

1.0 Village Context/Character

Kilmessan is a picturesque village located circa 11km from Navan and circa 8.5 km from Trim and has developed in an orderly fashion along a main street primarily between the former Navan-Dublin railway line to the west and the River Skane to the east. Historically the village developed as a result of the presence of a station on the former Navan-Dublin railway line, this station has been converted to a hotel. Existing development has taken place in a relatively compact manner. Its location, which is removed from the main arterial routes through the county, has resulted in limited traffic in the village. This, in combination with the village-scale streets, has led to a quieter and more pleasant pedestrian environment. The southern part of Kilmessan has been designated as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). Large mature trees play a very significant role in defining space and views within the ACA. Furthermore, the attractive stone walls and mature trees within the ACA form a pleasant backdrop to the village. The village contains a number of buildings which add significantly to its character.

It remains an objective of the Council to seek to have the Navan Dublin Rail line re-opened. The route of the existing line to the west of the village centre has been reserved as has a portion of land as white land to accommodate a future potential rail station and associated uses.

Position in Settlement Hierarchy	Village
2016 Population	654
2011 Population	586
Percentage Change 2011-2016	11.60%
Housing stock 2016	265
Number of units completed 2016-2019	0

Committed units not yet built	97
Population Projection 2027	904
Education Facilities	Kilmessan Primary School
Community Facilities	9
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)	Kilmessan Architectural Conservation Area
Protected Structures	12
Zone of Archaeological Potential	There is a National Monument Service Zone of Archaeological Notification in close proximity to the north of the village.
Natura 2000 Sites	The nearest Natura 2000 site is the River Boyne & River Blackwater SPA and SAC which is located approximately 2.67km to the north 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	Kilmessan Water Treatment Plant serves the village – capacity available. Wastewater discharged to Castletown Tara Treatment Plant – capacity available.

2.0 Vision

To consolidate and strengthen the defined and attractive Village Centre, recognising the importance of conserving and enhancing the quality of the Village's built heritage and natural environment, while catering for the needs of all sections of the local community. To develop existing opportunity and backland sites which will ensure that the village develops in a compact manner and will add to the vitality and vibrancy of the village.

3.0 Opportunities

- To enhance village presentation with high quality signage, public art and consistent lighting standards along the main street and at village entry and exit points.
- The provision of further open space and recreational areas including the improved landscaping of the existing public spaces (such as the car park adjacent to the school).
- A River Linear Park/Walk would contribute to the vitality and vibrancy of the village. There is an opportunity for a permanent playground at the lands north of St. Mary's Church, which would benefit the area.
- To enhance the community infrastructure of the village through support for the delivery of a key community asset in the former Temperance Hall.

4.0 Land Use Strategy

The land use strategy for Kilmessan aims to maintain and add to a built environment that is both attractive and distinctive to create a unique sense of place for those who both live and work, as well as those whose visit, the village. This will be achieved through the sensitive treatment of infill development and the conservation of important or key buildings particularly within the Architectural Conservation Area to the south of the village core. The provision of a compact and vibrant village centre is essential if Kilmessan is to cater for its current and future population needs in a sustainable manner.

4.1 Settlement and Housing

There is an extant permission for 32 No. units and for a nursing home in the village. There are a number of centrally located sites which had planning permission but have now expired.

In addition, there is a backland site to the rear of the Centra which presents a good opportunity to reinforce the existing village by providing a residential or mixed-use development.

4.2 Economy and Employment

Kilmessan is identified as a fourth-tier retail centre in the County Retail Hierarchy. It has a small range of retail services, primarily a local convenience shop, a pharmacy, hair-dresser, restaurant, butchers, post office, café and two public houses. The village would benefit from a greater range and variety of such facilities. The Station House Hotel provides a focal point to the north of the village centre and is a provider of local employment.

4.3 Water Service Infrastructure

Kilmessan is served by the following water services infrastructure:

Water: Kilmessan is supplied by a new water treatment plant commissioned in 2019. It is considered to have sufficient spare capacity to facilitate the development and growth provided for in this 2021-2027 CDP.

Wastewater: Kilmessan is served by the Skane Valley Sewerage Scheme including the Castletown Tara Treatment Plant. It is considered to have sufficient spare capacity to facilitate the development and growth provided for in this County Development Plan.

4.4 Movement

Bus Éireann Route 109B runs a service from Trim to Dublin via Kilmessan—and Dunshaughlin which services the village twice daily. The village would benefit from dedicated bus stops and associated shelters.

4.5 Cultural and Natural Heritage

The south of the village is designated as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and there are a number of protected structures located nearby. The focal point of this ACA is at the junction of roads at the southern end of the village and is occupied by the Market House, which forms an important visual feature for the village. Other buildings, which add significantly to the character of the village, include the former Church- St. Mary's, the Old Rectory and associated grounds. The attractive stone walls and mature trees are a pleasant backdrop to the village.

