

## **Appendix III**

### **Environmental Report**



# ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

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OF THE

## DRAFT ATHY TOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2012-2018

### STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT



**for: Athy Town Council**

Rathstewart  
Athy  
County Kildare



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## List of Abbreviations

<b>AA</b>	Appropriate Assessment
<b>CSO</b>	Central Statistics Office
<b>DCENR</b>	Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
<b>DEHLG</b>	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
<b>EIA</b>	Environmental Impact Assessment
<b>EPA</b>	Environmental Protection Agency
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>GSI</b>	Geological Survey of Ireland
<b>NHA</b>	Natural Heritage Area
<b>NIAH</b>	National Inventory of Architectural Heritage
<b>NSS</b>	National Spatial Strategy
<b>RBD</b>	River Basin District
<b>RMP</b>	Record of Monuments and Places
<b>RPS</b>	Record of Protected Structures
<b>RPGs</b>	Regional Planning Guidelines
<b>SAC</b>	Special Area of Conservation
<b>SEA</b>	Strategic Environmental Assessment
<b>SEO</b>	Strategic Environmental Objective
<b>SI No.</b>	Statutory Instrument Number
<b>SPA</b>	Special Protection Area
<b>WFD</b>	Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)

# Glossary

## Appropriate Assessment

The obligation to undertake Appropriate Assessment derives from Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. AA is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of a plan or project, alone and in combination with other plans and projects, on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in view of its conservation objectives.

## Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

Biodiversity is the variability among living organisms from all sources including inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems' (United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity 1992).

Flora is all of the plants found in a given area.

Fauna is all of the animals found in a given area.

## Biotic Index Values (Q Values)

The Biotic Index Values, or Q values, are assigned to rivers in accordance with biological monitoring of surface waters - low Q ratings, as low as Q1, are indicative of low biodiversity and polluted waters, and high Q ratings, as high as Q5, are indicative of high biodiversity and unpolluted waters. Good status as defined by the Water Framework Directive equates to approximately Q4 in the national scheme of biological classification of rivers as set out by the Environmental Protection Agency.

## Environmental Problems

Annex I of Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers, of 27 June 2001, on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive) requires that information is provided on 'any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme', thus, helping to ensure that the proposed strategic action does not make existing environmental problems worse.

Environmental problems arise where there is a conflict between current environmental conditions and ideal targets. If environmental problems are identified at the outset they can help focus attention on important issues and geographical areas where environmental effects of the plan or programme may be likely.

## Environmental Vectors

Environmental vectors are environmental components, such as air, water or soil, through which contaminants or pollutants, which have the potential to cause harm, can be transported so that they come into contact with human beings.

## Mitigate

To make or become less severe or harsh.

## Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures are measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse impacts on the environment of implementing a human action, be it a plan, programme or project. Mitigation involves ameliorating significant negative effects. Where there are significant negative effects, consideration should be given in the first instance to preventing such effects or, where this is not possible, to lessening or offsetting those effects. Mitigation measures can be roughly divided into those that: avoid effects; reduce the magnitude or extent, probability and/or severity of effects; repair effects after they have occurred; and compensate for effects, balancing out negative impacts with other positive ones.

## Protected Structure

Protected Structure is the term used in the Planning Act of 2000 to define a structure included by a planning authority in its Record of Protected Structures. Such a structure shall not be altered or demolished in whole or part without obtaining planning permission or confirmation from the planning authority that the part of the structure to be altered is not protected.

## Recorded Monument

A monument included in the list and marked on the map which comprises the Record of Monuments and Places that is set out County by County under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. The definition includes Zones of Archaeological Potential in towns and all other monuments of archaeological interest which have so far been identified. Any works at or in relation to a recorded monument requires two months notice to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government under section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994.

## Scoping

Scoping is the process of determining what issues are to be addressed, and setting out a methodology in which to address them in a structured manner appropriate to the plan or programme. Scoping is carried out in consultation with the appropriate bodies.

## Strategic Actions

Strategic actions include: *Policies*, which may be considered as inspiration and guidance for action and which set the framework for plans and programmes; *Plans*, sets of co-ordinated and timed objectives for the implementation of the policy; and *Programmes*, sets of projects in a particular area.

## Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt it.

## Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO)

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are methodological measures which are developed from international, national and regional policies which generally govern environmental protection objectives and against which the environmental effects of the Plan can be tested. The SEOs are used as standards against which the objectives of the Plan can be evaluated in order to help identify areas in which significant adverse impacts are likely to occur, if not mitigated.

## Preamble

The Draft Athy Town Development Plan 2012-2018 together with the accompanying SEA Environmental Report will need to be read in the context of other relevant plans and policies which relate to the Plan area. It is important to understand that the control and care of the environment falls within the jurisdiction of a very wide range of departments and agencies. These departments and agencies make plans for the development of, for example, road, rail and energy infrastructure which must be accommodated by the Town Plan. Such agencies are responsible for the separate environmental assessment of the adoption of these plans.

Spatial plans are principally about the arrangement of landuses to avoid conflicts and to protect amenities. Such plans exist as a series of layers that range from broad national policies – that have little spatial specificity – through regional, development and local area plans. Only the latter two types are likely to identify the locations where actual developments – and associated effects – are likely to occur. Each level of planning is subject to separate levels of assessment.

There are significant bodies of legislation that regulate how environmental resources are to be cared for. These exist and are implemented at a national level – with no local discretion. Such regulations cover the quality of air and water (surface, ground, drinking, marine and bathing waters), they cover River Basin Districts, they cover the protection of ecological resources (habitats, species) and they cover the protection of archaeology and national monuments.



# Section 1 SEA Introduction and Background

## 1.1 Introduction and Terms of Reference

This is the Environmental Report of the Draft Athy Town Development Plan 2012-2018 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The purpose of the report is to provide a clear understanding of the likely environmental consequences of decisions regarding the future accommodation of development in Athy Town.

The SEA is carried out in order to comply with the provisions of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004) and to anticipate and avoid adverse impacts arising from implementation of the Plan.

The purpose of this SEA Environmental Report - which should be read in conjunction with the draft Plan - is to provide a clear understanding of the likely environmental consequences of decisions arising from the implementation of the Plan.

## 1.2 SEA Definition

Environmental assessment is a procedure that ensures that the environmental implications of decisions are taken into account before the decisions are made.

*Environmental Impact Assessment*, or EIA, is generally used for describing the process of environmental assessment which is limited to individual projects such as waste incinerators, housing developments or roads while *Strategic Environmental Assessment*, or SEA, is the term which has been given to the environmental assessment of plans, and other strategic actions, which help determine what kind of individual projects take place.

SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely environmental effects of implementing a proposed plan or programme in order to insure that these effects are appropriately addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision-making in tandem with economic, social and other considerations.

By anticipating the effects and avoiding areas in which growth cannot be sustainably accommodated and by directing development towards more compatible and robust receiving environments real improvements in environmental management and planning can occur. Also, the scope of both SEAs which may be required for lower-tier plans and programmes within the Plan area and EIAs which may be required for individual projects may be reduced.

Developments which occur in Athy over the period 2012-2018 will be partly determined by the implementation of the Town Development Plan. By anticipating the effects of implementing the Plan, and avoiding development which cannot be sustainably accommodated, such as by directing development towards more compatible and robust receiving environments, real improvements in environmental management and planning can occur.

Benefits of considering environmental effects at this strategic Plan level include: that the scope of lower tier environmental assessments which may be required are likely to be reduced; the impacts arising from projects are also likely to be reduced; and, planning applications are more likely to be granted consent.

## 1.3 Legislative Context

Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers, of 27 June 2001, on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, referred to hereafter as the SEA Directive, introduced the requirement that SEA be carried out on plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors, including land use planning.

The SEA Directive was transposed into Irish Law through the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 435 of 2004) and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of

2004). Both sets of Regulations became operational on 21 July 2004.

#### **1.4 Implications for the Council and the Elected Members**

The above legislation requires the Athy Town Development Plan to undergo SEA. The findings of the SEA are expressed in an

Environmental Report which is submitted to the Elected Members alongside the Draft Plan. The Elected Members must take account of the Environmental Report before the adoption of the Plan. When the Plan is adopted a statement must be made public, summarising, inter alia: how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan; and, the reasons for choosing the Plan as adopted over other alternatives detailed in the Environmental Report.

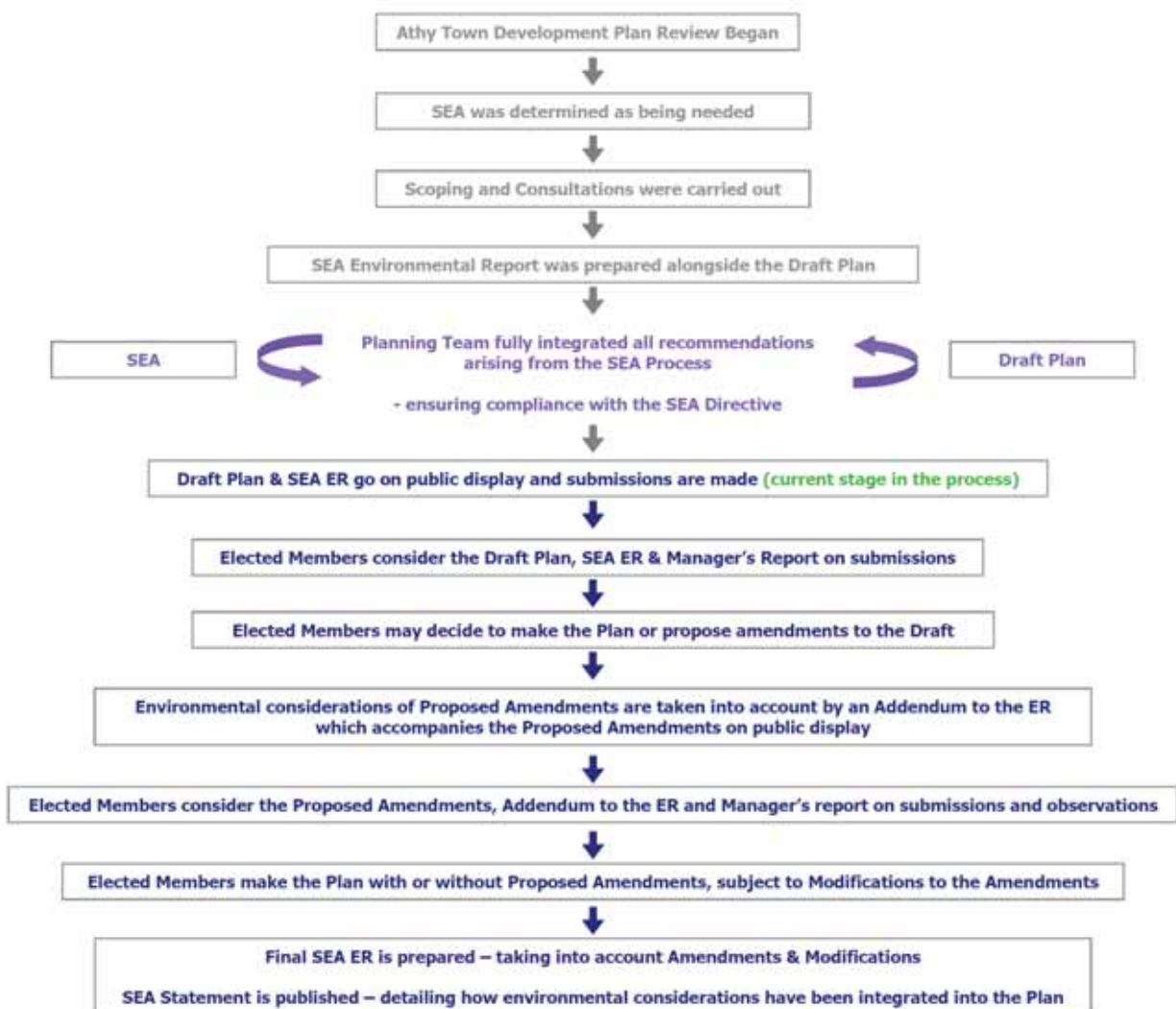
## Section 2 SEA Methodology

### 2.1 Introduction

This section details how the SEA for the Development Plan has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan. The SEA process started in October 2010 and this report has been produced in March 2011.

Figure 2.1 lays out the main stages in the Plan/SEA process. The process is currently at the sixth stage in the process as noted in green on this Figure.

Figure 2.1 Athy Town Development Plan and SEA Stages



## 2.2 Scoping

In consultation with the relevant authorities, the scope of environmental issues to be dealt with by the SEA together with the level of detail to which they are to be addressed was broadly decided after preliminary data collection. Scoping of the SEA was concurrent with certain issues being selected for further examination after certain data was obtained. Scoping allowed the SEA to become focused upon key issues, such as those relating to existing and potential environmental issues and environmental problems<sup>1</sup>.

Scoping facilitated the selection of issues relevant to the environmental components which are specified under the SEA Directive - biodiversity, fauna, flora, population, human health, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, and landscape.

With regard to human health, impacts relevant to the SEA are those which arise as a result of interactions with environmental vectors (i.e. environmental components such as air, water or soil through which contaminants or pollutants, which have the potential to cause harm, can be transported so that they come into contact with human beings). Impacts upon human beings arising as a result of social and economic conditions are not considered by SEA.

As environmental authorities identified under the SEA Regulations, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) and the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural

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<sup>1</sup> Annex I of the SEA Directive requires that information is provided on 'any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme', thus, helping to ensure that the proposed strategic action does not make existing environmental problems worse. Environmental problems arise where there is a conflict between current environmental conditions and ideal targets. If environmental problems are identified at the offset they can help focus attention on important issues and geographical areas where environmental effects of the plan or programme may be likely.

Resources (DCENR)<sup>2</sup> were all sent SEA scoping notices indicating that submissions or observations in relation to the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the environmental report could be made to Athy Town Council. Written submissions on the scope of the SEA were received from each of the environmental authorities and these were taken into account during the formulation of the scope of the SEA.

Representatives from the EPA, Athy and Kildare County Councils and CAAS attended an SEA Scoping Meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November 2010. The information provided at the SEA Scoping meeting was used to update the Scoping Report and was taken into account during the formulation of the scope of the SEA.

## 2.3 Appropriate Assessment & Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) have both been undertaken alongside the Draft Plan.

The requirement for AA is provided under the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 1992/43/EEC). The requirement for SFRA is provided under 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DEHLG, 2009).

The preparation of the Draft Plan, SEA, AA & SFRA have taken place concurrently and the findings of the AA & SFRA have informed both the Draft Plan and the SEA, although as noted in section 7.5, not all of the SFRA recommendations have been integrated into the Plan.

## 2.4 Environmental Baseline Data and Other Strategic Actions

The SEA process is informed by the environmental baseline (i.e. the current state of the environment) to facilitate: the identification and evaluation of the likely

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<sup>2</sup> The Marine function of the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources has been transferred to the Department of Agriculture Food and Fisheries

significant environmental effects of implementing the provisions of the Development Plan and the alternatives; and, the subsequent monitoring of the effects of implementing the Plan provisions as adopted.

The SEA Directive requires that information is provided on 'any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme'. Information is therefore provided on existing environmental problems which are relevant to the Plan, thus helping to ensure that the Plan does not exacerbate any existing environmental problems within or surrounding the Town.

The SEA Directive requires that information on the baseline environment be focused upon the relevant aspects of the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected and the likely evolution of the current environment in the absence of the plan or programme. Any information that does not focus upon this is surplus to requirements; therefore the SEA focuses on significant issues, disregarding the less significant ones.

In order to describe the baseline (the current state of the environment) in the Town, data was collated from currently available, relevant environmental sources.

## 2.5 Subsidiarity

In accordance with the established European principle of subsidiarity, the SEA Directive states that: Where plans and programmes form part of a hierarchy, Member States shall, with a view to avoiding duplication of the assessment, take into account the fact that the assessment will be carried out, in accordance with this Directive, at different levels of the hierarchy (Article 4.3).

## 2.6 Alternatives

The SEA Directive requires that reasonable alternatives (taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme) are identified described and evaluated for their likely significant effects on the environment. In accordance with this requirement, four alternative scenarios for the Development Plan are examined at this strategic level.

## 2.7 The SEA Environmental Report

In this Environmental Report, which is placed on public display alongside the Draft Plan, the likely environmental effects of the Draft Plan and the alternatives are predicted and their significance evaluated. The Environmental Report provides the Elected Members of Athy Town Council, who decide what type of Plan to make, as well as the public, with a clear understanding of the likely environmental consequences of decisions regarding the future accommodation of growth within the Town.

Mitigation measures to prevent or reduce significant adverse effects posed by the Plan are identified in Section 9 - these have been integrated into the draft Plan.

The Environmental Report will be required to be altered should changes be made to the Draft Plan which have not been evaluated by the SEA and which may be likely to have significant environmental effects.

The Environmental Report is required to contain the information specified in Schedule 2 of the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 435 of 2004) (see Table 1.1).

A draft SEA Statement (see Section 2.8 below) will be prepared and updated during the preparation of the draft Implementation Programme and Environmental Report. This draft document will show how both the SEA and the AA influenced the IP.

## 2.8 The SEA Statement

When the Plan adopted a document referred to as the SEA Statement must be made public. This is required to include information on: how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan - highlighting the main changes to the Plan which resulted from the SEA process; how the Environmental Report and consultations have been taken into account - summarising the key issues raised in consultations and in the Environmental Report indicating what action, if any, was taken in response; and the reasons for choosing the Plan in the light of the other alternatives, identifying the other alternatives considered,

commenting on their potential effects and explaining why the Plan was selected.

## 2.9 Legislative Conformance

This report complies with the provisions of the SEA Regulations and is written in accordance with Schedule 2B of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004).

Table 2.1 (overleaf) is a reproduction of the checklist of information to be contained in the Environmental Report (DEHLG, 2004)<sup>3</sup> and includes the relevant sections of this report which deal with these requirements.

## 2.10 Difficulties Encountered

### 2.10.1 Centralised Data Source

The lack of a centralised data source that could make all environmental baseline data for the Town both readily available and in a consistent format posed a challenge to the SEA process. This difficulty is one which has been encountered while undertaking SEAs at local authorities across the Country and was overcome by investing time in the collection of data from various sources and through the use of Geographical Information Systems.

### 2.10.2 Potential Monitoring Gaps

The following identifies issues with regard to the availability of data for the monitoring of selected SEA indicators (see also Section 10 Monitoring):

**Indicator B1** (Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive) is to be sourced from:

- the DEHLG report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as

required by Article 17 of the Directive; and,

- Consultations with the NPWS.

Consultations with the NPWS may be essential should the aforementioned report be of insufficient detail or frequency.

**Indicator B2** (Percentage loss of functional connectivity to macro-corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat which are important on a Town and environs level without remediation as a result of implementation of the Plan – as evidenced from a resurvey of CORINE mapping) is to be sourced from:

- CORINE mapping; and,
- Development Management Processes in the Council.

As noted in Section 4.2.2, it is recommended that important corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat are identified as part of the monitoring programme and that time resources are spent in the monitoring of these rather than in the monitoring of corridors or areas of habitat which are not important at Town and environs level.

**Indicator W2** (Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC) is to be sourced from the EPA; however, data may not be available for the preliminary monitoring evaluation as the groundwater threshold values to which this indicator relates have not yet been identified by the EPA.

<sup>3</sup> DEHLG (2004) *Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC): Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities* Dublin: Government of Ireland.

**Table 1.1 Checklist of Information included in this Environmental Report**

<b>Information Required to be included in the Environmental Report</b>	<b>Corresponding Section of this Report</b>
(A) Outline of the contents and main objectives of the Plan, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	Sections 4 and 5
(B) Description of relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the evolution of that environment without implementation of the Plan	Section 3
(C) Description of the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	Sections 3, 4, 7 and 8
(D) Identification of any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the Plan, particularly those relating to European protected sites	Section 3
(E) List environmental protection objectives, established at international, EU or national level, which are relevant to the Plan and describe how those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account when preparing the Plan	Sections 4, 6, 7 and 9
(F) Describe the likely significant effects on the environment	Sections 7 and 8
(G) Describe any measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse environmental effects of implementing the Plan	Section 9
(H) Give an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives considered, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken (including any difficulties)	Sections 2, 6 and 7
(I) A description of proposed monitoring measures	Section 10
(J) A non-technical summary of the above information	Non Technical Summary (separately Bound)
(K) Interrelationships between each Environmental topic	Addressed as it arises within each Section

## Section 3 Athy Town Environmental Baseline

### 3.1 Introduction

The environmental baseline of Athy is described in this section. This baseline together with the Strategic Environmental Objectives, which are outlined in Section 4, is used in order to identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Draft Town Development Plan and in order to determine appropriate monitoring measures.

The environmental baseline is described in line with the legislative requirements encompassing the following components – biodiversity, flora and fauna, population, human health, soil, water, air and climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between these components. A description is also included of the likely effects upon each environmental component under a do-nothing scenario i.e. the likely evolution of the environment without the implementation of the Draft Town Development Plan.

Athy is located in the south-west of County Kildare. The Town is served by the Dublin/Waterford railway line. The N78 (Dublin-Kilkenny/Waterford) runs through the Town.

The population of the Plan area stood at 7,943 in 2006 with the main concentration occurring in the Town Centre. The 2006 population rose from 5,308 in 1996 representing a 50% increase for the 10 year period. The national population increase was 17% for the same decade (Census 2006).

Land use in the Plan area is primarily agricultural in the rural environs of the Town. A wide variety of uses including commercial, industrial and residential, exist in the urban areas of the Town.

The Plan area has a rich and diverse range of natural habitats such as woodland, hedgerows, rivers and a canal some of which are recognised as being of local, national and EU importance, and many are designated for protection/preservation under national and/or EU legislation. The River Barrow and the Grand Canal provide corridors for biodiversity in the area.

Athy falls within the catchment of the River Barrow in the South Eastern River Basin District.



Figure 3.1 Context of Athy Town in relation to the island of Ireland and OS map of Town



## 3.2 Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

### 3.2.1 Introduction

Athy Town supports a wide diversity of natural and semi-natural habitats and a wide range of plant and animal species.

Green space, namely the agricultural lands in the Town's Environs, makes up a large part of the Plan area. This open space consists of a variety of habitats and corridors which provide for the movement of wildlife. This green space is clearly visible on the aerial photo (Figure 3.2) below.

The Town falls into the catchment of the River Barrow. The Grand Canal also runs through the west of the Plan area. These rivers and their associated tributaries and small lakes support good areas of biodiversity.

Man-made habitats within the Plan area are also important biodiversity areas. Gardens provide habitats for a range of wildlife including various bird species, invertebrates, such as bees and butterflies and mammals, such as hedgehogs, mice, rats and foxes. These species move around between gardens using hedgerows and vegetated areas. These urban green spaces, however small, are therefore of importance as they form part of a network of green spaces across the Plan area including gardens, parks, graveyards, amenity walks, railway lines and patches of woodland and scrub within which animals and plants continue to thrive.

### 3.2.2 CORINE Land Cover Mapping<sup>4</sup>

CORINE land cover mapping<sup>5</sup> of the Town for the year 2006 is shown on Figure 3.3.

<sup>4</sup> European Environment Agency Coordination of Information on the Environment (2004) *Ireland's Corine Land Cover 2000 (CLC2000)* Copenhagen: EEA  
<sup>5</sup> CORINE Land Cover (CLC) is a map of the European environmental landscape based on interpretation of satellite images. Land cover is the observed physical cover, as seen from the ground or through remote sensing, including for example natural or planted vegetation, water and human constructions which cover the earth's surface. Because of the scale of the CORINE data and the method by which it was collected there are likely to be a number of inaccuracies at the local level. It is noted, however,

The most common land cover in Athy is *Discontinuous Urban Fabric* and *Non-Irrigated Arable Land* of which there are roughly equal amounts. This is followed by *Pastures* which occur along the banks of the River Barrow and the south west of the Plan area.

*Sports and Leisure Facilities* can be found in the north western Plan boundary; the same exists to the north east of the Town, just outside of the boundary.

Land cover differences between the CORINE 2006 data (see Figure 3.3) and the data for the year 2000 (see Figure 3.4) are illustrated on Figure 3.6. The differences indicate expansion of the Town over the six year period as agricultural lands (*Non-Irrigated Arable Land* and *Pastures*) undergo urbanisation, becoming *Construction Sites, Industrial and Commercial Units* and *Discontinuous Urban Fabric*.

Land cover differences between the CORINE 2000 data (see Figure 3.4) and the data for the year 1990 (see Figure 3.5) are illustrated on Figure 3.7. The decade saw changes in agricultural land cover, particularly in the west of the Plan area. Parcels of land within the Town became urbanised.

### 3.2.3 Ecological Networks

Article 10 of the Habitats Directive recognises the importance of ecological networks as corridors and stepping stones for wildlife, including for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of species of flora and fauna. The Directive requires that ecological connectivity and areas of ecological value outside the Natura 2000 network of designated ecological sites are maintained and it recognises the need for the management of these areas through land use planning and development policies. Ecological networks are important in connecting areas of local biodiversity with each other and with nearby designated sites so as to prevent islands of habitat from being isolated entities. Ecological networks are composed of linear features, such as

that the land cover shown on the maps is generally accurate. The European Environment Agency, in conjunction with the European Space Agency, the European Commission and member countries is currently updating the CORINE land cover database.

treelines, hedgerows, rivers and streams, which provide corridors or stepping stones for wildlife species moving within their normal range. They are particularly important for mammals, especially for bats and small birds.

Key ecological corridors within the Town include the River Barrow, the Grand Canal, the Clogorow Stream, the railway line and the various hedgerows within the Plan area. Open space includes one neighbourhood park, two local parks and small areas of amenity green-space throughout the residential areas of the Town as well as the large amount of agricultural land outside of the Town.

### 3.2.4 Designations

#### 3.2.4.1 Introduction

Figure 3.8 maps the designated ecological sites<sup>6</sup> in Athy. These are the River Barrow and River Nore candidate Special Area of Conservation and the Grand Canal Proposed Natural Heritage Area.

#### 3.2.4.2 Candidate Special Areas of Conservation

Candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) have been selected for protection under the European Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (92/43/EEC), referred to as the Habitats Directive, by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government due to their conservation value for habitats and species of importance in the European Union. The sites are *candidate* sites because they are currently under consideration by the Commission of the European Union.

A large extent of the cSAC is visible on the Natura 2000 map, Figure 3.9, which also shows the other Natura 2000 sites within a 5, 10 and 15km radius of the Town.

The Habitats Directive seeks to establish Natura 2000, a network of protected areas throughout the EU. It is the responsibility of each member state to designate SACs to protect habitats and species, which, together with the SPAs designated under the 1979 Birds Directive, form Natura 2000.

<sup>6</sup> Site Synopses for SPAs, cSACs and NHAs are available from the National Parks and Wildlife Service at [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie)

#### 3.2.4.3 Natural Heritage Areas

Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) are designated due to their national conservation value for ecological and/or geological/geomorphological heritage. They cover nationally important semi-natural and natural habitats, landforms or geomorphological features, wildlife plant and animal species or a diversity of these natural attributes. NHAs are designated under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000.

Proposed NHAs were published on a non-statutory basis in 1995, but have not since been statutorily proposed or designated.

#### 3.2.4.4 Register of Protected Areas

In response to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive, a number of water bodies, or parts of water bodies, which must have extra controls on their quality by virtue of how their waters are used by people and by wildlife, have been listed on Registers of Protected Areas (RPAs) (see Section 3.5.6 and Figure 3.25). The River Barrow is included on the Register as a Water Dependent Habitat.

#### 3.2.4.5 Freshwater Pearl Mussels

The freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera Margaritifera*) is a bivalve, which is a type of mollusc or snail with a body that is almost completely enclosed between a pair of shells. The habitat of the freshwater pearl mussel in Ireland is restricted to near natural, clean flowing waters, often downstream of ultra-oligotrophic lakes.

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government has prepared 27 Draft Management Plans for Freshwater Pearl Mussel in accordance with Article 13 (5) of the Water Framework Directive as transposed in Ireland by the European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (S.I. No. 722 of 2003) and the Habitats Directive as transposed in Ireland by the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 (S.I. No. 94 of 1997). The objective of the plans is to restore the freshwater pearl mussel populations in 27 rivers, or stretches of rivers that are within the boundaries of Special Areas of Conservation.

There are no areas within the Town or near the Town boundary which have a specified

Freshwater Pearl Mussel population and hence a Draft Sub-Basin Management Plan.

#### **3.2.4.6 Salmonid Waters**

Salmonid Waters are designated and protected under the European Communities (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations 1998 (SI No. 293 of 1988). Salmonid Water designation imposes an obligation to maintain specific water quality standards and control pollution. There are no salmonid waters in the vicinity of Athy.

### **3.2.5 Existing Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna Problems**

Changes in land cover indicated by the CORINE data (see Figure 3.6 for 2000-2006 changes and Figure 3.7 for 1990-2000 changes) indicate that semi natural areas within the Town have been replaced by uses which generally include impermeable surfaces. These changes are likely to result in losses of biodiversity and flora and fauna.

Aquatic flora and fauna is vulnerable to all forms of pollution. Any existing problems with regard to surface water quality in the Town (see Section 3.5) are likely to be impacting upon aquatic biodiversity and flora and fauna.

With regard to terrestrial flora and fauna, all greenfield development in the area will cause an impact - the replacement of natural and semi natural habitats with artificial surfaces results in loss of flora and fauna and therefore adversely impacts upon this environmental component.

### **3.2.6 Evolution of Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna in the absence of the Draft Plan**

In the absence of a Development Plan, development would have no guidance as to where to be directed and planning applications would be assessed on an individual basis with flora and fauna, habitats and ecological connectivity protected under a number of strategic actions relating to biodiversity and flora and fauna protection.

In the absence of a Development Plan there would not be an integration of the ecological protection measures required by the Habitats Directive with the planning or development management of vulnerable areas. Therefore, it is likely that there would be less effective

protection of ecological resources in the absence of a Plan.

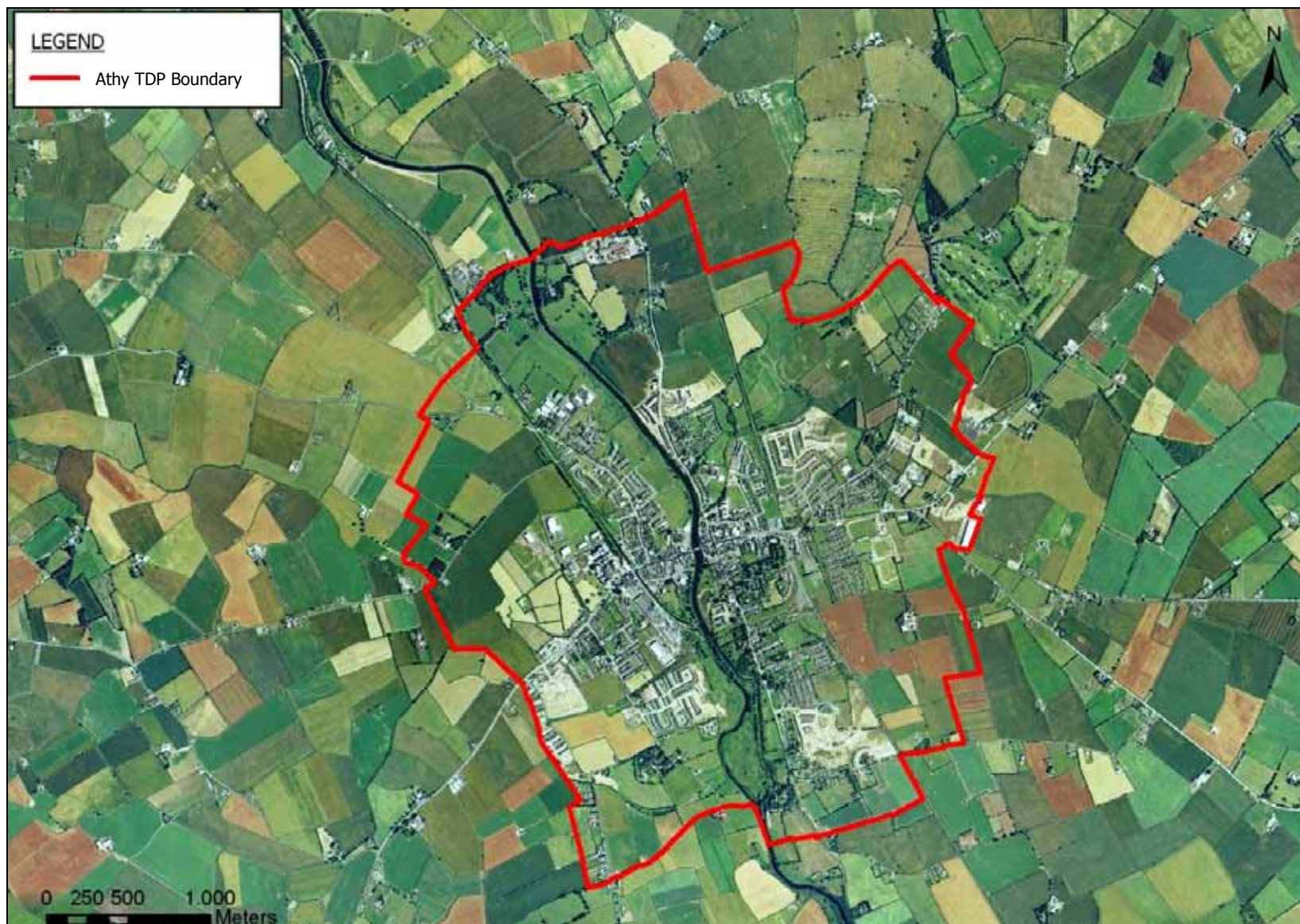
The evolution of biodiversity and flora and fauna would be dependent on the rate and extent of developments which would take place.

Weakly controlled development along or adjacent to the banks of rivers could result in a reduction in ecological connectivity within and between these and other habitats.

Pollution of water bodies as a result of any poorly planned future development would be likely to adversely impact upon aquatic biodiversity and flora and fauna including salmonid species and other species protected under Annex II of the Habitats Directive.

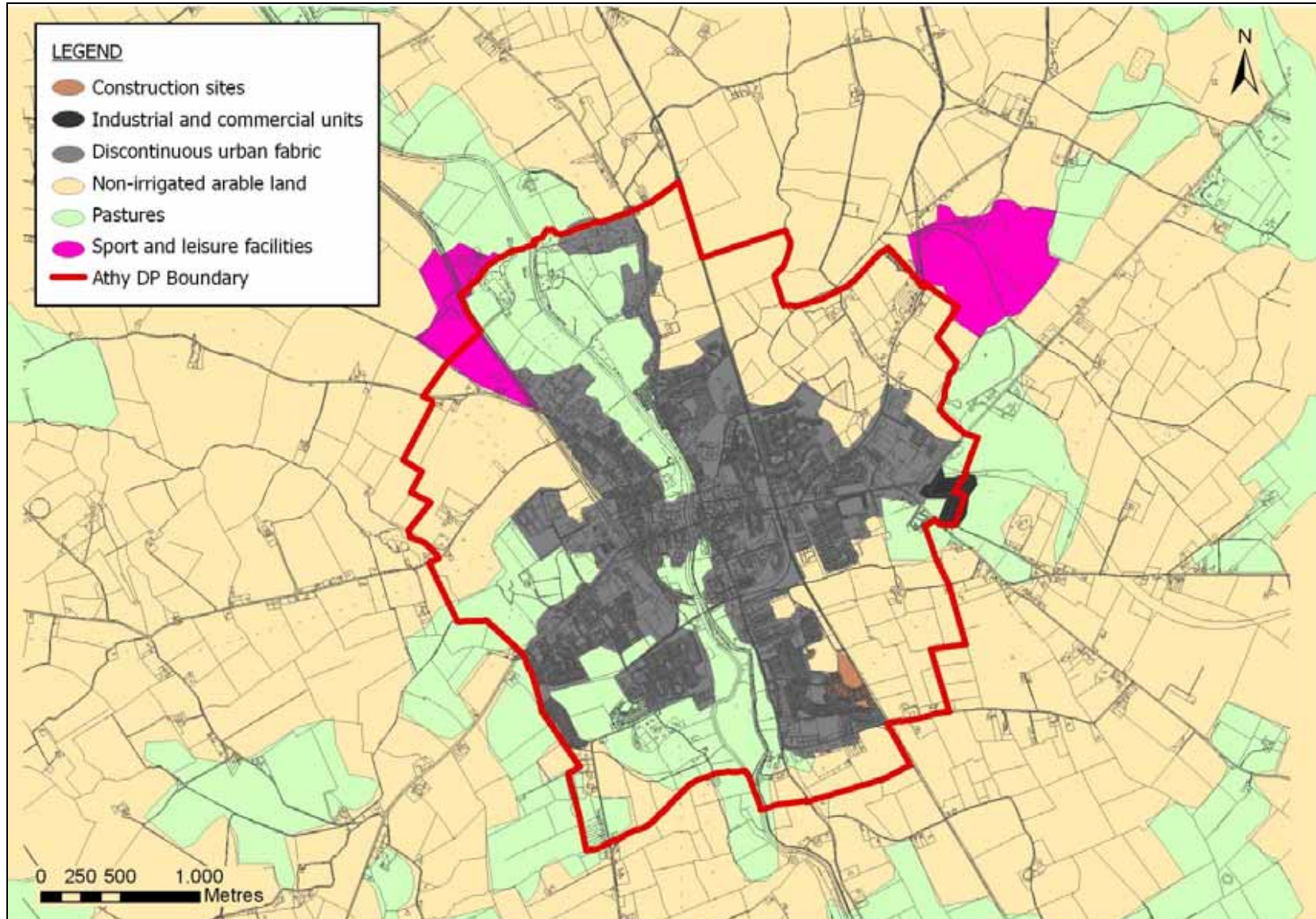
Climate change has the potential to result in the loss of habitats - including those designated as SACs and SPAs - through rising sea levels and increased levels of surface run-off. Some of the coastal habitats which are important to bird populations could eventually be inundated. Increased precipitation may disrupt the salinity gradients within estuarine systems and, coupled with likely increased sedimentation, disrupt spawning and nursery grounds as well as shellfish production and quality in such areas.

In the absence of a Development Plan, any greenfield development would adversely impact upon biodiversity and flora and fauna by replacing natural or semi natural habitats with artificial surfaces. The significance of such impacts would be dependent on whether such developments would result in the loss of habitats or species of importance as well as the cumulative loss and fragmentation of habitats and species as a result of all greenfield developments. It is noted that development of brownfield sites and re-development could also have impacts on terrestrial flora and fauna.



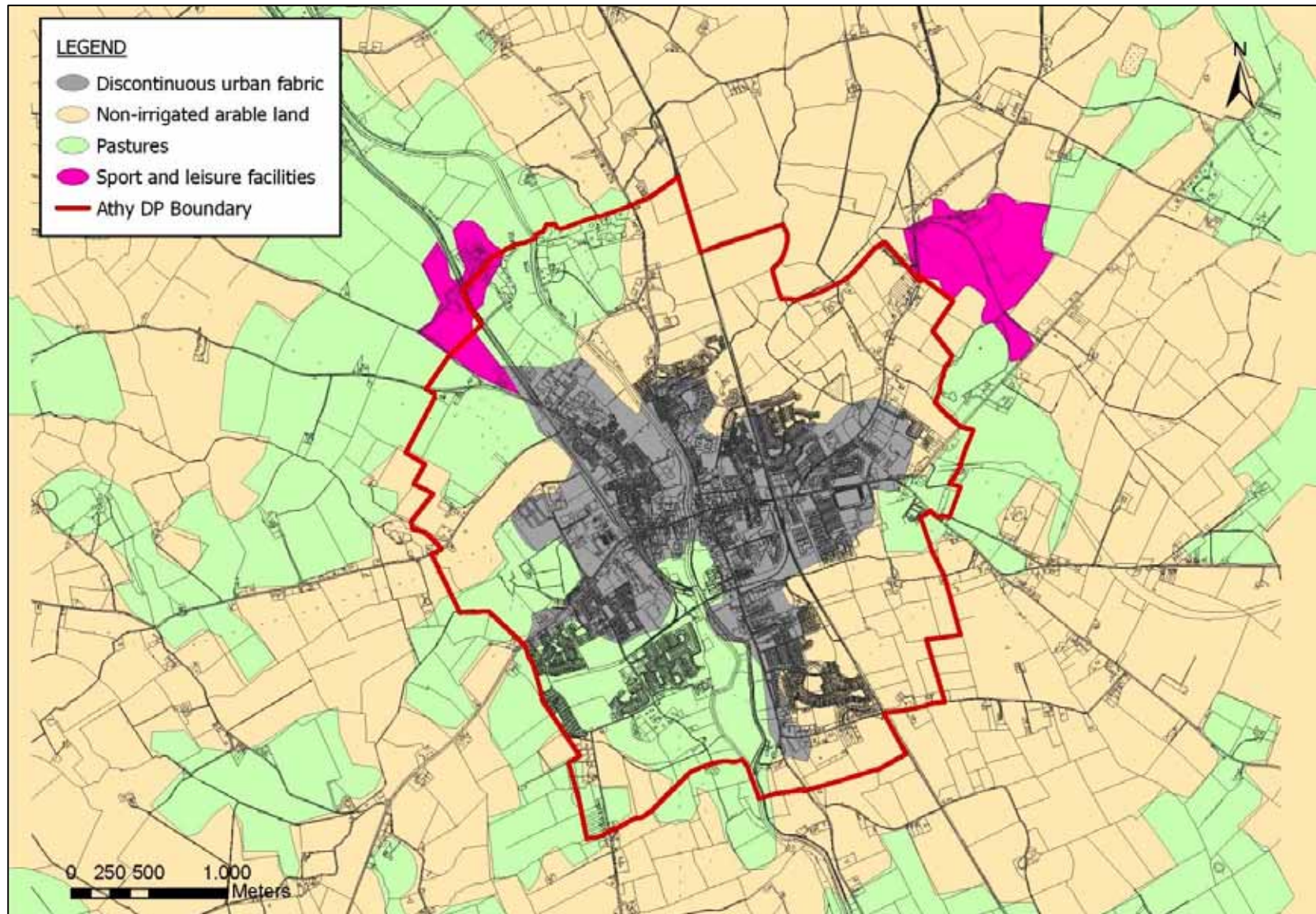
**Figure 3.2 Aerial Photo of Plan area**  
Source: Kildare County Council (Unknown)





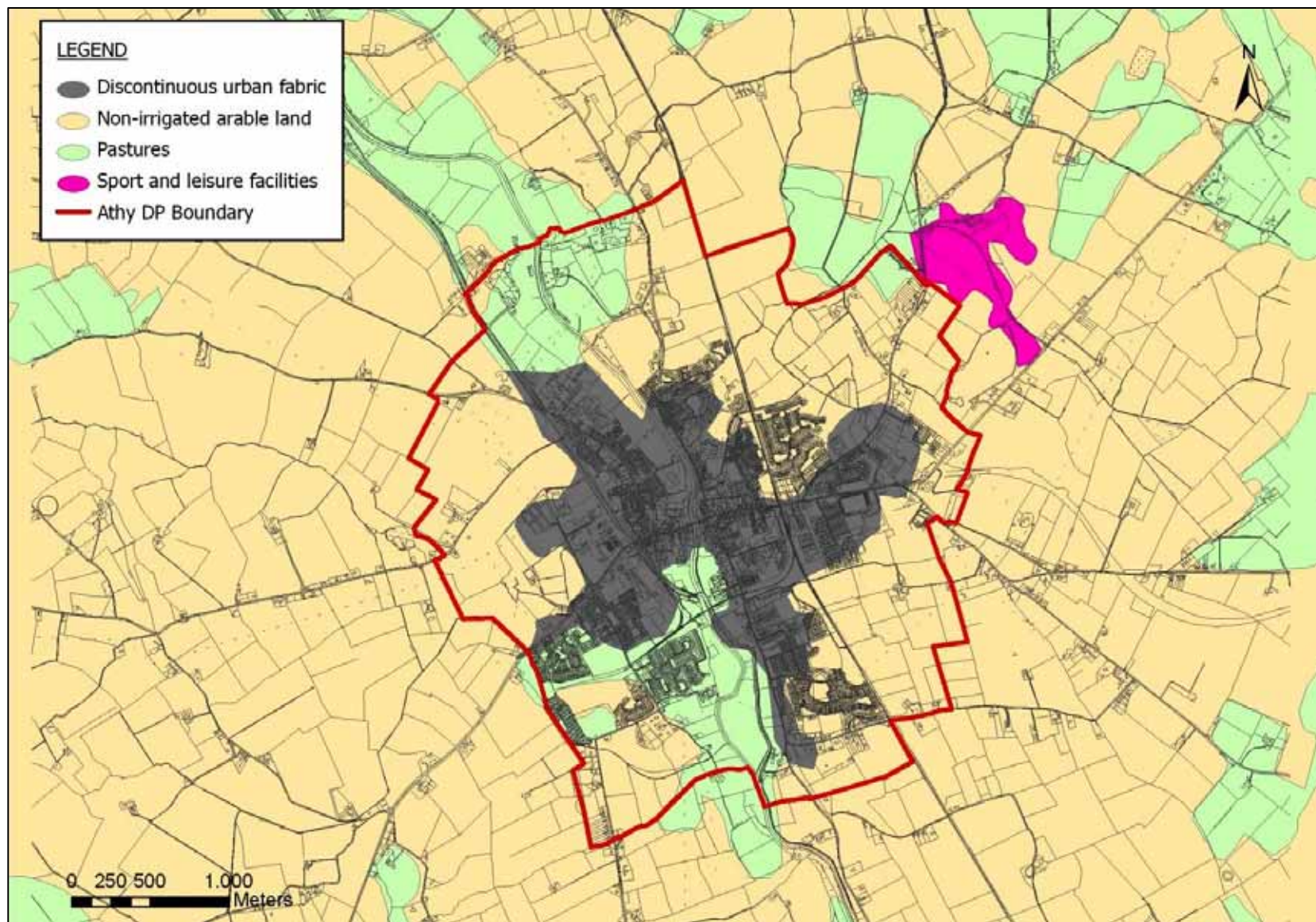
**Figure 3.3 CORINE Land Cover 2006**  
Source: EPA (2009)





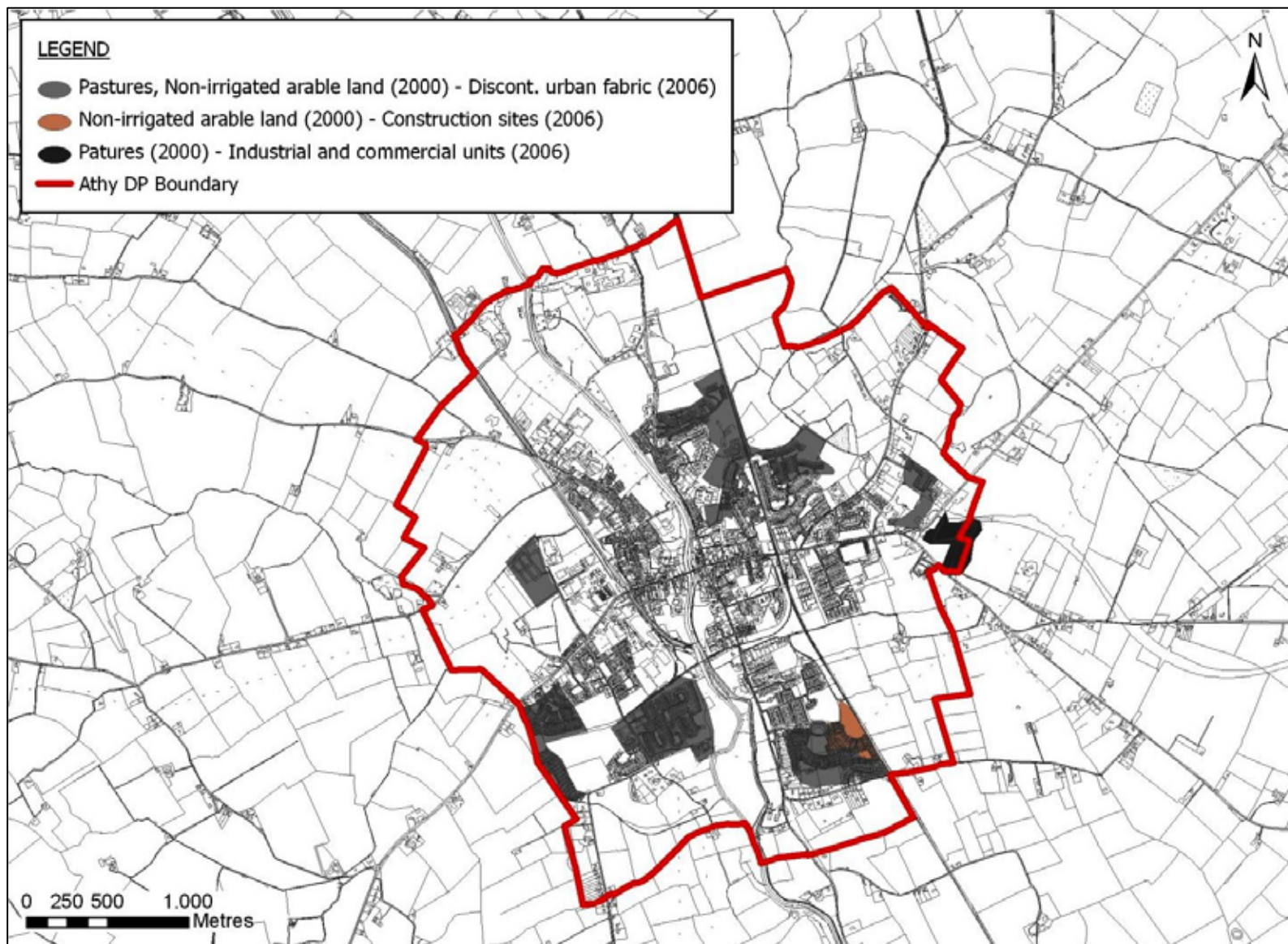
**Figure 3.4 CORINE Land Cover 2000**  
Source: EPA (2009)





**Figure 3.5 CORINE Land Cover 1990**

Source: EPA (2004)



**Figure 3.6 CORINE Land Cover Changes 2000-2006 showing their current (2006) cover**  
Source: EPA (2009)



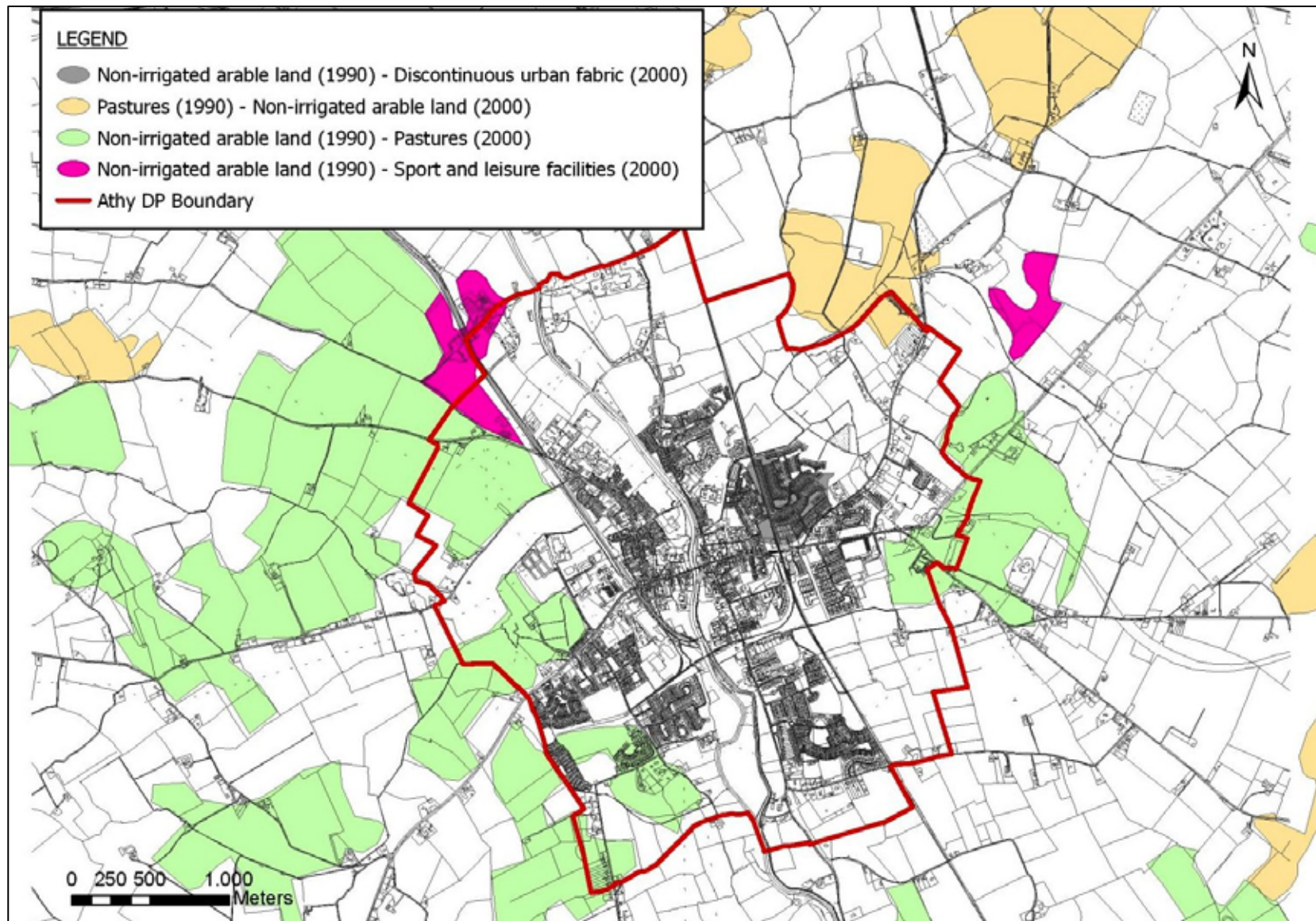
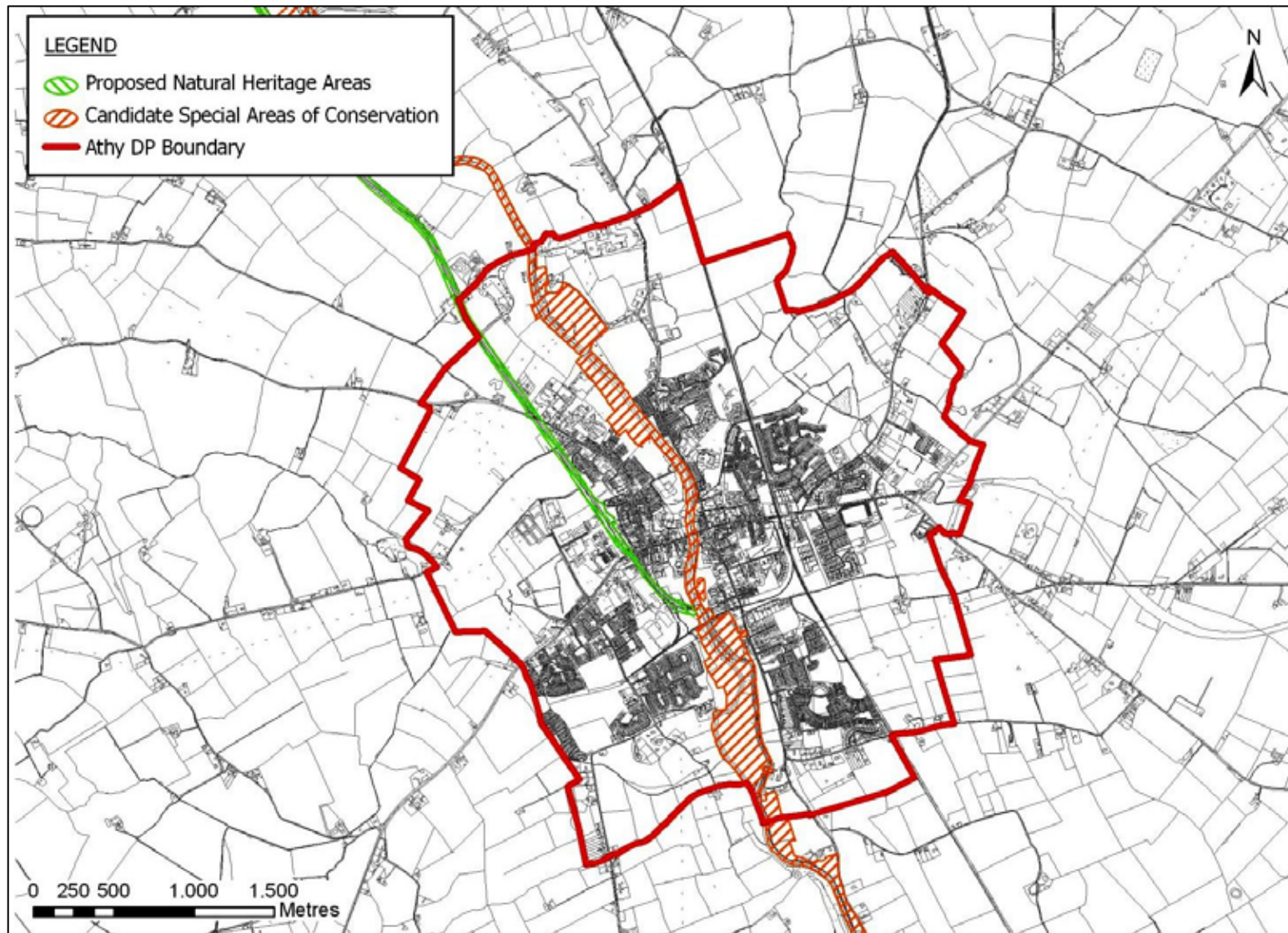


Figure 3.7 CORINE Land Cover Changes 1990-2000

Source: EPA (2004)



**Figure 3.8 cSAC and pNHA in the Athy Plan area**  
Source: NPWS (datasets downloaded Oct. 2010)



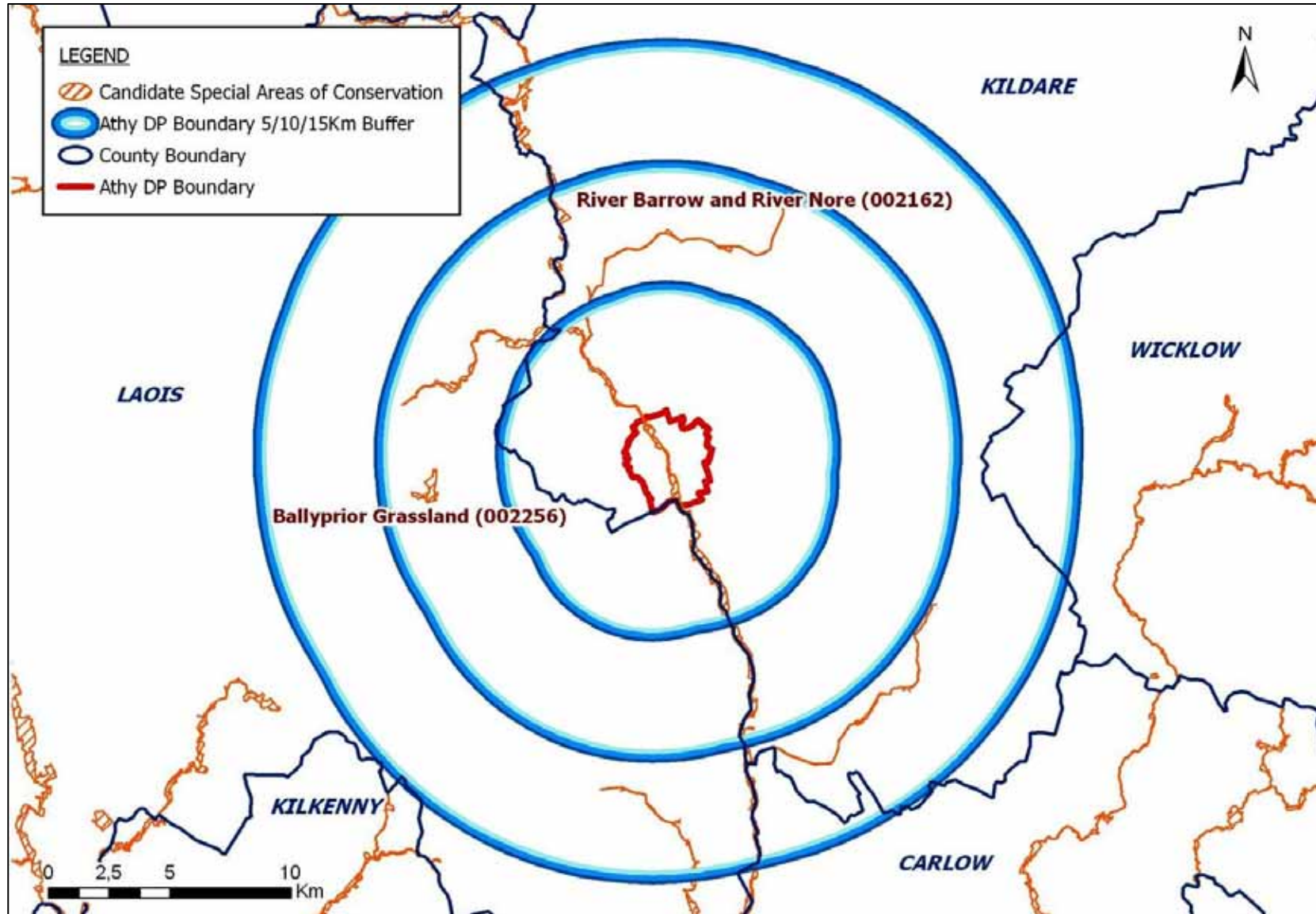


Figure 3.9 Natura 2000 Sites within 5, 10 and 15km of the boundary  
Source: NPWS (datasets downloaded Oct. 2010)

## 3.3 Population and Human Health

### 3.3.1 Population<sup>7</sup>

Figure 3.10<sup>8</sup> maps the population of the Town at the most recent (2006) Census. The population of the Plan area stood at 7,943 in 2006, with the main concentration occurring in the Town Centre.

The population in 2006 rose from 5,308 in 1996 representing a 50% increase for the 10 year period. The national population increase was 17% for the same decade.

While most of the population resides in the Town Centre, the Environs experienced increases of 40-80% between 1996 and 2006. The Town Centre experienced an increase of 1-10% over the same period. As seen on Figure 3.11, much of the growth took place between 2002 and 2006 when the environs of Athy experienced growth of between 50-70%. Population in the west of the Town Centre grew between 20-40% while the east of the Town Centre increased by 8-15%.

Population density within the Town Centre was 1001-2000 persons/km<sup>2</sup> in 2006. Density in the remainder of the Plan area and the environs stood at 20-100 persons/km<sup>2</sup>. Figure 3.13 maps density in the Town in 2006.

### 3.3.2 Human Health

Human health has the potential to be impacted upon by environmental vectors (i.e. environmental components such as air, water or soil through which contaminants or pollutants, which have the potential to cause harm, can be transported so that they come into contact with human beings). Hazards or nuisances to human health can arise as a result of exposure to these vectors arising from incompatible adjacent land uses for example. These factors have been considered with regard to the description of the baseline

of each environmental component and the identification and evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Draft Plan and the alternatives.

### 3.3.3 Existing Problems

As mentioned above, certain environmental vectors have the potential to transport and deposit contaminants or pollutants which could cause harm to the health of Athy's population. Such threats are expanded upon below and in the following sections.

IPPC licensed facilities could be potential polluters to the Plan area if the facilities do not comply with their licenses.

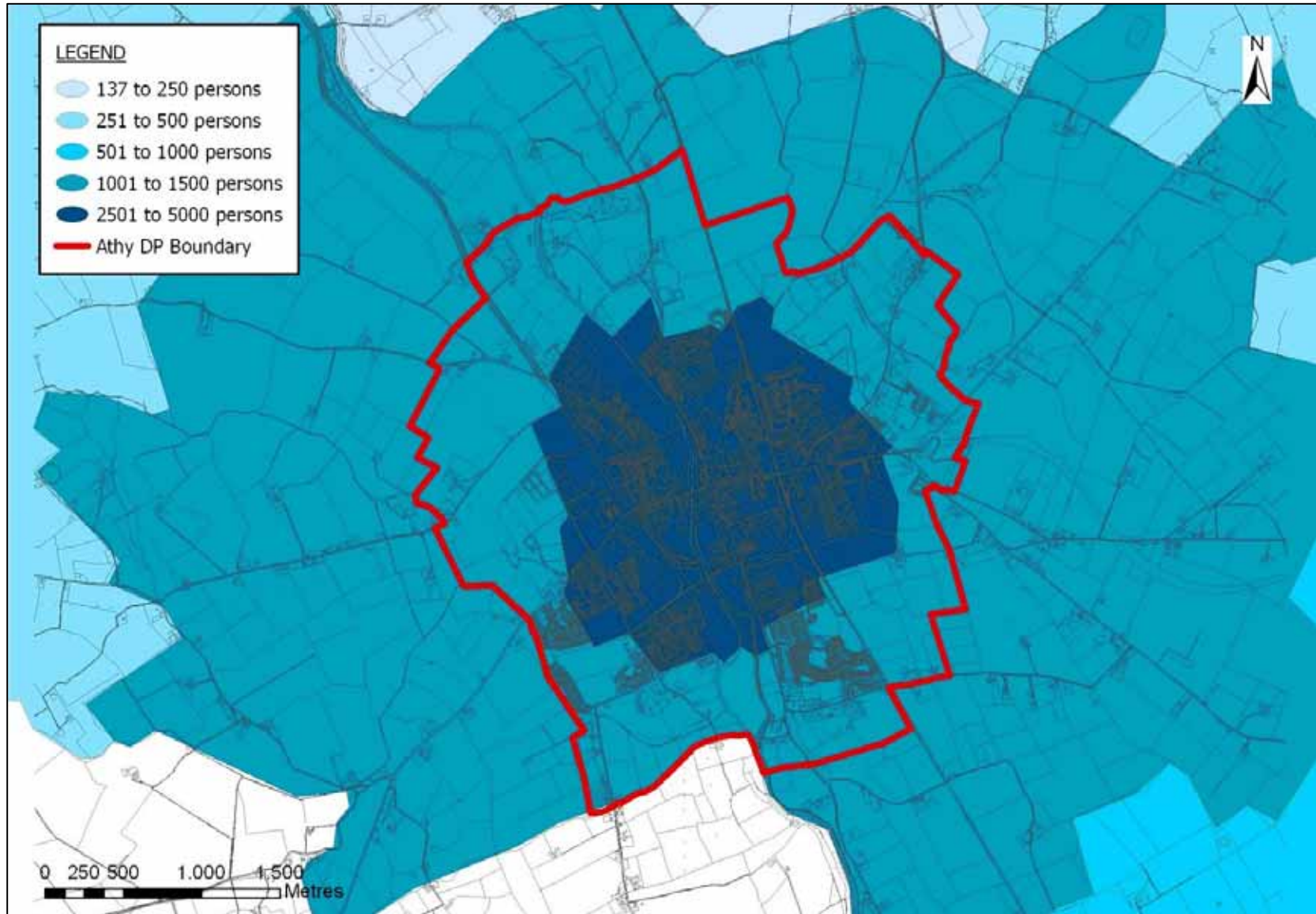
Although air quality in the Town meets current standards, traffic "hotspots" located along the main roads especially at intersections can give rise to a harsh sensory environment which may impact upon human health (see also Section 3.7.3).

### 3.3.4 Evolution of Population and Human Health in the absence of the Draft Plan

In the absence of a Development Plan there would be no framework for the provision of infrastructure to serve existing and future development. This could delay or hinder the provision of infrastructure and result in impacts on environmental vectors to which humans are exposed. For example, a lack of appropriate waste water treatment infrastructure could adversely impact upon drinking water quality and subsequently upon human health.

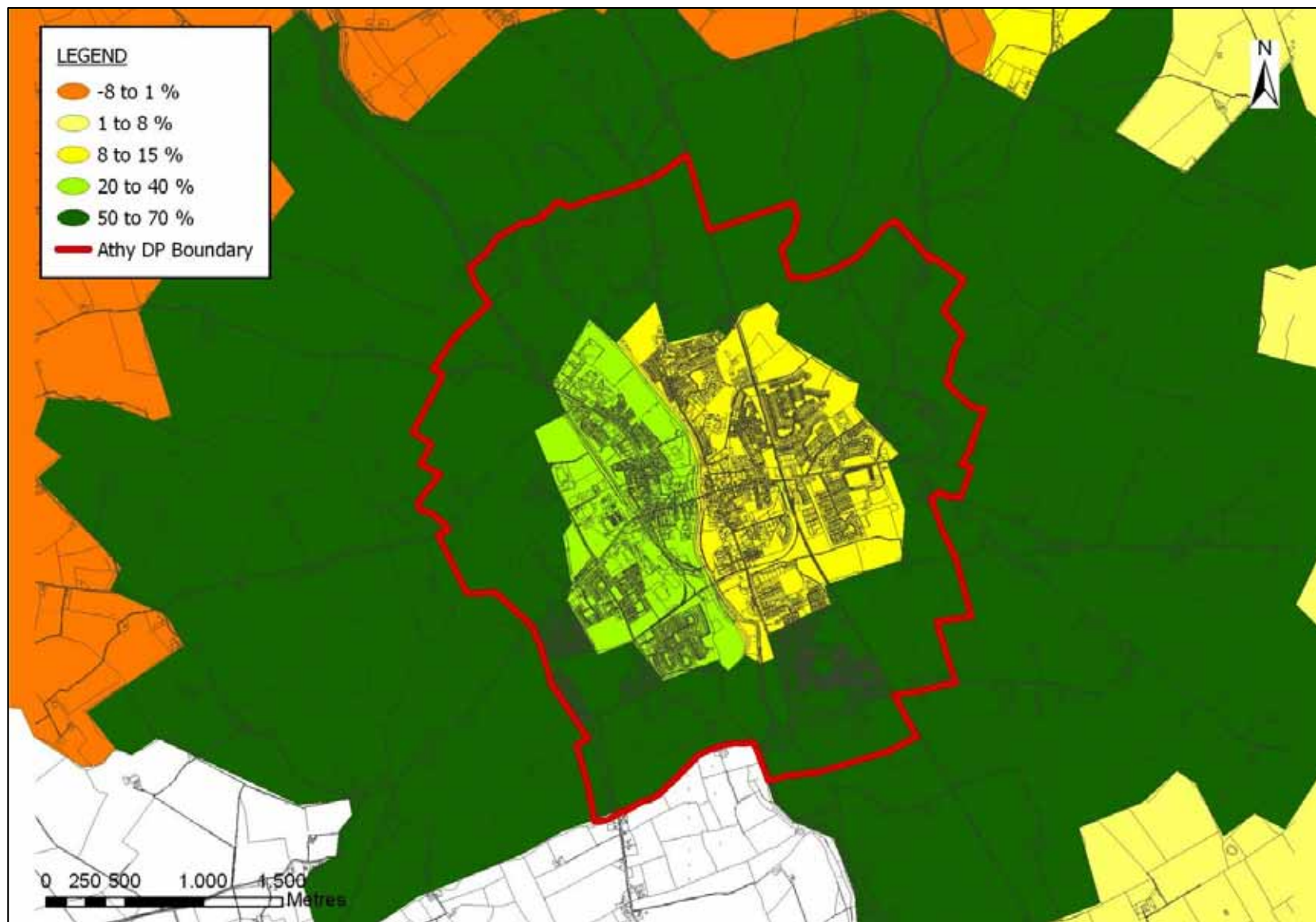
<sup>7</sup> CSO (various) *Census 2006 Volume 1 - Population Classified by Area; Census 2002 Volume 1 - Population Classified by Area; Census 1996 Volume 1 - Population Classified by Area* Cork: CSO.

