

1.0 Village Context/Character

Summerhill is located near the south central part of County Meath some 38km west of Dublin city centre. It lies 10km south of Trim and 12km north of Kilcock. The considerable amenity and heritage qualities of Summerhill are largely derived from the quality of the central area of the village. The narrow central green area framed by buildings with diverse styles together with its alignment to the entrance of the former Summerhill Demesne, creates an attractive and imposing environment. The character of Summerhill is also enhanced by the presence of significant stands of deciduous trees.

Summerhill serves a broadly rural hinterland. It differs from other villages in the county of similar scale in that it contains a sizeable employment/industrial estate within the village confines. Summerhill provides a broad range of retail and commercial services.

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| Position in Settlement Hierarchy | Village |
| 2016 Population | 878 |
| 2011 Population | 832 |
| Percentage Change 2011-2016 | 5.50% |
| Housing stock 2016 | 327 |
| Number of units completed 2016-2019 | 28 |
| Committed units not yet built | 6 |
| Population Projection 2027 | 978 |
| Education Facilities | Dangan Primary School (approximately 620m outside development boundary). |

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| Community Facilities | 9 |
| Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) | Summerhill Architectural Conservation Area. |
| Protected Structures | 9 (House, Shaws Public House, Water Pump; Summerhill House Gates; and terraced houses.) |
| Zone of Archaeological Potential | There is a National Monument Services Zone of Archaeological Potential within the village. |
| Natura 2000 Sites | The nearest Natura 2000 site is the River Boyne & River Blackwater SAC which is located approximately 7.5km to the west. |
| 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. |
| Water Services Infrastructure/Capacity | <p>Summerhill Wastewater Treatment Plant - Capacity Available.</p> <p>Summerhill is supplied by Trim Water Supply Scheme – limited capacity available.</p> |

2.0 Vision

The vision for the development of Summerhill over this Development Plan Period is to consolidate and strengthen the defined and attractive Village Centre, recognising the importance of conserving

and enhancing the quality of the Village's built and natural environment, while catering for the needs of all sections of the local community. A central tenet of this Plan will be the creation of a positive relationship with the rural hinterland.

3.0 Opportunities

Summerhill provides for a variety of land uses at present and is well positioned to accommodate further measured growth. There are backland development opportunities particularly to properties east and west of the Village Green. The village has a unique setting with a village green and vistas towards Summerhill Demesne. Summerhill has a weaker public realm structure to the north of the core and improvements to this area would significantly enhance the overall village setting.

4.0 Land Use Strategy

The provision of a compact and vibrant village centre is essential if Summerhill is to cater for its current and future population needs in a sustainable manner. The village settlement contains the main land uses required to maintain a largely self-sustaining community. The land use strategy seeks to promote the development of infill/undeveloped sites close to the core and maintain the vibrant mixture of land uses whilst facilitating natural residential growth in order to sustain and complement the land uses.

4.1 Settlement and Housing

Summerhill experienced modest growth between 2011-2016 however, in the preceding 15 years the village's population grew by 66% with much of this growth taking place at or near to the outskirts of the village. It is considered that appropriate lands for residential uses has been identified for the life of the Development Plan and beyond.

4.2 Economy and Employment

Summerhill is identified as a level 4 retail centre in the County Retail Hierarchy and this is reflected in the moderate range of retail / commercial services provided in the village. Commercial provision includes: two grocery/convenience shops, bookmakers, two bar/restaurants, two take-aways, pharmacy, two hair/beauty salons, barbers, butchers, two motor sales/repair premises, a hardware store, credit union, service station, post office and a chocolate factory. There remains scope for

further retail/commercial growth should demand arise and there is sufficient land identified for village centre use. In differing from many villages of similar size in the county, there is an enterprise centre to the west of the village and these lands are designated for employment use. (i.e.E2). It is vital that these lands are retained for employment use to realise their potential for creating local employment and 'down-stream' economic benefits for the village as a whole.

4.3 Water Services Infrastructure

Summerhill is currently served by the following water services infrastructure:

Water: Summerhill is supplied by Trim Water Supply Scheme. In the context of extant and future demand increases in Trim, spare capacity is limited.

Wastewater: Summerhill Wastewater Treatment Plant was commissioned in 2010. It has spare capacity available.

4.4 Movement

Summerhill is somewhat dominated by roads and vehicular traffic movement particularly to the north. Permeability away from the main streets is lacking although the radial layout of the village means most services/facilities are still within comfortable walking distance (400 metres – 5 minutes). The village would benefit by the provision of additional pedestrian and cycle movement infrastructure.

