Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008 - 2014

Adopted 16th June 2008

1 Strategic Context 1
1.1 Introduction 1
1.2 Plan Composition 1
1.3 Structure of the Development Plan 1
1.4 Sustainability 2
1.5 Policy Context 2
1.6 County Vision and Strategic Goals 3
1.7 Mission Statement 4
1.8 Monitoring and review 4
2 Demographic and Socio-Economic Trends 5
2.1 Population 5
2.2 County Kilkenny Population Trends 5
2.3 Population Projections 6
2.4 Migration Estimates 7
2.5 Results 7
3 Development Plan Strategy 9
3.1 Introduction 9
3.2 Policy Context 9
3.2.1 The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 9
3.2.2 The South East Regional Planning Guidelines 2004 11
3.2.3 Waterford Planning and Land Use Transportation Study (PLUTS) 11
3.3 Settlement Strategy 11
3.3.1 Large Growth Areas (Hub & Gateway) 12
3.3.2 Large Town – Environs of New Ross 13
3.3.3 District Towns 14
3.3.4 Smaller Towns & Villages 14
3.3.5 Smaller Settlements 15
3.4 Rural Settlement Strategy 16
3.4.1 Analysis of the County 17
3.4.2 Policies 17
3.4.3 Refurbishment and Replacement Dwellings 20
3.4.4 Sterilisation Agreements 21
3.5 Rural House Design Guidance 21
3.6 Implementation of Settlement Strategy 21
4 Housing and Community Facilities 23
4.1 Housing 23
4.2 Housing Strategy 23
4.3 Residential Development 26
4.4 Community Facilities 27
4.5 Education 28
4.5.1 Childcare Facilities 28
4.5.2 Primary and Post Primary Schools 29
4.6 Social Capital 30
4.7 Library Service 30
4.8 Health 31
4.8.1 Nursing Homes 32
5 Economic Development 33
5.1 Introduction 33
5.2 Enterprise Sectors in Kilkenny 33
5.3 Policy Context 34
5.3.1 National Spatial Strategy 34
5.3.2 Regional Planning Guidelines 35
5.3.3 County Development Board Strategy 35

5.3.4 Creative Heart of Ireland 36
5.4 Education 36
5.5 Strategic Locations for Enterprise and Employment 37
5.5.1 Kilkenny City 37
5.5.2 Belview Port 38
5.5.3 Enterprise and Employment in Rural Areas 38
5.6 E-commerce 39
5.7 Policies 39
5.8 Retail Strategy 40
5.8.1 County Retail Hierarchy 41
5.8.2 Core Retail Areas 41
5.8.3 Broad Assessment of the Requirement of Additional Retail Floor Space 42
5.8.4 Strategic Guidance on Location 44
5.8.5 Overview of Progress 44
5.8.6 Strategic Policy Framework 49
5.9 Specific Policies and Proposals 53
5.9.1 Kilkenny City & Environs 53
5.9.2 District Towns 54
5.9.3 General Policies 55
5.9.4 Criteria for Assessing Future Retail Proposals 56
5.9.5 Monitoring & Review 57
5.10 Derelict Sites 57
6 Rural Development 58
6.1 Introduction 58
6.1.1 National Spatial Strategy 58
6.1.2 National Development Plan 2007 – 2013 59
6.2 Council's Response 59
6.3 Natural Resources 61
6.3.1 Agriculture 61
6.3.2 Diversification 61
6.3.3 Fishing 62
6.3.4 Extractive Industries 63
6.4 Forestry 64
6.5 Rural Transport 65
7 Recreation, Tourism and the Arts 66
7.1 Introduction 66
7.1.1 Sustainable Tourism 67
7.1.2 The Tourism Product 68
7.1.3 Integrated Rural Tourism 69
7.1.4 Tourist Facilities and Infrastructure 70
7.1.5 Tourism Accommodation 70
7.2 Recreation and Amenities 71
7.2.1 Protection of Open Space 71
7.2.2 Provision of Public Open Space 72
7.2.3 Open Space in new residential development 82
7.2.4 The Rivers Nore, Suir and Barrow 83
7.2.5 Walking and Cycling Routes and Trails 84
7.3 The Arts/Cultural Development 86
7.3.1 Arts Infrastructure 87
8 Heritage 88
8.1 Introduction 88
8.2 Natural Heritage & Biodiversity 88

8.2.1 Designated Natural Heritage Sites of International and National Importance 88
8.2.2 Protected Species 91
8.2.3 Nature Conservation Outside of Designated Areas 92
8.2.4 Local Biodiversity Action Plan 92
8.2.5 County Geological Sites & Geological Heritage Areas 93
8.2.6 Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows 94
8.2.7 Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes 96
8.2.8 Woodstock Gardens 97
8.2.9 Mount Juliet Estate 97
8.2.10 Inland Waters, Rivers, Streams and Wetlands 101
8.3 Landscape 101
8.3.1 Areas of High Amenity 102
8.3.2 Views and Prospects 102
8.3.3 Landscape Character Assessment: 102
8.4 Built Heritage 105
8.4.1 Archaeological Heritage 105
8.4.2 The Record of Monuments and Places 107
8.4.3 Historic Graveyards 108
8.4.4 Architectural Heritage 108
8.4.5 Floodlighting 114
8.4.6 Place names 115
9 Infrastructure and Environment 116
9.1 Introduction 116
9.2 Climate Change 116
9.3 Transport 117
9.3.1 Transport 21 117
9.4 Road Network 117
9.4.1 National Road Network 117
9.4.2 Development Assessment Criteria 118
9.4.3 Regional Routes 119
9.4.4 Local Roads 119
9.4.5 Road Improvement Projects 119
9.4.6 Traffic Assessments 121
9.5 Public Transport 121
9.5.1 Rail 122
9.5.2 Bus & Taxis 123
9.6 Ports & Rivers 124
9.6.1 Belview 124
9.7 Airports 125
9.8 Energy and Telecommunication Facilities 126
9.8.1 The National Grid 126
9.8.2 Gas 126
9.8.3 Renewable Energy 126
9.8.4 Sustainability and Energy Efficiency in Buildings 130
9.8.5 Telecommunications 132
9.9 Air Quality 135
9.9.1 Noise and Dust 135
9.9.2 Light Pollution 136
9.10 Water Supplies 136
9.10.1 Surface Water 136
9.10.2 Groundwater 136
9.10.3 Water Quality 138

9.10.4 Water Services 140
9.10.5 Prioritisation of Investment 140
9.11 Waste water services 141
9.12 Waste Management 142
9.12.1 Waste Infrastructure 143
9.12.2 Litter Management Plan 143
9.12.3 Development Assessment Criteria 144
9.12.4 Surface Water Drainage 145
9.12.5 Flooding 146
9.13 Control of Major Accident Hazards Directive (Seveso II Directive) 147
9.13.1 Potentially Contaminated Land 148
9.14 Fire Service 149
10 Requirements for New Development 150
10.1 County Plan and Local Area Plans 150
10.2 Access for Persons with Disabilities and the Mobility Impaired 150
10.3 Urban Design 150
10.3.1 Qualities of Urban Design 151
10.4 Residential Development Standards 153
10.4.1 Housing Layout and Design 153
10.4.2 Density 154
10.5 Bin Storage Standards 155
10.5.1 Separation Distance between Houses 155
10.5.2 Boundary Treatment of House Sites 155
10.5.3 Naming of Housing Developments 156
10.5.4 Housing Developments and Road Noise 156
10.6 Apartments 156
10.7 Open Space Requirements 158
10.7.1 Public Open Space 158
10.7.2 Design of Open Space 158
10.7.3 Private Open Space 161
10.8 Home-Based Economic Activities 161
10.9 Granny flats/Extensions 162
10.10 Plot Ratio 162
10.11 Site Coverage 162
10.12 Rural Housing 163
10.12.1 Location 163
10.12.2 Siting 163
10.12.3 Design 163
10.13 Archaeology 164
10.14 Standards of Construction 164
10.15 Sustainable Building 165
10.16 Building Height Control 166
10.17 Building Lines 167
10.18 Parking and Loading 167
10.19 Infill Development 169
10.20 Shopfronts 169
10.20.1 Security Shutters 170
10.20.2 Canopies and Blinds 170
10.20.3 Lighting 170
10.21 Advertising and Signposting 170
10.22 Telecommunication Antennae 171
10.23 Automatic Teller Machines 171
10.24 Fast food take-aways 172

10.25 Caravan and Camping Parks 172
10.26 Childcare Facilities 172
10.27 Nursing Homes 173
10.28 Petrol and Gas Filling Stations 174
10.29 Control of Major Accident Hazards Directive (Seveso II Directive) 174
10.30 Cycle Facilities 175
10.31 Housing on Lands Zoned for Agriculture 175
10.32 Agricultural Developments 175
10.33 Waste Water Treatment 176
10.34 Development Contributions 176
10.35 Bonds 176
10.36 Future Publications of Standards and Guidelines 176
10.37 Tree and Hedgerow Preservation 176
10.37.1 Prevention of Damage and Protection of Trees/Hedgerows during site development 177

Appendices

A Housing Strategy

B Retail Strategy

C Landscape Character Assessment

D Wind Energy Development Strategy

E Native Trees and Shrubs

F Views to be preserved and protected and Areas of High Amenity

G Record of Protected Structures

H Architectural Conservation Areas

I National Monuments Preservation Orders & Listing Orders

Bibliography and List of References

List of Tables

Table 2.1: Population in Kilkenny City and County 1996-2006 5
Table 2.2: Population High Scenario A 7
Table 2.3: Population Central Scenario B 7
Table 2.4: Population Low Scenario C 7

Table 3.1: County Settlement Hierarchy 11
Table 3.2: Population in District Towns 1996 - 2006 14

Table 5.1: County Retail Hierarchy 41
Table 5.2: Net Expenditure Capacity Growth in the County Including Retail Warehousing Extants 43
Table 5.3: Net Expenditure Capacity Growth in the County Excluding Retail Warehousing Extants 43
Table 5.4: Summary of General Policies 55

Table 7.1: Tourism Statistics for Kilkenny and South East Region (Overseas Visitors) 66
Table 7.2: Guide to Hierarchies 74
Table 7.3: Amenity Development Thresholds 82

Table 8.1: Designated Natural Heritage Sites of International & National Importance 90
Table 8.2: County Geological Sites 93
Table 8.3: Tree Preservation Orders in County Kilkenny 95
Table 8.4: Mount Juliet Development Policies 99
Table 8.5: Mount Juliet Site-specific Objectives 100
Table 8.6: Mount Juliet Protected views 101

Table 10.1: Minimum apartment sizes 156
Table 10.2: Minimum storage space requirements 157
Table 10.3: Private Open Space Requirements 161
Table 10.4: Car Parking Standards 168

List of Figures

Figure 2.1: Population Projection for County to 2020
Figure 3.1: Regional Development Strategy – South East Region
Figure 3.2: Settlement Hierarchy
Figure 3.3: Rural Settlement Areas
Figure 5.1: Core Retail Area
Figure 8.1: Ecological and Natural Features
Figure 8.2: Mount Juliet Estate
Figure 8.3: Landscape Character Areas
Figure 9.1: Wind Energy Development Strategy

1 Strategic Context

1.1 Introduction

This Development Plan sets out Kilkenny County Council's policies and objectives for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County from 2008 to 2014. Part II Chapter I of the Planning and Development Act 2000 requires a planning authority to prepare a development plan for its functional area every six years. In accordance with this obligation the review of the County Development Plan 2002-2008 commenced in 2006. In preparing this County Development Plan the County Council had regard to relevant national plans, policies and strategies which relate to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. It also had regard to the plans of adjoining authorities. The plan also includes the mandatory objectives which are to be included in development plans as set out in the Planning and Development Act 2000. The Plan is accompanied by an Environmental Report prepared in accordance with the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 435 of 2004) and the *Planning & Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004* (S.I. No. 436 of 2004).

1.2 Plan Composition

The Development Plan 2002-2008 consisted of three volumes:

- Volume I – County-wide policies and objectives;
- Volume II - Plans for Callan, Castlecomer, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown, Waterford City Environs, Kilmacow and the Environs of New Ross;
- Volume III Kilkenny City & Environs.

This County Development Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of section 10 (2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2004. A separate Development Plan has been prepared for Kilkenny City and Environs under section 9 (3) of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

Local Area Plans for the towns of Callan, Castlecomer, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown, as well as Kilmacow and the Waterford City Environs were commenced in 2007 as the process for preparing Local Area Plans involves different time frames under the legislation from that of the County and City Development Plans.

1.3 Structure of the Development Plan

The Plan consists of a written statement and accompanying maps and includes policies, strategies and actions for the County at large. The first nine chapters contain policies and actions in relation to specific policy areas. It must be noted that each chapter is not a stand-alone chapter, but should be read in conjunction with all other chapters and policies. In assessing any development in the County, the overall context will be informed by all relevant policies, including the settlement strategy, housing, community, economic, heritage and

infrastructure considerations, underpinned by the County Vision and Strategic Goals. Therefore, no one policy takes precedence over another, but rather all policies converge, founded as they are on the goal of sustainable development.

All policies should also be read in conjunction with Chapter 10: Requirements for New Development.

1.4 Sustainability

The World Commission on Environment and Development (the Bruntland Commission) agreed the following definition of Sustainable Development:

"Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

POLICY SC1
To integrate the principles of sustainability in all policies and they will inform all the actions of the Council for the period of the Plan.

1.5 Policy Context

The main national plans, policies and guidelines, which must be considered, are:

The National Spatial Strategy **(NSS)** which sets out Government policy in relation to achieving balanced regional development over a twenty year time frame up to 2020. Kilkenny is part of the South East Region, which consists of counties Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford. The South East Region is identified for "reinforcing" and "strengthening" in the National Spatial Strategy. Waterford is identified as the Gateway for the region with Kilkenny and Wexford acting as Hubs which will support the national and international role of the gateways and in turn energise smaller towns and rural areas within their sphere of influence.

