



Statement of Consistency

In respect of:

Strategic Housing Development at Lissywollen, Athlone, County Westmeath



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On behalf of the applicant:

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1.0. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1.1. This Statement of Consistency has been prepared by Delphi Design, Architecture + Planning, on behalf of Alanna Roadbridge Developments Ltd. (the applicant) to accompany the application for Strategic Housing Development (SHD) submitted to An Bord Pleanála in respect of lands at Lissywollen, Athlone, County Westmeath.
- 1.1.2. Section 8(1)(a)(iv) of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 directs an applicant for SHD to submit a statement setting out how a proposed development will be consistent with the objectives of the relevant development plan and/or local area plans. In accordance with same, this Statement of Consistency demonstrates that the proposed SHD application is consistent with the relevant planning policies pertaining to the development site at local, regional, and national level.

1.2. Structure of Report

1.1.2. This Statement of Consistency is structured as follows:

- Section 2 provides an overview of the proposed development.
- Section 3 details the proposed development's consistency with national planning policy.
- Section 4 details the proposed development's consistency with Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines.
- Section 5 details the proposed development's consistency with regional planning policy.
- Section 6 details the proposed development's consistency with the Westmeath County Development Plan 2014-2020.
- Section 7 details the proposed development's consistency with the Draft Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027.
- Section 8 details the proposed development's consistency with the Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020.
- Section 9 details the proposed development's consistency with the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024.
- Section 10 provides for conclusions to this Statement of Consistency.

1.3. Documents Considered

1.3.1. This Statement of Consistency considers the following policy documents:

National Planning Context

- Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework (2018)
- Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness (2016)

Regional Planning Context

- Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (June 2019)

Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines

- Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018).
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2018).
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, Guidelines for Planning Authorities and the accompanying Urban Design Manual – A best practice guide (2009).



- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities - Best Practice Guidelines (2007).
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities for Child Care Facilities (2001).
- Irish Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013).
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009).
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009).
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (2018).

Local Planning Context

- Westmeath County Development Plan 2014-2020.
- Draft Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027.
- Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020.
- Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024.

1.3.2. The planning application is also accompanied by a comprehensive range of documentation, including for a detailed Planning Report and an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). This Statement of Consistency should be read in conjunction these documents together with the drawings and technical reports listed in the Cover Letter prepared by Delphi Design and enclosed application.



2.0. Development Overview

2.1. Site Location

- 2.1.1.** The application site is located c. 1 kilometre to the northeast of Athlone town centre, County Westmeath, in the townlands of Lissywollen, Kilnafaddoge & Retreat, and partially traversing the townlands of Curragh, Cloghanboy (Strain) & Cloghanboy (Homan).
- 2.1.2.** The site is located within lands designated for the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024 (hereafter LSFP). The LSFP lands are bounded to the north by the N6, which connects Kinnegad to Galway, to the west by the R915 (Ballymahon Road) and to the east by the R916. The LSFP lands are partially bisected along the south by the Old Rail Trail Greenway which forms a section of the Dublin-Galway National Cycle Network.
- 2.1.3.** The application site (i.e. that within the red line boundaries detailed on the site location map / site layout drawings prepared by Delphi Design and enclosed with the application) is generally bounded to the north by the N6, and to the south by the Old Rail Trail Greenway. To the west, the site is bounded by Scoil na gCeithre Máistrí primary school and Athlone Regional Sports Centre. The eastern boundary of the site is defined by an old boreen road further east of which lies undeveloped greenfield lands and ESB Regional Headquarters.
- 2.1.4.** The proposed development includes for the construction of a new east-west access route (Lissywollen Avenue) which is being delivered as per the objectives of the LSFP and as such, the full extent of the application boundaries extend from the existing Ballymahon roundabout (on the R915 - to the west) to the existing Garrycastle roundabout (on the R916 - to the east).

2.2. Site Description

- 2.2.1.** The application site currently consists of undeveloped greenfield lands zoned for proposed residential development / open space and is bisected by the existing Brawny residential estate (c.160 no. dwellings). Access to the site is currently limited to a distributor road (Brawny Road) which serves the Brawny estate and enters from the west off the Ballymahon roundabout.
- 2.2.2.** The western boundary of the site is defined by an existing cycleway, running along the perimeter of the Scoil na gCeithre Máistrí, which connects to the Old Rail Trail Greenway to the south. The western section of the site (i.e. that to the west of the Brawny estate) has a largely non-descript landscape character and slopes in a south westerly direction at an approximate gradient of 1 in 230.
- 2.2.3.** The eastern section of the site (i.e. that to the east of the Brawny estate) has a landscape typical of the rural countryside, with small, irregular and enclosed field patterns defined by hedgerows and trees. The eastern boundary of the site is defined by an old boreen which provides access to a former residence. The eastern section of the site slopes in a north easterly direction at an approximate gradient of 1 in 165.



Figure 1 - Subject site in the context of Athlone.



2.3. Development Proposal

2.3.1. The subject application for SHD is detailed in full below, as per the public notices:

Alanna Roadbridge Developments Ltd. intend to apply to An Bord Pleanála for permission for a strategic housing development, on a site of c. 17.64 hectares, located in the townlands of Lissywollen, Kilnafaddoge & Retreat, and partially traversing the townlands of Curragh, Cloghanboy (Strain) & Cloghanboy (Homan), Athlone, County Westmeath. The development site is bisected by the existing Brawny residential estate and is generally bounded to the north by the N6, to the south by the Old Rail Trial Greenway, to the west by Scoil na gCeithre Máistrí, and to the east by undeveloped lands, further east of which are ESB Regional Headquarters. Access to the development will be from the Ballymahon roundabout (on the R915 - to the west) and the Garrycastle roundabout (on the R916 - to the east).

The development will consist of the following:

- (1) Construction of 576 no. residential dwellings comprised of 285 no. houses and 291 no. apartments and duplex units consisting of:
 - 285 no. 2 storey semi-detached & terraced houses (50 no. four beds, 200 no. three beds & 35 no. two beds);
 - 8 no. apartments & duplexes (4 no. one beds & 4 no. three beds) in Block A (3 storeys);
 - 8 no. apartments & duplexes (4 no. one beds & 4 no. three beds) in Block B (3 storeys);
 - 15 no. apartments (15 no. two beds) in Block C (3 storeys);
 - 16 no. apartments & duplexes (7 no. one beds, 5 no. two beds & 4 no. three beds) in Block D (3 storeys);
 - 9 no. apartments & duplexes (5 no. one beds, 1 no. two bed & 3 no. three beds) in Block E (3 storeys);
 - 8 no. apartments & duplexes (4 no. two beds & 4 no. three beds) in Block F (3 storeys);
 - 4 no. apartments (4 no. one beds) in Block G (2 storeys);
 - 12 no. apartments & duplexes (12 no. three beds) in Block H (3 storeys);
 - 21 no. apartments (21 no. two beds) in Block K (3 storeys);
 - 36 no. apartments (36 no. two beds) in Block L (part 4 storey / part 5 storey);
 - 20 no. apartments (6 no. one beds, 6 no. two beds & 8 no. three beds) in Block M (part 3 storey / part 4 storey);
 - 27 no. apartments (27 no. two beds) in Block N (3 storeys);
 - 43 no. apartments & duplexes (14 no. one beds, 24 no. two beds & 5 no. three beds) in Block O (2 to 4 storeys);
 - 12 no. apartments (6 no. one beds & 6 no. two beds) in Block P (3 storeys);
 - 8 no. apartments & duplexes (4 no. two beds & 4 no. three beds) in Block Q (3 storeys);
 - 18 no. apartments (6 no. one beds & 12 no. two beds) in Block R (3 storeys);
 - 12 no. apartments & duplexes (6 no. two beds & 6 no. three beds) in Block S (3 storeys);
 - 14 no. apartments (4 no. one beds & 10 no. two beds) in Block T (3 storeys).
- (2) Construction of 2 no. crèches comprised of: a 2 storey crèche of c. 321m² located on the ground & first floors of Block C & a 1 storey crèche of c. 448m² located on the ground floor of Block T.
- (3) Construction of 1 no. community hub of c. 101m² located on the ground floor of Block D.
- (4) Construction of basement level car parking of c. 1,089m² comprising 34 no. car parking spaces & 36 no. bicycle parking spaces, forming part of Block L.



- (5) Construction of an east-west access road through the development site, extending from the Ballymahon roundabout (on the R915 - to the west) to the Garrycastle roundabout (on the R916 - to the east) and all associated road development works.
- (6) Provision of public open spaces, hard and soft landscaping, public lighting, car & bicycle parking, pedestrian and cyclist connections to Old Rail Trail Greenway, bin storage, 6 no. ESB sub-stations, drainage and attenuation, utility services etc. and all associated site development works.

The application contains a statement setting out how the proposal is consistent with the objectives of the Westmeath County Development Plan 2014-2020, the Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020 and the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024, and also contains a statement indicating why permission should be granted for the proposed development, having regard to a consideration specified in section 37(2)(b) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, notwithstanding that the proposed development materially contravenes a relevant development plan or local area plan other than in relation to the zoning of the land.

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) has been prepared in respect of the development proposal and accompanies the application. The application, together with the Environmental Impact Assessment Report, may be inspected, or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, during public opening hours at the offices of An Bord Pleanála and Westmeath County Council. The application may also be inspected online at the following website set up by the applicant: www.lissywollenshd.ie.

2.3.2. In summary, the application consists of 576 no. residential dwellings comprised of:

- 285 no. 2 storey semi-detached & terraced houses (50 no. four beds, 200 no. three beds & 35 no. two beds)
- 291 no. apartments & duplex units (60 no. one beds, 177 no. two beds & 54 no. three beds) in 18 no. blocks, ranging from 2 to 5 storey in height,

The development also includes for 2 no. childcare facilities, 1 no. community hub, basement level car parking and the construction of an east-west access route (Lissywollen Avenue) connecting Ballymahon roundabout (on the R915 – to the west) to Garrycastle roundabout (on the R916 – the east). For further details please refer to the Planning Report prepared by Delphi Design which accompanies the application as a separate document.

3.0. Statement of Consistency with National Policy

3.0.1. This section details the proposed development's compliance with relevant national planning policy, namely; Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework (2018) and Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness (2016).

3.1. Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework

3.1.1. The National Planning Framework (hereafter NPF) is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of the country to cater for a projected population increase of c. one million people up to the year 2040. The NPF is accompanied by the National Development Plan, a 10 year capital investment strategy, and together they are known as Project Ireland 2040.

3.1.2. A core element of the NPF strategy is compact growth with the key features being:

- *Targeting a greater proportion (40%) of future housing development to be within and close to the existing 'footprint' of built-up areas.*
- *Making better use of under-utilised land and buildings, including 'infill', 'brownfield' and publicly owned sites and vacant and under-occupied buildings, with higher housing and jobs densities, better serviced by existing facilities and public transport.*
- *Supporting both urban regeneration and rural rejuvenation through a €3 Billion Regeneration and Development Fund and the establishment of a National Regeneration and Development Agency.*

3.1.3. The NPF provides a framework for future development expressed through 10 no. National Strategic Outcomes as detailed in Figure 2. To achieve these National Strategic Outcomes each chapter of the NPF contains National Policy Objectives which promote coordinated spatial planning, sustainable use of resources, and protection of the environment.

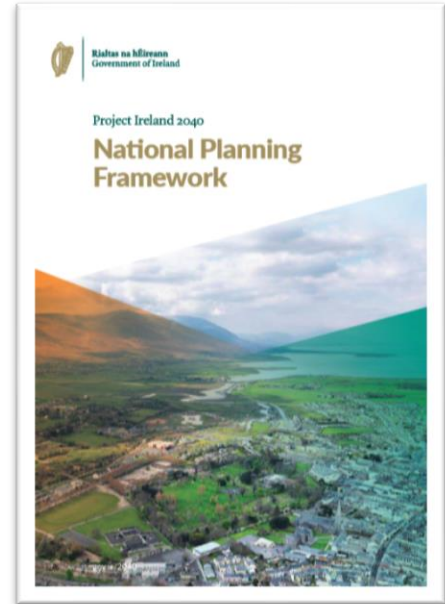




Figure 2 - National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF.

3.1.4. The 2016 Census Results put the population of Westmeath at 88,770 persons, with an average household occupancy rate of 2.76 persons. The NPF outlines a projected population target for Westmeath of between 96,500 - 98,500 persons up to the year 2026 and between 100,000-102,500 persons up to the year 2031. The NPF notes that the average household occupancy rate is expected to decline to around 2.5 persons by 2040. The following National Policy Objectives are considered relevant:

- **National Policy Objective 1a** - *“The projected level of population and employment growth in the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly area will be at least matched by that of the Northern and Western and Southern Regional Assembly areas combined.”*
- **National Policy Objective 1b** - *“Eastern and Midland Region: 490,000 - 540,000 additional people i.e. a population of around 2.85 million.”*
- **National Policy Objective 1c** - *“Eastern and Midland Region: around 320,000 additional people in employment i.e. 1.34 million in total.”*
- **National Policy Objective 32** - *“To target the delivery of 550,000 additional households to 2040.”*

3.1.5. National Strategic Outcome 1 of the NPF states that carefully managing the sustainable growth of compact cities, towns, and villages, will add value and create more attractive places in which people can live and work. Activating strategic areas to achieve effective density and consolidation is a top priority. The following National Policy Objectives are considered relevant:

- **National Policy Objective 3a** - *“Deliver at least 40% of all new homes nationally, within the built-up footprint of existing settlements.”*

- **National Policy Objective 3c** - *“Deliver at least 30% of all new homes that are targeted in settlements other than the five Cities and their suburbs, within their existing built-up footprints.”*

3.1.6. An overarching element of the NPF, of particular relevance to the development, is the recognition of Athlone as an important regional centre for the Midlands. The NPF acknowledges that due to its strategic location and scale of population, employment and services, Athlone has an influence that extends to part of all three regional assemblies in the country and therefore needs to fulfil a regional role to a greater extent than other towns and villages. National Policy Objectives 2b and 7 specifically recognise the key regional role of Athlone in the Midlands as detailed below:

- **National Policy Objective 2b** - *“The regional roles of Athlone in the Midlands, Sligo and Letterkenny in the North-West and the Letterkenny-Derry and Drogheda- Dundalk-Newry cross-border networks will be identified and supported in the relevant Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.”*
- **National Policy Objective 7** - *“Apply a tailored approach to urban development, that will be linked to the Rural and Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, with a particular focus on:*
 - *Dublin;*
 - *The four Cities of Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford;*
 - ***Strengthening Ireland’s overall urban structure, particularly in the Northern and Western and Midland Regions, to include the regional centres of Sligo and Letterkenny in the North-West, Athlone in the Midlands and cross-border networks focused on the Letterkenny-Derry North-West Gateway Initiative and Drogheda-Dundalk-Newry on the Dublin-Belfast corridor;***
 - *Encouraging population growth in strong employment and service centres of all sizes, supported by employment growth;*
 - *Reversing the stagnation or decline of many smaller urban centres, by identifying and establishing new roles and functions and enhancement of local infrastructure and amenities;*
 - *Addressing the legacy of rapid unplanned growth, by facilitating amenities and services catch-up, jobs and/or improved sustainable transport links to the cities, together with a slower rate of population growth in recently expanded commuter settlements of all sizes;*
 - *In more self-contained settlements of all sizes, supporting a continuation of balanced population and employment growth.”*[our emphasis added]

3.1.7. Chapter 4 of the NPF focuses on the development of urban spaces and the need to create more attractive ‘liveable’ towns and villages. The following National Policy Objectives are considered relevant:

- **National Policy Objective 4** - *“Ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being.”*
- **National Policy Objective 5** - *“Develop cities and towns of sufficient scale and quality to compete internationally and to be drivers of national and regional growth, investment and prosperity.”*
- **National Policy Objective 6** - *“Regenerate and rejuvenate cities, towns and villages of all types and scale as environmental assets, that can accommodate changing roles and functions, increased residential population and employment activity and enhanced levels of amenity and design quality, in order to sustainably influence and support their surrounding area.”*
- **National Policy Objective 11** - *“In meeting urban development requirements, there will be a presumption in favour of development that can encourage more people and generate more jobs and activity within existing cities, towns and villages, subject to development meeting appropriate planning standards and achieving targeted growth.”*



- **National Policy Objective 13** - *“In urban areas, planning and related standards, including in particular building height and car parking will be based on performance criteria that seek to achieve well-designed high quality outcomes in order to achieve targeted growth. These standards will be subject to a range of tolerance that enables alternative solutions to be proposed to achieve stated outcomes, provided public safety is not compromised and the environment is suitably protected.”*

3.1.8. Chapter 6 of the NPF focuses on enhancing the quality of life in Ireland’s cities, towns, and villages. The NPF acknowledges that it cannot effect change in all dimensions that contribute to quality of life, however, there are some key elements that it will directly impact on, most importantly ‘the natural and living environment’. The following National Policy Objectives are considered relevant:

- **National Policy Objective 27** - *“Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages.”*
- **National Policy Objective 28** - *“Plan for a more diverse and socially inclusive society that targets equality of opportunity and a better quality of life for all citizens, through improved integration and greater accessibility in the delivery of sustainable communities and the provision of associated services.”*
- **National Policy Objective 31** - *“Prioritise the alignment of targeted and planned population and employment growth with investment in:-*
 - *A childcare/ECCE planning function, for monitoring, analysis and forecasting of investment needs, including identification of regional priorities;*
 - *The provision of childcare facilities and new and refurbished schools on well-located sites within or close to existing built-up areas, that meet the diverse needs of local populations;*
 - *The expansion and consolidation of Higher Education facilities, particularly where this will contribute to wider regional development, and*
 - *Programmes for life-long learning, especially in areas of higher education and further education and training where skills gaps are identified.”*
- **National Policy Objective 33** - *“Prioritise the provision of new homes at locations that can support sustainable development and at an appropriate scale of provision relative to location.”*
- **National Policy Objective 34** - *“Support the provision of lifetime adaptable homes that can accommodate the changing needs of a household over time.”*
- **National Policy Objective 35** - *“Increase residential density in settlements, through a range of measures including reductions in vacancy, re-use of existing buildings, infill development schemes, area or site-based regeneration and increased building heights.”*

3.1.9. Chapters 9 & 11 of the NPF focus on the need to provide for a sustainable environmental future and the requirement to assess the impact of new developments on the environment. The following National Policy Objectives are considered relevant:

- **National Policy Objective 52** - *“The planning system will be responsive to our national environmental challenges and ensure that development occurs within environmental limits, having regard to the requirements of all relevant environmental legislation and the sustainable management of our natural capital.”*
- **National Policy Objective 75** - *“Ensure that all plans, projects and activities requiring consent arising from the National Planning Framework are subject to the relevant environmental assessment requirements including SEA, EIA and AA as appropriate.”*



3.1.10. Statement of Consistency with the NPF

- It is considered that the development is consistent with the National Strategic Outcomes and National Policy Objectives of the NPF.
- The development supports National Strategic Outcome 1 '*Compact Growth*' with the application site being located on an underutilised residentially zoned landbank located within the existing built-up footprint of the Athlone.
- The development supports the population targets for both Westmeath and the Eastern and Midland Region contained within the NPF. The development will deliver much needed housing on residentially zoned lands at an appropriate scale and density. In particular, it is considered that the development will strengthen the overall urban structure in Athlone and support the town's growth as a key regional centre can drive growth, investment and prosperity for the Midlands by catering for new housing at an appropriate density in an appropriate location.
- The development provides for new homes at a sustainable location with strategic access to existing employment and services. The development offers an appropriate mix of housing typologies to support the growing trends for smaller households and the need for lifetime adaptable homes. It is considered that the proposed layout caters for a well-designed, high quality, urban quarter which integrates with the existing community.
- The development caters for 2 no. childcare facilities to support the future population and a childcare and school demand assessment has been undertaken as part of the application to ensure that an appropriate level of educational facilities is available to support the development.
- The development prioritises sustainable transport modes and caters for community facilities to support the future population. Careful consideration has been given to the proposed building heights and levels of car parking provision to ensure integration with the existing community and development of a scheme which prioritises pedestrians and cyclists over more traditional forms of transport. Notwithstanding same, the development caters for an appropriate density which ensures efficient use of the lands available.
- The development has been designed in accordance with the relevant local area plan (the Lissywollen South Framework Plan) which ensures that the subject location is appropriate for the sustainable development of residential housing.
- The development has been subject to a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment, including for an Appropriate Assessment Screening. Existing features of biodiversity value have been retained within the scheme where feasible and mitigation measures put in place to ensure protection of the environment.

