

CHAPTER 2

2

Strategic Context and Core Strategy



Naas Town Development Plan 2011 - 2017



Strategic Context and Core Strategy

Aim: To respond in a coherent sustainable spatial fashion to the challenges facing Naas while building on its strengths and providing a more focused approach to planning for future development. The core strategy seeks to promote a more consolidated and compact urban form; to maintain and improve a sustainable economic base; to create new employment opportunities; to create sustainable and integrated communities together with the balancing of the natural environment with sustainable and appropriate development.

2.1 STRATEGIC PLANNING CONTEXT

The following sections set out a brief summary of the main provisions of national and regional plans, policies and strategies, which relate to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area covered by this Plan.

2.1.1 Main Policy Considerations

The Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2010, require that a Development Plan shall, so far as is practicable, be consistent with national plans, policies and strategies, which relate to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area covered by the Plan. Significant Government plans, policies and strategies influencing the preparation of this Development Plan in this chapter and elsewhere in the Plan are noted below. Other relevant documents include Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and include;

- Sustainable Development in Urban Areas;
- Architectural Heritage Protection;
- Best Practice Urban Design Manual;
- Design Standards for New Apartments;
- Provision of Schools and the Planning System;
- Childcare Facilities Guidelines;
- Retail Planning Guidelines;
- Sustainable Rural Housing;
- Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures;
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management;
- Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

These are dealt with in the relevant sections of this Development Plan.

2.2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

The following paragraphs set out a summary of the main provisions of national plans, policies and strategies, which relate to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area covered by the Plan.

i. National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020

The National Spatial Strategy provides a framework to promote and direct balanced regional development and sustainable growth and to guide policies, programmes and investment. The Strategy emphasises continued strong growth in the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) but with significant improvement in the regions outside the capital and more particularly in nine gateway cities and nine hub towns. The GDA is identified for consolidation and in strategic terms the following issues are of particular importance for County Kildare:

- Effective integration of land use and transportation.
- Supporting the region's capacity for innovation.
- Facilitating ease of movement of people and goods.
- Maintaining a high quality environment.

ii. National Development Plan 2007 - 2013

Through the prioritisation of investment the National Development Plan (NDP) seeks to maintain national competitiveness within a sustainable economic and budgetary framework. The Plan focuses investment around the National Spatial Strategy, the regions and the network of gateways identified in the NSS. The Plan's direction is characterised by the aims of sustainable economic growth, greater social inclusion and balanced regional development. In acknowledging the importance of the spatial management of the country the NDP focuses upon regional development and environmental sustainability as central to the investment structure of the Plan. It establishes policy and a financial framework within which national and local physical planning can be formulated and its strategies advanced. Such an approach is stated to be environmentally sustainable, socially cohesive and will enhance international competitiveness.

iii. Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland (1997)

The national strategy for sustainable development provides a framework for the achievement of sustainability at the local level. It calls on planning authorities to incorporate the principles of sustainable development into their Development Plans and to ensure that planning policies support its achievement.

The most common definition of sustainable development comes from the Commission on Environment and Development, commonly known as the Brundtland Report (1987) - "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

The "Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland" (1997) provides a framework for achievement of sustainability at local level. The strategy identifies key ways in which development plans can contribute to the achievement of sustainability.

These are by;

- Encouraging efficiency in the use of energy, transport and natural resources through the careful location of residential, commercial and industrial development and by controls on the shape, structure and size of settlements,
- Promoting the most effective use of already developed areas,
- Securing the protection and enhancement of the natural environment, including unique or outstanding features, landscapes and natural habitats,
- Accommodating new development needs in an environmentally sustainable manner.

iv. Transport 21 and Smarter Travel

Transport 21, is the capital investment framework for the transport system under the NDP over the period 2006-2015. It addresses the twin challenges of past investment backlogs and continuing growth in transport demand and comprises two investment programmes – a national programme and a programme for the Greater Dublin Area. County Kildare will benefit from both programmes. They aim to increase accessibility, ensure sustainability, expand capacity, increase use of public transport, enhance quality, and create an efficient national road and rail network and strengthen national, regional and local public transport services.