The National Development Plan 2007-2013 which sets out the economic and social investment priorities needed to realise the vision of a better quality of life for all. The NDP sets out a strong framework for the promotion of regional development with a particular focus on investment in the National Spatial Strategy (NSS). Strong urban centres are directly related to regional growth and development, affecting employment, incomes and quality of life throughout the regions. The investment framework and strategy of this NDP will assist and enhance physical and spatial planning.

Ministerial Guidelines and Directives including those on Housing Strategies, Retail Planning, Childcare Facilities, Development Plans, Residential Density, Architectural Conservation, Landscapes, Sustainable Rural Housing and Strategic Environmental Assessment. The Council will have regard to all future amendments and new Guidelines published during the plan period and will vary the Plan as appropriate.

At a regional level the main guidelines and strategies to be considered are:

South East Regional Planning Guidelines 2004-2020
The Regional Planning Guidelines expand on the NSS and identify critical enabling investment priorities for the region. The Guidelines are designed to achieve a better spatial balance of social, economic and physical development throughout the region. A settlement typology was established identifying six classifications of urban centres based on size and function and in line with the NSS.

Waterford Planning and Land Use Transportation Study (PLUTS) which sets out a strategy that aims to provide guidance as to the general scale and location of growth in Waterford City so that the City and its environs can be developed in a balanced, sustainable, transport-friendly and attractive way to provide a high quality of life and opportunities for all its citizens over the next 20 years.

At a county level, the Plan takes account of:

Strategy for Economic Social and Cultural Development 2002-2012. which sets out the agreed strategy for the social, economic and cultural development of Kilkenny for a 10-year period. The Kilkenny County Development Board produced a ten year strategy for the economic, social and cultural development of the City and County for 2002 to 2012. This document sets the framework within which the Kilkenny County Development Board will operate over the period 2002 to 2012.

The mission of this strategy is to empower the Kilkenny community to take more control over the issues that impact on their daily lives and to recognise the positive mutual dependency and synergy between County and City, to encourage a broadening vision beyond the confines of single agencies and organisations and to encourage full public consultation and a spirit of true partnership. It also sets out to underpin all actions with an ethos of equity and access for all and to consolidate and increase the cultural and economic wealth of the County.

POLICY SC2
It will be the policy of the County Council to ensure that the policies and objectives of this Development Plan support the County Development Board Strategy.

1.6 County Vision and Strategic Goals

Kilkenny County Council will seek to advance the position of the county as a centre of excellence for creativity in all sectors whilst ensuring the continued protection and enhancement of the county's magnificent built and natural heritage, its thriving cultural, sporting and artistic base and its strong and dynamic services economy through the promotion of sustainable economic, social and cultural development.

Strategic Goals

- To provide the highest quality living environments possible, in both urban and rural areas to all members of our community

- To sustain rural communities, by supporting agriculture, tourism and other rural based economic activity & promoting balanced development of rural settlements.
- In conjunction with the Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan to provide for a sustainable spatial development strategy to guide the location of development within the County
- To protect, conserve and enhance the built and natural heritage of County Kilkenny for future generations.

1.7 Mission Statement

Kilkenny County Council aims to work in partnership with the people of Kilkenny and relevant agencies to deliver quality services and to promote sustainable economic, social and cultural development for current and future generations.

1.8 Monitoring and review

The purpose of monitoring and evaluation is to assess the effectiveness or otherwise of policies and objectives in terms of achieving stated aims. Section 15(2) of the Act states that the manager shall, not later than two years after the making of a development plan, give a report to the members of the authority on the progress achieved in securing the objectives and section 95(3)(a) of the Act expressly requires that the two year report includes a review of progress on the housing strategy.

Following adoption of the Plan key information requirements will be identified focusing on those policies and objectives central to the aims and strategy of the plan. These information requirements identified will be evaluated on an annual basis during the plan period.

2 Demographic and Socio-Economic Trends

2.1 Population

The preliminary Census 2006 estimates an increase in County Kilkenny's population of 7,055 between 2002 and 2006. This represents an 8.8% increase from the Census 2002 and was slightly ahead of the national average of 8.1%. The preliminary figures further indicate that 4,822 of this rise was due to net migration.

Table 2.1 shows the actual population of the city and county from 1996 to 2006.

Table 2.1: Population in Kilkenny City and County 1996-2006

	1996	2002	2006
Kilkenny County	75,336	80,399	87,558
Kilkenny City & Environs	18,696	20,735	22,179

Net migration into Ireland has been strong since the mid to late 1990s, averaging 22,500 per annum between 1997 and 2001. This was largely driven by the return of many Irish nationals who had emigrated in the previous decade. Since 2002 this trend has intensified, helped to a large degree by the entrance of Eastern European states into the EU. Since 2002 total net migration into the State has averaged an annual 45,000.

The performance of the economy, in achieving high and sustained job creation relative to much of Europe has acted as the most significant attractor of EU migrants. More recently however, a reduced level of out-migration has been an additional factor adding to net migration.

According to the CSO more than half (54 per cent) of immigrants were aged 25-44 while a further 28 per cent were aged 15-24. Approximately 1 in 10 of the immigrants were children under the age of 15.

2.2 County Kilkenny Population Trends

The geographic spread of population in Ireland has not been confined to Greater Dublin or other urban centres but is increasingly evident in smaller towns and rural areas.

Almost all towns within the County have experienced growth in population, the one significant exception being Graiguenamanagh which has recorded a small decline in population between 2002 & 2006. In addition, 93 of the 111 rural Electoral Districts experienced growth in population.

Regional factors, such as the expansion of Waterford City have lead to some overspill of population into the Environs of Waterford within County Kilkenny.

However, Kilkenny has also enjoyed considerable economic growth in recent years. The County has developed and retained firms in growth sectors such as

financial services and healthcare. This has helped to attract employment and population growth into the City and County.

The major focus for expansion in population has been in the Environs of Kilkenny City and the Environs of Waterford City within County Kilkenny. An increase of 1,374 persons was recorded in the Environs of Kilkenny City in the period 2002 to 2006 while Waterford City Environs within County Kilkenny recorded an increase of 1,323 persons. The two areas combined accounted for 38% of the total increase within the County.

The population of the County within aggregate town areas as defined by the census has increased from 30.6 % in 2002 to 35.3% in 2006.
This is an indication that as the County population increases, a greater percentage of the resulting population are living within the urban areas of the county i.e. Kilkenny City, the Environs of Waterford City and to a lesser extent the towns of Thomastown, Castlecomer and Callan.

2.3 Population Projections

The National Spatial Strategy aims to achieve balanced development across Ireland. The NSS has designated Kilkenny as an economic 'hub' and Waterford as an economic 'gateway' location.

The function of a hub is to:

"provide important regional bases for foreign direct investment projects, indigenous industrial and service activity and the provision of essential local facilities and amenities in areas such as public services, education and healthcare." (National Development Plan, 2007-2025; p75)

The NSS further envisages Kilkenny City as providing a critical mass of population and skilled labour, achieving a population of 30,000+ by 2020.

The priority given to regional economic development in the National Spatial Strategy means that job growth is likely to remain a source of strong inter-regional migration flows over the medium to long term.

In addition, the expansion of nearby towns and centres such as Waterford and the Greater Dublin Area will continue to enhance Kilkenny's central location as a residential preference for commuters. This will be particularly relevant if the M7/M9 motorway connections go ahead as planned.

Projections of population are provided for Kilkenny County along with Kilkenny City and Environs. The central and low scenario projections for the years have been estimated using a cohort model.[1] The output from this process gives us the future natural change in population.

Three scenarios were examined based on the following rationale:

1. High Scenario: This is based on current trends observed between 2002 to 2006 through to 2020 and assumes annual growth in population of 2.13%

[1] See Kilkenny Population Study and Housing Strategy prepared by Colin Buchanan.

2. Central (preferred) Scenario: takes the Department of the Environment and Local Government (DoEHLG) latest population projections for the South East
3. Low Scenario: the CSO's 2004/5 projections for population and labour force.

2.4 Migration Estimates

For scenario A there are no separate assumptions for net migration per annum. However, the figure of 2.13% per annum growth to 2020 ultimately envisages that strong net migration will sustained throughout the forecast period. This is to allow for the possibility for the impact of specific developments under the NDP, such as the M7/M9 motorway that will extend the reach of Greater Dublin into the County during the Plan period.

For the other two scenarios B & C estimates of net migration into Kilkenny County by single year have been used drawing on two sets of official sources as below:

- CSO Population and Labour Force projections 2006-26, Nov 2004.
- Department for the Environment and Local Government, National and Regional Population Projections, Feb 2007

2.5 Results

Tables 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 show projected population based on the 'high' trends, 'central' DoEHLG and 'low' CSO scenarios outlined above.

Table 2.2: Population High Scenario A

High Scenario	2006	2008	2014	2020
Kilkenny County	87,558	91,328	103,639	117,609
City & Environs	22,179	23,180	26,568	30,243
Change County	-	4.3%	18.4%	34.3%
Change C&E	-	4.5%	19.8%	36.4%

Table 2.3: Population Central Scenario B

Moderate Scenario	2006	2008	2014	2020
Kilkenny County	87,558	91,629	102,157	111,005
City & Environs	22,179	23,264	26,344	29,268
Change County	-	4.6%	16.7%	26.8%
Change C&E	-	4.9%	18.8%	32.0%

Table 2.4: Population Low Scenario C

Low Scenario	2006	2008	2014	2020
Kilkenny County	87,558	90,708	98,745	104,962
City & Environs	22,179	22,974	25,406	27,837
Change County	-	3.6%	12.8%	19.9%
Change C&E	-	3.6%	14.5%	25.5%

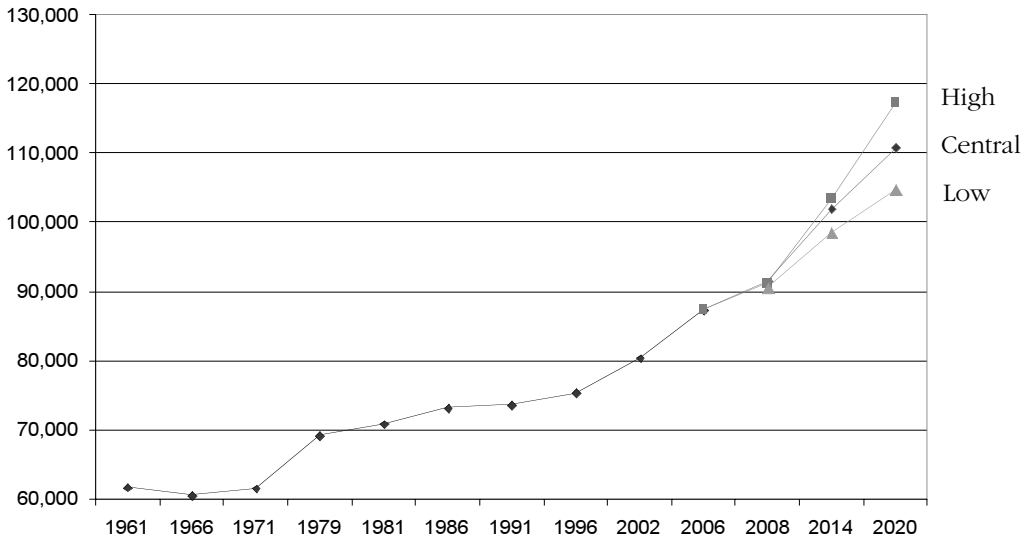
The above results envisage an increase in the County population of a minimum 17,404 (19.9%) and maximum 30,051 (34.3%) by 2020. Similarly, the City and Environs is expected to see an increase of between 5,658 (25.5%) and 8,064 (36.4%) over the same period.

Interestingly, population under the central projection shows a slightly larger increase than the high scenario to 2008. This is because the DoEHLG assumptions for migration imply that population grows at slightly above trend to 2011, before moderating to below the 2002-2006 trend growth rate.

All three scenarios, as illustrated in Figure 2.1 suggest that population will continue to climb in the County and City and Environs at a firm upward trend.

The preferred scenario is scenario B which is based on the most recent population projections from the DoEHLG and represent a more likely situation than the higher possibly unsustainable projections in Scenario A and the lower possibly unduly 'pessimistic' projections in Scenario C.

Figure 2.1: Population projections for County to 2020



3 Development Plan Strategy

3.1 Introduction

The strategy as outlined in the 2002 – 2008 County Development Plan can be described as a polycentric strategy which sought to develop and expand existing towns and villages in the county. As part of that strategy, a programme of Local Area Plans (LAPs) was embarked on and a total of sixteen LAPs have been adopted to date.

The primary objective of this settlement strategy is to encourage housing, industry and other land uses to locate on suitably zoned land in areas where the appropriate social, community and physical infrastructure either exists or is planned.

This settlement strategy aims to take account of and respond to:

- Balanced regional development,
- Sustainable development,
- Transport corridors and public transport services,
- Water services and,
- Environmental protection.

3.2 Policy Context

In devising the 2008 settlement strategy, the 2002 strategy was refined to take cognisance of the National Spatial Strategy, the Regional Planning Guidelines, the Waterford PLUTS and the recently published National Development Plan 2007 – 2013.

3.2.1 The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020

3.2.1.1 Gateways

In the NSS, Gateways were identified by the Government as the engines of regional and national growth with targets of critical mass to be achieved. Critical mass relates to size and concentration of population that enables a range of services and facilities to be supported. This in turn can attract and support higher levels of economic activity and improved quality of life. In the South East region, (Counties Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary South, Waterford and Wexford) comprise the region and Waterford city is designated as a gateway with Kilkenny and Wexford acting as Hubs.

