

3. Baltinglass Town Plan

3.1 Context

Baltinglass is located on the western fringes of the Wicklow Mountains, in west Co. Wicklow, near the Kildare and Carlow borders. The town is located in the Wicklow rural hinterland, approximately 30km south of Blessington, on the N81 Dublin-Tullow Road. It is also traversed by the R747, from Arklow to Kildare. The town is located on the River Slaney, a protected Natura 2000 site and is located just west of the Baltinglass Hills, a protected archaeological landscape.

Historically the settlement developed around the market square, with development spreading out to the east and west along the R747, forming the existing town centre. The town centre is focussed mainly east of the River Slaney, along Main Street and ending at Market and Weavers Square. West of the river, the town centre is focused around the N81/R747 crossroads, along Edward Street, Mill Street and Belan Street. The majority of residential estates and community and employment developments have been developed along the R747, with residential development west of the town mainly in the form of ribbon development along the main road network. A particularly important landmark is Quinn's Mart Site on Mill Street to the north of the town.

The town has grown considerably in recent years to a 2011 population of 1,786 people. Although employment can be sourced locally from activities pertaining to farming, industry and the services sector, a considerable proportion of people commute to Dublin for employment. The town serves the local town and hinterland population, providing mainly local convenience based shopping and service opportunities. Local community and recreation facilities are provided in the form of two primary schools, a post-primary school, a hospital, GAA and soccer playing fields, an adult learning centre, ecclesiastical facilities, an Outdoor Activity Centre, a public park along the River Slaney and Stratford Lodge Golf Club.

The town contains a significant amount of natural, archaeological and built heritage; including the archaeological sites of the Baltinglass Hills, Baltinglass Abbey and St.Mary's Church, the River Slaney Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and buildings of architectural and historical merit, many of which are located in the town centre. The town's rich and historic heritage makes a significant contribution to its distinct character.

Despite the town's strengths, the town's development is somewhat constrained by its relatively isolated location within the Greater Dublin Area hinterland, a shortfall of retail services and employment opportunities, a large number of derelict buildings and under-utilised sites (particularly around the outskirts of the town centre along the N81 Rathvilly road), traffic congestion along the Main Street and the N81/R747 intersection and the potential for flooding arising from the presence of the River Slaney.

3.2 Overall Vision and Development Strategy

A key aim of a Town Plan is to set out the vision and development strategy for the future development of a settlement and from this vision, all policies and objectives can be developed and implemented with the overall aim of achieving this vision. The vision and development strategy must be consistent with the 'Core Strategy' of this County Development Plan and reflect the characteristics, strengths and weaknesses of Baltinglass.

The vision for Baltinglass is:

- To ensure a high quality living environment for existing and future residents.
- To provide a framework for the growth of the town, in order to provide housing for current and future generations, to revitalise the economy of the town and to allow improvements of social and community facilities.
- Sustain a revitalised core town centre with commercial, residential and community developments being consolidated and promoted within this area.
- Create increased connectivity between a revitalised town core and the existing and proposed residential areas within the town.
- Facilitate and encourage the integration of the River Slaney as a key feature in the redevelopment of the town centre, maximising its potential as a local amenity.
- Promote and foster economic development and linkages to surrounding larger settlements within and outside the County.
- Develop the tourism potential of the area as a visitor / tourist destination in itself and in its role as a 'gateway' linking the west of the County to the Wicklow Mountains
- Protect the built and natural heritage of the area.

In recognition of the historical pattern of development, the profile of the settlement, the demands of higher order strategies and the vision for the town set out above, the development strategy is as follows:

- To reinforce and improve the visual appearance of the central area of the town and encourage development that will enhance the town's vitality and vibrancy.
- To identify key sites suitable for development in the town centre and set out design criteria capable of meeting the overall vision for the town core area.
- To plan for and encourage the provision of high quality housing, concentrated principally around Baltinglass town centre and lands within 1km of the town centre.
- To improve linkages between Baltinglass core town centre/existing community infrastructure and lands earmarked for future development west of the N81 at Bawnoge and in particular, to designate lands for new housing in this area, subject to substantial improvements to access routes, for vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists.
- To plan for and encourage the development of new employment opportunities, in the form of both new mixed use developments at the Mart Site and the development of employment lands to the east of the N81 at Bawnoge and along the R747 in the form of office / light industrial / warehousing development.
- To identify and address deficits in social, community and recreational services; to require developers to provide such facilities in tandem with new housing development where appropriate and to require the payment of development levies for the provision of such facilities by the local authority.
- To ensure that only appropriate land uses are provided on lands identified as being at risk of flooding.
- To create functional public spaces and pedestrian routes linked to new development that maximise the natural features of the area.
- To ensure the protection and enhancement of natural habitats, cultural heritage, ecological resources and biodiversity and in particular, to safeguard the integrity of the River Slaney SAC.

3.3 Residential Development

This plan provides for sufficient zoned land and residential development objectives in order to achieve the population and housing objectives set out in the 'Core Strategy' of this County Development Plan and as detailed in Part 1 of this plan 'Introduction to Level 5 Town Plans'.

Table 3.1 below sets out the land zoned for residential development in this plan, while Table 3.2 sets out details of lands to be included within the 'Strategic Land Bank'.

