# **Great Connell, Newbridge: Retail Impact Assessment**

# Prepared to support SHD Application for Aston Limited

**March 2022** 



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### 1 Introduction

#### 1.1 Purpose of Report

Aston Limited is proposing a strategic housing development residential of 569 no. residential units (325 no. houses and 244 no. apartments), a neighbourhood centre (11 no. units), a creche, part of the Newbridge Southern Outer Orbital Relief Route, open space and associated infrastructure and landscaping works at lands at Aston, Newbridge. The Newbridge Local Area Plan 2013 facilitates a neighbourhood centre on the site. The report considers the retail floorspace requirements for the Aston neighbourhood centre, having regard to the market demands in the area and relevant planning policy, in addition to reviewing the retail impact upon existing centres within the catchment. This is done in order the comply with the requirements of the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012, which seek to protect the vitality and viability of existing centres.

This report focuses on the provision of convenience (food) floor space provision as this is the anchor for any local neighbourhood centre. There will be no significant comparison (clothes and other comparison goods) component to the retail element of the scheme, given that it forms part of a local neighbourhood.

#### **1.2** Structure of Report

The report is structured in the following manner:

- Section 1: Introduction This section
- Section 2: Site and Surroundings Considers the location and context for the lands
- Section 3: Proposed Development Outlines the principal components of the permitted development.
- **Section 4: Policy Review -** Reviews national, regional and local policy framework.
- **Section 5: Retail Profile of Catchment** Reviews existing retail provision in Newbridge.
- Section 6: Retail Impact Assessment Provides an assessment of the retail impact of the development in accordance with the requirements of the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012.
- Section 7: Conclusions Provides conclusions in relation to the retail aspects of the development.



# 2 Site and Surroundings

#### 2.1 Location

The site is located on the eastern side of Newbridge and on the eastern side of the River Liffey. The other towns in, or just outside, the catchment are Naas, Kilcullen and Kildare Town.

The Lidl Distribution Centre and Pfzier and Murphy Group lie to the east and north of the site. Residential estates in the area include Wellesley Manor, Baroda Court and Connell Drive.

Presently, the site is not connected to the western side of the Liffey. Aston Limited are progressing under a separate application the extended road and bridge crossing over the river Liffey and onwards to junction 12 of the M7. The section on the NSSOR which is complete, and will support the proposed development, is in the final stages of being taken in charge by Kildare County Council.

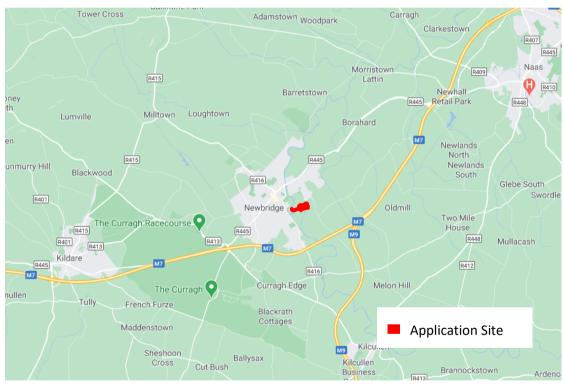


Figure 1: Site Location

#### 2.2 Site Description

The site total c27.56 ha and is currently mainly in agricultural use, comprising of areas zoned for residential, open space and amenity. The residentially zoned lands extend to 16.37 ha. Part of the Murphy complex extends into the site. Figure 2 illustrates the lands in context.



Figure 2: Development Site



The following SHD development has been permitted in the immediately vicinity:

SHD Ref: APB 302141-18 – Permission granted for 343 no. residential units with childcare facilities on the southern side of the River Liffey. This is now under construction.

SHD Ref: ABP 311040-12 – Permission granted for 204 no. residential units and the provision of a creche at Ballymany, Newbridge.

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# 3 Proposed Development

#### 3.1 Project Outline

This strategic housing development consists of residential of 569 no. residential units (325 no. houses and 244 no. apartments), a neighbourhood centre (11 no. units), a creche, part of the Newbridge Southern Outer Orbital Relief Route, open space and associated infrastructural and landscaping works.

In particular, the neighbourhood centre consists of the following

Table 1: Breakdown of Uses in Neighbourhood Centre

Unit No.	Use	Sqm (gross)*
1	Convenience Supermarket	909
2	Convenience/services	112
3	Convenience/services	49
4	Cafe	125
5	Convenience/services	171
6	Doctor/dentist/physio	120
7	Doctor/dentist/physio	120
8	Doctor/dentist/physio	90
9	Restaurant	213
10	Convenience/services	100
11	Convenience/services	100

<sup>\*</sup>Excludes party walls and some circulation space

#### 3.2 Project Description

The proposed development is described in the public notices as follows:

"The development will consist of the demolition of existing site structures (2,622.3 sqm) and the construction of 569 no. residential units, a neighbourhood centre with 11 no. units (commercial floor area 2,141 sqm) and a childcare facility (886 sqm), a circa 350 metre section of distributor road, and all ancillary and associated works on a site of 27.56 ha. The proposed development comprises:

- Demolition of existing site structures (total 2,622.3 sqm) comprising; 'Great Connell' a
  two-storey dwelling of 331.9 sqm with detached single storey garage and outhouses of
  48 sqm; 'Valencia Lodge' a single storey dwelling of 135.6 sqm with a single storey
  garage of 17.8 sqm; two no. single storey sheds of 1,440 sqm and 595 sqm, and a threesided shed of 54 sqm.
- 2. Construction of 569 no. new residential dwellings (325 no. houses and 244 no. apartments) comprising:
  - 64 no. two-bed houses; 175 no. three-bed houses; and 86 no. four-bed houses (ranging in height from 2 to 3 storeys).



