

# 2

## Core Strategy & Settlement Strategy



## **2 Kildare Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy**

### **2.1 Overall Aim:**

To provide for the delivery of an additional 9,144 housing units to accommodate an additional 25,146 people by the end of the Plan period, through the delivery of sustainable, compact settlements supported by a commensurate level of physical and social infrastructure to mitigate against climate change.

### **2.2 Introduction**

The Draft Core and Settlement Strategy set out an overarching growth strategy for the development of the county to 2029 and translate the strategic planning framework of the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midlands Region (RSES) and the Specific Planning Policy Requirements specified in the Ministerial Guidelines under Section 28 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended), to county level.

The Core Strategy is a critical component of the Draft Plan with the purpose of articulating a medium-to-longer term quantitatively based strategy for the spatial development of the area of the planning authority. The primary purpose is to provide an evidence-based rationale for the quantum of land proposed to be zoned specifically for housing, population and employment or mixed-use to accommodate and align with projected demand.

### **2.3 Statutory Requirements**

The Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 introduced a mandatory requirement for an evidence based “Core Strategy” to form part of all Development Plans. A Core Strategy shall provide for the following:

- Relevant information to show that the development plan and the housing strategy are consistent with the National Planning Framework, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and with the Specific Planning Policy Requirements (SPPRs) specified in the Section 28 Guidelines.
- Any policies of the Minister in relation to national and regional population targets.
- Relevant information to show that, in setting out objectives regarding retail development contained in the development plan, the planning authority has had regard to any guidelines that relate to retail development issued by the Minister under section 28.
- A settlement hierarchy including details of:
  - Settlement designations in accordance with the NPF/RSES.
  - Any policies or objectives in relation to national and regional population targets that apply to settlements in the hierarchy.
  - Projected population growth.
  - Aggregate projected population for:
    - villages and smaller towns with a population of under 1,500 persons,
    - the open countryside.

- Relevant roads that have been classified as national primary or secondary roads under Section 10 of the Roads Act, 1993 and relevant regional and local roads within the meaning of Section 2 of that Act.
- Relevant inter-urban and commuter rail routes.
- Rural areas in respect of planning guidelines relating to sustainable rural housing issued under Section 28 Guidelines.

**Table 2.1 - Core Strategy Requirements**

## **2.4 The Core Strategy and National and Regional Policy**

The Core Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy of the Draft County Development Plan are defined by the national and regional planning policy frameworks comprising: Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework; the Eastern and Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031 and Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines.

### **2.4.1 National Planning Framework**

The National Planning Framework (NPF) supported by the National Development Plan (NDP) is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of our country to the year 2040. It is a framework to guide public and private investment, to create and promote opportunities for people and to protect and enhance the environment at all levels.

The NPF is centred around ten National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) which are supported by ten Strategic Investment Priorities (See Figure 2.1). Development Plans must align with these NSOs, which are underpinned by National Policy Objectives (NPOs). The Strategic outcomes of the NPF should underpin the formation of the Core Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy of the Development Plan. The first NSO relates to compact growth and the Development Plan will endeavor to ensure that the settlement and growth strategy for the County will be directed where possible to the existing built-up areas of settlements as set out in the Settlement Hierarchy in Table 2.5.

The third NSO is also of particular relevance to County Kildare and relates to strengthening rural economies and communities, and the Development Plan will also endeavor to ensure that not only will our existing rural communities remain viable places to live, but that they are strengthened over the lifetime of the plan.

# National Planning Framework and its National Strategic Outcomes and Priorities of the National Development Plan

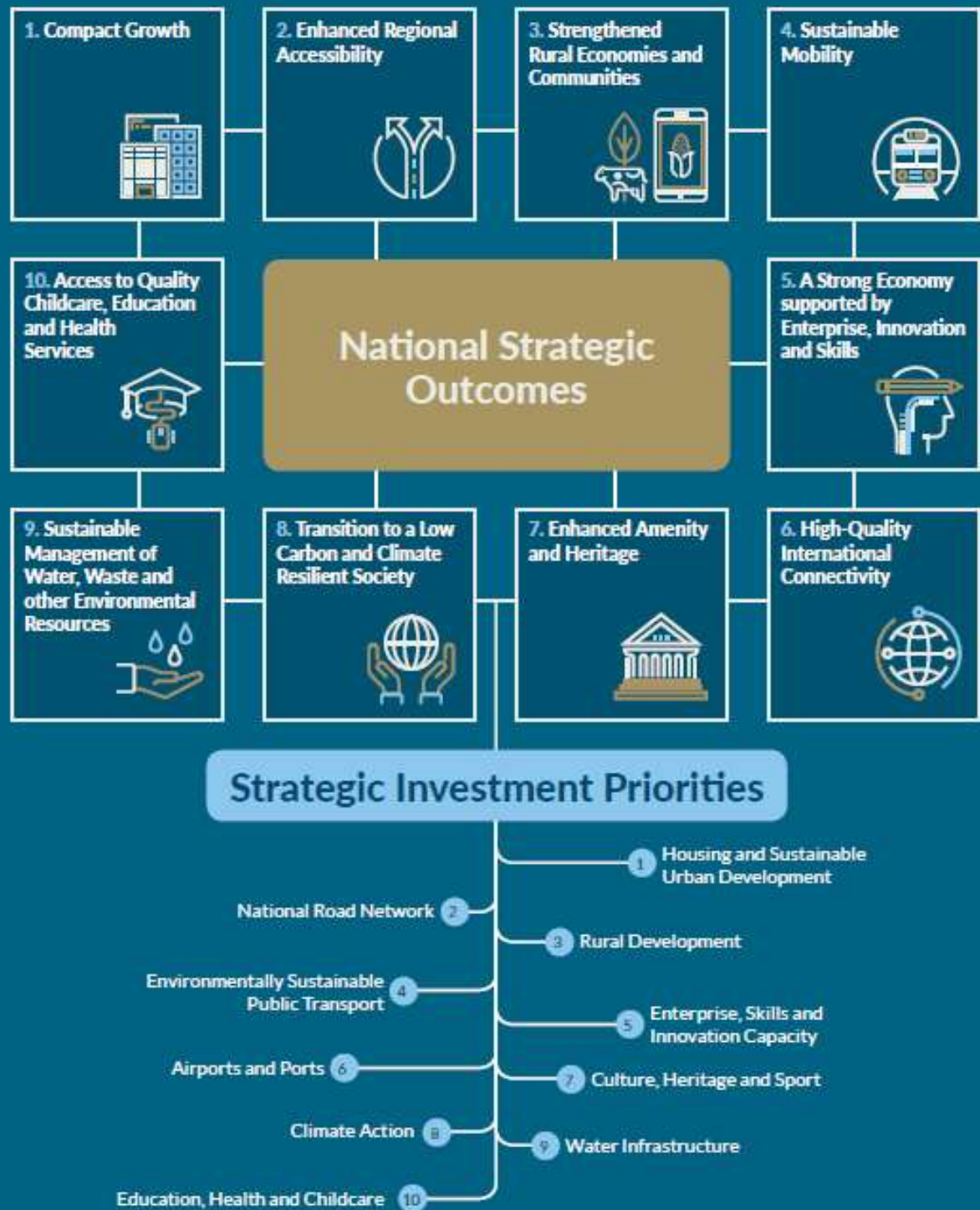


Figure 2.1 - National Strategic Outcomes and Strategic Investment Priorities

In terms of housing, the NPF outlines that at least 30% of all new homes that are targeted in the settlements (outside of the cities) are within their existing built-up footprints. Urban regeneration and infill sites can contribute to sustainable compact growth and the revitalisation of existing settlements at all scales. On this basis, the parameters set for the Core Strategy will focus future population and employment in a manner that complies with the National Policy Objectives of the NPF.

