Bennettsbridge Local Area Plan 2009-2015

July 2009

Kilkenny County Council

Adopted 20th July 2009

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Section One
Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Local Area Plan

The purpose of the Local Area Plan (LAP) is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Bennettsbridge. In this regard, the Plan contains policies and objectives on a wide range of issues for the future planning of the village. The LAP is a legal document and is a public statement of planning policies. It is prepared in consultation with the local community and members of the public.

The Plan seeks to provide a framework for how the village of Bennettsbridge can develop. It provides some ideas as to how this development can be achieved, what new developments are needed, where public and private resource inputs are required, and also sets out some of the standards that will guide development in the district.

The preparation of this LAP was guided by the policies and objectives set out in the Kilkenny County Development Plan (CDP) 2008-2014. Under section 3.1 of the CDP 'Development Plan Strategy' it is stated that the Council seeks to develop and expand existing towns and villages in the county. This is to be achieved though a programme of preparation of Local Area Plans. The preparation of an LAP for Bennettsbridge is part of this initiative.

Under the settlement hierarchy for County Kilkenny, the current County Development Plan identifies Bennettsbridge as a 'smaller town or village'. It recommends that smaller towns and villages need to be developed in a way that strengthens their role as local service centre whilst respecting their existing character.

Policies PS10 to PS14 of the CDP pertain to such small town and villages

PS10 *To strengthen the service centre role of smaller towns and villages.*

PS11 *To ensure that new residential development in smaller towns and villages is of a design, layout, character and scale which fits well with the town or village involved and presents a high quality living environment.*

PS12 *To revitalise existing villages through the promotion of development within them (particularly on infill sites, vacant sites and on backlands), in preference to continued ribbon development on the approach roads. This will promote the efficient use of available public infrastructure and services.*

PS 13 In partnership with relevant stakeholders and local communities, to facilitate and support the preparation and implementation of appropriate planning framework documents for appropriate villages in the country, as the need arises and resources allow.

This LAP has been prepared with regard to these policies.

1.2 Legal Basis of the Local Area Plan

The legal basis for the preparation of an LAP is set out under sections 18 and 19 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). The preparation of an LAP for Bennettsbridge falls under section 18(1) of the Act which states:

A Planning Authority may at any time, and for any particular area within its functional area, prepare a local area plan in respect of that area.

However an LAP must be consistent with the policies and objectives of the County Development Plan, and relevant national legislation.

This Local Area Plan will take a long-term approach to seek to direct future development in an orderly, economic, sustainable and coherent manner. It will also define a development boundary for the village to maintain a clear physical break between the edges of the settlement and the surrounding open countryside. Policies and objectives which encourage the sustainable development of the area to which it applies as well as a long-term vision for the village are contained in the Plan. The Local Area Plan, once adopted, will remain in force for a period of six years, but may be amended by the Planning Authority.

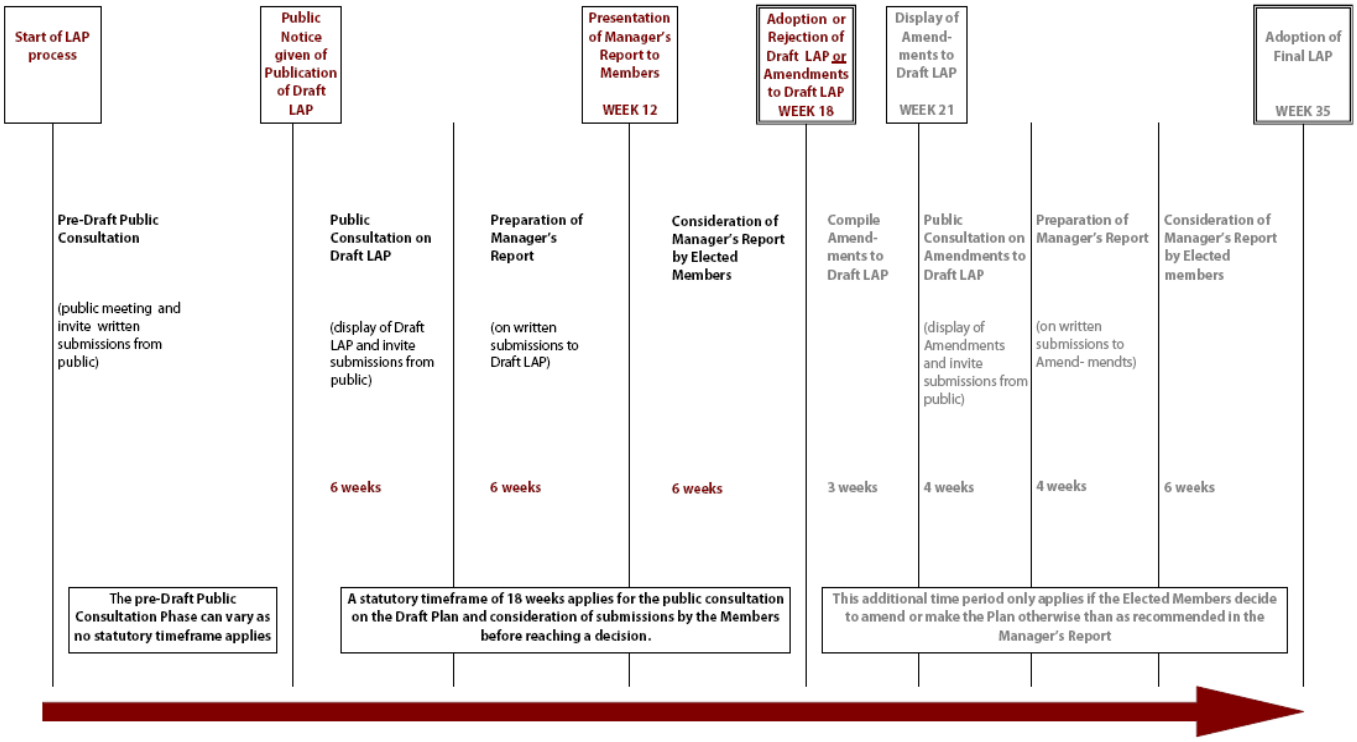
1.3 Stages of preparation of an LAP

Under the Planning and Development Act 2000 the Planning Authority shall take whatever steps it considers necessary to consult the public in the preparation of a Draft Local Area Plan. The pre-draft stage of the LAP usually involves public consultation and detailed surveys, research and analysis.

Once the Draft LAP is put on public display, a statutory timeframe applies. The public is invited to make submissions on the Plan for a period of six weeks. After that a period of six weeks is set aside for the preparation of a Manager's Report on the submissions which is then presented to the Elected Members. The Elected Members then have 6 weeks to consider

the Manager's report after which time they can vote to adopt the Draft LAP, to amend it or to revoke it.

If the members decide to make material amendments to the Draft LAP, these amendments have to be put on public display and submissions from the public on these amendments are again invited and a Manager's Report prepared. After the consultation exercise, the Members are again asked to vote on the Plan taking into account the Manager's report on amendments. The Members may make the plan in accordance with the recommendations in the Manager's report or may amend the proposed amendments by resolution.



Graph 1.1 Key Stages of the LAP process

1.4 Consultation

Under the Planning & Development Act 2000 the Planning Authority shall take whatever steps it considers necessary to consult the public.

1.4.1 Public Consultation

The intention to prepare a Local Area Plan for Bennettsbridge was advertised in a local newspaper "The Kilkenny People" on 23rd May 2008. A public consultation meeting was held at 7pm on May 28th 2008, in Bennettsbridge Community Centre in which a presentation was given by Keith Simpson Associates. Following this, members of the local community voiced their opinions on what they felt were the critical issues concerning the future development of the village.

As part of the public consultation a schools competition was also run in which pupils from the local Bennettsbridge National School, made models on how they presently viewed the village and 'A vision for the future' as to how they would like the village to develop.

Models prepared by
Bennettsbridge Primary School

Written submissions on the pre-Draft consultation phase were invited from members of the public to be made to Kilkenny County Council between the12th May to 20th June 2008. A total of seventeen submissions were received. The opinions expressed in these submissions were taken account of in the making of the Draft Plan. In essence, the wishes and views of the local community can be thus summarised;

- The need for sustainable growth which will enhance but not overburden the existing village and thereby to retain the village character of Bennettsbridge.
- The need for traffic calming and other physical improvements to the village make up and associated enhancement of streetscapes.
- The desire for development that will emphasise the strong civic pride and in particular the local importance of the GAA and Soccer Clubs.
- The need for a pedestrian river crossing and closer integration between the two parts of the village either side of the river.
- The provision of improved community facilities including the need for a Doctor/Health facility.
- The provision of appropriate leisure and amenity facilities for locals including making best use of the natural amenities provided by the River Nore.
- The need for development which strengthens the Local Crafts Industry and the local pride therein.
- The desire for amenity walks in and around the town.
- Improvements to the village in terms of its attractiveness to visitors.
- The protection of the natural and built heritage.
- The need for a strengthening of the local employment base.

- The provision of adequate infrastructure including the upgrade of the sewerage facilities.

All issues raised were taken into consideration in the preparation of the Draft LAP.

1.4.2 Stakeholder Consultation

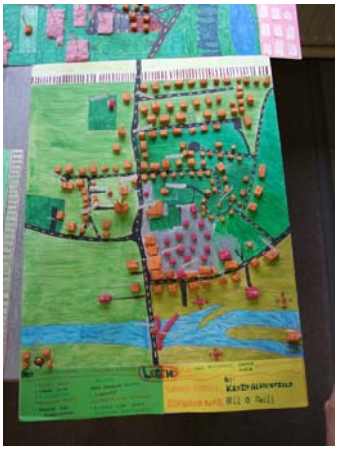
The preparation of the LAP has been directed by the comments and issues raised at a number of stakeholder meetings held with local stakeholders with an interest in this area. Meetings were held with representatives from the GAA, Soccer club, the local parish priest and various business owners.

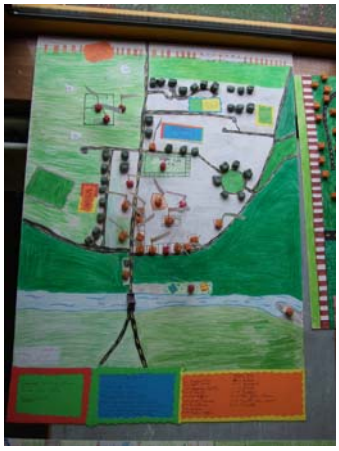
A wide range of issues were raised including a number of recurring issues as outlined above. The following issues were also raised which have been taken into consideration and included

- Improve and extend facilities for the GAA and soccer club
- The sustainable development of the village through the development of opportunity sites
- The zoning of land for residential development to provide for the growth of the village into the future
- An extension to/or additional land to accommodate the pressure on the graveyard

1.5 Screening

A screening exercise was carried out in relation to whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required for the Local Area Plan (Directive 2001/42/EC). In addition, a screening for the necessity of an Appropriate Assessment regarding the potential impact of the Plan on the candidate Area of Special Conservation (cSAC), a Natura 2000 site, was carried out (required under the EU Habitats Directive). These were sent to the relevant government departments and the Environmental Protection Agency. The screening exercises for both the SEA and AA concluded that no such exercise was required and agreement was obtained from the relevant statutory agencies.





Section Two
The Village of Bennettsbridge

2.1 Location

Located on the River Nore, the village of Bennettsbridge is situated almost mid-way between Kilkenny and Thomastown along the R700 and ca. 9km south of Kilkenny City. The village is located in the townland of Bennettsbridge, in the parish of Treadingstown, in the Barony of Gowran.

Its location within a river valley creates a picturesque setting for the village. This also results in the ground both east and west of the village rising upwards from the River, with the land directly adjacent to the river forming a flat flood plain. The main street of the village is located on raised ground to the immediate east of the river. Some buildings are also located in a dispersed fashion on the west bank of the river. The village is connected via a landmark bridge which forms a focal point within both the village and riverscapes and the surrounding agricultural landscape.

2.2 The Crafts Industry

County Kilkenny is renowned for its crafts industry and boasts a successful craft trail. The location of the Crafts Council of Ireland in Kilkenny City, and the foundation of Grennan Mill craft college in Thomastown has encouraged the continued growth of the crafts industry throughout the county. The trail features nine retail outlets throughout the county, four of which are located in Bennettsbridge. These included Chesneau Leather Goods, Keith Mosse Woodworking, Nicholas Mosse Pottery and 'Moth to a Flame' Handmade Candles.

2.3 Population

The population of Bennettsbridge is outlined in the table below and shows the differences in population figures between 1996 and 2006. The village of Bennettsbridge takes in three different Electoral Divisions (or parts thereof) as shown in the table below.

	1996	**2002**	**2006**	**Percent. change 1996-2002**	**Percent. change 2002-2006**
Bennettsbridge ED	n/a	624	561	n/a	-10.1%
Danesfort ED	n/a	65	81	n/a	24.6
Outrath ED	n/a	46	43	n/a	-6.5%
Bennettsbridge Village (Total)	601	735	685	22.3%	-6.8%

The 2006 census recorded a population of 685 people in Bennettsbridge, a decrease of 6.81% from the previous census. In comparison, the population increase in the 1996-2002 period had been exceptionally high at 22.3%.

At county level, the population of Kilkenny has shown a steady increase as set out in the table below. The percentage increase for the county from 1996 to 2006 was 13.7%.

Year	**1996**	**2002**	**2006**	**% Change (1996-2006**
Kilkenny County	75,336	80,399	87,558	13.7%

Mosse Mill – Home to Mosse Pottery

The County Development Plan sets out population projections for the county and these suggest that the population of Kilkenny City and County will continue to grow over the next 12 years. The last census period from 2002 to 2006 highlights that general population trends for the country show a marked increase in population, particularly in areas under urban influence (i.e. adjacent a larger conurbation).

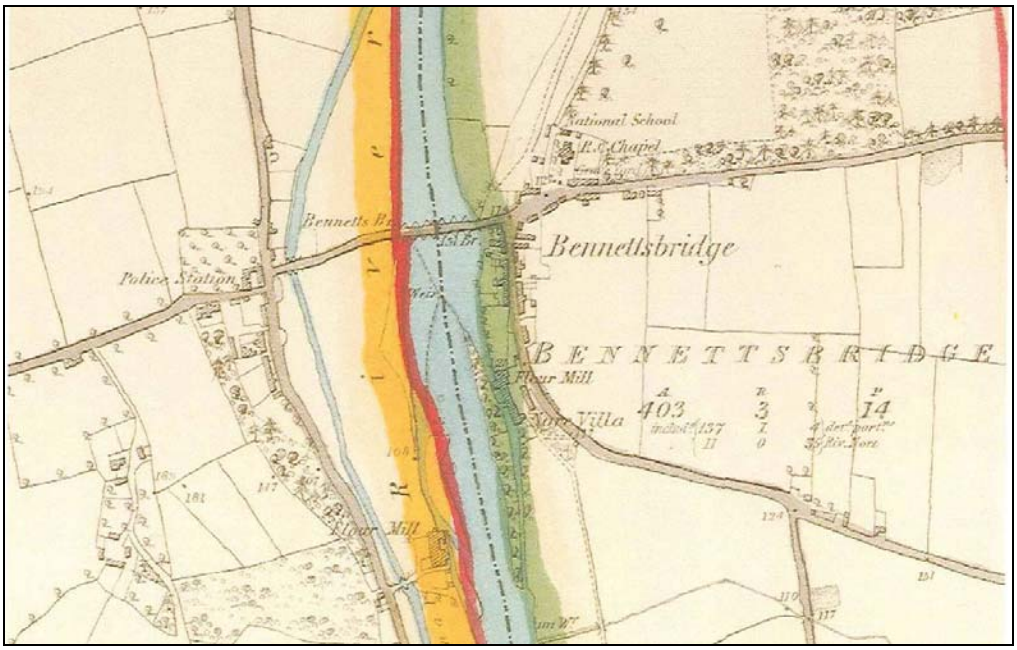
However, in relation to Bennettsbridge, the Census figures send out a somewhat mixed message. The growth during the 1996-2002 Census period is evidence of the attractiveness of Bennettsbridge as a location in close proximity to Kilkenny city. The subsequent decline in population in the 2002-2006 period is therefore unusual. Should these figures be an accurate reflection of population decrease in Bennettsbridge over recent years, this trend would not be desirable as population decline can potentially lead to a decrease of local services. This trend will be monitored during the lifetime of the Plan.

From a cursory analysis of recent building activity in the village (as discussed in Section 2.8) in relation to recent planning permissions for residential development, it would appear that a number of residential units were being built during the 2002-2006 period (and these now appear to be largely occupied). This would further suggest that the Census figures might not accurately reflect the actual population of the village.

2.4 Historical Development of the Village

It is recorded that the main passageway from Leinster to the south of Ireland passed through present day Bennettsbridge, fording the river upstream of the present bridge. This roadway became busier and a bridge was constructed to accommodate the use of this passage. The earliest mention of Bennettsbridge appears in 1285, when “Edward I made a grant of customs to be taken at the new bridge of Trenedinestone”. This early bridge is clearly delineated on the Down Survey map of 1654. The earlier bridge was washed away in the great flood of 1763 and replaced by the distinctive landmark bridge which exists today. This later bridge was built under the direction of the navigation board with public money. The industrial origins of the village are evident in the two landmark mills situated on either bank of the river, which have been in existence from at least the eighteenth century. These mills provided much of the employment base for the former inhabitants of the village with additional employment and produce being provided by the rich agricultural hinterland. The Census of Ireland c.1659 records 22 people in Bennettsbridge, 2 English and 20 Irish.

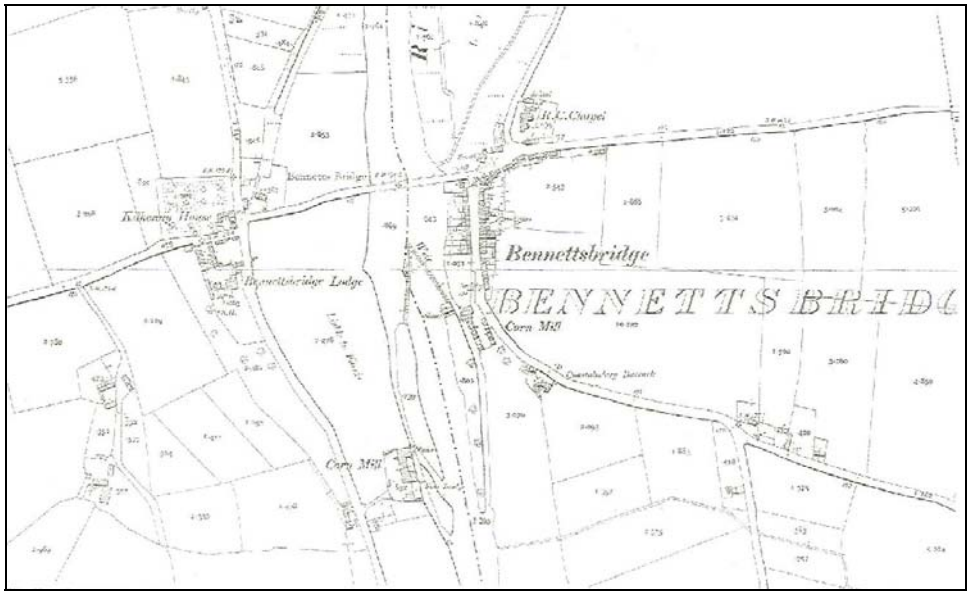
The first edition Ordnance Survey (O.S.) map of 1829, depicts the morphology of the village as extending south in a linear form along the main street and stretching eastwards along the Gowran road. Public buildings such as the early school and Roman Catholic church (which no longer exists) are located to the northeast of the village with two flour mills located on either bank of the river, with a weir downstream of the bridge. A canal is depicted to the west of the village.



Ordnance Survey Map, first edition, c.1829

The subsequent 1897 O.S. map depicts little change in the layout of the village, with the flour mills now shown as 'corn mills', and the police station now converted into a private house named 'Kilkenny House'.

By 1914 a new school had been constructed in the village. This school was extended and restored in the 1990's for use as a community centre. The neighbouring principal's residence functions as a private residence. A new school was constructed across the road in the 1990's and has been recently extended. The original early church built c.1822 was demolished and replaced with the present modern structure in 1967. The original layout of the village is still visible with additional residential expansion taking place on the fringes on the village.



Ordnance Survey Map, second edition, c.1897

2.5 Urban Structure and Land Patterns

Bennettsbridge occupies a prominent position on the River Nore. Impressive views are created up and down the river as one crosses the bridge.

The historic footprint of the village centres on the bridge. From here the village extends southwards along Main Street, resulting in a linear street pattern. The junction at the north end of Main Street and the Gowran road forms a pivotal area within the village, linking the village back to Kilkenny city via the bridge to the west and onto Gowran to the east. The historical civic centre is located just east of the Gowran road junction, as the original school and church were located here. Although both the original school and church have been replaced with modern buildings this area still remains as the civic centre of the village, having a grouping of commercial building at this junction.

The western side of the village comprises of a small grouping of historic structures across the river at the Danesfort cross roads.

A review of the layout of the village highlights that the oldest buildings from which the village has evolved are the mills and the bridge, which dominate the riverscape. Most of the buildings arranged in a linear pattern along Main Street date to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They are mixed single-two-and-three-storey structures which front directly onto the street. The plots are long and narrow, with those located on the west side running down to the edge of the riverbank. Those on the east side, originally backed onto open countryside which has been built up with residential developments from the 1940's onwards. The continuity of the building line along Main Street enhances the streetscape and reduces the amount of infill sites creating a strong building line and sense of enclosure. Residential infill which has taken place on the west side of the street respects the vernacular design of the buildings and conforms to the existing building line.

View southwards down Main Street

In the last few decades there has been a shift in the growth to the east of the village with the construction of new residential areas along the Gowran road. This takes the shape of mature housing estates on the eastern side of the village, wrapping around the village core and extending southwards. The village is approached on all sides by ribbon development which fizzles out into open countryside. The surrounding landscape of Bennettsbridge is typically rural with agricultural fields dedicated to livestock grazing and/or tillage. The field systems are demarcated by a series of mature natural hedgerows typical of rural Co. Kilkenny.

View northwards of Bridge, Weir and Kells Mill

Built on a floodplain, the flat area of the west banks as well as the open fields north and south of the village are liable to floods.

At present there are numerous vacant sites within the village centre. On Main Street alone there are two vacant residential units and a commercial unit which is now closed down. These premises detract from the overall architectural and visual appearance of the streetscape.

Section Five of this LAP outlines a number of specific policies and objectives in relation to the village centre/Main Street and opportunity sites.

2.6 The Village Centre

The village centre is based around Main Street and the Gowran road, leading past the school and church. In effect the main body of the village stretches from the Garda Station on the southern end of the village, through the church and school at the other end. The village contains

- Garda Station
- Credit union
- Post office
- Chesneau Leather Goods
- Two Pubs
- Church
- Graveyard
- Primary School
- Grocery Shop
- Butcher's Shop
- Restaurant

These units are clustered at either end of the village with the commercial centre of shops, nucleated on the junction of Main Street and Gowran Road. Financial services such as the post office and credit union are situated at the southern end of the village. The church and school are located opposite each other on the Gowran Road.

R.C Church at Bennettsbridge

The church was constructed in 1967 to the immediate east of the original church and graveyard. The original church was demolished, but the graveyard remained on the site and in use and predates the current church. The corner site of the graveyard has resulted in it being wedged between two roads and the new church. The graveyard is nearly at full capacity and its location has proven problematic for extension.

Recently Completed
Extension to Primary School

There are currently 195 pupils, 112 boys and 83 girls in Bennettsbridge primary school. This is an increase of 9 from last year. A new two class room extension has been built onto the school allowing for the removal of one of the prefabs currently on site.

The main area for parking within the village is in front of the school. This area is a designated parking area and serves the general village, the school and church. Parking at this area is

sufficient for the village but can become busy at peak school times during the week and on Sunday mornings. Parking provision for the rest of the village is currently mainly along the Main Street.

The remainder of the village further extends across the bridge, to a nucleation of industries, some of which are predominantly craft based, they include

- Nicholas Mosse Pottery
- Keith Mosse Woodturning
- Moth to a Flame candle making
- Glanbia
- Mixrite Ireland Ltd.
- Home Furniture

2.7 Village Character

Within the established village there are several features of interest which give Bennettsbridge its character and create a sense of place and identity. The bridge from which the village derives its name is a distinctive feature of both the village and riverscape alike. The landmarks of Kells Mill and Mosse Mill located down stream on either bank of the river contribute further as landmark features along the river bank. As a grain growing region within the country, mills were common features throughout the county of Kilkenny, many of whose remains are still visible through the landscape. The two mills at Bennettsbridge are still in a fine state of repair and functioning. These structures along with the bridge create a triangle which reflects the historical establishment of the village. They act as a link to its architectural, historical, technical and social past while simultaneously still functioning as an employment base for the village. They therefore create a sense of identity within the village.

Main Shop in Bennettsbridge

Modest in scale and simple in design, the buildings along Main Street are arranged in a terraced fashion. Most buildings are rendered with some having simple render decorative detailing exhibited in window and door surrounds. This is used to enliven the façade of these modest buildings. The variety of materials used in the finishes of buildings such as stone sills, redbrick chimneystacks and slate roofs creates textural variety in the street's appearance.

View of Main Street

The buildings located along the Gowran Road are in contrast with the strong building line which is established along the Main Street. Buildings such as the church and school are modern in design and finish and are set back from the street, located within their own grounds.