3.2. Rebuilding Ireland – Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness (2016)

3.2.1. Rebuilding Ireland is the Government’s Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness. The overarching aim of the Action Plan is to increase the delivery of housing, from its current undersupply across all tenures, to help individuals and families meet their housing needs.

3.2.2. The Action Plan provides a target to double the number of residential dwellings delivered annually by the construction sector and to provide 47,000 social housing units in the period up to 2021. The importance of land supply and location is a central consideration of the Action Plan which states that:

“locating housing in the right place provides the opportunity for wider family and social networks to thrive, maximises access to employment opportunities and to services such as education, public transport, health and amenities, while delivering on sustainability objectives related to efficiency in service delivery and investment provision.”

3.2.3. The Action Plan is structured on five key pillars, with Pillar 2 & 3 being most relevant to the development.

- Pillar 2 – Accelerate Social Housing
- Pillar 3 – Build More Homes



3.2.4. Statement of Consistency with Rebuilding Ireland

- The development caters for 576 no. dwellings comprised of 285 no. houses and 291 no. apartment and duplex units. As part of the development agreement between the applicant (Alanna Roadbridge Developments Ltd.) and the landowner (Westmeath County Council) 174 no. of the proposed dwellings will be delivered to the local authority as social housing representing 30% of the proposed dwellings. The proposed social housing units caters for a range of 1, 2 and 3 bed dwellings which are capable of supporting a broad range of housing needs. The development is therefore considered to fully support Pillar 2 of the Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan.
- The development caters for 576 no. dwellings on greenfield lands zoned for residential development. The development includes for the construction of an east-west access route (Lissywollen Avenue) which will connect the subject lands with Athlone town centre, ensuring that future residents will enjoy easy access to a wide range of existing employment and services. The development will substantially add to the residential accommodation in Athlone, catering to the increasing housing demand in the area and supporting Athlone’s role as a regional growth centre for the Midlands. The development provides a wide mix of unit types and household sizes. The development is also put forward at a scale and density which is appropriate to these residentially zoned lands. The development is therefore considered to fully support Pillar 3 of the Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan.
- The development will cater for homes to purchase and homes for the rental sector. The proposed dwellings have been designed to meet the most up to date standards for residential accommodation. The development is therefore also considered to support Pillar 4 ‘Improve the Rental Sector’ of the Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan.

4.0. Statement of Consistency with Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines

4.0.1. This section details the proposed development's compliance with relevant Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines, namely the following:

- Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018)
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2018)
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, Guidelines for Planning Authorities and the accompanying Urban Design Manual (2009)
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities - Best Practice Guidelines (2007)
- Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001)
- Irish Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013)
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009)
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (2018)

4.1. Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018)

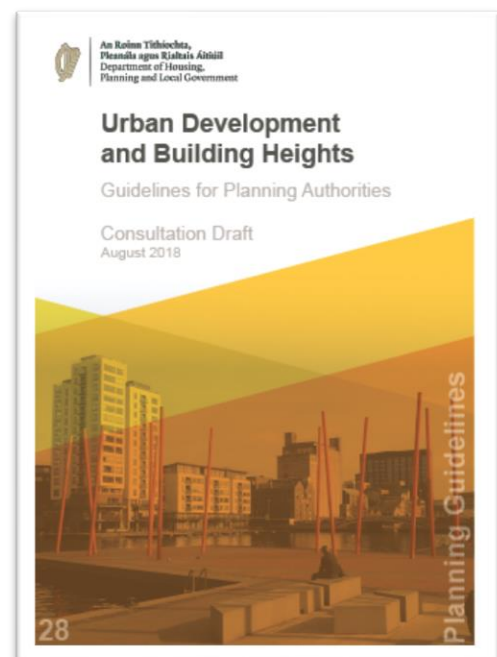
4.1.1. The Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines (2018) carry forward the National Policy Objectives of the NPF in relation to securing more compact forms of development. In summary, the guidelines seek to reinforce the need to consolidate and strengthen existing built-up areas and move away from blanket limitations on building height.

4.1.2. The guidelines clearly state that Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála are required to have regard to, and apply, any specific planning policy requirements (SPPRs) of the guidelines, in carrying out their functions. The guidelines also state that the SPPRs stated in the document take precedence over any conflicting policies and objectives of development plans, local area plans and strategic development zone planning schemes.

4.1.3. The guidelines also state that in relation to the assessment of individual planning applications and appeals, it is Government policy that building heights must be generally increased in appropriate urban locations. There is therefore a presumption in favour of buildings of increased height in city and town cores and in other urban locations with good public transport accessibility.

4.1.4. In relation to building height in suburban/edge locations (City and Town), the guidelines state that newer housing developments at the suburban edges of towns and cities *"typically now include town-houses (2-3 storeys), duplexes (3-4 storeys) and apartments (4 storeys upwards). Such developments deliver medium densities, in the range of 35-50 dwellings per hectare net. Such developments also address the need for more 1- and 2-bedroom units in line with wider demographic and household formation trends, while at the same time providing for the larger 3, 4 or more bedroom homes across a variety of building typology and tenure options, enabling households to meet changing accommodation requirements over longer periods of time without necessitating relocation."*

4.1.5. The guidelines require that new development in suburban/edge locations *"should include an effective mix of 2, 3 and 4-storey development which integrates well into existing and historical neighbourhoods and 4 storeys or*





more can be accommodated alongside existing larger buildings, trees and parkland, river/sea frontage or along wider streets.”

- 4.1.6.** The guidelines consider that such development patterns are generally appropriate outside city centres and inner suburbs for both infill and greenfield development and should not be subject to specific height restrictions. Where DMURS principles are incorporated, the guidelines encourage more compact urban forms and require the relevant planning authority and An Bord Pleanála to apply SPPR 4 which states:

“It is a specific planning policy requirement that in planning the future development of greenfield or edge of city/town locations for housing purposes, planning authorities must secure:

- 1. the minimum densities for such locations set out in the Guidelines issued by the Minister under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), titled “Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2007)” or any amending or replacement Guidelines;*
- 2. a greater mix of building heights and typologies in planning for the future development of suburban locations; and*
- 3. avoid mono-type building typologies (e.g. two storey or own-door houses only), particularly, but not exclusively so in any one development of 100 units or more.”*

4.1.7. Statement of Consistency with the Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines

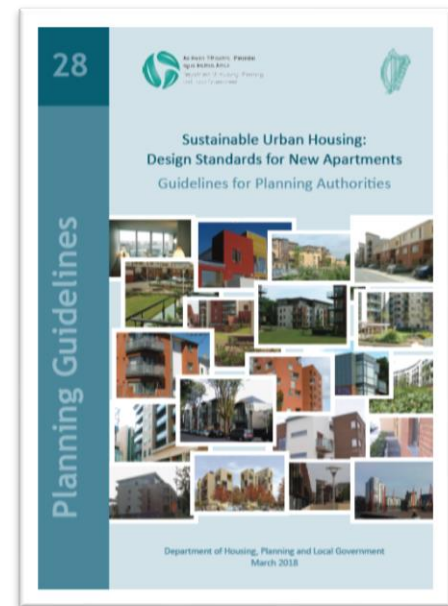
- In accordance with SPPR 4 of the above guidelines, the development caters for an appropriate density in compliance with the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2007). The net density of the development is c. 42 dwellings per hectare, while the layout has been designed so that density varies accordingly across the scheme to ensure the development integrates with its surroundings. Full details on the density of development can be found in the Planning Report which accompanies the application – please refer to same.
- The development includes for a mix of building heights ranging from 2 storey houses to 3, 4 & 5 storey duplex and apartment buildings. Careful consideration has been given to the proposed layout to ensure that higher buildings are located in appropriate locations, mainly along the wider east-west access route which runs through the scheme (Lissywollen Avenue) and adjacent to public open space.
- The development provides for a mix of building typologies and includes a range of dwelling types put forward to support wider demographic and household formation trends. The development mix comprises c. 10% 1-bedroom units; 37% 2-bedroom units; 44% 3-bedroom units; and 9% 4-bedroom units (49% houses, 43% apartments & 8% duplexes). The proposed scheme is designed around 5 no. character areas which ensure that monotonous volume building is avoided – for full details please refer to the Architectural Design Rationale which accompanies the application.
- The application is also accompanied by a DMURS Statement of Compliance, a Sunlight, Daylight and Shadow Assessment, and a number of environmental assessments, including for an EIAR and AA Screening, which demonstrate that the proposed building heights are appropriate to the application site and support the creation of a new urban quarter for Athlone.

4.2. Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2018)

4.2.1. The Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines (2018) update the previous 2015 version of same. The guidelines contain Specific Planning Policy Requirements (SPPRs) which must be applied by planning authorities, or An Bord Pleanála, in the exercise of their functions. Where specific planning policy requirements are stated in the guidelines, they must take precedence over any conflicting policies or objectives of development plans or local area plans.

4.2.2. The guidelines were adopted to ensure that the National Policy Objectives of the NPF can be delivered and are an acknowledgement of the growing need to provide for long-term apartment accommodation in the State in order to meet shifting demographics and lifestyle choices. The guidelines SPPRs for the following:

- Gross floor areas and internal space standards
- Dual aspect ratios
- Floor to ceiling height
- Apartments to stair/lift core ratios
- Storage spaces
- Amenity spaces including balconies/patios
- Room dimensions for certain rooms



4.2.3. Statement of Consistency with the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments

- SPPR 1 of the guidelines (dwelling mix) states that apartment developments may include up to 50% one-bedroom or studio type units (with no more than 20-25% as studios). In accordance with same, the development caters for 246 no. apartments with less than 50% (60 no. units representing 24% of the apartment mix) being one bedroom/studio apartments.
- SPPR 3 of the guidelines (minimum areas) states the minimum gross floor areas for apartments. The subject application is accompanied by a Quality Housing Assessment which demonstrates that the proposed apartments and duplex units comply with and/or exceed the gross floor area standards set out in the aforementioned guidelines, including for internal room areas and private amenity spaces etc.
- SPPR 4 of the guidelines (aspect) states the minimum number of dual aspects units for new apartments. In suburban or intermediate locations, it is an objective that there shall generally be a minimum of 50% dual aspect apartments in a single scheme. In accordance with same, of the 246 no. proposed apartments 205 no. are dual aspect units representing c. 83% are of the proposed apartments. All of the proposed duplex units are dual aspect. Therefore, of the 291 no. apartment & duplex units provided for in 18 no. blocks c. 86% are dual aspect in accord with the guidelines. As required north facing single aspect units have been kept to a minimum.
- SPPR 5 of the guidelines (floor to ceiling heights) states the minimum floor to ceiling height of apartments shall be 2.7m. In accordance with same, the proposed apartments comply with this requirement.
- SPPR 6 of the guidelines (units per core) states that a maximum of 12 apartments per core may be provided within apartment schemes. The design of the proposed apartments blocks comply with same.

4.3. Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, Guidelines for Planning Authorities and the accompanying Urban Design Manual (2009)

4.3.1. The Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas set out the core principles of urban design for creating places of high quality with distinct identities and sense of place. The guidelines also set out recommended densities for development and detail how density should be measured. The guidelines recommend that Planning Authorities promote high quality design in their policy documents and in their development management process.

4.3.2. The guidelines are accompanied by the Urban Design Manual which illustrates how the policy principles can be translated into practice by developers and Planning Authorities when designing new residential schemes. The Urban Design Manual provides a series of criteria (12 no.) against which residential proposals can be assessed at the levels of the neighbourhood, the site and the home.

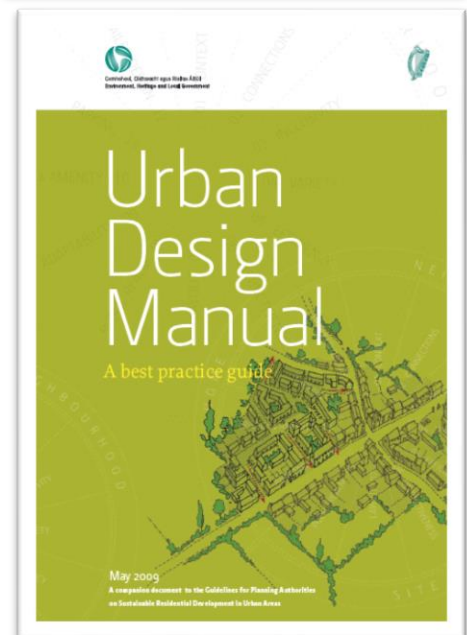
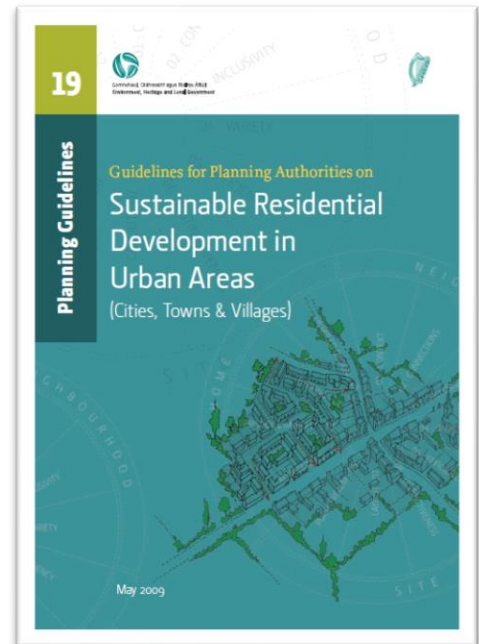
4.3.3. Statement of Consistency with the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines / Urban Design Manual

- The design, layout and built form of the development has been guided by the principles of urban design set out in the guidelines. It is noted that principles of urban design set out in the guidelines have been largely translated into the design objectives and standards for residential development contained in the existing Westmeath County Development Plan 2014-2020, Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020, and Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024. As detailed further on in this Statement of Consistency, the development complies with the objectives of the aforementioned planning documents and those standards have informed the nature, scale and form of development, ensuring a plan-led approach.

- The density of the development adheres to the guidance for sustainable residential development set out in the guidelines. The application site is an 'Outer Suburban / Greenfield Site' as it complies with Section 5.11 of the guidelines which define such sites as "as open lands on the periphery of cities or larger towns".

The guidelines state that "the greatest efficiency in land usage on such lands will be achieved by providing net residential densities in the general range of 35-50 dwellings per hectare and such densities (involving a variety of housing types where possible) should be encouraged generally. Development at net densities less than 30 dwellings per hectare should generally be discouraged in the interests of land efficiency, particularly on sites in excess of 0.5 hectares." The net density of the development is c. 42 dwellings per hectares, as detailed in the Planning Report prepared by Delphi Design which accompanies the application. The proposed net density therefore accords with the aforementioned guidelines.

- The subject application is accompanied by an Architectural Design Rationale which details development's compliance with the 12 Design Criteria and Indicators contained in the Urban Design Manual, which is also in accordance with the requirements of the Westmeath County Development Plan 2014-2020, Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020, and the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024 – for full details please refer to the Architectural Design Rationale prepared by Delphi Design.

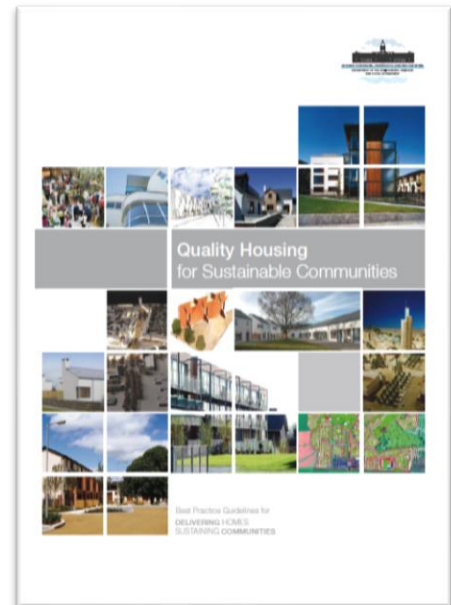


4.4. Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities - Best Practice Guidelines (2007)

4.4.1. The Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities Guidelines promote high standards in the design and construction of new residential developments. The guidelines identify core principles and criteria that have been found, from experience, to be particularly relevant to the creation of high-quality living environments for future residents. Guidance within this document is arranged under five headings as follows:

- Site Selection
- Design Brief, Procurement and Cost Control
- Urban Design Objectives in the Provision of Housing
- Scheme Layout and Design
- Dwelling Design

4.4.2. Chapter 5, Dwelling Design, provides guidance on the internal layout and space provision within houses including target gross floor areas and minimum room sizes. This guidance has been incorporated in the Westmeath County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 and Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020.



