

APPENDIX 4

Mullagharlin Masterplan

Mullagharlin Masterplan

March 2025



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council

MULLAGHARLIN MASTERPLAN

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Mullagharlin Masterplan consists of an extensive area of strategically located lands to the south of Dundalk Town Centre and west of Blackrock Village. The area is an important location in the economic development of Dundalk given the quantum of lands available for employment related uses, the existing infrastructure available, and the proximity of the lands to DkIT. In order to ensure links and connections between new and existing development areas can be strengthened the Finnabair Business Park, Xerox Technology Park, Dundalk Science and Technology Park, and DkIT have all been included within the Masterplan area.

The total quantum of lands within the Masterplan area is c.433.8 hectares. At the time of writing approximately 267 hectares of the land remain undeveloped. This Masterplan will provide an integrated strategy for the design and development of the lands which will ensure the creation of an attractive and functional environment where business and enterprise will thrive making the area an attractive location for both indigenous and international investment. It will build on recent successes in economic investment and promote opportunities for clustering and synergy between businesses in addition to the opportunities for collaboration and a close working relationship with DkIT.

1.1.1 STATUS OF THE MASTERPLAN

The inclusion of this Masterplan in the Dundalk Local Area Plan gives the Masterplan a statutory footing.

1.1.2 PURPOSE OF THE MASTERPLAN

The purpose of the Masterplan is to provide a vision and conceptual guide for the development of the lands located within the Masterplan area. It is an update of the Mullagharlin Framework Plan that was published in 2008. This updated Masterplan has taken account of changes in policy documents and land use zonings in the area and will seek to build on the successes achieved in the 2008 Framework Plan and ensure that future development in the area is guided by up to date policy.

It is intended that this Masterplan will be flexible and responsive in a way that it will enable designers to be creative and innovative and ensure the maximum potential of the lands can be achieved. One of the fundamental objectives of the Masterplan is to ensure the co-ordinated phasing and delivery of infrastructure.

1.1.3 VISION

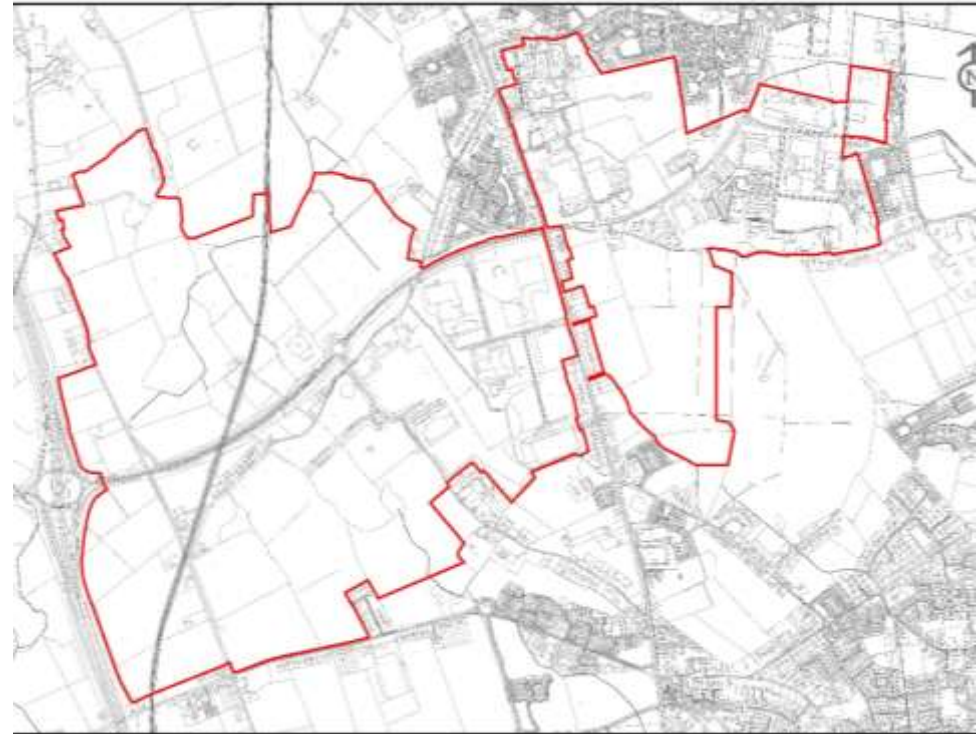
“For the Mullagharlin area to continue to develop as a business zone of international quality that can attract investment from a broad range of industries in an environment that is conducive to achieving high levels of synergy and collaboration between businesses and DkIT and where employees and businesses can thrive.”

