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CHAPTER 6
LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL
IMPACT

6.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter of the EIAR was prepared to assess the potential significant effects of the proposed development on the landscape, views and visual amenity of the study area of the subject site itself at a site known as Railpark, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, as well as the surrounding landscape context including views to and from the site from the wider landscape that are considered as representative sensitive receptors.

This chapter should be read in conjunction with the verified views/photomontage document prepared by Digital Dimensions, which forms an appendix to this EIAR (See Appendix 6.1 Photomontages).

6.1.1 Expertise & Qualifications

This chapter of the EIAR has been prepared by Margaret Egan, MILI, of Áit Urbanism + Landscape Ltd. Margaret Egan (MILI) is a director of Áit Urbanism + Landscape Ltd **and** has over twenty years' experience working as a Landscape Architect and LVIA Specialist in the public and private sector, undertaking Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments for a vast range of project types and complexities.

Margaret holds the following qualifications: Irish Landscape Institute, Professional Practice Examination 2005, Diploma in EIA Management, UCD 2003, Bachelor in Landscape Horticulture, UCD 1999, Bachelor of Science (Environmental Resources Management), DIT 1993 and has been involved in the preparation of LVIA's for the following projects:

- Deerpark, Howth Road, LRD, LVIA, Howth, Co. Dublin
- Newmarket Square Development SHD, LVIA (Mixed Use, multi-storey) Dublin 8
- Brighton Grove LRD LVIA, Foxrock Co. Dublin
- Greystones Media Campus LVIA, Greystones, Co. Wicklow
- The Speaker Conolly Public House, Mixed Use Development, LVIA, Firhouse, Co. Dublin
- Northwood 2E, SHD, LVIA, Santry, Co. Dublin
- Coolegad LRD, LVIA, Greystones, Co. Wicklow
- Glebe House LRD, LVIA, Blackrock, Co. Dublin
- Former Europa Garage site, LVIA, Newtown Avenue, Blackrock, Co. Dublin
- Parson Street Maynooth, LVIA, Co. Kildare
- The Farm at Cashel Palace LVIA, Cashel, Co. Tipperary
- Cookstown Road SHD, Enniskerry, LVIA, Co. Wicklow

6.2 STUDY METHODOLOGY

6.2.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment describes the existing receiving environment, the contiguous landscape and the methodology utilised to assess the effects of the proposed development. It assesses the visual extent of the proposed development and the proposal's visual effects on key views throughout the study area.

The study area referred to in this chapter includes the Railpark site itself, lands to the immediate north, south, east and west as presented in the landscape analysis mapping and drawings in Figures 6.2 to Figure 6.19 below.

The visual analysis study area includes the site itself, lands to the immediate north, south, east and west along with medium to long distance views back to the site from points identified in the Viewpoint Maps (Figure 6.33).

The viewpoints were collated from a desktop study of protected views, scenic routes and viewpoints, important views (ACA's) as well as special and protected landscapes as identified in the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029, and the Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031. Given the site location to the south-east of Maynooth town, the existing topography of the site, along with the intervening-built environment of Maynooth town and suburbs, it was assessed that many of these important views would not be effected by the proposed development. A representative sample of these protected views are included in this assessment to assess the visibility of the proposed development in the distance. In both scenarios, there will be no effect, as the massing of the proposed development cannot be seen and is indicated by a redline only. These are views View No. 4 Railpark/Donaghmore (Pike Bridge), and Viewpoint 5 (Scenic Route 28 within Carton Demesne).

Fourteen views (photomontages) were submitted for the S247 opinion stage.

A further three views (photomontages), identified as Views 15, 16 and 17 were undertaken as part of the request/opinion by Kildare County Council.

6.2.2 In response to points raised in the LRD Opinion Page 13: Point 64 LVIA/CGI's

Additional viewpoints are needed along the MERR, to the north, northeast, south, southeast and east of the site.

Response:

- MERR is not built
- Lands in private ownership
- Photomontages are developed utilising baseline photography from existing public realm (baseline views)
- Photomontages for the purpose of the LVIA are to be taken from the publicly accessible lands
- See additional Photomontages 15, 16 and 17 as representative views from the north and northeast along the Grand Canal Greenway/towpath and from the southeast, on the Celbridge Road.
- Only CGI's could be produced along the MERR as it is not an existing built structure. See CGI's 1-8. CGI's No. 1-4 are located within the scheme itself; CGI's No. 5-8 are located along the spine and the bridge of the future Maynooth Eastern Ring Road.

6.2.3 In response to points raised in the LRD Opinion Page 78: LVIA:

- Images from ramp/bridge of the MERR are required

Response: See CGI's D, E, F,G (Digital Dimensions Booklet)

This assessment describes the landscape and urban character of the subject site and hinterland, together with the visibility of the site from short, medium and long-distance viewpoints, that represent sensitive receptors in the local and wider landscape. The LVIA summarises the likely effects of the proposed development on the visual and landscape amenity of the subject site and its immediate area.

The following visual receptors that are considered sensitive, that are addressed in this assessment have been chosen based on the following criteria:

- Key views from designated sites of national or international importance where relevant
- Designated protected views and views/scenic routes protected through development objectives in the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029
- Designated protected views and views/scenic routes protected through development objectives in the Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031
- Local Amenity and Heritage Features
- Local community views to assess the landscape and visual impact of the proposals on those who live and work in proximity to the proposed development as well as those utilising local amenities
- Relevant local settlement nodes
- Major routes adjacent to the site

6.2.4 Overview

Landscape and visual impact assessments are two separate, but closely related topics. The assessment of visual impact focuses on the extent to which new developments can be seen. Visual analysis forms one part of a Visual Impact Assessment (VIA), the process by which the potential significant effects of a proposed development on the visual resource of an area are methodically assessed. In turn, VIA forms just one part of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and the wider process of Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). Landscape assessment focuses on the character of the landscape, examining responses which are felt towards the combined effects of the new development.

6.2.5 Desktop Study

Site assessments were undertaken in October and November 2024, and June 2025. Desktop studies were undertaken to evaluate the existing site conditions such as topography, vegetation, settlement patterns, contiguous land use, drainage, landscape and urban character as well as overall visibility of the site from surrounding areas. Information was also collated on protected views, scenic routes, special and protected landscapes etc.

The following documents and web resources were consulted for the desktop study:

- Ordnance Survey Ireland – Interactive Mapping and Aerial Photography www.osi.ie
- Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029
<https://kildarecoco.ie/AllServices/Planning/DevelopmentPlans/KildareCountyDevelopmentPlan2023-2029>

- Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031
<https://kildarecoco.ie/AllServices/Planning/LocalAreaPlans/CurrentLocalAreaPlans/MaynoothandEnvironsJointLocalAreaPlan2025-2031/>
- National Parks and Wildlife Service www.npws.ie
- Google Maps

Other terminology used within this chapter is set out below.

The following terminology, used in this visual assessment, is defined as follows:

- Visual Intrusion: where a proposed development will feature in an existing view but without obstructing the view.
- Visual Obstruction: where a proposed development will partly or completely obscure an existing view.
- Sensitivity and Significance: The significance of effects on the perceived environment will depend partly on the number of people affected, but also on value judgments about how much the changes will matter.

In this respect it is important to identify actual visual and physical connections between the site, its adjacent occupiers/landowners and those who interact with it from further afield, in the context of the existing and the proposed situations.

While our visual sense is generally acknowledged to represent the dominant contribution to our perception of place and its context, other factors also contribute. Hearing/sound, smell and a variety of social/cultural factors relating to the land-use, function or business conducted on the land (or indeed, memory) can sometimes over-rule or outweigh the visual aspects and lead to individual perceptions which could be described as relatively subjective. The relevance of these non-visual aspects to our perception of our environment and the impact made by proposed changes is considered in other sections of this assessment document. The purpose of this section is to objectively examine and assess the nature and extent of the visual impact created as a result of the development proposal.

6.2.6 Definition of Landscape

The term '*landscape*' is defined in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) as:

'Landscape is an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factor'.

6.2.7 Forces for Landscape Change

The landscape is not static and is continuously changing. Over time, many different pressures have altered landscapes and will continue to do so in the future. The key drivers of this change come from ongoing development that is required to meet the needs of a growing population and economy. This includes but is not limited to new housing and commercial development, new forms of energy generation and land management.

6.2.8 Guidance

Desktop studies were undertaken to evaluate the existing site conditions such as topography, vegetation, settlement patterns, contiguous land use, drainage, landscape character as well as overall visibility of the site from surrounding areas. Information was also collated on protected views, scenic routes, special and protected landscapes etc.

This section describes landscape and visual effects and has been prepared utilising the following guidance documents:

- ‘Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports’ Environmental Protection Agency, May 2022.
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government, 2018)
- Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (European Commission, 2017)
- ‘Advice notes for Preparing Environmental Impact Statements. Draft’. Environmental Protection Agency, 2016.
- ‘Landscape and Landscape Assessment Draft Guidelines’, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) 2000
- ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’, The Landscape Institute & I.E.M.A., UK, 2013.
- ‘Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook’, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), Version 5, 2018. Appendix 2: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

6.2.9 Key Principles of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Use of the Term ‘Effect’ vs ‘Impact’

GLVIA advises that the terms ‘*impact*’ and ‘*effect*’ should be clearly distinguished and consistently used in the preparation of an LVIA.

‘*Impact*’ is defined as the action being taken. In the case of the development, the impact would include the construction of the high-density residential accommodation along with supporting road and utility infrastructure and public open space. In addition, there is also the localised change on the site, mostly from the existing underutilized greenfield site with no usage, and the works required to facilitate this change.

‘*Effect*’ is defined as the change or changes resulting from those actions, e.g. a change in landscape character, or changes to the composition, character and quality of views in the receiving environment. This section of the report focusses on these effects.

6.2.10 Assessment of Both ‘Landscape’ and ‘Visual’ Effects

Another key distinction to make in a LVIA is that between landscape effects and the visual effects of development.

'Landscape' results from the interplay between the physical, natural and cultural components of our surroundings. Different combinations of these elements and their spatial distribution create distinctive characters of landscape in different places. 'Landscape character assessment' is the method used in LVIA to describe landscape, and by which to understand the potential effects of a development on the landscape as 'a resource'. Character is not just about the physical elements and features that make up a landscape, but also embraces the aesthetic, perceptual and experiential aspects of landscape that make a place distinctive.

Views and 'visual amenity' refer to the interrelationship between people and the landscape. The GLVIA prescribes that effects on views and visual amenity should be assessed separately from landscape, although the two topics are inherently linked. Visual assessment is concerned with changes that arise in the composition of available views, the response of people to these changes and the overall effects on the area's visual amenity.

6.2.11 Methodology for Landscape Assessment

In section 6.5 of this report the landscape effects of the development are assessed. The nature and scale of changes to the landscape elements and characteristics are identified, and the consequential effect on landscape character and value are discussed. Trends of change in the landscape are taken into account. The assessment of significance of the effects takes account of the sensitivity of the landscape resource and the magnitude of change to the landscape which resulted from the development.

6.2.12 Sensitivity of the Landscape Resource

The sensitivity of the landscape is a function of its land use, landscape patterns and scale, visual enclosure and the distribution of visual receptors, and the value placed on the landscape. It also relates to the nature and scale of development proposed. It includes consideration of landscape values as well as the susceptibility of the landscape to change.

Landscape values can be identified by the presence of landscape designations or policies which indicate particular values, either on a national or local level. In addition, a number of criteria are used to assess the value of a landscape.

Landscape susceptibility is defined in the GLVIA as the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline scenario and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies. Susceptibility also relates to the type of development – a landscape may be highly susceptible to certain types of development but have a low susceptibility to other types of development.

Sensitivity is therefore a combination of Landscape Value and Susceptibility.

For the purpose of assessment, five categories are used to classify the landscape sensitivity of the receiving environment as presented in Table 6.1 below. The following tables were created using EPA guidelines.

Figure 6.1: Chart Showing Typical Classifications of the Significance of Effects based on the sensitivity of the receiving environment.

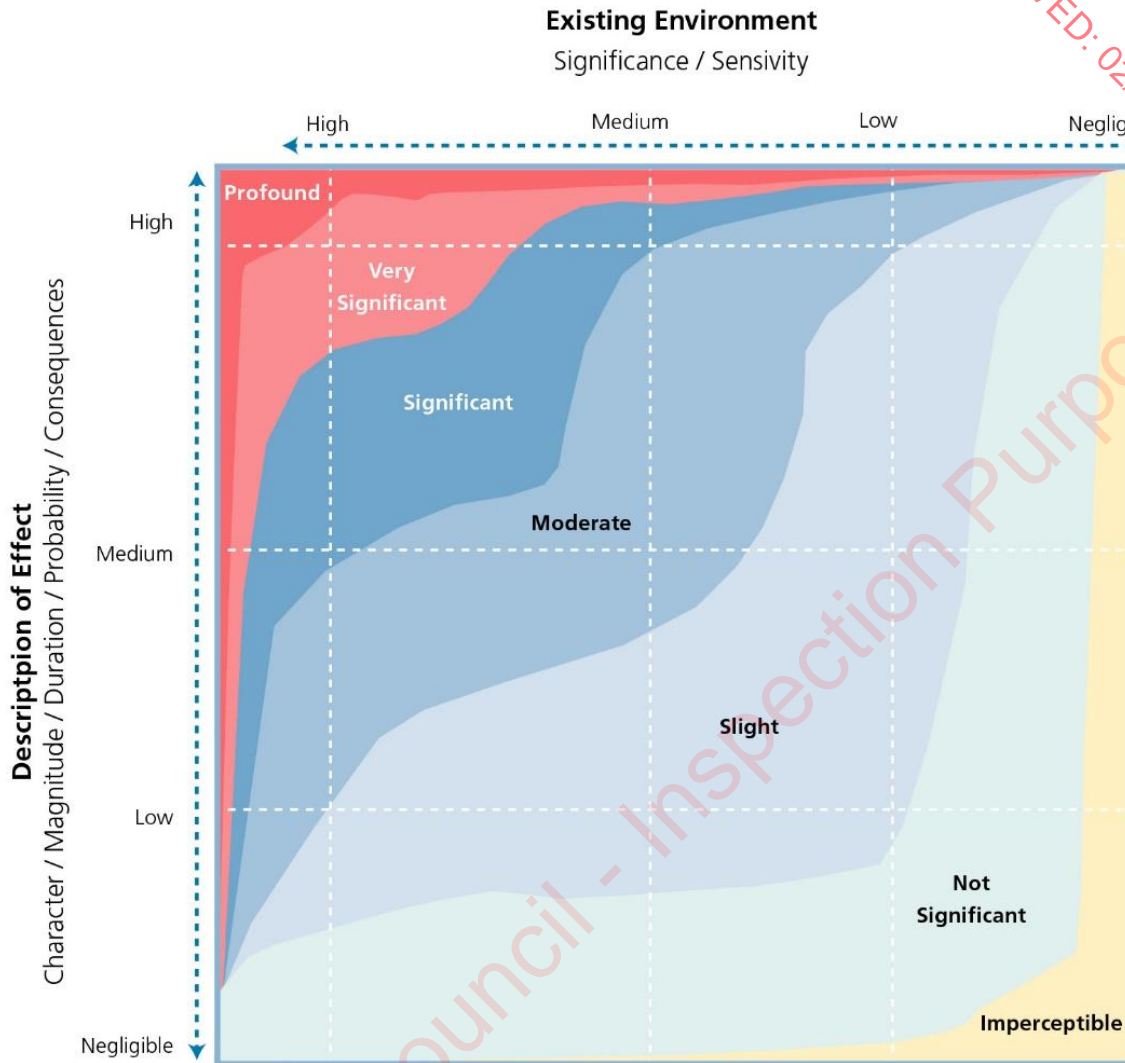


Table 6.1: Categories of Landscape Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	Areas where the landscape exhibits a very strong, positive character with valued elements, features and characteristics that combine to give an experience of unity, richness and harmony. The character of the landscape is such that its capacity for accommodating change in the form of development is very low. These attributes are recognised in landscape policy or designations as being of national or international value and the principal management objective for the area is protection of the existing character from change.
High	Areas where the landscape exhibits strong, positive character with valued elements, features and characteristics. The character of the landscape is such that it has limited/low capacity for accommodating change in the form of development. These attributes are recognised in landscape policy or designations as being of national, regional or

Sensitivity	Description
	county value and the principal management objective for the area is conservation of the existing character.
Medium	Areas where the landscape has certain valued elements, features or characteristics but where the character is mixed or not particularly strong or has evidence of alteration to / degradation / erosion of elements and characteristics. The character of the landscape is such that there is some capacity for change in the form of development. These areas may be recognised in landscape policy at local or county level and the principal management objective may be to consolidate landscape character or facilitate appropriate, necessary change.
Low	Areas where the landscape has few valued elements, features or characteristics and the character is weak. The character of the landscape is such that it has capacity for change; where development would make no significant change or would make a positive change. Such landscapes are generally unrecognised in policy and where the principal management objective is to facilitate change through development, repair, restoration or enhancement.
Negligible	Areas where the landscape exhibits negative character, with no valued elements, features or characteristics. The character of the landscape is such that its capacity for accommodating change is high; where development would make no significant change or would make a positive change. Such landscapes include derelict industrial lands or extraction sites, as well as sites or areas that are designated for a particular type of development. The principal management objective for the area is to facilitate change in the landscape through development, repair or restoration.

6.2.13 Magnitude of Landscape Change

The magnitude of change is a factor of the scale, extent and degree of change imposed on the landscape with reference to its key elements, features and characteristics (also known as ‘landscape receptors’). Five categories are used to classify magnitude of landscape change as described overleaf in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: Categories of Landscape Change

Magnitude of Change	Description
Very High	Change that is large in extent, resulting in the loss of or major alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape and/or introduction of large elements considered totally uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in fundamental change in the character of the landscape.
High	Change that is moderate to large in extent, resulting in major alteration to key elements features or characteristics of the landscape and/or introduction of large elements considered uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape.

Magnitude of Change	Description
Medium	Change that is moderate in extent, resulting in partial loss or alteration to key elements features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily substantially uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape.
Low	Change that is moderate or limited in scale, resulting in minor alteration to key elements features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in minor change to the character of the landscape.
Negligible	Change that is limited in scale, resulting in no alteration to key elements features or characteristics of the landscape key elements features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that are characteristic of the context. Such development results in no change to the landscape character.

6.2.14 Significance of Effects

In order to classify the significance of effects (both landscape and visual), the predicted magnitude of change is measured against the sensitivity of the landscape/viewpoint, using the following guide (see Table 6.3). There are seven classifications of significance, namely: (1) imperceptible, (2) not significant, (3) slight, (4) moderate, (5) significant, (6) very significant, (7) profound.

Table 6.3: Guide to Classification of Significance of Landscape Effects

		Sensitivity of the Landscape Resource				
		Very High	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Magnitude of Change	Very High	Profound	Profound-Very Significant	Very Significant-Significant	Moderate	Slight
	High	Profound-Very Significant	Very Significant	Significant	Moderate-Slight	Slight-Not Significant
	Medium	Very Significant-Significant	Significant	Moderate	Slight	Not Significant
	Low	Moderate	Moderate-Slight	Slight	Not significant	Imperceptible
	Negligible	Slight	Slight-Not Significant	Not significant	Imperceptible	Imperceptible

The matrix above is used as a guide only. The assessor also uses professional judgement informed by their expertise, experience and common sense, to arrive at a classification of significance that is reasonable and justifiable.

Landscape effects are also classified as positive, neutral or negative/adverse. Development has the potential to improve the environment as well as damage it. In certain situations, there might be policy

encouraging a type of change in the landscape, and if a development achieves the objective of the policy the resulting effect might be positive, even if the landscape character is profoundly changed.

6.2.15 Methodology for Visual Assessment

The visual effects of the development are assessed in section 6.5 of this chapter. Visual assessment considers the changes to the composition of views, the character of the views, and the visual amenity experienced by visual receptors. The assessment is made for a number of viewpoints selected to represent the range of visual receptors in the receiving environment. The significance of the visual effects experienced at these locations is assessed by measuring the viewpoint sensitivity against the magnitude of change to the view resulting from the development. Definitions of viewpoint sensitivity are provided below in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4: Categories of Viewpoint Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	Iconic viewpoints - towards or from a landscape feature or area - that are recognised in policy or otherwise designated as being of national value. The composition, character and quality of the view are such that its capacity for accommodating change in the form of development is very low. The principal management objective for the view is its protection from change.
High	Viewpoints that that are recognised in policy or otherwise designated as being of value, or viewpoints that are highly valued by people that experience them regularly (such as views from houses or outdoor recreation features focused on the landscape). The composition, character and quality of the view may be such that its capacity for accommodating compositional change in the form of development may or may not be low. The principal management objective for the view is its protection from change that reduces visual amenity.
Medium	Viewpoints representing people travelling through or past the affected landscape in cars or on public transport, i.e. viewing but not focused on the landscape which is regarded as moderately scenic. The views are generally not designated, but which include panoramic views or views judged to be of some scenic quality, which demonstrate some sense of naturalness, tranquillity or some rare element in the view.
Low	Viewpoints reflecting people involved in activities not focused on the landscape e.g. people at their place of work or engaged in similar activities such as shopping, or on heavily trafficked routes etc. The view may present an attractive backdrop to these activities but is not regarded as particularly scenic or an important element of these activities.
Negligible	Viewpoints reflecting people involved in activities not focused on the landscape e.g. people at their place of work or engaged in similar activities such as shopping where the view has no relevance or is of poor quality.

6.2.16 Magnitude of Change to the View

Classification of the magnitude of change takes into account the size or scale of the intrusion of development into the view (relative to the other elements and features in the composition, i.e. its relative visual dominance), the degree to which it contrasts or integrates with the other elements and the general

character of the view, and the way in which the change will be experienced (e.g. in full view, partial or peripheral, or glimpses). It also takes into account the geographical extent of the change, the duration and the reversibility of the visual effects.

Five categories are used to classify magnitude of change in the view as described below in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5: Categories of Visual Change

Magnitude of Change	Description
Very High	Full or extensive intrusion of the development in the view, or partial intrusion that obstructs valued features or characteristics, or introduction of elements that are completely out of character in the context, to the extent that the development becomes the dominant the composition and defines the character of the view and the visual amenity.
High	Extensive intrusion of the development in the view, or partial intrusion that obstructs valued features, or introduction of elements that may be considered uncharacteristic in the context, to the extent that the development becomes co-dominant with other elements in the composition and affects the character of the view and the visual amenity.
Medium	Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity.
Low	Minor intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in minor alteration to the composition and character of the view but no change to visual amenity.
Negligible	Barely discernible intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are characteristic in the context, resulting in slight change to the composition of the view and no change in visual amenity.

6.2.17 Significance of Visual Effects

As for landscape effects, in order to classify the significance of visual effects, the magnitude of change to the view is measured against the sensitivity of the viewpoint, using the guide in Table 6.3.

6.2.18 Quality and Timescale

The predicted effects are also classified as beneficial, neutral or adverse. This is not an absolute exercise; in particular, visual receptors' attitudes to development, and thus their response to the impact of a development, will vary. However, the methodology applied is designed to provide robust justification for the conclusions drawn. These qualitative effects are defined as:

- Adverse – Scheme at variance with landform, scale, pattern. Would degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of valued features, elements or their setting or cause the quality of the landscape(townscape)/view to be diminished.
- Neutral – Scheme complements the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape (townscape)/view and maintains landscape quality.

- Beneficial – improves landscape(townscape)/view quality and character, fits with the scale, landform and pattern and enables the restoration of valued characteristic features or repairs / removes damage caused by existing land uses.
- Effects are also categorised according to their longevity or timescale:
- Temporary – Lasting for one year or less.
- Short Term – Lasting one to seven years.
- Medium Term – Lasting seven to fifteen years.
- Long Term – Lasting fifteen years to sixty years.
- Permanent – Lasting over sixty years.

The Glossary of Effects used in the assessment of effects are as per EPA Guidelines below:

Table 6.6: Descriptions of Effects

Quality of Effects

Positive Effects	<i>A change which improves the quality of the environment (for example, by increasing species diversity, or improving the reproductive capacity of an ecosystem, or by removing nuisances or improving amenities).</i>
Neutral Effects	<i>No effects or effects that are imperceptible, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error.</i>
Negative Effects	<i>A change which reduces the quality of the environment (for example, lessening species diversity or diminishing the reproductive capacity of an ecosystem, or damaging health or property or by causing nuisance).</i>

Significance of Effects

Imperceptible Effect	<i>An effect capable of measurement but without noticeable consequences.</i>
Not Significant	<i>An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences.</i>
Slight Effect	<i>An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.</i>
Moderate Effect	<i>An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.</i>
Significant Effect	<i>An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.</i>
Very Significant	<i>An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity, significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.</i>
Profound Effect	<i>An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics.</i>

Duration of Impact/Effect

Momentary Effects	<i>Effects lasting from seconds to minutes.</i>
Brief Effects	<i>Effects lasting less than a day.</i>
Temporary Effects	<i>Effects lasting less than a year.</i>
Short-term Effect	<i>Effect lasting one to seven years.</i>
Medium-term Effect	<i>Effect lasting seven to fifteen years.</i>
Long-term Effect	<i>Effect lasting fifteen to sixty years.</i>

Permanent Effect	<i>It is lasting over sixty years.</i>
Reversible Effects	<i>Effects that can be undone, for example through remediation or restoration.</i>
Temporary Effects	<i>Effect lasting for one year or less.</i>

Types of Effects

Indirect Effects (a.k.a. Secondary or Off-site Effects)	<i>Effects on the environment, which are not a direct result of the project, often produced away from the project site or because of a complex pathway.</i>
Cumulative Effects	<i>The addition of many minor or insignificant effects, including effects of other projects, to create larger, more significant effects.</i>
'Do Nothing'	<i>The environment as it would be in the future should the subject project not be carried out.</i>
'Worst case' Effect	<i>The effects arising from a project in the case where mitigation measures substantially fail.</i>
Indeterminable Effect	<i>When the full consequences of a change in the environment cannot be described.</i>
Irreversible Effect	<i>When the character, distinctiveness, diversity or reproductive capacity of an environment is permanently lost.</i>
Residual Effect	<i>The degree of environmental change that will occur after the proposed mitigation measures have taken effect.</i>
Synergistic Effects	<i>Where the resultant effect is of greater significance than the sum of its constituents (e.g., combination of SOx and NOx to produce smog).</i>

A statement is made as to the appropriateness of the proposed development based on the combined assessment of the predicted landscape and visual effects. This methodology, in accordance with the various guidelines for LVIA, results in a conclusion as to the appropriateness of the proposed development based on objective assessment of its likely landscape and visual effects.

