

Adopted Variation No. 2



Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan

2010-2016

May 2013



Tullamore Town Council



Offaly County Council

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Preamble

This is Variation No. 2 to the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016 which comprises two parts (Part A & Part B):

Part A: Inclusion of a Core Strategy

Part B:

- (a) The inclusion of development standards for landscape buffer areas in Chapter 14.
- (b) The inclusion of the term and explanation 'Landscape Buffer' in Chapter 15 and,
- (c) Reduction in width by 50% of a portion of land zoned Open Space to the South of Tullamore at Clonminch providing for an increase of Business/Employment zoned lands.

The variation has been prepared and adopted in accordance with Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011, (S.I. No. 200 of 2011), amending the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 435 of 2004), Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011, (S.I. No. 201 of 2011), amending the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004), Circular PSSP 6/2011 – Further Transposition of the EU Directive 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011) and the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

The adopted variation is accompanied by a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report and an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report.

The format of the variation is as follows:

- The variation comprises two parts (Part A & B) with each part dealt with respectively.
- Existing text from the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016 is coloured in black as shown thus: **Sample Text**.
- Where the adopted variation has added text to the adopted plan, these changes are marked in red text as shown thus: **Sample text**.
- Where text is deleted from the adopted plan 2010-2016, these changes are marked in strikethrough as shown thus: ~~Sample Text~~.
- Changes to the zoning map (specific to Part B) are shown by means of a printout of the relevant section of the adopted zoning plan 2010-2016 and immediately thereafter showing the zoning map as adopted under this variation, with the areas for specific changes identified and highlighted for clarity.
- A Landscape Buffer appraisal document accompanies this adopted variation (Part B) for information purposes only.

Form

Variation No. 2 takes the form of a standalone document but remains a central component of the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan which forms the basis of future development decisions up until 2016. This document should be read in conjunction with the existing Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016.

Part A: Include a Core Strategy

1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, Offaly County Council and Tullamore Town Council have adopted a Core Strategy for inclusion into the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016, by way of variation under Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. This Core Strategy is consistent with Offaly County Development Plan 2009-2015 as varied, which incorporated the Core Strategy for County Offaly into that plan.

Variation No. 2 Part A supplements and supersedes, where relevant, the content of certain sections of the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan – in particular Chapter 4 “Development Strategy” of the current plan. The main areas where Variation No. 2 supersedes the current plan are those where reference is made to population targets, the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines and in particular, Variation No. 2 supersedes section 4.8 of the existing plan in terms of delivery of the population growth.

Policies TTEDP 04-01 & TTEDP04-03

TTEDP 04-01 It is the Councils’ policy to strategically prioritise the development of Tullamore as part of the Midlands Linked Gateway. The Councils will promote the growth of the gateway in nominal terms towards the 2022 target of 24,575 persons and also relative to the growth of the remainder of the county and in particular the share of County population attributed to the Gateway.

It is the Councils’ policy to implement the ‘sequential approach’ i.e. develop from the centre first, then outwards, in assessing proposed housing developments to avoid isolated development in outer zoned areas.

~~**TTEDP 04-03** It is the policy of the Councils to facilitate a population for Tullamore of 24,500 by 2022 and in the interim, a population of 19,250 by 2016, in line with the breakdown indicated in Table 4.4 of this chapter.~~

1.1 Background

The inclusion of the Core Strategy in the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan is a requirement introduced by the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010. The Core Strategy for County Offaly has already been incorporated into the Offaly County Development Plan 2009-2015 in Variation No. 1 of that plan and this Core Strategy will be consistent with that plan.

The current Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016 was adopted in May 2010 and includes a written statement and zoning map.

The Core Strategy includes all of the key requirements of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010. The purpose of a Core Strategy “is to articulate a medium to longer term quantitatively based strategy for the spatial development of the area of the planning authority, and in doing so, to demonstrate that the development plan and its objectives are consistent with national and regional development objectives set out in the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs)”¹. Tullamore Town Council is the planning authority for the area within the town boundary while Offaly County Council is the planning authority for the environs area.

This variation supplements and supersedes, where relevant, the content of certain sections of the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan – in particular Chapter 4 (“Overall Strategy”). The Core Strategy, will allow for possible development of the Masterplan Areas within the lifetime of this plan, should a viable and comprehensive proposal come forward.

¹ Source: DoEHLG Circular and Guidance Notes on Core Strategies, November 2010.

The main areas where the Core Strategy supersedes the current plan are as follows:

- Where reference is made to population targets – these are now superseded by the targets included in the Core Strategy.
- The Midland Regional Planning Guidelines 2004 is now replaced with the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022.
- Chapter 4 Overall Strategy – (Section 4.8).

