

Chapter 12

Clones Town Development Plan 2013-2019

12.1 Introduction

The Clones Town Development Plan 2013-2019 is the successor plan to the Clones Town Development Plan 2007-2013 and any previous plans. The plan relates to the administrative area of Clones Town Council and relevant lands within Monaghan County Council area, as identified on the attached map CDP1. This plan should be read in conjunction with the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019.

This Town 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 (Map CDP1) 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 Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019.

It should be noted that many objectives and policies contained within the Monaghan County Development Plan will also be applicable to the Clones Town Development Plan. In order to avoid repetition, common objectives and 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, objectives and policies contained within the Monaghan County Development Plan that relate to urban development shall apply and shall be considered to form part of the Clones Town Development Plan, unless otherwise stated. Similarly, objectives and policies contained within the Clones Town Development Plan will be applicable to all zoned lands identified on the attached map CDP1 and shall form part of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019 unless otherwise stated.

The Clones Town Development Plan 2013-2019 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 appropriate 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 Belfast to Galway 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.

Clones Regeneration Partnership was formed in December 1999, and consists of representative and community groups from Clones, supported by the executive members of the local authority and the various grant agencies. The Mission Statement of the Partnership is *“to involve everyone who lives and works in Clones and the surrounding Border Hinterland in generating economic and physical development taking account of the Social, Cultural and Recreational aspects in an accountable and inclusive manner and to ensure Clones makes a full contribution to and benefits equitably from Developments in the Region as a whole”*.

The Partnership created the Regeneration Strategy Report for the town which was aimed at outlining a way forward for the continued regeneration of the economy of the town and its hinterland. The recommendations included:

- The re-opening and re-development of the Ulster Canal into a major economic and tourism attraction.
- The development of the Canal Stores.
- The construction of a community centre to include facilities for the disabled, youth clubs, childcare, offices, meeting rooms, sports and exhibition area.
- The further development of the Clones Enterprise Centre and assistance in ensuring broadband connection.
- The restoration of the 'Boardroom' building, to its former glory and new use as a tourism amenity.
- Support for the community development programme.

The past years have seen changes in positive infrastructural and property developments in Clones arising out of the vision of the Strategy. Several successful projects were delivered, including the new Clones Business Technology Park which focused upon attracting technology based industries into the town. The principle achievement of the Partnership was to revive the hope and vision within the community of Clones.

The population of Clones Town declined by 16% in the year's 1986 - 1996 and by a further 10% in the years 1996 – 2002. Between 2002 and 2006 the population further declined by 12%. The 2011 preliminary census figures indicate a continuation of this trend with a further population decline of 0.6% between 2006 and 2011. The population in the hinterland of the town has remained stable, indicating a population movement from urban to rural areas and is 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 four towns in the county; however the decline in the urban population in Clones Town is the most marked.

12.1.2 Historical Context

Clones is associated with the monastic settlement of its patron, Saint Tiarnach, 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 twelfth 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 exists 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. Tiarnach'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 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 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.

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 are the responsibility of Monaghan County Council.

Strategy and Vision

12.2 Strategy and Vision

Chapter 8 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019 contains the strategic objectives for Clones Town. 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 the 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 rebuilding 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 Planning

12.3 Land Use Planning

The Clones Town Development Plan is fundamentally concerned with promoting growth and development while protecting the natural and built environment of the town. The primary tool to implement this strategy is through land use zoning. The land use zoning relating to Clones Town is detailed on Map CDP1.

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 2013-2019. Details of land use zonings are contained within Chapter 8 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019. The land uses applicable to Clones are as follows:-

- Town Centre
- Existing Residential
- Proposed Residential
- Strategic Residential Reserve
- Industry, Enterprise and Employment
- Existing Commercial
- Community Services/Facilities
- Recreation and Amenity
- Landscape Protection/Conservation

Natural and Built Heritage

12.4 Natural and Built Heritage

12.4.1 Natural Heritage

Kilroosky Lough Cluster, located north of Clones, is a designated Special Area of Conservation due to the nature of water quality and the life forms supported within this cluster of lakes. Ramages Lough is the closest of these lakes to the town with Kilroosky Lough and Dummy's Lough located in close proximity to the town also. This cluster of loughs are also a proposed Natural Heritage Area.

12.4.2 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, having the Round Tower & Abbey, the High Cross, and the 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, the restored Canal Stores (housing examples of Clones Lace), and the 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 and 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.

The overall character of Clones is typified by the contrast between the grandiose formal buildings fronting onto 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 Street, 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 backlands 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. The most notable are:

Fermanagh Street – 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.