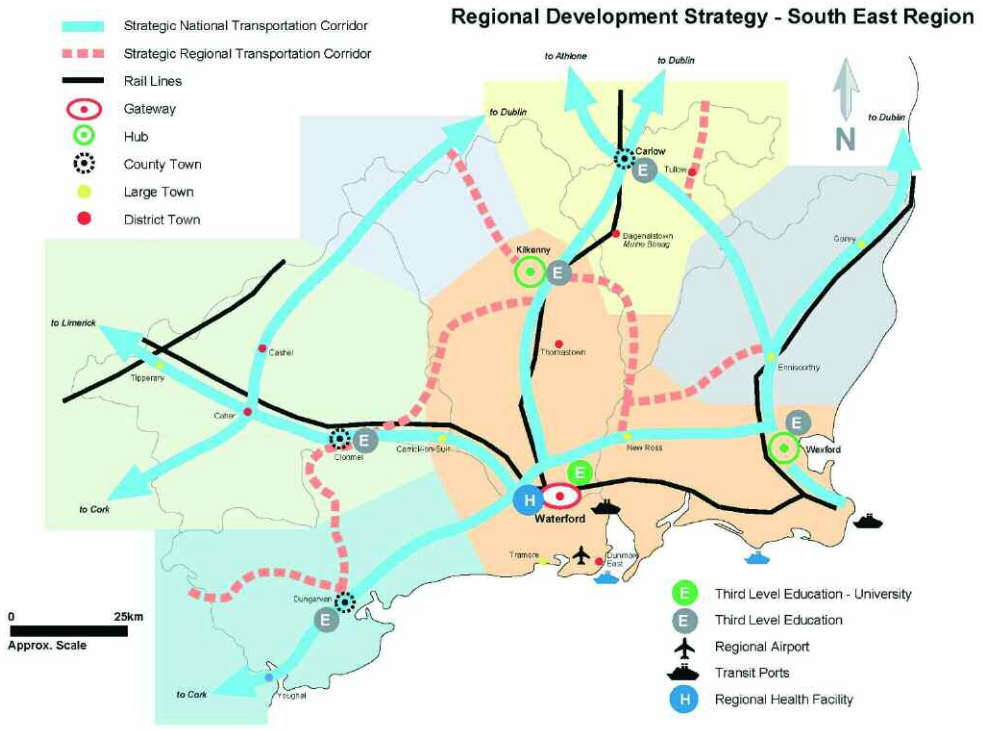
In September 2006 the DoEHLG published the "*Atlantic Gateways Initiative - Achieving Critical Mass*". This report explores how the vision of each of the gateway cities of Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford can become an increasingly interconnected and developed network of co-operating and complementary cities, which can in turn enhance the development potential of all four gateways and invigorate development in a wider subregional context.

The NSS establishes a framework within which roles are identified for strategically placed large urban centres, cities and hubs as well as other key county towns, villages and rural areas. The NSS notes that the rapid growth of

the main cities and surrounding regions of Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford points to their possible role in driving the development of their hinterlands and their combined potential to provide a strong counterbalance to Dublin capable of acting at the national and international levels, both individually and collectively.

The NSS emphasises that a process of strengthening the critical mass of the existing gateways of Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford both individually and collectively, to complement Dublin's successful national spatial role, offers the most immediate prospects of establishing more balanced patterns of development over the next few years.

Figure 3.1 Regional Development Strategy – South East Region



Source: *Regional Planning Guidelines, 2004*

3.2.1.2 Hubs

The Hub towns act as an economic bridge between the Gateway centres and their rural environs. In the South East region it is envisaged that critical mass will be enhanced through Waterford performing as a gateway, supported by Kilkenny and Wexford as hubs and the three together forming a nationally strategic 'growth triangle'.

3.2.1.3 Towns 1,500 – 5,000 population

Towns with a population between 1,500 and 5,000 within the region traditionally served a prosperous agricultural hinterland that generally endowed them with townscapes of high visual quality, compact form and a rich built heritage. The

quality of life attractions and scale of these towns form strong attractions for residential development along with small and medium enterprises.

The NSS recommends these strengths be capitalised on by local authorities through local planning and development promotion activities, with the support of urban renewal and other improvement initiatives, improvements to water services and improved capacity for development through, for example, better access to back-land areas. In this way these smaller towns can offer a distinctive alternative for people attracted to the quality of life such towns can offer.

3.2.2 The South East Regional Planning Guidelines 2004

The Regional Planning Guidelines give effect to the National Spatial Strategy at regional level and strengthen local authority development plans by setting out broad regional planning objectives. The Regional Planning Guidelines identify development roles for different types of urban centres. The typology developed clearly describes the functioning of the different centres and the issues that need to be addressed to achieve the Regional Development Strategy. Within the region and below the level of District Town a well-developed network of smaller towns and villages was also identified in the RPG's that play particularly important role as service/retail/residential centres.

3.2.3 Waterford Planning and Land Use Transportation Study (PLUTS)

The Waterford City Land Use and Transportation Study sets out a strategy that aims to provide guidance as to the general scale and location of growth in Waterford so that the City and its environs can be developed in a balanced, sustainable, transport-friendly and attractive way to provide a high quality of life and opportunities for all its citizens over the next 20 years. It recognizes that significant development will take place in the environs of Waterford City in County Kilkenny into the future as Waterford grows in its role as the Regional Gateway.

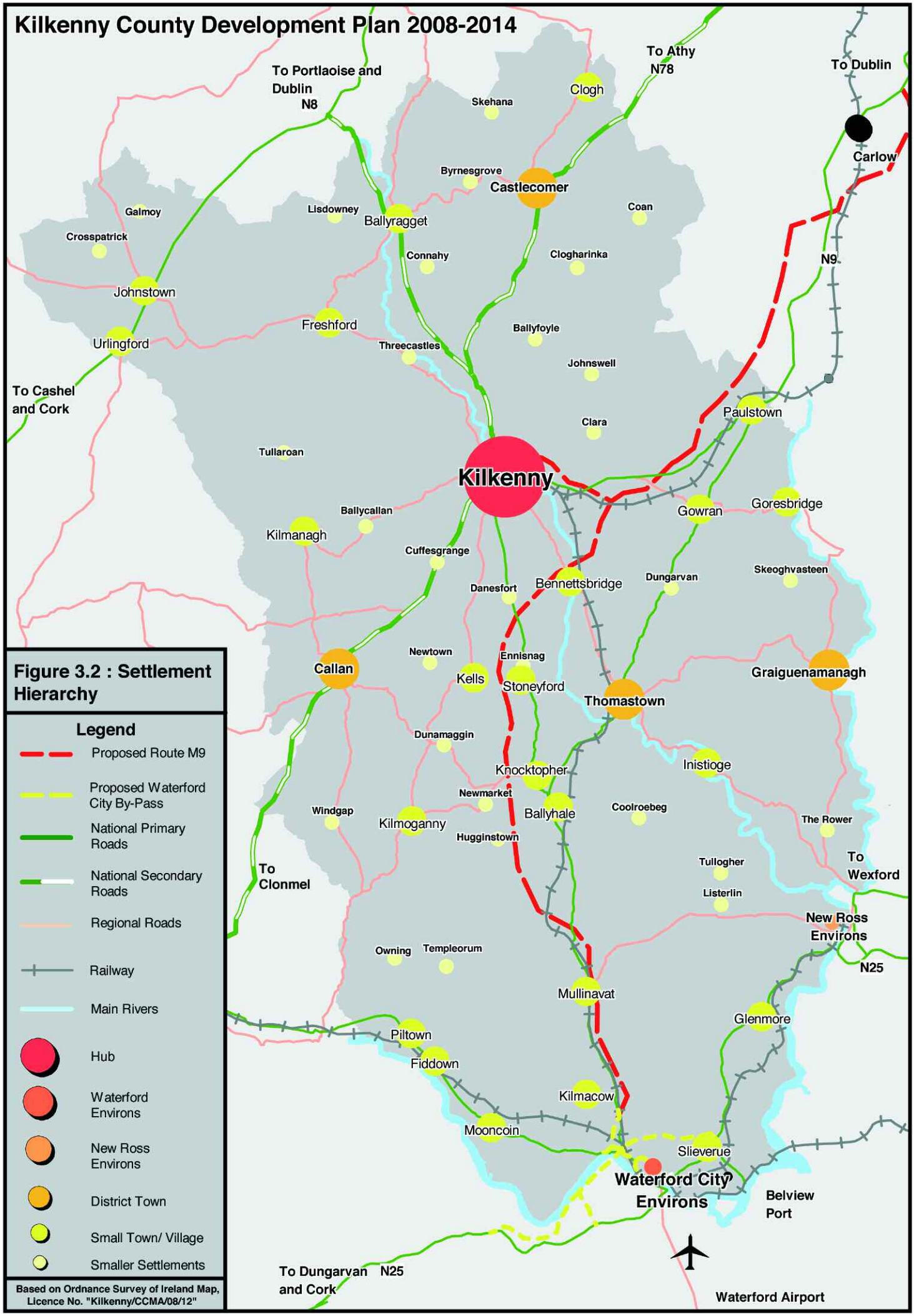
The PLUTS has been adopted by Kilkenny County Council, Waterford City Council and Waterford County Council.

3.3 Settlement Strategy

Within the policy context as outlined above, the settlement structure of the county can be classified into five categories; large growth areas, large town, district towns, smaller towns/villages and smaller settlements/nodes. This settlement structure is illustrated on Figure 3.2 Settlement Hierarchy.

Table 3.1: County Settlement Hierarchy

Type of Urban Centre	Town
Gateway	Waterford City Environs
Hub	Kilkenny
Large Town	New Ross Environs
District Towns	Callan, Castlecomer, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown


Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014
To Portlaoise and Dublin N8
To Athy N78
To Dublin
Carlow
Skehana
Clogh
Byrnesgrove
Castlecomer
Coan
Lisdowney
Ballyragget
Galmoy
Crosspatrick
Connahy
Clogharinka
N9
Johnstown
Freshford
Ballyfoyle
Urlingford
Threecastles
Johnswell
To Cashel and Cork
Clara
Paulstown
Tullaroan
Kilkenny
Ballycallan
Gowran
Goresbridge
Kilmanagh
Cuffesgrange
Skeoghvasteen
Dungarvan
Danesfort
Bennettsbridge
Newtown
Ennisnag
Graiguenamanagh
Callan
Kells
Stoneyford
Thomastown
Dunamaggin
Inistioge
Knocktopher
Newmarket
Coolroebeg
Windgap
Ballyhale
The Rower
Kilmoganny
Hugginstown
Tullogher
To Wexford
To Clonmel
Listerlin
New Ross Environs
Owning
Templeorum
N25
Mullinavat
Glenmore
Piltown
Fiddown
Kilmacow
Mooncoin
Slieverue
Waterford City Environs
Belview Port
To Dungarvan and Cork N25
Waterford Airport
Figure 3.2 : Settlement Hierarchy
Legend
Proposed Route M9
Proposed Waterford City By-Pass
National Primary Roads
National Secondary Roads
Regional Roads
Railway
Main Rivers
Hub
Waterford Environs
New Ross Environs
District Town
Small Town/ Village
Smaller Settlements
Based on Ordnance Survey of Ireland Map, Licence No. "Kilkenny/CCMA/08/12"

Smaller Towns and Villages	Ballyhale, Ballyragget, Bennettsbridge, Clogh-Moneenroe, Fiddown, Freshford, Glenmore, Goresbridge, Gowran, Inistioge, Johnstown, Kells, Kilmacow, Kilmanagh, Kilmoganny, Knocktopher, Mooncoin, Mullinavat, Paulstown, Piltown, Slieverue, Stoneyford and Urlingford.
Smaller Settlements	Ballycallan, Ballyfoyle, Byrnesgrove, Clara, Clogharinka, Coan, Connahy, Coolroebeg, Crosspatrick, Cuffesgrange, Danesfort, Dunamaggin, Dungarvan, Ennisnag, Galmoy, Hugginstown, Johnswell, Lisdowney, Listerlin, Newmarket, Newtown, Owning, Skehana, Skeoghvasteen, Templeorum, The Rower, Threecastles, Tullaroan, Tullogher and Windgap.

3.3.1 Large Growth Areas (Hub & Gateway)

3.3.1.1 Kilkenny City & Environs

Kilkenny City has been identified as a Hub in the National Spatial Strategy, and is a key driver which can help promote more balanced regional development. Under the NSS and Regional Planning Guidelines Kilkenny City has a target population of 30,000+ to be reached by the year 2020. Kilkenny is the driver of growth for the County at a sub- regional level and also supports Waterford City in its role as a Gateway. In order to fulfill its role as a Hub, Kilkenny City will be the main focus for public and private sector investment within the county over the period of the Plan.

3.3.1.2 Waterford Environs

Waterford is the principal city in the South-East Region and is the designated Gateway under the National Development Plan and the National Spatial Strategy. Development priorities for the City include enhancing its critical mass, implementing a co-ordinated approach to the development of the various parts of the city and its environs, which cross local authority boundaries.

An integrated land use and transportation study has been prepared for the Greater Waterford area (PLUTS) which sets out a vision for the development of Waterford city as a Gateway. This will have a key role in delivering social, economic and environmental sustainability for the City and its Environs.

Kilkenny County Council is committed to the role of Waterford City as a Gateway and in this regard will facilitate the continued development of the Waterford Environs within County Kilkenny and Belview Port which are seen as having substantial potential for enhancing critical mass. The Council will ensure through a separate Local Area Plan for the environs of Waterford within County Kilkenny, that there is sufficient development capacity for the various land uses required to support the Gateway.