<sup>8</sup> It is noted that there appears to be data missing to the south east of the Plan area – this area falls with Laois County Council.

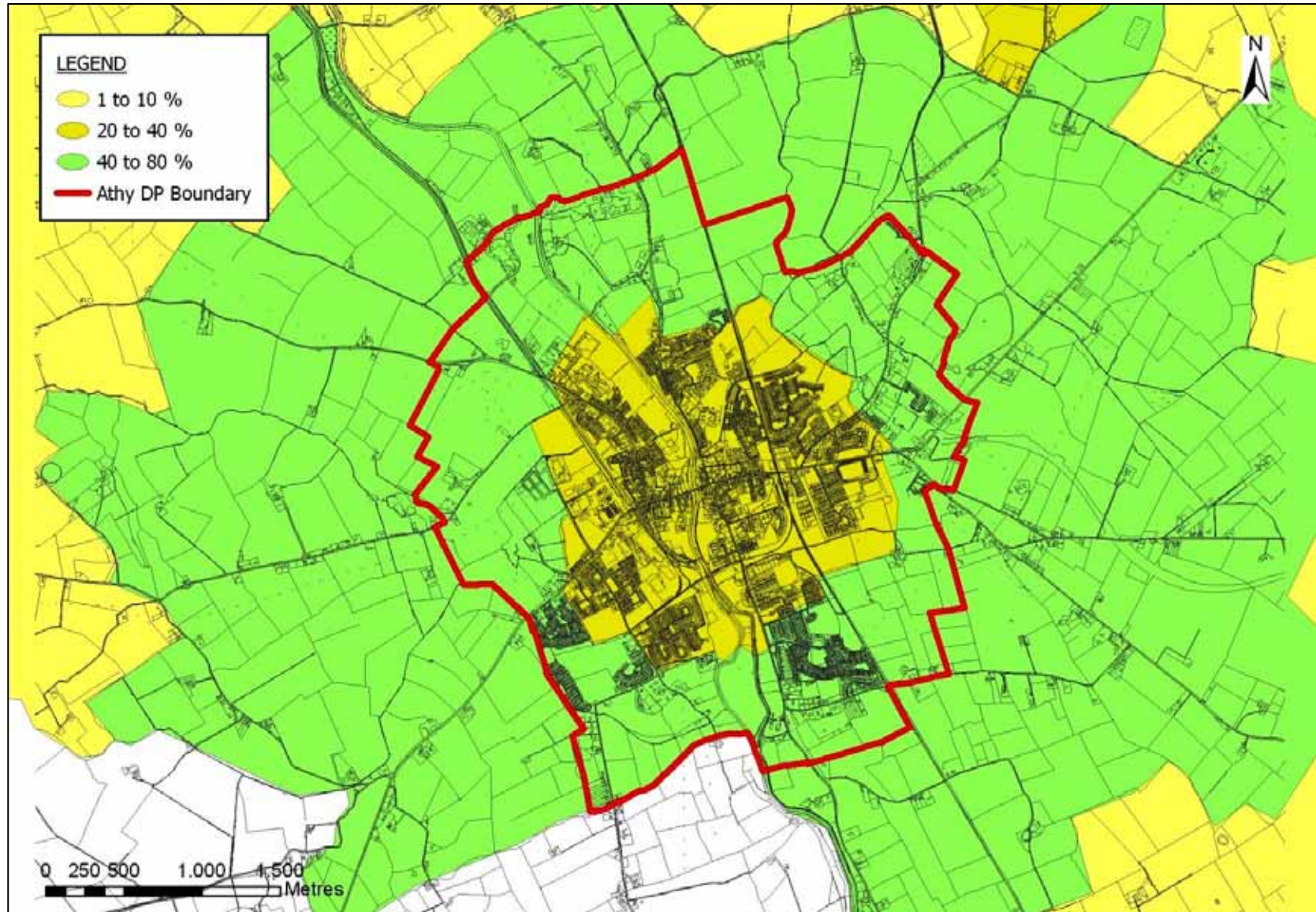


**Figure 3.10 Population of Athy 2006**  
Source: CSO (2007)



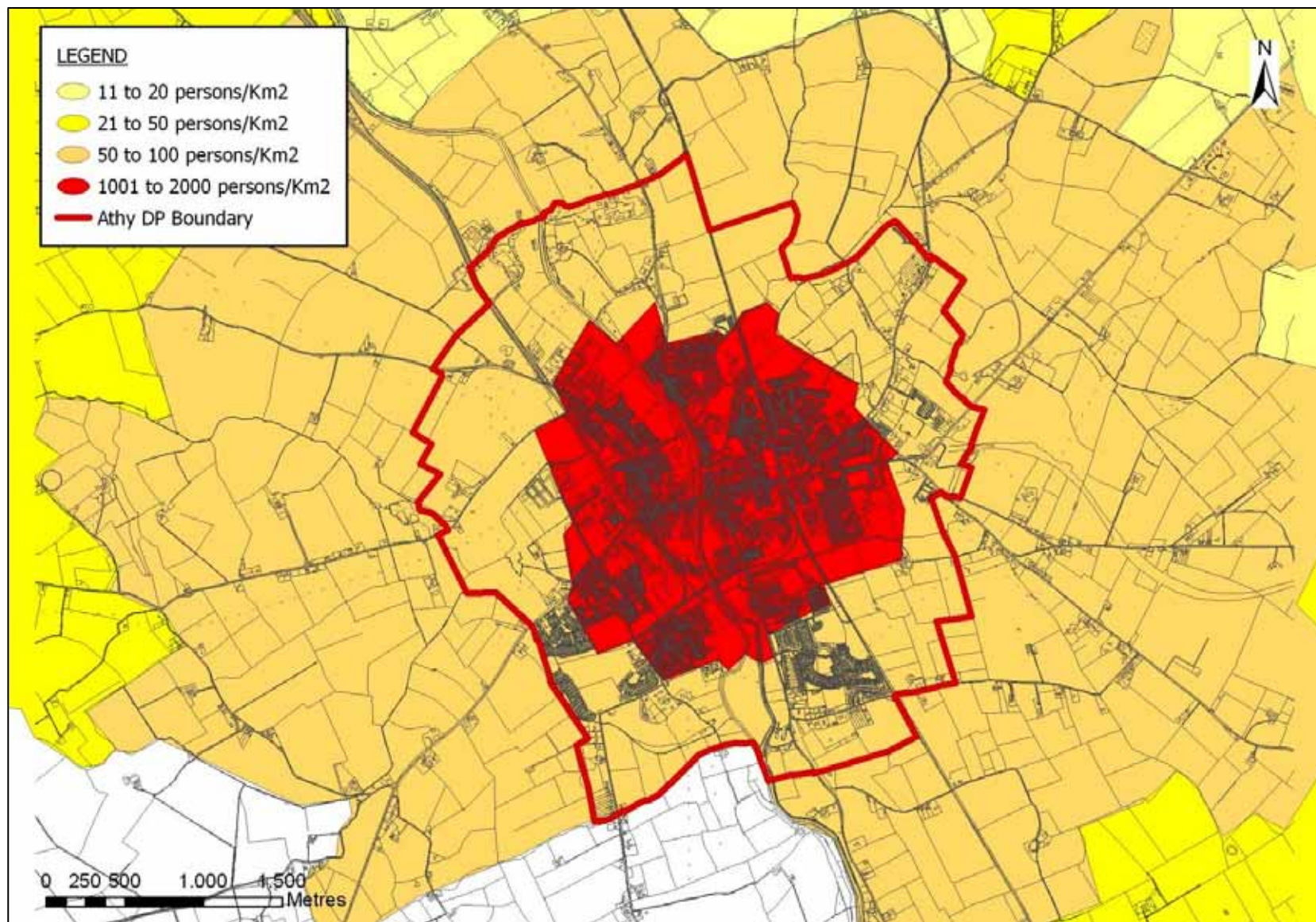


**Figure 3.11 Population Change in the Town 2002-2006**  
Source: CSO (2007)



**Figure 3.12 Population Change in the Town 1996-2002**  
Source: CSO (2003)





**Figure 3.13 Population Density 2006**  
Source: CSO (2007)



## 3.4 Soil

### 3.4.1 Introduction

Soil is the top layer of the earth's crust. It is formed by mineral particles, organic matter, water, air and living organisms. Soil can be considered as a non-renewable natural resource because it develops over very long timescales. It is an extremely complex, variable and living medium and performs many vital functions including: food and other biomass production, storage, filtration and transformation of many substances including water, carbon, and nitrogen. Soil has a role as a habitat and gene pool, serves as a platform for human activities, landscape and heritage and acts as a provider of raw materials. Such functions of soil are worthy of protection because of their socio-economic as well as environmental importance.

Soils in any area are the result of the interaction of various factors, such as parent material, climate, vegetation and human action.

To date, there is no legislation which is specific to the protection of soil resources. However, there is currently an EU Thematic Strategy on the protection of soil which includes a proposal for a Soil Framework Directive which proposes common principles for protecting soils across the EU.

### 3.4.2 Soil Types<sup>9</sup>

Soil types, as classified by Teagasc in co-operation with the Forest Service, EPA and GSI, are mapped on Figure 3.14. Subsoils in the Town are mapped on Figure 3.15.

Much of the Plan area consists of basic mineral soil with shallow well drained basic mineral soil comprising the majority. An area of mineral alluvium runs alongside the Barrow and the Clogorow Bog Stream indicating potential flood risk areas (see Section 3.5.7).

Subsoils in the Plan area consist mainly of limestone sands and gravels and limestone till.

Figure 3.16 maps "soil sealing" in the Town. This map indicates lands that have been built upon, thus sealing off the soil. Urbanised areas within the Town are clearly seen.

### 3.4.3 Geology, Quarries and Minerals

The underlying geology of Athy is mapped on Figure 3.17. The east of the Plan area is underlain with fossiliferous dark-grey muddy limestone while peloidal calcarenitic limestone exists in the west. Beyond that, bedrock comprises Crinoidal wackestone/packstone limestone.

Figure 3.18 maps the mineral locations in Athy. Within the Plan area boundary, there are three mineral location sites, five sites lay outside of the Plan boundary. All of these are to the north west of the Town.

### 3.4.4 Existing Problems

Land cover differences between the CORINE data (see Section 3.2.2) indicate that agricultural lands within the Plan area are being replaced by urban areas - this is likely to be resulting sealing off of soil resources.

Certain parts of the Town are not within the catchment of waste water treatment networks and consequently development in these areas uses septic tanks systems to treat waste water arising - it is likely that local pollution of soil is occurring in certain areas as a result of poorly maintained systems.

Greenfield development involves the building upon and thereby sealing off of soil thus representing an environmental problem.

Soil has the potential to be polluted and contaminated as a result of pollution from agricultural sources.

The Local Authority has identified three areas in Athy which were formerly used as dumps, asbestos is known to exist at these sites. These sites are at Greenhills, Tonlegee Lawns (Kilkenny Rd) and an area along the old railway line crossing the Carlow Rd. Mapping was not available at the time of writing this report. The exact boundaries of these sites are uncertain.

<sup>9</sup> Teagasc, GSI, Forest Service & EPA (2006) *Soils and Subsoils Class* Dublin: DEHLG

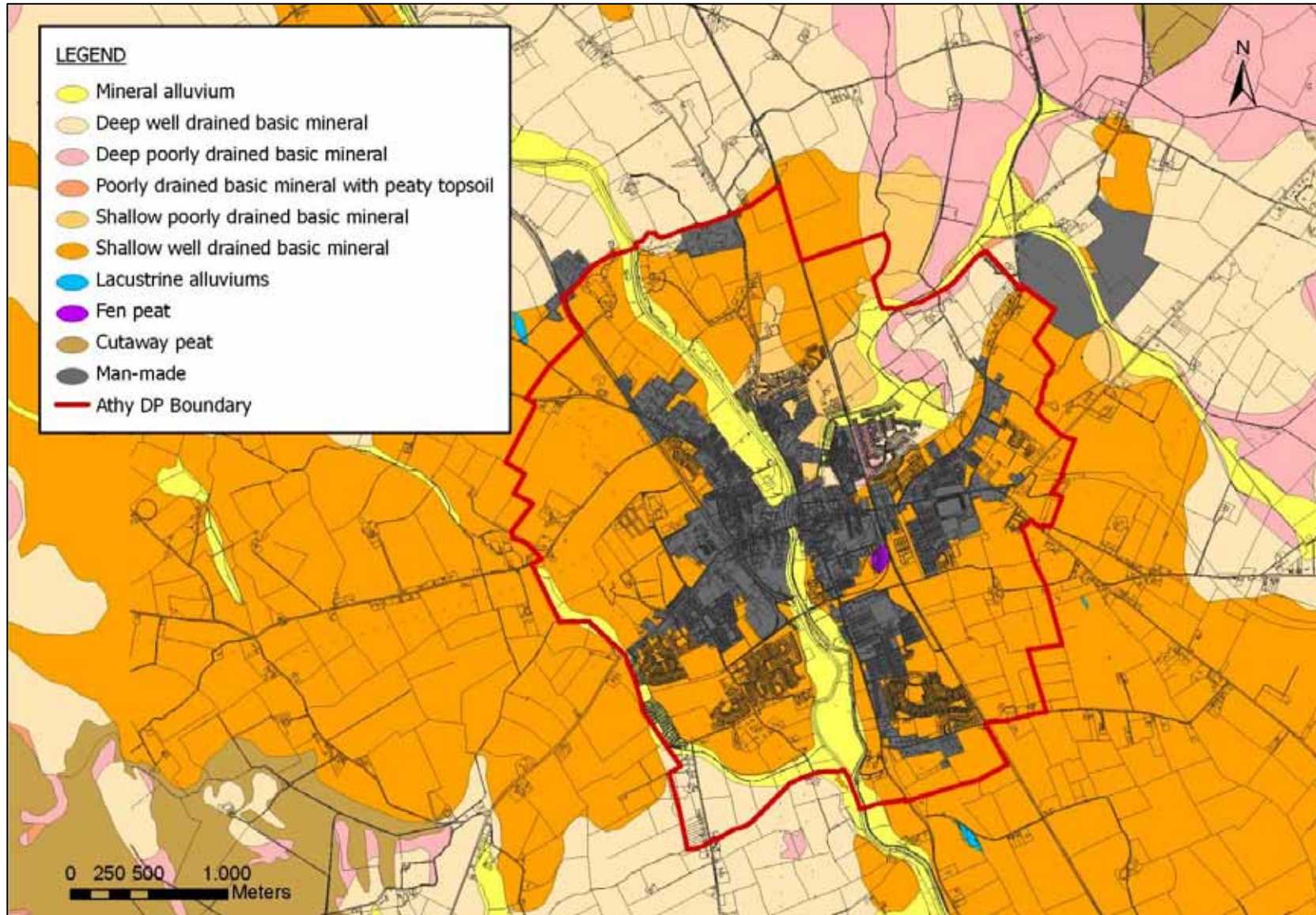
### **3.4.5 Evolution of Soil in the absence of the Draft Plan**

In the absence of the Development Plan, the evolution of soil would be dependent on developments which take place.

The currently proposed Soil Directive suggests encouraging the rehabilitation of brownfield sites, thus reducing the depletion of greenfield sites. However, in the absence of Plan, there would be no framework for the direction of growth towards brownfield sites, where such

direction is appropriate. As a result greenfield development would be likely to occur on an increased basis and would result in the building upon and thereby sealing off of the non-renewable subsoil and soil resources.

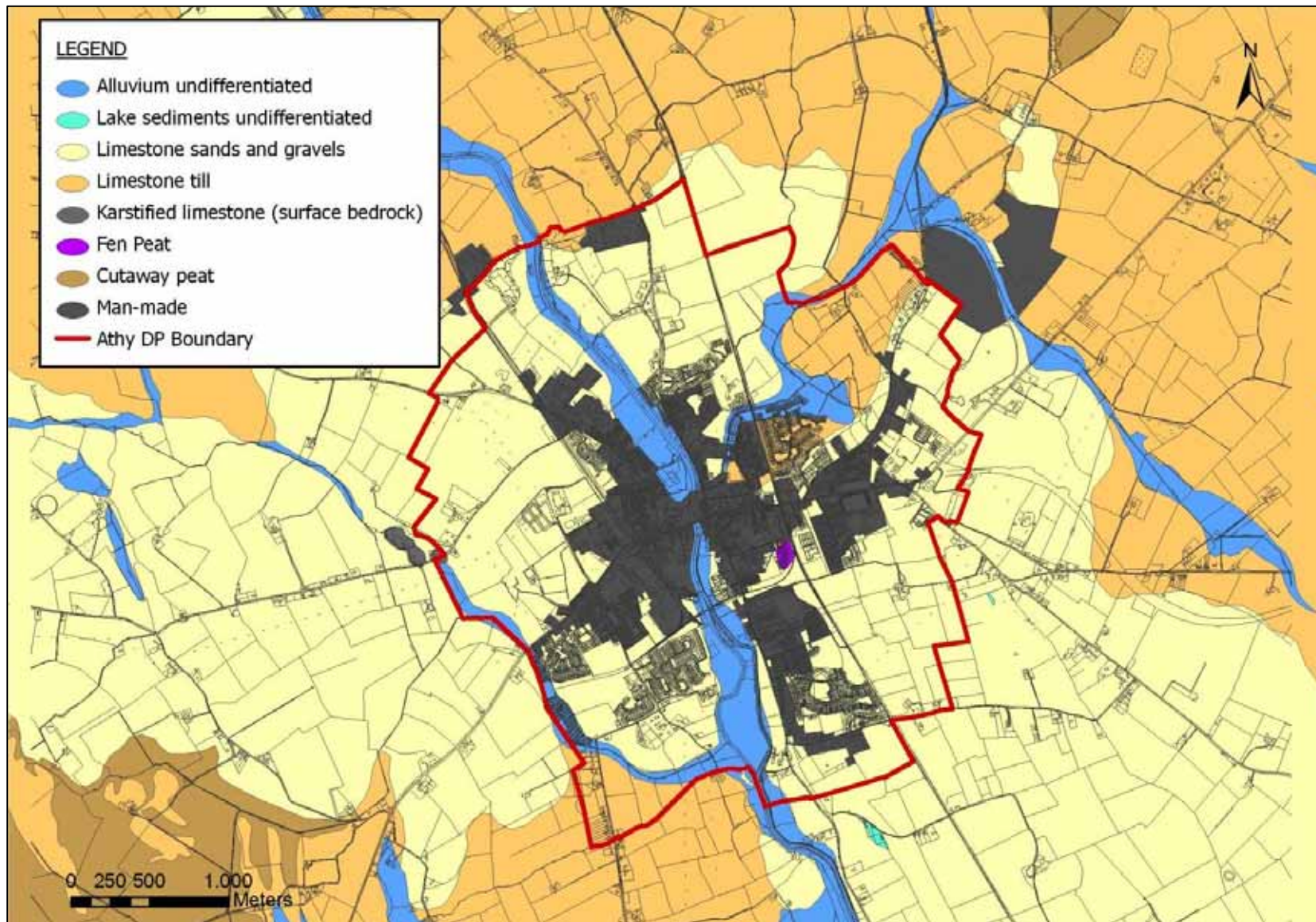
In the absence of a Plan, there would be no framework for the provision of infrastructure - such as that relating to waste water treatment - to serve existing and future development and therefore soil would have the potential to be polluted and contaminated as a result of pollution from development which is not serviced by appropriate waste water infrastructure.



**Figure 3.14 Soil Types**

Source: Teagasc in co-operation with the Forest Service, EPA and GSI (2006)

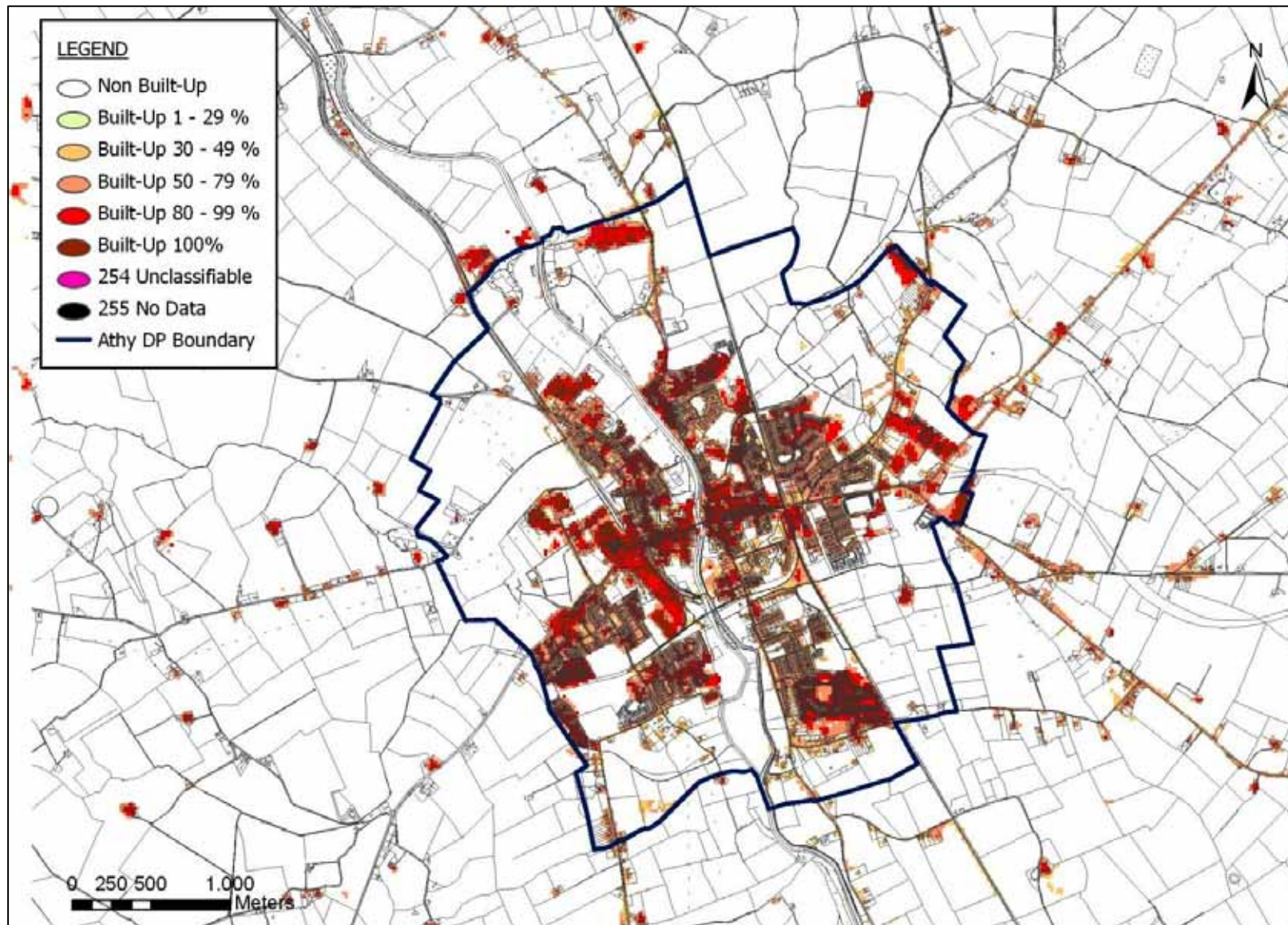




**Figure 3.15 Subsoil Types**

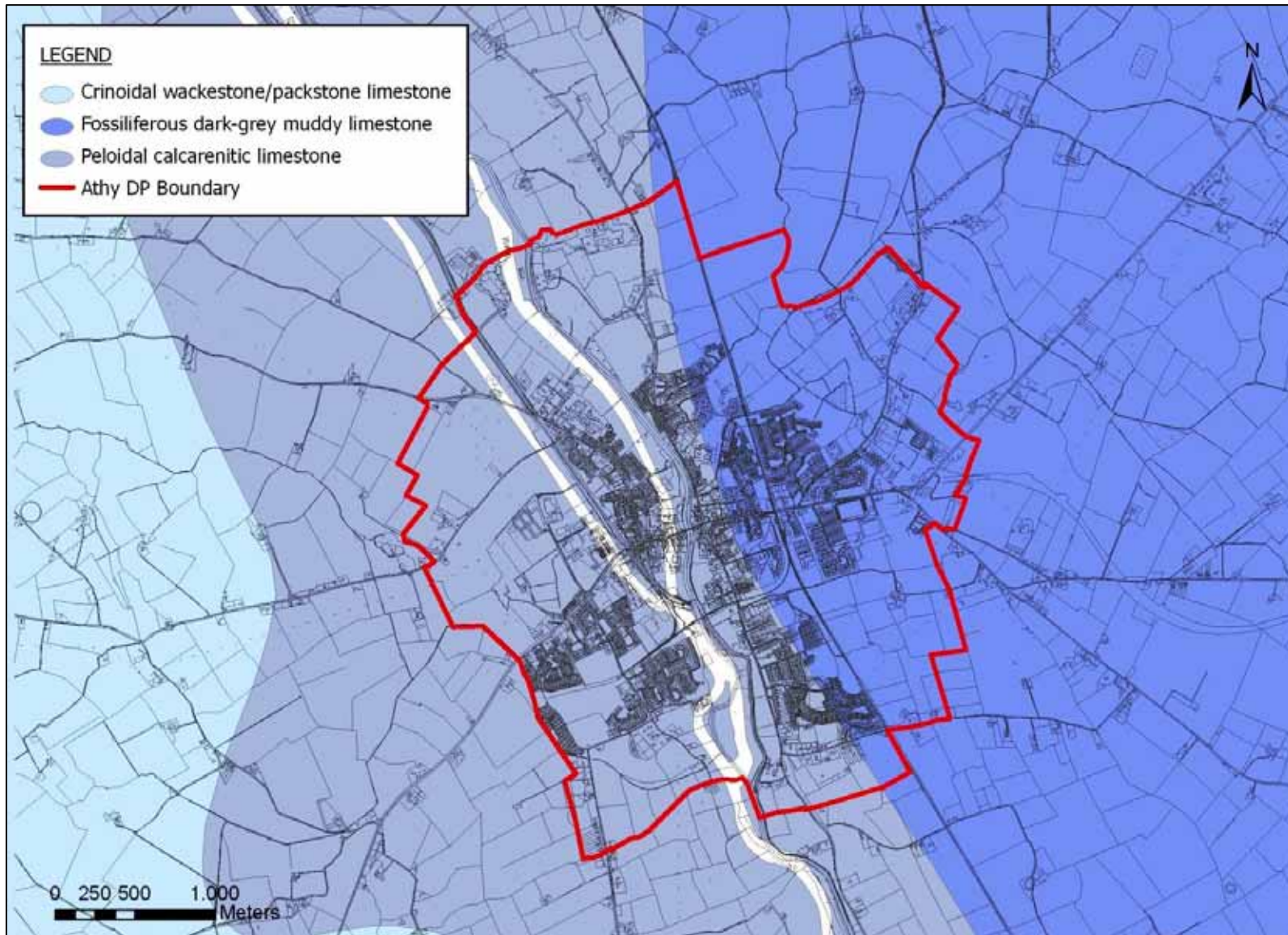
Source: Teagasc in co-operation with the Forest Service, EPA and GSI (2006)





**Figure 3.16 Soil Sealing**

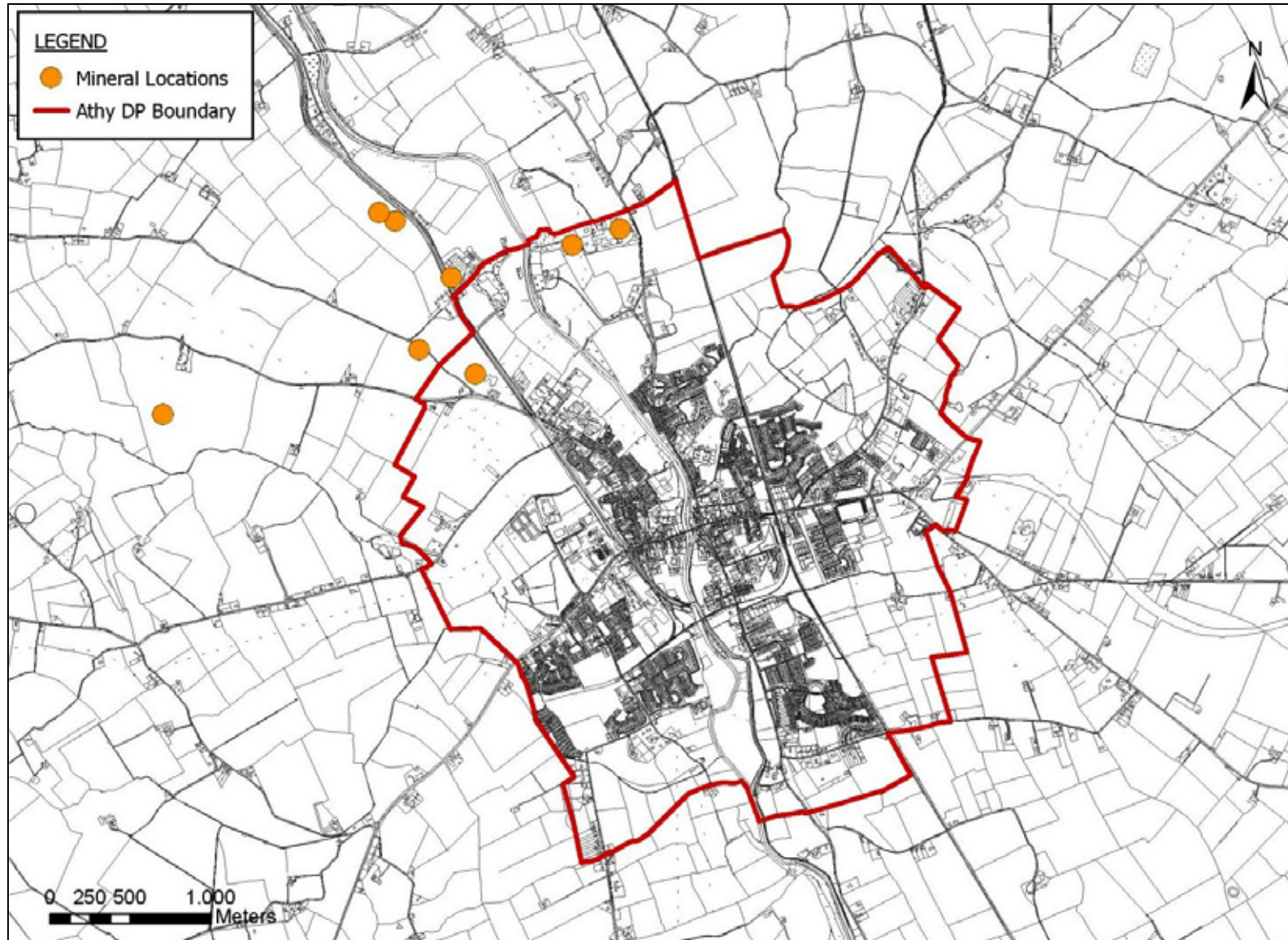
Source: EPA (2009)



**Figure 3.17 Geology**

Source: GSI (2005)





**Figure 3.18 Quarries and Mineral Locations**  
Source: GSI (2001)

## 3.5 Water

### 3.5.1 Introduction

Water within and surrounding the Town has many functions: it provides drinking water to the area's population; it sustains the biodiversity and flora and fauna described under Section 3.2; it provides amenity; and, it is an integral part of the landscape.

### 3.5.2 Potential Pressures on Water Quality

Human activities, if not properly managed, can cause deterioration in water quality. Pressures exerted by human activities include the following:

- sewage and other effluents discharged to waters from point sources, e.g. pipes from treatment plants;
- discharges arising from diffuse or dispersed activities on land;
- abstractions from waters; and,
- structural alterations to water bodies.

A point source pressure has a recognisable and specific location at which pollution may originate. Examples of significant point source pressures include direct discharges from waste water treatment plants, licensed discharges from industrial activities, landfills, contaminated lands (e.g. disused gas works) and mines.

A diffuse source pressure unlike a point source is not restricted to an individual point or location. The source of a diffuse pressure can be quite extensive. Significant examples of diffuse pressures include runoff from forestry and agricultural lands.

Excessive abstractions from surface waters and groundwater for drinking and industrial purposes can create pressures on the ability of a water body to maintain both chemical and ecological status.

Structural alterations such as river straightening; construction of embankments, weirs, dams, port facilities and dredging can create conditions such that a water body is no longer able to support the natural ecology which

would have existed prior to such modifications. These pressures are also referred to as morphological pressures.

### 3.5.3 The Water Framework Directive

#### 3.5.3.1 Introduction and Requirements

Since 2000, Water Management in the EU has been directed by the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD). The WFD requires that all Member States implement the necessary measures to prevent deterioration of the status of all waters - surface, ground, estuarine and coastal - and protect, enhance and restore all waters with the aim of achieving "good status" by 2015. All public bodies are required to coordinate their policies and operations so as to maintain the good status of water bodies which are currently unpolluted and improve polluted water bodies to good status by 2015.

#### 3.5.3.2 River Basin Districts and Water Bodies

For the purpose of implementing the WFD, Ireland has been divided into eight river basin districts or areas of land that are drained by a large river or number of rivers and the adjacent estuarine / coastal areas. The management of water resources will be on these river basin districts.

Within each river basin district - for the purpose of assessment, reporting and management - water has been divided into groundwater, rivers, lakes, estuarine waters and coastal waters which are in turn divided into specific, clearly defined water bodies.

Athy falls within the South Eastern River Basin District (RBD).

#### 3.5.3.3 River Basin Management Plans

The Local Authorities located in the RBDs have prepared River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) which are due to be adopted in the coming months. The Management Plans provide objectives for river basins in order to implement the requirements of the WFD to help protect and improve all waters in the RBDs.



### 3.5.4 Surface Water

#### 3.5.4.1 Introduction

Surface water in the Plan area is made up of the River Barrow, the Clogorow Stream and the Grand Canal.

#### 3.5.4.2 EPA Monitoring

Water quality in the Plan area is no longer monitored by the EPA.

The most recent water quality data<sup>10</sup> is mapped on Figure 3.19. Within the Town, there is one old monitoring point with another existing to the east of the Plan area. Downstream of this, there is a monitoring point where quality is Q3-4<sup>11</sup>. The River Barrow is monitored upstream of the Town outside of the Plan area, water quality is Q3-4 moderate status.

The Barrow Main Water Management Unit Action Plan (drawn up as part of the RBMP) identifies the upper reaches of the Clogorow Stream as being heavily silted and weedy and the lower reaches as being heavily calcified. A study carried out as part of the Action Plan didn't identify any sensitive species at either the upper or lower part of the stream. It also cites eutrophication as a problem on the Barrow.

#### 3.5.4.3 WFD Surface Water Status

The WFD defines "surface water status" as the general expression of the status of a body of surface water, determined by the poorer of its ecological status and its chemical status. Thus, to achieve "good surface water status" both the ecological status and the chemical status of a surface water body need to be at least "good".

Chemical Status is a pass/fail assignment with a failure defined by a face-value exceedance of an Environmental Quality Standards (EQS) for one or more priority action substances (PAS) listed in Annex X of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). The EQS values for individual PAS substances are set at European level. Good

<sup>10</sup> EPA (various) *Water Quality in Ireland* Wexford: EPA

<sup>11</sup> The Biotic Index Values, or Q values, are assigned to rivers in accordance with biological monitoring of surface waters - low Q ratings, as low as Q1, are indicative of low biodiversity and polluted waters, and high Q ratings, as high as Q5, are indicative of high biodiversity and unpolluted waters. Good status as defined by the Water Framework Directive equates to approximately Q4 in the national scheme of biological classification of rivers as set out by the EPA.

surface water chemical status means that concentrations of pollutants in the water body do not exceed the environmental limit values specified in the Directive.

Ecological status is an expression of the structure and functioning of aquatic ecosystems associated with surface waters. Such waters are classified as of "good ecological status" when they meet Directive requirements.

Generally, surface water in the Town is of good status with an area of moderate status in the north west of the Plan area. Figure 3.20 maps the WFD Surface Water Status for the Town.

### 3.5.5 Ground Water

#### 3.5.5.1 Introduction

Groundwater is stored in the void spaces in underground layers of rock, or aquifers. These aquifers are permeable, allowing both the infiltration of water from the soils above them and the yielding of water to surface and coastal waters. Groundwater is the part of the subsurface water that is in the saturated zone - the zone below the water table, the uppermost level of saturation in an aquifer at which the pressure is atmospheric, in which all pores and fissures are full of water.

#### 3.5.5.2 EPA Groundwater Quality

The EPA national groundwater-monitoring network includes sampling at some locations that are used for the abstraction of drinking water. Mean Phosphate Concentration, Mean Nitrate Concentration and Maximum Faecal Coliform are measured at Townparks (site code: 09\_001).

Phosphate is usually the limiting nutrient in surface water eutrophication and is therefore a cause for concern because relatively small inputs of phosphorus may lead to enrichment of lakes and rivers. In extremely vulnerable areas, where the soil and subsoil are shallow and where phosphorus enters groundwater in significant quantities, groundwater may act as an additional nutrient enrichment pathway for receptors such as lakes, rivers and wetlands. Mean Phosphate Concentration at this site in 2007/8 was 0.013 mg/l.

Relatively low concentrations of nitrate are found in natural groundwater and concentrations higher than 10mg/l as NO<sub>3</sub> are usually indicative of anthropogenic organic or inorganic inputs. Organic sources can include waste disposal, e.g. animal waste spreading or effluent from on-site wastewater treatment systems, whilst inorganic sources can include the spreading of artificial fertiliser. If a significant proportion of surface water flow is derived from groundwater, then increased nitrate concentrations in groundwater may contribute to eutrophication in surface waters. Mean Nitrate Concentration 18.5mg/l.

Microbial pathogens originate in animal faeces, i.e. from humans, cows, pigs etc. The main sources of microbial pathogens are on-site wastewater treatment systems (e.g. septic tank systems), farmyard run-off, grazing animals and the land-spreading of manure or slurry. In practice, the presence of faecal coliforms in water is taken as an indicator of faecal contamination and thus the potential presence of pathogens, i.e. the actual disease-causing organisms. The presence of faecal coliforms not only reflects the impact of human activities, but also the vulnerable nature of groundwater in some parts of the country. Max Faecal Coliform Count at this site in 2007/8 was 0.

### 3.5.5.3 WFD Groundwater Status

For groundwater bodies, the approach to classification is different from that for surface water. For each body of groundwater, both the chemical status and the quantitative must be determined. Both have to be classed as either "good" or "poor". The WFD sets out a series of criteria that must be met for a body to be classed as good chemical and quantitative status.

Groundwater within and surrounding the Plan area is of Good Status. This is mapped on Figure 3.21 below.

### 3.5.5.4 Groundwater Protection Schemes

Groundwater Protection Schemes are county-based projects that are undertaken jointly between the GSI and the respective Local Authority.

Groundwater sources, particularly public, group scheme and industrial supplies, are of critical importance in many regions. Consequently, the objective of source protection zones is to provide protection by placing tighter controls on

activities within all or part of the zone of contribution (ZOC) of the source.

A Groundwater Protection Scheme has been carried out for the County. Part of the east of the Town is a Source Protection area. The inner and outer protection areas are mapped on Figure 3.22.

### 3.5.5.5 Aquifer Vulnerability

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) rates aquifers according to their vulnerability to pollution. Aquifer vulnerability refers to the ease with which pollutants of various kinds can enter underground water. Figure 3.23 shows aquifer vulnerability data for the Town.

The vast majority of the Town is underlain by moderately to highly vulnerable aquifers. Along the western boundary, there are areas of extreme vulnerability with small areas of surface rock or Karst existing within them.

### 3.5.5.6 Aquifer Productivity

The GSI rates aquifers based on the hydrogeological characteristics and on the value of the groundwater resource. Ireland's entire land surface is divided into nine aquifer categories, two of which occur in Athy Town. The east of the Plan area is underlain by a locally important sand/gravel aquifer. These types of aquifers are capable of yielding enough water to boreholes or springs to supply domestic, commercial and industrial uses, depending on the nature and scale of the development. The west of the Plan area is underlain by a regionally important karstified aquifer-dominated by diffuse flow.

Figure 3.24 shows aquifer productivity data for the Town.

## 3.5.6 Register of Protected Areas

The WFD requires that Registers of Protected Areas (RPAs) are compiled for a number water bodies or part of water bodies which must have extra controls on their quality by virtue of how their waters are used by people and by wildlife.

The WFD requires that these RPAs contain: areas from which waters are taken for public or private water supply schemes; designated

shellfish production areas; bathing waters; areas which are affected by high levels of substances most commonly found in fertilizers, animal and human wastes - these areas are considered nutrient sensitive; areas designated for the protection of habitats or species e.g. salmonid areas; Special Areas of Conservation (SACs); and, Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Waters within and surrounding the Town which are listed on the RPAs are shown on Figure 3.25.

In Ireland, waters intended for human consumption are protected under the Drinking Water Regulations (S.I. 439/2000). The actual protected areas for drinking water are not outlined within these Regulations, so the protected area for drinking waters is represented by the water body from which the water is abstracted, be it groundwater, river or lake. All groundwater underlying the Town is listed on the RPA for Drinking Water Groundwater.

The RPA for Water Dependent Habitats includes habitats that are dependent on water: this includes areas already listed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service as Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas. Rivers on which certain habitats are dependant are also listed on the RPA. The River Barrow is listed on the RPA as it is a cSAC. It is also listed as a nutrient sensitive river.

### 3.5.7 Flooding

#### 3.5.7.1 Introduction

Flooding is an environmental phenomenon which, as well have causing economic and social impacts, could in certain circumstances pose a risk to human health. Athy Town is vulnerable to adverse effects which are exacerbated by changes in the occurrence of severe rainfall events, high tides and associated flooding of the Town's rivers. Local conditions such as low-lying lands and inadequate surface water drainage increase the risk of flooding. The risk of flooding has also been increased in the past by human actions including the clearing of vegetation to make way for agriculture, draining of bog and wetland areas and the development of settlements in the flood plains of rivers. Infrastructural development, culverting, forestry operations and all urban development in the floodplain present ongoing flooding hazards. Increased surface water runoff due to construction of new hard surfaced areas is now generally not as significant a problem as it was

in the past in terms of its impact on peak flows because of the implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS).

#### 3.5.7.2 EU Floods Directive

European Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of flood risks requires Member States to carry out a preliminary assessment by 2011 in order to identify the river basins and associated coastal areas at risk of flooding. For such zones, flood risk maps are required to be drawn up by 2013. Flood risk management plans focused on prevention, protection and preparedness must be established by 2015. The OPW is currently involved in a research project to develop maps with national coverage indicating areas that might be prone to flooding from rivers and streams. Further work is underway to refine the method and outputs, which, if successful, may enable this information to be made available in the near future.

#### 3.5.7.3 DEHLG Flood Risk Management Guidelines

In November 2009 the DEHLG published *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities*. These are aimed at ensuring a more consistent, rigorous and systematic approach which will fully incorporate flood risk assessment and management into the planning system. Planning authorities are required to undertake flood risk identification, assessment and management processes as appropriate when preparing or varying development plans and local area plans and in consideration of applications for planning permission.

#### 3.5.7.4 OPW's National Flood Hazard Mapping

Figure 3.26 maps the locations of the most significant flooding events in the Plan area - accessible from the OPW's National Flood Hazard Mapping website. Flood events and flood extents are recorded at various locations along the Town's rivers.

#### 3.5.7.5 Future Influences of Flood Risk

Large scale changes in the Town which could significantly influence flood risk and increase the magnitude and occurrence of flooding in the future may include:

- Climate changes resulting in increased river flows and rising sea levels;
- Large scale land use changes such as increased afforestation and associated clear-cutting, changes in agricultural land use and drainage of upland wetlands;
- Urban development increasing the speed and volume of run-off; and
- Changes to geomorphological processes such as sediment transport, siltation and erosion.

### 3.5.7.6 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Kilgallen and Partners Consulting Engineers have been appointed by Athy Town Council to undertake a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the Development Plan. The SFRA provides an appraisal and assessment of available flood risk data for the land-use proposals within the boundaries of the Plan area. This process identifies flood risk indicators in each area and, where it is demonstrated that lands may be at risk of flooding, recommends modifications to land-use proposals or the carrying out of more detailed flood risk assessment as appropriate. Lands which are recommended as requiring further assessment are identified in the SFRA, these occur across the Plan area.

The SFRA established 1 in 100 year and 1 in 1000 year flood event lines for zoned lands within the Plan area (see Figure 3.27) and used this map in order to undertake the assessment and facilitate the making of recommendations.

The SFRA has informed the Draft Plan and the SEA, although not all of the SFRA recommendations have been integrated into the Plan - see Section 7.5.

### 3.5.8 Existing Problems

The above descriptions identify a number of sensitivities with regard to the status of water bodies within Athy Town. There are environmental problems in Athy with regard to water quality which have the potential for significant adverse impact upon human health, drinking water supplies, biodiversity and flora and fauna.

Water quality data identifies multiple points on rivers throughout Athy Town as being of Moderate, Poor or Bad Status.

The Barrow Main Water Management Unit Action Plan identifies water quality problems on the Clogorow Stream and the Barrow.

Flooding has occurred at various locations within the Town.

### 3.5.9 Evolution of Water in the absence of the Draft Plan

Based on the status data, certain surface and ground water bodies are at a status less than good, which is the standard required by 2015.

If growth is not accompanied by appropriate waste water infrastructure/capacity then it is likely that:

- Certain river and ground water bodies would fail to meet the objectives of the WFD by 2015; and,
- Significant adverse impacts upon the biodiversity and flora and fauna of the Town could potentially arise.

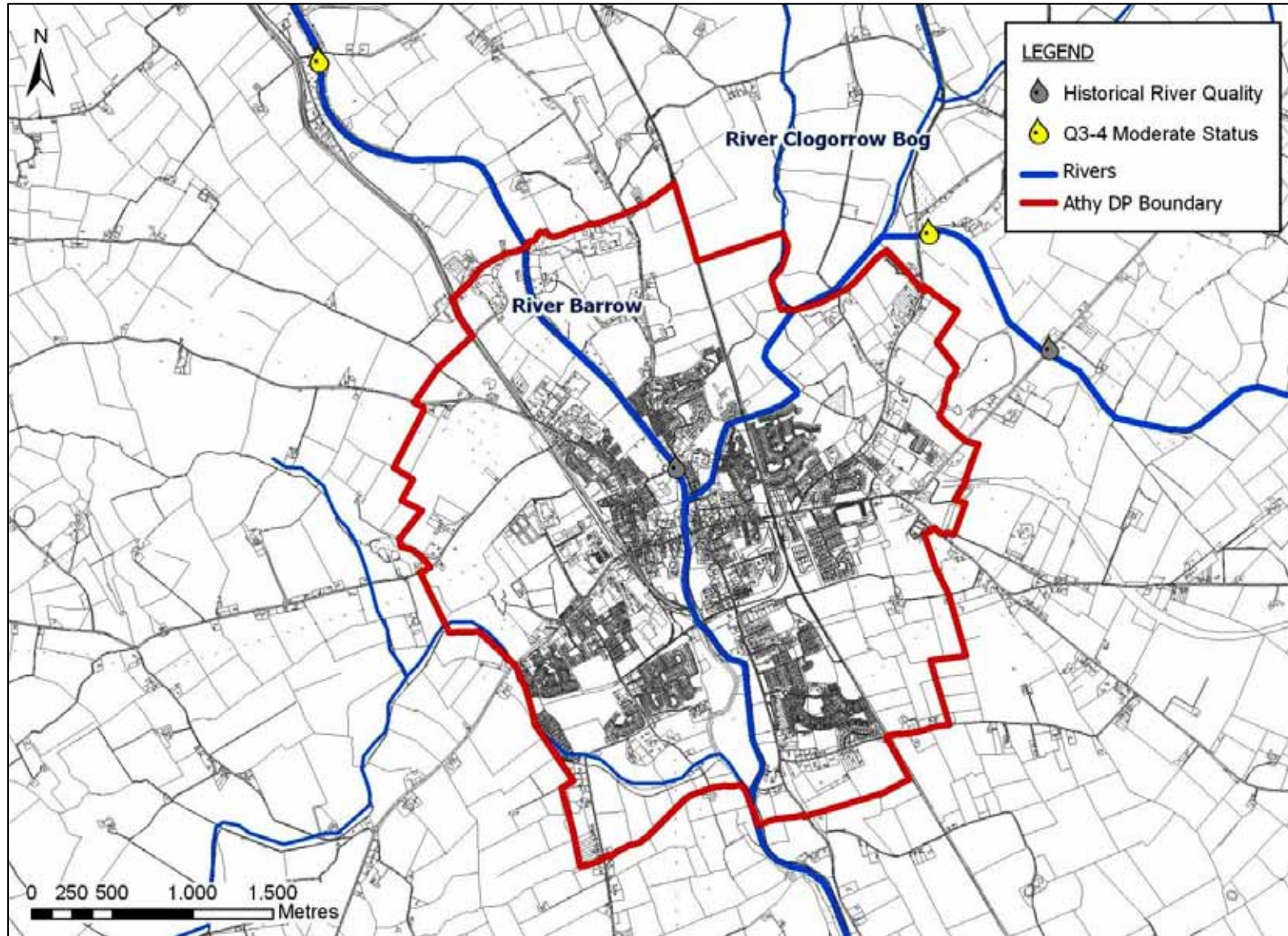
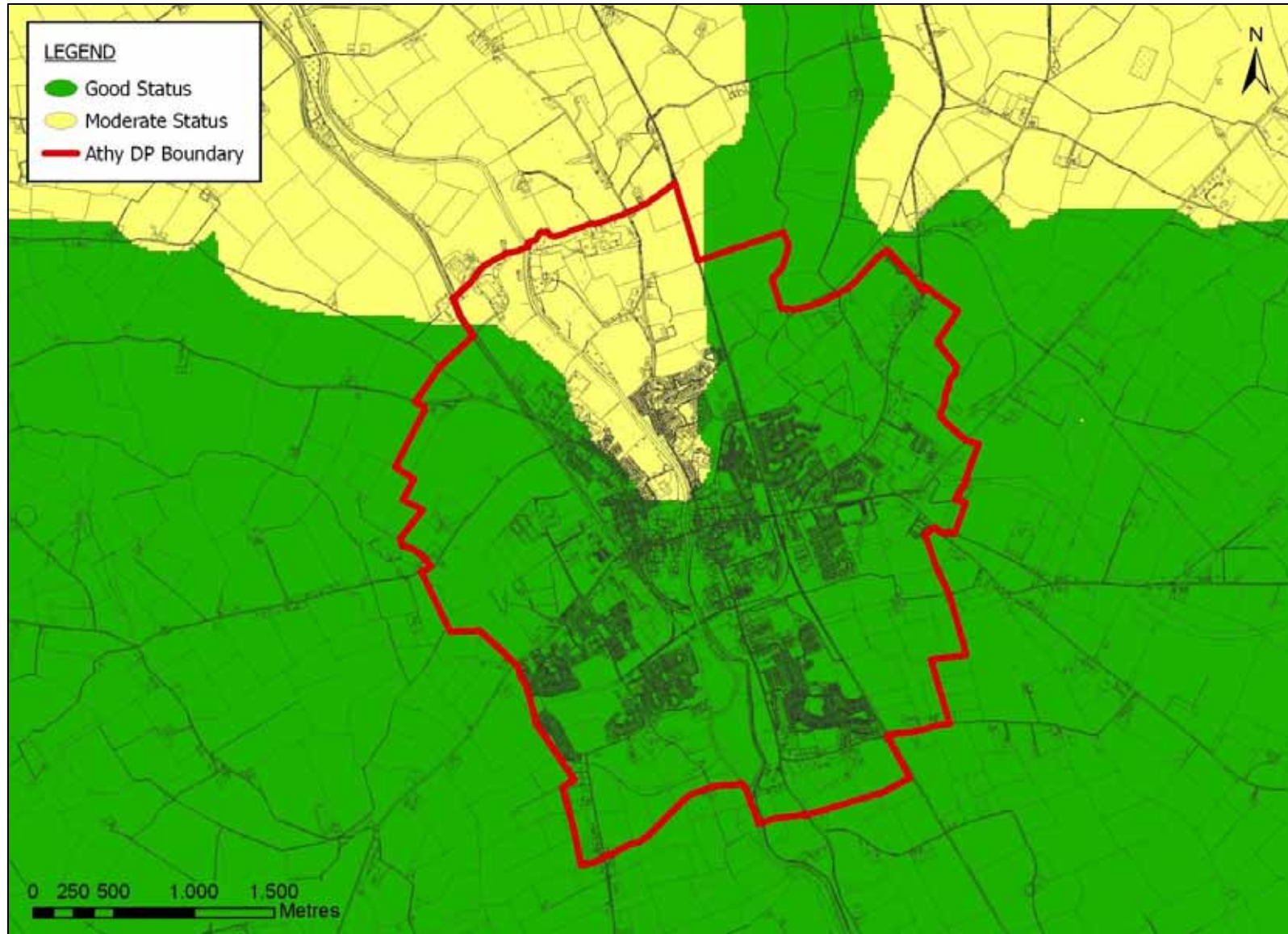
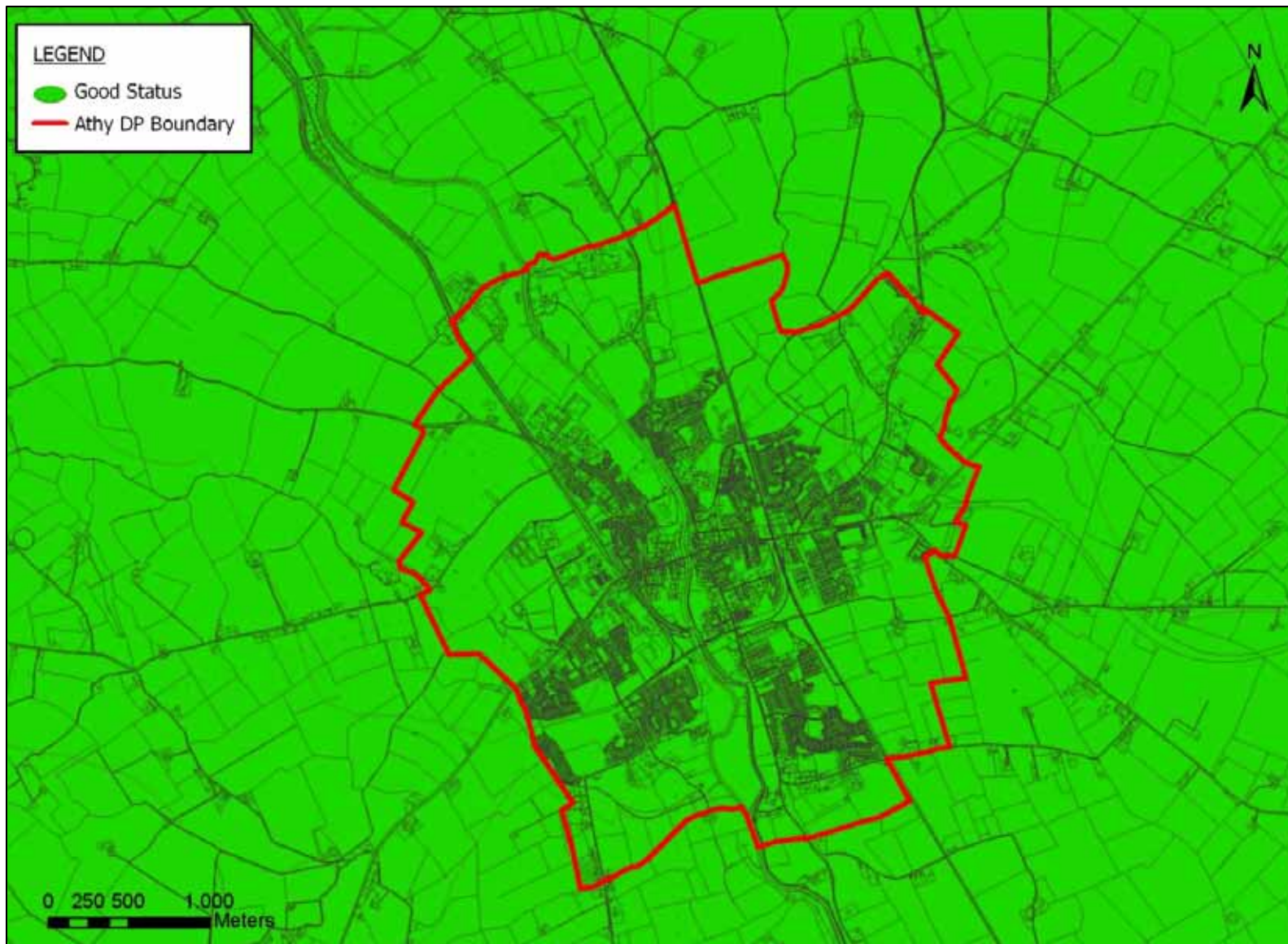


Figure 3.19 Q-Values (Biotic Index Ratings) at Points on Rivers  
Source: EPA (Various)



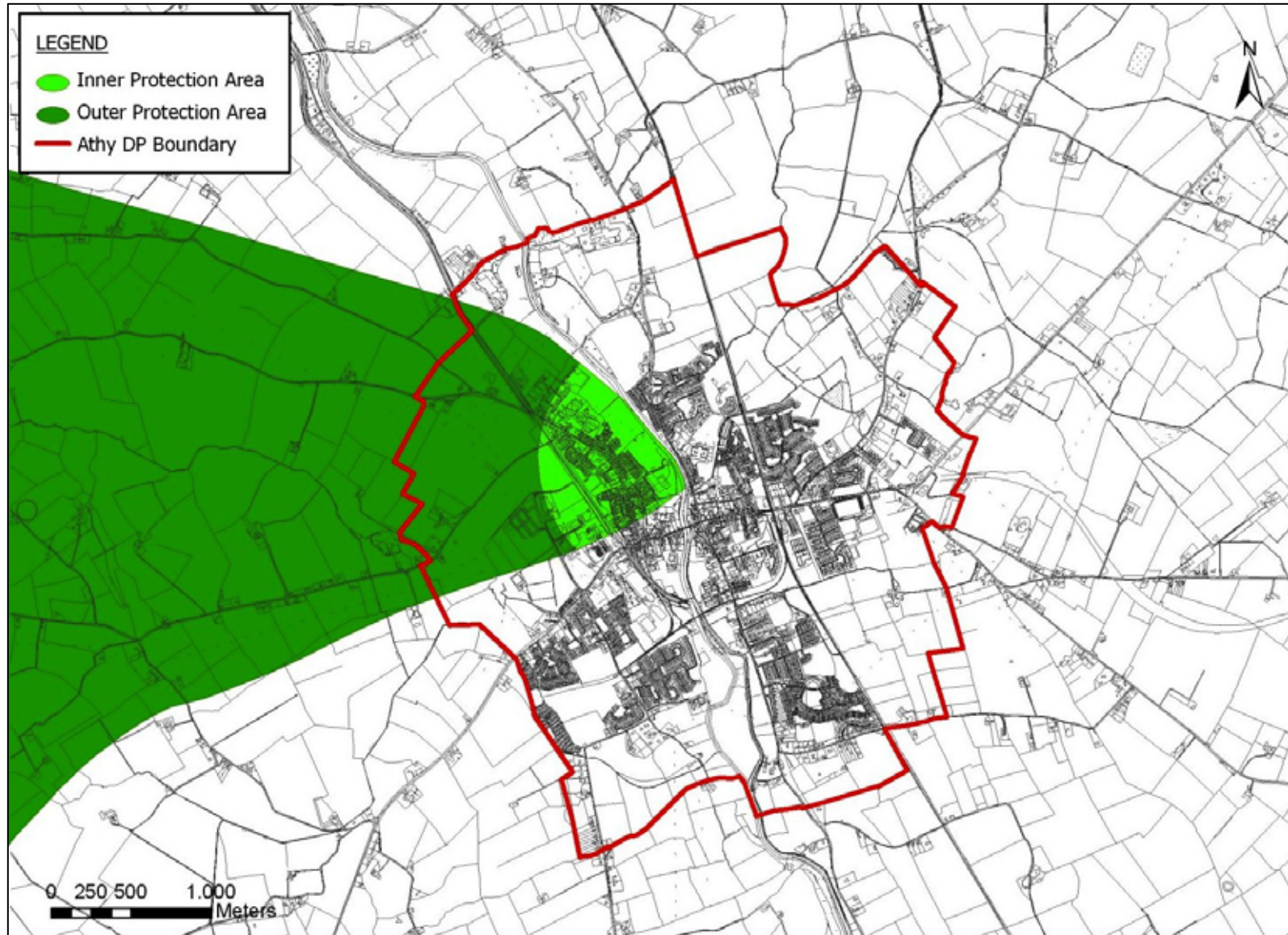


**Figure 3.20 WFD Status of Surface Waters in the Town**  
Source: EPA (2010)



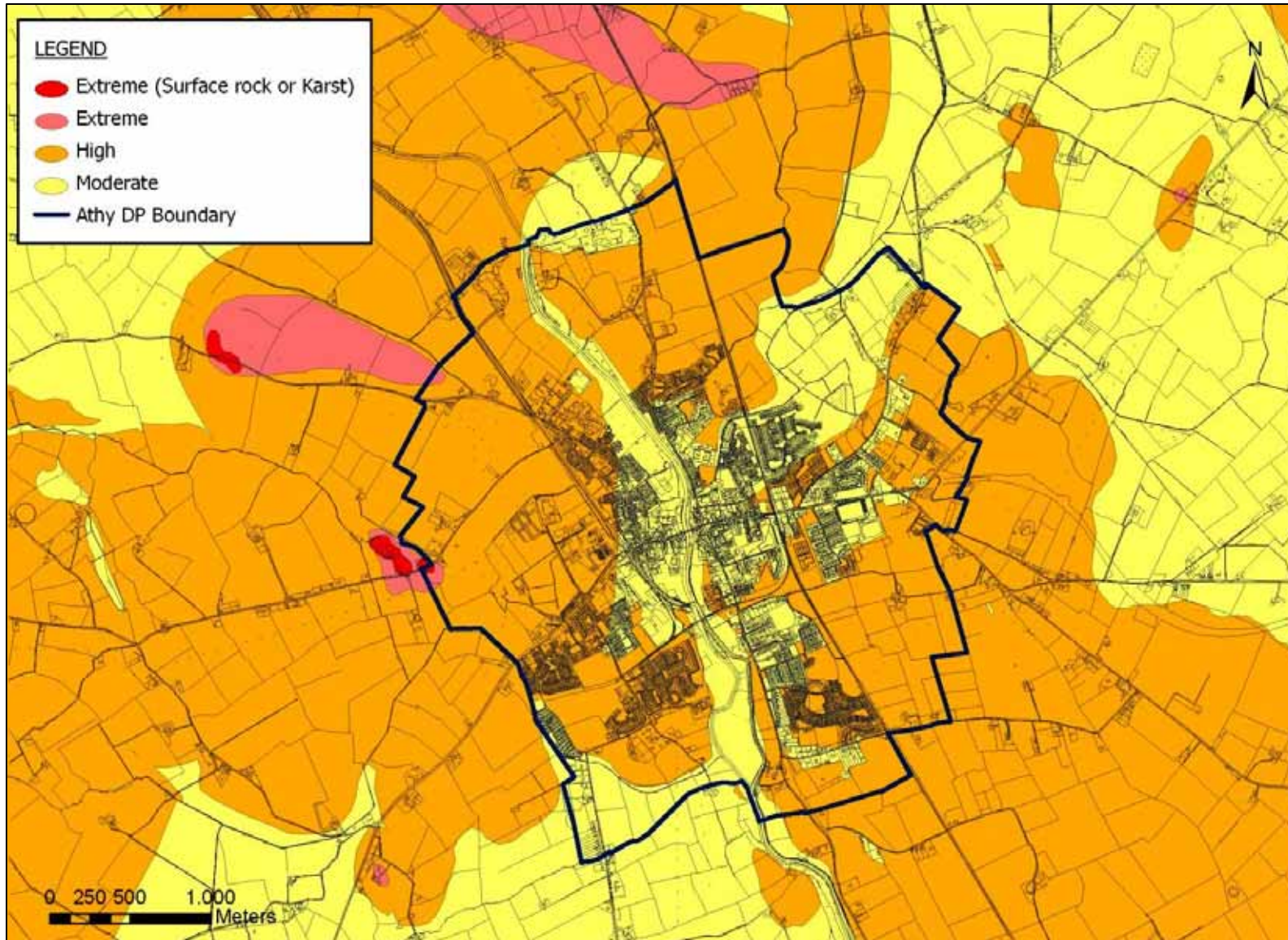
**Figure 3.21 Groundwater Quality and WFD Status of Groundwater**  
Source: EPA (2009), EPA (2010)





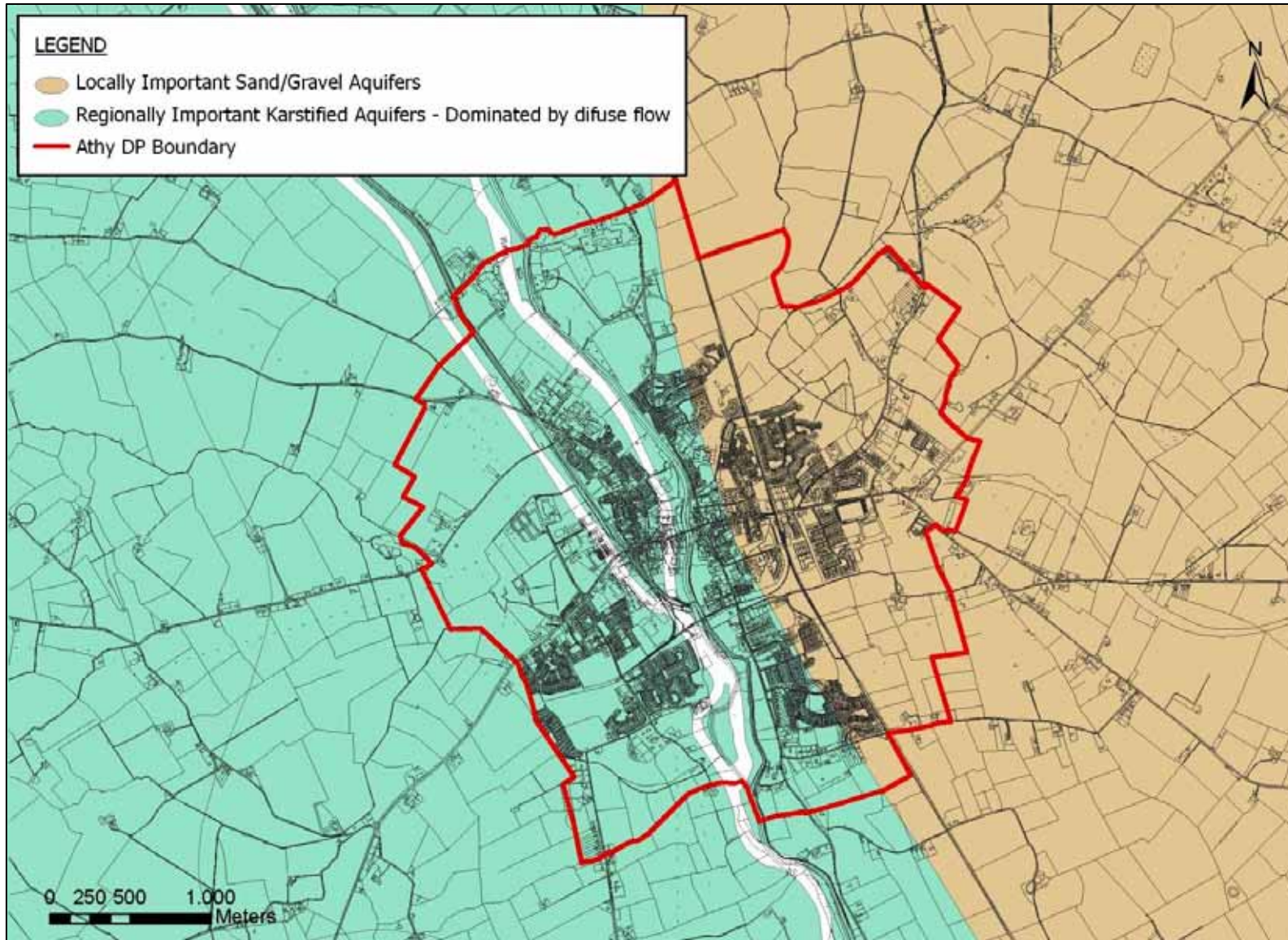
**Figure 3.22 Groundwater Protection Scheme**  
Source: Athy County Council (2010)





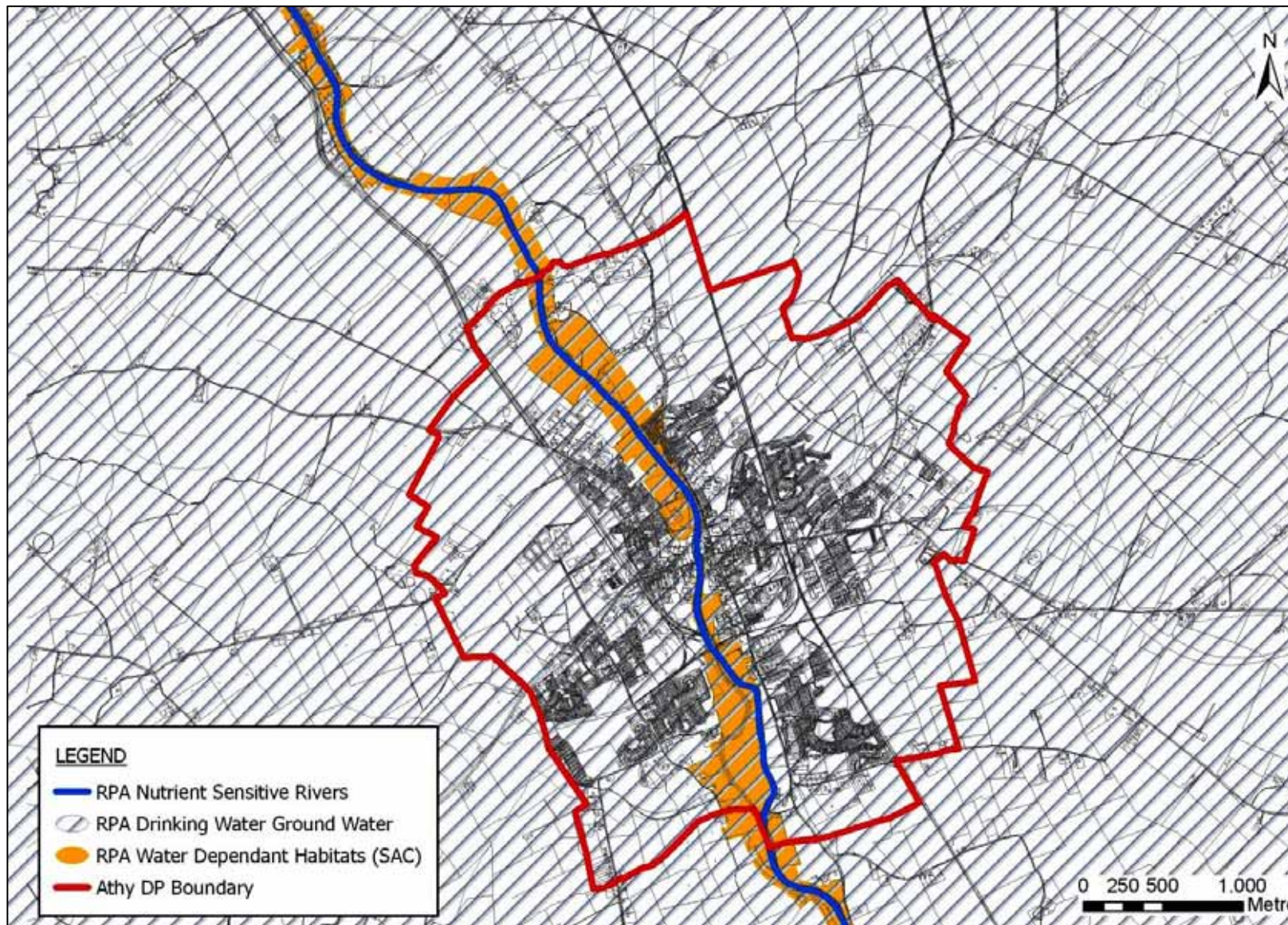
**Figure 3.23 Aquifer Vulnerability**  
Source: GSI (2006)





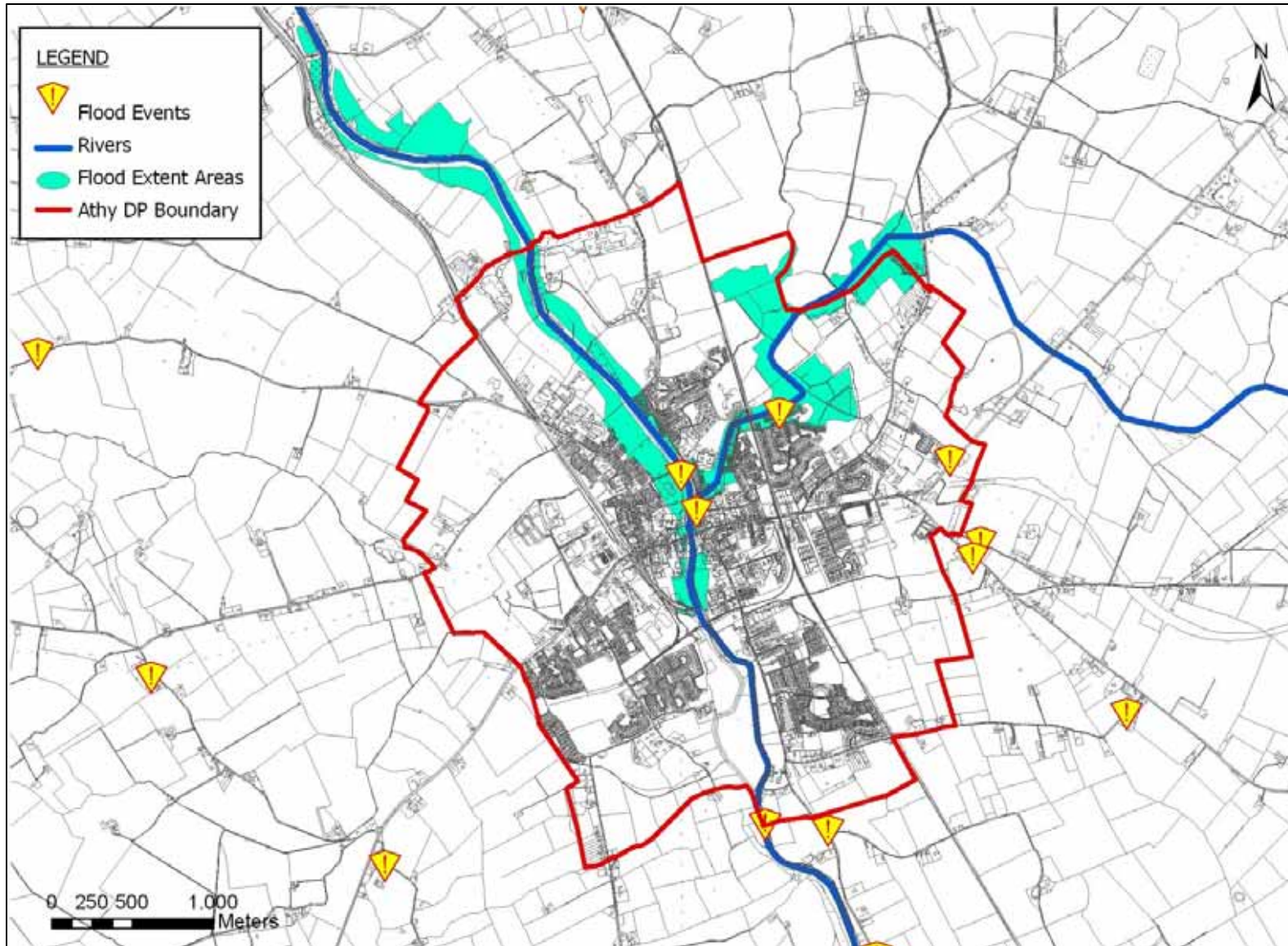
**Figure 3.24 Aquifer Productivity**  
Source: GSI (2005)





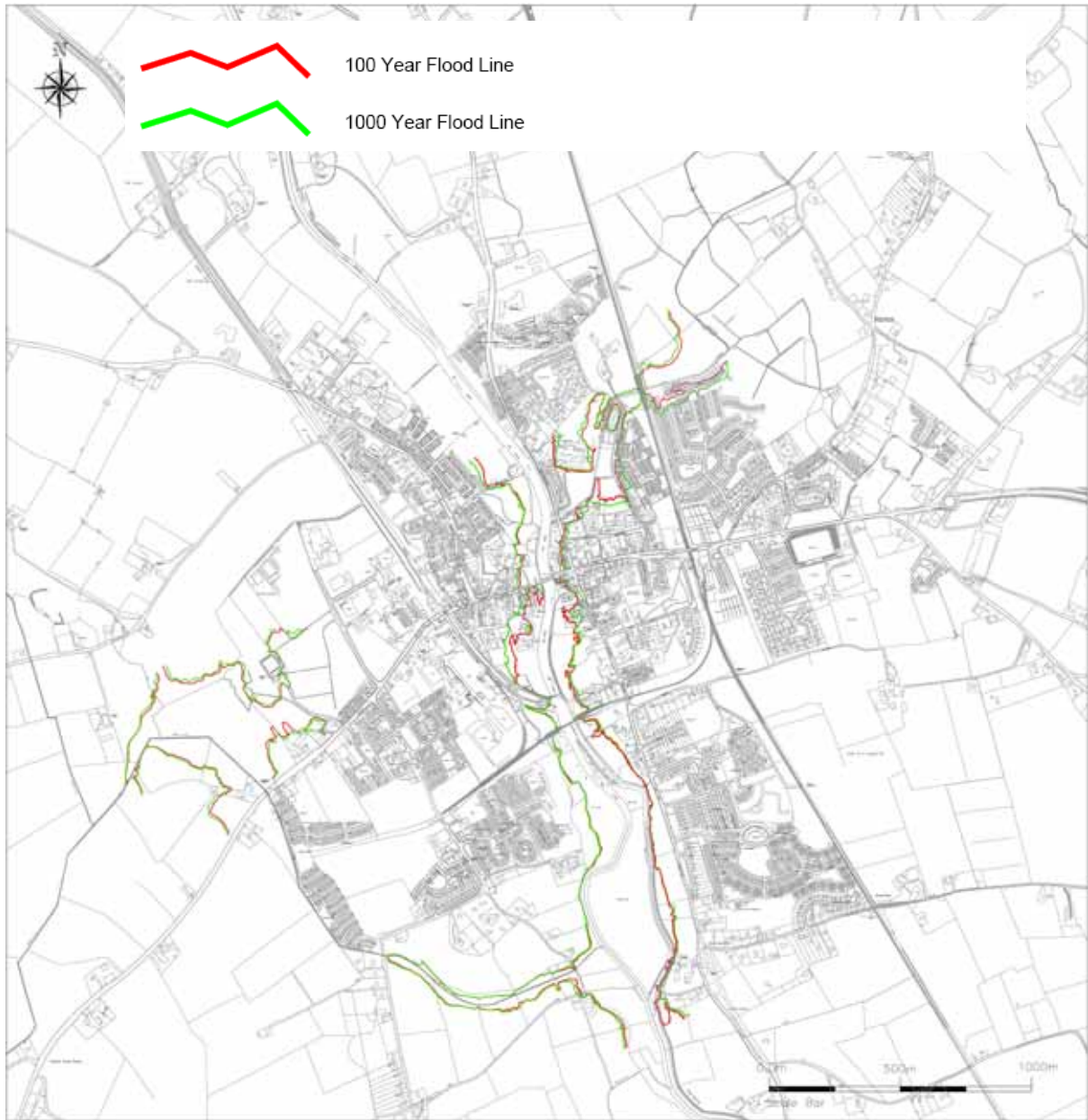
**Figure 3.25 WFD Register of Protected Areas**  
Source: EPA (2009)





**Figure 3.26 Rivers and Flood Events in the Town**  
Source: OPW (Various)





**Figure 3.27 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 year flood event lines**

Source: Kilgallen and Partners Consulting Engineers for Athy Town Council - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2011

## 3.6 Material Assets

### 3.6.1 Waste Water

#### 3.6.1.1 Relevant Legislation

The treatment of wastewater is governed by the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC) (amended by Directive 98/15/EEC) transposed into Irish law by the Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations 2001 (SI 254 of 2001). The Directive aims to protect the environment from the adverse effects of the wastewater discharges by ensuring that wastewater is appropriately treated before it is discharged to the environment. The Regulations stipulate that sewage treatment facilities are in place in all towns by 2005. The treatment of wastewater is also relevant to the Water Framework Directive which requires all public bodies, including Athy Town Council and Kildare County Council, to coordinate their policies and operations so as to maintain the good status of water bodies which are currently unpolluted and bring polluted water bodies up to good status by 2015 (see Section 3.5 *Water*).

