



Julianstown Village Design Statement

A National 'Pilot' for the Heritage Council's VDS Programme II





An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council



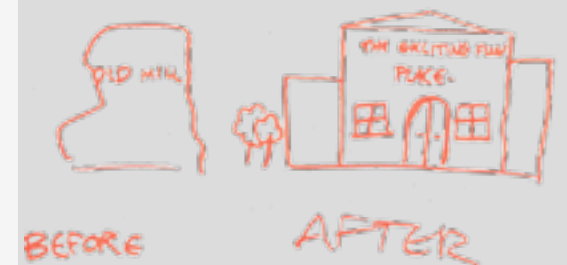
the paul hogarth company

Contents

Introduction & Background	1
The Collaborative Process	4
Context & History	8
Landscape Setting	10
The Village	12
The Shared Vision	16
Aims	18
Concept	19

The Welcome	20
The Street	22
The Heart	24
Our Heritage	26
The Village	28
The River	32
Landscape	34
Community	36

Agreed VDS Action Plan	38
Moving Forward!	40
Appendix A: People	42
Appendix B: Information	43





Introduction & Background

to the Julianstown 'National Pilot' Village Design Statement for the Heritage Council's National Village Design Programme II

The National Context;

The Julianstown Village Design Statement (VDS) is the national 'pilot' for the Heritage Council's new National Village Design Programme II. This 'pilot' project has been conceived over a period of two years and follows on from an external evaluation of the Heritage Council's VDS Programme I (2000-2008), which was completed in the autumn 2008; the Slane Castle National VDS Conference in October 2008; the launch of the Village Design booklet entitled – Enhancing Local Distinctiveness in Irish Villages - Village Design Statements in Ireland – The Way Forward, January 2009*; and the launch of the VDS Feedback Report from Tidy Towns and LEADER Groups, January 2010.

The Julianstown 'Pilot' VDS embraces a collaborative and participative approach to village design, whereby local communities have a real 'voice' in how their villages are planned and managed in the future. Communities are encouraged under the aims of Programme II, to 'Chair' the local VDS Project from the outset.

An external evaluation of the process adopted for the 'pilot' is also being undertaken on behalf of the Heritage Council by Tipperary Institute and will feed into the overall delivery of the National VDS Programme II from 2011 onwards and the development of a National Village Design 'Toolkit' for local communities, local authorities, Tidy Towns Committees and LEADER Groups. The 'Toolkit' will be supported by the introduction of multi-disciplinary training for local communities, local representatives and local authority officers.



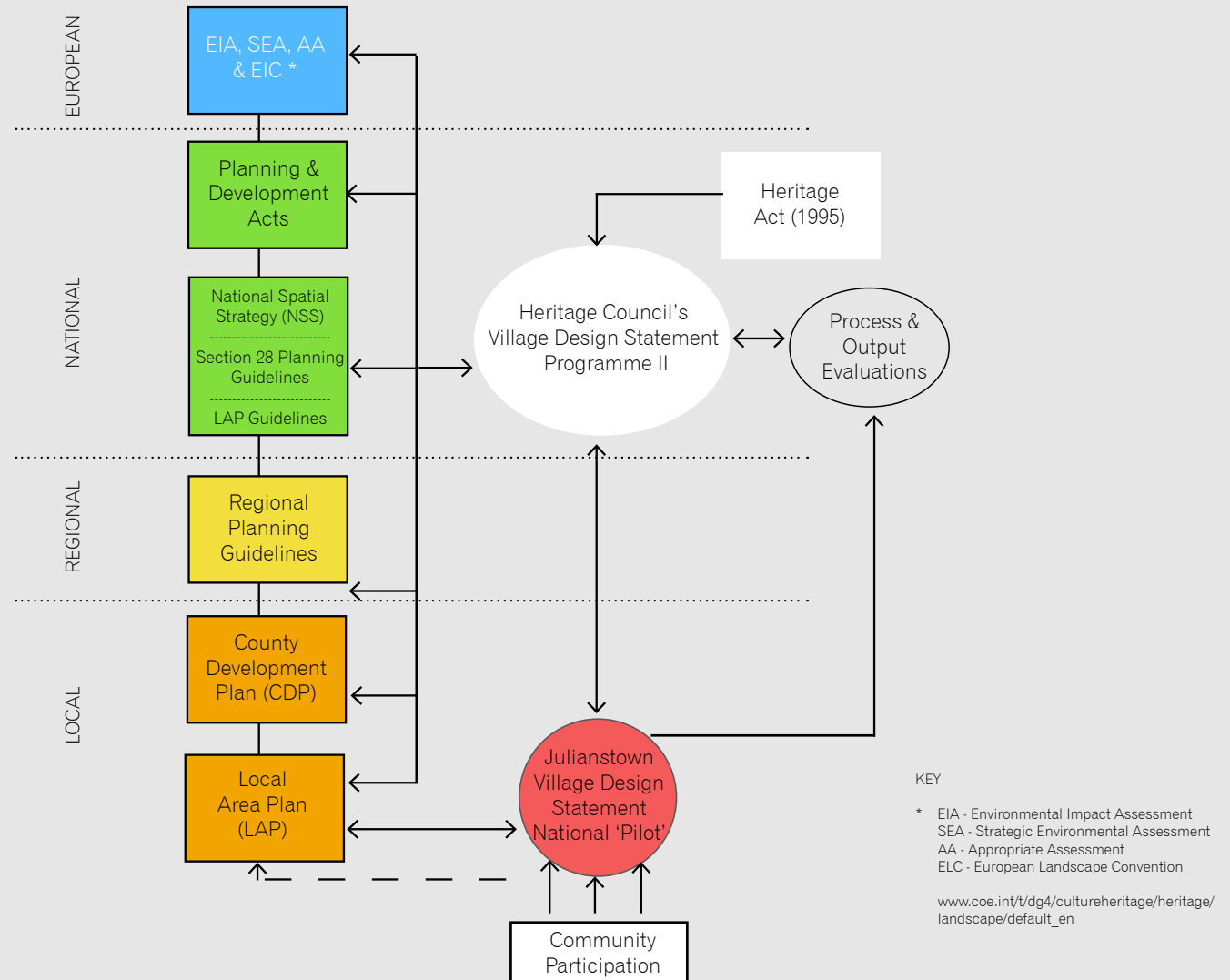
* www.heritagecouncil.ie/planning/publications/article/village-design-statements-vds-in-ireland-the-way-forward
www.heritagecouncil.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/Planning/VDS_Jan_2-10.pdf

Introduction & Background

This Julianstown Village Design Statement (VDS) is a non-statutory local development framework, compiled by the local community to establish a vision for the future of their village.

The aims of the Village Design Statement process are to:

- 1 To assess and describe what is distinctive and unique about Julianstown village to ensure these features are enhanced through the local planning system (and other relevant socio-economic development programmes).
- 2 To draw up design principles to guide for the future development within and surrounding the village, in accordance with published planning guidelines and the European Landscape Convention (ELC).
- 3 To effectively manage new development (including infill) and to provide advice to all decision makers, developers and their agents; and
- 4 To act as a focus for local communities to participate and collaborate effectively in the local planning process and other developments in and for their community.



European, National, Regional, County and Local Context of the 'Pilot' Village Design Statement

Introduction & Background

In their 2008 evaluation of the National Village Design Statement Programme I, The Heritage Council stressed that good Village Design Statements can:

Raise community awareness about their surrounding landscape and heritage assets;

Provide the community with a useful 'tool' to ensure that future developments and changes add to local distinctiveness and character;

Link into the planning system so that planners can use it to improve the local distinctiveness of design proposals;

Assist local authority planners, architects, developers and others by giving them local guidance up front and,

Generate and develop overall community confidence and capacity building.



Village Design Statements in Ireland - The Way Forward?



