

Outline Report for Amendment Number 1 of the Mullingar Local Area Plan 2014-2020

Prepared by the Housing Capital
Design Team of Westmeath County
Council

Introduction:

It is proposed to amend the zoning objective of four separate parcels of land in three locations in Mullingar Local Area Plan 2014-2020 to provide for the development of housing. Each site is currently zoned for open space. The sites are as shown below in Table No. 1. The proposed Amendment is shown in the appendices of this report.

Table 1: Sites proposed for residential use					
Location	Area (ha) approx.	Current Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Ownership	Minimum yield of dwellings
Ennell Court Mullingar	0.61	Open Space O-LZ7	Residential O-LZ1	Part Westmeath County Council / part private	18 - 21
Rear of Tesco's, Mullingar	0.65	Open Space O-LZ7	Residential O-LZ1	Westmeath County Council	14
Robsintown Road & Delvin Road, Mullingar	0.2	Open Space O-LZ7	Residential O-LZ1	Westmeath County Council	4
Total area of land to be rezoned	1.51	Minimum yield of total dwellings			40

Appropriate Assessment

The proposed variations will be subject to screening for appropriate assessment. It is not envisaged that the proposed development would give rise to any adverse impact on Natura 2000 sites. The planning authority shall determine whether the proposed variations require an appropriate assessment.

Environmental Assessment

While it is not anticipated that the proposed amendments will have an undue negative impact on the environment, due to the requirement of Article 14A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) that any amendment to a local area plan relating to a population of greater than 5,000 people requires an environmental report. Consequently, the amendment is not eligible to be screened for SEA and an environmental report will be prepared as required in relation to this proposed amendment.

Flood Risk

Flood risk has been considered in relation to all the sites. Two sites have issues: Ennell Court (Site B) and O'Growney Drive.

Site B at Ennell Court contains a small area of indicative and extreme pluvial flooding – extrapolated from MapInfo (OPW data). A surface water pipe runs parallel to the canal, adjacent to the site. This pipe may need to be upsized to accommodate development of the site. A strategic flood risk

assessment has been completed in this regard. It is considered that detailed proposals for surface water disposals should be submitted at Development Management stage.

The site to the rear of Tesco's was previously identified in a Westmeath County Council commissioned surface water study for part of Mullingar, by ARUPS, circa 2009/2010 as at risk of localised flooding due to its low lying nature together with insufficient capacity in the sewerage system. During the process of preparation of the 2014 Mullingar LAP, this site was brought forward by way of a proposed amendment. The addendum to the Strategic Environmental Assessment which accompanied the amendments indicated that a justification test would be necessary if the lands were to be zoned for residential use. Ultimately, the lands were retained as open space. As these lands are now presented for proposed variations to residential use, a justification test has been prepared, in accordance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines, 2009.

ENNELL COURT (SITE A & SITE B), PATRICK STREET, MULLINGAR

Introduction

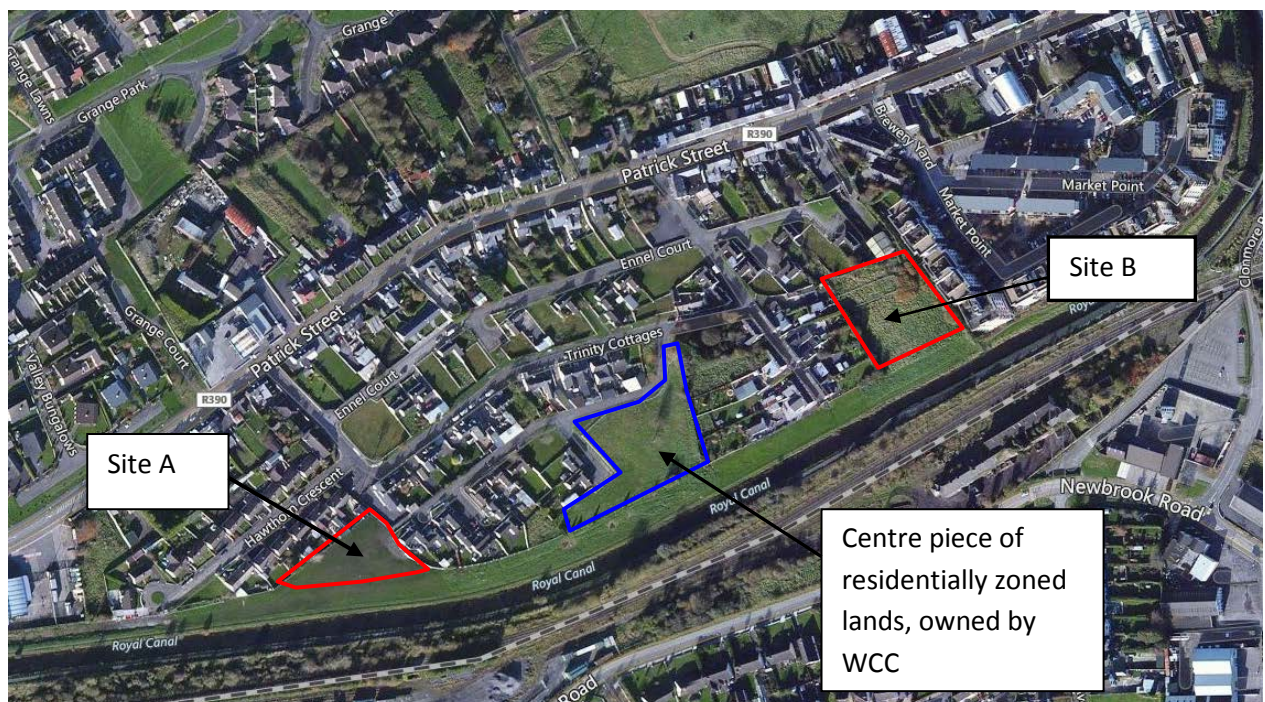
It is proposed to amend the Mullingar Local Area Plan 2014 – 2020 to accommodate the development of a social housing scheme at Ennell Court, Patrick Street, Mullingar. There are two plots of land (Site A and Site B), zoned for open space use, bounding the Royal Canal and collectively comprise an area of approximately 0.64 hectares.