6.2.19 Photomontage Methodology

A photomontage is defined as:

'A visualisation which superimposes an image of a proposed development upon a photograph or series of photographs. Photomontages are generated using computer software.' ('Visual Representation of Wind Farms - Good Practice Guidance', Scottish Natural Heritage (SHN) -. 2006)

Choice of Views

The views were chosen to accurately represent the likely visual impact from all directions. Views from the Public Domain were given priority, particularly those from main roads and access routes. The views submitted are considered to be the most important and representative, having regard to the requirement to examine the greatest likely effects on sensitive receptors.

6.3 THE EXISTING RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT (BASELINE SITUATION)

6.3.1 The Existing Site Context

The subject site is located within the townland of Railpark in the parish of Laraghbryan, on the outskirts of the town of Maynooth, Co. Kildare. The site measures 15.27ha and presents as an irregular, polygonal-shaped site. The site comprises of relatively flat grassland, surrounded by grassland fields to the north, east and south, and a residential housing development to the west. The site has no existing road frontage or vehicular access.

The northern boundary is linear, formed by continuous hedgerows. The eastern boundary cuts through an open grassland field diagonally in the upper portion, and in the lower portion, runs along the existing hedgerow. To the south, the grassland field has an open boundary, with the exception of a portion of hedgerow planting. The western boundary is formed by hedging which separates the field from the residential housing developments to the west of the site.

Figure 6.2: Site Location



6.3.2 Historical Landscape Context

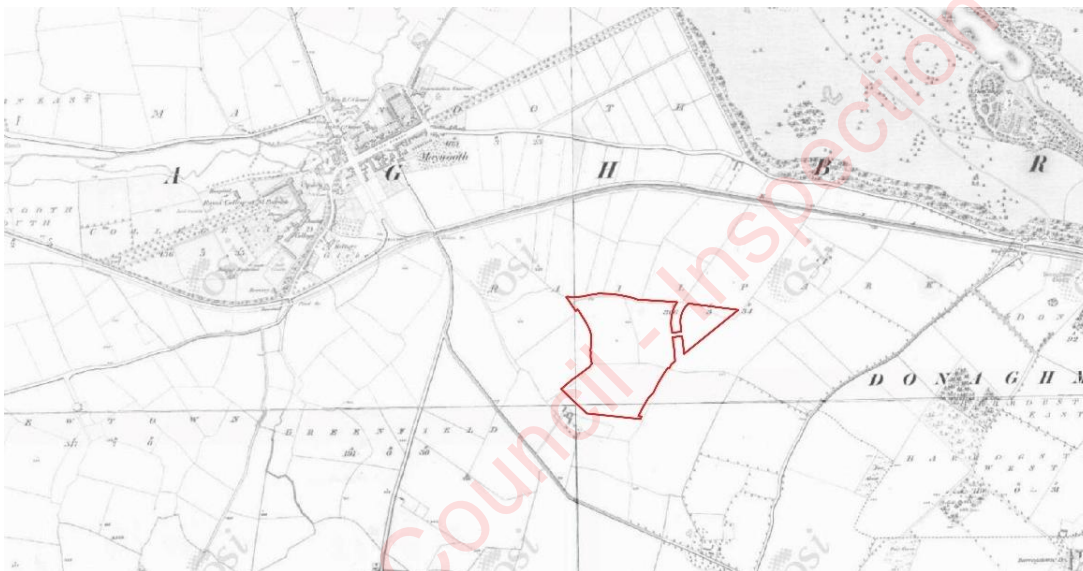
The lands at Railpark are located in the Laraghbryan Civil Parish, Barony of North Salt in County Kildare. Railpark is situated to the southeast of the town of Maynooth, as depicted in the Ordnance Survey of Ireland first edition 6 Inch mapping which was surveyed between 1829 and 1834. The surrounding lands at Railpark appear as a low-lying agricultural landscape setting. Adjacent to the lands at Railpark is a farmyard, which is labelled as Rockfield House in the second edition of the 6 Inch Ordnance Survey Maps. An obelisk, known as Connolly's Folly, is a historical monument approximately 1km to the east of

the site. It was designed by Richard Cassels and was built in 1740 for the Connolly family, of Castletown House.

The town of Maynooth is centred around the Main Street, with the courthouse at the centre. The castle dating from the early 13th century, Anglican church and Royal College of St Patrick are situated to the western end of Main Street and the Carton House Estate to the eastern end of Main Street. The Y-shaped harbour on the Royal Canal is depicted in this map, indicating the importance of the canal for transport at this time. The canal remains on the same alignment today, however the railway is not depicted on this map. Other notable buildings in the town include the presentation convent, police station, old and new R.C. chapels, kiln and rectory.

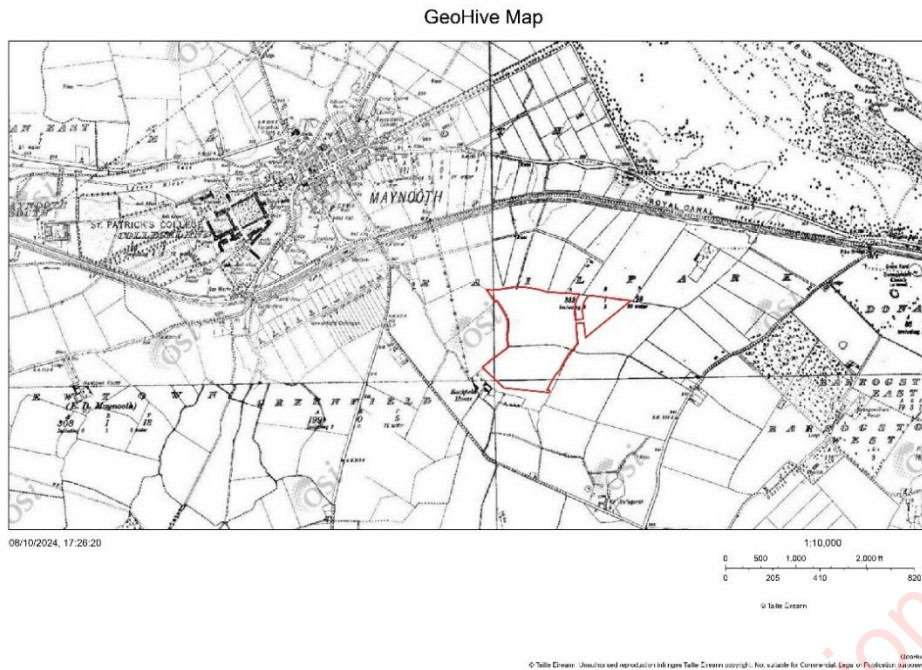
A small river, the Lyreen, a tributary of the Ryewater, which in turn is a tributary of the River Liffey, is shown running just north of the town centre. A mill race diverts from the Lyreen and a mill is situated just north of the castle. A reservoir is shown on the Lyreen river.

Figure 6.3: Historic 6 Inch Ordnance Survey Ireland Map 1829-1834



By the time of the second edition of the 6 Inch maps, the railways had been constructed. The train station in Maynooth is situated to the southern edge of the harbour, and the railway line runs to the south of the canal. Both the railway line and station appear as they are today. The town has not grown significantly, however additions on this map include Greenfield cottages lie to the south of the station, forming a row of cottage with a parcel of land belonging to each house, presumably for domestic agriculture. The mill depicted in the previous map is now shown as a corn mill (Manor Mills) to the north. The River Lyreen has been straightened since the first edition of the OSI map. A laundry is indicated in the presentation convent. Beside the harbour is a handball alley.

Figure 6.4: Historic 6 Inch Ordnance Survey Ireland Map 1888-1915



By 1995, significant suburban expansion around the town of Maynooth is evident. The M4 Motorway is constructed just south of the town, forming a boundary to the town’s suburban growth. Housing developments of a sprawl pattern are focused to the south of Maynooth between the royal canal and the motorway, and as far east as the lands at Railpark. The National University of Maynooth was founded and has expanded to lands north of St Patricks College, giving Maynooth status as a university town.

Figure 6.5: Aerial View 1995



Figure 6.6: Aerial View 1996-2000



Carton Demesne which is located to the north and north-east of the site. It was redeveloped into a hotel 2006, with the majority of estate parkland redeveloped into a golf course. Rockfield House to the south of the subject site is no longer in existence and perhaps cleared for future redevelopment of the site. The construction of a new housing development south of the subject site is apparent in the aerial maps between 2006-2013. Otherwise, suburban expansion of Maynooth remains as it is today. A route has been carved through the subject site, connecting the housing estate to the north of the site and the construction site to the south. Since this route is no longer on recent aerial maps, it is possible the route was used temporarily, either for moving construction materials or development of the site.

Figure 6.7: Aerial View 2006-2013



6.3.3 Circulation

In terms of road infrastructure, the M4 motorway which connects Dublin to Galway runs east to west and bypasses Maynooth to the south. An interchange at the Straffan Road (R406) serves as the primary vehicular route into the town from the motorway and is approximately 1.5km from the site. The Dublin Road (R148) runs to Kilcock to the west, and Leixlip to the east. The Celbridge Road (R405) runs between Celbridge to the southeast and Maynooth, joining the Straffan road just south of the town centre of Maynooth. R408 runs southwest of the town of Prosperous.

The planned Maynooth Eastern Ring Road is planned for the eastern side of Maynooth town and will provide a link between the Leixlip Road (R148) and the Celbridge Road (R405). It will include a bridge over the Royal Canal and the railway line. In addition to the carriageway for vehicular traffic, the road will provide pedestrian and cycle infrastructure and connect to the towpath of the Royal Canal.

In terms of wider pedestrian infrastructure, Carton Avenue serves as a tree-lined walk between the Main Street and Carton Estate. The Royal Canal Greenway is a linear walking and cycling route along the canal, which itself is used for boats. To the south, the railway line runs parallel to the canal.

The R405 to the south of the site features a narrow footpath, while the R406 accommodates a wider footpath alongside a bike lane that combines both physical kerb separation and painted markings, occasionally disrupted by bus stops. The Main Street offers a bike lane shared with the footpath, delineated by paint. On the Kilcock Road (R148) there are footpaths and painted cycle lanes. Dublin Road (R148) Moyglare Road and Meadowbrook Link Road provide a shared path for both cyclists and pedestrians, whereas Dunboyne Road does not have a designated bike lane. The cycle infrastructure on R408 varies throughout, featuring sections that are shared with footpaths as well as areas without dedicated lanes.

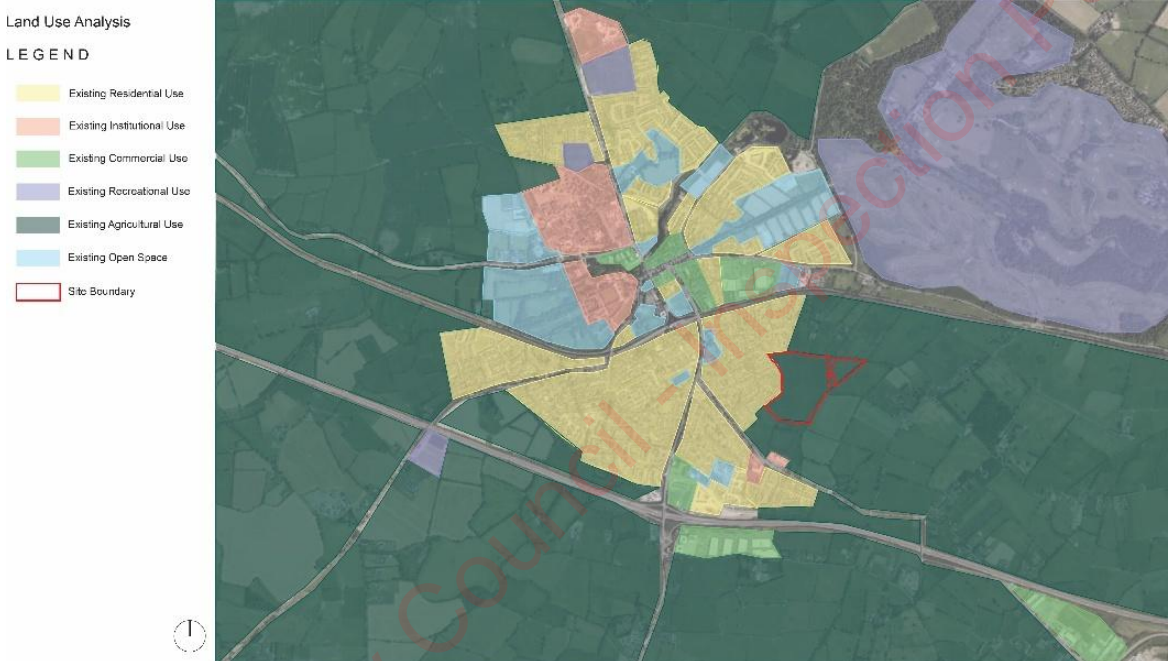
Figure 6.8: Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation Analysis



6.3.4 Contiguous Land Use

The subject site is located approximately 1km southeast of Maynooth Town Centre. Lands to the east of the site are predominantly agricultural. Land use immediately to the north and south are also agricultural. Residential land borders the east of the site. To the north, on the other side of the Royal Canal, is recreational space in the form a golf course on the Carton Estate. Institutional uses in the form of 2 schools: Maynooth Educate Together National School and Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich on the Celbridge Road lie south of the site. Southwest of the site, commercial land use is concentrated around the M4 junction: a Lidl supermarket to the north and Maynooth Business Campus south of the motorway. Within the town centre are various commercial, institutional and open space land uses. St Patrick’s College and Maynooth University are the primary institutional uses in the town. Town centre commercial land is centred on Main Street. Additional commercial uses are in the form of Manor Mills north of Main Street and Carton Retail Park just to the east of the town core.

Figure 6.9: Land Use Analysis



The site is accessible by Dublin Bus routes C4 and C6 (Dublin – Maynooth route) and W61 (Hazlehatch Station – Maynooth route) which stop close to the site on the Celbridge Road. Additionally, bus routes C3, C5, X25 and X25 stop on the Straffan Road servicing the Dublin – Maynooth route. Additionally, the train station services Maynooth with commuter trains to Dublin, and the Irish Rail service between Dublin and Longford/Sligo.

6.3.5 Open Space

To the north, east and south of the site are areas of open space comprising predominately of grassland. Further north, the golf course on Carton Estate and the treelined Carton Avenue serve as recreational open space and woodland. Open space associated with St Patrick’s College and Maynooth University are primarily lawn and recreational sports fields comprising of an astroturf pitch, playing fields, basketball in addition to a GAA club.

6.3.6 Trees and Vegetation

6.3.6.1 Tree Survey

A tree survey was undertaken by Charles McCorkell Arboricultural Consultancy. Tree and Hedge species are located at the periphery of the site. Their conditions were assessed by the arborist as moderate: with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20 years; low quality: with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 10 years, or young trees with a stem diameter below 150 mm; or cannot be retained: those in such a condition that they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the context of the current land use for longer than 10 years.

In total there are 34 trees made up of 7 tree species: Ash, Poplar, Fir, Sycamore, Leyland Cypress, Silver Birch and Deodar. 1 of these trees was rated as in moderate condition, 23 were low quality and 10 cannot be retained. No trees of high quality were found by the arborist. There are 43 hedge groups comprising of 7 hedge species: Blackberry, Ivy, Elder, Dog-rose, Hawthorn, Hazel, Cherry Laurel. (note : add latin names for all planting

Within the wider local context, street trees in the surrounding residential housing developments, hedgerows in surrounding fields, areas of woodland within the Carton Estate and open space within Maynooth University form a network of canopy cover.

Figure 6.10: Arborist Tree Rating Plan



6.3.6.2 Ecology and Habitats

The nearest Special Area of Conservation to the site is Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC, located between Leixlip and Maynooth, extending along the Rye Water, a tributary of the River Liffey. The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on *Annex I / II* of the *E.U. Habitats Directive*: Petrifying Springs, Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail (*Vertigo angustior*), Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (*Vertigo moulinsiana*). The conservation importance of the site lies in the presence of several rare and threatened plant and animal species, and the presence of petrifying springs, a habitat type listed

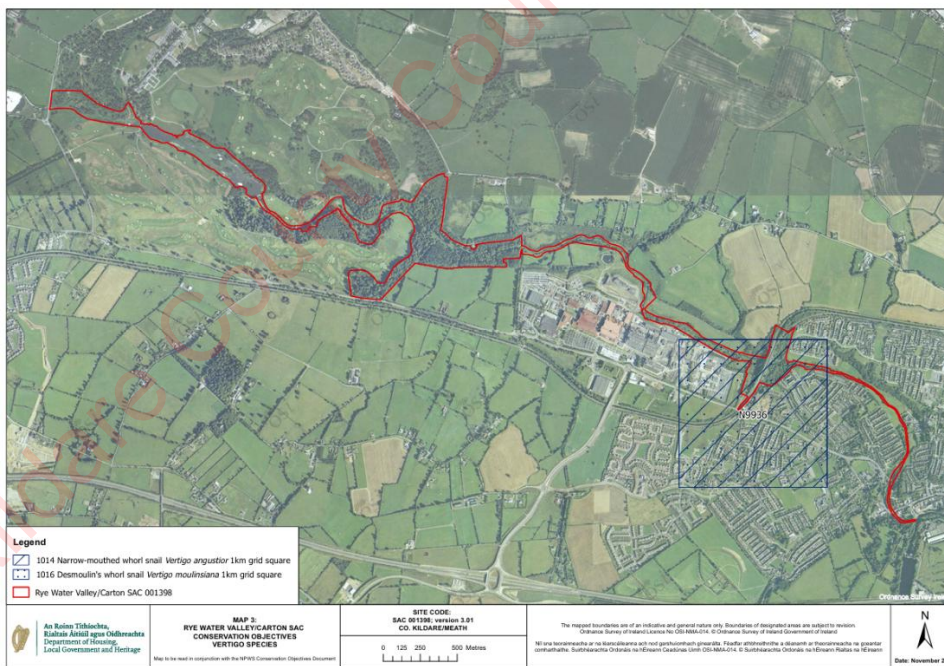
on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The woods found on Carton Estate and their birdlife are of additional interest.

As outlined in the *Kildare Council Development Plan, Chapter 12 Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure*, there are two proposed Natural Heritage Areas in the surrounding context of the site. These are Royal Canal and Rye Water Valley/Carton. These fall under the remit of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 and are designated to conserve species and habitats of national importance and sites of geological interest.

Figure 6.11: Habitat Map (by DNV)



Figure 6.12: Rye Water Valley/Carton



6.3.7 Visual Analysis

The site presents as an open grassland field with hedgerow planting at its boundaries. The predominant visual character of the site can be described as pastoral. It appears to have been used previously for agriculture but is not currently used for any purpose. Since the site hasn't had human intervention for some time, the grass has been let grow tall as a meadow.

The site is landlocked, with no road frontage or public access. As a result, visibility into the site from the Celbridge Road is limited. The existing approach to the site is made through another disused agricultural field, made up of grassland bordered by hedgerows.

The site is relatively flat, with no significant level differences, or elevation. The surrounding lands are also of flat topography. The site is bordered by open grassland fields to the north, east and south and by a residential housing development to the west.

Key views from the site are towards the spire of St Patrick's College Chapel to the west, Tyrconnell tower in the Carton estate to the north and Connolly's Folly to the east, distinctive architectural features in the surrounding demesne landscape. There are views of the treeline of surrounding fields, which enhance the visual character of the site.

The subject site sits on the edge of Maynooth's suburban development adjacent to an agricultural landscape setting. The adjoining residential developments are characterised by cul-de-sacs of low density two-storey semi-detached and detached houses with front gardens, driveways, and rear lawn gardens. The streetscapes are tarmacked, with grass verges and ornamental tree planting, concrete footpaths, and low brick boundary walls to front gardens of the houses. Boundary walls of the houses are typically made from pebbledash, with brick piers. Open spaces in the estates are generally made up of lawn for a kickabout area, and tree planting around the perimeter.



Plate No. 1 **View looking north into the site**



Plate No. 2 **View looking northwest towards St Patrick's College Chapel**



Plate No. 3 **View looking east towards Connolly's Folly**



Plate No. 4 **View looking northeast towards Tyrconnell Tower**



Plate No. 6 View looking south towards Tree Grouping south of the site boundary



Plate No. 7 View looking south towards Tree Grouping south of the site boundary



Plate No. 8 View looking west towards adjoining Rockfield housing development



Plate No. 9 View looking east along Northern hedgerow boundary

6.3.8 Relevant Legislation & Guidance

6.3.8.1 Planning Context

Landscape Planning policies and objectives relevant to the assessment of the impacts of the proposed development are laid out in the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029.

The subject site is zoned **C – New Residential**

Land-Use Zoning Objective: *To provide for new residential development.*

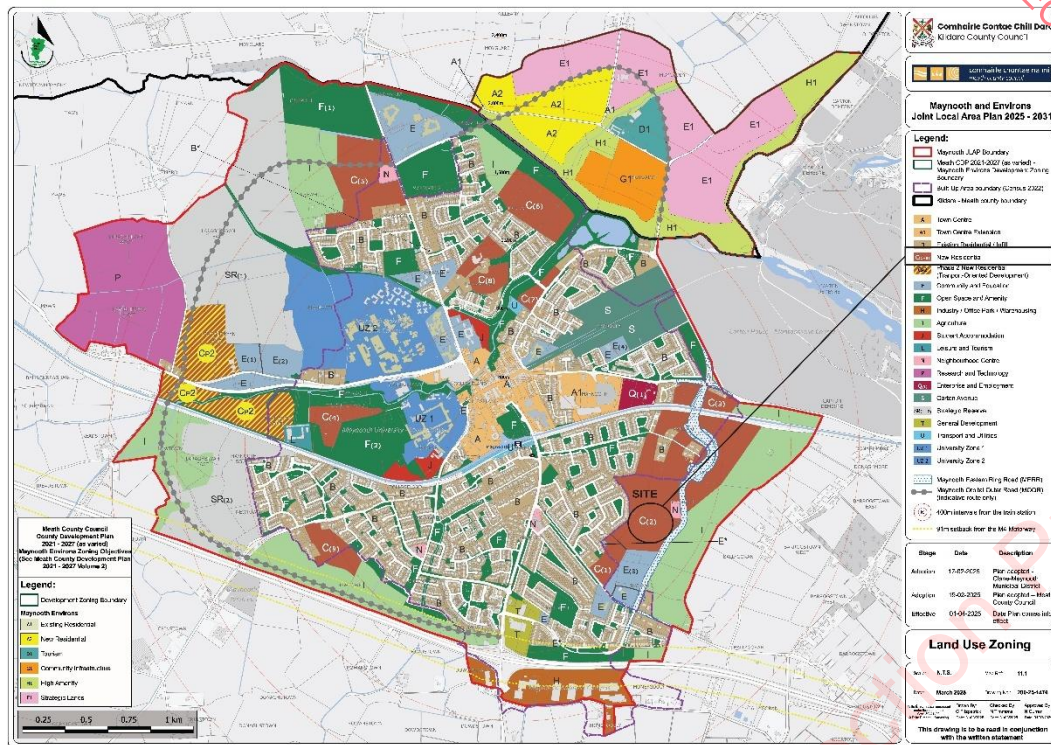
Table 6.7: Estimated Residential Capacity for Railpark, Maynooth

Zoning Designation	Location	Site Area (Ha.)	Site in Built-Up Area (BUA)	Estimated Residential Yield (approx. no. of units)	Net Density (dwellings per hectare - dph)
Units allocated to 'A: Town Centre' and 'B: Existing Residential and Infill' zoned lands	Maynooth Town Centre and on infill sites	N/A	Yes	250*	N/A
	Old Greenfield (Part 8 scheme)	1.9	Yes	65	N/A
Units with extant permission within 'A1: Town Centre' and 'C: New Residential zoned lands'	Parson Street*	1.29	Yes	169	N/A
	Mill Street	1.05	Yes	115	N/A
	Celbridge Road C(1)	3.02	Partially	105	N/A
	Mariavilla (Dunboyne Road) C(7)	c.2.4	Yes	81	N/A
Sub Total:		-	-	785	
	Railpark KDA C(2)	30.47	Partially	954	40 dph
	Dublin Road C(3)	3.55	Yes	124	42.5 dph
	St Patrick's College C(4)	4.84	Yes	310	80 dph
	Crewhill KDA C(5)	15.08	Partially	422	40 dph
	Rye Water Valley KDA C(6)	9.89	Yes	316	40 dph
	Lyreen Avenue KDA C(8)	5.47	Yes	263	60 dph
Sub Total:		69.3**	-	2,389	
TOTAL:			-	3,174***	-

The site is bordered to the south by lands zoned as Community and Education, and to the east by land zoned for the Maynooth Eastern Ring Road (MERR).

The Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031 identifies the site as one of four specific 'Key Development Areas' (KDAs) within Maynooth. The lands Railpark are considered to be strategic in terms of the development of an integrated residential neighbourhood that will contribute to the future growth and consolidation of Maynooth town alongside the future Maynooth Eastern Ring Road (MERR). An Urban Design Framework Plan and Design Brief has been prepared for the Railpark KDA to guide future development of this new suburban edge.

Figure 6.13: Maynooth & Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031: Land Use Zoning



Kildare County Council - Inspection Purposes Only

Figure 6.14: Design Brief-Railpark Key Development Area (KDA) Maynooth & Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031

11.4.1 Railpark Key Development Area

The Railpark Key Development Area represents an important opportunity for Maynooth to grow sustainably delivering a significant quantum of housing as well as the Maynooth Eastern Ring Road (MERR) in addition to providing new social infrastructure to serve the existing and planned resident population of the area.

