

CHAPTER 6

Retail



Retail

Aim: To promote and encourage enhancement and expansion of retail floorspace and town centre functions in Naas, to reflect its role as a Major Town Centre and County town, and further develop its competitiveness and importance as one of the key retail centres in the county and in the wider Greater Dublin Area.

6.1 POLICY CONTEXT AND RETAIL HIERARCHY

The preparation of this chapter is informed by the Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016, the Draft Kildare County Retail Strategy 2008-2016, published in 2010, and the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017.

The review and update of the County Retail Strategy was undertaken to ensure that the retail policies in the Development Plan are in accordance with all national, regional and local planning frameworks. It is consistent with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government's (DoEHLG) Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (RPG) (2005) and the GDA Retail Strategy (2008).

In order that the town's Retail Strategy is consistent with the Regional Retail Strategy, the timeframe of 2009-2016 has been adopted rather than that of the Town Development Plan.

As required by the Retail Planning Guidelines, the County Retail Strategy covers the matters that should be included in Development Plans, namely:

- Confirmation of the retail hierarchy, the role of centres and the size of main town centres.
- Definition in the Development Plan of the boundaries of the core shopping area of town centres.
- A broad assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace.
- Strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development.
- Preparation of policies and action initiatives to encourage the improvement of town centres.
- Identification of criteria for the assessment of retail developments.

Naas along with Newbridge is designated as a Level 2 Major Town Centre and County Town Centre (which is the level below Dublin City Centre) in the Greater Dublin Area Regional Retail Hierarchy. This designation has been reaffirmed in the County Retail Hierarchy in the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017.



6.2 RETAIL PROVISION IN NAAS

Although the largest town in the County, Naas has until recently been second to Newbridge in respect of its quantum of retail floorspace. Naas Environs is included as part of Naas town for the purposes of the retail strategy and assessment of retail floorspace. In 2000, Naas had a total net floorspace (excluding vacancies) of 10,154m² comprising 48.7% of convenience and 51.3% of mainstream comparison floorspace – this was less than half of Newbridge's total. This position has significantly changed as a result of the Globe and Newhall retail parks. This position will further change with the Corban's Lane-Naas Shopping Centre, which is partially constructed as of May 2011. Together with the town and environs, Naas has emerged as the largest retail centre in the county.

The County Retail Strategy identifies that the town currently has a total retail floorspace of 48,596m² net, comprising 10,008m² (20.6%) convenience, 17,172m² (35.3%) comparison and 21,416m² bulky goods (44.1%). This represents almost a five times increase in total net floorspace since 2000. The town's share of total floorspace in the county has increased from 15% to 28%.

The 2001 GDA Retail Strategy floorspace survey identified that Naas had less than 2.0% of its total floorspace vacant – an almost negligible amount.

The 2009 health check found that this position had changed with vacancies having increased considerably. This is a matter of concern for the town which requires to be redressed.

Since 2001, Naas has witnessed an improvement in its convenience offer through the introduction of Marks and Spencer Simply Food, which anchors the Naas Town Centre scheme, and Aldi and Lidl on the Newbridge Road. However its main food convenience floorspace still has not experienced the significant improvement envisaged

or required. The two main foodstores – Tesco and Superquinn are relatively small and are of a poor quality and format, which may lead people to travel elsewhere to meet their main food shopping needs. This position has changed through the opening of the Tesco anchored retail centre at Monread, and the proposed relocation of Superquinn from the Main Street to the former VEC site on the Newbridge Road. These proposals will open up further retail development opportunities within and on the edge of the town centre.

As the figures indicate, Naas' retail profile is dominated by bulky goods floorspace which accounts for some 44.1% of the total, growing from a negligible amount in 2001. As a result of the quality and quantum of the town's retail park offer, it is now one of the most important bulky



goods shopping destinations in the GDA. The combined mainstream comparison and bulky goods net floorspace totals 38,588m², which is 79.4% of total floorspace in the town. It accounts for 32.4% of total comparison floorspace in the county.

In addition, there remains a substantial quantum of retail floorspace which has extant planning permissions. However, given the economic climate over the last number of years, this is unlikely to be constructed at the scale initially envisaged.

6.3 STRATEGY

The strategy for retail development is to provide a retail planning framework and to provide comprehensive guidance in relation to retail development to assist the formulation and assessment of development proposals.

