

**Please note that this is the Original Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 (adopted on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2021). Following the adoption of Variation No. 1 & Variation No. 2 on the 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2024, this Plan has now been superseded by the Consolidated version.**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) is available to view at this link:**

**[Consolidated Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 incl. Variations 1 and 2](#)**

## 1.0 Village Context/Character

Donore is located towards the northeast of County Meath in close proximity to the border with County Louth. The village is located approximately 4km from Drogheda. There is an interchange with the M1 motorway, which is the main Dublin-Belfast road corridor, 2km east of the village. The village centre is focussed on St. Mary's Church and Parochial House dating from the mid-19th Century.

<b>Position in Settlement Hierarchy</b>	Village
<b>2016 Population 2020-2026</b>	760
<b>2011 Population</b>	339
<b>Percentage Change 2011-2016</b>	2.30%
<b>Housing stock 2016</b>	261
<b>Number of units completed 2016-2019</b>	4
<b>Committed units not yet built</b>	2
<b>Population Projection 2027</b>	860
<b>Education Facilities</b>	Donore National School
<b>Community Facilities</b>	6

<b>Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)</b>	None. However, the settlement is located within the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Boinne Buffer Zone
<b>Protected Structures</b>	Detached House;  Donore Parochial House; and,  St Mary's Roman Catholic Church
<b>Zone of Archaeological Potential</b>	None
<b>Natura 2000 Sites</b>	The River Boyne & River Blackwater SPA and SAC is approximately 2km to the north east of the village.
<b>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment</b>	No fluvial impacts, potential increase in runoff identified in Flood Risk Assessment and Management Plan for the Meath CDP 2021-2027.
<b>Water Services Infrastructure/Capacity</b>	East Meath Water Supply Scheme/Staleen Water Treatment Plant- Capacity available.  Donore Wastewater Treatment Plant- Capacity Available.

Donore is located within the buffer zone of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne which is one of only two current world heritage sites within the State. The village therefore is positioned within a highly sensitive landscape setting within the Boyne Valley.

## 2.0 Vision

The vision for the development of the village over the lifetime of the Development Plan is to consolidate and strengthen the village, through the provision of a well-defined village centre area, as well as a range of land-uses to support the residential population. Its role as a convenience 'Service Centre' to the surrounding local area and an important node along the 'Tourism Route; connecting the 'Battle of the Boyne Visitor's Centre located at Oldbridge to the Brú na Bóinne Visitor's Centre is also recognised. Incremental and organic development focusing on brownfield/ infill sites will be accommodated over the life-time of the Development Plan whilst ensuring no adverse impact on the context or setting of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne

## 3.0 Opportunities

Having regard to Donore's proximity to both the M1 Motorway and the major urban area of Drogheda, coupled with its pleasant landscape setting it is likely that it will experience significant development pressure in the future. However, commensurate with its Village status in the county settlement hierarchy and given its location within the buffer zone of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne, proximity to Battle of the Boyne sites, future residential development in the village will be modest and reflective of natural growth only. Conversely, the location of the village within the buffer zone of the UNESCO World Heritage Site presents commercial and tourism opportunities that should be harnessed and promoted.

## 4.0 Land Use Strategy

The land use strategy is to facilitate natural and incremental village growth over the period of the Development Plan. Any new development should be designed in a sensitive manner to protect the setting of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne as well as the character of the village.

### 4.1 Settlement and Housing

Residential development in the village comprises of 3 multiple housing developments and a number of individually designed detached dwellings. There are several vacant sites within

the village. Commensurate to its village status, it is considered that there is adequate land zoned for residential development to cater for residential needs over the lifetime of the Development Plan.

#### **4.2 Economy and Employment (including retail)**

Donore is considered to have an adequate level of retail and commercial provision having regard to its Level 5 Retail Centre position in the Retail hierarchy. (However, there remains potential for the provision of tourism related business particularly given Donore's sitting at the junction of a substantial number of routes serving the notable international heritage and tourist attractions in this region section of the Boyne Valley, specifically the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne, the key 'Battle of the Boyne' sites and the partially restored Boyne Navigation and associated Drogheda Boyne Greenway. There is substantial scope for Donore village to continue to function as an important gateway and base for tourism activities in the wider area. The Local Authority also recognises that Donore has considerable potential for the development of additional tourist and cultural related facilities such as accommodation and entertainment to further expand upon the potential that this cultural heritage designation and area of local distinctiveness offers. There are lands identified for B1 'Village Centre' use which has the potential to accommodate an increased commercial/tourism offering and further augment the identifiable village centre.