Table 3.1 Residential zoning provisions

| Location/Description | Zoning | Potential No. of Units |
|---|--------|------------------------|
| Lands to the north of Belan Street | R20 | 37 |
| Lands north west of the Parkmore estate (AA2) | R20 | 26 |
| Lands east of the N81 (SLO1) | R10 | 15 |
| Lands adjoining Whitehall Park | R20 | 45 |
| Land at Bawnoge (SLO2) | R20 | 169 |
| Action Area AA3 at Bawnoge | R20 | 129 |
| Town Centre/Mart Site/Infill Lands | RE/TC | 100 |
| Total | | 521 |

Table 3.2 Strategic Land Bank

| Location/Description | Zoning | Potential no. of Units |
|-------------------------------|--------|------------------------|
| Lands south of Allendale | SLB | 20 |
| Lands at Baltinglass West | SLB | 32 |
| Lands at within Action Area 3 | SLB | 84 |
| Total | | 136 |

3.4 Economic Development and Employment

As set out in the Economic Development and Employment Table of the 'Introduction to Level 5 Town Plans' it is an objective of the County Development Plan to increase the jobs ratio in Baltinglass by 50% in Baltinglass by 2028. The strategy of this plan is to take advantage of the existing economic assets in order to stimulate employment within the area. The key assets the plan area has to offer are:

- a large hinterland population offering a market for goods and services and a wide variety of skills;
- an attractive and accessible town centre, with numerous properties suitable for retail and commercial uses;
- proximity to the N81 and linkages to the N9/M9 and the primary dynamic cluster¹ of Naas/Newbridge/Kilcullen;
- the established agriculture sector and agri business; and
- the availability of Local Authority lands earmarked for employment and enterprise.

Given the town's location, situated in close proximity to the primary dynamic cluster of Naas/Kilcullen and Newbridge in Co. Kildare it is unlikely that the town can act as an attractor for a large scale employer to locate

¹ The Regional Planning Guidelines designate Naas/Kilcullen and Newbridge in Co. Kildare as a primary dynamic cluster. The RPGs state that clusters should be developed in a mutually dependent way so that the amenities and economies of the whole are greater than the sum of the parts.

over the lifetime of the plan. Therefore it is considered likely that most new employment creation will be generated by smaller and medium sized local enterprises / service providers. Opportunities particularly exist to develop 'product based'² intensive industries given the town's proximity to the N81 national secondary Route and the N9/M9 in Co. Kildare, while the town's proximity to the above dynamic cluster offers further opportunities to foster employment linkages and spin off industries from this large employment centre.

With respect to tourism, the proximity of Baltinglass to the western ends of the Wicklow Gap and Glen of Imaal roads, Kilcullen – Naas - Newbridge and the M9 to the west mean that Baltinglass could provide a tourism 'gateway' role between the Wicklow Mountains and visitors coming from / going to South Kildare / the south west of Ireland.

The plan will therefore make provision for lands to be reserved which will be capable of accommodating both local service employment in the form of light industry / small start up units and heavier industry types / a large stand alone employment development alongside the provision of a number of specific employment / tourism objectives aimed at maximising the potential of this industry in Baltinglass. Section 5 to follow addresses the development strategy for the town centre and retail.

Economic Development and Employment Objectives

- BALT1** To facilitate and support the growth of the town centre of Baltinglass in accordance with the provisions set out in Section 5 of this plan and to encourage the development of new retail / retail services and business support services (such as solicitors, accountants, architects etc) within the TC zone.
- BALT2** To facilitate and support the development of the tourism industry in Baltinglass and maximise the town's location as a gateway between the tourism assets within Co. Wicklow and the west, including Co. Kildare.
- BALT3** To promote the development of employment lands within Baltinglass in accordance with the provisions of Action Area 3 as set out in Section 9 of this plan.
- BALT4** To improve, as funding allows, the principal access routes and junctions linking Baltinglass town centre to surrounding tourist attractions and strategic transport corridors.
- BALT5** To support and facilitate in co-operation with relevant bodies and landowners, the provision of tourism amenity routes around the town.

² The development of this type of industry by reason of the product based nature of the traded commodity, is dependent on ease of access to the main transportation networks

3.5 Town Centre and Retail

The commercial core of Baltinglass is focused along the N81 south of the mart site as far as Edward Street and to the east of the River Slaney extending along the main street and surrounding Weavers Square. The pattern of development within the town core follows the more traditional main street format with Weavers square and the buildings within this area offering significant potential for increased commercial and community functions.

The existing retailing services within the town currently fall below what is envisaged by the County Plan for an area of Baltinglass' size with a number of vacant units within the identified town core and a number of buildings being used for purposes other than retail. The plan must therefore but in place a framework that allow this shortfall to be addressed and be capable of facilitating the future retailing needs of the projected population.

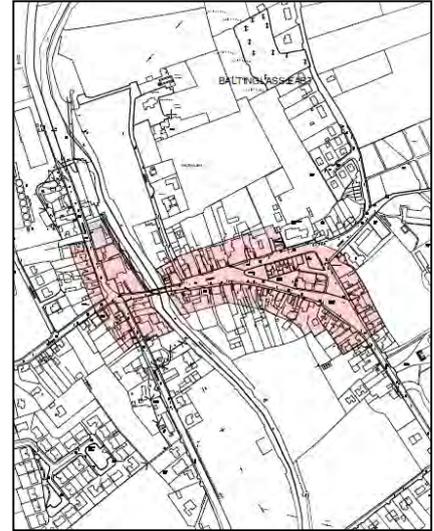


Figure 3.1 Baltinglass Town Centre

In accordance with the above this plan identifies two key opportunity sites within the core area, which alongside the objectives for the town centre below (and as set out in the 'Introduction to Level 5 Town Plans' and in Volume 1 of this County Development Plan), shall facilitate the overall strategy for the development of the town centre of Baltinglass.

Opportunity Sites

OP1 The Fire Station

This site measures c. 0.12ha located within a prime town centre location and is under-utilised in terms of development potential. The site is suitable for a landmark building of exceptional architectural quality, for a mixed use commercial, office, residential or community development. Any development would be required to provide pedestrian linkages through Market Square and a community element in accordance with the requirements of the Community, Cultural and Social Development Section of the Council. The design of this corner site should complement and address all street frontages and complement opportunity site No. 2 detailed below and the provisions of the Baltinglass Town Centre Refurbishment Scheme 2015.