Table 11.1 Railpark KDA Design Brief

Site area:	30.47 hectares (C: New Residential lands)
Indicative net density:	40 dwellings per hectare (DPH)
Estimated residential yield:	954 units
Urban character area:	Suburban edge
Housing types:	Apartments, duplexes, maisonettes, terraced townhouses and semi-detached houses
Strategic open space provision:	A 2.5-3-hectare local park with a Multi-Use Games Area and additional public open spaces throughout the KDA.

Vision
To realise the creation of a compact and well-integrated urban extension that consolidates development within the eastern area of Maynooth. The KDA will deliver a local park and a neighbourhood centre, as well as providing a site for a new post-primary school which will be developed over the medium to long term.

Built Form and Urban Structure
 The built form should seek to fully integrate with the established housing estates to the west and the approved residential scheme to the southwest. Overall densities should be lower where directly adjacent to existing residential areas and higher along the areas of the KDA fronting onto the approved route of the Maynooth Eastern Ring Road (MERR). This will offer a defined urban edge and enhance passive supervision of the route. The layout of urban form should be both permeable and legible. To enable this, the size of the street blocks should, as far as practicable, be 80-120 metres in dimension (as per DMURS Guidelines). The development of this KDA should take into consideration and respond appropriately to its surrounding context, in particular the location and setting of the low density dwellings in the north. These dwellings, which are currently accessed via a cul-de-sac from the Parklands estate, may be redeveloped as part of the design scheme.

The new neighbourhood centre should be located adjacent to the MERR and should be a key feature of the KDA. Designed as an urban village centre it should fully integrate into the KDA and act as an attractive local landmark and entrance to the neighbourhood.

The built form should be designed around the existing green and blue infrastructure features. Open spaces should also be defined by a strong building edge and overlooked to provide passive supervision and legibility. A mix of housing types and styles is required to create legibility and variety in the urban environment. Built form on corner sites shall have dual frontages.

Figure 6.15: Design Brief - Railpark Key Development Area (KDA) Maynooth & Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031**Connectivity and Movement**

Vehicular access to this KDA shall be provided via the Maynooth Eastern Ring Road (MERR) which shall be constructed prior to or in tandem with the development of the KDA. Internal vehicular links between different landholdings within the KDA shall be subject to the agreement of the planning authority during the planning application stage. The KDA should provide for a pedestrian and cycle friendly environment and integrate permeability and cycling routes to the Royal Canal Greenway to the north, as well as adjacent areas to the west and south. The KDA should also ensure the possibility of realising future links to potential development lands to the east. Particular attention should be given to the interface between the residential portion of the KDA and the site of the post-primary school to the south. A single point of access to the post-primary school site for vehicular traffic will be agreed with the planning authority at planning application stage. This will be either via point A: Celbridge Road or point B: MERR, as identified in Figure 11.6. Vehicular access to residential development within the KDA will be via the MERR only.

Green and Blue Infrastructure, Open Spaces and Surface Water Drainage

Natural features on the site such as existing hedgerows and treelines should be retained as far as practicable to protect the existing biodiversity and ecological networks on the site and help provide an established sense of place in the neighbourhood from the outset.

Green open space should be designed to a high quality finish. Spaces should also be defined by a strong building edge and overlooked to provide passive supervision and legibility. The KDA should provide for a 2.5-3-hectare local park at a central location. This will incorporate an all-weather Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and playground. Notwithstanding the multiple ownership of lands within the KDA, the local park shall feature a comprehensive and integrated design scheme with a substantial landscaped parkland area, containing high levels of native planting. The MUGA should not form an overly dominant aspect of the park. Appropriate urban trees should also be planted to help define internal streets as well as along the route of the MERR.

Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) to surface water management within the KDA shall be prioritised and align with the Maynooth and Environs Surface Water Management Strategy and Kildare County Council's Sustainable Drainage Systems Guidance Document (2024), as per Objective IO 2.2 (Chapter 10).

Boundaries and Entrance Treatments

All entrances to the KDA should be minimal, with the sense of arrival to the residential development being created by the design and layout of the built form and not the entrance itself. All boundaries and interface areas with the MERR should be understated and attractive and avoid presenting a closed-off or walled-in character.

Overall, boundary and entrance treatments should be in keeping with Section 15.4.5 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029.

Figure 6.16: Urban Design Framework Plan - Railpark Key Development Area (KDA) Maynooth & Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031

Figure 11.6 Railpark KDA Urban Design Framework



Key

Maynooth Eastern Ring Road (Measure RD 3)		Landscape reinforcement	
Local route		Potential access to Post-Primary school (A) → (B) →	
Pedestrian/cyclist connections		Wayleave	
Residential block		Neighbourhood centre	
Key building frontage		Landscaped civic plaza	
Strategic open space		Playground	
Existing green infrastructure		Nature-Based Management Area	

Built and Cultural Heritage

Aim: To protect, conserve and sensitively manage the built and cultural heritage of County Kildare and to encourage sensitive sustainable development so as to ensure its survival and maintenance for future generations.

General Heritage

County Kildare has a rich and diverse heritage, which includes landscapes, countryside, archaeological sites and the built environment of towns and villages. Heritage is integral to the identity of any county. It provides the county with a strong sense of place, character and distinctiveness. Heritage protection is an integral part of sustainable development, it has environmental, and quality of life benefits and also brings significant economic benefits. (KCDP 11.1)

Archaeological Heritage

Archaeological heritage consists of the material remains left behind by past societies and includes structures, places, caves, sites, features or portable objects, whether on land, underwater or in the intertidal zone.

Kildare’s irreplaceable archaeological heritage provides information on development through the millennia. Only a portion of the material remains of the past has survived, as many sites have disappeared from the landscape. Of those that do survive, some are visible in the landscape while others only survive beneath the current ground surface or have been remodelled within more modern buildings.

All known archaeological sites are identified in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) (see www.archaeology.ie). (KCDP 11.2)

In 1986 an Urban Archaeological Survey of County Kildare was conducted. A number of medieval / early modern towns with known archaeological potential were surveyed and Zones of Archaeological Potential were identified within these towns (KCDP 11.10.1):

Ardree, Ardscull, Athy, Ballymore Eustace, Castledermot, Celbridge, Clane, Cloncurry, Dunmanoge, Harristown, Kildare, Kilkea, Kill, Leixlip, Moone, Naas, Old Kilcullen, Oughterard, Rathangan, Rathmore, Silliot Hill

Monument	Townland	RMP number
Castle	Maynooth	KD005-015----

Policy AH P2 – Archaeological Heritage	Protect and enhance archaeological sites, monuments and where appropriate and following detailed assessment, their setting, including those that are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) or newly discovered archaeological sites and/or sub surface archaeological remains.
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Features of Historical Interest

Policy AH P5 – Archaeological Heritage	Secure the identification, protection and conservation of historic items and features of interest throughout the county including street furniture, surface finishes, roadside installations, items of industrial heritage and other stand-alone features of interest (items not listed on the RMP or RPS).
Objective AH O17 – Archaeological Heritage	Ensure that development within the county including Council development retains, refurbishes and incorporates features of historical interest, as deemed appropriate in each instance.

Country House and Demesnes

County Kildare has a large number of country houses and demesnes where the grounds and settings constitute an intrinsic element of their character. County Kildare includes the two most notable country houses in Ireland, Castletown House in Celbridge and Carton House in Maynooth, both of which have demesnes that are accessible to the public. There are many other country houses, with important designed landscapes and substantially intact demesnes that contribute the architectural and landscape heritage of County Kildare.

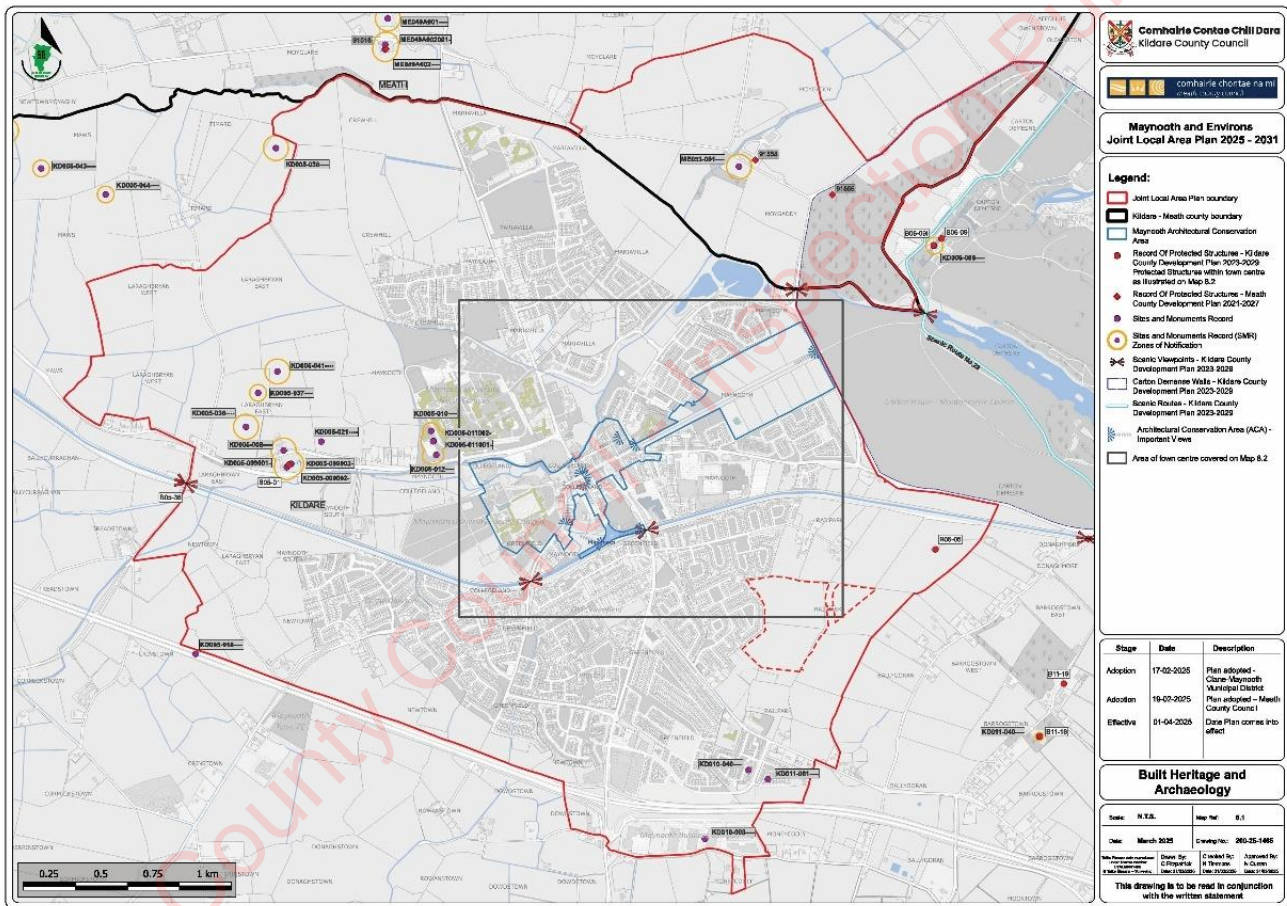
Piecemeal development of demesnes can be detrimental to the historical and architectural importance of the demesne and country house. It is an objective of the Council to prohibit development in gardens or landscapes which are deemed to be an important part of the setting of a protected structure or where they contribute to the character of an Architectural Conservation Area. (KCDP 11.16)

Policy AH P7 – Archaeological Heritage	Promote appreciation of the landscape and historical importance of traditional and historic gardens, demesnes and parks within County Kildare and particularly where they constitute an important and intrinsic value to the setting of a protected structure.
Policy AH P7 – Archaeological Heritage	Preserve and protect the historic gardens and designed landscapes identified in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage Survey of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes.
Objective AH O41	Encourage conservation, renewal and improvement which enhances the character and the setting of parks, gardens, and demesnes of historic interest within the county.
Objective AH O44	Preserve, protect and where necessary encourage the use of heritage/traditional varieties of plants and trees that form part of the local/ regional biodiversity resource and that contribute to local identity.

Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA)

An ACA is a place, area, groups of structures or townscape of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, or which contribute to the appreciation of protected structures, and whose character it is an objective of a development plan to conserve. In these areas, the protection of the architectural heritage is best achieved by controlling and guiding change on a wider scale than the individual structure, in order to retain the overall architectural or historic character of an area. Kildare Town has a defined boundary, an Urban Character Statement and policies to protect the character of the ACA. Boundaries for Architectural Conservation Areas have been defined for Athy, Ballitore, Celbridge, Kilcock, Leixlip, Maynooth, Monastervin, Naas, Prosperous and Rathangan. (KCDP11.18)

Figure 6.17: Built Heritage and Archaeology : Map 8.1 Scenic Routes & Scenic Views Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025 – 2031

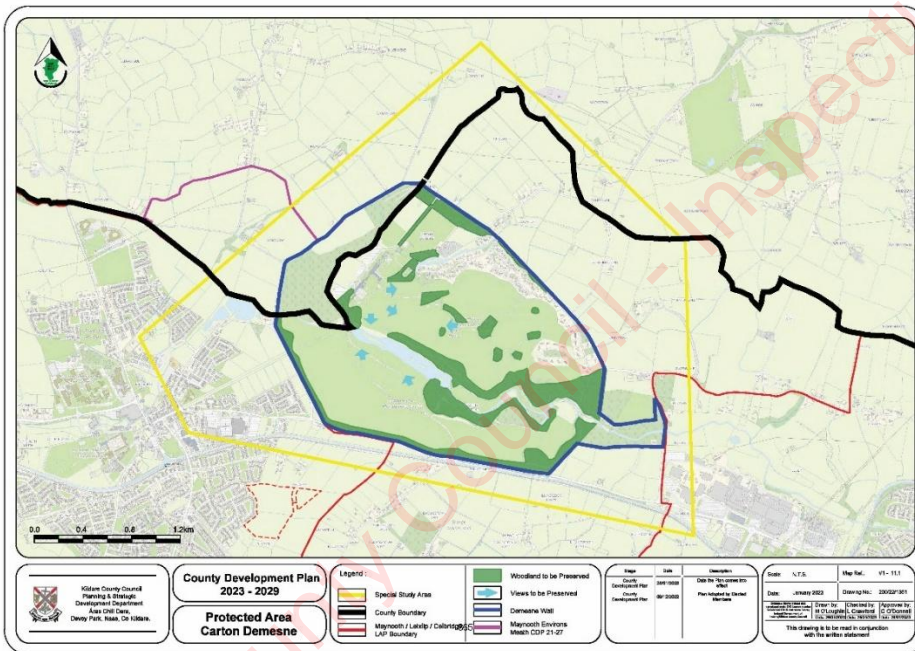


An ACA is a place, area, groups of structures or townscape of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, or which contribute to the appreciation of protected structures, and whose character it is an objective of a development plan to conserve. In these areas, the protection of the architectural heritage is best achieved by controlling and guiding change on a wider scale than the individual structure, in order to retain the overall architectural or historic character of an area. Kildare Town has a defined boundary, an Urban Character Statement and policies to protect the character of the ACA. Boundaries for Architectural Conservation Areas have been

defined for Athy, Ballitore, Celbridge, Kilcock, Leixlip, Maynooth, Monastervin, Naas, Prosperous and Rathangan. (KCDP11.18)

<p>Objective AH O60</p>	<p>Ensure that any development, modifications, alterations, or extensions within an ACA are sited and designed appropriately and are not detrimental to the character of the structure or to its setting or the general character of the ACA and are in keeping with any Architectural Conservation Area Statement of Character Guidance Documents prepared for the relevant ACA.</p>
<p>Objective AH O61</p>	<p>Ensure that all planning applications for new developments within or immediately contiguous to an ACA include an Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment and Design Rationale addressing design considerations such as urban structure and grain, density and mix, scale, height, materials, landscape, views and landmarks and historic development.</p>

Figure 6.18: Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 : Protected Area, Carton Demesne. (Site indicated in dashed red line)



The site (indicated by the dashed red line above) is approximately 600 metres from the Carton Demesne, designated as a protected area.

Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

Aim: To protect, manage and enhance the County’s biodiversity for future generations, including sites designated at national and EU level, protected species and habitats outside of designated sites and to promote the development of an integrated Green Infrastructure network in order to improve our resilience to climate change and to enable the role of Green Infrastructure in delivering sustainable communities.

Figure 6.19: Green & Blue Infrastructure Map 9.1 Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025 – 2031 (Site indicated in dashed red line)

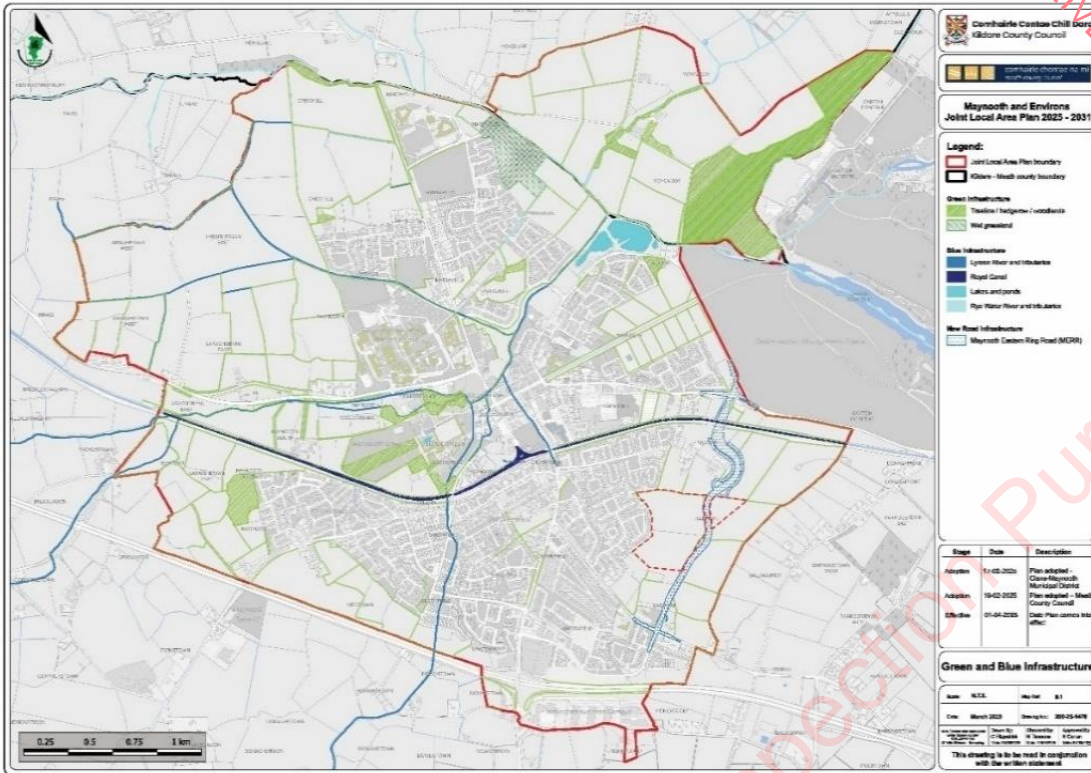
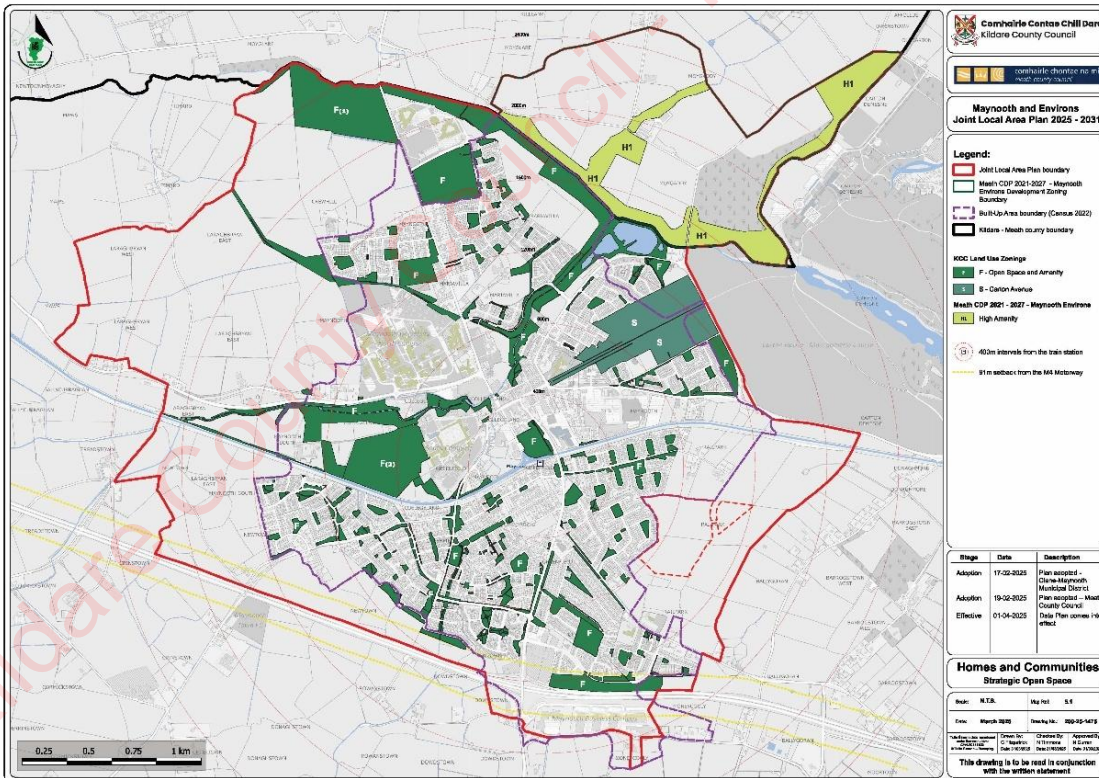


Figure 6.20: Strategic Open Space (Homes & Communities) Map 9.1 Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025 – 2031 (Site indicated in dashed red line)



<p>Policy BI P1 - County Kildare Biodiversity Action Plan 2009-2014</p>	<p>Integrate in the development management process the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and landscape features by applying the mitigation hierarchy to potential adverse impacts on important ecological features (whether designated or not), i.e. avoiding impacts where possible, minimising adverse impacts, and if significant effects are unavoidable by including mitigation and/or compensation measures, as appropriate. Opportunities for biodiversity net gain are encouraged.</p>
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Designated sites for nature conservation

The EU Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/ EEC) and the EU Habitats Directive (European Directive 92/43/EEC) provides for the establishment of the Natura 2000 network of sites of highest biodiversity importance for rare and threatened habitats and species across the EU. The Natura 2000 network of European sites comprises Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), and Special Protection Areas (SPA). There are 8 Natura 2000 sites within the county. (KCDP12.6.1)

Site Name	Site Code	European Designation	Qualifying Interests
Rye Water Valley at Carton	001398	SAC	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) Vertigo angustior (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) Vertigo moulinsiana (Desmoulin's Whorl Snail)

<p>Policy BI P2 - Designated sites for nature conservation</p>	<p>Seek to contribute to maintaining or restoring the conservation status of all sites designated for nature conservation or proposed for designation in accordance with European and national legislation and agreements. These include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Ramsar Sites and Statutory Nature Reserves.</p>
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Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and Nature Reserves

Under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) are designated to conserve species and habitats of national importance and sites of geological interest. The designation of these sites is the responsibility of the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and is an ongoing process as boundaries are revised and adjusted and new sites added. There are 23 designated or proposed Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), within the county. (KCDP12.6.1)

Site Name	Site Number
Royal Canal (Proposed)	002103
Rye Water Valley /Carton (Proposed)	001398

Policy BI P3	Ensure that any proposal for development within or adjacent to a Natural Heritage Area (NHA), Ramsar Sites and Nature Reserves is designed and sited to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, ecological, geological and landscape value of the site, particularly plant and animal species listed under the Wildlife Acts and the Habitats and Birds Directive including their habitats.
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Protected Habitats and Species

Policy BI P4	Ensure that any new development proposal does not have a significant adverse impact, incapable of satisfactory mitigation on plant, animal or bird species which are protected by law.
Objective B1 O15	Ensure that any new development proposal does not have a significant adverse impact on rare and threatened species, including those protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2012, the Birds Directive 1979 the Habitats Directive 1992 and the Flora Protection Order species and any species listed under the national red lists or that could be listed on a national red list.
Objective B1 O18	Require all applications for new developments to identify, protect and sensitively enhance the most important ecological features and habitats, and incorporate these into the overall open space network, keeping free from development and to provide links to the wider Green Infrastructure network as an essential part of the design process and by making 394 provision for local biodiversity (e.g. through provision of swift boxes or towers, bat roost sites, hedgehog highways2, green roofs, etc.).
Objective B1 O22	Identify and protect areas of high nature conservation value (including but not limited to SAC/SPA/pNHA) and support the landscape features which act as ecological corridors/networks and stepping-stones, such as river corridors, hedgerows, and road verges so as to minimise the loss of habitats and features of the wider countryside which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.

Hedgerows

County Kildare's hedgerow network is a huge asset to the county, being valuable in terms of agriculture, landscape, wild flora and fauna, water quality, carbon sequestration and employment. Hedgerows are also a valuable component of Ireland's cultural and natural heritage. Most Irish hedgerows were planted during the 18th and 19th centuries, following Acts of Parliament obliging landowners to erect permanent boundaries between their properties. Hedgerows along townland boundaries often date from medieval times or even earlier, with some boundaries dating back to the Bronze Age bank-and-ditch enclosures. Older hedges made up of native trees and shrubs, tend to have greater value in wildlife and heritage terms, having larger banks and ditches and being richer in species diversity. (KCDP12.9.1)

Policy B1 P6 - Hedgerows	Recognise the important contribution trees and hedgerows make to the county biodiversity resource climate mitigation, resilience and adaptation.
Objective B1 O26 - Hedgerows	Prevent, in the first instance, the removal of hedgerows to facilitate development. Where their removal is unavoidable, same must be clearly and satisfactorily demonstrated to the Planning Authority. In any event, removal shall be kept to an absolute minimum and there shall be a requirement for mitigation planting comprising a hedge of similar length and species composition to the original, established as close as is practicable to the original and where possible linking to existing adjacent hedges. Ideally, native plants of a local provenance and origin should be used for any such planting. Removal of hedgerows and trees prior to submitting a planning application will be viewed negatively by the planning authority and may result in an outright refusal.
Objective B1 O27 - Hedgerows	Require the retention and appropriate management of hedgerows and to require infill or suitably sized transplanted planting where possible in order to ensure an uninterrupted green infrastructure network.
Objective B1 O278 - Hedgerows	Promote the integration of boundary hedges within and along development sites into development design so as to avoid "trapped hedges" located to the boundary of houses within the development layout. Encourage the planting of woodlands, trees and hedgerows as part of new developments and as part of the Council's own landscaping works ideally using native plants of local provenance and origin.

