

## **Gormanston Written Statement**

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Gormanston</b>
<b>Position in Settlement Hierarchy</b>	<b>Village - Local centre for services and local enterprise development</b>
<b>Position in Retail Strategy</b>	<b>Level 5 retail centre</b>
<b>Population (2011) Census</b>	<b>500</b>
<b>Committed Housing Units (Not built)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Household Allocation (Core Strategy)</b>	<b>20 No. Units</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>Secondary School</b>
<b>Community Facilities</b>	<b>1 no. Church, Sports Ground, Community Hall</b>
<b>Natura 2000 sites</b>	<b>None within the development boundary</b>
<b>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)</b>	<b>No SFRA required. No lands within Flood zone A or B.</b>

### **Goal**

**To make a positive contribution to the development of Gormanston Village by the consolidation and strengthening of the defined and attractive Village Centre, recognising the importance of conserving and enhancing the quality of the Village's built and natural environment, while catering for the needs of all sections of the local community.**

### **01 Village Context**

Gormanston is situated within the Slane Electoral Area, to the north east of County Meath. The settlement is located close to the M1 Dublin Belfast motorway approximately 14 kilometres to the south of Drogheda and 5 kilometres to the northwest of Balbriggan. The village is also located proximate to the R132 Regional Road which is the former N1 National Primary Road and is also served by the Dublin Belfast rail service (Northern Commuter Line) with a station located to the east of the R132. Gormanston is located directly adjacent to the boundary with Fingal County with the River Delvin forming the county boundary. Whilst significant residential development has occurred in both Stamullen (1 kilometre to the west of Gormanston) and Balbriggan, the character of Gormanston has remained essentially rural. The approach roads to Gormanston are marked by the presence of mature trees and hedgerow which contribute to the visual qualities of the area.

Unlike most villages, Gormanston does not have a traditional nucleus which developed around a crossroads or a local school / church. Gormanston developed around Gormanston Castle which forms the western boundary of the Development Framework envelop. The pattern of development in Gormanston has remained similar to that at the turn of the 19th Century and has extended in a linear form along the approach roads to the village.

Gormanston has been identified as the location for the proposed development of a world class deepwater port, logistics centre and business park. This project is presently at feasibility stage and is outlined in considerable detail in Section 4.1.5 of Volume I of the County Development Plan. This area has been identified as a potential employment hub given its strategic location on the Dublin – Belfast M1 corridor. The future development of Gormanston over the life of this Development Plan will depend largely on the outcome of the feasibility study relating to the development of the proposed deepwater port, logistics centre and business park and the future of the Gormanston Army Camp located to the north of the village.

In order to facilitate the delivery of the vision for Gormanston, land use, movement and access, and natural and built heritage strategies have been identified. The land use strategy for Gormanston seeks to accommodate modest levels of population growth in accordance with the levels of growth provided for in Table 2.4 (Core Strategy) of the County Development Plan and to provide for distinctive quality driven residential development and essential local commercial and community facilities. In addition, the land use strategy seeks to ensure that adequate provision is made for appropriate commercial, community and educational facilities to serve existing and future residents.

## **02 Water and Wastewater Services**

Gormanston is currently served by the East Meath Regional Water Supply Scheme (RWSS). The River Boyne at Roughgrange is the main source for the East Meath RWSS. The water is then treated at Staleen waterworks and is distributed to the Gormanston area via Kiltrough Water Tower. The commissioning of the Dunshaughlin water treatment plant in April 2012 has reduced the demand on the East Meath Regional Water Supply by c. 500cu.m/day hence freeing up capacity to help supply this area. Notwithstanding the foregoing and progress made in relation to water conservation measures, there is limited available capacity in the scheme and ensuring security of supply to Gormanston is an ongoing challenge.

Waste water from Gormanston is generally treated by individual waste water treatment plants. Gormanston Military Camp, which is located outside of the village boundary, is serviced by its own treatment plant and has a sea outfall.