'Julianstown - Design Our Future' DVD

The Local Context;

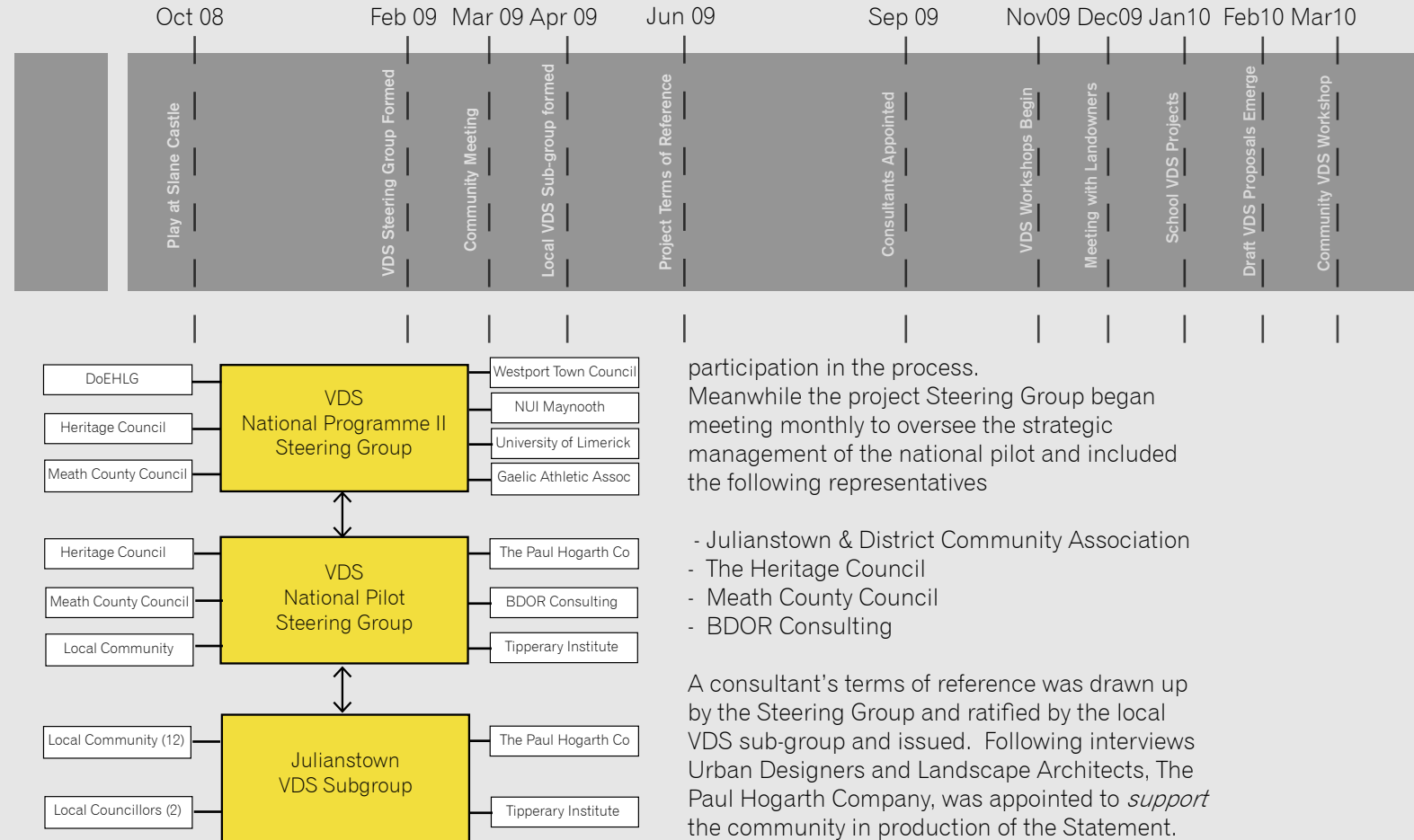
In 2007, the then Julianstown and District Resident's Association began researching the possibility of preparing a Village Design Statement (VDS), as a way of addressing the ongoing decline of facilities in the village and also to enable local people to have a say in any future development plans for the area. The Group held a meeting with the Heritage Officer of Meath County Council as a result of which they contacted and submitted an application for funding to the Heritage Council. While this was initially unsuccessful, as the Heritage Council was about to embark on an evaluation of the overall National VDS Programme I, both organisations continued to liaise.

The Heritage Council's Planning Officer then invited the Julianstown community to give a presentation from a community perspective at the Heritage Council's National Village Design Conference in the autumn of 2008. The Julianstown group saw this as an excellent opportunity to be creative and strategic and devised and performed a community play, which they performed live at Slane Castle in October 2008. This effective and well received production, later produced on DVD with the Heritage Council's support, featured local residents in discussion about life in the village while 'standing at the line', waiting for their children at the local school playground.

The Collaborative Process

In early 2009, the hard work of local residents paid off as Julianstown was selected by The Heritage Council as the National 'Pilot' Project for the National Village Design Programme II. A meeting was arranged between JDCA, The Heritage Council and Meath County Council to establish a partnership and to engage full support in the process of setting up a project Steering Group.

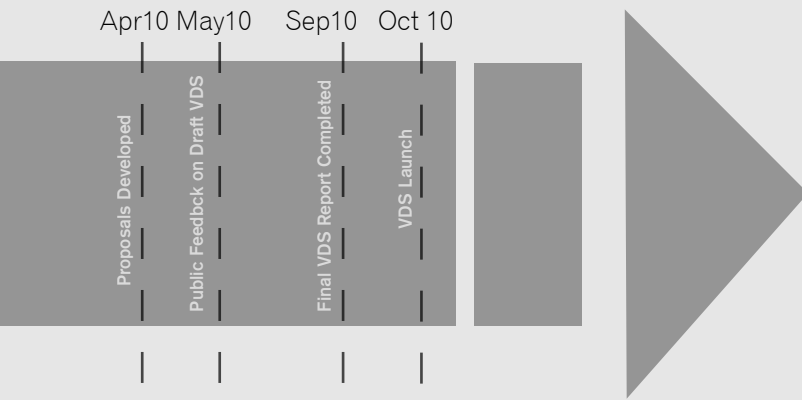
With momentum building, JDCA organised a well attended public event in March 2009, where the community play was performed live for a local audience, and the DVD was formally launched by Tom Dowling, the County Manager. Alison Harvey from the Heritage Council gave a presentation on the vision for the National Village Design Programme II to officially mark the start of the national 'pilot' project in Julianstown. The evening also included a participative exercise which revealed a common range of concerns about the village, and resulted in the formation of a Local Village Design Sub Group made up of 15 local residents and two County Councillors. This group began meeting monthly to engage local



Management Structure of the VDS National Programme II

“It’s the most exciting thing that’s happened in Julianstown for 30 years!”

Local Resident



The consultant team began work in partnership with the local VDS subgroup on the Julianstown Village Design Statement in October 2009. A number of workshops took place during which analysis of the village was undertaken and a draft vision for the village established.

Consultation with local people was a core element of the VDS process. Local landowners and developers met in December to discuss the statement and how they could play their part.

Members of Foirioige Youth Group took part in an evening workshop, during which they explored their likes and dislikes about the village, as well their visions for its future. They also built a substantial model of the village over a number of weeks.

Pupils from Whitecross National School carried out a number of exercises about the village, including writings describing Julianstown in the year 2020 and village models.

Running concurrently with the VDS, a class of postgraduate urban and rural design students from Queens University Belfast studied Julianstown in detail, producing a series of ambitious strategies and design proposals, later presented to the community.

On 25th March 2010 a major public event was held in Julianstown to present the interim findings of the Village Design Statement and to seek the input of local people. A series of options for the future of the village were presented for the public to analyse and discuss. This revealed a degree of consensus on the appropriate level of development, enabling finalisation of the statement to proceed.

The Julianstown Village Design Statement was formally launched by Minister for State, Ciarán Cuffe TD, on 7th October 2010.

In many ways, the process of developing this Village Design Statement has been as valuable as the document itself, bringing together local people, providing a focus around which all members of the community could participate and a mechanism for engagement with the Heritage Council and Meath County Council.