Kilkenny County Council's vision for the environs of Waterford in County Kilkenny is summarised as follows:

To ensure that the people of the Waterford City Environs in County Kilkenny enjoy a good quality of life with a high standard of education, excellent employment prospects and easy access to a full range of social, economic and

cultural services. This will be achieved through integrated planning and cooperation with Waterford City Council, all the other authorities in the region and other agencies, ensuring that Waterford and its Environs can compete internationally and maximise its potential as a gateway city serving the entire South East Region.

The Council in its approach to developing Waterford City Environs within County Kilkenny as an integral part of the Gateway City for the South East Region is conscious of maintaining the area's social, cultural, sporting and political identity into the future.

POLICY

- **PS1 To implement the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines by encouraging developments into the designated Hub of Kilkenny and the environs of the Waterford Gateway**
- **PS2 To cooperate with the relevant local and regional authorities in the development of the Atlantic Gateways Initiative**
- **PS3 To ensure that there is sufficient development capacity for the various land uses required to support Kilkenny City & Environs as Hub**
- **PS4 To facilitate and promote the continued development of the Belview Port Area as a strategic port for the region.**
- **PS5 To ensure that there is sufficient development capacity for the various land uses required to support the Waterford Gateway through a separate Local Area Plan for the environs.**

3.3.2 Large Town – Environs of New Ross

The Regional Planning Guidelines identified New Ross as a Large Town. According to the RPGs, New Ross was targeted for growth having regard to its strategic location, capacity for growth and potential to deliver on the core objectives of critical mass and balanced regional development.

Development priorities for New Ross include supporting the strengthening of critical mass within the catchment of the Waterford Gateway and implementing a co-ordinated approach to the development of New Ross and its environs, which cross local authority boundaries.

Both local authorities co-operated in the production of Development Plans for their respective areas. New Ross Town Council published their Development Plan in 2004 and Kilkenny County Council completed a Local Area Plan for the Environs of New Ross in 2005. Both plans will have a key role in ensuring that New Ross fulfils its role in supporting the Waterford Gateway.

POLICY

- **PS6 To support the strengthening of critical mass within the catchment of the Waterford Gateway by implementing a co-ordinated approach to the development of New Ross and its environs within County Kilkenny**

3.3.3 District Towns

Thomastown was the only town categorised as a District Town in the NSS and the RPGs, as it had a population in excess of 1,500 in 2002. The 2006 Census now shows that Callan and Castlecomer have both passed this 1,500 mark.

Graiguenamanagh, while not above this 1,500 population threshold, possesses many of the characteristics of a district town as identified in the RPG's such as being close to the population level of 1,500, having primary and second level schools, and is therefore included.

In general, these District Towns have well developed services and community facilities and have the capacity to accommodate additional growth (subject to certain physical infrastructural investments). Local Area Plans will be commenced for these District Towns in 2007. These LAPs will set out in detail the Council's requirements for all new development, including such considerations as density, layout and design requirements, public transport and road infrastructure, community facilities, open space and recreational facilities etc.

Table 3.2: Population in District Towns 1996 - 2006

Town	Population		
	1996	2002	2006
Callan	1,224	1,325	1,771
Castlecomer	1,380	1,482	1,531
Graiguenamanagh	1,113	1,166	1,097
Thomastown	1,581	1,600	1,837

Source: Census 1996, 2002 and 2006

POLICY

- **PS 7 To produce LAPs for and promote Callan, Castlecomer, Graignamanagh and Thomastown as District Towns, with an appropriate range of facilities and services, including social infrastructure, retail units, commercial offices and local enterprise, to serve their rural catchments.**
- **PS8 To ensure that the District Towns will in so far as practical be self-sufficient incorporating employment activities, sufficient retail services and social and community facilities.**
- **PS9 Promote enterprise and economic development in Graiguenamanagh in line with the Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch Development and Economic Study, 2006**

3.3.4 Smaller Towns & Villages

The smaller towns and villages need to be developed in a way that strengthens their role as local service centres whilst respecting their existing character. Achieving the right balance between encouraging development in smaller towns and villages and the scale and nature of such development is critical. It is important to ensure that new residential development in smaller towns and

villages is of a design, layout, character and scale which fits well with the town or village involved and presents a high quality living environment.

These smaller towns and villages within the county are:

Kilmacow, Urlingford, Freshford, Johnstown, Goresbridge, Ballyragget, Bennettsbridge, Inistioge, Clogh-Moneenroe, Gowran, Piltown, Fiddown, Slieverue, Glenmore, Ballyhale, Stoneyford, Knocktopher, Mullinavat, Kells, Paulstown, Kilmoganny, Mooncoin, Kilmanagh.

During the period of the County Development Plan 2002 – 2008, Local Area Plans were prepared for Urlingford, Freshford Goresbridge, Ballyragget, Inistioge, Gowran, Piltown, Fiddown, Slieverue, Ballyhale, Stoneyford, Knocktopher, Mullinavat, Kells and Mooncoin.

Local Area Plans or other appropriate planning framework documents will be prepared for the remaining smaller towns and villages during the life of this Plan.

POLICY

- **PS 10 To strengthen the service centre role of smaller towns and villages.**
- **PS 11 To ensure that new residential development in smaller towns and villages is of a design, layout, character and scale which fits well with the town or village involved and presents a high quality living environment.**
- **PS 12 To revitalise existing villages through the promotion of development within them (particularly on infill sites, vacant sites and on backlands), in preference to continued ribbon development on the approach roads. This will promote the efficient use of available public infrastructure and services.**
- **PS 13 In partnership with relevant stakeholders and local communities, to facilitate and support the preparation and implementation of appropriate planning framework documents for appropriate villages in the county, as the need arises and resources allow.**
- **PS 14 Have regard to Village Design Statements that have been prepared in consultation with the local community, and with the relevant agencies, as supplementary planning guidance documents**.

3.3.5 Smaller Settlements

The County Development Plan 2002 contains a further settlement tier not readily identifiable in the RPG's, which will also form part of the settlement structure. In developing a settlement strategy for the County the widely dispersed system of parishes was examined. Within each parish the location of services such as schools, post offices, Garda stations etc. was identified. From that survey, smaller settlements were identified where there was a cluster of two or more services. In addition to these identified locations there are also isolated rural services which have a role to play in serving the rural community.

Smaller settlements possess a very narrow range of physical and social infrastructure but have some limited capacity to cater for additional housing generally through low-density individual or multiple housing and other developments, in tandem with the provision of services. They will form an

important component of the settlement network, by providing a basic level of services and by accommodating new growth that is compatible with the area.

The scale and fabric of these centres must however be respected in new development proposals. Any new development should be of a design, layout, character and scale which fits well with the settlement involved and presents a high quality living environment.

POLICY
PS 15 It is the policy of the Council to encourage low density housing in the form of individual or multiple developments within smaller settlements and also immediately adjacent (i.e. within 150m) to an operating isolated rural service such as a school, public house, church or shop.

All applications for cluster development shall be assessed against the capacity of the area to absorb development. This capacity assessment will include consideration of environmental issues, roads, water services, community facilities and the surrounding area's natural and built heritage context.

Design of Clusters

(a) The proposed cluster should be context driven, respecting the rural setting and character of the area. The visual impact and appearance of new development should be fully considered when locating and designing new buildings.
(b) Any development should maximise the use of existing hedgerows and landscape features e.g. existing buildings, trees, stone walls etc..
(c) Provide a common entrance and access road, and shall not be permitted to access directly onto a National Primary or Secondary Route,
(d) Be serviced by a common proprietary sewage treatment systems, and have an outfall or suitable ground conditions for percolation,
(e) In the case of a development where serviced sites are to be sold, a design brief and development programme for the execution and completion of the development for the cluster shall be submitted at planning application stage.
(f) A variety of house sizes should be provided.

Clusters are intended to encourage small-scale expansion. They may accommodate a number of dwellings (usually about 8) but the exact number will ultimately depend on scale and pattern of existing development in the vicinity, impact on the landscape and site conditions. Permissions granted for clusters within the Areas of Urban Influence shall be subject to an occupancy condition (See Section 3.4.2).

3.4 Rural Settlement Strategy

The rural settlement strategy is based on the *Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2005). The objective of the Council's rural housing strategy is to provide for sustainable rural communities without compromising the physical, environmental, natural or heritage resources of the county.

This broad objective is underpinned by the following detailed objectives:

It is an objective of the Council to:

- Promote the sustainable development of rural areas.
- Protect the quality and character of rural areas.
- Protect the quality of the environment, including the prevention, limitation, abatement and/or reduction of environmental pollution and the protection of waters, groundwater and the atmosphere.
- Protect features of the landscape and areas of major importance for wild fauna and flora.
- Protect the character of the landscape, including views and prospects listed in this Plan and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest.

Almost 65% of the county's population live in rural areas.[2] The Council recognises that Kilkenny has a long tradition of people living in rural areas. It is the Council's intention to support this in a way that is sustainable.

3.4.1 Analysis of the County

In January 2006, Variation Number 8 to the County Development Plan 2002 was adopted which gave effect to the *Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines* within the County. Between January2006 and January 2007, a total of454 houses were constructed in rural areas.

The monitoring of rural housing and population trends is ongoing and the figures for the firsttwelve months of operation since the Variation came into effect show no significant changes to the level of rural housing being completed on an annual basis.

At this stage, given the length of time for which the current policy is in place, it is recommended to retain the existing policy and to monitor the trends in rural housing and population during the lifetime of the plan to ascertain if changes are required.

Accordingly the County falls into three broad categories of:

(a) Areas under Urban Influence
(b) Stronger Rural Areas
(c) Peripheral Areas of Population decline

See Figure 3.3: Rural Settlement Area Map.

3.4.2 Policies

The following policies have been devised in order to respond to the different housing requirements of urban and rural communities and the varying characteristics of rural areas. This is to ensure that first and foremost the housing

2 According to the Census of Population 2006

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014

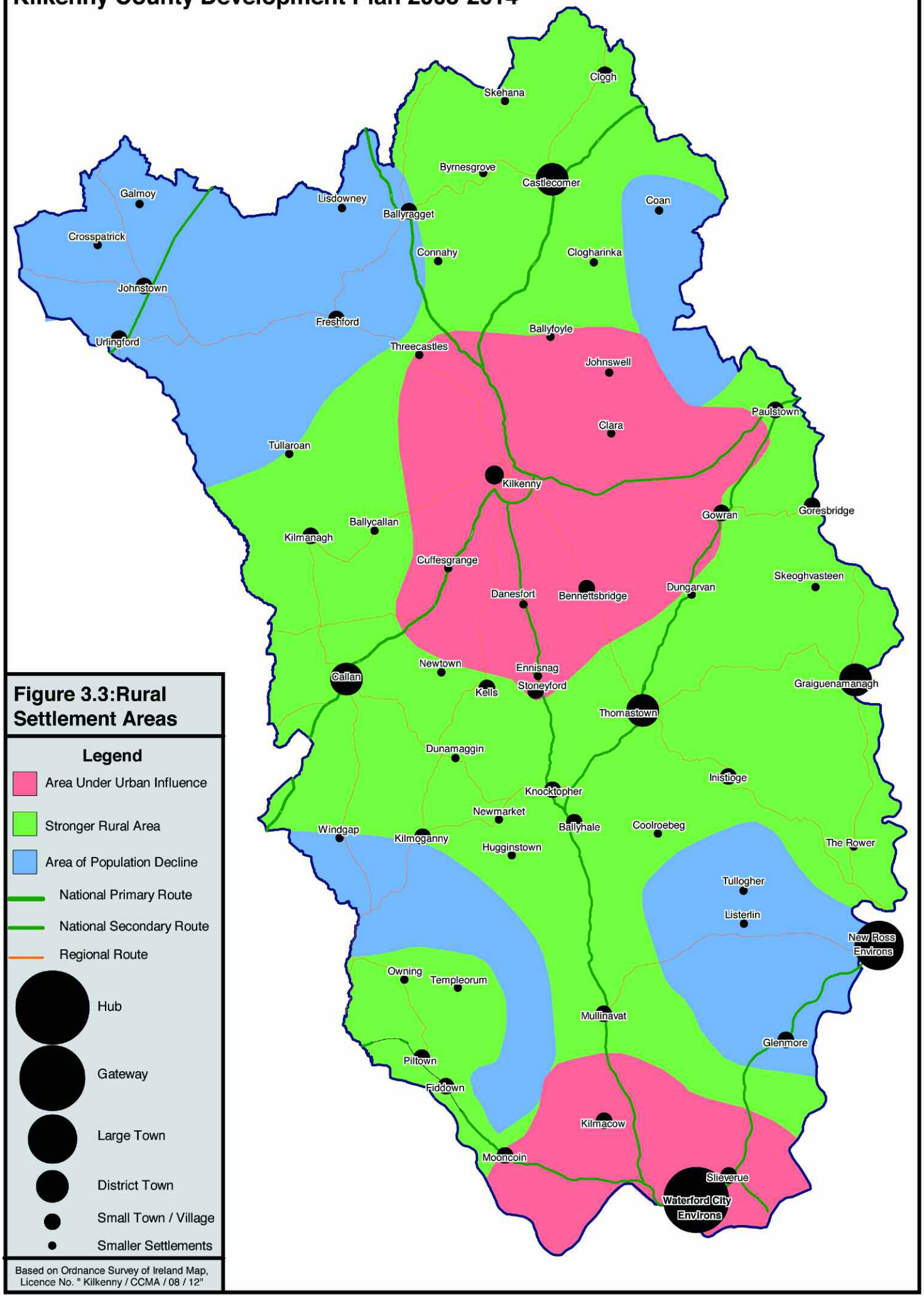


Figure 3.3:Rural Settlement Areas

Legend

- Area Under Urban Influence
- Stronger Rural Area
- Area of Population Decline
- National Primary Route
- National Secondary Route
- Regional Route
- Hub
- Gateway
- Large Town
- District Town
- Small Town / Village
- Smaller Settlements

Based on Ordnance Survey of Ireland Map, Licence No. " Kilkenny / CCMA / 08 / 12"

requirements of persons with roots or links in rural areas are facilitated in all such areas, but that planning policies also respond to local circumstances whether these relate to areas experiencing economic and population decline or to areas under sustained pressure for development.

