

VARIATION REPORT

FOR THE

PROPOSED VARIATION NO. 1

TO THE

ATHY TOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2012 – 2018

For: **Kildare County Council**
Áras Chill Dara
Devoy Park
Naas
County Kildare



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1.1 Introduction

Kildare County Council has prepared Proposed Variation No. 1 to the Athy Town Development Plan 2012 – 2018 under Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). This report sets out the details and reasons for the proposed variation to the Athy Town Development Plan 2012 – 2018. A concurrent variation process is under way in respect of the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017.

1.2 Legislative Requirements

Under Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the planning authority may at any time, for stated reasons, decide to make a variation of a development plan. The planning authority is required to send notice and copies of the proposed variation to a range of statutory bodies including government departments and other agencies as required by the Planning and Development Acts and to publish notice of the proposed variation of the development plan in one or more newspapers circulating in the area.

1.3 Public Consultation

A copy of the Proposed Variation No. 1 to the Athy Town Development Plan 2012 – 2018, together with the Strategic Environmental Assessment Determination and the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report may be inspected for a period not less than 4 weeks **from Wednesday 17th August 2016 to 5 p.m. on Wednesday 14th September 2016** at the following locations:

- Kildare County Council Offices, Aras Chill Dara, Naas, Co. Kildare (during office hours).
- Athy Municipal District Office, Rathstewart, Monasterevin Road, Athy (during opening hours).
- Athy Town Branch Library, Emily Square, Athy, Co. Kildare (during opening hours).

The variation can also be viewed or downloaded on the Council website

www.kildarecountycouncil.ie.

1.4 How to make a submission/observation

Written submissions or observations with respect to Proposed Variation No. 1 may be made to Kildare County Council on or before 5 p.m. on 14th September 2016 in one of the followings ways:

- In writing to Veronica Cooke, Administrative Officer, Planning Department, Kildare County Council, Aras Chill Dara, Naas, Co. Kildare.

Or

- By email to lpsubmissions@kildarecoco.ie

Any such written submissions or observations made before the stated closing date and time and to the specified postal and email address will be taken into consideration before the making of the variation. Written submissions or observations should include your name and a contact address and, where relevant, details of any organisation, community group or company etc. which you represent.

1.5 Next Steps

Following public consultation the Chief Executive of Kildare County Council will prepare a report on the submissions and observations received in respect of the proposed variations, respond to the issues raised and make recommendations in relation to the proposed variations, taking into account the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, the statutory obligations of the local authority and relevant policies or objectives of the Government or any Minister of Government.

The elected members of Kildare County Council will consider the proposed variation and the Chief Executives report.

1.6 Reasons for Proposed Variations to the Athy Town Development Plan 2012-2018.

The proposed variations seek to: realign the route of the Southern Distributor Road to accord with the preferred route selected and rename the route 'Athy Distributor Road' in the Athy Town Development Plan; remove the Northern Distributor Road Study Corridor from the Athy Plan; remove sections of the New Town Street that cross the River Barrow from the Athy Plan; and revise the policy in relation to a pedestrian/cyclist bridge over the River Barrow in the Athy Plan to one of carrying out a feasibility study in relation to this proposal.

The reasons for the proposed variation are:

1. To provide clarity in relation to the specific intentions of Kildare County Council in relation to a Distributor Road for Athy, and
2. To ensure consistency with the Kildare County Council Development Plan 2011 – 2017 for which notice of a proposed variation has been given pursuant to section 13 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2015.

Kildare County Council has undertaken a Strategic Environmental Assessment Determination in accordance with Article 13K of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2015 which determines that Proposed Variation No. 1 to the Athy Town Development Plan 2012 – 2018 is not likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Kildare County Council has undertaken Appropriate Assessment Screening under Section 177V Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2001 – 2015 which concludes in view of best scientific knowledge that Proposed Variation No. 1 to the Athy Town Development Plan 2012 – 2018 individually or in combination with another plan or project is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site taking into account the conservation objectives of any site and that there is no doubt or uncertainty in this regard.

This variation report sets out the proposed changes to text, maps and graphics throughout the Plan to reflect these changes.

2.1 How to Read this document

The document sets out the proposed amendments to the Athy Town Development Plan 2012 – 2018 in the order that they would appear in the Development Plan and includes the text changes and changes to mapping resulting from Variation No. 1.

Text amendments are represented as follows:

Development Plan	Text remains as it is in the Athy Town Development Plan 2012 – 2018.
<u>Development Plan</u>	New text inserted into the Athy Town Development Plan 2012 – 2018
Development Plan	Text deleted from the Athy Town Development Plan 2012 - 2018.

Chapter 1 Introduction and Strategic Context

1.6 Appropriate Assessment

Articles 6 (3) and 6 (4) of the Habitats Directive require an Appropriate Assessment of any plan or project whether within or outside a designated Natura 2000 site, which does not directly relate to the management of the site but may impact upon its conservation objectives.

All land use plans also require to be 'screened' for any potential impact on areas designated as Natura 2000 sites. In any case where, following screening, it is found that the draft plan may have an impact on the objectives of a Natura site, or such an impact cannot be ruled out, an Appropriate Assessment (AA) under the EU Habitats Directive must be undertaken.

This AA process comprises the assessment, based on scientific knowledge, of the potential impacts of the plan on the conservation objectives of any Natura site and the development, where necessary, of mitigation or avoidance measures to preclude negative effects. The impacts assessed must include the indirect and cumulative impacts of the plan, considered with any current or proposed activities, developments or policies impacting on the site. It informs plans of the environmental impacts of alternative actions and contributes to the integration of environmental considerations into plan making.

A Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment of the Athy Development Plan has been carried out. A number of policies and objectives within the Plan were identified which could lead to impacts on the River Barrow/River Nore SAC.

~~In particular, provisions for transport infrastructure (i.e. The Southern and Northern Distributor Roads) and a marina have the potential to significantly impact on the SAC.~~
In particular, provisions for transport infrastructure and a marina have the potential to significantly impact on the SAC.

The risks to the safeguarding and integrity of the qualifying interests and conservation objectives of the Natura site have been largely addressed by the inclusion of a number of objectives to ensure that developments arising through the implementation of the plan are subject to Appropriate Assessment at a more appropriate level and when further details of design and location are available. Infrastructure such as the marina and distributor roads will be subject to feasibility studies and route/site selection where appropriate. Other measures have been included for the protection of water quality including the requirement for ecological buffer zones and measures for prevention of pollutants entering watercourses.

Having incorporated mitigation measures, it is considered that the Athy Town Development Plan will not have a significant adverse effect on the River Barrow/River Nore SAC, and that the integrity of that site will not be adversely affected.

Chapter 2 Core Strategy

2.5.1 Future Population Growth and Housing Targets

This Plan provides sufficient new residential zoning to facilitate approximately 1,667 no. of units (75.8ha). This is a significant decrease in lands zoned for new residential development from 185 ha in the Athy Town Development Plan 2005-2012. It is recognised that this level of zoning is of a scale which could facilitate future development up to 2022¹ in line with the projected demands of the Regional Planning Guidelines. This level of zoning is deemed appropriate for the following reasons it will:

- Achieve more balanced residential development in all areas within the town boundary.
- Ensure accessibility to the proposed new road infrastructure. ~~such as the Northern Distributor Route.~~
- Be proximate and accessible to existing and future educational facilities.

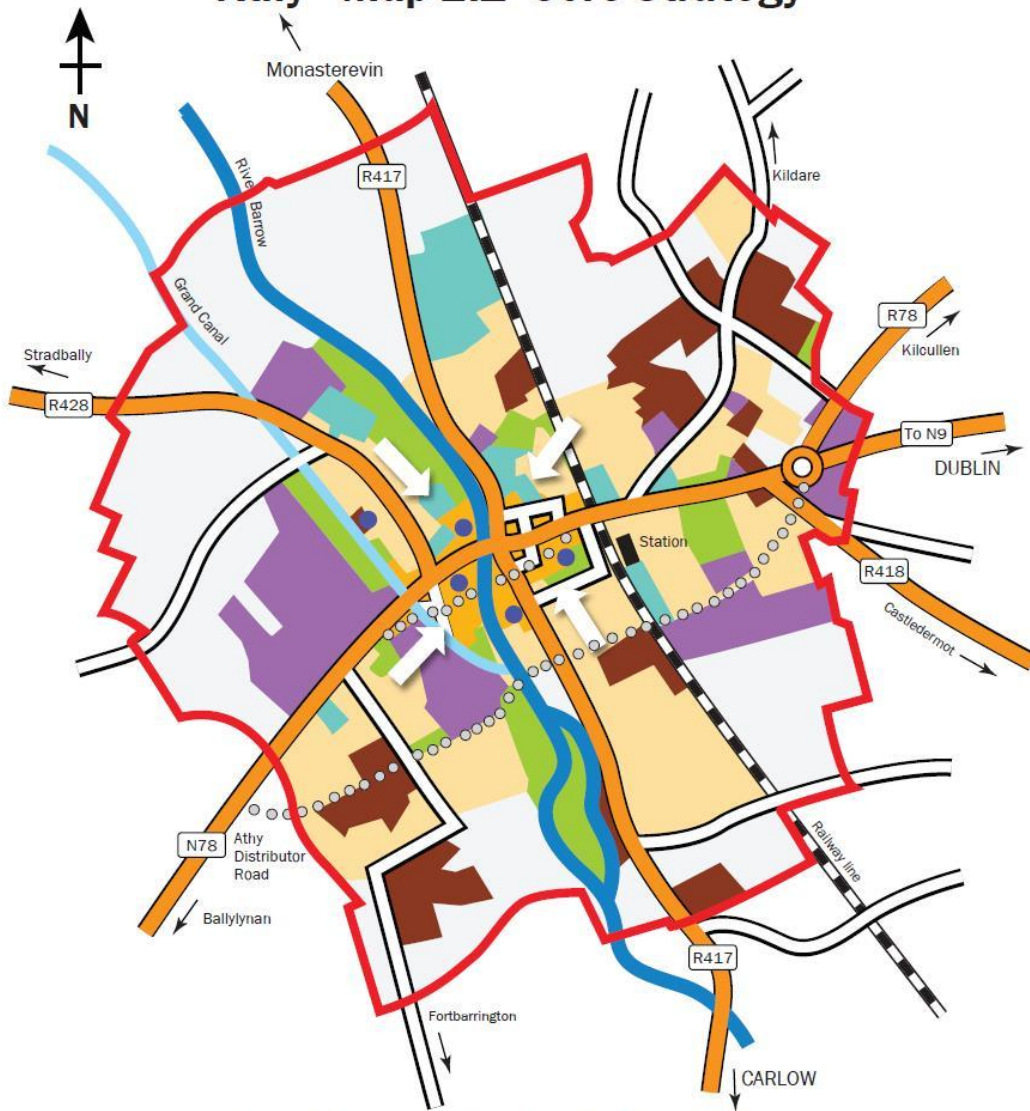
To ensure compliance with the core strategy of the plan a monitoring mechanism will be put in place in accordance with Policy CS 16. Furthermore, as part of the two year mid-term review an analysis of compliance with the Core Strategy will be undertaken and appropriate measures implemented if required (Refer Policy CS 17).