The development would form an extension to the Ennell Court Estate. Ennell Court is an estate of single storey dwellings and was constructed in the early 1970's by the NBA (National Building Agency) for Westmeath County Council. There were originally 55 houses in Ennell Court (some of these have been refurbished, demolished or reconstructed).

These sites are being considered in the context of the overall framework plan for the Ennell Court area, where a number of existing pockets of vacant land are being brought forward for housing. One of the principle aims of the framework plan is to develop an integrated scheme which addresses the Royal Canal and which encourages access through the estate linking Patrick Street and the Royal Canal.

Sites A and B form part of a larger scheme for the redevelopment of parts of Ennell Court. Between these two sites is an area of land, in the ownership of Westmeath County Council, which is already zoned for residential use. The development of Sites A and B will be done in the context of an overall plan which includes the existing piece of land zoned in the centre of the Sites A and B. Collectively, it is envisaged that at least 30 units can be developed in Ennell Court as part of an overall regeneration and integrated framework approach.

It is envisaged that the open space zoning along the canal will provide the reflective, linear open space requirements for the residential scheme as well as some active open spaces, including courtyard, overlooked green space and playground within the layout.



Key Site statistics: Site A

Site area	0.21ha
Present zoning Mullingar Local Area Plan	Open space
Proposed zoning	Residential
Ownership	Westmeath County Council

Site Description and Context: Site A

The site is flat, in grass and is generally triangular in nature. Refer to Plate A.1 for aerial photograph with approximate outline of site indicated. A site inspection indicated the remnants of a number of open fires. The site is poorly overlooked on all sides. The site is not maintained and does not appear to be used for recreational purposes. Existing access to the site is via 3 no. existing access points at Ennell Court, the canal and the junction between Hawthorn Crescent and Trinity Cottages (refer to Plates 2-4).

The site is bounded by the Royal Canal (and associated open space zoning) to the south; by Ennell Court to the east and; by Hawthorn Crescent to the north and north-west. Houses to the north and east are single storey. The house to the north east (no. 14 Trinity Cottages) is a traditional storey and a half type.

Plate A2 Access point at Ennell Court (Site A)



Plate A3 Pedestrian Access via the Royal Canal (Site A)



Plate A4: Pedestrian access at junction of Hawthorn Crescent and Trinity Cottages (Site A)



Flood Risk: Site A

The draft Flood Risk Maps (CFRAMS) prepared on behalf of the OPW have been examined. The site is not indicated as an area of risk.

The MapInfo layer on pluvial flooding (both extreme and moderate) has been examined. There is no indication of any flooding at this location.

Proposed Development: Site A

While proposals are at early stages of schematic plans, it is envisaged that the development will address the Royal Canal with car parking to the rear. It is considered that between 4 and 7 no. of units can be accommodated on this site, subject to a high standard of design and having due regard to existing residences in the vicinity. Access to the site is proposed via an existing pedestrian access and over part of the site belonging to no. 14 Trinity Cottages, plate no. 2.4 refers (this house is in Council ownership and is presently used for community and social work). The site can be described as inner suburban / infill, where density can be site specific, according to the Mullingar LAP.

Key Sites Statistics: Site B

Site area	Approx. 0.4 ha
Present zoning Mullingar Local Area Plan	Open space
Proposed zoning	Residential
Ownership	Part Westmeath County/part private
To be transferred	Via land purchase/agreement

Site Description and Context: Site B

The site is generally rectangular in shape and is bounded by the Royal Canal (and associated open space) to the south; by the Market Point development to the east and, to west by the rear of St. Anthony's cottages (refer to Plate A1). To the north the site is bounded by existing single storey dwellings which form part of the Ennell Court development, and a large galvanised shed. The site is laid out in grass, which is not maintained or used, though access can be gained readily along the banks of the canal. The site is overlooked significantly by the Market Point development to the east, refer to Plate A6.