The Core Strategy will demonstrate a level of consistency between the objectives of the development plan and the higher order spatial plans of the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines (MRPGs). The Core Strategy provides the key linkage between national and regional level plans and subsidiary plans such as town development plans.

1.2 Content of the Core Strategy

The required content of the Core Strategy is set out in Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, which requires that development plans must include the following:

- population targets;
- quantification of requirements for zoning of lands for residential and/or a mix of residential and other uses; and
- proposed existing and future distribution of population within the plan area within a settlement hierarchy.

The Act requires the Core Strategy to contain a written statement outlining the origins and broad aims of the strategy including the population targets for the plan period.

A Core Strategy Table summarising the key statistics in the Core Strategy as regards the distribution of future population and housing and their alignment with the relevant Regional Planning Guidelines is also required.

2. POLICY CONTEXT

The Core Strategy is positioned within a policy hierarchy that ranges from the higher level, strategic approach of the National Spatial Strategy, which seeks to provide an overall vision for development at a national level, to local area and town development plan level.

2.1 National Spatial Strategy (NSS)

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) 2002-2020 provides a planning framework for delivering more balanced social, economic and physical development between the regions of Ireland. A key concept of the NSS is the development and promotion of 'Gateways' and 'Hubs'. The NSS identifies a Midland Linked Gateway comprising Athlone, Tullamore and Mullingar.

The stated role of the Linked gateway towns is in 'Enhancing the level of critical mass in the Midlands region (Counties Laois, Offaly, Westmeath and Longford), by combining the complementary strengths of Athlone, Mullingar and Tullamore as a gateway at the heart of the region, is essential to boosting the region's overall economic strength' (NSS).

It is noteworthy that the NSS continues to serve as Ireland's national level spatial framework as outlined in the Planning Circular letter 02/2013.²

2.2 Midland Regional Planning Guidelines (MRPGs)

The Midland Regional Planning Guidelines (MRPGs) 2010-2022 were adopted on the 20th July 2010 and set out the long term strategic planning framework to direct the future growth of the Midland Region. The MRPGs designate Tullamore as a Linked Gateway town (linked with Athlone and Mullingar). One of the key areas of focus for the Midlands Linked Gateway is the growth of the critical mass of the region not only in population but also in terms of economic activity, employment and education.

² 'Until such time as a successor to the NSS has been developed and adopted by Government (as the current NSS was) and Oireachtas (as per the Mahon recommendation), the existing NSS continues to serve as Ireland's national level spatial planning framework.' PI/02/13, DoECLG, February, 2013.

Figure1. Extract from the MRPGs showing the Midland Regional Settlement Strategy.



Source: Midland Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022

2.3 Retail Strategy

The Retail Strategy for County Offaly (2008-2015) identifies the future retail floor space requirements to 2015. The strategy provides a Retail Hierarchy identifying the role of main retail centres within the County. The hierarchy, in line with the functional role assigned in the MRPGs, identifies Tullamore town as the sole 'primary tier' retail centre in the County, with Edenderry, Birr and Clara town centres being the 'secondary tier' centres and Banagher, Ferbane, Kilcormac and Portarlinton as 'tertiary' tiers ahead of the village and rural settlements as the 'fourth' tier.

The strategy is to reinforce and extend the high order retail function of Tullamore as part of the Linked Gateway in order to reduce expenditure leakage to outside of the County, with the main focus of retail

development being Tullamore. The requirement to undertake a Gateway Retail Strategy as required by the Retail Planning Guidelines will be addressed in the review of the County Development Plan.

2.4 Housing Strategy

Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended requires all planning authorities to include a housing strategy in any Development Plan.

The Housing Strategy for Offaly is given effect in the Offaly County Development Plan by objectives contained in Chapter 5 of Volume 1, and also in section 4.7 of the TTEDP and objectives of the TTEDP. As the principles underlying the Housing Strategy support strongly the role of Tullamore as a Linked Gateway Town and as the main settlement in the county which is targeted for growth, the Housing Strategy for Offaly will be reviewed at the next development plan review stage.

2.5 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

In accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009, Flood risk is a key consideration in the designating of land for development and assessment of planning applications. Publication by the OPW of Flood Hazard Mapping is due in 2013 and the final Shannon Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) is due to be published in 2015. However there are a number of sources of information currently available regarding flood risk within Tullamore town and environs including historic reports but also the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment flood zone maps published in 2011 by the OPW (as part of the preparation of the Shannon CFRAM). Current policies in the TTEDP, 10-15 to 10-18 which relate to flooding apply to all residential zoned lands across the plan area.