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

Actions are proposed:

- To reduce distance travelled by car and encourage smarter travel;
- To ensure alternatives to the car are more widely available;
- To strengthen institutional arrangements to deliver the targets.

v. Ireland National Climate Change Strategy

2007-2012 (2007)

The National Climate Change Strategy outlines the measures that Ireland will take in order to meet its commitments to limit greenhouse gas emissions over the period 2008-2012. This is to be achieved through legally binding limits to the production of those gases with the strategy incorporating a programme of actions for achieving those limits. The main focus is on reducing transport emissions, encouraging renewable energy sources, changes in agricultural practices and changes in waste disposal policies and plans. The strategy recognises that decisions by Local Authorities on the location, design and construction of domestic and commercial developments and of related economic and social activity, can have a significant effect on greenhouse gas emissions.

vi. National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2009-2020

The National Energy Efficiency Action Plan outlines Government proposals and actions to achieve its target of 20% energy savings across the economy by 2020. A strategy is outlined to reduce the country's dependency on imported fossil fuels, improve energy efficiency across a number of sectors and ensure a sustainable energy future. The Government's energy policy framework Delivering a Sustainable Future for Ireland – The Energy Policy Framework for 2007-2020 is designed to steer Ireland towards a new and sustainable energy future, one that helps increase security of supply, makes energy more affordable, improves national competitiveness and reduces our green house gas emissions.

2.3 REGIONAL PLANNING POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

Regional policies and strategies provide the policy link between national policies, guidance documents and Local Authority planning policies and decisions. The most relevant are outlined in the following paragraphs:

i. Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area (RPGs) 2010-2022 (2010)

The Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) aim to direct the future growth of the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) and to implement the strategic planning framework set out in the National Spatial Strategy. The Guidelines provide an overall strategic context for the Development Plans of each local authority in the GDA, including that of Naas Town Council and also provide a framework for future investment in environmental services, transportation and other infrastructure.

The core principles from the RPGs are:

- Dublin as the capital will serve a wide range of international, national, regional and local needs;
- The Dublin and Mid-East Regions will be attractive, vibrant locations for industry, commerce, recreation and tourism and will be a major focus for economic growth within the State. In this regard, Naas has been identified as a Primary Economic Growth Town;
- Development in the GDA will be directly related to investment in integrated high quality public transport services and focused on compact urban form; The RPGs identify a settlement strategy which reflects the different approaches needed within either the Metropolitan or Hinterland areas for towns within the hierarchy. In the settlement hierarchy for the GDA, Naas is identified as a Large Growth Town I.

The RPGs envisage that growth towns will accommodate significant new investment in transport, in economic and commercial activity and in housing. These towns will act as important self sustaining regional economic drivers for the GDA, capitalising on their connectivity and high quality connections to Dublin City Centre, whilst also supporting and servicing a wider local economy. Large Growth Towns are identified as being important centres for the delivery of public services, with hospitals, courts, local authority and civil service offices located within them; alongside IDA promoted companies, high order retail businesses, supported enterprise centres and active Chambers of Commerce providing a strong commercial hub within these towns and their environs.

ii. Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016 (2008)

The *Greater Dublin Area Retail Strategy* sets out a co-ordinated and sustainable approach to the assessment and provision of retailing within the Greater Dublin Area so that:

- Adequate and suitable provision is made to meet the needs of changing population patterns, and provide for healthy competition and consumer choice.
- Retail in suitable locations is provided and integrated within existing growth areas and public transport investment.
- Significant overprovision, which would place more marginal locations under severe pressure and undermine sustainability driven policies aimed at revitalising town centres, is avoided.

By setting out a strategic framework for retailing, the strategy seeks to give guidance on where future retail should be provided and what issues need to be addressed. To this end, the strategy proposes a retail hierarchy as a core spatial policy around which future growth, rejuvenation and expansion in the retail sector needs to be focused. The Retail Strategy for County Kildare is set within the context of the Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area.

Naas is identified as a Hinterland Area Level 2 Twin Major Town Centre. The Regional Retail Strategy promotes the following in respect of Naas:

'To promote and encourage the enhancement and expansion of retail floorspace in the County Town of Naas to reflect its role as a major town centre and the significant population growth experienced in the past decade and to create a thriving active town centre'.

The retail strategy for Naas contained in Chapter 6 of this Plan was undertaken to ensure that the retail policies in the Development Plan are in accordance with all national, regional and local planning frameworks, including the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government's (DoEHLG) 2005 *Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities* and the 2008 *GDA Retail Strategy*.

iii. Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area

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

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

The National Transport Authority (NTA) has issued a Draft Transport Strategy for the GDA which is linked to sustainable land use planning and is directed by the economic, social, cultural and environmental needs of the people of the GDA.