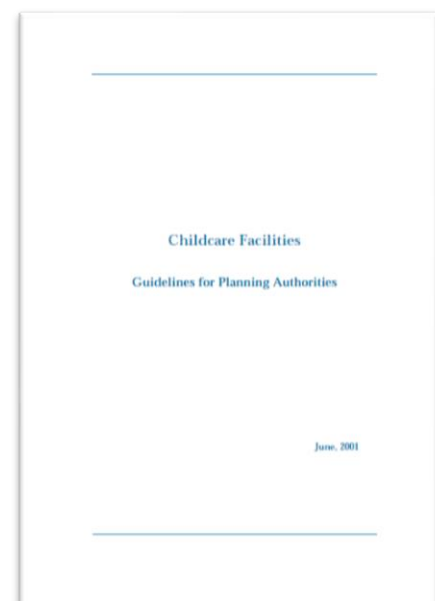
4.4.3. Statement of Consistency with the Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities

- The subject application is accompanied by a Quality Housing Assessment which demonstrates that the proposed dwellings conform to the principles and criteria set out within the Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities Guidelines where applicable.
- The subject application is also accompanied by an Architectural Design Rationale and Planning Report which details development's compliance with the aforementioned guidelines – for full details please refer to same.

4.5. Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001)

4.5.1. The Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities direct Planning Authorities to facilitate the provision of childcare facilities in appropriate locations. The Guidelines state that, in general, one new facility catering for 20 no. childcare places should be developed for every 75 new residential dwellings. The guidelines also provide broader guidance on internal room sizes for childcare facilities.

4.5.2. The guidelines state that the provision of new childcare facilities should have regard to the location of existing facilities, emerging demographics in the area, and advise that the provision of childcare facilities should form an integral part of pre-planning consultations between applicants and Planning Authorities.



4.5.3. Statement of Consistency with the Childcare Facilities Guidelines

- The development is located on the lands designated for the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024. The plan, which has been assessed and adopted by the local planning authority, has an objective to provide for 2 no. childcare facilities within the plan area, on the lands zoned for residential development. In accordance with same, the development caters for 2 no. childcare facilities.
- The first of the proposed childcare facilities consists of a 1 storey crèche measuring c. 448m² located on the ground floor of proposed Block T in the western part of the development. The proposed crèche has a capacity for c. 83 no. children.
- The second of the proposed childcare facilities consists of a 2 storey crèche measuring c. 321m² located on the ground & first floors of proposed Block C which is centrally located within the development. The proposed crèche has a capacity for circa 62 no. children.
- The Childcare Facilities Guidelines state that, in general, one new facility catering for 20 no. childcare places should be developed for every 75 new residential dwellings. Based on the development of 576 no. dwellings this equates to a provision of c. 154 no. childcare spaces, however, the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2018) state that:

“One-bedroom or studio type units should not generally be considered to contribute to a requirement for any childcare provision.”

- The development caters for 60 no.1 bed apartments. When 1 bed dwellings are discounted, the development caters for 516 no. dwellings which equates to a provision of c. 138 no. childcare places.
- The development caters for 2 no. childcare facilities with a combined capacity for c. 145 no. childcare places which exceeds the requirement for c. 138 no. childcare places. The development is therefore fully compliant with the Childcare Facilities – Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

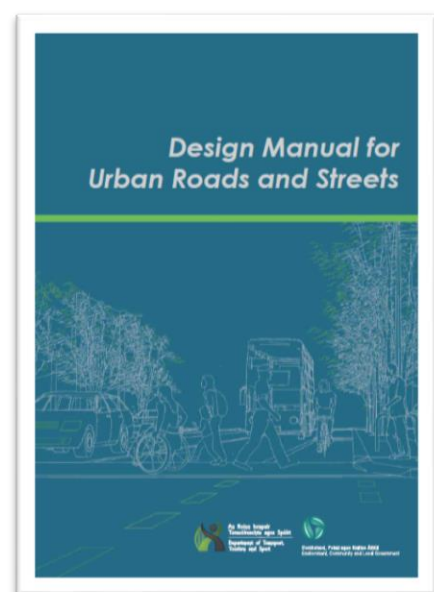
4.6. Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013)

4.6.1. The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) sets out design guidance and standards for constructing new, and reconfiguring existing, urban roads and streets in Ireland. It also outlines practical design measures to encourage more sustainable travel patterns in urban areas.

4.6.2. A key element of the DMURS is the need to design roads and streets as destinations rather than traffic corridors. As such a focus is placed upon the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users and enhancement of the public realm.

4.6.3. Statement of Consistency with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets.

- The development is located on the lands designated for the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024. The plan, which has been assessed and adopted by the local planning authority, details objectives for the road/street network, the key objective in relation to the application site being the delivery of a new east-west access route through the plan lands (Lissywollen Avenue). The objectives and guidance of the plan, which takes into account DMURS, has informed the proposed layout throughout the design process.



- In accordance with DMURS, the proposed layout and building form has been designed to create an urban edge to the east-west access route (Lissywollen Avenue) in order to create a sense of place and destination.
- The proposed avenue has been carefully designed to encourage appropriate traffic speeds with horizontal deflections and tight bends used where appropriate. To ensure a sense of place rather than that of a transport corridor, parking along the avenue is reduced and where provided is in the form of parallel parking.
- This avenue has been designed to support public transport (bus) routes, with the avenue catering for 2 no. new bus stops. To further support sustainable transport modes, a cycle and pedestrian route has been prioritised in the design of the avenue and is catered for along the entire length of the avenue.
- A series of secondary streets off the avenue cater for a mix of traditional road surfaces and homezones. The secondary street network has ensured that safe spaces are provided for pedestrians and cyclists at the connection points to the Old Rail Trail Greenway. Prioritisation has been given to pedestrian and cyclists throughout the proposed street network with on and off street cycle/pedestrian provided throughout the scheme.
- The subject application is accompanied by a number of additional documentation, including for a DMURS Statement of Compliance and Traffic and Transportation Assessment prepared by DBFL Consulting Engineers, which detail the scheme's compliance with DMURS – for full details please refer to same.

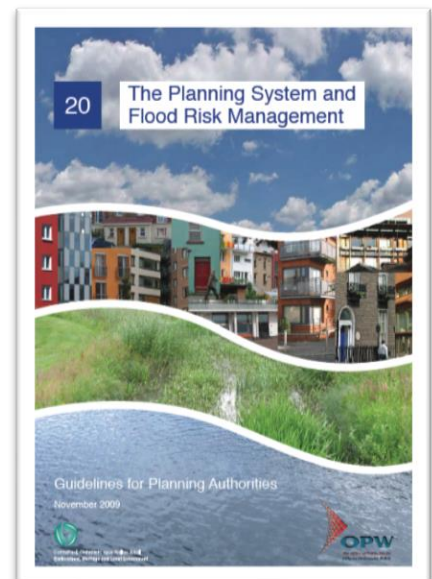
4.7. The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)

4.7.1. The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines provide detailed guidance on the role that flood risk should play at different levels of the planning system. Planning authorities must implement these guidelines to ensure that, where relevant, flood risk is a key consideration in development plans and local area plans and in the assessment of planning applications. The guidelines should also be utilised by developers and the wider public in addressing flood risk in preparing development proposals.

4.7.2. These guidelines introduce comprehensive mechanisms for the incorporation of flood risk identification and management into the planning process.

4.7.3. Statement of Consistency with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines

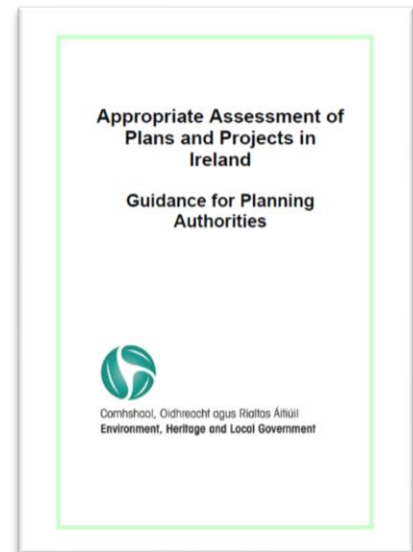
- The planning application is accompanied by a Site- Specific Flood Risk Assessment (SSFRA) prepared by DBFL Consulting Engineers. The SSFRA was carried out in accordance with requirements of the above guidelines. The SSFRA report includes for flood mitigation measures to minimise risk and concludes that, if implemented, the development of housing on the subject site is appropriate given the for the subject site's flood zone category and a justification test as outlined in the guidelines is not required. The development is therefore considered to be fully compliant with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines.



4.8. Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009)

4.8.1. The Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities, prepared jointly by the National Parks and Wildlife Services and Planning Divisions of the Department of Environment, Culture and Local Government, sets out the different steps and stages that are needed to establish whether a plan or project can be implemented without damaging an existing Natura 2000 site.

4.8.2. The guidelines indicate the role to be played by professional ecologists and other professionals in identifying potential impacts on same and provide details on potential mitigation measures needed to avoid such impacts. Where such impacts cannot be avoided the guidelines detail imperative reasons of overriding public interest which may allow a project to proceed.

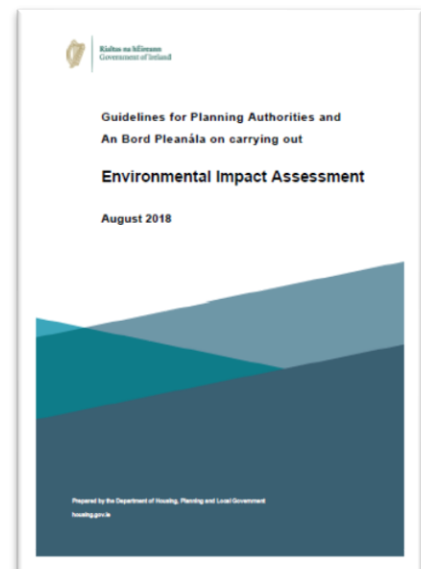


4.8.3. Statement of Consistency with Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland

- In accordance with the above guidelines, the subject application is accompanied by an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report prepared by FGE Consultants. The AA Screening Report has assessed the development's likely impact upon Natura 2000 sites, both individually and in combination with other projects. The AA Screening report undertaken has concluded that the development will not have a significant effect on the surrounding environment, therefore, the AA screening process does not need to progress to Stage 2.

4.9. Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (2018)

4.9.1. The purpose of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment is to provide practical guidance to planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála so that there can be greater consistency in the methodology adopted by consent authorities.



4.9.2. Statement of Consistency:

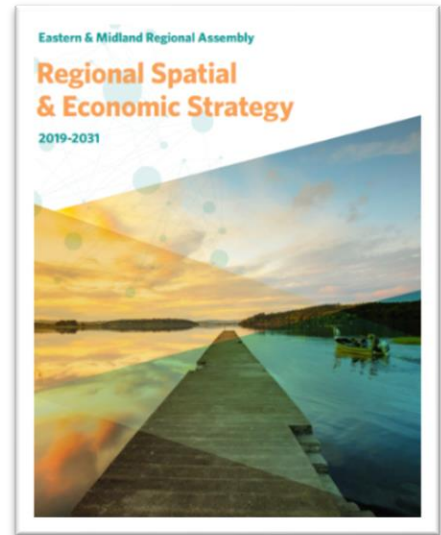
- The development is comprised of over 500 no dwellings (576 no. dwellings) and therefore, an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is required under Part 2(10) (b) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).
- An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), which also constitutes an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the purposes of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2018, has been prepared and accompanies the application as a separate document.
- The EIAR has been prepared in accordance with Directive 2014/52/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment as adopted on 16 April 2014 as an amendment of Directive 2011/92/EU. For full details please refer to the EIAR which accompanies the application.

5.0. Consistency with Regional Policy

5.0.1. This section details the development’s compliance with relevant regional planning policy, namely; the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2019-2031.

5.1. Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2019-2031

5.1.1. The NPF is supported by the establishment of statutory Regional Spatial & Economic Strategies for Ireland’s three regional assemblies. The Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2019-2031 (hereafter E&MRSES) is the relevant regional strategy for the development.



5.1.2. The E&MRSES is a strategic plan and investment framework which aims to shape the future development of the Eastern and Midland Region up to 2031 and beyond. The region is the smallest in terms of land area but the largest in population size and is identified as the primary economic engine of the State. The strategy identifies that the Eastern and Midland Region:

“is home to over 800,000 households, with 4 out of 5 living in conventional housing while apartments account for around 18% of our housing stock. One of the challenges facing the region is the continued growth rates of household formation coupled with a severe slowdown in the development of new housing stock during the economic recession, resulting in housing supply and affordability pressures in both sale and rental markets, particularly in Dublin and urban areas but affecting all of the region.”

5.1.3. The E&MRSES seeks to achieve the 10 no. National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF through the implementation of 16 no. Regional Strategic Outcomes as detailed in Figure 3. To achieve these Regional Strategic Outcomes, each chapter of the E&MRSES contains Regional Policy Objectives that promote coordinated spatial planning, sustainable use of resources and protection of the environment.

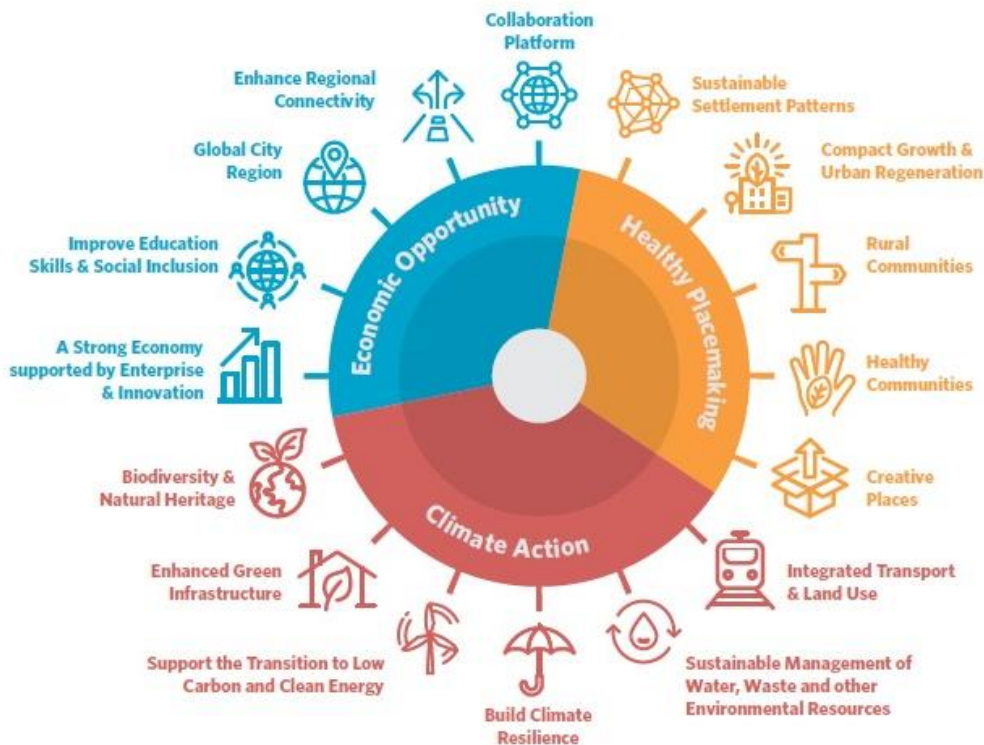


Figure 3 - Regional Strategic Outcomes of the E&MRSES.

5.1.4. The 2016 Census Results state the population of Athlone as being 21,349 persons with the E&MRSES outlining a projected population target of 30,000 by 2031, increasing the town's population by 8,851 persons (a 41% growth rate). Within the E&MRSES, Athlone is identified as a Regional Growth Centre with the key priorities for the town being the promotion of the continued sustainable compact growth.

5.1.5. Section 4.5. of the E&MRSES having specific regard to the development of Athlone within the life of the plan. Regarding residential development in the town, the E&MRSES asserts that the key to the success is the facilitation of significant population growth on zoned lands within the existing built-up footprint of the town. The development of strategic lands, including for the subject site at Lissywollen South, are noted to have the potential to deliver the population targets for Athlone identified in the E&MRSES.

5.1.6. With specific relevance to the development, the E&MRSES states:

"In particular, the development of the strategic landbank at Lissywollen South, also offers the opportunity to develop a new urban quarter extending from the town centre."

