

Please note that this is the Original Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 (adopted on the 22nd September, 2021). Following the adoption of Variation No. 1 & Variation No. 2 on the 13th May, 2024 and Variation No. 3 on the 27th January, 2025, this Plan has now been superseded by the Consolidated version.

The Consolidated version of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 (incl. Variations 1, 2 & 3) is available to view at this link [HERE](#)

1.0 Introduction

Consequent upon the Judgments and Order of Mr Justice Humphrey in Hickwell Limited & Hickcastle Limited v Meath County Council (no.1) [2022] IEHC 418 and Hickwell Limited & Hickcastle Limited v Meath County Council (no.2) [2022] IEHC 631, the entire indicative road route through area MP2 and MP3 (also referenced as area MP23 and MP24 in the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027), originally delineated in land use Zoning Map Sheet 13(a) (Dunboyne-Clonee-Pace Land Use Zoning Map) to the adopted Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027, has been removed and land use Zoning Map 13(a) and associated Written Statement text has been amended accordingly. The removal of the indicative road route from the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 shall not affect any existing development consents granted in these areas.

In order to ensure a holistic approach is taken to future growth and development within the Dunboyne/Clonee corridor the planning strategy set out in previous Plans of preparing a Plan for the combined wider area of Dunboyne and Clonee will be continued. A detailed Local Area Plan for Dunboyne/Clonee will be prepared during the life of this Plan.

Dunboyne and Clonee function as separate settlements at either end of the settlement hierarchy, i.e Dunboyne is designated as a self-sustaining growth town scheduled to accommodate significant growth over the plan period. Clonee, however is designated a village with a focus on infill, brownfield redevelopment and consolidation.

On the basis of the foregoing, this strategy will plan for the future growth of Dunboyne and the consolidation of the village of Clonee. The built-up area of Dunboyne and Clonee will not be permitted to coalesce in the context of the geographical proximity between each settlement.

A major flood event occurred in Dunboyne and Clonee in 2002, flood alleviation measures are now in place, however flooding remains a key constraint to the future development of the area. The area has significant potential to attract major employment generating investment given its location in the Metropolitan Area.

Recent population growth in Dunboyne has been disappointing having regard to the town's location in the Metropolitan Area and the quantum of suitably zoned lands which are well located and proximate to public transport. The combination of the connectivity between Dunboyne and Dublin City Centre, Airport, and Port, in addition to capacity being available in essential infrastructure makes the settlement an outstanding location to absorb and deliver substantial employment and residential growth.

Variation No 3 of the County Development Plan 2013-2019 aligned the policies and objectives of the Development Plan to the tenets of the Economic Development Strategy for County Meath as they relate to statutory land use planning.

The implementation of the 8 no. specific actions contained in the Strategy was the primary response of the Local Authority to seek to improve the number of local employment opportunities available to the resident population. In particular Action 3 of the Strategy identified a number of revisions required to the County Development Plan 2013-2019 to positively provide the framework for investment and employment creation while at the same time removing non-essential potential barriers to employment generating development. The requirements arising from Action 3 of the Strategy were a key reason for the preparation of Variation no. 3, therefore a comprehensive review of the County Development Plan was undertaken.

On the 23rd May 2016 Meath County Council Members voted to adopt Variation no. 3 to the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 and therefore commenced the process which has instigated the economic successes within the County to date.

Additional employment lands were identified as part of this process including the designation of sites to accommodate 'big box solutions' by way of a spot objective in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Housing and Planning. The variation was the subject of a Draft Direction which was successfully defended by the Planning Authority and ultimately withdrawn.

2.0 Town Context/Character

Dunboyne is a strategically important settlement in Meath. Located close to the border with Fingal, it is the only entire town in the county located in the Metropolitan Area of Dublin¹. The settlement benefits from a multi-modal transport system consisting of excellent road and rail links whilst the telecommunications and energy infrastructure available also make the town an attractive location for investment.