For future retail development of Naas, the emphasis is on ensuring that Naas sustains and enhances its role and importance in the shopping patterns of local people, the county, GDA and nationally. This will be largely driven by the effectiveness of realising significant enhancement of mainstream comparison shopping in Naas town centre.

The strategy seeks to ensure that the following aims are achieved:

- The town remains a key regional destination for bulky goods shopping;
- There is an improvement to main food shopping;
- The issue of traffic congestion is addressed;
- There is continued investment in the quality of the public realm;
- There is an expansion of Naas' tourism and leisure offer, particularly that which is retail-related.



The key emphasis is for the town to grow into a destination of greater regional and inter-regional importance in securing internationally operated department stores and a greater range of middle and higher order high street comparison shops.

This Development Plan sets out the policies and objectives to guide achievement of these aims over the period of the Plan and beyond.

6.3.1 Core Retail Area

The Core Retail Area of Naas is shown in Map 6.1 Core Retail Area. The map provides guidance on the extent of the retail core area which consists of both sides of North and South Main Street, Poplar Square and Market Square and Fairgreen. The core shopping area will form the primary focus and preferred location for new retail development

Where it is not possible to provide for the form and scale of development that is required on a site within the core area then consideration can be given to sites on the edge of the core.

The priority for the town centre should be the delivery of middle and higher order comparison floorspace. This approach, consistent with the RPG, GDA Retail Strategy and County Retail Strategy guidance, is reinforced in the Development Plan.

6.3.2 Sequential Approach

The Sequential Approach is incorporated in the strategic policy framework for guiding new retail development. It recognises the importance of sustaining the retail importance, vitality and viability of town and village centres. Proposals for retail schemes in Naas are required to take due cognisance of this as follows:

- In the first instance, the priority should be in locating retail development in the town centre,
- If town centre locations are not readily available within a reasonable and realistic timescale then edge of centre sites should be looked to. In the Retail Planning Guidelines, these are defined as sites that are within 300 – 400 metres of the Core Retail Area,
- Only after the options for town centre and edge of centre sites are exhausted should out of centre locations and sites be considered.

6.4 ECONOMIC CONTEXT AND FUTURE RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

Survey results indicate that Naas is achieving its role and importance as a Level 2 Major Town Centre and County Town Centre in the Regional Retail Hierarchy. However, quantum is not the only issue in respect of GDA Level 2 centres if they are to sustain and improve their attraction and competitiveness. Although Naas is recognised for its quality women's clothes and shoe shops, it is still underperforming as a mainstream comparison shopping destination. It appears that shoppers travel to Whitewater Shopping Centre in Newbridge and Kildare Village Outlet Centre as opposed to Dublin as traditionally was the case.



The multiple anchored Naas Shopping Centre with 43 mall units, partially constructed at Corban's Lane combined with the mixed use scheme on Monread Road, when built in its entirety, will help to redress the imbalance. However as with Newbridge, Naas also needs to see internationally operated department stores and an increase in the range of middle and higher order high street comparison shops in the town centre if it is to realise its role and importance as a Level 2 centre in the county and wider GDA.

The current economic position has been taken into consideration in the preparation of the County Retail Strategy and in the assessment of the potential for additional retail floorspace in Naas. Retail planning needs to take account of immediate trends but given the long timeframes generally involved in retail proposals being delivered, then a longer perspective approach is needed. It is an approach that is consistent with that adopted in the GDA Retail Strategy.

6.5 RETAIL DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCEMENT

Naas possesses a unique heritage and streetscape, including the untapped potential of its hidden waterfront at the Canal Harbour area, however it is recognised that there has been a decline in the general ambience of the core retail area and an increase in vacancies in recent years. A particular issue is traffic congestion in the core retail area. There has also been an increase in non-retail uses on the Main Street in recent years. There is, therefore, a need to address these issues and creatively harness the assets that distinguish the town from other centres, to enable Naas to grow into a quality retail and leisure destination.

It is recognised that the quality and quantum of retail floorspace is not the only factor underpinning Naas' attraction as a place people want to live, work, invest in and visit. Key in this equation is the quality of the public realm and the design of new developments. Thus environmental improvements need to continue to ensure that the profile, role and attraction of Naas continue to be sustained and developed.

