms of employment generation subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.
- Capitalising on existing significant infrastructure to further strengthen the local employment base, including connectivity along the M9, the N80 and the Dublin-Waterford Railway Line, and strong international connectivity with direct access routes to the Ports of Waterford and Rosslare and Dublin and Waterford Airports.
- Facilitating the implementation of Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration as set out in its Regeneration Action Plan and Urban Design and Implementation Plan, in order to support the vitality of the town centre and ensure it becomes an attractive destination and driver for commerce/retail and innovation.
- Addressing vacancy, dereliction and the underutilisation of lands and property.
- Supporting the development of an economic quarter and transport interchange on underutilised lands around Carlow Railway Station subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.
- Continuing to protect, strengthen, and develop the retail functions of Carlow-Graiguecullen in accordance with the Retail Strategy for County Carlow 2022-2028 and the Retail Strategy for County Laois 2021-2027.
- Progressing the delivery of the proposed measures and interventions in the Carlow-Graiguecullen Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) to support a shift towards sustainable travel and transport, including public transport and walking and cycling infrastructure, and permeability/connections.
- Supporting the intensification, renewal, and modernisation of existing industrial and enterprise floorspace in the joint urban area subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.
- Supporting proposals for foreign direct investment and indigenous investment.
- Guiding enterprise and employment developments to strategic employment lands in the joint urban area.
- Developing potential economic opportunities through consultation with Carlow and Laois County Council’s Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs), the IDA, the OPW, and Carlow Chamber of Commerce and Laois Chamber Alliance.
- Developing the tourism economy of Carlow-Graiguecullen in a manner that improves its profile as a tourism destination, grows tourism related employment, and enhances its tourist product offering and visitor experience.

4.2.1 Locations for Economic Development

The Infrastructural Assessment (IA) accompanying the JULAP has informed the zoning of lands for economic development. The IA ensures that all land zoned for development can be serviced within the lifetime of the Plan. While employment related uses can be facilitated on a number of land use zonings, there will be a specific focus in the JULAP on lands zoned Town Centre, Enterprise and Employment, and Business and Innovation. Notwithstanding the Town Centre First approach, it is also acknowledged that there are many economic lands uses that may not be appropriate in a town centre location for reasons relating to their size, nature of the activity or access / road network requirements. Therefore, the land use zonings have also been carefully considered to ensure that they are compatible with the wider area and take cognisance of ensuring the delivery of consolidated and compact growth.

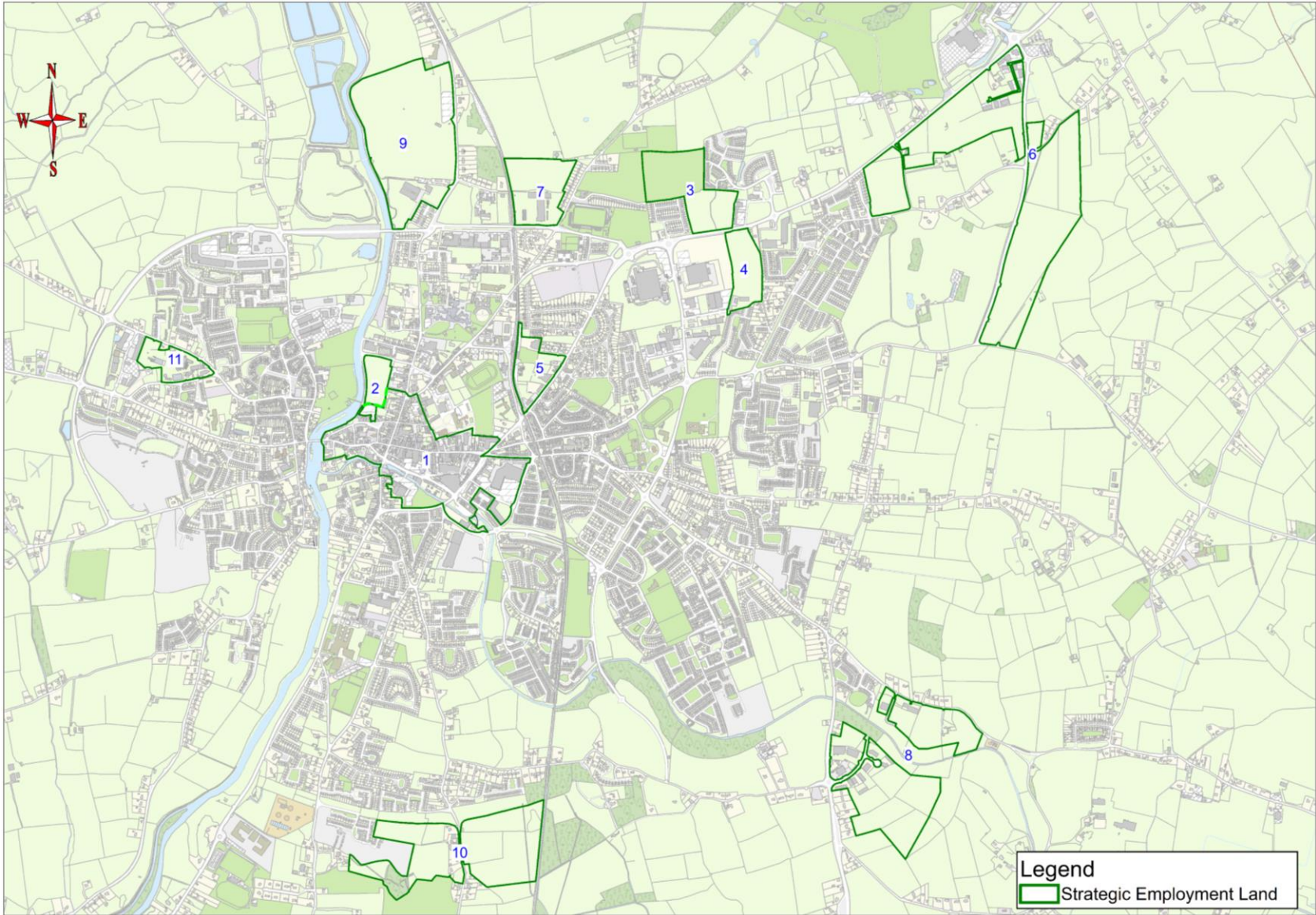
The land zoned for economic development will ensure Carlow-Graiguecullen has the ability to maintain, increase and diversify its employment base in a manner that reinforces its Key Town designation, and at the same time ensuring that it is well positioned to capitalise on and accommodate unexpected economic development opportunities that may arise during the plan period.

A total of c. 219 hectares of land is zoned for 'Enterprise and Employment' uses in this JULAP, and c. 40 hectares is zoned for 'Business and Innovation' uses. Of these two figures combined and the lands they encompass, a total of c. 160

hectares is undeveloped. In terms of the area of Graiguecullen in Co. Laois, c. 11 hectares of land is zoned for Enterprise and Employment uses, c. 1.5 hectares of which is undeveloped. These lands, in conjunction with other mixed-use zonings such as Town Centre, are considered adequate to serve the needs of a wide range of enterprise and employment opportunities over the lifetime of the JULAP and beyond.

4.3 Strategic Employment Land

Map 4.1 and Table 4.2 identifies strategic employment lands in Carlow-Graiguecullen. For further details also refer to Land Use Zoning Map 12.1 and Table 12.1: Land Use Zoning Categories, and Objectives and Land Use Acceptability as provided in Chapter 12. The layout and design of development proposals on these strategic land banks shall be of a high standard and quality. Carlow County Council and Laois County Council will support employment generating development proposals on these lands subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental criteria.



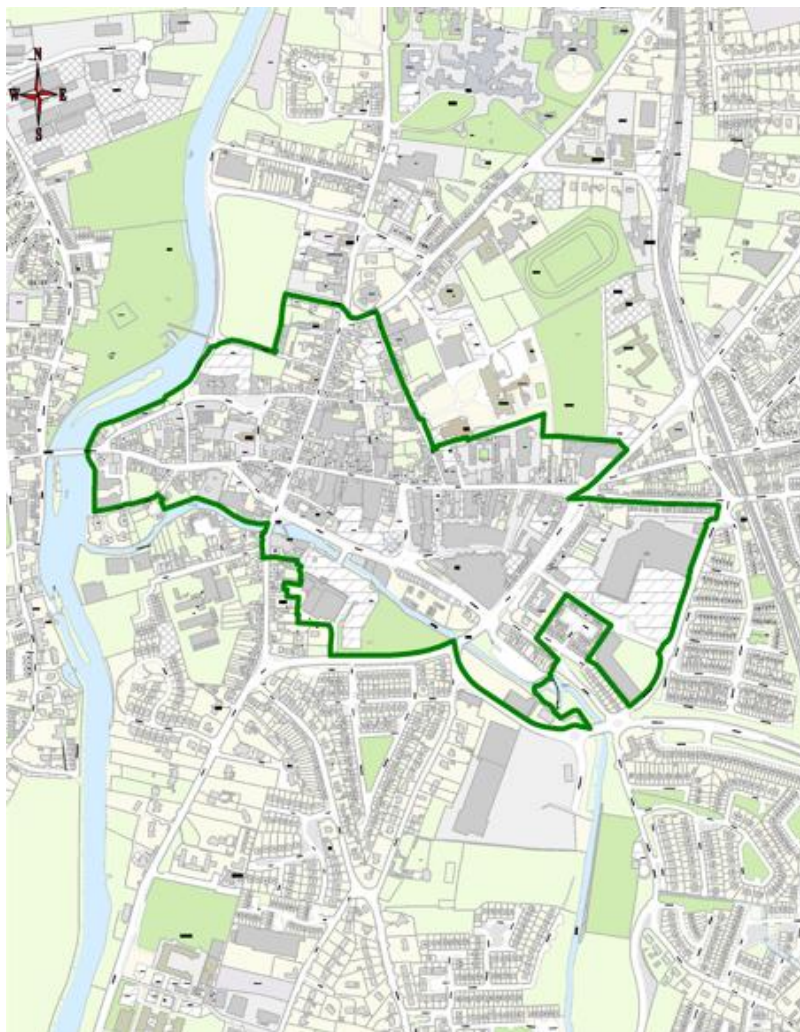
Map 4.1: Strategic Employment Land Carlow-Graigecullen

TABLE 4.2: STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT LAND

1-Core Retail Area

The retail offer on the Town Centre zoned land is distributed between the traditional commercial core located along Tullow Street, Dublin Street and the Potato Market and the more recent shopping centres. Retail units on Tullow Street and Dublin Street tend to be of a relatively small-scale accommodating uses such as independent retailers, boutiques, cafés, and restaurants while the newer shopping centres (Carlow Shopping Centre and Fairgreen Shopping Centre) provide larger floor plates making them more attractive to multiples and chain stores.

The Core Retail Area forms a central part of the overall Town Centre land use zoning. This is the preferred area for retailing to ensure the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre. However, in recognition of the on-going changes to retailing formats, the consolidation of the footprint of the town centre will also be encouraged to include a range of other functions including those relating to office, enterprise, tourism and culture, and hospitality uses, as well as live/work units, residential, and remote working hubs. Retail is discussed in further detail under Section 4.4.



2-Land adjoining Barrow Track

This area comprises c. 3.5 hectares of land at the western end of the Town Centre zoning, adjoining the Barrow Track to the west and the rear of properties fronting Dublin Street to the east. The land has frontage along the Barrow Track (to the west), Cox's Lane (to the south), and Andy Murphy Road (to the north). It is partly within and adjoining the designated Core Retail Area for Carlow Town and represents an important opportunity to consolidate and develop the town centre at its western end by incorporating a high-quality mixed-use development with commercial uses, which facilitates new connections to the town centre and provides a new innovative and vibrant urban quarter integrated with adjoining land uses and addressing the River Barrow.

The preparation of a masterplan shall accompany any development proposal on this land, which shall take account of the provisions of Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration in relation to the Barrow Track/Civic Spine Intervention Area. The masterplan shall include a vision for the overall land parcel to ensure development does not take place in a piecemeal manner and suitably integrates with existing development and infrastructure.

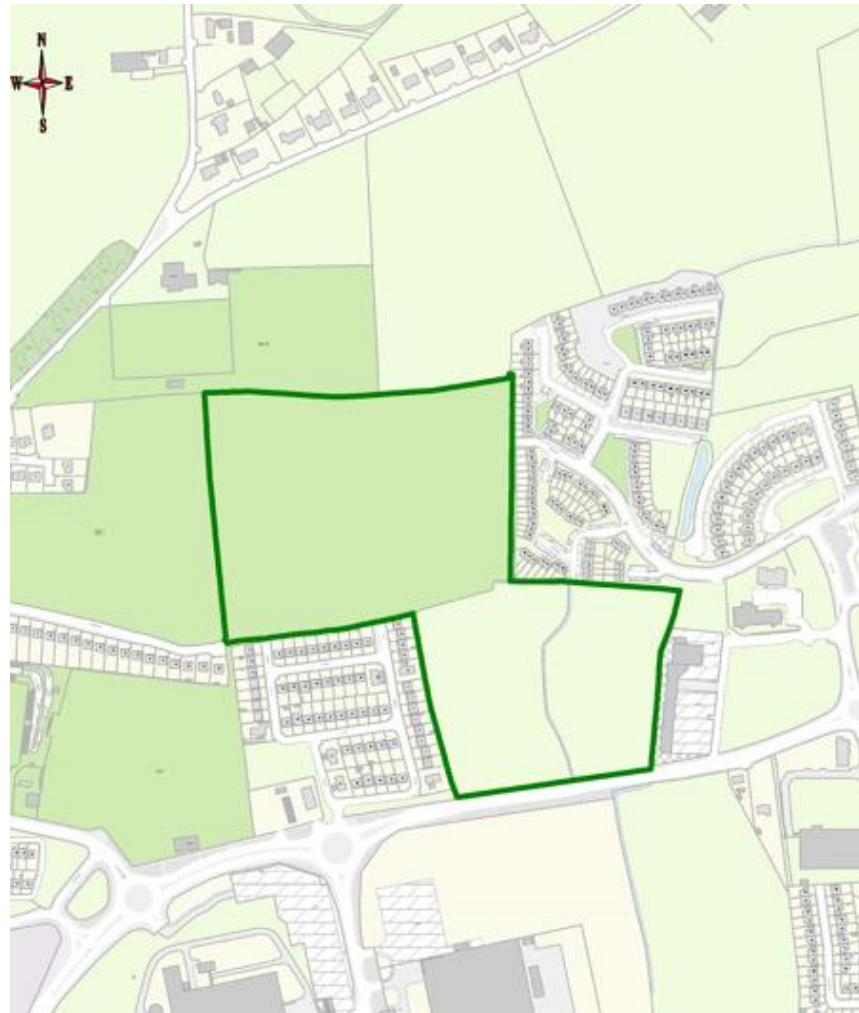
Development proposals will also be required to carefully consider potential flood risk impacts and potential impacts on River Barrow and River Nore SAC, through Flood Risk Assessment and Appropriate Assessment Screening/Natura Impact Statement (NIS).



3- Land adjoining Dublin Road (R448)

These lands are zoned Enterprise and Employment at the northern end of the joint urban area adjoining the Dublin Road (R448) and comprise a total area of c. 12.4 hectares. The southern portion of the land, c. 4 hectares, is occupied by the IDA's recently completed Advance Factory Building which will provide light industrial, office and ancillary support areas. The land to the rear (north) of the Advance Factory Building extends to c. 7.5 hectares and is undeveloped.

This strategic employment land bank is accessible from the Dublin Road (R448) and the O'Brien Road (N80). Both the R448 and N80 provide important and proximate linkages to the M9, and connections to the Eastern and Midlands Region and Southern Region. The land is also close to an existing concentration of established enterprise, employment, and industrial land uses along the O'Brien Road, including the former Braun site (now occupied by NUA) and the former Lapple site (now occupied by Moore Environmental and Central Engineering).



4-Land adjoining Dublin Road (R448) and accessible from O'Brien Road (N80)

These lands are located at the southern side of the Dublin Road (R448) extending to an area of c. 6 hectares. The southern end of the land is occupied by a multi-unit commercial building and the Carlow NCT Centre and is accessible via an access road leading directly from the O'Brien Road (N80). The said access road serves a number of existing developments including the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment (Workplace Relations Commission) and Burnside Eurocyl Ltd. The land is zoned Enterprise and Employment and has the potential to provide enhanced connectivity between the Dublin Road (R448) and the O'Brien Road (N80), and to accommodate complimentary enterprise and employment uses. Key to any new development proposal on the land which gives rise to significant car trip potential would be the preparation of a Traffic and Transport Assessment to assess, the transport impacts of a proposed development on the N80, incorporating any subsequent measures necessary to ensure roads and junctions and other transport infrastructure in the vicinity of the development remain fit for purpose and encourages a modal shift towards more sustainable travel modes.



5-Land adjoining and around Carlow Railway Station

Includes underutilised, greenfield, and centrally located land amounting to c. 6 hectares which is situated to the north, south and east of Carlow Railway Station and the Dublin to Waterford Railway Line. The land also encompasses commercial properties fronting Green Lane (R448). There are two existing access points (x 2) to the land from the R448.

The land is zoned Business and Innovation, and the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028. Policy ED. P11 of the County Development Plan identifies it as a location for the development of an economic quarter and transport interchange. The Business and Innovation land use zoning provides for high-technology related office-based industry.

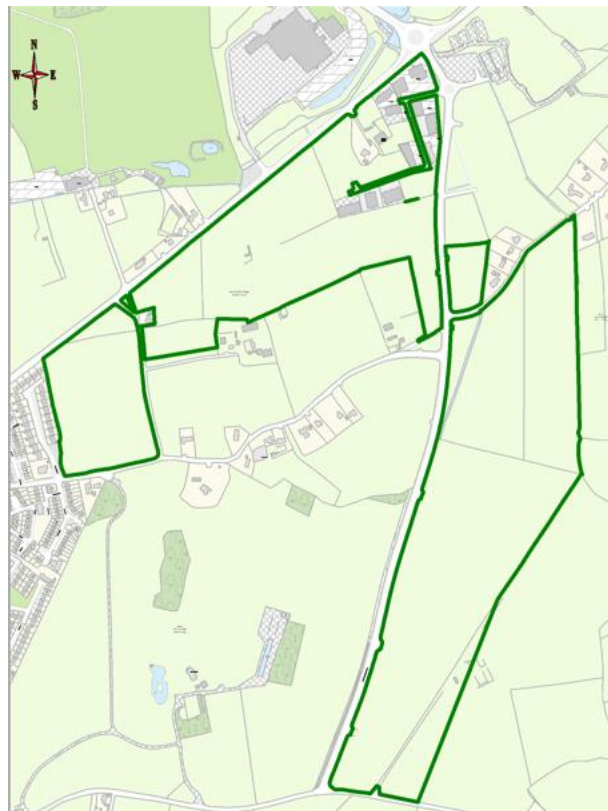


6-Land adjoining Dublin Road (R448) and Eastern Relief Road

This is strategically located land occupying prominent roadside frontage along the Eastern Relief Road and the Dublin Road (R448) at the northeastern end of the joint urban area. It comprises a significant land bank totalling c. 53.97 hectares, c. 6 hectares of which is developed and occupied by Deerpark Business Complex. The land is zoned Enterprise and Employment and represents a significant opportunity to consolidate enterprise and employment development at this location, which is to the immediate south of MSD Carlow, and on a primary approach to the joint urban area from the Eastern and Dublin regions. The land is also within easy access of M9 Junction 4.

Having regard to its significance in terms of a location next to a primary approach route to the joint urban area and beside the Eastern Relief Road, as well as the character and use of existing developed lands in the surrounding area, the land has been zoned Enterprise and Employment. This zoning provides for a mix of uses including high-end research and development, business, science and technology-based industry, financial services, call centres/telemarketing, software development, enterprise and incubator units, small/medium manufacturing, corporate offices in high quality campus/park type development.

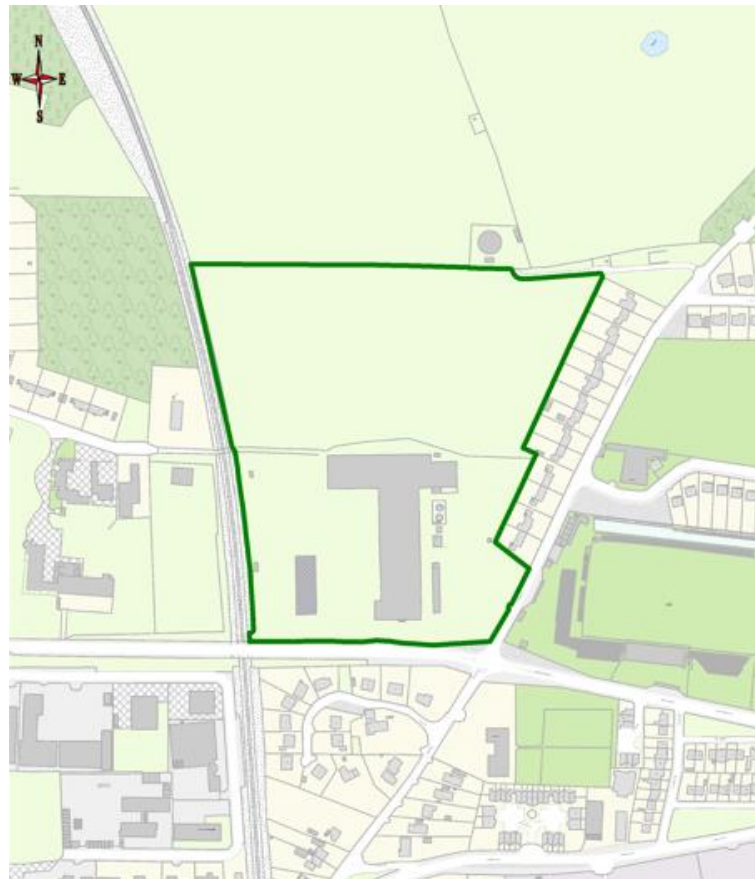
The preparation of a masterplan should accompany any development proposal on this land, to include a vision for the overall land parcel to ensure development does not take place in a piecemeal manner and suitably integrates with existing development and infrastructure.



7-Land adjoining Cannery Road (N80)

This land parcel is c. 10 hectares in area and has an existing established access on to the Cannery Road (N80). The land is adjoined to the east by the Oak Park Road and to the west of the Railway Line. The southern half of the land was the site of the former Erin Foods Factory and is now occupied by a waste management company (Ray Whelan Ltd.). The rear (northern) half of the land is undeveloped.

The land is located in a strategic position with direct access to the Cannery Road (N80) and is proximate to the Strawhall Industrial Estate and Carlow Gateway Business Centre. The land is zoned Enterprise and Employment, is currently underutilised, and represents an opportunity to accommodate higher order commercial, light industrial, office, and research and development uses. Key to any new development proposal on the land which gives rise to significant car trip potential would be the preparation of a Traffic and Transport Assessment to assess, the transport impacts of a proposed development on the N80, incorporating any subsequent measures necessary to ensure roads and junctions and other transport infrastructure in the vicinity of the development remain fit for purpose and encourages a modal shift towards more sustainable travel modes.



8-Land adjoining Wexford Road Business Park (N80)

Two land parcels zoned Enterprise and Employment and totalling c. 30.5 hectares.

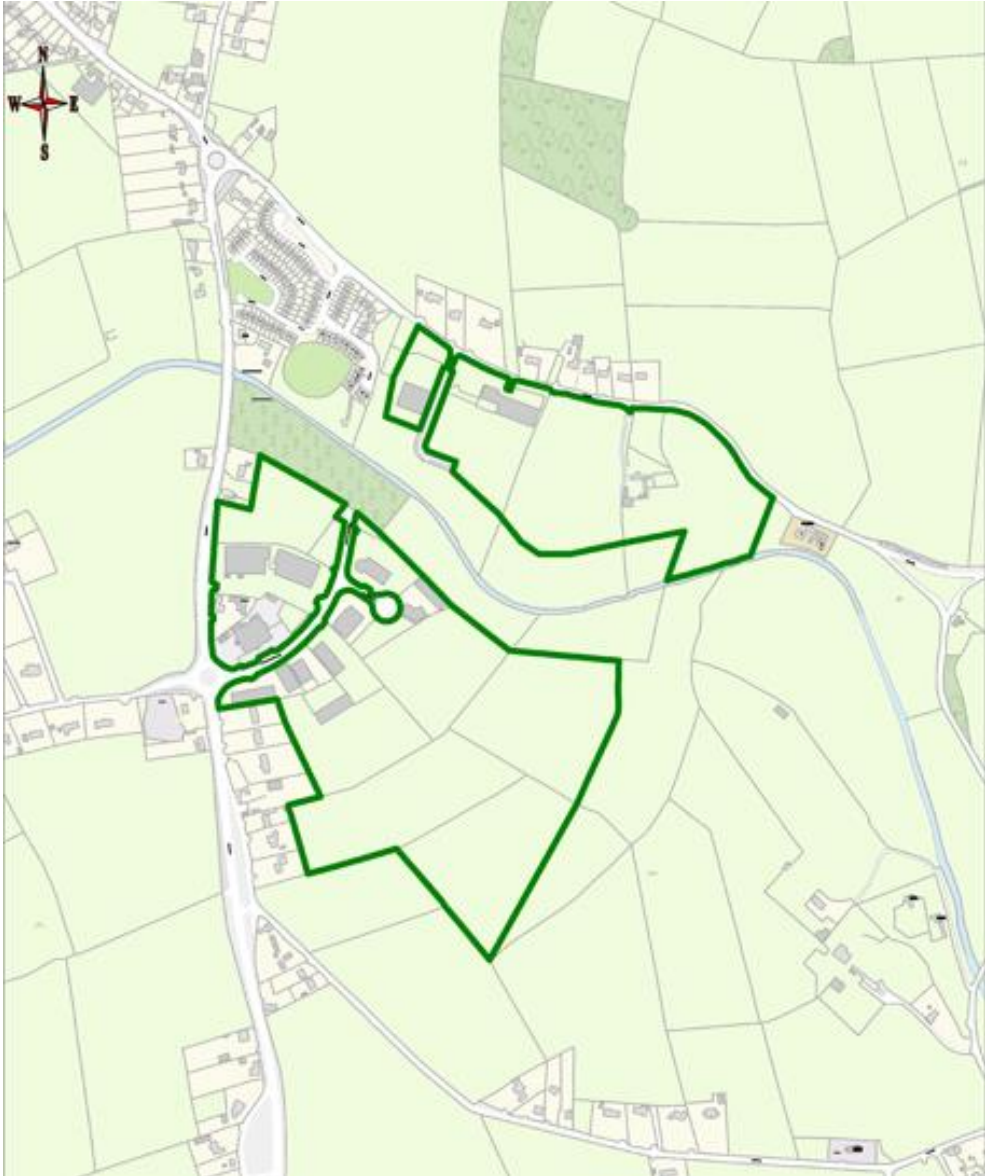
The northern land parcel is at the other (northern) side of the Burren River where it adjoins and is accessed from the Tullow Road (R725). Existing development on this land parcel includes the Dolmen Business Park, currently occupied by John Dargan & Sons Ltd. and a vacant car dealership site and building.

The southern land parcel is accessed from the Wexford Road (N80) and is occupied by the Wexford Road Business Park, which accommodate a mix of commercial, retail, professional service, and light industrial uses e.g., Nissan Carlow, Carlow Tyre Centre, Brealey Windows and Doors, Steeltech Sheds, Fine Framers, Ken Black Toy Store, Seamus Byrne Electrical Ltd., Kehoe Architectural Design, and Stone Systems. An undeveloped area to the south of the Wexford Road Business Park extends to c. 12 hectares.

The land benefits from a strategic location beside a primary approach route to the joint urban area from the southern region (the N80) and beside the indicative route of the Southern Relief Road. The land is also proximate to M9 Junction 5 at Rathcrogue.

Key to any development proposal on the land would be the preparation of a Traffic and Transport Assessment focusing on minimising impacts on the N80, and a layout and design that does not compromise or impact on the future delivery of the Southern Relief Road and suitably integrates with existing development and infrastructure.

In view of the location of the Burren River, development proposals will also be required, where applicable, to carefully consider potential flood risk impacts and potential impacts on the River Barrow and River Nore SAC, through Flood Risk Assessment and Appropriate Assessment Screening/Natura Impact Statement (NIS).



**9-Former
Sugar Factory
Land**

This substantial land parcel totals c. 30.5 hectares, is located to the north of the joint urban area and includes the site of the former Greencore Sugar Factory. The land is directly linked to the town centre by the R417 Athy Road, which is sited along its entire eastern boundary. Apart from the southernmost portion of the land which is occupied by existing commercial and light industrial enterprises, most of the land is a vacant brownfield site. Significant remediation (decontamination) works have been carried out on the land to date to render it suitable for uses other than industrial, the scope and progress of which have been overseen by the EPA through their licensing process.

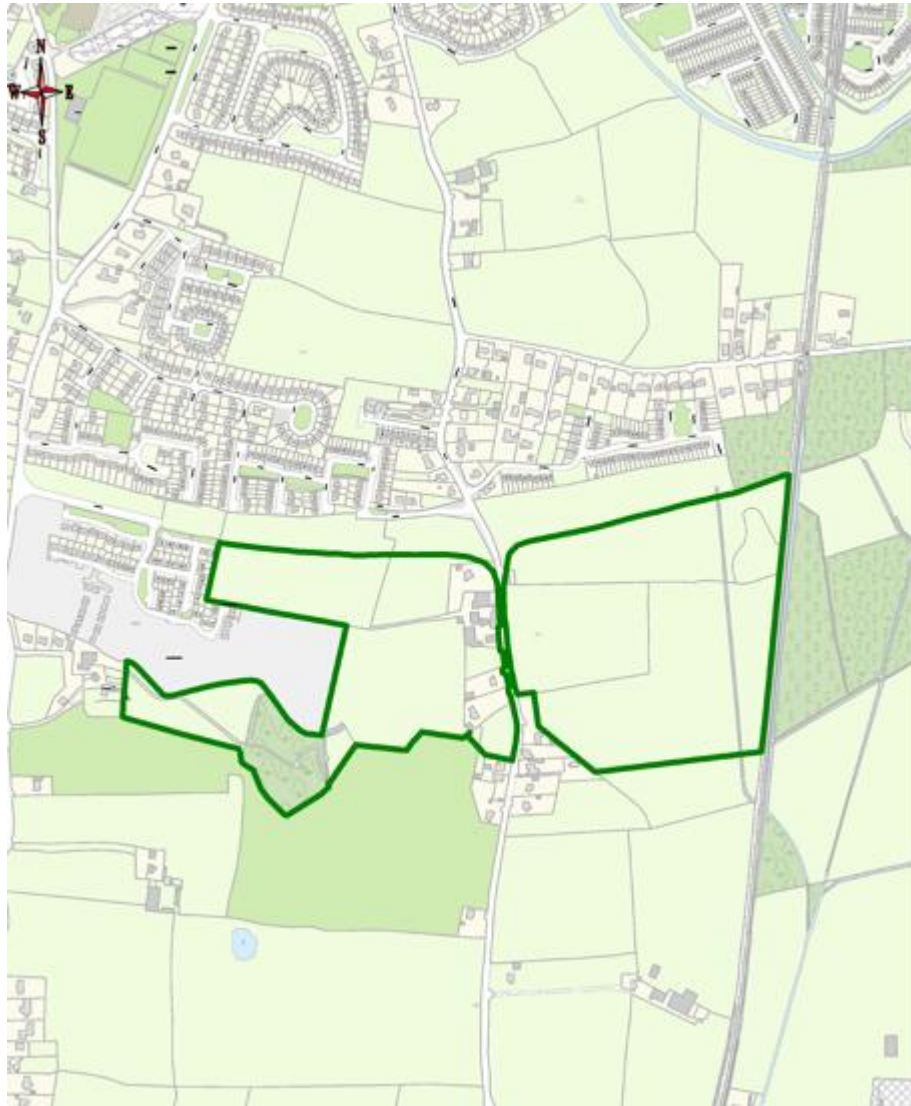
The preparation of a masterplan should accompany any development proposal on this land, to include a vision for the overall land parcel to ensure development does not take place in a piecemeal manner and suitably integrates with existing development and infrastructure.



**10-Land at
Quinagh**

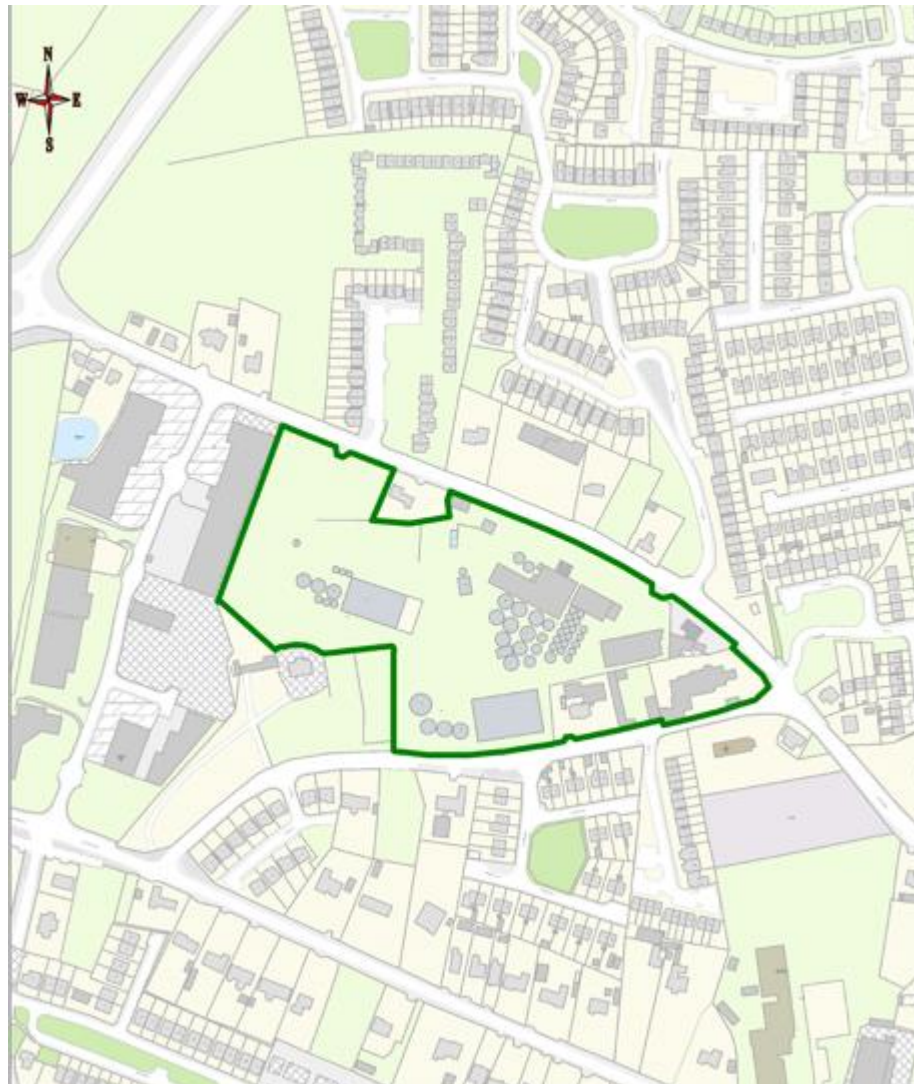
Two land parcels zoned Business and Innovation are located to the south of the joint urban area, and either side (east and west) of the Blackbog Road. The land is also strategically positioned along the indicative route of the proposed Southern Relief Road.

The Business and Innovation land use zoning provides for high-technology related office-based industry. Any development proposal on the land should not compromise or impact on the future delivery of the Southern Relief Road and suitably integrate with existing development and infrastructure, taking particular cognisance of the need to protect the amenity of adjoining residential properties.



**11-Tirlán
(Glanbia)
Land**

This land parcel comprises c. 4.98 hectares and is located in Graiguecullen, fronting the R924 (Ballickmoyler Road) to the north and Church Road to the south. The land is occupied and in commercial use by Tirlán. The commercial use includes a farm (agricultural supplies) shop and depot. A large part of the land that was formerly in use as a grain store remains underutilised. The land benefits from an accessible location proximate to the N80 (Northern Relief Road), and next to the existing Shamrock Business Park. Any redevelopment of the land must be sensitive to the character and setting of Graiguecullen Church of Ireland to the immediate east. The land represents an opportunity to accommodate higher order commercial, light industrial and office uses.



Economic Development – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- EE. P1:** Maximise the economic development potential of Carlow-Graiguecullen by capitalising on its economic assets as outlined in Table 4.1, including Key Town designation, locational advantage along the M9, the N80, and Dublin-Waterford Railway Line, higher level education offer, and by promoting and marketing the area for significant economic investment and employment growth.
- EE. P2:** Promote Carlow-Graiguecullen as a regional and inter-regional economic growth centre, through support for the expansion of its existing enterprise ecosystems, and through the provision of zoned lands and physical infrastructure to realise the delivery of strategic employment lands and to ensure the joint urban area has the ability to maintain, increase, and diversify its employment base, to reduce outbound commuting, and to ensure new employment development contributes towards reducing carbon output.
- EE. P3:** Support the role of the Waterford-Kilkenny-Carlow-Dublin M9/Rail Network/Axis as a regional and sub-regional driver for collaboration and growth, which can harness the combined economic strengths of settlements along the route and contribute to the creation of an inter-urban network of collaboration and growth in accordance with RPO 30 in the

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region.

- EE. P4:** Promote and support the diversification of the construction and manufacturing industries in Carlow-Graiguecullen, focusing on the attraction and expansion of businesses that operate in the field of building innovation, development, and the manufacturing of construction materials, and particularly in the context of sustainable development and nearly zero energy buildings.
- EE. P5:** Encourage and support opportunities in Carlow-Graiguecullen for further clustering and new spin-off sectors arising from existing multinational corporations, to ensure the joint urban area becomes an attractive destination and driver of business and innovation.
- EE. P6:** Support economic development by maximising the efficiency of zoned lands and by advocating for and facilitating the provision, upgrade, or refurbishment of necessary supporting physical infrastructure.
- EE. P7:** Ensure that lands zoned for employment generating uses in Carlow-Graiguecullen are kept free from inappropriate development that would prejudice future economic growth and activity.
- EE. P8:** Encourage and support the development of strategic employment lands in a comprehensive and sequential manner which uses existing infrastructure effectively and efficiently, ensuring development proposals are designed to the highest architectural and landscaping standards, with natural site features such as trees and hedgerows to

be retained and enhanced as an integral part of any scheme.

- EE. P9:** Encourage and support the re-use of vacant and underutilised lands and buildings, including the redevelopment of brownfield lands, for new employment generating developments, including those identified as strategic employment lands in Table 4.2.
- EE. P10:** Promote opportunities for the creation of research and development synergies between Carlow SETU, Carlow College St. Patrick's, and existing and future manufacturing related companies.
- EE. P11:** Ensure town centre lands become an attractive destination and driver of enterprise, employment, and innovation, through the implementation of Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration.
- EE. P12:** Support employment generating uses on land zoned Town Centre as a key driver of urban regeneration.
- EE. P13:** Seek to address vacancy, dereliction, and the underutilisation of land and buildings in the town centre by supporting an appropriate mix of other alternative uses such as enterprise and business start-ups, offices, tourism and culture, hospitality, residential etc., subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.
- EE. P14:** Support the development of an economic quarter and transport interchange on underutilised lands around Carlow railway station subject to

compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.

- EE. P15:** Engage with IDA Ireland and the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment in seeking to develop and attract potential economic opportunities into suitably zoned employment lands in the joint urban area.
- EE. P16:** Promote and support the role of Carlow and Laois County Councils' Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) in driving the development of local enterprise and job creation in Carlow-Graiguecullen.

Economic Development - Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- EE. O1:** Support the preparation of new Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs) for County Carlow and County Laois to ensure the local level framework is in place for the joint urban area to support economic growth and community improvements.
- EE. O2:** Seek to advance and secure the implementation of Project Carlow 2040 - A Vision for Regeneration through the development of the strategic Intervention Areas in the strategy, to drive the economic development of Carlow Town as an investment location.

4.4 Retail

The retail industry has undergone significant transformation in recent years, driven by consumers' use and retailers' adoption of digital technologies and the need for new solutions for traditional 'bricks and mortar' retail. Strengthening the retail sector in Carlow-Graiguecullen and particularly in support of town centre vitality, now requires a broad-based approach. In this regard, it is now more than ever recognised that retailing is not a solitary experience but can be combined with other activities and services such as relating to entertainment, food and drink, and tourism and culture. Ensuring the survival of retailing in the town centre can therefore be achieved by encouraging these activities and services alongside town centre living, to provide a greater mix of complimentary uses. An increased focus on placemaking is also required. The viability of retail stores in the future will be heavily reliant on being located in a quality urban setting with an experience which attracts consumers and increases dwell time.

4.4.1 Existing Retail Environment

4.4.1.1 Carlow Town

The quality and quantum of retailing on offer in Carlow Town reflects its Level 1 County Town Centre retail hierarchy designation in the Retail Strategy for County Carlow 2022-2028, and its Key Town status in the RSES for the Southern Region. Within Carlow Town the traditional town centre is recognised as Tullow Street and Dublin Street. However, in the past 20 years or so development in the Town Centre has been concentrated to the southeast of the traditional Town Core. Past Government tax incentives, such as the urban renewal schemes, also contributed to the expansion of the Town Centre

in an easterly direction including the development of the Carlow Shopping Centre, the Fairgreen Shopping Centre, and the Carlow Retail Park further south. This has resulted in a geographical shift from the traditional core retail area of the Town and has led to issues with integration and accessibility between the traditional core and the newer retail areas.

The smaller traditional sized units within the Town Centre along Tullow Street and Barrack Street generally accommodate independent and family-owned shops with the notable exception of the large Shaw's Department Store on Tullow Street. These are considered as a vital component of the retail mix of the Town as they add diversity to the Town's retail profile and enhance the overall vitality and viability of the core.

While the Town has a strong offer in terms of the number of multiples operating, its independent retailers maintain a strong presence within the core retail area. In terms of convenience retail provision, the Town is served by Tesco in Fairgreen Shopping Centre, Aldi on Hanover Road, Lidl on Tullow Road and SuperValu to the east of the Town anchoring the Sandhills Neighbourhood Centre on the Hacketstown Road. There is also an Aldi on Church Street in Graiguecullen within the functional area of Carlow County Council. A network of smaller scale convenience floorspace also serves the environs area of the Town.

Carlow Town is also well served in terms of retail warehouse provision, including Carlow Retail Park to the southeast of the town centre and west of Hanover Road, the Four Lakes Retail Park fronting the Dublin Road (R448) in the environs to the northeast, and Deerpark Business Complex opposite MSD Carlow on the Dublin Road (R448).

The breakdown of the existing net retail floorspace for Carlow Town in 2021 is set out in Table 4.3 and incorporates net retail floorspace from the County Laois side of the joint urban area i.e., Graiguecullen.

Table 4.3: Carlow Town & Graiguecullen Existing Retail Floorspace 2021 – Net (sq.m)		
Convenience	Non-Bulky Comparison	Bulky Comparison
12,569	27,060	35,689

The Retail Strategy for County Carlow 2022-2028 highlights a lack of permeability between the traditional town core retail area of Dublin Street and Tullow Street and the more recent modern additions to the Town Centre, specifically Fairgreen Shopping Centre. The Fairgreen Shopping Centre has poor pedestrian linkages to Tullow Street and lacks profile and visibility from Barrack Street. This lack of permeability has resulted in the weakening of the role and function of the traditional core shopping streets and issues with vacancy in the traditional Town Core, especially the western end of Tullow Street.

In terms of vacancy levels, the number of underutilised/vacant sites within Carlow Town has increased in recent years. This increase has negatively impacted the vitality and vibrancy of the Town, permeability within it, as well as resulted in a lack of a sense of a core. The GeoView Commercial Q2 2020 Report on Commercial Property estimated that Carlow Town had a vacancy rate of 18.2%, which was notably above the then national average of 13.5%.

Project Carlow 2040: A Vision for Regeneration puts in place a regeneration vision for the Town, central to which are the six Intervention Areas

that include inter alia Town Centre - Potato Market and Barrack Street and the Link Streets (Dublin Street and Tullow Street). These interventions will deliver improved Town Centre linkages and increased pedestrian mobility through the enhancement of existing streets to make them more pedestrian friendly as well as the provision of additional routes around the Town Centre to improve overall circulation. The delivery of these interventions will support the vitality of the Town Centre as the retail/commercial core while delivering the visual uplift that will unify the overall Town Centre.

Carlow Town Centre should continue to be the prime focus for future retail development and in particular the development of high order comparison retail floorspace should be located here. All types of retail floorspace are considered to be appropriate within Carlow Town as a Level 1 Centre in the Carlow County retail hierarchy, specifically comparison floorspace that is centrally located. With respect to the Core Retail Area of the Town Centre, key considerations are as follows:

- There is a need to enhance the retail role and function of the streets in the traditional core.
- Consideration must be given to emerging retail trends and how the Core Retail Area of Carlow Town can be positioned to not just respond to but benefit from these.
- The need for increased permeability between the traditional retail core and the newer south-eastern town centre expansion area.

4.4.1.2 Graiguecullen

Graiguecullen forms the western environs of Carlow Town, on the west side of the River Barrow and within the functional area of Carlow and Laois County Councils. Graiguecullen is

designated as a Level 3 Key Service Centre in the retail hierarchy set out in the Laois County Retail Strategy 2021-2027, the listed action for which is to *“Provide for shopping, amenity, commercial and community facilities of a scale and type to serve residents living within the district without undermining Carlow Town Centre”*.

Historically development was located around Chapel Street and Chaff Street in Graiguecullen. On the County Laois side, there has been significant development in terms of both housing and retail warehousing. These developments have been assisted by major road construction including the Northern Relief Road. The Shamrock Business Park and Barrow Valley Retail Park have both been developed in more recent years.

The Barrow Valley Retail Park is anchored by a Dunnes Stores and includes the Talbot Hotel and Dome Bowling Alley and Arcade. There are a mix of other commercial, retail, and professional services uses in the Retail Park, including a medical/doctor’s clinic, physiotherapy clinic, car sales, hardware and furniture stores, and gym.

The Shamrock Business Park includes Doyle’s Hardware/Builders Merchants, and a number of other retail warehousing units. It is also occupied by Graigue Village Shopping Centre fronting the Castlecomer Road (R430), which consists of neighbourhood facilities such as a Spar, takeaway restaurants, a dental clinic, as well as the National Driver Licence Service. The northern side of Barrowside Business Park off the Sleaty Road is within the functional area of County Laois, and includes a number of retail warehouse units, including furniture and car sales.

The shopping provision within Graiguecullen contributes towards Carlow Town’s ability to compete with other centres including Portlaoise,

Kilkenny and Newbridge. The existing and emerging convenience and comparison retail representation in Graiguecullen reflects its role in the Laois County Settlement Hierarchy as a District Centre. It is evident that residents do need to travel to larger shopping centres in order to fulfil their comparison-shopping needs and given the proximity to Carlow Town it is important that the future retail development of Graiguecullen complements that of the town and does not adversely impact the town centre Core Retail Area.

4.5 Promoting the Role of the Town Centre

4.5.1. Town Centre Living

Promoting Town Centre living will contribute to a more sustainable urban core where there are facilities, services, amenities and where they are generally proximate to employment. This in turn brings a renewed sense of vitality and viability to a place as people choose to stay local and are likely to be less reliant on cars. It can also encourage new business to meet a renewed local demand which in turn could have significant positive impacts on vacancy levels.

4.5.2 Key Town Centre Retail Opportunity Sites

The Retail Strategy for County Carlow 2022-2028 identifies six opportunity sites within the designated Core Retail Area. The redevelopment of these sites not only provides the opportunity to consolidate and strengthen the Core Retail Area and wider Town Centre, but also present opportunities for enhanced permeability and public realm improvements. It should also be noted that the Opportunity Sites, as outlined in Table 4.4 and as shown in Figure 4.2 with the designated Core Retail Area, provide a general location only. At this strategic

level it would not be appropriate to provide exact site boundaries as flexibility will be required to allow for (inter alia) site ownership, site assembly, and rights of way.