3. CORE STRATEGY

This section supersedes section 4.8 of the current TTEDP.

3.1 Rationale of Core Strategy

Tullamore is designated as a linked Gateway Town which means it is to be a driver for population growth within the midlands. The results from Census 2011 indicate that the population of Tullamore town and Environs has continued to grow (by 10%) from 12,927 in 2006 to 14,361 recorded in April 2011.

This core strategy will seek to improve the overall quality of life within Tullamore Town and Environs by ensuring that areas proposed for residential development are located appropriately, promoting a compact urban structure and aligned with associated infrastructural provision required to support the proposal, enhance the built environment and facilitate employment generating proposals.

Given that the Core Strategy has been inserted by way of variation into the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016, its main impact will be on the designation of undeveloped lands for residential purposes. The Core Strategy seeks to limit the quantity of undeveloped land available for residential development within the lifetime of the plan; This Core Strategy will take a sequential approach to the development of land, with land closest to the town centre designated for development within the lifetime of this plan. Lands outside of Phase 1 of the master plan areas will not be considered under the lifetime of this plan. The amount of Phase 1 lands which will be available for residential development will be controlled as is already provided for within the plan (up to 25% of Phase 1 Residential lands will be available for development, during the lifetime of this plan).

3.2 Core Strategy Aims

Aims of Core Strategy

1. To strengthen the role of the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan in implementing the objectives of higher order plans, where appropriate.
2. To ensure that the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016 is consistent with national and regional planning strategies, guidelines and policies including national and regional population targets.
3. To develop and implement an evidence based settlement strategy that provides a framework within which sustainable infrastructure, amenities, economic investment and development can be provided in a manner that maximises the use of resources in the Town and Environs, for current and future generations.
4. To ensure compliance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended.
5. To provide for the growth of Tullamore Town and Environs towards a long term target population and develop the town in its role as a Linked Gateway Town as set out in the settlement strategy in the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines. The continuing support for appropriately scaled development within and adjoining the town centre, in a sequential manner, will remain a priority while recognising the role that maximising the use of existing infrastructure, new infrastructure and public transportation links will play in future.
6. To ensure a high level of environmental protection in the implementation of the policies and objectives of the plan through the observance of all legal requirements with regard to Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitats Directive Assessment, Water Framework Directive and Floods Directive, as appropriate.
7. To ensure that the quantity and location of land zoned for development in the Development Plan will accommodate the level of development anticipated over the plan period and supports the priorities for growth indicated in the settlement hierarchy.
8. To ensure that future development will integrate with the existing and planned transport and services infrastructure such as road, rail and water services infrastructure in order to utilise them in the most efficient way possible (as per priority investments outlined at national and regional level).
9. To ensure that development over the lifetime of this plan is monitored and managed so as to achieve the overall objectives of this strategy.

3.3 Core Strategy Table

The Core Strategy is required, as per section 7 of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010, to set out a settlement hierarchy, to be specific in setting out population targets and housing requirements and identify the quantum, location and phasing of residentially zoned areas.

Table 3.1. Population Trends & Targets for Offaly and Tullamore

	2006 ³	2011 ⁴	2016 ⁵	2022 ⁶	Pop. Growth 2006-2016	Housing land required 2016 Ha.	Residential lands zoned prior to Core Strategy Ha.
County Offaly	70,868	76,687	82,114	86,771	11,246	336	1216 ⁷
Tullamore (Gateway Town)	12,927	14,361	20,207	24,575	7,280	129	416 ⁸

The population targets for the Midland Region (2016 & 2022) are outlined in the Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 (MRPGs) in Table 4.2 and Table 4.3 of that document. Taken from this, the projected population for County Offaly in 2016 is 82,114 and for Tullamore Town and Environs is 20,207. Therefore the target population growth from 2006 to 2016 is 7,280 for Tullamore. The application of the MRPGs allocation for County Offaly and Tullamore gives a requirement of 129 ha. for residential development in the Tullamore and Environs Area. This is calculated at a density of 35 units per hectare.

Table 3.2 below shows how the Tullamore Core Strategy is consistent with the County Core Strategy and also gives a breakdown of how the 129 ha. is allocated within the Tullamore and Environs Area.

³ CSO Results 2006.

⁴ CSO Results 2011.

⁵ Taken from Table 4.2 of the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Midland Region 2010 – 2022.

⁶ Taken from Table 4.2 of the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Midland Region 2010 – 2022.

⁷ Residential lands zoned prior to Offaly Council Core Strategy 2012- Variation no. 1 to CDP.

