



# PREPARATION OF THE CROSSAKIEL LOCAL AREA PLAN 2009-2015

## STRATEGIC ISSUES

Planning Department  
Meath County Council  
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## Introduction

The existing Crossakiel Development Plan was adopted as part of the Meath County Development Plan 2001. Crossakiel is identified as a village in the county settlement strategy contained in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. In this regard, the Development Plan for Crossakiel has been re-adopted pending the preparation of a Local Area Plan.

This 'Strategic Issues Paper' is a pre draft consultation document, published for the purpose of notifying the general public and interested parties Meath County Council's intention to prepare a Local Area Plan for Crossakiel and to engage in public consultation pursuant to the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

The purpose of the consultation document is to stimulate debate between the Planning Authority, key stakeholders, landowners and the general public regarding issues relevant to Crossakiel. A list of strategic issues has been identified in this regard. It is not an exhaustive list and there may be other topics or views on topics, which will be of relevance and that may be identified as a result of this consultation document being placed on public display.

## Strategic Issues

The key issues to be addressed in the Crossakiel Local Area Plan include:

- Integration and Consolidation of New and Existing Development
- Provision of Social and Community Facilities
- Enhancement of Movement and Access Networks
- Creation of Employment Opportunities
- Tourism
- Provision of Local Services
- Protection and Enhancement of Built and Natural Heritage
- Provision of Infrastructure
- Preparation of Urban Design Guidelines

These issues are not exhaustive and we welcome comments on any issues that you feel are relevant in the future planning and development of the area.

### Integration and Consolidation of New and Existing Development

Crossakiel village is an attractive settlement located on an upland area in northwest County Meath. The historic centre of the village is defined by three converging roads which form a triangular block comprising a cluster of traditional and modern building typologies. The Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 promotes villages such as Crossakiel as nodes for distinctive quality driven residential development and essential local commercial and community facilities. The existing Crossakiel development plan provides for the growth of Crossakiel through the identification of residential and mixed use lands. As such, an opportunity exists to integrate future development with a view to sustaining the service function of the historic settlement whilst retaining and enhancing the attractive qualities of the village. Meath County Council estimates that total undeveloped residentially zoned land available in Crossakiel is 7 hectares. At an average density of 20 units per ha this land could yield approximately 144 residential units.

There are adequate lands, if released and serviced to cater for the projected growth in households and population in Crossakiel over the plan period.

We would like your views on the existing development in Crossakiel and how best population growth should be accommodated.

### Provision of Social and Community Facilities

Community infrastructure plays an important role in the development of healthy and sustainable communities. Community infrastructure includes social, cultural, education, health, religious and recreational facilities. The provision of social and community facilities should occur in tandem with population growth and should meet the needs of all members of the community.

Crossakiel contains a limited number of social and community facilities. These include the 'Fair Green' and the Handball Alley, the latter being in need of refurbishment. Religious and educational services are located in adjoining villages such as Killskyre and Drumbarragh. The village also contains a Garda station. As the village grows, it will be necessary to identify sufficient lands to accommodate additional community and recreational facilities and to include objectives for the enhancement of existing facilities.

We are interested in hearing your views on the current provision of social and community infrastructure in Crossakiel and how the future social and community needs of the community might be met.

## **Enhancement of Movement and Access Networks**

The village of Crossakiel is defined by the road network linking the village to nearby settlements. The growth of the village should prioritise sustainable travel patterns through the provision of services and employment opportunities within walking distance of residential areas. Accordingly, existing and future movement and access networks should prioritise sustainable modes of transport by means of safe, attractive and connected pedestrian and cycle routes. Vehicular access to the village from a wider catchment area should provide for centralised bus stops and car parking facilities which maximise access to local services and facilities.

We welcome your views on the development of transport infrastructure in Crossakiel including topics such as transport, road and street layouts, pedestrian and cycle routes and accessibility.