Meath County Council place great importance on the role of Village Design Statements and in particular, their value to the statutory Local Area Plan process. The Julianstown Village Design Statement was compiled in advance of the review of the East Meath Local Area Plan and, consequently, its findings will be used to inform the development of this plan.

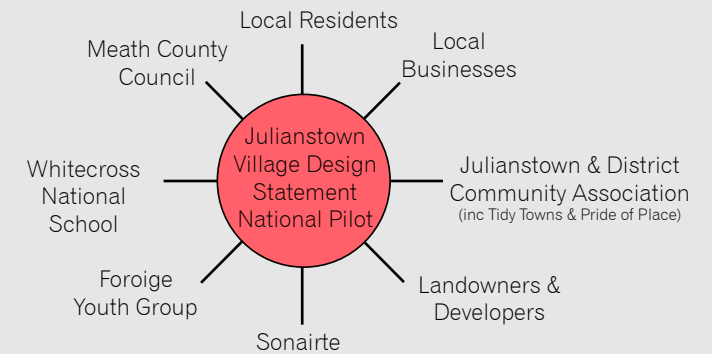
The Julianstown Village Design Statement was compiled by local residents with the full endorsement of local stakeholders and therefore represents a truly shared vision for the future of Julianstown. As such, all those with an interest in the regeneration and development of Julianstown are requested by its residents to consult this document and, wherever possible, adopt its principles in project proposals.



The Collaborative Process



The Collaborative Process



Local Project Stakeholders

A wide range of people had direct involvement in the shaping of the Village Design Statement. This included local residents, some of whom have lived in Julianstown all their lives, others who recently moved to the area. It included many children, teenagers and students, as well as some of the village's older residents. And it included local councillors, council officials, landowners, local businesses and others with a shared interest in the future of Julianstown.

Context

With a population of 600, Julianstown is located in the east of County Meath, 7km south of Drogheda and 40km north of Dublin. It is located on the N1 road which, until construction of the M1 motorway in 2003, was the principal road connection between Dublin and Belfast. The motorway is accessed via Junction 7 to the south of Julianstown, the last exit before the toll plaza located near Drogheda. To the east of Julianstown lie the seaside towns of Bettystown and Laytown, providing Julianstown's nearest rail link on the north / south line.

Significant levels of construction during the 1990s and 2000s have seen the towns of Drogheda, Bettystown and Laytown grow considerably. This has resulted in increased traffic flows through the village, caused mostly by Dublin-bound commuters joining the motorway at Junction 7. Evidence suggests that some motorists pass through Julianstown to avoid the motorway toll plaza.

Any future growth of these towns would therefore be likely to further increase pressure on Julianstown's roads. Similarly, urban sprawl from these settlements and along main roads could in time, threaten its distinctive identity.

A challenge for this Village Design Statement has been to find a balance between facilitating sustainable growth while maintaining the village's character and identity.



Location Plan of Julianstown

History



Historic Plan of Julianstown - 1836 - 1837 (Meath County Council)

The first historical references to the parish of Julianstown date back to the Norman era of the 12th Century, although evidence points to human activity dating back much further. This includes references to a battle in the year 852 involving the local Cianachta clan.

The history of Julianstown is intrically linked to the River Nanny, both as a crossing point and a resource for industrial activity.

In 1641 the village's bridge was chosen by Colonel Plunkett as the ideal location at which to ambush a contingent of government troops on their way to reinforce a besieged Drogheda. This bloody episode is now commemorated by a plaque on the current Bridge.

The River Nanny is also thought to have had 14 mills located along its length. The most evident of these today is a cornmill beside the bridge, since converted into a hotel. Further downstream, the ruins of a limekiln also remind us of brickworks that once operated in the area.

The village grew in close relationship with three nearby estates of Dardistown, Moymurthy and Ballygarth. It consisted of few houses and a travellers inn along the road, then growing in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to include the 6 swiss cottage style houses, garda station and courthouse. A more recent spell of growth in the late 20th and early 21st centuries has resulted in the village we see today.

Landscape Setting



Julianstown nestles in the valley of the River Nanny as the watercourse makes its way to the Irish Sea at Laytown. Much of the village's character stems from this pronounced topography, with nearby fields and the river floodplain clearly visible as the main road dips either side to meet the bridge. The character of the village is therefore intrinsically linked to its landscape setting, sense of place and cultural heritage.

With plentiful naturalised areas, Julianstown has good ecological value and high local biodiversity. Its vegetated river banks are home to many species of bird, such as Kingfisher and Grey Wagtail, and its relatively clean waters host Mullet and Trout. As such, it is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). It could therefore be said that Julianstown exists in a degree of balance with nature, reminding us that improving the village must not just be for people, but for all of its residents.





Satellite Photograph of Julianstown - early 2000s

The Village

In an era of villages throughout Ireland looking increasingly the same, it is essential to identify the components of Julianstown that make it distinctive. It is then possible to determine how these can be enhanced and protected for future generations.

The landmarks on this map were jointly identified by members of the community as the key components of Julianstown's distinctiveness. They include buildings and structures, as well as landscape features.

Julianstown is fortunate to have such a wealth of historic features, ranging greatly in nature from a 14th century castle to an award winning modernist church. Key sections of the village have been classified by Meath County Council as an Architectural Conservation Area. The landscape is also an integral part of Julianstown's character, focussed primarily on the river and associated topography. In considering the future of the village, it will be essential to consider how best to enhance these features, with scope for them to play a role in attracting visitors to the village.



Distinctiveness



1. Community Centre



2. Fields & Community Garden



3. Courthouse & Barracks



4. Old Mill



5. Bridge



6. Cherry Trees



7. St Mary's Church & Parish Rooms



8. The Gallops Pub



9. Swiss Cottages



10. River Nanny & Valley



11. Lime Kiln



12. Mile Stone



13. Whitecross School



14. Woods



15. St Mary's Church



16. Sonairte



17. Ballygarth Castle



18. Dovecot

The Village

Julianstown is a village with many qualities in terms of local distinctiveness and character that must be both preserved and enhanced. However, there are other parts of the village that are not working so well, requiring more efforts to address them.

For a long time traffic has been a major problem in Julianstown. This stems back to its location at a principal crossing point of the River Nanny, making Julianstown a key point on the road northwards from Dublin. Despite construction of the M1 motorway, traffic through the village is heavy and relatively fast.

Recent traffic counts indicated that 22,000 vehicles drive through Julianstown each weekday, including heavy goods vehicles. Causes can be linked to housing growth in south Drogheda, Laytown and Bettystown, as well as the location of road tolls on the M1, encouraging some drivers to take an alternative route through the village.

The direct impacts of traffic on Julianstown are substantial. These include:

Noise pollution
Road safety
Air pollution
Vibration

However, it is the indirect impacts that greatly influence Julianstown's ability to function as a normal village. Despite scenic views and attractive gardens, the impact of traffic is such that few people spend time out in the village. And so great is the risk of traffic to pedestrians and cyclists that few parents let their children walk through Julianstown alone and hardly anybody tries to cross from one side of the road to the other. As the road splits Julianstown in two, this greatly affects the way in which the village is used by residents. This is further compounded by a lack of pavements in key areas and the existence of only one pedestrian crossing point. Young people and other non drivers are affected the most.

Is this acceptable?



Another factor that has a particularly negative impact on Julianstown is the Old Mill Hotel, which currently lies in a derelict state. This prominent building is thought to date back to Norman times and functioned as one of 14 mills along the River Nanny. The building was extended over time and used more recently as a hotel and bar. The Old Mill was gutted by a major fire in 2007 and has been derelict since.

Due to its prominence in the centre of Julianstown, the dereliction of this building has an impact on the entire village. To passers by it sends out a negative message and discourages them from stopping. And to residents, who remember the Old Mill Hotel as a lively meeting place, it's a poignant and constant reminder of the village's decline. Action on the Old Mill is therefore of paramount importance to Julianstown.