2.4 STRATEGIES AND STUDIES FOR COUNTY KILDARE AND NAAS

i. Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017

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

The settlement strategy for County Kildare ranks settlements from large growth towns to moderate sustainable growth towns consistent with the Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022.

Arising from the County Development Plan, the following strategic consideration informs the preparation of the Naas Development Plan 2011-2017:

- Naas is designated Large Growth Town I
- Naas is identified as a Primary Economic Growth Town and is promoted for local and regional enterprise and servicing its urban and rural hinterland areas.

ii. Kildare Local Authorities Corporate Plan 2009-2014

The *Kildare Local Authorities Corporate Plan 2009-2014*, sets out the Mission Statement for the Kildare local authorities and a strategic framework for actions by the authorities. The plan outlines the core values of the local authorities and the key strategic objectives to be pursued over the five year period, subject to available resources. The plan also sets out the context for the preparation of the annual budget and business plans for each section of the local authorities.

iii. County Kildare County Development Board Strategy

The County Development Board, *Kildare 2012 - An Economic, Social and Cultural Strategy* is a strategy for the development of Kildare based on a shared vision for the county over a ten year period. It seeks "to make Kildare a better place to live, learn, work, visit and do business" and is accompanied by a set of goals and objectives to achieve this vision together with actions that will build on the strengths and opportunities of the county. Strategic goals and objectives from the CDB strategy have been taken into account in the preparation of the Naas Development Plan 2011-2017.

iv. Naas Integrated Framework Plan for Land Use and Transportation (IFPLUT)

In 2003 Kildare County Council and Naas Town Council, in conjunction with the Dublin Transportation Office, prepared an 'Integrated Framework Plan for Land Use and Transportation' for Naas (IFPLUT Study). The IFPLUT Study has a timeframe until 2020, and will complement the Development Plan for the town. It is a framework plan that sets out the principles for future development, guiding the level, scale and location of future development within the wider area of Naas, ensuring a quality living environment.

The principal objective of the IFPLUT is;

"To promote and encourage the development and growth of Naas in line with the principles of sustainable development. To promote an appropriate balance of employment, residential, service facilities (schools, retail, community facilities etc) and land uses that will increase the self-sufficiency of the town and support its role as a key part of a designated Primary Development Centre in the Greater Dublin Area."

The IFPLUT for Naas continues to inform the Council in the formulation of policies for the future development of the town.

Other plans and strategies which inform the preparation of this Plan include; Naas Traffic Management Plan and Kildare Open Space Strategy in addition to the following:

- The County Heritage Plan 2005-2009 outlines an action plan for the conservation, preservation and enhancement of Kildare's heritage including natural heritage. This Plan is due to be reviewed in 2011.
- The County Biodiversity Plan 2009-2013 provides a framework for conserving biodiversity and natural heritage at a local level. It consists of a number of practical actions which serve to raise awareness of and enhance the protection, conservation and management of our natural heritage.

2.5 CORE STRATEGY

The core strategy for Naas builds on the principles established in the previous Naas Town Development Plan 2005-2011 and the framework provided by the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022 and the core strategy of the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017. It sets out a strategic approach to the management of growth and resources in Naas and is expanded upon in the policies and objectives contained within the remainder of this Plan.

In developing a strategy for the future planning and sustainable development of the town it is recognised that Naas is the County Town of Kildare, is identified as a Large Growth Town I and Economic Growth Town in the Regional Planning Guidelines and is identified as a Level 2 Major Town Centre/County Town in the Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area.

The Development Plan aims to respond in a coherent sustainable manner to the challenges facing Naas while building on its strengths and introducing resilience to wider effects of climate change. The Development Plan seeks to provide for the residents of Naas and to facilitate the sustainable development of the town as a vibrant and viable place in which to live, work and visit. The overall strategy for Naas should be seen in the context of the six year period for the Development Plan and beyond.