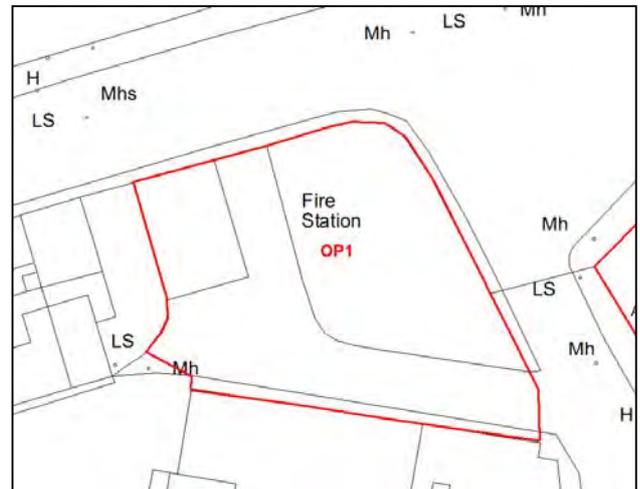


Figure 3.2 OP1

Objectives

- To provide for a mix of uses capable of accommodating retail/commercial/residential /community development.
- The development of all frontages of this site should provide for an active street frontage.
- The overall development proposal for the site shall include a detailed landscaping plan including both hard and soft landscaping.

OP 2 Lands to the east of OP1

This site measures 0.09ha and is situated off Weaver’s Square comprising a currently derelict site. The development of this area should complement the design and layout of opportunity site No. 1 located to the immediate west, while also respecting the character of the existing adjoining developments. The development of this site shall provide for an active street frontage onto Weaver’s Square/Chapel Hill.

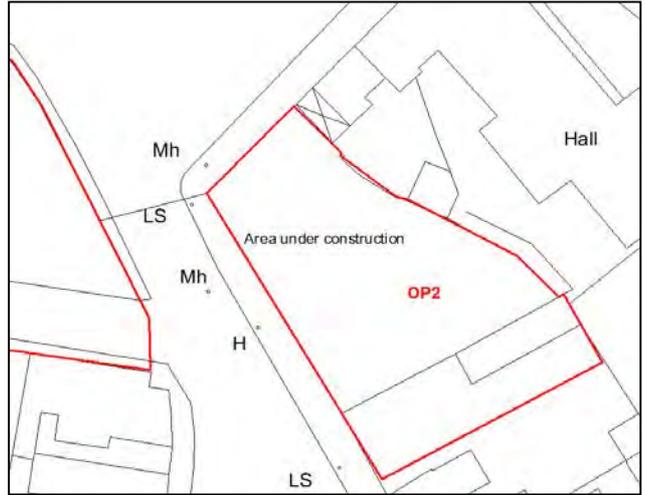


Figure 3.3 OP2

Objectives

- To provide for a mixed use development including commercial/retail units at ground level with residential commercial/units above.
- The subject lands shall be re-developed in a manner that addresses the existing character of this area while also complementing the design and layout of opportunity site No. 1.
- The development of these lands shall complement the provisions of the Baltinglass Town Centre Refurbishment Plan 2015.

3.6 Social and Community Infrastructure

The town of Baltinglass is currently serviced by a reasonable amount of community facilities, including a GAA pitch, a soccer pitch, a public park and children’s playing facilities (Cois Slaine), a library, a badminton hall and a community hall (Fatima Hall). In order to meets the needs of the existing and future residents of Baltinglass and its hinterland, there is a need to enhance community facilities in the town.

Within the plan area, the following lands are zoned for new social and community infrastructure:

Table 3.3 Provision of new Community and Recreation Infrastructure

| Use Group | Specific use | Zoning | Location | Area (ha) |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------|--|-----------|
| Education/Community | Primary Education | CE | Lands to the rear of Scoil Naomh Íosaf | 2 |
| | Community Use | CE | Lands to the east of the existing GAA grounds | 7 |
| Open space | Active Open Space | AOS | Lands north of the existing community park at Parkmore | 2.75 |

3.7 Service Infrastructure

To ensure that Baltinglass can fulfil its role within the Wicklow Core Strategy, the adequate provision of services infrastructure is essential in order for the town to grow.

Water Services

Wastewater: Baltinglass is served by the wastewater treatment plant at Lathaleere which discharges to the River Slaney. This waste water treatment system has a design capacity of 3,000pe (population equivalent). Extra capacity in the current plant is limited with works required to increase the capacity to cater for the projected future population of the area.

Water Supply: Baltinglass is served by 2 wells (Tinornan and Parkmore) and springs (Clogh Lower springs). Spare capacity regarding water supply is very limited and upgrades are required. Water supply is likely to be sufficient for the short to medium term.

Transportation and Movement

Public transport: Public transport to / from Baltinglass is provided by Bus Eireann, which provide a daily service connecting Dublin to Bunclody via Baltinglass.

Walking and cycling: While the majority of the main routes in the town have footpaths, some are in need of enhancement to width and overall quality. A number of peripheral locations do not have complete footpath routes to the town centre. The vast majority of the town's roads are dedicated to the needs of motorists, in terms of width dedicated to the road carriageway and car parking. Therefore there is scope to carry out footpath widening and to provide cycleways in some locations. Alongside these measures increased connectivity between the east and west of the town over the River Slaney is required.

Vehicular movement: The main street in Baltinglass is generally of good quality and reasonably wide, with no bottlenecks; however the R747/N81 junction has been identified as an area in need of improvement in particular the removal of hazardous pedestrian movements on this route. This plan includes an objective for a new road south of the plan area traversing Action Area 3 which could provide for an alternative route for traffic circulation in and out of the town from south of the town along the R747 to the N81 national secondary route.

Service Infrastructure Objectives (see Map 4)

BALT6 To provide for a new road linking the R747 and the N81 south of the town

BALT7 To provide for a new pedestrian linkages connecting the east and west of the town from the N81 south of Edward Street through SLO 1 and Action Area 2 onto the R747.