PlateA5: View from Royal Canal facing North (Site B)**Plate A6: View from Royal Canal facing North East (Site B)****Plate A7: View from Ennell Court (North West) facing South East (Site B)**



Flood Risk: Site B

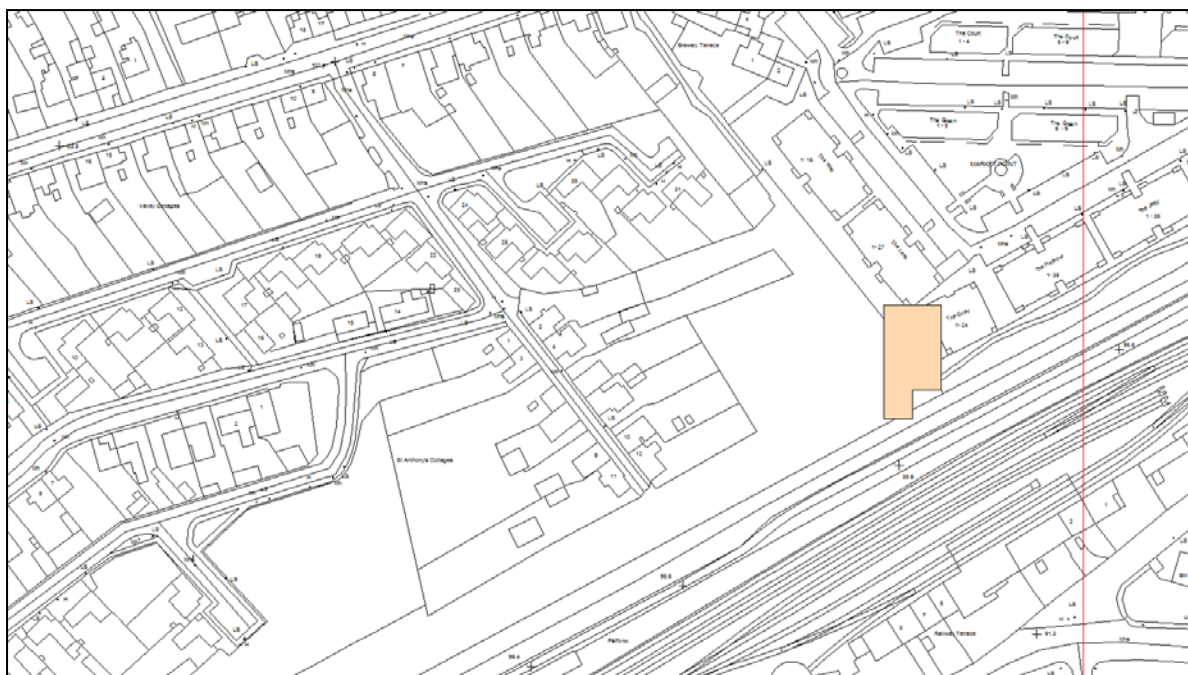
The draft Flood Risk Maps (CFRAMS) prepared on behalf of the OPW have been examined. The site is not indicated as an area of risk.

The OPW data on pluvial flooding (both extreme and moderate) has been examined. The site incorporates a small area indicated as 'pluvial indicative' and 'pluvial extreme', refer to map below (coloured orange). Following discussion with the Clerk of Works (Housing Team) and Executive Engineer in the Mullingar Municipal District, it is understood that a surface water pipe was laid parallel to the canal approx. 10 years ago to drain surface water. The surface water pipe which runs parallel to the Canal serves Market Point apartment development and there are fears that this pipe may be at or reaching its capacity, with incidents of surcharging in the past.

This would require further investigation and some hydraulic analysis to determine if this pipe needs to be upsized as part of a development, this would be completed at development management stage.

Site inspection did not indicate any sign of wet ground.

Plate A9: Area of indicative and extreme pluvial flooding, partially on site (Site B)



Criteria	Determination with regard to Ennell Court Site B subject to risk of pluvial flooding
1. The urban settlement is targeted for growth under the national Spatial Strategy, regional planning guidelines, statutory plans or under the Planning Guidelines or Planning Directives of the planning and development act, 2000, as amended	Yes, Mullingar is a designated Linked Gateway Town targeted for growth under the National Spatial Strategy, Midland Regional Planning Guidelines and the Westmeath County Development Plan 2014-2020.
2. The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the urban settlement and, in particular:	The lands have been identified for social housing, and are close to the urban core of Mullingar.
- Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	The lands are close to the urban core and will contribute to expansion of the centre of the urban settlement.
- Comprises significantly of under-utilised lands	The lands in question are greenfield undeveloped lands, which are under-utilised.
- Is within the core or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement	The lands adjoin the urban core of the town.
- Will be essential in achieving compact and sustainable urban growth	Development of the lands would assist in consolidating the urban settlement and would promote sustainable urban growth.
- There are no alternative lands for the particular use or development type in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the	There are suitable lands available for development, however the site is in the ownership of Westmeath County Council; is convenient to the town centre and adjacent to existing residential and commercial developments.