TABLE 4.4: TOWN CENTRE KEY RETAIL OPPORTUNITY SITES

TABLE 4.4: TOWN CENTRE KEY RETAIL OPPORTUNITY SITES	
<p>OPPORTUNITY SITE 1</p> <p>Penney’s Site and Hanover Shopping Centre, Kennedy Avenue</p>	<p>This site is located to the south of Carlow Town Centre off Kennedy Avenue, within the Core Retail Area. The site is triangular in shape and adjoined by Kennedy Avenue to the north and the main Kilkenny Road to the south. The site is bound to the north by the Burren River, a tributary of the River Barrow, which separates it from Kennedy Avenue. To the east is Hanover Park, a triangular public park flanked by the Kilkenny Road along one boundary and the Burren River to the north.</p> <p>While the return of Penney’s and an active retail use to the site is welcomed, there is significant scope to develop other unoccupied vacant units for a mix of uses. Such a redevelopment would present a significant opportunity to improve the multi-functionality of the Core Retail Area. In addition, given its central location, the redevelopment of the vacant units would also deliver significant benefits to the vitality and viability of the core retail area of Carlow. It would also offer potential placemaking benefits in combination with the pedestrianisation and public realm upgrades that form part of the Potato Market Intervention Area outlined in Project Carlow 2040; A Vision for Regeneration, as well as opportunities to provide an appropriate frontage to Kennedy Avenue that would integrate with the Barrack Street Intervention Area.</p>
<p>OPPORTUNITY SITE 2</p> <p>Barrack Street</p>	<p>Barrack Street is part of the traditional Core Retail Area of the Town Centre. The street presents a number of opportunities for redevelopment of existing sites, improvement to the public realm and enhanced linkages within the Town Centre. Barrack Street is central to increasing pedestrian mobility and the delivery of better management of cars and pedestrians to improve the overall quality of the space and serve to reinstate and support a more vibrant town centre.</p> <p>Project Carlow 2040: A Vision for Regeneration states that the improved connections between Potato Market and Barrack Street would provide additional routes around the Town Centre and enhanced overall circulation leading to a better experience of the area.</p>
<p>OPPORTUNITY SITE 3</p>	<p>The redevelopment of the site provides a key opportunity to integrate the traditional Town Centre focused on Dublin Street, Tullow Street, Barrack Street and Potato Market with the newer shopping areas at Fairgreen and</p>

<p>Plas na Saoirse, Kennedy Avenue</p>	<p>Carlow Shopping Centres, through the enhancement of pedestrian linkages across Kennedy Avenue.</p> <p>There are opportunities for pedestrianisation and for public realm upgrades that would integrate with the proposed Potato Market Intervention Area as outlined in Project Carlow 2040; A Vision for Regeneration. The redevelopment also offers opportunities to provide an appropriate frontage to Kennedy Avenue</p>
<p>OPPORTUNITY SITE 4</p> <p>Stonemason's/Crotty's Site</p>	<p>This is a backland area zoned Town Centre and located to the rear of Tullow Street, Charlotte Street, and College Street. Access to the site is currently restricted and the site comprises vacant two storey properties which front onto Charlotte Street and Tullow Street and a gated entrance from College Street.</p> <p>The site is a suitable location for infill development to consolidate the existing built form of the Town Centre. The redevelopment of the site also provides opportunities for the creation of new linkages between College Street and Charlotte Street.</p>
<p>OPPORTUNITY SITE 5</p> <p>Penny Lane Building, Tullow Street</p>	<p>This site is located on the northern side of Tullow Street, directly opposite the entrance to the Carlow Shopping Centre multi-storey car park. There is an existing two storey building on site occupied by a Home Savers store and surrounded by surface car parking. There is also a parade of small retail units along the western boundary of the site.</p> <p>This site comprises underutilised land in a Town Centre zoned area, and has a prominent position on a main shopping street i.e. Tullow Street. The redevelopment of the site has the potential to provide a range of uses, would bring increased footfall and much needed investment to the eastern end of Tullow Street.</p>
<p>OPPORTUNITY SITE 6</p> <p>Tullow Street</p>	<p>Tullow Street is a primary retail street in the Town Centre, with independent shops, restaurants, cafés, and pubs. The Street also contains a number of vacant units, with the group of buildings adjoining the entrance to the Carlow Shopping Centre multi-storey car park of particular note. These vacant units detract from the overall amenity of the Street and give an impression of dereliction at its eastern end.</p> <p>Project Carlow 2040: A Vision for Regeneration includes Tullow Street along with Dublin Street as the Link Street Intervention stating that: <i>"This Intervention seeks to support the vitality of the Town Centre as the retail/commercial core while delivering the visual uplift that will unify the overall Town Centre... The upgrading of the urban environment and public realm along these streets also provides the opportunity to address existing traffic and pedestrian safety issues."</i></p>

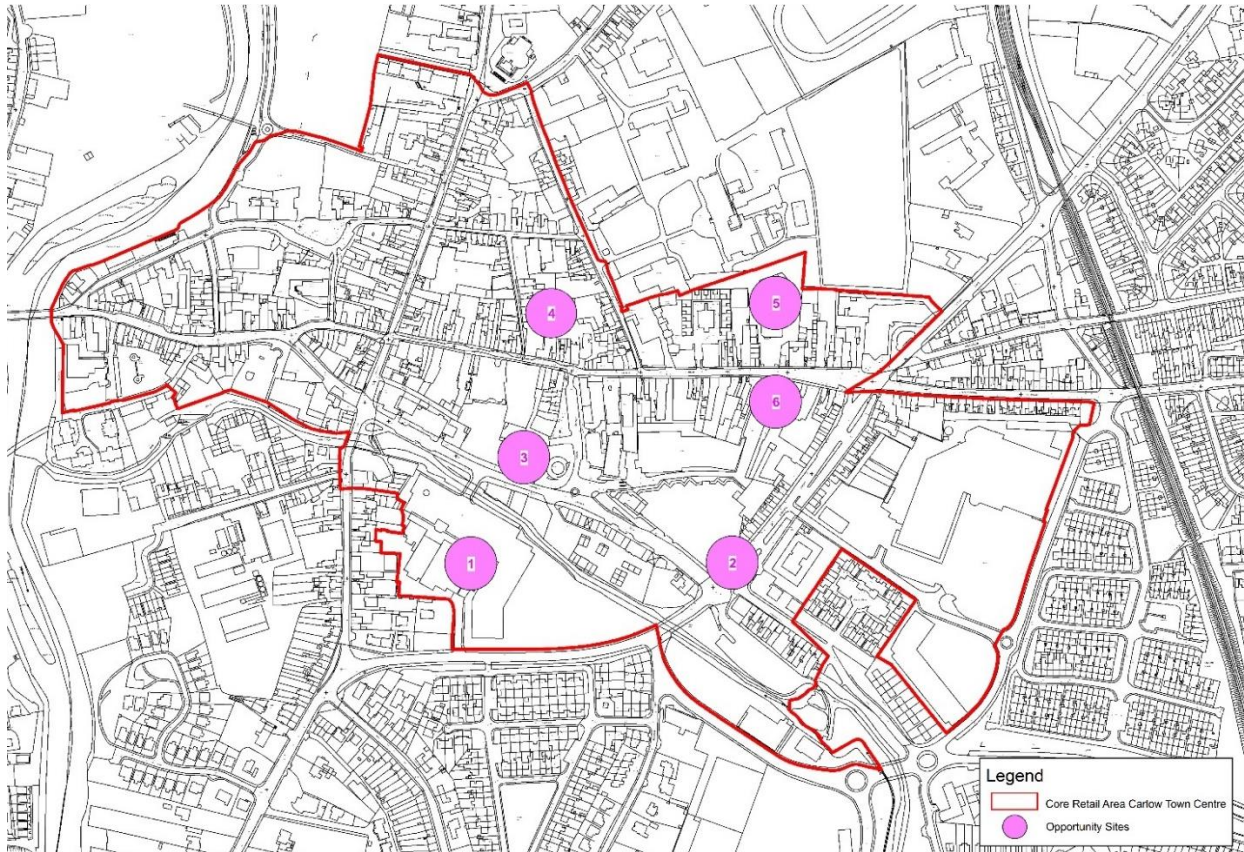


Figure 4.2: Core Retail Area & Opportunities Sites

4.5.3 Revitalisation of Vacant and Derelict Buildings

Vacant and derelict units not only adversely impact the vitality and viability of the Town Centre, but in most instances they also have a negative impact on its visual appearance and in turn its attraction to both consumers as well as businesses. The redevelopment and re-use of vacant and derelict properties is supported by this JULAP, including:

- Proposals that, in the first instance, seek to reuse vacant/derelict buildings in the Town Centre zoned area and bring them back into active use on a 'long term' basis.
- The use of empty units, on a temporary basis, as spaces to promote cultural and community events i.e. pop-up shops for artists, local community groups etc. and for other pop-up uses such as restaurants and cafes.
- The visual enhancement of vacant/derelict units through the treatment of empty windows so they become an attraction rather than an eyesore or other measures such as painting to improve their visual appearance including short or interim measures.
- Innovation and creativity in relation to the use of vacant buildings and derelict sites for different public activities and events where appropriate e.g., pop-up parks. The opening of Carlow Exchange at Potato Market by Carlow County Council is a recent example of this.
- A co-ordinated programme for building maintenance and development, as well as

the identification of specific buildings and sites that need to be targeted immediately.

4.5.4 Enhance the Public Realm

The creation and maintenance of a high quality, safe, attractive, and healthy public realm is increasing in importance. On-going environmental improvements to the public realm will continue to be promoted and encouraged. Project Carlow 2040: A Vision for Regeneration has a central role to play in delivering this for Carlow Town and positioning it for the future.

4.5.5 Design and Shopfront Guidance

Traditional shopfronts and signage are important contributors to the character and visual attraction of the Town Centre. The use of traditional shopfronts, signage and lettering will continue to be promoted and supported, and there will be a presumption against inappropriate shop front design. The implementation of the 'Streetscape Enhancement Scheme' in order to enhance the streetscape environment of the Town Centre will also be supported to encourage owners of local retail and commercial premises to improve their individual shopfronts

4.5.6 Promote Combined Niche Retailing, Local Industries and Tourism

Niche retailing that works with and utilises the existing unique assets and attributes of the Town Centre will be promoted as both an integral part of the retail offer as well as a tourism attraction.

4.5.7 Evening and Night-Time Economy

A diverse, vibrant, and sustainable night-time economy is an important part of any Town Centre and its vitality and viability. It has become even more important as people's pattern of shopping changes, with the combination of retail and

hospitality at the heart of experiential retailing and the renewed interest in and attraction of Town Centres.

The delivery of a multifunctional Town Centre will therefore be encouraged through the development of mixed-use schemes and the locating of complementary uses in and adjacent to the Core Retail Area. In this regard the integration of retail, leisure, restaurants, and bars is essential not only to the promotion of a vibrant evening and night-time economy but in attracting and retaining tourists who will want places to go and things to do in the evenings and at night.

4.5.8 Festivals, Events and Street Markets

Festivals, events, and markets are not only important in enhancing the attractiveness of town centres as places to visit but in many instances they are part of the history of a settlement and are central to maintaining a link to the past. Festivals, events, and markets will continue to be supported and encouraged, and the recently completed Carlow Exchange development is a specific example of this.

Retail – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

RT. P1: Promote the enhancement of retail floorspace, primarily comparison goods and town centre functions in Carlow Town, to sustain its competitiveness and importance as the only Level 1 Centre within the Carlow County Retail Hierarchy.

RT. P2: Provide for retail facilities of a scale and type to serve residents living in Gaiguecullen within the functional area

of County Laois and without undermining the competitiveness and importance of Carlow Town Centre as a Level 1 Centre in the Carlow County Retail Hierarchy.

RT. P3: Put ‘placemaking’ as a priority for Carlow Town Centre in accordance with the provisions of Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration, to create a memorable experience that goes beyond traditional shopping and seeks to combine elements of public realm, retail mix and curated events to create distinct experiences.

RT. P4: Ensure that retail development proposals shall accord to the policies, objectives and related criteria for retail development as outlined in Chapters 4 and 12 of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 as applying to Carlow Town functional area of County Carlow, and Chapter 7 of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 as applying to Graiguecullen functional area in County Laois, and are assessed in accordance with the provision of the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012). This includes the type, quantum, and location of future retail floorspace in the joint urban area.

RT. P5: Reduce floorspace vacancy within Carlow Town Centre through the identification of alternative uses for existing vacant floorspace where appropriate.

RT. P6: Prohibit significant new retail development that due to its scale and / or location would negatively impact,

either individually or cumulatively, on the vitality and viability of Carlow Town Centre.

RT. P7: Work with local industries in the promotion of specialist and small-scale tourist related retail outlets which will increase the potential to benefit from existing assets and attract event shoppers and tourists to Carlow-Graiguecullen.

RT. P8: Ensure that Carlow Town Centre stakeholders, including retailers, fully utilise all available ICT infrastructure to re-imagine the retail core experience, enhance its attractiveness, and embrace technological advances.

RT. P9: Promote the implementation of the ‘Streetscape Enhancement Scheme’ and ensure that new shop front and signage design contributes positively to and enhances the streetscape, and particularly the character and visual attraction of the Town Centre.

RT. P10: Support and facilitate the development of retail, retail services and niche retailing in the Town Centre, including new/infill development and redevelopment of an appropriate scale.

Retail – Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

RT. O1: Promote, support, and prioritise the redevelopment of the 6 no. Town Centre Opportunity Sites detailed in the Carlow County Retail Strategy 2022-2028, in order to consolidate and strengthen the Core Retail Area and wider Town Centre and to present opportunities for

enhanced permeability and public realm improvements:

1. Penney's Site and Hanover Shopping Centre, Kennedy Avenue
2. Barrack Street
3. Plas na Saoirse, Kennedy Avenue
4. Stonemason's/Crotty's Site
5. Penny Lane Building, Tullow Street
6. Tullow Street

RT. O2: Support the Town Centre Core Retail Area as the primary focus and preferred location for new retail development. Within this area there is a need to reinstate the role and function of the traditional retail core of the Town which is centred on Tullow Street, Dublin Street, Potato Market, and the future Barrack Street link.

RT. O3: Promote and facilitate the revitalisation and reuse of vacant and derelict properties/shop units in the joint urban area for retail and other town centre uses, including alternative or short-term measures to improve their visual appearance.

RT. O4: Support the multifunctional role of Carlow Town Centre including the provision of uses such as cafes, recreational and leisure facilities, restaurants, and other complementary uses that not only meet the needs of existing and future residents, but which also make the Town Centre attractive to visitors and tourists alike.

RT. O5: Support and facilitate the development of retail-led tourism associated with the natural and built heritage assets Carlow-Graiguecullen.

RT. O6: Introduce measures to improve the accessibility of Carlow Town Centre, including those that prioritise pedestrians and cyclists, and where feasible those that separate pedestrian and cycle traffic from vehicular traffic.

RT. O7: Encourage the active use of the upper floors of retail and commercial premises in the Town Centre, including the 'living over the shop' initiative.

RT. O8: Prevent over-development (proliferation) of non-retail uses / lower order commercial uses that would detract from the vitality and viability of the Town Centre Core Retail Area, such as fast-food takeaways and betting offices.

RT. O9: Promote activities and uses that enliven the Town Centre and improve the mix of uses within it, including town centre living, the evening and night-time economy, and festivals, events, and street markets in each town.

RT. O10: Ensure that applicants for significant new retail development undertake a thorough assessment of the quality and suitability of existing and available floorspace in the context of their proposals.

RT. O11: Support opportunities for the enhancement of pedestrian permeability in the Town Centre retail core in line with the recommendations of the walking strategy contained in Project Carlow 2040: A Vision for Regeneration, including improvements to the width and condition of existing footpaths, the implementation of safe crossings that reflect pedestrian desire

lines and proposals to upgrade junction arrangements to reduce delays to pedestrians.

RT. O12: Support and facilitate further public realm upgrades within Carlow Town Centre, particularly along Dublin Street and Tullow Street, which would benefit from enhanced landscaping and pavement improvements. The provision of street furniture such as benches, and the delivery of the 30km/hr zone will enhance the experience, safety and comfort of pedestrians living in, studying, working, and visiting the Town Centre.

RT. O12: Support the role and use of the Carlow Exchange at Potato Market as a community event space, including the continued development of the Carlow Farmer's Market.

RT. P13: Support shopping, commercial, amenity and community facilities on District Centre zoned land of a scale and type that does not undermine the role, and vitality and viability of Carlow Town Centre.

4.6 Tourism

Considering the richness of the natural and built heritage of Carlow-Graiguecullen, coupled with its highly accessible location by road and rail, it is in an excellent position to capitalise on and develop its existing tourism assets and potential and provide locally based employment opportunities.

This JULAP seeks to support existing tourism assets such as the River Barrow and Carlow Castle, seeking to improve these and others through the enhancement of the public realm.

This will deliver improved public spaces, enhanced linkages, appropriate signage, and an overall improvement to the quality of the area and its attraction as a tourism destination.

Carlow County Council and Laois County Council will look favourably on tourism development proposals and related infrastructure, which is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the joint urban area.

4.6.1 Recreation Tourism

4.6.1.1 River Barrow and Burren River

Natural heritage amenities such as the River Barrow and Burren River, can together act as a major attractor and significant tourist asset for Carlow-Graiguecullen. Given the location, extent, and quality of the River Barrow, which is fully navigable through the joint urban area, there is enormous potential for the development of waterways tourism as a prime tourist asset for the area. The river and the accessible tow path (Barrow Track) can accommodate many activities such as boating, walking, cycling, and fishing.

The River Barrow also represents one of the most significant industrial heritage monuments in the country with bridges, locks and lock-houses, and this history alone is an equally important tourism resource. The joint urban area grew up around the fortification (Carlow Castle) on the crossing of the river. In the 18th and 19th centuries commercial traffic on the river was at its peak, and this traffic remained on the river until the 1960s.

The development by Carlow County Council of the Town Park, marina (floating pontoon and slip), and pedestrian bridge at the River Barrow, have contributed to encouraging greater interaction with the river for visitors and residents. This will be further enhanced by

Carlow County Council’s development of the River Barrow Water Activity Centre on land beside the Town Park.

The Burren River is a tributary of the River Barrow and flows into the latter at Pembroke in Carlow Town. The Burren River runs south-east to north-west through Carlow Town, providing a ‘blue’ connection parallel to the Town Centre that offers an alternative route through and within the Town. It benefits from an accessible Linear Park along its east bank, which extends to c. 2km in length and comprises a hard surfaced walking and cycling route. In accordance with the provisions of Project Carlow 2040: A Vision for Regeneration, the intervention vision for the Burren River includes the delivery of a usable blue connection and ecological corridor that runs to the River Barrow, incorporating pedestrian links along the riverfront and a new connection with the historic Carlow Castle.

Carlow County Council and Laois County Council are committed to working with relevant stakeholders in order to harness the potential of the River Barrow and Burren River sensitively and appropriately as tourist attractions for boat users, for fishing and walking/cycling, and for nature and history enthusiasts.

4.6.1.2 Oak Park Forest Park

Oak Park Forest Park is a mature, mixed species woodland of over 120 acres with a predominance of beech, oak, scots pine, silver fir, larch, and sycamore. Boasting a rich diversity of wildlife, the lakes and their surrounds provide a habitat for swans and ducks, while the islands shelter many wild and game birds. Extending over four kilometres the walks include Butlers Wood Loop (700 metres), the Lake Path (800 metres), Fox Covert Track (1,100 metres) and Sally Island Trail (1,700 metres). Facilities at the

Forest Park include a universally accessible playground, outdoor exercise equipment, outdoor picnic tables, wheelchair accessible walkways and toilets, large car park, bat sanctuary and bird-watching area.

4.6.1.3 Delta Sensory Gardens

The award-winning gardens are situated on a 2.5-acre site on land at Strawhall Estate and were designed to provide a multi-sensory experience through the sight, touch, smell, and sound of plants, water features and other elements. The Gardens were officially opened in May 2007 and consist of 16 interconnecting gardens including a health and wellness garden. The gardens have a therapeutic focus and benefit people of all abilities with a mix of formal and informal landscaping.

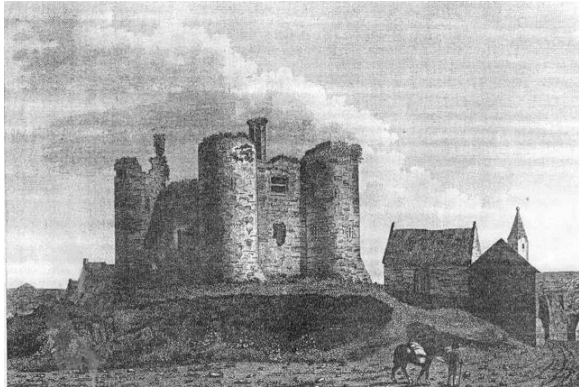
4.6.2 Cultural and Heritage Tourism

Carlow-Graiguecullen is located within Ireland’s Ancient East, which is Failte Ireland’s regional tourist experience brand to promote the history and culture of the 15 eastern counties of Ireland. The joint urban area’s unique architectural and historical attributes, including those attributes located in the surrounding hinterlands in County Carlow and County Laois, provide a solid basis to capitalise on this regional tourism brand and unlock the cultural and heritage tourism potential of the area. Some of the more notable attributes include:

4.6.2.1 Medieval Town & Carlow Castle

The town was founded by the Anglo-Normans and developed under the protection of Carlow Castle, which was built in the early 13th century. The medieval town included Dublin Street, the western part of Tullow Street, Castle Street, and Charlotte Street. The construction of Carlow Castle to defend a crossing point of the River

Barrow was likely the beginning for the development of Carlow Town and later Graiguecullen as a suburb of same.



17th Century Sketch of Carlow Castle (Thomas Dineley's Journal 1680)

Now in a ruinous state, Carlow Castle is located on the eastern side of the River Barrow. Located approximately 100 metres from the River Barrow and less than 100 metres from the Burren River, this landmark building is situated in the heart of the historic town core and is the only known surviving medieval building in the area. It is also one of the most important Anglo-Norman castles in Ireland.

Parts of Graiguecullen bridge, itself of historic significance, date back to the sixteenth century.

4.6.2.2 Brownshill Dolmen

The Brownshill Dolmen is a megalithic tomb dating from c.3,500BC and has a capstone weighing over 100 tonnes and recognised as being the largest of its kind found in Europe. The Dolmen is a significant landscape feature in the demesne landscape to the east of the joint urban area.

4.6.2.3 Carlow County Museum

Carlow County Museum is an award-winning museum located in Carlow's Cultural Quarter in the Town Centre. The museum spans four

galleries and houses a wide collection of items including the hand carved 19th century wooden pulpit from Carlow Cathedral (one of the top 100 objects to view in an Irish museum), the gallows trap door from Carlow Gaol used in 19th century public executions, an exhibition on the Carlow Sugar Factory, which was opened in 1926, and archaeological finds from the Carlow M9 bypass including the country's first ring brooch.

4.6.2.4 County Carlow Military Museum

The County Carlow Military Museum is dedicated to the collection, preservation, and display of military memorabilia heritage. The museum is housed in a late 19th century former church building on the grounds of St. Dymphna's Hospital/Carlow District Hospital. All artefacts in the Military Museum are donated by families of former service men and women and show their careers involving local, national, and international events in which they participated. A range of over 4,500 items cover all periods from Carlow Castle, 1798 Rebellion, 1916 Rising and World War 1 and 2.

4.6.2.5 Croppies Grave

The Croppies Grave is an historic landmark and monument, in Graiguecullen, to the 640 Carlow insurgents killed in the disastrous rising of the United Irishmen in 1798. The monument rises above the site of an old sand pit, where in the aftermath of the rising, the bodies of the Carlow insurgents were thrown and covered in quicklime in a mass grave.

4.6.2.6 Cultural Quarter

The Cultural Quarter is an area within the Town Centre which contains a number of cultural and heritage related uses including the VISUAL Centre for Contemporary Art and The George Bernard Shaw Theatre, Carlow College, the

Carlow County Museum, Carlow Cathedral, Carlow Tourism Office, and Carlow County Library.

The Tourist Hub/Linger Space project to the front of the VISUAL as already referred to in Section 4.7.1, will contribute to the enhancement of the role of the Cultural Quarter as a tourist destination. Carlow County Council are also exploring the potential of regenerating Carlow County Library and the Presentation Buildings along Tullow Street. Incorporating the Library, County Archive, Genealogy Centre, County Museum, Tourist Information Centre and Civic and Learning Space, the Presentation Buildings are a key community asset where residents and tourists frequent and spend time. The regeneration of these buildings into a modern cultural and heritage destination will support the development of the tourism product for the area.

4.6.2.7 Hinterland Assets

This JULAP recognises that the architectural, historical, and cultural assets accessible in the surrounding hinterlands to Carlow-Graigucullen can also be capitalised on to enhance the tourism potential of the joint urban area. Some examples of these assets include:

- Ducketts Grove Walled Gardens
- Killeshin Waterworks Reservoir Amenity Park
- Killeshin Church Romanesque Doorway and Graveyard
- Oisín Park Viewing Point Killeshin

4.6.3 The Arts

Carlow is a centre for the arts and cultural activities, accommodating significant modern arts and performance spaces as well as hosting renowned events.

4.6.3.1 Carlow Arts Festival

The Carlow Arts Festival is an annual multi-disciplinary arts festival which takes place in Carlow each June and is the first of the summer arts festivals in Ireland. Formerly Éigse Carlow Arts Festival (Éigse meaning ‘a gathering by poets’), Carlow Arts Festival began in 1979 as a community initiative, celebrating Irish heritage through Irish language, poetry, music and dance. The Festival has continued to evolve and is now one of only six strategically funded multi-disciplinary Arts Council funded festivals in the country and a highlight of the Irish cultural calendar. The focus on visual arts and presentation of international work through the Festival paved the way for the realisation and construction of the VISUAL Centre for Contemporary Art & The George Bernard Shaw Theatre.

4.6.3.2 The VISUAL

The VISUAL Centre for Contemporary Art & The George Bernard Shaw Theatre is one of Ireland’s leading contemporary art spaces situated in the heart of Carlow Town and opened in 2009. It houses a 335-seat theatre and the largest white cube gallery space in the country where it produces a programme of both commissioned and existing high-quality national and international contemporary art, plus a host of performances and events in multiple disciplines, including theatre, dance, film, comedy, literature and music. This €18 million development was a joint project funded by Carlow County Council with a grant of €3.17 million from the Department of Arts, Sport & Tourism under the ACCESS Programme. The site of the VISUAL was generously donated by Carlow College and is situated within its expansive eighteenth-century campus.

4.7 Food Tourism

This JULAP recognises that food can also play a role in tourism and visitor experiences in Carlow-Graiguecullen and provide an important platform for supporting and expanding local economic development.

Carlow Farmers' Market, founded in 2004, is one of the largest farmers' markets in the South-East and prides itself as one of the few authentic farmers' markets where the producers are all local, produce their own goods and sell mainly their own produce. The market trades every Saturday in and around the Carlow Exchange at Potato Market and offers both locals and tourists the chance to mingle with artisan suppliers and farmers who are passionate about their food, while learning the background of each individual product and receiving advice on how to make the best use of the extensive range available.

Tourism – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

TD. P1: Support and facilitate the development of the tourism industry in Carlow-Graiguecullen with an emphasis on utilising and harnessing the potential of the natural and built heritage of the joint urban area, subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria.

TD. P2: Support tourism initiatives including Fáilte Ireland's 'Ireland's Ancient East' tourism marketing platform which promotes Carlow-Graiguecullen as a visitor destination.

TD. P3: Support and collaborate with relevant agencies and bodies such as Carlow

Tourism, Tourism Ireland, Fáilte Ireland and The Arts Council, and key stakeholders and local communities, to further understand the needs of visitors to Carlow-Graiguecullen and to develop, promote and maximise the tourism potential of the joint urban area, and to ensure that tourism facilities are accessible to people with mobility issues, learning disabilities, people with visual or hearing impairments, young and elderly people.

TD. P4: Work with key stakeholders, including Carlow Tourism, Fáilte Ireland, the OPW, the Arts Council, the Heritage Council, and key stakeholders, businesses, and local communities, to support the sustainable development and promotion of heritage tourism in Carlow-Graiguecullen.

TD. P5: Protect and conserve the natural and built heritage of Carlow-Graiguecullen upon which the tourism industry is based, including landscapes, designated sites, habitats and species, water quality, archaeology and historic buildings and structures.

TD. P6: Promote Carlow Castle as a tourist attraction in conjunction with Fáilte Ireland, the OPW and relevant stakeholders, and to facilitate sustainable proposals to enhance the visitor experience at the castle, through the provision of improved access, signage, and associated infrastructure, as appropriate and as resources allow.

TD. P7: Develop and maximise the tourism potential of Carlow-Graiguecullen by facilitating the appropriate expansion of

existing facilities and the provision of new universally accessible and sustainable tourist attractions, facilities, and infrastructure in the joint urban area, while ensuring the protection of the environment and subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria.

TD. P8: Support and promote the tourism role of the Cultural Quarter in the Town Centre.

TD. P9: Support the development of the transformational public realm projects that will enhance the aesthetics of the built and natural heritage of Carlow-Graiguecullen and improve the overall ambience and visitor experience of the joint urban area.

TD. P10: Maximise, enhance, and support opportunities for the use of the River Barrow and Burren River as tourism and recreational amenities, and engage with relevant agencies, bodies, and key stakeholders in this regard, including Fáilte Ireland, Waterways Ireland, National Parks and Wildlife Service, and local communities, to develop the infrastructure, quality and amenity of these natural assets.

TD. P11: Support the provision of ancillary infrastructure and services that enhance the user experience of the River Barrow and Burren River and which increase tourism activity associated with water-based activities, where appropriate and feasible to do so and subject to normal planning and environmental criteria.


TD. P12: Facilitate, where appropriate, increased access to the River Barrow and Burren River, subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria.

TD. P13: Promote and support the role and continued expression of local culture, arts and entertainment in Carlow-Graiguecullen, and to facilitate and where appropriate to encourage the use of public spaces in the joint urban area for art events and performances.

TD. P14: Continue to promote and support the role of the VISUAL Centre for Contemporary Art and George Bernard Shaw Theatre as a regional and County arts asset venue of national significance.

TD. P15: Support and promote existing events and festivals in Carlow-Graiguecullen, including the Carlow Arts Festival, to increase the tourism, heritage, and cultural profile of the joint urban area, and where appropriate, promote and facilitate the development of new events and festivals, and venues to host same.**TD. P16:** Encourage and support an improved night-time economy in Carlow-Graiguecullen through the increased use of existing and temporary spaces for Culture, Arts and Entertainment uses including through extended opening hours for existing attractions, subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria.

TD. P17: Protect the environmental amenities of Carlow-Graiguecullen from insensitive or inappropriate development, particularly any development that threatens the



tourism resources of the joint urban area.

TD. P18: Support tourism initiatives which develop the tourism potential of the rural hinterland of Carlow-Graiguecullen while recognising and enhancing the quality and values of the rural area.

TD. P19: Facilitate the provision of standardised signage and interpretation for tourism facilities and tourist attractions throughout the joint urban area.

TD. P20: Promote and support the development of the food sector in Carlow-Graiguecullen, including the role of the Carlow Farmers' Market, and work in collaboration with relevant stakeholders to facilitate growth in this sector.

Tourism – Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

TD. O1: Support, promote and maximise the role of Carlow Town as a designated Ireland's Ancient East 'Destination Town', and to engage with Fáilte Ireland in developing and promoting future tourism initiatives in the town, including enhancement of public space, the development of a way finding project and welcome signage, transport links, accommodation, the night-time economy, and the sustainable development of our natural and built heritage, in order to capitalise on the potential benefit of the funding for the town.



Chapter 5

Urban Design, Town Centre and Regeneration

Chapter 5: Urban Design, Town Centre, and Regeneration

Aim: To guide the long-term development of Carlow-Graiguecullen in a manner that protects and enhances the unique attributes of the joint urban area, through the implementation of best practice urban design, placemaking and urban regeneration, which improves the health and wellbeing of its residents, supports compact growth, vibrant and inclusive urban environments, local businesses and tourism, and town centre living.

5.0 Introduction – Historic and recent development trends

As discussed in Chapter 2, the urban development of Carlow-Graiguecullen has its origins in the medieval period, with evidence of this historic fabric most visible in Carlow Castle, and in the layout of Dublin Street, the western part of Tullow Street, Castle Street, and Charlotte Street. The medieval footprint of the urban area would have been confined to the north bank of the Burren River and separated from the castle by a marsh known as the Moreen. The castle was separated from the urban area until the Moreen was reclaimed in the early 18th century.

Up until the beginning of the 18th century the urban area had not extended significantly beyond its original medieval built form. However, Graiguecullen and Burrin Street were two exceptions in this regard, and it is likely their development arose during the 16th century and followed the construction of bridges over the River Barrow and Burren River. The houses in the medieval part of the urban area have been

replaced and rebuilt over the centuries, the earliest surviving house occupying Nos. 16/17 Dublin Street and bearing a plaque dated 1699. In 1731 Brown Street was extended eastwards to join College Street, and in the same period Castle Street joined the castle directly to the urban area.

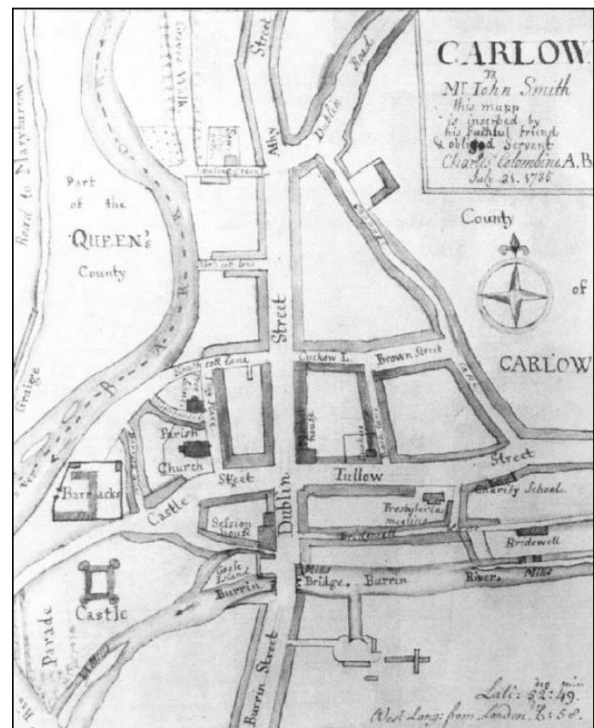


Fig. 5.1: Extract from Charles Columbine's map of Carlow Town 1735, College Street identified as 'Chapel Lane' and 'Graige' detailed in 'Queen's County' and on 'Road to Maryburrow' - (Source: libguides.ucd.ie)

There are many buildings surviving from the late 18th and early 19th centuries which appears to have been a period of expansion in the urban area. Montgomery Street and Pembroke Street were laid out in the early 18th Century, the latter formerly having been a private road. The majority of the landmark public buildings in the urban area also date from this period. After the first few decades of the 19th century there was little expansion on the outskirts of the urban

area. However, by the late 19th century and early 20th century a number of local authority housing schemes had been developed. The 20th century also heralded a new period of growth for the urban area the beginning of which can be attributed to the opening of the Carlow Sugar Factory, and later in the 1970s was reflected in the arrival of Braun and Lapple, and in the opening of Carlow Regional Technical College (RTC) as a higher education institution (now SETU).

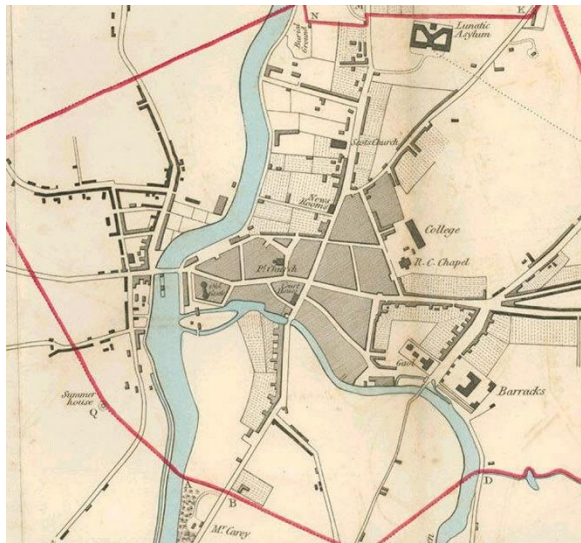


Figure 5.2: 1844 Map clearly depicting the then built form of Carlow-Graiguecullen (Source: Carlow Central Library).

Carlow-Graiguecullen’s suburban footprint largely has its origins from the 1960s, when more low-density and car-oriented developments began to appear along key approach roads to the joint urban area. Most of the population of the joint urban area now resides in residential estates which spread outwards from the traditional urban centre, and which are in many cases disconnected from the urban centre and community facilities. This suburban pattern of development was reinforced by the building

boom of the early 2000’s which witnessed the emergence of new residential, retail, and commercial developments in more peripheral and car dependent locations. Planning policy and measures aimed at prioritising and supporting urban regeneration, compact growth, and active travel, will therefore be key mechanisms to tackle legacies of the built environment, thereby ensuring the protection and enhancement of vitality and vibrancy of the joint urban area.

5.1 Urban Design and Placemaking

Urban design deals with the arrangement, appearance, and function of built environments such as Carlow-Graiguecullen. It is critical to the creation of liveable, sustainable urban areas that meet the needs of local communities. At its core is the placemaking or people-centred design approach (See Fig. 5.3), which priorities the needs of people over cars, buildings, and other infrastructure. This approach contributes to the development of more accessible and inclusive urban environments that have a sense of identity, and facilitate opportunities to reduce car dependency, support active travel, promote urban greening, and encourage social interaction.

Carlow County Council and Laois County Council have in their respective County Development Plans, prepared a suite of urban design policies, objectives, and related provisions to support and promote good urban design and quality placemaking, which should be read in conjunction with this chapter of the JULAP¹.

¹ Refer to Chapters 12 and 16 in the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and to Chapter 13 in the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027.

5.2 Key Urban Design Principles

This JULAP places a particular emphasis on encouraging design-led and responsive approaches to urban regeneration in Carlow-Graiguecullen. The key urban design principles listed below (1-11) should inform and act as a guide for all development proposals in the joint urban area:

- 1. Character:** Aim to create identity and character that reinforces locally distinctive patterns of development and landscape.
- 2. Maintain and Consolidate:** Maintain the core of the urban area while avoiding developments that cause sprawl or decentralising core functions.
- 3. Expansion:** Allow expansion where it does not have a negative impact on the existing urban centre or overall settlement fabric.
- 4. Urban Regeneration:** Prioritise the reuse, refurbishment, and redevelopment of existing buildings and sites to ensure the most efficient use of land in the joint urban area.
- 5. Continuity and Enclosure:** Ensure that public and private spaces that are clearly distinguished, and continuity of street frontages and enclosure of space by the built form, is achieved.
- 6. Public Realm:** Quality of public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe, uncluttered, and work effectively for all, including older people and people with disabilities.
- 7. Livable Environments:** Encourage walkable environments which facilitate access to public transport in order to reduce reliance on the private car, as well as the provision of a well-connected open space network.
- 8. Accessibility and Connectivity:** Provide opportunities for permeability to form new or to strengthen existing connections.
- 9. Mobility:** Prioritise pedestrian and cyclist movement and facilitate connectivity and permeability through the urban environment.
- 10. Variety and Viability:** Promote choice through a mix of compatible developments and uses that work together to ensure places respond to local needs, as well as providing for diverse and inclusive communities.
- 11. Environmental Sustainability:** Enhance local ecology by promoting biodiversity, by allowing new wildlife habitats to establish and protect existing ones.

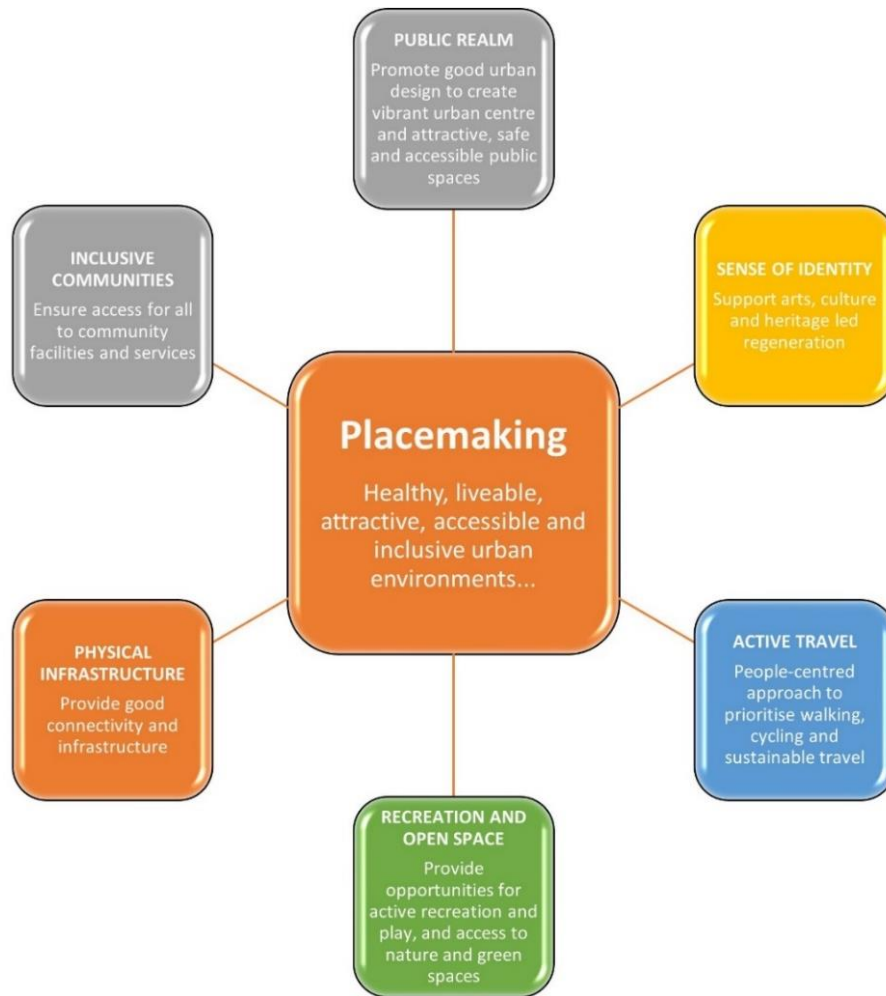


Fig. 5.3: The role of placemaking in good urban design

Urban Design and Placemaking – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

UD. P1: Provide high-quality public realm and urban spaces in Carlow-Graigucullen through support for and the promotion of good urban design and placemaking that reinforces a people centred approach to the creation of the built environment.

UD. P2: Ensure that all public and private development proposals make a positive contribution to the built environment of

Carlow-Graigucullen, through adherence to the best practice principles for urban design and placemaking as outlined in Chapters 12 and 16 of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 as applying to Carlow Town functional area in County Carlow, and Chapter 13 of the Laois County Development 2021-2027 as applying to Graigucullen functional area in County Laois.

5.3 Town Centre

Town centres remain the lifeblood of local economies, supporting business and generating employment opportunities. They also contain clusters of local services and act as transport hubs. The attractiveness and vibrancy of town centres is increasingly a key element in driving economic investment, particularly within the tourism and hospitality sectors.

The importance of town centres for local communities, including their associated localities and neighbourhoods, came to the fore during the COVID-19 pandemic. A combination of travel restrictions and home working arrangements led people to rediscover the importance of town centres such as in Carlow-Graigucullen, for social and cultural engagement, and for economic and recreational activities.

The impact of suburbanisation and edge and out of centre commercial and retail activity as alluded to in the introduction to this chapter, compounded by a reliance on private car for travel purposes a general drift away from town centre living, has also led to a ‘hollowing out’ effect in many town centres throughout Ireland.

Like many other comparable urban areas, the town centre in Carlow-Graigucullen has faced the issues and challenges referred to in the foregoing, which in many cases has led to a greater prevalence of vacancy, dereliction, and the underutilisation of sites and buildings.

For the purposes of this chapter, the town centre is defined as those lands zoned ‘A – Town Centre’ in the Land Use Zoning Map 12.1 included in Chapter 12.

5.4 Town Centre First

Town Centre First – A Policy Approach for Irish Towns’ (2022), is the Government’s recent overarching strategy for the renewal and regeneration of Irish Towns. The strategy includes policies aimed at tackling vacancy, combating dereliction, and breathing new life back into town centres. It also includes 33 actions which are intended to give towns the tools and resources they need to become more viable and attractive places in which to live, work, visit and run a business. The policy is underpinned by multiple existing and future multi-billion-euro investment programmes spread across major Government schemes such as the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF), Town and Village Renewal Scheme, and Croí Conaithe (Towns).

5.5 Active Land Management

5.5.1 Town Regeneration Officers and Town Teams

Managing the implementation of the Town Centre First policy at local level is the responsibility of Carlow and Laois County Council’s Town Regeneration Officers (TROs). The TRO role stems from Action 3 of the Town Centre first policy. The role is also crucial to supporting and building the capacity of the Town Teams. Town Teams comprise representatives of local residents, business people, community/voluntary groups, and other stakeholders, who will be empowered and supported to take a lead on the development of interventions that can make positive long-term changes for Carlow-Graigucullen.

Carlow County Council has already developed a Town Centre First Plan in the form of Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration. This

non-statutory regeneration strategy identifies challenges, actions, and integrated responses across a number of core themes and intervention areas as discussed in more detail in Section 5.6. Project Carlow 2040 seeks to maximise the impact of investment from funding streams available for town regeneration, including the URDF.

In addition, in 2023 Carlow County Council completed a vacancy survey for Carlow Town, which has revealed that there are circa 200 commercial and residential properties currently vacant and/or in a derelict condition. This survey encompassed that part of the Graiguecullen area in County Carlow. Specific funding has been received under Call 3 of the URDF which is designed to address long term vacancy and dereliction, as well as the acceleration of residential accommodation in the town.

Town Centre – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

TC. P1: Support the town centre led economic regeneration of Carlow-Graiguecullen, leveraging its strategic location and accessibility on regional and inter-regional road and rail networks, and building on its inherent strengths of education, connectivity, skills, innovation, enterprise, tourism, arts and culture, and retail services.

TC. P2: Support the role of the Town Regeneration Officers and Town Team in carrying out their duties in respect of prioritising the regeneration of Carlow-Graiguecullen through the application of the Government’s Town Centre First Policy approach.

TC. P3: Reinforce the role of the town centre as a primary location for commercial, civic, social, and cultural development through the promotion of new high-quality infill and backland development that consolidates the existing urban core.

TC. P4: Protect the character of the town centre and ensure that new development responds positively to its established built form, scale, and character and to continue implementing environmental improvements to sustain and improve its attraction for living, working, visiting and investment.

TC. P5: Protect the vibrancy, ambience, quality, and vitality of the town centre by:

- a) Promoting an appropriate mix of day and night-time uses.
- b) Preventing an excessive concentration of less desirable uses unless carefully managed through an appropriate sympathetic design approach.
- c) Facilitating development that will attract and retain commercial and retail activities in the town centre.
- d) Encouraging the re-use of vacant units for alternative functions and uses such as live-work units, residential units, remote working hubs, enterprise incubation, tourist spin-off enterprises, tourist accommodation, niche retail including food or craft enterprises, and cultural offerings such as theatre or museum.

TC. P6: Encourage and facilitate the full use of buildings and in particular the use of upper floors and backlands, with particular regard to high quality urban design and materials used as well as integration, and linkages.

TC. P7: Encourage and facilitate the appropriate intensification of town centre sites where high standards of architectural design are achieved and impacts on the character of the area are positive.

5.5.2 Croí Cónaithe (Towns)

The Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund delivered by local authorities, provides new choices for people to live in urban areas such as Carlow-Graiguecullen. The first element of the fund was launched on 14th July 2022 and provided grant funding to support the refurbishment of vacant properties for residential use. The grant is known as the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant.

Croí Cónaithe (Towns) – Policy

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

CC. P1: Support and promote the role of Croí Cónaithe (Towns) in delivering the refurbishment of vacant properties in Carlow-Graiguecullen for residential use and as a means of encouraging town centre living in the joint urban area, and subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.

5.5.3 Vacant Homes Officers

The appointment of local authority Vacant Homes Officers is part of the Government’s ‘Housing for All’ plan to 2030 to provide information, advice, and support for owners of vacant homes. More specifically, the Vacant

Homes Officers are responsible for administering the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant under the Croí Conaithe (Towns) fund and Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) programmes.

Vacant Homes Officers and Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) – Policy

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

VH. P1: Support and promote the role of the Councils’ Vacant Homes Officers in addressing vacancy and the efficient use of housing stock in Carlow-Graiguecullen, as part of the implementation of the Government’s ‘Housing for All’ plan to 2030 and Town Centre First Policy approach.

5.5.4 Land and Site Activation Measures

Underutilised/Vacant/Derelict buildings and sites represent both a challenge and an opportunity for Carlow-Graiguecullen. While such buildings and sites detract from the visual aesthetics and vibrancy of the joint urban area, they have the potential to be repurposed for additional housing, employment, cultural and other uses.

The Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) was introduced in the Finance Act 2021 as part of the Government’s ‘Housing for All’ plan and with the intention of replacing the outgoing Vacant Site Levy. The objective of the tax is to activate land that is serviced and zoned for residential use or mixed use, including residential use, in order to increase housing supply and to ensure the regeneration of vacant and idle lands in urban locations. Local Authorities are required to map the lands in scope for the tax. The RZLT will be administered by the Revenue Commissioners. The RZLT is part of the continued shift in

Government policy towards active land management within urban areas and can have an important role to play in in Carlow-Graiguecullen with regard to activating regeneration lands, vacant, derelict, and idle lands, and lands zoned for residential use.

In relation to derelict buildings Carlow and Laois County Councils will, where appropriate, continue to use their powers under the Derelict Sites Act 1990 (as amended) to deal with the issue of dereliction in the joint urban area.

Land and Site Activation Measures – Policy

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

UVD. P1: Encourage and facilitate the appropriate regeneration and reuse of underutilised, vacant, and derelict buildings and sites. Both Councils will continue to use their statutory powers, where appropriate, to consider such buildings and sites for inclusion in the Residential Zoned Land Tax or Register of Derelict Sites.

5.6 Urban Regeneration and Urban Development

5.6.1 Carlow Town

Settlement Consolidation Sites and Regeneration Sites – Carlow Town

A total of 4 no. settlement consolidation sites and 3 no. regeneration sites have been identified in Carlow Town (See Objectives Map, Chapter 4, Figure 4.2). These settlement consolidation and regeneration sites are located within the existing built-up area and in most cases are in or adjoining the town centre. The sites have been identified on the basis of their potential to generate wider regeneration benefits to the

town and to deliver significant housing provision or commercial, employment or mixed-use developments which contribute to consolidated urban growth. They include:

Settlement Consolidation Sites

- Former Greenvale Site
- Barrow Track Site
- Pembroke Sites (2 no.)

Regeneration Sites

- Crotty's Site
- Court Place Site
- Former Braun Site
- Kelvin Grove Site

It is important to note that a number of these sites overlap with the Intervention Areas the subject of Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration.

5.6.2 Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration

The purpose of Project Carlow 2040 is to guide the long-term development of Carlow Town by re-purposing the town centre and re-establish a definable core. The strategy seeks to build on its unique attributes and attractions in combination with addressing its existing challenges to make the town a place for its people, where residents, workers and visitors alike will be encouraged, to access everything the town centre has to offer. It acknowledges that significant investment is required to re-establish the town centre as a destination of choice for people to shop, work, visit, spend time and live.

The Strategy is grounded in a Vision and Guiding Principles, a Regeneration Action Plan, and a Regeneration Strategy which includes a number of physical Intervention Areas. To date, a total of €23m has been awarded under the Urban

Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) for key project identified in Project Carlow 2040.

The Strategy encompasses the existing town centre area, from the Potato Market through to Barrack Street, Carlow College and the Railway Station as well as link streets such as Tullow Street, Dublin Street and Shamrock Square, and also a section of the River Barrow to the west, including the Barrow Track, Carlow Castle, the Burren River, and the Pembroke area.

Through the implementation of the Strategy and its individual elements, it will improve health and wellbeing, create better urban spaces, enhance competitiveness and commercial activity, encourage town centre living and encourage building enhancements in order to improve the long-term viability of the area.

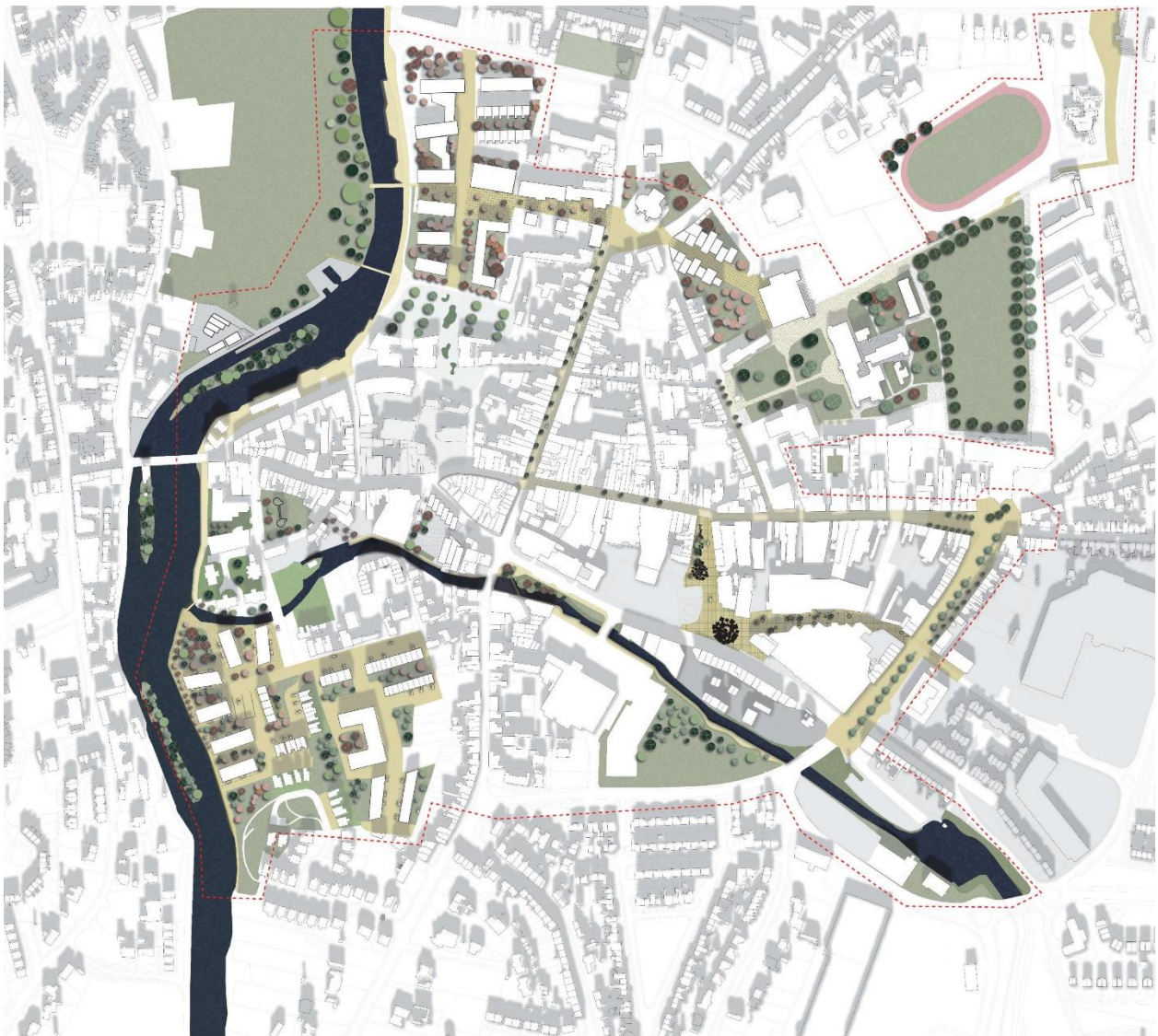
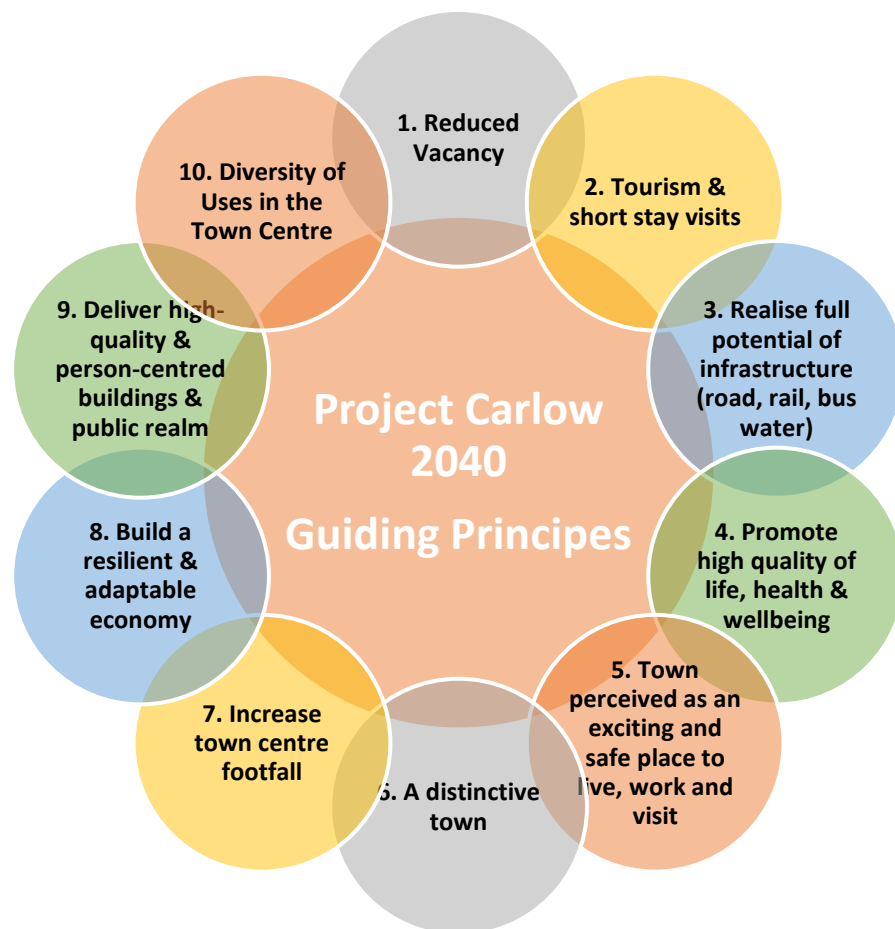


Fig. 5.4: Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration (Study Area and Context Map)

5.6.3 Vision and Guiding Principles

The Vision for Project Carlow 2040 is that *Carlow Town Centre will be a place for its people, where residents, workers and visitors alike will be encouraged, through enhanced connections and improvements in the public realm, to access everything the Town Centre has to offer including business and retailing, education, amenity spaces and cultural heritage. The enhancement of the unique attributes and attractions of Carlow Town will significantly improve the health and wellbeing of its people, support local business, facilitate tourism, and encourage people to live within the Town Centre.*

As this vision is, by its nature, both broad in its remit and aspirational in its aims, 10 no. guiding principles were also formulated to provide the framework and co-ordination approach to deliver the vision. The guiding principles seek to address the existing challenges facing Carlow Town by building on its many assets and attractions. The application of the guiding principles to each of the intervention areas and other future projects will ensure that strategic sites are brought forward in line with, and will contribute to, the realisation of the vision.