- Apartment Block A (Part 3 and 4 Storeys): 5 no. one-bed apartments; 14 no. twobed apartments; and 3 no. three-bed apartments. These proposed units have private balconies or terraces, and access to a community roof terrace of 112.4 sqm.
- Apartment Block B (Part 3 and 4 Storeys): 5 no. one-bed apartments; 14 no. twobed apartments; and 3 no. three-bed apartments. These proposed units have private balconies or terraces, and access to a community roof terrace of 112.4 sqm.
- Apartment Block C (Part 3 and 4 Storeys): 4 no. one-bed apartments; 19 no. two-bed apartments and 4 no. three-bed apartments. These proposed units have private balconies or terraces, and access to a community roof terrace of 87 sqm.
- 13 no. apartments above the proposed Neighbourhood Centre comprising; 4 no. own-door two-bed apartments; 3 no. shared-access one-bed apartments; and 6 no. shared-access two-bed apartments. These proposed units have private balconies or terraces.
- 160 no. own-door apartments in 2- and 3- storey buildings comprising; 16 no. one-bed apartments; 78 no. two-bed apartments, 66 no. three-bed duplex apartments. These units will have private amenity areas in the form of terraces, balconies and/or rear gardens.
- 3. Provision of Neighbourhood Centre (ranging in height between 2 and 4 storeys) with 11 no. commercial units comprising: a convenience shop of 909 sqm (unit 1); 3 no. doctor/dentist/physio units of 120 sqm, 120 sqm and 90 sqm (units 6, 7, and 8, respectively); a café of 125 sqm (unit 4); a restaurant of 213 sqm (unit 9); and 5 no. shop/convenience services units of 112 sqm, 49 sqm, 171 sqm, 100sqm and 100 sqm (units 2, 3, 5,10 and 11, respectively). The proposed Neighbourhood Centre includes an external roof terrace of 176 sqm.
- 4. Provision of a childcare facility (886 sqm) within the Neighbourhood Centre with capacity for in the order of 154 no. children.
- 5. Provision of 1,008 no. car parking spaces comprising 650 no. spaces for the proposed houses; 296 no. spaces for the proposed apartments; and 62 no. spaces to serve the Neighbourhood Centre.
- 6. Provision of 732 bicycle parking spaces (536 no. secure residential spaces, 134 no. residential visitor spaces, and 22 no. spaces to serve the Neighbourhood Centre).
- 7. A series of 18 no. public open spaces and pocket parks are proposed throughout the residential development (2.67 ha net area).
- 8. Provision of a 8.34 ha amenity area adjoining the River Liffey.
- 9. Vehicular access to the proposed development from Great Connell road via a circa 350 metre section of the Newbridge South Orbital Relief Road (NSOOR), including footpaths and cycle paths. It is proposed to upgrade the existing Great Connell Roundabout to a signalised junction, and provide footpaths within the subject site along the Great Connell Road.
- 10. Proposed development facilitates future potential pedestrian, cycle and vehicular links to adjoining residential development and undeveloped lands.
- 11. All enabling and site development works, landscaping, boundary treatments, lighting, services and connections, including connection to permitted wastewater pumping



station, waste management, ESB substations, compensatory flood storage and all other ancillary works above and below ground on a site of approximately 27.56 ha.

12. A 7 year permission is sought."



Figure 3: Proposed Layout





# 4 Policy Context

#### 4.1 National

#### Retail Planning Guidelines for the Planning Authorities 2012

The Retail Planning Guidelines have been revised and updated, placing a greater emphasis on competition and serving consumers.

Taking account of the above, five key policy objectives must guide planning authorities in addressing retail development issues in their development planning and development management functions, namely:

- Ensuring that retail development is plan-led;
- Promoting city/town centre vitality through a sequential approach to development;
- Securing competitiveness in the retail sector by actively enabling good quality development proposals to come forward in suitable locations;
- Facilitating a shift towards increased access to retailing by public transport, cycling and walking in accordance with the Smarter Travel strategy; and
- Delivering quality urban design outcomes.

Section 3.3.3 of the Guidelines emphasises, inter alia, that County Development Plans must outline the level and form of retailing that is appropriate to the various components in the settlement hierarchy of the core strategy, provide a broad assessment of retail floorspace and set out guidance on the location and scale of retail development to support the settlement hierarchy.

Local Centre or Neighbourhood Centre "...comprise a small group of shops, typically comprising newsagent, small supermarket/general grocery store, sub-post office and other small shops of a local nature serving a small, localised catchment population."

Section 4.4 indicates that where a development is not in accordance with the provisions of a development plan, then that development proposal, must be subject to the Sequential Approach and any departure from these principles must be justified. The development is fully in accordance with the policies of the Newbridge Local Area Plan 2013-2019 and a sequential test is not required.

Section 4.9 of the Guidelines emphasise that retail impact assessments should consider whether the proposal would:

- Support long term strategies for town centres.
- Cause adverse impacts to existing centres.
- Diminish the range of activities and services that a town centre can support.
- Cause an increase in vacancies in the prime retail area.
- Ensure a high standard of access by public transport, foot and private car.
- Link effectively with the existing town centre to ensure synergy.



#### Retail Design Manual 2012

The Retail Design Manual is the companion document to the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012. It sets out the principles by which good retail design may be achieved in a manner similar to the Urban Design Manual.

Higher density mixed use development generally enhances the vitality of urban centre, in particular in areas where higher gross density is central to the responsible use of the lands. This is particularly relevant in areas in proximity of public transport access points with high carrying capacity.

The Manual advocates the application of strong urban design principles in the retail development, particular in existing or newly planned towns and villages. It promotes long-life and loose fitting solutions to extend the life of retail units beyond their original use, in particular to help them evolve with technology and shopping trends.

When preparing the design brief, movement must be looked into detail, along with desire lines to see how opportunities can be generated to help make connections between existing and proposed communities and key community facilities.

#### 4.2 Regional Policy

#### Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016

The Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area (RSGDA)considers the strategic retail hierarchy for the Greater Dublin Area and provides guidance on formats and sizes of centres within the hierarchy. District centres serve a population of 10,000 to 40,000 inhabitants. Neighbourhood centres should provide a lower scale and mixed provision of shops that would mainly satisfy day-to-day needs of the resident population.

While acknowledging that large centres have in the past been the focus of development and investment, paragraph 6.20 of the strategy underlines the importance of neighbourhood/ local centres. Paragraph 6.25 of the Strategy indicates that a neighbourhood/small town/village centre provides one supermarket or discount foodstore ranging in size from 1,000-2,500 sq.m with a limited range of supporting shops (one or two low range clothes shops with grocery, chemist etc.) and retail services (hairdressers, dry cleaners, DVD rental) cafes and possibly other services such as post offices or community facilities or health clinics grouped together to create a focus for the local population.