Within the agricultural zone, housing will be restricted to people with a genuine housing need and who can demonstrate that they comply with local need requirements as outlined in Section 4.9 of the “Sustainable Rural Housing- Guidelines for Planning Authorities” and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

¹ On the basis of Athy continuing to have 4.5% of the projected overall growth of the County as provided for in the RPGs, it is estimated that 78.6ha of residential land will be required up to 2022.

Insert revised Map 2.1 Core Strategy

Athy - Map 2.1- Core Strategy



Athy - Moderate Sustainable Growth Town

Legend

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Athy Town Council Boundary | Main Road Network |
| Existing Built Area | Local Roads |
| Key Employment Areas | Distributor Road (Indicative only) |
| New Residential Areas | Railway Station |
| Green/Amenity Area | Railway |
| Community Education | Opportunity Areas |
| Town Centre | Consolidated Town Centre |
| Agriculture | |
| River Barrow | |
| Grand Canal | |

3.5 Factors Influencing Future Economic Development

I. Availability of zoned land

One of the key enablers to attract potential investment and employment to Athy will be the availability of appropriately zoned lands.

Under the Athy Development Plan 2006-2012 approximately 101 hectares of land is zoned for employment, industry and enterprise purposes in and around Athy. It should be noted that this figure does not include such uses as Town Centre, Retail, Leisure and Amenity which would also provide an element of employment generation.

Approximately 50 hectares of lands zoned for employment purposes remain undeveloped. This figure solely relates to lands zoned for employment such as industrial warehousing and commercial and does not take into account potential job creation on other lands zoned for town centre, retail or leisure and amenity uses.

It is considered that there is sufficient land zoned for employment generation to meet job creation needs for the town up to 2018 and beyond.

Table 3.4 provides further information in relation to the location and availability of undeveloped zoned employment land in Athy.

II. Infrastructure

Adequate infrastructure is vital for the facilitation of future economic development activity in the town. This includes water

services, effective road and public transport networks, energy, telecommunications, waste management, education and recreation facilities etc. There is a significant infrastructural deficit in relation to road infrastructure and to a lesser extent the public transport network in Athy.

~~The Southern Distributor Road in Athy has been identified as a key infrastructural priority and its delivery is viewed as being essential for the future economic expansion of the town as well as the significant improvement of the accessibility and attractiveness of the town centre. The Northern Distributor Road is identified in this Plan as a longer term objective in order to further improve accessibility and economic development of the town.~~

[The Athy Distributor Road has been identified as a key infrastructural priority and its delivery is viewed as being essential for the future expansion of the town as well as the significant improvement of the accessibility and attractiveness of the town centre.](#)

Improvement of the broadband and telecommunications network in Athy is also required in terms of the quality and range of broadband provision throughout Athy. The development of a comprehensive and efficient broadband and telecommunications network will bring significant economic benefits to the town. The availability of this telecommunications infrastructure in Athy enables high speed access to information for industry, public and private sector organisations.

Table 3.4 Location and Availability of Employment Land in Athy

Land Use Zoning Objective	Location and availability of (undeveloped) land	Employment Opportunities/Sectoral Strengths
<p>H2 Industrial & Warehousing</p> <p><i>To provide for and improve industrial and warehousing development and to include retail/warehousing.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodstock South • Along Southern <u>Athy</u> Distributor Rd 	<p>Development in these areas will be generally less employment intensive. Opportunity for development of high value added manufacturing and small –medium enterprise (SME).</p> <p>Significant capacity for infill industrial development and re-development of brownfield sites. Opportunity for new industrial and warehousing development, and small-medium sized enterprise in undeveloped areas.</p> <p>H2 to include Retail/Warehousing</p>

Chapter 5 Town Centre

5.6 Movement, Access and the Public Realm

Vehicular traffic in the town centre and the proximity of vehicular traffic to pedestrian movement on narrow pavements diminishes the quality of the environment for shopping, visitors, pedestrians etc. This Plan proposes the reduction in vehicular traffic in the town centre and promotes streets as “living spaces” which are a functional part of the community and the focus of activities. The Plan seeks to link commercial areas, employment areas and public spaces through a network of quality pedestrian and cycling routes in an enhanced public realm. An improved pedestrian environment will encourage higher levels of footfall on the main thoroughfares with associated higher levels of economic activity.

It is an aim of the Council to facilitate public realm improvements, both in terms of regeneration, building fabric, street materials and furniture and connectivity. In general, any urban renewal or environmental improvement scheme should retain historic features, street furniture and features of interest. In exceptional cases where any of these features need to be removed, their reuse where appropriate within the town centre will be encouraged. ~~This Plan also seeks to encourage the full or part pedestrianisation of parts of the town centre such as Emily Square during the plan period and the development of a pedestrian crossing over the River Barrow to the North of Cromaboo Bridge.~~

[This Plan seeks to promote pedestrian and cycle priority in parts of the town centre, such as the area in the vicinity of Emily](#)

[Square, during the plan period and to examine the feasibility of constructing a pedestrian crossing over the River Barrow as appropriate to link schools, parks, playing fields and residential areas on both sides of the river.](#)

It is the policy of the Council:

~~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.~~

[To examine the feasibility of providing a pedestrian / cycle crossing over the River Barrow as appropriate to link schools, parks, playing fields and residential areas on both sides of the river.](#)

PR 2: To encourage the improvement of the area surrounding the Dominican Church.

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.

5.7 Town Centre Objectives

It is an objective of the Council:

TCO 6: To provide for a pedestrian crossing from the train station to the park/playground in People's Park.

TCO 1: To maintain the Council's Derelict Sites Register and to exercise its powers under the Derelict Sites Act 1990.

TCO 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.

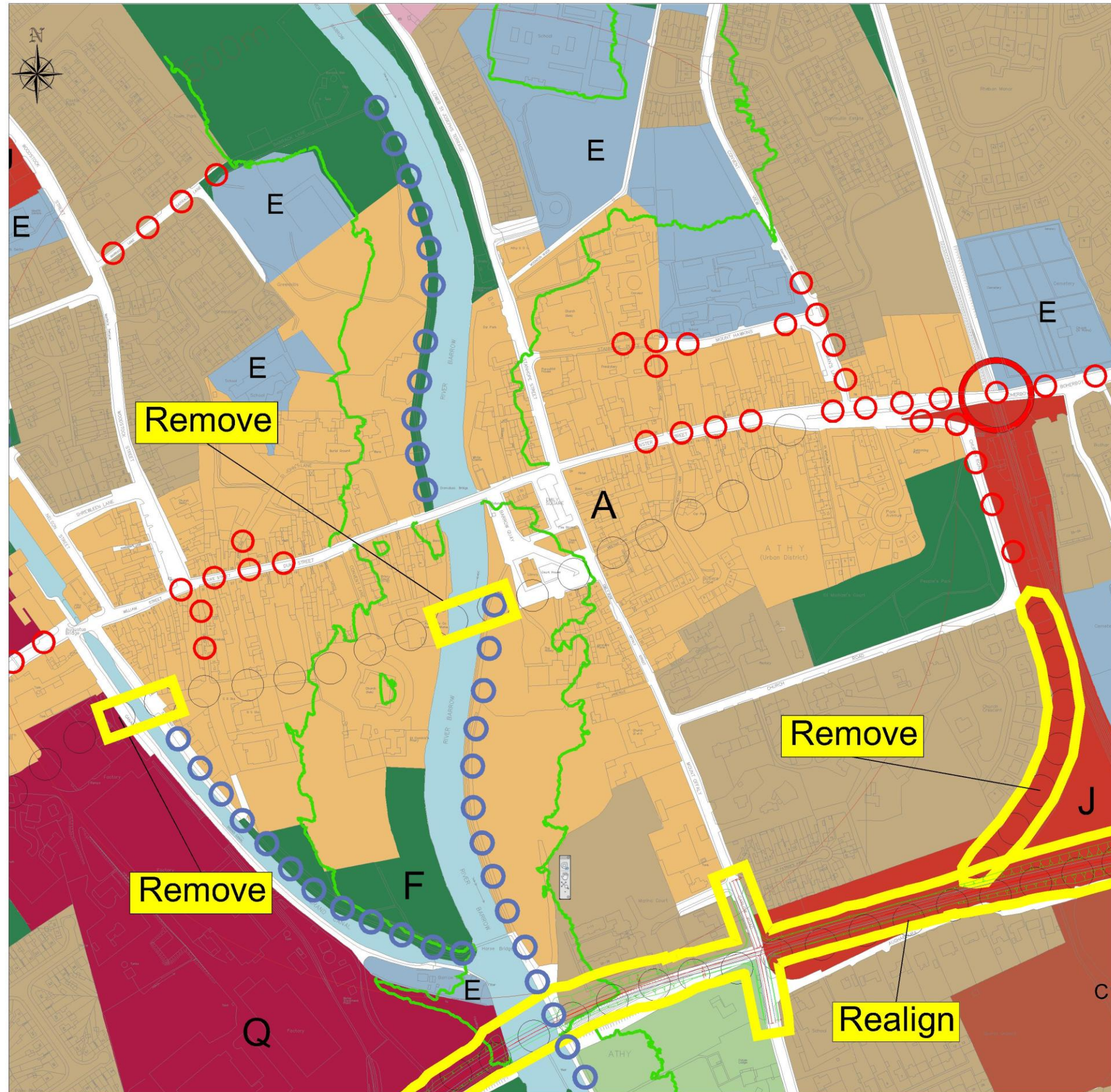
TCO 3: To prepare and implement an Environmental Improvement Scheme within the lifetime of this Plan to visually enhance the streetscape and key urban spaces with an emphasis on promoting a pedestrian and public transport friendly environment.

