



Chapter 12



CLONES TOWN  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN  
2007-2013



# Introduction

## 12.1.0 Introduction

The Clones Development Plan 2007 - 2013 is the successor document to the 2001 – 2006 Urban Development Plan and any previous plans. The plan relates to the administrative area of Clones urban district as identified on the attached map CDP 1.

This Clones Development Plan has been prepared concurrently with the Plans for Monaghan County and the four towns of Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, and Ballybay, in an attempt to provide a more comprehensive and cohesive blue print for the development of the county as a whole.

As such the land use zoning map (CDP 1) contains zoned lands within the environs of the towns that are located within the functional area of the County Council. For the sake of clarity and to avoid repetition, these maps have not been reproduced elsewhere. They will however, in so far as they relate to lands zoned for a particular land use within the functional area of the County Council, form part of the County Development Plan 2007 - 2013.

It should be noted that many policies contained within the County Development Plan will also be applicable to the Clones Development Plan. In order to avoid repetition, common policies have not been repeated in each plan, but have in many cases, been highlighted and cross referenced by paragraph numbers and policy references. In all cases however, policies contained within the County Development Plan that relate to urban development shall apply and shall be considered to form part of the Clones Development Plan, unless otherwise stated. Similarly, policies contained within the Clones Development Plan will be applicable to all zoned lands identified on the attached map CDP1 and shall form Monaghan County Development Plan 2007- 2013 unless otherwise stated.

The Clones Development Plan 2007 – 2013 sets out the Council's vision for the development of Clones and contains objectives which it seeks to implement over the period of the plan. These objectives relate to a range of topics including road and traffic, provision of services, preservation and conservation of buildings and protection of sites of scientific, historic or cultural importance. The plan will also address current and future plans for the development of Clones town through the provision by means of zoning of appro-

prate areas of land for residential, commercial and retail, industrial, open space and recreational areas.

## 12.1.1 Location and Context

Clones town is located less than 1 kilometre from the border with the North of Ireland, 20 kms west of Monaghan town and 25 kms north-east of Cavan town on the main Galway to Belfast National Secondary Road (N54). The town services the economic needs of a large rural hinterland, which extends into the North of Ireland and was a regional centre for the rail transport system in the past.

Clones has been a town in decline for the last thirty years. The town has suffered socially, economically and physically as a result of the troubles in Northern Ireland. The closure of border roads and direct links with its traditional hinterlands, throughout the 1970's and 1980's, decline in traditional industries and failure to attract significant inward investment, combined with its poor transport links, relative remoteness from Dublin and the separation of currency links (Sterling and Euro) have all contributed to the economic and social decline of the town.

The Clones Regeneration Strategy, 2002, a community-led study and plan for the economic and social regeneration of the town identified in detail the principal reasons for the decline.

1. Declining urban population with aging profile
2. Outward migration of males of working age
3. Poor transport infrastructure
4. Lack of amenities and services in the urban area and general perception of poor physical environment.
5. Lack of diversity within present industrial base.
6. Stagnation and over reliance on agricultural incomes
7. Higher unemployment rates, especially among males
8. Underdeveloped tourism sector and lack of amenities and services to aid development of this sector.
9. Lack of amenities and services and lack of sufficient resources, physical and human to entice larger firms.

The population of Clones town declined by 16% in the year's 1986 - 1996 and by a further 10% in the years 1996 - 2002. The 2006 census figures indicate a continuation of this trend with a further population decline of -12% between 2002 and 2006. The population in the hinterland of the town has remained stable, indicating a population movement from urban to rural areas and reflected in the lack of urban housing development and proliferation of one-off detached housing within the environs of the town. This pattern of development is replicated in each of the other five towns in the county; however the decline in urban population in Clones town is the most marked.



The Diamond, Clones

### 12.1.2 Historical Context

Clones is associated with the monastic settlement of its patron, Saint Tiernach, who established a Church and monastery named Cluain Eois in the sixth Century. However, the Ring fort located on the hill overlooking these ruins indicates a much earlier pre-Christian settlement on this site. The Abbey (of Saints Peter and Paul) was established by Saint Augustine's' canons in the early 12th century and the ruins of this Abbey are still to be found at the junction of Abbey Street and Mc Curtain Street. A Norman motte and bailey located to the west of the Diamond exist from this era and a planter's castle erected and garrisoned by English settlers in the 17th century overlooks O'Duffy's Street.

In recent centuries much of the development of the modern town and surrounding abbey can be traced to the

efforts of the agents who represented its absentee landlords, the Barrett-Lennards. Linen production was successfully introduced to the town and its environs and Clones assumed its position as the market centre for a wide hinterland in both counties Monaghan and Fermanagh.

Economic prosperity continued during the first half of the nineteenth century, when St. Tiernach's Church of Ireland was built in a commanding position at the top of the Diamond. The completion of the courthouse and a new and more substantial market house provides evidence of affluence and confidence. Such confidence was encouraged by the opening of the Ulster Canal in 1841 and by the immediate arrival of the railway. As it entered the twentieth century, Clones was comfortably situated, with its by then well-established market and rail communications with Belfast and Dublin. This was the situation until the partition of Ireland changed the relative geographical location and importance of Clones after which it became a border town with its commercial hinterland almost sliced into two halves.

From the 1920's until the late 1950's, the commercial heart of Clones struggled to adapt to changed circumstances as customs posts and 'unapproved' roads virtually encircled the town. A further devastating blow came with the closure of the railway in 1959, which gave rise to an accelerated outward flow, as Clones people moved to find employment elsewhere.

Engineering, food processing, agriculture and angling tourism sustained the town throughout the 1960's, but the impact of the Troubles, the devastating bomb attacks which demolished part of Fermanagh Street, the closure of cross-border routes and the break with Sterling had major repercussions in the 1980's and early 1990's.

As Ireland thrived in a relatively buoyant economy throughout the 1990's, Clones failed to attract new inward investment and stem its loss of population. Despite low interest rates and the opportunities available under a Tax Renewal Schemes, the main commercial streets of the town Fermanagh Street and '98 Avenue continued to decline, while the demand for one-off housing in rural areas accelerated the decline in the town's population.

Clones, today, retains the large open Diamond area in the centre, which together with Fermanagh Street has benefited from a major environmental improvement scheme between 2000 and 2005. The landscaping and general improvements carried out in the town centre have helped improve the general appearance of the town.



Clones retains the feel of a principal town, typified by the dominance of the two churches and the scale of the public space at its heart. The 'planned' nature of its layout, and the grandeur and scale of its civic buildings, particularly in the Diamond, harks to a more prosperous past than most towns.