This Development Plan seeks to encourage the focus of new development on:

- I. Promoting population growth in Naas in line with the Regional Planning Guidelines population projections and the settlement strategy of the County Development Plan 2011-2017;
- II. Promoting sustainable economic development and supporting investment in physical and social infrastructure;
- III. Protecting local assets by preserving the quality of the architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage, the landscape, Canal, open spaces and material assets of the town and;

- IV. Promoting social inclusion and facilitating the delivery of objectives contained in the Kildare County Development Board Strategy "Kildare 2012, An Economic, Social and Cultural Strategy for the Development of Kildare".
- V. Promoting a series of policies that will reduce the effects of climate change.

2.6 NAAS IN CONTEXT

2.6.1 Historical Context

The name Naas appears in three forms: An Nás, meaning "The Place of Assembly", Nás Laighean, meaning "The Place of Assembly of the Leinstermen", and Nás-na-Ríogh, meaning "The Place of Assembly of the Kings". The last Naas King to be recognised as King of Leinster was Cearbhall who died in 909. In 1175 the Barony of Naas was granted by Strongbow to Maurice Fitzgerald. The town grew into a Norman stronghold with castles, walls and gates. These fell into decay and by the end of the 16th Century, Naas was a market town. In his account of his journey through Kildare in 1732, John Loveday described Naas as "a town of one street and a good Market House".

The basic form of the town is linear, North Main Street being punctuated by Poplar Square, while South Main Street, which contains a wide space at Market Square, has a visually satisfying sense of enclosure. The town centre has an ancient street pattern of irregularity with continuous linked facades, which with the prevailing slated roofs gives an atmosphere of unity and urban quality.

The development of Naas has occurred around a relatively compact urban structure, where development and expansion opportunities are present. Naas also contains an outstanding natural resource in the form of the Canal, which enhances the built and natural heritage.

Like most Irish provincial towns Naas did not expand significantly during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In recent decades Naas as the county town has continued to expand depending on economic and social conditions and influenced by its location within the expanding Dublin region. From the 1960's, growth of the town has occurred on the outskirts of the town centre in the form of residential estates and industrial development with relatively little new development occurring in the historic town centre until recent times.



2.7 SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

2.7.1 Naas within its Regional and County Context

The Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 (RPGs) provides the strategic planning framework for all development plans within the GDA and set both population and housing targets for the Greater Dublin Area and Co. Kildare within a defined settlement hierarchy. The strategic planning framework of the RPGs identifies two planning policy zones, the Metropolitan Area and the Hinterland Area. These planning policy zones are supported by a settlement hierarchy with the identification of key growth towns to be consolidated, developed and supported within a sustainable urban form. Figure 2.1 illustrates the RPG settlement strategy for the Metropolitan and Hinterland Areas and demonstrates that Naas is designated as a Large Growth Town I.

The settlement strategy of the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017 is consistent with the RPGs in its designation of Naas as a Large Growth Town I. The settlement strategy in the County Development Plan indicates that Large Growth Towns I will act as important self-sustaining regional economic drivers, accommodating significant new investment in transport, housing, economic and commercial activity, while capitalising on international connectivity and high quality connections to Dublin City Centre. They also have a key role in supporting and servicing a wider local economy.

Key to underpinning Naas role as a Large Growth Town will be the provision of water services infrastructure. It is acknowledged that the most significant constraint to the short-term development of Naas relates to the wastewater infrastructural constraints at the Osberstown Waste Water Treatment Plant. It is likely that these constraints will remain until 2013.

Figure 2.1 RPG Settlement Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area, 2010-2022



2.8 SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

2.8.1 Population and Household Patterns

Changes in population and household patterns are important concepts in Development Plans in order to estimate land and services required for residential development, community facilities, employment, infrastructure etc. Table 2.1 indicates the pattern of population and household change in Naas from 1991- 2006.

In 2006 the population of County Kildare was 186,335. Naas had a population of 20,044 in 2006 which represented 10.7% of the population of the county.

For the ten year period from 1996-2006, the Naas urban area experienced an upward trend in population growth increasing from 14,074 persons in 1996 to 20,044 persons in 2006. The period 1996-2002 experienced the highest level of growth with a percentage increase in population of 29.9%. The population of the town increased by 9.4% during the period 2002-2006.

There has been limited population growth in Naas since 2006. Arising from a detailed land availability study carried out in December 2009, it was estimated that the population of Naas was c. 20,311 persons.