In devising these policies the following definitions have been used:

Urban Area: A city or town with a population of 1,500 or more at the time of the 2002 Census of Population. (This definition is consistent with the CSO and the *Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines*).

Urban Generated Rural Housing: Housing in rural areas sought by persons living and working in urban areas, including second homes.

Rural Generated Housing: Housing needed in rural areas within the established rural community by persons working in rural areas or in nearby urban areas.

Ribbon Development: 5 or more houses on any one side of a given 250 metres of road frontage.

A. Areas under Urban Influences

It is the Council's objective for areas of urban influence to facilitate the housing requirements of the rural community as identified in this section while on the other hand directing urban generated development to areas zoned for new housing development in city, towns and villages in the area of the development plan.

Areas under urban influence display the greatest pressures for development due to:

- Close commuting catchments of larger cities and towns,
- Rapidly rising population,
- Ready access to good road network with ready access to the larger urban areas.

As a local authority it is necessary to facilitate the housing requirements of the local rural community on the one hand subject to satisfying all technical considerations, while on the other hand directing urban generated development to areas identified for housing through zoning and the settlement hierarchy.

In areas of urban influences it is the policy of the Council to permit single houses for persons where the following criteria are met:

1. Persons who are full-time farmers or employed full-time in other rural-based activity such as horticulture, forestry, bloodstock or other rural-based activity in the area in which they wish to build or whose employment is intrinsically linked to the rural area in which they wish to build.
2. Immediate family members of people intrinsically linked* to the area to include brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, nieces, nephews and grandchildren.

3. Persons who are originally from the local area and wish to return to live in the local area *(returning migrants).*

***Persons who are an intrinsic part of the rural community:**
Such persons will normally have resided a *minimum of three years in a rural area* as members of an established rural community. Examples would include farmers, their sons and daughters and/or any persons taking over the ownership and running of farms, as well as people *who have developed strong links in the rural area* and are building their first homes. Examples in this regard might include sons and daughters of families living in rural areas who have grown up in rural areas and are perhaps seeking to build their first home near their family place of residence. The Council will also consider nieces and nephews and grandchildren in this regard. In certain circumstances, persons who lived for substantial parts of their lives in rural areas then emigrated and who now wish to return to reside near other family members or to care for elderly family members, will be considered an intrinsic part of the rural community.

All permission granted for rural housing within the Areas of Urban Influence shall be subject to an occupancy condition restricting the use of the dwelling to the applicant or members of his/her immediate family as a place of permanent residence. The period will be limited to five years from the date of first occupancy.

B. Stronger Rural Areas
In stronger rural areas of the county it is a key objective of the Council to consolidate and sustain the stability of the population and in particular to strike a balance of activity in the smaller towns and villages and the wider rural area thereby ensuring that these areas maintain a stable population base.

In stronger rural areas, it will be the policy of the Council to:

- Accommodate proposals for individual rural generated houses and promote the development of houses in the designated and smaller settlements.
- Actively stimulate and facilitate new housing development in designated towns and villages through the preparation of local area plans.
- Monitor development trends to avoid areas becoming overdeveloped, leading to an over concentration of development or ribbon development.

It will be the policy of the Council to consider development for single houses for the following classes of persons:

1. Persons who are an intrinsic part of the rural community* (see above text box)

2. Persons working full-time or part-time in rural areas

Such circumstances will normally encompass persons involved in full-time farming, forestry, inland waterway or marine related occupations, as well as part time occupations where the predominant occupation is farming/natural resource related. Such circumstances could also encompass persons whose work is

intrinsically linked to rural areas such as teachers in rural schools or other persons whose work predominantly takes place within rural areas.

The local area will be considered as within 10km of the proposed site excluding defined urban areas.

C. Peripheral Areas of Population Decline
In these areas it will be the policy of the Council to:

- Accommodate any proposals for individual rural or urban generated permanent residential development subject to meeting normal planning and environmental criteria,
- Actively stimulate and facilitate new housing development in designated towns and villages through the preparation of local area plans within these areas or identify crossroad type settlements where appropriately located and designed clustered development will be encouraged and accommodated.
- Monitor the operation of the settlement policies on an ongoing basis in structurally weak areas to avoid excessive levels of or inappropriately located development.

Subject to satisfying good practice in relation to site location and access, drainage and design requirements, rural generated housing requirements will be accommodated in the locality in which they arise.

In all cases the consideration of individual sites will be subject to normal siting and design considerations, which will include but not necessarily be limited to the following:

- Any proposed vehicular access would not endanger public safety by giving rise to a traffic hazard,
- That any proposed on-site waste water disposal system is designed, located and maintained in a way which protects water quality,
- That the siting and design of new dwellings takes account of and integrates appropriately with its physical surroundings and other aspects of the natural and cultural heritage and,
- That the proposed site otherwise accords with the objectives of the development plan in general.

3.4.3 Refurbishment and Replacement Dwellings

POLICY
PS16 To encourage and facilitate the appropriate refurbishment of existing housing stock in rural areas and in certain limited cases the replacement of existing dwellings subject to development assessment criteria outlined below.

- That in the case of refurbishment and extension proposals, that the scale and architectural treatment of proposed works are sympathetic to the character of the original structure and the surrounding area including adjoining or nearby development.
- That in the case of replacement dwellings, to require that the original structure was last used as a dwelling.

- That replacement dwellings are provided at locations where safe access and acceptable wastewater disposal arrangements can be put in place and where specific development objectives or other policies of the Planning Authority are not compromised.
- That the size and scale of the replacement dwelling should reflect the site's characteristics and context and shall accord with best practice in rural house design.
- Where an applicant can demonstrate that their proposals ensure the sensitive restoration of vernacular and traditional buildings in the rural area, such proposals shall not be subject to the policies in Section 3.4.2 that applies to new dwellings.

3.4.4 Sterilisation Agreements

Section 47 of the Act, provides that a planning authority may enter into an agreement with any person for the purposes of restricting or regulating the development and use of land permanently or for a specified period. Certain agreements under this section known more commonly as "sterilisation" agreements have been used on occasion by the planning authority to regulate development in rural areas. In areas where very significant levels of rural housing development have taken place on the edges of cities and towns and where such areas may be tending to become overdeveloped, such agreements have provided a useful tool in enabling planning authorities to support rural generated development on the one hand while avoiding over development of an area on the other.

In general the planning authority will avoid the use of sterilisation agreements and will focus instead on deciding the merits of the individual proposal in terms of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Where applications are made on lands outside of the areas of urban influence that have been the subject of sterilisation agreements in the past, the planning authority will assess each application on its merits having regard to the rural housing provisions of the development plan and the rural housing guidelines as issued by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

3.5 Rural House Design Guidance

An objective of the Kilkenny County Development Plan 2002 – 2008 was the production of a Rural House Design Guide for County Kilkenny, which is now complete.

It is intended that the design guide will act as an instrument to develop best practice in the design and siting of one off rural housing in County Kilkenny. Those intending to build houses in the countryside are advised to consult the Kilkenny Rural Design Guide for advice on site choice, local design and landscaping at an early stage in their preparations.

3.6 Implementation of Settlement Strategy

The settlement strategy outlined above will be reinforced by the Council reviewing the Local Area Plans that are already made, and preparing additional

LAPs and Village Design Statements (as supplementary guidance documents), where appropriate.

The settlement strategy outlined above under this section will be underpinned by the prioritisation of investment in local infrastructure under the Council's programmes in water services, roads and other infrastructure.

POLICY

- **PS17 To carry out annual monitoring of the operation of the rural settlement policy to ensure that the policies remain valid and up-to-date and reflect the Government Guidelines on Sustainable Rural Housing.**

4 Housing and Community Facilities

4.1 Housing

Building strong, inclusive communities is a key element in achieving sustainable development objectives. Sustainable communities require not only economic development, but also provision of and access to education, health and community support services, amenities and leisure services and a good quality built environment.

The Council's role is to formulate a planning policy for housing, consider planning applications for private housing, ensure that sufficient lands are zoned to meet the projected housing demand and provide houses or facilitate the provision of social and affordable housing for those unable to house themselves. The County Council is both the housing authority and the planning authority. In these roles it has the capacity to influence the supply, location and scale of new housing within its functional area.

The Council's core objective in relation to the provision of housing is to ensure that every household has accommodation suitable to their needs, located in a suitable environment, at a price or rent it can afford.

4.2 Housing Strategy

Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 requires that housing strategies be drawn up by planning authorities and integrated into their development plans.

The housing strategy shall:

(a) include an estimate of, and provision for, the existing need and the likely future need for housing in the area covered by the development plan. The Planning Authority shall ensure that sufficient and suitable land is zoned in its development plan for residential use (or for a mixture of residential and other uses), to meet the requirements of the housing strategy and to ensure that a scarcity of such land does not occur at any time during the period of the development plan.

(b) take into account the need to ensure that housing is available for persons who have different levels of income, and in particular for those in need of social or affordable housing in the area. A housing strategy shall therefore provide that as a general policy a specified percentage, not being more than 20% of the land zoned in the development plan for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be reserved for social and/or affordable housing.

(c) ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of the different categories of households, as may be determined by the Planning Authority, including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities.

(d) counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds. The Planning Authority may indicate in respect of any residential area that there is no requirement for social/affordable

housing in respect of that area, or that a lower percentage than that specified in the housing strategy may instead be required.

The needs of various groups, including the homeless, travellers and the elderly are addressed as part of the Housing Strategy.

A Housing Strategy has been prepared for the period 2008-2014 for both Kilkenny Borough and County Councils. This Strategy is incorporated into the Development Plan in Appendix A.

The principal features to emerge from the analysis presented in this housing strategy are as follows:

- A total of 7,038 new households are expected to be formed in County Kilkenny during the period 2008 to 2014.
- The existing local authority waiting list is c.1,200[3].
- Over the period of the strategy 20% of land zoned for residential or a mix of residential and other land uses will be reserved for social and affordable housing.
- Kilkenny has been particularly affected by issues related to housing affordability over the period of the previous housing strategy due to relatively low per-capita disposable income, rising number of household formations and other demand factors affecting household formations.
- The availability of zoned land is not expected to act as a constraint over the course of the Development Plan 2008 – 2014.

POLICY

- **HCF1 To implement the Housing Strategy contained in Appendix A of the Development Plan.**
- **HCF2 To require 20% of the land zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, be made available for the provision of social and affordable housing.**
- **HCF3 To assist and facilitate state and community bodies in the development of a Traveller horse project in the county**

It is the view of the Planning Department that the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 in relation to any particular site should be incorporated into any development proposal at an early stage in the development process. The Council will therefore require housing developers to whom the 20% requirement will apply to discuss the likely terms of Part V agreements at pre-planning consultations. Both the Council and the developer would thus have a common understanding of the nature of the likely agreement before detailed designs are prepared for any planning application.

[3] Of the 1,200 on the waiting list, 400 are on the list solely to secure rent supplement and openly state they do not wish to be considered for housing.

Conditions attached to planning permissions for residential development will require developers to enter into an agreement with the Council in relation to the provision of social and affordable housing in accordance with the housing strategy.

The various options for compliance are set down in the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2002. The following preferred options are available to satisfy the requirements of the housing strategy, in decreasing order of preference –

- The transfer of the required number of completed dwellings on the site,
- The transfer of a portion of the site subject to the planning application,
- The transfer of completed dwellings elsewhere,
- The transfer of fully or partially serviced sites on the site which will enable the Council to provide the appropriate number of units thereon,
- The transfer of serviced sites at another location,
- The transfer of land at another location,
- The payment of a monetary contribution.

An agreement may provide for a combination of the above.

The Council will continue to meet social and affordable housing needs in the towns, villages and rural areas of the county in a balanced way avoiding over-concentration in any one particular area. The Council in its house building programme will place an emphasis on well-designed and integrated schemes appropriate to the scale and character of the area.

The Council recognises the important role played by the voluntary sector in meeting social housing need and will support and facilitate the expansion of that role.

The Council will seek to meet the increased demand for social and affordable housing in a number of ways as a housing authority through,

- Affordable housing/joint venture schemes,
- the local authority's house building programme,
- the sale of sites scheme,
- the Voluntary Housing Sector and the Rental subsidy scheme,
- the capital assistance scheme,
- the disabled persons grant,
- the essential repairs grant and other measures, and
- the Homeless Forum initiative.

POLICY

- **HCF4 To provide the necessary infrastructural investment to facilitate the overall level of housing output required to meet the current and anticipated levels of demand in a planned coherent fashion.**

- **HCF5 To zone adequate amounts of land for housing to provide a locational choice and allow for the probability that not all zoned land will be made available for development.**
- **HCF6 To strive for the highest quality built environment when assessing development proposals.**
- **HCF7 To encourage economy and efficiency in the use of land and services.**
- **HCF8 To promote a high standard of architecture in the siting and design of new housing developments.**
- **HCF9 To encourage a variety of house types, sizes and tenure in individual schemes and to encourage variety, interest and social mix in private and social housing developments.**
- **HCF10 To ensure that the Council's housing policy and objectives are linked with employment, environmental, and infrastructural policies and objectives with the aim of improving the quality of life and the attractiveness of the county's towns, villages and open countryside.**

4.3 Residential Development

The settlement hierarchy as set out in Chapter 3 outlines the range of settlements within the county. Kilkenny City and Environs has its own Development Plan which will deal in detail with residential development. The other settlements within the county's hierarchy will be subject to Local Area Plans as appropriate.