6.6 DISTRICT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES

The need for new retail centres in existing and new residential areas is recognised to ensure that needs are met in a more efficient, equitable and sustainable way. District and neighbourhood centres should complement rather than compete with or detract from the town centre. The appropriate size for a district centre will be determined by the Development Plan assessment criteria for retail developments.

Neighbourhood Centres are of more limited size and function. The Retail Planning Guidelines do not provide an indicative threshold but the emphasis is on meeting daily needs. They are likely to be anchored by a supermarket – be that a mainstream, symbol group, discounter or independent operator – with a net retail floorspace of up to 1,500m², depending on the particular local context and potential and have a limited range of non retail services, civic, community and commercial leisure floorspace. Again, the principle is on ensuring such centres complement rather than detract or displace retail or other activities from a town centre but add to the quality of life attraction of the centre as a whole for living, working and investing in. A number of sites within Naas are zoned specifically for neighbourhood centre use.

6.7 RETAIL WAREHOUSE PARKS

Naas is the County's prime location for bulky goods shopping. There is, however, evidence that the market for bulky goods is largely saturated. Although it is an objective to sustain Naas' role and importance as a key bulky goods shopping destination in the county and wider GDA, in response to market conditions and pressure for alternative forms of retailing, it is not proposed to zone additional lands for retail warehousing in the Development Plan. It is a position that will require to be monitored over the period of the Plan to ensure that the town and county sustain their attraction and competitiveness in this market sector.

To protect the vitality and viability of Naas town centre and avoid retail parks emerging as out of town shopping centres, alternative forms of shopping in retail parks have not been permitted. This responds to evidence noted in the RPGs that planned retail parks do not have any material impact on town centres provided that the range of goods sold is limited to truly bulky goods or goods generally sold in bulk. To remove the potential for any adverse impact on the town centre, the Council will continue to restrict by condition the range of goods sold in retail parks to the sale of bulky goods.

6.8 RETAIL DEVELOPMENT IN BUSINESS PARKS AND EMPLOYMENT AREAS

It is part of the core strategy of this Plan to promote mixed use sustainable development strategies that combine working, living, leisure, shopping and local services provision. In addition to being a more sustainable development strategy for major strategic greenfield and brownfield locations, the introduction of limited local shopping and services provision is an important ingredient in the attraction and competitiveness of such areas as locations for new residents, employers, workers and investors. To this end, they require to be incorporated in the mix for major new employment areas, within the context of the wider strategy for district, neighbourhood and local centres in Naas.

In respect of older employment areas, provision of limited retail space will only be permitted when it directly interfaces with residential areas and is shown to be part of a strategic approach. Any further retail floorspace will be restricted to the wholesale sector.

6.9 RE-USE AND REGENERATION OF DERELICT AND UNDERUTILISED LAND AND BUILDINGS

Re-use and regeneration of derelict/obsolete/under-utilised land and buildings in town centres is a sustainable and desirable objective. Within the town centre there are opportunities for new retail development. New retail development in backland and under-utilised sites in Naas town centre may pose challenges, particularly in backland areas. However, in respect of delivering a critical mass and quality of mainstream comparison floorspace, the town centre must be the priority location if it is to benefit through enhanced footfall and vitality. Both the Naas Town Centre and Naas Shopping Centre schemes demonstrate what can be achieved.

The potential for the re-use and regeneration of derelict buildings and brownfield or underutilised sites in the town centre should be promoted in the formulation of retail and mixed-use development proposals. Only where suitable and viable land and buildings cannot be found should alternative options be considered by applicants.



6.10 RETAILING IN TOURISM AND LEISURE

In addition to shopping, Naas Town Centre is a popular destination for eating, meeting and greeting and has a range of hotels, restaurants, cafés and public houses and high quality fashion shopping, drawing trade from its hinterland. It is recognised that the town centre has the scope and potential for its tourism and leisure role to be further enhanced. As the tourism economy is of considerable importance to the town, retail-related tourism requires developing a greater critical mass and profile in the interests of the attraction and competitiveness of the town.

