9. RETAIL

AIM

To continue to sustain and improve the retail profile and competitiveness of County Kildare within the retail economy of the Greater Dublin Area and beyond, through harnessing the assets and potential of centres at all levels of the County Retail Hierarchy.

9.1 BACKGROUND

The preparation of this chapter has been informed by both the 2008 – 2016 *Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area* (the Regional Retail Strategy 2008) which guides the policies for retail planning across the seven councils which make up the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) and the Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy, Chapters 2 and 3 respectively of this Plan.

The requirement for a Regional Retail Strategy covering the GDA is one which has been set out in successive retail planning guidelines for planning authorities issued since 2000, including the most recent in 2012. In accordance with these Retail Planning Guidelines it is envisaged that a review and update of the Regional Retail Strategy will be prepared in 2016 in conjunction with the Council, other local authorities in the defined area, the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (DHPCLG) and other designated agencies as appropriate. The retail policies and objectives set out in this chapter will provide an important contribution to the review and update of the Regional Retail Strategy. They will, however, provide one component to the wider perspective and approach to strategic retail planning across the region. Consequently, to ensure consistency with the future multi-authority Regional Retail Strategy, the retail policies and objectives of this Plan will be reviewed and a Variation to this Plan prepared, as appropriate.

Under the Retail Planning Guidelines of 2000 and 2005, the Council was required to prepare a County Retail Strategy. These were issued as Draft County Retail Strategies in 2005 and 2010. Both of these provided the basis of the retail chapters of the 2005 – 2011 and 2011 – 2017 County Development Plans respectively. The strategies also informed the Naas Town Plan and Athy Town Plan over the period. Under the 2012 Retail Planning Guidelines, there is no longer a requirement for the Council to prepare an individual County Retail Strategy. The guidelines solely require that the Council must prepare a joint or multi-authority retail strategy with the other local authorities in the GDA.

There have been very important changes introduced through the 2012 Retail Planning Guidelines, and these are reflected in both the retail policies and objectives of this chapter and Chapter 17 Development Management Standards. An important constant in the guidance remains, i.e. what development plans should address in respect of retail planning.

The requirements have been extended since the previous Retail Planning Guidelines and the current guidelines require, as a minimum, that development plans:

i. State the elements of their settlement hierarchy in line with the relevant regional planning guidelines and their core strategy;

ii. Outline the level and form of retail activity appropriate to the various components of the settlement hierarchy in that core strategy;

iii. Define, by way of a map, the boundaries of the core shopping areas of city and town centres and also the location of any district centres;

iv. Include a broad assessment (m^2) of the requirement for additional retail floorspace only for those plans covered by a joint or multi-authority retail strategy;

v. Set out strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development to support the settlement hierarchy, including, where appropriate, identifying opportunity sites which are suitable and available and which match the future retailing needs of the area;

vi. Identify sites which can accommodate the needs of modern retail formats in a way that maintains the essential character of the shopping area;

vii. Include objectives to support action initiatives in city and town centres; such as:

   – Mobility management measures that both improve accessibility of retail areas while aiming to develop a pedestrian and cyclist friendly urban environment and vibrant street life;

   – Public realm interventions aimed at improving the retailing experience through high quality civic design, provision of attractive street furnishing, lighting and effective street cleaning/business improvement district type initiatives; and

viii. Identify relevant development management criteria for the assessment of retail development in accordance with these guidelines.

These requirements underpin the retail policies and objectives of this Plan and provide the guidance to assist the formulation and assessment of development proposals.

9.2 RETAIL CONTEXT

The importance, profile and competitiveness of the county regionally, nationally and internationally have changed to differing degrees across the different sectors of the retail market in the years since it was assessed as part of the preparation of the first Regional Retail Strategy (the Retail Planning Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2001). Of key importance are the following trends and developments:

– A significant improvement in the county's convenience offer through the combination of:
– The introduction of new large scale convenience stores;
– Increased market penetration of the international discounters; and
– The profile of successful franchising with local previously independent businesses under the umbrella of both national and international convenience operators in centres at all levels of the County Retail Hierarchy.

These improvements have generally been witnessed in all of the main centres of the county, although there are exceptions where permitted schemes have not been progressed, with those in Athy, Naas and Sallins specifically highlighted.

– Whitewater Shopping Centre, Newbridge is the largest and best anchored shopping centre outside of the Dublin Region, with Marks & Spencer and Debenhams, especially as the former is not currently trading in either Limerick or Waterford or to their optimum format in Galway.
– The Kildare Village Outlet Centre is the only designer outlet centre on the island of Ireland, which is only matched in the UK by the sister centre in Bicester, near Oxford. It has a regional, national and international profile and draw, which is set to increase through the recently opened extension to the centre.
– Naas establishing itself as the key location in the county and outside of the Dublin region for national and international bulky goods operators to locate, which is evidenced in the calibre tenants that have been secured.

The County Development Plan 2011 – 2017 highlighted that the county had witnessed an unprecedented growth in the quality and quantum of its retail offer between 2001 and March 2009 (the cut-off date for baseline information incorporated in the plan). Despite the impact of the recession, this growth has continued with the net retail floorspace of the county increasing by 17.2% from 161,545m^2 to 189,254m^2 between 2009 and January 2016 (the baseline cut-off date for retail quantitative data for this Plan). It is noted that the 2009 figure is lower than that set out in the Draft County Retail Strategy 2010 as this has been adjusted to exclude schemes which were well advanced at that stage and were included in the retail floorspace profile of the county.

As with the Draft County Retail Strategy 2010, a new retail floorspace survey was not conducted as part of the preparation of this Plan, with the last survey in the county being that undertaken for the preparation of the *Retail Planning Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2001*. It comprised generally, but not exclusively, surveying all towns and villages in the Greater Dublin Area with a population greater than 1,000 (based on the 1996 Census). The survey also quantified vacant floorspace in the different centres.

In the absence of a new floorspace survey the approach adopted, in both the Draft County Retail Strategy 2010 and this Plan, has been to update the information with that on trading new retail floorspace. It does not include a quantitative assessment of vacant floorspace in the county's different centres, but this has been assessed qualitatively in the retail health checks conducted as part of the preparation of this Plan. The approach adopted is that which was applied in the preparation of the 2008 Regional Retail Strategy and is that generally being applied by local authorities in the GDA and remainder of the country in the review and update of City and County Development Plans.

The majority of the increase in the county's retail floorspace is attributable to permissions which were granted in 2009. Very few since then have been built out and are fully trading albeit there are important exceptions to this. These include the expansion of the Kildare Village Outlet Centre and the increased presence of international convenience discounters. For the immediate future, as a result of confidence in the retail sector only slowly recovering, this trend is likely to continue, with many of the current permissions unlikely to be delivered or be so in the format or scale as granted.

The current net floorspace for the county and its main centres in the County Retail Hierarchy is set out in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1
Net Retail Floorspace Trading in 2016 (m^2)

Centre	Convenience	Comparison	Retail Warehousing	Total	Ranking
Athy	5,620	4,864	0	10,484	5
Ballymore-Eustace	439	52	135	626	16
Castledermot	1,174	35	0	1,209	14
Celbridge	5,276	3,122	0	8,398	6
Clane	2,805	785	0	3,590	11
Kilcock	906	583	300	1,789	13
Kilcullen	1,106	699	0	1,805	12
Kildare	5,208	15,485	1,100	21,803	4
Kill	504	111	0	615	17
Leixlip	3,453	1,913	400	5,766	8
Maynooth	8,732	14,266	0	22,998	3
Monasterevin	1,956	1,662	0	3,618	10
Naas	12,041	14,986	25,455	52,482	1
Newbridge	9,224	25,396	7,475	42,095	2
Prosperous	1,279	3,826	0	5,105	9
Rathangan	600	452	0	1,052	15
Sallins	2,477	2,742	600	5,819	7
Total	**62,800**	**90,979**	**35,475**	**189,254**	

Of the total current floorspace, some 33.2% is convenience, 48.1% comparison and 18.7% retail warehousing. These percentages have changed little since the 2009 adjusted baseline, although there has been both a slight increase in the convenience share and a parallel decrease in that of retail warehousing.

The effects of the recession are well illustrated by comparison of the total new floorspace in the county built and trading between 2001 – 2009 and 2009 – 2016 which was 94,176m^2 and 30,981m^2 respectively, with that of the latter period being less than a third of the previous one. Of the new floorspace trading since 2009, some 42.9% was convenience, 46.0% mainstream comparison and 11.1% bulky goods. This is a very different balance to that which prevailed between 2001 and 2009, where the percentages were 29.5%, 50.4% and 20.1% respectively.

The difference between the two periods reflects primarily the slowdown in the delivery of comparison floorspace and specifically that of bulky goods floorspace between 2009 and 2016. In respect of the latter, this also can be taken to reflect the effectiveness of the policies of the County Development Plan 2011 – 2017, which did not permit mainstream convenience and comparison retailing in retail parks and this may have served to erode market interest in new applications.

The sustained, albeit reduced, increase in the county's retail floorspace reflects and responds to the continuing attraction and competiveness of Kildare for shopping, compared to the position at the time of the Retail Planning Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2001. This is evidenced in both the increase in resident expenditure retained within the county and the inflows of expenditure to the county over the last fifteen or so years. There were no new household or shopper surveys undertaken as part of the preparation of this Plan, but those conducted for that of the Draft County Retail Strategy 2010 were reviewed. The findings of these surveys were assessed as remaining appropriate in January 2016, taking due account of:

(i) The critical mass and attraction of the county's existing and new floorspace across all sectors of the retail market; and

(ii) The potential impact on shopping patterns of large scale predominantly comparison developments and extensions in neighbouring local authority areas.

Retail Expenditure Assumptions

On the basis of the above, the assumptions in respect of outflow and inflow of expenditure across the county as a whole, accepting this will vary in respect of centres closer to neighbouring local authorities, are:

- **Convenience Resident Expenditure Retention:** 97.8%, an increase of 5.8% since the Retail Planning Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2001 surveys and remains exceptionally high and positive
- **Convenience Expenditure Inflows:** 6.0% - this is a decrease from 2001 (9.0%) but indicates the impacts of significant improvements in the offers of neighbouring counties
- **Comparison Resident Expenditure Retention:** 33.0%, which is a 14.0% improvement since the 2001 baseline survey and reflects the sustained improvement in the offer and attraction of key centres and schemes, regionally, nationally and internationally, in the county despite the competition from the improving offers of neighbouring counties
- **Comparison Expenditure Inflows:** 15.0%, which is a 9.0% improvement since 2001 that has been underpinned by, to differing degrees, the regional, national, international attraction and profile of the combination of the Newbridge Whitewater Shopping Centre, Kildare Village Outlet Centre and the suite of Naas's retail parks.

Although there have continued to be important improvements in the quality and quantum of the county's retail floorspace, there remains considerable scope for further enhancement. This is of key importance if the county's attraction for living, working, leisure and investment is to be sustained over the period of this Plan and beyond. Achievement of this underpins the retail vision, policies and objectives of the Plan.

9.3 STRATEGY

The overall strategy for retail planning and development in the county is structured by the following:

(a) Strategic Policy Framework;

(b) Retail Policies for Towns and Settlements in Kildare; and

(c) General Retail Policies.