Table 2 below is extracted from the RSGDA and identifies the preferable retail formats expected depending on the level in the hierarchy. A supermarket of less than 2,500 sqm net food often with car parking, usually attracts a catchment of 3,000 to 5,000 people, while a superstore, which is larger than 2,500 sqm is noted as serving a population of 12,000 to 15,000 people. Furthermore, discount retailers should be located in highly accessible locations such as neighbourhood centres.



Table 2: Retail Format for Hierarchy Levels (RPGs for the Greater Dublin Area)

	Higher Order Comparison	Middle Order Comparison	Lower Order Comparison	Superstore	Supermarket
Metropolitan Centre	√	√	√	√	√
Major Town Centre	√	√	√	√	√
Sub-County Town Centre		√	√	√	√
District Centre		√	√	√	√
Neighbourhood Centre			√33		√

Source: RSGDA 2008-2016

#### Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midlands Region

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region (RSES) sets out a 12-year strategic development framework for the Eastern and Midland Region. Supportive of the implementation of the NPF, the RSES reflects its focus on the provision of accessible services and facilities for communities within the Eastern and Midland Region.

Section 6.5 of the Strategy indicates that Newbridge is identified as a *Level 2 – Major Town Centres & County (Principal) Town Centre*. Neighbourhood Centres are defined as Level 4 centres within the retail hierarchy. Regional Policy Objectives are as follows:

"Retail Strategies and Retail Planning Guidelines

RPO 6.10: EMRA will support the preparation of a Retail Strategy / Strategies for the Region in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012, or any subsequent update, to update the retail hierarchy and apply floorspace requirements for the Region.

RPO 6.11: Future provisions of significant retail development within the Region shall be consistent with the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012, or any subsequent update, and the retail hierarchy for the Region, expressed in the RSES, until such time as this hierarchy is updated."



#### 4.3 County and Local Policy

#### Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023

Core Strategy

Variation No.1 was adopted in June 2020 and reflected the provisions of the RSES and the NPF Roadmap, which provided guidance on population targets. It confirmed Newbridge as a self sustaining growth town. It indicated an allocation for Newbridge of 699 additional dwellings between 2020 and 2023, which represents the end of the current County Development Plan period.

Retail Policy

The Plan sets out the retail hierarchy.

**"R 1:** Guide major retail development in accordance with the framework provided by the County Retail Hierarchy (Table 9.2) to enable an efficient, equitable and sustainable distribution of retail floorspace throughout the county."

Newbridge is confirmed Level 2 – Major Town and County Town Centres which caters for major convenience and comparison.

The sequential approach will also be adopted and this is outlined in the following policy;

**"R 2**: Guide retail development where practical and viable in accordance with the framework provided by the Sequential Approach to enable the vitality and viability of existing town and village centres"

The plan establishes an indicative quantum of retail floor space for the County over the Plan period and this is split between convenience and comparison retail provision. Appendix I of this report provides a classification of both convenience and comparison retailing. Table 3 below indicates the quantitative amount.

Table 3: Indicative Quantum of Retail Floorspace (sgm)

	Convenience		Comparison		
Period	Low	High	Low	High	
2017-2023	19,626	25,011	21,047	28,189	
2023-2029	28,908	37,480	30,310	41,501	
Total 2017-2029	48,534	62,491	51,357	69,690	

Source: Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023

Section 9.5.4 of the County Development Plan outlines the policy in relation to the development of new district and neighbourhood centres. "Neighbourhood Centres will be of a more limited size and function, in accordance with national and regional retail guidance. They will typically be



anchored by a small supermarket/general grocery store and have a small range of local shops and services." Due regard should be had to the definitions of various centres, as contained the Retail Strategy for the Dublin area 2008-2016.

Section 17.3.1 indicates that retail applications will be assessed in accordance with five criteria, which can be summarised as:

- i) Support retail hierarchy
- ii) Potential to increase employment opportunities
- iii) Potential to provide for competition and consumer choice
- iv) Ensure that other centres are not adversely affected

#### **Draft Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029**

The Draft Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 went on public display on the 14<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

Core Strategy

Newbridge is confirmed as a self-sustaining growth town in the Core Strategy. The housing target for the period Q4 2023 to Q4 2028 is 1,061.

Retail Policy

Newbridge, Naas and Maynooth are confirmed as Level 2 – Major Town Centres & County (Principal) Town Centres within the retail hierarchy. Level 4 – Neighbourhood Centres, Local Centres-Small Towns and Villages are also identified in the hierarchy.

Specific objectives for Newbridge include:

"RET O22 Support the appropriate development of underutilised lands and buildings within the existing Core Retail Area of Newbridge Town Centre (See Map 8.11)

RET O23 Support the framework for a more integrated approach to the planning of the town centre through the review of the Newbridge Local Area Plan 2013 – 2019, and in particular Edward Street/Main Street North/Charlotte Street/ Eyre Street area being a focus for achieving greater linkage and commercial synergy.

RET 024 Continue to enhance the profile of Newbridge through strategic environmental enhancement, the creation of vibrant urban spaces, places of interest and the introduction of public art.

RET O25 Monitor and restrict the number of lower order retail/commercial uses."

In relation to convenience retailing, the following objective is of relevance:

"RET O58 Require the nature of the comparison component of proposed large convenience stores is provided in detail, and a transparent and evidence-based Retail Impact Assessment (RIA)/Retail Impact Statement (RIS) to be provided with the of retail application."



It should be noted that in relation to the subject application, it is not anticipated that there will be any comparison component.

In relation to new neighbourhood centres, the following objectives are of relevance.

"RET O62 Consider the impact any new neighbourhood centre would have on the vitality and vibrancy of the county's Core Retail Areas (see Maps 8.1 – 8.11) and to only consider where they would complement and not compete with the established Core Retail Areas.

RET O63 Investigate the need for any additional retail provision in the form of a neighbourhood centre, within existing and expanding residential areas in future Local Area Plans and to zone land accordingly.

RET O64 Implement the 10-minute settlement concept when preparing local area plans to ensure land is zoned for the provision of neighbourhood retail centre uses within reasonable walking and cycling distance of newly planned neighbourhoods.

RET 065 Use assessment criteria for retail developments as outlined in Chapter 15, Development Management Standards when assessing neighbourhood centres."

The subject RIA addresses these issues.

RET O84 highlights that proposals not in compliance with the County Retail Hierarchy should have a full assessment, specifically in respect of the tests of the Sequential Approach. The proposed development is fully in accordance with the retail hierarch set out in the Plan and consequently, there is no requirement to undertake a sequential test in relation to the subject proposal.