#### **4.3 Water Services Infrastructure**

The village is served by the following water services infrastructure:

**Water:** Donore is supplied by the East Meath Water Supply Scheme. It is considered that there is adequate spare capacity to serve the development and growth provided for in the County Development Plan 2021-2027. There may be some localised network constraints.

**Waste Water:** The Donore wastewater treatment plant commissioned in 2010 serves the village and has adequate capacity to serve the development and growth provided for in the County Development Plan 2021-2027.

#### 4.4 Movement

Movement and access within the village is centred along the main 'street' (the Slane/Staleen Road). There are few pedestrian cycle / connections separate from the main street. It is important to improve the movement of pedestrians and cyclists through the area and to manage vehicular traffic passing through the village. To this end, the environmental improvements promoted for the village include the construction of pedestrian crossing, augment existing village footpaths, the development of cycleways, and the use of textured surfacing, tactile paving and improved markings for cyclist, pedestrian and motorised traffic.

In terms of public transport provision, Donore is served by the route 163 operating between and the Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre. The nearest railway station is Drogheda railway station approximately 6 kilometres away.

#### 4.5 Cultural and Natural Heritage

There are three buildings of historical significance designated as Protected Structures in Donore; Saint Mary's Roman Catholic Church, Donore Parochial House, and a detached house to the north west of St. Marys on the opposite side of the road. The surrounding environs to the village hold considerable cultural and heritage assets many of which attest to the medieval history of the area.

As noted above Donore is located within a highly sensitive landscape setting in the Boyne Valley and within the buffer zone of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne.

There are no Natura 2000 sites within the village; however the River Boyne and River Blackwater Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 002299) and the River Boyne and River Blackwater Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004232) are in close proximity. There are a number of noteworthy tree stands in the village along the main roads.

#### 4.6 Green Infrastructure

Donore enjoys some notable environmental qualities within its vicinity particularly the River Boyne Valley and the undulating hills surrounding its banks, specifically 'Redmountain' to the south and 'Donore Hill' to the north. However, the village itself is lacking active

recreational amenities such as walking networks or active open space to maximise such natural and man-made environmental assets, settings and views. Whilst there are several open space areas within housing developments, they do not provide children's play areas or all-weather facilities. These spaces provide only a minimal amenity value and the village is in need of a larger more purposeful open space area.

#### **4.7 Social Infrastructure**

The village has limited social infrastructure comprising of a school, church, burial ground and parish hall. The school was recently extended to provide for new classrooms and a general-purpose hall. The village depends to a large degree on facilities outside the settlement particularly those in Drogheda given its proximity. It would be beneficial to improve the social infrastructure of the village, including as referred to above the provision of a purposeful open space area in tandem with improving cycling/walking connections. The Council is satisfied that sufficient lands are available for social/community infrastructure to accommodate both existing and future populations during the lifetime of the Development Plan.

#### **4.8 Urban Design and Public Realm**

The village has a natural focal point at the junction of Slane/Staleen and Duleek Road, and the commercial building here contributes towards this focal point. The village core retains a rural / low density village character although the peripheries of the village are of a more suburban character. It would be desirable to see the public realm and streetscape improved to enhance the village core character, and improve the village aesthetics. The Council will promote well designed and highly considered architectural solutions to any developments proposed within the village centre in order to enhance both the image and appearance of the area and protect the character of the area and the setting of the Boyne Valley and the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne.

### **5.0 Town/Village 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:

### Settlement and Housing

#### **DON POL 1**

To promote the future development of Donore as a compact settlement and encourage development which will consolidate the distinctive character of the village, and preserve and enhance the quality of the village's built and natural environment, while catering for the needs of all sections of the local community and ensuring no adverse impact on the context or setting of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne.

## Objectives

It is an objective of the Council:

### Settlement and Housing

#### **DON 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 Donore as set out in Table 2.12 of the Core Strategy is not exceeded.

#### **DON 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.



## Economy and Employment

### DON OBJ 3

To continue to promote Donore Village as an important tourist centre within the surrounding area and to encourage, facilitate and capitalise upon the village's location adjacent to notable international heritage and the tourist attractions arranged along this section of the Boyne Valley, notably the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne.