The NPF also sets out a requirement for zoned land to be tiered (NPO 72a) which is informed by an infrastructural assessment of land. Planning authorities are required to apply a standardised, tiered approach to differentiate between i) zoned land that is serviced and ii) zoned land that is serviceable within the life of the Development Plan. When considering zoning lands for development purposes that require investment in service infrastructure, Planning Authorities will make a reasonable estimate of the full cost of delivery of the specified services and prepare a report, detailing the estimated cost at draft and final plan stages (NPO 72b). Where zoned land cannot be serviced within the life of the relevant plan, the NPF states that such lands should not be zoned for development (NPO 72c).

NPO 68 allows for a further allowance by way of up to 20% of targeted growth in the city being transferred to other settlements in the MASP, such as Maynooth. This has been agreed with the MASP Implementation Group and Maynooth is to receive an additional population of 10,000 on top of its Core Strategy allocation.

NPO 20 references the need to project for single housing in the countryside informed by the local authority's Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA) tool and CDP core strategy process.

NPO 30 requires that specific projections, supported by clear proposals in respect of ageing communities are part of core strategies.

#### **2.4.2 The NPF Implementation Roadmap**

The Implementation Roadmap for the National Planning Framework (July 2018) provided the population projections for Kildare for the period 2026 and 2031. These projections have also been transposed in the RSES. They provide the broad population parameters for the county for this County Development Plan and beyond.

#### **2.4.3 Ministerial Guidelines**

Ministerial Guidelines (Section 28 Guidelines) set out the policies and objectives as provided by the Minister, to inform and guide local authorities in carrying out their planning functions. The requirement for the Development Plan to be consistent with, inter alia the Ministerial Guidelines is woven throughout the planning legislation that pertains to the review of an existing and the making of a new County Development Plan. There are a number of these guidelines which directly inform the preparation of the Core Strategy which are set out in Appendix 8. Of particular note however are the following;

- Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Draft Aug 2021)
- Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Dec 2020)
- Guidance Notes on Core Strategy (2010)



- Design Standards for New Apartments (Dec 2020)
- Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Dec 2020)
- Retail Planning Guidelines (April 2012)
- Sustainable Residential Developments in Urban Areas: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (May 2009).

#### **2.4.4 Eastern Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019 - 2031**

The Eastern and Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019 – 2031 (RSES) is a regional strategic plan which sets out a settlement and economic growth strategy to ensure the needs of the Region's citizens in order to ensure that access to employment opportunities and services, ease of travel and overall well-being are met.

The Regional Growth Strategy identifies key locations for population and employment growth, coupled with investment in infrastructure and services to meet those growth needs. The Strategy was devised through the analysis of an asset-based assessment of settlements and a recognised Functional Urban Area produced by a city/town or village, devising a settlement strategy for the Region. The RSES growth strategy was developed having regard to the availability of suitably serviced land, resources, environment and infrastructure capacity. The settlements comprise seven levels with Dublin City and Suburbs forming the top-level settlement for the region. For County Kildare, Naas and Maynooth are the only regionally identified settlements within the county.

The Regional Settlement Hierarchy provides for three distinct areas across the Eastern and Midland Region comprising of the Dublin Metropolitan Area, the Core Region and the Gateway Region. Located within the region are the Regional Growth Centres of Athlone, Drogheda and Dundalk which were identified by the NPF and the Key Towns, Naas and Maynooth, as recognised in the RSES. County Kildare is predominantly located within the Core Region, with the exception of the northeast of the county which is located in the Dublin Metropolitan Area and a portion in the southwest of the county which forms part of the Gateway Region.

A Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) forms part of the Strategy, which identifies several large scale strategic residential and economic development areas, that will deliver significant development in an integrated and sustainable manner in the metropolitan area, of which the area of Maynooth, Leixlip, Celbridge and Kilcock forms part (northeast of the county). Strategic Development Areas have been identified at key nodes along high-quality public transport corridors in tandem with the delivery of infrastructure and enabling services. In Maynooth, lands to the southeast at Railpark and to the north and west near the University have been identified for strategic employment in the form of research and technology. In Leixlip, the former Hewlett Packard site and Collinstown site have been identified as strategic employment areas. The greenfield lands at Confey have also been identified as a strategic rail-based neighborhood, including residential and education development and mixed uses close to Confey Railway Station.

The Core Region includes the peri-urban 'hinterlands' in the commuter catchment around Dublin. It contains a strong network of county and market towns that have a good level of local employment, services and amenities, which serve their resident

populations and a wider catchment area. It is noted in the RSES that some areas have emerged mainly as commuting towns, experiencing high rates of population growth but with a weak level of services and functions for resident populations. These towns will require 'catch up' investment in local employment and services in order to become more self-sustaining and to improve sustainable mobility, particularly in those places where there are high levels of car dependency.

It is recognised that, as Kildare traverses the three designated areas, namely the Metropolitan Area, the Core Region, and the Gateway Region, it will be influenced by and have influence over future economic, social and environmental trends in the region. The RSES provides a broad planning framework giving an overall strategic context to the development plans of each local authority in the Eastern and Midland Region.

The Growth Strategy for the Region:

- Supports the continued growth of Dublin as the national economic engine.
- Delivers sustainable growth of the Metropolitan Area through the Dublin Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP). This includes Maynooth, Leixlip, Celbridge, and Kilcock and their immediate surrounds.
- Supports rural areas with a network of towns and villages.
- Embeds a network of Key Towns - Naas and Maynooth in County Kildare - through the region to deliver sustainable regional development.
- Supports the transition to low carbon, climate resilient communities and a healthy environment with high quality air and water.

The RSES requires the preparation of core strategies to have due regard to the settlement typology of towns in the Region and that towns should grow at a sustainable level appropriate to their position in the hierarchy. Higher densities should be applied to higher order settlements such as Key Towns, with a graded reduction in line with the hierarchy.

As per the NPF, RPO 3.2 requires local authorities in preparing their core strategies to set out measures to achieve compact urban development targets of at least 30% of all new homes within or contiguous to the built-up urban areas. Core strategies are also required to identify regeneration areas (RPO 3.3, refers) within existing urban settlements and set out objectives relating to the delivery of development on urban infill and brownfield regeneration sites. The designation of these regeneration sites will be through the Local Area Plans where Urban Regeneration Frameworks will be prepared and informed the bespoke development strategy for each settlement.