TCO 4: To investigate the feasibility of the pedestrianisation of all or part of Emily Square during the Plan period.

TCO 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.~~

[To examine the feasibility of constructing a pedestrian / cycle crossing over the River Barrow as appropriate to link schools, parks, playing fields and residential areas on both sides of the river.](#)

Insert Revised Map 5.1 Town Centre and Associated Zoning



Athy Town Development Plan
2012-2018
(Proposed Variation No 1)

LEGEND

- A: Town Centre
- B: Existing Residential & Infill
- C: New Residential
- D: Neighbourhood Centre
- E: Community & Educational
- F: Open Space & Amenity
- H, H1, H2: Industrial & Warehousing
- H3: Light Industrial & Commercial
- I: Agricultural
- J: Transport & Utilities
- U: Public Utilities
- Q: Enterprise & Employment
- R: Retail / Commercial
- Rivers and Canals
- Athy Town Council Boundary
- 500m Intervals from the centre of Town
- Public Rights of Way
- New Roads Objectives (Indicative only)
- Improvements to existing Road Network
- Reservation to allow upgrading of the Rail Bridge
- 1000 Year Flood Line

Note: This map should be read in conjunction with the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Athy (Refer to Appendix II)
Note: Road, cycle and foot path locations are indicative only & may be subject to change during the detailed design process.

Town Centre & Associated Zoning

Date: June 2016 <small>Revision Date: 24-05-16</small>	Map Ref: 5.1
Scale: N.T.S.	Drawing No: 200/10/545
Ordnance Survey Ireland. All rights reserved. Licence No.: 2004/07/CCMA (Kildare County Council)	Drawn By: NH Checked By: BR

THIS DRAWING TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE WRITTEN STATEMENT

Chapter 7 Movement and Transport

7.4.3 Walking and Cycling

In accordance with the principles of sustainable development, this Plan aims to promote walking and cycling as effective modes of transport within the urban area. The Plan supports and encourages the continued development of walking as a sustainable form of transportation and the Council will work with organisations and groups in the promotion of safe walking throughout the town including historic/heritage walks which are an important amenity and tourism resource. Future developments should provide for the safe movement of pedestrians. Currently cycling does not play a significant role as a mode of transportation in Athy. A number of development objectives set out in the plan will enhance the pedestrian and cycling environment for the enjoyment of Athy residents and visitors alike.

~~The development of the Southern and Northern Distributor roads and the New Town Centre Street will provide major opportunities to develop pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in the town centre. This may provide the opportunity to develop a one-way system which would offer the potential to reallocate road space to footpaths and dedicated cyclist facilities.~~

[This Plan seeks to promote pedestrian and cycle priority in parts of the town centre, such as the area in the vicinity of Emily Square, during the plan period and to examine the feasibility of constructing a pedestrian crossing over the River Barrow as appropriate to link schools, parks, playing](#)

[fields and residential areas on both side of the River.](#)

7.5.1 Southern Distributor Road (SDR)

The route comprises an urban single carriageway circa 3.2 km in length. The proposed Southern Distributor Road is intended to divert through traffic away from the town centre. This road will facilitate improved safety due to the removal of vehicles from the existing N78 in the town centre, especially heavy goods vehicles and will free up capacity for road users who want to avail of the facilities of the town.

The secondary function of the Athy SDR is to facilitate the orderly expansion of Athy increasing connectivity and allowing for the integration of different modes of transport. The proposed scheme will include pedestrian and cycle paths, additional crossing points over the River Barrow, Grand Canal and railway line and will facilitate linkages between zoned land, the town centre and railway station linking the N78 southwest of the town at Bennetsbridge to the N78 northeast of the town at Gallowshill.

From its commencement, there will be a roundabout at the tie into the N78, Kilkenny road southwest of the town. The proposed route will run for part of the route along the line of the disused CIE rail line. It then crosses the River Barrow and the main Dublin to Waterford rail line before tying into the newly constructed N9/N10 link road roundabout.

~~An Appropriate Assessment of the Proposed Athy Southern Distributor Road has been carried out. It concluded that once best practice is followed throughout the construction of the proposed roadway, and~~

the recommended mitigation measures are taken into consideration, it is considered that this development will not have a significant negative impact upon the River Barrow/River Nore SAC and its habitats and species.

7.5.2 Northern Distributor Road (NDR)

The proposed NDR begins on the N78 at the junction with the Old Dump Road and will require the realignment and upgrade of the existing road to the Bohernouca Crossroads.

The primary function of the proposed Northern Distributor Road is similar to that of the above mentioned Southern Distributor Road, once constructed it will help to reduce traffic congestion in the town centre whilst also linking up the various development and zoned lands to the north of the town. It continues through the townland of Prusselstown and crosses the Noneen and Clogorow Bog rivers, crossing the main Waterford to Dublin Railway line, passing through the Barrowford townland and crossing the R417 Monasterevin Road. The route crosses the River Barrow, the Cardington Road and the Grand Canal adjacent to the Cardington Demense. Following this, the route crosses the R428 Stradbally Road and passes through the townland of Woodstock North and South. It then crosses the Ballintubbert Road after Lennons Bridge to tie into the N78 South West of Athy town.

A Route Selection Study has been carried out and a route corridor has been identified and is illustrated on the land use zoning Map 16.1. An Appropriate Assessment has not been carried out to date.

7.5.3 New Town Centre Streets

The proposed street will be approximately 1 km in length, running from the junction of Leinster Street and St. Michael's Terrace as far as Upper William Street. It will incorporate facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, a bridge over the River Barrow and a drop lock and bridge on the Grand Canal.

In 1999 Shaffrey Associates prepared a report for the Planning Authority "Athy – New Street Proposals 1999." This Report contains recommendations on the development of the Athy Inner Relief Road as a New Town Centre Street within Athy.

Similar recommendations are made in the Athy Traffic Management Plan prepared in 2009 by WSP Ireland, it recognizes that this link will function as a street and not as a relief road as it was originally envisaged in the 1970's. The development of Athy town centre in the intervening years between its initial proposal and today has surpassed the need for a Relief Road at this location; there is however significant benefits arising from the construction of a street complete with River and Canal crossings along the alignment of the route.

This New Town Centre Street will contribute fundamentally to the connectivity of the town and allow for significant improvements to be made along the main street catering for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicular traffic appropriately.

The development of this street will also provide opportunities to redevelop the existing streetscape of Leinster Street and Duke Street and to develop between the New Town Centre Street and Duke Street, thus

expanding the Town Centre function and adding to the local economy.

A number of new town centre streets are proposed to provide access to “opportunity sites” in the southern town centre area. Indicative routes are shown from St. Michael’s Terrace to Emily Square; from the River Barrow to the Grand Canal (via Dominican site); and from the Grand Canal to Upper William Street (via Tegral site). While the delivery of these streets is unlikely to be achieved in the short to medium term, the Council will seek to preserve the indicative routes free from development to protect the viability of these routes and to promote the coordinated development of these backland areas in the longer term.

7.5.4 Distributor/Relief Roads

The primary function of Distributor Roads in Athy is to divert through traffic away from the town centre and to improve the public realm, while also contributing to an efficient transport network in the town.

It is the policy of the Council:

- DR 1: To ensure that new distributor/relief roads are designed and constructed in a manner that will enable them to fulfill their functions.
- DR 2: To limit direct access onto distributor/relief roads to a number of strategically located junctions.
- DR 3: To continue the development of distributor/relief roads namely the Northern and Southern roads. the proposed Athy Distributor Road.