⁸ Residential zoned lands in TTEDP 2010-2016 including Master Plan areas, Phases 1, 2 & 3. Of this 416 ha. only 89 ha was earmarked for residential development under the lifetime of the plan.

Table 3.2 Tullamore Core Strategy Table

		Residential lands	2016 Pop.
MRPG Allocation for County Offaly ⁹		336 ha.	82,114
Offaly CDP Core Strategy allocation ¹⁰		336 ha.	82,114
MRPG Allocation for Tullamore ¹¹ (Gateway town)		129 ha.	20,207
Core Strategy Allocation for Tullamore		129 ha.	20,207
Breakdown of Tullamore Core Strategy - 129 ha. allocation			
Residential area.	Ha.	No. of units ¹²	Description
Within the Town Boundary area.	75	2,625	75 ha. of residentially zoned lands within the town boundary area is available for residential development. This is exclusive of all Masterplan areas.
Master plan areas. (25% of Phase 1).	40	1,400	Up to 25% of Phase 1 of the Master plan areas, (residential zonings) - 40 ha. will be available for housing development to meet the population growth. This will be monitored closely over the lifetime of the plan. This is reduced from 50% as per Section 4.8 of the TTEDP.
Environs area.	14	490	From the Environs Areas, a total of 14 ha. of residential zoned lands will be considered for housing development over the lifetime of the plan. This is exclusive of the Masterplan areas.
Total:	129	4,515	

⁹ Allocation as per Table 4.3 of the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Midland Region 2010 – 2022.

¹⁰ Section 4.4 of the Core Strategy states 'The Delivery of residential development shall be monitored and managed to ensure compliance with the figure of 336 ha allocated in the MRPGs'.

¹¹ Allocation as per Table 4.3 of the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Midland Region 2010 – 2022.

¹² A density assumption of 35 units per hectare applies to Tullamore Town and Environs Area as per table 4.3 of the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Midland Region 2010 – 2022.

3.4 Delivery of Core Strategy

As outlined above an area of 129 ha. of residential zoned lands is required for Tullamore to accommodate predicted population growth to the year 2016, which is in line with the Offaly County Development Plan, 2009 -2015, as varied. Under the TTEDP (adopted in May 2010) an area of 416 ha. is zoned residential. The prioritisation and delivery of the 129 ha. requirement is set out below.

For the purposes of the Core Strategy delivery, the plan area is looked at under 3 areas.

1. Tullamore Town Council Area
2. The 4 Masterplan areas
3. Environs Areas, outside the master plan areas

The strategy uses a practical approach to zoned lands concentrating on developable blocks of land which could in theory yield comprehensive housing developments in the plan area. Accessibility, flood risk and sequential approach are key considerations underlying the strategy. The breakdown of the 129 ha. is laid out below.

Tullamore Town Council Area	75 ha. of residentially zoned lands within the town boundary area is available for residential development. This is exclusive of all Masterplan areas.
Masterplan Areas	Up to 25% of Phase 1 of the 4 Masterplan areas, residential zonings, (40 ha.) will be available for housing development to meet the population growth. This will be monitored closely over the lifetime of the plan. This is reduced from 50% as per Section 4.8 of the TTEDP which is now deleted.
Environs area	From the Environs Areas, (outside the Master Plan Areas) a total of 14 ha. of residential zoned lands will be considered for housing development over the lifetime of the plan.

3.5 Control of Development

The sequential approach will be applied in these cases and progress will be monitored over the lifetime of the plan.

As the overall target for growth for this plan period is an important factor in contributing to Tullamore achieving the necessary critical mass for a Gateway town, the Planning Authority shall seek to deliver this population in a flexible manner using the principle of sequential approach. The designated role of Tullamore as a linked-gateway settlement requires targeted and prioritised development to maximise use of existing and planned infrastructure, promoting the development of critical mass and supporting economic growth.

The Planning Authority will continue to have regard to the Department's guidelines on 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas' when assessing development applications, particularly having regard to densities. The policies set out below, as well as existing policies in the TTEDP, will apply.

3.5.1 Sequential Approach

The sequential approach relates generally to development taking place from the centre out, avoiding ‘leapfrogging’ of more appropriate lands and consolidating existing developed areas. This is essential to underpin the sustainable delivery of population and housing requirements over the plan period.

Having regard to the amount of land zoned for residential development within Tullamore and the need to ensure the growth of the Gateway as the key driver within the county, the Councils will implement a strict ‘sequential approach’ when assessing development applications. This is set out in the amended TTEP P04-01, and also included as an aim of the Core Strategy. Proposals that do not comply with the sequential approach will not be favoured.

