

Cornamagh

Local Area Plan, July 2009

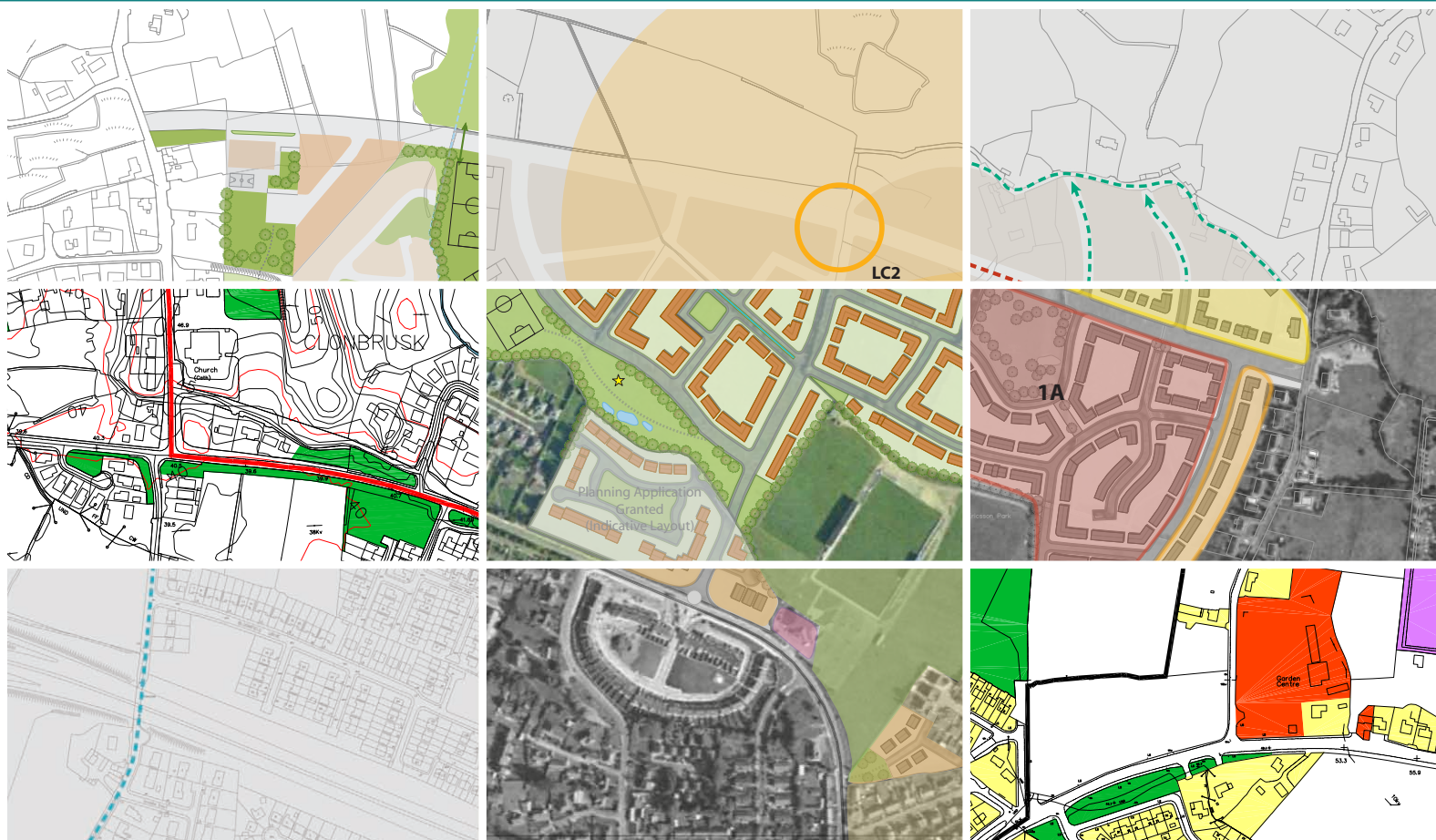


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1. INTRODUCTION – Background and Purpose of Study

1.1. Objectives of the Brief

The objective of this Cornamagh Local Area Plan (LAP) is to guide the development of the Cornamagh area within the administrative boundary of Athlone Town Council.

The LAP establishes the framework within which the provision of housing, services, transport links, employment and supporting infrastructure and development are appropriately coordinated to create sustainable urban extensions and develop communities. This LAP aims to:

- o **Develop a policy document** to guide the overall development of the Cornamagh LAP representing a departure from single use blanket land use zoning, by providing for a new urban extension,
- o **Identify existing land uses** in the study area and develop proposals for their incorporation into the overall LAP area,
- o Encourage a vibrant mix of residential and supporting uses to create a sustainable urban community with access to employment, recreation, open space, education and community facilities within a coordinated framework.
Determination of the activities and uses is to include identifying the requirement for (if any) and appropriate location of:
 - A primary school,
 - Neighbourhood shopping and community facilities,
- o **Maximise linkages** within the LAP area to adjoining lands, while also seeking opportunities to link with existing centres and services, integrate with communities, and the natural and built environment,
- o Set out the basis for the **provision of utilities** and other infrastructural elements,
- o **Provide an urban design and landscape framework** for the overall layout and development of the LAP area reflecting best practice in terms of design, mix and typology of uses which considers/demonstrates the following:
 - Integration of the defining elements of landscape character (topography, ecology), bio-diversity, heritage and architectural value to create a landscape framework with a high amenity value within which future building projects can be developed.
 - Promotion of a high standard of design and layout that provides legibility, character and local distinctiveness in the Area.
 - Determination of height, bulk and massing of buildings and how streets, squares and open spaces of neighbourhoods are to be connected; and how the area is to connect to other areas,
 - Promotion of innovative design solutions incorporating energy efficient design techniques and the use of renewable energy resources in individual buildings and in overall layout;
 - The role of culture, memory and history in defining a sense of place.

INTRODUCTION – Background and Purpose of Study

- Develop a coherent framework to **facilitate access and movement** within the Area and to the surrounding area, which considers:
 - The design of roads as urban roads with frontage development,
 - Identification of the movement patterns for people on foot, by bicycle, by car or public transport;
 - Development of an open space network through the site, to provide pedestrian links within the area and to the surrounds, including the provision of wildlife corridors,
 - Provision of green linkages and a cycle network that promotes connectivity and permeability both within the local plan area and to the surrounding areas,
 - The importance of design and layout coupled with a transport plan that offers viable and efficient alternatives to the private car.
- **Provide proposals for implementation** that consider the need for flexibility, robustness and the ability to adapt to change.

2. THE STUDY AREA

2.1. Context

This 'Local Area Plan' study area has been identified in the *Athlone Town Development Plan 2008 – 2014* and comprises lands, primarily, within the townland of Cornamagh in addition to lands within Clonbrusk.

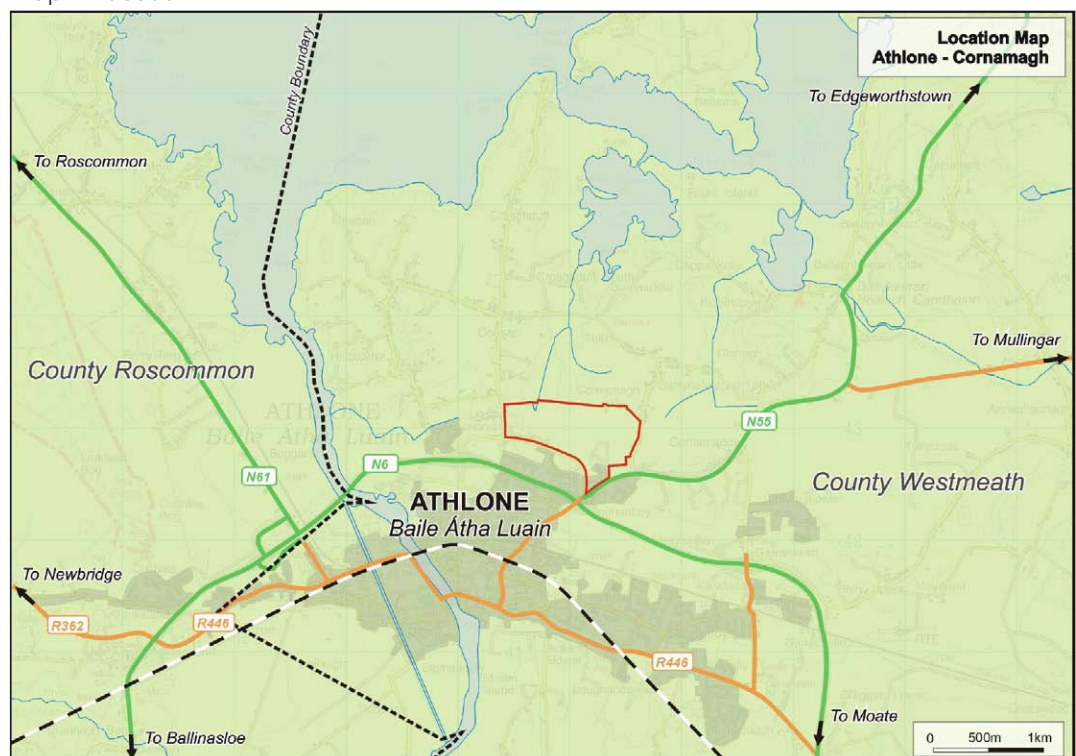
The study area is located to the north of the town centre and north of the Athlone Relief Road. The western most boundary is formed by local road L-4005-13/L-1478-0 (Coosan Point Road) which extends from the Town out to Coosan Point, much of the southern boundary is formed by local road L-4001-0, extending from its junction with the L-4005-13/L-1478-0 to the south of Coosan Church to its junction with the N55 at Clonbrusk.

From this southern most point of the study area in Clonbrusk, the boundary extends in a north-easterly direction along the N55 to its junction with local road I-5496 which leads into McCormack Park and also represents the boundary to the Cornamaddy Local Area Plan area.

The boundary follows the line of the Cornamaddy Plan area in a northerly direction as far as the junction of the L-8001-0 (Cornamagh Road) with local road L-8001-01 which also represents the northerly most extent of the Town Council administrative area.

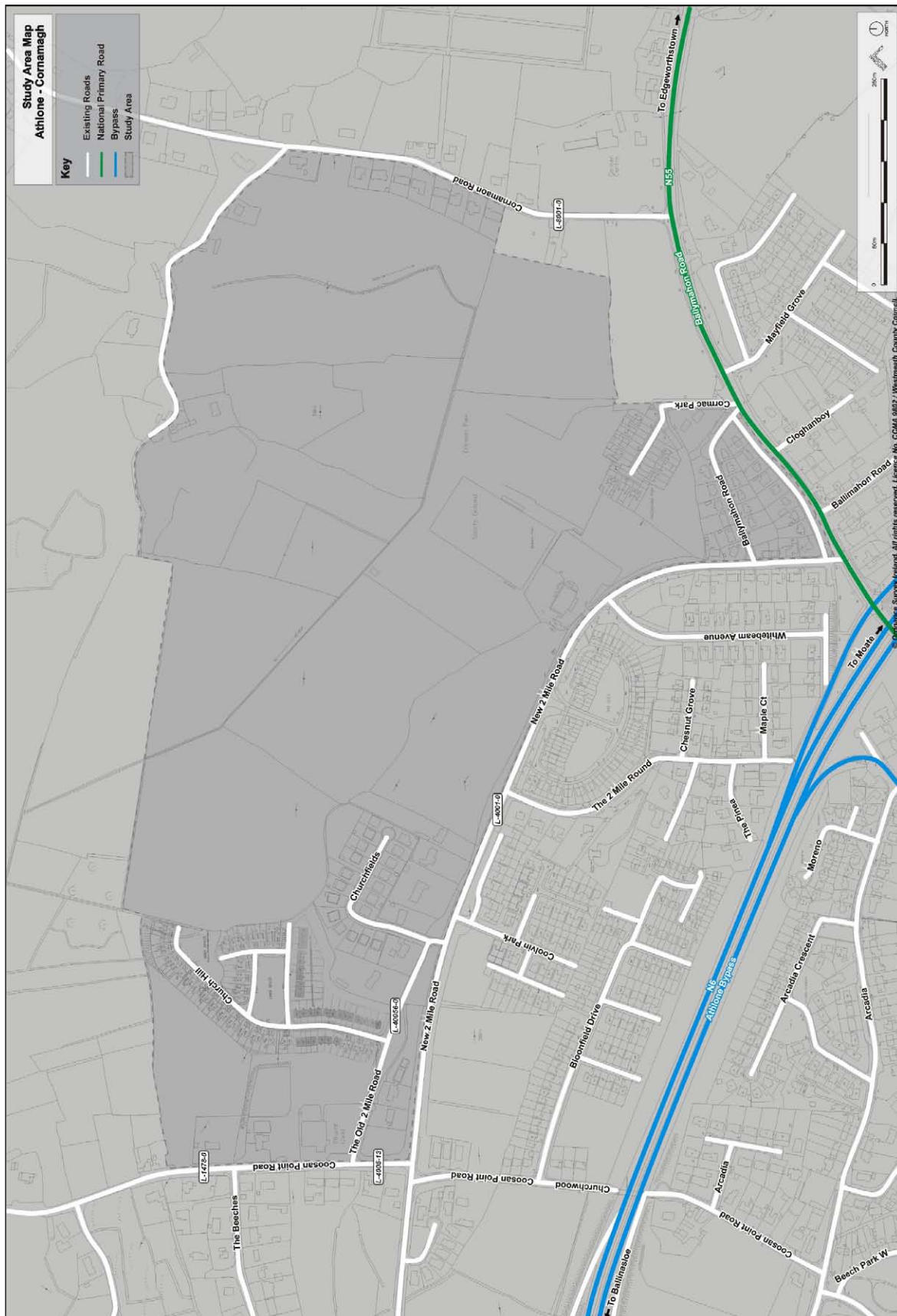
The northern boundary, extending in an east/west direction follows the line of the Athlone Town Council administrative boundary from the junction of the L-8001-0/L-8001-01 back to the I-1478, the Coosan Point Road.

Map 1: Location



THE STUDY AREA

Map 2: Study Area



THE STUDY AREA

2.2. Site Description and Existing Land Uses

The study area comprises approx. 57.5 ha (142 acres) contained within a network of local roads comprising the L-4005-13/L-1478-0, L-4001-0 and the L-8001-0. The perimeter of the study area, fronting the local roads, has experienced most development including a couple of residential estates, but the remainder of the lands to the rear of this road frontage development are primarily undeveloped.