Inland Waters

Over 112 km of the canals, the Grand Canal, Royal Canal and the Barrow Line, extend across Kildare. Once the lifeline of the local economy, forming the main transport routes in Kildare, these waterways and

their towpaths now support a large eco-system of diverse plant and animal species along with a significant leisure resource in the county. Kildare is also traversed by some of the more productive and important salmonid systems in the region, the River Liffey, the River Barrow and the River Boyne.

Rivers and streams should be maintained in an open, semi-natural condition. Their corridors and valleys provide effective measures to protect and maintain biodiversity and to help manage fluvial and pluvial flooding while supporting a quality, multi- functional green network generating multiple benefits for the environment, tourism and society. Groundwater is important for supplying water and maintaining wetlands and river flows in dry periods. Groundwater resources should be protected and managed in a sustainable manner.

<p>Policy B1 P7 - Inland Waters</p>	<p>Recognise and promote inland waters, natural environmental assets and to protect rivers, streams and other watercourses and, wherever possible, maintain them in an open state capable of providing suitable habitats for fauna and flora while discouraging culverting or realignment.</p>
<p>Objective B1 O37 - Inland Waters</p>	<p>Ensure the protection of rivers, streams and other watercourses and, wherever possible, maintain them in an open state capable of providing suitable habitats for fauna and flora while discouraging culverting or realignment. Endeavour to re-open previously culverted streams and watercourses through any future development/redevelopment proposals.</p>

Protected Habitats and Species

<p>Policy BI P4</p>	<p>Ensure that any new development proposal does not have a significant adverse impact, incapable of satisfactory mitigation on plant, animal or bird species which are protected by law.</p>
<p>Objective B1 O15</p>	<p>Ensure that any new development proposal does not have a significant adverse impact on rare and threatened species, including those protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2012, the Birds Directive 1979 the Habitats Directive 1992 and the Flora Protection Order species and any species listed under the national red lists or that could be listed on a national red list.</p>
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<p>Objective B1 O41 - Inland Waters</p>	<p>Maintain riparian buffer zones and potential uses as identified in Table 12.4 when considering potential development and proposed development layouts within or adjacent to waterways.</p>
<p>Objective B1 O45 - Inland Waters</p>	<p>Ensure that any runoff from developed areas does not result in any deterioration of downstream watercourses or habitats and require that pollution generated by a development is treated</p>

	within the development area prior to discharge to local watercourses.
Objective B1 O46 - Inland Waters	Generally, prohibit infilling of land adjacent to rivers, including natural floodplains, prior to or during any development. This will only be permitted, where, in the opinion of the planning authority, there is an over-riding public interest in order to provide a key public infrastructure or to provide a more coherent design approach (in line with an approved urban design strategy) but, it will be subject to ensuring that adequate compensatory flood storage (if necessary) is provided elsewhere.
Objective B1 O47 - Inland Waters	Ensure the protection, improvement or restoration of riverine floodplains and to promote strategic measures to accommodate flooding at appropriate locations including nature-based solutions, in order to protect ground and surface water quality and build resilience to climate change.

Peatlands

Policy B1 P8 - Peatlands	Ensure that Kildare’s wetlands and watercourses are retained for their biodiversity, climate change mitigation properties and flood protection values and at a minimum to achieve and maintain at least good ecological status for all wetlands and watercourses in the county by, at the latest, 2027 in line with the Water Framework Directive and Ramsar Convention.
Objective B1 O51 - Peatlands	Ensure that an ecological impact assessment is undertaken in conjunction with proposals involving drainage or reclamation of wetlands identified in Table 12.6. Impact assessment of all developments on peatlands shall consider peatland stability, carbon emissions balance, Hydrology and Ecology.
Objective B1 O55 - Peatlands	Protect, conserve, and manage the character and appearance of ecological and archaeological heritage and amenity values of peatland landscapes and historic/ancient walkways through bogs, by promoting high environmental standards.
Objective B1 O56 - Peatlands	Ensure that development proposals or activities that may impact on sensitive water habitats, in particular wetlands (identified as part of the County Kildare Wetland Survey 2012-2014, (See Table 12.6), shall not be permitted without the introduction of mitigation measures agreed in writing with the Council to eliminate negative environmental impacts.

Invasive Species

Policy B1 P9 - Invasive Species	Implement and support measures for the prevention and/or eradication of invasive species within the county and the control of noxious weeds.
Objective B1 O58 - Invasive Species	Require all development proposals to address the presence or absence of invasive alien species on proposed development sites and (if necessary) require applicants to prepare and submit an Invasive Species Management Plan where such species exist, in order to comply with the provisions of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2015.

Geology

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI), in partnership with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, is seeking to identify geological and geomorphological sites of national significance for statutory designations as Natural Heritage Areas. Other geological sites of national or local importance are being identified as Sites of Geological Importance and by virtue of their recognition in Development Plans will be protected from potentially damaging development. An audit of the Geological Heritage of County Kildare was carried out in 2005, which identified 22 geological sites of interest in the county. (KCDP12.13)

Site Name	Geological Interest	Location
Liffey Valley	Fluvial/Lacustrine Geomorphology	Ballymore Eustace - Kilcullen

Policy B1 P10 - Geology	Maintain and protect the conservation value of geological sites of national or local importance and seek the sustainable management of the county's geological heritage resource as listed in Table 12.7.
Objective B1 O60 - Geology	Consult with the Geological Survey of Ireland regarding any development proposals within or likely to have an impact on Sites of Geological Importance set out in Table 12.7.
Objective B1 O61 - Geology	Contribute towards the protection from inappropriate development of Geological Natural Heritage Areas that become designated during the lifetime of this Plan.

Green Infrastructure (GI)

Policy B1 P11 - GI	Identify and map the key elements of the green infrastructure network in Kildare; and seek to protect, enhance, and expand the County's green infrastructure network, through informed, evidence-based methods, which do not threaten the integrity of existing native biodiversity.
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Policy B1 P12 - GI	Recognise the importance of Green Infrastructure in Kildare and protect this valued biological resource, the ecosystem services it provides and the contribution to climate resilience.
Objective B1 O64 - GI	Ensure the protection, enhancement and maintenance of Green Infrastructure in Kildare.
Objective B1 O65 - GI	Support the development of a Regional Green Infrastructure Strategy and the identification, management, development and protection of strategic GI connections in co-operation with Kildare's neighbouring counties and the Midland and Eastern Regional Assembly.
Objective B1 O66 - GI	Develop a strategy, to identify a series of greenbelt/green spaces (in addition to those identified in this CDP) to retain and protect between the growing settlements within Kildare during the lifetime of the Plan with particular attention to the undeveloped areas between Celbridge, Leixlip and Maynooth and to collaborate with South Dublin County Council, where appropriate.
Objective B1 O68 - GI	Provide for the incorporation of underpasses and/or Green Bridges at ecologically sensitive locations on the county's road and rail corridors (including those along disused railway corridors) that will facilitate the free movement of people and species through the urban and rural environment.
Objective B1 O69 - GI	Promote a network of paths and cycle tracks to enhance accessibility to the Green Infrastructure network across the County, while ensuring that the design and operation of the routes respect, and where possible, enhance the ecological potential of each site.

Kildare County Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy

There are three key components to Kildare's Green Infrastructure Strategy:

- 1. Core Areas: These are large geographical areas of influence and importance, for reasons of ecology, landscape, designation, heritage, environmental management and ecosystem services.*
- 2. Stepping Stones: These are smaller geographical areas but either critically important because of their environmental quality (i.e., local native woodlands, intact bogs/peatlands, wetlands), local amenity value (i.e., urban parks) or because of their scale as undeveloped areas, such as Coillte forestry plantations.*
- 3. Corridors: These are the connectors providing vital linkages in the networks, for example, canals, stream/river corridors and the associated riparian corridors or valleys, disused railway lines, etc. Designated as a Corridor, The Royal Canal runs from Dublin (North) westwards serving Leixlip, Maynooth and Kilcock and continues to Mullingar and Longford. (KCDP12.14.8)*

Urban Green Infrastructure

Policy B1 P13 - Urban Green Infrastructure	Recognise the importance of Urban Green Infrastructure in addressing a broad range of urban challenges, such as connecting people with nature, adapting to climate change, supporting the green economy and improving social cohesion and to seek to protect and enhance this resource, particularly existing semi-natural areas, or habitats (such as hedgerows, canals, rivers, ponds).
Objective B1 O70 - Urban Green Infrastructure	Ensure that the Green Infrastructure Strategy and Network identified in this County Development Plan and Local Area Plans is used to inform the development management process to ensure that new residential areas, business/ industrial development tourism and other relevant projects contribute towards the conservation and protection of Kildare's habitats and species, and the protection, management and enhancement of the existing Green Infrastructure in terms of design, layout and landscaping.
Objective B1 O71 - Urban Green Infrastructure	Identify existing Green Infrastructure at the initial stages of the planning process and to use this information to guide the overall design of an appropriate site layout which is reflected in the developments landscaping plan. The landscaping plan submitted with an application should clearly illustrate how existing Green Infrastructure, and opportunities to create more linkages, have informed and been incorporated into the development, layout and, if appropriate, management proposals.
Objective B1 O72 - Urban Green Infrastructure	Ensure that the design of new development does not cause fragmentation of the Green Infrastructure network.
Objective B1 O73 - Urban Green Infrastructure	Encourage the use and incorporation of Biophilic design into all new development schemes, increasing proximity of and/or views to nature, landscape and landscape features, in the interests of public health.
Policy B1 P13 - Public Open Spaces and Parks	Protect and enhance the Green Infrastructure network throughout the county
Objective B1 O74 - Public Open Spaces and Parks	Strengthen ecological networks between urban areas to create greater linkages to Natura 2000 sites, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, parks and open spaces and the wider regional Green Infrastructure network.
Objective B1 O75 - Public Open Spaces and Parks	Require multifunctional open space provision within all new developments; this includes provision for ecology and sustainable water management.

Green Infrastructure (GI) and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) drain surface water in an environmentally friendly way by replicating natural systems in managed environments. SuDS systems seek to collect, store and release surface water back to the environment using natural systems in a slow and controlled way, thereby reducing the risk of fluvial and pluvial flooding. SuDS represents a critical move away from the conventional practice of piping all surface water directly to the nearest watercourse or river towards an approach where water is either infiltrated or conveyed more slowly to water courses via constructed wetlands, permeable surfaces, filter strips, ponds, swales and basins, all of which contribute to more environmentally friendly and aesthetically pleasing methods of controlling surface water. (KCDP12.14.11)

Policy B1 P15 - SuDS	Promote and support the development of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) to ensure surface water is drained in an environmentally friendly way by replicating natural systems.
Objective B1 O76 - SuDS	Promote and support the development of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) such as integrated constructed wetlands, permeable surfaces, filter strips, ponds, swales and basins at a site, district and county level and to maximise the amenity and bio-diversity value of these systems.
Objective B1 O77 - SuDS	Integrate nature-based solutions and climate change considerations into the design, planning, and implementation of infrastructure provision/ works and development proposals at the earliest possible stage of the design process.
Objective B1 O78- SuDS	Actively promote and encourage nature-based approaches and green infrastructure solutions as viable mitigation and adaptation measures to surface water management.
Objective B1 O79- SuDS	Promote the provision of Green Roofs and/ or Living Walls in developments where expansive roofs are proposed.

Landscape, Recreation and Amenity

Landscape Character Assessment

In terms of Landscape Character, the proposed development site lies within an area categorised as ‘Northern Lowlands’ Landscape Character Type and is ranked as:

Class 1 Low Sensitivity, areas with the capacity to generally accommodate a wide range of uses without significant adverse effects on the appearance or character of the area.

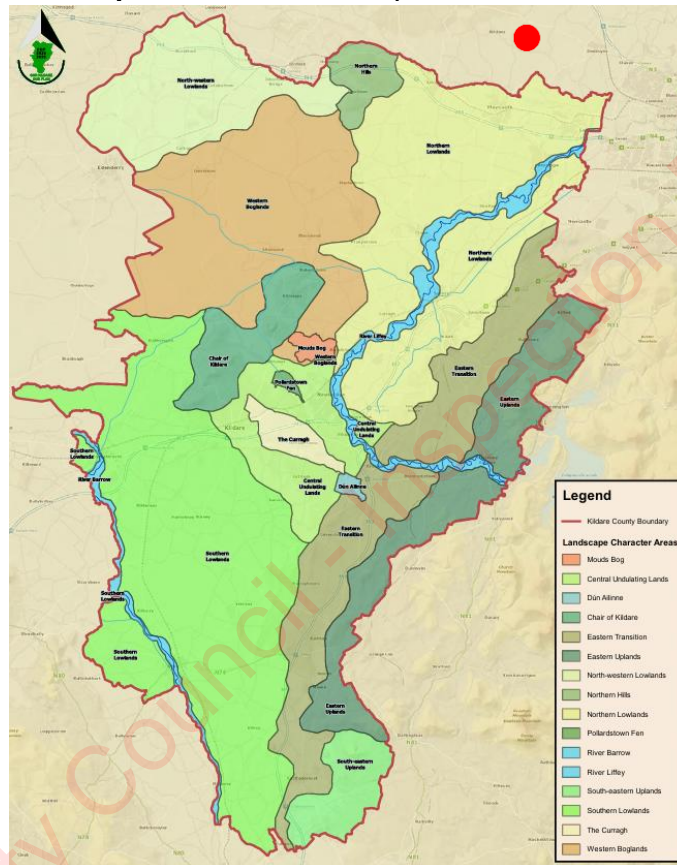
This classification applies to the northeastern corner of the county, with the exception of the River Liffey which is classed as *Special Sensitivity* and a rating of 4.

This area has a most compatible rating for agriculture, and a high compatibility rating for housing, urbanisation and infrastructure.

The majority of the site is currently grassland with a mix of grass species and is bordered to the west by suburban housing. Hedgerows form the site boundary, comprising of trees and hedgerows.

The lands are located in what can be described as a peri-urban landscape, in a former agricultural landscape setting on the south-eastern outskirts of Maynooth town.

Figure 6.21: KCDP13.3 Landscape Character Areas (Site location indicated in red)



Policy LR P1	Protect and enhance the county’s landscape, by ensuring that development retains, protects and, where necessary, enhances the appearance and character of the existing local landscape.
Objective LR O9	Continue to support development that can utilise existing structures, settlement areas and infrastructure, whilst taking account of local absorption opportunities provided by the landscape, landform and prevailing vegetation.
Objective LR O10	Recognise that the lowlands and the transitional area are made up of a variety of working landscapes, which are critical resources for sustaining the economic and social well-being of

	the county and include areas of significant landscape and ecological value, which are worthy of protection. Such landscapes include the internationally recognised landscape of Punchestown and its environs.
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Tables 13.1 to 13.4: Landscape Character Sensitivity Classifications/Factors. Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029

Sensitivity of Principal Landscape Character Assessment (Dominant Sensitivity Outlined)	Class 1 Low Sensitivity	Class 2 Medium Sensitivity	Class 3 High Sensitivity	Class 4 Special Sensitivity	Class 5 Unique Sensitivity
North Western Lowlands	Class 1				
Northern Lowlands	Class 1				
Central Undulating Lands	Class 1				
Western Boglands			Class 3		
Southern Lowlands	Class 1				
Eastern Transition		Class 2			
Eastern Uplands			Class 3		
South-Eastern Uplands		Class 2			
Sub-ordinate Landscape Areas					
Northern Hills				Class 4	
Chair of Kildare				Class 4	
The Curragh					Class 5
Pollardstown Fen					Class 5
Dun Ailinne					Class 5
Allen Bog				Class 4	
River Liffey				Class 4	
River Barrow				Class 4	

Table 13.1 - Landscape Sensitivity Classification to Landscape Character Areas

Sensitivity	Landscape Character Area	Location	Description
Class 1 Low Sensitivity	North-Western Lowlands Northern Lowlands Central Undulating Lands Southern Lowlands		Areas with the capacity to generally accommodate a wide range of uses without significant adverse effects on the appearance or character of the area.
Class 2 Medium Sensitivity	Eastern Transition Lands South- Eastern Uplands		Areas with the capacity to accommodate a range of uses without significant adverse effects on the appearance or character of the landscape having regard to localized sensitivity factors.
Class 3 High Sensitivity	Western Boglands Eastern Uplands		Areas with reduced capacity to accommodate uses without significant adverse effects on the appearance or character of the landscape having regard to prevalent sensitivity factors.
Class 4 Special	Chair of Kildare Northern Hills River Liffey River Barrow Mouds Bog		Significant adverse effects on the appearance or character of the landscape having regard to prevalent sensitivity factors.
Class 5 Unique	The Curragh Pollardstown Fen Dun Alinne		Areas with low capacity to accommodate uses without significant adverse effects on the appearance or character of the landscape having regard to special sensitivity factors.

Table 13.2 - Landscape Sensitivity Classification to Landscape Character Areas

	Agriculture and Forestry		Housing	Urbanisation	Infrastructure	Extraction	Energy			
	Agriculture	Forestry								
Proximity within 300m of Principal Landscape Sensitivity Factors.										
Major Rivers and Water bodies	5	5	2	2	3	2	1	0	1	0
Canals	5	5	2	2	3	2	1	0	1	1
Ridgelines	5	5	1	1	1	1	0	0	2	0
Green Urban Areas	4	5	2	0	0	4	3	3	3	2
Broad-Leaved Forestry	3	5	2	2	2	4	3	2	3	1
Mixed Forestry	3	5	2	2	2	4	3	2	3	1
Natural Grasslands	5	2	2	1	1	4	2	1	1	2
Moors and Heathlands	2	2	1	0	0	1	2	1	0	2
Agricultural Land with Natural Vegetation	5	5	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4
Peat Bogs	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	0	2
Scenic View	5	5	2	1	1	5	1	3	0	0
Scenic Route	5	5	2	1	1	5	1	3	0	0

Table 13.4 - Likely compatibility between a range of land-uses and proximity to Principal Landscape Sensitivity Factors.

Compatibility Key															
Most		Agriculture and Forestry		Housing		Urbanisation			Infrastructure		Extraction		Energy		
High		Agriculture	Forestry	Rural Housing	Urban Expansion	Industrial Projects	Tourism Projects	Major Powerlines *	Sand & Gravel	Rock	Windfarm	Solar			
Medium		Principal Landscape Character Areas													
Low		Sensitivity Class													
Least															
North Western Lowlands	1														
Northern Lowlands	1														
Southern Lowlands	1														
Central Undulating Lands	1														
Western Boglands	3														
Eastern Transition	2														
Eastern Uplands	3														
South-Eastern Uplands	2														
Sub-ordinate Landscape Areas															
Northern Hills	4														
Chair of Kildare	4														
The Curragh	5														
Pollardstown Fen	5														
Allen Bog	4														
River Liffey	4														
River Barrow	4														
Dun Ailinne	5														

Table 13.3 - Likely compatibility between a range of land-uses and Principal Landscape Areas.

Policy LR P1	Protect and enhance the county’s landscape, by ensuring that development retains, protects and, where necessary, enhances the appearance and character of the existing local landscape.
Objective LR O1	Ensure that consideration of landscape sensitivity is an important factor in determining development uses. In areas of high landscape sensitivity, the design, type and the choice of location of the proposed development in the landscape will be critical considerations.
Objective LR O2	Require a Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment to accompany proposals that are likely to significantly affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape Sensitivity Factors; • A Class 4 or 5 Sensitivity Landscape (i.e. within 500m of the boundary); • A route or view identified in Map V1 - 13.3 (i.e. within 500m of the site boundary). All Wind Farm development applications irrespective of location, shall be required to be accompanied by a detailed Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment including a series of photomontages at locations to be agreed with the Planning Authority, including from scenic routes and views identified in Chapter 13.
Objective LR O3	Require all Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments of specified linear infrastructure projects to be undertaken in line

	with the guidance on best practice methodology of the TII publication <i>Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) and Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) of Specified Infrastructure Projects (2020)</i> .
Objective LR O4	Ensure that local landscape features, including historic features and buildings, hedgerows, shelter belts and stone walls, are retained, protected and enhanced where appropriate, so as to preserve the local landscape and character of an area.
Objective LR O5	Preserve, where appropriate, the open character of commonage.
Objective LR O6	Investigate the feasibility of preparing a Landscape Conservation Area Assessment within the county to identify any area(s) or place(s) within the county as a Landscape Conservation Area, in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).
Objective LR O7	Restrict the quarrying of sensitive sites within the Landscape Character Areas in line with Table 13.3 and Table 13.4 above and to protect and conserve the ecological, archaeological, biodiversity and visual amenity surrounding quarry sites.
Objective LR O8	Ensure that all quarrying activities and projects associated with the extractive industry comply with all relevant Planning and Environmental Legislation and the Guidelines for the Protection of Biodiversity within the Extractive Industry document 'Wildlife, Habitats & the Extractive Industry'.
Objective LR O9	Continue to support development that can utilise existing structures, settlement areas and infrastructure, whilst taking account of local absorption opportunities provided by the landscape, landform and prevailing vegetation.
Objective LR O10	Recognise that the lowlands and the transitional area are made up of a variety of working landscapes, which are critical resources for sustaining the economic and social well-being of the county and include areas of significant landscape and ecological value, which are worthy of protection. Such landscapes include the internationally recognised landscape of Punchestown and its environs.
Objective LR O11	Support collaboration between Kildare County Council, the Midlands Regional Transition Team and all other relevant stakeholders and the development of partnership approaches to integrated peatland management for a just transition that incorporates the management, rehabilitation and restoration / re-wetting of significant tracts of peatlands in conjunction with appropriate developed after uses.
Objective LR O12	Recognise that boglands, including cutaway and cut-over bogs, are critical natural resources for ecological and

	environmental reasons, particularly for climate mitigation and adaptation. Development proposals for boglands that reduce biodiversity and increase greenhouse gas will not be considered. Appropriate environmental assessment should be carried out for any development proposals which impact on boglands.
Objective LR O13	Recognise that some cutaway and cut-over boglands may represent degraded landscapes and thus may potentially be fit to absorb a variety of development provided that the development proposal does not increase Green House Gas emissions or damage protected habitats or species. Projects which result in increases in ammonia emissions to watercourses will not be considered.
Objective LR O14	Maintain the visual integrity of Eastern Transition Lands which have retained an upland character.
Objective LR O15	Continue to facilitate appropriate development in the Eastern Transition Lands, in an incremental and clustered manner, where feasible, that respects the scale, character and sensitivities of the local landscape, recognising the need for sustainable settlement patterns and economic activity within the county.
Objective LR O16	Require the undertaking of a peatland stability assessment, carbon emissions balance assessment and hydrological and ecological impact assessments, as appropriate, when developing project proposals for development on peatlands.

Areas of High Amenity

In addition to Landscape Character Areas and the sensitivity of these areas to development, there are certain special landscape areas within the county, some of which overlap with sensitive landscapes. For the purposes of this Plan these areas have been defined as Areas of High Amenity. They are classified because of their outstanding natural beauty and/or unique interest value and are generally sensitive to the impacts of development.

These areas are outlined in the following sub-sections.

The River Liffey and the River Barrow Valleys

The River Liffey and the River Barrow valleys are of significance in terms of landscape and amenity value and as such are sensitive to development. The River Barrow is a designated Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). They are characterised by smooth terrain and low vegetation, with extensive upland views (i.e. the Chair of Kildare to the west and the Eastern Uplands to the east) and distant views including the neighbouring Wicklow Mountains. The topography is such that it allows vistas over long distances without disruption along the river corridor. As a result, development on the banks of the rivers can have a disproportionate visual impact, due to an inherent inability to be visually absorbed. However, the undulating topography occurring within the river valleys provides physical shielding and has the potential

to visually enclose the built form within the river valley, where it does not break the skyline. Shelter vegetation exists along some stretches of the valleys with the presence of natural and native woodland that grows on the floodplains of the rivers, as well as by conifer plantation in adjacent lands. This vegetation has a shielding and absorbing quality in landscape terms. It can provide a natural visual barrier as well as adding to the complexity of a vista, breaking it up to provide scale and containment for built forms.

Many views of the river valleys are available from local roads and from viewing points located along the valleys. While river valleys represent potentially vulnerable linear landscape features, as they are often highly distinctive in the context of the general landscape, in certain circumstances landscape sensitivities may be localised or site-specific. (KCDP13.4.4)

Rye Water Valley at Carton SAC

Rye Water Valley/Carlton Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is located between Leixlip and Maynooth, in Counties Meath and Kildare, and extends along the Rye Water, a tributary of the River Liffey.

The river was arterially drained in the early 1950s but remains the only significant salmon spawning and nursery stream discharging into the River Liffey downstream of Leixlip dam. The Rye Water Valley/Carlton SAC is designated for the protection of two molluscs listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive. These semi-aquatic snails, *Vertigo angustior* and *V. moulinsiana* occur in marsh vegetation near Louisa Bridge, downstream of the Intel site. In addition, the marsh, mineral spring and seepage area found at Louisa Bridge, which supports the presence of these molluscs is of a type considered to be rare in Europe and is a habitat listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive.