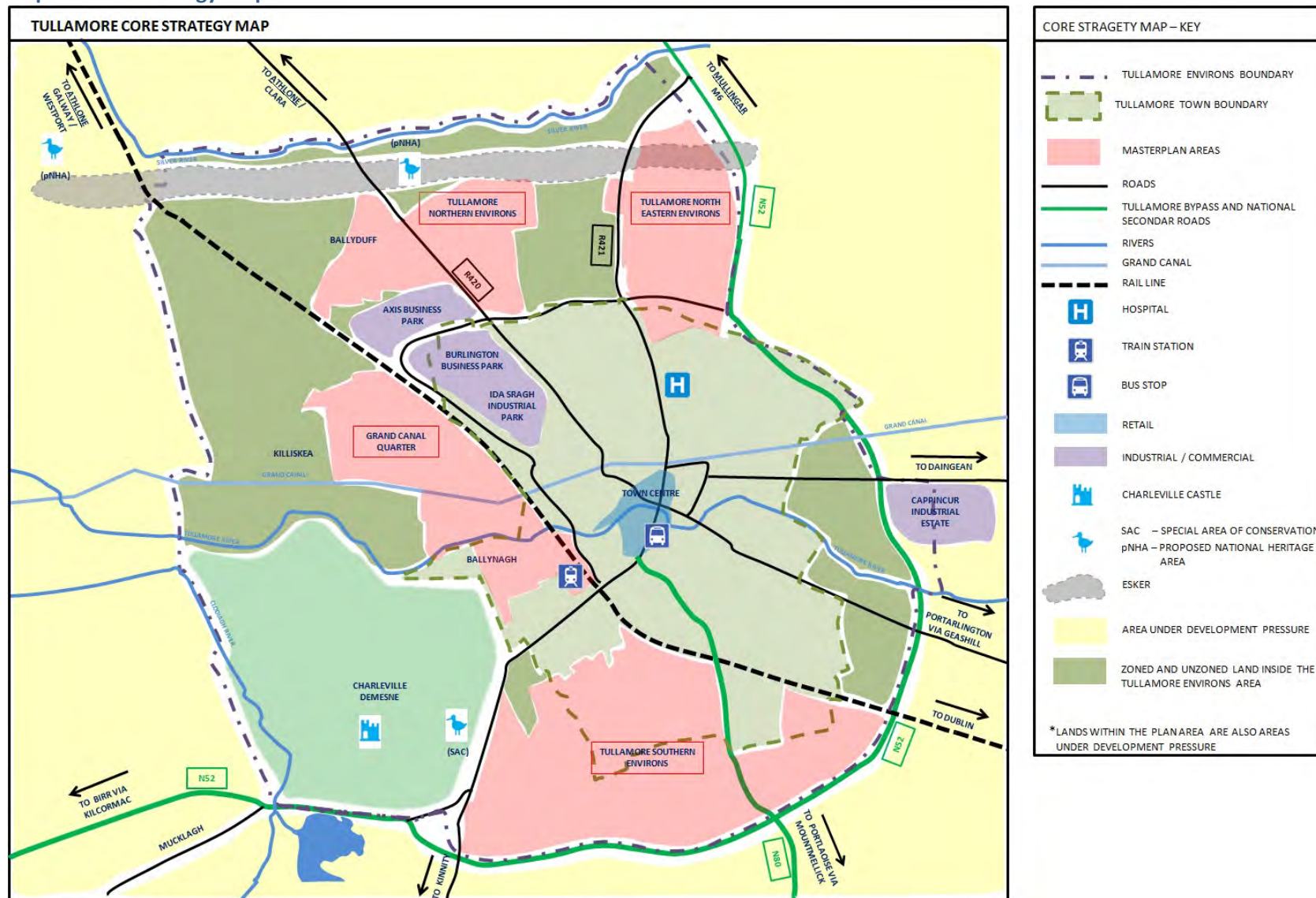
3.5.2 Land Use Zoning Map

Following on from the Core Strategy table, the Tullamore Town and Environs Land Use Zoning Map (first adopted in June 2010 as part of the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016), were reviewed as part of the preparation of this Core Strategy. The Landuse zoning plan and Masterplan area maps will not be adjusted in this instance. However the development of residential lands will be in accordance with the Core Strategy Table and Section 3.5 and 3.5.1 above and the relevant policies and objectives.

3.5.3 Tullamore Town Core Strategy Map

The Core Strategy Map (Figure 3.1) overleaf provides a visual representation and geographical illustration of Tullamore Town’s development envelope in line with the availability and integration of services, transport, infrastructure and economic activity whilst also preserving its natural environment and amenities. The format of the Core Strategy Map is as required under section 7 of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010) Section (2B) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

Map 3.1 Core Strategy Map



3.6 Policies

Tullamore Core Strategy Policies

TCSP-01 It is the Councils' policy to implement the Core Strategy for Tullamore Town and Environs in order to be consistent with, and in accordance with, policies at a national level and regional level, in particular population targets and distribution.