core of the urban settlement	The site incorporates a small area indicated as 'pluvial indicative' and 'pluvial extreme'. Hydraulic analysis to determine if the existing surface water drainage pipe needs to be upsized as part of a development, will be completed at development management stage.
3. A Flood Risk Assessment to an appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the Local Area Plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere	A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was carried out on the LAP. The land area affected by Pluvial Flood Risk is relatively small in scale. In relation to the site in question, the portion of the site may be retained as open space or the developer may demonstrate through hydraulic analysis that the surface water drainage system can accommodate development on the site.

Proposed Development: Site B

It is envisaged that the development will address the Royal Canal with car parking to the rear. It is considered that approx. 14 units can be accommodated on this site, subject to a high standard of design and having due regard to existing residences in the vicinity. Proposed access to the site is via the existing Ennell Court estate to the north. The site can be described as inner suburban / infill, where density can be site specific, according to the Mullingar LAP. It is envisaged that the open space zoning along the canal will accommodate the open space provision for the residential development.

REAR OF TESCO'S, MULLINGAR

Introduction

It is proposed to vary the Mullingar Local Area Plan 2014 – 2020 to accommodate the development of a social housing scheme to the rear of O'Growney Drive, Mullingar. The area to be rezoned comprises an area of approximately 0.65 hectares. Given the complexity of access to the site and the expressed desire to retain some land as open space, 50% of the overall lands owned by the Council has been reserved for public open space.

Key Site Statistics

Site area	0.65 ha
Present zoning Mullingar Local Area Plan	Open space
Proposed zoning	Residential with specific objective to retain a minimum area of 50% as open space.
Ownership	Westmeath County Council

Site Description and Context

The site is long and narrow with average dimensions of 235m x 48m. The site is generally flat although uneven in places. There is evidence of some reeds in spots. The site is not passively supervised as it is surrounded on three sides by the backs of houses.

The site is bounded by the car park associated with Tesco's to the south. There is a gradient change between the car park and the site, (a fall), of circa 2-3m. To the west and north, the site is bounded by a high block wall which separates Ashfield. To the east, the site is bounded by the rear gardens of St. Bridget's Terrace and O'Growney Drive.

Relevant Planning History

Planning reg. ref. 80/240: permission granted to St. Bridget's Park Development to erect a community centre.

Proposed Development

The access to serve the site will be determined at development stage. Access to the site can be facilitated via Ashfield (which is the optimum route), via Abbeylands or via the Green Road. This would necessitate acquiring land to facilitate access. Access could also be facilitated via the access road which bounds the north east of the site and serves as rear access to some of the St. Bridget's Terrace residences. It may be necessary to consider a one-way traffic system if this access route is considered (refer to plate 3).