A number of state-supported community bodies have been active in the town over the past decade. These bodies in a spirit of partnership are addressing the social and economic needs of the townspeople and have harnessed together the many active groups in the town in a cohesive manner. The Clones Regeneration Strategy, published in 2002, sought to address the economic and social decline of Clones town by identifying key proposals/projects that would lead investment in the town and foster a sense of regeneration.

Clones still remains the premier GAA venue in Ulster and aims to capitalise on its strategic location by the development of its historic past and the re-opening of the Ulster Canal. The Canal and the Diamond are the town's most treasured assets.

The Town Council boundary is illustrated on map CDP1 and is the area for which the Town Council has direct responsibility. The areas outside the Town Council boundary is the responsibility of Monaghan County Council.

## Strategy & Vision

### 12.2 Strategy and Vision

The Clones Town Development Plan 2007- 2013 seeks to:

1. Create a clear strategic framework for the sustainable development of the town and its hinterland.
2. Give spatial expression to the economic, cultural and social aims of the town.
3. Provide a basis for significant public and private sector investment in infrastructure, services and development, offering clear guidance to both sectors in framing development proposals, in partnership with the community
4. Establish a framework for more detailed specific local plans and projects within the town

5. Protect and enhance the unique heritage and social amenities of the town.
6. Renew and regenerate the town as the economic driver for the area
7. To enhance and promote the town's image

The town, by virtue of its distance from the county's premier route, N2, and divided hinterland has failed to sustain its previous role as a vibrant market town. Increasing mobility, declining population levels and a failure to attract new industrial investment has led to the town's decline. The Clones Regeneration Strategy identified four strategic issues that contributed to this decline.

1. Proximity to Border and Poor Connectivity
2. Physical and Environmental Decline
3. Loss of Key Wealth Generators
4. Political, Historic and Economic Disadvantage

The Clones Regeneration Strategy, supported by Clones Town Council, sought to break the cycle of decline and contribute to good quality of life by generating and retaining the confidence of those living and willing to invest in the town, as well as those providing and willing to provide services and facilities. The Strategy identified the elements of the town's economic and social infrastructure that require re-building and many of these projects form key elements of this plan.

The policies and objectives of the Town Development Plan reflect those of the Regeneration Strategy and the strategic aims of halting the economic and social decline of the town and improving the quality of life in Clones is common to both plans.

## Land Use

### 12.3 Land Use

The Clones Town Development Plan is fundamentally concerned with promoting growth and development while protecting the natural and built environment. The primary tool to implement this strategy is through land use zoning. The land-use planning map relating to Clones Town is at the back of this plan

Land use zonings indicate the purpose for which particular areas of land may be used and provide certainty with regard to the approximate location and distribution of land uses and activities. The purpose of such zonings is to allow for the rational use of land, protect the amenity of the town and to allow adequate space for current and future developments. Clones Town has been zoned with a variety of land uses enclosed within a development limit which should provide compatible land uses and sufficient lands for the sustainable development of the town over the plan period 2007 -2013. The land uses are as follows:-

- Town Centre - Areas zoned as Town Centre can include mixed uses including commercial retail, offices, light industrial and residential uses.
- Industry and employment
- Commercial
- Community/ Civic / Educational
- Recreation / Open Space - These areas have been zoned to allow for the provision of recreational facilities and open space that allow for active sporting and passive uses. These areas are vital for the social well being of the residential population and also to provide a facility for the public in general
- Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs) - These areas are important landscape features and elevated lands with in the settlement which have been identified so as to ensure that developments do not detrimentally impact on the amenity of the landscape nor on the natural setting of the town.
- Low and Higher Density Housing

The Planning Authority acknowledges that there is an increasing demand for the provision of larger detached dwellings on substantial plots within the planned limits of settlements. To accommodate this need the Planning Authority has zoned areas of low density housing where densities in excess of 6 residential units to the acre (15 dwellings per hectare) will be prohibited. A total of 70 ha have been zoned for low density housing in this development plan.

In accordance with the provisions of the Residential Density Guidelines for Planning Authorities, Clones Town Council shall encourage higher residential densities in appropriate locations, subject to appropriate qualitative safeguards, which ensure that the highest quality of residential environment is achieved. Higher density residential developments will be encouraged within and close to town & settlement centres, where the higher densities reflect the character of the area; the design is of high quality; and the development is on lands that can be serviced. A total of 75 ha have been zoned for higher density housing in this Development Plan.

Areas zoned for Housing may where necessary accommodate some retail or community development, where the provision of these is directly related to the residential use.

Applications for development which would not inhibit the primary zoning use will be considered on its merits, and permission may be granted where the planning authority considers that the proposed use or development would not be detrimental to the primary use objective for that area.



Clones Business Technology Park

# Archaeology & Built Heritage

## 12.4.0 Archaeology

The historical development of Clones is reflected in its urban archaeology and built environment to an extent not seen in any other south Ulster town. The earliest monuments in the town are the Round Tower and Celtic Cross. Situated adjacent to the Round Tower is a stone Sarcophagus carved in the shape of an early Irish Church.

The Augustians built Clones Abbey dedicated to Saint Peter and Saint Paul, in the 12th Century. The Church of Saint Tiernach on the Diamond appears to occupy a site in use from early Christian times. On the same hill is a well-preserved motte and Bailey, constructed by the Normans in 1212

Policies for the protection of Archaeological Heritage in Clones Town are provided in Chapter 4, ENV. 34 - 38 of the County Development Plan 2007 - 2013.

## 12.4.1 Built Heritage

Clones is located in a pivotal position in South Ulster and has a long history of being at the centre of cultural, religious, social and commercial life since pre-Christian times, such as the Round Tower & Abbey, High Cross, Ring Fort. The town has a large number of important archaeological and historic sites of notable importance within Ireland. The town also has retained its industrial heritage with the Ulster Canal and restored Canal Stores (housing examples of Clones Lace) and railway turntable building.

Clones as a town is characterised by the "Diamond", a public open space located in a central prominent position within the town. Formal buildings, several of townscape merit, help define the "Diamond". The public space is dominated by the Church of Ireland to the north west. The graded approaches heighten the civic importance of the Diamond as a public space. The sense of enclosure is strong throughout the narrow streets, which lead up to the Diamond. The changes in levels leading to the Diamond heighten its importance as an urban space.

In later years a number of important buildings were developed including a large selection of Georgian and Victorian

houses. The Market House was built in 1844 (Existing Library), the Courthouse on Mc Curtain Street was also built during this period. The beautiful early Victorian Boardroom adjacent to the Round Tower graveyard was built in 1859. Other buildings around the town which are worthy of note are the Late 19th Century Chapel of the Sacred Heart, The Masonic Hall, Orange Hall, Protestant Hall, High School and the Canal Stores.