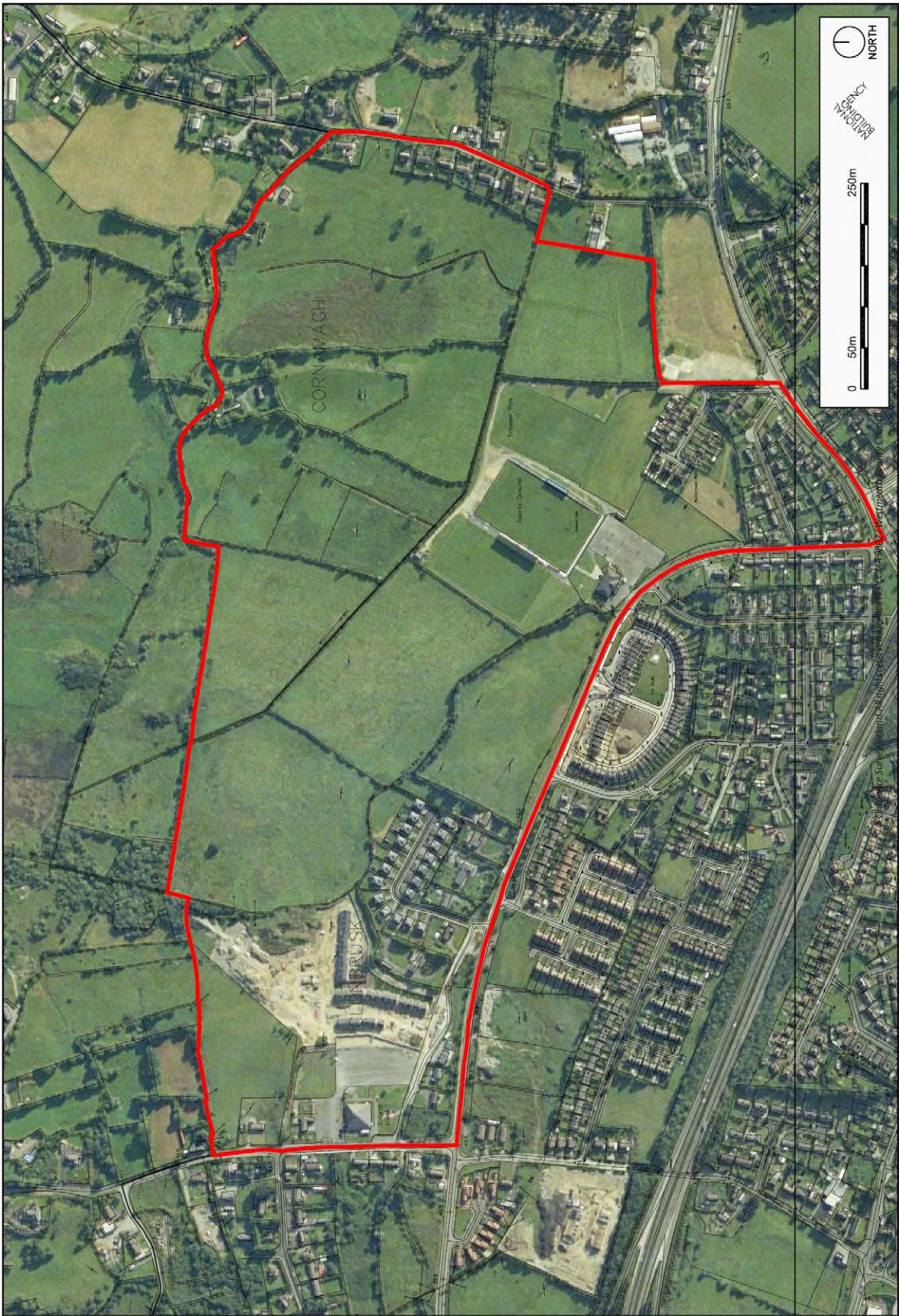
At the west side of the study area, Coosan Church and Grounds, fronts the Coosan Point Road, with single houses to the north and south. Adjacent to the church, the L-40056-0 bisects the south western corner of the study area and provides an opportunity for local access, although it is fronted in places, by residential properties up to its junction with the L-4001-0.

The L-4001-0, forming much of the southern and south eastern boundary to the study area, provides access to undeveloped lands between existing residential development and Buccaneers Rugby Club whose playing pitch and grounds (Dubarry Park) comprise a significant area of sporting/recreational land in the study area. The remainder of the road frontage, along the N55 and L-8001-0, comprises established residential development with significant ribbon development to the eastern boundary presenting limited opportunities to access the undeveloped backlands.

The central and northern portion of the study area is primarily undeveloped, slightly undulating farmland characterised by typical hedgerow divisions.

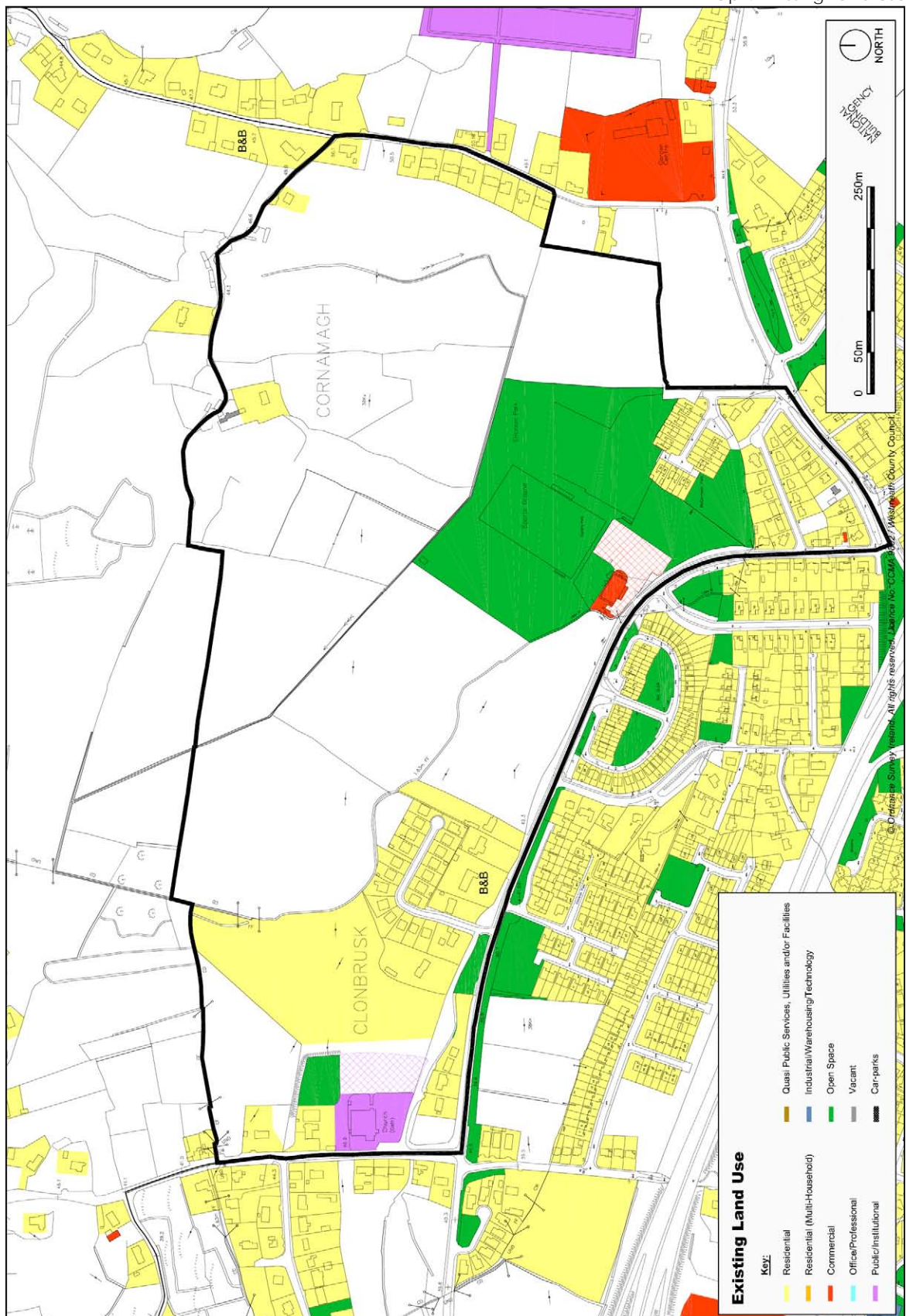
THE STUDY AREA

Map 3: Aerial Photograph



THE STUDY AREA

Map 4: Existing Land Use



THE STUDY AREA

2.3. Site Landscape Characteristics

Natural Features

The central and northern portion of the study area is primarily undeveloped, slightly undulating farmland characterised by typical hedgerow divisions. The hedgerow representing the townland boundary between Clonbrusk and Cornamagh, is typical of other townland boundaries in the area. It represents an important wildlife corridor of species rich native hedgerow and is to be retained and incorporated into open space network.

There is a line of trees to the west of the study area, situated in front of a pocket of housing development. A small stream flows from a point in front of the Dubarry Park Sports Grounds (within the study area) to Lough Ree, situated further north. The hedgerow that follows this watercourse represents the townland boundary between Clonbrusk and Cornamagh. It is typical of other townland boundaries in the area and represents an important wildlife corridor of species rich native hedgerow. This stream and hedgerow is to be retained within the open space network.

Topography

The lands are generally level with a series of low undulating hills combining to form a series of shallow valleys against the urban edge of the town. The local high points are situated towards the perimeter of the LAP area, notably, to the east adjacent to the Cornamagh Road, to the west adjacent to Coosan Church and to the south, adjacent to Dubarry Park.



Water channel along a street section, Bunclody, Wexford.



Detailing of crossing point, Bunclody, Wexford.



THE STUDY AREA

Geology

Underlying the study area are both gravel and poorly productive bedrock aquifers, overlaid with soil series comprising Rathowen, Gortnamona and Patrickswell, Baggottstown soils. The GSI's Shannon RBD subsoil data indicates that the study area over lies peat and glaciofluvial sands and gravels.

Environmental Standards and Designations

It is not expected that any environmental quality standards will be exceeded or that the value of vulnerable areas limited as a result of this LAP. There are no recognised environmentally designated areas within or adjacent to the Cornamagh Local Area Plan boundary.

Archaeological Features

A known archaeological site has been identified, within the curtilage of an existing dwelling in the townland of Clonbrusk. (SMR reference no. WM029-002) This site has been classified as an 'Altar' by the Sites of Monuments & Records, which is an elevated table or podium on which the Eucharist is celebrated. These can be any date from 400A.D onwards (see Map 5 Environmental Parameters).

It will be an objective of the Planning Authority to secure the preservation in-situ (or if necessary preservation by record), integrity and visual amenity of:

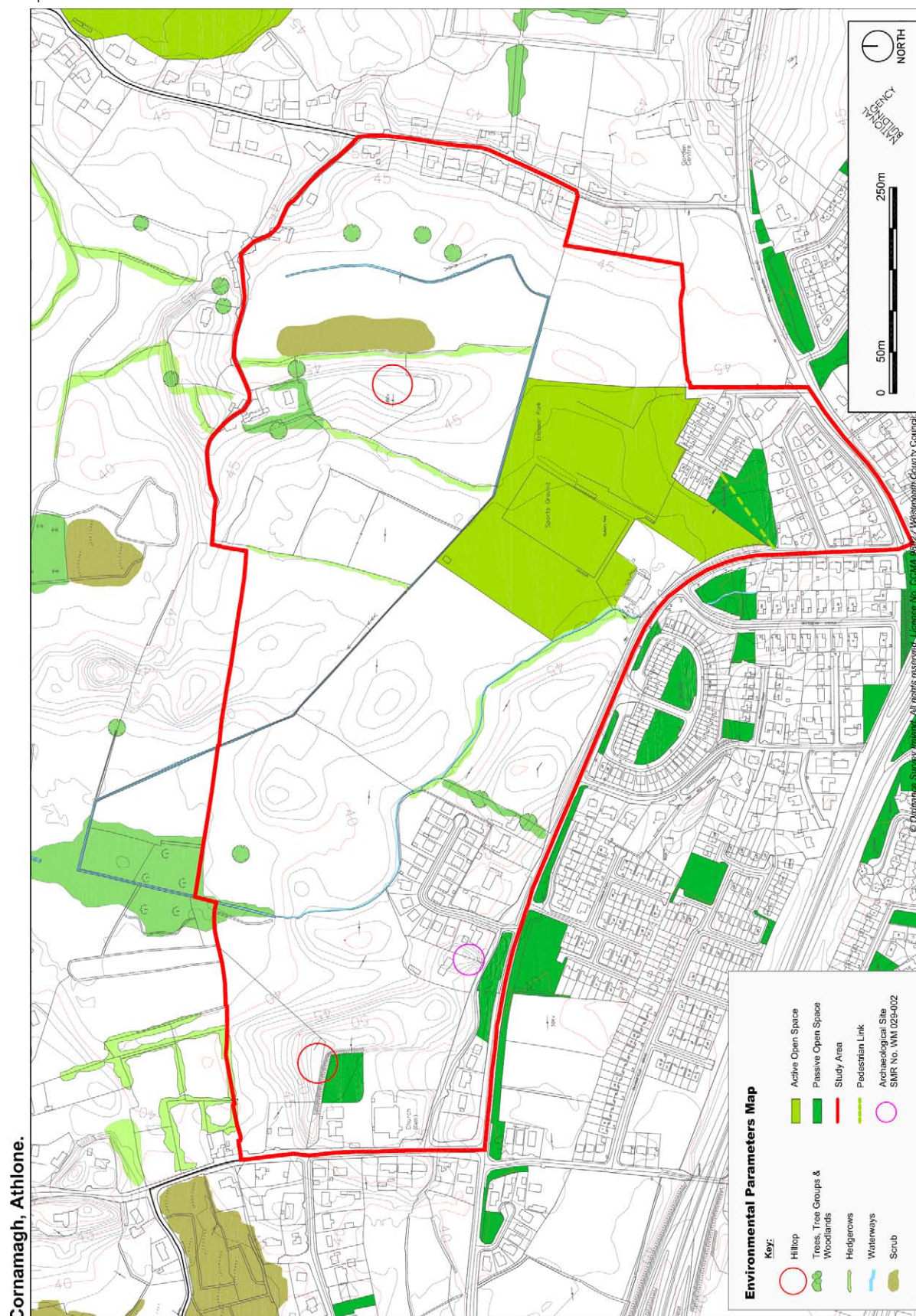
- The archaeological monuments included in the Record of Monuments & Places as established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994.
- Sites and features of historical and archaeological interest.
- Any sub-surface archaeological features that may be discovered during the course of infrastructural works in the Cornamagh area.

In securing such preservation the Planning Authority will have regard to the advice and recommendations of The Heritage Division, both in respect of whether or not to grant planning permission and in respect of the conditions to which permission, if granted, should be subject.

Any development either above or below ground, within the vicinity of a site of archaeological interest shall not be detrimental to the character of the archaeological site or setting.

THE STUDY AREA

Map 5: Environmental Parameters



THE STUDY AREA



2.4. Adjoining Land/Development

North

To the north, the study area adjoins open, undeveloped, countryside and the townlands of Tullin.