Clonee is a village to the south-east of Dunboyne situated on the boundary with Fingal. It is a well serviced centre for a settlement of its size, particularly in relation to convenience retailing.

The transition of the Dunboyne-Clonee area towards a centre of enterprise and employment has been bolstered by recent Foreign Direct Investment in ICT by Facebook and Pharmaceuticals by Takeda Pharmaceuticals. The clothing, retail and food business Avoca, has also enhanced the attractiveness of the town as a retail destination. These investments have assisted in raising the

¹ Maynooth and Kilcock Environs located in County Meath

profile of the area and provide a platform for further investment that will strengthen the employment base.

Position in Settlement Hierarchy	Dunboyne - Self-Sustaining Growth Town Clonee - Village
2016 Population	Dunboyne - 7,272 Clonee - 826
2011 Population	Dunboyne - 6,959 Clonee - 631
Percentage Change 2011-2016	Dunboyne - 4.50% Clonee – 31%
Housing stock 2016	Dunboyne - 2,304 Clonee - 466
Number of units completed 2016-2019	Dunboyne – 48 Clonee - 83
Committed units not yet built	Dunboyne – 119 Clonee - 24
Core Strategy Household Allocation 2020-2027²	Dunboyne – 2,002 units.

² The unbuilt extant units have been included in this allocation

Population Projection 2027	Dunboyne – 10,572
	Clonee – 1,026
Resident Workers 2016	Dunboyne – 3,294
	Clonee – N/A
Total Jobs 2016	Dunboyne – 1,211
	Clonee – N/A
Job – Workforce Ratio 2016	Dunboyne – 0.36
	Clonee – N/A
Education Facilities	Dunboyne Senior and Junior National Schools, St. Peter's National School, St Peter's College Secondary School, College of Further Education
Community Facilities	9 (Childcare options)
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)	Dunboyne Architectural Conservation Area
Protected Structures	3
Zone of Archaeological Potential	There are a number of National Monument
	Services Zones of Archaeological Notification within the settlement area.

Natura 2000 Sites	The nearest Natura 2000 site is the Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC which is located approximately 4.5km to the south west of Dunboyne.
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	Manage flood risk and development in line with approved policies and objectives as set out in Vol. 1 Chapter 6: Infrastructure. All development should be subject to an appropriately detailed FRA at development management stage to ensure FFLs and ground levels are set appropriately and that the risk of surface water flooding is correctly managed. Ensure that distributor roads have appropriate site-specific FRA and OPW Section 50 consent. G1 lands to the east must apply the sequential approach.
Water Services Infrastructure/Capacity	Water: Water is supplied from Dublin via Ballycoolin Reservoir. Capacity is available but, this is the subject of ongoing review in the context of increasing water demand within the Greater Dublin Area and capital interventions. There are localised network constraints. Wastewater: Wastewater is discharged to Dublin for treatment in Ringsend. Capacity is available but, this is the subject of ongoing review in the context of increasing wastewater discharges within the Greater Dublin Area and Capital interventions. There are localised network constraints.

Modal Share Targets for 2026	
Modal Share for Walking	22% (Increasing from 15% in 2016)
Modal Share for Cycling	4% (Increasing from 2% in 2016)
Modal Share for Bus	11% (Increasing from 11% in 2016)
Modal Share for Rail	8% (no change from 8% in 2016)
Reduction Target for Car Use	53% (reduction from 59% in 2016)

3.0 Vision

For Dunboyne and Clonee to become recognised as a location of choice for investment by local, national, and international enterprises which would form the basis of the creation of compact, attractive, sustainable communities based on the principles of the 'live work' community model.

4.0 Opportunities

- The location of Dunboyne in the Dublin Metropolitan Area provides an opportunity for the area to forge greater relationships and connections with key growth areas in Dublin and the wider Metropolitan Area.
- The availability of strategically located employment and residential lands as identified in the Dublin Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan in addition to the area benefiting from the best transport links in the county presents opportunities to facilitate significant employment and residential growth.