Canal Stores - Clones

The overall character of Clones is typified by the contrast between the grandiose formal buildings fronting on to the Diamond and the low scale residential/retail properties adjacent to this. Due to the topography of the town, the surrounding landscape is often visible and this provides a rich contrast to the developed town and built form. The streets vary in character from a built up 'urban' form as with Fermanagh St., to the 'rural' nature of Ball Alley, typified by the high dry-stone wall which surrounds the abbey ruins set against views into the adjacent landscape. An interesting feature throughout the historic town of Clones are the number of arches and archways that link the back lands areas of the main Streets with interesting and appealing spaces, once vibrant and full of residential activity.

All views into the Diamond are terminated by views of buildings on the opposite side, creating a feeling of formal space. The roads that feed the Diamond each vary in character in townscape terms, most notably:

**Fermanagh St.** - The main retail street for the town comprising 2/3 storey properties in terraced formation. The buildings are mainly finished in painted render with little embellishment, and the fenestration is generally of Georgian proportion. The streetscape is enhanced by several ornate/well proportioned shop frontages, which include "The Tower" at the lower end and a terraced series of shop fronts on entrance to the Diamond. The height to width ratio of the street creates enclosure, which provides a rich contrast to the openness of the Diamond ahead. The street gently curves and rises steeply to into the square. The view into the Diamond is terminated by the grandeur of the Market House (County Library).

**Cara Street** - This is principally a domestic street of residential scale. This small scale provides a link between the formal scale of the Diamond and the rural landscape beyond. The street rises in to the Diamond and the ornate shop frontages at the head of Fermanagh Street terminate the view into the Diamond. At the other end of the street (leaving town), the row of small terraced cottages completes the transition from town to countryside. The buildings within this street are characterised by a number of modest two storey dwellings finished in coloured rendered finishes with brick detailing to window surrounds, brick chimneys and slate roofs.

**MacCurtain St.** - The detailing along this street shows the character and variety of buildings commonly found in many Irish towns. Shops are of various sizes, with dwelling houses and public houses inter-linked. Each maintains a generally cohesive building line and has continuity in the colour and type of roof materials. Individual design details highlight individual properties, but visual unity is maintained through parity of scale, colour and materials used. MacCurtain St. has been noted by An Taisce as having special architectural merit.

**Ulster Canal** - The Ulster Canal (93Km in length) stretches from Lough Neagh in the middle of Northern Ireland and links up with the Shannon-Erne waterway at Lough Erne in Fermanagh. Along its route it passes through several towns including the Moy and Charlemount in Northern Ireland, and Monaghan and Clones in the Irish Republic. Positive

action has been indicated from both the Northern and Southern authorities about the possibility of reopening the canal. This would constitute a large engineering project, which would provide significant direct and indirect benefits for the town and region.

The canal is an invaluable heritage and cultural resource as it formed an intrinsic part of the development of the localities, through which it passed. The canal has been long infamous as the narrowest gauge navigation in all of Ireland and is therefore of particular industrial heritage interest.

A feasibility study has been completed by Waterways Ireland, the cross-border government agency responsible for inland waterways. The study concludes that the project is a feasible objective and it concurs with various development plans for the areas concerned. The study also concludes that the project has the potential to attract usage from a wide array of recreational and other interests, both on the waterway and along the canal corridor. Apart from the obvious cruise hire market and other types of boating activity, potential also exists to attract holidaymakers including walkers, cyclists, angler's etc.

Navigation of the Ulster Canal would provide an opportunity for the town to develop as a major tourist facility. It is widely anticipated that the canal project will be a joint North/ South project and as such its implementation will rest with both the Northern Ireland and Irish Republic governments. The project could have very positive benefits for both of these areas.

The restored Canal Stores situated on Cara Street are the original Ulster Canal buildings that were used when the canal opened in 1891. The buildings date from 1840. Clones Development Society Ltd. have restored the main warehouse building. The centre provides a focal point for the development of tourism in the region. Currently the Canal Stores acts as a multifunctional Arts/Tourist/Activity Centre hosting a range of uses.

Policies for the protection of Heritage in Clones Town are provided in Chapter 4 of the County Development Plan 2007 - 2013. Specific objectives for the protection of Clones Heritage are as shown over;



## Policies for Protection of Heritage

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| CL1.  | Protect and preserve the Protected Monuments and Structures located within the Town Council area, particularly Clones Fort, the Round Tower and Abbey and the High Cross on the Diamond, in accordance with the Council's statutory duties  |
| CL2.  | Designate an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) in Clones town centre in accordance with DOEHLG 'Architectural Heritage Protection' during the plan period 2007 - 2013   |
| CL3.  | Protect and conserve the streetscape character, architectural quality, and heritage of the Diamond, MacCurtain St., Cara St, and Fermanagh St.  |
| CL4.  | Encourage new developments which refurbish existing buildings and back lands in order to eliminate dereliction and reinforce the town centre. In particular the Council will encourage infill development and refurbishment of Fermanagh Street, '98 Avenue, O'Duffy Terrace and Annalore St. |
| CL5.  | Ensure that new development will enhance, respect and compliment the form and scale of the existing town streetscape and architecture.  |
| CL6.  | Preserve features that contribute to the townscape and character of the town - Archways, facades, stonework, iron railings, etc   |
| CL7.  | To extend the programme of streetscape renewal to other parts of the town   |
| CL8.  | Ensure the design of shop fronts, signs and advertisements match the overall form and structure of the buildings to which they pertain  |
| CL9.  | Ensure that the size, design, colour, material and illumination of signs should be subdued. Signs should generally be positioned well below first floor window level.   |
| CL10. | Discourage the external illumination of buildings and signs, but permit careful spotlighting of key buildings of particular interest  |



## Town Centre

### 12.5 Urban Renewal & Dereliction

Clones town was approved for inclusion in the Town Renewal Scheme launched by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in 1999. 104 properties in the Town Renewal Plan Area were designated under the scheme whereby owners/developers could offset the cost of construction and renovation works against generous tax exemptions over a ten-year period. The Scheme sought to regenerate the town centre by facilitating the renewal and refurbishment of residential and commercial development in the centre of the town

The Scheme which ends in 2008 has failed to regenerate the retail and commercial core of the town. A significant number of vacant premises remain in the town, primarily along Fermanagh Street, the traditional retail core of the town. Dereliction is also present in a number of other areas such as the back lands between Fermanagh Street and '98 Avenue, the rear of the Diamond and MacCurtain Street

The refurbishment of Fermanagh Street and the Diamond in 2002 by Clones Town Council did not act as a catalyst for private investment in the town centre. Individual units were refurbished, but as a whole, Fermanagh Street is not functioning as the retail core of the town and many properties remain derelict and unoccupied.

