

## Part B

### Policies and Objectives





## 6.0 Introduction

This section outlines specific policies and objectives of the County Council with regard to the development of land within the boundary of the local area plan. The overarching policies and objectives of the County Development Plan (as may be amended) will also apply to development within the local area plan boundary. Key issues which recur throughout the plan include economic development, town centre development, addressing vacancy levels in the town centre area, housing provision, movement and transport, infrastructure provision, community and cultural developments together with the protection and enhancement of natural and built heritage.

Specific policies and objectives are identified that will promote the proper planning and sustainable development of the town. In summary the key policies and objectives are grouped under the following headings:

### (i) Compliance with the Core Strategy to achieve sustainable growth

To ensure that the future development of Monasterevin is in accordance with the Core Strategy of the Kildare CDP 2011-2017, the plan provides for the zoning of lands for residential and employment uses. A framework is also set out for the town's sustainable growth through the incorporation of policies in relation to, housing mix, community development, cultural development together with natural and built heritage, movement and transport, connectivity between neighbourhoods and new housing provision.

### (ii) Enterprise, Industry and Economic Development

As a Moderate Sustainable Growth Town, Monasterevin must seek to develop in a self sufficient manner reducing commuting levels and ensuring sustainable levels of housing growth, providing a full range of local services adequate to meet local needs at district level and for surrounding rural areas. It is imperative that

Monasterevin can support and enhance enterprise and industry for a growing population, so as to sustain existing employment and provide new employment opportunities appropriate to the size, role and potential of the town.

Presently, Monasterevin has a limited amount of enterprise and employment opportunities to serve the local population and hinterland area. This LAP seeks to encourage and sustain a diversity of employment opportunities, identify potential for inward investment and enhance the tourism economy. To achieve this, the plan sets out policies and objectives that build on the town's economic and heritage strengths to seek to create a unique tourism destination while also maximising lands strategically located to provide for future new employment areas.

### (iii) Retail and Town Centre Uses

The main retail area in Monasterevin is located on lands to the east of the town centre area comprising Supervalu, the Post Office, pharmacy, launderette and newsagent. Willoughby's Hardware and Glanbia Countrylife Store are also recognised as considerable draws within the town and its catchment area. There are a number of smaller shops, service providers and public houses located within the town.

Having regard to the high level of vacant floor space and dereliction within the town centre, significant opportunities exist for the re-use and regeneration of lands and buildings. Of particular note are the former Cassidy's Distillery sites and structures located on both sides of Dublin Street.

Monasterevin has a limited retail offer for a town of its size and catchment area. The potential of Monasterevin to operate as a tourist and local retailing destination is advocated by combining and marketing the town and environs as a unique heritage, tourism and retail offer. Reflecting this, the plan sets out policies and

objectives that reinforce the town centre while encouraging the re-use and regeneration of vacant buildings and sites within the town centre area. It is recognised that there is a need to carefully plan and manage future retail and non-retail services in the town to further strengthen the retail offer to protect and enhance the town's unique character while promoting economic vitality and viability. This plan is informed by the Draft Kildare County Retail Strategy 2010 -2016.

Encouraging high quality design and facilitating an appropriate mix of uses will also help to ensure that the town centre provides a suitable focus for creating sustainable communities. The protection of built heritage and the integration of new retail development within the existing historic urban form is also a key objective of this plan.



(iv) Urban Design and Town Centre Development

Good urban design is essential if Monasterevin is to become an attractive, high quality, sustainable place to live and work. It is important that new development respects the older streets and finer urban grain in the town centre. New areas should create individuality in

the form of character areas, enhancing the built environment.

The importance of Monasterevin's townscape qualities are derived from its historic urban structure. Indicative Design Briefs have been prepared for three key town centre sites (Refer to Section 6.8) which are:

- (i) Moore Abbey/ Market Square
- (ii) Cassidy's Distillery
- (iii) Dublin Street

These design briefs set out broad parameters for the future development of these areas. Each brief is indicative only and has been prepared following an urban analysis.

Indicative Public Realm Improvement Schemes are also set out in Section 6.9 for Dublin Street, Market Square and Main Street and the revised treatment of the junction at Market Square/Moore Abbey. These proposals demonstrate the potential positive impact of improvements and enhancements to the public realm of the town while incorporating the principles set out in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013).

The public realm improvement scheme encourages the regeneration and conservation of the town centre by using best practice urban design principles in terms of the maximisation of public space and movement corridors using an appropriate palette of materials, finishes and landscaping. The implementation of such improvements to the public realm of the historic core is a key objective of this plan.

#### (v) Movement and Transport

The improvement of transportation infrastructure in Monasterevin is a key element of the sustainable development of the town. Policies and objectives are outlined to promote integrated land use and transportation planning to further support and encourage more sustainable modes of travel. The plan also sets out specific policies for local improvements in and around the town centre and objectives to

secure routes for longer term roads infrastructure. A key objective of this Plan is to promote a sustainable transport network of linkages including the provision of roads, footpaths, cycle lanes, greenways, public transport infrastructure and promoting interconnectivity between modes.

(vi) **Water, Drainage and Environmental Services**

Adequate water, drainage and environmental services are necessary to facilitate the sustainable development of the town. These issues are addressed in various policies and objectives to provide for sufficient water, wastewater and water drainage infrastructure to service the predicted requirements of the town over the plan period and beyond. Relevant legislative requirements in relation to environmental requirements are also set out including policies and objectives relating to flood risk requirements.

(vii) **Energy and Communications**

The development of a more sustainable approach to energy use, power generation and energy efficiency in all sectors is vital in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This includes focussing on more sustainable forms of transport, compact urban forms and improving energy efficiency.

(viii) **Educational, Community and Cultural**

The provision of education and community facilities at appropriate locations to support the projected population levels for Monasterevin is recognised. A site within Moore Abbey Demesne has been identified for the provision of a new secondary school. The improvement of local community facilities and sports facilities together with the need to encourage the shared use of existing facilities is advocated. The remainder of Moore Abbey Demesne located within the town boundary is zoned for Community and Educational purposes and a limited area of Town Centre zoning also.

This zoning will provide for the appropriate development of recreational, educational and community facilities.

(ix) **Architectural and Archaeological Heritage**

The protection and enhancement of the unique built heritage and streetscape in Monasterevin is one of the core objectives of this plan. Policies and objectives have been incorporated which seek to protect, preserve and enhance the town's archaeology, built heritage and townscape.

(x) **Natural Heritage and Biodiversity**

The importance of green infrastructure and its contribution to the town is recognised. This plan includes a green infrastructure map (along with habitat mapping and specific target notes contained in a supplementary report) which describes the green infrastructure of Monasterevin including relevant policies for its protection and enhancement<sup>1</sup>. Policies and objectives are also included to ensure the protection of the River Barrow (cSAC) and the Grand Canal (pNHA).

(xi) **Recreation, Amenity and Open Space**

The plan recognises the importance of the existing natural amenities in the town. Lands have been designated for open space and amenity throughout the town and along the River Barrow and Grand Canal. This plan seeks to enable residents and visitors to the town to enjoy these natural amenities while preserving them for future generations and to avoid inappropriate development. A series of existing and planned local green ways/cycle/pedestrian routes are also identified for recreation and tourist use and to increase permeability and connectivity within and around the town.

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<sup>1</sup> Detailed habitat mapping was carried out for Monasterevin and informed the Green Infrastructure Strategy for the town.

## Core Strategy - Policy

It is the policy of the Council:

### 6.1 Compliance with Core Strategy to achieve Sustainable Growth

The level of zoned lands in the Monasterevin Local Area Plan 2008 exceeded the demands over the life of that plan. Residential and employment lands have been zoned over the life of this Plan in compliance with the Core Strategy of the Kildare CDP 2011-2017. Those lands which are zoned will be subject to a monitoring programme to ensure that the future development of Monasterevin is in accordance with the Core Strategy of the CDP.

PD 1: To monitor carefully the scale, rate and location of newly permitted developments and implement appropriate development management measures to ensure compliance with the core strategy including population targets and to achieve the delivery of strategic plan led and coordinated, balanced development within the town.



## 6.2 Housing

The number of households in Monasterevin has increased considerably from 1,060 households in 1996 to 1,374 households in 2011 (Census 2011). The type and scale of residential development in the town centre area of Monasterevin comprises two, three and four storey terraced residential units, with some living over the shop units. There a number of larger historic structures which have been converted into apartments along with unique larger dwellings on large sites, in particular on Drogheda Street. In the outer areas of the town residential development comprises a variety of single and two storey, terraced and semi detached/detached suburban type housing. Monasterevin has a high level of three to four bedroom detached and semi detached dwellings.

### 6.2.1 New Housing Unit Targets

As outlined in Part A (Section 3.5) a total of 544 new residential units may be delivered in Monasterevin during the period 2015-2021. In light of this target set out by the County Settlement Strategy it is recognised that the Monasterevin LAP 2008 significantly over zoned lands for residential use. This Plan has rezoned the excess residential lands based on the principles of the sequential approach<sup>2</sup>.

Having regard to:

- Building completions since the previous plan;
- Current valid planning permissions; and
- Uncommitted residential zoned lands since 2008.

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<sup>2</sup> The sequential approach as set out in the DoECLG Development Plan Guidelines (2007) specifies that zoning shall extend outwards from the centre of an urban area, with undeveloped lands closest to the core and on public transport routes being given preference, encouraging infill opportunities and that areas to be zoned shall be contiguous to existing zoned development lands.

It has been calculated that out of the c. 44 ha (this figure does not include town centre and new residential/infill sites) of undeveloped new residential lands zoned in the 2008 LAP<sup>3</sup>, there is approximately 19ha over and above that required to accommodate 337 units in Monasterevin. As a result lands in excess of those required to comply with the core strategy set out in the CDP 2011-2017, have been rezoned to alternative uses. Residential sites have been identified based on their committed status and the location of the uncommitted lands in accordance with the principles of the sequential approach i.e. developing from the town centre out towards the ends. Table 11 sets out the housing projection for the town up to 2021.

Table 11 Housing Unit Projection up to 2021

2006 Population	3,017 persons
2011 Census Population	3,710 persons
2006-2021 Unit Target	687 units
Residential Unit Completions since 2006	324 units
Valid Residential grants of permission	207 units
2015-2021 Unit Target	544 units
Capacity of New Residential zoned lands	c.576 units

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<sup>3</sup> Unit capacity of uncommitted zoned land in the Monasterevin LAP 2008 is approximately 1,100 units

### 6.2.2 Housing Location and Density

Table 12 identifies the locations, site size and unit potential for each of the sites designated for new residential expansion to meet the remaining unit target of 33 units over the lifetime of the plan. The sites identified for the most part, are located in the town centre and on the edge of the established urban area of the town. The sites listed in Table 12 provide c. 25.5 ha of land for new residential development with the potential to deliver approximately 576 units

This capacity is in excess of the 544 unit target up to 2021. Residential development will be monitored over the life time of this plan in line with Policy PD 1 (Section 6.1) to ensure compliance with the core strategy.

