



# BALTINGLASS

LEVEL 4 | Self Sustaining Town Plans

Wicklow County Development Plan 2022 – 2028

# LEVEL 4 PLANS - BALTINGLASS

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# SELF SUSTAINING TOWN PLANS (LEVEL 4)

## Baltinglass, Newtownmountkennedy, Rathdrum

### PART 1 INTRODUCTION

This volume of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022 - 2028 comprises land use plans for the Level 4 towns of Baltinglass, Newtownmountkennedy and Rathdrum. In the past, Local Area Plans would have been adopted for most Level 4 towns; however, changes to the Planning Act in 2010 allow the Planning Authority to incorporate development plans for towns with a population of less 5,000 into the County Development Plan.

This County Development Plan therefore includes the development plans for **Baltinglass**, **Newtownmountkennedy** and **Rathdrum**, while Local Area Plans are being maintained for **Kilcoole** (the plan for Kilcoole having been combined with the Greystones – Delgany LAP in 2013) and **Enniskerry** (the plan for Enniskerry having been combined with the wider Bray Municipal District LAP in 2018).

The purpose of these plans is to put in place a structure that will guide the future sustainable development of each settlement. These plans, in conjunction with the County Development Plan will inform and manage the future development of the town.

The aim of these plans is to establish a framework for the planned, co-ordinated and sustainable development of each settlement, and to enhance and facilitate the balancing of economic, social and environmental infrastructure in order to maintain and develop a high quality of life without compromising the protection of the environment and the needs of future generations.

Level 4 settlements in County Wicklow are identified in the Core Strategy 'self sustaining towns' which are defined as *'towns with high levels of population growth and a weak employment base which are reliant on other areas for employment and/or services and which require targeted 'catch up' investment to become more self-sustaining'*.

Self-Sustaining Towns are towns that require contained growth, focusing on driving investment in services, employment growth and infrastructure whilst balancing housing delivery. There is a strong emphasis on aligning population growth with employment growth to make these towns more self-sustaining and capable of accommodating additional growth in the future.

Some of these settlements have experienced significant housing growth in recent years and are now in need of catch-up facilities and employment growth. There is potential to pursue further placemaking improvements within the town centres to create a stronger urban structure, deliver improved community and recreation facilities, strengthen the towns' identities and sense of place and provide for a high quality of life.

Delivering compact growth, regeneration and revitalisation of the town centres is a key priority for all Level 4 settlements. Proposals for regeneration and renewal should be heritage led where possible and informed by healthy placemaking. Sustainable mobility will be promoted as part of any new development within these settlements.

All efforts shall be made to minimise repetition of County Development Plan objectives in these Town Plans, unless it is considered necessary to emphasise assets or restate objectives that have particular relevance and importance to that town. Development standards, retail strategies etc that are included in the County Development Plan shall not be repeated. Any specific policies / objectives or development standards required for a particular town will be stated as precisely that, and in all cases will be consistent with the County Development Plan. Thus development standards will be the same across the entire County, and any differences for specific settlements would be clear and

transparent, to both those adopting the plans, and the general public alike.

Furthermore, Level 4 Town Plans shall only include objectives that are settlement specific and achievable, and avoid those that are aspirational or are best dealt with in the annual budget, road works programme, etc. The role of land use plan is to put in place framework within which development can occur, but does not decide what works actually get done by either private individuals or public bodies. The delivery of objectives will be determined by the initiation of private development or by the allocation of public funding through the annual budgetary process, or other sources such as LEADER, the RRDF, Town & Village Renewal Scheme etc, which is a separate process to any land use plan.

Therefore this volume shall take the following format:

- Part 1:** Sets out the high level strategies and objectives that are common to all Level 4 towns, as well as the common zoning objectives.
- Part 2:** Sets out the detailed plan for Baltinglass (including a land use map, a heritage map and any other maps considered necessary for that town).
- Part 3:** Sets out the detailed plan for Newtownmountkennedy (including a land use map, a heritage map and any other maps considered necessary for that town).
- Part 4:** Sets out the detailed plan for Rathdrum (including a land use map, a heritage map and any other maps considered necessary for that town).

## PART 1.1

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES

### 1.1.1 Core Strategy

Level 4 plans exist in a hierarchy of plans flowing from national level (NPF) to regional level (RSES) to County level (Wicklow County Development Plan). It is through the County Development Plan that these higher order strategies, as well as other national and regional policies (e.g. relating to transportation and the environment) are translated to a 'local level'. The County Development Plan includes a 'Core Strategy' which sets out the 'direction' for the future growth of the County, in accordance with these higher level strategies, and in particular sets out the settlement and population growth strategy up to 2031, evaluates the demand for housing and adequacy of zoned lands to meet those needs, as well as providing strategies for infrastructure, environmental protection and retail development.

Table 1 below sets out the key elements of the Wicklow County Development Plan 'Core Strategy', as they apply to Level 4 settlements.

**Table 1 Wicklow Core Strategy for Level 4 towns**

Core Strategy of the CDP	Application to Level 4
<b>Settlement, Population &amp; Housing Strategies</b>	<p>Level 4 settlements are designated 'Self Sustaining Towns' described as 'towns with high levels of population growth and a weak employment base which are reliant on other areas for employment and/or services and which require targeted 'catch up' investment to become more self-sustaining'.</p> <p>These towns range in size (as per the Census of population in 2016) from c. 1,700 to 4,250 persons. Population growth in Level 4 towns overall is targeted to be in the 20%-25% range between 2016 and 2031, with variation in future growth rates between towns in the level due to developments already underway in some towns (particularly Rathdrum and Newtownmountkennedy).</p>
<b>Economic Development Strategy</b>	<p>The towns will aim to become more self-sustaining by concentrating on local enterprise and employment growth and catch-up facilities. This will include attracting investment in a mixture of 'people' and 'product' intensive industries that will generate new employment opportunities and improve the jobs ratio.</p>
<b>Retail Strategy</b>	<p>Level 4 settlements are identified as either 'Level 3' or 'Level 4' in the County retail hierarchy, with the Level 4 towns included in this plan (Baltinglass, Newtownmountkennedy and Rathdrum) all being designated 'Level 3' centres.</p> <p>These centres will vary both in the scale of provision and the size of catchment, due to proximity to a Major or County Town Centre, i.e. Bray or Wicklow Town. Generally where the centre has a large catchment (e.g. market town in a rural area) and is not close to a larger centre, there will be a good range of comparison shopping, though no large department stores or shopping centres, with a mix of retail types benefiting from lower rents away from larger urban sites, leisure / cultural facilities and a range of cafes and restaurants.</p>
<b>Community Development Strategy</b>	<p>In accordance with the County community facilities hierarchy, Level 4 settlements generally fall into the 2,000-7,000 population range and should be ideally serviced by the following community infrastructure: community / parish hall, multi-purpose community space and / or meeting rooms, local town park and open spaces/nature areas, outdoor multi-use games areas, playgrounds, playing pitches and a library.</p>
<b>Infrastructure Strategy</b>	<p>In accordance with the County Development Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Measures will be required to facilitate a modal shift to more sustainable transport options including promotion of development patterns and development of enhance infrastructure to facilitate walking, cycling and increased use of public transport;</li> <li>- Only locations that are already served, or have committed investment to enhance water and wastewater infrastructure shall be identified for new development.</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental Strategy</b>	<p>To ensure the objectives of the plan are consistent with the conservation and protection of the environment.</p>

## 1.1.2 Population and Housing

The Q2 2028 population target for Level 4 towns is provided in the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan.

**Table 2** Level 4 population and housing targets

### Level 4 Population Targets Q2 2028

LEVEL 4	2016	Q2 2028
Baltinglass	2,251	2,607
Enniskerry	1,877	2,106
Kilcoole	4,244	4,778
Newtownmountkennedy	3,552	5,179
Rathdrum	1,716	2,,339

### Level 4 Housing Unit Targets 2031

LEVEL 4	Housing Stock 2016	Completions 2017-2020	Estimated completions 2021-Q2 2022	Housing Growth Q3 2022-Q2 2028	Housing Growth Q3 2028-Q4 2031	Total Housing Growth 2016-2031
Baltinglass	903	46	40	85	24	195
Enniskerry	648	34	40	36	15	125
Kilcoole	1,451	97	20	140	30	287
Newtownmountkennedy	1,222	250	100	433	99	882
Rathdrum	669	132	100	68	31	331

## Population & Housing Objectives

- To adhere to the objectives of the Wicklow County Development Plan in regard to population and housing as are applicable to Level 4 towns, and ensure that the provisions of each plan create a flexible land use framework that allows for housing targets to be fulfilled.
- A minimum of 30% of the targeted housing growth shall be directed into the existing built up area of the settlement, on lands zoned 'town centre', 'village centre', 'existing residential' and 'mixed use'. In cognisance that the potential of such regeneration / infill / brownfield sites is difficult to predict, there shall be no quantitative restriction inferred from this plan or the associated tables on the number of units that may be delivered within the built up envelope of the town.
- In order to ensure however that overall housing and population targets can be delivered, land may be zoned for new residential development outside of the existing built up envelope, subject to the amount of zoned land not exceeding 70% of the total housing target for that settlement.
- To require that new residential development represents an efficient use of land and achieves the highest density possible, having regard to minimum densities as set out in Table 6.1 (of Chapter 6 of the County Development Plan) subject to the reasonable protection of existing residential amenities and the established character of existing settlements.
- **Housing occupancy controls:** As 'self sustaining towns', Level 4 towns should provide for the housing demands generated from people from across the County and region.

### 1.1.3 Economic Development & Employment

Depending on their degree of accessibility, scale of population / workforce and market catchment, and the availability of support services, the Level 4 towns have varying roles to play in acting as attractors for foreign and local investment. Level 4 settlements are likely to perform a lesser function in terms of attracting foreign investment than Level 1-3 settlements; however historical foreign investment and local characteristics may support the ability of these towns to attract this scale and type of investment into the future. Generally, towns of this scale are particularly suited to attracting local investment and should aim to target investment in the form of local services, 'product intensive' industries, particularly those linked to rural resources, such as food processing, agricultural services and tourist facilities / accommodation.

The factors that make a town economically viable and attractive to investors and visitors are numerous and often hard to predict and influence, but for the purpose of these land use plans, the strategy for economic development will be based around:

- a) providing a land-use framework for each town, which makes the Council's requirements and expectations with respect to the location and type of new employment generating development abundantly clear;
- b) supporting and facilitating, to the highest degree possible (subject to environmental and other relevant planning considerations) all forms of employment generation and in particular, to encourage employment and commercial uses as a key activity in the town centre;
- c) a focus on 'placemaking' to create attractive and sustainable communities, with high quality services and public realm, to create attractive places to live, work, visit and invest.

An established measure of the employment 'health' of a settlement is a measure called the 'jobs ratio'. This is the relationship between the resident workers and the number of jobs in any defined area. A healthy area is considered to be one where the jobs ratio exceeds 70%<sup>1</sup>. Baltinglass, Newtownmountkennedy and Rathdrum in 2016 all had jobs ratio in excess of 70%, all in or around 80%. This reflects the important role these towns play in the economic development and support of their hinterlands. It is important that this high level of employment is maintained into the future as resident population grows, and is developed further in an environmentally sustainable manner, with a particular focus on growing employment and businesses in the town centre and other already built up areas, densifying existing employment area, and targeting growth at locations that are the most sustainable in terms of accessibility. In this regard, it is the objective of the CDP to increase the jobs ratio in Level 4 towns by a minimum of 25% up to 2031.