#### Newbridge Local Area Plan 2013-2019 (Extended to December 2021)

The development of the site will be covered by the zoning provisions of the Newbridge LAP. The lands are zone C "New Residential" where the objective is "To provide for new residential development". There is a specific objective relating to the lands

"C13 – The provision of a small, high quality designed neighbourhood centre to serve the local population will be acceptable as part of the overall development of these lands."

#### Section 7.4.3 indicates:

"There are small neighbourhood centres within established residential areas providing a range of local convenience shops and other neighbourhood facilities. It is considered that these are sufficient to cater for existing residential areas. Applications for new neighbourhood facilities will be assessed in conjunction with population expansion." Our emphasis is in bold.

#### It is the policy of the Council:

"CR1: To facilitate the needs of existing and growing residential areas through a network of local and neighbourhood centres. All local and neighbourhood centres shall complement rather than detract or displace retail of other activities from the town centre. Large-scale convenience format centres will not be permitted"



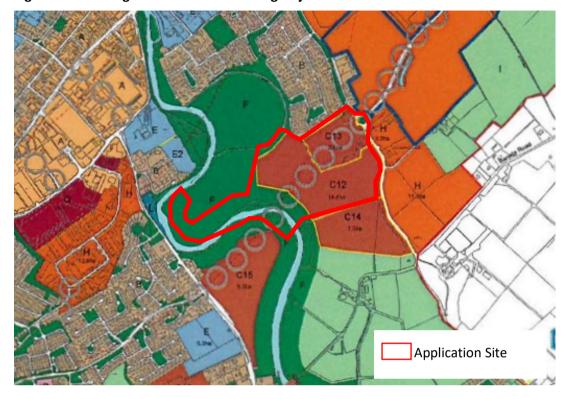


Figure 4: Newbridge Local Area Plan Zoning Objectives

There are lands zoned to cater for a further small neighbourhood centre opposite Walshestown Park in the southern part of Newbridge. That proposed neighbourhood centre is located c1.5km to the south west of the subject residential development and will serve its immediate residential neighbourhood and additional residential and industrial development in the southern part of Newbridge. There is no permitted development on this site opposite Walshestown Park. The impact of any residential development on that site will be assessed against the various application planning policy provisions and standards.



#### 5 Retail Profile of Catchment

#### 5.1 Overview

It is a linear town with the commercial town centre spreading from the bridge over the River Liffey to the south west along the former N7 to the bridge over the Limerick/Cork railway line. Although no longer on the main road south, Newbridge continues to be congested particularly along Main Street largely due to the traffic generated by the shopping centres, foodstores and retail warehousing within the town centre. The most important retail centre is Whitewater Shopping Centre, the adjacent Penneys store, the Tesco superstore and Woodies DIY store. There, however, remain older shopping developments including Ballymany with a large Spar and Dunnes anchored Moorefield Shopping Centres and old format retail warehousing in the Newbridge Retail Park/Shopping Centre. The Lidl store located on Athgarvan Road is a first generation store. The new Aldi store on Newbridge Road adjacent to Dunnes Stores has recently opened and significantly enhances the supermarket retail offer in the town.

The straight-line distance between the residential element of the development and the town centre zoned area is 660m and c1km from Main Street. With the Newbridge South Orbital Relief Road (NSOOR) fully in place, including the new bridge over the Liffey, the residential element of the proposed development will be c1.4km from the town centre zoned area and c1.7km from the Main Street. Prior to the completion of the new Liffey bridge, the site will be solely accessed from Great Connell Road and the residential element will be 1.7km from the Main Street.

The Development Plan indicates that the County retains 97.8% of its convenience expenditure and there is 6% inflow of expenditure from outside, indicating that the County has a good level of convenience retail provision. It is generally recognised that the impact of online shopping on local floor space requirement of convenience outlets is limited as local stores act as the distribution centres for local deliveries.

The review considers the impact upon existing centres (i.e. Newbridge town centre and Kilcullen) as required by the Retail Planning Guidelines, and also considers the role which the new centre will play in providing for existing and new residential communities in this part of Newbridge.

#### 5.2 Convenience Floor Area

Table 2 below provides details of convenience floor space within the Newbridge and Kilcullen which has been defined as falling within the catchment. This is expressed as net sales area, which is the provided in Appendix I.

Table 4: Convenience Floor Area in the Catchment (sqm)

Existing and Permitted Retail	Convenience			
<u>Centre</u>	2016 Existing	Completions 2017-2022	Permitted	Total Existing & Permitted
Kilcullen	1,106			1,106
Newbridge	9,224			9,224
Permitted Lidl (additional floorspace)			364	364
Permitted Aldi (recently constructed)		1,268		1,268
TOTAL	10,330	0	1,632	11,962

Source: Appendix 6B of the Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016 & Planning Register



#### 5.3 Newbridge Health Check

#### 5.3.1 Background

A survey was undertaken in March 2022. Its primary purpose was to identify, quantity and qualify the retail offer in Newbridge. This has followed the reopening of all sectors after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The data discussed below regards number of units and not square meterage.

The following areas were surveyed:

- Main Street (counted from the Athgarvan Road/Main Street junction to Edward Street/ Athgarvan Road Junction).
- The Courtyard Shopping Centre and Whitewater Shopping Centre.
- Athgarvan Road
- Eyre Street, Georges Street, Robert Street and Charlotte Street (including Charlotte Mall).

The results are summarised in the table below.

**Table 5: Newbridge Retail** 

	Total Conven- ience	Total Comp- arison	Total Services	Total Pubs Cafes / Restaurants	Vacant @ Ground Floor	Total Take- aways	Total Units
Main Street	4	31	37	16	10	8	98
Courtyard / Whitewater	2	56	6	17	3	0	84
Athgarvan	3	4	0	1	1	0	9
Eyre St / Georges St / Charlotte Street	6	14	37	14	16	8	87
<b>Cutlery Street</b>	1	10	13	2	0	1	27
Town Total (in units)	16	115	93	50	30	17	305
Town Total (in %)	5.25	37.7	30.5	16.4	9.9	5.6	100

#### 5.3.2 Convenience

The share of convenience units is not reflective of the actual surface occupied by the units. The main units are occupied by Dunnes Stores, Supervalu, Lidl and the recently constructed Aldi store which are located on parcels of land bounded by Edward Street and the Athgarvan Road. Tesco Superstore is just further to the south on Moorefield Road, but within walking distance of the town centre. There are few units used by independent, such as greengrocers, butchers, bakeries, etc.