Public investment in the construction of Clones Technology Park and proposed new County Library Headquarters and

Fire Station on '98 Avenue, was intended to supplement private investment projects in the centre of town following the launch of Clones Regeneration Strategy and the Town Renewal Scheme. Also, while the Health Services Executive operates a Health Clinic at Analore St. and general practitioners are located in the town centre, the Clones Regeneration Strategy identified the provision of a central multi-purpose health centre as a priority to meet the needs of the community. Clones Town Council would encourage the provision of such a facility in the town centre. In general however, public and private sector investment in the town has been limited.

Clones Town Council will continue to encourage development and will use its statutory powers to tackle dereliction in the centre of the town and to regenerate Fermanagh Street and the commercial centre of the town.

With a declining population, there is a significant danger that existing and traditional services will withdraw from the town. Clones Town Council in partnership with Monaghan County Council, the Court Service and local solicitor's practices is seeking to restore Clones Courthouse and ensure the retention of Court facilities in the town.

New development in Clones Town Centre will be subject to the policies laid out in Chapter 8 of the County Development Plan 2007 - 2013.

Specific objectives for the development of Clones town centre are as follows:-

Policies for Town Centre	
CL11.	Regenerate the town centre as a residential, retail and services centre, with particular emphasis on Fermanagh Street and the Diamond and encourage the refurbishment, renewal and re-use of existing buildings and derelict sites.
CL12.	Continue to provide public investment directly and in partnership with the voluntary or private sector, to support the vibrancy of the town.
CL13.	Use statutory legislative powers to discourage and prevent dereliction and encourage regeneration and development in the town
CL14.	Maintain and Restore Clones Courthouse during the Plan period 2007 - 2013
CL15.	Allow for the provision and expansion of a central multi purpose health centre in the town centre as a priority to meet the needs of the community.

# Retail & Services

## 12.6 Retailing

The level of retail activity in Clones has declined significantly over the past decade. Fermanagh Street is the traditional commercial centre of the town, however many of the retail units based on the street were small and dated. The level of dereliction and number of vacant premises in Fermanagh Street and '98 Avenue is currently being addressed, but the variety of traders in the town is limited with only one supermarket on Fermanagh Street and a limited number of comparison goods shops in the town. The town is well-served with food take-aways and public houses. There are also two hotels and a large builders providers located in the town

With the decline in population and increasing mobility, Clones town is unable to sustain a vibrant comparison goods sector. The variety and range of shops and offices needs to be broadened and expanded. The viability of local businesses does however depend on achieving and maintaining a sustainable population and catchment area. Increasingly the service sector, such as professional services

and non-retail businesses are facing uncertain futures in the town, competing with vibrant economies in Cavan and Monaghan. Whilst dereliction, poor quality buildings, access to car-parking and passing trade are issues that need to be addressed, the town needs to develop its function as a vibrant residential centre to sustain its retail and service sectors.

Clones Town Council will continue to encourage the location of town centre retail and service businesses within the zoned area and will through development control restrict non-town centre businesses from locating within the town centre. The Town Council will in collaboration with the business sector and local traders, improve and develop the town centre shopping facilities as resources become available.

Retailing proposals within the town shall have regard to the Retail Development Strategy for County Monaghan, October 2003, together with the policies RET 1. – RET. 15 contained in Chapter 5 of the Monaghan County Development Plan, 2007 – 2013. Specific objectives for retailing in Clones are as follows:-

Policies for Retailing	
CL 16.	Encourage development that would maintain and consolidate the retail core of the town, in order to protect its vitality and viability as the principal shopping area for Clones and its environs.
CL17.	Encourage and provide for a wider range (i.e. convenience and comparison goods) and size of retail shops in the town centre
CL18.	Ensure that town centre sites are where possible retained for retail and commercial activities, and restrict non-town centre uses from locating within the town centre

# Population & Settlement Housing

## 12.7 Population

The 2006 Census shows that the population of Clones town has declined in the period 2002 - 2006 by -11.9% from 1,721 to 1,517. The population of the State increased by 8.2% during the same period. The environs of Clones experienced a population increase of 10.6% between 2002 and 2006 which would indicate a migration out from the urban area of the town to the rural hinterland.

Between 1979 and 2002, the town's population has declined by almost one-third.



Table 12.1. Population for Clones Town

Population Census 1979-2006				
	State	County	Clones Town	Clones R.E.D.
1979	3,368,217	50,376	2,574	5,379
1981	3,443,405	51,192	2,556	5,484
1986	3,540,643	52,379	2,280	5,612
1991	3,525,719	51,293	2,094	5,373
1996	3,626,087	51,313	1,921	5,304
2002	3,917,336	52,772	1,728	5,448
2006	4,234,925	55,997	1,517	-
1979-2006	25.7%	11.1%	-41%	-

As stated in the County Development Plan, population trends are central to the planning process. Changes in population, household patterns and spatial distribution form the basis on which decisions on land use, service provision, housing, employment retail community and recreational needs are determined. The decline in the numbers residing in the town is exacerbated by a settlement pattern of dispersed population dependant upon road transport, resulting in a further weakening of the urban structure and a loss of investment in the town's retail and service sector.

Strong population centres become self-generating in terms of employment, attracting inward investment in industry

and commerce and supporting a wider range and quality of infrastructure, services and facilities.

In recent years, housing and apartment development in town centres, throughout Ireland, has strengthened urban settlements as economic and service centres. This pattern of development has not however been reflected in Clones where the principle challenge remains to halt the net out migration from the urban area to sustain the services that remain in the town. The current settlement trend and population loss is unsustainable and is having a detrimental effect on the viability of the town



The National Spatial Strategy, the Regional Planning Guidelines and the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines provide a basis for planning authorities to formulate a settlement strategy for the county, as outlined in chapter 3 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2007 –2013. In that settlement strategy Clones Town was identified as a Tier 3 town which provides a range of retail and educational services. In accordance with this strategy it is proposed that Clones develops as a residential centre and a service and local retail centre for the surrounding hinterland

The Border Region's Planning Guidelines identified Clones as a medium-sized town (pop between 1,500 and 5,000) which is in need of urban strengthening, and which performs an important role in driving the development of its locality. The Settlement Strategy contained within the Guidelines aims to strengthen the role of small towns to support local economies and accommodate additional population. This Strategy aims to support the viability of local services and infrastructure. It focuses on protecting the natural and built heritage and enhancing quality of life

Clones, located on the N54 midway between two hub towns, Cavan and Monaghan, and 35km from Enniskillen, must increase its population and develop its weak urban structure, to sustain its role as a service and employment centre. The development of the town as a vibrant, residential centre is critical to its future. In addition, Clones must provide social, recreational and economic facilities that encourage residential development in and around the town.