The strategic policy framework, which underpins the specific and general retail policies and objectives of this Plan, comprises the:

- County Retail Hierarchy
- Sequential Approach
- Core Retail Areas
- Broad Assessment of the Requirement for Additional Retail Floorspace.

9.3.1 County Retail Hierarchy

The County Retail Hierarchy in general is aligned with that of the Plan's Settlement Strategy but it is acknowledged that there are divergences between this and where a centre is appropriately designated in the County Retail Hierarchy. This is reflected in the Plan's retail policies and objectives which recognise that, while a centre may be significant in its population size and economic importance, this currently may not be matched by its profile and role in retailing in the county.

The County Development Plan 2011 – 2017 County Retail Hierarchy was reviewed in the preparation of this Plan against the Settlement Strategy. Key considerations in the review of the County Retail Hierarchy have been the retail performance and current potential of the different centres in the hierarchy. From this, the following are highlighted:

(i) The County Retail Hierarchy remains consistent with the Regional Retail Hierarchy but, in the forthcoming review and update of the latter, the Council will be seeking to have Maynooth designated as the Level 2 Metropolitan Area Major Town serving North East Kildare, and

(ii) To ensure the integrity of the County Retail Hierarchy, there have been minor adjustments to which tier within the different levels of the hierarchy certain centres appropriately sit (e.g. Kilcock is not a retail centre on par with Maynooth and this needs to be recognised).

Policy: County Retail Hierarchy

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 1 Guide major retail development in accordance with the framework provided by the County Retail Hierarchy (Table 9.2) to enable an efficient, equitable and sustainable distribution of retail floorspace throughout the county.

Table 9.2
County Retail Hierarchy

Level	Metropolitan Area	Hinterland Area
Level 2	**Major Town Centres**	**Twin County Town Centres**
	Leixlip (including Collinstown)	Naas and Newbridge
Level 3	**Town Centres**	**Sub County Town Centres/Town Centres**
	Tier 1 Town Centre *Celbridge and Maynooth* Tier 2 Town Centre *Kilcock*	Tier 1 Sub County Town Centre *Athy and Kildare Town* Tier 2 Town Centre *Clane, Kilcullen, Monasterevin*
Level 4	**Village Centres**	**Local Centres – Small Towns & Large Village Centres**
	Straffan	Tier 1 Small Town Centres *Castledermot, Prosperous, Rathangan and Sallins* Tier 2 Large Village Centres *Allenwood, Ballitore, Ballymore-Eustace, Crookstown, Derrinturn, Kill and Robertstown*
Level 5	**Corner Shops**	**Smaller Village Centres/Crossroads/Rural Settlements**

In accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines and the Regional Retail Strategy, the County Retail Hierarchy provides the strategic policy framework for the spatial distribution of new retail development. The emphasis is on strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail developments with the hierarchy setting the framework for the spatial distribution of the quantum and nature of convenience and comparison floorspace. It is defined as follows:

- **Level 2 – Major Town and County Town Centres:** major convenience and comparison.
- **Level 3 – Town and Sub County Town Centres:** large scale convenience and middle order comparison, but not excluding higher order comparison particularly that related to the tourism economy.
- **Level 4 – Village Centres and Small Town Centres:** predominantly additional convenience but not excluding tourism related comparison.

9.3.2 Sequential Approach

The Sequential Approach is incorporated in the strategic policy framework for guiding new retail development. It recognises the importance of sustaining the vitality and viability of town and village centres. Planning applications for retail development proposals, including extensions or material change of use of existing developments (as introduced in the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012), must comply with the criteria of suitability of use, size, scale and accessibility and the following key principles of the Sequential Approach:

i. In the first instance, the priority should be given to locating retail development in town centres or village centres;

ii. If it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that town/village centre locations are not readily available within a reasonable and realistic timescale then edge of centre sites can be considered. In the Retail Planning Guidelines, these are defined as sites that are within 300 – 400 metres of the Core Retail Area of a centre; and

iii. Only after the options for town centre (or village centre) and edge of centre sites are exhausted should out of centre locations and sites be considered.

The detail of the requirements for retail applications and the assessment of these by the Council under the tests of the Sequential Approach are provided in the 2012 Retail Planning Guidelines.

Policy: Sequential Approach

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 2 Guide retail development where practical and viable in accordance with the framework provided by the Sequential Approach to enable the vitality and viability of existing town and village centres to be sustained and strengthened.

9.3.3 Core Retail Areas

The Core Retail Area is that part of a town centre which is primarily devoted to shopping, as distinct from the wider Town Centre Zoning Objective. It is normally defined as the area including and immediate to the 'prime pitch'. This is the area that achieves the highest rentals, best yields, is highest in demand from retailers, developers and investors and the area in which pedestrian flows are greatest.

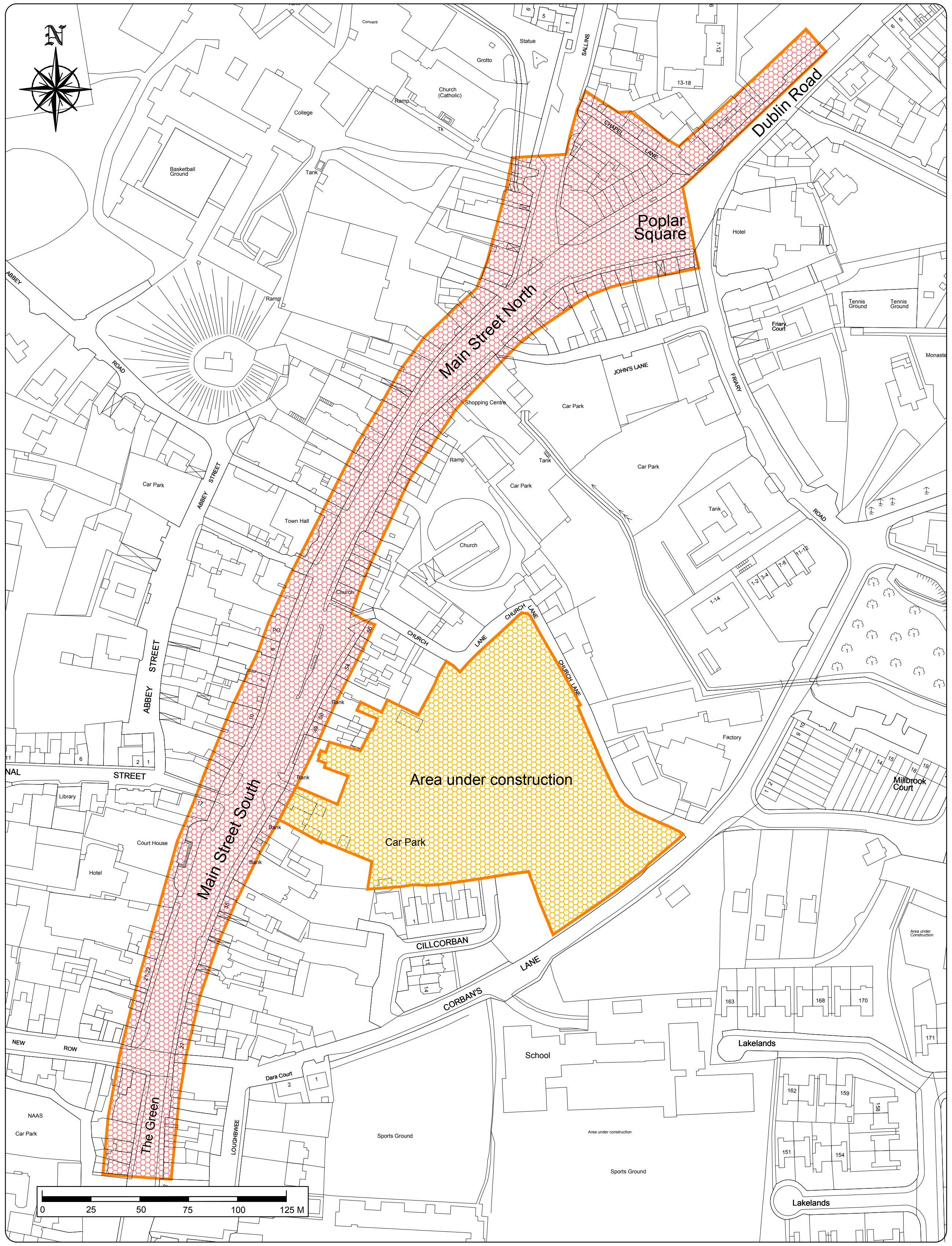
The designation of Core Retail Areas generally is only applicable to the main towns in the County Retail Hierarchy whereas in smaller centres retail floorspace is on the whole more dispersed. The designated Core Retail Areas of the main centres in the county are provided later in the chapter in Maps 9.1 – 9.9.

Policies: Core Retail Areas

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 3 Define the Core Retail Area within the Development Plan/Local Area Plans of the county's main centres to provide guidance on the application of the Sequential Approach.

R 4 Confirm the Town Centre zoning in adopted Local Area Plans and, where appropriate, designate further Town Centre Expansion Areas subject to the tests of the Sequential Approach to enable the vision for these centres to be achieved and to provide the appropriate guidance to applicants.



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

Naas Core Retail Area
County Development Plan
2017 - 2023
Existing Area
Expansion Area

Scale: N.T.S.
Map Ref.: V1-9.1
Date: February 2017
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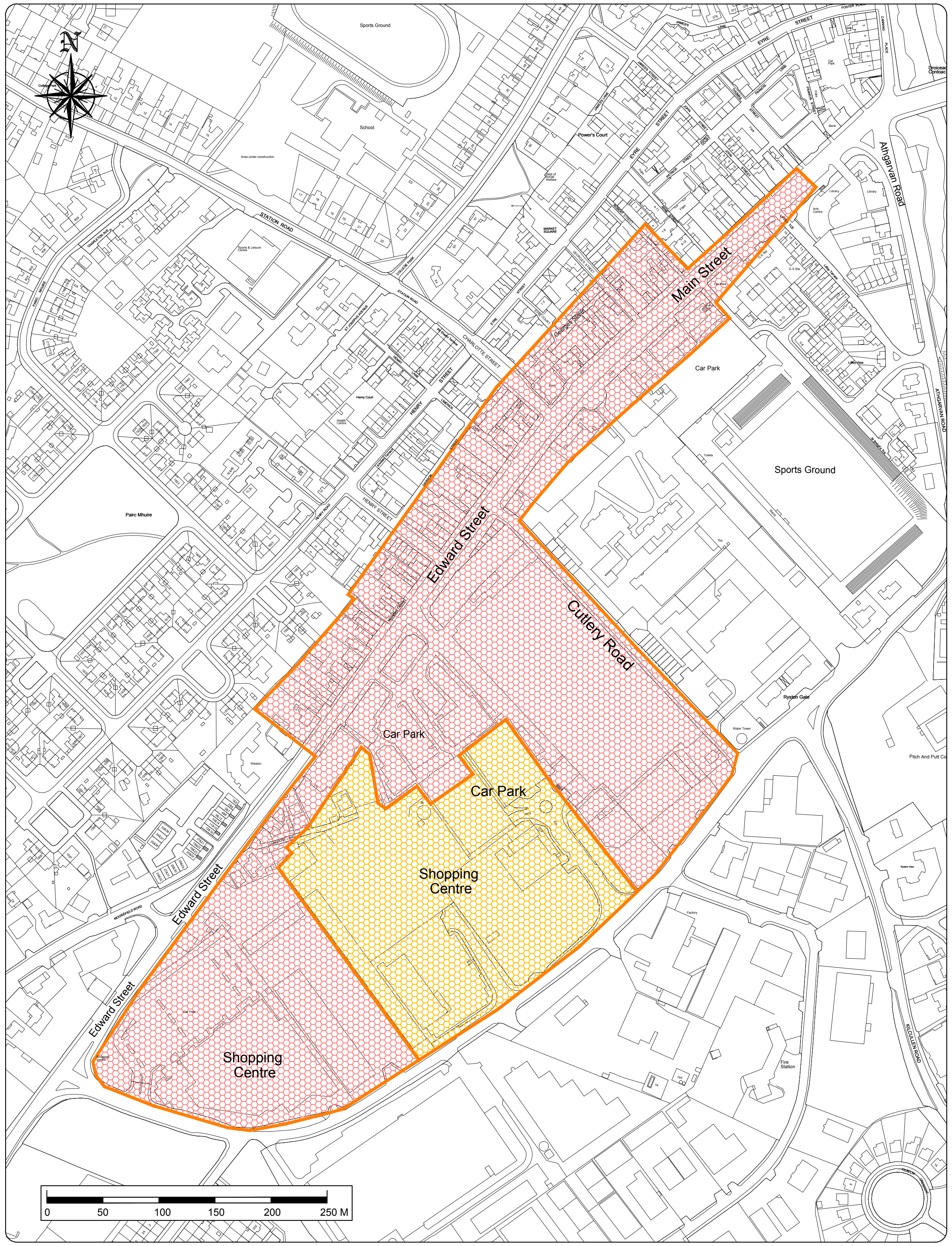