This table also shows the amount of land proposed to be zoned in each town for new employment. While it is assumed that a proportion of jobs growth will occur in the town centres and other mixed use lands that are not specifically zoned for employment alone, or will occur on existing developed employment land through intensification, sufficient zoned employment land is zoned in each town to meet all of the jobs growth required, on the assumption of 80 employees per hectare, plus an additional 'headroom' of 100% to ensure that there will be no shortage of site choice for developers of new employment.

LEVEL 4	Jobs ratio 2016	Targeted future jobs ratio 2031	Jobs growth targeted up to 2031	Quantum of zoned employment land (ha)
Baltinglass	0.81	1.01	+500	13
Enniskerry	0.33	0.41	+100	1 <sup>2</sup>
Kilcoole	0.46	0.57	+100	10 <sup>2</sup>
Newtownmountkennedy	0.78	0.97	+1,100	28
Rathdrum	0.82	1.03	+600	15

<sup>1</sup> As per RSES Appendix A - data and indicators

<sup>2</sup> To be reviewed in the next LAP to be commensurate with the employment growth objective.

## Economic Development & Employment Objectives

- Increase the quality and range of employment opportunities by facilitating developments that involve foreign and local investment in a variety of forms, including 'people' and 'product' intensive industries. The Council will particularly support the development of 'people' intensive employment generating developments at locations served by sustainable and active modes of transport, those that provide for the local convenience and social service needs of the area and those that provide for the needs of tourists and visitors. The Council will support the development of 'product' intensive industries at appropriate locations, and will particularly support developments based on the use of a local rural resource.
- To facilitate and support the highest degree possible, all forms of employment creation on appropriately zoned land and to promote the intensification of activities on existing employment sites and to take advantage of the existing economic assets of the town in order to stimulate further employment within the area.
- Promote in the first instance the growth of economic activity and employment in the town centre and built up parts of the towns; and where a demand for 'greenfield' employment development is identified, to ensure zoned, serviced land is available in appropriate locations in accordance with the zoning principles of the County Development Plan.
- To encourage the redevelopment of town centre and brownfield sites for enterprise and employment creation throughout the settlements and to consider allowing 'relaxation' in normal development standards on such sites to promote their redevelopment, where it can be clearly demonstrated that a development of the highest quality, that does not create an adverse or unacceptable working environment or create unacceptable impacts on the built, natural or social environment, will be provided.
- To encourage and facilitate the development of small to medium scale indigenous industries and services at appropriate locations within the Level 4 settlements. The Council acknowledges that the development of small scale projects with long term employment potential are important in sustaining both urban and rural settlements in County Wicklow and as such, the Council will adopt a proactive and flexible approach in dealing with applications on a case-by-case basis.
- Support a shift towards low carbon and climate change resilient economic and enterprise activity, reducing energy dependence, promoting the sustainable use of resources and leading in the Smart Green Economy.
- To promote high quality housing, community facilities and a built and natural environment that is attractive to indigenous and foreign industry and employees.
- To promote tourist developments at suitable locations that are of an appropriate scale and design, particularly developments that are associated with the tourism products or themes associated with any town and its hinterland and maximise the town's location as a destination and gateway between the tourism assets.
- To facilitate home-working, the development of co-working hubs and innovative forms of working, which reduce the need to travel.

### 1.1.4 Town Centres & Retail

Level 4 town centres perform a variety of roles and functions for their residents and their wider rural communities. The strengths of these settlements lie in their capacity to accommodate a mix of uses including employment, residential, community and other functions in a compact walkable environment that provides a high quality of life. They are a hub for social, economic and administrative functions in addition to providing places for recreation, worship and leisure.

Level 4 town centres, like many across all tiers of the hierarchy in County Wicklow, have experienced significant challenges to retain vibrancy and vitality. The National Planning Framework (NPF) places a strong emphasis on strengthening Ireland's urban structure by targeting both population and employment growth in urban areas, promoting urban infill and brownfield development and ensuring that towns and villages are attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of



life and wellbeing.

The retail function of Level 4 towns is as set out in the County Retail Strategy, and with respect to the three settlements addressed in this plan it is considered to fulfil the role of a 'sub County' town centre, serving a wide district. Retail is a key function of Level 4 towns and a thriving retail sector is essential to maintain vitality and vibrancy in the core areas of the town and to maintain the town as the focal point for the wider rural area in which it is located.

Towns and villages are continually evolving. This is essential for their survival. It is important that Wicklow's planning policy is flexible to allow town centres to evolve and diversify. The planning policy for Level 4 town centres will therefore be based on the following objectives:

### **Town Centres & Retail Objectives**

- To support the continued enhancement of the existing Town Centre of Level 4 towns as the heart of the settlement;
- Ensure that the town centres are attractive places to live in, to work in and to visit, easy to get to, easy to walk and cycle within and are competitive places to conduct business;
- Facilitating a diverse mix of uses, and particularly encourage residential usage at appropriate town centre densities, and the concept of 'living over the shop';
- Create compact towns by reusing existing buildings and maximising the potential of infill and brownfield sites;
- Encourage the redevelopment and regeneration of vacant, underutilised and derelict sites;
- To apply the Vacant Sites Levy on qualifying vacant lands identified in each town as being within the 'regeneration and renewal' zone;
- The redevelopment of lands within the town core areas, particularly those sites with frontage onto the main streets and squares of Level 4 towns, shall provide for a street fronting building of a high quality design or for a high quality urban space, including hard and soft landscaping, and appropriate street fixtures and furniture, in order to enhance and create a more attractive streetscape;
- To allow a relaxation in certain development standards in the town centre zones in the interest of achieving the best development possible, both visually and functionally while maintaining the highest quality of design in all new developments;
- Promote healthy placemaking and prioritise walking and cycling; improve linkages between core town centres and existing community infrastructure and lands earmarked for future housing development;
- Use public realm improvements to stimulate investment and economic confidence; encourage public art in publicly accessible spaces such as town streets and squares and along existing or future parks and amenity routes;
- Embracing the historic character and heritage attributes of each town centres and strengthen the strong sense of place;
- Support and enhance the potential of the towns as focal points for the local community, for tourism and culture;
- Facilitate an expansion of retail floorspace to reduce leakage of expenditure from both the town itself and the wider County. Guide and promote the expansion of retail floorspace first and foremost within the core retail areas and thereafter in accordance with the sequential approach to retail development;
- Provide for an expansion in the variety of retail and retail service facilities so that the town includes a range of retail outlets that provide for the day to day needs of the local population and the needs of other businesses and tourists, in accordance with the provisions of the "Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities" (DoEHLG 2012), and any subsequent Ministerial Guidelines or directives and the Wicklow County Retail Strategy.

### 1.1.5 Social & Community Development

The provision of accessible social and community infrastructure, including open space and leisure / recreational facilities, contributes to the quality of life for all and it is important that existing and future residents of the towns and their catchments are provided with such facilities. High quality social and community services in an area can also make a place more attractive for the establishment of new businesses and to encourage long stay visitors. In particular, new community facilities will be required to be provided in tandem with the development of significant new residential developments and new neighbourhoods.

#### Community Infrastructure & Open Space Objectives

- To facilitate the development of a range of high quality community and recreational facilities that meet the needs of the local population, and in particular to require that new community and recreational facilities are developed in tandem with new housing, through the implementation of the objectives of Chapter 7 of Volume 1 of the County Development Plan.
- To manage the pace of new housing developments commensurate with existing / planned community facilities.
- To support existing clubs and sporting organisations in providing continued sports activities for those living in the settlement and the wider area;
- To support the creation of functional and healthy public spaces and pedestrian routes within the settlements and to other nearby settlements, in order to maximise opportunities for outdoor activity.
- Where projects for new recreation projects (such as riverine parks, greenways, walking routes, trails etc) identified in these plans are not already provided for by existing plans / programmes or are not already permitted, then the feasibility of progressing these projects shall be examined, taking into account planning need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report and the objectives of the overall plan relating to sustainable development.

### 1.1.6 Service Infrastructure

The provision of transport and services infrastructure is essential to the development of any town, providing ease of movement within towns, connecting towns to surrounding areas and providing sufficient service infrastructure capable of meeting the demands of the resident, commercial and employment populations. Adequate infrastructure is vital for the facilitation of the future development of Level 4 towns. This includes water services, effective road and public transport networks, energy, telecommunications, waste management etc.

The County Development Plan, and various programmes of the Council's Roads and Environmental Services Departments, as well as outside agencies such as Irish Water and the National Transport Authority, provide detailed strategies and objectives for a whole range of service infrastructure. As these provisions apply directly to towns in Level 4 it is not considered necessary to restate all of these objectives; any objectives included in these plans are those considered necessarily to emphasise assets or restate objectives that have particular relevance and importance to the area.

#### Service Infrastructure Objectives

- Promote a development pattern and the development of enhanced infrastructure to facilitate walking, cycling and increased use of public transport; in particular:
  - to support and facilitate the implementation of measures to improve walking / cycling opportunities within the towns and between the towns and other centres of population and activity in the wider area;
  - to support and encourage actions to address through traffic on the main streets and squares, in particular the provision of mechanisms to slow traffic through the centres and give priority to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport; where possible the development of alternative routes

- through the towns, particularly from existing or planned new residential areas that avoid the need to use the main streets and squares to access essential services and to enter / exit the towns; the development of alternative car parking arrangements around the town cores;
- to promote the delivery of improved bus services in the towns by facilitating the needs of existing or new bus providers with regard to bus stops and garaging facilities (unnecessary duplication of bus stops on the same routes / roads will not be permitted); facilitating the provision of bus priority where a requirement for such is identified; requiring the developers of large-scale new employment and residential developments in the town to fund / provide high quality pedestrian and cycling facilities to public transport routes / nodes;
  - to support design solutions and innovative approaches in order to reduce car dependency;
  - to cooperate with NTA and other relevant transport planning bodies in the delivery of a high quality, public transport systems.
- Facilitate and promote the delivery of reliable and effective water, drainage, energy, waste management and communications infrastructure to service the existing and future development needs of the settlements. In particular:
    - to support and facilitate the improvement and increased resilience of the water distribution, supply and storage systems;
    - to support and facilitate any necessary upgrades to the wastewater collection and pumping systems (where required);
    - ensure the separation of foul and surface water discharges in new developments through the provision of separate networks. Ensure the implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and in particular, to ensure that all surface water generated in a new development is disposed of on-site or is attenuated and treated prior to discharge to an approved surface water system;
    - to promote energy efficiency and the development of renewable energy projects.
  - To ensure that only appropriate land uses are provided on lands identified as being at risk of flooding.
  - Where projects for new infrastructure identified in these plans are not already provided for by existing plans / programmes or are not already permitted, then the feasibility of progressing these projects shall be examined, taking into account planning need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report and the objectives of the plan relating to sustainable development. A Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken where appropriate, for relevant new road infrastructure in two stages: Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection, and Stage 2 – Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection.