The main open spaces within the village centre are located along the banks of the river adjacent to Mosse Mill and behind the butchers shop. These open areas are not landscaped and are under grass functioning as flood plains during the winter months. The area immediately adjoining the school is a common open area, used for additional recreation space by the school. Bennettsbridge GAA Club, located on the northern periphery of the village and the soccer club located to the east of the village act as the recreational open space for the village inhabitants. Additional open space is located within the residential developments throughout the village.

2.8 Planning History

A planning history search revealed that Bennettsbridge is not currently under large development pressure. The majority of planning applications are for extensions to existing buildings or are in relation to the existing quarries. Two large applications date back to 2003 and 2004. A planning application was granted in 2004 for the construction of 36 houses on the eastern boundary of Bennettsbridge (Pl. Ref. 01/63). A second planning application was submitted for the construction of 36 houses on the adjoining site (Pl. Ref. 03/1587). This was granted permission by An Bord Pleanála subject to 9 conditions, inter alia reducing the overall units to 34 and making development subject to satisfactory wastewater treatment facilities being implemented (ABP Ref. PL 10.205689).

Garda Station

GAA pitch

2.9 Community Facilities/ Amenity/ Recreation

During public and stakeholder consultation the strengths and weaknesses in the available community facilities in Bennettsbridge were highlighted.

The strengths present within the village include

- the GAA club and its facilities located on the northern periphery of the village,
- the soccer pitch,
- the village hall,
- the open green space beside the school.

A medical surgery is located in the village in the clinic in Marian Place. There is no pharmacy in the village.

Although Bennettsbridge has the advantage of having established sports facilities at the GAA grounds, it was felt that the facilities of the Soccer Club were badly underdeveloped. The Soccer Club currently depends on the utilisation of additional facilities at the open area beside the school and the Woodlawn area.

The lack of children's amenities, especially a play ground was also noted. The area beside the school provides a pleasant

amenity but the need to protect this amenity for the future was highlighted.

The absence of a river walk was identified and the need to build on the existing crafts trail within the village.

A need for more shops or a small supermarket with sufficient parking was also raised.

A significant weakness identified by the public was the lack of a community hall. Although a village hall is present in the old school house, it was felt that this building was not sufficient to cope as a community facility for the population of the village.

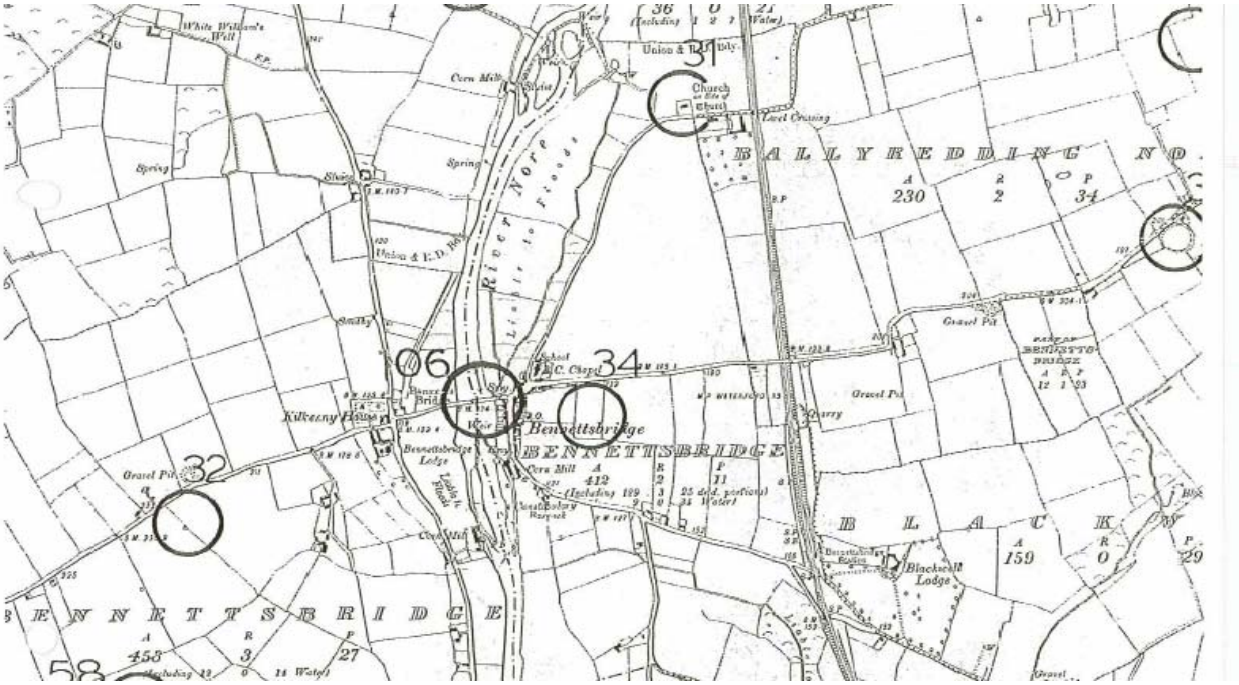
Increased Garda facilities for the village, particularly in relation to opening hours of the station, were also highlighted as an issue.

2.10 Archaeology and Built Heritage

2.10.1 Archaeology

Archaeological monuments are protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004 and are identified by The National Monuments Service under the DoEHLG. The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) was established under Section 12 of the National Monuments Act 1994 (Amendment). The RMP identifies archaeological sites throughout the country. Each site is recorded under an identification number and plotted on an Ordnance Survey map. An accompanying index lists all sites under corresponding identification number, townland and classification. This is not an exhaustive list of all archaeological monuments and can be added to or subtracted from. See the table below for the RMP for Bennettsbridge.

RMP Number	Townland	Classification
KK024-031001	Bennettsbridge	Church
KK024-031002	Bennettsbridge	Graveyard
KK024-032	Bennettsbridge	Enclosure
KK024-033	Bennettsbridge	Building
KK024-03401	Bennettsbridge	Enclosure site
KK024-03402	Bennettsbridge	Enclosure Site
KK024-010601	Bennettsbridge	Bridge site possible



RMP Map showing archaeological sites within the vicinity of Bennettsbridge

2.10.2 Record of Protected Structures

Our architectural heritage is a unique and irreplaceable resource which is a vital link to our past. Under the Planning and Development Act 2000, it is the statutory responsibility of each planning authority to include in its development plan a Record of Protected Structures (RPS). The Act also requires a Planning Authority to include objectives for the preservation of the character of areas of special architectural interest. 'The Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2004' (AHPG) sets out guidelines for the protection of the county's architectural heritage.

There are a number of protected structures currently in Bennettsbridge as listed in the County's Record of Protected Structures.

Protected Structure: Bridge over River Nore

Further to this, the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH), a division within the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, carried out an interim survey in 2004 of all structures within the county, deemed to be of importance as set out under the categories of special interest. This included a survey of Bennettsbridge.

Listed in the table below are both structures that are on the RPS as well as those from the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

Description	Location	NIAH Ref	RPS Ref
Bridge	Ballyredding North	12312001	N/A
Bennettsbridge National School	Bennettsbridge	12312002	N/A
House	Bennettsbridge	12312009	N/A
Larkin & Associates	Bennettsbridge	12312008	N/A
Kells Wholemeal Mill	Bennettsbridge	12312007	D113
Bennettsbridge Garda Siochána Station	Bennettsbridge	12312006	C21
Nicholas Mosse	Bennettsbridge	12312011	C19
Cobbles/flags/paving/kerbing	Bennettsbridge	12312015	N/A
Kilkenny House	Bennettsbridge	12312013	N/A
Bennettsbridge Lodge	Bennettsbridge	12312012	N/A
Railway Bridge	Bennettsbridge	12312005	N/A
Bridge	Bennettsbridge	12312010	C18
Bridge	Bennettsbridge	12312014	N/A

2.11 Natural Environment

Kilkenny County is an inland county located in the most fertile plain in Ireland. The River Nore flows in a north-south axis through the county, dissecting it. The topography of the county is generally consistent, being flat throughout the greater part of the county with upland areas to the north-east, north-west and south.

The landscape of County Kilkenny is a diverse and valuable resource. Bennettsbridge village is situated in the valley of the River Nore, surrounded by open countryside, c.9 kilometres southeast of Kilkenny city. It is situated in the river's floodplain. The Nore valley is a low-lying area of the county, with an undulating terrain of grey-brown podsoils. The banks of the river at Bennettsbridge conform to general floodplain vegetation of grassland. The main geological composition of the region is dolomite limestone of Lower Carboniferous age. The working quarry north of Bennettsbridge has been included as a 'Site of Geological Interest' as an area of exposed dolomite under section 8.2.5, table 8.2 of the County Development Plan 2008-2014.

Bennettsbridge is located in the Lowlands Area of the Landscape Appraisal of the Kilkenny County Development Plan. The lands in this area are described as being 'the most extensive lowland area in the county' where the terrain is 'generally smooth although undulating in certain areas, with vegetative/wooded

slopes rising from the river valley'. The generally flat topography allows long distance visibility. This is further assisted by the large open fields being given over to grassland with a small amount of tillage on the fringes. These create a uniform appearance to the landscape.

The River Nore which flows through the centre of the village is a designated candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) under the EU Habitats directive.

A Nore river walkway project is currently being developed by BNS Rural Development in association with Kilkenny County Council. The walk is divided into stages which includes

- Kilkenny to Bennettsbridge
- Bennettsbridge to Thomastown
- Thomastown to Inistioge

This walk will follow the east bank of the river from Kilkenny towards Bennettsbridge, emerging into the village at the steps behind the butcher's shop and continuing down the Main Street.

2.12 Traffic and Transportation

2.12.1 Traffic Congestion

The main Kilkenny to Thomastown road, R700, passes through the centre of the village. This has resulted in heavy volumes of traffic on the Main Street and crossing the narrow bridge. The junction at the bridge and Gowran road has become a bottleneck. This problem is further accentuated by the location of three quarries, Hennessy's, Lagan's and Roadstone, within the vicinity of the village, resulting in large numbers of trucks utilising this route.

2.12.2 Public Transport and Parking

At present there is no train or bus service within the village resulting in large scale car dependency for transport. Parking along Main Street is problematic due to the narrow width of the main street and the current traffic volumes on this route.

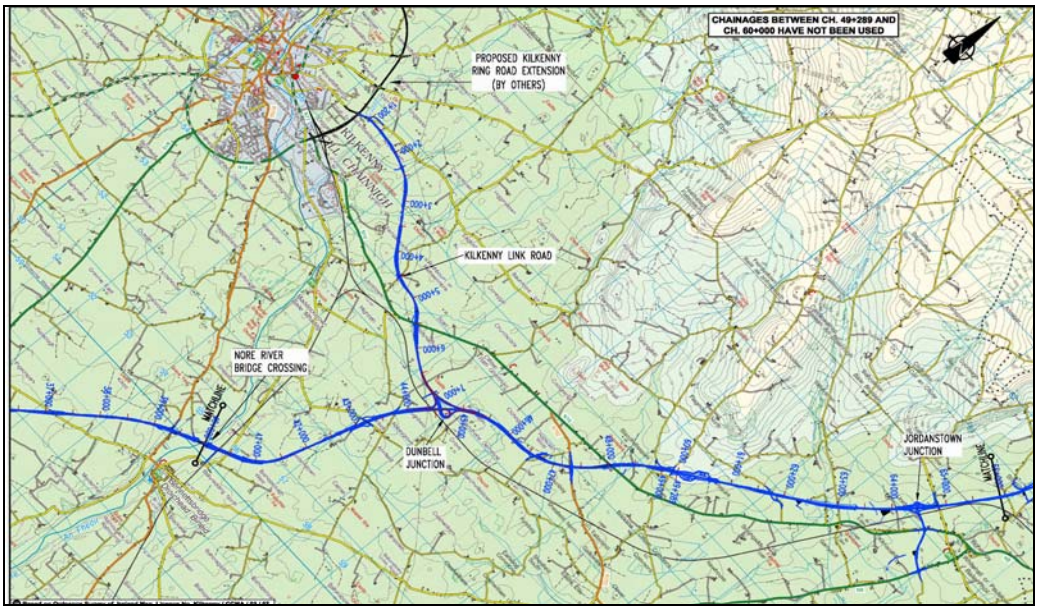
2.12.3 N9 Upgrade

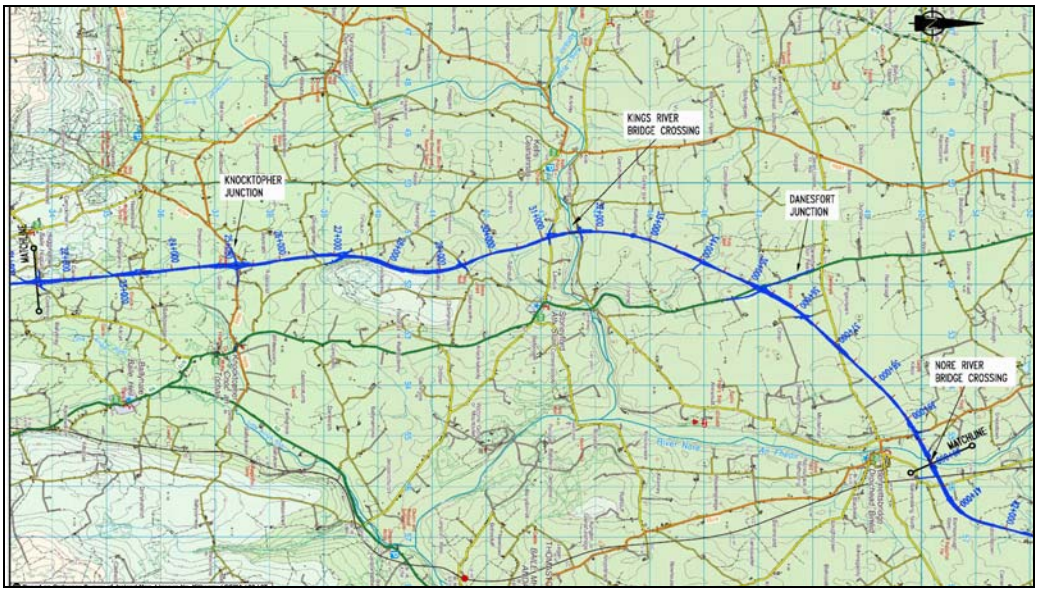
The new N9 upgrade, Kilcullen to Waterford Scheme, which is a subsection of the overall N9 Waterford to Knocktopher scheme passes to the north of the village. The development consists of the construction of 24 km of high quality dual carriageway. There are three junctions in close proximity to Bennettsbridge;

- Danesfort Junction is located just southwest of the village. It is on the line of the existing N10. This junction will allow local access, and access to Kilkenny City. This will be the access point closest to motorists in Bennettsbridge.

- Dunbell junction will provide a link at the intersection of the Kilkenny Link Road and the proposed mainline, in Dunbell Big. No access is allowed at this junction
- Jordanstown junction located approximately 1km to the west of Paulstown. This will provide a Link Road to connect to the existing N10 and to the existing N9 south of Paulstown.

Shown below are sections of the new N9 route alignment near Bennettsbridge which are taken from the Environmental Impact Statement submitted as part of the project.





Extract Maps from the Environmental Impact Statement prepared for the N9 Waterford to Knocktopher scheme

Section Three
Policy Context

3.1 National Spatial Strategy, 2002 – 2020

The *National Spatial Strategy (NSS)* is a twenty-year planning framework designed to deliver more balanced physical development between regions in Ireland. It provides a national framework and policy guidance for the implementation of regional, county and city plans. This pattern for development is designed to be implemented via Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs), which act as a bridge between national development and local planning. Regional Authorities were established to administer these guidelines and promote a coordinated framework for the provision of sustainable development in the seven designated regions.

3.2 The National Development Plan 2007-2013

The NDP set out a framework of investment for the social and economic development of identified regions within the NSS. It builds on the provisions established by the previous plan. It includes investment in areas such as education, roads, wastewater treatment plants, social housing and others all of which contribute to and enhance the spatial development of the regions in the country.

3.3 Regional Planning Guidelines for the South East Region, 2004-2020

The Regional Planning Guidelines aim to implement the policies and objectives of the National Spatial Strategy at a regional level. The south-east region comprises of Counties Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary South, Waterford and Wexford.

The planning framework at county level and in particular the respective county development plans need to be developed in accordance with the policies set out in the regional planning guidelines and the policies transposed at a county level.

Regional Planning Guidelines Strategy Map

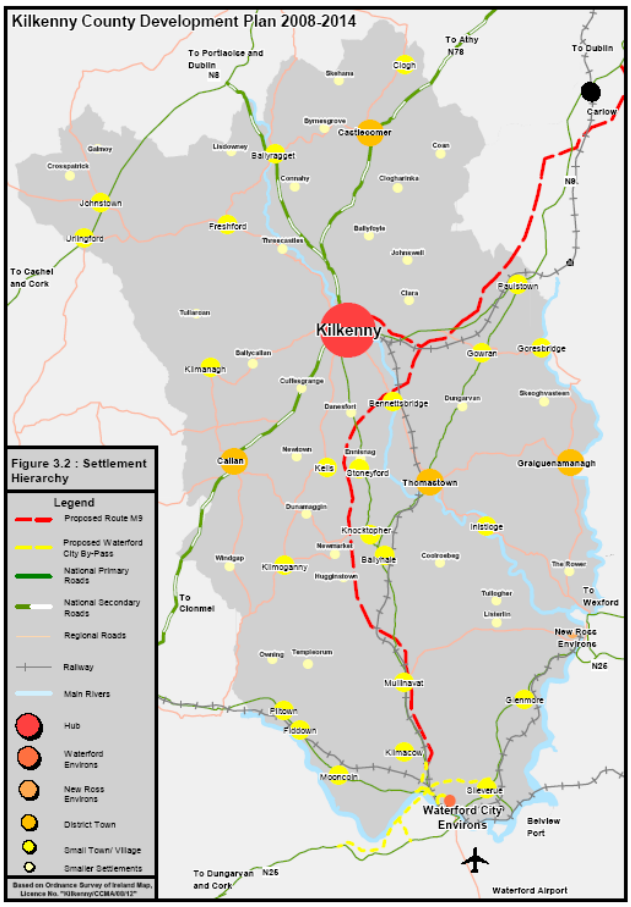
3.4 County Development Plan, 2008-2014

The Kilkenny County Development Plan, 2008-2014 is the statutory framework for County Kilkenny. The Local Area Plan has had due regard to all relevant policies set out in the Plan.

Under table 3.1 'County Settlement Hierarchy' contained in the current County Development Plan, Bennettsbridge has been classified under '*smaller towns and villages'.* Located within the immediate hinterland of Kilkenny city, Bennettsbridge is subject to development pressure. The Plan notes the importance of retaining the existing character of such small towns and villages, whilst permitting development in a way that strengthens their role as local service centres.

Under the Rural Settlement Strategy, contained within the current Development Plan, Bennettsbridge has been identified as an *Area Under Urban Influence*. Such areas are under the greatest pressure for development due to

- Close commuting catchments of larger cities and towns
- Rapidly rising population
- Ready access to good roads networks with ready access to larger urban areas



It is therefore important to facilitate the housing requirement for such areas through the sustainable zoning and development of lands identified for housing.

The Retail Strategy for Kilkenny County Council and Borough Council was first carried out in 2002 and reviewed twice since. Under the county retail hierarchy as outlined in the Development Plan, Bennettsbridge has been identified under level 4 'village centre'.

When designing for new development within the village, consideration should be given to Chapter 10 *Requirements for New Development* of the current County Development Plan.

Section Four
Bennettsbridge: Local Area Plan Strategy

4.1 A Vision for Bennettsbridge

At the outset of the Local Area Plan, a vision for the village of Bennettsbridge has been developed which is closely based on the views and wishes of the local community. The public consultation workshop, school project, stakeholder consultation and written submissions identified a number of issues which are of importance to the local community. A summary of these was outlined in Section 1 of the Plan.

Taking account of the issues identified by the local community, the following encapsulates the vision for Bennettsbridge:

Vision:

To grow Bennettsbridge into a safe, attractive and viable village by providing for sustainable expansion and development which is appropriate to and integrated with the existing village, taking account of its rich heritage and further enhancing the role of Bennettsbridge as a destination for the arts and crafts and as an attractive place for locals and visitors alike.

4.2 Future Growth based on the Policy Context

The future growth of the village of Bennettsbridge needs to be strictly guided by the parameters as they are set out in the overall policy context, in particular the Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014, which, in turn, is guided by the policies contained in the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines for the South-East Region, 2004 (see Section 3 for full policy review).

The LAP, once adopted, will remain in place for a period of 6 years and will need to set out an assessment of the appropriate future growth of the village over this time period and beyond. The key is to provide for sustainable growth that will keep the village viable and prospering whilst not overburdening existing services.

As stated in Section 2.3, the village had a population of 685 in 2006 as recorded by the Census.

The County Housing Strategy was adopted as part of the County Development Plan in 2008. The preferred scenario in this was the central scenario which predicted a 16.7% county-wide population increase to 2014. Applying this increase to the growth of Bennettsbridge results in a horizon of 799 people to 2014 (approx. 821 to 2015.). This additional 136 people (above the 685 recorded in 2006), at a household occupancy of 2.88 and average density of 20 dwellings per hectare, equates to 2.36 hectares. The Development

Plan Guidelines recommend that enough land should be zoned to meet residential needs for 9 years, i.e. 1.5 times the projected demand. This equates to a land requirement of 3.5 hectares over the lifetime of the plan. See Section 4.3.3 for a detailed rationale.

Such an increase in the local population needs to be achieved in conjunction with the provision of an increase in local employment. The growth of Bennettsbridge in line with these targets would achieve, inter alia, the following key policy objectives in line with the Development Plan:

- a strengthening of the service centre role of Bennettsbridge both in terms of the town proper and its immediate hinterland;
- maintaining the vitality and viability of the existing village and in particular ensuring the sustained provision of existing services, such as schools, shops, sports clubs, etc.;
- the avoidance of unsustainable ribbon development in the adjoining countryside by ensuring the designation of appropriate zoned lands adjacent the existing village and thereby an efficient use of existing and planned service infrastructure.

The land use zoning framework as presented in this Local Area Plan (please see Section 4.3 below) has translated the population horizon as set out above by designating an adequate amount of zoned land in the village which can cater for the anticipated population increase as well as the expansion of the employment base of the village.

The designation of residential lands was particularly guided by objective PS12 of the County Development Plan (as quoted above) by designating lands particularly on infill sites, vacant sites and on backlands.

4.3 Development Boundary and Land Use Zoning Framework

As there was no previous Local Area Plan in place for Bennettsbridge, this LAP has set out both a new development boundary for the village (for the period of the plan) and a land use zoning framework (please see Zoning Map in Appendix I).

4.3.1 Development Boundary

The Development Boundary for the village has been designated taking into consideration a number of factors as set out in the Development Plan Guidelines[1]. When considering specific lands for zoning for development it is important to consider the following factors as outlined in the guidelines to ensure the proper planning and sustainable development of the area:

- Need
- Policy Context
- Capacity of Water, Drainage and Roads Infrastructure
- Supporting Infrastructure and Facilities
- Physical Suitability
- Sequential Approach

[1] Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (June 2007) “Development Plans – Guidelines for Planning Authorities”.

- Environmental and Heritage policy, including conservation of habitats and other sensitive areas.

In this regard, the development boundary also takes account of factors such as the setting of the village within the surrounding landscape and 'natural' boundaries such as the rail line and the river, the need to provide for a compact and accessible built form and the existing built environment and road structure.

The development boundary is delineated on the zoning map (see Appendix I) and relates to the existing built up area of the village and adjoining lands thereby incorporating the village centre, the main existing residential areas and current local employers, namely Glanbia and adjoining sites and the Mosse Mill.

4.3.2 Land Use Zoning

The purpose of zoning is to indicate to property owners and the general public the types of development which the Council considers most appropriate in each land use category. Detailed zoning objectives are provided in Section 7 of the Local Area Plan which also sets out the development management guidelines for new development in the village.

The Land Use Zoning Framework is reflective of existing established uses in the village and designates appropriate amounts of undeveloped land for the provision of new residential areas and areas for existing and future enterprise and industry.

4.3.3 Zoning for New Residential Areas

In line with the population projections and growth scenario set out in Section 4.2 above, the LAP has identified a number of areas for new residential development. The overall need to zone lands for new residential development has been calculated in line with the projected growth and policy context, taking on board the following considerations:

- A total additional population of 136 persons over the lifetime of the plan would equate to an additional 47 households. This is calculated in line with Census 2006 data which indicates an average household occupancy rate for County Kilkenny at 2.88 persons per household.

- The zoning of lands for these additional households is based on an assumed residential density of approx. 20 units to the hectare. This density is in line with current policy provision, particularly those set out for villages under national Planning Guidelines[2]. In particular, it reflects the established patterns of housing development in Bennettsbridge and it ensures that future housing can be of an attractive size and scale.

- It is further acknowledged that this Local Area Plan must provide for a robust development environment. A degree of 'headroom' or surplus is required in the lands zoned for development. This headroom takes account of the likely scenario that not all zoned land will be developed and available for occupancy during the

[2] Department of the Environment and Local Government (1999) *Residential Density Guidelines for Planning Authorities*; Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (Dec. 2008) *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas - Guidelines for Planning Authorities.*

term of this Local Area Plan; whilst allowing for the projected growth in population for Bennettsbridge.