#### 3.6.1.2 Current Capacity and Demand and Future Upgrades

Wastewater is treated at the Athy Wastewater Treatment Plant at Boherbui located to the south west of the Town Centre. The plant has an existing design capacity of 15,000 population equivalent (PE)<sup>12</sup> with room for future expansion. The current loading of the treatment plant is approximately 10,000PE resulting in a spare capacity of approximately 5,000PE.

Spare capacity at a waste water treatment plant indicates that plant is likely to be in conformance with the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive at present. Plants operating over capacity suggest that they are unlikely to be in conformance with the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive.

<sup>12</sup> Population equivalent (in waste-water monitoring and treatment) refers to the amount of oxygen-demanding substances whose oxygen consumption during biodegradation equals the average oxygen demand of the waste water produced by one person. PE figures include waste waters from industrial sources, hotels, etc as well as domestic output.

It is anticipated that it will be necessary to extend the plant to 11,500 PE before 2014 to meet additional domestic and non-domestic demand. In addition the overall wastewater network requires improvement to facilitate possible future expansion of the Town. In the interim however wastewater improvements under the Athy Sewerage Scheme include the provision of a new trunk foul sewer to the south east of the Town to serve lands located at Prusselstown. Remediation of the existing sewer network to the east of the river Barrow was carried out in 2010 as the first phase of the Athy Sewerage Scheme.

The waste water treatment plant at Athy along with its discharge point on the Barrow as well as the portion of the Plan area which is serviced by the waste water network is mapped on Figure 3.28.

### 3.6.2 Drinking Water

#### 3.6.2.1 Drinking Water Quality<sup>13</sup>

Drinking water must be clean and wholesome. That means it must meet the relevant water quality standards and must not contain any other substance or micro-organism in concentrations or numbers that constitute a potential danger to human health.

Compliance with the drinking water requirements is determined by comparing the results of analyses submitted by water suppliers to the standard for 48 parameters specified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2), 2007. To ensure that these standards are met, each water supply must be monitored on a regular basis.

Under Section 58 of the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992 the EPA is required to collect and verify monitoring results for all water supplies in Ireland covered by the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations, 2000. The EPA publishes their results in annual reports which include Remedial Action Lists (RALs). The RAL identifies water supplies which are not in compliance with the Regulations mentioned above.

<sup>13</sup> Text in this section is sourced from EPA (2009) *The Provision and Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland: A Report for the Years 2007-2008*, Wexford: EPA

Athy is not listed on the Remedial Action List. There was a nickel exceedance in the Athy supply in 2007. However, nickel is not present in the untreated or treated water from these supplies and it is likely that this exceedance was due to contamination from tap fittings.

### 3.6.2.2 Status of Water Supply in Athy<sup>14</sup>

At present, Athy's daily water demand is in excess of 4,000m<sup>3</sup> and is supplied from four separate sources within the Town located along the north western bank of the River Barrow. An additional source is also obtained from the Regional Supply from the Poulaphouca Reservoir to supplement the Town's supply. This can be extended into the Town should any of the local sources need to be shut off.

The construction of the Srowland Water Treatment Plant and the Srowland to Ardsclull and Srowland to Old Kilcullen Water Rising Mains contracts form part of the River Barrow Abstraction Scheme. The Srowland Water Treatment Plant will supply treated water to Ardsclull Reservoir (which will supply Athy) and Old Kilcullen Reservoir. The Water Services Investment Programme 2010 - 2012 approved funding for these contracts.

The tendering process for the Srowland Water Treatment Plant DBO has been completed and the DoEHLG has approved the Tender Report. It is envisaged that construction will commence early this year. The projected construction period is two years.

Construction of a new 150mm diameter trunk main on the Monasterevin Road which will link to Wellfields Monasterevin is currently being carried out. This will provide an additional source of water supply when required. It is envisaged that the Barrow Abstraction Scheme should be completed by 2012 which will further consolidate and improve the Town's water supply.

While there is adequate supply of water to Athy town approx 25% of the total demand is supplied to Athy from outside sources.

Should the main source in Athy i.e. "The Gallery" become unusable, for example due to a reoccurrence of flooding, KCC will increase

<sup>14</sup> Text in this section is from Kildare County Council Water Services, Oct. 2010.

the amount supplied from both directions. Increase from Dublin road supply will require permission of Dublin City Council. The use of the Monasterevin Wellfield will allow greater flexibility as it is own well supply.

Water abstraction points are mapped on Figure 3.28.

### 3.6.3 Waste

The Council is obliged to collect or arrange for the collection of household waste in its jurisdiction. Waste collected is currently transferred to Dublin from the Integrated Waste Management Facility at Silliot Hill, Kilcullen for baling prior to disposal at Arthurstown Landfill Site.

Athy Civic Amenity Centre is located at Gallowshill in the east of the Town. Waste is compacted at the facility and stored in sealed haulage containers prior to disposal off-site. Receptacles are provided for collection/storage of various recyclable wastes such as; glass, plastics, metals, white goods, electronic goods, paper/cardboard, textiles, timber, tyres, household construction and demolition waste, and green waste. Green waste is shredded on-site.

The location of the waste transfer station is mapped on Figure 3.28.

### 3.6.4 Vehicular Circulation

The N78 is the main route through Athy. It connects Dublin, Naas, Kilcullen, Athy/Casteldermot and Kilkenny/Waterford. The R428, R471 and R418 are other roads in the Plan area as well as several local country roads. A number of bus services are also in operation with Bus Eireann providing Expressway Services, Local/Rural/Commuter and City/Town Services in the Town.

The Town is also served by the Dublin/Waterford railway line.

Figure 3.29 maps the road network in Athy, it also maps the rail which is routed through the Town.

### **3.6.5 Existing Problems relating to Material Assets**

Certain parts of the Town are not within the catchment of the waste water treatment network and consequently development in these areas use septic tanks to treat waste water arising. This has the potential to be a problem for other environmental components where the systems are not properly maintained.

### **3.6.6 Evolution of Material Assets in the absence of the Draft Plan**

In the absence of a Development Plan, there would be no framework to provide the

infrastructure which is necessary in Athy to serve existing and proposed development such as waste water treatment plants and networks, water supply infrastructure, transport infrastructure and powerlines etc.

Failure to provide sufficient infrastructure for development would be likely to result in significant adverse impacts. For example, failure to upgrade and provide new waste water infrastructure would be likely to adversely impact upon water quality and indirectly significantly adversely impact upon biodiversity and flora and fauna, drinking water supplies and human health.



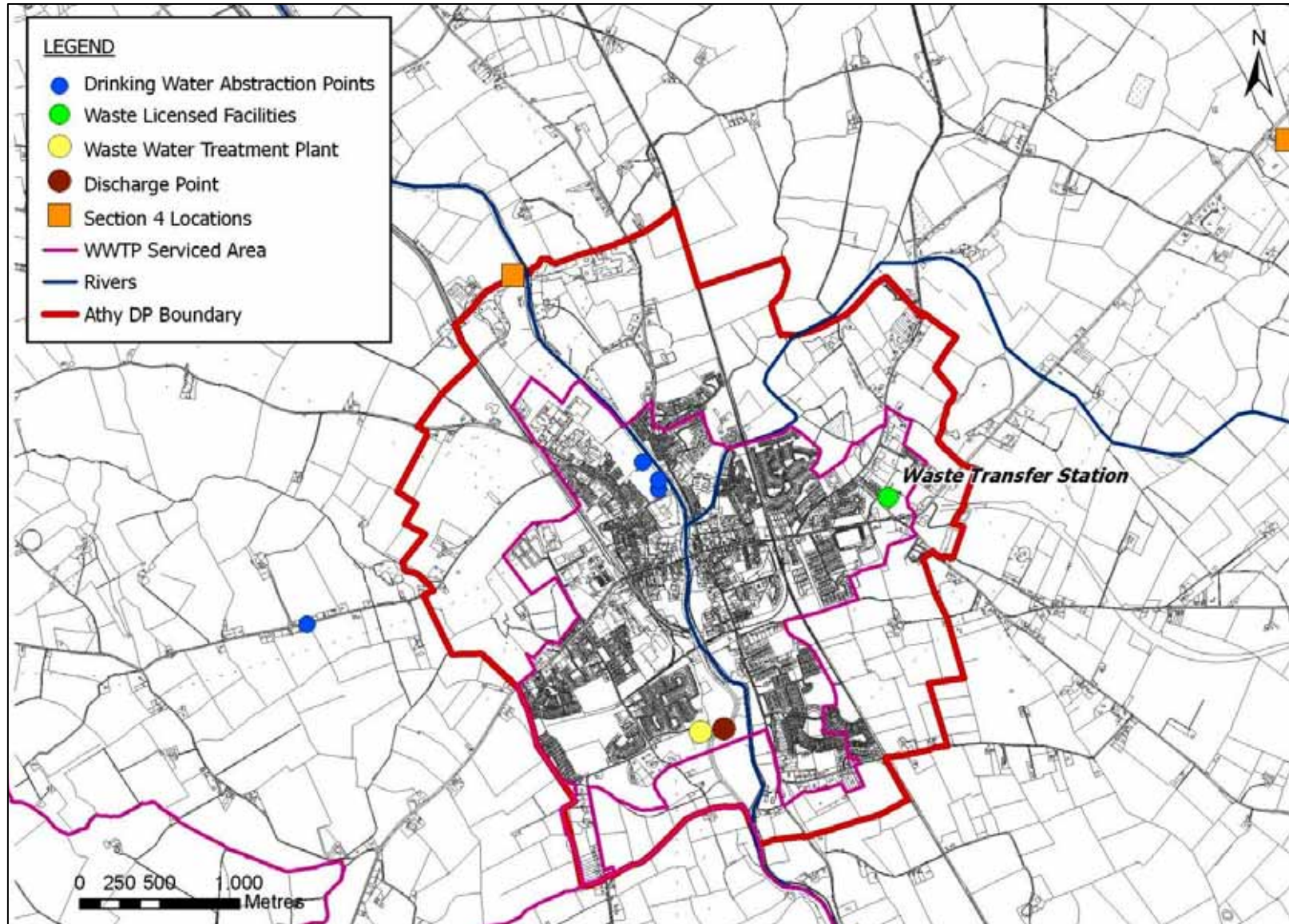
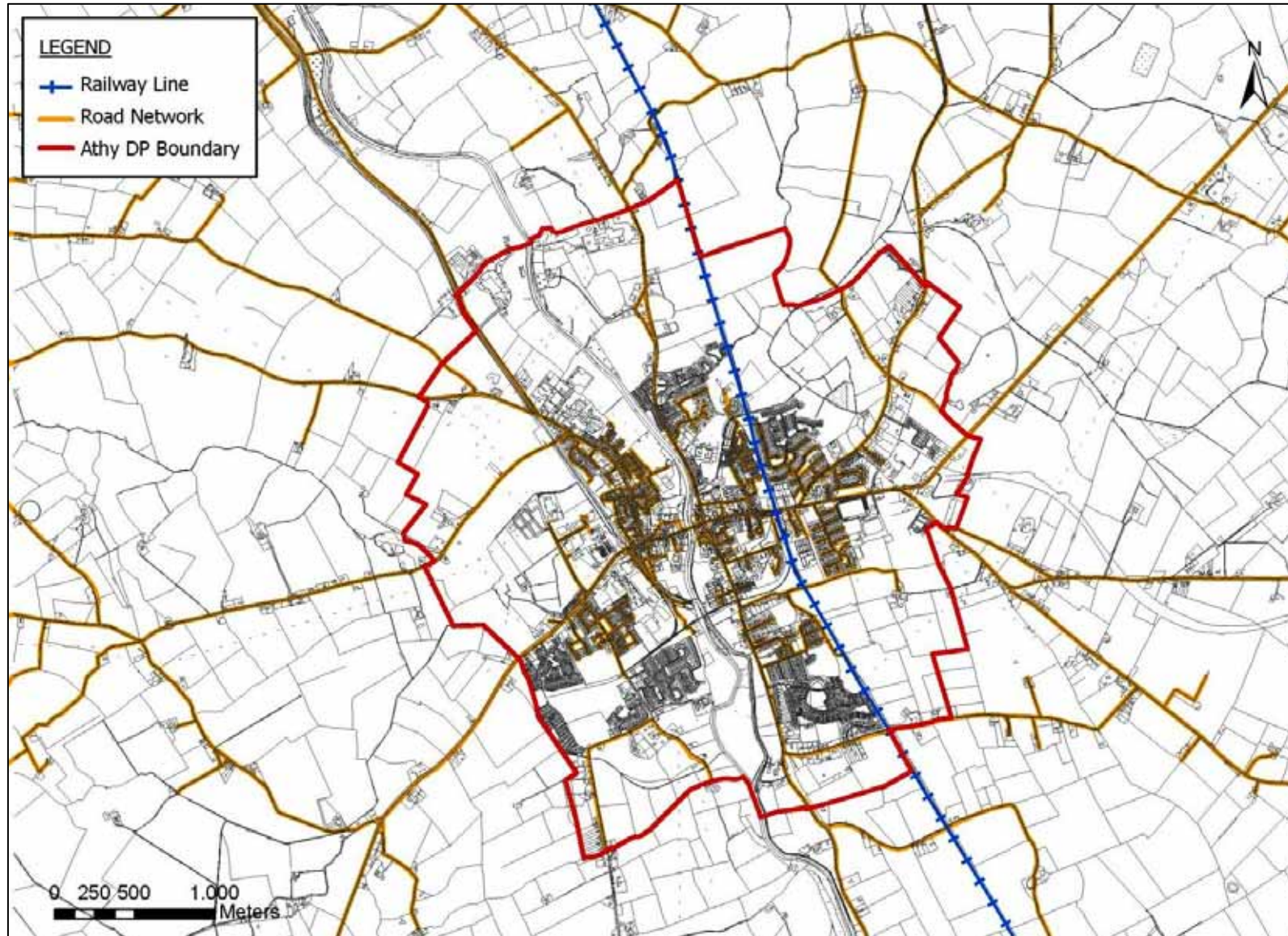


Figure 3.28 Water Treatment Plants, Waste Water Treatment Plants, Discharge Points and Serviced Areas and Section 4 Licenses  
Source: KCC (Various)





**Figure 3.29 Road and Rail Network**  
Source: KCC (Various)

## 3.7 Air and Climatic Factors

### 3.7.1 Ambient Air Quality

#### 3.7.1.1 Introduction and Legislation

In order to protect human health, vegetation and ecosystems, EU Directives set down air quality standards in Ireland and the other Member States for a wide variety of pollutants. These pollutants are generated through fuel combustion, in space heating, traffic, electricity generation and industry and, in sufficient amounts, could affect the well being of the areas inhabitants. The EU Directives include details regarding how ambient air quality should be monitored, assessed and managed.

The principles to this European approach are set out under the Air Quality Framework Directive 1996 as transposed into Irish law under the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992 (Ambient Air Quality Assessment and Management) Regulations 1999 (SI No. 33 of 1999).

Four daughter Directives lay down limits or thresholds for specific pollutants. The first two of these directives cover: sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and oxides of nitrogen, particulate matter and lead; and, carbon monoxide and benzene. Two more daughter directives deal with: ozone; and polyaromatic hydrocarbons, arsenic, nickel, cadmium and mercury in ambient air.

In order to comply with these directives, the EPA measures the levels of a number of atmospheric pollutants. For the purposes of monitoring in Ireland, four zones are defined in the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2002 (SI No. 271 of 2002). The main areas defined in each zone are:

- Zone A: Dublin Conurbation.
- Zone B: Cork Conurbation.
- Zone C: 21 Other cities and large towns comprising Galway, Limerick, Waterford, Clonmel, Kilkenny, Athy, Drogheda, Wexford, Athlone, Ennis, Bray, Naas, Carlow, Tralee and Dundalk.
- Zone D: Rural Ireland, i.e. the remainder of the State - small towns and rural areas of the country - excluding Zones A, B and C.

As mapped on Figure 3.30, Athy falls with Zone D.

#### 3.7.1.2 Coal Restriction Areas

A ban on the marketing, sale and distribution of bituminous coal applies in Athy and fifteen other towns and cities around the country including Dublin (since 1990), Cork (since 1995), Arklow, Drogheda, Dundalk, Limerick and Wexford (since 1998), Celbridge, Galway, Leixlip, Naas and Waterford (since 2000), Bray, Kilkenny, Athy and Tralee (since 2003).

The origins of the coal bans date from the start of the 1990s when the main air quality problem facing Ireland was the occurrence of "winter smog" (smoke and sulphur dioxide emissions) resulting from widespread use of bituminous coal in major urban areas, notably Dublin, leading to serious health effects for people. Regulations were made in 1990 to ban the marketing, sale and distribution of bituminous coal in the Dublin area. Smoke and sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) levels showed considerable improvement once the ban was introduced and it was decided in subsequent years to extend the ban further in order to achieve and preserve good air quality in the selected areas.

### 3.7.2 Potential Point Sources of Emissions to Air

#### 3.7.2.1 IPPC Licensed Facilities

The EPA has been licensing certain large-scale industrial and agriculture activities since 1994. Originally the licensing system was known as Integrated Pollution Control (IPC) licensing, governed by the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992. The Act was amended in 2003 by the Protection of the Environment Act, 2003 which gave effect to the Integrated Pollution Prevention Control (IPPC) Directive. Detailed procedures concerning the IPPC licensing process are set out in the EPA Acts 1992 to 2007 and the associated licensing regulations.

IPPC licences aim to prevent or reduce emissions to air, water and land, reduce waste and use energy/resources efficiently. An IPPC license is a single integrated license which covers all emissions from the facility and its environmental management. All related operations that the license holder carries in connection with the activity are controlled by this license. Before a license is granted, the

EPA must be satisfied that emissions from the activity do not cause a significant adverse environmental impact.

There is one active IPPC licence in Athy. Peerless Rug Europe Limited (P0261-01) is located in the Industrial Estate at Townspark as mapped on Figure 3.30. This facility is licensed for the dyeing, treatment or finishing (including moth-proofing and fire-proofing) of fibres or textiles (including carpet) where the capacity exceeds 1 tonne per day of fibre, yarn, or textile material.

Up to the surrendering of the IPPC licence in May 2009, Crown Packaging Ltd. (P0098-01) in Woodstock Industrial Estate was licensed for the manufacture or use of coating materials in processes with a capacity to make or use at least 10 tonnes per year of organic solvents, and powder coating manufacture with a capacity to produce at least 50 tonnes per year.

### 3.7.3 Noise

Noise is unwanted sound. It can seriously harm human health and interfere with daily activities at school, at work, at home and during leisure time. Areas within the Town which are commonly affected by noise are urban areas and areas along roadsides.

Generally, the main noise source in the Town is from traffic. Streets in low lying areas that have high traffic counts as well as enclosing taller buildings are likely to have harsh sensory environments with regard to noise levels with regard to this source.

Traffic noise alone is harming today the health of almost every third European<sup>15</sup>. *Traffic hotspots* within the Town are likely to have elevated levels of air pollution and noise due to traffic congestion compared to surrounding rural areas. These hotspots are located along the main road routes - especially at intersections - and provide for a harsh sensory environment which may impact upon human health.

In addition, there are localised noise sources which include train movements, air conditioning equipment and bars.

<sup>15</sup> World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (2003) *Technical meeting on exposure-response relationships of noise on health 19-21 September 2002* Bonn, Germany Bonn: WHO

## 3.7.4 Climatic Factors

### 3.7.4.1 Greenhouse Gases

In order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions the internationally agreed Kyoto Protocol established emissions reduction targets for developing countries. Ireland's emission target for greenhouse gases is to limit the increase in their combined emissions during the five-year period 2008-2012 to 13 per cent above 1990 levels.

Based on the inventory figures for 2006<sup>16</sup>, the EPA estimates that Ireland's emissions in 2006 were 25.5 per cent higher than the baseline estimate that underlies Ireland's allowable emissions for the period 2008-2012, as agreed in the peer review of Ireland's 2006 submission to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

With regard to overall emissions, *Agriculture* is the single largest contributor, at 27.7% of the total, followed by *Energy* (power generation & oil refining) at 22.3% and *Transport* at 19.7%. The remaining 30% is made up by the Residential sector at 10.4%, *Industry and Commercial* at 17.2%, and *Waste* at 2.6%.

Transport continues to be the dominant growth sector with emissions at 682,000 tonnes higher in 2006 than in 2005. This represents a 5.2% increase on 2005 levels and 165% increase on the 1990 transport emissions. Road transport accounts for 97% of the transport sector emissions. The increase in the GHG emissions from the transport sector reflects sustained increases in fuel consumption with petrol usage up 3.4% and diesel consumption up 7.9% from the previous year.

### 3.7.4.2 Climate Change

Climate change refers to any change in climate over time, whether due to natural variability or as a result of human activity. The release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere as a result of human activities adds to natural climate variability by increasing the naturally occurring greenhouse effect. This greenhouse effect occurs in the atmosphere and is caused by greenhouse gases which exist naturally in the atmosphere. The greenhouse gases retain the radiation which is released from the earth

<sup>16</sup> EPA (2008) *Ireland's Emissions of Greenhouse Gases for the period 1990-2006* Wexford: EPA



as a result of heating by the sun. This retention maintains a global temperature which is suitable for ecosystems and life.

Climate change is not limited to changes in temperatures or weather - it can also mean changes in the occurrence of extreme and unstable weather conditions, storms and floods, droughts and coastal erosion.

### 3.7.4.3 Potential Effects of Changed Climate

The EPA's 'Climate Change: Regional Climate Model Predictions for Ireland' (2005)<sup>17</sup> report provides an analysis of future Irish climate conditions for the period 2021–2060 based on the outputs from a new regional climate modelling facility located in Met Éireann.

As increased temperatures will lead to greater amounts of water vapour in the atmosphere and an accelerated global water cycle, it is reasonable to expect that river catchment areas will be exposed to a greater risk of flooding. The increase in winter precipitation will be likely to produce a significant increase in the more intense discharge episodes, raising the risk of future flooding.

The report identifies that although it is not possible to comment on changes in flood magnitude and frequency, the increase in winter runoff indicated for many parts of the west of the country, especially under the scenario for the period 2061–2090, is likely to have significant implications. River flooding tends to be more common during the wetter winter months when soils are near saturation and can be exacerbated in coastal areas when interactions occur between high tides and high flows. Many of the rivers draining upland areas have a rapid or "flashy" response to rainfall enhanced by rising topography. Steep slopes and thin soils favour rapid flow pathways and water is rapidly transmitted to the channel network especially in urbanised catchments with extensive areas of impermeable surfaces.

<sup>17</sup> Community Climate Change Consortium for Ireland (2005) *Environmental RTDI Programme 2000–2006 Climate Change: Regional Climate Model Predictions for Ireland (2001-CD-C4-M2) Final Report* Wexford: Environmental Protection Agency

### 3.7.5 Existing Problems

*Traffic hotspots* within the Plan area are likely to have elevated levels of air pollution and noise due to traffic congestion, this is particularly the case along the N78 through the Town.

Localised air pollution incidences with regard to PM10 and PM2.5 and noise pollution are both likely to occur when demolition/construction takes place - especially in relation to PM10 if suppression techniques are not introduced - and when traffic is queuing for long periods of time.

Ireland's current emissions are exceeding targets agreed in the peer review of Ireland's 2006 submission to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It is unlikely that Ireland will meet these targets and it is likely therefore that financial penalties will be incurred. Transport related emissions continue to be the dominant growth sector.

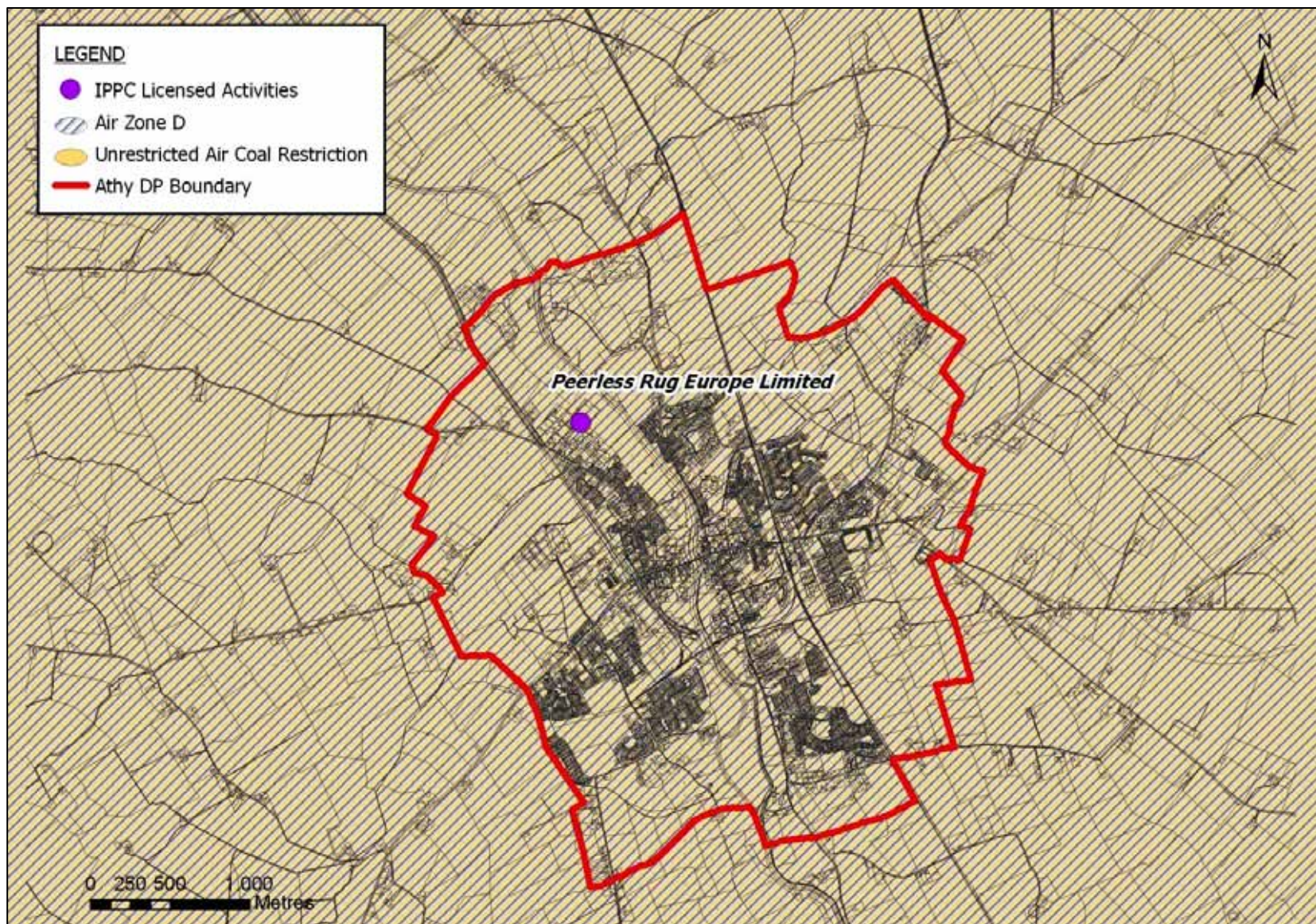
Changes in sea level and/or changes in the occurrence of severe rainfall events as a result of climate change could adversely impact upon the area's human beings, its biodiversity and its economy (see also Section 3.5.7 Flooding).

### 3.7.6 Evolution of Air and Climatic Factors in the absence of the Draft Plan

Increases in the use of catalytic converters, cleaner fuels, better engine technology and maintenance is generally reducing the pollution omitted per motor vehicle, however, this reduction is probably being offset by the increase in the number of cars as well as the increase in the volume and incidences of traffic congestion. Increases in the number of cars as well as the increase in the volume and incidences of traffic congestion may lead to increases in air and noise pollution in the future.

In the absence of the Draft Plan, the realisation of objectives relating to energy efficiency, renewable energy and a reduction in local transport related emissions to air contained within the Draft Plan would be missed.





**Figure 3.30 Air Quality Zones, Coal Restriction Areas and IPPC Licensed Facility**

Source: EPA (2009)



## 3.8 Cultural Heritage

### 3.8.1 Introduction

Heritage, by definition, means inherited properties, inherited characteristics and anything transmitted by past ages and ancestors. It covers everything, from objects and buildings to the environment. Cultural heritage includes physical buildings, structures and objects, complete or in part, which have been left on the landscape by previous and indeed current generations.

Athy developed as part of the Anglo-Norman settlement in Ireland. Woodstock Castle was built in the early years of the thirteenth century near an ancient river crossing. The Priory of St Thomas and Hospital of St John was founded in the thirteenth century on rising ground above the river on its west side while, on the east bank, just south of the crossing, a Dominican friary was established in 1253 in the area known as the Abbey.

### 3.8.2 Archaeological Heritage

#### 3.8.2.1 Introduction

Archaeology is the study of past societies through the material remains left by those societies and the evidence of their environment. Archaeological heritage consists of such material remains (whether in the form of sites and monuments or artefacts in the sense of moveable objects) and environmental evidence. As archaeological heritage can be used to gain knowledge and understanding of the past it is of great cultural and scientific importance.

Archaeological sites and monuments vary greatly in form and date; examples include earthworks of different types and periods, (e.g. early historic ringforts and prehistoric burial mounds), megalithic tombs from the Prehistoric period, medieval buildings, urban archaeological deposits and underwater features.

Archaeological sites may have no visible surface features; the surface features of an archaeological site may have decayed completely or been deliberately removed but archaeological deposits and features may survive beneath the surface.

Archaeological finds dating to the Neolithic and the Bronze Age attest to the importance of the crossing over the River Barrow from prehistoric times. Two stone-axe heads were found in the Rathstewart area of the Town. The archaeological record also includes churches and graveyards, gatehouses, mills and the bridge in the Town.

#### 3.8.2.2 Record of Monuments and Places

Athy's archaeological heritage is protected under the National Monuments Acts (1930-2004), Natural Cultural Institutions Act 1997 and the Planning Acts. The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is an inventory, put on a statutory basis by amendment to the National Monuments Act 1994, of sites and areas of archaeological significance, numbered and mapped.

The term 'monument' includes all man-made structures of whatever form or date except buildings habitually used for ecclesiastical purposes. All monuments in existence before 1700 A.D. are automatically considered to be historic monuments within the meaning of the Acts.

There is a number of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places within the Town. The historic core of Athy was identified as a Zone of Archaeological Potential, see Figure 3.32. Within the Zone of Archaeological Potential there is a significant potential of uncovering archaeological remains.

### 3.8.3 Architectural heritage

#### 3.8.3.1 Introduction

The term architectural heritage is defined in the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments Act 1999 as meaning all: structures and buildings together with their settings and attendant grounds, fixtures and fittings; groups of structures and buildings; and, sites which are of technical, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical interest.

The town retains many buildings of significance, including Whites Castle (a prominent feature in the Town), Market House (Heritage Centre and Library), The Model Farm and School, the Dominican Church and the Presbyterian Church.

### 3.8.3.2 Record of Protected Structures

The Record of Protected Structures (RPS) is legislated for under Section 51 of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

Protected Structures are defined as structures, or parts of structures that are of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view.

In relation to a protected structure or proposed protected structure, the following are encompassed:

- the interior of the structure;
- the land lying within the curtilage<sup>18</sup> of the structure;
- any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors; and,
- all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of any structure or structures referred to in subparagraph (i) or (iii).

There are eight structures listed on the RPS. Structures listed on the Record of Protected Structures are mapped on Figure 3.32 along with additions proposed under the draft Kildare CDP 2011-2017.

### 3.8.3.3 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) is a state initiative under the administration of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and established on a statutory basis under the provisions of the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999.

The purpose of the NIAH is to identify, record, and evaluate the post-1700 architectural

heritage of Ireland, uniformly and consistently as an aid in the protection and conservation of the built heritage. NIAH surveys provide the basis for the recommendations of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government to the planning authorities for the inclusion of particular structures in their Record of Protected Structures (RPS).

Spatial distribution of monuments listed on the NIAH is mapped on Figure 3.33.

### 3.8.4 Existing Cultural Heritage Problems

Threats to cultural heritage might include the cumulative accommodation of large scale development in the Town, development which involves material alteration or additions to protected structures, brownfield development and development on sites adjoining protected monuments, places or structures.

### 3.8.5 Evolution of Cultural Heritage in the absence of the Draft Plan

In the absence of the Plan, the evolution of cultural heritage would be dependent on developments which take place.

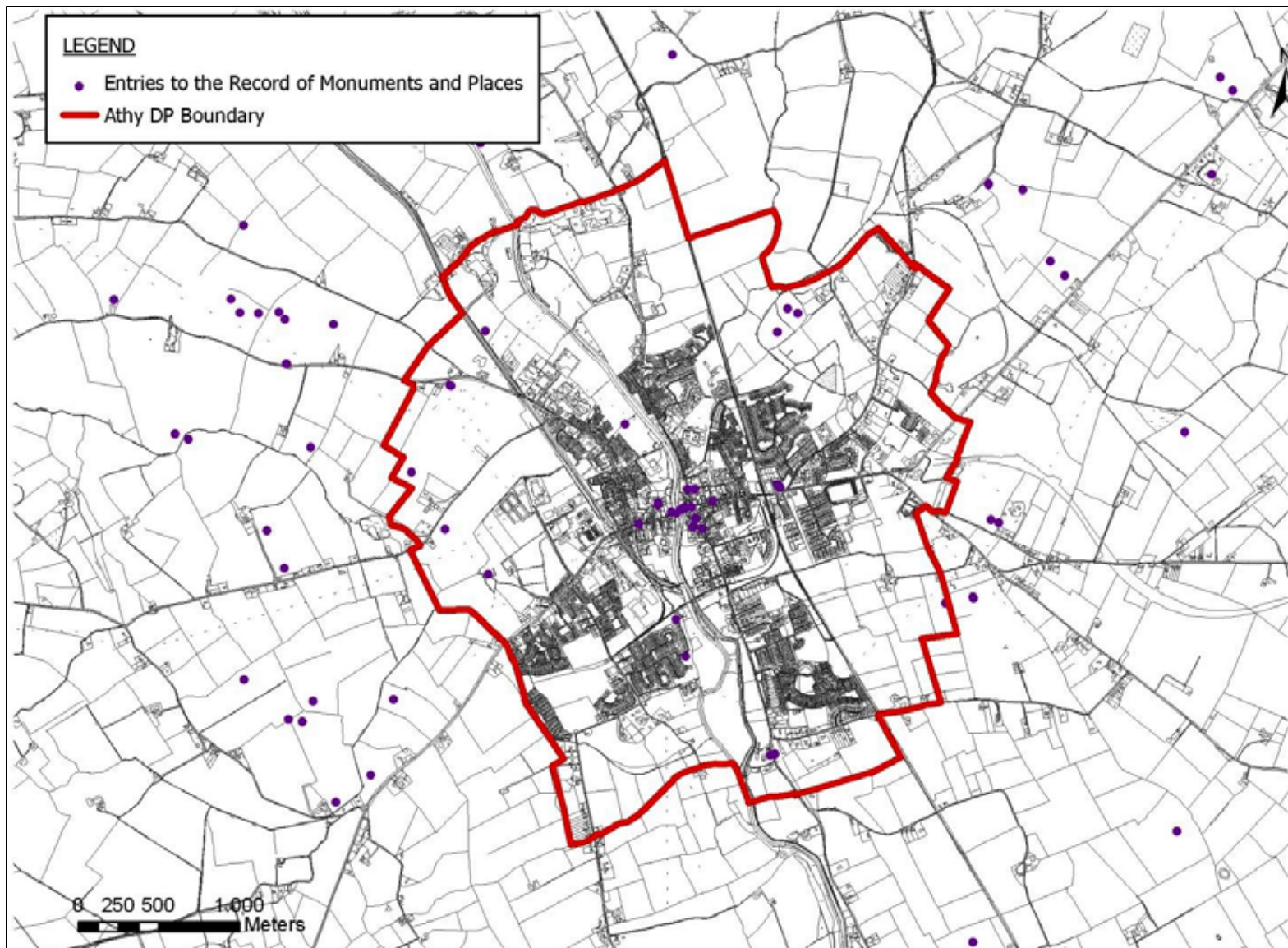
Such development would have no guidance as to where to be directed and planning applications would be assessed on an individual basis with cultural heritage protected under a number of strategic actions relating to archaeological and architectural protection.

Beneficial impacts upon the protection of cultural heritage which would be likely to arise as a result of the Plan provisions would not necessarily occur.

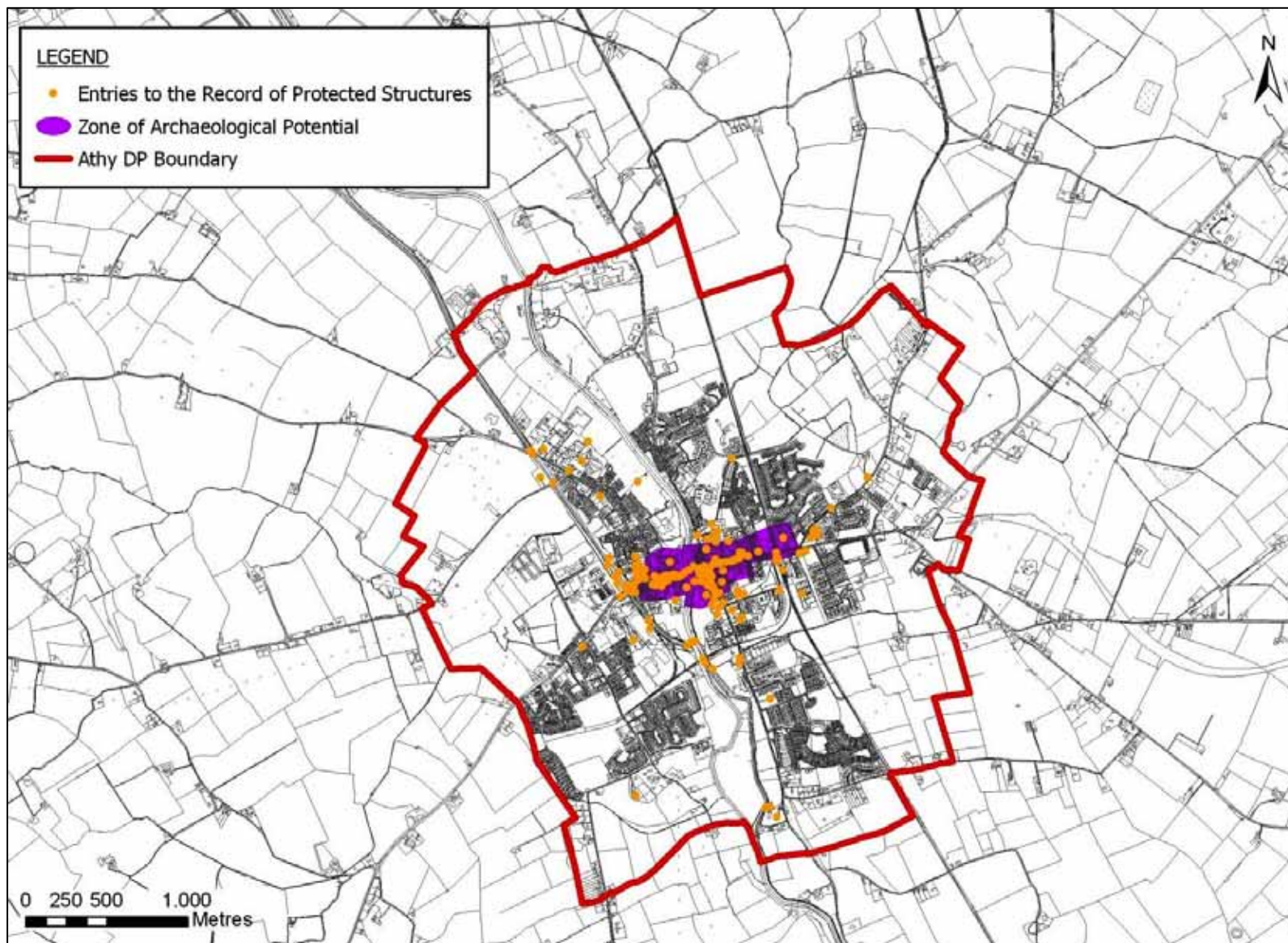
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<sup>18</sup> Curtilage is normally taken to be the parcel of ground immediately associated with the Protected Structure, or in use for the purposes of the structure. Protection extends to the buildings and land lying within the curtilage. While the curtilage sometimes coincides with the present property boundary, it can originally have included lands, features or even buildings now in separate ownership, e.g. the lodge of a former country house, or the garden features located in land subsequently sold off. Such lands are described as being attendant grounds, and the protection extends to them just as if they were still within the curtilage of the Protected Structure.



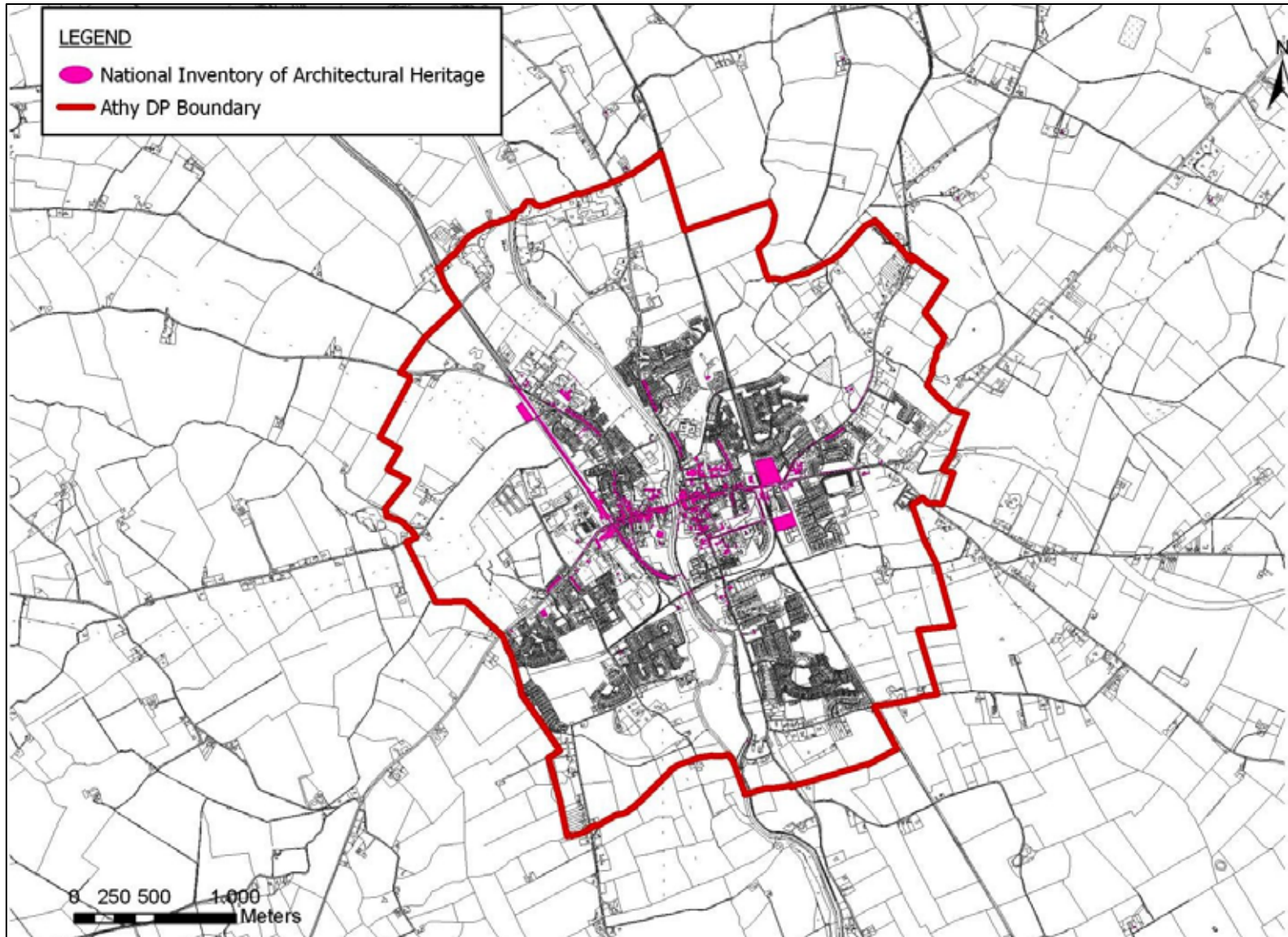


**Figure 3.31 Entries to the Record of Monuments and Places**  
Source: KCC (Unknown)



**Figure 3.32 Entries to the Record of Protected Structures**  
Source: Athy TDP (2006-2012)





**Figure 3.33 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage**  
Source: DEHLG (2006)



## 3.9 Landscape

### 3.9.1 Introduction

Landscapes are areas which are perceived by people and are made up of a number of layers:

- landform, which results from geological and geomorphological history;
- land cover, which includes vegetation, water, human settlements;
- human values which are a result of historical, cultural, religious and other understandings and interactions with landform and land cover.

The population is concentrated in Athy Town with houses and farms dispersed in the rural hinterland. Whites Castle is a prominent feature of the Town and is visible from the N78. The River Barrow and the Grand Canal are also important features of the Town's landscape.

### 3.9.2 Landscape Character Areas

A Landscape Character Assessment was carried out for County Kildare in 2004. This is contained in an appendix to the draft Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017 and it identifies fifteen landscape classifications, three of which occur in the Plan area. These are described below:

#### 3.9.2.1 Southern Lowlands

The lowland plains of County Kildare principally comprise fertile lands with relatively high levels of local population and intensive land management. The slope and topography of areas occur in a shallow / gradual transition; the area is generally characterised by flat terrain and low vegetation. Concentrations of tillage lands in this lowland area tend to be characterised by extensive views across large fields with low, maintained hedges.

This Landscape Character Area applies to most of the Plan area and its environs. This is mapped on Figure 3.34.

#### 3.9.2.2 River Valley and Grand Canal

Water corridors and river valley areas represent potentially vulnerable linear

landscape features, as they are often highly distinctive in the context of the general landscape. In many cases landscape sensitivities may be localised or site specific within this character area. Canal corridors are characterised by generally open views to surrounding pasture and agricultural lands. The canal banks are sometimes wooded although large sections blend into open pasture lands.

The River Barrow and lands within its vicinity, fall into the "River Valley" Character Area. This can be seen on Figure 3.34 along with the "Grand Canal" Character Area.

The River Barrow Valley and The Grand Canal Corridors are also classified as "Areas of High Amenity".

### 3.9.3 Scenic Routes and Protected Views

Scenic Routes and Protected Views consist of important and valued views and prospects within the County. A Scenic Route is designated to the east of the Town. A brief description of the route as outlined in the draft County Development Plan is included below:

Views of Moat and Ardscurr, N78 from Russelstown Cross Roads to Kilmead.

Location: Tullygorey, Aghanure, Ardscurr, Youngstown.

Long distance views towards Moate and Ardscurr are available from the N78 national road (north of Athy). The flat topography of the area and the apparent elevation of the N78, allow for extensive and long-distance visibility of the surrounding environs. The existing vegetation throughout the agricultural lands and the hilltops that define the skyline to the west, add complexity to the high scenic quality of the available views.

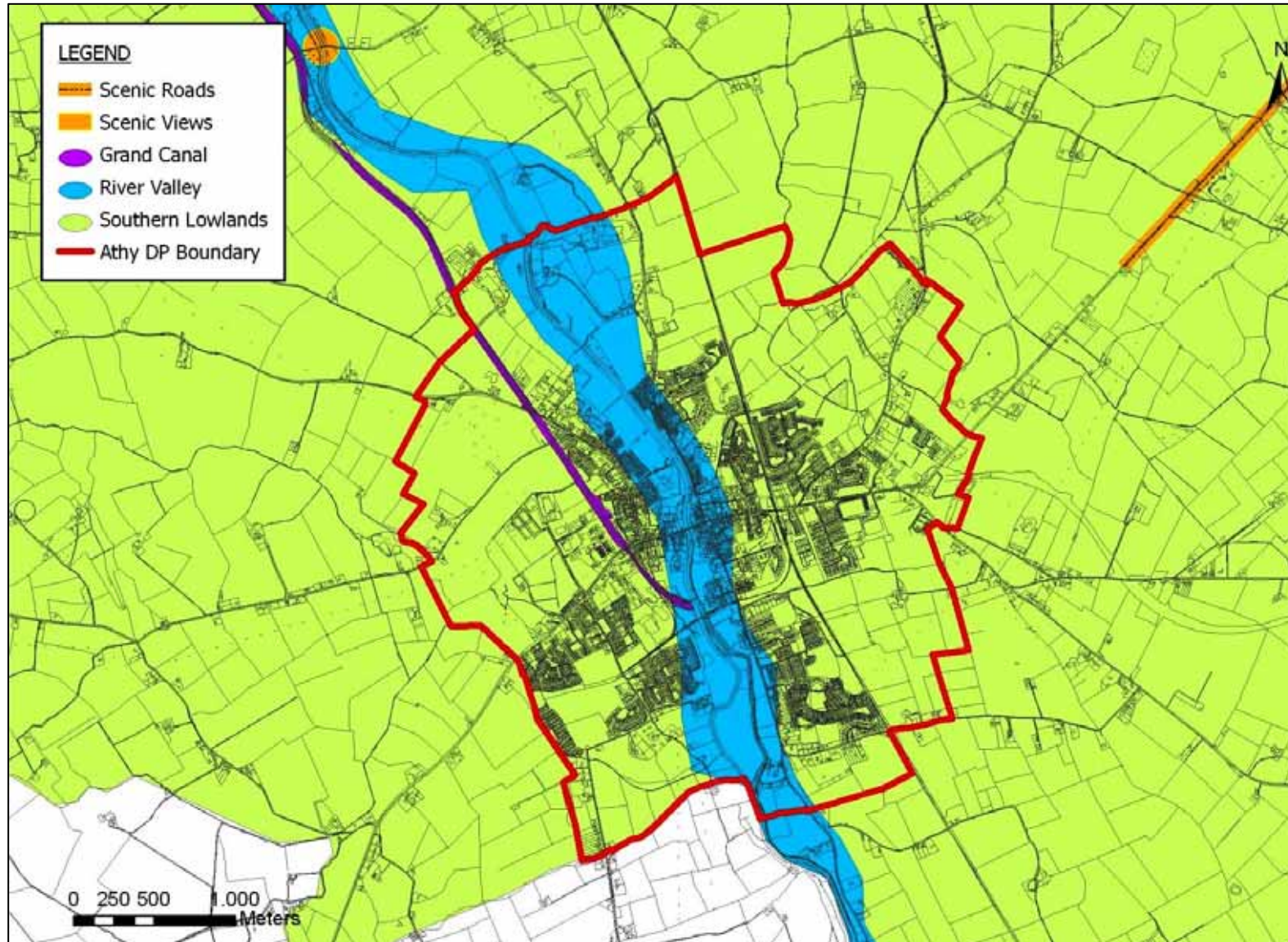
In addition to Scenic Routes there are a number of Protected Views, throughout the County. These are often located along water corridors and to and from the hills in the countryside. There are two Protected Views to the north west of Athy. One of these can be seen on Figure 3.34, the other lies just north of this.

### **3.9.4 Existing Landscape Problems**

Generalised landscape problems include the cumulative visual impact resulting from developments such as one off houses. Such developments, which individually often do not have significant adverse impacts, have the potential to cumulatively and adversely significantly impact upon sensitive landscapes.

### **3.9.5 Evolution of Landscape in the absence of the Draft Plan**

In the absence of a Development Plan, development would be likely to occur on a one-off, dispersed basis. This could have cumulative impacts on the landscape. However, Development Management would continue to safeguard the landscape resources that have been highlighted above.



**Figure 3.34 Scenic Roads and Views, Sensitive Landscape Areas and Views and Prospects**  
Source: Athy Town Development Plan (2006-2012)



## 3.10 Overlay Mapping of Environmental Sensitivities

### 3.10.1 Introduction and Methodology

In order to identify where most sensitivities within the Town occur, a number of the environmental sensitivities described above were weighted and mapped overlapping each other. Figure 3.35 provides an overlay of environmental sensitivities in Athy Town.

Environmental sensitivities are indicated by colours which range from acute vulnerability (brown) extreme vulnerability (red) to high vulnerability (dark orange) to elevated vulnerability (light orange) to moderate vulnerability (yellow) to low vulnerability (green). Where the mapping shows a concentration of environmental sensitivities there is an increased likelihood that development will conflict with these sensitivities and cause environmental deterioration.

A weighting system applied through Geographical Information System (GIS) software was used in order to calculate the vulnerability of all areas in the Town. Equal value is given to all environmental components (landscape, water, biodiversity etc.) with the following environmental sensitivity factors each attributed weighting of 5 points:

- Ecological designations (candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Proposed Natural Heritage Areas and Nutrient Sensitive Rivers)
- Landscape Character Areas, scenic roads and protected views;
- Heritage designations (entries to Records of Protected Structures, entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, Zone of Archaeological Potential and entries to the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage);
- Water resources (drinking groundwater protection, surface waters, flood risk areas, extreme and high vulnerability aquifers and source protection areas)

The scale of sensitivity for each area of the Town corresponds to the sensitivity factors: 5 points corresponds to one sensitivity factor; 10 points corresponds to two sensitivity factors;

20 points corresponds to four sensitivity factors and so on.

**Table 3.1 Overall Vulnerability Classes**

Score	Vulnerability Class
10-15	Low
20-25	Moderate
30-35	Elevated
40-45	High
50-60	Extreme
>65	Acute

Although there are limitations and elements of subjectivity to the overlaying of sensitivities the overlay mapping was used in order to speedily identify the areas where conflicts between development within the Plan area and environmental sensitivities would be likely to occur if unmitigated.

### 3.10.2 Conclusions

Generally, the Plan area and the surrounding lands are of low vulnerability. An area of moderate vulnerability traverses the western Plan boundary where an Inner Source Protection for ground water occurs.

The Glogorow Stream is of moderate vulnerability where flood extent areas overlap with other environmental sensitivities.

The River Barrow is of moderate vulnerability, increasing to extreme in places. This is due to an overlap in many environmental factors including flood risk areas, landscape sensitivity and its designation as a cSAC and a nutrient sensitivity river.

The Grand Canal is acutely vulnerable in places owing to landscape designations and its designation as a proposed Natural Heritage Area.

The areas of highest vulnerability occur in the Town Centre where archaeology is the main contributor.

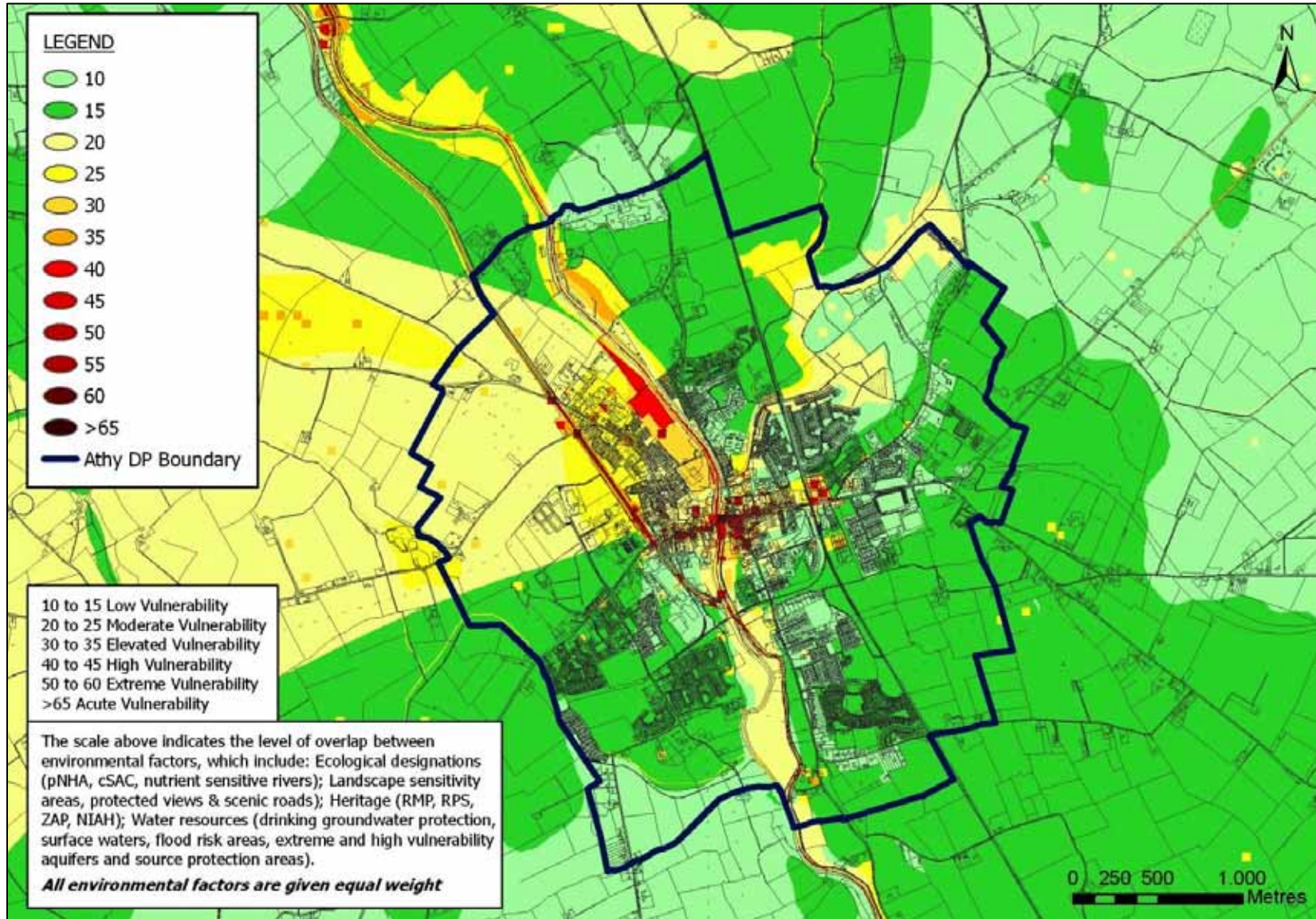


Figure 3.35 Overlay of Environmental Sensitivities

Source: CAAS (2010)

## Section 4 Strategic Environmental Objectives

### 4.1 Introduction

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are methodological measures against which the environmental effects of the Plan can be tested. If complied with in full, SEOs would result in an environmentally neutral impact from implementation of the Plan. The SEOs are set out under a range of topics and are used as standards against which the provisions of the Draft Plan can be evaluated in order to help identify areas in which potential adverse impacts may occur.

SEOs are distinct from the objectives of the Plan and are developed from international and national policies which generally govern environmental protection objectives. Such policies include those of various European Directives which have been transposed into Irish law and which are intended to be implemented within the Plan area.

The SEA Directive requires that the evaluation of plans and programmes be focused upon the relevant aspects of the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected. In compliance with this requirement, the SEA focuses upon the most relevant aspects of environmental characteristics within and surrounding the Town.

SEOs are linked to indicators - which can facilitate monitoring the environmental effects of implementing the Plan when adopted - and targets - which the Plan can help work towards.

The use of SEOs, although not a statutory requirement, does fulfil obligations set out in Schedule 2B of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004).

### 4.2 Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

#### 4.2.1 International, European and National Strategic Actions

##### 4.2.1.1 Habitats Directive 1992

The European Council Directive on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (92/43/EEC), referred to as the Habitats Directive, aims to ensure the conservation of certain natural habitats and species which are at favourable conservation status.

The Habitats Directive establishes Natura 2000, a network of protected areas throughout the EU. SACs together with SPAs - which are designated under the 1979 Birds Directive - form Natura 2000.

Article 6 of the Habitats Directive provides for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessments of plans or projects which have the potential to impacts upon Natura 2000 sites.

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are designated and protected under the Habitats Directive 1992 (92/43/EEC) due to their conservation value for habitats and species of importance in the European Union.

Article 10 of the Habitats Directive recognises the importance of ecological networks as corridors and stepping stones for wildlife, including for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of species of flora and fauna. The Directive requires that ecological connectivity and areas of ecological value outside the network of designated ecological sites are maintained, and it recognises the need for the management of these areas through land use planning and development policies.

In Ireland, the habitats and species occurring in both SACs and SPAs are protected from effects of development occurring outside their boundaries under Section 18 "Prohibition of works on lands outside a European site" of the



European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997. The Regulations require that where a development is proposed to be carried out, on any land that is not within a protected site and is liable to have an adverse impact on the protected site in question, including direct, cumulative and indirect impacts, an Appropriate Assessment is required.