1.1.4 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Masterplan are as follows:

- Facilitate the creation of attractive and vibrant business and technology parks where business and enterprise can thrive and have access to the necessary supporting infrastructure and services.
- Provide the opportunities for collaboration between businesses and DkIT and facilitate continued investment in the DkIT campus.
- Provide for a mixed-use area south of DkIT campus consisting of employment, residential, and student accommodation, ancillary retail uses and associated community facilities.
- To take a plan led approach to the development of the Masterplan lands by ensuring the necessary physical infrastructure is delivered in tandem with development.
- To support the provision of green infrastructure, ecological corridors, landscaped areas, and natural habitats with the development of the Masterplan lands.
- To ensure there is permeability and connectivity throughout the Masterplan area.
- To support the shift to more sustainable modes of travel by prioritising the provision of active travel and public transport infrastructure whilst recognising the importance of continuing to invest in the road infrastructure to ensure the connectivity within and accessibility to the area is maintained.
- Protect the strategic function of the national road network.

Map 1: Mullagharlin Masterplan Boundary

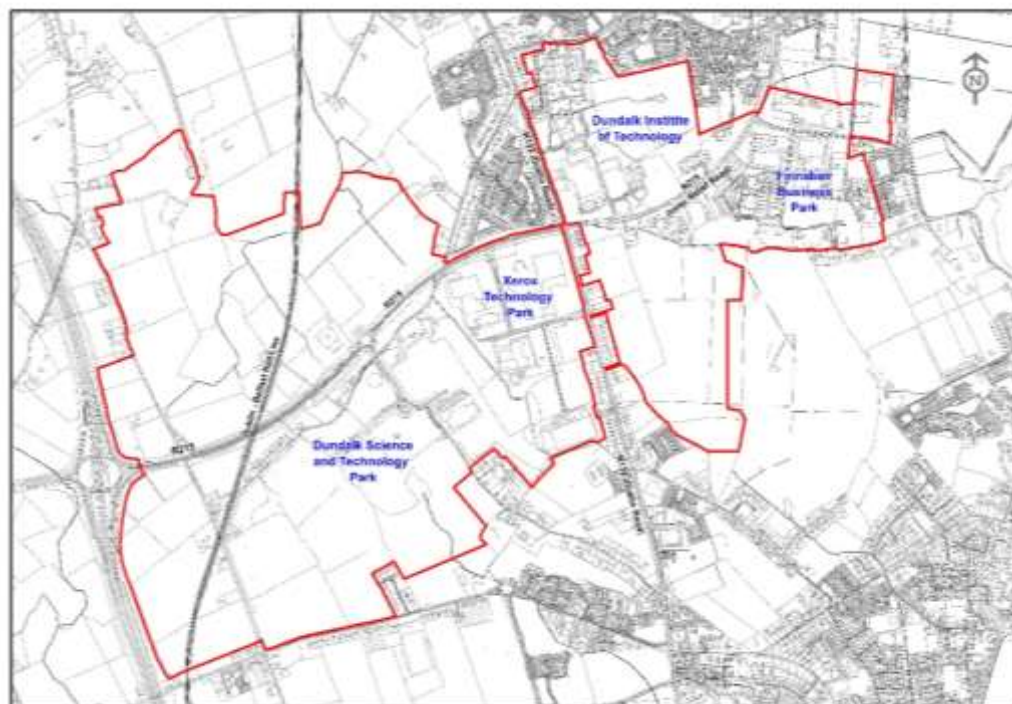


1.2 THE MASTERPLAN AREA

The Masterplan area consists of 433.8 hectares of land between the M1 Motorway and the eastern edge of the Dublin Road (R132). The lands are approximately 2km south-west of Dundalk town centre.

