

30. Riverstown Mini-Plan

Village profile

Riverstown is located approximately 20 km to the south of Sligo City, in a designated *Rural Area in Need of Regeneration*. The village provides a range of important services for the population of the wider rural area.

The Douglas River (SAC / NHA) flows to the north of the village, the Arrow / Unshin River (SAC / NHA) flows to the west, and to the east there is Lough Meharth (NHA). These natural amenities are of particular heritage value to the village.

The old village core is focused along Main Street and the local road which runs west to connect with the N-4. The village core consists mainly of terraced buildings mixed with some new residential and commercial structures. Development in recent years has been located close to the village centre.

In the County settlement hierarchy, Riverstown is designated as a *village sustaining the rural community* (see Section 3.2 of this Plan).

Population and housing

According to 2011 Census information, Riverstown had a population of 374 persons in 2011 (21 % higher than the 2006 population). The population had already risen by 13.5% between the years 2002 and 2006. A survey carried out by Council planners in 2015 estimated a population of 442 persons based on a total of 170 occupied houses within the development limit. Census 2016 recorded a population of 334 persons in Riverstown.

More recent growth in residential development is largely attributable to the Rural Renewal Tax Incentive Scheme and the attractive setting of the village. New housing has taken the form of suburban-type estates.

The 2015 survey found a residential vacancy rate of 9% (17 units), down from a rate of 12% (20 units) in 2009.

It is considered that there is only limited need for additional residential development during the plan period.

Community facilities

There is a good range of community facilities in Riverstown: two primary schools, a playschool, a playground, two churches, a community hall and two playing pitches with associated dressing rooms. The village is also served by a Garda Station, doctor's surgery and health centre.

Recent population growth may result in demands for additional community facilities. While some lands have been zoned for these specific purposes, a flexible approach should be taken towards proposals for community developments on other suitable sites.

Commercial and enterprise development

Riverstown plays an important role as a retail provider for the surrounding rural community. Retail development in the form of small convenience outlets is focused along Main Street and in the village core.

The Homeland Co-Op shop provides a valuable service to the wider farming community. Its continued development is important for the vitality of the village centre.

The Folk Park and the Morrison Centre are Riverstown's cultural and tourist attractions. A supportive approach should be adopted to promote their continued use and future growth.

Infrastructure

Riverstown is served by a network of local roads, one of which runs west of the village to connect with the N4 Sligo-Dublin road (approximately 3 km away).

The water supply is sourced from a well bore adjacent to Lough Arrow. The wastewater treatment plant has a design capacity of 600PE (population equivalent).

Objectives

Note: These objectives must be considered in conjunction with the policies and objectives contained in Volume 1 and the general policies for mini-plans contained in Chapter 1 of Volume 2 of this Plan.

It is an objective of Sligo County Council to:

30.1 Natural heritage and open space

- A.** Encourage the protection and enhancement of the conservation value of Unshin River SAC / pNHA (including part of the Douglas River) and Lough Meharth pNHA.
- B.** Encourage improved access to Unshin River and Douglas River by providing walkways as indicated on the Objectives Map and by requiring their provision in conjunction with the development of adjoining lands, subject to Habitats Directive Assessment.
- C.** Reserve land for a public park on site OS-1. The park should be developed as a semi-natural open space area and should protect and highlight the archaeological integrity of the site. Pedestrian links should be provided to adjoining lands and Main Street.

30.2 Built heritage

A. Seek the protection and conservation of the following Protected Structures located within the plan limit:

RPS-18 Bridge spanning the Douglas River, Ardculmer Td/Ardkeeran Td, Riverstown

RPS-19 Riverstown National School, Ardkeeran, Riverstown

RPS-20 Millview House, Ardkeeran, Riverstown

RPS-21 Church of the Sacred Heart (RC), Ardkeeran, Riverstown

RPS-156 Riverstown Garda Station, Cooperhill, Riverstown

RPS-157 Cooper Memorial Hall, Cooperhill, Riverstown

RPS-158 Tawnagh Church (CoI), Cooperhill, Riverstown

RPS-159 Bridge spanning Unshin River, Cooperhill/ Td/Ardkeeran Td, Riverstown

RPS-170 Kingsville House, Cultylough, Riverstown

B. Require any development proposal involving a *Building of Note* (as indicated on the Objectives Map) to restore or renovate the building in a sensitive manner that will contribute to the preservation and enhancement of the character of the building and its setting.