It should be noted that the zoning of lands for new residential development within this plan will not in any way infer a prior commitment on the part of the Council regarding their future zoning for residential purposes within any future amendment or review of the Monasterevin Local Area Plan. Any subsequent decision will be considered within the framework of national, regional and county policy including new unit and population targets applicable at the time, the

core strategy and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

A total of 10 sites have been zoned for new residential development. In addition to these lands, the existing residential, infill and town centre zonings provide opportunities for a wide number of uses including residential development as appropriate. Generally higher densities will be considered in town centre locations with medium to lower densities being considered at outer suburban and greenfield sites.

**Note:** The densities levels in Table 4.2 of the County Development Plan are indicative only. Applications for residential developments should have regard to design principles and standards. The DEHLG Guidelines on ‘Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas’ (2009) outline sustainable approaches to the development of urban areas. These set out national policy of encouraging more sustainable urban development by the avoidance of excessive suburbanisation and the promotion of higher residential densities in appropriate locations.

**Table 12** Quantum of New Residential Land (zoned C) within the plan area

Land Use Zoning (Map 7)	Site Area (Ha)	Units granted	Units estimated (based on c.25 units per ha)
C1	7.4	171 units granted (Committed)	
C2	3.3		82 units (Not committed)
C3	1.9	36 units granted (Committed)	
C4	1.3		20 units (Not committed)
C5	1.5		37 units (Not committed)
C6 and C8	7.5		187 units (Not committed)
C7	1.0		25 units (Not committed)
C9	0.6		15 units (Not committed)
C10	0.6		3 units (Not committed)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25.5Ha</b>	<b>207 units committed</b>	<b>369 units not committed</b>
<b>TOTAL UNITS</b>		<b>576 (total committed and uncommitted units)</b>	



Table 13 Indicative Residential Densities.

Location for New Residential Development	General Density Parameters
Town Centre and Brownfield Sites	Site specific higher densities generally promoted e.g. 50 units per ha
At strategic locations including public transport nodes and town centre area.	50 units per ha
Inner Suburban/Infill	Site Specific
Outer Suburban/Greenfield (generally new residential zoning areas)	30-50 units per ha
Outer Edge of Urban Rural transition	20-35 units per ha

Source: DEHLG Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009)

### Housing – Policies

It is the policy of the Council:

HP 1: To facilitate sustainable development in Monasterevin in line with the settlement strategy set out in the Kildare CDP 2011-2017 (or as may be amended) and its designation as a Moderate Sustainable Growth Town.

HP 2: To ensure that the density and design of development respects and reflects the character of the existing historic town centre in terms of structure, pattern, scale, design and materials with adequate provision of open space and protection of residential amenities.

HP 3: To require a phasing programme where a residential development larger than 20 units is proposed. The phasing programme shall be lodged and agreed with the Planning Authority detailing the construction, phasing and completion of each phase and timeframe of the overall project.

HP 4: To encourage appropriate densities for new housing development in different locations in the town while recognising

the need to protect existing residential communities and the established character of the town and surrounding area.

HP5: To require the submission of a design statement for all sites identified for the provision of residential development which clearly describes and illustrates how the proposal relates to its site and context. The scheme must accord with the DEHLG publication *Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009)* and the '12 Criteria' outlined in the associated *Urban Design Manual*.

HP 6: To require the provision of pedestrian routes linking new residential developments to the town centre, education, recreation, amenity, employment and retail uses. Such routes and linkages shall be clearly indicated on plans and proposals submitted as part of a planning application.

### 6.2.3 Housing Mix and Community Development

The importance of creating sustainable neighbourhoods, whereby adequate community facilities are available in conjunction with the provision of new housing, is acknowledged. A

key aim in the provision of new housing in Monasterevin is to encourage diversity rather than uniformity and as far as possible to relate the type of proposed new housing to the varying needs of the population. In all housing proposals an appropriate mix of dwelling types to meet the needs of categories of households will be encouraged. The creation of sustainable neighbourhoods also requires easy access to adequate community facilities.

### Housing Mix and Community - Policies

It is policy of the Council:

HP 6: To consider the provision of serviced sites on residentially zoned land at appropriate suburban locations to cater for a range of household sizes (refer to Section 4.9.3 of the CDP). Serviced site proposals should include general design principles for individual plots (plot ratios, building heights, building orientation, private open space, palette of building materials, boundary details and parking arrangements).

HP 7: To support high quality smaller residential developments and to ensure that these new development proposals are appropriately designed to create a sense of community. In this regard, individual residential schemes shall generally be of a scale not exceeding 100 units (exceptions to this will be considered on the merits of each application).

HP 8: To require applications for residential development (over 20 units), to demonstrate the provision of an appropriate mix of dwelling types having regard to the following:

- the nature of the existing housing stock and existing social mix in the area;
- the desirability of providing for mixed communities

- provision of a range of house types and tenures;
- the need to provide a choice of housing suitable to all age groups and persons at different stages of the life cycle and
- the need to cater for special needs groups.

HP 9: To restrict apartment developments generally to town centre locations or suitably located sites adjoining the train station. Only in exceptional circumstances will apartments be considered outside town centre locations or adjoining the train station. Apartments will not be permitted where there is an over concentration of this type of development. Higher density schemes will only be considered where they exhibit a high architectural design standard creating an attractive and sustainable living environment.

HP 10: To facilitate and co-operate in the provision of community services including, in particular, local services, schools, crèches and other community, education and childcare facilities in tandem and in the vicinity of all new and existing residential development.

HP 11: To require applications for larger residential developments (over 20 units) to demonstrate how the proposed increase in population will be accommodated in terms of education provision<sup>4</sup>.

HP 12: To facilitate, where appropriate, the provision of purpose built dwellings for

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<sup>4</sup> In this regard, current guidelines from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Department of Education indicate that 12% and 8.5% of a population at any time is assumed to be of primary and secondary going age respectively.

those with special needs, including provision for the needs of the elderly, persons with physical disabilities and persons with learning disabilities and in conjunction with other voluntary bodies and the private sector.

HP 13: To refuse permission for residential development on established green spaces and/or on lands which are designated as public open space.

#### 6.2.4 Housing in the agricultural zone

The primary aim for the agricultural zone in Monasterevin is to preserve agricultural uses and to protect the physical, environmental, natural and heritage resources of these areas. This area has been zoned to prevent urban generated development which would interfere with the operation of farming/bloodstock or rural resource based enterprise. The provision of any new housing within this zone will be strictly controlled.

The Sustainable Rural Housing- Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2005) set out principles regarding the siting and design of new dwellings in rural areas, the protection of water quality, the provision of a safe means of access and the conservation of sensitive areas. Within the agricultural zone in Monasterevin, housing will be confined to people with a genuine housing need and who can demonstrate that they comply with the relevant category of local need outlined in the County Development Plan 2011-2017 (or as may be amended).

#### Housing in the agricultural zone – Policies

It is the policy of the Council:

HP 14: To strictly manage the provision of one off housing on lands zoned “I – Agricultural”. Limited one off housing will be permitted in this zone where a genuine need is established, subject to compliance with the rural housing

policy as set out in the Kildare County Development Plan 2011 -2017 (or as may be amended). Documentary evidence of compliance with this policy must be submitted as part of the planning application, including a separate statement by the applicant on the need to reside in the area.

HP 15: To ensure that, notwithstanding compliance with Policy HP 14, applicants comply with all other normal siting and design considerations.

HP 16: To protect the physical, environmental, natural and heritage resources of the agricultural zones.

HP 17: To facilitate working from home subject to relevant planning criteria and the protection of the residential amenity of neighbouring properties and environmental amenity of the area.

#### Housing – Objectives

It is an objective of the Council:

HPO 1: To secure the implementation of the Kildare Local Authorities Housing Strategy 2011-2017 or any subsequent amendment to or review of the Strategy.

HPO 2: To provide for additional community services where there are existing deficiencies in the area

HPO 3: To promote a high standard of architecture in the design of new housing developments and to encourage a variety of house types, sizes and tenure to cater for the needs of the population and facilitate the creation of balanced communities.

HPO 4: To provide adequate accommodation for Travellers in accordance with the Council’s Traveller Accommodation

Programme set out in the Housing Strategy of the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017 and the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018.



## 6.3 Economic Development

In order to maintain a vibrant and attractive town and a sustainable community, one of the key issues is economic development. Employment opportunities are vital for a town to develop economically in an increasingly competitive market and dynamic economic climate and it is important for towns to take advantage of any unique asset or specialist expertise.

The hierarchy of Employment Centres in the Kildare CDP 2011-2017 identifies Monasterevin as a District Employment Centre to be prioritised for providing employment needs of the urban area as well as a large rural hinterland. Emphasis is placed on innovation in indigenous enterprise (both high tech and traditional) and business start ups.

### 6.3.1 Existing economic profile of the town.

Historically, Monasterevin had a strong tradition with trade, manufacturing and distilling. The development of the Grand Canal and the railway created the conditions and location for Monasterevin to prosper with industrial development accounting for the majority of its industrial employers throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

The dominant categories of employment in Monasterevin recorded in the 2011 Census were Professional Services. However it should be noted that of the 1,387 workers living in Monasterevin, 886 (63%) worked outside the area. The daytime working population (resident and non-resident) of the town was 796 with professional services being the largest sector, followed by commerce and trade and manufacturing.

The main sources of employment locally are Moore Abbey, Glanbia (Countrylife), financial services, Supervalu and Willoughby's Hardware along with various shops and smaller scale professional services.

### 6.3.2 Strategy for economic development and employment creation

In devising an economic strategy for Monasterevin it is important to recognise that the town is classified as a District Employment Centre. While the town should maximise employment opportunities locally, any strategy should be realistic in terms of the potential opportunities for the town.

The advantageous location of the town in close proximity to the railway and the M7 means that it is well placed to maximise and facilitate employment opportunities.

It is likely that such opportunities would be local indigenous employers rather than larger multinationals. However in the event that a larger employer seeks to locate in Monasterevin, a significant land bank (c. 26 ha) is zoned for Q: Enterprise and Employment and H: Industrial and Warehousing purposes on the Kildare Road (R445) close to the town centre, residential, education and amenity areas, public transport infrastructure and the M7 motorway.