5.7 Regeneration Action Plan

As part of the preparation of the Strategy four core themes emerged which were explored and refined through Carlow County Council’s consultation and collaboration with key stakeholders and the public. These themes structured the undertaking of the background study and analysis that informed a series of the long-term strategy and approach to the spatial development of the town. The four core themes are:

- Economic and Investment
- Transport and Movement
- Health and Wellbeing
- Environment and Sustainability

A further series of outcomes and actions were developed for each of these themes. The actions for each theme are summarised in Table 5.1.

Economic and Investment		Transport and Movement	
1.	Enhancing the vitality and viability of the Town Centre	1.	Support sustainable communities with emphasis on active travel
2.	Public Realm Enhancements	2.	Provide new pedestrian routes through each intervention area
3.	Support Key Town role	3.	Deliver high-quality public transport
4.	Delivery of intervention areas	4.	Implement cycling strategy
5.	Develop local authority sites	5.	Build on natural assets and biodiversity and particularly R. Barrow and Burren River
6.	Support collaboration of SETU and Carlow College		
7.	Provide business support through Local Enterprise Office and available funding		
Health and Wellbeing		Environment and Sustainability	
1.	Support urban life and public health in post-Covid society	1.	Support reduction in resource consumption and transition to low-carbon society through climate change mitigation and adaptation
2.	Promote physical activity	2.	Introduce sustainable growth principles in the regeneration of Carlow Town
3.	Promote role of improved design and planning in regeneration of Town Centre	3.	Protect and enhance unique biodiversity and landscape
4.	Actively improve air, water, and soil quality	4.	Support innovative building solution in the intervention areas
5.	Ensure all members of community have good opportunities to be healthy		
6.	Promote the delivery of sporting facilities		

Table 5.1: Summary of actions for each of the Core Themes in Project Carlow 2040

5.8 Implementation

The Strategy focuses on six Intervention Areas containing public realm projects and development opportunities in and around the town. The Intervention Areas were informed by extensive public consultation and include:

1. Town Centre – Potato Market and Barrack Street
2. Cultural Quarter (including links to Railway Station)
3. The Barrow Track/Civic Spine
4. The Pembroke District
5. The Burrin Riverfront
6. Link Streets (Dublin Street and Tullow Street)

Each of the Interventions Areas are shown in Tables 1 to 6 along with a summary of the urban design approach for each. The high-quality urban design principles underpinning each of the Intervention Areas are outlined in Appendix I of the Strategy. The focus is on place-making and the ‘Pedestrian First’ approach, through creating vibrant places with a strong sense of identity, and with linkages and legible pedestrian routes. Some of the key aspects of the interventions are:


- Improve Town Centre linkages and increase pedestrian mobility
- Permeability through Carlow College as a public space
- Connect the River Barrow and the Burren River back to the Town, helping to provide the Town Centre with a unique character and identity while utilizing the opportunity for amenity and recreation along the riverfront while providing sustainable public realm spaces and routes
- Deliver a ‘Civic Spine’ development across Local Authority owned lands and into Carlow College

- Create a residential quarter within Carlow Town in the Pembroke area
- Provide a linear area, encompassing Carlow Castle, with a mix of cultural, historical, recreational, leisure and retail uses

In addition to the foregoing, the rationale for each of the Intervention Areas is also underpinned by a series of health and wellbeing principles based on:

- Improvements in the built environment
- Greater access to urban green and blue space for walking, cycling and exercise
- Increased opportunities for physical activity
- Improved air quality (reduction in car numbers)
- Contribution to positive outlook and good mental health
- Promoting community initiatives
- Promoting walking and cycling as primary modes of transport
- Promoting public transport
- Creation of inviting spaces through interventions in the physical environment
- Places for community and social environment to thrive
- Connection to Barrow Way
- Open riverfronts

In addition to the six Intervention Areas which contain individual projects and regeneration objectives, the Strategy also incorporates a number of Character Areas which together, help identify the key characteristics across the Town Centre area. Each Character Area can incorporate elements from the different Intervention Areas and their purpose is to identify the key existing characteristics and features which should be protected and/or enhanced by, and inform, new development in the town.



The Character Areas are listed below and shown in Fig. 5.5.

- Town Centre
- Retail Quarter
- Cultural Quarter
- Historical Quarter
- Residential Quarter
- Recreation and Leisure Quarter
- Civic/Hotel Quarter

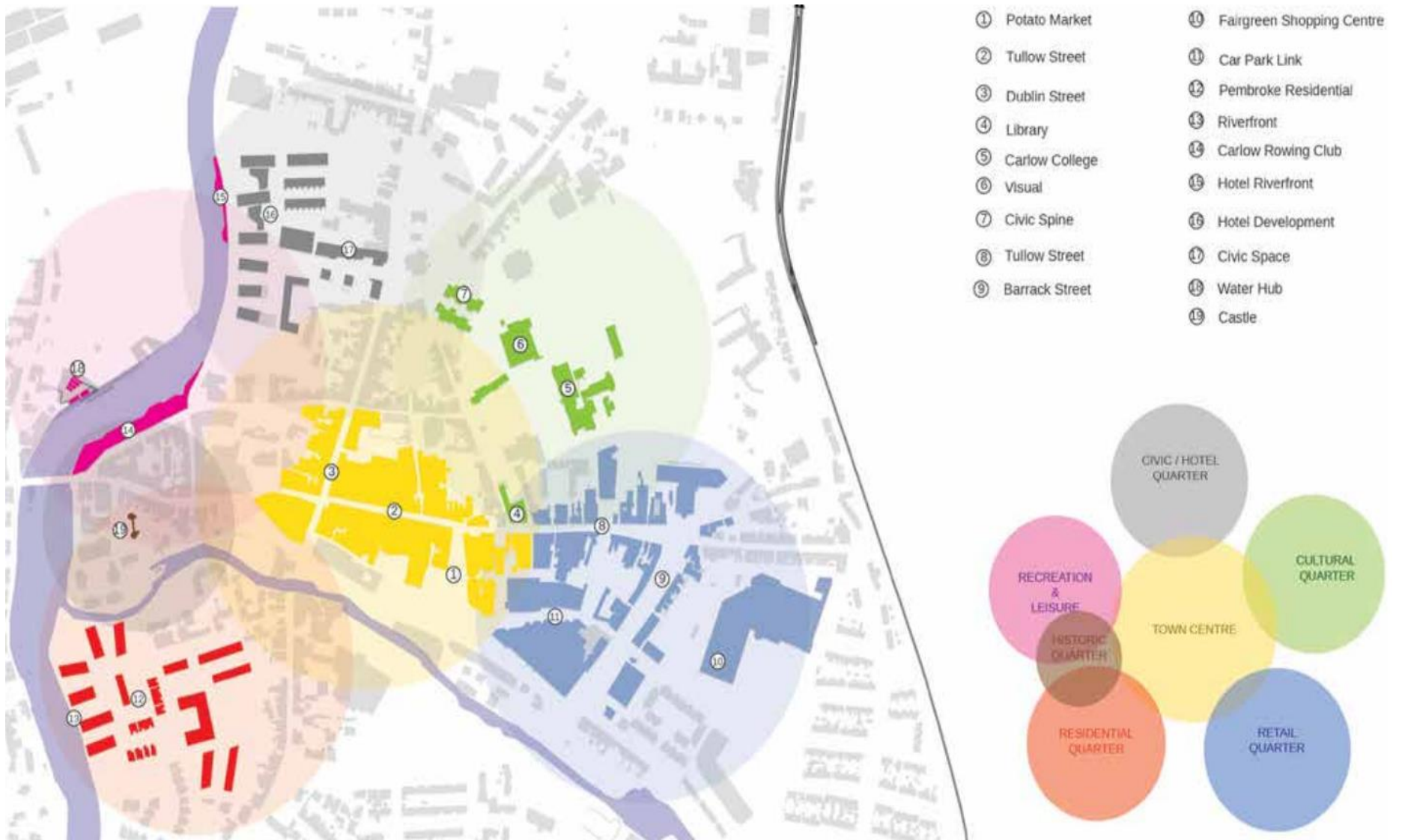


Fig. 5.5: The Character Areas incorporated into Project Carlow 2040

TABLE 1: INTERVENTION AREA 1 - TOWN CENTRE

The purpose of this Intervention is to improve Town Centre linkages and increase pedestrian mobility from Potato Market through to Barrack Street with wider connectivity to Carlow College and the Railway Station. Better management of cars and pedestrians will serve to improve the overall quality of the space and serve to reinstate the area as the 'Heart of the Town'.

Connections between Potato Market and Barrack Street will provide additional routes around the Town Centre and improves overall circulation leading to a better experience of the area. The integration of link streets such as Tullow Street, Dublin Street and Shamrock Square are important facets of this intervention and they serve to enhance the vibrancy and viability of this space.

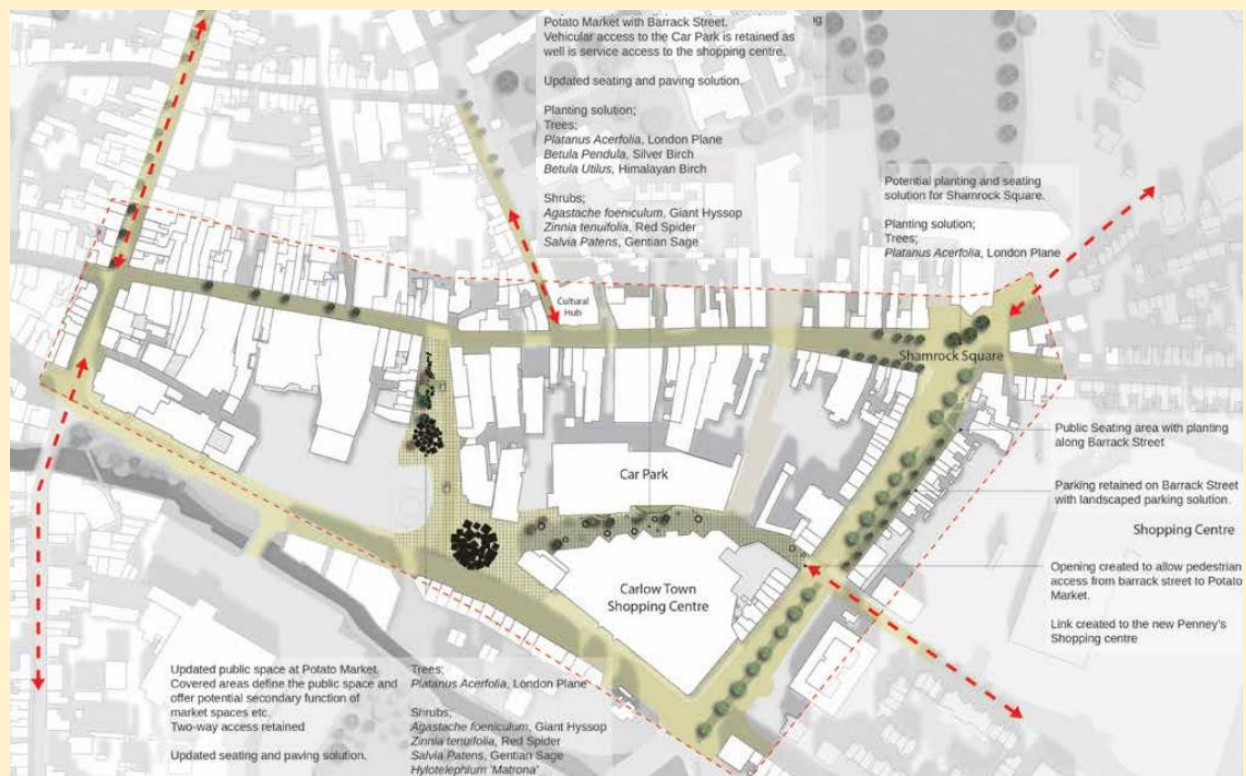


TABLE 2: INTERVENTION AREA 2 - CULTURAL QUARTER

The Cultural Quarter consists of the Carlow College campus, Visual, and the Carlow Courthouse. Ideally located within the Town Centre, Carlow College is situated within an expansive eighteenth-century campus positioned behind the main shopping district. The original campus entrance on College Street is located approx. 100m from Tullow Street and is the main pedestrian entrance for students in the College. The campus is also located a short distance from the Railway Station on St. Joseph's Road, however, there is no direct access between the two.

This Intervention will improve the connections between key retail, recreational, educational, and civic spaces in Carlow Town as well as to public transport and will entice people to spend more time in a vibrant and modern Town Centre. It will further act to support and enhance the strategic partnership between Carlow College and SETU Carlow. Through enhanced connections with public transport, improvements in the public realm and general enhancements to the attractiveness of the Town Centre, this Intervention will support Carlow in becoming a first-class destination for higher education.

Carlow College is an important asset in the Town and is a key employer and education provider serving the Town and wider area. The College occupies a major landholding and contributes to civic, cultural, religious, educational, and recreational amenities for Carlow Town. The Vision for this Intervention Area is to provide additional connectivity through the Town Centre, from east to west and from north to south.



TABLE 3: INTERVENTION AREA 3 - BARROW TRACK/CIVIC SPINE

The River Barrow is not utilised to its full potential within the Town. This intervention area seeks to unlock the potential of Carlow’s Riverfront, specifically the lands at Barrow Track which are currently vacant and underutilised. This includes lands that have approx. 300m of prime river frontage, with a site that presents an opportunity to deliver an innovative, mixed-use urban quarter, the integration of which with the River Barrow will be a defining feature of the area.

It is envisaged that the site can support a significant level of high-quality development that will integrate innovative design solutions and a mix of uses. The development of this area also provides the opportunity to integrate the site with the Town Core, thereby delivering enhanced connections through to the Courthouse, to the VISUAL and to Carlow College. The delivery of this ‘Civic Spine’ through the centre of Carlow Town will require cooperation between multiple landowners including Carlow County Council. A collaborative effort is required on multiple fronts to achieve this visionary development for the benefit of the Town as a whole.



TABLE 4: INTERVENTION AREA 4 - PEMBROKE DISTRICT

The vision for this area as an Intervention is to reimagine it as a new and vibrant residential quarter that benefits from its position on the banks of the River Barrow, new public spaces, and enhanced connections with the Town Centre. This Intervention is central to realising one of the key aims of this Strategy, the promotion and delivery of Town Centre living.

Under the Intervention the area will be transformed to facilitate a range of residential types and densities, attractive to both residents and visitors due to a new public riverfront park, enhancements to the public realm, public riverfront connections and improved connectivity through the provision of two new bridges across the Burren River.

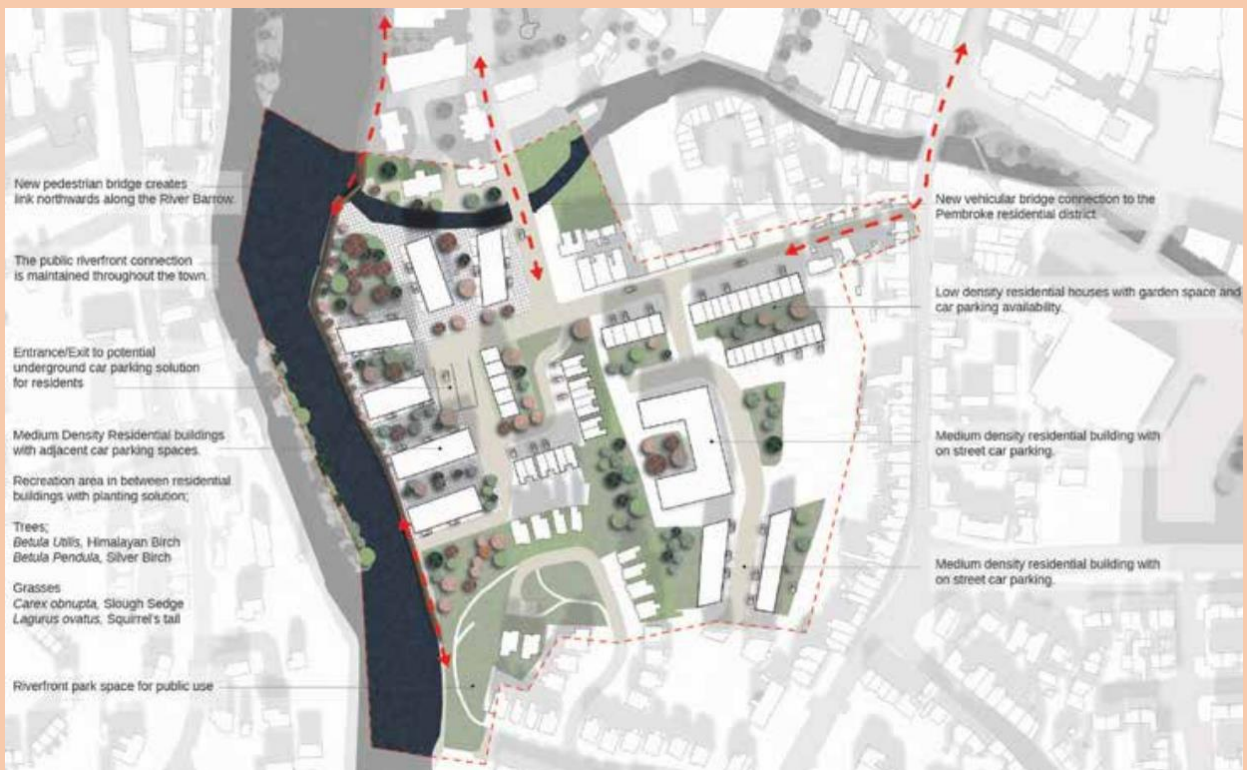


TABLE 5: INTERVENTION AREA 5 - THE BURRIN RIVERFRONT

The vision for this Intervention is to create a continuous link that facilitates an ecological corridor through the Town, exposes the potential benefits that the Burren River presents as an amenity corridor, as well as acting to connect and integrate existing green spaces, Intervention Areas and Carlow Castle into the wider urban fabric of the Town.

The Intervention Area extends beyond the banks of the Burren River seeking to deliver an animated and usable blue connection that runs to the River Barrow and incorporates pedestrian links along the riverfront and a new connection with the historic Carlow Castle.



TABLE 6: INTERVENTION AREA 6 - LINK STREETS (DUBLIN ST. AND TULLOW ST.)

Dublin Street and Tullow Street are already primary retail streets with independent shops, restaurants, cafés, pubs, and nightclubs. They also provide for the movement of people in the Town, both east to west and north to south. The upgrading of these streets will deliver key connections and ancillary services for the community, students, and visitors alike. The Intervention Area has looked at ways in which existing public space can be enhanced and largely traffic-dominated streets can be 'greened'. Through the consolidation of on-street parking, along with the introduction of trees, planting and new seating areas, the critical role of the Town Centre as the heart of Carlow will be reinforced.



5.8.1 Strategic Intervention Area – Graiguecullen

In addition to the provisions of Project Carlow 2040 as detailed in the foregoing, this JULAP has also identified a strategic Intervention Area for Graiguecullen in County Laois (Refer to Table 7 below).

TABLE 7: INTERVENTION AREA - TÍRLAN (GLANBIA) SITE

The vision for this intervention area is to unlock the development potential of what is a significant landbank and underutilised site on a key approach to Carlow-Graiguecullen from the Midlands Region (including Portlaoise) on the N80.

It is envisaged that the site could support a significant level of high-quality commercial development that would integrate with the adjoining Shamrock Business Park, and potentially deliver an enhanced public realm, with new connections and permeability between the R924 (Ballickmoyler Road) to the north and Church Road to the south, for existing neighbouring commercial and residential areas.



Urban Regeneration and Urban Development – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- URD. P1:** Promote the town centre as the priority location for commercial, civic, social, and cultural development, along with a focus on urban regeneration that supports compact growth through the development of key brownfield, infill, and backland sites.
- URD. P2:** Promote the consolidation of the town centre with a focus on the regeneration of underutilised/vacant buildings and strategic sites and the establishment of a mix of uses to encourage greater vibrancy outside of business hours.
- URD. P3:** Ensure that urban regeneration and new development enhances the character of the built environment of the joint urban area and the quality of the public realm, taking account of the Key Urban Design Principles referred to in Section 5.2.
- URD. P4:** Encourage the full utilisation of buildings and sites, in particular use of upper floors and backlands where appropriate, with due cognisance of quality of urban design, integration, and connections.
- URD. P5:** Require that development proposals facilitate a connected network of streets and spaces which prioritise pedestrians and cyclists and provides for the possibility of connections to future development on adjacent lands.
- URD. P6:** Actively engage with local communities, landowners, developers, and other agencies to secure resources for the enhancement, renewal, and regeneration of the town centre.
- URD. P7:** Support increased building heights for river frontage lands in the joint urban area, including along the River Barrow, subject to compliance with best practice urban design, and proper planning and environmental considerations.
- URD. P8:** Promote the utilisation of available funding to support the plan led development and regeneration of publicly owned land banks in Carlow-Graiguecullen.
- URD. P9:** Require all development proposals for strategic regeneration, brownfield, infill, and backland sites in the joint urban area to 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 development proposal complies with statutory guidelines that seek to integrate principles of high-quality urban design and placemaking.
- URD. P10:** Improve the public realm and attractiveness of the Town Centre through development and connectivity of key urban regeneration locations in the town centre with improved accessibility from the historic town centre to the Railway Station and Fairgreen.
- URD. P11:** Support the development of underutilised lands along the River Barrow as a strategic natural asset for the town. Any future development of

these lands or proposals for an additional bridge should be subject to further studies to inform the exact nature and intensity that could be accommodated without giving rise to adverse effects on sensitive Natura 2000 habitats and consider any in combination effects arising from proposals for a bridge.

Urban Regeneration and Urban Development – Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

URD. O1: Support and facilitate the implementation of the Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration as set out in its Regeneration Action Plan and Urban Design and Implementation Plan, and actively seek further funding from relevant agencies and Government sources including the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) to secure financial support for all regeneration and urban development projects in Carlow Town.

URD. O2: Support, advance, and facilitate the regeneration and development of the 6 no. Intervention Areas detailed in Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration, and in accordance with the urban design and implementation framework detailed in the regeneration strategy:

1. Town Centre – Potato Market and Barrack Street
2. Cultural Quarter (including links to Railway Station)
3. The Barrow Track/Civic Spine
4. The Pembroke District

5. The Burrin Riverfront
6. Link Streets (Dublin Street and Tullow Street)

URD. O3: Ensure for the benefit of surrounding land uses and local communities that urban regeneration and new developments respond to and support, protect, and enhance the characteristics and roles, as appropriate, of the Character Areas identified in Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration. The Character Areas are:

1. Town Centre
2. Retail Quarter
3. Cultural Quarter
4. Historical Quarter
5. Residential Quarter
6. Recreation and Leisure Quarter
7. Civic/Hotel Quarter

URD. O4: Support and facilitate the regeneration and development of the Tírlan (Glanbia) Intervention Area as detailed in Table 7, including the full utilisation of the site in a manner that enhances the character of the built environment and the quality of the public realm, taking account of the Key Urban Design Principles referred to in Section 5.2.



Chapter 6

Sustainable Travel and Transportation

Chapter 6: Sustainable Travel and Transportation

Aim: To promote and develop a sustainable, integrated and universally accessible transport system for Carlow-Graiguecullen that prioritises walking, cycling, and public transport, in addition to the provision of an appropriate level of road infrastructure, road capacity and traffic management, and which supports future development and thereby facilitating the transition to a lower carbon-based climate resilient and healthy urban environment.

6.0 Introduction

A well performing transport network will underpin the economic, spatial, social, and environmental success of Carlow-Graiguecullen, as well as contribute to a more climate resilient urban environment. Building on the strategic location of the joint urban area and its existing assets, the prioritisation of integrated transport and land use together with investment in public transport, active travel networks, and shared, low carbon mobility options, will improve people’s travel choices and support safe, sustainable, and healthy lifestyles.

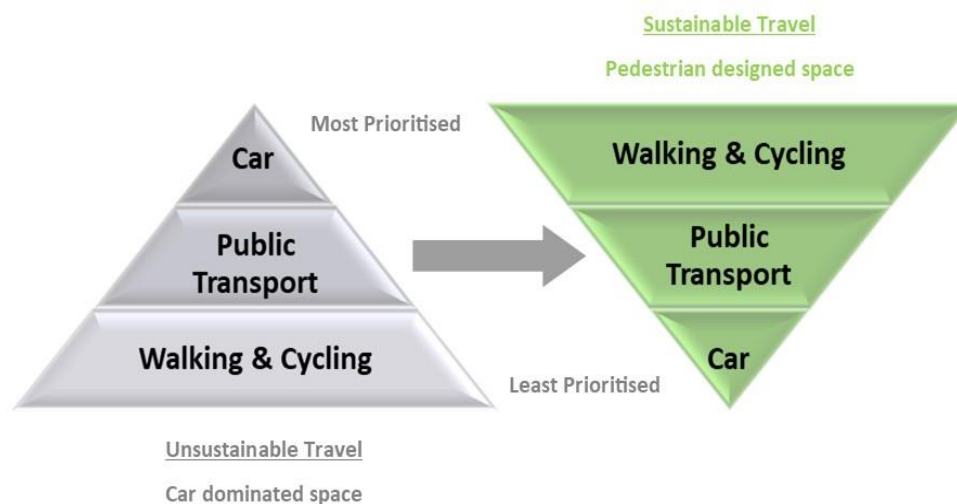


Figure 6.1: Existing & Desired Travel Type Hierarchies

Census 2016 data revealed that despite a large proportion of people living and working in the Carlow-Graiguecullen area, there remains a high dependency on private car usage for travel (which at 72%, was higher than the national average). The impact of expanding development on greenfield edge of centre sites is a key factor in this regard, which together with unconnected

patterns of development, particularly in residential estates, emphasises the need to examine existing land use and transport provision to ensure the right infrastructure is in place to connect the population to key employment, service, educational, and recreational facilities.

Sustainable modes of transport are recognised as being a viable alternative to the private car where significant residential and employment opportunities exist. Provision of appropriate active travel infrastructure together with behavioural change will be key in this regard.

For further details on the existing transport characteristics of Carlow-Graiguecullen please refer to Chapter 2.

6.1 Integrated Land Use & Transport Planning

A key approach to support a shift towards sustainable, healthy, and low carbon urban areas is the formulation of land use policies which prioritise development that is within realistic walking and cycling distances from key employment, service, educational, and recreational areas. In this regard, Carlow, and Laois County Councils both acknowledge the importance of the fundamental link between land use and transport planning (ref: Fig 6.2) to reduce car-based travel and promote more sustainable and active modes travel.

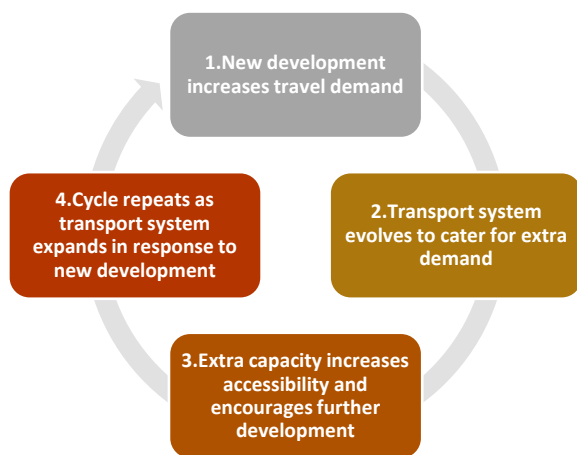


Figure 6.2: Landuse-transport feedback cycle

The importance of integrated land use and transport planning for the urban area is addressed in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) which accompanies this Draft JULAP and is also reflected in the findings of the 10-Minute Town Study commissioned by the Southern Regional Assembly in 2020 for Carlow Town. The findings point to deficiencies in the existing built environment with respect to accessibility, permeability, active travel, and public transport infrastructure.

Integrated Land Use and Transport Planning – Overarching Policy:

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- LT. P1:** Actively support an integrated approach to land use and transport planning in Carlow-Graiguecullen that promotes a shift towards a sustainable, healthy, and low carbon joint urban area with a reduced need for car-based travel, and through the prioritisation of development that is within reasonable walking and cycling distances from key employment, service, educational, and recreational areas, and key public transport nodes.
- LT. P2:** Ensure the design of all streets and roads in the joint urban area complies with the principles, approaches and standards in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS 2013-2019) and any subsequent updates to this Design Manual.

6.2 Planning for Sustainable Travel and Transportation in Carlow-Graiguecullen

The achievement of a comprehensive and meaningful transition towards a model of sustainable travel and transportation in Carlow-Graiguecullen is a critical component to realise the future vision for the joint urban area. Sustainable integrated communities can only be achieved by providing communities with a realistic and convenient alternative to the private car which links key destinations in the joint urban area. Furthermore, without the delivery of sustainable travel options, other strategic development policy such as the successful regeneration of the town centre cannot be achieved. Accordingly, this JULAP will seek to maximise, where feasible and subject to funding, the opportunities identified in the LTP (discussed in Section 6.3 below) and in Project Carlow 2040, capitalising on the space available in the joint urban area to create a transformed public realm, and expand high-quality pedestrian, cycling and public transport links.

The importance of planning for sustainable travel is also reflected in the recent formation of new dedicated Active Travel Teams by Carlow County Council and Laois County Council. In conjunction with their respective Municipal District Offices and central Roads Departments, and in consultation with the NTA, the Active Travel Teams are involved in the design, procurement, supervision, and construction of schemes which include the provision of new walking and cycling routes, widened footpaths, and new pedestrian crossings.

Planning for Sustainable Travel and Transportation in Carlow-Graiguecullen – Policy:

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

AT. P1: Support the role of the Councils' Active Travel Teams in the promotion and delivery of sustainable and active travel infrastructure and options in Carlow-Graiguecullen, including the provision of new and enhanced walking and cycling routes, widened footpaths, and pedestrian crossings.

6.3 Local Transport Plan (LTP)

As part of the preparation of this JULAP an Local Transport Plan (LTP) has been undertaken on behalf of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council and in conjunction with the National Transport Authority (NTA). The LTP, included as Appendix IV, has assisted in placing sustainable transport considerations to the forefront of land use planning decisions in the formulation of the Draft JULAP. It examines existing and proposed transport infrastructure for all modes of transport, including walking and cycling, and provides some insight into existing transport patterns and constraints.

The outputs from the LTP for Carlow-Graiguecullen include a series of strategy options, with associated objectives, proposed interventions to support the shift towards sustainable movement throughout the joint urban area and to accommodate anticipated transport demand due to planned population growth. The key inputs in the development of the strategy options are shown in Figure 6.3. The strategy options in the LTP are outlined in Section 6.3.3.



Figure 6.3: Key Inputs for LTP Strategy Options

The identification of transport infrastructure proposals in this JULAP and associated LTP, including locations and any associated mapping, that is not already permitted or provided for by existing plans/programmes/etc. is non-binding and indicative.

New transport infrastructure will be considered subject to environmental constraints, including those related to habitats and potential impacts (e.g. disturbance from lighting). This will include minimising river crossings, avoiding sensitive habitats, not increasing barriers to flood waters and sustainable design and construction techniques.

Proposals would need to be subject to a Corridor and Route Selection Process, as relevant and as per Section 5.9 “Infrastructural Improvement Process” of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and Objective TRANS 15 of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Proposed interventions will be required to demonstrate that they are consistent with all relevant legislative requirements.

Local Transport Plan (LTP) – Overarching Policy

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

LTP. P1: Progress the delivery of the appropriate measures and interventions as outlined in the Carlow-Graigucullen Local Transport Plan(LTP) on a phased basis and subject to the availability of funding, in order to support the shift towards sustainable travel and transport throughout the joint urban area and to accommodate anticipated transport demand due to planned population growth.

6.3.1 Baseline Assessment

6.3.1.1 Existing Travel Demand

The baseline study carried out to inform the objectives of the LTP examined existing travel demand from POWSCAR analysis using Census 2016, data from Strava, permeability assessment, analysis of walking catchments,

accessibility to opportunities and services together with public transport data including traffic growth, congestion, and parking provisions. The results of the study provide a comprehensive review of available data to identify the existing issues in the transport network serving the area, while also highlighting

opportunities for improvement that can contribute to reduced car dependency. A summary of the baseline assessment as presented in the LTP is outlined in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 LTP Baseline Data	
Modal Split	
Work Trips:	73% of the population travel to work in a private vehicle, as opposed to 13% using active modes (walking or cycling), and only 1.1% and 1.5% using bus and rail services respectively.
Education Trips:	70% the main mode of transport to primary schools is the private vehicle, with 25% travelling by foot. The use of private vehicles for travel to secondary schools is 60%, with walking at 20%. 50% travel by private vehicle to SETU. The number of third level students walking is higher at 30%, but the use of public transport remains low.
Origin -Destination Analysis	
Origin of Work Trips:	Approx. 30% of work trips originate within the urban area.
Origin of Education Trips:	Over 65% of trips travelling to primary school originate in Carlow Town and 17.4% originate in Graiguecullen.
Destination of Work / Education Trips:	At nearly 40%, the urban area is the largest origin point for secondary level school trips. 44.2% of work/college trips are internal to Co. Carlow. 60.6% of the Carlow primary school trips had a destination of Carlow. Following on from this, 15.2% and 13.6% of primary school trips originating in Carlow CSO were destined for Carlow, County Laois and Carlow Rural respectively. In terms of secondary level trips, 90% of residents attend a school that is located in the joint urban area.
Transport Infrastructure and Services	
Walking and Running Trips:	Strava data indicates high usage of public roads for walking and cycling, and particularly along the N80 to the north and east of the joint urban area (including O'Brien Road, Cannery Road etc.), the R448 (including Dublin Road and Green Lane), and Carpenter Way (L4057).
Cycling Trips:	2.1% of people in Carlow-Graiguecullen cycle to work, and similarly only 2% cycle to education. Strava details illustrate that cycling is focused along the N80 with higher levels of cycling along the roads to the south of the joint urban area, including the R448 (Kilkenny Road) which passes SETU Carlow.
Permeability Assessment	
Linear Barriers to Permeability:	Dublin-Waterford Railway Line: Six crossing points exist along this route on road network and with many lacking high-quality active travel infrastructures. N80: Crossing points are available along the N80 but many at roundabout junctions where vehicular traffic movements are prioritised. River Barrow: Three crossing points, two road bridges with footpaths and one pedestrian bridge open during the day-time hours at Carlow Town Park. Burren River: Three crossing points comprising road bridges with footpaths, with two bridges (at Hanover and Paupish) having segregated cycle facilities.
Analysis of Walking Catchments	

Town Centre Catchment:	Carlow District Hospital/St. Dymphna's, five primary level and two secondary level schools, as well as other key services, are all located within a 1km catchment. In addition, residential areas to the east and south are also within walking distance of the town centre.
Supermarket Catchments:	A 1km catchment reveals that the majority of residential areas fall within 1km of at least one supermarket.
Train Station Catchments:	The 1km catchment identified for Carlow Train Station reveals that it is easily accessible on foot from the core of the town centre but is not as accessible from more suburban residential areas.
Bus Stop Catchments:	A 500m catchment has been applied to bus stops. Only five bus stops are noted within the joint urban area. The town centre sits well within the 500m of buffer of bus stops, meaning catching the bus from and to town centre is viable. However, many residential areas and some other employment spots, like the business parks, are not close to a bus stop and aren't as accessible on foot.
Primary and Secondary School Catchments:	The majority of the residential areas are all within a 1km walk of a primary school. Similar to primary schools, the 1km walking catchments shown for secondary schools in the LTP reveals that many residential areas fall within same. However, the trips to Tyndall College are very likely to be completed using the car due to fewer residential areas falling within the 1km catchment.
SETU:	The SETU Carlow campus is approximately a 15-minute walk from the town centre. However, like the other educational facilities, it is essential that this campus is served by sustainable transport options to ensure a modal shift is achieved.

Accessibility to Opportunities and Services¹

Employment:	Overall, the results of the analysis demonstrate good accessibility to employment through walking and acknowledges the potential for encouraging increased active travel for commuting trips.
Primary and Secondary Schools:	Poorer accessibility to primary schools is evident for locations sited further away from the primary schools themselves. Lower accessibility patterns exist for Carlow Educate Together, which is likely due to inadequate active travel routes and permeability in that area. Overall, Census data for secondary schools reveals that many who live in the area could access secondary level education on foot and could use walking more frequently for travel. However, a large proportion of the population (just over 40%) have no secondary schools within a twenty-minute walk, therefore, without permeability improvements to shorten trip distances a modal-shift towards walking is unlikely to occur.
GP Services:	The analysis reveals that many residential areas to the northern and eastern ends of the joint urban area are not within a twenty-minute walk of many GP services due to their central town centre location. Equally however, travel from those residential areas in the immediate surrounds of the town centre is shown to be manageable on foot as they are within a twenty-minute walk of GP services.
Supermarkets:	The results show a large part of the joint urban area to be within a twenty-minute walk of at least one supermarket. It is also identified that there are pockets of lower walking accessibility to supermarkets in northern and eastern sections of the joint urban area, but generally walking access to these shops is good from most areas and an uptake in walking for these trips could be promoted.
Parks and Open Spaces:	Data analysis supports the improvement of park and open space accessibility based on the future proposed path network options.

¹ ATOS (Accessibility to Opportunities and Services) is a tool maintained by the NTA to investigate how easy it is to access a range of different key services by active modes including Employment, Primary Education, Post Primary Education, GPs, Food Shopping and Open Spaces. Further details regarding the ATOS methodology can be found in Section 5.1.3 of the LTP Part 1 - Baseline Assessment.

Public Transport

Public Transport:	<p>The LTP has highlighted various deficiencies in the current public transport offering in Carlow-Graiguecullen (e.g., while the joint urban area is well connected in terms of routes to neighbouring settlements, the frequency of connections could be improved, and there is potential to improve bus access along local routes).</p> <p>In addition to an overview of the public road network serving the joint urban area, the LTP examines available data for traffic growth, traffic congestion, and parking. It highlights that there is a high volume of car parking available in the town centre area, with approximately 62% calculated as being on-street pay and display parking, and a further 26% comprising off-street parking. This car parking provision, when coupled with a restricted sustainable transport network, reinforces the dominance of private cars as the preferred transport option</p>
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6.3.2 LTP Principles

Following consideration of the data presented in the baseline assessment, in addition to the completion of a SWOT analysis of the joint urban

area, the LTP has outlined a series of guiding principles to help inform the option development process and as a future monitoring tool once implementation of the LTP begins. The guiding principles are outlined in Table 6.2 below.

Table 6.2: LTP Guiding Principles

Overall Strategy Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote the town centre as the core of activity and improve the transport system to make the town centre a more attractive place to live, work, visit and recreate in. ▪ Seek to reduce the number of car-based trips through a shift to sustainable modes. ▪ Prioritise walking, cycling, and public transport accessibility. ▪ Ensure sustainable development and compact growth through integrated land-use transport planning. ▪ Provide sufficient transport infrastructure to accommodate population and employment growth. ▪ Improve public health and well-being by promoting active travel.
Walking Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create an integrated walking network for Carlow-Graiguecullen which allows convenient, safe, and efficient travel across the town and also facilitating recreational walking. ▪ Improve permeability to enhance access to homes, schools, jobs, shops, SETU, and the public transport network. ▪ Improve the safety for pedestrian, especially those in vulnerable groups, through the provision of high-quality footpaths and crossing points. ▪ Provide walking links between transport hubs, workplaces, and homes. ▪ Promote a modal shift from private car towards walking, especially for trips that are short or medium distances.
Cycling Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an integrated and inclusive network for Carlow-Graiguecullen. • Improve the safety and security of those cycling in Carlow-Graiguecullen.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve connections for cyclists between homes and key trip attractors, i.e., the town centre, train station, educational facilities, and supermarkets. • Provide safe and convenient crossing points at major junctions for both new and existing cycle infrastructure. • Promote a modal-shift from the private car to cycling, particularly for short and medium trip distances. • Provide satisfactory cycle parking at key destinations and mobility hubs which allow for the safe storage of cycles.
Public Transport Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access from residential, employment, education, healthcare, and retail facilities to public transport stops. • Improve the coverage, frequency, and capacity of bus and rail services. • Provide bus priority infrastructure where it is necessary to improve journey times and reliability. • Improve public transport stops/stations in respect to location, information, accessibility, infrastructure, and visibility. • Improve interchange experience for passengers changing between different modes of public transport or routes. • Promote modal shift from the private car to bus or rail, particularly for medium/long distance trips. • Ensure interchanges are convenient and allow for access to various key destinations to enhance the attractiveness of public transport.
Road Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduce car dependency by promoting mode transfer to walking, cycling, and public transport. ▪ Reduce options vehicular trips through the Town Centre through road layout and access changes as well as parking and policy. ▪ Improve road safety and eliminate collision hot spots. ▪ Overcome issues relating to pinch points which threaten capacity and network reliability. ▪ Ensure that junctions are suitably improved to provide for those trips which cannot be converted to sustainable modes, particularly important for rural parts of Carlow. ▪ Restrict certain car movements to try and ensure that infrastructure commitments to active modes and public transport do create a modal-shift.
Parking Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manage provision of parking to support the economic vitality of the joint urban area. ▪ Ensure parking provision encourages sustainable travel. ▪ Reduce on-street parking in the town centre to facilitate the public realm and sustainable travel. ▪ Improve quality of parking information. ▪ Introduce parking demand management to reduce car dependency and promote sustainable travel. ▪ Provide high-level recommendations for locations electric vehicle charging. ▪ Ensure parking pricing and availability help secure a modal-shift.

6.3.3 LTP Strategy Options

The analysis completed for the baseline assessment provided strategy options to address existing travel and transport issues. The

implementation of the strategy options, including potential timeframes for same are based on the following:

- **Short-term:** measure intended for implementation within 1-2 years
- **Medium-term:** measures intended for implementation within 3-5 years
- **Long-term:** measures intended for implementation within 6-10 years
- **Ongoing:** measure could commence in the short-term, but will span a number of years

The potential timeframes for each of the strategy options are set out in Section 5.3 of the LTP Report. These timeframes are indicative only and will be subject to funding and resource availability.

6.3.4 Active Travel Modes

The LTP provides walking and cycling strategies which have separate objectives and options.

6.3.4.1 Walking Strategy

The LTP walking strategy seeks to create convenient and efficient walking routes between homes and key trip attractors and reduce walking distances through enhanced permeability. This would give active modes of travel a competitive advantage over private cars. The strategy also seeks to facilitate recreational walking through the delivery of routes which are attractive.

The preferred option identified for the walking travel mode is an improved walking network, which delivers permeability enhancements. The proposed permeability connections are shown in Figure 6.4, and new or upgraded paths are shown in red. These permeability connections are recommended as a network.

The improved permeability connections where viable will be delivered as follows:

- **Cut Throughs:** removing a small permeability barrier where appropriate, such as fencing or

a wall, to allow for the easy flow of pedestrians between two areas.

- **New Paths:** the provision of an entirely new connection, for example through a field or along the edge of residential estates.

The new permeability proposals include a new active travel bridge crossing the River Barrow. The provision of this bridge to the south of the joint urban area could remove a major permeability barrier and allow easier movement for pedestrians and cyclists, in an area currently severed by the River Barrow.

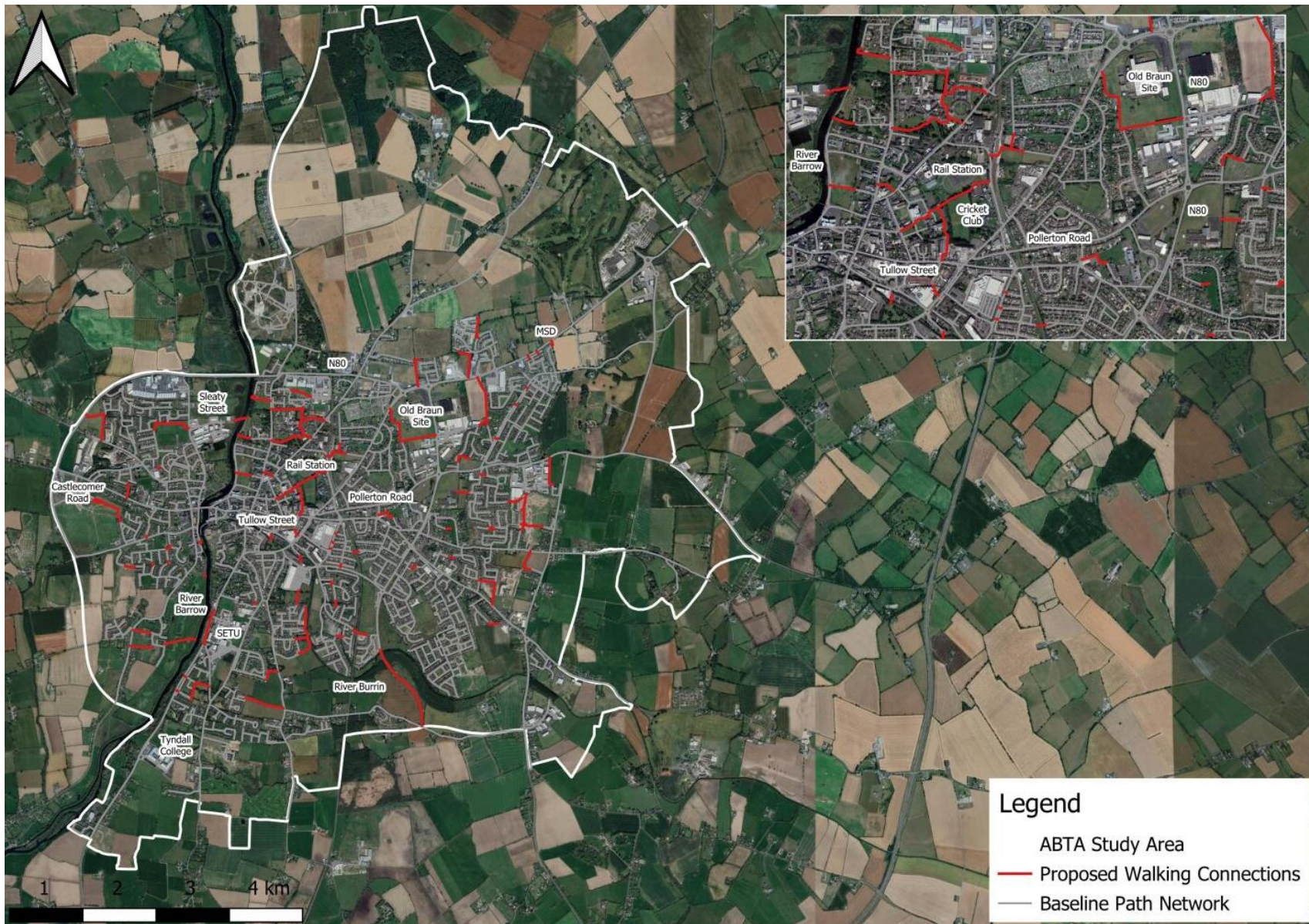


Figure 6.4: Proposed walking permeability connections shown in red

6.3.4.2 Cycling Strategy

The LTP cycling strategy seeks to provide a well-connected and high-quality cycle network across the joint urban area. Options have been developed building upon the existing cycle connections in Carlow and also to provide cycling connections between residential areas and key amenities. There are varying levels of cycle infrastructure proposed in the LTP, depending on the constraints that were encountered on each route.

Figure 6.5 outlines the cycle proposals incorporating a network of connected routes through different levels of infrastructure provision, including:

Off-Road Segregated: cyclists are segregated from pedestrians and road traffic, meaning each mode has their own designated space. This is the optimal level of infrastructure provision.

Shared Footway: cyclists and pedestrians share the footpath, which is indicated through markings on the pavement. This option does not allow for segregated space between all modes; however, it still ensures segregation between active modes and road traffic.

Shared Roadway (Quiet Route): cyclists and traffic share the road. In terms of the LTP option, shared roadway is only suggested for a quiet route, for example through a residential street which is quieter generally or where traffic calming measures (e.g. speed bumps or chicanes) are to be implemented.

Additional measures to complement the provision of the cycle network have also been identified in the LTP, including cycle parking, bike maintenance stands, cycle hire schemes, advertising, and cycle training.



Figure 6.5: Proposed Cycling Network

Walking and Cycling – Policy

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

WC. P1: Support and promote enhanced connectivity where appropriate for pedestrians and cyclists in Carlow-Graiguecullen in order to improve accessibility throughout the joint urban area and to the town centre, employment areas, residential areas, local schools and other educational facilities, recreational facilities, and public transport nodes.

WC. P2: Ensure that all development where appropriate within Carlow-Graiguecullen provides for connectivity (pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular) to adjacent lands in accordance with the National Transport Authority's Permeability Best Practice Guide (2015) and any subsequent update to this Guide.

WC. P3: Ensure all new development proposals are permeable for walking and cycling and seek the retrospective implementation of walking and cycling connections and facilities in existing neighbourhood, where feasible and appropriate, in order to support and encourage a shift to sustainable travel modes.

WC. P4: Ensure that pedestrian and cycling infrastructure is based on principles of Universal Design, and that all footpaths in Carlow-Graiguecullen are accessible to all members of the community,

including people with disabilities, the elderly, and people with young children.

WC. P5: Provide adequate and secure bicycle parking facilities subject to demand analysis at appropriate locations in the joint urban area.

WC. P6: Develop and promote in conjunction with local communities and relevant stakeholders in the joint urban area, short walking routes such as looped walks, heritage trails and Slí na Sláinte routes.

Walking and Cycling – Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council:

W. O1: Support and facilitate the delivery of new and improved walking and cycling network in Carlow-Graiguecullen, which delivers permeability enhancements and connections where appropriate as identified in the Local Transport Plan(LTP) and in Figures 6.4 and 6.5, in conjunction with the National Transport Authority, other statutory agencies, and relevant stakeholders. Final design details shall be subject to appropriate environmental assessment and undergo a separate public consultation process where applicable.

6.3.5 Public Transport Strategy

The improvements to public transport identified in the LTP aim to make public transport travel more accessible, convenient, and attractive so that this mode can become a more viable transport option for Carlow-Graiguecullen.

6.3.5.1 Bus Strategy

The bus strategy options seek to build upon the Carlow Town Bus Service. In particular, the strategy options in the LTP have been developed to cover routing gaps, bus stops and associated route infrastructure not provided for in the bus route plans developed by the NTA and Carlow County Council and Laois County Council i.e. improvements including shelters, lighting, better information, timetabling etc.). Such improvements will improve the overall attractiveness of public transport and could encourage increased usage. It is also proposed that major public transport stops such as Carlow Coach Park would become mobility hubs to act as a seamless transfer point for all transport modes as well as an enjoyable place to wait for public transport services, buy tickets and seek out information.