#### 5.3.3 Comparison

Almost 40% of the total number of units in Newbridge are dedicated to comparison shopping. The Heath Check Survey allowed to make a number of observations:



- To the exception of Penneys, most units along Main Street are independent retailers. A similar observation can be made for the Courtyard Shopping Centre, where only TKMax and EuroGiant are multiples.
- Whitewater Shopping Centre is almost entirely occupied by high street retailers. This is likely due to demand for larger and more modern surfaces.
- Cutlery Street provides a good mix of services and comparison retail, mostly operated by independents. It is likely thriving due to its proximity to Whitewater.
- Penneys appears to be the key units on Main Street, triggering many of the pedestrian movements.

#### 5.3.4 Services

There is a strong service base in Newbridge with 30% of units providing services such as banking and financial, phone repairs, hairdressing, etc.

#### 5.3.5 Pubs, Restaurants, Cafés and Takeaways

There is relatively a large food court in the Whitewater Shopping Centre which includes 18 units. This tends to skew the results of the health check. All units in the court are cafés and fast food types units to the exception of two units. There is a substantial number of takeaways in the town, those are generally concentrated into two broad areas, the Whitewater Shopping Centre and the north Main Street / Eyre Street area. In general, there are few restaurants in Newbridge Town Centre. Similar observation is made for cafés. There are few independent cafés, but these appear to perform well and were busy on both survey days.

#### 5.3.6 Retail Vacancies

The total number of vacant ground floor units was just under 10% of the total number of units surveyed. These were largely concentrated in the Eyre Street/Robert Street/Charlotte Street and to the north of Main Street. There were a few vacant units on the street sides of the Whitewater Shopping Centre. COVID-19 has made it difficult to confirm permanent vacancies.

#### *5.3.7 General Commentary*

Whitewater Shopping Centre is the principal location for multiples and high street retailers, which seek larger and more modern units. The role of Whitewater Shopping Centre will likely be further enhanced with the permitted expansion of the Courtyard Shopping Centre.

There are significant differences between the east and the west of Main Street in terms of retail offer and quality of the offer. This is largely due to the type of units available on either side of the street. The historic core of Newbridge offers smaller and older units which are not suitable to high street retailers.

There are a number of key attractions on the east side of Main Street such as the Library, the Garda Station, the Stadium and Bord na Mona which currently limit further retail expansion on that side of Main Street.

Vacancies in the town are concentrated to the northern end of Main Street and the historic core and increase as distance from Whitewater Shopping Centre increases.



# 6 Assessment of Retail Impact

#### 6.1 Introduction

This Section provides an assessment of the likely capacity requirements in quantitative terms for the additional retailing floor space in Aston, having regard to the policy context and its designation as a neighbourhood centre and the retail impact of the proposed development. The application is for a 7 year permission.

The quantitative aspect of this assessment is dependent upon certain assumptions in relation to consumer spending growth, turnover, sales density, population growth, and general demands in retailing. The assessment focused on the convenience element, as the other units are generally for use for retail services such as hairdressers, bookmakers, cafes, etc. Any modest provision of lower order comparison retailing which may be accommodated within the neighbourhood centre will not materially impact upon other centres.

The definitions of comparison and convenience retailing is provided in Appendix I.

#### 6.2 Methodology

The approach taken is a step by step assessment in accordance with Annex 5 of the Retail Planning Guidelines. These steps are as follows:

- i) Identification of catchment or study area;
- ii) Estimation of expenditure available within the defined catchment or study area;
- iii) Estimation of the turnover of existing centres within the catchment area which is likely to be affected by a new development. This involves projecting inflows and outflows or expenditure derived principally from the RSGDA 2008-2016;
- iv) Estimation of the turnover of the new development for which a planning application is being lodged; and
- v) Estimation of the quantum of consumer retail spending available in the catchment area which will be diverted from existing centres to the new retail development.

All figures within the assessment been rounded off to the nearest point of decimal. The price year throughout the assessment is 2016. Relevant 2016 census population information is used to inform the baseline. Forecast years of 2026 and 2031 are examined to allow for an appraisal of the retailing requirements.

The assumptions adopted in this assessment are conservative and are based upon the most recent data in relation to expenditure per capita, population projections and turnover ratios. They fully reflect the recent COVID-19 pandemic and reopening in order to provide an account for realistic projections for the future.



#### 6.3 Step 1 - Identification of Catchment Area

This has involved the identification of appropriate drive time isochrone having regard to the proximity of centres within the catchment and those outside. Given the nature of the retail element of the development and its location, a 15 minute drive-time isochrone was selected and is indicated as the catchment in Figure 5 below. This is considered to be a reasonable basis for calculating the catchment given accessibility and location of other centres and also reflects the drivetime isochrone used in relation to the new Aldi store in the centre of Newbridge. This drivetime catchment includes all of Newbridge and Kilcullen.

Inevitably, there is overlap between adjoining catchments. In particular, Naas has a strong offer and is a significant catchment.

There is a current distribution of convenience retail providers throughout the catchment study area, with a Tesco, Lidl, Aldi, Dunnes and Spar within the town centre.

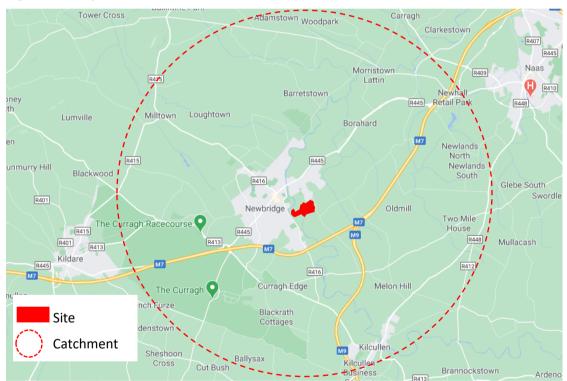


Figure 5: Study Catchment

#### **6.4** Step 2 – Estimate of Available Expenditure

The 2016 current baseline population is taken from the 2016 Census. The Electoral Districts of Ballysax, Carnalaway, Droichead Nua (Newbridge) Rural, Droichead Nua (Newbridge) Urban, Kilcullen, Ladytown, Morristownbiller and Old Connell all fall within the catchment. Two forecast years are selected: 2026, which represents the opening year and 2031 which corresponds with the NPF forecast year.