7.7.1 General Movement and Transport Objectives

It is an objective of the Council:

~~GO 1: To implement the recommendations of the Athy Traffic Management Plan, including the environmental and traffic management improvements.~~

7.7.2 Sustainable Travel

It is an objective of the Council:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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

STO 5: ~~To investigate the pedestrianisation of certain town centre routes once the New Town Centre Street is constructed.~~

To examine the feasibility of the pedestrianisation of certain town centre routes.

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.~~

To examine the feasibility of 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. Any bridge would have to be constructed to the specifications of all statutory bodies.

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.

STO 8: To assist and encourage the development and expansion of rural transport initiatives, in conjunction with other statutory and development agencies.

7.7.3 Roads Programme

It is an objective of the Council:

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).~~

To construct the Athy distributor road including links to the town centre and 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)

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.~~

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.~~

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- 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.~~
- To support the construction of new town centre streets and acquire land to facilitate construction.
- RP 5: To complete road improvements to the Fortbarrington Road from Blackparks to Ardrew.
- RP 6: To improve the junctions of the R418 (Castledermot Road) with the N78.
- RP 7: To improve the junction of the Kildare Road with the N78, having regard to the constraints of nearby protected structures.
- 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.
- RP 9: To carry out the improvement of the local road from Prusselstown Cross Roads to the N78 Dublin Road.
- 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 Iarnród Éireann.
- RP 11: To implement traffic calming and other associated measures on the R417 and R428 as part of new developments.
- RP 12: To implement traffic calming measures on Stanhope Place and Mount Hawkins.
- RP 13: To implement traffic calming measures on the N78 at the GAA club.
- RP 14: To review and set out an implementation plan for the roads programme, including the improvement of walking and cycling routes, as part of a “local traffic plan” to be prepared following publications of the NTA Transport Strategy for the GDA and in accordance with Section 65 of the DTA Act 2008.
- RP 15: ~~To prepare the preliminary design of the Northern Distributor Road within 21 months from the day of the adoption of this Plan.~~

Chapter 11 Recreation and Amenity

11.4 Amenity

It is the policy of the Council:

- A1: To continue the development of riverside and canal side walking routes with the creation of a linear park along the River Barrow and canal in conjunction with the relevant statutory bodies.
- A 2: To continue the amenity development of the People's Park and to retain its enclosed urban park character.
- A 3: To maintain and develop the amenity potential of the canal for recreation.
- A4: To ensure that any future development along the Canal and the River provides walking routes and does not disproportionately affect their amenity value.
- A5: To promote an increased awareness of Athy walking routes and heritage trails as attractive and unique recreational and educational amenities.
- A6: To protect and improve all existing rights-of-way and to create further rights-of-way where necessary and appropriate.
- 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 government departments. Any proposed cycling or walking routes along [or across](#) 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.

11.5 Parks and Open Spaces

Open spaces are a vital part of the urban environment. Open space amenities create benefits not only for the enhancement of the quality of life of residential areas but also provide opportunities for recreational activities, ecological and environmental preservation as well as education. The Council is responsible for the maintenance and management of a number of open spaces and amenity areas in Athy. The planning process plays a vital role in ensuring that existing parks and open spaces are protected and enhanced. In addition it is key to the provision of appropriate, high quality additional parks and open spaces to cater for increased demand as new residential areas are developed and the population increases.

Athy contains a range of sizes and types of open spaces which are accessible to the public. The land use zoning map 16.1 outlines the areas for Open Space and Amenity in the town. These areas include lands which are in public and private ownership and consist of a variety of sports clubs, the People's Park and the open space area north of Barrack Lane. These areas in are in addition to approximately 57ha of land zoned for open space and amenity purposes throughout Athy.

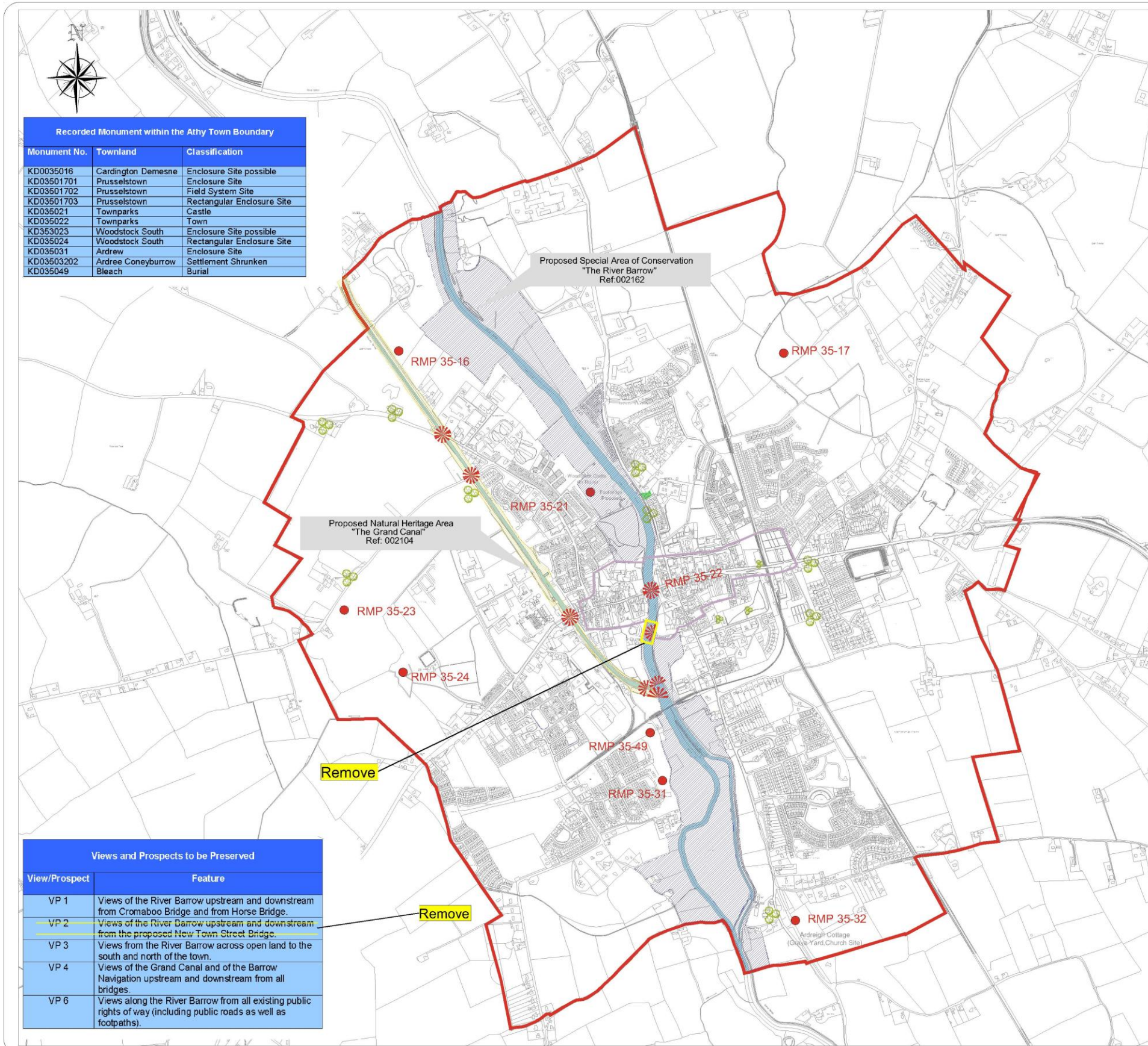
An Open Space Strategy was completed for County Kildare in 2010. The strategy identified a hierarchy of open space for the county, provided an audit of open space based on this hierarchy and assessed current and future open space needs within the county. The strategy noted that there is an adequate

diversity of public open space throughout Athy including one neighbourhood park, two local parks and small areas of amenity green-space throughout the residential areas of the town. The recommendations arising from the strategy have been taken into consideration in the policies and objectives outlined below. The open space area to the north of the town centre is largely undeveloped therefore it is proposed to intensify the usage of this open space area with the intention of developing a town park and providing a range of sports and community facilities in a coordinated manner. The provision of such facilities will benefit both schools and residential areas located to the north of the town which will maximise the usage of such facilities. ~~The provision of a new footbridge across the Barrow at this point will further increase accessibility to these services.~~ [The feasibility of providing a new footbridge across the River Barrow at this point to increase accessibility to services will be examined.](#) A landscape management plan for this area will seek to enhance the amenity value of this open space.

Table 13.1: Protected Views and Prospects








	Views and Prospects
VP1	Views of the River Barrow upstream & downstream from Cromaboo Bridge & from Horse Bridge
VP2	Views of the River Barrow upstream & downstream from the proposed New Town Street bridge
VP3	Views from the River Barrow across open land to the south and north of the town.
VP4	Views of the Grand Canal and of the Barrow Navigation, upstream and downstream from all bridges.
VP5	Views along the River Barrow from all existing public rights of way (including public roads as well as footpaths).
VP6	Views of the Dominican Church from Barrow Quay and from the banks of the River Barrow.
VP7	Views and prospects forming the setting and environs of all protected structures.

Insert Revised Map 13.1 Natural Heritage, Views and Prospects



**Athy Town Development Plan
2012-2018
(Proposed Variation No 1)**

Legend

-  Grand Canal and River Barrow
-  NHA Grand Canal
-  SAC River Barrow
-  Athy Town Boundary
-  Existing trees to be Preserved
-  Zone of Archaeological Potential
-  Views & Prospects to be Preserved (Related to Water Corridor)
-  Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) (National Site or Monument)

Natural Heritage, Views & Prospects

Date: June 2016

Map Ref: 13.1

Scale: N.T.C.