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 into 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 Street – 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 Street 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 Charlemont in Northern Ireland, and Monaghan and Clones in the Irish Republic. 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.

Waterways Ireland is responsible for the management, maintenance, development and restoration of the inland navigable waterway system throughout the island, principally for recreational purposes. Their remit was extended in 2007 by the North/South Ministerial Council, to include responsibility for the restoration of the section of the Ulster Canal between Clones and Upper Lough Erne and following restoration, for the management, maintenance, and development of this waterway principally for recreational purposes. At the North/South Ministerial Council (NSMC) Plenary meeting in 2007, it was agreed to proceed with the restoration of the section of the Ulster Canal between Clones and Upper Lough Erne in the light of the Irish Government's offer to cover the full capital costs of the project. Since the beginning of 2008, Waterways Ireland appointed an in-house project manager to progress this project to completion. Planning applications were lodged with Monaghan County Council and Clones Town Council in October 2011 to construct a new canal section, marina and amenity area for 36 boat mooring and associated development works. Subsequent applications were submitted to Cavan County Council and the Department of the Environment Northern Ireland in October 2011. It is anticipated that following grants of planning permission, contracts will be allocated by the end of 2011 / early 2012, with works being completed by mid to end of 2013. Navigation of the Ulster Canal would provide an opportunity for the town to develop as a major tourist facility.

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 has 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.

12.4.3 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 Tiarnach 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.

General objectives and policies for the protection of Natural and Built Heritage in Clones Town are provided in Chapters 4, 8 and 15 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019. Specific objectives for the protection of Natural and Built Heritage in Clones are as follows:

Objectives for the Protection of Natural and Built Heritage	
CLO 1	Ensure that all plans and projects relating to natural and built heritage within Clones Town are subject to policies AAP1-AAP5 contained within Chapter 4, Environment and Heritage, of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019.
CLO 2	Development within the vicinity of groundwater or surface water dependant Natura 2000 sites (Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC) will not be permitted where there is potential for a likely significant impact upon the groundwater or surface water supply to the Natura 2000 site. Where appropriate, the applicant will be requested to demonstrate with hydrogeological evidence that the proposed development will not adversely affect the quality or quantity of groundwater or surface water supply to the Natura 2000 sites.
CLO 3	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.
CLO 4	Protect and conserve the streetscape character, architectural quality, and heritage of the Diamond, MacCurtain Street, Cara Street and Fermanagh Street.
CLO 5	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 Street.

Town Centre

12.5 Town Centre

12.5.1 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. A total 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. Although 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, a significant number of vacant premises remain primarily along Fermanagh Street which, despite being recognised as the traditional retail core of the town, is failing to function in this regard. Dereliction is also present in a number of other areas such as the backlands between Fermanagh Street and '98 Avenue, and the rear of the Diamond and MacCurtain Street.

Public investment in the construction of Clones Technology Park, the new County Library Headquarters and the 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. The Clones Regeneration Strategy identified the provision of a central multi-purpose health centre as a priority to meet the needs of the community. The 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.

The 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.

New development in Clones Town Centre will be subject to the objectives and policies laid out in Chapters 4, 5, 6, 8 and 15 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019. Specific objectives for the development of Clones Town centre are as follows:-

Objectives for Town Centre	
CLO 6	Ensure that all plans and projects relating to town centre development within Clones Town are subject to policies AAP1-AAP5 contained within Chapter 4, Environment and Heritage, of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019.
CLO 7	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.
CLO 8	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.

Retailing**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 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 takeaways and public houses. There are also two hotels.

With the decline in population and increasing mobility, Clones 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.

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

A Retail Development Strategy for County Monaghan for the period 2013-2019 is currently being drafted. Until this has been completed, retailing proposals within Clones shall have regard to the Retail Development Strategy for County Monaghan, October 2003. New retail development within Clones shall be compliant with the objectives and policies contained in Chapters 5, 6, 8 and 15 of the Monaghan County Development Plan, 2013-2019.

Population and Housing

12.7 Population and Housing

12.7.1 Population

The preliminary figures from 2011 Census shows that the population of Clones urban area declined in the period 2006-2011 by 0.6% from 1,517 to 1,508 persons. The population of Clones Town and Environs fell marginally from 1,767 in 2006 to 1,761 in 2011. This is in contrast to the other four towns in the county which all experienced percentage increases in their town and environs population of between 11% and 20%. Clones's rural area experienced a population increase during the same period with a 6.1% rise from 8,976 to 9,523 persons.