#### The assessment assumes that:

- The population of Kildare increases by 31,500 between 2016 and 2026, as per Variation No.1 of the Kildare County Development Plan, representing a 14% increase.
- The population of Kildare will increase by a further 12,500 by 2031, representing a 20% increase between 2016 and 2031
- Growth is allocated to Morristownbiller with the 343 units permitted under SHD Ref: APB 302141 and the 204 units permitted under SHD Ref: ABP 311040, and to Droichead Nua (Newbridge) Rural with the 569 proposed under the subject application.
- A household size of 2.5 persons per house is applied. This yields a 75% increase in population in Droichead Nua (Newbridge) Rural and a 25% increase in Morristownbiller between 2016 and 2031.
- Natural growth is assumed over the remaining EDs within the catchment for 2026 and up 2031.

**Table 6: Population Forecast in the Catchment** 

	2011	2016	% chge 2011- 2016	2022	2026	2031	% change 2016- 2026	% change 2016- 2031
Kildare County Council	210,312	222,504	6%	237,983	254,004	66,504	14%	20%
				-				
Ballysax	1,937	1,945	0%	1,955	1,955	1,963	0%	1%
Carnalaway	1,914	1,991	4%	2,087	2,087	2,171	5%	9%
Droichead Nua Rural	2,528	2,732	8%	2,997	4,419	4,776	62%	75%
Droichead Nua Urban	7,563	7,762	3%	8,007	8,007	8,218	3%	6%
Kilcullen	3,296	3,499	6%	3,758	3,758	3,989	7%	14%
Ladytown	941	964	2%	992	992	1,017	3%	5%
Morristownbiller	13,852	14,781	7%	15,971	17,338	18,501	17%	25%
Oldconnell	904	983	9%	1,086	1,086	1,181	10%	20%
Study Area Total	2,935	34,657	5%	36,852	39,642	41,815	14%	21%

Expenditure levels for convenience are analysed. All monetary values in the analysis have a **Price Year** of **2016**. This is the latest year for which disaggregated information is currently available from the Central Statistics Office's (CSO) Annual Service Inquiry (ASI) and its County Incomes and Regional Gross Domestic Product (CIRGDP) and Consumer Price Index (CPI) published data.

The expenditure per capita figures have to be inflated in accordance with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) between 2016 and 2022. Assumptions are made in relation to inflation having regard to the ECB's target rate of 2%. Table 7 gives expenditure per capita figures for the ASI base year, the retail base year for the project and 2026 and 2031.



Table 7: Existing and Projected Expenditure Per Capita (2016 Prices)

Year	Convenience expenditure per capita
2016	€3,561
2022	€4,390
2026	€4,558
2031	€5,033

By multiplying the projected per capita expenditure on convenience goods for the projected population for the catchment area in the current and projected future year, figures for resident expenditure can be established for the catchment. These have to be adjusted to reflect additional inflow and outflow expenditure to reflect market share and retained expenditure. Broadly speaking the inflows and outflows of convenience expenditure into the catchment are in equilibrium reflecting the assumptions in Appendix 7c of the Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area.

Table 8: Available Convenience Expenditure (2016 Prices)

Year	Resident Convenience Expenditure (3)	Convenience Expenditure Inflows (1)	Convenience Expenditure Outflows (2)	Available Convenience Expenditure
2016	€120,698,478	€7,241,909	€10,862,863	€117,077,524
2022	€149,972,792	€14,997,279	€13,497,551	€151,472,519
2026	€167,511,670	€16,751,167	€15,076,050	€169,186,787
2031	€195,083,061	€19,508,306	€17,557,476	€197,033,892

Notes:

- (1) As per Development Plan
- (2) Outflows for 2016 based on Table 7 of Appendix 7c (convenience) of the GDA Retail Strategy
- (3) As per Development Plan assumptions

#### 6.5 Step 3 – Estimate of Turnover of Existing and Permitted within the Catchment

It is possible to derive the turnover of existing floorspace within the catchment area by multiplying the floorspace in each category by the average turnover per sqm. In considering appropriate turnover levels it is important to have regard to the different nature of retail floorspace provided across the catchment area. Turnover ratios also growth annually and this is estimated at 0.5% per annum. Table 9 below details the assumptions.

Table 9: Assumed Turnover Ratios per Sqm for Convenience Floorspace

2016	2022	2026	2031
€12,551	€12,932	€13,193	€13,868

The turnover of existing and permitted floor space in Table 4 is obtained by multiplying the turnover ratios by the floor area in the base year and design year. This is illustrated below in Table 10.



**Table 10: Turnover in Existing and Permitted Convenience Floorspace** 

2016 Turnover of Combined Existing & Permitted	2022 Turnover of Combined Existing & Permitted		2031 Turnover of Existing and Permitted
€115,771,530	€154,695,791	€157,812,989	€165,883,566

It is also possible at this stage to estimate the convenience floorspace requirements within the catchment. Headroom is for established by subtracting the expenditure of existing and permitted floorspace from the available retail expenditure for each of the years 2016 (census year), 2022 (base year), 2026 (forecast year 1), and 2031 (forecast year 2). The headroom in expenditure is then divided by the assumed turnover ratio for the year. Results are detailed in Table 11.

Table 11: Indicative Net Floor Area Requirements

2016 Available Expenditure	2016 Existing and Committed Turnover	2016 headroom	2016 Floor space Requirement (sqm)
€117,077,524	€115,771,530	€1,305,994	104
2022 Available Expenditure	2022 Existing and Committed Turnover	2022 Headroom	2022 Floorspace Requirement (sqm)
€151,472,519	€154,695,791	-€3,223,272	-249
2026 Available	2026 Existing and	2026 Hoodroom	2026 Floorspace
Expenditure	Committed Turnover	2026 Headroom	Requirement (sqm)
€169,186,787	€157,812,989	€11,373,798	862
2031 Available	2031 Existing and		2031 Floorspace
Expenditure	Committed Turnover	2031 Headroom	Requirement (sqm)
€197,033,892	€165,883,566	€31,150,326	2246

The results indicate that the centre at Aston could accommodate the following

- 2026 862 sgm
- 2031 2,246 sqm

#### **6.6** Step 4 - Estimate of Turnover of Proposed Centre

An estimate of the turnover of the proposed outlet involves a calculation of the net sales area of both the convenience and comparison element. The ratio of net lettable to net retail sales area is taken as 66% for convenience and comparison as per Appendix 1 of the GDA Retail Strategy. It is assumed that only unit no. 1 and no.2 are taken up as convenience retailing: one being a supermarket and the other a newsagents.