### 12.7.1 Housing Strategy

Section 95(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 requires that a development plan shall set out a strategy for the purposes of ensuring that the housing needs of the existing and future population of the area are provided for.

Monaghan Local Authorities adopted a Housing Strategy in 2001. A revised Housing Strategy 2007 - 2013 was adopted on 5 June 2007.

The average household size in the State in 2002 was 2.9 persons, compared to a county figure of 3.1. According to the 2006 census figures the average household size in County Monaghan is 3.0 persons.

The housing stock in the town centre is old, although a number of houses and retail units were renewed and refurbished over the past five years. Census 2002 identified 701 dwelling houses in the town, of which 436 were built prior to 1960, with over half (362) built prior to 1940. 329 of the housing units are terraced houses, with 157 detached and 143 semi-detached houses. 504 of the houses were owner-occupied, with 76 rented from the local authority and 95 rented privately.

Since 2002, new detached and semi-detached housing was constructed on the approach roads to town and off the Roslea and Newtownbutler Roads.

The majority of housing in the town is in private ownership however 51 houses are rented from the Clones Town Council

The town centre contains numerous opportunities for urban housing developments. Derelict and vacant properties to the rear of Fermanagh Street, '98 Avenue, MacCurtain St. and Cara St. provide ideal locations for town housing, apartment over business premises and infill developments.

Undeveloped serviceable lands to the rear of the Newtownbutler Road, Roslea Road and Millbrook offer opportunities for new family housing in a town setting. The land use proposals as indicated on map CDP 1 identify and zone lands for housing development in the town and its environs. The provisions of Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, will apply to all lands zoned for residential use. The Council's current housing strategy requires that provision be made for 20% social and affordable housing on zoned residential lands.

### 12.7.2 Social Housing:

There are presently 72 persons/households on the waiting list for social housing in the town. The Town Council is currently constructing 12 new social houses at O'Neill Park. A further five units have been acquired in a private housing development located off the Roslea Road, as part of a Part V agreement with the developers. Clones Town Council envisages the acquisition of housing from developers under Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as a primary source of its social housing supply. However, the Council recognises the need to intensify its housing construction programme, in partnership with Monaghan County Council and the voluntary sector, to meet current and future demands for social housing.

Clones Town Council also seeks to acquire and rehabilitate derelict properties and sites to meet housing need and tackle the issue of dereliction within the town. Clones Town Council has acquired a number of properties in MacCurtain Street and aims to construct a housing scheme, by replacing derelict housing and lands.

Play areas have been provided in the vicinity of social housing at O'Neill Park and Cherry Park.

### 12.7.3 Private housing

Private sector housing, in the form of detached one-off housing, has been concentrated in the rural area around the town and on approach roads. However new developments are now under construction closer to the town centre with further proposals around the town granted planning permission.

There is a demand for new private housing development in Clones especially among the younger people who have been unable to purchase property in either of the county towns of Cavan or Monaghan. The competitive house price advantage of Clones over these two towns is a factor that marks Clones out as a potential housing destination, particularly attractive to first-time buyers. An increase in new housing and subsequent population increase would revitalise the town's commercial and social fabric. The easy commuter distance between Cavan, Monaghan and Enniskillen also marks Clones out as a new potential housing location.

Residential development shall be facilitated in urban areas having regard to the standards of the, 'Residential Density Guidelines for Planning Authorities' Department of the Environment and Local Government 1999 and section 8.3 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2007 -2013. Some of the provisions include such as density, layout, building line, building height, services, open space provision, orientation, boundaries, mix of dwellings types, traffic safety, pedestrian linkages, car parking, 'taking in charge' and management of estates.

Monaghan Local Authorities have produced guidelines in relation to "Standards for Housing Development" to ensure that all landscaping, open space, boundary treatments, roads and services are of sufficient quality. All housing developments must comply with these guidelines.

In accordance with the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, and in order to meet on-going social and affordable housing needs, the Planning Authority shall require 20% of units from all private housing developments on zoned housing land in Clones.

#### 12.7.4 Affordable Housing

As stated the competitive house price advantage of Clones over Cavan and Monaghan should serve to mark the town as an attractive housing destination. However local house prices have kept pace with the larger towns and the Housing Strategy 2001 has identified a need to intervene in the market to provide for the needs of those requiring affordable housing. Clones Town Council intends to service that need through Part V agreements with private housing developers.

#### 12.7.5 Travellers

The County Monaghan Traveller Accommodation Plan 2005 - 11 identifies Clones as a centre for accommodating travellers. The Traveller Accommodation Programme 2005 proposes to upgrade the existing 4 bay halting site at Largy, to comply with current standards and guidelines.

Proposals for all new residential development within Clones will be subject to policies contained within chapter 8 (specifically section 8.3) of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2007 – 2013 and the Residential Density Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DOEHLG. Specific policies relating to residential development in Clones are outlined below:-

Policies for Residential Housing	
CL19.	Promote Clones as a residential centre and encourage the development of new residential accommodation in the town.
CL20.	Provide directly or in partnership with the voluntary or private sector sufficient social and affordable housing to meet the needs of the area
CL21.	Provide sufficient zoned, serviceable land to meet the future housing needs of the town
CL22.	Encourage social integration and a mixture of tenures in all housing developments
CL23.	Encourage the refurbishment and reuse of derelict houses and development on derelict lands and infill sites in the town
CL24.	Acquire sufficient land to meet the needs of the Town Council's Housing Construction Programme.
CL 25.	Comply with the Monaghan County Council Housing Strategy



## Industry & Employment

### 12.8 Industry and Employment

Clones town has a small number of core industries, which have provided constant employment, largely in the unskilled sector, notably in the food processing, and engineering/ steel industries. The major employers in 2006 are A.I.B.P.Ltd, Meat Processors, located on the Scotshouse road, and Feldhues on the Monaghan Road who manufacture value-added meat products. The format of the workforce has changed considerably over the past five years, with many foreign nationals employed in low-skilled jobs.

In December 2003, the management of Container Pressure Vessels Ltd. the largest employer in the town with a workforce in excess of 180 persons announced the closure of the plant. Since the sale of the factory site in 2004, three new enterprises have commenced production, albeit with lower employment numbers.

The John Matthews Enterprise centre in the middle of

Clones provides small incubator work units to a number of small family operated businesses in the town, including Clones Poultry Processors Ltd. Clones Development Society operates two small businesses in the Enterprise centre which deal with printing design and desktop publishing along with providing information technology training to the town's population.