South

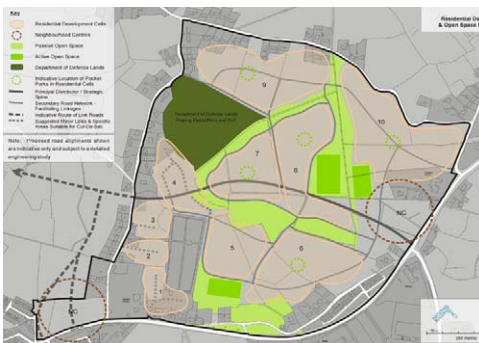
The land immediately adjoining the study area to the south has established residential development in the form of suburban estates and road frontage ribbon development, extending to the Athlone Relief Road to the south. Land south of the N55 forms part of the *Curragh-Lissywollen North LAP, 2006*.



South East - Curragh Lissywollen North Local Area Plan, 2006

The Plan area comprises a total area of 85.3 hectares situated immediately north of the N6 (Athlone By-Pass). The proposed development framework provides for mixed use and residential development (to include Traveller Halting Site and an Asylum Seeker Mobile Home Site), integrated with existing housing development to the west. There is also provision for a network of passive and active open spaces. Key features include the protected structure – Lissywollen House and significant tree groupings. It is proposed that the residential element of the development will accommodate a potential population of between 1,280 and 1,850 people.

Further suburban residential development exists south of the Athlone Relief Road (ARR), extending to the southeast to the border of the Lissywollen South Masterplan.



East

The lands to the east are contained within the *Cornamaddy Local Area Plan* area, including Fernhill Garden Centre, situated on the opposite side of the Cornamagh Road. The area was subject to a Local Area Plan in 2005.

Cornamaddy Local Area Plan 2005

The Plan area comprises a total of 85.6 hectares of land. The N55 runs along the south and eastern boundary of the site. The proposed development framework consists of a number of residential development cells (10 in total), interspersed by a network of linear parks and open spaces (passive and active). A local distributor road traverses the mid section of the area, with potential to be extended westerly and into the northern section of this proposed Cornamagh LAP area. The development will be serviced by a 'neighbourhood centre' to the eastern boundary and a commercial/retail centre located to the northeast, directly adjoining the proposed Cornamagh LAP area. It is proposed that the residential element of the development will accommodate a potential population of between 2,930 and 5,003 people.



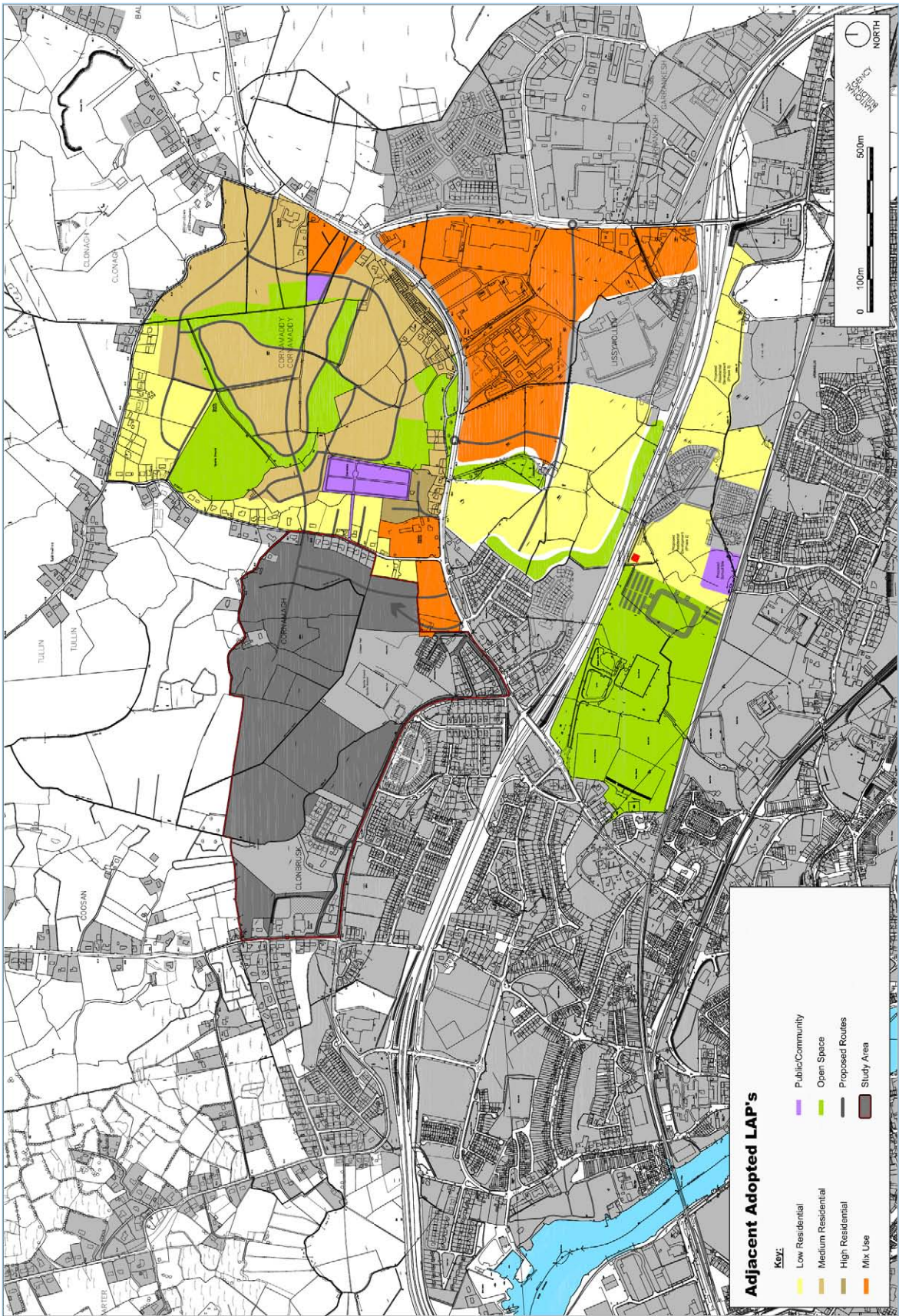
Existing development to the east. Proposed development is to interlock back gardens creating an enhanced image but still allowing for pedestrian connections

West

The lands to the west of the study area are characterised by a combination of ribbon and suburban residential development, with pockets of open space within and between estates.

THE STUDY AREA

Map 6: Adjacent Adopted LAPs





2.5. Planning Policy

The **Athlone Town Plan 2008 – 2014** sets the local policy framework to facilitate and manage the growth of Athlone up to 2014, anticipating a population growth to 22,774.

Having regard to the extent of growth envisaged over the Plan period and beyond, The Plan, indicates that it is vitally important that development takes place in a plan led manner which involves carrying out detailed framework plans, in particular, for new areas identified for development.

This brief concerns the LAP for the Cornamagh area, north of Athlone Town Centre. This LAP will set a statutory landuse development framework for possible future development within the Cornamagh area in a way that is in keeping with the surrounding character of Athlone while allowing for growth in a sustainable manner.

The Local Area Plan sits within a hierarchy of national, regional and local planning policy documents; any adopted Local Area Plan must be consistent with this policy context.

The **National Development Plan 2000 – 2006 (NDP)** outlined that the Governments objective for regional policy was 'to achieve more balanced regional development between and within the two regions (BMW and South and East) and to develop the potential of both to contribute to the greatest possible extent to the continuing prosperity of the country.'

Developed under the NDP, the remit of the **National Spatial Strategy (NSS)** was to identify broad spatial development patterns for areas and to set down indicative policies in relation to the location of development and services. The Midlands including Westmeath, is identified as being an area to play a "reinforcing" role, where the key considerations are the creation (based on the Athlone/Mullingar/Tullamore Gateway) of a critical mass necessary to enhance the powers of attraction of the Midlands, strengthening the network of towns and villages in support of this, and supporting rural areas to complement settlements.

The **Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines (2004)** have been prepared to implement the NSS at a regional level. This is to be achieved through building up the urban structure of the region around a hierarchy of the linked gateway and principal towns, coupled with a focus on service towns and villages. The development of the Athlone/Mullingar/Tullamore linked gateway is a central aim of the NSS and Regional Planning Guidelines and the Regional Guidelines see it as the critical driver of the regional economy requiring targeted investment in key enabling infrastructure provision and support services.

Building on the National Spatial Strategy, Regional Planning Guidelines and ongoing investment under the National Development

THE STUDY AREA

Plan 2007-2013, the Westmeath and Offaly local authorities are working together to maximise the development potential of the Midlands Gateway of Athlone/Mullingar/Tullamore.

The Gateway principle is developed in both the **County Development Plan 2008 – 2014** and the **Athlone Town Plan** and, it is recognised that, one of the key challenges that the Midlands region faces is generating self sustaining as opposed to commuter led growth.

It is envisaged that development based on an LAP concept for coordinated growth will create sustainable urban communities providing residential accommodation, employment, leisure and social and community infrastructure appropriately coordinated.

Policy P-UD1 of the Athlone Town Plan states that it is the policy of the Council that large Greenfield or redevelopment areas, which are zoned for development, should be subject to framework plans which may be prepared as local area plans.

The Department of Environment & Local Government guidance on **Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, December 2008** and the companion document **Urban Design Manual**, A best practice guide, December 2008 have been taken into account in the draughting of this document.

Land Zonings

The Westmeath County Development Plan 2008 - 2014 and the Athlone Town Plan 2008 - 2014 within their respective Zoning Maps have identified that a Local Area Plan is to be prepared for the area of Cornamagh.

This LAP zoning category in the Development Plans allows for a more detailed identification and approach to the zoning of specific undeveloped areas of land. Areas that are considered suitable to accommodate new residential and associated development, or enterprise development, will be identified through a careful masterplanning process. This will allow for more careful consideration to be given to issues such as the built form of the area, provision for recreation, amenity, education and community facilities in line with residential development and for detailed consideration to be given to layouts and design.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

3.1. Introduction

In establishing a development framework for the area, the following principles have been considered:

- Consideration for the existing land use patterns in the area and development of appropriate linkages between the study area and the surrounding environment, including zoned land identified in the adjacent LAP areas.
- The protection and integration of key environmental and landscape features. These features include the local water course that flows to Lough Ree, mature tree groupings, significant hedgerows, significant views, and open space networks,
- Ensure the provision of a network of open spaces, to include playing fields, amenity areas and linear parks,
- Identify an appropriate level of land use intensification that will facilitate the provision of a viable public transport service and support the provision of/accessibility to services, while also creating a desirable balance between the natural and built environment,
- Through design, develop high quality walking and cycling routes and convenient access to public transport (facilitated by an appropriate road network) as a viable alternative to private car use both within the study area and linked to the wider area, particularly to services, facilities and amenities.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

3.2. ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

The strategy for facilitating accessibility and the safe movement of people, goods and vehicles within, to and from the study area is intrinsically linked with the identification of land uses and land use patterns that reduce the need to travel (accessibility) by car and which facilitate travel by the preferred modal splits of walking, cycling and public transport.

The Study acknowledges that the proposal for residential development in the study area will have the cumulative effect of an increase in traffic and this could have a negative effect on the circulation framework. It therefore strives to achieve the aims of the 'Traffic Management Guidelines'¹ in that:

'the design and layout of roads needs to be integrated into the development in a way that is sensitive to the local development rather than to dominate it. The development plan and development control processes should also ensure that new developments are highly permeable in terms of the ability of public transport modes such as buses, and pedestrians and cyclists being able to move through and between adjacent developments'.

3.2.1. Existing Road Network

The N55 adjoins the southern most point in the study area, while the remaining road network comprises local urban roads. The L-8001-0 provides access from the east with potential to link through to the Cornamaddy Local Area Plan area. Local road L-4001-0 forms much of the southern boundary to the study area and with road frontage areas so far undeveloped provides a number of potential accesses.

Road frontage development restricts access potential along L-4005-13/L-1478-0, but access to agricultural back lands has been retained to the north of Coosan Church. Coosan Point Road (L-1478) and the N55 link the study area to the town centre; approx. 1.5km to the South and the southern most point of the study area in Clonbrusk is slightly over 1km from the rail station.



¹ Department of Transport, Department of Environment and Local Government, Dublin Transportation Office; published by The Stationary Office, May 2003

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



Griffith Avenue, Dublin. Direct access from residential properties to road through wide verge to allow for safe ingress and egress.

3.2.2. Road Hierarchy

It is necessary to develop an appropriate road hierarchy within the site to optimise linkages to the wider area and to safely accommodate public transport, pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. The current road network neither has adequate capacity nor is sufficient to service the proposed development in the study area (see Map 7: Circulation).

The Plan provides for three types of road for the movement and transportation of people within the area. A design code has been developed for the proposed road hierarchy, namely the local distributor route, secondary routes and residential access routes. There is an element of flexibility within the design code for each of the route types; this contributes towards both variety and legibility (See Urban Design Framework, Section 9) in the proposed development framework.

Local Distributor Route

This street will run from east to west through the northern section of the study area and will be an extension to the 'Distributor Route' proposed in the Cornamaddy LAP 2005. The street will be designed as the main through route, with key architectural buildings at significant junctions.