In continuing to increase the number of houses the Council must ensure that it achieves quality in terms of neighbourhoods and homes, and choice in terms of location and the tenures available.

Quality in this context means the development of accessible, sustainable, integrated neighbourhoods which are much less car dependant and are more easily served by public transport.
Additional features of sustainable neighbourhoods include:

- compact, energy efficient and high quality urban development;
- accessibility via public transport networks and also meeting the needs of the pedestrian and cyclist; and
- provision of a good range of amenities and services within easy and safe walking distance of homes.

The provision of additional housing throughout the county offers an opportunity to deliver new development of the highest physical and environmental quality that contributes to the achievement of more sustainable communities and balanced regional development.

The sustainability of communities is dependant on a balanced pace of development. Any development must reflect its context, and associated infrastructure must be provided to ensure that a coherent sense of place and sense of community is preserved. This approach will ensure any new development will respect the scale and character of the settlement. In general, new residential development in smaller towns and villages should be of a design, layout, character and scale which fits well with the town or village involved and presents a high quality living environment. See Chapter 10 for the relevant

Design Guidelines. Local Area Plans and Village Design Statements will provide detailed design guidance on new developments for specific settlements.

Over the period of the previous Development Plan the Council prepared Local Area Plans for a number of settlements within the county. During the evolution of that process, policies and objectives were devised to include linking the development of new housing with the provision of essential supporting physical and social infrastructure and services. Within each Local Area Plan, guidance is given on the achievement of high quality urban design appropriate to the particular settlement coupled with the development of a compact and sustainable settlement.

The appropriate residential density in any particular location will be determined by the following:

i) The extent to which the design and layout follows a coherent design brief resulting in a high quality residential environment;
ii) Compliance with qualitative and quantitative criteria set out in the subsequent Development Management Section;
iii) Proximity to points of access to the public transport network;
iv) Existing topographical, landscape or other features on the site, and;
v) The capacity of the infrastructure, including social and community facilities, to absorb the demands created by the development.

The choice as to the level of residential density appropriate to a given area cannot therefore be considered in simple arithmetic terms for all development sites as a single numerical value. Rather, the identification of a given density and the question of its appropriateness should be determined by spatial planning and architectural design criteria, determined by the context of a given site and the relationship to the overall proper planning and sustainable development of that centre.

It follows from this approach that there will be no set minimum or maximum density specified in the Plan. The emphasis will be on providing quality housing environments based on innovation and a design-led approach.

POLICY

- **HCF11 Emphasise quality, innovation and a design-led approach in all housing development with proposals appropriate to each site and location.**

4.4 Community Facilities

Community facilities are essential to the well-being and functioning of populated areas. These facilities include health clinics, hospitals, schools, churches, shopping facilities,-libraries, community halls, burial grounds etc.

The primary role of the Planning Authority is to reserve sufficient lands within the settlement centres to meet likely future demands for community infrastructure. A recurring problem with respect to the provision of this infrastructure is its timely provision in conjunction with new housing. The Local Area Plans will seek to resolve this current problem by linking the provision of

community facilities to increases in residential population within large residential areas by means of phasing arrangements.

The preferred option for the Planning Authority is for new and existing buildings to facilitate and provide for a range of compatible community uses. The Planning Authority will investigate opportunities for multi-purpose use to ensure that communities are best served without duplication of effort. It is important that the greatest possible use of a building is made, thereby providing community and leisure facilities close to the areas where they are needed.

POLICY

- **HCF12 Reserve sites for community facilities as appropriate and to seek to remedy deficiencies in existing developed areas.**
- **HCF13 Link the provision of community facilities to increases in residential population through phasing arrangements in the Local Area Plans to ensure the timely provision of facilities.**
- **HCF14 Locate community facilities within existing settlements and where population levels warrant a particular service.**
- **HCF15 Liaise with community groups and to assist community initiatives subject to the availability of resources.**
- **HCF16 To ensure that, where practicable, community, recreational and open space facilities are clustered, with the community facilities being located in local centres or combined with school facilities as appropriate. Community facilities should be located close to or within walking distance of housing, accessible to all sectors of the community and facilitate multi-use functions through their design and layout.**

4.5 Education

4.5.1 Childcare Facilities

The provision of childcare facilities is recognised as a strategic piece of social infrastructure required to enable people to participate more fully in society, particularly in accessing employment, education and social networks. National policy on childcare facilities is set out in *Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2001). Government policy on childcare is to increase the number of childcare places and facilities available and to improve the quality of childcare services for the community.

New residential areas have been identified as an important location for the provision of childcare facilities and it is considered that provision should be made for purpose built, easily accessible facilities in new developments of 75 dwellings or more.

A County Childcare Strategy has been prepared by Kilkenny County Childcare Committee. This provides the over-arching policy framework for the provision of childcare in the county. Kilkenny County Council is working with Kilkenny County Childcare Committee, through its role on the CDB, to improve the quality, provision and affordability of childcare in the county.

In developing proposals for housing schemes, developers are encouraged to liaise with the County Childcare committee in advance of preparing planning applications in order to ascertain the local requirements.

POLICY

- **HCF17 Facilitate the provision of childcare facilities in a sustainable manner in appropriate locations which include the following: larger new housing estates, industrial estates and business parks, in the vicinity of schools, neighbourhood and district centres and adjacent to public transport facilities.**
- **HCF18 To require the provision of appropriate purpose built childcare facilities in association with proposals for new residential development of more than 75 dwelling units. Where appropriate the Council will operate this requirement in a flexible manner and will encourage and facilitate cooperation between developers to jointly provide facilities, having regard to the Kilkenny County Childcare Strategy.**
- **HCF19 In so far as possible, the provision of childcare facilities should be adjacent to, or co-located with, other facilities required for other community use.**
- **HCF20 To assess, in conjunction with the Kilkenny County Childcare Committee and the County Development Board, the continuing needs around childcare and related facilities and review progress on the provision of same during the period of this Plan.**

4.5.2 Primary and Post Primary Schools

Where new schools are required, they should be located close to, or within the main residential areas of the village or town so that as many children/students as possible can walk or cycle to school. The opportunity should be taken to locate the schools so that they naturally contribute to the development of a sense of community in new neighbourhoods. Where possible, these schools should be served by a dedicated and safe footpath and cycle-way network.

4.5.2.1 Dual Use of School Buildings

School and other educational premises represent a valuable resource in terms of land and buildings, which generally is only used on a partial basis. The dual use of educational facilities, where it does not conflict with the delivery of the education service (i.e. outside school hours and during school holidays) can contribute to meeting the wider needs of the community, by helping to satisfy demand for a variety of activities. The DEHLG Guidelines on Childcare Facilities recommend the use of school premises to cater for after school care and school authorities are encouraged to examine how they can help address this demand.

Where lands and buildings can be beneficially used by the community, the Council will promote such uses subject to available resources. Where new schools are proposed and indeed other community facilities, opportunities will be sought to ensure that they are designed in such a way as to facilitate dual use from the onset.

4.6 Social Capital

Social Capital may be defined as that which accrues to a person or group as a result of their active participation in the life of their communities. For example, social capital is said to be gained from neighbourliness, local area networking or volunteering. Something as simple as being known to the local shop-keeper, chemist or publican is said to have benefits for the well-being of individuals within the social capital debate.

Kilkenny local authorities are committed to the Agenda 21 process of building partnerships between local authorities and other sectors to develop and implement local policies for the development of sustainable communities. This commitment involves a wide range of public consultation in the actions taken by the local authority from plan making and policy formulation to implementation of specific projects such as playgrounds.

In 2002 the *County Development Board Strategy for Economic, Social & Cultural Development 2002-2012* was prepared. The main representation for the voluntary sector is through the Community and Voluntary Forum which is the mechanism for supporting a collective voice for the community and voluntary sector. There is representation on a number of structures in the county in order to inform policy, such as the County Development Board itself and its subcommittees (including SIM – Social Inclusion Measures subgroup), Strategic Policy Committees and Expanded Area Committees.

It is through these measures that the local authorities will seek to build social capital within the county.

POLICY

- **HCF21 To make Kilkenny an attractive place to live and work by building strong, inclusive communities that have a sense of place and belonging, with adequate provision of and access to services and facilities to meet the needs of the county's growing population**
- **HCF22 To work with other relevant organisations, through the County Development Board, to facilitate the provision of public and social services in areas of identified need throughout the county.**
- **HCF23 To work with the County Development Board and its sub-structures, to advance social inclusion and development by developing the co-ordinated delivery of services and facilities in the county.**
- **HCF24 To promote the development of social capital by providing opportunities for interaction, participation and the co-ordinated provision of public services.**

4.7 Library Service

Kilkenny County Library Service is commencing the process of creating a five-year Development Plan. It will include a review of existing services and provisions and consultation with various stakeholders, together with recommendations for future programming. The overall process will take twelve to eighteen months.

Within this new Development plan there will be an emphasis on providing equality of access for all the residents of County Kilkenny. This will consolidate the work that has been done to ensure equality for people with disabilities in access to, and participation in, the public library service. The plan will also give recognition to the fact that Kilkenny is now home to many people of different nationalities and cultures, be they refugees, asylum seekers or immigrants. It will therefore include measures such as the introduction of the World book collection in 2006 for our borrowers at the City Library.

Staff have committed to the adjustment of opening hours and services that best meets the needs of the public. The various branches are now being used as access points for public services.

The Internet has greatly improved access to information. However all sectors have not benefited in particular people in the older age cohorts. The library staff are now engaged in initiatives targeted at these sectors.

POLICY

- **HCF25 To continue to improve the library service for all.**

ACTIONS
- **To provide a branch library in Mullinavat to service the Piltown electoral area**
- **To provide a new Library for the City to be located at County Hall, which will replace the existing Carnegie Library.**

4.8 Health

Healthcare and medical facilities are provided by public, private and voluntary agencies within County Kilkenny. The Health Service Executive – South Eastern Area (previously South Eastern Health Board) is the primary organisation responsible for the delivery of health care and personal social services to the people of Kilkenny.

St. Luke's Hospital and Lourdes Orthopaedic Hospital, Kilcreene are the acute hospitals in Kilkenny. The residents of the county also have access to hospitals in the surrounding counties such as Waterford Regional Hospital.

With the scale of increase in population, it is to be expected that there will be a demand for more healthcare and medical facilities within the county to cater for the resident population.

The primary role of the Planning Authority with regard to health care is to ensure that there is an adequate policy framework in place inclusive of the reservation of lands should additional services be required and that the health care facilities would be permitted subject to good planning practice. Future provision should be planned and implemented in concert with residential development, especially where this is undertaken in the context of Local Area Plans. The Planning Authority will reserve sites within development centres for health care facilities in consultation with the HSE.

POLICY

- **HCF26 To facilitate the development by the Health Service Executive - South Eastern Area of a comprehensive range of health and social care services and in particular services for the elderly including the development of community, hospital, community nursing and day care services throughout the county.**

4.8.1 Nursing Homes

In the light of an increasing ageing population, investment in developing a range of facilities for the elderly, including nursing units, has been facilitated under the National Development Plan. The Council recognises that nursing homes should not only be provided in established towns and villages but also in appropriate rural areas.

POLICY

- **HCF27 To ensure that adequate land and services are available for the provision of all types of facilities for the elderly including nursing homes/retirement centre both public and private and the improvement, expansion and establishment of health services generally such as extended nursing care, day care and respite care.**

5 Economic Development

5.1 Introduction

The Local Authority does not have a direct role or remit in economic development or job creation but has an important role in promoting economic development by the provision of policies and infrastructure to enable such growth.

County Kilkenny's economy is strong and growing and has undeniably benefited from the extraordinary growth in Ireland's economy from the second half of the 1990s. The county (including Kilkenny City) had the second lowest level of disposable income per person for 2004 at 16,369, which was 13% below the state average (Central Statistics Office, February 2007; County Incomes and Regional GDP 2004).

The most recent figures available show that the live register for the County at April 2007 is 2,455 persons.

The most recent source of detailed information on the workforce in County Kilkenny is the 2002 Census.

In 2002 Kilkenny workforce had the following characteristics:

- The percentage of people employed in agriculture has continued to decrease. In 1996 17.5% worked in agriculture compared to 24% in 1986. This figure declined to 10.7% in 2002, which is 4.8% higher than the national average.
- Of persons above the age of 15 living in Co. Kilkenny, 18% hold third level qualifications as compared with a National average of 21%.

5.2 Enterprise Sectors in Kilkenny

Technology, tourism, craft & design, engineering and food processing are the dominant industries in the county. Glanbia PLC and Smithwick's St. Francis Abbey Brewery are major food and beverage processing companies located in the county and are examples of industrial development, which evolved from the agricultural hinterland to their current position as market leaders in the food sectors. In the tourism sector, Kilkenny City has a thriving tourism product and in the county, Mount Juliet Conrad is the largest tourism product.

At present significant areas of industrial land are located in Kilkenny City and Belview Port. Lands for industrial development in Kilkenny City are located at the Hebron industrial estate at Purcell's Inch and at Loughboy. There are also four strategic areas zoned for the development of business parks in the City and Environs. Smaller parcels of land for industrial development are located in the smaller towns and villages in the County.

Kilkenny has had limited Foreign Direct Investment but has had some success in the area of financial services with location of Statestreet, VHI and Banking 365 in the City. The current economic climate is making it more difficult to secure foreign direct investment.