This site is important due to the presence of several rare and threatened plant and animal species, and the presence of petrifying springs, a habitat type listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The woods found on Carton Estate and their birdlife are of additional interest. (KCDP13.4.5)

The Grand and Royal Canal Corridors

The Royal Canal flows in an east to west direction along the northern boundary of the county through Leixlip, Maynooth and Kilcock and continues into County Meath. The canal corridors and their adjacent lands have been landscaped and enhanced along the sections where the canals flow through urban areas and with the development of Greenways and Blueways. Canal locks are distinctive features of these water corridors. The smooth terrain, generally gentle landform and low canal bank grassland that characterise the canal corridors allow vistas over long distances without disruption, where the canal flows in a straight-line direction. Consequently, development can have a disproportionate visual impact along the water corridor, and it can prove difficult for the existing topography to visually absorb development. The occurrence of natural vegetation, coniferous and mixed plantations adjacent to the water corridors can have shielding and absorbing qualities in landscape terms, by providing natural visual barriers.

Canal corridors are potentially vulnerable linear landscape features, as they are often highly distinctive in the context of the general landscape. In some cases, landscape sensitivities may be localised or site-specific. (KCDP13.4.6)

Policy LR P2	Protect High Amenity areas from inappropriate development and reinforce their character, distinctiveness and sense of place.
Objective LR O17	Control development that will adversely affect the visual integrity of Areas of High Amenity by restricting the development of incongruous structures that are out of scale with the landscape within the Areas of High Amenity including advertising signs, hoardings, fencing etc. which create visual clutter and disrupt the open nature of these areas.
Objective LR O18	Facilitate appropriate development in areas of high amenity that can utilise existing structures, settlement areas and infrastructure, taking account of the visual absorption opportunities provided by existing topography and vegetation.

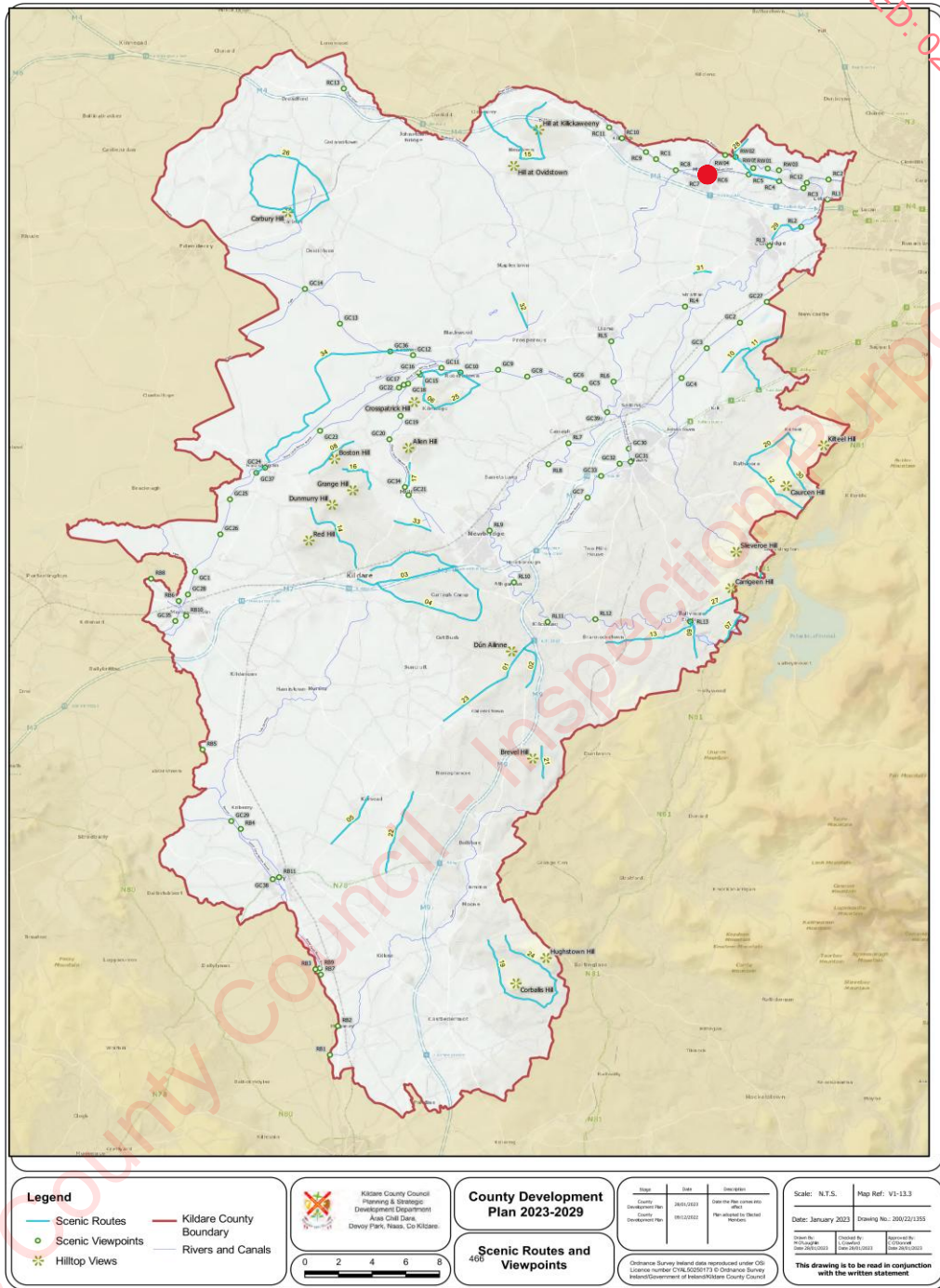
Objective LR O19	Restrict the over development of the edge of the Curragh Plains and development that obtrudes on the skyline as viewed from the Plains.
Objective LR O20	Co-operate with all relevant stakeholders including the Department of Defence, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, the racehorse industry, those with sheep grazing rights and the various interests currently with rights to the Curragh in the implementation of the Curragh Conservation, Management and Interpretation Plan, designated as a cNHA .
Objective LR O21	Restrict development which may have a negative impact on the water quality and quantity of the Pollardstown Fen, in particular groundwater sources.
Objective LR O22	Co-operate with the relevant government departments and other statutory bodies in the protection and conservation of the Fen, a designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
Objective LR O23	Co-operate with the relevant government departments in the protection and conservation of both the Royal and Grand Canals and the River Barrow, designated as a cNHA and SAC respectively and in the sections of the River Liffey designated as a cNHA.
Objective LR O24	Support and promote an extension of the proposed Special Amenity Area Order for the Liffey Valley from Lucan to Leixlip and other parts of the Valley within County Kildare.
Objective LR O25	Work closely with the relevant State bodies, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), UNESCO and local stakeholders to support the designation of the Dun Ailinne Royal Site as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
Objective LR O26	Contribute towards the protection of waterbodies and watercourses, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips, wetlands and natural floodplains,

	from inappropriate development. This will include buffers free of development in riverine and wetland areas, as per chapter 12.
Objective LR O27	Support the recreational amenity of wetlands.
Objective LR O28	Have regard to the four major steps in the integrated watercourse protection strategy of Inland Fisheries Ireland's publication 'Planning for Watercourses in an Urban Environment – 2020 Update'.
Objective LR O29	Ensure that the Streamside buffer zone (minimum of 10m plus) is kept free from development and existing vegetation is retained undisturbed to contribute to biodiversity and to ensure that bike paths and/or larger footpaths along rivers and streams are provided in the Middle buffer zone (15m-30m), in line with the Inland Fisheries Ireland's publication 'Planning for Watercourses in an Urban Environment – 2020 Update'. Planting if required should be in keeping with the recommendations of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.
Objective LR O30	Sensitively consider developments in the Upland Character Areas including East Kildare Uplands that have a functional and locational requirement to be situated on steep or elevated sites (e.g. reservoirs, telecommunication masts or wind energy structures) where it can be explicitly demonstrated that residual adverse visual impacts are minimised or mitigated.
Objective LR O31	Have regard to the potential for screening vegetation when evaluating proposals for development within the Upland Character Areas including East Kildare Uplands.

Scenic Routes and Protected Views

Scenic routes provide views of the landscape of the county and many built and archaeological features. In addition to scenic routes there are a number of protected views throughout the county. These are located particularly along water corridors and to and from the hills in the countryside. Scenic routes and protected views consist of important and valued views and prospects within the county. These scenic routes, hilltop views and scenic viewpoints are listed in Table 13.5, 13.6 and 13.7 below and their locations can be seen on Map V1 - 13.3. (KCDP13.5)

Figure 6.22: Scenic Routes and Prospects: Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 (Site location indicated in red)



The Council recognises the need to protect the character of the county by protecting views and scenic routes. However, it is acknowledged that in certain circumstances, some development may be necessary. In this regard, appropriate location, siting and design criteria should strictly apply. All proposals will be assessed taking into account the overall character of the scenic route and the character of the landscapes through which the route passes, in accordance with the criteria outlined in section 13.3.2.

Scenic routes outlined in Table 13.5 relevant to this report are **Carton demesne**: views within the Carton Demesne Walls, to and from Carton House, the Lake and Woodland Areas.

Views to and from Hills

As the landform of the county is generally flat, with very little variation in topography and predominantly low vegetation, extensive views can be obtained from hilltops, allowing vistas over long distances, and similarly from the lowland areas the eye is drawn to the primary and secondary ridgelines that define the skyline throughout the county.

Ridgelines are conspicuous features of the natural landscape as they perform an important role as dominant landscape focal points. It is important that development does not interrupt the integrity of ridgelines. Development on steeply sloping land can be viewed over greater distances. (KCDP13.5.1)

Table 13.6: Hilltop Views in County Kildare

No.	Hilltop Views
01	Red Hill
02	Dunmurry Hill
03	Grange Hill
04	Allen Hill
05	Hill at Ovidstown
06	Hill at Killickaweeny
07	Kilteel Hill
No.	Hilltop Views
08	Caurcen Hill
09	Slieveroe Hill
10	Carrigeen Hill
11	Brevel Hill
12	Hughstown Hill
13	Corballis Hill
14	Boston Hill
15	Dún Ailinne
16	Crosspatrick Hill
17	Carbury Hill

Views to and from Waterways

River floodplains and canal banks are generally sensitive to development to varying degrees. Both the rivers and the canal corridors provide a contrast of form and colour on the landscape.

Urban and rural development has taken place along some sections of the canals and rivers, interrupting the integrity of these linear landscape features and in some cases significantly affecting their scenic amenity value. It is important that development does not further interrupt the integrity of river and canal corridors – with the exception of specific areas that are zoned for development (i.e. in Local Area Plans). The protected views to and from the Royal Canal, Grand Canal, River Liffey, River Barrow and Rye River are listed in Table 13.7 below. (KCDP 13.5.2)

Views of the River Liffey from Bridges		
RL01	Leixlip Bridge	Leixlip
RL02	New Bridge	Coneyburrow
RL03	Celbridge Bridge	Celbridge
RL04	Straffan Bridge	Lodgepark, Straffan
RL05	Alexandra Bridge	Abbeyland
RL06	Millicent Bridge	Castlesize
RL07	Caragh Bridge	Halverstown/ Gingerstown
RL08	Victoria Bridge	Moortown/ Yeomanstown
RL09	New Bridge	Droichead Nua (Newbridge)
RL10	Athgarvan Bridge	Rosetown/Athgarvan
RL11	Kilcullen Bridge	Kilcullen
RL12	New Bridge	Cramersvalley/Carnalway
RL13	Ballymore Bridge	Ballymore Eustace

Views of the Rye Water River from Bridges		
RW01	Black Bridge	Kellystown / Blakestown
RW02	Carton Bridge	Carton Demesne
RW03	Sandfords Bridge	Carton Demesne (L1014)
RW04	Kildare Bridge	Carton Demesne
RW05	Carton Bridge	Carton Demesne

Views to and from bridges on the Royal Canal		
RC1	Bailey's Bridge	Maws
RC2	Cope Bridge	Newtown/Leixlip
RC3	Louisa Bridge	Easton/Leixlip
RC4	Deey Bridge	Collinstown
RC5	Pike Bridge	Railpark/Donaghmore
RC6	Mullen Bridge	Railpark/Maynooth
RC7	Bond Bridge	Maynooth
RC8	Jackson's Bridge	Laraghbryan East
RC9	Chambers Bridge	Maws
RC10	Shaw Bridge	Kilcock
RC11	Allen Bridge	Boycetown
RC12	Rye Water Aqueduct	Leixlip
RC13	Moyvally Bridge	Moyvally

Recreation and Amenities

Recreation and amenity areas within the county include natural, recreational and sporting amenities as well as social and community infrastructure. These facilities provide many cultural, social, economic and environmental benefits and provide a positive contribution towards quality of life. The provision of a range of amenities which can cater for the demands of an increasing population, and which will be accessible for all sectors and age groups of the population is a central element in the delivery of sustainable communities. (KCDP13.6)

Policy LR P4	Protect and maintain the existing recreation infrastructure in County Kildare and support the diversification of the rural economy through the development of the recreational potential of the countryside in accordance with the forthcoming National Outdoor Recreation Strategy, subject to all relevant and cumulative environmental assessments and planning conditions.
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Urban Recreation and Amenity

Access to opportunities for recreation and amenity is an important consideration in improving quality of life. This is likely to become more significant as the population increases, and land becomes more valuable and pressure from competing land uses becomes more intense.

Local networks of high quality, well managed and maintained open spaces, sports and recreational facilities help to enhance the urban environment and should be planned to be easily accessible to all. (KCDP13.7)

Open Space

New development of housing and / or commercial development influences the need for new sports and outdoor community facilities. The zoning of land for “open space” is an important element of land-use planning and should be provided within Development Plans and Local Area Plans as appropriate.

The Kildare Open Space Strategy (2021), identified a hierarchy of open space within the county, including three categories of open space types, which will influence future open space provision in County Kildare (Appendix 3 refers).

This strategy includes an audit of facilities currently available and an assessment of current and future needs within the county. Recommendations are outlined for the current and future open space requirements for villages and towns in the county and will form an important input into the preparation of future Local Area Plans.

The provision of accessible open space is an integral part of the provision of high-quality green infrastructure for communities. Overall, the Council will seek the provision of open space at a standard of 2.5 ha per 1000 population in accordance with the Kildare Open Space Strategy (2021). (KCDP13.7)

Allotments, Community Gardens and Farms

Allotments and community gardens are becoming increasingly popular. Allotment gardens allow a number of people to cultivate their own vegetables in individual plots/land parcels on lands owned by another private individual or body. Both types of facilities can have a number of benefits including the promotion of healthy lifestyles, biodiversity and providing a cheaper local and sustainable source of food. There are currently 55 no. allotments at the Wonderful Barn in Leixlip.

Derrybeg Farm, in Celbridge, operates under the model of a Community Supported Agricultural (CSA) and is part of a national and international network that serves residents in the Celbridge, Leixlip and Maynooth Area. The farmers work the land and the consumers/members commit to pay a sum of money in advance to cover the day to day running of the farm in return for a box of seasonal vegetables each week over a nine-month season. The model could be extended to other communities in County Kildare. (KCDP 13.7.2)

Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure refers to the network of linked high quality green spaces and other environmental features within an urban setting. This strategically planned and delivered network should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource, capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. This includes climate change adaptation, waste and water management, food production, recreation and health benefits, biodiversity enhancement linkages and economic benefits.

In developing green infrastructure, opportunities should be taken to develop and enhance networks for cycling, walking and other non-motorised transport. Green infrastructure includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, allotments and private gardens. (KCDP 13.7.3)

Sports and Recreational Facilities

The development of sport and recreation is important in encouraging a sense of wellbeing and social contact. Kildare County Council acknowledges the very important roles that open space and sporting, and social clubs play in enhancing the social and recreational life of Kildare’s communities. Facilities for both formal and informal recreation catering for the entire community of all abilities, are required. It is an objective of KCC to encourage the dual use of amenity facilities (See objectives in Section 10.12). (KCDP 13.7.4)

Children’s Play Facilities

Children’s play is important to their development. It is through play that they learn to socialise and interact with the world. In supporting play, residential areas, parks and open spaces should be available and be safe and enjoyable for children of different ages.

The vision of the ‘Kildare Play Strategy (2018-2028)’ is ‘to have Kildare recognised as a child-friendly county and a leader in public play & recreation provision” with the values of inclusiveness, Best Practice, Collaboration and Partnership and Integrity.

New playgrounds have been provided in Kill, Sallins, Eadestown, Caragh, Timahoe and Castledermot. A new skatepark was provided in Newbridge in 2019 and a pilot scheme is underway in Celbridge for the development of an outdoor youth facility. This pilot scheme will inform the development of other play facilities in County Kildare. (KCDP13.7.5)

Policy LR P5	Preserve, manage and maintain to a high standard the existing public parks, open spaces, amenities and recreation facilities throughout the county.
Objective LR O81	Ensure that new developments are compatible with the availability and size of passive and active open space and recreational facilities, i) within 10 minutes’ walk from people’s homes; ii) accessible to all, regardless of age, physical mobility, disability or social disadvantage; iii) are in line with the Settlement Strategy and the ‘Sustainable Development in Urban Areas: Guidelines for Planning Authorities,’ (DEHLG, 2009); iv) include disabled parking bays, and v) include accessible play recreational facilities/equipment.
Objective LR O82	Require the provision of good quality, well located and functional open space in new residential developments, including landscaping with native species and scale appropriate natural play areas to cater for all age groups.

Objective LR O83	Ensure development proposals provide for hedgerow and woodland creation and augmentation within developments ⁷ at the start of the construction phase and encourage the block planting of woodland and the joining up of hedgerows and woodlands between developments in order to support habitat creation, in so far as possible.
Objective LR O84	Ensure that all development proposals include comprehensive landscaping schemes including trees, suitable to their environment and to require that the planting of same should either be carried out in full as part of Phase 1 for larger phased schemes or prior to the occupation of any units on the overall development site on all other schemes.
Objective LR O85	Facilitate additional non-mainstream facilities for the youth and sport facilities that lend themselves to lifelong participation for older persons through the provision of suitable facilities in all towns and villages.
Objective LR O86	Provide play facilities adjacent to other community and childcare facilities, in so far as is possible, and to ensure their proper management and maintenance.
Objective LR O87	Implement the Kildare Play Strategy (2018-2028) to address the play and recreational needs of children and young people growing up in County Kildare.
Objective LR O88	Avoid the loss of an existing amenity or recreational facility through any development proposal, unless: (i) The facility or amenity was established as an interim use pending the completion of an improved or satisfactory replacement facility; or (ii) The applicant can demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that there is an insufficient local demand for the existing facility; or (iii) Satisfactory alternative provision can be made by the applicant that will be fully operational either prior to the commencement of development or prior to the occupation of any residential units directly associated with the subject recreational facility.

Objective LR O88	Avoid the loss of an existing amenity or recreational facility through any development proposal, unless: (i) The facility or amenity was established as an interim use pending the completion of an improved or satisfactory replacement facility; or (ii) The applicant can demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that there is an insufficient local demand for the existing facility; or (iii) Satisfactory alternative provision can be made by the applicant that will be fully operational either prior to the commencement of development or prior to the occupation of any residential units directly associated with the subject recreational facility.
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Objective LR O89	Liaise with sporting organisations to ensure that where possible the needs of sports clubs and the communities are met in the provision of quality facilities in line with the vision and objectives of the National Sports Policy, 2018-2027.
Objective LR O91	Support and facilitate the development of allotments/community gardens that's accessible to all and meet the following criteria: (i) The lands are of appropriate scale and at appropriate locations, situated within or immediately adjacent to the edge of towns/ villages; (ii) (ii) Proximate to public transport links and walking/cycling infrastructure; and (iii) (iii) Adequate water supply and adequate parking facilities can be provided.
Objective LR O104	Consider future needs in the provision of new or in the expansion of existing sport and recreational facilities, by encouraging the clustering of facilities, improving the range, quality, access and capacity of facilities and catering for all age-groups and abilities through initiatives in partnership with community groups and sporting organisations.
Objective LR O105	Minimise the environmental impact of external lighting at sensitive locations within the Green Infrastructure network to mitigate adverse impacts on sensitive fauna and protected species, and to achieve a sustainable balance between the recreational needs of an area, the safety of walking and cycling routes and the protection of light sensitive species such as bats.

Urban Design, Placemaking and Regeneration

Kildare is becoming an increasingly urbanised county, a trend that is anticipated to continue over the coming decades and one which the plan must address in order to focus on the needs of current and future residents of the county. As such, its network of settlements, its towns and villages, are the focus of ongoing growth and expansion. A key issue will be to ensure that this growth is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable. In this regard, it is recognised that settlements need to successfully accommodate and integrate new development whilst also maintaining and enhancing the character and viability of their historic centres. This is considered to be a critical element central to the retention of their overall identity, and key to providing both new and existing communities with 'a sense of place' and belonging. (KCDP14.1)

Policy UDP1 – Urban Design and Placemaking	Apply the principles of people-centred urban design and healthy placemaking as an effective growth management tool to ensure the realisation of more sustainable, inclusive, and well-designed settlements resilient to the effects of climate change and adapted to meet the changing needs of growing populations including aging and disabled persons.
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Objective UD O1 - Urban Design and Placemaking	Require a high standard of urban design to be integrated into the design and layout all new development and ensure compliance with the principles of healthy placemaking by providing increased opportunities for physical activities, social interaction and active travel, through the development of compact, permeable neighbourhoods which feature high-quality pedestrian and cyclist connectivity, accessible to a range of local services and amenities.
Objective UD O2 - Urban Design and Placemaking	Ensure that town centres remain the focal point of their respective settlements by maintaining and enhancing their role as dynamic, attractive, resilient and inclusive environments, and as established destinations for commercial, retail, civic and recreational activities.
Objective UD O3 - Urban Design and Placemaking	Support and promote the '10-minute settlement' concept across all towns and villages in the county and require that all Local Area Plans incorporate policies and objectives that will assist in its implementation.
Objective UD O4 - Urban Design and Placemaking	To require all proposals for multi-unit residential developments to demonstrate how the principles of 'Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design' have been considered and applied in the design and layout of the proposed scheme.
Policy UD P2 - Urban Design and Placemaking	Develop towns and villages of all types and scale as environmental assets and ensure that their regeneration and renewal forms a critical component of efforts to achieve compact growth development and increased climate resilience within settlements across the county.

Development Management Standards

Soft Landscaping

Planting and landscaping should be used to incorporate new buildings into their surroundings and provide privacy between dwellings. New planting should consist of local native plant types with consideration given to providence and origin of plants indigenous to the area. s with consideration given to providence and origin of plants indigenous to the area. The planting should be incorporated into the site to enhance overall appearance, to conserve biodiversity and to contribute to the green infrastructure of the area. (KCDP15.2.4)

Hard Landscaping

Hard landscaping design, including paving and street furniture, is an important element in defining the character of streets and public open spaces. It can also help to provide a visual link to the surroundings; define and enclose spaces and delineate public from private space; provide security to private areas; distinguish between pedestrian, cycle, and vehicle movement; and provide suitable play space for children. Hard landscaping shall address the following:

- Applications for substantial hard-surfaced areas (e.g., streets, squares, open spaces, paved areas, footpaths, and driveways) must use appropriate materials that are durable and of good quality while demonstrating methods of controlling and limiting surface water run-off consistent with sustainable development.
- Use of permeable paving/surfaces, ponds, bio-retention areas, tree pits, rain gardens, swales and other nature based drainage system methods, such that rainfall is not directed immediately to surface water drains. Such methods can serve to reduce the risk of flooding.
- The use of artificial grass in all new residential developments shall not be permitted, save in exceptional circumstances including for children's play areas.
- Walls, fences, metal railings, and gates used to define spaces should be selected so as to be an integrated part of the overall design. Street furniture should be appropriately designed and sited such that it does not provide an obstacle for people with disabilities.
- Where underground or surface works are carried out, the Council will ensure the reinstatement of materials or the replacement with materials of similar style and quality.

Hard-landscaping proposals for public areas shall also be assessed with regard to the principles of the Urban Design Manual Best Practice Guide (DEHLG, 2009), as appropriate.

The integration of art into the public domain can contribute positively to the urban form, creating local distinctiveness and enhancing a public space.

Where possible and practicable existing stone walls should be retained as part of new developments. (KCDP15.2.5)

Open Space

Towns in Kildare will be required to provide a minimum of 2.5 hectares of Open Space per 1,000 of population which should include both formal (Active Open Space, Neighbourhood/local park, Play areas) and informal open spaces (Parks and Gardens, Amenity Green Space, Natural and semi-natural). (KCDP15.6)

On greenfield sites, the minimum area of open space that is acceptable within the site is 15% of the total site area. This may include Natural / Semi-Natural Green Spaces incorporating the planting of native species and pollinator friendly areas which enhance biodiversity up to a maximum of 8%.

SuDS are not generally acceptable as a form of public open space provision, except where they contribute in a significant and positive way to the design and quality of open space. Where the Council considers that this is the case, in general a maximum of 10% of the open space provision shall be taken up by SuDS. (KCDP15.6.6)

Transport

New pedestrian and cycle paths shall be designed in accordance with the Government's Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets - 2019 (DMURS), the national Cycle Manual (2011 and any subsequent updates), Draft GDA Cycle Network Plan (NTA, 2021) and Section 5.4.1 of this Plan. (KCDP15.7.1)

The Planning Authority requires the provision of a minimum level of secure cycle parking facilities in association with new development and changes of use. This is consistent with the objectives and policies of the National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022) and the Draft GDA Cycle Network Plan (NTA, 2021). (KCDP15.7.2)

Public Transport Objectives	
It is an objective of Kildare County Council and Meath County Council to:	
MATO 3.1	Support sustainable mobility within Maynooth by focusing people-intensive land uses around existing and planned public transport nodes, and along existing and planned high capacity public transport corridors.
MATO 3.2	Actively engage and co-operate with the Department of Transport, National Transport Authority (NTA), Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), Irish Rail, Local Link and other stakeholders to improve the provision of public transport in Maynooth, including the implementation of the measures outlined in Table 7.5 and illustrated on Map 7.3 of this Joint Plan.
MATO 3.3	Support the ongoing roll-out of the BusConnects programme in Maynooth and support any potential expansion in BusConnects routes which would serve new and expanding areas of Maynooth including Maynooth West and Moygaddy.
MATO 3.4	Support retaining the C4 Dublin Bus route service to/from Maynooth, in the interests of promoting greater levels of connectivity and sustainable mobility in the town.
MATO 3.5	Support the delivery of the DART+ West services in Maynooth, including the development of ancillary supporting infrastructure, subject to planning and environmental considerations.
MATO 3.6	Support and facilitate the National Transport Authority and Irish Rail in delivering a second train station to the west of Maynooth, including the development of ancillary supporting infrastructure, subject to planning and environmental considerations.