The southern section of the Dundalk Inner Relief Road traverses through the Masterplan area with lands located to the north and south of this road. The Dublin-Belfast rail line bisects the lands in a north-east to south-west direction.

Map 2: Location of Existing Business Parks and DkIT



1.2.1 LAND USES

The primary land uses in the Masterplan area are employment related. There are 3 existing business/technology parks in the area as follows:

- Finnerlin Business Park
- Xerox Technology Park
- Dundalk Science and Technology Park

These business and technology parks are developed in a campus style environment with a variety of building sizes and designs in an attractive landscaped setting connected by quality service roads. They host a variety of business types including pharmaceuticals, services, manufacturing, and logistics. Within these parks there are undeveloped lands available for future development that are suitable for small, medium, and large-scale enterprises across a broad range of business and industrial uses.

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) which is situated to the north of the Inner Relief Road at the Xerox junction is also located within the Masterplan area. These lands are zoned for 'Research, Education, and Innovation' uses.

1.2.2 POLICY CONTEXT

Dundalk is designated as a Regional Growth Centre in the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region (RSES). This designation means the town is a focal point for population and employment growth. It is projected in the RSES that by 2031 the population of Dundalk will be 50,000. This will provide a critical mass of population that will make the town attractive for economic investment.

Dundalk enjoys international and interregional connectivity by the M1, part of the TEN-T Core Network. To maintain the benefit of M1 connectivity, development in proximity to the national road network should be in accordance with the *Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoECLG, 2012)* and relevant national road network technical and standards requirements of TII Publications.

The Louth County Development Plan recognises the strategic role of Dundalk as a centre of employment in both Louth and the wider region. To facilitate economic investment and employment generating development it is important that there are sufficient lands available for these uses. This will enable the town to develop as a centre of scale and support the creation of more balanced regional development.

1.2.3 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

This Masterplan will provide a co-ordinated framework for the development of the area that will ensure the creation of an attractive and well-connected employment area that will meet the needs of employees and businesses in the town.

New developments shall ensure the efficient movement of vehicles and people through the provision of link roads and pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure. New service roads shall incorporate active travel infrastructure. New roads shall also be future proofed to incorporate the provision of bus stops and turning/set down areas for buses to enable the expansion of the town bus service to the area. Consideration shall also be given to the provision of Shared Mobility Hubs in appropriate locations.

The Masterplan will seek to ensure permeability between and connectivity between existing campuses and undeveloped lands whilst also recognising that for various reasons such as security it may not always be feasible. Car and cycle parking shall be conveniently located and in accordance with the Car Parking and Cycle Parking Standards as set out in the County Development Plan unless a reduction in parking is deemed acceptable to the Planning Authority. Parking areas shall be suitably lined and surfaced while any loading bays shall be located so delivery vehicles do not interfere with the movement or circulation of traffic.

High quality open spaces and landscaping will be required to support the creation of an attractive environment for businesses to operate in. New buildings shall generally respect established building lines and shall include an appropriate set back from roads, cycle paths, or footpaths that takes account of the nature of the use, the scale of the building and the existing pattern of development in the area.

The design and scale of any building shall be appropriate for the intended use. Designers shall seek to reduce the visual impact of larger buildings by incorporating a suitable mix of finishes and architectural treatment that breaks the building up, particularly on the front elevation. Landmark buildings of notable design will be encouraged at strategic locations.

Where there are residential areas adjacent to the Masterplan lands consideration shall be given to having reduced heights to minimise the contrast and impact between the two areas.

Roof mounted equipment such as extractor fans, air conditioning units, antenna, or generators shall be designed to integrate into any building and shall be appropriately screened where possible.

1.2.4 UNDEVELOPED MIXED USE AND BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY ZONED LANDS

There are large parcels of undeveloped lands zoned C1 'Mixed Use' and E2 'Business and Technology'. The Mixed Use zoning which is to the south of DkIT campus and east of the R132 will provide for a range of uses including employment, commercial, and healthcare facilities alongside student and residential accommodation. These lands have an area of 43.4ha. The layout of any development on these lands shall seek to maximise the opportunities for connectivity with DkIT.

