

## Section 1:

### 1.1 Introduction

This Action Area Plan (hereinafter referred to as the Drummonds Mill site or the AAP lands) as indicated on Maps 1 and 2, has been prepared in the context of the Kildare County Development Plan 2005-2011 and the Rathangan Local Area Plan 2002.

The Rathangan Local Area Plan (LAP) identifies the subject lands as being the subject of an Action Area Plan (AAP). The lands are designated 'Town Centre', the objective of which is:

*'To provide for the development and improvement of appropriate town centre uses including retail, commercial, office and civic use'* (Section 3.2 – Rathangan LAP 2002).

### 1.2 Plan Objectives

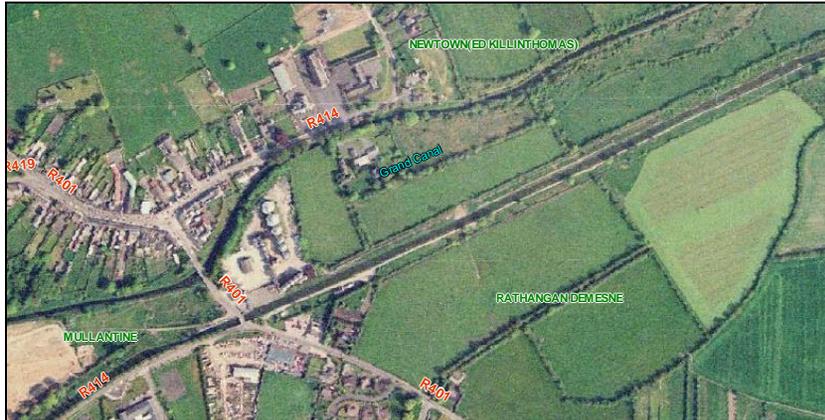
Specific objectives of this Plan include:

- To facilitate the expansion of the town centre in a co-ordinated and comprehensive manner, providing greater connectivity between the Town Centre and the AAP lands.
- To provide an appropriate mix of uses.
- To encourage development of a high quality layout and design.

- To encourage the conservation and appropriate re-use of the protected structures on the lands.
- To enhance the amenity value of the River Slate and Grand Canal.
- To retain the established tree line along the river Slate except for where the removal of same is necessary for the purposes of achieving greater permeability between the town centre and the AAP lands.
- To encourage the re-development of the Grand Canal as a navigable water body.



**Fig 1: Location map of Rathangan**



**Fig 2: Aerial view of AAP lands**

### 1.3 Historical Background

The village of Rathangan prospered with the opening of the Grand Canal in 1790. The village was a convenient crossing point for both the Grand Canal and River Slate. The importance of the canal declined however with the coming of the railway and the town subsequently stagnated with relatively little development throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### 1.4 Characteristics of the Lands

The AAP lands, which extend to c. 7 hectares (c. 18 acres) are located to the east of Rathangan town centre with natural boundaries

formed by the River Slate along the northern boundary and the Grand Canal along the southern boundary. The lands are currently laid out in two distinct subdivisions of 'brownfield' and 'greenfield' uses. The brownfield portions lie to the west and to the north-east of the AAP lands, the former, extending to c. 3 hectares (c. 7 acres) once housed the operations of the Drummonds Mill. Remnants of the workings of the Mill are still evident on the AAP lands and include the Drummonds Mill Grain Store, Sally Corn Mill and the adjoining house.

### 1.5 Topography

The AAP lands are relatively flat and low lying. This mild topography gives the area an open character with long vistas and views. The land is subdivided into four sectors generally defined by hedgerow, namely the brownfield area to the west, a central field, a south-eastern field and the complex surrounding Sally Corn Mills to the north-east.

### 1.6 Adjoining Land Uses

Adjoining land uses to the north and north-west are town centre. Land to the south-west has an open space and amenity designation. To the north west the existing Memorial Garden provides an amenity buffer between the AAP lands and the centre of Rathangan. To the east and south of the AAP lands is a pattern of dispersed residential development.