6.3.9 Relevant Planning Permissions Locally

Location: Railpark, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.

Planning Authority Case Reference: 15263

The erection of 126 No. two storey houses, of which 34 are detached four bedroom houses (types A, B, C, & D), 64 No. semi-detached consisting of 40 four bedroom houses (type E) and 24 three bedroom houses (type F) with 28 terraced three bedroom houses (type G) and a two storey educational building containing crèche and childcare facilities. Access is from the Maynooth Eastern Relief Road which was previously granted planning permission under Register Reference No. 07/1419 and includes 703m of distributor road containing 2 No. access roundabouts, with associated roads, verges, footpaths, open spaces, landscaping, public lighting and boundary walls. The development includes the provision of waste water and surface water services including attenuation, screening statement for appropriate assessment, mains water, utility services and all associated site works.

Status: Planning Application Withdrawn March 2016

Location: Railpark, Celbridge Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.

Planning Authority Case Reference: 21156**Bord Pleanála Case reference: PL09.312685**

Development on this 1.99 ha site, approximately, at lands adjoining an existing residential development (Rockfield Court), Railpark, Celbridge Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare. (This forms Phase 2 of a residential masterplan for some 105 No. units in total on a wider c. 3.26 ha landholding under the Applicant's control). The proposed Phase II development will consist of: Construction of a residential development comprising 47 No. dwellings in total, consisting of 11 No. two-bedroom two storey houses and 10 No. three-bedroom three storey houses (21 No. houses in total) including rear private open spaces; 13 No. one bedroom apartments and 13 No. two-bedroom apartments (26 No. three storey duplex apartments in total), including balconies and a single storey crèche facility (c.261 sqm). The development will also include: new vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian access from Celbridge Road via currently undeveloped lands to the southwest (Phase 1); a new pedestrian footpath and bicycle track along the site frontage to Celbridge Road; the provision of future access connection points to adjacent lands to the southwest (Phase 1), north and the southeast; works to facilitate connections to existing services infrastructure in Rockfield Park to the west. The development will also comprise internal roads, footpaths, cycle tracks, public open spaces, children's play area and bicycle store areas; parking at surface level (95 No. total spaces for car parking and 33 No. bicycles spaces); drainage attenuation; all hard and soft landscaping; boundary treatments; removal of the existing hedgerows adjacent to Celbridge Road; changes in levels; and all ancillary site development works and site services provision (including wayleave to the north-east) above and below ground.

Status: Permission Granted February 2024

Location: Railpark, Celbridge Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.

Planning Authority Case Reference: 21155**Bord Pleanála Case reference: PL09.312671**

Development on this 2.18 ha site, approximately, at lands adjoining an existing residential development (Rockfield Park), Railpark, Celbridge Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare. (This forms Phase 1 of a residential masterplan for some 105 no. units in total on a wider c. 3.26 ha landholding under the Applicant's control). The proposed Phase 1 development will consist of: Construction of a residential development comprising 58 no. dwellings in total, consisting of 18 no. two-bedroom two storey houses, 14 no. three-bedroom three storey houses and 2 no. four-bedroom three storey houses (34 no. houses in total) including rear private open spaces; 12 no. one-bedroom apartments and 12 no. two-bedroom apartments (24 no. three storey duplex apartments in total), including balconies. The development will also include: new vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian access from Celbridge Road; a new pedestrian footpath and cycle track along the main site frontage to Celbridge Road; the provision of future access connection points to adjacent lands to the northeast (Phase 2), northwest and the southeast; works to facilitate connections to existing services infrastructure to the northeast via Phase 2 lands. The development will also comprise internal roads, footpaths, cycle tracks, public open spaces, and bicycle store areas; parking at surface level (117 no. total spaces for car parking and 30 no. bicycles spaces); drainage attenuation; all hard and soft landscaping; boundary treatments; removal of the existing hedgerows adjacent to Celbridge Road, changes in levels;

and all ancillary site development works and site services provision (including wayleave to the north-east) above and below ground.

Status: Permission Granted February 2024

Location: Maynooth Eastern Ring Road

Planning Authority Case Reference: 071419

Bord Pleanála Case reference: ABP-315313-22

The construction of a road of total linear length of approximately 1400m and width of 17.8m containing two traffic lanes with grass margins, footpaths, cycle tracks and junctions including internal roundabouts etc

6.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development will consist of the following elements:

A ten-year planning permission is being sought for a proposed development comprising of 581 no. residential units, a neighbourhood centre and all associated development, on a site of approximately 15.27 hectares.

The residential component of the development consists of 185 no. apartment / duplex apartments and 396 no. houses to be provided as follows:

- 59 no. 2 bed two storey terraced houses
- 52 no. 3 bed two storey mid terrace houses
- 223 no. 3 bed two storey end terrace/semi-detached houses
- 58 no. 4 bed two storey semi-detached houses
- 4 no. 4 bed two storey detached houses
- 185 no. duplex apartments / apartments (53 no. 1 beds, 92 no. 2 beds, 40 no. 3 beds) in a series of 3 to part 6 storey duplex apartment / apartment blocks.

The proposed neighbourhood centre consists of 3 no. buildings (Block A, Block B and a standalone café / restaurant kiosk building) and a new public plaza and communal open space.

Block A is part 5 storey / part 6 storey building comprising health centre (174 sq.m) and two no. Class 1-Shop units (124 sq.m) and (166 sq.m) at ground floor level and 41 no. apartments from first to fifth floor level.

Block B is a 5 storey building block comprising a childcare facility (762 sq.m) at ground floor level and 48 no. apartments from first to fourth floor level. All duplex apartments / apartment units are provided with a balcony, terrace or private garden on all elevations.

A total of 888 no. car parking spaces are proposed, which includes 711 no. in-curtilage spaces for houses, 115 no. spaces for the duplex apartments / apartments, 36 no. visitor car parking spaces, 26 no. for the

commercial uses at the neighbourhood centre including visitor and staff parking. A total of 623 no. cycle spaces are proposed for residents, 42 no. spaces for the neighbourhood centre uses and 93 no. visitor cycle parking spaces.

The proposal includes significant public open space including a new Local Park, linear park and pocket parks, children's play areas and ancillary play area for the childcare facility. The development includes hard and soft landscaping, lighting, boundary treatments and communal open space areas.

The proposed development provides for two no. vehicular accesses from the permitted Maynooth Eastern Ring Road (MERR), including a new pedestrian/cyclist signalised crossing, associated internal roads, pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, set down areas, bin and bike stores, paths and access points provided up to the application site boundary to provide for potential future connections to adjoining lands to the north and south, subject to agreement with the Planning Authority / adjacent landowner.

The development includes foul and surface water drainage, 6 no. ESB Substations, green roofs, services and all associated and ancillary site works and development.

6.4.1 Site Planning - Design Strategy – Architecture

A detailed description of the design strategy is presented in the Architectural Design Statement by the project Architects, JFA.

Following on from consultation with Kildare County Council S247 meetings, the key changes to the overall site plan during the design process included the following :

The layout was revised to provide a stronger urban edge along the Maynooth Eastern Ring Road with a proposal for a neighbourhood centre including a public plaza, retail and medical centre uses at the ground and first floor levels, with apartments from ground to fourth floor level.

Provision was made for future vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist connections to lands to the south of the site (Educate Together lands; separate ownership and future planning applications for a secondary school). These future connections aligned with the Urban Design Framework for the Railpark Key Development Area lands in the Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031. The layout of the lands to the northeast of the site have also been revisited to align with this Urban Design Framework. A tree and hedgerow survey undertaken by Charles Mc Corkrell Arboricultural Consultant, informed both the site layout and landscape proposals which highlighted the retention of groups of trees and hedgerows. A hedgerow along the northern boundary of the site being preserved and integrated into the proposed boundary treatment and open space. The western boundary treatment will also retain existing vegetation. A cycle and pedestrian greenway was proposed to run east-west through the site from Public Open Space 7 (POS7) to Public Open Space 1 (POS1). The public park located to the north of the site was widened to accommodate a children's play area, a MUGA, a skate park, basketball area, outdoor gym amongst other spaces.

The duplex component of the proposed built environment was moved along the western edge of the Maynooth Eastern Ring Road (MERR). DMURS was considered throughout the design process and the overall design is considered DMURS compliant.

Following on from the Stage 2 LRD Opinion by Kildare County Council, the key changes made to the overall site layout include the following :

- The plaza moved to north-west corner of neighbourhood centre to connect with park
- Cafe pavilion building added to east of plaza as buffer to MERR
- The neighbourhood centre is generally reconfigured
- Northeastern area of site has been revised to allow for higher density
- Duplexes and apartments included to give a stronger face to the MERR and make a gateway with the neighbourhood Centre at the entrance to the site
- The linear open space has been reconfigured with widened sections of open space connecting to a green corridor
- The lands between the subject site and the MERR have been included in the landscape strategy
- Redesign of the road layout generally
- Redesign of the plaza with elements of the paving extended to the road, the cycle and pedestrian paths which visually connect the plaza to the park entrance. A tree lined boulevard draws the eye from the plaza to the park

The architectural design strategy proposes three character areas to create a visual and aesthetic distinction to the residential areas in the scheme through the use of a variety of brick colours and renders, along with the neighbourhood centre.

6.4.2 Material Strategy

6.4.2.1 Character Area 1

Character Area 1 forms the environs around the local park to the north of the site and west of the future MERR.

The houses are characterised by the use of two tones of brick, red and whitewash

White brick will articulate feature window bays and break up terraces with vertical bands. The red will contrast with the large areas of green space in the park.

Dark grey window frames will have differing contrast against the red and white brick adding visual interest along with light coloured doors

The full brick facades and stronger, earthy colour signal entrance to the area around the park, a key feature and amenity of the site.

6.4.2.2 Character Area 2

Character Area 2 is located the north east of the site and east of the future MERR.

It is bounded by the MERR to the west, a mature hedgerow of predominantly hawthorn to the north, and open fields to the south-east.

Between the MERR and the residential road are planted landscaped spaces with natural play areas, and a tree lined street runs through the area with two 3 storey duplexes forming a gateway.

The material treatment of the houses utilises a light grey smoked brick and high quality white render to give a light appearance.

The four bed houses are distinguished by full brick outer faces, while other houses use brick on feature elements, to bookend terraces, and add variety.

The olive colour window frames add further distinction to the houses and harmonize with the hedgerow and street trees.

6.4.2.3 Character Area 3

Located at the southern portion of the site, between the duplexes facing the MERR, the western boundary with Rockfield, and the southern boundary with The Grange (under construction), Character Area 3 is defined by smoked buff brick and light colour window frames which set it apart visually from other areas. This will contrast with the adjacent Character Area 1, where the feature accents are in white, and the house is in red brick.

6.4.2.4 Neighbourhood Centre

The Neighbourhood Centre blocks are proposed to be primarily in brick in two colours, white for upper floors, and red for ground level.

Dark grey cladding panels are used as a contrasting element on certain corners.

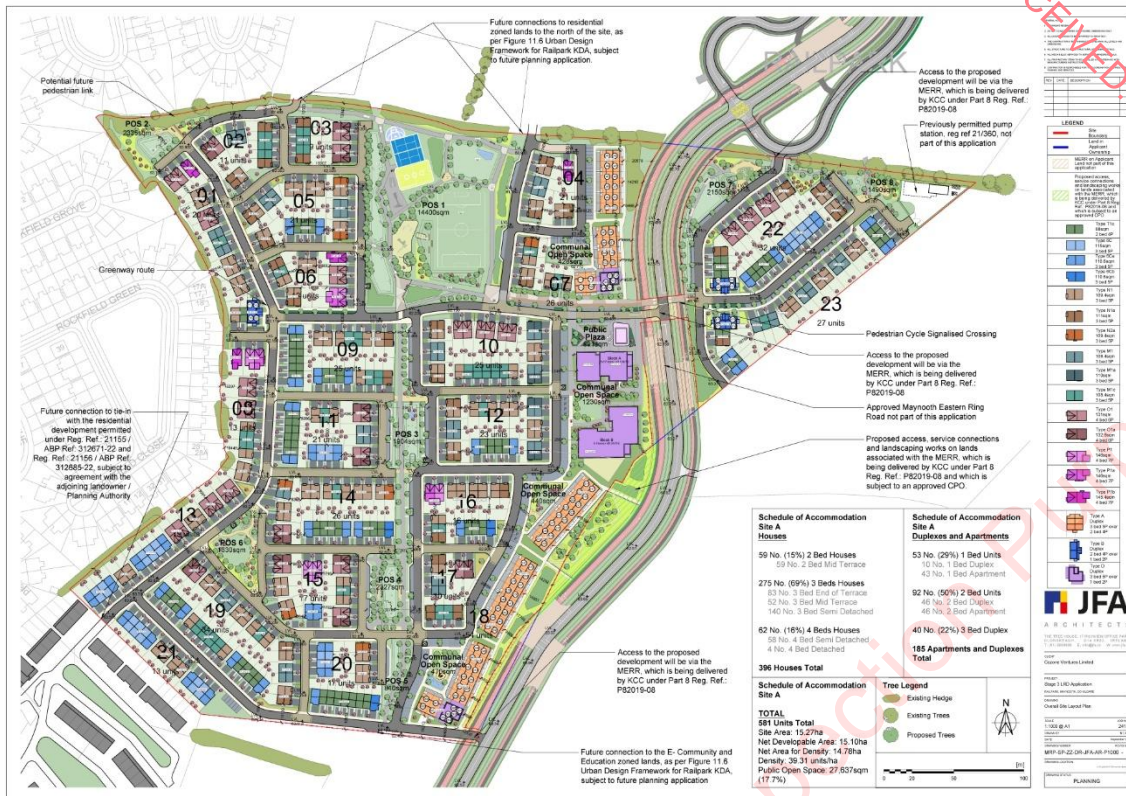
The material palette is simple but high-quality and brick details such as soldier courses, projecting headers, and hit-and-miss arrangements, provide variety and visual interest without introducing additional materials.

Soldier courses give legibility to the floor levels and continue across the balcony fascia, visually integrating the balconies.

Glass balustrades give a light feel to the balconies

As ground the ground floor uses are primarily commercial and all the residential space is at upper floors, the change in brick colour makes this legible and provides a solid base to the building.

Figure: 6.23 Overall Site Plan (JFA Architects)



6.4.3 Landscape Strategy – Landscape Masterplan

The site plan for the Railpark lands has been developed around a strong green infrastructure network. A network that seeks to incorporate existing green infrastructure assets in the form of hedgerows, and establish a network of green spaces that are:

- Usable and connected
- Safe and attractive
- Support biodiversity through habitat retention and creation
- Incorporate nature based solutions (SuDS)
- Support active travel
- Provide for healthy lifestyles through play, exercise and sports

There are two principal ‘Green Corridors’ in the network; an east-west corridor building on an alignment of existing hedgerows and a north-south corridor incorporating new green spaces. The character of the East-West Corridor will be dominated by the retained hedgerow; the corridor will incorporate a greenway for pedestrians and cyclists and the hedgerow can be supplemented by a grassland meadow verge and additional native tree planting. The north-south corridor will be created through development of a local park and connecting linear green corridor. The biodiversity function of this corridor will be in the form of new habitat creation - tree lines, hedgerow planting and meadow grassland, that also contribute to nature based drainage solutions (SuDS). The north-south corridor will also incorporate a greenway for pedestrian and cycle connectivity. There will be smaller pocket parks distributed through the scheme; primarily to support doorstep play for younger children and also to incorporate nature-based drainage solutions.

Figure 6.24: Green Infrastructure Strategy (Áit Urbanism + Landscape)

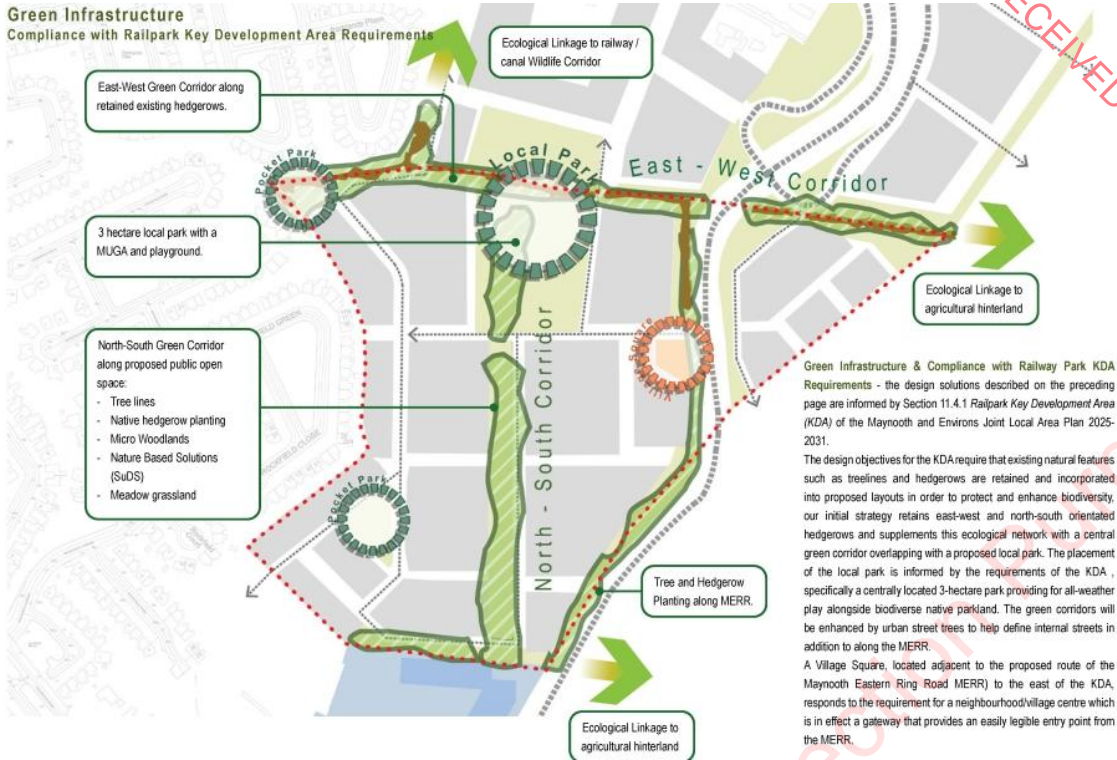


Figure 6.25: Recreation and Amenity (Áit Urbanism + Landscape)

Railpark Lands Maynooth

LANDSCAPE AND GI STRATEGY

Recreation & Amenity



Figure 6.28: Neighbourhood Square (Áit Urbanism + Landscape)



Figure 6.29: Pocket Parks (Áit Urbanism + Landscape)



6.5 POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

6.5.1 Landscape Effects

6.5.1.1 Construction Stage

There is the potential for likely significant and adverse temporary effects on the landscape during the construction stage of the project resulting from the following elements associated with construction works:

- Erection of physical structures such as site compounds and storage area
- Erection of site hoarding, signage, security fencing
- Presence of site machinery and delivery/storage of materials etc
- Lighting:
 - Temporary security lighting
 - Lighting at height associated with construction of structures
 - Lighting in the contractor's compound and car parking areas
 - Light spill and glare towards surrounding residential and agricultural receptor areas to the north, west and south of the site
 - Light spill which could impact ecology/biodiversity

6.5.1.1 Operational Stage

It is understood that the proposed development of this type, results in a permanent change and may fundamentally alter the appearance of the landscape. However, altered appearance does not necessarily equate to long-term/permanent negative effects to landscape character.

Therefore, it is essential that a holistic view is taken with proposals of this nature, that not only assess the potential impact during the construction phase, but critically how the proposal will appear when fully implemented and the new planting/landscaping have matured. The proposed design will feature public open spaces that incorporate a diverse layered palette of soft landscaping including new woodland tree copses, native and ornamental hedgerow planting, wildflower meadow planting, bulb planting and ornamental planting.

Landscape mitigation measures are designed into the landscape site plan and include the retention of the much of existing boundary trees and hedgerows on the northern and western edges of the site to maintain and enhance the landscape aesthetic of the existing landscape character and to foster biodiversity. Retention of trees and hedgerows, combined with future appropriate native species will retain existing ecological corridors locally.

Without landscape mitigation measures in place, the potential landscape effects resulting from the proposed development during the operational phase are considered to be significant and adverse.

6.5.2 Visual Effects

6.5.2.1 Construction Stage

The visual effects due to construction are likely to be short term, terminating upon completion of the development. There is potential for likely significant and adverse short-term effects during construction from the following elements associated with construction and works:

- Dust
- Site huts
- Building materials
- Ground disturbance (e.g. topsoil, stockpiles, etc.)
- Site hoarding/security fencing
- Construction works

There is potential for likely significant and adverse short-term visual effects from the use of temporary buildings, machinery necessary for construction works at proposed works, as well as stockpiling of materials.

There is potential for a significant and adverse short-term effects from the transportation of the material to be recycled and the recycled material to and from the site if applicable. There is the potential for a likely significant and adverse short-term visual impact on views into the site.

The main stages of the construction phasing will include the following:

- Site preparation works
- Site establishment and erection of temporary structures
- Diversion and connection of services and utilities
- Construction of foundations and structures
- Mechanical and electrical installation
- Fit-out and external works.

Table 6.8: Construction Stage Visual Impacts Without Mitigation

Location	View No.	Sensitivity	Probability	Duration	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects
M4 overbridge / Straffan Road (R406).	1	Low	None	None	None	None
R405 overbridge and the M4 motorway	2	Low	None	None	None	None
Ballygoran Road	3	Low to Medium	Likely	Short-term	Negative	Slight
Scenic Viewpoint Along Royal Canal RC5: Railpark/Donaghmore (Pike Bridge)	4	Medium to High	None	None	None	None

<i>Ballygoran Road</i>	5	Low to Medium	Likely	Short-term	Negative	Moderate
<i>Scenic Route 28 through southwest of Carton Demesne (Protected Area)</i>	6	High	None	None	None	None
<i>Parkland Grove</i>	7	Low	Likely	Short-term	Negative	Moderate
<i>Parkland Grove</i>	8	Low	Likely	Short-term	Negative	Moderate
<i>Parklands Place</i>	9	Low	Likely	Short-term	Negative	Moderate
<i>Rockfield Green</i>	10	Low	Likely	Short-term	Negative	Moderate
<i>Rockfield Manor</i>	11	Low	None	None	None	None
<i>R405 Celbridge Road</i>	12	Low	Likely	Short-term	Negative	Slight
<i>R405 Celbridge Road Opposite the Educate Together Primary School</i>	13	Low	Likely	Short-term	Negative	Slight
<i>R405 Celbridge Road</i>	14	Low	Likely	Short-term	Negative	Moderate
<i>R405 Celbridge Road Cumulative MERR</i>	14	Low	Likely	Medium to Long Term	Negative	Significant
<i>Celbridge Road, South East of the Site</i>	15	Low	None	None	None	None
<i>Royal Canal – North East of the site</i>	16	High	None	None	None	None
<i>Royal Canal – North of the Site</i>	17	High	Likely	Short-term	Negative	Slight
<i>Royal Canal – North of the Site, including the future MERR</i>	17	High	Likely	Medium to Long Term	Negative	Profound

6.5.2.2 Operational Stage

Potential effects will arise from the proposed low to high density residential development once it is operational and construction is complete. The patterns of use from day to day will alter as both vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian movement are likely to increase both throughout the site itself and along on approach to the development, namely Celbridge Road and the future Maynooth Eastern Ring Road. The masterplan provides for possible future connections for vehicular, pedestrian and cyclists to the southwest, southeast, northwest and north. Some of these lands are subject to granted or future planning permissions. Others are possible future connections to established local residential areas such as the Parklands estate.

There may potentially be a perceived adverse and moderate visual effects resulting from the replacement of the agricultural landscape aesthetic with a low to high density residential development and associated ancillary site infrastructure. However, the site is currently an underutilised agricultural field with a low landscape sensitivity and low landscape value, adjacent to an established residential area and a new residential development being constructed to the southwest of the site. The proposed development forms a part of the Kildare County Council's vision for the future sustainable development of Maynooth Town along with the proposed Maynooth Eastern Ring Road within The Railpark Key Development Area.

Potential adverse visual effects will be mitigated by extensive landscape proposals shown in the landscape site plan. There is potential for a likely moderate and positive visual effects from the creation of public open spaces throughout the site, for the use of residents and the wider community.

There may also be potential future benefit through the future provision of interconnection between this proposed development, other future proposed developments and the existing residential estates to the west and south of the site.

Based on the above, it is considered unlikely that there will be significant adverse visual effects from the proposed development once it is operational and all landscape installations and proposals as presented in the landscape site plan are implemented in full.

The proposed design will encompass the following elements:

- Public open spaces
- Variety of passive and recreational spaces
- A variety of hardscape materials
- Improved public pedestrian and cyclist permeability through the site
- The creation of green links connecting pockets of open space and amenity areas through the landscape site plan's green infrastructure strategy
- A hierarchy of native and ornamental planting including trees, shrubs, hedging, ornamental grasses, herbaceous and perennial planting, wildflower meadow, tree copses, bulb and pollinator friendly planting generally.
- The retention of existing trees, scrub and hedgerows to the north and west of the site and the planting of native broadleaf tree species for biodiversity protection and enhancement
- Hard and soft surface open spaces with seating areas
- SuDS features

The architectural and urban design strategy is guided by the principles of the Railpark Key Development Area (KDA) (Urban Design Framework Plan) in the Maynooth and Environs Local Area Plan 2025-2031. The architectural treatments en façade of the proposed development will be reflective of the site context and landscape character. A number of architectural design features are proposed that allow the built form to visually recede and are of particular note along the proposal's elevations to the Maynooth Eastern Ring Road where the proposed scheme will be the most visible. The architectural treatments are outlined in the JFA's Architectural Design Statement and are comprised of the materials strategy for three distinct residential character areas along with the proposed neighbourhood centre.