### 1.1.7 Built Heritage & Natural Environment

The protection and enhancement of heritage and environmental assets through this plan will help to safeguard the local character and distinctiveness of each town and its surroundings, providing local economic, social and environmental benefits. The maps included in this plan include heritage maps indicating the key natural and built heritage features.

#### Heritage Objectives

- To protect natural, architectural and archaeological heritage, in accordance with the objectives set out in the County Development Plan, as are applicable to each town.
- To enhance the quality of the natural and built environment, to enhance the unique character of the town and environs as a place to live, visit and work;
- To promote greater appreciation of, and access to, local heritage assets;
- To ensure the protection and enhancement of natural habitats, cultural heritage, ecological resources and biodiversity and in particular, to safeguard the integrity of the watercourses and rivers in the area.

### 1.1.8 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Each plan, in conjunction with the overall County Development Plan, has been subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The 'Environmental Report' accompanying the overall County Development Plan sets out the environmental consequences of making the plan, including the town plans and provides measures to address any potential adverse impacts.

### 1.1.9 Appropriate Assessment

These plans, as part of the overall County Development Plan, have been subject to Stage 2 'Appropriate Assessment' under the Habitats Directive. The findings of this assessment are provided in the Appropriate Assessment Natura Impact Report that accompanies the County Development Plan.

### 1.1.10 Flood Risk Assessment

As part of each plan addressed in this Volume, a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been carried out. The assessment is presented as part of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment appendix of the County Plan. All applications shall be assessed in accordance with the provisions of '*The Planning System and Flood Risk Management*' Guidelines (DoEHLG 2009) and the flood management objectives of the County Development Plan.

Where existing development is located within Flood Zones A or B, new development shall be limited to minor development only; any proposals for new development should be accompanied by an appropriately detailed FRA, undertaken in accordance with Section 4 of the SFRA and the relevant policies and objectives in the County Development Plan.

Any proposals for new development in Flood Zones A or B shall be accompanied by an appropriately detailed FRA, undertaken in accordance with Section 4 of this SFRA and the relevant policies and objectives in the County Development Plan, and in particular, where the lands at risk of flooding form part of a larger development site, the sequential approach shall be applied in the site planning, to ensure no encroachment onto, or loss of the flood plain, or that only water compatible development such as Open Space will be permitted for the lands which are identified as being at risk of flooding within the site.

## PART 1.2 ZONING AND LAND USE

The plan maps for each town indicates the boundary of the town plan. All lands located outside the plan boundary are considered to be within the rural area. Within these areas, planning applications shall be assessed having regard to the objectives and standards for the rural area, as set out in Volume 1 of the Wicklow County Development Plan.

The purpose of land use zoning objectives is to indicate the Council's intentions for land uses in the town.

### 1.2.1 Zoning Objectives

Land use zoning objectives and the associated vision for each zone are as follows:

ZONING	OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
<b>RE: Existing Residential</b>	To protect, provide and improve residential amenities of existing residential areas	To provide for house improvements, alterations and extensions and appropriate infill residential development in accordance with principles of good design and protection of existing residential amenity. In existing residential areas, the areas of open space permitted, designated or dedicated solely to the use of the residents will normally be zoned 'RE' as they form an intrinsic part of the overall residential development; however new housing or other non-community related uses will not normally be permitted.
<b>RN: New residential</b>	To provide for new residential development and supporting facilities.	To facilitate for the provision of high quality new residential developments at appropriate densities with excellent layout and design, well linked to the town centre and community facilities. To provide an appropriate mix of house sizes, types and tenures in order to meet household needs and to promote balanced communities.
<b>TC: Town Centre</b>	To provide for the development and improvement of appropriate town centre uses including residential, retail, commercial, office and civic use.	To develop and consolidate the existing town centre to improve its vibrancy and vitality with the densification of appropriate commercial and residential developments ensuring a mix of commercial, recreational, civic, cultural, leisure and residential uses, while delivering a quality urban environment, with emphasis on regeneration, infill town and historic centre conservation; ensuring priority for public transport where applicable, pedestrians and cyclists, while minimising the impact of private car based traffic and enhance and develop the existing centre's fabric.
<b>VC: Village Centre</b>	To provide for the development and improvement of appropriate village centre uses in areas that are secondary or subsidiary area to the main town centre.	To develop and consolidate the village centre zones in an appropriate manner and to an appropriate scale and with such uses as specified in each town plan given their roles as a secondary or subsidiary area to the main town centre.
<b>LSS: Local Shops &amp; Services</b>	To provide for small scale local neighbourhood shops and services	To facilitate the limited development of small scale local neighbourhood shops and retail services and other local service uses that meet only the retail or service needs of residents in the immediate catchment and are not of such a scale or type that would detract or draw trade from lands designated town centre.

ZONING	OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
<b>E: Employment</b>	To provide for the development of enterprise and employment	To facilitate the further development and improvement of existing employment areas and to facilitate opportunities for the development of new high quality employment and enterprise developments in a good quality physical environment.
<b>CE: Community &amp; Education</b>	To provide for civic, community and educational facilities	To facilitate the development of necessary community, health, religious, educational, social and civic infrastructure.
<b>AOS: Active Open Space</b>	To protect and enhance existing and provide for new active open space	To facilitate the further development and improvement of existing active open spaces, formal exercise areas, sports grounds, playing pitches, courts and other games areas and to facilitate opportunities for the development of new high quality active recreational areas.
<b>OS1: Open Space</b>	To protect and enhance existing and provide for recreational open space	To facilitate the further development and improvement of existing parks and casual play areas, to facilitate opportunities for the development of new high quality amenity open areas and to restrict developments / activities (such as the use or development of such lands for formal sports grounds for organisations that are not available for a broad range of the public) that would reduce the opportunities for use by the wider public.
<b>OS2: Passive Open Space</b>	To protect and enhance existing open, undeveloped lands	To protect, enhance and manage existing open, undeveloped lands that comprise flood plains, buffer zones along watercourses and rivers, steep banks, green breaks between built up areas, green corridors and areas of natural biodiversity.
<b>PU: Public Utility</b>	To maintain lands providing services infrastructure	To allow for lands to be designated for public utilities such as waste water treatment plants, large ESB substations, gasworks etc
<b>T: Tourism</b>	To provide for tourism related development	To provide for the sustainable development of tourism related structures, uses and infrastructure. To provide for the development of tourism facilities including accommodation of an excellent sustainable design and aesthetic quality. Tourism related office, civic and cultural and commercial development will be facilitated.
<b>MU: Mixed Use</b>	To provide for mixed use development	The nature of the mixed use development envisaged for any particular site is set out in the text of the plan.
<b>SLB: Strategic Land Bank</b>	To provide a land bank for future development of the settlement after the lifetime of this plan, if and when the need arises.	These are lands that are identified as being potentially suitable for new residential development having regard to proximity and accessibility to infrastructure. However, these lands are not necessary for development during the lifetime of this plan and may only be considered for detailed zoning and development after 2028. Any development proposals within the lifetime of the plan will be considered under the County Development Plan rural objectives.

The box below gives typical appropriate uses for each zone type. The planning authority shall determine each proposal on its merits, and shall only permit the development of uses that enhance, complement, are ancillary to, or neutral to the zoning objective. Uses that are materially inconsistent with and detrimental to the zoning objective shall not be permitted.

Uses generally appropriate for **residential (RN / RE)** zoned areas include houses, apartments, residential open space, education, community facilities, retirement homes, nursing homes, childcare, health centres, guest house, bed and breakfast, places of public worship, home based economic activity, utility installations and ancillary development and other residential uses in accordance with the CDP.

Uses generally appropriate for **town and village centres (TC / VC)** include residential development, commercial, retail, retail services, health, restaurants, public house, public buildings, hotels, guest houses, nursing / care homes, parking, office, tourism and recreational uses, community, including provision for religious use, utility installations and ancillary developments for town centre uses in accordance with the CDP.

Uses generally appropriate for **employment (E)** zoned land include general and light industry, office uses, enterprise units, appropriate warehousing, petrol filling stations (as deemed appropriate), public transport depots, open space, including sports grounds, community facilities including community and sports centres, utility installations and ancillary developments for employment and industry uses in accordance with the CDP.

Uses generally appropriate for **community and educational (CE)** zoned land include community, educational and institutional uses include burial grounds, places of worship, schools, training facilities, community hall, nursing homes, health related developments, sports and recreational facilities, utility installations and ancillary developments for community, educational and institutional uses in accordance with the CDP.

Uses appropriate for **active open space (AOS)** zoned land are sport and active recreational uses including infrastructure and buildings associated with same.

Uses appropriate for **open space (OS1)** zoned land are recreational uses such as formal / informal landscaped parks with off-road walking / cycling paths, as well as playgrounds, skate parks, Mixed Use Games Areas and outdoor gyms.

Uses appropriate for **passive open space (OS2)** zoned land are uses that protect and enhance the function of these areas as flood plains, buffer zones along watercourses and rivers, green breaks between built up areas, green corridors and areas of natural biodiversity. The development of these lands for recreational uses may only be considered where such use is shown to not undermine the purpose of this zoning.

Uses generally appropriate for **public utility (PU)** zoned land are for the provision of necessary infrastructure and services such as water and waste water treatment plants, large ESB sub-stations, gasworks.

Uses generally appropriate for **tourism (T)** zoned land are tourism accommodation and tourism / recreational uses such as Bed & Breakfast, cultural uses, holiday homes, hotels, recreational facilities.

Uses generally appropriate for any **mixed use (MU)** area will be specified in the plan.

Many uses exist where they do not conform to the designated zoning objective. When extensions to, or improvements of premises accommodating such uses are proposed, each shall be considered on its merits and permission may be granted where the development does not adversely affect the amenities of properties in the vicinity and does not prejudice the proper planning and development of the area.

Whilst the land-use zoning will give an indication of the acceptability or otherwise of particular uses in particular areas, proposed development will also be assessed in terms of compatibility with the development control

guidelines and standards outlined in the Wicklow County Development Plan and this plan. Factors such as density, height, massing, traffic generation, public health regulations, design criteria, visual amenity, availability of services and potential nuisance by way of noise, odour and air pollution are also of importance in establishing whether or not a development proposal conforms to the proper planning and sustainable development of an area.

### 1.2.2 Phasing

It is an objective of the Council that development is undertaken in an orderly and sustainable manner. The development of zoned land should generally be phased in accordance with the sequential approach:

- Development should extend outwards from the town centre with undeveloped land closest to the centre and public transport routes (if available) being given preference, i.e. 'leapfrogging' to peripheral areas should be avoided;
- A strong emphasis should be placed on encouraging infill opportunities and better use of under-utilised lands; and
- Areas to be developed should be contiguous to existing developed areas.

Only in exceptional circumstances should the above principles be contravened, for example, where a barrier to development is involved. Any exceptions must be clearly justified by local circumstances and such justification must be set out in any planning application proposal.