### **1.7 Ecology**

The river and canal walks and the associated flora and fauna represent the main ecological feature of the AAP lands. A mature stand of mixed trees including conifers, poplars and whitethorn, lines the southern bank of the River Slate. These trees screen the mill site and hoists from the town and constitute an important visual and ecological amenity feature in their own right.

## Section 2:

### 2.1 Context in the Rathangan Local Area Plan 2002

The development strategy of Kildare County Council as set out in the Local Area Plan for the town, is to expand the town centre, and the Drummonds Mill site has been identified as an appropriate location in which to accommodate this expansion. Accordingly the zoning of the study area is Town Centre (A) (Section 3.2 – Rathangan LAP 2002).

The purpose of the ‘Town Centre’ zoning is to protect and enhance the special character of Rathangan town centre and to provide for and improve retailing, residential, commercial, office, cultural and other uses that are appropriate to the centre of a developing town.

### 2.2 Archaeology

The Urban Archaeological Survey commissioned by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, formerly known as Duchas, has identified a zone of archaeological potential in Rathangan. A portion of lands to the west of the AAP lands lie within this zone as identified on Maps 1 and 2. Any proposed development within this zone shall have due regard to same.

### 2.3 Architectural Heritage

The following is a list of protected structures, as taken from the Rathangan Local Area Plan 2002. These structures respectively lie wholly within, partially within or adjacent to the AAP lands and thereby must be taken into consideration in the assessment of all development proposals on these lands.

Item and Location	IP No.	Description
Rathangan Bridge	IP 3	Bridge
Bridge over Slate River**	IP 4	Bridge
Harbour, Slate River	IP 5	Harbour
Sally Corn Mills	IP 8	Building and Bridge
House adjacent to Sally Corn Mills	IP 9	Building
Grain store, Drummonds Mill	IP29	Building
Grand Canal* Harbour at Drummonds	IP30	Harbour
Mill Race adjacent to Sally Corn Mills	IP31	Mill Race

**Fig 3: Protected Structures**

\* The Grand Canal is also designated a Natural Heritage Area (NHA). An NHA, as defined in the Wildlife Amendment Act 2000, is ‘an area worthy of consideration for one or more species, communities, habitats, land forms or geological or geomorphological features, or for its diversity of natural attributes’.

\*\* The Slate River is a tributary of the Barrow which is a candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC).

Furthermore, the Action Area Plan boundary adjoins the historic core of Rathangan town, which has been designated as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) in the Rathangan Local Area Plan, adopted in 2002. Due regard must also be given to the sensitivities of this area (See Map 1).

#### **2.4 Views and Prospects**

It shall be an objective of the Council to protect views and prospects of the Canal from all locations (Section 3.11.3 – Rathangan LAP 2002).

It shall be an objective of the Council to preserve views and prospects forming the settings and environs of all protected structures (Section 3.11.3 – Rathangan LAP 2002).

#### **2.5 Tree Protection Orders**

It shall be an objective of the Council to protect, by way of tree protection orders or by other means, trees and groups of trees of special amenity value around Sally Mills, along the river bank at Mill Street and along the Grand Canal (Section 3.11.4 – Rathangan LAP 2002).

## Section 3:

Kildare County Council, together with other utility companies and authorities, provide important services for residents and enterprises in Rathangan. The Council, both directly and through the facilitation of other utility companies and authorities, will seek to ensure the efficient and effective provision of utility services throughout the town.

### 3.1 Public Services

It shall be an objective of the Planning Authority:

- To require that all services, including electricity, telephone and TV be provided underground.

### 3.2 Foul Drainage

Foul drainage from Rathangan is serviced in part, by a combined sewage system. Drainage from the Rathangan catchment flows by gravity to the existing Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) to the west of the town centre on the Monasterevin Road.