C. Ensure that new development within the village centre reflects and enhances the existing streetscape character in accordance with the policies set out in **Chapter 12 (Urban design)** and the requirements of Section **13.2.4 Development in historic streetscapes** (development management standards) of this Plan.

D. The Objectives Map identifies key sites or structures that have potential or already contribute to the village character by closing a view or containing a space. These sites and structures should be redeveloped or renovated with particular attention to design, having regard to their location, so that they enhance the streetscape and act as focal points or landmarks.

30.3 Circulation and parking

A. Support the provision of pedestrian links between the village and surrounding natural amenities, whilst also connecting with the Folk Park and community facilities (as shown on the Objectives Map). The provision of such links will be required in conjunction with the development of adjoining lands, and shall be subject to Habitats Directive Assessment and the maintenance of the river buffer.

30.4 Village-centre mixed-use zone

A. Require any redevelopment of the existing commercial development at VC-1 to create a strong building line which shall define a public square to the front of the site. Car parking shall be located to the rear of the buildings.

30.5 Community facilities

- A.** Facilitate the relocation of St Joseph’s National School to a larger site on lands zoned for community facilities to the south of the village.
- B.** Encourage the maintenance and enhancement of the existing sports grounds and associated facilities.

30.6 Residential development

- A.** Retain the existing mature trees and stone wall along the eastern boundary of the residential site opposite Kingsville House.
- B.** Any redevelopment of the above site should incorporate well-designed open spaces at the junction of public roads at the south of the site and along the riverside to the north of the site.

30.7 Business and enterprise

- A.** Encourage the maintenance and enhancement of the Folk Park as a tourist attraction.
- B.** Facilitate the development of additional tourism-related local enterprise initiatives.

30.8 Wastewater treatment

- A.** Retain and enhance existing landscaping at the site of the wastewater treatment works.
- B.** A buffer zone shall apply in the vicinity of the existing WWTP site. Development within this zone may be restricted or prohibited in the interest of public health and the protection of residential amenities. The extent of development restrictions in each case will be assessed at planning application stage.

30.9 Flood risk management

- A.** OPW flood risk mapping indicates a potential risk of fluvial (river) flooding on part of the Folk Park site (see the Designations map for more details). Any significant redevelopment of this site shall be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment appropriate to the type and scale of the development being proposed.

Buildings of Note

BoN No. 1 – Five-bay, two-storey building



Architecturally valuable features

- roof pitch; chimneys on ridge of roof;
- vertical-emphasis windows; random rubble stone walling; arched entrance.

This building occupies a prominent position at the south-eastern entrance to the village and has interesting features, which add character to the streetscape.

Recommendation: The replacement of the windows with timber sliding sash windows would greatly enhance the character of this building.

BoN No. 2 – Eight-bay, two-storey public house



Architecturally valuable features

- roof pitch; chimneys on ridge of roof;
- original sash windows on upper floors;
- decorative but simple plaster work on the façade.

This imposing building is an important component of the vernacular streetscape of Riverstown.

Recommendation: The replacement of the ground floor windows with a type appropriate to the age of the building would enhance its character. Any expansion of the commercial use of this building must be treated sensitively in terms of the elements mentioned above and in terms of its intrinsic character.