Carlow Bus Park Upgrade

Central to the LTP’s public transport strategy is the provision of an N80 orbital bus route, which would serve key destinations such as homes in Graiguecullen, retail spaces along the N80 and R448, Carlow Train Station, and MSD. The proposed N80 orbital route is shown in Figure 6.6.

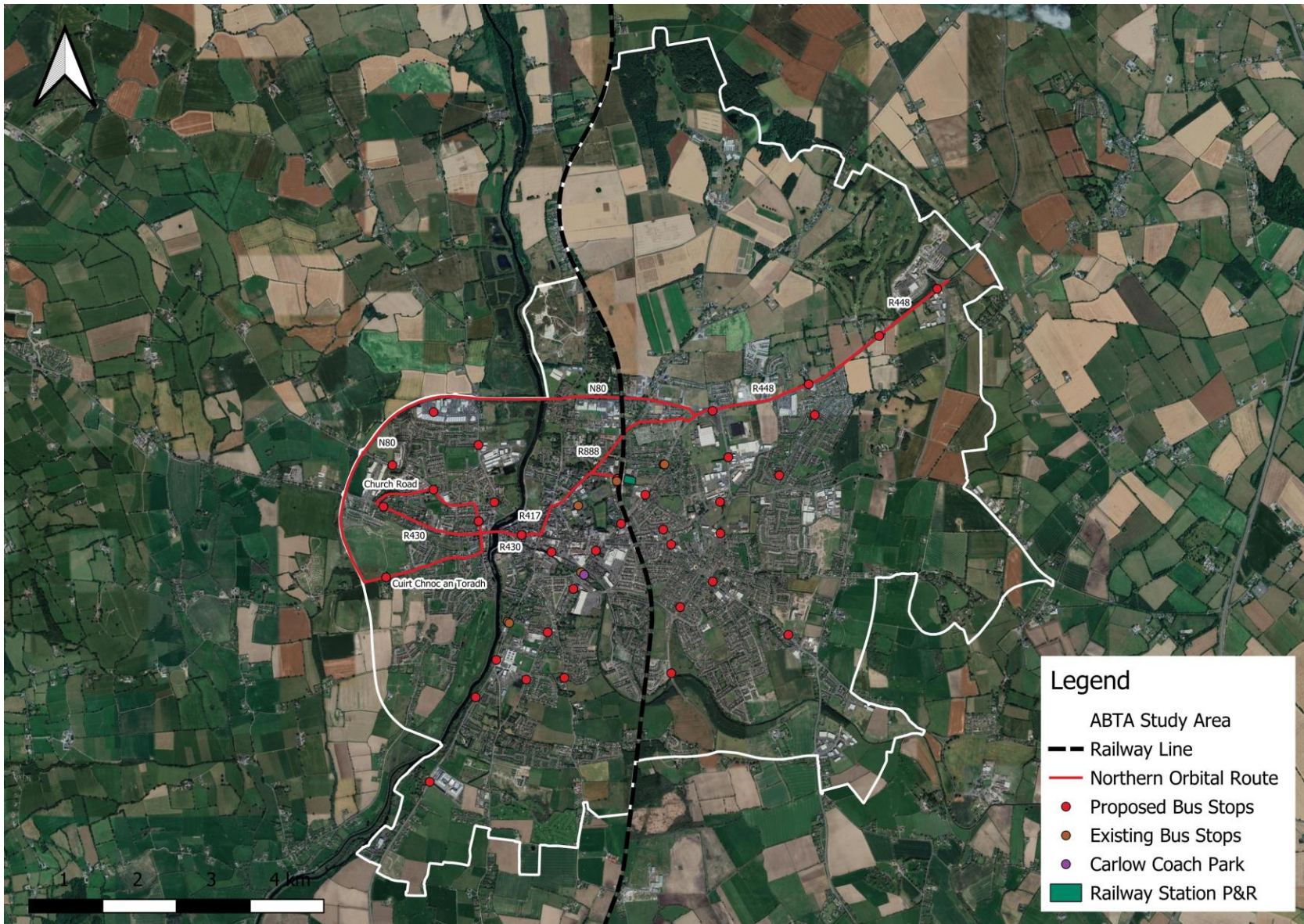


Figure 6.6: Proposed N80 Orbital Route

6.3.5.2 Carlow Town Bus Service

Following a lengthy period of consultation between Carlow County Council, Laois County Council and the NTA, a local bus service became operative in August 2023. It comprises two bus routes as detailed in Figure 6.7 i.e., Route CW1 and Route CW2.

Both bus routes interchange at a number of locations, including Sandhills and Carlow Town Park, and the service operates 18 hours a day and seven days a week. The bus routes provide enhanced connections to and between services in the urban area, making trips more accessible and more sustainable.

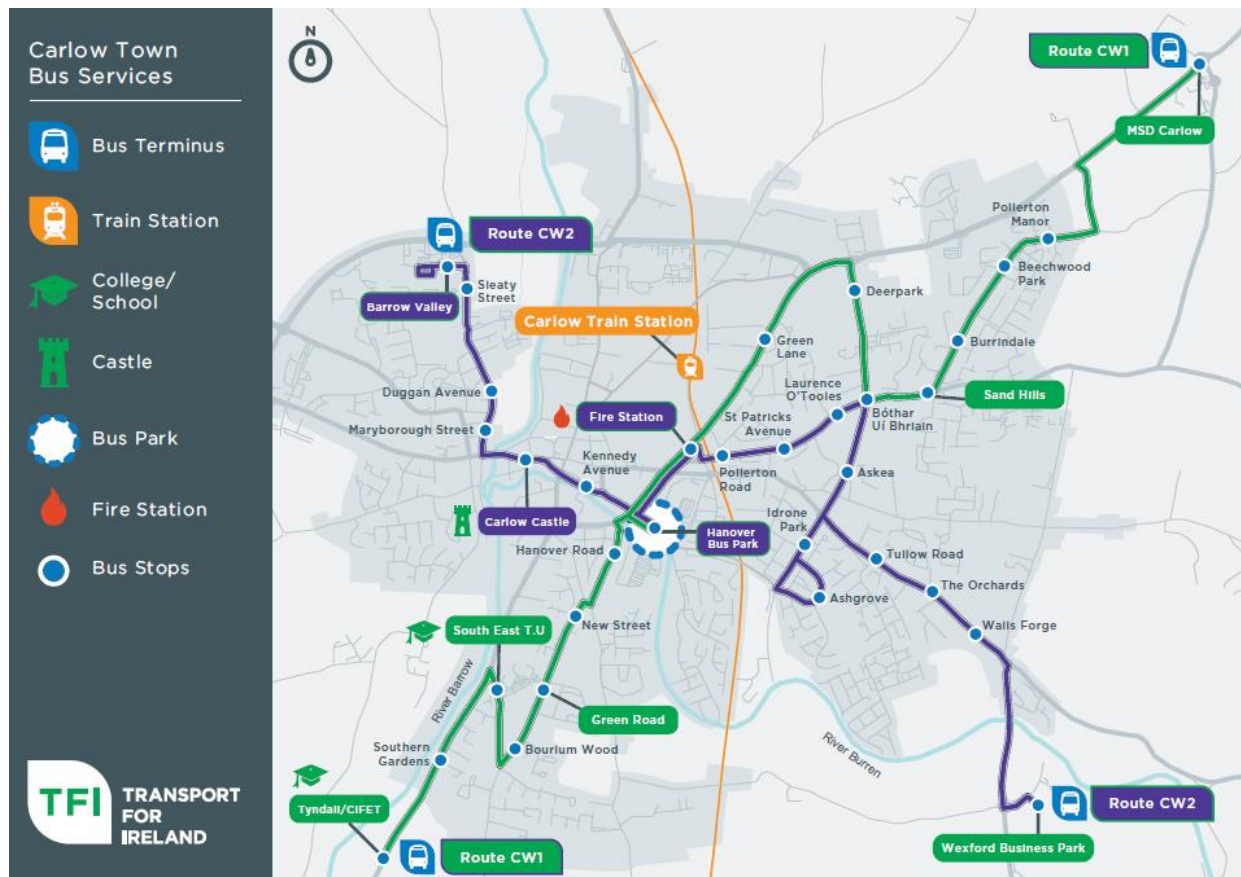


Figure 6.7: Bus Routes - Route CW1 and Route CW2

6.3.5.3 Rail Strategy

The LTP acknowledges that improvements to the frequency of services at Carlow Railway Station would improve the attractiveness of rail as a mode of transport. While such improvements lie outside the scope of the LTP, Carlow County Council and Laois County Council will continue to engage with Irish Rail to support the development and delivery of more frequent and improved rail services to serve the joint urban area.

There is also recognition in the LTP that the provision of additional measures as outlined hereunder would further enhance the quality and attractiveness of public transport services:

- **Real-time passenger information for bus services:** Carlow County Council and Laois County Council will work with operators regarding the need for and benefits of real-time information.
- **Flexible and affordable ticketing:** Carlow County Council and Laois County Council will endeavour to work with the necessary parties to provide tickets for public transport services which are flexible and affordable.
- **Marketing campaign:** To improve the awareness of the public transport offer in Carlow-Graiguecullen, Carlow County and Laois County Council will run a marketing campaign. This would outline the improvements made to bus services and other key information e.g. prices, running times, and journey times between key destinations.

Public Transport – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- PT. P1:** Promote the sustainable development of Carlow-Graiguecullen by actively engaging with and supporting relevant national transport agencies in their remit to deliver improvements to the public transport network/services for the joint urban area, including at Carlow Railway Station and Carlow Bus Park, and to ensure the provision of integrated public transport services that provide an attractive and convenient alternative to private car travel thereby reducing car dependency for travel purposes.
- PT. P2:** Support transport agencies, including the National Transport Authority (NTA) and public service transport providers in the provision of new and improved public transport services and routes, the enhancement of the quality, frequency and speed of existing train and bus public transport services serving Carlow-Graiguecullen, and with measures incorporated to facilitate access for all.
- PT. P3:** Generate additional demand for public transport services in Carlow-Graiguecullen by maximising the accessibility of these services through integrated land use and transport planning.
- PT. P4:** Ensure that public transport infrastructure, as required and appropriate, is considered as part of any significant residential or commercial development proposals in the joint urban area e.g., evaluation for requirement for new bus stops,

turnaround facilities, pedestrian access, and layover facilities.

Public Transport – Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

PT. O1: Support and facilitate the delivery of the preferred public transport improvements identified in the Local Transport Plan(LTP) to make public transport travel in Carlow-Graiguecullen a more accessible, convenient, attractive, and viable transport option.

PT. O2: Seek the delivery of a transport node in the immediate vicinity of Carlow Railway Station, facilitating integration of local bus services and private transport modes with the rail network which will facilitate easy exchange between modes and / or routes.

6.3.6 Road Infrastructure Strategy

The LTP notes that due to the hierarchy of different transport modes, it would not be appropriate to make the case for significant road construction in isolation. Instead, future road construction, or improvements, are linked to improvements for sustainable transport as part of multi-modal solutions. Notwithstanding, the LTP recognises that given the character of the joint urban area and its rural hinterland, there remains a need for many people to use private vehicles for travel purposes, with the N80 providing a strategic connection for freight travel. Options have therefore been included within the LTP, which ensure the safe and efficient operation of the road network for the movement of people and goods.

Road strategy options in the LTP have been split into two categories, changes to the road layout

or changes to junctions. In a number of locations, a subset of options is provided for, whereby a number of different measures could be implemented to achieve the same outcome. Whilst many of the options proposed in the LTP focus on the provision of active travel infrastructure, Carlow County Council and Laois County Council are committed to measures which will better manage the existing road network, such as the optimisation and control of traffic signals.

As some of the proposed measures reallocate road space to sustainable modes of transport, in the longer term, Carlow County Council and Laois County Council are seeking the construction of the Southern Relief Road in the respective County Development Plans. The Southern Relief Road will provide alternative routes for those that need to drive, removing traffic from the town centre and ensuring measures which reallocate road space to sustainable modes of transport are more feasible. Figure 6.8 denotes the location of potential changes to road and junctions in Carlow-Graiguecullen. For information on these potential changes the reference numbers shown in Figure 6.8 should be cross referenced with Table 3-1 in the LTP.

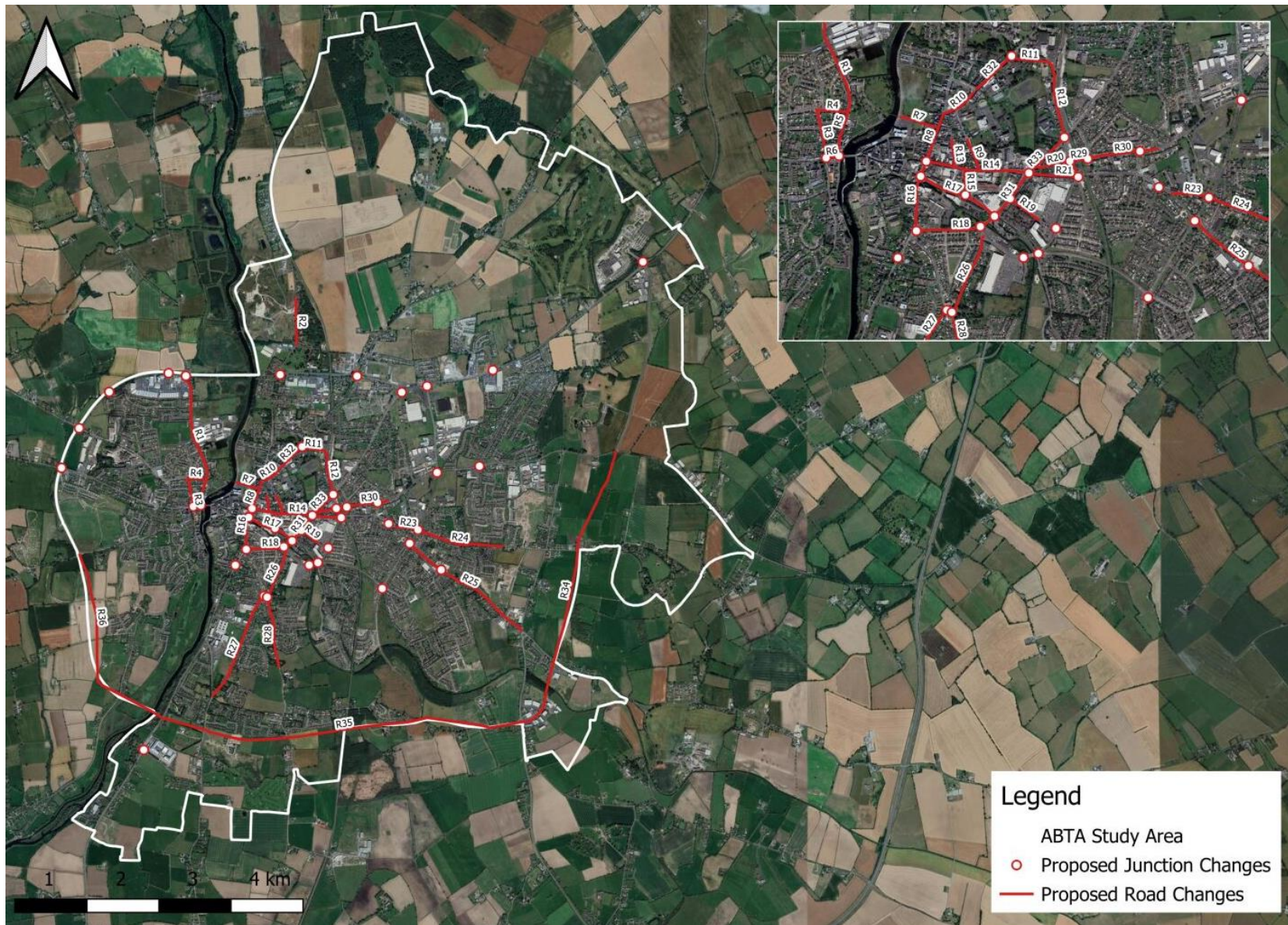


Figure 6.8: Proposed Road Changes and Upgrades

6.3.6.1 Carlow Southern Relief Road

At a national level the delivery of the Carlow Southern Relief Road is identified in the National Development Plan 2021-2030 as a priority strategic project. At a regional level, the RSES for the Southern Region supports the delivery of the Southern Relief Road N80 – R448 and its completion to link with the N80 within County Laois, including the provision of an appropriate crossing of the River Barrow and other transport measures with adjoining local/ regional authorities and stakeholders (see RPO 14 v.). The RSES for the Eastern and Midlands Region also acknowledges the importance of inter-regional transport routes such as the N80.

The delivery of the Southern Relief Road is also an objective of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (see Objective RR. O1). The Carlow Northern Relief Road Extension in County Laois, which forms part the overall Southern Relief Road route, is a priority road project in the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 (see Policy Objective Trans 25).

The completion of the Southern Relief Road is of strategic regional importance in terms of enhancing the connectivity between the Midlands Region and South-East Region. It is also of significance at a more local level in the joint urban area in terms of addressing and alleviating local traffic management considerations, with associated benefits for the urban environment and local economy. The delivery of the relief road also has the potential to have a positive impact on reducing optional vehicular trips in the town centre and overcoming road network pinch points. The three planned phases for the route are as follows:

- **Phase 1:** from the N80 at Ballinacarrig northwards to link with the Carlow Eastern Relief Road.

- **Phase 2:** from the Kilkenny Road (R448) to the N80, including a crossing over the Dublin-Waterford Railway Line.
- **Phase 3:** from the Carlow Northern Relief Road Extension southwards to the Kilkenny Road (R448) and including a crossing over the River Barrow.

The indicative alignment of the Southern Relief Road, including Northern Relief Road Extension, is illustrated in Figure 6.9. Carlow County Council and Laois County Council will continue to engage with the Department of Transport to support the delivery of the Southern Relief Road and Northern Relief Road Extension in accordance with the provisions of the National Development Plan, the RSES for the Southern Region, and the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028.



Figure 6.9: Indicative alignment of Southern Relief Road

Road Infrastructure – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- **RI. P1:** Maintain, improve, and extend the public road network in and around Carlow-Graiguecullen to ensure a high standard

of connectivity and safety for all road users.

RI. P2: Co-operate and liaise with the Department of Transport, the National Transport Authority (NTA) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) in relation to securing appropriate improvements/ extensions as appropriate to the public road network within Carlow - Graiguecullen.

RI. P3: Provide for traffic calming and speed reduction measures throughout the joint urban area, where necessary as funding allows, and ensure that all new developments are designed to incorporate appropriate traffic calming measures as set out in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS 2013-2017), and any subsequent updates to this Design Manual.

RI. P4: That all medium to large scale and complex planning applications (30+ residential units, commercial development over 1,000sq.m., or other development proposals as required by Carlow County Council and Laois County Council shall be accompanied by a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) carried out in accordance with Transport Infrastructure Ireland's (TII) Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines (2014)

and any subsequent updates this Guidelines.

Road Infrastructure – Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

RI. O1: Support and facilitate the delivery of the preferred road infrastructure

improvements identified in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) and Figure 6.8, with associated benefits for sustainable travel and transport and multi-modal solutions.

RI. O2: Support and facilitate the planning, design, and completion of the Carlow Southern Relief Road N80-R448 including a new bridge crossing over the River Barrow, to enhance connectivity between the South-East and Midlands Regions, and to address and alleviate traffic management considerations thereby making a positive contribution to the local economy and urban environment of Carlow-Graiguecullen.

6.3.7 Parking Strategy

Options for parking are proposed in the LTP, and which in some cases would be necessary to provide improved infrastructure for other travel modes or an improved public realm / street environment in the joint urban area. The strategy options for parking are listed in Table 6.3.

Parking – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

PK. P1: Support the provision of parking in Carlow-Graiguecullen to provide for the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors to the joint urban area.

PK. P2: Apply the policies, objectives and standards for parking as set out in the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 as applying the Carlow Town functional area in County Carlow and of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 as applying to the

Graiguecullen functional area in County Laois and relevant Section 28 Guidelines, in considering applications for planning permission in the joint urban area.

- PK. P3:** Allow for the reduction in car parking requirements for commercial developments in suitable town centre locations within the joint urban area where a detailed parking analysis demonstrates adequate supply of proximate car parking spaces thereby encouraging a modal shift away from the private car to more sustainable forms of transport, walking, cycling and public transport.
- PK. P4:** Apply flexibility in relation to car parking requirements where appropriate in response to well-designed development proposals that can achieve urban infill and brownfield development objectives in Carlow-Graiguecullen, and subject to the availability of connections to active travel and public transport infrastructure and provided public safety is not compromised and the environment is suitably protected.
- PK. P5:** Promote and support the provision of appropriate infrastructure at suitable locations in the joint urban area to accommodate a change to electric vehicles, by requiring all new carparks or extensions to existing carparks to include the installation of electric vehicle charging points.

Parking – Objective

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- PK. O1:** Support and facilitate the delivery of the preferred car parking options identified in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) .

TABLE 6.3: LTP PARKING STRATEGY OPTIONS

OPTION	DESCRIPTION
Parking Pricing	Review pricing across town centre
New Railway Station Car Park	New car park east of the railway line accessed from Glendale Avenue
Current Railway Station Car Park	Convert the current railway station car park into a place for cycle parking, a drop-off zone for those trying to access the station, as well as an upgraded bus stop and waiting area
Carlow Retail Park	Make use of some of the spaces in the Carlow Retail Park to provide parking for SETU students and workers who could then walk to campus.
School Drop-Off Restrictions	Remove set down or drop-off zones immediately outside schools Resident permits on streets near to schools.
Electric Vehicle Charging	Provision of electric vehicle charging at convenient locations
SETU	Provide a new car park near to SETU
Parking App	Consider benefits of a parking app to make sure parking in Carlow can be easily located and paid for.
Parking Enforcement	Ensure adequate enforcement of parking restrictions to ensure benefits of the other parking options are captured.
Vehicle Wayfinding	Provision of signage which can identify where car parking is located and number of spaces available.



Chapter 7

Infrastructure and Environmental Services

Chapter 7: Infrastructure and Environmental Services

Aim: *To facilitate future growth in Carlow-Graiguecullen in line with the capacity and availability of supporting infrastructure and environmental services and to ensure such growth occurs in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.*

7.0 Introduction

The availability of high-quality infrastructure and environmental services will enhance the economic competitiveness of Carlow-Graiguecullen, as well as making the joint urban area an attractive place to live, work and visit. Infrastructure for public water supply, wastewater, energy, surface water drainage, and ICT, together with services such as waste management, must be planned for in the urban area to ensure there is adequate capacity to cater for the land use zonings and level of development provided for in this JULAP. In this regard and in accordance with the National Planning Framework (NPF) an Infrastructure Assessment has also been prepared alongside this JULAP to ensure that informed decisions are made regarding the planned growth for the joint urban area and that this growth is in line with the capacity and delivery of the necessary supporting infrastructure (See Appendix V).

Carlow County Council and Laois County Council, in line with the policies, objectives and related provisions in their respective County Development Plans, will continue to contribute towards the protection of existing and potential water sources including rivers, streams, groundwater and associated habitats and

species in accordance with EU and national level legislation policy and guidelines.

7.1 The Provision of Water Services

Public water services in Ireland, including the provision of water supply and wastewater/foul drainage infrastructure, is the responsibility of Uisce Éireann since the 1st January 2014. This responsibility involves the delivery of strategic water and wastewater projects and infrastructural improvements within Counties Carlow and Laois and urban areas such as Carlow-Graiguecullen. Future development of water services will be in line with Uisce Éireann's Capital Investment Plan, subject to the availability of funding, along with environmental and financial sustainability criteria. Carlow and Laois County Councils will continue to support Uisce Éireann in identifying water services that are required to support planned development in Carlow-Graiguecullen in line with national and regional level policies.

7.1.1 Public Water Supply

Uisce Éireann are continually progressing leakage reduction activities, mains rehabilitation and capital maintenance activities. Uisce Éireann also continually monitor the performance of the water supply networks to ensure that the most urgent works are prioritised as required.

The public water supply for Carlow-Graiguecullen is provided by surface and ground water sources in the Carlow North Water Resource Zone. This includes surface water abstraction from the River Slaney at Rathvilly Water Treatment Plant (WTP – capacity of 11,500m³/day), and from the Burren River at Sion

Cross WTP (capacity 3500 m³/day). Groundwater abstraction is provided from a borehole at Oak Park WTP at the northern end of the joint urban area (2,000 m³/day), and from two boreholes at Derrymoyle WTP to the west of Graiguecullen (1,250 m³/day).

Uisce Éireann Asset Planning have approved the design of approximately 13km of upsizing of the trunkmain from Straboe to the Brownhill Reservoir, with 6km approved to commence construction in 2023. This upsizing will eliminate the constraints in the network. Uisce Éireann may also carry out local upgrades required within Carlow Town.

7.1.2 Water Conservation

Water conservation is an essential element of the sustainable management and use of water resources, even where adequate supplies exist. Conservation measures not only include the monitoring of water usage and the detection of leaks, but also public awareness measures and advice for consumers.



Source: www.water.ie

The replacement of over 1,854 metres of old cast iron water mains with high density polyethylene (plastic) pipes has recently been completed in

the urban centre, that encompassed four phases of works including Kennedy Street, Burrin Street, Castle Street, Bridewell Lane, Charlotte Street and Brown Street. The replacement of ageing backyard water mains and the provision of new connections for customers in Graiguecullen has also been completed, which involved the decommissioning of approx. 3.6km of old cast iron back yard water mains, and the installation of 2.5km of new water mains.



Replacing cast iron water mains with polyethylene (plastic) pipes (Source: www.water.ie)

Public Water Supply – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

PW. P1: Support Uisce Éireann in the provision of a sufficient quantity and quality of water to serve the needs of the existing and future population of Carlow-Graiguecullen over the period of the Plan and in accordance with the Core Strategies of Carlow and Laois County Councils, and to promote the sustainable management of the water supply for the joint urban area.

PW. P2: Ensure that new developments will be required to connect to the public water

supply network in Carlow-Graiguecullen where public water mains are available, and subject to connection agreements with Uisce Éireann and compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria.

PW. P3: Ensure that development proposals adhere to the standards and requirements of Uisce Éireann in relation to connections to the public water network, and to encourage all developers to consult with Uisce Éireann in relation to connection agreement/self-lay agreement requirements prior to submitting a planning application.

PW. P4: Support and collaborate with Uisce Éireann in increasing public awareness of water conservation measures and techniques, and in the reduction of water leakage in Carlow-Graiguecullen as part of the implementation of their National Leakage Reduction Programme.

PW. P5: Support best practice water conservation measures in development proposals, including the use of rainwater harvesting systems, roof water collection (water butts), and grey water recycling.

PW. P6: Contribute towards the protection of existing and potential water resources, and their use by humans and wildlife, including rivers, streams, and groundwater, and associated habitats and species, in accordance with the standards and requirements set out in EU and national legislation and guidance.

Public Water Supply – Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

PW. O1: Support the investment and provision of public water supply infrastructure by Uisce Éireann, including any maintenance works and planned upgrades to water treatment plants and the associated public mains water network serving the joint urban area, including the safeguarding of existing such infrastructure corridors, in order to ensure that zoned lands are adequately serviced over the period of the Plan and in accordance with the Core Strategies of Carlow and Laois County Councils.

7.2 Public Wastewater Collection & Treatment

The Mortarstown Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) provides treatment for the sewerage effluent generated by the Carlow-Graiguecullen joint urban area. The WWTP has a current treatment capacity of 36,000 population equivalent (pe). The Uisce Éireann wastewater capacity register indicates that the WWTP has spare capacity available. However, improvement and upgrade works are planned by Uisce Éireann for the WWTP to increase its treatment capacity to 58,000pe, and the forecasted completion data for this upgrade is Q2 2029.

Uisce Éireann commenced a Drainage Area Plan for Carlow Town in 2022 and to assess the performance of the wastewater networks service the area. The following key drivers were identified from this DAP by Uisce Éireann:

- **Environmental** - There are a number of pumping station and combined network overflows in the network, which can

discharge either directly or indirectly (via storm water infrastructure) to watercourses such as the River Barrow and Burrin.

- **Hydraulic** - It is believed that some sections of the network are operating at or close to capacity which is restricting future development upstream of these areas.
- **Structural** - Given the age of some of the sewers within the agglomeration, there is some concern regarding structural integrity of sections of the network. Excessive infiltration has been reported as a significant issue in some areas of the network.
- **Operational** - There are instances of blockages and operational issues across the network. Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOGs) are an issue in a number of areas. Odour and septicity have also been reported as an issue.
- **Growth** - Carlow-Graiguecullen is identified as a Key Town with a targeted 30% population growth to 2040. UÉ has received a large number of pre-connection enquiries and applications regarding new residential and commercial developments in the area.

Uisce Éireann continually progress sewer rehabilitation and capital maintenance activities, and Uisce Éireann will continue to monitor the performance of the networks to ensure that the most urgent works are prioritised as required.

The 2016 Census revealed that there were 169 individual septic tanks or other individual treatment systems serving private households within Carlow-Graiguecullen. It is the policy of Carlow and Laois County Councils to encourage and support a changeover from septic tanks/private wastewater treatment systems to

the public wastewater network wherever feasible, and subject to connection agreements with Uisce Éireann.

Public Wastewater Collection & Treatment – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

WW. P1: Facilitate and support Uisce Éireann in the delivery of public wastewater services in Carlow-Graiguecullen to serve the needs of the existing and future population of the Plan area, subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria and the standards and requirements set out in EU and national legislation and guidance.

WW. P2: Encourage the decommissioning of existing on-site private wastewater treatment systems and the connection of properties to the public wastewater network in Carlow-Graiguecullen wherever feasible, to minimise risk of groundwater pollution and subject to connection agreements with Uisce Éireann and compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria and the standards and requirements set out in EU and national legislation and guidance. The provision of individual wastewater treatment systems within the Plan boundary will be strongly discouraged to minimise the risk of groundwater pollution.

WW. P3: Ensure that development proposals adhere to the standards and requirements of Uisce Éireann in relation to connections to the public wastewater

network, and to encourage all developers to consult with Uisce Éireann prior to submitting a planning application in relation to connection agreement/self-lay agreement requirements.

Public Wastewater Collection & Treatment – Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

WW.O1: Support wastewater treatment infrastructure investment and provision by Uisce Éireann in Carlow-Graiguecullen, including any maintenance works and planned upgrades for Mortarstown WWTP and the associated wastewater network serving the joint urban area, including the safeguarding of existing such infrastructure corridors, in order to ensure that zoned lands are adequately serviced over the period of the Plan and in accordance with the Core Strategies of Carlow and Laois County Councils.

WW. O2: Implement, in conjunction with Uisce Éireann, the relevant recommendations set out in the EPA (2022) publication ‘Urban Waste Water Treatment in 2021’ and any subsequent update to this document.

7.3 Surface Water, Groundwater & Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

The impact of extreme rainfall events is increasing with climate change and this is significantly increasing both the level of pollution from urban runoff and the flood risk arising from the greater volume of runoff from largely impermeable urban areas. Traditionally urban

drainage systems in built-up areas like Carlow-Graiguecullen were solely designed to ensure rainwater was removed as quickly as possible from land or a particular site. However, this traditional approach typically leads to reduced absorption to ground, increased volumes, and speed of runoff, and ultimately to issues such as flooding, pollution and water quality degradation before the rainwater returns to the natural environment.

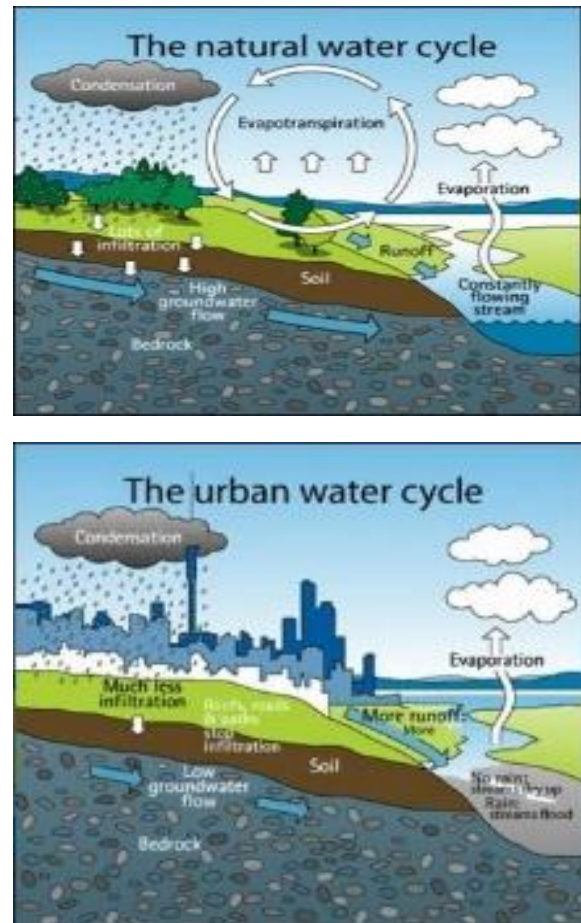


Fig. 7.1: How urban environments impact the natural water cycle (Source: National Geographic Society)

Current accepted best practice for managing surface water now includes the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS), nature-based solutions, and the provision/protection of green infrastructure.



These best practice approaches and systems aim to reduce flood risk, improve water quality, and enhance biodiversity and amenity (Further details on green infrastructure can be found in Chapter 10). Improving biodiversity can lead to a greener and more pleasant urban environment, with associated positive implications for recreation, health, and wellbeing. By incorporating SuDS in new developments, the surface water regime of a pre-development 'greenfield' situation can be replicated as closely as possible, conveying water more slowly to the drainage system and to watercourses. The use of SuDS can vary, but primarily includes measures such as infiltration trenches /soakaways, filter drains, and the use of permeable surface finishes, to swales, green roofs, detention basins, and stormwater wetlands.

Prospective applicants and developers are advised to consult with the DHLGH 'Nature-based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas – Best Practice Interim Guidance Document, 2022' (and any subsequent editions of the Guidance). This Guidance advises on approaches to mimic the natural water balance of rural areas through water sensitive urban design and development. SuDS is also discussed further in Chapter 10.

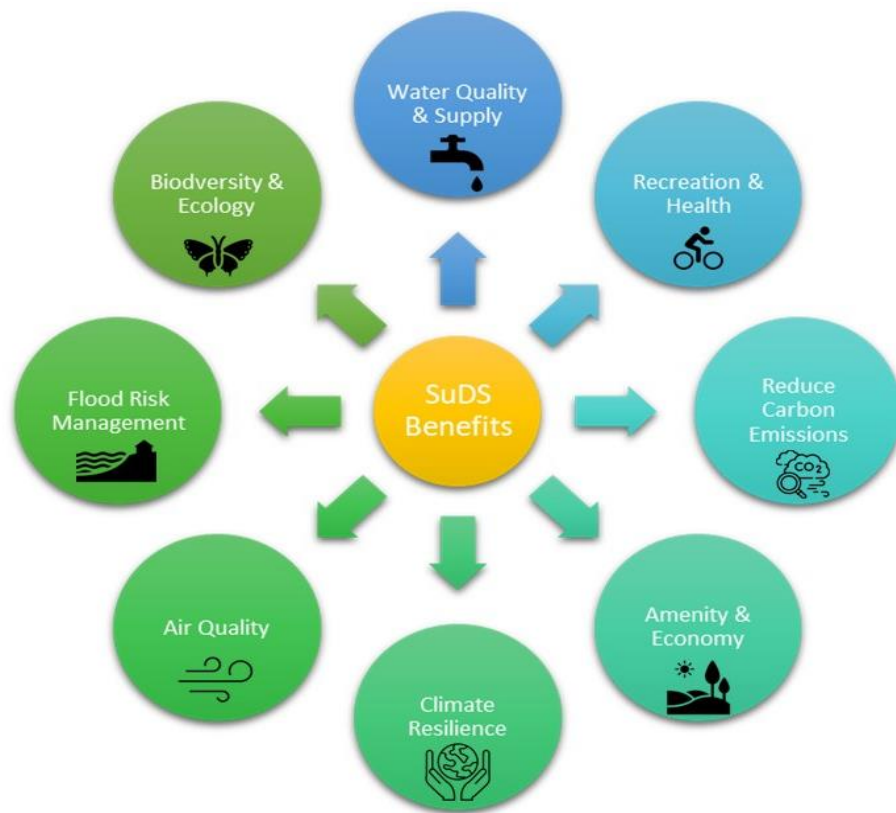


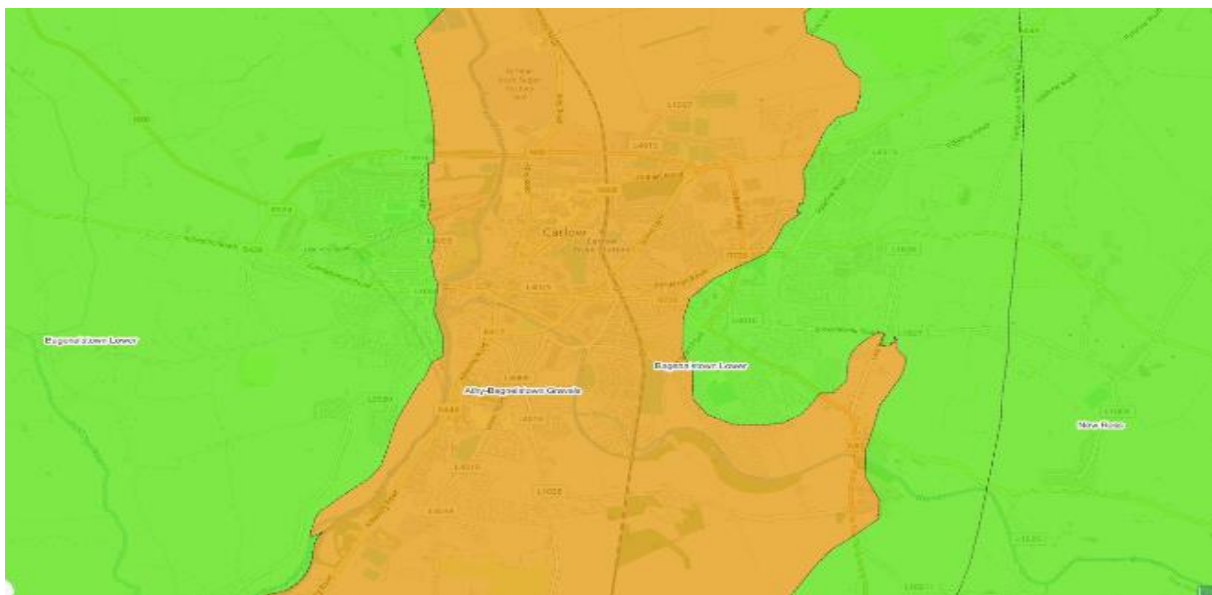
Figure 7.2: Some of the amenity benefits of SuDS



Fig. 7.3: Examples of SuDS (Source: DHLGH ‘Nature-based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas – Best Practice Interim Guidance Document, 2022’)

The objective of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) is to protect and restore good water quality, which is carried out through the implementation of River Basin Management Plans for Ireland. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through the WFD River Waterbody Status 2016-2021, has identified that the River Barrow flowing north-south through Carlow-Graiguecullen, and its tributary the Burren River flowing from east-west through the urban area, both have an unsatisfactory ‘moderate’ status.

The associated WFD Risk Assessment details that both watercourses are ‘at risk’ from pollution. The overall groundwater status for a significant part of the joint urban area is classified as ‘poor’ on the basis of the EPA’s Groundwater Quality WFD Status 2016-2021, with the exception of area in the environs to the east of Carlow Town and the Graiguecullen area to the west of the River Barrow. Map 7.1 below identifies ‘poor’ status groundwater with an orange colour and ‘good’ status groundwater with a green colour.



Map 7.1: Groundwater Status Carlow-Graiguecullen (Source: EPA Groundwater Ground Waterbody WFD Status 2016-2021)

Surface Water & Groundwater (Incl. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- SG. P1:** Maintain and enhance the existing surface water drainage systems in Carlow-Graiguecullen and to protect surface and ground water quality in accordance with the Water Framework Directive.
- SG. P2:** Require the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) within development proposals and infrastructure projects, in accordance with the DHLGH *Nature-based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas – Best Practice Interim Guidance Document, 2022'* (and any subsequent amendments or revisions to the document), Carlow County Council's *SuDS Policy*, and Laois County Council's *Storm Water Management Policy* as appropriate, in order to reduce flood risk, improve water quality and enhance biodiversity and amenity in the joint urban area.
- SG. P3:** Ensure that all development proposals maintain surface water discharge at greenfield run-off rate, including an allowance for climate change.

Surface Water & Groundwater (Incl. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) – Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Councils to:

- SG. O1:** Maintain, improve, and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of surface waters and groundwater in Carlow-Graiguecullen in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and in accordance with the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021 and any subsequent amendments or revisions to the Plan.
- SG. O2:** Require applicants, where necessary, to demonstrate that development proposals will not negatively impact on any surface water or groundwater body, individually as a result of the proposed development, or cumulatively, in combination with other developments, and be compliant with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and measures to protect and improve our water bodies set down in the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018 – 2021 and any subsequent amendments or revisions to the Plan.

7.4 Flood Risk Management

Flooding is a natural process that can occur at any time and in a wide variety of locations. In an urban setting it can typically occur from rivers, but prolonged, intense, and localised rainfall can also result in sewer flooding, overland flow, and groundwater flooding. One of the many effects of climate change is the likely increase in the frequency, pattern, and severity of flooding. In terms of land use planning, it is development in inappropriate locations that can exacerbate the

problems of flooding by accelerating and increasing surface water run-off, altering watercourses, and removing floodplain storage.

The Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2009), as amended by Government Circular PL2/2014, introduced mechanisms for the incorporation of flood risk identification, assessment, and management into the planning process and primarily in relation to the preparation of development plans and the assessment of planning applications.

The aim of flood risk management is to minimise the level of flood risk to people, business, infrastructure and the environment through the identification and management of existing and potential future flood risks. This can include flood protection works, stormwater attenuation, and significantly, the avoidance of development in areas subject to flooding, except in very limited circumstances.

Carlow County Council and Laois County Council will ensure that only developments consistent with these Guidelines will be approved and permission may be refused where flood risk issues have not been, or cannot be, addressed successfully and where the presence of unacceptable residual risks to the development, its occupants or users and adjoining property remain.

Planning applications for minor developments, such as extensions to existing houses and the change of use of existing buildings, are unlikely to result in significant flooding issues, unless they obstruct important flow paths, introduce a significant number of people into the flood risk areas or entail the storage of hazardous substances. Since such applications concern existing buildings, the sequential approach

cannot be used to locate them in lower-risk areas and the 'Justification Test' will not apply. However, in accordance with the Guidelines, a commensurate assessment of the risks of flooding should accompany such applications to demonstrate that they would not have adverse impacts or impede access to a watercourse, floodplain or flood protection and management facilities.

7.4.1 Flooding in Carlow-Graigucullen

The sources of previous flood events in the urban area have been a combination of fluvial (river) and pluvial (surface water) flooding. The severe flooding event in November 2009 when the River Barrow burst its banks following a prolonged period of heavy rain, emphasises the importance of considering flood risk in land use planning. A maximum flood depth of 1.5m was recorded and 33 residential and 16 commercial properties were affected. Instances of pluvial flooding in the urban area have largely been due to deficiencies in the surface water drainage systems.

The Carlow Flood Relief Scheme was initiated in 1996 following severe flooding in 1995 and was constructed from 2010 to 2013. The Scheme, which comprises flood defence walls and embankments along part of the east and west banks of the River Barrow and along the Burren River (with a pumping station at their confluence), provides protection against fluvial flooding to the 1% AEP for 185 properties.

A review of the GSI Groundwater Flooding Data Viewer identified some isolated areas of historic groundwater/surface water flooding in Carlow-Graigucullen, but primarily to the fringes and outside of the joint urban area.



Flood defence wall along east bank of River Barrow

During the initial Flood Risk Review (FRR) stage of the South Eastern CFRAM, Carlow Town was selected as an Area for Further Assessment (AFA). This AFA designation resulted in a further and full analysis of flood risk in the urban area, including the use of 1D-2D hydraulic modelling of the River Barrow and associated tributaries. Arising out of the AFA, further works on the Burren River in the Mill Race/Springfield area and on the Knocknagee Stream in the Castle Oaks area were recommended by the CFRAM and have been included as part of the first 50 FRs to be investigated further under a 10-year Government spending plan that was announced in May 2018.

7.4.2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been carried out for this JULAP in accordance with the Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG & OPW, 2009), as amended by Government Circular PL2/2014. The SFRA is included in Appendix III and has been informed by all available flood risk data for Carlow-Graiguecullen, including data from the South Eastern Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and

Management (CFRAM) Programme, existing flood relief schemes, historical flood event reports and observations, and site visits. The consideration of flood risk in the SFRA also takes account of climate change impacts and includes provisions for adapting to and mitigating same. Through relevant land use zonings objectives, the JULAP avoids development in areas at risk of flooding and has substituted vulnerable land uses with a less vulnerable use where this is possible. Development Plan 'Justification Tests' were also carried out on a number of sites to determine the appropriateness of land use zonings in flood risk areas, the details of which are included in the SFRA.

Flood Risk Management – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- FR. P1:** Ensure that all development proposals in Carlow- Graiguecullen comply with the requirements of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG and OPW, 2009) and Circular PL2/2014 (and any future revisions or updates to these Guidelines), in particular through the application of the sequential approach and the Development Management Justification Test.
- FR. P2:** Have regard to the findings and recommendations of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) carried out for this Joint Urban Local Area Plan.
- FR. P3:** Carry out flood risk assessment for the purpose of regulating, restricting, and controlling development in areas at risk of flooding in Carlow-Graiguecullen and to minimise the level of flood risk to

people, business, infrastructure and the environment through the identification and management of existing and potential future flood risk.

FR. P4: Require the submission of a Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessments (FRA) in areas at risk of flooding in Carlow-Graiguecullen. The assessment shall be carried out by a suitably qualified and indemnified professional, shall be appropriate to the scale and nature of the risk to the proposed development and shall consider all sources of flooding. The FRA shall be prepared in accordance with the Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG and OPW, 2009) and Circular PL2/2014 (and any future revisions or updates to these Guidelines), and shall address climate change, residual risk, avoidance of contamination of water sources and any proposed site-specific flood management measures.

FR. P5: Minimise flood risk arising from pluvial (surface water) flooding in Carlow-Graiguecullen by promoting the use of natural flood risk management measures including the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and nature-based solutions.

FR. P6: Maintain a riparian (buffer) zone of not less than 10 metres between all watercourses and any development proposals to mitigate against flood risk, with the full extent of the buffer zone to be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Planning Authority, based on site specific characteristics and sensitivities

and consultation with Inland Fisheries Ireland.

Flood Risk Management – Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

FR. O1: Manage flood risk in Carlow-Graiguecullen in conjunction with the Office of Public Works (OPW) and in accordance with the requirements of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009), Circular PL02/2014, and any future revisions or updates to these Guidelines.

FR. O2: Seek to ensure that where flood risk management works take place that the natural and cultural heritage of the River Barrow and Burren River is protected and improved where possible.

7.5 Environmental Services

7.5.1 Waste Management

The location of joint urban area on the border of counties Carlow and Laois means that the management of waste is governed at a regional level by the Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 (Carlow Town) and the Eastern and Midlands Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 (Graiguecullen). Both plans contain a range of policies and actions to meet specified mandatory and performance-based targets, in conjunction with support for the circular economy approach and the prevention and management of waste in a safe and sustainable manner.

Refuse collection in Carlow-Graiguecullen is carried out by a number of private operators, and

public bring bank (recycling) facilities for glass and cans are located throughout the joint urban area.

The provision of additional waste management facilities will be supported where there is an identified need. Carlow County Council and Laois County Councils will also continue to support circular economy principles in addressing all aspects of waste in Carlow-Graiguecullen, in order to prioritise waste prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery over waste disposal. In this regard, educating local communities and businesses about their responsibility as waste generators is a central component of the role of local authorities in waste management.



Fig. 7.4: The Circular Economy - less raw material, less waste, fewer emissions (Source: European Parliament)

Waste Management – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

WM. P1: Promote and support sustainable forms of waste management by households, communities, and businesses, including waste prevention, minimisation, reuse, recycling, and recovery.

WM. P2: Safeguard the environment of the joint urban area by seeking to ensure that residual waste is disposed of appropriately.

WM. P3: Ensure that Carlow-Graiguecullen is served by adequately sized public recycling facilities, including bring bank recycling facilities, and to adequately maintain existing recycling facilities in the joint urban area.

WM. P4: Require the incorporation of sustainable waste management measures within developments, including the provision of adequately sized facilities for the storage, separation, and collection of waste and recyclable materials.

Waste Management – Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Councils to:

WM. O1: Implement the provisions of the Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 and the Eastern Midlands Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021, and any subsequent or updated versions of these plans during the lifetime of this JULAP, as a means of promoting the circular economy approach and ensuring the prevention and management of waste in a safe and sustainable manner.

WM. O2: Promote and facilitate communities becoming involved in environmental awareness activities and community-based recycling initiatives or environmental management initiatives

in support of local sustainable waste management practices.

WM. O3: Eliminate unauthorised fly tipping in the joint urban area and to regulate and control the disposal of builder's spoil and rubble.

7.6 Litter Management

Litter detracts from the overall appearance of Carlow-Graiguecullen for both residents and visitors alike. Both Councils therefore recognise the importance of preventing and minimising litter, including incidences of illegal dumping. This is underpinned by the provisions contained in their respective Litter Management Plans i.e. Carlow County Council Litter Management Plan 2021-2023 and Laois County Council Litter Management Plan 2022-2024. There is an equally important role for local communities, businesses, and Tidy Towns Groups in the management of litter, alongside public awareness initiatives such as An Taisce's National Spring Clean, the Green Schools Programme, and the Green Dog Walkers Campaign.

Litter Management – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

LM. P1: Support local schools, town, and community groups such as Carlow Tidy Towns in the prevention and control of litter and through education and awareness programmes and where available, through the provision of grant aid.

Litter Management – Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

LM. O1: Support and implement the provisions of the Carlow County Council Litter Management Plan 2021-2023 and the Laois County Council Litter Management Plan 2022-2024, and any subsequent or updated versions of these plans during the lifetime of this JULAP, including associated measures for the prevention and control of litter, and public awareness and education initiatives regarding litter pollution.



Chapter 8

Sustainable Communities

Chapter 8: Sustainable Communities

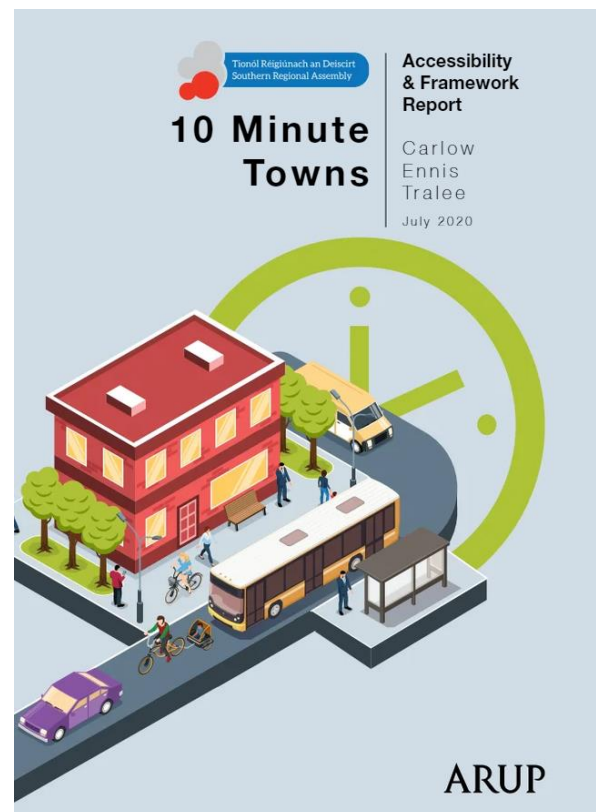
Aim: To facilitate the development of sustainable and inclusive communities in Carlow-Graiguecullen that respond to the needs of the current and future population of the joint urban area, and through support for the provision, expansion and enhancement of key facilities, services and amenities including healthcare, education, childcare, recreation, arts, and culture.