5.1.7. The E&MRSES underlines the need for new residential development in the town to be high quality, well designed, and capable of offering a mix of housing types to meet the needs of a variety of users. It is considered that such development will strengthen the economic potential of Athlone and support both current and future employment. The following Regional Policy Objectives are detailed for Athlone:

- **Regional Policy Objective 4.4** - *"A cross boundary statutory Joint Urban Area Plan (UAP) for the Regional Growth Centre of Athlone shall be jointly prepared by Westmeath and Roscommon County Councils in collaboration with EMRA and NWRA. The UAP will support, the development of Athlone as an attractive, vibrant and highly accessible Regional Centre and economic driver for the centre of the Country. The Joint UAP will identify Athlone's functional urban area and outline a boundary for the plan area, in addition to the identification of strategic housing and employment development areas and the infrastructure investment requirements to promote greater coordination and sequential delivery of serviced lands for development."*
- **Regional Policy Objective 4.5** - *"Promote Athlone as a key location for regional economic development supporting the provision of increased employment through the expansion of the existing enterprise ecosystem in Athlone and smart specialisation, that have developed through collaboration with the relevant enterprise agencies including the IDA, Athlone Institute of Technology and the Midlands Innovation and Research Centre and support the provision of physical infrastructure and zoned lands to realise the phased delivery of strategic employment lands in central accessible locations."*
- **Regional Policy Objective 4.6** - *"Support the role of Athlone Institute of Technology as a centre of excellence for education and in achieving its status as a Technological University."*
- **Regional Policy Objective 4.7** - *"Support the development of a cross sectoral approach to promote Athlone as a key tourism destination in the Midlands, building on Fáilte Ireland's Hidden Heartlands brand and the forthcoming Shannon Tourism Masterplan to develop the recreation and amenity potential of waterways including the River Shannon and Lough Ree and the development of a greenway network including the Galway to Dublin Cycleway."*
- **Regional Policy Objective 4.8** - *"Support the regeneration of underused town centre and brownfield / infill lands along with the delivery of existing zoned and serviced lands to facilitate significant population growth and achieve sustainable compact growth targets of 30% of all new homes to be built within the existing built up urban area."*
- **Regional Policy Objective 4.9** - *"Support ongoing implementation of flood risk management and flood alleviation measures to facilitate the growth of Athlone."*



- **Regional Policy Objective 4.10** - *“Support the development of joint economic, transport and retail plans by Westmeath and Roscommon County Councils in collaboration with, and where appropriate, relevant local authorities and relevant agencies, to facilitate the growth of Athlone as a regional economic driver.”*

5.1.8. Other Regional Policy Objectives of relevance are as follows:

- **Regional Policy Objective 9.4** - *“Design standards for new apartment developments should encourage a wider demographic profile which actively includes families and an ageing population.”*
- **Regional Policy Objective 9.10** - *“In planning for the creation of healthy and attractive places, there is a need to provide alternatives to the car and to prioritise and promote cycling and walking in the design of streets and public spaces. Local authorities shall have regard to the Guiding Principles for ‘Healthy Placemaking’ and ‘Integration of Land Use and Transport’ as set out in the RSES and to national policy as set out in ‘Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas’ and the ‘Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS).”*

5.1.9. Statement of Consistency with the E&MRSES

- It is considered that the development fully complies with, and supports, the policies and objectives of the E&MRSES.
- The development will see the delivery of much needed new housing stock at the strategic residential landbank of Lissywollen South. The E&MRSES specifically details the development of Lissywollen South offers the opportunity to develop a new urban quarter extending from the town centre. The subject scheme has been carefully designed to ensure that the range of building typologies on offer, and the layout proposed, will create a modern new urban quarter on the subject lands, at an appropriate level of density, which will support the Athlone’s role as a regional growth centre for the Midlands.
- The development of 576 no. dwellings will support the projected population targets for Athlone contained in the E&MRSES. The development’s location, which is surrounded by existing development, will deliver new housing on zoned and serviced lands, facilitate significant population growth, and achieve sustainable compact growth targets of 30% of all new homes to be built within the existing urban area.
- The design of the proposed scheme has been guided by the detailed objectives for Lissywollen South contained in the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024. The development provides for an appropriate mix of housing typologies, catering for 1, 2, 3 & 4 bed houses, apartments and duplex units which will meet the needs of a variety of households and support the provision of lifetime adaptable homes.
- The development caters for community infrastructure which will provide employment opportunities within the scheme. The proposed layout has been designed to ensure pedestrian / cyclist prioritisation, in compliance with the principles of DMURS, and caters for a series of connections to the Old Rail Trail Greenway which support the promotion of Athlone as a key tourist destination.
- The provision of a new east-west access route (Lissywollen Avenue), together with the secondary street network, in compliance with DMURS principles, and prioritisation of pedestrian / cyclist routes, will aid the reputation of the adjacent Athlone Institute of Technology as a centre of excellence.
- The proposed scheme also includes for SUDS and other drainage mitigation measures which support the ongoing implementation of flood risk management and flood alleviation in Athlone.



6.0. Consistency with Westmeath County Development Plan 2014 -2020

6.0.1. The Westmeath County Development Plan 2014-2020 (hereafter CDP) is the current statutory Development Plan relevant to the subject application and details the overall strategic policies and objectives for County Westmeath. Town Development Plans are also in place for Athlone and Mullingar, with Athlone having several Local Area Plans in place which co-ordinate development of the town. The relevant provisions of the Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020 and the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2014-2020 are discussed in Section 8 & 9 of this Statement of Consistency.

6.1. CDP Core Strategy

6.1.1. The CDP Core Strategy sets out a vision for the county and strategic aims required to deliver same. The goal of the Core Strategy is to ensure that:

“the future spatial development of Westmeath is directed by means of a plan led approach, directing residential and employment generating development to locations in accordance with Regional Policy, and with environmental carrying capacity, which can support investment in public infrastructure and services and which is sensitive to the physical character of the built and natural environment.”

It is stated that where there is conflict between the Core Strategy and the individual chapters of the CDP, the Core Strategy shall take precedence.

6.1.2. Within the Core Strategy, Athlone is designated as a Linked Gateway Town and allocated to the highest tier of the Settlement Hierarchy. Linked Gateway Towns aim to act as drivers of economic growth, employment and service provision in the county. Accordingly, the CDP’s strategic aims include for the prioritisation the sustainable development of such towns with Core Strategy policy ‘P-CS8’ stating the need to:

“prioritise sustainable development in the Linked Gateway towns of Athlone and Mullingar, in line with National and Regional policy provisions.”

6.1.3. Table 2.2. of the Core Strategy states that Westmeath has a projected population target of 106,370 persons up to the year 2020 (an increase of 20,206 from 2011), with the projected population target for Athlone being 24,809 persons (an increase of 8,482 from 2011). The housing yield for Athlone is stated being 2,210 units¹.

6.1.4. The preferred development strategy for Westmeath underlines the need to:

“Promote and facilitate the development of critical mass, employment, enterprise and economic activity with particular emphasis on the role of the Gateway Towns of Athlone and Mullingar as the principal drivers of economic growth.”

6.1.5. The following Core Strategy Policy Objectives are considered to be relevant:

- **P-CS1** - *“To ensure that, the future spatial development of Westmeath is in accordance with higher level plans including National and Regional Spatial Policy including national policy guidance issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 as amended, the River Basin Management Plans, Surface Water Regulations and the Habitats Directive.”*
- **P-CS2** - *“In the assessment of development proposals, to take account of transport corridors, environmental carrying capacity, availability and/or capacity to provide waste water and water supply services, potential to conflict with WFD objectives potential to impact on the integrity of European sites and*

¹ Population and housing targets have not been achieved to date. Updated figures are detailed in the Draft Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027 in Section 8 of this Statement of Consistency.



Annexed Habitats and species, features of biodiversity value including ecological networks, impact on landscape and visual characteristics, education and other socioeconomic objectives.”

- **P-CS3** - *“In the assessment of development proposals, to take into account Article 6(3)(4) and Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, the Surface Water Regulations 2009 and the relevant measures of the River Basin Management Plans 2009- 2015.”*
- **P-CS4** - *“To prioritise sequential development including the development of infill and brownfield lands and to consider the relationship of new areas with existing development, in the assessment of development proposals in urban areas.”*
- **P-CS5** - *“To promote the integration of land use and transportation policy and to prioritise provision for cycling and walking travel modes and the strengthening of public transport.”*
- **P-CS6** - *“To restrict development in areas at risk of flooding in accordance with the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoECLG/OPW 2009).”*
- **P-CS7** - *“To implement all land use planning policy and objectives in a manner which takes account of, and is consistent with the Core Strategy. Where a policy conflict arises, the Core Strategy shall have primacy.”*
- **P-CS8** - *“To prioritise sustainable development in the Linked Gateway towns of Athlone and Mullingar, inline with National and Regional policy provisions.”*
- **P-CS9** - *“To facilitate sustainable development in the towns and villages in the county, of a nature that supports their defined role at county and regional level at a scale appropriate to the availability of supporting infrastructure.”*
- **P-CS10** - *“To have regard to the Department of Environment Guidelines “Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines”, (2009) issued to Planning Authorities in relation to the scale of residential development appropriate to settlements within the hierarchy.”*
- **P-CS12** - *“To monitor and review development trends in the context of zoned residential land, having regard to the ambitious growth targets which have been set for the Gateway Towns but which are dependent upon strong economic recovery.”*

6.1.6. Statement of Consistency with CDP Core Strategy

- It is considered that the development complies with the policies of the CDP Core Strategy.
- The development will achieve sustainable development of lands zoned for residential use and thereby support the growth of Athlone as a gateway town in compliance with the national and regional planning policies discussed in the previous sections of this Statement of Consistency.
- The development will assist in achieving the population and housing targets for the county through the provision of 576 no. residential units, to be built within the existing urban footprint of Athlone in a sequential manner and in proximity to existing amenities and services. The projected development population of 1,567 persons will support the goal of achieving critical mass in Athlone.
- The development is put forward in compliance with the provisions of Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020 and the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024, both of which comply with the Core Strategy of the existing CDP. This ensures that the development is plan led and provides for residential development in an appropriate location which is sensitive to the existing built and natural environment.



- The development caters for a new east-west access route (Lissywollen Avenue) which has been designed to support public transport (bus). This avenue, together with the scheme as a whole, prioritise pedestrians and cyclists, thereby strengthening sustainable transport modes.
- The subject application is accompanied by, inter alia, an Environmental Impact Assessment Report, an Appropriate Assessment Screening, Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment and an Engineering Services Report. These assessments have confirmed the capacity of existing and proposed services to support the development and put in place mitigation measures, where necessary, to protect the environment.

6.2. Housing

6.2.1. Chapter 4 'Housing' details guidance for new residential development in the county. Section 4.2.5 of the CDP details the Housing Strategy for the county up to the year 2020. It is noted that following are listed as impacting and informing the housing policy:

"Future housing allocation shall be allocated in accordance with the Core Strategy settlement hierarchy and in particular in Athlone and Mullingar."

"All new housing shall be built in accordance with a 'house for life' and support independent living."

"A higher percentage of new housing developments to cater for 'start up units' i.e. 2 bedroom accommodation will be required."

"Reduce affordability requirement to 15% in new housing schemes."

"Underutilised or derelict land and housing units in the town centres of Mullingar and Athlone close to public transport links appropriate for residential use should be identified."

6.2.2. Section 4.3 of the CDP sets out the following housing policies & objectives which are considered relevant to the development:

- **P-HS2** - *"To secure the provision of social and affordable housing accommodation, to meet the needs of all households and the disadvantaged sectors in the county, including the elderly, first time buyers, single person households on modest incomes, people with disabilities, and special needs etc."*
- **P-HS3** - *"To ensure in accordance with Part V of the Planning & Development Act 2000 as amended that arrangements for the provision of Social and Affordable Housing are made in accordance with the current Housing Strategy."*
- **P-HS4** - *"To support the right of every individual to own their own property, and to ensure a suitable range of tenure types, to meet the needs of a more mobile population."*
- **P-HS6** - *"To ensure the provision of a suitable range of house types and sizes to facilitate the demographic profile of the county."*

6.2.3. Statement of Consistency with Housing

- The development will assist in achieving the above targets through its compliance with the Core Strategy and the delivery of 576 no. dwellings on lands zoned for residential development.



- All the proposed dwellings have been designed to the most up to date standards in terms of their gross floor areas and are capable of facilitating future alterations if required, thereby supporting lifelong housing, independent living, and the 'live- work units.
- The development caters for 60 no. 1 bed dwellings (apartments) and 212 no. two bed dwellings (houses, apartments & duplexes) representing c.10% (1 beds) & c. 37% (2 beds) of the proposed dwellings. This provision of 1 & 2 bed dwellings will cater for 'start up units' and the growing trends for smaller household sizes.
- The development agreement between the applicant (Alanna Roadbridge Developments Ltd.) and the landowner (Westmeath County Council) will see 174 no. dwellings (c. 30% of the total dwellings proposed) offered for social housing. Within this allocation, 58 no. dwellings are offered in compliance with the provisions of Part V of the Planning Development Act 2000 (as amended). The development will therefore fully support the need to reduce affordability in new schemes.
- The development caters for a wide range of unit types and sizes, including for houses, apartments and duplex units consisting of c. 10% 1 bed dwellings; c. 37% 2 bed dwellings; c. 44% 3 bed dwellings; and c. 9% 4 bed dwellings. The development caters for housing which can be offered to both home purchasers and on the rental market.

6.3. Future House Type Requirements

6.3.1. Section 4.4. of the CDP details the future house type requirements for the county. It is noted that there has been a decline in the average household size in the county with greatest expressed need among people on the Council's waiting list being for two bedroom accommodation in the larger settlements. The following future housing type policies are considered relevant:

- **P-HT1** - *"To ensure that a suitable variety and mix of dwelling types and sizes is provided in developments to meet different needs, having regard to demographic and social changes."*
- **P-HT2** - *"To ensure all new residential schemes are designed so that units are easily adaptable in the future to accommodate housing for life."*
- **P-HT3** - *"To support independent living for people with disabilities and the elderly and where possible, to ensure that housing is integrated within proposed or existing residential developments and located close to existing community facilities."*

6.3.2. Statement of Consistency with Future House Type Requirements

- The development is fully in accordance with the above policies of the CDP. The development caters for 576 no. dwellings comprised of 285 no. houses; 246 no. apartments; and 45 no. duplex units. A breakdown of the proposed mix is detailed in Tables 1 - 4 below.

House Type	No. of Units	Percentage of Units
Two Bed	35	12%
Three Bed	200	70%
Four Bed	50	18%
Totals	285	100%

Table 1 - Proposed mix of house types.



Apartment Type	No. of Units	Percentage of Units
One Bed	60	25%
Two Bed	169	68%
Three Bed	17	7%
Totals	246	100%

Table 2 - Proposed mix of apartment types.

Duplex Type	No. of Units	Percentage of Units
Two Bed	8	18%
Three Bed	37	72%
Totals	45	100%

Table 3 - Proposed mix of duplex types.

Unit Type	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	Total
Houses	-	35	200	50	285
Apartments	60	169	17	-	246
Duplex Units	-	8	37	-	45
Overall Mix	10%	37%	44%	9%	100%

Table 4 - Overall dwelling mix.

- The above housing mix is considered appropriate to the needs of the county and ensures that a variety dwelling types and sizes are provided throughout the scheme which can meet the needs of a diverse population and the changing needs of same over the course of the lifecycle.
- As detailed in the Quality Housing Assessment which accompanies the planning application, all the proposed dwellings are of a size which meets with and/or exceeds the required standards for new dwellings. The size of individual dwellings proposed allows the opportunity for future alterations if required and thereby support the principles of housing for life. The development also caters for an large quantum of ground floor own door dwellings which can be easily accessed by people with disabilities and/or the elderly.

6.4. New Residential Development

6.4.1. Section 4.7. of the CDP details the general polices for new residential development for the county. The following policies are considered relevant to the development.

- **P-SRD1** - *“To ensure that settlements growing a manner that is self-sustaining with sufficient social and economic infrastructure, and to a scale which aligns with the Settlement Hierarchy prescribed in the Core Strategy.”*
- **P-SRD2** - *“To encourage and promote the development of underutilised, infill and backland development in the larger settlements subject to development management criteria being met.”*
- **P-SRD4** - *“To ensure as far as possible that “greenfield” housing development takes place on the basis of comprehensive Action Area Plans prepared on the basis of the foregoing policies and objectives.”*
- **P-SRD6** - *“To promote energy efficiency during both the construction phase and during the lifetime of residential development through sensitive design and layout taking into account topography, orientation and surrounding features of a site.”*



- **P-SRD7** - *“To encourage the careful use of resources both now and in the future and to reduce the use of energy and non-renewable resources by promoting the use of public transport and reducing car dependence through measures that reduce travel distances and the need to travel.”*
- **P-SRD8** - *“To promote social inclusion by encouraging the provision of community facilities and in particular childcare facilities in new and established residential areas.”*
- **P-SRD9** - *“To promote social integration and inclusion by having a range of house types and sizes, tenures and age groups located in established and new communities, to enable residents to integrate and create a sense of belonging and permanency.”*

6.4.2. Statement of Consistency with New Residential Development

- The development is fully in accordance with the above policies, specifically Policy P-SRD4 with the development being put forward in accordance with the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2014.
- The development is of a scale which is appropriate to the subject lands and the subject application has undertaken a number of infrastructure assessments, enclosed with the application as individual documents, which have ensured there is existing capacity in the area to serve the development.
- A Construction Management Plan and a Building Lifecycle Report are submitted with the application which detail the energy efficiency of the development.
- The development caters for 2 no. childcares facilities and a new community hub facility which are put forward in support of self-sufficiency and, together with existing facilities in the vicinity, are of an appropriate scale for the development.
- Central to the proposed scheme is the development of a new east-west access route (Lissywollen Avenue). This route has been designed in compliance with the principles of DMURS and to support public transport, with 2 no. bus stops proposed. Pedestrian and cyclist routes are catered for along the avenue, and throughout the scheme generally. The development caters for 5 no. new connection points to the Old Rail Trail Greenway to the south. It is considered that the development adequately promotes and supports sustainable transport mode. A Mobility Management Plan to encourage same is also enclosed with the application.
- As detailed in the Quality Housing Assessment which accompanies the planning application, all the proposed dwellings are of a size which meets with and/or exceeds the required standards for new dwellings. The size of individual dwellings proposed allows the opportunity for future alterations if required and thereby support the principles of housing for life. The development also caters for an large quantum of ground floor own door dwellings which can be easily accessed by people with disabilities and/or the elderly.

6.5. Residential Density

- 6.5.1. Section 4.8 details guidance for residential density in new developments. It is noted that, in regard to Athlone, increased densities are considered to be appropriate where:

“there is necessary infrastructure, compliance with open and private space, undue impact on amenities is avoided, high quality design is exhibited and the scheme is in keeping with the character of the area.”

6.5.2. The following policies are considered relevant to the development:

- **P-RD1** - *“To promote higher residential density development in town centres and in particular Athlone and Mullingar, including on brownfield and infill sites subject to Development Management Standards being met and existing residential amenity not being compromised. In circumstances where public transport services are available car parking standards may be relaxed.”*
- **P-RD3** - *“To ensure that new housing development in towns and villages is of an appropriate scale, layout and design quality, and that it relates to the character and form of the settlement.”*
- **P-RD6** - *“To require new residential development in the towns and villages to comply with the residential standards set out in the Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government’s Guidelines Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009) in regard to density and design quality.”*

6.5.3. Policy P-RD1 of the CDP allows for higher residential density, particularly in Athlone and Mullingar:

“subject to Development Management Standards being met and existing residential amenity not being compromised”.

It is also noted that the above policy allows for relaxed car parking standards where public transport services are available. The proposed development complies with the Development Management Standards of the CDP and the proposed layout has given consideration to the existing residential amenity in the vicinity and is designed to reduce any negative effects on same.

6.5.4. Statement of Consistency with Residential Density

- The development is fully in accordance with the above policies of the CDP.
- The development provides for a net density of c. 42 dwellings per hectare, as detailed in the Planning Report prepared by Delphi Design which accompanies the application, however density is varied across the scheme in consideration of the surrounding environs. The development complies with the above guidance for residential density through its high-quality design, provision of public and private open spaces with meet with the standards of the CDP, and the development’s location adjacent to existing services, the N6 and the Old Rail Trail Greenway.
- As detailed in previous sections of this Statement of Consistency, the development complies with the residential standards set out in the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009) with regard to density and design quality.