BoN No. 3 – Five-bay, two-storey public house



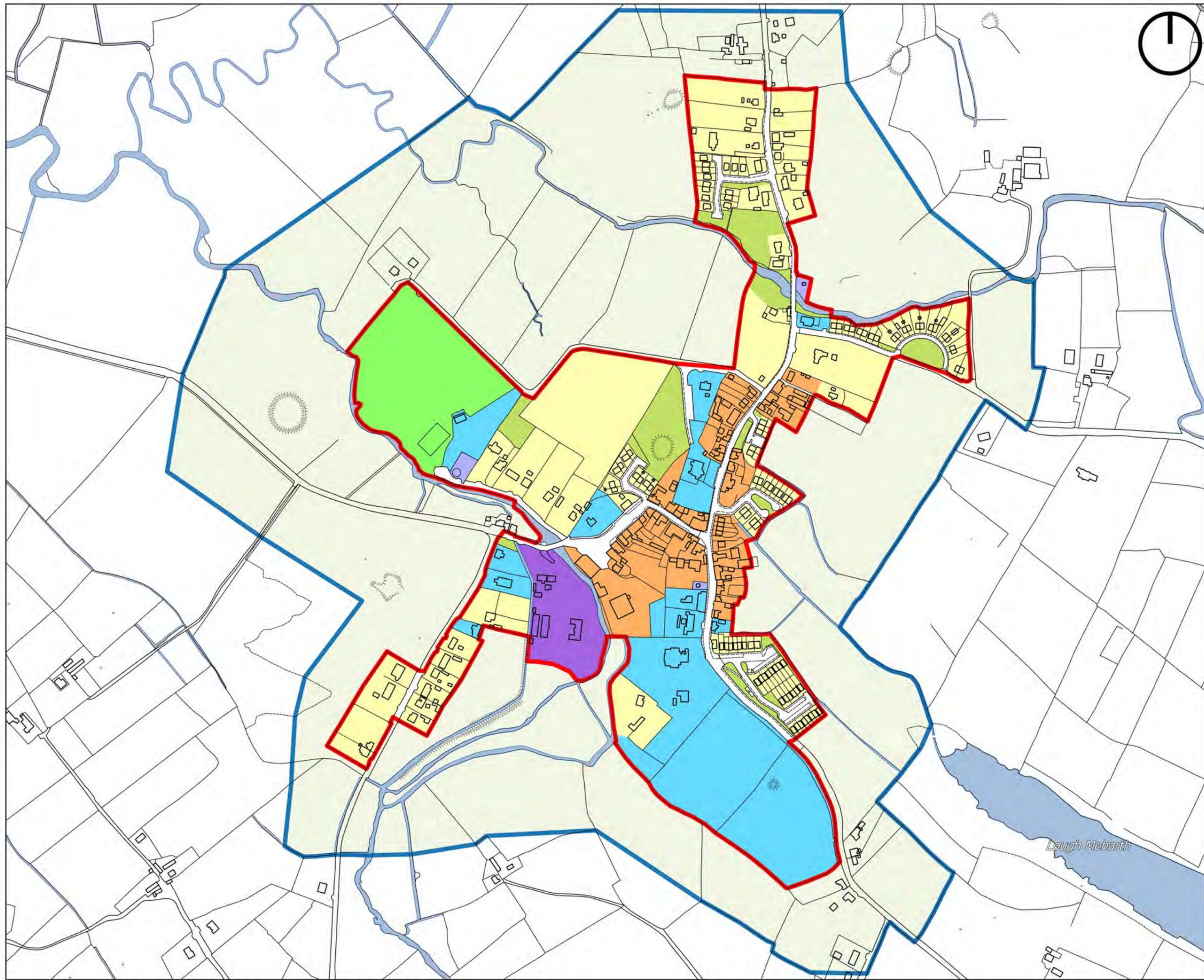
Architecturally valuable features

- roof pitch; decorative chimneys on ridge of roof; vertical-emphasis windows;
- ashlar facade.

Although much modified, this building, which is defined by its striking chimneys, is an imposing presence on the streetscape.

Recommendation: The replacement of the uPVC windows with timber sliding sash windows would greatly enhance the character of this building. Any expansion of the commercial use of this building must be treated sensitively in terms of the elements mentioned above and in terms of its intrinsic character.