Kildare County Council
Planning Department,
Áras Chill Dara,
Devoy Park, Naas,
Co Kildare.

Newbridge Core Retail Area
County Development Plan
2017 - 2023
Existing Area
Expansion Area

Scale: N.T.S.
Map Ref.: V1-9.2
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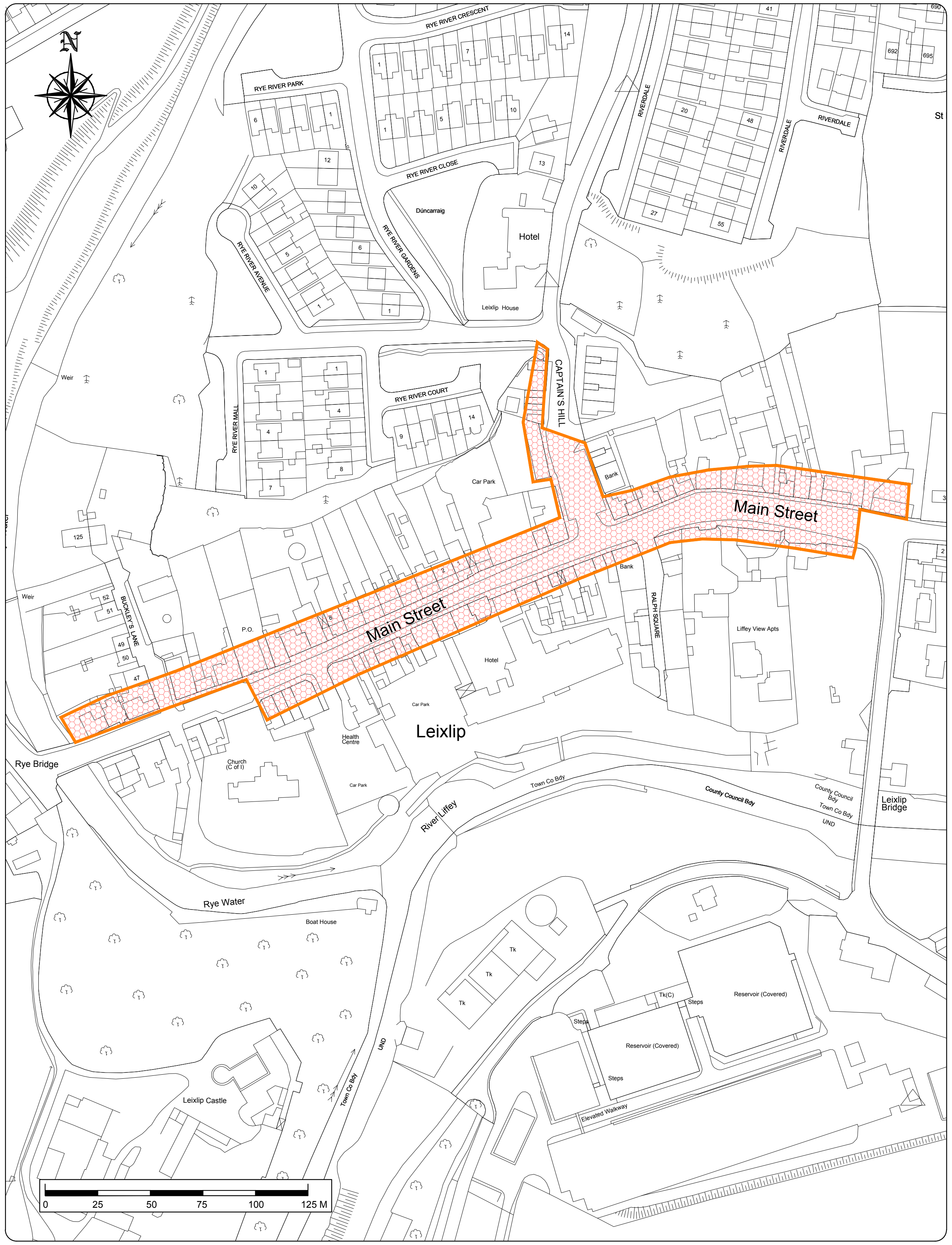

Kildare County Council
Planning Department,
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Naas, Co Kildare.

Leixlip Core Retail Area
County Development Plan
2017 - 2023

Existing Area

Scale: N.T.S.	Map Ref.: V1-9.3
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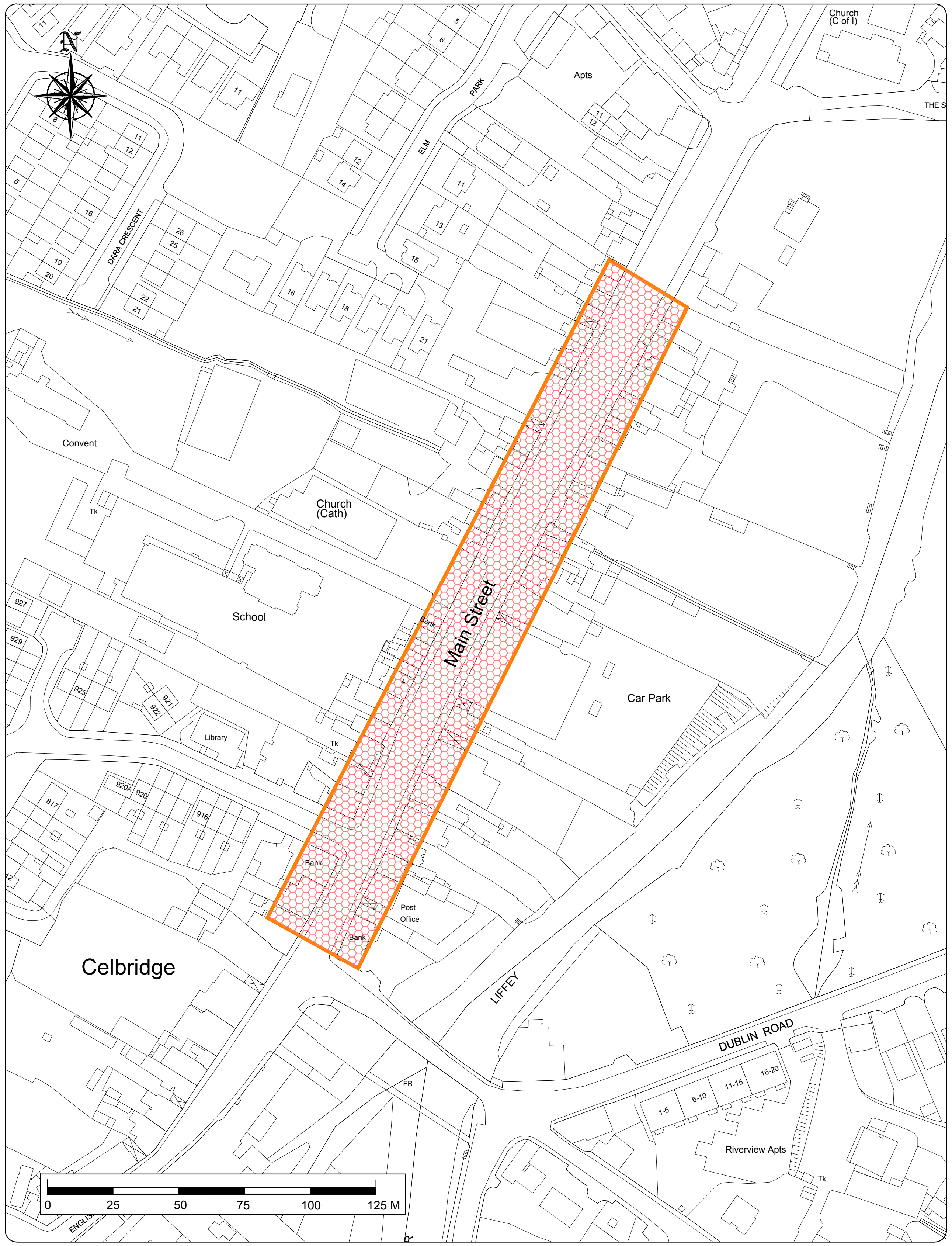

Kildare County Council
Planning Department,
Áras Chill Dara,
Naas, Co Kildare.