Analysis

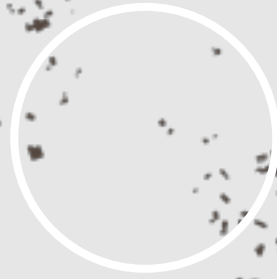
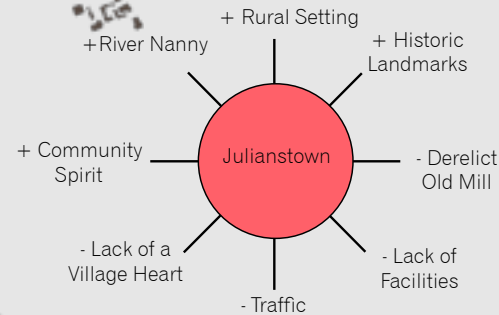


Figure Ground Study

In addition to closure of the Old Mill Hotel, Julianstown has seen other amenities close, including a shop, post office and gardai station. The Gallops Bar and Restaurant, Pitch and Put and Golf course and a crèche are the only remaining commercial enterprises located within the village centre, with other businesses located along the main road, primarily aimed at drivers and beyond a comfortable walking distance from the village. Again, heavy traffic and lack of pavement provision further discourages residents making journeys to these on foot.

The lack of commercial activity in Julianstown has led to a lack of physical and social activity as well. With little or no reason to go into the village, the streets are noticeably empty of people. It is now rare for residents to meet one another on the street, directly impacting on the sense of community.



Key Analysis Findings

This analysis of Julianstown was carried out by local residents with support of the consultant team. It included a number of exercises, building on the feedback received at the initial public meeting.

Perhaps the most poignant discovery of this analysis process is reflected by above plan. Using a technique known as figure ground study, residents mapped all buildings in the village, enabling conclusions to be drawn from the result.

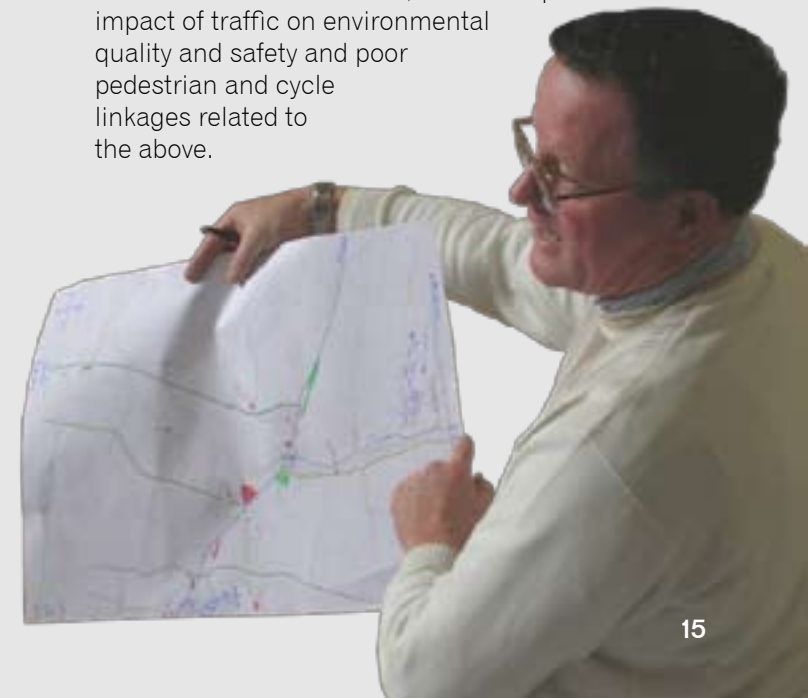
The clear observation is that Julianstown is split into four separate parts, either side of the river and the road. What is also particularly evident is a large gap between buildings in the middle, indicating that Julianstown lacks a defined centre - or a heart.

“Our village lacks a heart: there is nothing at its centre, just a big hole!”
VDS Subgroup member

Analysis Findings

To summarise, Julianstown has a wealth of qualities that must be retained and enhanced. These include: buildings and structures of historic or architectural significance (including the Old Mill in need of urgent action), a strong landscape character of river and valley; and a combination of the above to create a unique urban form.

However, analysis suggests that Julianstown is unsustainable in its present form because of a limited ability to support local amenities and employment; lack of a centre around which such amenities can be focussed; an unacceptable impact of traffic on environmental quality and safety and poor pedestrian and cycle linkages related to the above.



What kind of place would you like Julianstown to be?

Having identified its distinctive features and the issues and opportunities associated with the village, we can now look to the future. What kind of place would you like Julianstown to be? This fundamental question was discussed at length by local residents, including school children and the Village Design Subgroup. It challenged people to think in some detail about what qualities they would like Julianstown to have in the future.

Visioning exercises included selecting key words that best describe the village of the future (right), drawings and essays on Julianstown in the year 2020 and the development of an options matrix, describing different levels of development and associated projects.



The Shared Vision

“Julianstown will grow into an attractive, safe and sustainable village. Founded on its rich history and ecology, it will be home to a vibrant, creative and enterprising community, welcoming to all”.



The Shared Vision Statement (above) represents the aspirations that the people of Julianstown have for their village. It was developed through an open process of discussion, debate and revision, to reflect the views of as many people as possible. All future development and regeneration projects in Julianstown must now seek to contribute to the realisation of this vision.

Aims

1

To protect and enhance Julianstown's distinctive identity through its buildings, structures landscape

- Conservation / Restoration
- Public Realm and Space Enhancement
- Management of New Development

2

To develop Julianstown into a sustainable village with the amenities and quality of environment its community desire

- New appropriately designed housing
- Comprehensively tackling traffic issues
- Interconnection of parts of the village
- Introduction of new amenities and facilities

3

To bring a social and economic vitality back to Julianstown

- Development of a strong, mixed use village centre
- Attraction of investment and employment

These 3 aims and accompanying objectives set in place how the Vision for Julianstown will be realised. They are accompanied by the adjacent Village Design Concept. This identifies key concepts for the future of the village and, on the following pages, provides the framework by which principles and projects are identified.



Village Design Concept



VDS Concept Plan

-  **The Welcome**
Creating a more welcoming village for locals and visitors alike
-  **The Street**
Tackling traffic and creating a better environment for pedestrians and cyclists
-  **The Heart**
Establishing a defined centre for the village
-  **Our Heritage**
Protecting and enhancing the village's historic features, including the Old Mill
-  **The Village**
Providing new homes and managing growth
-  **The River**
Improving the River Nanny as a place for people and wildlife
-  **Landscape**
Safeguarding the village's natural setting and enhancing the environment
-  **Community**
Nurturing a stronger sense of community

What does Julianstown say to you? First impressions and the quality of arrival experience in the village are key considerations. This is not just for aesthetic reasons, important as they are, but in the messages conveyed to people, be they residents, passers by, tourists or potential investors. Scope exists to improve the arrival experience from all directions into Julianstown, improving external perceptions of the village and giving everybody a warmer welcome.

Julianstown currently lacks an identifiable crest or logo. Consideration should be given to development a brand for the village, so helping to send out a positive image of Julianstown to those from outside. This will be particularly important if the village seeks to attract tourists, in what can be a competitive market place. The process of developing a brand identity must involve the input of the local community, so that it fits the village, as opposed to something falsely imposed upon it.

Principles

- Define and celebrate entrance points to the village
- Communicate the identity of Julianstown in a coordinated way

Signage is an important means of communication, informing people of directions, road safety, goods and services. However, left uncoordinated, signage can have a negative visual impact on its surroundings. Julianstown has a wide variety of signage types throughout the village, especially to either side of its approach roads. A signage coordination strategy should therefore be established to identify appropriate locations and designs for signage around the town. A series of simple design guidelines can help to harmonise signage, without overly limiting creativity.