6.5.3 Potential Significant Effects

This section identifies potential effects of the construction and operational phases of the development on the landscape and visual resource study area. Fourteen viewpoints chosen at the outset for the purposes of the visual assessment, which were submitted for the LRD opinion stage. An additional three viewpoints and as well as 8 no. CGI's were undertaken, as requested by Kildare County Council.

The views assess the potential visual effects of the proposed mixed use residential development, as well as the cumulative visual effects of a future ring road (MERR) development by Kildare County Council to north, south and east of the site.

The views were chosen as being representative of the key sensitive views in terms of effects on local sensitive receptors and are taken from the public domain. (Please see Digital Dimension Document for Verified Views in A3 format in Appendix 6.1).

In terms of **Scenic Routes and Scenic Views**, the following have been assessed:

Views to and from Bridges on the Royal Canal :

RC5: Railpark/Donaghmore (Pike Bridge): See Viewpoint 4

Scenic Routes

Scenic Route 28 : Carton Demesne : See Viewpoint 5

Figure 6.33: Viewpoint Maps by Digital Dimensions



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View No. 1 Existing



View No. 1	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
	Northern Lowlands – (Road Infrastructure)	Class 1 Low Sensitivity	Low	Low	Low	High

This viewpoint is taken looking northeast towards the site from the M4 overbridge / Straffan Road (R406). The view depicts motorway infrastructure, with planted road embankments and road lighting. The landscape character presents as relatively flat and reflective of this ‘Northern Lowlands’ Landscape Character Area description.

View No. 1 Proposed



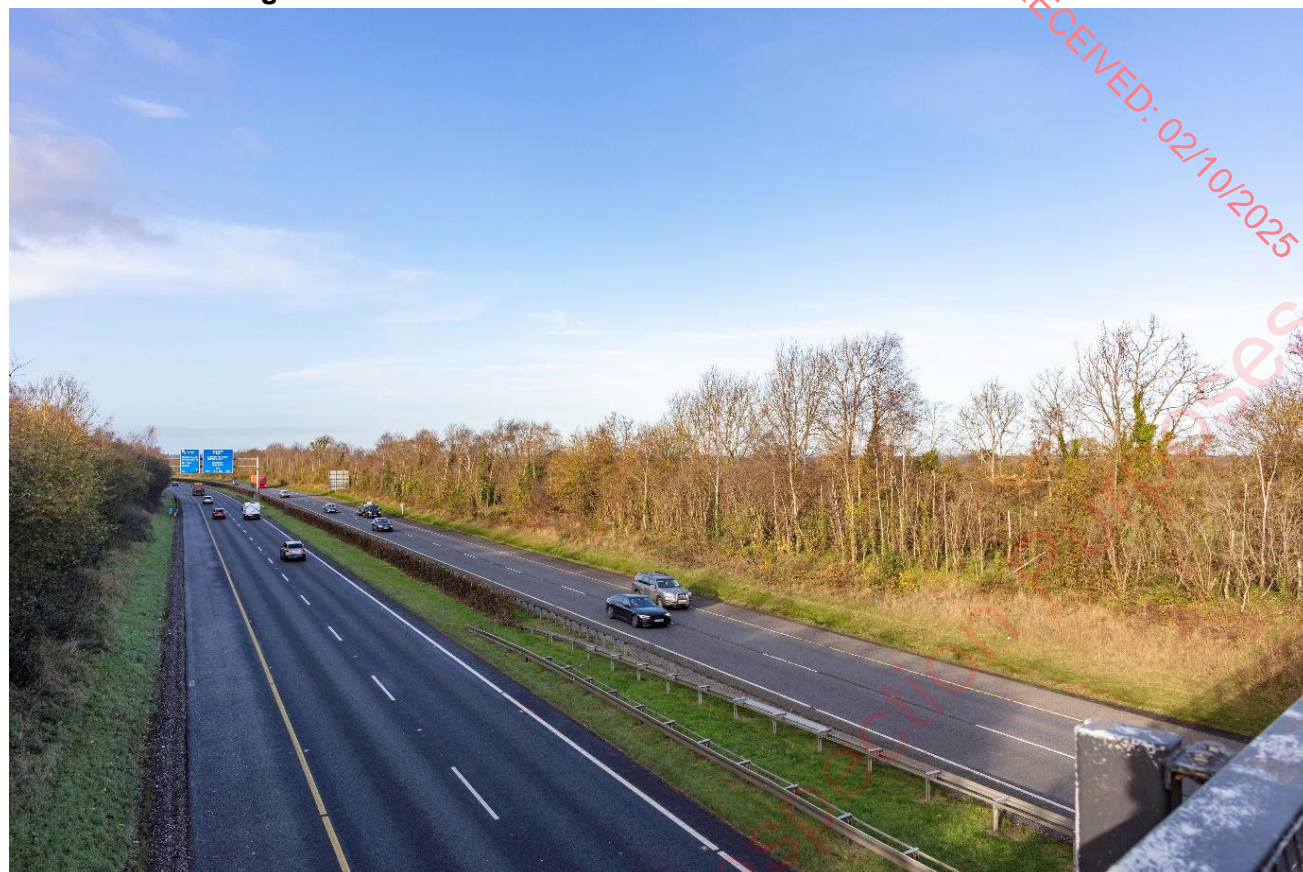
The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location. The redline indicates the location of the proposed development in the background of view. It will be screened by distance from the site combined with intervening planting in the wider landscape.

Impact Assessment

View No. 1	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
	None	None	None

Given the low visual sensitivity of the view and the high landscape capacity for change, it is considered that the proposed development will not have a significant adverse effect on this view.

View No. 2 Existing



View No. 2	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
	Northern Lowlands – (Road Infrastructure)	Class 1 Low Sensitivity	Low	Low	Low	High

This viewpoint is taken looking northwest towards the site from the R405 overbridge and the M4 motorway. The view depicts motorway infrastructure, with planted road embankments and road lighting. The landscape character presents as relatively flat and reflective of this ‘Northern Lowlands’ Landscape Character Area description.

View No. 2 Proposed



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location. The redline indicates the location of the proposed development in the background of view. It will be screened by distance from the site combined with intervening planting in the wider landscape.

Impact Assessment

View No. 2	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
	None	None	None

Given the low visual sensitivity of the view and the high landscape capacity for change, it is considered that the proposed development will not have a significant adverse effect on this view.

View No. 3 Existing



View No. 3	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
	Northern Lowlands	Class 1 Low Sensitivity (With strong rural aesthetic)	Low to medium	Low to medium	Low to medium	Medium to High

This view is taken on the Ballygoran Road looking west, northwest towards the site. The view depicts an open rural agricultural landscape setting with a lowland landscape character, made up of grassland, hedgerow and treelines along the boundaries as well as a metal agricultural gate access. Some of the upper levels of the urban/suburban built fabric of the eastern edge of Maynooth Town are visible in the background of view.

View No. 3 Proposed



The proposed development will be visible from this viewpoint. Two storey houses, three story duplexes and the part four, five and a six storey apartment blocks will be visible over the hedgerow in the background of view. The lower levels of the much of the proposed development will be screened by existing and proposed vegetation.

Impact Assessment

View No. 3	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
	Neutral	Slight	Permanent

Given the location of the proposed development within the Railpark KDA, the overall low to medium visual and landscape sensitivity and low to medium landscape value along with a medium to high landscape capacity for change along this peri-urban site on the eastern edge of Maynooth town, it is considered that the proposed development will not have a significant adverse effect on this view.

View No. 4 Existing



View No. 4	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
	Northern Lowlands (Scenic View) (Royal Canal Greenway)	Sensitive Receptor Scenic Viewpoint Along Royal Canal RC5:Railpark/Donaghmore (Pike Bridge)	Medium to High	Medium to High	Medium to High	Low to Medium

This view is taken at Pike Bridge on the Royal Canal, looking southwest towards the development site, and adjacent to the entrance to Carton Demesne on the Leixlip Road. This viewpoint is identified as a ‘Scenic View - RC5:Railpark/Donaghmore (Pike Bridge)’. The view depicts the built heritage of the bridge itself, the Royal Canal (Area of High Amenity), the railway line, and the broadly open agricultural landscape setting of this northern lowlands area. Some large residential properties are visible in the middle distance along with some agricultural building in the background. There is a substantial tree, and hedgerows present in the wider landscape along with old stone wall roadside boundaries, particularly to the left of view. The combination of these features adds a medium to high landscape sensitivity and value to the view with the subsequent landscape capacity for change being considered low to medium.

View No. 4 Proposed



The proposed development will not be visible from this location due to distance from the site, intervening tree and hedgerow planting as well as the intervening-built environment. The redline indicates the location of the proposed development in the distance.

View No. 4	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
	None	None	None

It is considered that the proposed development will not have a significant adverse effect on this view.

View No. 5 Existing



View No. 5	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
	Northern Lowlands	Class 1 Low Sensitivity (Strong rural aesthetic).	Low to medium	Low to medium	Low to medium	Medium to High

This view is taken further north on the Ballygoran Road looking west towards the site. The view depicts an open rural agricultural landscape setting with a lowland landscape character, made up of grassland, hedgerow, treelines and timber fence lines along the boundaries as well as a metal agricultural gate access. The church steeple of St. Patricks Church within the grounds Maynooth University which is over 83m in height is visible in the background. Some of the upper levels of the urban/suburban built fabric of the eastern edge of Maynooth Town is also visible in the background of view.

View No. 5 Proposed



The proposed development will be visible from this viewpoint. Two storey houses, three story duplexes and the part four, five storey and six story apartment blocks will be visible in the middle distance. Some of the lower levels of the proposed development will be screened by existing and proposed vegetation. The upper levels of the steeple of St. Patricks Church are retained. Some of the open views of the skyline are removed by the massing of the taller built elements of the scheme.

Impact Assessment

View No. 5	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
	Neutral	Moderate	Permanent

Given the location of the proposed development within the Railpark KDA the overall low to medium landscape sensitivity and landscape value along with a medium to high landscape capacity for change along this peri-urban site on the eastern edge of Maynooth town, it is considered that the proposed development will not have a significant adverse effect on this view.

View No. 6 Existing



This view is taken within the grounds of Carton Demesne, which is designated as a ‘Protected Area’ within the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029. The view is taken adjacent to Scenic Route 28, which moves through the southwest of the demesne landscape.

View No. 6	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
	Northern Lowlands	High Sensitivity Protected Area Adjacent to Scenic Route 28 through south west of Carton Demesne	High	High	High	Low

View No. 6 Proposed



The proposed development will not be visible from this location due to distance from the site, intervening topography, intervening tree and hedgerow planting. The redline indicates the location of the proposed development in the distance.

Impact Assessment

View No. 6	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
	None	None	None

It is considered that the proposed development will not have a significant adverse effect on this view.

View No. 7 Existing



View No. 7	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
	Northern Lowlands	Class 1 Low Sensitivity	Low	Low	Low	High

This viewpoint is taken looking south towards the site from Parklands Grove. The location of the view is from a narrow rural lane that with a number of residential properties, farms and outbuildings. The lane is effectively a cul-de-sac that terminates approximately 180m to the southeast of this viewpoint location. The main vehicular access to this laneway is from the west off the Straffan Road and through the Castelbridge housing estate. The view depicts a rural agricultural fieldscape setting that can be described as relatively flat with some internal undulations. There are some glimpse views through the hedgerow in the middle distance to the built environment on Celbridge Road to the south of the site. The overall landscape sensitivity of the view is considered low with a low landscape value given its location adjacent to a peri-urban landscape on the southeastern edge of Maynooth town with substantial housing developments to the west, southwest and south of the site.

View No. 7 Proposed



The proposed development will be visible from this viewpoint location. The roofscape of the two storey houses to the east of the proposed development will be visible along with the upper levels of the three story duplexes and the part four, five and six storey apartment blocks will be visible in the middle distance. The existing trees and hedgerows will screen the lower levels of the proposals from this viewpoint location. The overall visual and landscape sensitivity of the view is considered low, with a low landscape value given its location adjacent to a peri-urban landscape on the southeastern edge of Maynooth town with substantial housing developments to the west, southwest and south of the site.

Impact Assessment

View No. 7	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
	Neutral	Moderate	Permanent

Given the location of the proposed development within the Railpark KDA , the low visual and landscape value and low landscape sensitivity of this view, it is considered that the proposed development will not have a significant adverse effect on this view.

View No. 8 Existing



View No. 8	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
	Northern Lowlands	Class 1 Low Sensitivity	Low	Low	Low	High

This viewpoint is taken approximately 140m northwest of Viewpoint 7, on Parkland Grove, looking south towards the site. Again, the location of the view is from a narrow rural lane that with a number of residential properties, farms and outbuildings some of which are visible to the left of the view.

The main vehicular access to this laneway is from the west off the Straffan Road and through the Castelbridge housing estate. The view depicts a rural agricultural fieldscape setting that can be described as relatively flat with trees and hedgerows forming the fieldscape boundaries. Again, there are some glimpse views through the hedgerow in the middle distance, right of view, to the built environment on Celbridge Road to the south of the site. The overall landscape sensitivity of the view is considered low with a low landscape value given its location adjacent to a peri-urban landscape on the southeastern edge of Maynooth town with substantial housing developments to the west, southwest and south of the site.

View No. 8 Proposed



The proposed development will be visible from this viewpoint location. The roofscape of the two storey houses to the east of the proposed development will be visible along with the upper levels of the three-story duplexes and the part four, five and six storey apartment blocks will be visible in the middle distance. The existing trees and hedgerows will screen the lower levels of the proposals from this viewpoint location. The overall landscape sensitivity of the view is considered low, with a low landscape value given its location adjacent to a peri-urban landscape on the southeastern edge of Maynooth town with substantial housing developments to the west, southwest and south of the site. However, there is a rural aesthetic to the view that has some quality and the higher density elements of the proposed development do change the view from a rural/peri-urban view to that of an urban setting.

Impact Assessment

View No. 8	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
	Neutral	Moderate	Permanent

Given the location of the proposed development within the Railpark KDA, the low visual sensitivity of the view, low landscape sensitivity and landscape value, with a high capacity for change, it is considered that the proposed development will not have a significant adverse effect on this view.

View No. 9 Existing



This viewpoint is taken from an area of open space within Parklands Place looking south, south-east towards the site. The view depicts a suburban residential landscape setting on the southeast of Maynooth town. The built environment is made up of two storey red brick semi-detached houses with front gardens and red brick wall boundary treatments. On curtilage parking is provided within the front garden areas. There is some tree planting within the open space and grass verges adjacent to the access road. Some larger trees that may be part of the agricultural hedgerow to the field in the background of view are visible to the left of view behind the houses.

View No. 9	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
	Northern Lowlands (Suburban residential landscape)	Class 1 Low Sensitivity	Low	Low	Low	High

View No. 9 Proposed



Some of the roofscape of the two-storey houses to the northwest of the proposed development will be visible from this viewpoint location. There will be more views into the proposed development from the rear of these private properties.

Given the location of the proposed development within the Railpark KDA, the low landscape sensitivity and low landscape value with a high capacity for change in this suburban landscape setting, the impact of the proposed development on views from the public open space on Parklands Crescent is considered neutral, slight and permanent.

Impact Assessment

View No. 9	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
	Neutral	Slight	Permanent

Given the low visual sensitivity of the view with a high capacity for change, it is considered that the proposed development will not have a significant adverse effect on this view.

View No. 10 Existing



This viewpoint is taken from an area of open space within Rockfield Green looking east towards the site. The view depicts a suburban residential landscape setting on the southeast of Maynooth town. The built environment is made up of two storey red brick semi-detached houses with front gardens and red brick wall boundary treatments. On curtilage parking is provided within the front garden areas. There is some tree planting within the open space and grass verges adjacent to the access road. Some larger trees that may be part of the agricultural hedgerow to the field in the background of view are visible to the left of view behind the houses.

View No. 10	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
	Northern Lowlands (Suburban residential landscape)	Class 1 Low Sensitivity	Low	Low	Low	High

View No. 10 Proposed



Some of the roofscape of the two-storey houses to the west of the proposed development, along with some partial views of the facades of these houses will be visible from this viewpoint location. There will be more views into the proposed development from the rear of these private properties. Given the low landscape sensitivity and low landscape value with a high capacity for change in this suburban landscape setting, the impact of the proposed development on views from the public open space on Rockfield Green is considered neutral, slight and permanent.

Impact Assessment

View No. 10	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
	Neutral	Slight	Permanent

Given the location of the proposed development within the Railpark KDA, the low visual sensitivity of the view with a high capacity for change, it is considered that the proposed development will not have a significant adverse effect on this view.

View No. 11 Existing



This viewpoint is taken from an area of open space at Rockfield Manor looking east, northeast towards the site. The view depicts a suburban residential landscape setting on the southeast of Maynooth town. The built environment is made up of two storey red brick semi-detached houses with front gardens and red brick wall boundary treatments. On curtilage parking is provided within the front garden areas. There is some tree planting within the open space and grass verges adjacent to the access road. Some trees that may be part of the agricultural hedgerow to the field in the background of view are visible in the middle distance behind the two storey houses.

View No. 11	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
	Northern Lowlands (Suburban residential landscape)	Class 1 Low Sensitivity	Low	Low	Low	High

View No. 11 Proposed

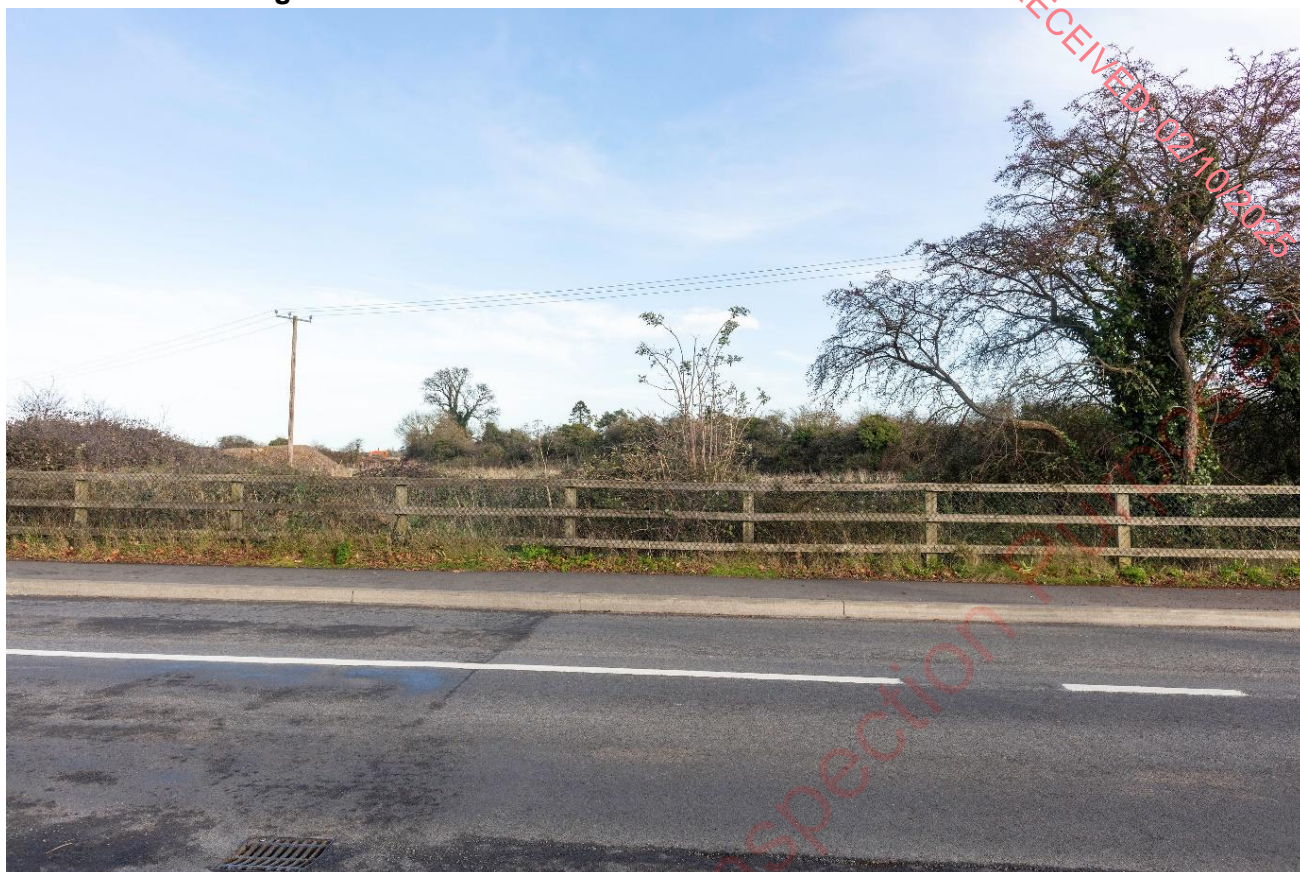


The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location within the area of open space. There may be views into the proposed development from the rear of these properties on Rockfield Manor. The location of the proposed development in the background, left of view, is indicated with a red line.

Impact Assessment

View No. 11	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
	None	None	None

View No. 12 Existing



View No. 12	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
	Northern Lowlands (Suburban road infrastructure)	Class 1 Low Sensitivity	Low	Low	Low	High

This viewpoint is taken from the R405 (Celbridge Road) looking north, north-east towards the proposed development site. The view is dominated by suburban road infrastructure, narrow tarmacadamed footpath, timber post, rail and wire mesh boundary fence with scrub planting immediately behind the fence line itself. Some scattered trees sit within hedgerows surrounding an overgrown grass field in the middle distance. Overhead wire and pole infrastructure is visible within the field itself.

Construction works are ongoing in a site to the left of view (Rockfield Court, residential development by High Degree Developments Ltd). Some stockpiles of soil and plant machinery are visible within the view. There are a number of residential housing estates out of view to the south, west and north in this suburban landscape setting. Two local schools are located to the south (Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich) and to the east (Maynooth Educate Together). The overall visual and landscape sensitivity is considered low with a low landscape value and a high capacity for change.

View No. 12 Proposed



Some of the proposed development will be visible from this viewpoint location, mainly in the form of two storey houses to the south of the site. The overall visual and landscape sensitivity is considered low with a low landscape value and a high capacity for change in this suburban location.

As the overall visual and landscape sensitivity is considered low with a low landscape value and a high capacity for change in this suburban location, the visual impact is considered neutral, slight and permanent.

Impact Assessment

View No. 12	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
	Neutral	Slight	Permanent

Given the location of the proposed development within the Railpark KDA, it is considered that the proposed development will not have a significant adverse effect on this view.

View No. 13 Existing



This viewpoint is looking north, north-east from the R405 (Celbridge Road), towards the proposed development site. The view is dominated by suburban road infrastructure and the built environment and grounds of the Maynooth Educate Together School. Mature trees sit within hedgerows are visible in the background of view. A more robust public interface is visible in the foreground of view with rubble stone walls and pillars, railing, grass verge, paving and yellow school ‘pencil’ bollards. The overall visual and landscape sensitivity is generally considered low with a low landscape value and a high capacity for change in this suburban location.

View No.	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
13	Northern Lowlands (Suburban road infrastructure and local educational setting) (Maynooth Educate Together School)	Class 1 Low Sensitivity	Low	Low	Low	High

View No. 13 Proposed



The upper levels of the proposed development will be visible from this viewpoint location. The upper levels of the part 4, 5 and six storey apartment blocks will be visible over the existing hedgerow and trees in the background of view.

As the overall visual and landscape sensitivity is considered low with a low landscape value and a high capacity for change in this suburban location, the visual impact is considered neutral, slight and permanent.

Impact Assessment

View No. 13	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
	Neutral	Slight	Permanent

It is considered that the proposed development will not have a significant adverse effect on this view.

View No. 14 Existing



This view is taken from the Celbridge Road looking north, northeast toward the site. The view shows the road infrastructure itself with painted road warning for motorists to slow down as they approach the Educate Together Primary School visible in the middle distance, along with road crossing light warning light infrastructure. Another primary school, Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich, is in very close proximity to this location, out of view on the southern side of Celbridge Road.

The view depicts a landscape that can be described as peri-urban with remnants of agricultural fields. Hedgerows and agricultural access gates frame the view into the grassed field with boundary trees and hedgerow visible in the distance.

View No. 14	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
	Northern Lowlands (Peri-urban landscape. Suburban road infrastructure)	Class 1 Low Sensitivity	Low	Low	Low	High

View No. 14 Proposed



The proposed development will be visible in the background of view, and present as a low to high suburban/peri-urban development. Given the location of the proposed development within the Railpark KDA, the overall visual and landscape sensitivity being considered low with a low landscape value and a high capacity for change in this suburban location, the visual impact is considered neutral, slight to moderate and permanent.

Impact Assessment

View No. 14	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
	Neutral	Slight to moderate	Permanent

View No. 14 Proposed Cumulative



This cumulative view shows the future Maynooth Eastern Ring Road at the junction of the Celbridge Road. The existing hedgerows, agricultural gate and agricultural field will be removed and replaced with two carriage roadway, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure as well as soft landscaping in the form of grassed verges. Lands to the right of view are subject to a Compulsory Purchase Order by Kildare County Council to facilitate the road construction works.

It is anticipated that existing boundary trees and hedgerow along the western edge of the property to the right of view will be removed.

For the purpose of communicating a provisional finish, a two-meter-high wall, with low shrub planting and grass verge to the road edge, along with proposed tree planting along the wall on the opposing private lands have been modelled in this instance. The material finishes are representative only.

Again, the overall visual and landscape sensitivity is considered low with a low landscape value and a high capacity for change in this suburban location. The proposed Maynooth Eastern Ring Road will significantly alter from a peri-urban landscape character to a suburban/urban edge on the outskirts of Maynooth town. The visual impact is considered neutral, significant and permanent. The proposed development will be visible in the background of view.