In line with the population projections as outlined under Section 4.2 and the considerations as set out above, a total of 3.5 hectares of residential land is required. In terms of residential units that could be provided the different land banks are as follows:

- A substantial tract of land has been identified which will be subject to a development framework plan. The total area of this is 10.76 hectares (plus the GAA pitch which measures 2.18ha). The first phase of development will provide a maximum of 3.5 hectares of residential land. Further detail on this is outlined in Section 6.
- A small parcel of land to the south of the GAA pitch (approx. 0.45 ha) has been identified for housing. These lands are owned by the local authority.
- A small parcel of land has been identified adjacent to the railway line (approx.0 .5 hectares). An estimated 5 to 10 units could potentially be provided here.

4.4 Future Housing Provision

4.4.1 Local Authority and Social/Affordable Housing

A large proportion of the housing stock in Bennettsbridge was developed by the Local Authority. The earliest County Council development was the “Bull Ring”, dating from the 1940s. Marian Place (built in 1956) and Woodlawn (built in 1971) are more recent examples.

All new private housing developments will be required to comply with the Council’s Housing Strategy and in particular the provisions for social and affordable housing set out therein. All future large scale housing developments shall be subject to detailed negotiations with the Council’s Housing Department regarding the obligations under Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

HOUSING

Policies

H1 Kilkenny County Council will enter into negotiations with any private developer of new housing regarding the provisions for social and affordable housing in line with the Council’s Housing Strategy regarding the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

4.5 Future Employment

Employment in Bennettsbridge has traditionally been focused around a number of key employers such as the Glanbia site and other craft industries. The proximity of the village to Kilkenny city has also meant that a proportion of locals commute to the city for employment.

The crafts industry has more recently expanded in the village. It is of particular importance to Bennettsbridge and this is reflected in the fact that along the Kilkenny Crafts trail, four out of a total of nine crafts retail outlets are located in Bennettsbridge. It is therefore a key policy to retain, strengthen and enhance the crafts base of the village. This will be achieved through a number of objectives, primarily relating to the overall improvements of the physical fabric and attractiveness of the town and new facilities for pedestrians and by making the village an attractive destination for visitors and tourists.

In addition to the crafts industry, employment and industrial land is required to secure the economic position of Bennettsbridge and lands have been zoned accordingly.

EMPLOYMENT

Policies

E1 To retain, strengthen and enhance the crafts industry in Bennettsbridge. Kilkenny County Council will favourably consider innovative and new proposals that will aid the future of the arts and crafts industry in the village.

E2 Kilkenny County Council has designated appropriate lands zoned for the provision of employment related uses, including Small and Medium Sized Enterprise, to promote a diverse local economy and job provision locally.

E3 Kilkenny County Council will actively pursue the strengthening of the attractiveness of Bennettsbridge as a destination for visitors and tourists by implementing village improvement measures as set out in this LAP, as well as working with private sector interests in the enhancement of the village.

4.6 Proposals for Traffic and Transport Improvements

4.6.1 Traffic Congestion and Heavy Goods Vehicles

As stated in Section 2, traffic congestion around the bridge and the predominance of traffic on the Main Street of Bennettsbridge are key issues facing the future viability and attractiveness of the village. Congestion is primarily caused by traffic passing through Bennettsbridge on the R700 and traffic crossing the river. A sharp left turn from the Main Street onto the bridge causes hold ups by turning HGVs and traffic backing down Main Street is a regular occurrence as a result of this.

A key issue and problem identified by the local community is the predominance and amount of HGV traffic passing through the village. This stems primarily from two sources, regional HGV movements and locally generated HGV traffic.

Within the south-east region, HGV traffic is generated by movements of trucks emanating from Rosslare Harbour and heading towards Kilkenny and beyond. The R700 acts as a shortcut from Rosslare via a number of small towns and villages, including Thomastown, Inistioge and Bennettsbridge, which all suffer traffic congestion as a result. More suitable alternative, if somewhat longer, routes exist for these traffic movements. In particular, the upgrade of the N9/M9 national route provides viable opportunities for a re-routing of traffic away from regional roads and towards the more appropriate and better developed national road network (even if this would mean a greater travelling distance for HGV vehicles). However, there is currently no incentive for HGV traffic to avail of these alternative options (or indeed a disincentive to use the R700). The routing of regional HGV traffic therefore needs to be developed on a county wide basis and in consultation with the National Roads Authority.

Locally, HGV traffic is generated from the three quarries located around Bennettsbridge. The movement of these trucks through the town not only causes congestions but also poses a safety hazard for the local community as some of the routes used by the quarry trucks have no footpaths and are generally unsafe for pedestrians. Further to this, there is considerable pollution associated with the quarry trucks, particularly in terms of dust generated on approach roads to the village and the main thoroughfares. While the operation and expansion of the quarries has been assessed under various planning applications (some of these including Environmental Impact Statements), it is proposed that a further investigation study should be carried out in order to ascertain how the HGV movements which are mostly generated by local quarries could be further minimised and additional appropriate traffic management controls be put in place.

4.6.2 Pedestrian Facilities

Footpaths in Bennettsbridge are mostly existent on the Main Road, Gowran road and within the existing residential areas. A pedestrian crossing has recently been installed in front of the Church. However, some of the approach roads to the town have no footpaths and are therefore unsafe for pedestrians. The lack of a footpath on the bridge results in the loss of connection between the east and west sides.

The land use zoning map (see Appendix I) has included a specific objective for the upgrading of footpaths or the instalment of footpaths where upgrades need to be carried out. In addition, Section 6.4 of the LAP sets out specific proposals for the provision of a new pedestrian bridge over the River Nore.

4.6.3 Car Parking

Car parking in the village centre is primarily provided by the car park in front of the school and on street parking outside the church, outside the convenience shop along Gowran Road and on Main Street. It appears that the amount of parking spaces is generally considered appropriate by locals and parking provision only becomes an issue during busy periods such as match days or social occasions centred on the Church.

Despite this, there is some evidence of indiscriminate parking in the village centre, particularly outside the butcher shop and in areas where parking is not formalised by road markings etc.

During GAA matches, the field to the south of the GAA pitch acts as an overflow parking area. During other times this area is often used

as an informal playing pitch. This area has now been zoned for new residential use.

4.6.4 Roads Objectives

A roads objective is identified on the Land Use Zoning Map (see Appendix I) as follows:

Local Access Road between Gowran Road and Ballyredding North

As part of the Masterplan for the lands to the north of Gowran Road as outlined in Section 6 of the LAP, it is an objective that a local access road be provided between the Gowran Road and Ballyredding North. This will provide local access to the development lands and GAA pitch.

4.6.5 Public Transport

A bus service is provided for the village. A Bus Éireann route (no. 73) from Waterford to Athlone and Longford runs through the village. A private service is provided by Kilbride's Coaches.

The Waterford-Kilkenny railway line runs through Bennettsbridge. A railway station was located in Bennettsbridge in the early 20th century. The Council would support the possibility of locating a train station in Bennettsbridge in the future.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

Policies

TT1 To ensure that all new roads are designed as 'people friendly' with regard to pedestrian and cycling facilities, favouring soft engineering solutions such as horizontal alignment of roads and/or use of green verges to road sides to segregate pedestrians and cyclists and to promote traffic calming. Hard engineering solutions such as speed ramps and speed tables will be discouraged.

TT2 To provide for an upgrading and/or provision of new footpaths and lighting on all approach roads to Bennettsbridge and as indicated on the zoning map as resources and finances permit.

TT3 To ensure that a new road is provided for new local access between the Gowran Road and Ballyredding North in conjunction with new development.

TT4 To examine how HGV movements which are mostly generated by local quarries could be further minimised and additional appropriate traffic management controls be put in place.

Actions

TTA1 To work closely with public and private agencies responsible for transport services in the provision of new services and supporting infrastructure, and to facilitate the provision of bus stops and shelters as appropriate.

TTA2 To prepare a traffic management plan for the area including the school, church, graveyard, community centre and bridge.

4.7 Provision of Community Facilities

As outlined in Section 2 of the LAP, the consultation exercise carried out as part of the Local Area Plan preparation indicated that the local community felt that the present strengths within the village include the GAA club and its facilities, the soccer pitch, the village hall and the open green space beside the school.

The Church and Graveyard

Weaknesses indicated were the lack of a doctor/ health facility, the underdeveloped facilities of the soccer club, the lack of a play ground, the absence of a properly constituted river walkway, the general need for more shops or a small supermarket and the need for an upgraded community hall.

It was further identified during the stakeholder consultation that the graveyard (located to the front of the church in the heart of the village) is nearing capacity and will need to be extended in the near future.

With regard to the educational needs of the village, the Primary School located in Bennettsbridge currently caters for a total of 195 pupils (school year 2008/2009). New enrolment figures for 2009/2010 are ca. 23 pupils and an equal amount of pupils will be leaving the school at that time. School facilities are of a high standard and a new extension for two classrooms has recently been completed. In line with the recommendations as set out in the Code of Practice issued by the Department of Education and Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government[3], the LAP has calculated the future additional school going population at primary school age to be 17 pupils over the lifespan of the plan should all new residential areas be fully built out. (Primary school going pupils are calculated at 12% of any future population, in this case an additional population of 136 as set out in Section 4.2 above would lead to an anticipated increase of 17 pupils over the next 6 years).

The Old School House now in use as a Community Centre

It is an objective of the LAP that future housing development will need to be monitored against the provision of additional spaces in the local Primary School to avoid an oversubscription resulting from an increase in local housing. In this regard, future housing should not be allowed to continue until capacity constraints in the primary school have been resolved.

The LAP has developed a number of policies which the Council will seek to implement during the lifespan of the Local Area Plan in conjunction with other relevant authorities and the local business community.

Grotto at entrance to graveyard

[3] Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Department of Education Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2008) *The Provision of Schools and the Planning System – A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities*.

New School Extension

Informal Playing Pitch

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Policies

CF1 To maintain and enhance the role of Bennettsbridge as a Local Service Centre in line with the recommendations of the County Development Plan.

CF2 To encourage and facilitate the provision, expansion and upgrading of community facilities in the village.

CF3 To require that future housing development of ten or more units demonstrates that appropriate capacity exists in the local primary school prior to the granting of planning permission.

CF4 To liaise with the Health Service Executive to investigate the provision of a local GP service and/or health centre facility.

CF5 To assist and facilitate the local community in the expansion of the existing graveyard or the development of a new graveyard to serve the needs of the local population.

4.8 Open Space and Amenity

The rural setting of Bennettsbridge and its location on the River Nore ensure that the village is embedded in the surrounding countryside which offers ample opportunity for natural amenity and recreation. In addition, there are a number of formalised open spaces in and around the village which are frequently used by the local population. The following sets out different types of Open Space and the value they provide, both as recreational assets and in terms of biodiversity, and sets out relevant policies to further enhance and protect these different areas.

4.8.1 Types of open space

The types of open space in and around Bennettsbridge essentially fall into three categories and can be summarised as follows:

Existing Accessible Open Space
These areas are usable and accessible by the public. They are provided in the existing residential areas (such as the green space within the Bull Ring and open space at Hillview and Noreview Heights), the playing pitches (GAA and Soccer) and the green field beside the school. The riverbanks, where accessible, also provide for a passive recreation area. The key objective of this LAP is to retain and enhance these existing areas of open space.

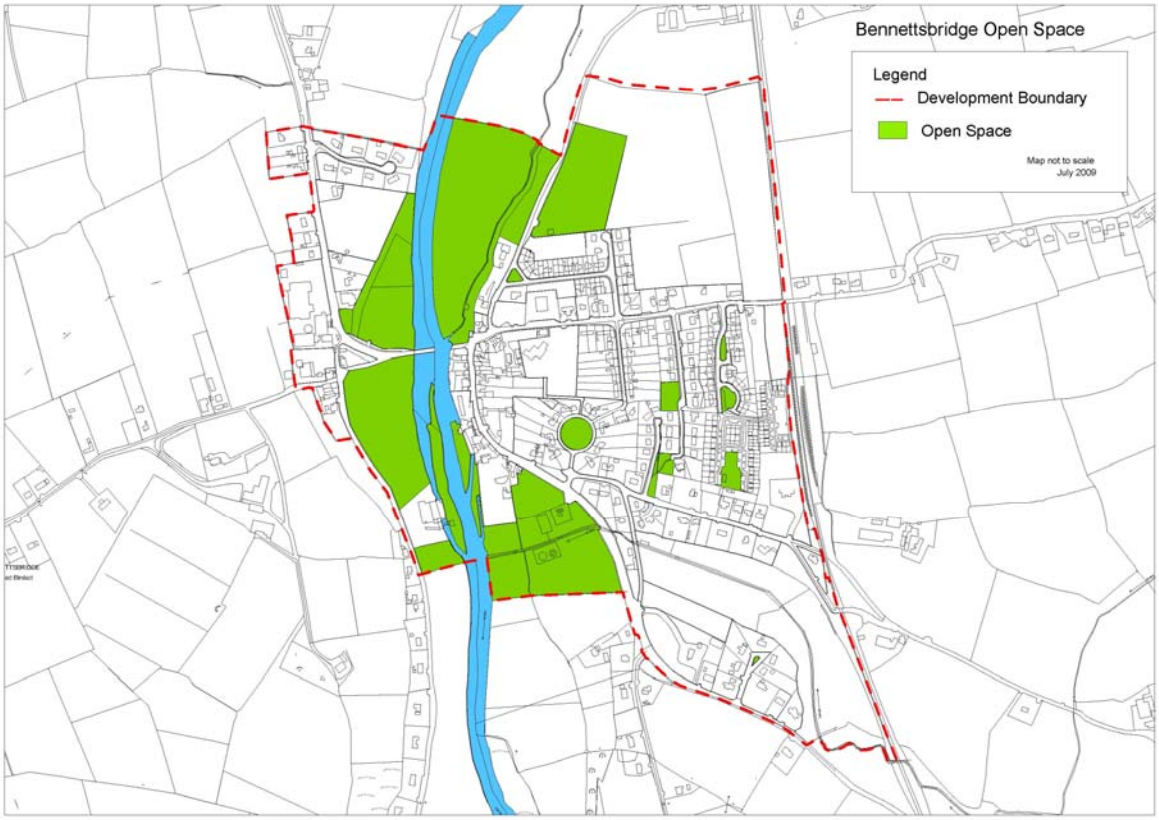
Strategic Open Space
These areas are not generally accessible by members of the public but still provide a valuable amenity and buffer for the village. These areas primarily comprise of those sections of the riverbanks which are not accessible, the area around the waste water treatment plant and other areas currently in private ownership. These areas should be kept free of development and retained as strategic open space.

New Designated Open Space

These are areas which are currently in private ownership or not accessible by the general public but that should in future be open to the public and provide active and passive recreation areas for the local population. These areas comprise of new parks/green spaces to be provided within new residential development, a new proposed linear park along the stream which is a tributary to the Nore and other areas along the river adjacent the Mosse Mill which could provide for a more active recreation space including the provision of walkways and picnic areas and potential mooring points for recreational boat users (such as kayaks and canoes).

The GAA pitch and soccer field have been designated as new open space as improvements for these are linked to the roll-out and delivery of the Framework Plan for the residential lands to the north of Gowran Road (see Section 6).

It will be a specific policy of the LAP to provide for recreational access onto the river banks of the Nore, to provide a new linear park and associated walkway along the stream to the south of the village and to provide for new open space associated with any new residential development and in line with development plan standards and the provision of the Sustainable Residential Development Guidelines. Map 4.1 shows lands zoned for open space under the zoning framework plan.



Map 4.1 Open Space and Amenity

4.8.2 Recreational Walkways

The need for recreational walks in and around the village for locals and visitors alike was identified as a key issue during the public consultation exercise. In this regard, a number of potential walks have been identified and these are marked as specific objectives on the zoning map (see Appendix I).

Two particular new walkways have been identified in this LAP:

- The first is an extension southwards of the existing walkway along the River Nore which forms part of the River Nore Valley Walk.
- The second is identified along the small stream to the south of the village. The achievement of this is seen as a long-term goal to be achieved beyond the lifetime of this plan.

Despite the recognised benefits of recreational walkways, implementation of these in Ireland has been slow when compared to other European countries. A number of legal issues are associated with access across privately owned lands and these will need to be resolved amicably with the relevant landowners.

The Local Authority will in this regard enter into negotiations with the local landowners affected and will reach agreement on a number of 'ground rules' to be established in relation to the potential access routes before these are implemented. These 'ground rules' need to form a legal agreement and should be guided by the "National Countryside Recreation Strategy" published by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs in 2004 and the associated "Access Parameters and Countryside Code"[4] document.

OPEN SPACE/ AMENITY

Policies

OS1 It is a policy of the Local Area Plan to safeguard the biodiversity and amenity value of the open space areas in and around the village. In particular, to keep open space areas free of inappropriate development.

OS2 To enhance the active recreational value provided by the River Nore and its banks by providing new walkways, benches, picnic areas and small scale mooring areas for boat or canoe clubs (as resources permit).

OS3 To ensure that any development application adjacent to the river sets aside sufficient land to provide for a long-term objective of a linear park along the river.

OS4 To reserve lands for the future provision and implementation of a number of strategic recreational walkways as identified on the land use zoning map.

[4] Both documents available at http://www.pobail.ie/en/RuralDevelopment/NationalRuralDevelopment/ComhairlenaTuaithe/

OS5	To provide for a new playground in a suitable location, as resources and finances permit.
OS6	To ensure that any proposed development that has the potential to impact on the cSAC will be subject to the Appropriate Assessment process.

4.9 Archaeology and Built Heritage

4.9.1 Archaeology

Section 2.10 provides a detailed overview of the archaeological heritage of Bennettsbridge. In particular, six sites are identified in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) located in and adjacent to the village. It is an objective of this plan to protect the archaeological heritage in line with the *Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (1999)*, published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

All future development in the village which might have an impact on the archaeological heritage needs to have regard to the policies and specifics set out in the Kilkenny County Development Plan, 2008-2011 (in particular policies H78 to H90 of the Plan).

4.9.2 Built Heritage

As part of the preparation of this LAP a comprehensive study of the architectural heritage of Bennettsbridge was carried out. This included a review of the current Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and an Architectural Conservation Area Appraisal. A brief overview of the structures currently on the RPS and surveyed by the NIAH is given in Section 2.10.

In addition to the four structures listed on the RPS, the NIAH survey included another nine structures giving a total of thirteen structures identified by the NIAH as being of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, technical or social interest within the village of Bennettsbridge. These nine structures are **proposed for inclusion** on the RPS for the village.

An additional six structures which are not currently on the RPS or included on the NIAH survey were identified during a comprehensive survey of the village. They are deemed to comply with the categories of special interest as set out in the 'The Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2004' (AHPG). They are therefore **proposed for inclusion** on the RPS for the village.

The following table lists all structures currently included on the Record of Protected Structures, all structures which are listed in the NIAH survey and which are proposed to be included on the RPS and those structures that are not currently listed and not included in the NIAH survey but which are proposed for inclusion on the RPS.

Description	Detailed Description	Location	NIAH Ref	RPS Ref
Bridge	Two-span rubble stone hump back road bridge over railway line, opened 1848	Ballyredding North	12312001	N/A
Bennettsbridge National School	Detached five-bay single-storey national school, dated 1914, on a symmetrical T-shaped plan comprising five-bay single-storey main block with single-bay (three-bay deep) single-storey gabled projecting central range having single-bay single-storey lower flanking bays.	Bennettsbridge	12312002	N/A
Railway Bridge	Single-span railway bridge over road, opened 1848, possibly originally single-arch.	Bennettsbridge	12312005	N/A
Bennettsbridge Garda Siochána Station	Detached three-bay two-storey Gothic-style Royal Irish Constabulary barracks, c.1850	Bennettsbridge	12312006	C21
Kells Wholemeal Mill	Detached single-bay three-storey gable-fronted flour mill, c.1825. Attached four-bay two-storey mill owner's house, c.1875, to south-east possibly originally three-bay two-storey. Part refenestrated, c.1975.	Bennettsbridge	12312007	D113
Larkin & Associates	Attached four-bay single-storey house, c.1825	Bennettsbridge	12312008	N/A
House	Attached three-bay two-storey house, c.1925.	Bennettsbridge	12312009	N/A
Bridge	Seven-arch rubble limestone road bridge over river, built 1763.	Bennettsbridge	12312010	C18
Nicholas Mosse	Attached three-bay six-storey flour mill, c.1825	Bennettsbridge	12312011	C19
Bennettsbridge Lodge	Detached five-bay two-storey house, c.1825	Bennettsbridge	12312012	N/A
Kilkenny House	Detached six-bay two-storey Royal Irish Constabulary barracks, c.1800	Bennettsbridge	12312013	N/A
Bridge	Two-arch rubble stone road bridge over flood plain, c.1750.	Bennettsbridge	12312014	N/A
Cobbles/flags/paving/kerbing	Section of dressed limestone kerbing, c.1875	Bennettsbridge	12312015	N/A

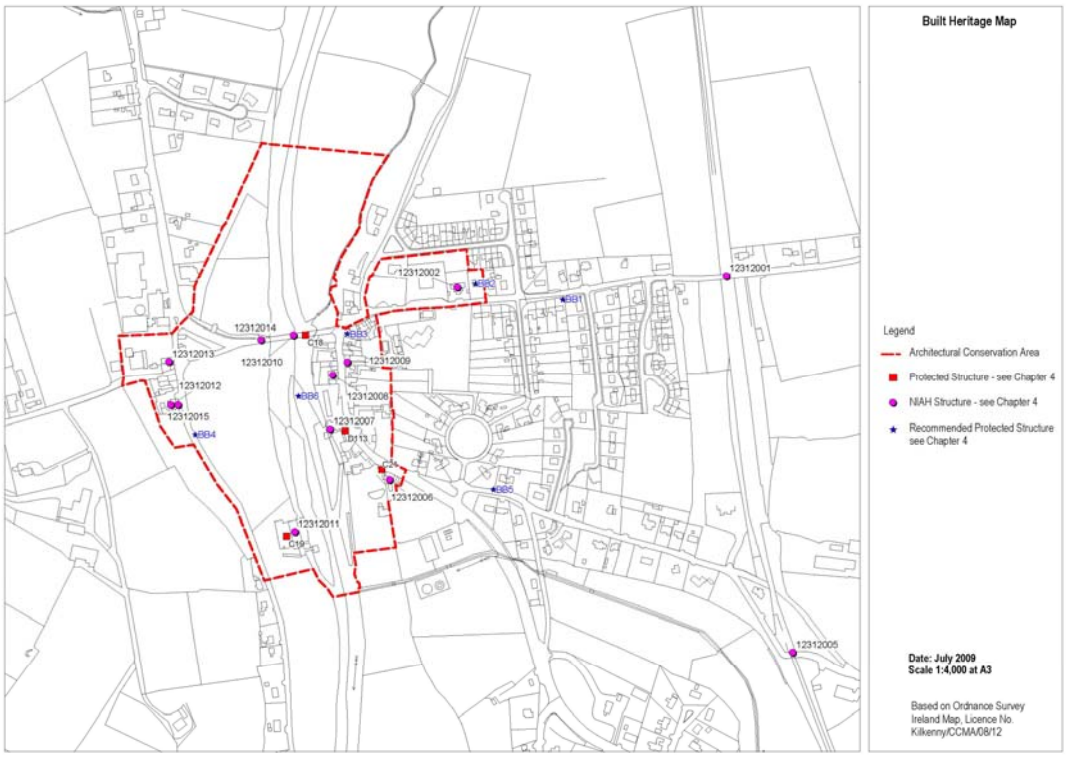
Description	Detailed Description	Location	Map Ref.
Vent Pipe	Cast-iron vent pipe, erected c.1880	Gowran Road	BB1
House	Detached L-plan 3 bay 2 storey house, built c. 1920	Gowran Road	BB2
The Corner House Pub/house	Attached 3 bay 3 storey house, built c. 1820 having shopfront to ground floor	Corner of Gowran and Thomastown roads	BB3
Boundary Wall & Stile	Rubble limestone boundary wall, built c. 1885 with wrought iron pedestrian stile.	Annamult Road	BB4
Water hydrant/ Pump	Cast-iron water hydrant, c. 1880	Thomastown Road	BB5
Weir	V-shaped water weir constructed c. 1800	River	BB6

4.9.3 Architectural Conservation Area

The centre of Bennettsbridge has been proposed to be designated an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). This will enhance and ensure the protection of the character and the historic core of the village. Guidance for addressing the management of the ACA and policies in relation to its conservation and protection are outlined in a separate document *Bennettsbridge Architectural Conservation Area Appraisal and RPS Review.*

This document is included in Appendix 3 of the report and contains both the details and policies in relation to the Architectural Conservation Area as well as the full review of Protected Structures.

Map 4.2 summarises the structures currently on the RPS and those which are proposed for inclusion on the RPS. It also outlines the proposed ACA boundary (for full scale Map see Appendix I).



Map 4.2 Architectural Conservation Area and Architectural Heritage

BUILT HERITAGE

Policies

BH1 Ensure the conservation and protection of the architectural heritage through the protection and conservation of the current/ proposed structures contained on the Record of Protected Structures and in line with the policies set out in the Kilkenny County Development Plan, 2008-2014 (particularly Policies H93-H101).