## **Creation of Employment Opportunities**

There are a limited number of employment opportunities within Crossakiel village. The main commercial and industrial activities within the village include an aluminium recycling centre, the post office, local shop, credit union, public house, hairdressing salon and a motor repair service. It is envisaged that the future growth of villages such as Crossakiel will preclude the development of dormitory villages. As such, the future development of the village should seek to provide local employment opportunities for a local population. In this regard, the existing Crossakiel development plan identifies lands for mixed residential and business uses.

[We invite your views on the economic development of Crossakiel and the provision of employment opportunities within the village.](#)

## **Tourism**

Tourism makes an important contribution to the economy of County Meath and the many towns and villages which attract visitors to the area. The Meath County Development Plan recognises the significance of tourism in diversifying rural economies and regenerating certain towns and villages.

Crossakiel is an attractive village comprising a rich heritage and benefiting from proximity to Slieve na Calliagh and the Loughcrew megalithic cairns. As such, Crossakiel has the potential for the sustainable development of tourism facilities and infrastructure and the enhancement of the local tourism economy subject to the conservation and protection of the village's built and natural heritage.

[We would like to hear your views on the sustainable development of Crossakiel's tourism economy and how the village might be promoted as an attractive tourist destination for visitors to the county.](#)

## **Provision of Local Services**

Local services are an important resource within a community and should seek to meet the daily needs of the local population. A sustainable village should contain a range of services including retail and commercial functions, all of which should be located within walking distance of residential areas. As previously noted, the village contains a post office, local shop, credit union, public house and hairdressing salon. The growth of the resident population of Crossakiel should seek to provide for additional local services whilst sustaining those that already exist.

[We would like to gather your views on the existing and future provision of local services in Crossakiel and how community needs could be satisfied within the village.](#)

## **Protection and Enhancement of Built and Natural Heritage**

Crossakiel is located within the southwest Kells lowlands as identified in the Landscape Character Assessment of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. This area is characterised by rolling farmland with remnants of parkland landscapes. Crossakiel is situated on a small hill which benefits from attractive views to the Loughcrew

Hills and countryside to the west and south. Several mature and attractive trees are located around the village which contribute to the picturesque qualities of Crossakiel.

The village of Crossakiel contains several protected structures and fixtures which are important heritage assets that should be protected and preserved in the course of future development. These include the ruins of Saint Schiria's Church, two 19<sup>th</sup> century houses and a cast iron water pump. Additional structures of value have been identified in the national inventory of architectural heritage and include an early 19<sup>th</sup> century house, a water pump on the village green and a 1930's signpost on the outskirts of the town. There is also a mound barrow located within the historic core of the village.

We are interested in hearing your views on the protection of the built and natural heritage of Crossakiel village and how this heritage might be preserved and enhanced in the course of future development.

### **Provision of Infrastructure**

The proper and sustainable development of Crossakiel will be contingent upon the provision of basic infrastructure and in particular the augmentation of existing waste water treatment facilities within the village and water supplies from the Kells / Oldcastle water supply scheme. It is also important that Crossakiel is adequately served in terms of up to date telecommunications infrastructure and energy supplies. In this regard, the phasing of development in tandem with the provision of necessary infrastructure will be central to the future development of the village.

We welcome your views on the provision of key infrastructure in Crossakiel including water supply, waster water treatment, telecommunications and energy infrastructure.

### **Preparation of Urban Design Guidelines**

Crossakiel comprises an historic core surrounded by industrial and residential areas. The historic village is picturesque in its organisation comprising elements such as traditional building typologies, a village green, the ruins of St. Schiria's Church and groups of mature trees. Although an important source of local employment, the aluminium recycling factory located adjacent the village has a strong visual presence which conflicts with / detracts from the picturesque qualities of the historic village.

The preparation of urban design guidelines for the village provides an opportunity to enhance the structure of the village whilst ensuring new development respects the positive characteristics of the existing settlement. Accordingly, the guidelines will identify appropriate forms of development with respect to issues such as scale, massing, building forms and materials.