TCSP-02 It is the Councils' policy that future residential development proposals shall be located at a scale appropriate to the levels identified in the Core Strategy Table and the accompanying land use zoning map. Notwithstanding the other policies in the Tullamore Town and Environs Development plan and other considerations in the assessment of residential development proposals, proposals shall also be in accordance with the provisions of the Water Framework Directive; the Habitats Directive and any guidelines issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Acts as amended.

Site identification should incorporate the following characteristics:

- develop sequentially from the centre of existing settlements and maintain the existing pattern and character of settlements and;
- make efficient use of existing and proposed infrastructure,
- integrate with the existing transport network to help reduce the overall need to travel and encourage the use of alternatives to the car and
- Promote Smarter Travel.

TCSP-03 It is the Councils' policy that development will not be permitted where it conflicts with the Core Strategy.

Monitoring and Management

TCSP-04 Notwithstanding the amount of land made available for residential purposes to 2016, it is the Councils' policy not to exceed, through the facilitation of residential development, the allocated housing land requirements set out for Tullamore Town and Environs in the MRPGs.

TCSP-05 It is the Councils' policy to monitor and manage residential development in Tullamore Town and Environs, in line with national and regional development objectives, through the Core Strategy in this plan and also through the development management process. In this regard, it is the Councils' policy to cooperate with the Midland Regional Authority as part of the monitoring and review approach.

TCSP-06 It is the Councils' policy to ensure that development in urban areas maximises opportunities to reuse previously developed land and further, to use land in the most efficient way possible and appropriately according to the area in which it is located.

Housing and Retail Strategies

TCSP-07 It is the Councils' policy that where there is any discrepancy in relation to population targets and/or housing land requirements, between the Core Strategy and the Housing Strategy

and/or the Retail Strategy, the policies and objectives of the Core Strategy shall take precedence.

Ongoing Developments

TCSP-08 It is the Councils' policy to prioritise the completion of development where works are ongoing. In this regard, Offaly County Council and Tullamore Town Council will, where necessary, engage with developers, landowners and agencies involved to resolve outstanding issues and reach a satisfactory conclusion.

TCSP-09 It is the Councils' policy to have regard to future DoECLG/Government guidance in relation to the satisfactory completion of developments where works are ongoing.

3.7 Objectives Strategy

TCSO-01 It is an objective of the Councils to seek to direct development in such a manner as is appropriate to achieve the overall aims of the Core Strategy.

TCSO-02 It is an objective of the Councils to monitor and manage the delivery of residential development having regard to the Core Strategy Table during the plan period through the development management process and also using accurate and recent statistics as and when they are published.

Developments that are ongoing

TCSO-03 It is an objective of the Councils to adequately address the completion of housing developments that are ongoing, where Offaly County Council or Tullamore Town Council have the capacity to do so, in accordance with DoECLG/Government guidance being issued.

*****PART A END*****

Part B: Amend the written statement to include provisions relating to Landscape Buffers and amend the landuse zoning map to reduce an area of open space identified as a landscape buffer.

4. PURPOSE OF VARIATION NO. 2 (PART B)

Part B of variation No. 2 makes provision to include reference to Landscape Buffers in the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016 and provides for alteration by way of reduction in extent to one such landscape buffer.

Variation No. 2 (Part B) of the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016 amends the written statement and the Landuse Zoning Map of the plan to provide for:

- (a) The inclusion of development standards for landscape buffer areas in Chapter 14**
- (b) The inclusion and explanation of the term 'Landscape Buffer' in Chapter 15 and,**
- (c) Reduction in width by 50% of a portion of land zoned Open Space to the South of Tullamore at Clonminch providing for an increase of Business/Employment zoned lands.**

4.1 Background

The Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016 and in particular the zoning objectives map accompanying the plan provides for a range of areas that are designated with an Open Space Landuse Zoning. These areas are indicated by their green colour on the zoning objective map and their use(s) described in Chapter 15 of the Plan (specifically section 15.3.5). They include areas designed and used as playgrounds, general amenity areas, amenity areas associated with residential areas and sports and recreational centres and activities.

While there are particular areas within the plan that come under the legend 'Open Space', some areas are proving to function in more of a protective manner as 'Buffer' areas between landuses. Their function can be termed concisely as 'Landscape Buffers'. These areas have been identified and examined in the appraisal document that informed and accompanies this variation. Their distinctive function as described in the accompanying appraisal document necessitates reference in the written statement of the Plan and therefore variation to same to include such reference.