The Council has an important role to play in facilitating industrial development within the County. This ranges from its direct role in the provision of essential infrastructure to its close co operation with the agencies which have an established remit for specific intervention in this area and through its direct and indirect involvement with local development companies and organisations such as the County Enterprise Board, Leader, KIDCO, Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce and Industry**,** IBEC and other development agencies in the County.

5.3 Policy Context

5.3.1 National Spatial Strategy

The NSS acknowledged that the increasing number of people commuting to work is unsustainable and having a negative effect on the quality of life of the country's population, in particular the working population. Thus, the underpinning aim of the Strategy is to improve the quality of life of all citizens, bringing jobs closer to where people live, improving our environment and building a strong sustainable economic future for ourselves and our children.

The NSS recognised that trends regarding the structure, pattern and location of economic investment related as much to the skill and resource base of an area, as it did to the financial incentives, which may be offered. To this end, the NSS identifies a number of international trends emerging that have a significant influence on the location of enterprise, including:-

- The tendency towards spatial concentrations of technology,
- The attraction of skilled workers and companies to urban areas,
- The growing importance of services which reinforce the role of large centres of population, and
- The importance of supporting and strengthening the capability and quality of research and development functions at various regional locations in Ireland to sustain a competitive and innovative enterprise sector.

Further, the NSS identifies future trends in enterprise as likely to include the following:-

- The majority of new jobs will be created in the service sector,
- The increasing importance for companies in the service sector of locations at or close to major points of consumer demands,
- Local services, health care, leisure and tourism will become even more significant as the population ages and disposable incomes rise,
- The need to allocate additional investment in research design, innovation and development to remain competitive and viable,
- Areas with a strong population base that can support high quality business infrastructure, technological development and innovation will continue to be major attractors, and
- A range of high quality residential locations will be necessary to attract skilled labour.

In the context of the National Spatial strategy and the National Development Plan the economic development of Kilkenny City and County can no longer be viewed in isolation from the rest of the South East Region as a whole. Ireland as a country has become an open economy[4] and as a result the economic development of County Kilkenny, and in turn that of Kilkenny City & Environs, must now be considered in the context of regional, national and global influences.

5.3.2 Regional Planning Guidelines

The Regional Planning Guidelines state[5] that the provision of first class infrastructure and facilities in the Hubs and County town locations within the South East Region will help in development of 'critical mass' in the region and the achievement of the nationally strategic 'growth triangle' referred to in Section 4 of the National Spatial Strategy between Kilkenny, Wexford and Waterford city.

Critical mass of economic activity and opportunities is facilitated by:

- Business and Technology Parks – IDA Ireland
- County Enterprise Parks – Enterprise Ireland
- Development of quality industrial estates to accommodate small to medium enterprises – Local Authorities/County Enterprise Boards/Private Developers
- Development of higher education and training

5.3.3 County Development Board Strategy

Each Planning Authority, through the County Development Board (CDB) is required to prepare a ten year strategy for the county. The purpose of such a strategy is to 'facilitate the articulation of a vision for the development of the county' and to 'provide the focus for co-operation and co-ordination which in turn will enhance the capacity for maximising the effectiveness of spending programmes'. The true value of this strategy is that it provides a framework by which Planning Authorities can co-ordinate the delivery of services and infrastructure. Kilkenny published its strategy - *A Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development* - in 2002.

The CDB's mission statement is:

- To empower the Kilkenny community to take more control over the issues that impact on their daily lives and to recognise the positive mutual dependency and synergy between County and City.
- To encourage a broadening vision beyond the confines of single agencies and organisations and to encourage full public consultation and a spirit of true partnership.
- To underpin all actions with an ethos of equity and access for all and to consolidate and increase the cultural and economic wealth of the County.

[4] Ireland the fifth most open economy in the world
[5] Regional Planning Guidelines page 90

5.3.4 Creative Heart of Ireland

Kilkenny has a strong Arts and Crafts base which owes its origins to the establishment of Kilkenny Design Workshops in the 1960's, which was a state funded body responsible for promoting product and graphic design in industry which operated to the 1980's. The brand also draws on the very strong clusters of creative businesses in and around the city and county - everything from artists to craftspeople, musicians and graphic designers. The brand also draws on the very strong clusters of creative businesses in and around the city and county - everything from artists to craftspeople, musicians and graphic designers. The Crafts Council of Ireland (CCoI) has been centred here since 1998, which has consolidated Kilkenny's position as the creative heart of Ireland. The CCoI is the national design and economic development organisation for the craft industry in Ireland.
Its activities are funded by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment via Enterprise Ireland.

Approximately 10% of Kilkenny County Enterprise Board assistance has been directed towards the Craft Sector since 1993. As retailing is vitally important for many crafts people, the location of any proposed workspace is vital.

Kilkenny County Council acknowledges the importance of the arts and the craft sectors to Kilkenny for tourism, employment and quality of life.

POLICY

- **ED1 To support the development of the crafts sector and liaise with the Crafts Council of Ireland, the County Enterprise Board and other interested bodies to facilitate growth within this sector.**

5.4 Education

Third level educational facilities include an outreach centre based in St. Kieran's College associated with NUI Maynooth, which delivers a range of courses and programmes. NUI Maynooth recently published the Kilkenny Campus Strategic Plan 2007-2011 which sets out how the campus will grow to accommodate 450 students by 2011.

Institutes of Technology are located in Carlow and Waterford and Tipperary has an Institute of Education. There is an aspiration to have a university in the South East Region. It is important that access to good quality third level education is provided so that the social, cultural and economic life of the city and county is enhanced to the greatest extent possible. Kilkenny County Council fully supports the ambition of Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) to gain university status with the main campus located in Waterford City and other faculties in the other large population centres.

POLICY

- **ED2 To facilitate and promote the development of the third level outreach facility in Kilkenny City to its maximum potential.**
- **ED3 To support the establishment of a university for the South East Region with its main campus located in Waterford City and faculty campus facilities in Kilkenny and other Hubs and County Towns within the Region.**

- **ED4 To support the provision of a third/fourth level facility for the city and county which would include within it a creative academy.**

5.5 Strategic Locations for Enterprise and Employment

Within County Kilkenny there are two nationally and regionally important strategic locations for enterprise and employment. These are Kilkenny City & Environs and Belview Port in the environs of Waterford City in County Kilkenny.

5.5.1 Kilkenny City

Kilkenny has many strengths as an attractive location for industry as:

1. The administrative capital of the County;
2. A reasonable sized city and environs with population of approximately 20,000;
3. Designated as a Hub under the NSS;
4. Containing excellent infrastructure in terms of roads, rail, airports and seaports – only 70 miles from Dublin and 30 miles from the port facilities at Belview in South Kilkenny and the South East Regional Airport at Waterford;
5. Excellent social and leisure amenities with good quality urban and natural environment;
6. Proximity to various third-level colleges in the south-east with developing outreach facilities from NUI Maynooth.

Major recent economic investment has occurred in the retail and tourism sectors with the development of retail warehousing parks at Purcells Inch and Smithslands and the development of a major new mixed-use development adjacent to McDonagh railway station.

There have been several new hotel developments within the City & Environs completed during the period of the last plan expanding the range and number of bed nights available to tourists.

POLICY

- **ED5 To make Kilkenny City & Environs a premier choice for indigenous and foreign direct investment across all sectors of the economy by developing a location that will attract and sustain indigenous and foreign direct job creating investment'.**
- **ED6 To ensure that an adequate quantity and range of land is available for enterprise development and that the appropriate infrastructure is provided.**
- **ED7 To liaise with the IDA, Enterprise Ireland, the County Enterprise Board, KiDCo, the Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other bodies to promote Kilkenny as a city for inward investment and growth of indigenous industry.**
- **ED8 To facilitate the provision of childcare facilities in appropriate locations thereby promoting labour market participation among parents and supporting parents in accessing employment, training and education.**
- **ED9 To provide improved road infrastructure from Kilkenny to other local urban centres and national centres, to support the provision of an improved**

rail service (freight and passenger) for the industrial, agricultural and service sectors having particular regard to access to and from Waterford Regional Airport and Belview Port.

- **ED10 To encourage the development of incubator units and small high technology units**

5.5.2 Belview Port

The Belview area is located approximately 3 miles from Waterford City. The Belview Portal and Industrial Area Action Plan was reviewed and incorporated into the 2002 County Development Plan. That Plan sets out the development strategy, policies and objectives of Kilkenny County Council for this area. The PLUTS document identifies Belview as one of four key locations for future employment location for Waterford City.

The Port at Belview is a strategic national, regional and county asset with good road and rail links. The role and status of the port nationally and regionally should be strengthened in line with the NSS by supporting and promoting a balanced multi-modal freight transport policy that safeguards the importance of rail transport as a means of access to the port.

The port has excellent road connections to the National Road Network via the N29 and N25 routes and it will benefit significantly in terms of access from the upgrading of the National Road Network – particularly from the provision of the Waterford Bypass.

POLICY

- **ED11 To develop the national role of the Port at Belview and the Belview industrial zone.**
- **ED12 To prepare a Local Area Plan for the Environs of Waterford City within County Kilkenny including the port at Belview and the Belview Industrial zone, continuing with the policy of partnership with the local community.**
- **ED13 To ensure that sufficient and suitable land is zoned for port and industrial development at Belview in accordance with its strategic role nationally and within the Southeast Region. Such land will, normally, be protected from inappropriate development that would prejudice its long term strategic development.**

5.5.3 Enterprise and Employment in Rural Areas

Rural areas have a vital contribution to make to the achievement of balanced regional development. This involves utilising and developing the economic resources of rural areas, particularly in agriculture and food, marine, tourism, forestry, renewable energy, enterprise and local services, while at the same time capitalising on and drawing strength from vibrant neighbouring urban areas. In this way rural and urban areas are seen as working in partnership, rather than competing with each other.

Rural development has been dealt with in detail in Chapter 6 of this plan.

Certain kinds of industry, especially those which involve natural resources and serve rural communities may, at an appropriate scale, have a role to play in rural development. Where appropriate locations are available, with adequate infrastructure, these can be located outside settlements.

POLICY

- **ED14 To provide an adequate range of locations for both large and small scale new industrial development throughout the County. This development will be encouraged to locate on appropriately zoned lands within the development boundaries of established settlements to facilitate more sustainable commuting patterns and to contribute to the economic development of towns and villages.**
- **ED15 To promote rural industries generally and to facilitate certain kinds of rural industry, especially those that are natural resource dependent (e.g. associated with forestry) to be located outside settlements in appropriate locations.**
- **ED16 To promote on-farm – off-farm enterprises associated with diversification of the existing farm enterprise.**

5.6 E-commerce

Electronic Commerce may be defined as the exchange of value over the electronic medium. The electronic medium is the internet, the wireless network used by mobile phones or the digital TV Network.

The uptake and impact of e-commerce has varied dramatically between industry sectors, but it is true to say that over time, almost every industry will be impacted in some form by e-Commerce. The high tech sector, both hardware and software is being transformed by e-commerce.

E-Commerce will effectively mean accessing information and services from home, from the car or from the office. The communications /electronic commerce sector is a key input to continued economic development. It provides the basic infrastructure for new information communications and digital industries and is already altering the modus operandi of traditional industries, the way in which work is organised, the interaction between consumers and business and visa versa.

POLICY

- **ED17 Support and facilitate the provision of advanced communication networks and services to the extent required to contribute to national competitiveness and attract inward investment.**

5.7 Policies

- **ED18 It will be the policy of the Council to facilitate the creation of new employment opportunities in the county by:**

a) Ensuring that sufficient land is zoned for industrial and commercial development.

b) **Facilitating where possible the expansion of existing industries and businesses and the development of new industrial or service sector undertakings**
c) **Supporting with the IDA in the promotion of foreign direct investment and establishment of new industries in the County.**
d) **Facilitating and encouraging the establishment of small scale light industries which are considered compatible with surrounding uses on suitable sites.**
e) **Supporting the County Enterprise Board in the fostering and promotion of indigenous enterprises within the County.**
f) **Supporting in conjunction with the LEADER programme and co-operating with Local Area Partnerships in rural development projects.**
g) **Supporting Enterprise Ireland in the promotion of inward investment in the County**
h) **Preparing an integrated industrial development strategy for the County through the County Development Board in conjunction with KIDCO the County Enterprise Board, LEADER local area partnerships and Enterprise Ireland.**
i) **Facilitating the provision of childcare facilities in appropriate locations thereby promoting labour market participation among parents and supporting parents in accessing training, education and employment.**

5.8 Retail Strategy

Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Borough Council adopted the first Kilkenny City and County Retail Strategy in 2002. A key recommendation was that the strategy be reviewed after 3 years. The first review was adopted in 2005. As part of the making of this Development Plan a full review of the City and County Retail strategy has taken place.

An important part of the review was the updating of baseline information. This included the following:

- Review of population figures and forecasts
- Updating the floorspace survey
- New household and shoppers surveys
- A broad capacity assessment for the requirement of additional retail floorspace.
- Updating the health checks of Kilkenny City, Callan, Castlecomer, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown
- Updating the comparative review of similar counties.

The objective of the review was to ensure that the requirements of paragraph 36 of the *Retail Planning Guidelines* would be met in the Development Plan i.e.:

- Confirmation of the retail hierarchy,
- Definition of the core retail area of town centres,
- A broad assessment of the requirement of additional retail floorspace,
- Strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development,
- Preparation of policies and action initiatives to encourage the improvement of town centres,
- Identification of criteria for the assessment of retail developments.

5.8.1 County Retail Hierarchy

A review of the county retail hierarchy has taken place to incorporate the factors and influences that have changed since 2004. The revised County Retail Hierarchy is set out in Table 5.1 below.

The modifications recommended are the re-designation of Callan as a Tier 1 Level 2 Sub County Town centre from a Tier 2 Level 2 Sub County Town centre.