As stated in Chapter 3 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019, 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.

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 Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 introduced the requirement to include a core strategy with all development plans. The core strategy must show that the development objectives in the development plan are consistent, as far as practicable with national and regional planning guidelines. As a consequence the quantum of residential land use zoning must be commensurate with population growth targets set out within Chapter 3, Settlement/Core Strategy. In this settlement strategy Clones is 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 be developed as a residential centre and a service and local retail centre for the surrounding hinterland.

Clones, located on the N54 midway between the two hub towns of 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.

12.7.2 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 in terms of tenure are provided for. Monaghan Local Authorities adopted a Housing Strategy in 2007. A review of this strategy has been undertaken and is presented as Chapter 16 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019.

The Planning Authority shall, in accordance with the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 and the policies identified in the Housing Strategy, continue to require developers of all private housing developments on zoned housing land in the five towns to provide 20% of units for social and affordable housing needs.

12.7.3 Residential Developments

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

All new residential housing in Clones shall be required to comply with the objectives and policies contained within Chapters 3, 4, 6, 8 and 15 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013–2019.

Industry, Enterprise and Employment

12.8 Industry, Enterprise and Employment

Clones 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 are A.I.B.P. Ltd (meat processors), located on the Scotshouse Road, and Feldhues GMBH on the Monaghan Road, which 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.

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

The Clones Business Technology Park was funded by the International Fund for Ireland, Border Action, Clones Town Council and Monaghan Enterprise Fund, and was facilitated by the Clones Regeneration Partnership. Described as a "landmark building for future sustainable development of the wider Clones Erne East cross-border area, the 750 square metre modern business park was opened in September 2006 and provides attractive, modern office accommodation divided into 9 units varying in floor area from 35 m² right up to 1,900 m² with flexibility to combine some of the units into even larger work areas. The 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.

According to the 2006 census the number of unemployed in the Clones Urban area was 47, compared with 85 in 2002. Classified by socio-economic group the predominant employment sectors in the town are manufacturing (27.14%), and commerce and trade (19.29%)

Approximately 35 hectares of land have been zoned for industry, enterprise and employment (Refer to Map CDP1). 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 2013-2019. The majority of this land is adjacent to the N54. Access to the zoned Industry, Enterprise and Employment lands along the N54 where the general speed limit applies should be in the first instance via the proposed road linking the N54 to the Roslea Road. Only where there is no other reasonable alternative, would direct access onto the N54 be permitted where the general speed limit applies, and it would be subject to the provision of satisfactory access arrangements. Any application for development on these lands proposing direct access onto the national road shall be accompanied by a master plan for the entire Industry, Enterprise and Employment zoning at this location. All new industrial development within Clones shall be required to comply with the objectives and policies contained within Chapters 4, 5, 6, 8 and 15 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013–2019. Specific objectives with regard to industrial development in Clones are as follows:-

Objectives for Industry, Enterprise and Employment

CLO 9	Ensure that all plans and projects relating to industry, enterprise and employment within Clones Town are subject to policies AAP1-AAP5 contained within Chapter 4, Environment and Heritage, of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019.
CLO 10	Support an expanded education and research sector in Clones.

Infrastructure and Services

12.9 Infrastructure and Services

12.9.1 Roads and 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.

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

Southern By pass from N54 to R183 to R212 to N54

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, the need to provide alternative access to the existing N54 route through the Diamond and Cara Street is acknowledged. Consequently, it would be prudent to identify a potential link and have regard to it when assessing new development proposals.

Inner Relief Road from N54 to R183 to R212 to N54

The provision of an inner relief road would provide alternative access to the existing N54 route through the Diamond and Cara Street in the absence of the Southern N54 By-pass. Consequently, it would be prudent to identify a potential link and have regard to it when assessing new development proposals.

Link Road from Cara Street (N2) to Newtownbutler/Enniskillen Road (R183)

This potential link would open up extensive lands for future residential and commercial development and improve traffic movement in and around the town

Link Road from Monaghan Road (N2) to Roslea Road (LP2110)

Extension of Monaghan Road (N2) – Roslea Road Link Road (around St. Tiarnach's Park)

This potential link 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.

These potential links are identified by indicative lines on Map CDP1. As these potential new links will be subject to detailed design and will be taken through the relevant consent procedures, these indicative lines represent the centre line of a 100 metre wide preliminary corridor.

A number of roads within the town have been identified as requiring improvement. 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 Magheraveely 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 purple and white line on Map CDP 1.

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.