## **2.5 Devising the Core Strategy**

The following sets out a comprehensive and detailed evidence-based analysis which examines a range of inter-related factors that are relevant in devising the Core Strategy for the County Development Plan. An overview of the main considerations and evidence-based analysis which has informed the Core Strategy, are as follows:

- Trends in Population Growth
- Population Projections for Kildare
- Evaluation of Housing Demand
- Housing Targets

### 2.5.1 Kildare's Population Growth Trends

As a direct result of the coronavirus pandemic, the 2022 Census was postponed and therefore the most up to date population analysis is Census 2016. This census outlines that the total population within Kildare in 2016 was 222,504, which was the fifth highest population in the State. Over a 20-year period (1996 to 2016), Kildare experienced a 64.8% (+87,512) increase in its population base, the second highest rate in the State. The growth rate from 2006 to 2016 of 19.4% is the fourth highest in the State.

Kildare has a geographically varied population density. It has a density figure of 131.3 persons per square km. However, approximately 72% of the county's population live on 5% of the county's total land area, with the northeast of the county having by far the highest population densities. For instance, the Leixlip/Celbridge Municipal District (MD) has a density figure of 702.9 persons per square kilometre, more than four times as densely populated than all other MDs.

### 2.5.2 Population Projections for Kildare

The Transitional Regional and County Population Projections to 2031 for Kildare as provided in the NPF Roadmap and the RSES, are as follows:

County	2016	2026	2031
Kildare	222,500	249,000 - 254,000	259,000 - 266,500

**Table 2.2 - Transitional Population Projections**

Source: NPF Roadmap (July 2018) and RSES (June 2019)

The above figures for Kildare provide for a population range for the period to 2026 and onwards to 2031. Taking the higher range for each growth band, the county population is projected to increase by 31,500 persons to 2026 with an additional 12,500 to the year 2031.

### 2.5.3 Evaluation of Housing Demand

Kildare is a significant residential base within the State with the eighth largest housing stock nationally. According to the 2016 Census, the total number of occupied households within Kildare was 73,348 and 4,650 vacant properties (excluding holiday homes) were recorded in Kildare. The Census 2016 vacancy rate stood at 5.7% which was considerably below the State (9.1%) average at the time.

Construction of new houses in Kildare exceeded the State average. In the period since the 2011 Census, 1,739 residential units or 2.4% of all housing in Kildare was constructed. This was marginally higher than the State (2%) average and represents the 7th highest rate of all local authorities.

National Policy Objective 37 requires that a 'Housing Need Demand Assessment' (HNDA) be undertaken for each Local Authority Area in order to correlate and accurately align future housing requirements. It is important for the success of the Plan that new homes are located where housing demand is greatest and where there is good accessibility to employment, education, public transport, and other services and amenities.



The HNDA (See Appendix 1) informs housing policies, housing strategies and associated land use zoning policies as well as assisting in determining where new policy areas or investment programmes should be developed.

#### 2.5.4 Housing Targets

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage issued the '*Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning*' (December, 2020). Appendix 1 of the aforementioned document identified a total housing demand of 18,425 for County Kildare over the period 2020-2031 (see Table 2.3 below).

Kildare County Council		Annual Average	Total Households
A.	ESRI NPF scenario projected new household demand 2017-2031	1,483	22,238
B.	Actual new housing supply 2017-19	1,368	4,104
C.	Homeless households and estimated unmet demand as at Census 2016	N/A	291
<b>Housing Demand 2020-31 = Total (columns A-B+C)/12</b>		1,535	18,425

**Table 2.3 – Housing Target for County Kildare**

The Settlement Hierarchy which is set out in Table 2.8 below identifies the projected housing units and population to the end of the Plan period in 2029.

For calculation purposes the projected figures span 6 full calendar years between Q1 2023 (when this Plan is expected to come into effect) and Q4 2028, when this Plan is due to expire. The population targets have been calculated by using the national average household figure of 2.75<sup>1</sup> and applying these to the housing figures, the method for which is set out in Table 2.4 below.

Step	Source	Calculation
1.	Housing demand 2020-2031 <sup>2</sup>	18,425
2.	CSO – dwelling completions for 2020	- 1,661 <sup>3</sup>
		<b>= 16,764/11<sup>4</sup></b>
3.	Annual housing completion target for Kildare 2021-2031 <sup>5</sup>	= 1,524 x 8 <sup>6</sup>
		<b>= 12,192</b>

<sup>1</sup> The 2.75 occupancy is based on the national average as per the CSO 2016 Census.

<sup>2</sup> Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning (Dec 2020)

<sup>3</sup> CSO NDQ 06 Official Statistics

<sup>4</sup> 2021-2031

<sup>5</sup> 11 full calendar years

<sup>6</sup> 8 full calendar years from Q1 2021 – Q4 2028 just before this Plan expires in Q1 2029

Step	Source	Calculation
4.	Housing completion estimates for 2021 and 2022	- 3,048 <sup>7</sup>
5.	CDP housing target to end of Plan period	<b>= 9,144</b>

**Table 2.4 – Methodology used to determine housing targets to the end of the Plan period**

Having regard to the housing demand figures for County Kildare arising from the 'Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning' for the period of this Plan, the housing target for County Kildare to the end of the Plan period is therefore **9,144** housing units which translates to an additional 25,146 persons.

## 2.6 Compact Growth and Climate Action

The promotion of a compact urban form of development is a central part of mitigating climate change. The policies and objectives of this Core Strategy seek to provide for a consolidated urban form within existing settlements. In applying this approach, alongside the various other components in the Development Plan, the aim is to strive towards the delivery of connected neighbourhoods and the 10-minute settlement concept within the urban settlements.

The central idea of 10-minute settlements is to create integrated communities that provide high quality and safe links to public transport, local shops and services, amenity areas, places of employment and to other neighbourhoods. Essentially, the concept provides for settlements to be designed to reduce the overall need to travel while also allowing for sustainable transport options (walking and cycling) to become realistic and convenient alternatives to the car for short trips, therefore reducing carbon emissions. While the concept of the 10-minute settlement can be applied to towns and villages of all sizes, the results may not be as effective in smaller towns and villages due to their lack of critical mass to support local services and employment centres. In such instances it is acknowledged that there is a degree of inter-dependency between nearby settlements with regard to the provision of local services, facilities and amenities.

## 2.7 Town and Village Renewal

The framework for the Draft Core Strategy is based on the key principles and objectives of the NPF, RSES including the MASP and Specific Planning Policy Requirements (SPPRs) of the Ministerial Guidelines. It applies a compact growth philosophy to the existing urban footprint of settlements in the county through the consolidation within the existing urban footprint, by ensuring 30% of all new homes are targeted within the existing built-up areas, in line with the NPF National Strategic Outcome. This means that the extent of zonings on peripheral greenfield development sites will need to be critically evaluated with regard to their compatibility with the renewal and regeneration targets set out in the NPF.

