

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No. 1 & Variation No. 2 on the 13th May, 2024 and Variation No. 3 on the 27th January, 2025, this Plan has now been superseded by the Consolidated version.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

This written statement will provide an overview of the development strategy for Dunshaughlin. A detailed Local Area Plan for the town will be prepared during the life of this Plan.

2.0 Town Context/Character

Dunshaughlin is an important growth town in south Meath. Located off the M3 between Navan and Dunboyne, the settlement benefits from access to the national motorway network. The town enjoys a balance of employment opportunities and local service provision. As part of the construction of the M3 a by-pass was constructed around the town. This has reduced the volume of traffic movements and improved environmental quality. The traditional setting of the town core around the historic spine of the main street underlines the potential of the town as a place to live and work.

Position in Settlement Hierarchy	Self-Sustaining Growth Town
2016 Population	4,035
2011 Population	3,903
Percentage Change 2011-2016	3%
Housing stock 2016	1,481
Number of units completed 2016-2019	419
Committed units not yet built	1,156

Core Strategy Household Allocation 2020-2027¹	1,003 units
Population Projection 2027	6,235
Resident Workers 2016	1,841
Total Jobs 2016	998
Job – Workforce Ratio 2016	0.54
Education Facilities	2 primary schools (including 1 Gaelscoil) and 1 post-primary school; and, childcare options
Community Facilities	10 facilities including a health centre, library, community centre, park and playground, and sporting facilities
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)	None
Protected Structures	14

¹ Under a Strategic Housing Development application permission was granted for 913 units. This is a 10 year permission where it is envisaged the lands will be developed across multiple Development Plans. Taking this into account 600 (two-thirds) of the 913 units have been included in the Household allocation during this Development Plan.

Zone of Archaeological Potential	There is a National Monument Services Zones of Archaeological Potential within the settlement area.
Natura 2000 Sites	The nearest Natura 2000 site is the River Boyne & River Blackwater SPA and SAC which is located approximately 12.2km to the north west.
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	Flood Zones A and B to the west of the town core, outside the settlement boundary. Manage flood risk and development in line with approved policies and objectives as set out in Vol. 1 Chapter 6: Infrastructure
Water Services Infrastructure/Capacity	Water and Wastewater treatment capacity available, however, there are localised network constraints.
Modal Share Target for 2026	
Modal Share for Walking	18% (Unchanged from 15% in 2016)
Modal Share for Cycling	1% (Unchanged from 1% in 2016)
Modal Share for Bus	12% (Unchanged from 12% in 2016)
Modal Share for Rail	3% (Unchanged from 3% in 2016)
Reduction Target for Car Use	57% (Reducing from 64% in 2016)

3.0 Vision

‘For Dunshaughlin to continue to develop on a sustainable platform that recognises the capacity of the settlement to accommodate both residential and economic growth due to its location along the M3 Motorway and the corridor of Phase II of the Navan Rail project. The principles of sustainable design and movement shall be embraced in order to ensure connectivity and permeability between various land uses and to support the creation of a sustainable community’.

4.0 Opportunities

- The location of Dunshaughlin along the corridor of Phase II of the Navan Rail project has the potential to provide significant economic benefit to the town as it will improve connectivity and competitiveness and therefore make the settlement more attractive for inward investment.
- The investment in the water and wastewater infrastructure in Dunshaughlin has provided a security of supply and capacity to facilitate the growth of the town.
- Recent investments in the town centre including the Lidl, Aldi and adjacent mixed-use buildings has consolidated retail development in the town centre and provides an opportunity for further economic investment through the multiplier effect that will enhance the environmental quality and retail offering in the town centre.

5.0 Land Use Strategy

The land use strategy for Dunshaughlin is based on the following rationale as set out below:

5.1 Development Strategy

The location of Dunshaughlin along the corridor of Phase II of the Navan Rail Project in addition to recent investment in water and waste water infrastructure in the town means the settlement is well positioned to accommodate residential and economic growth during the life of this Plan. Recent population growth in the town will increase the critical mass of population in the town and will help to support the viability of a rail service extending from Dunboyne North to Navan.

As demonstrated by the recent increase in residential activity in the town, Dunshaughlin is one of the most active settlements in the County for household construction. Whilst this increase in

housing supply is welcomed in meeting the pent-up demand in the County, it is also important to carefully manage the release of housing lands to ensure the population of the town increases at a steady and manageable rate.

Taking this into account, future development in the town will primarily focus on the build out of existing developments, the most significant of which is a Strategic Housing Development at 'The Willows' to the south of the town centre adjacent to the Business Park, where a 10 year permission was granted for 913 residential units in 2019. In addition, there are small parcels of residential lands close to the town centre and adjacent to existing developments that would consolidate development within the urban core of the town.

The Core Strategy household allocation for Dunshaughlin has taken account of the fact that the SHD permission at 'The Willows' is for 10 years and is likely to be built out across multiple Development Plans. Therefore two-thirds of this permission (600 units) have been included in the Core Strategy allocation, with the remaining units to be included in subsequent Plans.² This provides a more realistic figure as to the actual number of units likely to be delivered under this permission during the life of this Plan.

A surplus of residential lands has been identified in Dunshaughlin. In recognition of the longer term objective of Dunshaughlin becoming a rail based settlement as part of the construction of Phase II of the Navan Rail Project, a reserve of residential lands that will not be available until after 2027 has been included. This will provide clarity with regard to the long term growth strategy for the town.