The town centre (and its regeneration) affords an opportunity for employment in Monasterevin by harnessing an ethos of a small town with an attractive streetscape and robust green infrastructure network. Regeneration of the town centre, promoting tourism (cycling, walking, boating and fishing), retail and commercial activity and the development of key brownfield sites with a high quality architectural input are crucial to secure the town as a desirable location in which to reside and work over the coming years.

The long term economic strategy of this plan is centred on the following key objectives:

- Promoting and facilitating the appropriate development of enterprise and employment lands close to key transportation links and residential, amenity and town centre areas, in order

to build on the potential role of the town as a place to live, work, visit and enjoy;

- Consolidating commercial and retail development in the existing town centre appropriate to its designation as a Moderate Sustainable Growth Town, located in the Hinterland Area;
- Encouraging the regeneration and appropriate redevelopment of Cassidy's Distillery structures and other vacant properties within the historic town centre core and encouraging the provision of a mix of residential, arts and crafts, distilling and brewing, cultural and community uses, high quality public realm and open spaces;
- Increasing physical connectivity between employment areas, commercial, residential, amenity and tourist developments to encourage spin off developments within the town. The Grand Canal and River Barrow are features of the town that should be exploited for their tourism and recreational amenity along with Moore Abbey Woods;
- Creating opportunities for cultural, social, community, passive and active leisure activities that maximise the potential of the existing heritage and amenity assets; and
- Improving the built environment and public realm of the town and provision of community and amenity facilities to improve the quality of life for the residents of Monasterevin.

### 6.3.3 Factors influencing employment creation

A number of key land use factors can influence the future economic potential of Monasterevin. These include the availability of zoned land,

availability of infrastructure and quality of life considerations.

#### (i) Availability of Zoned Land

This Plan identifies approximately 3ha of either undeveloped or under-utilised land for Town Centre uses, c.12ha of undeveloped lands for Employment and Enterprise purposes, c. 17ha of undeveloped lands for Industrial and Warehousing.

Apart from the Town Centre zoned area, the remainder of lands zoned for employment purposes are located at the junction of Toghher Road and Drogheda Row and on the eastern edge of the town with easy access to the town centre, residential and amenity areas and transportation links.

A number of areas of land zoned for Industrial and Warehousing development in the 2008 LAP have been either re-zoned to agricultural uses, or de-zoned altogether. This was deemed appropriate given their risk of flooding, as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (carried out as part of the preparation of this LAP), and/or their location on the extreme periphery of the town, adjacent to the M7 motorway, and the availability of more appropriate, sustainable and easily accessible lands located adjacent to the town.

#### (ii) Infrastructure

Adequate infrastructure is essential to facilitate future economic activity in the town. This includes water services, effective road and public transport networks, energy, telecommunications, waste management, education and other community facilities. Wastewater facilities in Monasterevin were upgraded with a Population Equivalent (PE) of 9,000. This is sufficient to meet the needs of the population of Monasterevin over the plan period and beyond. The opportunity also exists for further expansion of the waste water treatment plant facility should the need arise in the future.

The location of the railway station close to residential and amenity areas, the M7 motorway and local bus transport routes all positively influence employment creation. The Plan also sets out short and long term transportation policies and objectives designed to allow efficient access to and throughout the town.

### (iii) Quality of Life

Factors that make a town attractive for both firms and employees are the key to a successful economic development strategy. Specific actions to improve quality of life include:

- Providing high quality residential development with supporting social, recreational and community facilities;
- Ensuring a vibrant town centre with an attractive high quality built environment and public realm to encourage employees to reside within the town;
- Ensuring that new developments complement the existing environment and is of the highest quality; and
- Increasing and improving the range of recreational, amenity, community and cultural facilities.

### Economic Development – Policies

It is the policy of the Council:

ED 1: To promote enterprise creation opportunities and initiatives, in line with the designation of Monasterevin in RPGs as a District Centre.

ED 2: To promote and facilitate synergy between heritage, retail, commercial, employment and tourism development within Monasterevin that enhances the economic profile of the town, so that Monasterevin can become more economically self sufficient.

ED 3: To engage with existing employers and potential new employers in creating and fostering enterprise development in the town

ED 4: To facilitate the sustainable development of commercial, office, incubator/start up units, light industrial and warehousing development on appropriately zoned and serviced lands in co-operation with relevant development agencies.

ED 5: To facilitate economic development through the provision of appropriate infrastructure within the town.

### Economic Development - Objectives:

It is an objective of the Council:

EDO 1: To ensure that sufficient and suitable land is zoned for employment generating uses in Monasterevin. Such land will normally be protected from inappropriate development that would prejudice its long term development for these uses.

## 6.4 Tourism Development

Tourism has the potential to play a significant role in the economic development of Monasterevin. The town possesses a wide variety of high quality attractions each of which has the potential to attract large numbers of visitors. The River Barrow and Grand Canal act as focal points in the town and serve as important recreation and amenity resources for residents and the wider area. They provide a rich natural and built heritage along with Moore Abbey Woods which also make a significant contribution to the green infrastructure of the town.

The town is located in close proximity to Dublin, the national tourism hub as well as Kildare town. Access to Monasterevin is by a number of means, including road, rail and canal, which serve to open up the area to a large population.

An opportunity exists for Monasterevin to capitalise further on its tourism strengths and to seek to attract additional visitor numbers to the town and surrounding area. Focus needs to be directed towards the development of Monasterevin as a tourism destination. Waterside and waterway activities along the full length of the Grand Canal are growing in popularity and Monasterevin is no exception. Woodland walks can also be enjoyed in Moore Abbey Demesne. The opportunity for further spin off enterprises to complement the tourism and recreational aspects of the town should also be exploited.

### 6.4.1 Waterways, waterside, recreation, amenity tourism

The River Barrow passes to the west of the town centre and runs through Moore Abbey. It is fully navigable for 68km from Athy to St. Mullins, taking in Monasterevin along the route. The County Kildare section of the Grand Canal Barrow Line is 43km long with nine locks. Both of these waterways are significant attractions which pass through Monasterevin.

A study of the River Barrow Corridor: was carried out in 2011. This was commissioned by Waterways Ireland together with Fáilte Ireland and the Carlow, Kildare, Kilkenny, Laois and Wexford County Councils that border the Grand Canal Barrow Line, the Barrow Navigation and the estuary of the River Barrow. The study undertook an audit of existing facilities and tourism products in the catchments and identifies potential sites for future tourism enterprise. The study also addresses the development of tourism, recreation and associated economic development opportunities along the banks and within a development corridor up to 15 miles from the river.

Arising from the findings of this study a number of projects have been identified. In particular, one of the projects proposed is a shared-use long distance trail along the River Barrow, which meets the environmental, and recreation needs of the communities through which the Barrow flows. The route has been branded the Barrow Blueway<sup>5</sup>.

This proposed blueway development will extend from Lowtown in Co. Kildare to St. Mullins in Co. Carlow and through towns including Monasterevin, Vicarstown, Athy, Carlow, Bagenalstown, Graiguenamanagh and St. Mullins.

County Kildare Fáilte along with Waterways Ireland, County Kildare Leadership Partnership, Fáilte Ireland and Kildare County Council published a Strategic Plan 2013-2016 for the development of the Grand and Royal Canals for tourism purposes. The core product is Kildare itself, its people, its places, its culture and experiences. A key objective of the plan is to develop both the Grand and Royal Canals for recreational purposes, to include cycle paths and walkways and navigational improvements.

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<sup>5</sup> An Appropriate Assessment has been carried out on the proposed Barrow Blueway by Waterways Ireland.



The aim is to open up the canals across Kildare to link with Dublin, the Barrow river system and Mullingar to the west, so that visitors can enjoy a soft outdoor activity in a peaceful setting. The development of greenways has proven to stimulate and create much new visitor activity thus greatly aiding tourism service providers businesses within their catchment.

In 2013, the National Transport Authority published a Cycle Network Plan for the Greater Dublin Area. This plan also identifies a Greenway and an Inter Urban Cycle Route through Monasterevin (Refer to Map 2). The Council supports these initiatives to provide strategic walking and cycling routes in conjunction with angling spots along the waterways.

#### 6.4.2 Heritage Tourism

Monasterevin boasts a rich and unique architectural, natural and historical heritage. The town retains many buildings of significance including, Moore Abbey Demesne, Cassidy's Distillery, Togher House and Kilrue House, The Hulk, various churches and unique streetscapes dating back to the merchant class who resided mostly in the town.

The town also has strong connections to the Earls of Drogheda, Irish Tenor Count John Mc Cormack and poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins as well as the Gordon Bennett Road Race and the 1798 Rebellion. It is essential to protect and promote these interesting qualities of Monasterevin so that the growth in tourist visitor numbers to the town is encouraged.

#### Tourism – Policies

It is the policy of the Council:

T 1: To continue to work closely with key stakeholders in the tourism industry including Kildare Fáilte, Fáilte Ireland, Waterways Ireland and the National Parks and Wildlife Services, in order to develop the overall tourist and

economic potential of the town, with particular emphasis on the River Barrow and Grand Canal.

T 2: To recognise and improve the existing tourism resources of Monasterevin, including the Grand Canal and River Barrow waterside amenity activities such as walking, cycling, angling and boating and to facilitate their further enhancement.

T 3: To improve the visitor experience to the town and to cooperate with all stakeholders and appropriate agencies in improving the public realm and promoting tourism based enterprises and facilities in the town.

T 4: To capitalise on potential tourist income by seeking to promote existing accommodation and new accommodation choices in the town.

T 5: To facilitate and guide the development of additional attractions and facilities within the town in order to encourage tourists to extend their stay and increase tourism generated expenditure in the town.

T 6: To support the provision of appropriate signage along existing heritage and tourism walking routes in Monasterevin.

T 7: To promote and support festivals and sporting events to increase the tourism, cultural and lifestyle profile of the town including the use of green areas throughout the town.

T 8: To encourage the sustainable development of tourism activities such as waterways activities, agri-tourism, green/eco tourism, niche retailing, local and other craft/production type activities so as to diversify the tourism product in Monasterevin.



TO 5: To support Waterways Ireland in the provision of sewerage and water intake and outtake pumping facilities along the Grand Canal in Monasterevin. Any proposal will be assessed having regard to the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

### Tourism – Objectives

It is an objective of the Council;

- TO 1: To support the provision of maps at gateways such as Monasterevin Railway Station and the gates of Moore Abbey Demesne as well as signage for tourist facilities at nodal spaces such as Market Square, the playground, Riverside Park and along the Canal and River banks.
- TO 2: To create a complementary design brief in consultation with the Municipal District Committee for shop front and streetscape improvements that would offer a suggested complementary palette of colours, designs, signage, materials and lettering for property owners in accordance with the Kildare Shopfront Design Guide (2013).
- TO 3: To support the development of green and blue ways by Waterways Ireland and adjoining authorities along with the National Transport Authority in Monasterevin through the implementation of the objectives and actions set out in the relevant plans.
- TO 4: To promote the development of and enhance all walking routes within the town, as indicated (Transportation and Movement Objectives) on Map 2.