Matters relating to the Birds and Habitats Directives that arise in relation to planning and development are addressed in the 2010 Planning and Development Act.

#### **4.2.1.2 Birds Directive 1979**

The 1979 European Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC), referred to as the Birds Directive, - as well as its amending acts - seeks to protect, manage and regulate all bird species naturally living in the wild within the European territory of the Member States, including the eggs of these birds, their nests and their habitats; and to regulate the exploitation of these species.

The Directive places great emphasis on the protection of habitats for endangered as well as migratory species, especially through the establishment of a coherent network of Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

SPAs are protected under the Directive and have been designated in Ireland by the DEHLG due to their conservation value for birds of importance in the European Union.

#### **4.2.1.3 European Freshwater Directive 1978**

Salmonid Waters are designated and protected under the European Communities (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations 1998 (SI No. 293 of 1988) which implements the European Council Directive on the quality of fresh waters needing protection or improvement in order to support fish life (78/659/EEC), referred to as the European Freshwater Directive as amended and codified. Salmonid Water designation imposes an obligation to maintain specific water quality standards and control pollution.

#### **4.2.1.4 UN Convention on Biological Diversity 1992**

The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity 1992 requires the promotion of the

conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

#### **4.2.1.5 National Biodiversity Plan 2002**

The preparation and implementation of Ireland's National Biodiversity Plan 2002<sup>19</sup> complies with an obligation under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. The overall goal of the Plan is to secure the conservation, including where possible the enhancement and sustainable use of biological diversity in Ireland and to contribute to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity globally. Objectives following on from this goal are to:

- Conserve habitat diversity, including all sites of special biodiversity importance;
- Conserve species diversity;
- Conserve genetic diversity, both wild and domesticated; and
- Contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and to advancing other obligations of the CBD in the EU, regionally and internationally.

Comments were invited by DEHLG in the second half of 2010 on a new Draft Second National Biodiversity Plan.

#### **4.2.1.6 Wildlife Act 1976 and Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000**

The basic designation for wildlife is the Natural Heritage Area (NHA). They cover nationally important semi-natural and natural habitats, landforms or geomorphological features, wildlife plant and animal species or a diversity of these natural attributes. Under the Wildlife Amendment Act (2000), NHAs are legally protected from damage from the date they are formally proposed for designation.

In addition to NHAs, a number of proposed NHAs (pNHAs) were published on a non-statutory basis in 1995, but have not since been statutorily proposed or designated (designation is expected to proceed on a phased basis over the coming years).

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<sup>19</sup> Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands (2002) *National Biodiversity Plan* Dublin: Government of Ireland

#### 4.2.2 SEOs, Indicators and Targets

<b>SEO B1:</b>	To ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annexed habitats and species <sup>20</sup>
<b>Indicator B1:</b>	Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive
<b>Target B1:</b>	Maintenance of favourable conservation status for Annexed habitats and species to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan <sup>21</sup>

<b>SEO B2:</b>	To ensure compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the protection of corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat <sup>22</sup> which are important at Town and environs level for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species
<b>Indicator B2:</b>	Percentage loss of functional connectivity to macro-corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat which are important on a Town and environs level without remediation as a result of implementation of the Plan – as evidenced from a resurvey of CORINE mapping
<b>Target B2:</b>	No significant corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat or parts thereof which are important on a Town and environs level and which provide functional connectivity to be lost without remediation as a result of implementation of the Plan

Note: the impact of implementing the Plan on aquatic biodiversity and flora and fauna is also influenced by both impacts upon the quality of surface water bodies - which relates to SEO W1 - and the provision of appropriate levels of waste water treatment infrastructure - this relates to SEO M1.

<sup>20</sup> 'Annexed habitats and species' refers to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

<sup>21</sup> 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 plan to proceed; and,  
 (c) adequate compensatory measures in place.

<sup>22</sup> Important corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat include the River Barrow and the Grand Canal. It is recommended that important corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat are identified as part of the monitoring programme and that time resources are spent in the monitoring of these rather than in the monitoring of corridors or areas of habitat which are not important at Town and environs level.

## 4.3 Population and Human Health

### 4.3.1 Population

In order to promote sustainable development and allow for public transport systems to function more effectively - as promoted by higher level land use strategic actions including the National Spatial Strategy - it is essential to consolidate the physical growth of Athy Town.

This can be achieved through the development of vacant, derelict and underutilised lands, in particular where they are in close proximity to public transport routes.

The DEHLG's Residential Density Guidelines 1999 and the DEHLG's Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines 2008 recommend planning authorities to promote higher residential densities, particularly in redeveloping 'brownfield' sites and in proximity to town centres and public transport corridors.

The impacts of implementing the Development Plan on both the spatial distribution of population and the nature of development with regard to greenfield and brownfield development relates to SEO S1 which aims to maximise sustainable brownfield development and minimise greenfield development.

### 4.3.2 Human Health

#### 4.3.2.1 Introduction

The impact of implementing the Development Plan on human health is determined by the impacts which the Plan will have upon environmental vectors. Impacts which the Plan might have upon these vectors would be influenced by:

- The extent to which new development is accompanied by appropriate infrastructure - this relates to SEOs M1 and M2;
- Impacts upon the quality of water bodies - these relate to SEOs W1 and W2;
- The extent of development provided by the Plan which would increase flood risk - this relates to SEO W3; and,

- The interaction between human beings and the noise generated by the landuses provided for by the Plan.

A number of potentially contaminated sites exist within the Plan area. Potential conflicts between these sites and human health could arise if development of these sites was not mitigated.

#### 4.3.2.2 Emission Limits

Emission limits for discharges to air, soil and water are set with regards to internationally recognised exposure limit values. These are generally set to be many times the safe exposure limit - in order to provide protection. In the event that a land-use plan began to have adverse health effects on surrounding populations it is likely that it would have been identified as being in breach of such emission standards at a very early stage - and long before the manifestation of any adverse health effects in the population. Nonetheless for the sake of consistency with the requirements of the SEA Regulations this section includes an objective, indicator and target for health.

### 4.3.3 SEOs, Indicators and Targets

<b>SEO HH1:</b>	To protect human health from hazards or nuisances arising from exposure to incompatible landuses
<b>Indicator HH1:</b>	Occurrence (any) of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors as identified by the Health Service Executive and Environmental Protection Agency
<b>Target HH1:</b>	No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of implementing the Plan



## 4.4 Soil

### 4.4.1 Proposal for a Soil Framework Directive

To date, there is no legislation which is specific to the protection of soil resources and soil protection is addressed indirectly and/or within sectoral policies: water, waste, chemicals, industrial pollution prevention, nature protection, pesticides and agriculture.

However, there is currently an EU Thematic Strategy on the protection of soil which includes a proposal for a Soil Framework Directive which proposes common principles for protecting soils across the EU.

Article 5 of the proposed Directive states that, for the purposes of preserving the various functions of soil; sealing, the development of artificial surfaces on top of soil resources, should be limited. The proposed Directive suggests that this may be achieved through rehabilitating brownfield sites, thus reducing the depletion of greenfield sites. The proposed Directive also states soil should be used in a sustainable manner which preserves its capacity to deliver ecological, economic and social services, while maintaining its functions so that future generations can meet their needs.

### 4.4.2 SEOs, Indicators and Targets

<b>SEO S1:</b>	Maximise the sustainable re-use of brownfield lands, and maximise the use of the existing built environment rather than developing greenfield lands
<b>Indicator S1:</b>	Area of brownfield lands developed over the Development Plan's lifespan
<b>Target S1:</b>	Arising from increased levels of brownfield development, a reduced availability of brownfield land (subject to availability on the open market, the demand for such land and the ability for such lands to be sustainably re-used) at the end of the Development Plan lifespan

## 4.5 Water

### 4.5.1 The Water Framework Directive 2000

Since 2000, Water Management in the EU has been directed by the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD). The WFD has been transposed into Irish legislation by the European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (SI No. 722 of 2003). The WFD requires that all member states implement the necessary measures to prevent deterioration of the status of all waters - surface, ground, estuarine and coastal - and protect, enhance and restore all waters with the aim of achieving good status by 2015.

### 4.5.2 Quality Standards for Surface Waters

The European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009) is the final major piece of legislation needed to support the WFD and gives statutory effect to Directive 2008/105/EC on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy. The Surface Waters Regulations also give further effect to the WFD, establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy and Directive 2006/11/EC on pollution caused by certain dangerous substances discharged into the aquatic environment of the Community.

The Surface Waters Regulations apply to all surface waters - including lakes, rivers, canals, transitional waters, and coastal waters - and provide, inter alia, for:

- The establishment of legally binding quality objectives for all surface waters and environmental quality standards for pollutants;
- The examination and where appropriate, review of existing discharge authorizations by Public Authorities to ensure that the emission limits laid down in authorisations support compliance with the new water quality objectives/standards;
- The classification of surface water bodies by the EPA for the purposes of the Water Framework Directive;
- The establishment of inventories of priority substances by the EPA, and;

- The drawing up of pollution reduction plans by coordinating local authorities (in consultation with the EPA) to reduce pollution by priority substances and to cease and/or phase out discharges, emissions or losses of priority hazardous substances.

In addition, the Regulations require that a public authority shall not, in the performance of its functions, undertake those functions in a manner that knowingly causes or allows deterioration in the chemical status or ecological status (or ecological potential as the case may be) of a body of surface water.

In order to satisfy the overall WFD objective of 'good status', a surface water body must achieve the requirements of the good ecological<sup>23</sup> and chemical<sup>24</sup> status.

### 4.5.3 Quality Standards and Threshold Values for Ground Water

Detailed provisions to achieve the aims of the WFD for ground water have been presented in a Groundwater Daughter Directive (Directive 2006/118/EC on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration).

This Directive sets up environmental objectives of good groundwater quantitative and good groundwater quality (chemical status), as well as ensuring a continuity to the 1980 Groundwater Directive (Directive 80/68/EEC on the protection of groundwater against pollution caused by dangerous substances) which is due to be repealed under the WFD by the end of 2013.

Article 3 of the 2006 Directive required that the assessment of the chemical status of groundwater use both quality standards identified in Annex I of the Directive and

<sup>23</sup> Ecological status comprises: biological quality elements, physiochemical conditions and hydromorphological quality elements. The overall ecological status of the water body is determined by the lowest level of status achieved across all quality elements.

<sup>24</sup> Chemical status assessment is based on compliance with the standards laid down for priority substances by Directive 2008/105/EC on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy (the Surface Waters Regulations give effect to the environmental standards established by this Directive).

threshold values to be set by individual member states.

Groundwater quality standards are environmental quality standards expressed as the concentration of a particular pollutant, group of pollutants or indicator of pollution in groundwater, which should not be exceeded in order to protect human health and the environment. Annex I of the Directive sets standards for two pollutants: Nitrates - 50mg/l - and; Active substances in pesticides<sup>25</sup>, including their relevant metabolites, degradation and reaction products - 0,1 µg/l and 0,5 µg/l (total<sup>26</sup>).

Irish groundwater threshold values<sup>27</sup> are currently in the process of being set by the EPA.

### 4.5.4 Flooding

#### 4.5.4.1 EU Floods Directive

European Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of flood risks aims to reduce and manage the risks that floods pose to human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity. The Directive applies to inland waters as well as all coastal waters across the whole territory of the EU.

The Directive requires Member States to carry out a preliminary assessment by 2011 in order to identify the river basins and associated coastal areas at risk of flooding. For such zones flood risk maps are required to be

<sup>25</sup> 'Pesticides' means plant protection products and biocidal products as defined in Article 2 of Directive 91/414/EEC and in Article 2 of Directive 98/8/EC, respectively.

<sup>26</sup> 'Total' means the sum of all individual pesticides detected and quantified in the monitoring procedure, including their relevant metabolites, degradation and reaction products.

<sup>27</sup> Threshold values are to be established by Member States for all pollutants and indicators of pollution which characterise groundwater bodies classified as being at risk of failing to achieve good groundwater chemical status under the WFD. Threshold values are required to be established in a way that, should the monitoring results at a representative monitoring point exceed the thresholds, this will indicate a risk that one or more of the conditions for good groundwater chemical status - with regard to the ability of groundwater to support human uses and with regard to waters used for the abstraction of drinking water - are not being met.

drawn up by 2013. By 2015 flood risk management plans focused on prevention, protection and preparedness must be established by 2015.

The Directive is to be carried out in coordination with the Water Framework Directive and flood risk management plans and river basin management plans should be coordinated.

#### 4.5.4.2 DEHLG Flood Risk Management Guidelines

In November 2009 the DEHLG issued *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines* for Planning Authorities. These are aimed at ensuring a more consistent, rigorous and systematic approach which will fully incorporate flood risk assessment and management into the planning system.

The Guidelines require the planning system to, among other things:

- Avoid development in areas at risk of flooding, particularly flood plains, unless there are proven sustainability grounds that justify appropriate development and where flood risk can be reduced or managed to an acceptable level, without increasing flood risk elsewhere;
- Adopt a sequential approach to flood risk management when assessing the location for new development based on avoidance, reduction and mitigation of flood risk; and,
- Incorporate flood risk assessment into the process of making decisions on planning applications and planning appeals.

### 4.5.5 SEOs, Indicators and Targets

<b>SEO W1:</b>	To maintain and improve, where possible, the status of surface waters
<b>Indicator W1:</b>	Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009)
<b>Target W1:</b>	To achieve 'good status' <sup>28</sup> in all bodies of surface waters by 2015 and to not knowingly allow deterioration in the status of any surface water

<b>SEO W2:</b>	To prevent pollution and contamination of ground water
<b>Indicator W2:</b>	Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC
<b>Target W2:</b>	Compliance with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC

<sup>28</sup> Good status as defined by the WFD equates to approximately the following in the current national schemes of classification as set out by the EPA:

- *Q4* in the biological classification of *rivers*;
- *Mesotrophic* in the classification of *lakes*; and,
- *Unpolluted* status in the Assessment of Trophic Status of *Estuaries and Bays* in Ireland (ATSEBI).



<b>SEO W3:</b>	To manage areas that are currently at risk of flooding or are likely to pose a significant flood risk in the future in compliance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities and Foods Directive ultimately
Indicator W3i:	Number of developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk
Target W3i:	Minimise developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk in compliance with <i>The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines</i> for Planning Authorities
Indicator W3ii:	Compliance with the recommendations contained in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment being undertaken for the Plan
Target W3ii:	To comply with the recommendations contained in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment being undertaken for the Plan

Section 36 of the Act provides for the making of 6-year Water Services Strategic Plans (WSSPs) in order to:

- to protect human health and the environment;
- to facilitate the provision of sufficient water services for domestic and non-domestic requirements in the area to which the plan relates; and,
- to support proper planning and sustainable development, including sustainable use of water resources.

WSSPs are to be made by Water Services Authorities for their functional areas. The Act allows for two or more Water Services Authorities to jointly make a WSSP in relation to all of their combined functional areas, or parts thereof.

WSSPs are required to include information on the following:

- drinking water quality;
- the prevention or abatement of risk to human health or the environment;
- current and projected need for water services;
- arrangements in place or planned for the provision of water services;
- shortfalls in the provision of water services;
- water conservation measures in place or planned;
- monitoring arrangements;
- asset management planning; and,
- income and expenditure.

Section 36 (9) of the Act allows for the making of regulations prescribing the manner in which any matter is to be set out or addressed in a water services strategic plan, notification or consultation requirements and procedures or associated time limits, prior to and after its making.

## 4.6 Material Assets

### 4.6.1 Water Services Act 2007

The Water Services Act 2007 (SI No. 30 of 2007) incorporates a comprehensive review, update and consolidation of all existing water services<sup>29</sup> legislation, and facilitates the establishment of a comprehensive supervisory regime to ensure compliance with specified performance standards.

<sup>29</sup> Services, including the provision of water intended for human consumption, which provide storage, treatment or distribution of surface water, groundwater or water supplied by a water services authority, or waste water collection, storage, treatment or disposal.

### 4.6.2 Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive 2001

The treatment of wastewater is governed by the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC) (amended by Directive 98/15/EEC) transposed into Irish law by the Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations 2001 (SI No. 254 of 2001). The Directive aims to protect the environment from the adverse effects of the wastewater discharges by ensuring that wastewater is appropriately

treated before it is discharged to the environment. The Regulations stipulate that sewage treatment facilities are in place in all towns by 2005.

Appropriate treatment is essential in order to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (see Section 4.5.1).

### 4.6.3 Drinking Water Regulations 2007

The environmental baseline with regard to drinking water demand and supply is identified in Section 3 and measures have been integrated into the Development Plan in order to help ensure a clean and wholesome water supply.

The European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 require the compliance of water intended for human consumption with 48 parameters.

### 4.6.4 SEOs, Indicators and Target

<b>SEO M1:</b>	To serve new development with adequate and appropriate waste water treatment
<b>Indicator M1i:</b>	Number of new developments granted permission which can be adequately served with waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan
<b>Target M1i:</b>	All new developments granted permission to be connected to and adequately served by waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan
<b>Indicator M1ii:</b>	Preparation of a Water Services Strategic Plan - in compliance with the Water Services Act - for the functional area of the Council
<b>Target M1ii:</b>	For the Council - alone or in combination with other Water Services Authorities - to prepare a Water Services Strategic Plan in compliance with the Water Services Act

<b>SEO M2:</b>	To serve users of public water supplies with drinking water that is both wholesome and clean
<b>Indicator M2i:</b>	Number of non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health
<b>Target M2i:</b>	No non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health as a result of implementing the Plan
<b>Indicator M2ii<sup>30</sup>:</b>	Preparation of a Water Services Strategic Plan - in compliance with the Water Services Act - for the functional area of the Council
<b>Target M2ii:</b>	For the Council - alone or in combination with other Water Services Authorities - to prepare a Water Services Strategic Plan in compliance with the Water Services Act

<sup>30</sup> Indicator and Target M2ii are the same as Indicator and Target M1ii

## 4.7 Air and Climatic Factors

### 4.7.1 Introduction

The impact of implementing the Plan on air quality and climatic factors will be determined by the impacts which the Plan has upon the traffic levels which relate to SEOs C1 and C2.

Travel is the source of most:

- Noise;
- Air emissions; and,
- Energy use (41.4% oil equivalent of final energy consumption in 2006 was taken up by transport - sourced from Sustainable Energy Ireland's online Energy Statistics Data Bank).

Land-use planning contributes to what number and what extent of journeys occur. By addressing journey time through land use planning, increases in greenhouse gases can be minimised. Furthermore, by concentrating populations, greenfield development - and its associated impacts - can be minimised and the cost of service provision can be reduced.

### 4.7.2 Air Quality

In order to protect human health, vegetation and ecosystems, EU Directives set down air quality standards in Ireland and the other Member States for a wide variety of pollutants. These pollutants are generated through fuel combustion, in space heating, traffic, electricity generation and industry and, in sufficient amounts, could affect the well being of the Town's inhabitants. The EU Directives include details regarding how ambient air quality should be monitored, assessed and managed.

The principles to this European approach are set out under the Air Quality Framework Directive 1996 while four daughter Directives lay down limits or thresholds for specific pollutants.

### 4.7.3 Climatic Factors

In order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions the internationally agreed Kyoto Protocol established emissions reduction targets for developing countries. Ireland's emission target for greenhouse gases is to limit the increase in their combined emissions during the five-year

period 2008-2012 to 13 per cent above 1990 levels.

### 4.7.4 Noise

Noise is unwanted sound. Traffic noise alone is harming today the health of almost one third of Europeans<sup>31</sup>.

The Noise Directive - Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise - is part of an EU strategy setting out to reduce the number of people affected by noise in the longer term and to provide a framework for developing existing Community policy on noise reduction from source.

The Directive requires competent authorities in Member States to:

- Draw up *strategic noise maps* for major roads, railways, airports and agglomerations, using harmonised noise indicators<sup>32</sup> and use these maps to assess the number of people which may be impacted upon as a result of excessive noise levels;
- Draw up action plans to reduce noise where necessary and maintain environmental noise quality where it is good; and,
- Inform and consult the public about noise exposure, its effects, and the measures considered to address noise.

The Directive does not set any limit value, nor does it prescribe the measures to be used in the action plans, which remain at the discretion of the competent authorities.

### 4.7.5 SEOs, Indicators and Targets

It is noted that - in addition to being addressed as part of this assessment - traffic issues will also be addressed as appropriate at individual project level by the development management process and/or EIA.

<sup>31</sup> World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (2003) *Technical meeting on exposure-response relationships of noise on health 19-21 September 2002* Bonn, Germany Bonn: WHO

<sup>32</sup> [ $L_{den}$  (day-evening-night equivalent level) and  $L_{night}$  (night equivalent level)]



<b>SEO C1:</b>	To reduce travel related greenhouse emissions to air
Indicator C1i <sup>33</sup> :	Percentage of population within the Plan area travelling to work or school by public transport or non-mechanical means
Target C1i:	An increase in the percentage of the population within the Plan area travelling to work or school by public transport or non-mechanical means
Indicator C1ii <sup>34</sup> :	Average distance travelled to work or school by the population within the Plan area
Target C1ii:	A decrease in the average distance travelled to work or school by the population of the Plan area

<b>SEO C2:</b>	To encourage modal change from car to more sustainable forms of transport
The use of the SEO C2 provides a qualitative directional measure which is used to evaluate the effects of implementing the Plan.	

## 4.8 Cultural Heritage

### 4.8.1 Archaeological Heritage

#### 4.8.1.1 Valletta Convention 1992

The European Convention on Protection of the Archaeological Heritage known as the Valletta Convention of 1992. This was ratified by Ireland in 1997 and requires that appropriate consideration be given to archaeological issues at all stages of the planning and development process.

#### 4.8.1.2 National Heritage Plan for Ireland 2002

The core objective of the National Heritage Plan for Ireland 2002<sup>35</sup> is to protect Ireland's

<sup>33</sup> As measured by the Central Statistics Office

<sup>34</sup> As measured by the Central Statistics Office

<sup>35</sup> Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands (2002) *National Heritage Plan for Ireland* Dublin: Government of Ireland

heritage. In this regard the polluter pays and the precautionary principle are operable.

#### 4.8.1.3 National Monuments Acts

Archaeology in Ireland is protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930 to 2004.

Recorded monuments are protected by inclusion on the list and marked on the map which comprises the Record of Monuments and Places set out County by County under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. The definition includes Zones of Archaeological Potential in towns and all other monuments of archaeological interest which have so far been identified.

Any works at, or in relation to a recorded monument requires two months notice to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government under section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994.

Direct impacts on national monuments in State or Local Authority care or subject to a preservation order require the consent of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government under Section 14 of the National Monuments Act 1930 as amended by Section 5 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004.

### 4.8.2 Architectural Heritage

#### 4.8.2.1 Planning and Development Act 2000

Records of Protected Structures (RPSs) are legislated for under Section 51 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 and include structures which form part of the architectural heritage and which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

#### 4.8.2.2 Architectural Heritage and Historic Monuments Act 1999

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) is a state initiative under the administration of the DEHLG which was established on a statutory basis under the provisions of the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999. Its purpose is to identify, record, and evaluate the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland, uniformly and consistently as an aid in the

protection and conservation of the built heritage. It is intended that the NIAH provides the basis for the inclusion of particular structures in RPSs.

### 4.8.3 SEOs, Indicators and Targets

<b>SEO CH1:</b>	To protect the archaeological heritage of the Town including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context
<b>Indicator CH1:</b>	Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Zones of Archaeological Potential - (and their context of the above within the surrounding landscape where relevant) protected
<b>Target CH1:</b>	Protect entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Zones of Archaeological Potential - (and their context of the above within the surrounding landscape where relevant)

<b>SEO CH2:</b>	To preserve and protect the special interest and character of the Town's architectural heritage
<b>Indicator CH2i:</b>	Percentage of entries to the Record of Protected Structures (and/or their context within the surrounding landscape where relevant) protected
<b>Indicator CH2ii:</b>	Number of additions to the Record of Protected Structures and the number of additional ACAs
<b>Target CH2i:</b>	Protect entries to the Record of Protected Structures (and/or their context within the surrounding landscape where relevant)
<b>Target CH2ii:</b>	Make Additions to the Record of Protected Structures and make additional ACAs, where appropriate

## 4.9 Landscape

### 4.9.1 Introduction

The landscapes within the Plan area - including a number of views and prospects - are protected through policies contained in the current Town Development Plan 2006-2012.

### 4.9.2 SEO, Indicator and Target

<b>SEO L1:</b>	To avoid significant adverse impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to landscapes which are most valuable and most sensitive to change and protected views and prospects
<b>Indicator L1:</b>	Number of complaints received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable impacts on the landscape resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan
<b>Target L1:</b>	No developments permitted which result in avoidable impacts on the landscape resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan

## Section 5 Context for the Town Development Plan

### 5.1 Legislative Context

The Draft Athy Town Development Plan 2012-2018 has been prepared in accordance with the requirements and provisions of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010. It relates to the functional area of Athy within the Athy Town Council boundary.

The Plan sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the town over the period 2012-2018. It is prepared with reference to the Draft Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017 which sets out strategies, policies and objectives for the development of County Kildare. Population targets for Athy and the strategy for economic development as outlined in the County Plan have informed the preparation of this plan.

### 5.2 Content and Structure of the Plan

The Development Plan consists of a written statement with accompanying maps. It comprises 14 Chapters as follows:

- Chapters 1 and 2 set out the introduction, strategic context and core strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Athy;
- Chapters 3-12 set out detailed policies and objectives under a range of headings which the Town Council will seek to achieve over the six-year life of the Plan e.g. economic development, housing, town centre development, retail, movement and transport, infrastructure, social, community, heritage and the development of opportunity areas;
- Chapter 13 sets out development management objectives and standards to be applied to future development proposals. The purpose of these standards and objectives is to guide and assist the preparation of development proposals and to

regulate the impact of development on the environment; and,

- Chapter 14 sets out the land use activities referred to under each zoning objective and indicates the acceptability or otherwise of specified land uses within each zone.

Appendices to the Plan include the SEA Environmental Report (this report), the Appropriate Assessment, the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, the Housing Strategy and the Record of Protected Structures.

### 5.3 Alternatives

Sections 6 and 7 of this report identify, describe and evaluate different alternative development scenarios for the Plan, taking into account the relevant land use strategic actions (see Section 5.4), the SEOs identified in Section 4 as well as the geographical scope of the Town Council area.

The evaluation of the alternatives results in the identification of potential environmental effects. These environmental effects are considered alongside planning - social and economic - effects leading to the emergence of a preferred alternative.

### 5.4 Relationship with other relevant Plans and Programmes

#### 5.4.1 Introduction

The Draft Plan sits within a hierarchy of land use forward planning strategic actions. The Plan must comply with higher level strategic actions and will, in turn, guide lower level strategic actions. The following sections identify number of these strategic actions, further details of which are contained in the Draft Plan.

## 5.4.2 National Development Plan 2007-2013

The National Development Plan 2007-2013 (NDP) is designed to underpin the development of a dynamic competitive economy over the period 2007 - 2013. It envisages a total investment of €184 billion over 7 years to 'secure the further transformation of our country socially and economically within an environmentally sustainable framework'.

It identifies investment funding for significant projects in sectors such as health services, social housing, education, roads, public transport, rural development, industry, and water and waste services. The NDP is designed to strengthen and improve the international competitiveness of the Country so as to support continued, but more balanced, economic and social development in line with the National Spatial Strategy.

## 5.4.3 National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020

The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS) is a 20-year planning framework for the entire Country to guide policies, programmes and investment. It seeks to promote a better balance of social, economic and physical development between the Regions.

The NSS is based on a hierarchy of settlement; Gateways, Hubs and county towns along with the need to support the role of smaller towns, villages and diverse rural economies.

Athy is neither a gateway nor hub however, with a population of over 5,000 it will act as a focus for a balanced pattern of growth. Athy will have to compete with higher order cities and towns to secure funding for strategic investment opportunities. Notwithstanding this, the Greater Dublin Area is identified for consolidation and in strategic terms the following issues are of particular importance for Kildare:

- Effective integration of land use and transportation;
- Supporting the region's capacity for innovation;
- Facilitating ease of movement of people and goods; and,

- Maintaining a high quality environment.

## 5.4.4 Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland 1997

This Strategy provides a framework for the achievement of sustainable development at local level and calls on planning authorities to incorporate the principles of sustainability into Development Plans.

## 5.4.5 Transport 21 & Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future

*Transport 21* is the capital investment framework for the transport system over the period 2006-2015. It addresses the twin challenges of past investment backlogs and continuing growth in transport demand.

*Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future* is the new transport policy for Ireland for the period 2009-2020. The policy recognises the vital importance of continued investment in transport to ensure an efficient economy and continued social development, but it also sets out the necessary steps to ensure that people choose more sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport.

## 5.4.6 Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area

Ireland is divided into eight regional forward planning regions, Dublin, Midlands, Mid East, Mid West, South East, South West, West and Border, each with its own regional planning authority composed of Elected Members selected by the constituent local government councils. Regional planning authorities are required, under the Planning and Development Act as amended, to draw up regional planning guidelines (RPGs), long term strategic planning frameworks, for their relevant region.

County Kildare is located within the Greater Dublin Area for which the RPGs for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022 have been prepared.

The key principle of the strategy involves consolidating the growth of the Metropolitan



Area and concentrating the future development of the Hinterland Area into a number of selected towns to be developed as self sustaining growth towns.

Athy, Kildare, Monasterevin and Kilcullen are designated as Moderate Sustainable Growth Towns within the hinterland area. These strategically placed, strong and dynamic urban centres are to absorb most new population growth in the hinterland area acting as key centres for the provision of services for surrounding smaller towns in rural areas. They are also recognised as having an important supporting and complementary role in the development of economic growth throughout the GDA.

#### **5.4.7 Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area**

The Dublin Transportation Office (DTO) 'A Platform for Change 2000-2016' seeks the development of an efficient and high quality system of public transport connections within the Greater Dublin Area. It comprises two independent objectives, namely:

- Infrastructure and service improvements to expand the public transport network, strategic road construction and traffic management.
- Demand management to reduce the growth in private travel through the application of land use and other policies while maintaining economic progress.

#### **5.4.8 South Eastern River Basin Management Plan**

The Water Framework Directive was adopted in 2000 and requires the preparation of a management plan for all waters in an area called a River Basin District. Athy is located in the South Eastern River Basin District. The Directive's main aim is to maintain all water bodies, rivers, lakes, groundwater and estuaries at high status, to prevent deterioration in the existing status of water, and to achieve at least "good status" in relation to all waters by 2015. The River Basin Management Plan describes in detail the status of all waters and protected areas. A programme of measures will be put in place to provide the works necessary to bring water bodies to good quality status. These measures

have informed the preparation of this Draft Plan.

#### **5.4.9 Draft Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017**

The Draft Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017 due for adoption in April 2011 has been prepared having regard to the NSS, the RPGs and various Government guidelines. It sets out the context for future development in County Kildare and includes a core strategy, development objectives, a settlement hierarchy, and policies for the protection of the environment.

The settlement strategy for County Kildare ranks settlements from large growth towns to moderate sustainable growth towns consistent with the Regional Planning Guidelines 2012-2022.

Arising from the Draft County Development Plan 2011-2017, the following strategic considerations have informed the preparation of the Draft Plan:

- Athy is to plan for a potential population growth of 2,736 between 2006 and 2018, equating to 1,252 residential units;
- Athy is identified as a secondary economic growth centre providing an important and complementary role in developing economic growth and sectoral interests in tandem with the primary economic growth towns; and,
- Development of sectoral strengths will be promoted comprising high value-added manufacturing and internationally traded sectors in tandem with IDA support around transport corridors and routes such as the rail station supported by continued investment in education and skills development.

#### **5.4.10 Athy Integrated Framework Plan for Landuse and Transportation**

In 2004 Kildare County Council and Athy Town Council, in conjunction with the Dublin Transportation Office, prepared an Integrated Framework Plan for Land Use and

Transportation for Athy (IFPLUT Study). The purpose of this Integrated Framework Plan is to integrate the strategic and coordinated planning of land use and transport up to 2016 and beyond. The IFPLUT Study has a timeframe until 2020, and will complement the Development Plan for Athy. It sets down the principles for future development, guiding the level, scale and location of development within the wider area of Athy, to provide for a quality living environment.

## **5.5 Environmental Protection Objectives**

The Draft Plan is subject to a number of high level national, international and regional environmental protection policies and objectives, including those which have been

identified as Strategic Environmental Objectives in Section 4.

Examples of Environmental Protection Objectives include the aim of the EU Habitats Directive - which is to contribute towards ensuring biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora in the European territory of Member States - and the purpose of the Water Framework Directive - which is to establish a framework for the protection of inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater which, among other things, prevents deterioration in the status of all water bodies and protects, enhances and restores all waters with the aim of achieving good status by 2015.

The Plan must be consistent with these objectives and implement them in Athy.

## Section 6 Description of Alternative Development Scenarios for the Plan

### 6.1 Introduction

One of the critical roles of the SEA is to facilitate an evaluation of the likely environmental consequences of a range of alternative scenarios for accommodating future growth in Athy.

These alternative development scenarios must be realistic, capable of implementation, and should represent a range of different approaches within statutory and operational requirements of the Development Plan. In some cases the preferred scenario will combine elements from the various alternatives considered.

This section identifies and describes different alternative development scenarios, taking into account higher level strategic actions as well as the geographical scope of the Plan area.

The scenarios are evaluated in Section 7 resulting in the identification of potential effects and informing the selection of a preferred alternative for the Draft Plan. The policies and objectives which are required to realise the preferred alternative are evaluated in Section 8.

Mitigation measures attempt to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the preferred alternative have been integrated into the Draft Plan - these are identified in Section 9.

### 6.2 Excluding the 'Do-Nothing' Scenario

As the current Plan is required to be reviewed and replaced by a new Plan under legislation a 'do-nothing' alternative is not considered, nor is it required to be by the SEA Directive.

Annex I of the SEA Directive specifies that information should be provided in the environmental report on *inter alia* the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or

programme'. Section 3 identifies the evolution of each component of the environment in the absence of implementing the Draft Plan.

### 6.3 Description of Alternative Scenarios

#### 6.3.1 Introduction

The following summarises a series of 'Scenarios' which provide alternative visions of how the future development of the Town might occur. These are neither predictions nor preferences - instead they offer a range of plausible and internally consistent narratives of the outcome of different planning and development strategies. These provide the basis for the comparative evaluation of the likely environmental effects of each plan, which in turn serves the purpose of identifying which features of plans and policies are likely to be sensitive or robust over the widest range of circumstances.

#### 6.3.2 Alternative Scenario 1: *Consolidation and Western Expansion*

Alternative Scenario 1 (see Figure 6.1) provides for the consolidation of the town centre and the development of additional lands to the west of the town centre and Grand Canal. It:

- Concentrates mixed high density development on available sites in the town centre;
- Concentrates additional mixed Residential and Employment uses to the west of the town centre and Grand Canal; and,
- Provides for the potential relocation of the Tegral and Greencore companies and the redevelopment of these sites for mixed uses thereby extending the town centre and bringing higher density employment uses closer to the residential area of Ardrew to the west of the town.

### **6.3.3 Alternative Scenario 2: *Consolidation and Eastern Expansion***

Alternative Scenario 2 (see Figure 6.2) provides for the consolidation of the town centre and the development of additional lands to the east of the town centre and the railway line. It:

- Concentrates mixed high density development on available sites in the town centre; and,
- Concentrates additional mixed Residential and Employment uses to the east of the town centre and the railway line.

### **6.3.4 Alternative Scenario 3: *Peripheral Expansion***

Alternative Scenario 3 (see Figure 6.3) provides for the peripheral expansion of the Town. It:

- Applies Residential and Employment land use zoning objectives from areas beyond the existing development envelope to lands bordering the administrative boundary of the Town Council.
- Provides for development which is led by market demand, with planning applications would be evaluated on a case by case basis.

### **6.3.5 Alternative Scenario 4: *Consolidation and Limited Expansion around Existing Development Envelope***

Alternative Scenario 4 (see Figure 6.4) provides for the consolidation of the town centre and limited expansion of lands generally adjacent to the existing development envelope. It:

- Concentrates mixed high density development on available sites in the town centre
- Limits the zoning of lands to the quantity required to fulfil the relevant targets for Athy as set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines and the Draft Kildare County Development Plan.
- Decisions with regard to which lands are dezoned from the current 2006-2012 Plan are made according to the presence or absence of key environmental considerations including:
  - The River Barrow candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC);
  - Flood Risk; and,
  - Proximity to the town centre and public transport links.



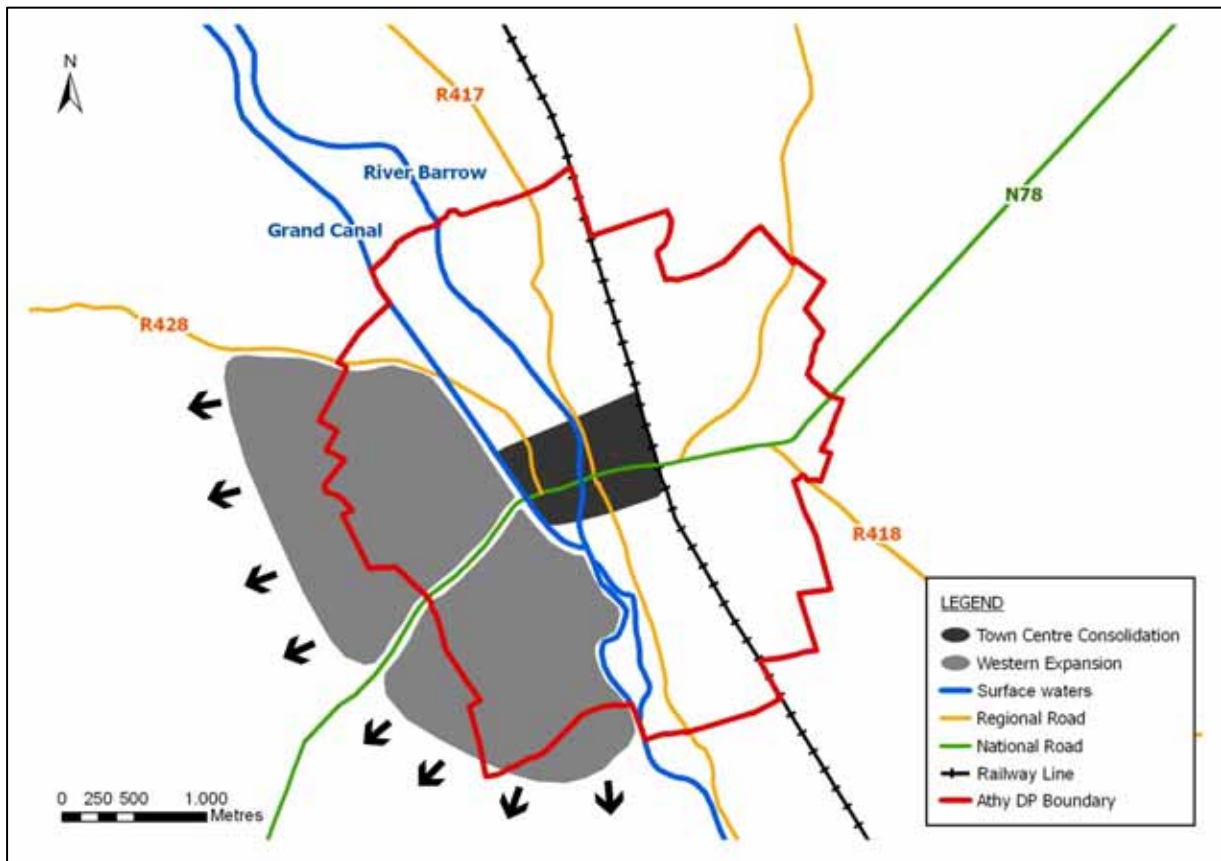


Figure 6.1 Scenario 1: Consolidation and Western Expansion

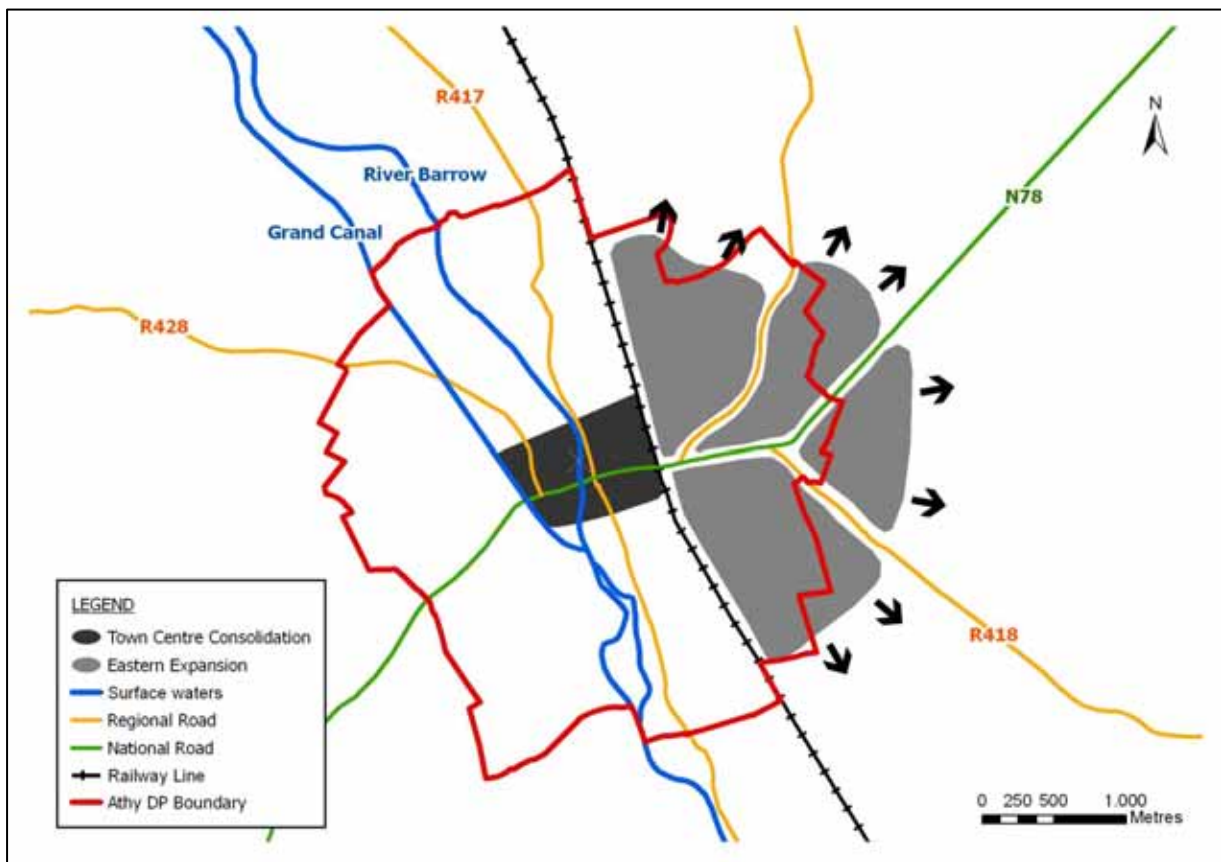


Figure 6.2 Scenario 2: Consolidation and Eastern Expansion

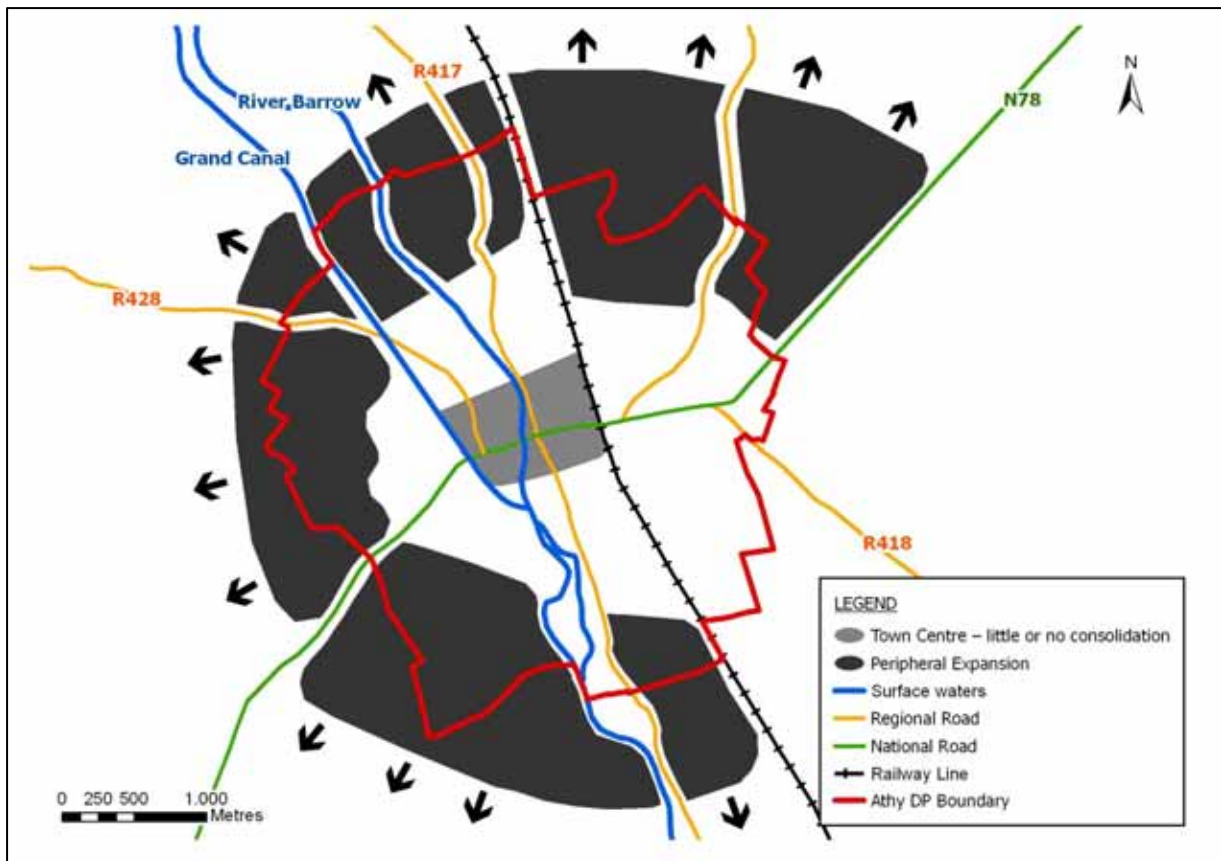


Figure 6.3 Scenario 3: *Peripheral Expansion*

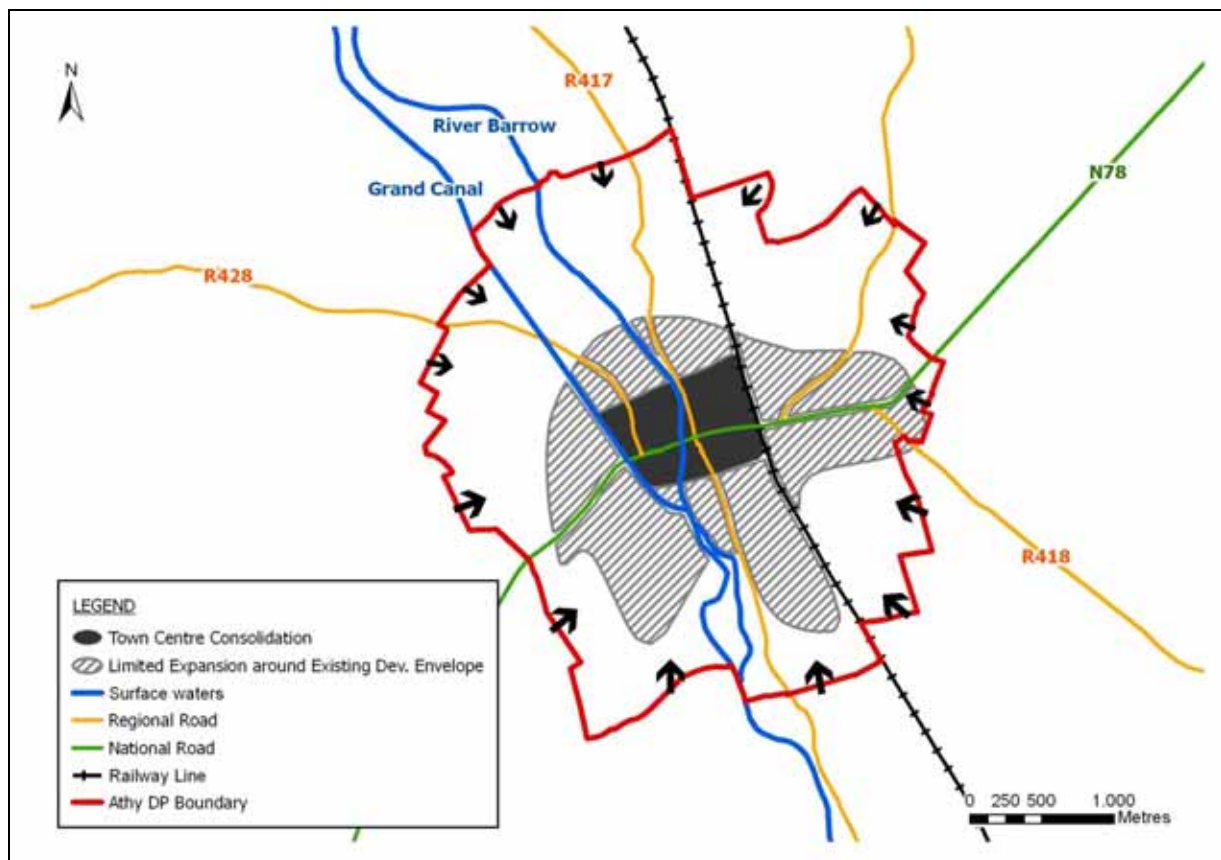


Figure 6.4 Scenario 4: *Consolidation and Limited Expansion around Existing Development Envelope*

## Section 7 Evaluation of Alternative Development Scenarios for the Plan

### 7.1 Introduction

protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annexed habitats and species<sup>36</sup>.

This section determines the relative merits of 4 alternative development scenarios for accommodating future growth in Athy Town. This determination identifies the interactions between each of the scenarios and the receiving environment.

### 7.2 Methodology

Scenarios are evaluated in a succinct and focused way for environmental effects against both the existing environment which is described and mapped in Section 3 and the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) which are identified in Section 4.

In order to comply with the SEA Directive Strategic Environmental Objectives have been grouped under relevant parent components such as *water* and *landscape*.

Based on an understanding of the existing and emerging environmental conditions within and surrounding the Town, a series of SEOs were identified and developed in order to assess the likely environmental effects which would be caused by implementation of each of the 4 alternative scenarios described in Section 6. The alternatives are evaluated using compatibility criteria (see Table 7.1) in order to determine how they are likely to affect the status of these SEOs.

Table 7.2 brings together all the SEOs which have been developed from international and national policies which generally govern environmental protection objectives.

The SEOs and the alternative scenarios are arrayed against each other to identify which interactions - if any - would cause impacts on specific components of the environment.

Where the appraisal identifies a likely conflict with the status of an SEO the relevant SEO code is entered into the conflict column - e.g. B1 which stands for SEO likely to be affected - in this instance 'to ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive with regard to the

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<sup>36</sup> 'Annexed habitats and species' refers to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

**Table 7.1 Criteria for appraising the effect of Alternatives and Plan provisions on SEOs**

Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs
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**Table 7.2 Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs)<sup>37</sup>**

SEO Code	SEO
<b>B1</b>	To ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annexed habitats and species <sup>38</sup>
<b>B2</b>	To ensure compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the protection of corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat <sup>39</sup> which are important at Town and environs level for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species
<b>HH1</b>	To protect human health from hazards or nuisances arising from exposure to incompatible landuses
<b>S1</b>	Maximise the sustainable re-use of brownfield lands, and maximise the use of the existing built environment rather than developing greenfield lands
<b>W1</b>	To maintain and improve, where possible, the status of surface waters
<b>W2</b>	To prevent pollution and contamination of ground water
<b>W3</b>	To manage areas that are currently at risk of flooding or are likely to pose a significant flood risk in the future in compliance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities and Floods Directive ultimately
<b>M1</b>	To serve new development with adequate and appropriate waste water treatment
<b>M2</b>	To serve users of public water supplies with drinking water that is both wholesome and clean
<b>C1</b>	To reduce travel related greenhouse emissions to air
<b>C2</b>	To encourage modal change from car to more sustainable forms of transport
<b>CH1</b>	To protect the archaeological heritage of the Town including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context
<b>CH2</b>	To preserve and protect the special interest and character of the Town's architectural heritage
<b>L1</b>	To avoid significant adverse impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to landscapes which are most valuable and most sensitive to change and protected views and prospects

<sup>37</sup> Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are methodological measures which are developed from international and national policies which generally govern environmental protection objectives and against which the environmental effects of the Draft Plan and the alternatives can be tested. The SEOs are used as standards against which the provisions of the Draft Plan can be evaluated in order to help identify areas in which significant adverse impacts are likely to occur, if unmitigated against.

<sup>38</sup> 'Annexed habitats and species' refers to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

<sup>39</sup> Important corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat include the River Barrow and the Grand Canal. It is recommended that important corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat are identified as part of the monitoring programme and that time resources are spent in the monitoring of these rather than in the monitoring of corridors or areas of habitat which are not important at Town and environs level.



## 7.3 Evaluation of Alternative Scenarios<sup>40</sup>

### 7.3.1 Alternative Scenario 1: *Consolidation and Western Expansion*

#### **Car Dependency, Travel Related Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Brownfield vs. Greenfield Development**

By providing for the consolidation of the town centre thereby encouraging brownfield development<sup>41</sup>, Scenario 1 would be likely to contribute towards an uptake in more sustainable modes of transport. Contributing towards this uptake would contribute towards efforts to minimise:

- energy usage for transport;
- travel related emissions to air; and
- increases in car dependency<sup>42</sup>.

However, by providing for significant additional zoning to the west of the town centre, this scenario could dilute the consolidation of the town centre and limit associated brownfield development<sup>43</sup> and increases in sustainable mobility<sup>44</sup>.

#### **Water Services, Water Resources and Human Health**

Development within the town centre provided for by this Scenario would be conveniently served by drinking water services<sup>45</sup> and by the existing waste water treatment plant<sup>46</sup> - thereby contributing to the protection of water resources<sup>47</sup> and human health<sup>48</sup>. Although there is waste water treatment capacity available, an upgrade of the collection network is required. An upgrade of drinking water supply would also be needed<sup>49</sup>.

It would be more difficult to serve the western expansion of the town with water services<sup>50</sup>; consequently, this expansion would potentially conflict with the protection of water resources<sup>51</sup>, drinking water<sup>52</sup> and human health<sup>53</sup>.

A potential conflict between this scenario and human health<sup>54</sup> could arise as a result of the development of potentially contaminated sites.

#### **Flood Risk**

A potential conflict between this scenario and the minimisation of flood risk and consequently human health could occur<sup>55</sup>.

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<sup>40</sup> Footnotes like this are used in this section in order to identify instances where interactions between the relevant Scenario and the relevant SEOs occur. The nature of these interactions is identified on the tables at the end of this section.

<sup>41</sup> SEO S1

<sup>42</sup> SEOs C1 & C2

<sup>43</sup> SEO S1

<sup>44</sup> SEOs C1 & C2

<sup>45</sup> SEO M2

<sup>46</sup> SEO M1

<sup>47</sup> SEOs W1 & W2

<sup>48</sup> SEO HH1

<sup>49</sup> SEO M2

<sup>50</sup> SEOs M1 & M2

<sup>51</sup> SEO W1 & W2

<sup>52</sup> SEO M2

<sup>53</sup> SEO HH1

<sup>54</sup> SEO HH1

<sup>55</sup> SEOs HH1 & W3

## **Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna**

Town centre consolidation potentially conflicts with sensitivities including the River Barrow cSAC and ecologically sensitive non-designated sites. The western expansion provided for by this scenario potentially conflicts with ecological connectivity - including that of the Grand Canal pNHA<sup>56</sup>.

## **Landscape**

Town centre consolidation provided for by this scenario potentially conflicts with protected views along Leinster Street and along the River Barrow while the western expansion potentially conflicts with protected views along the Grand Canal<sup>57</sup>.

## **Cultural Heritage**

Potential conflicts between archaeological<sup>58</sup> - including the Zone of Archaeological Potential - and architectural heritage<sup>59</sup> and the consolidation of the town centre would be likely to occur. Conflicts between cultural heritage and the western expansion would also be likely to occur.

### **7.3.2 Alternative Scenario 2: Consolidation and Eastern Expansion**

#### **Car Dependency, Travel Related Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Brownfield vs. Greenfield Development**

By providing for the consolidation of the town centre thereby encouraging brownfield development<sup>60</sup>, Scenario 2 would be likely to contribute towards an uptake in more sustainable modes of transport. Contributing towards this uptake would contribute towards efforts to minimise:

- energy usage for transport;
- travel related emissions to air; and,
- increases in car dependency<sup>61</sup>.

However, by providing for significant additional zoning to the east of the town centre, this scenario could dilute the consolidation of the town centre and limit associated brownfield development<sup>62</sup> and increases in sustainable mobility<sup>63</sup>.

#### **Water Services, Water Resources and Human Health**

Development within the town centre provided for by this Scenario would be conveniently served by drinking water services<sup>64</sup> and by the existing waste water treatment plant<sup>65</sup> - thereby contributing to the protection of water resources<sup>66</sup> and human health<sup>67</sup>. Although there is waste water treatment capacity available, an upgrade of the collection network is required. An upgrade of drinking water supply would also be needed<sup>68</sup>.

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<sup>56</sup> SEOs B1 & B2

<sup>57</sup> SEO L1

<sup>58</sup> SEO CH1

<sup>59</sup> SEO CH2

<sup>60</sup> SEO S1

<sup>61</sup> SEOs C1 & C2

<sup>62</sup> SEO S1

<sup>63</sup> SEOs C1 & C2

<sup>64</sup> SEO M2

<sup>65</sup> SEO M1

<sup>66</sup> SEOs W1 & W2

<sup>67</sup> SEO HH1

<sup>68</sup> SEO M2

It would be more difficult to serve the eastern expansion of the town with water services<sup>69</sup>; consequently, this expansion would potentially conflict with the protection of water resources<sup>70</sup>, drinking water<sup>71</sup> and human health<sup>72</sup>.

A potential conflict between this scenario and human health<sup>73</sup> could arise as a result of the development of potentially contaminated sites.

### **Flood Risk**

A potential conflict between this scenario and the minimisation of flood risk and consequently human health could occur<sup>74</sup>.

### **Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna**

Town centre consolidation potentially conflicts with sensitivities including the River Barrow cSAC and ecologically sensitive non-designated sites. The eastern expansion provided for by this scenario potentially conflicts with ecological connectivity<sup>75</sup>.

### **Landscape**

Town centre consolidation provided for by this scenario potentially conflicts with protected views along Leinster Street and along the River Barrow<sup>76</sup>.

### **Cultural Heritage**

Potential conflicts between archaeological<sup>77</sup> - including the Zone of Archaeological Potential - and architectural heritage<sup>78</sup> and the consolidation of the town centre would be likely to occur. Conflicts between cultural heritage and the eastern expansion would also be likely to occur.

## **7.3.3 Alternative Scenario 3: *Peripheral Expansion***

### **Car Dependency, Travel Related Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Brownfield vs. Greenfield Development**

By not consolidating the existing town centre, not encouraging brownfield development<sup>79</sup> and providing for new development on peripheral greenfield sites, away from the town centre and public transport nodes, Scenario 3 would be likely to result in more unsustainable modes of transport and would increase:

- energy usage for transport;
- travel related emissions to air; and,
- levels of car dependency<sup>80</sup>.

These environmental conflicts associated with these increases would not be likely to be mitigated.

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<sup>69</sup> SEOs M1 & M2

<sup>70</sup> SEO W1 & W2

<sup>71</sup> SEO M2

<sup>72</sup> SEO HH1

<sup>73</sup> SEO HH1

<sup>74</sup> SEOs HH1 & W3

<sup>75</sup> SEOs B1 & B2

<sup>76</sup> SEO L1

<sup>77</sup> SEO CH1

<sup>78</sup> SEO CH2

<sup>79</sup> SEO S1

<sup>80</sup> SEOs C1 & C2

### **Water Services, Water Resources and Human Health**

Peripheral development would not be served by public waste water treatment<sup>81</sup> or drinking water services<sup>82</sup> thereby conflicting with water resources<sup>83</sup>, drinking water<sup>84</sup> and human health<sup>85</sup> - these conflicts would be unlikely to be fully mitigated.

A potential conflict between this scenario and human health<sup>86</sup> could arise as a result of the development of potentially contaminated sites.

### **Flood Risk**

A potential conflict between this scenario and the minimisation of flood risk and consequently human health could occur<sup>87</sup>.

### **Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna**

Peripheral development potentially conflicts directly and cumulatively with sensitivities including the River Barrow cSAC and the Grand Canal pNHA<sup>88</sup>. Peripheral development would also cumulatively conflict with ecological connectivity - these conflicts would be unlikely to be fully mitigated<sup>89</sup>.

### **Landscape**

Peripheral development would result in significant change to the landscape surrounding the existing development envelope of the town<sup>90</sup>.

### **Cultural Heritage**

Potential conflicts between archaeological<sup>91</sup> in the peripheries of the Plan area and potential conflicts architectural heritage<sup>92</sup> in the town centre (in the long term, arising from a lack of development and subsequent decay) would be likely to occur. By not providing for the consolidation of the town centre this scenario would be likely indirectly contribute towards the protection of the Zone of Archaeological Protection<sup>93</sup>.

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<sup>81</sup> SEO M1  
<sup>82</sup> SEO M2  
<sup>83</sup> SEO W1 & W2  
<sup>84</sup> SEO M2  
<sup>85</sup> SEO HH1  
<sup>86</sup> SEO HH1  
<sup>87</sup> SEOs HH1 & W3  
<sup>88</sup> SEO B1  
<sup>89</sup> SEO B2  
<sup>90</sup> SEO L1  
<sup>91</sup> SEO CH1  
<sup>92</sup> SEO CH2  
<sup>93</sup> SEO CH1



### **7.3.4 Alternative Scenario 4: *Consolidation and Limited Expansion around Existing Development Envelope***

#### **Car Dependency, Travel Related Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Brownfield vs. Greenfield Development**

By providing for the consolidation of the town centre thereby encouraging brownfield development<sup>94</sup> and only allowing limited expansion, Scenario 4 would be likely to help to maximise the uptake in more sustainable modes of transport. Maximising this uptake would help to minimise:

- energy usage for transport;
- travel related emissions to air; and,
- increases in car dependency<sup>95</sup>.

#### **Water Services, Water Resources and Human Health**

Development within the town centre and limited development generally adjacent to the existing development envelope provided for by this Scenario would be conveniently served by drinking water services<sup>96</sup> and by the existing waste water treatment plant<sup>97</sup> - thereby contributing to the protection of water resources<sup>98</sup> and human health<sup>99</sup>. Although there is waste water treatment capacity available, an upgrade of the collection network is required<sup>100</sup>. An upgrade of drinking water supply would also be needed<sup>101</sup>.

Potential conflict between this scenario and human health<sup>102</sup> could arise as a result of the development of potentially contaminated sites.

#### **Flood Risk**

A potential conflict between this scenario and the minimisation of flood risk and consequently human health could occur<sup>103</sup>.

#### **Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna**

Town centre consolidation potentially conflicts with sensitivities including the River Barrow cSAC and ecologically sensitive non-designated sites. The limited expansion provided for by this scenario potentially conflicts with ecological connectivity - including that of the Grand Canal pNHA<sup>104</sup>.

#### **Landscape**

Town centre consolidation and limited expansion provided for by this scenario potentially conflicts with protected views along Leinster Street, the River Barrow and the Grand Canal<sup>105</sup>.

#### **Cultural Heritage**

Potential conflicts between archaeological<sup>106</sup> - including the Zone of Archaeological Potential - and architectural heritage<sup>107</sup> and the consolidation of the town centre would be likely to occur.

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<sup>94</sup> SEO S1

<sup>95</sup> SEOs C1 & C2

<sup>96</sup> SEO M2

<sup>97</sup> SEO M1

<sup>98</sup> SEOs W1 & W2

<sup>99</sup> SEO HH1

<sup>100</sup> SEOs M1, W1, W2, M2 & HH1

<sup>101</sup> SEO M2

<sup>102</sup> SEO HH1

<sup>103</sup> SEOs HH1 & W3

<sup>104</sup> SEOs B1 & B2

<sup>105</sup> SEO L1

### 7.3.5 Evaluation of Alternative Scenarios against SEOs

The table overleaf provides an evaluation of each of the alternative development scenarios for the Draft Plan against the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs).

Scenario 3 *Peripheral Expansion* would be likely to conflict the most with SEOs, having 9 probable conflicts which would unlikely to be mitigated. This is because consolidation of the existing town centre would be unlikely to occur under this Scenario, with development provided for at the periphery of the town and on greenfield sites.

Scenario 4 *Consolidation and Limited Expansion around Existing Development Envelope* would be likely to: improve the status of SEOs the most, more than Scenarios 1, 2 and 3; and, potentially conflict with SEOs the least, less than Scenarios 1, 2 and 3. This is because this Scenario provides for the consolidation of the town centre and only provides limited expansion of lands which are generally adjacent to the existing development envelope.

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<sup>106</sup> SEO CH1

<sup>107</sup> SEO CH2

	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs - would be mitigated
Scenario 1: <i>Consolidation and Western Expansion</i>	<p><b>C1 C2 S1</b> (by providing for the consolidation of the town centre, this scenario: encourages brownfield development; contributes to reductions in car dependency; and, minimises increases in travel related greenhouse gas emissions)</p> <p><b>M1 W1 W2 M2 HH1</b> (development within the town centre would be conveniently served by drinking water services and by the existing waste water treatment plant - thereby providing for the protection of water resources and human health)</p>		<p><b>C1 C2 S1</b> (by providing for significant additional zoning to the west of the town centre, this scenario: could dilute the consolidation of the town centre and limit associated brownfield development and increases in sustainable mobility)</p> <p><b>CH1 CH2</b> (potential conflicts with cultural heritage arising from town centre consolidation and western expansion)</p> <p><b>B1 B2</b> (town centre consolidation potentially conflicts with sensitivities including the River Barrow cSAC and ecologically sensitive non-designated sites; western expansion potentially conflicts with ecological connectivity - including that of the Grand Canal pNHA)</p> <p><b>L1</b> (town centre consolidation potentially conflicts with protected views; western expansion potentially conflicts with protected views along the Canal)</p> <p><b>M1 W1 W2 M2 HH1<sup>108</sup></b> (although there is waste water treatment capacity available, an upgrade of the collection network is required. An upgrade of drinking water supply would also be needed. It would be more difficult to serve the western expansion of the town with water services; consequently, this expansion would potentially conflict with the protection of water resources, drinking water and human health)</p> <p><b>W3 HH1</b> (potential conflict with minimisation of flood risk)</p> <p><b>HH1</b> (potential conflict arising from potentially contaminated sites)</p>
Scenario 2: <i>Consolidation and Eastern Expansion</i>	<p><b>C1 C2 S1</b> (by providing for the consolidation of the town centre, this scenario: encourages brownfield development; contributes to reductions in car dependency; and, minimises increases in travel related greenhouse gas emissions)</p> <p><b>M1 W1 W2 M2 HH1</b> (development within the town centre would be conveniently served by drinking water services and by the existing waste water treatment plant - thereby providing for the protection of water resources and human health)</p>		<p><b>C1 C2 S1</b> (by providing for significant additional zoning to the east of the town centre, this scenario: could dilute the consolidation of the town centre and limit associated brownfield development and increases in sustainable mobility)</p> <p><b>CH1 CH2</b> (potential conflicts with cultural heritage arising from town centre consolidation and eastern expansion)</p> <p><b>B1 B2</b> (town centre consolidation potentially conflicts with sensitivities including the River Barrow cSAC and ecologically sensitive non-designated sites; western expansion potentially conflicts with ecological connectivity)</p> <p><b>L1</b> (town centre consolidation potentially conflicts with protected views)</p> <p><b>M1 W1 W2 M2 HH1<sup>109</sup></b> (although there is waste water treatment capacity available, an upgrade of the collection network is required. An upgrade of drinking water supply would also be needed. It would be more difficult to serve the western expansion of the town with water services; consequently, this expansion would potentially conflict with the protection of water resources, drinking water and human health)</p> <p><b>W3 HH1</b> (potential conflict with minimisation of flood risk)</p> <p><b>HH1</b> (potential conflict arising from potentially contaminated sites)</p>

**Table 7.3 Evaluation of Alternative Development Scenarios 1 and 2 against SEOs**

<sup>108</sup> Note that these potential conflicts are greater than those detailed under Scenario 4

<sup>109</sup> Note that these potential conflicts are greater than those detailed under Scenario 4

	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs - would be mitigated
Scenario 3: <i>Peripheral Expansion</i>	<b>CH1</b> (indirect contribution towards the protection of the zone of archaeological potential in the town centre as consolidation of town centre is not provided for)	<b>C1 C2 S1</b> (development would be on greenfield sites at the periphery; car dependency and travel related greenhouse gas emissions would increase) <b>B2</b> (peripheral development would cumulatively conflict with ecological connectivity - these conflicts would be unlikely to be fully mitigated) <b>M1 W1 W2 M2 HH1</b> (peripheral development would not be served by water services thereby conflicting with water resources, drinking water and human health - these conflicts would be unlikely to be fully mitigated, in the absence of significant extra investment)	<b>CH1 CH2</b> (potential conflicts with archaeological heritage in the peripheries and potential conflicts with architectural heritage arising from decay of the town centre) <b>B1 B2</b> (peripheral development potentially conflicts directly and cumulatively with sensitivities including the River Barrow cSAC and the Grand Canal pNHA) <b>L1</b> (peripheral development would result in significant change to the landscape surrounding the existing development envelope of the town) <b>W3 HH1</b> (potential conflict with minimisation of flood risk) <b>HH1</b> (potential conflict arising from potentially contaminated sites)
Scenario 4: <i>Consolidation and Limited Expansion around Existing Development Envelope</i>	<b>C1 C2 S1</b> (by providing for the consolidation of the town centre and only allowing limited expansion, this scenario - more than the other scenarios: encourages brownfield development; contributes to reductions in car dependency; and, minimises increases in travel related greenhouse gas emissions) <b>M1 W1 W2 M2 HH1</b> (development within the town centre and limited development generally adjacent to the existing development envelope would be conveniently served by drinking water services and by the existing waste water treatment plant - thereby providing for the protection of water resources and human health)		<b>CH1 CH2</b> (potential conflicts with cultural heritage mainly arising from town centre consolidation) <b>B1 B2</b> (town centre consolidation potentially conflicts with sensitivities including the River Barrow cSAC and ecologically sensitive non-designated sites; limited expansion potentially conflicts with ecological connectivity - including that of the Grand Canal pNHA) <b>L1</b> (town centre consolidation and limited expansion potentially conflicts with protected views) <b>M1 W1 W2 M2 HH1</b> <sup>110</sup> (although there is waste water treatment capacity available, an upgrade of the collection network is required. An upgrade of drinking water supply would also be needed) <b>W3 HH1</b> (potential conflict with minimisation of flood risk) <b>HH1</b> (potential conflict arising from potentially contaminated sites)

**Table 7.4 Evaluation of Alternative Development Scenarios 3 and 4 against SEOs**

<sup>110</sup> Note that these potential conflicts are less than those detailed under Scenarios 1 and 2



## **7.4 The Selected Alternative Development Scenario for the Draft Plan which was submitted to the Elected Members**

The Alternatives that were examined were produced and evaluated at an earlier - more embryonic - stage to facilitate the evaluation and selection of a plan - having regard, *inter alia* to environmental consequences.