- The recent investment in Clonee by Facebook and Takeda Pharmaceuticals in Dunboyne provides an opportunity for the settlements to be marketed as a location of choice for national and international investment which could stimulate further economic activity.
- The completion of the Dunboyne Transport Study (Transportation Study for Dunboyne and Environs) provides a platform for the implementation of an integrated Land Use and Transportation strategy in the future growth and development of the area.
- There is continuing interest in further investment in the area so additional serviced lands have been identified to address the employment needs of the area over the plan period.

5.0 Land Use Strategy

The strategic location of Dunboyne and Clonee along a multi-modal road and rail corridor in the Dublin Metropolitan Area makes the area well positioned to accommodate significant population growth and economic investment.

The Development Strategy for the area is to build on recent economic successes and to continue to promote the area as a location of choice for high tech, pharmaceutical, logistics, warehousing, and other employment generating uses. An integrated approach will be taken to transport and land use policy in the area. This will ensure that future investment will be concentrated on strategic employment and residential lands along the M3 Parkway Commuter rail line.

Residential growth will also be focused on centrally located lands in proximity to the rail stations in the town. There are additional strategic sites that have been identified for residential uses however they will not be available for development until after 2027. The identification of these lands provides clarity and direction with regard to the long-term growth strategy of this Metropolitan settlement.

5.1 Residential

The primary areas for population growth will be in Dunboyne and Dunboyne North adjacent to the M3 Parkway Park and Ride.

There are centrally located residential lands within walking distance of the town centre that have the capacity to deliver significant residential development. These lands have remained undeveloped for a significant period, however the Council understands that said lands will now be brought forward

for development. The Council will continue to promote the release of these lands through its active land management strategy.

The lands at Dunboyne North are zoned for employment, commercial, and residential uses (initial development of 500 units) that are to be developed under the 'live work' community model. The lands at Dunboyne North were the subject of a Draft Ministerial Direction in 2016³. Subsequently the Minister decided to withdraw the Draft Direction.

A Master Plan is to be prepared for these lands, which have the potential to deliver a sustainable mixed use 'live work' community adjacent to a rail station with the capacity to accommodate employment and residential growth.

The lands at Dunboyne central rail station and the M3 Parkway are considered capable of accommodating buildings of increased height.

5.2 Employment and Economy

The Meath Economic Strategy has identified Dunboyne as one of the key centres for economic development in the County. The area has enjoyed recent successes in Foreign Direct Investment. The strategy of this Plan is to build on these successes and continue the development of the area as a hub for economic growth and investment.

Employment lands in the area are primarily concentrated to the east of Dunboyne adjacent to the M3 at Portan. Part of these lands are occupied by the Facebook Data Centre complex with the remainder available for development. To the north of these lands at Piercetown the Takeda Pharmaceutical facility is located.

Within Dunboyne there is a Business and Enterprise Park that is performing strongly. At Dunboyne North adjacent to the M3 Parkway Park and Ride Rail Station there are employment lands available that are to be developed as part of a 'live work' community.

The expansion of the Facebook campus will encompass approximately 45% of the Master Plan 23 area. In order to ensure there are sufficient employment lands available to accommodate large scale indigenous or Foreign Direct Investment additional employment lands between this Master Plan Area and the Bracetown Business Park have been zoned. A detailed Master Plan (MP 24) will

³ Variation No 3 Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019.

be required to be prepared for these lands, which shall set out a design concept for the lands including general layout and access and service arrangements.

With regard to retail development, Dunboyne has benefitted from significant investment in its retail offering including a new Avoca Store at Piercetown and a new SuperValu store in the town centre. This has improved the quality and range of retailing in the town. Future retail investment will be focused in the town centre area to ensure the urban core of the town is preserved.

5.3 Community Building

The Development Strategy for the area will support the provision of additional community and education facilities where a need has been identified. This includes the provision of an additional primary and secondary school and a third level education facility, the requirement for which has been identified by the Department of Education.

A potential location for the Primary and Secondary School has been identified adjacent to the residential lands and rail station in the town centre, where lands have been zoned for Community Infrastructure.