## 6.5 Retail

Retail provision is a key element of economic self sufficiency and has an important role to play in the future development of the social and economic life of a town. Monasterevin is in a position to capitalise on its location and its accessibility. However, the trade draw to the larger towns in the vicinity is evident and needs to be addressed so that Monasterevin can sustain itself effectively.

It is recognised that the town centre needs to expand its retail offer and existing retail outlets need to increase their profile. Vacant premises need to be brought into use in order to revitalise the town centre area.

### 6.5.1 Retail profile of Monasterevin

The Draft Kildare County Retail Strategy 2010 highlights that the retail floorspace of Monasterevin is limited. It is widely distributed around the town centre and as such, Monasterevin does not have what could be defined as a Core Retail Area. The strategy notes that in 2009 the town had a total net retail floorspace of 3,618m<sup>2</sup>, comprising 1,956m<sup>2</sup> (54.1%) of convenience and 1,662m<sup>2</sup> (45.9%) of comparison<sup>6</sup> floorspace. These figures represented a significant increase in total retail floorspace on the figures recorded in a 2001 baseline study. The increase however was due mainly to the provision of additional convenience and comparison floorspace at SuperValu. The retail and non retail floorspace has not kept pace with the needs of the town and its catchment area.

The strategy carried out in 2010 identified numerous vacant premises in various locations throughout the town which it largely attributed to prevailing economic conditions. In the interim, further closures within the town have negatively impacted on the aesthetics and

dynamics of the town centre. In addition to these issues, the proximity of Kildare,

Newbridge and Portlaoise and newer developments within these towns has had a dramatic impact on the take up of floorspace within Monasterevin town centre. The provision of convenience and comparison floorspace at the SuperValu Shopping Centre has also had an impact on the historic town centre area of Monasterevin.

The former Cassidy's Distillery complex on Dublin Street has created an image of decline and vacancy on the approach road through the town. It was anticipated that this would be redressed with the removal of heavy traffic following the opening of the M7 bypass, however this has not occurred. A survey of land uses and vacancy levels in the town centre was carried out in Q 4 of 2014 as part of this plan review. (Refer to Map 1). The results of this survey demonstrate the high level of vacancy within the town centre area.

The retail profile of the town is characterised as being predominantly convenience comprising the neighbourhood shopping centre with SuperValu as the anchor tenant along with a mix of independent retailers and services providers occupying five other units. Willoughby's Hardware and Glanbia Countrylife Store are both recognised as considerable draws within the town and its wider catchment area. In particular Willoughby's Hardware provides vitality and daytime activity along Main Street with the store dominating the central area of the historic town centre.

Monasterevin continues to have a limited retail offer for a town of its size and catchment area and in respect of its role within the GDA and county settlement and retail hierarchies.

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<sup>6</sup> These figures exclude vacant floor space.

### 6.5.2 Strategy for developing the retail profile of Monasterevin

The key to developing a strategy for the town's retail profile is to encourage spending within the town by residents and visitors alike. This can only happen where there is a combination of confidence in the marketplace, an available catchment and a willingness to spend. The enhancement, consolidation and strengthening of the town centre as a hub for retail activity is important to reinvigorate the historic core of the town.

The strategy for developing the town's retail profile is centred on:

- Consolidating and revitalising the town centre;
- Encouraging mixed use town centre development through appropriate regeneration of the town centre;
- Addressing high vacancy levels by promoting the occupation of existing vacant commercial and residential units in the town centre accommodating commercial, retail, arts and crafts, distilling, brewing, residential, cultural and community activities;
- Encouraging the development of the three key town centre sites (Market Square, Cassidy's Distillery, Dublin Street) in accordance with the Design Brief principles outlined in Section 6.8; and
- Preparation and implementation of a Town Improvement Scheme (subject to funding) to enhance the visual appearance and integrate improved walking and cycling facilities in and around the town (Refer to Section 6.9 for indicative proposals).

#### Retail – Policies

It is policy of the Council:

R1: To encourage the development of the retail and service role of Monasterevin as a self sustaining centre catering for

the needs of the town's population and the wider rural area in accordance with the policies contained in the County Development Plan, the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012 and any future retail strategy that may be issued during the life of this plan.

- R2: To facilitate and support the appropriate regeneration of the former Cassidy's Distillery with a suitable range of retail and commercial uses to meet the needs of residents/employees of the area.
- R3: To encourage an appropriate extension of the town centre into Moore Abbey Demesne (Refer to Section 6.8.1) in a planned and appropriate manner in order to provide for a range of retail and employment opportunities in this prime town centre location.
- R4: To improve the town's attraction as a retail destination through additional investment in the public realm; attracting a critical mass of new retail investment within the historic town centre and by facilitating the enhancement of supporting tourism infrastructure. (e.g. hotel, hostel and restaurants).
- R 5: To encourage landowners, retailers and development interests to realise the potential of vacant and backland town centre lands in Monasterevin.
- R 6: To encourage and facilitate the development of a combined and unique heritage, retailing and tourism experience within the town and to encourage strong linkages between these attractions.

R 7: To encourage the development of independent retail outlets in the town centre that will create a unique character and shopping experience for visitors.

Street, Market Square and Main Street, having regard to the Sequential Approach outlined in the Retail Planning Guidelines.

R 8: To facilitate the needs of existing and new residential areas through a network of sustainable local and small scale neighbourhood centres. A local neighbourhood centre shall not undermine the viability of the town centre.

RO 2: To promote the development of lands zoned town centre (including brownfield sites identified for regeneration) as the preferred location for commercial development in Monasterevin.

### Retail - Objectives

It is an objective of the Council:

RO 3: To refuse planning applications for amusement/gaming arcades in the town centre as they are considered to be undesirable uses and potentially detrimental to the business and commercial environment of the town.

RO 1: To encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of vacant and derelict land/buildings for retail and other town centre uses, in particular along Dublin



## 6.6 Town Centre Development

### 6.6.1 Introduction and Background

Monasterevin's historic town centre as we know it today was largely developed by the mid-eighteenth century. The construction of Monasterevin town centre area occurred during the period from 1790 to 1860. The settlement of the Earls of Drogheda in Monasterevin was crucial development of the town from a small monastic centre to a substantial manor town.

The town centre has a wide range of unique built and natural elements that combine to create its distinctive form, character and context. The town's heritage is reflected by its rich and diverse built fabric representing various periods of development. The historic town core primarily comprises modest eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings typical of Irish market towns, punctuated by its unusually high number of bridges. The opening of the Grand Canal in 1786 allowed the local distilling industry along with other industrial activities to flourish.

The town centre area extends from the Canal Harbour to Dublin Street encompassing Moore Street, Main Street, Market Square, part of Moore Abbey Demesne and the southern end of Drogheda Street. Uses in these areas comprise retail, commercial, educational, industrial and residential. Traditionally town centre activities would have centred on Market Square, Main Street and Moore Street with the more industrial type developments located on Dublin Street.

Underutilised, vacant and derelict sites and buildings all detract from the image of the town, undermining its vitality and viability.

### 6.6.2 Townscape Analysis

The following section considers the town centre in terms of:

- Legibility, function and image;
- Built form and visual appropriateness;
- Public Open Space;
- Transport links and movement; and
- Land use and activity.

These criteria provide the structure to inform the urban design strategy and framework plan for the future development of the town centre.

#### (i) Legibility, Function and Image

Monasterevin is a compact town with a formal planned street pattern. Main Street and Moore Street are located parallel to the River Barrow, in the oldest part of the town, with Drogheda Street being constructed at a later stage. As well as containing some fine individual buildings, Main Street is a good example of 18<sup>th</sup> Century town planning.

The town has a unique heritage and history. St. Evin's monastery flourished in the 800's. The coming of the Moores marks an important point in the history of Monasterevin. Its rise as the "Venice of Ireland" was encouraged by the many improvement works undertaken by the family and the influx of a mixed Protestant and Catholic merchant class. The First Earl laid out many of the streets in Dublin City Centre. His descendents continued this tradition of town planning by laying out the grid-pattern of Monasterevin with the parallel Main Street and Drogheda Street which were connected by several interconnecting laneways.

During the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century the town centre itself was an attractive industrial town inhabited mostly by the merchant/business class. This residential element is particularly evident on the West End onto Moore Street where two and three storey dwellings are located with the unusual feature of their garden plots being located on the opposite side of the street along the banks of the River Barrow.

Today, much commercial activity occurs at the Supervalu Neighbourhood Shopping Centre to the east of the town centre. While the provision of new retail facilities was much needed, the location of the centre away from the main town centre has had an impact on the strength and vitality of the retail offer within the traditional core town centre of Monasterevin.

This coupled with significant changes in shopping patterns and retail offer, landownership issues, and competition from other towns has resulted in the loss of active street frontages, particularly within the historic core area.

It is important that these underutilised buildings/sites which form a key element of the town's streetscape and character are restored and reinvigorated with appropriate uses that secure their long term integrity. They also represent an opportunity for urban renewal and investment that would assist in creating a critical mass of population and services within the town centre in order to secure its long term viability and vitality.

#### (ii) Built Form and Visual Appropriateness

Urban grain can be defined as the pattern and form of buildings, plots and blocks within the urban areas<sup>7</sup>. Market Square,

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<sup>7</sup> In cases where there is a dense pattern with multiple plots/buildings fronting a street, the

Main Street, Moore Street, the western edge of Drogheda Street and the western side of Whelans Row display a finer urban grain with land parcels for the most part comprising deep plots with narrow frontages onto the street. Significantly larger urban blocks and detached buildings, set back from the road on their own grounds, are mainly located along Drogheda Street and also along the eastern end of Dublin Street (Cassidy's Distillery) around the outer edge of the historic core.

Dublin Street in particular is typified by vacant and near derelict structures on large plots resulting in a poor gateway to the town. There is an opportunity to revitalise this area of the town through appropriate re-use, restoration and renovation. Some new infill structures have integrated well into the existing town centre. Examples include the Credit Union on Whelans Row and an office building on Drogheda Street. Land parcels located mainly to the east of the historic core are more loosely defined by approach roads and connecting local roadways. In some instances these parcels retain eighteenth and nineteenth century roadside buildings, but are generally characterised by more modern housing estates.