The Alternative Scenario for the Draft Development Plan which was chosen to be developed for the Draft Development Plan by the plan-making team and which was submitted to the Elected Members under Section 11 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010 was Scenario 4 (*Consolidation and Limited Expansion around Existing Development Envelope*) – this Scenario achieves a good balance between potential environmental impact and conformance with relevant higher level planning objectives including the Draft County Development Plan 2011-2017.

In total, the Draft Development Plan which was submitted to the Elected Members provided for the dezoning of approx. 130 hectares of land from that which is zoned in the current 2006-2012 Plan.

With the integration of appropriate mitigation measures (including those which are identified in Section 9 of this report) potential adverse environmental effects which could arise as a result of implementing Alternative Scenario 4 would be likely to be avoided, reduced or offset.

Alternative Scenario 4 was chosen to be developed for the Draft Development Plan by the plan-making team having regard to both:

1. The environmental effects which were identified by the Strategic Environmental Assessment; and,
2. Planning - including social and economic - effects.

## **7.5 The Draft Development Plan which was chosen by the Elected Members to be placed on public display**

The Draft Development Plan which was chosen by the Elected Members to be placed on public display is a mix of parts of all 4 Alternative Scenarios, providing for expansion of the town in eastern areas, in western areas, at peripheral greenfield sites and at areas around the existing development envelope. The Core Strategy Map from the Draft Development Plan is shown on Figure 7.1 while the Land Use Zoning Map is shown on Figure 7.2.

The Draft Development Plan which was submitted to the Elected Members provided for the dezoning approx. 130 hectares of land from that which is zoned in the current 2006-2012 Plan. The Elected Members decided against the dezoning these lands by the Draft Plan to be placed on public display.

The likely significant effects of implementing the Draft Development Plan are detailed below.

### **Car Dependency, Travel Related Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Brownfield vs. Greenfield Development**

By providing for significant New Residential zoning in eastern, western and peripheral areas, the Draft Development Plan would be likely to dilute the consolidation of the town centre and limit associated brownfield development<sup>111</sup> and increases in sustainable mobility<sup>112</sup>. The Plan would be likely to result in more unsustainable modes of transport and would increase:

- energy usage for transport;
- travel related emissions to air; and,

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<sup>111</sup> SEO S1

<sup>112</sup> SEOs C1 & C2

- levels of car dependency<sup>113</sup>.

Limited consolidation is contributed towards by the inclusion of policies and objectives favourable to the achievement of brownfield development, infill etc. however with the extent and location of New Residential zoning provided for, it is unlikely that significant levels of consolidation would be achieved.

### **Water Services, Water Resources and Human Health**

It will be difficult to serve the eastern, western and peripheral expansion of the Town into lands that are zoned as New Residential with water services<sup>114</sup>; consequently the Draft Development Plan would potentially conflict with the protection of water resources<sup>115</sup>, drinking water<sup>116</sup> and human health<sup>117</sup>. Investment will be required in order to comply with policies and objectives which have been integrated into the Draft Development Plan for the adequate and appropriate provision of water services and the protection of environmental components including water resources and human health. Additional waste water treatment capacity would have to be provided and the collection network would have to be expanded into the east, west and periphery of the Town. An upgrade of drinking water supply would also be needed<sup>118</sup>.

A potential conflict between this scenario and human health<sup>119</sup> could arise as a result of the development of potentially contaminated sites.

### **Flood Risk**

The zoning contained for certain lands in the Draft Development Plan chosen to be placed on public display does not adhere to all the recommendations contained in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. The lands are identified as C3, C4, C5 and C32 in Section 4.4 of the SFRA and are zoned as New Residential. The SFRA identifies that: "These lands did not pass the Justification Test. It is recommended that in each case, the entire parcel be reclassified for water compatible development only".

Although mitigation measures integrated into the Draft Development Plan are retained and would mitigate some effects, significant increases in flood risk and associated potential impacts upon human health could occur<sup>120</sup>.

### **Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna**

The eastern, western and peripheral expansion provided for by the Draft Plan and any town centre development which occurred would potentially conflict with ecological connectivity - directly and cumulatively -, including that of the Grand Canal pNHA and the River Barrow cSAC<sup>121</sup>. Residual adverse effects on ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats would be likely to remain, especially in the more peripheral areas<sup>122</sup>.

The footprint of the land use zoning contained in the Draft Plan does not directly conflict with the protection of the River Barrow cSAC; policies and objectives which have been integrated into the Draft provide for the protection of this site and the Natura 2000 network. The extent of New Residential zoning provided for by the Draft Plan chosen to be put on public display potentially conflicts with the provision of adequate and appropriate waste water treatment and collection infrastructure and therefore potentially conflicts with the protection of the River Barrow cSAC, however, in order to help ensure that adequate and appropriate waste water treatment and collection

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<sup>113</sup> SEOs C1 & C2

<sup>114</sup> SEOs M1 & M2

<sup>115</sup> SEO W1 & W2

<sup>116</sup> SEO M2

<sup>117</sup> SEO HH1

<sup>118</sup> SEOs M1 & M2

<sup>119</sup> SEO HH1

<sup>120</sup> SEOs HH1 & W3

<sup>121</sup> SEOs B1 & B2

<sup>122</sup> SEO B2

infrastructure is provided, policies and objectives have been integrated into the Draft Development Plan. Compliance with these measures will require investment.

## Landscape

The western expansion of the Town potentially conflicts with protected views along the Grand Canal. Peripheral development would result in significant change to the landscape surrounding the existing development envelope of the town. Any town centre development would potentially conflict with protected views along Leinster Street and along the River Barrow<sup>123</sup>.

## Cultural Heritage

Potential conflicts between archaeological<sup>124</sup> in the peripheries of the Plan area and potential conflicts architectural heritage<sup>125</sup> in the town centre (in the long term, arising from a lack of development and subsequent decay) would be likely to occur. By failing to achieve significant levels of consolidation within the town centre this scenario would be likely indirectly contribute towards the protection of the Zone of Archaeological Protection<sup>126</sup>.

## Evaluation against SEOs

The table below provides an evaluation of each of the alternative development scenarios for the Draft Plan against the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs).

Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs - would be mitigated
<p><b>CH1</b> (indirect contribution towards the protection of the zone of archaeological potential in the town centre as it is unlikely that significant levels of consolidation would be achieved)</p>	<p><b>C1 C2 S1</b> (development would be spread throughout the administrative area of the Council; car dependency and travel related greenhouse gas emissions would increase)</p> <p><b>B2</b> (residual adverse effects on ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats would be likely to remain, especially in the more peripheral areas)</p> <p><b>M1 W1 W2 M2 HH1</b> (more peripheral development would not be served by water services thereby conflicting with water resources, drinking water and human health - in the absence of significant extra investment these conflicts would be unlikely to be fully mitigated)</p> <p><b>W3 HH1</b> (conflict with minimisation of flood risk; recommendations contained in Section 4.4 of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment not adhered to)</p>	<p><b>CH1 CH2</b> (potential conflicts with archaeological heritage in the peripheries and potential conflicts with architectural heritage arising from decay of the town centre)</p> <p><b>B1 B2</b> (development potentially conflicts directly and cumulatively with sensitivities including the River Barrow cSAC and the Grand Canal pNHA)</p> <p><b>L1</b> (peripheral development would result in significant change to the landscape surrounding the existing development envelope of the town)</p> <p><b>HH1</b> (potential conflict arising from potentially contaminated sites)</p>

<sup>123</sup> SEO L1

<sup>124</sup> SEO CH1

<sup>125</sup> SEO CH2

<sup>126</sup> SEO CH1

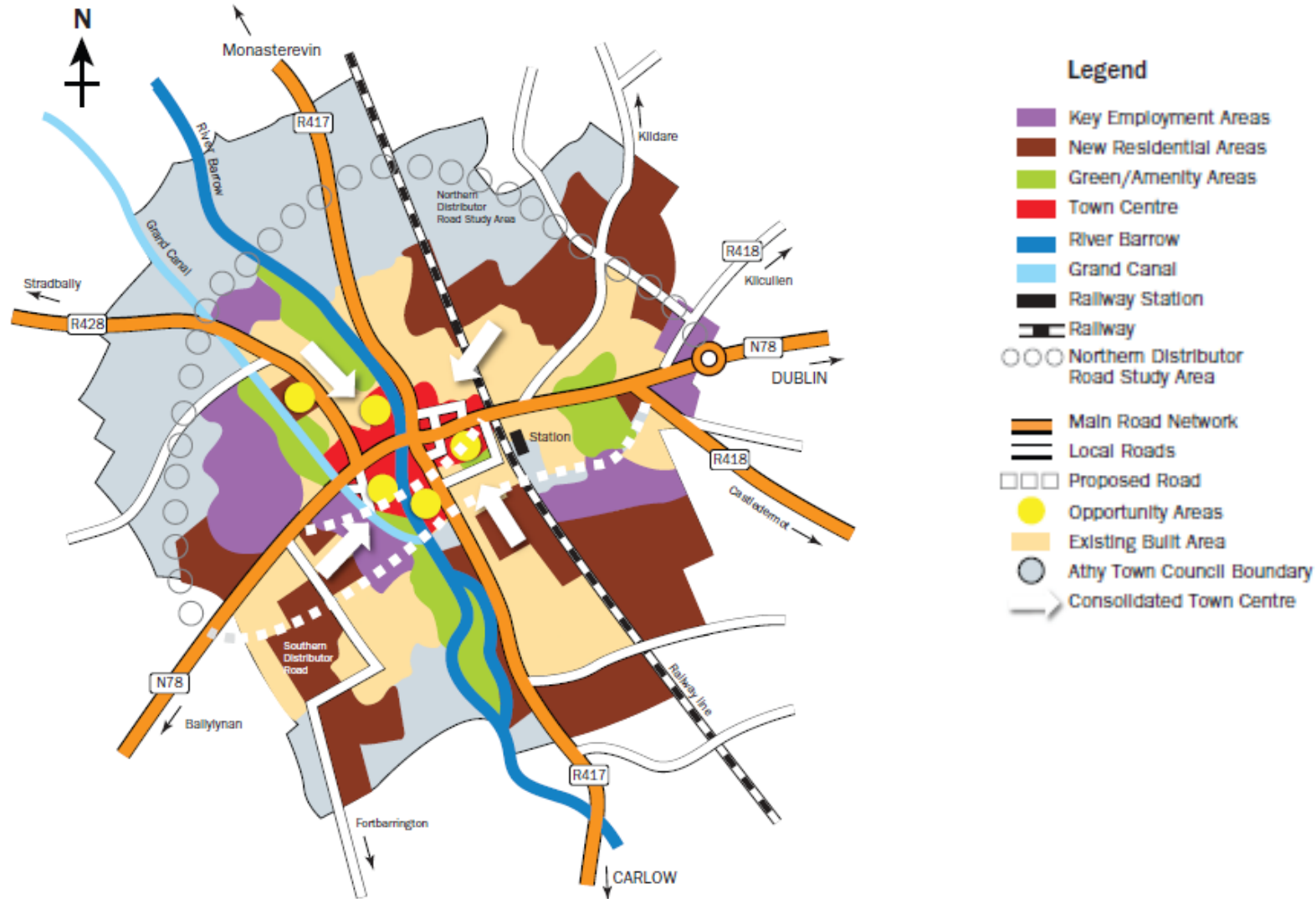


Figure 7.1 Core Strategy Map from the Draft Development Plan



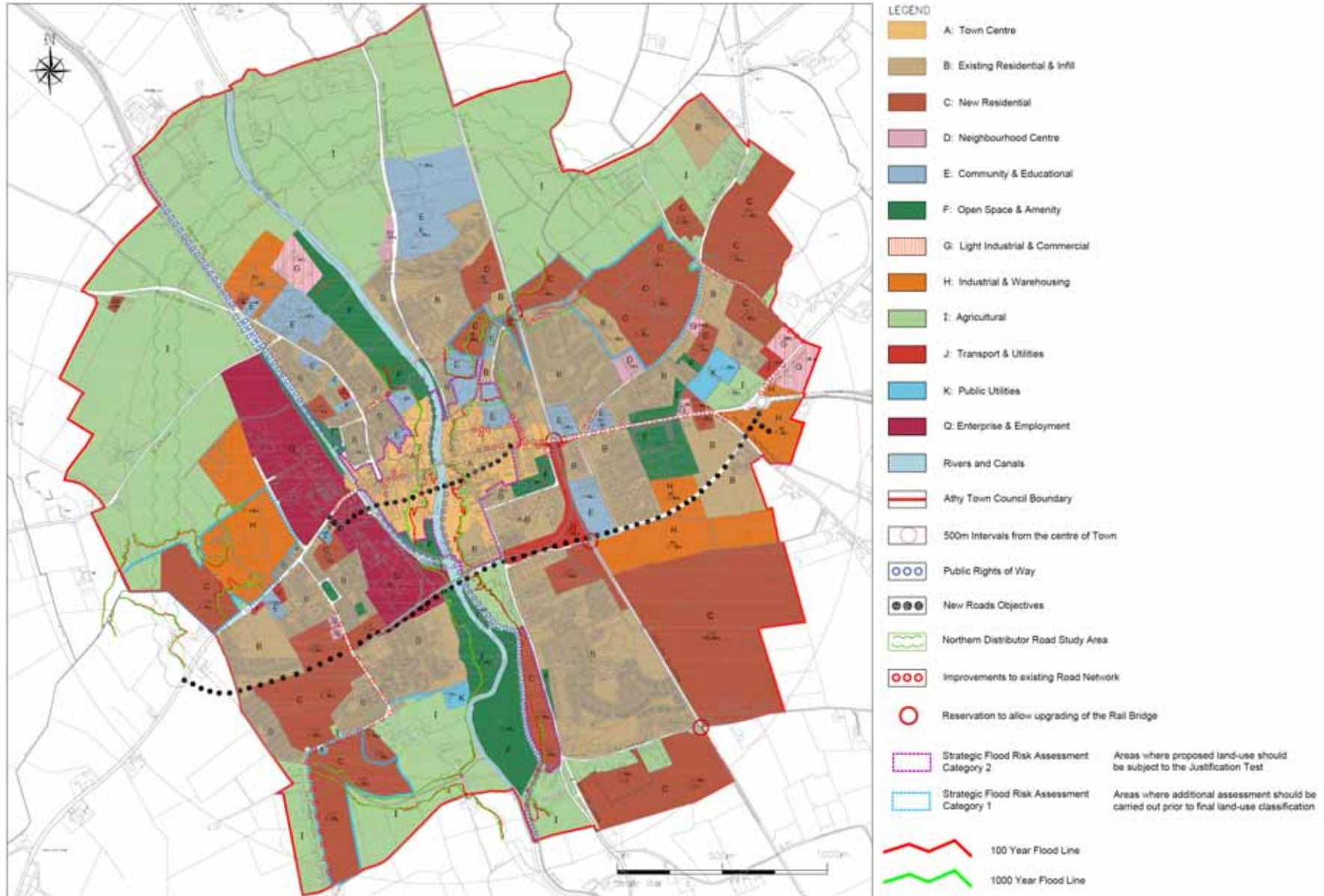


Figure 7.2 Zoning Map from the Draft Development Plan which was chosen by the Elected Members to be placed on public display

## **Section 8 Evaluation of Draft Plan Provisions**

### **8.1 Introduction**

This section evaluates the Draft Plan's policies and objectives. As detailed under Sections 7.4 and 7.5, the Alternative Scenario for the Draft Development Plan which was chosen to be developed for the Draft Development Plan by the plan-making team and which was submitted to the Elected Members under Section 11 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010 was Scenario 4, providing for consolidation of the town centre and limited expansion around the existing development envelope.

The Draft Development Plan which was chosen by the Elected Members to be placed on public display is a mix of parts of all 4 Alternative Scenarios, providing for expansion of the town in eastern areas, in western areas, at peripheral greenfield sites and at areas around the existing development envelope.

In general the policies and objectives contained in this section were prepared by the Plan-making team in order to realise Scenario 4 and have not changed significantly since being submitted to the Elected Members for their consideration,

### **8.2 Methodology**

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are used in order to evaluate the Draft Plan's policies and objectives as outlined under Section 7.2. Use has also been made of the environmental baseline descriptions and the maps of the individual components provided in Section 3.

The interactions between the SEOs and the policies and objectives of the Plan determine the likely significant effects of implementing the Plan. These effects include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects. Table 8.1 (overleaf) brings together all the SEOs which have been developed from international, national and regional policies which generally govern environmental protection objectives.

### **8.3 Determination of Potential Interactions**

Certain Plan policies and objectives are evaluated as having potential conflicting interactions with the status of SEOs. The interaction and environmental impacts, if any, which occur will be determined by: the nature and extent of individual projects or multiple projects; lower tier plans and subsequent development; and, site specific environmental factors.

These impacts may be assessed as part of a lower tier environmental assessment and/or by the development management process.

Avoidance of conflict is dependent upon compliance with the mitigation measures which have emerged through the SEA, Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment processes together with management of permissions in a way which does not conflict with the status of SEOs. Providing other Plan measures are complied with, unnecessary conflicts with SEOs would be avoided.

### **8.4 Potential Cumulative and Indirect Effects**

The provisions of the Development Plan will combine with the provisions of other planning and sectoral policies and objectives including those which are included in the following documents to provide for the development of Athy, County Kildare and the wider Region and contribute towards the need for developments such as those relating to transport, water services or power infrastructure. Such planning and sectoral policies and objectives which have been used in the assessment when considering potential cumulative and indirect conflicts and effects include:

- The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020;
- The National Development Plan 2007-2013;
- The Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area;
- River Basin Management Plan for the South Eastern River Basin District;
- Higher level Environmental Protection Objectives and related Plans which have been identified in Sections 3 and 4 of this report;
- Strategic Actions and related Plans and Programmes which have been identified within Plan provisions; and,
- Lower tier land use plans within the wider County and Barrow Catchment.

Other planning and sectoral policies and objectives - and projects arising - are subject to their own planning and environmental assessment processes. Potential cumulative and indirect conflicts and effects will be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Plan through the SEA (see Section 9) and they will be addressed by lower tier environmental assessment, as appropriate.

**Table 8.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs)<sup>127</sup>**

SEO Code	SEO
B1	To ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annexed habitats and species <sup>128</sup>
B2	To ensure compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the protection of corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat <sup>129</sup> which are important at Town and environs level for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species
HH1	To protect human health from hazards or nuisances arising from exposure to incompatible landuses
S1	Maximise the sustainable re-use of brownfield lands, and maximise the use of the existing built environment rather than developing greenfield lands
W1	To maintain and improve, where possible, the status of surface waters
W2	To prevent pollution and contamination of ground water
W3	To manage areas that are currently at risk of flooding or are likely to pose a significant flood risk in the future in compliance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities and Floods Directive ultimately
M1	To serve new development with adequate and appropriate waste water treatment
M2	To serve users of public water supplies with drinking water that is both wholesome and clean
C1	To reduce travel related greenhouse emissions to air
C2	To encourage modal change from car to more sustainable forms of transport
CH1	To protect the archaeological heritage of the Town including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context
CH2	To preserve and protect the special interest and character of the Town's architectural heritage
L1	To avoid significant adverse impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to landscapes which are most valuable and most sensitive to change and protected views and prospects

<sup>127</sup> Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are methodological measures which are developed from international and national policies which generally govern environmental protection objectives and against which the environmental effects of the Draft Plan and the alternatives can be tested. The SEOs are used as standards against which the provisions of the Draft Plan can be evaluated in order to help identify areas in which significant adverse impacts are likely to occur, if unmitigated against.

<sup>128</sup> 'Annexed habitats and species' refers to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

<sup>129</sup> Important corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat include the River Barrow and the Grand Canal. It is recommended that important corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat are identified as part of the monitoring programme and that time resources are spent in the monitoring of these rather than in the monitoring of corridors or areas of habitat which are not important at Town and environs level.

## **8.5 Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment**

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) have both been undertaken alongside the Draft Plan.

The requirement for AA is provided under the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 1992/43/EEC). The requirement for SFRA is provided under 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DEHLG, 2009).

The preparation of the Draft Plan, SEA, AA & SFRA have taken place concurrently and the findings of the AA & SFRA have informed both the Draft Plan and the SEA (although not all of the SFRA recommendations have been integrated into the Plan - see Section 7.5).



## 8.6 Chapter 2: Core Strategy

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
<p><b>Core Strategy Aim</b> To respond in a coherent sustainable spatial manner to the development of Athy providing a more focused approach to planning for future development. The core strategy seeks to promote a more consolidated and compact urban form; to create and promote new employment opportunities; to create sustainable and integrated communities while balancing the protection of the natural and built heritage with sustainable and appropriate development</p>	<p>HH1 W1 W2 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2</p>		<p>B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p><b>Core Strategy Aims and Objectives</b> The aims and objectives of the core strategy are to: (i) Recognise and promote the role of Athy as a Moderate Sustainable Growth Town having an interacting and supporting role servicing the rural hinterland area of south Kildare. (ii) Facilitate future population growth of Athy in line with the RPGs and the Draft County Development Plan 2011-2017, through the consolidation of the town centre and adjoining residential areas. (iii) Support the development of Athy as a secondary economic growth centre providing an important role in developing economic growth and sectoral interests. (iv) Encourage and support the delivery of key infrastructural projects to ensure that future development needs are met in a sustainable and coordinated manner. (v) Promote and encourage major enhancement and expansion of the retail offer and town centre retail functions of Athy in line with its designation as a Sub County Town Centre in south Kildare. (vi) Develop a compact urban form with particular emphasis on the orderly redevelopment and regeneration of key areas within the town centre. (vii) Protect local assets by preserving the quality of the landscape, open space, architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage and material assets of the county.</p>	<p>HH1 W1 W2 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2</p>		<p>B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p><b>Policies</b> CS 1: To facilitate sustainable levels of housing growth at appropriate locations within the town in tandem with social / community infrastructure and local services adequate to meet the needs of the population of the town and surrounding rural area. CS 2: To facilitate greater co-ordination of residential and employment provision with the delivery of public infrastructure, amenities, community facilities, schools, public transport etc. CS 3: To encourage and facilitate new employment opportunities within the town and to seek to attract higher order knowledge based enterprise and economic development. CS 4: To focus sectoral opportunities on the development of high value added manufacturing, SMEs, agri-business, agriculture and tourism. CS 5: To address commuting patterns by building up the local economy to a more sustainable level. CS 6: To support, protect and reinforce the role of the town centre as the central retailing and service area of Athy through the intensification, consolidation and appropriate redevelopment of the town centre. CS 7: To facilitate the provision of high level and broad ranging uses, and to enhance and develop the urban fabric of the town centre.</p>	<p>HH1 W1 W2 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2</p>		<p>B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	

<p>CS 8: To promote the appropriate use and re-use of town centre backland and under-utilised sites to promote the regeneration of areas in need of renewal.</p> <p>CS 9: To promote and facilitate the development of sustainable communities through land use planning, by providing for land uses capable of accommodating employment, community, leisure, recreational and cultural facilities, accessible to and meeting the needs of all individuals and local community groups, in tandem with the delivery of residential and physical infrastructure to create quality environments in which to live.</p> <p>CS 10: To ensure that developments are accessible to meet the needs of all individuals and local community groups.</p> <p>CS 11: To seek the delivery of physical and community infrastructure in conjunction with high quality residential developments to create quality living environments.</p> <p>CS 12: To protect and conserve buildings, areas, structures, sites and features of special architectural, historic, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest and to protect features of natural heritage, including the Canal, watercourses and habitats.</p> <p>CS 13: To protect and conserve the natural environment.</p> <p>CS 14: To protect and conserve nationally important and EU designated sites.</p> <p>CS 15: To promote and enhance biodiversity.</p>				
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## 8.7 Chapter 3: Economic

	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs
<b>Aim</b>				
To provide for the future well being of the residents of Athy by facilitating and promoting economic development and the growth of employment opportunities in all sectors in accordance with the principles of sustainable development; to achieve a reduction in the levels of commuting from the town by ensuring that lands are appropriately zoned and a framework is in place to attract greater employment opportunities and manufacturing industries by fostering competitiveness and innovation within a high quality physical environment; to provide a greater focus on community building and the quality of life of the residents of Athy.	HH1 W1 W2 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2		B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
<b>Policies-General Economic Development</b>				
ED1: To facilitate and support the growth of Athy as an attractive location for employment development.	HH1 W1 W2 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2		B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
ED2: To promote employment in Athy in order to reduce the need to travel and the dependence on private transport.	HH1 W1 W2 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2		B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	

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ED3: To promote economic development on appropriately zoned land throughout the town, especially at or in close proximity to transport nodes.	HH1 W1 W2 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2		B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
ED4: To support the development of a high quality built environment to attract and sustain enterprise and employment.	CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3	
ED5: To promote innovative economic sectors and encourage business clusters that exploit links with one another and with third level education facilities.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
ED6: To actively encourage the appropriate redevelopment of brownfield sites and re-use of disused buildings for enterprise and employment creation, when such development is in compliance with the policies and objectives of this Plan.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
ED7: To promote the establishment of entrepreneurial start up business and small scale employment generating activities and to apply a flexible approach to zoning where it can be demonstrated that the proposed use would have minimal impact on adjoining uses, particularly residential.			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2	
ED8: To encourage and facilitate at appropriate locations, small indigenous industries in recognition of their increasing importance in providing local employment and helping to stimulate economic activity.			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2	
ED9: To encourage and facilitate the development of 'green' industries, including those relating to renewable energy and energy-efficient technologies			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2	

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<b>Large scale enterprise development Policy</b>				
ED 10: To encourage the development of existing manufacturing industries in the town while establishing and expanding new categories of business in Athy and support their development.				B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2
<b>Small – Medium Enterprise (SME) Policy</b>				
ED11: To facilitate the development of knowledge-intensive and technology based companies in Athy and to encourage the provision of Research and Development/ Innovation facilities and SMEs to support enterprise and employment.				B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2
<b>Retail and Office Development Policy</b>				
RO1: To implement the retail strategy and support the creation of high quality living and shopping environments which will add to the attraction of Athy for employers as a town in which to locate.				B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2
RO2: To facilitate and encourage office based industry primarily in enterprise and employment zones and to encourage smaller scale office development in the town centre.	C1 C2 S1			B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1
RO3: To locate commercial developments providing goods / services to significant numbers of visiting members of the public, within or in close proximity to the existing town centre.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>Education and Health Policy</b>				
EH 1: To promote initiatives with relevant agencies to expand training and education that meets the wide range of business skills located in the town.				B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2



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EH 2: To support and co-operate with promoters or operators of public and private health care facilities by facilitating and encouraging the provision of improved health care facilities in appropriate locations in the town.			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2	
<b>Incubation units / workshops / business starter units Policy</b>				
EEO1: To promote the provision of workspace units suitable for small businesses and start up companies, in general, and with particular emphasis on their provision within large schemes.			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2	
<b>Research and Development Policy</b>				
EEO2: To promote the growth of Research and Development in Athy by facilitating the conditions conducive to such development including a high quality built and natural environment, public transport infrastructure and community and cultural infrastructure.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2			
EE 03: To support the development of economic opportunities which support the third level education base of CIT and NUI Maynooth, particularly in the areas of R&D, agri-engineering and alternative energies. The Council will co-operate with Carlow IT and NUI Maynooth to promote and encourage R&D in Athy to attract industry.			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2	
<b>Home Based Economic Activity Policy</b>				
HW1: To facilitate home-working and innovative forms of working which reduce the need to travel but are subordinate to the main residential use of the dwelling and do not result in a dis-amenity in an area.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1
HW2: To encourage the provision of live-work units as part of mixed-use developments in appropriate locations (particularly at ground floor level).	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1

<b>Design, Location and Availability of Employment lands in Athy Policies</b>				
UD1: To ensure that new employment areas are attractive areas and are of a high standard of urban design.	CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 S1
UD2: To ensure the provision of adequate screening of employment developments in the form of planting, landscaping and mounding as appropriate, especially where new industrial/employment developments adjoin residential areas.	CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 S1
UD3: To ensure that the layout of new employment developments will have regard to alternative sustainable modes of transport. Site layout should emphasise the necessary connections to the wider local and strategic public transport, walking and cycling networks.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
<b>Prevention of Major Accidents Policy</b>				
MA1: To have regard to the following in assessing applications for new developments (including extensions):  a) Major Accidents Directive (Seveso II – 96/082/EEC) b) The potential effects on public health and safety. c) The need to ensure adequate distances between such developments and residential areas, areas of public use and any areas of sensitivity. d) The advice of the HSA.	B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 M1 M2			W3 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>Rural Development and Agricultural Development Policy</b>				
AG1: To promote an environmentally sustainable agricultural/horticultural sector and a vibrant bloodstock industry, which contributes to a dynamic and successful rural economy.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1			M2 C1 C2
AG2 : To support the development of agriculture within the agricultural zone in Athy; to develop a sustainable agricultural sector that is compatible with the sustainable development of the town and maintains the viability of farming.			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M2 C1 C2
AG3: To ensure that agricultural activities do not impinge on the visual amenity of the countryside/ agricultural zone and to ensure that watercourses, wildlife habitats and areas of ecological importance are protected from the threat of pollution.	B1 B2 HH1 M1 W1 W2 CH1 CH2 L1			M2 C1 C2 S1 W3

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AG4: To protect agricultural and equine uses, from encroachment by urban development uses beyond that needed to cater for the orderly expansion of the town.	B1 HH1 M1 W1 W3 CH2 C1	B2 S1 M2 W2 CH1 L1			
AG5: To protect and ensure the continuing viability of agriculture and horticulture within rural areas and to sustain the rural character of the countryside as a valuable resource.			B1 HH1 M1 W2 CH1 L1	B2 S1 W1 W3 CH2	M2 C1 C2
AG6: To promote the diversification of the rural economy and the development of rural indigenous industry while safeguarding the environment and role of the rural area as a strategic asset.			B1 HH1 M1 W2 CH1 L1	B2 S1 W1 W3 CH2	M2 C1 C2
AG7: To encourage agri-businesses appropriate to the area which are directly related to the local horticultural or agricultural sectors in areas zoned for agricultural purposes.			B1 HH1 M1 W2 CH1 L1	B2 S1 W1 W3 CH2	
AG8: To require any proposed agri-business within the rural area is supported by a comprehensive traffic impact study of vehicular traffic generated by such an enterprise.	C1 C2				B1 HH1 M1 W1 W3 CH2 L1
<b>Equine Industry Policy</b>					
EQ1: To encourage the development of equine related enterprises on agricultural zoned lands within the town boundary.	C1 C2		B1 HH1 W1 W3 M2 CH2	B2 S1 W2 M1 CH1 L1	
<b>General Economic Development and Employment Objectives</b>					
EDO 1: To encourage economic development and employment development in the Moderate Sustainable Growth Town of Athy in accordance with national and regional policies and objectives and in accordance with the overall development strategy of this Plan.	HH1 W2 S1 M2	W1 C1 M1		B1 HH1 M2 W2 CH1 L1	B2 M1 W1 W3 CH2

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<p>EDO 2: To ensure that sufficient and suitable land is zoned for employment generating uses in Athy. Such land will, normally, be protected from inappropriate development that would prejudice its long term development for these uses.</p>	<p>HH1 W1 W2 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2</p>		<p>B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p>EDO 3: To ensure the provision of water, wastewater treatment and waste management facilities to accommodate future economic growth of the town.</p>	<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 C1 C2</p>		<p>B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2</p>	<p>C1 C2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>
<p>EDO 4: To co-operate with and seek to facilitate local community based development groups in developing employment clusters including incubator/start up units as appropriate.</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p>EDO 5: To continue to forge strong partnerships and work in conjunction with national, regional and local development agencies, including Forfás, Industrial Development Agency, Kildare County Development Board, Kildare County Council, County Enterprise Board, Enterprise Ireland, Athy Industrial Forum, FAS and also the educational sector including CIT and the VEC in attracting new commercial enterprises and employment opportunities in Athy.</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2</p>	
<p>EDO 6: To acquire suitable land, subject to the availability of funding, to stimulate and support creative and innovative entrepreneurial initiatives.</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2</p>	
<p>EDO 7: To support IDA Ireland in the attraction of high value added manufacturing sectors and internationally traded sectors of Athy.</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2</p>	
<p><b>Tourism Policy</b></p>				
<p>TS 1: To recognise the employment and revenue potential of tourism in the local economy.</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	



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<p>TS 2: To recognise and improve the existing tourism potential of Athy such as the Grand Canal and River Barrow waterside amenity activities such as walking, fishing boating will be further enhanced through specific objectives of the Plan.</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p>TS 3: To implement the recommendations of the River Barrow Valley Study currently being carried out by Waterways Ireland in conjunction with Fáilte Ireland and other local authorities.</p>	<p>B1 B2 C2 CH 1 CH2 L1</p>		<p>HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 W1 W2 W3</p>	
<p>TS4: To identify opportunities to improve the tourist product in Athy and to co-operate with the appropriate statutory agencies, private tourism sector and community groups.</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p>TS 5: To encourage tourism related uses along the Grand Canal and River Barrow including the investigation of the feasibility of developing a marina within the town boundary (in accordance with Policy R 9) and associated boating uses and activities in co-operation with the relevant statutory agencies, voluntary bodies and private property owners to develop the infrastructure and amenity of both water bodies.</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p>TS 6: To continue to work closely with key stakeholders in the tourism industry including Kildare Fáilte, Fáilte Ireland and Waterways Ireland in conjunction with local clubs and stakeholders, in order to further develop the overall tourist and economic potential in and around the town with particular emphasis on water based and waterside activities such as angling, boating, walking, canoeing etc</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p>TS 7: To work with the relevant agencies and bodies in the development and improvement of tourism related infrastructure, facilities activities in Athy.</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p>TS 8: To ensure that the development of new tourist facilities are designed to the highest standard with particular emphasis given to quality materials and accessibility.</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	

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TS 9: To support the development of new tourist facilities or upgrading / extension of existing tourist facilities, including hotels, guesthouses and B&B's, in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
TS 10: To promote the establishment of tourist destinations in Athy subject to them being of an appropriate scale, located in sustainable locations, adequately served by public transport and would not adversely impact upon a Natura 2000 site.			B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	B1
TS11: To promote festivals and sporting events to increase the tourism, cultural and lifestyle profile of the town including the use of appropriate green areas throughout the town.			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
<b>Tourism Objectives</b>				
TSO1: To support the provision and development of walking and cycling trails which give access to river and canal banks and towpaths, subject to Appropriate Assessment where appropriate and in conjunction with Waterways Ireland and the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the DoEHLG.	C1 C2		B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	B1
TSO 2: To promote the National Trails Network, Sli na Sláinte and other defined walking trails and cycle routes.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
TSO3: To support the protection of recreational areas such as the People's Park and encourage the further development of amenity areas such as the area surrounding Woodstock Castle, Lords Island and the adjoining gardens of White Castle.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
TSO4: To support the development of the tourism industry by the upgrading of existing amenities in co-operation with the appropriate statutory agencies, private tourism sector and community groups.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	

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TSO5: To facilitate the erection of standardised signage for tourism facilities and tourist attractions throughout the town.				B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1
TSO6: To protect the environmental amenities of Athy from insensitive or inappropriate development, particularly any development that threatens the tourism resources of the town.	B1 B2		HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
TSO7: To recognise the importance of the local golf clubs and other sports clubs and sporting events to tourism in the town.				B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1
TSO8: To promote Athys literary, social, historical, genealogical, archaeological, architectural and natural heritage as tourism generating opportunities.	CH1 CH2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3 L1	
TSO9: To harness the economic benefits of the tourism industry through sustainable means, including the conservation and protection of the built and natural heritage	B1 B2 CH1 CH2 L1		HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3	
TSO10: To encourage the development of tourism activities such as waterways activities, agri-tourism, green/eco-tourism, niche retailing, food markets, local and other craft type activities so as to diversify the tourism product in Athy.			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
TSO11: To support sustainable tourism initiatives which develop the tourist potential of the rural area around the town while recognising and enhancing the quality and values of this rural area.			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	

TSO12: To protect the economic and social benefits of licensed local farmers/ country markets and support their role as visitor attractions.			B1 HH1 M1 C1 C2 W2 CH1 L1	B2 S1 M2 W1 W3 CH2 L1
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## 8.8 Chapter 4: Housing

	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs
<b>Aim</b>				
To ensure that there is adequate land in appropriately zoned locations for residential development; to protect and improve residential amenity in existing residential area; to encourage a quality standard of residential development and public spaces; to provide an appropriate mix of house sizes, types and tenures in order to meet different household needs and to promote balanced and integrated communities.	HH1 W1 W2 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2		B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
<b>Development Capacity Policies</b>				
HP1: To ensure that sufficient and suitably located land is zoned to satisfy housing development needs within the period of the Plan and in accordance with population targets for Athy.	HH1 W1 W2 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2		B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
HP 2: Where a residential development larger than 5 units is proposed, a detailed phasing programme shall be lodged and agreed with the Planning Authority detailing the construction, phasing and completion of each phase and timeframe of the project.	C1 C2 M1 M2 HH1 W1 W2			B1 B2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1
HP3: To implement the Kildare Local Authorities Housing Strategy 2011-2017 prepared in accordance with the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1	



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<p>HP4: To have regard to the provisions of the Guidelines on "Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas" and the accompanying 'Urban Design Manual' in assessing applications for housing development.</p>	<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>			
<p><b>Policies - Density, Design and Layout</b></p>				
<p>HP5: To encourage appropriate densities of new housing development in accordance with Government advice set out in the 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas'.</p>	<p>C1 C2</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>
<p>HP6: To encourage higher residential densities in the town centre, on 'brownfield' and infill sites close to existing/potential connections to public transport.</p>	<p>C1 C2 S1</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>
<p>HP7: To ensure that all new urban development especially in and around the town centre is of a high design and supports the achievement of successful urban spaces and sustainable communities.</p>	<p>CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 S1</p>
<p>HP8: To require diversity in the density of development and in the form, size and type of dwelling within residential areas.</p>				<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>
<p>HP9: To secure the development of a mix of house types and sizes throughout the town as a whole to meet the needs of the existing and projected likely future population. A statement of mix may be required for multi unit schemes to demonstrate that the needs of the area are provided for within the scheme.</p>				<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>
<p>HP10: To require the submission of design statements for residential development in excess of 50 housing units to facilitate the proper evaluation of the proposal relative to key objectives of the Development Plan with regard to the creation of sustainable residential communities.</p>	<p>CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 S1</p>

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HP11: To refuse permission for residential development on zoned open green spaces, or on lands which are designated as public space.	B1 B2 S1 W3 C1 C2 L1			HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 CH1 CH2
HP12: To ensure developments are carried out generally in accordance with the 'Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas'. (DoEHLG 1998) or as updated or amended.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 M1 M2 C1 C2			W3 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1
HP13: To ensure that all open spaces, entrances, pathways and parking areas in new residential developments are designed with reference to "Buildings for Everyone – Inclusion, Access and Use (National Disability Authority, 2002) and any subsequent update.				B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>Policies - Existing Residential</b>				
HP14: To encourage infill housing developments on appropriate sites.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
HP15: To facilitate the extension of existing dwelling houses in principle subject to standards outlined in Chapter 15 Development Management Standards.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
HP16: To facilitate the development of corner sites or wide side garden locations for infill housing subject to standards outlined in Chapter 15 Development Management Standards.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
HP17: To facilitate the provision of a family flat in circumstances where the Planning Authority is satisfied that there is a valid case and where the proposal has regard to the standards in Chapter 15 Development Management Standards.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
HP18: To permit backland development generally only where development is carried out in a comprehensive redevelopment of the backland to secure a co-ordinated scheme. Each application will be considered on its merits.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	

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HP19: To facilitate sub-division of dwellings for exceptionally large houses on relatively extensive sites subject to adherence to all relevant Development Management standards set out in Chapter 15.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>Policies – Apartment Development</b>				
HP20: To restrict apartment developments generally to town centre locations or suitably located sites adjoining public transport connections. Apartments will not be permitted where there is an over concentration of this type of development. Higher density schemes will only be considered where they exhibit a high architectural design standard.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>Policies - Housing and Community</b>				
HP21: To facilitate and co-operate in the provision of services for the community including, in particular, schools, crèches and other education and childcare facilities in tandem with residential development.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
HP22: To require the provision of Childcare Facilities in all new residential developments as appropriate. The indicative standard is one childcare facility, accommodating 20 children, for each 75 dwellings. This standard may be modified in any particular case where there are significant reasons for doing so.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
HP23: To seek to ensure the necessary infrastructural investment to facilitate the overall level of housing output required to meet the current and anticipated levels of demand in a planned and coherent fashion.	C1 C2 M1 M2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
HP24: To facilitate the provision of purpose built dwellings for those with special needs, including provision for the needs of the elderly, persons with physical disabilities and persons with learning disabilities and in conjunction with other voluntary bodies and the private sector.			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2	
<b>Policies - Housing in the Agricultural Zone</b>				
HP25: To manage the provision of one off housing in conjunction with the local need criteria as outlined above. Documentary evidence of compliance with the rural housing policy must be submitted as part of the planning application, including a separate statement by the applicant on the need to reside in the area.			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2	

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<p>HP26: To ensure that, notwithstanding compliance with the Local Need eligibility criteria, applicants comply with all other normal siting and design considerations.</p>	<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>			<p>C1 C2</p>
<p>HP27: To protect the physical, environmental, natural and heritage resources of the agricultural zone</p>	<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>			<p>C1 C2</p>
<p>HP28: To require that applicants comply with the requirements of 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities' published by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (November 2009).</p>	<p>HH1 W3</p>			<p>B1 B2 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2</p>
<p><b>Policies - Special Needs Housing</b></p>				
<p>HP29: To provide adequate accommodation for Travellers in accordance with the Kildare Local Authorities Traveller Accommodation Programme.</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2</p>	
<p>HP30: To facilitate the provision of purpose built dwellings individually and within mixed schemes for those with special needs, including provision for the needs of the elderly, persons with physical disabilities and persons with learning disabilities and in conjunction with other voluntary bodies and the private sector.</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2</p>	
<p>HP31: To provide for and facilitate the provision of accommodation to meet the needs of the elderly and to encourage the provision of a range of housing options for elderly persons in central, convenient and easily accessible locations and to integrate such housing with mainstream housing where possible.</p>	<p>C1 C2</p>		<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p>HP32: To provide and facilitate the provision of accommodation to meet the needs of those with disabilities through the adaptation of appropriate accommodation.</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2</p>	

<b>Housing Objectives</b>				
HO1: To secure the implementation of the Kildare Local Authorities Housing Strategy 2011-2017.			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2	
HO2: To provide adequate accommodation for Travellers in accordance with the Council's Traveller Accommodation Programme.			B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2	
HO3: To promote a high standard of architecture in the design of new housing developments and to encourage a variety of house types, sizes and tenure to cater for the needs of the population and facilitate the creation of balanced communities.	CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 HH1 S1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2	

## 8.9 Chapter 5: Town Centre

	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs
<b>Aim</b>				
To develop a compact urban form and to improve the vitality and viability of the town centre area of Athy through the provision of a high level and broad range of uses for residents, workers and visitors to the town; to provide greater opportunities for town centre living; to facilitate high quality urban design and through the provision of high quality public realm to promote the town centre as an attractive place for all to enjoy.	C1 C2 S1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2	
<b>Town Centre Uses Policies</b>				
TC 1: To promote the vitality and viability of the town centre area so that it becomes a high quality environment for shopping, working and visiting the town.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	



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TC 2: To encourage and promote development within the town centre which is of a high standard of design, has an appropriate mix of uses, enhances the built environment and delivers a high quality public realm.	C1 C2 S1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2	
TC 3: To reinforce Athy Town Centre as the priority location for new retail and services development, with quality of design and integration /linkage with the existing urban form/ layout being fundamental prerequisites.	C1 C2 S1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2	
TC 4: To promote appropriate residential development within the town centre and encourage the concept of 'Living Over the Shop' in the town centre.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
<b>Town Centre Design Policies</b>				
TCD 1: To ensure that new development in the town centre will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances its character thereby promoting high quality urban change and improvement.	C1 C2 S1 CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2
TCD 2: To continue to enhance the streetscape and heritage assets of the town centre, to continue environmental improvements, to sustain and improve its attraction for living, working, visiting and investment.	C1 C2 S1 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2	
TCD 3: To ensure the retention of older shop fronts and other significant elements of the streetscape, which enhance the visual amenity and distinctiveness of the town centre.	CH1 CH2			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 S1 L1
TCD 4: To seek to improve existing shopfronts and to ensure that new shopfronts reflect the scale and proportions of the existing streetscape.	CH1 CH2			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 S1 L1
TCD 5: To restrict unnecessary additional lighting, including intermittent lighting and neon lighting on external elevations, particularly in or adjacent to residential properties.	CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 S1
TCD 6: To place underground new service cables and ducting such as electrical, telephone, broadband and cable television.	L1 CH2		B1 B2 W1 CH1	HH1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 C1 C2
TCD 7: To insist upon the use of high quality materials and traditional hand painted signs, as opposed to uPVC, plastic or other materials. Internally illuminated plastic signage will generally not be permitted.	CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 S1

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TCD 8: To restrict the use of external security grilles/shutters on shop fronts.	CH1 CH2			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 S1 L1
TCD 9: To restrict advertising signs/ banners/ stickers on the inside of shop front/ commercial business windows.				B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 S1 L1 CH1 CH2
<b>Urban Renewal / Regeneration and Opportunity Sites Policies</b>				
UR 1: To encourage a greater usage of backland areas and to promote the re-development of brownfield sites in the town centre area where new development will positively contribute to the commercial vitality of the town centre.	C1 C2 S1			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
UR 2: To encourage and promote the re-utilisation and revitalisation of derelict or obsolete structures or land in the town centre and encourage the renewal/repair and maintenance of structures on the Council's Derelict Sites Register. The Council will use its statutory powers, where appropriate and consider such sites for inclusion on the Register of Derelict Sites.	C1 C2 S1			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
UR 3: To encourage the use of upper floors of existing buildings and the development of mixed-use schemes, particularly for residential uses.	C1 C2 S1			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
UR 4: To encourage the creation of new public spaces within the fabric of the town centre, provided they are passively supervised and surrounded by active ground floor use.	C1 C2 S1			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
UR 5: To require that any new development creates or positively contributes towards a connected network of streets and spaces, which prioritises pedestrians and cyclists.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1 S1
UR 6: To ensure that town centre environmental improvements including improved paving, street furniture and tree planting are designed and implemented to a high design standard.	CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 S1

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<b>Movement, Access and the Public Realm Policies</b>				
PR 1: To provide pedestrian links from the nearby schools on the east and west of the River Barrow to recreational facilities and residential areas through the development of safe pedestrian routes and a pedestrian footbridge over the River Barrow.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
PR 2: To encourage the improvement of the area surrounding the Dominican Church.			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	C1 C2 M1 M2
PR 3: To work towards improving the overall visual appearance of Athy by encouraging the following: (a) The removal of overhead cables and wires placing them underground within the town centre in conjunction with the various utility companies. (b) The control of advertising, including the removal of existing signage which is visually obtrusive or out of character, in particular neon and poor quality plastic signage will be prohibited.	CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 W1 CH1	HH1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2
<b>Town Centre Objectives</b>				
TC0 1: To maintain the Council's Derelict Sites Register and to exercise its powers under the Derelict Sites Act 1990.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
TC0 2: To seek the removal of unauthorised advertising/ signage through enforcement provisions and to encourage new advertising and signage which is appropriate to the streetscape and positively contributes to the public realm.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
TC0 3: To prepare and implement an Environmental Improvement Scheme within the lifetime of this Plan to visually enhance the streetscape and key urban spaces with an emphasis on promoting a pedestrian and public transport friendly environment.	CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2		B1 B2 W1 CH1	HH1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1
TC0 4: To investigate the feasibility of the pedestrianisation of all or part of Emily Square during the Plan period.	C1 C2 S1			M1 M2 B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1
TC0 5: To construct a pedestrian crossing over the River Barrow as appropriate to link schools, parks, playing fields and residential areas on both sides of the river	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
TC0 6: To provide for a pedestrian crossing from the train station to the park/playground in People's Park.	C1 C2		B2 S1 CH1 CH2	B1 HH1 W3 M1 M2 W1 W2 L1

## 8.10 Chapter 6: Retail

	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs
<b>Aim</b>				
To promote and encourage major enhancement and expansion of the retail floorspace and town centre functions of Athy, to further develop its competitiveness with nearby towns such as Carlow and Portlaoise, its importance as a Sub County Town Centre in County Kildare and the wider Greater Dublin Area.	<b>C1 C2 S1</b>		<b>B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</b>	
<b>Greater Dublin Area retail Strategy Policy</b>				
SR 1: To promote the role of Athy as a key town serving the large rural hinterland of South Kildare seeking to create a critical mass within the urban core so that the retail opportunities in the town centre are developed to create a viable, attractive local destination for convenience and comparison shopping and thus reduce market leakage from this area.	<b>C1 C2</b>		<b>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</b>	
<b>Kildare County Development Policy</b>				
SR 2: To promote and encourage major enhancement and expansion of the retail offer and town centre functions of Athy, Clane and Kildare Town to sustain and enhance their importance as Sub County Town Centres within the Central and South Sub Areas of the County.	<b>C1 C2</b>		<b>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</b>	
SR 3: To work with Athy Town Council in delivering the policy objectives of the County Retail Strategy in order that it delivers its vision and potential as the mechanism for redressing high shopping expenditure leakage from its catchment area and the south of the County as a whole.	<b>C1 C2</b>		<b>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</b>	
<b>Strategy Policies</b>				
RS1: To guide major retail development in accordance with the framework provided by the County Retail Hierarchy to enable an efficient, equitable and sustainable distribution of floorspace throughout the town.	<b>C1 C2</b>		<b>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</b>	

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RS2: To define the Core Retail Area of Athy Town Centre in accordance with Map 6.1.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
RS3: To promote the Core Retail Area and town centre as the primary focus and preferred location for new retail development.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
RS4: To guide retail development in accordance with the framework provided by the Sequential Approach to enable the vitality and viability of the town centre to be sustained and strengthened.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
RS5: To assess all applications for large retail development in accordance with the criteria set out above and in Chapter 15 Development Management Standards of this Plan.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
<b>Specific Retail Policies</b>				
RP1: To promote and encourage major enhancement and expansion of the retail offer and town centre retail functions of Athy and to develop its importance as a Sub County Town Centre within the south of the County whilst ensuring high quality design in all retail proposals.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
RP2: To work with Kildare County Council in delivering the policy objectives of the County Retail Strategy in order that Athy delivers its vision and potential as the mechanism for redressing high shopping expenditure leakage from its catchment area and the south of the County as a whole.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
RP3: To work in partnership with local organisations, businesses and people in the delivery of the vision for Athy	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	



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RP4: To improve the shopping experience in Athy Town by promoting the potential of Athy Town for a range of additional convenience and comparison floorspace at appropriate locations.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
RP5: To align, as far as is practicable, new retail development with existing and proposed public transport infrastructure and services and encourage access by foot and bicycle to reduce the dominance of access by private car.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
RP6: To promote retail warehousing to the southeast of the town (zoned H2 Industrial & Warehousing) in order to meet, more sustainably the needs in this sector of the market in the south of the County.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
RP7: To recognise the tradition of Athy as a Market Town and to encourage the continuation and improvement of the 'Athy Town Market' and the continued development of a high quality 'Farmers Market' within the town.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
<b>General Retail Policies</b>				
RP8: To encourage and facilitate the enhancement and environmental improvement of Athy Town.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1			
RP9: To pursue all avenues of funding to secure resources for the enhancement, renewal and regeneration of the public realm in Athy Town Centre.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
RP10: To ensure that the best quality of design is achieved for all new retail development and that design respects and enhances the specific characteristics of Athy Town in terms of design, scale and external finishes.	CH1 CH2			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 L1 C1 C2 S1
RP11: To protect and enhance the amenities and character of Athy Town Centre. The Council will seek to balance the competing needs of commercial, service social and cultural functions which the town centre performs with the need to protect the recognised heritage and architectural quality of its streetscape. This will apply to skyline, shop fronts and advertising structures.	C1 C2 S1 CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2

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RP12: To encourage and facilitate the development of appropriately located retail centres to meet the needs of existing and growing areas of the town in accordance with the sequential approach.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
RP13: To identify appropriate locations for new retail centres within established residential areas and where large scale residential development is planned over the period of the timescale of the Development Plan while having regard to the possible impact on Athy Town Centre.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
Retail Warehouse Parks Policy				
RP14: To prohibit mainstream and discount convenience retail developments in retail parks.				B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 S1 CH1 CH2 L1
RP15: To prohibit mainstream comparison floorspace or retailers in retail parks.				B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 S1 CH1 CH2 L1
RP16: To ensure that the level of retail and local services provision in existing and new major employment areas sustains and enhances their attraction as locations for investment.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
RP17: To provide the land use and retail planning framework to ensure that the mixed use strategies for new employment areas respond to the wider context of need and demand in related expanding residential areas in the interests of ensuring that these locations are attractive to new residents, workers and employers.	C1 C2		B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
RP18: To limit the level of shopping and local services provision in existing industrial estates or parks, unless there is an interface with neighbouring residential areas. Standalone mainstream and discount convenience or comparison floorspace will not be permitted in existing employment areas unless it is proven to be part of the wholesale retail market sector.	C1 C2			B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1

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RP19: To encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of land and buildings for retail and other town centre uses.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
RP20: To work with and encourage landowners, retailers and development interests to realise the potential of town centre lands in Athy Town.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
RP21: To encourage and facilitate the development of retailing in the tourism and leisure sectors and encourage strong linkages between each.			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2 S1	
RP22: To encourage and facilitate the delivery of tourism related retail developments and initiatives in and around Athy Town Centre and waterfront.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
RP23: To take cognisance in the designations of areas for Casual Trading of the proper and sustainable development of Athy, including: the preservation and improvement of amenities; the safety and convenience of pedestrians; the traffic likely to be generated by Casual Trading; and, the promotion of tourism.	C1 C2			B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
RP24: To prosecute in situations where the Act is being contravened.				B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
RP25: To discourage amusement/gaming arcades in the Core Retail Area as they are considered to be an undesirable use and potentially detrimental to the business and commercial environment of the town.				B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1

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RP26: To discourage non retail and lower grade retail uses e.g. takeaways and betting offices in the Core Retail Area and other principal streets in the town centre in the interests of maintaining and sustaining the retail attraction of Athy Town Centre.				B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
RP27: To encourage and facilitate the potential of Athy Town as a centre for innovation in retailing in order to enhance the town's retail offer and attraction.	C1 C2		B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
RP28 To review and monitor retail trends that could have an influence on the performance of the sector within the town and pursue harnessing new concepts and formats in the Athy Town retail structure.	C1 C2		B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
RP29: To require applicants to indicate their proposed hours of opening. Late opening of shops will only be permissible where it can be clearly demonstrated that there will be no negative impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring areas.				B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>General Retail Policy</b>				
GR1: To make an important contribution to sustaining and improving the retail profile and competitiveness of the town and County Kildare within the retail economy of the GDA and beyond.	C1 C2		B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
GR2: To encourage and facilitate the preservation of the retail and services role of Athy in both the County and GDA contexts.	C1 C2		B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
GR3: To reinforce the heart of the town centre as the priority location for new retail development, with quality of design and integration/linkage being fundamental prerequisites.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	

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<p>GR4: To address leakage of retail expenditure from the town and its catchment by facilitating the strengthening of the range and quality of its retail offer.</p>	<p>C1 C2</p>		<p>B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p>GR5: To encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict and underutilised land and buildings in the town centre for retail and other town centre uses, having regard to the Sequential Approach outlined in this Plan.</p>	<p>C1 C2 S1</p>		<p>B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p>GR6: To ensure an efficient, equitable and sustainable spatial distribution of retail centres in and around the town.</p>	<p>C1 C2</p>		<p>B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p>GR7: To establish clear principles and guidance on where various forms of new retail floorspace would be acceptable.</p>	<p>C1 C2</p>		<p>B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p>GR8: To ensure that the retail needs of the Athy catchment area are met as fully as possible to promote social inclusion within the town and take due cognisance of the GDA retail hierarchy.</p>	<p>C1 C2</p>		<p>B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	



## 8.11 Chapter 7: Movement and Transport

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
<b>Aim</b>				
To promote ease of movement within and access to Athy, by integrating sustainable land use planning with a high quality, integrated transport system; to support improvements to the road, rail and public transport network, together with cycleway and pedestrian facilities and to provide for new and improved transport facilities within Athy in a manner which is consistent with proper planning and sustainable development.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
<b>General Movement and Transport Policies</b>				
GT 1: To co-operate with other agencies to promote and facilitate the implementation of a sustainable transportation strategy for Athy having regard to Transport 21 (2006- 2015), Department of Transport's Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020 and the Dublin Transportation Office's strategic document Platform for Change 2000-2016"and the forthcoming strategy to be published by the National Transport Authority.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
GT 2: To support sustainable modes of transport that ensure that land use planning and zoning are fully integrated with the provision and development of high quality transportation systems.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
GT 3: To promote and encourage the development and growth of Athy in line with the principles of sustainable development and to continue to support the policies and recommendations as outlined in the Athy Integrated Framework Plan for Land - Use and Transportation and the Athy Traffic Management Plan.	C1 C2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 M1 M2		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 M1 M2	
GT 4: To provide a road network which is safe and efficient for all road users while being cognisant of the requirements of all traffic, including motorised vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
GT 5: To ensure that Athy is well-connected to both the national road network and local centres of population.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
GT 6: To progressively improve all urban roads and footpaths and maintain these to the highest possible standards, having regard to the availability of finance and amenity and townscape requirements.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2

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GT 7: To improve road safety within the town centre by implementing gateway entry treatments and other speed reduction measures (incl. 50kph signage) inside the town boundary. This measure will include reducing the speed limit appropriately in the core town centre, and between the town centre and the town boundary.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 M1 M2
GT 8: To investigate the reduction of vehicular traffic passing through the Town Centre to improve the pedestrian environment of the town's retail core.	C1 C2 S1			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 M1 M2
GT 9: To co-operate with the public transport authorities and any other relevant bodies to promote the use of existing parking facilities in the town for park and ride purposes.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 M1 M2
GT 10: To utilise the provisions of Sections 48(2)(C) and 49 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended to generate financial contributions towards the capital costs of providing strategic and local transport infrastructure.				B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 C1 C2 L1 M1 M2
GT 11: To continue to support the operation of and development of the bus service provided by South Kildare Community Transport supported by the Department of Transport	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 M1 M2
GT 12: To have regard to the condition, location and accessibility of heritage items in the planning and provision of transportation services.	B1 B2 W1 W2 CH1 CH2 L1			HH1 S1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2
GT 13: To have regard to the policies, actions, outcomes and recommendations of the Kildare Local Authorities Noise Action Plan regarding new development in proximity to National Routes.	HH1			B1 B2 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 M1 M2
GT 14: To increase the level of access within Athy to a choice of transport modes and, in particular, to promote forms of development that reduce dependence on private car transport.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2

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<p>GT 15: To require roads and other infrastructure crossing a Natura 2000 site to comply with the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate the need for the project in light of a “do nothing” context.</li> <li>• Develop and evaluate a comprehensive series of plausible alternative routes and design strategies.</li> <li>• Demonstrate how each route has taken due account of, and accommodated ecological considerations and legislative requirements.</li> <li>• Demonstrate that the chosen route will not cause any significant adverse effects on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site.</li> </ul>	<p>B1 W1</p>	<p>B2</p>		<p>HH1 S1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2 L1</p>
<p>GT 16: To support the Government’s Electric Transport Programme 2008, by facilitating the roll-out of charging infrastructure for electric vehicles at appropriate locations within the town, through the planning system.</p>	<p>C1 C2</p>		<p>B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>M1 M2 S1</p>
<p><b>Public Transport Policies</b></p>				
<p>TM 1: To promote the enhancement and to maximise the use of Athy train station and to assess the need to provide for additional parking facilities at this location.</p>	<p>C1 C2</p>		<p>CH2</p>	<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 L1 M1 M2</p>
<p>TM 2: To facilitate and promote the development of upgraded rail infrastructure and services on the ‘Dublin-Waterford’ line through Athy.</p>	<p>C1 C2</p>		<p>B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH2</p>	<p>S1 CH1 L1 M1 M2</p>
<p>TM 3: To co-operate with the relevant transport bodies and authorities to secure improvements and further developments of the public transport system.</p>	<p>C1 C2</p>		<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>M1 M2</p>
<p>TM 4: To encourage public transport usage by improving bus shelters and associated passenger facilities.</p>	<p>C1 C2</p>		<p>CH2</p>	<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 L1 M1 M2</p>
<p>TM 5: To encourage the implementation and expansion of local bus services to link key trip generators and attractors in the town, particularly residential, employment, educational and retail centres.</p>	<p>C1 C2 S1</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 M1 M2</p>
<p>TM 6: To require that public transport set-down and pickup points are located such that the safety of passengers is maximised and the safety of road users is not endangered through the creation of a traffic hazard</p>	<p>C1 C2</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 M1 M2</p>
<p>TM 7: To facilitate the provision of taxi and hackney services and appropriately located parking in Athy.</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>C1 C2 M1 M2</p>

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TM 8: To facilitate provision of a bus-bay and quality bus waiting area in the town centre and to encourage interchange between bus and rail services.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
<b>Walking and Cycling Policies</b>				
WC 1: To promote and encourage sustainable and environmentally friendly forms of transportation such as cycling and walking in accordance with national and regional walking and cycling policies.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
WC2: To increase priority for pedestrians and cyclists at signalised junctions in Athy town centre.	C1 C2 S1			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 M1 M2
WC 3: To provide for safer routes to schools within the town and to encourage walking and cycling as suitable modes of transport as part of the Green School Initiative Programme and other local traffic management improvements.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
WC4: To facilitate and encourage cycling as a more convenient and safe method of transport through an integrated network of safe and convenient cycle and pedestrian routes throughout Athy.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
WC 5: To realise the potential of cycling and walking routes along the Grand Canal and River Barrow. (Refer to Recreation and Amenity Chapter 11, Map 11.1)	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
WC 6: To ensure the provision of cycle parking facilities in new development schemes.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
WC7: To provide and seek the provision of secure cycle parking facilities at key areas in Athy town centre and to encourage and promote the use of cycling by employees, shoppers and visitors to the town.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
WC 8: To traffic calm and environmentally enhance the regional / national routes leading into the town, to make them safer and more pedestrian and cyclist friendly in conjunction with Kildare County Council and other statutory bodies.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2

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WC 9: To ensure that roads and footpaths are designed and constructed to cater for the needs of the people with disabilities.	C1 C2			M1 M2 B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1
WC10: To provide footpath continuity at appropriate locations to the Town boundary.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
WC 11: To improve existing lighting and seek the provision of additional lighting facilities in Athy as funding becomes available.			B1 B2 L1	HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2
WC 12: To carry out a feasibility study regarding the provision of a boardwalk along Cromaboo Bridge. The scope of this report must have regard to the design and impact of the proposed boardwalk, having regard to the protected structure status of the bridge; it's location within the ACA and the SAC status of the River Barrow.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
WC13: To encourage the provision of secure bicycle parking facilities in the town centre at public facilities such as schools, the library, the train station and in all new developments in accordance with the standards set out in the development management standards in Chapter 15.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
<b>Distributor/Relief Roads Policy</b>				
DR 1: To ensure that new distributor/relief roads are designed and constructed in a manner that will enable them to fulfil their functions.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
DR 2: To limit direct access onto distributor/relief roads to a number of strategically located junctions.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
DR 3: To continue the development of proposed distributor/relief namely the Northern and Southern roads.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2



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DR 4: To require housing scheme roads to be provided in accordance with: a) Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009) and accompanying Best Practice Design Manual (2009). b) Architecture 2009-2015 Towards a Sustainable Future: Delivering Quality within the Built Environment (2009). c) Manual for Streets published by the Department of Transport, and Communities and Local Government (England and Wales) (2007) and any new guidance/ standards issued from the DoEHLG.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 M1 M2
<b>Parking Policies</b>				
PK 1: To optimise the use of existing parking stock, and to provide, facilitate and regulate the provision of parking spaces conveniently located to serve the various land uses.	S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	C1 C2 M1 M2
PK 2: To seek to ensure that all new private car parking facilities are provided to an appropriate standard, including the provision of public lighting, permanent surfacing and marking, the provision of adequate circulation and aisle widths.	S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	C1 C2 M1 M2
PK 3: To manage the provision of on street parking and to promote the provision of off-street car parks at edge-of-town centre locations and to reduce on street parking in the town centre.	S1 C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
PK 4: To require significant new industrial developments in the vicinity of Athy to incorporate designated HGV parking areas.	S1 C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
PK 5: To ensure that car parking is generally provided in accordance with "Buildings for Everyone" 2002 published by the National Disability Authority.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 S1 M1 M2
PK 6: To prepare a car parking strategy for the town ensuring that there is a network of car parks at strategic entry points to the town centre.	S1 C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
<b>General Movement and Transport Objectives</b>				
GO 1: To implement the recommendations of the Athy Traffic Management Plan, including the environmental and traffic management improvements.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2

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GO 2: To prepare a traffic and public realm plan for Emily Square and to make recommendations on the necessary improvements.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
GO 3: To liaise with Kildare County Council on the possibility of developing a central website containing information on public transport services and routes available in Athy.				B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 S1 C1 C2 M1 M2
GO 4: To assess the viability of diverting HGVs away from the town centre and consider the feasibility of providing localised parking centres for Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs).	S1 C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
GO 5: To support the improvement of public transport services generally by reserving land in suitable locations.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
GO 6: To improve road/street signage by undertaking a survey to assess proliferation, gaps and quality in signage and to develop a policy for the future provision of signage within the town, including the location of parking facilities and key public buildings and attractions throughout the town.			CH1 CH2 L1	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2
GO 7: To optimise use of the existing parking stock, by increasing turnover, by increasing occupancy at under-utilised locations and to direct traffic to locations where spare capacity is available.	S1 C1 C2			M1 M2 B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1
GO 8: To consider the development of multi-storey car parks and/basement car parks in the town.	S1 C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
GO 9: To require all proposed developments to provide appropriate turning areas for emergency and service vehicles.				B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
GO 10: To ensure all new developments are accessible to sustainable modes of transportation.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2

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GO 11: To identify car parks and other suitable locations for the provision of appropriate battery charging infrastructure for electrically powered cars/vehicles as a means by which the Council can assist in achieving a reduction in carbon emissions.	C1			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 C2 M1 M2
<b>Sustainable Travel Objectives</b>				
STO 1: To engage with service providers to regularise the number of bus stops and provide bus pull in bays and shelters along the main routes thereby improving safety and traffic flow.				B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
STO 2: To encourage Iarnród Éireann, Bus Éireann and private companies to improve the frequency and quality of public transport facilities to, from and within the town.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
STO 3: To investigate the potential for a number of "park and walk" sites which would provide convenient pedestrian access to the town centre, as an alternative to providing additional car parking within the town centre area.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
STO 4: To continue the road and footpath improvements, which facilitate pedestrian safety at various locations within the town centre, and in particular at the following junctions: (a) N78 / Kirwans Lane (b) N78 / Church Road (c) N78 / Chapel Lane (d) N78/ Meeting Lane (e) N78 / St John's Lane (f) N78 / Green Alley (g) N78 / Nelson Street (h) Mount Hawkins / Chapel Lane (i) Kirwans Lane / Mount Hawkins (j) Woodstock Street / Barrack Lane	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
STO 5: To investigate the pedestrianisation of certain town centre routes once the New Town Centre Street is constructed.	C1 C2 S1			M1 M2 B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1
STO 6: To construct a pedestrian bridge over the River Barrow as appropriate to link schools, parks, playing fields and residential areas on both sides of the river, thereby providing safer routes to school. This bridge will be constructed to the specifications of all statutory bodies.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2

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STO 7: To upgrade and construct continuous walkways and cycle ways along both sides of the River Barrow and Grand Canal, to provide attractive leisure routes and alternative routes to the town centre.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
STO 8: To assist and encourage the development and expansion of rural transport initiatives, in conjunction with other statutory and development agencies.	C1 C2			M1 M2 B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>Roads Programme Objectives</b>				
RP 1: To construct a Southern distributor road including a proposed link from this route to the town centre via the train station and to preserve these routes free from development. This is a priority objective of this plan. (Refer to Land Use Zoning Map 16.1)	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
RP 2: To support the construction of a Northern Distributor Road and until such time as construction commences to preserve the route free from development.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
RP 3: That following completion of the Detailed Design and Appropriate Assessment for the Northern Distributor Road (NDR), the proposed land take, indicated on Map No 16.1 be amended to coincide with the proposed land take for the NDR.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 S1	M1 M2
RP 4: To support the construction of the New Town Centre Street and to co-operate with Kildare County Council in acquiring land to facilitate its construction. The design of the proposed New Town Centre Street and bridge crossing shall have regard to the potential impact on Emily Square and adjoining lands.	C1 C2 S1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
RP 5: To complete road improvements to the Fortbarrington Road from Blackparks to Ardrew.			B2 W2 W3 CH1 CH2	B1 HH1 W1 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2 L1
RP 6: To improve the junctions of the R418 (Castledermot Road) with the N78.			B2 W2 W3 CH1 CH2	B1 HH1 W1 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2 L1
RP 7: To improve the junction of the Kildare Road with the N78, having regard to the constraints of nearby protected structures.			B2 W2 W3 CH1 CH2	B1 HH1 W1 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2 L1

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RP 8: To continue the construction of gateway features on the west-end of the N78 and to introduce gateway features on the eastern-end of the N78 to alert drivers that they are entering an urban area. This will include improved lighting, traffic calming measures, provision of higher level of signage along with road markings.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 M1 M2
RP 9: To carry out the improvement of the local road from Prusselstown Cross Roads to the N78 Dublin Road.			B2 W2 W3 CH1 CH2	B1 HH1 W1 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2 L1
RP 10: To ensure that adequate set back is provided adjacent to the four railway bridges in Athy to allow for the upgrading of the railway in consultation with Iarnrod Eireann.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 M1 M2
RP 11: To implement traffic calming and other associated measures on the R417 and R428 as part of new developments.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 M1 M2
RP 12: To implement traffic calming measures on Stanhope Place and Mount Hawkins.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 M1 M2
RP 13: To implement traffic calming measures on the N78 at the GAA club.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1 M1 M2