BALT8 To support and facilitate the refurbishment of the town centre area in accordance with the provisions of the 'Baltinglass Town Centre Refurbishment Plan' with the overall aim of improving / providing new footpaths, cycleways and traffic calming on existing roads where required and to require the provision of new link roads, footpaths and cycleways as specified in this plan in 'Action Areas' and 'Specific Local Objective' areas.

3.8 Built and Natural Heritage

There are 6 buildings located within the core of Baltinglass recorded for heritage value and listed on the Record of Protected Structures, with a further 7 RPS entries located outside the town core but within the plan area. Within and surrounding the plan area there are a number of recorded monuments including the recorded monuments at Baltinglass Hills which is also listed as a zone of archaeological potential.

In terms of natural heritage, the key feature in the settlement is the River Slaney, which is an EU protected salmonid river (SAC) separating the east and west of the town flowing in a north south direction towards Carlow.

The landscape around the north and east of Baltinglass is identified as an 'Area of High Amenity', the key feature being the Baltinglass Hills and their associated visual and cultural significance while the lands to the south and west are designated 'Rolling Lowlands' due to the presence of more low lying farmlands in this area. There is one listed view within the plan area south of Baltinglass along the R747 'view of Rathnagree and Rathcoran Hillforts' and one listed prospect north of the town 'Prospect of Slaney River valley, Baltinglass Abbey, Rathnagree and Rathcoran Hillforts'.

In formulating additional policies for the protection of natural heritage in the Baltinglass plan area, the Council will be required to give consideration to the potential impacts of development on all such sites, and the plan is accompanied by the required environmental assessments as separate documents.

The protection and enhancement of heritage assets through the plan will help to safeguard the local character and distinctiveness of Baltinglass and its surroundings, providing local economic, social and environmental benefits.

Heritage Objectives

BALT9 In the interests of the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in Baltinglass, it is an objective of this plan to:

- protect trees, hedgerows and watercourses and other features of the natural landscape - development that requires the felling of mature trees of conservation and/or amenity value, even though they may not be listed in the Development Plan, will generally be discouraged; and
- require the planting of indigenous plant and tree species in new developments and along new vehicular and pedestrian routes.

3.9 Action Area Plans and Specific Local Objectives

Action Area 1

This Action Area is situated at the Mart Site in Baltinglass comprising of 5.65ha of land, zoned for mixed use development providing for residential/office/retail/ civic and community development in accordance with the following objectives:

- Any development shall respect and complement the character and setting of the distinct heritage of the site. Any proposal shall be particularly responsive to the industrial heritage of the site. Elements of such shall be incorporated in design, landscaping and civic features.
- In order to ensure that the role of the Town Centre is not compromised, the only form of retail use permitted shall be retail warehousing, shops (major foodstore only), cash and carry, discount foodstore.
- The residential element of the development shall comprise a maximum of 40% of total floor area over the entire site (up to a maximum of 75 units). Residential development shall be located to the north of the site and comprise a key gateway/landmark building of exceptional architectural quality. Only 50% of the proposed residential element may be developed prior to the delivery of the community facilities required.
- The community element of this action area shall measure a minimum of 0.5ha the use of which shall be agreed with the Community, Cultural and Social Development Section of the Council.

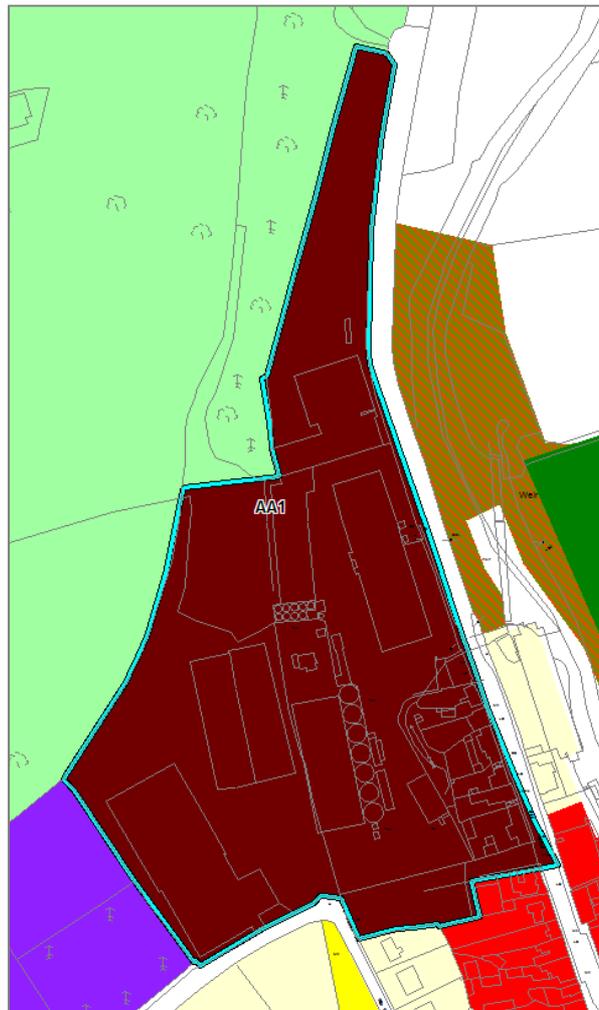


Figure 3.4 Action Area 1

Action Area 2

This Action Area is located on lands west of the existing fuel station at Parkmore extending west as far as the River Slaney as shown in Figure 2 (measuring c. 4.9ha). The subject lands shall comprise of a Town Centre 'extension', including commercial, residential and open spaces uses. The extreme western section of the lands comprise lands located within the 'conservation zone' following the boundary of the River Slaney Natura 2000 site with further lands identified as open space being located within the 1:1000 flood line.