6.6. Residential Layout & Design

6.6.1. Section 4.10 states that the Council’s primary aim in relation to residential development is to deliver high quality sustainable living environments which are attractive, safe, vibrant, and meet the needs of the residents and the community. To this end the principles of the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, Guidelines for Planning Authorities and the 12 design criteria in the accompanying Urban Design Manual (2009) are to be applied to new residential schemes in the county. The following policies are considered relevant:

- **P-LD1** - *“To achieve attractive and sustainable development which is based upon high standards of design, layout, and landscaping for new housing development.”*
- **P-LD2** - *“To determine the layout of new development before or at the same time as the road layout with identified connections to social infrastructure identified. Roads within housing estates should be overlooked by frontage development.”*



- **P-LD3** - *“To make appropriate provision for amenity and public open space as an integral part of new residential development or extensions to existing developments.”*
- **P-LD4** - *“To require Design Statements to be submitted for all new residential development schemes over 10 houses.”*
- **P-LD5** - *“To require that all new housing schemes shall be designed to reduce energy demand and shall comply with the Building Regulations energy performance standard.”*
- **P-LD6** - *“To ensure that all residential properties are designed with flexible and adaptable layouts to suit the homeowner with regard to Lifetime Homes.”*

6.6.2. Statement of Consistency with Residential Layout & Design

- The development is fully in accordance with the above policies.
- The layout has been informed throughout by the principles and criteria set out in the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, Guidelines for Planning Authorities and the 12 design criteria in the accompanying Urban Design Manual (2009) – for full details please refer to the Architectural Design Rationale prepared by Delphi Design which accompanies the application as a separate document.
- The development caters for an appropriate mix of housing typologies in the form of 1, 2, 3 & 4 bedroom houses, apartments and duplex units. All the proposed dwellings have been designed to the standards of the current building regulations and will ensure energy efficiency throughout the scheme.
- Public open space has been provided in accordance with the standards of the CDP i.e. 15%, and provides for a hierarchy of spaces which is detailed in the landscaping documents accompanying the application.
- The development caters for a new east-west access route (Lissywollen Avenue) which is being delivered as per the objectives of the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024. The route of avenue formed an integral part of the design process and was informed by several consultations with the local planning authority and local residents. The avenue has been designed to encourage reduced traffic speeds, prioritise the pedestrian and, together with the proposed building layout, create a sense of destination / place.
- All the proposed roads within the scheme are overlooked by proposed dwellings to ensure passive surveillance and enhanced security.

6.7. Public & Private Open Space

6.7.1. The following policies have regard to public and private open space in new residential developments:

- **P-PPOS1** - *“To ensure the provision of public and private open space within new residential development is of a high standard, overlooked and integral to the overall development. Narrow tracts of land or ‘left over areas’ will not be accepted as open space provision”.*
- **P-PPOS2** - *“To require a detailed landscaping plan with all new housing developments by a suitably qualified professional. The landscaping design shall include a survey of the existing natural features on the site and shall indicate trees to be retained”.*



6.7.2. Statement of Consistency Public & Private Open Space

- The development caters of a public open space provision of c. 16% of the net developable site area which is considered appropriate and in compliance with the above policies. Narrow tracts of 'leftover' space have not been included for in this calculation. For a full breakdown of the calculation of public open space please refer to the Planning Report prepared by Delphi Design which accompanies the application. All areas of public open space have been located to ensure they form an integral part of the scheme and are easily accessible to residents throughout the scheme. All areas of public open space are overlooked by proposed dwellings for enhance security and passive surveillance.
- A Landscape Design Rationale, prepared by Ronan MacDiarmada & Associates, which details the open space hierarchy – for full details please refer to same. Proposed planting and boundary treatments are detailed on the enclosed landscaping drawings prepared by Ronan MacDiarmada & Associates – please refer to same.
- A tree and hedgerow survey has been prepared by Arbor Care and a tree protection plan is enclosed with the application – please refer to same. Existing trees and hedgerows have been retained and incorporated into the design where feasible and supplemented by new planting where loss has occurred.

6.8. Development Management Standards

6.8.1. Section 14.3. of the CDP sets out the Development Management Standards for residential development in the county. The following are considered to be of relevance:

- **Section 14.3.4. Density** - Regard to be paid to the principles as outlined in the DEHLG 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas - Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2009), the accompanying Urban Design Manual (2009) and Smarter Travel policy document. Density will be depend on location, context, scale and availability of public transport. It is noted that more specific recommendations may be adopted in Local Area Plans. It is also noted that higher densities may be considered in respect of all sites in urban areas, but particularly those developments in excess of 0.5ha
- **Section 14.3.5. Site Coverage** - Flexibility will be applied in the assessment of planning applications however a general site coverage of between 70% and 80% is deemed be appropriate in urban locations.
- **Section 14.3.6. Plot Ratio** - Indicative plot ratios are detailed in Table 14.1 of the CDP. Outer suburban locations should be in a range of 0.35- 0.5.
- **Section 14.3.7. Design** - All housing developments will be assessed in both quantitative and qualitative terms as to whether they demonstrate the key elements of a good urban design and meet prescribed standards.
- **Section 14.3.8. Privacy and Enclosure** - Minimum rear garden depths should be 11m and rear boundary walls or fences shall be constructed to a height of not more 2m however flexibility may be applied.
- **Section 14.3.9. Overlooking** - A distance of 22m between opposing rear first floor windows should be maintained however flexibility may be applied. Any window proposed at ground floor level shall not be less than 1m from the boundary it faces.
- **Section 14.3.10. Overshadowing** - Daylight and shadow projection diagrams should be submitted for proposals with building of height or in close proximity to existing development.



- **Section 14.3.11 Private Open Space** - A minimum range of 60m² to 75 m² should be applied to 3 & 4 bedroom dwellings with 48m² provided for 2 bedroom dwellings. Private open space should be located behind the building line.
- **Section 14.3.12 Public Open Space** - A minimum standard of 15% of site area should be has been designated as Public Open Space. Open space provision should be provided on a hierarchical basis distributed throughout the proposed scheme.
- **Section 14.3.16. Phasing of Large Scale Residential Schemes** - Phasing programmes are required for large scale residential developments.
- **Section 14.3.20_Road Design and Layout in Residential Schemes** - Main link roads within scheme serving over 50 no. dwellings be physically constrained by the road layout to ensure speeds of between 30kph and 50kph.
- **Section 14.5.6 Childcare** - In relation to new housing areas a standard of one childcare facility providing for a minimum of 20 childcare places per approximately 75 dwellings shall be provided, unless otherwise recommended by the County Childcare Committee.
- **Section 14.9.1. Mobility Management Plans** - Mobility Management Plans are required where significant developments are proposed.
- **Section 14.9.2. Car Parking Standards** - Generally should comply with parking standards detailed in Table 14.11 of the CDP i.e. minimum 1 no. space per residential dwelling.
- **Section 14.9.5. Cycle Parking Standards** - 2 private secure bicycle spaces per 100 sq.m in residential housing schemes.

6.8.2. Statement of Consistency with CDP Development Management Standards

- The development has been designed, and progressed, with regard to the above Development Management Standards of the CDP. The Planning Report prepared by Delphi Design, which accompanies the application as a separate document, contains detailed information on the development's compliance with the above standards – please refer to same.
- Details of the development's compliance with the above standards can also be found in the following documents which accompany the application:
 - Sunlight, Daylight and Shadow Assessment
 - Mobility Management Plan
 - Statement of Compliance with DMURS
 - Traffic and Transportation Assessment
 - Landscape Design Rationale
 - Architectural Design Rationale
 - Childcare and School Demand Assessment
 - Quality Housing Assessment



6.9. Summary of Statement of Consistency with CDP

- 6.9.1.** Based on all the foregoing in Section 6 of this Statement of Consistency, it is considered that the development is in full compliance with the existing CDP. The development will deliver new residential accommodation on an undeveloped, underutilised, greenfield site zoned for residential use, which has the benefit of a specific local area plan setting out a detailed framework for the subject lands. The development provides for 576 no. dwellings and supports development of Athlone as a Strategic Gateway for the west of the county/country.



7.0. Draft Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027

- 7.1. The Draft Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027 (hereafter DCDP) is yet to be adopted with the public consultation period for same having ended on 30th June 2020. While the DCDP is subject to change, the Core Strategy of the DCDP has been written to ensure consistency with the objectives of the NPF and the E&MRSES. Given that the proposed development will be built out during the lifetime of the next development plan it is considered important to have some reference to the Core Strategy of the DCDP.
- 7.2. In accordance with the objectives of the NPF and the E&MRSES, the DCDP lists Athlone as a Regional Growth Centre in Tier 1 of the county's Settlement Hierarchy. Within the life of the next development plan Athlone is envisaged to grow by 3,460 persons, or 2,768 persons when the County Roscommon element of the town is excluded.
- 7.3. Section 2.9 of the DCDP notes that *"future development required to achieve the vision for Athlone includes the regeneration of underused, vacant or derelict lands in the town centre"* and aims to achieve compact growth targets with a minimum of 30% of new homes to be built within the existing built-up areas.
- 7.4. To this end, the DCDP identifies lands for which there is available service capacity and are capable of accommodating new development within the existing built-up footprint of established settlements or contiguous to existing developed lands. In the case of Athlone, in order to achieve the projected population targets of the NPF and the E&MRSES, regard is also given to lands that are not currently sufficiently serviced to support new development but have potential to become fully serviced within the life of the plan.
- 7.5. Section 2.16 of the DCDP details the housing stock and capacity of Westmeath. It is noted that the housing stock of the county increased by just 231 dwellings between 2011 and 2016. It is also stated that 2 person households and 1 person households form the largest overall proportion of total households in Westmeath, representing 28% and 23.5% of households in the county. 8.5% of the county's housing stock comprises of apartments.
- 7.6. The DCDP considers that lands currently identified for residential development are sufficient to meet the population targets set out in the Core Strategy and are guided by the NPF and E&MRSES requirements to promote consolidation of existing settlements and promote more compact forms of growth. The following Core Strategy Policy Objectives for Athlone are stated in the DCDP:
- **CPO 2.1** - *"Support the continued growth of Athlone, with a focus on quality of life and securing the investment to fulfil its role as a key Regional Growth Centre and economic driver in the centre of Ireland, with a target population of 30,000 up to 2031."*
 - **CPO 2.2** - *"Prepare a joint statutory Joint Urban Area Plan (UAP) for Athlone with Roscommon County Council in collaboration with EMRA and NWRA."*
 - **CPO 2.3** - *"Promote Athlone as a sustainable transport hub, of national and regional importance and support the preparation of a joint Transport Plan between Westmeath and Roscommon County Councils in collaboration with transport agencies and key stakeholders to improve sustainable mobility in the town."*
- 7.7. Core Strategy Policy Objectives of the DCDP also considered to be of relevance to the development are as follows:
- **CPO 2.11** - *"Ensure that the future spatial development of Westmeath is in accordance with the National Planning Framework 2040 (NPF) including the population targets set out under the Implementation Roadmap, and the Regional, Spatial and the Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Region 2019-2031."*



- **CPO 2.12** - *“Implement all land use planning policy and objectives in a manner which takes account of and is consistent with the Core Strategy in order to accelerate a transition to a greener, low carbon and climate resilient County with a focus on reduced travel demand through the promotion of sustainable settlement patterns.”*
- **CPO 2.13** - *“In the assessment of development proposals, to take account of transport corridors, environmental carrying capacity, availability and/or capacity to provide waste water and water supply services, potential to conflict with Water Framework Directive objectives, potential to impact on the integrity of European sites and Annexed Habitats and species, features of biodiversity value including ecological networks, impact on landscape and visual characteristics, education and other socioeconomic objectives.”*
- **CPO 2.14** - *“Promote the integration of land use and transportation policies and to prioritise provision for cycling and walking travel modes and the strengthening of public transport.”*
- **CPO 2.15** - *“Support the regeneration of underused town centre and brownfield / infill lands along with the delivery of existing zoned and serviced lands to facilitate population growth and achieve sustainable compact growth targets of 30% of all new housing to be built within the existing urban footprint of targeted settlements in the County.”*

7.8. Statement of Consistency with the DCDP

- While the DCDP is yet to be adopted and is subject to change, it is noted that the plan has been written to ensure consistency with both the NPF and the E&MRSES and it is acknowledged that the proposed development, if granted permission, will be built in the life of the next development plan.
- The development complies with the DCDP’s Core Strategy and will provide housing to support the projected population growth of Athlone of 8,851 persons (41% growth) up to the year 2031. The development will provide for much needed housing on zoned, serviced, lands within the existing footprint of an urban settlement. Moreover, the development is in accordance with the higher level national and regional plans are previously detailed in this Statement of Consistency.
- The development caters for much needed housing typologies which are in demand i.e. 1 & 2 bed dwellings, with the development providing for 60 no. 1 bedroom dwelling (c. 10% of proposed mix) and 21w no. 2 bedroom dwellings (c. 37% of proposed mix).
- The development is put forward in compliance with the provisions of Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020 and the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024, both of which comply with the Core Strategy of the DCDP. This ensures that the development is plan led and provides for residential development in an appropriate location which is sensitive to the existing built and natural environment.
- The development caters for a new east-west access route (Lissywollen Avenue) which has been designed to support public transport (bus). This avenue, together with the scheme as a whole, prioritise pedestrians and cyclists, thereby strengthening sustainable transport modes.
- The subject application is accompanied by, inter alia, an Environmental Impact Assessment Report, an Appropriate Assessment Screening, Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment and an Engineering Services Report. These assessments have confirmed the capacity of existing and proposed services to support the development and put in place mitigation measures, where necessary, to protect the environment.

8.0. Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020

8.1. The Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020 (hereafter ATDP) is the relevant development plan for the town of Athlone. The application site is located to the northeast of the town centre and is zoned for residential development. The application site is also subject to a Local Area Plan, known as the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024. The Lissywollen South area is designated in the ATDP as an area to undergo comprehensive & significant development in order to ensure more integrated development forms and coordinated delivery. The Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024 is discussed in detail in Section 9 of this Statement of Consistency.

8.2. Core Strategy

8.2.1. The ATDP contains a Core Strategy which details the vision for Athlone and the strategic aims to deliver same. It is noted that a number of Local Area Plans are in place to guide the future spatial development of the town, with the proposed development being located on lands designated for the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024.

8.2.2. The ATDP Core Strategy projects an average occupancy rate for estimated future housing at 2.4 persons and an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare. It is estimated that 3,310 houses are required up to the year 2020 to meet the projected population target for the town during the life of the plan. The Core Strategy details the preferred development strategy for the town, of note to the proposed development are the following:

“Promoting and facilitating the development of critical mass, employment, enterprise and economic activity in Athlone, commensurate with its status as a Linked Gateway Town”.

“Protecting the town’s key environmental assets, in particular the River Shannon and its callows by implementing an environmental protection policy which recognises the various environmentally sensitive zones and Natura 2000 sites within the town”.

“Ensuring that all new significant development is carried out in accordance with the agreed development framework in tandem with the provision of appropriate supporting infrastructure”.

“Pursuing the development of identified opportunity sites in the town”.

8.2.3. The ATDP contains a number of Core Strategy policies however of particular relevance to the proposed development is Core Strategy Policy P-CS5 which seeks to:

“To guide the future development of Athlone in accordance with the spatial framework established in Local Area Plans in the town”.

8.2.4. Also of relevance to the development are the following Core Strategy policies:

- **P-CS1** - *“To ensure that the future spatial development of Athlone is in accordance with higher level Plans including National and Regional Spatial Policy, together with national policy guidance issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 as amended, the River Basin Management Plans, Surface Water Regulations and the Habitats Directive.”*
- **P-CS2** - *“To take account of in the assessment of development proposals, transport corridors, environmental carrying capacity, availability and/or capacity to provide waste water services education and other socioeconomic objectives.”*
- **P-CS4** - *“To seek the delivery of physical and community infrastructure in conjunction with high quality residential developments to create quality living environments.”*



- **P-CS6** - *“To take in account, in the assessment of development proposals, Article 6(3)(4) and Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, the Surface Water Regulations 2009 and the relevant measures of the Shannon River Basin Management Plan 2009-2015.”*
- **P-CS7** - *“To ensure a sequential approach to development and promote residential development, prioritisation of infill sites / developments and the occupation of residential units in the town core, in order to promote the achievement of critical mass and protect and enhance town centre function.”*
- **P-CS8** - *“To promote the integration of land use and transportation policy and to prioritise provision for cycling and walking travel modes and the strengthening of public transport.”*
- **P-CS9** - *“To restrict development in areas at risk of flooding in accordance with the Planning System, Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG/OPW 2009) and the Shannon Catchment Flood Risk Assessment Management Study (CFRAMS).”*
- **P-CS10** - *“To protect and conserve buildings, sites, public open spaces and features of special architectural, historic, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest and to protect features of natural heritage, including the River Shannon, canal, watercourses and habitats.”*
- **P-CS11** - *“To promote the appropriate use and re-use of town centre backland and under-utilised sites and to promote the regeneration of areas in need of renewal.”*
- **P-CS12** - *“To facilitate the sustainable development of Athlone as part of the Midland Linked Gateway to meet economic, social and demographic growth requirements in accordance with the provisions of the National Spatial Strategy and the Midland Regional.”*

8.2.5. Statement of Consistency with Core Strategy

- It is considered that the development fully complies with the above Core Strategy policies of the ATDP.
- The design, layout, and housing typologies provided for within the scheme have been guided foremost by the objectives of the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024, as directed by ATDP Core Strategy policy P-CS5. This ensures that the development is plan led and provides for residential development in an appropriate location which is sensitive to the existing built and natural environment.
- The development will achieve sustainable development of lands zoned for residential use and thereby support the growth of Athlone as a gateway town in compliance with the national and regional planning policies discussed in the previous sections of this Statement of Consistency.
- The development will assist in achieving the population and housing targets for Athlone through the provision of 576 no. residential units, to be built within the existing urban footprint of Athlone in a sequential manner and in proximity to existing amenities and services. The projected development population of 1,567 persons will support the goal of achieving critical mass in Athlone.
- The development caters for 2 no. childcares facilities and a new community hub facility which are put forward in support of self-sufficiency and, together with existing facilities in the vicinity, are of an appropriate scale for the proposed development.
- Central to the proposed scheme is the development of a new east-west access route (Lissywollen Avenue). This route has been designed in compliance with the principles of DMURS and to support public transport, with 2 no. bus stops proposed. Pedestrian and cyclist routes are catered for along the avenue, and throughout the scheme generally. The development caters for 5 no. new connection points to the Old



Rail Trail Greenway to the south. This avenue, together with the scheme as a whole, prioritises pedestrians and cyclists thereby promoting sustainable transport modes.

- The subject application is accompanied by, inter alia, an Environmental Impact Assessment Report, an Appropriate Assessment Screening, Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment and an Engineering Services Report. These assessments have confirmed the capacity of existing and proposed services to support the development and put in place mitigation measures, where necessary, to protect the environment.
- The application lands are located to the immediate north-east of the town centre and the development of same ensures a sequential approach is prioritised on underutilised lands located in close proximity to existing amenities. The proposed layout has been designed to prioritise public transport and other sustainable modes of transport. The development caters for a new community hub facility and 2 no. childcare facilities to support future social infrastructure demands generated by the development.