DESIGN CODE

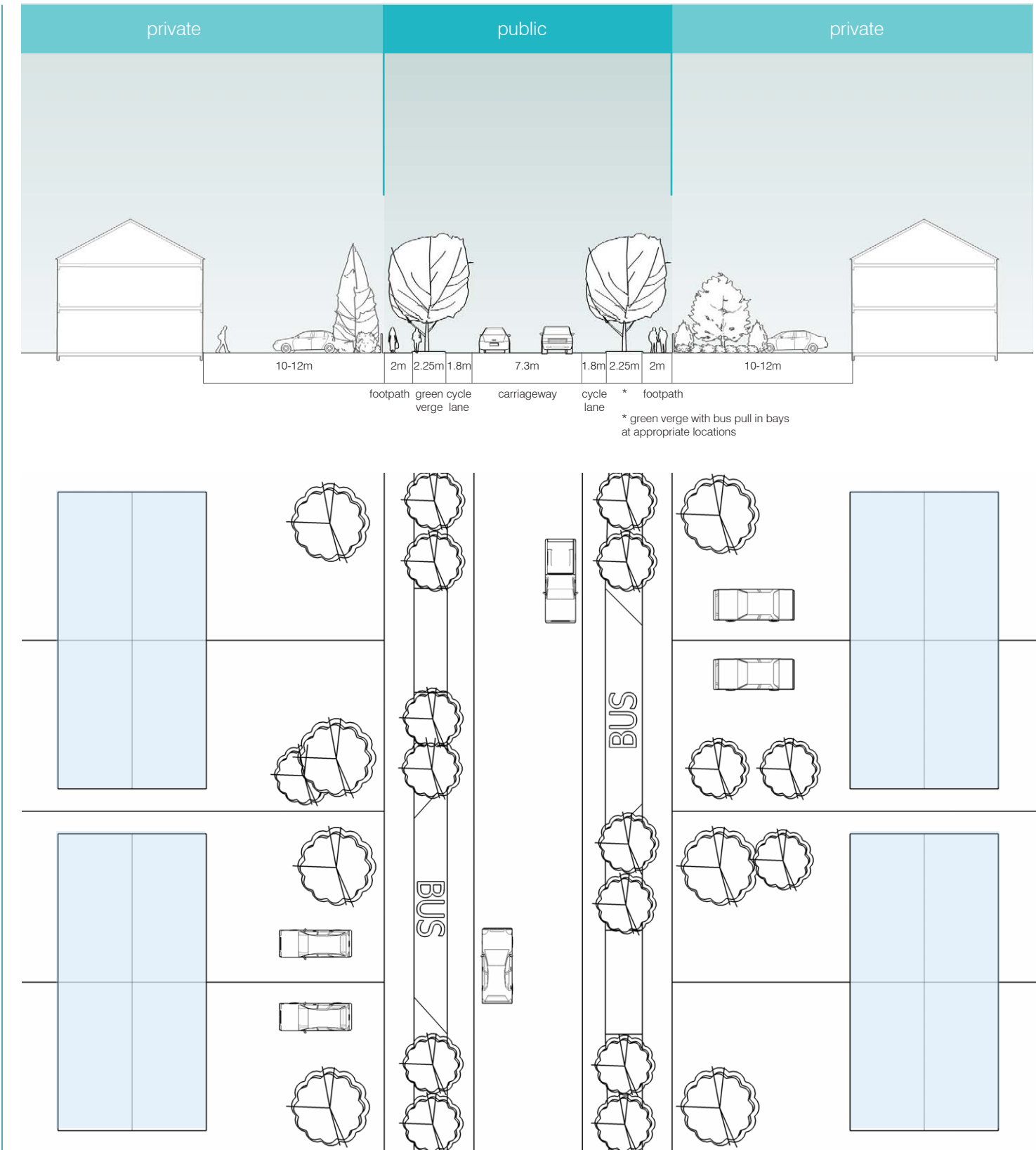
Table 1: Cornamagh Local Distributor Road

CRITERIA	STREET SPECIFICATIONS
Design Speed	
Speed limit	50kph
Street dimensions and character	
Carriageway	7.3m (Two way carriageway accommodating bus movements)
Footpath	2.0m on each side
Cycle way	1.8m in each side
Green verge	2.25m on each side
Building setback	10 – 12m
Direct vehicular access to properties	Yes, egress to the road must be in forward gear only
Public Transport	
Bus access	Yes, bus pull in bays are to be accommodated within the verge section at appropriate locations
Street design details	
Traffic calming	Features at 30 – 70m - formal crossings, variation in planting/materials and building lines
Car parking	1-2 spaces per dwelling*
Off street car parking	Yes, shared courtyards and in curtilage

* Refer to Athlone Town Development Plan 2008 - 2014 - Part 3, p.100, Parking

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Proposed Local Distributor Road



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Major Access Routes

These streets will provide access between the Local Distributor Route and the Minor Access Routes, while also providing the primary route from the study area to the town centre and surrounding area.

Table 2: Cornamagh Major Access Routes

CRITERIA	STREET SPECIFICATIONS
Design Speed	
Speed limit	30 - 50kph
Street dimensions and character	
Carriageway	6.0m
Footpath	2.0m on each side
Cycle way	1.5m on each side
Green verge	1.50 – 2.0m on each side
Building setback	3 - 6m
Street design details	
Traffic calming	Features at 30 – 70m - formal crossings, variation in planting/materials and building lines
Car parking	1-2 spaces per dwelling*
On street car parking	Parallel parking allowed along appropriate sections, on one side of the street incorporated within the area designated for green verge, 2.0m
Off Street car parking	Yes, shared courtyards and in curtilage

* Refer to *Athlone Town Development Plan 2008 - 2014 - Part 3, p.100, Parking*

Minor Access Routes

These narrower roads will provide access from the secondary routes to smaller areas of housing. Road surface will be shared for vehicles and cyclists and appropriate traffic calming measures will be installed.

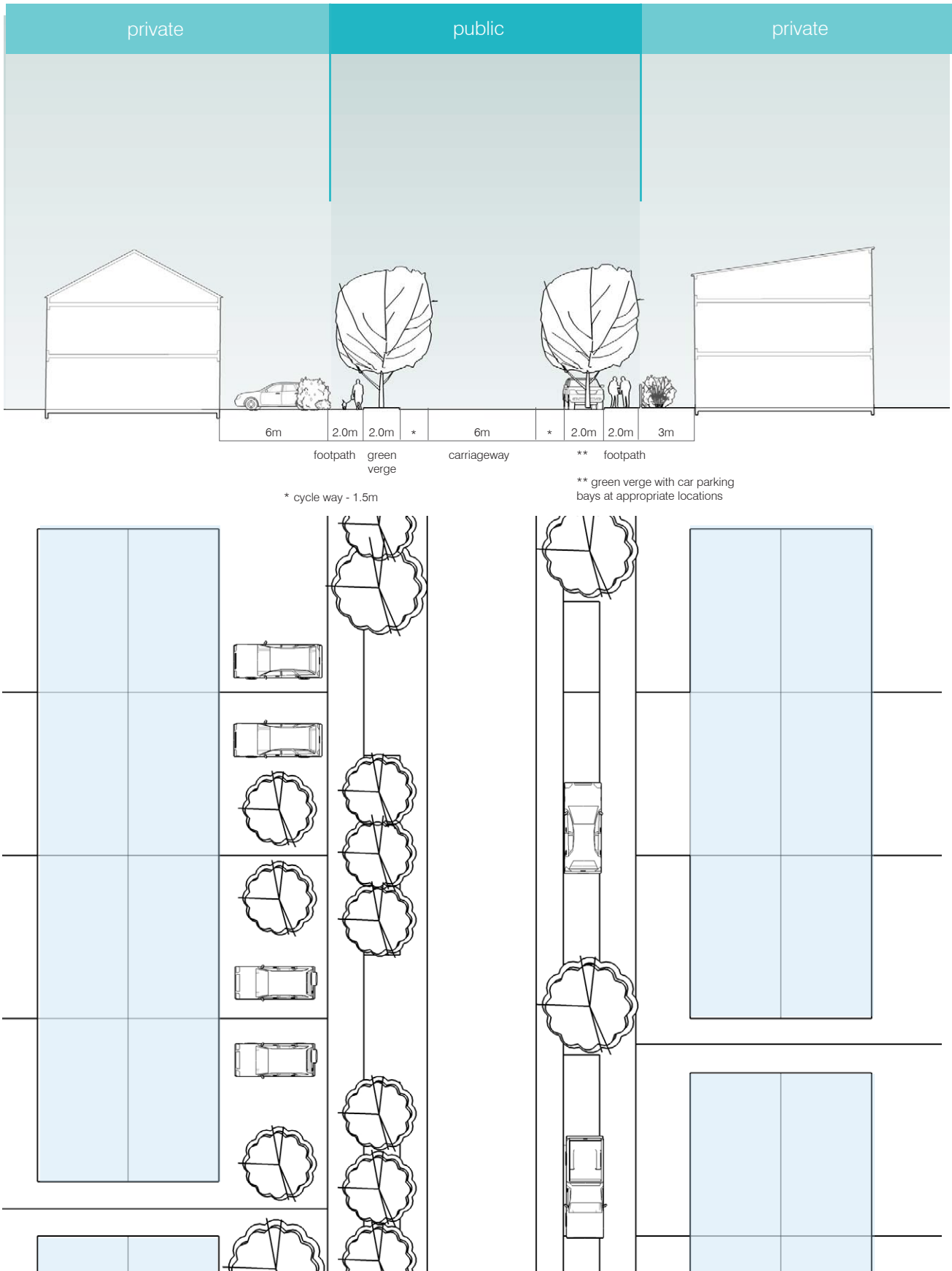
Table 3: Cornamagh Minor Access Roads

CRITERIA	STREET SPECIFICATIONS
Design Speed	
Speed limit	20 - 30kph
Street dimensions and character	
Carriageway width	5 - 5.5m
Footpath	2.0m on each side
Cycle way	No, carriageway shared by both vehicular and cyclist users
Green verge	0 – 2.0m on each side
Building setback	1.5 - 6m
Street design details	
Traffic calming	Features at 30 – 70m - formal crossings, variation in planting/materials and building lines
Car parking	1-2 spaces per dwelling*
On street car parking	Parallel parking allowed along appropriate sections, on one side of the street incorporated within the area designated for green verge, 2.0m
Off Street car parking	Yes, shared courtyards and in curtilage

* Refer to *Athlone Town Development Plan 2008 - 2014 - Part 3, p.100, Parking*

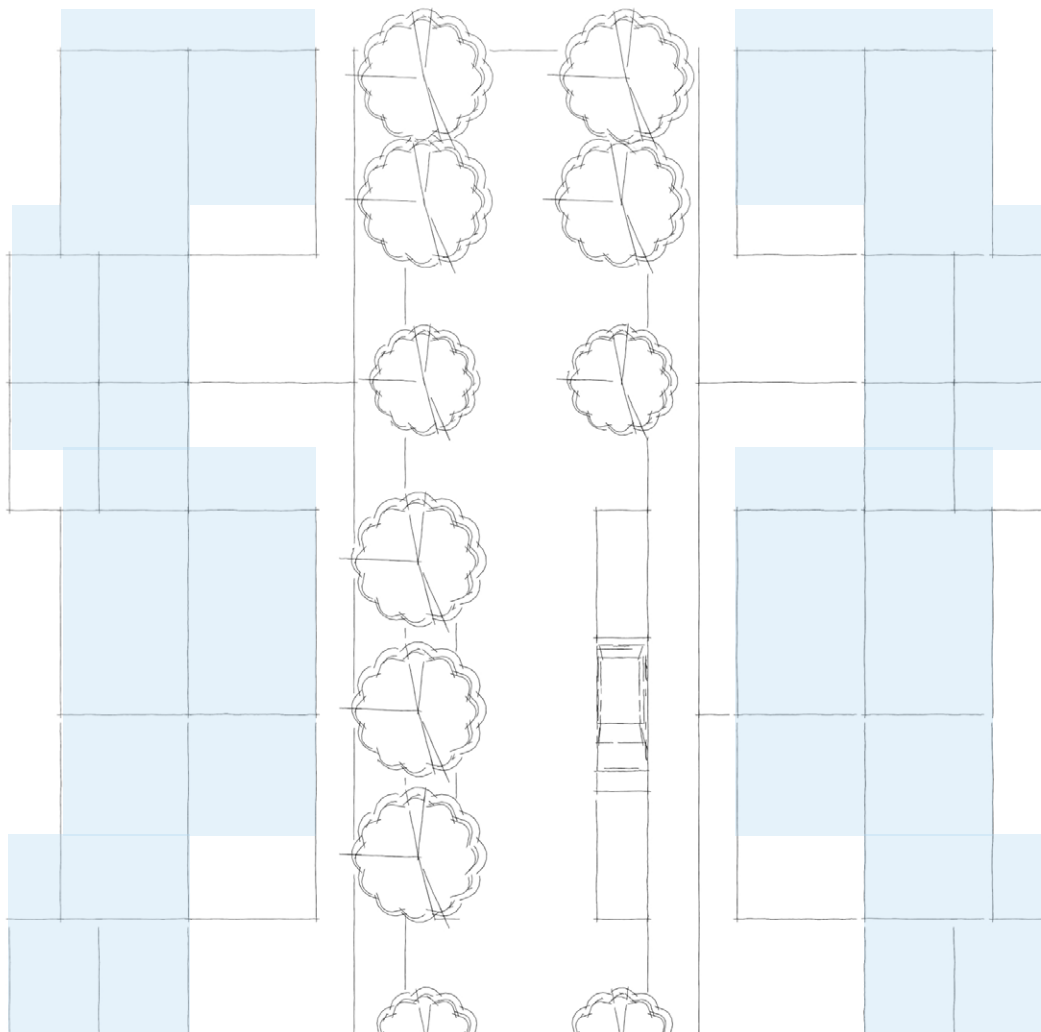
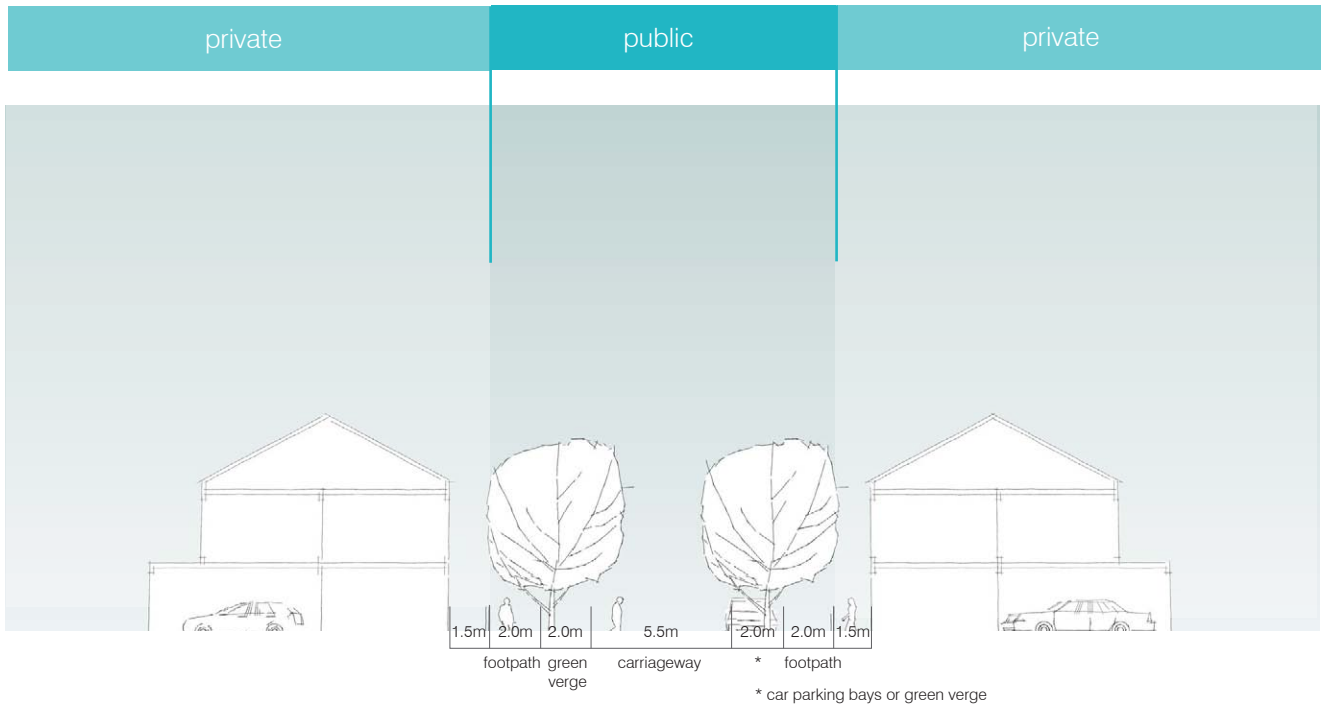
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Proposed Major Access Road



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Proposed Minor Access Road



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

3.2.3 Accessing and Exiting the Area

Direct access will not be possible from the local distributor road on to the L-8001-0 road that bounds the area to the east. The Cornamagh Distributor Road will join up with the Cornamaddy Distributor Road via a bridge across the L-8001-0 thus allowing for a continuous flow of traffic. The bridge has been proposed in the Cornamaddy LAP 2005.