Currently there are local deficiencies in the capacity of the sewerage network particularly in the town centre.

Kildare County Council is currently upgrading the existing WWTP. This is expected to be completed in early 2007.

It shall be an objective of the Planning Authority:

- To ensure that the necessary drainage facilities to serve the needs of all development within the town and to prevent pollution are provided
- To separate the disposal of foul and surface water through the provision of separate sewerage networks.

### 3.3 Surface Water Drainage

Significant quantities of surface water drainage from existing developments drain to the combined sewer system. Some road drainage, drainage from the rear of riverside properties and drainage from some properties on the Kildare Road presently discharge to the River Slate.

Kildare County Council will ensure that surface water drainage from all future developments is discharged to a separate surface water system and that this system is designed in accordance with the recommendations of the 'Storm Water Management Policy for Developers' (1999). This will necessitate surface water attenuation systems for medium to large-scale developments. In addition Kildare County Council will require that where possible surface water drainage design incorporates Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS).

It shall be an objective of the Planning Authority:

- To prevent surface water from flowing directly into the Grand Canal.

### 3.4 Water Supply

Rathangan is connected to the Ballymore Eustace Reservoir as part of the Mid-Regional Water Supply Scheme. Water supply is adequate to serve the present and future needs of the town.

### 3.5 Solid Waste Disposal

Refuse collection is currently carried out on a weekly basis and disposed of at Silliot Hill landfill.

### 3.6 Gas Supply

There is no existing gas distribution network in the Rathangan Area. The nearest gas main is located in Kildare town, approximately 10 kilometres away. There are no plans at present to expand the main network to serve Rathangan.

### 3.7 Public Transport

At present the town is served by a public bus service (the No. 126 Bus Eireann route). This service departs twice daily and is an extension of the original Kildare – Dublin route. In addition to bus transport, the railway station at Kildare (approximately 10 km away) is accessible via the R401 regional route.

### 3.8 Roads

Rathangan is linked to Edenderry and Kildare by the Regional Route R 401, to Monasterevin and Allenwood by the R 414 and to Portarlinton by the R 419.

The bridging point over the canal has a restricted carriageway and greatly impacts on the ability of Bridge Street to carry increased volumes of traffic. This bridge is a narrow ‘hump-back’ bridge with poor sight distances to the south-east, on exiting the AAP lands. A pedestrian bridge has recently been constructed.

It shall be an objective of the Planning Authority:

- *‘To protect from development.... and seek [the] construction together with associated footpaths, street lighting and cycle lanes [of the stretch of roadway] from the Allenwood Road at the end of Chapel Street [R 414] to the Kildare Rd. (R 401)... including new bridges over the Slate River and Grand Canal’*

(Section 3.8 – Rathangan LAP 2002)

- In support of the delivery of the aforementioned road, Kildare County Council will consider the introduction of a ‘Supplementary development contribution scheme’ in accordance with Section 49 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2006.

## Section 4:

### 4.1 Guiding principle of the Action Area Plan

The Action Area Plan (AAP) aims to create a new community for the ‘Drummonds Mill’ site that is based on proper planning and sustainable principles. In particular, a sustainable form of development will be achieved for the development of the AAP lands by a strong emphasis on the following:

- The location of homes, amenities and workplaces in close proximity to each other and to the established centre of Rathangan
- The provision of attractive walking and cycling routes
- Achieving a mix of uses
- Providing for a mix of dwelling types
- Promotion of energy-efficiency in buildings
- Permeability

### 4.2 Key Principles of Urban Design

A set of key principles has been established which guide the urban design aspects of the Action Area Plan framework. These key principles are as follows:

#### 4.2.1 Movement Strategy:

- To develop the AAP lands into a place that is safe and easy to access and move through.

- To promote overall accessibility and permeability by connecting the AAP lands with the centre of Rathangan and adjoining areas.