Few active frontages are present on the laneway and streets such as Whelan's Row and Hopkins Lane. Despite connecting the two primary parallel streets, these areas are underutilised and underdeveloped. An opportunity exists to transform these routes into urban streets and lanes within the town core, particularly along Hopkins Lane.

The image of the town core is crucial to its vitality and therefore plays an important part towards the success of the town centre. Some commercial premises in the town

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urban grain is defined as fine. The term loose grain is applied where the building plot is larger and the built form smaller.

centre contribute towards a positive image for the town such as Willoughby's Hardware, Mooney's Pub and Boland's Pub. However Main Street, Market Square and Dublin Street areas in particular provide a poor quality public realm which detracts from the attractiveness of the town. Dublin Street along with Market Square have the potential to strengthen and improve the image of the town.

Unfortunately the quality of some shop front design combined with ad hoc advertising also detracts from the overall streetscape. Furthermore the visual clutter of telegraph poles, excessive road signage and projecting signage masks the historic rhythm of the street.

### (iii) Public Open Space

Monasterevin has an excellent and abundant provision of public open space for both passive and active recreation purposes. Areas such as Riverside Park, the playground, the parkland area to the front of the Graveyard along the Athy Road, the Canal/River banks and Moore Abbey Woods (located outside the town boundary) provide a network of green spaces. However there is a lack of connectivity linking such spaces with the town centre and adjacent residential areas. Connectivity between these public open spaces along with general accessibility should be improved, creating a robust green infrastructure network within the town.

Despite being a planned town, there is a lack of a central civic space with an absence of high quality hard and soft areas within the urban core. Historically the main area for congregation would have been Market Square. Originally this square stretched from Monasterevin General Stores across the roadway to Finlays carpark and outside the gates of Moore Abbey lands. However with vehicular traffic taking precedence over

pedestrian traffic this square has been severed with only the 1798 Rebellion Commemoration Monument standing in the centre of the junction of Main Street and Dublin Street.

Through the preparation and implementation of a Public Realm Improvement Scheme (Refer to Section 6.9), it is considered that some of the former vibrancy and attractiveness of the Market Square can be resurrected through appropriate resurfacing and landscaping. These improvements will help to create a heightened sense of identity for residents and businesses while improving the overall image of the town.





#### (iv) Transport Links and Movement

Industrial development within the town centre was historically linked to the development of the Grand Canal and the railway in the late 1700s. The closure of the railway resulted in the slow decline of the town throughout most of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In 2001 the railway station was reopened and it now serves as an important commuter route and also links the town to Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Mayo.

In the past the Grand Canal and River Barrow served as bustling transport corridors. While their original use is now obsolete, these water bodies provide valuable recreation and amenity options along with new greenway routes for the area. An extensive network of routes also run through Moore Demesne. However except for Moore Abbey Woods, the pathways within the Demesne are currently inaccessible to the public

The planned nature of the historic town centre has created a relatively permeable street pattern. Since the construction of the M7 by pass in 2004, the level of traffic passing through Monasterevin has dramatically decreased. An opportunity now exists to increase permeability within the town centre and to improve the quality of the existing connections.

#### (v) Land Use and Activity

The predominant uses in the town centre include retailing, public houses, bookmakers, financial and community facilities such as the schools, town library, and sports grounds. There are a high number of residential units in the town centre, many of which form part of the original streetscape. It is vital that the town centre remains an attractive place to live in order to maintain beneficial uses throughout the day and night. This plan therefore actively encourages the retention of

residential accommodation over existing retail and commercial properties in the town centre.

Map 1 identifies the main uses on the ground floors of buildings in the town centre area. A large proportion of buildings are indicated as being vacant. Much of Dublin Street and Main Street are dominated by public houses and takeaways, many of which have restricted opening hours which impacts on the vitality of the area, particularly during day time hours.

An increase in retail provision within the town centre in particular along Market Square, Main Street, Moore Street and Dublin Street, is necessary to ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre area.

#### (vi) Renewal, Reuse and Regeneration

While some properties are well maintained, there remains a high level of vacant and derelict sites within the town centre, most notably along Dublin Street and also extending onto the Market Square, Main Street and Moore Street. Monasterevin boasts a unique historical architectural and urban form, however vacant and unkempt sites threaten the vitality and viability of the town centre.

This Plan aims to provide the framework for a more integrated approach to new development and regeneration within the town centre. Refer to Section 6.9 for indicative public realm improvement schemes for key areas within the town centre.



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

**Monasterevin  
 Local Area Plan 2016 - 2022**

**Legend :**

- Residential
- Community/Public/Municipal Use
- Retail/Active Frontage
- Bank/Financial
- Vacant
- Clinic/Office/Surgery
- Pub/Resturant/Takeaway
- Rivers, Canal & Lakes

**Town Centre Ground Floor Usage**

Scale: N.T.S.	Map Ref.: 1
Date: February 2015 ( Revision 02-03-2016 )	Drawing No.: 200/14/667
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This drawing is to be read in conjunction with the written statement





### 6.6.3 Strategy for the Town Centre

In setting out specific urban design policies and objectives for future development proposals in the centre, the Council will proactively encourage the regeneration and conservation of the town and ensure that growth is managed and coordinated using best practice principles in terms of detailed design considerations. This section should be read in conjunction with the relevant DECLG guidelines and Government policy documents listed below:

- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns and Villages) (2009).
- Urban Design Manual; a Best Practice Guide (2009).

- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013).
- Government Policy on Architecture 2009-2012 (2009).
- Shopfront Design Guidelines, Kildare County Council (2013).
- Retail Design Guidelines (2012).

Policies and objectives set out in this plan aim to improve the vibrancy and environmental quality of the town centre thereby improving its image and securing further investment.

The town has suffered since the decline of industrial activities and in more recent years from periods of difficult economic and market conditions. Independent retailers should be encouraged to occupy Market Square, Main Street, Dublin Street and Moore Street in order for Monasterevin to regain its once vibrant character.

Expansion of the town centre area in a sustainable manner can also be within the town centre lands at Moore Abbey Demesne and also by utilising backland areas in particular to the rear of Cassidy's Distillery and warehouses along Dublin Street. The redevelopment of these lands in an appropriate manner would provide an opportunity to revive Dublin Street, extend the Market Square area and strengthen the linkage between the town centre and Moore Abbey Demesne.

Improved pedestrian and cycle facilities are required linking the town centre and surrounding areas to the railway station in order to realise the importance of public transport in Monasterevin. An opportunity also exists to improve the quality of the public realm by creating safer routes from the railway station to the town centre and key residential, commercial and amenity areas.

Furthermore the implementation of the recommendations set out in the NTA GDA Cycle Network Plan along with Waterways Ireland Barrow Blueway proposals will serve to provide greater sustainable local and inter county connectivity along the banks of the River Barrow. (Refer to Section 6.10.1)

The strategy set out in this Plan to improve the town centre area is to:

- Have regard to the principles set out in the indicative Design Briefs (refer to Section 6.8) prepared for key sites in the town to ensure orderly town centre growth that balances adaptation, preservation and expansion;
- Prepare and implement (subject to funding) a public realm improvement scheme for Dublin Street; Market Square and Main Street (refer to indicative proposals set out in Section 6.9) to improve the visual appearance and

integration of all modes of transport in and around the town centre;

- Protect the historic core of the town, particularly the West End, Main Street and Drogheda Street while promoting the regeneration and appropriate re use of vacant/underutilised/ derelict structures and sites;
- Support proposals to enhance footfall in the historic town centre in particular around Market Square, Main Street and Dublin Street;
- Encourage the use of upper floors within the town centre for both residential and commercial purposes;
- Develop a framework for orderly town centre growth that balances adaptation, preservation and expansion;
- Set out principles for the intensification of use of existing urban grain within the established town centre; and
- Establish a consistent approach to key redevelopment sites by way of comprehensive public realm improvement schemes (refer to Section 6.9) and indicative Design Briefs (Refer to Section 6.8).

### Town Centre Strategy - Policies

It is the policy of the Council:

- TC 1: To facilitate the development of the historic town centre area as a vibrant area with a diverse mix of uses and to consolidate the key areas of Market Square, Main Street and Dublin Street through

- appropriate infill development and through the regeneration of underutilised backland, brownfield and derelict areas within the town.
- TC 2: To create a more attractive, vibrant and consolidated town centre by utilising urban design principles in accordance with the Design Briefs and Public Realm Improvement Schemes.
- TC 3: To encourage the extension of appropriate town centre uses into lands zoned A1: Town Centre in Moore Abbey Demesne (as set out in Section 6.9, Design Brief 1) in a planned and appropriate manner in order to provide for a range of mixed uses including cultural, community, employment and retail in a prime and unique town centre location. Any proposals to regenerate this area shall have due regard to the setting and structures of architectural and vernacular merit.
- TC 4: To ensure the important economic, social, cultural and residential roles of the town centre are protected and enhanced and that its vibrancy, vitality and environmental quality are maintained and improved.
- TC 5: To provide for sustainable urban expansion areas by prioritising the development of derelict/brownfield and key infill/gap sites.
- TC 5: To seek the provision of higher order retail uses along Dublin Street, Market Square and Main Street. In particular, the planning authority will have regard to the cumulative impact of bookmakers and take aways on the town centre area during the planning application process.
- TC 6: To encourage new residential development in the town centre by encouraging mixed use developments, especially at first floor level and above.
- TC 7: To restrict unnecessary additional lighting and projecting signage, banners, window stickers on the external elevations of all town centre premises.
- TC 8: To insist upon the use of high quality materials and traditional hand painted signs where appropriate, as opposed to u PVC, plastic or other materials. Internally illuminated plastic signage will generally not be permitted.
- TC 9: To seek to improve existing shopfronts and to ensure that new shopfronts reflect the scale and proportions of the existing streetscape.
- TC 10: To preserve the historic core of the town as the principal retail and commercial area of the town and encourage an appropriate mix of uses, whilst safeguarding the vitality and viability of the area.

#### Town Centre Strategy - Objectives

- TCO 1: To protect the town centre from inappropriate development and encourage the sustainable relocation of existing inappropriate uses.
- TCO 2: To improve the attractiveness of the built fabric of the town through the encouragement of appropriate redevelopment and renewal of vacant and derelict sites or buildings

and to ensure high quality design in all new developments. (Refer to Section 6.9 public realm improvement schemes for guidance)

TCO 3: To facilitate retail and commercial development, where appropriate, within the identified town centre area. In instances where the applicant has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that there are no suitable or available locations within the Town Centre, other lands adjoining the Town Centre may be considered in a sequential manner.