A key objective of the Plan is to provide for road improvements at key junctions, which will now accommodate greater capacity as a consequence of new development. These junctions are outlined in the Map 7: Circulation. Junction 1 is situated at the point where the 'Local Distributor Road' meets the I-1478. The road to the north of this junction will also require upgrading to improve sightlines. Junction 2 is situated where the I-1478 meets the I-1482 and Junction 3 is where the proposed major access route at the centre of the site meets the I-1482.

3.2.4. Public Transportation

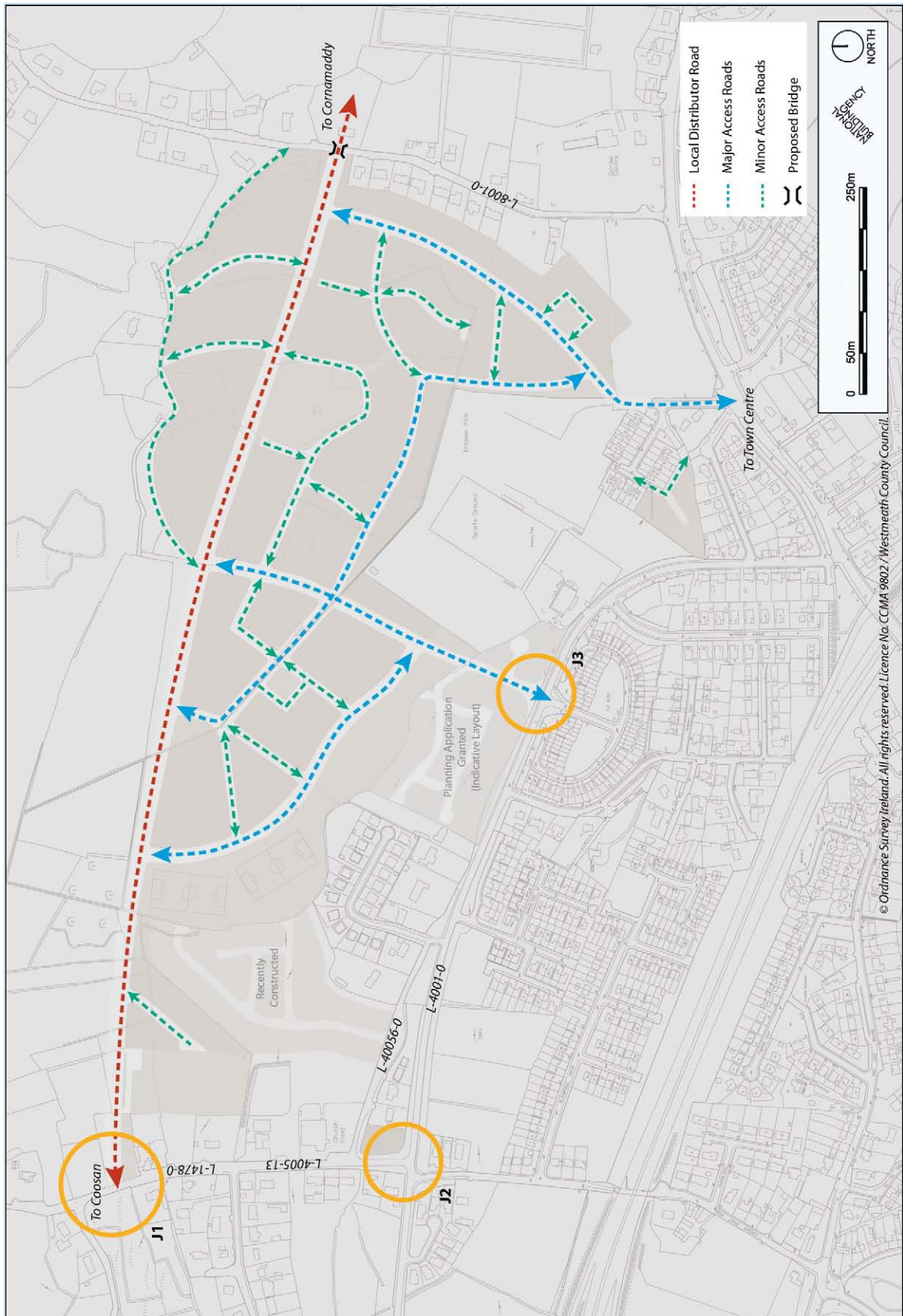
The proposed local distributor road, allows for bus access and bus pull in bays. This road will establish a continuous link with the tree lined distributor road outlined in the Cornamaddy Local Area Plan 2005. The Proposed Bus Route Options Map (Map 8) outlines the options for bus routes servicing the site and local area.

There are 3 (no.) North-South Route Options namely the I-1475 at the eastern boundary, the proposed major access route at the centre of the study area and Coosan Point Road (I-1478) and 2 (no.) East-West Route Options. The Route Options accommodate flexibility and the expansion of the service in line with new development. This orbital route will have the capacity to link with the town centre, railway station and surrounding environment, positively contributing to the sustainability of the development.

"good public transport, walking and cycling links should be supported by density such as 35-50 dwellings per hectare" *Traffic Management Guidelines – Section 1.8, page 27*

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Map 7: Circulation Map



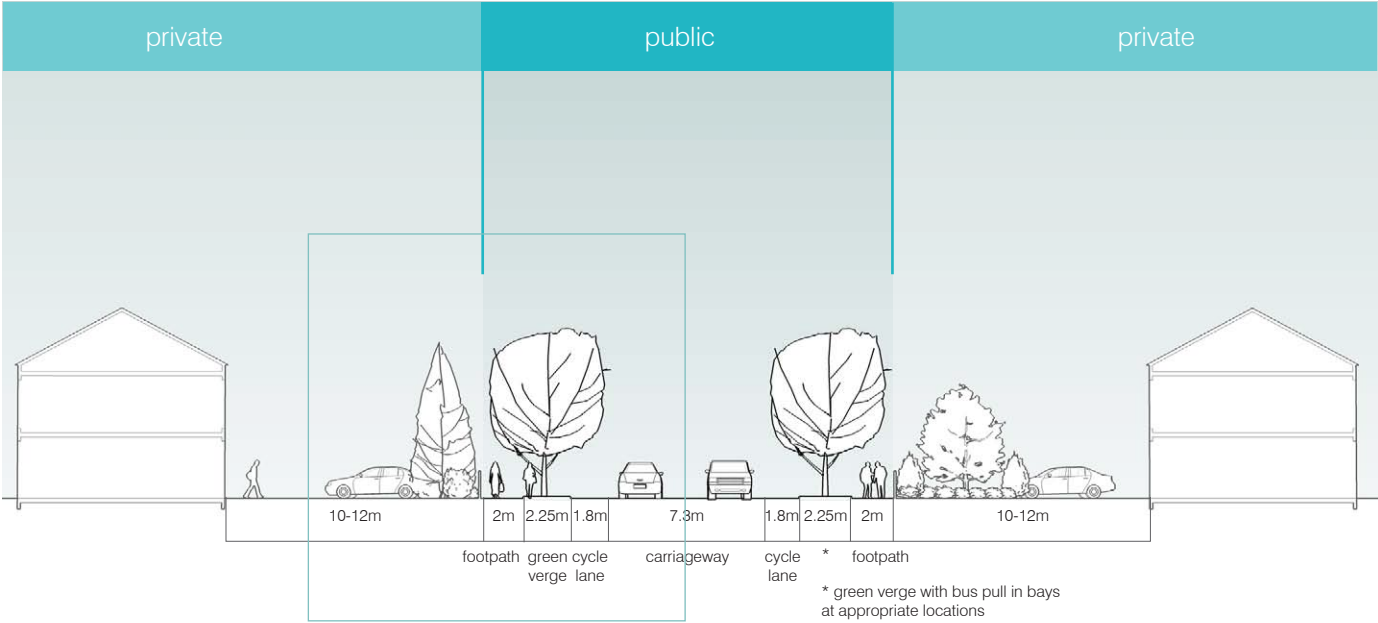
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



3.2.5. Pedestrian Routes and Cycleways

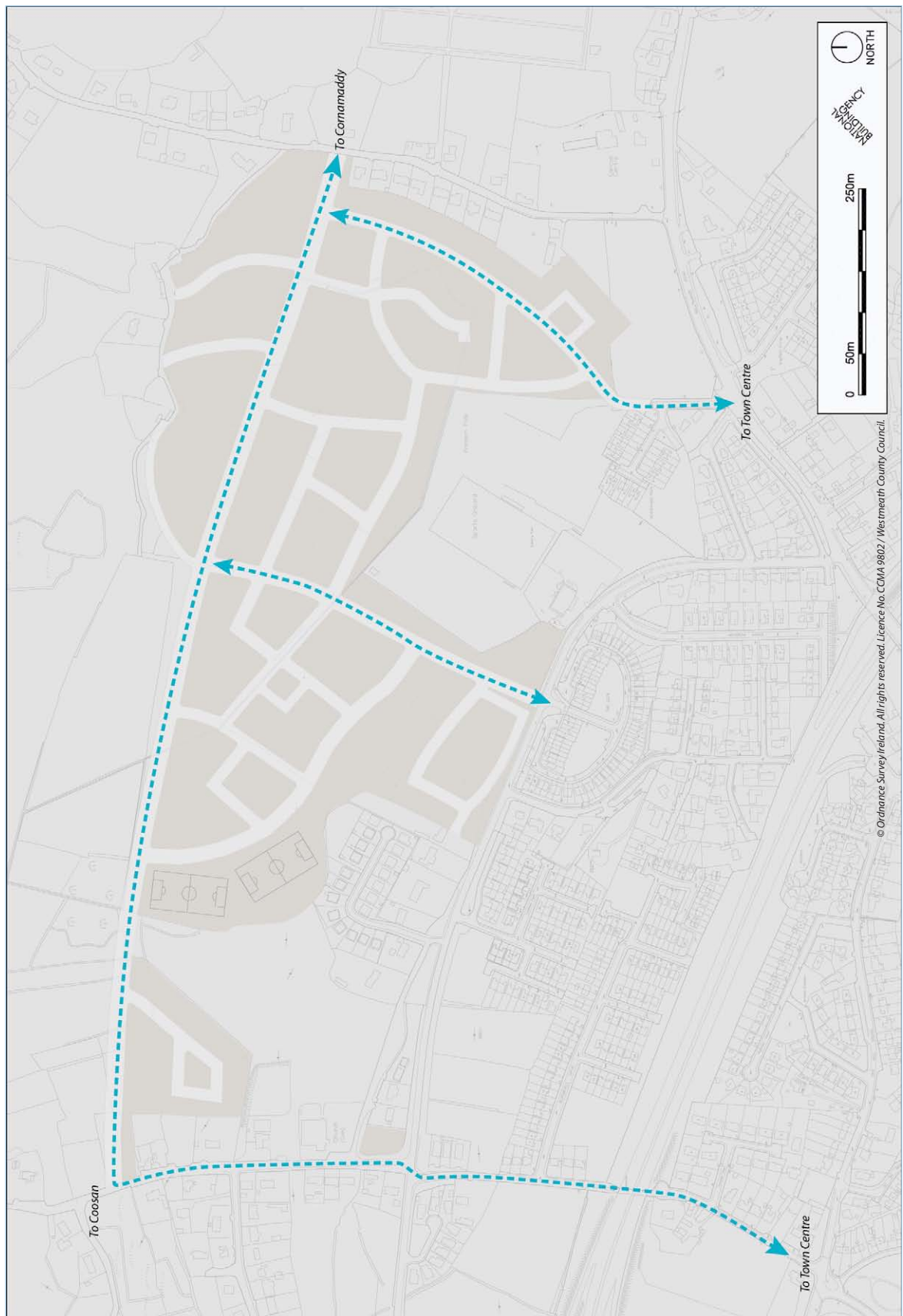
The study area includes the development of a network of pedestrian and cycle routes that will provide high quality, safe and accessible routes to local services. The network will also act as an amenity linking the proposed recreational area, linear park, playing fields, pocket parks and sport ground, within the study area. Residential areas and local amenities have in their design considered opportunities for pedestrian safety and include natural surveillance of pedestrian routes.

Pedestrian and cycle routes will be promoted to link the nearby Rugby Club, GAA Club and Regional Sports Centre and the proposed local shops at Coosan Church and the commercial/retail centre proposed along the N55 (See Cornamaddy Local Area Plan 2005).



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Map 8: Bus Route Options



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

3.3. PROPOSED OPEN SPACE NETWORKS

3.3.1. Objectives

A network of passive and active open spaces makes an important contribution to the quality of life of residents, while also maintaining and enhancing the natural environment. The proposed network of open space has been developed with due regard to the protection and integration of key environmental and landscape features that currently contribute to the uniqueness of the site and will play a key role in defining legibility and creating variety within the proposed development.

In the design of open space consideration should be given to the treatment, landscaping and uses of spaces, namely:

- The appropriate incorporation and integration of the local watercourse that flows in a northeasterly direction to Lough Ree and retention of the townland hedgerow.
- The preservation and enhancement of existing significant hedgerows and wildlife corridors that currently follow the meandering route of the local watercourse and have potential for incorporation into a linear park,
- The design of the network should consider community safety and incorporate opportunities for natural surveillance and deterrents to crime.
- Regard should be given to accessibility, particularly for the mobility impaired.
- Consideration should be given to the incorporation of storm water attenuation facilities in open spaces to alleviate pressure on surface water run-off.
- Include opportunities for pocket parks, active playing fields and 'green routes'.

Table 4: Proposed Open Space Network

PROPOSED OPEN SPACE NETWORK	HECTARES
Linear Park (including Playing Fields)	3.3
Amenity Area	1.0
Pocket Parks	0.8
Other	15% minimum of gross site area
TOTAL	5.10

3.3.2. Key Features

The key features of the proposed open space network are:

Linear Park

It is proposed that a linear park will meander from the south of the site, to where there is a grouping of tree specimens to the north and linking into the proposed north/south circulation route. The route of the park will follow the route of some significant hedgerow species, which also represent the townland boundary between Clonbrusk and Cornamagh, an important wildlife corridor. The park will be overlooked by a row of terraced housing, which will have short front gardens and will be orientated to provide a high degree of informal natural surveillance. This park will provide a strong green link running east-west.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Playing Fields

It is proposed that two playing fields are located at the northern end of the linear park, which will be in walking distance to the proposed primary school. These playing fields are additional to the existing network of local playing fields for multi-purpose use, which include the private playing fields at Dubarry Sports Grounds, the Department of Defence Playing Fields and new playing fields proposed at two sites in the Cornamaddy Local Area Plan 2005. There is also a hard-surfaced play area at the rear of Coosan Church.

