
Thurles and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015



Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann Thuaidh
North Tipperary County Council



Variation Number 1

To take account of amendments to

- Chapter 1 – Introduction
- Chapter 2 – Demographics and Development Strategy
- Chapter 3 - Housing and Settlement
- Chapter 5 - Economy and Town Centre
- Chapter 6 - Transport Accessibility and Services
- Chapter 8 - Development Management
- Appendix 1 Zoning Matrix
- Map 1 - Zoning Map

and to insert

- A Core Strategy into Chapter 2
- Chapter 9 - Monitoring and Implementation
- Appendix 9 - Sustainability Matrix
- Appendix 10 – Stage 1 Flood Impact Assessment

in the Thurles and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015

**Thurles Town Council
North Tipperary County Council**

6th December 2010

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.2 Relationship to other Plans

- In preparing the Plan, the Planning Authorities have had regard to the policies and objectives set out in the North Tipperary County Development Plan 2009-2016 as varied. Policies contained in the development plans for the neighbouring towns of Nenagh and Templemore and the Local Area Plan for Roscrea were also taken into account. A number of other statutory and non-statutory planning initiatives also have a bearing on this review

1.2.1 County Development Plan 2010-2016

The North Tipperary County Development Plan was adopted in July 2010. The Planning Authorities has had regard to the policies and objective in this Plan.

Section 3.6 of the County Development Plan 2010 promotes Thurles as a Primary Service Centre in the County.

1.2.2 Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022

Regional Authorities have been given an important role in the implementation of the NSS through the preparation and implementation of regional socio-economic strategies and regional planning guidelines. The Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010, for the administrative areas of North Tipperary, Clare, Limerick County and Limerick City, were adopted in September 2010. The Thurles Town and Environs Development Plan is fully supportive of the strategic policy guidelines set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines 2010.

In setting out detailed policies and objectives, the Council has striven for maximum consistency between the policies and objectives of the RPGs and those of the Town Development Plan. The Council must demonstrate how it takes into account the RPGs for the Mid West Region in this process. Core issues that arise, as expressed in the Town Development Plan will relate to:

- The implementation of the population targets for the town of Thurles as provided for in the RPGs.;
- Acknowledgement of and support for the Limerick/Shannon Gateway and restraint in relation to inappropriate expansion on the outskirts of the town;
- Framing and outlining appropriate infrastructural needs with particular emphasis on public transport;
- Cognisance of Climate Change and the need for the promotion and development of renewable energy and technologies.
- Promotion of sustainable development within the Town

Thurles has been identified within Zone 5 of the RPGs alongside the town of Templemore.

Policy S1: Limerick/Shannon Gateway

It is the policy of the Council to support the Limerick/Shannon Gateway as identified in the National Spatial Strategy 2002.

1.2.3 National Development Plan 2007

The National Development Plan (NDP) identifies investment funding for significant projects in sectors such as health services, social housing, education, broadband, roads, public transport, rural development, industry, water and waste services. The NDP is designed to strengthen and improve the international competitiveness of the Country so as to support continued, but more balanced, economic and social development in line with the NSS.

1.2.4 National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012

The strategy seeks to reduce dependence on the use of fossil fuels for energy production, increase use of low and zero carbon fuels and improve building efficiency. The Councils are committed to ensuring that the measures and commitments identified in the Strategy will be implemented throughout the life of the Town and Environs Development Plan.

1.2.5 The Water Framework Directive 2000

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) sets out a framework for comprehensive management of water resources in the European Community. It addresses inland surface waters, estuarine and coastal waters and groundwater. The fundamental objective of the WFD aims at maintaining “high status” of waters where it exists, preventing any deterioration in the existing status of waters and achieving at least “good status” in relation to all waters by 2015.

1.2.6 County Retail Strategy

County Retail Strategy 2003 was adopted in December 2003 and is incorporated through policy support in this Plan. The Strategy is due for review in 2011 and this Plan will fully support its findings.

1.2.7 County Landscape Character Assessment

This study has been prepared in accordance with the Landscape Guidelines from the Department of Environment and Local Government. It provides the basis for assessment and classification of the landscape in the Town and County.

1.2.8 Flood Guidelines (DoEHLG 2009)

These guidelines introduce comprehensive mechanisms for the incorporation of flood risk identification, assessment and management into the planning process, building upon the longstanding acknowledgement in the planning system of the importance of addressing the issue. Implementation of the guidelines is to be achieved through specific actions at the national, regional, local authority and site specific levels.

1.2.9 Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas 2008

These statutory Guidelines and accompanying Urban Design Manual set out and illustrate essential criteria for sustainable urban residential development and demonstrate how new development can be integrated and facilitated across a range of locations. These Guidelines assist planning authorities, developers, architects and designers in achieving high standards for new residential development. They update and revise the 1999 Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Residential Density and benefit from the

extensive experience gained over recent years. Importantly specific guidance is provided for the first time on residential development for smaller towns and villages, acknowledging that different solutions are required to meet different scales and patterns of urban development.

1.2.10 National Planning Guidelines

In addition to the planning guidelines which are explained in detail above, the Plan was prepared in accordance with the DoEHLG Development Plan Guidelines (2007) and with full regard to all guidelines and circular documents published by the DoEHLG as they relate to land use planning. These documents are referenced as appropriate in each chapter of the plan.

1.2.11 Adjoining Local Authority Development Plans

In preparing the Thurles Town and Environs Development Plan regards has been had to the Development Plans of adjoining and nearby Planning Authorities including North Tipperary County Development Plan, Limerick City Development Plan and the Limerick County Development Plan.

1.3 Plan Boundary

The majority of the Plan is within Thurles Town administration area but the remainder is within the County administration area. For the purposes of this Development Plan, Thurles and environs shall be taken as the area shown by the blue line of the attached Zoning and Objectives Maps and the Thurles Town Boundary is outlined in Red.

The North Tipperary County Development Plan was adopted in July 2010. The Planning Authority has had regard to the policies and objective in this Plan.

Section 3.6 of the County Development Plan 2010 promotes Thurles as a Primary Service Centre in the County.

1.4 Locational Context of the Town

3rd paragraph

The National Spatial Strategy 2002 – 2020 states that towns such as Thurles need appropriate policies and actions to support

their roles as drivers of development at the county level. Examples include policies or actions to achieve good urban design and environmental quality, water services and effective linkage to the gateways in the region. The Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 classifies Thurles within Zone 5, an area well served with a train service and, as a result, is experiencing a certain amount of commuter-based development.

CHAPTER 2 - DEMOGRAPHICS AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2.7 Population Projections

The task of accurate population projections is onerous given the interplay of numerous factors of uncertainty. The projected population will be influenced by variable fertility rates and the extent of migration which is in turn dependant upon the economic welfare. The recent trend indicates that the population of the area is stagnant due in part to falling fertility rates and high levels of out-migration, but also to development restrictions caused by infrastructural deficits and low levels of economic activity. A smaller ageing population would, if left unchecked, consequently impact adversely upon the attractiveness of Thurles as a settlement and service centre.

In order to redress the trends towards an ageing population with overall stagnant population growth the following options are presented:

Option 1: **do nothing** and is outlined above as current trends – This will inevitably lead to a further decline in the services of the town and an increase in the average age of the population of the town;

Option 2: **Promote the town and rural area equally**;

Option 3: **Promote the town through residential/industrial/commercial/heritage development** – Due to its locational advantage, architectural heritage and human and technical resources, this was seen as the most sustainable option. Furthermore the hinterland of the town should be restricted to that which is required to serve local need. Such an approach would serve to encourage the younger migrant population to live in Thurles rather than Limerick, Nenagh, Templemore or Roscrea and to take up employment to remain living in the town. This would offset the losses of younger population who move away from the area for education or employment purposes.

In order to ensure that Thurles expands at a rate comparable to other urban centres in the county over the period 2009-2015, the following will need to take place:

1. The expansion of the third level educational facilities and the introduction of an employment activity that attracts in-

migration, e.g. a government department, a high-tech industry, etc.

2. Successful promotion of the town as a commuter centre for Limerick, Dublin, Cork, Kilkenny, Nenagh, Templemore, Roscrea and the surrounding hinterland;
3. Introduction of a settlement strategy that strengthens the town as a growth centre by restricting the growth in urban-generated one-off houses in the hinterland and hasten the completion of attractive urban/suburban housing within the town.
4. Develop services in the town e.g. shopping, offices, etc.
5. Make Thurles a more attractive place to visit and shop in.

2.8 Compliance with National and Regional Population Targets

This plan adopts an approach to population growth that is dependent on the implementation of the National Spatial Strategy rather than the ‘past trends’ approach of previous plans. This new approach is in line with Government and Regional Authority advice on population targets to local authorities issued in October 2009. As a result, future populations are expressed as ‘targets’ in this plan rather than ‘projections’, to ensure adequate investment in infrastructure, which will help to maintain the Thurles’ economic growth and avoid infrastructural deficits. The following table sets out the targets as they apply to the Mid West Region and individual counties, with North Tipperary anticipated to grow by 14,700 to a population of 80,723 by 2022, suggesting a total growth of 22%. Within this, the population of Thurles is set to grow by 1,690 people by 2022. These target populations from the DoEHLG and Mid-West Regional Authority have also been directly transposed into the preparation of the North Tipperary County Development Plan 2010 – 2016.

Table 2.7 Population Projections for Mid West Region Including North Tipperary (Source: Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 and North Tipperary County Development Plan 2010)

	2006 CSO*	2016 MWRA* *	2022 MWRA* *
North Tipperary	66,023	75,671	80,723
Limerick	131,516	144,217	154,665
Limerick City	52,539	77,642	86,990
Clare	110,950	129,786	139,650
Total	361,028	427,316	461,744

- *Central Statistics Office
- **Mid West Regional Authority

Tables 2.8 and 2.9 contain the breakdown of the population targets within North Tipperary and the various allocations to different zones highlighting the emphasis on the Gateway and the Hub as requested by the DoEHLG. Table 2.2 sets out the figures for 2016 and Table 2.3 sets out the targeted growth up to 2022.

Table 2.10 sets out the population targets for 2016 and 2022 based on Settlement, Retail and Economic Hierarchy as set out in the Draft County Development Plan 2010-2016. These target figures are based on data from the DoEHLG and the Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines.

Population Targets Breakdown for 2016 (Source Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 and North Tipperary County Development Plan 2010)

	Population 2002	Population 2006	Service Towns	Gateway	Hub	Rest Z1 & Z2	Other allocation by Zone	Target 2022
Zone 1 & 2	17,504	21,006				3,282		24,288
Zone 5* Thurles (Thurles Town)	23,798	24,494	1,706				1,838	28,038
Zone 6 Roscrea (Roscrea Town)	19,708	20,523	1,247				1,575	23,345
Total	61,010	66,023	2,953			3,282	3,413	75,671

*Thurles forms part of Zone 5. See Map 1 below.

Table 2.9 Population Targets Breakdown for 2022 (Source Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 and North Tipperary County Development Plan 2010)

	Population 2002	Population 2006	Service Towns	Gateway	Hub	Rest Z1 & Z2	Other allocation by Zone	Target 2022
Zone 1 & 2	17,504	21,006				5,000		26,006
Zone 5* Thurles (Thurles Town)	23,798	24,494	2,600				2,800	29,894
Zone 6 Roscrea (Roscrea Town)	19,708	20,523	1,900				2,400	24,823
Total	61,010	66,023	4,500			5,000	5,200	80,723

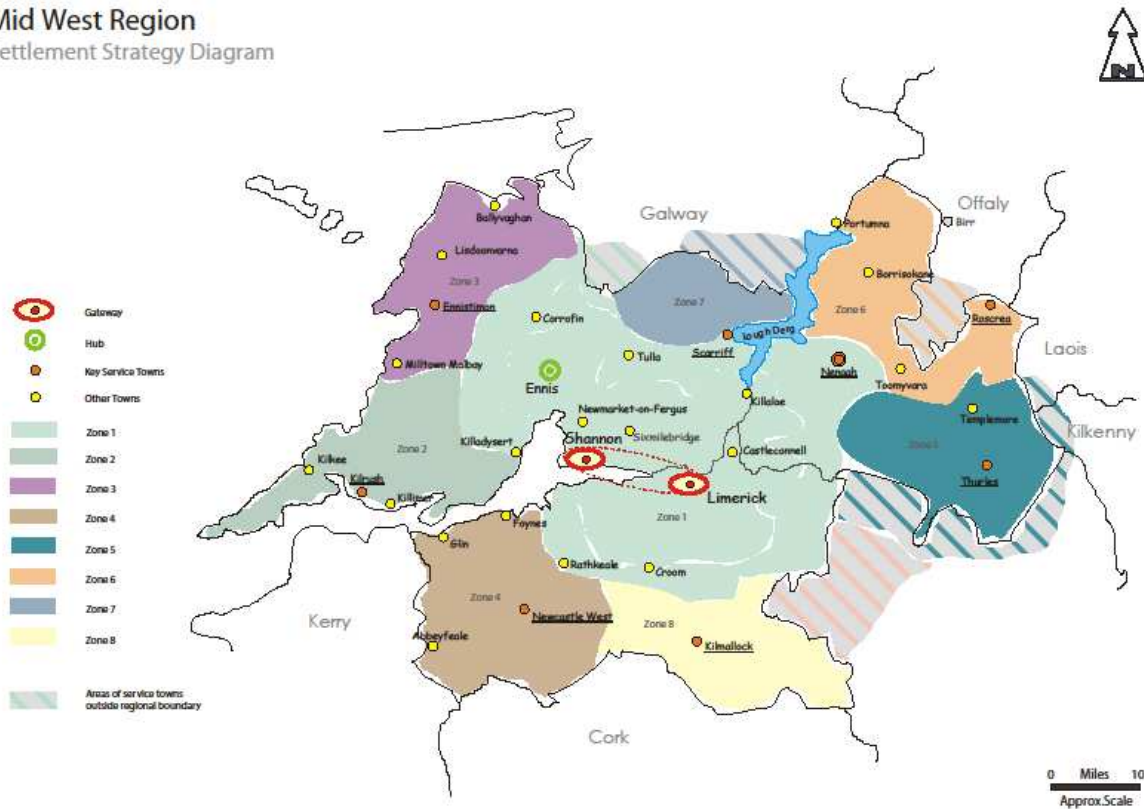
*Thurles forms part of Zone 5. See Map 1 below.

Table 2.10: Population Targets Breakdown for 2022 Based on Settlement, Retail and Economic Hierarchy (Source Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 and North Tipperary County Development Plan 2010)

Hierarchy Position	Town	Population 2006	Population 2016	Population 2022	House No. required based Households of 2.5	Land to be zoned in Hectares*
Tier 1 Primary Service Centres	Thurles	7,682	8,791	9,372	676	68
	Nenagh	7,751	8,957	9,590	736	74
	Roscrea	4,910	5,858	6,354	578	58
	Templemore	2,270	2,594	2,631	144	24
	Borrisokane	832	994	1,079	99	16.5
Tier 2 Secondary Service Centres / Market Towns	Borrisoleigh	626	711	756	52	9
	Ballina	1,861	2,150	2,301	176	29
Tier 3 District Service Centres	Newport	1,286	1,490	1,597	124	21
	Cloughjordan	394	469	508	46	11
	Holycross	343	394	421	31	8
Tier 4 Local Service Centres	Littleton	463	531	567	42	10
	Toomevara	286	336	362	30	7
	Twomileborris	550	635	680	52	13
Tier 5 (see Table 3.7 of CDP for full list)						
Tier 6 Rural Countryside						

- Based on an average density of 25 dwellings to the hectare in Nenagh, Thurles and Roscrea, 15 dwellings to the hectare in Templemore, Borrisokane, Borrisoleigh, Ballina and Newport and 10 dwellings to the hectare elsewhere, and using a multiplier of 2.5.

Mid West Region
Settlement Strategy Diagram



Map 1 - Mid West Region Zones (Source: Mid West RPGs 2010)

2.9 Land Budget

Land budget: A calculation of the amount of zoned land available and how many factories/businesses/houses can be developed on that land.

2.9.1 Residential Land Budget

This relates to land zoned Residential (High Density), and Residential (Low Density) in the Thurles Town and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015.

2.9.2 Capacity of Residential Lands

The following table sets out the extent of area of Land zoned as “Residential” or “Future Residential Land (phase 2)”, and which doesn’t have the benefit of a planning permission in the Thurles and Environs Development Plan based on the housing needs as identified in Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines (See Map 1.1). The Table also shows the amount of land previously zoned in Thurles as “Residential” or “Future Development Land” under the Thurles and

Environs Development Plan 2007-2013 when it was adopted in 2007.