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<sup>7</sup> 12,192 / 8 (8 full years) x 2 (2021 and 2022 completion estimates)

## **2.8 The Core Strategy and Zoning for Residential Use**

### **2.8.1 Tiered Approach to Land Use Zoning**

The National Planning Framework (NPF) requires the Plan to adopt a Tiered Approach to Zoning. With specific reference to Appendix 3, the NPF sets out a two-tier approach to land zoning as follows:

- Tier 1:** Serviced Zoned Land – comprising lands that are able to connect to existing development services and generally positioned within the existing built-up footprint of a settlement or contiguous to existing developed lands or spatially sequential within the plan area.
- Tier 2:** Serviceable Zoned Land – comprising lands that are not currently sufficiently serviced to support new development but have the potential to become fully serviced within the life of the plan. These lands may be positioned within the existing built-up footprint of a settlement, or contiguous to existing developed lands or to Tier 1 zoned lands. The potential for delivery of the required services and/or capacity to support new development on Tier 2 lands must be identified and specific details provided by the planning authority in the form of an Infrastructural Assessment.

To comply with the requirements of Appendix 3 of the National Planning Framework, a Sustainable Planning and Infrastructural Assessment (SPIA) was undertaken to assess the suitability of lands for future development. Volume 2 of the Draft Plan sets out the land use zoning for settlements of the small towns and villages within the county.

Volume 2 is accompanied by an assessment which provides a weighting of potential sites for future development on the basis of sustainable planning and serviceability/infrastructural grounds. This assessment assists in the designation of lands as either Tier 1 lands or Tier 2 lands and identifies the likely development services required to support new development. The SPIA was integral in informing the future development strategy for the small towns and villages.

Individual Local Area Plans will be prepared for higher order settlements, where individual Infrastructural Assessments will be carried out to apply the tiered approach to the zoning provisions associated with their respective housing allocations.

## **2.9 Devising the Settlement Strategy**

The targeted distribution of housing and population within the development plan of a city or county council, is referred to in the Planning Act as the ‘settlement hierarchy’. The Settlement Hierarchy details the key locations/settlements where development will take place. The Act requires that a designation be given to a city or town in the area of the development plan, with a population that exceeded 1,500 persons in the most recent census of population. Designations should be made on the basis of the role and function of each settlement consistent with the asset-based approach of the RSES and the potential for economic and social development. Assessments shall be in compliance with policy directives of the Minister issued under Section 29 and have regard to guidelines issued by the Minister under Section 28 or take account of any relevant policies or objectives of the Government, the Minister or any other Minister of the Government, as the case may be.

The settlement hierarchy is the defining vision for how the county is likely to grow and develop over the lifetime of the development plan, with a clear set of spatial priorities identified. The settlement strategy of the plan is the means by which spatial choices are made and priorities expressed.

The principles governing the categorisation of each settlement type have been defined in the RSES and are summarised below.

The RSES **Settlement Hierarchy** defines settlements as follows:

**Key Towns** are large economically active service and/or county towns (Naas and Maynooth) that provide employment for their surrounding areas and with high-quality transport links and the capacity to act as growth drivers to complement the Regional Growth Centres.

**Self-Sustaining Growth Towns** are towns with a moderate level of jobs and services – includes sub-county market towns and commuter towns with good transport links and capacity for continued commensurate growth to become more self-sustaining.

**Self-Sustaining Towns** are towns with high levels of population growth and a weak employment base which are reliant on other areas for employment and/or services and which require targeted ‘catch up’ investment to become more self-sustaining.

**Towns and Villages** are settlements with local service and employment functions.

**Rural** areas are smaller villages and the wider rural region.

**Table 2.5 – Definitions for settlements within the Settlement Hierarchy**

The RSES designated Naas and Maynooth as Key Towns with the remaining settlements having been designated in accordance with an evidence-based assessment undertaken by Kildare County Council. A range of factors were considered in the context of the allocation of settlements to each level, as follows:

- Key Town designations in the RSES.
- Scale of existing population and the performance of individual settlements.
- Proximity to high quality public transport services
- Availability and capacity of physical and social infrastructure currently in place in each of the settlements.
- Environmental sensitivities in the county.

As part of the preparation of this Plan a survey was undertaken of all settlements in the county that did not require a mandatory Local Area Plan. For each of the 64 identified settlements (as per the Variation to the Kildare County Development Plan in June 2020) a survey was undertaken to determine the level of existing physical, social and community infrastructure in each settlement. A number of amendments were made to the Settlement Hierarchy arising from this process. Narraghmore (previously a rural settlement) was moved up the hierarchy and is now designated as a village. Clogherinkoe and Kilkea (both previously rural nodes) were moved up the hierarchy to become rural settlements while Maddenstown moved down the hierarchy to become a rural node.

The collated data that informed the revised Settlement Hierarchy comprising information in relation to the extent of physical, social and community infrastructure present in each settlement as of summer 2020 is presented in Volume 2 of this Draft Plan. This information also appears in the main body of the text for each of the Small Towns and Villages and in the legend for each of the Rural Settlement maps.

### **Nodes**

Cadamstown, Kilshanroe, Newtown, Tirmoghan, Carbury, Timahoe, Lackagh, Ballyshannon, Castlemitchell, Ticknevin, Rathmore, Eadestown, Maddenstown, Killina, Clongorey/Blacktrench.

**Table 2.6 – Rural Nodes**

## **2.10 Target Residential Density**

The Sustainable Residential Development Guidelines encourage net densities of between 35-50 dwellings per hectare within larger towns with net densities of between 30-35 dwellings per hectare considered acceptable in certain large town contexts and net densities of less than 30 dwellings per hectare.

Table 2.8 – ‘Settlement Hierarchy – Population and Housing Unit Targets’ includes the proposed residential density target (units/hectare) for each of the settlements, to the end of the Plan period. While many development sites, particularly in central, well serviced areas may achieve closer to the higher end of the identified ranges, for calculation purposes the lower of each of the ranges was taken into account in each instance having regard to the land take that would ordinarily be required for access routes into and through sites, provision of centrally located and well-designed areas of open space, areas for utilities, sustainable urban drainage systems and so on.

Every effort will be made however to increase the quantum of housing delivered on each development site having regard to the above while at the same time ensuring that the quality of the housing to be delivered is not compromised and consideration given to the capacity and character of the receiving environment to absorb new developments.

## **2.11 Rural Settlements in the Countryside**

There is continued and considerable development pressure for single homes in the rural area across County Kildare. The National Planning Framework acknowledges that this is a national issue and further acknowledges that in rural Ireland, many people seek the opportunity to build their own homes but find it difficult to do so in smaller settlements because of a lack of available sites and services. The NPF also states that in order to assist this, local authorities will be supported in undertaking the necessary land acquisition, site preparation and local infrastructure provision to deliver self-build development options in smaller towns/villages.

National Policy Objective (NPO) 18b of the NPF specifically makes provision for developing a programme for ‘new homes in small towns and villages’ with local authorities, public infrastructure agencies such as Irish Water and local communities to provide serviced sites with appropriate infrastructure to attract people to build their own homes and live-in small towns and villages.