This action area shall be delivered as a mixed use town centre extension/residential and open space zone in accordance with the following criteria:

- The development of the lands within and adjoining the existing town centre zoning shall provide for pedestrian connectivity between the existing town centre and the residential/open space lands within the action area.
- The development of the town centre extension and residential lands shall be designed and laid out in a manner that facilitates accessibility to and provides passive supervision of the designated open space area.
- The design and layout of development in the Action Area shall facilitate the development of a pedestrian route from the R747 to the N81 (through SLO1) via a new pedestrian bridge over the River Slaney; land shall be reserved for any such future bridge.

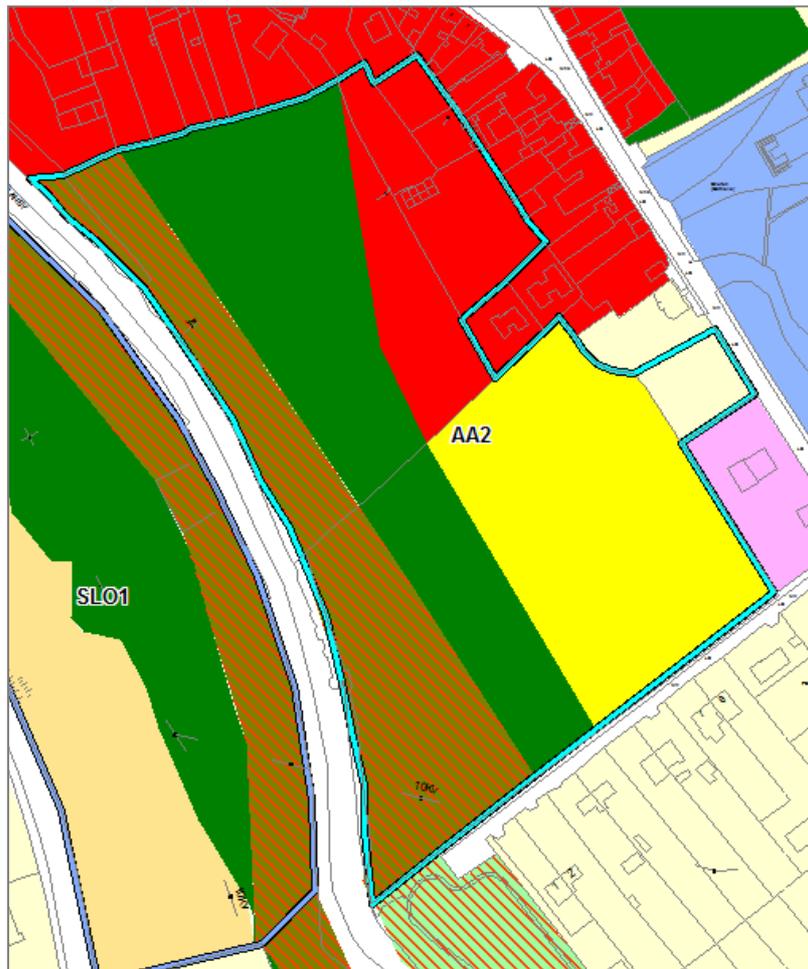


Figure 3.5 Action Area 2

Action Area 3

This Action Area is located on lands west of the River Slaney, accessed off the N81 national secondary route. The subject lands measure c. 28.12ha and shall be developed for residential/employment and open space purposes in accordance with the following objectives:

- The residential element of the action area shall be designed and laid out in a manner which addresses the N81 national secondary route, providing for an open space green area adjoining the western boundary.
- The internal road network serving this Action Area shall be designed in such a way as to form part of the future R747 – N81 link road and facilitate access to the designated Strategic Land Bank 'SLB' lands and the employment lands. The design/layout and width of this road shall be agreed with the Transportation and Roads section of Wicklow County Council.
- The development of the action area shall ensure adequate protection and enhancement of the open space and conservation area adjoining the River Slaney.