8.3. Housing

8.3.1. Chapter 3 of the ATDP sets out the policies and objectives for new residential development in the town. The ATDP's Housing Strategy makes the following recommendations of relevance to the proposed development:

"Future housing allocation shall be allocated in accordance with the Core Strategy settlement hierarchy".

"All new housing shall be built in accordance with a 'house for life' and support independent living".

8.3.2. ATDP identifies a decline in the average household size and an increase in the elderly, dependent and single parent household population. The ATDP also states that:

"The demand for two bedroom accommodation is high among the elderly and people with disabilities, as they require additional rooms for carers. The greatest requested need among people on the Councils waiting list is for 2 bedroom accommodation".

8.3.3. The following Housing Policies are of relevance:

- **P-H2** - *"To secure the provision of social and affordable housing, to meet the needs of all households and disadvantaged sectors in Athlone, including the elderly, first time buyers, single person households on modest incomes, people with disabilities and special needs etc."*
- **P-H3** - *"To ensure, in accordance with Part V of the Planning & Development Acts 2000 as amended, that 15% of the land zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, be made available for the provision of social and affordable housing."*
- **P-H4** - *"To support the right of every individual to own their own property, and to ensure a suitable range of tenure types, and engage with the private rented sector to meet the needs of a more mobile population."*
- **P-H5** - *"To ensure the provision of a suitable range of house types and sizes to facilitate the demographic profile of the town."*
- **P-H6** - *"To have regard to the provisions of the 'Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas' and the accompanying 'Urban Design Manual' in assessing applications for housing development."*
- **P-H7** - *"To require diversity in the form, size and type of dwelling within residential schemes."*



8.3.4. Statement of Consistency with Housing Policy

- All the proposed dwellings have been designed to the most up to date standards in terms of their gross floor areas and are capable of facilitating future alterations if required, thereby supporting lifelong housing, independent living and 'live-work' units.
- The development caters for 60 no. 1 bed dwellings (apartments) and 212 no. two bed dwellings (houses, apartments & duplexes) representing c.10% (1 beds) & c. 37% (2 beds) of the proposed dwellings. This provision of 1 & 2 bed dwellings will cater for 'start up units' and the growing trends for smaller household sizes.
- The development agreement between the applicant (Alanna Roadbridge Developments Ltd.) and the landowner (Westmeath County Council) will see 174 no. dwellings (c. 30% of the total dwellings proposed) offered for social housing. Within this allocation, 58 no. dwellings are offered in compliance with the provisions of Part V of the Planning Development Act 2000 (as amended). The development will therefore fully support the need to reduce affordability in new schemes.
- The development caters for a wide range of unit types and sizes, including for houses, apartments and duplex units consisting of c. 10% 1 bed dwellings; c. 37% 2 bed dwellings; c. 44% 3 bed dwellings; and c. 9% 4 bed dwellings. The development caters for housing which can be offered to both home purchasers and on the rental market.
- The design, layout, and built form of the development has been guided by the principles of urban design set out in the guidelines. The subject application is accompanied by an Architectural Design Rationale which details development's compliance with the 12 Design Criteria and Indicators contained in the Urban Design Manual, which is also in accordance with the requirements of the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024 – for full details please refer to the Architectural Design Rationale prepared by Delphi Design.

8.4. Specific Housing Requirements

8.4.1. Section 3.5 of the ATDP details the policies in relation to specific housing requirements. The following policies are also considered to be of relevance:

- **P-FH1** - *"To ensure a mix and range of housing types and in particular two bedroom accommodation, to meet the diverse needs of residents of the town."*
- **P-FH2** - *"To ensure all new residential schemes are designed so that units are easily adaptable in the future to accommodate housing for life."*
- **P-FH3** - *"To ensure that a suitable variety and mix of dwelling types and sizes is provided in developments to meet different needs, having regard to demographic and social profile of the town's population."*
- **P-FH4** - *"To support independent living for people with disabilities and the elderly and where possible housing is integrated within proposed or existing residential developments and located close to existing community facilities."*
- **P-FH6** - *"To provide for and facilitate the provision of accommodation to meet the needs of the elderly and to encourage the provision of a range of housing options for elderly persons in central, convenient and easily accessible locations in the town and to integrate such housing with mainstream housing where possible."*



8.4.2. Statement of Consistency with Specific Housing Requirements

- The development caters for an appropriate mix of dwellings comprised c. 10% 1-bedroom units; 37% 2-bedroom units; 44% 3-bedroom units; and 9% 4-bedroom units (49% houses, 43% apartments & 8% duplexes). This mix of dwellings will cater for a diverse range of living requirements.
- All the proposed dwellings are of a generous size and capable of being adapted by individual residents should their requirements change over the course of the lifecycle. The proposed dwellings are therefore capable of supporting independent living for people with disabilities and the elderly. The proposed development caters for public transport routes which will allow residents to easily access local facilities. Disabled parking facilities are also accommodated within the proposed scheme.

8.5. Sustainable Residential Development

8.5.1. Section 3.7 of the ATDP details the policies in relation to sustainable residential development in the town. Of particular relevance to the proposed development is Policy P-SR6:

“To ensure that new Greenfield residential estate development should be in accordance with the spatial framework established in the relevant Local Area Plan for the subject area”.

8.5.2. The following policies are also considered to be of relevance:

- **P-SR1** - *“To support the principle of sequential development in assessing all new residential development proposals, whereby areas closer to the centre of the town, including underutilised and brownfield sites, will be chosen for development in the first instance to promote a sustainable pattern of development.”*
- **P-SR3** - *“To ensure all new residential development complies with the evaluation criteria for determining the suitability of housing in an urban area, as set out in the National Spatial Strategy.”*
- **P-SR7** - *“To promote energy efficiency both during the construction phase and during the lifetime of residential development by sensitive design and layout taking into account topography, orientation and surrounding features of a site.”*
- **P-SR8** - *“To promote social inclusion by encouraging the provision of community facilities and in particular childcare facilities in new and established residential areas.”*

8.5.3. With regard to residential density, the ATDP states that densities and detailed residential layouts are prescribed in many of the Local Area Plans in the town. In relation to the proposed development densities are prescribed in the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024, which is discussed in detailed in Section 9 of this Statement of Consistency.

8.5.4. Statement of Consistency with Sustainable Residential Development

- The development complies with the above policies of the ATDP.
- The scheme has been designed in accordance with the objectives contained in the relevant Local Area Plan i.e. the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2020. The subject lands are currently vacant, underutilised, zoned for residential development, and located adjacent to the existing town centre. The development therefore supports the principle of sequential development.
- A Construction Management Plan and a Building Life Cycle Report accompany the application as separate documents and details the energy efficiency of the development during both the construction and



operational phase of the development. This is also detailed in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report which accompanies the application.

- The development caters for 2 no. childcares facilities and a new community hub facility which are put forward in support of self-sufficiency and, together with existing facilities in the vicinity, are of an appropriate scale for the development.
- The subject application is accompanied by, inter alia, an Environmental Impact Assessment Report, an Appropriate Assessment Screening, Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment and an Engineering Services Report. These assessments have confirmed the capacity of existing and proposed services to support the development and put in place mitigation measures, where necessary, to protect the environment.

8.6. Residential Density

8.6.1. Section 3.9. of the ATDP details the policies in relation to Residential Density. The following policies are also considered to be of relevance:

- **P-RD3** - *“To apply the residential standards set out in the DEHLG’s guidelines Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009) as appropriate.”*

8.6.2. Statement of Consistency with Residential Density

- The development, including for its net density and layout, has been designed with reference to the residential standards set out in the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009) document as appropriate.

8.7. Residential Design & Layout

8.7.1. With regard to residential layout, design, and open space, the following policies of the ATDP, are considered relevant the proposed development:

- **P-RLD1** - *“To achieve attractive and sustainable development and create high standards of design, layout, and landscaping, for new housing development.”*
- **P-RLD2** - *“To determine the layout of new development before or at the same time as the road layout with connections to social infrastructure identified.”*
- **P-RLD3** - *“To require that appropriate provision is made for amenity and public open space as an integral part of new residential or extensions to existing developments.”*
- **P-RLD4** - *“All new housing schemes shall be designed to reduce energy demand and shall comply with the Building Regulations energy performance standards.”*
- **P-RLD5** - *“To ensure that all residential properties are designed with flexible and adaptable layouts to suit the homeowner with regard to Lifetime Homes.”*
- **P-POS1** - *“To ensure that the provision of public and private open space for new residential development is of a high standard, overlooked and integral to the overall development. Narrow tracts of land or ‘left over areas’ will not be included within open space provision.”*
- **P-POS2** - *“To require a detailed landscaping plan with all new housing developments by a suitably qualified professional. The landscaping design shall include a survey of the existing natural features on the site and indicate those to be retained.”*



8.7.2. Statement of Consistency with Residential Layout and Design

- The development is fully in accordance with the above policies.
- The proposed layout has been informed throughout by the principles and criteria set out in the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, Guidelines for Planning Authorities and the 12 design criteria in the accompanying Urban Design Manual (2009) – for full details please refer to the Architectural Design Rationale prepared by Delphi Design which accompanies the application as a separate document.
- The development caters for an appropriate mix of housing typologies in the form of 1, 2, 3 & 4 bedroom houses, apartments and duplex units. All the proposed dwellings have been designed to the standards of the current building regulations and will ensure energy efficiency throughout the scheme.
- All the proposed dwellings have been designed to the most up to date standards in terms of their gross floor areas and are capable of facilitating future alterations if required, thereby supporting lifelong housing and independent living.
- The development caters for a new east-west access route (Lissywollen Avenue) which is being delivered as per the objectives of the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024. The route of avenue formed an integral part of the design process and was informed by several consultations with the local planning authority and local residents. The avenue has been designed to encourage reduced traffic speeds, prioritise the pedestrian/cyclist and, together with the proposed building layout, create a sense of destination / place.
- All the proposed roads within the scheme are overlooked by proposed dwellings to ensure passive surveillance and enhanced security.
- The development caters of a public open space provision of c. 16% which is considered appropriate and in compliance with the above policies. Narrow tracts of ‘leftover’ space have not been included for in this calculation. For a full breakdown of the calculation of public open space please refer to the Planning Report prepared by Delphi Design which accompanies the application. All areas of public open space have been located to ensure they form an integral part of the scheme and are easily accessible to residents throughout the scheme. All areas of public open space are overlooked by proposed dwellings for enhance security and passive surveillance.
- A Landscape Design Rationale, prepared by Ronan MacDiarmada & Associates, which details the open space hierarchy – for full details please refer to same. Proposed planting and boundary treatments are detailed on the enclosed landscaping drawings prepared by Ronan MacDiarmada & Associates – please refer to same.
- A tree and hedgerow survey has been prepared by Arbor Care and a tree protection plan is enclosed with the application – please refer to same. Existing trees and hedgerows have been retained and incorporated into the design where feasible and supplemented by new planting where loss has occurred.

8.8. Development Management Standards

8.8.1. Chapter 12 ‘Development Management Standards’ of the ATDP details the minimum required standards for residential development in the town. In general, these standards are consistent with those stated in the Westmeath CDP as previously outlined in Section 6 of this Statement of Consistency.

8.8.2. The ATDP has specific reference to the development of tall buildings which, for the purposes of the plan, are defined as a building of over three or four storeys, depending on context. The ATDP notes that there is precedent for tall buildings in Athlone and that “*scope exists for the development of high-quality residential accommodation in appropriate locations*”.



8.8.3. Section 12.7 of the ATDP also has specific regard to Noise Management where it is stated that applications for development in close proximity to major roads will require the developer to identify and propose noise mitigation measures within the zone of influence.

8.8.4. Statement of Consistency with ATDP Development Management Standards

- As previously detailed in Section 6 of this Statement of Consistency, the development has been designed, and progressed, with regard to the Development Management Standards of the Westmeath CDP, and thereby can be considered compliant with the Development Management Standards of the ATDP. The Planning Report prepared by Delphi Design, which accompanies the application as a separate document, contains detailed information on the development's compliance with these standards – please refer to same.
- Details of the development's compliance with the above standards can also be found in the following documents which accompany the application:
 - Sunlight, Daylight and Shadow Assessment
 - Mobility Management Plan
 - Statement of Compliance with DMURS
 - Traffic and Transportation Assessment
 - Landscape Design Rationale
 - Architectural Design Rationale
 - Childcare and School Demand Assessment
 - Quality Housing Assessment
- The development caters for buildings of up to 5 storey in height (part 4 / part 5 storey) which is considered appropriate and in accordance with the vision for the subject lands outlined in the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024. The proposed building heights are also considered appropriate in light of the SSPRs contained in the 2018 Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines.
- The subject application is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report which includes for a chapter on noise impact, as required by the ATDP, and mitigation measures for same.

8.9. Lissywollen

8.9.1. The ATDP also contains a number of specific references with regard to the development of lands at Lissywollen South. The following are considered to be relevant to the proposed development:

- *“A Local Area Plan was adopted for Lissywollen South in 2008, which provides for a number of distinctive character areas set within a unifying urban and landscape structure”.*
- *“This Plan supports the concept of a live-work unit which can be defined as a single unit within a building that is both a place to live and a place of business or commerce. The development of live-work units can lead to a more sustainable land use pattern, by providing for a mix of uses, ensuring a balance between day and night time activity and reducing commuting, and is specifically provided for in the Lissywollen South Local Area Plan”.*
- **O-WC11-** *“To provide north-south pedestrian and cycle linkages between Curragh-Lissywollen and Lissywollen South/Retreat, to overcome barriers to access and movement created by the N6 and rail lines.”*



8.9.2. Statement of Consistency with Lissywollen

- The proposed layout is based upon 5 no. distinctive character areas which will be differentiated through their building form and external finishes. Full details of these character areas can be found in the Architectural Design Rationale which accompanies the application – please refer to same. The proposed layout / character areas are put forward in compliance with the overall unifying urban and landscape structure of the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024.
- The proposed dwellings are of a generous size with meet with and/or exceed the minimum gross floor area standards set out in the relevant planning policy documents. All of the proposed dwellings, particularly the 3 and 4 bedroom houses, are capable of supporting the concept of live-work with additional bedroom capable of being converted in home offices.
- The proposed layout caters of pedestrian and cycle linkage throughout and careful consideration has been given to the provision of new connections to the Old Rail Trail Greenway to the south. While Objective O-WC11 does not directly apply to the subject site, the proposed layout has been designed with cognizance to same and will not impede the future delivery of this objective.

8.10. Summary of Statement of Consistency with the ATDP

- Based on all the foregoing in Section 8 of this Statement of Consistency, it is considered that the development is in full compliance with the existing ATDP. The development will deliver new residential accommodation on an undeveloped, underutilised, greenfield site zoned for residential use, which has the benefit of a specific local area plan setting out a detailed framework for the subject lands. The development provides for 576 no. dwellings and supports development of Athlone as a Strategic Gateway for the west of the county/country.

9.0. Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024

- 9.0.1.** The development site is subject to a strategic Local Area Plan known as the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024 (hereafter LSFP). The LSFP was adopted in accordance with the policies and objectives of the ATDP and has regard to the objectives of the NPF. The LSFP seeks to develop this strategically located 78 hectare land bank as a highly sustainable and integrated new urban quarter extending from the town centre of Athlone. The LSFP is noted as being a robust and adaptable development framework.
- 9.0.2.** The LSFP lands are divided into 4 development areas, as per Figure 5, with the application site comprising the entirety of Area 2 'Brawny' and the majority of Area 1 'East End'. Save for parts of the route of the proposed east-west avenue (Lissywollen Avenue), the entirety of the application site is zoned for 'Proposed Residential' development.



Figure 4 - Development areas of the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024.

9.1. Development Strategies

- 9.1.1.** The LSFP details a development strategy to guide the overall structure, planning, and design rationale for the plan area under the following headings:
- Land use and function
 - Landscape and urban form
 - Access and movement

The proposed development's consistency with the development strategy of the LSFP is detailed in the following sub-sections.

9.2. Land Use and Function

9.2.1. Map 1 of the LSFP, as per Figure 6 below, demonstrates the Land Use & Function Strategy for the LSFP with the application site being located on the residentially zoned lands. The objective for these lands is to provide for a range of dwelling sizes and typologies to accommodate emerging demographic trends, with a diversity in the building form creating sustainable neighbourhoods.

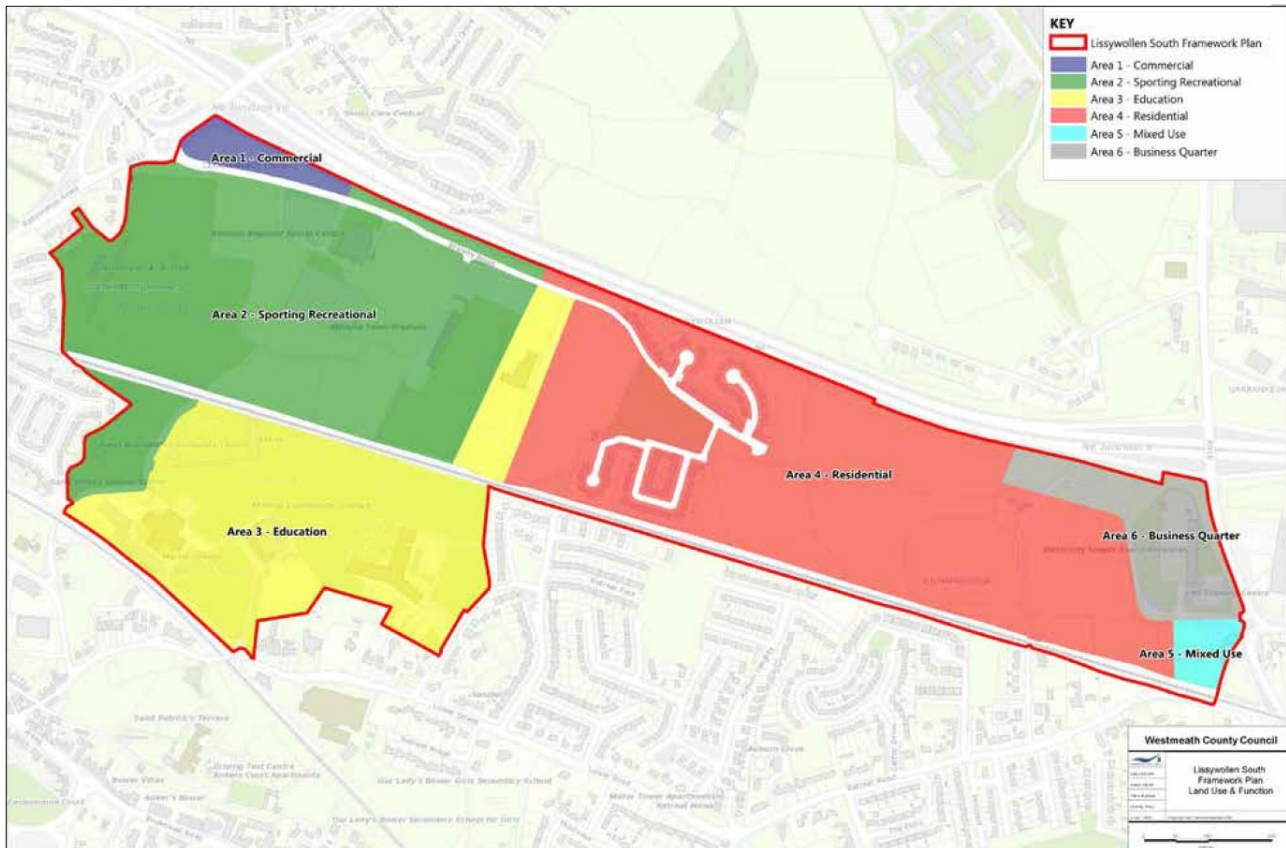


Figure 5- Land Use and Function of the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024.