#### 4.2.2 Layout and Design:

- To develop the AAP lands as a unique place, reflecting its historical identity and complementing the established character of Rathangan.
- To develop the AAP lands into a place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished and where the continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of space by the built form is achieved.
- To promote public spaces and routes throughout the AAP lands that are attractive, safe, uncluttered and work effectively for all segments of society, including younger children, older people and people with disabilities.
- To promote legibility in the AAP lands through development that provides recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people navigate easily through spaces.

#### 4.2.3 Uses:

- To promote diversity and choice through a mix of sustainable development types including commercial, residential and leisure facilities.
- To promote the importance of the Grand Canal as a valuable amenity resource.

### 4.3 Overall Objectives for Development Areas A & B

Planning applications on the AAP lands will be assessed on their merits. There shall be no presumption that residential development shall constitute the dominant part of development on this site given the strategic town centre location of the lands and their associated mixed-use designation. Well-designed mixed-use development proposals comprising cultural, community, commercial, residential, leisure and other facilities will be favourably considered as part of an overall development scheme. Due regard shall be had to the zoning matrix in Section 3.2 of the Rathangan Local Area Plan 2002.

#### 4.3.1 Density:

The AAP lands are zoned 'town centre' in the Rathangan Local Area Plan 2002 as adopted. The density proposed for this area shall be in accordance with the densities as identified in Section 15.3.6 of the County Development Plan 2005-2011.

It shall be an objective of this Plan:

- To have regard to the densities as set out above as maximum densities only in the assessment of any development proposal on the AAP lands. To this end, the quality of design and layout proposed for any development scheme shall be

first and foremost to the number of development units to be delivered.

#### 4.3.2 Movement Strategy:

##### Existing situation:

The only and viable vehicular access point into Area A is from the R 401 adjacent and to the west of the lands. Sightlines from this access point are however extremely restricted due to the proximity of the access to Rathangan Bridge, a protected structure. Furthermore, the bridging point over the canal at this location has a restricted carriageway, which reduces the ability of Bridge Street to carry increased volumes of traffic. It is an objective of the Planning Authority to protect from development and seek the construction of the stretch of roadway from the Allenwood Road at the end of Chapel Street (R 414) to the Kildare Road (R 401), to include new bridges over the Slate River and the Grand Canal, together with associated footpaths, street lighting and cycle lanes (Section 3.8 – Rathangan LAP 2002).

In order to allow for the easier and safer movement of pedestrians along the R 401, a pedestrian bridge has recently been constructed to the south west of the proposed temporary access point to the AAP lands. While this new bridge provides a safe route along which pedestrians can move, it is acknowledged that it does not provide the quickest through route into the central core of Rathangan having regard to pedestrian desire lines.

Having regard to the pattern of established uses in Rathangan, it is noted that a natural pedestrian desire line has emerged along Bridge Street towards the AAP lands in a south-easterly direction.

It shall be an objective of this Plan:

- To seek the construction of the eastern road, in accordance with Section 3.8 of the Rathangan Local Area Plan 2002, together with the bridge crossings over the River Slate, the Mill Race and the Grand Canal. The AAP lands shall be developed on a **phased** basis in tandem with the **phased** construction of the ‘eastern road’. In accordance with Section 4.3.3 of this Action Area Plan, the Planning Authority shall agree upon the development proposal and phasing programme prior to the formal submission of any planning application on the AAP lands.
- In support of the delivery of the eastern road, Kildare County Council will consider the introduction of a ‘supplementary development levy scheme’ in accordance with Section 49 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2006.
- To provide for two-way vehicular movement into and out of a portion of Area A from the R 401 on a temporary basis, subject to a traffic impact assessment and an independent road safety audit on the relevant proposals until such time as the eastern road has been constructed from the R 414 (Chapel Street) to the R 401 (Kildare Road). Upon completion of the eastern road, this junction, at Bridge Street, shall be limited to a left turn only onto the R 401. Currently, the Planning Authority shall only look favourably

upon the development of a portion of Area A (subject to agreement with the Transportation Department of Kildare County Council). This shall be incorporated as part of the phasing programme (as above).