BH2 The vernacular style prominent in Bennettsbridge makes use of materials such as stone, slate, timber windows and doors, and decorative render work. It is reflective of the simplicity and modest scale used in the execution of finishes to buildings. The council will support the retention, repair and re-use of such materials.

BH3 a) To protect and enhance archaeological sites and monuments (including their settings), and extending to any additions or alterations that may arise during the lifetime of this plan;
(b) To require an appropriate archaeological assessment to be carried out in respect of any proposed development likely to have an impact on a Recorded Monument or their settings

Actions

BHA1 To respond to the Ministerial recommendation to include in the Record of Protected Structures, structures which have been identified as being of Regional, National or International significance in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage survey of the city and county published in 2006.

BHA2 To encourage the redevelopment of derelict sites in Bennettsbridge, in particular those along the Main Street, in accordance with best practice conservation techniques and guidelines.

Architectural Conservation Area Policy:

ACA1 To protect the special character of the ACA by ensuring that any development within Bennettsbridge should be in line with the policies contained within the document *Bennettsbridge Architectural Conservation Area Appraisal and RPS Review* (contained in Appendix III of the LAP).

4.10 Natural Heritage, Landscape and Biodiversity

4.10.1 Landscape Characterisation

The County Development Plan provides for a landscape character assessment of the county. The village of Bennettsbridge is located within an area characterised as 'Lowland Area', whereas those areas associated with the Nore river are characterised as 'River Valley'. In this regard, it is a policy of the LAP that any future development within Bennettsbridge will need to have full regard to the policies set out in the County Development Plan and Landscape Character Assessment document. While it is recognised that the area is a 'working landscape', it will be a particular objective of the LAP to minimise any visual impact of future development on the setting and visual quality of the landscape. In particular, the siting and design of taller buildings will need to be carefully assessed in this regard.

4.10.2 The River Nore

The River Nore is a candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) (Site Code 002162). As such, the river and associated floodplains have been designated as Open Space under this Local Area Plan and will need to be kept free of any development and the integrity of the cSAC will need to be safeguarded.

4.10.3 Views and Prospects

There are a number of views and prospects around the village of Bennettsbridge which are worthy of protection. In this regard, the Natural Heritage Protection Map (see Appendix I) has identified a number of views and prospects of high amenity value. Views shall be protected, however, this shall not give rise to prohibition on proposed development but rather to provide for design and scale of new development to minimise visual impact and to not seriously hinder or obstruct these views.

4.10.4 Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows

Woodlands, trees and hedgerows provide important wildlife habitats as well as contributing significantly to the character, setting and amenity of Bennettsbridge. They are a great landscape resource. There are a number of areas of mature trees which have been identified on the Natural Heritage Protection Map (see Appendix I). In addition to their obvious benefits in terms of biodiversity, the basis for protecting these areas can be summarised as follows:

- The line of mature trees along the banks of the River Nore add to the visual amenity of the river corridor and the setting of the historic bridge and Mill structures.
- The mature trees leading along Annamult Road to Mosse Mill in conjunction with the boundary wall and style to be protected provide for a scenic 'avenue'-type approach to the historic Mill building
- The trees and shrubbery adjacent the stream where a walkway is proposed add to the setting and character of the area and could be successfully built into any future layouts for the proposed linear park and walkway.
- The small woodland to the south of the Garda station along the Main Street provides for an established wooded area which also shelters adjoining residents from any potential nuisance of the existing and proposed waste water treatment plants.

4.10.5 Biodiversity

Biodiversity refers to the diversity of ecosystems, individual species of flora and fauna and also genetic diversity. It is an objective of Kilkenny County Council to prepare a county wide Bio-Diversity Plan. The CDP sets out policies in relation to the protection of natural heritage and biodiversity which should be adhered to (see Chapter 8 of the Development Plan).

NATURAL HERITAGE, LANDSCAPE AND BIODIVERSITY

Policies

NH1 To minimise any visual impact of future development on the setting and visual quality of the landscape. In particular, the siting and design of taller buildings will need to be carefully assessed in this regard.

NH2 To protect the integrity of the river corridor both in terms of its designation as a cSAC and important wildlife habitat as well as an important landscape feature. Any proposed developments that have the potential to impact on a Natura 2000 site will be subject to a project level appropriate assessment. No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

NH3 To protect designated views and prospects in and around Bennettsbridge (as outlined on the Natural Heritage Protection Map in Appendix I) from inappropriate development and to provide for design and scale of new development to minimise visual impact and to not seriously hinder or obstruct these views.

NH4 To protect woodlands, trees and hedgerows which are of amenity or biodiversity value and contribute to the amenity of Bennettsbridge. This relates in particular those areas identified on the Natural Heritage Protection Map (Appendix I). Proper provision will need to be made for their protection and management in any future development proposals.

NH5 Any future planning applications which would potentially have a negative impact on the local biodiversity shall include a proper assessment by a qualified professional and shall take all relevant measures to avoid or minimise the loss to local biodiversity. In seeking to enhance and protect the natural environment, the Council will seek to:

- Protect natural heritage sites designated in National and European legislation, specifically the River Barrow and River Nore cSAC
- Protect the bio-diversity of the area, particularly to protect those species listed in Annex II of the Habitats Directive.
- Protect the River Nore as a fisheries resource and Salmonid Water

4.11 Proposals for Water Services and Utilities

4.11.1 Water Supply

The existing water supply for Bennettsbridge village is part of the wider Bennettsbridge Regional Water Supply Scheme (RWSS). A preliminary report was carried out in 2008 by RPS Consulting Engineers for Kilkenny County Council outlining the present condition and proposed improvements to the Bennettsbridge RWSS.

The capacity of the current scheme, which was constructed in the 1950's, is constrained by a number of factors, including limited source capacity. The report identified the need to upgrade the water supply scheme in light of anticipated population growth and in particular to address the high levels of Unaccounted For Water (UFW).

In general terms, the issue of water conservation has come to prominence in new and existing developments. In this regard, it is a policy of the Council that all future developments must have regard to the need to conserve water.

Water Supply Policies:

WS1 The Council will endeavour to upgrade the water supply and associated distribution network of Bennettsbridge to cater for the anticipated population growth of the village and in line with the upgrades to the Bennettsbridge Regional Water Supply Scheme.

WS2 All future developments must have regard to the need to conserve water.

4.11.2 Waste Water Treatment

A primary water treatment plant is currently in operation just north of the Garda Barracks. The majority of the village is served by this system and the existing sewerage network drains to this facility. The system currently only provides primary treatment (screening grit chamber, septic tank and sludge drying beds). Effluent from the treatment plant is discharged into the River Nore, upstream of the Weir and Mosse Mill.

An upgrade of the existing system has been approved which will provide for the proper treatment of all sewage to high standards. The treatment system will provide for the treatment of waste water from a population equivalent to 1,953 persons.

Wastewater Policies:

WW1 Any significant additional development in Bennettsbridge is viewed premature pending the upgrading of the waste water treatment plant.

Action:

WWA1 To ensure the speedy delivery of the upgraded waste water treatment facility to cater for the existing and future population of the village.

4.11.3 Surface Water Drainage

It is an objective that all future developments in the LAP area shall ensure the sustainable management of surface water runoff in line with best current practice. In particular, it is an objective of Kilkenny County Council that that all future developments incorporate 'Sustainable Drainage Systems' (SuDS) as part of development proposals to reduce the rate and quantity of runoff.

All surface water drainage shall be in accordance with the requirements of the Kilkenny County Development Plan, 2008-2014 (particularly Section 9.12.4). Further guidance in respect of SUDS philosophy is provided in the following CIRIA[5] Publications:

- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems-Design Manual for Scotland and Northern Ireland;
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems-Best Practice Manual;
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems-Best Practice Manual and Drainage of Development Sites-A Guide,
- The SuDS Manual (C697)

Above: Examples of SuDS

Surface Water Drainage Objectives:

SW1 To require all developments to provide 'Sustainable Drainage Systems' (SuDS) as part of their development proposals and in line with the requirements of the County Development Plan.

[5] www.ciria.org

4.12 Flooding and Flood Risk

The River Nore is susceptible to flooding on a regular basis. The Office of Public Works provide some data in terms of flood events and flood areas. However, no detailed up-to date data has of yet been collated for Bennettsbridge.

Notwithstanding this, Map 4.3 below details data currently available from the OPW's website as part of the *National Flood Hazard Mapping*. In particular areas to either side of the river which are defined as being identified under the "Benefiting Land Maps". This refers to a dataset prepared by the Office of Public Works identifying land that might benefit from the implementation of Arterial (Major) Drainage Schemes (under the Arterial Drainage Act 1945) and indicating areas of land subject to flooding or poor drainage.

This gives an approximate estimation of the extent of the floodplain at Bennettsbridge. The lands thus identified have been zoned as 'Open Space' under the Zoning and Land Use Map (Appendix I). These lands also largely correspond to the area identified as a candidate Special Area of Conservation under the EU Habitats Directive. In this regard, it is a policy of the LAP to keep this area free from all inappropriate development and to assess development in line with the recently published Draft Guidelines on Flood Risk Management[6].

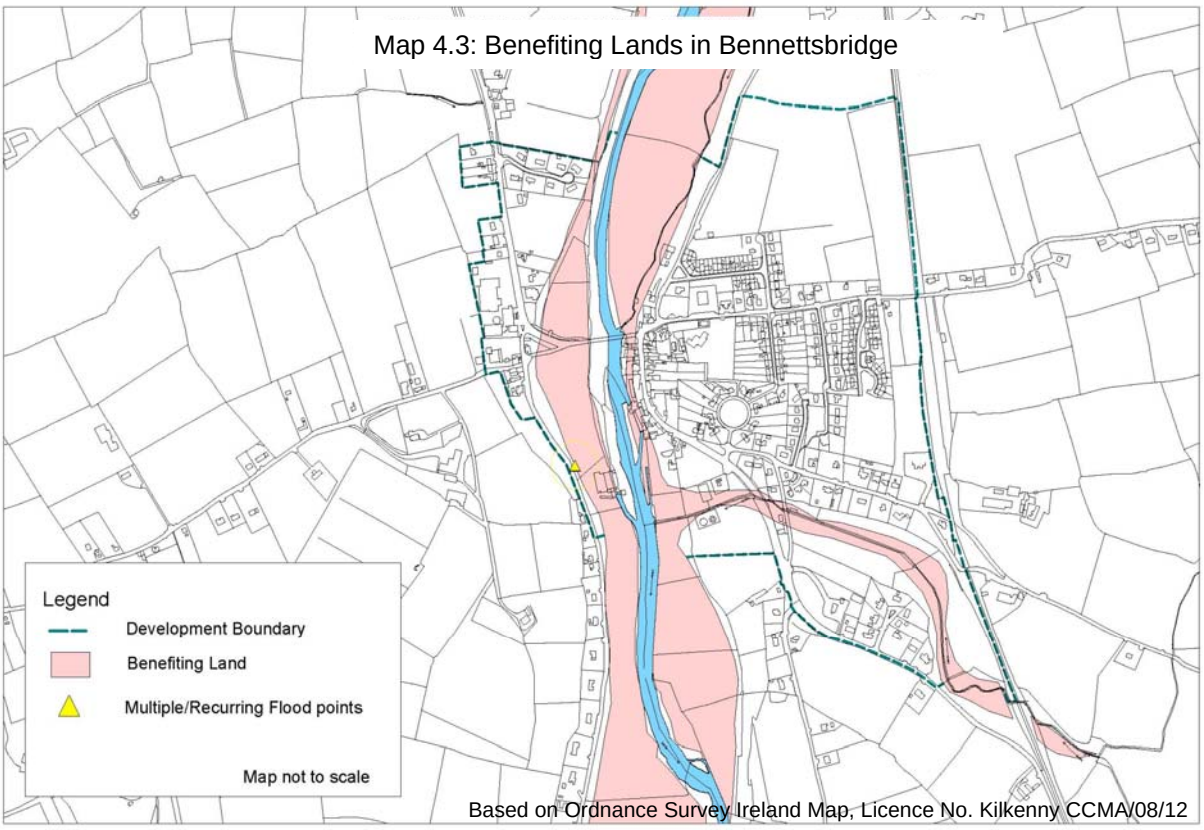
Flood Risk Policies:

FR1 To prevent any development that might have a negative impact on the River Nore floodplains.

FR2 To require all significant developments impacting on flood risk areas to provide a Flood Impact Assessment, to identify potential loss of flood plain storage and how it would be offset in order to minimise impact on river flood regime. All development shall have full regard to the DoEHLG's Draft Guidelines on Flood Risk Management.

FR3 To investigate, in conjunction with the OPW, the causes of flooding on the Annamult Road and possible solutions.

[6] Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Office of Public Works (2008) *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Consultation Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities*.



Source: OPW

4.13 Renewable Energy

It is considered that the most appropriate opportunity for renewable energy generation in Bennettsbridge is that of small scale hydro energy. The location of Bennettsbridge prevents substantial wind energy developments taking place as outlined in the County Development Plan (Section 9.8.3.3) and Wind Energy Study commissioned by the Council.

Notwithstanding this, it should be noted that the recently adopted Planning and Development Regulations 2008 (S.I. No. 235 of 2008) give effect to new exempted development provisions in respect of renewable technologies for industrial buildings, business premises and agricultural holdings. The Regulations provide exemptions for wind turbines, met masts, combined heat and power (CHP) plants, solar panels and biomass boiler units, subject to certain conditions, across each of the sectors.

Section 6 of the Local Area Plan provides standards for residential development in terms of sustainable design and building methods.

4.13.1 Hydro Power

The rich heritage of Mill buildings in County Kilkenny and the presence of two working mills in the village of Bennettsbridge are testament to the importance of hydro-power in the county over the centuries. Hydro-electricity has been produced since 1922 on both sides of the river. Kilkenny County Council welcomes the possibilities of expansion of hydro-power generation from the existing mills, weir and associated structures subject to amenity considerations and current accommodation capacities of the national grid.

Any future hydro-energy schemes will need to show best practice in relation to impact on amenity or indigenous fish population, including

seasonal migration. In this regard guidelines prepared by the Central and Regional Fisheries Board and the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources shall be consulted[7].

4.14 Waste Management and Recycling

It is an objective of this Plan that all future development should seek to minimise waste through reduction, re-use and recycling. Waste management and disposal shall be considered as part of the construction process and in the operation of the development when completed. There is an existing bring centre located beside the GAA field.

4.14.1 Construction Waste

Construction-related waste accounts for about one-third of total land filled waste in Ireland. It is therefore an objective of the Local Area Plan to minimise construction waste for all new development. During the construction process measures should be implemented to minimise soil removal (as part of the scheme design process), properly manage construction waste and encourage off-site prefabrication of building elements where feasible.

4.14.2 Domestic Waste

Everyday domestic waste produced by future residents and businesses shall be minimised through reduction, re-use and recycling. All new development shall provide for waste separation facilities, recycling banks and compost units.

Waste Management Policies:

WM1 During the construction process measures should be implemented to minimise soil removal (as part of the scheme design process), properly manage construction waste and encourage off-site prefabrication where feasible.

WM2 All new developments in the Local Area Plan lands shall provide for domestic waste separation facilities, recycling banks and compost units.

WM3 To maintain a bring centre in the village.

[7] Central and Regional Fisheries Board and the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources (2005) *Guidelines on the Construction and Operation of Small-Scale Hydro Electric Schemes and Fisheries*.

4.15 Specific Local Objectives

The Land Use and Zoning Map provides for a number of Specific Local Objectives which need to be taken into consideration in the future planning and development of Bennettsbridge. These are as follows:

SO1 **Any proposal for development on this land must come forward in the context of an overall framework plan for the entire area. Any such framework plan will address:**

- **delivery of mandatory objectives**
- **capacity of social and physical infrastructure (school)**
- **phasing of development**

SO2 **To ensure the existing right of way to the community slipway is retained**

SO3 **As a long-term objective to provide a linear park along the stream in agreement with the landowners.**

SO4 **To provide an upgrade of the existing sewage treatment plant to a new specification as a Secondary Treatment Plant with a ca. 2,000 Population Equivalent.**

SO5 **To protect the community's continued use of this area as a recreational resource.**

SO6 **To facilitate the community in advancing proposals for the use of the factory site to the rear of the Ring.**

Section Five
Strategic Opportunities for the Village

5.1 Introduction

Whereas Section 4 of this LAP sets out the general policies and objectives for the future sustainable development of the village, this section of the Plan is concerned with the physical make-up of the village. It provides some ideas and opportunities for the enhancement of the village from an urban design point of view.

In this regard, an overall strategy has been developed which includes some key elements as explained in Section 5.2. A number of particular sites have been identified for positive intervention to the village fabric.

The Main Street and village centre are dealt with in some more detail, as is the need for a safe pedestrian crossing across the river Nore.

5.2 Overall Strategy

5.2.1 Key Elements

The overall strategy for the village is based around a number of key elements which provide for minor interventions and improvements to the existing fabric of the village.

Pedestrian Connectivity - Strategic pedestrian linkages are identified. A key concept is the linking and integration of the new residential area to the existing village.

Public realm improvements – The primacy of the public realm should lie at the heart of all village improvements.

New landmark buildings – Landmark buildings of a particular architectural design merit can define the urban landscape and provide focal points for the village.

Opening up views – creating and opening up views of key focal points such as the river Nore and Mosse Mill have the potential to re-focus the village to make the most of some of its key assets and the visual and physical setting of the village.

Opening up backlands – opportunities for new infill development are explored.

Key public spaces – these spaces act as areas for social interaction and congregation as well as providing 'breathing space' in the built environment and should be designed accordingly.

Opportunity sites – provide for areas where new development or redevelopment can provide for an important stimulus by adding to the attractiveness of the village.

5.2.2 Key Opportunity Sites

Backland Opportunity Site
Development potential exists to the rear of the primary school. Development of this area will only be allowed subject to safe access and parking arrangements.

It is envisaged that the development could provide courtyard retail units and craft workshops. The built form could be that of two storey mews type development.

The development can be linked to the residential developments to the north and west by existing and proposed pedestrian connections. These connections would improve the overall permeability throughout the village.

Gateway Structure
The possibility exists of providing a landmark structure(s) on the Credit Union site which would provide enclosure and signal the entrance to the village along the Thomastown Road. This key building could help formalise the gateway to the village.

Main Street Improvements
It is proposed to improve the streetscape and public realm in the core of the village (see also Section 5.3 below). These improvements will include inter alia:

- Surface Material
- Boundary Treatment
- Planting
- Street Furniture
- Lighting
- Parking Provision

Kells Mill
Kells Mill is part of the historic fabric of the town. It is located in a pivotal location along Main Street. The Mill structure itself is protected and the building is a fine example of industrial architectural heritage. It is a working mill at present. However, should the opportunity arise, the Mill and associated open space to the front (currently occupied by grain silos) provide for a great opportunity to enhance this section of Main Street. As one possibility, the Mill could in the future provide for a visitor and tourist attraction (either in its present form as a working mill or as a major opportunity site/building).

The Triangle
The strategy identifies the triangle as an opportunity site for development. The site presents an opportunity to provide community uses and exhibition spaces linked to the crafts industry. The redevelopment of this site also provides an opportunity to provide clear views of the existing landmark structure – Mosses Mill and also to the village proper with are currently hidden by undergrowth. Clear signage is also required at this location towards the village core.

Employment area west of River
This site occupies a pivotal location on the west side of the village. It is located at the point where the road from Kilkenny swings around in a curve to lead onto the bridge over the River Nore. It is therefore visible when approaching Bennettsbridge from Kilkenny as well as when approaching the bridge from the Thomastown direction.

As such, the LAP recommends that this site, due to its pivotal location, should provide for a building of specific design merit which should accommodate mixed use development with a primarily employment focus. In this regard, future uses here should strengthen or be beneficial to the craft industry of the village. Ancillary provision of offices related to workshops and the provision of live/work units should be considered.

The building height should not substantially exceed that of the existing structure. The design of the building should be assessed primarily within its surrounding context and its location at this pivotal point.

5.3 The Village Centre

The village centre of Bennettsbridge is located to the east of the river Nore and is in the main centred around the Church and Graveyard, National School and Main Street. In effect the main body of the village stretches from the Garda Station on the southern end of the village, to the church and school at the northern end.

The most lively part of the town is the triangle centred on the school, shop and church and adjacent to the public car park. This area is where most interactions take place and where the heart of the village lies. In contrast, the Main Street appears to suffer from some dereliction and evidence of empty units and building plots.

The main street is heavily dominated by traffic and does not make for a very pleasant walking environment due to narrow footpaths and a relatively poor public realm. The footfall on Main Street is low in comparison to other areas of the village.

Unsightly Grain Silos

Poor road surface treatment

Poorly defined parking arrangements

A key challenge for the future planning and development of Bennettsbridge is therefore to address the problems associated with Main Street, and in particular to address the following challenges:

- Key improvements are needed to manage traffic and in particular the prevalence of HGVs on Main Street and through the village (see also Section 4.6).
- Footpaths and street furniture (incl. street lighting) need to be improved to make Main Street a more attractive environment for pedestrians.
- Safe crossing points need to be provided across Main Street.
- Kells Mill could in the future provide a major opportunity site which could provide a visitor and tourist attraction (either in its present form as a working mill or as a major opportunity site/building).

Kilkenny County Council in association with local business interest will endeavour to address some of these issues and concerns facing the village centre. In particular, the future development of Bennettsbridge will have regard to the following objectives:

Village Centre Policies:

VC1 To strengthen the role and function of the town centre by concentrating future commercial and retail development in the centre and along Main Street by having regard to the sequential approach for new retail developments and in line with the Retail Planning Guidelines, 2005.

VC2 To improve pedestrian safety in the village centre and to provide for one or more pedestrian crossing points on Main Street.

VC3 To formalise parking arrangements along Main Street and to investigate the potential for off-street parking behind the existing buildings and to thereby free up additional space for pedestrians through the widening of footpaths.

VC4 To improve signage for visitors and tourists, in particular in relation to the crafts trail and various crafts industries located in and around the village and to make it more attractive and easier to walk between these different attractions and to thereby increase the footfall for the village.

VC5 To actively encourage the use of derelict buildings and empty building plots in the village centre and along Main Street in particular.

VC6 To capture the amenity potential offered by the river by keeping existing access points open and investigating further potential access or views opened up from Main Street toward the river.

5.4 Pedestrian Crossing over the River Nore

The strategy identifies the absolute necessity for a pedestrian link across the river, linking the village core to the craft industries and residential developments to the west of the river. The existing bridge experiences high levels of vehicular traffic and is too narrow to provide for necessary footpaths as well as two lanes of traffic. Due to the heavy volumes of traffic, the bridge is not safe or suitable for pedestrians at present and this in effect means that the only way to cross over from one part of the village to the other is by car.

As a result, the village core and Main Street lose out on any passing trade that might be generated between the different crafts shops either side of the river, notably Mosse pottery and Chesnau Leather. In particular, the village also loses out on the significant levels of trade stopping at Mosse's Mill.

A number of options have been explored and assessed in the strategy regarding the provision of a safe pedestrian crossing and these can be summarised thus:

- **No Physical Intervention**: this could be achieved by narrowing vehicular traffic on the existing bridge to one lane and implementing a signalised, alternating traffic system. The space thus freed up could provide for new footpaths.

- **New Structure attached to existing bridge**: a new structure could be attached to the existing bridge. Given the status of the existing bridge as a Protected Structure and taking into account the integrity of the design of this historical bridge, this option is not seen as ideal due to its potential negative visual impact on the existing structure.

- **New, stand-alone pedestrian bridge**: a new light-weight structure could be designed as a pedestrian only bridge. While this might be a worthwhile option to explore in the long term and examples of such bridges do exist, it is considered that in the short term, due to cost constraints such an option would not be feasible.

In conclusion, it is considered that the most implementable option in the short term is the regulation of vehicular traffic crossing the bridge and making adequate room for pedestrians. Notwithstanding this, it is suggested that the option of a stand-alone bridge should be investigated with a particular view to identifying possible sources of funding for such a project.

Policy:

PC1 To investigate all options for improving pedestrian facilities (including lighting) over the River Nore. Any proposal will need to have full regard to the status of the existing bridge which is a Protected Structure, the cSAC status of the River Nore and the designation of the overall area as an Architectural Conservation Area.

Section Six
Development Parameters and Indicative Framework Plan for New Residential Area

6.1 Introduction

The lands to the north of the village have been zoned to provide for residential expansion in line with the growth projections as provided in Section 4. Given the size of the area in relation to the existing village it is considered appropriate that these lands should be developed in accordance with some key parameters and that a number of key projects and facilities need to be provided in tandem with the provision of housing.

Therefore any proposal for development on this land must come forward in the context of an overall framework plan for the entire area.

Any such framework plan will address:

- delivery of mandatory objectives
- capacity of social and physical infrastructure (e.g. school, other community facilities, water services etc.)
- phasing of development

Even though the entirety of the lands (approx. 10.76 ha) are zoned for new residential development, not all of the lands will yield residential development as the Local Area Plan provides for a number of key elements to be delivered such as improved soccer facilities, as well as ancillary parking and a new multi-purpose facility which facilitates a range of uses such as community, recreation and sports training.

The area subject to the Framework Plan will cater for the expansion of Bennettsbridge over the long term. The framework is therefore further split into two phases. Phase 1 is to provide expansion areas within the period of this Local Area Plan and Phase 2 should be considered when all lands of Phase 1 have been developed, but in any event no earlier than the next LAP period (beyond 2015). A maximum of 3.5 hectares of residential land will be provided in the first phase, which will be for the lifetime of this plan. The quantum and phasing will be revised at the review of this plan post 2015.