Table 2.11: Residentially zoned land in Thurles

Land Availability Hectares	Thurles Town and Environs Development Plan 2009
Residential Zoned Land High Density 2009	37.54ha
Residential Zoned Land Low Density 2009	53.58ha
Total 2009	91.12ha
Residential Zoned Land 2010	65.74ha

The target population for Thurles in 2022 is approximately 9,672 people, a growth of 1,690 or 22% growth from 2006 Population. The population target for 2016 is 8,791, or 1,109 people. At the lower household rate of 2.5 as set

out in the County Housing Strategy 2009, this would require a total of 443.6 houses or 89 houses per year to be constructed up to 2016. See Table 2.6 below.

Table 2.12: Number of dwellings required in Plan area

	Population growth 2006-2016	Population growth 2006-2022
Number of Dwellings required at household rate of 2.5 persons per h'hold	444	676
Amount of zoned land required*	17.74ha	27.07ha
Using a multiplier of 2.5 as set out in Guidelines	44.35ha*	67.67ha*

*** Based on an average density of 25 dwellings to the hectare in Thurles and using a multiplier of 2.5.**

CHAPTER 3 - HOUSING AND SETTLEMENT

3.2.1 Facilitating New Housing

In order to meet the aims of sustainable development and the Core Strategy as outlined in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, there is a need to make the most efficient use of land. Sites proposed for housing should be well related in scale and location to existing development. The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government has published a range of guideline documents which relate to development of residential estates. All residential developments will be assessed with regard to these guidelines and in particular the following:

- DoEHLG Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, 2008.
- DoEHLG Urban Design – Best Practice Guide, 2008.
- DoEHLG Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments, 2007.
- DoEHLG Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities, 2007.

The Planning Authorities anticipate that future residential growth will occur generally in lands reserved in the areas set out in Table 3.1 and on a scale as set out in Table 2.12 above.

3.3 Housing Policies

The County Housing Strategy encourages development in towns that are considered to possess the capability to absorb further development as well as providing for local rural housing need, while retaining the character of those settlements. Even if the population of Thurles were to remain static, there would be a demand for additional houses. This will require the provision of a wide range of housing units to provide for all sectors of society. However, Thurles has been the subject of considerable pressure for housing in the recent past. This is largely a result of its proximity to the Limerick and Kilkenny housing markets, the attraction of urban dwellers to Thurles and the affordable cost of housing in Thurles when compared to comparable housing in Limerick/Kilkenny.



This layout offers streetscape, distinctive character, variety of house types, good quality open space and provides a blue print for future neighbourhood development in Thurles.

In order to contain the growth of Thurles to that which is sustainable, the Council will confine future housing development to lands zoned for that purpose and development on unzoned lands will be resisted.

3.3.1 Building New Communities

The Council will require the provision of communities rather than traditional housing estates. There will therefore be a strong emphasis on mix of uses, house types, layouts that facilitate streetscape and open spaces that have natural supervision, and layouts and facilities which support and facilitate the growth of sustainable communities. The Council will give free advice to estate designers, and builders on the use of these innovative schemes, and may permit a higher density where "courtyard" or "precinct" types of layout are used.

A pedestrian system separate from the road layout may be desirable, especially if leading through to churches, schools or shopping centres. Pedestrian linkage to adjoining development and its open space should be provided where appropriate. Where possible links shall be fronted by houses, to ensure the supervision of public open space and the use of long narrow alleys should be avoided.

Key Housing policy aims:

- (i) To reverse the spread of one-of housing on the outskirts of Thurles.
- (ii) To assist and encourage housing associations in the provision of social and affordable housing.

Policy HSG 1: New Estate Housing

It is the policy of the Councils to provide new housing on land zoned for residential development or for a mixture of residential and other uses based on the community concept, as follows:

- a) to provide high quality residential layouts that are traffic calmed by design, provide sequencing of streetscape and open spaces and conform to Residential Housing Guidelines;
- b) to ensure the provision of a wide range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of different sections of the population;
- c) to conform with the DoEHLG ‘Density Guidelines for Planning Authorities’
 - DoEHLG Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, 2008
 - DoEHLG Urban Design – Best Practice Guide, 2008
 - DoEHLG Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments, 2007
 - DoEHLG Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities, 2007
- d) to provide suitable and supervised amenity areas for children, teenagers and adults.
- e) To provide high quality residential layouts that are traffic calmed by design.
- f) To ensure that a sufficient amount of land is zoned for housing purposes, in appropriate locations within the designated town boundary.

The community concept is based on the principle that people should be able to find many of the requirements for daily living within easy reach of their home. It ensures that new housing and service provision, in the form of schools, shops, community and recreation facilities, are mutually supportive and provide for sustainable and pleasant living environments.

3.3.1(i) HOUSING DEVELOPMENT DESIGN

The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Dec 2008) are accompanied by a best practice

urban design manual which sets out and illustrates essential criteria for sustainable residential development, and demonstrates how new developments can be integrated and facilitated across a range of scales and locations.

The guidelines stress that planning authorities should promote good urban design in their policy documents and in their development management process. Clearly defined policies create more certainty for potential developers and their design teams, and also provide a basis for developing a shared, collaborative approach to pre-application consultations with the planning authority.

The companion urban design manual shows how urban design principles can be applied in the design and layout of new residential developments, at a variety of scales of development and in various urban settings.

In particular, the design guide sets out the following 12 criteria which can be used at pre-application meetings and in the assessment of planning applications and appeals.

Criteria No. and Description
1. Context: How does the development respond to its surroundings?
2. Connections: How well is the new neighbourhood/site connected?
3. Inclusivity: How easily can people use and access the development?
4. Variety: How does the development promote a good mix of activities?
5. Efficiency: How does the development make appropriate use of resources, including land?
6. Distinctiveness: How do the proposals create a sense of place?
7. Layout: How do the proposals create people-friendly streets and spaces?
8. Public Realm: How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas?
9. Adaptability: How will the buildings cope with change?
10. Privacy/Amenity: How do the buildings provide a decent standard of amenity?
11. Parking: How will the parking be secure and attractive?
12. Detailed Design: How well thought through is the building and landscape design?

These guidelines will be of fundamental importance to the future development of Thurles.

3.3.2 Infill Housing

Policy HSG 2: Infill Housing Development

It is the policy of the Council to have regard to the urban form and the suitability of infill sites proposed for development and to have regard to the impact of such development on the surrounding built and natural environment. The scale, plot ratio and impact on adjoining properties will be assessed against the guidelines set out in Chapter 8 and the 2008 DoEHLG Guidelines.

3.3.6 Back Land Development

A certain amount of vacant land prevails within the town. This comprises mainly of a substantial area of back land to the rear of the main streets. However, much of this land has remained undeveloped or uncultivated due to the decline in families living within the town core or above their premises and an increase in commercial premises. The proliferation of ribbon development outside the town has also undermined the residential function of the town. Thus, there is a need to encourage residential development within and closer to the town core.

Policy HSG5: Back Land Development

It is the policy of the Council to encourage the appropriate development of back lands within the town.

CHAPTER 5 - ECONOMY AND TOWN CENTRE

5.1.1 Economic Corridor

The Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 have identified a new economic corridor running between Thurles, Templemore and Roscrea, with potential links to Clonmel to the south and Athlone to the north. This economic corridor offers a variety of opportunities for Thurles and its hinterland to attract inward investment and to promote its unique position in the centre of the country and to avail of its excellent transport links

Policy ECON 1(a): Economic Corridor

It is the policy of the Councils to promote the economic corridor of Thurles, Templemore and Roscrea, in line with the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines, 2010.

5.6 Retail in the Town Centre

Retail is the key activity that can strengthen the character and importance of a town. The traditional clustering of this activity with others, providing services to the local community and visitors alike, makes the centres of towns important cultural and commercial features of everyday life.

The retail sector is an important service sector in Thurles and is an important source of employment and revenue for the town. Providing a healthy shopping environment in Thurles is essential to the long-term sustainability of the town. The provision of a good local retail base can reduce the need to travel to other towns in order to shop.

It is the intention of the Council to facilitate the objectives of the County Retail Strategy. Furthermore, the Retail Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2005) published by the Department of the Environment and Local Government provides a comprehensive framework for Local Authorities to guide the development of the retail sector of urban areas in their jurisdictions. Under these Guidelines, the Planning Authority identifies areas that would facilitate commercial development in a planned, orderly and sustainable manner.

Under the Retail Strategy for North Tipperary, it is the policy of the Council to promote and encourage major enhancement of retail provision in Thurles.



North Tipperary County Council produced a County Retail Strategy (CSR) in December 2003. Arising out of that study Thurles Town Council has produced Town Centre Strategy for Thurles town that puts forward a clear vision for the town, identifies the issues/weaknesses in current town centre policy, and presents a clear pathway towards achieving the stated vision. Site Specific Development Briefs are presented in Appendix 8.

Policy ECON 6: Town Centre

It is the policy of the Councils to strengthen the town centre function of Thurles as a commercial, cultural and living centre in accordance with the County Retail Strategy and the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG 2005) and the Town Centre Strategy.

Policy ECON 6(a) Retail Development

It is the policy of the Council to consolidate and improve the existing and proposed retail for the town, prior to further expansion. The Council will seek to encourage the improvement of the quality of existing retail provision.

Policy ECON 6(b): New Retail Development within or on the edge of the town centre

The Council supports proposals for new retail and other mixed use development in or on the edge of the town centre where the proposal:

- (a) Itself, or cumulatively with other development, will not cause detriment to the vitality or viability of the established centre;
- (b) is well located and convenient, attractive and has safe pedestrian linkages;
- (c) can provide or is in close proximity to adequate parking; and
- (d) provides adequate facilities for the recycling of waste packaging generated by the proposal, including a bring centre where required.

Policy ECON 6(c): Commercial Retail Development beyond the edge of the town centre

It is the policy of the council to support the provision of retail and other commercial development provided that:

- (a) The proposal is on land that has been designated for such development in the Plan;
- (b) it does not detract from the vitality and viability of the town centre;
- (c) the proposed development accords with the County Retail Strategy and the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2005); and
- (d) the proposal accords with the design standards set out in Chapter 8 of this plan

Policy ECON 6(d): New Retail Development

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that new retail development provides a visually interesting street frontage in line with policy objectives contained within this Plan. New retail development shall be appropriately located in the town centre, and shall have no detrimental impact on the surrounding built, historic and natural environment, residential amenity, traffic generation or visual amenity.

Policy ECON 6(e): Regional Shopping

It is the policy of the Council to support the position of Limerick City as the key retail centre in the Mid West Region.

The location of new retail development is crucial to the long term vitality and viability of Thurles. Proposals for new retail development that is located outside the central area will be assessed under the criteria set out in Chapter 8 on Development management. Through its zoning objectives, the Planning Authorities will only allow development in the outer zones that will enhance rather than detract from the town centre. It will have particular regard for the Retail Planning Guidelines – (DoELG, April 1999).

Policy ECON 7: Non-Retail Uses

It is the policy of the Councils to control the provision of non-retail uses at ground floor level, within the Primary Retail Streets, to protect the vitality of the main shopping street.



This policy will be used to limit the amount of non-retail uses on Liberty Square, Cathedral Street and Friar Street. Banks and other financial institutions, offices and professional practices reduce the vitality and viability of shopping areas. These uses do not enhance the quality of the shopping experience as they can often have dead frontage particularly at night and are not as dependent on passing trade. When dealing with pre-application enquiries the Planning Authorities will generally encourage such uses to locate in secondary shopping streets.

5.6.1 Specific Retail Objectives

R.1 Apply the sequential approach to the location of new retail development, depending on the availability of suitable sites. The preferred location for new retail development is within the town centre.

R.2 Restricting major retail development to appropriate locations within the ‘town centre’ zoned area.

R.3 Avoid ‘dead frontages’ on the buildings fronting onto the main streets within the town centre, the town centre being defined as the area zoned ‘Town Centre’ use on the Zoning Map. This means that development at ground floor level is restricted to shopping and closely related uses such as banking with office/residential overhead. However, the existing use of the site/building shall be considered in any proposed redevelopment.

R.4 Encourage local shopping facilities (corner shops) in new residential schemes in order to ensure convenience for residents to promote a continued sense of community and reduce journeys to higher order centres.

R.5 Ensure proposals for additional retail developments comply with the provisions of the County Retail Strategy and the ‘Retail Planning

Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2005' and any updated versions of these documents.

Policy ECON 8: Townscape Improvement

It is the policy of the Councils to seek improvements to the quality of the town centre as part of new development in accordance with the standards set out in the Chapter 8 on Development management and the guidelines within the Architectural Conservation Area Design Statement and the Town Centre Strategy.

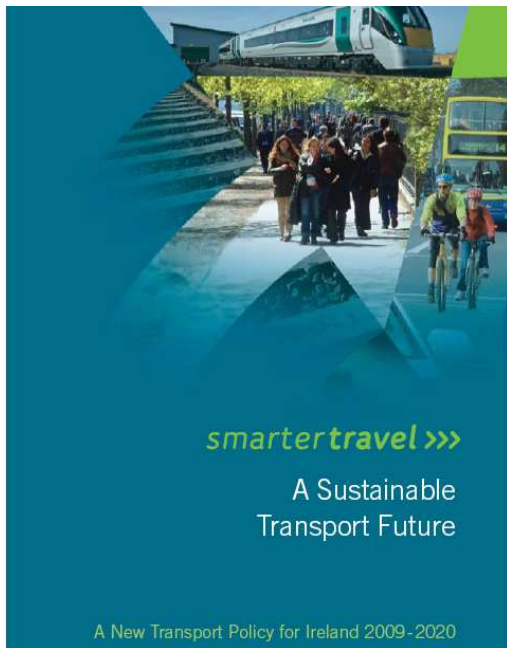
CHAPTER 6 - TRANSPORT ACCESSIBILITY AND SERVICES

6.2.7 Current Transport Issues

The Government in its publication “Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020” published by the Department of Transport reaffirms its vision for sustainability in transport and sets out five goals;

- To reduce overall travel demand;
- To maximize the efficiency of the transport network;
- To reduce reliance on fossil fuels;
- To reduce transport emissions; and
- To improve accessibility to transport.

The Council notes the requirement in the document that local authorities prepare transport plans in keeping with the strategies. The policies and objectives in this Plan have been prepared having regard to this document.



Specific Objective

INF1 It is an objective of the Council to prepare County Transport Plans in line with the recommendations of the Department of Transport publication “Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020”.

6.8.4 Flooding

In September 2008 the DoEHLG published Draft Guidelines entitled ‘The Planning System and

Flood Risk Management’. The Guidelines introduce mechanisms for the incorporation of flood risk identification, assessment and management into the planning system. The Guidelines require Planning Authorities to:

- Avoid development in areas at risk of flooding by not permitting development in flood risk areas, particularly floodplains, unless where it is fully justified that there are wider sustainable grounds for appropriate development and unless the flood risk can be managed to an acceptable level without increasing flood risk elsewhere and where possible, reducing flood risk overall;
- Adopt a sequential approach to flood risk management based on avoidance, reduction and then mitigation of flood risk as the overall framework for assessing the location of new development in the development planning process; and
- Incorporate flood risk assessment into the process of making decisions on planning applications and planning appeals.

Policy SERV 5: Protection of the Flood Plain

It is the policy of the Councils to discourage development within established flood plains. However where development is considered appropriate adjacent to an existing flood plain and would result in alteration of natural drainage systems, the Councils will require mitigation measures to minimise the risk of flooding.

The primary aim of this policy is to protect residential and commercial areas from flooding. The first consideration, therefore, shall be the protection of existing flood plains free from development that would add to the risk of flooding. It is agreed that such flood plains be re-assessed following completion of River Suir Catchment Flood Relief And Management Study (CFRAMS) by the Office of Public Works.

POLICY SERV 5(a): Flood Risk Management

It is the policy of the Council to implement the recommendations of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Office of Public Works Guidelines on ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’ and any subsequent guidelines issued in assessing applications for planning permission to assess the likely risk of flood hazard on any new

development in areas historically prone to flood or at risk of flooding.

The primary aim of this policy is to protect residential and commercial areas from flooding. The first consideration, therefore, shall be the protection of existing flood plains free from development that would add to the risk of flooding. It is agreed that such flood plains be re-assessed following completion of Flood Relief Scheme by the Office of Public Works.

Policy SERV 6: Flood Alleviation Measures

It is the policy of the Councils to ensure that development does not increase the risk of flooding, and development in low-lying areas or known flood plains will be required to produce a Flood Impact Assessment to demonstrate that the development will not contribute to flooding within the immediate or wider catchment area.

6.9 Specific Water and Flood Risk Management Objectives

W.1 To encourage the use of recycled waters where drinking water is not needed.

W.2 To encourage the use of permeable surfaces e.g. gravel drives etc, to reduce surface water run-off.

W.3 To encourage the use of SUDS techniques, constructed wetland and other natural solutions to reduce the impact of surface water runoff on river and ground waters

W.4 It is an objective of the Council to prepare Supplementary Development Contribution Schemes for specified water service proposals that will benefit future development in order to generate funds for the construction of these services. The schemes shall be drawn and implemented in accordance with Section 49 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000.