- To develop the lands into an area that is safe and easy to access and move through, with a particular emphasis on pedestrian, cyclist and disabled mobility. Traffic calming for vehicular movement in this area shall become an integral feature of any development scheme proposed on this site.
- To develop well lit pedestrian links in a westerly direction to connect with Tannery Park.
- To further encourage the movement of pedestrians, cyclists and the disabled, along Bridge Street towards the AAP lands in a south-easterly direction.

#### 4.3.3 Layout & Design:

Having regard to:

- (i) the former use of the site as a Mill
- (ii) the sensitive and strategic location of ‘the site’ between the River Slate and the Grand Canal
- (iii) the visibility of the site from all approach roads and
- (iv) the proximity of the site to the core of Rathangan

it shall be an objective of the AAP to promote a living environment where the quality of development proposed, in terms of its layout, innovative design and associated open space is of the highest possible standard.

It shall be an objective of the Planning Authority to require the provision of the following as part of any development proposal on the AAP lands:

- good quality design and a range of architectural styles. All proposed developments shall have due regard to the EC Directive 2002/91/EC which relates to the energy performance of buildings (see Appendix A attached).
- variety in terms of size and design of unit types. In this regard and in the interests of sustainability, glass and solar panels shall be incorporated into the building design, particularly on south facing walls.
- active street frontages on all elevations in the interests of vitality and vibrancy.
- sensitive integration of any scheme with the existing protected structures. The developer(s) shall liaise with the Conservation Officer of Kildare County Council in this regard.
- a linear park which shall run along the length of both the River Slate and the Grand Canal and shall be up to ten metres in width from the edge of either water body (See Map 2).
- a landscape plan, prepared by a suitably qualified person, together with a fully comprehensive management plan as part of any planning application for the area of space between the edge of the water body (of both the River Slate and Grand Canal) and the building line of new development. Such a plan shall include proposals for the following;
  - (a) 'hard' landscaping to include a footpath and a bicycle path
  - (b) 'soft' landscaping to include planting areas together with a planting scheme for same. Such a planting scheme shall include the precise location, number and types of plants/native trees, together with a clear and concise planting programme.
  - (c) A detailed design proposal for the area of open space/civic space on the opposing side of the river to Memorial Park on accessing the AAP lands from the pedestrian bridge crossing (Section 4.4.a). This proposal shall comprise a formal, pedestrian friendly space to form an appropriate gateway for pedestrians into the AAP lands at this location.
  - (d) seating arrangements, both formal and informal to address the River, Canal, public open spaces and front façade of development units.
  - (e) The established tree line along the River Slate shall be retained except where the removal of same will be necessary for the construction of the pedestrian bridge from Memorial Park into the north west of the AAP lands (Section 4.4.a). The felling of a limited number of additional trees may be permitted where a need to fell same is demonstrated and where the Planning Authority is in agreement with the proposal. Each case shall be assessed on its merits, however, in the event that trees are felled, proposals shall be submitted as part of any planning application for the replacement of same with mature, native species.
  - (f) A formal proposal for a hierarchy of public open spaces throughout the site. This proposal shall include

- (i) a pedestrian link route from the linear parks along both the River Slate and the Grand Canal to incorporate existing natural vegetation between both water bodies.
- (ii) a central, functional and accessible area of public open space
- (iii) A significant element of dedicated pedestrian space shall also be provided as an integral part of any development scheme proposed.
- a marina or moorings along the Grand Canal. The developer(s) shall liaise with Waterways Ireland in this regard in the interests of encouraging the re-use of the Canal as a navigable water body. A copy of all correspondence between the developer(s) and Waterways Ireland shall be submitted as part of any planning application on Area A.
- a 3D digital model for any development proposal on the lands having particular regard to the context of the proposal when viewed from the following locations;
  - (a) on the approach to the AAP lands from the R 401 due south of Area A at the bridge crossing
  - (b) on the approach to the AAP lands from Market Square due north west of the AAP lands.
- The developer(s) is/are obliged to consider all possible implications of a development proposal on the Barrow cSAC of which the Slate River is a tributary. In this regard, the National Parks and Wildlife Service should be consulted.