## 8.12 Chapter 8: Water, Drainage and Environmental Services

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
<b>Aim</b>				
To develop, protect, improve and extend water and wastewater and environmental services throughout Athy and to prioritise the sustainable provision of water services infrastructure to complement the overall strategy for the economic and population growth of the town and achieve enhanced environmental protection.	B1 HH1 W1 W3 M2	B2 S1 W2 M1	B1 HH1 W2 CH2 L1	C1 C2
<b>Water Supply Policies</b>				
WS1: To secure the timely development of the priorities relating to Athy outlined in the Water Services Investment Programme - Assessment of Needs 2010 to 2012.	B1 HH1 W1 M1 M2	B2 S1 W2	B1 HH1 W2 CH1 CH2 L1	C1 C2 W3
WS2: To secure priorities outlined in the Water Services Investment Programme - Assessment of Needs 2010 to 2012 including the network upgrade of the Athy Sewerage Scheme and the Barrow Abstraction Scheme	B1 HH1 W1 M1 M2	B2 S1 W2	B1 HH1 W2 CH1 CH2 L1	C1 C2 W3
WS 3: To prepare a Water Services Strategic Plan - in compliance with the Water Services Act - for the functional area of the Council. Such a Plan may be prepared jointly with other Water Services Authorities.	B1 HH1 W1 M1 M2	B2 S1 W2	B1 HH1 W2 CH1 CH2 L1	C1 C2 W3
WS4: To provide water, sufficient in quantity and quality to serve the needs of existing and future population.	HH1 M2	S1	B1 HH1 W2	C1 C2 W3 M1 CH1 CH2 L1
WS5: To examine ways of improving and upgrading the drinking water supply in Athy to cater for existing development in line with changing EU and National Directives, and concurrently to allow for increased residential, industrial and commercial growth in line with the objectives of this Plan.	HH1 M2	S1	B1 HH1 W2	C1 C2 W3 M1 CH1 CH2 L1
WS6: To upgrade the existing water supply network infrastructure with the aim of improving the supply and quality of drinking water and reducing the level of unaccounted for water.	HH1 M2 W2 B2	S1 W1 B1	B1 W1 CH1 CH2	C1 C2 W3 M1 L1
WS7: To promote conservation of water resources and where possible effect a reduction in the overall demand for treated water.	HH1 M2 W2 B2	S1 W1 B1		C1 C2 W3 M1 CH1 CH2 L1
WS8: To promote water conservation measures within Athy by requiring the installation of water meters in all new residential units and in cases where planning permission is required for an extension.	HH1 M2 W2 B2	S1 W1 B1		C1 C2 W3 M1 CH1 CH2 L1

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WS9: To explore sustainable water conservation initiatives including large scale rainwater harvesting, re-use of grey water and improved leakage controls.	HH1 S1 M2 W1 W2 B1 B2		CH2	C1 C2 W3 M1 CH1 L1
WS10: To require developments to connect to the public water supply.	HH1 M2		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2	C1 C2 W3 M1 CH1 CH2 L1 S1
WS11: To actively minimise leakage from the water supply network.	HH1 S1 M2 W1 W2 B1 B2		B1 B2 W1 CH1 CH2	C1 C2 W3 M1 L1
<b>Wastewater Treatment Policy</b>				
WW1: To reserve and allocate a proportion of the capacity of the Athy Sewerage Treatment Plant to development that yields long term sustainable employment in the town.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 M1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2	C1 C2 W3 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
WW2: To minimise leakage from the foul sewer network and surface water infiltration into the foul sewerage system while at the same time reducing groundwater pollution.	B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 M1		B1 B2 W1 W2 CH1 CH2	C1 C2 W3 S1 M2 L1
WW3: To ensure that public wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure - which fully complies with requirements of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (Council Directive 91/271/EEC of 21 May 1991 concerning urban waste-water treatment) (amended by Directive 98/15/EEC) including the need to provide secondary treatment and other treatment as required - shall be operational and with adequate capacity to accommodate waste water arising from development, prior to developments being occupied. Discharges arising from this collection and treatment shall also comply with the requirements of the Directive.	B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 M1		B1 B2 W1 W2 CH1 CH2	C1 C2 W3 S1 M2 L1
WW4: To implement the relevant recommendations set out in Urban Waste Water Discharges in Ireland for Population Equivalents Greater than 500 Persons - A Report for the Years 2006 and 2007 (EPA Office of Environment Enforcement, 2009).	B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 M1		B1 B2 W1 W2 CH1 CH2	C1 C2 W3 S1 M2 L1
<b>Surface Water and Drainage Policy</b>				
SW1: To implement the requirements of the DoEHLG The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) in the carrying out of functions during the period of the Plan.	W3 HH1		B1 B2 S1 W1 W2 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2 C1 C2
SW2: To ensure that appropriate drainage facilities are provided which will allow development to proceed without leading to an increased risk of pollution or flooding.	W3 HH1 B1 B2 S1 W1 W2		CH1 CH2	M1 M2 C1 C2 L1
SW3: To ensure that all new developments shall incorporate SuDS facilities to restrict surface water runoff in accordance with the principles of the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS).	W3 HH1 B1 B2 S1 W1 W2		CH1 CH2	M1 M2 C1 C2 L1
SW4: Future development proposals should be subject to an appropriate flood risk assessment in accordance with the Athy Town Development Plan (2012~2018) Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.	W3 HH1 S1			M1 M2 C1 C2 B1 B2 W1 W2 CH1 CH2 L1

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SW5: Persons/Companies undertaking Flood Risk Assessments shall certify that the Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the DoEHLG Planning System and Flood Risk Management ~ Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) and utilising other flood information as it becomes available.	W3 HH1 S1			M1 M2 C1 C2 B1 B2 W1 W2 CH1 CH2 L1
SW6: To ensure that all structures adjacent to watercourses (including hard landscaping) adjacent to watercourses is set back from the edge of the watercourse to allow access for channel clearing/ maintenance. A set back of 10 metres will generally be required depending on channel width and location.	W3 HH1 B1 B2 L1		S1	M1 M2 C1 C2 W1 W2 CH1 CH2
SW7: To ensure that the requirements of Inland Fisheries Ireland are adhered to in the construction of flood alleviation measures. This includes, but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowance for dry weather flow conditions to be reflected in channel cross section;</li> <li>• Appropriate programming of any "instream works" to reflect the requirements of Inland Fisheries Ireland.</li> </ul>	W3 HH1 B1 B2 W1 W2 L1			M1 M2 C1 C2 S1 CH1 CH2
SW8: To protect groundwater resources and drinking water catchments having regard to the County Kildare Ground Water Protection Scheme 1999 (as amended) and Environmental Protection Agency Code of Practice or Building Regulations applicable at the time from the effects of flooding.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2
<b>Water Quality Policy</b>				
WQ 1: To co-operate with the EPA, HSE and other authorities, in the continued implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive and assist and co-operate with the lead authorities for the South Eastern River Basin District.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2			C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1
WQ2: To ensure, through the implementation of the River Basin Management Plans and their associated Programmes of Measures and any other associated legislation, the protection and improvement of all drinking water, surface water and ground waters throughout the town.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2			C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1
WQ 3: To work, in co-operation with relevant organisations and major stakeholders, to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the protection and improvement of water resources.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2			C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1
WQ 4: To continue efforts to improve water quality under the Local Government (Water Pollution) Act 1977, (as amended) and by implementing the measures outlined under the Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) and other relevant Regulations.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 M1 M2			C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 W3
WQ 5: To promote public awareness of water quality issues and the measures required to protect both surface water and groundwater bodies.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 M1 M2			C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 W3
WQ6: To ensure that all agricultural activities adhere to any current or future legislation on water quality, such as the Phosphorous Regulations, Water Framework Directive and Nitrate Directive.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2			C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1

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WQ7: To ensure conformance with the relevant recommendations set out in The Provision and Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland - A Report for the Years 2007-2008 (EPA Office of Environment Enforcement, 2009).	HH1 S1 M2		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2	C1 C2 W3 M1 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>Water, Wastewater and Drainage Objectives</b>				
WDO1: To improve the provision of water and drainage services in new developments and in those areas of the town where deficiencies exist.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 CH1 CH2	C1 C2 L1
WDO2: To protect, improve and conserve the town's wastewater resources.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 CH1 CH2 L1	C1 C2 M2
WDO3: To facilitate the provision of necessary water infrastructure in a sustainable manner	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 CH1 CH2 L1	C1 C2
WDO4: To improve water quality in the town in accordance with European and National legislation.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2			C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1
WDO5: To monitor and review the water quality standards of Athy Town Council in light of European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations 2007 (SI 278 of 2007), and to ensure continuing compliance with the regulations.	HH1 S1 M2			C1 C2 W3 M1 CH1 CH2 L1 B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2
WDO6: To improve and expand the water supply to all areas in accordance with the Water Services Investment Programme for County Kildare.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 M2		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 CH1 CH2	C1 C2 M1 W3 L1
WD 07: To promote rain water harvesting as a complementary surface water management system in all developments and in particular, for larger developments.	HH1 S1 M2 W1 W2 B1 B2		CH2	C1 C2 W3 M1 CH1 L1
WDO8: To promote the changeover from septic tanks to mains connections in Athy where this is feasible.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1		B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 CH1 CH2	C1 C2 M2 L1
WDO9: To carry out a survey of the surface water culverts in Athy to assess their current state, and to improve culverts where necessary.	W3 HH1		B1 B2 W1 L1	C1 C2 M1 M2 W2 CH1 CH2 S1

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WDO10: To carry out a programme of dredging surface water drains and to continue to ensure that the drains are regularly maintained to minimise the risk of flooding.	W3 HH1		B1 B2 W1 L1	C1 C2 M1 M2 W2 CH1 CH2 S1
WDO 11: To promote sustainable water conservation initiatives, particularly for larger developments including rainwater harvesting, re-use of grey water and improved leakage control with a view to their implementation within the town's water supply and drainage network.	HH1 S1 M2 W1 W2 B1 B2		CH2	C1 C2 W3 M1 CH1 L1
WDO 12: To decommission as many lead public water mains as possible in older areas of Athy where they are present.				B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
WDO13: To fulfil its responsibilities under the Flood Risk Directive 2007/60/EC and cooperate with the Office of Public Works in the development of any Catchment-based Flood Risk Management Plan as necessary. Any relevant recommendations and outputs arising from Flood Risk Management Plan will be incorporated into the Development Plan.	W3 HH1		B1 B2 S1 W1 W2 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2 C1 C2
WDO14: To integrate into the Plan, relevant findings of the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (CFRAMS) for the River Barrow Catchment when it is finalised in 2014, as appropriate.	W3 HH1		B1 B2 S1 W1 W2 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2 C1 C2
<b>Environmental Services Aim</b>				
To conform with EU, national and regional policies in relation to waste management, to protect and enhance water, air and noise quality and to promote environmental awareness in Athy.	B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 M1			S1 W3 C1 C2 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>Waste Management Policies</b>				
WM1: To have regard to the County Kildare Waste Management Plan in the implementation, operation and management of schemes and services for the disposal of waste.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
WM 2: To seek to ensure that Athy is served by adequate recycling facilities in the form of kerbside collection, the continued operation and improvement of the existing Civic Amenity Centre and bring-bank recycling facilities.	C1 C2		CH1 CH2 L1	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2
WM 3: To encourage waste prevention, minimisation, reuse, recycling and recovery as methods of managing waste. Where waste management is not being carried out properly, the Waste Management Act, 1996 to 2008 will be used as a means to ensure specific national policies and regulations are adhered to.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1			



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WM 4: To promote and facilitate communities to become involved in environmental awareness, community-based recycling initiatives and environmental management initiatives, which will lead to local sustainable waste management practices.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1			
WM 5: To ensure that the "Code of Practice Environmental Risk Assessment for Unregulated Waste Disposal Sites" published by the EPA is adhered to regarding any contaminated sites within the town council boundary and to ensure that a risk based assessment procedure is carried out for all historic unregulated waste disposal sites; the potential risks are assessed and that the appropriate remedial measures or corrective actions are put in place before any development takes place.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 M2			M1 W3 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>Litter Management Policy</b>				
L1: To enforce, where applicable, the provisions of the Litter Pollution Act 1997.	HH1 CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2
L2: To prepare a Litter Management Plan for Athy in accordance with the Litter Pollution Act 1997.	HH1 CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2
L3: To continue education and awareness programmes in local schools and to promote grant schemes and initiatives to resident associations and other groups which aim to reduce litter in the town.				B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
L4: To require the provision of litter bins on or directly adjoining the premises of all neighbourhood facilities.				B1 B2 S1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>Pollution Control- Water, Air and Noise Policies</b>				
N 1: To enforce, where applicable, the provisions of the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006.	HH1			B1 B2 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
N 2: To seek to ensure that noise levels do not exceed accepted standards and that new developments incorporate measures to ensure compliance with the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006 and any subsequent revision of these Regulations.	HH1			B1 B2 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1

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N3: To regulate and control activities likely to give rise to excessive noise (other than those activities which require regulation by the Environmental Protection Agency).	HH1			B1 B2 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
N4: To require activities likely to give rise to excessive noise to install noise mitigation measures and monitors.	HH1			B1 B2 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>Light Policy</b>				
L1: To seek to minimise the effects of all new external lighting on environmental amenity	B1 B2 L1			HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2
<b>Environmental Services Objectives</b>				
ENO 1: To facilitate the implementation of the County Kildare Waste Management Plan 2005-2010 and any subsequent revisions thereof during the period of this Plan.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
ENO 2: To investigate the possibility of the further provision of recycling facilities in Athy.	C1 C2		CH1 CH2 L1	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2
ENO 3: To facilitate the preparation and implementation of the Kildare Noise Action Plan 2009 and Athy Litter Management Plan and any subsequent amendments during the period of the Plan.	HH1 CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2
ENO 4: To continue to monitor air quality at selected locations throughout the town in co-operation with the Health Service Executive and the Environmental Protection Agency.	HH1			B1 B2 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
ENO 5: To continue to monitor watercourses and other sensitive areas of the town's environment with a view to early detection and prevention of pollution.	B1 B2 W1 W2 L1			HH1 S1 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2

ENO 6: To continue to support Community Groups, Resident's Associations and Tidy Town's Committee, in the promotion of Athy as a clean and attractive town.	HH1 CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2
ENO 7: To continue to expand environmental awareness initiatives designed to create increased public awareness of waste prevention, minimisation and reuse.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1			

## 8.13 Chapter 9: Energy and Communications

	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	<b>Probable Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	<b>Potential Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs
<b>Aim</b>				
To promote energy conservation in Athy through appropriate land use and building standards with an aim to reduce the demand for energy and fossil fuels in particular and to promote and facilitate the development of telecommunications infrastructure.			B1 B2 L1 CH1 CH2	HH1 W1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 C1 C2 S1
<b>Policy- Energy Waste</b>				
EN1: To support the regional, national and international initiatives and strategies and to facilitate measures that seek to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. In this regard, the Council will generally support initiatives taken to provide for more sustainable forms of energy use in and environmentally acceptable manner, subject to the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.	C1		B1 B2 L1 S1 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 W1 W2 W3 HH1 C2	
<b>Policies – Renewable Energy</b>				
RE 1: To promote, support and facilitate the development of renewable energy in Athy, where it is considered appropriate.			B1 B2 L1 CH1 CH2 W1 W2 W3 HH1	M2 S1 M1 C1 C2
RE 2: To explore all viable options with regard to utilising renewable energies for all public infrastructure and developments, subject to funding.			B1 B2 L1 CH1 CH2 W1 W2 W3 HH1	M2 S1 M1 C1 C2

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<b>Policies – Energy Efficiency</b>				
EE 1: To promote energy conservation and efficiency measures and to facilitate innovative building design that promotes energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources in accordance with national policy and guidelines.			CH2	HH1 W1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 CH1 C1 C2 B1 B2 L1
EE 2: To encourage use of passive solar design principles for residential building(s).			CH2	HH1 W1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 CH1 C1 C2 B1 B2 L1
EE 3: To support and encourage the installation of solar collectors and panels for the production of heat or electricity in residential and commercial buildings, in line with relevant design criteria.			CH2	HH1 W1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 CH1 C1 C2 S1 B1 B2 L1
EE 4: To have regard to and implement where feasible, the recommendations of the National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012.			B1 B2 L1 CH1 CH2	HH1 W1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 C1 C2
<b>Policies – Non Renewable Energy</b>				
NR 1: To encourage through coordinated land-use and transport planning, a reduction in the demand for vehicular travel and journey lengths.	C1 C2 S1			B1 B2 L1 CH1 CH2 HH1 W1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1
NR 2: To promote the design and construction of buildings so as to limit the amount of energy required for the operation of the buildings and the amount of CO2 emissions associated with this energy use.				HH1 W1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 CH1 CH2 C1 C2 B1 B2 L1
NR 3: To implement a programme to place all existing overhead cables underground throughout the town centre during the lifetime of the plan, subject to available funding.	L1 CH2		B1 B2 W1 CH1	HH1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 C1 C2
NR 4: To support the infrastructural renewal and development of electricity networks in Athy town and environs as appropriate. The development of secure and reliable electricity transmission infrastructure is recognized as a key factor for supporting economic development and attracting investment to the area.			B1 B2 W1 CH1 CH2 L1	HH1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 C1 C2

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NR 5: To encourage the extension of the existing gas infrastructure network in Athy and its environs in consultation with Natural Gas providers.			B1 B2 W1 CH2 CH1 L1	HH1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 C1 C2
<b>Policies - Telecommunications</b>				
TE 1: To encourage the development and expansion of communication, information and broadcasting networks, including mobile phone networks, broadband and other digital services.			B1 B2 L1 W1 CH1 CH2	HH1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 C1 C2
TE2: To encourage owners and operators of telecommunication structures to facilitate the co-location of antennae on existing support structures and masts.	B1 B2 L1 W1 CH1 CH2		B1 B2 L1 W1 CH1 CH2	HH1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 C1 C2
TE 3: To achieve a balance between facilitating the provision of telecommunications infrastructure in the interests of social and economic progress and sustaining residential amenity and environmental quality.	B1 B2 L1 W1 CH1 CH2		B1 B2 L1 W1 CH1 CH2	HH1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 C1 C2
TE 4: To ensure that the location of telecommunications structures minimises and/or mitigates any adverse impacts on communities and the built or natural environment.	B1 B2 L1 W1 CH1 CH2			HH1 W1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 C1 C2
TE 5: To preserve significant views from the visual intrusion of large scale telecommunications infrastructure.	L1 CH1 CH2			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 C1 C2
TE 6: To ensure that new telecommunications infrastructure are adequately screened, integrated and/or landscaped so as to minimise any adverse visual impacts on the environment.	L1 CH1 CH2			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 C1 C2
TE 7: To promote and encourage the delivery of a high capacity ICT infrastructure, broad-band network, cable and broadcasting technologies throughout Athy and to facilitate access to these services by all sectors of the community by developing initiatives through the public library service.	C1 C2		B1 B2 W1 L1 CH1 CH2	HH1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1
TE 8: To support national policy for the provision of new and innovative telecommunications infrastructure, including a fibre optic broadband network and to recognise that the development of such infrastructure is a key component of future economic prosperity of Athy.			B1 B2 W1 L1 CH1 CH2	HH1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 C1 C2
<b>Energy and Communication Objectives</b>				
EC1: To support the modernisation and development of telecommunications and broadband infrastructure to support the economic development of Athy.			B1 B2 L1 W1 CH1 CH2	HH1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 C1 C2
EC2: To implement on a phased basis a programme of placing all existing and proposed overhead cables underground throughout the town centre and to seek DoEHLG financial support to undertake such works. Future capacity should be taken into account and appropriate ducting should also be put in place when the cables are placed underground.	L1 CH2		B1 B2 W1 CH1	HH1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 C1 C2



EC3: To support the implementation of the National Broadband Scheme insofar as it relates to Athy and to co-operate with the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources in any future additions to the scheme.			B1 B2 L1 W1 CH1 CH2	HH1 W2 M2 S1 W3 M1 C1 C2
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## 8.14 Chapter 10: Social Community and Cultural Development

	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs
<b>Aim</b>				
Aim: To ensure that Athy is an attractive place to live and work by building strong inclusive communities that have a sense of place and belonging, with the provision of accessible social and community facilities.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
<b>Community Services and Facilities Policies</b>				
CF 1: To ensure that sufficient lands are zoned to cater for the social and community needs of the town.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
CF 2: To actively promote the provision of community, educational, social and recreational facilities in tandem with future housing development. In certain large mixed use schemes the frontloading of such infrastructure may be required prior to the commencement of development. In this regard, applicants will be required to submit a Social Infrastructure Assessment (SIA) for the following; residential schemes on zoned land which are greater than 50 units, or where deemed necessary by the planning authority. The suitability and scale of proposed developments will be assessed against the level of social infrastructure in the town. The Planning Authority will seek to ensure that unsustainable levels of population growth do not take place in the absence of adequate levels of social infrastructure.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
CF 3: To carry out a review of the SIA process to assist in the implementation of policy CF2 above in conjunction with Kildare County Council.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	

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CF4: To encourage the shared use of educational and community facilities for community and non-school purposes where possible so as to maximise the sustainable use of such infrastructure and promote community cohesion.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1 C1 C2			
CF 5: To assess the suitable provision of nursing homes, crèches and other commercially run community facilities and amenities at appropriate locations in the town.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
CF 6: To facilitate the provision of social, community and cultural services along safe walking routes and within a walking distance of communities, through prudent and inclusive planning.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
CF 7: To ensure that future social, community and cultural facilities are adequate and of a standard to meet the needs of the communities they serve and that they are physically and spatially integrated into the local area. Such facilities need to be provided in tandem with the phasing of new residential development.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
<b>Social Inclusion and Community Development Policy</b>				
SC 1: To promote equality of access to services and facilities and assist in the removal of barriers to full participation in society.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
SC 2: To work with the Athy RAPID Area Implementation Team to co-ordinate and improve services aimed at the RAPID target groups.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
SC 3: To support and encourage the establishment of consultative structures, particularly those associated with the County Development Board, which enhance and enable communities to engage in policy making.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1

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SC 4: To ensure that all arts and cultural facilities in the ownership and management of the Council are accessible to the wider community and to promote the role of these facilities as focal points for the community.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
SC 5: To support and encourage communities in the restoration and rehabilitation of community halls / centres, thereby facilitating a greater level of social and community inclusion. Assistance in the form of funding will be subject to budget allocations.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
SC 6: To support and facilitate the improvement of public service infrastructure and facilities in the town, in particular health centres and local clinics, Garda Station and installations.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
<b>Groups with Specific Design / Planning Needs Policies</b>				
YPC 1: To consider the needs of children and young people, including those with disabilities and additional needs, in the provision of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities (refer to Chapter 11 for additional policies on recreation and amenity).	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
YPC 2: To support and encourage the establishment of facilities for young people at appropriate locations within the town.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
PD 1: To ensure that all buildings, public open spaces, recreational and amenity areas are accessible for people with disabilities, having regard to the Building Regulations, the objectives of 'Building for Everyone' (National Disability Authority) and 'Access for the Disabled' (No. 1 to 3) (National Rehabilitation Board).	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
PD 2: To ensure that parking spaces provided for people with disabilities are appropriately indicated and are located in a manner which has regard to dismounting, safety of drivers and passengers.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1

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PD 3: To ensure that all footpaths and public areas are accessible and safe for people with disabilities and/or reduced mobility by way of dishing of footpaths, location of crossings etc.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
PD 4: To provide for the needs of people with visual difficulties in the design of pedestrian facilities, by assessing the options available and choosing the most appropriate design to implement on a case by case basis.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
OP 1: To facilitate the provision of continuing care facilities for the elderly, such as: own homes (designed to meet the needs of elderly people), sheltered housing, day-care facilities, nursing homes and specialised care units (e.g. dementia specific units) at appropriate locations in the town.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
OP 2: To cater for the diversity of older people's needs by promoting adaptability and flexibility in the design of homes, and the promotion of appropriately located commercial and community facilities in the town.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
OP 3: To site residential care facilities for the elderly in accordance with the following: (i) Facilities should be located close to community and social facilities required by occupants (e.g. shops, post office, community centres, etc) thereby ensuring that older people can remain part of existing communities. (ii) Facilities should be easily accessible for residents, employees, visitors and service providers. A mobility strategy should be provided detailing connections to local/social infrastructure facilities, amenities and public transport services for residents, employees and visitors. (iii) Located within an environment that is suitable for their stated purpose, integrating within the wider community while providing a safe environment for residents. (iv) Located in an area which can benefit from the creation of strong links between the care for the elderly facilities and the local community including activities linked to other community groups.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
OP 4: To require the design and layout of residential care facilities for the elderly to comply with all relevant standards set out in the 'National Quality Standards for Residential Care Settings for Older People in Ireland' published by the Health Information and Quality Authority (February 2009) or the relevant standards for any subsequent national guidelines. Relevant standards are contained within Chapter 15 Development Management Standards.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
TC1 Explore the feasibility of designating lands for the provision of an Equine based facility.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	

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TC2	To support the Athy horse project in association with Kildare Traveller Interagency Strategy			B1 HH1 W1 W3 M2 CH2 C1	B2 S1 W2 M1 CH1 L1 C2	
<b>Local Development / Community Groups Policies</b>						
LDG 1:	To continue to co-operate with statutory bodies, in particular the County Development Board, Enterprise Ireland and other agencies including the voluntary sector, residents, business and environment groups to counter disadvantage and social exclusion, to secure improvements in the quality of community facilities and to promote equality of access to public and social services for all members of the community	C1 C2		B1 HH1 W1 W3 M2 CH2	B2 S1 W2 M1 CH1 L1	
LDG 2:	To work with the Athy RAPID Area Implementation Team to co-ordinate and improve services aimed at the RAPID target groups.	C1 C2				B1 HH1 W1 W3 M2 CH2
LDG 3:	To promote social inclusion, improved facilities and encourage greater integration of marginalized groups, including ethnic minorities, in community-based initiatives.	C1 C2		B1 HH1 W1 W3 M2 CH2	B2 S1 W2 M1 CH1 L1	
<b>Arts and Culture in the Community Policies</b>						
AC 1:	To develop and improve the physical infrastructure of cultural facilities in the town.	C1 C2		B1 HH1 W1 W3 M2 CH2	B2 S1 W2 M1 CH1 L1	
AC 2:	To ensure that all arts and cultural facilities in the ownership and management of the Council are accessible to the wider community and to promote the role of these facilities as focal points for the community.	C1 C2				B1 HH1 W1 W3 M2 CH2
AC 3:	To continue to support an Arts and Cultural Programme for Athy Community library	C1 C2				B1 HH1 W1 W3 M2 CH2



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AC 4: To support the town's existing Heritage Centre/Tourist Office by the promotion of further heritage services within the town.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
AC 5: To assist the development of the Arts Service within the town and to expand the town's cultural infrastructure.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
AC 6: To recognise and support the continued use of the Youth Café (in the Quaker Meeting House) and the Arts Centre (in the Methodist Church) in providing social, community and cultural services within the town.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>Library Services Policies</b>				
LR 1: To provide and improve access to library services and provide an integrated approach to the delivery of library, arts, archives and local studies services.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
LR 2: To continue to improve access for the disabled in the existing library accommodation/Heritage Centre/Tourist Office.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>School Facilities Policies</b>				
ED 1: To facilitate the provision of new education and other community facilities, and appropriate extensions to such facilities, within the town through the reservation / zoning of land for such uses.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
ED 2: To continue to facilitate the provision of dedicated facilities for adult and community education in recognition of the growing demand for life long learning opportunities and the perceived shortage of such facilities at present.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	

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ED 3: To ensure that new or additional educational facilities are designed and located and have adequate management arrangements in place so as to enable the greatest possible use by the wider community.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>Childcare Facilities Policies</b>				
CF 1: To ensure the provision of childcare facilities in accordance with the Childcare Facilities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG) and the Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 1996 and 1997, 'Ready, Steady, Play! A National Play Policy' (2004) and any other relevant statutory guidelines which may issue during the period of this Plan.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
CF 2: To facilitate and encourage the provision of childcare facilities, including community crèche facilities, of an appropriate type and scale, at appropriate locations in the town.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
CF 3: To assess, in conjunction with the Kildare County Childcare Committee, the continuing needs around childcare and related facilities and review progress on provision during the mid term review of this Plan.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
CF 4: To promote and encourage the provision of a network of childcare facilities that reflects the distribution of the residential population in the town in order to minimise travel distances and maximise opportunities for disadvantaged communities.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>Health Services Policies</b>				
HS 1: To support and co-operate with promoters or operators of public and private health care facilities by facilitating and encouraging the provision of improved health care facilities in appropriate locations in the town	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
HS 2: To facilitate the integration of appropriate healthcare facilities within new and existing communities.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1

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HS 3: To support the provision of 'one stop' primary care medical centres and GP practices particularly along public transport routes and at locations easily accessible to members of the wider community.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
<b>Burial Grounds Policies</b>				
BG 1: To protect the cultural heritage of the town's burial grounds and to encourage their management and maintenance in accordance with conservation principles.	CH1 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH2
BG 2: To provide or assist in the provision of burial grounds at appropriate locations in the town.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
<b>Objectives</b>				
SCO 1: To assess the suitability and demand for care facilities for the elderly and to facilitate the use of appropriate site(s) within the town for such uses.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
SCO 2: To develop a partnership approach in funding and developing play opportunities in the town, in accordance with any forthcoming Council's Play Policy.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
SCO 3: To improve library provision and services subject to the availability of resources and finance.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
SCO 4: To improve fire service provision, subject to the availability of resources and finance.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	

SCO 5: To provide or assist in the provision of burial grounds by reservation of land at suitable locations and provision of local authority burial grounds, where feasible.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
SCO 6: To actively pursue the location of a third-level outreach facility in Athy so as to improve access to further education and provide a greater range of opportunities for members of the community. A possible location for this facility would be in Rathstewart adjacent to the Community College.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
SCO 7: To continue to enforce the By-laws in association with Kildare County Council relating to the control of horses in public places.				B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1

## 8.15 Chapter 11: Recreation and Amenity

	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs
<b>Aim</b>				
To ensure the retention, provision and maintenance of accessible recreational and amenity facilities including parks and open spaces to meet the needs of the growing population of Athy.	B1 B2 L1 W3 HH1 C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
<b>Recreation Policies</b>				
R 1: To encourage the provision, improvement and expansion of more varied recreational and sporting facilities to serve the needs of the town;	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	

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R 2: To encourage recreational and amenity facilities to be multi-functional and not used exclusively by any one group.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
R 3: To encourage and promote the provision of pedestrian, cycle routes and networks linking parks and open spaces to residential developments so as to facilitate recreation and amenity activity, where feasible.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
R 4: To safeguard existing leisure, recreational facilities in Athy town and encourage the provision of new facilities for community use in new areas, or in areas where an identified shortage of such facilities exist.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
R 5: To facilitate the provision of sports and community facilities on Council owned land north of the Town Centre in a co-ordinated manner ensuring accessibility and usability by all members of the community.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
R 6: To seek to develop in conjunction with Kildare County Council, a county play and recreational and amenity strategy.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
R 7: To support Kildare Sports Partnership and encourage participation in sport and recreation in Athy through strategic placement, planning, refurbishment and management of new and existing facilities.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
R 8: To promote active amenity sports along the River Barrow and the Canal.			B1 B2	M1 M2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1



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R 9: A study will be carried out to explore the feasibility of developing a marina within the town area. This study will examine the need for the marina in light of a "do nothing" context, a range of sizes, locations and adjoining uses. Any development proposed in light of this study will be subject to EIA and Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1	
<b>Amenity Policy</b>				
A1: To continue the development of riverside and canalside walking routes with the creation of a linear park along the River Barrow and canal in conjunction with the relevant statutory bodies.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
A 2: To continue the amenity development of the People's Park and to retain its enclosed urban park character.	C1 C2		B2 S1 CH1 CH2	B1 HH1 W3 M1 M2 W1 W2 L1
A 3: To maintain and develop the amenity potential of the canal for recreation.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
A4: To ensure that any future development along the Canal and the River provides walking routes and does not disproportionately affect their amenity value.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
A5: To promote an increased awareness of Athy walking routes and heritage trails as attractive and unique recreational and educational amenities.	C1 C2		B1 B2	M1 M2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1
A6: To protect and improve all existing rights-of-way and to create further rights-of-way where necessary and appropriate.	C1 C2		B1 B2	M1 M2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1
A7: To facilitate, where practicable, the provision of cycle-ways or walkways along the extent of the canal, in co-operation with landowners, Waterways Ireland and DoEHLG. Any proposed cycling or walking routes along the Grand Canal and River Barrow will be subject to a feasibility study and Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2

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A 8: To support the conservation and development of local angling waters and associated infrastructure required to advance the sport in the town. Any proposed restocking will be carried out in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service and in co-operation with Inland Fisheries Ireland. Any proposed works, including infrastructural works will be subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive."			B1 B2 M1 M2 HH1 S1 C1 C2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
<b>Parks and Open Spaces Policy</b>				
OS 1: To develop and facilitate the provision of public open space generally in accordance with "Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas-Guidelines for Planning Authorities" (DoEHLG, 2009) and with the 'Kildare Open Space Strategy'	C1 C2 W3			B1 B2 M1 M2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1
OS 2: To facilitate and encourage a series of high quality open spaces throughout the town, preferably as part of a larger linked network that is available to all ages and accessible to everyone, including people with mobility impairments.	B1 B2 L1 W3 HH1 C1 C2		B1 B2	HH1 S1 W1 W2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2
OS 3: To retain open space lands with established recreational uses.	B1 B2 L1 W3 HH1 C1 C2			M1 M2 S1 W1 W2 CH1 CH2
OS 4: To preserve, manage and maintain to a high standard the existing parks and open spaces in the town.	B1 B2 L1 W3 HH1 C1 C2		B1 B2	M1 M2 S1 W1 W2 CH1 CH2
OS 5: To encourage the provision of open space for both passive and active recreation to serve the needs of the town's existing and future population concurrent with new residential development.	B1 B2 L1 W3 HH1 C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
OS 6: To protect lands zoned Open Space and Amenity from inappropriate development, to provide for public access for recreational purposes, and to facilitate nature conservation in these areas	B1 B2 L1 W3 HH1 C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
AL 1: To encourage and facilitate the development of allotments of an appropriate scale which meet the following criteria; (i) The lands are appropriately situated within or immediately adjacent to the edge of the town; (ii) The lands are easily accessible to the residents of the town; and (iii) Adequate water supply and adequate bicycle and car parking facilities can be provided'.	B2 W3 HH1 C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
<b>Recreation and Amenity Objectives</b>				
RAO 1: To support the development of a quality open space area to include the provision of sports and community facilities on Town Council owned land north of Barrack Lane (Refer to Map 11.1).	B1 B2 L1 W3 HH1 C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	

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<p>RAO 2: To carry out a Landscape management plan for the open space area to the north of Barrack Lane containing a detailed planting, landscaping and maintenance programme for the area. This landscape plan should address issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need for attenuation ponds</li> <li>• Street furniture including lighting, seats and bins</li> <li>• Pedestrian and Cycle facilities</li> <li>• New planting and management facilities</li> </ul>	<p>B1 B2 L1 W3 HH1</p>		<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p>RAO 3: To facilitate the provision of secure bicycle locking facilities at the People's park.</p>	<p>C1 C2</p>		<p>B2 S1 CH1 CH2</p>	<p>B1 HH1 W3 M1 M2 W1 W2 L1</p>
<p>RAO 4: To investigate developing Lord's Island as a Wildlife amenity area open to all members of the community.</p>	<p>C1 C2</p>		<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>M1 M2</p>
<p>RAO 5: To support the development of a linear walkway along the banks of the Canal and River Barrow. Any proposed cycling or walking routes along the Grand Canal and River Barrow will be subject to a feasibility study and Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.</p>	<p>C1 C2</p>		<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>M1 M2</p>
<p>RAO 6: To undertake a feasibility study to determine the most appropriate location for a skateboard park.</p>				<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 M1 M2</p>
<p>RAO 7: To continue landscaping and maintenance of amenity areas.</p>	<p>B1 B2 L1 W3 HH1</p>		<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p>RAO 8: To provide and develop walking and cycling routes throughout the Town, particularly ones linking various areas of public open spaces and amenity in accordance with Map 11.1</p>	<p>C1 C2</p>		<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>M1 M2</p>
<p>RAO 9: To continue to maintain existing open space areas within housing developments, which have been taken in charge by the Council.</p>	<p>B2 W3 HH1 C1 C2</p>			<p>B1 S1 W1 W2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>

RAO 10: To implement the recommendations of the Kildare Open Space Strategy as appropriate.	C1 C2 B2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
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## 8.16 Chapter 12: Archaeological and Architectural Heritage

	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs
<b>Aim</b> To conserve, protect and enhance the architectural and archaeological heritage of Athy. To strike a reasonable balance between conservation and development objectives and continue to protect, conserve and enhance buildings, areas, structures, sites and features of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.	CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2
<b>General Heritage Policy</b>				
HP 1: To work with relevant agencies in promoting awareness and pride in the natural, built and archaeological heritage of the county and to develop codes of best practice in relation to conservation of this heritage.	B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 CH1 CH2 L1			W3 M1 M2 S1 C1 C2
HP 2: To encourage participation by heritage groups, community associations and local people in the identification, protection, conservation and enhancement of the heritage in Athy.	B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 CH1 CH2 L1			W3 M1 M2 S1 C1 C2
<b>Archaeological Heritage</b>				
AH1: To ensure full consideration is given to the protection of archaeological heritage when undertaking or authorising development in order to avoid unnecessary conflict between development and the protection of the archaeological heritage.	CH1 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH2
AH 2: To have regard to the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) Table 12.1 when assessing planning applications for development.	CH1 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH2

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<p>AH 3: To protect and preserve any archaeological sites, which have been identified subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP).</p>	<p>CH1 L1</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH2</p>
<p>AH 4 To ensure that development in the vicinity of a site of archaeological interest is not detrimental to the character of the archaeological site or its setting by reason of its location, scale, bulk or detailing and to ensure that such proposed developments, are subject to an archaeological assessment. Such an assessment will seek to ensure that the development can be designed in such a way as to avoid or minimise any potential effects on the archaeological heritage.</p>	<p>CH1 L1</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH2</p>
<p>AH 5: To encourage the provision of signage to publicly accessible recorded monuments.</p>	<p>CH1 L1</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH2</p>
<p>AH 6: To have regard to the Zone of Archaeological Potential shown on Map 12.1 and ensure that planning applications are referred to the appropriate prescribed bodies and to have regard to the advice and recommendations of the prescribed bodies.</p>	<p>CH1 L1</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH2</p>
<p>AH 7: To retain where possible the existing street layout, historic building lines and traditional plot widths where these derive from medieval or earlier origins.</p>	<p>CH1 L1</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH2</p>
<p>AH 8: To protect the historical burial grounds within Athy town and encourage their maintenance in accordance with conservation principles in co-operation with the Historic Monuments Advisory Committee and National Monuments Section of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG).</p>	<p>CH1 L1</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH2</p>
<p>AH9: To encourage the rehabilitation, renovation and re-use of older structures, where appropriate. Such rehabilitation, renovation and re-use works to existing vernacular structures must positively contribute to the streetscape of the area and shall have regard to bats and their roosts.</p>	<p>CH2 L1</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1</p>

<b>Architectural Heritage</b>					
PS1: To conserve and protect the town's built environment and heritage in terms of streetscapes, individual buildings and features of historical, architectural, artistic, cultural, scientific, social and technical interest using the powers vested in it by the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010.	CH2 L1				B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1
PS2: To ensure the protection, conservation and, where necessary, appropriate restoration of the architectural heritage of the town for future generations, and protect structures on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS). Any conservation and restoration works must positively contribute to the streetscape of the area.	CH2 L1				B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1
PS3: To promote and encourage the sensitive alteration/extension to Protected Structures so that they are in keeping with the character of the building and adjoining buildings.	CH2 L1				B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1
PS4: To require a method statement for the conservation of any works to protected structures. Method statements should make reference to the DoELHG Advice Series in how best to repair and maintain historic buildings.	CH2 L1				B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1
PS5: To assist owners of Protected Structures in the maintenance and repair of their properties through the Building Conservation Grant Scheme funded by the DoEHLG.	CH2 L1				B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1
PS6: To refuse planning permission for the demolition of any protected structure unless the Council is satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist.	CH2 L1		CH2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1
PS7: To protect the curtilage of protected structures or proposed protected structures and to prohibit inappropriate development within the curtilage or attendant grounds of a protected structure which would cause loss of or damage to the special character of the protected structure and loss of or damage to, any structures of heritage value within the curtilage of the protected structure	CH2 L1 B2				B1 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1



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PS8: To encourage uses compatible with the character of protected structures. In certain cases, the planning authority may relax its requirements in order to secure the protection and restoration of the structure. These requirements including site development standards, zoning etc, may be relaxed if the protected structure, its special interest, character and setting is protected and its use and development is consistent with conservation policies and its special interest, character and setting is protected.	CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1
PS9: To endeavour to strategically target conservation funding for specific priority projects.	CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1
ACA1: To ensure that any development, modifications, alterations, or extensions within an Architectural Conservation Area are sited and designed appropriately, and are not detrimental to the character of the structure or to its setting or the general character of the ACA.	CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1
ACA2: To have regard to architectural heritage when considering proposed infrastructure developments (including transport, telecommunications, sewerage and water) located in close proximity to Protected Structures or the Architectural Conservation Area.	CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1
IH1: To promote the marketing and interpretation of industrial heritage sites and to encourage public awareness and appreciation of this heritage with a view to optimising its tourism potential.	CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2
IH2: To conserve items of architectural or industrial archaeological interest associated with the canal systems in association with Waterways Ireland, and the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the DoEHLG and local communities.	CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2
VH1: To encourage the protection, appreciation and appropriate revitalisation of the vernacular heritage of the town including their settings and features.	CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1
FI1: To protect and conserve important heritage items such as historic gardens, stone walls, bridges, street furniture, post boxes, curtilage features, and other significant historic features of interest.	CH1 CH2 L1 B2			B1 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2

<b>Archaeological and Architectural Objectives</b>				
AHO1: To review on an ongoing basis the Record of Protected Structures and make additions and deletions as appropriate over the period of this Plan.	CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1
AHO2: To seek the protection of all structures listed on the Record of Protected Structures and to protect the town's vernacular architectural heritage.	CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1
AHO3: To publish an information booklet outlining the specific recommendations for development within the Architectural Conservation Area.	CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1
AHO4: To secure the preservation (in-situ or by record) of all sites and features of historical and archaeological interest.	CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2
AHO5: To prepare a buildings at risk register and to prevent the endangerment of Protected Structures, historic or vernacular buildings.	CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2
AHO6: To encourage, where practicable, the provision of public access to sites identified on the Record of Monuments and Places under the direct ownership or control of the Local Authority and the State.	CH1 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH2
AHO7: To record and protect heritage items, such as walls, bridges and street furniture, within Athy.	CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2
AHO8: To support the Athy Heritage Centre and museum as an important tourism and heritage resource for the town. To support its board of directors in progressing related programmes and proposals including, in particular, the further development of the Ernest Shackleton theme.				B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1

## 8.17 Chapter 13: Natural Heritage and Biodiversity

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
<b>Aim</b>				
To protect, conserve and manage natural heritage in a sustainable manner ensuring that the future economic growth and development of Athy complements its natural setting.	B1 W1 L1	B2 W2		HH1 S1 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2
<b>General Natural Heritage and Designated Sites Policy</b>				
NH 1: To have regard to the actions contained in the County Biodiversity Plan.	B1 W1 W3 L1	B2 W2 HH1		S1 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2
NH 2: To facilitate the conservation and enhancement of the Grand Canal pNHA, and the River Barrow cSAC, including the adjacent wetlands and associated habitats and to ensure that development does not significantly adversely affect conservation values.	B1 W1 L1 HH1	B2 W2 W3		S1 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2
NH 3: To preserve the quality and quantity of water in the Grand Canal system and the Barrow in partnership with Waterways Ireland and the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the DoEHLG	B1 W1	B2		HH1 S1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2 L1
NH 4: To have regard to the views and guidance of National Parks and Wildlife Service of the DoEHLG in respect of proposed development where there is a possibility that such development may have an impact on sites with nature conservation designations.	B1 W1	B2		HH1 S1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2 L1
NH 5 To require the submission of an Ecological Impact Assessment for all development which may have a significant impact on the Canal, river and riparian habitats. This assessment should where appropriate suggest a minimum buffer of undisturbed vegetation to be retained to mitigate against pollution risks, reduce flooding potential, maintain habitats and provide an ecological corridor. The buffer zone shall, where possible be maintained free of development and hard surfaces. The assessment shall address the following issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protected species i.e. bats otters including the requirement for derogation licences</li> <li>Cumulative impact of the proposed development.</li> </ul>	B1 W1	B2		HH1 S1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2 L1
NH 6: To ensure that any project with the potential to impact upon a Natura 2000 site(s) i.e. the River Barrow shall be subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. Potential temporary impacts upon the River Barrow cSAC arising from construction activities shall be avoided by compliance with the measures outlined in Section 3.5.2 of the Appropriate Assessment Natura Impact Statement.	B1 W1	B2		HH1 S1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2 L1

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NH 7: To ensure that no project which gives 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) <sup>130</sup>	B1 W1	B2 B2			HH1 S1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2 L1
NH 8: A suitable buffer zone will be maintained between the Grand Canal and the River Barrow and any proposed development. The extent and composition of this undisturbed riparian buffer zone should be determined in consultation with a qualified ecologist. In all instances however a buffer of 2.5 metres of vegetation shall be retained along the canal bank to mitigate against pollution risks, reduce flooding potential and maintain habitat.	B1 W1	B2 L1			HH1 S1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2
<b>Polices - Non Designated Sites</b>					
NH 9: To facilitate, maintain and enhance as far as is practicable the natural heritage and amenity of the town by seeking to encourage the preservation and retention of woodlands, hedgerows, stonewalls, rivers, streams and wetlands. Where the removal of such features is unavoidable appropriate measures to replace like with like should be considered, subject to safety considerations.	B2 W2 HH1	W1 W3 L1			B1 S1 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2
NH 10: To ensure that existing biodiversity features such as watercourses, streams, hedgerows, trees, ecological corridors and linkages are incorporated into the design of new developments.	B2	W1			B1 HH1 S1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2 L1
NH 11: To protect, conserve and enhance the town's biodiversity and natural heritage including wildlife (flora and fauna), habitats, landscapes and/or landscape features of importance to wildlife.	B1 W1 HH1	B2 W3 L1			S1 M1 W2 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2
NH 12: To seek compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to encouraging the management of features in the landscape which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora. Such features are those which, by virtue of their linear and continuous structure act as biodiversity (such as rivers with their banks or the traditional systems for marking field boundaries) or their function as stepping stones which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora and (such as ponds or small woods), are essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.	B1 W1 HH1	B2 W3 L1			S1 M1 W2 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2
NH 13: To support measures for the prevention and/or eradication of invasive species as appropriate, as opportunities and resources allow.	B1 W1	B2 L1			HH1 S1 M1 W2 W3 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2
<b>Policies – Trees and Hedgerows</b>					
NH 14: To promote the protection and preservation of existing hedgerows, where appropriate and encourage planting of native hedgerow species.	B2	L1			B1 HH1 S1 M1 W1 W2 W3 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2

<sup>130</sup> 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 plan to proceed; and
- (c) adequate compensatory measures in place.

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NH 15: To promote the preservation and enhancement of native and semi-natural woodlands, groups of trees and individual trees.	B2 L1			B1 HH1 S1 M1 W1 W2 W3 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2
NH 16: To discourage the felling of mature trees and encourage tree surgery rather than felling where appropriate.	B2 L1			B1 HH1 S1 M1 W1 W2 W3 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2
NH 17: To restrict the cutting of hedges during the bird-nesting season (1st March until 31st August), except in certain legally defined circumstances, in accordance with the provisions of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000.	B2 L1			B1 HH1 S1 M1 W1 W2 W3 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2
NH 18: To discourage the felling of mature trees to facilitate development, and will encourage tree surgery rather than felling where possible.	B2 L1			B1 HH1 S1 M1 W1 W2 W3 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2
NH 19: To promote the protection of trees, in particular native and broadleaf species, which are of conservation and/or amenity value. Development that requires the felling of mature trees of species interest, notwithstanding the fact that they may not be listed in this Plan, will be discouraged.	B2 L1			B1 HH1 S1 M1 W1 W2 W3 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2
<b>Policies - Rivers, Streams and Canals</b>				
NH 20: To protect existing rivers, streams and watercourses and wetlands located on land zoned for development and incorporate them within the overall design for the area, thereby contributing to and connecting into an overall green network for the town.	B1 B2 W1 W2 L1 W3 HH1			S1 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2
NH 21: To consult, as appropriate, with the relevant Fisheries Board in relation to developments that could potentially impact on the aquatic ecosystems and associated riparian habitats.	B1 B2 W1 W2 L1			HH1 S1 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2
NH 22: To protect rivers, streams and other water courses and, wherever possible, maintain them in an open state capable of providing suitable habitats for fauna and flora and discouraging culverting or realignment.	B1 B2 W1 L1 W3 HH1			S1 W2 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2

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NH 23: To seek during redevelopment the creation of a riparian buffer strip along either side of all watercourses where practicable.	B1 W1 W3 B2 L1 HH1			S1 M1 CH1 C1 W2 M2 CH2 C2
<b>Policies - Green Infrastructure</b>				
GI 1: To have regard to the recommendations of the forthcoming Green Infrastructure Strategy prepared for the County as part of the County Development Plan.	C1 B2 W1 HH1 CH1 C2 C2 B1 L1 W3 W2 S1 CH2		B1 B2	M1 M2
<b>Policies - Views and Prospects</b>				
VP 1: To preserve views listed in Table 13.1	L1			B1 HH1 W1 W3 M2 CH2 C2 B2 S1 W2 M1 CH1 C1
VP 2: To ensure that development does not disrupt available vistas or impact on the landscape quality and scenic value of the Grand Canal corridor.	L1			B1 HH1 W1 W3 M2 CH2 C2 B2 S1 W2 M1 CH1 C1
<b>Natural Heritage/Biodiversity Objectives</b>				
NHO 1: To conserve and protect national/EU designated sites and to ensure that any new development proposal in the vicinity of, or affecting a designated site, provides sufficient information to show how its proposals will impact on the habitat of the site, and appropriate amelioration, and the Council will consult with the DOEHLG in this regard.	B1 B2			HH1 W1 W3 M2 CH2 C2 S1 W2 M1 CH1 C1 L1
NHO 2: To encourage the development of proposals for new woodlands utilising funding available through schemes such as the Neighbour Wood and Native Woodland Schemes.	B2			B1 S1 W2 M1 CH1 C1 HH1 W1 W3 M2 CH2 L1
NHO 3: To consult with the National Parks and Wildlife Service prior to undertaking, approving or authorising any works or development that may impact on the natural heritage	B1 W1 B2			HH1 W2 M1 CH1 C1 S1 W3 M2 CH2 L1



NHO 4: To map the habitats contained within and adjacent to the Plan area and to identify the biodiversity areas and recommendations made for their protection and enhancement.	B1 W1	B2			HH1 S1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2 L1
NHO 5: To carry out a tree survey of all trees in the town and to implement its recommendations in relation to the protection of specific trees and groups of trees of special amenity value, including the possible masking of Tree Preservation Orders (TPO).	B2 L1				B1 HH1 S1 M1 W1 W2 W3 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2
NHO 6: To prepare a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the County, including Athy during the lifetime of this plan.	C1 C2 B1 B2 L1 W3 W1 W2 HH1 S1 CH1 CH2		B1 B2		M1 M2
NHO 7: To request National Parks and Wildlife Service to prioritise the preparation of Management Plans for Natura 2000 Sites which are located in the vicinity of the Plan area.	B1 B2				HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2 L1

## 8.18 Chapter 14: Urban Design and Opportunity Areas

	Likely to <u>Improve</u> status of SEOs	Probable <u>Conflict</u> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	Potential <u>Conflict</u> with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	No <u>Likely</u> interaction with status of SEOs
<b>Aim</b>				
To create a vibrant and bustling town and to enhance the quality of the built environment.	C1 C2 S1			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>General Urban Design Polices</b>				
UDG 1: To utilise the towns historic core as a tool to regenerate the town centre to achieve a place with a positive public image.	S1 C1 C2		CH1 CH2 L1	B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2

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UDG 2: To facilitate the development of the historic core as a cultural quarter that reinforces Athy's status as a Heritage town.	CH1 CH2 L1 S1 C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2
UDG 3: To improve access and use of new and existing amenity spaces in the town through well designed developments that provide connections from the town centre by way of good linkages and higher level of permeability.	B2 L1 C1 C2 S1			B1 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2
UDG 4: To improve the quality of the public open spaces along the banks of the river and develop the amenities provided by the town's unique location adjacent to the waterways.	C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1	
UDG 5: To provide better definition of public parks and open space that allows for greater levels of use, particularly in the vicinity of the Town's Park.	C1 C2		B1 B2	HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
UDG 6: To improve the approaches to the town and provide well designed entrances to mark the edges of the town centre at appropriate locations that reflect its character.	L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2
UDG 7: To achieve better connectivity and permeability to overcome the traffic congestion along Leinster Street and Duke Street.	C1 C2		B1 B2	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
UDG 8: To provide overlooked cycle and pedestrian linkages between the residential areas, amenity areas and the town core.	C1 C2		B1 B2	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
<b>Urban Design Framework Policies</b>				
UDF 1: To consolidate the existing town centre through an integrated approach that consolidates the town centres activities in a sustainable manner.	C1 C2 S1			B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1

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<p>UDF 2: To improve the image of the town centre by increasing permeability, creating well defined street edges (where private space and public space meet), developing high quality streets with active ground floor frontages</p>	<p>C1 C2 S1</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>
<p>UDF 3: To strengthen the identity of the town by achieving a balance between old and new which reinforces the distinctiveness of the historic town core.</p>	<p>CH2 L1</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1</p>
<p>UDF 4: to improve the quality of the town's streetscape by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting and encouraging high quality shopfront design particularly within the Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) (Refer to Chapter 15 in this Plan).</li> <li>• Encouraging the retention, sensitive repair and re-use of traditional shopfronts.</li> <li>• Encouraging the sensitive conversion of retail units to residential use where viable.</li> <li>• Reducing visual clutter by removing and preventing the introduction of poor quality projecting signage.</li> </ul>	<p>CH2 L1</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1</p>
<p>UDF 5: To provide an attractive streetscape along Leinster Street, Duke Street and Emily Square by rationalising and calming traffic flow, regularising on street car parking using high quality materials to create a quality public realm.</p>	<p>CH2 L1 C1 C2</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1</p>
<p>UDF 6: To intensify town centre development by establishing a consistent approach to key redevelopment sites by way of comprehensive design guidelines (refer to section 14.X – Character areas)</p>	<p>S1</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>
<p>UDF 7: To allow for the intensification of the town centre by utilising undeveloped, backland and brownfield land within or adjacent to the town centre area.</p>	<p>S1 C1 C2</p>		<p>B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	
<p>UDF 8: To strengthen and formalise existing routes within the town as well as creating new linkages along which development can take place.</p>			<p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	

UDF 9: To facilitate traffic calming measures, most importantly at the entrances and approaches to the town, which improve the comfort for pedestrians and enhance the public realm.	C1 C2			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
UDF 10: To develop a network of public spaces throughout the town that are easy to move between allowing for various modes of transport.	B2 C1 C2		B1 B2	HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1
UDF 11: To utilise and enhance the environmental qualities of the town to provide quality facilities in terms of passive and active recreational green spaces.	B2 C1 C2		B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	M1 M2
UDF 12: To prepare and submit a design statement for developments within the town centre, as deemed necessary by the Planning Authority.	CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2
UDF 13: To incorporate the Key Design Guidelines set out for each of the five character areas (defined in section 14.7 of the plan) in the preparation of design statements.	CH1 CH2 L1			B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2

## 8.19 Chapter 15: Development Management Standards

	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs
<b>Aim</b>				
To ensure the orderly and sustainable development of high quality living and working environments in the town through the setting out of objectives and standards for the management of development.	B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 C1 C2 L1			

## 8.20 Chapter 16: Land Use Zoning

	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	<b>Probable Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of SEOs
<b>Aim</b>				
To ensure the orderly and sustainable development of the town through the setting out of zoning objectives for a variety of uses.	HH1 W1 W2 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2		B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
<b>Land Use Policies</b>				
LU1: To ensure that a logical and sequential approach is adopted for development within the Athy Town Plan area (i.e. prioritising the development from the core area outwards.)	HH1 W1 W2 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2		B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
LU2: To prohibit the proliferation of any individual use which in the opinion of the Planning Authority does not contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centre.	HH1 W1 W2 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2		B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	
LU3: To encourage a mix of uses where appropriate.	HH1 W1 W2 C1 C2 S1 M1 M2		B1 B2 HH1 M1 M2 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1	

## Section 9 Mitigation Measures

### 9.1 Introduction

Mitigation measures are measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse impacts on the environment of implementing the Development Plan.

Likely significant beneficial effects of implementing the Draft Plan have been and will be maximised and potential adverse effects have been and will be avoided, reduced or offset through:

- The consideration of alternatives for the Draft Plan;
- Mitigation by Addition of Policies and Objectives; and,
- Mitigation measures arising from the findings of the Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (note that not all of the SFRA recommendations have been integrated into the Plan - see Section 7.5).

The mitigation measures may be incorporated into the briefing of design teams as well as the subsequent design, specification and development management of the landuses to be accommodated within the Plan area.

Additional more detailed mitigation measures to those identified below would be likely to be required by the development management and EIA processes of individual projects and would be likely to be required to be integrated into relevant lower-tier plans and programmes.

Section 11 includes a SEA Summary table which identifies likely significant effects and corresponding mitigation and monitoring measures.

### 9.2 Mitigation through Consideration of Alternatives

A range of potential alternative development scenarios for the Development Plan were identified at an early stage in the process and evaluated for their likely significant environmental effects (see Sections 6 and 7).

The environmental baseline and the Strategic Environmental Objectives (see Sections 3 and 4) were used in order to predict and evaluate the environmental effects of implementing the alternatives.

Communication of the findings of this evaluation helped the Planning team make an informed choice as to which alternative was to be put before the Members of the Council.

Communication of this evaluation to the Members of the Council through this report will help the Members to make an informed choice with regard to the making of the Plan.

### 9.3 Mitigation by Addition of Policies and Objectives

This section lists certain key measures which have been integrated into the draft Plan which are envisaged to mitigate significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the Draft Plan.

Note that mitigation measures generally benefit multiple environmental components i.e. a measure providing for the protection of surface water resources could beneficially impact upon the protection of biodiversity, flora and fauna, drinking water resources, human health and provision of appropriate waste water treatment infrastructure.

The reference codes are those which accompany the relevant measures in Section 8 of this report and in the Draft Plan.

#### 9.3.1 Natura 2000 Sites and Annexed Habitats and Species

Policies: CS 14, GT 15, NH 1, NH 2, NH 6 and NH 7.

Objective NHO 7.

#### 9.3.2 Ecological Connectivity and Stepping Stones

Policies: CS 13, NH 12 and NH 21.



### 9.3.3 Human Health

Policies: MA1, N 1, N 2 and WM 5.

Objective ENO 4.

See also measures which have been included under Water Services (Waste Water) and Water Services (Drinking Water).

### 9.3.4 Reuse of Brownfield Lands

Policies: CS 8, ED6, HP6, UR 1 and UR 2.

### 9.3.5 Status of Surface and Ground Water Bodies

Policies: WQ 1, WQ2, WQ 4 and WQ6.

Objective: WDO4.

Also see measures under Water Services (Waste Water).

### 9.3.6 Flooding

Policies: HP28, SW1, SW3 and LU4.

Objectives: WDO13 and WDO14.

### 9.3.7 Water Services (Waste Water)

Policies WW3, WW4 and WS1.

Objectives: WDO2 , WDO3 and WDO8,.

### 9.3.8 Water Services (Drinking Water)

Policies: WS1, WS2, WS3, WS4, WS6, WS10 and WQ7.

Objective: WDO5.

### 9.3.9 Travel Related Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Car Dependency

Policies: TM 3, WC 1, WC 4 and WC 7.

### 9.3.10 Archaeological Heritage

Policies: CS 12, AH1, AH 3, AH 4 and AH 6.

### 9.3.11 Architectural Heritage

Policies: CS 12, PS 1, PS 7 and ACA1.

Objective AHO1.

### 9.3.12 Visual/Landscape

Policies: TE 5, VP 1 and VP 2.

## 9.4 Other Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures - including those detailed above - have been integrated into the Draft Plan arising from the findings of the Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).

In particular, the AA has resulted in the amendment of the following Policies:

- Policy A7

From:

To facilitate, where practicable, the provision of cycle-ways or walkways along the extent of the canal, in co-operation with landowners, Waterways Ireland and DoEHLG.

To:

To facilitate, where practicable, the provision of cycle-ways or walkways along the extent of the canal, in co-operation with landowners, Waterways Ireland and DoEHLG. Any proposed cycling or walking routes along the Grand Canal and River Barrow will be subject to a feasibility study and Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

- Policy R 9

From:

To encourage the development of a marina within the town area of approximately 50 berths and

appropriate adjoining uses". This proposed development of a marina would need to be the subject of an AA and SEA and a separate study to determine the optimum and most appropriate location of the development.

To:

A study will be carried out to explore the feasibility of developing a marina within the town area. This study will examine the need for the marina in light of a "do nothing" context, a range of sizes, locations and adjoining uses. Any development proposed in light of this study will be subject to EIA and Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

## Section 10 Monitoring Measures

### 10.1 Introduction

The SEA Directive requires that the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes are monitored. This Environmental Report puts forward proposals for monitoring the likely significant effects of implementing the Development Plan.

Monitoring enables, at an early stage, the identification of unforeseen adverse effects and the undertaking of appropriate remedial action. In addition to this, monitoring can also play an important role in assessing whether the Plan is achieving environmental objectives and targets - measures which the Plan can help work towards - whether these need to be reexamined and whether the proposed mitigation measures are being implemented.

### 10.2 Indicators and Targets

Monitoring is based around the indicators which were chosen earlier in the process. These indicators allow quantitative measures of trends and progress over time relating to the Strategic Environmental Objectives used in the evaluation. Focus is given to indicators which are relevant to the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan and existing monitoring arrangements will be used in order to monitor the selected indicators. Each indicator to be monitored is accompanied by the target(s) which were identified with regard to the relevant legislation (see Section 4).

Table 10.1 below shows the indicators and targets which have been selected for monitoring the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan.

### 10.3 Sources

Measurements for indicators should come from existing monitoring sources and no new monitoring should be required to take place. Existing monitoring sources exist for each of the indicators and include those maintained by the Athy Town Council and other relevant authorities e.g. the Environmental Protection

Agency, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Central Statistics Office.

The *Development Management Process* in Athy Town Council will provide passive monitoring of various indicators and targets on an application by application basis. Where significant adverse effects - including positive, negative, cumulative and indirect - are likely to occur upon, for example, entries to the RMP, entries to the RPS or ecological networks as a result of the undertaking of individual projects or multiple individual projects such instances should be identified and recorded and should feed into the monitoring evaluation.

### 10.4 Reporting & Responsibility

A preliminary monitoring evaluation report on the effects of implementing the Development Plan will be prepared to coincide with the Manager's report to the Elected Members on the progress achieved in securing Plan objectives within two years of the making of the Plan (this Manager's report is required under Section 15 of the 2000 Planning Act).

Athy Town Council is responsible for collating existing relevant monitored data, the preparation of preliminary and final monitoring evaluation reports, the publication of these reports and, if necessary, the carrying out of corrective action.

It is recommended that a Steering Committee be established within the Council to oversee the monitoring process.

### 10.5 Thresholds

Thresholds at which corrective action will be considered are as follows:

- boil notices on drinking water;
- fish kills;
- court cases taken by the DEHLG regarding impacts upon archaeological heritage including entries to the

Record of Monuments and Places;  
and,

- complaints received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable environmental impacts resulting from development which is granted permission under the Development Plan.

**Table 10.1 Selected Indicators, Targets and Monitoring Sources**

Environmental Component	Selected Indicator(s)	Selected Target(s)	Source	Monitoring Frequency
<b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</b>	B1: Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive	B1: Maintenance of favourable conservation status for Annexed habitats and species to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan <sup>131</sup>	a) DEHLG report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive; and, b) Consultations with the NPWS.	a) Every 6 years b) At preliminary monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4
	B2: Percentage loss of functional connectivity to macro-corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat which are important on a Town and environs level without remediation as a result of implementation of the Plan – as evidenced from a resurvey of CORINE mapping	B2: No significant ecological networks or parts thereof which provide functional connectivity to be lost without remediation resulting from development provided for by the Plan	a) CORINE mapping resurvey b) Development Management Process in the Council	a) Unknown b) Per granted permission; compile at preliminary monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4
<b>Population and Human Health</b>	HH1: Occurrence (any) of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors as identified by the Health Service Executive and Environmental Protection Agency	HH1: No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of implementing the Plan	Consultations with EPA and Health Service Executive	At preliminary monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4

<sup>131</sup> 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 plan to proceed; and,  
(c) adequate compensatory measures in place.

Environmental Component	Selected Indicator(s)	Selected Target(s)	Source	Monitoring Frequency
<b>Soil</b>	S1: Area of brownfield lands developed over the Development Plan's lifespan	S1: Arising from increased levels of brownfield development, a reduced availability of brownfield land (subject to availability on the open market, the demand for such land and the ability for such lands to be sustainably re-used) at the end of the Development Plan lifespan	Development Management Process in the Council	Per granted permission; compile at preliminary monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4
<b>Water</b>	W1: Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009)	W1: To achieve 'good status' <sup>133</sup> in all bodies of surface waters by 2015 and to not knowingly allow deterioration in the status of any surface water	Data issued under the Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme for Ireland (EPA, 2006)	Unknown
	W2: Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC <sup>132</sup>	W2: Compliance with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC	Data issued under the Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme for Ireland (EPA, 2006)	Unknown
	W3i: Number of developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk	W3i: Minimise developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk in compliance with <i>The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities</i>	Development Management Process in the Council	Per granted permission; compile at preliminary monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4

<sup>132</sup> Data may not be available for the preliminary monitoring evaluation as the groundwater threshold values to which this indicator relates have not yet been identified by the EPA.

<sup>133</sup> Good status as defined by the WFD equates to approximately the following in the current national schemes of classification as set out by the EPA:

- *Q4* in the biological classification of *rivers*;
- *Mesotrophic* in the classification of *lakes*; and,

*Unpolluted* status in the Assessment of Trophic Status of *Estuaries and Bays* in Ireland (ATSEBI).



Environmental Component	Selected Indicator(s)	Selected Target(s)	Source	Monitoring Frequency
<b>Water (continued)</b>	W3ii: Compliance with the recommendations contained in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment being undertaken for the Plan	W3ii: To comply with the recommendations contained in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment being undertaken for the Plan	Athy Town Council	Detail status of Plan preparation at preliminary monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4
<b>Material Assets</b>	M1i: Number of new developments granted permission which can be adequately served with waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan	M1i: All new developments granted permission to be connected to and adequately served by waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan	Development Management Process in the Council	Per granted permission; compile at preliminary monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4
	M1ii: Preparation of a Water Services Strategic Plan - in compliance with the Water Services Act - for the functional area of the Council	M1ii: For the Council - alone or in combination with other Water Services Authorities - to prepare a Water Services Strategic Plan in compliance with the Water Services Act	Athy Town Council	Detail status of Plan preparation at preliminary monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4
	M2i: Number of non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health	M2i: No non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health as a result of implementing the Plan	a) EPA The Provision and Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland reports (EPA); b) EPA Remedial Action List; and, c) Athy Town Council.	a) Annual/biannual; b) Annual/biannual; c) Council's Water and Waste Services Department to confirm - as appropriate - status of supplies listed on Remedial Action List.
	M2ii <sup>134</sup> : Preparation of a Water Services Strategic Plan - in compliance with the Water Services Act - for the functional area of the Council	M2ii: For the Council - alone or in combination with other Water Services Authorities - to prepare a Water Services Strategic Plan in compliance with the Water Services Act	Athy Town Council	Detail status of Plan preparation at preliminary monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4

<sup>134</sup> Indicator and Target M2ii are the same as Indicator and Target M1ii

Environmental Component	Selected Indicator(s)	Selected Target(s)	Sources	Monitoring Frequency
<b>Air and Climatic Factors</b>	C1i: Percentage of population within the Plan area travelling to work or school by public transport or non-mechanical means	C1i: An increase in the percentage of the population within the Plan area travelling to work or school by public transport or non-mechanical means	Central Office      Statistics	Next Census 2011
	C1ii: Average distance travelled to work or school by the population within the Plan area	C1ii: A decrease in the average distance travelled to work or school by the population of the Plan area	Central Office      Statistics	Next Census 2011
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	CH1: Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Zones of Archaeological Potential - (and their context of the above within the surrounding landscape where relevant) protected	CH1: Protect entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Zones of Archaeological Potential - (and their context of the above within the surrounding landscape where relevant)	a) Development Management/ Enforcement Processes in the Council; and, b) Consultation with DEHLG.	a) Per granted permission; compile at preliminary monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4 b) At preliminary monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4
	CH2i: Percentage of entries to the Record of Protected Structures (and/or their context within the surrounding landscape where relevant) protected	CH2i: Protect entries to the Record of Protected Structures (and/or their context within the surrounding landscape where relevant)	a) Development Management/ Enforcement Processes in the Council; and, b) Consultation with DEHLG.	a) Per granted permission; compile at preliminary monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4 b) At preliminary monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4
	CH2ii: Number of additions to the Record of Protected Structures and the number of additional ACAs	CH2ii: Make Additions to the Record of Protected Structures and make additional ACAs, where appropriate	Athy Town Council	Detail status of Plan preparation at preliminary monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4
<b>Landscape</b>	L1: Number of complaints received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable impacts on the landscape resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan	L1: No developments permitted which result in avoidable impacts on the landscape resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan	Development Management Process in the Council	Per granted permission; compile at preliminary monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4

## Section 11 SEA Summary Table

Below is a summary table outlining how likely significant effects (if unmitigated) are linked to relevant mitigation measure(s) - which have been integrated into the Plan - and indicator(s) which will be used for monitoring.