Celbridge Core Retail Area
County Development Plan
2017 - 2023

Existing Area

Scale: N.T.S.	Map Ref.: V1-9.4
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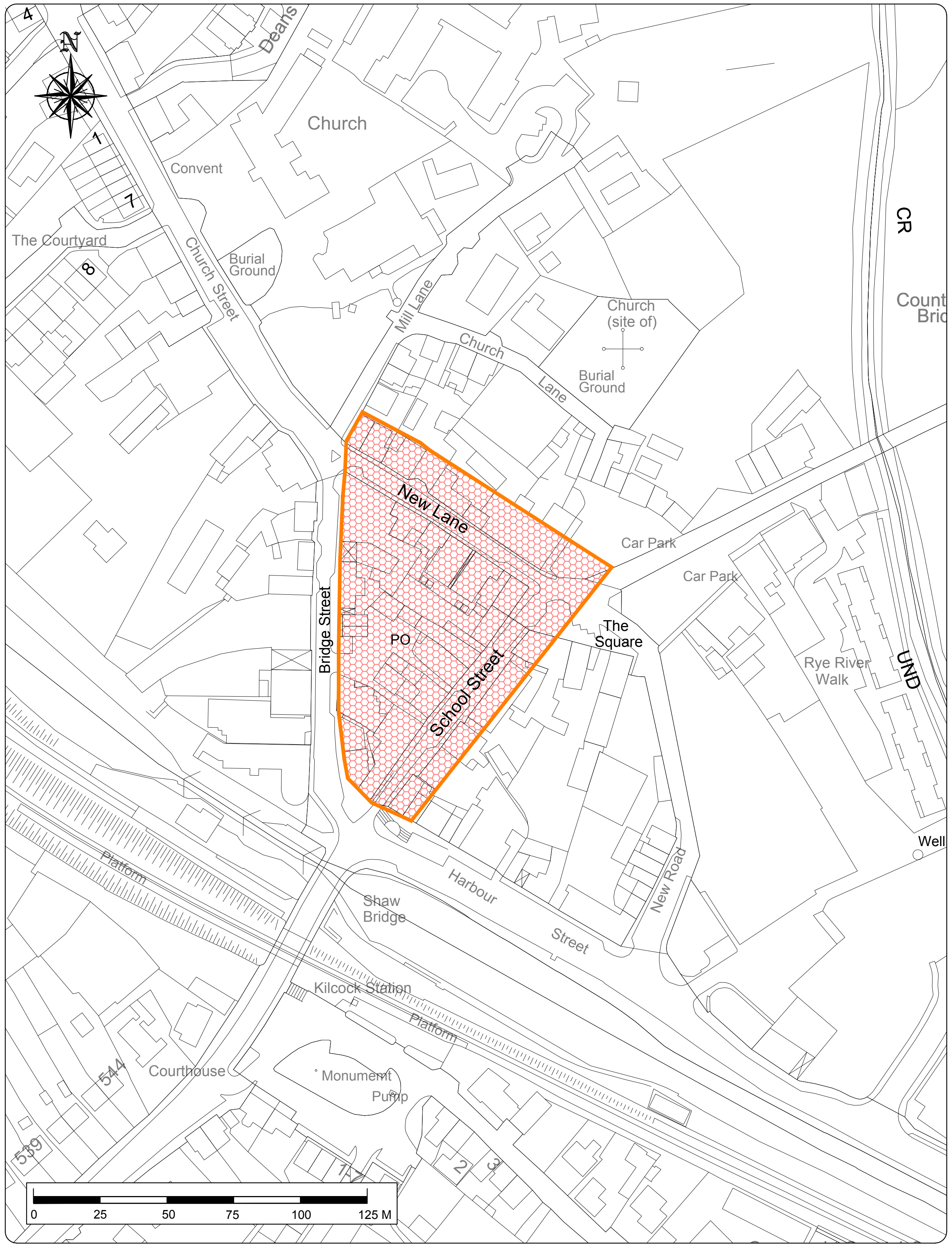

Kildare County Council Planning Department, Áras Chill Dara, Naas, Co Kildare.	**Kilcock Core Retail Area** County Development Plan 2017 - 2023 Existing Area

Scale: N.T.S.	Map Ref.: V1-9.5
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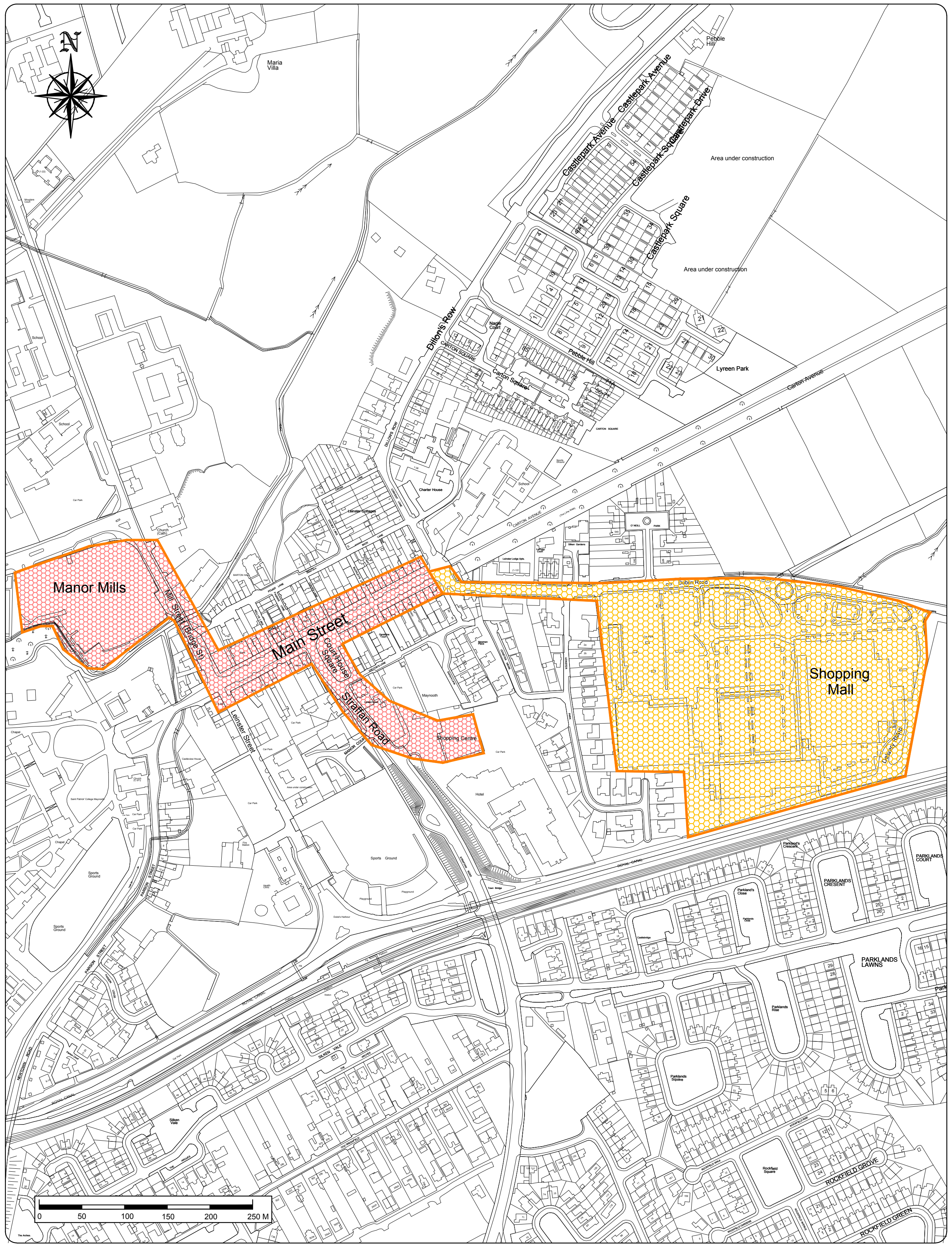

Kildare County Council Planning Department, Áras Chill Dara, Devoy Park, Naas, Co Kildare.	**Maynooth Core Retail Area** County Development Plan 2017 - 2023 Existing Area Expansion Area

Scale: N.T.S.	Map Ref.: V1-9.6
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Athy Core Retail Area
County Development Plan
2017 - 2023

Existing Area
Expansion Area

Scale: N.T.S.	Map Ref.: V1-9.7
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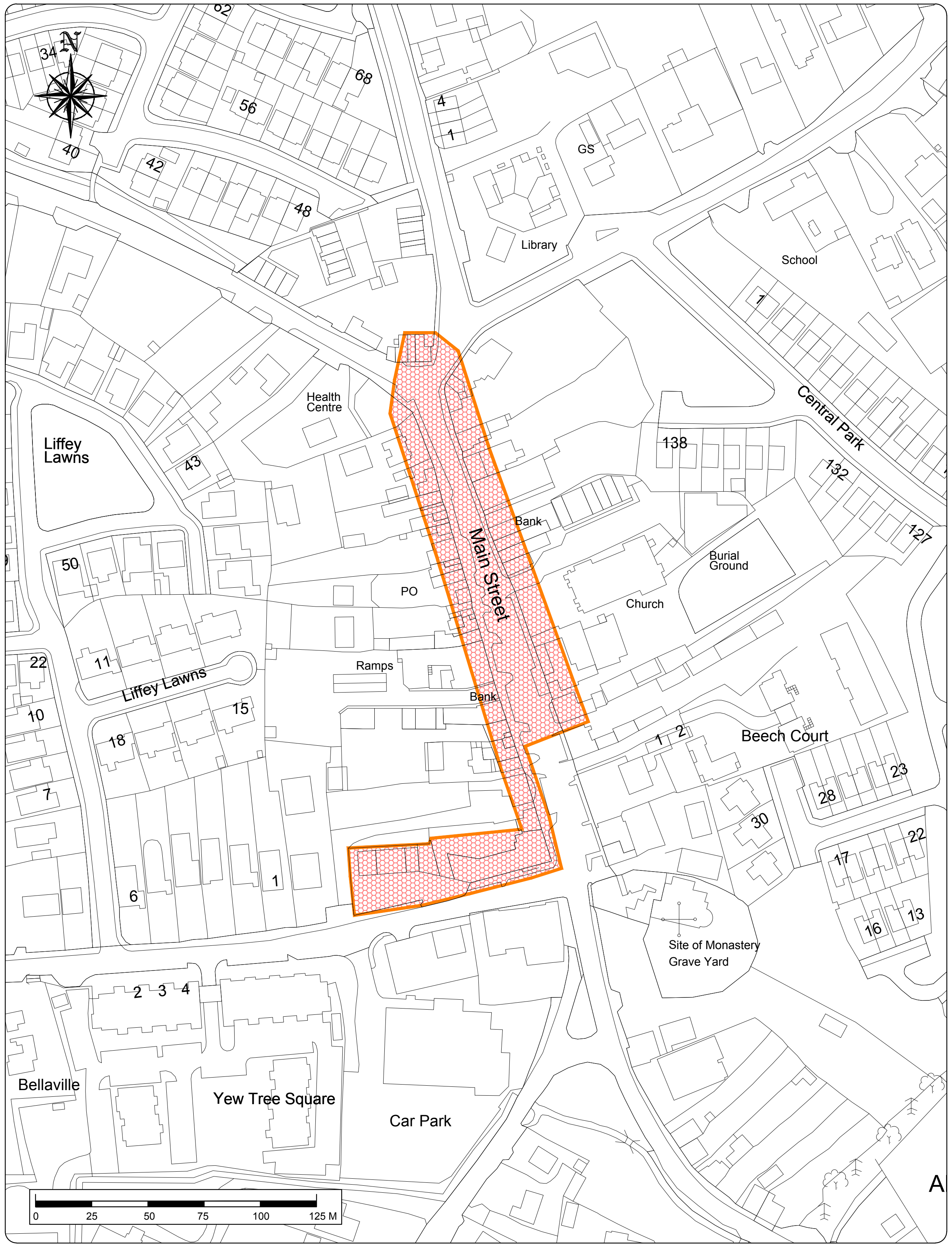

Kildare County Council
Planning Department,
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Naas, Co Kildare.