The Third Level Education Campus could be accommodated on the Master Plan lands adjacent to the Rail Station in Dunboyne North where students and employees could benefit from access to a rail service which would provide a reliable and sustainable mode of transport to and from the campus.

The Castle and Tolka Rivers provide a valuable recreational amenity for local residents with regard to walking and cycling. Environmental improvements along this corridor would make this area more accessible. There is also an opportunity of developing a Regional Park on lands identified as open space to the south-east of Dunboyne Rail Station. The provision of such an amenity will be beneficial to all members of the community. The feasibility of providing this park will be examined during the life of this Plan. Please refer to Chapter 7 Community Building Strategy for further details.

5.4 Movement and Connectivity

As part of the Integrated Land Use and Transportation Strategy for the Dunboyne Area, a Transport Study has been completed. This Study identifies current deficiencies in infrastructure in addition to future investment and upgrades required to ensure the sustainable growth of the town improving connectivity between the town centres and new growth areas.

This Study will determine key transport policy for the area and consequently will inform the future development strategy for the area.

6.0 Town Development Policies and Objectives

As a point of clarity, the Policies and Objectives set out below are in addition to those included in the Written Statement in Volume One of the County Development Plan. To avoid repetition Policies and Objectives have only been restated where they have particular relevance to the settlement. These Policies and Objectives should therefore be read in conjunction with the Policies and Objectives and Development Standards in Volume One of the County Development Plan.

Policy

It is the policy of the Council:

DCE POL 1

To support the development of Dunboyne and Clonee as an enterprise and employment hub that will be complemented by a compact, attractive, and sustainable residential community and urban environment.

Objectives

It is an objective of the Council:

Settlement and Housing

DCE OBJ 1

To secure the implementation of the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan, in so far as is practicable, by ensuring the household allocation for Dunboyne and Clonee as set out in Table 2.12 of the Core Strategy is not exceeded.

DCE OBJ 2

To support and encourage residential development on under-utilised land and/or vacant lands including 'infill' and 'brownfield' sites, subject to a high standard of design and layout being achieved.

DCE OBJ 3

To continue to support the implementation of the Active Land Management Strategy in Dunboyne

DCE OBJ 4

To operate an Order of Priority for the release and development of residential lands with any lands identified as being 'Post 2027' not available for development until after 2027.

DCE OBJ 5

To prioritise the delivery of residential development on the residentially zoned lands adjacent to Dunboyne Rail Station and Dunboyne North.

DCE OBJ 6

To provide a single landmark building of significant architectural merit to replace the existing Herbal Medicine facilities in Dunboyne which could include the provision of integrated holistic medical care, research and educational facilities as part of the continued development of Dunboyne Herbs.

The building shall be accommodated on lands outside the designated Flood Plain, identified on the land use zoning map. Any application submitted with respect to the subject lands shall be accompanied by a suitably detailed Flood Risk Assessment and Management Plan. The associated primary residence of Dunboyne Herbs shall also be provided for as part of the relocation of the business.

Economy and Employment

DCE OBJ 7

To continue to support and facilitate the development of the Dunboyne-Clonee area as a hub for employment and economic investment in County Meath and the Dublin Metropolitan Area.

Infrastructure

DCE OBJ 8

To liaise with and support Irish Water to endeavour to provide adequate water services to meet the development needs of Dunboyne and Clonee within the Plan period.

Master Plans

DCE OBJ 9

To facilitate the preparation of a Master Plan at:

- MP22 Lands at Dunboyne North
- MP23 Lands at Bracetown/Gunnocks
- MP24 Lands at Pace townland between Piercetown and Bracetown, east of the M3 Motorway.

As set out in Section 7 of this written statement.

Social Infrastructure

DCE OBJ 10

To support and facilitate the provision of primary and post-primary school facilities as required by the Department of Education.

DCE OBJ 11

To support and facilitate the provision of new educational facilities for Dunboyne College of Further Education preferably at lands proximate to the rail station at Dunboyne North.