**Table 12: Convenience Net Sales Area of Proposed Development** 

Convenience Floor Area	Gross Floor Area (sqm)	Net Sales Area (sqm)		
Convenience Supermarket	909	600		
Convenience newsagents	112	74		
Total	1,021	674		

The turnover of the proposed centre is then calculated by multiplying the increased net retail sales areas by the turnover per sqm in the forecast years of 2026 and 2031. This yields a turnover of the convenience element of €8.9m in 2026 and €9.3m in 2031. The supermarket would be a



small outlet, catering for top up convenience sales and lower volume purchases, suitable for those who would walk.

#### 6.7 Step 5 - Estimate of Retail Spending Diversion and Retail Impact

As highlighted above, it is estimated that there would be an available convenience retail expenditure in 2026 of €169.1m and a projected turnover in the catchment area of €157.8m for the existing and permitted development, leaving a headroom of €11.3m. This demonstrates that there is adequate capacity in a theoretical closed system, with all expenditure occurring within the catchment, to cater for the development. The floor area equivalent of this expenditure is approximately 862 sqm of net retail area, when the appropriate sales densities are applied. The proposed convenience is 674 sqm net sales area.

The available expenditure will increase to €197m in 2031 and the turnover of existing and permitted will be €165.8m, leaving a headroom of €31.1m, or an equivalent floor space of 2,246 sqm of net sales area. This illustrates further growing demands.

However, obviously no such retail catchment is completely closed, and the above figures suggest the currently Newbridge provides significant convenience retailing, drawing trade in from outside the catchment. While currently there may be adequate provision, the above figures illustrate that with a growing population resulting from the development itself, and other development recently permitted within the same area, that there is a strong demand which will need to be satisfied by new floor space.

A failure to provide the proposed modestly sized store will result in a several impacts. Firstly, there would be a tendency to overtrade in existing stores, with further pressure to expand out-of-town retailing. Secondly, it is probable that there would be leakage of expenditure outside of the catchment, particularly to Naas as shoppers seek options to avoid congestion. Shoppers will have to travel some distance thereby contributing to increased journey lengths. The Retail Planning Guidelines acknowledge that most weekly bulk convenience shopping is undertaken by car. It will therefore be a matter of providing convenience retail outlets closer to the resident population, and in particular new emerging residential areas, in order to reduce trip length and thereby promoting sustainable development. This is reflective of the 10 minute settlement concept.

Appendix II provides an estimate of convenience retail trade diversions from, or the retail impact upon, existing centres, resulting from the proposed development. There is a very slight negative impact of -1% upon Kilcullen in the forecast year of 2026, but there is no negative impact in the 2031 forecast year as general growth in demand will outweigh any trade diversion. There will be no negative retail impact upon Newbridge Town Centre in either 2026 or 2031.



## 7 Conclusions

In conclusion, and in considering whether the proposal complies with the criteria of section 4.9 of the Retail Planning Guidelines, we would highlight the following:

- Supporting Long Term Strategies for the town centre The proposed development is fully in accordance with the retail policies of Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023. The proposal is for neighbourhood centre and is provided in accordance with a specific objective in the Newbridge Local Area Plan 2013-2019 which seeks to provide this centre in conjunction with new residential development. It will allow for the development of a 10 minute settlement with facilities to cater for the local population and which are within walking distance. It supports the retail hierarchy established in statutory planning policy.
- Would not cause adverse impacts upon existing centres The retail impact assessment
  demonstrates that the development would not have a negative impact upon the
  Newbridge Town Centre or Kilcullen. It will provide for consumer choice for residents.
- Enhance range of activities and services The development would provide essential retail and other local services for new residential development on the subject site and on adjoining lands in accordance with the objectives of the LAP. It will provide for doctor's surgery, dentist, physio, restaurant, café, small convenience supermarket and other convenience and retail services. These uses will be also supported by a creche to be provided within the development.
- Not result in increased vacancies The quantity of floor space can comfortably be accommodated in the catchment.
- Accessible The development will be highly accessible to the local area which it will serve, particularly new development on eastern side of Newbridge. It will be accessible by car, taxi, cycling and walking.
- Synergy It would have synergies with the proposed creche within the development and would be an integral part of a new emerging community. Furthermore, it will provide for employment choices.

The neighbourhood centre is being provided in accordance with the specific objective C13 of the Newbridge Local Area Plan 2013-2019. It requires the "The provision of a small, high quality designed neighbourhood centre to serve the local population will be acceptable as part of the overall development of these lands." The modest size of the convenience outlet will serve the immediate residential catchment in the north eastern part of Newbridge and the new residential population associated with 569 dwellings proposed as part of the subject development. This development alone will give rise to a population of c1,400 based upon a household size of 2.5. There are other residentially zoned lands immediately to the east which will be served the proposed centre in due course. The existing residential areas of Baroda Court and Wellesley Manor to the north of the site, which are not currently served by local neighbourhood facilities, will be served by the proposed development. In addition, there are a further 343 units permitted on lands to the south. The proposed neighbourhood centre will serve these units when occupied and when the Liffey Bridge is complete as part of the Newbridge South Orbital Relief Road.



# Appendix I – Glossary of Terms

This glossary covers forms of retail development and types of retail location. As retailing is dynamic, it should be noted that new forms of retailing may evolve which are inadequately described by current terminology, and should be assessed on their merits.

Types of Retail Floorspace

**Total Shopping Centre Floorspace** – internal space (measured from inside walls) of a covered shopping centre including circulation space toilets, lifts and escalators gross retail area, gross non-retail area floorspace devoted to incidental activities such as foodcourt, administrative offices, walkways, car parking both integrated and surface.

**Gross Retail Floorspace** – the total floorspace, as measured from inside the shop walls, which includes sales space, plus storage space, offices, toilets, canteen, and circulation space.