Table 2.1 Population Change in Naas 1991-2006

	1991	1996	2002	2006
Population	11,141	14,074	18,288	20,044
Households	3,125	4,391	5,906	6,506
Average Household Size	3.56	3.21	3.09	3.08

Source: CSO Census of Population

2.8.2 Households and Household Sizes

The total number of households in Naas increased from 5,906 in 2002 to 6,506 in 2006. The average household size fell from 3.09 in 2002 to 3.08 in 2006. The fall in household size is relatively small compared to national trends, where the average household size for the State fell from 3.14 to 2.81 persons in the same period. Housing requirements and demands in Naas will continue to change to reflect changes to household size and other socio-economic factors.

2.8.3 Demographic Profile

The 2006 Census indicated that the age profile of Naas remained consistent with Census 2002 figures for the town. The demographic profile of Naas remained relatively young with 53% of the town's population being between the ages of 15-44 years. The Census indicated that the category of persons aged between 25-44 years was the fastest growing segment of the population accounting for 37% of the total population in Naas compared to 31% for the corresponding age group for the county. The figures indicate that Naas has a high working population which is an indication of the economic opportunities in the town and its role as a significant commuter base to the Dublin region. The percentage of the town's population over 65 years rose from 5% in 2002 to 7% in 2006.

2.8.4 Labour Force and Commuting

According to a CSO study entitled "Census 2006-Profile of Working Population of Large Towns," Naas had one of the highest rates of labour force participation (at 71.9%) in the country. The study indicates that of 8,391 workers residing in Naas in 2006, 5,823 worked outside the town leaving 2,568 persons who both lived and worked in the town. A further 5,141 workers travelled into Naas to work resulting in a working population of 7,709. The study reveals that the working population of Naas was drawn from the surrounding areas in Kildare and from neighbouring counties.

Naas experiences a significant outflow of workers from the town due to commuting. While the study indicates that the percentage loss of workers commuting from Naas is not as severe as other large towns, the loss of 8.1% of workers outside the town is significant and demonstrates the need to provide suitable employment opportunities within the town.

Table 2.2 Working Population of Naas

Naas	
Total resident workers	8,391
Residents working outside town	5,823
Workers travelling from outside town	5,141
Working population	7,709
Percentage loss	-8.1%

Source: CSO "Census 2006, Profile of Working Population of Large Towns"

2.8.5 Level of Education

It is recognised that education, training and the upskilling of the town's workforce will be vital to the future economic success of Naas. Census figures in 2006 indicate that the resident workers in Naas have a high level of educational attainment with 45% of the working population having a third level qualification or higher and 29% of the population having an education to Leaving Certificate level.

Table 2.3 Educational Levels of Resident Workers, 2006

Level of Education	Number	Percentage
Primary school or none	279	3%
Lower secondary	914	11%
Leaving Cert, Technical or Vocational	2,453	29%
Third Level or higher	3,751	45%
Persons still in education	994	12%
Working population	8,391	100%

Source: CSO Census of Population

It is evident that there is an educated population residing in Naas. Therefore it is important to provide sufficient employment opportunities in the town to cater for the existing and future population. It is imperative that the necessary spatial strategy is put in place to support, maintain and improve a sustainable economic base, maintain existing jobs and create new employment opportunities.

2.9 FUTURE POPULATION GROWTH AND HOUSING TARGETS

The most recent population targets *National Population Projections and Regional Population Targets 2010 to 2022*, were issued by the Government in January 2009. These targets took into account the National Spatial Strategy, the six yearly cycle for the review of the Regional Planning Guidelines and the changed economic circumstances and market conditions. The Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 have incorporated the national projections and these have informed the preparation of the County Development Plan and in turn, the Naas Town Development Plan.

The RPGs suggests that County Kildare should plan for continued strong levels of population growth towards a target of 234,422 by 2017 and 252,640 by 2022, an increase of 66,305 persons or 33.8%, on the population in 2006. In terms of population allocation for County Kildare, the RPGs identify a minimum of 35% of the overall allocation to the towns in the Metropolitan area and the remaining 65% to the Hinterland area. Of the proportion allocated to the Hinterland, a minimum of 50% of the allocation is directed to the main urban centres.

Arising from the RPGs population targets, a settlement hierarchy is provided for County Kildare in the County Development Plan. Naas is allocated 12.9% of the total population growth for the county. In 2006 the population of Naas represented 11% of the overall county figure of 186,333. It is envisaged that Naas will continue to retain the greatest percentage of allocation growth in the county during the lifetime of the plan.