Any significant new development within this area should investigate the option of connecting into the Drogheda Wastewater Treatment Plant. There is an agreement in place between Louth County Council, Drogheda Borough Council and Meath County Council for the sharing of both water supply and wastewater treatment infrastructure. An upgrade of this plant provided a total capacity available to Meath County Council of 27,500 Population Equivalent (PE). There is currently an availability of 10,500 PE.

All development proposals shall be considered in the context of the available waste water and water supply capacity.

## **03 Land Use**

There is a limited extent of existing development in Gormanston. Residential development consists mainly in the form of detached dwellings on individual sites. The hall, secondary school and GAA grounds are in relative proximity while the existing public house is located to the north of the village core.

Gormanston has development primarily as a rural residential cluster around Gormanston Castle now Gormanston College. The area lacks a distinct village form and has instead developed in a dispersed and disjointed manner. Future land use within Gormanston will be on a small scale relevant to the existing size and character of the village and will be delivered on a phased basis adjacent to the existing developed areas of the village.

## **04 Residential Development**

There is a limited extent of existing development in Gormanston. Residential development consists mainly in the form of detached dwellings on individual sites. The village has retained the rural appearance and does not lend itself to suburban type development. It is understood that several ancient cob cottages still exist in the village under more modern surfaces. Pedestrian connectivity within the village is poor at present given the rural nature of the surrounding road network.

Section 2.3.1 of Volume 1 of the County Development Plan outlines the settlement hierarchy for the county. The Core Strategy of the County Development Plan (Table 2.4 refers) provides a housing allocation of 20 no. units to Gormanston over the 2013-2019 period. The Core

Strategy of this County Plan seeks to permit a moderate rate of residential expansion within the village over the Plan period than was perhaps envisaged in the past having regard to the expanse of lands identified with a residential land use zoning objective in the East Meath Local Area Plan 2005. Future development and growth will need to take account of the village's ability to grow in a sustainable manner without causing unacceptable impacts upon the surrounding environment. This Development Framework endeavours to facilitate well designed, sustainable new residential communities in order to promote the efficient use of land and of energy, to reduce pressure for one-off housing on rural lands, and to enhance the character of Gormanston and make provision for future community infrastructure for the village.

A parcel of land directly to the south of Beechville House is identified as Phase 1 in the Order of Priority as identified on the land use zoning objectives map. The Planning Authority is satisfied that sufficient lands have been identified within Phase 1 of the Order of Priority to accommodate the household allocation of 20 units. All other lands are identified as Residential Phase II (Post 2019) and are not intended for release within the life of this County Development Plan.

### **05 Commercial, Economic and Retail Uses**

Gormanston is identified as a Level 5 retail centre in the County Retail Hierarchy. At present, the only commercial facilities in the village consist of a public house (The Huntsman). A second public house located on the opposite side of the R132 (The Cock Tavern) is presently closed and is considered one of the oldest pubs in Ireland. There is no convenience shop in the village and the post office closed in the recent past. The Gormanston Wood Nursing Home is located to the east of the Development Framework envelop and adjoins the R132 Regional Road.

Development in this village has occurred in a dispersed form rather than creating a distinct and typical village form. There are no lands identified with a B1 "Village Centre" land use zoning objective having regard to the form of the village and to the current and projected population.

Gormanston Camp consists of approximately 226 acres. The camp is currently home to Gormanston Camp Company and B Company 27th Infantry Battalion. The Camp is used for air-ground and air-defence training. The Planning Authority has previously identified a large parcel of land (85 hectares) at the current Military Camp to the north of the village for employment uses. The rationale behind this land use zoning objective applying to these lands previously related to a Government decision on July 1st 2003 that lands at Gormanston would be amongst state lands released for inclusion in the Sustaining Progress Affordable Housing Initiative. It was agreed with the Department of Environment to place these lands which were designated with an employment land use zoning objective in the East Meath Local Area Plan 2005 on the open market with the perspective purchaser having to provide an agreed quantum of housing on appropriately zoned lands elsewhere in the Greater Dublin Area. The designation of these lands as part of the Affordable Housing Initiative Scheme has since been removed by the Government.