DCE OBJ 12

To support and facilitate improvements to and extensions of the east-west linear park, enhancing the environmental quality and amenity of the Castle River corridor.

DCE OBJ 13

To explore the feasibility of developing a regional park on lands to the east/south east of Dunboyne Rail Station which would include areas of active and passive recreational amenities and would meet the need of the existing and future population in the Plan area.

Movement

DCE OBJ 14

To encourage and facilitate the provision of east – west connections across the railway on the lands zoned for new residential development.

DCE OBJ 15

To facilitate the development of a pedestrian link over the M3 to support the development of employment lands to the north of Dunboyne.

DCE OBJ 16

To support and facilitate the implementation of cycle lanes and associated cycle infrastructure upgrades as identified within the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan, within the town centre in partnership with the National Transport Authority and other relevant stakeholders.

DCE OBJ 17

To support and facilitate in conjunction with the National Transport Authority the extension of the existing bus service to the M3 parkway and development lands to the north of Dunboyne.

DCE OBJ 18

To support the delivery, in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders, of a link road on the lands zoned for new residential development to the east and north east of Dunboyne.

DCE OBJ 19

To support the delivery, in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders, of a link road within to the south of Dunboyne extending from the Station Road to Rooske Road.

DCE OBJ 20

To facilitate, in conjunction with the National Transport Authority and all relevant stakeholders, the provision of new pedestrian and cycle linkages and infrastructure, connecting lands at Pace to Dunboyne Town Centre.

DCE OBJ 21

To facilitate the implementation of a HGV ban in both Clonee and Dunboyne town centres.

DCE OBJ 22

To support and facilitate the delivery of the transport infrastructure and measures set out in the Dunboyne and Environs Transportation Study.

DCE OBJ 23

To support the delivery, in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders, of a footpath extending from the development boundary of Dunboyne on the Rooske Road northwards to link with the existing footpath on the Rooske Road.

7.0 Master Plans

There are 3 Master Plan areas in Dunboyne as follows:

Master Plan	Description	Status
Master Plan 22	Dunboyne North – mixed use lands consisting of employment, residential and commercial lands adjacent to the M3 Parkway Park and Ride facility. No Master Plan has been agreed for these lands. The requirements of this Master Plan are as follows: To require the preparation of a Master Plan for Dunboyne North centred around the M3 Parkway public transport hub which shall provide for the creation of a ‘live work’ community at Dunboyne North. This model shall comprise a balanced mix of complimentary land uses including science park/high technology, logistics, warehousing, neighbourhood retail centre, education (including third level) and residential based on an integrated sustainable “live work” community. The Master Plan shall be agreed in writing with the Executive of the Planning Authority and shall address land use, transportation, connectivity, urban design, recreation, environmental impacts including flood risk, phasing and implementation issues to the	Awaiting preparation

Master Plan	Description	Status
	satisfaction of the Executive of the Planning Authority. The Master Plan shall provide the overall unifying vision and goals for the delivery of the following land uses: Employment, education (including third level), residential, commercial, and open space/amenity. In regard to the residential element of the Master Plan, it shall be a requirement that proposals will include the provision of residential units with a range of typologies to support the delivery of a sustainable “live work” community-based model. High end office-based employment which shall be at a level commensurate with its location and proximate to a multi-modal public transport interchange. Strategic employment use predominantly led by a Science Park for Innovation & Research and Educational Facilities or similar high end “E1” office-based uses. A pedestrian and cycle route over the M3 Motorway to lands to the east subject to the agreement of Transport Infrastructure Ireland. A Linear Park which shall be integrated with future development of the entire corridor area and based on the precepts of the green	

Master Plan	Description	Status
	infrastructure guidance as contained in the RSES 2019-2031. The Master Plan shall address the following: Phasing proposals setting out how the development of the Master Plan will be progressed including the mix of uses and physical and social infrastructure to be delivered in each phase. Phase one of any development of these lands shall be required to comprise of the submission of a planning application for an agreed quantum of employment uses. An overall design concept for the lands. Guidance for high quality design throughout the development Building heights and densities. A landscape plan inclusive of the Linear Park for the development and landscape management plan (post-completion of the development). Flood Risk Assessment which takes account of the most up to date CFRAM data A Transport Assessment shall be prepared which addresses the following issues: Access arrangements to the Master Plan lands.	