8.0 Introduction

Prioritising the development of inclusive and sustainable communities in Carlow-Graiguecullen is central to safeguarding and improving the quality of life of all residents in the joint urban area. This aim is reflected in the strategic objectives of this draft plan and in the overarching aim of this chapter. There is a requirement to respond to the demographic and societal changes occurring in the joint urban area to ensure that support for new and improved community, recreational and amenity services and facilities are provided for. Local authorities act as core agents in placemaking and operate at a community level and are appropriately positioned to engage with stakeholders and respond accordingly with appropriate supporting policies, public interventions, and targeted investment opportunities.

8.1 Connected Communities – The 10-Minute Town

The idea of the 10-minute neighbourhood or town is a central starting point to building inclusive and sustainable communities and first gained popularity in North America and later in Europe as an urban planning concept. It focuses on reducing car dependency by seeking to have all community facilities, services, and amenities accessible within a 10-minute walk or cycle from homes or by public transport. It focuses on creating sustainable and connected communities, through first understanding how neighbourhoods work, and secondly designing or retrofitting the built environment where possible to provide more compact, connected, and permeable places.



The Southern Regional Assembly commissioned the undertaking of a 10-Minute Town study for Carlow, which formed part of the Regional Action Plan for the Interreg Europe MATCH-UP project. The main findings of the 10-Minute Town study highlight some of the challenges facing Carlow-Graigucullen in supporting and creating inclusive and sustainable communities. These challenges relate to (inter alia) urban sprawl, a car dependent built environment, self-contained/disconnected residential estates, and deficiencies in active travel infrastructure. The findings of the study highlighted that:

- There is generally a lack of direct access from residential estates to main roads.
- The need to improve existing footpaths, not only for safety reasons, but also to encourage residents and visitors to walk within their 10-minute catchment rather than rely on the car.
- There is potential to promote cycling as a means of transport by providing adequate cycling facilities, including parking.
- There is potential for new local bus routes and/or increases in frequency for existing routes.

The incorporation of design and retrofitting measures to support the 10-Minute town would have numerous benefits for Carlow-Graigucullen. These include reducing the need to travel (which therefore reduces car dependency, emissions, air pollution and congestion), but also promoting physical activity and opportunities for community interaction – creating socially connected neighbourhoods and improving the overall quality of life for everyone. Associated policies and objectives concerning integrated land-use and transport planning can be found in the Chapter 6: Sustainable Travel and Transportation.

Connected Communities: The 10-Minute Town – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- CC. P1:** Promote and support the development of connected communities and the attainment of the 10-Minute town, having regard the findings of the 10-Minute Towns Study for Carlow, and with an emphasis on active travel and shorter walking and cycling timeframes to social and community facilities, improving permeability in the built environment, and encouraging a reduction in car dependency.

8.2 Social and Community Facilities

Social and community facilities have a broad remit that encompasses a variety of services and amenities in areas such as education, healthcare, childcare, sports and recreation, and a good quality-built environment. In many cases these facilities are run and managed by local communities and in a voluntary capacity, providing vital services to the young, the elderly, people with disabilities, migrants etc. They underpin and enhance quality of life and provide a vital platform for community and social interaction which many people rely on for personal health and wellbeing. Some of the key social and community facilities in the joint urban area include:

- St. Catherines Community Services Centre
- New Oak Community Centre
- Carlow Youth Centre
- Askea Community Centre and Askea Childcare Centre
- St. Fiac’s Hall
- St. Fiac’s House
- HSE Health Centre, Oakley Park

- Graiguecullen Parish Childcare Centre CLG
- Sacred Heart Hall
- Carlow Regional Youth Services
- Delta Centre
- Tintean Centre
- Cathedral Parish Centre
- Carlow Youth Training – Community Training Centre
- Carlow Senior Citizens Centre

Carlow Community and Voluntary Forum, in conjunction with Carlow County Sports Partnership, have compiled a directory of indoor community and sports infrastructure which can be accessed at [county-carlow-directory-of-facilities.pdf](#). This directory includes the community facilities referred to above, as well as sports and school facilities.

Carlow County Council and Laois County Council, along with their respective Public Participation Networks (PPNs), recognise the essential contribution facilities such as those listed above make to the quality of life in the joint urban area, and their value to community development is acknowledged. Both Councils are committed over the lifetime of this JULAP and subject to resources, to supporting and providing a range of shared, inclusive, and accessible social and community facilities that respond to the various needs and expectations of the current and future population of the joint urban area. At the same time, this JULAP acknowledges that there are challenges facing Carlow-Graiguecullen in meeting these needs and expectations. Legacies concerning the urban environment and communities must be tackled relating to (inter alia) the quality of developments, placemaking, consolidating and connecting existing and new residential areas, deficiencies in social and community facilities and social deprivation. The delivery of new and improved social and

community facilities will not be through policy alone but will require sustained measures and targeted investment over the long term. Public intervention must also foster pride of place and it calls for imaginative solutions such as support for repurposing existing underutilised urban spaces and buildings where appropriate.

8.2.1 Carlow Exchange

The Carlow Exchange at Potato Market was developed by Carlow County Council and officially opened in September 2022. It is a centrally located 332sq.m. semi-covered multi-functional community space for cultural, economic, and social activities. The development was funded under the Town and Village Accelerate Scheme and the Open Public Spaces Scheme, its purpose being to enhance the vitality and vibrancy of the urban area and contribute to improved public facilities and amenities.



8.2.2 Tullow Road Community Hub

A multi-functional community hub is proposed by Carlow County Council on land adjoining John Sweeney Park off the Tullow Road. The hub will comprise a 768sq.m. facility, with a community hall, multi-purpose classrooms, meeting and training rooms, and a coffee dock providing vital community facilities where they are most needed.



Social and Community Facilities – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

SCF. P1: Facilitate and secure the provision of new and enhanced social and community facilities to support existing and new communities in Carlow-Graiguecullen, and in a manner which provides flexibility to respond to varied and changing needs and deficiencies, and through funding for their development where available and appropriate.

SCF. P2: Recognise, support, and encourage the role of community participation in the provision and improvement of social and community facilities, independently and in association with relevant stakeholders, including the Carlow and Laois Public Participation Networks (PPNs)

SCF. P3: Promote the highest standards of universal access and design in all community facilities.

SCF. P4: Enhance opportunities for existing and proposed social and community facilities, through support for the repurposing of existing underutilised spaces and buildings, and by facilitating the co-location and shared use of

existing such facilities by community groups, including amenities and schools, and subject to compliance with planning and environmental considerations.

SCF. P5: Encourage the siting of social and community facilities in suitable locations in the joint urban area which are close to existing such facilities, and existing and planned active travel and public transport infrastructure, and in order to support increased accessibility, connectivity, and reduced travel times to and from these facilities and infrastructure and to and from peoples' homes and places of work.

Social and Community Facilities – Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

SCF. O1: Deliver the Tullow Road Community Hub subject to the availability of financing and compliance with all planning and environmental criteria.

8.3 Education and Training Facilities

The development of high-quality educational and training facilities strengthens the fabric of communities and enables parity of opportunities, as well as sustainable and societally enriching goals. Equally, the level of education in an area can be a determining factor for some businesses when assessing new locations for their operations and can therefore also make a positive contribution to the commercial and business life of an urban centre. Carlow County Council and Laois County Council have a role in facilitating the provision of these facilities and primarily through the formulation of supporting policies and objectives, and the zoning of lands for educational uses to meet the

needs of new and existing communities in line with the pace of development.

8.3.1 Primary and Post-Primary

There are a total of 10 mainstream primary schools and 6 post-primary schools serving the joint urban area. The construction of a new 1,200sq.m. purpose-built Saplings Special School recently commenced in 2023 on a site in Fruithill, Graiguecullen. It should also be noted that the primary level educational needs of residents are to a smaller extent being met by schools in nearby settlements, such as at Bennekerry, Tinryland, and Killeshin. One of the post-primary schools (Knockbeg, St. Mary's) is located outside of the plan area and in a rural location in County Laois. Tyndall College, extending to 10,000sq.m, is Carlow's newest post-primary school and is based on the new Kilkenny-Carlow Education and Training Board's (KCETB) campus at Mortarstown on the Kilkenny Road. St. Mary's Academy CBS has also recently received planning approval for new school facilities on lands adjoining their existing grounds. In principle, it is anticipated that an increase in school place requirements resulting from projected population growth will be mitigated by a corresponding decline in school place requirements arising from underlying demographics. However, in accordance with the principle of compact growth at least 30% of all new homes to be built in Carlow-Graiguecullen are to be built within the existing built-up footprint of the joint urban area. Arising from same increased pressure for additional school places may arise Therefore, the existing school sites and land buffers around them will be of critical importance as it may be necessary to extend the existing schools to meet any increased requirements.

This JULAP also recognises that the schools in Carlow-Graiguecullen play an important role in their communities by making their facilities available outside of school hours and during holiday periods for a variety of different uses and users. The includes after-school activities, homework clubs, breakfast clubs, summer camps, sporting, and other activities for children, as well as the facilitation of community groups in the evening. Such use of school buildings for recreational and community purposes is encouraged by Carlow County Council and Laois County Council in accordance with Department of Education *Guidelines on the use of School Buildings outside of School Hours* (2017).

8.3.2 Third Level

Carlow-Graiguecullen has two third level institutions comprising South East Technological University (SETU) and Carlow College, St. Patrick's.



The SETU was formally established in 2022 following the merger of IT Carlow and Waterford Institute of Technology. The merger forms part of wider Government policy to create higher education institutions of a larger scale and greater capacity, which are to act as catalysts for innovation and regional development, increased foreign direct investment, and overall

socio-economic progress. With 11,000 students and 850 staff, SETU Carlow provides a wide range of undergraduate courses encompassing business, humanities, applied sciences and health and sports sciences, to computing, aerospace and mechanical engineering, electronic engineering, and the built environment. These are supplemented by a further range of postgraduate courses and a lifelong learning programme for adults to upgrade their skills and qualifications in line with current trends.

RSES Regional Policy Objective RPO 14 in the Southern Region affirms the role of the SETU in strengthening education provision at a regional and inter-regional level, and in providing internationally recognised higher education and research opportunities which can facilitate transformational change and act as a key driver for enabling sustainable future employment growth for the urban area. The SETU has also invested heavily in their development of a state of the art 31-acre sports campus off the Kilkenny Road, which accommodates playing pitches including all-weather pitches, walking trail, athletics track, and viewing stadium. The sports campus also facilities local community use.

Founded in 1782, Carlow College St. Patrick's is the country's second oldest university level institution. The college offers undergraduate, post graduate and evening courses focused on arts, humanities, and social, political and community studies. In 2019 Carlow College formed a collaborative agreement with SETU Carlow (then IT Carlow) for higher education and research initiatives. The agreement recognised and strengthened an ongoing partnership between the two institutions and their shared interests. In particular, it provided for

institutional alignment in delivering greater collaboration in relation to academia, research, learner engagement, facilities and resources, and community engagement. It is an action under Strategic Objective 7 in the SETU Strategic Plan 2023-2028 to seek non-core funding to enable SETU to conduct academic, financial, and legal analyses in relation to future partnership models with Carlow College St. Patricks.



8.3.3 Further Education and Training

Further Education is organised through the Education and Training Boards (ETBs) which oversees the delivery of continuing education and training for young school leavers and adults. It is also considered a lead contact point for people to re-engage with learning and is therefore a key sector for supporting lifelong learning. Carlow Institute of Further Education recently developed 10,000sq.m. metre campus off the Kilkenny Road providing courses over many professional fields, as well as realistic working environments including art studios, recording studio, science labs and automotive engineering.



Kilkenny and Carlow Educational and Training Board (KCETB), which Carlow Institute is a constituent of, also has progress agreements to higher education with SETU.

8.3.4 Community Education

KCETB's community education service supports the delivery of a broad range of education programmes in partnership with community providers/groups and in local centres throughout Carlow. The main Carlow Office is located on Burrin Street. Commitment towards the promotion and facilitation of lifelong learning, social inclusion and social/personal development in local communities is central to the education service. Courses are provided in collaboration with various community groups, such as women's groups, disability groups, active retirement groups and local development groups.

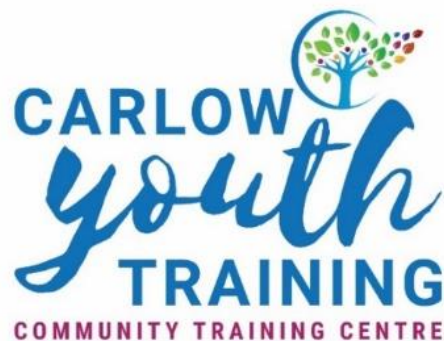
The core principles of community education are:

- Lifelong Learning (lifelong, life-wide and voluntary/self-motivated)
- Equality
- Inter-culturalism
- Active and social inclusion (addressing marginalisation)
- Developmental participation
- Reflective practice
- Collective community advancement /empowerment
- Fostering personal development
- Combatting social isolation
- Addressing social and education disadvantage

8.3.5 Carlow Youth Training

Carlow Youth Training located at Askea Business Park, is a Community Training Centre providing training, support, and work experience to early

school leavers who are most in need of basic vocational training. The training provision is divided between 'in-centre learning' and 'linked work experience learning'.



Education and Training – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- ET. P1:** Continue to liaise with the Department of Education as appropriate, to assist in the delivery of future educational requirements within Carlow-Graiguecullen, including the provision of school accommodation, the development of new schools, and the expansion or alteration of existing schools.
- ET. P2:** Support and facilitate the development and expansion of educational facilities in Carlow-Graiguecullen, including the protection of existing school sites for education use, and where appropriate the land buffers adjoining them.
- ET. P3:** Support and encourage, as appropriate, the multi-use of education buildings and facilities in Carlow-Graiguecullen outside of normal hours, where it does not conflict with the delivery of education services and in accordance with the Department of Education *Guidelines on*

the use of School Buildings outside of School Hours (2017).

- ET. P4:** Ensure that appropriate infrastructure and high-quality urban design is provided concurrently with the development or expansion of educational and training facilities in Carlow-Graigucullen, including where appropriate walking and cycling infrastructure.
- ET. P5:** Promote and support initiatives with relevant stakeholders to expand education and training that supports lifelong learning and meets the wide range of business skills located in Carlow-Graigucullen.
- SCF. P3:** Promote the highest standards of universal access and design in all educational and training facilities.

Education and Training – Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- ET. O1:** Support the role and development of SETU Carlow and Carlow College St. Patrick's in strengthening education and training provision at a regional and inter-regional level and in providing internationally recognised higher education and research opportunities which can act as a key driver for enabling sustainable future employment growth for the joint urban area.
- ET. O2:** Provide new and improved walking and cycling infrastructure and vehicular traffic calming measures in the vicinity of schools.

8.4 Childcare Facilities

The 2016 Census revealed that 0-4 years pre-school population in Carlow-Graigucullen, at 1,907, represented 7.9% of the total population of the joint urban area. In line with their above-average population growth rate over the past decade, County Laois has the highest proportion of infants of all counties that share a border with County Carlow. In this regard, Graigucullen's population growth and the proportion of infants in its population (>8%) is more typical of County Laois than of County Carlow.

The provision of quality affordable childcare places is therefore critical for Carlow-Graigucullen, both developmentally for children and as a support for people to participate more fully in society, particularly in accessing employment, education, and social networks.



Childcare facilities are well distributed throughout the joint urban area and predominantly comprise privately owned facilities and some community owned facilities. According to the directories held by the Carlow and Laois County Childcare Committees and the register maintained by Tusla Child and Family Agency there are a total of 21 childcare facilities in the joint urban area (6 in Graigucullen and 15 in Carlow Town). Figures obtained from the Tusla Child and Family Agency register reveal that when taken together all these facilities have an enrolment capacity for 1,069 children. However,

data obtained from both County Childcare Committees identifies that these facilities, as of January 2023, were either all at or close to full enrolment capacity for full day care pre-school spaces.

Childcare Facilities – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- CF. P1:** Encourage and support the provision of childcare facilities to support new and existing communities in Carlow-Graigucullen and as an integral part of proposals for new residential developments in the joint urban area. Carlow and Laois County Councils will have regard to the DEHLG’s *Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2001) and any future revisions or updates to these Guidelines in relation to the provision of childcare facilities.
- CF. P2:** Liaise with Carlow and Laois County Childcare Committees in identifying childcare facility needs in Carlow-Graigucullen and in supporting the delivery of new, improved high quality and accessible childcare facilities at appropriate locations throughout the joint urban area, and subject to siting design considerations and compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria.
- CF. P3:** Promote the highest standards of universal access and design in all childcare facilities in accordance with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs *Universal Design Guidelines for Early Learning and Care Settings* (2019)

and any future revisions or updates to these Guidelines.

8.5 Healthcare Facilities

Public healthcare facilities in Carlow-Graigucullen are the responsibility of the Health Service Executive (HSE Carlow/Kilkenny for Carlow Town in County Carlow and Laois/Offaly for Graigucullen in County Laois). At the core of the provision of these public facilities is St. Dymphna’s Hospital/Carlow District Hospital.

The hospitals provide a broad range of community care services within their grounds off the Athy Road, including child and adult mental health services, addiction services, hospital respite and palliative care services, as well as dental, Xray and eye clinics, an audiology centre, a physiotherapy department, and civil registration for births, deaths, and marriages. The hospital grounds also accommodate Caredoc Carlow, residential accommodation at Kelvin Court, and Tusla Child and Family Agency. The HSE also operates the Sacred Heart Hospital accessed from the Old Dublin Road, which is a 63-bed facility providing respite, palliative care and rehabilitation needs for adults.

These facilities and services are further supplemented by those provided in the HSE Primary Care Centre located at Shamrock Plaza, its role being part of a national initiative to procure an integrated HSE and GP-resourced primary care centre. The primary care centre is the central entry point to community health and delivers health and social care services including public health nursing and outreach hospital consultant clinics. Graigucullen also has a Health Centre run by HSE Laois/Offaly at Oakley Park, providing (inter alia) GP services, child, disability and older people services, and occupational therapy.

In addition to HSE public facilities and services, the healthcare needs of the joint urban area are met by GP medical/family practices, nursing homes (3 no.), dentists, pharmacies, and other related facilities and services. HSE data for 2023 reveals that there is a total of 53 GPs in the joint urban area (Carlow Town 43 no. and Graiguecullen 10 no.), who are based in various grouped medical practices.

Carlow County Council and Laois County Council recognise the significant importance of all of these healthcare facilities and services to the joint urban area and surrounding hinterland, and that general practices in particular are experiencing significant pressure in the provision of healthcare. Both Councils will therefore continue to support the development and expansion of healthcare facilities and services subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria.

Healthcare Facilities - Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

HF. P1: Support the Health Service Executive (HSE) and other statutory, private, and voluntary operators in the provision of new and improved healthcare facilities and services at appropriate locations in Carlow-Graiguecullen and subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria.

HF. P2: Support the regional importance of St. Dymphna's Hospital/Carlow District Hospital in the provision of healthcare facilities and services.

HF. P3: Support and encourage the improvement and upgrade of existing

health centres, local clinics, and nursing homes in the joint urban area.

HF. P4: Encourage the provision of healthcare facilities and services that are well located in new and existing communities in terms of accessibility and convenience to walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure.

8.6 Inclusive Communities

In developing and improving community facilities and services in a manner that supports diverse and inclusive communities in Carlow-Graiguecullen, consideration must be given to the specific design and planning needs of key cohorts of the local population. This includes young people, older people, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and the Irish Traveller community. Census 2016 population data for the joint urban area revealed the following in regard to these groups:

- People aged 18 and under accounted for 26.4% of the population, which was marginally higher than the county figure for Carlow (26%), below that of Laois (28.6%), but higher than the state figure of 25%.
- 10.3% of the population were 65 and over, which was below the county figures for Carlow (12.9%) and Laois (11.3%).
- 15.4% of the population had a self-declared disability, almost two percentage points above the state figure of 13.5%.
- Non-Irish nationals accounted for 16% of the population, notably higher than the state figure of 11.4%.
- Irish Travellers constituted 1.4% of the population, higher than the county figures for Carlow (0.9%), Laois (0.9%) and the state figure of 0.7%.

More recently Carlow-Graiguecullen has witnessed the arrival of refugees from Ukraine who are fleeing the war and seeking protection in Ireland. Carlow and Laois County Councils and voluntary services have a key role to play in responding to this unprecedented crisis by supporting the integration of Ukrainians in local communities and ensuring they have access to key community facilities and services.

Inclusive Communities – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Councils to:

- IC. P1:** Support the role and work of community agencies, groups, and organisations in the delivery of new and improved community facilities and services in Carlow-Graiguecullen for young people, older people, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, refugees and protected persons, and the Traveller Community.
- IC. P2:** Promote social inclusion and tackle disadvantage through equality of access to facilities and services for all residents in Carlow-Graiguecullen, including refugees and displaced persons to whom temporary protection applies under relevant European and National legislative provisions.
- IC. P3:** Consider the needs of young people, older people and people with disabilities and additional needs, in the provision of outdoor and indoor play and recreational facilities in Carlow-Graiguecullen and consult with relevant stakeholders as maybe appropriate regarding design considerations for local authority developments.

8.7 Sports, Recreation, and Play

Carlow-Graiguecullen is home to a wide range of purpose-built sports, recreation and play facilities. These facilities are provided through a mix of public, private, third level, school, community facilities, and voluntary organisations. The built and natural environment of the joint urban area, including its public roads and footpaths, open spaces, the River Barrow and Burren River, also supports an array of sports, recreation and play activities such as walking, jogging, cycling, boating, and fishing. The aforesaid are further supplemented by commercial operated leisure facilities, such as fitness centres, gyms, and children’s play centres.

Sports and recreation clubs in the joint urban area cater for GAA, soccer, rugby, rowing, tennis/squash/badminton, golf, swimming, karate, kickboxing, boxing, athletics, archery, and scouts. Some of the key sporting clubs and facilities include:

- Netwatch Cullen Park
- SETU Sports Campus
- Graiguecullen Swimming Pool
- Carlow Lawn Tennis Club
- St. Laurence O’Toole’s Athletics’ Club
- Carlow Town Hurling Club
- Carlow Rowing Club
- Eire Og, O’Hanrahans, and Graiguecullen GFCs
- Carlow Rugby Football Club
- Carlow Golf Club
- Carlow Sports and Social Club
- St. Patrick’s Boys, New Oak, and Hanover Harps FCs
- St. Fiac’s FC
- Carlow Youth Centre

Carlow and Laois Sports Partnerships are at the forefront of the development and promotion of

these sporting and recreational activities. They work with clubs, schools, and community groups to ensure that structures are in place to enable participation for all community members.

Some of the key recreational and play facilities serving the joint urban area, existing and planned, include the following:

Oak Park Forest Park

Includes mature woodland traversed by looped walking paths, a children's playground, and an outdoor exercise area.



River Barrow and Barrow Track

Known locally as the Barrow Track, the former towpath along the River Barrow functions as an important amenity for residents of Carlow-Graiguecullen, and particularly for walking, cycling, and angling. The river itself is used for leisure boating and regularly by Carlow Rowing Club. Project Carlow 2040: A Vision for Regeneration, which is discussed in further detail in Chapter 10, recognises that the Barrack Track

is underutilised and has much greater potential to contribute to the recreation and amenity of the urban area.

Carlow Town Park

Is a centrally located open space located alongside the River Barrow in Graiguecullen and is linked to Carlow Town by a pedestrian bridge. The park includes a playground, landscaped open space with pedestrian paths, slipway, and small marina.

Burren River Linear Park

The Burren River Linear Park was opened in 2013 and is a key asset in the area, including a hard surfaced cycling and walking route along the east of the river. The linear park extends to c. 2km, with direct access to Carlow and to and from several residential areas along its length.

Hanover Park

Improvement works were completed in 2022 at Hanover Park with a focus on biodiversity and the provision of new pathways, seating, and lighting. A second phase of works are also planned, to include an accessible and inclusive playground, a bike pump track, and a mini-basketball court.

Skate Park

The concrete skate park was opened in 2020 on a site off the Burrin Road and features a bowl and street area for skateboarding and BMX bike users.



An Gairdín Beo

An Gairdín Beo is a 2-acre community garden located off the Old Dublin Road and on land leased from the Sisters of Mercy.



Delta Sensory Gardens

Delta Sensory Gardens are set on 2.5 acres of land at Strawhall Estate. The gardens are part of the Delta Centre which was established in 1990 as a centre for adults with disabilities. The Sensory Gardens were created as a therapeutic outlet for those attending the service and also as a means of providing funding for the centre.

River Barrow Water Activity Centre

Carlow County Council received approval from An Bord Pleanála for the development of a River Barrow Water Activity Centre on land beside the Carlow Town Park. The development of such a centre is part of an urban regeneration initiative

and long-term objective to provide a community and recreational asset that would enhance the user experience of the river. The centre will provide a base for many clubs active in the area, will include storage, changing and community facilities, and a central café facing the river.



Carlow County Council and Laois County Council will continue to liaise with sporting clubs and organisations, communities, and other relevant stakeholders, to ensure that where possible that needs are met in the provision of quality sports, recreational and play facilities. Developments which seek to cluster activities and integrate them with community facilities, including schools, will be encouraged to ensure a more sustainable and efficient use of shared arrangements such as access, parking, changing rooms etc.

Sports, Recreation, and Play – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- SR. P1:** Facilitate collaboration between Carlow and Laois Sports Partnerships, clubs, communities, and partnerships within and beyond sport, to increase sport and physical activity participation levels in Carlow-Graiguecullen.
- SR. P2:** Support local community and sports groups in developing and improving sports facilities at appropriate locations

in Carlow-Graiguecullen. To facilitate the creation of multi-user community hubs, new facilities should where possible, be clustered with other community facilities.

SR. P3: Promote the highest standards of universal access and design in all sports, recreational and play facilities and that proposals for new such facilities are accompanied by appropriate infrastructure including car and bicycle parking and changing rooms.

SR. P4: Ensure that sufficient and appropriate open space, recreation, and amenity facilities, both passive and active, are provided in Carlow-Graiguecullen to meet the changing needs of new and existing communities in the joint urban area.

SR. P5: Encourage and facilitate the provision of public open spaces in accordance with the standards in the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009), and any future revisions or updates to these Guidelines.

SR. P6: Prohibit the loss of existing public and private recreational zoned open space unless alternative recreational facilities are provided at a suitable location.

SR. P7: Support and encourage, where appropriate, the multi-use of all sports and recreational facilities, including sports hall, community halls and centres.

SR. P8: Support local communities in the provision of play facilities at appropriate locations in the joint urban area.

SR. P9: Facilitate appropriately scaled play areas within new and existing residential developments, and provide, in so far as is possible, play facilities adjacent to community and childcare facilities.

SR. P10: Protect and develop the connected networks of existing green spaces in the joint urban area to serve the growing needs of local communities.

SR. P11: Prohibit the development of areas in Carlow-Graiguecullen zoned open space/amenity or areas which have been indicated in a previous planning application as being open space.

SR. P12: Support local community groups in the development of open spaces, such as parks, community gardens, and allotments, subject to residential amenity and compliance with all planning and environmental considerations.

Sports, Recreation, and Play – Objective

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

SR. O1: Deliver the River Barrow Water Activity Centre subject to the availability of financing and compliance with all planning and environmental criteria.

SR. O2: Deliver the redevelopment of Hanover Park, including the provision of accessible and inclusive playground, mountain bike pump track, and mini basketball court, subject to the availability of financing and compliance with all planning and environmental criteria.

8.8 Arts and Culture

The arts and culture are critical components of urban centres such as Carlow-Graiguecullen. They strengthen a sense and pride of place, promote community engagement and social interaction, and enable people to express their creativity. At the core of the arts and cultural offering are theatres, museums, galleries, libraries, and festivals and events.



Carlow-Graiguecullen is recognised as an important destination for arts and culture. There has been significant investment in the arts and cultural offering, including the development of the Cultural Quarter in an area around the VISUAL Centre for Contemporary Art and George Bernard Shaw Theatre, Carlow Courthouse, Carlow Cathedral, the Carlow County Museum, Carlow College, and Carlow Central Library. Through Failte Ireland Funding, Carlow County Council are carrying out further public realm improvement works to promote the VISUAL as a key destination / tourist hub and to encourage greater tourist and pedestrian activity in the area. The Cultural Quarter is also one of six intervention areas identified in Project Carlow 2040: A Vision for Regeneration (See Chapter 10). In addition to the Carlow County Museum located in the town centre, the County Carlow Military Museum occupies a 19th century former church building on the grounds of St. Dymphna's Hospital/Carlow District Hospital, and is

dedicated to the collection, preservation, and display of military memorabilia heritage.

In addition to the provision of traditional onsite and online information resources, the role of Carlow Central Library has expanded in more recent years as a key civic space catering for community engagement in arts and culture. The planned redevelopment of the library will see the construction of a double height 1105sq.m extension including basement, to accommodate additional library, cultural, civic, and learning space.

There are number of arts and cultural events held in Carlow every year including the Carlow Arts Festival. In 2023 Carlow hosted the International Pan Celtic Festival, which is a celebration of the cultural links between Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Brittany, Cornwall, and the Isle of Man.

Arts and Culture – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- AC. P1:** Encourage the provision of new or improved arts and cultural facilities in Carlow-Graiguecullen, and to recognise and support the role of arts and culture as a form of community infrastructure that can make a positive contribution to the public realm of the joint urban area.
- AC. P2:** Promote and support the role and continued expression of arts and culture in Carlow-Graiguecullen, and to facilitate and encourage the use of public spaces in the joint urban area for arts and cultural festivals and events.
- AC. P3:** Continue to promote and support the role of the VISUAL Centre for Contemporary Art and George Bernard

Shaw Theatre as a regional arts asset and venue of national significance, in supporting artists in their practice and providing opportunities for new works to be commissioned, and as a venue for residents and visitors to access.

AC. P4: Encourage and support the creation and display of works of art in public areas in Carlow-Graiguecullen, including appropriate locations within the streetscape, provided no unacceptable environmental, amenity, traffic or other adverse issues arise.

AC. P5: Promote and support the role, development and expansion of facilities, services and initiatives provided by Carlow Central Library, to cater for the diverse needs of local communities in Carlow-Graiguecullen and seek to develop links with the libraries at SETU Carlow and Carlow College, St. Patrick's.

Arts and Culture – Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

AC. O1: Support the re-development and extension of Carlow Central Library, subject to the availability of resources and finance, and compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.

8.9 Places of Worship and Burial Grounds

Carlow County Council and Laois County Council recognise the important role places of worship and burial grounds have for local communities in the joint urban area. There are places of worship for various denominations represented in

Carlow-Graiguecullen, including those which occupy established church buildings.

In the interests of social inclusion, Carlow and Laois County Councils will work with representative bodies of religious faiths to realise the needs of the varied communities in Carlow-Graiguecullen.

In this regard, this JULAP recognises that St. Mary's Cemetery is the principal burial grounds in the joint urban area and is nearing capacity.

Places of Worship and Burial Grounds – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

PW. P1: Support and facilitate the development or extension of places of worship and burial grounds at appropriate locations in Carlow-Graiguecullen and in co-operation with local communities.



Chapter 9

Built Heritage

Chapter 9: Built Heritage

Aim: To protect, conserve and manage the built heritage of Carlow-Graiguecullen, by promoting the understanding, enhancement, and appropriate development of these assets, to ensure they contribute to the further sustainable development and heritage-led regeneration of the joint urban area.

9.0 Introduction

The built heritage of Carlow-Graiguecullen, inclusive of its architectural and archaeological heritage, is a significant element in the definition and experience of the joint urban area. Its character and distinctiveness contribute to a sense of place and serves as physical expression of past generations. This heritage can also have a positive role in shaping the future of Carlow-Graiguecullen, including opportunities for increased economic vitality, tourism, urban regeneration, placemaking, climate resilience, and for engendering civic pride. It is therefore crucially important that there is an understanding and appreciation of the social and economic value and benefits that conserving the built heritage of Carlow-Graiguecullen can bring.

Pre-historic settlement in the area is most notably reflected by the Brownhill Dolmen, a neolithic portal tomb and significant landscape feature to the east of the joint urban area. The early historic built fabric of the town was founded by the Anglo-Normans and developed under the protection of Carlow Castle built in the early 13th century. The original medieval fabric of the area includes Dublin Street, the western

part of Tullow Street, Castle Street, Brown Street, and Charlotte Street. By the 18th century the core of this medieval area had only been extended to Graiguecullen on the other side of the River Barrow and to Burren Street on the other side of the Burren River. It was during the 19th century that landmark buildings such as Carlow Courthouse and Carlow Cathedral were constructed, along with transport infrastructure such as Carlow Railway Station.

The content of this chapter should be read in conjunction with the built heritage policies, objectives and related provisions set out in Chapter 10 of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and Chapter 12 of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027.

9.1 Heritage-Led Regeneration

Heritage-led regeneration focuses on investing in the targeted restoration and reuse of built heritage assets in ways that can drive positive and ambitious change in town centres, responding to the way that people live, work and shop. It is also about bringing the history of places to the fore, involving communities in heritage projects, and improving places with the aim of attracting new business, visitors, and residents.

In support of the Town Centre First policy set out in the *Programme for Government: Our Shared Future* (2020), the Historic Towns Initiative (HTI) is a joint undertaking by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Heritage Council, which aims to promote the heritage-led regeneration of Ireland's historic towns. With support and funding through the HTI, Carlow County Council commenced the

preparation of a Historic Towns Initiative Plan for Carlow Town in 2023. The plan will:

- Include a focus on the medieval town, and designated Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs);
- Examine existing levels of building vacancy and dereliction;
- Assess the connectivity of the main streets, laneways, and historic sites to each other;
- Catalogue and examine the existing built heritage to determine what conservation funding interventions are required;
- Take account of climate change impacts; and,
- Produce an action plan for heritage-led regeneration to be used as a tool to leverage funding for interventions, including the reuse of vacant floors in historic buildings for residential purposes.

The crucial role of heritage-led regeneration in the town centre is also reflected in the proposed interventions contained in Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration.

Heritage-Led Regeneration - Policy

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- HR. P1:** Promote and encourage heritage-led regeneration, including the conservation and sustainable use of historic buildings and sites integral to the history and evolution of Carlow-Graiguecullen, and in order to raise public awareness of this history, and to tackle dereliction and vacancy so as to improve the quality of life of the joint urban area by making it

an interesting, unique, and attractive place for residents and visitors.

Heritage-Led Regeneration - Objective

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- HR. O1:** Support, in conjunction with key stakeholders, the preparation and implementation of a Heritage-Led Regeneration Plan for Carlow Town in accordance with the Historic Towns Initiative and relevant funding sources, and its role in the conservation, enhancement and interpretation of built heritage, and the reuse of vacant historic buildings.

- HR. O2:** Support the implementation and role of the ‘Interventions Areas’ identified in Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration, in enhancing the setting and context of key built heritage assets in Carlow Town, including improved access to and exposure and interpretation of these assets, and subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.

9.2 Architectural Heritage

Architectural heritage is a term used to refer to buildings and structures which are of special interest based on architectural, historic, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical reasons. These special interests can include the sites, settings, attendant grounds, fixtures, and fittings of such buildings and structures. In historic built environments such as Carlow-Graiguecullen, architectural heritage and archaeology are not mutually exclusive, and therefore certain buildings, structures or

features can have both attributes. The history and evolution of the built environment of the joint urban area is discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.

9.2.1 Protected Structures & the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

A protected structure is a structure or part of a structure that Carlow County Council or Laois County Council consider is of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical point of view. Details of protected structures in the joint urban area can be found in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) accompanying the Carlow County Development Plan (Appendix VIII) and the Laois County Development Plan (Appendix 1). A list of the protected structures in the joint urban area is included in Table 9.2 at the end of this chapter, along with Built Heritage Maps (Maps 9.8 to 9.13) identifying locations. The details provided should also be cross-referenced with the individual Records of Protected Structures held by Carlow County Council and Laois County Council.

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) places an obligation of local authorities to include policy and objectives for the protection of protected structures. The full extent of a protected structure can include its interior and exterior and fixtures and features forming part of same, land lying within its curtilage, and other structures within that curtilage. Curtilage is not defined by planning legislation but is understood to be the parcel of land immediately associated with a protected structure and which was or is in use for the purposes of that structure.

The placing of a structure on the RPS seeks to ensure that the character special interest of the

structure is conserved and protected, and that any changes or alterations to it are carried out in such a way as to retain and enhance this character and special interest. Works to a protected structure, which would materially affect the character of the structure, require planning permission.

In addition to the role of the RPS as referred to above, the State also maintains a National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH). This is a central database for post 1700 architectural heritage. The structures listed in the NIAH do not have statutory protection, but they do provide a basis for recommendations for inclusion on the RPS.

Some well-known and landmark examples of protected structures in Carlow-Graiguecullen include:

- Carlow Cathedral (RPS CT77)
- Carlow College St. Patricks (RPS CT73)
- St. Mary's Church of Ireland Church (RPS CT49)
- Carlow Court House (RPS CT37)
- St. Dymphna's Hospital (RPS CT25)
- Carlow Railway Station (RPS CT8)
- Oak Park Arch/Entrance Gates (RPS CT70)
- Graiguecullen Church of Ireland Church (RPS CT118)
- Former Sugar Factory Lime Kiln Tower (CW77)

Further guidance on the conservation and protection of architectural heritage, including protected structures is provided in the 'Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2011', published by the Department of Arts, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht. The Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) also provide a 'Guide to Architectural Heritage' as

part of their 'Planning Leaflets' advice series accessible at <https://www.opr.ie/planning-leaflets/>

Architectural Heritage – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

BH. P1: Ensure the protection and conservation of the character, setting and special interest of all buildings and structures (or parts of structures) and sites, listed as protected structures in the Records of Protected Structures for Carlow-Graiguecullen, including their curtilage, attendant grounds, and fixtures and fittings.

BH. P2: Preserve and enhance buildings and structures listed in the Records of Protected Structures for Carlow-Graiguecullen, and to carefully consider any development proposals that would affect their special interest, both directly and indirectly.

BH. P3: Ensure that all development proposals that affect a protected structure or a proposed protected structure in Carlow-Graiguecullen, including proposals for modifications, alterations, refurbishment, or extensions, are sympathetic to and protect, conserve and retain the character, setting and special interest of the protected structure or proposed protected structure, in accordance with the *'Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities'* (Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, 2011).

BH. P4: Require development proposals involving protected structures or proposed protected structures in Carlow-Graiguecullen, to be subject to an Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment as described in Appendix B of *'Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities'* (Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, 2011).

BH. P5: Support and promote the use of expert conservation advice, best conservation practice, and the use of appropriately skilled and experienced contractors and specialists, for any works to protected structures in Carlow-Graiguecullen, in accordance the *'Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities'* Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, 2011) and their *'Advice Series'* on how best to repair and maintain historic buildings.

BH. P6: Ensure that development proposals do not obscure views, principal elevations and the character and setting of protected structures.

BH. P7: Prevent inappropriate alterations to protected structures, and to prohibit the demolition of any protected structure unless the relevant local authority is satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist. The demolition of a protected structure with the retention of its façade will likewise not generally be permitted.

BH. P8: Promote the sympathetic maintenance, adaptation and appropriate use and reuse of protected structures in Carlow-Graiguecullen and encourage measures

that support the climate proofing of these structures.

BH. P9: Promote the retention of any original or historic building fabric including for example timber sash windows, stonework, brickwork, joinery, ironwork, traditional mortars, render and decorative or weather finishes and slate and vernacular architectural details.

BH. P10: Proactively address dereliction, endangerment, neglect, and vacancy of historic buildings in Carlow-Graiguecullen, through the use of relevant statutory provisions and through the promotion of appropriate uses and the sensitive conservation of historic buildings, in conjunction with other relevant initiatives.

BH P11: Protect and conserve important heritage items such as, gates, street furniture, post boxes and other significant historic features of interest in Carlow-Graiguecullen.

9.2.2 Architectural Conservation Areas

An Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) represents a complimentary statutory provision to the Record of Protected Structures. An ACA can include a place, area, group of structures or townscape which is either of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical interest in its own right, or which contributes to the appreciation of protected structures. This could include, for example, a terrace of houses, buildings surrounding a square, or any group of buildings which together give a special character to an area.

ACAs can serve to preserve and reinforce aspects of the built environment in urban area that contribute to its heritage and distinctiveness, such as urban grain, scale, building heights and lines. The preservation and maintenance of key building features and materials such as shop fronts, chimneystacks, sash windows and building finishes such as slate roofing and lime renders, are also important elements in the conservation of the special character of ACAs. It is important that change within ACAs is carefully managed by preserving what makes the ACA special, encouraging the refurbishment and reuse of buildings that are vacant or in poor condition, allowing for alterations and extensions where appropriate, and enabling redevelopment where it will contribute positively to the special character of the area.

The carrying out of any works that would have a material effect on the character of an ACA requires planning permission. In this regard, the owners and occupiers of non-protected structures located with the ACA should note that carrying out of works to the exterior of a building/structure located in an ACA constitutes exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of the exterior of the building/structure or that of neighbouring structures or open spaces. For example, alteration works to streetscape features such as roofs, walls, windows, doors, and rainwater goods, may not be exempted development.

Within the joint urban area there are a total of 7 no. ACAs, which are within the administrative area of Carlow County Council. The principle character of the ACAs is summarised in Table 9.1. The spatial extent of these ACAs is defined on Maps 9.1 to 9.5, and on the Built Heritage Maps

(Maps 9.8 to 9.13) included at this end of this chapter.

Architectural Conservation Areas - Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

AC. P1: Protect and enhance the historic character, heritage value and visual setting of the Architectural Conservation Areas in Carlow-Graiguecullen, and to carefully consider any development proposals that would affect the special interest of these areas.

AC. P2: Ensure that development proposals within or adjoining the Architectural Conservation Areas in Carlow-Graiguecullen are of high-quality design and finish and are sympathetic to the character of the areas. All applications within and adjoining an ACA will be assessed in the context of the following criteria and the impact of any development proposal on the immediate surroundings of the site, the broader townscape, or its landscape setting;

- The height, scale, and orientation of the development proposal;
- The bulk, massing and density of the development proposal and its layout in relation to any building line and the surrounding plan form;
- The quality and type of materials to be used in the construction of the development proposal, and any boundary treatments and landscaping;
- The design and detail of the development proposal;
- The retention of the traditional plot boundaries in the joint urban area; and,

- The retention and maintenance of historic street furniture, surfaces, and boundary treatments.

AC. P3: Avoid the removal of structures and distinctive features which make a positive contribution to the character of the Architectural Conservation Areas in Carlow-Graiguecullen, including buildings, building features / fixtures / fittings, shop fronts, boundary treatments, street furniture, landscaping and paving.

AC. P4: Require development proposals in the Architectural Conservation Areas to have regard to the *'Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities'* (Department of Arts, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht, 2011) and their *'Advice Series'* on how best to repair and maintain historic buildings.

AC. P5: Encourage the retention, repair and re-use of materials which characterise the vernacular architecture of the Architectural Conservation Areas, including stone, slate, timber windows and doors, and decorative renders.

AC. P6: Strongly discourage proposals for the demolition of a building or structure that positively contributes to the character of an Architectural Conservation Area, except in exceptional circumstances. Such applications will be required to be accompanied by a photographic survey, condition report and architectural heritage assessment of the structure and an assessment of the impact of the replacement building on the character of the ACA.

AC. P7: Require that proposals for infill development within an Architectural Conservation Area in Carlow-Graiguecullen, and proposals contiguous to an ACA, should include an analysis of how the new development will complement the setting, character, and appearance of the ACA.

AC. P8: Reduce, prevent, and encourage the removal of visual and urban clutter within the Architectural Conservation Areas in Carlow-Graiguecullen including, where appropriate:

- Traffic management structures
- Utility structures and signage
- Signage (including signs protruding from the façade) at ground and upper floor levels;
- Obsolete/unnecessary lighting, electrics, cables, ducts Internally affixed stickers;
- Internally illuminated signage.

AC. P9: Encourage the repair and enhancement of existing shopfronts and the replacement of inappropriate shop fronts where necessary. The design of new shop fronts is required to act in harmony with the upper floor facades to complement and enhance the character of a building and streetscape plots.

AHP.10: Require development proposals relating to existing shopfronts or new shopfronts, to include proposals which would, where relevant, incorporate the removal of visually intrusive elements from buildings such as inappropriate signage, lighting and ancillary cables and ducts, and inappropriate materials.

Architectural Conservation Areas - Objective

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

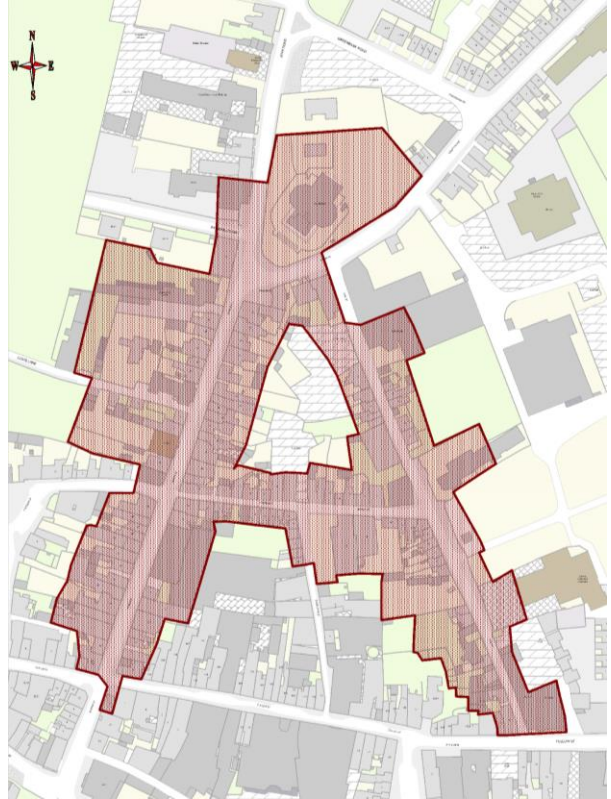
AC. O1: Address dereliction and promote appropriate and sensitive reuse and rehabilitation of buildings, building features and sites within the Architectural Conservation Areas located in Carlow-Graiguecullen.

Table 9.1: Architectural Conservation Areas

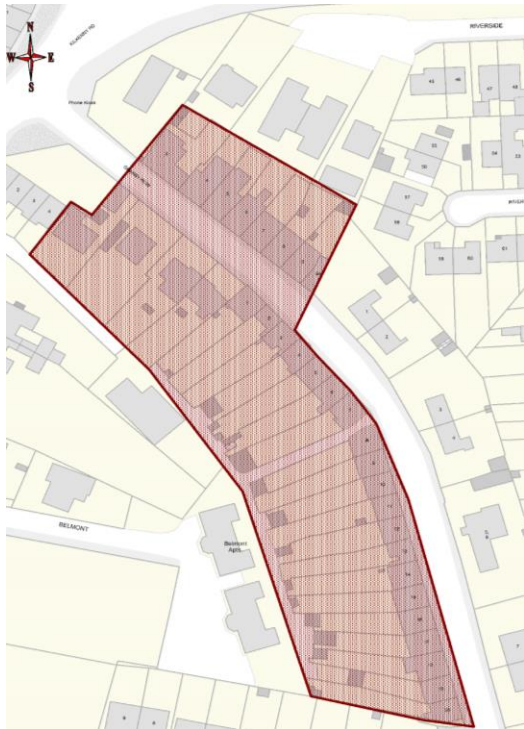
ACA	Character
Montgomery Street	The ACA is a residential street that was laid out in the early 19 th century. The street comprises terraces of 2-storey and some single storey houses. Individually the houses on the street are not of particular architectural distinction, but together form a street of great charm.
Dublin Street	Dublin Street was built as a residential street. Like neighbouring Tullow Street, it has tall, steep roofed buildings which date from the 18 th and 19 th centuries. Some of the buildings retain their original doorcases. The earliest surviving house is in Dublin Street with a plaque dated 1699. There are a number of protected structures on the street.
Brown Street	The street is formed by late 18 th century houses, a number of which still retain their round-headed architraved doorcases. As a group these houses have a greater historic value than that which they might merit individually. A plaque on the wall of at the Dublin Street end of Brown Street (i.e gable of no. 15 Dublin Street) bears one of Brown Street's previous names Hunt Street and the year 1776. In 1731 Brown Street was extended eastwards to join College Street.
College Street	College Street is a narrow attractive street linking Tullow Street to the south to Court Place to the north. The character of the street is particularly influenced by historic landmark buildings and grounds at Carlow College St. Patricks and Carlow Cathedral.
Granby Row	Granby Row runs between Kilkenny Road and Hanover Cross. Previously known as Beggars Row, Granby Row has a strong uniformity in character, the historic streetscape being defined by a notable terrace of 2-storey granite houses on its eastern side and 2-storey houses on narrow deep plots along its western side.
Little Barrack Street	This ACA includes terrace of 16 no. small and historic single storey houses along the southern side of the street. Along its northern side the street would have historically aligned with a high boundary wall enclosing the British Army Barracks. It is one of the last streets in the area to have a cobbled footpath.
Maryborough Street	The character of this ACA is informed by a prominent position just west of the River Barrow and close to Graiguecullen Bridge, Maryborough Street having a principal access from the south off Bridge Street. Maryborough Street comprises part of the historic built fabric of Graiguecullen, with some notable examples of historic 2 and 3-storey townhouses and a 3-storey stone mill building.



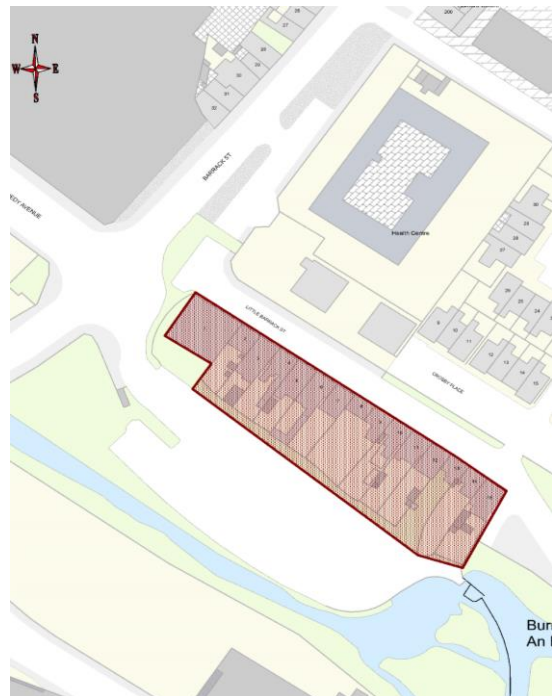
Map 9.1: Montgomery Street ACA



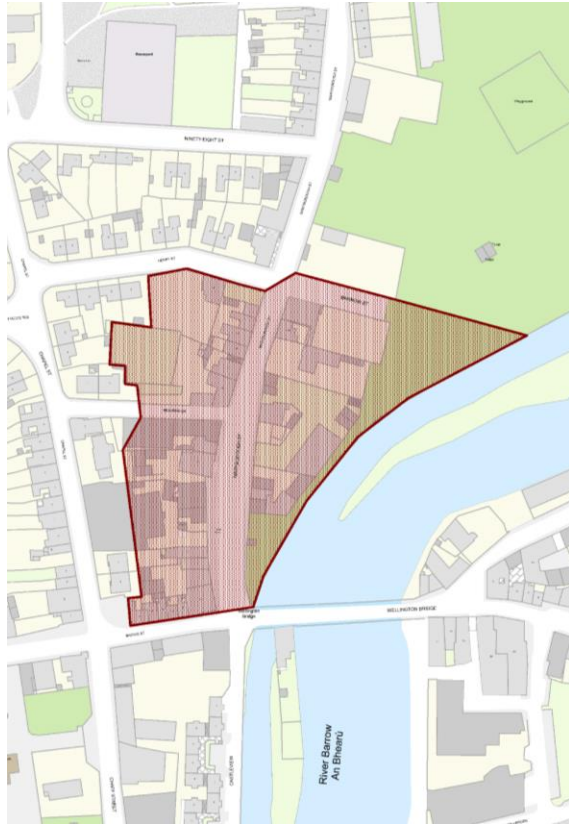
Map 9.2: Dublin Street, College Street & Brown Street ACAs



Map 9.3: Granby Row ACA



Map 9.4: Little Barrack Street ACA



Map 9.5: Maryborough Street ACA

9.2.3 Vernacular Architecture

Alongside buildings and structures listed as protected structures or located in ACAs, can be more restrained and sometimes less obvious vernacular architecture that makes an equally important contribution to the built fabric and character of the townscape of Carlow-Graiguecullen. This type of architecture was typically concerned with fulfilling more ordinary and functional purposes and uses, such as dwellings, outhouses, street furniture, and shopfronts. However, in the present day it can represent a valuable physical reminder of traditional building forms and types, and local building skills and materials. Carlow County Council and Laois County Council will therefore encourage the retention, protection, and reuse of vernacular architecture in the joint urban

area, rather than its demolition, replacement, or dereliction.