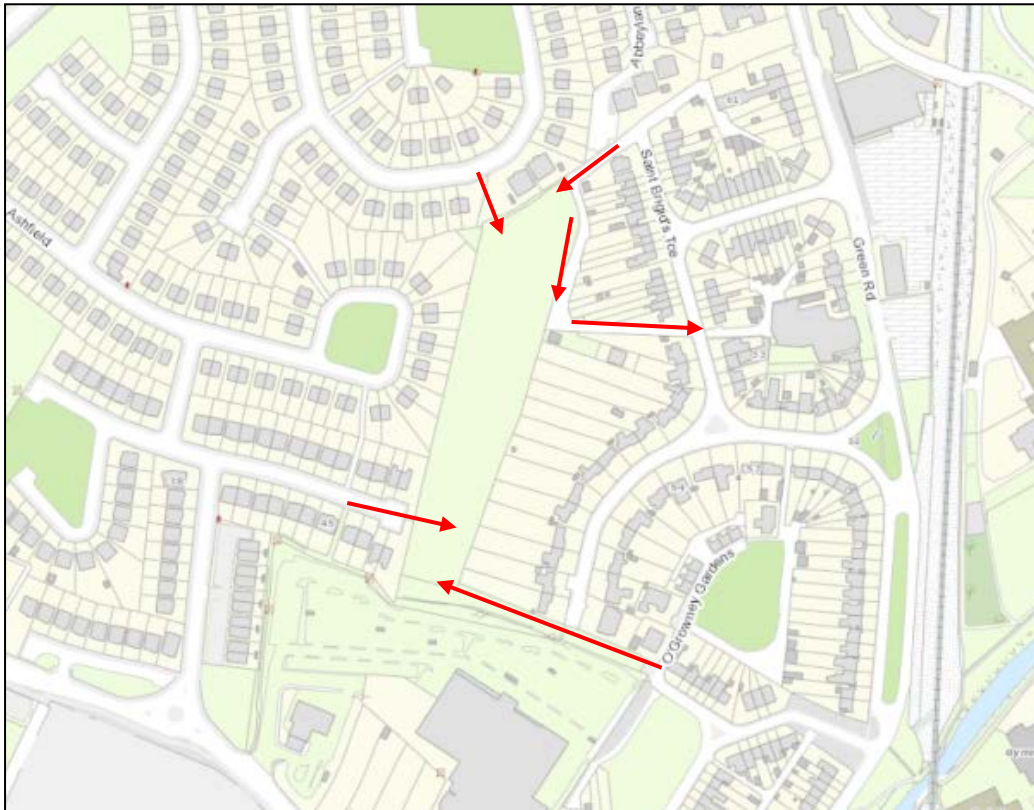
Plate C1: Aerial Photograph of Site



Plate C2: View from Tesco's car park looking across the site to the north



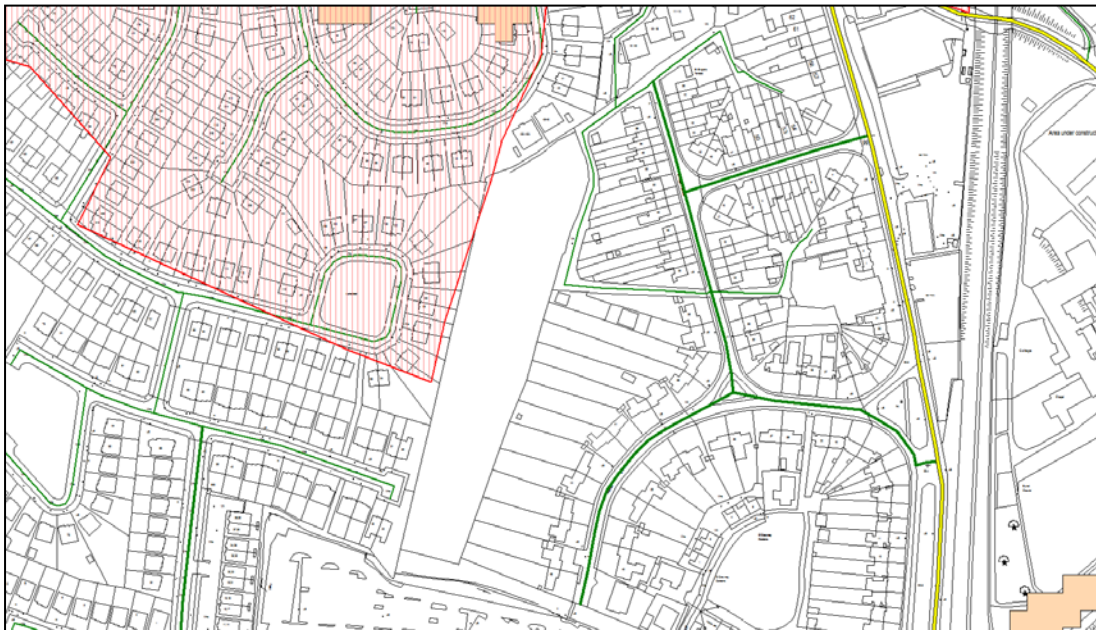
Plate C3: Possible Vehicular Access Route



Flood Risk

The draft Flood Risk Maps (CFRAMS) prepared on behalf of the OPW have been examined. The site is not indicated as an area of risk. It bounds lands indentified as 'benefiting lands' (i.e. lands which have or will benefit from arterial drainage schemes), indicated by red hatching on Plate C4 below.

Plate C4: Extract from Flood Risk MapInfo layer



The OPW data on pluvial flooding (both extreme and moderate) has been examined. The site does not indicate any risk in this regard. The site adjoins the Ashfield estate, where some pluvial flooding is indicated to the north of the site (coloured orange).

There are no known historic incidences of flooding on the site, as might be recorded on floodmaps.ie.

There are three types or levels of flood zones defined for the purposes of the Flood Risk Guidelines: Flood Zone A – where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is highest (greater than 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding or 0.5% or 1 in 200 for coastal flooding); Flood Zone B – where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is moderate (between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 and 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding and between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 year and 0.5% or 1 in 200 for coastal flooding); and Flood Zone C – where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is low (less than 0.1% or 1 in 1000 for both river and coastal flooding). Flood Zone C covers all areas of the plan which are not in zones A or B.

The site can thus be described as Flood Zone C – Low Probability of Flooding, where the Guidelines indicate that highly vulnerable development (such as housing) is appropriate (i.e. a justification test is not considered necessary in such cases). The Guidelines state that development in this zone is appropriate from a flood risk perspective (subject to assessment of flood hazard from sources other than rivers and the coast) but would need to meet the normal range of other proper planning and sustainable development considerations.