The w

“Make the village stand out in your mind”

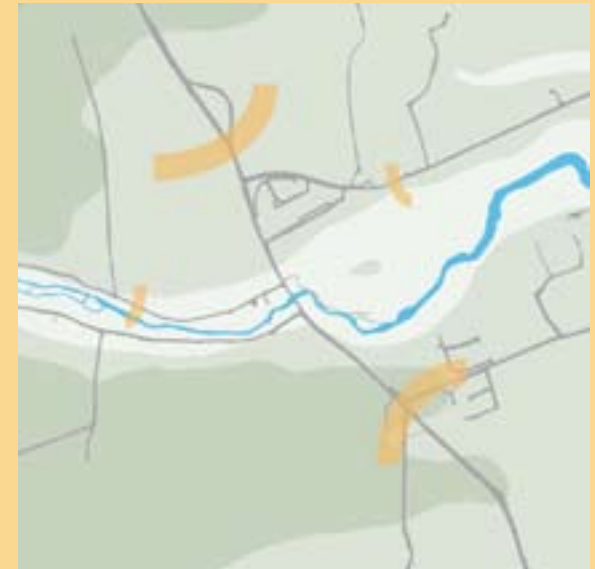
Participant at the VDS Public Workshop

Defining where the village 'starts and stops' is a crucial task. In developing this statement, residents found that different people had different views on this issue, perhaps reflective of the tendency for development to sprawl out of the village in recent years. Entrance points have thereby been identified on the adjacent plan. This allows for the creation of gateways, through the balanced use of public art, signage, lighting and street trees.

Public art in Julianstown should be site specific - ie responsive in subject to its setting, rather than designed in isolation from the village and sited afterwards. Inspiration could be taken from the village's rich history or landscape.

Projects

- 1 Public art at main road entrances to village, signage to attract tourism
- 2 Coordinate all signage via a strategy
- 3 Develop a Julianstown brand & logo



Creating a more welcoming village for locals and visitors alike

elcome



The main road through Julianstown is wide and fast, greatly affecting the way in which the village functions. A number of measures are therefore required to address this issue, so that Julianstown can prosper as a safe place in which to live, shop, stop off and play.

Over the long term, reduction of traffic flows through Julianstown should be addressed at a regional level. This could include establishment of a bypass to the west of the village, or reconfiguration of motorway exits and tolls to provide more direct access to south Drogheda and the east coast. However, it is recognised that this is unlikely to take place in the near future, requiring other measures to be put in place.

Principles

- Reduce traffic volume and speeds
- Improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists
- Transform the character from road to street, via building frontages and streetscape design

Most places are about striking a balance and Julianstown is no different. Efforts are needed to readdress the balance between motorised vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. At the moment, drivers have little indication that they are passing through a village and therefore little inclination to slow down. Tackling this issue is not just about traffic calming - it's about changing the whole relationship with the road.

It is advocated that Julianstown seeks to turn its road into a street, helping it to become the focus of the village, while also encouraging drivers to pass through with more care (or even stop off). Achieving this will require new development to provide positive frontage onto the street, as seen in the vicinity of the Swiss Cottages.



The Street

“Would you let your kids walk to school in Julianstown?”

Participant at the VDS Public Workshop



A comprehensive streetscape project would also help in this transformation. This would include increased foot and cycle paths, attractive high quality surfacing and a consistently applied approach to street furniture (eg. seating, bins and light columns). Where possible, street furniture should be bespoke designed to enhance local distinctiveness. Details should be very robust but appropriate to a village setting rather than a main road.

Reducing the impact of cars on Julianstown will also be achieved through other projects proposed by the VDS, including the provision of community facilities within walking distance of the village (thus reducing local car usage.) Less cars and more people would be a major step in giving Julianstown back its village character.

Tackling traffic and creating a better environment for pedestrians and cyclists

Streets

Julianstown needs more pedestrian crossing points, to allow safe passage across the road while also slowing traffic.



Projects

- 4 Lobby for long-term by pass or another untolled exit from M1
- 5 Implement concentrated traffic calming in the village
- 6 Streetscape - Implement footpaths and lighting along roads, making a central feature of the Old Bridge
- 7 Explore lorry ban



Establishing a defined centre for the village

The

Analysis revealed that Julianstown lacks a clear centre, resulting in a village split into four and its residents rarely coming together. For Julianstown to be a successful and sustainable village, this needs to be addressed - putting a beating heart back into the centre of the village.

Principles

- Prioritise new development within a close walking distance to the centre
- Locate enhanced community facilities (indoor and outdoor) at the centre of the village
- Provide improved connections between the centre and all other areas of the village



The Old Bridge is widely accepted as the centre of Julianstown. This historic structure is in need of restoration with scope to also improve lighting, footpaths and historic interpretation.

“There’s nowhere now to stop and have a chat with your neighbours”

VDS Subgroup Member



Heart

New development in Julianstown must be prioritised at the centre of the village, as opposed to along approach roads or at the edges. This provides the opportunity to increase the density of population living within a walkable area, helping to support facilities and adding life back onto the streets. Residents understand that new development has to be commercially viable. However, they also feel strongly that new development in the heart of Julianstown must provide facilities for local residents, be it a shop, business centre or other community facility.

Another community facility lacking in Julianstown is a play area. Located at the centre of the village, this would provide a much needed place for children to play in safety. Designed and equipped to a high standard, the facility would also attract families to visit the village.

It is important that community facilities around the village, such as the community centre and parish rooms, have good direct walking links to the village centre. In places, this will require new footpaths and a possible river footbridge.

Projects

- 8** Create a central theme for the village focussing on the strength of river and heritage
- 9** Develop a shop and cafe in or near a small housing development and have this connected with redevelopment of Old Mill
- 10** Build playground space
- 11** Develop sports facilities as part of the new school
- 12** Revamp old community centre, including tennis and basketball court

Julianstown is a historic village, dating back to at least the 12th Century. As such, its heritage is a critical component of its identity. Many of Julianstown's historic buildings and structures are in good condition, such as the Swiss Cottages, Gardai Station and Courthouse. However there are others, including the Old Mill, Bridge and Dovecot, that are in urgent need of restoration. Saving the built and natural heritage of Julianstown must be a priority.

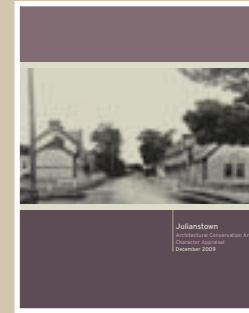
Principles

- Conserve the fabric of historic buildings and monuments
- Identify new, sustainable uses for old buildings
- Enhance the setting of historic buildings and monuments
- Restore derelict and vacant buildings
- Communicate the importance of Julianstown's natural and built heritage

Due to its historic importance, the centre of Julianstown is a designated Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) in the Meath County Development Plan (2007 – 2013). This affords the village protection through the statutory planning system. The ACA Character Appraisal (right) provides a detailed analysis of the village's historic layout and guidance on any works to existing buildings or new development within this area. This Village Design Statement should therefore be read in conjunction with the Character Appraisal.

Protecting heritage is about more than the conservation of structures - it must also be about finding sustainable means by which old buildings and landscapes can be looked after in the future. It must also be about education, so that the value of these assets is fully understood. Through this process of protecting Julianstown's heritage, social and economic benefits can be brought to the village, through tourism, education and an increased sense of civic pride.

Protecting and enhancing the village's historic features, including the Old Mill



Our Her

“I would like to see the Old Mill put back together... they should also build a lovely playground for the children to play at and have fun”

Pupil, Whitecross School

Projects

- 13** Prepare Conservation & Management Plan for Old Mill and Bridge
- 14** Develop design brief for the Old Mill
- 15** Have community involvement in the development of the Old Mill as Community, Heritage or Tourism Centre
- 16** Develop Heritage Trail



For anyone who visits Julianstown, it is immediately clear that The Old Mill is in a very poor condition. This protected structure dates back to the earliest days of the village and such dereliction poses a threat to its survival. For residents, the importance of this building is such that its state has a deep impact on the village. It is therefore critical that the building and site are improved in the short term, while restoration takes place and new, sustainable uses are found.

As the village and future of the Old Mill are intrinsically linked, it will be important for local people to have a say in its development. The most effective means of doing so will be to work with its owners and planning authorities to develop a design brief for the site. This will enable key design principles, as set out by this document, to be established. While many possible uses exist for the site, some element of community orientated use would make a major contribution to the village.