TCO 5: To pursue all avenues of funding to secure resources for the enhancement, renewal, restoration and regeneration of the public realm of the town centre.

TCO 6: To safeguard the important architectural and streetscape heritage of the Town Centre area and to seek the incorporation of details, policies and objectives in the Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) for Monasterevin within the Kildare CDP 2011-2017 or any further review.



## 6.7 Urban Design Analysis

The town's heritage is reflected by its rich and diverse built fabric representing various periods of development associated with Monasterevin. The historic town core comprises good examples of defining eras in Irish architecture, in particular modest eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings typical of Irish market towns, punctuated by an unusually high number of bridges. The urban design analysis detailed in this section highlights the distinctive nature of the town's built fabric, setting the framework for specific objectives and policies for all future development of the town.

### 6.7.1 Urban Design Framework

This section establishes the general approach and principles to guide growth and manage change in the town, including specific proposals to strengthen and consolidate Monasterevin in order to create a lively urban core with a diversity of uses.

Consolidation of the town centre area is necessary to reinforce the historic core as the central hub of activity. Linkages between the core and the Supervalu Neighbourhood Shopping Centre need to be strengthened to create a compact coherent and legible town (Refer to Map 2).

### 6.7.2 Strengthening of the Historic Core

A wide range of shops and businesses are required to ensure the vitality of the town centre. The greater the mix of shops and services the greater the attraction of the town centre.

Destination independent retailers, such as Willoughby's Hardware can stimulate shopper/ pedestrian flows past other retail units and services. The provision of a destination cultural/shopping experience on the ground floors of the Cassidy's Distillery structures on Dublin Street would encourage pedestrian movement through this area and underpin activity. Similarly

additional destination shops could be provided on Market Square, Main Street and Moore Street.

To reinforce the historic streetscape, existing units should be appropriately developed and any new retail units should be of a fine grain where feasible with active frontages and a variety of operators. Apart from pubs, and restaurants, non retail activities should ideally be located on upper floors so that retail frontage is maintained at street level.

### 6.7.3 Shop fronts and Streetscape

The image of Monasterevin and its town centre is crucial to its success. Shop fronts have a significant impact on the image of a town and the quality of the public domain. Moore Street has a small number of well maintained shop fronts e.g. Mooneys Pub and Willoughby's Hardware. Many of the residential units at the northern end of Moore Street are also well maintained and presented.

Overall, however, the town centre experience has deteriorated with high vacancy rates and poor quality retail provision and shop fronts.

The streetscape has also suffered in recent decades. The decline of the public realm particularly in the vicinity of Market Square and Dublin Street where vacancy, poor quality shop fronts, inappropriate materials, excessive signage and finishes along with poor footpath surfacing and lighting are common place. Consequently, the architectural merit of buildings and the collective townscape qualities continues to be eroded

Kildare County Council published Shop Front Design Guidelines in 2013 in order to encourage and guide retailers and designers to maintain and improve the character and



appearance of traditional shop fronts. The guide also provides guidance on improving the quality of contemporary shop front designs so that they respect and enhance their surroundings. It will also help local independent traders who are vital to towns such as Monasterevin.

Shop fronts have a significant impact on the image of a town and the quality of the public domain. It is therefore proposed to:

- Promote and encourage high quality shop front design particularly within the designated Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) in Monasterevin;
- Encourage the retention, sensitive repair and re-use of traditional shop fronts; and
- Reduce visual clutter by removing and preventing the introduction of poor quality projecting signage.
- 



## 6.7.4 Urban Design Strategy

A central objective of this Plan is to revitalise and consolidate the town centre, providing for a vibrant range of commercial and mixed-use development. Key to achieving this is the regeneration of vacant and derelict sites in the town centre and the enhancement of the public realm as set out in the design briefs (Section 6.8) and the indicative public realm improvement schemes (Section 6.9).

This section sets out specific proposals to guide growth and manage change in the town in order to create a lively urban core with a mix of residential, commercial, community and amenity uses. The overall aim is to achieve a flexible and realistic framework for growth while allowing for the continued development, regeneration and physical improvement of the town.

### Urban Design - Policies

It is the policy of the Council:

UD 1: To ensure that all new developments are designed to have regard to the rich and diverse urban and built fabric of the historic town core.

UD 2: To ensure that all new development has regard to the design principles and proposals set out in Section 6.8 Urban Design Briefs.

UD 3: To create a more attractive, vibrant and consolidated town centre by adhering to urban design principles and materials that preserve and enhance the existing townscape character while retaining the collective network of streets, lanes and market square as defined by compact urban blocks and finer urban grain.

- UD 4: To improve permeability through the larger land parcels around the outer historic core and to link them to the existing hierarchy of routes and civic spaces within and around the town centre.
- UD 5: To retain, where appropriate, attractive stone boundary walls and mature landscaping including hedgerows and trees, which contribute to the character of the town.
- UD 6: To improve access to and increase the use of new and existing amenity spaces providing connections to the town centre by way of quality linkages.
- UD 7: To protect key views and prospects particularly to and from the River Barrow, Grand Canal and from approach roads into the historic town centre.
- UD 8: To improve within the lifetime of this plan, the visual appearance of all approaches to the town in particular from Junction 14 on the M7 Motorway and from Ballybrittas. These improvements should include the implementation of high quality design solutions on approaches to Monasterevin from east/west to the town in accordance with the principles set out in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Street 2013 to highlight and promote the importance of place.
- UD 9: To provide high quality cycle and pedestrian linkages between residential, employment, amenity areas and the town core.
- UD 10: To require the undergrounding of utility cables in the town centre.
- UD 11: To discourage the removal of street furniture of heritage and aesthetic value and to carry out a review of same.
- UD 12: To encourage and facilitate the appropriate and sustainable regeneration of Cassidy's Distillery complex for uses that are appropriate to its strategic location in the town creating a built environment that respects the industrial and architectural history of the site and the existing urban fabric.
- UD 13: To encourage and facilitate the regeneration of derelict land and buildings within and around the town centre and in particular vacant floorspace within the town centre area. Proposals to retain the facade in isolation of the structure will not normally be permitted.
- UD 14: To seek the retention, restoration and improvement of buildings of architectural and vernacular merit (including those buildings that are not deemed to be protected structures. Proposed works to such buildings shall have regard to the streetscape as and the established character of the area.
- UD 15: To take enforcement measures where appropriate to secure the removal of unauthorised advertisement and signage from private property.



### 6.8 Urban Design Briefs

The ‘Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas’ and the accompanying ‘Urban Design Manual – A best practice guide’ were published by the DoEHLG, May 2009. These Guidelines set out in detail the role of urban design in the delivery of sustainable communities. In accordance with Section 3.8 of the Guidelines, this Plan includes design briefs to promote the development of three key areas within the town centre area (Section 6.8). These are as follows:

- (1) Moore Abbey and Market Square
- (2) Cassidy’s Distillery Site
- (3) Dublin Street Site (Fassnidge Motors)

These indicative briefs will assist all parties involved in the planning process – landowners, developers, agents, design teams and the planning authority. A more detailed urban analysis will be required to be prepared by developers/landowners as part

of any development proposal. The briefs are based on an appraisal of the area and its urban context. This analysis is used to form a vision for each area based on three key principles of urban design:

- a) built form
- b) landscape/urban space and
- c) connectivity/movement.

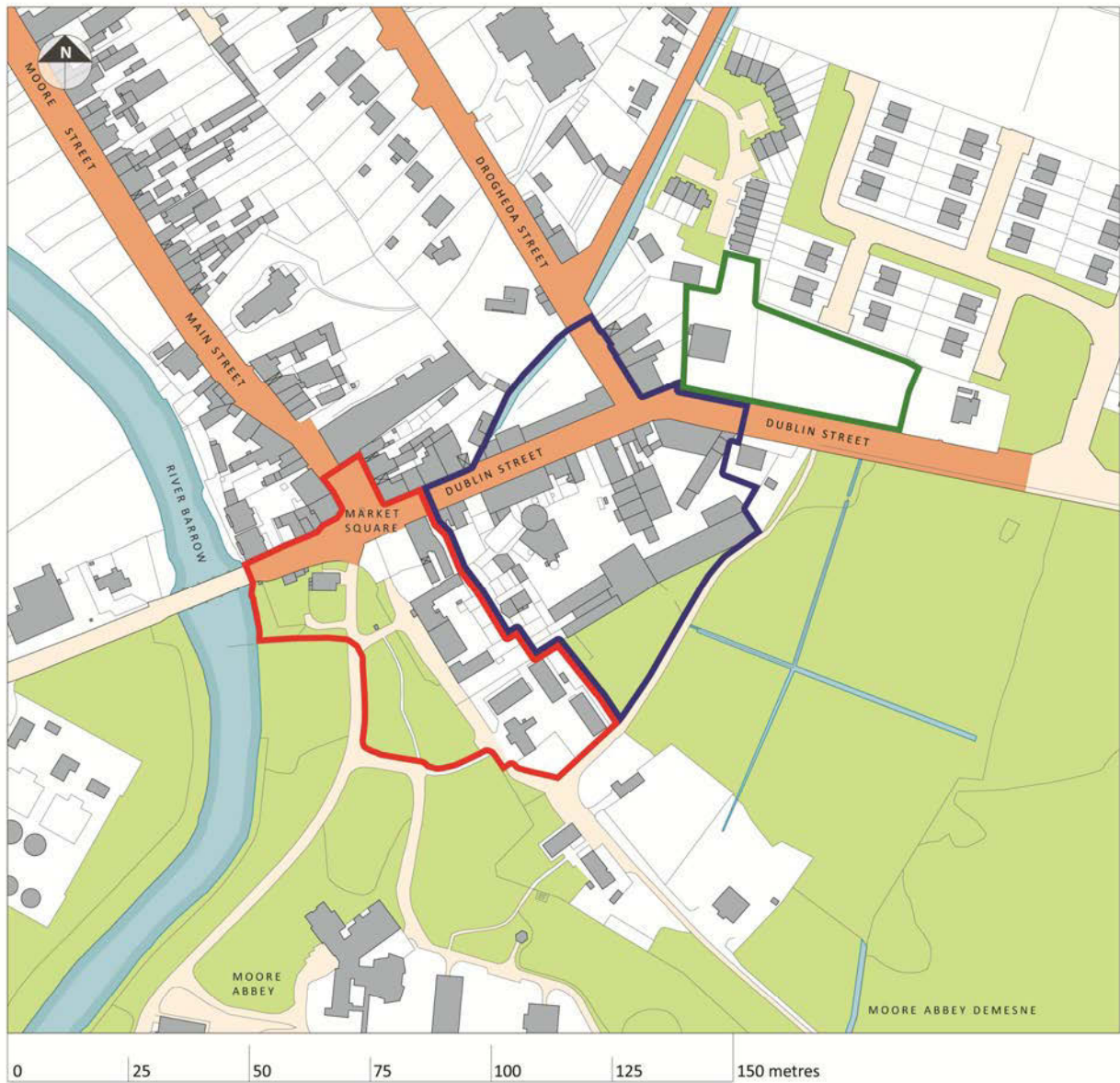
These design briefs are indicative only and serve to set out guidance as to how the areas could be developed. They set out broad design parameters for the development of the sites including movement, the location and type of development blocks, building frontage, civic spaces, the promotion of natural features and the location of landmark buildings. The briefs should be used to inform the more detailed layout and design proposals within each site.