The Council may, in certain cases, phase permitted development where this is considered necessary for the following:

- (i) the promotion of an appropriate balance of employment, residential and service facilities (schools, shopping, community facilities etc.) and other uses that are required to increase the self-sufficiency of the settlement, or
- (ii) ensuring the delivery of infrastructural services in tandem with development, including water, sewerage and road infrastructure, that is required to safeguard the environmental quality and public safety of the area.

### 1.2.3 Action Area Plans

Action Areas have been identified in each plan where necessary. Action Areas are to be the subject of comprehensive (not piecemeal) integrated schemes of development that allow for the sustainable, phased and managed development of the Action Area during the plan period. Separate applications for sections of each Action Area will not be considered until an overall Action Area Plan has been agreed in writing with the Planning Authority unless it can be shown that any application will not undermine the achievement of the overall objectives for that Action Area. The position, location and size of the land use zonings shown on the plan map are indicative only and may be altered in light of eventual road and service layouts, detailed design and topography, subject to compliance with the criteria set out for the Action Areas.

By time related conditions, agreements or otherwise, the Council will regulate the building programme to ensure that the needs of the population do not exceed the provision of essential support systems and that the Council will use its powers under the Planning & Development Acts to effect this control.

### 1.2.4 Strategic Land Bank

Having regard to the housing targets set out in this County Development Plan, the amount of land designated and zoned for the development of new housing has been reviewed and updated as set out in each plan. In order to be consistent with the provisions of the County Development Plan 'Core Strategy' and Ministerial guidelines with regard to the zoning of land, the plans herewith provided shall provide for sufficient zoned land to ensure growth targets as set out in the 'Core Strategy' can be achieved.

These revisions may entail a reduction in the amount of residentially zoned 'greenfield' lands outside of the existing built up envelope of each town. In accordance with the 'Core Strategy' guidelines issued by the Department of the



Environment, Community and Local Government, where a surplus of zoned housing land is identified, it will be necessary to select the most appropriate land to zone in the plan and then implement one of the following options:

1. Designate the surplus land as a 'strategic land reserve/bank' for the future that will not be allowed to develop within the plan period, or
2. Change the zoning of the surplus residential land to some other land use that is required during the lifetime of the plan, or
3. Remove the zoning from the surplus land.

A combination of these approaches is taken in these plans.

### **Strategic Land Bank Objective**

These are lands that are identified as being potentially suitable for new residential development having regard to proximity and accessibility to infrastructure. However these lands are not necessary for development during the lifetime of this plan and may only be considered for detailed zoning and development after 2028, if the need arises. Any development proposals within the lifetime of the plan will be considered under the Wicklow County Development Plan rural objectives.

#### **1.2.5 European Sites**

There are a number of 'European Sites' (SACs / SPAs) located in or in close proximity to the settlements in Level 4. The sites themselves are protected from inappropriate development through the legal provisions of the Habitats and Birds Directives, as well as the Planning Act. Such sites, where they are located within the plan boundary of a Level 4 settlement, are shown on the heritage map associated with the plan as SAC / SPA as appropriate.

In a number of locations, there are lands adjoining European Sites, which while not being included in the legally designated site, are linked to the site in terms of similar or supporting habitats, water flows or other characteristics which render them important to protect from inappropriate development which may have a direct or indirect effect on the designated site itself<sup>3</sup>. The extent of any such 'buffer zone' has been determined through both desktop and field assessment by the plan team and a professional ecologist, as well as consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

The approach to zoning at / in European Sites and any associated 'buffer zone' has been as follows:

1. No lands within the actual European Site have been zoned;
2. Where the 'buffer zone' coincides with existing developed areas, the lands have been zoned for their existing use, which will essentially allow for the continuation of the existing use and its enhancement. In accordance with the provisions of the EU Habitats Directive 1992 and the Planning & Development Act, any proposed development with potential to impact upon the integrity of a European Site shall be subject to an Appropriate Assessment;
3. Where the 'buffer zone' coincides with existing undeveloped lands, the lands will only be zoned for new development where it can be justified that such zoning and development arising therefrom is essential for the town to achieve its development vision and strategic objectives. In accordance with the provisions of the

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<sup>3</sup> In accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, the aim is to protect and maintain linear landscape features which act as ecological corridors, such as watercourses (rivers, streams, canals, ponds, drainage channels, etc), woodlands, hedgerows and road and railway margins, and features which act as stepping stones, such as marshes and woodlands, which taken as a whole help to improve the coherence of the European network

EU Habitats Directive 1992 and the Planning & Development Act, any proposed development with potential to impact upon the integrity of a European Site shall be subject to an Appropriate Assessment;

4. Where the 'buffer zone' coincides with existing undeveloped lands, and the development of these lands is not essential for the achievement of the development vision and strategic objectives for the town, the land will be zoned 'OS2' – **passive open space**. The only developments that will be considered in such area are those which contribute to the objective of the Passive Open Space zone (detailed in this plan) and that can be shown to not diminish the role and function of such areas, will not result in adverse impacts on the integrity of any EU protected site and will not diminish the biodiversity value of the lands or the ability of plants and animals to thrive and move through the area.

### European Sites Objectives

To protect European Sites and a suitable buffer area from inappropriate development.

Projects giving rise to adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites (cumulatively, directly or indirectly) arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall not be permitted on the basis of this plan<sup>4</sup>.

Ensure that development proposals, contribute as appropriate towards the protection and where possible enhancement of the ecological coherence of the European Site network and encourage the retention and management of landscape features that are of major importance for wild fauna and flora as per Article 10 of the EU Habitats directive. All projects and plans arising from this Plan will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

In order to ensure the protection of the integrity of European Sites, the planning authority is not limited to the implementation of the above objectives, and shall implement all other relevant objectives of the CDP as it sees fit.

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<sup>4</sup> Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. there must be: a) no alternative solution available, b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project to proceed; and c) adequate compensatory measures in place.

## PART 2

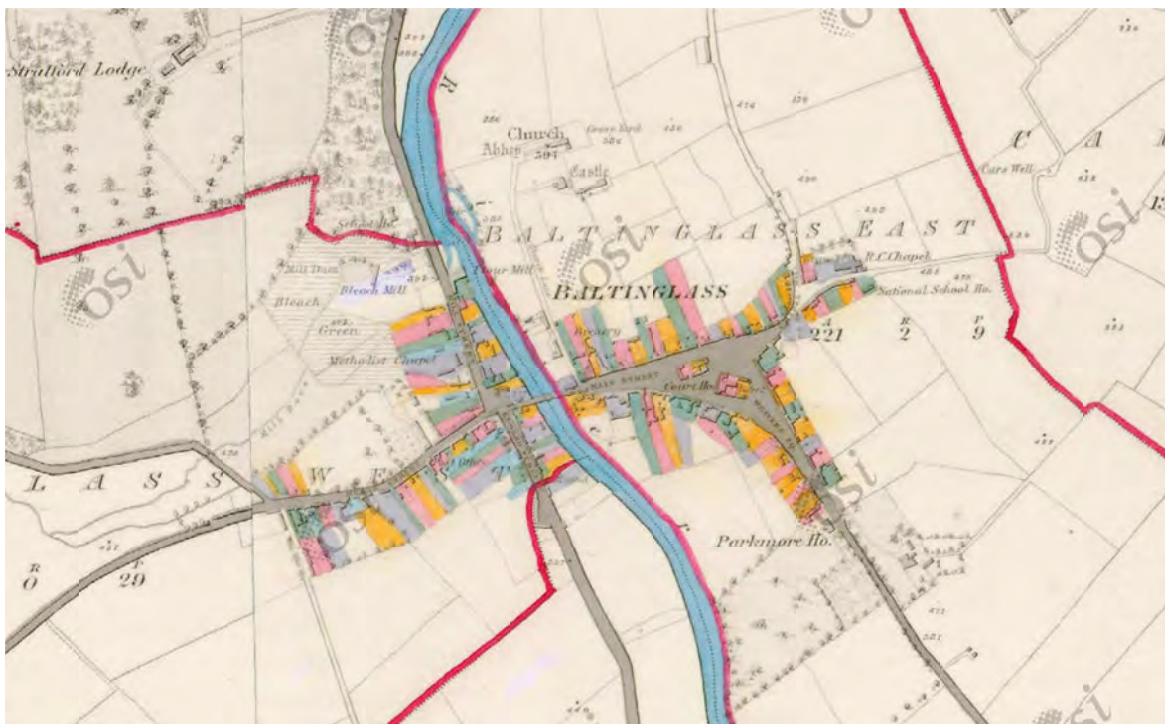
## BALTINGLASS SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

### 2.1 Context

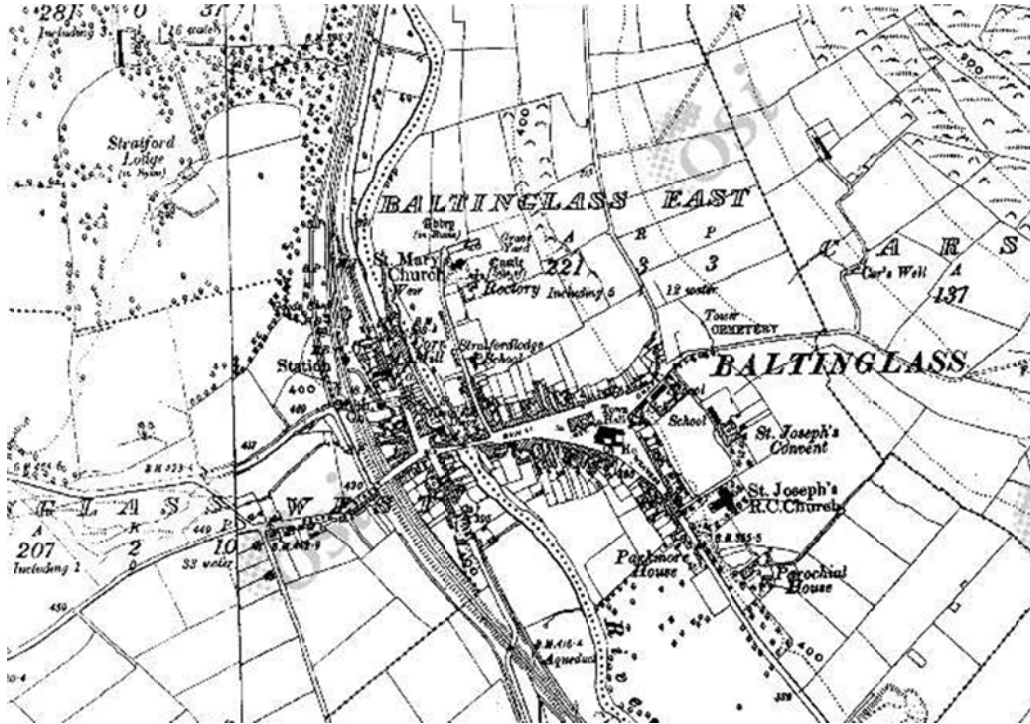
Baltinglass is located on the western fringes of the Wicklow Mountains, in west Co. Wicklow, near the Kildare and Carlow borders. The town is located in the Wicklow rural hinterland, approximately 30km south of Blessington, on the N81 Dublin-Tullow Road. It is also traversed by the R747, from Arklow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

The Cistercian abbey, founded by Diarmaid Mac Murchadha in 1148, was the origin of the settlement that became Baltinglass. It began as a village at a fording place on the Slaney adjacent to the Abbey. At the time of the dissolution of the Abbey by Henry VIII in 1537 there was a small gathering of houses. By the 1660s there were 38 houses and in 1663 the town was incorporated by charter from Charles II. In the mid-eighteenth century textile industries were introduced by the Stratford family (later Earls of Aldborough). During the 1798 Rebellion, and for many decades afterwards, Baltinglass was a garrison town. By the early nineteenth century it was the seat of administration for West Wicklow, with a courthouse, a prison and an infirmary. In 1838 it was designated the centre of a poor law union and in 1841 the workhouse was opened.