Drg No: 200/10/509

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Drawn By
NH

Checked By
BR

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Chapter 14 Urban Design and Opportunity Areas

14.5.4 Regularise Traffic

It is the aim of this strategy to intensify and transform Athy from a busy through route to a bustling core. Presently, Leinster Street and Duke Street are characterised by significant levels of vehicular activity that is largely associated with through traffic, however commercial activities within the town also contribute to the traffic flows in the area. The proposed ~~Southern~~ **Athy** Distributor Road will remove significant levels of the through traffic from the town centre. Upon the construction of this road, it is therefore an objective of this strategy that traffic be calmed, most importantly at the entrances and approaches to the town in order to improve the comfort for pedestrians and enhance the public realm. This can be achieved by providing alternative routes through the town centre, reducing the level and speed of traffic through the town by appropriate use of surface material combined with pedestrian priority zones.

14.5.5 Formalise Entrances and Approaches to the Town Centre

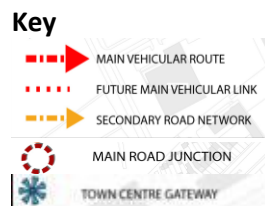
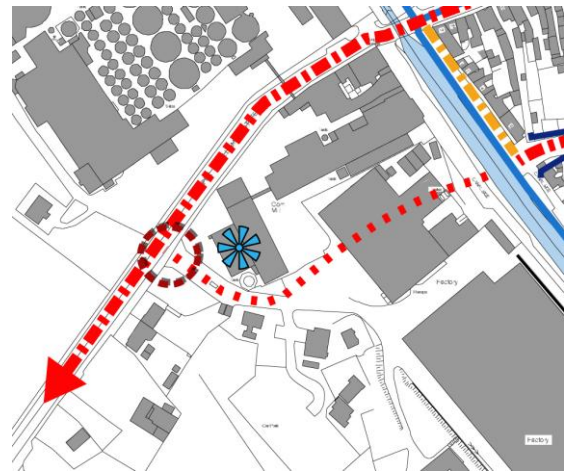
The existing entrances to the town create a poor sense of arrival. Derelict buildings set a negative tone along the approach from the west, while vacant sites and the awkward road layout provide a poor sense of enclosure as the town is approached from the east. It is therefore proposed to mark the entrances to the town as follows:

- **The Western Approach**

Create a new approach to the town at the Tegral Site at the junction of the proposed

New Town Street (Inner Relief Street) and the Kilkenny Road. A key building should signify this important entrance to the town. Create a new approach to the town at the Tegral Site at the junction of the proposed new street and the Kilkenny Road. A key building should signify this important entrance to the town.

Insert New Figure 14.1 Western Approach



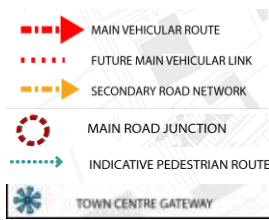
- **The Eastern Approach**

Transform Leinster Street at the Junction with Church Road into a boulevard and create a new public space with a key building at the junction of the proposed New Town Street and Leinster Street. Create a new public space with a key building at the junction of the proposed new street and Leinster Street.

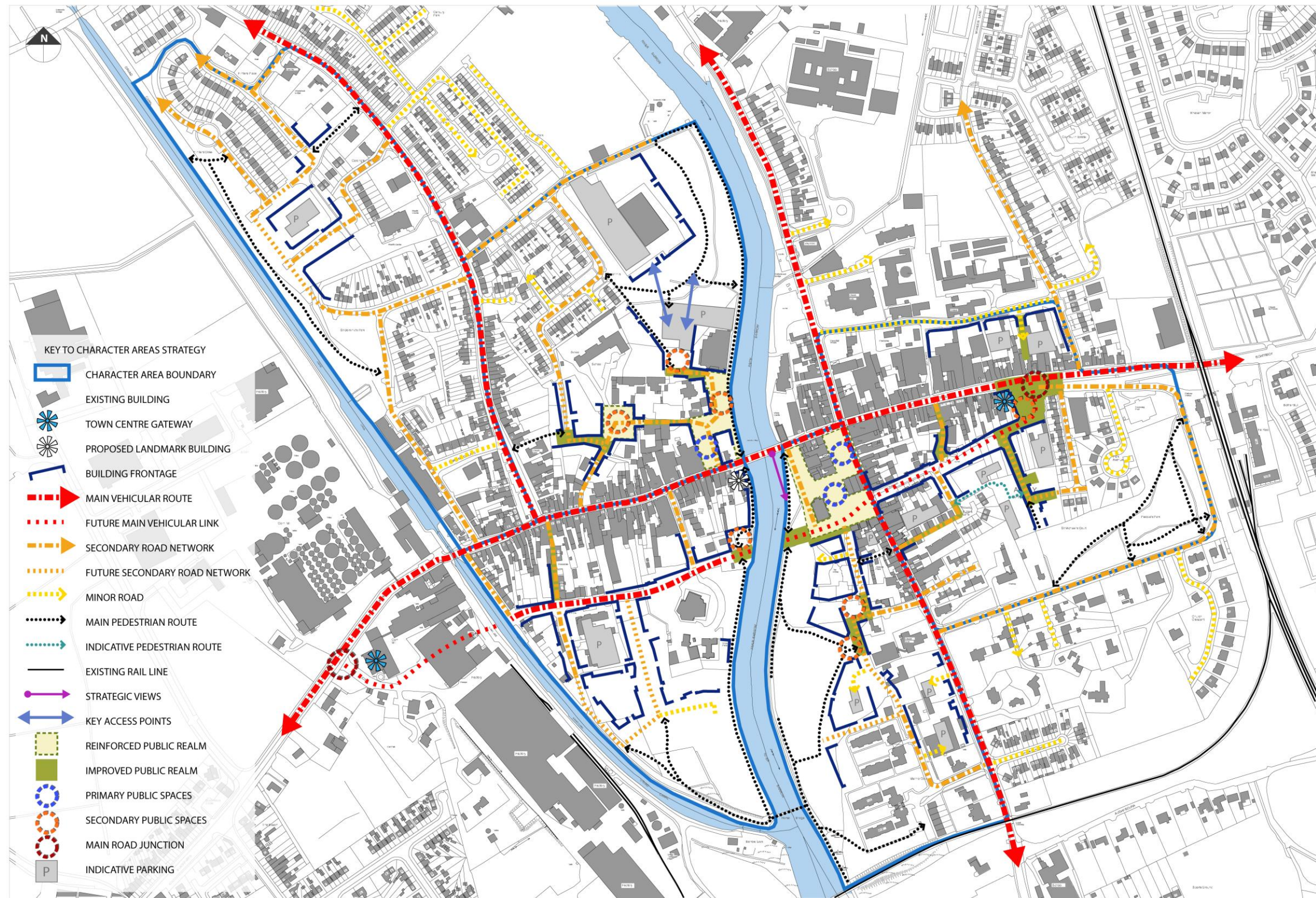
Insert New Figure 14.2 Eastern Approach



Key



Insert New Figure 14.3 Urban Design Framework



14.6.1 Town Core Character Area

The Study Area

The subject lands comprise primarily of the area to the north and south of Leinster Street including Emily Square. These lands are bounded by the Railway line to the East, Kirwans Lane to the North, and Church Road and the Abbey Lands to the south and south west respectively and the River Barrow to the west.

Key Urban Design Issues

The study area provides an opportunity to revitalise an underutilised area in the historic centre.

There are a number of key opportunity sites within the character area, mostly occurring to the rear of the existing buildings north and south of Leinster Street.

Design Objectives

~~In order to increase permeability and to provide relief to the traffic congestion experienced through the town, it is proposed to develop a New Town Street to the south of Leinster Street. This street provides an opportunity to maximise the potential of extensive backland opportunity sites to the south of Leinster Street.~~