It is envisaged that the provision of serviced sites to create ‘build your own home’ opportunities within the existing footprint of rural settlements will provide an alternative to one-off housing in the countryside. A number of the sites have been identified for serviced sites in the county’s small towns, villages and rural settlements (see maps for each settlement type in Volume 2).

## 2.12 Preferred Development Strategy

The preferred development strategy will focus on:

- Achieving the critical mass in the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) area (Maynooth, Leixlip, Celbridge & Kilcock) and in the Key Towns of Naas and Maynooth.
- Measured growth with emphasis on economic growth in the towns identified as Self-Sustaining Growth Towns and Self-Sustaining Towns as per Table 2.7.
- A hierarchy of smaller rural settlements to provide a range of services and employment for their local populations.
- Development in rural areas with a focus on agricultural diversification, appropriate rural enterprise (e.g. renewable energy production) and the strengthening of existing towns and villages.
- Protecting the environment by recognising the various environmentally sensitive zones within the county but not to exclude appropriate and otherwise acceptable uses and development.

Hierarchy	Description	Locations
<b>Key Towns</b>	Large towns which are economically active that provide employment for their surrounding areas. High quality transport links and the capacity to act as regional drivers to complement the Regional Growth Centres.	Naas Maynooth
<b>Self-Sustaining Growth Towns</b>	Moderate level of jobs and services.	Newbridge Leixlip Kildare Town Athy
<b>Self-Sustaining Towns</b>	High levels of population growth and a weak employment base.	Celbridge Kilcock Monasterevin Clane
<b>Towns</b>	Local service and employment functions in close proximity to higher order urban areas.	Sallins Kilcullen Kill Prosperous Rathangan Castledermot Derrinturn

**Table 2.7 - Settlement Hierarchy and Typology County Kildare**



**Table 2.8 – Settlement Hierarchy – Population and Housing Unit Targets Q1-2023 to Q2-2028**

Settlement Type	Settlement Name	Census 2016 Population	Settlements percentage per total County population	2021 Population Estimate (based on % growth from 2011-2016)	Housing & Population Target %	Population Target 2023 to 2028 (end of Q4) (persons)	Housing Target 2023 to 2028 (end of Q4) (units) in accordance with HSTGs	Residential Zoned Land Requirement (ha)	Target Residential Density (UPH)
<b>County</b>	<b>Kildare</b>	<b>222,504</b>		<b>235387</b>		<b>260533</b>	<b>9144</b>		
<b>Key Town</b>	<b>Naas</b>	21,393	9.60%	22632	14.9%	3747	1362	40	35-50
	<b>Maynooth (MASP)</b>	14,585	6.60%	15429	10.90%	2741	997 <sup>8</sup>		35-50
<b>Self-Sustaining Growth Towns</b>	<b>Newbridge</b>	22,742	10.20%	24059	11.60%	2917	1061	35	35-50
	<b>Leixlip</b>	15,504	7%	16402	10.20%	2565	933	31	35-50
	<b>Kildare Town</b>	8,634	3.90%	9134	4.70%	1182	430	14	35-40
	<b>Athy</b>	9,677	4.30%	10237	4.80%	1207	439	15	35-40
<b>Self-Sustaining Towns</b>	<b>Celbridge</b>	20,288	9.10%	21463	10.00%	2515	914	30	35-40
	<b>Kilcock</b>	6,093	2.70%	6446	4.00%	1006	366	12	35-40
	<b>Monasterevin</b>	4,246	1.90%	4492	2.60%	654	238	8	35-40
	<b>Clane</b>	7,280	3.27%	7702	2.40%	604	219	7	35-40
<b>Towns</b>	<b>Sallins</b>	5,849	2.62%	6188	1.90%	478	174	6	35-40
	<b>Kilcullen</b>	3,710	1.70%	3925	2.50%	629	229	8	35-40
	<b>Kill</b>	3,348	1.50%	3542	1.30%	327	119	4	35-40
	<b>Prosperous</b>	2,333	1.04%	2468	1.00%	251	91	3	30-35
	<b>Rathangan</b>	2,611	1.20%	2762	0.90%	226	82	3	30-35
	<b>Castledermot</b>	1,475	0.70%	1560	0.50%	126	46	2	30-35
	<b>Derrinturn</b>	1,602	0.70%	1695	0.60%	151	55	2	30-35
<b>Villages</b>	Athgarvan (1176), Johnstown (1,005), Straffan (853), Ballymore Eustace (873), Allenwood (981), Johnstownbridge (683), Coill Dubh (746), Coolearagh (377), Kilmeague (1082), Caragh (966), Kildangan (317), Suncroft (746), Robertstown (707), Ballitore (793), Crookstown (105), Moone (127), Timolin (136), Narraghmore (378)	9,984	4.80%	10562	4.70%	1006	366		
<b>Rural Settlement<sup>9</sup></b>	Ballyshannon, Broadford (50), Milltown (344), Killeel (214), Staplestown (116), Ardclough (220), Allen (94), Brannockstown (217), Twomilehouse (460), Brownstown (883), Cutbush (278), Nurney (456), Calverstown (699), Rathcoffey (271), Maganey/Levitstown (88), Kilberry (400), Kilmead (309), Clogherinkoe (196), Kilkea (105)	3,310	1.40%	3502	1.50%	377	137		
<b>Rural Dwellers<sup>10</sup></b>			25%		8%	2012	732		
<b>Blessington Environs</b>					1%	251	91		
<b>Pop Growth</b>						25146			
<b>Total</b>		<b>222504</b>		<b>235387</b>		<b>260533</b>	<b>9144</b>		

<sup>8</sup> Additional population allocation for Maynooth of **up to** 10,000 persons from redistribution of NPF City and Suburbs allocation (EMRA, July 2020). The precise allocation that will be attributed to Maynooth however will be determined at LAP stage on foot of detailed assessments and audits of available social and physical infrastructure.

<sup>9</sup> Not all Rural Settlements are captured under CSO Census and therefore are not independently verified.

<sup>10</sup> the figure included for "Rural Dwellers" is an estimate and is not a verified population from Census 2016. It should be noted that areas within or in the environs of designated towns and settlements may be 'rural' houses however are included in the small area population for that settlement as a consequence of the Small Area Population Statistics boundaries.

## **2.13 Core Strategy Statement**

Having regard to SPPR DPG 6 of the Draft Development Plan Guidelines, it is considered that the above approach is consistent with the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy and moreover takes into account the more recently published Housing Supply Target (HST) Methodology for Development Planning (December 2020). In this regard Table 2.4 above determines the target number of housing units to be delivered to the end of the Plan period having regard to Table 2.3 above which is taken directly from the HST Guidelines with respect to County Kildare. The national average household size is then applied to the housing figure in order to determine the projected population target to the end of the Plan period<sup>11</sup>.