**Table 11.1 SEA Summary Table: Likely Significant Effects, Mitigation Measures and Indicators for Monitoring**

Likely Significant Effect, if unmitigated	Mitigation Measure Reference(s) from Plan	Primary Indicator(s) for Monitoring
Loss of biodiversity with regard to Natura 2000 Sites and habitats and species listed under Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive	Policies: CS 14, GT 15, NH 1, NH 2, NH 6 and NH7.  Objective NHO 7.	B1: Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive
Loss of biodiversity with regard to ecological connectivity and stepping stones	Policies: CS 13, NH 12 and NH 21.	B2: Percentage loss of functional connectivity to macro-corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat which are important on a Town and environs level without remediation as a result of implementation of the Plan – as evidenced from a resurvey of CORINE mapping
Spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from exposure to incompatible land uses	Policies: MA1, N 1, N 2 and WM 5.  Objective ENO 4.  See also measures which have been included under Water Services (Waste Water) and Water Services (Drinking Water).	HH1: Occurrence (any) of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors as identified by the Health Service Executive and Environmental Protection Agency
Failure to maximise the sustainable reuse of brownfield lands	Policies: CS 8, EDP6, HP6, UR 1 and UR 2.	S1: Area of brownfield lands developed over the Development Plan's lifespan
Adverse impacts upon the status of surface and ground water bodies	Policies: WQ 1, WQ2, WQ 4 and WQ6.  Objective: WDO4.  Also see measures in this section under Water Services (Waste Water).	W1: Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009) W2: Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC
Flooding	Policies: HP28, SW1, SW3 and LU4.  Objectives: WDO13 and WDO14.	W3i: Number of developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk W3ii: Compliance with the recommendations contained in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment being undertaken for the Plan

Likely Significant Effect, if unmitigated	Mitigation Measure Reference(s) from Plan	Primary Indicator(s) for Monitoring
Inadequate waste water treatment for new populations	Policies WW3, WW4 and WS1.  Objectives: WDO2, WDO3 and WDO8.	M1i: Number of new developments granted permission which can be adequately served with waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan M1ii: Preparation of a Water Services Strategic Plan - in compliance with the Water Services Act - for the functional area of the Council
Inadequate drinking water supply for new populations & Reduction in water quality which would present a potential danger to human health	Policies: WS1, WS2, WS3, WS4, WS6, WS10 and WQ7.  Objective: WDO5.	M2i: Number of non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health  M2ii: Preparation of a Water Services Strategic Plan - in compliance with the Water Services Act - for the functional area of the Council
Increases in travel related greenhouse gas emissions and increases in car dependency	Policies: TM 3, WC 1, WC 4 and WC 7.	C1i: Percentage of population within the Plan area travelling to work or school by public transport or non-mechanical means  C1ii: Average distance travelled to work or school by the population within the Plan area
Effects on archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, including Zones of Archaeological Potential	Policies: CS 12, AH1, AH 3, AH 4 and AH 6.	CH1: Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Zones of Archaeological Potential - (and their context of the above within the surrounding landscape where relevant) protected
Effects on architectural heritage including entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas	Policies: CS 12, PS 1, PS 7 and ACA1.  Objective AHO1.	CH2i: Percentage of entries to the Record of Protected Structures (and/or their context within the surrounding landscape where relevant) protected  CH2ii: Number of additions to the Record of Protected Structures and the number of additional ACAs
Visual impacts	Policies: TE 5, VP 1 and VP 2.	L1: Number of complaints received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable impacts on the landscape resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan

# APPENDIX I - NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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## ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT OF THE DRAFT ATHY TOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2012-2018 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT



**for: Athy Town Council**

Rathstewart  
Athy  
County Kildare



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**MARCH 2011**

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## Section 1 Introduction and Terms of Reference

This is the Non-Technical Summary of the Environmental Report of the Draft Athy Town Development Plan 2012-2018. The purpose of the Environmental Report is to provide a clear understanding of the likely environmental consequences of decisions regarding the future accommodation of growth in Athy.

### **What is an SEA?**

SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely environmental effects of implementing a proposed plan, or other strategic action, in order to ensure that these effects are appropriately addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision-making on a par with economic and social considerations.

### **Why is it needed?**

The SEA is being carried out in order to comply with the provisions of the SEA Regulations and in order to improve planning and environmental management within Athy. The output of the process is an Environmental Report which should be read in conjunction with the Draft Development Plan.

### **How does it work?**

All of the main environmental issues in Athy are assembled and presented to the team who are preparing the Plan. This helps them to devise a plan that protects whatever is sensitive in the environment. It also helps to identify wherever there are environmental problems in the area - so that these won't get any worse - and ideally the Plan tries to improve these.

To decide how best to make a plan that protects the environment as much as possible the planners examine alternative versions of the Plan. This helps to highlight the type of plans that are least likely to harm the environment.

### **What is included in the Environmental Report which accompanies the Draft Plan?**

The Environmental Report contains the following information:

- o A description of the environment and the key environmental issues;
- o A description and assessment of alternatives for the Draft Plan;
- o An assessment of Plans policies and objectives; and,
- o Mitigation measures which will aid compliance with important environmental protection legislation - e.g. the Water Framework Directive, the Habitats Directive - and which will avoid/reduce the environmental effects of implementing the Plan.

### **What happens at the end of the process?**

When the Draft Plan is adopted a document must be made public, referred to as the SEA Statement.

The SEA Statement must include information on how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan and why the preferred alternative was chosen for the Plan in light of the other alternatives - this introduces accountability, credibility and transparency into the Plan-making process.

## Section 2 The Draft Plan

### 2.1 Content and Structure of the Plan

The Development Plan consists of a written statement with accompanying maps. It comprises 14 Chapters as follows:

- Chapters 1 and 2 set out the introduction, strategic context and core strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Athy;
- Chapters 3-12 set out detailed policies and objectives under a range of headings which the Town Council will seek to achieve over the six-year life of the Plan e.g. economic development, housing, town centre development, retail, movement and transport, infrastructure, social, community, heritage and the development of opportunity areas;
- Chapter 13 sets out development management objectives and standards to be applied to future development proposals. The purpose of these standards and objectives is to guide and assist the preparation of development proposals and to regulate the impact of development on the environment; and,
- Chapter 14 sets out the land use activities referred to under each zoning objective and indicates the acceptability or otherwise of specified land uses within each zone.
- Appendices to the Plan include the SEA Environmental Report (this report), the Appropriate Assessment, the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, the Housing Strategy and the Record of Protected Structures.

### 2.2 Interactions with Relevant Policy, Plans or Programmes

#### National Development Plan 2007-2013

The National Development Plan 2007-2013 (NDP) is designed to underpin the development of a dynamic competitive economy over the period 2007 - 2013. It envisages a total investment of €184 billion over 7 years to 'secure the further transformation of our country socially and economically within an environmentally sustainable framework'.

It identifies investment funding for significant projects in sectors such as health services, social housing, education, roads, public transport, rural development, industry, and water and waste services. The NDP is designed to strengthen and improve the international competitiveness of the Country so as to support continued, but more balanced, economic and social development in line with the National Spatial Strategy.

#### National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020

The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS) is a 20-year planning framework for the entire Country to guide policies, programmes and investment. It seeks to promote a better balance of social, economic and physical development between the Regions. The NSS is based on a hierarchy of settlement; Gateways, Hubs and county towns along with the need to support the role of smaller towns, villages and diverse rural economies. Athy is neither a gateway nor hub however, with a population of over 5,000 it will act as a focus for a balanced pattern of growth. Athy will have to compete with higher order cities and towns to secure funding for strategic investment opportunities. Notwithstanding this, the Greater Dublin Area is identified for consolidation and in strategic terms the following issues are of particular importance for Kildare:

- Effective integration of land use and transportation;
- Supporting the region's capacity for innovation;

- Facilitating ease of movement of people and goods; and,
- Maintaining a high quality environment.

### **Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland 1997**

This Strategy provides a framework for the achievement of sustainable development at local level and calls on planning authorities to incorporate the principles of sustainability into Development Plans.

### **Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022**

Ireland is divided into eight regional forward planning regions, Dublin, Midlands, Mid East, Mid West, South East, South West, West and Border, each with its own regional planning authority composed of Elected Members selected by the constituent local government councils. Regional planning authorities are required, under the Planning and Development Act as amended, to draw up regional planning guidelines (RPGs), long term strategic planning frameworks, for their relevant region. County Kildare is located within the Greater Dublin Area for which the RPGs for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022 have been prepared.

### **Transport 21 & Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future**

*Transport 21* is the capital investment framework for the transport system over the period 2006-2015. It addresses the twin challenges of past investment backlogs and continuing growth in transport demand. *Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future* is the new transport policy for Ireland for the period 2009-2020. The policy recognises the vital importance of continued investment in transport to ensure an efficient economy and continued social development, but it also sets out the necessary steps to ensure that people choose more sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport.

### **Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area**

The Dublin Transportation Office (DTO) 'A Platform for Change 2000-2016' seeks the development of an efficient and high quality system of public transport connections within the Greater Dublin Area. It comprises two independent objectives, namely:

- Infrastructure and service improvements to expand the public transport network, strategic road construction and traffic management.
- Demand management to reduce the growth in private travel through the application of land use and other policies while maintaining economic progress.

### **South Eastern River Basin Management Plan**

The Water Framework Directive was adopted in 2000 and requires the preparation of a management plan for all waters in an area called a River Basin District. Athy is located in the South Eastern River Basin District. The Directive's main aim is to maintain all water bodies, rivers, lakes, groundwater and estuaries at high status, to prevent deterioration in the existing status of water, and to achieve at least "good status" in relation to all waters by 2015. The River Basin Management Plan describes in detail the status of all waters and protected areas. A programme of measures will be put in place to provide the works necessary to bring water bodies to good quality status. These measures have informed the preparation of this Draft Plan.

### **Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017**

The Draft Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017 due for adoption in April 2011 has been prepared having regard to the NSS, the RPGs and various Government guidelines. It sets out the context for future development in County Kildare and includes a core strategy, development objectives, a settlement hierarchy, and policies for the protection of the environment.

The settlement strategy for County Kildare ranks settlements from large growth towns to moderate sustainable growth towns consistent with the Regional Planning Guidelines 2012-2022.

Arising from the Draft County Development Plan 2011-2017, the following strategic considerations have informed the preparation of the Draft Plan:

- Athy is to plan for a potential population growth of 2,736 between 2006 and 2018, equating to 1,252 residential units;

- Athy is identified as a secondary economic growth centre providing an important and complementary role in developing economic growth and sectoral interests in tandem with the primary economic growth towns; and,
- Development of sectoral strengths will be promoted comprising high value-added manufacturing and internationally traded sectors in tandem with IDA support around transport corridors and routes such as the rail station supported by continued investment in education and skills development.

### **Athy Integrated Framework Plan for Landuse and Transportation**

In 2004 Kildare County Council and Athy Town Council, in conjunction with the Dublin Transportation Office, prepared an Integrated Framework Plan for Land Use and Transportation for Athy (IFPLUT Study). The purpose of this Integrated Framework Plan is to integrate the strategic and coordinated planning of land use and transport up to 2016 and beyond. The IFPLUT Study has a timeframe until 2020, and will complement the Development Plan for Athy. It sets down the principles for future development, guiding the level, scale and location of development within the wider area of Athy, to provide for a quality living environment.

### **Environmental Protection Objectives**

The Draft Plan is subject to a number of high level national, international and regional environmental protection policies and objectives, including those which have been identified as Strategic Environmental Objectives in Section 3.11.

Examples of Environmental Protection Objectives include the aim of the EU Habitats Directive - which is to contribute towards ensuring biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora in the European territory of Member States - and the purpose of the Water Framework Directive - which is to establish a framework for the protection of inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater which, among other things, prevents deterioration in the status of all water bodies and protects, enhances and restores all waters with the aim of achieving good status by 2015.

The Plan must be consistent with these objectives and implement them in Athy.

## Section 3 The Environmental Baseline

### 3.1 Introduction

The environmental baseline of Athy is described in this section. This baseline together with the Strategic Environmental Objectives, which are outlined in Section 4, is used in order to identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Draft Town Development Plan and in order to determine appropriate monitoring measures.

The environmental baseline is described in line with the legislative requirements encompassing the following components – biodiversity, flora and fauna, population, human health, soil, water, air and climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between these components. A description is also included of the likely effects upon each environmental component under a do-nothing scenario i.e. the likely evolution of the environment without the implementation of the Draft Town Development Plan.

### 3.2 Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

#### 3.2.1 Introduction

Athy Town supports a wide diversity of natural and semi-natural habitats and a wide range of plant and animal species. Green space, namely the agricultural lands in the Town's Environs, makes up a large part of the Plan area. This open space consists of a variety of habitats and corridors which provide for the movement of wildlife. This green space is clearly visible on the aerial photo (Figure 3.1) below. The Town falls into the catchment of the River Barrow. The Grand Canal also runs through the west of the Plan area. These rivers and their associated tributaries and small lakes support good areas of biodiversity.

#### 3.2.2 CORINE Land Cover Mapping<sup>1</sup>

The most common CORINE<sup>2</sup>land cover in Athy is *Discontinuous Urban Fabric* and *Non-Irrigated Arable Land* of which there are roughly equal amounts. This is followed by *Pastures* which occur along the banks of the River Barrow and the south west of the Plan area.

#### 3.2.3 Ecological Networks

Ecological networks are composed of linear features, such as treelines, hedgerows, rivers and streams, which provide corridors or stepping stones for wildlife species moving within their normal range. They are particularly important for mammals, especially for bats and small birds. Key ecological corridors within the Town include the River Barrow, the Grand Canal, the Clogorow Stream, the railway line and the various hedgerows within the Plan area. Open space includes one neighbourhood park, two local parks and small areas of amenity green-space throughout the residential areas of the Town as well as the large amount of agricultural land outside of the Town.

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<sup>1</sup> European Environment Agency Coordination of Information on the Environment (2004) *Ireland's Corine Land Cover 2000 (CLC2000)* Copenhagen: EEA

<sup>2</sup> CORINE Land Cover (CLC) is a map of the European environmental landscape based on interpretation of satellite images. Land cover is the observed physical cover, as seen from the ground or through remote sensing, including for example natural or planted vegetation, water and human constructions which cover the earth's surface. Because of the scale of the CORINE data and the method by which it was collected there are likely to be a number of inaccuracies at the local level. It is noted, however, that the land cover shown on the maps is generally accurate. The European Environment Agency, in conjunction with the European Space Agency, the European Commission and member countries is currently updating the CORINE land cover database.

## 3.2.4 Designations

### 3.2.4.1 Introduction

Figure 3.2 maps the designated ecological sites<sup>3</sup> in Athy. These are the River Barrow and River Nore candidate Special Area of Conservation and the Grand Canal Proposed Natural Heritage Area.

### 3.2.4.2 Candidate Special Areas of Conservation

Candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) have been selected for protection under the European Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (92/43/EEC), referred to as the Habitats Directive, by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government due to their conservation value for habitats and species of importance in the European Union. The sites are *candidate* sites because they are currently under consideration by the Commission of the European Union. The Habitats Directive seeks to establish Natura 2000, a network of protected areas throughout the EU. It is the responsibility of each member state to designate SACs to protect habitats and species, which, together with the SPAs designated under the 1979 Birds Directive, form Natura 2000.

### 3.2.4.3 Natural Heritage Areas

Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) are designated due to their national conservation value for ecological and/or geological/geomorphological heritage. They cover nationally important semi-natural and natural habitats, landforms or geomorphological features, wildlife plant and animal species or a diversity of these natural attributes. NHAs are designated under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. Proposed NHAs were published on a non-statutory basis in 1995, but have not since been statutorily proposed or designated.

### 3.2.4.4 Register of Protected Areas

In response to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive, a number of water bodies, or parts of water bodies, which must have extra controls on their quality by virtue of how their waters are used by people and by wildlife, have been listed on Registers of Protected Areas (RPAs) (see Section 3.5.6 and Figure 3.9). The River Barrow is included on the Register as a Water Dependent Habitat.

### 3.2.4.5 Freshwater Pearl Mussels

The freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera Margaritifera*) is a type of snail with a body that is almost completely enclosed between a pair of shells. The habitat of the freshwater pearl mussel in Ireland is restricted to near natural, clean flowing waters. There are no areas within the Town or near the Town boundary which have a specified Freshwater Pearl Mussel population and hence a Draft Sub-Basin Management Plan.

### 3.2.4.6 Salmonid Waters

Salmonid Waters are designated and protected under the European Communities (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations 1998 (SI No. 293 of 1988). Salmonid Water designation imposes an obligation to maintain specific water quality standards and control pollution. There are no salmonid waters in the vicinity of Athy.

## 3.2.5 Existing Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna Problems

Changes in land cover indicated by the CORINE data indicate that semi natural areas within the Town have been replaced by uses which generally include impermeable surfaces. These changes are likely to result in losses of biodiversity and flora and fauna.

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<sup>3</sup> Site Synopses for SPAs, cSACs and NHAs are available from the National Parks and Wildlife Service at [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie)



Aquatic flora and fauna is vulnerable to all forms of pollution. Any existing problems with regard to surface water quality in the Town (see Section 3.5) are likely to be impacting upon aquatic biodiversity and flora and fauna.

With regard to terrestrial flora and fauna, all greenfield development in the area will cause an impact - the replacement of natural and semi natural habitats with artificial surfaces results in loss of flora and fauna and therefore adversely impacts upon this environmental component.

### **3.2.6 Evolution of Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna in the absence of the Draft Plan**

In the absence of a Development Plan, development would have no guidance as to where to be directed and planning applications would be assessed on an individual basis with flora and fauna, habitats and ecological connectivity protected under a number of strategic actions relating to biodiversity and flora and fauna protection. The evolution of biodiversity and flora and fauna would be dependent on the rate and extent of developments which would take place.

In the absence of a Development Plan there would not be an integration of the ecological protection measures required by the Habitats Directive with the planning or development management of vulnerable areas. Therefore, it is likely that there would be less effective protection of ecological resources in the absence of a Plan.

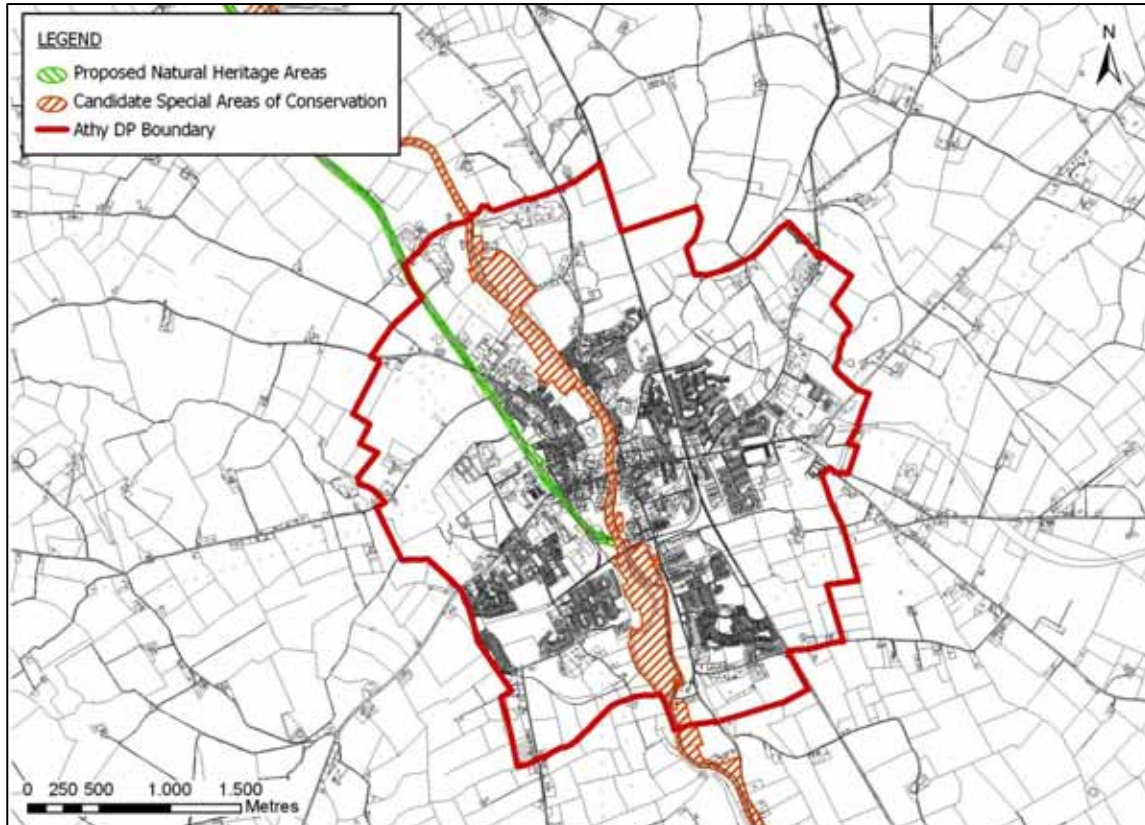
Pollution of water bodies as a result of any poorly planned future development would be likely to adversely impact upon aquatic biodiversity and flora and fauna including salmonid species and other species protected under Annex II of the Habitats Directive. Weakly controlled development along or adjacent to the banks of rivers could result in a reduction in ecological connectivity within and between these and other habitats.

Climate change has the potential to result in the loss of habitats - including those designated as SACs and SPAs - through rising sea levels and increased levels of surface run-off. Some of the coastal habitats which are important to bird populations could eventually be inundated. Increased precipitation may disrupt the salinity gradients within estuarine systems and, coupled with likely increased sedimentation, disrupt spawning and nursery grounds as well as shellfish production and quality in such areas.

In the absence of a Development Plan, any greenfield development would adversely impact upon biodiversity and flora and fauna by replacing natural or semi natural habitats with artificial surfaces. The significance of such impacts would be dependent on whether such developments would result in the loss of habitats or species of importance as well as the cumulative loss and fragmentation of habitats and species as a result of all greenfield developments. It is noted that development of brownfield sites and re-development could also have impacts on terrestrial flora and fauna.



**Figure 3.1 Aerial Photo of Plan area**  
Source: Kildare County Council (Unknown)



**Figure 3.2 cSAC and pNHA in the Athy Plan area**  
Source: NPWS (datasets downloaded Oct. 2010)

## 3.3 Population and Human Health

### 3.3.1 Population<sup>4</sup>

Figure 3.3<sup>5</sup> maps the population of the Town at the most recent (2006) Census. The population of the Plan area stood at 7,943 in 2006, with the main concentration occurring in the Town Centre.

The population in 2006 rose from 5,308 in 1996 representing a 50% increase for the 10 year period. The national population increase was 17% for the same decade.

While most of the population resides in the Town Centre, the Environs experienced increases of 40-80% between 1996 and 2006. The Town Centre experienced an increase of 1-10% over the same period. Much of the growth took place between 2002 and 2006 when the environs of Athy experienced growth of between 50-70%. Population in the west of the Town Centre grew between 20-40% while the east of the Town Centre increased by 8-15%.

Population density within the Town Centre was 1001-2000 persons/km<sup>2</sup> in 2006. Density in the remainder of the Plan area and the environs stood at 20-100 persons/km<sup>2</sup>.

### 3.3.2 Human Health

Human health has the potential to be impacted upon by environmental vectors (i.e. environmental components such as air, water or soil through which contaminants or pollutants, which have the potential to cause harm, can be transported so that they come into contact with human beings). Hazards or nuisances to human health can arise as a result of exposure to these vectors arising from incompatible adjacent land uses for example. These factors have been considered with regard to the description of the baseline of each environmental component and the identification and evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Draft Plan and the alternatives.

### 3.3.3 Existing Problems

As mentioned above, certain environmental vectors have the potential to transport and deposit contaminants or pollutants which could cause harm to the health of Athy's population. Such threats are expanded upon below and in the following sections.

IPPC licensed facilities could be potential polluters to the Plan area if the facilities do not comply with their licenses.

Although air quality in the Town meets current standards, traffic "hotspots" located along the main roads especially at intersections can give rise to a harsh sensory environment which may impact upon human health (see also Section 3.7.3).

### 3.3.4 Evolution of Population and Human Health in the absence of the Draft Plan

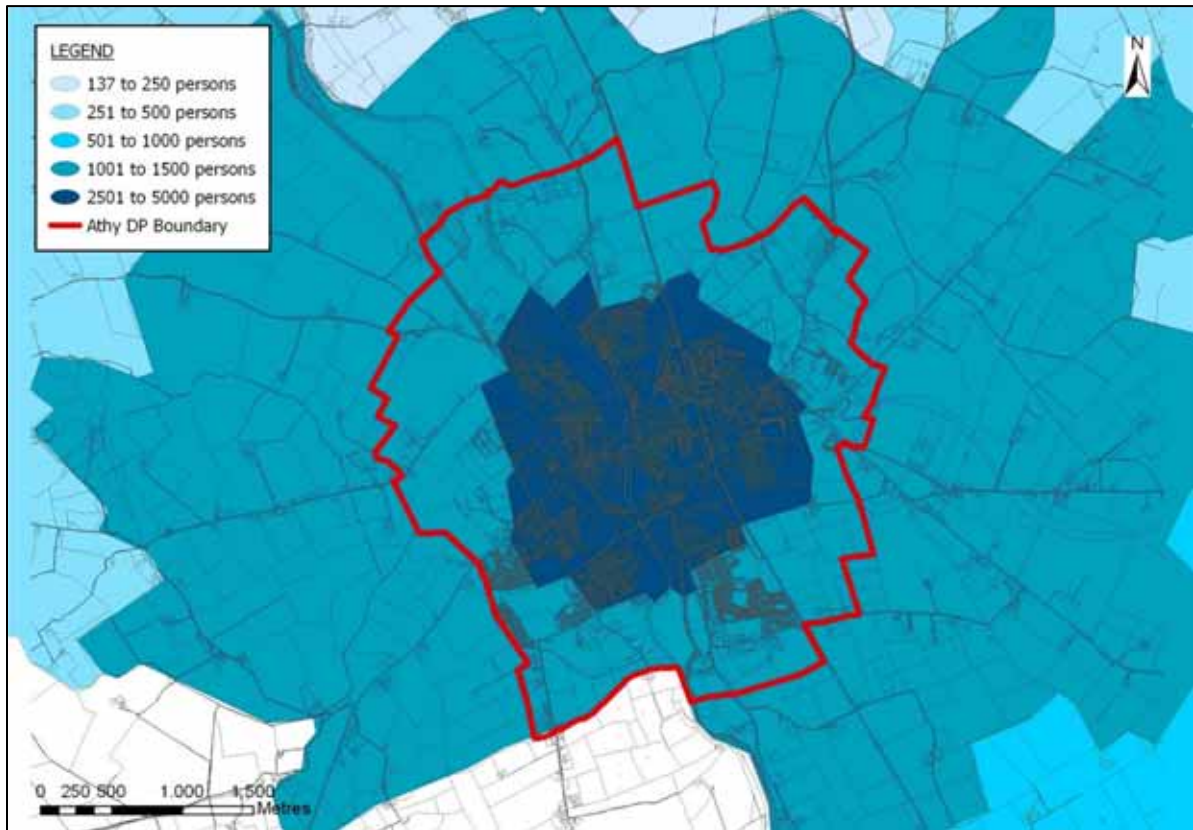
In the absence of a Development Plan there would be no framework for the provision of infrastructure to serve existing and future development. This could delay or hinder the provision of infrastructure and result in impacts on environmental vectors to which humans are exposed. For example, a lack of appropriate waste water treatment infrastructure could adversely impact upon drinking water quality and subsequently upon human health.

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<sup>4</sup> CSO (various) *Census 2006 Volume 1 - Population Classified by Area; Census 2002 Volume 1 - Population Classified by Area; Census 1996 Volume 1 - Population Classified by Area* Cork: CSO.

<sup>5</sup> It is noted that there appears to be data missing to the south east of the Plan area – this area falls with Laois County Council.





**Figure 3.3 Population of Athy 2006**  
Source: CSO (2007)



**Figure 3.4 Population Change in the Town 2002-2006**  
Source: CSO (2007)

## 3.4 Soil

### 3.4.1 Introduction

Soil is the top layer of the earth's crust. It is formed by mineral particles, organic matter, water, air and living organisms. Soil can be considered as a non-renewable natural resource because it develops over very long timescales. Such functions of soil are worthy of protection because of their socio-economic as well as environmental importance. Soils in any area are the result of the interaction of various factors, such as parent material, climate, vegetation and human action.

To date, there is no legislation which is specific to the protection of soil resources. However, there is currently an EU Thematic Strategy on the protection of soil which includes a proposal for a Soil Framework Directive which proposes common principles for protecting soils across the EU.

### 3.4.2 Soil Types<sup>6</sup>

Soil types, as classified by Teagasc in co-operation with the Forest Service, EPA and GSI, are mapped on Figure 3.5.

Much of the Plan area consists of basic mineral soil with shallow well drained basic mineral soil comprising the majority. An area of mineral alluvium runs alongside the Barrow and the Clogorow Bog Stream indicating potential flood risk areas (see Section 3.5.7).

Subsoils in the Plan area consist mainly of limestone sands and gravels and limestone till.

Figure 3.6 maps "soil sealing" in the Town. This map indicates lands that have been built upon, thus sealing off the soil. Urbanised areas within the Town are clearly seen.

### 3.4.3 Geology, Quarries and Minerals

The underlying geology of Athy is mapped on Figure 3.7. The east of the Plan area is underlain with fossiliferous dark-grey muddy limestone while peloidal calcarenitic limestone exists in the west. Beyond that, bedrock comprises Crinoidal wackestone/packstone limestone.

Within the Plan area boundary, there are three mineral location sites, five sites lay outside of the Plan boundary. All of these are to the north west of the Town.

### 3.4.4 Existing Problems

Land cover differences between the CORINE data (see Section 3.2.2) indicate that agricultural lands within the Plan area are being replaced by urban areas - this is likely to be resulting sealing off of soil resources.

Certain parts of the Town are not within the catchment of waste water treatment networks and consequently development in these areas uses septic tanks systems to treat waste water arising - it is likely that local pollution of soil is occurring in certain areas as a result of poorly maintained systems.

Greenfield development involves the building upon and thereby sealing off of soil thus representing an environmental problem.

Soil has the potential to be polluted and contaminated as a result of pollution from agricultural sources.

The Local Authority has identified three areas in Athy which were formerly used as dumps, asbestos is known to exist at these sites. These sites are at Greenhills, Tonlegee Lawns (Kilkenny Rd) and an area

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<sup>6</sup> Teagasc, GSI, Forest Service & EPA (2006) *Soils and Subsoils Class* Dublin: DEHLG

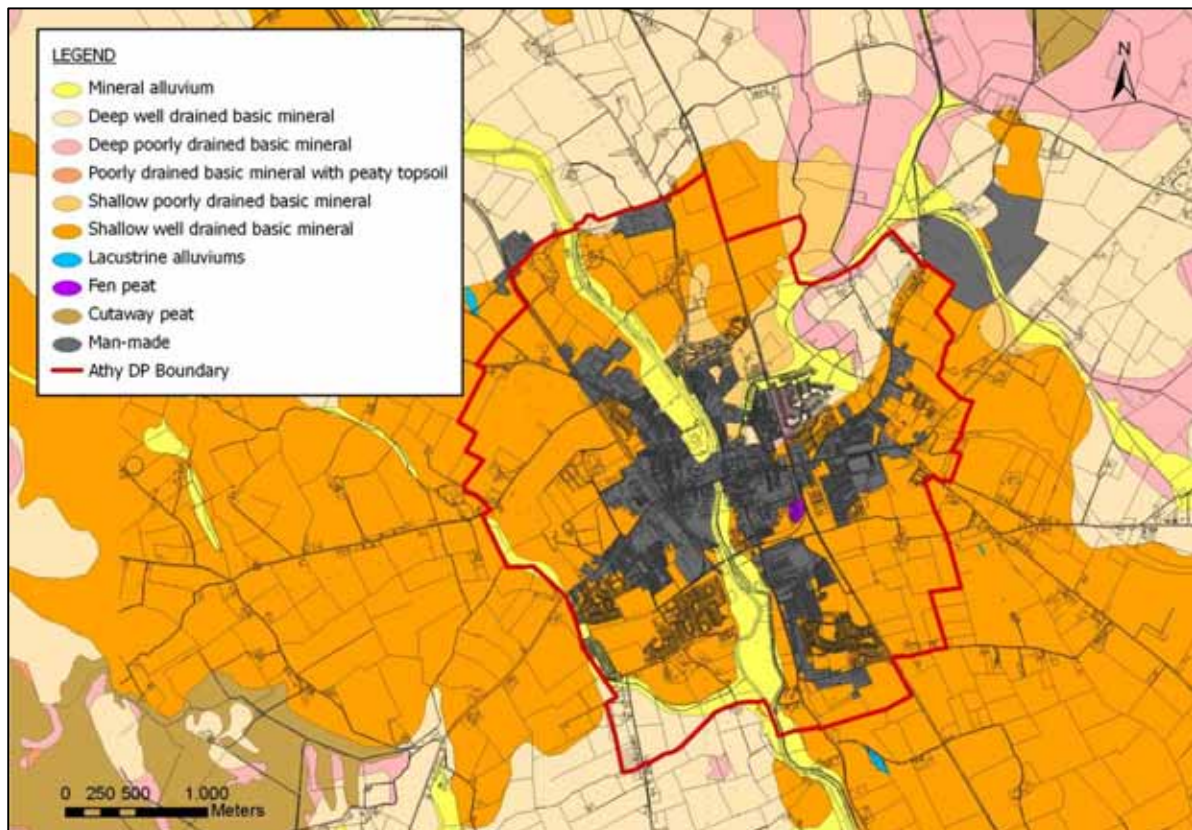
along the old railway line crossing the Carlow Rd. Mapping was not available at the time of writing this report. The exact boundaries of these sites are uncertain.

### 3.4.5 Evolution of Soil in the absence of the Draft Plan

In the absence of the Development Plan, the evolution of soil would be dependent on developments which take place.

The currently proposed Soil Directive suggests encouraging the rehabilitation of brownfield sites, thus reducing the depletion of greenfield sites. However, in the absence of Plan, there would be no framework for the direction of growth towards brownfield sites, where such direction is appropriate. As a result greenfield development would be likely to occur on an increased basis and would result in the building upon and thereby sealing off of the non-renewable subsoil and soil resources.

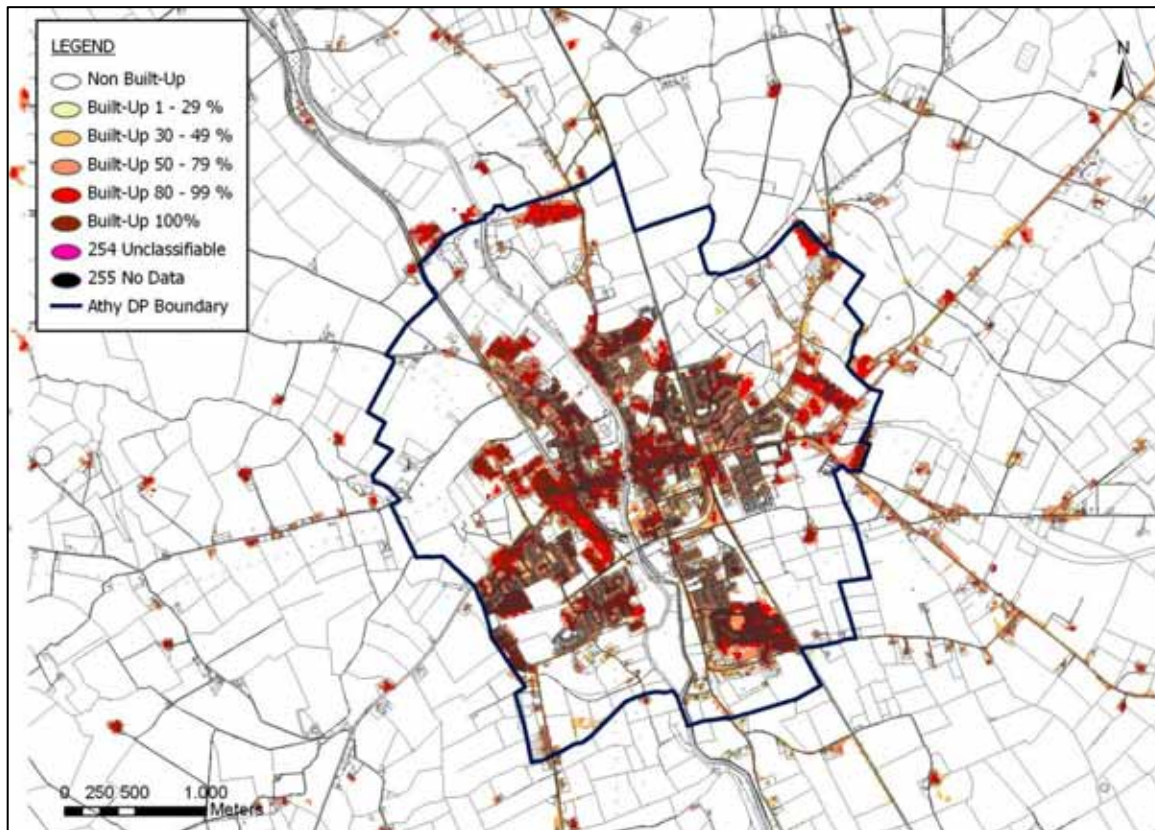
In the absence of a Plan, there would be no framework for the provision of infrastructure - such as that relating to waste water treatment - to serve existing and future development and therefore soil would have the potential to be polluted and contaminated as a result of pollution from development which is not serviced by appropriate waste water infrastructure.



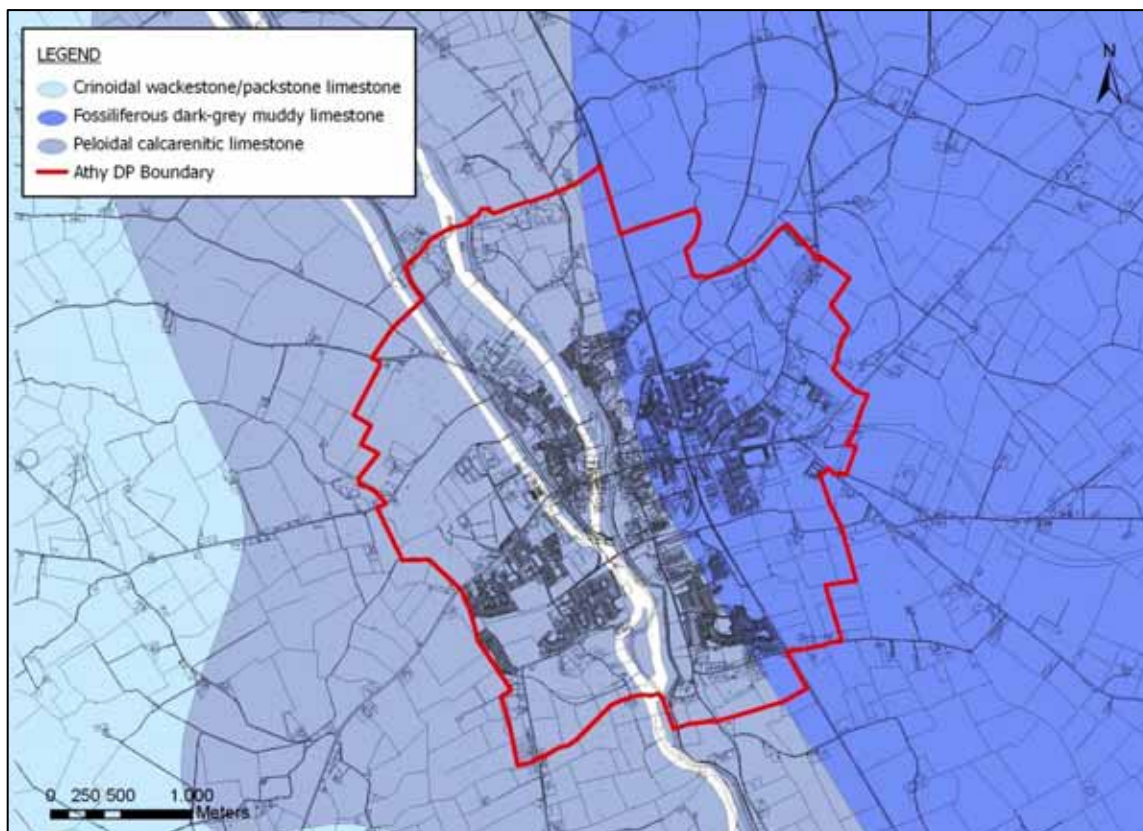
**Figure 3.5 Soil Types**

Source: Teagasc in co-operation with the Forest Service, EPA and GSI (2006)





**Figure 3.6 Soil Sealing**  
Source: EPA (2009)



**Figure 3.7 Geology**  
Source: GSI (2005)

## **3.5 Water**

### **3.5.1 Introduction**

Water within and surrounding the Town has many functions: it provides drinking water to the area's population; it sustains the biodiversity and flora and fauna described under Section 0; it provides amenity; and, it is an integral part of the landscape.

### **3.5.2 Potential Pressures on Water Quality**

Human activities, if not properly managed, can cause deterioration in water quality. Pressures exerted by human activities include the following:

- sewage and other effluents discharged to waters from point sources, e.g. pipes from treatment plants;
- discharges arising from diffuse or dispersed activities on land;
- abstractions from waters; and,
- structural alterations to water bodies.

### **3.5.3 The Water Framework Directive**

#### **3.5.3.1 Introduction and Requirements**

Since 2000, Water Management in the EU has been directed by the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD). The WFD requires that all Member States implement the necessary measures to prevent deterioration of the status of all waters - surface, ground, estuarine and coastal - and protect, enhance and restore all waters with the aim of achieving "good status" by 2015. All public bodies are required to coordinate their policies and operations so as to maintain the good status of water bodies which are currently unpolluted and improve polluted water bodies to good status by 2015.

#### **3.5.3.2 River Basin Districts and Water Bodies**

For the purpose of implementing the WFD, Ireland has been divided into eight river basin districts or areas of land that are drained by a large river or number of rivers and the adjacent estuarine / coastal areas. The management of water resources will be on these river basin districts. Athy falls within the South Eastern River Basin District (RBD). Within each river basin district - for the purpose of assessment, reporting and management - water has been divided into groundwater, rivers, lakes, estuarine waters and coastal waters which are in turn divided into specific, clearly defined water bodies.

The Local Authorities located in the RBDs have prepared River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) which are due to be adopted in the coming months. The Management Plans provide objectives for river basins in order to implement the requirements of the WFD to help protect and improve all waters in the RBDs.

### **3.5.4 Surface Water**

#### **3.5.4.1 EPA Monitoring**

Surface water in the Plan area is made up of the River Barrow, the Clogorow Stream and the Grand Canal. Water quality in the Plan area is no longer monitored by the EPA. The most recent water quality data is mapped on Figure 3.8. Within the Town, there is one old monitoring point with another existing to the east of the Plan area. Downstream of this, there is a monitoring point where quality is Q3-4. The River Barrow is monitored upstream of the Town outside of the Plan area, water quality is Q3-4 moderate status.

The Barrow Main Water Management Unit Action Plan (drawn up as part of the RBMP) identifies the upper reaches of the Clogorow Stream as being heavily silted and weedy and the lower reaches as

being heavily calcified. A study carried out as part of the Action Plan didn't identify any sensitive species at either the upper or lower part of the stream. It also cites eutrophication as a problem on the Barrow.

#### **3.5.4.2 WFD Surface Water Status**

The WFD defines "surface water status" as the general expression of the status of a body of surface water, determined by the poorer of its ecological status and its chemical status. Thus, to achieve "good surface water status" both the ecological status and the chemical status of a surface water body need to be at least "good". Generally, surface water in the Town is of good status with an area of moderate status in the north west of the Plan area.

### **3.5.5 Ground Water**

#### **3.5.5.1 Introduction**

Groundwater is stored in the void spaces in underground layers of rock, or aquifers. These aquifers are permeable, allowing both the infiltration of water from the soils above them and the yielding of water to surface and coastal waters. Groundwater is the part of the subsurface water that is in the saturated zone - the zone below the water table, the uppermost level of saturation in an aquifer at which the pressure is atmospheric, in which all pores and fissures are full of water.

#### **3.5.5.2 EPA Groundwater Quality**

The EPA national groundwater-monitoring network includes sampling at some locations that are used for the abstraction of drinking water. Mean Phosphate Concentration, Mean Nitrate Concentration and Maximum Faecal Coliform are measured at Townparks (site code: 09\_001).

#### **3.5.5.3 WFD Groundwater Status**

For groundwater bodies, the approach to classification is different from that for surface water. For each body of groundwater, both the chemical status and the quantitative must be determined. Both have to be classed as either "good" or "poor". The WFD sets out a series of criteria that must be met for a body to be classed as good chemical and quantitative status. Groundwater within and surrounding the Plan area is of Good Status.

#### **3.5.5.4 Groundwater Protection Schemes**

Groundwater Protection Schemes are county-based projects that are undertaken jointly between the GSI and the respective Local Authority. Groundwater sources, particularly public, group scheme and industrial supplies, are of critical importance in many regions. Consequently, the objective of source protection zones is to provide protection by placing tighter controls on activities within all or part of the zone of contribution (ZOC) of the source. A Groundwater Protection Scheme has been carried out for the County. Part of the east of the Town is a Source Protection area.

#### **3.5.5.5 Aquifer Vulnerability**

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) rates aquifers according to their vulnerability to pollution. Aquifer vulnerability refers to the ease with which pollutants of various kinds can enter underground water. The vast majority of the Town is underlain by moderately to highly vulnerable aquifers. Along the western boundary, there are areas of extreme vulnerability with small areas of surface rock or Karst existing within them.

#### **3.5.5.6 Aquifer Productivity**

The GSI rates aquifers based on the hydrogeological characteristics and on the value of the groundwater resource. Ireland's entire land surface is divided into nine aquifer categories, two of which occur in Athy Town. The east of the Plan area is underlain by a locally important sand/gravel aquifer. These types of aquifers are capable of yielding enough water to boreholes or springs to supply domestic, commercial and industrial uses, depending on the nature and scale of the development. The west of the Plan area is underlain by a regionally important karstified aquifer-dominated by diffuse flow.

### **3.5.6 Register of Protected Areas**

The WFD requires that Registers of Protected Areas (RPAs) are compiled for a number water bodies or part of water bodies which must have extra controls on their quality by virtue of how their waters are used by people and by wildlife.

The WFD requires that these RPAs contain: areas from which waters are taken for public or private water supply schemes; designated shellfish production areas; bathing waters; areas which are affected by high levels of substances most commonly found in fertilizers, animal and human wastes - these areas are considered nutrient sensitive; areas designated for the protection of habitats or species e.g. salmonid areas; Special Areas of Conservation (SACs); and, Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

All groundwater underlying the Town is listed on the RPA for Drinking Water Groundwater. The River Barrow is listed on the RPA as it is a cSAC. It is also listed as a nutrient sensitive river. These are mapped on Figure 3.9.

### **3.5.7 Flooding**

#### **3.5.7.1 Introduction**

Flooding is an environmental phenomenon which, as well have causing economic and social impacts, could in certain circumstances pose a risk to human health. Athy Town is vulnerable to adverse effects which are exacerbated by changes in the occurrence of severe rainfall events, high tides and associated flooding of the Town's rivers. Local conditions such as low-lying lands and inadequate surface water drainage increase the risk of flooding. The risk of flooding has also been increased in the past by human actions including the clearing of vegetation to make way for agriculture, draining of bog and wetland areas and the development of settlements in the flood plains of rivers. Infrastructural development, culverting, forestry operations and all urban development in the floodplain present ongoing flooding hazards. Increased surface water runoff due to construction of new hard surfaced areas is now generally not as significant a problem as it was in the past in terms of its impact on peak flows because of the implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS).

#### **3.5.7.2 EU Floods Directive**

European Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of flood risks requires Member States to carry out a preliminary assessment by 2011 in order to identify the river basins and associated coastal areas at risk of flooding. For such zones, flood risk maps are required to be drawn up by 2013. Flood risk management plans focused on prevention, protection and preparedness must be established by 2015. The OPW is currently involved in a research project to develop maps with national coverage indicating areas that might be prone to flooding from rivers and streams. Further work is underway to refine the method and outputs, which, if successful, may enable this information to be made available in the near future.

#### **3.5.7.3 DEHLG Flood Risk Management Guidelines**

In November 2009 the DEHLG published *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines* for Planning Authorities. These are aimed at ensuring a more consistent, rigorous and systematic approach which will fully incorporate flood risk assessment and management into the planning system. Planning authorities are required to undertake flood risk identification, assessment and management processes as appropriate when preparing or varying development plans and local area plans and in consideration of applications for planning permission.

#### **3.5.7.4 OPW's National Flood Hazard Mapping**

Figure 3.10 maps the locations of the most significant flooding events in the Plan area - accessible from the OPW's National Flood Hazard Mapping website. Flood events and flood extents are recorded at various locations along the Town's rivers.

Large scale changes in the Town which could significantly influence flood risk and increase the magnitude and occurrence of flooding in the future may include:

- Climate changes resulting in increased river flows and rising sea levels;
- Large scale land use changes such as increased afforestation and associated clear-cutting, changes in agricultural land use and drainage of upland wetlands;
- Urban development increasing the speed and volume of run-off; and
- Changes to geomorphological processes such as sediment transport, siltation and erosion.

### **3.5.7.5 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment**

Kilgallen and Partners Consulting Engineers have been appointed by Athy Town Council to undertake a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the Development Plan. The SFRA provides an appraisal and assessment of available flood risk data for the land-use proposals within the boundaries of the Plan area. This process identifies flood risk indicators in each area and, where it is demonstrated that lands may be at risk of flooding, recommends modifications to land-use proposals or the carrying out of more detailed flood risk assessment as appropriate. Lands which are recommended as requiring further assessment are identified in the SFRA, these occur across the Plan area.

The SFRA established 1 in 100 year and 1 in 1000 year flood event lines for zoned lands within the Plan area and used this map in order to undertake the assessment and facilitate the making of recommendations.

The SFRA has informed the Draft Plan and the SEA, although not all of the SFRA recommendations have been integrated into the Plan - see Section 4.4.

### **3.5.8 Existing Problems**

The above descriptions identify a number of sensitivities with regard to the status of water bodies within Athy Town. There are environmental problems in Athy with regard to water quality which have the potential for significant adverse impact upon human health, drinking water supplies, biodiversity and flora and fauna.

Water quality data identifies multiple points on rivers throughout Athy Town as being of Moderate, Poor or Bad Status. The Barrow Main Water Management Unit Action Plan identifies water quality problems on the Clogorow Stream and the Barrow.

Flooding has occurred at various locations within the Town.

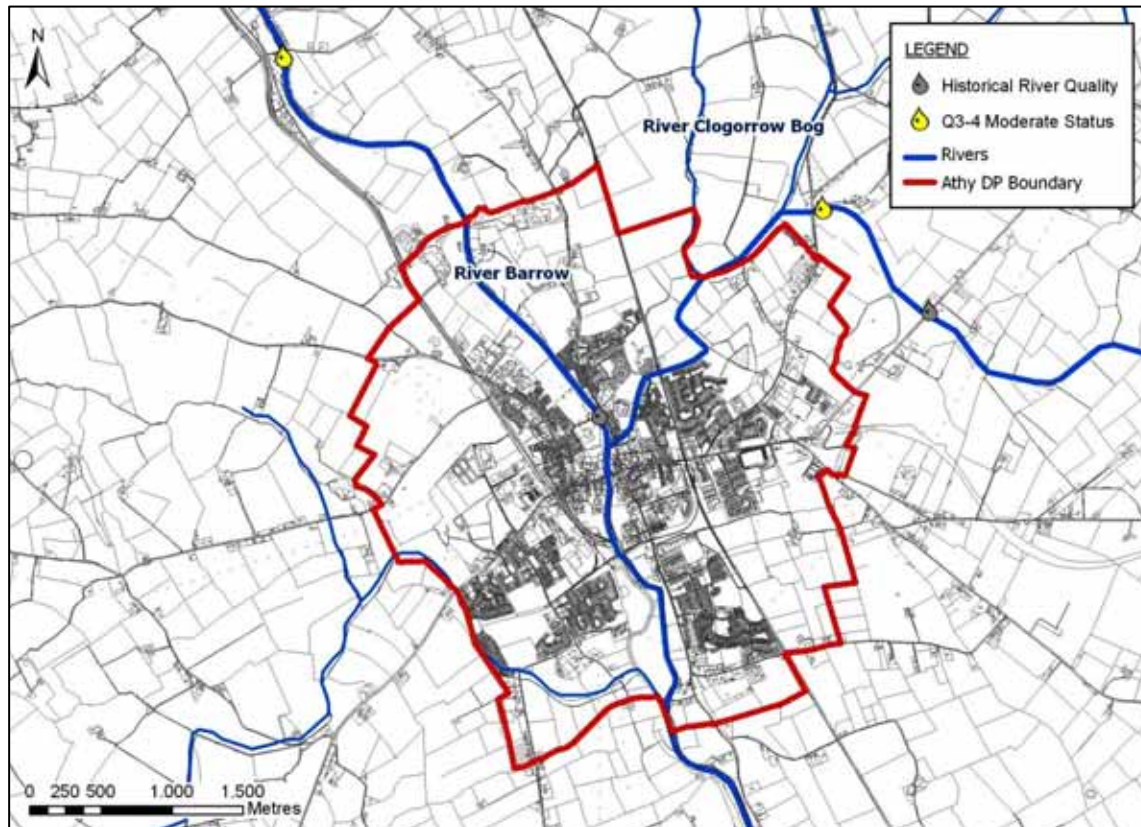
### **3.5.9 Evolution of Water in the absence of the Draft Plan**

Based on the status data, certain surface and ground water bodies are at a status less than good, which is the standard required by 2015.

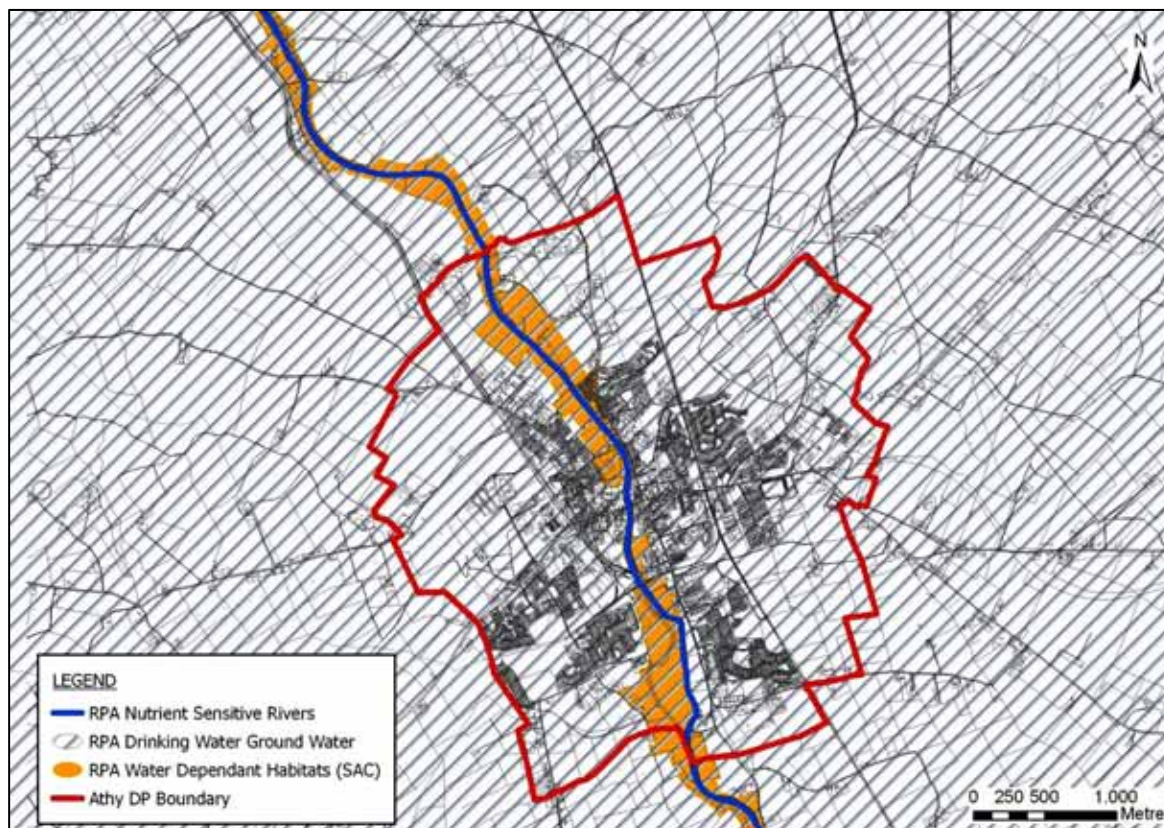
If growth is not accompanied by appropriate waste water infrastructure/capacity then it is likely that:

- Certain river and ground water bodies would fail to meet the objectives of the WFD by 2015;
- Significant adverse impacts upon the biodiversity and flora and fauna of the Town could potentially arise.



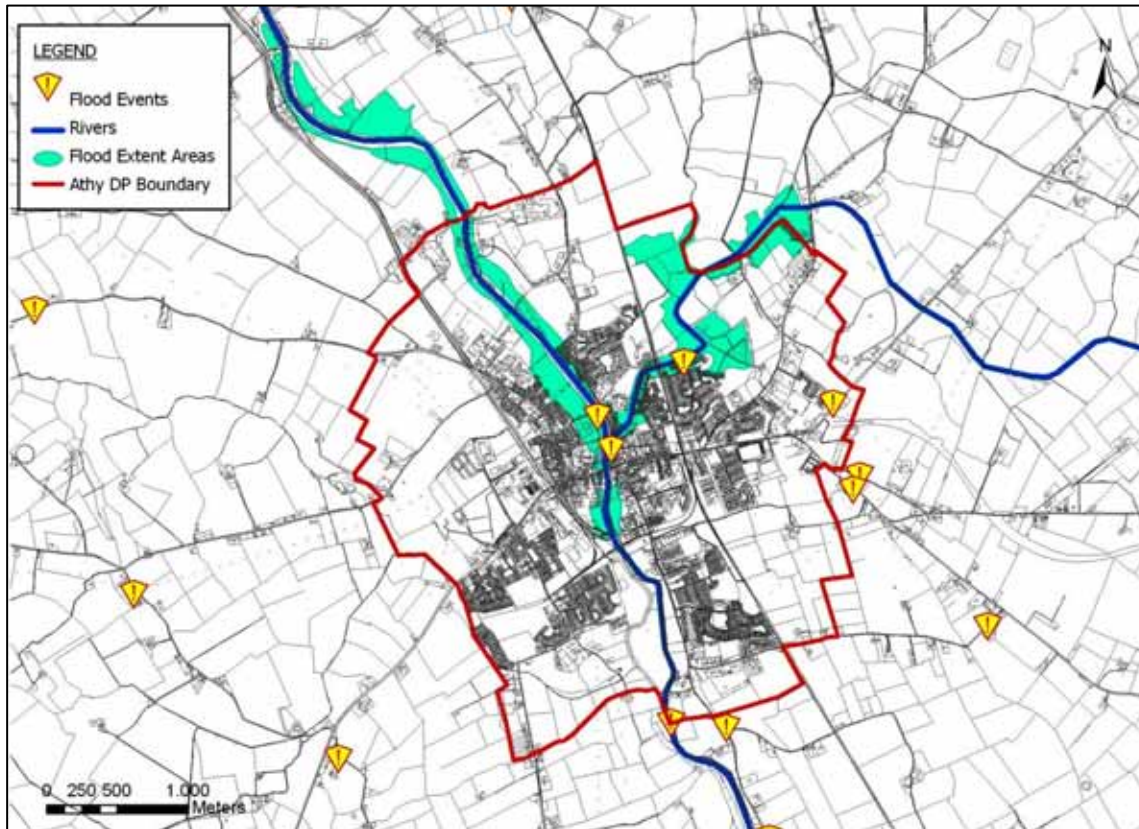


**Figure 3.8 Q-Values (Biotic Index Ratings) at Points on Rivers**  
Source: EPA (Various)



**Figure 3.9 WFD Register of Protected Areas**  
Source: EPA (2009)





**Figure 3.10 Rivers, Lakes and Flood Events in the Town**  
Source: OPW (Various)

## 3.6 Material Assets

### 3.6.1 Waste Water

#### 3.6.1.1 Relevant Legislation

The treatment of wastewater is governed by the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC) (amended by Directive 98/15/EEC) transposed into Irish law by the Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations 2001 (SI 254 of 2001). The Directive aims to protect the environment from the adverse effects of the wastewater discharges by ensuring that wastewater is appropriately treated before it is discharged to the environment. The Regulations stipulate that sewage treatment facilities are in place in all towns by 2005. The treatment of wastewater is also relevant to the Water Framework Directive which requires all public bodies, to coordinate their policies and operations so as to maintain the good status of water bodies which are currently unpolluted and bring polluted water bodies up to good status by 2015 (see Section 3.5 *Water*).

#### 3.6.1.2 Current Capacity and Demand and Future Upgrades

Wastewater is treated at the Athy Wastewater Treatment Plant at Boherbui located to the south west of the Town Centre. The plant has an existing design capacity of 15,000 population equivalent (PE)<sup>7</sup> with room for future expansion. The current loading of the treatment plant is approximately 10,000PE resulting in a spare capacity of approximately 5,000PE.

<sup>7</sup> Population equivalent (in waste-water monitoring and treatment) refers to the amount of oxygen-demanding substances whose oxygen consumption during biodegradation equals the average oxygen demand of the waste water produced by one person. PE figures include waste waters from industrial sources, hotels, etc as well as domestic output.

Spare capacity at a waste water treatment plant indicates that plant is likely to be in conformance with the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive at present. Plants operating over capacity suggest that they are unlikely to be in conformance with the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive.

It is anticipated that it will be necessary to extend the plant to 11,500 PE before 2014 to meet additional domestic and non-domestic demand. In addition the overall wastewater network requires improvement to facilitate possible future expansion of the Town. In the interim however wastewater improvements under the Athy Sewerage Scheme include the provision of a new trunk foul sewer to the south east of the Town to serve lands located at Prusselstown. Remediation of the existing sewer network to the east of the river Barrow was carried out in 2010 as the first phase of the Athy Sewerage Scheme.

The waste water treatment plant at Athy along with its discharge point on the Barrow as well as the portion of the Plan area which is serviced by the waste water network is mapped on Figure 3.11.

## 3.6.2 Drinking Water

### 3.6.2.1 Drinking Water Quality<sup>8</sup>

Drinking water must be clean and wholesome. That means it must meet the relevant water quality standards and must not contain any other substance or micro-organism in concentrations or numbers that constitute a potential danger to human health.

Under Section 58 of the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992 the EPA is required to collect and verify monitoring results for all water supplies in Ireland covered by the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations, 2000. The EPA publishes their results in annual reports which include Remedial Action Lists (RALs). The RAL identifies water supplies which are not in compliance with the Regulations mentioned above. Athy is not listed on the Remedial Action List. There was a nickel exceedance in the Athy supply in 2007. However, nickel is not present in the untreated or treated water from these supplies and it is likely that this exceedance was due to contamination from tap fittings.

### 3.6.2.2 Status of Water Supply in Athy<sup>9</sup>

At present, Athy's daily water demand is in excess of 4,000m<sup>3</sup> and is supplied from four separate sources within the Town located along the north western bank of the River Barrow. An additional source is also obtained from the Regional Supply from the Poulaphouca Reservoir to supplement the Town's supply. This can be extended into the Town should any of the local sources need to be shut off.

The construction of the Srowland Water Treatment Plant and the Srowland to Ardscull and Srowland to Old Kilcullen Water Rising Mains contracts form part of the River Barrow Abstraction Scheme. The Srowland Water Treatment Plant will supply treated water to Ardscull Reservoir (which will supply Athy) and Old Kilcullen Reservoir. The Water Services Investment Programme 2010 - 2012 approved funding for these contracts.

While there is adequate supply of water to Athy town approx 25% of the total demand is supplied to Athy from outside sources.

Should the main source in Athy i.e. "The Gallery" become unusable, for example due to a reoccurrence of flooding, KCC will increase the amount supplied from both directions. Increase from Dublin road supply will require permission of Dublin City Council. The use of the Monasterevin Wellfield will allow greater flexibility as it is own well supply. Water abstraction points are mapped on Figure 3.11.

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<sup>8</sup> Text in this section is sourced from EPA (2009) *The Provision and Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland: A Report for the Years 2007-2008*, Wexford: EPA

<sup>9</sup> Text in this section is from Kildare County Council Water Services, Oct. 2010.

### **3.6.3 Waste**

The Council is obliged to collect or arrange for the collection of household waste in its jurisdiction. Waste collected is currently transferred to Dublin from the Integrated Waste Management Facility at Silliot Hill, Kilcullen for baling prior to disposal at Arthurstown Landfill Site.

Athy Civic Amenity Centre is located at Gallowshill in the east of the Town. Waste is compacted at the facility and stored in sealed haulage containers prior to disposal off-site. Receptacles are provided for collection/storage of various recyclable wastes such as; glass, plastics, metals, white goods, electronic goods, paper/cardboard, textiles, timber, tyres, household construction and demolition waste, and green waste. Green waste is shredded on-site. The location of the waste transfer station is mapped on Figure 3.11.

### **3.6.4 Vehicular Circulation**

The N78 is the main route through Athy. It connects Dublin, Naas, Kilcullen, Athy/Casteldermot and Kilkenny/Waterford. The R428, R471 and R418 are other roads in the Plan area as well as several local country roads. A number of bus services are also in operation with Bus Eireann providing Expressway Services, Local/Rural/Commuter and City/Town Services in the Town. The Town is also served by the Dublin/Waterford railway line.

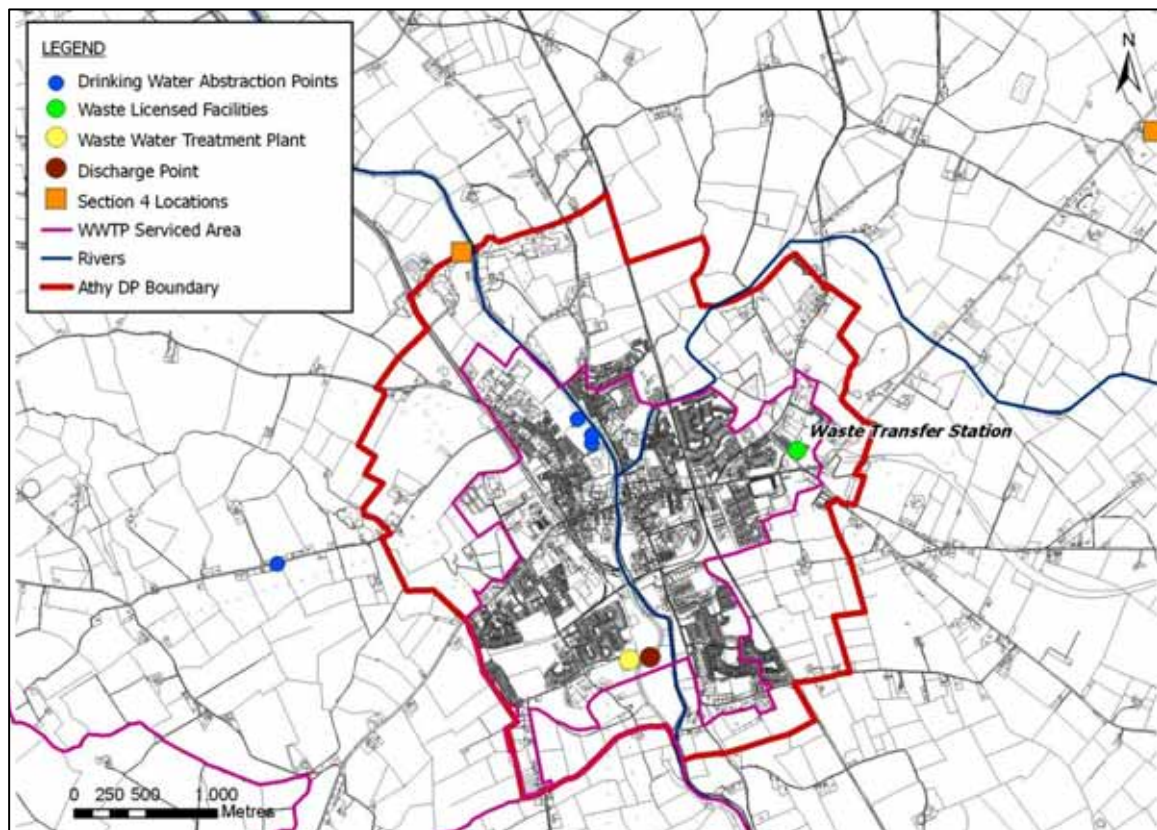
### **3.6.5 Existing Problems relating to Material Assets**

Certain parts of the Town are not within the catchment of the waste water treatment network and consequently development in these areas use septic tanks to treat waste water arising. This has the potential to be a problem for other environmental components where the systems are not properly maintained.

### **3.6.6 Evolution of Material Assets in the absence of the Draft Plan**

In the absence of a Development Plan, there would be no framework to provide the infrastructure which is necessary in Athy to serve existing and proposed development such as waste water treatment plants and networks, water supply infrastructure, transport infrastructure and powerlines etc.

Failure to provide sufficient infrastructure for development would be likely to result in significant adverse impacts. For example, failure to upgrade and provide new waste water infrastructure would be likely to adversely impact upon water quality and indirectly significantly adversely impact upon biodiversity and flora and fauna, drinking water supplies and human health.



**Figure 3.11 Water Treatment Plants, Waste Water Treatment Plants, Discharge Points and Serviced Areas and Section 4 Licenses**

Source: KCC (Various)

## 3.7 Air and Climatic Factors

### 3.7.1 Ambient Air Quality

#### 3.7.1.1 Introduction and Legislation

In order to protect human health, vegetation and ecosystems, EU Directives set down air quality standards in Ireland and the other Member States for a wide variety of pollutants. These pollutants are generated through fuel combustion, in space heating, traffic, electricity generation and industry and, in sufficient amounts, could affect the well being of the areas inhabitants. The EU Directives include details regarding how ambient air quality should be monitored, assessed and managed.

The principles to this European approach are set out under the Air Quality Framework Directive 1996 as transposed into Irish law under the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992 (Ambient Air Quality Assessment and Management) Regulations 1999 (SI No. 33 of 1999).

Four daughter Directives lay down limits or thresholds for specific pollutants. The first two of these directives cover: sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and oxides of nitrogen, particulate matter and lead; and, carbon monoxide and benzene. Two more daughter directives deal with: ozone; and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, arsenic, nickel, cadmium and mercury in ambient air.

In order to comply with these directives, the EPA measures the levels of a number of atmospheric pollutants. For the purposes of monitoring in Ireland, four zones are defined in the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2002 (SI No. 271 of 2002). The main areas defined in each zone are:

- Zone A: Dublin Conurbation.
- Zone B: Cork Conurbation.

- Zone C: 21 Other cities and large towns comprising Galway, Limerick, Waterford, Clonmel, Kilkenny, Athy, Drogheda, Wexford, Athlone, Ennis, Bray, Naas, Carlow, Tralee and Dundalk.
- Zone D: Rural Ireland, i.e. the remainder of the State - small towns and rural areas of the country - excluding Zones A, B and C. Athy falls with Zone D.

### 3.7.1.2 Coal Restriction Areas

A ban on the marketing, sale and distribution of bituminous coal applies in Athy and fifteen other towns and cities around the country including Dublin (since 1990), Cork (since 1995), Arklow, Drogheda, Dundalk, Limerick and Wexford (since 1998), Celbridge, Galway, Leixlip, Naas and Waterford (since 2000), Bray, Kilkenny, Athy and Tralee (since 2003).