W.5 To seek to protect the lands that are liable to flooding, which if developed could impact negatively on existing built environment.

W.6 To integrate comprehensive flood risk assessment and management in the overall planning process.

W.7 To address flood risk management in the detailed design of development, as set out in the Guidelines 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management'.

W.8 The Council shall require any development proposal in a location identified as being subject to flooding to:

(a) Carry out a flood risk / catchment analysis for the development to assess the likely level of flood

hazard that may affect the site to the satisfaction of the Council;

(b) Design the development to avoid minimum flood levels, incorporating building design measures and materials to assist evacuation and minimize damage to property from flood waters;

(c) Demonstrate that the proposal will not result in increased risk of flooding elsewhere, restrict flow across floodplains, where compensatory storage / storm water retention measures shall be provided on site; and

(d) Proposals should have provision to reduce the rate and quantity of runoff i.e. minimisation of concrete surfaces and use of semi permeable materials and include adequate measures to cope with the flood risk, e.g. sustainable drainage systems.

W.9 To have regard to the Office of Public Works Planning Policy Guidance in the design and consideration of development proposals.

W.10 To preserve riparian strips free of development and of adequate width to permit access for river maintenance.

W.11 To support all necessary works being carried out by The Office of Public Works in the development of a flood defence scheme to alleviate existing flooding in the town

W.12 To resist development that would impact on a flood plain or lead to increased flooding.

6.13.1 Climate Change Strategies

16.13.1(i) National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012

The National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012 builds on the commitment to sustainable development set out in Towards 2016¹ and the National Development Plan 2007-2013 and is one of a number of interrelated Government initiatives that address energy and climate change issues.

¹ Towards 2016 Ten Year Framework Social Partnership Agreement 2006-2015. The deal provides a 10-year framework to plan social and infrastructural developments.

Policy SERV15: Climate Change

It is Council policy to minimise emissions to the air of greenhouse gases in order to contribute to a reduction and avoidance of human induced climate change in accordance with the Kyoto agreement. The Council supports and is committed to the National Climate Change Strategy and in general to facilitating measures which seek to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

Policy SERV15 (a) : Climate Change

It is the policy of the Council to have regard to the National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012 and the Mid-West Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, in its decision making process.

6.13.1(ii) Regional Climate Change Strategy

The Mid West Regional Authority in conjunction with the Tipperary Energy Agency, and the Limerick/Clare Energy Agency, has prepared a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for the Mid-West Region. The recommendations of this Plan will be incorporated by the Council at all levels of its operation and as part of its Business Action Plan and Corporate Plan.

6.13.1(iii) County Climate Change Strategy

The TEA completed an Energy and Emissions Balance for County Tipperary and set out in a Climate Change Strategy for the County in 2007. The purpose of these documents is to track progress in terms of energy use and emissions and to set targets for reduction and development.

Specific Objectives

1. It is an objective of the Council to be a leader in the action against climate change and will strive to reduce energy consumption and increase the use of renewable energy in line with international targets. Related initiatives will help to sustain local communities and present opportunities for local enterprise.

2. It is an objective of the Council to develop and implement Energy Efficiency Guidelines for the promotion of energy efficiency initiatives within the town.

6.13.2 Energy Efficiency

Energy efficiency is paramount if Ireland is to assist in mitigating its vulnerability to climate change and to volatile fuel prices. The EU Directive on the Energy Performance of Buildings (EPBD), as transposed into Irish legislation in 2006, contains a range of provisions aimed at improving energy performance in residential and non-residential buildings both new build and existing. The incorporation of good design into developments is considered as being the key in achieving optimum energy performance of buildings.

The following list, although not comprehensive, are examples of the issues which applicants should have regard to in designing a building/dwelling:

- Site layout and associated bio-climatic/passive solar design measures
- Enhanced levels of insulation in walls, floors, glazing and doors
- Reduced uncontrolled air infiltration losses
- Use of healthy and controllable ventilation systems
- Heat recovery systems
- Use of daylight
- Water conservation measures
- More sustainable building materials
- Improved heat generation appliance efficiency, e.g. condensing boilers
- Intelligent heating system configuration and time /temperature /zone/ function controls
- Efficient provision of domestic hot water
- Fuel switching to low or zero CO₂ emitting fuels
- Energy efficient lighting systems
- Incorporation of renewable energy systems e.g. active solar, heat pumps, biomass
- Provision of appropriate group or district heating systems.
- Use of low energy carbon concrete as part of construction.

In the case of non-domestic buildings additional options include:

- Heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems
- Electrical energy use including motive power
- Efficient lighting systems and controls

- Building Energy Management Systems
- Occupancy Controls
- Monitoring and Targeting Systems
- Combined Heat and Power (CHP)

Policy SERV 15(b): Energy Efficiency

It is the policy of the Council to promote energy conservation and efficiency measures and to facilitate innovative building design that promotes energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources in accordance with national policy and guidelines.

6.13.3(i) Sustainability Matrix

The Council, in conjunction with the Mid West Regional Authority has developed and will implement a sustainability matrix which should be completed as part of all planning applications. This will highlight to applicants the key issues which should be addressed (energy, transport, materials etc) and present opportunities for off setting poorer aspects of the development against those aspects which achieve high standards e.g. A rated dwelling versus increased transport use or use of local resources versus no use of renewables.

Policy SERV15(c): Sustainability Matrix

It is a policy of the Council that the Sustainability Matrix contained in Appendix 6 is completed as part of all planning applications submitted.

6.13.3(ii) Building Energy Rating (BER)

As part of the EPBD Directive, a Building Energy Rating (BER) certificate, which is effectively an energy efficiency label, will be required at the point of sale or rental of a building, or on completion of a new building. The Council will continue to have regards to national policy on this issue.

- **Housing on Zoned Land**

The Planning Authority will have regard to the DoEHLG *Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, 2008* in the assessment of any proposals for residential development, including inter alia those in respect of energy efficiency, passive solar design and renewable energy sources.

6.13.4 Renewable Energy

The Council supports national and international initiatives for limiting emissions of greenhouse

gasses and encouraging the development of renewable energy sources. The Green Paper on Sustainable Energy states that a sustainable energy policy should support economic development while protecting all environmental assets and reducing the Irish contribution to global environmental problems.

New technologies have enabled the development of sustainable energy sources. These include, wind, biomass and waste, solar, hydro, combined heat and power, geothermal heat transfer, etc. The Council will seek to promote all appropriate technologies through the development control process.

Policy SERV15 will seek to act as the driving force behind Thurles achieving the “European Energy Award”. The new energy policy will be under constant review and will change and adapt to ensure that Thurles achieves as high a standard of sustainable energy use as possible.

6.13.5(i) Renewable Energy - Policy Context at a National Level

- *National Climate Change Strategy (2007-2012)* as provided for in the *National Development Plan (2007-2013)*.
- Energy White Paper “*Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland*” (2007). This sets out the broad energy policy framework for the long-term development of the energy sector, including power generation and energy use in transport and the built environment. The energy paper recognises that energy policy must make a substantial contribution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficiency improvements, changes in the fuel mix and the increased use of renewable energy.
- *National Energy Efficiency Action Plan*, submitted to the European Commission in October 2007 (due to be published in 2009).
- Amended Building Regulations for new houses and apartments built from July 2008.
- *Consultation Paper on National Energy Efficiency Action Plan for Ireland 2007-2010*.

Thurles Town Council, through the Tipperary Energy Agency has been at the forefront of renewable energy policy direction in recent years and North Tipperary is one of the pilot counties for the Sustainable Energy in Rural Village Environments (SERVE) project launched under

the EU CONCERTO Programme in 2007. It is envisaged that Thurles Town Council will continue to promote, pilot and encourage renewable energy technologies and resources during the lifetime of this Plan.

The Council will continue to take a positive and pro-active approach to the acceptance and development of renewable energy facilities, where appropriate. Applications will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Policy SERV15(d): Renewables

It is the policy of the Council to support regional, national and international initiatives for limiting emissions of greenhouse gases and to encourage the development of renewable energy sources.

Policy SERV15(e): Renewable Energy Sources

It is the policy of the Council to facilitate the continual development of renewable energy sources having regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area concerned, having particular regard to amenities, landscape sensitivities and the protection of habitats and heritage.

Specific Objectives

3. It is an objective of the Council that all housing, commercial and other developments which have a floor area of greater than 1000m² shall seek to have a minimum of 25% of all of the buildings energy requirements supplied by local renewable energy supply.

4. It is an objective of the Council to work with developers / operators of industrial / commercial buildings in the use and installation of renewable technologies in order to achieve energy savings.

5. Where development is being undertaken which lends itself to the use of district heating, that an analysis of the potential for district heating should be undertaken.

CHAPTER 8: DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Main Sections in this Chapter:

1. Introduction
2. Pre-Planning Consultation
3. Enforcement
4. Development Contributions
5. Land-use Zoning Objectives
6. Infill Development
7. Access for the Disabled
8. Development Form
9. Extension to Dwellings
10. Childcare Facilities
11. Public Open Space Requirements
12. Parking & Loading
13. Bicycles
14. Petrol and Service Stations
15. Commercial/Retail Development
16. Industrial Development Standards
17. Guidelines on Shopfronts and Signage
18. Development in the Architectural Conservation Area
19. Protected Structures
20. Inventory Records: Technical Notes
21. Development in Areas of Archaeological Interest
22. Industrial Development
23. Other Development



8.1 Introduction

Development management is a statutory process, and there is an obligation on the Councils to ensure that permissions granted under the Planning Acts are consistent with the policies and objectives in the Development Plan. This part of the Plan deals with the planning standards and design criteria, which will be applied by the Councils to development proposals within the Plan Area (see Zoning Map).

This section sets out the main guidelines in respect of the control of development, a more detailed set of guidelines is contained Chapter 9 of the County Development Plan 2010-2016. There is provision for a degree of flexibility, which will apply where proposed development is otherwise consistent with proper planning and development and the preservation and improvement of amenities in the town.

In respect of development proposals in the Architectural Conservation Area, the Councils will apply the design standard set out in the Architectural Conservation Area Design Statement

(Appendix 2) in addition to the following development management standards.

8.2 Pre-Planning Consultation

The Council in accordance with Section 247 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) provides an opportunity for applicants to engage in discussions with the Planning Authority, prior to making a planning application. Applicants are encouraged to avail of this service, particularly for large scale developments such as residential estates, quarries and wind farms, to ensure planning applications are processed in a timely manner.

It should, however, be noted that such discussions will not prejudice any subsequent decision made by Thurles Council.

8.3 Enforcement

The Planning Acts give power to the Councils to take enforcement action when development is started without planning permission, if conditions attached to permission are not complied with, or when other breaches of control have been committed.

Contraventions of planning law undermine the successful implementation of the Councils' policies and are unfair on those who have abided by planning controls.

The Councils will take enforcement action whenever it is expedient to do so, having regard to the policies in this Plan and other material considerations.

8.4 Development Contributions

Considerable sums of money have been and will continue to be expended by the Councils in the provision of public services. The Councils will require financial contributions towards the capital expenditure necessary for the provision of infrastructure works required which facilitate development. Such works include drainage, water supply, roads, footpaths and traffic management, open space and car parking.

The Councils have prepared Development Contribution Schemes under Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000. These set out the contributions required in Thurles and environs in respect of the provision of public infrastructure and facilities.

8.5 Land-Use Zoning Objectives

The purpose of land-use zoning is to indicate the planning control objectives of the Councils for all lands within the development plan boundary.

This ensures that development is guided towards the right location and enhances both commercial stability and the environment of the town.

Zone	Objective
TC	To provide for town centre facilities.
MU	To provide and improve mixed use activities.

RC	To provide and improve retail and commercial activities.
R	To preserve and enhance existing residential amenity.
R1	To provide for new residential development.
R2	To provide for new residential (low density) development.
EI	To protect and provide for educational and institutional facilities.
SP	To protect and provide for social and public facilities.
AG	To provide for agricultural needs and to protect and enhance rural amenity.
I	To provide for industrial and employment related development.

Appendix 1 lists the matrix of land-use activities referred to under each zoning objective. It indicates the acceptability or otherwise (in principle) of the specified land-uses in each zone.

The use-class Matrix is intended as a general guideline in assessing the acceptability or otherwise of development proposals, although the listed uses are not exhaustive. However, they relate only to land-use, factors such as density, height, massing, traffic generation, public health, design criteria and visual amenity, and potential nuisance by way of noise, odour and pollution are also significant and relevant to the proper planning and development of the area.

8.6 Infill development

The central area of a town by its very nature generates economic activity of all sorts, which in turn creates pressures for physical changes. It is the aim of the Council to cope with these changes in a positive way, while protecting the intrinsic merits of the town, particularly within the ACA.

Good infill development does not necessarily imply an exact copy of what was there before or what the adjacent buildings are like. It is, however, important that the overall building lines and heights are retained. Proposed infill development within the ACA will be assessed against the guidance set out in the Architectural Conservation Area Design Statement in Appendix 2.

8.7 Access for the Disabled

Access requirements for physically disabled persons should be incorporated into the design of buildings and layouts of developments likely to be used by the general public and will be a material consideration of the Planning Authority in assessing applications.

Developers should have regard to the criteria set out in the following in the preparation of development proposals

- Access for the disabled - minimum design criteria, published by the National Rehabilitation Board;
- Part M of the Building Regulations 1997 to 2000; and
- Buildings for Everyone - Access and uses for all the citizens, by the National Rehabilitation Board, 1998.

The needs of people with disabilities should be taken into account in the design and construction of footpaths and parking areas. Footpaths in developments shall be dished at junctions. Parking areas should make provision for spaces for disabled drivers and such spaces should be located in the most convenient locations for ease of use. Designated car parking spaces should be reserved for people with disabilities at a ratio of 1:10. Their location should be clearly signposted and bays marked. These spaces should be located closest to the point of entry to the building with no crossing of vehicular routes. The pedestrian route should be defined (e.g. textured surface), non slip and well lit.

Tactile indicators are becoming increasingly more common. Tactile paving surfaces can be used to convey important information to visually impaired pedestrians about their environment. The provision of tactile surfaces for the visually impaired in all developments will be required.

8.8 Development Form

The Department of Environment and Local Government has published a range of guideline documents which relate to development of residential estates. All residential developments will be assessed with regard to these guidelines and in particular the following:

- DoEHLG Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, 2008.

- DoEHLG Urban Design – Best Practice Guide, 2008.
- DoEHLG Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments, 2007.
- DoEHLG Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities, 2007.

The main objective for new residential development in Thurles is to achieve high quality living environments that are more sustainable than many previous examples and can be enjoyed by all who use them. In the majority of cases, recent housing developments have tended to be repetitive and uniform. A similar mix of houses arranged to a standardised layout around a rigid road hierarchy results in sameness that lacks any local identity. One housing area looks very similar to any other. The general objectives for new development in Thurles seek to avoid this past trend and are summarized as follows:

- To achieve a distinct sense of place - related to the existing town but with separate identity;
- To create a hierarchy of legible urban forms including distinct neighbourhoods, focal centres and landmark buildings;
- To provide for a variety of house types and densities, including provision of private, social, affordable and sheltered housing;
- To create a variety of functional and secure public spaces that interconnect with movement through the site, including formal squares, new streets, incidental open spaces and urban gardens;
- To promote clear views and easy orientation, including linkages with adjacent sites; and
- To secure a significant open space that provides both a recreational resource and a distinctive setting for new development.

Current building form in Thurles is mixed with a variety of development styles. The inherited building form is reflected on the main street and surrounding roads, where there is a mixture of two storey terraced dwellings, larger two storey buildings, and one-off and low density developments that include substantial farmhouses and more modern cottages and bungalows.

A fundamental requirement will be to ensure that new development will be integrated into the landscape setting. This can be achieved by retaining existing site features (such as trees, hedgerows, ponds, rock outcrops, etc) and by using strong structure planting that complements and reinforces the existing vegetation pattern.

The scale, massing and height of proposed development needs to be considered in relation to that of adjoining buildings, the local topography, the general pattern of heights in the area, and views and landmarks. In the majority of cases, successful development is achieved by defining and enclosing space by buildings, structures and landscape. Buildings that follow a continuous building line around a street block and contain the private space within rear gardens or courtyards are usually more successful than individual buildings that stand in the middle of a plot.

At key locations, such as street corners and other focal points, the building form should be articulated to reinforce the legibility of the layout (e.g. by varying the building height and/or architectural treatment).