It shall be an objective of the Planning Authority to proceed with the development of the AAP lands as follows:

1. Prior to the submission of any planning application on the APP lands, the developer(s) shall prepare detailed drawings (including layout and design proposals, independent Traffic Impact Assessment and a Mobility Management Plan) for the entire AAP lands, together with a phasing programme for the delivery of the proposed development scheme and the necessary supporting physical infrastructure. These proposals shall have regard to all of the general and specific objectives of this AAP.
2. The Forward Planning Section undertakes to assist and facilitate in the pre-planning process in relation to suitable development proposals for the lands.
3. The development proposal and phasing programme shall be agreed with the Planning Authority prior to the formal submission of any planning application on the AAP lands.

#### **4.3.4 Uses:**

It shall be an objective of the Planning Authority:

- To promote diversity and choice through a mix of sustainable development types including commercial, residential and leisure facilities among others, that work together to respond to local needs.

- To promote the importance of the Grand Canal as a valuable amenity resource.
- To promote a significant element of residential development together with a range of nighttime and daytime uses in the interests of vitality and vibrancy. Having regard to same, it is important that proposed uses shall be complementary to those uses already established in the centre of Rathangan and shall not necessarily compete with same.

## 4.4 Specific Objectives for Development Area A

It shall be an objective of the Planning Authority to require that;

the developer(s) liaise with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG) prior to the submission of any planning application in Area A as part of this Area lies within the zone of Archaeological Potential (see Maps 1 and 2). A copy of all correspondence between the developer and the DoEHLG shall be submitted as part of any planning application on Area A.

### 4.4.1 Movement Strategy:

It shall be an objective of the Planning Authority:

- To promote underground parking as an element of any development scheme on Area A.
- To seek the construction of a pedestrian, cyclist and disabled access bridge from Memorial Park into Area A, to the north west of the AAP lands from which a defined street shall be created to lead to an area of central public open space.
- The construction of additional pedestrian, cyclist and disabled access bridges from the centre of Rathangan into Area A may also be considered as part of proposed development schemes.

- To require that traffic entering Area A from the eastern road, be directed underground at the south-west corner of Development Area B.

### 4.4.2 Layout & Design:

It shall be an objective of the Planning Authority:

- To encourage the construction of modern apartment style development along the Grand Canal, as part of a mixed development scheme to take advantage of the southerly aspect at this location. Roof gardens and balconies may also be considered in this regard.
- To preserve the view of the Catholic Church from the AAP lands.

### 4.4.3 Uses:

It shall be an objective of the Planning Authority:

- To encourage commercial uses on the ground floor of development units in the interests of promoting vibrancy and vitality.
- To encourage small retail units on the approach to this area from Memorial Park in the interests of promoting greater useability of this space. Uses at this location may include market stalls, a farmers market, display of arts and crafts et cetera.
- To encourage the location of retail outlets for the sale of high quality goods and services.

## **4.5 Specific Objectives for Development Area B**

### **4.5.1 Movement Strategy:**

It shall be an objective of the Planning Authority:

- To limit the use of the existing vehicular bridge (protected structure) to the north of the site.
- To require that the primary vehicular access to Area B be provided from the eastern road. Proposals for same shall be included as part of the phasing programme in accordance with Section 4.3.2.

### **4.5.2 Layout & Design:**

It shall be an objective of the Planning Authority:

- To promote the development of a unique 'heritage quarter' having due regard to the location and juxtaposition of the protected structures. This area shall have a distinctive character

**APPENDIX A**

EC DIRECTIVE 2002/ 91/ EC