The location of the Mixed Use lands makes them suitable for a range of uses including higher order business uses supported by local facilities including shops (with a gross floorspace no more than 350m²), cafes, restaurants, and community facilities. Residential accommodation (including student accommodation) will also be considered on these lands. An area of c.2.5 hectares shall be utilised as playing pitches and associated facilities in a centrally located part of the lands. If in excess of 50% of the lands are to be utilised for residential development a community building shall also be provided. The playing pitches and community building shall be delivered in tandem with any residential development on the lands. In the event that the primary use of the lands shall be for residential development the developers shall engage with the Planning Authority in relation to the potential requirement for lands to be reserved for a school on the lands.

This shall be factored into the design and layout of any development at an early stage to ensure it would be appropriately located.

The Business and Technology lands to the north of the Inner Relief Road are undeveloped with c.117 ha of land available for development. In addition, there are c.98ha available on the southern side of the road. This gives a total of c.215ha of business and technology lands available for development in the Masterplan area. These lands are suitable for a range of employment related uses including science and technology, financial, manufacturing, or knowledge-oriented uses.

It is envisaged that these lands will have a functional layout that provides a strong active frontage, attractive landscaped spaces and cyclist, pedestrian, and vehicular infrastructure that provides connectivity. Such a layout will ensure the creation of a space where businesses can thrive. It is acknowledged that there will be a mixture of building types and styles that will reflect the use and operation of each business.

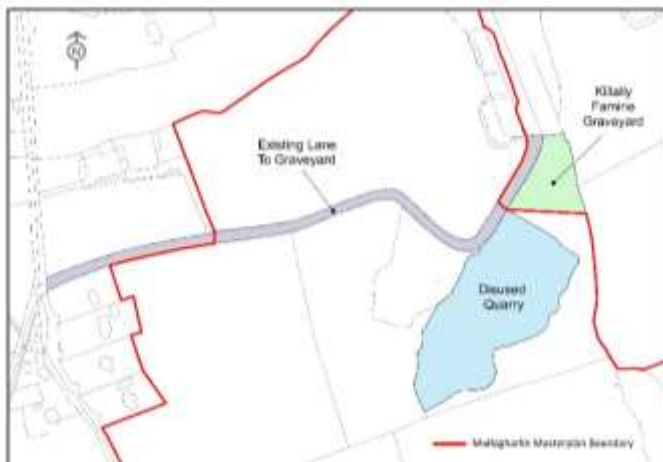
This can range from large scale buildings that require a large floorplate and high ceiling to facilitate the manufacture and storage of goods to smaller office style buildings where the design and layout is more akin to the provision of professional services. Whilst the scale of some buildings is such that they will be visible in the surrounding environment the design of buildings shall incorporate measures that will reduce this dominance and soften the visual impact.

This may include the use of a range of materials and finishes, particularly on the front elevation. Landscaping can also be used to integrate buildings into the local environment.

1.2.5 KILLALLY GRAVEYARD AND DISUSED QUARRY

In the northern section of the Masterplan area there is a disused quarry where the extraction of rock has ceased for a considerable period of time. This quarry is immediately south of Killally Graveyard. The boundary of the Masterplan area abuts this graveyard. Killally graveyard was established in 1853 and continued in use until 1905. It is known locally as ‘The Famine Graveyard’ and was utilised primarily for those persons who died in the workhouse on the Ardee Road to the north of the graveyard. The graveyard is accessed via an existing lane known as ‘Sidella Lane’ off the Ardee Road. Part of this laneway is within the Masterplan area and is indicated on Map 3 below. The laneway continues in a northerly direction from the graveyard and opens onto the Knockbridge Road (R171). The graveyard is enclosed by a stone wall. Any development in proximity of this graveyard shall be cognisant of its sensitivity and historical importance. A landscaped buffer shall be provided as part of any application along the boundary of the graveyard and Sidella Lane with any application clearly indicating the public access to the graveyard from Sidella Lane being retained.