6.2 Development Parameters - Key Elements to be provided on the Framework Plan Lands

Mandatory objectives
The mandatory objectives to be provided are:

a) a full-sized soccer pitch
b) a multi-purpose facility which facilitates a range of users such as community uses, sports uses and playground etc.,
c) Provision for 0.75 acres for graveyard expansion, and
d) Connector street from Gowran road to Ballyreddin road, which will be designed as a pedestrian friendly environment, with integrated traffic calming design.

Residential Density
An average density range of 20-24 units to the hectare will be applied across the development framework area. The density permitted for each phase will depend on the design quality of each individual application but in general the overall density on the framework lands should be in this range.

Open Space Provision
Open Space shall be provided in line with the standards and requirements as set out in the County Development Plan. Some off-set arrangements are possible in relation to the provision of improved soccer facilities in lieu of some of the open space requirements. This shall be subject to agreement with the Planning Authority at application stage.

Delivery of Community/Sports Facilities
Improved facilities which can cater for a range of uses such as community, recreation and sports training have to be provided and will need to be built into the overall roll-out of development in the framework area. Notwithstanding the above, it is considered appropriate that the delivery of these facilities shall be negotiated with the planning authority at application stage to determine the optimal location and design in consultation and agreement with the local community.

The specification of these facilities should, as a minimum, include an indoor sports hall which can also be used as a multi purpose hall for non-sport related events and shall include changing room facilities, ancillary general utility room(s) and a reception area.
The provision of a full-sized soccer pitch is also a requirement for the future development of the area.

6.3 Framework Plan Vision

The framework plan should provide for a fully permeable and recognisable, interconnecting network of streets, pedestrian and cycle routes, squares and public parks, along with varied and visually interesting buildings and vistas, connecting to the existing and proposed recreational facilities, the village centre, the primary school, public open spaces, between residential blocks and to existing and planned routes within the adjoining development.

Streets should be designed to give control back to pedestrians and therefore encourage healthy activity. This will be achieved by paying close attention to the design of street surfaces and planting which are integrated with traffic calming design. All open spaces are addressed and overlooked promoting natural surveillance of these areas and improving the general quality of life. Attractive and successful outdoor areas provide a quality public realm which is essential to providing each sector with its own individual identity.

6.4 Phasing

A maximum of 3.5 hectares of residential land will be provided in the first phase, which will be for the lifetime of this plan. The multi-purpose facility and soccer pitch must be provided as part of Phase 1.

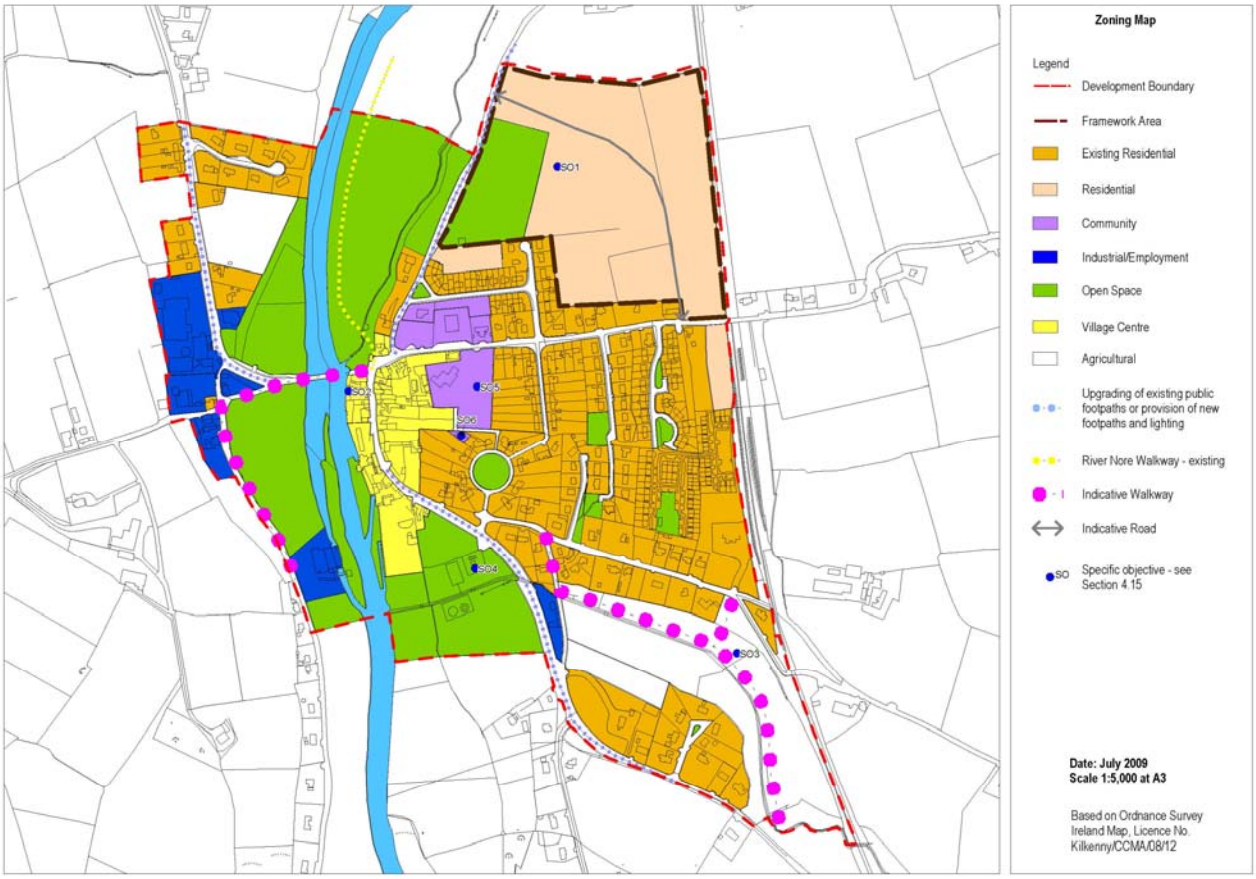
The quantum and phasing will be revised at the review of this plan post 2015.

Section Seven
Development Management Guidelines and Standards

7.1 Introduction

This section of the LAP sets out a number of development control guidelines and standards which need to be adhered to in the provision of new development. These are in addition to those set out in the Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014.

The Zoning Objectives provide general guidance as to the appropriate type of development within each of the land use zones (as per the Land Use Zoning Map see Map 7.1 below and full size map in Appendix I).



Map 7.1 Land Use Zoning Map

7.2 Zoning Objectives

The following gives an overview of the zoning objectives applicable in the Local Area Plan and as indicated on the land use zoning map. These shall act as a general guide to the proper management of future development proposals.

Village Centre

Objective	To provide for mixed commercial and ancillary uses that support the viability and vitality of the village centre
The zoning objective seeks to promote and encourage the development of the village centre as a vibrant and viable place. Appropriate uses would primarily include retailing, employment, cultural, residential, recreational, hospitality, medical and community uses.	

Community

Objective	To protect, provide and enhance community facilities
The zoning objective seeks to ensure the proper provision and enhancement of facilities which are of direct benefit to the local community, including educational, religious and cultural facilities as well as community centres, school playing fields and indoor ancillary sports facilities.	

Existing Residential

Objective	To protect and enhance the amenity of established residential areas
The zoning objective seeks to enhance and protect the amenity of existing residents. Infill and redevelopment proposals are acceptable in principle subject to careful consideration with regard to protecting the amenity of existing residents such as privacy, daylight/sunlight and other associated best practice standards. Ancillary uses such as crèches, nursing homes, local convenience shops (not exceeding 100sqm GFA), GP clinic or surgery and guesthouses will generally permissible subject to safeguards in relation to residential amenity.	

New Residential

Objective	To provide for new residential communities and protect and enhance amenities of existing residential areas.
This land use zoning identifies areas suitable for new residential development. Generally, residential densities should be in the region of 20 units to the hectare and residential design needs to be subject to the policies and standards set out in the Local Area Plan and County Development Plan. Ancillary uses such as crèches, nursing homes, local convenience shops (not exceeding 100sqm GFA), GP clinics or surgeries and guesthouses/B&Bs will generally be permissible subject to safeguards in relation to residential amenity.	

Industrial/Employment

Objective	To provide for employment and related uses subject to the provision of necessary infrastructure
The zoning objective identifies areas suitable for employment provision, including, inter alia, industrial premises, light industry, warehouses, small and medium sized enterprise, office employment and retail, appropriate to the scale and character of the village. Particular consideration should be given to the further development, enhancement and facilitation of the crafts industry in the village. All development proposals need to demonstrate adequate provision of necessary physical infrastructure. Residential use would be considered only where no less than two separate planning uses are proposed (i.e. retail/residential or industry/residential etc.) and the residential component shall not comprise greater than 50% of the total gross floorspace. Any residential use will be subject to satisfactory arrangements in relation to the disposal of waste water.	

Open Space/Recreation

Objective	To provide for and improve for active and passive recreation and to retain areas of strategic open space.
The zoning objective provides for the reservation of Open Space in line with the categorisation of Section 4.8 of the LAP and to provide for designated areas of accessible and usable Recreational Open Space for the enjoyment of the Local Community. Open Space/Recreation areas should be generally kept free of development.	

Agriculture

Objective	To conserve and protect agricultural land from interference from non-agricultural uses. To prevent premature development of agricultural land adjacent to development areas.

Permitted Uses: Agriculture, horticulture, public service installations
Open for Consideration: Public open space, guesthouse, restaurant, nursing home, dwelling houses in certain limited cases as outlined in the County Development Plan Section 10.31, halting site, private open space, other uses not contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

7.3 Design Standards for New Housing

7.3.1 Residential Development Standards

All planning applications for substantial new residential development need to comply with the requirements for new development as set out in Section 10.4 of the Kilkenny County Development Plan, 2008-2014 as well as complying with the wider policy context and best design practice, primarily those set out in the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government's publications *"Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities", "Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities"*, "*Sustainable Residential Guidelines*" and "*Urban Design Manual*".

The best practice guidelines *"Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities"* set out a number of essential requirements in relation to quality housing. The documents sets out that good quality, sustainable housing should be:

Socially and environmentally appropriate
The type of accommodation, support services and amenities provided should be appropriate to the needs of the people to be accommodated. The mix of dwelling type, size and tenure should support sound social, environmental and economic sustainability policy objectives for the area and promote the development of appropriately integrated play and recreation spaces.

Architecturally appropriate
The scheme should provide a pleasant living environment, which is aesthetically pleasing and human in scale. The scheme design solution should understand and respond appropriately to its context so that the development will enhance the neighbourhood and respect its cultural heritage.

Accessible and adaptable
There should be ease of access and circulation for all residents, including people with impaired mobility, enabling them to move as freely as possible within and through the development, to gain access to buildings and to use the services and amenities provided.

Dwellings should be capable of adaptation to meet changing needs of residents during the course of their lifetime.

Safe, secure and healthy
The scheme should be a safe and healthy place in which to live. It should be possible for pedestrians and cyclists to move within and through the area with reasonable ease and in safety. Provision for vehicular circulation, including access for service vehicles, should not compromise these objectives.

Affordable
The scheme should be capable of being built, managed and maintained at reasonable cost, having regard to the nature of the development.

Durable
The best available construction techniques should be used and key elements of construction should have a service life in the order of sixty years without the need for abnormal repair or replacement works.

Resource efficient
Efficient use should be made of land, infrastructure and energy. The location should be convenient to transport, services and amenities. Design and orientation of dwellings should take account of site topography so as to control negative wind effects and optimise the benefits of sunlight, daylight and solar gain; optimum use should be made of renewable sources of energy, the use of scarce natural resources in the construction, maintenance and management of the dwellings should be minimised.

7.3.2 County Development Plan Standards

Generally, any development proposals for new residential development will need to be assessed having regard to the objectives and policies set out in the County Development Plan. Policies contained in the Local Area Plan are in addition to those of the County Development Plan.

NEW HOUSING
Policies

H1 New housing development shall demonstrate how the design has incorporated the recommendations of the best practice guidelines *"Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities"* as outlined in Section 7.3.1 of the LAP.

H2 New housing development needs to be mindful of the character of the existing village and shall seek to integrate with the existing built up area and shall be in keeping with the established character of the village

H3 The scale of new housing development shall be assessed within the overall population projections for the village as set out in Section 4.2 of the LAP and shall not pose an unsustainable strain on existing physical and/or community infrastructure (see also Policies CF3, WW1).

H4 New housing shall be of a design and scale to provide a real and viable alternative to one-off housing and ribbon development in the surrounding countryside. In particular, larger than average gardens and improved levels of privacy and overlooking shall be achieved where possible.

7.4 Sustainable Design and Building Methods

This Local Area Plan sets out parameters for the sustainable siting, design and construction of buildings, particularly with regard to energy efficiency and energy conservation, as well as waste management and disposal and sustainable urban drainage systems. These standards need to be read and adhered to in conjunction with improved national standards (Part L of the Building Regulations 2007, as amended).

Measures that promote energy conservation and efficiency in buildings include air tightness, appropriate use of glazing, high insulation standards and more efficient heating. Alternative forms of electricity and heat generation should also be considered. The various elements in relation to energy conservation and ecological building design are further outlined in this section.

Sustainable Design Policy:

SD1 All planning applications need to demonstrate compliance with the main relevant objectives and principles in relation to sustainable design standards as set out in the Local Area Plan.

7.4.1 Passive Solar Design

Passive Solar Design (PSD) techniques relate to the siting, layout, built form and landscaping of a development. The use of PSD techniques is cost effective, as it requires little or no cost to the developer and can amount to substantial savings on behalf of the owner/occupier. It also reduces the long-term use of fossil fuels and thereby reduces CO2 production. PSD techniques are particularly suited to lower-density housing as the siting of individual homes is afforded greater flexibility due to larger plot sizes and potential for overshadowing can be avoided.

The main elements for the application of PSD with regards to design, siting and layout are as follows:

Orientation - To maximise solar access and its benefits the principal façade of a building should be orientated to be within 30 degrees of south (where feasible). A southerly orientation maximises solar gain in winter.

Openings - Large glazed surfaces should be located on the southern face of the building. These surfaces must be highly insulated through high performance glazing to prevent the loss of heat.

Internal planning - The internal layout of residential buildings should be designed by setting living spaces to the south and service spaces to the cooler north.

Avoidance of Overshadowing – where feasible, buildings should be carefully spaced to minimise the loss of solar gain due to overshadowing.

Passive Solar Design Policy:

PSD1 The orientation, detailed design and specifications of all buildings in the Local Area Plan lands need to demonstrate how they maximise passive solar gain in line with best practice guidelines.

7.4.2 Renewable Energy Supply

It will be an overall objective of this Local Area Plan that all new buildings in the Plan area should aim to utilise renewable energy supply systems.

It is envisaged that the space and water heating requirements for future buildings should be met by either some or all of the following technologies:

Active Solar Design

Active solar systems can work in unison with passive systems and provide an alternative mechanism for harnessing solar energy. This system does not rely on site orientation or layout but can be incorporated into any building design to maximise energy efficiency.

Active solar technology involves the installation of a solar collector device; this device absorbs the sun's heat to provide space or water heating. A correctly sized unit can provide around half of a household's water needs over a year; large buildings can introduce several systems to increase solar absorption.

Alternative Heating Systems

Energy-Efficient Heating Systems such as wood pellet stoves and boilers and geothermal heat pumps can greatly help to reduce energy consumption. Geothermal heat pumps (GHP) work by extracting heat energy from a low temperature source and upgrading it to a higher temperature so that it can be used for space and water heating. Heat pumps are very economical. For every unit of electricity used to power the heat pump, 3 to 4 units of heat are generated. They work best in conjunction with low temperature heat distribution systems e.g. underfloor heating.

Wood burning systems do emit carbon dioxide. However, as the wood fuel is cultivated, it absorbs the exact same amount of carbon dioxide as is released when burnt. As such it does not add to the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. An eligible system can be used for heating a single room, hot water or a whole house.

7.4.5 Reduction in Water Consumption

Fresh water resources are increasingly becoming an issue of environmental and economic importance. According to the European Environment Agency, the average consumption for all households purposes is about 150 litres per capita (1999). On this basis the average water consumption per person in Ireland comes to a staggering 55,000 litres per person per year. The third biggest user of water is the WC, accounting for almost 35% of a person's average daily water consumption.

In this regard it is suggested that rain water recovery systems be utilised in the construction of new housing as well as the fitting of low-water use appliances.

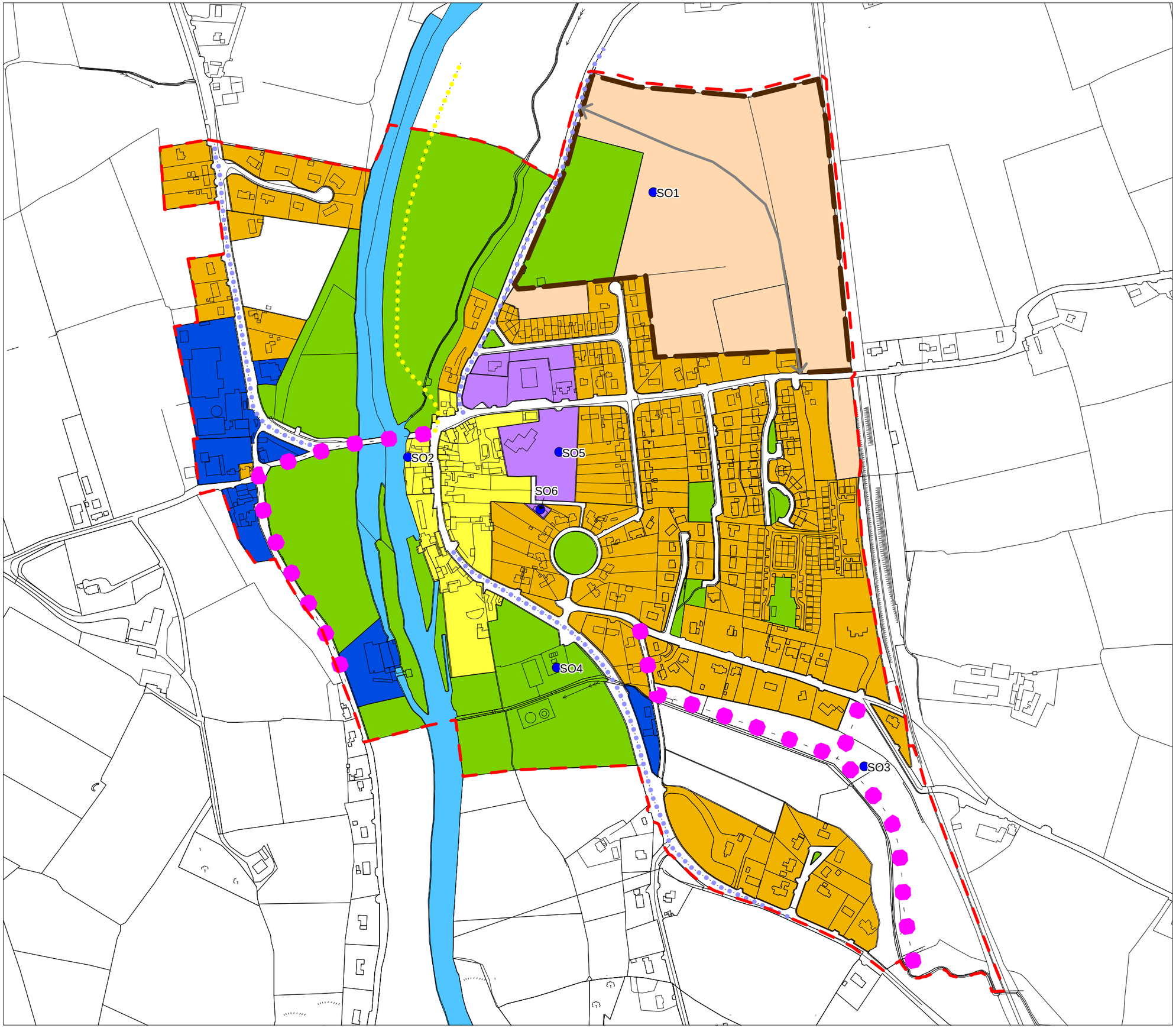
Rain Water Recovery Systems
Rain water recovery systems harvest rain water which can then be used for the flushing of toilets, washing machines and general outside use. A rainwater-holding tank is installed below the ground that gathers water from the roof of buildings. This water is pumped into a tank within the building's roof space where it is stored until required. This water would otherwise have to be treated and pumped by the local authorities presenting a substantial saving. The system filters and collects between 20% and 30% of total water consumption used by a family of four. The system is isolated from the mains water system to eliminate any possibilities of contamination. In the event of using all of the rainwater reserve, an automatic change over system switches over to using mains water until the rainwater tank starts to refill. The rainwater system generally has three separate filters which reduce particles down to 130 microns. These systems should have the British Board of Agreement approval to meet the Building Regulations.

Low-water use appliances
It is an objective that all new buildings in the Plan area install low water sanitary appliances to reduce water usage.

7.4.6 Construction Methods
The use of renewable building materials, such as wood from sustainable managed forests and locally sourced building materials should be encouraged for development in the Local Area Plan lands. Other features of construction should also be considered such as off-site construction and prefabrication to minimise the impact of building on the site, reductions in levels of on-site waste and also minimising cost. The re-use of construction waste such as the reuse of excavated material as topsoil should also be considered.

APPENDIX I – MAPS

Zoning Map
Built Heritage Map
Natural Heritage Map



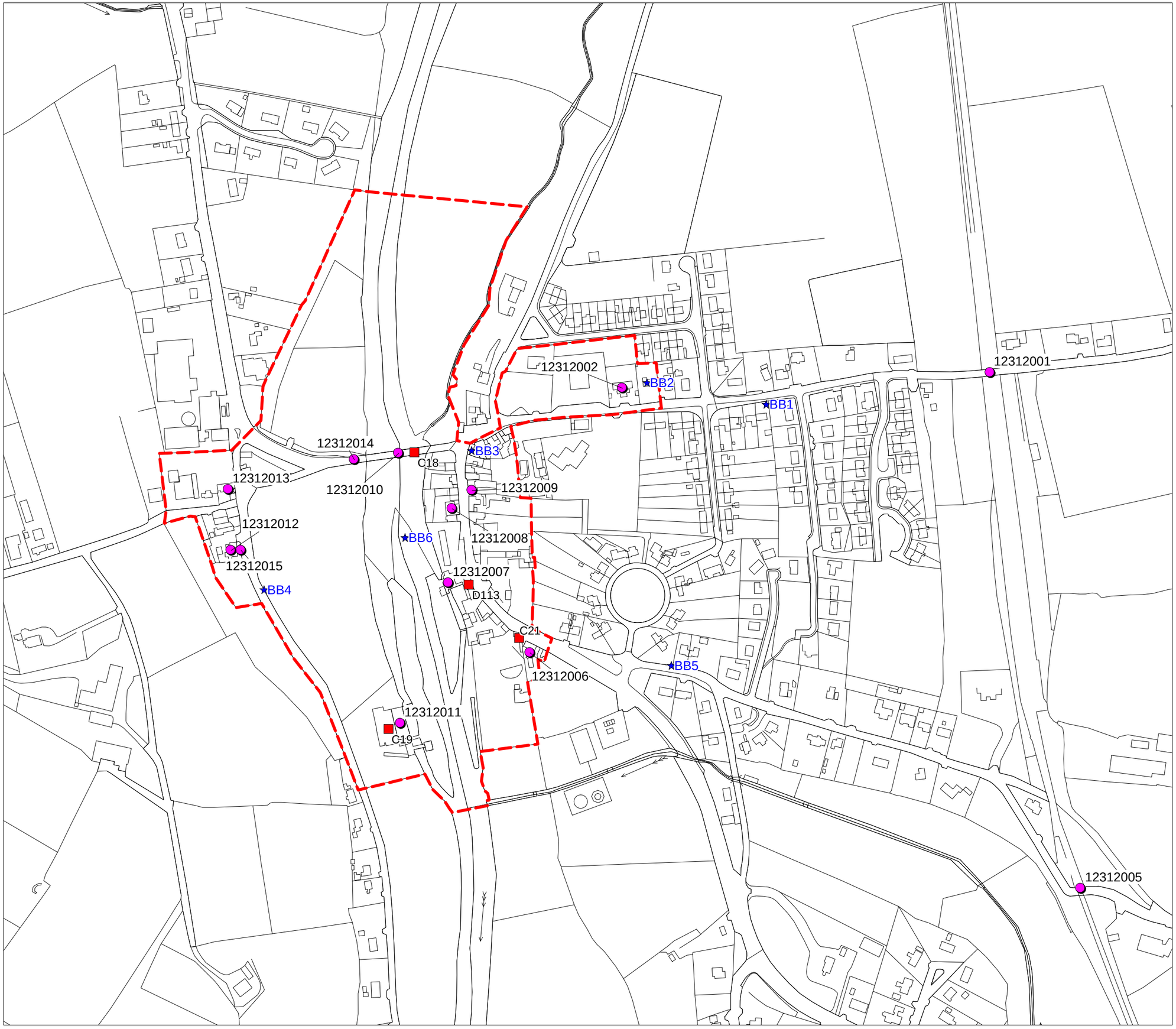
Zoning Map

Legend

- Development Boundary
- Framework Area
- Existing Residential
- Residential
- Community
- Industrial/Employment
- Open Space
- Village Centre
- Agricultural
- Upgrading of existing public footpaths or provision of new footpaths and lighting
- River Nore Walkway - existing
- Indicative Walkway
- Indicative Road
- SO Specific objective - see Section 4.15