A partial surface water management study was carried out by ARUPS for Mullingar in 2009/2010 which indicated that there was an issue of pluvial flood risk (which might arise as a result of rainfall and sewerage pipe constraints) on lands adjoining the site at Ashfield/Abbeylands. Mapping associated with the issue at Ashfield/Abbeylands indicate moderate pluvial flooding risk across part of the site.

Draft Flood Maps as part of the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Programme have been prepared for Mullingar, as Mullingar was identified as an Area of Further Assessment (AFA). The site was not included in the AFA. The flood risk maps are derived from river reaches (the Brosna in this instance). There are many other possible sources of flooding, such as from surcharged urban drainage systems, ponding rainwater, groundwater, overtopping or breaching of water retaining structures (e.g. reservoirs). Flooding from these other sources has typically not been mapped, and so areas that are not shown as being within a flood extent may therefore be at risk from flooding from one or more of these other sources.

The site is not identified as prone to flood risk in the draft CFRAMS maps. It may, however, be at risk of localised flooding from other sources e.g. rainwater ponding as identified in the 2010 Arups study. Typically, surface water can be managed in an urban environment, via connections to existing surface water drains, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and attenuation. Consultation with the Executive Engineer in the Mullingar District indicates no concern regarding flood risk management in relation to the site, if it were to be developed, provided the urban runoff is designed to mimic, as much as possible, the original greenfield behaviour.

The Flood Risk Assessment undertaken as part of the preparation for Mullingar LAP 2014 – 2018 did not indicate that the site was subject to flood risk. However, when the site was put forward as an amendment to the draft plan to rezone from open space to residential use, the Manager's Report referenced the ARUP's surface water management study which identified part of the site as at risk of pluvial flooding and recommended that a justification test be undertaken. While a justification test is not normally required for lands in Zone C – lands with a low probability of flooding – having regard to ARUP's surface water management study, it is considered prudent to complete a justification test for the proposed variation.

The Senior Planner has advised that a justification test is undertaken with respect to varying the zoning of the site from open space to residential use. It should be noted that not more than 50% of the site will be developed for housing, thus enabling appropriate SuDS to be incorporated into the development and in order to protect existing and future residential amenities.

Justification Test

A justification test has been undertaken in accordance with the s.28 Flood Risk Management Guidelines, refer to Table C1 below.

Table C1: Justification Test

Criteria	Determination with regard to site to rear of Tesco's subject to risk of pluvial flooding
1. The urban settlement is targeted for growth under the national Spatial Strategy, regional planning guidelines, statutory plans or under the Planning Guidelines or Planning Directives of the planning and development act, 2000, as amended	Yes, Mullingar is a designated Linked Gateway Town targeted for growth under the National Spatial Strategy, Midland Regional Planning Guidelines and the Westmeath County Development Plan 2014-2020.
2. The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the urban settlement and, in particular:	The lands have been identified for social housing, and are close to the urban core of Mullingar.
- Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	The lands are close to the urban core and will contribute to expansion of the centre of the urban settlement.
- Comprises significantly of under-utilised lands	The lands in question are greenfield undeveloped lands, which are under-utilised.
- Is within the core or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement	The lands adjoin the urban core of the town.
- Will be essential in achieving compact and sustainable urban growth	Development of the lands would assist in consolidating the urban settlement and would promote sustainable urban growth.
- There are no alternative lands for the particular use or development	There are suitable lands available for development, however the site is in the ownership of Westmeath County Council; is convenient to the

type in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement	town centre and adjacent to existing residential and commercial developments. The site is considered to be in Zone C – low probability of flooding - having regard to: no known historic data that the site has flooded; OPW data indicates that the site is not at risk from pluvial or fluvial flooding; appropriate mitigation measures can be put in place, such as SuDS to address any concerns, and; not more than 50% of the site shall be developed for housing, thus enabling appropriate area for any attenuation and soakage if required.
3. A Flood Risk Assessment to an appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the Local Area Plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere	A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was carried out with respect to the Mullingar LAP 2014 - 2020. In relation to the site in question, the SFRA (addendum) states that: Part of this area has been identified in the "Surface Water Management Policy" Report by ARUP as at risk of pluvial flooding. The proposed zoning of the site comprises residential and open space. It is recommended that the portion of this site which is subject to risk of flooding be retained as open space.

Conclusion

Having regard to the site's location proximate to the town centre, in a linked gateway town, where it is national, regional and local policy to channel growth, and having regard to the immediate need for social housing in Mullingar, government policy in respect of the same; the limited anticipated development of the lands owned by Westmeath County Council at this location (i.e. not more than 50%); the lack of any recorded incident of flooding on the site; and proposed mitigation measures such as SuDS and attenuation, it is considered that the requirements of the justification test are fulfilled.

Consultation with the District Engineer agrees with the flood risk assessment of this report and confirms that the surface water discharge from any proposed development on these lands would have to be restricted to mimic the existing green field run-off from these lands.