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 Squares. West of the river, the town centre is focused around the N81/R747 crossroads, along Edward Street, Mill Street and Belan Street, which was the location on the former railway line. Baltinglass railway station opened in 1885, as part of the line from Sallins to Tullow. It closed to passengers in 1947 and closed altogether in 1959 along with the rest of the line. 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 local landmark is Quinn's Mart Site on Mill Street to the north of the town, which is a very active commercial site serving a wide area, and contains the former train station building.

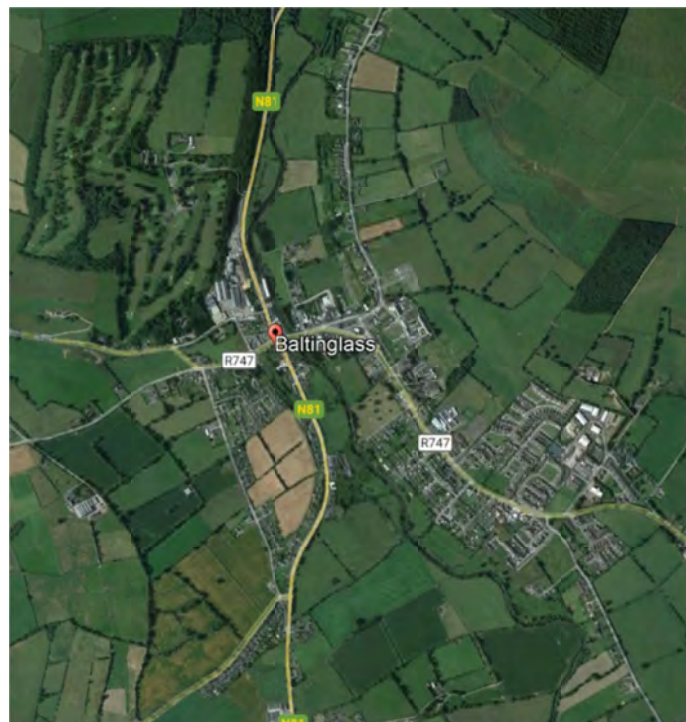


Historic 6-inch map 1829-1842



6-inch Cassini Maps (1830s – 1930s)

The town has grown considerably in recent years to a 2016 population of 2,251 people. Although employment can be sourced locally from activities pertaining to farming, industry and the services sector, a considerable proportion of people commute out of the area, including 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.



Baltinglass 2021 (Google Earth)

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, traffic congestion along the Main Street and the N81/R747 intersection and the potential for flooding arising from the presence of the River Slaney.

## 2.2 Overall Vision & 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.
- Facilitate a transition to a low carbon settlement.

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 plan for and encourage the provision of high quality housing, concentrated principally in Baltinglass town centre and lands within 1km of the town centre.
- To improve linkages between Baltinglass core town centre/existing community infrastructure and existing / planned new residential areas; in particular, to improve pedestrian accessibility across the River Slaney.
- To promote and support the delivery of enhanced public transport infrastructure, including the potential for a bus based park and ride facility in the town.
- 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 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.

### 2.3 Residential Development

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

As set out in Part 1.1.2, the future housing growth target for Baltinglass is c. 150 units. A minimum of 30% of the targeted housing growth shall be directed into the built up area of the settlement, generally comprising lands zoned 'town centre' and 'existing residential'. In cognisance that the potential of town centre regeneration / infill / brownfield sites is difficult to predict, there shall be no quantitative restriction inferred from this plan on the number of units that may be delivered on lands zoned 'TC' or 'RE' within the built up envelope of the town.

This plan makes provision for two 'greenfield' areas zoned for new housing development, with development capacity for c. 150 units; the smaller of these two sites (with capacity for c. 15 units) actually being located within the built up envelope of the town.

Having regard to the population and housing targets, some previously zoned residential land is herewith designated a 'strategic land bank' (SLB); these are lands that are considered as being potentially suitable for new residential development having regard to proximity and accessibility to infrastructure but that are not necessary for development during the lifetime of this plan and may only be considered for detailed zoning and development after 2028, if the need arises.

**Table 2.1 Residential & SLB zoning provisions**

Location/Description	Area (ha)	Zoning	Potential / permitted No. of Units
Bawnoge (N81)	3.8	RN	135 <sup>5</sup>
Lathalere	0.6	RN	15
Bawnogue	8.8	SLB	n/a
<b>Total</b>			<b>150</b>

<sup>5</sup> Permission already granted in 2019 for 55 unit development on these lands, as yet to commence; however lands have potential for more intensive development.

## 2.4 Economic Development & Employment

As set out in the introduction to the Level 4 Town Plans it is an objective of the County Development Plan to increase the jobs ratio in Baltinglass by at least 25% by 2031. 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 to the Key Towns of Naas and Carlow / Graigecullen;
- the established agriculture sector and agri business; and
- a strong heritage and recreation offer that could be further developed for visitors.

Given the town's location and accessibility, it is unlikely that the town can act as an attractor for a large scale employer to locate 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' intensive industries given the town's proximity to the N81 national secondary route and the N9/M9.

With respect to tourism and recreation, the combination of the town's archaeological and historical assets (in particular the Baltinglass hillforts archaeological landscape), its natural environment that offers numerous recreational opportunities (such as water sports based on the River Slaney, outdoor pursuits such as hill walking) in addition to 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 is well positioned to enhance its tourism sector and to also act as a tourism 'gateway' between the Wicklow Mountains and visitors coming from / going to south Kildare / the south east of Ireland.

The plan will 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.

### Economic Development & Employment Objectives

- BALT1** To facilitate and support the growth of the town centre of Baltinglass in accordance with the provisions set out in Section 2.5 of this plan and to encourage the development of new employment, including but not limited to retail / retail services and business support services (such as solicitors, accountants, architects etc), start-ups etc within the TC zone.
- BALT2** To facilitate and support the development of the tourism industry in Baltinglass, in particular the town's tourism offer and infrastructure, and its role as a gateway between the tourism assets within Co. Wicklow and the wider region.
- BALT3** To promote the development of employment lands within Baltinglass in accordance with the provisions of SLO-2 as set out in Section 2.9 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.

## 2.5 Town Centre & Retail

The commercial core of Baltinglass is focused along the Main Street, Market Square and Weavers Square on the east side of the River Slaney, and on the west side of the river along the N81 south of the mart site as far as Edward Street. There are two supermarkets, one each side of the river, and a range of smaller shops, retail services, community facilities, cafes and public houses along all key streets and squares. The user experience on the west side of the Slaney is poor as the N81 passes through this part of the town, which carries significant traffic, giving rise to difficulties accessing premises, congestion and safety issues. In addition, there are significant safety issues arising, particularly for pedestrians crossing from one side of the Slaney to the other due to the narrow width of the bridge, which has no pedestrian facilities. The areas and streets around Market Square and Weavers Square to the east of the Slaney are more pedestrian and user friendly, and it is in this area of the town centre that the majority of public services are located.

The current retail offer and range of town centre services in Baltinglass is not considered sufficient to meet the needs of the town and its catchment's existing and future population, and there is a dependency on larger towns in the region for higher order services. A wider range of shops (particularly in comparison shopping) and recreational, cultural and social facilities, as well as an improved public realm are required to ensure a re-invigorate and revitalise the town's centre, with an improved daytime and evening experience. The town centre must provide for a mix of retail, employment, education, social and cultural activities, where people engage with each other and shopping plays only a part of the town centre experience. The regeneration of the town centre will in turn benefit the wider economy by attracting people not only to live but also to work in the town.

A significant number of buildings and sites are vacant in the town centre, which could be suitable for appropriate redevelopment particularly for residential and employment use. These sites present an opportunity to develop a more diverse range of services and facilities for the town centre which would regenerate the town centre and encourage more people to visit and spend money. Many of these sites are in a ruinous or neglected condition which has an adverse effect on the character of the area including anti-social behaviour and in some cases a reduction in the number of people choosing to live here. The implementation of the Vacant Site Levy and the Derelict Sites Levy will be key to the regeneration of this area. Many of the vacant sites in the town centre have already been placed on the Vacant Site Register and the Council will continue to monitor and investigate vacancy levels in the town.

The town centre of Baltinglass contains a significant number of structures / features of built heritage value, some of which are listed for preservation. These play an important part in adding to the overall attractiveness of the town centre and contribute to the traditional town centre appeal. With the increasing interest in greenways and walking routes, opportunities with respect to the route of the old railway line and associated structures (such as the old railway station) on the west side of the town may arise.

It is an objective of the Local Authority to continue to work with the local community to develop an agreed programme for the improvement of the public realm of the town centre and for the overall physical, economic and social regeneration of the town centre, and to actively seek funding to implement same. In this regard, RRDF funding was secured in 2019 for the first stages of this project, namely for public realm improvements around Main Street and Market Square and the regeneration of the Courthouse / library building including the development of a digital / co-working hub.

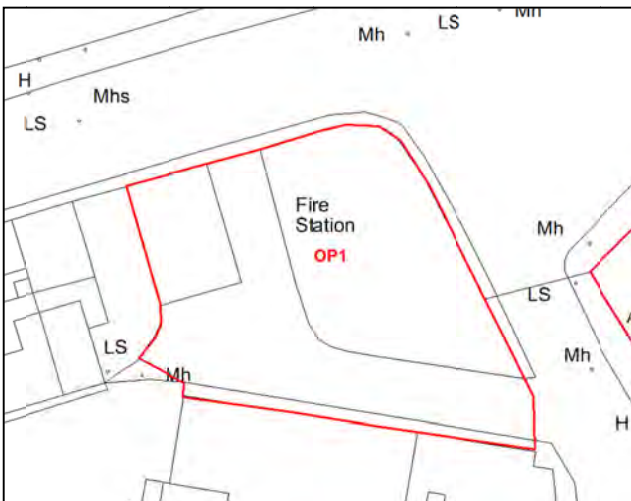
In accordance with the above this plan identifies two key opportunity sites within the core area, which alongside the objectives for the town centre below shall support the overall strategy for the development of the town centre of Baltinglass.