Map 3: Location of Killally Graveyard and Disused Quarry



The disused quarry has an area of approximately 3 hectares. The extraction of rock has resulted in a significant level difference between the ground level of the quarry and the surrounding agricultural lands. This level difference is marked by the cliff face in the quarry. It is considered that there is an opportunity for the disused quarry to be integrated into the future layout of the Masterplan area. It could be utilised to create a habitat for local wildlife that would enhance the biodiversity of the area with opportunities also available for rehabilitation with the possibility for the construction of buildings at the bottom of the cliff face.

Whilst the lands in the vicinity of the disused quarry can be developed prior to a use for the quarry being finalised, any layout shall take cognisance of the quarry, with access to and passive surveillance of the quarry being ensured through the appropriate location of service roads and buildings.

Disused Quarry



Killally Graveyard



1.2.6 DkIT

DkIT is a leading higher education institute in the north Leinster and south Ulster region. It is a diverse and friendly campus with international students from across the globe choosing to study there. Courses include a blend of practical and academic learning and are designed with career opportunities in mind. The campus is equipped with excellent facilities and services and its location off the Dublin Road is in proximity to Dundalk town centre. This Masterplan recognises the importance of DkIT in Dundalk and the opportunities it provides for collaboration with existing businesses in the town. It will continue to support investment in facilities, infrastructure, and services in the campus.



1.2.7 MOVEMENT

The integration of walking and cycling infrastructure into the design and layout of the Masterplan lands will ensure that future employees will have the choice to avail of sustainable modes of transport when travelling to and from work. Provision shall also be made for bus stops. This infrastructure will assist in reducing the dependence of the car as the primary mode of transport.

There will continue to be a requirement for roads infrastructure to ensure the lands are accessible and connected to the existing road network. There are individual access points to the existing Business Parks and DkIT off the Inner Relief Road. This Masterplan will seek to achieve high levels of connectivity and permeability that would ensure employees and service vehicles can move efficiently throughout the Masterplan lands. The Masterplan also seeks to improve permeability between existing campuses including the IDA Science and Technology Park and Xerox Technology Park through the provision of pedestrian and cycle links and, where feasible, vehicular links.

The delivery of the link road between the Marlbog Road and the Inner Relief Road would have the dual benefit of providing a direct link for existing and future employees to the IDA Science and Technology Park from the Marlbog Road whilst also removing vehicular traffic from Chapel Road. This link road will be developer driven and will be delivered as part of the future build out of these lands. It is acknowledged that these lands may be built out incrementally or as one entire development and this is dependent on a range of factors including the future end user.