Applications for new development will therefore be assessed by the Town Council according to how well they respond to these guidelines and to the following general principles:

- Buildings should generally be two or three-storeys, terraced or semi-detached. Some single storey dwellings should also be incorporated to meet the needs of all potential occupants;
- Detached buildings should be incorporated at appropriate key locations where they can be incorporated in the general form of the street through the use of boundary walls and landscaping;
- The built form should be arranged in simple blocks according to the building type and required density;
- Parking should be provided discreetly, in indented bays and parking courts wherever possible;
- Rear courtyard areas should be arranged to be over-looked by active frontages;
- The corners and other key focal points of blocks should be articulated through height and/or architectural treatment;
- The plot width for individual units should vary in order to reduce repetition; and

- Occasional non-domestic buildings will be encouraged within residential areas at suitable locations as a means of encouraging mixed-use development.

In seeking to achieve the above standards, this Plan does not seek to prescribe in detail the form and appearance of development in Thurles which may be unduly prescriptive, but instead sets out guiding principles that the Town Council wish to see embodied in new development.

8.8.1 PUBLIC REALM

The quality of the public realm depends on the arrangement of its paving, planting, lighting, shelter, signage, street furniture, and the way it is over-looked, as well as the routes passing through it and the uses next to it. To be effective, public space needs to be designed with a purpose in mind. Space left over after development, without a function, is a wasted resource and will detract from the area's sense of identity. In particular, the specifications of materials and maintenance should demonstrate high standards of visual attractiveness, durability and environmental performance. Such considerations will be essential requirements of new development in Thurles and applicants will need to demonstrate that the quality of the public realm has been fully taken into account as an integral part of any submitted schemes.

The creation of high quality housing, attractive public open spaces and a sense of community shall take priority in design considerations. New development shall follow the principles below and shall comply with the design guidelines for urban residential development set out in this Development Plan and Governmental Guidelines. Applications for new development will be assessed by the Town Council according to how well they respond to the general principles outlined below.

Preliminary design requirements for new residential developments should include:

- A comprehensive plan demonstrating layout principles, access and linkages to adjoining developed areas and towards the town centre and town facilities and also show how linkages to adjoining undeveloped lands can be accommodated.

- Consideration of the main points of access for pedestrians, cyclists, emergency vehicles, public transport, service vehicles and private motorists;
- Walking and cycling routes to local facilities such as shops, schools, health centres, etc;
- Consideration of provision for low design speed (including 20mph) and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Any off-site road improvement works, public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure that will be required;
- Impact on the existing road network in terms of environmental and travel issues;
- Lighting and landscaping for walking and cycling routes;
- The location, amount and impact of car parking; and
- Visitor parking for cars and for bicycles.

8.8.2 DENSITY

To achieve the objectives of sustainability, it is considered in this Plan that new development needs to be focused within the defined settlement boundary of Thurles, with an emphasis on high quality urban design. In the interests of land efficiency within the plan boundary it is considered necessary to apply minimum recommended densities.

In determining suitable density, the character and amenities of the site and of the surrounding area will be considered along with the need for a variety of site sizes and house designs to encourage social mix and choice. In appropriate locations higher densities will be required which must be subject to exceptional quality of design and finishes, proper provision for active and passive recreation and good living conditions, including privacy and adequate natural light, within each accommodation unit.

The Council does not wish to set minimum or maximum residential densities, but to seek efficient and sustainable development on all residential zoned land. The Council will assess appropriate density on a case by case basis, having regard to the DoEHLG Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, 2008.

The following standards may be taken as guide for developments at the initial design stage.

Table 8.2: Residential Density

Town Centre / Infill Development	Follow established plot ratios
Town Centre / New Development	25-40 units per hectare
Urban Fringe	20-25 units / hectare
Low Density Housing	12-18 units / hectare

In order to offer an effective alternative to the provision of single houses in the surrounding rural area, it is appropriate in controlled circumstances to consider proposals for developments at lower densities near the edge of the town. It is desirable that serviced sites of not less than 0.10 hectares (0.25 acres) are provided, except in exceptional circumstances. Larger sites will be required for housing exceeding 250sq.m. to allow for sufficient private amenity space, parking and landscaping.

8.8.3 Design Statements

The Council will require that all planning applications for housing schemes over 5 number houses are accompanied by a detailed design statement.

The Council will require schemes to have regard to the neighbourhood principle as set out in Chapter 3 of the Plan. In this regard, the statement shall take account of the following design principles.

Context: Developments should take account of the characteristics of the site, the natural and built environment, views and vistas.

Natural Features: Developments should seek the retention of natural features, trees, hedgerows, watercourses, landform features.

Traffic Management: Developments should ensure that natural traffic calming is incorporated within the scheme. Long straight roads and artificial traffic calming measures should be avoided.

Permeability: Developments should seek to ensure integration and linkages with core community facilities and should ensure access provision for pedestrians and cyclists.

House Design: Dwellings should be designed taking reference from the prevailing character of the town. The development should also make provision for a mix of house designs to accommodate different family types.

Public Open Space: Public open space should incorporate high quality hard and soft landscaping which creates areas for active use and visual interest.

The Council will require that a development proposing five or more dwellings incorporates a minimum of 15% of the gross site area as useable public open space.

Private Open Space: Private Open Space shall be designed for maximum privacy and orientated for maximum sunshine and shelter.

The provision of adequate private open space is essential for the privacy and amenity of occupants of residential developments.

The following quantitative minimum standards will be applied to housing developments:

Table 8.3: Private Open Space: Dwellings

Dwellings	Square Metre
3-4 bed	65 sq.m.
1-2 bed	48 sq.m.

The provision of private open space for apartment developments will require a more creative approach. Private open space should be provided in the form of communal landscaped courtyards, roof gardens, balconies or winter gardens (glass screened areas separated from living areas).

The Council will require developments meet the following minimum quantitative standards for apartment developments:

Table 8.4: Private Open Space for Apartments

Town Centre	1 bed	10 sq.m.
	2-3 bed	15-20sqm.
Edge of Centre	1 bed	20 sq.m.
	2-3 bed	30-40 sq.m.

Overlooking: Residential development shall be designed to ensure sufficient privacy for occupants. In general, the Council will require a

separation distance of 22m metres between first floor opposing windows. The Council may consider accepting a reduced standard subject to innovative design measures for window design, orientation of building and habitable spaces.

Phasing: Large scale residential estates shall be designed to ensure the development can be constructed in distinct phases. Each phase shall incorporate the full completion of open space and infrastructural services.

Building Heights: A variety of building heights will be encouraged in all new developments / redevelopment. Key considerations in establishing appropriate building heights will be:

- i. The scale of the existing streetscape and existing building heights in the surrounding areas.
- ii. Assessment of integration with the existing streetscape in the area
- iii. The degree of overlooking and any resulting loss of privacy.
- iv. The degree of over-shadowing and any loss of light that may arise.
- v. Impacts arising on the streetscapes of Thurles, including the degree of obtrusion of the building on the skyline.
- vi. The extent to which the building detracts from important landmarks.
- vii. The effect on the microclimate in the vicinity of the proposed development.
- viii. The degree to which the building may contribute to the overall townscape. In particular, care will be required in the treatment of roof-tops and all machine/mechanical rooms will need to be adequately screened or designed as an integral part of the building.

8.8.4 BIO-DIVERSITY

Design layouts should aim to enhance and protect the biodiversity resources of the area. This can be achieved through the following:

- i. Retain and enhance existing vegetation, including trees, shrubs and hedgerows, wherever possible and incorporate these into the development.
- ii. Networks of wildlife sites are more ecologically valuable than isolated wildlife areas. Where possible create linking corridors of habitats.
- iii. Use native planting species of local provenance (i.e. grown locally rather than imported). Trees and shrubs that grow

naturally in the surrounding countryside are often the best choice for the area.

- iv. Where possible and appropriate avoid the culverting of watercourses
- v. Where possible set aside maintenance-free / semi-natural areas and avoid or limit the use of herbicides and pesticides.

8.8.5 Apartments

The Council in assessing new apartment developments will have regard to “Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2007”.

The Council will require developments meet the following minimum standards:

Table 9.5: Minimum floor areas for Apartments.

One bedroom	45sq.m.
Two bedroom	73sq.m.
Three bedrooms	90 sq.m.

The Council will also apply the following standards for apartment developments:

- Dual aspect apartments should be the standard design approach to maximise sunlight. Where it is not possible to incorporate dual aspect designs (for example corner units) single aspect apartments should ensure that the main living areas face south.
- All apartment units should include storage provision for bulky items in addition to the minimum floor area specified above. This storage provision may be provided in a communal areas (e.g. at basement level).
- Developments should include provision for storage and collection of waste materials.
- Developments should be provided with the potential for locating communal satellite dishes (at roof level) to avoid subsequent demand for individual satellite dishes.

8.8.6 Residential Estate Names

The Council will require estate names to be agreed with the local authority. The Council will require estate names to take account of local distinctiveness and character and use the Irish language where possible or appropriate.

8.9 Extensions to Dwellings

The Council will seek to implement the following guidelines in respect of residential extensions:

- (i) The extension should generally be subordinate to the main building.
- (ii) The form and design should integrate with the main building, following window proportions, detailing and finishes, including texture, materials and colour.
- (iii) A pitched roof will be required except on some small single storey extensions.
- (iv) Designs should have regard for the amenities of the neighboring residents, in terms of light privacy.
- (v) Dormer windows should be subordinate in design, set back from the eaves line and built to match the existing roof.
- (vi) The ground floor of the extension will be required to be accessible to all users.
- (vii) Extensions are generally not allowed to be built over underground infrastructure.

8.10 Childcare Facilities

The Planning Authorities will take into account of the provisions of the *Childcare Facilities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2001) and the *Childcare Strategy for North Tipperary 2007*. In assessing applications for childcare facilities in existing residential business areas, the Local Authority will look favourably on proposals that protect the character and amenities of the area and provide for high quality childcare facilities.

Requirement : One childcare facility with places for 20 children for each 75 dwellings.

Locations : Commercial parks, adjacent to schools, on land zoned for Town Centre and Residential purposes.

Facilities : Should be accessible to all groups, should include safe and convenient parking for staff and customers and a safe drop off area for parents. Facilities should have an outdoor area for outdoor playtime.

8.11 Open Space

8.11.1 Public Open Space

Public open space is one of the key elements in defining the quality of the residential environment. It provides passive as well as active amenity and has important ecological and environmental aspects. Open space standards shall comply with National Guidelines and best practice as appropriate. In calculating the area of open space, the area of roads, grass margins, roundabouts, footpaths, left over areas, backlands, buffer zones around ecological monuments and visibility splays shall not be taken into account.

The Council will require all open space provision to take account of the following principles:

- i) Open space should be provided on a hierarchical basis in a comprehensive and linked way, designed as an integral part of the development
- ii) Areas should be of demonstrable recreational or amenity value. Small dysfunctional open spaces should be avoided.
- iii) The majority of open space should be multi-functional and should include space for informal amenity, children's play areas and passive amenity.
- iv) Areas should be easily and safely accessible from all dwellings which the space is designed to serve.
- v) The design, location and appearance of open space areas should have regard to the amenities of nearby dwellings, for example areas where children play should be overlooked by the fronts of nearby dwellings to provide for maximum surveillance and overlooking
- vi) Open space areas shall be suitably proportioned. Narrow tracts, backlands areas, steep gradients or peripheral areas will not be acceptable.
- vii) Public open space should not be located so close to adjoining dwellings so as to cause undue noise or nuisance to existing or proposed residents.
- viii) Attractive natural landscape features should be protected and incorporated into open space areas, for example trees, streams and hedgerows. Tree planting should normally form an integral part of such open space areas.

- ix) Hard landscape elements such as paving, cobbled areas etc should be incorporated into the design and presentation of open areas.
- x) Developers should consider providing a variety of open spaces. These should include both formal and informal semi-natural areas, such as wetlands, woodlands, meadows, green corridors, as well as formal gardens, play areas and seating areas.

Local Areas for Play:

LAPs are small areas (approximately 100 sq. m) of unserviced play space located within 1-minute walking time (60m) of houses. These areas cater for 4-6 year old children with a limited amount of static play equipment provided. Surface will be grassed. The area should be fenced with a gate to prevent dogs accessing the site, but designed to enable visibility from adjacent areas and nearby housing.

Local Equipped Areas for Play:

LEAPs are unsupervised play areas for 4-8 year old children located within 5-minutes walking time (240m) of houses. The area will provide at least five types of play equipment with seating for adults. The surface should be of grass, bark chip or rubber carpet. Low fencing will allow supervision from nearby houses.

The Council may consider accepting financial contributions in lieu of actual provision, in order to improve the quality of existing open space or development of new public space.

8.11.1 (i) Management Plan for Public Open Spaces

Developers will be required to make suitable provision for the future management and maintenance of open space. Where spaces and facilities are not taken in charge by the Council alternative arrangements should be made through Management Company's or as otherwise agreed with the Planning Authority.

8.11.2 Private Open Space

A minimum of 48 sq. m private open space will be required for 1-2 bed units. Each subsequent bedroom will require an additional 10 sq. m.

Private open space for apartments in the town centre will be:

- 1-bed apartment – 10 sq. m.
- 2/3-bed-apartment – 15-20 sq. m.

On the edge of the town the private open space will be:

- 1-bed apartment – 20 sq. m.
- 2/3-bed-apartment – 30-40 sq. m.

8.12 Traffic, Parking and Loading

The Council will require that proposals for all new developments demonstrate that a safe access and egress can be provided to ensure traffic safety is not compromised.

8.12.1 Sight Lines in Urban Areas

In urban areas visibility splays for entrance will be determined on a site specific basis subject to:

- Traffic Safety
- Need to promote in-fill development
- The need to avoid undue disturbance to adjoining properties.

8.12.2 Traffic Impact Assessment

The Council will require that Traffic Impact Assessments (TIA's) are carried out where a proposed development may significantly impact on the capacity of the surrounding road network.

The TIA shall be prepared in accordance with the "Traffic Management Guidelines Manual, 2003" published by the Department of Transport 2003 and the "Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines 2007" published by the NRA.

The following are the minimum thresholds of developments which will require a TIA:

- Residential Development over 200 dwellings
- Retail and Leisure Developments over 2,500 sq.m.
- Industrial Developments over 5,000 sq.m.
- Office, Hospitals and Educational Developments over 2,500sq.m.
- Warehousing Developments over 10,000 sqm.

TIA's will also be required where there is a 10% increase in traffic or a 5% increase in congested areas.

TIA's will also be required for sub-threshold development where the Council considers that a development may have an impact on the carrying capacity of the surrounding network.

8.12.3 Road Safety Audits

The Council will require that a Road Safety Audit is carried out where a development is likely to have a significant impact on a National Road or Regional Road.

Road Safety Audits shall be carried out independently by assessors approved by the NRA in accordance with the NRA "Road Safety Audit Guidelines".

8.12.4 Parking

The Council's car parking requirements are set out in following table. In addition to the general car parking standards required, service bays may also be required.

The Council will require proposals for development to be accompanied by a schedule of car parking standards and full details of services areas/delivery areas. Proposals for delivery areas shall include an illustration of turning movements.

Where the developer is unable to meet the requirements relating to car parking, a contribution, commensurate with the shortfall in spaces, shall be paid to the Councils to facilitate the provision of car parking facilities elsewhere.

Car parking should be located where possible behind established building lines in the interest of good townscape. Where parking is proposed to the front of a building, it is important that planting and boundary walls/railings are used to maintain the visual appearance of the area. In town centre mixed-use development proposals, consideration will be given to dual parking where peak times do not coincide.

Table 8.3: Car Parking Standards

Land-use	Standards
Cinema	1 space per 3 seats
Bars/Restaurant/Hotel	1 space per 15 sq. m. public area
Clinics/Surgeries	2 spaces per consulting room
Caravan Park	1 space per unit of accommodation
Crèche	1 per employee & 0.25 per child
Dance halls/Discos	1 space per 10 sq. m.

Dwelling (up to 3-bedrooms)	1 space per dwelling unit
Dwelling (4-bedrooms or more)	2 spaces per unit
Hotel/Motel/Guest House	1 space for every 2 bed spaces
Leisure Centre	1 space per 50 sq. m.
Light Industry	1 space per 35 sq. m.
Manufacturing	1 space per 35 sq. m.
Nursing Homes	1 space per 4 residents
Offices	1 space per 35 sq. m.
Retail Shops/Supermarkets	1 space per 20 sq. m.
Retail Warehousing	1 space per 35 sq. m.
Science & Technology Based Enterprises/Business Park	1 space per 25 sq. m.
Warehousing	1 space per 100 sq. m.
Other	Individual assessment

In case of a use not specified in the table, the Council will determine the parking requirements.

Where parking is associated with late night uses such as places of entertainment, car parking should be sited so as to reduce noise disturbance to adjoining residents to a reasonable level.

Note: Points 1-4 below apply.

- (i) Each car space shall be 4.8m x 2.5m with 6.1m wide circulation aisles.
- (ii) Disabled spaces shall be 3m wide, with one space per 20 provision.
- (iii) Loading bays should be generally 9m x 5m (but at least 6m x 3m).
- (iv) In case of a use not specified in Table 8.3, the Councils will determine the parking requirements.
- (v) Parent and child spaces.