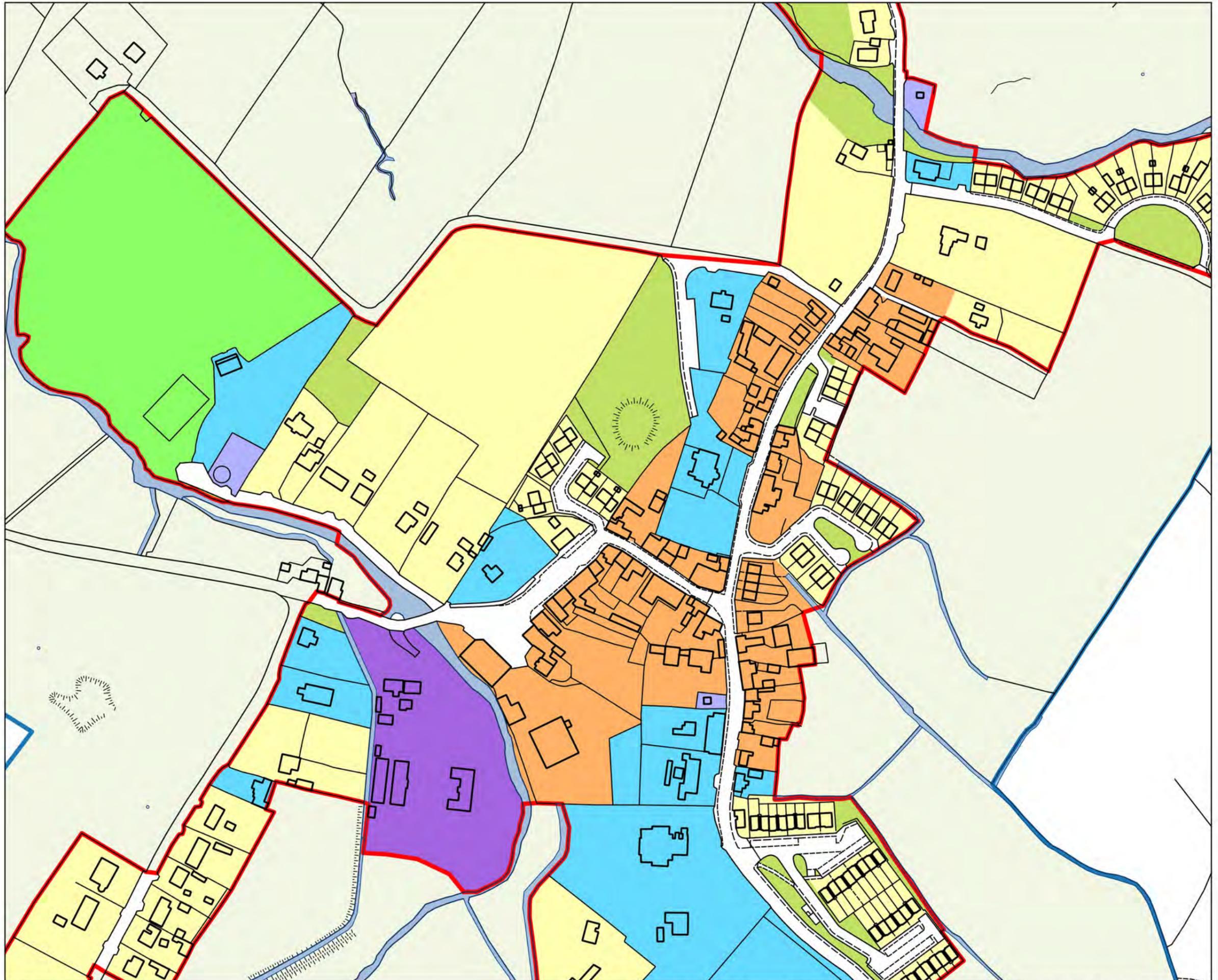
Riverstown Zoning Map

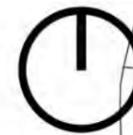


- plan limit
- development limit
- residential uses
- mixed uses
- community facilities
- business & enterprise
- open space
- sports and playing fields
- public utility
- green belt