### DON OBJ 4

To co-operate with the local community and all other relevant stakeholders in promoting tourism and securing the development of tourist-based enterprises and facilities in Donore.

## Infrastructure

### DON OBJ 5

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

### DON OBJ 6

To manage flood risk and development in line with the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. (see Volume 4 Strategic Environmental Assessment, Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment).

## Movement

### DON OBJ 7

To investigate the potential for additional car-parking and a bus set-down area with shelter in the village.

### DON OBJ 8

To support the provision of a pedestrian/cyclist connection between Slane/Staleen and Duleek Road.

### DON OBJ 9

To secure the provision of a pedestrian crossing within the village core area.

**DON OBJ 10**

To seek to discourage the use of the village's road network by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) in conjunction with traffic calming measures and other environmental improvements.

**DON OBJ 11**

To support the delivery of a Pedestrian Walkway/Cycleway connecting Donore Village to the town of Drogheda subject to relevant environmental assessments.

**DON OBJ 12**

To support the delivery of a Pedestrian Walkway /Cycleway connecting Donore Village to Brú na Bóinne Visitors Centre and St. Mary's GFC football pitch subject to relevant environmental assessments.

**DON OBJ 13**

To support the delivery of a proposed Pedestrian Walkway/Cycleway connecting Donore Village to the "Battle of Boyne" Office of Public Works site at Oldbridge House subject to relevant environmental assessment.

**DON OBJ 14**

To support the delivery of Pedestrian Walkways/Cycleways to connect:

- "The Grange" housing estate (South side) to the village centre.
- "The Grange" housing estate (South side) towards St. Mary's Villas.
- The Church of the Nativity to the southern edge of settlement.

**DON OBJ 15**

To seek to provide a car parking facility adjacent to the National School to serve the collection and drop-off needs of the School.

## Cultural and Natural Heritage

**DON OBJ 16**

To preserve the setting and visual amenity value of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne and the high-quality landscape character of the Boyne Valley by strictly controlling any future development that would be detrimental to their continued preservation, conservation, setting or their visual amenity value.

**DON OBJ 17**

To investigate the potential for the village to act as a local hub for access to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú Na Bóinne / Battle of the Boyne areas with walking / cycling routes from the village to these facilities and on to Drogheda.

**DON OBJ 18**

To protect the ridgelines which frame views within and from the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne from inappropriate or visually intrusive development.

**DON OBJ 19**

To retain tree stands and hedgerows as identified on the landuse zoning map to include the front of the national school; to the front of the Church; on the southern side of the Slane/Staleen Road; to the rear of the protected structure at the northern side of the junction of the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone and Slane/Stalleen Roads; and, on the northern side of the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone Road.

**Social****DON OBJ 20**

To facilitate the provision of a community playground within the village.

## Urban Design and Public Realm

### DON OBJ 21

To protect the landscape setting of the national monuments within the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne by requiring that all development proposals involving mixed-use, commercial or multiple unit residential development within the village's development boundary are subject to a Visual Impact Assessment. Such development proposals must be accompanied by a Design Statement and Visual Impact Statement with photomontages or similar 3D material in order to assist the Council in determining whether there is any visual impact upon the village's character or the 'Core Area' of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne. In particular, photomontages shall be sited so as to show the visual impact, if any, that any proposed development may have on the setting of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne in order to prevent any inappropriate or avoidable impacts on the quality of that environment. Developments in excess of two-storeys in height will generally be discouraged.

### DON OBJ 22

To promote the enhancement of approach roads, entrances/exits, streets and the general village character within Donore in order to better define the character of the village and promote a quality host environment to facilitate its role as a tourist centre for the surrounding area.

### DON OBJ 23

To facilitate public realm improvement works for the village focusing on the development of cycleways, and the use of textured surfacing, tactile paving (which is not dominated by tarmacadam), and improved road markings for cyclist, pedestrian and motorised traffic. The creation of a street furniture palette to achieve an improved public realm setting within the village would be desirable.

### DON OBJ 24

To cater for the appropriate re-use, re-development and re-generation of under-utilised sites and /or buildings within Donore.

**DON OBJ 25**

To encourage the re-use of the 18th and 19th Century 'Cottier' and 'Labourers' cottages remaining within the village.