8.13 Bicycles

Cycling is a viable alternative to the car for access within the town of Thurles. In order to promote its use and in support of the Councils' aim for sustainable development, the Councils will require that secure cycle parking facilities are provided for new



development where possible.

8.14 Petrol & Service Stations

Thurles is reasonably well served as regards retail petrol outlets. When assessing any future planning applications, the Councils will consider the need for such provision, but will resist proposals where current provision is considered adequate.

Petrol stations often take the role of providing general convenience retail provision for a town. While, this role may be important, the retail provision of petrol stations can have a detrimental impact on vitality of the town centre.

The Council, in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines, 2005 will generally require that net retail floor space shall not exceed 100sq.m. Where floor space exceeds this requirement, the development shall be subject to the sequential test approach and a Retail Impact Assessment will be required to demonstrate that the development would not impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre.

The Council will require that proposals for Petrol Stations also comply with S.I. 311 of the 1979 Dangerous Substances (Retail and Private Petroleum Stores Regulations), and the following:

- A minimum of frontage of 30m within a 50/60 KPH area and 45m in other speed limit area.
- A minimum distance of 7m from the pump island to the road boundary
- Two access points, between 7-9m wide, with a minimum junction radius of 10.7m
- A minimum distance of 50m from entrance to nearest major junction and 25m to nearest minor junction;
- A footpath of 2m wide with 0.5m high wall along the front boundary;
- A petrol/oil interceptor to the surface water drainage;
- Adequate facilities for storage of refuse and waste on site;
- A scheme of landscaping to protect visual amenities.

8.15 Commercial/Retail Development

The location of new retail development is crucial to the long-term vitality of Thurles. Proposals for

new retail development that is located outside the central area will be assessed against the following criteria and should demonstrate whether or not the proposal would:

- ◆ Undermine or have an adverse impact on the quality of the town centre
- ◆ Diminish the range of shops in the town centre;
- ◆ Ensure good access by car, walking, cycling and where possible by public transport;
- ◆ Link effectively with the existing town centre

Plot ratios

Plot ratios will be influenced by general planning standards and Section 5.2 of Residential Density – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, 1999), as amended, but will generally be:

Town centres: plot ratio 1.0 - 2.0

Town Suburbs: plot ratio of 0.25 - 0.5

Site Coverage shall be a maximum of 70% in town centre and commercial zoned areas.

8.15.1 Access

- Main access roadways, side roads and cul-de-sac roads should have a minimum carriageway width of 7.5 metres.
- A 2 metre wide footpath should be provided and should be separated from the carriageway by a 1.3 metre wide grass strip.
- Each site will generally be restricted to a single access.

8.15.2 Individual Site Layouts

- Adequate space should be provided for the loading and unloading of goods and the manoeuvring of vehicles within the site and clear of the public road – preferably behind the building line.
- Adequate turning space must be provided within each site.
- Areas between the building and the roadside boundary may include car parking spaces provided there is an acceptable landscaping scheme.
- Set back from nearest edge of roadside boundaries should be incorporated into all site layouts as follows:
 - County Roads – 18m
 - Regional Roads – 20m
 - National Secondary Roads – 30m
 - National Primary Roads – 30m
 - New National Primary Roads – 90m

(Note: the development may be located closer to the New National Primary Road if the applicant/developer can show that acceptable noise levels can be achieved, but in any event shall not be less than 50m).

8.15.3 Design

- A very high quality of commercial/retail design should be incorporated into the buildings, which should also include an architecturally pleasing entrance feature.
- Overly long rectangular buildings will not generally be acceptable - the impact of these structures will be expected to be softened by breaking up the mass into appropriately stepped sections.
- All external walls should be suitably clad or fully rendered and painted, save for where brick or similar finished material acceptable to the Planning Authority (such as forticrete block-work) is proposed.
- In the case of developments of two or more buildings, a uniform design, including architectural treatment, roof profiles, boundary fences, landscaping, car parking and building lines, is essential.
- Building heights should not generally exceed a maximum height of 10.5 metres and roof finishes should generally be darker than the side, rear and front elevations. Roof profiles should be varied to introduce interest and visual amenity.
- Access for the disabled is a general requirement and must conform to the recommendations set down in Technical Guidance Document M of the Building Regulations 1997, or as amended.

8.15.4 Car Parking & Circulation

- All new developments must provide car-parking spaces as set out in Section 8.11.
- Parking areas should be reserved solely for the parking of vehicles and should not be used for storage of materials or goods associated with the development, or for the parking of goods or other heavy vehicles.
- Car parking facilities for visitors and for disabled drivers should be provided and separate staff car parking should be provided and identified where feasible.
- Parking should also be separately provided for articulated and fixed axle vehicles/trucks and these should be provided separate to the car parking requirements.
- Turning Circles.

8.15.5 Fencing & Landscaping

- Proposals should be accompanied by a suitable landscaping scheme to soften the visual appearance of the buildings and to screen adjoining properties, views from public areas such as roads, footpaths etc.
- Details of boundary treatment and landscaping should accompany applications. Existing trees and hedgerows should be protected.
- Landscaping proposals should provide for planting in an informal pattern with trees and shrubs of varieties common to the surrounding area.
- All electricity and telephone service lines should be laid underground.
- No security fencing should be installed forward of the front building line of any industrial or warehouse facility.
- Definition of roadside boundaries should be by way of low walls (not to exceed 1.0 metre in height) or by means of planting and landscaping of the boundary.

8.15.6 Use

- Full details of the proposed uses should be submitted with the planning application if known. Changes in use may require planning permission in accordance with the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

8.15.7 Storage of Goods & Fuels

- Goods, including raw materials, manufactured goods, packaging, crates etc., should be stored or displayed only within the enclosed building area. Any proposal to use external space for storage or display should be submitted to the Planning Authority for permission.
- All outdoor storage and other areas, including bin storage, oil tanks etc., should be located behind the building line and be fully screened by screen fencing or walls 2.0 metres in height.
- All over-ground oil, chemical storage tanks should be adequately bunded to protect against spillage. Bunding should be impermeable and capable of retaining a volume equal to 1.5 times the capacity of the largest tank. Filling and off-take points should be located within the bund.

8.15.8 Drainage

- All domestic sewage generated by the development shall be separately collected and discharged to the public sewage system where available.
- All uncontaminated roof and surface water drainage shall be collected via a separate storm

water system and discharged to public storm sewer, the adjacent watercourse or soakways within the site.

- Interceptor traps shall be fitted to the storm water drainage system to prevent accidental spillage of oils, grease, solvents or other contaminated matter entering the watercourses or soakways.
- Detailed drawings of foul and storm water drainage systems shall accompany the planning application. Drawings should include layout and longitudinal sections together with gradients, pipe diameters and invert levels and location of manholes and interceptor traps.
- Trade effluent shall only be discharged in accordance with the terms of a current licence granted under the relevant provisions of the Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts 1977 – 1990, as amended.

8.15.9 Water Supply

- Water supply shall be metered (individual) and connected to the existing public supply.
- All valves and hydrants should be set in proper chambers and fitted with covers and frames and no part of the development should be greater than 50m from a fire hydrant. Hydrants should be valved, with “London Round Thread” connectors.
- Drawings submitted as part of a planning application shall show details of the water main layout to include details in respect of pipe class and diameter, location of all valves and hydrants and stopcocks, together with details of on-site water storage, including storage for fire fighting purposes and water treatment facilities.

8.15.10 Lighting

- Impacts resulting from lighting of sites shall be minimised. A detailed study may be required prior to the commencement of development to outline probable impacts and suggest ameliorative measures.

8.15.11 Noise Levels

- Noise levels arising from any industrial development should not exceed 55 dB(A) Leq between 08.00 to 18.00 hours. Monday to Saturday inclusive, but excluding public holidays, when measured at any point along the site boundary. At all other times the noise level should not exceed 45 dB(A) Leq when measured at the same locations. No pure tones should be audible at any time.

8.15.12 Advertising

- A co-ordinated signage system throughout will be encouraged by the Council, signage should be restricted to a single sign identifying all occupiers of the site.
- No advertising signs should be erected on any premises, or within its curtilage, without a prior specific grant of permission from the Planning Authority except where it is exempt under the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001. All signage on the sides of buildings shall be subject to a prior grant of planning permission.

8.15.13 Retail Warehousing

The assessment of retail warehousing will be on an individual basis, but in any event shall have regard to the development management criteria set out in Section 8.16 below.

8.16 Industrial Development Standards

The following factors will be taken into account in the assessment of all applications for the development of new industrial (light, general and warehousing) space throughout the town.

8.16.1 Access

- Main access roadways, side roads and cul-de-sac roads should have a minimum carriageway width of 7.5 metres.
- A 2 metre wide footpath should be provided and should be separated from the carriageway by a 1.3 metre wide grass strip.
- Each site will generally be restricted to a single access.

8.16.2 Individual Site Layouts

- Adequate space should be provided for the loading and unloading of goods and the manoeuvring of vehicles within the site and clear of the public road – preferably behind the building line.
- Adequate turning space must be provided within each site for 15 metre articulated vehicles and 9 metre fixed axle vehicles.
- Areas between the building and the roadside boundary may include car-parking spaces provided there is an acceptable landscaping scheme.
- Set back from nearest edge of roadside boundaries should be incorporated into all site layouts as follows:
 - County Roads – 18m
 - Regional Roads – 20m
 - National Secondary Roads – 30m

- National Primary Roads – 30m
- New National Primary Roads – 90m

(Note: the development may be located closer to the New National Primary Road if the applicant/developer can show that acceptable noise levels can be achieved, but in any event shall not be less than 50m).

8.16.3 Design

- A very high quality of industrial design should be incorporated into the buildings, which should also include an architecturally pleasing entrance feature.
- Overly long rectangular buildings will not generally be acceptable - the impact of these structures will be expected to be softened by breaking up the mass into appropriately stepped sections.
- All external walls should be suitably clad or fully rendered and painted, save for where brick or similar finished material acceptable to the Planning Authority (such as forticrete block-work) is proposed.
- In the case of developments of two or more industrial or warehouse buildings, a uniform design, including architectural treatment, roof profiles, boundary fences, landscaping, car parking and building lines, is essential.
- Building heights should not generally exceed a maximum height of 10.5 metres and roof finishes should generally be darker than the side and front elevations. Roof profiles should be varied to introduce interest and visual amenity.
- Access for the disabled is a general requirement and must conform to the recommendations set down in Technical Guidance Document M of the Building Regulations 1997, or as amended.

8.16.4 Car Parking & Circulation

- All new developments must provide car-parking spaces as set out in Section 8.11.
- Parking areas should be reserved solely for the parking of vehicles and should not be used for storage of materials or goods associated with the development, or for the parking of goods or other heavy vehicles.
- Car parking facilities for visitors and for disabled drivers should be provided, and separate staff car parking should be provided and identified where feasible.
- Parking should also be separately provided for articulated and fixed axle vehicles/trucks and these should be provided separate to the car parking requirements.

8.16.5 Fencing & Landscaping

- Proposals should be accompanied by a suitable landscaping scheme to soften the visual appearance of the buildings and to screen adjoining properties, views from public areas such as roads, footpaths etc.
- Details of boundary treatment and landscaping should accompany applications. Existing trees and hedgerows should be protected.
- Landscaping proposals should provide for planting in an informal pattern with trees and shrubs of varieties common to the surrounding area.
- All electricity and telephone service lines should be laid underground.
- No security fencing should be installed forward of the front building line of any industrial or warehouse facility.
- Definition of roadside boundaries should be by way of low walls (not to exceed 1.0 metre in height) or by means of planting and landscaping of the boundary.

8.16.6 Use

- Full details of the proposed use, including industrial processes involved, any toxic materials, chemicals or solvents used, should be submitted with the planning application if known. Changes in use may require planning permission in accordance with the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

8.16.7 Storage of Goods & Fuels

- Goods, including raw materials, manufactured goods, packaging, crates etc., should be stored or displayed only within the enclosed factory area. Any proposal to use external space for storage or display should be submitted to the Planning Authority for permission.
- All outdoor storage and other areas, including bin storage, oil tanks etc., should be located behind the building line and be fully screened by screen fencing or walls 2.0 metres in height.
- All over-ground oil, chemical storage tanks should be adequately bunded to protect against spillage. Bunding should be impermeable and capable of retaining a volume equal to 1.5 times the capacity of the largest tank. Filling and off-take points should be located within the bund.

8.16.8 Drainage

- All domestic sewage generated by the development shall be separately collected and discharged to the public sewage system where available.

- All uncontaminated roof and surface water drainage shall be collected via a separate storm water system and discharged to public storm sewer, the adjacent watercourse or soakways within the site.
- Interceptor traps shall be fitted to the storm water drainage system to prevent accidental spillage of oils, grease, solvents or other contaminated matter entering the watercourses or soakways.
- Detailed drawings of foul and storm water drainage systems shall accompany the planning application. Drawings should include layout and longitudinal sections together with gradients, pipe diameters and invert levels and location of manholes and interceptor traps.
- Trade effluent shall only be discharged in accordance with the terms of a current licence granted under the relevant provisions of the Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts 1977 – 1990, as amended.
- Detailed calculations, specifications and drawings for Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS).

8.16.9 Water Supply

- Water supply shall be metered and connected to the existing public supply (individual basis).
- All valves and hydrants should be set in proper chambers and fitted with covers and frames and no part of the development should be greater than 50m from a fire hydrant. Hydrants should be valved, with “London Round Thread” connectors.
- Drawings submitted as part of a planning application shall show details of the water main layout to include details in respect of pipe class and diameter, location of all valves and hydrants and stopcocks, together with details of on-site water storage, including storage for fire fighting purposes and water treatment facilities.

8.16.10 Lighting

- Impacts resulting from lighting of sites shall be minimised. A detailed study may be required prior to the commencement of development to outline probable impacts and suggest ameliorative measures.

8.16.11 Noise Levels

- Noise levels arising from any industrial development should not exceed 55 dB(A) Leq between 08.00 to 18.00 hours. Monday to Saturday inclusive, but excluding public holidays, when measured at any point along the site boundary. At all other times the noise level

should not exceed 45 dB(A) Leq when measured at the same locations. No pure tones should be audible at any time.

8.16.12 Advertising

- A co-ordinated signage system throughout industrial estates will be encouraged by the Council. Within the curtilage of industrial estates, signage should be restricted to a single sign identifying all occupiers of the site at the entrance and to fingerpost signs at junctions throughout the estate where such are considered necessary by the Council.
- No advertising signs should be erected on any premises, or within its curtilage, without a prior specific grant of permission from the Planning Authority except where it is exempt under the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001. All signage on the sides of buildings shall be subject to a prior grant of planning permission.

8.17 Guidelines on Shopfronts and Signage

Shopfronts in Thurles are often an integral and harmonious part of the streets. The variety of different shop designs and colour is undoubtedly one of the most attractive features of the town.

Traditional shop fronts display the vernacular architecture of Thurles and are an important expression of local history. The name and signboard of a traditional shop front may be identified with a particular family style and tradition.

The use of Irish names and signs that include the Irish language will be supported in line with the other policies set out in the development plan.

8.17.1 Features of Traditional Shopfronts

The traditional shop front typically takes the form of an entablature resting on pilasters, or more rarely columns.

Highly decorative vertical mullions (vertical divisions between the panes), dividing the windows, are a common feature of the traditional Irish shop front.

The hand-painted lettering of the name board is a special Irish craft and is one of the most important components of the traditional Irish shop front. Small hand-painted advertisements on walls, old enamelled signs and hanging signs representing trades are features which add to the

decorative quality of buildings. Shopfronts are traditionally painted in strong colours.

8.17.2 Features to avoid in design of shopfronts

The following guidelines set out the important elements of traditional shop fronts:

- Over use of signage
- Large undivided window displays
- Internally illuminated signage
- External security shutters
- Murals on gable walls. However, architectural innovation can still exist within this framework, thus avoiding hollow pastiche styles.

8.17.3 Signage

- Signage on a building shall be confined to fascia and one projecting sign;
- Signs shall be hand painted and not internally illuminated;
- Signage shall not interfere with doors or windows and shall not project above eaves level or otherwise obtrude on the skyline;
- Freestanding signs shall be licensed and sandwich boards allowed where pedestrian safety or amenity are not compromised;
- Miscellaneous advertising such as banners, flags, spotlights and neon moving message signs will not normally be permitted.

8.17.4 Advertising structures and signs

The following design guidelines are in support of the general Policy relating to advertising. Advertising structures can be divided into two categories:

1. Signs to advertise a business, goods or service.
2. Hoardings or poster boards erected or rented by specialist firms.

The erection of signs is a necessary part of commercial life and in the interest of traffic direction.