Heritage

The Vi

Providing new homes and managing growth

The ability of Julianstown to support community facilities is directly linked to population growth and new housing. Similarly, the village's character is greatly influenced by new architectural and urban design.

Principles

- Manage sustainable growth of the village
- Design new development to positively contribute character and reinforce distinctiveness of Julianstown, in line with VDS principles
- Follow a compact development pattern that makes the village walkable, reducing car usage



The population of Julianstown is approximately 600 having grown from 400 in 2004. Relative to other parts of the county, this growth is relatively small. Future permissible growth levels will be set out in the revised LAP. The extent to which Julianstown grows is critically linked to its character and sustainability - a question that has been discussed at length by the community through the course of this VDS.

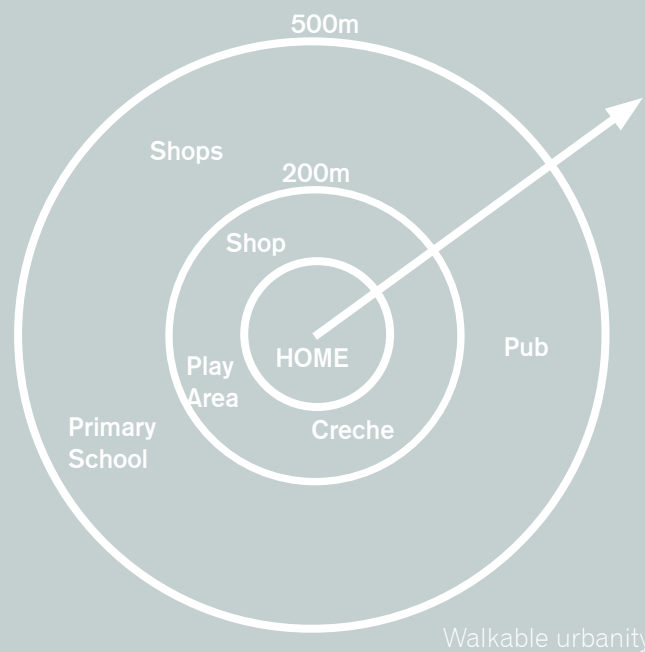


Analysis found that Julianstown's distinct character is significantly linked to the design of its older buildings, such as the Swiss Cottages. New housing, while of generally good quality, lacks the same distinctiveness of design and arguably reduces the uniqueness of the village. What is more, nearly all recent development has been of family homes, lacking the diversity of accommodation needed to attract a wider cross section of the community.

“Some new houses are needed, but not too many - we don't want to lose the village feel”

Participant, VDS Workshop

Village



Through public discussion, residents agreed that some housing growth in Julianstown is needed to support community facilities, but not enough to radically alter the character of the village. New development must be sited and designed in a manner that encourages residents to walk as much as possible, as opposed to be entirely structured for car use. This will therefore require the prioritisation of housing within a walking distance of the centre of the village. Housing should also be mixed in size, including 1 and 2 bedroom houses as well as family homes.



The community also feel that tourism is an aspect with great potential in Julianstown. Centred on the river, Old Mill, Sonairte, Ballygarth Castle and other historic features, increased numbers of visitors can contribute directly to the economic sustainability of the village.

Projects

- 17** A small increase in housing, including enterprise and shop units
- 18** Develop tourism to support the economic viability of the village



To strengthen the character of Julianstown (and halt any erosion of its unique identity), it is important that new development follows the principles of good urban design, drawing direct reference from the existing village. This page sets out some of the key design principles for new development in Julianstown. These should be followed in conjunction with The Guidelines for Planning Authorities on the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (DEHLG 2009) and the Julianstown Architectural Conservation Area Character Appraisal (ACA).

Density & Massing

New development in Julianstown should be constructed to a sustainable density range of 30 to 40 dwellings per hectare. Village character should be maintained with a varied, pitched roofline of 1, 1.5 and 2 storey buildings.

Legibility

All development in Julianstown must positively contribute to the hierarchy of defined streets and spaces, in line with urban design best practice. This should include landmark buildings and architectural features at key junctions and gateways; use of buildings and landscape to achieve good spatial definition and design that maximises the benefit of Julianstown's distinctive views and vistas.

The Village

Providing new homes and managing growth

Materials & Local Traditions

New development must employ building materials of relevance to Julianstown and its district. Smooth render and stucco should predominate, with some limited use of exposed brick and stone to match established buildings. Roofs should be of grey slate or equivalent and the use of plastic fittings and features strictly avoided. Local craftsmanship and construction techniques should be employed wherever feasible.

Public Realm

Development must contribute positively to the creation of good public realm. All buildings must front onto streets and public spaces, activated by doors and windows. Blank walls, back gardens and service areas should be kept to the rear, away from public areas. Areas of paving and landscape must be designed to a high standard and the street layouts and details should be appropriate to a small village. (Also see Landscape)

Julianstown Style

All developers and architects should be in a position to demonstrate how their proposed buildings have taken design reference from Julianstown, so as to positively reinforce the village's distinct character and identity. This should not necessarily result in pastiche replicas and allow room for contemporary and innovative architecture, as long as the VDS principles are observed.



Diversity

The village requires a diverse range of accommodation types to support a sustainable and mixed community. New development should therefore comprise of a mix of 1, 2, 3 + bedrooms, detached, semidetached and terraced dwellings, as well as a combination of privately owned, rented and social housing.

Community Consultation

Local developers should be encouraged to present information on development proposals at bi-annual public meetings of Julianstown & District Community Association



New housing should add to the distinct character of Julianstown



The River Nanny flows through the heart of Julianstown and is much loved by residents of the village. However, access to the river is difficult, so it currently plays a limited role in the daily life of the village. The community are in broad agreement that the river has great potential to be enjoyed more fully by locals and visitors alike. This must, however, be in balance with its natural ecosystem and designation as a Natural Heritage Area (NHA) & Special Area of Conservation (SAC).



Principles

- Conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the river and its margins
- Manage flood risk from the river
- Provide safe access to the river for leisure and education
- Enhance the natural and built setting of the river



“...the thing that would make Julianstown extra special is a boardwalk beside the River Nanny. It would look lovely and I think that a lot of people would appreciate it.”

Pupil, Whitecross School

Th

Cleaning and maintaining the River Nanny are a short term priority. This would involve the removal of litter and debris and, in consultation with expert ecological advice, the selected thinning of vegetation along with habitat improvement.

Over the longer term, a network of paths and boardwalks should be established along the river banks, forming a key part of Julianstown's Green Infrastructure (GI). These would provide safe access to the river's edge for local people, for walking, jogging and cycling. Potential also exists to establish wider regional linkages along the river, connecting with Dardistown, Ballygarth Castle, Sonairte and Laytown through the development of a Community Greenway. The potential of new footbridges should also be examined, connecting with the old community centre and supplementing the narrow footpath on the existing bridge.

Development of river paths, boardwalks and a heritage trail should be comprehensively designed using a landscape masterplan, followed by phased implementation of sections.

Projects

- 19** Manage and maintain river
- 20** Develop water heritage trail from Dardistown to Sonairte & Ballygarth, with canoeing and wildlife facilities
- 21** Design board walk at bridge
- 22** Build new footbridge to Community Centre
- 23** Develop river walk to Ballygarth & river garden space



Use of the water for activities such as fishing and canoeing should also be pursued, subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment. This would allow locals and visitors to explore and enjoy this wonderful natural resource.

Improving the River Nanny as a place for people and wildlife



Julianstown has a distinctive rural character, largely due to numerous views of the countryside from within the village. It is therefore important that the landscape setting of the village is maintained and enhanced where possible. Julianstown is also fortunate to have a particularly active Tidy Towns and Pride of Place group who have made award winning progress in providing attractive public spaces around the village, including the beautiful community garden.