## 3.7.2 Potential Point Sources of Emissions to Air

### 3.7.2.1 IPPC Licensed Facilities

The EPA has been licensing certain large-scale industrial and agriculture activities since 1994. IPPC licences aim to prevent or reduce emissions to air, water and land, reduce waste and use energy/resources efficiently. An IPPC license is a single integrated license which covers all emissions from the facility and its environmental management. All related operations that the license holder carries in connection with the activity are controlled by this license. Before a license is granted, the EPA must be satisfied that emissions from the activity do not cause a significant adverse environmental impact.

There is one active IPPC licence in Athy. Peerless Rug Europe Limited (P0261-01) is located in the Industrial Estate at Townspark. Crown Packaging Ltd. (P0098-01) in Woodstock Industrial Estate was licensed up to Map 2009.

## 3.7.3 Noise

Noise is unwanted sound. It can seriously harm human health and interfere with daily activities at school, at work, at home and during leisure time. Areas within the Town which are commonly affected by noise are urban areas and areas along roadsides.

Generally, the main noise source in the Town is from traffic. Streets in low lying areas that have high traffic counts as well as enclosing taller buildings are likely to have harsh sensory environments with regard to noise levels with regard to this source. *Traffic hotspots* within the Town are likely to have elevated levels of air pollution and noise due to traffic congestion compared to surrounding rural areas. These hotspots are located along the main road routes - especially at intersections - and provide for a harsh sensory environment which may impact upon human health. In addition, there are localised noise sources which include train movements, air conditioning equipment and bars.

## 3.7.4 Climatic Factors

### 3.7.4.1 Greenhouse Gases

In order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions the internationally agreed Kyoto Protocol established emissions reduction targets for developing countries. Ireland's emission target for greenhouse gases is to limit the increase in their combined emissions during the five-year period 2008-2012 to 13 per cent above 1990 levels.

Based on the inventory figures for 2006<sup>10</sup>, the EPA estimates that Ireland's emissions in 2006 were 25.5 per cent higher than the baseline estimate that underlies Ireland's allowable emissions for the period 2008-2012, as agreed in the peer review of Ireland's 2006 submission to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

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<sup>10</sup> EPA (2008) *Ireland's Emissions of Greenhouse Gases for the period 1990-2006* Wexford: EPA

### 3.7.4.2 Climate Change

Climate change refers to any change in climate over time, whether due to natural variability or as a result of human activity. The release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere as a result of human activities adds to natural climate variability by increasing the naturally occurring greenhouse effect. This greenhouse effect occurs in the atmosphere and is caused by greenhouse gases which exist naturally in the atmosphere. The greenhouse gases retain the radiation which is released from the earth as a result of heating by the sun. This retention maintains a global temperature which is suitable for ecosystems and life.

### 3.7.4.3 Potential Effects of Changed Climate

The EPA's 'Climate Change: Regional Climate Model Predictions for Ireland' (2005)<sup>11</sup> report provides an analysis of future Irish climate conditions for the period 2021–2060 based on the outputs from a new regional climate modelling facility located in Met Éireann. As increased temperatures will lead to greater amounts of water vapour in the atmosphere and an accelerated global water cycle, it is reasonable to expect that river catchment areas will be exposed to a greater risk of flooding. The increase in winter precipitation will be likely to produce a significant increase in the more intense discharge episodes, raising the risk of future flooding.

The report identifies that although it is not possible to comment on changes in flood magnitude and frequency, the increase in winter runoff indicated for many parts of the west of the country, especially under the scenario for the period 2061–2090, is likely to have significant implications. River flooding tends to be more common during the wetter winter months when soils are near saturation and can be exacerbated in coastal areas when interactions occur between high tides and high flows. Many of the rivers draining upland areas have a rapid or "flashy" response to rainfall enhanced by rising topography. Steep slopes and thin soils favour rapid flow pathways and water is rapidly transmitted to the channel network especially in urbanised catchments with extensive areas of impermeable surfaces.

### 3.7.5 Existing Problems

*Traffic hotspots* within the Plan area are likely to have elevated levels of air pollution and noise due to traffic congestion, this is particularly the case along the N78 through the Town.

Localised air pollution incidences with regard to PM10 and PM2.5 and noise pollution are both likely to occur when demolition/construction takes place - especially in relation to PM10 if suppression techniques are not introduced - and when traffic is queuing for long periods of time.

Ireland's current emissions are exceeding targets agreed in the peer review of Ireland's 2006 submission to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It is unlikely that Ireland will meet these targets and it is likely therefore that financial penalties will be incurred. Transport related emissions continue to be the dominant growth sector.

Changes in sea level and/or changes in the occurrence of severe rainfall events as a result of climate change could adversely impact upon the area's human beings, its biodiversity and its economy (see also Section 3.5.7 Flooding).

### 3.7.6 Evolution of Air and Climatic Factors in the absence of the Draft Plan

Increases in the use of catalytic converters, cleaner fuels, better engine technology and maintenance is generally reducing the pollution omitted per motor vehicle, however, this reduction is probably being offset by the increase in the number of cars as well as the increase in the volume and

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<sup>11</sup> Community Climate Change Consortium for Ireland (2005) *Environmental RTDI Programme 2000–2006 Climate Change: Regional Climate Model Predictions for Ireland (2001-CD-C4-M2) Final Report* Wexford: Environmental Protection Agency



incidences of traffic congestion. Increases in the number of cars as well as the increase in the volume and incidences of traffic congestion may lead to increases in air and noise pollution in the future.

In the absence of the Draft Plan, the realisation of objectives relating to energy efficiency, renewable energy and a reduction in local transport related emissions to air contained within the Draft Plan would be missed.

## **3.8 Cultural Heritage**

### **3.8.1 Introduction**

Heritage, by definition, means inherited properties, inherited characteristics and anything transmitted by past ages and ancestors. It covers everything, from objects and buildings to the environment. Cultural heritage includes physical buildings, structures and objects, complete or in part, which have been left on the landscape by previous and indeed current generations.

Athy developed as part of the Anglo-Norman settlement in Ireland. Woodstock Castle was built in the early years of the thirteenth century near an ancient river crossing. The Priory of St Thomas and Hospital of St John was founded in the thirteenth century on rising ground above the river on its west side while, on the east bank, just south of the crossing, a Dominican friary was established in 1253 in the area known as the Abbey.

### **3.8.2 Archaeological Heritage**

#### **3.8.2.1 Introduction**

Archaeology is the study of past societies through the material remains left by those societies and the evidence of their environment. Archaeological heritage consists of such material remains (whether in the form of sites and monuments or artefacts in the sense of moveable objects) and environmental evidence. As archaeological heritage can be used to gain knowledge and understanding of the past it is of great cultural and scientific importance.

Archaeological finds dating to the Neolithic and the Bronze Age attest to the importance of the crossing over the River Barrow from prehistoric times. Two stone-axe heads were found in the Rathstewart area of the Town. The archaeological record also includes churches and graveyards, gatehouses, mills and the bridge in the Town.

#### **3.8.2.2 Record of Monuments and Places**

Athy's archaeological heritage is protected under the National Monuments Acts (1930-2004), Natural Cultural Institutions Act 1997 and the Planning Acts. The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is an inventory, put on a statutory basis by amendment to the National Monuments Act 1994, of sites and areas of archaeological significance, numbered and mapped.

There is a number of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places within the Town. The historic core of Athy was identified as a Zone of Archaeological Potential, see Figure 3.12.

### **3.8.3 Architectural heritage**

#### **3.8.3.1 Introduction**

The term architectural heritage is defined in the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments Act 1999 as meaning all: structures and buildings together with their settings and attendant grounds, fixtures and fittings; groups of structures and buildings; and, sites which are of technical, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical interest.

The town retains many buildings of significance, including Whites Castle (a prominent feature in the Town), Market House (Heritage Centre and Library), The Model Farm and School, the Dominican Church and the Presbyterian Church.

### **3.8.3.2 Record of Protected Structures**

The Record of Protected Structures (RPS) is legislated for under Section 51 of the Planning and Development Act 2000. Protected Structures are defined as structures, or parts of structures that are of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view. There are eight structures listed on the RPS. Structures listed on the Record of Protected structures are mapped on Figure 3.12 along with additions proposed under the draft Kildare CDP 2011-2017.

### **3.8.3.3 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage**

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) is a state initiative under the administration of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and established on a statutory basis under the provisions of the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999. The purpose of the NIAH is to identify, record, and evaluate the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland, uniformly and consistently as an aid in the protection and conservation of the built heritage. Spatial distribution of monuments listed on the NIAH is mapped on Figure 3.13.

### **3.8.4 Existing Cultural Heritage Problems**

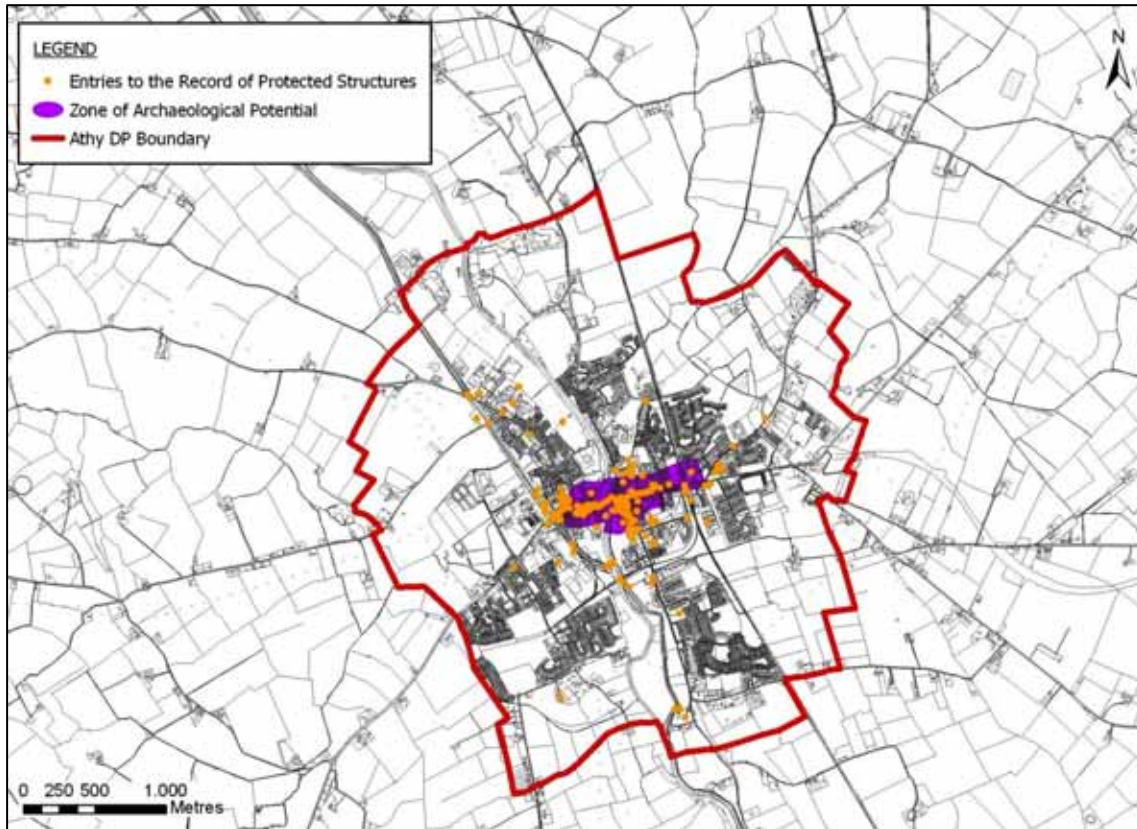
Threats to cultural heritage might include the cumulative accommodation of large scale development in the Town, development which involves material alteration or additions to protected structures, brownfield development and development on sites adjoining protected monuments, places or structures.

### **3.8.5 Evolution of Cultural Heritage in the absence of the Draft Plan**

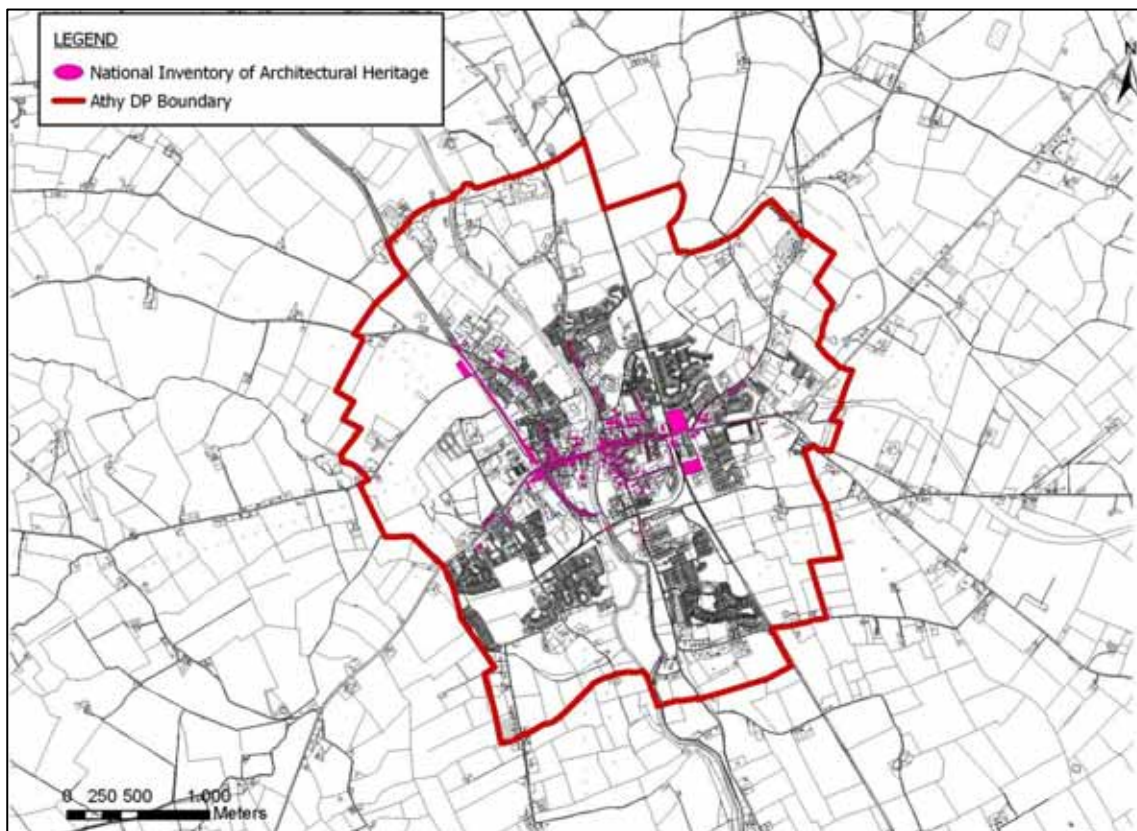
In the absence of the Plan, the evolution of cultural heritage would be dependent on developments which take place.

Such development would have no guidance as to where to be directed and planning applications would be assessed on an individual basis with cultural heritage protected under a number of strategic actions relating to archaeological and architectural protection.

Beneficial impacts upon the protection of cultural heritage which would be likely to arise as a result of the Plan provisions would not necessarily occur.



**Figure 3.12 Entries to the Record of Protected Structures**  
Source: Athy TDP (2006-2012)



**Figure 3.13 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage**  
Source: DEHLG (2006)

## **3.9 Landscape**

### **3.9.1 Introduction**

Landscapes are areas which are perceived by people and are made up of a number of layers:

- landform, which results from geological and geomorphological history;
- land cover, which includes vegetation, water, human settlements;
- human values which are a result of historical, cultural, religious and other understandings and interactions with landform and land cover.

The population is concentrated in Athy Town with houses and farms dispersed in the rural hinterland. Whites Castle is a prominent feature of the Town and is visible from the N78. The River Barrow and the Grand Canal are also important features of the Town's landscape.

### **3.9.2 Landscape Character Areas**

A Landscape Character Assessment was carried out for County Kildare in 2004. This is contained in an appendix to the draft Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017 and it identifies fifteen landscape classifications, three of which occur in the Plan area; Southern Lowlands, River Valley and Grand Canal. These are mapped on Figure 3.14. The River Barrow Valley and The Grand Canal Corridors are also classified as "Areas of High Amenity".

### **3.9.3 Scenic Routes and Protected Views**

Scenic Routes and Protected Views consist of important and valued views and prospects within the County. A Scenic Route with views of Moat and Ardscull, N78 from Russelstown Cross Roads to Kilmead is designated to the east of the Town.

In addition to Scenic Routes there are a number of Protected Views, throughout the County. These are often located along water corridors and to and from the hills in the countryside. There are two Protected Views to the north west of Athy. One of these can be seen on Figure 3.14, the other lies just north of this.

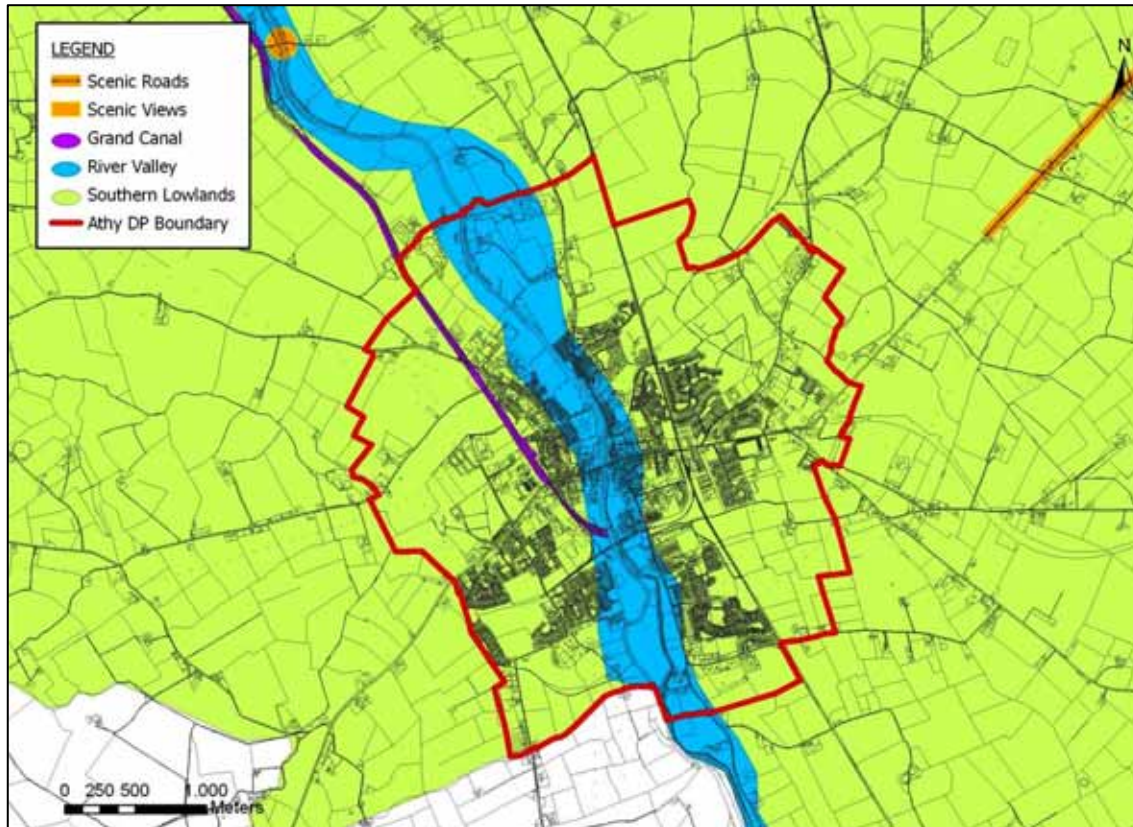
### **3.9.4 Existing Landscape Problems**

Generalised landscape problems include the cumulative visual impact resulting from developments such as one off houses. Such developments, which individually often do not have significant adverse impacts, have the potential to cumulatively and adversely significantly impact upon sensitive landscapes.

### **3.9.5 Evolution of Landscape in the absence of the Draft Plan**

In the absence of a Development Plan, development would be likely to occur on a one-off, dispersed basis. This could have cumulative impacts on the landscape. However, Development Management would continue to safeguard the landscape resources that have been highlighted above.





**Figure 3.14 Scenic Roads and Views, Sensitive Landscape Areas and Views and Prospects**  
 Source: Athy Town Development Plan (2006-2012)

## 3.10 Overlay Mapping of Environmental Sensitivities

### 3.10.1 Introduction and Methodology

In order to identify where most sensitivities within the Town occur, a number of the environmental sensitivities described above were weighted and mapped overlapping each other. Figure 3.15 provides an overlay of environmental sensitivities in Athy Town.

Environmental sensitivities are indicated by colours which range from acute vulnerability (brown) extreme vulnerability (red) to high vulnerability (dark orange) to elevated vulnerability (light orange) to moderate vulnerability (yellow) to low vulnerability (green). Where the mapping shows a concentration of environmental sensitivities there is an increased likelihood that development will conflict with these sensitivities and cause environmental deterioration.

A weighting system applied through Geographical Information System (GIS) software was used in order to calculate the vulnerability of all areas in the Town. Equal value is given to all environmental components (landscape, water, biodiversity etc.) with the following environmental sensitivity factors each attributed weighting of 5 points:

- Ecological designations (candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Proposed Natural Heritage Areas and Nutrient Sensitive Rivers)
- Landscape Character Areas, scenic roads and protected views;
- Heritage designations (entries to Records of Protected Structures, entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, Zone of Archaeological Potential and entries to the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage);
- Water resources (drinking groundwater protection, surface waters, flood risk areas, extreme and high vulnerability aquifers and source protection areas)

**Table 3.1 Overall Vulnerability Classes**

Score	Vulnerability Class
10-15	Low
20-25	Moderate
30-35	Elevated
40-45	High
50-60	Extreme
>60	Acute

### 3.10.2 Conclusions

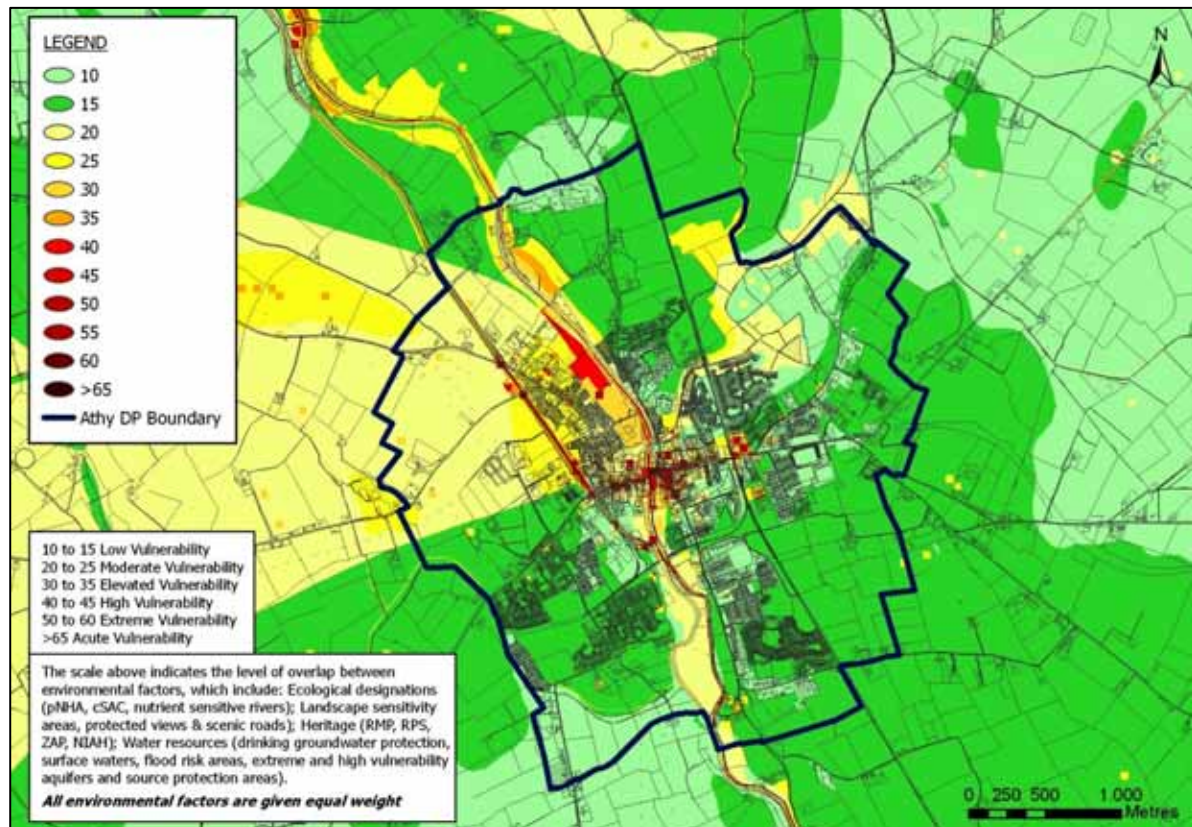
Generally, the Plan area and the surrounding lands are of low vulnerability. An area of moderate vulnerability traverses the western Plan boundary where an Inner Source Protection for ground water occurs.

The Glogorow Stream is of moderate vulnerability where flood extent areas overlap with other environmental sensitivities.

The River Barrow is of moderate vulnerability, increasing to extreme in places. This is due to an overlap in many environmental factors including flood risk areas, landscape sensitivity and its designation as a cSAC and a nutrient sensitivity river.

The Grand Canal is acutely vulnerable in places owing to landscape designations and its designation as a proposed Natural Heritage Area.

The areas of highest vulnerability occur in the Town Centre where archaeology is the main contributor.



**Figure 3.15 Overlay of Environmental Sensitivities**

Source: CAAS (2010)



### 3.11 Strategic Environmental Objectives

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are methodological measures against which the environmental effects of the Plan can be tested. If complied with in full, SEOs would result in an environmentally neutral impact from implementation of the Plan. The SEOs are set out under a range of topics and are used as standards against which the provisions of the Draft Plan can be evaluated in order to help identify areas in which potential adverse impacts may occur. SEOs are distinct from the objectives of the Plan and are developed from international and national policies which generally govern environmental protection objectives. Such policies include those of various European Directives which have been transposed into Irish law and which are intended to be implemented within the Plan area.

<b>SEO Topic</b>	<b>SEO</b>
Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna	To ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annexed habitats and species <sup>12</sup>
Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna	To ensure compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the protection of corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat <sup>13</sup> which are important at Town and environs level for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species
Human Health	To protect human health from hazards or nuisances arising from exposure to incompatible landuses
Brownfield Development	Maximise the sustainable re-use of brownfield lands, and maximise the use of the existing built environment rather than developing greenfield lands
Surface Water Status	To maintain and improve, where possible, the status of surface waters
Ground Water Status	To prevent pollution and contamination of ground water
Flood Risk	To manage areas that are currently at risk of flooding or are likely to pose a significant flood risk in the future in compliance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities and Floods Directive ultimately
Waste Water Treatment	To serve new development with adequate and appropriate waste water treatment
Drinking Water Provision	To serve users of public water supplies with drinking water that is both wholesome and clean
Transport related Emissions	To reduce travel related greenhouse emissions to air
Transport Mode	To encourage modal change from car to more sustainable forms of transport
Archaeological Heritage	To protect the archaeological heritage of the Town including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context
Architectural Heritage	To preserve and protect the special interest and character of the Town's architectural heritage
Landscape	To avoid significant adverse impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to landscapes which are most valuable and most sensitive to change and protected views and prospects

<sup>12</sup> 'Annexed habitats and species' refers to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

<sup>13</sup> Important corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat include the River Barrow and the Grand Canal. It is recommended that important corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat are identified as part of the monitoring programme and that time resources are spent in the monitoring of these rather than in the monitoring of corridors or areas of habitat which are not important at Town and environs level.

## Section 4 Alternative Scenarios

### 4.1 Description of the Alternative Plan Scenarios

One of the critical roles of the SEA is to facilitate an evaluation of the likely environmental consequences of a range of alternative scenarios for accommodating future growth in Athy.

#### 4.1.1 Alternative Scenario 1: *Consolidation and Western Expansion*

Alternative Scenario 1 (see Figure 4.1) provides for the consolidation of the town centre and the development of additional lands to the west of the town centre and Grand Canal. It:

- Concentrates mixed high density development on available sites in the town centre;
- Concentrates additional mixed Residential and Employment uses to the west of the town centre and Grand Canal; and,
- Provides for the potential relocation of the Tegral and Greencore companies and the redevelopment of these sites for mixed uses thereby extending the town centre and bringing higher density employment uses closer to the residential area of Ardrew to the west of the town.

#### 4.1.2 Alternative Scenario 2: *Consolidation and Eastern Expansion*

Alternative Scenario 2 (see Figure 4.2) provides for the consolidation of the town centre and the development of additional lands to the east of the town centre and the railway line. It:

- Concentrates mixed high density development on available sites in the town centre; and,
- Concentrates additional mixed Residential and Employment uses to the east of the town centre and the railway line.

#### 4.1.3 Alternative Scenario 3: *Peripheral Expansion*

Alternative Scenario 3 (see Figure 4.3) provides for the peripheral expansion of the Town. It:

- Applies Residential and Employment land use zoning objectives from areas beyond the existing development envelope to lands bordering the administrative boundary of the Town Council.
- Provides for development which is led by market demand, with planning applications would be evaluated on a case by case basis.

#### 4.1.4 Alternative Scenario 4: *Consolidation and Limited Expansion around Existing Development Envelope*

Alternative Scenario 4 (see Figure 4.4) provides for the consolidation of the town centre and limited expansion of lands generally adjacent to the existing development envelope. It:

- Concentrates mixed high density development on available sites in the town centre
- Limits the zoning of lands to the quantity required to fulfil the relevant targets for Athy as set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines and the Draft Kildare County Development Plan.
- Decisions with regard to which lands are dezoned from the current 2006-2012 Plan are made according to the presence or absence of key environmental considerations including:
  - The River Barrow candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC);
  - Flood Risk; and,
  - Proximity to the town centre and public transport links.

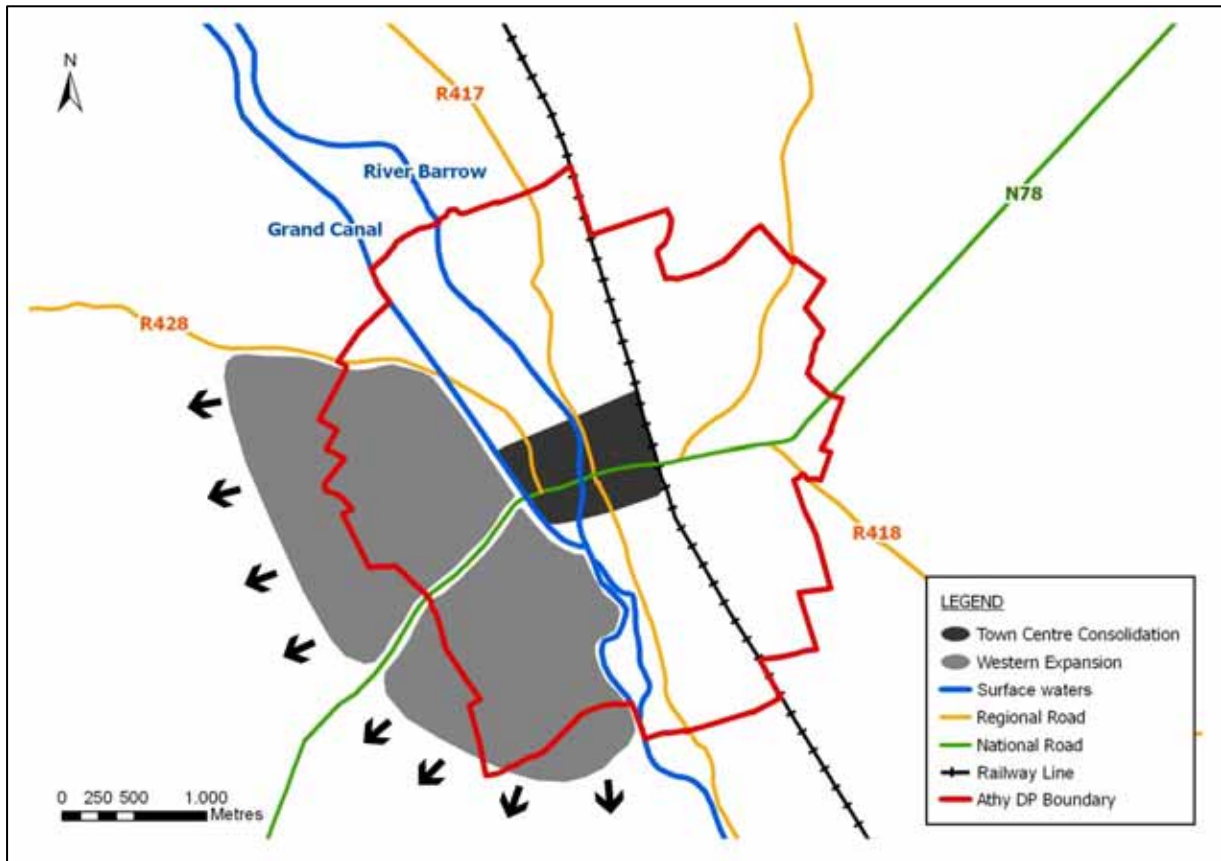


Figure 4.1 Scenario 1: Consolidation and Western Expansion

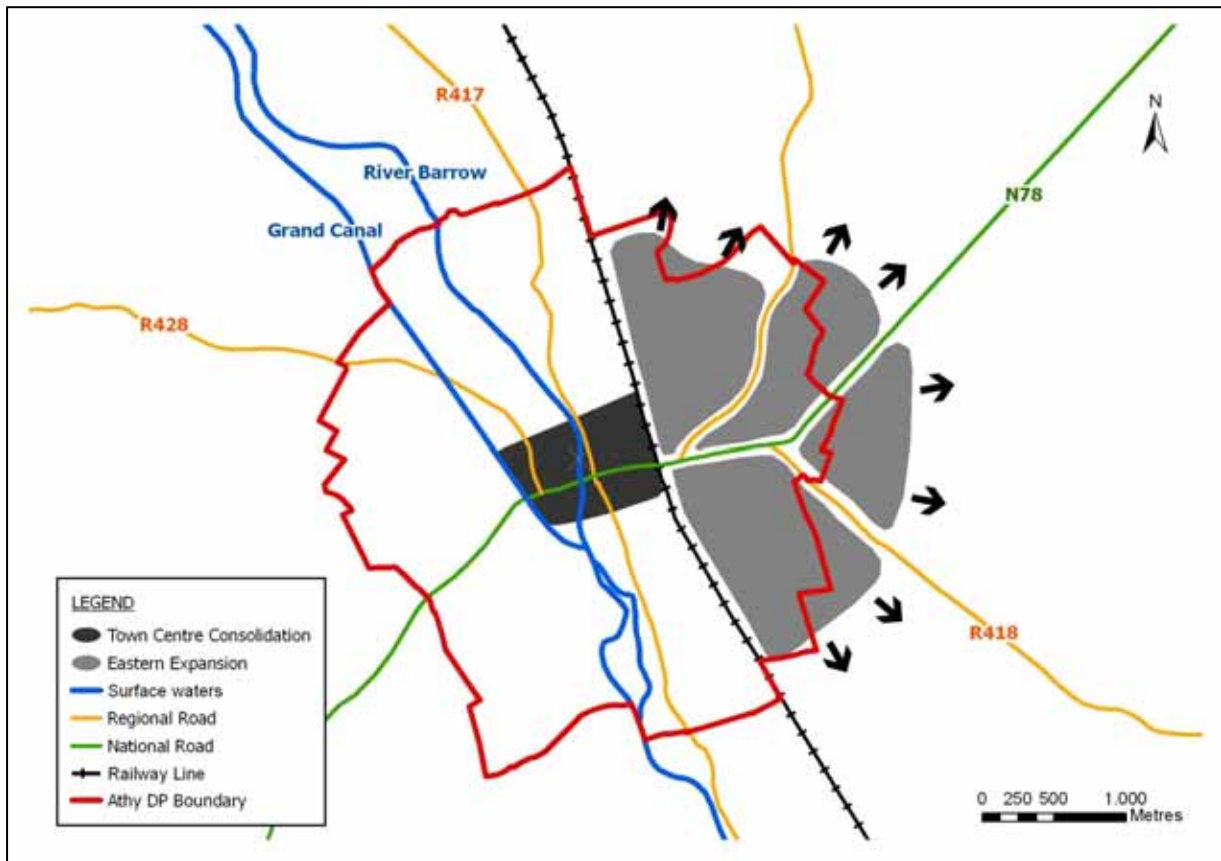


Figure 4.2 Scenario 2: Consolidation and Eastern Expansion

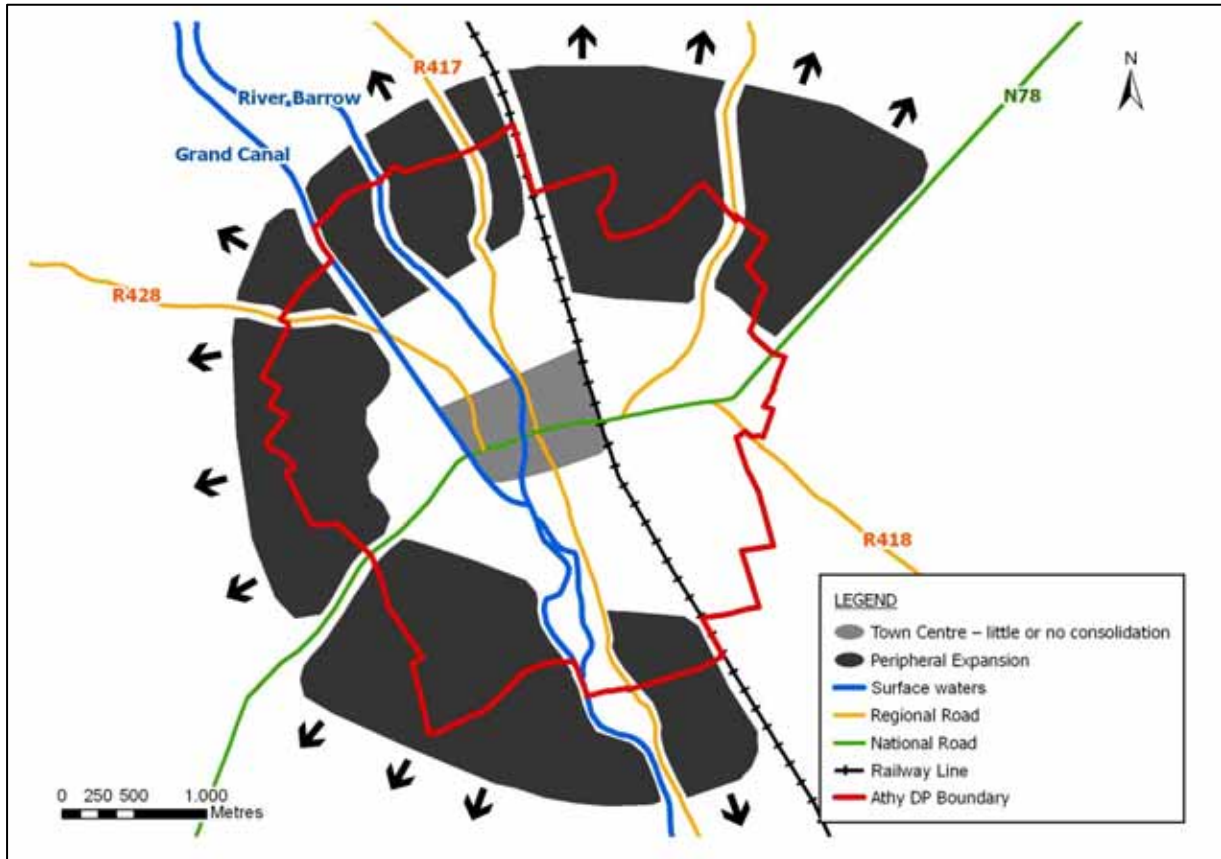


Figure 4.3 Scenario 3: *Peripheral Expansion*

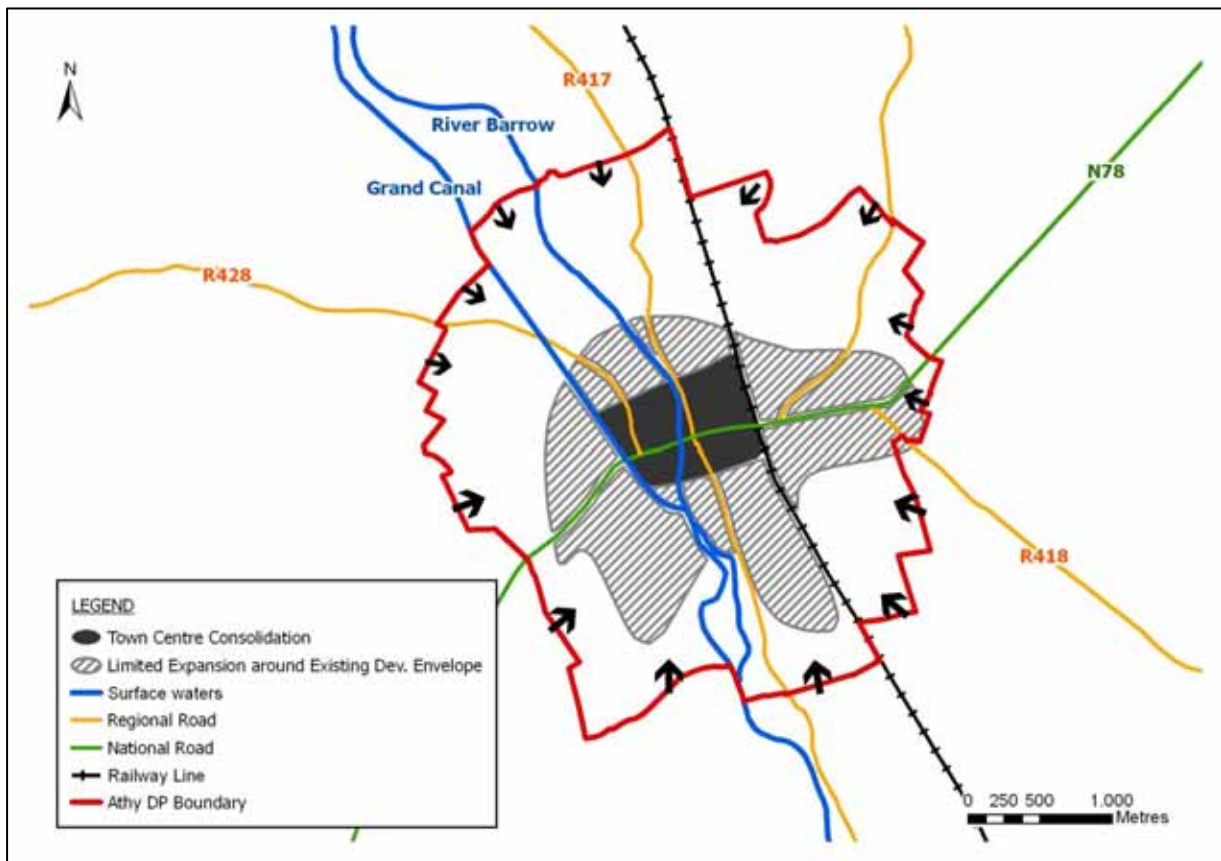


Figure 4.4 Scenario 4: *Consolidation and Limited Expansion around Existing Development Envelope*

## 4.2 Evaluation of the Alternative Scenarios

### 4.2.1 Methodology

This section summarises the evaluation of the Alternative Scenarios which is found in Section 7 of the Environmental Report. Scenarios are evaluated in a succinct and focused way for both planning and environmental impacts against both the existing environment and the Strategic Environmental Objectives (both of which are summarised within Section 3).

### 4.2.2 Alternative Scenario 1: *Consolidation and Western Expansion*

#### **Car Dependency, Travel Related Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Brownfield vs. Greenfield Development**

By providing for the consolidation of the town centre thereby encouraging brownfield development, Scenario 1 would be likely to contribute towards an uptake in more sustainable modes of transport. Contributing towards this uptake would contribute towards efforts to minimise:

- energy usage for transport;
- travel related emissions to air; and,
- increases in car dependency.

However, by providing for significant additional zoning to the west of the town centre, this scenario could dilute the consolidation of the town centre and limit associated brownfield development and increases in sustainable mobility.

#### **Water Services, Water Resources and Human Health**

Development within the town centre provided for by this Scenario would be conveniently served by drinking water services and by the existing waste water treatment plant - thereby contributing to the protection of water resources and human health. Although there is waste water treatment capacity available, an upgrade of the collection network is required. An upgrade of drinking water supply would also be needed.

It would be more difficult to serve the western expansion of the town with water services; consequently, this expansion would potentially conflict with the protection of water resources, drinking water and human health.

A potential conflict between this scenario and the minimisation of flood risk and consequently human health could occur.

A potential conflict between this scenario and human health could arise as a result of the development of potentially contaminated sites.

#### **Flood Risk**

A potential conflict between this scenario and the minimisation of flood risk and consequently human health could occur.

#### **Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna**

Town centre consolidation potentially conflicts with sensitivities including the River Barrow cSAC and ecologically sensitive non-designated sites. The western expansion provided for by this scenario potentially conflicts with ecological connectivity - including that of the Grand Canal pNHA.

## **Landscape**

Town centre consolidation provided for by this scenario potentially conflicts with protected views along Leinster Street and along the River Barrow while the western expansion potentially conflicts with protected views along the Grand Canal.

## **Cultural Heritage**

Potential conflicts between archaeological - including the Zone of Archaeological Potential - and architectural heritage and the consolidation of the town centre would be likely to occur. Conflicts between cultural heritage and the western expansion would also be likely to occur.

### **4.2.3 Alternative Scenario 2: *Consolidation and Eastern Expansion***

#### **Car Dependency, Travel Related Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Brownfield vs. Greenfield Development**

By providing for the consolidation of the town centre thereby encouraging brownfield development, Scenario 2 would be likely to contribute towards an uptake in more sustainable modes of transport. Contributing towards this uptake would contribute towards efforts to minimise:

- energy usage for transport;
- travel related emissions to air; and,
- increases in car dependency.

However, by providing for significant additional zoning to the east of the town centre, this scenario could dilute the consolidation of the town centre and limit associated brownfield development and increases in sustainable mobility.

#### **Water Services, Water Resources and Human Health**

Development within the town centre provided for by this Scenario would be conveniently served by drinking water services and by the existing waste water treatment plant - thereby contributing to the protection of water resources and human health. Although there is waste water treatment capacity available, an upgrade of the collection network is required. An upgrade of drinking water supply would also be needed.

It would be more difficult to serve the eastern expansion of the town with water services; consequently, this expansion would potentially conflict with the protection of water resources, drinking water and human health.

A potential conflict between this scenario and the minimisation of flood risk and consequently human health could occur.

A potential conflict between this scenario and human health could arise as a result of the development of potentially contaminated sites.

#### **Flood Risk**

A potential conflict between this scenario and the minimisation of flood risk and consequently human health could occur.

#### **Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna**

Town centre consolidation potentially conflicts with sensitivities including the River Barrow cSAC and ecologically sensitive non-designated sites. The eastern expansion provided for by this scenario potentially conflicts with ecological connectivity.



## **Landscape**

Town centre consolidation provided for by this scenario potentially conflicts with protected views along Leinster Street and along the River Barrow.

## **Cultural Heritage**

Potential conflicts between archaeological - including the Zone of Archaeological Potential - and architectural heritage and the consolidation of the town centre would be likely to occur. Conflicts between cultural heritage and the eastern expansion would also be likely to occur.

### **4.2.4 Alternative Scenario 3: *Peripheral Expansion***

#### **Car Dependency, Travel Related Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Brownfield vs. Greenfield Development**

By not consolidating the existing town centre, not encouraging brownfield development and providing for new development on peripheral greenfield sites, away from the town centre and public transport nodes, Scenario 3 would be likely to result in more unsustainable modes of transport and would increase:

- energy usage for transport;
- travel related emissions to air; and,
- levels of car dependency.

These environmental conflicts associated with these increases would not be likely to be mitigated.

#### **Water Services, Water Resources and Human Health**

Peripheral development would not be served by public waste water treatment or drinking water services thereby conflicting with water resources, drinking water and human health - these conflicts would be unlikely to be fully mitigated.

A potential conflict between this scenario and the minimisation of flood risk and consequently human health could occur.

A potential conflict between this scenario and human health could arise as a result of the development of potentially contaminated sites.

#### **Flood Risk**

A potential conflict between this scenario and the minimisation of flood risk and consequently human health could occur.

#### **Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna**

Peripheral development potentially conflicts directly and cumulatively with sensitivities including the River Barrow cSAC and the Grand Canal pNHA. Peripheral development would also cumulatively conflict with ecological connectivity - these conflicts would be unlikely to be fully mitigated.

## **Landscape**

Peripheral development would result in significant change to the landscape surrounding the existing development envelope of the town.

## **Cultural Heritage**

Potential conflicts between archaeological in the peripheries of the Plan area and potential conflicts architectural heritage in the town centre (in the long term, arising from a lack of development and subsequent decay) would be likely to occur. By not providing for the consolidation of the town centre this scenario would be likely indirectly contribute towards the protection of the Zone of Archaeological Protection.

### **4.2.5 Alternative Scenario 4: *Consolidation and Limited Expansion around Existing Development Envelope***

#### **Car Dependency, Travel Related Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Brownfield vs. Greenfield Development**

By providing for the consolidation of the town centre thereby encouraging brownfield development and only allowing limited expansion, Scenario 4 would be likely to help to maximise the uptake in more sustainable modes of transport. Maximising this uptake would help to minimise:

- energy usage for transport;
- travel related emissions to air; and,
- increases in car dependency.

#### **Water Services, Water Resources and Human Health**

Development within the town centre and limited development generally adjacent to the existing development envelope provided for by this Scenario would be conveniently served by drinking water services and by the existing waste water treatment plant - thereby contributing to the protection of water resources and human health. Although there is waste water treatment capacity available, an upgrade of the collection network is required. An upgrade of drinking water supply would also be needed.

A potential conflict between this scenario and the minimisation of flood risk and consequently human health could occur.

Potential conflict between this scenario and human health could arise as a result of the development of potentially contaminated sites.

#### **Flood Risk**

A potential conflict between this scenario and the minimisation of flood risk and consequently human health could occur<sup>14</sup>.

#### **Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna**

Town centre consolidation potentially conflicts with sensitivities including the River Barrow cSAC and ecologically sensitive non-designated sites. The limited expansion provided for by this scenario potentially conflicts with ecological connectivity - including that of the Grand Canal pNHA.

#### **Landscape**

Town centre consolidation and limited expansion provided for by this scenario potentially conflicts with protected views along Leinster Street, the River Barrow and the Grand Canal.

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<sup>14</sup> SEOs HH1 & W3

## **Cultural Heritage**

Potential conflicts between archaeological - including the Zone of Archaeological Potential - and architectural heritage and the consolidation of the town centre would be likely to occur.

### **4.2.6 Evaluation of Alternative Scenarios against SEOs**

The main Environmental Report provides an evaluation of each of the alternative development scenarios for the Draft Plan against the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs).

Scenario 3 *Peripheral Expansion* would be likely to conflict the most with SEOs, having 9 probable conflicts which would unlikely to be mitigated. This is because consolidation of the existing town centre would be unlikely to occur under this Scenario, with development provided for at the periphery of the town and on greenfield sites.

Scenario 4 *Consolidation and Limited Expansion around Existing Development Envelope* would be likely to: improve the status of SEOs the most, more than Scenarios 1, 2 and 3; and, potentially conflict with SEOs the least, less than Scenarios 1, 2 and 3. This is because this Scenario provides for the consolidation of the town centre and only provides limited expansion of lands which are generally adjacent to the existing development envelope.

## **4.3 The Selected Alternative Development Scenario for the Draft Plan which was submitted to the Elected Members**

The Alternatives that were examined were produced and evaluated at an earlier - more embryonic - stage to facilitate the evaluation and selection of a plan - having regard, *inter alia* to environmental consequences.

The Alternative Scenario for the Draft Development Plan which was chosen to be developed for the Draft Development Plan by the plan-making team and which was submitted to the Elected Members under Section 11 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010 was Scenario 4 (*Consolidation and Limited Expansion around Existing Development Envelope*) – this Scenario achieves a good balance between potential environmental impact and conformance with relevant higher level planning objectives including the Draft County Development Plan 2011-2017.

In total, the Draft Development Plan which was submitted to the Elected Members provided for the de-zoning of approx. 130 hectares of land from that which is zoned in the current 2006-2012 Plan.

With the integration of appropriate mitigation measures (including those which are identified on Table 5.1 of this report) potential adverse environmental effects which could arise as a result of implementing Alternative Scenario 4 would be likely to be avoided, reduced or offset.

Alternative Scenario 4 was chosen to be developed for the Draft Development Plan by the plan-making team having regard to both:

1. The environmental effects which were identified by the Strategic Environmental Assessment; and,
2. Planning - including social and economic - effects.

## **4.4 The Draft Development Plan which was chosen by the Elected Members to be placed on public display**

The Draft Development Plan which was chosen by the Elected Members to be placed on public display is a mix of parts of all 4 Alternative Scenarios, providing for expansion of the town in eastern areas, in western areas, at peripheral greenfield sites and at areas around the existing development envelope. The Core Strategy Map from the Draft Development Plan is shown on Figure 4.5 while the Land Use Zoning Map is shown on Figure 4.6.

The Draft Development Plan which was submitted to the Elected Members provided for the dezoning of approx. 130 hectares of land from that which is zoned in the current 2006-2012 Plan. The Elected Members decided against the dezoning these lands by the Draft Plan to be placed on public display.

The likely significant effects of implementing the Draft Development Plan are detailed below.

### **Car Dependency, Travel Related Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Brownfield vs. Greenfield Development**

By providing for significant New Residential zoning in eastern, western and peripheral areas, the Draft Development Plan would be likely to dilute the consolidation of the town centre and limit associated brownfield development and increases in sustainable mobility. The Plan would be likely to result in more unsustainable modes of transport and would increase:

- energy usage for transport;
- travel related emissions to air; and,
- levels of car dependency.

Limited consolidation is contributed towards by the inclusion of policies and objectives favourable to the achievement of brownfield development, infill etc. however with the extent and location of New Residential zoning provided for, it is unlikely that significant levels of consolidation would be achieved.

### **Water Services, Water Resources and Human Health**

It will be difficult to serve the eastern, western and peripheral expansion of the Town into lands that are zoned as New Residential with water services: consequently the Draft Development Plan would potentially conflict with the protection of water resources, drinking water and human health. Investment will be required in order to comply with policies and objectives which have been integrated into the Draft Development Plan for the adequate and appropriate provision of water services and the protection of environmental components including water resources and human health. Additional waste water treatment capacity would have to be provided and the collection network would have to be expanded into the east, west and periphery of the Town. An upgrade of drinking water supply would also be needed. A potential conflict between this scenario and human health could arise as a result of the development of potentially contaminated sites.

### **Flood Risk**

The zoning contained for certain lands in the Draft Development Plan chosen to be placed on public display does not adhere to all the recommendations contained in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. The lands are identified as C3, C4, C5 and C32 in Section 4.4 of the SFRA and are zoned as New Residential. The SFRA identifies that: "These lands did not pass the Justification Test. It is recommended that in each case, the entire parcel be reclassified for water compatible development only".

Although mitigation measures integrated into the Draft Development Plan are retained and would mitigate some effects, significant increases in flood risk and associated potential impacts upon human health could occur.

### **Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna**

The eastern, western and peripheral expansion provided for by the Draft Plan and any town centre development which occurred would potentially conflict with ecological connectivity - directly and cumulatively -, including that of the Grand Canal pNHA and the River Barrow cSAC. Residual adverse effects on ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats would be likely to remain, especially in the more peripheral areas.

The footprint of the land use zoning contained in the Draft Plan does not directly conflict with the protection of the River Barrow cSAC; policies and objectives which have been integrated into the

Draft provide for the protection of this site and the Natura 2000 network. The extent of New Residential zoning provided for by the Draft Plan chosen to be put on public display potentially conflicts with the provision of adequate and appropriate waste water treatment and collection infrastructure and therefore potentially conflicts with the protection of the River Barrow cSAC, however; in order to help ensure that adequate and appropriate waste water treatment and collection infrastructure is provided, policies and objectives have been integrated into the Draft Development Plan. Compliance with these measures will require investment.

### Landscape

The western expansion of the Town potentially conflicts with protected views along the Grand Canal. Peripheral development would result in significant change to the landscape surrounding the existing development envelope of the town. Any town centre development would potentially conflict with protected views along Leinster Street and along the River Barrow.

### Cultural Heritage

Potential conflicts between archaeological in the peripheries of the Plan area and potential conflicts architectural heritage in the town centre (in the long term, arising from a lack of development and subsequent decay) would be likely to occur. By failing to achieve significant levels of consolidation within the town centre this scenario would be likely indirectly contribute towards the protection of the Zone of Archaeological Protection.

### Evaluation against SEOs

The table below provides an evaluation of each of the alternative development scenarios for the Draft Plan against the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs).

Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs - would be mitigated
<p><b>CH1</b> (indirect contribution towards the protection of the zone of archaeological potential in the town centre as it is unlikely that significant levels of consolidation would be achieved)</p>	<p><b>C1 C2 S1</b> (development would be spread throughout the administrative area of the Council; car dependency and travel related greenhouse gas emissions would increase)</p> <p><b>B2</b> (residual adverse effects on ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats would be likely to remain, especially in the more peripheral areas)</p> <p><b>M1 W1 W2 M2 HH1</b> (more peripheral development would not be served by water services thereby conflicting with water resources, drinking water and human health - in the absence of significant extra investment these conflicts would be unlikely to be fully mitigated)</p> <p><b>W3 HH1</b> (conflict with minimisation of flood risk; recommendations contained in Section 4.4 of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment not adhered to)</p>	<p><b>CH1 CH2</b> (potential conflicts with archaeological heritage in the peripheries and potential conflicts with architectural heritage arising from decay of the town centre)</p> <p><b>B1 B2</b> (development potentially conflicts directly and cumulatively with sensitivities including the River Barrow cSAC and the Grand Canal pNHA)</p> <p><b>L1</b> (peripheral development would result in significant change to the landscape surrounding the existing development envelope of the town)</p> <p><b>HH1</b> (potential conflict arising from potentially contaminated sites)</p>

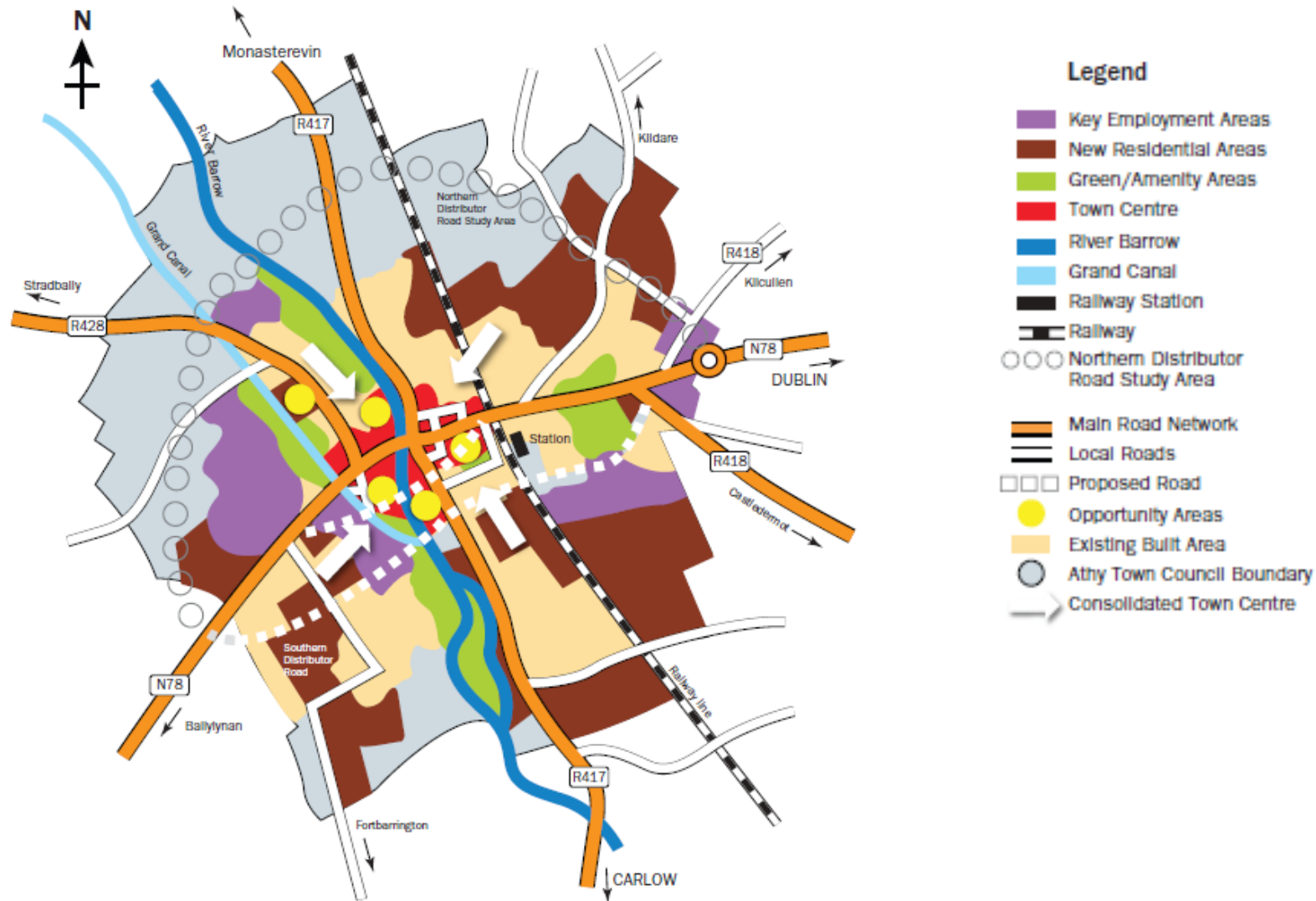


Figure 4.5 Core Strategy Map from the Draft Development Plan



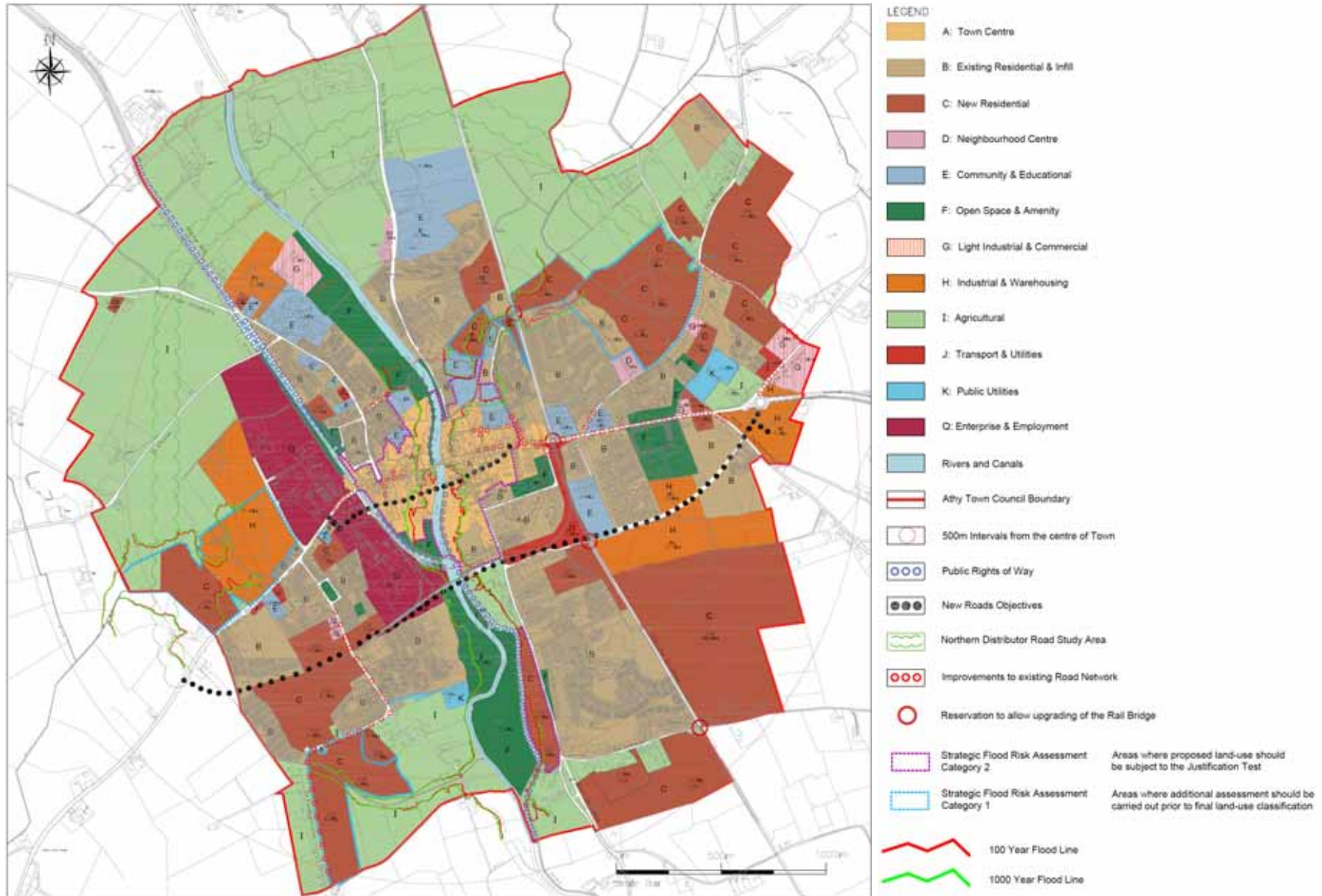


Figure 4.6 Zoning Map from the Draft Development Plan which was chosen by the Elected Members to be placed on public display

## Section 5 Mitigation and Monitoring Measures

### 5.1 Mitigation

Mitigation measures are measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse impacts on the environment of implementing the Development Plan.

Likely significant beneficial effects of implementing the Draft Plan have been and will be maximised and potential adverse effects have been and will be avoided, reduced or offset through:

- The consideration of alternatives for the Draft Plan;
- Mitigation by Addition of Policies and Objectives; and,
- Mitigation measures arising from the findings of the Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (note that not all of the SFRA recommendations have been integrated into the Plan - see Section 4.4).

The mitigation measures may be incorporated into the briefing of design teams as well as the subsequent design, specification and development management of the landuses to be accommodated within the Plan area.

Overleaf is a summary table outlining likely significant effects and corresponding mitigation and monitoring measures.

### 5.2 Monitoring

The SEA Directive requires that the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes are monitored. The Environmental Report contains proposals for monitoring the Plan which are adopted alongside the Plan. Monitoring enables, at an early stage, the identification of unforeseen adverse effects and the undertaking of appropriate remedial action. In addition to this, monitoring can also play an important role in assessing whether the Development Plan is achieving its environmental objectives and targets - measures which the Development Plan can help work towards - whether these need to be re-examined and whether the proposed mitigation measures are being implemented.

The Environmental Report identifies indicators - which allow quantitative measures of trends and progress in the environment over time. Measurements for indicators generally come from existing monitoring sources. A preliminary monitoring evaluation report on the effects of implementing the Development Plan will be prepared within two years of the making of the plan. The Council is responsible for collating existing relevant monitored data, the preparation of a monitoring report, the publication of this report and, if necessary, the carrying out of corrective action.

The following summary table shows indicators which were selected for monitoring the various environmental components. Also identified on the table are the likely significant effects - if unmitigated - and corresponding mitigation measures.

**Table 5.1 SEA Summary Table: Likely Significant Effects, Mitigation Measures and Indicators for Monitoring**

Likely Significant Effect, if unmitigated	Mitigation Measure Reference(s) from Plan	Primary Indicator(s) for Monitoring
Loss of biodiversity with regard to Natura 2000 Sites and habitats and species listed under Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive	Policies: CS 14, GT 15, NH 1, NH 2, NH 6 and NH7.  Objective NHO 7.	B1: Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive
Loss of biodiversity with regard to ecological connectivity and stepping stones	Policies: CS 13, NH 12 and NH 21.	B2: Percentage loss of functional connectivity to macro-corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat which are important on a Town and environs level without remediation as a result of implementation of the Plan – as evidenced from a resurvey of CORINE mapping
Spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from exposure to incompatible land uses	Policies: MA1, N 1, N 2 and WM 5.  Objective ENO 4.  See also measures which have been included under Water Services (Waste Water) and Water Services (Drinking Water).	HH1: Occurrence (any) of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors as identified by the Health Service Executive and Environmental Protection Agency
Failure to maximise the sustainable reuse of brownfield lands	Policies: CS 8, EDP6, HP6, UR 1 and UR 2.	S1: Area of brownfield lands developed over the Development Plan's lifespan
Adverse impacts upon the status of surface and ground water bodies	Policies: WQ 1, WQ2, WQ 4 and WQ6.  Objective: WDO4.  Also see measures in this section under Water Services (Waste Water).	W1: Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009) W2: Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC
Flooding	Policies: HP28, SW1, SW3 and LU4.  Objectives: WDO13 and WDO14.	W3i: Number of developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk W3ii: Compliance with the recommendations contained in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment being undertaken for the Plan

Likely Significant Effect, if unmitigated	Mitigation Measure Reference(s) from Plan	Primary Indicator(s) for Monitoring
Inadequate waste water treatment for new populations	Policies WW3, WW4 and WS1.  Objectives: WDO2, WDO3 and WDO8.	M1i: Number of new developments granted permission which can be adequately served with waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan M1ii: Preparation of a Water Services Strategic Plan - in compliance with the Water Services Act - for the functional area of the Council
Inadequate drinking water supply for new populations & Reduction in water quality which would present a potential danger to human health	Policies: WS1, WS2, WS3, WS4, WS6, WS10 and WQ7.  Objective: WDO5.	M2i: Number of non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health M2ii: Preparation of a Water Services Strategic Plan - in compliance with the Water Services Act - for the functional area of the Council
Increases in travel related greenhouse gas emissions and increases in car dependency	Policies: TM 3, WC 1, WC 4 and WC 7.	C1i: Percentage of population within the Plan area travelling to work or school by public transport or non-mechanical means C1ii: Average distance travelled to work or school by the population within the Plan area
Effects on archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, including Zones of Archaeological Potential	Policies: CS 12, AH1, AH 3, AH 4 and AH 6.	CH1: Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Zones of Archaeological Potential - (and their context of the above within the surrounding landscape where relevant) protected
Effects on architectural heritage including entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas	Policies: CS 12, PS 1, PS 7 and ACA1.  Objective AHO1.	CH2i: Percentage of entries to the Record of Protected Structures (and/or their context within the surrounding landscape where relevant) protected CH2ii: Number of additions to the Record of Protected Structures and the number of additional ACAs
Visual impacts	Policies: TE 5, VP 1 and VP 2.	L1: Number of complaints received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable impacts on the landscape resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan