

## 7 ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS

### 7.1 Introduction

In order to assess the appropriate location for future development in the Study Area, a number of potential land use scenarios were analysed. A total of six land use scenarios were initially assessed in terms of their compliance with the guiding principles. The six scenarios are:

- A. Do minimum approach – continue development as per the Development Plan.
- B. Consolidation of development on appropriate town centre sites, and the development of additional lands to the west of the railway and the town centre.
- C. Consolidation of development on appropriate town centre sites, and development of additional lands east of the town centre.
- D. Consolidation of development on appropriate town centre sites and development of additional land to the east and west of the river.
- E. Concentration of all development south of the town.
- F. Concentration of all development north of the town.

The scenarios include the following common elements:

- To accommodate an urban population increase of approximately 6,800 in almost 2,500 new households resulting in an urban population of 16,700. This accounts for the existing population of 6,050 and the potential population of 3,900 from the 1,450 residential units identified as granted or pending planning applications in section 3.4.
- To accommodate approximately 6,700 new jobs, assuming full employment and balanced inward and outward migration.
- To provide adequate schooling facilities for the existing and future population.
- To provide adequate local services and community facilities.

## 7.2 Land Use Scenario A



**Figure 7.1** Scenario A

the most efficient use of existing and proposed infrastructure, for example roads, public transport, walking and cycling, networks. The proposed southern bypass utilises a disused railway line for parts of its alignment. Much of the employment-zoned lands are remote from the bypass and the railway station. In this regard Scenario A would only partially comply with this guiding principle.

### Building on the Physical and Cultural Heritage

In general, the development of the town in accordance with the Development Plan policies will comply with this guiding principle. However, opportunities for making better use of the River Barrow and the Grand Canal are not exploited particularly to the south of the town centre, at the confluence of the river Barrow and along the canal where Tegral and Minch Norton are located.

This scenario is essentially a do-minimum approach i.e. the continued development of the existing land use zones in the Study Area, in line with existing Development Plan policies. The Athy Development Plan does not contain any maximum or minimum density standards. Residential density is determined by minimum garden sizes, minimum room sizes etc. It has been estimated as part of this Study, based on the Development Plan and what has recently been granted in the town, that typical densities are in the order of 30 dwellings per hectare.

### Mix of Land Uses and the Promotion of Sustainable Travel

Within this scenario lands are poorly connected to the town centre and employment areas by walking and cycling routes. The result would be a continuing reliance on the car. Many of the employment uses are in the town centre, or in close proximity to it. It is considered therefore, that Scenario A would partially comply with this particular guiding principle.

### Best Use of Existing and Proposed Infrastructure

As some of the existing zoned undeveloped residential land is considered remote from the town, it does not make

### 7.3 Land Use Scenario B



**Figure 7.2** Scenario B

development in the town centre, and will promote higher densities than currently exist in locations adjoining the built up area. It will require the provision of a Southern Outer Bypass.

#### **Building on the Physical and Cultural Heritage**

The development of higher densities in the town centre, the relocation of Tegral and Minch Norton and the subsequent redevelopment of their sites, together with the development of the site to the north at the confluence of canal and the River Barrow, can significantly enhance the physical and cultural heritage of the town.

Under Scenario B residential and employment lands are concentrated to the west of the railway and the town centre. Higher residential densities are advocated in line with the Residential Density Guidelines, particularly within walking distance of the public transportation nodes and the main street. Gross densities of 50 dwellings per hectare are suggested within 600 m of the train station, bus station and Main Street. Gross densities of 35 dwellings per hectare are suggested for lands outside this 600m radius.

#### **Mix of Land Uses and the Promotion of Sustainable Travel**

Scenario B looked to comply with this guiding principle. The potential relocation of Tegral and Minch Norton and the development of their sites for mixed purposes will extend the town centre, and bring higher density employment uses closer to the residential areas of Ardrew, located to the west of the town.

#### **Best Use of Existing and Proposed Infrastructure**

It is considered that Scenario B will maximise the use of existing infrastructure, as it will concentrate high-density

## 7.4 Land Use Scenario C

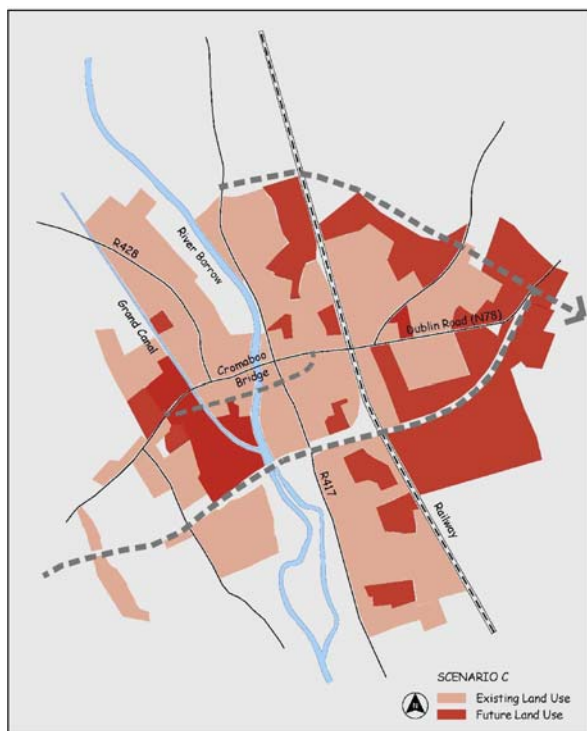


Figure 7.3 Scenario C

This scenario focuses on the consolidation of development on appropriate town centre sites, and development of additional lands east of the town. Residential densities similar to those discussed under Scenario B above, are advocated.

### Mix of Land Uses and the Promotion of Sustainable Travel

Scenario C will concentrate development on available sites in the town centre, and will concentrate additional development adjoining the built up area to the east of the town. Given the proposed juxtaposition of future residential and future employment zones, and also the proximity to the railway station, it is considered that Scenario C would comply with this guiding principle.

### Best Use of Existing and Proposed Infrastructure

Similar to Scenario B, it is considered that Scenario C will maximise the use of existing infrastructure, as it will concentrate high-density development in the town centre, and will promote higher densities than currently exists in locations adjoining the built up area. Furthermore overall travel distance to the train station will be minimised.

### Building on the Physical and Cultural Heritage

The development of higher densities in the town centre, the potential relocation of Tegral and Minch Norton and the subsequent redevelopment of their sites, together with the development of the site north of where canal and river cross, will significantly enhance the physical and cultural heritage of the site.

## 7.5 Land Use Scenario D

This scenario focuses on the dispersal of residential and employment uses in Athy, a proposed bypass to the north of the town, and the utilisation of part of the southern proposed bypass route. Residential densities similar to those discussed under Scenarios B and C above, are advocated.

### Mix of Land Uses and the Promotion of Sustainable Travel

Scenario D will partially comply with this guiding principle. Whilst the employment zones east of the town will be accessible by sustainable modes of transportation, the existing industrial areas to the west will remain relatively isolated from new residential uses.

### Best Use of Existing and Proposed Infrastructure

Scenario D will focus development in proximity to the railway and will encourage high-density uses in the town, centre but will require a northern bypass. In this regard, it is only considered to partially comply with the guiding principle.

### Building on the Physical and Cultural Heritage

Scenario D will partially comply with this guiding principle. The opportunity to relocate Tegral and Minch Norton away from the canal is lost, but the site to the north of the waterway confluence will be developed.

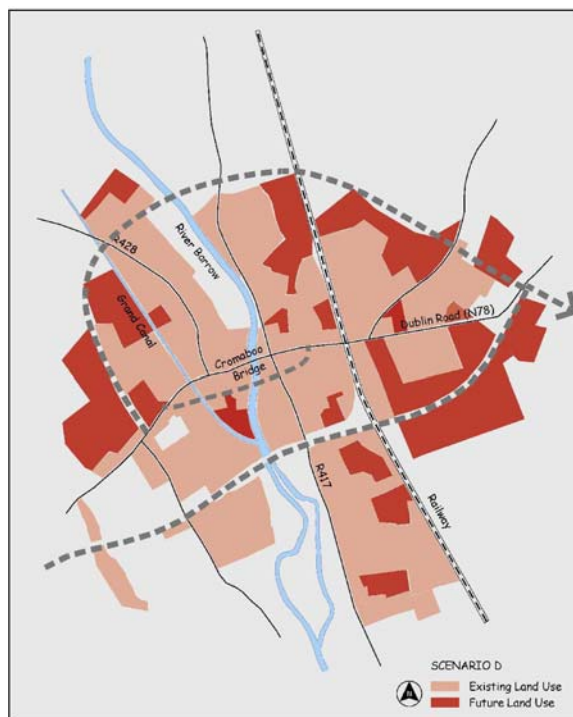


Figure 7.4 Scenario D

## 7.6 Land Use Scenario E

Under this scenario new growth will take place on available lands to the south of the town's built up area.