The Naas Town Development Plan 2005-2011 planned for a future population of 27,000 persons by 2011. Given the estimated population of approximately 20,311 in 2009, it is clear that the target population set for 2011 will not be achieved.

Table 2.4 outlines the projected population growth and housing requirements for Naas during the period from 2006-2017. The population target set for 2017 is 27,933 persons representing a percentage increase of 39% from 2006. It is estimated that approximately 12% of the county population will live in Naas in 2017 and it is projected that Naas may have an additional 7,889 persons living in the town in 2017.

Arising from the population target, the housing unit target for Naas is 3,610 additional units. It should be noted that in calculating unit projections, the RPGs apply a standardised vacancy rate of 6.5% to reflect the need for the market to operate efficiently and to allow for the normal turnover of the housing stock.

The Development Plan must therefore provide for this level of growth in Naas during the Plan period.

Table 2.4 Assessment of Population and Housing Requirements in Naas 2006-2017

Naas	
2006 Population census	20,044
2009 Population estimate	20,311
2017 Population target	27,933
Population increase 2006-2017	7,889 (40% increase)
New housing unit target 3,610 units	
Quantum of undeveloped residential zoned land which can accommodate residential development (ha)	136ha
Quantum of undeveloped other zoned land which can accommodate residential development (ha) ¹	14ha
Potential units deliverable on residential land	4,488
Potential units deliverable on other land	462
Unit target surplus ²	1,340

Source: Regional Planning Guidelines for the GDA 2010-2022 and the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017.

¹ These comprise lands zoned for purposes other than solely residential e.g. town centre, existing residential, urban village etc. and could accommodate some residential development.

² Target figure does not include the overprovision of zoned land (of up to 50%) to be provided for under the DoEHLG Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2007).

2.10 DELIVERING THE CORE STRATEGY

2.10.1 Strategy for Naas as a Large Growth Town I

The strategy for the future growth of Naas is to formulate a framework for the sustainable development of the town in a co-ordinated manner, while simultaneously conserving the town's unique character, form, heritage and amenity. The strategy will seek to maximise the potential of Naas as a "Large Growth Town I" by virtue of its strategic location in the Greater Dublin Area and as a centre of regional and county importance in terms of services, employment, settlement and economic activity.

The Plan seeks to facilitate population growth in Naas having regard to overall population projections and housing targets as set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 and in the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017.

2.10.2 Economic Strategy

The strategy for the future economic development of Naas has been informed by the Regional Planning Guidelines which identify Naas as a Primary Economic Growth Town. Critical mass is a core objective for economies of scale to justify strategic infrastructure provision. Economic clusters are also promoted as part of the overall economic strategy of the RPGs. In this regard, Naas is clustered with Newbridge. The RPGs seek to focus development on strategic economic growth centres and supporting economic growth towns.

The Development Plan promotes enterprise and employment land uses which will facilitate the creation of employment in Naas. It is an aim to reduce levels of commuting and to attract higher order knowledge based, enterprise and economic development in addition to promotion of small-medium size enterprise. To realise the potential of Naas, sectoral opportunities focusing on high-tech manufacturing, ICT, food production, tourism and bloodstock should be pursued.

The overall economic strategy for Naas seeks to direct and encourage economic growth toward areas zoned for employment uses and particularly towards the Northwest Quadrant area which is identified as being the most appropriate location to facilitate major new employment growth. The strategy allows for a greater degree of co-ordination of employment, public infrastructure, amenities, and community facilities, schools, public transport etc.

through a plan led approach. The Plan seeks to create balanced development and to allow for future levels of economic growth. Appropriate policies and objectives to deliver the overall economic strategy are outlined in Chapter 3.

2.10.3 Town Centre Strategy-Consolidation and Expansion

In order to promote the sustainable growth of Naas and assist in fulfilling its role as a growth centre, the strategy seeks to facilitate the sustainable development of an attractive and vibrant town centre that provides for current needs and potential future demands. The strategy also seeks to support the regeneration and redevelopment of under-utilised areas within the town to help consolidate development, while ensuring that new development respects the existing built-form and residential amenity of the area. Under the strategy, it is envisaged that parts of Naas Town Centre would be developed/redeveloped to accommodate high quality urban development whilst also protecting its unique character.