4.2 Adopted changes to Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016

(a) Inclusion of development standards for landscape buffer areas in Chapter 14

The insertion of a new sub-section 14.2.29 entitled Landscape Buffer into Chapter 14 of the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016 as follows:

14.2.29 Landscape Buffers

Landowners/developers, on developing areas adjoining and including landscape buffers or other areas in close proximity, the following should be considered and/or addressed:

- Landscape buffers should create attractive and distinctive frontages onto the Tullamore Bypass (N52) with full cognisance of the role that they fulfill in the concealment of less attractive aspects of particular landuse(s), development(s) or building(s).
- Landscape buffers should create an interesting and varied framework of spaces i.e. planted areas, amenity areas or formally landscaped, designed specifically with respect to their location and the uses that they are protecting.
- Landscape buffers should allow for existing landscape features, mature vegetation and topography to provide for minimal necessary intervention where it is not warranted.
- Regard should be taken of the ecological significance of landscape buffers. Ecology considerations should be incorporated into the design and maintenance of landscape buffer areas.
- Where landscape buffer areas adjoin residential landuses they should be incorporated or addressed in some way that sees these areas used as an amenity ancillary to the residential use whilst performing a dual use of protecting the residential landuse from other landuses where perceived impacts are identified.
- Where landscape buffer areas adjoin the Grand Canal they should be preserved and continue to serve to protect the Grand Canal from encroachment from urban uses. Visual impact from the Grand Canal should be taken into consideration at all times with any development proposals on adjoining lands as the Canal is an important alternative transport corridor into Tullamore Town.
- Specific objectives relating to landscape buffers in Chapter 5 should be adhered to for lands located within the masterplan areas identified in Chapter 5.

(b) Inclusion of the term and explanation 'Landscape Buffer' in Chapter 15

Addition to section 15.3.5 of the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016:

15.3.5 Open Space/Sports/Recreation/Amenity Zoning Objective:

The use of land as 'Open Space' shall be taken to include the use of land for; afforestation, playgrounds, housing estate open spaces, parks and development incidental to the enjoyment of open space including sports centres, outdoor recreation centres and landscaped areas, the provision of shelters, walks, walls, sanitary conveniences, play equipment, dressing rooms and similar facilities. It also provides for the use of such land or such facilities for games, educational and recreational purposes. High standards of accessibility are essential. **Open Space shall also be taken to include the use of land as Landscape Buffer where the distinctive purpose is to both separate and protect landuses which are incompatible.**

(c) Reduction in width by 50% of a portion of land zoned Open Space to the South of Tullamore at Clonminch providing for an increase of Business/Employment zoned lands.