Section 2.13 above sets out the preferred development strategy for Kildare, including the Key Towns, Self-Sustaining Growth Towns, Self-Sustaining Towns and Towns throughout the county. With respect to all other settlements, Section 2.10 above justifies the placing of the remaining settlements in the hierarchy having regard to the availability of physical, social and community services which are detailed in Volume 2 of this Plan.

## **2.14 Employment in Kildare**

The Guidance Note on Core Strategies (2010) states that while the Act does not expressly require core strategies to contain information concerning other land uses such as employment it is stated that planning authorities should undertake an appropriate level of analysis to ensure that sufficient lands are identified for employment purposes at suitable locations, taking proper account of national planning policies such as those above and the availability of the required physical infrastructure, particularly access and water services.

The 2016 Census identified, that of the 222,504 population of the county, that 106,849 comprised the total labour force of the county. The total jobs in Kildare in 2016 totalled 62,985 giving a jobs ratio for the county of .6 which implies a net outflow.

Given its location in the state, being well served by both road and rail infrastructure and being located in close proximity to Dublin, the airport and port it has traditionally attracted a lot of inward investment. Kildare had the 6<sup>th</sup> highest rate of outbound commuters in 2016 with 39.1% out commuting with the top employment destinations being Dublin City, South Dublin, Fingal, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown and Meath. By comparison, more than 33% of all jobs in Kildare are occupied by persons outside the county with the top employment origins being Laois, South Dublin, Meath, Dublin City and Offaly.

## **2.15 Naas to Newbridge Strategic Economic and Employment Zone**

The Newbridge to Naas corridor is seen as a Strategic Economic Zone in the centre of the County, comprising the Tougher Industrial Estate and the industrial zone on the northern end of Newbridge. This zone comprises some global names such as Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, the Lidl Regional Distribution Centre, DSV, the Barola/Primark

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<sup>11</sup> A review in line with trends as per next CSO figures may be required

Distribution Centre (with national and international distribution planned) and Dr. Pepper. The overall area is strategically located at the confluence of the M7 and M9. A number of these are hyper scaled distribution centres and will include the largest of their kind in the country following the granting of Barola/Primark with a 68,000 square metre facility. The Industrial Development Authority (IDA) has also acquired a strategic bank of land in the zone, which will over time see the Tougher area linked back into Newbridge. While only a portion of their IDA landholding is zoned, it is the intention of the Council to work with them and other relevant stakeholders should any new Foreign Direct Investment company express an interest to establish a strategic employer in the County.

The long-term vision for this area between Naas and Newbridge is for two dynamic and vibrant town centres linked by a strong economic corridor focused on the eastern side of the R445. Each town will offer a wide range of retail, commercial, leisure, social and cultural enterprises and civic amenities (civic squares/public realm interventions) and a vibrant evening economy sustaining a strong residential base that will be served by a future DART service (electrification of the rail line from Sallins to Newbridge).

This will evolve over many years – well beyond the lifetime of this County Development Plan. What is critical during the lifetime of this plan (and subsequent plans) is that there is an avoidance of haphazard industrial units, sporadically located on either end of the corridor or at either side of the R445. The focus for this plan period will be to concentrate on the Newbridge end of the corridor linking back up to Tougher and this strategy will be developed further as part of the preparation of the Newbridge Local Area Plan. The vision will be to provide a higher end profile - i.e. offices and/or strong architectural and landscape treatment - with more consistent building lines along the east side of the R445 (Newbridge to Naas Road), with more 'big box' developments (i.e., logistics, warehousing and possibly data centres) to the rear (further east).

The development of the area will be underpinned by an Urban Design Framework, identifying key landscape/heritage features to be retained, indicative areas for strategic and sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDs), key road linkages/circulation routes and indicative urban design treatments (landscaping and building lines).

### **2.15.1 Key Towns**

The primary focus for employment growth in Kildare will be towards the Key Towns of Naas and Maynooth. In Naas, key employment opportunities will arise within Millennium Park and the North West Quadrant areas as well as the expansion of a range of enterprises in the existing industrial parks around the town, with a particular focus on the food processing sector, in addition to IT, digital/tech, logistics and high-tech manufacturing. The Naas LAP also makes a special provision for data centre development at two sites.

In Maynooth the potential of the Research and Technology lands to the west could be realised to deliver significant commercial functions. Knowledge based employment focusing on ICT and manufacturing could also be strengthened through the development of a research and technology campus. Further development of Maynooth University as a leading third level research and educational facility with

potential synergies to large new and established employers offers significant potential as does the development of St. Patrick's College Campus for a mix of uses.

### **2.15.2 Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP)**

The Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy included the preparation of a Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) which, for Kildare, included the north eastern towns of Maynooth, Leixlip, Celbridge and Kilcock. Given the particularly strong road and rail networks in these areas, both existing and proposed (including Dart+ proposals) and their proximity to Dublin, a number of key strategic employment sites were identified including, in particular, a research and technology park adjoining Maynooth University (further emphasising the importance of Maynooth as a Key Town) and the former Hewlett Packard site and Collinstown site at Leixlip. The development of both these sites could attract further inward investment and counter commuter outflows from the county.

### **2.15.3 Self-Sustaining Growth Towns**

The self-sustaining growth towns of Newbridge, Leixlip, Kildare Town and Athy will continue to attract a moderate level of jobs and services through a range of employment types including biotechnology, ICT, high-tech manufacturing and research, bloodstock, tourism and food and beverage products.

### **2.15.4 Self-Sustaining Towns**

The self-sustaining towns of Celbridge, Kilcock, Monasterevin and Clane which have a high level of population growth and a weak employment base have the potential to improve their employment offering through biotechnology, knowledge based digital enterprises, logistics, tourism and food and beverage products in order to strengthen their overall economic offering.

### **2.15.5 Towns**

The towns of Sallins, Kilcullen, Kill Prosperous, Rathangan, Castledermot and Derrinturn will continue to improve their economic offering through small scale industries, traditional natural and resource assets including food, energy and tourism.

As part of the preparation of this Plan an assessment was undertaken of the quantum of undeveloped employment lands in County Kildare, the details of which are presented in Table 2.9 below under the various types of land use zonings.

<b>Type of employment use</b>	<b>Ha</b>
Business & Technology	2.493
Data Centre	93.242
Enterprise and Employment	223.124
General Development	3.418
Industry and Warehousing	451.721
Integrated Leisure	132.366
Light Industry, Office Park & Warehousing	1.429
Light Industry and Warehousing	26.339
Mixed Use	17.715

Type of employment use	Ha
Office, Enterprise & Employment	73.836
Research and Technology	72.272
<b>Total</b>	<b>1097.955</b>

**Table 2.9 – Quantum of undeveloped lands in County Kildare**

The aim for this Plan is to co-locate employment centres near homes and communities, thereby reducing the need for unsustainable commuting patterns into, within or outside of the county. This can and will be achieved in a number of ways including;

- (i) Zoning lands for employment type uses throughout the County through the Local Area Plan process.
- (ii) Continuing to work with key stakeholders to identify ways of attracting investors and employers to locate in Kildare in partnership with the Kildare Local Enterprise Office and the IDA.
- (iii) Recognise the highly skilled labour force in situ in the county and to continue to work in partnership with key educational institutions such as NUI Maynooth and the KWETB to further improve the county's labour force.
- (iv) Developing a co-working hub strategy for the County, which reduces the need for commuting and creates a dynamic environment for start-ups

Critically, it will be an action of this Plan to monitor the quantum of undeveloped lands as set out in Table 1 above in order to determine whether it is necessary to identify and zone additional lands for employment purposes having regard to the employment hierarchy as set out above.