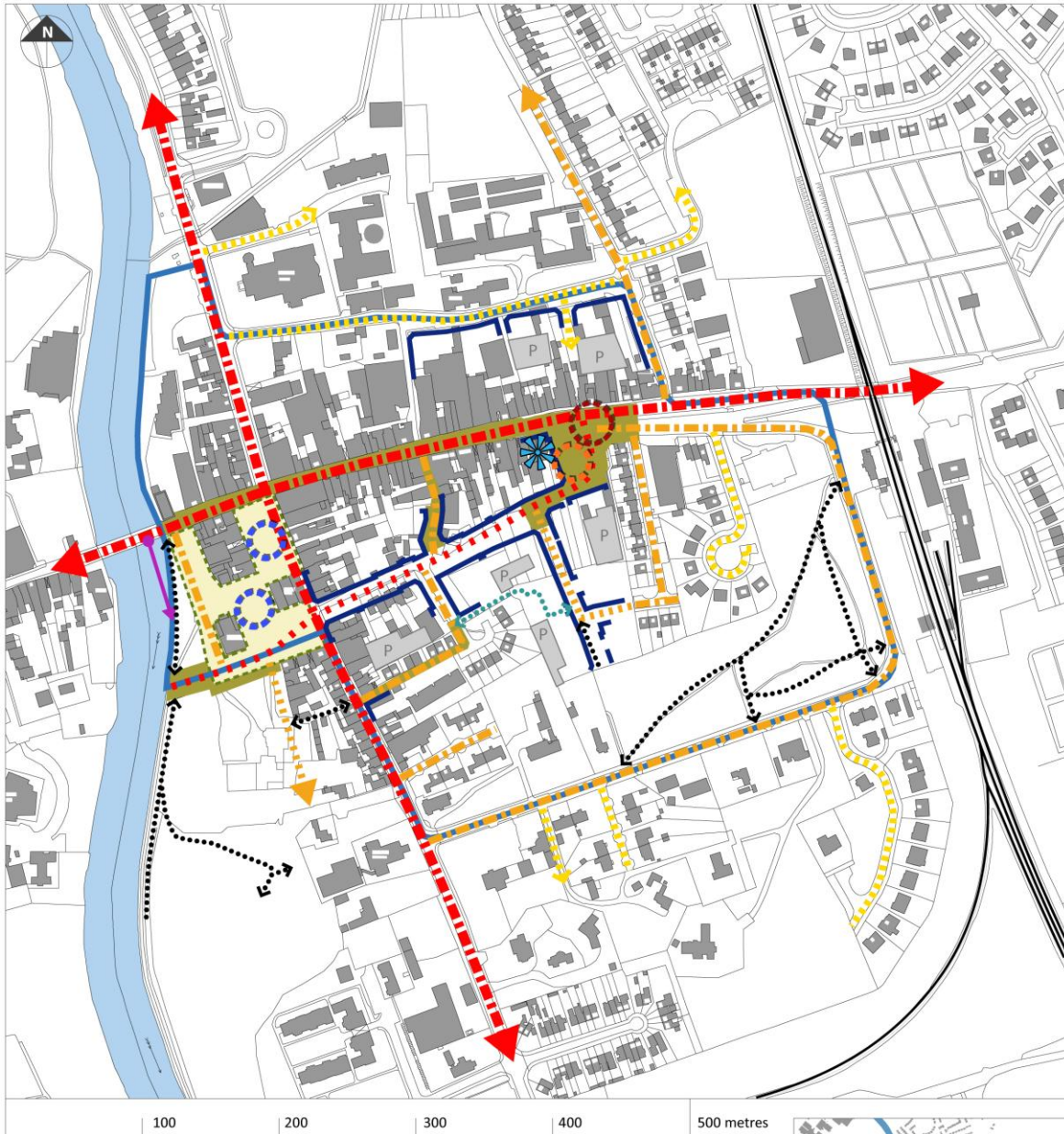
It is proposed to develop a new street to the south of Leinster Street. This street provides an opportunity to maximise the potential of extensive backland opportunity sites to the south of Leinster Street. The character area presents an opportunity to formalise the approach and entrance and create a new well defined entrance into the town centre in order to create a sense of arrival and departure. It is envisaged that a key building

at the junction of Leinster Street and the New Street will signal the significance of the site as an entrance into the Town Centre. Care should be taken that this building addresses both street frontages and must be designed to an exceptional standard on all elevations. Care should be taken with regard to the scale and massing of this structure to ensure that it does not become too bulky. New developments should enhance the character of the existing historic core.




















~~It is proposed that the New Town Street will link to Emily Square. In order to overcome the barrier of the river and increase permeability within the town centre it is proposed that a new vehicular bridge will link Emily Square to the access road at the Dominican Church and the backlands to the south of Duke Street.~~

Development along the New Town Street should complement and add to the existing town core providing a successful urban centre with a concentration and variety of uses.

Insert New Figure 14.6 Town Core Character Area

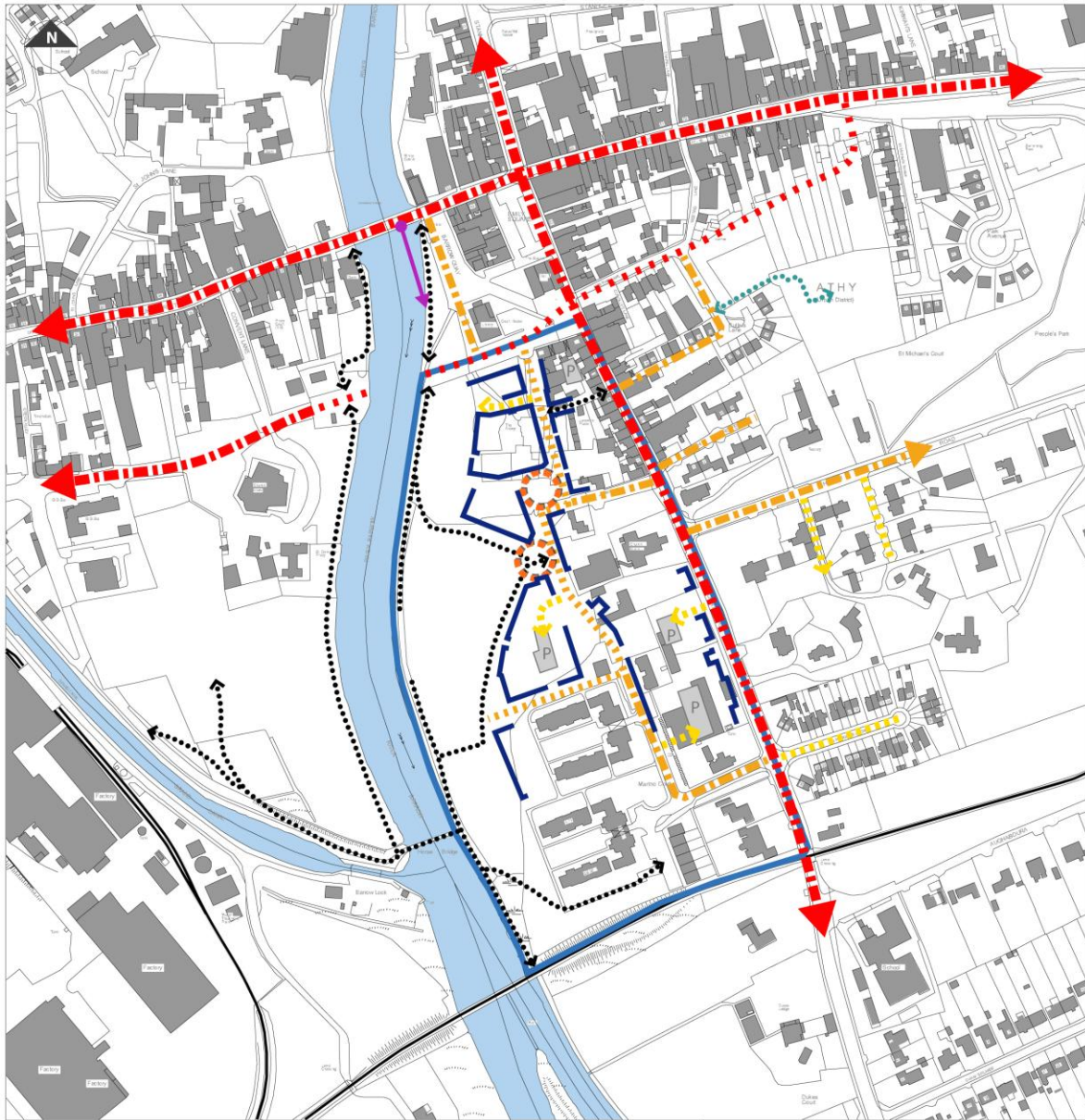


KEY TO TOWN CORE AREA STRATEGY

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
|  | CHARACTER AREA BOUNDARY |  | MINOR ROAD |
|  | EXISTING BUILDING |  | MAIN PEDESTRIAN ROUTE |
|  | TOWN CENTRE GATEWAY |  | INDICATIVE PEDESTRIAN ROUTE |
|  | BUILDING FRONTAGE |  | EXISTING RAIL LINE |
|  | MAIN VEHICULAR ROUTE |  | REINFORCED PUBLIC REALM |
|  | FUTURE MAIN VEHICULAR LINK |  | PRIMARY PUBLIC SPACES |
|  | SECONDARY ROAD NETWORK |  | SECONDARY PUBLIC SPACES |
|  | FUTURE SECONDARY ROAD NETWORK |  | MAIN ROAD JUNCTION |
| | |  | IMPROVED PUBLIC REALM |
| | |  | STRATEGIC VIEWS |
| | |  | INDICATIVE PARKING |



Insert Revised Figure 14.7 The Abbey Character Area



KEY TO THE ABBEY SITE STRATEGY

- | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| | CHARACTER AREA BOUNDARY | | MINOR ROAD |
| | EXISTING BUILDING | | MAIN PEDESTRIAN ROUTE |
| | PROPOSED LANDMARK BUILDING | | INDICATIVE PEDESTRIAN ROUTE |
| | BUILDING FRONTAGE | | EXISTING RAIL LINE |
| | MAIN VEHICULAR ROUTE | | REINFORCED PUBLIC REALM |
| | FUTURE MAIN VEHICULAR LINK | | PRIMARY PUBLIC SPACES |
| | SECONDARY ROAD NETWORK | | SECONDARY PUBLIC SPACES |
| | FUTURE SECONDARY ROAD NETWORK | | IMPROVED PUBLIC REALM |
| | | | STRATEGIC VIEWS |
| | | | INDICATIVE PARKING |



14.6.3 Dominican Lands Character Area

Study Area

The Dominican lands are located between the Barrow Navigation of the Grand Canal and the River Barrow. The subject lands comprise of the undeveloped lands around the Dominican Church and include the underutilised and backland sites along the church access road to the south of Duke Street. A number of fields are located at the junction of the Barrow Navigation of the Grand Canal and the River Barrow. There is currently restricted access to the area via a pedestrian bridge and an access road to the church.