Clane Core Retail Area
County Development Plan
2017 - 2023

Existing Area

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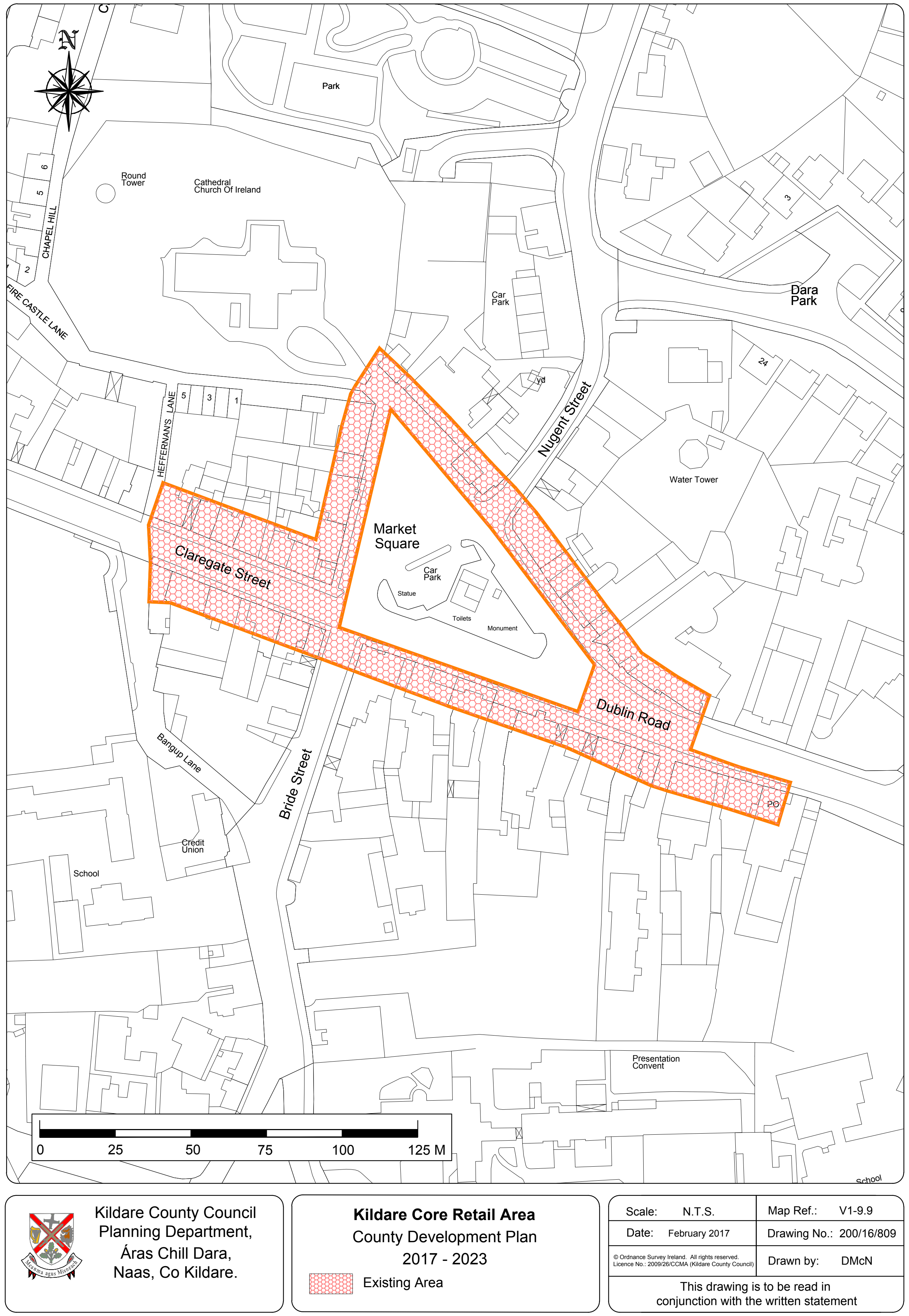

Table 9.3
Indicative Net Floorspace Potential (m²)

	Convenience		Comparison	
Period	**Low**	**High**	**Low**	**High**
2017 – 2023	19,626	25,011	21,047	28,189
2023 – 2029	28,908	37,480	30,310	41,501
Total 2017 – 2029	**48,534**	**62,491**	**51,357**	**69,690**

9.3.4 Broad Assessment of the Requirement for Additional Retail Floorspace

The broad assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace was previously not included in the most recent County Development Plans but was an inherent part of the 2005 and 2010 Draft County Retail Strategies, which informed the retail policies and objectives of the respective plans. To meet the requirements of the 2012 Retail Planning Guidelines it is included in this Plan in Table 9.3.

The broad assessment is provided as guidance and is not intended to be prescriptive. This qualification is provided to highlight the capacity for additional retail floorspace in the county but is not a simple arithmetic exercise as different proposals will have their own catchment areas and trade draws depending on the scale, nature and location of the proposed development. It is, thus, a tool to inform decision making with the real control factor being meeting the tests of the assessment criteria for retail developments outlined in Chapter 17.

The assessment is founded on the approach adopted in the two previous Draft County Retail Strategies of 2005 and 2010. The key inputs to deriving the assessment are:

- The most up to date population baseline and forecasts provided in the Core and Settlement Strategies of the Plan, with the foundation being those in the Regional Planning Guidelines 2010.
- Data and trends provided in the CSO Annual Services Inquiry (ASI), Consumer Price Index (CPI) and Regional Incomes and County Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
- The Economic and Social Research Institute's (ESRI) *Medium Term Review: 2013 – 2020* which provides forecast growth trends to 2020.
- Current retail floorspace and assumptions on full planning permissions and their likelihood of being built out.
- The outflows from and inflows to the county of consumer expenditure, as outlined in Section 9.2.

A 2013 Price Year for the assessment is adopted as this is the latest year for which disaggregated information is available.

The assessment covers the period of this Plan and the next, as was the approach adopted in the 2005 and 2010 Draft County Retail Strategies. This approach recognises that many applications take time to deliver and often span two plan periods.

The potential for additional floorspace over the next two plan periods is in respect of convenience floorspace but below that for comparison, particularly under the high growth scenario. However, this comparative assessment highlights the impact of the recession and its continued influence on retail expenditure potential, with the key recent published indicators of this summarised as follows:

i. The CSO ASI 2013 total comparison retail turnover is just over 14% less than that which prevailed at 2006 (the base year for the Draft County Retail Strategy 2010). In contrast, total convenience turnover is just over 10% of that at 2006 but has grown at slower pace than trends at the peak of the economy. The decrease in the former highlights the significantly less expenditure on comparison goods during the recession;

9

ii. The CSO 2013 County Incomes and Regional Gross Domestic Product for Kildare of €17,209 is between that which prevailed in 2002 and 2003, whereas that at 2006 was €21,117 which was close to the peak in 2008. It is important to highlight that the county has continued to outperform the State average under these indices and is second to the Dublin Region as a whole in the country; and

iii. Convenience per capita spend has overtaken that of comparison, contrary to the trend prevailing in the Draft County Retail Strategy 2010. This noted, per capita levels derived for convenience in 2016 in the Draft County Retail Strategy 2010 will not be achieved until 2018 and those in respect of comparison, not until at least 2025.

The economy is forecast to grow over the coming years however, the ESRI and other authoritative bodies/forecasters are more cautious than previously. This position, and that in respect of key indicators, will be monitored and updated by the Council in its assessment of retail applications.

Policy: Retail Floorspace

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 5 Have due regard to the broad assessment for additional retail floorspace in the Plan period and beyond in the determination of retail planning applications, in parallel with a more detailed appraisal under the plan's retail development management criteria as set out in Chapter 17.

9.4 RETAIL POLICIES FOR TOWNS AND SETTLEMENTS IN KILDARE

9.4.1 Hinterland Area: Level 2 Twin County Town Centre – Naas

Based on the 2011 Census of Population, marginally Naas is no longer the largest town in the county with it being overtaken by Newbridge – its Twin County Town Centre in the County Retail Hierarchy. However, this is set to be readdressed through the Settlement Strategy over the period of this Plan, given that Naas is designated as a Large Growth Town I in the Regional Planning Guidelines. Although it is perceived to also have lost its ranking as the largest retail centre in the county, the floorspace assessment confirms that Naas has the largest retail floorspace in Kildare and this approximates to some 27.8% of the county's total, even when key vacancies are taken into account.

Underpinning this is that Naas has 19.2% of the county's convenience floorspace and 71.8% of its bulky goods floorspace, with the latter accounting for 48.5% of total retail floorspace in the town and its environs. It has resulted in Naas sustaining and enhancing its role and profile as the largest and most important bulky goods shopping destination outside of the Dublin Region in the GDA.

Concerns have been raised in respect of the diminished vitality and vitality of the Core Retail Area of Naas in recent years. Key issues in the equation that underpin this are: the stalling of the delivery of Naas Shopping Centre at Corban's Lane, the lost progress on the redevelopment/regeneration of the former Superquinn store site and the closures of both Marks & Spencer in the Naas Town Centre scheme and the Naas Shopping Mall. Additionally, outside of the Core Retail Area, has seen the closure of Penneys on the Blessington Road.

Although all of the above have had an impact on the vitality and viability of the Core Retail Area, in view of the general strength, resilience and attraction of the independent businesses in the area, the town continues to perform relatively well. In addition, there has been to differing degrees, a continued revitalisation of Friary Lane by niche retailers, restaurants and cafes. However, there are concerns in respect of the increased presence of budget retailers, betting shops and takeaway outlets which serve to undermine the profile and ambience of the Core Retail Area.

The above noted, Naas requires to sustain its profile and retail floorspace growth through the delivery of mainstream national and international comparison retailers in the heart of and adjacent to the town centre. The priorities over the Plan period and beyond are working with stakeholders to secure:

- the completed development of the Naas Shopping Centre/Corban's Lane site; and
- the redevelopment/regeneration of the former Superquinn, Penneys and Naas Shopping Mall sites.

Additionally, a better focus is required on the enhancement and improvement of the quality of the heritage environment of the town centre.

Policies: Naas

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 6 Promote and encourage major enhancement and expansion of mainstream comparison floorspace and town centre functions in the Hinterland Area Twin County Town of Naas, to reflect its role as a Major Town Centre and further develop its competitiveness and importance as a key centre in the GDA.

R 7 Restrict the granting of permissions for both convenience and mainstream comparison floorspace in the town and its environs outside of the designated Core Retail Area until proposals for the redevelopment/regeneration of some of the following key sites have been achieved:

- Naas Shopping Centre – Corban's Lane
- The former Superquinn site
- The Naas Shopping Mall
- The former Penneys outlet on Blessington Road.

9.4.2 Hinterland Area: Level 2 Twin County Town Centre – Newbridge

Although Newbridge is second to Naas in respect of its total retail floorspace, it has sustained and enhanced its profile as the most important mainstream comparison shopping retail destination in Kildare, with mass appeal that extends beyond the county's boundaries. This is based on the combined quality and quantum of the Whitewater Shopping Centre and Penneys' higher and middle order comparison offer, which have elevated the town to one of the most important Level 2 centres in the GDA, and subsequently nationally, given that the former is anchored by both Marks & Spencer and Debenhams.