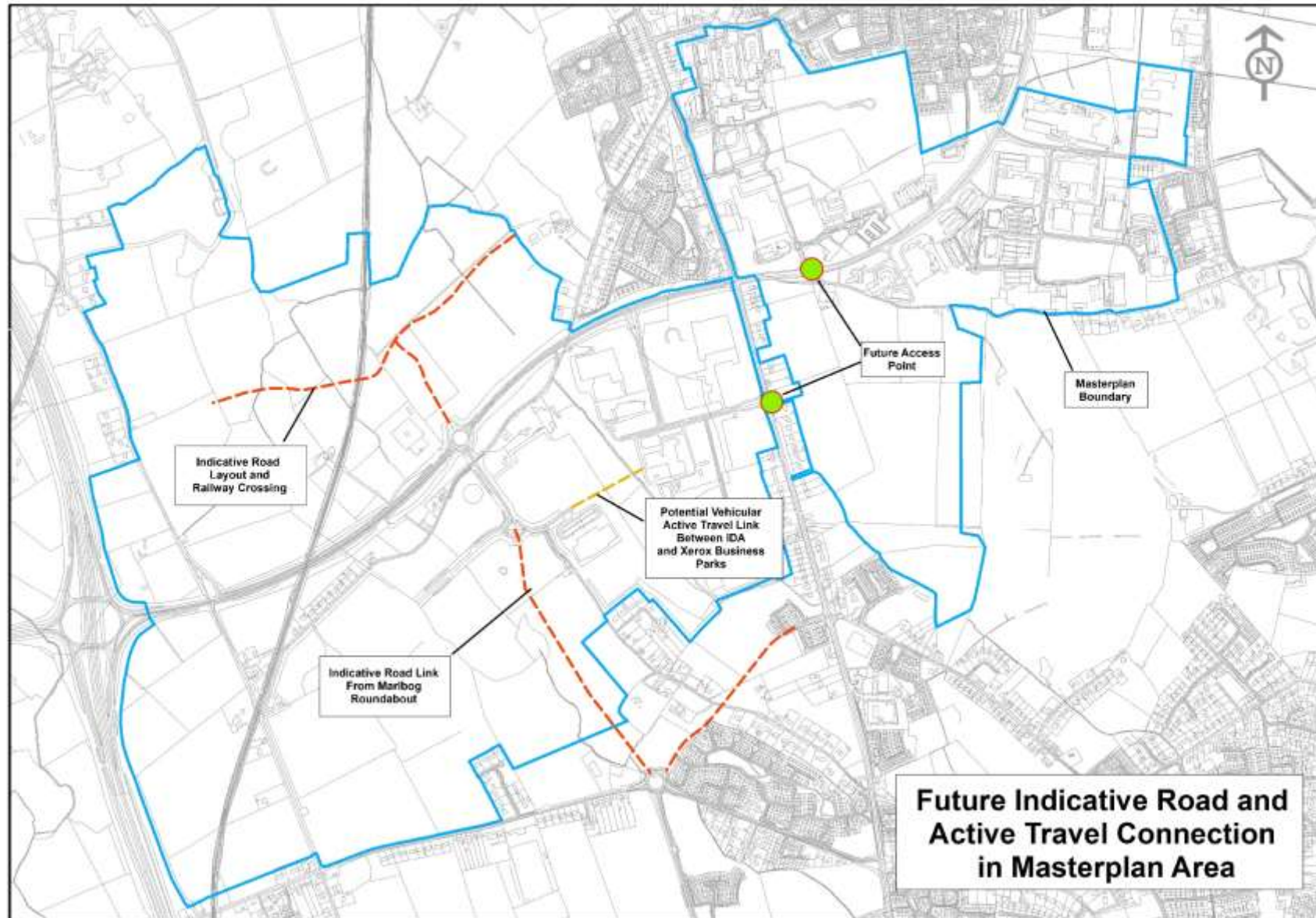
All planning applications on the lands east or west of the proposed link road between the Marlbog Road and the Inner Relief Road for economic/employment related development shall include proposals for delivery of part or all of the link road. The extent of the road required to be delivered will depend on the quantum of lands to be developed, the use and scale of the development and the number of persons to be employed. This will be considered in more detail at the pre-planning and/or planning application stage for any application on the lands.

The lands to the north of the Inner Relief Road were undeveloped at the time of writing. These lands shall be accessed via the existing roundabout on the Inner Relief Road. The Dublin-Belfast Railway line bisects these lands, which will restrict the level of connectivity and permeability. The design of the internal service roads in this part of the Masterplan area shall include provision for a bridge over the rail line.

It is envisioned that the lands west of the rail line will be accessed via a bridge crossing and service road linking in with the existing roundabout.

Consideration may be given for an alternative access to serve part of these lands prior to the bridge crossing being delivered if it can be demonstrated through the preparation of a Traffic Impact Assessment and an analysis of the surrounding road network and associated junctions that the existing road network could accommodate the additional traffic movements without resulting in the creation of a traffic hazard. The map below identifies the indicative location of the primary access points to the lands from the existing road network in addition to the connectivity within the lands.

Map 4: Indicative Road Access Points and Potential Active Travel Connections



1.2.8 SIGNAGE

Signage within the Masterplan area shall be kept to a minimum. Details of all signage and any associated lighting shall be agreed as part of a planning application. The number and location of signs on an individual building and within a business park shall avoid a situation that would result in clutter or the over-proliferation of signage.

1.2.9 LANDSCAPING AND BOUNDARY TREATMENT

Landscaping shall be carried out as part of any development with a detailed landscaping plan including a list of species and a timescale for planting to be included as part of an application.