Amenity Area

It is proposed that an amenity area is located at the east of the study area. This area will draw on the amenity value associated with the existing features of the site including the 'local high point'. The amenity area will act as a focal point for the neighbourhoods in east Cornamagh and in this respect will contribute to the legibility and character of this local area. This amenity area will provide a strong green link running north-south.

Pocket Parks

A number of pocket parks are proposed within the development. They contribute positively to the open space network and linkages. They also play an important role in the proposed residential cells, particularly in providing space for younger children to play in the vicinity of their homes. The parks, in their design and location, should be overlooked and accessible to the maximum number of people.



Bunclody, Wexford



Green Routes

The local distributor road will have a tree-lined boulevard that will contribute positively to reducing noise and greening the environment along this public transport corridor. This green route will also link the Amenity Area at the eastern end of the site to the northern point of the linear park, playing a key role in reinforcing the relationship between the network of significant open spaces in the area.

There is also the opportunity to incorporate the drainage channel at certain sections as a natural design feature of the development by exposing the water at different points along its route towards Lough Ree. A successful example of such a feature incorporated into a urban landscape can be found along Main Street, Bunclody, Wexford (see adjacent photo's).

Open Space

15% of each residential development must be reserved for Open Space. The local authority may also attach the following conditions to an application:

- That the developer provide to the Local Authority's specification, open space or a portion of open space elsewhere. If this option is engaged, the open space shall generally be provided within a reasonable distance from the development (circa 400 metres).

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

- Alternatively, the Local Authority may consider arrangements whereby appropriate community facilities may be provided in lieu of the developers open space requirements.

In calculating the area of open space, roads, roundabouts, footpaths, grass margins and other areas of incidental open space shall not qualify for open space assessment.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Map 9: Open Space Network



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

3.4. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

3.4.1. Residential Development

This study area consists predominantly of greenfield land, which is currently unserved.

This LAP aims to develop a coherent residential framework for the site area that will sensitively and appropriately integrate existing ribbon development, housing estates and one-off houses in the area into planned sustainable residential neighbourhoods.

The provision of housing in this area is considered important in terms of pursuing the needs of the Westmeath County Housing Strategy and in supporting the strategic goals of the Regional Planning Guidelines.

3.4.2. New Residential Development

New residential development will take the form of infill and greenfield development. It will serve to seamlessly fuse with existing development to produce a number of residential cells, serviced by local facilities and with a population density that can support sustainable development and the provision of necessary infrastructure. The residential cells are defined predominantly by density, building type and access to open space. A description of the key characteristics of each of the cells is provided in Tables 5 – 9 (See Map 10: Development Cells).

Development Cell 1 is generally characterised by medium residential development with low to medium density development identified adjacent to the existing residences. Housing units will be predominantly semi-detached houses and townhouses. Residential Development in this cell will be complemented by a variety of open spaces including the proposed Amenity Area and a number of pocket parks.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Table 5: Development Cell 1

DEVELOPMENT CELL 1	
<i>Area Character Type</i>	Mainly Medium residential development area
<i>Gross Area</i> <i>Medium Density 30 - 40 units/hectare</i> <i>Low - Medium Density 18 - 34 units/hectare</i>	9.73 ha (excluding roads) 7 ha 1.56 ha
<i>Dwelling Type</i>	Predominantly Semi-detached, and townhouses
<i>Min-Max Dwellings per Hectare</i>	<i>Medium Density 30 - 40 units/hectare</i> <i>Low - Medium Density 18 - 34 units/hectare</i>
<i>Min-Max Total Dwelling Units</i> <i>Medium Density</i> <i>Low - Medium Density</i>	238 - 333 210 - 280 28 - 53
<i>Min Affordable/Social Dwelling</i>	20%
<i>Population Potential*</i>	595 - 832
<i>Childcare Places**</i>	63 - 89 childcare places
<i>Building Height</i>	Mainly 2 and some 3 storeys
<i>Max Landmark/Signature Building Height</i>	3 storeys
<i>Public Open Space</i>	Amenity Area, and Pocket Parks, Open Space (1.3 hectares***)
<i>Private Open Space</i>	All dwellings to have a private garden, patio, balcony or terrace
<i>Car Parking</i>	1-2 spaces per dwelling Mixture of on-street and off-street car park

*Average household size in Co. Westmeath is 2.5 persons, Westmeath County Development Plan, 2008 - 2014,

** Min of 20 childcare places for every 75 housing units

*** Any shortfall of public open space within each individual cell is accommodated within the overall Plan area within the area identified as the Linear Park (refer to section 5)

Table 6 sets out the composition of development in Residential Cell 2. Development in this area will primarily consist of low to medium density. Housing units will be predominantly semi-detached orientated towards open space. This area is predominantly characterised by the 3.3 hectare linear park, which runs along the southwestern boundary of the cell.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Table 6: Development Cell 2

DEVELOPMENT CELL 2	
Area Character Type	Mainly Low to medium residential development area
Total Gross Area	8.57 ha (excluding roads)
Total Residential Area	5.1 ha
Low - Medium Density 18 - 34 units/hectare	4.1 ha
Medium Density 30 - 40 units/hectare	1.0 ha
Dwelling Type	Predominantly semi-detached
Min-Max Dwellings per Hectare	Medium Density 30 - 40 units/hectare Low - Medium Density 18 - 34 units/hectare
Min-Max Total Dwelling Units	104 - 179
Medium Density	30 - 40
Low - Medium Density	74 - 139
Population Potential*	260 - 447
Min Affordable/Social Dwelling	20%
Childcare Places**	27 - 48 childcare places
Building Height	Mainly 2
Max Landmark/Signature Building Height	3 storeys
Public Open Space	Linear Park and Pocket Parks (3.47 hectares***)
Private Open Space	All dwellings to have a private garden.
Car Parking	1-2 spaces per dwelling Mixture of on-street and off-street car park

*Average household size in Co. Westmeath is 2.5 persons, Westmeath County Development Plan, 2008 - 2014,

** Min of 20 childcare places for every 75 housing units

*** Any oversupply of public open space within this cell is balanced out within the overall Plan area in terms of allowing for 15% minimum of gross site area to be covered by public open space (refer to section 5).

Table 7: Development Cell 3

DEVELOPMENT CELLS 3	
Area Character Type	Infill, Low - Medium density development area
Gross Area (excluding roads)	.42 ha
Total Residential Area	.31 ha
Dwelling Type	Semi detached and terraced houses
Min-Max Dwellings per Hectare	18 - 34 units per hectare
Min-Max Total Dwelling Units	6 - 10 units
Population Potential*	15 - 25
Childcare Places**	1 - 3 childcare places
Building Height	2 storey
Public Open Space	Pocket Park retaining pedestrian thru-way
Private Open Space	All dwellings to have a private garden.
Car Parking	1-2 spaces per dwelling

*Average household size in Co. Westmeath is 2.5 persons, Westmeath County Development Plan, 2008 - 2014

Development Cell 3 constitutes infill development on an existing overgrown field while retaining the pedestrian thru-way and improving safety and overlooking within this area.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Table 8: Development Cell 4

DEVELOPMENT CELLS 4	
<i>Area Character Type</i>	Low - Medium density development area adjacent to area identified for educational use
<i>Gross Area (excluding roads)</i>	.77 ha
<i>Dwelling Type</i>	Semi detached and terraced houses
<i>Min-Max Dwellings per Hectare</i>	18 - 34 units per hectare
<i>Min-Max Total Dwelling Units</i>	14 - 26 units
<i>Population Potential*</i>	35 - 65
<i>Childcare Places**</i>	4 - 7 childcare places
<i>Min Affordable/Social Dwelling</i>	20%
<i>Building Height</i>	2 storey
<i>Private Open Space</i>	All dwellings to have a private garden.
<i>Car Parking</i>	1-2 spaces per dwelling

*Average household size in Co. Westmeath is 2.5 persons, Westmeath County Development Plan, 2008 - 2014,

** Min of 20 childcare places for every 75 housing units

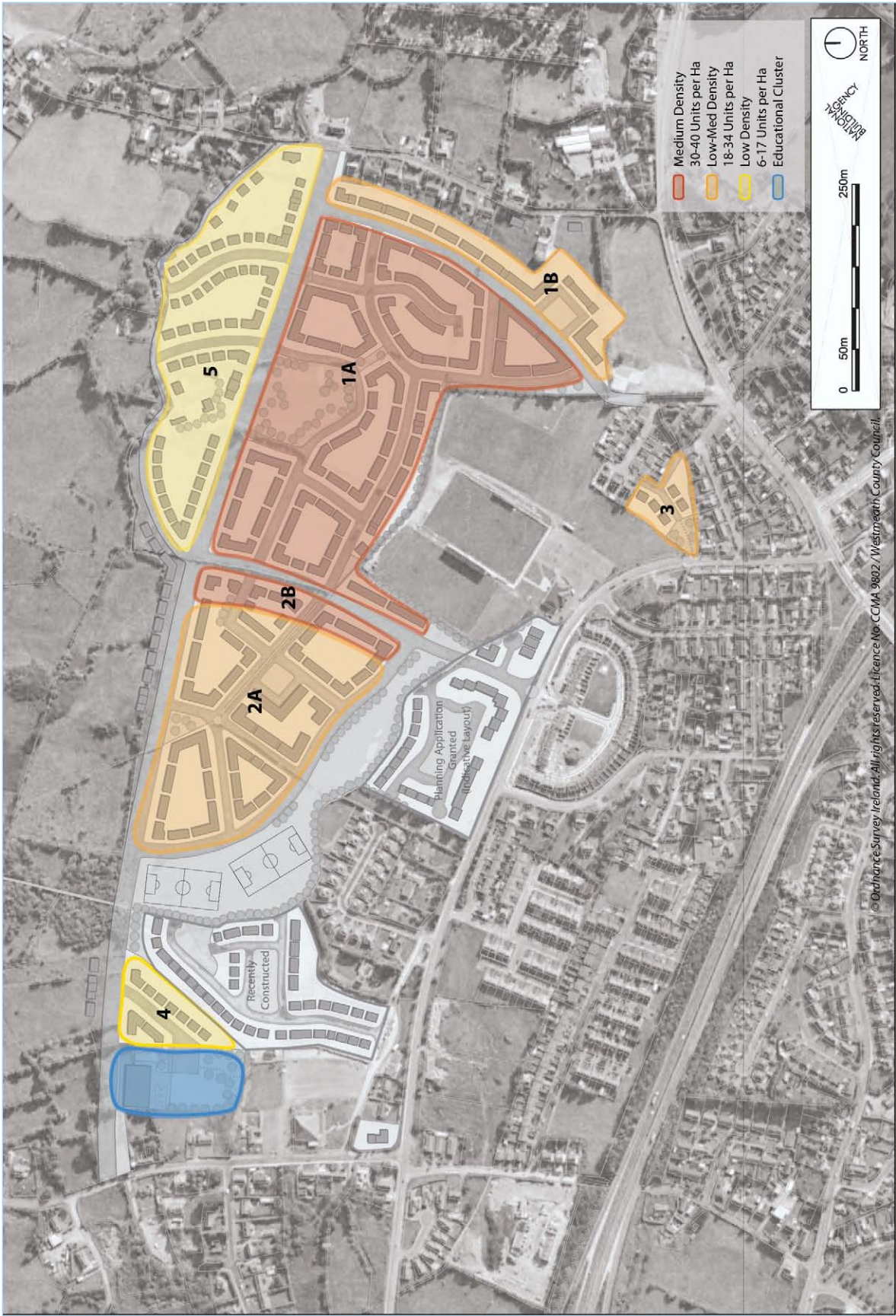
Table 9: Development Cell 5

DEVELOPMENT CELLS 5	
<i>Area Character Type</i>	Self-build, Low residential, development area
<i>Gross Area (excluding roads)</i>	4.45 ha
<i>Dwelling Type</i>	Semi detached and detached houses
<i>Min-Max Dwellings per Hectare</i>	6 -17 units per hectare
<i>Min-Max Total Dwelling Units</i>	27 - 75 units
<i>Population Potential*</i>	67 - 187
<i>Min Affordable/Social Dwelling</i>	20%
<i>Min Non Residential Development</i>	7 - 20 childcare places
<i>Building Height</i>	Mainly 2 storeys
<i>Public Open Space</i>	Pocket Park and Green Route
<i>Private Open Space</i>	All dwellings to have a private garden.
<i>Car Parking</i>	1-2 spaces per dwelling

Table 9 refers to the composition of development in Cell 5. This Cell is to be characterised by self-build, low density, residential development. This allows individuals the opportunity to build and design their own homes on plots of land creating individual styles and streetscape. Housing units will predominantly be semi-detached and detached. Development Cell 5 is located along the 'local distributor road' and land north of this road. There will be a pocket park and green route along the 'local distributor road'.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Map 10: Development Cells



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

3.4.3. Social and Affordable Housing Provision

It is an objective of the Council to apply the provisions of the Westmeath County Housing Strategy to the residentially zoned land in the study area. The Westmeath County Housing Strategy sets out that under the assessment of the need for social and affordable housing, the Council's policy is to reserve up to 20% of land zoned for residential, or a mixture of residential or other uses, for the provision of social and affordable housing (section 94 (4) (C)).

The Council's policy is to engage in preplanning discussions with the developer to agree which of the options provided in the Planning Act will apply to individual developments.

The Act provides for three core options:

- The transfer of land to the Council;
- Transfer of houses to the Council or persons nominated by the Council or;
- Transfer of fully or partially serviced sites to the Council or persons nominated by the Council.

In exceptional circumstances, where it is considered that an agreement under section 96(3) of the Act is not practical, the Council will have recourse to the provisions of section 96(12)(a).

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

3.5. COMMUNITY FACILITIES, AND LOCAL SHOPPING CENTRES

3.5.1. Existing Community Services

Coosan Church is situated to the western edge of the study area and represents a focal point for the community.

The Dubarry Park represents a regionally important sports ground with associated community and recreational facilities, including licensed premises. The Regional Sports Centre is approx. ½ km to the south in Lissywollen. There are other pockets of public open space associated with existing residential areas that also fulfill an important recreational role.

While there are limited local and community facilities in terms of local convenience shopping provision, with the exception of Hannons and the nearby Service Station (Fox's). The adjacent Cornamaddy LAP 2005 identifies locations for two neighbourhood centers - the southerly most centre (referred to in the Plan as a commercial/retail center) fronts the N55 and is directly adjacent to the Cornamagh LAP Area.