## Opportunity Sites

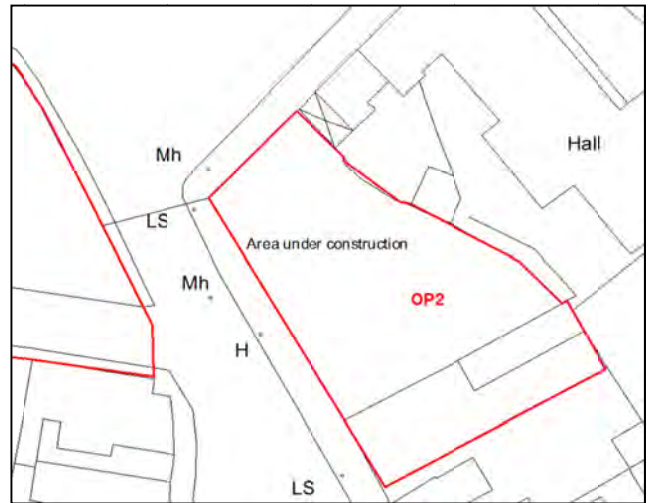
### OP1 The Fire Station

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.



### OP2 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.



## Town Centre & Retail Development Objectives

- BALT6** To work with the local community and other stakeholders to design, secure funding for and implement significant improvements to the town centre including but not limited to:
- the provision of mechanisms to slow traffic through this area;
  - the provision of safer pedestrian access over the River Slaney;
  - alterations to the layout of the road carriageway and on-street car parking to allow for the provision of new or improved pedestrian and cycling facilities and additional pedestrian crossing points;
  - the creation of new civic spaces at suitable locations and in particular around Market Square and Weavers Square;
  - improved hard and soft landscaping and tree planting, lighting, seating and other street 'furniture';
  - the improvement of safety and appearance of key junctions, in particular the N81 / R747 junction;
  - the provision of improved facilities for public transport providers and users, including improved access to bus stops (particularly crossing points for passengers), shelters, covered bicycle parking, information points with maps, routes, timetables, real-time information and designated taxi ranks at / near the bus stops on Main Street;
  - The provision of bicycle parking and electric car charging points.
- BALT7** To support opportunities to create better linkages between the town centre and the river.
- BALT8** All development proposals in the 'Town Centre' zone shall respect the character and setting of the historic main streets and squares including but not limited to protected structures therein and integrate in a satisfactory manner with the existing character and streetscape in terms of massing, rhythm, materials and finishes.
- BALT9** To facilitate and support the development of a new supermarket on land zoned town centre that will improve the retail offer for Baltinglass and the surrounding area and will support a healthy and vibrant town centre.

## 2.6 Social & Community Development

Key community facilities currently in Baltinglass settlement boundary or in the immediate vicinity include:

Facility	Name
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community Centre</li> <li>▪ Library</li> <li>▪ Baltinglass outreach centre / citizens information</li> <li>▪ Youth club</li> </ul>
Religious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ St. Joseph's RC</li> <li>▪ St. Mary's Col</li> </ul>
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Scoil Naomh Iosaf NS</li> <li>▪ Stratford Lodge NS</li> <li>▪ Scoil Chonglais</li> </ul>
Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Baltinglass playground</li> </ul>
Childcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Little Feet</li> <li>▪ Kids Aloud</li> </ul>
Sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Baltinglass GAA</li> <li>▪ Baltinglass Town AFC</li> <li>▪ Baltinglass outdoor recreation centre</li> <li>▪ Badminton Club</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Golf Club</li> </ul>
<b>Medical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Baltinglass District Hospital</li> <li>▪ Health Centre</li> <li>▪ Primary Care Centre</li> </ul>
<b>Emergency Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fire Station</li> <li>▪ Garda Station</li> </ul>

The Council seeks to create an environment in which everyone can develop to their full potential to enable them to participate in and contribute to all aspects of social, economic and cultural life. While the town of Baltinglass has a good range of community facilities, including sports grounds, indoor community and recreational facilities, health centre and primary and secondary schools, enhanced facilities are needed to accommodate the recent and planned future growth in population.

### Open Space

In accordance with the Council's 'Play' and 'Sports & Recreation' strategies, approximately 12ha<sup>6</sup> of open space would be required for a town of c. 2,750 persons with a wider catchment of c. 5,000, generally provided as 8ha of organised sports grounds and outdoor play space, 3ha of casual informal play spaces (which includes open space within housing estates) and 1ha of equipped play spaces.

**Table 2.2 Active & passive open space**

	Location	Zoning	Area (ha)
<b>Existing</b>	Baltinglass Park	OS	3.5
	Residential open spaces	RE	3.5
<b>Proposed</b>	Rathcoran	OS	0.9
	Bawnogue (AA1)	AOS	3.4
	Riverine park (east)	OS1	1.2
	Riverine park (west)	OS1	7.5
	Riverine corridor (east)	OS2	3.8
	Riverine corridor (west)	OS2	8.5
	Residential open spaces <sup>7</sup>	RN	1.2

Baltinglass GAA, located just south-east of the plan boundary, also provides c. 5ha of active open space.

The protection and enhancement of heritage and environmental assets through this plan will help to safeguard the local character and distinctiveness of the area and its surroundings, providing local economic, social and environmental benefits. This plan has identified the River Slaney and its associated green corridor as a 'Green Infrastructure' resource in the area. Any lands within 50m of the river bank, where currently undeveloped, are zoned OS2 'passive open space' where the goal is to protect and enhance the function of these areas as flood plains, buffer zones along watercourses and rivers, green breaks between built up areas, green corridors and areas of natural biodiversity.

It is an objective of this plan that where possible and feasible without damage to their ecosystems (most likely therefore on lands zoned OS1), to develop these riverine areas as linked parks. Subject to further assessment it is desired that such parks would link to existing developed parks and recreation areas and to future longer 'greenroutes' such as a possible greenroute along the old railway line.

<sup>6</sup> Policy is to provide for 2.4 ha (6 acres) per 1,000 population for outdoor playing space comprising 1.6 hectares for outdoor sport, 0.6ha of 'casual play space' and 0.2ha of 'equipped play space'.

<sup>7</sup> Open spaces associated with housing developments are counted as 'casual informal play space'. The total likely to be provided is based on the amount of land zoned for new housing.

The exact route for these possible developments is not yet known so detailed ecological assessment for impacts on important ecological features, including general ecological impact assessment and specifically Appropriate Assessment, is best carried out when these routes are designed. The detailed design of these schemes will need to take into account the relevant ecological features in proximity to the proposed routes and the potential for impacts arising from the routes will need to be taken into account including both construction and operational phases.

### **Community Development Objectives**

- BALT10** To support and facilitate the development of a multi-purpose sports campus in Baltinglass.
- BALT11** To require the delivery of new parks and open spaces, including sports grounds, as part of major development in SLO-1 and SLO-2.
- BALT12** To facilitate and encourage the development of a series of high quality open spaces throughout the town, preferably as part of a larger linked green network, that is available to all ages and accessible to everyone, including people with mobility impairments.
- BALT13** To facilitate the development and enhancement of suitable access to and connectivity between areas of interest for residents, wildlife and biodiversity, with focus on promoting river corridors, European Sites, nature reserves and other distinctive landscapes as focal features for linkages between natural, semi natural and formalised green spaces where feasible and ensuring that there is no adverse impact (directly, indirectly or cumulatively) on the conservation objectives of European Sites.

## **2.7 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.

**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 3,600pe (population equivalent) with current loading of c. 2,800pe and therefore capacity is adequate to accommodate existing and planned development in the town.

**Water Supply:** Baltinglass is served by 2 wells (at Tinornan and Parkmore) and springs (at Bawnogues) which are only used seasonably to supplement supply if required. It is intended that these springs will be decommissioned and replaced with a borehole in the event of development in SLO-1 / SLO-2. The capacity of the current supply (including the springs) will meet the water supply needs of the town in the medium term and will be likely sufficient accommodate development targeted in this plan.

### **Transportation & 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.

### Service Infrastructure Objectives

**BALT14** To provide for new pedestrian footbridge connecting the east and west of the town.

**BALT15** 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, and supporting a modal shift to more active and sustainable modes of transport.

**BALT16** To address the safety and traffic flow issues at the junction of the N81 and the R747.

## 2.8 Built & Natural Heritage

### Built Heritage

Baltinglass has a wealth of buildings of architectural merit (See map No. 2 Heritage Objectives). 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. There are many further valuable building and items that are not on the RPS; together these structures enhance the character of the area and are important tourism assets to the town. While some historical structures in the town are well maintained, many others continue to fall into disrepair. Such structures form part of the town's built heritage and history, and their protection and regeneration is a key aim of this plan.

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.

### Natural Heritage

The town and its surroundings are abundant with natural heritage, the protection and enhancements of which is vital to the overall sustainability development of the area, the development of recreation and tourism and for the continued health and well-being of residents. 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. In order to ensure both that lands surrounding this watercourse is maintained free of development in accordance with flood risk management principles and that the lands remain open as a green resource to the area, this plan designates lands along both banks as 'open space'.

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 , 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*'.

### Heritage Objectives

**BALT17** To ensure the protection of all structures (or parts of structures) contained in the Record of Protected Structures.

**BALT18** To consolidate and safeguard the historical and architectural character of Baltinglass town centre through

the protection of individual buildings, structures, shopfronts and elements of the public realm that are of architectural merit and / or contribute greatly to this character. All proposals for development within the historic core of Baltinglass and in the vicinity of recorded monuments and protected structures shall be accompanied by an archaeological / architectural impact assessment clearly demonstrating that the development proposed will not adversely impact on the integrity, heritage value or setting of valuable features and showing how the development has been designed to protect and enhance the heritage of the area.

**BALT19** To protect the integrity of the Baltinglass Hills archaeological landscape including identified monuments and their wider setting by resisting development that may adversely impact upon the significance and understanding of this important landscape.

**BALT20** New development and redevelopment proposals, where considered appropriate, are required to contribute towards the protection, management and enhancement of the existing green infrastructure assets / corridors and the provisions of new green infrastructure assets / corridors in terms of the design, layout and landscaping of development proposals.

## 2.9 Specific Local Objectives

### SLO-1 Bawnoge (North)

This area is located on lands west of the River Slaney, accessed off the N81 national secondary route. The subject lands measure c. 10ha and include c. 3.8ha zoned for new residential development, 1.3ha zoned for 'mixed use' and 4.95ha zoned for open spaces use (AOS, OS1, OS2).

Permission was granted in 2019 for 55 housing units on part of the lands zoned for 'new residential'. Any further applications for permission or amendments to the parent permission in this SLO area shall comply with the provisions of this updated town plan.

This SLO shall be developed in accordance with the following criteria:

- 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.
- Access into these lands shall be so located and designed as to provide for access from the N81 into SLO-2.
- The mixed use zone shall be reserved for the development of a discount foodstore.
- No further permission shall be granted in SLO-1 unless accompanied by a programme for the delivery of an active open space zone of not less than 2ha on lands zoned AOS.
- Lands zoned OS1 shall be reserved for possible future development of a riverine park.
- Developments adjoining the designated and future open spaces shall be laid out and designed in such a way as to safeguard the integrity of the route of the old railway line as part of a possible longer amenity route and so designed and units so orientated as to allow for passive supervision and easy access to the open spaces; in particular, no structures shall back onto open spaces and residential open spaces shall be designed where possible to flow into the larger open space areas.
- The development of the action area shall ensure adequate protection and enhancement of the open space and conservation area adjoining the River Slaney.