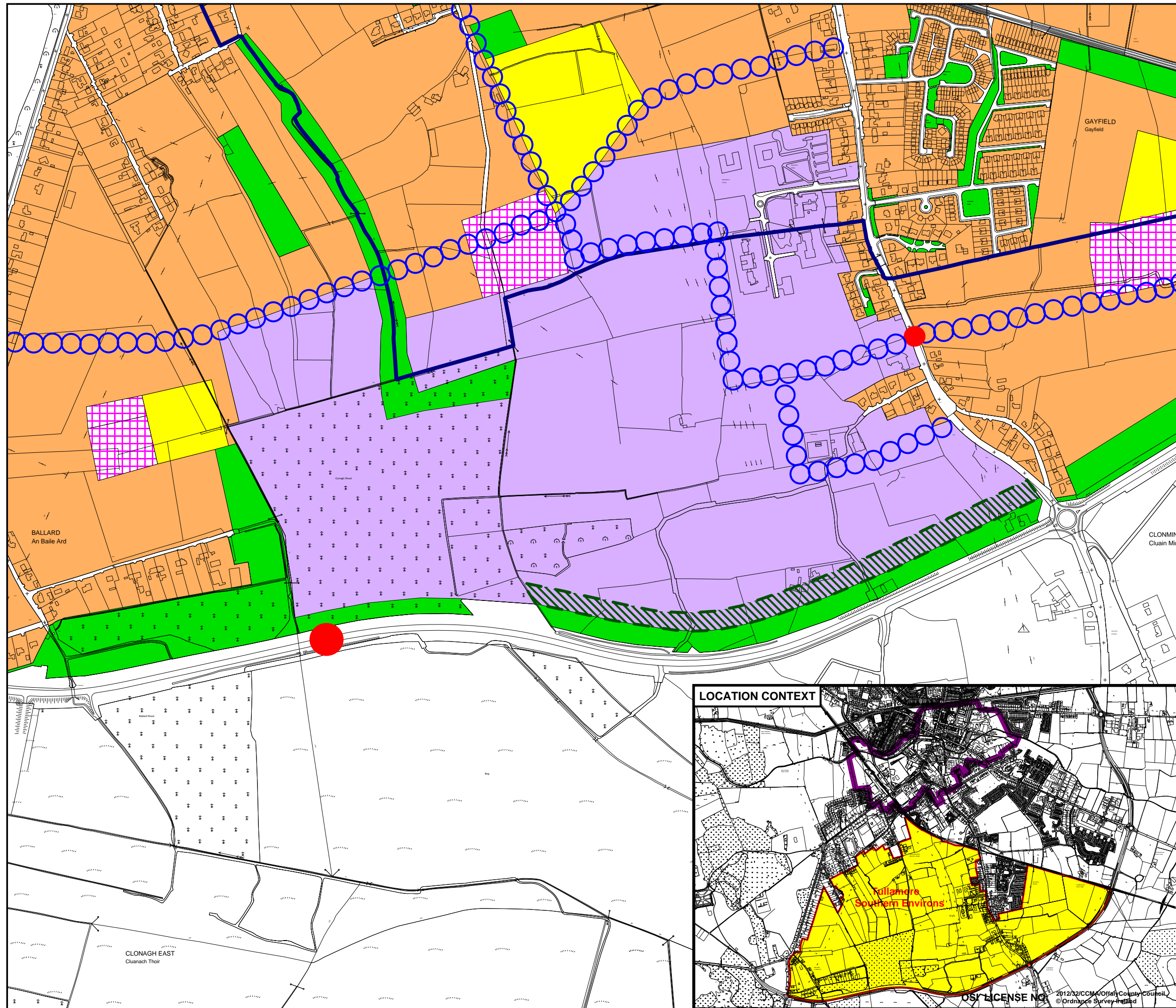
The Business/Employment zoning objective as per the provisions of section 15.3.1 of the plan (as amended by additional provisions of variation no. 1) provides for the development of higher end commercial, general industrial and technological uses to a design and layout that is of particular high quality. Exacting criteria calling for significant investment in quality of design, treatment of public realm areas and landscaping in the demonstration of quality proposals are written into the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016 for business/employment zoned lands to endorse the exceptional quality that is required by this zoning objective.

To the south of Tullamore at Ballard is a parcel of land zoned for open space identified in the accompanying document¹³ as a Landscape Buffer. This area immediately adjoins Business/Employment zoned lands to the north and the N52 to the south. The area of land zoned open space totals 9.5 hectares maintaining a width of between 35 metres and approximately 100 metres and is located to the west of the Clonminch Road. However having regard to the high end nature of proposed uses on Business/Employment lands in this area and the criteria stipulating the quality of design and public realm layout that is required, it is considered that the extent of the landscape buffer is not entirely necessary at this particular location. The extent of the buffer at this particular location has been reduced by 50% along its length. The reduction in extent of the landscape buffer necessitates a change to the landuse zoning map of the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016 providing for a reduction of open space zoned land from 9.5 ha to 4.3 ha giving that area (5.2 ha) over to Business/Employment zoning thus increasing Business/Employment zoning from 105 ha to 110.2 ha in the Southern Environs Masterplan area.

Please refer to the accompanying maps which are both extracts of the landuse zoning map of the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016. Map 1 shows the area subject to the adopted change in zoning as it currently exists in the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016 and map 2 shows the area with the adopted reduction in Open Space zoned land (giving over 5.2 ha of open space zoned land to Business/Employment zoning).

*****Part B End *****

¹³ Landscape Buffer Appraisal



LEGEND

STRATEGIC DISTRIBUTOR NETWORK & LINKAGE

PROPOSED NEW ROUNDABOUT/JUNCTION

TULLAMORE TOWN BOUNDARY

AREA SUBJECT TO ALTERATION:- CHANGE FROM OPEN SPACE TO BUSINESS/EMPLOYMENT

ZONINGNEIGHBOURHOOD CENTREBUSINESS/EMPLOYMENTPUBLIC/COMMUNITY/EDUCATIONALOPEN SPACERESIDENTIAL

Tullamore Town Council
Comhairle Baile na Tulaí Móire

Offaly County Council
Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí

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PROJECT
VARIATION NO.2 (PART B)
TULLAMORE TOWN & ENVIRONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2010-2016

SCALE N.T.S.	PROJECT NO. NO.2 TTEDDP PART B	DRAWING NO. 1/1
DATE May 13	DRAWN BY G. Fox	CHECKED B. Maher