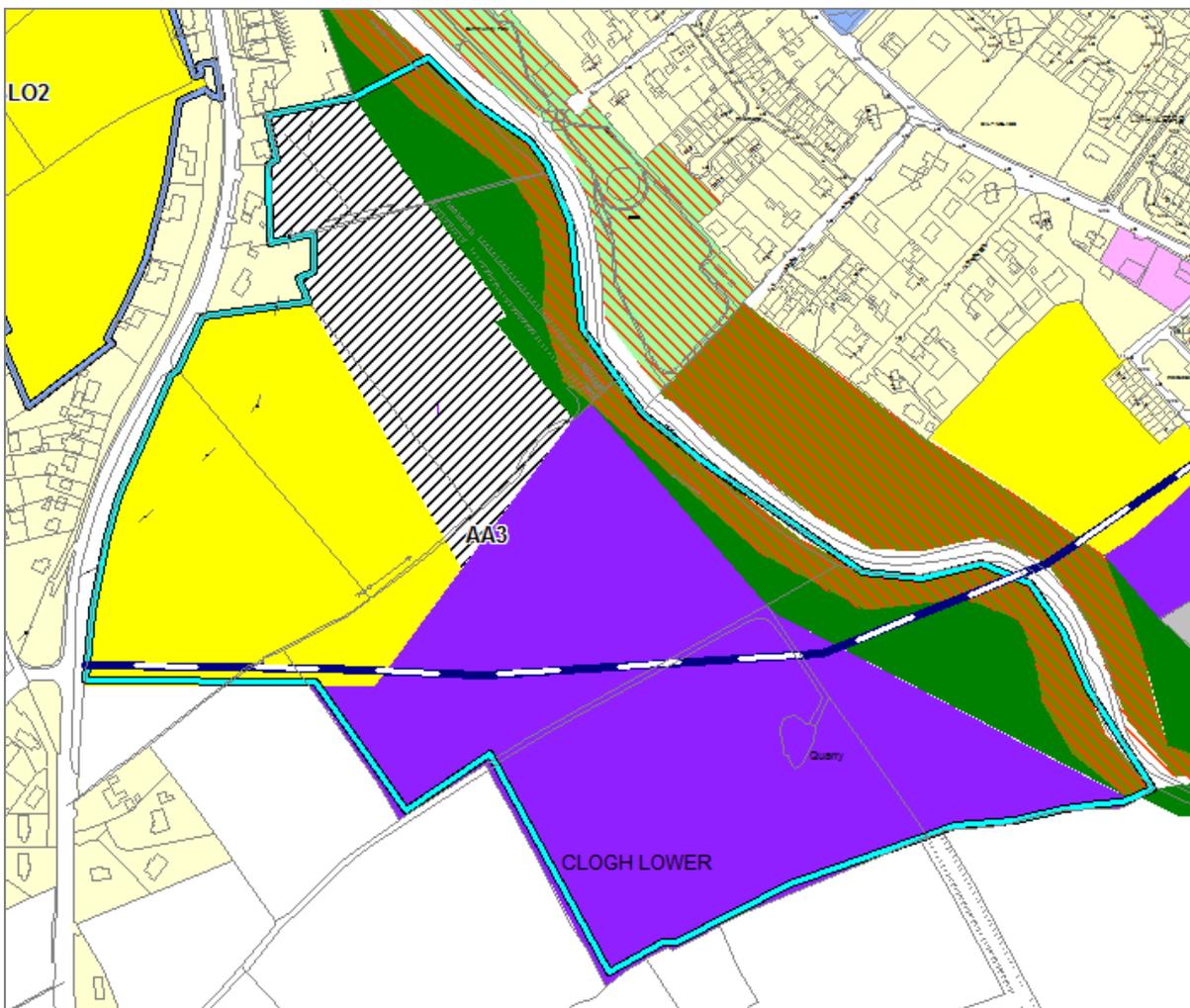


Figure 3.6 Action Area 3

Specific Local Objectives

SLO 1 This SLO is located on lands adjoining the N81 south of Edward Street measuring c. 2.3ha and shall be delivered as a residential and open space/public park extension in accordance with the following criteria:

- The design and layout of development in the SLO shall facilitate the development of a pedestrian route from the R81 to the R747 (through AA2) via a new pedestrian bridge over the River Slaney; land shall be reserved for any such future bridge.
- The development of the residential element of the site shall ensure passive supervision of the proposed pedestrian access through appropriate design and building orientation.
- The development of the SLO shall ensure adequate protection and enhancement of the open space zoning and conservation area adjoining the River Slaney.



Figure 3.7 SLO1

SLO 2 This SLO is located on lands at Bawnoge measuring c. 9ha and shall be delivered as a comprehensive residential/community/active open space area in accordance with the following criteria:

- Vehicular access to the proposed SLO shall be provided via the N81 national secondary road; pedestrian routes shall be provided to the Bawnoge road and linking the Bawnoge road to the N81.
- The design and layout of the proposed scheme shall provide for a central active open space and community area measuring c. 1.4ha and providing for a mix of open space and community uses to be agreed with the Community, Cultural and Social Development Section of the Council.
- The design and layout of the residential element of the site shall ensure passive supervision of the proposed active open space and community lands.

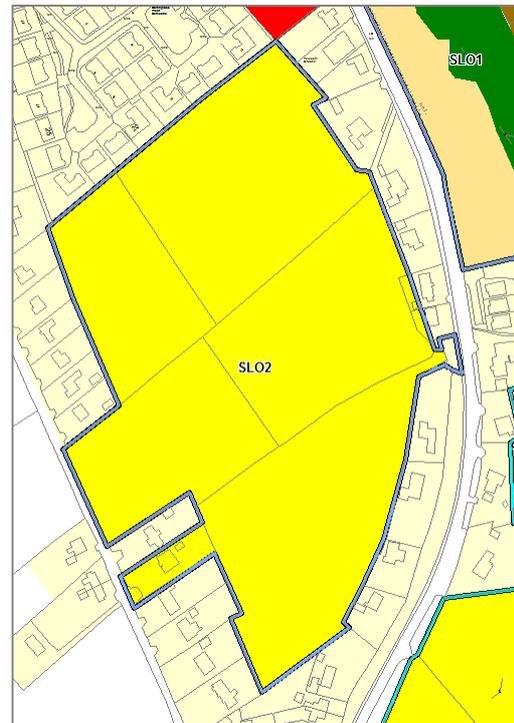
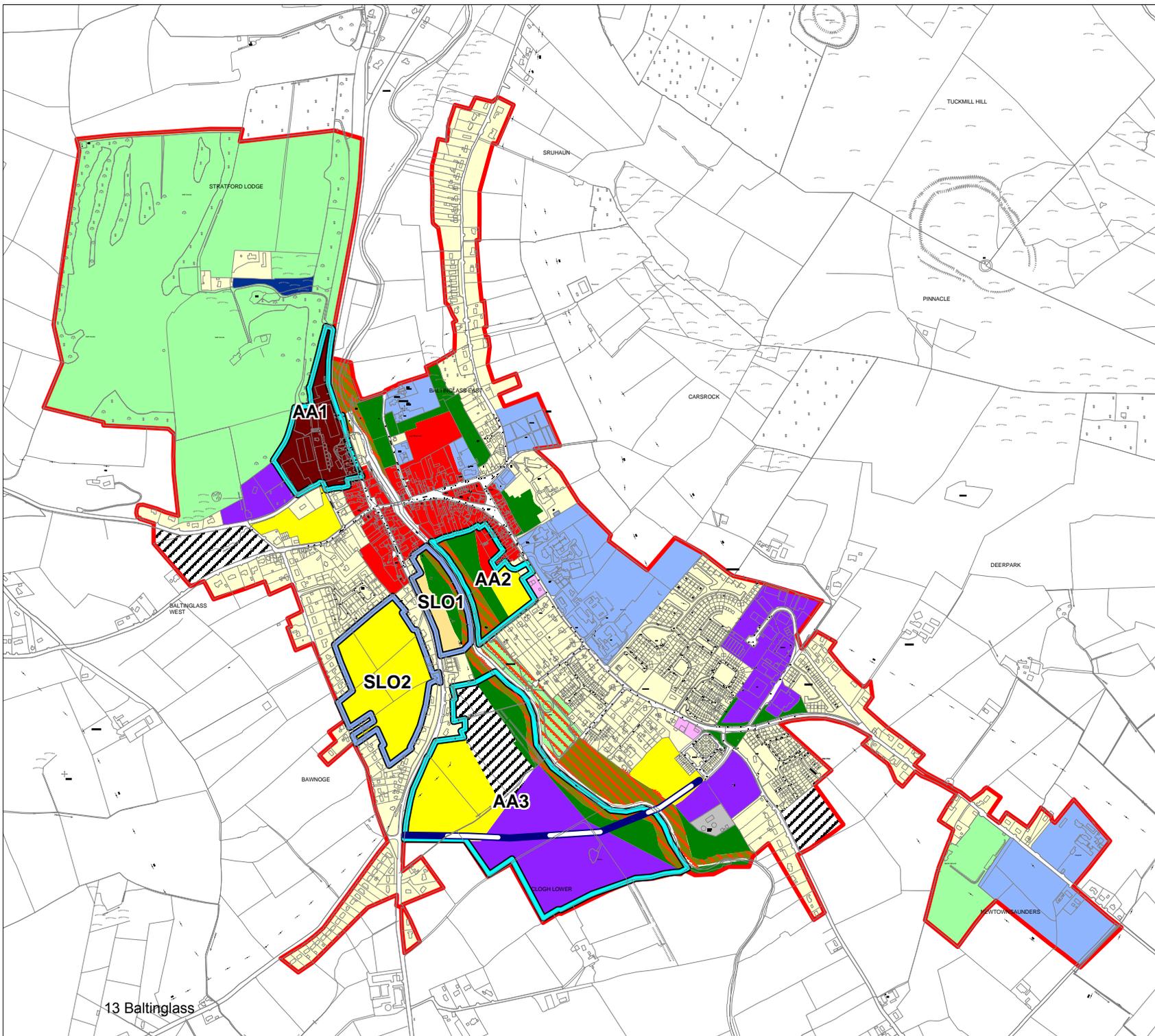