We invite your views on the preparation of urban design guidelines for Crossakiel and your views on the enhancement of the public realm and appropriate building typologies.

## Strategic Environmental Assessment

The EU Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (2001/42/EC) was transposed into Irish Planning Law by the Planning and Development Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations of 2004. Article I of the SEA Directive states:

'The objective of this Directive is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes, with a view to promoting sustainable development, by ensuring that, in accordance with this Directive, an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant environmental effects on the environment'.

Where an SEA is not mandatory it is necessary to establish whether a plan or programme would have significant environmental effects on the environment. This process involves the screening of plans and requires an assessment of the characteristics of the plan and the effects and the area likely to be affected by the plan. This assessment is forwarded to the environmental authorities (Environmental Protection Agency, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources) for their comment. The screening of the Crossakiel Local Area Plan is currently underway.

Should an SEA of the Crossakiel LAP be required the following procedures will be involved in the assessment:

- Preparation of an environmental report where the likely significant environmental effects are identified and evaluated
- Consultation with the public and environmental authorities
- Incorporation of the findings of the report and the outcome of the consultations in decision whether to adopt or modify the Draft Development Plan
- Publication of the decision on the adoption of the plan and outline how the SEA influenced the outcome

The environmental report is the kernel of the SEA process. The environmental report will contain the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan which must be identified, described and evaluated in the report. In determining the effects on the environment the following will be considered:

Biodiversity	Flora	Climate Factors
Population	Soil	Material Assets
Human Health	Water	Cultural Heritage
Fauna	Air	Landscape

The interaction of all of the above will also be evaluated.

The preparation of a draft local area plan and environmental report occurs in tandem where an SEA is required. The preparation of the plan and the report will be integrated so that the draft plan is informed by environmental considerations from the beginning.

The undertaking of a SEA has a number of benefits. By undertaking a SEA, it is intended to provide the framework for influencing decision-making at an earlier stage when plans and programmes that bring about individual projects, are being developed. This should lead to more sustainable development through the orderly appraisal of policy options. Additionally, the SEA will play an essential role in addressing cumulative impacts. SEA will therefore improve the quality of the plan making process by facilitating the identification and appraisal of alternative plan strategies, raising awareness of the environmental impacts of plans and encouraging the inclusion of measurable targets and indicators facilitating effective monitoring of the implementation of the plan, and thus make a positive contribution to subsequent reviews.

## Submissions

Meath County Council hereby invites any interested parties to make submissions in respect of the Consultation document to the undersigned before 3.30 pm on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2008. Any submissions or observations so made will be taken into consideration by the Council before the making of the Local Area Plan. Submissions or observations in electronic format can be e-mailed to [planningsubmissions@meathcoco.ie](mailto:planningsubmissions@meathcoco.ie) before 3.30pm on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2008.

Please make your submission by one medium only i.e. in hard copy or email. This will avoid the duplication of submission reference numbers and will streamline the process. Your assistance on this issue is appreciated. All submissions to be clearly marked with the name of the settlement to which the submission refers. **The deadline for receipt of submissions is Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2008.**

All submissions or observations received during the above time period will be taken into consideration during the preparation of the Draft Local Area Plan.

The Consultation Document is available for inspection during normal office hours at the following locations from Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2008.

- Planning Department, Abbey Mall, Abbey Road, Navan.
- Meath County Library / Navan Branch Library, Railway Street, Navan.
- Kells Town Council and Area Office, Kells
- Kells Branch Library, Castle St, Kells
- [www.meath.ie](http://www.meath.ie)

Copies of the Consultation Documents are available for purchase from the Planning Department, Abbey Mall, Abbey Rd, Navan, Co. Meath.

Please contact Lynda Thornton @ 046- 9097566 or [lthornton@meathcoco.ie](mailto:lthornton@meathcoco.ie)

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