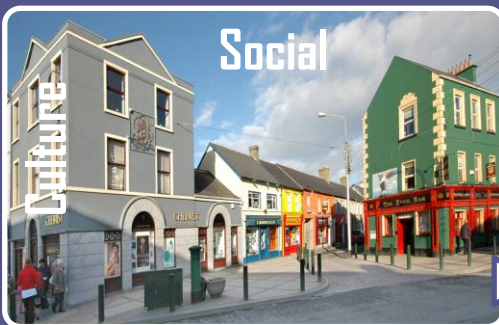


APPENDIX 1A

PLAN

AS INSERTED BY VARIATION NO.2 TO
LONGFORD COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2015-2021

INCORPORATING LONGFORD TOWN AND ENVIRONS LOCAL AREA PLAN 2016-2022



PREPARED BY THE SPATIAL PLANNING SECTION, LONGFORD COUNTY
COUNCIL

SEPTEMBER 2016

PLAN

Spatial Planning Unit

- Senior Executive Officer – Terry Rooney
- Executive Planner – Aoife Moore

The spatial planning unit is responsible for the delivery of the forward planning work programme that maintains the planning policy framework at local level in accordance with the provisions of the planning and development act.

Established in October 2015, the Spatial Planning Unit works in tandem with the Regeneration and Unfinished Housing Estate teams, creating a positive outlook for the development of the county, based on robust planning policy with its roots in a firm evidence base and articulated through the County Development Plan.

This plan has been prepared by the Spatial Planning unit, in consultation with a multi-disciplinary working group from within the council and with additional input from

- A/Staff Officer, Planning Administration - Tricia Devine
- GIS Technician, Map Illustration and MyPlan – Sean Savage

Glossary

Biodiversity: the following definition is taken from the current National biodiversity Plan at <https://www.npws.ie/legislation/national-biodiversity-plan>

Biological diversity or “biodiversity” means the variety of all life forms on Earth. We as human beings are an integral part of biodiversity and we can influence it in a positive or negative way. Biodiversity provides us with food, fuel, medicines and other essentials that we simply cannot live without and is a critical component of the services that nature provides free of charge to all of human society.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) : The Environmental Protection agency defines Strategic Environmental Assessment in the following way

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the process by which environmental considerations are required to be fully integrated into the preparation of Plans and Programmes and prior to their final adoption. The objectives of the SEA process are to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to promote sustainable development by contributing to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of specified Plans and Programmes

The requirement for SEA derives from the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC). Eleven sectors are specified in the Directive and Competent Authorities (Plan/Programme makers) must subject specific Plans and Programmes for these sectors to an environmental assessment where they are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Further information at <http://www.epa.ie/monitoringassessment/assessment/sea/>

Appropriate Assessment (Habitats Directive Assessment): An Appropriate Assessment establishes whether a plan or project can be implemented without damaging a Natura 2000 site. It consists of a process whereby the implications of plan implementation are assessed for relevant Natura 2000 sites and their conservation objectives. Appropriate Assessment addresses the likelihood that various plans and projects, alone and in combination with other plans and projects, may lead to the destruction or deterioration of these sites and the wildlife and habitats that they host.

Policy and proposals with potential to incur adverse effects upon Natura 2000 sites must be subject to an Appropriate Assessment, which follows a series of steps and stages in line with Articles 6.3 and 6.4 of the Habitats Directive, that must be observed in establishing whether a plan or project can be implemented without damaging or contravening the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites.

The significance of impacts is first assessed during an Appropriate Assessment screening exercise, the conclusions of which will either identify the potential for further significant impacts or a statement that no significant impacts are likely to occur.

A complete Appropriate Assessment will also require mitigation and avoidance of impacts, with cognisance of provisions in the Directive for circumstances in which there are no alternatives and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest requiring a plan or project to proceed.

Further guidance is available at <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/guidance-appropriate-assessment-planning-authorities>

Natura 2000 sites: These are designated conservation sites with particular relevance in terms of appropriate assessment and include the following

- *Special Protection Areas (SPAs)*
- *Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)*
- *European Offshore Marine Sites (EOMS)*
- *Ramsar Sites*

Further information available at <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites>

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA): SFRA assesses flood risk in the context of plans at a strategic level, indicating where development may or may not be appropriate in a flood risk context, indicating vulnerable areas and identifying others for further specific study. Methodology is set out in the Ministerial Guidelines issued under Section 28 of the Planning Act and available at the following link.

<http://flooding.ie/en/media/The%20Planning%20System%20and%20Flood%20Risk%20Management.PDF>

Open Space Hierarchy: This hierarchy outlines the relationship between public, semi-public and private spaces, their uses, connectivity and how they contribute to the structure and function of the urban area.

Active Frontage: This term refers to the interaction between a building and the street at ground level, usually facilitated by the number of access points into a building for different uses. Active frontage generally promotes a more vibrant pedestrian environment in town centres.

The Planning Act (or the Act): This refers to the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010 (as amended) that contain Irish planning primary legislative provisions. These are informed by Government policy and supported by the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2016 and relevant planning guidance (issued under s. 28 of the Act).

<http://www.housing.gov.ie/legislation>

Neighbourhood Centre: Neighbourhood centres are focal points identified in appropriate, usually residential, areas to facilitate the provision of local level services such as shops, education and childcare, promoting accessibility and sustainable travel.

Green Infrastructure: This is a concept that utilises natural ecosystems and their functions to promote sustainable solutions to planning and land use issues in an urban setting. These include responding to micro-climatic conditions on individual sites using siting and vegetation to large scale flood prevention and mitigation initiatives.

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation: These are provisions that will be required as part of the preparation of plans and programmes into the future in line with national frameworks. Mitigation provisions are policy provisions to limit further climate change, such as sustainable travel policy to prevent the release of further carbon into the atmosphere. Adaptation measures will require policy changes to address the effects of climate change such as provisions for emergency planning in extreme weather events and the application of revised flooding projections under the SFRA outlined above.

Appendix 1A (i) Zoning provisions

INDICATIVE FLOOD ZONES, WHERE APPLICABLE, OVERLIE AND SUPERCEDE ALL OTHER ZONING PROVISIONS ON SITE.

This section should be read in conjunction with the Core Strategy contained at Section 2. The following zonings are indicative of the level and nature of development which is deemed by the Planning Authority to be appropriate to the area.

The zonings are intended to be flexible, provided that the basic concepts of proper planning, residential amenity and good design practice are adhered to. Any proposed development should be compatible with the primary zoning use and not detract from the amenity of the area. These zonings should be read in conjunction with the Development Plan Standards, particularly in relation to design, materials, public open space and parking requirements.

ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL

This zoning is intended primarily for established housing development but may include a range of other uses particularly those that have the potential to improve the residential amenity of residential communities such as schools, crèches, small shops, doctor's surgeries, small scale residential, playing fields, etc.

Potential sites may range from small gap infill, unused or derelict land and backland areas, side gardens of existing houses, up to larger undeveloped sites within an established residential area. A balance must be struck between the reasonable protection of the amenities and privacy of adjoining dwellings, the protection of established character and the need to provide infill development. Proposals for development involving the intensification of residential uses within existing residential areas will need to clearly demonstrate that the proposal respects the existing character of the area and would not harm the amenity value of adjacent properties.

Within this zoning category the improved quality of existing residential areas will be the Council's priority.

STRATEGIC RESIDENTIAL LAND RESERVE

TO PROVIDE FOR THE LONGER TERM HOUSING REQUIREMENTS OF THE TOWN

Residential development, other than that set out below, will not be permitted on these lands during the lifetime of the Plan (It should be noted that lands zoned for the purposes of strategic residential reserve may be released for development over future plan periods). The following residential type development may be considered acceptable;

- 1) Where there is a live permission for residential development that has not been activated.

The life of these permissions may be extended in accordance with the provisions of Section 42A of the Planning & Development Act 2010, as amended. Proposals for new developments will not be considered over the lifetime of the current plan period.

- 2) A proposal for a single dwelling house may be considered under this zoning where:

a) the unit to be provided will serve as the permanent place of residence of the landowner or a member of his/her immediate family

b) and where it can be clearly demonstrated that the provision of such a unit would not compromise the ability of the wider area of zoned land to be developed in the future,

c) and the dwelling would easily integrate with the existing and future development of the lands and those in the vicinity.

3) In exceptional circumstances where it can be clearly demonstrated by the developer that there is a significant difficulty in the release or identification of lands for a specific residential type development, consideration will be given to the release of lands zoned Strategic Residential Reserve, subject to established planning criteria and including in particular;

a) The requirement to remain within the overall residential land use targets as set out in the Core Strategy;

b) The lands are being developed in a sequential manner;

c) It has been clearly justified and demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, that there is a clear discrepancy between the supply and release of residentially zoned lands and the demand for residential units.

Certain developments that can demonstrate a strategic element (e.g. a significant commercial or social element), may be deemed acceptable.

SITE RESOLUTION OBJECTIVE

TO PROVIDE A MIX OF USES FOR THE SUSTAINABLE REGENERATION OF THE AREA.

This zoning allows for a redevelopment of the site to better to provide for the community and residents needs including the provision of housing which is more in line with the traditional character and scale of development in the area, having regard for market demand, family accommodation requirements or the needs of older people or those with disabilities.

Any development proposal for the land will only be permitted where the development proposed is compatible with the existing development on the site and should aim to incorporate any of the following elements, that are appropriate to the site, in addition to the provision of residential accommodation;

- *Community or resident needs (including education, childcare, healthcare, special needs housing etc);*
- *Opportunities for local business and enterprise;*
- *Active and passive recreation and amenity;*
- *Community facilities (properties could be rented for community development, crèches, childcare, drop-in centres, education, after-school care, training);*
- *Local shop facilities where such facilities would be commercially viable.*

Any development proposal for the site must be accompanied by a phasing scheme for the works including proposals for the protection of the residential amenities of existing residents in the area.

Potential developers are advised to consult with the Planning Authority regarding any proposed site resolution developments at the preplanning stage.

RECREATION, AMENITY AND GREEN SPACES

TO PRIMARILY PROVIDE FOR RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE AND ANCILLARY STRUCTURES

To preserve, provide for and improve active and passive recreational public and private open space, environmental buffers and ancillary structures. The areas included in this zoning objective cover both private and public open space and are dispersed throughout urban centres of every size. The Council will not normally permit development that would result in a loss of open space.

This zoning provides for open spaces, parks and development incidental to the enjoyment of open space including sport and leisure facilities such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, meeting rooms, a gym, sports training halls, catering facilities, caretaker accommodation.

The zoning also provides for the reservation of environmental buffers at strategic corridors. The proposed utilisation of the River Camlin and Royal Canal as a walk and park would provide a recreational backbone to the town which would provide a wildlife corridor and a potential link to other walking routes, facilitating the establishment of a pedestrian network of pathways.

The zoning further facilitates the protection of existing green areas and public open spaces which provide for the passive and active recreational needs and provides for the use of such land or such facilities for games, educational and recreational purposes.

SOCIAL/COMMUNITY

TO PRIMARILY PROVIDE FOR SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES IN ADDITION TO SPORTING AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.

This zoning provides for facilities that serve the community as a whole such as schools, community centres, creches, nursing homes etc. and also allows for the extension of existing sporting, recreational and cultural facilities.

HI-TECH/LIGHT INDUSTRIAL/EMPLOYMENT GENERATING

TO PRIMARILY PROVIDE FOR HI-TECH/LIGHT INDUSTRIAL AND EMPLOYMENT GENERATING USES.

Zonings of this nature are indicative and are adaptable to the nature, size and requirements of future employment/hi-tech industrial development. The creation of local employment and generation of economic development is the primary aim of this zoning. Hi-tech business/office will be considered within this zoning.

The provision of developments within this zoning shall be designed to the highest architectural standards and will be flagship in terms of quality, employment and status.

The provision of any development within this zoning is subject to the protection of the N4 Mullingar to Roosky corridor and potential developers are advised to consult with the Planning Authority regarding any proposed developments at the preplanning stage.

EMPLOYMENT/MIXED USE

TO PRIMARILY PROVIDE FOR EMPLOYMENT GENERATING USES (OFFICE/LIGHT INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL) AND RESIDENTIAL WHERE APPROPRIATE. .

Development carried out under this zoning should have regard to the dual use of the zoning, and adaptable to the nature, size and requirements of future employment/mixed use development.

Developers should be cognisant of the high profile location of this zoning and design, siting and materials should be chosen accordingly.

INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL

TO PRIMARILY PROVIDE FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT WITH A POSSIBLE ELEMENT OF COMMERCIAL/RETAIL DEVELOPMENT.

The dual zoning is weighted towards industrial development, with allowances made for ancillary commercial development. Larger scale commercial development under this zoning will require the preparation of a detailed plan for the area involved prior to consideration, and, in particular, retail, to be considered in the light of the findings of the retail strategy.

INDUSTRIAL

TO PRIMARILY PROVIDE FOR INDUSTRIAL/WORKSHOP AND WAREHOUSE DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING COMPATIBLE USES SUCH AS OFFICES AND DISTRIBUTION.

Zonings of industrial nature are indicative and are adaptable to the nature, size and requirements of future employment/industrial development. The creation of local employment is the primary aim of this zoning. Hi-tech business/office and light industrial developments will be considered within this zoning.

INDICATIVE FLOOD ZONE

This Zoning has been replaced by the provisions of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment carried out as part of the preparation of the Longford Town and Environs Local Area Plan and reflected in the Constrained Land Use Objective at Section 3.8 of this document.

APPENDIX 1a (II) Longford Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2016-2022

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Executive summary

This summary was written using the National Adult Literacy Agency's (NALA) Plain English Guidelines and received the NALA Plain English Mark.



Longford County Council have prepared this Plan to encourage development in Longford Town and the surrounding area. The improvements identified will benefit those who live, work and visit here. Other plans, like the County Development Plan, have agreed on places, spaces, buildings and other things that make the area unique and these will be protected in any proposals made by this Plan. The Plan covers 2016 - 2022. There are a number of reasons why it is important to make this Plan at this time.

Changes in legislation and guidelines at a national level

Reform of Local Government over the last number of years means that Longford Town has become part of Longford County Council and is no longer a separate Local Authority.

Every six years, a Planning Authority (like Longford County Council) makes a plan for its area that sets out how it sees this area developing over that timeframe. Local Government Reform means that the 'Plan for the Town' now forms part of the County Development Plan.

This is good for Longford because it allows the relationship between the town and its surrounding area to be addressed together. It also means that we can draw up planning rules and standards and apply them in a way that allows all areas to plan for and combine their strengths.

Combining existing plans into one document

We need to combine existing plans into one document that deals with the town and the surrounding area. There were four separate plans

that operate in Longford Town and Environs.¹ This Plan combines these into one document and show how they relate to the County Development Plan.

Putting Longford in the best position to benefit from investment

We need to place Longford in the best possible position to benefit from new investment, both from public funding sources and private developers. Changes in how plans are made and what they must contain mean that this Local Area Plan must now combine social, community and environmental considerations. It needs to do this to guide economic investment in a way that provides the greatest benefit. This Plan is divided into these areas below.

Section 1: Guidelines and legislation

Section 1 shows:

- how guidelines and legislation have changed;
- what these changes mean for the Plan; and
- how we will prepare the Plan.

It also shows the area on the ground that the Plan will cover. It explains how this Plan will relate to the County Development Plan. It details the important role that the town has in the development of the county in:

- providing employment;
- bringing investment; and
- making community and social services available.

In Section 1 we also show how the County Plan will provide these into the future.

¹ Longford Town Development Plan 2009-2015; Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021; Longford Northern Environs Local Area Plan 2008-2014 and Longford Southern Environs Local Area Plan 2010-2016.

Section 2: Facts and figures

Section 2 brings in facts and figures. It outlines population targets that have been set for the county at a regional level. It shows how these are divided between the town and the county up until 2022.

This section also looks at details like:

- where people work and live; and
- the age of the population into the future.

These details allow the Plan to make relationships between people, spaces and places. They provide a starting point for a vision of how the town and its surroundings should develop. They also direct planning for this future over the next six years.

Section 3: Seven ‘character areas’

Section 3 divides the Plan area into seven different types of ‘character areas’. These are based both on the function of the space now and what has been identified as the best use of the space in the future. We want to get the greatest benefit from investment and create a place that attracts people to live, work and stay.

These areas are shown on the map at Figure 4. In the Longford County Development Plan we have identified zonings that tell the public what different spaces can be developed and used for. Each one of the seven types of ‘character areas’ lists a range of zones that we will consider for each space. This informs the future development of these areas (see Table 1).

Areas that may flood are shown on top of these zonings and additional rules apply in their development.

Section 4: Economy, quality of life and infrastructure

Section 4 contains three strategies relating to:

- the economy;
- quality of life; and
- infrastructure.

These strategies look at the Plan area and developing its spaces, buildings and services. They then link this development with ideas to improve the economy and quality of life. The right infrastructure is needed in the right places to support this development in a way that gives the best value for money.

Economic strategy

The economic strategy highlights how important it is to develop the town core area (outlined in Section 3) and the investment needed to do so.

We then link the order in which this development is to take place to:

- the distance from the town centre;
- the ability of the area to be served by:
 - the road network,
 - water services, and
 - public transport; and
- the need for particular areas to be redeveloped to improve the overall town image.

This starting point allows us to first develop the areas where the required services exist. It also allows us to:

- identify sites that need to be developed for the overall good of the Plan; and
- take steps to make sure that this happens.

Quality of life strategy

We outline proposals to improve quality of life which includes improved access to recreational facilities and amenity areas, and the quality of the public spaces in-between.

Longford has a special identity with the Mall, St Mel's Cathedral, the Canal, River Camlin and other attractions. We should package these and Longford's overall image with festivals, history and culture to show off the best of what Longford has to offer.

In this strategy we identify eight areas in the town that, if developed in the right way, could have wide-reaching positive effects for the town and surrounding areas. We will use these areas as shown in Table 1, in addition to proposals outlined for each site as outlined in Table 2.

Infrastructure strategy

The infrastructure strategy:

- sets out what is needed for the town to develop;
- is linked to the development priorities described in the economic strategy; and
- deals with access and movement.

It also brings in national policy on smarter travel that promotes walking, cycling and public transport and links this through the other areas of the Plan.

We also include larger scale proposals in relation to national roads where they relate to the Plan area.

Section 5: The role of the Council

Section 5 sets out how the Council will:

- put the Plan in place;
- assess and guide development through the process of planning permissions;
- apply for funding;
- promote regeneration; and
- influence investment plans of infrastructure providers such as Irish Water and Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

Section 6: Measuring progress

Section 6 outlines how the Council intends to measure the progress of the Plan and make changes if needed.

Table 1: ‘Character areas’ and County Development Plan zonings						
Town core	Residential	Commercial and industrial	Industrial and commercial	Recreational	Social and community	Site resolution²
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established residential³. • Site resolution. • Recreation, amenity and green spaces. • Social, community. • Employment, mixed use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established residential. • Site resolution. • Recreation, amenity and green spaces. • Social, community. • Strategic Residential Reserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial, industrial. • Employment, mixed use. • High-tech, light industrial, employment-generating. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-tech, light industrial, employment-generating. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation, amenity and green spaces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social, community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site resolution objective.

² The purpose of site resolution is to help improve an area that has existing problems. For example, buildings, roads or paths in a poor state of repair.

³ This refers to existing residential areas.

Table 2: Strategic sites							
Connolly Barracks	Market Square	Ballymahon Street	Longford Shopping Centre (Tesco)	Little Water Street	Ballyminion Neighbourhood centre	Athlone Road business and industrial area	Mall and adjacent areas
<p>In this area we need to build on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • getting funding; • heritage of the site; • its good location within the town; and • its links to other important sites. 	<p>There are opportunities at the former location of the canal harbour with the removal of the swimming pool. We will encourage more activity at street level and between both ends of the town.</p>	<p>This is a high profile street. We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • address vacant and derelict structures; and • make the street more pedestrian friendly. 	<p>This is a well-used space. We could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make it more attractive to pedestrians; • make better links with the main street and the Water Street/Mall area; and • encourage more people to live here 	<p>We could open up this area and the northern end of the town with the link to the N5. We plan to open the riverside location. We plan to make the most of this town-centre site.</p>	<p>Uses in this area need to link together and to the town core (see Section 3). This area needs community facilities like street furniture and planting to become more pedestrian friendly.</p>	<p>This is a high profile approach into town. We need to address the issue of vacant and derelict buildings.</p>	<p>This is an important amenity in the town centre. It needs greater links to the town core (see Section 3). We need to address flood considerations in the residential areas. We also need to address connections between existing and potential amenity areas.</p>

1. INTRODUCTION AND PROCESS

This Local Area Plan has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the relevant Guidelines issued under s.28 of this Act and its associated regulations. This Local Area Plan addresses Longford Town and Environs area (see **Fig. 2** for Plan extent), and will cover the period 2016-2022. The plan has been prepared in accordance with the guidance issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) under S.28 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2016 (the Acts) on Local Area Plans in 2013.

Following consultation with the Department of the Environment, the following processes were carried out under the Planning and Development Act to establish a consolidated planning framework for Longford Town over the Period from 2016-2022

- Preparation of a Local Area Plan (incorporating required assessments) for Longford Town and Environs (refer to **Figure 1.** for extent)
- Variation of Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021 (CDP) incorporating required assessments, to include the provisions of the above

The above processes were run in tandem to ensure an integrated approach and to prevent inconsistencies in the application of the planning framework within the town and environs area.

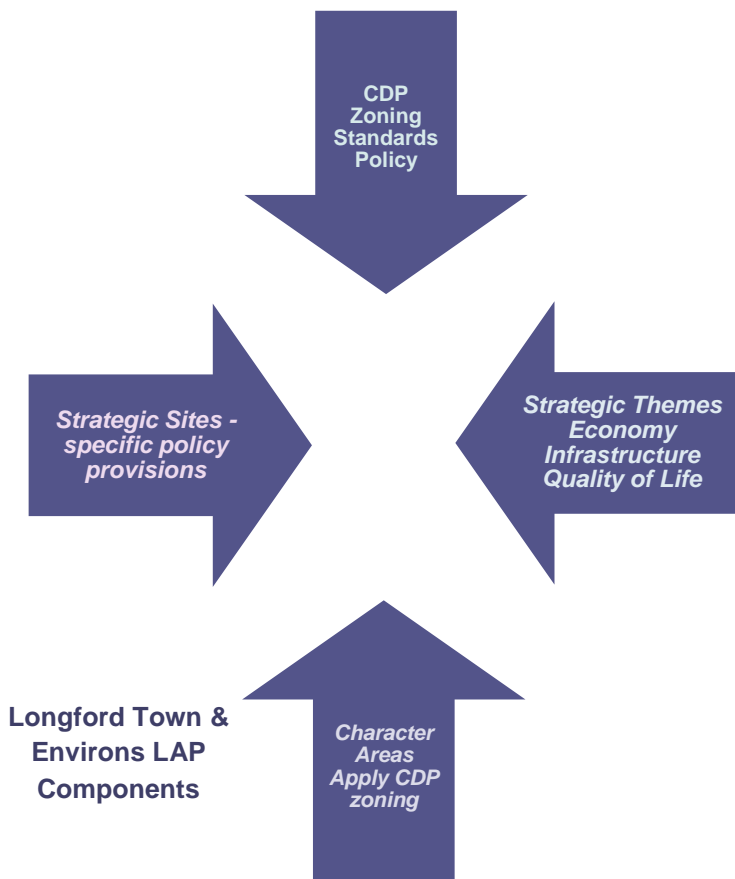
This Local Area Plan (LAP) incorporates and replaces the Longford Town Development Plan, the Northern Environs and Southern Environs Local Area Plans and town environs area formerly contained in the CDP. The Plan, together with the existing applicable zoning definitions to which the character areas in this plan refer, now form Appendix 1A of the CDP⁴.