Date: July 2009
Scale 1:5,000 at A3

Based on Ordnance Survey Ireland Map, Licence No. Kilkenny/CCMA/08/12



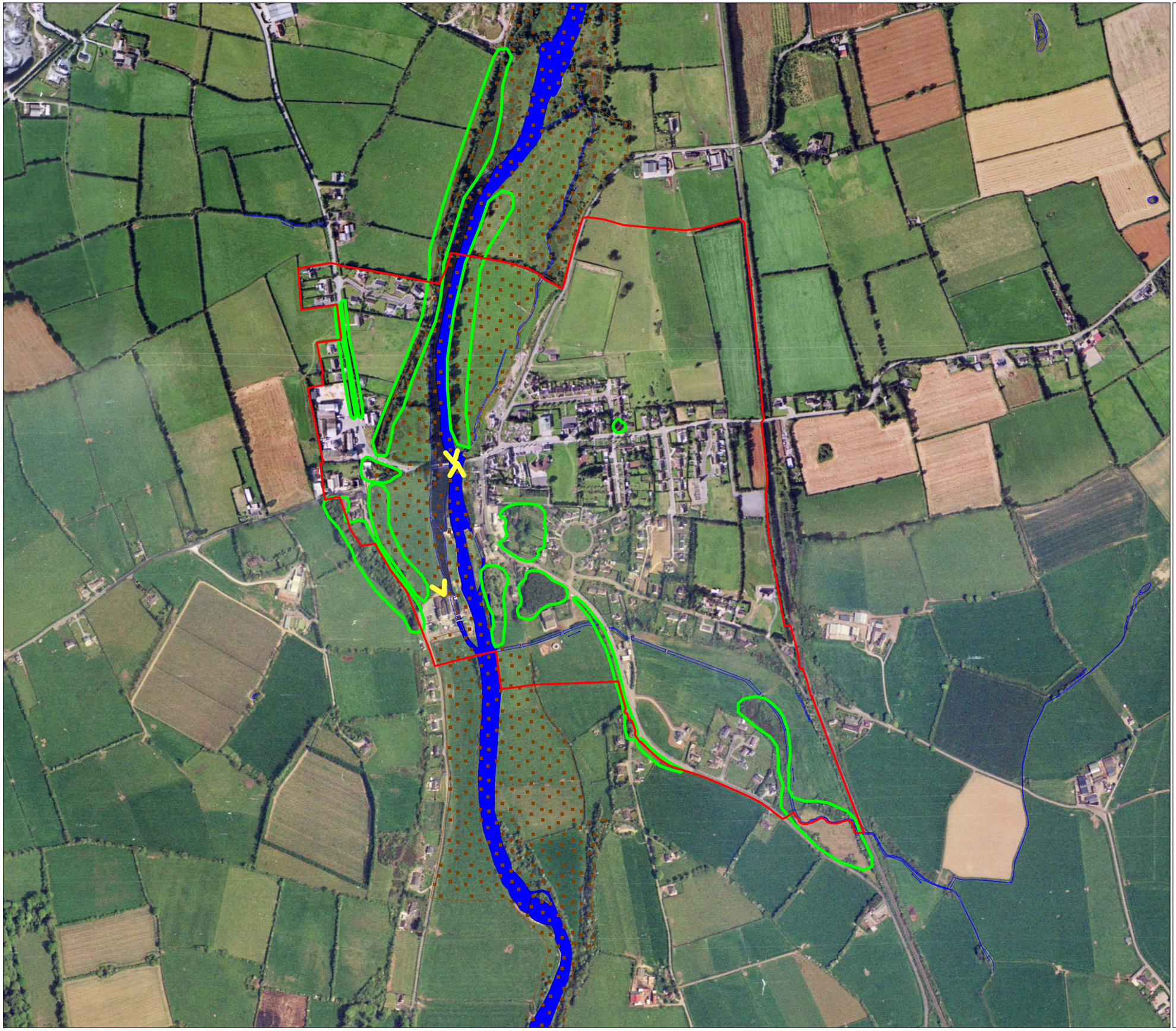
Built Heritage Map

Legend

- Architectural Conservation Area
- Protected Structure - see Chapter 4
- NIAH Structure - see Chapter 4
- Recommended Protected Structure see Chapter 4

Date: July 2009
Scale 1:4,000 at A3

Based on Ordnance Survey Ireland Map, Licence No. Kilkenny/CCMA/08/12



Natural Heritage Protection

Legend

- Local Area Plan Boundary
- Protected View
- Trees and Hedgerows to be protected
- Special Area of Conservation

Date: July 2009
Scale 1:7,500 at A3

Based on Ordnance Survey Ireland Map, Licence No. Kilkenny/CCMA/08/12

APPENDIX II – Site Synopsis of River Barrow and River Nore cSAC

SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: RIVER BARROW AND RIVER NORE

SITE CODE: 002162

This site consists of the freshwater stretches of the Barrow/Nore River catchments as far upstream as the Slieve Bloom Mountains and it also includes the tidal elements and estuary as far downstream as Creadun Head in Waterford. The site passes through eight counties – Offaly, Kildare, Laois, Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Wexford and Waterford. Major towns along the edge of the site include Mountmellick, Portarlington, Monasterevin, Stradbally, Athy, Carlow, Leighlinbridge, Graiguenamanagh, New Ross, Inistioge, Thomastown, Callan, Bennettsbridge, Kilkenny and Durrow. The larger of the many tributaries include the Lerr, Fushoge, Mountain, Aughavaud, Owenass, Boherbaun and Stradbally Rivers of the Barrow and the Delour, Dinin, Erkina, Owveg, Munster, Arrigle and King's Rivers on the Nore. Both rivers rise in the Old Red Sandstone of the Slieve Bloom Mountains before passing through a band of Carboniferous shales and sandstones. The Nore, for a large part of its course, traverses limestone plains and then Old Red Sandstone for a short stretch below Thomastown. Before joining the Barrow it runs over intrusive rocks poor in silica. The upper reaches of the Barrow also runs through limestone. The middle reaches and many of the eastern tributaries, sourced in the Blackstairs Mountains, run through Leinster Granite. The southern end, like the Nore runs over intrusive rocks poor in silica. Waterford Harbour is a deep valley excavated by glacial floodwaters when the sea level was lower than today. The coast shelves quite rapidly along much of the shore.

The site is a candidate SAC selected for alluvial wet woodlands and petrifying springs, priority habitats on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The site is also selected as a candidate SAC for old oak woodlands, floating river vegetation, estuary, tidal mudflats, *Salicornia* mudflats, Atlantic salt meadows, Mediterranean salt meadows, dry heath and eutrophic tall herbs, all habitats listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The site is also selected for the following species listed on Annex II of the same directive - Sea Lamprey, River Lamprey, Brook Lamprey, Freshwater Pearl Mussel, Nore Freshwater Pearl Mussel, Crayfish, Twaite Shad, Atlantic Salmon, Otter, *Vertigo moulinsiana* and the plant Killarney Fern.

Good examples of Alluvial Forest are seen at Rathsnagadan, Murphy's of the River, in Abbeyleix estate and along other shorter stretches of both the tidal and freshwater elements of the site. Typical species seen include Almond Willow (*Salix triandra*), White Willow (*S. alba*), Grey Willow (*S. cinerea*), Crack Willow (*S. fragilis*), Osier (*S. viminalis*), with Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), Hemlock Water-dropwort (*Oenanthe crocata*), Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*), Thin-spiked Wood-sedge (*Carex strigosa*), Pendulous Sedge (*C. pendula*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*) and the Red Data Book species Nettle-leaved Bellflower (*Campanula trachelium*). Three rare invertebrates have been recorded in this habitat at Murphy's of the River. These are: *Neoascia obliqua* (Diptera: Syrphidae), *Tetanocera freyi* (Diptera: Sciomyzidae) and *Dictya umbrarum* (Diptera: Sciomyzidae).

A good example of petrifying springs with tufa formations occurs at Dysart Wood along the Nore. This is a rare habitat in Ireland and one listed with priority status on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive. These hard water springs are characterised by lime encrustations, often associated with small waterfalls. A rich bryophyte flora is typical of the habitat and two diagnostic species, *Cratoneuron commutatum* var. *commutatum* and *Eucladium verticillatum*, have been recorded.

The best examples of old Oak woodlands are seen in the ancient Park Hill woodland in the estate at Abbeyleix; at Kyleadohir, on the Delour, Forest Wood House, Kylecorragh and Brownstown Woods on the Nore; and at Cloghristic Wood, Drummond Wood and Borris Demesne on the Barrow, though other patches occur throughout the site. Abbeyleix Woods is a large tract of mixed deciduous woodland which is one of the only remaining true ancient woodlands in Ireland. Historical records show that Park Hill has been continuously wooded since the sixteenth century and has the most complete written record of any woodland in the country. It supports a variety of woodland habitats and an exceptional diversity of species including 22 native trees, 44 bryophytes and 92 lichens. It also contains eight indicator species of ancient woodlands. Park Hill is also the site of two rare plants, Nettle-leaved Bellflower and the moss *Leucodon sciuroides.* It has a typical bird fauna including Jay, Long-eared Owl and Raven. A rare invertebrate, *Mitostoma chrysomelas,* occurs in Abbeyleix and only two other sites in the country. Two flies *Chrysogaster virescens* and *Hybomitra muhlfeldi* also occur. The rare Myxomycete fungus, *Licea minima* has been recorded from woodland at Abbeyleix.

Oak woodland covers parts of the valley side south of Woodstock and is well developed at Brownsford where the Nore takes several sharp bends. The steep valley side is covered by Oak (*Quercus* spp.), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and Birch (*Betula pubescens*) with some Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) and Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*). All the trees are regenerating through a cover of Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*) Wood Rush (*Luzula sylvatica*) and Broad Buckler-fern (*Dryopteris dilatata*).

On the steeply sloping banks of the River Nore about 5 km west of New Ross, in County Kilkenny, Kylecorragh Woods form a prominent feature in the landscape. This is an excellent example of a relatively undisturbed, relict Oak woodland with a very good tree canopy. The wood is quite damp and there is a rich and varied ground flora. At Brownstown a small, mature Oak-dominant woodland occurs on a steep slope. There is younger woodland to the north and east of it. Regeneration throughout is evident. The understorey is similar to the woods at Brownsford. The ground flora of this woodland is developed on acidic, brown earth type soil and comprises a thick carpet of Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Hard Fern (*Blechnum spicant*), Cow-wheat (*Melampyrum* spp.) and Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*).

Borris Demesne contains a very good example of a semi-natural broad-leaved woodland in very good condition. There is quite a high degree of natural re-generation of Oak and Ash through the woodland. At the northern end of the estate Oak species predominate. Drummond Wood, also on the Barrow, consists of three blocks of deciduous woods situated on steep slopes above the river. The deciduous trees are mostly Oak species. The woods have a well established understorey of Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), and the herb layer is

varied, with Brambles abundant. Whitebeam (*Sorbus devoniensis*) has also been recorded.

Eutrophic tall herb vegetation occurs in association with the various areas of alluvial forest and elsewhere where the flood-plain of the river is intact. Characteristic species of the habitat include Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), Marsh Ragwort (*Senecio aquaticus*), Ground Ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*) and Hedge Bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*). Indian Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), an introduced and invasive species, is abundant in places.

Floating River Vegetation is well represented in the Barrow and in the many tributaries of the site. In the Barrow the species found include Water Starworts (*Callitriche* spp.), Canadian Pondweed (*Elodea canadensis*), Bulbous Rush (*Juncus bulbosus*), Milfoil (*Myriophyllum* spp.), *Potamogeton* x *nitens,* Broad-leaved Pondweed (*P. natans*), Fennel Pondweed (*P. pectinatus*), Perfoliated Pondweed (*P. perfoliatus*) and Crowfoots (*Ranunculus* spp.). The water quality of the Barrow has improved since the vegetation survey was carried out (EPA, 1996).

Dry Heath at the site occurs in pockets along the steep valley sides of the rivers especially in the Barrow Valley and along the Barrow tributaries where they occur in the foothills of the Blackstairs Mountains. The dry heath vegetation along the slopes of the river bank consists of Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) species with patches of acidic grassland vegetation. Additional typical species include Heath Bedstraw (*Galium saxatile*), Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*), Common Sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*) and Bent Grass (*Agrostis stolonifera*). On the steep slopes above New Ross the Red Data Book species Greater Broomrape (*Orobanche rapum-genistae*) has been recorded. Where rocky outcrops are shown on the maps Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) and Wood Rush (*Luzula sylvatica*) are present. At Ballyhack a small area of dry heath is interspersed with patches of lowland dry grassland. These support a number of Clover species including the legally protected Clustered Clover (*Trifolium glomeratum*) - a species known from only one other site in Ireland. This grassland community is especially well developed on the west side of the mud-capped walls by the road. On the east of the cliffs a group of rock-dwelling species occur, i.e. English Stonecrop (*Sedum anglicum*), Sheep's-bit (*Jasione montana*) and Wild Madder (*Rubia peregrina*). These rocks also support good lichen and moss assemblages with *Ramalina subfarinacea* and *Hedwigia ciliata*.

Dry Heath at the site generally grades into wet woodland or wet swamp vegetation lower down the slopes on the river bank. Close to the Blackstairs Mountains, in the foothills associated with the Aughnabrisky, Aughavaud and Mountain Rivers there are small patches of wet heath dominated by Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) with Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*), Carnation Sedge (*Carex panicea*) and Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*).

Saltmeadows occur at the southern section of the site in old meadows where the embankment has been breached, along the tidal stretches of in-flowing rivers below Stokestown House, in a narrow band on the channel side of Common Reed (*Phragmites*) beds and in narrow fragmented strips along the open shoreline. In the larger areas of salt meadow, notably at Carrickcloney, Ballinlaw Ferry and Rochestown on the west bank;

Fisherstown, Alderton and Great Island to Dunbrody on the east bank, the Atlantic and Mediterranean sub types are generally intermixed. At the upper edge of the salt meadow in the narrow ecotonal areas bordering the grasslands where there is significant percolation of salt water, the legally protected species Borrer's Saltmarsh-grass (*Puccinellia fasciculata*) and Meadow Barley (*Hordeum secalinum*) (Flora Protection Order, 1987) are found. The very rare Divided Sedge (*Carex divisa*) is also found. Sea Rush (*Juncus maritimus*) is also present. Other plants recorded and associated with salt meadows include Sea Aster (*Aster tripolium*), Sea Thrift (*Armeria maritima*), Sea Couch (*Elymus pycnanthus*), Spear-leaved Orache (*Atriplex prostrata*), Lesser Sea-spurrey (*Spergularia marina*), Sea Arrowgrass (*Triglochin maritima*) and Sea Plantain (*Plantago maritima*).

Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand are found in the creeks of the saltmarshes and at the seaward edges of them. The habitat also occurs in small amounts on some stretches of the shore free of stones.

The estuary and the other Habitats Directive Annex I habitats within it form a large component of the site. Extensive areas of intertidal flats, comprised of substrates ranging from fine, silty mud to coarse sand with pebbles/stones are present. Good quality intertidal sand and mudflats have developed on a linear shelf on the western side of Waterford Harbour, extending for over 6 km from north to south between Passage East and Creadaun Head, and in places are over 1 km wide. The sediments are mostly firm sands, though grade into muddy sands towards the upper shore. They have a typical macro-invertebrate fauna, characterised by polychaetes and bivalves. Common species include *Arenicola marina*, *Nephtys hombergii*, *Scoloplos armiger*, *Lanice conchilega* and *Cerastoderma edule*.

The western shore of the harbour is generally stony and backed by low cliffs of glacial drift. At Woodstown there is a sandy beach, now much influenced by recreation pressure and erosion. Behind it a lagoonal marsh has been impounded which runs westwards from Gaultiere Lodge along the course of a slow stream. An extensive reedbed occurs here. At the edges is a tall fen dominated by sedges (*Carex* spp.), Meadowsweet, Willowherb (*Epilobium* spp.) and rushes (*Juncus* spp.). Wet woodland also occurs. This area supports populations of typical waterbirds including Mallard, Snipe, Sedge Warbler and Water Rail.

The dunes which fringe the strand at Duncannon are dominated by Marram grass (*Ammophila arenaria*) towards the sea. Other species present include Wild Sage (*Salvia verbenaca*), a rare Red Data Book species. The rocks around Duncannon ford have a rich flora of seaweeds typical of a moderately exposed shore and the cliffs themselves support a number of coastal species on ledges, including Thrift (*Armeria maritima*), Rock Samphire (*Crithmum maritimum*) and Buck's-horn Plantain (*Plantago coronopus*).

Other habitats which occur throughout the site include wet grassland, marsh, reed swamp, improved grassland, arable land, quarries, coniferous plantations, deciduous woodland, scrub and ponds.

Seventeen Red Data Book plant species have been recorded within the site, most in the recent past. These are Killarney Fern (*Trichomanes speciosum*), Divided Sedge (*Carex*

divisa), Clustered Clover (*Trifolium glomeratum*), Basil Thyme (*Acinos arvensis*), Hemp nettle (*Galeopsis angustifolia*), Borrer's Saltmarsh Grass (*Puccinellia fasiculata*), Meadow Barley (*Hordeum secalinum*), Opposite-leaved Pondweed (*Groenlandia densa*), Autumn Crocus (*Colchicum autumnale*), Wild Sage (*Salvia verbenaca*), Nettle-leaved Bellflower (*Campanula trachelium*), Saw-wort (*Serratula tinctoria*), Bird Cherry (*Prunus padus*), Blue Fleabane (*Erigeron acer*), Fly Orchid (*Ophrys insectifera*), Broomrape (*Orobanche hederae*) and Greater Broomrape (*Orobanche rapum-genistae*). Of these the first nine are protected under the Flora Protection Order 1999. Divided Sedge (*Carex divisa*) was thought to be extinct but has been found in a few locations in the site since 1990. In addition plants which do not have a very wide distribution in the country are found in the site including Thin-spiked Wood-sedge (*Carex strigosa*), Field Garlic (*Allium oleraceum*) and Summer Snowflake (*Leucojum aestivum*). Six rare lichens, indicators of ancient woodland, are found including *Lobaria laetevirens* and *L. pulmonaria.* The rare moss *Leucodon sciuroides* also occurs.

The site is very important for the presence of a number of EU Habitats Directive Annex II animal species including Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera* and *M. m. durrovensis*), Freshwater Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*), Salmon (*Salmo salar*), Twaite Shad (*Alosa fallax fallax*), three Lamprey species - Sea (*Petromyzon marinus*), Brook (*Lampetra planeri*) and River (*Lampetra fluviatilis*), the marsh snail *Vertigo moulinsiana* and Otter (*Lutra lutra*). This is the only site in the world for the hard water form of the Pearl Mussel *M. m. durrovensis* and one of only a handful of spawning grounds in the country for Twaite Shad. The freshwater stretches of the River Nore main channel is a designated salmonid river. The Barrow/Nore is mainly a grilse fishery though spring salmon fishing is good in the vicinity of Thomastown and Inistioge on the Nore. The upper stretches of the Barrow and Nore, particularly the Owenass River, are very important for spawning.

The site supports many other important animal species. Those which are listed in the Irish Red Data Book include Daubenton's Bat (*Myotis daubentoni*), Badger (*Meles meles*), Irish Hare (*Lepus timidus hibernicus*) and Frog (*Rana temporaria*). The rare Red Data Book fish species Smelt (*Osmerus eperlanus*) occurs in estuarine stretches of the site. In addition to the Freshwater Pearl Mussel, the site also supports two other freshwater Mussel species, *Anodonta anatina* and *A. cygnea*.

The site is of ornithological importance for a number of E.U. Birds Directive Annex I species including Greenland White-fronted Goose, Whooper Swan, Bewick's Swan, Bar-tailed Godwit, Peregrine and Kingfisher. Nationally important numbers of Golden Plover and Bar-tailed Godwit are found during the winter. Wintering flocks of migratory birds are seen in Shanahoe Marsh and the Curragh and Goul Marsh, both in Co. Laois and also along the Barrow Estuary in Waterford Harbour. There is also an extensive autumnal roosting site in the reedbeds of the Barrow Estuary used by Swallows before they leave the country.

Landuse at the site consists mainly of agricultural activities – many intensive, principally grazing and silage production. Slurry is spread over much of this area. Arable crops are also grown. The spreading of slurry and fertiliser poses a threat to the water quality of the salmonid river and to the populations of Habitats Directive Annex II animal species within the site. Many of the woodlands along the rivers belong to old estates and support

many non-native species. Little active woodland management occurs. Fishing is a main tourist attraction along stretches of the main rivers and their tributaries and there are a number of Angler Associations, some with a number of beats. Fishing stands and styles have been erected in places. Both commercial and leisure fishing takes place on the rivers. There is net fishing in the estuary and a mussel bed also. Other recreational activities such as boating, golfing and walking, particularly along the Barrow towpath are also popular. There is a golf course on the banks of the Nore at Mount Juliet and GAA pitches on the banks at Inistioge and Thomastown. There are active and disused sand and gravel pits throughout the site. Several industrial developments, which discharge into the river, border the site. New Ross is an important shipping port. Shipping to and from Waterford and Belview ports also passes through the estuary.

The main threats to the site and current damaging activities include high inputs of nutrients into the river system from agricultural run-off and several sewage plants, overgrazing within the woodland areas, and invasion by non-native species, for example Cherry Laurel and Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*). The water quality of the site remains vulnerable. Good quality water is necessary to maintain the populations of the Annex II animal species listed above. Good quality is dependent on controlling fertilisation of the grasslands, particularly along the Nore. It also requires that sewage be properly treated before discharge. Drainage activities in the catchment can lead to flash floods which can damage the many Annex II species present. Capital and maintenance dredging within the lower reaches of the system pose a threat to migrating fish species such as lamprey and shad. Land reclamation also poses a threat to the salt meadows and the populations of legally protected species therein.

Overall, the site is of considerable conservation significance for the occurrence of good examples of habitats and of populations of plant and animal species that are listed on Annexes I and II of the E.U. Habitats Directive respectively. Furthermore it is of high conservation value for the populations of bird species that use it. The occurrence of several Red Data Book plant species including three rare plants in the salt meadows and the population of the hard water form of the Pearl Mussel which is limited to a 10 km stretch of the Nore, add further interest to this site.

16.1.2003

APPENDIX III –Architectural Conservation Area Appraisal and RPS Review

Bennettsbridge Architectural Conservation Area Appraisal & Review of the Record of Protected Structures

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1.0 Physical Context

1.1 Description of Bennettsbridge

The main Kilkenny to Thomastown road (R700) passes over the bridge curving southwards through the centre of the village. The historic footprint of the village centres on the bridge and Gowran road junction then extends southwards towards Thomastown. This results in a linear street pattern forming the Main Street which extends eastwards following the curve of the Gowran road. There are other smaller roads leading of this main artery on both side of the river but there is little development on them, and the overall street pattern is focused on the main street.

1.2 Urban Structure

A review of the layout of the village highlights that the oldest buildings from which the village has evolved are the mills and bridge, which dominate the riverscape. There is a small grouping of historic structures across the river at a cross roads, at the Kilkenny/ Danesfort crossroads. Most of the buildings arranged in a liner pattern along the main street date to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They are mixed single, two-and-three-storey structures which front directly onto the street. The plots are long and narrow, with those located on the west side running down to the edge of the riverbank. Those on the east side originally backed onto open countryside which has been built up with residential developments. The presence of the river flowing to the immediate west of the village has resulted in new residential development been concentrated to the east of the village. Such residential expansion has slowly evolved from the 1940's with the construction of 'The Ring' housing scheme through to date.

Figure 1: View along the Main Street, looking southwards from the bridge.

The Main Street is level along its length, having good visual enclosure. The strong building line, generated by terraces of buildings along the Main Street, largely prevents outward views to the east and west. The northern end of the main street opens up as it turns eastwards towards Gowran. A small grouping of terraced buildings are located on the southern side of the road as it turns eastwards with the graveyard, church former school and detached residential units opening up the area on the northern side. The area beyond this is occupied by mature residential development.

The existing buildings along the Main Street are predominantly terraced, and although not of high architectural quality, their special interest lies in the strong building line and their historic value. Their aesthetic value is generated by the general form of the terraces, with the slight changes in scale, height and roof line. Main Street is enhanced the vernacular design of the buildings and by building details such as the materials, decorative render mouldings, windows and. Such detailing enhances the appearance of the village and adds a sense of character. The vista on the southern end of Main Street is closed by an eighteenth century mill, now Kells Mill.

Figure 2: Terraced structures along Main Street

The main architectural features of the village pivot on the bridge and two mills. Although the village has developed in an easterly direction in recent times the River forms the backbone of the village with the bridge connecting the Main Street to a grouping of historic structures on the western bank and the domineering Mosses Mill. The architectural and technical quality of these structures dominates both the surrounding countryside and the riverscape.

The urban quality of Bennettsbridge is characterised through its variety of urban space. This includes its compact main street, having mixed building heights, materials and finishes. Modern residential development is predominately concentrated to the east of the village the village and is arranged in matured suburban type housing estates. The domineering river and associated bridge and mill buildings with weir in captures the industrial heritage of the village. Put together, these aspects of the village give it its unique distinctive character and sense of place.