As stated in Volume I of the County Development Plan, the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area recognise the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor as it passes through the region in addition to the identified Primary and Secondary Economic Growth Towns. The "Mid East Regional Authority Economic Development Strategy" (December 2009) which is appended to the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area recognises the imbalance in the Mid-East Region between existing residential development and the limited level of economic development being provided. The Strategy advocates the designation of Stamullen as a Secondary Economic Hub, predicated upon the development of the deepwater port and would further support the clustering of a wide range of economic activities leveraging on the existing economic base. This in turn supports the conclusions drawn by Indecon International Economic Consultants who prepared an "Economic Development

Strategy for the M1 Economic Corridor” for the period 2010 – 2022 on behalf of Meath, Fingal & Louth Local Authorities. The resultant strategy also identified the Stamullen / Gormanston area as being suitable for creating an employment hub serving the wider East Meath area.

There is a proposal to develop a world class deepwater port, logistics centre and business park at Gormanston, County Meath. The development of the deepwater port would transform the economic and employment prospects of the East Meath – North Fingal area and establish a new economic hub on the Dublin – Belfast M1 Corridor. The current status of the project is that pre-feasibility and environmental / habitat assessment has been carried out. Meath County Council is committed to the development of a deep water port and associated landside activities in East Meath.

In the event that the deep water port proceeds at a location close to Gormanston, the scale of lands identified for employment generating uses in this Development Framework may need to be reconsidered during the life of this Development Plan. It is therefore considered appropriate to identify the lands previously identified with an employment land use zoning objective as “White Lands” until there is greater certainty with regard to the proposed deepwater port at Gormanston. This land use zoning objective seeks “to protect strategic lands from inappropriate forms of development which would impede the orderly expansion of a strategic urban centre”. It is not generally envisaged that development proposals will be brought forward during the life of this Development Plan for these lands. They are identified as strategic lands and their designation is to allow for a long term, integrated approach to be taken to the expansion of an urban area.

## **06 Community Facilities & Open Spaces**

Current community facilities in Gormanston consist of the church, community hall, GAA grounds and secondary school. Meath County Council will support the expansion of these facilities as necessary to serve the existing and additional population in the area.

The Franciscan College Gormanston is a Roman Catholic school operated and managed by the Irish province of the Order of Friars Minor. The student body numbers are 350 approximately and include students from abroad. The College offers boarding and day facilities. Boarding at Gormanston is a mixture of five day and seven day boarding options for boys. Girls are admitted and welcome to the school as day students. Gormanston is a private fee-paying College.

The Aras Preston Sports Complex within the school is available for rent outside of school hours (sports complex, football pitches and swimming pool). This is a valuable community facility used extensively by residents in Gormanston, Stamullen, Julianstown and the north Fingal area. Additional land has been identified with an appropriate land use zoning objective around Gormanston College to allow for the extension of the school in the future.

It will be an objective of this Development Framework to identify and facilitate the provision of open spaces within Gormanston as part of any new development. It is an objective to develop a linear park along the Delvin River in conjunction with the development of the residential lands to the north noting that said lands are identified as Phase II in the Order of Priority.

## 07 Urban Design

A high standard of building design will be required for all types of development in Gormanston. The design approach should be representative of Gormanston as a rural village with cues for building form taken from the traditional and vernacular built heritage in the area. New building should respond to the individual site context and take due cognisance of adjoining development. Within residential areas, standard suburban house designs should be avoided and an individual approach should be taken to house design.

Within the commercial area to the north of the village, buildings should be designed to be adaptable to multiple uses in the interests of sustainability.

This Development Framework seeks to achieve a balance between facilitating further sustainable growth and development within Gormanston while ensuring that the existing rural character of the village is maintained and enhanced.

## 08 Heritage

There are numerous items in Gormanston included on the Record of Protected Structures attached to the County Development Plan and it is an objective to preserve the character and setting of these buildings.