6.11 NON-RETAIL USES IN THE CORE RETAIL AREA AND OTHER MAIN STREETS

While there have been improvements to the retail offer and environment of Naas town centre in recent years, the parallel introduction of non-retail and lower grade retail uses in the Core Retail Area and other main streets has changed the characteristics and ambience of the town centre and is a matter of concern to the Council and other stakeholders. Such uses include amusement/gaming Arcades, bookmakers, and hot fast-food outlets. It is recognised that the smaller retail footprints which prevail in Naas town centre do not in general meet the requirements of national and international retail operators and the space provides the opportunity for the introduction of alternative occupiers such as the aforementioned non retail uses. To maintain the integrity, critical mass of quality retail activity, vitality and viability of the Core Retail Area and other main streets in the town centre, the Council will seek to discourage the introduction of such uses in these areas.

6.12 INNOVATION IN THE TOWN'S RETAIL SECTOR

As has been demonstrated in recent years, the retail sector is one of the most dynamic and competitive in the economy. To ensure that Naas sustains and enhances its attraction and competitiveness as a retail destination, it must be proactive and responsive in respect of innovation in retailing and new retail market trends. Encouraging and facilitating innovation, be that in trading format, location or product, will assist the town to build on the success that has been established to date and, consequently its retail profile and attraction.

6.13 CRITERIA FOR RETAIL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

In accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines requirements, all applications for significant development should be assessed against a range of criteria. These criteria are set out in Chapter 13 Development Management. As a general rule, developments in excess of 1,000m² (gross) of convenience floor-space and 2,000m² (gross) of comparison will be assessed by the criteria.

Where an application is made within or adjacent to the designated Core Retail Area of the town it will not always be necessary to demonstrate the quantitative need for retail proposals in assessing such proposed developments.

In setting out the retail impact, the focus should be on how the scheme will add/detract from the quality of the town centre in respect of improving the retail offer, integration with the built fabric and quality of life within the town centre. However, this only applies to Naas town centre and edge of centre sites. Proposals not in compliance with the retail hierarchy should have a full assessment, specifically in respect of the tests of sequential approach. This guidance is in accordance with that provided in the GDA Retail Strategy.

In making applications for retail development above the threshold criteria, applicants should ensure that the proposal demonstrates compliance with the assessment criteria of both the Retail Planning Guidelines, the GDA Retail Strategy and complies with the County Retail Strategy.

If the retail proposal, whether significant or not, is in compliance with the Development Plan policies and proposals in all material respects, it should not be necessary for the applicant to provide additional supporting background studies. However, the onus is on an applicant to demonstrate convincingly that the proposal complies with the Development Plan. Where there is doubt on any aspect of a planning application, the Council will require a detailed justification related to the matter.

6.14 RETAIL POLICIES

6.14.1 Retail Hierarchy

It is the policy of the Council:

- RP1:** 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.
- RP2:** To ensure that the retail needs of the town's residents are met as fully as possible within Naas, taking cognisance of the county and GDA retail hierarchies, to enable the reduction in the required travel to meet these needs and in the interests of achieving greater social inclusion and accessibility to shopping and services across all sectors of the community.
- RP3:** To continue to address leakage of retail expenditure from the town and its catchment area by strengthening the range and quality of its retail offer.



RP4: To sustain and enhance the increase in comparison expenditure inflows to the town and develop its attraction as a key retail destination in the GDA and beyond through delivering a quality and quantum of middle and higher order comparison shopping within the town centre.

RP5: To ensure an efficient, equitable and sustainable spatial distribution of retail centres in Naas.

RP6: To promote the town centre as the primary retailing and commercial sector location in the town. Retailing will be promoted as the core function of the town centre.

6.14.2 Sequential Approach

It is the policy of the Council:

RP7: To guide retail development in accordance with the framework provided by the Sequential Approach to enable the vitality and viability of the town centre and other centres to be sustained and strengthened.

The Sequential Approach is incorporated in the strategic policy framework for guiding new retail

development in the Development Plan. It recognises the importance of sustaining the retail importance, vitality and viability of town and other centres.

Proposals for retail schemes in Naas shall take due cognisance of this as follows:

- a) In the first instance, the priority should be in locating retail development in the town centre
- b) If town centre locations are not readily available within a reasonable and realistic timescale then edge of centre sites should be examined. In the RPGs, these are defined as sites that are within 300 – 400 metres of the Core Retail Area; and,
- c) Only after the options for town centre and edge of centre sites are exhausted should out of centre locations and sites be considered.