Vernacular Architecture – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

VA. P1: Support proposals to retain, repair and refurbish vernacular buildings or structures in the joint urban area that are in a rundown or derelict condition, subject to the use of appropriate traditional building materials and methods and provided that proposals for redevelopment / extensions are of an appropriate design and do not detract from the character of the original building or structure.

VA. P2: Promote the protection, retention, public awareness, and appropriate renewal and regeneration of the vernacular buildings and structures not listed in the Records of Protected Structures for Carlow-Graiguecullen.

VA. P3: Resist and discourage the demolition of vernacular architecture in Carlow-Graiguecullen, and where appropriate promote the sympathetic renewal, maintenance, adaptation, and re-use of historic building stock, and encourage the retention and repair of original fabric such as windows, doors, wall renders, roof coverings, shopfronts, and other significant features, whether protected or not.

VA. P4: Ensure proposed redevelopment / extensions to vernacular building stock in Carlow-Graiguecullen are sympathetic to the setting, design, scale, footprint, and materials of the existing buildings.

Extensions should generally be located to the rear and not obscure the form or layout of the existing building, the substantial removal of walling is not generally recommended, and connecting the existing building and extension should minimise the number of new openings and ideally use existing openings.

- VA. P5:** Require development proposals affecting vernacular buildings in the joint urban area to be accompanied by a detailed measured survey, photographic record and written report carried out by a professional with appropriate conservation expertise and, preferably, an understanding of vernacular buildings.

9.3 Archaeological Heritage

Archaeological heritage can be defined as the surviving material remains of human presence in the landscape, as left by past societies and cultures. Archaeology is the study of human past using these material remains. It is most often the case that archaeological heritage comprises sites where there are no above-ground visible features, but where below surface remains are expected or are known to exist. Below ground, above ground, or underwater, archaeological heritage can include known and as yet unidentified sites, monuments, objects, man-made structures or altered natural structures. Urban areas may contain important sub-surface archaeological deposits and apparently modern, or relatively modern structures may contain much earlier fabric.

The National Monuments Act 1930 (as amended) provides for the legal protection of archaeological heritage from unauthorised

damage or interference. The Act's most widely applying provision is the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), which consists of a statutory audit of all known sites and features of historical and archaeological importance. All sites identified in the RMP are protected under Section 12 of the Act. The establishment of the statutory RMP was informed by a previous Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) issued to all Counties in the State between 1984 to 1992. The RMP can be accessed through the Archaeological Survey of Ireland database, including an historic environment viewer, at www.archaeology.ie. Information on archaeology in the planning process is also provided by the OPR in their 'Planning Leaflet' advice service accessible at <https://www.opr.ie/planning-leaflets/>

Some archaeological heritage in Carlow-Graiguecullen, for example Carlow Castle, will appear on the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and on Carlow County Council's Record of Protected Structures (RPS), and therefore is protected by both the National Monuments Act 1930 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). A list of the recorded archaeology in the joint urban area is included in Table 9.3 at the end of this chapter, along with a Built Heritage Maps identifying locations (Maps 9.8 to 9.13). It is also advised to cross-reference the details provided in this chapter with the data available on the Record of Monuments and Places which can be accessed at www.archaeology.ie

9.3.1 Zone of Archaeological Potential

A Zone of Archaeological Potential is defined on the basis of the Record of Monuments and Places as already referred to. It therefore relates to a zone or area in which significant archaeology has been found and where there is a high likelihood of further such findings. The Zone of

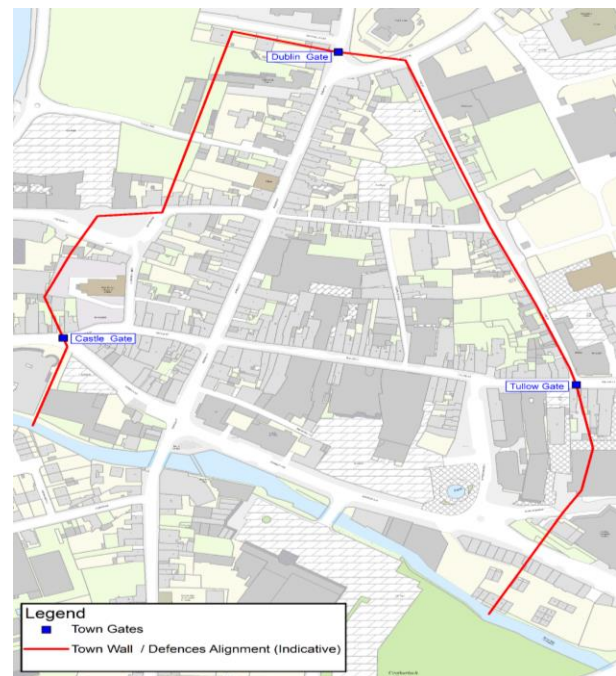
Archaeological Potential for Carlow-Graiguecullen is identified on Map 9.7 , and on the Objectives Map (12.2) accompanying this JULAP.

Development proposals located within the Zone of Archaeological Potential and/or close to known archaeological monuments/sites, including development sites that are extensive in area, will be required as part of the planning application process, or by condition of a permission, to carry out archaeological assessment, monitoring, testing or excavation within the area either prior to the planning decision or prior to any development proceeding on site. Carlow County Council and Laois County Council will consult with the Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage and other statutory consultees when considering planning applications in their respective administrative areas that relate to development proposals on or in the vicinity of archaeological monuments/sites.

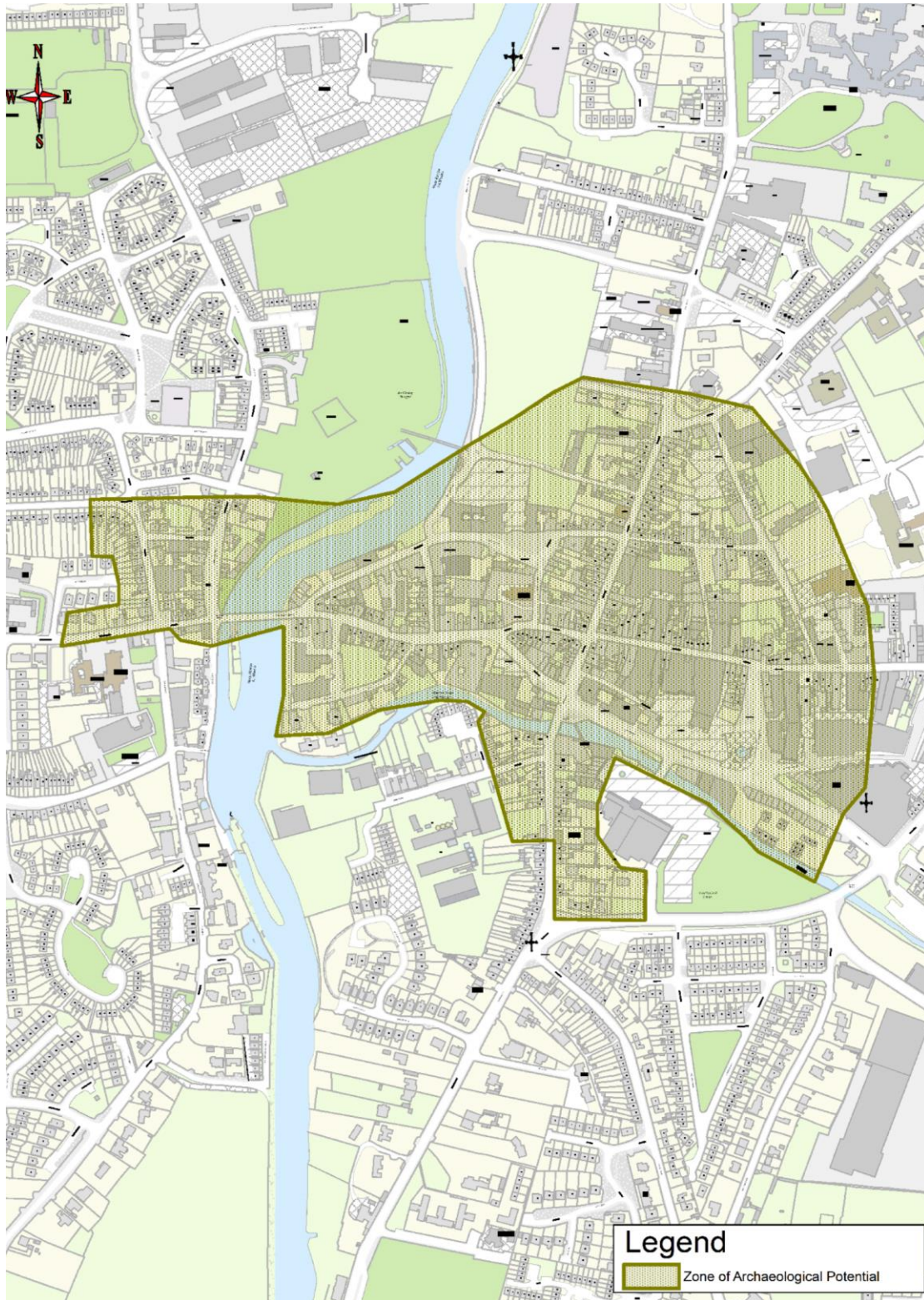
The historic environment viewer accessible at www.archaeology.ie also has a feature that enables a 'Zone of Notification' to be shown for archaeological monuments/sites. These notification zones do not define the exact extent of the monuments/sites but rather are intended to identify them for the purposes of notification under Section 12 of the National Monuments Act 1930 (as amended) i.e., notification required to be given to Minister for Housing Local Government and Heritage of intention to carry out works on or close to a recorded monument/site.

9.3.2 Medieval Town Wall/Defences

The significance of Carlow Town in the medieval period is attested to by the construction of town defences, which were built in the latter part of the 14th century. The town defences consisted of a wall and a number of town gates. All upstanding traces of the town wall were gone by the early 18th century, and therefore its exact course or route is unknown. However, there have been consistent suggestions that the defences formed an irregular-shaped triangle as indicated on Map 9.6, along with three main town gates at Tullow Street, the northern end of Dublin Street, and Castle Street. The postulated line of the wall is also shown in the OPWs Urban Archaeological Survey for County Carlow (1990). The Carlow Town wall/defences are recorded on the Record of Monuments and Places (and the Sites and Monuments Record) under reference CW007-018006.



Map 9.6: Postulated route and location of Carlow Town Wall/Defences and three main gates



Map 9.7: Carlow-Graiguecullen Zone of Archaeological Potential

Archaeological Heritage – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

AH. P1: Secure the preservation (either in situ or by record) of all archaeological monuments in Carlow-Graiguecullen included in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and their settings, and of all sites and features of significant archaeological or historical interest, including potential and previously unknown sites or features, in consultation with the National Monuments Service in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

AH. P2: Safeguard the archaeological heritage located within the boundary of this JULAP and avoid negative impacts on sites, monuments, features, or objects of significant historical or archaeological interest.

AH. P3: Ensure that any development proposal in the joint urban area that may, by reason of location, scale, nature, layout, or design, have potential implications for archaeological heritage (including areas and sites of archaeological potential), shall be subject to an archaeological assessment. The archaeological assessment will seek to ensure that the development proposal can be sited and designed to avoid impacting on archaeological heritage. Any archaeological excavation shall be carried out in accordance with best practice outlined by the NMS, the National Museum of Ireland, and the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland. In all such cases the relevant local authority shall consult with the National

Monuments Service in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

AH. P4: Have regard to the Record of Monuments (RMP) and Places, the OPWs Urban Archaeological Survey for County Carlow (1990), and archaeological sites identified subsequent to the publication of the RMP when assessing planning applications for development. No development shall be permitted in the vicinity of a recorded feature, where it detracts from the setting of the feature or which is injurious to its cultural or educational value.

AH. P5: Ensure the protection of the Zone of Archaeological Potential for Carlow-Graiguecullen as identified in the Record of Monuments and Places, and the Zone of Notification for archaeology, and to ensure that planning applications in these areas are referred to appropriate statutory consultees.

AH. P6: Promote public awareness of the archaeological heritage of Carlow-Graiguecullen, and encourage where appropriate and practicable, the provision of appropriately designed and located signage, interpretative material, and public access (including disabled access) for archaeological sites under the direct ownership, guardianship, or control of Carlow County Council and / or Laois County Councils and/or the state.

AH. P7: Ensure remains of the historic Carlow Town Walls/Defences are retained where these still exist (including

subterranean remains) and to promote public awareness and understanding of the existence and role of the Town Wall/Defences and their route within the built environment.

AH. P8: Protect the medieval core of the joint urban area and retain, except in exceptional circumstances, the existing street layout, historic building lines and traditional plot widths where these derive from medieval or earlier origins.

AH. P9: Encourage and provide for the protection and maintenance of historic burial grounds within Carlow-Graigucullen, in co-operation with the Office of Public Works and the National Monuments Service in the Department of the Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

AH. P10: Protect and conserve underwater archaeological heritage, including that associated with the River Barrow and Burren River, and including potential and previously unknown sites or features, in consultation with the National Monuments Service in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

9.4 Climate Change & Built Heritage

The impacts of climate change as discussed in Chapter 11 of this JULAP will have implications for built heritage in Carlow-Graigucullen. More extreme weather events, including hotter and dryer summers and warmer and wetter winters, could result in structural damage to monuments and historic buildings in the joint urban area. Carlow County Council and Laois County Council therefore recognise the importance of climate proofing structures, including the provisions of the Department of Culture Heritage and the Gaeltacht Built & Archaeological Heritage, Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan (2019).

Climate Change & Built Heritage – Policy

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

CCH. P1: Increase public awareness of the impacts of climate change on built heritage, and support and promote measures to climate proof-built heritage in the joint urban area having regard to the *'Built & Archaeological Heritage, Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan'* (Department of Culture Heritage and the Gaeltacht 2019)

Table 9.2: Protected Structures - Carlow-Graiguecullen JULAP Boundary

RPS Number	Address	Description	NAIH No.
RPS 387	Killeshin Church of Ireland, Graigue	Detached six-bay Georgian Gothic-style Church of Ireland church, c. 1830, with spire and chancel.	12803702
CW078	Athy Road	Strawhall House	
CW077	Former Sugar Factory, Athy Rd	Lime Kiln / Cooling Tower	
CW069	Oak Park Demesne, Oak Park	Oak Park House	10300206
CW422	Oak Park Demesne	Iron Bridge	10300207
CW421	Oak Park Demesne	Old Stable Blocks	10300205
CW424	Oak Park Demesne	Mausoleum	10300204
CW418	Oak Park Demesne	Walled Garden and Building	
CW419	Oak Park Demesne	The Dairy	10300208
CW423	Oak Park Demesne	Graveyard and Church Ruins	10300214
CW420	Oak Park Demesne	The Stable Complex	10300215
CW070	Oak Park Demesne, Oak Park	Entrance Gates	10300209
CW442	Hacketstown Road, Carlow	Pollerton House Gates	10300711
CW443	Hacketstown Road, Carlow	Pollerton House Lodge	10300712
CW444	Palatine Road, Carlow	Pollerton House Gateway	10300715
CW052	Brown's Hill, Carlow	Brown's Hill House	10300724
CW051	Brown's Hill House	Browns Hill House Stables	10300723
CW310	Brown's Hill House	Garden House	
CW244	Brown's Hill Road, Carlow	Brown's Hill House Gate Lodge	10000725
CW397	Mortarstown	Brannigan's	10300710
CW066	Mortarstown Upper	Erindale	10300702
CW395	Mortarstown Upper	Erindale Stables	10300702
CW042	Ballinacarrig	Culm Crusher	10300726
CW104	Ballinacarrig	Gleb House	
CT8	Railway Road	Carlow Railway Station	10000484
CT9	Railway Road	Bishop Foley School	10000683
CT2	St. Leo's Convent of Mercy	Entrance Gates	10000677
CT3	Dublin Road	St. Leo's Convent of Mercy	10000678
CT4	Dublin Road	1 Leinster Crescent	10000679
CT5	Dublin Road	2 Leinster Crescent	10000680
CT6	Dublin Road	3 Leinster Crescent	10000681
CT7	Dublin Road	4 Leinster Crescent	10000682
CT1	Barrow track	Graveyard	10000856
CT25	Athy Road	St. Dympna's Hospital	10000751

Table 9.2: Protected Structures - Carlow-Graigecullen JULAP Boundary

RPS Number	Address	Description	NAIH No.
CT31	St. Dympna's Hospital	Gate Lodge	10000752
CT24	Athy Road	Kelvin Grove	10000790
CT101	Athy Road	Boundary Wall	10000640
CT26	Athy Road	House (Stella Maris)	10000647
CT27	Athy Road	Masonic Lodge	10000653
CT28	Athy Road	House	10000622
CT29	Athy Road	House	10000621
CT30	Athy Road	McGovern Solicitors	10000620
CT33	Athy Road	Greenville	10000619
CT32	Athy Road	Presbyterian Church	10000618
CT35	Athy Road	Carlow VEC	10000617
CT34	Athy Road	Methodist Church	10000654
CT43	Dublin Street	Assembly Rooms	10000774
CT44	Dublin Road	Capuchin Friary	10000777
CT47	Hay Market	Town Hall	10000072
CT48	Hay Market	Clerkins	10000076
CT49	Church Street	St. Mary's COI	10000107
CT112	Church Street	Robert Daniel's Solicitors	
CT110	Dublin Street	Cigar Divan	
CT111	Dublin Street	Connie Byrne Hyland	
CT45	Dublin Street	Tom Kehoe Auctioneers	10000383
CT16	Byrne Street	Deighton Memorial Hall	10000186
CT102	Dublin Street	Jenning's Opticians	
CT103	Dublin Street	Alana	
CT42	Dublin Street	Redsetter	10000367
CT105	Dublin Street	Lamberts / Second to None	
CT106	Dublin Street	Hennessy's	
CT107	Dublin Street	House	
CT108	Dublin Street	House	
CT109	Dublin Street	Millard Solicitors	
CT38	Court Place	Bank of Ireland	10000614
CT39	Athy Road	Malcomson Law Solicitors	10000615
CT36	Athy Road	Byrne Solicitors	10000615
CT37	Court Place	Court House	10000655
CT41	Court Place	Former Bank House (Office)	10000657
CT40	Court Place	The Irishman's	10000661

Table 9.2: Protected Structures - Carlow-Graigucullen JULAP Boundary

RPS Number	Address	Description	NAIH No.
CT72	College Street	Parish Hall	10000434
CT75	College Street	Entrance Gates St. Patricks College	10000435
CT76	College Street	Gate Lodge St. Patrick's College	10000436
CT73	College Street	St. Patrick's College	10000437
CT74	College Street	Rear extension St Patrick's Collee	10000438
CT77	College Street	Carlow Cathedral	10000188
CT78	College Street	Railings and Gates, Carlow Cathedral	10000439
CT89	Tulow Street	Rainbow Record's / Dinn Ri	10000265
CT98	Tulow Street	Byrne's Bookstore	10000342
CT99	Tulow Street	EBS	10000343
CT88	Tulow Street	Scragg's Alley	10000262
CT100	Tulow Street	Tully's Bar	10000350
CT90	Tulow Street	The Barrack's	10000271
CT97	Tulow Street	Carlow Library	10000314
CT91	Tulow Street	Mary Kelly's	10000289
CT96	Tulow Street	Racey Byrne's	10000307
CT95	Tulow Street	Paddy Powers	10000306
CT92	Tulow Street	Ladbrook's	10000297
CT93	Shamrock Square	Shop	10000300
CT94	Shamrock Square	Shop	10000299
CT83	Barrack Street	O'Farrell Auctioneers	10000516
CT84	Barrack Street	Dr. Doyles Surgery	10000517
CT86	Kennedy Avenue / Barrack Street	Walls of Former Goal	10000567
CT85	Kennedy Avenue	Entrance Gates of Former Goal	10000566
CT87	Carlow Shopping	Governor's House of Former Goal	10000565
CT80	College Street	Former Warehouse	10000441
CT79	College Street	Tapas and Wine Bar	10000440
CT19	Burrin Street	Entrance Gates Hanover House	10000236
CT116	58 Burrin Street	House	
CT115	57 Burrin Street	House	
CT114	56 Burrin Street	House	
CT18	49 Burrin Street	House	10000228
CT10	Pembroke	House	10000253
CT15	Pembroke	Verona	1000901
CT14	Pembroke	Pembroke House	10000247
CT13	Pembroke	Dunmore House	10000246

Table 9.2: Protected Structures - Carlow-Graiguecullen JULAP Boundary

RPS Number	Address	Description	NAIH No.
CT12	Pembroke	Old Mason	10000245
CT11	Pembroke	St. Anthony's	10000244
CT17	Burrin Street	Burrin House	10000189
CT50	Carlow	Carlow Castle	
CT113		Wellington Bridge	
CT51	Castlehill	Crisp Centre	10000096
CT52	Castlehill	House	10000097
CT62	Graiguecullen	Bridge Stores	10000059
CT57	Chaff Street, Graiguecullen	Castle View House	10000020
CT58	Chaff Street	Former Constabulary Barracks	10000025
CT59	Castlecomer Road	St Clare's RC Church	10000026
CT60	Castlecomer Road	Poor Clare's Convent	10000027
CT61	Maryborough Street	House	10000046
CT54	Castle Hill	Haughney's Warehouse	10000135
CT53	Castle Hill	Corcorans Castle Inn	10000134
CT20	Charlotte Street	Former Quaker House	10000428
CT21	Hanover	The Hermitage	10000607
CT22	Athy Road	Bishop's Palace	10000785
CT23	Athy Road	Belgriffin House	10000786
CT46	33 Dublin Street	St. Brigid's Hospital	10000768
CT56	Leighlin Road	House	10000009
CT55	Leighlin Road	House	10000003
CT71	Green Lane	Youth Centre	10000707
CT81	Pollerton Road	Pollerton Castle	10000877
CT82	Pollerton Road	Warehouse	10000453
CT117	Potato Markey	Pillar Box	
CT118	Graiguecullen	Graiguecullen COI Church	
CT63	No. 6 Kennedy Street	House/Commercial Premises	10000103
CT69	Kilkenny Road	The Rectory	10000865
CT70	Kilkenny Road	Otterholt	10000866
CT64	Kilkenny Road	Barrowville	10000223
CT67	Kilkenny Road	Galaroga	10000862
CT68	Kilkenny Road	Roseville or Borlum	10000863
CT66	Kilkenny Road	Grosvenor Place	10000860
CT65	Kilkenny Road	Garryowen	10000859

Table 9.3: Record of Monuments and Places - Carlow-Graiguecullen JULAP Boundary

RMP	TOWNLAND	MONUMENT TYPE
CW007-004	POLLERTON LITTLE	Burial Ground
CW007-018006	CARLOW	Town defences
CW007-057	CHAPELSTOWN	Enclosure
CW007-018	CARLOW, GRAIGUE	Historic town
CW002-004001	STRAWHALL	Redundant record
CW002-005	STRAWHALL	Enclosure
CW002-006	STRAWHALL	Ring-ditch
CW002-007001	OAKPARK OR PAINESTOWN	Church
CW002-008001	OAKPARK OR PAINESTOWN	Ring-ditch
CW002-010	OAKPARK OR PAINESTOWN	Ringfort - rath
CW002-011	OAKPARK OR PAINESTOWN	Enclosure
CW002-012	OAKPARK OR PAINESTOWN	Ringfort - rath
CW002-014	POLLERTON BIG	Enclosure
CW007-001	CARLOW	Burial ground
CW007-002	POLLERTON BIG	Dovecote
CW007-003	POLLERTON BIG	Designed landscape - tree-ring
CW007-005	POLLERTON BIG	Armorial plaque
CW007-006	KERNANSTOWN	Enclosure
CW007-007	KERNANSTOWN	Enclosure
CW007-009	CHAPELSTOWN	Ecclesiastical site
CW007-010	KERNANSTOWN	Megalithic tomb - portal tomb
CW007-018002	CARLOW	Castle - Anglo-Norman masonry castle
CW007-018003	CARLOW	Bridge
CW007-018004	CARLOW	Bridge
CW007-018005	CARLOW	Mill - unclassified
CW007-018007	CARLOW	Church
CW007-019	CARLOW	Enclosure
CW007-020	BALLINACARRIG	Moated site
CW007-021	RATHNAPISH	Enclosure
CW007-022	CARLOW	Enclosure
CW007-023	CARLOW	Ringfort - rath
CW007-024	BALLINACARRIG, CHAPELSTOWN, STAPLESTOWN	Bridge
CW007-063	KERNANSTOWN	Burial ground
CW007-065	CHAPELSTOWN	Enclosure
CW007-066	CHAPELSTOWN	Enclosure
CW007-067	CHAPELSTOWN	Enclosure

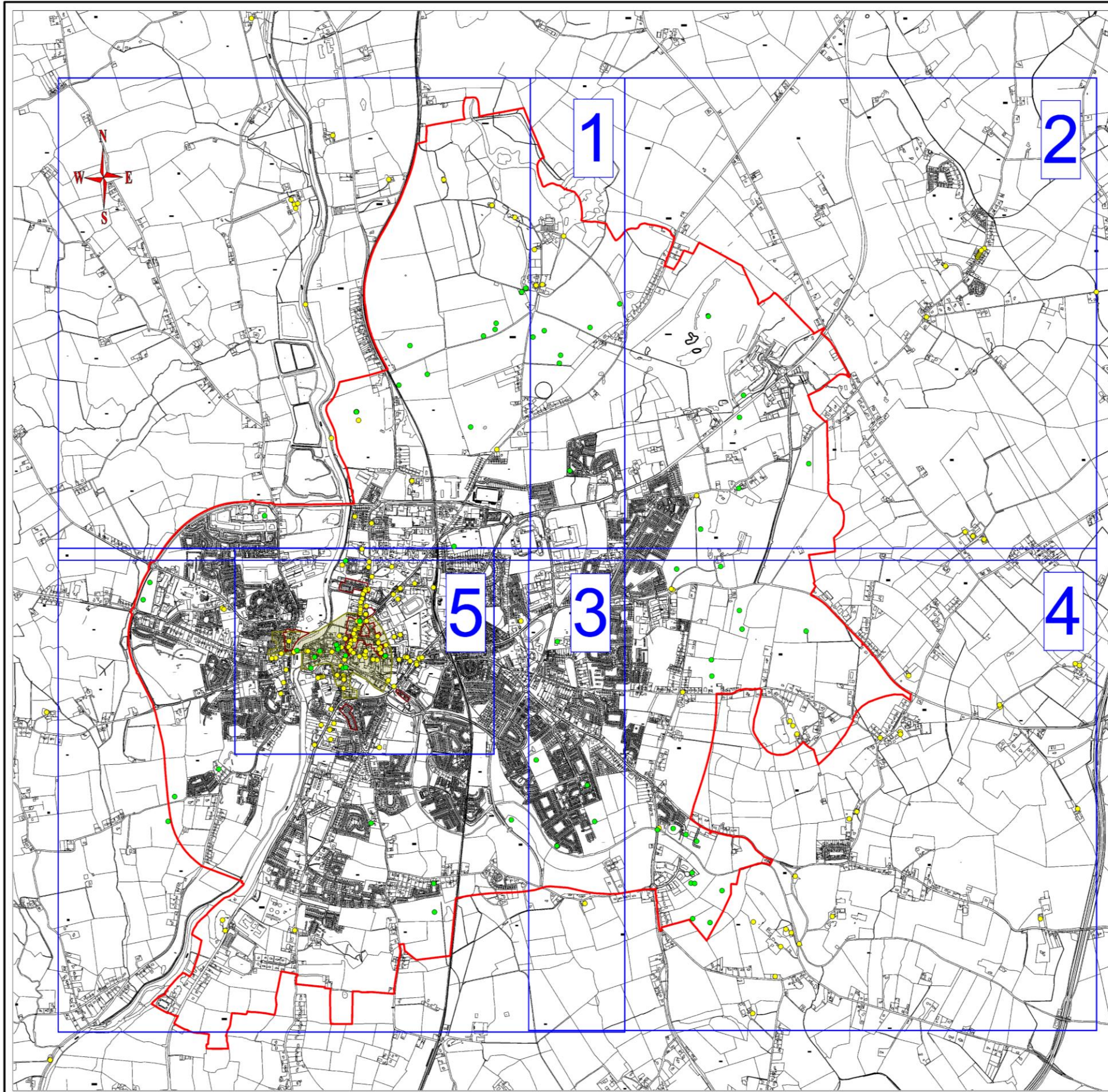
CW007-069	STAPLESTOWN	Field system
CW007-070	STAPLESTOWN	Redundant record
CW007-071	STAPLESTOWN	Enclosure
CW007-076	QUINAGH	Enclosure
CW002-004002	STRAWHALL	Redundant record
CW002-004003	STRAWHALL	Redundant record
CW002-008002	OAKPARK OR PAINESTOWN	Ring-ditch
CW002-008003	OAKPARK OR PAINESTOWN	Ring-ditch
CW007-080	STAPLESTOWN	Ring-ditch
CW007-081	STAPLESTOWN	Enclosure
CW007-082	STAPLESTOWN	Enclosure
CW002-004	STRAWHALL	Flat cemetery
CW007-018016	CARLOW	Tomb - effigial
CW007-146	POLLERTON LITTLE	Cremation pit
CW002-019	OAKPARK OR PAINESTOWN	Ring-ditch
CW007-018009	CARLOW	Graveyard
CW007-018010	CARLOW	Graveyard
CW002-007002	OAKPARK OR PAINESTOWN	Graveyard
CW007-018011	CARLOW	Redundant record
CW007-159	CARLOW	Linear earthwork
LA037-015	CROSSNEEN	Ring-ditch
LA037-003	CROSSNEEN	Ringfort - rath
LA037-013001	GRAIGUE (Slievemargy By.)	Burnt spread
LA037-013002	GRAIGUE (Slievemargy By.)	Burnt spread
LA032-038	GRAIGUE (Slievemargy By.)	Burnt spread
CW002-020001	OAKPARK OR PAINESTOWN	Enclosure
CW002-020002	OAKPARK OR PAINESTOWN	Field system
CW002-021	OAKPARK OR PAINESTOWN	Ring-ditch
CW002-022	OAKPARK OR PAINESTOWN	Designed landscape feature
CW007-167	CARLOW	Stone head (present location)
CW007-018017	CARLOW	Battlefield
CW002-024	OAKPARK OR PAINESTOWN	Enclosure
CW007-174	CARLOW	Enclosure
CW007-175	QUINAGH	Enclosure - large enclosure
CW002-025	POLLERTON LITTLE	Enclosure
LA037-018	CROSSNEEN	Ring-ditch
CW002-026	STRAWHALL	Ring-ditch
CW007-181	CARLOW	Tomb - effigial (present location)

CARLOW / GRAIGUECULLEN
DRAFT JOINT URBAN
LOCAL AREA PLAN
2024 - 2030



Legend

- National Monuments Record
- Record of Protected Structures
- Architectural Conservation Area
- Zone of Archaeological Potential
- JULAP Boundary

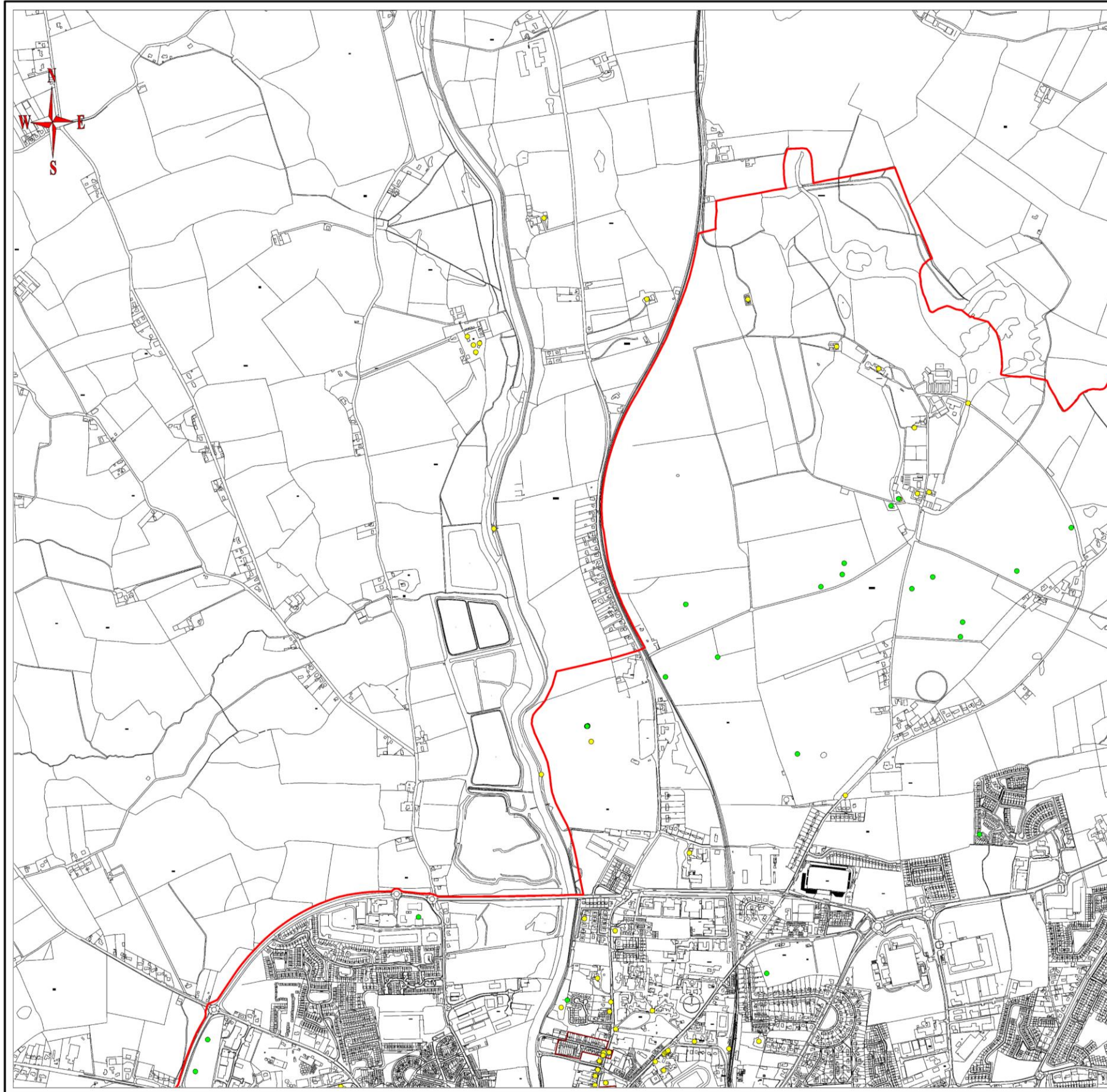


**Built Heritage Map
Map Grid 9.8**



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CARLOW / GRAIGUECULLEN DRAFT JOINT URBAN LOCAL AREA PLAN 2024 - 2030



Legend

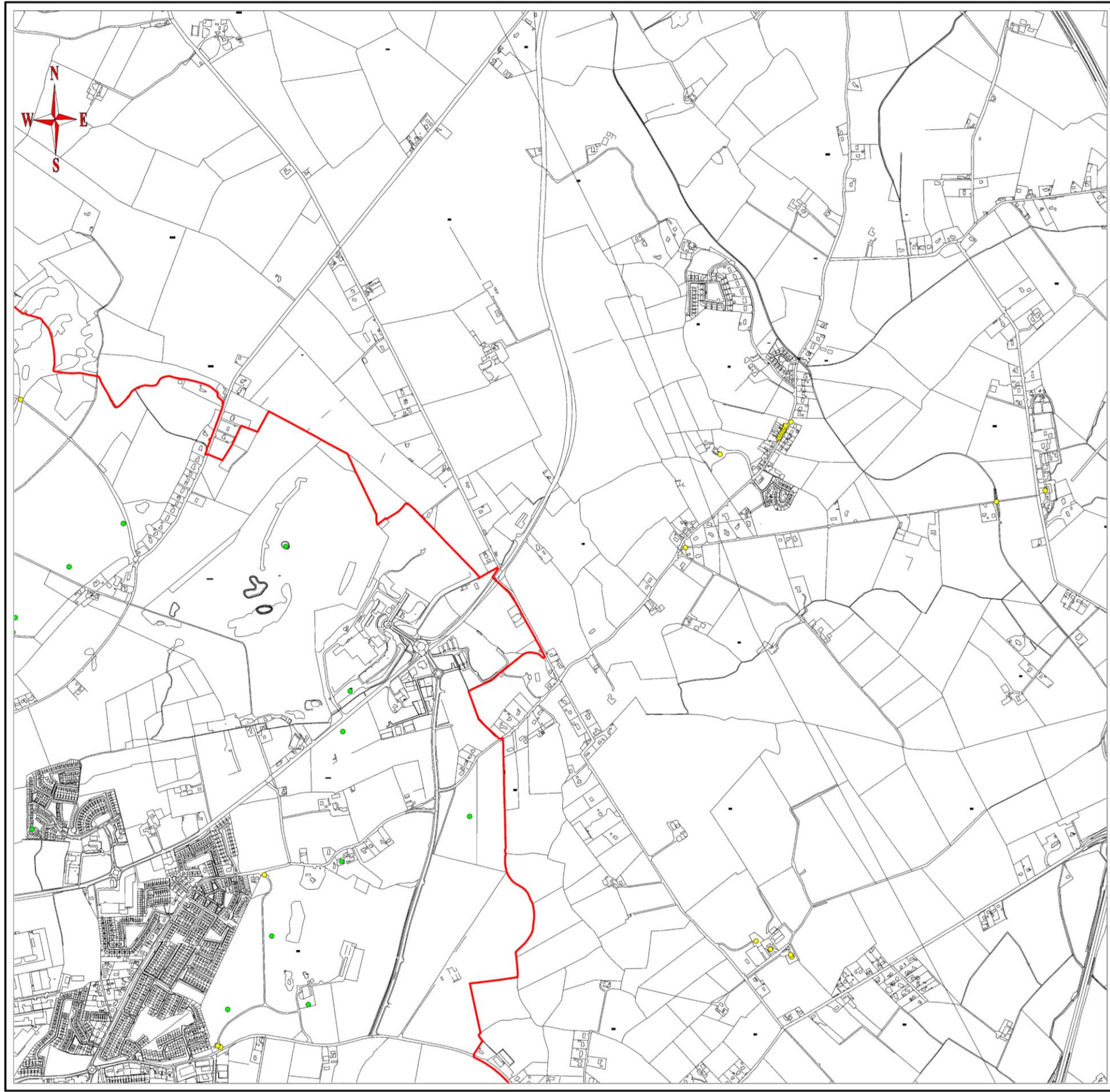
- National Monuments Record
- Record of Protected Structures
- Architectural Conservation Area
- Zone of Archaeological Potential
- JULAP Boundary

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Legend

- National Monuments Record
- Record of Protected Structures
- Architectural Conservation Area
- Zone of Archaeological Potential
- JULAP Boundary

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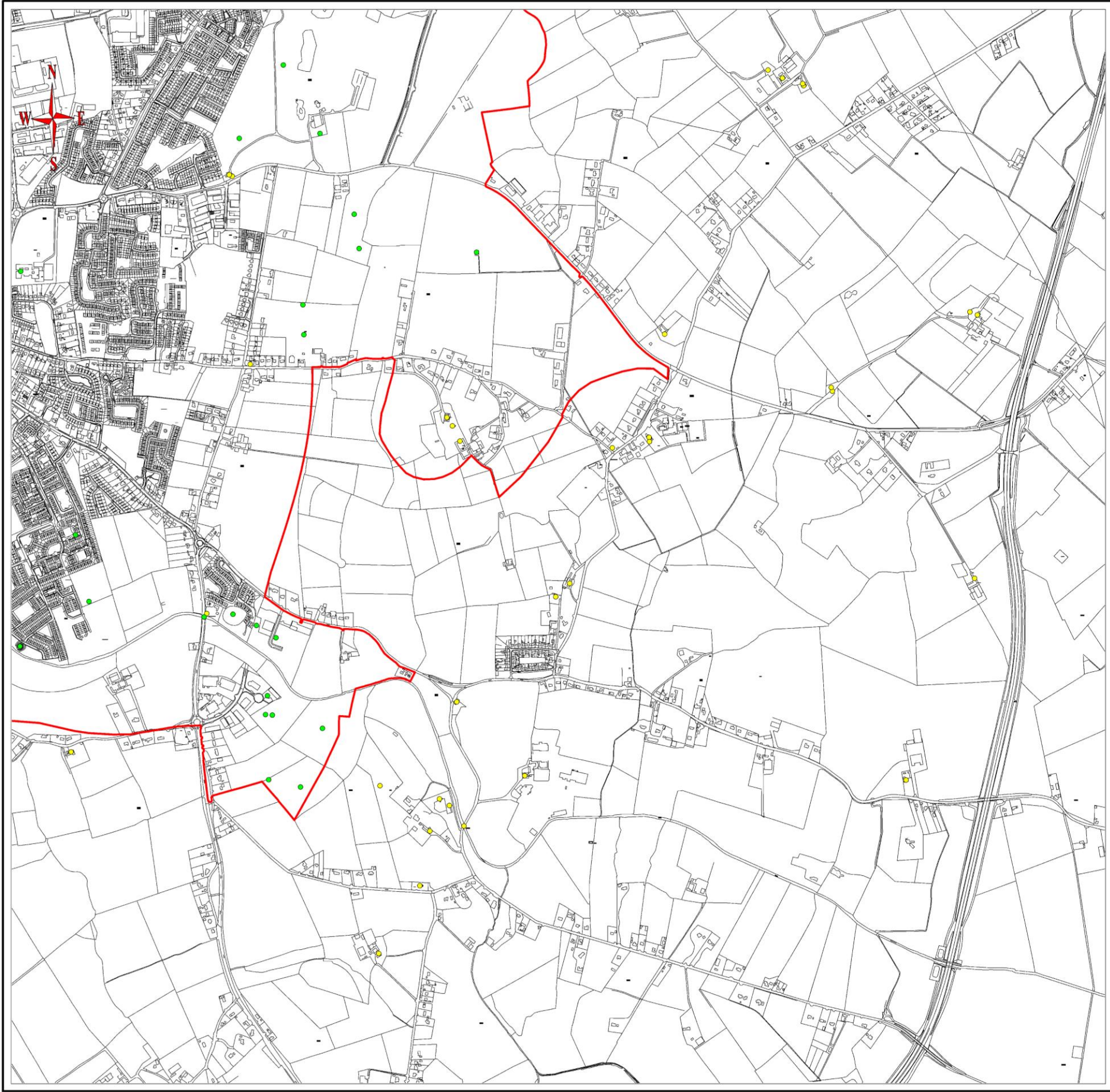
- Legend**
- National Monuments Record
 - Record of Protected Structures
 - ▭ Architectural Conservation Area
 - ▭ Zone of Archaeological Potential
 - ▭ JULAP Boundary

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- Record of Protected Structures
- ▭ Architectural Conservation Area
- ▭ Zone of Archaeological Potential
- ▭ JULAP Boundary

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2024 - 2030



Legend

- National Monuments Record
- Record of Protected Structures
- ▭ Architectural Conservation Area
- ▭ Zone of Archaeological Potential
- ▭ JULAP Boundary

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Chapter 10
Natural Heritage, Green Infrastructure
& Landscape

Chapter 10: Natural Heritage, Green Infrastructure and Landscape

Aim: To protect and enhance the natural heritage and landscape of Carlow-Graigucullen, thereby ensuring it makes a significant and positive contribution to biodiversity and the public realm, to the health, well-being, and recreational needs of residents, and to the role of green infrastructure as a natural asset capable of strengthening climate resilience in the joint urban area.

10.0 Introduction

Natural heritage applies to all elements of the natural environment, including native plants and animals and the landscapes and habitats they occupy. These elements of the natural environment are also commonly referred to as biodiversity, a separate term which gives recognition to the variety of living things in a particular habitat or landscape, and to the interconnectivity and interdependencies that can exist between them. Conserving and enhancing natural heritage and biodiversity is an integral part of good environmental management and sustainable development.

Although an urban settlement, Carlow-Graigucullen supports significant natural heritage spaces and corridors, some valuable examples of which include the River Barrow, the Burren River, Oak Park Forest Park, and Carlow Town Park. Protecting and enhancing this natural heritage can make a significant contribution to the health and well-being of residents in the joint urban area, at the same time as providing opportunities for economic

growth, tourism, and recreation. Equally, the interconnected network of natural heritage features in the joint urban area, as a form of green infrastructure, can deliver a range of key ecosystem services that can contribute towards the protection of biodiversity, sustainable urban drainage, flood management, and climate action. Further details on natural heritage, green infrastructure and landscape can be found in Chapters 9 and 10 of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028, and in Chapter 11 of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027.

10.1 Designated Sites

Carlow-Graigucullen boasts two significant natural heritage sites which contribute greatly to the character of the joint urban area. These sites comprise the River Barrow, a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and Oak Park, a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA).

10.1.1 River Barrow SAC

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), also known as 'European Sites', are legally protected under the EU Habitats Directive (92/42/EEC) and are selected for the conservation of Annex I habitats and Annex II species. All such designated areas, including SACs, collectively form part of what is known as the Natura 2000 network of sites across Europe. The River Barrow forms part of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC (Site Code: 002162) and flows southwards through the joint urban area where it forms a natural boundary between lands at Carlow Town to the east and lands at Graigucullen to the west. The SAC is of considerable conservation significance due to the occurrence of good examples of habitats and

plant and animal species listed in Annexes I and II of the EU Habitats Directive. The populations of bird species that use the river corridor also contributes to its high conservation significance.

The spatial extent of the River Barrow SAC is shown on Map 10.1.

10.1.2 Oak Park pNHA

Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) are designated sites of national importance for habitats, species, and for geological interest. Under the Wildlife Act 1976 (as amended), NHAs are legally protected from damage from the date they are formally proposed for designation. Sites that have been identified but not yet formally designated as NHAs, are known as proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs). The Oak Park pNHA is located at the northern end of the joint urban area and comprises mature woodland, lakes and wetlands that provide an important habitat for wildlife, including many wild and game birds.

The spatial extent of the Oak Park pNHA is shown on Map 10.2.

Natural Heritage – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

NH. P1: Protect, manage, and enhance the natural heritage, biodiversity, landscape, and environment of Carlow-Graiguecullen in recognition of its importance as a non-renewable resource, a unique identifier, as a natural resource, an ecosystem services asset that can contribute towards sustainable urban drainage, flood management, and climate action.

NH. P2: Support the conservation and enhancement of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC, and to protect the SAC from any plans and projects that are likely to have a significant effect on the coherence or integrity of the designated site, in accordance with relevant EU environmental directives and applicable national legislation, policies, plans and guidelines.

NH. P3: Ensure that Appropriate Assessment Screening, and if required Appropriate Assessment, is carried out in respect of plans and projects in Carlow-Graiguecullen. Where likely significant effects have been identified in respect of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of European Sites, in particular the River Barrow and River Nore SAC, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, ensure Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive. Carlow County Council and Laois County Council shall only agree to the plan or project after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site, in particular the River Barrow and River Nore SAC, unless the plan or project is subject to the provisions of Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive.

NH. P4: Contribute towards the protection, from significant adverse effects, of the ecological integrity, and the visual, recreational, environmental and amenity value of the Oak Park proposed

Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) and associated habitats.

NH. P5: Promote the carrying out of ecological/habitat assessments to inform the layout and design of development proposals and ensure they integrate the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and landscape features wherever possible in Carlow-Graiguecullen, by minimising adverse impacts on existing habitats (whether designated or not) and by including mitigation and/or compensation measures, as appropriate.

NH. P6: Promote increased understanding and awareness of the natural heritage and biodiversity located in the joint urban area of Carlow-Graiguecullen.

NH. P7: Promote development for recreation and educational purposes that does not conflict with maintaining the favourable conservation status of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC and Oak Park pNHA, including the achievement of their conservation objectives.

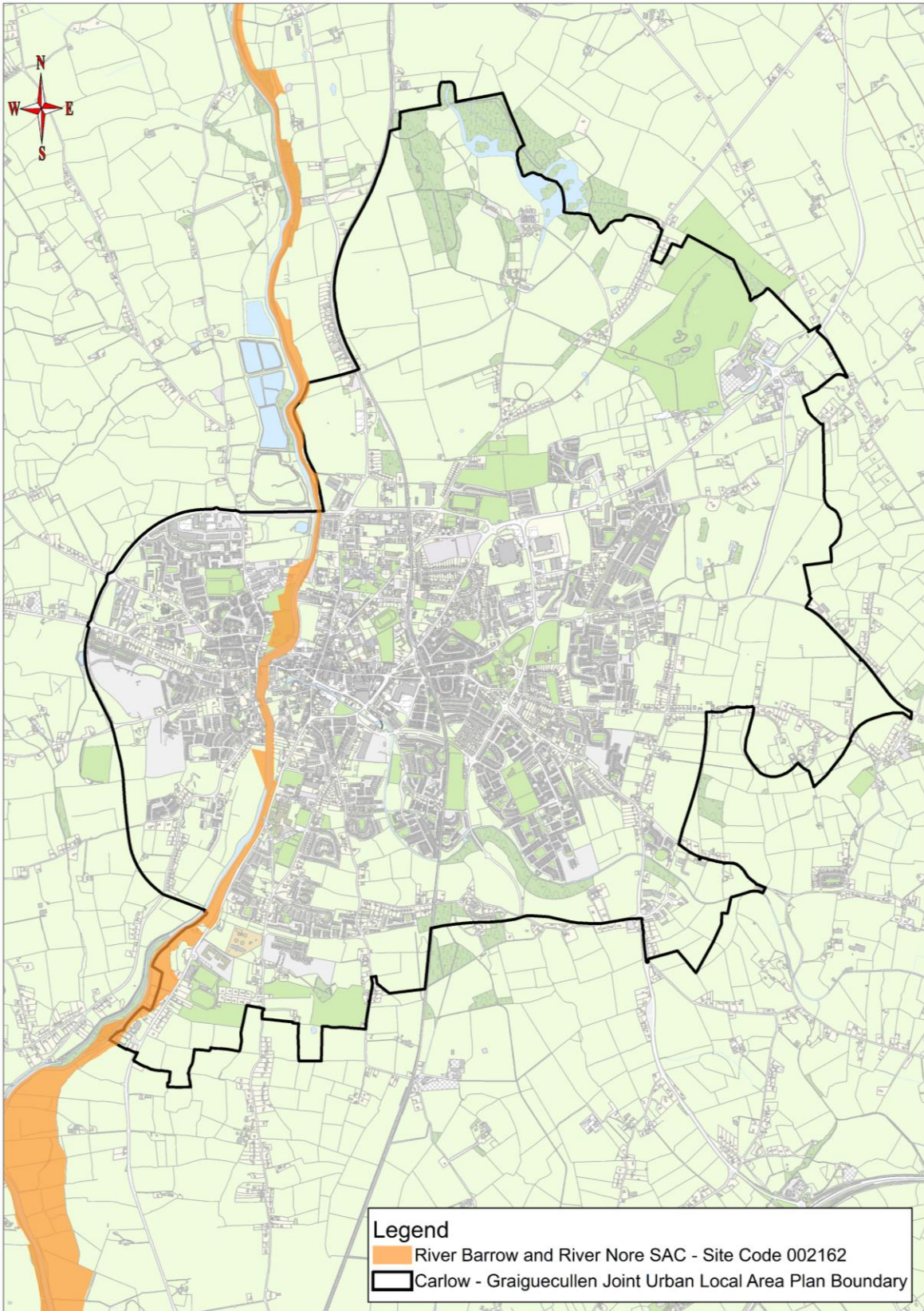
NH. P8: Promote, protect, and enhance sustainable and appropriate access to natural heritage in Carlow-Graiguecullen.

