

1.0 Introduction

Consequent upon the Order of the High Court made on the 3rd May 2023 in proceedings [2021 No. 958 JR](#) the following changes have been made to the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027:

- (a) Removal of Sheet 35(a) Southern Environs of Drogheda, Sheet 35(a) Southern Environs of Drogheda-Combined, and Sheet 35(b) Heritage, but only insofar as relates to the A2 Residential Zoned lands in the Southern Environs of Drogheda (not including any lands that were Zoned A2 Phase I in the previous Meath County Development Plan). The order provides that these lands will be rezoned WL (White Lands).***
- (b) Removal of the last three paragraphs of section 2.8.1.1 of Chapter 2 - Core Strategy; and***
- (c) Removal of the figure “178.70” in the table to section 2.10.4, Column I, Row 1; of Chapter 2 - Core Strategy.***

The aforementioned Land Use Zoning Maps and Chapter 2 Core Strategy of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 have been amended to reflect this judgement. The rezoning of these lands and removal of this text from the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 shall not affect any existing development consents granted in these areas.

This written statement will provide a brief description and development strategy for South Drogheda Environs. As required by Regional Policy Objective 4.11 in the RSES¹, a Joint Urban Area Plan (UAP) is to be prepared by Meath County Council and Louth County Council during the life of this Plan. Pending the completion of this Urban Area Plan, a written statement and land use zoning objectives map to establish a framework for inter alia the future UAP, to support economic development and to provide a basis for continued operation of the development management process pending the completion of the UAP has been included.

2.0 Town Context/Character

Drogheda is the largest town in Ireland, with a population in excess of 44,000 in 2022, 8,137 of which resided within the South-Environs within the Meath administrative area. The town is strategically located along the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor. Its importance as a centre for population and economic growth is recognised in the designation of the settlement as a Regional Growth Centre in the National Planning Framework.

is to be prepared for Drogheda by Meath and Louth County Council, in collaboration with the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly. This Plan will support the development of the town as a driver for economic growth along the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor.

¹ Regional Policy Objective 4.11 of the RSES sets out the requirement to prepare a Joint Urban Area Plan and is as follows: 'A cross boundary statutory Joint Urban Area Plan (UAP) for the Regional Growth Centre of Drogheda shall be jointly prepared by Louth and Meath County Councils in collaboration with EMRA. The UAP will support, the development of Drogheda as an attractive, vibrant and highly accessible Regional Centre and economic driver. The Joint UAP will identify a functional urban area and plan boundary for the plan area and strategic housing and employment development areas and infrastructure investment requirements to promote greater coordination and sequential delivery of serviced lands for development.'

Position in Settlement Hierarchy	Regional Growth Centre
2022 Population (Within the Meath Administrative Area)	8,137
2016 Population (Within the Meath Administrative Area)	6,527
Percentage Change 2016-2022	24.6%
Housing stock 2016	2,293
Number of units completed 2016-2019	113
Committed units not yet built	572
Core Strategy Household Allocation 2020-2027²	2,292 units
Population Projection 2027	9,475

² The unbuilt extant units have been included in this allocation

Resident Workers 2016	3,700
Total Jobs 2016	1,216
Job – Workforce Ratio 2016	0.33
Education Facilities	Le Chéile Educate Together, Mornington; Gaelscoil an Bhradáin Feasa, Mill Road, Mornington; and, Drogheda Grammar School, Mornington Road
Community Facilities	There are a range of community facilities in the Drogheda area including Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, sports clubs, and community buildings
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)	None
Protected Structures	Drogheda Grammar School Outbuildings to Stameen House 'Eagle Lodge' detached 3 storey house
Zone of Archaeological Potential	There are a number of National Monument Service Zones of Archaeological Notification located across the Southern Environs of Drogheda.

Natura 2000 Sites	The River Boyne & River Blackwater SAC is adjacent to the northern boundary of the Plan area where it abuts the River Boyne.
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. Development should be subject to an appropriately detailed FRA at development management stage. Review of land use zonings is required under the Joint Urban Plan.
Water Services Infrastructure/Capacity	Water supply in South Drogheda is served by the East Meath Water Supply Scheme. The main water source is abstraction from the River Boyne at Roughgrange where it is pumped to the Staleen Water Treatment Works and distributed to Drogheda and the East Meath Area following treatment. There is capacity available, however, there are network constraints. Wastewater in the area is discharged to the Drogheda WWTP. Capacity is available but, there are network constraints.
Modal Share Targets for 2026	
Modal Share Target for Walking	22% (Increasing from 9% in 2016)
Modal Share for Cycling	4% (Increasing from 1% in 2016)

Modal Share for Bus	13% (No change from 13% in 2016)
Modal Share for Rail	5% (No change from 5% in 2016)
Reduction Target for Car Use	53% (reduction from 69% in 2016)

3.0 Development Strategy

The Development Strategy for the area will focus on the creation of a sustainable settlement with improved links and connections to the town centre and where there is a balance between population growth and economic development.

In accordance with the revised housing supply targets as set out in the NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements Guidelines (2025), two parcels of 'Whitelands' totalling 20.66ha have been identified as being appropriate to be rezoned to A2 - New Residential under Variation 5. Collectively, both parcels of land are capable of accommodating approximately 661 new housing units. The strategic location of both sites and potential for housing development would represent the logical and coherent extension of established residential areas in close proximity to employment uses. Both sites are serviced / serviceable with no known infrastructural constraints that would impact the delivery of housing on the lands.

South Drogheda has been identified as a strategic employment centre in the Meath Economic Development Strategy due to the strategic location of the area along the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor and its connectivity between Dublin City Centre and Airport via road and rail links. The development of the town as a Regional Growth Centre is dependent on economic investment and job creation therefore this Plan will continue to support the economic development of the town and in particular the concentration of development in the IDA Business Park and the employment lands on the Duleek Road.

There has been an increase in residential activity in the area with permission granted for residential developments on the Rathmullan Road and Duleek Road. A Strategic Housing Development of 250 residential units has also been granted permission in Bryanstown. This Plan will support the creation of sustainable communities in South Drogheda, with the development of residential lands being dependent on the provision of any necessary social and physical infrastructure.

4.0 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:

STH DRO POL 1

To support the continued development of Drogheda as an attractive, vibrant, and accessible Regional Growth Centre that functions as a focal point for economic investment and population growth along the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor.

Objectives

It is an objective of the Council:

STH DRO OBJ 1

To prepare, as a priority, a Joint Vision and Urban Area Plan for Drogheda in partnership with Louth County Council within the lifetime of this Plan in accordance with the requirements of Regional Policy Objective 4.11 of the RSES for the Eastern and Midland Region and the recommendations set out in the Report of the Drogheda Boundary Review Committee published in February 2017.

STH DRO OBJ 2

To support the sustainable development of existing zoned lands in the Southern Environs of Drogheda with a particular emphasis on the promotion of the IDA Business Park as a location for strategic economic investment and the creation of compact, residential communities in key locations in proximity to established residential areas and transport hubs.

STH DRO OBJ 3

To support the preparation of a Local Transport Plan for Drogheda, in conjunction with Louth County Council and in consultation with the National Transport Authority and other relevant stakeholders.