Key Urban Design Issues

Although there have been a number of modern developments in this area in recent years, the built form generally provides poor street frontage resulting in a low quality public realm and streetscape. The existing access road consists of few active frontages and town centre uses resulting in an underutilised and underdeveloped area within the town centre. Both the river to the east and the canal to the west form barriers and sever the character area from nearby Emily Square and surrounding areas and permeability is poor between these areas.

Design Objectives

In order to increase permeability and to provide relief to the traffic congestion through the town, it is proposed to link the existing access road to the Dominican church with the new vehicular bridge. An opportunity therefore exists to transform this access road into a bustling urban street within the town core by improving the quality of the public

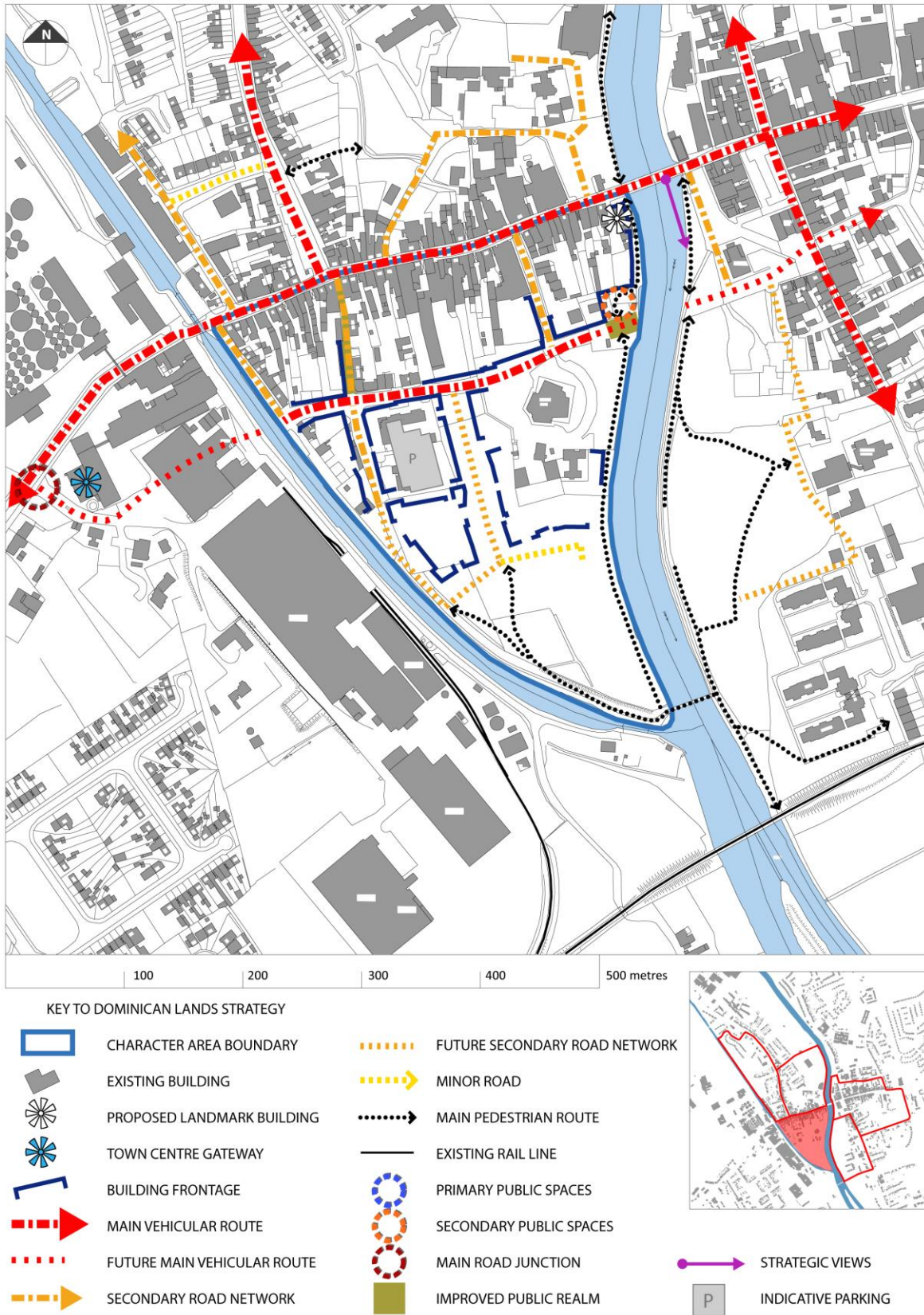
realm, in particular the existing connections and linkages to Duke Street and Emily Square.

The canal is an important historic and amenity element within the town. The canal itself is an underutilised asset which currently presents a physical barrier between the urban centre and the industrial lands to the west. The development of this area provides an opportunity to maximise the potential of the industrial lands to the west of the town by increasing links between these character areas and to establish links with the historic town centre.

TABLE 14.3 KEY DESIGN GUIDELINES

- ~~Overcome the natural barrier of the River Barrow by providing new connections between the character area and Emily Square.~~
- Create a sustainable town centre extension with a mix of uses.
- Extend the river and canal side walkways.
- Transform the church access roadway (Dominican Lane) into a bustling street within the town core.
- Provide appropriate infill development with active frontages and a strong building line along Dominican Lane and Convent Lane.
- Improve the quality of the public realm and reinforce the existing linkages between the character area, Duke Street and Emily Square.
- Provide an area of passive recreational space to the south of the character area overlooked by larger detached residential development.

Insert Revised Figure 14.8 The Dominican Lands Character Area



14.6.4 Edmund Rice Square Character Area

The Study Area

The subject site is located immediately adjacent to the existing Town Centre and is zoned for town centre uses. Pettits Supermarket and Shaws Department Store mainly define this area towards the town centre, while a large expanse of residential development and a public park define the character area to the north. The character area is bounded by the River Barrow to the east, Woodstock Street to the west and Duke Street to the south. The character area is outlined in blue on the following graphic, Fig. 14.9.

Key Urban Design Issues

Edmund Rice Square provides a poor quality public realm used entirely as a surface car park. The square is currently flanked by under scaled one and two storey retail units. The current configuration of the square does little to improve the streetscape along Duke Street.

Pettits Supermarket severs the town centre from the adjacent residential area. The supermarket does not address the river or the open space to the north. The existing riverside walkway is not overlooked, is of poor quality, is poorly lit, attracts anti social behaviour and consequently is uninviting.

The existing built form along St. John's Lane is of poor quality and comprises derelict industrial buildings and vacant sites, overall providing a poor public realm.

There is no connectivity with residential development to the north of Edmund Rice Square apart from an unsupervised

pedestrian walkway to the housing area adjacent to the school.

Design Objectives

The redevelopment of the area provides an opportunity to connect with the residential development, park and community facilities to the north of the square behind the supermarket. ~~It is proposed to provide a new pedestrian bridge linking the park and residential area with the schools to the east of the river.~~

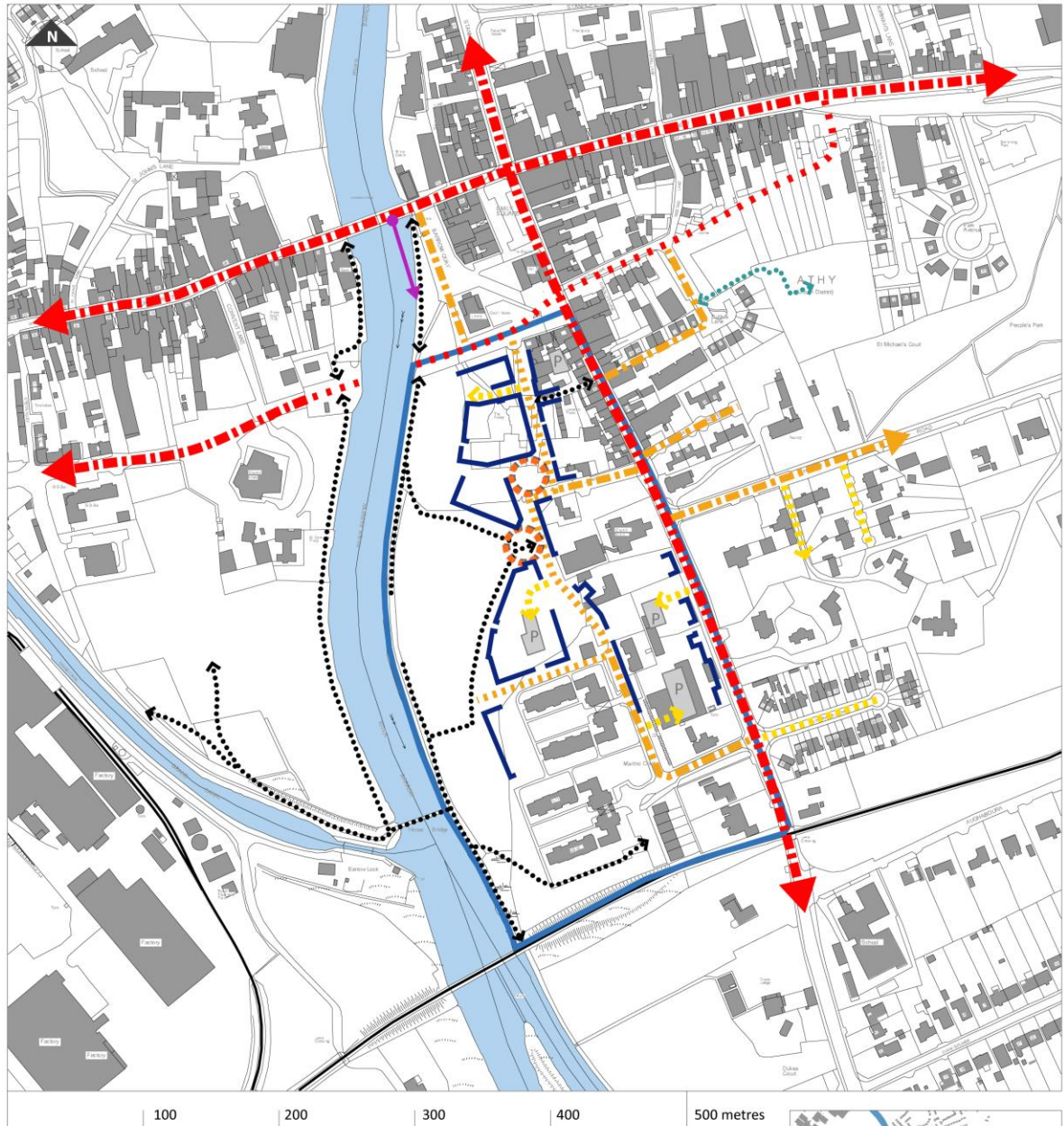
It is proposed to investigate the feasibility of constructing a new pedestrian bridge linking the park and residential area with the schools to the east of the river.