## SLO-2 Bawnoge (South)

This area is located on lands west of the River Slaney, proximate to the N81 national secondary route. The subject lands measure c. 18ha and include c. 10.5ha zoned for employment use, and 7.5ha zoned for open space uses (OS1 and OS2).

This SLO shall be developed in accordance with the following criteria:

- Access into these lands shall be via SLO-1 unless a suitable alternative from the N81 is determined which does not prejudice access to SLO-1
- Lands zoned OS1 shall be reserved for possible future development of a riverine park.
- Developments adjoining the designated and future open spaces shall be laid out and designed in such a way as to safeguard the integrity of the route of the old railway line as part of a possible longer amenity route and so designed and units so orientated as to allow for passive supervision and easy access to the open spaces; in particular, no structures shall back onto open spaces and development open spaces shall be designed where possible to flow into the larger open space areas.
- The development of the action area shall ensure adequate protection and enhancement of the open space and conservation area adjoining the River Slaney.

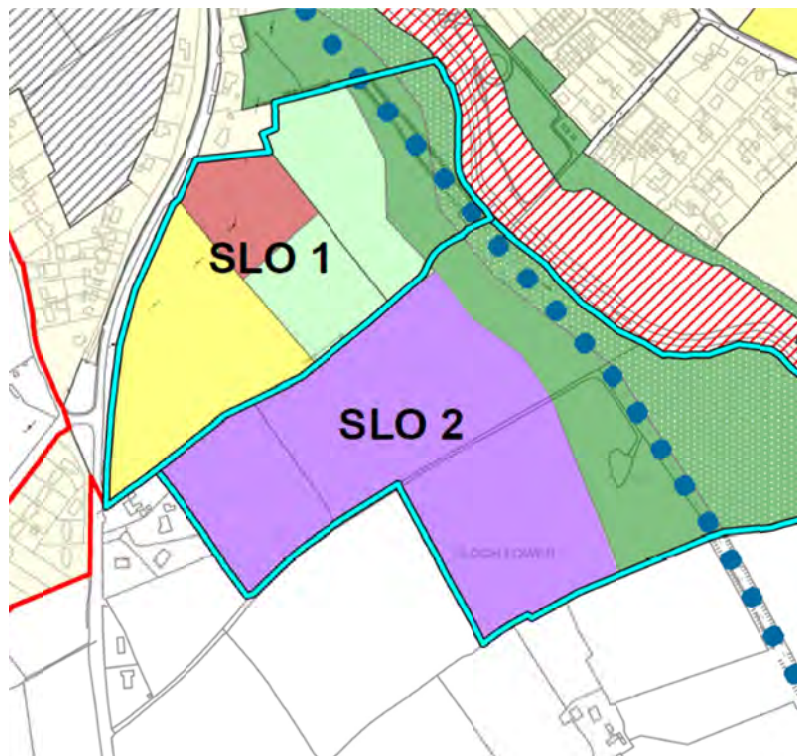


Figure 2.1 Specific Local Objective Areas 1 & 2

### SLO-3 Baltinglass East

This area is located on lands east of the River Slaney, south of Market Square. The subject lands measure c. 1ha and are zoned for tourism use. Parts of these lands are in Flood Zones A and B.

This SLO shall be developed in accordance with the following criteria:

- Only 'water compatible development' as defined by 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines' (OPW / DEHLG 2009) may occur in areas identified in this plan SFRA or any future site specific flood risk assessment as being in Flood Zone A;
- Only 'water compatible development' or 'less vulnerable development' as defined by the Guidelines may occur in areas identified in this plan SFRA or any future site specific flood risk assessment as being in Flood Zone B;
- Projects giving rise to adverse effects on the integrity of the River Slaney SAC or any other European site (cumulatively, directly or indirectly) arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall not be permitted on the basis of this zoning<sup>8</sup>. Any development proposals will be required to contribute as appropriate towards the protection and where possible enhancement of the ecological coherence of the European Site network and encourage the retention and management of landscape features that are of major importance for wild fauna and flora as per Article 10 of the EU Habitats directive.

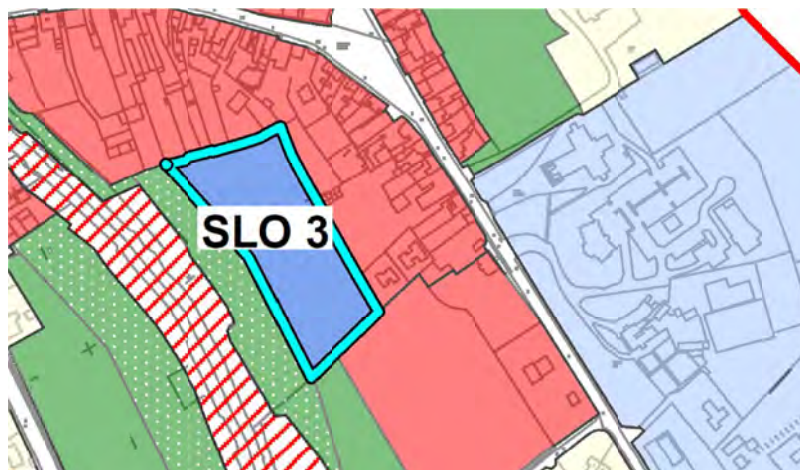
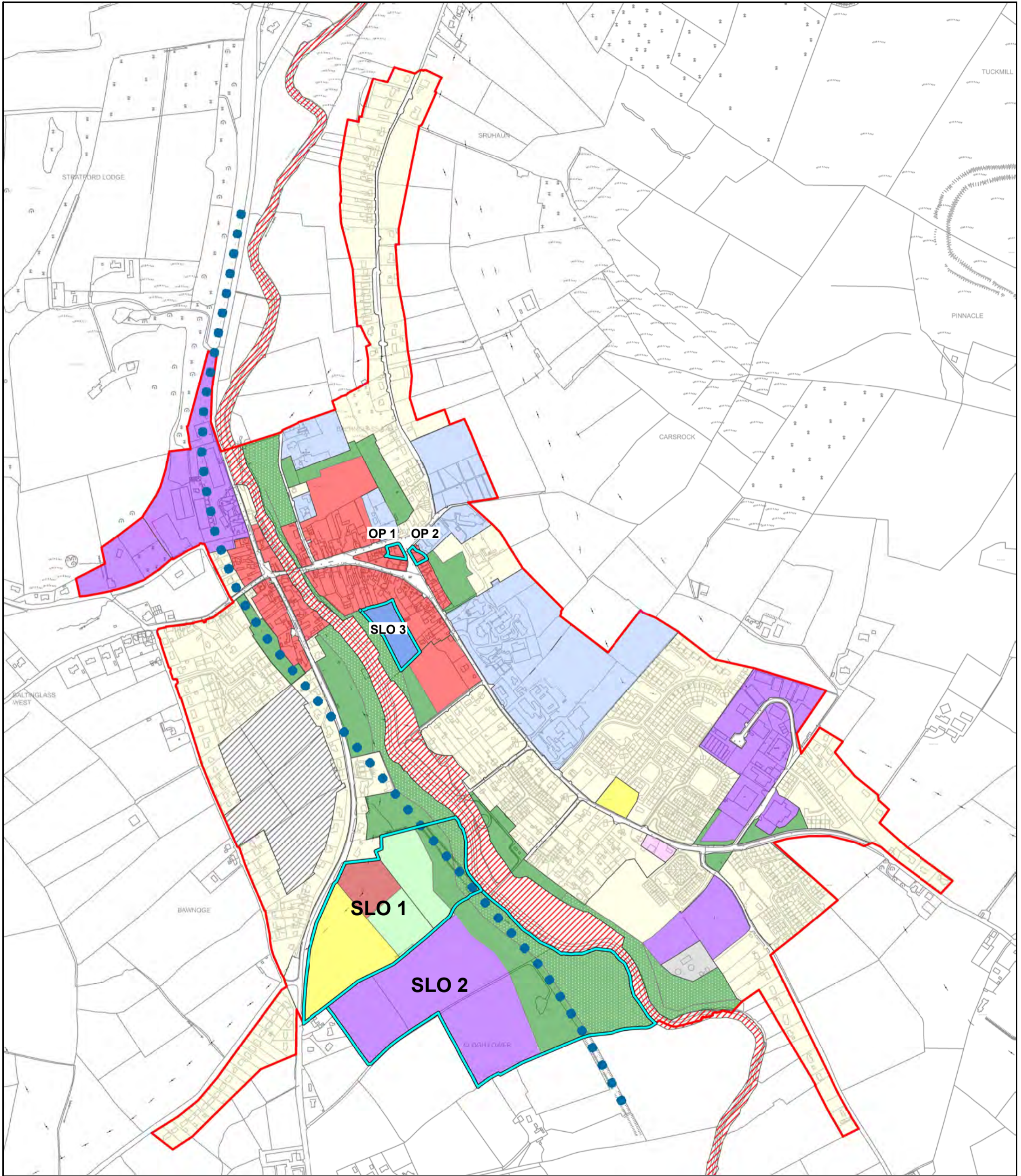


Figure 2.2 Specific Local Objective Areas 3

<sup>8</sup> Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. there must be: a) no alternative solution available, b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project to proceed; and c) adequate compensatory measures in place.





**Baltinglass Town Plan**

**Map No. 1**

**Land Use Zoning Objectives**



**Legend**

- Settlement Boundary
- RN-New Residential
- RE-Existing Residential
- TC-Town Centre
- CE-Community & Education
- E-Employment
- MU-Mixed Use
- PU-Public Utility
- OP-Opportunity Sites & SLO-Specific Local Objectives
- LSS-Local Shops & Services
- SLB-Strategic Land Bank
- AOS-Active Open Space
- OS1-Open Space
- OS2-Passive Open Space
- Tourism
- SAC-Special Area of Conservation
- - - ● Route of old railway line - Possible Greenway Route