Development proposals within each area should reference design objectives and guidelines for the respective design brief.


Any proposal for development should have regard to all relevant development management standards as set out in Chapter

19 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017 (or any subsequent plan).

Figure 6: Indicative Design Brief Areas



KEY

-  DESIGN BRIEF 1: MOORE ABBEY AND MARKET SQUARE (FUTURE EXPANSION AREA)
-  DESIGN BRIEF 2: CASSIDY'S DISTILLERY (REGENERATION AREA)
-  DESIGN BRIEF 3: DUBLIN STREET (INFILL SITE)
-  PUBLIC REALM AND STREET IMPROVEMENT WORKS

### 6.8.1 Design Brief 1: Moore Abbey and Market Square

#### Study Area

The lands included in Design Brief 1 are outlined in red and comprise Market Square, Finlay's Public House and car park, and the buildings located to the immediate south of the gates of Moore Abbey Demesne. The R 445 (former N7) runs east-west through the site with the River Barrow running along the western boundary. The site is located within the ACA boundary and includes a number of protected structures.

#### Key Urban Design Issues

The study area provides a longer term opportunity to revitalise and this underutilised area and improve its relationship vis a vis the historic town centre. The existing built form and movement pattern of the area provides a natural expansion to the existing town centre. There are a number of key opportunity sites within the area including the development of an urban park and the opening of the pedestrian gateway into Moore Abbey to encourage the introduction of commercial uses into the existing structures in a pedestrian and cyclist friendly urban environment.

#### Design Objectives

The longer term objective for this character area is to extend the commercial footprint into this historic area and secure the regeneration of the buildings associated with Moore Abbey. Minimal intervention is required to create a seamless extension to the town centre. A variety of uses, including

tourism, retail, community and educational services and residential development could be accommodated in this area.

The development of two urban parks together with the relocation of the 1798 Rebellion Commemoration Monument from the junction of the Moore Abbey entrance into the urban park would present an opportunity to formalise an underutilised area of the town, as well as providing the monument with a more appropriate and accessible setting.



#### Key Design Guidelines

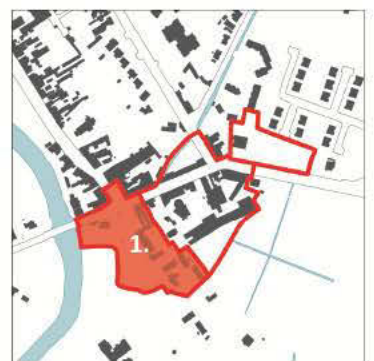
- Transform Market Square and the junction of Dublin Street and Main Street by providing a new focus for the town centre;
- Create a permeable, vibrant, sustainable extension to the town centre with a mix of uses;
- Facilitate the development of a new pedestrian focused street and mixed use zone to act as a natural extension to the town centre area;
- Reinforce the role of Market Square and the surrounding public areas as the main civic and commercial space within the town;
- Develop a landscaped urban park to act a gateway into the area accommodating the relocated monument;
- Promote additional retail, tourism, cultural, community and residential uses; and
- Introduce passive traffic calming measures using a table top junction (or similar), pedestrian crossing areas and tightening of the corner radii.

Figure 7: Design Brief 1 Moore Abbey and Market Square



- KEY
-  CHARACTER AREA OUTLINE
  -  EXISTING BUILDING
  -  PEDESTRIAN FOCUSED ROUTE / LINK
  -  PUBLIC URBAN SQUARE / PLAZA / PARK
  -  RELOCATED MONUMENT
  -  NEW ACTIVE FRONTAGE

-  PUBLIC REALM AND STREET IMPROVEMENT WORKS
-  HARD AND SOFT LANDSCAPING



## 6.8.2 Design Brief 2 Cassidy's Distillery

### Study Area

The subject lands are outlined in blue and comprise mostly vacant natural stone structures running along the north and south of Dublin Street. The Cassidy's Distillery complex adjoins Moore Abbey Demesne along the southern boundary. The lands comprise numerous structures of exceptional architectural, historical, technical and social interest representing the early industrialisation of Monasterevin in the late eighteenth/early nineteenth centuries. These include the Mash House, residential accommodation, offices, warehouses, wash tun house and various structures associated with Cassidy's Distillery. Part of the site is located within the ACA boundary and includes a number of protected structures.

### Key Urban Design Issues

The study area provides an opportunity to regenerate and revitalise an underutilised town centre site of significant architectural and historic merit. The structures along Dublin Street frame the approach into the town and provide a strong built form. However these structures are mostly vacant, in poor repair and do not currently provide for an attractive street frontage. The backland areas on the southern side of the street are inaccessible and have been abandoned for some time.

The structures on the northern side of the street mirror those on the south in terms of height, scale and bulk. The backland area of this part of the site is also underutilised and in need of redevelopment. Appropriate uses will be encouraged in key buildings on the streetscape having regard to the architectural and historical character of the distillery complex.

### Design Objectives

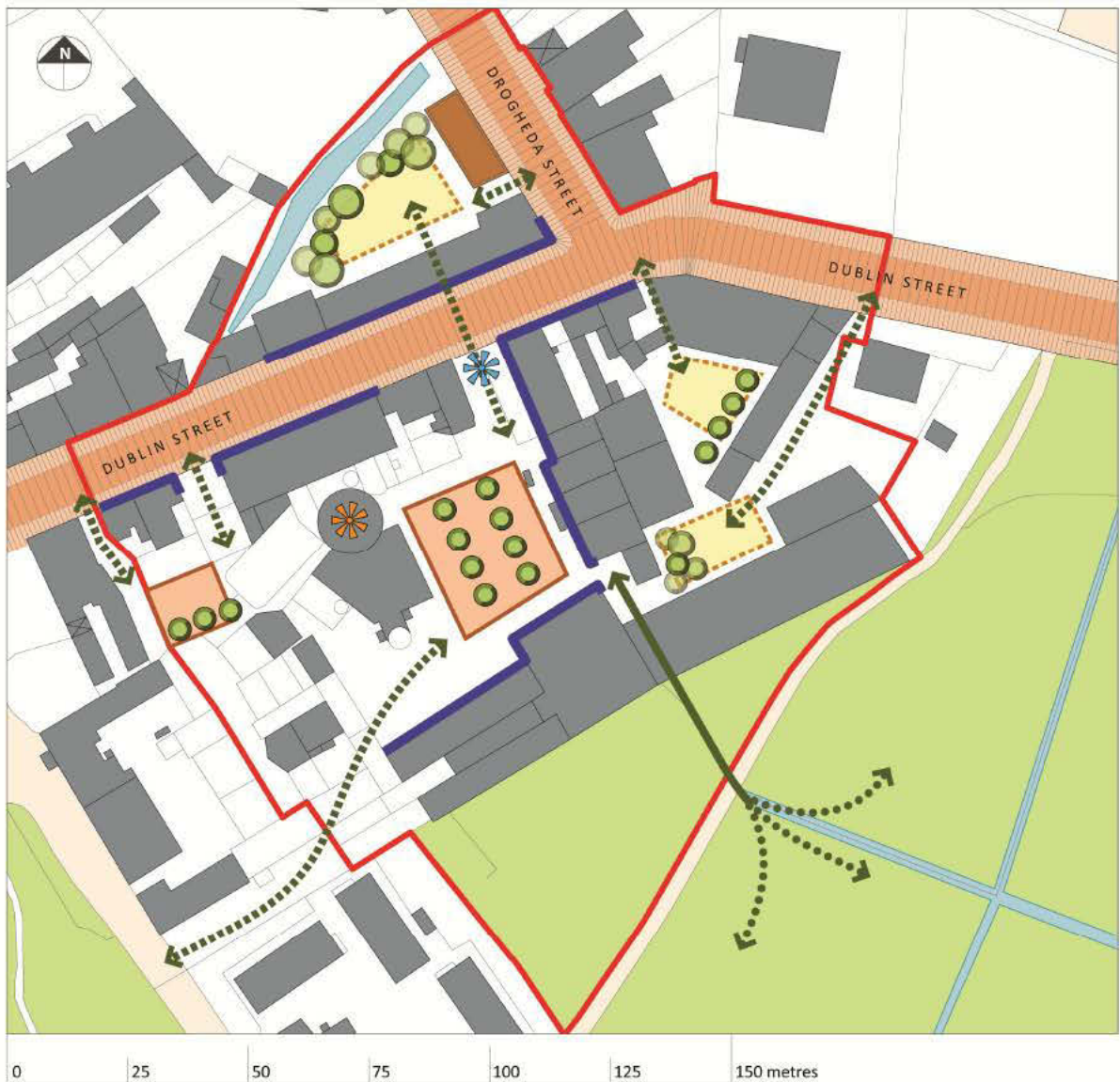
The longer term objective is to secure sustainable uses within the distillery. The existing built fabric would not require significant alterations. Alternative uses with a focus on the sensitive redevelopment of buildings within a new pedestrian area which complements the existing town core with a variety of uses will be encouraged such as a new distillery, brewery, arts and crafts, tourism, cultural, commercial, retail, residential, amenity and community uses.. A number of opportunities exist in the backlands of both sides of Dublin Street for appropriate infill development. Infill development should have regard to the surrounding character of the area and deliver a quality public realm.

The regeneration of this area provides an opportunity to maximise the potential of these industrial lands by establishing connections between this previously inaccessible area and the town centre and wider areas, including Moore Abbey Demesne.

### Key Design Guidelines

- Improve connectivity and permeability of these areas;
- Regenerate the existing industrial complex in the town centre with a mix of employment, tourism, cultural, residential, light industrial and commercial uses;
- Transform Dublin Street and the approach into Monasterevin into a vibrant, connected area within the town centre;
- Deliver high quality public and private open spaces within the industrial heritage; and
- Facilitate new infill development having regard to the architectural integrity, scale and character of the existing structures.