Gormanston Castle was, from the 14<sup>th</sup> century to the 1950s, the seat of the Preston family, who managed to hold onto their estate lands through the centuries despite being staunch Catholics. Gormanston Castle was built in 1786, on the site of a castle erected in 1372. The head of the family is known as Viscount Gormanston, premier Viscount of Ireland. The current holder of the title is Jenico Preston, 17<sup>th</sup> Viscount Gormanston who resides in London. The family sold the castle in the 1950s, when it was acquired by the Franciscan Order of Friars who then established a boarding school for boys in the grounds, known as Gormanston College.

The group of passage graves on either side of the mouth of River Delvin known as the Bremore/Gormanston group is believed by most experts on the passage grave culture in Ireland to mark the arrival of that culture from the Iberian Peninsula and to be the precursor of later developments such as the Newgrange cluster. Legend also associates the site with the first landings of both St Patrick and Oliver Cromwell. The Gormanston area is outstandingly rich in Neolithic artefacts and indeed those of all later periods.

During construction of a gas pipeline between the UK and Ireland, a 7 metre long prehistoric dugout was found just offshore at Gormanston strand. Unlike other ancient Irish boats the Gormanston boat seems to have been of outrigger construction.

There are also a number of archaeological monuments in the village environs which include a church within the Gormanston College campus (SMRS Ref: ME028 019) and a Habitation Site to the east of the village (SMRS Ref: ME028 051). It is an objective of this Development Framework to preserve and protect these features.

Cromwell's Avenue which extends from the main gates to Gormanston College in an easterly direction appears to have been the approach route to the original castle. It is an objective of this Development Framework to protect and maintain the view from Gormanston Castle along this route. Any development within this area will have to have regard to the location and setting of Cromwell's Avenue within its design noting that the subject lands are included as Phase II lands in the Order of Priority.

There are no Candidate Special Conservation Areas (c.SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA) or proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA) within the development boundary of Gormanston. However, the River Nanny Estuary & Shore SPA is located to the north east of the development boundary.

Development within the village should have regard to existing biodiversity within the significant stretches of hedgerow present. New site development plans should include for the preservation of natural features on the site, particularly trees and hedgerow, in the interests of both visual amenity and biodiversity.

This Development Framework seeks to protect and enhance the existing built and natural heritage of the village and will seek to ensure that all Government Guidelines are adhered to when considering new forms of development.

## **09 Movement & Access**

Gormanston consists of a linear development along the Village Road. It is connected to Gormanston via the Gormanston Road which traverses across the M1 Motorway close to Junction 7 which serves both settlements. The Village Road joins the R132 Regional Road at the Huntsman Inn and a public bus stop is located on either side of the R132 at this location. The village is connected to the Gormanston Army Camp via Camp Lane and is also connected to the R132 via Martins Road and the Devlin Road to the south. The Devlin Road is part of a staggered junction arrangement with the R132 with the other arm of this junction "Station Road" serving the train station.

All of the roads within the village are rural, do not have footpaths or public lighting, are rural in nature and are not heavily trafficked. However the R132 which travels adjacent to the Gormanston Development Framework envelop and links Balbriggan with Drogheda carries significant levels of traffic and poses a risk for pedestrians accessing the bus stop on the R132 and train station to the east of the village.

The transport vision for Gormanston is to ensure that, where necessary, the use of private vehicles is facilitated in an efficient and equitable manner whilst encouraging the use of more sustainable modes of transport including pedestrian and cycle movement.

In order to achieve this vision it will be necessary to provide for the improvement in pedestrian and cycle facilities and traffic movement at appropriate locations within the village. Gormanston has been provided with pedestrian and cycle links to Stamullen which has been welcomed.