9.2.2. Of relevance to the development are the following Land Use and Function objectives of the LSFP:

- **O-LUF1** - “To reinforce, consolidate and foster activity and a sense of community in Brawny through a mix of housing and household types, new community uses, facilities and new local services.”
- **O-LUF5** - “To ensure the timely provision of community facilities and services in tandem with the development of lands.”
- **O-LUF7** - “To support and encourage the provision of educational, community, recreational, healthcare and social infrastructure facilities, within the Lissywollen South Framework Plan, including promotion of optimum use of existing facilities and encouragement of shared/dual use of existing and future facilities.”
- **O-LUF9** - “To promote the expansion of existing recreational facilities at Sarsfield Square, whilst maximising links to the adjacent Regional Sports Centre and to the Old Rail Trail.”
- **O-LUF10** - To promote a variety of residential typologies, including terraced, semi-detached, detached housing, duplexes and apartments with coherent streets and connected open spaces to create distinctive neighbourhoods that will promote adaptable whole life-cycle living.”
- **O-LUF13** - “To provide a new community focus and multipurpose facility serving Brawny serving existing and new residential areas.



9.2.3. Statement of Consistency with Land Use and Function

- It is considered that the development fully complies with the above Land Use and Function objectives of the LSFP.
- The proposed layout has taken great cognizance of the existing residential development which bisects the subject site i.e. the Brawny residential estate. The design process included for several consultations between representatives of the applicant's design team, the local planning authority (Westmeath County Council) and the existing residents of Brawny prior to formal pre-planning application consultations being held for the subject development. The outcome of these meetings informed the layout which is now put forward for permission and it is considered that the proposed development will integrate with the existing community at Brawny thereby enhancing the sense of community in the area.
- The development caters for a modern, vibrant, new urban quarter, as envisaged by the LSFP, which individual areas across the scheme being differentiated into 5 no. character areas. This approach allows for a diverse mix of housing and household types, while also ensuring that the sense of community in Brawny reinforced and protected.
- The development caters for a wide variety of residential dwellings including for terraced & semi-detached housing, as well as apartment / duplex units which can cater for residents across all stages of the life cycle. All the proposed dwellings are provided with private amenity space in accordance with the standards of the Westmeath CDP and the relevant Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines.
- The proposed layout has been designed with cognizance to the need to promote the Old Rail Trail Greenway, located along the southern boundary of the application site, as an important amenity feature. The creation of connectivity and permeability between the development and the Old Rail Trail Greenway has been integral to the design process. 5 no. new connection points from the application site onto the Greenway are proposed, increasing access for both future residents and visitors. The uses of homezones on the approaches to the Greenway ensure an enhanced sense of place / safety and prioritisation pedestrians / cyclists over car users. Segregated cycle / pedestrian routes are provided for throughout the proposed scheme to support the promotion and use of the Greenway, as well as permeability throughout the scheme and to Athlone town centre.
- The development caters for a new community hub facility. The community hub measures c. 101m² and is located on the ground floor of Block D. This community hub will be capable of supporting a number of potential functions and provides a focal point for the existing and future communities at Brawny. The development also caters for 2 no. childcare care facilities, important road infrastructure, and an ample provision of public open space. The development will be built out on a phased basis with a phasing plan accompanying the planning application. The proposed phasing of the development will ensure that there is a timely provision of social infrastructure in tandem with the delivery of residential dwellings.

9.3. Landscape & Urban Form

- 9.3.1. Map 2 of the LSFP, as per Figure 7 below, highlights the Landscape & Urban Form Strategy for the LSFP lands. The LSFP seeks to retain key landscape features, where feasible, provide an open space network and greening of new road infrastructure, whilst promoting high quality innovative design led urban forms and layouts.

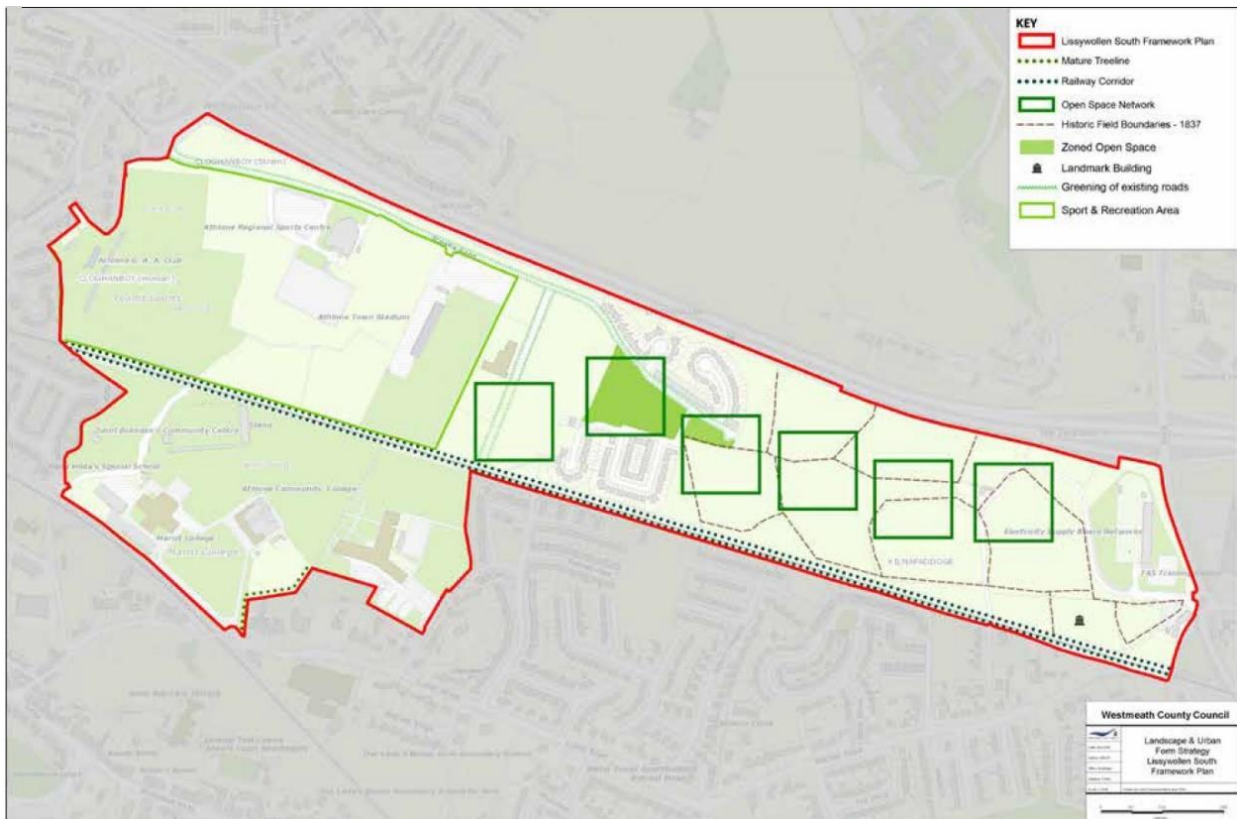


Figure 6 - Landscape and urban form strategy of the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024.

9.3.2. Of relevance to the development are the following Landscape and Urban Form objectives of the LSFP:

- **O-LUF1** - *“To protect and supplement existing landscape features of amenity and biodiversity value such as established field boundaries, significant hedgerows and stands of trees, and to incorporate same into the new urban structure.”*
- **O-LUF2** - *“To provide for structural tree lines along both the Lissywollen Avenue and the North South Avenue and appropriate landscaping along new streets, green links and open spaces.”*
- **O-LUF3** - *“To implement a planting scheme of native trees and hedgerow within the Regional Sports campus and along the entire extent of the Brawny Road and existing access road serving the Gaelscoil.”*
- **O-LUF4** - *“To provide a hierarchy of linked urban and open spaces across the plan area with connectivity to the Regional Sports Centre, business quarter, new residential areas and the Old Rail Trail including the creation of active and passive recreation areas and children’s play areas.”*
- **O-LUF5** - *“To promote biodiversity by surveying and protecting existing areas of biodiversity value and provide for new and extended areas of biodiversity, where identified.”*
- **O-LUF6** - *“To prepare and implement a comprehensive landscaping scheme for existing open space area serving Brawny, to include street furniture and public art/sculpture.”*
- **O-LUF7** - *“To ensure a continuous frontage and passive supervision over open spaces and green links, in particular, along the Old Rail Trail Greenway.”*
- **O-LUF8** - *“To provide a distinctive urban form that responds to the character of the locality and allows for ease of access and navigation.”*



- **O-LUF9** - *“To ensure new development proposals respond to the local context and avoid monotonous and repetitive styles of ‘volume building’ type schemes.”*
- **O-LUF10** - *“To ensure a continuous frontage and appropriate massing and scale along new routes and focal spaces.”*
- **O-LUF11** - *“To prohibit the siting of rear elevations/gardens onto public open spaces, streets and the N6 national route.”*
- **O-LUF12** - *“To promote high quality architect designed innovative layouts and energy efficient design.”*
- **O-LUF13** - *“To consider opportunities for higher buildings where they provide a clear benefit for legibility and identity for the area, and where they are compatible with the skyline and development management standards prescribed in the Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020.”*
- **O-LUF15** - *“To protect environmental quality in Lissywollen through the implementation of European, National and Regional policy and legislation relating to air quality, greenhouse gases, climate change, light pollution, noise pollution and waste management, in order to support the national transition to a climate resilient low carbon society and economy, at a local and county level.”*
- **O-LUF16** - *“To protect Annex 1 habitat Molinia Meadows (Habitat Code 6410) where identified and in this regard an ecological survey by a suitably qualified person may be required to be undertaken in advance of any development proposal within the plan area.”*

9.3.3. Statement of Consistency with Landscape and Urban Form

- The development has considered the existing environmental amenity of the site. A detailed Landscape Rationale, prepared by Ronan MacDiarmada & Associates, is submitted with the application as a separate document – please refer to same for full details. A tree and hedgerow survey and tree protection plan has also been prepared by Arbor Care and is submitted with the application. Where feasible existing hedgerows and trees have been retained in the proposed scheme incorporated into the landscape features. New native trees and hedgerows will also be planted as part of the scheme in order to support biodiversity initiatives – please refer to the proposed landscaping proposals submitted with the application for full details. Environmental protection and integrity will be ensured throughout the construction process in compliance with European, National and Regional policy. This will be implemented through construction management plans & on-site inspection and will be conducted in compliance with the mitigation measures detailed in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report which accompanies the application.
- The proposed development caters for a hierarchy of linked urban and natural open spaces across the scheme which will enhance connectivity between the new residential areas and the Old Rail Trail Greenway. The enclosed landscaping plans cater for active and passive recreation areas, children’s play areas and street furniture. Along the route of the main avenue (Lissywollen Avenue) street trees are proposed to provide green links and promote a sense of place. All the proposed areas of public open space, and the proposed street network, are overlooked by proposed dwellings to enhance safety and feeling of security in these areas.
- The development caters for 5 no. character areas in order to avoid the monotony of ‘volume building’ and create distinct urban forms. The western section of the site will cater for a more urban area, largely consisting of apartment & duplex units, while the eastern section of the scheme largely consists of more traditional 2 storey semi-detached and terraced housing which will be distinguished by different material finishes. All the materials used for external finishes will be of a high quality and the proposed dwellings will be built to the most up to date energy efficient standards. A Building Life Cycle Report and Architectural Design Rationale further detailing same are enclosed with the application – please refer to same.



- The proposed street network has been designed to comply with the principles of DMURS and caters for a legible layout which priorities pedestrians / cyclists over cars. The proposed layout has ensured that continuous frontage is catered for along street routes for passive surveillance. The proposed layout also ensures that rear gardens do not back onto streets, public open spaces or the adjacent N6. Building of appropriate levels of massing and scale are located along the route of the main avenue (Lissywollen Avenue) to create an urban edge to the development and enhance the sense of place.
- The development has encouraged higher buildings (5 storeys maximum) in appropriate locations, mainly located along the main avenue and adjacent to public open space, which also remaining sensitive to the existing environs and the contextual sitting of the site. The proposed buildings of height are largely located to the northwest of the scheme in order to create a welcoming urban form and a positive identity for the area which is compatible with the vision of the LSFP.

9.4. Access & Movement

- 9.4.1.** Map 3 of the LSFP, as per Figure 8 below, highlights the Access & Movement Strategy for the LSFP lands. The LSFP seeks to provide two new strategic access routes, maximise connections to the wider environs via the Old Rail Trail and promotion of a modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport.
- 9.4.2.** The principal movement element of the LSFP relevant to the proposed development is the construction of a new east-west access route, referred to as 'Lissywollen Avenue', with the secondary road network deriving from same. The LSFP notes that at the tertiary level, there are opportunities in the structure for shared spaces and homezones.
- 9.4.3.** Lissywollen Avenue is described in the LSFP as an urban boulevard, designed as the main through route opening up access to lands for development and ensuring the provision of adequate access and permeability throughout the plan area. While the avenue is envisaged as providing for a degree of through-traffic, it is noted that passive traffic calming measures such as deliberate changes in horizontal alignment are required to ensure prioritisation of pedestrian, cyclist and public transport.

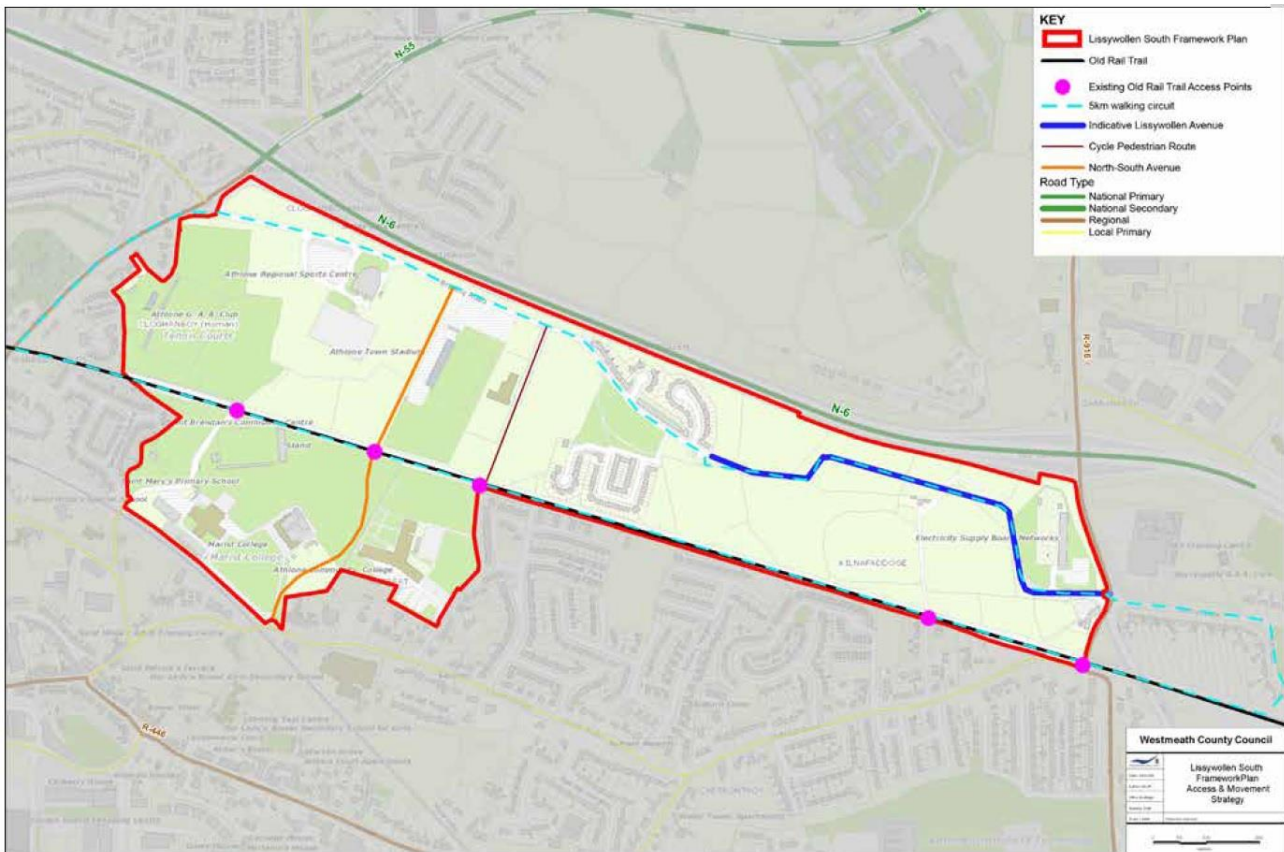


Figure 7- Access and movement strategy of the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024.