The following guidelines will be used in assessing planning applications in order to control such development:-

- Well designed and suitably located signage will be favorably considered;
- Each application will be considered on its merits having regard to traffic safety, visual amenity and commercial interests;
- In line with Department of the Environment guidelines, strict control in

relation to advertising along National Routes will be exercised in the interest of traffic safety.

- Tourism signage shall conform to the Department of the Environment "Criteria for the Provision of Tourist Attraction and Accommodation Signs".
- In scenic areas or tourist routes advertising for tourist attractions will be permitted where it does not impair visual amenity.
- The Council will promote the use of composite advance signs to avoid a proliferation of competing commercial signs.

Details of shop-front signs are set out in Appendix 2 (Architectural Conservation Area Design Statement), but can be summarised as follows:-

- ◆ Shop-front signs shall be confined to fascia level,
- ◆ Projecting signs will be confined to one, located at fascia level,
- ◆ Internally illuminated plastic box signs will not be approved;
- ◆ Projecting or hanging signs illuminated by spotlight may be permitted where visual clutter does not occur, and
- ◆ Free-standing signs such as sandwich boards will not be permitted on footpaths, where they cause an obstruction to pedestrian use.

Note: unauthorised signs on private property will be subject to enforcement procedures and the Council will remove such signs on public roads.

8.17.5 Poster boards

Poster boards constitute one of the most obtrusive elements of advertising, and it is undesirable that hoardings or structures be located in the open countryside, approach roads to the town or within the ACA. Alternatively, poster boards forming temporary screening for derelict or vacant sites where development is taking place can carry a useful function. Boards fitting this description should not exceed 30% of the wall or screening on which it is mounted.

8.18 Development in the Architectural Conservation Area

The Councils consider that this area shall be subject to special control, and detailed guidance is therefore provided in Appendix 2 of this Plan.

All new development proposals will be assessed against the design guidance contained in the Architectural Conservation Area Design Statement.

An objective to preserve the character of an ACA, once approved by the elected members of a council, carries through from development plan to development plan and remains an objective of the planning authority unless subsequently modified by the elected members.

The legislation relating to ACAs and ASPCs is contained in Chapter 2 of Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000. ACA legislation may be used to protect the following:

- (a) groups of structures of distinctiveness or visual richness or historical importance;
- (b) the setting and exterior appearance of structures that are of special interest, but the interiors of which do not merit protection;
- (c) the setting of a protected structure where this is more extensive than its curtilage;
- (d) designed landscapes where these contain groups of structures as in, for example, urban parks, the former demesnes of country houses and groupings of archaeological or industrial remains;
- (e) groups of structures which form dispersed but unified entities but which are not within the attendant grounds of a single dominant protected structure.

In the course of preparing the Thurles Town & Environs Development Plan an ACA was selected and designated, as indicated in the table below. The historic character and appearance

The Plan will provides policy support to protect, conserve and improve, where appropriate, the existing architectural and civic character of the various ACAs (Appendix 2).

8.19 Protected Structures

The provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 will guide the assessment of development proposals affecting the character or appearance of a protected structure or the curtilage of such a structure, in addition to the same guidelines contained in Appendix 2. However, unauthorised removal or demolition of part or all of a protected structure is liable to result in the Councils initiating enforcement action.

Planning authorities have a clear obligation to create a record of protected structures (RPS) which includes all structures or parts of structures in their functional areas which, in their opinion, are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest. This record forms part of a Planning Authority's Development Plan under the provisions of Sections 51-55 of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

Development plans must include objectives for the protection of such structures and the preservation of the character of such areas to ensure proper and sustainable planning and development;

New responsibilities are given to the owners and occupiers of protected structures to maintain them and planning authorities have additional powers to ensure that buildings are not endangered either directly or through neglect. Financial assistance, in the form of conservation grants, is available from planning authorities to assist in this process;

Where a structure is protected, the protection includes the structure, its interior and the land within its curtilage and other structures within that curtilage (including their interiors) and all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of all these structures. All works which would materially affect the character of a protected structure, or a proposed protected structure, will require planning permission.

8.19.1 Status of Protected Structures

A 'protected structure' is defined as any structure or specified part of a structure, which is included in the RPS. A structure is defined by the 2000 Act as 'any building, structure, excavation, or other thing constructed or made on, in or under any land, or any part of a structure'. In relation to a protected structure or proposed protected structure, the meaning of the term 'structure' is expanded to include:

- ◆ The interior of the structure;
- ◆ The land lying within the curtilage of the structure;
- ◆ Any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors, AND

- ◆ All fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of the above structures.

8.19.2 Purpose of a declaration

Where a building is a protected structure or a proposed protected structure, works that would normally be exempt from the requirement for planning permission are NOT exempted development where they would materially affect the character of the protected structure or any element of it which contributes to its special interest.

Under Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, an owner or occupier of a protected structure may make a written request to the planning authority for a declaration as to the type of works the authority considers would or would not materially affect the character of the protected structure. The Authority has 12 weeks in which to respond. It should be noted that Section 57 does not apply to proposed protected structures or to buildings within ACAs that are not individually recorded on the RPS.

Declarations may be used as a formal advice mechanism for the owner and occupier of a protected structure as issues arise which require clarification. Declarations can be issued to permit specific minor works, including enabling works that, in the opinion of the planning authority, would not materially affect the character of the protected structure. However, it is always preferable to inspect, assess and give formal recommendations for the complete structure where this is feasible, to ensure that its full character is taken into account in the declaration.

It is not necessary for the applicant to have any specific works in mind when applying for a declaration. Indeed, if the owner or occupier is contemplating major works to a protected structure, pre-planning discussions with the planning authority may be advisable and, depending on the outcome, the submission of a planning application.

A declaration must not exempt works that would have a material effect on the character of a protected structure. A declaration cannot exempt development that would not otherwise be exempt from a requirement for planning permission.

Declarations relating to places of public worship are subject to special considerations.

8.20 Inventory Records: Technical Notes

8.20.1 Categories of Special Interest

The system of rating the buildings has been used in accordance with the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage Guidelines.

It should be noted, in this regard, that the inventory of Thurles was undertaken largely on the basis of physical, architectural and fabric evidence and therefore certain buildings that may only be of social or cultural importance may not have been noted. This is in accordance with the manner in which Interim County Surveys are undertaken.

1. Architectural Interest

- A wide range of characteristics and features can contribute to the architectural interest of a protected structure or ACA, for example:
- A positive contribution to its setting;
- A reference to previous building styles, street lines and plot sizes relate to the communal history of settlement in a town;
- An exemplar of good-quality architectural design;
- The use of traditional construction methods and materials;
- The form and proportions of a building: volume or massing, plot size, boundary alignments and street-frontage alignment of the built environment can be part of the heritage of an urban area.

Urban design schemes initiated in the past by civic authorities or landlords are also significant.

2. Historical Interest

Characteristics and features that contribute to the historic interest of a protected structure or ACA could be as follows:

- Evidence of the plots, boundaries and streets in towns and cities contain a record of past urban life;
- Historical street patterns and squares, market places and bridging points;
- Industrial heritage value, for example the remains of small local enterprises such as mills and maltings;
- Large-scale purpose-built complexes.

Buildings themselves can be interpreted as a historic document that illustrates the effects of

change over time. The fabric of a structure or an area may contain evidence of its former use, style or symbolic meaning.

3. Archaeological Interest

Characteristics and features that contribute to the archaeological interest of a protected structure or ACA could be as follows:

- Burgage plots and evidence of medieval street patterns;
- The remains of fabric that dates to pre-1700 (and may be included on the Sites and Monuments Record);
- Defensive structures, enclosing walls and field patterns.

It should be noted that these structures can be a combination of above-ground and below-ground structures.

4. Scientific Interest

Characteristics and features that contribute to the scientific interest of a protected structure or ACA could be as follows:

- Design patterns in the landscape or townscape that relate to geophysical or astronomical alignments;
- Examples of particular ecosystems or species, such as arboreta, botanical gardens, or other collections of exotic or rare plant species;
- An association with scientific measurement, for example an OS benchmark.

5. Technical Interest

Characteristics and features that contribute to the technical interest of a protected structure or ACA could be as follows:

- An example of technical or structural innovation in the design or construction techniques of a structure;
- Unusual construction materials, particularly man-made materials that were novel or ground-breaking;
- An industrial-heritage landscape related to mine-working, chemical extraction or milling.

6. Social Interest

Characteristics and features that contribute to the social interest of a protected structure or ACA could be as follows:

- Special social interest may be found in town parks and communal greens laid out with trees, benches and water fountains, and often

sited especially to improve the surroundings of urban dwellers;

- Philanthropic housing for workers is an example of social interest;
- A place that is an essential reference point for the identity of a community;
- Fixtures and features that testify to the community involvement in the creation of a structure.

7. Artistic Interest

Characteristics and features that contribute to the artistic interest of a protected structure or ACA could be as follows:

- The consistent use of crafted materials, such as paving or walling in local styles or materials;
- Styles of decoration such as moulded terracotta embellishments;
- Buildings that are finely decorated in all or in part in a particular style of carved or applied decoration, or by a particular artist;
- Public sculpture, utilities or memorials, as well as being works of art in their own right, can be the artistic focus of a public space;
- A formally laid out landscape or townscape could also be of artistic interest.

8. Cultural Interest

Characteristics and features that contribute to the cultural interest of a protected structure or ACA could be as follows:

- Public spaces, which facilitate certain forms of behaviour, such as the spaces formed to facilitate markets, fairs, outdoor theatre or communal celebrations;
- Structures with literary association or with rarity value.

8.21 Development in Areas of Archeological Interest

When considering proposals within or in close proximity to areas of archeological potential, the Council will have regard to the provisions of the National Monuments Acts 1930 to 2004, the observations and recommendations of Duchas – the Heritage Service of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and other interested bodies.

The Council, on granting planning permission may impose conditions requiring completion by the applicant of an archeological assessment;

and/or monitoring, testing or excavation by a professional archeologist.

The preservation of all or part of the archeological remains in the area covered by the permission may also be considered by the Council as a restriction or condition on such development.

8.22 Industrial Development

The Council in assessing applications for new industrial estates (light, general and warehousing) will require the following standards to be met:

Access: Single access to multi-unit developments. Access road shall have a minimum carriageway width of 7.5m with 1.3m.

Site Layouts: Adequate space shall be provided for the loading and unloading of goods and the manoeuvring of vehicles within the site. Building line set back of at least 12 metres from estate road boundaries should be incorporated into all site layouts.

Design: Designs shall be of a high quality and shall comply with the following:

- Building heights shall not generally exceed 10.5 meters and should not exceed a height which is necessary for the function of the building.
- Building mass should be broken down into stepped sections to mitigate the visual impact.
- Multi-unit buildings should incorporate a uniform design in terms of architectural treatment, roof profiles and boundary fences.

Fencing and Landscaping: A comprehensive landscaping plan including full details of boundary treatment and plant shall accompany applications.

No security fencing should be installed forward of the front building line of any industrial or warehouse facility.

Use: Full details of the proposed use, including industrial process involved, any toxic materials, chemicals or solvents use, shall be submitted.

Storage of Goods and Fuels: Goods, including raw materials, manufactured goods, packaging

etc. shall be stored or displayed only within the enclosed units, all over ground oil, chemical storage tanks shall be adequately banded to protect against spillage. Provision of adequate storage shall be provided to facilitate segregation of materials.

Signage: Signage shall be restricted to a single sign identifying all occupiers of the site at the entrance and to fingerpost signs at junctions as appropriate.

Car Parking Provision: Car parking should be provided in accordance with the standards set out in Table 8.6. Parking should also be separately provided for articulated and fixed axle vehicles/trucks.

Noise Levels: Noise levels arising from any industrial development should not exceed 55 dB(A) Leq between 0800 to 1800 hours. Monday to Saturday inclusive, but excluding public holidays, when measured at any point along the site boundary, unless otherwise agreed by the Planning Authority. At all other times the noise level should not exceed 45 dB(A) Leq when measured at the same locations unless otherwise agreed by the Planning Authority. No pure tones should be audible at any time.

8.23 Other Development

Other development or development that is not specified elsewhere in this Plan will be assessed on an individual basis on the merits of each development or application.

8.24 Environmental Impact / Impact on Natural Heritage

An Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) must be carried out where required by the prescribed regulations. The Planning Authority may require the submission of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for sub-threshold developments having regard to the cumulative impacts of development and potential environmental impacts.

The Council will require that all development that are likely to have a significant impact on a SAC or SPA will be accompanied by an Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitat Directive.

Where a development falls within a conservation designation, the developer is advised to consult with the DoEHLG prior to making an application. Evidence of such consultation should be submitted to the Planning Authority at application stage.

Appendix 1: Matrix of Use Classes related to Use Zones

Use Classes	TC	MU	RC	R	R1	R2	EI	SP	AG	I	AM
Abattoir	x	x	o	x	x	x	x	x	o	o	x
Advertising Structures/Panels	o	o	o	x	x	x	x	o	x	o	x
Agricultural Buildings/Structures	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	√	o	x
Associated Commercial Sports Related Activities	o	o	o	x	x	x	x	o	x	o	o
Bed and Breakfast	√	o	√	o	o	o	x	x	x	x	x
Betting Office	√	x	√	x	x	x	x	x	x	o	x
Car Park	√	x	√	o	o	o	x	o	x	√	o
Caravan Park/Camping	x	x	o	x	o	o	x	x	o	o	x
Cash and Carry Wholesale	√	√	√	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cemetery/Graveyard	x	o	o	x	o	o	x	√	√	o	o
Church	o	o	o	√	√	o	√	√	√	o	o
Commercial Leisure Related Buildings	x	o	√	o	o	o	o	o	x	o	x
Community Facility	√	o	√	o	√	√	√	√	o	√	o
Concrete/Asphalt etc. plant	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	√	x
Crèche/Nursery School	√	√	√	o	√	√	o	o	x	o	x
Cultural Use	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	x	o	o
Dance hall/Disco/Cinema	√	o	o	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Doctor/Dentist	√	√	√	o	√	√	√	x	x	x	x
Educational	√	x	√	x	o	o	√	√	o	o	x
Enterprise Centre	√	o	√	x	x	x	✗ o	x	x	√	x
Funeral Home	√	o	√	o	o	o	x	x	x	o	x
Garden Centre	x	√	o	x	x	x	x	x	√	o	x
Guest House/Hostel	√	x	√	o	o	o	x	x	x	x	x
Halting Sites	x	x	x	o	o	x	x	x	o	√	x
Health Centre	√	o	o	o	o	o	√	√	x	o	x
Heavy Vehicle Park	x	x	o	x	x	x	x	x	x	√	x
Home Based Economic Activities	o	o	√	o	o	o	x	x	x	x	x
Hospital	x	o	o	x	x	x	o	o	x	o	x
Hotel/Motel	√	o	√	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Household Fuel Depot	√	o	o	o	o	o	x	x	x	√	x
Industrial - General	o	√	o	x	x	x	x	x	x	√	x
Industrial - Light	o	√	o	x	x	x	x	x	x	√	x
Industry - Other	x	x	o	x	x	x	x	x	x	√	x
Motor Sales Outlet	o	o	o	x	x	x	x	x	x	o	x
Offices above 60 sq. m.	√	√	√	x	x	x	x	x	x	o	x
Offices less than 60 sq. m.	√	√	√	o	√	o	x	x	x	o	x
Open Space	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Petrol Station	o	o	o	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Use Classes	TC	MU	RC	R	R1	R2	EI	SP	AG	I	AM
Private Garage	o	o	o	√	√	√	x	x	x	x	x
Private Tip	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Public House	√	o	√	o	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Public Services	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Recycling Facility	x	o	o	x	x	x	x	x	o	√	o
Refuse Transfer Station	x	o	o	x	x	x	x	x	o	√	o
Residential	o	o	o	√	√	√	o	x	x	x	x
Residential Institution	x	x	x	√	√	√	o	o	x	x	x
Restaurant	√	o	√	o	x	x	x	x	x	o	x
Retail Warehouse	√	o	o	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Retirement/Nursing Home	√	x	√	o	√	o	o	o	x	x	x
Service Garage	o	o	o	x	x	x	x	x	x	o	x
Shop – Neighbourhood	√	x	√	o	√	o	x	x	x	x	x
Shops	√	x	o	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Supermarket	√	o	o	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Take-Away	o	x	√	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Transport Depot	x	o	o	x	x	x	x	x	x	√	x
Veterinary Surgery	√	o	√	o	o	o	x	x	o	o	x
Warehousing	o	o	√	x	x	x	x	x	x	√	x
Workshops	o	o	√	x	x	x	x	x	x	√	x

Permitted in Principle	√	Open for Consideration	o	Not Permitted	x
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Zone	Objective
TC	To provide for town centre facilities.
MU	To provide and improve mixed use activities.
RC	To provide and improve retail and commercial activities.
R	To preserve and enhance existing residential amenity.
R1	To provide for new residential development.
R2	To provide for new residential (low density) development.
EI	To protect and provide for educational and institutional facilities.
SP	To protect and provide for social and public facilities.
AG	To provide for agricultural needs and to protect and enhance rural amenity.
I	To provide for industrial and employment related development.
AM	To preserve and enhance amenity facilities.