Construction work has just been completed on the Clones Business Technology Park, an office enterprise facility at Barry McGuigan Park. The site of the building was donated by the Town Council and the development was grant aided by Monaghan County Enterprise Board, the International Fund for Ireland and Interreg.

According to the 2002 census the number of unemployed in the Clones Urban area was 85 and this compared to figures of 93 and 121 in 1996 and 1991 respectively. The unemployment figure has fallen, reflecting the vibrancy of the economy both nationally and within the county. Classified by socio-economic group the predominant employment sectors in the town are the non-manual, manual skilled and the semi-skilled sectors.



The County Monaghan Partnership Company, which has a specific remit in tackling social exclusion, has identified specific social disadvantaged groups in the urban area and is delivering a program of support to these groups. These groups include Travellers, Long-Term Unemployed and Women's groups.

The Clones Regeneration Strategy has identified the need to develop specific incubator units to facilitate small enterprises and employment opportunities in the town. This need was highlighted following the closure of the C.P.V. plant in 2003. The Plan recognises the need to provide additional serviced land for industrial use.

The new Technology Park aims to attract technology-based

service industries to locate in Clones particularly since there is a keen information technology expertise available locally. Young people who have left to attend third level establishments and who have obtained various qualifications have been unable to return to their town since there are no jobs available locally which matches their skill requirements.

Approximately 36 hectares of land have been zoned for industry on the attached map, CDP 1. These areas include existing industrial sites within the town, with the remaining area to accommodate all proposed industry in the town during the plan period 2007 – 2013. The majority of this land is adjacent to the N54 and the proposed by pass to allow easy access to these lands. The objectives for industry in Clones are provided below:-

Policies for Industry	
CL26.	Ensure that sufficient and suitable land is reserved for new industrial development at appropriate locations, where there are existing infrastructural facilities, services, good communications, or where they can be provided at a reasonable cost in the town and its environs.
CL27.	Encourage the growth and/or expansion of existing locally based small scale industry through the provision of suitably serviced sites.
CL28.	Co-operate with IDA Ireland, Forbairt, Forf-s, the County Enterprise Board, community groups and other relevant bodies to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the provision of necessary infrastructure and services to support industrial development.
CL29.	Ensure that a high standard of design, layout and amenity is provided and maintained in all new industrial developments.
CL30.	Support an expanded education and research sector in Clones
CL31.	Continue to support and facilitate cross-border co-operation and trade between County Monaghan and the North of Ireland.

## Infrastructure & Services

### 12.9 Roads & Traffic Management

Clones is located on the N54 National Secondary Route linking Belfast to Galway. It is also linked to its hinterland, both north and south by four regional roads (to Enniskillen, Roslea, Scotshouse and Newbliss) and a local road (to Magheraveeley).

The N54 route services a large number of heavy goods vehicles. The junction of Cara Street and The Diamond is particularly narrow and the impact of these vehicles on residents in Cara St is particularly acute. Monaghan County Council, in consultation with Clones Town Council is seeking to identify an alternative route for the N54 that avoids the town centre.

Clones Town Council, recognising the need for a by-pass for traffic along the N54, is seeking to open up development land for housing and industry and improve traffic linkages by developing a series of new relief roads around the town. A number of potential links have been identified as follows:

**Route 1: Southern N54 By-pass** - The provision of a by-pass of the town along the national secondary route is the responsibility of the National Roads Authority and Monaghan County Council. However in the context of the Town Development Plan, Clones Town Council acknowledges the need to provide alternative access to the existing N54 route through the Diamond and Cara Street and recognises that it would be prudent for Monaghan County Council to identify a route and preserve it free from development to facilitate the construction of a by-pass.

**Route 2: Annalore Street to Cara Street** - following the line of the Ulster Canal this inner relief road has the potential to open up development land to the south of the town and could link with a future N54 by-pass of the town. This route would also contribute to the development of a small section of the Ulster Canal.

**Route 3: Cara St to Newtownbutler Road** - This route is proposed to continue the link in Route 2 to connect with the Newtownbutler Road. This proposal would open up extensive lands for future residential and commercial development and improve traffic movement in and around the town

**Route 4: Monaghan Road - Roslea Road Link** - This proposed road to the north of the N54 Clones-Monaghan road, east of the existing Feldhues plant, would open up a substantial parcel of land for industrial and residential use and has the potential in future to link directly with the Roslea Road, with a possible further link to Millbrook and the Magheraveeley Road. Such a route would also ease access to St. Tiarnach's Park GAA ground.

**Route 5 : Extension of Monaghan Road - Roslea Road Link Road (around St Tiarnach's Park)** - Development of this road will allow traffic entering from the new link road (route 4) to access directly onto Millbrook and the Magheraveeley Road.

**Route 6:** Development of a new urban road from the public car park on 98 Avenue to the new business centre at Barry Mc Guigan Park

It is also proposed to upgrade a number of roads within the town. These road improvements include:-

**Carn Lane** - upgrade to two way carriageway and footpaths for a distance of 250 metres to facilitate further residential development

**Millbrook (opposite St Tiarnach's Park)** - widen carriageway north towards Magheraveeley Road to facilitate new development.

**Lackey Bridge Road** - Upgrade road to include footway out to Town Council boundary

These new road upgrades have been outlined in a dashed pink line on the attached map CDP 1.

Table 6.6 in Chapter 6 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2007 – 2013 summarises the potential new road developments in and around the town.

The current N54 has a severely limiting control on the development of the town. Located so close to the border to the south, west and north, the potential to extend development, particularly commercial and industrial development, to the east of the town along the N54 is limited by the restrictions on development along national roads in the general speed limit areas. Clones Town Council seeks the extension of restricted speed limits along the N54 and the zoning of significant land along the route to facilitate commercial and industrial development. The route of the potential N54 By-pass would not be affected by these changes.

Monaghan County Council is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of regional roads in the town and Clones Town Council will continue to maintain and improve road surfaces, footpaths and street furniture throughout the town, in partnership with Monaghan County Council.



Fermanagh Street, Clones

### 12.9.1 Parking

Clones Town Council currently maintain three major car-parks in addition to on-street parking facilities along Fermanagh St. and the Diamond. Parking regulations are implemented by the Council. A number of private car-parks are maintained by business, sporting and church groups. The number of public car-parking spaces currently provided by the Town Council are shown in the table below.