### **Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy**

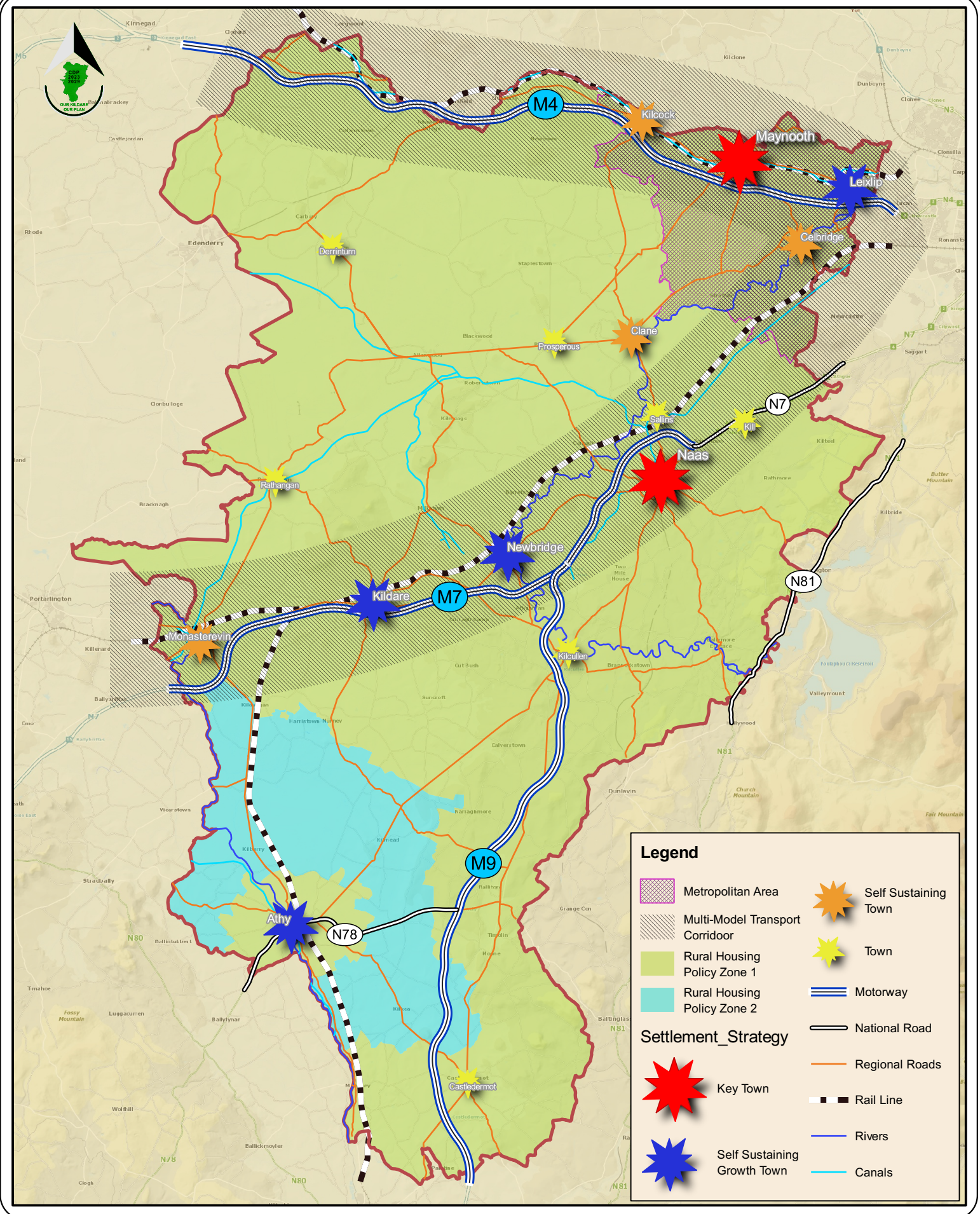
It is an objective of the Council to:

- CSO 1.1** Ensure that the future growth and spatial development of County Kildare is in accordance with the population and housing allocations contained in the Core Strategy which aligns with the regional growth strategy as set out in the National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region and further specified in the 'Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning'
- CSO 1.2** Ensure that the future growth and spatial development of County Kildare provides for a county that is resilient to climate change, enables the decarbonisation of the county's economy and reduces the county's carbon footprint in support of national targets for climate mitigation and adaption objectives as well as targets for greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

<b>CSO 1.3</b>	To actively engage with the Eastern Midlands Regional Assembly during the mid-term review of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and to inform the consideration of how urban settlements are designated within the region.
<b>CSO 1.4</b>	Ensure that sufficient zoned and adequately serviced lands are available to meet the planned population and housing growth of settlements throughout the county in line with the Core Strategy and the Settlement Hierarchy.
<b>CSO 1.5</b>	Promote compact growth and the renewal of towns and villages through the development of underutilised town centres and brownfield sites, maintaining a 'live' baseline dataset and to monitor the delivery of population growth on existing zoned and serviced lands to achieve the sustainable compact growth targets of 30% of all new housing within the existing urban footprint of settlements.
<b>CSO 1.6</b>	Promote, and initiate where feasible, measures to reduce vacancy and the underutilisation of existing building stock and support initiatives that promote the reuse, refurbishment and retrofitting of existing buildings within settlements throughout the county.
<b>CSO 1.7</b>	Promote and facilitate the development of sustainable and socially integrated communities through land use planning, by providing for land uses capable of accommodating employment, community, leisure, recreational and cultural facilities having regard to the quality of the environment, landscape character and the archaeological and architectural heritage.
<b>CSO 1.8</b>	Support the implementation of Kildare's Climate Change Adaptation Plan in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders.
<b>CSO 1.9</b>	Review and prepare on an ongoing basis a portfolio of Local Area Plans (LAPs) for the mandatory LAP settlements of Naas, Maynooth, Newbridge, Leixlip, Kildare, Athy, Celbridge, Kilcock, Monasterevin, Sallins, in accordance with the objectives of the County Development Plan and all relevant Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines.
<b>CSO 1.10</b>	Inform and engage with the preparation of the emerging Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for the county which will promote and support the economic and community development of Kildare.
<b>CSO 1.11</b>	Leverage funding from all available sources including the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) and the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) to help secure the equitable delivery of key projects that will contribute to town and village renewal across County Kildare particularly in more densely populated areas north of the county and to endeavor to ensure key project plans are, where possible, prepared in advance of funding announcements.