It is also proposed to provide additional opportunities for community facilities within the park which will overlook an extended riverside walkway. The walkway should run from Duke Street to the proposed pedestrian bridge. In the development of this walkway due consideration should be taken of the SAC status of the River Barrow.



















TABLE 14.4 KEY DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Overcome the natural barrier of the River Barrow by providing new connections between the character area and Emily Square.
- Create a sustainable town centre extension with a mix of uses.
- Extend the river and canal side walkways.
- Transform the church access roadway (Dominican Lane) into a bustling street within the town core.
- Provide appropriate infill development with active frontages and a strong building line along Dominican Lane and Convent Lane.
- Improve the quality of the public realm and reinforce the existing linkages between the character area, Duke Street and Emily Square.
- Provide an area of passive recreational space to the south of the character area overlooked by larger detached residential development.

Insert Revised Figure 14.9 Edmund Rice Square Character Area



KEY TO THE ABBEY SITE STRATEGY

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
|  | CHARACTER AREA BOUNDARY |  | MINOR ROAD |
|  | EXISTING BUILDING |  | MAIN PEDESTRIAN ROUTE |
|  | PROPOSED LANDMARK BUILDING |  | INDICATIVE PEDESTRIAN ROUTE |
|  | BUILDING FRONTAGE |  | EXISTING RAIL LINE |
|  | MAIN VEHICULAR ROUTE |  | REINFORCED PUBLIC REALM |
|  | FUTURE MAIN VEHICULAR LINK |  | PRIMARY PUBLIC SPACES |
|  | SECONDARY ROAD NETWORK |  | SECONDARY PUBLIC SPACES |
|  | FUTURE SECONDARY ROAD NETWORK |  | IMPROVED PUBLIC REALM |
| | |  | STRATEGIC VIEWS |
| | |  | INDICATIVE PARKING |

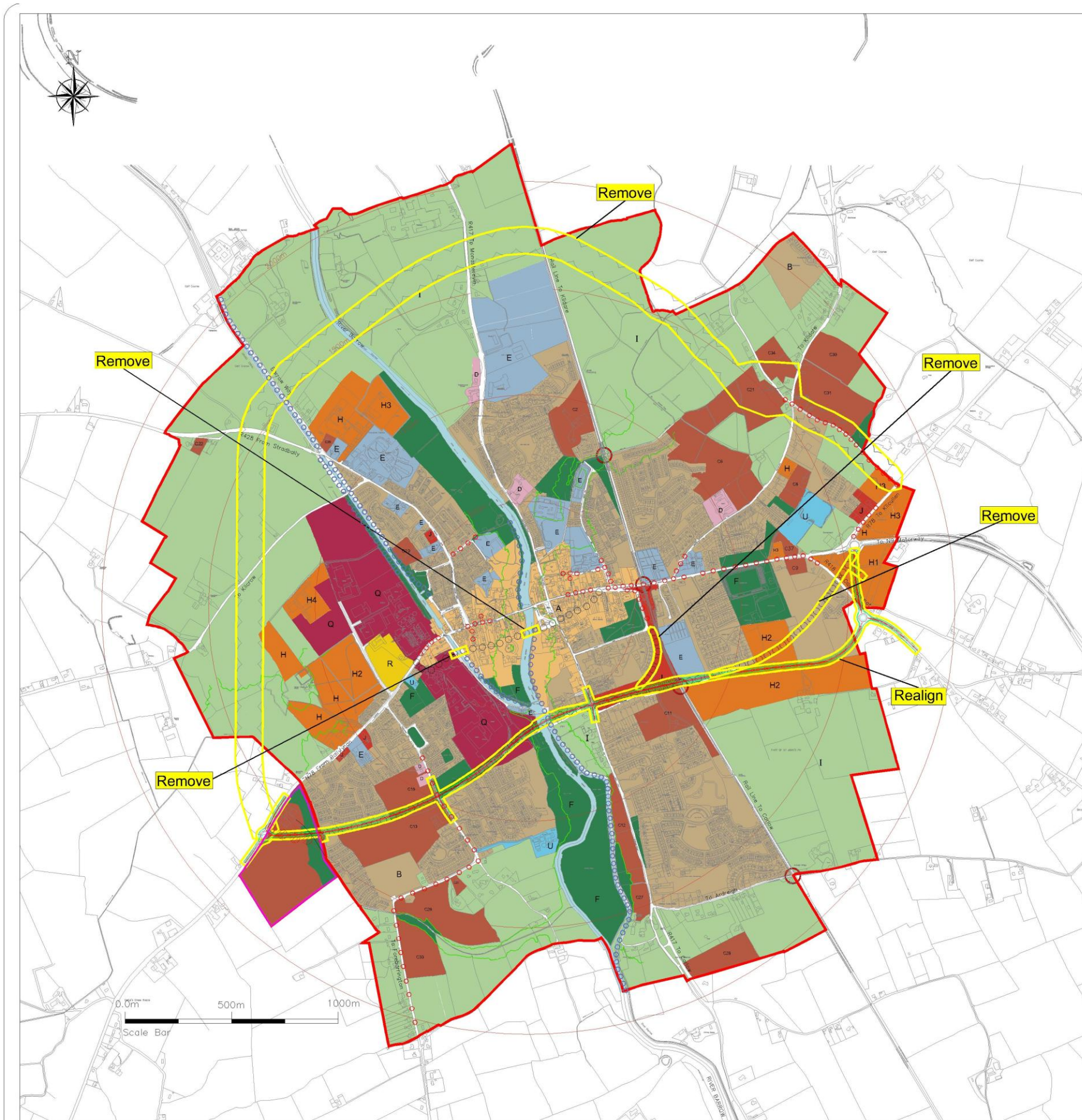


Chapter 16 Land Use Zoning

Table 16.2 Land Use Zoning Objectives

Ref	Use	Land-Use Zoning
H2	Industrial and Warehousing	<p>To provide for light industrial and industrial office type employment in a high quality campus environment and to provide for retail warehousing in accordance with the retail policy and subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lands located to the north and south of the Southern Athy Distributor Road <p>A Master Plan much be prepared for this area and any application must be submitted having regard to this Master Plan. The Master Plan should be prepared by the landowners ideally working together, and in consultation with Kildare County Council and any other service providers.</p> <p>Any development on these sites must not seriously injure the amenities of adjoining land uses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lands zoned as H2: Industrial and Warehousing off the N78 Ballylynan Road <p>It is recommended that development of these lands be accompanied by a Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment appropriate to the nature and scale of development being proposed. Such Development Proposals shall also:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Indicate and quantify loss of floodplain storage arising from the development proposal; (ii) Provide compensatory storage located within or adjacent to the proposed development; (iii) Indicate measures to ensure that water-vulnerable elements of the Development would not be flooded during the 1000year flood; (iv) Ensure that existing flow paths for flood waters will not be compromised.

Insert Revised Map 5.1A Land Use Zoning Map



Athy Town Development Plan
2012-2018
(Proposed Variation No 1)

LEGEND:

- A: Town Centre
- B: Existing Residential & Infill
- C: New Residential
- D: Neighbourhood Centre
- E: Community & Educational
- F: Open Space & Amenity
- H, H1, H2, H4: Industrial & Warehousing
- H3: Light Industrial & Commercial
- I: Agricultural
- J: Transport & Utilities
- Q: Enterprise & Employment
- R: Retail / Commercial
- U: Public Utilities
- Rivers and Canals
- Athy Town Council Boundary
- 500m Intervals from the centre of Town
- Public Rights of Way
- New Roads Objectives (Indicative only)
- Northern Distributor Road Study Area
- Improvements to existing Road Network
- Reservation to allow upgrading of the Rail Bridge
- 1000 Year Flood Line

Note: This map should be read in conjunction with the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Athy (Refer to Appendix 6)
Note: Road, cycle and foot path locations are indicative only & may be subject to change during the detailed design process.

Land Use Zoning Map

Date: June 2016 <small>Revision Date: 24-05-16</small>	Map Ref: 5.1A
Scale: N.T.S.	Drawing No: 200/10/545
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Appendix I

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report

Appendix II

Appropriate Assessment Screening Report