New development in the village must take cognisance of its special landscape setting. The skyline of the river valley is particularly sensitive and efforts are required to retain rural views to the tops of hills either side of the village. Eastward views to the river valley are also critical and should be enhanced. The feasibility of introducing a buffer around Julianstown should be researched to protect its rural setting from over development. Areas of landscape should be considered within or for all new developments.

Principles

- Protect and enhance the natural setting of the village
- Retain and manage mature vegetation and landscapes
- Improve village cleanliness and tidiness
- Add new landscapes in association with new developments

**Safeguarding the village's
natural setting and enhancing
the environment**

Landscape Setting & Environment





1



2



3



4

Recommended Native Tree Species for Julianstown

- Alder** *Alnus glutinosa* 1
- Ash** *Fraxinus excelsior* 2
- Aspen** *Populus tremula* 3
- Bird Cherry** *Prunus padus* 4
- Crab Apple** *Malus sylvestris* 5
- Elder** *Sambucus nigra* 6
- Hawthorn** *Crataegus monogyna* 7
- Hazel** *Corylus avellana* 8
- Penduculate Oak** *Quercus robur* 9
- Rowan** *Sorbus aucuparia* 10



All landscape projects in Julianstown must seek to contribute positively to the area's biodiversity. Reference must therefore be made to the County Biodiversity Action Plan. Trees planted in Julianstown should be native species (left) due to the far greater contribution they make to the local ecology. Leaving wildlife areas completely alone is rarely best practice, as invasive, non native species can often dominate. Areas such as the woods next to the school must therefore be proactively managed, so that it can reach its full potential as a place for wildlife and residents.

ape



5



6



7



8



9



10

Projects

- 24** Tidy Towns and Pride of Place projects, including maintenance of Community Garden, local woods & provision of underground bottlebanks
- 25** Research feasibility of a development buffer



Principles

- Support existing community groups
- Identify opportunities for community networks
- Build capacity of Julianstown & District Community Association

Supporting and growing Julianstown Comm



Julianstown has a very strong sense of community, despite the many challenges presented by the physical layout of the village. Furthermore, many residents have felt the process of compiling this Village Design Statement has been a positive step in bringing people closer together. Strengthening community spirit and cooperation further will have many benefits for Julianstown. First and foremost, it will enrich the lives of those who live there, making the village a more enjoyable place in which to live. In addition, it will also make Julianstown feel even safer and more welcoming to visitors. All in all, these are critical factors of sustainability. Importantly, delivering the Village Design Statement will require considerable coordination and energy amongst residents. This needs to be supported through resources, training, capacity-building and evaluation.

Julianstown & District Community Association (formerly Residents Association) was formed in 2010 as a legal company. It has provided a very effective means by which local residents have come together in the pursuit of common goals for the village. The strength and effectiveness of this organisation will be key in ensuring the effective implementation of the VDS. Increased membership, a wide range of activities and continuance of its strong relationship with the Council and other organisations are fundamental to the village.

To deliver the Village Design Statement, the community will be required to drive the process, working closely with other stakeholders. This will involve establishing project teams as described in the following section. The JDCA will need to build and maintain key partnerships with The Heritage Council and Meath County Council and other key agencies in order to ensure the level of support and draw down of resources to make project proposals a reality.



n's sense of community community

www.julianstowncommunity.com

All of the proposals contained within the Village Design Statement will contribute directly or indirectly to the village's sense of community. By providing better facilities, connections between them and a more attractive place in which to live, pride and community cohesion all stand to benefit. The proposals contained within this section seek to assist the delivery of these objectives and the vision set out by the Village Design Statement.

Capacity building workshops are proposed to ensure that local people are equipped to fully engage in the process of transforming Julianstown. These would include training in project management, community development, leadership, facilitation, funding, planning design and landscape.

It is also proposed to establish an annual event or festival in the village, taking place around the same time each year.

Projects

- 26** Develop and promote Julianstown Village & District Community Association
- 27** Plan and implement community training and capacity building
- 28** Establish and support VDS project teams
- 29** Develop regular social activities in the Gallops and other venues
- 30** Establish an annual village event or festival

This event should be based on a theme with relevance to Julianstown and be programmed to complement and not compete with similar activities elsewhere. This would help to bring people of the village together and provide an attraction to visitors.

Agreed VDS Action Plan

The success of the Julianstown Village Design Statement must be judged on its ability to bring about change. Principles and projects will be of little value unless they can be lifted from the pages of this document and applied to development and regeneration initiatives throughout the village. The proposals of the Village Design Statement must also be used to inform future planning policy and in particular the East Meath Local Area Plan, due for revision in 2011.

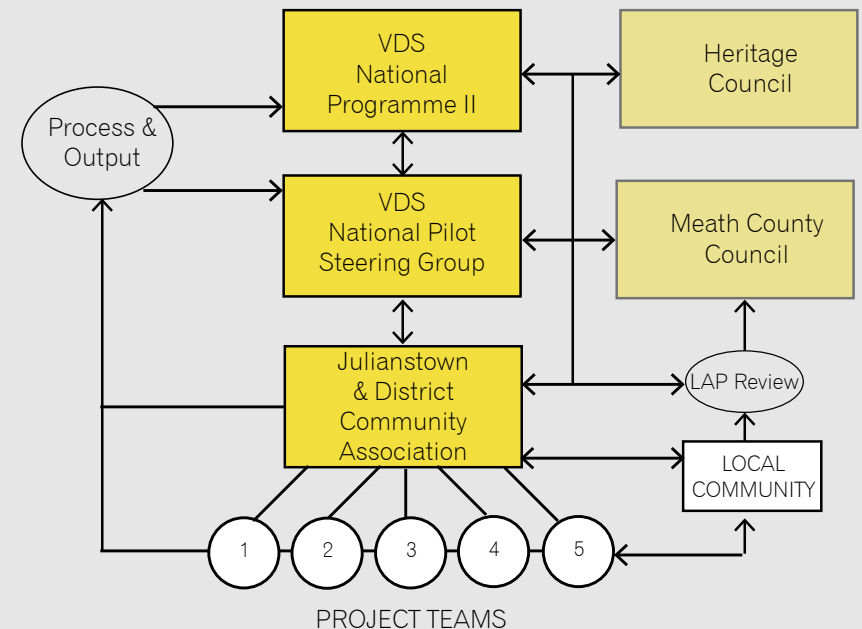
Bringing about positive change will be reliant on the continuation of a true partnership approach between the community, Meath County Council, private developers and government agencies, such as the Heritage Council and Meath Partnership. By working together, channelling expertise and resources to the right areas, Julianstown stands to benefit significantly.

It proposed to continue the VDS Steering Group assembled for this project and in time grow this to accommodate new stakeholders as identified. Their role will be to monitor progress, assist in the decision making process and ensure that different projects are coordinated with one another as much as possible.

Village Design Project Teams should also be established to advance specific proposals with this report. These teams will be made up of representatives of all of the stakeholders identified, including landowners, the Council and members of the community. Specialist input on these teams should also be sought on a voluntary or paid basis (eg local history, ecology etc)

A key challenge in delivering the Village Design Statement projects will invariably be funding, particularly given the trying economic context in which this project has been produced. All stakeholders must work hard to identify sources of funding from local and central government, European programmes and the private sector.

The Action Plan for Delivery (right) provides a tool by which implementation of the VDS projects should be managed. This is a live document that must be updated regularly in response to progress made and new opportunities as they arise. There will be feedback meetings to the local community bi-annually at least to review progress and inform future planning.



Most of the projects in the Action Plan are for the community to drive forward on their own, in partnership with others or through lobbying. It is also important to be ready for changes or proposals that arise from outside – for example new housing projects and the possible new school. The Implementation Team will need to be able to form small groups, probably quickly, to respond to any proposals and engage speedily to influence designs to ensure that they make a positive contribution to the village character.

**“Some of the things
above may never happen
but some might and it
would be nice to think
that my suggestions had
an input towards the way
Julianstown turned out.”**

Pupil, Whitecross School

Any new potential projects in the village should be tested against the Aims, Concept and Principles set out by the VDS to determine their value to the village. Should a project fail to meet the majority of criteria, its planning and design should be reconsidered accordingly. Equally, any project meeting the criteria and making a positive contribution to the village should be supported through to delivery.