9.4.4. Of relevance to the development are the following Access & Movement objectives of the LSFP:

- **O-AM1** - *“To provide a new and extended east west Lissywollen Avenue in the form of an urban boulevard linking and unifying all parts of the plan area.”*
- **O-AM2** - *“To integrate a secondary network of streets with Lissywollen Avenue and the existing street network.”*
- **O-AM5** - *“To provide an integrated and permeable network of streets with high quality pedestrian and cycle networks, maximising linkages within the area, to the Old Rail Trail and to the wider environs.”*
- **O-AM6** - *“To create a network of safe and attractive streets structured around a compact and walkable layout to ensure ease of movement.”*
- **O-AM7** - *“To provide for a high quality safe pedestrian and cycle network within the Plan Area with high levels of permeability, passive surveillance and supervision and to ensure that this network will provide attractive, legible and direct links to the Town Centre, AIT, the Regional Sports Centre, Bus Stops and the wider environs.”*
- **O-AM8** - *“To provide for a bus service to serve the plan area.”*
- **O-AM9** - *“To promote the creation of a 5km walking/running circuit within Lissywollen, in the interests of quality of life and promoting healthy communities.”*
- **O-AM10** - *“To improve existing streets in terms of pedestrian and cycle facilities as well as landscape and urban quality.”*



- **O-AM11** - *“To prohibit the siting of rear elevations/gardens onto public open spaces, streets and the N6 national route.”*
- **O-AM12** - *“To promote high quality architect designed innovative layouts and energy efficient design.”*
- **O-AM13** - *“To promote routes and spaces which are human scaled, memorable as places, have a high standard of amenity and support sustainable transport forms such as walking, cycling and public transport.”*

9.4.5. Statement of Consistency with Access & Movement

- The development caters for a new urban avenue / boulevard spanning from east to west. The proposed avenue (Lissywollen Avenue) will connect the existing Ballymahon roundabout (on the R915 -to the west) to Garrycastle roundabout (on the R916- to the east). The proposed avenue will therefore link all of the Area 1, 2 & 3 lands of the LSFP. This avenue has been designed in compliance with the principles of DMURS and caters for traffic calming measures such as tight bends and horizontal deflections where appropriate. A segregated pedestrian / cycle route is catered for along the entire route of the avenue to promote prioritisation of pedestrians / cyclists and sustainable transport modes. The proposed avenue has also been designed to cater for public transport (bus) with 2 no. new bus stops proposed along the route.
- The development caters for an integrated network of secondary streets which offer a mix of street typology and are designed in compliance with DMURS. The secondary street network is orthogonal in design to cater for ease of access, movement and accessibility. The development also caters ample provision of footpaths, cycling routes and soft landscaping areas which will encourage walking/running within Lissywollen and promote healthy communities. These routes will be overlooked by proposed dwellings for passive surveillance and will ensure permeability throughout the proposed scheme. The proposed layout has been designed to prohibit the siting of rear elevations/gardens onto public open spaces, streets, and the adjacent N6.
- The development caters for links to the Old Rail Trail to the south of the development. 5 no. new connection points are proposed. On the approaches to the Greenway, homezones are proposed to ensure creation of safe spaces for cyclists / pedestrians entering and exiting the Greenway. The proposed scheme caters for off street cycling routes throughout which will further encourage use of the adjacent Greenway.
- The development caters for 5 no. character areas in order to avoid the monotony of 'volume building' and create distinct urban forms. The western section of the site will cater for a more urban area, largely consisting of apartment & duplex units, while the eastern section of the scheme largely consists of more traditional 2 storey semi-detached and terraced housing which will be distinguished by different material finishes. All the materials used for external finishes will be of a high quality and the proposed dwellings will be built to the most up to date energy efficient standards. A Building Life Cycle Report and Architectural Design Rationale further detailing same are enclosed with the application – please refer to same.

9.5. Framework Strategies

- 9.5.1. Section 4 'Framework Strategies' of the LSFP divides the residentially zoned lands within the plan area into 4 parcels of land, each with their own vision and objectives. The key objectives for each development parcel derive from the overarching vision of the plan as detailed in the objectives listed under Land Use & Function; Landscape & Urban Form; and Access & Movement. The development is located on lands designated as Parcel 1, 2, & 3 as detailed in Figure 9 below.



Figure 8 - Development parcels of the Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024.

9.5.2. The LSFP requires that a Masterplan be prepared by the applicant(s)/ developers(s) for each of the residential zoned land parcels to demonstrate how the objectives of the LSFP are being achieved. It is considered that the subject application effectively represents the masterplanning of the residentially zoned lands of the LSFP with only a small section of the residentially zoned lands, to the east, outside the control of the applicant, not included for in the subject application i.e. the eastern end of Parcel 3 and the entirety of Parcel 4. The proposed scheme has been designed to ensure that the future development of these lands is not impeded by the granting of the subject development.

9.6. Parcel 1

9.6.1. Parcel 1 is located to the west of the existing Brawney estate and to the east of the existing Scoil na gCeithre Máistrí Gaelscoil. The Parcel 1 lands comprise approximately 3.27 hectares of land. The vision for the Parcel 1 lands is to present a new urban edge extending west of the existing Brawny estate which marks the primary interface of residential development in the plan area, thus requiring a carefully considered and high quality urban design approach. The guiding principles for the development the Parcel 1 lands are detailed in Figure 10 below.

Table Parcel 1 Guiding Principles	(Table 5)
To develop a highly sustainable living environment with a strong sense of place and with connections to the established community at Brawny.	
To create a street user hierarchy prioritising walking and cycling designed to actively encourage all level of users and abilities.	
To ensure that new street networks are fully integrated and connected with surrounding networks to ensure ease of movement and permeability.	
Residential layouts shall, where appropriate, utilise the perimeter block principle as a departure from more recent cul-de-sac type layouts.	
To ensure that new development reinforces, rather than undermines local communities and assists in successful project delivery for new and existing communities.	
To ensure a coherent spatial structure, based on best practice sustainable urban design principles as a focus to meet the needs of all existing and future residents.	

Figure 9 - Guiding principles for the development the Parcel 1 lands.

9.6.2. The objectives for the Parcel 1 lands are detailed below:

- **P1-KS01** - *“To create a new urban streetscape with strong built form along the entirety of both the local access road serving Scoil na gCeithre Maistri, the existing distributor road serving Brawny and the Old Rail Trail.”*
- **P1-KS02** - *“To ensure that new residential development shall provide an active frontage, positively address and provide passive surveillance over the Old Rail Trail and public open space area serving Brawny.”*
- **P1-KS03** - *“To promote the development of family orientated, high quality, adaptable, life long homes through creative and energy efficient design.”*
- **P1-KS04** - *“To improve connectivity to the Old Rail Trail through enhanced pedestrian and cycleway linkages.”*
- **P1-KS05** - *“Permeability through the site will be promoted to successfully integrate the new residential area with the surrounding community in Brawny, taking cognisance of existing desire lines and routes to ensure ease of movement.”*
- **P1-KS06** - *“To provide for a childcare facility to serve the needs of new residential communities which should cluster with existing Primary School.”*
- **P1-KS07** - *“Consideration may be given to higher density units adjoining existing public open space area to the east of Parcel 1, provided that the residential amenity of adjacent dwellings is protected.”*
- **P1-KS08** - *“To provide for a linear park across Parcel 1 to link existing public open space area at Brawny with the Regional Sports Centre complex.”*



9.6.3. Statement of Consistency with Parcel 1 Objectives

- The development caters for 18 no. apartment & duplex blocks, 9 no. of which are located in the Parcel 1 lands. The proposed scheme as such has been designed to cater for a higher density in the western section of the scheme (c. 73 dwellings per hectare on Parcel 1 lands) which will provide the new urban streetscape and strong built form envisage for the Parcel 1 lands. Notwithstanding same, the proposal building form and layout are considerate to the need to protect the residential amenity of adjacent dwellings.
- The development caters for works to the estate roads of the existing Brawny estate i.e. the provision of new homezones. The proposed layout has also ensured integration of the existing open space at Brawny into the proposed scheme and takes desire lines into account to ensure ease of movement.
- The proposed layout is designed to ensure that dwellings passively overlook, positively address and provide active frontage over public open spaces and the Old Rail Trail Greenway. All the dwellings proposed are of an ample size which meet with and/or exceed the minimum recommendations for gross floor areas and internal rooms standards as per the relevant Section 28 Guidelines and Westmeath CDP standards. All the dwellings proposed are capable of being adapted in the future to accommodate housing for life.
- The development caters for pedestrian and cycle linkages throughout the scheme. Particular care has been given to the provision of cycle route along the route of the proposed Lissywollen Avenue. 5 no. new connection / access points are proposed between the development and the Old Rail Trail Greenway to the south. On the approaches to the Greenway homezones are proposed to encourage reduced traffic speeds and enhance / promote pedestrian & cyclist movement.
- The development caters for 1 no. childcare facility on the Parcel 1 lands to serve the needs of new residential communities.
- The development caters for green linkages (community spaces) between the existing public open space area at Brawny and the Regional Sports Centre complex located to the west of the subject site.

9.7. Parcel 2

9.7.1. Parcel 2 is located to the east of the existing Brawny Square, to the southeast of Brawny Close, and extends to the ESB Networks building at the eastern end of the LSFP area. Parcel 2 also borders the Old Rail Trail Greenway to the south.

9.7.2. Parcel 2 land is characterised by a network of enclosed fields cordoned off by hedgerows and trees. The development of the Parcel 2 lands represents the largest undeveloped land bank in the plan area and the LSFP calls for a variety of housing typologies and styles in order to ensure diversity and avoid mass monotonous volume build. The LSFP also requires a central east-west avenue route in the form of a main street linking the existing Brawny scheme to the R916 (to the east). The guiding principles for the development the Parcel 2 lands are detailed in Figure 11 below.

Table Parcel 2 Guiding Principles	(Table 7)
- To create a central east-west avenue/urban boulevard, Lissywollen Avenue, in the form of a Main Street or boulevard linking the Brawny scheme to the R916. The route shall be dictated by the existing landscape character to provide a distinctive urban form with landmarks and vistas to provide ease of orientation.	
- To provide an east-west Linear Park enabling strategic connections to the Regional Sports Centre, the Old Rail Trail and the wider green network, as well as functioning as a useable public space for residents, employees and visitors.	
- To provide for an adequate level of diversity in the building form, tenure and layout to contribute to successful living and working environments.	
- To establish a coherent spatial structure, based on urban design principles, as a focus for a new community and its integration with the established Brawny community comprising the following elements:	
o Recognisable routes throughout the scheme with the use of defined intersections and key buildings to aid orientation and add character.	
o A Street hierarchy with priority to pedestrians and cyclists by providing routes that are direct, safe and secure with access via safe and attractive pockets of public open spaces.	
o Creation of passive supervision over the Old Rail Trail Greenway and associated links as well as open space areas while ensuring privacy for residences.	
o Attractive, safe, accessible and connected public open spaces to provide a high quality of public realm as a key component to add character and identity.	
o Adaptable and versatile housing to accommodate a diverse community and encourage sustainable living practices.	

Figure 10 - Guiding principles for the development the Parcel 2 lands.

9.7.3. The objectives for the Parcel 2 lands are detailed below:

- **P2-KS01** - *“To ensure high quality tree lined streetscape is achieved along the new East West Avenue/ urban boulevard – Lissywollen Avenue through distinctive high quality street furniture, lighting, paving and public artwork that creates a distinctive character associated with this peri urban location.”*
- **P2-KS02** - *“To promote the creation of a high quality public realm by establishing a high quality of design in architecture and landscape architecture.”*
- **P2-KS03** - *“To create and improve a hierarchy of interconnecting green spaces which link existing public open space with the Regional Sports Centre complex through the provision of safe pedestrian and cycle routes through the area, having regard to the Landscape Framework & Access Strategy.”*
- **P2-KS04** - *“To provide a series of pocket parks as informal recreational spaces.”*
- **P2-KS05** - *“To provide a childcare facility to serve new residential communities and the adjacent Business Park.”*
- **P2-KS06** - *“To provide a public park along the eastern end of Parcel 2 to serve new residential development, the student quarter and adjoining business district.”*



- **P2-KS07** - *“Consideration may be given to higher density units adjoining existing public open space area to the east of Parcel 1, provided that the residential amenity of adjacent dwellings is protected.”*

9.7.4. Statement of Consistency with Parcel 2 Objectives

- The development caters for a new east-west access route (Lissywollen Avenue) which will be tree lined, landscaped and finished with high quality design. The proposed avenue has formed an integral element of the proposed layout with the building form put forward in order to support an urban edge to the avenue and a sense of place/destination.
- The development caters for a variety of open spaces including for pocket parks as informal recreational spaces. These green space areas form a hierarchy of interconnecting green spaces which link existing and proposed public open spaces. All of the proposed public open spaces cater for safe pedestrian and cycle permeability and have regard to the Landscape Framework & Access Strategy. Public open space will be landscaped and finished with high quality design as per the landscaping and boundary treatment details, prepared by Ronan MacDiarmada & Associates which accompany the application.
- It is considered that the proposed building typologies and material finishes represent high quality design which ensures the creation of a high-quality public realm. 5 no. character areas are proposed throughout the scheme to ensure a sense of place for individual communities and avoidance of monotonous, volume type, building. For full details please refer to the Architectural Design Rationale which accompanies the application.
- The development caters for 1 no. childcare facility in the Parcel 2 lands.

9.8. Parcel 3

- 9.8.1.** Parcel 3 is comprised of the northernmost section of residential zoned lands of the LSFP and lies between the existing Brawny estate and Enterprise and Employment zoned lands to the east. The Parcel 3 lands are bounded to the north by the N6 section of the M6 Motorway. The LSFP calls for the Parcel 3 lands to present a visually attractive approach to Athlone. The LSFP also emphasizes the importance of the boundary treatment along the N6 to ensure that residential amenity of future residents is protected. The guiding principles for the development the Parcel 3 lands are detailed in Figure 12 below.

Table Parcel 3 Guiding Principles	(Table 9)
- To ensure that the design and layout of new development positively responds to the existing landform and character, thus ensuring integration into the receiving environment.	
- To provide for new residential communities which successfully integrate with the existing housing scheme at Brawny.	
- Provision of structure planting and shelter belts to provide a clearly defined urban edge along the bypass to the northern boundary.	
- To integrate new development into the landscape setting with a particular emphasis on the creation of positive urban edges.	
- To positively respond to the transition from residential zoned lands to employment and enterprise lands, together with the interface of the national road network, while retaining a sense of identity and local distinctiveness.	

Figure 11- Guiding principles for the development the Parcel 3 lands.

9.8.2. The objectives for the Parcel 3 lands are detailed below:

- **P3-KS01** - *“To minimise the adverse impacts of noise and promote good health and a good quality of life through the effective management of noise from the N6.”*
- **P3-KS02** - *“To provide a landscaped buffer along the entirety of the northern boundary of Parcel 3.”*
- **P3-KS03** - *“To provide a landscaped buffer along the eastern end of Parcel 3 to protect the residential amenity of future residents.”*
- **P3-KS04** - *“To ensure that residential development adjoining the new East West Avenue is of the highest architectural design and positively enhances this important urban boulevard.”*
- **P3-KS05** - *“To restrict the development of new residential schemes backing onto the N6.”*

9.8.3. Statement of Consistency with Parcel 3 Objectives

- The development caters for a landscape habitat buffer along the northern boundary of the scheme which will aid the mitigation of adverse impacts of noise from the N6. Noise mitigation measures and a noise impact assessment have been included for in the EIAR which accompanies the application.
- The proposed scheme has ensured that none of the proposed dwellings back onto the N6.
- The proposed layout has been designed to cater for active frontage and passive surveillance along the entirety of the new east-west avenue and the proposed dwellings are considered to be of the highest architectural design which will positively enhance the streetscape of the new urban boulevard. For full details please refer to the Architectural Design Rationale which accompanies the application.



9.9. Other Considerations

9.9.1. The LSFP details other requirements to be met by development proposals within the plan area. The following are considered of relevance to the subject development:

- **Design Statement** – A design statement is to be submitted for all ‘medium to large’ (30+ units) proposals.
- **Open Space** – Open Space shall be provided at a rate of 15%.
- **Density** – A general density of 35 dwellings per hectare shall apply however variation of density across the plan area is encouraged.
- **Roads** – Road network shall comply with the principles of DMURS.
- **Childcare** – An appropriate level of childcare provision shall be included for within development applications.
- **Environment** – Development proposals shall support environment quality and protection.

9.9.2. Statement of Consistency with Other Considerations

- An Architectural Design Rationale has been prepared in compliance with the guidance of the LSFP and is enclosed with the application.
- Open space has been provided for at a rate of 16% - for full details please refer to the Planning Report submitted with the application.
- The development caters for a gross density of c. 33 dwellings per hectare and a net density of c. 42 dwellings per hectare. Density has been varied across the site in an appropriate manner - for full details please refer to the Planning Report submitted with the application.
- The proposed road network is put forward in compliance with the principles of DMURS and the guidelines of the LSFP.
- 2 no. childcare facilities are catered for within the development.
- A comprehensive Environment Impact Assessment Report has been prepared and is enclosed with the application. Mitigation measures have been incorporated into the design to ensure environmental protection.

9.10. Overall Statement of Consistency with LSFP

9.10.1. By virtue of all the above detailed in Section 9 of this Statement of Consistency, it is considered that the development complies with the policies, objectives, and strategies for the development of the subject lands contained in the LSFP.

9.10.2. The LSFP aims to develop these strategically located zoned lands as a highly sustainable and integrated new urban quarter extending from the town centre of Athlone. The development will deliver new residential accommodation in line with this vision and provide for the highest architectural quality to ensure that these currently underutilised lands can be developed into modern new neighbourhoods.



10.0. Conclusions of Statement of Consistency

- 10.1. This Statement of Consistency has been prepared by Delphi Design, Architecture + Planning, on behalf of Alanna Roadbridge Developments Ltd. (the applicant) to accompany the application for Strategic Housing Development (SHD) submitted to An Bord Pleanála in respect of lands at Lissywollen, Athlone, County Westmeath.
- 10.2. In accordance with Section 8(1)(a)(iv) of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016, this Statement of Consistency has detailed how the proposed development is consistent with the objectives of the relevant planning policies pertaining to the development site at local, regional, and national level.
- 10.3. This Statement of Consistency has considered the following policy documents:

National Planning Context

- Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework (2018)
- Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness (2016)

Regional Planning Context

- Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (June 2019)

Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines

- Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018).
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2018).
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, Guidelines for Planning Authorities and the accompanying Urban Design Manual – A best practice guide (2009).
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities - Best Practice Guidelines (2007).
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities for Child Care Facilities (2001).
- Irish Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013).
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009).
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009).
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (2018).

Local Planning Context

- Westmeath County Development Plan 2014-2020.
- Draft Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027.
- Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020.
- Lissywollen South Framework Plan 2018-2024.

- 10.4. Having regard to all the foregoing contained in this Statement of Consistency, it is considered that the proposed development is appropriate to the subject site and will provide high quality residential development in support of national, regional and local planning policy.
- 10.5. The information contained in this Statement of Consistency should be read in conjunction with the other documentation, drawings, and technical reports, submitted with the application.



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