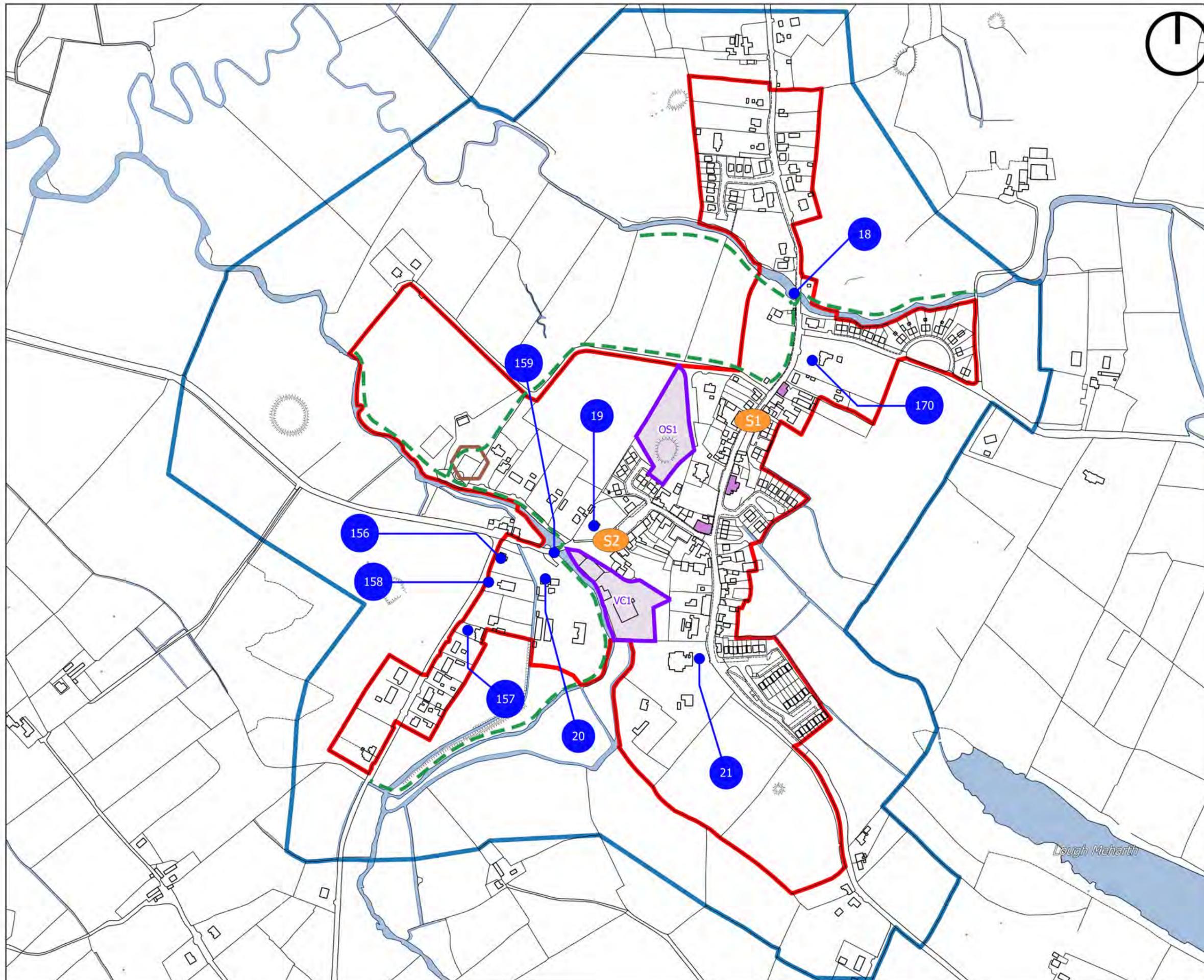
Riverstown Zoning detail

- plan limit
- development limit
- residential uses
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- community facilities
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- green belt





Riverstown Objectives Map



- plan limit
- development limit
- protected structure
- buildings of note
- river walks, pedestrian and cycle links
- for objectives relating to individual sites refer to written text
- key sites for streetscape design
- WWTP buffer zone (indicative)

RPS no	Name
18	Bridge spanning the Douglas River
19	Riverstown National School
20	Millview House
21	Tawnagh Church (RC)
156	Riverstown Garda Station
157	Cooper Memorial Hall, Riverstown
158	Tawnagh Church (CoI), Riverstown
159	Bridge spanning the Unshin River
170	Kingsville House

Riverstown designations

-  plan limit
-  development limit
-  record of monumnets and places
-  Proposed Natural Heritage Area
-  Special Area of Conservation
-  CFRAM flood zone A
-  CFRAM flood zone B
-  PRFA rainfall flooding 1 in 100 year
-  PRFA rainfall flooding 1 in 1000 year
-  PRFA river flooding 1 in 100 year
-  PRFA river flooding 1 in 1000 year

sources

Western CFRAM UoM35
Hydraulic Modelling Report
OPW 2015

PRFA indicative extents
and outcomes map
(OPW, 2012)