The strategy promotes the consolidation and expansion of the existing town centre. Appropriate policies and objectives to deliver the overall town centre strategy are outlined in Chapter 5.

2.10.4 Creation of Sustainable Integrated Communities

In parallel with the provision of a more consolidated and compact urban form, together with the provision of employment opportunities, is the need to create sustainable and more socially inclusive integrated communities.

The Plan will seek to provide and facilitate the development of quality homes, mixed tenure neighbourhoods, catering for a wide range of families. There is also a clear need to provide support infrastructure including social and community infrastructure in tandem with residential development. In order to achieve this, a number of key principles are identified to ensure that infrastructure such as schools, retail, childcare and open space facilities are provided in a concurrent manner. The Plan seeks to create a vibrant and bustling town with a diverse mix of activities and the creation of sustainable and integrated communities. Appropriate policies and objectives to assist in delivering sustainable communities are outlined throughout the Plan, and particularly in Chapter 10.

2.10.5 Balancing the Environment with Sustainable and Appropriate Development

The built and natural heritage of Naas is recognised as important environmental and economic resources and their conservation and enhancement is a major objective of the Development Plan. A key challenge is to balance the protection of the natural and built environment with the pressure for development. The Plan seeks to protect local assets and to identify elements of key importance to the unique identity and character of Naas Town, and also to enhance, conserve and/or protect these as appropriate.

The strategy seeks to facilitate the provision of improved amenities within the town and to facilitate the development and promotion of Naas as a tourist and recreation destination base. An important mechanism to achieve a balance between the environment and development is to formulate appropriate policies and objectives for the protection, enhancement and management of our heritage and these are outlined in Chapter 11 of this Plan.

2.11 CORE STRATEGY POLICIES

2.11.1 Naas as Large Growth Town I

It is the policy of the Council:

CS1: To prioritise the sustainable development of Naas as the County Town for Kildare and to ensure that Naas can support the level of growth to underpin its role within the Greater Dublin Area as a "driver" of development in sustaining strong levels of economic growth.

CS2: To facilitate the development of new housing in accordance with the targets set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines and the County Settlement Hierarchy in the County Development Plan.

CS3: To consolidate and develop a sustainable town and avoid sprawl and coalescence of the town with nearby towns/villages.

2.11.2 Economic Development

It is the policy of the Council:

- CS4:** To support the sustainable development of Naas as a focal point for regional and county economic development and employment growth.
- CS5:** To provide for the future well being of residents and workers of Naas by facilitating economic development and the growth of employment opportunities in all sectors in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.
- CS6:** To promote and attract economic activity at appropriate locations throughout the town.
- CS7:** To address commuting patterns by building up the local economy to a more sustainable level.

2.11.3 Town Centre

It is the policy of the Council:

- CS8:** To support, protect, reinforce and extend the role of the town centre as the central retailing and service area of Naas through the intensification, consolidation and appropriate expansion of the town centre.
- CS9:** To facilitate the provision of high level and broad ranging uses, and to continue to enhance and develop the urban fabric of the town centre.

- CS10:** To promote the appropriate use and re-use of town centre backland and under-utilised sites to promote the regeneration of areas in need of renewal.

2.11.4 Sustainable and Integrated Communities

It is the policy of the Council:

- CS11:** To promote and facilitate the development of sustainable communities through land use planning, by providing for land uses capable of accommodating employment, community, leisure, recreational and cultural facilities, accessible to and meeting the needs of all individuals and local community groups, in tandem with the delivery of residential and physical infrastructure to create quality environments in which to live.
- CS12:** To ensure that developments are accessible to meet the needs of all individuals and local community groups.
- CS13:** To seek the delivery of physical and community infrastructure in conjunction with high quality residential developments to create quality living environments.





2.11.5 Balancing the Environment with Sustainable and Appropriate Development

It is the policy of the Council:

CS14: To protect and conserve buildings, areas, structures, sites and features of special architectural, historic, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest and to protect features of natural heritage, including the Canal, watercourses and habitats.

CS15: To protect and conserve the natural environment.

CS16: To protect and conserve nationally important and EU designated sites.

CS17: To promote and enhance biodiversity.

CS18: To comply with the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment - the SEA Directive and the associated Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations.

Map 2.1 Core Strategy