11. INSERTION OF CORE STRATEGY INTO CHAPTER 2

2.10 Core Strategy

The purpose of the core strategy is to illustrate that the development objectives in the Town and Environs Development Plan are consistent as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives as set out in the National Spatial Strategy 2002 – 2020, the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Mid West Area and the North Tipperary County Development Plan 2010-2016.

2.10.1 Settlement Hierarchy

Strong towns and villages are the mainstay of a strong county. Vibrant and viable settlements that provide a range of jobs, services and housing choice not only provide the basis of strong economies and communities, but also support a greater range of sustainable modes of transport, both within and between settlements. Thurles is at the cornerstone of this within North Tipperary. The County Settlement Hierarchy, of which Thurles is identified as a Tier 1 town, has been devised according to the following key aspects of the NSS:

- The spatial structure set out in the strategy in relation to the Mid-West region ;
- The complementary role of other towns and villages;
- The role of linkages in terms of good transport, communications and energy networks;
- Distinction between urban generated housing and rural generated housing;
- Suggested range of policy responses for different rural areas; and
- The spatial planning framework to support sustainable rural settlement.

In addition the settlement strategy was prepared having regard to availability of services, transport and accessibility and a range of socio-economic factors with a view to achieving balanced county-wide growth and having regard to the SEA process.

2.10.2 Housing & Zoning

In order to accommodate this growth, it will be necessary for this plan to ensure that adequate provision is made for zoned housing / mixed use land. Chapter 3 of this plan sets out in detail the availability of land for housing, which is summarised as follows:-

- The plan area is planned to grow to a total population of 8,791 in 2016 and 9,372 in 2022;
- It is estimated that in the near future that the average household size in North Tipperary will have declined to 2.52 (Source: County Housing Strategy 2009). Assuming this same household size for Thurles and its environs, there would be a need for 444 dwelling units in the settlement by 2016 and 676 by 2022;
- It is essential that a surplus of zoned lands is provided to take account for lands that are not released to market and land that may not be developed due to normal market friction.
- For the purposes of this plan a multiplier of 2.5 will be utilised in accordance with the RPGs and the North Tipperary County Development Plan.;
- In this context, the plan must ensure sufficient land is designated for c. 1,110 new residential units by 2016 and c. 1,690 new residential units by 2022;
- Notwithstanding the zoning of land for residential purposes, the Development Management Process shall monitor and implement the population targets and shall phase and restrict where necessary the granting of residential planning permissions to ensure these targets are not exceeded;
- Housing development shall be managed and phased to ensure that

infrastructure and in particular community infrastructure is provided to match the need of the new residents.

- The zoning provisions within the Plan has provided significant opportunities for high density residential development, as well as lower density and serviced sites provision. This will allow for the development of a balanced town not only in terms of its spatial development but also in terms of its social and economic development.

2.10.3 Infrastructure Roads

The plan area is served by three national routes - the M8, N62 and the N75. The M8 has undergone significant investment in the last number of years with the completion of the Cork to Dublin motorway. The M7 will continue to be the principal access corridor in the eastern side on the County. The N62, which starts south of Thurles at the Horse and Jockey, provides a strategic link between the southern part of the Country and the Midlands and the North, while also links up the three main towns in the east of the County which have been identified as an Economic Corridor in the Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 i.e. Thurles, Templemore and Roscrea.. The N75 runs between Thurles and the old N8.

The upgraded M8 now provides easy access to the Gateways of Dublin and Cork which is providing new challenges to the town.

The plan area is served by a network of regional and local roads, which are essential for inter-county traffic and local movements.

- In light of the likely continuing car dependency to access other main population centres in the short to medium term, including Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Clonmel and Kilkenny, it is the strategy of this Plan to facilitate and encourage measures to improve

capacity and efficiency of the national routes and facilitates the improved use of the national routes by public transport;

- The growing importance of the N62 in the coming years and the likely increase in the number of vehicles along this route will require improvements in access to this route from the town.
- Further improvements to the Regional Roads linking Thurles with its catchment area, should be carried out as required.

Rail

The plan area is served by one mainline – the Dublin to Cork line and there is a functioning train station in the town. This rail service provides hourly service to each of the main cities in the Country.

- It is the strategy of this plan to encourage and facilitate significant improvements to rail infrastructure.

Economic Development

In order to increase employment generating development in Thurles, the Council will zone lands at key locations in the town and will support and facilitate business employment uses within the town and promote growth in small and medium sized units and the “Knowledge Economy” in the town.

- It is the strategy of this plan to increase the quantity and range of quality employment opportunities in Thurles;
- It is the priority of the plan to promote enterprise and innovation, particularly in services and the knowledge and green industries;
- It is the priority of the plan to ensure that strategic reserves of land are available for employment purposes.

2.10.4 Social Development

The plan area has a range of social and sporting facilities, buildings and clubs that

cater for the large population of the plan area. New residential developments within the plan area shall make provision of social and recreational facilities.

- It is the strategy of this plan that sufficient lands are reserved for community uses;
- The expansion of the residential development shall be managed appropriately and commensurate with the community facilities available;
- It is the priority of this plan to ensure that the delivery of new community facilities as part of development proposals.

2.10.5 Retail

The County Retail Strategy for North Tipperary includes recommendations for Thurles and is consistent with the Retail Planning Guidelines, the Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 and has regard to the Mid West Retail Strategy (which covers Limerick City, Limerick County and Clare County), and the North Tipperary County Development Plan 2010 which acknowledges the need to protect Limerick City centre as the primary retailing centre within the Region. The County Retail Strategy is to be reviewed in 2011 and Objective R13 of this plan states that the County will require all applications to comply with the County Retail Strategy.

In accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines, the County Retail Strategy includes the following:

- Definition in the plan of the boundaries of the core shopping area of the town centre;
- A broad assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace;
- Strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development;
- Preparation of policies and action initiatives to encourage the improvement of the town centres;
- Identification of criteria for the assessment of retail development.

2.11 Key strategic objectives

It is envisaged that the overall strategic planning aims for Thurles and its environs will be underpinned by a number of core strategic planning policies which provide a framework for specific objectives throughout this Plan. These strategic planning objectives are outlined below.

CS1: It is an objective of the Council to implement relevant European, national and regional regulations, guidelines and strategies at town level.

CS2: It is an objective of the Council to provide a framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of the town over the plan period.

CS3: It is an objective of the Council to provide for an enhanced quality of life for all, based on high quality, sustainable residential, working and recreational environments and transportation networks.

CS4: It is an objective of the Council to promote Thurles as a local and regional centre of trade, business and tourism, while encouraging employment growth and economic activity.

CS5: It is an objective of the Council to ensure that everybody has the opportunity of obtaining affordable housing, can enjoy safe and accessible environments, have access to employment, education, community and recreational facilities and arts and culture and to promote social inclusion.

CS6: It is an objective of the Council to identify, conserve, protect and enhance the unique natural and built heritage of Thurles town and its environs.

CS7: It is an objective of the Council to provide appropriately zoned lands to cater for the sustainable growth of the town.

CS8: To enhance existing housing areas and to provide for high quality new housing, at appropriate locations and to ensure the development of a range of house types, sizes and tenures in order to

meet the differing need of all in society and to promote balanced communities;

CS9: To maintain and enhance the viability and vibrancy of Thurles as the County Town and a major urban centre, to ensure that the town remains at the heart of the wider community and provides a wide range of retail, employment, social recreational and infrastructural facilities;

CS10: To protect and improve Thurles Town and Environs transport, water, waste, energy and communication infrastructure, whilst having regard to responsibilities to respect areas protected for their important flora fauna or other natural features;

CS11: To promote and facilitate the development of sustainable communities through land use planning, by providing for land uses capable of accommodating community, leisure, recreational and cultural facilities accessible to and meeting the needs of all individuals and local community groups, in tandem with the delivery of residential and physical infrastructure in order to create a quality built environment in which to live;

CS12: To address the climate change challenge, as a plan dynamic, throughout the plan area, directly in the area of flooding and renewable energy, and indirectly by integrating climate change and sustainable development into statements of plan policy, strategies and objectives.

9. MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Main Sections in this Chapter are:

1. **Introduction**
2. **Section 15(1) Planning and Development act 2000**
3. **Indicators and Targets**
4. **Council's Responsibility**

9.1 Introduction

It is important that the policies and objectives of the Plan are monitored and reviewed to gauge their effectiveness as they are implemented. The monitoring process highlights the areas of the Plan which need reviewing and gives an indication as to whether the Plan is achieving its aims. A screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment of the Policies of the Plan has been undertaken to assess whether the current set of policies are in line with the sustainability aims of the Plan.

9.2 Section 15(1) Planning and Development Act 2000

Section 15 (1) of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2006 requires the Planning Authority to take such steps within its powers as may be necessary for securing the objectives of the Development Plan. Under Section 15 (2) of the Act there is a requirement of the Manager to give a report to the Members of the Authority, not more than 2 years after the making of the Plan, setting out the progress achieved in securing the objectives contained in the County Development Plan. In addition, under Section 95(3) of the Act, the Manager is required to include in this report the progress achieved in implementing the Housing Strategy.

9.3 Indicators and Targets

A list of indicators and targets relating to the overall strategic themes of the Plan has been devised as shown in Table 9.1. This will enable the monitoring of the policies in the Plan and provide information on whether the aims of the Plan are being met. The Plan will be subject to ongoing

monitoring and review as is deemed necessary and further areas for monitoring and the use of the data will be examined where necessary.

Thurles Town Council has aimed to incorporate the main principles and practices on accessibility in this Plan in line with guidelines from the National Disability Authority. The Council further supports the 'Disability Proofing Template for Local Government – Barcelona Declaration Project 2001-2004' and will disability/equality proof the Plan and ensure that the monitoring, feedback and evaluation of the Plan will include an impact measure on the quality of life of people with disabilities.

9.4 Council's Responsibility

The Council produces a series of regular monitoring reports in addition to other planning related data as required by the Government. These relate to the key areas of:

- Housing – the monitoring of residential land availability, the supply of housing land and affordable housing
- Employment – the monitoring of employment land availability and the supply of strategic employment land
- Planning application statistics.

Policy MI: Monitoring the Plan

The Planning Authority will continue to monitor the effectiveness of policies and objectives in the Plan and will take account of the changing circumstances in the physical, social and economic environment in order to review and update the Plan.

Table 9.1 Indicators and Targets

Strategic Theme/Aim	Indicator	Target (by 2016)
Settlement Strategy		
1. Consolidate, strengthen and develop local communities	Population in Thurles Town and Environs	To increase or maintain
Housing		
2. Meet housing needs	Area of land available for housing development.	To increase if necessary only
3. Improve access to facilities and services for all especially disadvantaged groups	Social & Affordable housing provided in new developments.	To meet social & affordable targets in housing strategy.
	Proportion of new dwellings, which meet access-housing standards.	To increase
	Access to new buildings for people with disabilities.	To increase
Transport and Infrastructure		
4. Minimise energy consumption by transport, and the need to travel	Number of car trips (morning peak)	To reduce
	Use of public transport (bus).	To increase or maintain
	Cycling as a transport mode	To increase or maintain
	Average housing densities in new development.	Where appropriate to increase or maintain
	5. Maximise renewable energy	Number of renewable energy projects
6. To maximize recycling/reuse of waste.	Percentage of waste recycled.	To increase recycling and composting in housing and commercial developments.
7. Minimise pollution	To upgrade water services and infrastructure	To improve or maintain
	To have regard to River Basin Management plans in accordance with the Water Framework Directive	To improve or maintain

Economic Development		
8. Consolidate, strengthen and diversify the local economy	Supply of employment land Amount of floorspace of new retail development located in accordance with the Retail Strategy.	To increase or maintain New retail development developed in accordance with the Retail Strategy and Retail Planning Guidelines.
Environment and Heritage		
9. Conservation and enhancement of natural heritage and built environment	Number of Architectural Conservation Areas Protected Structures	To increase or maintain To increase or maintain
10. Protect amenity, ecological and landscape value.	Number of Tree Preservation Order's (TPO's). Number of sites of importance for Nature Conservation adversely affected by development.	To increase TPO's No sites adversely affected by development
Community and Recreation		
11. Protect open space, recreational and community facilities	Area of publicly accessible open space gained or lost. Number of leisure and community facilities lost to other uses.	To increase or maintain To decrease
12. Childrens' Play Areas	The number of children's playgrounds per population – directly provided by the Local Authority or facilitated by the Local Authority.	To increase or maintain
13. Protect open space, recreational and community facilities	Area of publicly accessible open space gained or lost. Number of leisure and community facilities lost to other uses.	To increase or maintain To decrease
Disability/Equality		
14. Promoting Universal Accessibility	Accessibility to all types of development and infrastructure, e.g. Footpaths, roadways, parks, etc for people with disabilities	To increase

APPENDIX 9 - SUSTAINABILITY MATRIX

TRANSPORT

Headings	Comments
1) Is the development near a transport node?	
2) Is the development supported by public transport, cycling, pedestrian, and environmentally friendly transport? (Public transport, cycle ways and footpaths should be identified on your plans)	
3) Does the development support pedestrian priority and sustainable living?	
4) Does the development have good accessibility and pedestrian permeability? (A pedestrian mobility plan should be submitted as part of the planning application)	

ENERGY

Headings	Comments
5) Has your development incorporated other sustainable design approaches/ renewable energy technologies?	
6) Has your development used renewable materials: natural, ecological and locally produced? Please provide a detailed breakdown of materials proposed to be used.	
7) Has your development proposals to minimise waste and has it made provision for re-cycling in the collection of waste?	
8) What is the preliminary Building Energy Rating (BER) for the proposed building? Please submit copy of preliminary BER.	
9) How has your proposed building has been sited in order to maximise exposure to passive solar energy?	

ECOLOGY

Headings	Comments
10) Has your development retained and integrated into its design related features of the site such as trees, shrubs, water courses and topography?	
11) Will the proposed development protect bio-diversity and use native species? A full environmental analysis of all designations and other significant features should be submitted as part of the proposed development. A management scheme for on-going ecological conservation should be submitted as part of the planning application.	
12) Demonstrate in your application how the development will link urban and rural.	

13) Clearly demonstrate how green areas have been designed to provide maximum enjoyment and form an integrated part of the development.	
14) Demonstrate how water features within and adjoining the site and their existing integrity is protected and enhanced as part of the proposed development.	
15) Show how water quality will be protected during construction and after completion of the development.	
16) Your proposals to identify and reduce likely sources of noise pollution.	

LAND

Headings	Comments
17) Demonstrate how your design has maximised the efficient use of land for urban development.	
18) Demonstrate how the proposed development has followed the sequential approach so as to maximise its integration with the existing fabric of the settlement?	
19) Clearly justify, where existing buildings have not been incorporated into the development, why it is proposed to remove them. Where it is proposed to demolish existing buildings, you should submit detailed proposals for the reuse of materials from these building.	
20) Clearly show how your proposals complies with appropriate national, regional and local guidelines.	

SOCIAL QUALITY

Headings	Comments
21) Demonstrate how your development has provided a housing mix to cater for different household sizes and social integration, appropriate to the settlement.	
22) Show all existing services, workplaces and schools in the area and how the proposed development relates to each of them.	
23) Show that sufficient capacity exists within local school and crèches in the area, in line with appropriate guidelines.	
24) Demonstrate how your development caters for persons with disabilities, special needs and the elderly.	

APPENDIX 10 - STAGE 1 FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is the Stage 1 Flood Risk Identification for Variation No. 1 of the Thurles and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015 (hereafter referred to as the Plan), prepared in accordance with “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities” published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Office of Public Works in November 2009.

The purpose of this process is to identify whether there may be any flooding or surface water management issues related to the Plan area that may warrant further investigation through Stage 2 and 3 Flood Risk Assessment. This report should be read in conjunction with the SEA Screening Report prepared for Variation No. 1 of the Plan.

This Stage 1 Flood Risk Assessment forms an integral part of the SEA process for Variation No. 1 of the Plan and will inform the approach to future planning and development in Thurles.

2.0 FLOOD RISK IDENTIFICATION (STAGE 1)

The following sources of information have been investigated in order to determine flood risk potential;

1. OPW preliminary Flood Risk Assessment indicative fluvial flood maps.
2. Predictive and historic flood maps, and benefiting land maps, such as those at www.floodmaps.ie.
3. Predicative flood maps produced under the CFRAM.
4. River Basin Management Plans and reports.
5. Indicative assessment of existing flood risk under preliminary flood risk assessment.
6. Expert advise from OPW
7. Consultation with local authority
8. Topographical maps.
9. GSI Alluvial deposit map.
10. Liable to flood markings on the old 6 inch maps.
11. Newspaper reports.
12. Consultation with Local Community
13. Walkover survey

Each of these sources is addressed individually below:

1. OPW preliminary Flood Risk Assessment indicative fluvial flood maps.

These are being produced through the catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study. These maps are not yet available for the River Suir Catchment.