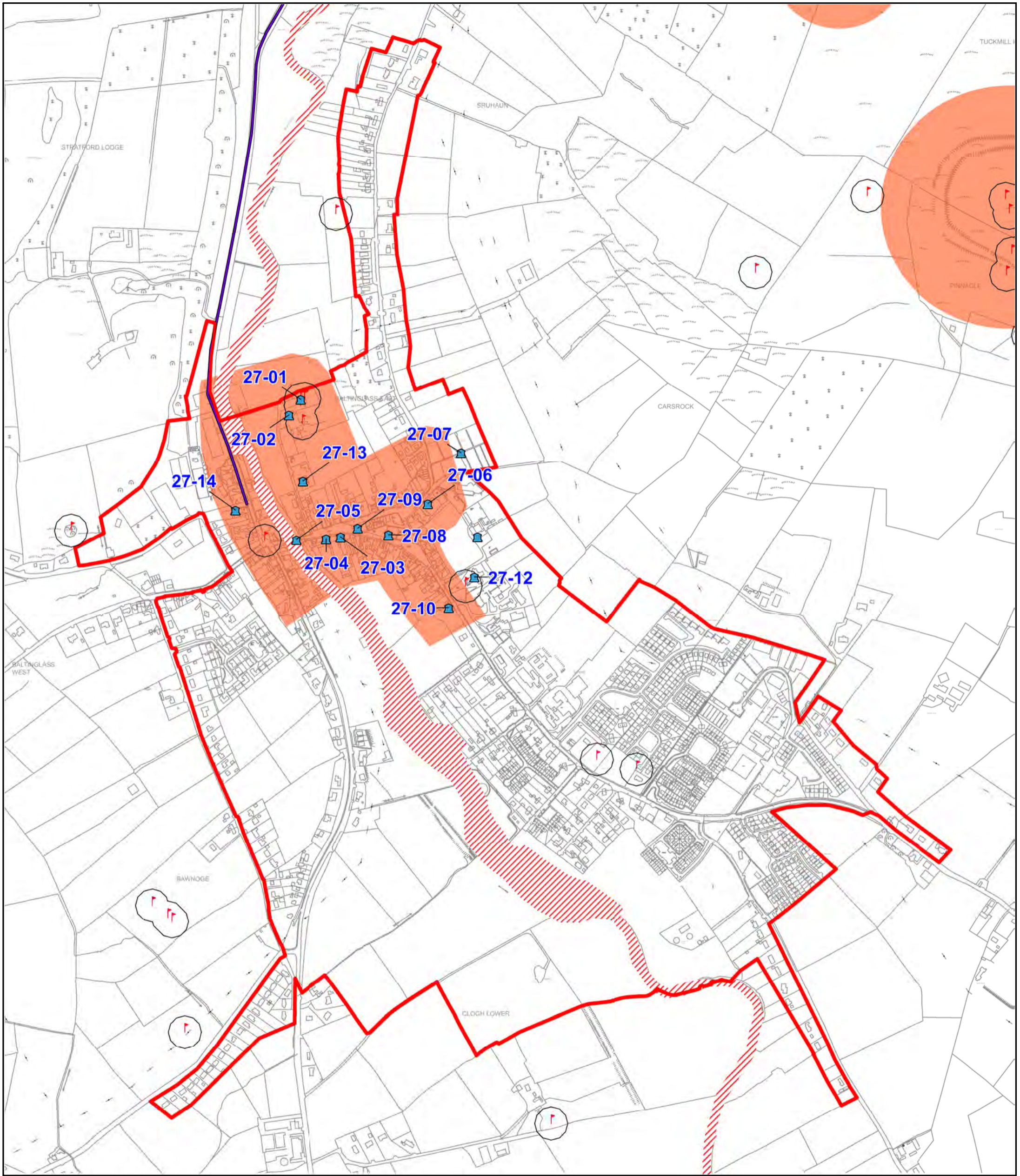
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**Baltinglass Town Plan**

**Map No. 2**

**Heritage Objectives**



**Legend**

- Settlement Boundary
- 🏠 Protected Structure
- P National Monuments
- Prospects
- SAC-Special Area of Conservation
- Area of Archaeological Potential and Significance

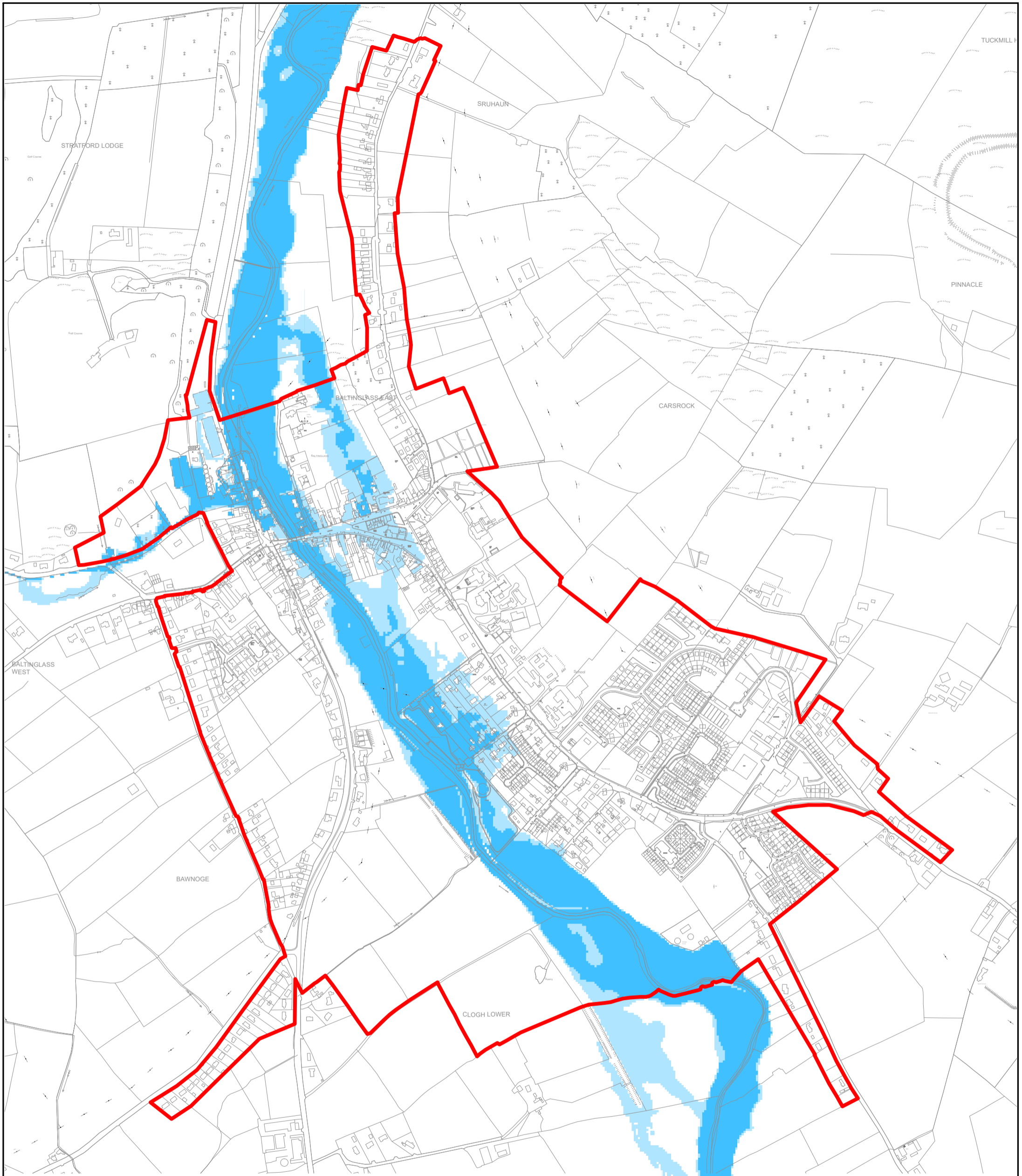
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**Baltinglass Town Plan**

**Map No. 3**

**Indicative Flood Zones**



**Legend**

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)

Settlement Boundry

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

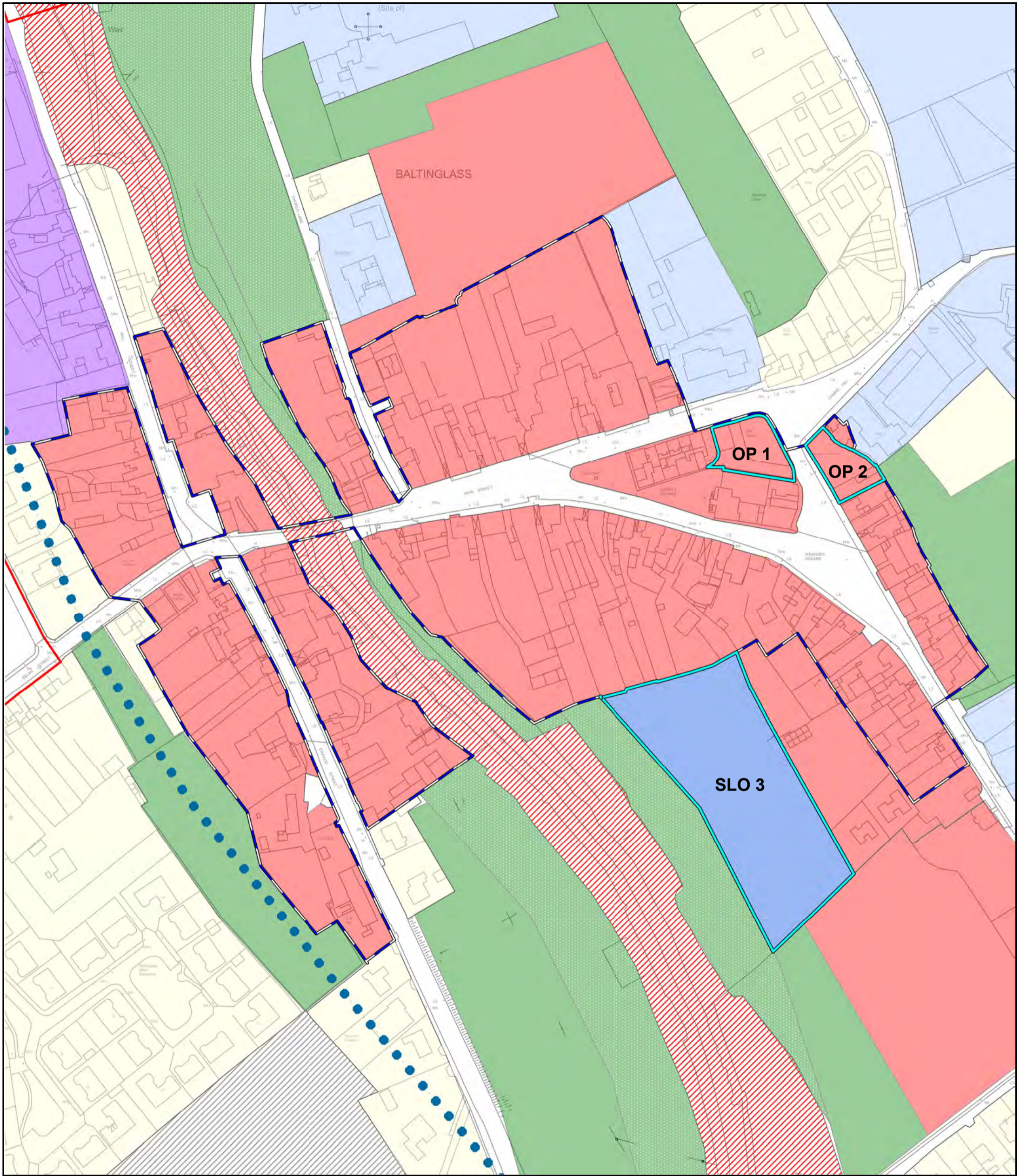
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**Baltinglass Town Plan**

**Map No. 4**

**Regeneration & Renewal Area**



**Legend**

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Settlement Boundary      | Route of old railway line - Possible Greenway Route  |
| Regeneration Boundary    | OP-Opportunity Sites & SLO-Specific Local Objectives |
| RN-New Residential       | SAC-Special Area of Conservation                     |
| RE-Existing Residential  | LSS-Local Shops & Services                           |
| TC-Town Centre           | SLB-Strategic Land Bank                              |
| CE-Community & Education | AOS-Active Open Space                                |
| E-Employment             | OS1-Open Space                                       |
| PU-Public Utility        | OS2-Passive Open Space                               |
|                          | Tourism  |

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