### Mix of Land Uses and the Promotion of Sustainable Travel

Scenario E will not comply with this guiding principle, as areas will have to be rezoned and developed south of the town, remote from the town centre and other existing employment areas.

### Best Use of Existing and Proposed Infrastructure

Scenario E will not comply with this guiding principle as substantial new roads, public transport, walking, cycling, water and drainage networks for the new residential population will have to be developed to the south of the town.

### Building on the Physical and Cultural Heritage

Scenario E does not comply with this guiding principle, as no new development will occur in the town centre, thus losing a significant opportunity to enhance the physical appearance of the town.



Figure 7.5 Scenario E

## 7.7 Land Use Scenario F

Under this scenario new growth will take place on available lands to the north of the town's built up area.

### Mix of Land Uses and the Promotion of Sustainable Travel

Scenario F will fail to comply with this guiding principle. Substantial lands will have to be zoned to the north of the town, resulting in urban sprawl, and a continued reliance on the car.

### Best Use of Existing and Proposed Infrastructure

Scenario F will not comply with this guiding principle, as existing infrastructural provision in the town centre will not be fully utilised.

### Building on the Physical and Cultural Heritage

As in Scenario E, Scenario F does not comply with this guiding principle, as no new development will occur in the town centre, thus losing a significant opportunity to build on the physical and cultural heritage of the town.

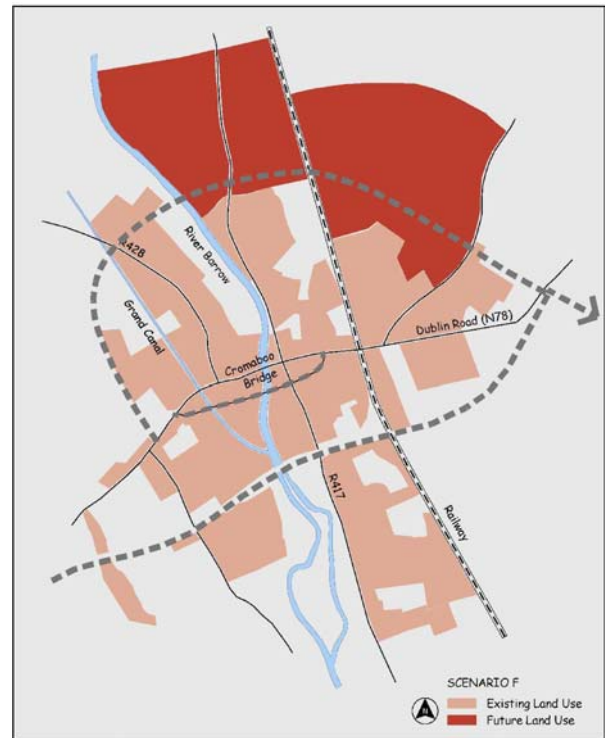


Figure 7.6 Scenario F

## 7.8 Summary

It is apparent from Table 7.1 below that Land Use Scenarios E and F do not comply with the guiding principles and are not worthy of further investigation. Land Use Scenarios A, B, C and D however, are either in compliance or partial compliance and should be assessed further in the context of the specific objectives for the Study Area. This assessment is carried out in the following sections of this report.

Table 7.1: Assessment of Land Use Scenarios in the Context of the Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles	A	B	C	D	E	F
Mix of Land Uses and Promotion of Sustainable Travel	○	✓	✓	○	✗	✗
Best Use of Existing and Proposed Infrastructure	○	✓	✓	○	✗	✗
Building on the Physical and Cultural Heritage	○	✓	✓	○	✗	✗

- ✓ - In full compliance with guiding principle
- - In partial compliance with guiding principle
- ✗ - Not in compliance with guiding principle