**Net Retail Floorspace** – the area within the shop or store which is visible to the public and to which the public has access including fitting rooms, checkouts, the area in front of checkouts, serving counters and the area behind used by serving staff, areas occupied by retail concessionaires, customer service areas, and internal lobbies in which goods are displayed, but excluding storage areas, circulation space to which the public does not have access to, cafes, and customer toilets.

#### Types of Retail Goods

Although there is a trend for "scrambled merchandising" whereby some retail businesses sell both convenience goods and comparison goods, greater definitional clarity is obtained by adopting a goods-based retail classification. Retail goods categories can be divided into convenience goods and comparison goods as follows:

#### Convenience Goods: - food

- alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages;
- tobacco:
- non-durable household goods;

#### Comparison Goods: -footwear; •

- furniture, furnishings and household equipment (excluding non-durable household goods);
- medical and pharmaceutical products, therapeutic appliances and equipment;
- educational and recreation equipment and accessories;
- books, newspapers and magazines;
- goods for personal care;
- goods not elsewhere classified;
- bulky goods
- Goods generally sold from retail warehouses --where DIY goods or goods such as flatpack furniture are of such size that they would normally be taken away by car and not be portable by customers travelling by foot, cycle or bus, or that large floorspace would be required to display them e.g.
- repair and maintenance materials;



- furniture and furnishings;
- Carpets and other floor coverings;
- household appliances;
- tools and equipment for the house and garden;
- bulky nursery furniture and equipment including --perambulators;

bulky pet products such as kennels and --aquariums; audio-visual, photographic and information --processing equipment; catalogue shops and other bulky durables for --recreation and leisure.

Types of Retailing

#### Supermarket

Single level, self service store selling mainly food, with a net retail floorspace of less than 2,500 M2.

#### **Superstore**

Generally single level, self service stores selling mainly food, or food and some non-food goods, with at least 2,500 M2 net retail floorspace but not greater than 5,000 M2 net retail floorspace and with integrated or shared parking.

#### **Hypermarket**

Single or multi-level self service store selling both food and a range of comparison goods, with net retail floorspace area in excess of 5,000 M2 with integrated or shared parking.

#### **Shopping Centre**

Predominantly purpose-built centres comprising a mix of large and small units, typically anchored by a large convenience goods stores

#### **Retail Parks**

A single development of a least three retail warehouses with associated car parking.

#### **Retail Warehouse**

A large single-level store specialising in the sale of bulky household goods such as carpets, furniture and electrical goods, and bulky DIY items, catering mainly for car-borne customers.

#### **Factory Shop**

A shop located as part of or adjacent to the production facility and specialising in the sale of manufacturers' products direct to the public.

#### **Outlet Centres**

Groups of retail units in particular focusing on fashion and accessories which are generally associated with designer groups. They specialise in selling surplus stock and end-of-line goods at discounted prices.

#### **Forecourt Retailing**

Mini-supermarket linked to petrol filling stations.



#### Types of Centre

#### **City and Town Centres**

Provide a broad range of facilities and services and fulfill a function as a focus for both the community and public transport. The term excludes district centres, retail parks, and local centres.

#### **District Centre**

Provides a range of retail and non-retail service functions (e.g. banks, post office, local offices, restaurants, public houses, community and cultural facilities) for the community at a level consistent with the function of that centre in the core strategy. They can be purpose built as in new or expanding suburbs or traditional district centres in large cities or town

#### **Local Centre or Neighbourhood Centre**

Comprise a small group of shops, typically comprising newsagent, small supermarket/general grocery store, sub-post office and other small shops of a local nature serving a small, localised catchment population.

Types of Location

#### **Retail Area**

That part of a town centre which is primarily devoted to shopping.

#### Centre

For the purposes of these guidelines, a centre refers to a city or town centre and can also, refer to the centre of a district or neighbourhood centre which has been identified in the settlement hierarchy of a development plan

#### **Edge-of-Centre**

A location within easy walking distance of the primary retail area of a city town centre or district centre.

#### **Out-of-Centre**

A location that is clearly separate from a town centre but within the town development boundary, as indicated in a development plan or local area plan.



# Appendix II- Retail Trade Diversion and Impact

#### **Convenience Spending Diversion 2026**

<u>Centre</u>	2022 Turnover Existing & Permitted	2026 Turnover Existing & Permitted	% Increase turnover 2022- 2026	2026 Trade Diversion from Each Centre	% 2026 Trade Diversion from Each Centre	2026 Turnover of Each Centre After New Development	% 2026 Trade Change of Each Centre	Difference between 2022 and 2026 after New Development	Cumula tive Retail Impact
Kilcullen	€14,303,089	€14,591,303	2%	€ 444,507	5%	€14,146,796	-3%	-€156,293	-1%
Newbridge Town Centre	€140,392,703	€143,221,686	2%	€ 1,333,521	15%	€141,888,165	-1%	€1,495,462	1%
Subtotal	€154,695,791	€157,812,989		€ 1,778,028	20%	€156,034,961	-1%	€1,339,170	1%
Leakage outside Catchment	-€3,223,272	€11,373,798		€ 7,112,112	80%	€4,261,686		€7,484,957	
Proposed Development						€8,890,141			
TOTAL	€151,472,519	€169,186,787			100%	€169,186,787			

#### **Convenience Spending Diversion 2031**

<u>Centre</u>	2022 Turnover Existing & Permitted	2031 Turnover Existing & Permitted	% Increase turnover 2022- 2026	2031 Trade Diversion from Each Centre	% 2031 Trade Diversion from Each Centre	2031 Turnover of Each Centre After New Development	% 2031 Trade Change of Each Centre	Difference between 2022 and 2031 after New Development	Cumul ative Retail Impact
Kilcullen	€14,303,089	€15,337,504	7%	€ 467,239	5%	€14,870,265	-3%	€567,176	4%
Newbridge Town Centre	€140,392,703	€150,546,062	7%	€ 1,401,718	15%	€149,144,344	-1%	€8,751,642	6%
Subtotal	€154,695,791	€165,883,566		€ 1,868,957	20%	€164,014,609	-1%	€9,318,818	6%
Leakage outside Catchment	-€3,223,272	€31,150,326		€ 7,475,827	80%	€23,674,499		€26,897,771	
Proposed Development						€9,344,783			
TOTAL	€151,472,519	€197,033,892			100%	€197,033,892			

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