RP8: To assess all applications for large retail development in accordance with the criteria set out above and in Chapter 13 Development Management of this Plan.

6.14.3 Core Retail Area

It is the policy of the Council:

- RP9:** To define the Core Retail Area of Naas Town Centre in accordance with Map 6.1: Core Retail Area.
- RP10:** To promote the Core Retail Area and the town centre as the primary focus and preferred location for new retail development.

6.14.4 Specific Retail

It is the policy of the Council:

- RP11:** To work in partnership with local organisations, businesses and people in the development of a vision for Naas town centre.
- RP12:** To identify and enlarge the scope for new retail development in Naas and assist the town to better achieve its role as a key retail and development centre in the county, regional and national retail hierarchies.
- RP13:** To sustain Naas' role and importance as a key bulky goods shopping destination in the county and wider GDA.
- RP14:** To align, as far as 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.
- RP15:** To maintain and improve the shopping experience by encouraging a range of convenience and/or comparison retail shops.
- RP16:** To ensure that best quality of design is achieved for all proposed retail developments and that design respects and enhances the specific characteristics of the town.
- RP17:** To encourage and facilitate innovation and diversification in the town's retail profile and offer.
- RP18:** To review and monitor retail trends that could have an influence on the performance of the sector within Naas and pursue harnessing new concepts and formats in the town's retail structure.

6.14.5 District and Neighbourhood Centres

It is the policy of the Council:

- RP19:** To encourage and facilitate the development of appropriately located retail centres to meet the needs of existing and growing areas of the town.
- RP20:** To identify appropriate locations for new retail centres within large established residential areas and where large scale residential development is planned over the timescale of the Development Plan.

6.14.6 Retail Warehouse Parks

It is the policy of the Council:

- RP21:** To retain retail warehouse parks for bulky goods and not permit convenience retail shopping in retail parks.
- RP22:** To retain retail warehouse parks for bulky goods and not permit mainstream comparison floorspace or retailers in retail parks.

6.14.7 Retail Development in Business Parks and Employment Areas

It is the policy of the Council:

- RP23:** 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.
- RP24:** 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 and individual main centres in the interests of ensuring that these locations are attractive to new residents, workers and employers.
- RP25:** To limit the level of shopping and local services provision in existing industrial estates or parks. 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.

6.14.8 Town Centre

It is the policy of the Council:

- RP26:** To encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings for retail and other town centre uses.
- RP27:** To work with and encourage landowners, retailers and development interests to realise the potential of town centre lands in Naas.
- RP28:** To pursue all avenues of funding to secure resources for the enhancement, renewal and regeneration of the public realm of Naas town centre.

6.14.9 Retailing and Tourism Policy

It is the policy of the Council:

- RP29:** To encourage and facilitate the development of retailing in the tourism and leisure sectors and encourage strong linkages between each.
- RP30:** To encourage and facilitate the delivery of tourism related retail developments and initiatives in and around Naas town centre.

6.14.10 Casual Trading

The Council will carry out its statutory functions under the Casual Trading Act 1995, including the issuing of permits and the designation of Casual Trading areas where the Council considers these to be necessary.

It is the policy of the Council:

- RP31:** To prosecute in situations where the Casual Trading Act is being contravened.
- RP32:** To take cognisance in the designations of areas for Casual Trading of the proper and sustainable development of Naas, 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.

6.14.11 Non Retail Use in Core Areas and Innovation

It is the policy of the Council:

- RP33:** 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.
- RP34:** To discourage non retail and lower grade retail uses, such as, take-aways 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 Naas town centre.
- RP35:** To require applicants to indicate their proposed hours of opening. Late opening of shops will only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that there will be no negative impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring areas.