5.2 Social and Community Infrastructure

Associated with this future population growth is the need to identify any requirement for additional social, community, and recreational facilities. Such facilities are a key element in the creation of a balanced² and sustainable community. At present the town is generally well served by social and community facilities. This includes a community centre, library, health centre, and social services, and playing fields.

As part of 'The Willows' Strategic Housing Development a community facility and playground will be provided. Adjacent to this development there are lands zoned for open space uses. It will be an

² For clarification the residential zoning on the Land Use Zoning Map includes the entire site as granted by An Bord Pleanála under ABP.303433.19

objective of this Plan for playing fields and/or any other active and recreational uses to be developed on these lands.

In anticipation of the need to provide additional school places, lands have been identified for a new education campus in the southern part of the town where an additional primary and secondary school are to be developed subject to the support of the Department of Education and Skills.

5.3 Economy and Employment

Retail and commercial development will be concentrated in the town centre where there are opportunities to redevelop under-utilised lands. The recent development of a Lidl store and mixed use building on the site of the former mart in the town has improved the retail offering and has had a positive impact on the streetscape and vibrancy. There are further opportunities to consolidate development in the town centre that would strengthen the retail core. Such sites will be promoted through the Councils Active Land Management Strategy.

The creation of a sustainable community also requires opportunities for employment creation and economic investment. The location of Dunshaughlin on the national and regional road network provides excellent connections to Dublin and key regional towns which make the town an attractive location for potential employers. The Business Park in the southern part of the town is an important employment hub, with additional employment lands available to the south of the Dublin Road. These lands have the capacity to accommodate either locally based small-medium sized enterprises or a large stand-alone employment use.

A strategic employment site has been identified to the south west of the town centre which is envisaged will provide much needed employment for the new residential communities developing in the town. The development of these lands will facilitate the creation of a vibrant 'live work' community and the future delivery of a key transportation artery that will connect the settlement directly to the M3 Motorway. The delivery of this particular road scheme is a key tenet of this Plan.

5.4 Movement

It is recognised that as the population of Dunshaughlin increases, traffic movements will also increase. The provision of a distributor road around the town that ties in with the existing link road to the M3 would result in more efficient traffic movements whilst also reducing congestion in the town centre. These roads will be developer driven and will be completed on a phased basis in

tandem with the development of the identified lands. Part of the eastern section of this Distributor Road is to be developed as part of 'The Willows' residential development. This Plan supports the delivery of these Distributor Roads and recognises the benefits they would have in removing through traffic from the town centre and promoting a more pedestrian and cycle friendly environment in the urban core of the town.

Enhancing permeability and connectivity between the town centre and surrounding residential areas is another priority of this Plan. It is therefore an objective to identify any improvements to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure that would encourage walking and cycling within and between spaces in the town. This includes the provision of new links between existing and future developments including the education campus and playing fields in the southern part of the town.

As part of the strategy of promoting sustainable transport and encouraging residents to avail of the regular bus service that provides regular connections to Dublin and Navan, it will be an objective of this Plan to identify a suitable location for a park and ride facility.

5.5 Water Services Infrastructure

Dunshaughlin is served by the following water services infrastructure:

Water: The Dunshaughlin Water Supply Scheme comprising a new wellfield, water treatment plant and storage tower was completed in 2012. It has capacity to serve the development and growth provided for in this 2021-2027 CDP. However, some localised network constraints exist.

Wastewater: The Dunshaughlin Sewerage Scheme was completed in 2006. The treatment plant serves Dunshaughlin, Drumree, Dunsany and Kilmessan. It has capacity to serve the development and growth provided for in this 2021-2027 CDP. However, some localised network constraints exist.

6.0 Town Development Policies and Objectives

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:

DNS POL 1

To support the growth of Dunshaughlin in a manner that allows the town to fulfil its function as a 'Self-Sustaining Growth Town' by facilitating sustainable residential growth and promoting the town as a centre for employment and economic development that maximises the transport links with key settlements in the County and wider Region.

DNS POL 2

To support the provision of a train station and associated parking in Dunshaughlin, as part of Phase II Dublin to Navan Rail project proposal.

Objectives

It is an objective of the Council:

Settlement and Housing

DNS 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 Dunshaughlin as set out in Table 2.12 of the Core Strategy is not exceeded.

DNS 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.

DNS OBJ 3

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

DNS 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.

Economy and Employment

DNS OBJ 5

To facilitate the development of local business employment and enterprises on lands zoned for employment uses.

DNS OBJ 6

To facilitate the development of a 'strategic employment site' for high technology uses.

Infrastructure

DNS OBJ 7

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

Movement

DNS OBJ 8

To support improvements in the pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in the town that will improve connectivity and permeability and promote more sustainable modes of transport.

DNS OBJ 9

To facilitate the completion of the Eastern Relief Road from the Dublin Road to the Lagore Road and on to the Red Bog Road to the east and south-east of the town.

DNS OBJ 10

To support the continuation of the Western Distributor Link Road from its position west of the Dunshaughlin Interchange to the R147 south of the town.

DNS OBJ 11

To examine the feasibility of providing Park and Ride facilities in Dunshaughlin located in employment lands in the south western part of the town.

Social

DNS OBJ 12

To support the development of a primary and secondary school in Dunshaughlin to meet the educational needs of the residents of the town and its catchment.

DNS OBJ 13

To support the development of playing fields and/or any other identified recreational uses on the land zoned as open space adjacent to 'The Willows' residential development in the southern part of the town.

Urban Design and Public Realm**DNS OBJ 14**

To ensure that any development in the town centre contributes positively to and enhances the streetscape of Dunshaughlin.