Figure 3: Mosse mill with weir to foreground

Figure 4: Looking northeast across river towards the bridge

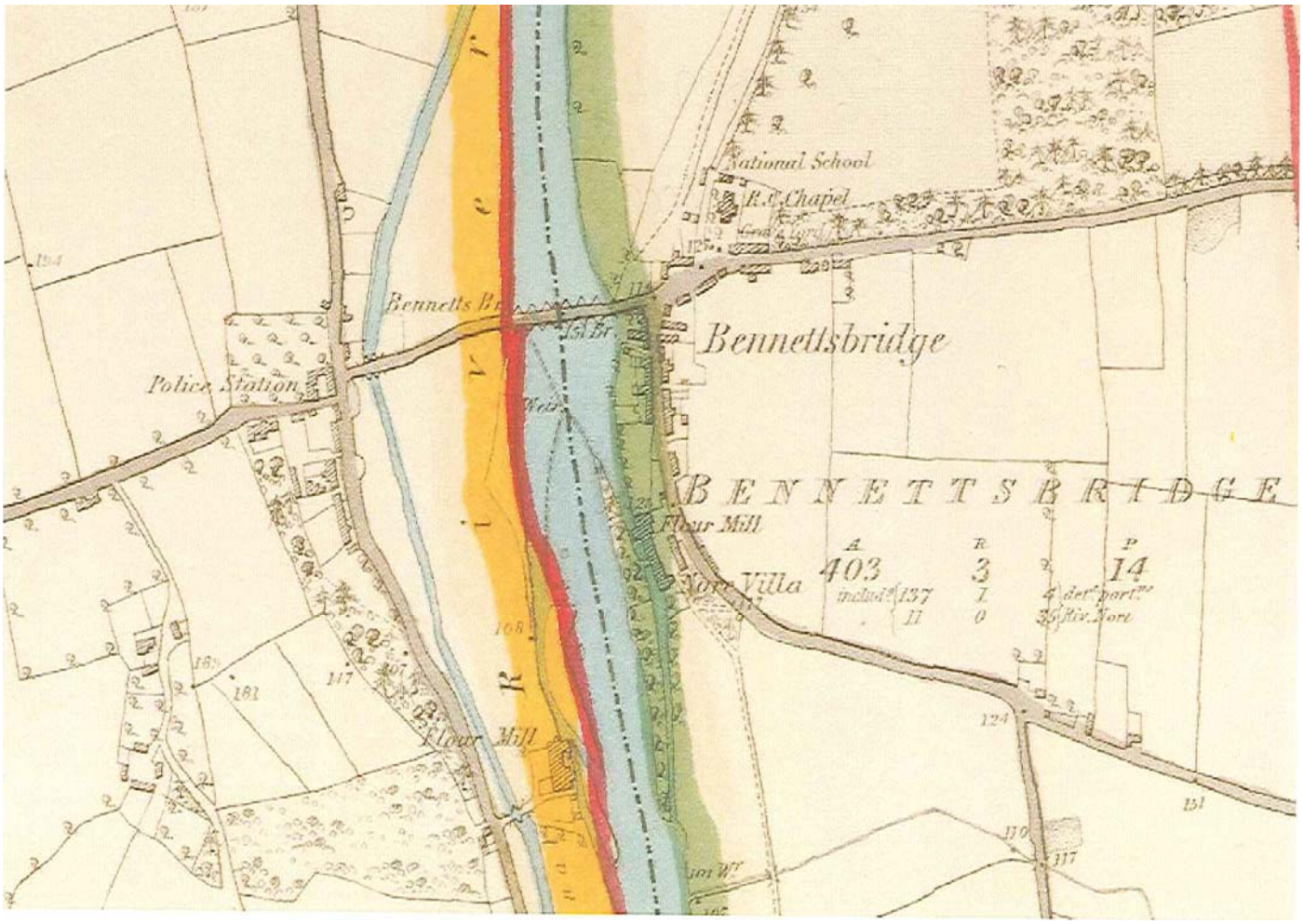
Figure 5: View looking north along Main Street

2.0 Bennettsbridge Chronological Development

2.1 Historical Development of the Village

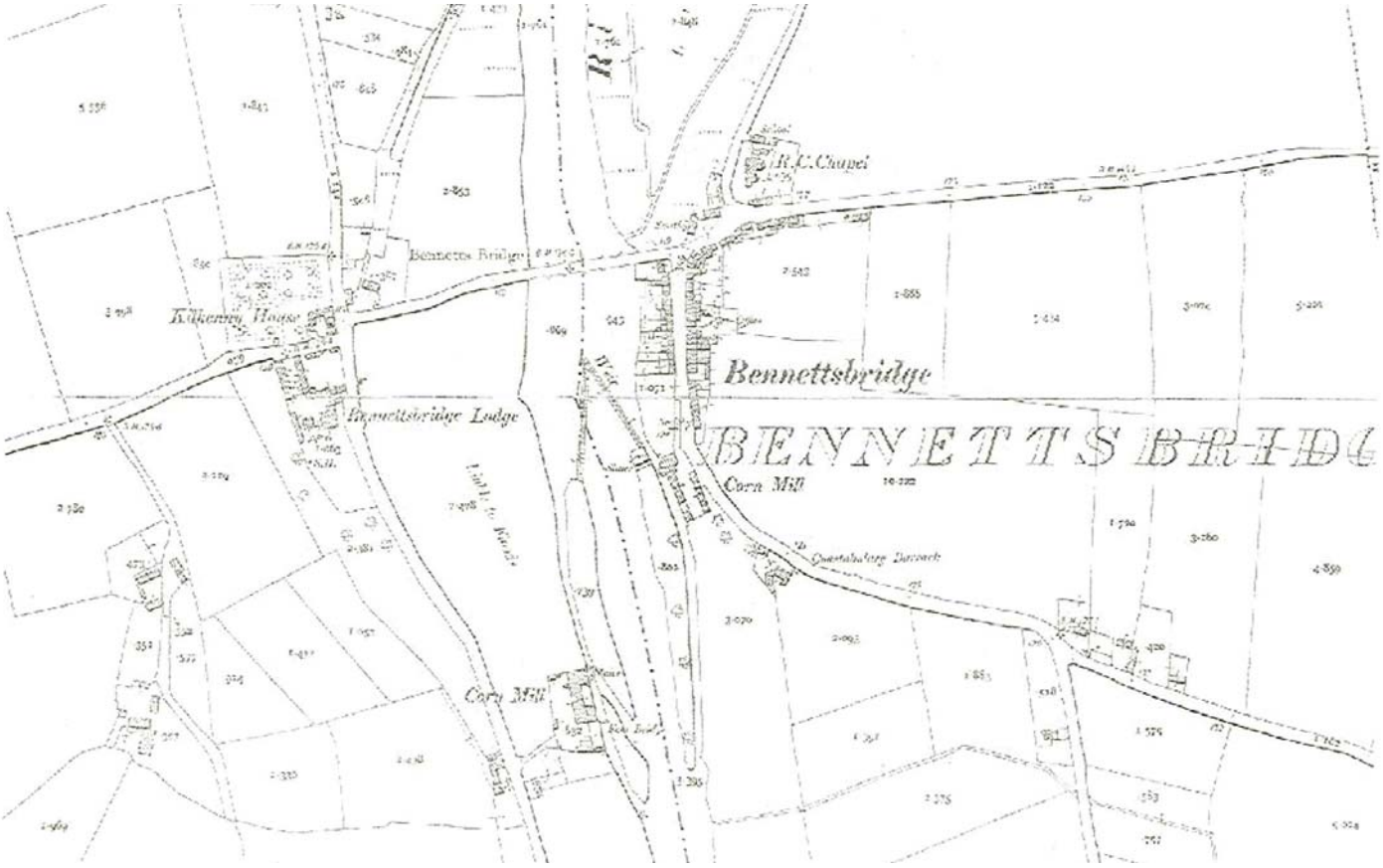
The village of Bennettsbridge is recorded as being dedicated to Saint Benet from which it derives its name. This early bridge is clearly delineated on the Down Survey map of 1654. It was washed away in the great flood of 1763 and replaced by the distinctive landmark bridge which exists today. This later bridge was built under the direction of the navigation board with public money. The industrial origins of the village are evident in the two landmark mills situated on either bank of the river, which have been in existence from at least the eighteenth centaury.

The historical core of Bennettsbridge as depicted on the first edition Ordnance Survey (O.S) map c.1829, is a linear settlement, taking its form along the main R700 from Kilkenny to Bennettsbridge, which branches into a junction sweeping westwards over the bridge and eastwards towards Gowran. The village had a significant local civic function acting as a service area for the surrounding rural hinterland. This is evident in the number of civic and public buildings marked on this early map. The village is shown as being well established with buildings such as the original school and R.C church, which are located on the Gowran road. Terraced structures are shown on both sides of the Main Street. A police station is situated to the west of the bridge at a staggered crossroads. Two flour mills, with a weir between them, are shown as located on either bank of the river downstream of the bridge.



Map 1: First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, c.1829

The subsequent second edition O S map of 1897 depicts little change in the layout of the village, with the flour mills now shown as ‘corn mills’, and the police station now converted into a private house named ‘Kilkenny House’. A Constabulary Barracks is shown to the couth-east of the village.



Map 2: Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map, c.1897

Since the publication of these early maps the morphology of the village has changed little. Some changes have taken place such as in 1914 a new school was constructed in the village and this building now functions as a hall with the construction of a new school across the road in the 1990's. The original early church built c.1822 was demolished and replaced with the present modern structure in 1967. Historically the village developed on both sides of the river but in more recent times residential development has been concentrated on the eastern side of the village.

3.0 Streetscape and features

3.1 Streetscape

The streetscape of the Bennettsbridge ACA is comprised predominantly of small terraces, having intermittent semi-detached and detached structures. These buildings are of early nineteenth-century buildings with mixed single–two and three-storey structures. They are arranged in small terraces and front directly onto the street. Most are render finished, having square-headed window and door openings, which have predominately been replaced with modern windows and doors. 'The Corner House' (Lalor's Pub), is a fine example of a strong landmark at the corner junction of Main Street and the Gowran road. Raising to three-stories it breaks the dominant two-storey roofline of the street. It is the first building viewed as one descends over the bridge and curves to connect Main Street and the Gowran road. Occasional commercial buildings are located at intervals along the main street, punctuating the residential development. The civic and spiritual structures located predominately on the Gowran road, with financial buildings such as the credit union and post office located at the southern end of the village.

Figure 6: View northwards along Main Street

3.2 Features

The buildings along Main Street are made attractive by the following features:

(i)Undulating roofline

Figure 7: View of west side of Main Street showing the variety of roof heights

(ii) Strong building line

Figure 8: View of east side of Main Street showing buildings fronting directly onto the Main Street

(iii)Gable-ended properties

Figure 9: Small groupings of terraced structures, punctuated by laneways exposing end gables

(iv) Regular chimneys, breaking up the expanses of slate roof

Figure 10: Gable ended chimneystacks

(v) Natural materials

Figure 11: Slate, stone and timber, render and decorative render mouldings used in the finish of buildings

(vi) Details

Figure 12: Examples such as multi-paned windows, most particularly the original sliding sash windows, of which few remain

(vii) Intermitted laneways

Figure 13: Laneways leading to the rear of properties resulting in the grouping of buildings into small terraces

4.0 Policy Context in relation to ACAs

4.1 Planning & Development Act, 2000

The legislation that relates to Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) is contained in Sections 81 to 83 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 ("the Act").

Section 81 of the Act requires Planning Authorities to include objectives in their Development Plans to establish ACAs where necessary to protect the character of the area, place, townscape or street, taking account of the building lines and heights, that:

(a) Is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or

(b) Contributes to the appreciation of protected structures.

Section 82 of the Act deals with the control of development within an ACA and states

(1) Notwithstanding section *4(1)(h),* the carrying out of works to the exterior of a structure located in an architectural conservation area shall be exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of the area.

(2) In considering an application for permission for development in relation to land situated in an architectural conservation area, a planning authority, or the Board on appeal, shall take into account the material effect (if any) that the proposed development would be likely to have on the character of the architectural conservation area.

4.2 Department of the Environment Guidelines

Chapter 3 of the *Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, *2004* provides the guidance documentation for the preparation and designation of an Architectural Conservation Area. The Guidelines state that legislation maybe used to protect the following under ACA designation.

(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 for a single dominant protected structure.

In the case of Bennettsbridge ACA, we would propose that **(a)**, **(c)** and **(d)** above, as noted in bold type, have been fundamental consideration in designating the Architectural Conservation Area.

The Guidelines state that the policies contained in an ACA should be consistent with, and supported by, the policies contained in the County Development Plan. The Guidelines propose that an ACA should be used to protect groups of structures of distinctiveness or visual richness or historical importance.

The procedure set down for the designation of an ACA within these Guidelines has been followed in preparing the ACA for Bennettsbridge, which is as follows:

(a) Identifying Areas for Protection;

- Criteria for ACAs are set down under section 3.2 of the Guidelines;
- This process includes undertaking a historical map search of the town, and tracing the historical development of the proposed area
- This initial stage also involves reviewing the structures listed in the National Inventory of the Architectural Heritage for Bennettsbridge (of which there are 15), and any Protected Structures listed in the village in the County Development Plan of which there are four.

(b) Identifying the Character of an Area

- Site visit(s) and inspections, including making a photographic record of the village are fundamental to this stage of the ACA process;
- Maps are utilised to indicate areas of special interest in the town, with the character of the ACA being based on the categories of special interest set down in the Guidelines (architectural, historical, archaeological, cultural, archaeological, artistic, scientific, technical and social).
- This stage includes an overview of the established character of the place, land uses and considering the settlement pattern. It also addresses more detailed issues such as architectural form, materials, common features, street furniture, boundary treatment, and building types and scales.

(c) Analysis of Setting of the ACA

- This stage of the process relates to considering the boundaries of the ACA, and the aspects of the ACA that relate to features other than the individual buildings/ structures.

(d) Justification for Designation of ACA

- Although not normally a part of the Department of the Environment Guidelines, the Council's Brief required that a justification for the development of an ACA be provided. Policies in relation to ACA are contained under section 8.4.4.2 of the County Development Plan and these, along with the rationale outlined in the planning guidelines, were assessed when considering Bennettsbridge for ACA designation.

4.3 County Development Plan

In accordance with the Planning and Development Act, 2000 the Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014 has a number of policies in relation to Architectural Conservation Areas. These include the following policies:

- **H102** To ensure the preservation of the special character of each ACA particularly with regard to building scale, proportions, historical plot sizes, building lines, height, general land use, building materials, historic street furniture and paving.
- **H103** To have regard to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines, issued by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government when assessing proposals for development affecting the character of an ACA.
- **H104** To consider the designation of Architectural Conservation Areas where appropriate and provide a local policy framework for the preservation of the character of these areas.
- **H105** To ensure the retention, repair rather than replacement and regular maintenance of original/early features in buildings, which contribute to the character of an ACA such as chimneystacks, roof coverings, roof profiles, external wall treatments, doors and windows, shopfronts and pubfronts and to ensure the use of appropriate materials and repair techniques when repairs are being carried out.
- **H106** To ensure that inappropriate materials such as windows, doors and rainwater goods constructed of aluminium or uPVC are not introduced to buildings within ACA's.
- **H107** To encourage high quality, contemporary design and material where appropriate when new buildings are being introduced into an ACA and the retention of the historic scale and plot size.
- **H108** To ensure the preservation of the character of the ACA when assessing proposals for advertising.
- **H109** To retain historic items of street furniture where they contribute to the character of the ACA and to protect historic items of street furniture and road side items as appropriate.
- **H110** To ensure the conservation of historic shopfronts and pubfronts. Where replacement is necessary, to encourage the introduction of shopfronts and pubfronts of contemporary high quality design and materials.
- **H111** To seek the retention of mature trees/ significant planting (those in good condition) which contribute to the character of each ACA where appropriate.

This ACA for Bennettsbridge will have regard to these specific policies and to the County Development Plan in general.

5.0 Justification for the proposed designation of an ACA

5.1 Statement of Significance

Bennettsbridge is located within a gently undulating landscape characterised by regular sized field patterns. The surrounding landscape is typically rural with agricultural fields dedicated to livestock grazing or tillage. The field systems are demarcated by a series of mature natural hedgerows typical of rural Ireland.

The historic heart of the village of Bennettsbridge pivots on the riverscape and the domineering mills and landmark bridge. These structures are responsible for the development of the village and provide a strong link to the villages architectural, technical, historical and social past. They provide the Village of Bennettsbridge with an historical identity. This identity is further enhanced by the vernacular style of buildings arranged on the Main Street. The undulating roof lines and modest detailing such as render finishes add character to the village and give it a sense of place. Although the village has expanded over time with an extension along Main Street in a southerly directly and newer residential development to the east of the village the centre of the village has not shifted and remains centred on the Mills and bridge.

This location creates several attractive scenic views. From all areas of the village attractive views are afforded of the surrounding countryside and along the river. These views and vistas are important aspects to the character of the village. The protection of such views is provided for in the Local Area Plan for Bennettsbridge.

The rationale for the development of this Architectural Conservation Area has been based on the following considerations:

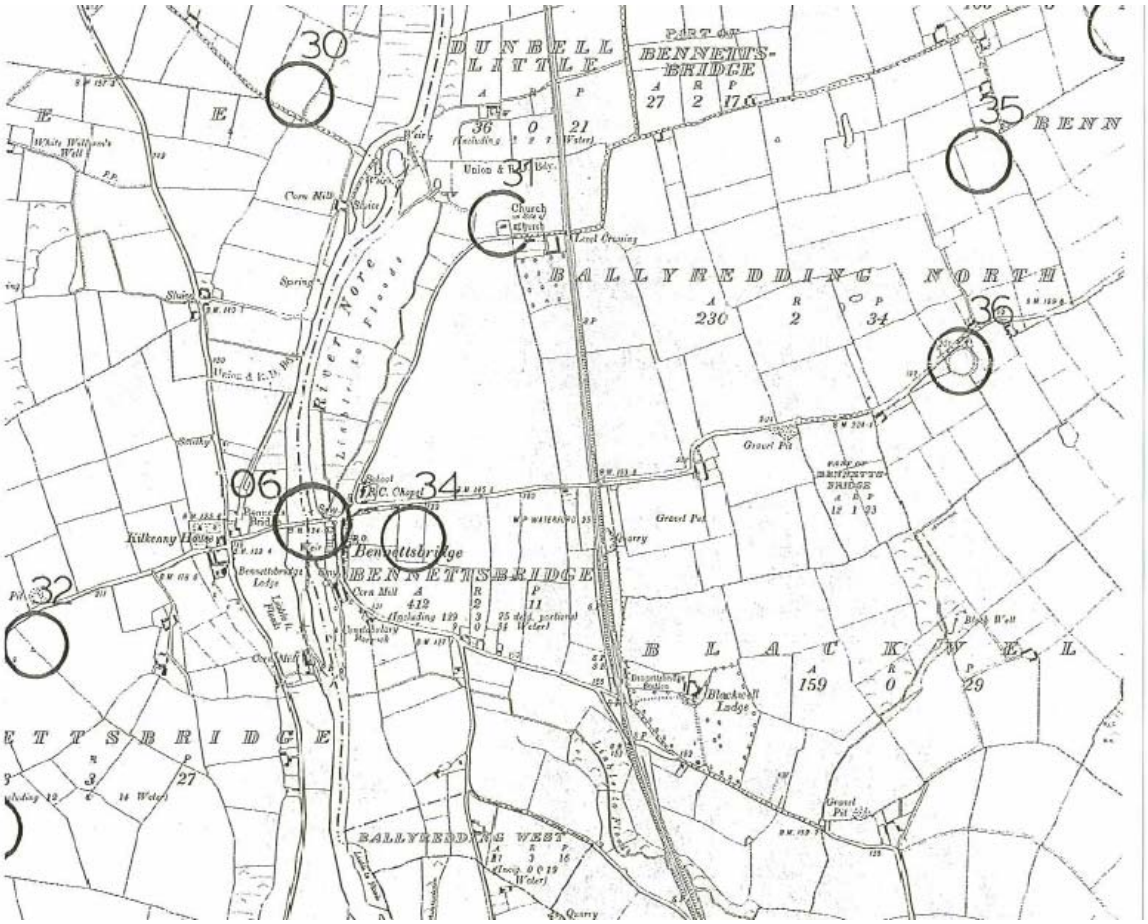
1. Historical Importance

The village of Bennettsbridge is well established with the earliest record appearing in 1285, when “Edward I made a grant of customs to be taken at the new bridge of Trenedinestone”. The two mills and bridge sites are of extreme historic importance and are primarily responsible for the establishment of the village. They add a link to the past and create a sense of identity and place with the villagescape. The present morphology of the village has changed little over time with the majority of buildings located within the village core and in turn the ACA dating to the earlier part of the nineteenth century, and as such have historical merit.

2. Presence of Archaeological Remains

The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) identify archaeological sites throughout the country. The village of Bennettsbridge has several Recorded Monuments, which indicates that there has been settlement at this location for a long time. The RMP for Co. Kilkenny identifies two sites within Bennettsbridge village and a further two sites within the vicinity of the village. These included site KK024-10601 which is centred on the

bridge and is classified as “bridge site possible”. This refers to a bridge predating the present bridge which spans the Nore at this point and is believed to have been located downstream of the present stone bridge. Sites KK024-03401/KK024-03402 are located c.400m to the southeast of the village and are classed as a “enclosure site”. Site KK024-032 is located c.800m to the south west of the site and classed as an “enclosure site”.



Map 3: Record of Monuments and Places Map

3. Architectural Importance

The *Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities* indicate that the purpose of an ACA can be to protect groups of structures of distinctiveness or historical importance as well as protecting the setting of protected structures. In the case of the Bennettsbridge ACA, it has both of these aims, in protecting the streetscape of the Main Street itself, and in providing an additional protective mechanism for the setting of the many Protected Structures located within the village.

Apart from the single attractive and imposing buildings within the village (which have been listed under the RPS above), there are very attractive buildings that form a strong streetscape retained within the village.

Like many villages in Ireland they evolved over time, with the same historic building line being followed. Bennettsbridge was predominately established with the Mills and their presence before the establishment of the main street is evident in the way the main street curves to accommodate Kells Mill at it extends southwards. The building line of the main street is similar to that of many Irish villages with simple single and two-storey structures with facades fronting directly onto the street. The modest design and scale of the buildings is created with the repetition subtle features such as pitched roofs, chimney finishes, and timber sash windows with stone sills. The use of readily available resources which are simple in design and finish gives adds symmetry to a place. The vernacular design of the buildings creates a sense of harmony and belonging.

4. Features and Materials

Good conservation practice should be encouraged to preserve the features and materials which contribute significantly to the make up of an ACA. Special attention should be paid to features and materials which have been identified as contributing to a building or group of structures under the categories of special interest as these in turn contribute to the ACA designation. Such features included the presence of slate, decorative chimney finishes, ridge cresting and tiles, timber barge boards, cast-iron rainwater goods, decorative and carved eaves courses, moulded and render detailing, timber sash and casement windows and traditional timber battened and panelled doors. Sustainable repair or appropriate replacement of features should be carried out in accordance with the AHPG. Additional features which fall into the categories of special interest but which do not form part of an individual or group of structures must also be taken into consideration. This is evident in the cast-iron vent pipe, water hydrant and wrought-iron pedestrian style and the finishes applied to the limestone boundary wall and kerbing. These are all reminders of the technical advances applied to functional public features in the mid to late nineteenth century.

5. Categories of Special Interest

The *Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities* recommend that the character of an ACA be identified and assigned categories of special interest. In the case of Bennettsbridge, this ACA has architectural, historical and archaeological interest.

6. Setting

In general the setting of an ACA is crucial and can influence the overall ACA designation of an area or group of structures. The setting of Bennettsbridge ACA is very significant, given the villages location, in close proximity to Kilkenny city and its situation within the picturesque Nore River valley. Its location on the river should not be underestimated as it has essentially led to the development of the village. The valley in which it is situated creates views in and out of the village which in turn add to the setting of individual

protected structures and groups of buildings which make up the ACA. It is therefore important to clearly define the boundaries of the ACA in order to ensure its preservation. Internally, the ACA is largely confined mainly along the main street and across the river towards Mosses Mill and towards the grouping of historic buildings at the Danesfort/ Kilkenny road crossroads. The setting of the ACA has the potential to be greatly damaged by inappropriate demolition along the Main Street, unsympathetic backland development along the river front and the removal of historic fabric from buildings all of which significantly enhances the character of the ACA.

6.0 Proposed ACA Policies for the Local Area Plan

Given the particular nature of an ACA, the Department of the Environment Guidelines refer to the fact that the County Development Plan and any other relevant plans should have reference in their policies to supporting and protecting any designation Architectural Conservation Areas.