At present, Newbridge has 22.3% of the county's retail floorspace and significantly 27.9% of its mainstream comparison floorspace, which accounts for 60.3% of the town's total floorspace. These figures confirm the role and importance of Newbridge being the most important mainstream comparison shopping destination in the county. Despite the recession, the combination of the retail offer and the integral cinema complex in the Whitewater Shopping Centre has sustained an important boost to the town centre and a further benefit to trade in local restaurants, cafes and bars and the night time economy. Additionally, there has been;

(i) The regeneration/redevelopment of the former Atlantic Homecare site on Newbridge Retail Park through the introduction of both SuperValu and Home Store and More; and

(ii) The increasing national and international profile and attraction of the Newbridge Silverware Visitor Centre, which incorporates both an award winning restaurant and the Museum of Style Icons, with the most recent published statistics indicating that the centre is fifth in the top 10 of most visited non-paying visitor centres in the country.

As was the case at the time of the Draft County Retail Strategy 2010, there has been a visual environmental improvement in the quality of Newbridge Town Centre which has redressed issues that previously prevailed. These benefits require to be spread throughout the town centre by facilitating enhanced linkages along Main Street and to the Edward Street/Main Street North/Charlotte Street/Eyre Street area. This noted, the latter area has begun to evolve and develop a niche and momentum in the intervening years.

Over the period of this Plan and beyond, the priority is for Newbridge to sustain and enhance its role and importance in the national and regional retail hierarchies. Unlike the majority of higher order centres in the GDA and wider country, Newbridge has the scope and potential to achieve this within the town centre through the regeneration of land and buildings. The objective must be to maximise the potential of regeneration to consolidate, integrate and visually improve the town centre.

Policies: Newbridge

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 8 Support and implement appropriate development of lands for the future expansion of Newbridge Town Centre,

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and specifically the Whitewater Shopping Centre, facilitated by the expansion of the Core Retail Area.

R 9 Provide the framework for a more integrated approach to the planning of the town centre through the Newbridge Local Area Plan 2013 – 2019, and in particular Edward Street/Main Street North/Charlotte Street/Eyre Street area being a focus for achieving greater linkage and commercial synergy.

R 10 Continue to enhance the profile of Newbridge through strategic environmental enhancement, the creation of spaces and places of interest and the introduction of public art.

R 11 Support the further development of the tourism asset and attraction of the Newbridge Silverware Visitor Centre, given its benefits to both the retail and tourism economies of the town and county.

9.4.3 Metropolitan Area: Level 2 Major Town Centre – Leixlip

Leixlip, including Collinstown, was designated as the location for the Metropolitan Area Level 2 Major Town Centre to serve North East Kildare in the Regional Retail Strategy and consequently in the County Development Plan 2011 – 2017, with the timeframe for this being achieved determined as being gradually across a 20 year period from 2008. The designation and objective was founded in the Retail Planning Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2001, which identified the need for a Level 2 Major Town Centre in North East Kildare to better meet the existing and potential shopping needs of people living in this area of the county/GDA. To ensure consistency with the Regional Retail Hierarchy, Leixlip (including Collinstown) remains the designated Level 2 Metropolitan Area Major Town Centre in the county.

However, in the interim period, given the impacts of the recession, Leixlip, including Collinstown, is no longer considered by the Council as being the realistic location for its designated role in the Regional and County Retail Hierarchies. The basis of this will be submitted by the Council in its inputs/co-operation in the preparation of both the programmed 2017 *Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy* (RSES) and the new Regional Retail Strategy which informs this. Key influences in respect of this include:

- The significant improvement of the relatively nearby expanding Level 2 Metropolitan Area Major Town Centres of Blanchardstown and Liffey Valley, as well as proximity to Dublin City Centre.
- The significant retail profile and potential of Maynooth.

In 2011, Leixlip had the fourth largest population in the county and this position is projected to remain over the period of this Plan. However, it is eighth in terms of its quantum of retail floorspace. As has long been recognised, there is relatively limited potential for expansion of Leixlip Town Centre's retail offer. Accordingly, the continued enhancement and consolidation of the traditional heart of the town centre is promoted. The expansion of the established neighbourhood scale centres at Confey and Louisa Bridge is also encouraged. In addition, Leixlip has the relatively untapped potential of its heritage and tourism assets which requires to be harnessed.

Policies: Leixlip

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 12 Seek the re-designation of Leixlip as a Metropolitan Area Level 3 Centre in the new GDA Retail Hierarchy.

R 13 Work with development interests/landowners and other key stakeholders in the development of a revised plan for the lands at Collinstown.

R 14 Encourage and facilitate sustaining and enhancing the retail, commercial, leisure and services offer of Leixlip as a Level 3 Town Centre and harnessing the potential of its heritage and tourism assets.

9.4.4 Metropolitan Area: Level 3, Tier 1 Town Centres – Celbridge and Maynooth

Celbridge is underperforming in meeting the needs of local people in the town and its hinterland in an efficient and equitable way. The key opportunities for this to be satisfactorily addressed will be identified in the forthcoming Celbridge/Castletown Local Area Plan, with due regard to the significance of the heritage of the 18th century streetscape, including buildings and their river frontages, historic houses, their settings, associated demesnes and landscapes being of significant importance. The new Celbridge/Castletown Local Area Plan will provide more specific detail at a local level on the most appropriate locations and extent for new retail provision and expansion within the town, taking account of heritage and landscape character.

In contrast, although there has not been any significant new retail floorspace since 2009, Maynooth has sustained its position as the third largest retail centre in Kildare. Additionally, it is recognised as the only town which has the scope and potential to be the designated Level 2 Metropolitan Area Major Town Centre serving North East Kildare. To ensure consistency with the Regional Retail Hierarchy, Maynooth remains designated as a Tier 1 Level 3 Town Centre in this Plan. There will, however, be a submission by the Council on the preparation of both the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and new Regional Retail Strategy which seeks the re-designation of Maynooth as the area's Level 2 Major Town Centre, and that this not be constrained to being achieved gradually over a twenty year time period. The area identified for this to be achieved is the Town Centre Expansion Area to maximise linkage and synergy with the town's Core Retail Area.

Policies: Celbridge and Maynooth

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 15 Encourage the development of the retail, commercial, leisure and service role of Celbridge as a self-sustaining main centre in the Metropolitan Area of the county and GDA.

R 16 Promote and progress the delivery of the integrated expansion of Celbridge Town Centre while taking account of its Georgian streetscape and historic setting and to facilitate town centre consolidation, through the re-use and regeneration of backlands and other key lands and buildings around the town centre.

R 17 Seek the re-designation of Maynooth as the Metropolitan Area Level 2 Major Town Centre to serve North East Kildare in the new GDA Retail Hierarchy.

R 18 Secure the achievement of Maynooth becoming a Metropolitan Area Level 2 Major Town Centre through encouraging the redevelopment of the Town Centre Expansion Area and the regeneration of backland areas of the town centre.

R 19 Investigate the need for any additional retail provision as appropriate within existing and expanding residential areas in future Local Area Plans during the period of this Plan.

9.4.5 Metropolitan Area: Level 3, Tier 2 Town Centre – Kilcock

While consistent with the GDA Retail Hierarchy, Kilcock has been re-designated in this Plan as a Level 3, Tier 2 Town Centre. This is to sustain the integrity of the County Retail Hierarchy and responds to the fact that the town's population and retail offer are not comparable to that of either Celbridge or Maynooth. It is evidenced by Kilcock having less than half the population of the two larger centres (in 2011 it was the ninth largest town in the county), and its total retail floorspace at thirteenth in the county's size rankings. There has been market interest for retail investment in the town with a Tesco Express and a SuperValu store on the north of the square having opened. These are important additions to the town's retail offer. However, its further development as a retail centre higher in the County Retail Hierarchy is recognised to be limited in view of Kilcock's proximity to Maynooth, the third most important retail centre in the county. Set against this and other influences, it is unlikely that the town will regain its parity designation with these larger centres in the Metropolitan Area in the foreseeable future. It is, however, important that Kilcock further develops its role, function and attraction to better meet the retail needs of the town and its hinterland area's growing population. Additionally, Kilcock has a heritage townscape, a profile on the Royal Canal and is a key location on the M4 between the Dublin conurbation and the midlands, which are assets that require to be maximised. The latter is evidenced by the town increasingly being a sought location as a strategic distribution hub for major retail companies.

Policies: Kilcock

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 20 Encourage and facilitate the regeneration of land and buildings in the Kilcock Core Retail Area and other Town Centre zoned lands.

R 21 Work with all stakeholders in further promoting the asset of Kilcock's heritage townscape and location on the Royal Canal.

9.4.6 Hinterland Area: Level 3, Tier 1 Sub County Town Centres – Athy and Kildare Town

Reflecting their key roles as Sub County Town Centres, Athy and Kildare are the sixth and seventh largest towns in the county and have the fifth and fourth largest quantum of retail floorspace respectively. The nature and profile of retail floorspace in both differs significantly and will continue to be so. This is founded on the following:

i. Athy's profile and its existing and potential both convenience and mainstream comparison floorspace. There are planning permissions for both which would significantly sustain and enhance the attraction of the Sub County Retail Centre. However, a combination of both the effects of the recession and the impact of this on developer/operator investment strategies has put on hold the implementation of these permissions. As a consequence, while sustaining its role and importance as a Hinterland Area Tier 1 Sub County Town Centre, Athy is increasingly underperforming in this role. This is well evidenced by the increasing level of vacancies in the south-western parts of the town's designated Core Retail Area. The objective, thus, must be for the Council to work with the developers/ applicants to encourage and facilitate the delivery of permissions;

ii. In contrast, Kildare Town has witnessed its regional, national and international retail profile being further enhanced through the recent opening of the extension of the Kildare Village Outlet Centre. In parallel, since the 2009 floorspace assessment, there has been the introduction of the neighbouring Tesco anchored shopping centre and an international discounter to Kildare Town's retail profile. However, there are concerns that these developments are not providing the sought after linkages and benefits to the vitality and viability of the Core Retail Area of the town.

Policies: Athy and Kildare Town

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 22 Promote and encourage major enhancement and expansion of the retail offer and town centre functions of Athy and Kildare Town to sustain and enhance their importance as Sub-County Town Centres within the South Sub-Area of the county.

R 23 Support and implement appropriate development of lands for the future expansion of Athy Town Centre and specifically those facilitated by the expansion of the Core Retail Area and the designation of those lands as the Town Centre Retail Expansion Area in the forthcoming Athy Local Area Plan.

R 24 Work with all stakeholders in Athy to redress the high retail expenditure leakage from the town, its catchment area and the south of the county as a whole and deliver the vision and potential of the town, as set out in the Athy Town Development Plan 2012 – 2018.

R 25 Encourage and facilitate the further expansion of the Kildare Village Outlet Centre in accordance with the guidance in the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012 and to achieve greater linkage and synergy with Kildare Town Centre and the offers and attractions of Naas and Newbridge. In any future expansion of the Kildare Village Outlet Centre it should be demonstrated that there will be no capacity impacts on the national motorway and regional and local road networks.

R 26 Investigate the need for any additional retail provision as appropriate within existing and expanding residential areas in future Local Area Plans during the period of this Plan.

R 27 Identify and zone suitable locations for retail warehouse development in Kildare Town in the review and update of the Kildare Town Local Area Plan 2012 – 2018.