Location	No. of spaces available
Upper Diamond	20
Lower Diamond	23
Fermanagh Street	20
Credit Union Car-Park	70
Fermanagh St. Car-Park	80
'98 Avenue Car-Park	55

In addition to the above parking any new development within Clones Town Centre shall comply with car parking requirements identified in chapter 8 the County Development Plan 2007 - 2013

Table 12.2: Number of Parking Spaces in Clones Town

Policies for Roads	
CL32.	Maintain and develop the roads network around and within the town in conjunction with Monaghan County Council.
CL33.	Reduce traffic congestion and improve access and traffic flow throughout the town.
CL34.	Construct new roads and improve the existing road network in accordance with proposals outlined in section 12.9, around and through the town, to open up development lands and improve traffic safety
CL35.	Construct and maintain pedestrian and traffic safety measures and implement traffic control measures, where required, throughout the town
CL36.	Regulate and manage car-parking facilities throughout the town in accordance with chapter 8 of County Development Plan 2007 - 2013.
CL37.	Strengthen and reconstruct all deficient sections of road pavement and footpath and provide additional pavements and footpaths in residential areas when resources become available.

**Policies for Roads (cont.)**

CL38.	Co-operate with developers in the provision of access points, roads, footpaths and services and require where it is deemed necessary, a contribution from developers for upgrading of the existing road infrastructure in order to facilitate development and / or activities which are out of scale with existing development.
CL39.	Ensure that adequate space is provided in all new developments for off-street car parking, and to require adequate provision of loading space within the curtilage
CL40.	Control and restrict any new direct access points on to National routes within the general speed limit areas in accordance with the policies laid out in chapter 8 of the Monaghan County Development Plan, 2007 - 2013.

**12.9.2 Water and Waste-water Services**

Under section 83 of the Local Government Act 2001 from the 1st January 2004 Monaghan County Council became the sole Sanitary Authority for County Monaghan. Monaghan County Council is now responsible for the provision of Water Services (Water and Waste Water) throughout the county.

A new water treatment plant was constructed in 2003 to service Clones town and the surrounding area. Monaghan County Council has also completed a water-metering installation programme which ensures that all non-domestic consumers are now billed on the basis of their water consumption and helps to reduce unnecessary consumption.

Plans for the construction of a new Waste Water Treatment Plant and upgraded collection network for Clones are included in the National Water Services Investment Programme. A Preliminary Report will be prepared to analyse the needs of the town in terms of treatment facilities, storm water and sewerage network capacity.

It is an objective of Clones Town Council to provide public conveniences within Clones Town

**12.9.3 Power and Telecommunications**

Clones Town Council will continue to co-operate with

statutory and regulated bodies in the provision of power and communication facilities throughout the town. Section 6.5 in chapter 6 contains the relevant policy for telecommunications throughout County Monaghan. The County Council in conjunction with telecommunications companies will supply the necessary infrastructure on demand. In 2008 work will complete on the Metropolitan Area Network (MAN) for Clones. The MAN is in the form of a series of loops in the centre of town and extend from there along the main urban arterial roads to facilitate connection to major businesses and potential users.

**12.9.4 Education**

Clones has two National schools and one Secondary school. A new replacement school building for Scoil Mhuire, located on the site of the former St. Tiarnach's Secondary School, off the Roslea Road, has been approved by the Department of Education and construction is due to be completed in 2008. Fortview N.S. is located on the Newtownbutler Road.

Largy College, the town's secondary school, is located on Annalore St. The school, which opened in 2003, contains a playing field and indoor sports facilities that are also available for community use.

The number of students attending each school in September 2005 are shown in table 12.3 over.



School	No. of Students	Enrolment 2005	Comments
Scoil Mhuire N.S.	220	29	New School under construction
Fortview N.S.	13	0	
Largy College	471	97	New School completed 2003

Table 12.3. Numbers of Students attending Schools in Clones

Policies in relation to development for education purposes are contained in chapter 7 of the Monaghan County Development Plan, 2007 – 2013.

### 12.9.5 Recreation and Amenity

The current social and recreational facilities are inadequate with over 50 community / voluntary and sporting groups operational in the town. St. Tiarnach's G.F.C., Clones Town F.C. and Clones Athletic Club have limited playing facilities to cater for their membership. Vibrant, well resourced sporting clubs with modern recreation facilities are vital to the health of the community and add significantly to the quality of life of citizens and the attractiveness of the town as a residential centre.

Largy College provides excellent indoor and outdoor facilities to the community. These facilities however are unable to cater for the entire needs of the towns sporting and community groups.

A central multi-functional centre has been advocated by a number of community groups in the town and proposals for a sports facility at Millbrook are well advanced. However there are a number of potential unused buildings, which may become available to the community. While major refurbishment may need to be carried out on these buildings to allow for the range of uses required by these groups, the re-use of established buildings by the community prevents dereliction and offers immediate access to facilities.

Clones Golf Club has extended and developed its course over the past number of years and is a valuable asset to the social fabric of the town. There are plans to renovate and extend the Clubhouse.

Monaghan County Council has acquired a site on '98 Avenue to construct a new County Library Headquarters. Approval to commence the project was issued in 2004 and construction work commenced in 2006.



### 12.9.6 Open Space

Clones has a number of important public spaces. The Diamond area is the most important public spaces and it is imperative that this space is preserved in a dignified and appropriate manner. The town also has a number of important historical and heritage sites within close proximity to the Diamond area. These sites need to be maintained and visitor access improved with due recognition given to the status of these amenities and their role in the development of Clones.

Clones Town Council owns and maintains two public recreation parks, the Town Park and Barry McGuigan Park, in addition to the open space and playgrounds located in various housing estates. The Clones Regeneration Strategy has identified the potential to develop a linear park, adjacent to the Town Park, along the Ulster Canal, between the Canal Stores and MacCurtain St. A linear park and walkway along the canal banks would make enhance the canal and town as a tourist destination.

## Policies for Recreation and Open Space

CL41.	Co-operate with relevant educational authorities in developing additional facilities in the town with the view of improving the availability of education
CL42.	Support the development of social, recreational, sporting and community facilities in Clones in appropriate locations
CL43.	Provide sufficient open space and amenity areas within the town for its population and prevent the loss of existing or private open space unless alternative facilities are provided in a suitable location elsewhere.
CL44.	Maintain existing rights of way and investigate the creation of additional public rights of way either, by agreement or by use of compulsory powers.
CL45.	Develop a linear park along the route of the Ulster Canal
CL46.	Redevelop and upgrade the remainder of Barry McGuigan Park and the Town Park

### 12.10 Tourism

Clones has a largely undeveloped tourism potential. The town's important archaeological and historic sites, together with its heritage features, such as the Ulster Canal, could be developed as a significant tourist attraction, given its pivotal position and profile. However, the town lacks the infrastructure to attract and retain significant numbers of visitors on a consistent basis.