Figure 8: Design Brief 2: Cassidy's Distillery



- KEY
- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
|  | CHARACTER AREA OUTLINE                    |  | LANDMARK (MASH HOUSE)                            |
|  | EXISTING BUILDING                         |  | RECONSTRUCTION OF ORIGINAL ARCHWAY / ENTRY POINT |
|  | PEDESTRIAN FOCUSED ROUTE / LINK           |  | NEW ACTIVE FRONTAGE                              |
|  | GREENWAY LINK TO MOORE ABBEY DEMESNE      |  | NEW INFILL STRUCTURE                             |
|  | PUBLIC URBAN SQUARE / PLAZA / PARK        |  | PUBLIC REALM AND STREET IMPROVEMENT WORKS        |
|  | SEMI PRIVATE SQUARE(S) (RESIDENTIAL AREA) |  |  |





### 6.8.3 Design Brief 3 Dublin Street

#### Study Area

The subject lands are outlined in green and comprise two distinct areas Fassnidges Motors and an adjoining greenfield site. Residential areas are located to the rear and eastern edge of the site.

#### Key Urban Design Issues

Due to its pivotal location on the main thoroughfare through the town, the study area provides an opportunity to deliver a strong street edge on entry to Monasterevin.

It is envisaged that the site can accommodate a mix of uses with an emphasis on own door access for residential units, which may include live/ work units or similar.

#### Design Objectives

The appropriate development of this area should serve to transform the approach to the town and the junction of Dublin Street and Drogheda Street by providing a high quality architectural treatment and public realm with a mixture of uses. New development should facilitate pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular movement and should frame streets.

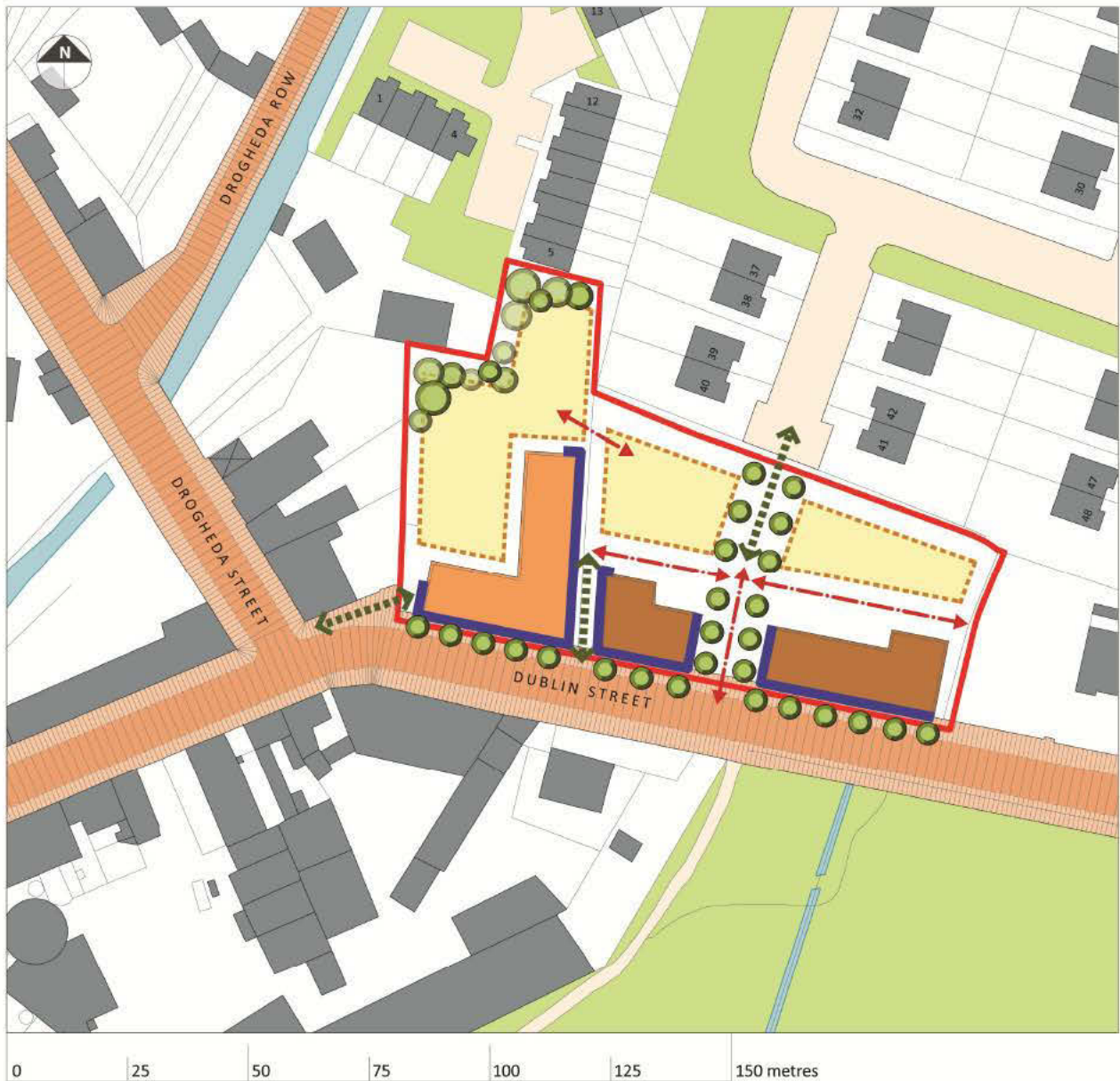
Development should be provided in the form of clearly defined blocks with semi private enclosed open space incorporating landscaped parking, rear access and communal spaces. Any new development shall have regard to the character, scale, height of structures in the vicinity of the site. Residential units within this area shall contain an appropriate mix of typologies, unit size and tenancies. Flexible frontages should be incorporated into buildings at ground floor level to allow for conversion

from residential, office, workspace, services uses to adapt to future needs.

#### Key Design Guidelines

- Provide strong street edges with clearly defined buildings and active ground floor uses in order to increase activity and interaction with the public realm;
- Improve permeability and connectivity of the site with the surrounding areas;
- New development should have regard to the character, scale, height and bulk of the existing structures in the vicinity;
- New development should facilitate pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular movement with clearly defined urban spaces; and
- Transform the approach to Monasterevin and the junction of Dublin Street and Drogheda Street by providing a high quality architectural treatment and public realm with a mixture of ground floor commercial uses and residential units.

Figure 9: Design Brief 3: Dublin Street



- KEY**
-  CHARACTER AREA OUTLINE
  -  EXISTING BUILDING
  -  PEDESTRIAN FOCUSED ROUTE / LINK
  -  VEHICULAR / PEDESTRIAN ROUTE
  -  SEMI PRIVATE SQUARE / LANDSCAPED PARKING (RESIDENTIAL)
  -  HARD AND SOFT LANDSCAPING
  -  NEW ACTIVE FRONTAGE
  -  RESIDENTIAL BLOCK WITH LIMITED COMMERCIAL ON GROUND FLOOR
  -  RESIDENTIAL BLOCK (EXISTING GRAIN / HEIGHTS ON DUBLIN STREET)
  -  PUBLIC REALM AND STREET IMPROVEMENT WORKS



## 6.9 Public Realm

### 6.9.1 Introduction

Numerous vacant and derelict buildings are located in the town centre. These structures coupled with a number of brownfield sites and the quality of the public realm largely contribute the poor image of Monsterevin. This is particularly evident along Dublin Street, Market Square and Main Street. The planned street pattern with wide carriage ways framed by attractive buildings has become visually and physically cluttered. Excessive road and shopfront signage, overhead wires, poor footpaths and urban spaces, all contribute to the poor image of town.

Resolving these issues should form part of an overall approach to the regeneration of the town centre. All road users should be

considered equally and accommodated accordingly in order to provide for a safer, more attractive and more enjoyable urban space. Vehicular movement should not dominate the town centre area.

Shopfronts and use of colour and materials can have a significant impact on the quality of the town. The architectural merit of buildings and the overall streetscape are being eroded by poor quality shopfronts. Monasterevin and Dublin Street in particular would benefit significantly from an improvement to the quality of shopfronts. The Kildare Shopfront Guidelines provides guiding principles for both designers and shop owners on various aspects of good shopfront design.



### 6.9.1 Market Square key design proposals

The following public realm improvement works are encouraged to improve the town centre:

- Reclamation of Market Square as a multi use, bustling public space;
- Relocation of the 1798 Rebellion Commemoration Monument to the south of the square;
- Introduction of passive traffic calming measures – tightening of junction radii, table top junction with marked pedestrian crossing areas, cycle lane(s), landscaping; and
- Improved public realm- hard and soft landscaping, good quality footpaths, public lighting, shop front improvements, de-cluttering of signage, undergrounding of overhead power lines.



*Current View of Market Square*



*Indicative transformation of Market Square*

## 6.9.2 1798 Monument and Moore Abbey gate key design proposals

The following public realm improvement works are encouraged to improve the town centre:

- Relocation of the 1798 Rebellion Commemoration Monument and placing on a plinth to give denote its importance;
- Creation of a public pocket park area at the gates of Moore Abbey /side of Finlays Pub;
- Introduction of passive traffic calming measures – tightening of junction radii, table top junction with marked pedestrian crossing areas, cycle lane(s), landscaping; and
- Improved public realm- hard and soft landscaping, good quality footpaths, public lighting, de-cluttering, undergrounding of overhead power lines.



*Current View of 1798 Rebellion Commemoration Monument and Moore Abbey Gates*



*Indicative transformation of the 1798 Monument and Moore Abbey gates area*

### 6.9.3 Moore Street/Main Street key design proposal

The following public realm improvement works are encouraged to improve the town centre:

- Introduction of cycle lanes, improvement of footpath environment along the riverside gardens;
- Improved public realm- hard and soft landscaping, good quality footpaths public lighting, de-cluttering, undergrounding of overhead power lines;
- Formalise on street parking arrangements;
- Reinforce the streets the existing and vibrant role of the street and improve the overall public realm; and
- Strengthen the role of the street and streetscape through improved pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular movement patterns.



*Current view of Moore Street*



*Indicative transformation of Moore Street*

#### 6.9.4 Dublin Street key design proposals

The following public realm improvement works are encouraged to improve the town centre:

- Appropriate re-use and refurbishment of former Cassidy's buildings along both sides of the street;
- Widening of footpaths, particularly on the south facing side of the street and incorporation of outdoor seating areas;
- Introduction of cycle lanes;
- Improved public realm – hard and soft landscaping, good quality footpaths, public lighting, de-cluttering, undergrounding of overhead power lines; and
- Formalise on street parking arrangements.



*Current view of Dublin Street*



*Indicative transformation of Dublin Street*