NH. P9: Identify, protect, conserve, and enhance wherever possible, wildlife habitats and species of local importance in Carlow-Graiguecullen, not otherwise protected by legislation. Such habitats can include woodland, river, wetlands, and grassland areas along with field boundaries

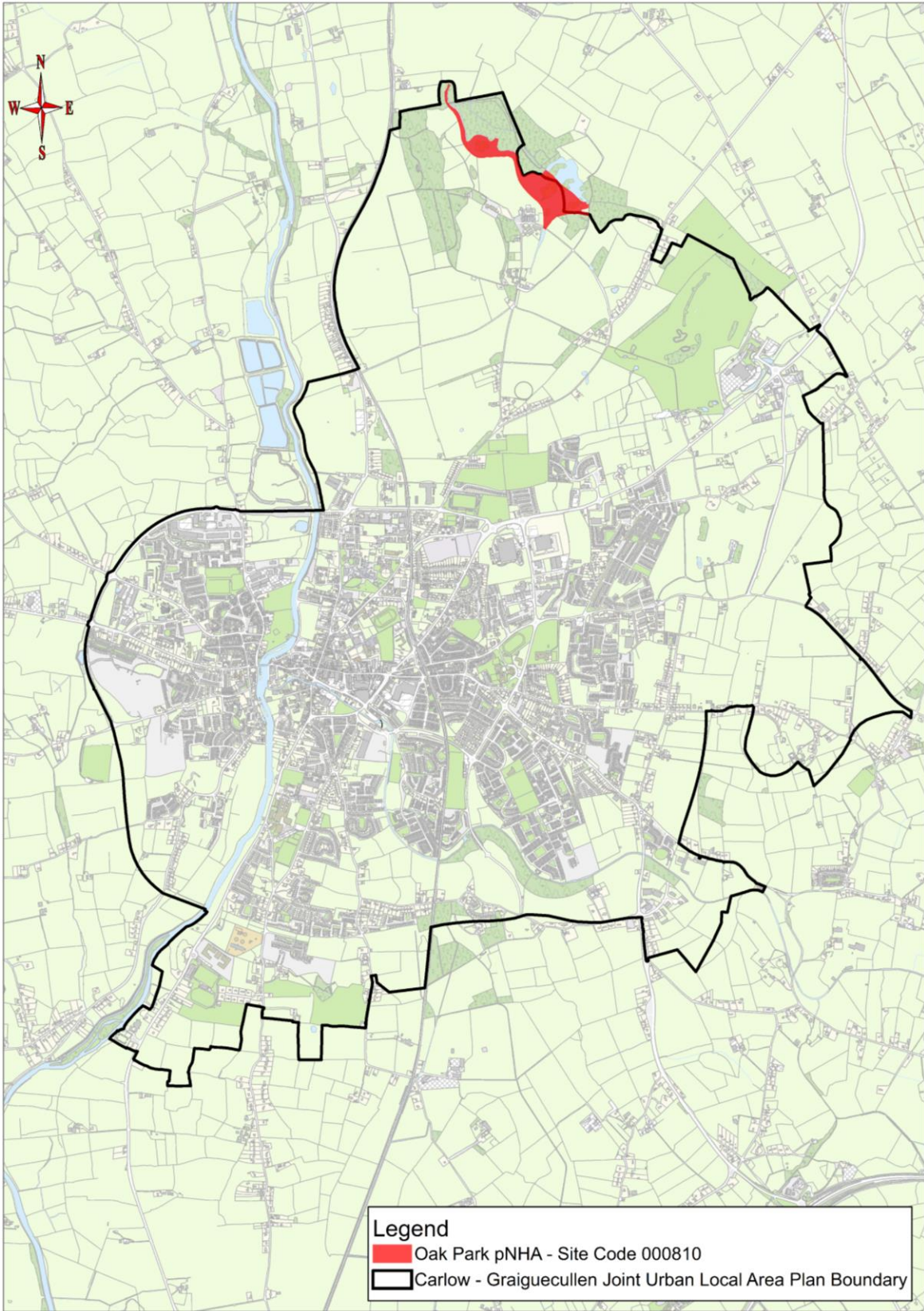
(hedgerows, stone walls and ditches). These features form part of a network of habitats and corridors, which allow wildlife to exist and flourish and contribute to compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive

NH. P10: Protect and enhance the natural environment of Carlow-Graiguecullen and recognise the important role of the natural heritage in the area through its diversity, quality, and integrity, and in terms of enhancing the image of the joint urban area and contributing to quality of life and wellbeing, economic growth, tourism and recreation.

NH. P11: Ensure that lighting proposals along water courses, rivers, and streams in the joint urban area, are not in conflict with bat species, and to ensure that expert advice is sought on such lighting proposals in order to mitigate the impacts of lighting on bats and other species and habitats.



Map 10.1: River Barrow and River Nore SAC



Map 10.2: Oak Park proposed Natural Heritage Area

10.2 Green Infrastructure

In a broad sense Green Infrastructure is a term used to group and describe those elements of the natural environment which can deliver ecosystem services and protect natural heritage. The growing use of the term green infrastructure has placed a particular focus on the multi-functional role of the natural environment, which can when of a high quality simultaneously support wildlife corridors, sustain air and water quality, contribute to sustainable drainage, flood protection and climate resilience, and provide vital amenity and recreational spaces for communities. In this regard, it is equally important to note that not all elements of green infrastructure perform the same functions and not all are of equal value. For example, while a narrow and grassed strip of land adjoining a public road in the joint urban area may accommodate excess surface water runoff, it will not provide a significant wildlife habitat. Conversely, riparian habitat along the River Barrow would have greater capacity to absorb excess water, provide pollution control and would support a greater diversity of wildlife. Therefore, any development proposal that includes green infrastructure, must recognise such differences in quality and value and distinguish what are the most important components.

10.2.1 Green Infrastructure in Carlow-Graigucullen

The green infrastructure network in Carlow-Graigucullen provides connectivity of habitat for a range of species. Of particular importance to biodiversity in the joint urban area are:

- River Barrow and associated riparian habitat (Special Area of Conservation)

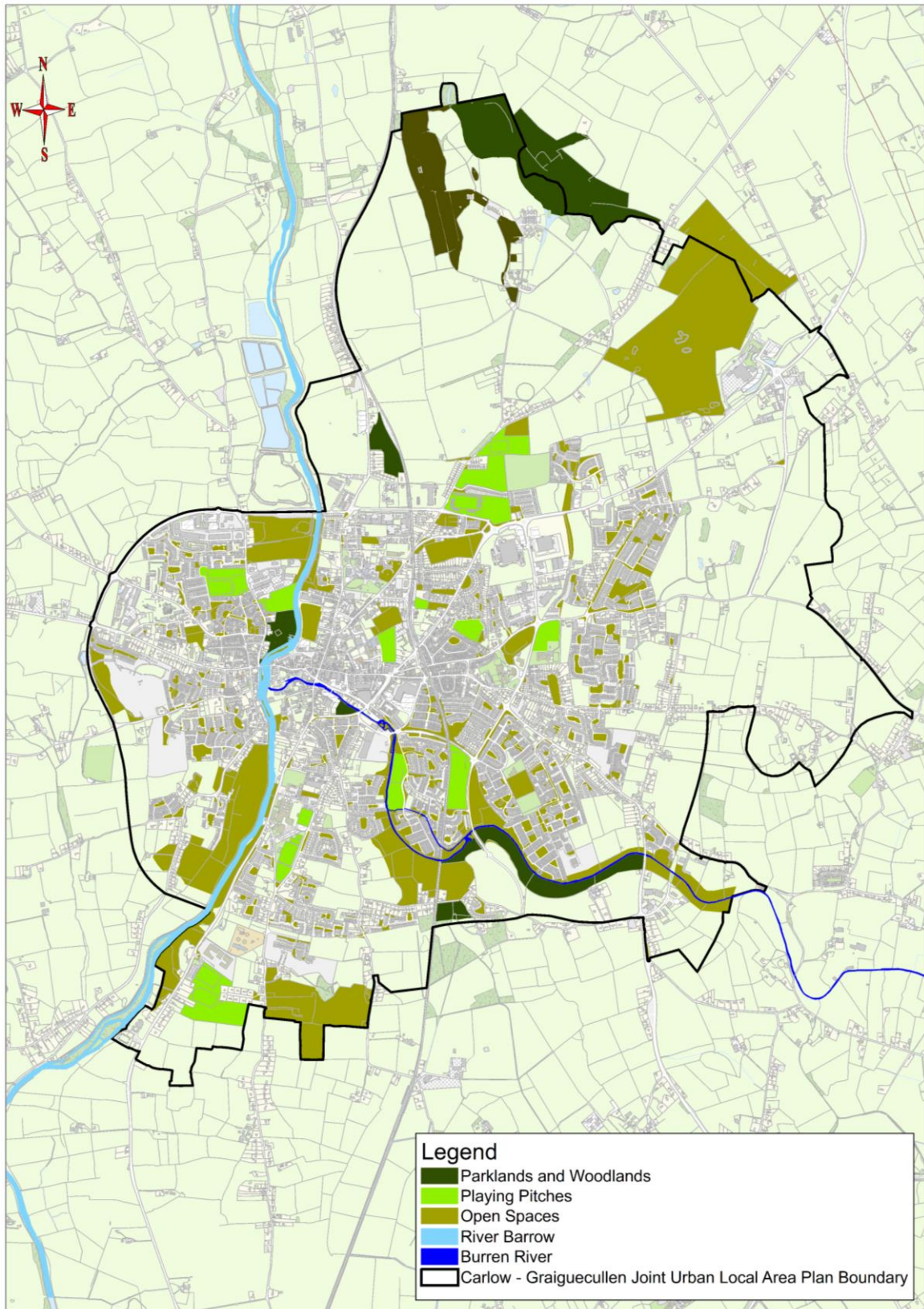
- Burren River and associated riparian habitat (tributary of the River Barrow)
- Oak Park Forest Park (proposed Natural Heritage Area)

Aside from the foregoing, the green infrastructure network in the joint urban area includes areas of woodland, public open/amenity spaces, parklands, gardens, hedgerows, and treelines. There are some areas of undeveloped ground, cemeteries, and agricultural fields which can warrant consideration. Recognition must also be given to existing and/or potential green infrastructure proximate to JULAP boundary, such as the former Sugar Factory lagoons along the western side of the River Barrow. It is critical that all of these areas are safeguarded and given the opportunity to increase their extent and ecological function for Carlow-Graigucullen by retaining links and supporting connectivity within the network.

The roads and railway traversing the joint urban area also represent opportunities to connect green spaces and strengthen existing green infrastructure. In addition, the stepping stone habitats, including scattered trees, hedgerows, and parkland, as well as public open spaces within housing estates, can further enhance the connectivity of habitats, and in turn, promote biodiversity across the joint urban area. The network of existing green infrastructure in Carlow-Graigucullen is shown on Map 10.3. Typologies of green infrastructure in the joint urban area are detailed in Table 10.1.

Table 10.1: Typologies of Green Infrastructure in Carlow-Graigucullen

Typology	Examples
Parklands & woodlands	Woodland and parkland areas, including the trees, hedgerows, and grasslands within them, have a key role in supporting biodiversity in the joint urban area, and in improving the health and wellbeing of residents as recreation and amenity spaces. Some notable examples include Oak Park Forest Park, Carlow Town Park, Hanover Park, and Burren River Linear Park.
Open spaces	<p>The network of open spaces located in Carlow-Graigucullen, including those more easily identifiable along the River Barrow and Burren River, those more formally managed planted spaces in residential areas and on institutional lands, allotments, playing pitches, and gardens such as Delta Sensory Gardens and Gairdín Beo, function as the stepping stone and corridor habitats that support and promote biodiversity across the built environment. Other and in some case less noteworthy open areas scattered throughout the joint urban area (publicly accessible and otherwise) also as function green infrastructure.</p> <p>This JULAP also recognises that burial grounds, while providing culturally sensitive space for burial and remembrance, have a significant value as recreational spaces similar to parklands for nature conservation and the promotion of diversity. Burial grounds in the joint urban area such as St. Mary's Cemetery, Killeshin Church of Ireland Cemetery, and Barrow Track Cemetery (The Old Graves), are therefore considered a type of green infrastructure.</p>
Rivers/water bodies	The River Barrow and the Burren River comprise significant water bodies in the joint urban area, and along with lakes and wetlands at Oak Park, provide a multitude of benefits including biodiversity, flood management, and recreation and amenity space. The location of agricultural lands on the flood plains of the River Barrow are also of relevance in this regard.



Map 10.3: Network of Existing Green Infrastructure in Carlow-Graigucullen

10.2.2 Carlow Town Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2025

This Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan was prepared under a partnership framework between Carlow County Council, Carlow Town Development Forum, and the community of Carlow Town. It recognises the potential in Carlow Town to strengthen the green infrastructure network and promote habitat connectivity to the surrounding landscape through the implementation of a range of biodiversity enhancement measures, with a focus on five areas as detailed below. The Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan provides a strategic plan and specific actions for protecting and enhancing biodiversity in each of the focus areas, including tackling invasive non-native species and protecting ecosystem services. The Strategy also fully acknowledges the economic value of ecosystem services and the need to restore them for the benefit of the local economy and the wellbeing of residents.

1. Town Centre

Carlow Town Centre predominantly contains buildings and artificial surfaces habitat. This habitat type includes roads, houses, buildings, and other artificial built and hard surfaces. There are trees planted under pavements throughout the town, particularly along Kennedy Avenue, Barrack Street and new trees planted along Green Lane. It is typically of low botanic value, however, may be of value for fauna species, in particular bats, swallows and swifts.

2. Hanover Park

Hanover Park is a public park that contains a variety of different habitat types, including amenity grassland that makes up the majority of the park area, scattered trees and parkland, ornamental/non-native shrub along part of the

bank of the Burren River and depositing/ lowland rivers i.e., the Burren River that forms a boundary to the north of the park.

3. Burren River Linear Park

The Burren River Linear Park consists of a walking/cycling route alongside the Burren River. Five main habitat types exist along the portion of the trail surveyed, including amenity grassland, a mosaic of treelines and scrub, depositing lowland rivers, a small section of buildings and artificial surfaces, and dry meadows and grassy verges.

4. River Barrow

The River Barrow was included as a focus area due to it being the most important ecological feature in the area and a designated Special Area of Conservation with legal protection for habitats and species of European importance (See Section 10.1.1 for further details regarding the SAC).

5. The Plots

The Plots are situated in a residential area. They consist of the following habitat types: amenity grassland (Hanover Harps Playing Pitches), treelines, scattered trees and parkland, horticultural land; recolonising bare ground; dry meadows and grassy verges; hedgerows, buildings and artificial surfaces and flower beds and borders.

Green Infrastructure – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

GI. P1: Protect and enhance the biodiversity and ecological function of the green infrastructure network in Carlow-Graiguecullen.

- GI. P2:** Identify, protect, maintain, and enhance existing and planned green infrastructure assets in Carlow-Graiguecullen, and recognise the wide range of environmental, social, and economic benefits of green spaces and nature-based solutions by ensuring the integration of green infrastructure planning and development in the planning process.
- GI. P3:** Protect and preserve landscape features which significantly contribute to green infrastructure in Carlow-Graiguecullen, including trees, hedgerows, woodlands, wetlands, watercourses, and other habitats.
- GI. P4:** Require the protection and integration of new and existing green infrastructure as an essential component of all new developments in Carlow-Graiguecullen, and to ensure future development does not fragment, damage, or prejudice the integrity of the green infrastructure network in the joint urban area.
- GI. P5:** Ensure the green infrastructure and habitat features identified on Map 10.3, Network of Existing Green Infrastructure in Carlow-Graiguecullen, and the linkages between them and surrounding rural areas, are integrated into the design of new developments as far as practicable.
- GI. P6:** Require development proposals to include an outline of measures to protect the retained green infrastructure of a site during the period of construction.
- GI. P7:** Require large scale development proposals in the joint urban area such as residential schemes, industrial development, or retail schemes, to submit a green infrastructure plan as an integral part of a planning application.
- GI. P8:** Promote a network of pedestrian and cycle paths to enhance accessibility to the green infrastructure network in Carlow-Graiguecullen, while ensuring that the layout, design, and operation of the routes responds to the ecological protection needs of each site.
- GI. P9:** Incorporate elements of green infrastructure into existing areas of hard infrastructure in the joint urban area, where possible, thereby integrating these areas of the existing urban environment into the overall green infrastructure network.
- GI. P10:** Promote appropriate tree planting and pollinator friendly planting, in accordance with the recommendations of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025 throughout Carlow-Graiguecullen and in open spaces within new developments, in order to enhance local biodiversity, visual amenity and surface water management.
- GI. P11:** Ensure that green areas and open spaces associated with new residential developments and other relevant projects provide multifunctional benefits that enrich quality of life for local communities, ecologically rich areas that enhance biodiversity, and sustainable water management.
- GI. P12:** Take account of Inland Fisheries guidance *‘Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment, A Guide to the*

Protection of Watercourses through the use of Buffer Zones, Sustainable Drainage Systems, Instream Rehabilitation, Climate/Flood Risk and Recreational Planning’ (2020) when considering development proposals in the vicinity of rivers and streams in Carlow-Graiguecullen.

- GI. P13:** Incorporate items of historical or heritage importance within the green infrastructure network in Carlow-Graiguecullen as amenity features, as far as practicable.
- GI. P14:** Seek to protect trees and hedgerows in the joint urban area with a particular local amenity or conservation value and encourage the planting of native tree and hedgerow species.

Green Infrastructure - Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- GI. O1:** Support the implementation of the Carlow Town Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2025, and any subsequent updated version this document.
- GI. O2:** Investigate the feasibility of providing a wetland amenity area on lands comprising the former Sugar Factory lagoons, in conjunction with relevant stakeholders and local community groups, taking account of the environmental sensitivities of the land and the need to ensure impacts to biodiversity and nature conservation interests are avoided.

10.3 Green Infrastructure and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)

The impact of extreme rainfall events is increasing with climate change and this is significantly increasing both the level of pollution from urban runoff and the flood risk arising from the greater volume of that runoff from the largely impermeable urban area.

A fundamental part of SuDS is the provision of adequate levels of treatment of surface water prior to discharging to a watercourse. SuDS aims to address both quality and quantity of runoff whereby both the rate and volume of discharge are reduced.

This JULAP encourages new developments to consider nature-based solutions to the management of rainwater and surface water runoff to reduce pollution and reduce flood risk as well as to improve biodiversity and provide a greener more pleasant urban environment.

Developers are advised to consult with the *Nature-based Solutions to the ‘Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas – Water Sensitive Urban Design Best Practice Interim Guidance Document’* (DHLGH, 2021) which seeks to mimic the natural water balance of rural areas through water sensitive urban design. This can be achieved through the replacement of impermeable surfacing with nature-based planted areas that are designed to absorb, retain, store, and treat urban runoff prior to discharge back into the environment.

Further details regarding SuDS can be found in Section 7.3, Chapter 7 Infrastructure and Environmental Services.

10.4 Landscape

Our tangible heritage includes our visible natural landscape with its rich diversity of habitats and species. In the context of an urban settlement such as Carlow-Graiguecullen, this natural heritage, such as the River Barrow and Burren River, is very much interwoven with the historic evolution of the built environment of the joint urban area, including its streetscapes, bridges, its architecture, and its archaeology. The challenge is to manage the varied and inter-linking elements of our landscape resource in a sustainable manner, so that we can protect our heritage assets while promoting a quality of life, and a sense of identity and pride in the joint urban area.

In recognition and support of the aforesaid, a number of distinct Landscape Character Types (LCTs) have been designated within Carlow-Graiguecullen. These LCTs are shown on Map 10.4 and were prepared with regard to the DEHLG *'Draft Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines for Planning Authorities'* (2000). There is a total of 6 no. LCTs in the joint urban area as set out below, each of which are accompanied by general recommendations, which are intended to inform the policy framework of this JULAP as well as the development management assessment and decision-making process.

1. Historic Urban Core
2. Urban Fringe Areas
3. River Corridors
4. Lowland Agricultural Areas
5. Rolling Lands with Strong Boundaries
6. Demesne Landscape

1. Historic Urban Core

This LCT is indicated by early historic mapping of streets and building patterns for the joint urban area, including first ordnance survey mapping dating from the early to mid-19th century. The urban area as known today was likely established and developed as a result of the land occupying a strategic location and crossing point on the River Barrow. Key features of this LCT include:

- An urban morphology shaped by the routes of the River Barrow and Burren River.
- Fine urban grain, with small urban blocks and strong enclosure of streets.
- Building elevations with a vertical emphasis and finished with materials such as natural slate and lime renders.
- Designation as Zone of Archaeological Potential, and including Carlow Castle, a National Monument dating from the medieval period.

Key urban landscape areas within the historic core are the built areas protected by way of Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) designations. The town also includes a number of historic landmark buildings, which are important in the wider urban landscape and which are protected by way of protected structure or recorded monument designations. Views of landmark buildings are important within the landscape, whether the views of the structures are panoramic or vistas. Views and vistas aligned with landmark buildings serve as vital orientation points in a townscape such as Carlow-Graiguecullen, especially for the visitor. Particular attention should be given to key views because of their importance to the composition of the built environment. Spaces associated with focal buildings contribute to their legibility and status within the landscape. The focal buildings

listed below each have a public function which can be strengthened through the definition of their surrounding open space.

- Carlow Castle
- Graiguecullen Bridge
- Carlow Cathedral
- Carlow Court House
- Carlow College
- The VISUAL and George Bernard Shaw Theatre
- Saint Mary's Church
- Carlow Town Hall

Effective management of the urban landscape of Carlow-Graiguecullen will draw people into the town centre from the emerging poles of activity along the fringes of the joint urban area and carry them on a journey through the historic heart of the built environment and to one of the areas greatest asset, the River Barrow, and its banks.

ACAs and protected structures are addressed in detail in Chapter 9 Built Heritage, and the role of urban design and placemaking is dealt with in Chapter 5 Urban Design, Town Centre, and Regeneration.

General Recommendations

1. Development proposals for new structures and spaces within the historic urban core should respond to scale, massing, grain, roofscapes, building lines and elevational emphases of surrounding buildings; appropriate contemporary approaches will be considered on a par with historicist approaches. Particular emphasis should be placed on the use of quality material whether contemporary or traditional.
2. The sensitive treatment of landmark sites such as those contiguous to the River Barrow or Burren River, at road junction, corner sites,

sites adjacent to public open spaces, sites within Architectural Conservation Areas, or sites within the settings of Protected Structures or Monuments, is of significant importance.

3. In the management of historic structures and spaces, regard must be given to the provision of universal access.

2. Urban Fringe Areas

The defining characteristics of this LCT include radial and orbital roads with a mixture of ribbon-style housing, some in rural idiom and others more suburban in character. These houses are often encircled with established suburban housing estates or with newer estates contiguous to agricultural lands. Other key features of this LCT include:

- The suburban layout and design of individual houses and residential estates with a formal character, contrasts with the more sinuous and naturalised surrounding rural landscape.
- This landscape character type therefore often has a discordant appearance at the edges with abrupt distinctions between suburban areas and the surrounding rural landscape.
- Business Parks, retail warehousing, neighbourhood centres are other uses found within this LCT.
- The characteristics of this LCT mean that opportunities to represent the character or distinctiveness of the joint urban area at key gateways into same are often under-utilised and instead the visitor can be presented with an unsympathetic and unfinished transition between an attractive rural landscape and an attractive historic town centre.

General Recommendations

1. To create attractive gateways into the joint urban area from surrounding rural areas using tree planting, by upgrading boundary treatments or using landscape buffer zones, to ensure a gradual and pleasant transition from rural to suburban and urban.
2. Utilise phasing conditions as part of the development management process to discourage the unfinished appearance of partially constructed new developments.
3. The use of landscaping conditions in relation to development within the urban fringe is of particular importance in softening the transition between suburban and rural.

3. River Corridors

Landscape character in the joint urban area is strongly influenced by the River Barrow and the Burren River. This LCT contains a wealth of historic features providing longstanding evidence of human influence on the landscape, including Carlow Castle, Graiguecullen Bridge, Burren Bridge, the Barrow Track, weirs and lock gates. Key features of this LCT include:

- The route of the River Barrow which flows north south through the joint urban area, and along which runs the Barrow Track (former towpath now a tourism and recreational asset).
- The River Barrow is at a mature stage in the joint urban area, with flat flood plains to either side.
- Mature bankside vegetation fringes the River Barrow.
- The route of the Burren River which flows generally east west through Carlow Town, flowing into the River Barrow at Pembroke. This watercourse

functions as a key landscape character defining element of the environs area.

- While not exerting the same influence in the area as the River Barrow, the Burren River is also associated with floodplains, bankside vegetation, and a more recently developed walking and cycling route (Carlow Town Linear Park).

General Recommendations

1. Recognise the importance of river corridors for the functioning of the river including flood management and ensure associated flood risk informs land management as well as development.
2. Where justified, ensure new or refurbished structures or spaces within the town centre address and respond to the river setting and open views.
3. Conserve bankside vegetation in recognition of its importance within the ecology of river basins generally and the sensitivity of the River Barrow as a Special Area of Conservation.
4. Protect and foster the development of additional public amenity areas in association with the river corridors subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.
5. Preserve the scenic and recreational value of the river corridors.
6. Protect structures of special interest and associated with rivers, including industrial heritage.

4. Lowland Agricultural Areas

Comprises primarily pastoral and tillage agriculture on the outskirts of the joint urban area. Key features of this LCT include:

- Generally, a flat open landscape with long range views towards the uplands at the Killeshin Hills.
- Field patterns tend to be of large scale and are generally bounded by deciduous hedgerows containing mature trees.
- Farm sizes are larger than average.
- Much of the area has a visually enclosed character due to mature trees and hedgerows lining roads and field boundaries, and due to areas of woodland.
- Views of landmark buildings and landscape features, including surrounding upland areas, are a characteristic of this area and should be retained because the interaction between the lowlands and uplands is an important feature of this LCT.

General Recommendations

1. To promote agricultural practices where existing / proposed to create a sustainable rural economy.
2. Encourage the retention of hedgerows and species mix of hedgerows and field patterns.
3. Design of all single one-off houses to be fully compliant with Rural House Design Guidelines of the Carlow County Development Plan or Laois County Development Plan as applicable.
4. Promote rural diversification subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.

5.Rolling Lands with Strong Rural Boundaries

This LCT comprises an attractive gently undulating landscape enclosed by mature trees and hedgerows. Key features of the LCT include:

- Narrow public roads that are rural in character, more similar to laneways than throughfares.
- Experience of this LCT as being rural and undeveloped is emphasised by the strong enclosure of public roads with mature trees and hedgerows.
- Mature trees and hedgerows along public roads punctuated with field gates which open up occasional expansive panoramas, and views of single one-off houses of diverse styles, some unsympathetically suburban in appearance.

General Recommendations

1. To promote agricultural practices where existing / proposed to create a sustainable rural economy.
2. Encourage the retention of hedgerows and field patterns.
3. Retain rural and undeveloped character of the LCT, having regard to its attractiveness.
4. Ensure one-off rural houses respond to the rural character of the LCT, preserve hedgerows, or present a strong screen between road and garden to retain sense of enclosure.
5. Ensure landscaping schemes are sympathetic to the LCT.

6.Demesne Landscape

One of the significant LCTs identified in the joint urban area is the demesne landscape. These landscapes are generally designed and associated with historic country house estates mostly dating from the 18th and 19th centuries. The extent of demesne landscapes is often indicated by gatehouses/lodges, estates walls and other structures, as well as planting and field boundary patterns and other landscape features.

Natural features usually play a significant role in the layout and design of demesne landscapes, together with structures and planting. Features include tree-lined estate roads, ornamental lakes, woodlands, and designed panoramas and vistas. Agricultural demesne lands are often very open with standalone or clusters of mature trees arranged informally within tillage or pasture fields rather than strong hedgerows.

Two key examples of these LCTs include:

(i) Oak Park Demesne

Oak Park Demesne is a c. 323-hectare (800-acre) estate owned by Teagasc and located to the north of the joint urban area. The Oak Park demesne was bought by Colonel Henry Bruen I in 1775. The current house at Oak Park is the result of four periods of expansion and remodelling carried out between 1797 and 1902.

Oak Park Demesne significantly influences the landscape character of the northern fringe of the joint urban area, with much of the lands having been formally landscaped and with large tree covered sections. Key natural features of this demesne include a relatively regular shaped field pattern of large plots divided by a series of access routes to Oak Park House. Many of these fields contain mature stands of deciduous trees which in conjunction with the more recently cultivated Teagasc tree plantations provide a sense of enclosure within the demesne. Closer to the Cannery Road end of the northern fringe, substantial stands of mature deciduous trees become a less frequent feature although there are a large number of notable mature trees; mostly horse chestnut, located on the lands between the Athy and Oak Park Roads immediately north of Cannery Road. These mature trees significantly contribute to the area's biodiversity.

Open farmland characterises those areas which are not directly associated with the demesne lands. Nevertheless, even on these lands a regular shaped field pattern of large plots predominates.

Carlow County Council, together with Teagasc, opened Oak Park Forest Park in 2006. The park comprises several walking routes through c. 50 hectares (124-acres) of mature woodlands by a lake and continues to be a significant amenity for residents of Carlow-Graiguecullen and for visitors to the area. Oak Park Forest Park contains fine examples of native tree and plant species, and also provides a habitat for a wide range of wildlife. The sizeable lake situated to the east of Oak Park House forms part of the proposed Natural Heritage Area discussed in Section 10.1.2.

(ii) Browneshill Demesne

The second notable demesne landscape is Browneshill Demesne, located at the eastern end of the joint urban area. The large historic country house in the demesne was built in 1793 and is one of only a small number of surviving Georgian mansions in County Carlow. The high wall around the historic estate was built as part of a Famine Relief project in the 1840s. The mature natural landscape and naturally screen well-established dwellings associated with Browneshill provides high quality topographical variation to a comparatively lower contiguous landscape. The area also offers the only naturally elevated and expansive view of the surrounding area.

Another significant feature in the demesne is the Browneshill Dolmen.

General Recommendations

1. To promote agricultural practices to create a sustainable rural economy including field research and laboratory research related to agriculture, rural diversification, and bioenergy.
2. Maintain and enhance the 18th and 19th century estate landscapes and associated structures, parkland, and woodland to develop them as a tourism resource, as well as the Brownhill Dolmen.
3. Preserve fine tree specimens of landscape significance.
4. Conserve valuable habitats, including any national nature conservation designations.


Landscape – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- LC. P1:** Protect significant views of landmark structures in Carlow-Graiguecullen.
- LC. P2:** Protect the character and setting of demesne landscapes in Carlow-Graiguecullen, including Oak Park Demesne to the north of the joint urban area and Brownhill Demesne to the east.
- LC. P3:** Protect and enhance the landscape character of the joint urban area, having regard to the assigned Landscape Character Types in Map 10.4 and recommendations in Section 10.4, and to urban gateways, key open spaces, landmark structures, and to important landscape features such as at the River Barrow and Burren River.
- LC. P4:** Ensure that development will not have a disproportionate landscape or visual impact in the joint urban area, due to

siting, layout, design, or excessive size or scale.

- LC. P5:** Protect and maintain the landscape quality and visual integrity of river corridors in Carlow-Graiguecullen, including the River Barrow and Burren River.
- LC. P6:** Ensure the effective management of lands adjoining the River Barrow and Burren River and in a manner that maximises views and interactions with these important landscape features in the joint urban area, taking account of the environmental sensitivities of these lands and the need to ensure impacts to biodiversity and nature conservation interests are avoided.
- LC. P7:** Require, where appropriate, Landscape/Visual Impact Assessments to be prepared by suitably qualified professionals, for development proposals which may have significant landscape or visual impacts in the joint urban area, and/or which are located within or adjacent to sensitive landscapes such as river corridors and demesne landscapes.
- LC. P8:** Ensure that features which contribute to local landscape character in Carlow-Graiguecullen, including historic features and buildings, trees, hedgerows, shelter belts and stone walls, are retained, protected, and enhanced where appropriate, so as to preserve the appearance and local landscape character of an area, whilst supporting sustainable landscape change and development. Development proposals



necessitating the removal of such features will be discouraged.

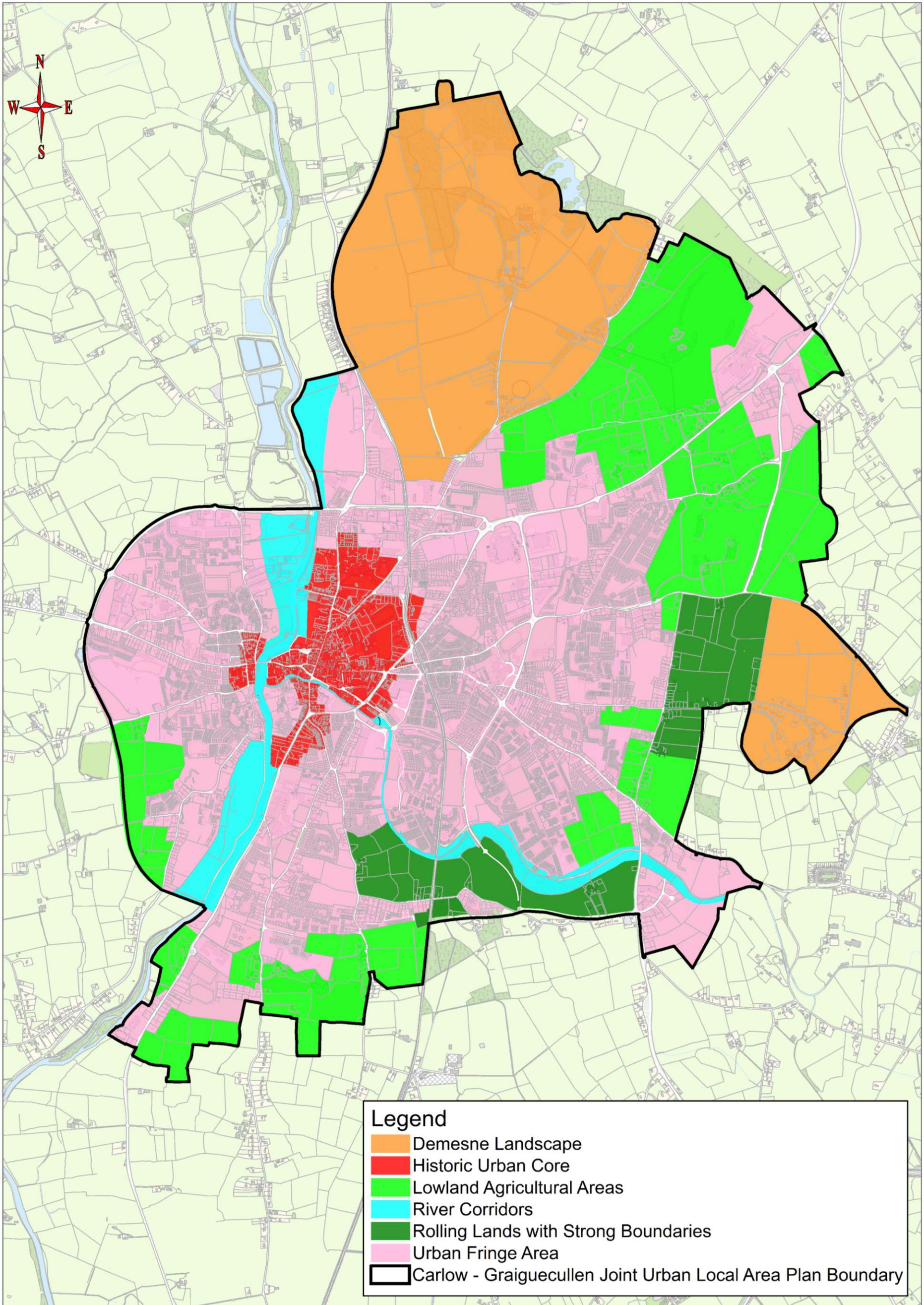
LC. P9: Preserve historic place and street names in Carlow-Graiguecullen and ensure that the names of all new developments take account of local historical, heritage and cultural associations in the joint urban area.

Landscape - Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

LC. O1: Ensure that landscape/visual impact assessment will be a key consideration in the assessment of development proposals in Carlow-Graiguecullen.

LC. O2: Ensure that the management and assessment of development in Carlow-Graiguecullen takes account of the recommendations and assigned Landscape Character Types detailed in Section 10.4 and Map 10.4.



Map 10.4: Carlow-Graiguecullen Landscape Character Assessment



Chapter 11

Climate Action

Chapter 11: Climate Action

Aim: *To tackle the challenge of climate change in Carlow-Graiguecullen, with a focus on the role of spatial planning in contributing to the transition of the joint urban area to a low-carbon and climate resilient future, and through targeted climate change mitigation and adaptation measures aimed at reducing greenhouse gases and increasing energy efficiency and conservation.*

11.0 Introduction

Operating within the broader framework of sustainable development, the spatial planning process provides an established means through which climate action measures can be integrated and implemented at a local level to support a transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society. Development plans in particular (including this JULAP) provide an opportunity to focus on the land-use aspects of climate action and how the planning system as a whole can be utilised to support positive change and action. This is confirmed in the range of cross-cutting national and regional climate action policy objectives included in the NPF and the RSES', and those included in the respective County Development Plans for Carlow County Council and Laois County Council. The content of this chapter should be read in conjunction with the climate action policies, objectives and related provisions contained in Chapter 7 of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and

Chapter 3 of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027.

This JULAP recognises that the multi-faceted nature of the climate challenge for Carlow-Graiguecullen requires the integration and co-ordination of 'climate proofed' policies and investment to ensure that key projects and infrastructure can be delivered at appropriate locations. The Plan also recognises that the climate change challenge requires a combined approach utilising both climate mitigation and adaptation measures (See Figure 11.1). These considerations and measures are therefore at the forefront of the formulation of this JULAP, together with the integration of key national and regional policy concerning compact growth, sustainable mobility, town centre regeneration, and the protection and enhancement of biodiversity. This aims to ensure that the provisions of the Climate Action and Low Carbon (Amendment) Act 2021 are adhered to, which set out binding targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and for the delivery of renewable energy.

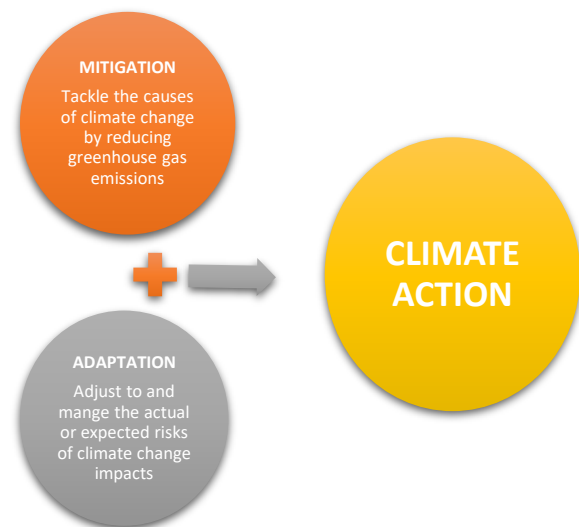


Figure 11.1: Climate Mitigation and Climate Adaptation

11.1 Climate Action

Climate action policy in Ireland now reflects the ambition of the EU and that required to confront the challenges of climate change. The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 as already referred to, enshrines the National Climate Objective to pursue and achieve, by no later than the end of 2050, *the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy*. The Amendment Act frames Ireland’s legally binding climate ambition to deliver a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 51% by 2030. This will place the country on a trajectory to achieving climate neutrality by no later than the end of 2050.

11.2 Local Authority Climate Action Plans

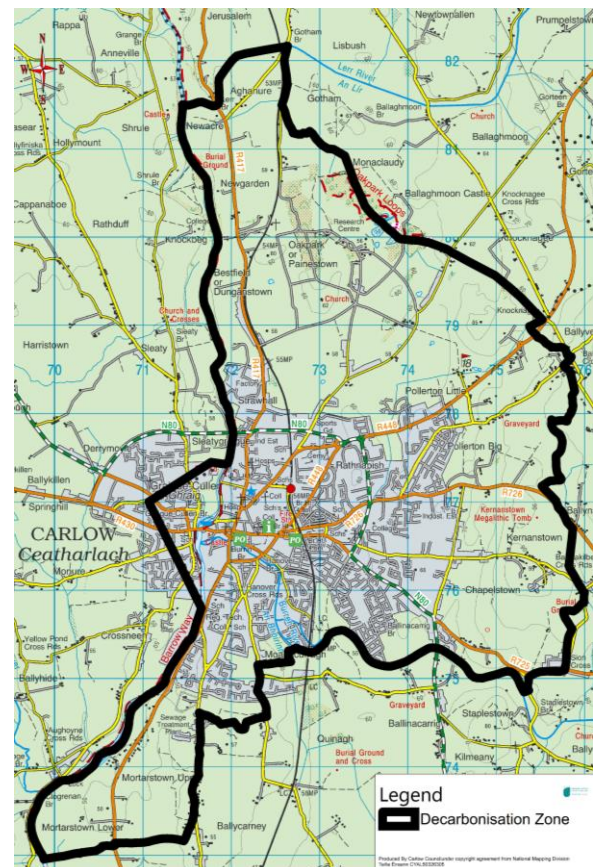
In accordance with the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, Carlow County Council and Laois County Council are required to prepare climate action plans for their respective administrative areas. The climate action plans will help both Council’s to address, in an integrated way, the mitigation of CHG emissions and climate change adaptation, and to translate national climate policy to local and community levels in Carlow-Graiguecullen. The climate action plans will cover a 5-year period and are required to be prepared and adopted before 24th February 2024. They will also play a significant role in reinforcing the commitment by the local government sector to lead on place-based climate action at a local level.

11.3 Carlow Town - Decarbonisation Zone

The first National Climate Action Plan 2019 required each local authority, by 30th April 2021, to identify a Decarbonisation Zone (DZ) within their administrative areas. Action 80 of the

subsequent National Climate Action Plan 2021 integrated the development of DZs into the statutory Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines (i.e., Technical Annex D). It is intended that DZs will be a demonstration and test bed of what is possible for decarbonisation and climate action at local and community levels to help support and realise national climate action ambitions.

In 2021 Carlow Town was selected as the DZ for County Carlow, following the engagement of consultants to prepare a DZ proposal and a period of public consultation. The spatial area of the DZ comprises the District Electoral Divisions (DEDs) of Carlow Rural, Carlow Urban and Graiguecullen Urban (See Map 11.1).



Map 11.1 : Carlow Town Decarbonisation Zone

In accordance with the requirements of the Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines, Carlow County Council carried out a Tier 3 Baseline Emissions Inventory (BEI) of GHG emissions, including energy use, in the DZ for the year 2018 across a number of sectors including transport, agriculture, residential, and commercial/industrial. The total baseline GHG emission for the DZ in 2018 was recorded at 108,122.86 tCO₂eq (tonnes of CO₂ equivalent). Transport accounted for the highest percentage of total CHG emissions at 41.5%, followed by residential (30.3%) and commercial/industrial (22.8%). The data included a further breakdown of transport fuel types used, with diesel at 70.3%, petrol at 27.7%, and electricity less than 1%. The data pointed to a high dependency on private cars for travel purposes and estimated that of the 13,939 mechanically propelled vehicles recorded in the DZ, 73% (or 10,272) were private cars.

	GHG Emissions (tCO₂eq*)	Energy Consumption (MWh**)
Transport	44847.9 (41%)	170,612.1
Commercial/Industrial	24,684.9 (22.8%)	92,918.5
Residential	32,727.4 (30.3%)	123,504.7
Agriculture	3,981.3 (3.70%)	476.6
Carlow County Council	1,320 (1.20%)	4,420
* tCO ₂ eq (tonnes of CO ₂ equivalent) **MWh (megawatt-hour)		

Table 11.1 : Summary of GHG Emissions & Energy Consumption for key sectors in the Carlow Town DZ for 2018 (Source: Southeast Energy Agency)

Climate Action – Overarching Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- CA. P1:** Support the transition of Carlow-Graiguecullen to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050, by way of reducing greenhouse gases, increasing renewable energy, and improving energy efficiency and conservation.
- CA. P2:** Promote and encourage positive community and/or co-operative led climate action initiatives and projects in Carlow-Graiguecullen that seek to reduce carbon emissions, improve energy efficiency and conservation, enhance green infrastructure, and encourage awareness on climate change issues and impacts.
- CA. P3:** Encourage innovation and facilitate the development of pilot schemes that support climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.

Climate Action – Overarching Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- CA. O1:** Support, in conjunction with key stakeholders, the preparation and implementation of the Climate Action Plans for County Carlow and County Laois, and to facilitate their role as a driver in the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change adaptation in Carlow-Graiguecullen, and the translation of national climate policy to local and community levels in the joint urban area.

CA. O2: Support and facilitate the role of the Carlow Town Decarbonisation Zone in the delivery of effective climate action at a local level, through interventions, projects, and actions aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing energy efficiency and conservation.

CA. O3: Advocate for climate action by raising public awareness of climate change issues and responses.

11.4 Spatial Planning and Climate Action

The following sections of this chapter outline some of the areas in which spatial planning can be utilised to support climate action. For the entire context of these subject areas the text of relevant chapters of this JULAP should be directly referred to. Further details can also be found in the County Development Plans for Carlow and Laois.

11.5 Integrated Land Use Planning & Sustainable Travel

The National Climate Action Plan 2023 identifies that the transport sector in Ireland has been the fastest growing source of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) over the past three decades, showing a 112% increase between 1990 and 2021. There is significant potential in this sector to tackle climate change and reduce GHG emissions through measures which:

- Aim to reduce or avoid the need for travel through enhanced spatial planning;
- Encourage modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport; and,
- Utilise new technologies including electric vehicles, biofuels, and e-bikes.

Therefore, this JULAP aims to:

- Support an integrated approach to land use and transport planning in Carlow-Graiguecullen, to promote a shift towards a sustainable, healthy, and low carbon joint urban area with a reduced need for car-based travel.
- Prioritise development that is within realistic walking and cycling distances from key destinations in the joint urban area.
- Reduce the carbon footprint of Carlow-Graiguecullen by prioritising and enhancing sustainable travel options and permeability/connections to key destinations in the joint urban area.
- Support the use of new technologies including electric vehicles, through the roll-out of additional electric charge points in collaboration with relevant agencies; and,
- Make more provision for secure cycle parking facilities at appropriate locations throughout the joint urban area.

An Local Transport Plan (LTP) has been prepared alongside this JULAP, which will assist in ensuring that sustainable transport considerations inform land use planning decisions. The LTP is included as Appendix IV and is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6 Sustainable Travel and Transportation.

Integrated Land Use Planning & Sustainable Travel - Policy

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

LU. P1: Secure climate resilience and a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in Carlow-Graiguecullen by actively implementing policies which support integrated land use planning and sustainable travel, and maximise such opportunities through

development location, form, layout, and design.

11.6 Urban Regeneration & Compact Growth

The 10-Minute Town study undertaken for Carlow by the Southern Regional Assembly in 2020 highlighted some key challenges in achieving a more integrated compact settlement. These challenges related to (inter alia) urban sprawl, a car dependent built environment, self-contained/disconnected residential estates, and deficiencies in active travel infrastructure. Overcoming these challenges will also present corresponding opportunities to address climate change. Further details on the 10-Minute Town study can be found in Chapter 7 Sustainable Communities.

The policies and objectives in this JULAP aimed at supporting urban regeneration and compact growth will provide a focus for measures and projects in the joint urban area aimed at optimising the use/reuse of the existing built environment and building stock, the development of brownfield and infill sites, and the reduction in greenfield land consumption and inefficient infrastructure provision. All of the aforementioned will have particular implications for the achievement of a greater availability and uptake of sustainable travel options and reduced trip times to and between key destinations in the joint urban area. This will encourage less reliance on private cars, will facilitate easier access to public transport, create more possibilities for walking and cycling, and ultimately lead to reduced carbon heavy travel patterns.

In addition to the foregoing and alongside urban regeneration, heritage-led regeneration can also have a positive role in addressing the challenge of climate change. Carlow County Council has commenced the preparation of a Historic Towns

Initiative Plan for Carlow Town, further details on which are set out in Chapter 9 Natural and Built Heritage.

11.7 Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration

It is an objective of this JULAP to support and facilitate the implementation of Project Carlow 2040, including the regeneration of the 6 no. intervention areas identified in the strategy. Objectives URD. 01 to URD.03 in Chapter 10 of this JULAP refer. The Strategy acknowledges the key role physical urban regeneration in addressing the climate change challenge, and with particular regard to:

Development Change

- **Spatial:** Focusing development in the core of Carlow Town.
- **Movement and Air Quality:** Becoming aware of our impact on the climate and making a positive change for the future.
- **Health and Wellbeing:** Placing an emphasis on healthy living through urban design practices.

Environmental Assets

- **Green and Blue Infrastructure:** Increase use of the River Barrow and River Burren as green and blue areas for leisure and amenity and also as sustainable industries.

Urban Regeneration & Compact Growth – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- UR. P1:** Secure climate resilience and a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in Carlow-Graiguecullen through encouragement and support for urban regeneration

projects and interventions, including those set out in Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration.

UR. P2: Support the effective and efficient use of land in Carlow-Graiguecullen, prioritising compact growth in preference to greenfield land consumption, through the development and regeneration of vacant and underutilised brownfield/infill land and buildings within the existing built-up footprint of the joint urban area.

Urban Regeneration & Compact Growth – Objective

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

UR. O1: Leverage all available funding streams which will support and deliver urban regeneration outcomes in Carlow-Graiguecullen which seek to secure climate resilience and a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the joint urban area.

11.8 Renewable Energy

Renewable energy is that which is derived from natural sources that are not depleted when used and which are alternatives to fossil fuels. There is potential for a range of renewable energy technologies in Carlow-Graiguecullen, including (but not limited to) wind energy, solar energy, micro-renewable energy, bioenergy, geothermal energy, and hydro energy. These technologies are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7 of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and Chapter 3 of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027. This JULAP supports the production of energy from renewable sources in Carlow-Graiguecullen subject to compliance with

proper planning and environmental considerations.

Renewable Energy – Policy

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

RE. P1: Encourage and support a transition to renewable energy sources in Carlow-Graiguecullen, subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.

11.9 Energy Efficiency and Conservation

Generating energy through renewable energy sources must be complemented by efforts to reduce energy demand and waste. The implementation of energy efficiency and conservation measures will be vital if Carlow-Graiguecullen is to achieve a carbon neutral future. Improving the energy efficiency of homes and public buildings is a critical climate priority and a major focus of the funding provided in the National Development Plan 2018-2031. This will deliver wider benefits than just a reduction in GHGs. An energy efficient home is a home that is warmer, more comfortable, and much cheaper to heat. This leads to improved health outcomes, higher disposable incomes and reduced poverty, as well as the creation of new employment. Separately, energy conservation is more reliant on human behaviour that results in the use of less energy, which can be supported by increasing public awareness and promoting the use of smart electricity metres, monitoring, and heating controls etc.

In line with the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027, this JULAP:

- Recognises that the design, construction, and operation of new buildings, have a significant role to play in reducing energy demand and increasing energy efficiency into the future;
- Promotes energy efficient design through careful site selection, building shape/design, structural materials (that have low to zero embodied energy and CO2 emissions) and orientation so as to maximise solar gain;
- Recognises the potential of green walls and green roofs to greatly reduce the amount of energy needed to keep the temperature of a building comfortable all year round by insulating against extensive heat loss in the winter and heat absorption in the summer;
- Promotes the retrofitting of existing buildings, including public buildings, to reduce energy demands and promotes the principles of Energy Efficient Design (EED) to minimise the energy consumption of buildings through their lifecycle. Carlow and Laois County Councils are continually upgrading their social housing units in the joint urban area to increase the BER ratings of dwellings;
- Promotes the retrofitting of non-LED local authority public lighting in Carlow-Graiguecullen to high efficiency LED lanterns to contribute to meeting statutory energy efficiency targets, significantly reducing emissions, and achieving cost savings with energy and maintenance efficiencies;
- Promotes smarter travel, including use of the Carlow Town Bus Service which was launched in 2023.

Notable existing examples of energy efficiency and conservation in Carlow-Graiguecullen include development and infrastructural planning for new buildings at SETU Carlow and MSD Carlow. On the SETU Carlow campus off the Kilkenny Road all new buildings will be required to comply fully with the most current version of Part L of the Building Regulations (known as the NZEB regulations) and all buildings will require an “A” rated energy certificate. The buildings where possible will also be required to comply with a number of good practice sustainability requirements that go beyond the requirements of the Building Regulations.

MSD Carlow has made energy efficiency design a priority for a recently constructed QO Laboratory Building at its facility off the Dublin Road. With support from SEAI Ireland the building is the first in Ireland to be certified to LEED Gold (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) and EXEED Designed Certifications (Excellence in Energy Efficient Design).

Energy Efficiency and Conservation – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

EE. P1: Encourage and promote the consideration of energy efficient and low-carbon design solutions and modern construction methods when carrying out pre-planning discussions for major residential, commercial, and industrial development in Carlow-Graiguecullen.

EE. P2: Encourage development proposals that are low carbon, well adapted to the impacts of climate change, include mitigation measures, and maximise energy efficiency through renewable energy sources, water conservation, SuDS, siting, layout and design.

EE. P3: Promote the use of efficient energy storage systems and infrastructure that support energy efficiency and reusable energy system optimisation, subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.

EE. P4: Support the use of blue roofs, green roofs, green walls, photovoltaic and/or solar thermal collector panels and heat pumps on new residential, commercial, industrial, and public buildings.

EE. P5: Support and facilitate the installation of district heating systems as a decarbonising technology in new developments in Carlow-Graiguecullen, subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.