Gormanston is currently served by the 101 bus service by Bus Éireann. This service operates from Talbot Street in Dublin city centre to the Bus Station in Drogheda, via Swords, Balbriggan and Julianstown. The 100 and 100X service which include access to Dublin Airport from Drogheda also serve Gormanston. The village is also served by the Gormanston Train Station to the east of the village. The station is served by the Dublin – Belfast commuter service with Pearse Station in Dublin the capital hub. The station car park has been renovated in the recent past and provides space for 137 no. cars. However, the introduction of paid parking in this station has resulted in cars parking along Station Road causing inconvenience for residents and those seeking to access the beach at Gormanston.

## Strategic Policies

<b>SP 1</b>	To promote the development of Gormanston as a compact settlement with a pedestrian friendly environment, a legible and coherent physical form, and a variety of land uses and amenities necessary to sustain the local community.
<b>SP 2</b>	To protect the character of the village through the provision of appropriate infill development which has regard to the scale, character and amenities of the village.
<b>SP 3</b>	<p>To operate an Order of Priority for the release of residential lands in compliance with the requirements of CS OBJ 6 of the County Development Plan as follows:</p> <p>i) The lands identified with an A2 "New Residential" land use zoning objective corresponds with the requirements of Table 2.4 Housing Allocation &amp; Zoned Land Requirements in Volume I of this County Development Plan and are available for residential development within the life of this Development Plan.</p> <p>ii) The lands identified with an A2 "New Residential" land use zoning objective but qualified as "<i>Residential Phase II (Post 2019)</i>" are not available for residential development within the life of this Development Plan.</p>

## Policies

### Water and Wastewater Services

<b>WWS POL</b>	To endeavour to maintain and provide adequate potable water and wastewater treatment infrastructure that is sufficient to meet the development needs of the village within this Plan period. However, the Council acknowledges that there are significant constraints on the capacity of the existing infrastructure and may consider restricting development in circumstances where such infrastructure is inadequate.
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### Flood Risk

<b>FR POL 1</b>	To manage flood risk and development in Gormanston in line with policies WS 29 – WS 36 inclusive in Volume I of this County Development Plan.
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<b>FR POL 2</b>	Where existing development in the village envelop is at potential risk of flooding (G1 " <i>Community Infrastructure</i> " land use zoning objectives refer) as identified on the land use zoning objectives map, any significant extensions / change of use / reconstruction shall be subject to an appropriately detailed Flood Risk Assessment in line with the policies (WS POL 29 - 36) contained in Volume I of the County Development Plan.
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### Land Use

<b>LU POL</b>	To encourage the development of commercial development as part of an integrated development on the lands identified with an A2 "New Residential" (Phase I) land use zoning objective on the land use zoning objective map.
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## Community Facilities and Open Spaces

**CF POL** To protect the sites of existing facilities and support their further development and expansion.

## Urban Design

**UD POL** To facilitate the creation of an urban environment of quality in a visual sense with good urban design with appropriate attention to orientation and landscaping.

## Movement and Access

**MA POL** To require the provision of good public lighting standards on all routes and extension of footpaths and public lighting to the development boundaries on public roads in association with further development.

## Objectives

### Flood Risk

**FR OBJ** To seek to implement the recommendations of the Fingal East Meath Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (FEMFRAMS) as applicable to the River Delvin.

### Heritage

**HER OBJ 1** Trees, woodlands and hedgerows to be preserved:

1. Trees in the grounds of Gormanston College.
2. Trees along the area known as Cromwell's Avenue.
3. Trees and woodland area to the north of the Delvin River.

**HER OBJ 2** Views to be preserved:

1. Views from Cromwell's Avenue west towards Gormanston Castle.
2. Views from Gormanston Castle east along Cromwell's Avenue towards the sea.

**HER OBJ 3** To have regard to the bio-diversity value of existing trees and hedgerows in areas that are liable to be developed.

### Movement and Access

**MA OBJ 1** To continue to improve linkages between Stamullen and Gormanston.

**MA OBJ 2** To provide and/or upgrade footpaths within the development boundary. Any footpaths connecting Gormanston to the coast shall be subject to Appropriate Assessment.

**MA OBJ 3** To seek to provide public access to land which has been identified with an F1 "Open Space" land use zoning objective.