6.15 RETAIL OBJECTIVES







It is an objective of the Council:

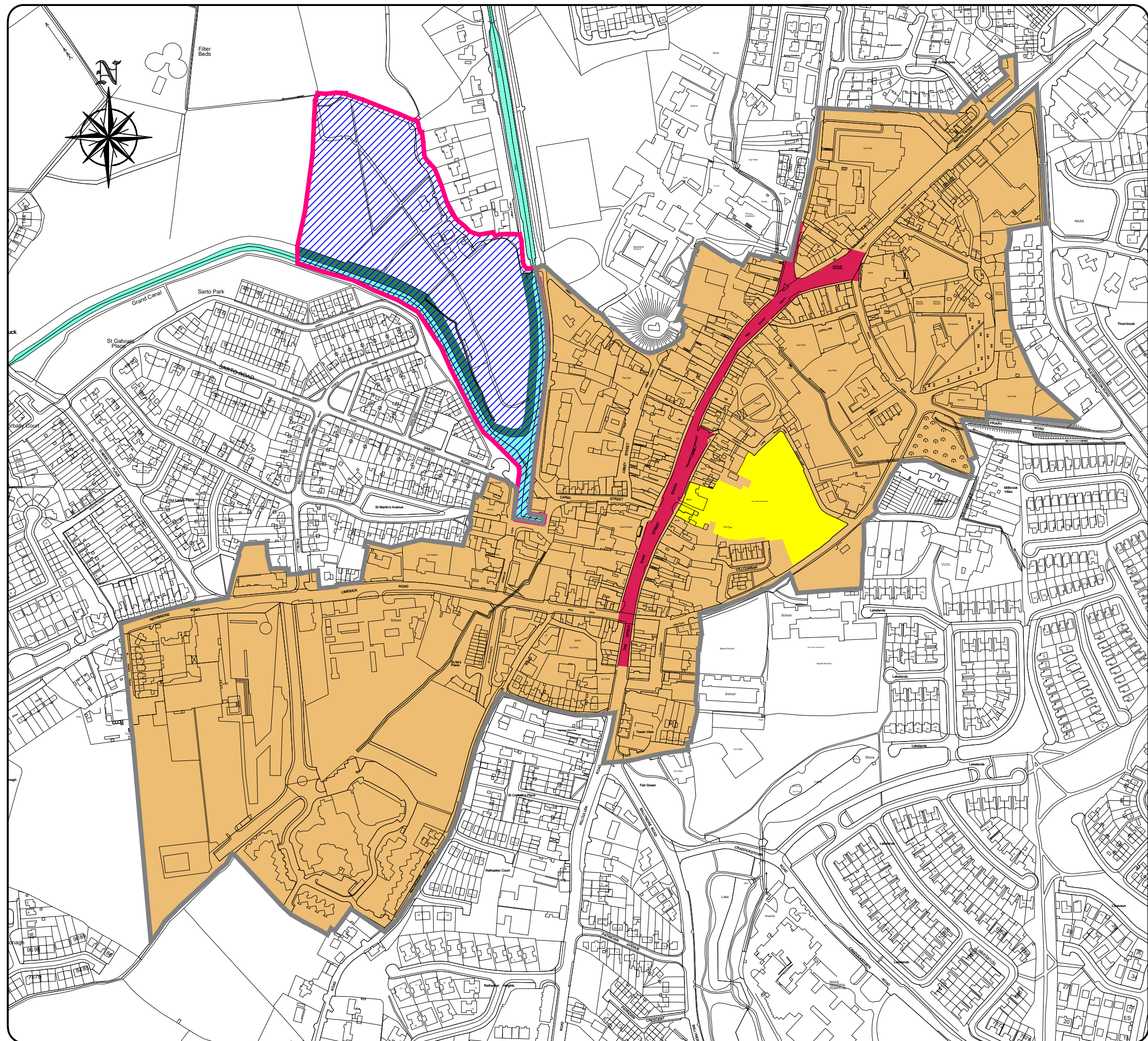
- RO1:** To reinforce the heart of the town as the priority location for new retail development, with quality of design and integration/linkage within the existing urban form/layout being fundamental prerequisites.
- RO2:** To encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings for retail and other town centre uses, having regard to the Sequential Approach outlined in this Development Plan.
- RO3:** To encourage and facilitate the preservation and enhancement of the retail and services role of Naas.



Naas Town Development Plan
2011 - 2017

LEGEND

-  Town Centre
-  Lands subject to future Local Area Plan
-  Core Retail Area
-  Proposed Retail Area
-  Open Space & Amenity
-  Canal



Core Retail Area

Scale: N.T.S.

Map Ref.: 6.1

Date: 6th June 2011

Drawing No: 200/11/528

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