⁴ Incorporation of LAP into Appendix 1A of CDP by way of Variation no.2 of the CDP, adopted by Longford County Council in September 2016

1.1 APPROACH

This Plan has been developed as follows:



Review of provisions for the area contained within the Plan hierarchy and guidance issued under S. 28 of the Planning Acts

Analysis of demographic and socio economic data and recent development trends

Incorporation of Flood Risk and SEA findings (Quality of Life Strategy)

Identification of Character Areas and application of CDP zonings

Identification of Strategic Themes and tailored policy for Masterplan areas

Development of implementation, delivery, monitoring and review provisions

This Local Area Plan promotes a flexible, layered approach to land use zoning, within the constraints imposed by the CDP Core Strategy, utilising the zoning definitions and provisions of the current County Development Plan that remain, with the addition of this LAP, at Appendix 1A. These zonings are applied through identified character areas outlined hereunder.

PLAN EXTENT

The townlands included in this Local Area Plan are as follows, and are illustrated in **Figure 1** below:

Clonbalt	Lisbrack	Farranyoogan	Knockahaw	Deanscurragh
Cartrons	Demesne	Garvagh	Abbeycartron	Townparks
Aughadegnan	Mullagh	Farnagh	Templemichael Glebe	Glack
Moneylagan	Ballyminion	Ferefad	Ardnacassagh	

The consolidation of the planning framework in this Local Area Plan will allow for a coordinated approach to the delivery of residential development across Longford Town and environs and ensure that the provisions of the core strategy outlined above with regard to quantum, location and density are adhered to over the plan lifetime. This will be supported by the phasing and monitoring provisions that are contained in sections 4 and 6 of this plan.

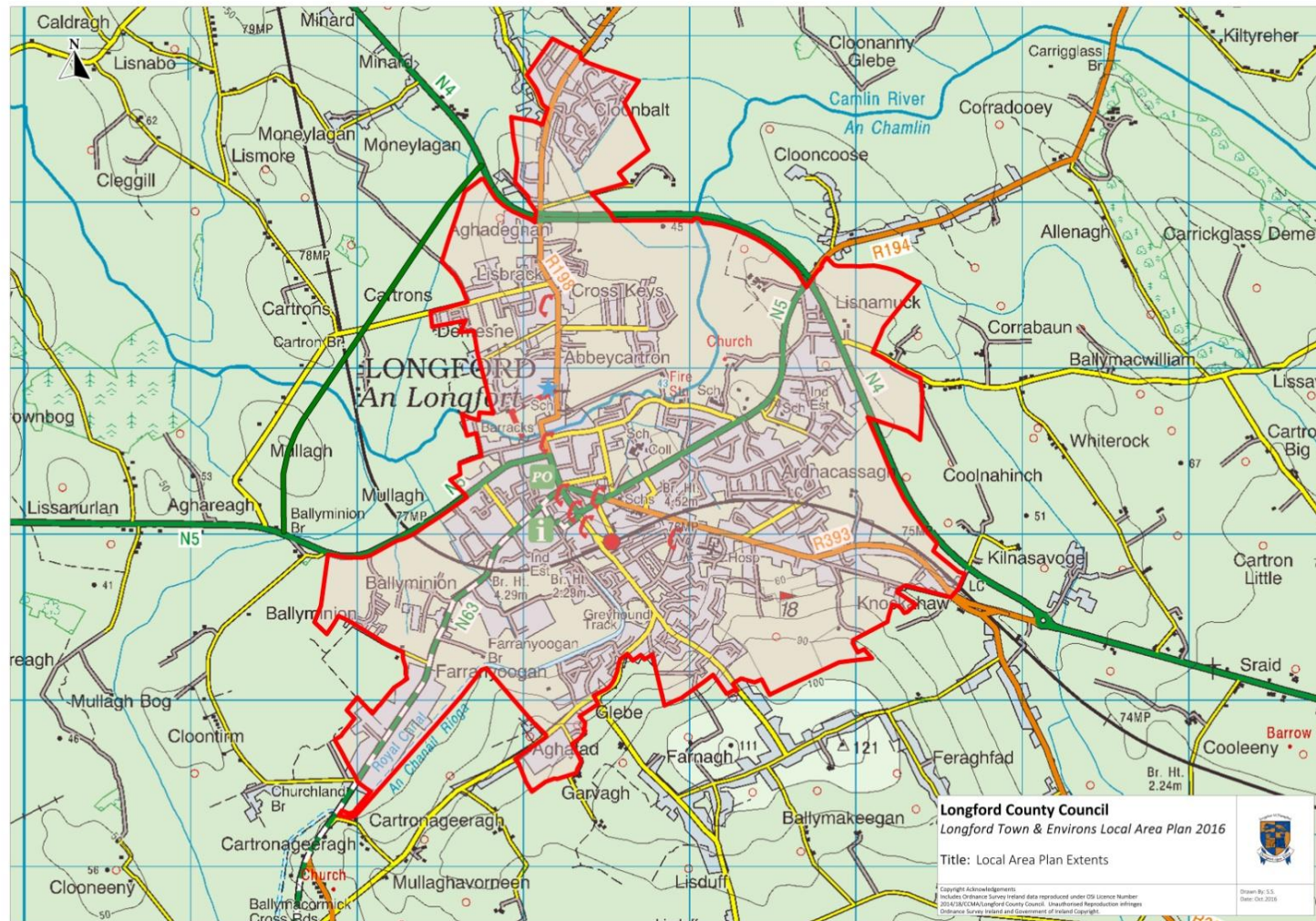


Figure 1: Longford Town and Environs Local Area Plan - Extent

1.2 COMPLIANCE WITH THE SETTLEMENT STRUCTURE OF LONGFORD COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN, 2015-2021

Section 2.1.4 of the County Development Plan sets out the following relationship between the County Plan and Longford Town and Environs and sets the context for this Local Area Plan:

“The Longford Town Development Plan, 2009-2015, is currently still used for the area and includes a detailed Core Strategy that was incorporated by way of variation in 2013. The Town Development Plan, however, is set within the previously applicable legislative framework and needs updating to reflect the provisions of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 that abolished Longford Town Council.

The Northern (2008-2014) and Southern Environs (2010-2016) Local Area Plans for Longford Town, relate to areas that immediately bounded and straddled the now abolished Longford Town Council administrative boundary.

On adoption of this Plan, the Longford Town Development Plan and the Northern and Southern Environs Local Area Plans for Longford Town shall be reviewed. It is considered likely that following the abolition of the Town Council and thus the administrative boundary of the Town Council boundary, that the provisions of the above mentioned Plans be merged and prepared as one overarching plan for the Longford Town area.”

The following sections address consistency across the plan hierarchy in specific areas as required by the S.28 guidance issued by the DECLG on Local Area Plans (2013).

FUNCTION

The role and function of Longford Town is clearly set out in the CDP at Section 2.6.1.4, which places Longford Town at Tier 1 of the settlement hierarchy, designated as a County Town of Regional Importance, based on its designated role in the current Regional Planning Guidelines.

“Longford Town is identified in the MRPGs as the main driver of development in the north of the region, with substantial retail and administrative functions and considerable social infrastructure serving a broad, cross-regional hinterland and hence has been identified as the main focus for population growth during the current Development Plan period. The majority of industrial, commercial, business and retail development will also be channelled to Longford Town.”

This role is further reinforced by the associated housing and retail strategies (See Box 1) that prioritise development in Longford Town and have informed the policy and objectives contained within this Local Area Plan.

Figure 2 shows the Core strategy Map contained at Section 2.1.4 of the CDP that sets the function and role of Longford Town in a county context

Box 1: CDP Section 2.1.4 Retail Strategy

The retail hierarchy recognises the importance of and reinforces the role of Longford Town, as a Principal Town, and places it at the top of the retail hierarchy.

In order to cater for the 2022 target population, it is considered that a total of 2,000-3,000m² convenience, 1,500-2,500m² comparison and 4,500- 5,500m² bulky floor space is required over the period to 2022.

In line with the Retail Planning Guidelines and having regard to the Retail Hierarchy, Longford Town and Environs is the only location within the County that has been identified as suitable for the provision of District Centres for the purpose of providing retailing and amenities to serve its catchment population. In this regard the importance of promoting the use of appropriate lands within Longford Town for the development of associated employment generating, industrial and mixed uses in order to enhance and contribute to the economy of Longford and promote the town as the northern driver for the Midland Region is also highlighted.



Figure 2 Longford County Development Plan Core Strategy Map

This Local Area plan aims, through its policies and objectives to reinforce and support these functions to ensure that Longford Town fulfils its defined role as an economic driver in the north midlands and an administrative and service centre for its extended hinterland.

SCALE AND POPULATION

Core Strategy and Population Table (TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH SECTION 2 OF THE CDP)

The current anticipated population, based on the provisions of the Current Midland Regional Planning Guidelines⁵, over the lifetime of the County Development Plan is outlined in the Core Strategy Table hereunder:

Settlement Designation	Core Strategy Population Allocation	Housing Requirement in Hectares	Previous Zoning (ha)	Zoning (ha)	Housing Yield	Previous Excess Zoning (ha)	Shortfall residentially zoned land (ha)
County	5603	139	163	163	140	0	0
County Town Longford Town Principal Town	4924	102	65	65	65	0	37
County Balance	679	35	98	98	35	0	0
Other Towns ↓							
Granard	n/a	4	14	13	4	0	0
Edgeworthstown	n/a	3	12.5	11.5	3	0	0
Ballymahon	n/a	1.5	7.5	7	1.5	0	0
Lanesborough	n/a	1.5	7	5	1.5	0	0
Serviced Settlements	n/a	11	32.5	32.5	10	0	0
Rural Service Settlements & Hinterland	272	14	39.5	14	14	0	0

The figures outlined in the table above are also consistent with the housing strategy prepared for the County. These provide for an additional population of 4,924 in the town area up to 2022, with an associated housing requirement of 102ha, indicating a shortfall of 37ha residential land in the former town council area (the area formerly covered by the administrative town boundary). It is anticipated that this shortfall can be addressed in a variety of ways that are outlined in the sections that follow in relation to residential development and town core regeneration.

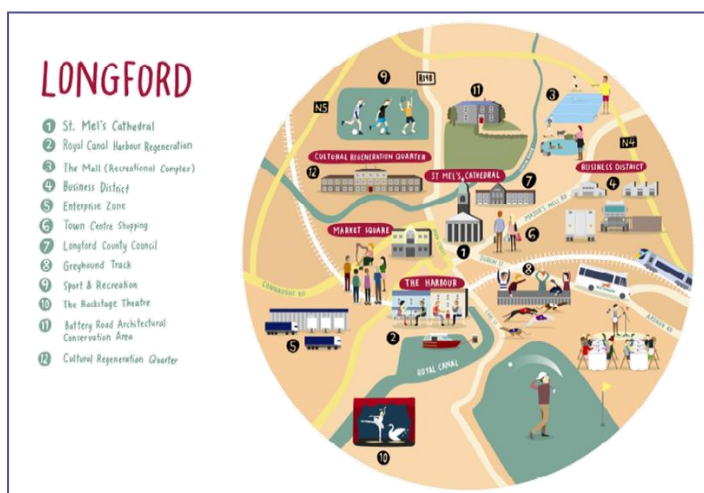


Figure 3 Summary Map of development opportunities, Longford Town

Future development Priorities

The future Development Priorities for Longford Town are set out in schematic form in the CDP document (Fig 3). This schematic map illustrates the potential that exists in the built fabric, cultural heritage and amenity of Longford town, its employment base and shopping facilities.

The strategies developed at Section 4 of this Plan build on these priorities and apply a coordinated approach across former administrative and plan boundaries

⁵ The second column Core Strategy Population Allocation sets out the population allocations for Longford as expressed at Table 4.3 of the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Midland Region 2010– 2022 and the subsequent Regional Technical Group population update. A target population growth of 5,603 persons has been allocated to County Longford with 4, 924 persons assigned to Longford Town and the residual balance to be distributed across the remainder of the County in line with the Settlement Hierarchy. 40% of the County balance of 272 persons is to be located in the Open Countryside in line with the assumptions of the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines, 'Future Housing Land Requirements 2016' calculations.

Incorporation of Environmental and Heritage Protection

Strategic Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is mandatory for Local Area Plans where the population exceeds 5,000 persons, as in the case of Longford Town and Environs. An SEA has been carried out in tandem with the preparation of this Local Area Plan in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004-2011, and has influenced and informed the development strategies, policies and objectives at Section 4 of this plan. An Environmental Statement accompanies this document and outlines the likely significant effects on the environment of the implementation of this plan.

Habitats Directive Assessment

The Plan has been screened for potential impacts on Natura 2000 sites through Habitats Directive Assessment (Appropriate Assessment) pursuant to article 6 of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). It has been determined that the implementation of the plan will not adversely affect the integrity of any such sites.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was undertaken on the provisions of the plan in accordance with the guidelines issued under S.28 of the Act (Flood Risk Management and the Planning System) and has informed the policies and objectives contained at Section 3.

Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Area

The record of protected structures in the town area and the Battery Road architectural conservation area were listed in the Longford Town Plan, 2009-2015. These structures are now considered as included within the record of protected structures contained within the County Development Plan that replaces the Town Plan by virtue of s. 51 (3) and 81 (2) of the act which state the following:



51. (3) "Subject to any additions or deletions made to the record, either under this part or in the course of a review of the development plan under Part II, a record of protected structures shall continue to be a part of that plan or any variation or replacement of the plan."

81. (2) "Where a development plan includes an objective [re:ACA] ...any development plan that replaces the first-mentioned development plan shall, subject to any variation thereof under S. 13, also include that objective."

The contribution that these structures make to the aesthetic and cultural heritage of the town is acknowledged throughout the strategies contained within this plan. Masterplanning proposals in particular contained at section 4 will ensure that the integrity of protected structures and their setting in maintained and enhanced as part of any initiatives brought forward for development.

2. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

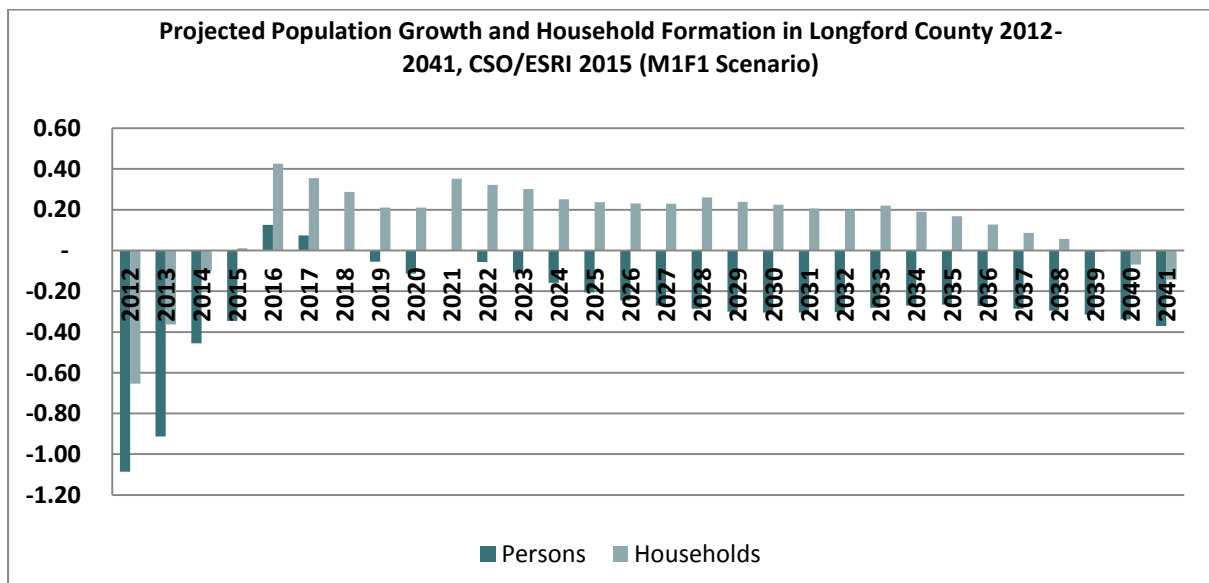
The following figures are included to provide an overview of current thinking on the dynamics of population in the plan area and are not intended to replace current targets as these are defined within the core strategy of the CDP to which this plan is bound.

2.1 CENTRAL STATISTICS OFFICE AND OTHER PROJECTIONS

The 2016 census was carried out in April and initial results are not anticipated until the end of the year. While there is a significant range within the prevailing projections, current CSO population estimates for the period up to 2046 across all scenarios indicate a consistent increase in the primary school age cohort which has implications for the planning of educational, health and childcare facilities over the plan lifetime.

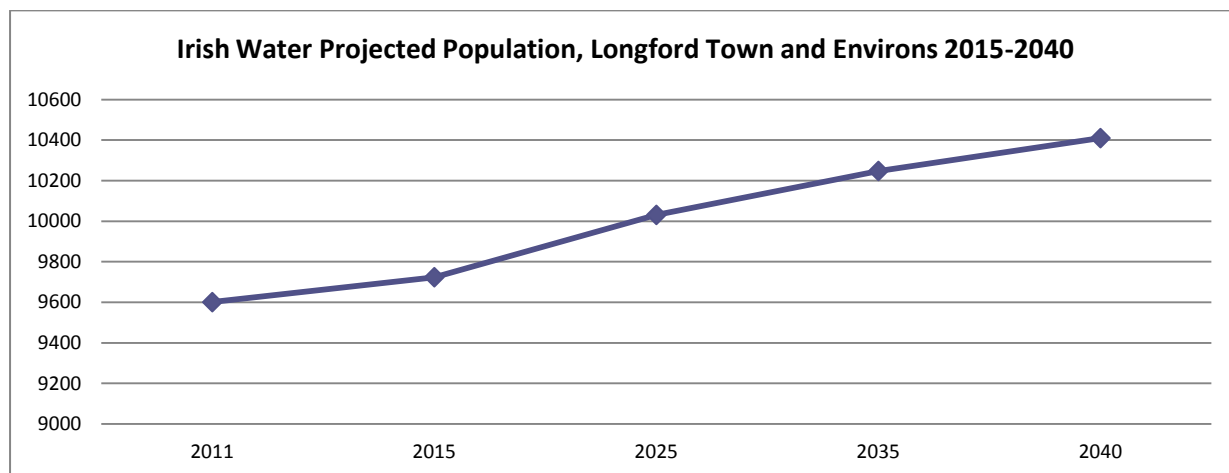
The following outline is based on presentations by Irish Water and the ESRI at a briefing of the Eastern and Midland Regional Authority and its constituent Local Authorities on the preparation of the Water Investment Plan for the period 2017-2021.

CSO/DECLG population projections are carried out on a regional basis, following the former NUTS III regions of which there are 8 in number rather than the current 3. This creates difficulties in disaggregating data at a county level and for this reason and to facilitate infrastructure and other planning initiatives, the Economic Social Research Institute (ESRI), produced the projections outlined hereunder, that indicate a potential drop in the county population from 2018 under the CSO M1F1 scenario. Figure 3 however indicates that the rate of growth in Household formation is likely to remain relatively consistent and that in any event demand for housing and associated infrastructure is likely to remain over the plan period.



M1F1 Scenario CSO/ESRI 2015

Irish water interpolated figures for Longford Town, derived by the application of a growth rate for towns either above, as in the case of Longford, or below 1,500 persons. The rates applied in the case of Longford Town are 1.28% for the period 2011-2015, 3.16% for 2015 – 2025, 6.32% for 2015-2035 and 7.9% from 2015 – 2040.



The chart outlined below however indicates the range of values that exist in the prevailing projections for the former Midland Region (Longford, Laois, Offaly and Westmeath) which now form part of the Midlands and Eastern Region.

Table 1 - summary of current population projections for the Midland Region over the plan period and beyond

	DECLG population targets (2010)				ESRI Population Projections				CSO Regional Projections	
	DECLG	Actual	DECLG	DECLG	M1F1	M1F1	M1F1	M1F1	M2F2 Traditional (1000s)	
	2010	2011	2016	2022	2013	2016	2022	2031	2011	2031
Midland	275,600	282,410	297,300	317,100	281,747	283,876	290,428	297,075	284	309

The range of figures outlined at table 1 will be clarified as part of the ongoing preparation of the Regional Social and economic Strategies and National Planning Framework. These, informed by the detailed results of the 2016 census, will provide a greater depth of information and policy guidance upon which projections can be made with greater certainty and at which stage local policy frameworks can be amended if required.

2.2 LECP SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

This is based on the census of 2011 and uses the towns and environs figures (as defined by continuous residential fabric). Changes in this overall figure do not reflect the disparity between the growth of the town area (5%) and its environs (31.7%) between 2006 and 2011 (CSO Census 2001 Vol 1).

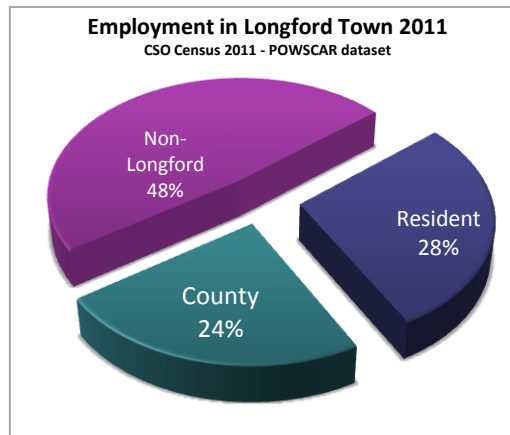
Some of the main points

- Non-National population 26.3% in the town area
- High level of relative deprivation, high level of unemployment, low level of educational attainment and a high level of persons with a disability

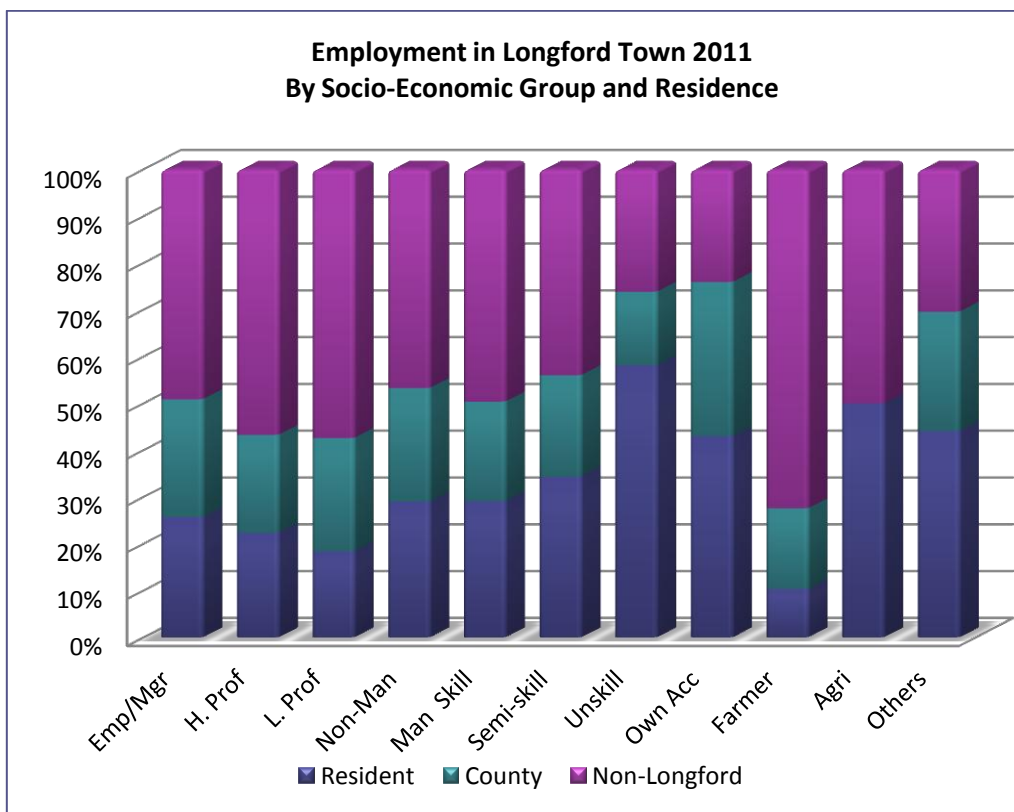
This illustrates a pattern of suburban development where the more affluent tend to gravitate to the outskirts of the town, the town begins to decline and residential occupation in the core area drops. This is reflected in the Pobal deprivation index mapping 2001 that shows progressively disadvantaged areas from the outer areas into the centre of the town

This also indicates the significant issues that exist in terms of retaining population within the town. There is significant in-commuting to employment, illustrated in the charts below which, while sustaining economic

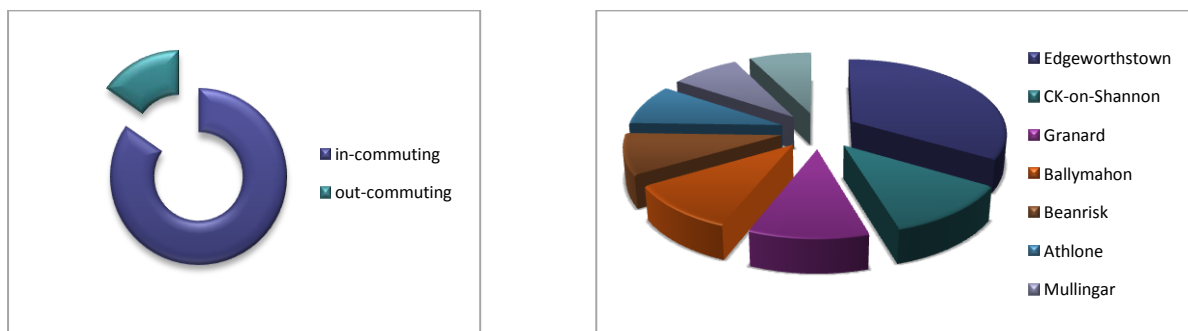
development, negatively impacts on the residential potential of the town centre as evening/night-time uses are not sustained.



Those employed within the town fall into the socio-economic groups outlined in the chart below.



As illustrated above, those employed in managerial and professional roles tend to come from outside of the town and county, while those living in the town are predominantly employed in the unskilled and manual sectors.



The charts above illustrate that in-commuting for employment into the town is significantly higher than out-commuting. The main out commuting areas for Longford Town residents reflect C&D foods in Edgeworthstown, Pat the Baker in Granard and Kepak in Ballymahon.

2.3 CEDRA ANALYSIS

The Commission for the Economic Development of rural areas published their report in 2014 which dealt with regional development and in particular, how regional towns exert influence over their rural hinterland. The report also highlighted the difference between population growth and economic development in these towns as compared to national figures and trends over the “boom” period, referring to the significant loss of population living in these towns, from 12%-9% of the overall total over the period from 1991-2011, as population moves to the outskirts or rural areas as reflected in the figures discussed in the above sections with reference to Longford Town.

The report went on to outline the clear beneficial relationship between regional towns such as Longford and their surrounding rural areas in an economic context. This resulted in the identification and definition of Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) that define the area around which individual settlements exert a specific economic influence and within which these settlements are the clear focus of economic and administrative activity.

These zones were based on a detailed spatial analysis of census figures in the context of national trends that clearly illustrate the disproportionate economic growth achieved on a national basis.

2.4 COMMENTARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The figures outlined above indicate that there is a need to attract and retain employed residents in high-value jobs within the County. Strategic objectives have been set for this goal in the current regional planning guidelines that focus on delivering quality of life, objectives that have been transposed into the current County Development Plan. These objectives have, in turn, influenced this local area plan level in the following areas

The promotion of appropriate employment opportunities for those leaving school and college,

The development of a high quality public realm, with a high level of amenities to attract and retain population and stimulate appropriate levels of development in line with the plan hierarchy

Availability of schools, childcare and access to healthcare will become an increasingly important aspect of planning into the future with growth expected in the age cohorts where these services are critical, regardless of the overall rate of population change

Ensuring the availability of a variety of housing types, including high-value properties, and tenures, such as short-term leasing opportunities to cater for the population range and mix anticipated over the plan period

The need for a wide range of retailing and other commercial services in the town centre, including the provision of a hotel in the town centre, to ensure that Longford Town addresses the development priorities assigned as part of its defined role.

While population projections may be outdated in the context of upcoming data sources and policy frameworks at national and regional level, there is a broad established range within which reasonable assumptions can be made with regard to planning for residential development over the plan horizon (as set out by the core strategy in the current CDP) and assumptions with regard to the potential age profile of the population over the plan period in terms of basic service and utility provision.

The retail strategy, contained within the CDP to which this plan is subordinate, sets out the quantum and location of retail development required. No such provision exists in the case of potential industrial/employment generating land uses and their potentially significant infrastructural requirements that could manifest in the short to medium term. This issue is addressed further in the Infrastructure strategy.

Many of these objectives are self-reinforcing, requiring a coordinated approach and appropriate policy integration. Relevant best practice in these areas is contained in manuals that accompany guidance under S.28 of the Act.

3. CHARACTER AREAS

Read in conjunction with Figure 4.

Local Area plan spatial policy is based on the identification of broad character areas, within which the existing zoning provisions contained within the CDP will be applied with the addition of location specific policies and objectives as appropriate. These character areas have been defined on their predominant services, functions, amenities and improvements required in order to achieve the objectives set out across the strategic themes of Quality of Life, Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure, which, in turn enable Longford Town and its environs to perform its role as set out the Longford County Development Plan, 2015-2021.

OBJ CA1: Zoning provisions are contained in Appendix 1A of the County Development Plan, and are applied in accordance with the range of uses considered appropriate within each of the character areas outlined hereunder (indicated in bold italics under each character area description). Specific objectives express the more detailed grain of the urban setting where strategic sites have been identified for masterplan development to further overall plan aims.

The identification of these character areas and their associated Zoning has been informed by the required **environmental and flood risk assessments** and has been amended as appropriate to comply with their findings. The main focus of this strategy is the **retention of a compact, walkable core area** that will promote **sustainable transport provision, the renewal of strategic areas and the promotion of economic and employment generating development**. This flexible approach has been developed to **maximise the potential for economic, social and environmental benefit** by the establishment of a broad yet appropriate range of uses for each character area within the plan.

Development will adhere to the standards as outlined in the relevant sections of the Longford County Development Plan

Zonings, while primarily based on the character areas outlined above, will also be subject to the following additional considerations:

- **Compatibility with existing adjacent conforming land-uses**
- **Compatibility with the existing core strategy for Longford**
- **Compatibility with the Retail Strategy and associated policies and objectives (CDP section 4.3)**
- **Where there is a conflict of policy advice, the Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021 will take precedence.**

Specific objectives are outlined below under each character area to tailor CDP zonings to town circumstances.

OBJ CA2: Longford County Council will assess proposals for development in terms of, inter alia, potential impact on existing adjacent developments, existing land uses and/or the surrounding landscape. Where proposed developments would be likely to have a significant adverse effect on the amenities of the area through pollution by noise, fumes, odours, dust, grit or vibration, or cause pollution of air, water and/or soil, the Council shall ensure the introduction of mitigation measures in order to eliminate adverse environmental impacts or reduce them to an acceptable operating level.

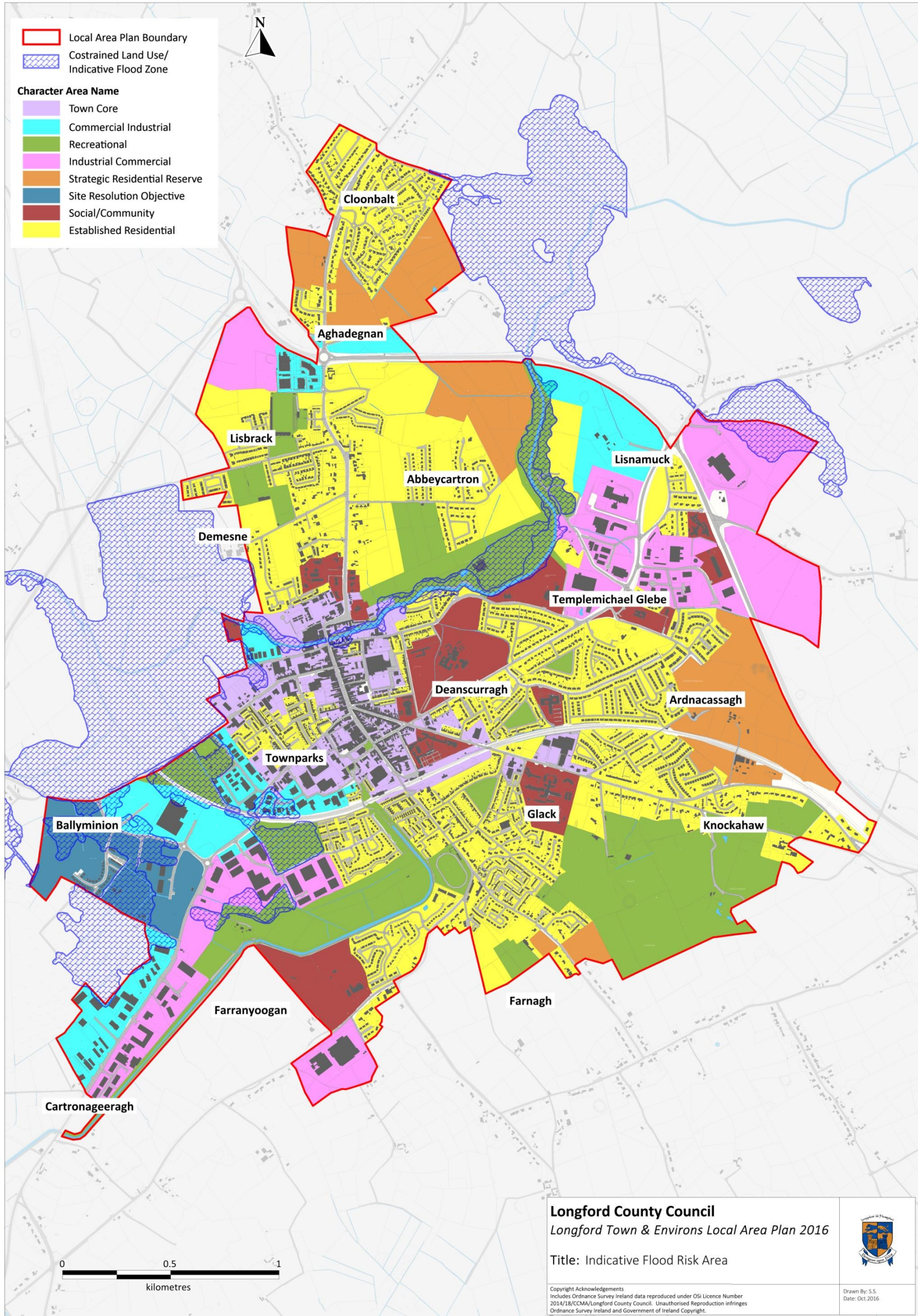
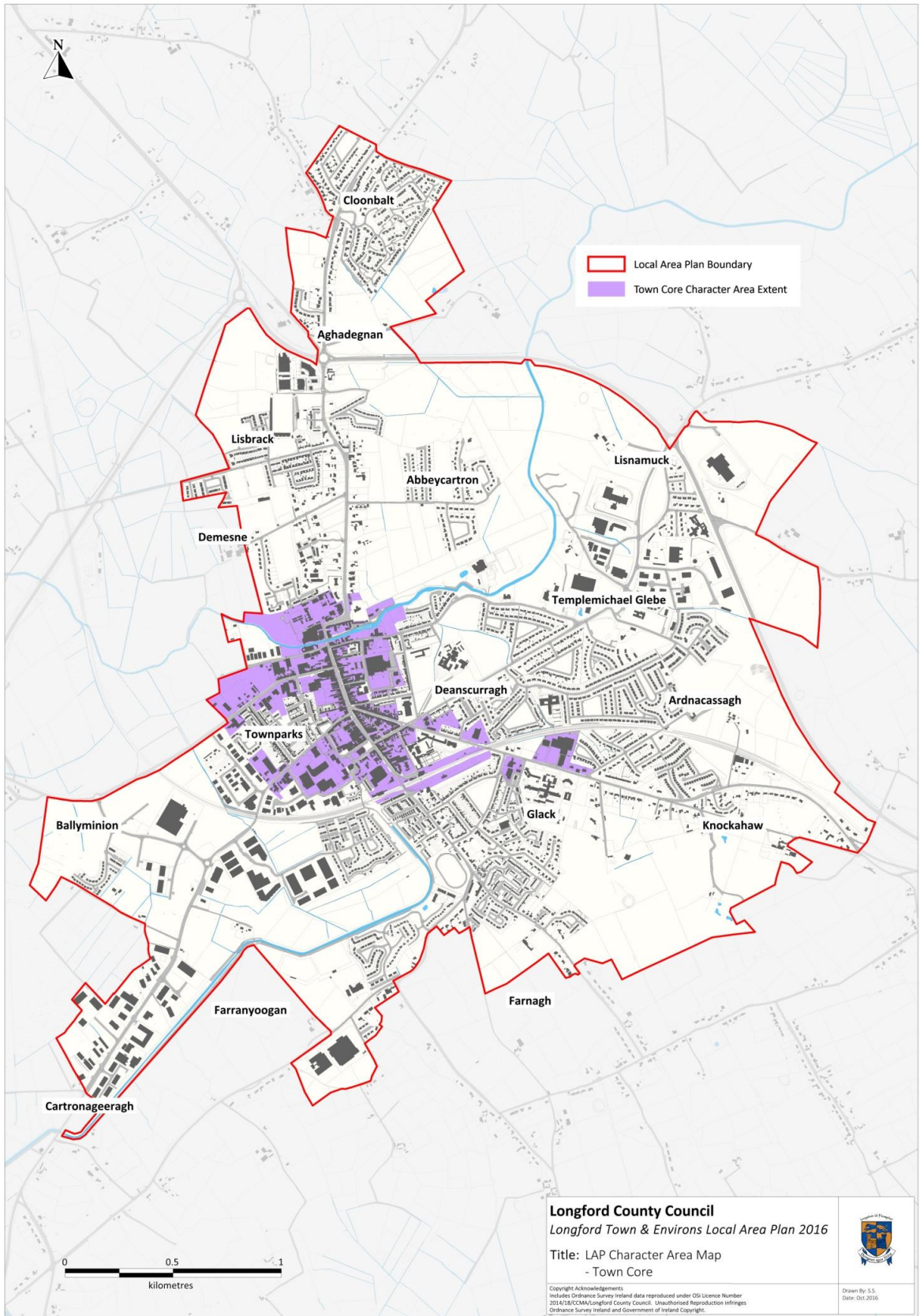


Figure 4: Longford Town and Environs Local Area Plan Character Area (Including Constrained Land Use Objective)



3.1 TOWN CORE

Zoning Provision – Established Residential, Site Resolution, Recreation, Amenity and Green Spaces, Social/Community, Employment/Mixed Use

Longford Town Core can be characterised as a compact and walkable centre with a distinct layout, built heritage and strong identity. The industrial, administrative, transportation and military history of the town is reflected in this identity through the Camlin River, Royal Canal, Connolly Barracks and St. Mels College and Cathedral. The town retains these functions and acts as a service and administrative centre for its wider hinterland. This plan aims to build in these strengths for maximum social, environmental and economic benefit.

The central business area of the town is the driver of development for the town itself and its broader hinterland. This plan aims to ensure that development and use categories are appropriately located within the Town Centre and its environs to promote sustainable travel patterns and maximize benefit from infrastructural investment, while protecting and enhancing quality of life. These principles are supported by the following policies and objectives.

OBJ TC 1: Proposed development in the Town Core area will be encouraged where this is compatible with and/or supports existing adjacent uses. Development that is incompatible with town core use or that has the potential to negatively impact on the vitality of the area will be resisted.

The following policies, in tandem with specific objectives outlined for defined masterplan areas, will work toward this aim:

- 3.1.1. Enhance the public realm, in particular, to promote a pedestrian focused environment in the context of permeability, scale, legibility, activity and accessibility

- 3.1.2. Promote economic development in cooperation with other agencies and organisations including Longford Chamber of Commerce and other business interests in the Town

- 3.1.3. Promote increased residential occupation within the town centre, particularly refurbishment of upper storeys of existing commercial buildings along the main thoroughfares, enhancing activity from day into night-time and entertainment/amenity uses.

- 3.1.4. Develop flagship projects that enhance the potential of the town centre in its role as economic driver

- 3.1.5. Investigate the potential for coach parking facilities to enhance tourism accessibility and activity within the town core.

OBJ TC2: The establishment of residential uses will be promoted within the Town Core area (in accordance with the provisions of the CDP Core Strategy), in order to encourage greater vibrancy within the town centre outside of business hours. In particular, there will be a focus on underused buildings within the town core and sections of the housing list where a shortage of suitable accommodation has been identified, such as elderly single males. This will be supported through initiatives and opportunities at local and national level as they arise.

OBJ TC3: It is a specific objective of Longford County Council to promote the development of a hotel within the Town Core and to generally enhance the availability of tourist accommodation, restaurant and other evening entertainment facilities in order to lengthen the economic day and enhance the residential environment of the core area.

3.2 RESIDENTIAL

Zoning Provision

Residential 1: Established Residential Zoning, Site Resolution Objective, Social/Community, Recreation, Amenity and Green Spaces

Residential 2 – Strategic Residential Reserve

This character area is intended to address both established and proposed residential developments in their respective areas.

There are a wide range of existing and proposed residential areas within the Plan area, ranging from compact urban developments to suburban estates and one-off dwellings. There are also historic dwellings and mixed-use structures within the town core area in particular that also need to be considered.

The following specific objectives will address the requirements of this policy in the implementation of the LAP.

OBJ R1: Proposed residential density and unit output will be maintained in accordance with the provisions of the CDP core strategy and housing strategy.

OBJ R2: Applications for appropriately scaled community facilities and services such as childcare, education, recreational & amenity facilities and neighbourhood centres will be considered within Residential Character areas subject to individual site suitability assessment.

OBJ R3: Development will be phased in accordance with the Residential 1 and 2 sequencing provisions provided for at section 4.4.1 of this LAP and as illustrated in the character area zoning map at Figure 4.

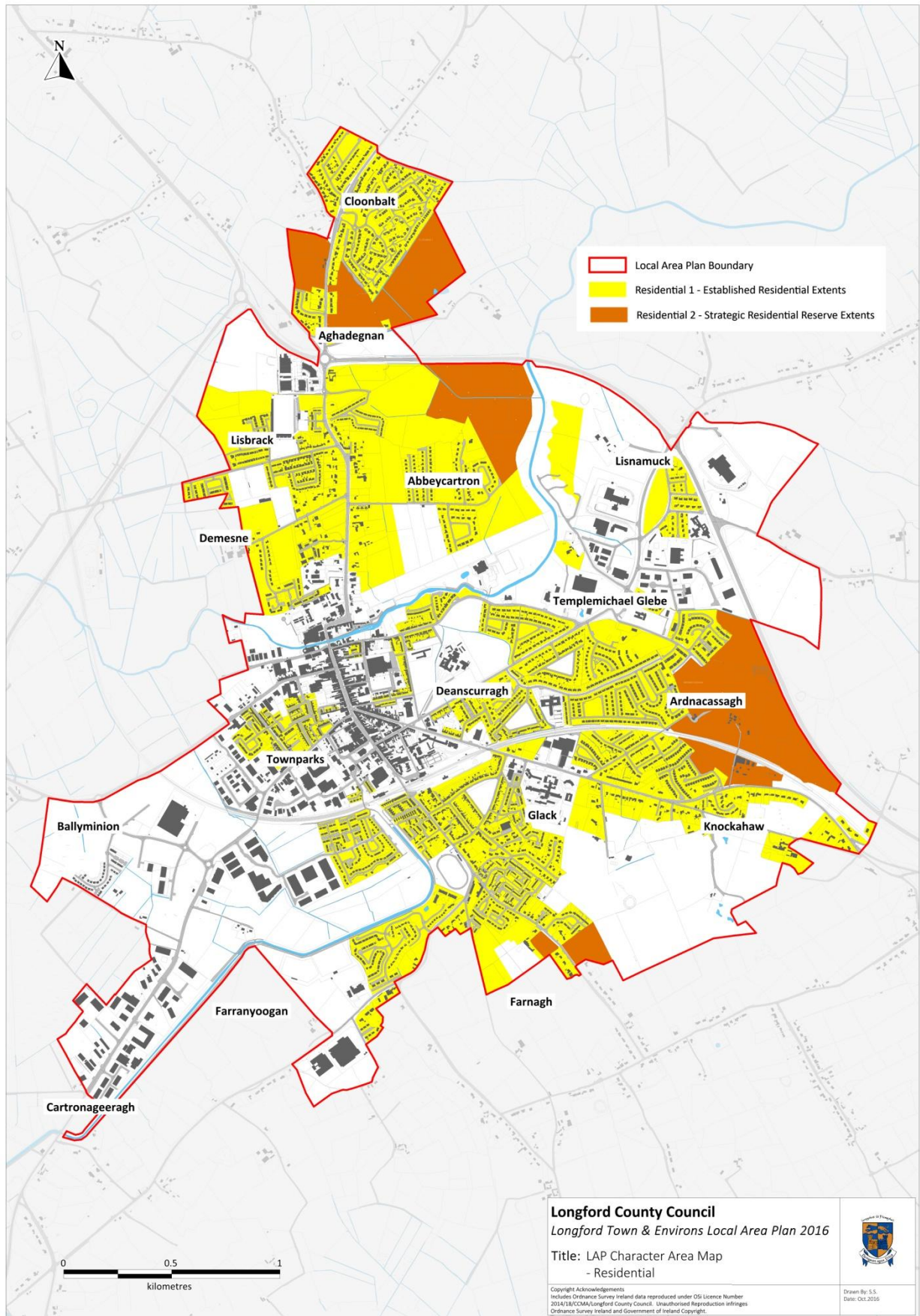
OBJ R4: Applications for proposed residential Development will be designed, phased and assessed in accordance with the provisions of the Guidelines issued on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, issued under s.28 of the Act and its associated Urban Design Guide.

The following policies relate to established residential areas of mixed tenure that are compact in form, are generally of higher densities and are located close to the town core.

- 3.2.1. Maintain quality of the built environment and public spaces, promote civic pride and counteract anti-social behaviour in conjunction with housing agencies and community organizations
- 3.2.2. Enhance access and sustainable mobility between these areas, important services and the town centre .
- 3.2.3. Promote regeneration of housing stock and ensure availability of accommodation types to suit existing and projected need over the plan period.
- 3.2.4. Identify relevant sites within the regeneration area outlined at section 4 in the context of the application of the vacant sites levy.
- 3.2.5. The zoning strategy will seek to ensure a diverse mix of house types in these areas to ensure that residents can maximise the benefits of proximity to the town centre and access essential services
- 3.2.6. Standards for residential development will be applied as outlined in Sections 3.2.1.1 and 3.2.1.2 of the CDP.

In housing areas that are generally more removed from town core Longford County Council will

- 3.2.7. Promote sustainable transport options to the town core, in particular the development of dedicated and appropriately designed walkways and cycleways that facilitate universal access to services and employment as part of a wider sustainable mobility strategy for the town



- 3.2.8. Identify and promote movement strategy as per Section 4 of this plan and in line with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets⁶ (DMURS)
- 3.2.9. Facilitate the completion of outstanding elements and occupation of vacant units where relevant in housing estates and developments throughout the plan area.
- 3.2.10. Promote infill development at appropriate densities, scales, types and layouts that facilitate wider infrastructural and service provision within the town centre.
- 3.2.11. Facilitate access to and development of neighbourhood centres to serve large scale residential estates and/or those removed from the town core. Neighbourhood scale facilities, including educational, sports and recreational facilities and services will be considered where appropriate within residential character areas.
- 3.2.12. Maintain services and functions at an appropriate level, ensuring that these do not impact on service provision within the town core and/or generate unacceptable levels of traffic in inappropriate areas

3.3 COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL

Zoning Provision - Commercial/Industrial, Employment/Mixed-use, High-tech/Light Industrial/Employment Generating

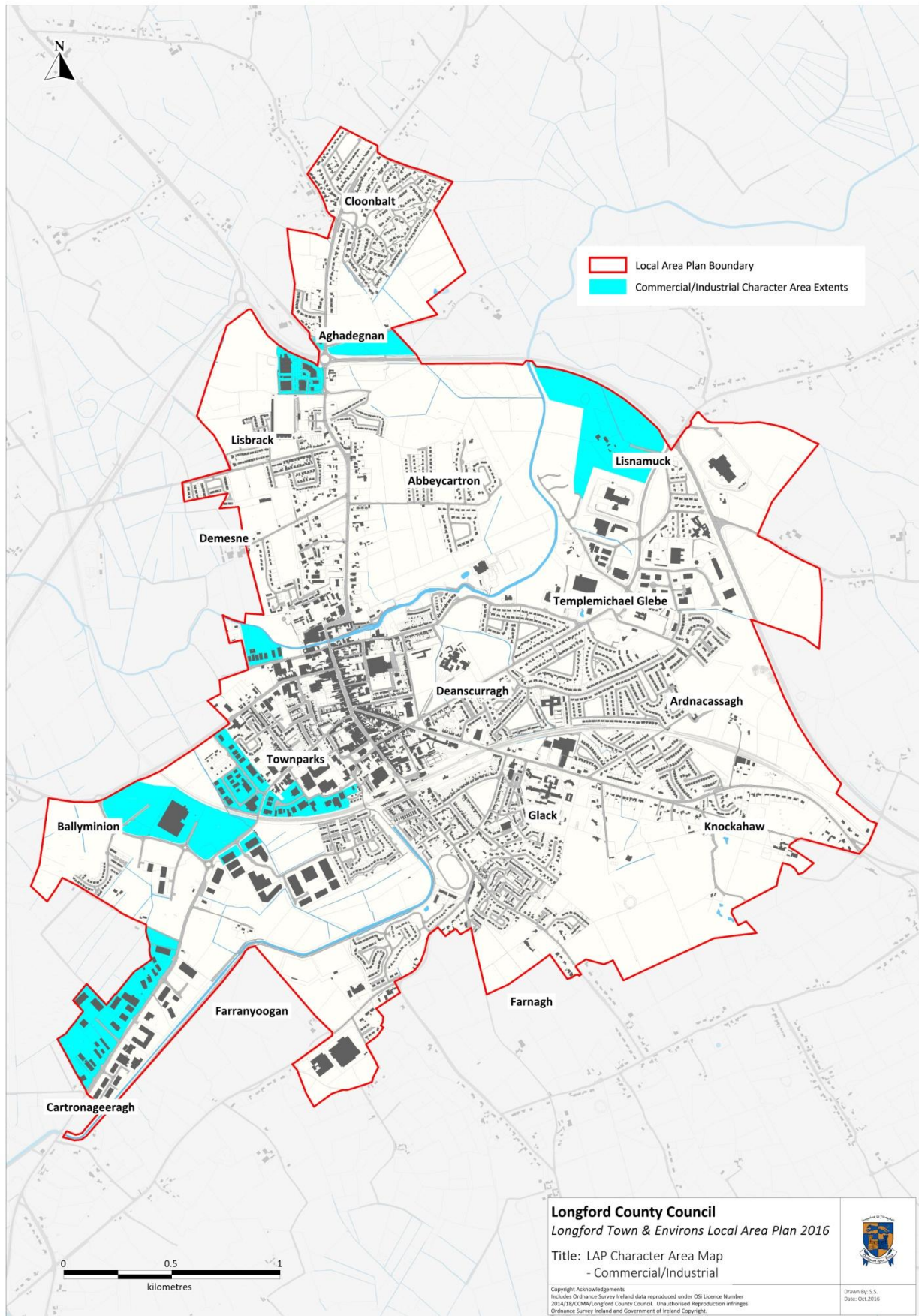
A substantial proportion of the built environment in this character area consists of speculative commercial units, many of which were constructed to avail of tax incentives. Many of these buildings, the sites they occupy and those adjacent are incomplete, vacant and/or derelict and are in need of attention.

OBJ CI1: Development and uses in these areas will be controlled in line with the retail strategy for County Longford and prevent “leakage” of retail activity from the town core.

The following policies relate to established retail areas on the periphery of the Town area that facilitate high volumes of traffic and primarily deal with “bulky” retail goods (as defined in the retail strategy in Longford County Development Plan) and services that require predominantly high levels of vehicular servicing.

- 3.3.1. Maintain appropriate pedestrian/vehicular interaction as per DMURS
- 3.3.2. Enhance and maintain visual amenity within, outside and on approaches to these developments, particularly where these are high profile and/or on major access routes into the town.
- 3.3.3. Promote the regeneration of these areas through the application of experience gained in the successful roll out of the unfinished housing estates project.
- 3.3.4. Development of innovative and transformative projects in high profile areas to act as a catalyst for further appropriate development in the area
- 3.3.5. Ensure that development in these areas is appropriate to the location and does not impact on town centre uses. Restrictions on unit sub-division and uses may be applied as appropriate.
- 3.3.6. Promote appropriate maintenance and enhancement of roads, footpaths, street lighting and street furniture in these areas to create a more attractive and inviting public realm, particularly where located on high profile approaches into the town and adjacent to amenity areas and routes such as the Royal Canal

⁶ Prepared by the DECLG in conjunction with the DTTAS in 2013



3.4 INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL

Zoning Provision - HI Tech / Light –Industrial / Employment Generating

These are existing and proposed employment areas within the town and environs, that are central in securing sustained economic growth for the plan area.

OBJ IC1: Longford County Council will, in conjunction with the relevant Government Departments, development agencies and infrastructure, utility and service providers, seek to ensure an adequate supply of appropriately zoned and serviced land to address the needs of Longford Town and Environs over the Plan period.

OBJ IC2: Ensure that there are adequately scaled, serviced sites, appropriately located and available for industrial development and expansion within Longford Town and Environs.

These objectives are further supported by the policies outlined hereunder

- 3.4.1. Ensure that existing industrial estates are well maintained and serviced in terms of vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access between employment areas, the town core and relevant facilities such as access to childcare and schools.
- 3.4.2. Promote a high standard of design and innovation in the construction of new industrial buildings and facilities and ensure that the surrounding areas are well maintained

3.5 RECREATIONAL

CDP Zoning Provision Recreation/Amenity and Green Spaces/ Flood Attenuation

These spaces, facilities and amenities are located throughout the Town and its Environs, providing essential services to those that live work and visit the town.

OBJ RL1: Longford County Council will seek to implement walking and cycling networks as outlined in Figure 5 and as identified in the Longford Cycling Strategy⁷ and to integrate these initiatives with others at regional and national level such as the blueway and national cycling routes.

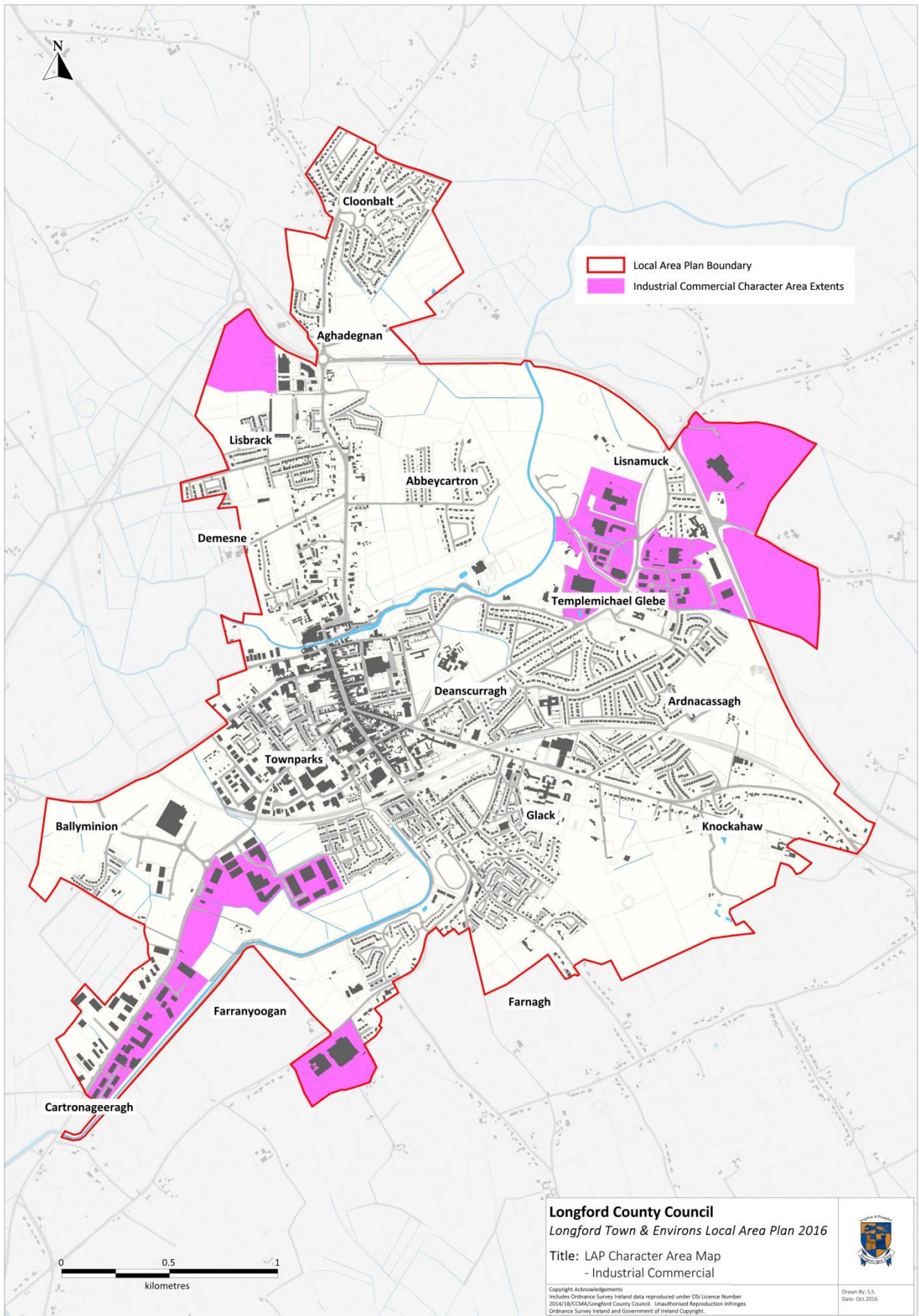
OBJ RL2: Longford County Council will explore potential innovative uses of recreational areas in the adaptation to and mitigation of the effects of climate change, such as the promotion of sustainable travel modes and the designation of recreational areas as appropriate uses in indicative flood zones

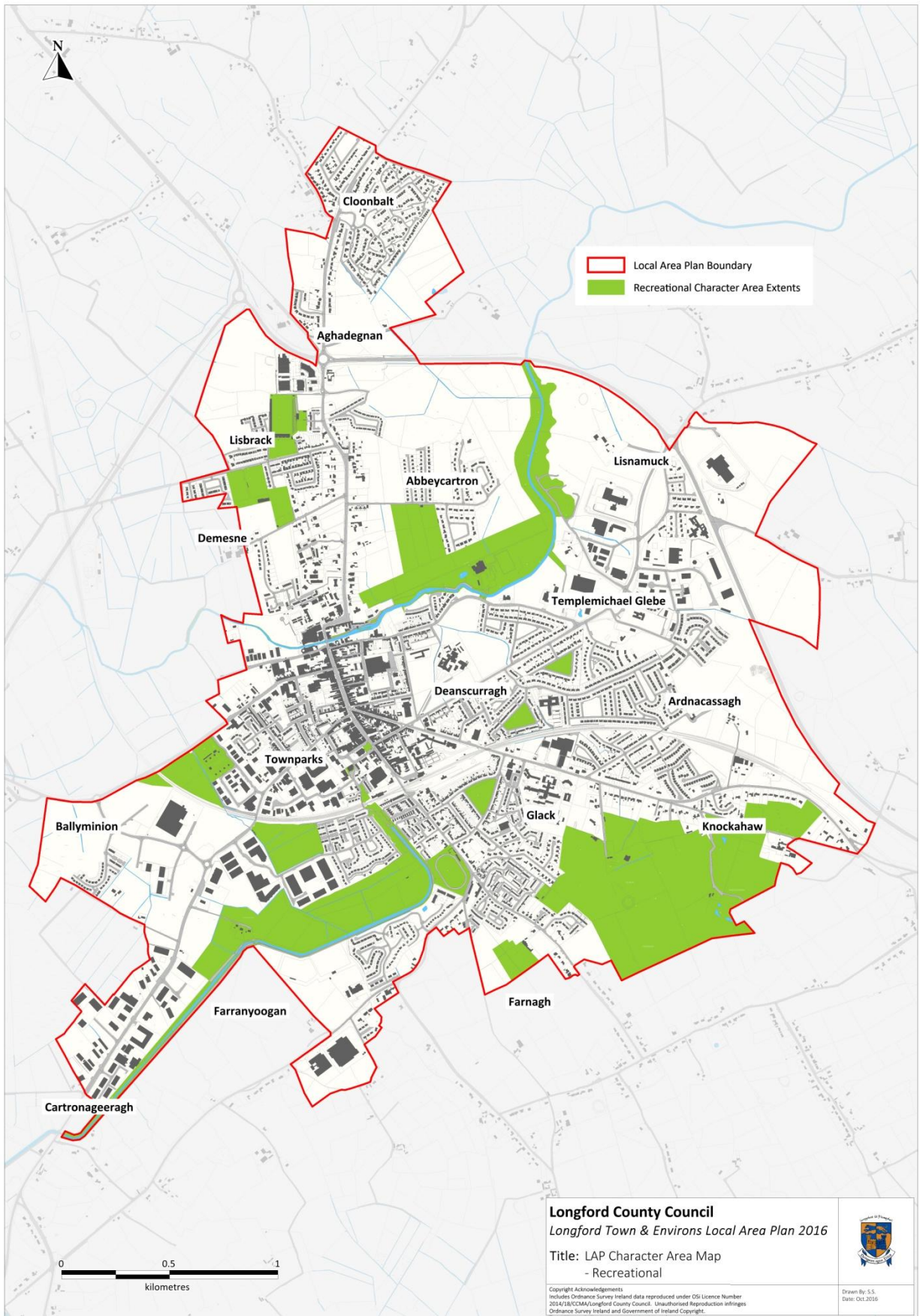
OBJ RL3: It is the policy of Longford County Council to actively promote the development of networked amenity spaces to enhance overall quality of life and promote the Economic, Social and Environmental development of Longford Town and Environs.

The following policies aim to support identified objectives

- 3.5.1. Provide enhanced physical and visual connections between individual amenity areas, the town core and residential/employment areas.
- 3.5.2. Define a hierarchy of public open space at town level that connects county, regional and national levels of amenity infrastructure and ensures coherent planning for future provision.
- 3.5.3. Develop innovative models utilising green infrastructure to address waste management and disposal, climate change adaptation and energy generation and management as part of flagship regeneration initiatives in appropriate areas.

⁷ Longford Town Cycling Strategy prepared by Longford County Council in conjunction with Roughan and O'Donovan and the National Transport Authority, January 2013





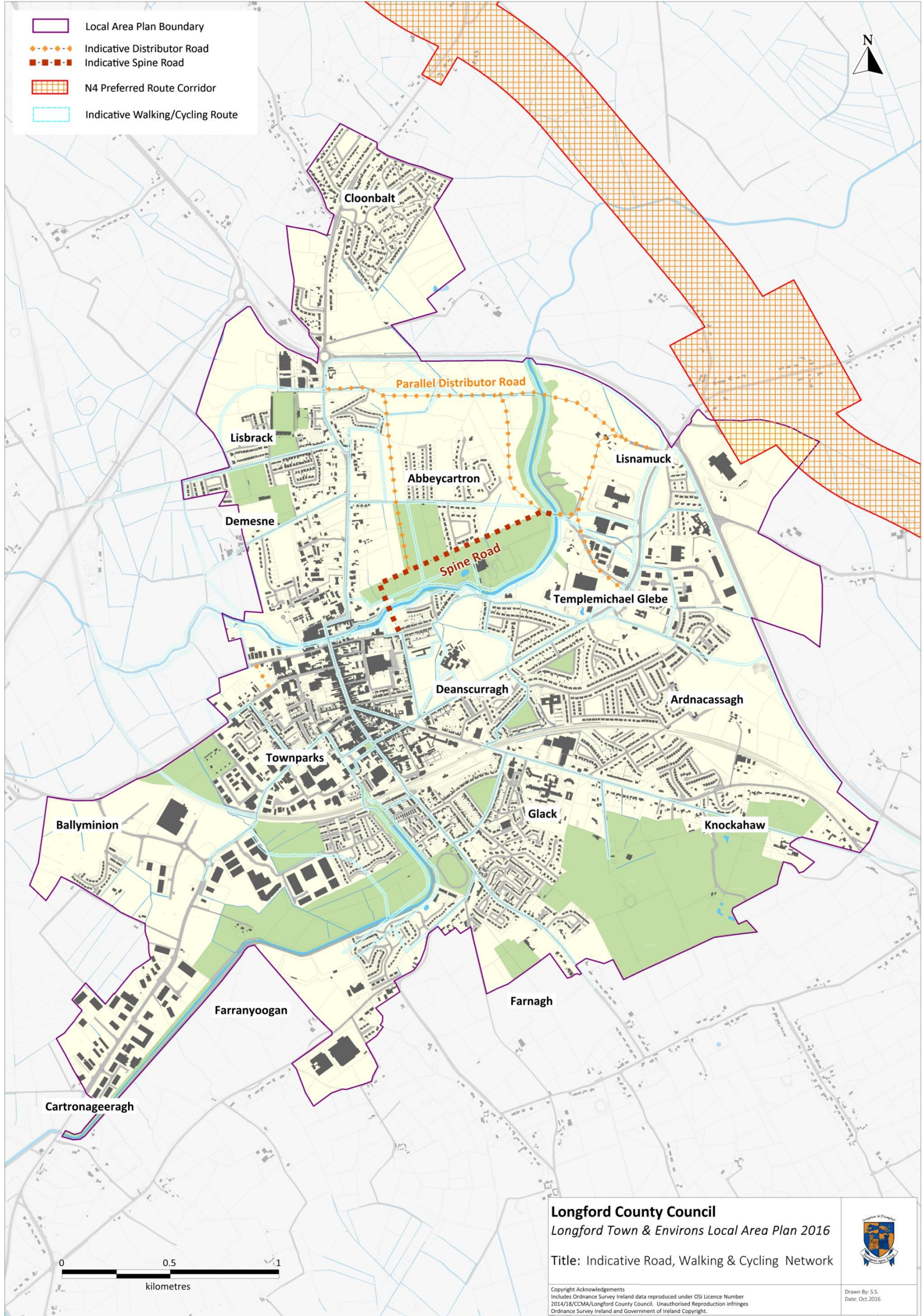


Figure 5 Indicative Road Network, walking and cycling routes

3.6 SOCIAL/COMMUNITY

Zoning provision – Social/Community

This character zone contains facilities that, together with other functions, serve the social and administrative needs of the community. The following policies are proposed to enhance the facilities available within the town while promoting a vibrant and pedestrian focused central area and congregation spaces.

OBJ SC1: Longford County Council will seek to ensure that there is an adequate supply of appropriately zoned land within the Plan area to cater for the social and administrative needs of the Town and its hinterland over the plan period, as identified through liaison with the relevant agencies and departments.

Policies in support of this objective are outlined as follows

- 3.6.1. Longford County Council will promote the principles of universal design in the siting, location and execution of proposed social and community facilities within the plan area to ensure accessibility for all and promote smarter travel practices.
- 3.6.2. Locations chosen for future social and community facilities will be cognizant of pedestrian dynamics within the town core and the need to ensure that footfall is encouraged and retained along important thoroughfares to add passive security and promote economic development

3.7 SITE RESOLUTION

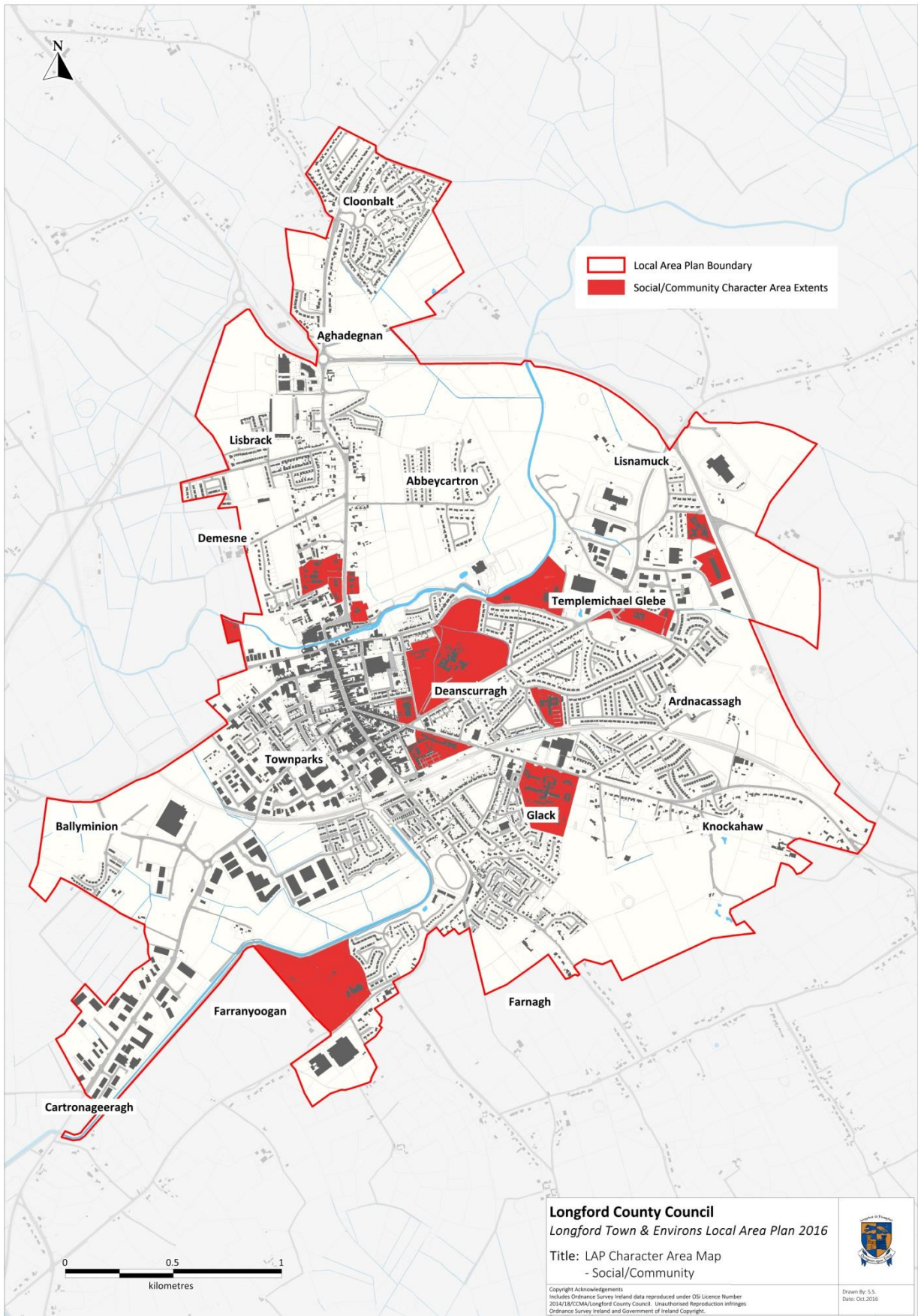
Zoning Provision – Site Resolution Objective

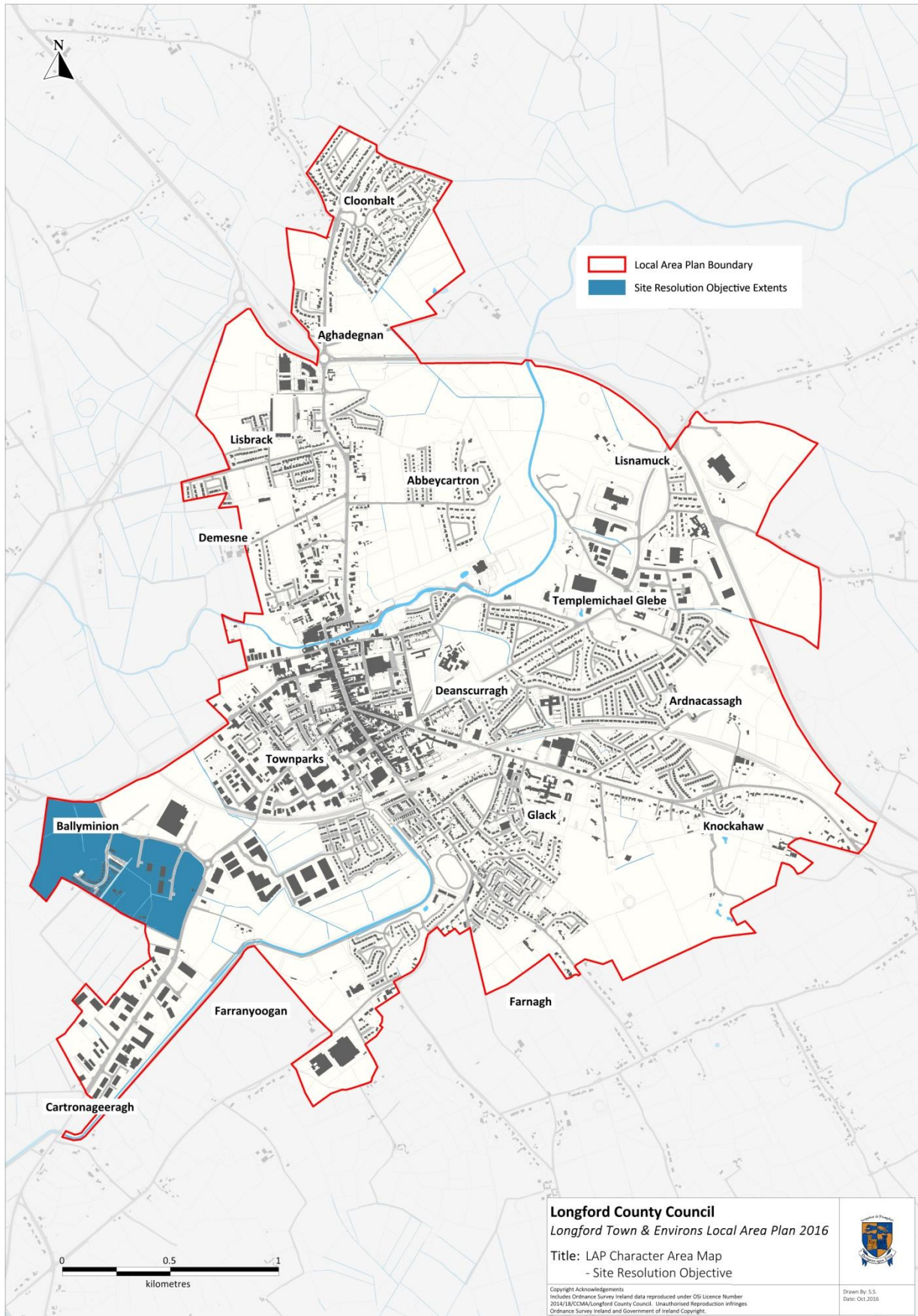
This Character area is concerned with lands that detract from the overall area in which they are situated, either by way of heightened levels of vacancy (commercial, industrial, residential) or through poor maintenance and/or dereliction or a mix of these attributes. These areas are prominently located and have a significant visual impact that affects the overall image and investment potential of the town and environs.

OBJ SRO1: It is an objective of Longford County Council that the root cause of issues arising in these areas are addressed and that the sites are brought back into beneficial use

Policies supporting these objectives will

- 3.7.1. Promote innovative solutions that can be implemented over the short-term to deal with problematic areas and ensure social, economic and environmental gain for communities located within them.
- 3.7.2. Land use provisions in these areas will facilitate a wide range of compatible uses subject to planning, environmental and infrastructural considerations to ensure an appropriate and dynamic mix to re-energise and invigorate these areas and the image that they project.





3.8 AREAS AT RISK OF FLOODING

Zoning Provision – Constrained Land Use

The principle of ‘Constrained Land Use’ will apply to existing non-Greenbelt lands which fall within the indicative Flood Risk Zone (see Figure 4).

OBJ CLU1: Longford County Council will seek to ensure that the provisions of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines issued under s. 28 of the Act are implemented in so far as possible in the application of this plan to future development

OBJ CLU2: The Indicative Flood Risk Zone (Figure 4) will be protected from inappropriate development. In this regard, developments/land uses will be directed into the appropriate Flood Zone in accordance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. Where a development and/or land use is proposed that is inappropriate within the Flood Zone, a Development Management Justification Test and Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment⁵.

OBJ CLU3: Site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be required for all planning applications within and adjacent to areas at risk of flooding, including developments that may be appropriate to the particular Flood Zone. Such FRAs shall take into account potential increase in flood risk arising from subsidence in areas which have been in-filled.

The Constrained Land Use objective will facilitate the appropriate management and sustainable use of flood risk areas.

This constrained objective derives from the recommendations set out in the SFRA undertaken for the Longford LAP. This constrained objective limits new development, while recognising that:

- *Certain sites are transected by Flood Risk Zones. Overarching Land Use Objectives that apply to these sites allow for a variety of uses, some of which may not be compatible with Flood Risk Zones A and B, and some of which*

may be compatible with Flood Risk Zones A and B. Proposals for development in these areas should ensure that the configuration of uses allow for compliance with the provisions of this Plan; and

- *Existing vulnerable development within certain areas may require small scale development. Such proposals may be deemed acceptable provided that it has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, that the development will not give rise to significant flooding issues, will not obstruct important flow paths, introduce a significant additional number of people into flood risk areas or entail the storage of hazardous substances. In this instance, specifications for developments in flood vulnerable areas as set out in LAP Appendix 1 shall apply.*

3.8.1. Development proposals within these areas shall be accompanied by a detailed Flood Risk Assessment⁸, that will assess the risks of flooding associated with the proposed development.

3.8.2. With regard to climate change, Strategic Flood Risk Assessments and site-specific Flood Risk Assessments shall provide information on the implications of climate change with regard to flood risk in relevant locations⁹.

3.8.3. Proposals shall only be considered where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, that they would not have adverse impacts or impede access to a watercourse, floodplain or flood protection and management facilities, or increase the risk of flooding to other locations. The nature and design of structural and non- structural flood risk management measures required for development in such areas may also be required to be demonstrated, so as to ensure that flood hazard and risk will not be increased. Measures proposed shall follow best practice in the management of health and safety for users and residents of the development. Further Guidance in this regard is contained at LAP Appendix 1.

⁸ Carried out in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Assessment Guidelines and associated Circular PL 2/2014 (or as updated)

⁹ The 2009 OPW Draft Guidelines on ‘Assessment of Potential Future Scenarios for Flood Risk Management’ (or any superseding document) shall be consulted with to this effect

4. STRATEGY

The following section deals with interrelated strategic themes that, though their respective thematic provisions, underpin and guide the more detailed policies and objectives contained elsewhere throughout this plan.

4.1 ECONOMIC STRATEGY

Longford Town is a designated driver within the Northern area of the Midlands Region as per the MRPGS 2010 – 2020. It is also recognised as a driver within its wider hinterland that extends into the border area as per the CEDRA report. The County Development Plan Settlement Strategy places Longford town at the top of the hierarchy. This plan recognises the role of Longford town in the local, regional and national economy and promotes the enhancement and strengthening of this role through the following strategic provisions.

This LAP will promote suitably located residential, retail, commercial and industrial development in accordance with the identified character areas and their associated zoning provisions, at an appropriate scale to facilitate the economic development of the town and its hinterland over the lifetime of this plan.

This LAP, through its policies relating to each character area and the promotion of a high quality of life, will provide a framework for the development of suitable conditions to secure inward industrial, commercial and retail investment and expansion of existing facilities to promote and enhance all levels of the economy.

OBJ ECON 1: It is an objective of Longford County Council to identify prioritised development area within which specific regeneration policies will be promoted to address the provisions of s. 10 (2)(h) of the Act which states that:

“...a development plan shall include objectives for...the development and renewal of areas identified having regard to the core strategy , that are in need of regeneration, in order to prevent –

Adverse effects on existing amenities in such areas, in particular as a result of the ruinous or neglected condition of any land,

Urban blight and decay,

Anti-social behavior, or

A shortage of habitable houses or of land suitable for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses “

4.1.1 REGENERATION AREA

The 2015 Housing and Regeneration Act amends s. 10 of the Planning and Development Act to provide for the designation of urban regeneration areas within which the Vacant Sites levy can be applied as required. Following consultation with the Department of the Environment, the designation of this area has been linked to the sequencing of residentially zoned land within and adjacent to Longford Town centre in line with the requirements of the housing list, the requirements of the core strategy and to facilitate smarter travel and sustainable mobility.

Figure 6 utilises buffers to indicate distance from the town core, represented in this case by Centenary Square and 400m, 600m, 800m and 1km distances¹⁰. This is then used to illustrate the prioritized development zones within which vacant sites may be identified.

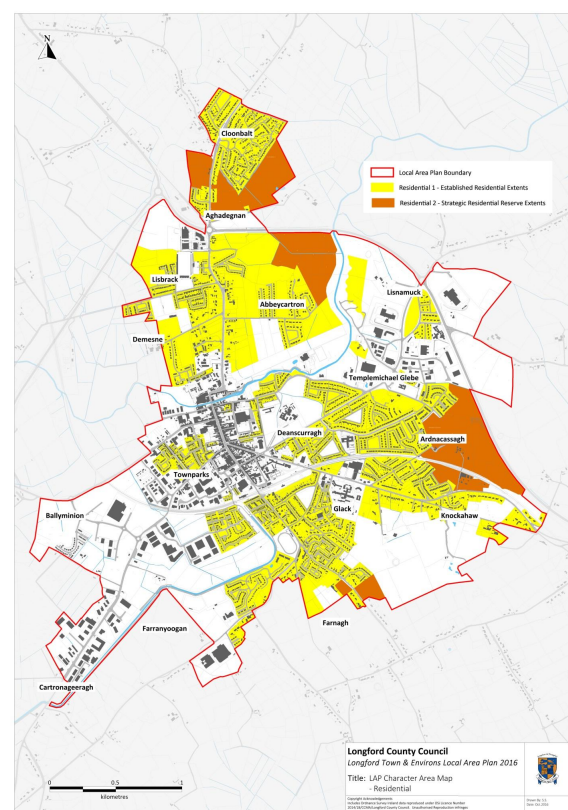
4.1.2 PHASING

This process has also been utilized to address residential phasing provisions (1&2) as outlined in section 3. These buffers were overlain with water services and infrastructure information, residential zoning and walking routes mapping, resulting in the designation of phase 1&2 residential phases, illustrated in Figure 4. Residential zoning is prioritized to include those areas that are not within an area of flood extent and are:

- Within the 800m distance of the town centre
- Serviced areas within 1km of the town centre
- within 1.5km that are serviced, well served by walking/cycling routes, with appropriate social infrastructure and/or brownfield sites/subject to a site resolution objective

The redevelopment of vacant properties in the town core area and within the regeneration zone outlined at Figure 6 will be a priority and, in particular, the promotion of residential development in this area to act as a catalyst for economic development.

Residential 1 relates to lands that are residentially zoned and appropriately serviced by infrastructure and educational facilities and are areas that can be developed over the plan period. Phase 2 lands are not anticipated to be developed over the plan period and/or prior to the installation of appropriate physical and social infrastructure.



¹⁰ "400m is an accepted threshold for walking to the bus, 800m is a suggested threshold for walking to a town /township centre" *Shaping neighbourhoods - a guide for Health, Sustainability and vitality Barton, Grant and Guise 2003 P.119*

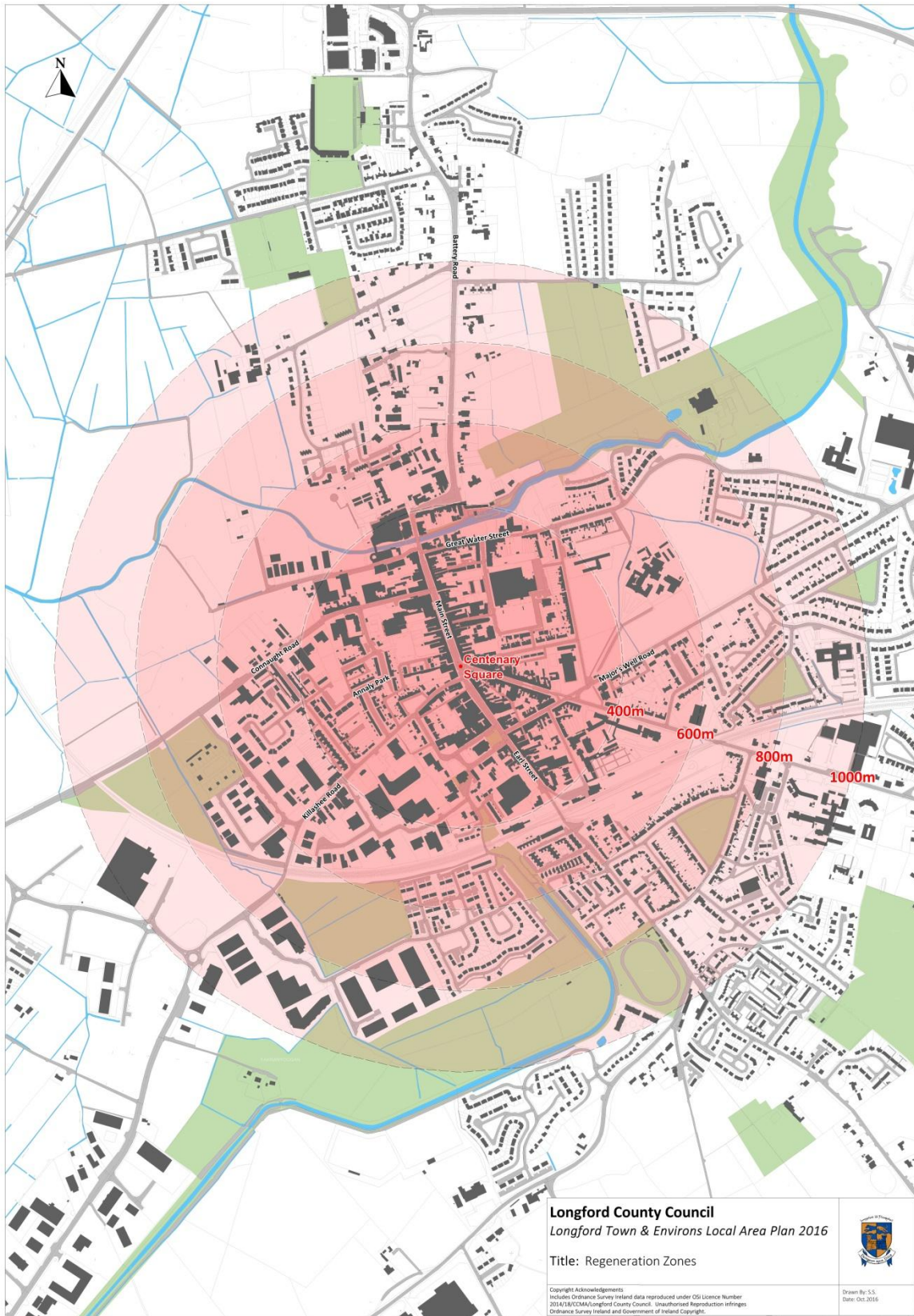


Figure 6: Longford Town and Environs LAP 400m,(regeneration Zone) 600m, 800m and 1km buffers (Darkest to lightest from Centenary Square)

MOVEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE PHASING

Key infrastructure and amenities should be provided at the appropriate juncture to facilitate planned development in appropriately zoned areas. In particular, with regard to the indicative road network at Figure 5, that shall be provided in the following prioritised manner as part of proposed development in the area (read in conjunction with infrastructure strategy):

1. The southern spine road, that will facilitate traffic movement between the Ballinalee road and the town centre, will be provided by the Local Authority funded by a special contribution scheme to be levied on relevant development in the area. This will be prioritised by the Local Authority and will form the first phase of the indicative road network at Figure 5.
2. Capacity improvements shall be carried out to the N4 Roundabouts as part of proposed relevant development in the northern portion of the plan area. These will take place in accordance with details provided at Appendix 2. Significant development requiring access to the Ballinalee road shall install a roundabout with appropriate provision for pedestrians and cyclists in accordance with the DMURS and the Longford Cycle Strategy.
3. The parallel distributor road shall be provided by developers of the area at their own expense along with the relevant internal links as the area is developed to the relevant design standards in consultation with the infrastructure section of the Local Authority. The development of this road will be achieved by way of conditions of planning permission which may provide for the completion of a road section within a certain timeframe relative to other aspects of the development. The Camlin Bridge associated with this road will be provided by way of a supplementary development contribution scheme to be drawn up covering the appropriately zoned land-banks that will benefit from its construction. Proposed developers may be required to conduct and/or update studies to indicate traffic flows from development lands and their existing and potential impact on the national road network, including any mitigation measure required to mitigate such impact.
4. Monitoring will continue over the plan period to ensure that proposed development does not negatively impact on road capacity. Phased improvements to the road network will be aligned with development proposals as set out in the schedule in Table 16 at Appendix 2

Walking and cycle routes at Figure 5 will be provided in accordance with the DMURS as part of relevant developments and in particular, the following specific Pedestrian and Cyclist infrastructure:

- Mall Route extension – linking Abbeycartron Road and the Ballinalee Road across the Camlin River
- Battery Road – Ballinalee Road Primary Connector: Running parallel to the N4 bypass, this pedestrian/cycle link will be recognised as an integral element at the design stage of proposed development in the area, facilitating attractive and vibrant pedestrian scale frontage and passive overlooking to encourage the use of alternative transport modes.
- Pedestrian crossings will be installed as part of any roundabout facilitating access to the Ballinalee Road, but will remain minimal across the N4 bypass.
- Should the N4 bypass be brought offline over the term of this plan and the existing carriageway downgraded, a more complex suite of cycle and pedestrian links could be pursued in conjunction with a reduction in traffic speed and general modifications to the road cross-section to match a new distributor role in accordance with the provisions of the DMURS.

4.2 QUALITY OF LIFE STRATEGY

The interplay between the built environment of the town, the services and functions that it provides, the accessibility of these services and function and the attractiveness of their setting all contribute to the quality of life associated with an area.

The Ignite survey carried out on behalf of the Heritage Council (April 2015) indicated that those living in Longford town considered it to have quite a high overall quality of life, however, other research (Orla Murphy, 2011) indicates that the proportion of those actually residing within the town centre is quite low.

This figure would appear to have decreased further following this research, resulting in a significant loss of services, functions and business premises within the main streets of the town creating high profile vacancies that are challenging to address and a cycle from which it is difficult to emerge.

Vacancy and dereliction has taken its toll on the built environment, particular in the centre of the Town, with a number of high profile instances along Ballymahon Street and Main Street that require urgent attention.

This LAP proposes a holistic approach to these issues through an overall Quality of Life Strategy that aims to address strategic sites within the character areas outlined above to act as catalysts for economic, social and physical enhancement of the Town and its environs over the plan period, through the application of specific policy outlined in the following sections.

The enhancement of Quality of Life is not only relevant to those who reside within the town but is also essential for the economic development of Longford and its wider functional area. Closely linked to economic development, these areas will be developed in conjunction with other strategies such as the Longford Tourism Strategy and the Midlands Action Plan for Jobs and should be read in conjunction with the Tourism Section at Chapter 4.5 of the CDP.

4.2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

The quality of the environment has a significant impact in how we experience and interact with the places and spaces in which our lives are set. This plan has been informed by strategic environmental, flood risk and appropriate assessment processes that ensure environmental considerations and the principles of sustainability remain to the fore in the promotion of development and regeneration in the plan area.

The following policy and objectives shall be applied in the consideration of future proposals in Longford Town and Environs

OBJ ENV 1: Longford County Council, through the articulation of the policies and objectives contained within this plan, will contribute towards compliance with EU Directives - including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC) – and relevant transposing Regulations.

4.2.2.1 The following sensitivities, in addition to those identified in Section 4 of the SEA Environmental Report that accompanies the Plan, will be considered in the evaluation of proposals for development and any associated reports and assessments:

- *Candidate Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas;*
- *Features of the landscape that provide linkages/connectivity to designated sites (e.g. watercourses or areas of semi-natural habitat such as woodlands);*
- *Natural Heritage Areas and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas;*
- *Entries to the Record of Monuments and Places;*
- *Zones of Archaeological Heritage;*
- *Entries to the Record of Protected Structures; and*
- *Architectural Conservation Areas.*

CLIMATE CHANGE AND AIR QUALITY

The following policy and objectives will be applied in support of national and EU policy in relation to climate change and air quality in the Plan area

4.2.2.2 Longford County Council recognise European and national objectives for climate adaptation and will work with the EPA, the Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly and neighbouring planning authorities in implementing future guidance for climate change proofing of landuse plan provisions, as is flagged in the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (DECLG, 2012).

OBJ CC1: Longford County Council will promote the preservation of best ambient air quality compatible with sustainable development in accordance with the EU Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/50/EC) and ensure that all air emissions associated with new developments are within Environmental Quality Standards as out in the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011 (SI No. 180 of 2011) (or any updated/superseding documents).

4.2.2.3 Ensure the implementation of the specific guidance on radon prevention measures for new homes as contained within the existing Building Regulations (including any updated/superseding regulations that may be published within the lifetime of this Plan).

BIODIVERSITY, FLORA AND FAUNA

The importance of the protection and maintenance of biodiversity in the plan area is acknowledged, both in the context of protected sites, wildlife corridors and other areas that provide locally important habitats that contribute to ecosystem function. The following policies and objectives will be applied in order to prevent loss of biodiversity and specifically, to contribute towards the protection of designated ecological sites including candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs); Wildlife Sites (including proposed Natural Heritage Areas); and Flora Protection Order sites, existing or designated over the lifetime of this plan.

OBJ ENV 2: Longford County Council will contribute towards compliance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines¹¹.

¹¹ including the following and any updated/superseding documents outlined hereunder:

- *EU Directives, including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended)^[1], the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)^[2], the Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC)^[3], the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC).*
- *National legislation, including the Wildlife Act 1976^[4], the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989 (SI No. 349 of 1989) (as amended), the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003*
- *(as amended), the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 477 of 2011) and the European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations 2008^[5].*
- *National policy guidelines (including any clarifying Circulars or superseding versions of same), including the Landscape and Landscape Assessment Draft Guidelines 2000, the Environmental Impact Assessment Sub-Threshold Development Guidelines 2003, Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines 2004 and the Appropriate Assessment Guidance 2010.*
- *Catchment and water resource management Plans, including the relevant River Basin Management Plan.*
- *Biodiversity Plans and guidelines, including Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016: Ireland's 2nd National Biodiversity Plan (including any superseding version of same).*

OBJ ENV 3: Longford County Council, will, as part of the exercise of its powers and duties under this plan contribute towards the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, rivers, streams, other landscape features and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping stones in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.

In addition, the following policy provisions shall apply:

4.2.2.4 Where trees or hedgerows have to be removed there should be suitable planting of native species in mitigation. Where possible hedgerows and trees should not be removed during the nesting season (i.e. March 1st to August 31st). Birds' nests can only be intentionally destroyed under licence issued under the Wildlife Acts of 1976 and 2000.

4.2.2.5 Bat roosts may be present in trees, buildings and bridges and can only be destroyed under licence issued in accordance with the Wildlife Acts, and a derogation under the Habitats Regulations, in conjunction with the implementation of suitable mitigation measures.

4.2.2.6 Longford County Council will contribute towards the protection of non-designated habitats and species, as appropriate in the exercise of its duties and powers.

4.2.2.7 Longford County Council will support, as appropriate, the National Parks and Wildlife Service's efforts to seek to control the spread of non-native invasive species on land and water.

4.2.2.8 As part of the assessment of proposals for Amenity, Tourism and Recreational Development, Longford County Council will require that any increase in visitor

- *Ireland's Environment 2014 (EPA, 2014, including any superseding versions of same), and to make provision where appropriate to address the report's goals and challenges.*

numbers in relevant areas is managed to avoid significant negative effects including loss of habitat and disturbance¹².

- 4.2.2.9 Planning permission will be sought for development where the area impacted by works relating to the drainage or reclamation of a wetland exceeds 0.1 hectares¹³ or where such works may have a significant effect on the environment. Such planning applications will be subject to an Appropriate Assessment where appropriate.

APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

This plan has been screened for Appropriate Assessment in accordance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive and, Longford County Council, as the competent Authority in this instance, in consultation with the Environmental Authorities, have indicated that stage two assessment is not required in this instance, subject to the application of the following policy and objectives.

OBJ ENV 4: All projects and plans arising from this plan¹⁴ (including any associated flood alleviation, improvement works or associated infrastructure) will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. A plan or project will only be authorised after the competent authority has ascertained, based on scientific evidence, Screening for Appropriate Assessment, and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment where necessary¹⁵.

¹⁴ Such projects include but are not limited to those relating to: agriculture; amenity and recreation; contaminated sites; electricity transmission; flood alleviation and prevention; forestry; mineral extraction; renewable energy projects; roads; telecommunications; tourism; wastewater and discharges; and water supply and abstraction.

¹⁵ *The Plan or project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or*

The Plan or project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type/and or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or

The Plan or project will have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons for overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a

¹² In general, pedestrian and cycle routes need ecological assessment in their planning and design and should not target sensitive ecological sites or parts of sites, as such routes have potential for disturbance to habitats and species, including as a result of noise, lighting, etc. Otherwise their development may not be consistent with nature conservation objectives and legal compliance requirements.

¹³ Planning and Development (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2011 and the European Communities (Amendment to Planning and Development) Regulations 2011

OBJ ENV 5: No projects giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of this plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects[6]).

WATER QUALITY

The following policies shall apply to proposed development in the plan area for the protection of water resources, quality and the habitats wildlife and amenities that depend on this resource.

4.2.2.10 Waterbodies and watercourses including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips and natural floodplains, will be protected from inappropriate development.

4.2.2.11 With regard to the Water Framework Directive, the implementation of this plan will contribute towards the protection of existing and potential water resources, and their use by humans and wildlife, including rivers, streams, groundwater and associated habitats and species in accordance with the associated requirements and guidance 16 . Longford County Council will support the application and implementation of a catchment planning and management approach to development and conservation, including the implementation of Sustainable Drainage System techniques for new development as appropriate.

4.2.2.12 This plan will support the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the relevant River Basin Management Plan, and associated Programmes of Measures, or any such plans that may supersede same during the lifetime of the plan, as well as relevant recommendations contained in the Water Quality in Ireland 2010 – 2012 (EPA, 2015, and any updated/superseding document). Proposals for development would not have an unacceptable impact on the water environment, including surface waters, groundwater quality and quantity, river corridors and associated woodlands¹⁷.

requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000.

^[6] Except as provided for in Section 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:

- a) no alternative solution available,
- b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project to proceed; and
- c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

¹⁶ Including EU Water Framework Directive 2000 (2000/60/EC), the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009), the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC and the European Communities Environmental Objectives (groundwater) Regulations, 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010) and other relevant EU Directives, including associated national legislation and policy guidance (including any superseding versions of same)

¹⁷ Where appropriate, Longford County Council will have cognisance of the EU's Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Document No. 20 which provides guidance on exemptions to the environmental objectives of the Water Framework Directive

4.2.3 PUBLIC REALM

A detailed public realm assessment will be carried out in the town core area to identify improvements that can be made to enhance the pedestrian environment in particular in Longford Town and promote inward investment and residential use in the town core through:

- Promoting activity at street level in existing and new developments
- Improving pedestrian permeability throughout the town core
- Developing (an accessibility audited) hard and soft landscaping scheme throughout the town in accordance with a coordinated theme
- Assessing footpaths and junctions within the town core from a pedestrian and an accessibility perspective and carry out improvements as required
- Ensure that important views and vistas within the town streetscape are maintained and enhanced through public realm improvements and/or the promotion of specifically designed development at an appropriate scale and location
- Connect, Overlap, Exchange and Accommodate – these are the strategies proposed following the outcome of dedicated research into Irish Towns - Longford being one of the settlements featured¹⁸.

Specifically with regard to Longford, the publication highlights the lack of connection between major recreational amenities at the Mall and the Canal and the potential of this defined connection, combined with enhanced connections between the Main Street and Shopping Centre car-park, to create a catalyst for development along the main thoroughfares. The following specific recommendations are made in this regard:

Exchange and Overlap – promote the occupation of vacant buildings within the main street by community groups and other uses through rate reductions/rebates and promotion of flexible and overlapping uses in both buildings and urban spaces

Accommodate – create the environment necessary to promote residential occupation of the town

core, diversity of accommodation on a block by block basis

These studies will be utilized and built upon in order to promote a vibrant, vital town centre that serves the needs of the town and its residents.

OBJ QOL 1: it is an objective of Longford County Council to review existing studies relating to the quality of life in the town and its environs and update these where relevant for incorporation into policy as appropriate.

OBJ QOL 2: It is an objective of Longford County Council to prepare a detailed public realm strategy to identify and address improvements required to the public realm, taking the principles of universal design into account.

¹⁸ "Town – origins morphology and future" Orla Murphy, 2011

4.2.4 CULTURE HERITAGE AND ENVIRONMENT

Longford Town has a strong and unique identity, with a broad range of heritage interests from the refurbished St. Mel's Cathedral to Connolly Barracks and onto the Mall Park. These areas should be highlighted and linked in a meaningful way through physical and visual connections and through coordinated signage and other directional facilities as part of public realm improvements.

Longford Town core has a strong built environment, a well defined layout and an historic built fabric with considerable potential. Strategies within this plan will work with these attributes to promote the establishment of appropriate facilities such as accommodation and hospitality services, for Longford to act as a gateway to the historic, amenity, cultural and tourism attractions in its wider hinterland.

OBJ QOL 3: It is an objective of Longford County Council to review the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation areas in the Plan area in accordance with legislative provisions within two years of its adoption.

4.2.4.1 Longford County Council seeks to secure the protection of architectural heritage by complying, as appropriate, with the legislative provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in relation to architectural heritage and the policy guidance contained in the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2011 (and any updated/superseding document).

The Archaeological heritage of the town will be protected and enhanced, in particular by implementing the relevant provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the National Monuments Act, 1930 (as amended). In this regard, Longford County Council will:

4.2.4.2 Contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of archaeological sites and monuments and their settings, archaeological objects and underwater archaeological sites that are listed in the

Record of Monuments and Places, in the ownership/guardianship of the State, or that are subject of Preservation Orders or have been registered in the Register of Historic Monuments.

4.2.4.3 Contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection and preservation of archaeological sites, which have been identified subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.

4.2.4.4 Consult with the National Monuments Service of the Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht in relation to proposed developments adjoining archaeological sites.

Cultural associations, highlighted in events, festivals and parades, such as Halloween Dead-of-Night, St Patricks Day, Christmas and Summer civic events and commemorations are central to the role of the County Town. This role will be promoted and enhanced as appropriate over the lifetime of this plan, particularly in terms of the flexibility and use of public spaces and how events can increase awareness of these spaces and maximise their use into the future.

Longford has a diverse population with many nationalities resident in the town. This diversity adds to the vibrancy of the town, bringing ethnic food stores and a new interaction with the urban environment that utilises the street as a semi-private public space that becomes a playground and an extension of the living area. This reimagining of the urban space reinvigorates central areas and this plan seeks to capture this energy to promote vibrant residential and mixed use spaces in the town core.

Cultural and religious institutions are important visual elements throughout the streetscape, yet are also functional features from a congregational perspective with the potential to add to activity in the town centre, particularly outside of working hours and at weekends. The importance of retaining this vibrancy will be considered in the future, particularly in the context of promoting the location of appropriate uses between the town centre and outer environs.

The environmental importance of the River Camlin and the Royal Canal and their relationship with the town over the years is acknowledged in the context of their contribution to the following aspects of the Environment of the Town:

**TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE * INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT * INFLUENCE ON THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT * INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY * FLOOD ATTENUATION * HABITAT, FLORA AND FAUNA * PASSIVE AND RECREATIONAL AMENITY * TOURISM*

This heritage association is further developed through the associated public realm strategy and other provisions of this plan, including the protection of the environmental quality of the river in terms of both its water quality and associated Riparian Habitat and the amenity development of the Blueway associated with the Royal Canal.

carried out into the nature of any soil and groundwater contamination and the risks associated with site development work proposed.

OBJ QOL4: Encourage and facilitate, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, the development of green infrastructure that recognises the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the following:

- Provision of open space amenities
- Sustainable management of water
- Protection and management of biodiversity
- Protection of cultural heritage
- Protection of protected landscape sensitivities.

4.2.4.5 Longford County Council will continue to secure the protection of county and local level landscape designations from incompatible developments. Proposals for development that have the potential to significantly adversely impact upon these designations shall be accompanied by an assessment of the potential landscape and visual impacts of the proposed development - demonstrating that landscape impacts have been anticipated and avoided to a level consistent with the sensitivity of the landscape and the nature of the designation.

4.2.4.6 Adequate soil protection measures shall be undertaken as part of any proposed development carried out under this plan, including appropriate investigations to be

4.2.5 SPECIFIC SITE OBJECTIVES

These sites are considered regenerative catalysts within the town, the development of which will have an overall impact beyond individual site boundaries. The zoning of each site is based on the provisions of the character area in which it is located (Section 3).

OBJ QOL 5: Longford County Council will promote the development of the strategic sites outlined hereunder on a masterplan basis. Funding will be actively sought in this regard from a variety of local, national and EU sources as part of the dedicated County regeneration initiative, however private development will also be encouraged in accordance with a detailed and agreed masterplan that fully addresses the potential of the site in its wider context. Masterplans shall be prepared in consultation with infrastructure providers such as Irish Water and Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

It is anticipated that a masterplan will be prepared for each of the sites outlined hereunder in the lifetime of this plan to promote an appropriate mix of development to facilitate the implementation of identified objectives in each instance.

Developments in these areas should adhere to the principles contained within the DMURS and other guidance issued on Sustainable Urban Development and the accompanying Urban Design Manual and shall be prepared in consultation with infrastructure providers including Transport Infrastructure Ireland and Irish Water.

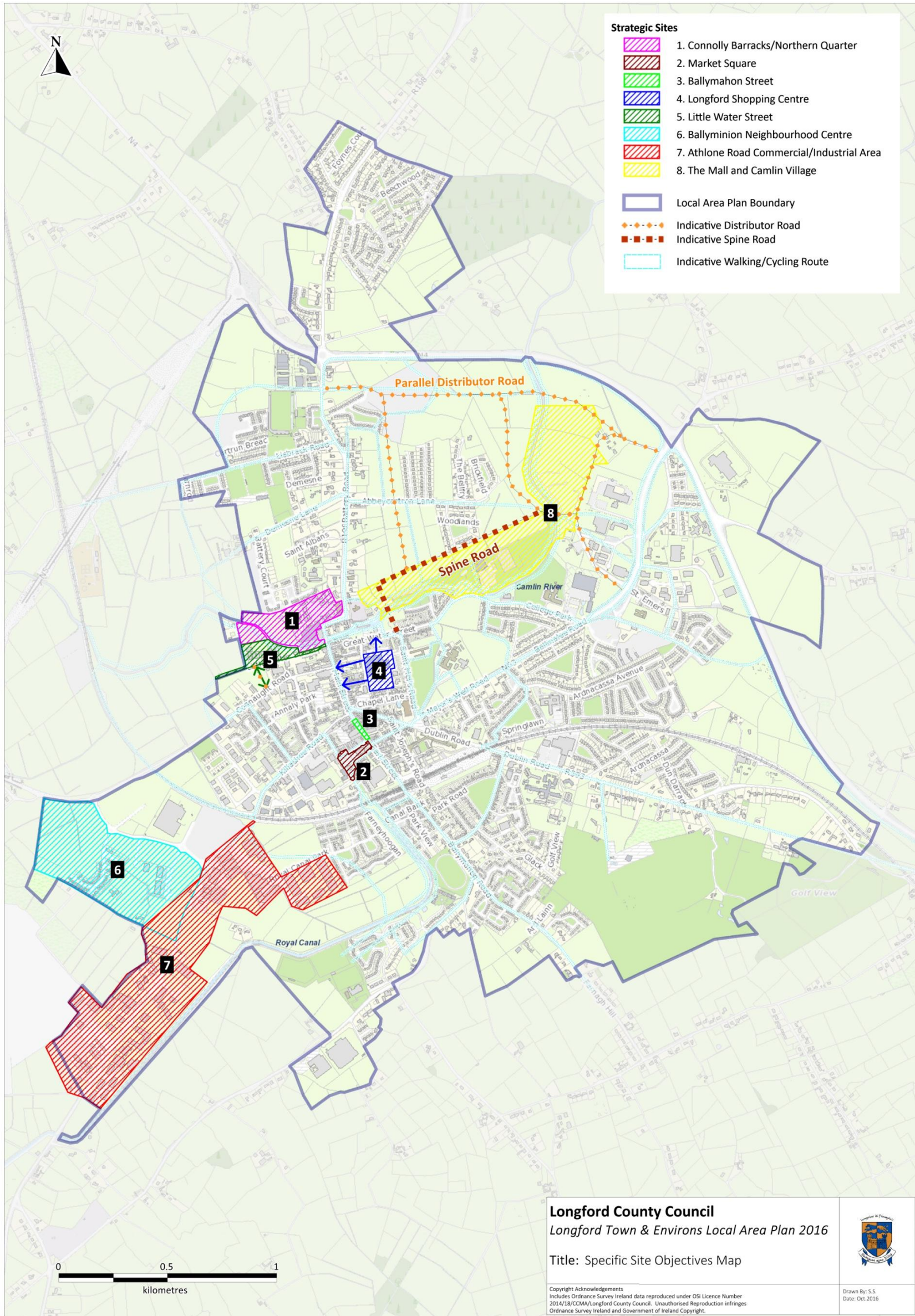
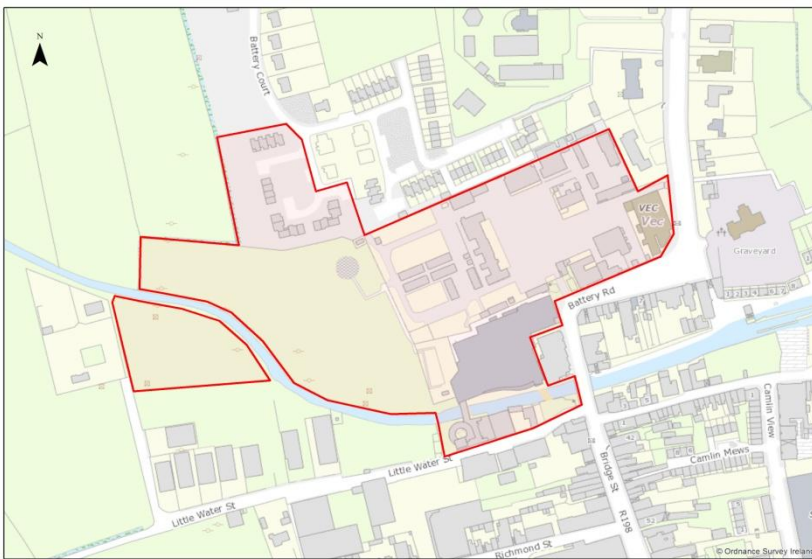


Figure 7 Specific Site Objectives - Location Map

STRATEGIC SITE 1 - CONNOLLY BARRACKS/NORTHERN QUARTER



The Northern quarter site contains the Connolly Barracks/Longford Shopping centre area, and has already been progressed as a transformative project within the northern section of the town (detailed provisions set out under the Town Core character area at section 3.1).

The regeneration of this area remains central to the development of the town and will be progressed as a priority as part of this Local Area Plan in order to build on innovative initiatives to date and EU, National and local investment.

Masterplan development in this area will be cognisant of the other specific sites outlined hereunder within the town core, with a view toward creating physical, visual and perceptual connectivity and a holistic, brand-driven approach to the promotion of Longford town in a coordinated way and in the context of its designated role within the region.



The range of uses proposed under the town core zoning are intended to be flexible in order to promote fresh and innovative potential uses within the area, centred on the Barracks compound and the adjacent vacant shopping centre building. Plans for the development of this area shall consider elements such as

- The Historic context and the “layers” of heritage associated with the site and its built fabric
- The location of the site within the town and the promotion of sustainable movement within the town core, parking provision .
- enhancing links between the core and outlying residential, educational, recreational and amenity links in particular.
- The riverside location, biodiversity, amenity and open space and the contribution of these elements to proposed development in the area and its wider context.
- Land use considerations in the context of flood risk

STRATEGIC SITE 2 - MARKET SQUARE

The urban space to the rear of the market square was once utilized as an important civic space and could be re-evaluated in this context. Previously used for festivals and gatherings, and the harbour for the Grand Canal Longford spur, it has now been almost wholly appropriated for parking use and vehicular traffic. The space is well articulated, with a strong streetline bounded by an interesting mix of period and modern buildings, considerably enhanced by removal of the swimming pool building in recent years.



The space also links the pedestrian routes to the Longford Retail Park and Ganlys/Hazelwood shopping area from the Town Centre. These currently have little legibility as pedestrian spaces and are perceived as distant from the town centre. Consideration should be given to linking these areas by introducing a more pedestrian scale as part of masterplanning for this site by

- Encouraging greater interaction between buildings and the street at ground-floor level, in particular to the rear of the former town council building
- Providing a crossing area in the vicinity of John Browne's pub
- Reducing the visual impact of parking in the space, either through more effective landscaping, surface treatment or reduction/realignment of existing spaces
- The introduction of measures to encourage uses that are incompatible with town centre functions, relocate to more appropriate locations.
- Consideration of the relationship between the site and the Canal and its associated transport history

STRATEGIC SITE 3 – BALLYMAHON STREET

Ballymahon Street forms the southern end of the axis of activity in the town core and has suffered considerably as either end of the axis became redundant and activity contracted to Upper Main Street and the existing shopping centre operating in the town core (Tesco). This has manifested itself in high profile vacancies that create a poor impression and are detrimental to the remaining businesses on the street.

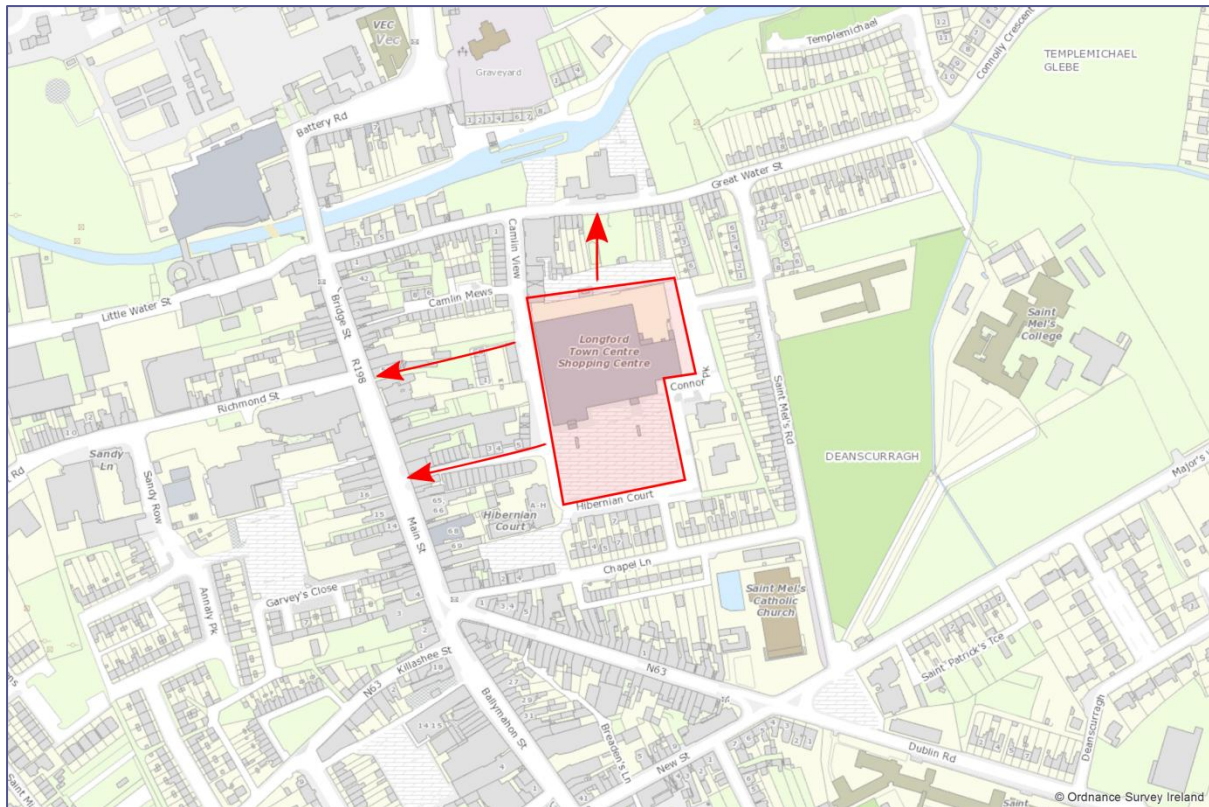


There has been considerable effort on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce and the Local Authority over recent years to both find a use for these buildings and/or ensure that they are maintained in good condition and do not detract from the remainder of the street. This action has been successful in many instances, however, high profile voids remain, most noticeably between Wards Chemist and Herterich's butchers and opposite in the case of the former PV Fallon's.

This local area plan will, as part of an overall public realm strategy, promote innovative solutions to these areas insofar as its remit allows. This could include amendments to the built fabric that would promote permeability through the core, with greater access and visibility and a potential new public space that could be utilised in novel ways and/or included as part of a wider open space strategy throughout the town and/or as part of the stalled sites initiative.

STRATEGIC SITE 4 – SHOPPING CENTRE (TESCO)

The existing operational Longford Shopping Centre acts as a central draw within the town core, generating footfall that radiates outwards onto the main streets of the town, mainly due to its Tesco and Penny's anchors, but also the significant, cheap and easily accessible surface car-parking (some 420 spaces) that is secure, monitored and centrally located within the town core.

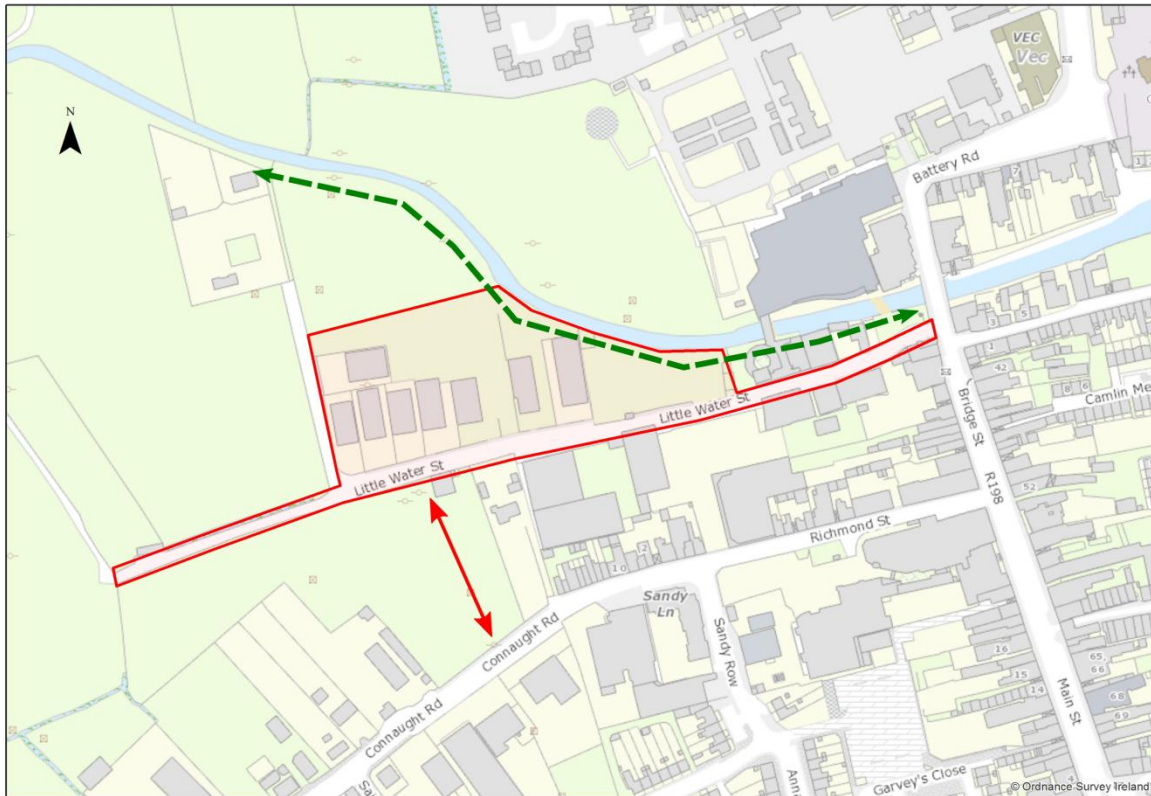


It is essential that this important facility is retained within its central location and not lost to the periphery as has happened in similarly-sized Irish towns, resulting in significant adverse impacts on town centre vitality. Interventions and enhancements in this area should include:

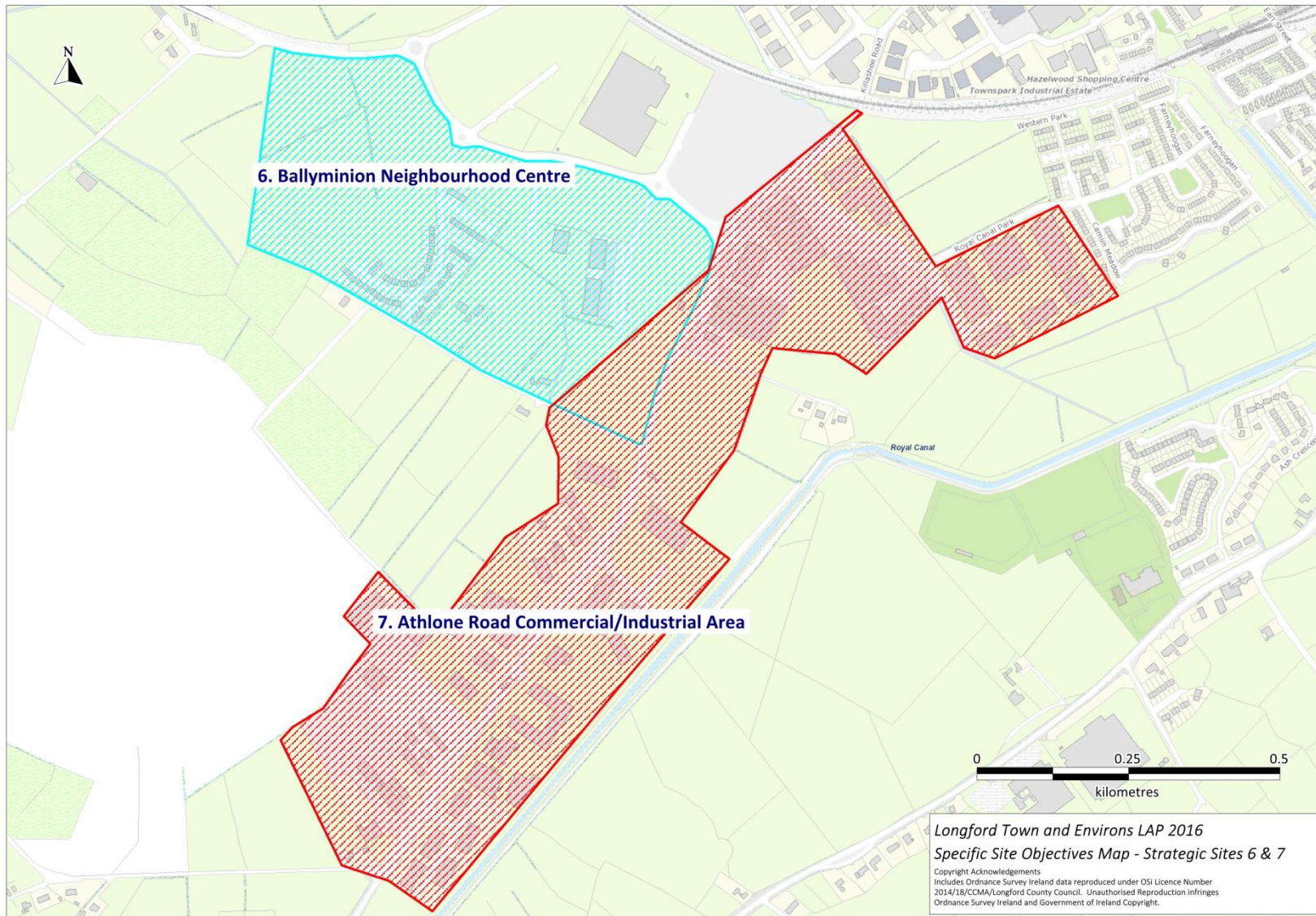
- Greater consideration of the public realm – appropriate street furniture, shared surfaces, planting and signage that reflect the use of the area at a human scale, reduce vehicular dominance and facilitate the use of the space to link areas and town core functions.
- Enhancement of physical and visual permeability between the shopping centre area and the main streets through existing archways and alleys, in association with the promotion of active frontages in these areas and on the perimeter of the parking area, and also enhanced connectivity to the County Council offices and the Mall.
- Uses and functions promoted in this area should be of a nature that will generate activity through the day and into night time providing activity and passive security that will help to increase residential uptake in the town core.

STRATEGIC SITE 5 - LITTLE WATER STREET

This street is strategically located within the town centre and currently contains a broad mix of uses from industrial to bulky retail and uses connected with the automobile and construction industries. The potential for this area to develop in response to initiatives associated with the Connolly Barracks/Shopping centre is significant for the following reasons:



- The potential to create a link from Water Street to the N5 would provide enhanced vehicular access to the shopping centre site which is currently severely restricted
- The properties on Little Water Street currently back onto the River Camlin. These sites that would potentially have a significantly higher value if released for alternative development, while simultaneously increasing the attractiveness of the wider area for town centre economic uses.
- The existing uses in the area, which require large, industrial-scale buildings and access for HGVs may be better suited to areas such as the Athlone Road, where there are a significant number of potentially suitable vacant and under-utilised sites and buildings with ready access to transport infrastructure.



STRATEGIC SITE 6 – BALLYMINION NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

This area is remote from the town core, with no sustainable transport access and has received considerable adverse media attention over recent times in terms of the quality of its built environment. It is proposed that the site resolution objective zoning remains and that the site is developed in conjunction with strategic site 7 below.



The Glenn Riada area should be addressed as a matter of priority, with enhanced physical and visual connections between the estate, its surroundings and the town. Approaches to the estate should be upgraded in accordance with the DMURS and should incorporate screening for noise and visual impact (in accordance with the adopted noise plan) from the adjacent N5 national primary route and the existing large Flancare distribution facility. The access road between the N5 and N63 has been taken in charge by Longford County Council and should also be considered in this context should this become part of the national road network, effectively acting as a southern by-pass route.

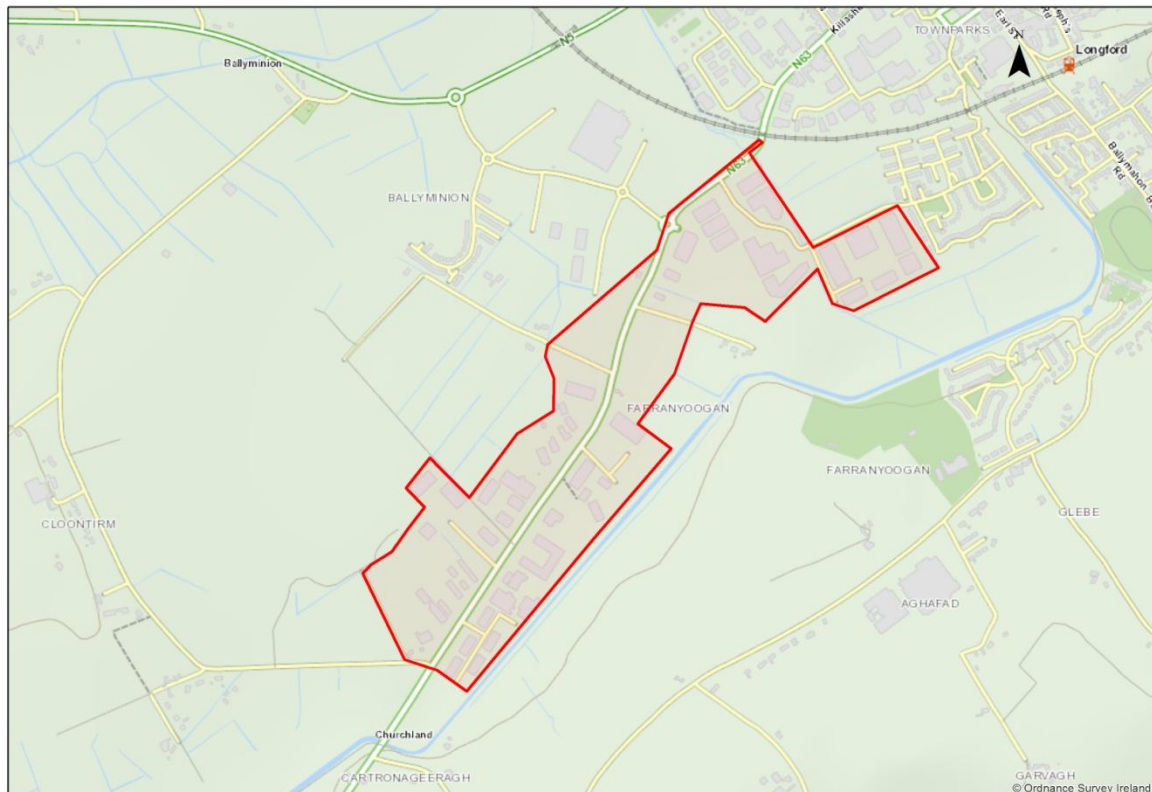
The primary aims of this masterplanning on this site will be to:

- Create an attractive built environment and public realm – instil a sense of pride in the residents and owners and promote future investment in the area
- Develop secure, attractive and accessible pedestrian-scaled physical and visual links with the adjacent primary care centre and from both into the town core, without reliance on vehicular transport (in accordance with DMURS).
- In conjunction with the development of the Ballyminion/Flancare strategic site, develop fresh solutions to benefit the existing community on a pilot basis before expansion to the wider town and environs area. This could include innovative proposals and pilot initiatives in the areas of water conservation and renewable energy development.
- Promote the development of neighbourhood level facilities serving the residents and wider public using the adjacent primary care and employment areas on the Athlone road, such as a local convenience shop and crèche, playground and other community facilities, building upon existing uses to create a cohesive neighbourhood centre.

STRATEGIC SITE 7 - ATHLONE ROAD INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL AREA

The Athlone Road approach into the town is characterised by large industrial commercial-type structures of various types and finishes, mismatched boundaries and some poorly maintained buildings and sites.

This is one of the more heavily trafficked routes in and out of the Town and therefore has a high visibility and profile that could be utilised in a more positive way to promote the town.



The residential area at Gleann Riada is a particular issue and consideration of the residents in this area should be central to any proposals for this area.

- Lighting, footpath and road improvements should be progressed in the area, in addition to an overall scheme that will promote the repair, maintenance and coordination of boundaries and vacant sites focusing on the area from the Cloontirm Road in the south to the Railway Bridge and onto the Hazelwood shopping centre in the north. These improvements should include more pedestrian facilities and street furniture to create a more human scale environment, particularly out to the Primary Care Centre and Gleann Riada housing estate (see specific site 6 above). This scheme should conform to an overall theme that designates the area as a specific quarter for development, where innovation will be encouraged and promoted.
- An holistic approach should be employed in this area, addressing the reconciliation of the various uses in this area and its surrounds, including the promotion of the relocation of town centre uses to more appropriate core locations and vice versa (religious institutions, retail, communications industry) .
- The installation of a range of appropriate and innovative land uses should be considered for this area on a pilot basis in tandem with the Midland Energy Agency/SEAI.

STRATEGIC SITE 8– THE MALL AND CAMLIN VILLAGE

The potential to utilise green infrastructure to promote the sustainable social, economic and environmental development of the town will be fully explored in the context of achieving biodiversity objectives, addressing climate change adaptation and mitigation, the potential for water conservation and recovery, renewable energy generation and the potential for horticultural on-site waste recovery and recycling. The mall amenity area, expanded to the north as illustrated, with its close proximity to the town core, provides significant opportunities in this regard.



The town core and the mall area itself would be considerably enhanced by greater visual and physical connections between each other and other important amenity and historic attractions. This should be progressed as part of overall planning for the area and the proposed public realm strategy, the preparation of which is a stated objective of this plan.

The “Camlin Village” area, currently zoned for residential development, is subject to flood risk (as outlined at Figure 4) provision for which must be made as part of any detailed plans for the area. In this regard, recreation, sporting and amenity facilities will be considered on this site as part of an overall masterplan for the area that will, in addition to other relevant considerations, address the following issues:

- Preservation and enhancement of existing recreational and sporting facilities for mall users, adjacent educational institutions and residential areas .
- Installation of complimentary and shared infrastructure such as parking, river crossings etc that benefit the area as a whole and enhance mobility and circulation throughout the town.

4.3 INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

4.3.1 WATER SERVICES

The provision of piped water services are now in the domain of Irish water with the support of the Local Authority under a service level agreement. Irish Water have indicated that there is adequate capacity to cater for the current core strategy target up to 2021.

- 4.3.1.1. Longford County Council will collaborate with and support, as relevant and appropriate, Irish Water in its new role as the lead authority for water services and contribute towards compliance with the provisions of the relevant regulations¹⁹.
- 4.3.1.2. Development will only be permitted in instances where there is sufficient capacity in the public water and wastewater infrastructure.
- 4.3.1.3. In conjunction with Irish Water, Longford County Council will seek to implement relevant recommendations set out in the EPA (2015) publication Urban Waste Water Treatment in 2014 (and any subsequent update).
- 4.3.1.4. Collaborate with Irish Water in contributing towards compliance with the relevant provisions of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations 2001 and 2004 and the Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations 2007
- 4.3.1.5. The Council, in conjunction with Irish Water, shall have regard to the EPA (2015) publication Drinking Water Report for 2014 (and any subsequent update) in the establishment and maintenance of water sources in the County

4.3.1.6. The Council, in conjunction with Irish Water, shall undertake recommendations made by the EPA arising from any failure to meet drinking water standards and any enlistment on the EPA's Remedial Action List.

OBJ WS 1: Longford County Council will seek to ensure the provision of appropriate and adequate drinking water as part of Irish Water investment and management programmes

Headroom needs to be secured to ensure that anticipated levels of economic development can be accommodated into the future in a sustainable way.

OBJ WS 2: Longford County Council will seek to ensure the provision of an appropriate level of headroom in water services to facilitate the economic, social and environmental development of the town in the longer term. In this regard, the sewerage treatment plant in the town should be sized, as part of Irish Water investment, to cater for potential large-scale industrial development in particular and in addition to anticipated population projections.

The units located in the Athlone Road area, which is the subject of the strategic site designation outlined above, are not currently served by mains sewerage. Foul waste from these units is treated by septic tanks and/or treatment systems each serving a group of units and percolating to ground. While there is a pumping station with significant capacity adjacent to the railway bridge at the entrance to the town from the Athlone Road, Irish Water have indicated that connections to this will be developer led.

OBJ WS 3: Longford County Council will promote the establishment of schemes in designated areas in tandem with proposed developers, Irish Water and other utility and services providers to secure infrastructural services to designated sites for the promotion of appropriate development.

¹⁹ Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations 2001 and 2004 and the Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations 2007, European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 and compliance of water supplies comply with the 48 parameters identified in these Regulations.

4.3.2 SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE

Surface water drainage deficiencies remain in some areas such as Springlawn and the Teffia Park/Dublin Road Junction, associated with the combined sewerage systems that exist in some areas of the town. This plan will promote the resolution of these issues and ensure that further development will not take place in areas where surface water drainage deficiencies exist.

OBJ SW1: Longford County Council will pursue the resolution of surface water drainage issues as required throughout the town, in conjunction with Irish Water as appropriate

4.3.3 MOVEMENT STRATEGY

This Local Area Plan seeks to incorporate smarter travel policies in the future development of Longford Town and its environs in the context of new development and proposed enhancements to existing developments and the public realm to reduce the need to travel, maximise efficiency, and promote sustainable travel choices, as outlined in policy throughout the plan. These will be supported by other land-use planning measures such as sequential residential development and appropriate density provisions, cycling and walking networks and the promotion of pedestrian permeability throughout the town, in other sections of this plan and the overarching CDP.

OBJ MS1: An Accessibility Audit shall be carried out over the lifetime of this plan in conjunction with the proposed public realm strategy and in association with other local authority departments, associations for the elderly, disabled and other community organisations to assess and improve accessibility for all, particularly within and between important services and the main thoroughfares and public spaces throughout the town.

Existing areas identified for attention include:

- The access from St. Christopher's into the town centre and, in particular, the junction at Great/Little Water Street
- Crossing area to the rear of the Market Square
- Roundabout at the northern end of the Battery road into the Demesne
- Road Crossings along Ballinalee Road/social services offices/St Emer's /rear of Market Square
- Enhanced connectivity and accessibility between the Railway/Bus Station, residential areas, employment and other services
- Footpaths and surface condition throughout the town, availability of seating in the public realm

OBJ MS2: Larger employers within the town and applications for planning permission to establish employment generating premises will be encouraged to develop mobility management plans to promote sustainable travel choices. This will include measures to support smarter travel such as the provision of cycle facilities and bicycle storage and shower facilities for employees.

4.3.3.1 ROADS

The Road Network classification throughout the town has altered over recent times, with the N5 bypass completed in 2013 and the potential delivery of a “southern bypass” with the taking in charge of the “flancare” road linking the N4/N5/N63. Plans remain for the off-line construction of an N4 dual carriageway from Mullingar linking with the existing dual carriageway at the Tomisky roundabout on the border with County Leitrim. Opportunities to address circulation issues within the town arising out of road declassification will be addressed where possible, as will potential funding shortfalls through alternative means, in the absence of Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) funding as a result of such declassification.