We would propose that the following policy objectives be incorporated in the Bennettsbridge Local Area Plan in regard to this proposed ACA in Bennettsbridge:

Table 1: Policy Objectives

ACA 1	The Council shall ensure that development in the Bennettsbridge Architectural Conservation Area will be controlled in order to protect, safeguard and enhance their special character and environmental quality.
ACA 2	Within Architectural Conservation Areas, all those buildings, spaces, archaeological sites, trees, views and other aspects of the environment which form an essential part of their character, will be protected.
ACA 3	It is Council policy to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the urban public domain within Architectural Conservation Areas.
ACA 4	It is a policy of the Council that planning permission will be required for extensions to residential dwellings within Architectural Conservation Areas.
ACA 5	The design of any development in Architectural Conservation Areas, including any changes of use of an existing building, should preserve and/or enhance the character and appearance of the Architectural Conservation Area as a whole.
ACA 6	The Council will actively support and promote schemes for the conservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of this Architectural Conservation Area.
ACA 7	It will be Council policy to retain, restore and repair historic items of street furniture and paving within this Architectural Conservation Area.
ACA 8	It will be Council policy to seek the placing underground of all electricity, telephone and television cables within this Architectural Conservation Area.

ACA 9	There is great potential for shopfronts to contribute positively to the character of the ACA proposals for modifications or insertion of new shopfronts should consider using materials and design aspects appropriate to this ACA. Traditional-style shopfronts are acceptable. However the Council will also favourably consider high-quality design proposals for shopfronts that are more modern in style, providing that they respect the established pattern, scale, materials and proportions of the buildings within the ACA. Modern design that makes a positive contribution to this ACA will be considered.
ACA 10	No development shall be permitted that in any way negatively impacts on the Main street/Riverscape, including any proposals that would dwarf the streets prominence, that would cause visual impacts or any development that would negatively impact on the current vibrancy and pivotal nature of the square in the town.
ACA 11	The designation of an Architectural Conservation Area does not prejudice against innovative and contemporary design, on the contrary in principle design of a contemporary and minimalist style will be encouraged within ACA's provided it does not detract from the character of the area. It is considered that new buildings should be of their own time in appearance and should not replicate the style and detailing of heritage buildings. The replication of historic architectural styles is considered to be counter productive to heritage conservation in principle as it blurs the distinction between what is historic and what is contemporary and can lead to the emergence of poorly considered and inauthentic buildings.
ACA 12	The council accepts that it is necessary to encourage the continued growth and development of Bennettsbridge. However in doing so the council will have regard to the presence of protected structures and features contained within the designated Architectural Conservation Area. Any new development will carried out in line with the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines published by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government.
ACA 13	The use of materials such as stone, slate, timber windows and doors, and decorative render work are often vernacular in nature and reflect indigenous craftsmanship and resources. They often reflect the simplicity and modest scale used in the execution of finishes to buildings. There importance such not be underestimated

	in their contribution to the make up and aesthetic appearance of an ACA. The council will support the retention, repair and re-use of such materials.
ACA 14	The council will have regard to the Heritage Protection Guidelines as published by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government in regard to any work to protected structures located within Bennettsbridge Architectural Conservation Area.
ACA 15	As part of the continued development of Bennettsbridge the council will promote the re-use of derelict buildings and sites located within an Architectural Conservation Area, as a means to further enhance its preservation.

7.0 The Record of Protected Structures

7.1 Architectural Heritage

Our architectural heritage is a unique and irreplaceable resource which is a vital link to our past. A vast and varied amount of structures can be designated 'a protected structure', if they are deemed to be of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest. It is therefore an important function of each local authority to draw up and maintain a record of protected structures for is functional area to protect this rich architectural heritage for the future.

7.2 Policy Content

Under the Planning and Development Act 2000, it is the statutory responsibility of each planning authority to include in its development plan a Record of Protected Structures (RPS). The act defines 'a structure' as "any building structure, excavation, or other thing constructed or made on, in or under any land, or any part of a structure". The meaning of the term structure is explained as

(a) the interior of the structure
(b) the land lying within the cartilage of the structure
(c) any other structures lying within that cartilage and their interiors, and
(d) all fixtures and fittings which form part of the interior or exterior of the above structures

Guidance on the categories of special interest for considering structures for the inclusion in the RPS are outlined under section 2.5.4 to 2.5.20 of the 'Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines, 2004'.

The current County Development Plan for Kilkenny states that "there are now approximately 700 buildings, structures and features listed in the RPS and the record will continue to be added to as structures, buildings and features of special interest are identified and as resources permit".

There are four Protected Structures in Bennettsbridge and it is these buildings which help give Bennettsbridge its character. It is the policy of Kilkenny County Council to ensure that all ACAs and Protected Structures are protected from inappropriate development. This will be carried out through policies in relation to the RPS, of the *Kilkenny County Development Plan, 2008-2014*, which state as follows:

- **H93** Ensure the conservation and protection of the architectural heritage of County Kilkenny for generations by including all structures considered to be of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, scientific, social or technical interest in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS).

- **H94** To have regard to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government in 2004 when assessing proposals for the development affecting a protected structures.
- **H95** To encourage the sympathetic retention, reuse and rehabilitation of protected structures and their setting.
- **H96** To promote principles of best practice in conservation and the use of appropriate materials and repair techniques through the administration of the Conservation Grants Scheme funded by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government.
- **H97** Ensure the protection of the architectural heritage through promoting the importance of regular maintenance of structures contained within the Record of Protected Structures.
- **H98** Provide assistance to owners of protected structures in undertaking essential repairs and maintenance by the provision of relevant information.
- **H99** Promote by example the principles of best practice in conservation of the built heritage through the custodianship of Protected Structures in the Council's ownership/care.
- **H100** To protect the elements of designed landscapes of special interest located within the attendant grounds of Protected Structures, including boundary features.
- **H101** To require an architectural impact assessment/ conservation method statement for the developments within the grounds of country house estates which are Protected Structures.

ACTION

- To respond to the Ministerial recommendation to include in the Record of Protected Structures, structures which have been identified as being of Regional, National or International significance in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage survey of the city and county published in 2006.
- To carry out a review of the Record of Protected Structures.

7.3 The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH), a division within the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, carried out an interim survey in 2004, of all structures within the county, deemed to be of importance as set out under the categories of special interest. As part of this survey the NIAH has also drawn up a substantial list and completed field survey of buildings, structures and features of special importance within Bennettsbridge. Some of these structures are included in the list of Protected Structures contained in the current County Development Plan.

The buildings that are noted as being Protected Structures and those included in the NIAH will form part of the analyses upon which the appropriate boundary for the

Bennettsbridge ACA will be based. We would note that buildings rated Regional or above on the NIAH would normally be subject to a ministerial recommendation for their inclusion on the RPS of Kilkenny County Council. This status has merited them being included in this appraisal.

The procedure for making additions and deletions to the Record of Protected Structures is contained under section 55 of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

7.4 Buildings of Regional Importance included on the Record of Protected Structures

Within the village of Bennettsbridge there are four buildings of international and local significance which are listed in the Record of Protected Structures. These structures include the bridge, two mills and the Garda barracks. These structures are located within, and form part of the Architectural Conservation Area. These buildings are listed in the table below with a full record being contained in appendix A. They are regarded as being of importance due to their architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, technical or social value. All of these buildings are also included in the National Inventory of the Architectural Heritage for Bennettsbridge. It is proposed that these structures be retained on the record of protected structures.

7.5 Buildings and Features of Special Importance currently included on the NIAH Survey and proposed for inclusion on the RPS

A total of 13 structures have been identified by the NIAH as being of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, technical or social value within the village of Bennettsbridge. During a comprehensive survey of the village as part of the preparation of an LAP the significance of these structures were assessed and identified as being of significance. They are therefore **proposed for inclusion** on the RPS for the village. They are located within, and form part of the Architectural Conservation Area These buildings are listed in the table below with an extended description contained in Appendix B.

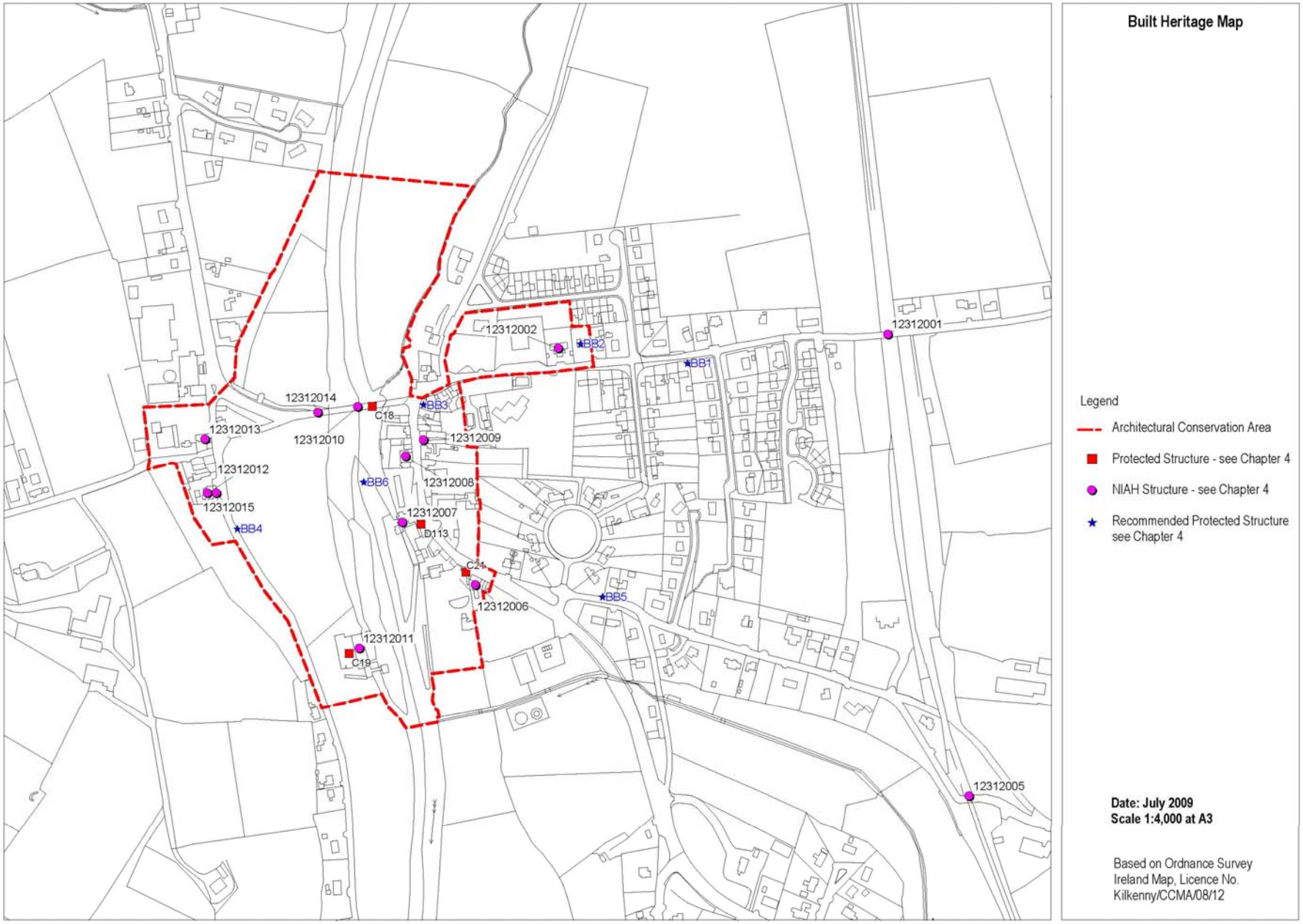
7.6 Buildings and Features of Special Importance not included on either the RPS or the NIAH Survey but are proposed for inclusion on the RPS

This section includes buildings and structures that are not currently included on either the Record of Protected Structures or in the NIAH survey for Bennettsbridge. During a comprehensive survey of the village as part of the preparation of an LAP seven structures were identified as being of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, technical or social value. They are located within, and form part of the Architectural Conservation Area. They are therefore **proposed for inclusion** on the RPS for the village. These buildings are listed in the table below with a full description in appendix C.

Table 2: Structures of architectural significance

Description	Detailed Description	Location	NIAH Ref	RPS Ref
Bridge	Two-span rubble stone hump back road bridge over railway line, opened 1848	Ballyredding North	12312001	N/A
Bennettsbridge National School	Detached five-bay single-storey national school, dated 1914, on a symmetrical T-shaped plan comprising five-bay single-storey main block with single-bay (three-bay deep) single-storey gabled projecting central range having single-bay single-storey lower flanking bays.	Bennettsbridge	12312002	N/A
House	Attached three-bay two-storey house, c.1925.	Bennettsbridge	12312009	N/A
Larkin & Associates	Attached four-bay single-storey house, c.1825	Bennettsbridge	12312008	N/A
Kells Wholemeal Mill	Detached single-bay three-storey gable-fronted flour mill, c.1825. Attached four-bay two-storey mill owner's house, c.1875, to south-east possibly originally three-bay two-storey. Part refenestrated, c.1975.	Bennettsbridge	12312007	D113
Bennettsbridge Garda Siochána Station	Detached three-bay two-storey Gothic-style Royal Irish Constabulary barracks, c.1850	Bennettsbridge	12312006	C21
Nicholas Mosse	Attached three-bay six-storey flour mill, c.1825	Bennettsbridge	12312011	C19
Cobbles/flags/paving/kerbing	Section of dressed limestone kerbing, c.1875	Bennettsbridge	12312015	N/A
Kilkenny House	Detached six-bay two-storey Royal Irish Constabulary barracks, c.1800	Bennettsbridge	12312013	N/A
Bennettsbridge Lodge	Detached five-bay two-storey house, c.1825	Bennettsbridge	12312012	N/A
Railway Bridge	Single-span railway bridge over road, opened 1848, possibly originally single-arch.	Bennettsbridge	12312005	N/A
Bridge	Seven-arch rubble limestone road bridge over river, built 1763.	Bennettsbridge	12312010	C18
Bridge	Two-arch rubble stone road bridge over flood plain, c.1750.	Bennettsbridge	12312014	N/A

Map 4: MAP OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES, NIAH STRUCTURES AND PROPOSED ADDITIONS TO RPS



Appendix A:

Buildings of Regional Importance currently included on the Record of Protected Structures and proposed for retention on the RPS

Name: Bennettsbridge Garda Siochana Station
RPS Number: C21
NIAH Number: 12312006
Detached L-plan three-bay two-storey former Royal Irish Constabulary barracks, having corner turrets on circular plans. Built c.1850, converted to use as a Garda Siochana Station in 1927. Hipped slate roof retaining its cast-iron rainwater goods, rendered battlement parapets to turrets having cut-stone chamfered coping. Timber sash windows, some in bi-partite arrangement having cut limestone sills, lancet-style to turrets. Square-headed door opening with timber panelled door.

Historical and social importance are attributed to this structure as it was originally built as an RIC barracks, the building was burnt during in the early 1920's and stood derelict. It was converted to a Garda station in the late 1920's and retains many notable features from this time including the sash windows.

Name: Nicholas Mosse
RPS Number: C19
NIAH Number: 1232011

Detached three-bay six-storey mill, c.1800. Depicted as a corn mill on early OS maps c.1830, and subsequently depicted as a flour mill c.1890. Extensively renovated c. 1980 to accommodate commercial use. Modern extension to west elevation. Hipped slate roof with cast-iron rainwater goods. Rubble limestone construction with roughcast lime rendered walls. Camber-headed openings with timber casement sills (some replacement) having no sills. Segmental-arch opening with cut limestone surround, to replacement timber and glazed door.

This imposing mill forms an integral part of the industrial heritage of Bennettsbridge. It forms part of a larger group of structures with the wholemeal mill on the opposite bank, weir and bridge. Historic and social interest is connected with this building as originally one of the main employment bases for inhabitants of the village.

Name: Kells Wholemeal –Mill Complex
RPS Number: D113
NIAH Number: 12312007

(i) Detached mill complex built c.1825, comprising of three-storey gable fronted mill with double gabled fronted extended range to west and further extensions to north. Hipped slate roof retaining sections of cast-iron rainwater goods. Roughly dressed limestone eaves course to random rubble limestone walls, having sections of roughcast lime render. Block-and-start redbrick surrounds to square and camber headed openings having replacement timber windows and no sills to main block, timber windows to extended ranges.

(ii) Attached former miller's house to south-east, c. 1875, now disused. Comprising four-bay two-storey houses with pitched slate roof and remains of cast-iron rainwater goods. Timber sash windows with cut stone sills, timber panelled shutters to window interiors.

Central to the development of Bennettsbridge, this mill is an important reminder of the industrial heritage of the building and is of technical and architectural importance to the village and the heritage of the county as a whole.

Bennettsbridge Bridge
RPS Number: C18
NIAH Number: 12312010

Seven-arch rubble limestone Road Bridge, over the River Nore, built c. 1775. Comprising round-headed arches with cut limestone voussoirs having double keystones. Rubble limestone walls with square-limestone coping to parapet. V-shaped cut-waters to up and down stream elevations. Stumps of limestone guard-stones to carriageway.

Displaying the advances in civil engineering of the mid-eighteenth century, highlighting its distinctive architectural and technical importance. The bridge forms an important landmark within the riverscape and surrounding countryside.

Appendix B:

Buildings and Features of Special Importance included on the NIAH Survey and proposed for inclusion on the RPS

Railway Bridge Gowran Road
NIAH Number: 12312001

Two-span rubble stone hump back road bridge over railway line, opened 1848. Coursed dressed tooled limestone walls, having projecting rock-faced limestone piers, with cut limestone stringcourse supporting parapets having cut-limestone coping. Pair of flat spans with limestone ashlar lintels supported on post. Sited spanning railway line with grass banks.

Built as part of the development of the Waterford and Maryborough [Portlaoise] Branch extension of the Great Southern and Western Railway line by the Waterford and Kilkenny Railway Company. This bridge is an importance reminder of the advances which took place in transport in the mid-nineteenth century.

Bennettsbridge National School
NIAH Number: 12312002
Detached T-plan former National School dated 1914, now in use as a community centre. Comprising five-bay single-storey central block, having two-bay gable fronted projection. Lower single-bay lean-to projections to front elevation. Pitched slate roof with cast-iron rainwater goods. Cut limestone date plaque to rendered walls. Timber sash windows to main block having limestone sills. Set within its own grounds having random rubble stone boundary walls to perimeter with cut-stone coping. Of architectural and social importance this building contributes positively to the architectural heritage of the village.

Railway Bridge Gowran Road
NIAH Number: 12312005

Single-span railway bridge over road, opened 1848, possibly originally single-arch. Renovated, c.1975, with span replaced. Irregular coursed rock-faced squared rubble stone walls with rock-faced cut-stone coping. Replacement single flat steel span, c.1975, on steel girders having replacement steel railings, c.1975, to parapet. Sited spanning road.

Larkin Associates
NIAH Number: 12312008
Attached four-bay single-storey house, built c.1825, with abutting three-bay house. Now part in use as offices. Pitched artificial slate roof with cast-iron rainwater goods. Timber sash windows with painted stone sills.

A modest house in both scale and architectural features this building forms an integral part of the main street. Having been well maintained this house retains much of its historic fabric.

House, Main Street
NIAH Number: 12312009
Terraced two-storey house, built c.1925. Pitched artificial slate roof with rendered eaves. Timber sash windows with cut stone and concrete sills. Timber panelled door.

This modest house still retains many of its original features and character. Forming part of a terrace it contributes positively to the main streetscape of Bennettsbridge.

Bennettsbridge Lodge
NAIH Number: 12312012

Detached five-bay two-storey house, built c1825, possibly refenestrated in the early twentieth century. Pitched slate roof having timber bargeboards to gables and cast-iron rainwater goods. Replacement timber sash windows with cut stone sills. Timber panelled door with leaded overlight. Roughcast boundary wall to front of site having cut-limestone channelled piers and wrought-iron gate. Rubble limestone carriage-arch to north with redbrick voussoirs, two-storey outbuildings to rear.

This attractive but modestly designed building retains its original form and many architectural features, most notably the timber sash windows.

Kilkenny House
NIAH Number: 12312013
Detached six-bay two-storey former police station, built c.1800, having integral carriage-arch. Converted to residential use c.1850. Pitched slate roof with redbrick chimneystacks. Replacement timber sash windows with cut stone sills. Timber panelled doors. Remains of rubble stone outbuildings to rear, having cut stone window sills. Rubble stone boundary wall to rear.

This building forms a vital part of the architectural heritage of Bennettsbridge and is depicted as a Police station on early OS maps. It appears to have ceased use as a police station in the mid-nineteenth centaury and is depicted as Kilkenny House with formal walled gardens to the rear. Nevertheless much historic fabric survived this subsequent change of use of the building.

Road Bridge
NIAH Number: 12312014

Two-arch stone flood bridge, c.1750. Depicted on OS map 1829 as bridge over canal, subsequently drained as depicted on OS map 1879. Random rubble limestone walls having squared coping to parapets. Pair of segmental-arches with dressed limestone pier and voussoirs.

This modest bridge, simple in form exhibits the advances in civil engineering of the late eighteenth century.

Limestone Kerbing
NIAH Number: 12312015

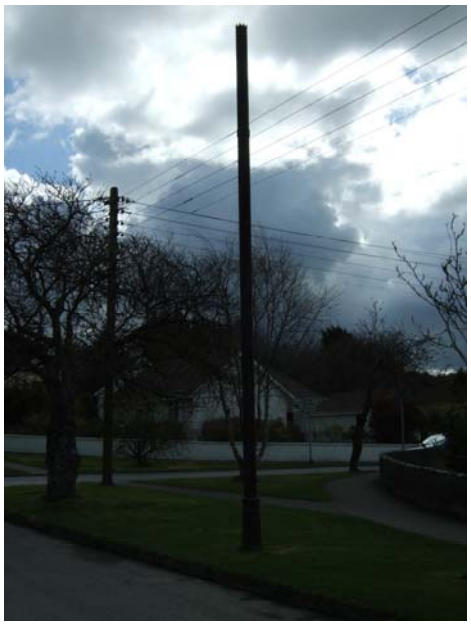
Section of dressed limestone kerbing, dated c.1885.

A subtle feature within the village streetscape, this kerbing exhibits the traditional means of finishing footpaths in locally sourced material.

Appendix C:

Buildings and Features of Special Importance not included on the NIAH Survey and proposed for inclusion on the RPS

Vent Pipe Gowran Road
BB1
Cast-iron vent pipe, erected c.1880, comprising fluted pedestal, moulded necking and cylindrical shaft with crown head. Now disused. Located to road side. Vent pipes were used during the latter half of the nineteenth century as part of the new sewage system laid down in many Irish towns and villages at this time. As the name suggests they allowed for the release or venting of smells and gases from the sewage system. As with many mass produced Victorian objects, attention was paid to detail and decoration which enlivened their appearance.



This simple piece of street furniture adds character to the streetscape and is a valuable element of the area's former infrastructure. Functional objects such as this which are no longer in use are increasingly disappearing throughout the Irish countryside. It is therefore recommended that it is added to the Record of Protected Structures.

House Gowran Road
Map Number: BB2

Detached L-plan three-bay two-storey house, built c.1920, having central gable-fronted entrance-bay. Pitched slate roof with gabled redbrick chimneystacks, timber barge boards to gabled front and cast-iron rainwater goods. Roughcast rendered walls with staggered redbrick quoins. Square-headed window openings with replacement uPVC windows, having redbrick block-and-start surrounds and limestone sills. Square-headed door opening with replacement uPVC door having redbrick-block-and-start surrounds with redbrick label-moulding above with carved stops. Rubble limestone boundary wall to front of house with square profile piers and cut coping.

Located adjacent to the school, this house is situated in a prominent location within the village. The architectural integrity of the building is retained through its form and notable features such as the red brick chimneystacks, quoins and label moulding. It is therefore recommended that it is added to the Record of Protected Structures

The Corner House/ J. Lalor
BB3

Attached three-bay three-storey house, built c.1820 having shopfront to ground floor, with attached five-bay two storey house with shopfront to ground floor. Possibly originally two buildings. Pitched artificial slate roof with rendered chimneystack, skylight and replacement rain water goods. Smooth rendered painted walls having decorative moulded render alternating quoins to corners. Replacement uPVC windows having decorative moulded surrounds, with painted render sills. Display window to southern end of front elevation. Double timber panelled door with decorative moulded render surround and prominent keystone. Carved tapering limestone guard stone to front of site.

Located in a prominent position on the main street, the height and form of this building make it a positive contributor to the architectural heritage of the village. The retention of the decorative render mouldings adds to the architectural integrity of the structure. It is therefore recommended that it is added to the Record of Protected Structures.

Boundary Wall and Pedestrian Stile
Map Number: BB4
Rubble limestone boundary wall, built c.1885, with wrought-iron pedestrian turn style.

Technical interest is exhibited in this structure as an early example of an intact boundary wall. With the adjacent footpath and wrought-iron stile this group from an attractive group of features within the village streetscape. It is therefore recommended that it is added to the Record of Protected Structures.

Water Hydrant Thomastown Road
Map Number: BB5
Cast-iron water hydrant, c.1880, comprising fluted shaft, with protruding decorative bucket stand, banded neck and fluted cap with acorn finial. Set to side of street.

Situated to the side of the street, this cast-iron water hydrant attests to the high quality of mass production at the time of casting, which makes it a positive contributor to the streetscape. It displays interesting design and detail, which enlivens this utilitarian object. It is an important reminder of the technical heritage of the village. It is therefore recommended that it is added to the Record of Protected Structures

Weir on the River Nore
Map Number: BB6
V-shaped water weir constructed c.1800.

A notable landmark within the village landscape and along the riverscape. Constructed as part of a group to serve the two mills on the either bank of the river this building forms part of a group of industrial buildings. It is therefore recommended that it is added to the Record of Protected Structures

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