ROBINSTOWN ROAD AND DELVIN ROAD, MULLINGAR

Introduction

It is proposed to amend the Mullingar Local Area Plan 2014 – 2020 to accommodate the development of a social housing scheme at the junction of Robinstown Road and Delvin Road, Mullingar.

Key site statistics

Site area	0.2ha
Present zoning Mullingar Local Area Plan	Open space
Proposed zoning	Residential
Ownership	Westmeath County Council
Potential housing yield	3-4 units

Site Description and Context

The site is bounded to the east by the Robinstown Road (which connects the Castlepollard Road and the Delvin Road). The Delvin Road bounds the site to the south. To the north lies a cul-de-sac (in the form of a hammer head) serving Dalton Park. The site is bounded by Assumption Villas (a row of bungalows) lies to the south west, and by Dalton Park, a two storey local authority housing development lies to the north west. St. Loman's Hospital lies to the east. The site rectangular in nature and is laid out in unkept grass. The site is bounded by a mixture of a low wall and post and rail fence.

MapInfo indicates that a local authority application relates to the site (LA_66). Details presently unavailable: awaiting same from Mullingar Area Office.

Plate E1 Aerial Photograph of Site



Plate E2 View of site from Delvin Road (Robinstown Road to RHS)



Plate E3 View of site from Dalton Park, looking south



2.4 Proposed Development

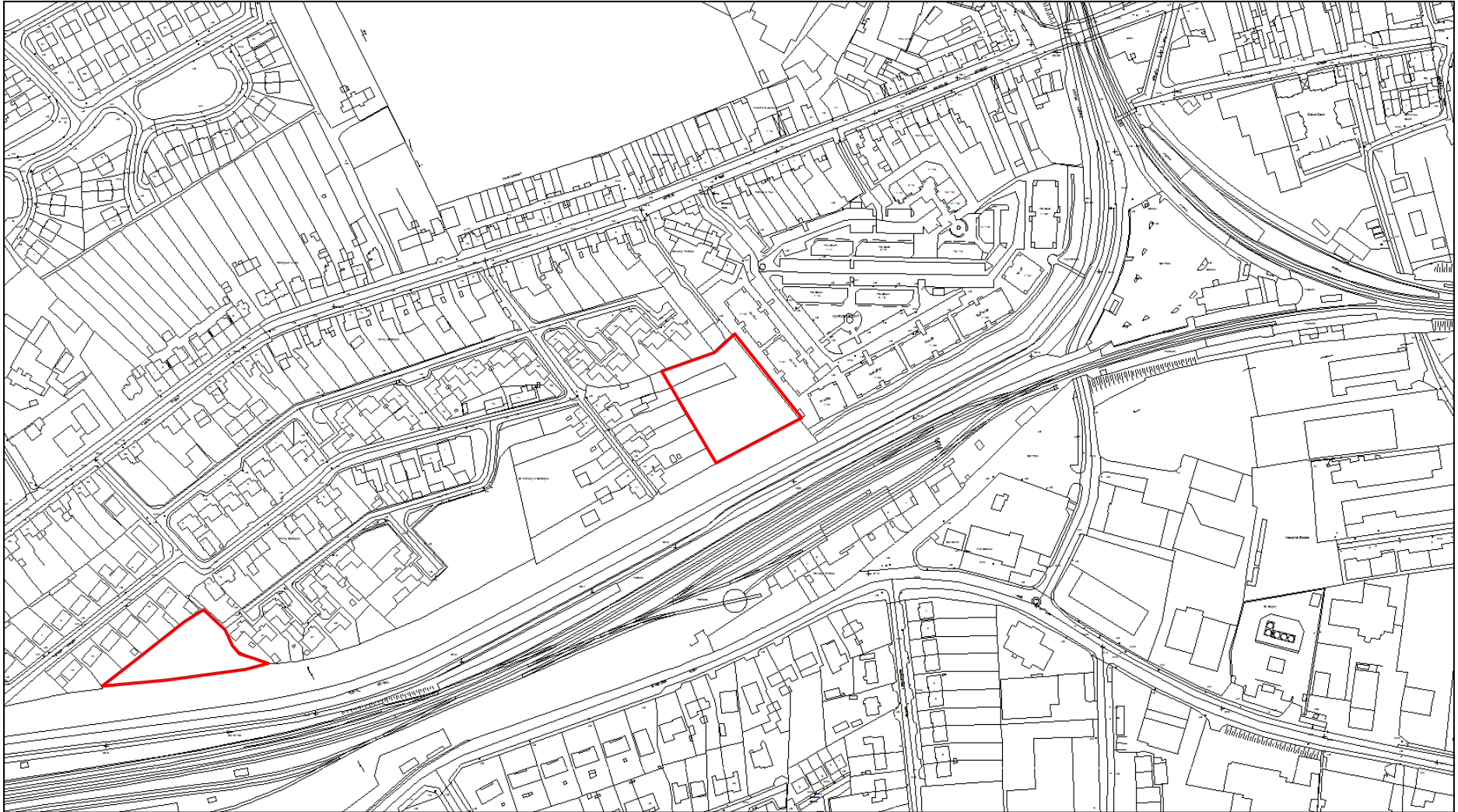
Having regard to the need for a percentage of open space, and with due consideration for existing dwellings in the vicinity, it is considered that the site will accommodate at least 3-4 units. This equates to approx. 7 units per ha. The site may accommodate more dwellings if a 'landmark' corner approach is taken to its development – this can only be determined at development management stage.