Boundary treatments can assist in the integration of a development into the streetscape. The front roadside boundary shall be of a high quality. To provide continuity within a business park/industrial estate where possible the front roadside boundary shall be consistent with adjacent buildings. Palisade fencing along front boundaries will not be permitted.

1.2.10 ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The importance of a safe, secure, and reliable electricity network and quality telecommunications infrastructure in attracting economic investment is recognised. In this regard this Masterplan supports the provision of new or upgrade of existing electricity and telecommunications infrastructure that is required to facilitate the development of the area.

As part of the decarbonisation of the electricity network it is recognised that businesses may seek to install renewable technologies such as solar or wind to generate electricity. This Masterplan supports the construction and installation of such technologies subject to compliance with the relevant planning and environmental policy and criteria.

1.2.11 WATER AND WASTEWATER

Applicants are advised to liaise with Uisce Éireann via the Pre-Connection Enquiry service in order to determine the feasibility of a connection to the water supply or foul sewer network. Louth County Council continues to work closely with Uisce Éireann in ensuring there is sufficient available capacity in the network and treatment plants to facilitate future growth and investment.

1.2.12 SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DRAINAGE SYSTEMS (SuDS)

A sustainable approach to the control and management of surface water is fundamental in creating climate resilient neighbourhoods and communities. This is delivered through the design, construction, and management of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS).

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems are an integrated solution to rainwater management so that water is infiltrated to the drainage system more slowly in order to minimise the impacts of urban runoff on streams and rivers. It is recognised as a green infrastructure based approach to drainage and storm water management.

1.2.13 SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

There are numerous benefits in developing a sustainable approach to surface water management in the early stages of a development whereby local amenities, ecology, and biodiversity can be enhanced and surface water can be integrated into a network of green corridors.

Planning applications within the Masterplan area shall be accompanied by a Surface Water Management Plan which will set out proposals for the management of surface water within the development. To enable a consistent/universal approach to be taken to the management of runoff, consideration should also be given to surrounding lands in the Masterplan area and how runoff will be managed on those lands.

1.2.14 FLOODING

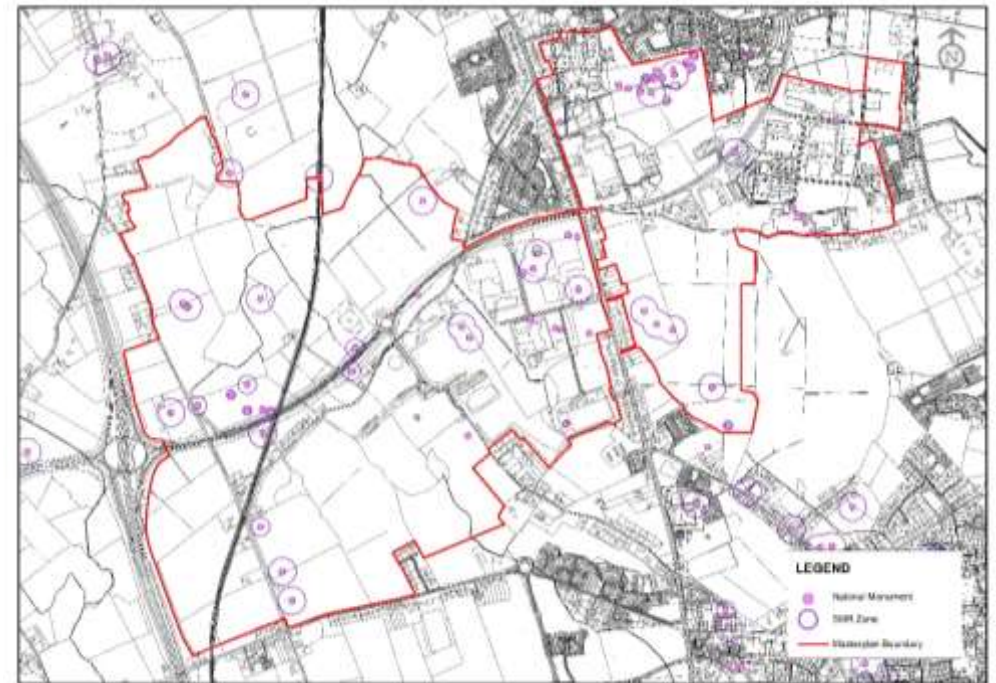
As part of the preparation of a planning application on the Masterplan lands applicants and developers are advised to consult the OPW Flood Information Portal floodinfo.ie or contact the Planning Authority to confirm the most up to date flood maps that are available for the area.