Master Plan	Description	Status
	Provision of safe cycle ways and pedestrian routes throughout the Master Plan lands connecting to the town centre. Provision and access for service vehicles to the lands. The Master Plan shall be agreed in writing with the Executive of the Planning Authority in advance of any planning application relating to the development of these lands being lodged. The following high-level strategic principles shall apply: The objectives of the Economic Development Strategy for County Meath, including the development of Dunboyne as a “live work “ community and one of 5 strategic sites for the County; The need to provide an adequate supply of housing and other infrastructure to serve the projected growth in the Metropolitan Area; The proximity of the lands in question to transport infrastructure, including a railway station; The recommendations of the Transport Study for Dunboyne and Environs (Aecom Transport Consultants);	

Master Plan	Description	Status
Master Plan 23	To facilitate the development of lands between Portan Clonee and Bracetown for E2 “General Industry & Employment” and E3 “Warehousing and Distribution” purposes solely for the development of major employment proposals, primarily, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), requiring a significant site area, having regard to this strategic location within the county, as provided for in Volume I of the County Development Plan. A Master Plan and a detailed Roads Needs Assessment of said lands shall accompany any planning application for the development of these lands. This Master Plan shall obtain the prior written agreement of the Executive of the Planning Authority. The Master Plan shall accompany any application for planning permission on these lands and shall address land use, transportation, connectivity, urban design, recreation, environmental impacts including flood risk, phasing and implementation issues to the satisfaction of the Executive of the Planning Authority. The Master Plan shall address the following:	Master plan in place for these lands, any future planning applications will be required to update same as part of an iterative process.

Master Plan	Description	Status
	A Design Concept for the lands; Guidance for high quality design throughout the development; Building heights and densities; A landscape plan for the development and landscape management plan (post-completion of the development); Flood Risk Assessment which takes account of the most up to date available CFRAM data A Transport Assessment which addresses the following issues: • Access arrangements to the Development Site; • Provision of safe cycle ways and pedestrian routes throughout the Development Site; • Provision and access for Service Vehicles to the Site. The Master Plan shall be agreed in writing with the Executive of the Planning Authority in advance of the lodging of any planning application.	
Master Plan 24	To facilitate the development of lands at Pace townland between Piercetown and Bracetown, east of the M3 Motorway for E2	Awaiting preparation

Master Plan	Description	Status
	“General Industry & Employment” and E3 “Warehousing and Distribution” purposes solely for the development of major employment proposals, primarily Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), requiring a significant site area, having regard to this strategic location within the county, as provided for in Volume I of the County Development Plan. A Master Plan and a detailed Roads Needs Assessment of said lands shall accompany any planning application for the development of these lands. This Master Plan shall obtain the prior written agreement of the Executive of the Planning Authority. The Master Plan shall accompany any application for planning permission on these lands and shall address land use, transportation, connectivity, urban design, recreation, environmental impacts including flood risk, phasing and implementation issues to the satisfaction of the Executive of the Planning Authority. The Master Plan shall address the following: A design concept for the lands	

Master Plan	Description	Status
	Guidance for high quality design throughout the development; Building heights and densities; A landscape plan for the development and landscape management plan (post-completion of the development); Flood Risk Assessment which takes account of the most up to date available CFRAM data. A Transport Assessment which addresses the following issues: 1. Access arrangements to the Development Site; 2. Provision of safe cycle ways and pedestrian routes throughout the Development Site; 3. Provision and access for Service Vehicles to the Site. The Master Plan shall be agreed in writing with the Executive of the Planning Authority in advance of the lodging of any planning application.	