Although the village and the surrounding environs hold environmental assets, none are designated at National or International level; the village does not contain nor is it adjacent to any Natura 2000 sites. However, the River Skane is a tributary of the River Boyne which is designated as the River Boyne and River Blackwater Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 002299). Large mature trees play a very significant role in defining space and views within the ACA setting. Furthermore, there are a number of trees and hedgerows around the village which contribute to its rural character. The protection of the natural environment of Kilmessan is fundamental, as it provides the village with its own unique identity and amenity background. Therefore, it is vital to achieve the correct balance between protection of the natural environment and the future development of the village.

4.6 Green Infrastructure

There is a considerable amount of land zoned F1 “Open Space” within the development envelopment which could be utilised for active and passive recreational amenities. To the south, the lands zoned “High Amenity” and the grounds of the church provide an attractive backdrop to the town.

4.7 Social Infrastructure

St Joseph’s Primary School is located centrally within the village. Immediately adjacent to the school is the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of the Nativity of Mary. The former school which is a detached five-bay two storey building built c. 1927 stands to the south of the R.C Church. Kilmessan Parish Church (C of I) is located further to the south of the village and was first built in 1731. The Credit Union and former Garda station are located to the north of the Church of Ireland.

Whilst Kilmessan has a strong sporting tradition, there are a lack of sporting facilities within the village itself. The well-known hurling and camogie club is located 1km from the village on the Ringlestown Road while Kilmessan Parish joins with Dunsany for Gaelic football utilising the pitch in Dunsany. The badminton club uses the GAA pavilion on the Ringlestown road. Kilmessan ladies and men’s soccer teams currently train at the Astro turf pitch at the GAA grounds and are seeking a suitable location for a pitch.

4.8 Urban Design and Public Realm

Kilmessan has developed in a compact manner resulting in the creation of a rural village ambience. The buildings reflect this and are mostly 2 or three storeys in height. Overall Kilmessan has good pedestrian facilities including footpaths and crossing areas. The grass verges and low stone walls create a pleasant environment for pedestrians.

5.0 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:

KLM POL 1

To consolidate and strengthen the commercial and residential village centre of Kilmessan, and encourage development which will contribute to the character and structure of the village core and to preserve and enhance the quality of the village's attractive 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, as an attractive place to live, work, recreate and visit.

Objectives

It is an objective of the Council:

Settlement and Housing

KLM OBJ 1

To seek to provide open space and recreational areas for the local population.

KLM OBJ 2

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

Economy and Employment**KLM OBJ 3**

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

Cultural and Natural Heritage**KLM OBJ 4**

To protect the natural landscape setting of the village.

KLM OBJ 5

To require the use of traditional details and materials in order to match the existing buildings and streetscape.

KLM OBJ 6

To promote the preservation of individual trees or groups of trees as identified on the land use zoning map including those located in the grounds of St. Mary's Church and to manage these trees in line with arboricultural best practice.

KLM OBJ 7

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 Kilmessan Architectural Conservation Area Character Statement

Movement

KLM OBJ 8

To seek to provide new pedestrian crossings at key locations and to complete network of footpaths, in particular to the south of the village.

KLM OBJ 9

To seek to introduce traffic calming measures, particularly at essential services with dedicated street parking as necessary, to strengthen the village core.

KLM OBJ 10

To seek to provide bus stops and shelters in conjunction with the relevant stakeholders.

KLM OBJ 11

To facilitate the development of a railway station, park and ride facility and associated infrastructure as part of the delivery of Phase II of the Navan Rail Line, in conjunction with Irish Rail and other relevant stakeholders.

Infrastructure

KLM OBJ 12

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).

Social

KLM OBJ 13

To seek to enhance community and recreational facilities within the village, including the provision of a permanent playground, subject to available resources.

KLM OBJ 14

To seek to provide, in conjunction with relevant stakeholders, a River Linear Park/Walk along Skane River to the east and through the hotel lands, subject to appropriate environmental assessments.

The Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan (LAP) was adopted by the Elected Members of Meath County Council on 19 February, 2025 and by the Elected Members of the Clane-Maynooth Municipal District on 17 February 2025.

To ensure consistency of the adopted Maynooth & Environs Joint LAP with the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 (as varied), Draft Variation No. 4 was on public display from 16 May to 4pm 16 June, 2025 in order to update the County Development Plan 2021-2027 (as varied). For full details, please refer to Draft Variation No. 4

Pursuant to Section 13 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) Meath County Council, being the Planning Authority for County Meath, at their meeting on Monday 7 July 2025, made Variation No. 4 to the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 (as varied).

The Maynooth & Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031 (JLAP) came into effect on 1st April 2025. This Joint Local Area Plan (JLAP) and all other supporting documents can be viewed under “Materials” located on right-hand side of <https://consult.meath.ie/en/consultation/consolidated-meath-county-development-plan-2021-2027-varied/chapter/maynooth-environs>

Urban Design Public Realm

KLM OBJ 15

To preserve the character of the village and its setting by requiring that the height, scale, and design of any proposed development within the village and in the surrounding area should complement the character of the village and not diminish its distinctiveness of place.

KLM OBJ 16

To seek to provide good and consistent village type lighting standards on all routes and extension of footpaths and public lighting to the development boundaries on public roads, as appropriate.

KLM OBJ 17

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