Where a risk of flooding may be an issue for a development, a Flood Risk Assessment appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and the risks arising will normally be required. The detailed Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment should quantify the risks and effects of any necessary mitigation, together with the measures needed or proposed to manage residual risks.

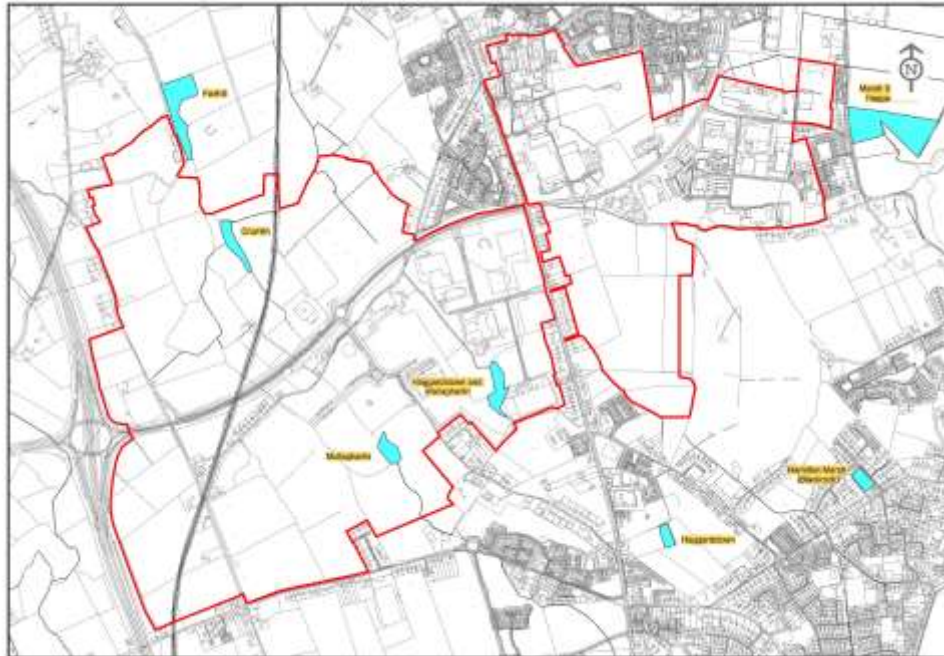
1.2.15 ARCHAEOLOGY

Within the Masterplan area there are a significant number of recorded monuments listed in the Record of Monuments and Places. These monuments are located on both developed and undeveloped lands. As part of any planning application an archaeological assessment shall be carried out. This assessment shall include a geophysical survey and test excavations and shall set out the archaeological and historical context of the lands with any recommendations and/or mitigation measures clearly set out. For the most up to date information on recorded monuments the Historic Environment Map Viewer on the National Monuments Service website (www.archaeology.ie) should be consulted.

Map 5: Locations of Recorded Monuments



Map 6: Wetlands in the Masterplan Area



1.2.15 WETLANDS

There are 3 wetlands located within the Masterplan Area as follows:

Site Code	Name	Conservation Value
WHI_LH202	Crumlin	E Rating: Local conservation value (low value)
WMI_LH173	Mullagharlin	E Rating: Local conservation value (low value)
WMI_LH287	Haggardstown and Mullagharlin	D Rating: Local conservation value (moderate value)

Any development in the vicinity of the wetlands shall have regard to the policy objectives in the Local Area Plan with regard to the protection and enhancement of wetlands.

1.2.16 DESIGN STATEMENT

A Design Statement shall be included with any application of scale in the Masterplan area. This Statement shall set out how the development complies with the relevant sections of this Masterplan, Development Plan policy and standards in addition to any Section 28 guidelines as applicable.



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