The Action Plan stipulates the prioritisation of projects, based on the beneficial impact they are likely to have on the village and the length of time they are likely to take to deliver. Some projects will be required to be completed for others to commence and importantly, projects must not be delivered in isolation from one another.

Concept	Project		Priority	Timeframe
The Welcome	1	Public Art at main road entrances to village, signage to attract tourism	VH	S
	2	Coordinate all signage via a strategy	H	S
	3	Develop a Julianstown brand & logo	VH	S
The Street	4	Lobby for long term by pass or another untolled exit from M1	VH	L
	5	Implement concentrated traffic calming in village centre	H	S
	6	Streetscape - Implement footpaths and lighting along roads, making a central feature of the Old Bridge	VH	S
	7	Explore lorry ban	H	M
The Heart	8	Create a central theme for village focussing on river and heritage	VH	S
	9	Develop a shop and cafe in or near a small housing development and have this connected with redevelopment of Old Mill	H	M
	10	Build playground space	VH	S
	11	Develop sports facilities as part of new school	H	M
	12	Revamp old community centre, including tennis and basketball courts	H	M
	13	Prepare Conservation and Management Plan for Old Mill and bridge	H	S
Our Heritage	14	Develop design brief for the Old Mill	VH	S
	15	Have community involvement in Old Mill as a community, hertiage or tourism centre	VH	S
	16	Develop Heritage Trail	M	M
	17	A small increase in housing, including enterprise and shop units	M	M
The Village	18	Develop tourism to support the economic viability of the village	M	M
The River	19	Manage and maintain river	VH	S
	20	Explore water heritage trail from Dardistown to Sonairte and Ballygarth	H	S
	21	Design board walk at bridge	M	M
	22	Build new footbridge to Community Centre	M	L
Landscape	23	Develop river walk to Ballygarth and river garden space	M	M
	24	Tidy Towns and Pride of Place projects, including maintenance of Community Garden, local woods & provision of u / ground bottlebank	VH	S
Community	25	Research feasibility of a development buffer	M	M
	26	Develop and promote Julianstown Village & District Community Association	VH	S
	27	Plan and implement community training and capacity building	VH	S
	28	Establish and support VDS project teams	VH	S
	29	Develop regular social activities in the Gallops and other venues	H	S
	30	Establish an annual village event or festival	H	S

Key - Priority: VH - Very High, H - High, M - Medium, Timeframe: S - Short, M - Medium, L - Long



Moving Forward!

Julianstown is a special place. Its riverside setting and landmark buildings combine to create a village with its own distinctive character and charm. And despite the rush of roads and dispersed development pattern, Julianstown is home to a strong community who are passionate about their village.

Through this Village Design Statement, the people of Julianstown have put in place a clear vision for the future. The village will be safer - reducing traffic and creating pavements. It will be more attractive - eradicating dereliction and controlling new development. It will be sustainable - supporting local facilities and reducing car dependency. Above all Julianstown will become an even better place to live

Nobody is under the illusion that fulfilling this vision will be easy. It will require an unprecedented level of collaboration, a lot of hard work and perseverance. But by keeping true to the Village Design principles, by harnessing the energy and enthusiasm that exists and above all, by working together, it will be possible to bring about a wonderful transformation of Julianstown.



Appendix A: People

VDS National Programme II Steering Group

Wendy Bagnall, Senior Executive Planner, Meath County Council
Caroline Creamer, National University of Ireland, Maynooth
Niall Cussen, Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government
Kevin Giles, Tidy Towns Unit, Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government
Alison Harvey (Chairperson), VDS National Programme II Manager, The Heritage Council
Kieran Leddy, Gaelic Athletic Association
Ciaran Lynch, Rural Planning Unit, Tipperary Institute
Dr Brendan O'Keefe, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick
Grainne Shaffrey, Shaffrey Associates and Heritage Council Member
Simon Wall, Westport Town Council

VDS National 'Pilot' Steering Group

Wendy Bagnall - Senior Executive Planner, Meath County Council
Jeff Bishop - Director, BDOR Consulting
Emer Dolphin - (Chairperson), Julianstown & District Community Association
Jonathan Gannon - Intern, The Heritage Council (June 2010 - to date)
Pamela Harty - Intern, The Heritage Council (June 2009 - December 2009)
Alison Harvey - VDS National Programme II Manager, The Heritage Council
James Hennessey - Associate Director, The Paul Hogarth Company
Paddy Prendergast - Julianstown & District Community Association
Martin McCormick - Evaluator, Tipperary Institute

VDS Sub Group

Cllr Serena Campbell - Meath County Council
Cllr Eoin Holmes - Meath County Council
Emer Dolphin - (Chairperson), Julianstown & District Community Association

Paul Berrill	Barry James	Leo Monahan
Clare Burke	Fred Logue	Niamh NiLoinsigh
James Carey	Mary Logue	Paddy Prendergast
Sean Crosson	Peter Madden	Andrew Pufield
Miriam Doyle	Jenny Markey	Martina Relehan
Nicola Hanratty	Gavan McCullough	

Tribute to Madeline Darby

It is with an enormous sense of loss to us all here in Julianstown, when we learnt of the death of Madeline Darby of Rockbellev Julianstown.

Madeleine was so very much a part of the community and was involved with the Julianstown Residents Association and Village Design Group, Whitecross National School's Parent's Association, Meals on Wheels and the church. In her quiet way she achieved so much with her enthusiasm, energy and sense of fun. She motivated us all and she will be deeply missed in so very many ways.



For those who did not know Madeline, they may very well have seen her out and about working within the village often with her husband Donal and children Ciara and Mark. Together with fork or litter picker she took a huge personal pride in Julianstown and its appearance, helping to plant the Community Garden and various beds throughout the village. All of us here at the JDCA felt very privileged to work with her and admired her as a person of tremendous courage, integrity, good humour and generosity.

Even when faced with serious illness, she continued to serve on the JDCA Committee, the Village Design Sub-group and the Parents Council of the school. She was passionate about her local community and about Julianstown and she will be sadly and deeply missed by all her friends and neighbours in the village. We will all miss her kindness, generosity and good heart. The fun and friendship shared, her enthusiasm and common sense, a wonderful friend and neighbour. Beannaímis an solas a thóraíonn a h-anam ionúin.

Appendix B: Information

VDS National Programme II

Village Design Statements in Ireland - The Way Forward?

www.heritagecouncil.ie/planning/heritage-council-initiatives/evaluation-of-the-village-design-statement/

www.heritagecouncil.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/Planning/VDS_Jan_2-10.pdf

Policy - United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Aarhus Convention (1998)

<http://www.unece.org/env/pp/>

Policy - European

European Landscape Convention (2004)

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/landscape/default_en.asp

Faro Declaration (2005)

http://www.cingo-strasbourg.eu/Site_web_en/Reference_en/Farodec_en.pdf

Planning Policy - National

Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas

www.environ.ie/en/Publications/DevelopmentandHousing/Planning/FileDownload,19164,en.pdf

Other policies and guidelines

www.environ.ie

Planning Policy - Regional

Regional Planning Guidelines - Greater Dublin Area

<http://www.rpg.ie/>

Planning Policy - County

Meath County Development Plan 2007 - 2013

www.meath.ie/planning

Planning Policy - Local

East Meath Local Area Plan 2005

www.meath.ie/planning

Julianstown Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) Character Appraisal

www.meath.ie/LocalAuthorities/Heritage/ArchitecturalHeritage/ArchitecturalConservationAreas/File,39997,en.pdf

Contact Information

The Heritage Council - www.heritage.ie

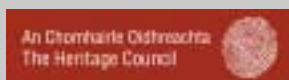
Meath County Council - www.meath.ie

Julianstown & District Community Association - www.julianstowncommunity.com

The Paul Hogarth Company - www.paulhogarth.com

BDOR Consulting - www.bdor.co.uk

Tipperary Institute - www.tippinst.ie



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