Figure 3.8 SLO2

Baltinglass Town Plan

WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2016-2022



-  Settlement Boundary
-  RE Existing Residential
-  R10 Residential
-  R20 Residential
-  MU Mixed Use
-  TC Town Centre
-  LSS Local Shops & Services
-  CE Community & Educational
-  E Employment
-  T Tourism
-  OS Open Space
-  AOS Active Open Space
-  POS Passive Open Space
-  PU Public Utility
-  Specific Local Objective Boundary
-  Action Area Plan Boundary
-  Road Objective
-  CA Conservation Area
-  SLB Strategic Land Reserve

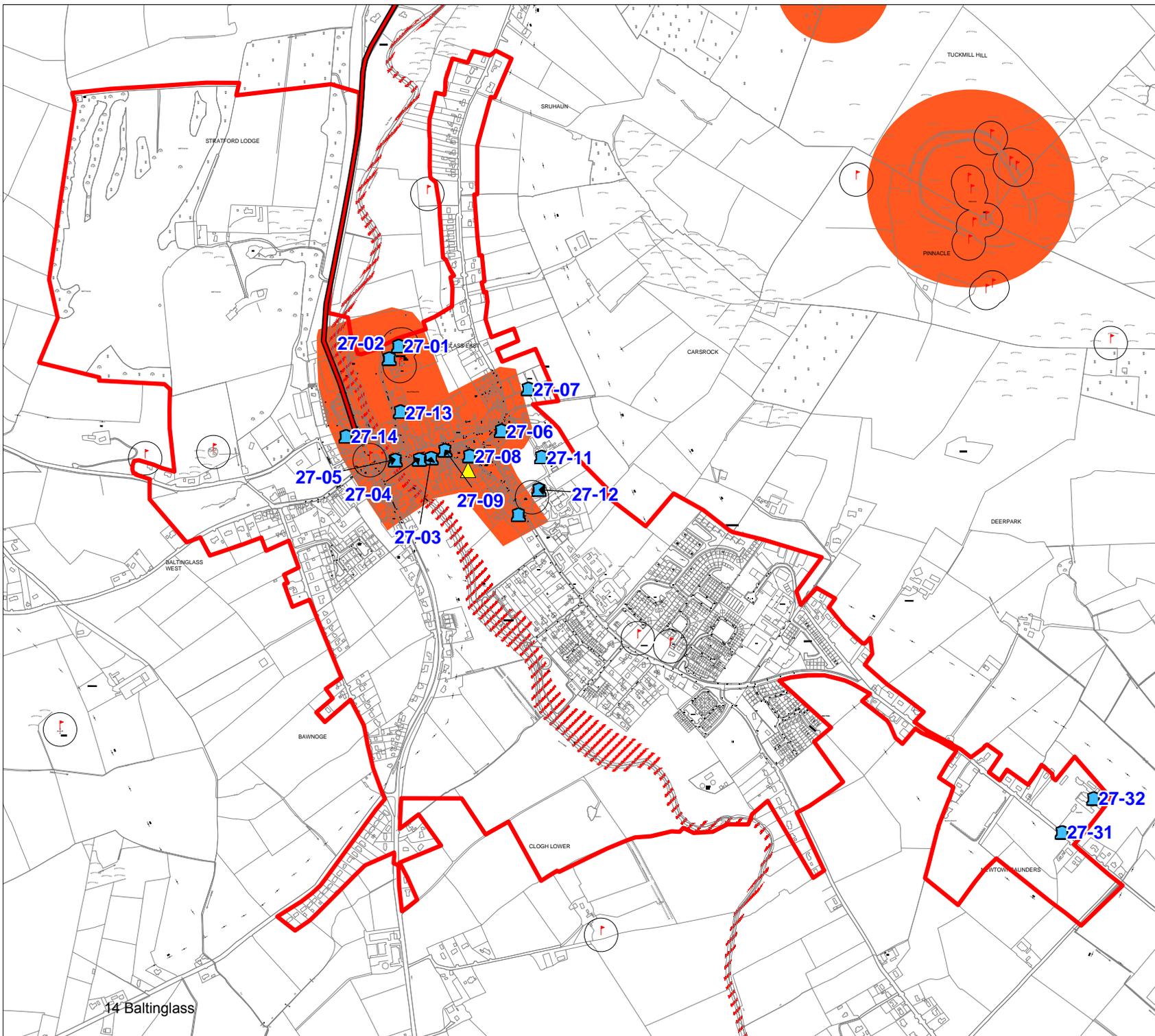
**Title: Land Use Zoning Objectives
Map No. : 1**