12.9.2 Parking

Clones Town Council currently maintain three major car parks in addition to on-street parking facilities along Fermanagh Street 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.

Table 12.1 Number of Parking Spaces in Clones Town

Location	No. of spaces available
Upper Diamond	20
Lower Diamond	23
Fermanagh Street	20
Credit Union Car Park	70
Fermanagh St. Car Park	80
Library Car Park	15-20
Roslea Car Park	20-30

In addition to the above parking any new development within Clones Town Centre shall comply with car parking requirements identified in Chapter 15 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019.

Road developments within Clones shall be required to comply with the objectives and policies contained within Chapters 6 and 8 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013–2019.

12.9.3 Water Services

Monaghan County Council is currently the sole Sanitary Authority for County Monaghan and is responsible for the provision of Water Services (Water and Waste Water) throughout the county.

12.9.4 Water Supply

A new water treatment plant was constructed in 2003 to service Clones 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 thus helping to reduce unnecessary consumption.

12.9.5 Waste Water Collection and Treatment

The capacity of the waste water treatment works in Clones is shown in the table below.

Table 12.2 Capacity of Waste Water Treatment Works in Clones

Town/Village	Existing Design P.E.	Current Loading P.E.	Treatment Type	Proposals
Clones	4,500	3,100	Secondary	New final clarifier.

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

Objectives and policies in relation to Water Services are contained within Chapters 4 and 6 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019.

12.9.6 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. Chapters 6 and 15 contain the relevant objectives and policies for telecommunications throughout County Monaghan. The Council in conjunction with telecommunications companies will supply the necessary infrastructure on demand.

12.9.7 Education

Clones has one National school, St Tiarnach's which is located on the Roslea Road. Largy College, a co-educational Secondary School offering a wide range of courses at Junior and Senior levels is located on Annalore Street. The college contains indoor and outdoor sports facilities which are also available for community use.

The number of students attending each school is shown in Table 12.3 overleaf.

Table 12.3 Numbers of Students attending Schools in Clones

School	No. of Students
St Tiarnach's.	239
Gaelscoil Eois	48
Largy College	487

Objectives and policies in relation to development for education purposes are contained in Chapter 7 of the Monaghan County Development Plan, 2013-2019.

Recreation and Amenity

12.10 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.

Planning consent was obtained in 2010 (amended in 2011) for the construction of a sports building, eight lane athletics track, an all weather multipurpose pitch and substantial car parking facilities at Millbrook. The development is expected to provide a substantial economic boost to the Clones and Fermanagh region. The project has been developed and is overseen by Clones Regeneration Partnership with the majority of the funding for the project secured following the submission of a grant application to the Special European Union Programmes Body's (SEUPB) PEACE Programme's Priority 2:1: Creating Shared Public Space.

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.

The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government provided funding for the new County Library Headquarters. The library, with a floor area of 1,450 sq metres, was opened on '98 Avenue in Summer 2008.

12.10.1 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. In addition, 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.

Objectives and policies in relation to development for recreation and amenity are contained in Chapters 7 and 8 of the Monaghan County Development Plan, 2013-2019. Specific objectives for recreation and open space in Clones are as follows:-

Objective for Recreation and Amenity	
CLO 11	Ensure that all plans and projects relating to recreation, amenity and open space within Clones Town are subject to policies AAP1-AAP5 contained within Chapter 4, Environment and Heritage, of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019.
CLO 12	Develop a linear park along the route of the Ulster Canal.
CLO 13	Redevelop and upgrade the remainder of Barry McGuigan Park and the Town Park.

Tourism

12.11 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 will offer significant opportunities to develop tourism related facilities throughout the town, but particularly between Cara Street, McCurtain Street and the Diamond. A marina development is proposed as part of the Ulster Canal regeneration project. It is acknowledged that such a development affording for the overnight stopping for canal users, offers great tourism potential for the town. 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. Tiarnach'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 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. Objectives and policies in relation to tourism development are contained within Chapters 5, 8 and 15 of the Monaghan County Plan 2013-2019. Specific objectives with regard to tourism development in Clones are as follows:-

Objectives for Tourism	
CLO 14	Ensure that all plans and projects relating to tourism within Clones Town are subject to policies AAP1-AAP5 contained within Chapter 4, Environment and Heritage, of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019.
CLO 15	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.
CLO 16	Encourage the provision of a hotel and other tourism accommodation on appropriate zoned lands in Clones.
CLO 17	Upgrade and develop angling facilities in Clones and the Erne East Area in co-operation with Inland Fisheries Ireland and other relevant water bodies.
CLO 18	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.