2. Predictive and historic flood maps, and benefiting land maps, such as those at www.floodmaps.ie.

This website was consulted. It was found that 4 flood events were recorded for the Thurles Area. Only one recorded within the Plan Boundary. It was recorded that the River Suir floods annually for a distance of 1km upstream of bridge. Historically road near bridge and Patrick’s College flood. Some remedial works have been carried out.

1. Flood Event: Thurles Town [Flood ID 3747] Recurring.

Other locations of flood events are not in areas designated for growth.

3. Predicative flood maps produced under the CFRAM.

The Suir Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (CFRAM) has commenced and is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2011. Therefore the predicative flood maps to be prepared under this project are not yet available.

4. Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Plans and reports.

The Suir Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (CFRAM) has commenced and is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2011. Therefore this Stage 1 Flood Risk Assessment has not been able to make reference any guidance or information which may be contained within it. It is hoped that as part of the review of the Plan, to be completed by 2013 that this information will be available and can feed into the Assessment for the new Plan.

5. Indicative assessment of existing flood risk

The Suir River flows in a north east to south direction through Thurles where it is joined by the Drish River to the south/south-east of the town Bridge and jointly flow southwards to the Turtulla Bridge, where it flows in a westerly direction to Holycross. It is noted that the OPW has recorded flood events in and around the town. The Rivers are generally unrestricted and benefits from a substantial buffer/amenity area along its much of their banks.

6. Expert advice from OPW

This Stage 1 Flood Risk has been undertaken with the advantage of expert advice from the Engineering Services Flood Relief Design Section of the OPW who have collated of a significant amount of data for the River Suir CFRAM Study.

7. Consultation with local authority

A site visit was undertaken with the Thurles Area Engineer (Mr. Ruairi Boland) and the Thurles

Town Planner (Ms. AnneMarie Devaney). Consultation also took place with the Thurles Town Clerk (Mr. Michael Ryan).

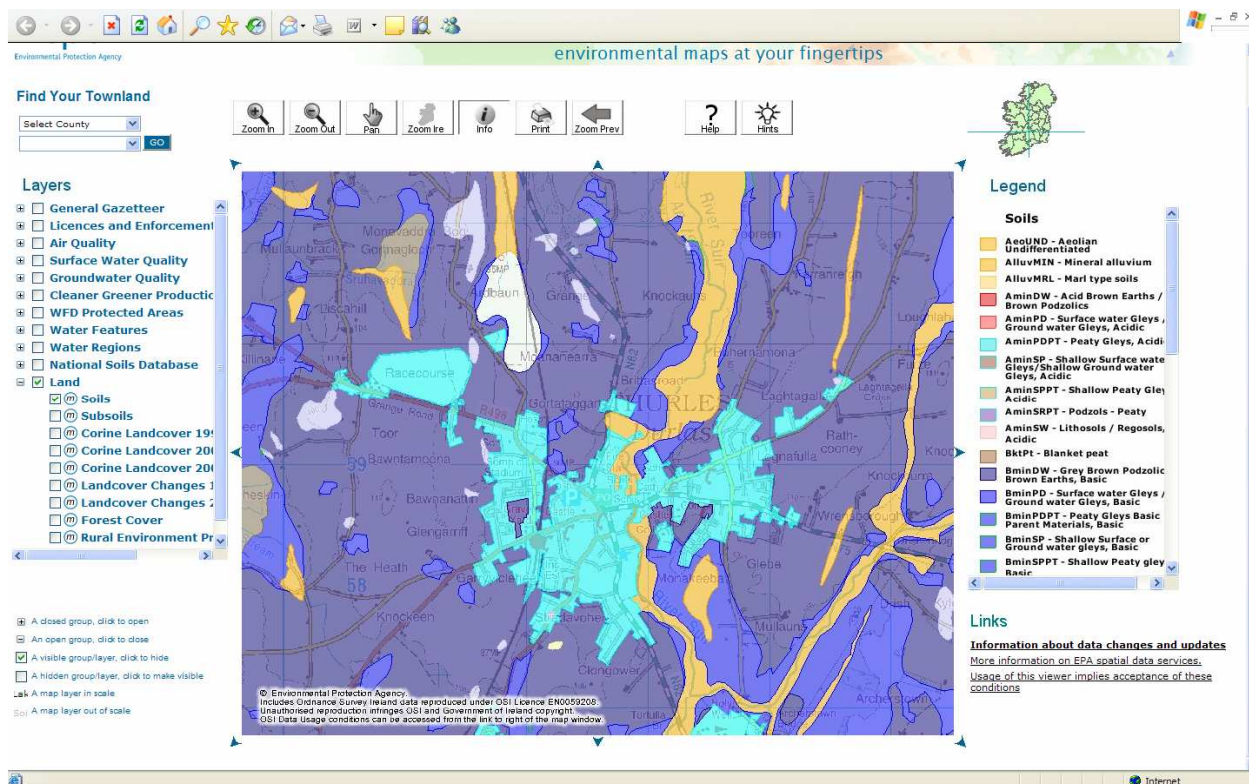
8. Topographical maps.

County Topographical maps do not adequately address the local Thurles area as they are based on the topography of the county.

9. GSI Alluvial deposit map.

The GSI Soils map (Source Environmental Protection Agency website) is set out above for Thurles. The beige area represents that area where alluvial soils have been historically deposited. Alluvial soil mapping alone is not a definitive gauge of areas at flood risk, however, it a useful indicator of areas where flood events have occurred historically. The GSI Soils Map has informed the Land Use Zoning Map 1 and areas which are liable to flooding have been zoned for amenity land or other non-developmental uses.

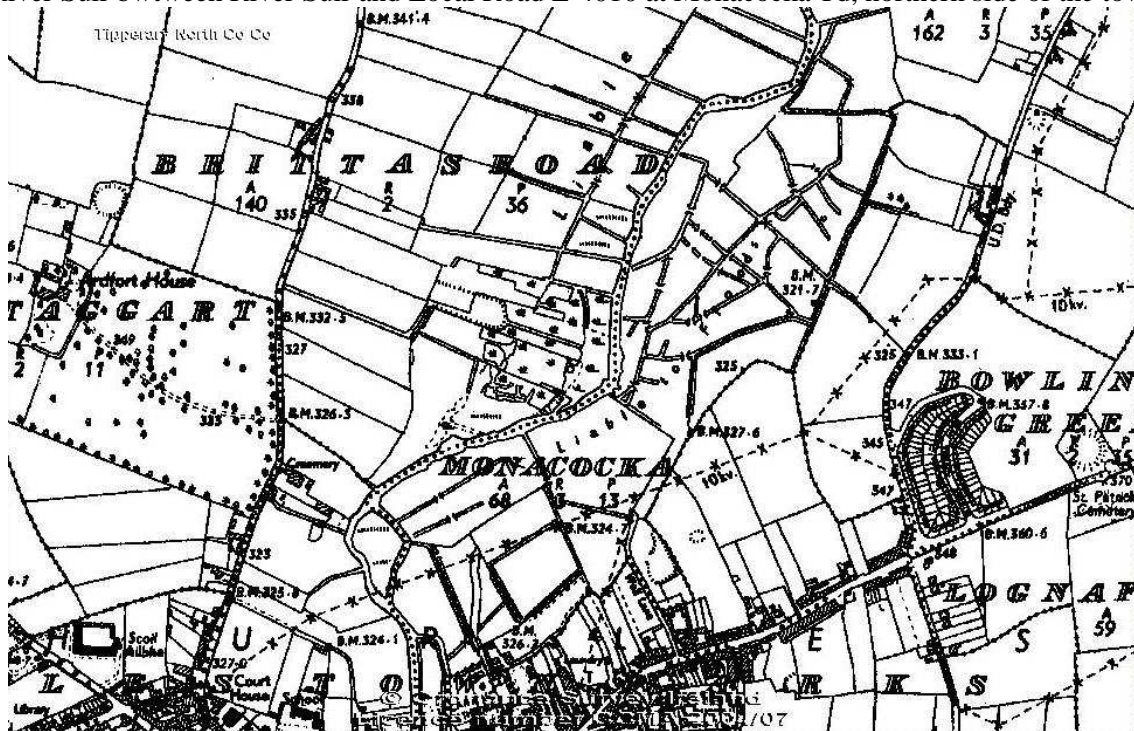
Soils Map for Thurles (Source: Environmental Protection Agency website)



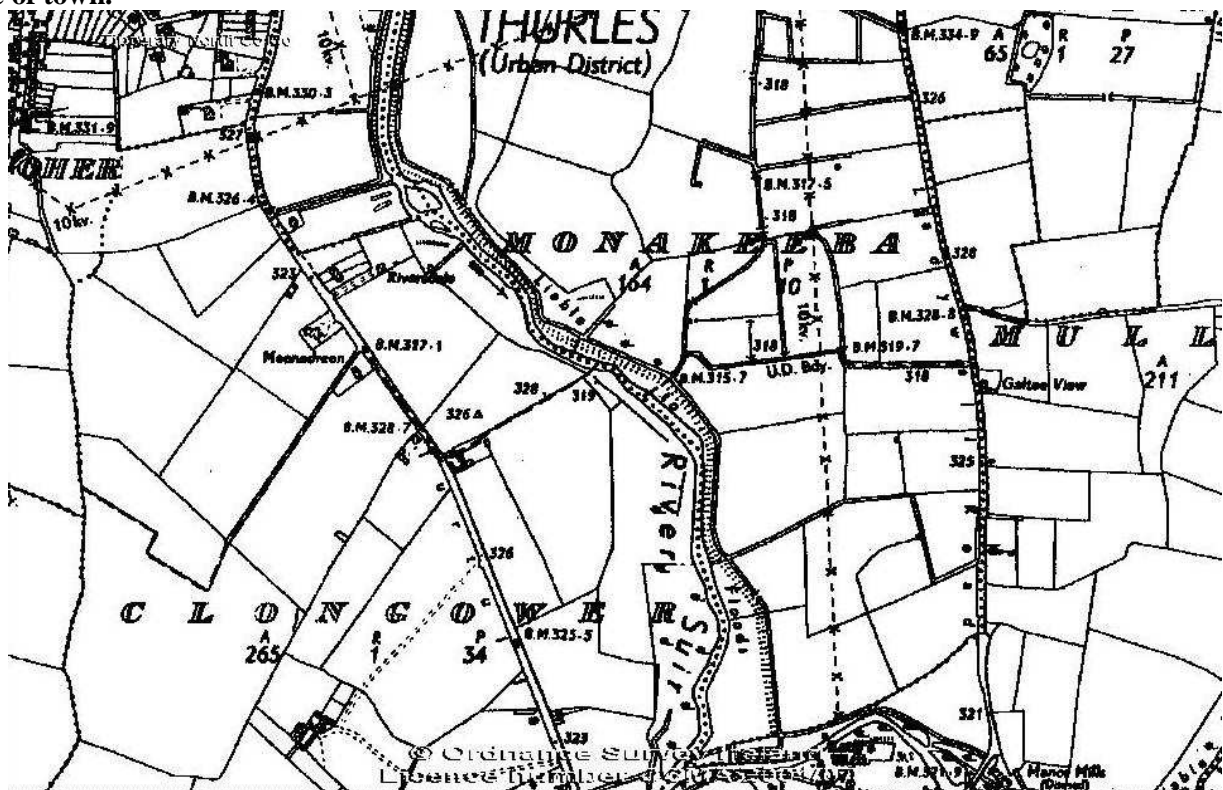
10. Liable to flood markings on the old 6 inch maps.

The following lands have been identified as being liable to flooding on the historic 6- inch maps:

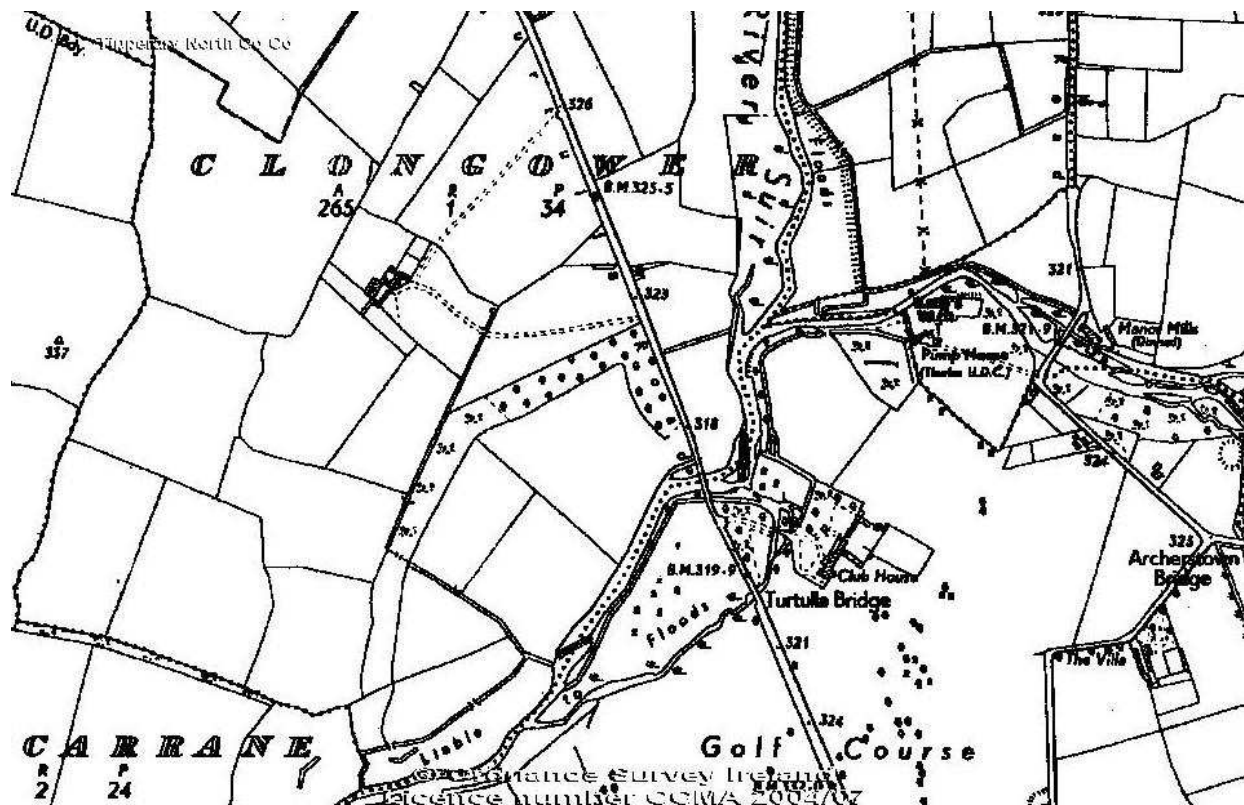
Locations 1 & 2 Lands between N62 and River Suir at Brittas Road Td, northern side of the town and lands east of the River Suir between River Suir and Local Road L-4010 at Monacocka Td, northern side of the town.



Location 3 Lands to the east of the N62 on the eastern banks of the River Suir at Clongower Td, southern side of town.



Location 4 Lands to the west of Turtulla ridge, to the north and south of River Suir, southern side of town.



11. Newspaper reports

The Newspaper Reports available at www.floodmaps.ie were consulted as part of this Stage 1 Flood Risk Assessment.

12. Consultation with local people.

Consideration was given to any comments received during the public consultation phases on the 2009 Development Plan that relate to flooding in the area.

13. Walkover survey to assess potential sources of flooding.

A number of inspections were carried out on site by the Planning Office during the preparation of the Variation.

3.0 CONCLUSION

This is the Stage 1 Flood risk assessment for Variation No. 1 to the Plan. It is clear that the River Suir may overflow its banks on an intermittent basis. However a precautionary approach has been adopted under the Variation No. 1 of the Plan and new development has been directed away from the

flood plain area to minimise potential flood risk. Furthermore lands at risk of flooding have been zoned for amenity land use. Furthermore Variation No. 1 provides that planning applications which may have an impact on Flood Risk be supported by a full and comprehensive Flood Risk Assessment.

The Planning Authority is satisfied that there is no potential flood risk identified in areas planned for growth in Thurles based on an assessment of all the sources listed above and bearing in mind a precautionary approach. This report should be read in conjunction with proposed Variation No. 1 of the Plan and the SEA Screening Report prepared as part of the variation process.

It is concluded that there will be no significant flood risk to the Plan area and any surrounding areas as a result of Variation No. 1 to the Thurles and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015.