Baltinglass Town Plan

WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2016-2022

-  Settlement Boundary
-  Protected Structure
-  National Monument
-  Prospect
-  County Geological Site
-  Special Area of Conservation
-  Areas of Archaeological Potential or Significance



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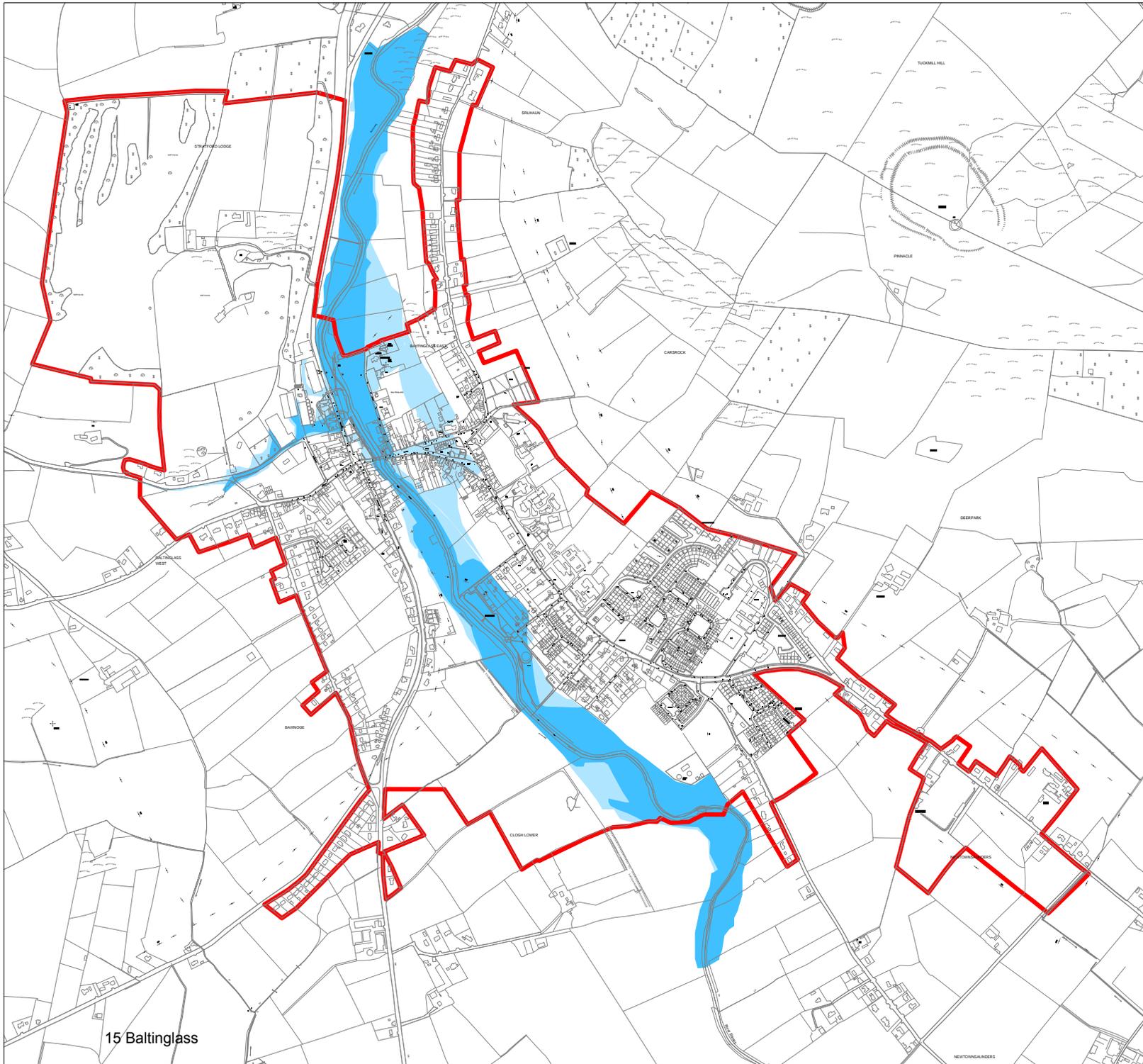
**Title: Heritage Objectives
Map No. : 2**



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Baltinglass Town Plan

WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2016-2022



-  Settlement Boundary
-  Flood Zone A: High probability of flooding
Where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is highest (greater than 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding or 0.5% or 1 in 200 for coastal flooding)
-  Flood Zone B: Moderate probability of flooding
Where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is moderate (between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 and 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding and between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 year and 0.5% or 1 in 200 for coastal flooding)

Disclaimer

These Indicative Flood Zones were based on information available at the time of drafting and amending this plan. Any new data and analysis carried out after this date has not been integrated into this map but should be used in conjunction with this map for development proposals. All information may be substantially altered in light of future data and analysis.

Full Disclaimer is included in SFRA

**Title: Indicative Flood Zones
Map No.: 3**



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Planning Department**

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