The reopening of the Ulster Canal to connect the Shannon-erne Waterway and Lough Neagh would offer significant opportunities to develop tourism related facilities throughout the town, but particularly between Cara St, McCurtain St. and the Diamond. Feasibility Studies and Economic Assessments have been completed by Waterways Ireland and the potential to develop a marina in the town as an overnight stopping facility for canal users offers great potential. The Canal Stores restored by Clones Development Society signals the potential for regeneration the re-opening of the canal would offer. In addition to water-based tourism opportunities, the Ulster Canal has the potential to attract significant investment in canal-side residential and commercial development along its route.

Clones attracts large volumes of visitors to the town attending G.A.A. matches in St. Tiernach's Park, each summer. The town has traditionally been closely associated

with the Ulster Final and other major G.A.A. matches. Concern has been expressed regarding the long-term viability of St.Tiarnach's Park as the home of Ulster G.A.A. and the Town Council would support and encourage further development of the ground and its facilities. The development of new road access to the ground and enhancement of the approaches to St.Tiarnach's Park are essential to its development. Other sports-related attractions of the town include angling and golf, which provide huge potential to attract visitors to the town. Broad policies relating to tourism development in Clones are included in chapter 5 of the Monaghan County Development Plan, 2007 - 2013.



New Library Headquarters, Clones

## Policies for Tourism

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| CL47. | Encourage and accommodate the reopening of the Ulster Canal and the provision of a marina at an appropriate location within the town as it provides a vehicle for regeneration    |
| CL48. | Encourage the provision of a hotel and other tourism accommodation on appropriate zoned lands in the Clones   |
| CL49. | Upgrade and develop angling facilities in Clones and the Erne East Area in co-operation with the Fisheries Board and other relevant water bodies                                  |
| CL50. | Develop a facility to provide accessible tourist information throughout the town and its environs within the plan period 2007 - 2013  |
| CL51. | Develop a website to provide local information to a wide audience   |
| CL52. | Improve information boards throughout the town and its environs.  |
| CL53. | Develop a new image for the town through promoting its heritage assets such as the Round Tower, High Cross, the Ulster Canal and its sporting tradition as the home of Ulster GAA |
| CL54. | Develop improved cross border networks to encourage tourism and business to operate in both NI and the ROI  |



The Old Buttermarket, Clones

## View Map – Clones Town Map CDP 1

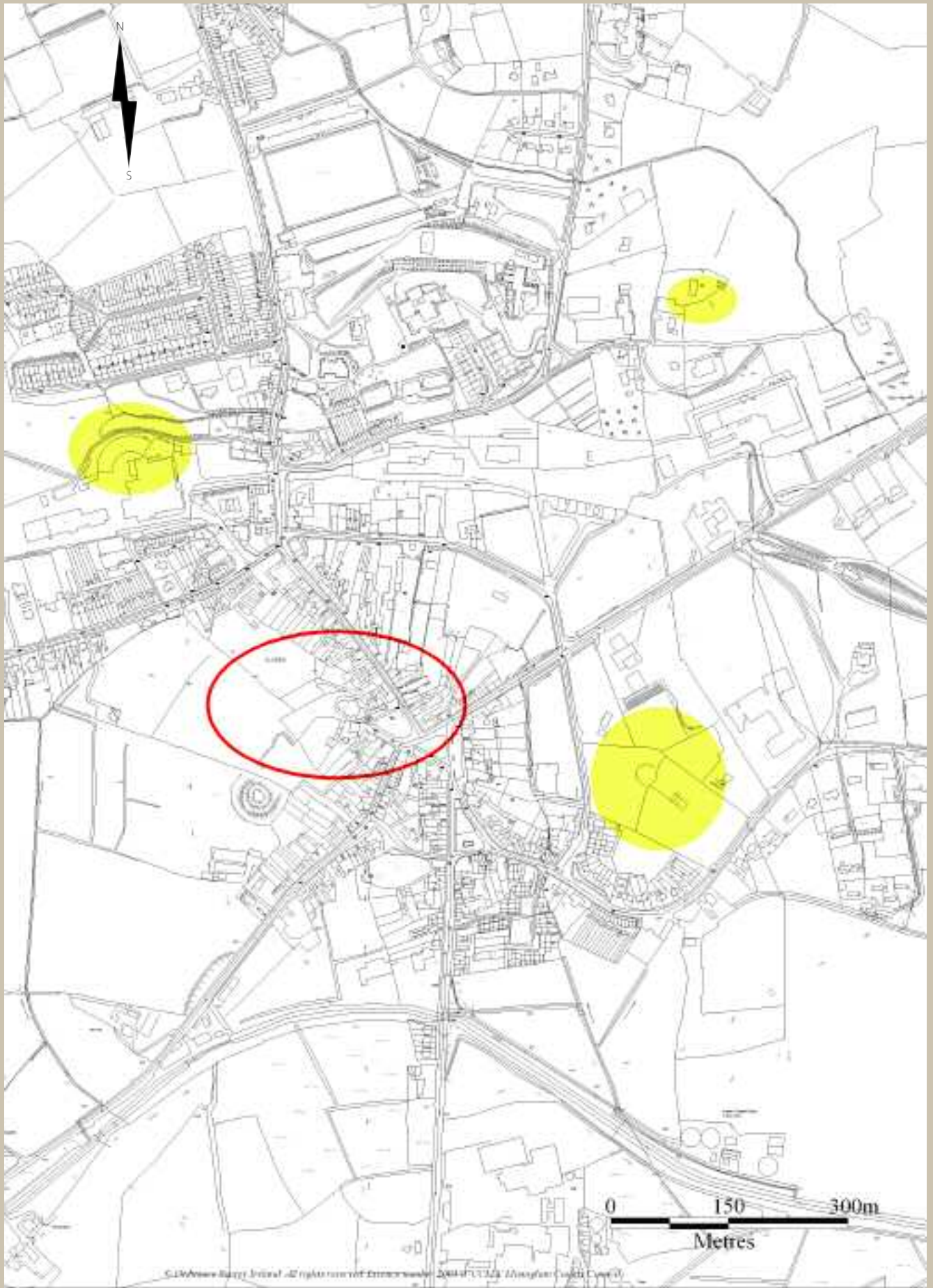
Download a detailed copy below:

[http://www.monaghan.ie/websitev2/download/pdf/planning/developmentplan2007-2013/FinalPrintedVersion/clones\\_mapReduced.pdf](http://www.monaghan.ie/websitev2/download/pdf/planning/developmentplan2007-2013/FinalPrintedVersion/clones_mapReduced.pdf)









## Map CDP 2 - Clones Town Area of Archaeological Importance



Approximate Location  
of Sites of  
Archaeological  
Importance

Zone of  
Archaeological  
Importance