2.5 Flood Risk

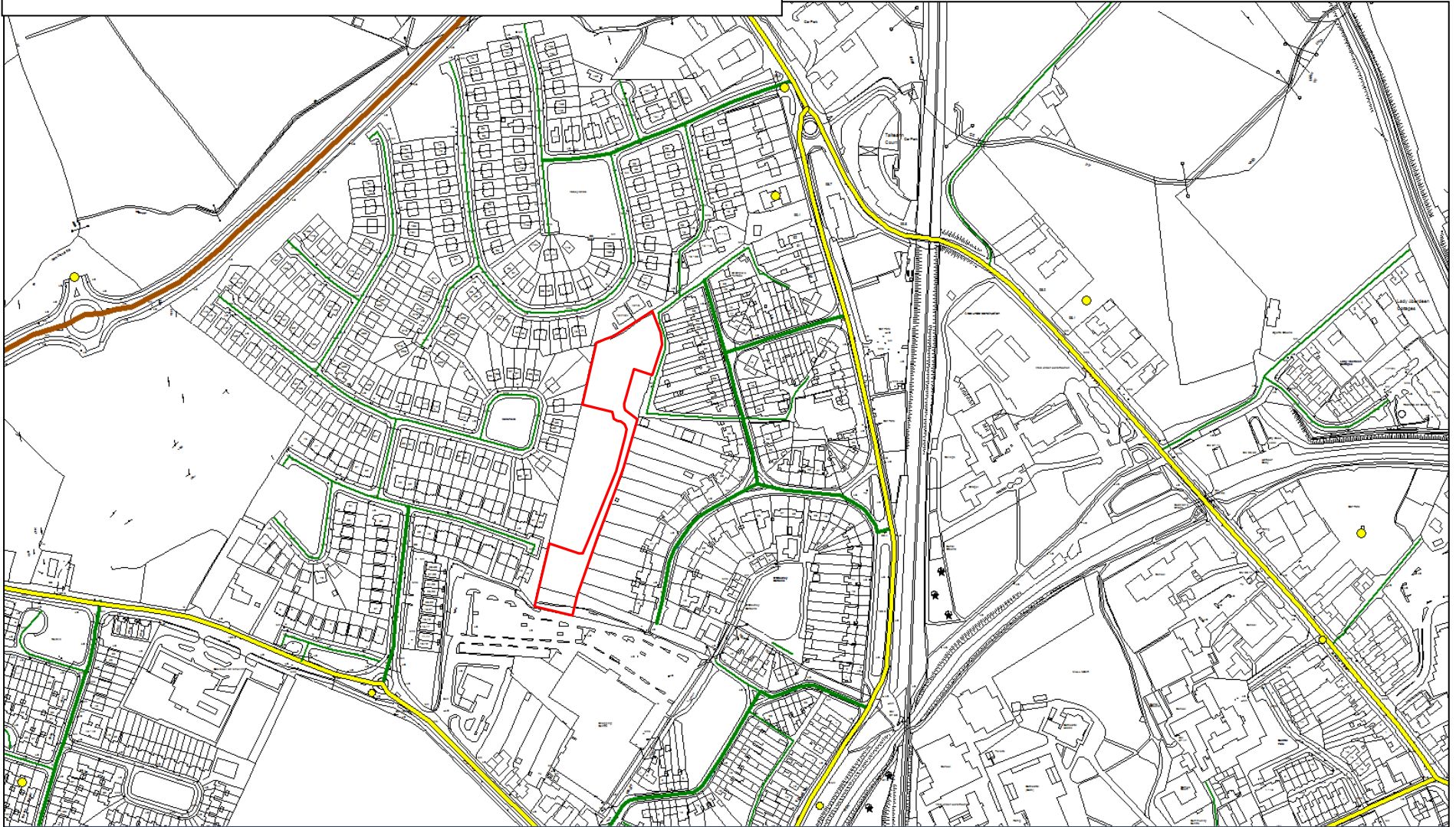
The draft Flood Risk Maps (CFRAMS) prepared on behalf of the OPW have been examined. The site is not indicated as an area of risk.

The OPW data on pluvial flooding (both extreme and moderate) has been examined. There is no indication of any flooding at this location.

Appendix A: Site A & B, Ennell Court, Mullingar to be zoned Residential OLZ-1



Appendix B: O'Growney Drive, Mullingar to be zoned Residential OLZ-1



Appendix C: Robinstown Road/Delvin Road, Mullingar to be zoned Residential OLZ-1