OBJ RN1: It remains an objective of Longford County Council to continue to progress the development of the N4 Mullingar-Rooskey dual carriageway with the relevant government departments and transport agencies.

Applications for planning permission on the industrially zoned lands to the north of the N4 Longford Bypass (see Figure 4) shall be subject to a detailed traffic impact assessment in advance of their consideration for development.

Any proposed development shall have regard to National policy concerning the preservation of the N4 national primary road for National/Regional Traffic

INDICATIVE ROAD NETWORK

The proposed road network outlined in Figure 5 will be provided as part of the planning process and through funding opportunities and other initiatives as they arise. This will be informed by smarter travel principles outlined above and in accordance with the provisions of the DMURS. The cycle network as outlined in the framework shall be progressed in tandem with these initiatives.

OBJ RN2: Longford County Council will require developers in specific areas to provide elements of the road network as indicated in Figure 5 and associated cycle and pedestrian facilities in accordance with the provisions of the DMURS. This will be required and details agreed in association with permission for such development, where this will facilitate the appropriate access to and movement within the development concerned and to strengthen its relationship with the town centre. Where appropriate, infrastructural funding will be addressed through the provisions of contribution schemes prepared under s.48 & 49 of the Act

The indicative road network as illustrated is in line with that developed as part of the local area plan process for the northern environs of Longford Town in 2008, based on extensive consultation between the Council and their engaged engineering experts, the Department of the Environment and the National Roads Authority at the time.

This network is based on the following provisions

- Enhanced walking and cycling network as outlined in figure 5 to be addressed in accordance with the provisions of the DMURS
- Vehicular access to be provided linking Longford town centre and the lands zoned to the north of the Camlin River in the vicinity of Great Water Street, to include a spine road parallel to the Mall Amenity Area. This would be provided by the Local Authority and involve the installation of a new river crossing from the Mall to Great Water Street (See Figure 5), funded through the application of specific levies on development that would benefit from such a link (in accordance with a specific scheme under S. 49 of the Act).

- Links bridging the Camlin River and facilitating east-west movements as alternatives to the existing N4/N5 bypass would be provided as developer-led interconnectors providing access to and within the site (See Figure 5). These will be provided as part of a legible and permeable road network to make connections across the northern portion of the town and protect the national road network. The following specific policy objectives apply in this instance:
 - A vehicular bridge will be provided to link proposed new development on the east and west side of the Camlin River (see Fig 5)
 - A permeable secondary road network shall be provided to the lands to the south of the bypass (see Fig 5) to support and protect the capacity of the national road network. Road lines illustrated are indicative and shall be clarified along with defined access and egress points prior to construction in consultation with the infrastructure department of Longford County Council
 - North-south and east-west road connections as indicated on Figure 5 will be delivered as part of proposed developments to improve connections and links between the town core and the northern area of the town and its environs
 - The southern spine route indicated on figure 5 will be developed as indicated to facilitate the development of lands zoned to the north. All developments permitted that will benefit from the development of this route will be levied in accordance with a special scheme under s. 49 of the PDA to facilitate the construction of this route.
 - Road capacity Junction Improvements indicated at Figure 5 will be undertaken on the N4/N5 in line with phasing provisions under section 4.1.2

4.3.4 TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The metropolitan network has been installed in Longford Town. Access to high-speed broadband is a central consideration in the development of a successful business environment and will be promoted as part of this plan, particularly in conjunction with the progression of the strategic sites identified.

4.3.5 WASTE INFRASTRUCTURE

- 4.3.5.1. Longford County Council will, in accordance with the provisions of the Regional Waste Management Plan, support the waste minimisation initiatives and promote a practice of reduce, reuse and recycle where possible and will safeguard the environment by seeking to ensure that residual waste is disposed of appropriately.
- 4.3.5.2. Construction wastes arising will be managed and disposed of in a way that ensures the provisions of the Waste Management Acts and new Waste Management Plan. Construction Waste Management Plans will be implemented where relevant to minimise waste and ensure correct handling and disposal of construction waste streams in accordance with the Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects, Department of the Environment, July 2006.
- 4.3.5.3. The Council shall continue to fulfil its duties under the Waste Management (certification of historic unlicensed waste disposal and recovery activity) Regulations 2008 (S.I. No 524 of 2008), including those in relation to the identification and registration of closed landfills.

5. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY

It is anticipated that the objectives contained within this plan will be delivered in a variety of ways, some of which are outlined hereunder.

5.1 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

The development management process is the primary implementation route for statutory plans. This plan, in addition to the CDP to which it is subordinate, will be used to inform and guide potential development within its functional area, upon which decisions will be based and conditions of development applied, including development contributions in accordance with the provision of schemes prepared under S.48 &49 of the Act.

Bonds will apply to specific developments to ensure that strategic elements are appropriately phased and completed in line with stated Council priorities, policies and objectives.

An additional dimension of this plan is to promote broader consideration of site potential and its relationship to adjacent functions and uses. The designation of strategic sites in the town are considered key elements in this regard, facilitating site assembly and installation of infrastructural prerequisites for development that have the potential to bring development to the next level with transformational results.

5.2 REGENERATION

A dedicated regeneration unit has been established in Longford County Council which comprises a multi-disciplinary group that liaises with other departments within the Council, community groups, development and funding agencies in order to secure social economic and physical interventions that will benefit the county. With its roots in the successful UFHE initiative, the unit is focused on the delivery of cost effective and coordinated projects with tangible and meaningful results.

The regeneration unit works in tandem with the spatial policy section and as such, it is anticipated that the policies and priorities identified in this plan will be used to focus the regeneration programme in the Town and Environs area.

The regeneration Unit is also concerned with sourcing and drawing down available sources of funding from public and private sources at all levels which will also help to secure the objectives contained within this plan. This initiative has progressed a number of projects in the town including at Connolly Barracks and the 1916 memorial park to the south of Áras an Chontae on Great Water Street.

The designation of strategic sites throughout the Town and environs area provides a roadmap within which funding can be applied for specific projects, such as the REDZ pilot initiative with a degree of certainty having been through an initial consultation, engagement and adoption process. Should other funding streams become available in the future, such as the stated funding commitment for the development for regional towns, the associated policies and priorities adopted for these sites provides a strong framework upon which funding applications can be based and physical results delivered in a shortened timescale.

5.3 CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLANNING

The priorities identified and adopted in this plan will be utilised in the formulation of submissions on future capital investment plans for infrastructural provision into the future in the areas of education and community services, water services and transport infrastructure development. Sequencing and phasing of development in the plan allows for prioritised infrastructural requirements over the short, medium and longer term horizons and will be aligned with monitoring provisions at section 6.

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This Local Area Plan will be subject to ongoing monitoring provisions across a number of areas. In this regard, indicators will be used where they exist and/or systems will be developed to monitor progress in the following areas:

- Residential development in identified priority areas, population growth and relationship to core strategy
- Progress on “Smarter Travel” and capacity reviews as required under indicative road network provisions
- Environmental Indicators – Strategic Environmental Assessment, Water Framework Directive and other Environmental Protection Agency parameters
- Progress on site resolution objectives, and resolution of derelict and vacant sites
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation indicators (once developed)

The spatial planning section will, in conjunction with the regeneration unit, investigate the potential of developing a suite of multi-purpose indicators to monitor the achievement of common goals and objectives across social, economic and physical development themes.

These indicators will be compiled into a mid-term report for presentation to the elected members in 2019. This will facilitate policy review and amendment, if required, and form part of the review process for future plans.

LAP APPENDIX 1

Advice for Small Scale Development to Existing Vulnerable Development within Constrained Lands Use Areas

This appendix contains advice for small scale development to existing vulnerable development within certain Constrained Land Use areas.

Constrained Land Use areas are shown on the LAP Character Areas Map and detailed policy outlined at Section 3.8 of this Plan.

Applications for small scale development to existing vulnerable development within flood vulnerable zones shall provide details of structural and non-structural risk management measures to include, but not be limited to specifications of the following:

FLOOR LEVELS

- In areas of limited flood depth, the specification of the threshold and floor levels of new structures shall be raised above expected flood levels to reduce the risk of flood losses to a building, by raising floor heights within the building structure using a suspended floor arrangement or raised internal concrete platforms.
- When designing an extension or modification to an existing building, an appropriate flood risk reduction measure shall be specified to ensure the threshold levels into the building are above the design flood level. However, care must also be taken to ensure access for all is provided in compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations.
- Where threshold levels cannot be raised to the street for streetscape, conservation or other reasons, the design shall specify a mixing of uses vertically in buildings - with less vulnerable uses located at ground floor level, along with other measures for dealing with residual flood risk.

INTERNAL LAYOUT

- Layout of internal spaces shall be designed and specified to reduce the impact of flooding [for example, living accommodation, essential services, storage space for provisions and equipment shall be designed to be located above the predicted flood level]. In addition, designs and specifications shall ensure that, wherever reasonably practicable, the siting of living accommodation (particularly sleeping areas) shall be above flood level.
- With the exception of single storey extensions to existing properties, new single storey accommodation shall not be deemed appropriate where predicted flood levels are above design floor levels.
- In all cases, specifications for safe access, refuge and evacuation shall be incorporated into the design of the development.

FLOOD-RESISTANT CONSTRUCTION

- Developments in flood vulnerable zones shall specify the use of flood-resistant construction aimed at preventing water from entering buildings - to mitigate the damage floodwater caused to buildings.

- Developments shall specify the use of flood resistant construction prepared using specialist technical input to the design and specification of the external building envelope – with measures to resist hydrostatic pressure (commonly referred to as “tanking”) specified for the outside of the building fabric.
- The design of the flood resistant construction shall specify the need to protect the main entry points for floodwater into buildings - including doors and windows (including gaps in sealant around frames), vents, air-bricks and gaps around conduits or pipes passing through external building fabric.
- The design of the flood resistant construction shall also specify the need to protect against flood water entry through sanitary appliances as a result of backflow through the drainage system.

FLOOD-RESILIENT CONSTRUCTION

- Developments in flood vulnerable zones that are at risk of occasional inundation shall incorporate design and specification for flood resilient construction which accepts that floodwater will enter buildings and provides for this in the design and specification of internal building services and finishes. These measures limit damage caused by floodwater and allow relatively quick recovery.
- This can be achieved by specifying wall and floor materials such as ceramic tiling that can be cleaned and dried relatively easily, provided that the substrate materials (e.g. blockwork) are also resilient. Electrics, appliances and kitchen fittings shall also be specified to be raised above floor level, and one-way valves shall be incorporated into drainage pipes.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANNING

- In addition to considering physical design issues for developments in flood vulnerable zones, the developer shall specify that the planning of new development also takes account of the need for effective emergency response planning for flood events in areas of new development.
- Applications for developments in flood vulnerable zones shall provide details that the following measures will be put in place and maintained:
 - Provision of flood warnings, evacuation plans and ensuring public awareness of flood risks to people where they live and work;
 - Coordination of responses and discussion with relevant emergency services i.e. Local Authorities, Fire & Rescue, Civil Defence and An Garda Síochána through the SFRA; and
 - Awareness of risks and evacuation procedures and the need for family flood plans.

ACCESS AND EGRESS DURING FLOOD EVENTS

Applications for developments in flood vulnerable zones shall include details of arrangements for access and egress during flood events. Such details shall specify that:

- Flood escape routes have been kept to publicly accessible land.
- Such routes will have signage and other flood awareness measures in place, to inform local communities what to do in case of flooding.
- This information will be provided in a welcome pack to new occupants.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further and more detailed guidance and advice can be found at <http://www.flooding.ie> and in the Building Regulations.

LAP APPENDIX 2

PHASED ROAD CAPACITY IMPROVEMENTS AS PER STRATEGIC TRAFFIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT (STIA)

8 Infrastructure Phasing and Monitoring

Based on the preceding assessment, the following infrastructure and development phasing is recommended. The additional development threshold for the LAP (i.e., increase from existing situation) is tabulated in Table 16 below. These have been extracted from Appendix A Table 3 to highlight the LAP development that could have a potential direct impact on the N4 Bypass. As very little development has occurred in these zones between 2005 (model base year) and 2008, these developments are equivalent to the new development proposed for the LAP up to 2013.

Table 16: LAP Lands Additional Development: Expected Scenario (2013)

LAP Zone Number	Development Land Use	Plot Area (hectares)	% Buildout	Development Schedule (Units or sqm GFA)
101	Employment/Mixed Use	3.6	50%	9,100
	Residential	4.7	50%	59
	Commercial	4.7	50%	11,800
201	Residential	20.8	40%	208
202	Employment/Mixed Use	14.0	20%	14,000
203	Residential	16.2	10%	41
301	Residential	0.3	100%	6
	Commercial	0.3	100%	1,300
302	Primarily Residential	5.3	50%	66
	Commercial (cinema and parking)	0.7	100%	3,600
402	Employment/Mixed Use/Large Scale Convenience Retail	18.0	100%	39,500
	Residential (Camlin Village)	7.8	100%	195

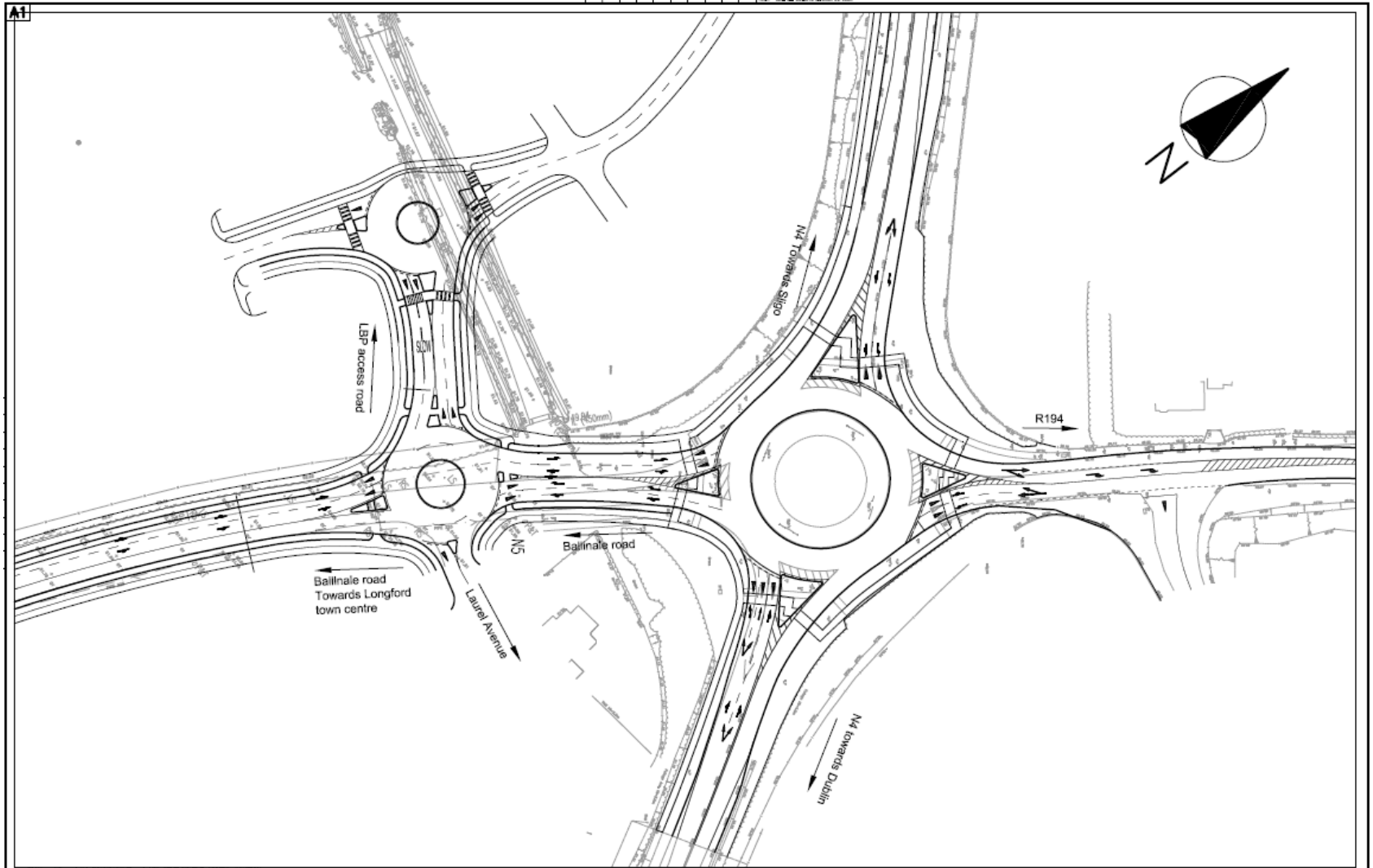
To accommodate the above additional developments, the following LAP infrastructure improvements would be required:

- LAP Spine Road – Link from Ballinalee Road via the Longford Business Park access road, across the Camlin River via a new bridge and continuing via the Mall. The southern end links to the Town Centre and Battery Road via the Abbeycartron Link Road.
- Parallel Distributor Road (Partial) – Link from Battery Road at the existing Red Cow Retail Park roundabout to the Spine Road at the Mall. This first phase will not include Parallel Distributor Road bridge link to the Longford Business Park (see Figure 9).
- N4/Ballinalee Road Roundabout Improvements – Provide two circulating lanes and minor widening of the westbound N4 approach to introduce a third lane. This will also include the dualling of the northbound approach arm of Ballinalee Road.
- N4 Red Cow Roundabout Improvements – Provide two circulating lanes and minor widening of the westbound N4 approach to introduce a third lane. This will also include the dualling of the northbound approach arm of Battery Road.
- Ballinalee Road/Longford Business Park/Laurel Avenue Roundabout – This will be a new roundabout serving as the major access to the LAP Lands from the east. It will be a four-arm roundabout with 2-lane entries/exits for all major arms. The section between this roundabout and the N4 roundabout would be widened to provide two lanes per direction.
- Battery Road/LAP Parallel Distributor Road/Red Cow Retail Park - This will be an improvement to the existing retail park roundabout which will serve as the major access to the LAP Lands from the west. It will be a four-arm roundabout with 2-lane

entries/exits for all major arms. The section between this roundabout and the N4 roundabout would be widened to provide two lanes per direction.

As LAP development exceeds the schedule quoted in Table 16, it is anticipated that the Parallel Distributor Road would need to be constructed in its entirety. This phase will primarily consist of the second LAP lands river crossing linking the Parallel Distributor to the Longford Business Park lands. This will provide a direct alternative route for local traffic using the N4 bypass.

In order to ensure acceptable traffic conditions along the existing bypass and the surrounding local areas, periodic monitoring of the vehicular flows generated by the LAP lands and the resulting traffic conditions would be undertaken. This will be part of the normal development planning application process for the various sites within the LAP lands and the surrounding areas. This is in line with the LAP strategy to implement the LAP road infrastructure in tandem with the granting of planning permissions for developments along the primary distributor roads. This is demonstrated by the fact that parts of these links are already in place or will shortly be built as part of current approved developments permitted by the Local Authority.



PLAN - N4 JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT ACCESS JUNCTION

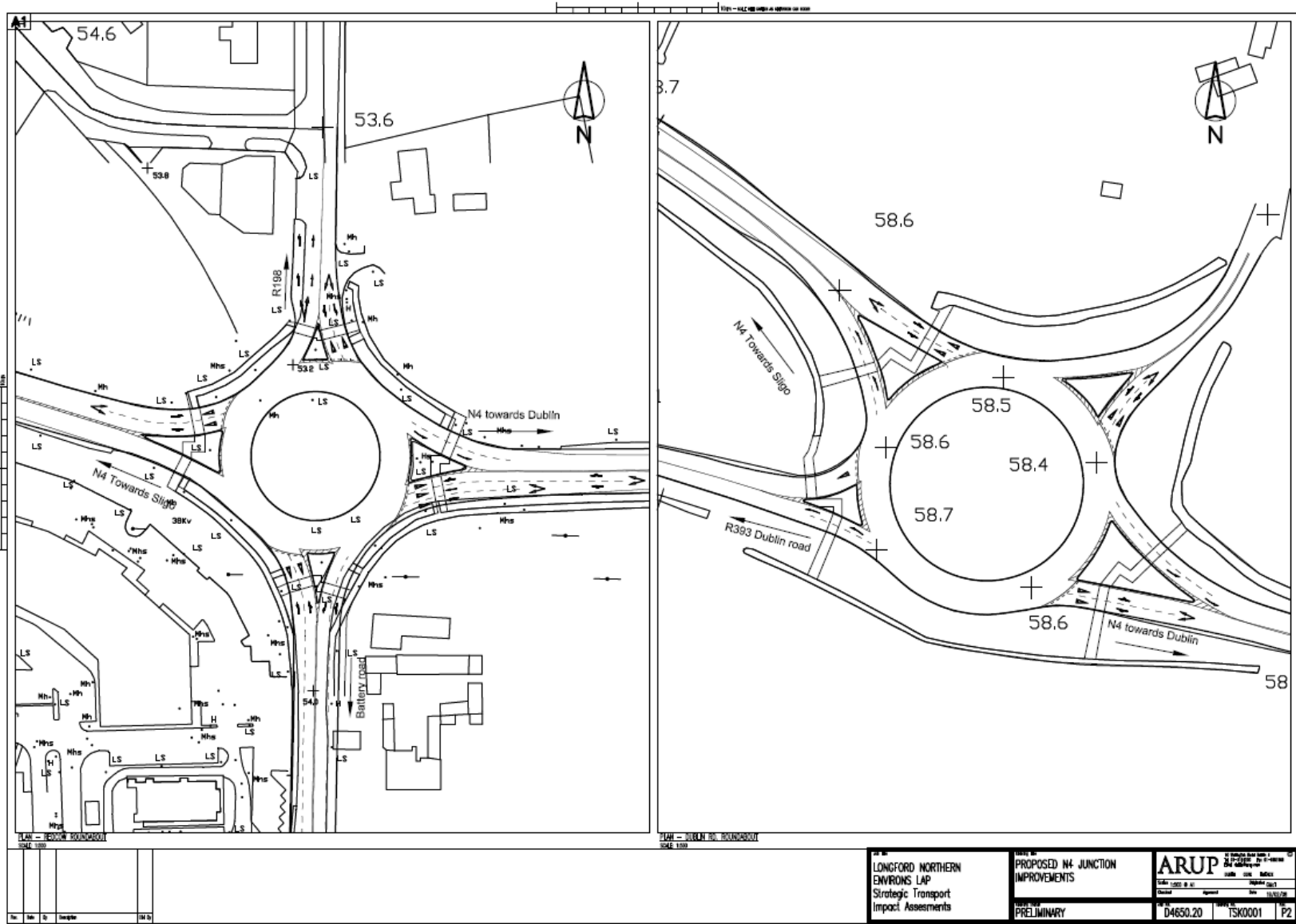
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PROJECT
**LONGFORD NORTHERN
 ENVIRONS LIP**
 Strategic Transport
 Impact Assessments

STAGE
**PROPOSED N4 JUNCTION
 IMPROVEMENTS**
 PRELIMINARY

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LONGFORD NORTHERN
 ENVIRONS LAP
 Strategic Transport
 Impact Assessments

PROPOSED N4 JUNCTION
 IMPROVEMENTS
 PRELIMINARY

Project No: D4650.20	TSK0001 P2