9.4.7 Hinterland Area: Level 3, Tier 2 Town Centres – Clane, Kilcullen, Monasterevin

Clane has been re-designated from a Hinterland Area Level 3, Tier 1 Sub County Town Centre to a Level 3, Tier 2 Town Centre as it has not developed the retail potential and Sub County Town Centre role envisaged in the County Development Plan 2011-2017. As with Kilcullen and Monasterevin the town's retail potential is influenced by its proximity to one or more of the higher order centres of Naas, Newbridge, Celbridge and Kildare Town, despite Clane having the eighth largest population in the county. While the population of all the towns increased at a greater rate and significantly so in the cases of Clane (34.9%) and Kilcullen (23%), than the county average of 12.9% between 2006 and 2011, no new significant retail floorspace has been developed in any of them since 2009. Consequently, and more so than was the position in the County Development Plan 2011 – 2017, the three towns' retail floorspace has failed to keep pace with the needs of their rapidly growing populations. As the Settlement Strategy indicates, this population growth is projected to continue over the period of this Plan and, thus there is an increasing need for considerable enhancement of the retail offer in each of these towns.

Policies: Clane, Kilcullen, Monasterevin

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 28 Encourage the growth and development of retail and other town centre services/ functions in Clane, Kilcullen and Monasterevin, to enable them to grow into more self-sustaining towns in the County's Settlement and Retail Hierarchies, with Clane growing into its potential as a Hinterland Area Level 3, Tier 1 Sub County Town Centre to redress the strategic spatial deficiency in main Sub County Town Centres in the north of the county.

R 29 Progress the redevelopment/ regeneration of town centre sites, with any expansion of Clane, Kilcullen and Monasterevin's main food and comparison offers being in the town centres or appropriate edge of centre locations. The emphasis is on consolidation of these town centres through mixed-use retail-led regeneration.

R 30 Develop and build on the tourism potential of Kilcullen and Monasterevin's heritage and natural environments as part of an integrated strategy for raising their profiles and identities.

9.4.8 Metropolitan Area: Level 4 Village Centre – Straffan

Straffan remains the only designated Metropolitan Area Level 4 Village Centre in the County Retail Hierarchy. It is a village that, in view of its structure, lack of village centre or edge of centre opportunities and restricted residential development potential, will only witness limited growth in its retail and non-retail services offer over the timescale of this Plan. Any enhancement will generally be through infill development and the re-use and regeneration of land and buildings, with quality of design and respect for the character of the village being key requirements. Additionally, Straffan has scope and potential to improve its tourism profile, which is largely generated from its close association with the K Club.

Policy: Straffan

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 31 Monitor the sustainability of local shopping and services provision in Straffan and encourage applications for retail and tourism related development that serve to consolidate and enhance the quality of the village centre.

9.4.9 Hinterland Area: Level 4, Tier 1 Small Town Centres – Castledermot, Prosperous, Rathangan and Sallins

There are a number of centres in the Hinterland Area of Kildare that have a range of shopping, non-retail services and, to differing degrees civic and community functions which render them Small Town Centres in the county context. This is consistent with their designations in the Settlement Strategy. Consequently, they are designated as Level 4, Tier 1 Small Town Centres in the County Retail Hierarchy and are Castledermot, Prosperous, Rathangan and Sallins. As with the Hinterland Area, Level 3 Town Centres, each of the towns witnessed population increases above that of the county average between 2006 and 2011, with Castledermot (57.6%), Rathangan (38.2%) and Sallins (38.8%) being significantly above the 13% county average. As was the position in the CDP 2011 – 2017, there has not been a parallel increase in shops and services since the 2009 floorspace assessment to meet the needs of their growing populations or that of their rural hinterlands. Currently, this is not set to change in the foreseeable future to any great degree. While the Settlement Strategy promotes continued growth of the populations of all three towns over the period of this Plan, the percentage increases will be below the 22.3% forecast for the county as a whole between 2017 and 2023. This noted, there is considerable need for the enhancement of their retail floorspace, particularly in respect of convenience shopping, over the period of the Plan.

Policies: Castledermot, Prosperous, Rathangan and Sallins

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 32 Facilitate and encourage the provision of shops and services to consolidate and strengthen the role of Level 4, Tier 1 Small Town Centres in meeting the needs of their existing and expanding populations and those of their rural hinterlands.

R 33 Encourage and respond positively to applications for retail and other town centre developments in Castledermot, Prosperous, Rathangan and Sallins where they serve to consolidate the town centres and respect and enhance the existing built fabric.

9.4.10 Hinterland Area: Level 4, Tier 2 Village Centres – Allenwood, Ballitore, Ballymore Eustace, Crookstown, Derrinturn, Kill and Robertstown

Kildare has a number of large urban centres in its context as a predominantly rural county. Consequently, the importance of key Level 4, Tier 2 Hinterland Area Village Centres in the County Settlement Hierarchy, and ensuring their proper planning and sustainable development, is recognised in the Council's programme of existing and emerging Village Plans (Volume 2 Section 2 refers). Village centres play an important part in rural community life within the county. By reason of their size (in general all had populations of under 1,000 at the time of the 2011 Census) and the increasing influence of larger centres they serve, on the whole, smaller catchment areas and have a more limited range and quality of retail and non-retail services floorspace than Level 4, Tier 1 Small Town Centres. Not all of the villages in the county have any retail floorspace and, hence, only those which do are designated Level 4, Tier 2 Village Centres in the County Retail Hierarchy. These are **Allenwood**, **Ballitore**, **Ballymore-Eustace**, **Crookstown, Derrinturn**, **Kill** and **Robertstown**. The performance and potential of each of these centres varies. The retail planning policy for the majority of the centres over the timescale of this Plan is to secure the consolidation of each through the re-use and regeneration of existing lands and buildings.

Policies: Allenwood, Ballitore, Ballymore Eustace, Crookstown, Derrinturn, Kill and Roberstown

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 34 Facilitate the local provision of shops and services in Level 4, Tier 2 Village Centres to meet the needs of existing and expanding populations.

R 35 Encourage and facilitate preservation of retail, other services and tourism potential within established rural centres.

9.5 GENERAL RETAIL POLICIES

In addition to specific policies, a number of general policies are defined to shape retailing in the county over the period of this Plan and beyond. These have been informed by the Retail Planning Guidelines, the Regional Retail Strategy and both the review of the County Retail Strategy 2010 and the performance of the retail economy in the county in the interim years.

9.5.1 Convenience Retailing

The Council supports the enhancement of the convenience/food shopping offer across all centres of the County Retail Hierarchy. It is a priority of the Council to ensure the sustained vitality, viability and attraction of centres at all levels of the County Retail Hierarchy, that new foodstores are located in the centre of towns and villages, with all other applications demonstrating that they fully meet the tests of the Sequential Approach. Additionally, the Council has concerns with the exclusion of any comparison threshold within the net floorspace cap of 3,000m² for large convenience stores in the county, as set out in the 2012 Retail Planning Guidelines, specifically as a number of the main national and international convenience operators are potentially opening the door to in-store High Street mainstream fashion brand concessions. This has very real potential implications for the vitality, viability and attraction of main centres in the County Retail Hierarchy. Over the period of this Plan, it is an issue which will be fully addressed in the assessment of applications for large scale convenience stores.

Policies: Convenience Retailing

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 36 Request that the nature of the comparison component of proposed large convenience stores is provided in detail, and a transparent and evidence-based Retail Impact Assessment (RIA)/Retail Impact Statement (RIS) provided in support of the application.

R 37 Refuse permission for edge of and out of centre large convenience stores which include a large component of High Street fashion brands in the comparison mix proposed in the interests of sustaining and further enhancing the vitality, viability and attraction of the Core Retail Areas of the main town centres in the county.

9.5.2 Corner Shops and Smaller Villages/Settlements

Meeting the retail and community needs of people living in Kildare is an important objective of the Council through this Plan and is consistent with the objectives of the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012 and the Regional Retail Strategy.

Policies: Corner Shops and Smaller Villages/Settlements

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 38 Retain, encourage and facilitate the retail role of Corner Shops and Smaller Villages around the county.

R 39 Encourage and facilitate preservation of retail and other services within established rural centres.

9.5.3 Enhancement of Towns and Villages

Over the last fifteen years County Kildare has witnessed a significant improvement in its attraction for convenience, higher and middle order mainstream comparison and bulky goods shopping for both residents of the county and national and international visitors alike. This has helped decrease the outflows of expenditure from the county and increased the level of inflows. It is recognised that the quality and quantum of retail floorspace is not the only factor underpinning Kildare's attraction as a place people want to live, work and invest in and visit. Key in this equation is the quality of the public realm and the design of new developments. Progress on improvements to the public realm has been achieved to differing degrees in the county in recent years and the quality of design of new developments has been a key criterion in the assessment of proposals. This progress and approach requires not only to be sustained but further enhanced/progressed, consistent with the 2012 Retail Planning Guidelines accompanying Design Guide Manual, over the period of this Plan and beyond, if Kildare and its towns and villages are to remain key attractors for living, working and investing in across all sectors of the economy.

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Policies: Enhancement of Towns and Villages

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 40 Encourage and facilitate the enhancement and environmental improvement of the county's towns and villages and review the approaches of the exemplars in Ireland and overseas to inform how this can be achieved.

R 41 Pursue all avenues of funding, including State funding, to secure resources for the enhancement, renewal and regeneration of the public realm of the county's towns and villages.

R 42 Ensure that the best quality of design is achieved for all new retail development and that it respects and enhances the specific characteristics of the different towns and villages in the county in terms of design, scale and external finishes.

R 43 Protect and enhance the amenities and character of town centres in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. The Council will encourage the further improvement and development of commercial, service, social and cultural functions which its town and village centres perform while ensuring the protection of the important heritage and architectural quality of their streetscapes. This will apply to the skyline, shop fronts and advertising structures.

R 44 Work with other statutory and non-statutory stakeholders in the preparation of environmental improvement/design strategies that harness the heritage and potential of the main towns in the first instance, founded on models successfully being implemented in such centres as Clonakilty in Cork and Westport in Mayo.

9.5.4 New District and Neighbourhood Centres

Kildare has continued to witness one of the largest increases in population in the country since 1996. Growth has been based on the rapid expansion of new residential areas in the county's towns and villages, which followed development/expansion trends of the previous twenty to thirty years. To respond to the needs of these growing areas of population, the Council recognises that provision for new District and Neighbourhood Centres may be required in existing and expanding residential areas to ensure that needs are met in a more efficient, equitable and sustainable way, with the former only applicable to the largest centres in the County Retail Hierarchy.

New District and Neighbourhood Centres should complement rather than compete with town centres. In accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines definition, their predominant retail role should be main food shopping supported by a mix of local, civic, community and non-retail services and a limited quantum of comparison shopping, which should be lower order in nature. What is appropriate will be determined by the application of the tests of the assessment criteria for retail developments as outlined in Section 17.13 of Chapter 17, Development Management Standards. Neighbourhood Centres will be of a more limited size and function, in accordance with national and regional retail guidance. They will typically be anchored by a small supermarket/general grocery store and have a small range of local shops and services.

Policy: New District and Neighbourhood Centres

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 45 Investigate the need for any additional retail provision as appropriate within existing and expanding residential areas in future Local Area Plans during the period of this Plan and having regard to the possible impact on town centres, with the key emphasis being securing and sustaining the vitality and viability of the Core Retail Areas of the county's centres across all levels of the County Retail Hierarchy.