Impact Assessment

View No.	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
14	Neutral	Significant	Permanent

Additional Views (15,16,17)

View 15 Existing



This view is taken along the Celbridge Road to the southeast of the site looking northwest towards the subject site. It depicts a rural road setting on the southeastern edge of Maynooth town, with road verge and low growing vegetation, boundary hedgerow adjoining a field in the background of view. Some trees are visible in the wider landscape beyond.

View No. 15	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
	Northern Lowlands	Class 1 Low Sensitivity	Low	Low	Low	High

View 15 Proposed



The proposed development will not be visible from this location due to distance from the site, intervening topography, intervening tree and hedgerow planting. The redline indicates the location of the proposed development in the distance/background of view

Impact Assessment

View No.	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
15	None	None	None

View 16 Existing



This viewpoint is taken along the Royal Canal greenway to the north east of the site, looking south west towards the subject site. The Royal Canal is a proposed NHA and is a highly sensitive landscape with a low capacity for change.

View No. 16	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
	Royal Canal (Proposed NHA) Highly Sensitive Landscape	High Sensitivity	High	High	High	Low

View 16 Proposed



The proposed development will not be visible from this location due to distance from the site, intervening topography, intervening tree and hedgerow planting.

The redline indicates the location of the proposed development in the distance/background of view.

Impact Assessment

View No.	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
16	None	None	None

View 17 Existing



This viewpoint is taken along the Royal Canal greenway (and rail line) to the north of the site, looking south towards the subject site. The Royal Canal is a proposed NHA and is a highly sensitive landscape with a low capacity for change.

View No. 17	Landscape Character Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
	Adjacent to the Royal Canal (Proposed NHA) Highly Sensitive Landscape	High Sensitivity	High	High	High	Low

View 17 Proposed



The proposed development will not be visible from this location due to distance from the site, and the MERR embankment and new road infrastructure. The redline indicates the location of the proposed development in the distance/background of view.

The cumulative effects of the construction of the new road will substantially alter the landscape character of this section of the Royal Canal.

Impact Assessment (Proposed Development and Cumulative)

View No. 17	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
Proposed Development	None	None	None
Cumulative Effects	Negative	Profound	Permanent

Summary of effects

Location	View No.	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects	Duration Of Impact
M4 overbridge / Straffan Road (R406).	1	None	None	None

R405 overbridge and the M4 motorway	2	None	None	None
Ballygoran Road	3	Neutral	Slight	Permanent
Scenic Viewpoint Along Royal Canal RC5:Railpark/Donaghmore (Pike Bridge)	4	None	None	None
Ballygoran Road	5	Neutral	Moderate	Permanent
Scenic Route 28 through southwest of Carton Demesne (Protected Area)	6	None	None	None
Parkland Grove	7	Neutral	Moderate	Permanent
Parkland Grove	8	Neutral	Moderate	Permanent
Parklands Place	9	Neutral	Slight	Permanent
Rockfield Green	10	Neutral	Slight	Permanent
Rockfield Manor	11	None	None	None
R405 Celbridge Road	12	Neutral	Slight	Permanent
R405 Celbridge Road Opposite the Educate Together Primary School	13	Neutral	Slight	Permanent
R405 Celbridge Road	14	Neutral	Slight to moderate	Permanent
R405 Celbridge Road	14 Proposed Cumulative	Neutral	Significant	Permanent
Celbridge Road, South East of the Site	15 Additional View	None	None	None
Royal Canal – North East of the site	16 Additional View	None	None	None
Royal Canal – North of the Site	17 Additional View	None	None	None
Royal Canal – North of the Site, including the future MERR	(Cumulative-MERR)	Negative	Profound	Permanent

6.6 POTENTIAL CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

There will be potential cumulative effects of the proposed development with the ongoing construction of residential housing developments at Railpark to the south and south west of the site along with the future construction of the Maynooth Eastern Ring Road (MERR) to the south, southeast and east of the site. The landbank that is currently agricultural in nature and ‘land-locked’ will alter to a peri-urban / suburban landscape setting on the southeast of Maynooth Town.

The key projects that will influence the cumulative effects are as follows:

<p>Planning Ref: 071419 Kildare County Council Granted in 2008 Railpark, Maynooth, Co. Kildare</p>	<p><i>Development Description</i></p> <p>The construction of a road of total linear length of approximately 1400m and width of 17.8m containing two traffic lanes with grass margins, footpaths, cycle tracks and junctions including internal roundabouts etc</p>
<p>Planning Ref: 21156 Kildare County Council Granted in 2022 Railpark, Celbridge Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.</p>	<p><i>Development Description</i></p> <p>Development on this 1.99 ha site, approximately, at lands adjoining an existing residential development (Rockfield Court), Railpark, Celbridge Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare. (This forms Phase 2 of a residential masterplan for some 105 No. units in total on a wider c. 3.26 ha landholding under the Applicant’s control). The proposed Phase II development will consist of: Construction of a residential</p>

	<p>development comprising 47 No. dwellings in total, consisting of 11 No. two-bedroom two storey houses and 10 No. three-bedroom three storey houses (21 No. houses in total) including rear private open spaces; 13 No. one bedroom apartments and 13 No. two-bedroom apartments (26 No. three storey duplex apartments in total), including balconies and a single storey creche facility (c.261 sqm). The development will also include: new vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian access from Celbridge Road via currently undeveloped lands to the southwest (Phase 1); a new pedestrian footpath and bicycle track along the site frontage to Celbridge Road; the provision of future access connection points to adjacent lands to the southwest (Phase 1), north and the southeast; works to facilitate connections to existing services infrastructure in Rockfield Park to the west. The development will also comprise internal roads, footpaths, cycle tracks, public open spaces, children’s play area and bicycle store areas; parking at surface level (95 No. total spaces for car parking and 33 No. bicycles spaces); drainage attenuation; all hard and soft landscaping; boundary treatments; removal of the existing hedgerows adjacent to Celbridge Road; changes in levels; and all ancillary site development works and site services provision (including wayleave to the north-east) above and below ground.</p>
<p>Planning Ref: 21155 Kildare County Council Granted in 2024 Railpark, Celbridge Road, Maynooth</p>	<p><i>Development Description</i> Development on this 2.18 ha site, approximately, at lands adjoining an existing residential development (Rockfield Park), Railpark, Celbridge Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare. (This forms Phase 1 of a residential masterplan for some 105 no. units in total on a wider c. 3.26 ha landholding under the Applicant’s control). The proposed Phase 1 development will consist of: Construction of a residential development comprising 58 no. dwellings in total, consisting of 18 no. two-bedroom two storey houses, 14 no. three-bedroom three storey houses and 2 no. four-bedroom three storey houses (34 no. houses in total) including rear private open spaces; 12 no. one-bedroom apartments and 12 no. two-bedroom apartments (24 no. three storey duplex apartments in total), including balconies. The development will also include: new vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian access from Celbridge Road; a new pedestrian footpath and cycle track along the main site frontage to Celbridge Road; the provision of future access connection points to adjacent lands to the northeast (Phase 2), northwest and the southeast; works to facilitate connections to existing services infrastructure to the northeast via Phase 2 lands. The development will also comprise internal roads, footpaths, cycle tracks, public open spaces, and bicycle store areas; parking at surface level (117 no. total spaces for car parking and 30 no. bicycles spaces); drainage attenuation; all hard and soft landscaping; boundary treatments; removal of the existing hedgerows adjacent to Celbridge Road, changes in levels; and all ancillary site development works and site services provision (including wayleave to the north-east) above and below ground.</p>
<p>Planning Ref: 211108 Kildare County Council Granted in 2022 Parklands Grove, Railpark, Maynooth, Co. Kildare</p>	<p><i>Development Description</i> The demolition of a habitable house and the construction of 40 No. houses and 36 No. apartments, 1 No. vehicular link with the approved Maynooth Eastern Ring Road and all associated and ancillary site development works. Details of the dwelling types are as follows: 24 No. "Type A", 3-Bed, 2.5 Storey Houses; 8 No. "Type B", 3-Bed 2 Storey Houses; 1 No. "Type B1", 3-Bed, 2 Storey House; 3 No. "Type C", 3-Bed, 2 Storey Houses; 2 No. "Type C1", 3-Bed, 2 Storey Houses; 2 No. "Type D", 3-Bed, 2 Storey Houses; 20 No. "Type E", 2-Bed Apartments; 10 No. "Type F", 1-Bed Apartments; 1 No. "Type H", 1-Bed Apartment; 2 No. "Type I", 1-Bed Apartments; 3 No. "Type J", 2-Bed Apartments. The application contains a statement setting out how the proposal will be consistent with objectives of the relevant development plan or local area plan. Revised by Significant Further Information which consists of the applicant has requested a 10-year permission.</p>

6.7 'DO NOTHING' IMPACT

The site would remain in agricultural use in this peri-urban landscape setting on the southeast of Maynooth town. There would be no landscape or visual change to the site itself, however there will be substantial changes locally with the ongoing constructions of lands to the south, south west of the site at Railpark, and to the south, southeast and east of the site with the future construction of the Maynooth Ring Road which is likely to proceed in the short to medium term. These developments are in line with the future planned expansion of Maynooth Town itself.

6.8 AVOIDANCE, REMEDIAL & MITIGATION MEASURES

6.8.1 Incorporated Design Mitigation

A number of steps have been taken in the design development process to address and reduce any landscape and visual effects. These include the following designed in mitigation measures:

- Through the positioning of the various elements of the development on site in order to enhance the appearance of the scheme as a whole through the design of the site layout and built form.
- The creation of high-quality public and communal open spaces for the use and amenity of the users of the development and the wider community.
- Through the creation of a universally accessible green public pedestrian route through the development in order to provide safe pedestrian circulation
- The provision of a new vehicular access point from Maynooth Eastern Ring Road (MERR)
- The retention of existing trees and perimeter hedgerows where along the northern and western boundaries of the site. Existing planting will be enhanced and strengthened by additional planting of native broadleaf species and dense woodland and understory planting. The retention of existing trees and hedgerows is important for the protection of local foraging and commuting bat populations as well as existing green infrastructure.
- Landscape and green infrastructure strategy including tree and hedgerow retention where feasible along the west and northern boundaries of the site. The retention of existing trees and hedgerows is important for the protection of local foraging and commuting bat populations as well as existing green infrastructure.
- New planting of appropriate native and pollinator friendly species to ensure no net biodiversity loss
- Designed in nature-based drainage systems including SUDs features, biodiversity areas, and use of permeable paving materials
- Creation of a new public park, MUGA, grassed pitch, natural play areas, and several other public spaces, pocket parks and plazas
- Creation of micro forests, meadows, orchard, bat corridor, substantial street tree planting, trees and planting in opens spaces containing pollinator friendly planting
- Provision of adequate open space for future potential alternative use by residents such as allotments
- Monitoring, maintenance and management of the existing tree and hedgerow canopy.

6.8.2 Construction Phase Mitigation

L&V CONST 1: Construction and Environmental Management Plan

During the construction phase, site hoarding will be erected to restrict views of the site during construction. Hours of construction activity will be as set out in the Outline Construction and Environmental Management Plan.

L&V CONST 2: Tree/Hedgerow Protection

The protection of existing trees and hedgerows during the Construction Phase is essential to maintain landscape character. The following mitigation measures will be implemented to ensure that retained vegetation is not damaged or degraded during site works:

- Prior to the commencement of any construction activities, protective fencing will be erected around all trees and hedgerows designated for retention. This fencing will be installed in accordance with BS 5837:2012 – Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations.
- The fencing will be positioned to fully enclose the Root Protection Area (RPA) of each tree, as defined in the arboricultural constraints plan. The fencing will be robust, clearly marked, and remain in place for the duration of construction works.
- A qualified arborist will inspect and sign off on the fencing installation prior to any site clearance or earthworks. No ground disturbance, stockpiling of materials, or movement of machinery will be permitted within the fenced protection zones.
- All site personnel will be briefed on the importance of tree and hedgerow protection during toolbox talks, and signage will be placed on fencing to reinforce exclusion protocols.
- Any works required in proximity to retained trees (e.g. utility installation or landscaping) will be carried out under the supervision of the appointed arborist and in accordance with best practice guidelines to avoid root damage or canopy stress.

6.8.3 Operational Phase Mitigation**L&V OPERA 1: Landscape Design**

A comprehensive landscape architectural design for the entire site is proposed, integrating mitigation measures that are required to avoid or reduce potential negative effects of the development. Please see the landscape plans and reports by AIT Urbanism and Landscape submitted with the planning application for full details of the extensive landscape proposals. The primary measures of note are as follows:

- Retention of existing hedgerows.
- Extensive tree planting to screen and soften the proposed development, create structure in the streetscapes, impart character to the proposed development.
- Extensive native shrub and hedgerow planting, as well as wildflower and perennial plantations to encourage pollinators and native wildlife. Planting is in accordance with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.
- A new local public park with recreational space, habitat plantation and integrated Sustainable Drainage measures.
- Extensive areas of greenway and streetscape for walking and cycling.
- Along the Maynooth Eastern Ring Road (MERR), the development presents a strong landscaped frontage, including a formal tree-lined avenue. This not only enhances visual amenity and provides acoustic buffering but also establishes a coherent urban edge that integrates seamlessly with the future growth of Maynooth.
- Native trees, shrubs and wildflowers will be used where possible, particularly in the buffer spaces surrounding the development site.

- Internal streets within the development will also contain a substantial amount of street tree planting that will continue to soften and screen the development over the medium to long-term as the trees and planting mature.

6.8.4 'Worst-Case' Scenario

The 'worst-case' scenario relating to this chapter's assessment, describes the effects that arise from a development in the case where the designed in mitigation measures substantially fail. In respect of the landscape and visual amenity of the proposed development, the designed in mitigation measures include substantial green infrastructure proposals, multi-tiered landscape planting proposals as well as all hard landscape elements. These elements combine to add visual and landscape amenity to the proposed scheme as well as enhancing the existing biodiversity throughout the site. If the planted installations fail due to poor plant stock, poor planting or maintenance methods or regimes, there may be potential for significant adverse landscape and visual effects locally within the subject site that may require re-planting.

6.9 RESIDUAL EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

6.9.1 Landscape

6.9.1.1 Construction Impacts and Effects on the Landscape

Designated Construction Exclusion Zones will be created around existing trees and hedgerows that are to be retained. These zones will be formed by the erection of protective fencing along with Root Protection Areas, as presented in the Tree Protection Plans (No.'s 1-4) by Charles Mc Corkrell, Arboricultural Consultancy. The greatest of the visual impacts from the mitigation measures of the Construction Stage will be felt by local residents in adjacent housing developments to the west of the site (Parklands, Rockfield); on future residents of Rockfield Court and Rockfield Park that are currently under construction to the southwest of the subject site; on students and teachers of Maynooth Educate together school and grounds to the south of the site, as well as residents of stand-alone properties to the southeast, and north of the site. Construction impacts (construction traffic) will also impact residents and users of the wider Celbridge Road area, as well as the Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich school community.

Anticipated residual effects will be as per **Table 6.8** due to the predominantly short-term nature of the construction stage of the proposed development.

6.9.1.2 Operational Impacts and Effects on the Landscape

6.9.1.2.1 *Short-term landscape impacts after the construction works (up to seven years)*

Following completion of the construction works which will be carried out in phases, the main landscape impact will be in the change of land use from a former agricultural landscape setting with a low landscape sensitivity to that of a urbanised residential landscape setting and associated uses. The new land use will be in accordance with the Urban Design Framework Plan for the Railpark Key Development Area (KDA) as presented in the Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031. Given the low landscape sensitivity of the existing site, combined with the comprehensive landscape architectural proposals, it is anticipated that the landscape impact will be moderate and positive in the short term.

6.9.1.2.2 Medium-term landscape impacts (seven to fifteen years)

It is anticipated that as the landscape plantings mature and all open spaces are managed and maintained that the landscape impact will continue to be moderate and positive.

6.9.1.2.1 Long-term landscape impacts (over fifteen years)

It is anticipated that the landscape plantings will mature over time, and in the long term, subject to proper management and maintenance that the landscape impact will be moderate to significant and positive.

6.9.1.3 Summary of Effects on the Landscape

Given the low landscape sensitivity of the subject site, it is anticipated that the landscape impacts will be predominantly moderate and positive over time.

Substantial portions of existing hedgerows and trees along the west and northern boundaries of the site will be retained and enhanced with appropriate planting. The landscape masterplan proposes a multi-layered approach to planting throughout the site which will in time see the creation of a diverse habitats, with appropriate native and biodiverse planting, as well as ornamental planting to the public realm. The creation of a number of pocket parks, public park, plazas, nature play areas in conjunction with nature-based SUDs feature will have a moderate to significant effect on the local landscape amenity.

6.9.2 Visual

6.9.2.1 Operational Impacts and Effects on Visual Receptors

In the short term, the assessment concludes that the quality of the effect of visual change ranges from none to neutral in all scenarios, with the exception of the View 17 (Cumulative View) where the visual effect of the construction of the future MERR is considered negative at a location north of the site on the Royal Canal (a sensitive location given its pHNA designation).

The significance of effect of visual change ranges from none to significant in all scenario's, again bar Cumulative view No. 17, where the significance of effect (of the MERR) is considered profound. The duration of impact ranges from none to permanent.

The proposed development is in line with the Kildare County Councils Urban Design Framework Plan for the Railpark Key Development Area, as presented in the Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031.

Table 6.9: Predicted Visual Effects – Summary Table

Location	View No.	Sensitivity	Probability	Duration Of Impact	Quality of Effects	Significance of Effects
<i>M4 overbridge / Straffan Road (R406).</i>	1	Low	None	None	None	None
<i>R405 overbridge and the M4 motorway</i>	2	Low	None	None	None	None
<i>Ballygoran Road</i>	3	Low to Medium	Likely	Permanent	Neutral	Slight
<i>Scenic Viewpoint Along Royal Canal RC5:Railpark/Donaghmore (Pike Bridge)</i>	4	Medium to High	None	None	None	None
<i>Ballygoran Road</i>	5	Low to Medium	Likely	Permanent	Neutral	Moderate
<i>Scenic Route 28 through southwest of Carton Demesne (Protected Area)</i>	6	High	None	None	None	None
<i>Parkland Grove</i>	7	Low	Likely	Permanent	Neutral	Moderate
<i>Parkland Grove</i>	8	Low	Likely	Permanent	Neutral	Moderate
<i>Parklands Place</i>	9	Low	Likely	Permanent	Neutral	Slight
<i>Rockfield Green</i>	10	Low	Likely	Permanent	Neutral	Slight
<i>Rockfield Manor</i>	11	Low	Likely	None	None	None
<i>R405 Celbridge Road</i>	12	Low	Likely	Permanent	Neutral	Slight
<i>R405 Celbridge Road Opposite the Educate Together Primary School</i>	13	Low	Likely	Permanent	Neutral	Slight
<i>R405 Celbridge Road</i>	14	Low	Likely	Permanent	Neutral	Slight to moderate
<i>R405 Celbridge Road</i>	14 Proposed Cumulative	Low	Likely	Permanent	Neutral	Significant
<i>Celbridge Road, Southeast of the Site</i>	15	Low	Likely	None	None	None
<i>Royal Canal – Northeast of the site</i>	16	High	None	None	None	None
<i>Royal Canal – North of the Site</i>	17	High	None	None	None	None
<i>Royal Canal – North of the Site, including the future MERR</i>	17 (Cumulative-MERR)	High	Likely	Permanent	Negative	Profound

The lands at the subject site can be described as a peri-urban landscape, in a former agricultural landscape setting on the south-eastern outskirts of Maynooth town. The majority of the site is currently grassland with a mix of grass species and is bordered to the west by suburban housing. Hedgerows form the site boundary, comprising of trees and hedgerows.

In general, the landscape sensitivity of the site and its immediate environs can be described as low with a high capacity for change. However, a number of highly sensitive landscapes are located to the north and east, within 1 km of the site.

The Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029, and the Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031 were reviewed to scope out potential impacts of the proposed development on views from protected and sensitive landscapes, scenic views/routes, protected views, built and cultural heritage sites:

- Maynooth Town Architectural Conservation Area and Important Views
- Carton Demesne : Protected Area

- Views to and from bridges on the Royal Canal
- Proposed NHA's

Given the distance from the site, intervening topography and the existing built environment, it is anticipated there would be no impact on the Maynooth Town Architectural Conservation Area or any of the Important views associated with the Maynooth Town ACA.

In terms of the assessment of potential visual effects of the construction and operational stages of the proposed development, seventeen photomontages were prepared by Digital Dimensions. The views were chosen as being representative of the key sensitive views in terms of effects on local sensitive receptors and are taken from the public domain. (Please see Digital Dimension Document for Verified Views in A3 format in Appendix 6.1).

The quality of the effect of visual change ranges from none to neutral in all scenarios, with the exception of the View 17 (Cumulative View) where the visual effect of the construction of the future MERR is considered negative at a location north of the site on the Royal Canal (a sensitive location given its pHNA designation).

The significance of effect of visual change ranges from none to significant in all scenario's, again bar Cumulative view No. 17, where the significance of effect (of the MERR) is considered profound. The duration of impact ranges from none to permanent.

The subject site presents as a former agricultural fieldscape in a peri-urban setting within the 'Northern lowlands' landscape character type with a low sensitivity to change and a high compatibility rating for housing, urbanisation and infrastructure.

As a 'Key Development Areas' (KDAs) within The Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031, the proposed development will be seen as part of the future sustainable development of Maynooth town in conjunction with the future construction of the Maynooth Eastern Ring Road.

The landscape character will alter from an agricultural fieldscape in a peri-urban setting to a new residential suburb of Maynooth with substantial green infrastructure and public open spaces. The retention of substantial sections of the eastern and northern hedgerows will assist in retaining part of the rural aesthetic of site.

6.10 MONITORING

A suitably qualified arboricultural consultant / Arboricultural Clerk of Works (ACoW) will be employed prior to commencement of demolition and constructions works to monitor and supervise any tree removal and ensure tree protection measures are in place and maintained.

A suitably qualified Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) will be employed prior to commencement of demolition and construction works to provide ecological consultancy to the construction team. The ECoW will carry out monitoring activities as listed in Table 5.30 of Chapter 5: Biodiversity. *'Monitoring and pre-works inspections for the identified mitigation measures during the Construction Phase of the Proposed Development.'*

Both the ACow and ECow will liaise with each other as there will be interactions between both professions. Detailed landscape drawings and specifications will be prepared by the project landscape architect to ensure best practice is adhered to. All landscape works will be supervised by the project landscape architect.

Operational Phase

A ‘Taking In Charge’ (TIC) plan has been prepared by JFA, the project architects, and is submitted as part of this application. (See Drawing Number: MRP-SP-ZZ-DR-JFA-AR-P1400). The TIC Plan highlights areas of public open space and public realm that will be maintained and managed by Kildare County Council. The remaining areas will be managed and maintained by a private management company, as well as the creche operator.

Summary of Mitigation and Monitoring

Table 6.10: Construction Phase: Mitigation and Monitoring

Likely Significant Effect	Mitigation	Monitoring
Visual Construction Traffic Cranes	Site Hoarding Traffic Management Plan	As per CEMP – Inspection Plans
Landscape Site Clearance Change of land use from former agricultural lands in a peri-urban landscape to a new residential neighbourhood	Retention of much of the boundary hedgerows and treelines along the west and northern boundaries Tree and hedgerow protection measures prior to construction works	Supervision and inspection of tree and hedgerow protection measures by the project arboriculturist (Arboricultural Clerk of Works – AcoW), project landscape architect, and project ecologist – EcoW)

Table 6.11: Operational Phase: Mitigation and Monitoring

Likely Significant Effect	Mitigation	Monitoring
Visual Negative effects on adjacent visual receptors	Siting of the taller built elements of the built environment to reduce the visual impact on adjacent sensitive receptors such as setbacks from the site boundaries, Retention of hedgerow and tree planting where feasible along the west and northern boundaries Substantial additional tree planting through the site	Defects Liability Period inspection of all planted material by project landscape architect Landscape maintenance and management plan to be agreed with local authority prior to construction phase. Taking in Charge Plan to be agreed with local authority
Landscape Change in landscape character from peri-urban rural landscape to urban	Retention of hedgerow and tree planting where feasible along the west and northern boundaries Creation of public open spaces Substantial additional tree planting through the site	Management and maintenance of the site by qualified landscape contractor to be regularly inspected by the project landscape architect up to hand over of areas to the local authority at Taking In Charge.

	Multi layered approach to landscape plantings throughout the scheme	
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6.11 REINSTATEMENT

There are no reinstatement works required following the construction and completion of the proposed development.

6.12 INTERACTIONS

This chapter on Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of the proposed development, has the potential to interact with the following chapters of the EIAR:

- Chapter 3: Population and Human Health
- Chapter 5: Biodiversity
- Chapter 4: Archaeology, Cultural and Architectural Heritage
- CEMP (Construction and Environmental Management Plan)

6.13 DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN COMPILING

There were no difficulties encountered compiling this chapter.

6.14 REFERENCES

The following documents and web resources were consulted for the desktop study:

- Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 <https://kildarecoco.ie/>
- Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031 <https://kildarecoco.ie/>
- Ordnance Survey Ireland – Interactive Mapping and Aerial Photography www.osi.ie
- ‘Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Statements’
- Environmental Protection Agency, 2002
- ‘Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports’
- Environmental Protection Agency, May 2022.
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government, 2018).
- Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (European Commission, 2017).
- ‘Advice notes on current practices (in the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement), Environmental Protection Agency, 2003
- ‘Advice notes for Preparing Environmental Impact Statements. Draft’. Environmental Protection Agency, 2015.
- ‘Landscape and Landscape Assessment Draft Guidelines’, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) 2000
- ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’, The Landscape Institute & I.E.M.A., UK, 2013.

- ‘Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook’, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), Version 5, 2018. Appendix 2: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
- Townscape Character Assessment, Technical Information Note 05/2017, Landscape Institute.
- Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009.
- Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines for Planning Authorities, December 2018, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government

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