<b>CSO 1.12</b>	Require that the design of future developments occurs in a manner that facilitates sustainable travel patterns, with a particular focus on increasing the share of active modes (walking and cycling) and public transport use and creates a safe, attractive, universally accessible environment for pedestrians and cyclists, where measurably adequate transport links are in place, or will be situated, close to new developments and, insofar as possible, to existing developments which would benefit from them.
<b>CSO 1.13</b>	Engage with public infrastructure providers including Irish Water and local communities to provide serviced sites with appropriate infrastructure for people to build their own homes in designated towns and villages, subject to all relevant planning and environmental criteria as a sustainable alternative to one off housing.
<b>CSO 1.14</b>	Monitor the take up of available employment related land use zonings throughout the county every two years following the adoption of the Plan in order to determine if further lands are required to be zoned for employment purposes at particular locations.
<b>CSO 1.15</b>	Review the existing quantum of employment related land use zonings in each of the Local Area Plan (LAP) towns as part of the review of each of the LAPs. Additional lands may be zoned for employment purposes, as necessary and appropriate in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.
<b>CSO 1.16</b>	Continue to work in a positive and proactive manner with key stakeholders to identify ways of attracting investors and employers to locate in Kildare, in partnership with the Kildare Chamber of Commerce, the Kildare Local Enterprise Office and the IDA.
<b>CSO 1.17</b>	Continue to work with the educational institutions throughout the county and Solas, in order to further enhance the already existing highly skilled labour force in Kildare and to encourage improvements in the labour force to include the development of specific apprenticeships in the technology, tourism, youth and childcare sectors during the lifetime of the plan to enhance and develop the agility of the workforces in those sectors.
<b>CSO 1.18</b>	To consider aligning the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029, with the up-to-date population from the forthcoming Census, where there are verified material population differentials to those in Table 2.8 of the Plan, by way of a statutory variation pursuant to Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).



Kildare County Council  
Planning & Strategic  
Development Department  
Áras Chill Dara,  
Devoy Park, Naas, Co Kildare.

0 4 8 12

## Draft County Development Plan 2023-2029

## Core Strategy Map

Stage	Date	Description
Draft County Development Plan	12/12/2021	Draft Plan Issued to the Elected Members
Draft County Development Plan	14/03/2022	Draft Plan Issued for Public Consultation

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Date: Dec 2021

Drawn By:  
M O'Loughlin  
Date 16/02/2022

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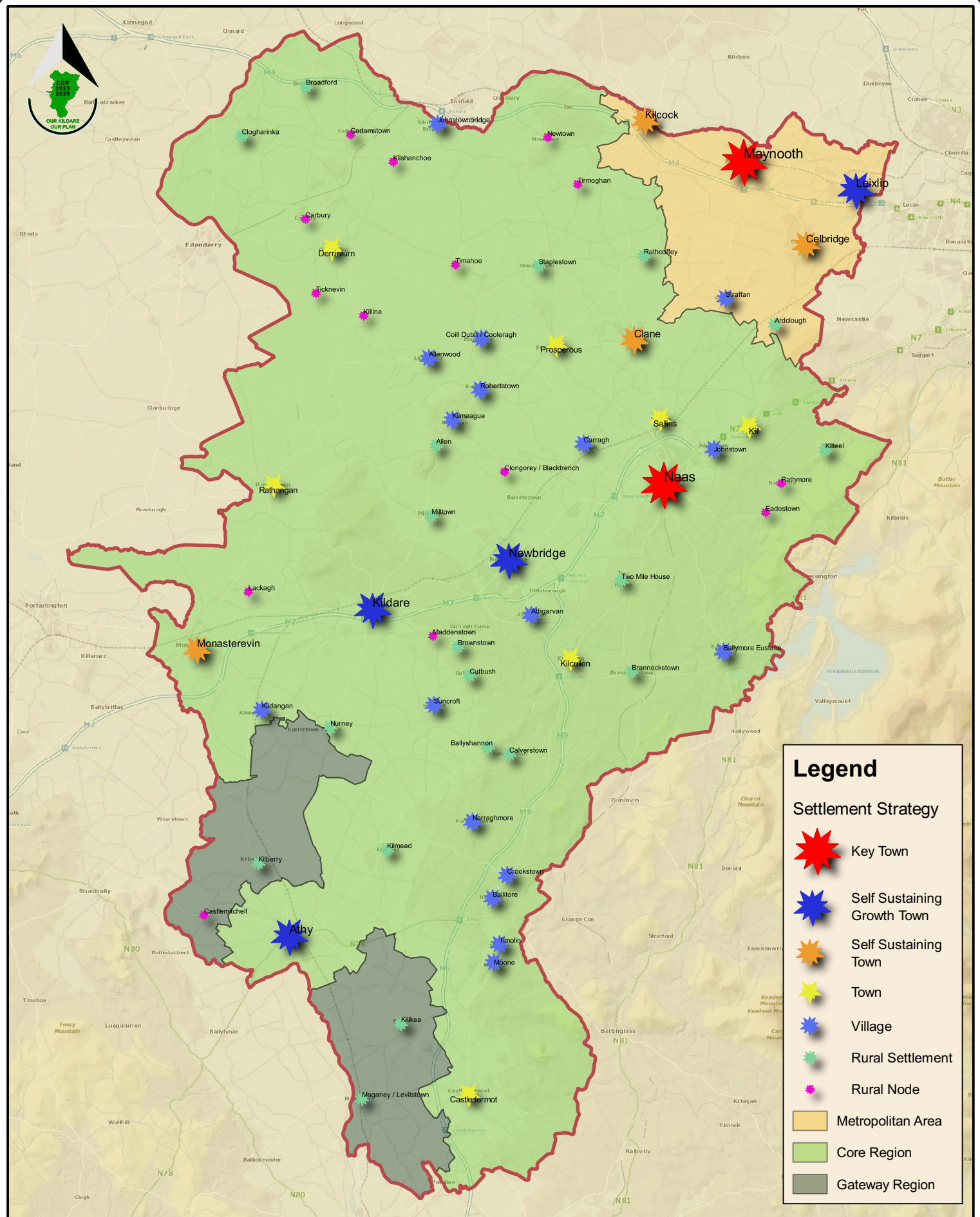
Drawing No.: 200/22/1222

Checked By:  
L Crawford  
Date 16/02/2022

Approved By:  
C O'Donnell  
Date 16/02/2022

This drawing is to be read in conjunction with the written statement





### Legend

**Settlement Strategy**

- Key Town
- Self Sustaining Growth Town
- Self Sustaining Town
- Town
- Village
- Rural Settlement
- Rural Node

Metropolitan Area

Core Region

Gateway Region

Kildare County Council  
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Development Department  
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## Draft County Development Plan 2023-2029

## County Settlement Hierarchy Map

Stage	Date	Description
Draft County Development Plan	12/12/2021	Draft Plan Issued to the Elected Members
Draft County Development Plan	14/03/2022	Draft Plan Issued for Public Consultation

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Approved By: C O'Donnell Date 01/03/2022	

**This drawing is to be read in conjunction with the written statement**