9.5.5 Retail Warehouse Parks

There was increasing pressure in the county over the period of the County Development Plan 2005 – 2011 for other forms of retailing than bulky goods shopping to be permissible in retail parks, specifically main food and discount convenience and mainstream comparison floorspace. To protect the vitality and viability of the county's town centres and avoid retail parks emerging as out of centre shopping centres, this pressure was resisted by the Council through the adopted policies in the County Development Plan 2011 – 2017. This responds to evidence noted in the Retail Planning Guidelines 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 town centres, the Council will continue to restrict by condition the range of goods sold in retail parks to the sale of bulky goods. In accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines, if there are or have been a number of retail park applications over a period of three years in the same area then the Council will require applicants to provide an assessment of the cumulative impact of more than one retail park proposal.

Policies: Retail Warehouse Parks

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 46 Prohibit mainstream and discount convenience retail developments in retail parks.

R 47 Prohibit mainstream comparison floorspace or retailers in retail parks.

9.5.6 Retail Development in Business Parks and Employment Areas

Single-use large employment areas, be they business parks or industrial parks and estates, have generally been superseded by more mixed-use sustainable development models 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 local shopping and services provision is an important ingredient in the attraction and competitiveness of such areas. In respect of older employment areas, retail provision will be limited unless it directly interfaces with existing and expanding residential areas and forms part of a strategic approach to provision in the suburbs of the county's main centres. Any further retail floorspace in employment areas will be restricted to meeting the convenience and non-retail services needs of employees rather than facilitating the creation of a new Neighbourhood or District Centre.

Policies: Business Parks and Employment Areas

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 48 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.

R 49 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.

R 50 Limit the level of shopping and local services provision in existing industrial estates or business parks. Stand-alone mainstream and discount convenience or comparison floorspace will not be permitted in existing or emerging employment areas, unless it is proven to be part of the wholesale retail market sector.

9.5.7 Re-Use and Regeneration of Derelict and Underutilised Land and Buildings

Re-use and regeneration of derelict/obsolete/underutilised land and buildings in town and village centres is a sustainable and desirable objective. In the context of the county, regeneration and renewal are particularly important in town and village centres, as they will help achieve preservation and restoration of the character and quality of the centres, particularly in terms of vernacular/historical architecture, scale, height, density and massing. The potential for the

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

Policies: Re-use and Regeneration of Derelict and Underutilised Land and Buildings

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 51 Identify obsolete and potential renewal areas and to encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings in the county's main towns, villages and smaller centres. The Council will use its statutory powers, where appropriate, to facilitate this and will consider such buildings and lands for inclusion in the Register of Derelict Sites.

R 52 Work with landowners and development interests to pursue the potential of suitable, available and viable land and buildings for retail and other town centre uses across all centres in the County Retail Hierarchy.

9.5.8 Retailing in Tourism and Leisure

Kildare is rich in its tourism potential through its natural assets, rivers and canals, built heritage, equine industry and internationally important racecourses, recreational assets, visitor attractions (such as Castletown House, the Japanese Gardens, the National Stud and the Newbridge Silverware Visitor Centre), excellence in its hospitality sector and, more recently, the introduction of the mass appeal of the Kildare Village Outlet Centre. To date, the full retail dimension of the county's tourism economy has not been harnessed. As this is of considerable importance to the wider Kildare economy, retail-related tourism requires to develop a greater critical mass and profile, in the interests of the attraction and competitiveness of the county.

Policies: Retailing in Tourism and Leisure

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 53 Encourage and facilitate the development of retailing in the tourism and leisure sectors, subject to protecting tourism and leisure amenities from insensitive and inappropriate development.

R 54 Encourage and facilitate the delivery of tourism related retail developments and initiatives, subject to compliance with this Plan's objectives and its Development Management assessment criteria in Chapter 17.

9.5.9 Garden Centres and Agri-Business Diversification

The profile and mixed-use diversification of existing and new garden centres and agri-businesses has been an increasing trend over the last decade in the county. The Council in principle supports this as both contribute to the economies of Kildare's rural areas. However, through their expansion and diversification, such developments should not become alternatives to small towns and village centres, as this could impact on the viable sustainability of existing retail and non-retail services businesses and the expansion of these offers in the county's smaller rural centres. Sustaining, protecting and enhancing the vitality, viability and attraction of small towns and villages in the county is a priority of the Council and proposals that could undermine this will be resisted.

Policy: Garden Centres and Agri Business Diversification

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 55 Seek comprehensive details such as Retail Impact Assessment/Retail Impact Statement and other appropriate studies, for all proposals for new garden centres or agri-businesses or extensions to either (which include retail and restaurant/cafe floorspace) to enable assessment of their potential impact on nearby small towns and villages. In addition, such proposals may also require the submission of Traffic and Transport Assessment, where required, under the NRA Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines (2014) or any update to same.

9.5.10 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.

Policies: Casual Trading

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 56 Prosecute in situations where the Casual Trading Act 1995 is being contravened.

R 57 Take cognisance of the proper and sustainable development of the county's towns and villages, 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.

R 58 Encourage and support the development and attraction of quality town markets selling artisan food and craft produce in centres, at all levels of the County Retail Hierarchy, in recognition of their potential to sustain and increase the attractiveness of these centres.

9.5.11 Non-Retail Uses in Core Retail Areas and Other Main Streets

While the retail offer and attraction of Kildare's main centres has witnessed a significant improvement over the last fifteen years, the parallel introduction of non-retail and lower grade retail uses in Core Retail Areas and other main streets has changed the characteristics and ambience of these centres. Such uses may include amusement/gaming arcades, bookmakers, fast food outlets, budget shops, charity shops, telephone/ mobile shops and business and financial services. It is recognised that in the majority of the county's main centres the retail footprints do not meet the requirements of national and international operators and the space provides the opportunity for the introduction of alternative occupiers, often without a planning application for a change of use being required. To maintain the integrity, critical mass of quality retail activity, viability and vitality of Core Retail Areas and other main streets, the Council will seek to discourage an overconcentration of the aforementioned uses in prime retail areas.

Policies: Non Retail Uses in Core Retail Areas and Other Main Streets

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 59 Refuse planning applications for amusement/ gaming arcades as they are considered to be an undesirable use and potentially detrimental to the business and commercial environment of centres in the county.

R 60 Discourage where possible within its statutory powers the introduction of non-retail and lower grade retail uses in Core Retail Areas and other streets, in the interests of maintaining and sustaining the retail attraction of the county's centres.

9.5.12 Innovation in the County's Retail Offer

Although the recent recession has had significant impacts, taking a longer term perspective over the last fifteen-plus years the retail sector has emerged as one of the most dynamic and competitive in the economy. This is set to be the case over the period of this Plan and the next. However, in the most recent forecasts of both the CSO and ESRI, there is, rightly, caution on whether the retail sector achieves the level and profile of its boom years in the last decade. This noted, to ensure that the county 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. The benefits of this approach are demonstrated in the success of the Kildare Village Outlet Centre and its role in raising the retail profile of the county in regional and national shopping patterns, as well as introducing an international dimension to its shopper attraction. Retailing is a key part of Kildare's tourism offer and, as such, is important to the county's economy as a whole. Encouraging and facilitating innovation, be that in trading format, location or product, will assist the county to build on the success that has been established to date and, consequently its retail profile and attraction.

Policies: Innovation in the County's Retail Offer

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 61 Encourage and facilitate innovation in the county's retail offer and attraction.

R 62 Review and monitor retail trends that could have an influence on the performance of the sector within Kildare and pursue/harness new concepts and formats in the county's retail structure.

R 63 Require applicants for retail planning consents to confirm their proposed hours of opening. 24 hour 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. Proposed hours of opening for various uses may also be prescribed in Local Area Plans.

9.5.13 Criteria for Assessing Retail Proposals

In accordance with the requirements of the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012, all applications for significant development should be assessed against a range of criteria. These criteria are provided in Section 17.13 of Chapter 17 of the Plan. As a general rule, developments in excess of 1,000m² (gross) of convenience floorspace and 2,000m² (gross) of comparison will be assessed by the criteria.

Where an application is made within existing defined Level 2 Major Town or County Town Centres 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, urban design, integration with the built fabric and quality of life within the town/centre. An additional consideration should be whether the proposed development has the potential to result in displacement of retail activity from established areas of the town centre. However, this approach only applies to town centres and edge of centre sites. Proposals not in compliance with the County Retail Hierarchy should have a full assessment, specifically in respect of the tests of the Sequential Approach. This guidance is in accordance with that provided in the Regional Retail Strategy 2008.

In making applications for retail development above the Plan's assessment criteria thresholds, applicants should also ensure that the proposal demonstrates compliance with the assessment criteria of both the Regional Planning Guidelines 2012 and the Regional Retail Strategy.

If the retail proposal, whether significant or not, is in compliance with development plan policies and proposals in all material respects, it should expect to meet with approval. In accordance with the Regional Planning Guidelines, in such instances 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 does comply 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 that is questionable.

Policy: Criteria for Assessing Retail Proposals

It is the policy of the Council to:

R 64 Assess all applications for large retail development in accordance with the criteria set out above and in Section 17.13 of Chapter 17, Development Management Standards of this Plan.

9.6 RETAIL OBJECTIVES

It is an objective of the Council to:

RTO 1 Ensure that the retail needs of the county's residents are met as fully as possible within Kildare, taking cognisance of the Regional and County Retail Hierarchies, to enable the reduction in the requirement to 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.

RTO 2 Reinforce the County Retail Hierarchy which assists in defining the county's settlement structure and provides clear guidance on where major new retail floorspace would be acceptable.

RTO 3 Ensure an efficient, equitable and sustainable spatial distribution of main centres across the county in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

RTO 4 Continue to address leakage of retail expenditure from Kildare through securing the development of the appropriate quality and quantum of additional convenience, comparison and bulky goods floorspace in centres across the county.

RTO 5 Sustain and enhance the increase in comparison expenditure inflows to the county and its attraction as a retail destination in the GDA, nationally and internationally through delivering a quality and quantum of retail offer in the main centres in the County Retail Hierarchy.

RTO 6 Reinforce the heart of town and village centres as the priority location for new retail development, with quality of design and integration/linkage being fundamental prerequisites.

RTO 7 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.

RTO 8 Encourage and facilitate the preservation and enhancement of the retail and services role of both individual villages and village/settlement clusters around the county.

RTO 9 Encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings for retail and other town centre uses, with due cognisance to the Sequential Approach.

RTO 10 Promote retail-led tourism in Kildare and to facilitate the provision of tourism infrastructure.

RTO 11 Encourage and facilitate innovation and diversification in the county's retail profile and offer.

RTO 12 Support existing retail facilities and to facilitate the provision of new facilities as appropriate where such proposals are in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines, the Regional Retail Strategy, the Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

RTO 13 Support a diverstiy of the retail offer, including the sustainability of the independent retail sector in the county.

RTO 12 Support existing retail facilities and to facilitate the provision of new facilities as appropriate where such proposals are in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines, the Regional Retail Strategy, this Plan's Core and Settlement Strategies and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

RTO 13 Support a diversity of the retail offer in the county and including the sustainability of independent retail sector in the county.