The development of public transport bus links is critical to ensure a better modal split in favour of public transport away from the private motor vehicle. A rail service is available from Kilcock and Enfield. It would be beneficial to have a scheduled bus service to the railway station in Kilcock which is approximately 11km from the village. Furthermore, it is essential that a village the size of Summerhill maintains good transportation links to surrounding urban areas, such as Trim, in order to attract future population and potential business opportunities.

4.5 Cultural and Natural Heritage

The Village Green framed by townhouses creates a high-quality village core. There are a number of protected structures nearby including Shaws Public House, Summerhill House Gates, and Terraced Houses east of the village green. The central core of Summerhill forms part of an Architectural Conservation Area. The ACA includes the estate village and its central green, the entrance to Summerhill House to the south of the green and the narrowing into the Trim Road to the north of the village. Care must be taken with regard to any future proposals in this area.

The village does not contain any Natura 2000 sites with the nearest such site being approximately 8km away. There are many distinctive tree stands worthy of protection particularly around the Village Green and Summerhill Demesne.

4.6 Green Infrastructure

The Village Green has place defining strengths and leads towards Summerhill Demesne which provides an open verdant backdrop to the village. Continued improvements to the Village Green and views toward the Demesne would further enhance the village setting.

4.7 Social Infrastructure

The existing level of civic and community facilities should be monitored to cater for the village's needs having regard to the existing and future population. The Summerhill Community Centre is a focus for social interaction in the village but the site may be constrained in terms of future growth/development. This Development Plan has ensured that sufficient land for community use has been identified within the village core to cater for future growth in this regard if needed. The provision of cycle path connection to Dangan National School (outside the settlement boundary) to the north would improve access and permeability to the School.

4.8 Urban Design and Public Realm

The village of Summerhill is based on a classical layout associated with the development of the former Summerhill House and Demesne to the south of the village. To the north of the village green the urban fabric weakens and it would be desirable to see the public realm and streetscape improved to complement the Village Green area. Sensitive treatment of infill/back land development and the conservation of key traditional style buildings are important to safeguarding the character of Summerhill.

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:

SUM POL 1

To promote the future development of the village as a compact settlement with a pedestrian friendly environment, and a variety of land uses and amenities and encourage development which enhances the quality of the village's distinct built and natural environment, while catering for the needs of all sections of the local community to ensure that the village develops in a sustainable manner.

Objectives

It is an objective of the Council:

Settlement and Housing

SUM OBJ 1

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.

SUM OBJ 2

To promote "living over the shop" opportunities.

Economy and Employment

SUM OBJ 3

To consolidate commercial/retail development within the village core and promote infill/ back land development to meet the commercial needs of the village over the lifetime of the Development Plan.

SUM OBJ 4

To support the development of the lands identified for E2 land use zoning objective for employment creation purposes.

SUM OBJ 5

To maintain and improve the vitality and viability of the core area of the Village as the focus of all commercial and retail activity, in order to ensure both a mixture and variety of local shopping to serve the shopping needs of the local community.

Infrastructure**SUM OBJ 6**

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.

Movement**SUM OBJ 7**

To facilitate the provision of a pedestrian crossing from the Community Centre to the village core.

SUM OBJ 8

To investigate junction improvements works at the R156 (opposite Shaw's Pub) to enhance movement for pedestrians in this area.

SUM OBJ 9

To facilitate the completion of a cycle path to Dangan National School in conjunction with relevant stakeholders.

Cultural and Natural Heritage**SUM OBJ 10**

To require that all development proposals within or contiguous to the Architectural Conservation Area be sympathetic to the character of the area, that the design is appropriate in terms of height, scale, plot density, layout, materials and finishes and is appropriately sited and designed in accordance with advice given in Summerhill Architectural Conservation Area Character.

SUM OBJ 11

To protect tree stands identified on the land use zoning map including those in the vicinity of the Village Green, the entrance to Summerhill Demesne and along the R156.

Social

SUM OBJ 12

To facilitate and support the implementation of the Summerhill Community Plan and other community led projects to generally enhance the Village whilst ensuring that the projects which emanate from same are consistent with the development objectives contained in this Written Statement for the Village.

Urban Design and Public Realm

SUM OBJ 13

To seek to facilitate public realm improvement works in the Village focusing on traffic-calming to achieve better balance between the needs of the pedestrian / cyclist / public transport and those of the private car. Other measures may include improved street definition, raised tables connecting the Village Green with footpaths on either side; footpath improvements throughout the village, planting & 'softening' at the northern end of the village core as well as improved public lighting.

SUM OBJ 14

To ensure that all new development respects the scale, form and character of the village.