Impact of Development

Table 10 refers to potential development impacts in terms of the number of housing units, potential population and the associated number of childcare places required. The projected population will impact on surrounding community facilities, the local economy and labour force. It is an objective of this LAP to set out the social and community infrastructure requirements that are to be delivered within the Plan area to meet the needs of the proposed development and potential population.



Table 10: Development Impacts

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT	HOUSING UNITS PROPOSED	POTENTIAL POPULATION	CHILDCARE PLACES REQUIRED
Residential Cell 1	238 - 333	595 - 832	63 - 89
Residential Cell 2	104 - 179	260 - 447	27 - 48
Residential Cell 3	6 - 10	15 - 25	1 - 3
Residential Cell 4	14 - 26	35 - 65	4 - 7
Residential Cell 5	27 - 75	67 - 187	7 - 20
TOTAL	389 - 623	972 - 1,556	102 - 167

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

3.5.2. Local Convenience Centre

There may be a requirement to provide additional facilities one to the west/northwest of the study area where there is already established residential areas in proximity to the study area and one to the north to provide for the future residential expansion.

The Local Centre Map (Map 11) details the area that will be serviced by the proposed local centres at Coosan Church and north along the proposed distributor road (in the study area) and the Retail/Commercial centre proposed in the Cornamaddy LAP 2005.

It is proposed that a local centre be located at the junction at Coosan Church, where there is potential to support the expansion of the proposed Centre into adjacent sites, if required in the future. This Centre will service existing residential development (at Clonbrusk and Cloghanboy estate) and proposed development within a 500 metre radius (pedestrian catchment) of the centre. The Centre will accommodate local need only, both the existing and proposed residential development and will not contain retail units of a size or nature that would attract or detract from trade in the town centre (The total retail block should not exceed a maximum of 250m²).

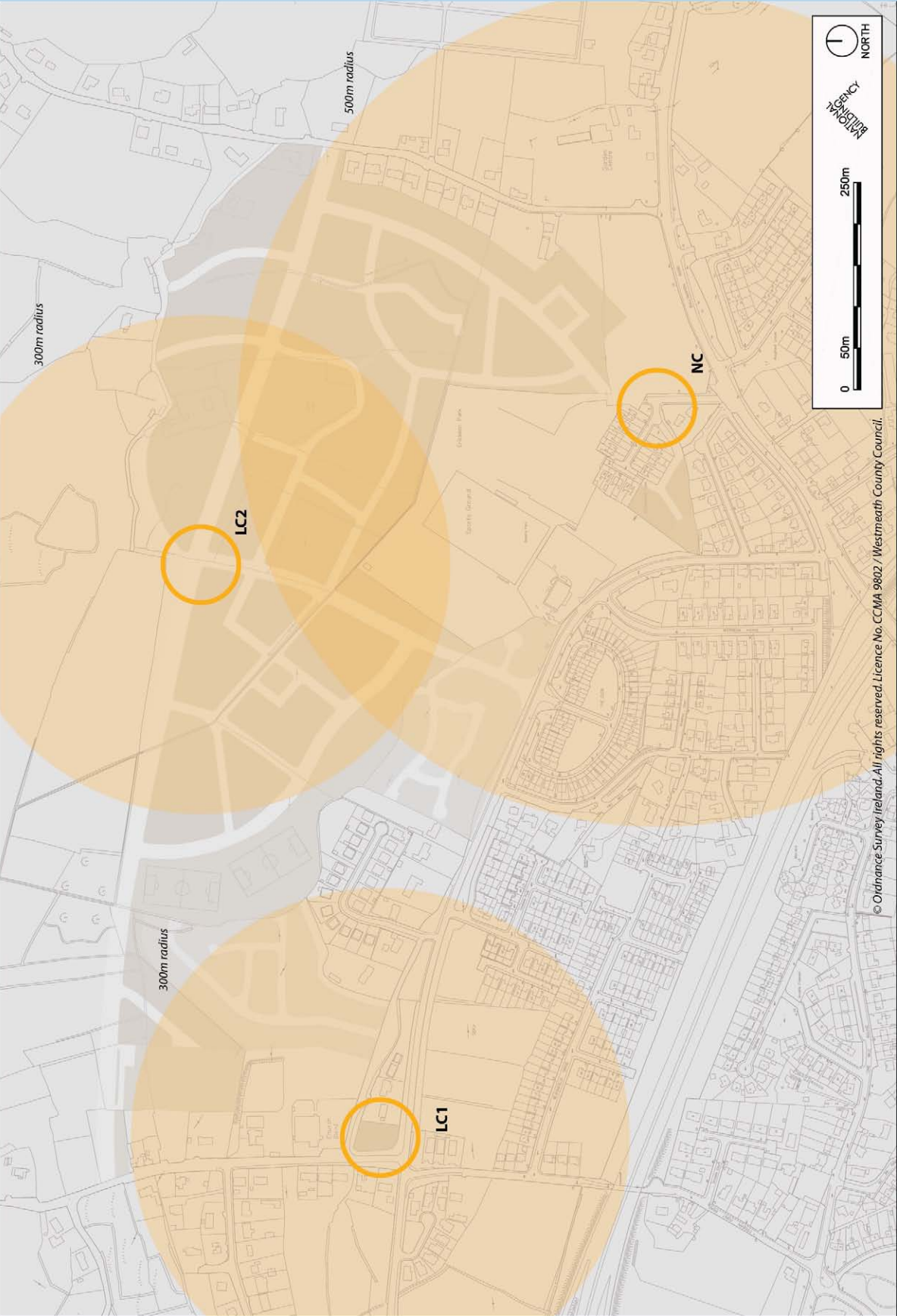
It is proposed that a local convenience centre consisting of a row of 3 to 4 shops be located on the local distributor road to service the needs of this population and potential future development that may take place to the north.

The convenience centre has been located along this main transport route to ensure vitality and service passing trade, while also being readily accessible by a range of transport options including public transport, private car, walking and cycling.

Mixed-use developments, including the provision of accommodation over retail/commercial are to be encouraged at such centres, as well as grouped small starter incubator workshops, craft, or service units, with the sustainable ideal of a person living close to where they work, to local services and to a public transport network, being strived for.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Map 11: Local Centres



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

3.5.3. Provision of Childcare Facilities

It is an objective of the Council to require a developer to provide childcare facilities in accordance with Section 7.4.5 of the Westmeath County Development Plan 2008-2014 and 'Childcare facilities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities', 2001.

A minimum requirement shall be the provision of 20 children unit crèche/childcare facilities for every 75 houses. Additional crèche facilities for employees working in mixed-use areas will also be considered. A financial contribution by way of community charge may be applied in respect to the provision of childcare facilities on housing developments with less than 75 units.

Table 8 outlines the childcare requirements associated with each of the Residential Development Cells. There is currently a single purpose build crèche/Montessori facility (Headstart) located in a new residential development at Clonbrusk and adjacent to Coosan Church. Also a creche has been identified for inclusion within the granted residential planning application in the south of the study area.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

3.5.4. Provision of Schools

Future primary school demands, have been based on:

- 1) the anticipated increase in population within the surrounding area over the next nine years (as set out in the local authority development plan and local area plans);
- 2) the current school-going population based on school returns;
- 3) the increase in school-going population, assuming that an average of 12% of the population are expected to present for primary education; and
- 4) the number of classrooms required in total derived from the above.

Therefore the potential total population increase, taking into account readjusted population, could lead to an overall increase of between 563 – 915 primary school going pupils.

Assuming a rate of 28 pupils per class there may be a need for an additional **20 – 32 classrooms**.

The future expansion proposals of the two existing schools in the area (Coosan and Cornamaddy National Schools) could provide for an additional 10 classrooms – leaving a shortfall of 10 - 22 classrooms. Therefore it is recommended that a site is made available within the Draft Cornamagh LAP framework to allow for future educational primary school needs of a two storey building incorporating 16 classrooms, which would require 1.14 hectares (2.8 acres) of land. It is proposed to identify land, which allows for good access opportunities and is adjacent to existing community developments, a possible location, at this stage of the Draft, is adjacent to Coosan Church off the L-4005-13/L-1478-0 road and the proposed Distributor route.

The Department of Education and Science guidance documents were adhered to when forming this assessment including Technical Guidance Document - 025 - Identification and Suitability of Sites for Primary Schools and Code of Practice for Planning Authorities and the Provision of Schools, July 2008.

This Plan acknowledges the existence and role of existing schools in close proximity to the Cornamagh area. This Plan makes provision for school facilities in the area assuming the needs cannot be met by the existing schools. Nothing in this Plan should in any way prejudice the development/expansion of these existing schools

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



3.6. PUBLIC UTILITIES

3.6.1. Water Supply, Drainage and Flood Risk

The County Development Plan indicates, in the 'Water and Waste Water Investment Programme – Assessment of Needs', that a study is required of the foul and surface water drainage areas and networks, to include the extension of drainage areas and the extension of sewerage works and to determine capacity and loading of the Athlone Main Drainage System. In this regard a report has been submitted to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and currently the Council are waiting on approval of consultants.

3.6.2. Waste Management and Recycling

Domestic Waste Facilities

Individual dwellings are required to accommodate collection of source-segregated waste. Consequently, sufficient space for three (no. 3) wheel bins for residual waste, collected recyclable waste and appropriate organic matter needs to be incorporated into the design of individual households. Multi-storey residential development should have adequate storage facilities located at ground level. Any proposal for alternative waste management storage systems would need to meet the requirements/standards of the Planning Authority and relevant departments of the local authority.

Standards to be applied could be as follows:

- 1-2 person households: 3X120 litre wheel bins
- 3-6 person households: 3X240 litre wheel bins
- 2 bed apartments: 2X240 litre wheel bins

Design

- Waste storage facilities need to be secure to provide protection from vandals, scavengers and vermin.
- The location of waste storage facilities should have due regard to the potential (negative) impact of noise, odour and visual obtrusion.
- The incorporation of segregated waste disposal facilities in the home, has the potential to play an important role in encouraging householders to maximise opportunities for recycling, through efficient storage and convenient disposal of waste.

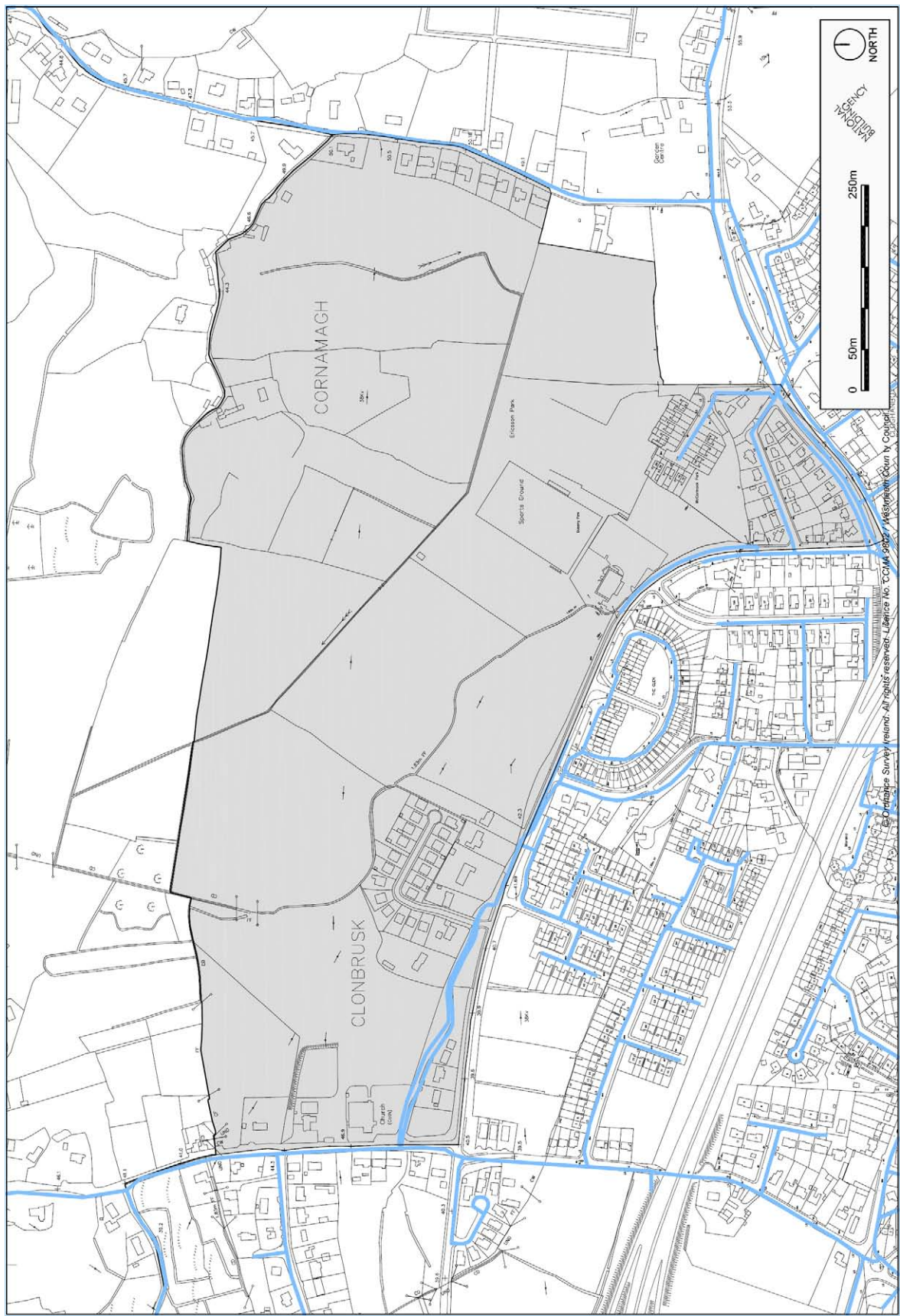


Business/Community Waste

Individual businesses and community facilities within the study area should be required to demonstrate an appropriate waste management strategy that incorporates a strong emphasis on minimising waste and recycling materials, wherever possible.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Map 12: Existing Water Supply Network



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



Any proposal for residential, commercial or community development within the study area needs to be accompanied by a 'Waste Management Plan'. The Plan will need to determine the potential volume of waste arising from both the construction and operation of development, recycling potential/opportunities, segregation requirements and the frequency of collection.

The recycling of construction and waste and the reuse of aggregates and other materials will be supported in the construction of the roads, housing and neighbourhood development in the study area. To this end, recovered aggregates from within the site will be used, depending on quality. As a result the amount of new base materials required to be imported into the site will be reduced.

3.6.3. Electricity

Currently a 38Kv powerline runs east to west across the site. This will need to be placed underground for reasons of safety, to maximise use of existing land and to reduce visual intrusion on the landscape.

4. URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

4.1. Urban Design Framework

An urban design framework highlights how existing and proposed resources of the area can be utilised to serve the future of the community.

Provision is to be made for the protection of the natural environmental features identified and allow for these features to be integrated within the overall vision for the area. These features include:

The key features that will influence the overall urban design approach will be:

- The local water course that flows to Lough Ree,
- Mature tree groupings and significant tree specimens as outlined in the Landscape Context section.
- Significant hedgerows,
- The role of Cossan Church as a focal point for the community and the regionally important Dubarry Sports grounds. Both are prominent and important centers of community activity and are important landmarks in the study area.

4.2. Guiding Principles

- To develop a framework that provides for optimum permeability through the provision of a road hierarchy and pathways that are integrated with sustainable landuse patterns.
- To create a network of public spaces, from playing fields and linear parks to pocket parks within housing areas,
- To maintain and enhance the natural features of the study area, protect important wild life habitats and to maintain historical continuity,
- To ensure the highest standard of landscape and architectural design,
- To provide for good quality pedestrian linkages,
- To ensure a high quality public domain.

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK



Linear Park - Main Amenity Area



Focal buildings - note building heights at junctions

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

4.3. Permeability

Permeability refers to the ease that people can move about their environment and get to their destinations. This is achieved through creating strong links throughout the site and providing access to the surrounding area.

The local distributor road will link the site with the Cornamaddy LAP area and will provide an access route for public transport, improving the sustainability of the area.

The road hierarchy is based on three types of roads and aims to achieve efficient access and movement throughout the site, while also providing the appropriate infrastructure to accommodate different journey types. This will ensure that 'Minor Access Routes' service the local neighbourhoods and are not used by through traffic and that the 'Major Access Routes' and 'Local Distributor' road act as arterial channels providing the preferred/most convenient route to adjacent areas, local services and beyond.

4.4. Legibility

Legibility is the extent to which it is possible to understand the physical structure of an environment or the layout of a development. If streets are legible then it is likely that the place will be more memorable or distinctive and the ease with which people can orientate themselves will be greater. To achieve legibility it is advisable to avoid a repetitive approach to design throughout the site/area.

Sustainability requires that greater mix of housing types and quality of design is required, which in turn lends itself to the development of more visually interesting, legible environments.

The following features are key contributors to the legibility of the area and include:

- The Commercial/Retail Centre located just outside the site boundary to the northeast of the area. It acts as a gateway to the site and to development located both in the Cornamaddy LAP area and Residential Development in Cell 1.
- The proposed local centre at the junction beside Coosan Church also acts as an important point of reference in the development and a focal point for the community.
- Increasing building height at junctions and the alignment of buildings, so as to produce vistas at junctions are important features that also assist in defining changes in the road hierarchy.
- The incorporation of prominent landscaping features, such as the Linear Park, Amenity Area, and tree lined Local Distributor Road are distinctive elements of the character of the area.

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

4.5. Variety

The study area is currently of rural character with limited piecemeal development. It is an infill site wedged between the Cornamaddy LAP area to the east the existing residential development to the west. This Plan aims to seamlessly integrate the study area with the emerging urban character of the adjacent lands, while also recognising the character of the existing landscape. The proposal aims to maintain the sites existing natural form and flow, while also developing a sense of place and community.

Variety will be achieved through working in harmony with the existing variety in topography and natural features and developing a variation in building types and designs.

Variety has been achieved within the five residential cells through the promotion of different architectural styles, varying residential densities and the network of open space. This is coupled with flexibility within the three road types outlined in the road hierarchy. Most notably road widths are set as a range, which allows for both flexibility and a large degree of consistency.

4.6. Design Principles for New development

The following design principles should be adhered to in the design of new housing areas and mixed use areas in the plan area:

- Quality in housing design
- Key architectural features
- Variation in building types
- Boundary treatment
- Building orientation and natural surveillance
- Home Zones
- Local transportation networks
- Car parking
- Landscape elements
- Street furniture and place names

Boundary Treatment

In the context of this LAP, boundary treatment is specifically concerned with the separation of the private space of individual properties and the public realm of the street. Boundary treatment also has a role to play in delineating between private, semi-private and public spaces and defining prohibited accessibility to these different types of spaces. Boundary treatment has an impact on the character of a street scene, together with a need to provide security for residents.

Building Orientation and Natural Surveillance

Buildings should be orientated to provide natural surveillance over transport/access routes, linear parks and pockets of open space. This will assist in increasing the perception of safety, increase the use of public spaces and reduce opportunities for crime. The degree of overlooking to be achieved along the linear park is a particularly important factor in the provision of this open space.

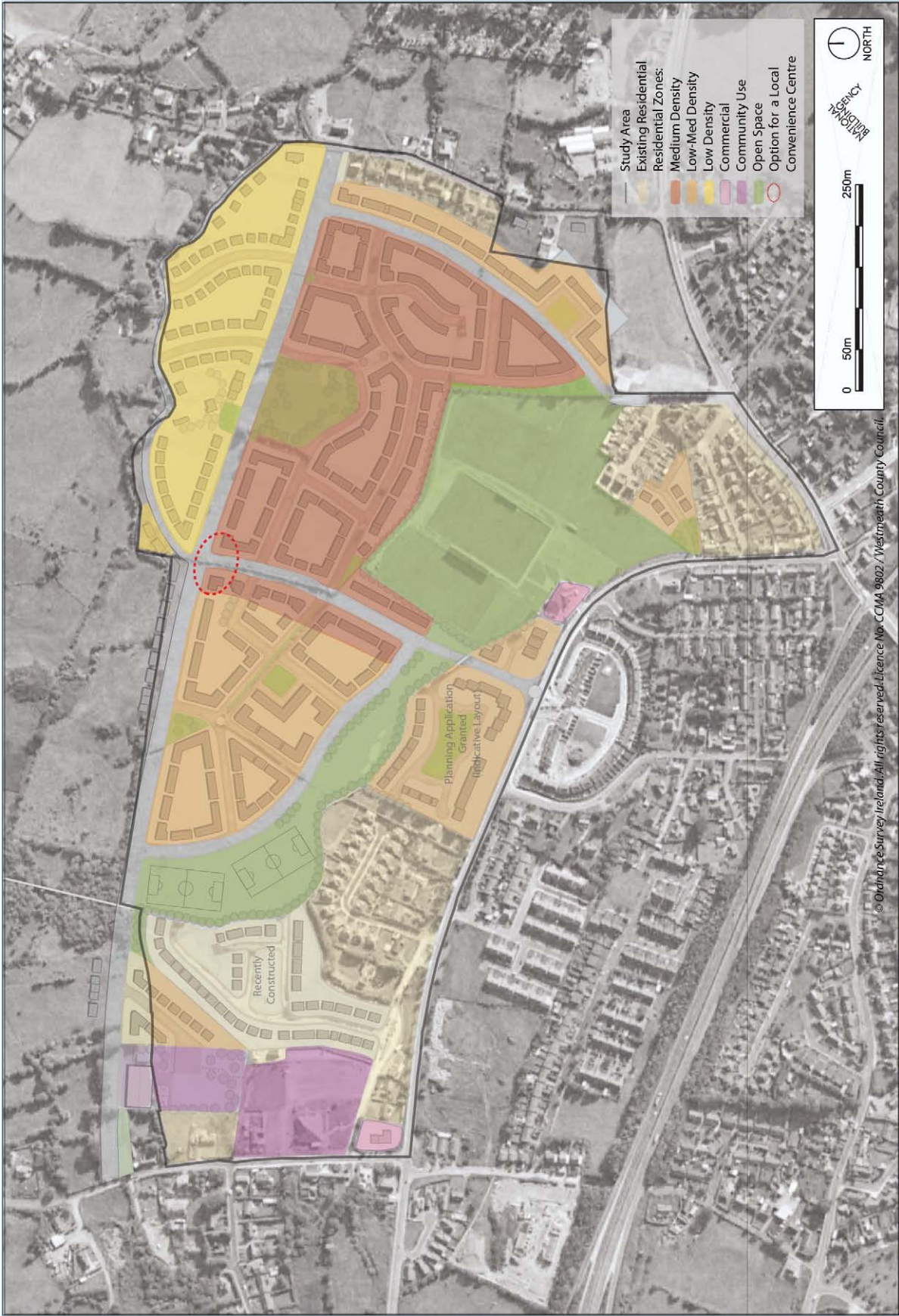
URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Home Zones

The concept of 'Home Zones' is based on the principle that the design of residential streets ensures priority of pedestrians, cyclists and residents over the car and therefore residential areas become places where children can play and people interact. Design principles used in the creation of 'home zones' include the use of materials and street furniture to reduce the speed of motorists, variation in road widths and the use of paving instead of tarmac to distinguish the area. Refer to Biddulph, M. (2001), 'Home Zones – A Planning and Design Handbook, for the implementation of home zones in new housing developments.

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Map 13: Zoning



URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Map 14: Development Framework



5. IMPLEMENTATION

5.1. Phasing/Progress of Development

The Plan will be in effect for the next six years, from the date of adoption, however the structure set in place will look at a longer timeframe for implementation (20 year period) (Source: Strategic Environmental Assessment – Screening).

The potential pace of implementation of a Plan for this area is curtailed by the appropriate provision of water and sewerage facilities to the site. Water supply will be in place for the site. However a sewerage scheme to service the Clonbrusk area (west of the site) will not be in place until 2010, and the pace of development will be determined by the availability of infrastructure.

5.2. Development Contribution Scheme

According to the Development Contribution Scheme, a planning authority may when granted permissions include conditions for requirement the payment of a contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of the planning authority (Part 3, Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000). Levies for Public infrastructure and facilities can relate to:

- The acquisition of land,
- The provision of open spaces, recreational and community facilities and amenities and landscaping works,
- The provision of bus corridors and lanes, bus interchange facilities (including car parks for those facilities), infrastructure to facilitate public transport, cycle and pedestrian facilities, and traffic calming measures,
- The refurbishment, upgrading, enlargement or replacement of roads, car parks, car parking places, sewers, wastewater and water treatment facilities, drains and watermains,
- All matters ancillary to the above.

A special contribution may be required for the Cornamaddy Underbridge, proposed in the Cornamaddy LAP 2005. This Underbridge will ensure a free flow of traffic along the public transport corridor (local distributor road) that traverses both this LAP and the Cornamaddy LAP 2005.

Additional national and EU level programmes, include the approach to Public Private Partnership (PPPs), National Lottery Facility Funding, Community Support Frameworks, as well as other funding mechanisms available from various government departments. Such bodies have varying criteria regarding the type of development they fund and may be useful to consider in the achievement of certain objectives.

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5.3. Public Private Partnership (PPP)

A public private partnership involves a partnership agreement between the public and private sector for the delivery of specific projects relating to public services and infrastructure. Such an approach can ensure the commitment of funding due to interlinked public and private assistance, and aims at ensuring the most economically efficient manner of development. Education, local services, health, housing, public transport, roads, solid waste, waste/wastewater and other public services can benefit from a PPP approach.

5.4. Implementation of the Open Space Network

In residential developments, developers shall provide communal open space to a high landscaped quality equivalent in area to a maximum of 15% of the total area of the site or 2.8 hectares per 1,000 population, whichever is greater according to the residential guidelines.

In calculating the open space requirements, the relevant open space zonings will make up a percentage of the requirement for open space within the area which is being developed.

5.5 Phasing of large development

(i) In large developments the Planning Authority will seek phasing programmes. The phasing can be by: number of units over a certain time period, or on completion of a particular area of a development. Commencement of any next phase will not be permitted until all services and infrastructures are completed to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.

(ii) The Planning authority may condition that no houses in a development shall be occupied until services to each house has been completed and are operational.

6. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

6.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC) applies to plans and programmes for which formal preparatory action started on or after the 21st July 2004. Guidelines have been published by the Department of the Environment Heritage & Local Government (2004) to aid in the implementation of this Directive, whose objective is to:

"Provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development, by ensuring that, in accordance with this Directive, an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment".

The land in question within the Cornamagh area forms an urban extension to Athlone town and is mainly agricultural in nature with some housing occurring in the form of residential housing estates and linear road development, a significant area of land is taken up by sporting grounds. The existing population within the area is significantly less than the mandatory 10,000 persons required to warrant a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). However, the plan must undergo a screening process to identify whether an SEA is needed or not.

Notification was issued to the prescribed environmental authorities on the 4th March 2009, giving them an opportunity to comment on whether they consider that significant effects on the environment would be likely to arise from the implementation of the Cornamagh Local Area Plan. The screening notice outlined the characteristics of the Plan, policy, setting & background, environmental considerations and characteristics of the effects and area likely to be affected.

The screening notice was issued to:

- the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);
- the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG);
- the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR).

An email response was issued from the DCENR stating that they had no comments to make at this time, which was without prejudice to any comments that the Shanon Regional Fisheries Board may have to make.

No comments or observations were received from the EPA or DEHLG, at that time.

Environmental issues have been strongly considered throughout this Plan. In establishing the vision for Cornamagh, the following principles have been considered:

- Consideration for the existing landuses in the area.
- Protection and integration of key environmental and landscape features – such features have provided the basic

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- framework for the open space strategy.
- Encouraging walking and cycling, thereby discouraging unnecessary car-use.
- Settlement context and population projections.
- Sufficient water supply and drainage facilities.
- Management of Waste.
- Sustainable building design and energy efficiency in buildings.

If this Plan were not in place, it could lead to piecemeal development of the environs of Athlone. This would lead to unsustainable development pressures with an abundance of one-off housing and development taking place in possibly environmentally sensitive areas.

Overall it is envisaged that the implementation of the Cornamagh LAP, will not have any adverse or significant environmental effects on the existing environment as strong policies and objectives are to be put in place for the proper sustainable development of this area.

Based on the above considerations, and following the above screening process, whereby the specific context of the LAP for Cornamagh has been assessed against the environmental significance criteria as contained in Annex II (2) of the SEA Directive, it is the recommendation that a full SEA is not required for the Cornamagh LAP.

The primary objective of the Plan is to ensure the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. This is to be achieved by regulating development through strategic environmental measures, land use zoning and development objectives. As a result, the implementation of the Plan is unlikely to give rise to significant environmental effects.

6.2 Appropriate Assessment

Under Article 6 (3) and (4) of the EU Habitats Directive an Appropriate Assessment (AA) of plans must be carried out where significant effects may result in relation to the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites (SACs and SPAs).

Lough Ree Special Area of Conservation (SAC) site code no. 000440 and Special Protection Area (SPA) site code no. 004064 is located over 1km away to the north of the site. It is not envisaged that the development of the Cornamagh area will have any significant environmental impacts on the SAC and SPA. As stated by the DEHLG 'the planning authority is in discussions with the Department in relation to planned upgrading of water services infrastructure in Athlone'. Therefore any in-situ effects such as the cumulative impacts on the SAC's associated with additional loadings on municipal wastewater treatment works will be taken account of in the necessary upgrading process.