EE. P6: Promote the use of efficient energy storage systems and infrastructure in Carlow-Graiguecullen that support energy efficiency and reusable energy system optimisation, subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.

Energy Efficiency and Conservation – Objective

It is the objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

EE. O1: Support the implementation of national energy efficiency standards in Carlow-Graiguecullen, including energy efficiency and conservation measures through:

- Improved building design;
- Promoting smarter travel; and,
- Raising awareness/benefits of energy conservation.

EE. O2: Reduce dependency on fossil fuels for domestic and commercial heating in Carlow-Graiguecullen by encouraging the use of renewable heat solutions through the development management process.

EE. O3: Retrofit all non-LED local authority public lighting in Carlow-Graiguecullen to high efficiency LED lanterns to contribute to meeting statutory energy efficiency targets, and to significantly reduce emissions and achieve cost savings with energy and maintenance efficiencies.

11.10 Flood Risk Management

Carlow County Council and Laois County Council recognise that climate change will have a significant impact on flooding, flood risk and flood risk management in the joint urban area. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) prepared to inform this JULAP addresses climate change at both the plan making and development management stages. The SFRA acknowledges that with climate change, the frequency, pattern, and severity of flooding is expected to change and become more damaging. The strategic land-use planning decisions taken within this JULAP have therefore been fully informed by the findings of the SFRA. Further details can be found in Chapter 5 Infrastructure and Environmental Services.

11.11 Nature-Based Solutions & Green Infrastructure

Nature-based solutions and green infrastructure give recognition to the role of the natural environment in moderating and adapting to the effects of climate change. In urban areas green infrastructure can:

- Act as a carbon sink to absorb and thereby avoid increases in emissions;
- Create diverse habitats with associated positive impacts for biodiversity and ecosystem services;
- Manage high temperatures by providing evaporative cooling and shading;
- Contribute to flood prevention and storage capacity, reducing and slowing down peak flows and alleviating flooding; and,
- Address flood risk by reducing the rate and volume of water entering drains.

As detailed in Chapter 10, green infrastructure in Carlow-Graigucullen, which includes strategic natural assets such as the River Barrow and Burren River, will be essential to the success of climate mitigation and adaptation measures in the joint urban area.

Nature-Based Solutions & Green Infrastructure - Policy

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

NB. P1: Actively promote and encourage nature-based approaches and green infrastructure solutions in Carlow-Graigucullen as viable mitigation and adaptation measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase the adaptive capacity of ecosystems and optimise the multifaceted benefits through:

- Conservation, promotion, and restoration of the natural environment;
- Integrating an ecosystem services approach and promote healthy living environments through enhanced connection with nature and recreation/amenity.

- Enhancing biodiversity in the joint urban area.
- Assist with water and flood risk management; and,
- Carbon storage or sequestration.


11.12 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Climate change impacts in Carlow-Graigucullen will present challenges for urban drainage, particularly in relation to more frequent rainfall events and incidences of urban (pluvial) flooding. The implementation of SuDS can contribute to offsetting the impacts of climate change and increasing climate resilience. SuDS provide areas within the built environment where the natural processes of rainwater interception, storage and infiltration can take place, offering a more sustainable approach to the management of urban storm water runoff than impermeable surfaces, and conventional underground pipe and storage-based solutions. Unlike conventional drainage systems, SuDS systems can also contribute to green infrastructure, providing additional benefits for recreation and biodiversity. This JULAP supports the positive role SuDS can make for climate change mitigation and adaptation. All new developments (including amendments / extensions to existing developments) will be required to incorporate SuDS as part of the development/design proposals.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) – Policy

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

SW. P1: Ensure that all development proposals where viable incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and



other nature-based surface water drainage solutions.

11.13 Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Provisions in this JULAP

Climate action represents a cross-cutting theme within the wider framework and role of spatial planning. Table 11.2 summarises how policies, objectives, and related provisions in this JULAP contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

TABLE 11.2: INCORPORATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION IN THE JULAP

Chapter	How policies, objectives, and related provisions of this JULAP contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
<p>Chapter 1</p> <p>Plan Review Context</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gives recognition to the role of climate action in spatial planning and as a cross-cutting theme that has informed the preparation of this JULAP. ▪ Identifies the purpose of the JULAP, including the development of Carlow-Graiguecullen in an integrated and coordinated manner with a focus on strategic sites and regeneration areas to support the delivery of compact growth.
<p>Chapter 2</p> <p>Carlow-Graiguecullen Strategic Planning and Vision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identifies the challenge of urban sprawl in addressing the future development of the joint urban area in a manner that promotes and supports climate action measures, including compact growth, urban regeneration, and town centre living. ▪ Takes account of the role of sustainable modes of travel, including walking, cycling and public transport and existing travel and commuting patterns that could be improved. ▪ Includes climate action as a strategic objective (SO. 6) to transition Carlow-Graiguecullen to a low-carbon and climate resilient urban area.
<p>Chapter 3</p> <p>Core Strategy and Housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports compact growth, including measures that encourage the reuse and refurbishment for residential use of underutilised, vacant, and derelict buildings, reuse of upper floors, and sites within the built-up area of Carlow-Graiguecullen. ▪ Supports the transition of Carlow-Graiguecullen to a low-carbon and climate resilient urban area through the promotion of sustainable development patterns, sustainable and active travel, and sustainable energy use.
<p>Chapter 4</p> <p>Economic Development, Retail and Tourism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognises the role of natural capital in the joint urban area, including natural assets such as the River Barrow and Burren River, including their role in providing important ecosystem services which adapt to climate change. ▪ Economic strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supports the implementation of Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration. - Seeks to address vacancy, dereliction and the underutilisation of land and property. - Supports the delivery of the Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) to support a shift towards sustainable travel and transport, including public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure, and permeability/connections ▪ Supports economic development by maximising the efficiency of zoned lands. ▪ Encourages and supports the development of strategic employment lands in a comprehensive and sequential manner which uses existing infrastructure effectively and efficiently. ▪ Supports the redevelopment of key town centre retail opportunity sites and associated permeability improvements. ▪ Promotes the revitalisation and reuse of vacant and derelict shop units for retail and other town centre uses.

TABLE 11.2: INCORPORATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION IN THE JULAP

Chapter	How policies, objectives, and related provisions of this JULAP contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seeks to protect the natural and built heritage of the joint urban area, upon which the tourism industry is based.
<p>Chapter 5</p> <p>Urban Design, Town Centre and Regeneration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides for the consideration of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures in the design of the built environment. ▪ Seeks to encourage and facilitate the regeneration and reuse of underutilised, vacant, and derelict buildings and sites. ▪ Supports the implementation of Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration, including consolidation of the town centre and compact growth. ▪ Promote active land management to make the most efficient use of lands in urban locations.
<p>Chapter 6</p> <p>Sustainable Travel & Transportation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aims to support the transition to a lower carbon-based climate resilient and healthy urban environment. ▪ Supports and integrated approach to land use and transportation to promote a low carbon joint urban area. ▪ Seeks to support the Councils’ Active Travel Teams in the promotion and delivery of sustainable and active travel infrastructure in the joint urban area. ▪ Supports the delivery of proposed measures and interventions in the Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) to support shift towards sustainable travel and transport. ▪ Seeks to facilitate new and improved walking and cycling networks, including enhanced permeability, connections, and accessibility to key destinations. ▪ Supports the role of public transport in the joint urban area, including the Carlow Town Bus Services and Carlow Railway Station. ▪ Provides for a reduction in car parking requirements for commercial developments in suitable town centre locations to encourage a modal shift away from the private car to more sustainable forms of travel. ▪ Includes flexibility for car parking requirements where appropriate in response to well-designed development proposals that achieve urban infill and brownfield development objectives.
<p>Chapter 7</p> <p>Infrastructure and Environmental Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Require the use of nature-based solutions and sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS) in the management of surface water drainage, including an allowance for climate change. ▪ Require flood risk management, including site-specific flood risk assessment, to take account of climate change impacts. ▪ Supports best practice water conservation measures, including the use of rainwater harvesting systems and roof water collection. ▪ Supports protection of existing and potential water resources and their use by humans and wildlife, including rivers, streams, groundwater, and associated habitats and species.

TABLE 11.2: INCORPORATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION IN THE JULAP

Chapter	How policies, objectives, and related provisions of this JULAP contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
<p>Chapter 8</p> <p>Sustainable Communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognises the role of the 10-Minute Town in supporting the development of connected communities, with an emphasis reducing car dependency, on active travel, and shorter walking and cycling times to community facilities in the built environment. ▪ Promotes the highest standards of universal access and design for all community, sports, education, and childcare facilities. ▪ Supports the repurposing of existing underutilised buildings for community facilities, including the co-location and shared use of existing such facilities by community groups. ▪ Encourages the siting of social and community facilities in suitable locations, including close to existing such facilities, and close to existing and planned active travel and public transport routes. ▪ Supports the multi-use of education buildings and facilities, and all sports and recreational facilities. ▪ Supports the provision of new and improved walking and cycling infrastructure in the vicinity of schools. ▪ Encourages the provision of childcare facilities as an integral part of proposals for new residential developments. ▪ Supports the provision of healthcare facilities and services that are well location in new and existing communities in terms of accessibility and convenience to walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure. ▪ Seeks to prohibit the loss of existing public and private recreational zoned open space. ▪ Seeks to protect and develop the connected network of existing green spaces in the joint urban area to serve the growing needs of local communities.
<p>Chapter 9</p> <p>Built Heritage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote and encourage heritage-led regeneration, including the conservation and sustainable use of historic buildings and sites integral to the history and evolution of Carlow-Graigucullen. ▪ Prevent inappropriate alterations to protected structures, and to prohibit the demolition of any protected structure unless the relevant local authority is satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist. ▪ Preserve and enhance buildings and structures listed in the Records of Protected Structures for Carlow-Graigucullen, and to carefully consider any development proposals that would affect their special interest, both directly and indirectly. ▪ Proactively address dereliction, endangerment, neglect, and vacancy of historic buildings in Carlow-Graigucullen, through the use of relevant statutory provisions and through the promotion of appropriate uses and the sensitive conservation of historic buildings, in conjunction with other relevant initiatives.

TABLE 11.2: INCORPORATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION IN THE JULAP

Chapter	How policies, objectives, and related provisions of this JULAP contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protect and conserve important heritage items such as, gates, street furniture, post boxes and other significant historic features of interest in Carlow-Graiguecullen. ▪ Increase public awareness of the impacts of climate change on built heritage, and support and promote measures to climate proof-built heritage in the joint urban area having regard to the 'Built & Archaeological Heritage, Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan' (Department of Culture Heritage and the Gaeltacht 2019)
<p>Chapter 10</p> <p>Natural Heritage, Green Infrastructure and Landscape</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seeks to protect, conserve, and manage natural heritage in Carlow-Graiguecullen to ensure it contributes to the future sustainable development of the joint urban area. ▪ Recognises and supports the role of natural heritage, biodiversity and landscape as a non-renewable resource and eco-system services asset that can contribute towards sustainable urban drainage, flood management, and climate action. ▪ Supports the conservation and enhancement of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC. ▪ Seeks to protect wildlife habitats and species not otherwise protected by legislation, including woodland, river, wetlands, and grassland areas. ▪ Recognises and supports the role of green infrastructure as a natural asset capable of strengthening climate resilience in Carlow-Graiguecullen.
<p>Chapter 11</p> <p>Climate Action</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outlines the role of spatial planning in addressing the climate change challenge, and the manner in which it can be utilised to support climate action in Carlow-Graiguecullen.
<p>Chapter 12</p> <p>Land Use Zoning Objectives & Implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aims to manage and deliver new development in Carlow-Graiguecullen to ensure that it occurs in an orderly and efficient manner and in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development. ▪ Supports climate action, including the policies, objectives, and related provisions in Chapter 11. ▪ Supports compact growth in Carlow-Graiguecullen by following the sequential approach in the identification of lands for development. ▪ Supports the intensification of development on lands adjacent or close to public transport nodes and corridors and which contribute to the minimisation of trip generation and distribution.



Chapter 12

Land Use Zoning Objectives and Implementation

Chapter 12: Land Use Zoning Objectives and Implementation

Aim: To manage and deliver new development in Carlow-Graiguecullen to ensure that it occurs in an orderly and efficient manner and in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.

12.0 Introduction

Chapter 2 of this JULAP sets out a vision for the future development of Carlow-Graiguecullen which seeks to ensure that the joint urban area *“maximises and builds on its Key Town designation, strategic accessible location, regional and inter-regional connectivity, and existing inherent strengths, prioritising quality of life considerations, the economic and employment potential of the town, town centre led urban regeneration, focusing on a low carbon and compact pattern of development, while seeking to conserve and enhance the town’s existing natural and built heritage assets”*. In order to achieve this stated vision, it is important that the policies and objectives of this JULAP are effectively progressed and delivered over the 2024-2030 time period of the plan.

Taking account of the foregoing, the policies and objectives of this JULAP are specific to Carlow-Graiguecullen. However, the overarching county level policies and objectives of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 will also apply. In particular, the development management standards for the joint urban area will be applied as follows:

- **For Carlow Town and Carlow Town Environs in the administrative area of Carlow County Council:** Refer to Chapter 16 of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028.
- **For Graiguecullen in the administrative area of Laois County Council:** Refer to Chapter 13 of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Where conflict arises between this JULAP and these County Development Plans, the provisions of the respective County Development Plan will take precedence.

12.1 Land Use Zoning Objectives

This section sets out the general land use and zoning objectives for Carlow-Graiguecullen. Guidance on each of the land use zoning categories is provided, as well as the objectives that apply to them.

The primary purpose of land use zoning is to promote the orderly development of the joint urban area. It is based on a zoning strategy that seeks to:

- Ensure that sufficient lands are zoned to allow the aims of the Core Strategies in the Carlow County Development Plan and Laois County Development Plan to be realised.
- Promote particular classes of use in appropriate locations and to assist and provide certainty to the public and communities in accessing the most appropriate locations for new development.

- Only consider lands for zoning if there is a likelihood that these lands can be accessed and serviced within the life of the JULAP.
- Consolidate development in the joint urban area by identifying opportunities for the redevelopment of under-utilised brownfield and infill lands and existing sites and buildings, in order to add vitality to area and to ensure the efficient use of urban lands.
- Support compact growth in the joint urban area by following the sequential approach in the identification of lands for development.
- Support the intensification of development on lands in the joint urban area, such as land adjacent or close to public transport nodes and corridors and which contribute to the minimisation of trip generation and distribution.
- Support the protection and conservation of natural and built heritage assets in the joint urban area.
- Support community development and recreation.
- Support climate action, including the policies, objectives, and related provisions in Chapter 11.
- Promote and support economic development and employment generation in suitable locations.

The land use zoning categories and objectives should be read in conjunction with the Land Use Zoning Map and Objectives Map accompanying this JULAP i.e. Map Refs 12.1 and 12.2.

12.1.1 Land Use Acceptability

This section provides general guidance on the uses that are considered ‘Permitted in Principle’ or ‘Open for Consideration’ within each of the land use zoning categories. It also provides clarity for uses that are not listed, for existing non-conforming uses, and for the transitional areas between different land use zoning categories.

The guidance provided is not intended to replace the normal planning process. Therefore, an indication that a use would be ‘Permitted in Principle’ in a particular zoning category should in no way be taken to imply a grant of permission, or that a planning application may necessarily be successful.

Individual planning applications are a matter for Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to decide upon for their respective administrative areas, taking into consideration the wider policies and objectives that pertain to statutory land use planning, including Development Management standards, ministerial guidelines, and the merits of individual development proposals. In this regard, factors such as making the most efficient use of land, density, height, massing, traffic generation, public health regulations, design criteria, visual amenity, environmental considerations, flooding, and potential nuisance by way of noise, odor or air pollution are also of importance in establishing whether a development proposal conforms to the proper planning and sustainable development of an area.

Permitted in Principle Uses

Uses that are listed as 'Permitted in Principle' are considered to be generally acceptable in the relevant zoning category, subject to normal planning considerations (e.g., design, scale, density, layout, noise, odour, residential amenity, traffic generation, and service arrangements), compliance with the relevant policies, objectives and standards set out in this JULAP, and any relevant ministerial guidelines.

Open for Consideration Uses

Uses that are listed as 'Open for Consideration' are uses that are not considered acceptable in principle in all parts of the relevant use zone. However, such uses may be acceptable in circumstances where Carlow County Council or Laois County Council is satisfied that a proposed use would not conflict with the general objectives for a land use zone in their administrative areas and permitted or existing uses as well as being in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Uses Not Listed

Whilst an extensive list of potential land uses in the 'Permitted in Principle' and 'Open for Consideration' categories has been provided for each of the land use zones, it is recognised that there may be scenarios where there are proposals for uses that are not listed. Where this arises such proposals will be considered on their individual merits, with reference to the most appropriate use of a similar nature that is listed, and taking account of surrounding land uses, the compatibility of the use/development in the area in which it is proposed to locate, compliance with the relevant policy, objectives, standards and requirements as set out in this JULAP, and the

proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Non-Conforming Uses

'Non-conforming uses' are established uses that do not conform to the zoning objectives of this JULAP. Generally, Carlow County Council and Laois County Council will consider reasonable intensification of extensions to and improvement of premises that accommodate non-conforming uses, provided that it would not be injurious to the amenities of the area and would not prejudice the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Transitional Areas

Abrupt transitions in scale and use should generally be avoided adjacent to the boundary of land use zones. Development proposals in transitional areas should seek to avoid development that would be detrimental to the amenities of the contiguous zone.

In zones abutting residential areas, particular attention will be paid to the uses, scale, density, and appearance of development proposals and to landscaping and screening proposals in order to protect the amenities of residential properties. Development abutting amenity and open space will generally facilitate the passive supervision of that space, where possible by fronting onto it.

Material Contravention

Carlow County Council and Laois County Council have a statutory obligation to take such steps as may be necessary to secure the objectives of this JULAP. In appropriate circumstances a material contravention of the JULAP may be permitted. The granting of a planning permission that

materially contravenes this JULAP is a reserved function of the Elected Members of Carlow County Council or Laois County Council as appropriate, and exercisable following a public consultation process.

12.1.2 Land Use Zoning Objectives

The following sections detail the objectives and requirements for each of the land use zoning categories. Each of the land use zoning categories has an objective and an explanation which sets the context for the consideration of future development and indicates what land uses would be permitted in principle or open for consideration. The land use classes listed for each zoning category are intended as general guidance and are not exhaustive. There are 18 categories in total as listed in Table 12.1. Table 12.2 details the objective and purpose for each land use zoning category, as well as ‘Permitted in Principle Land Uses’ and ‘Open for Consideration Land Uses’.

Ref:	LAND USE ZONING CATEGORY
A	Town Centre
B	Existing/Infill Residential
C	New Residential
D	Commercial/Residential
E	Neighbourhood Facilities/Centre
F	District Centre
G	Enterprise and Employment
H	Retail Warehousing
I	Business and Innovation
J	Industry
K	Community/Education
L	Tourism and Leisure
M	Resort
N	Agriculture
O	Open Space and Amenity
P	Demesne Landscape
Q	Transport and Utilities
R	Strategic Reserve

Table 12.1 – Land Use Zoning Categories

REF	LAND USE ZONING CATEGORY	OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE	PERMITTED IN PRINCIPLE USES	OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION USES
A	TOWN CENTRE	<p>Objective: To protect, provide for and/or improve town centre facilities and uses.</p> <p>The purpose of this zoning is to protect and enhance the character and vibrancy of the existing town centre and to provide for and strengthen as appropriate retailing, residential, commercial, cultural, tourist and other appropriate uses. It will promote compact growth through the consolidation of development on town centre lands, allowing for a broad range of compatible and complementary uses, which will be encouraged to locate in this area in order to create an attractive environment to reside, shop, work, visit and in which to invest. The appropriate reuse, adaptation, and regeneration of buildings, infill sites, backlands, vacant, derelict and underutilised lands, including residential development, will be encouraged. The full use of upper floors in retail and commercial premises in the town centre for residential use will also be encouraged. Primacy of existing Core Retail Area will be retained and prioritised for any new retail development to enhance its vitality and viability. Retail proposals shall have regard to relevant policies and objectives in the Retail Strategy (Appendix 5) of the Carlow County Development Plan, the Retail Planning Guidelines, and Chapter 4 of this JULAP. Town centre development proposals will be required to be of a high architectural quality, which contributes to a distinct sense of place and public realm, promotes sustainable modes of travel and be appropriate to its location. New commercial and retail uses will be accommodated in town and village centres. The size and scale of any such commercial or retail development</p>	<p>Dwelling, Guest House/Hotel/Hostel, Restaurant, Public House, Shop (convenience), Shop (comparison), Coffee Shop/Tea Room, Bank/Financial Institution, School, Medical and Related Consultant, Health Centre/Health Care Facility, Nursing Home, Doctor/Dentist etc., Community Facility, Recreational Facility, Civic Use, Cultural Uses, Library, Offices, Live/Work Unit, Car Parks, Cinema, Dancehall, Disco, Place of Worship, Park/Playground, Tourist related facilities, Utility Structures, Funeral Home, Childcare Facilities, Education Facility (Primary, Secondary or Third Level or Training Centre), Neighbourhood Centre, Public Transport Infrastructure.</p>	<p>Amusement Arcade, Car servicing/maintenance garage, Workshop, Petrol Service Station, Car Sales Outlet, Builders Provider, Plant and Tool Hire, Warehouse/Store/Depot, Industry (light), Playing Fields, Takeaway/Fast Food Outlet, Third Level Student Accommodation.</p>

REF	LAND USE ZONING CATEGORY	OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE	PERMITTED IN PRINCIPLE USES	OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION USES
		shall be reflective of the role and function of the town in the settlement hierarchy.		
B	EXISTING/INFILL RESIDENTIAL	<p>Objective: To protect and improve existing residential amenity; to provide for appropriate infill residential development; to provide for new and improved ancillary services.</p> <p>The purpose of this zoning is to conserve and enhance the quality and character of established residential communities and protect their amenities. Infill developments, extensions, and the refurbishment of existing dwellings will be considered where they are appropriate to the character and pattern of development in the area and do not significantly affect the amenities of surrounding properties. The strengthening of community facilities and local services will be facilitated subject to the design, scale, and use of the building or development being appropriate for its location.</p>	Dwelling, Community Facilities, Allotments, Retirement Village, Sheltered Accommodation, E- Charging Facility, Park/Playground, Recreational/Amenity Open Space.	B&B/Guest House, Restaurant, Shop (convenience), Coffee Shop/Tea Room, School, Medical and Related Consultant, Health Centre, Nursing Home, Recreational Facilities, Playing Fields, Place of Worship, Cultural Uses, Library, Home Based Economic Activities, Tourist related facilities, Childcare Facilities, Adult Education/Literacy/ Basic Education/Youth Reach Facility, Utility Structures.
C	NEW RESIDENTIAL	<p>Objective: To provide for new residential development, supporting community facilities and other facilities and services incidental to residential development.</p> <p>This is the primary location for new residential neighbourhoods. Any development shall have a high-quality design and layout with an appropriate mix of housing and associated sustainable transport links including walking, cycling, and public transport to local services and facilities. The density of the development shall be reflective of the location of the lands, with consideration for higher densities</p>	Dwelling, Community Facilities, Allotments, Childcare Facilities, E- Charging Facility, Park/Playground, Recreational/Amenity Open Space.	B&B/Guest House, Restaurant, Shop (convenience), Coffee Shop/Tea Room, School, Medical and Related Consultant, Health Centre, Nursing Home, Recreational Facilities, Playing Fields, Place of Worship, Cultural Uses, Home Based Economic Activities, Tourist related facilities, Childcare Facilities, Adult Education/Literacy/ Basic

REF	LAND USE ZONING CATEGORY	OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE	PERMITTED IN PRINCIPLE USES	OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION USES
		where appropriate on more centrally located areas close to employment or services, or in strategic locations along public transport networks. In addition to residential development, consideration will also be given to community facilities, retail services and uses that would support the creation of a sustainable neighbourhood; provided such development or uses are appropriate in scale and do not unduly interfere with the predominant residential land use.		Education/Youth Reach Facility, Utility Structures.
D	COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL	<p>Objective: To protect and improve existing commercial uses within residential areas and provide for additional compatible uses.</p> <p>The purpose of this zoning is to reflect the established mix of commercial uses within residential areas which have developed historically in areas outside of town centre lands in Carlow Town. Any new development in this zone must not prejudice the viability of established land uses within the zone. Extensions or the redevelopment of existing commercial uses must not impact negatively on neighbouring residential amenity and must be sympathetic to existing surrounding built environment and pattern of development in layout, design, and use of materials and finishes.</p>	Shop (convenience), Car Park, Dwelling, Childcare Facilities, Petrol Service Station, Restaurant.	Takeaway/Fast-Food Outlet, Medical and Related Consultancy, Offices, Park/Playground, Public House, Recreational Facilities, Community Hall and Sports Hall, Utility Structures, Workshop, Education Facility (Primary, Secondary or Third Level or Training Centre).
E	NEIGHBOURHOOD FACILITIES/CENTRE	<p>Objective: To provide for and improve local neighbourhood centres and facilities.</p> <p>It is intended that land zoned for 'Neighbourhood Centre' or 'Neighbourhood Facilities' will be developed to provide an appropriate range of local services including commercial,</p>	Shop (convenience ≤ 1,200 sqm net.), Café/Tea Room, Restaurant, Dwelling, Health Centre/Clinic, Medical and related Consultancy, Park/Playground, Childcare Facilities, Bring Banks, Digital	Car Park, Community Facility, Cultural Uses, Library, B&B/Guesthouse, Fast-food Takeaway Outlet, Offices, Recreational Facility, Community Hall, Sports Hall and Utility Structures.

REF	LAND USE ZONING CATEGORY	OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE	PERMITTED IN PRINCIPLE USES	OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION USES
		<p>office, retail and community uses, to support the local community.</p> <p>Neighbourhood centres may where appropriate, include an element of residential development subject to achieving the protection of residential amenities and compliance with development management standards, residential particularly above ground floor level will be encouraged.</p> <p>Neighbourhood centres or facilities are intended to serve the immediate needs of a localised catchment i.e. the local working and residential population and complement, rather than compete with similar retail uses within the established town or village centres. Medical clinics, professional offices, childcare facilities (crèche), small convenience stores, local shops and cafes are envisaged for these particular areas. The threshold or floor area proposed for each neighbourhood centre will be assessed in relation to the nature and extent of retail provision in accordance with the current retail strategy, the intended catchment area for the neighbourhood centre and the impact that the proposal may have on the vitality and viability of the established town centre.</p> <p>No single shop unit shall be greater than. 1,200sqm net floor area.</p> <p>New neighbourhood centres and facilities shall be of high-quality design in accordance with the development management standards set out in Chapter 16 of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 or the requirements</p>	<p>Innovation Hub/Co-working Space.</p>	

REF	LAND USE ZONING CATEGORY	OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE	PERMITTED IN PRINCIPLE USES	OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION USES
		of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 as may be applicable.		
F	DISTRICT CENTRE	<p>Objective: To provide for shopping, commercial, amenity, and community facilities of a scale and type that does not undermine the role, and vitality and viability, of Carlow Town Centre.</p> <p>The purpose of this zoning is to recognise the established role and functions of the Barrow Valley Retail Park in Graiguecullen in accordance with the requirements of the Retail Planning Guidelines. The Retail Park provides a comprehensive range of commercial and community services. The land comprising the Retail Park is built out to its boundary area extents, including the N80 (Northern Relief Road) to the north and west, existing residential areas to the south, and Sleaty Road to the east. Shopping, commercial, amenity, and community facilities at Barrow Valley Retail Park will be promoted at a scale that does not adversely impact on the retailing and commercial primacy of Carlow Town Centre.</p>	Hotel, Restaurant, Shop (convenience), Shop (comparison), Coffee Shop/Tea Room, Bank/Financial Institution, Medical and Related Consultant, Health Centre/Health Care Facility, Doctor/Dentist etc., Community Facility, Recreational Facility, Civic Use, Cultural Uses, Library, Offices, Car Park, Playground, Tourist related facilities, Utility Structures, Childcare Facilities, Public Transport Infrastructure.	Amusement Arcade, Car Sales Outlet, Builders Provider, Plant and Tool Hire, and Warehouse/Store/Depot.
G	ENTERPRISE AND EMPLOYMENT	<p>Objective: To promote and provide for the development of enterprise and employment generating uses.</p> <p>This zoning provides for the creation of enterprise and employment uses apart from traditional commercial functions that should locate within a town or village core area. Lands zoned for 'Enterprise and Employment' include the use and development of land for high-end research and development, business, science and technology-based industry, financial services, call centres/telemarketing,</p>	High-end research and development, business, science and technology-based industry, financial services, call centres/telemarketing, software development, enterprise and incubator units, small/medium manufacturing, corporate offices, office based enterprise.	Restaurant, Public House, Shop (convenience), School, Adult Education/literacy/basic education/youth reach facility Community Facility, Childcare Facilities, Recreational Facilities, Community Hall and Sports Hall, Cultural Uses, Library, Medical and Related Consultant, Health Centre/Health Care Facility, Petrol

REF	LAND USE ZONING CATEGORY	OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE	PERMITTED IN PRINCIPLE USES	OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION USES
		<p>software development, enterprise and incubator units, small/medium manufacturing, corporate offices in high quality campus/park type development. This zoning also provides for 'walk to' support facilities such as canteen, restaurant or crèche services which are integrated into employment units and are of a nature and scale to serve the needs of employees on the campus.</p> <p>This zoning does not include general retail, retail park outlets and heavy industrial undertakings.</p> <p>It is intended that such developments will have high quality architectural design and landscaping, and associated transportation infrastructure such as car and bicycle parking may also be required as part of any development proposal.</p>		<p>Service Station, Car Sales, Car servicing /maintenance garage, Cinema, Funeral Home, Heavy Commercial Vehicle Parks, Warehouse, Store, Depot, Industry, Industry (light), Workshops, Playing Fields, Place of Worship, Park/Playground, Tourist Related Facilities, Utility Structures.</p>
H	RETAIL WAREHOUSING	<p>Objective: To consolidate retail park and retail warehousing development.</p> <p>These areas are dedicated to the sale of bulky goods requiring extensive showroom space and with common car parking areas. A retail warehouse can comprise a large single-level store specialising in the sale of bulky household goods such as carpets, furniture and electrical goods, and bulky DIY items, catering mainly for car-borne customers.</p> <p>These areas are provided for outside of the town centre because of their size, access, and parking requirements. Units measuring less than 700sq.m. are not suitable within areas zoned for retail warehousing as these may be more suitable for town centre locations.</p>	<p>Retail Warehouse, Sale of Bulky Goods, Car Park, Car Sales Outlet, Factory Outlet Stores, Garden Centre, Utility Structures.</p>	<p>Cash and Carry/Wholesale Warehousing, Takeaway/Fast Food Outlet, Restaurant, Drive Thru Restaurant, Café/Tea Room, Childcare Facilities.</p>

REF	LAND USE ZONING CATEGORY	OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE	PERMITTED IN PRINCIPLE USES	OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION USES
I	BUSINESS AND INNOVATION	<p>Objective: Provide for high-technology related office-based industry.</p> <p>The main purpose of this zoning objective is to promote and encourage the provision of high technology industry, office-based industry, and start-up business units, in which research, innovation and development play a significant part and which lead to and accommodate the commercial production of a high technology output.</p> <p>High technology industries include software development, information technology, telemarketing commercial research and development, data processing, publishing and media recording and media associated activities.</p> <p>General Offices where each office unit is in excess of 200sq m will also be acceptable in principle on sites zoned for Business and Innovation.</p> <p>The layout of new employment sites will have to have regard for alternative sustainable modes of transport and mobility management. Site layout should emphasise the necessary connections to the wider local and strategic public transport, walking and cycling networks. A high standard of landscaping will be required in association with the development of these lands.</p>	Offices, Office-Based Enterprise, Science/Technology Based Enterprise, Training Centre, Wet Laboratories, Call Centre, Car Park, Laboratory Research.	Childcare Facilities, Playground, Conference Centre, Enterprise Incubator Units, Industry (light), Recreational Facility, Community Hall and Sports Hall, Playing Fields, Restaurant, Café, Shop (local convenience), Utility Structures.
J	INDUSTRY	<p>Objective: To provide for industrial development and ancillary office use.</p>	Industry, industry (light), manufacturing, science and technology-based industry, ancillary office, car park,	Agri. Business, research and development, bring banks/civic amenity, science and technology enterprise, training centre,

REF	LAND USE ZONING CATEGORY	OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE	PERMITTED IN PRINCIPLE USES	OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION USES
		This zoning provides for general and specialised industrial uses, associated with high inputs of energy, water and materials and the management of environmental emissions including noise, dust, and odour. Other uses ancillary or similar to industrial uses will be considered in this zone on their merits.	workshops, garages/panel beating/car repairs, plant storage.	warehouse, store, depot, utility structures and facilities, petrol service station, heavy commercial vehicle parks.
K	COMMUNITY/EDUCATION	<p>Objective: To protect and provide for community and educational facilities.</p> <p>The purpose of this zoning is to provide for and safeguard community, educational and civic facilities and uses which contribute to the creation of viable and sustainable communities, including health care, childcare, schools, places of worship, community facilities, recreational facilities, and ancillary neighbourhood uses and services.</p>	Education Facility (Primary, Secondary or Third Level or Training Centre), Childcare/Creche/Playschool, Cultural Uses, Library, Health Centre/Health Care Facility, Cemetery, Medical and related Consultancy, Nursing Home, Park/Playground, Place of Worship, Playing Fields, Recreational Facilities, Community Hall and Sports Hall.	Car Park, Offices, Restaurant, Café/Tea Room, Shop (convenience), Cinema, Dancehall, Disco, Warehouse/Store/Depot, Workshop, Utility Structures, Funeral Home, Residential Institution, Utility Structures.
L	TOURISM AND LEISURE	<p>Objective: To provide for and enhance tourism and leisure facilities.</p> <p>The purpose of this zoning is to provide for the use of land for the provision of tourism and leisure facilities and uses. This includes tourist attractions, cultural facilities, tourist amenities, services, and accommodation. Development that contributes to the enjoyment of recreation or leisure activity will also be considered.</p>	Agri-Tourism, B&B/Guest House, Hotel/Hostel/Aparthotel, Tourist Accommodation, Coffee Shop/Tea Room, Conference/Event Centre, Craft Centre /Shop, Cycleway/Walkway trails, Recreational/Amenity Open Space, Recreational Facility, Community Hall and Sports Hall, Restaurant, Tourist Facility, Cultural Use, Park/Playground, Childcare Facilities, Adult	Dwelling, Public House, Shop (comparison), Community Facility, Offices, Car park, Cinema, Dancehall, Disco, Industry (light), Workshops, Takeaway/Fast Food Outlet, Utility Structures.

REF	LAND USE ZONING CATEGORY	OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE	PERMITTED IN PRINCIPLE USES	OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION USES
			Education/literacy/ basic education/youth reach facility.	
M	RESORT	<p>Objective: To provide for resort uses.</p> <p>The purpose of this zoning is to provide for leisure and recreational facilities and associated infrastructure.</p>	B&B/Guest House, Hotel/Hostel/Aparthotel, Tourist Accommodation, Coffee Shop/Tea Room, Conference/Event Centre, Craft Centre /Shop, Cycleway/Walkway trails, Recreational/Amenity Open Space, Recreational Facility, Leisure Facility, Restaurant, Tourist Facility, Cultural Use, Park/Playground, Childcare Facilities, Adult Education/literacy/ basic education/youth reach facility.	Public House, Shop (comparison), Community Facility, Offices, Car park, Cinema, Dancehall, Disco, Workshops, Takeaway/Fast Food Outlet, Utility Structures.
N	AGRICULTURE	<p>Objective: To retain and protect agricultural uses.</p> <p>The purpose of this zoning is to ensure the retention of agricultural uses and protect them from urban sprawl and ribbon development. Uses which are directly associated with agriculture or which would not interfere with this use are open for consideration. This includes limited housing for persons who can demonstrate compliance with the rural housing criteria in Chapter 3, tourism related projects such as tourist caravan parks or campsites and amenity uses such as playing fields, or parks.</p>	Park/Playground, Playing Fields, Cattle shed/Slatted Unit, Agricultural effluent storage facilities, Broiler House, Stable Yard, Utility Structures, Agri-Tourism, Cemetery.	Dwelling, Recreational Facilities, Community Hall and Sports Hall, Tourist related Facilities, Tourist Camping Site, Caravan Park, Guesthouse, Childcare / Creche/Playschool.

REF	LAND USE ZONING CATEGORY	OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE	PERMITTED IN PRINCIPLE USES	OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION USES
O	OPEN SPACE AND AMENITY	<p>Objective: To protect, provide for and enhance open space, amenity facilities, and recreational uses.</p> <p>The areas included in this zoning objective cover both private and public open space and are dispersed throughout towns and villages, as well as riparian zones and environmental buffers. The aims of this land use-zoning objective include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ to protect residential amenity in housing developments; ▪ to protect, improve and provide for recreation, open space, and amenity provision; ▪ to protect, improve and maintain public open space; ▪ to preserve private open space, and ▪ to provide recreational and community facilities. <p>The Council will not normally permit development that would result in a loss of open space within town and villages except where compensatory open space is provided to service the community affected in an appropriate location.</p> <p>Existing agricultural uses in open space areas will continue to be permitted, and reasonable development proposals in relation to this use will be considered on their merits.</p>	Park/Playground, Playing Fields, Walkway/Cycleway Trails, Recreational Open Space and Amenity.	School, Childcare Facility, Community Facility, Recreational Facility, Community Hall and Sports Hall, Cultural Uses, Car Park, Tourist related Facility, Utility Structures.
P	DEMESNE LANDSCAPE	<p>Objective: To protect and conserve the special character of demesne landscapes and provide for research activities.</p> <p>These areas, including Oak Park Demesne and Browns Hill Demesne, usually consist of expansive areas of mostly agricultural lands punctuated by individual fine specimen mature trees, stands of trees and mature hedgerow, and are</p>	Field Research and Data Collection, Playground, Cycleway/Walkway trails, Recreational Open Space and Amenity, Recreational Facilities, Restaurant/Café.	Car park, Cemetery, Community Facility, Cultural Use, Enterprise and Incubator Units, Laboratory Research, Wet Laboratories, Office-Based Enterprise, Science/Technology Based

REF	LAND USE ZONING CATEGORY	OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE	PERMITTED IN PRINCIPLE USES	OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION USES
		often characterised by historic boundary walls and field patterns laid out in association with a demesne house. The purpose of this zoning is to conserve the special character of these demesne landscapes by retaining their open character along with the associated field and planting patterns. The undertaking of scientific research is also provided for within this zoning category.		Enterprise, Garden Centre, Training Centre.
Q	TRANSPORT AND UTILITIES	<p>Objective: To provide for transport infrastructure and public utilities.</p> <p>This zoning identifies lands associated with the provision of transport infrastructure and public utilities such as road, rail, electricity, gas, telecommunications, broadband, and water, wastewater infrastructure etc. The nature of these facilities is such that the use of the lands is dedicated to the provision and maintenance of such uses.</p> <p>Car parks and commercial development associated with the provision of public transport services are considered appropriate in this zoning.</p> <p>This zoning also provides for and preserves land in the ownership of Carlow County Council, Laois County Council, or other bodies charged with the provision of services such as electricity, telecommunications, water, wastewater etc.</p>	Car Park, Park and Ride Facilities, Public Transport Infrastructure (Rail/Bus), Utility Structures and Facilities.	Industry (light), Warehouse/Store/Depot.
R	STRATEGIC RESERVE	<p>Objective: To provide a land reserve for the orderly development and future expansion of the towns and villages into the future.</p>	Agriculture, Park/Playground, Playing Fields, Utility Structures, Walkway/Cycleway Trails, Recreational Open Space and Amenity.	



REF	LAND USE ZONING CATEGORY	OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE	PERMITTED IN PRINCIPLE USES	OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION USES
		Regarding lands included in the 'Strategic Reserve' land bank, it is important to highlight that the inclusion of such lands will not in any way infer a prior commitment on the part of the Council regarding their future zoning in a subsequent development plan. Such a decision will be considered within the framework of national and regional population targets applicable at that time and proper planning and sustainable development.		

12.1.3 Definition of Key Use Classes

Agriculture

Use of land or buildings for the purposes set out in Section 2 (1) "agriculture" of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)

Bed and Breakfast

A dwelling house of which part of the bedroom accommodation is available for overnight rental by members of the public and breakfast may be provided as part of the service but not other meals.

Dwelling

Including a residential unit such as a house or apartment.

Carpark

A building or part thereof or land (not being part of a public road) used for the parking of mechanically propelled vehicles, excluding heavy commercial vehicles.

Cemetery

Land used as a burial ground.

Cash and Carry

A building or part thereof or land used for the sale of goods in bulk to traders on a cash-and-carry basis.

Childcare

"Childcare" is taken to mean full day care and sessional facilities and services for pre-school and school-going children out of school hours. It includes services involving care, education, and socialisation opportunities for children. Thus services such as pre-schools, day care services, crèches, playgroups, childminding and after school groups are included, but schools (primary, secondary and special) and residential centres for children are excluded.

Place of Worship

Any structure habitually used as a place of public worship or for religious instruction. Where a building or part of a building, on the same site as a place of public worship or on an adjoining site, is used in connection with that place of public worship, such a use shall be deemed to be a related use.

Community Facility

A building or part thereof used for (community) activities organised primarily by the local community and to which the public may be admitted on payment of a charge or free of charge.

Crèche or Playschool

Use of a building or part of a building for the provision of day care facilities for the minding and training of children below primary school entry age.

Sessional: The provision of a service which offers a planned programme to pre-school children for between 2 and 3.5 hours per day on two or more occasions per week by trained personnel. Sessional services include playschools and Montessori schools.

Full Day Care: The provision of a structured day care service for children for more than 3.5 hours per day, supervised by trained personnel. This would include playschools, Montessori schools, crèche nurses and after school care.

Cultural Use

Use of a building or part thereof or land for cultural purposes to which the public may be admitted on payment of a charge or free of charge.

Dancehall/Disco

A building or part thereof where the primary function is the provision of dancing facilities.

Education

The use of a building or part thereof or land as a school, college, technical institute, academy, lecture hall or other educational centre. Where a building or part of a building on the same site as an educational building or on an adjoining site is designed for use or used as a residence for the staff or the pupils of that educational building such a use shall be deemed to be educational.

Funeral Home

A building or part of a building used for the storage, preparation and laying of human remains, the holding of burial services and the assembling of funerals.

Garden Centre

The use of land, including buildings, for the cultivation, storage and/or the display and sale of horticultural products and the display and sale of related goods and equipment.

Guest House

A building or part thereof where sleeping accommodation and meal services are generally available to residents only.

Health Centre

A building or part thereof or land used for the provision of local medical or social assistance services for the local community and including group practices and clinics.

Home Based Economic Activity

Service type activities carried on for profit by the occupier of a dwelling, such use being subordinate to the use of the dwelling as a residence.

Industry (light)

The use of a building or part thereof or land for industry (not being a special industry) in which the processes carried on or the machinery installed are

such as could be carried on or installed in any residential area without detriment to the amenity of that area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit and may include a service garage but not a petrol station.

Office

A building in which the sole or principal use is the undertaking of professional, administrative, financial, marketing or clerical work, including services provided principally to visiting members of the public.

Open Space

Any land, whether enclosed or not, on which there are no buildings or of which not more than one-twentieth is covered with buildings and the whole of the remainder of which is laid out as a garden or is used for purposes of recreation or lies waste and unoccupied.

Petrol Service Station

A structure or land used for the purpose of the selling by retail of petrol, fuel oils, lubricating oils and liquefied petroleum gas generally for use in motor vehicles. It does not include a service garage or motor sales outlet. Petrol service stations can provide a wide range of retail goods in an associated shop. In general, these shops should remain secondary to the use as a petrol filling station.

Public House

A building or part thereof or land licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquor to the public for consumption on the premises.

Recreational Facility

A building or part of a building which may be available to the public on payment of a charge or free of charge in the use of which no excessive noise is produced and which may contain a theatre, a cinema, an art gallery or exhibition hall (other than for trading purposes), an assembly hall, a social centre, a community centre, a swimming pool, a bowling alley or a squash centre but

may or shall exclude dance halls, band halls, discotheques or similar uses. It may also include facilities for other physical activities in the form of structured games or play for the purpose of recreation or amusement.

Restaurant

A building or part thereof where the primary function is the sale of meals and refreshments for consumption on the premises.

Retail Parks

A single development of at least three retail warehouses with associated car parking.

Retail Warehouse

A large single-level store specialising in bulky household goods such as carpets, furniture, electrical goods, and bulky DIY items, catering mainly for car-borne customers.

Shop (convenience)

Goods based retail classification for shop selling convenience goods, examples of which include food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, tobacco and non-durable household goods.

Shop (comparison)

Goods based retail classification for shop selling comparison goods, examples of which include clothing and footwear, furniture, furnishings and household equipment (excluding non-durable household goods), medical and pharmaceutical products, therapeutic appliances and equipment, educational and recreation equipment and accessories.

Warehouse/Store/Depot

A building or part thereof where goods are stored prior to distribution and sale elsewhere.

Wholesale Outlet

A building or part thereof or land used for the sale of goods by wholesale to traders only. Processing and manufacturing of such goods is excluded.

Workshop

A building in which goods are manufactured or repaired.


12.2 Implementation and Monitoring

12.2.1 Introduction

Carlow County Council and Laois County Council are committed to the continuous process of implementing and monitoring the policies and objectives contained in this JULAP and will occupy a leadership role in progressing same.

Many policies and objectives in the JULAP relate to development management processes, which can be implemented through established internal procedures in Carlow County Council and Laois County Council. The intention of other policies and objectives in the JULAP can be wide-ranging, and for this reason their successful implementation can necessitate a collaborative approach with a range of agencies and stakeholders, including local communities, governmental and non-governmental bodies and agencies, and adjoining local authorities.

It should also be noted that there are policies and objectives aimed at supporting an intended outcome, rather than being the direct means of delivering the outcome. In this regard, the implementation of policies and objectives in the JULAP, including the desired planning outcomes, can be subject to external factors such as the availability of resources, political support, and economic circumstances in terms of funding in



both County Councils and the availability of capital from other sources.

Carlow County Council's and Laois County Council's Planning Departments are primarily responsible for implementing and monitoring the JULAP for their administrative areas through their forward planning and development management functions. However, the cross-functional content of the JULAP is such that it also coordinates the policies and objectives of the Councils' other internal departments, such as their Transportation Departments, Environment Departments, Housing Departments, Community Departments, and Local Enterprise Offices. In addition, the scope of certain objectives in the JULAP can be such that external bodies such as Uisce Éireann, the Environmental Protection Agency, the OPW, or Transport Infrastructure Ireland, can be responsible for their implementation.

In the preparation and drafting of this JULAP every effort has been made, as far as is practicable, to formulate policies and objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, and realistic. The policies and objectives in the JULAP have all also been formulated with the aim of fulfilling the Vision for Carlow-Graiguecullen included in Chapter 2, including the cross-cutting themes which underpin the JULAP and the Strategic Objectives, as set out in Chapter 2 (See also Table 12.2 below). The Strategic Objectives in the JULAP are themselves broadly aligned with the:

- National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF;
- Regional Strategic Outcomes of the RSES' for the Southern Region and the Eastern and Midlands Region;

- Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027; and,
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Table 12.2: Strategic Objectives

SO. 1:	Town Centre Led Urban Regeneration	Encourage and support town centre led urban regeneration for Carlow-Graiguecullen, focusing on the appropriate redevelopment and reuse of key derelict, vacant and underutilised sites and buildings, the consolidation of the town through the use of brownfield, infill and backland sites, the conservation of historic building stock, and the implementation of streetscape and public realm improvements.
SO. 2:	Economic Development and Employment	Encourage and facilitate balanced economic development and employment opportunities in Carlow-Graiguecullen, ensuring a vibrant local economy that maximises business and investment opportunities and the existing economic attributes of the town, and supports the development of a diverse range of economic sectors.
SO. 3:	Urban Design	Improve the public realm and attractiveness of Carlow-Graiguecullen through the delivery of high-quality urban design outcomes, taking account of the need to respond to the social and physical characteristics of the existing built environment and those features that should be protected and/or enhanced by, and inform, new development.
SO. 4:	Sustainable Travel and Transport	Prioritise integrated transport and land use, supported by investment in public transport, active travel networks and shared, low-carbon mobility options, which will improve people's travel choices and support safe, sustainable, and healthy lifestyles.
SO. 5:	Housing and Communities	Promote Carlow-Graiguecullen as a priority location for regional level community and social infrastructure and support the expansion and enhancement of existing community facilities, the provision of residential development, and a range of new community facilities in tandem with population growth to meet the needs of future residents in the joint urban area.
SO. 6:	Climate Action	Transition Carlow-Graiguecullen to a low-carbon and climate resilient town through a combination of effective mitigation and adaptation measures, in addition to maximising opportunities for energy efficiency, renewables, and decarbonisation.
SO. 7:	Protection of Natural and Built Heritage	Manage the development of Carlow-Graiguecullen in a manner that protects, conserves, and enhances the natural and built heritage of the area.
SO. 8:	Arts, Culture and Tourism	Support the development of, and investment in new and existing arts, culture and tourism infrastructure and amenities in Carlow-Graiguecullen.

12.2.2 Implementation

The implementation of the JULAP will be achieved in a number of different ways, including:

- The application of the policies, objectives, standards, and related provisions in the assessment of planning applications for permissions, including local authority development. In view of the cross-cutting and multi-faceted scope of many of the policies and objectives in the JULAP, they will contribute to the achievement of multiple Strategic Objectives in the Plan, which are themselves interconnected.
- The integration of the strategies, policies, and objectives of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 with the JULAP.
- Investment in infrastructure and environmental services that underpin the policies and objectives of the JULAP. The Strategic Objectives in the Plan, and the Core Strategies in the County Development Plans, establish the priorities for the provision and improvement of infrastructure and environmental services by the Carlow County Council and Laois County Council, and by other agencies, subject to the availability of funding.
- The ongoing monitoring of the strategies, policies, and objectives in the JULAP as appropriate.
- Identifying the need for any adjustments to strategies, policies, and objectives over the

lifetime of the JULAP, as appropriate, and in future reviews.

12.2.3 Funding

The fulfilment of policies and objectives in the JULAP, including strategies or projects, will be dependent on capital funding from the Government and other state agencies. The funds of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council are allocated and adopted under the annual budgets for each local authority.

12.2.4 Development Contributions

Development contributions for the provision of infrastructure and services such as roads, footpaths, surface water drainage, amenity and open space provision, will be applied as appropriate to development proposals granted permission. The details and basis for the determination of the contributions are set out in the respective Development Contributions Schemes for Carlow County Council and Laois County Council, which are adopted in accordance with Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

12.2.5 Other Sources of Funding

Other sources of funding that will assist in the implementation of policies and objectives in the JULAP include:

- **Rural and Urban Regeneration Funds (RRDF and URDF):** These funds arise from the National Development Plan in support of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and other national strategies and are available to support the implementation of local authority developments plans and local

economic and community plan objectives. The types of projects eligible for funding include measures to address building vacancy and refurbishment, public realm improvements, enabling infrastructure, and sustainable mobility.

- **Climate Action Fund:** This aims to support initiatives that contribute to the achievement of Ireland’s climate and energy targets.
- **Smarter Travel and Active Travel Funding:** Funding allocated by the National Transport Agency (NTA) to support area-based transport assessments, local transport plans, and sustainable transport projects.
- **Uisce Éireann Capital Investment Funding:** Funding for new and upgraded water and wastewater infrastructure e.g., wastewater treatment plants.
- **Small Towns and Villages Growth Programme:** Uisce Éireann funding to support growth in small towns and villages through upgrades to wastewater treatment plants.
- **National Biodiversity Funding and Grant:** Funding to support local authority biodiversity plans and projects.
- **Public Private Partnership:** Involves a partnership agreement between the public and private sectors for the delivery of specific projects relating to public services and infrastructure. Such approaches ensure a commitment to funding due to interlinked public and private assistance and aims at ensuring the most economically efficient manner of development.

12.3 Environmental Monitoring

Article 10 of the SEA Directive requires monitoring of the significant environmental effects of the implementation of this JULAP in order to identify, at an early stage, unforeseen adverse effects and to enable appropriate remedial action to be undertaken. While the ongoing implementation of the policies and objectives of the JULAP and the monitoring processes detailed above incorporates some monitoring of environment related objectives, the full and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation assessment, required to be undertaken under Article 10 of the SEA Directive, is set out in the Strategic Environmental Assessment included in Appendix I.