Ferrybank was designated as a District Centre in previous Development Plans, however the question as to whether a centre for Ferrybank should be town or district centre will be resolved upon the completion of the upcoming joint retail strategy.

Table 5.1: County Retail Hierarchy

Level/Retail Function	Centre
Level 1 Major Town Centre/County Town	Kilkenny City & Environs
Tier 1 Level 2 Sub county town	Callan Thomastown
Tier 2 Level 2 Sub County Town	Castlecomer Graiguenamanagh
Level 3 Town	No designated centre
Level 4 Village Centre	
Level 4 Neighbourhood Centre	As designated for Kilkenny City & Environs and Waterford Environs

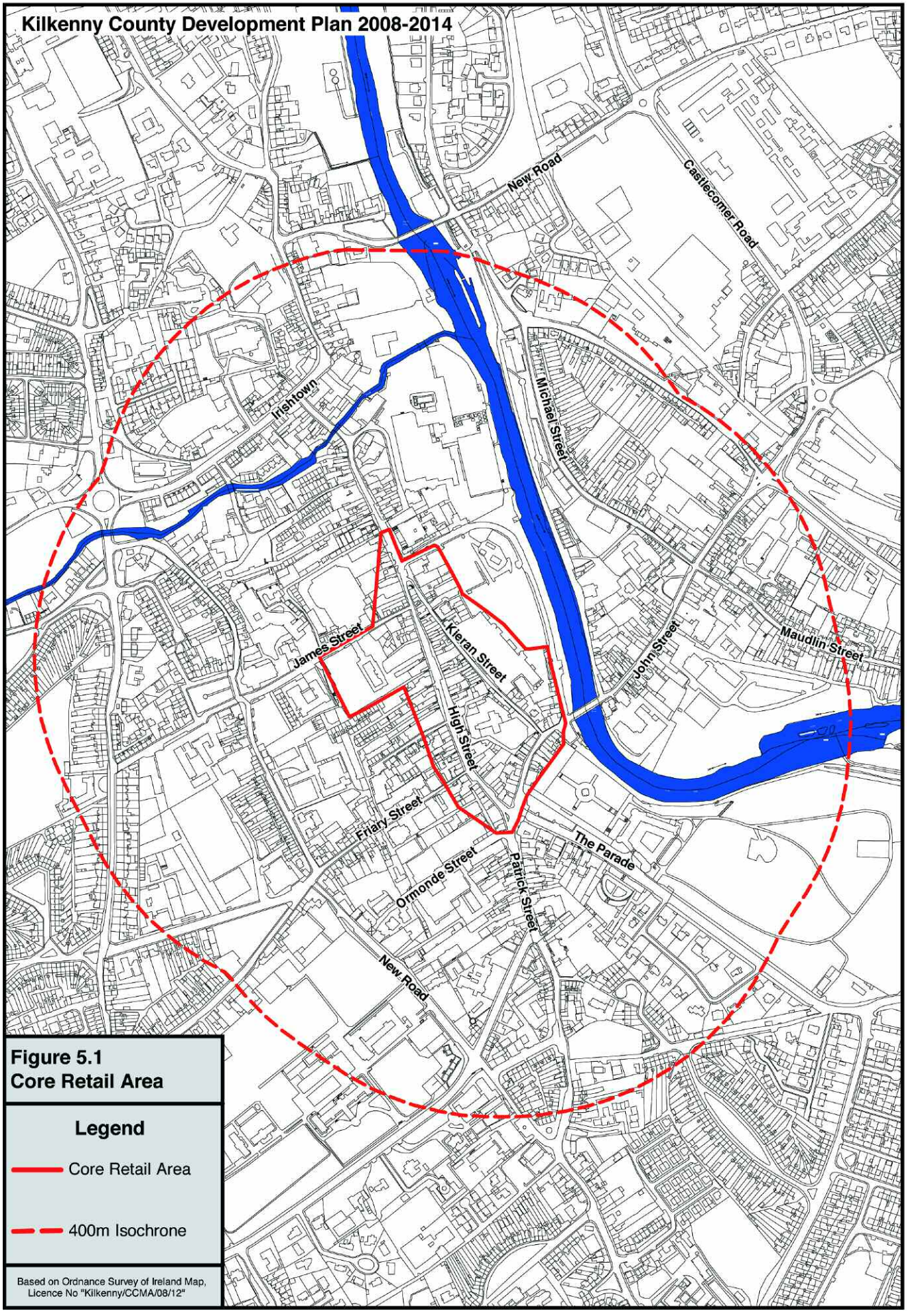
5.8.2 Core Retail Areas

The review of the main centres within the county confirms that the Core Shopping Area is relevant only to Kilkenny City Centre and that the four District towns are of too small a scale to warrant such an approach. The core shopping area for Kilkenny City Centre and the 400metre edge of centre boundary are shown in Figure 5.1. The core shopping area comprises the following streets: Parliament Street/Market Cross; High Street; Rose Inn Street; and St Kieran's Street.

The 2007 review confirms the conclusions of the 2004 review which was that the existing core shopping area should be retained in the best interests of the retail future of the City Centre and as such the City & County as a whole.

Key considerations in arriving at this conclusion include:

- The larger the defined core shopping area then the greater scope to diffuse the retail floor space around a wider area.
- This could bring policy conflicts and a potential wider distribution of floor space.
- The result could be a real threat of weakening, not strengthening, the prime shopping area.


Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014
New Road
Castlecomer Road
Irishtown
Michael Street
James Street
Kieran Street
John Street
Maudlin Street
High Street
Friary Street
The Parade
Ormonde Street
Patrick Street
New Road
Figure 5.1
Core Retail Area
Legend
Core Retail Area
400m Isochrone
Based on Ordnance Survey of Ireland Map, Licence No "Kilkenny/CCMA/08/12"

5.8.3 Broad Assessment of the Requirement of Additional Retail Floor Space

This review covers the period 2008 to 2014 but also takes a longer term view to take into account the 2020 planning horizon of the *National Spatial Strategy* and *South East Regional Planning Guidelines*.

The inclusion of consideration of capacity up to 2020 is for the following reasons:

- Given Kilkenny City's designation as a Hub under the NSS and the large increase in population projected over the period of the NSS to 2020, then it is important for strategic land use planning purposes that a longer term view/vision is taken; and
- The review of the City and County Retail Strategy will become part of the City and County Development Plans, both of which have to have regard to the NSS and Regional Planning Guidelines which provide spatial and policy planning guidance to 2020.

One of the key requirements of the Retail Planning Guidelines is that retail strategies should provide a broad assessment of the additional retail floorspace required in counties over the lifetime of their strategies. The Plan takes account of: the changes to the population, population forecasts, updated information on expenditure, retail floorspace, extant planning permissions and the findings of the 2007 household and shopper surveys.

The assessment identifies the type and amount of additional floorspace that will be required to accommodate additional expenditure over the timescale of the Retail Strategy. At the same time allowance is made for:

- New retail outlets that are planned to come on-line identified by extant planning permissions.
- Increases in sales in existing forms of retailing - this includes e-retailing, mail order sales and market stalls. It excludes wholesale and car sales outlets as laid down by the RPG's.

The key inputs and outputs to the capacity assessment are a derivation of the following:

- Step 1: Population and Expenditure Estimates
- Step 2: Turnover Estimates
- Step 3: Turnover Ratios
- Step 4: Gross Additional Expenditure Potential
- Step 5: Future Sources of Retail Sales
- Step 6: Capacity Potential.

From the estimates of gross additional expenditure potential and subtracting the expenditure accounted for by the extant planning permissions there will be very limited potential for additional mainstream comparison floorspace to accommodate key City developments until post 2014. As such, the objectives for strengthening the role of the traditional City Centre will not be delivered in the short and medium term timescale.

For this reason two scenarios to estimate the approximate floorspace required to accommodate the anticipated increase in expenditure were derived (a) one

INCLUDING extant retail warehousing permissions and (b) **EXCLUDING** extant retail warehousing permissions.

Table 5.2 sets out the assessment of additional floorspace up to 2014 and 2020 including retail warehousing.

Table 5.2: Net Expenditure Capacity Growth in the County ('04 prices, €m) Including Retail Warehousing Extants

Period	Convenience			Comparison		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
2008 -2014	1,968	2,699	3,144	-4,120	-1,443	-1,348
2014 - 2020	4,274	5,119	6,649	27,899	32,021	38,739
Total	6,242	7,818	9,794	23,780	30,579	37,392
Source: DTZ Pieda Consulting: Review of Kilkenny City & County Retail Strategy 2007						

The table shows that there is potential for additional convenience floorspace in the County in the period 2008 to 2014 and a greater quantum post-2014.

With regard to comparison floorspace, the table clearly illustrates that there is no capacity for any additional comparison floorspace in the period 2008 - 2014. The position greatly improves post-2014. The lack of capacity over the timescale of the emerging City & County Development Plans is a concern, particularly in respect of delivering emerging proposals and objectives for further comparison floorspace in the City Centre, e.g. the Kmart site and Bateman Quay.

Table 5.3 sets out the assessment of additional floorspace up to 2014 and 2020 excluding retail warehousing.

Table 5.3: Net Expenditure Capacity Growth in the County ('04 prices, €m) Excluding Retail Warehousing Extants

Period	Convenience			Comparison		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
2008 -2014	1,968	2,699	3,144	8,886	11,563	12,439
2014 - 2020	4,274	5,119	6,649	28,680	32,802	39,520
Total	6,242	7,818	9,794	37,566	44,365	51,959
Source: DTZ Pieda Consulting: Review of Kilkenny City & County Retail Strategy 2007						

This scenario excluding retail warehousing has no implications for convenience floorspace potential. As with the first scenario, there is limited potential for any significant additional convenience floorspace from 2008 to 2014.

However, the exclusion of the extant retail warehousing permissions has a considerable effect on the comparison capacity potential for the period 2008 to 2014. The assessment identifies that there is potential for additional comparison floorspace which would facilitate continuing improvement in the City Centre's offer over the period to 2014.

5.8.4 Strategic Guidance on Location

The following have been identified as being of particular importance in examining strategic location in the review of the retail strategy:

i. Providing the retail land use and planning policy framework to ensure that the City and County fully play their role in achieving the objectives and targets of the NSS and SERPG;
ii. Current and pending strategic infrastructure investment;
iii. Ensuring that the current strength and importance of Kilkenny City and Environs in County, Regional and national shopping patterns is sustained and enhanced;
iv. The strengths and weaknesses of the City and County against both competing and comparable counties and centres are harnessed and addressed;
v. That the increasing outflows of both convenience and comparison expenditure are redressed by providing the means to improve the attractiveness of the City and County's retail offer for residents of the City and County;
vi. That the decreasing inflows of convenience expenditure are addressed through the enhancement of the City and County's convenience offer;
vii. That the increasing inflows of comparison expenditure from visitors to the County from neighbouring counties and further afield are sustained and enhanced;
viii. The foundations for the future of retail planning in the City and county are strong and defensible in respect of the emerging City and County Development Plans and the timeframes of the NSS and SERPG to 2020.
ix. The vitality and viability of the District Towns and the measures required to sustain and enhance this;
x. The role of retail warehousing in the City's retail offer.

5.8.5 Overview of Progress

The previous Development Plan (2002-2008) identified key locations for additional major new retail floorspace as:

- Kilkenny City and Environs; and
- Waterford City Environs.

In respect of the four **Level 2 Sub-County Town Centres**, these were not anticipated to have significant market interest or development of major additional retail floorspace during the plan period.

During the Plan period 2002-2008 proposals were advanced in a number of the key locations identified for additional major new retail floorspace. These are:

I. Kilkenny City: McDonagh station
II. Kilkenny City Environs: Smithsland and Ormonde Retail Parks – retail floorspace has been delivered and is trading.
III. Waterford City Environs: Ferrybank – construction is underway.

Additionally, and contrary to what was anticipated, a large quantum of new retail space was introduced in Callan and Thomastown and considerable interest has been shown in additional new floorspace in both these centres.

5.8.5.1 Kilkenny City & Environs

In reviewing the potential of the City and its environs, the structure is provided by the Sequential Approach:

a) City Centre;
b) Edge of Centre; and
c) Out of Centre.

a) City Centre

The starting point in the appraisal of retail potential for the City Centre is consideration of its role and importance in the hierarchy and the need for it to be the priority location for additional floorspace. The review of potential sites and locations conducted confirmed the findings of the 2001 Strategy and the 2004 Review, namely:

- There are no sites or buildings of any substantial size available for retail development within what is termed the Core Retail Area
- The Architectural Conservation Area policies covering the City Centre effectively remove any potential now and in the future for major redevelopment of space within the City Centre
- There is potential for improvement and enhancement of the City Centre offer, both retail and leisure, by utilisation of vacant floorspace, conversions and gap infilling and this can be addressed under normal development control policies and procedures.

Bateman Quay

The above noted, Bateman Quay is the only site/area within the City Centre that is of key importance in terms of enhancement of the retail attraction of the City and County. This site has been identified as a prime City Centre retail location since 2001. It has been earmarked for civic and cultural uses but there has been increasing recognition of the site's potential in the consolidation and expansion of City Centre retailing. The redevelopment of the site with a mixture of civic and retail uses will help to counter balance the emerging Mc Donagh Station and Kmart schemes thereby helping to protect the vitality, viability and attraction of the City Centre as the premier location for shopping in the City.

Over the timescale of the 2008 - 2014 City & Environs Development Plan, the development and delivery of mixed use proposals for Bateman Quay – including a large component of higher order comparison and speciality shopping - will be a priority retail planning objective of the local authorities.

The Parade

An additional area, which to date has not been given due recognition of its importance as having potential to deliver any significant quantum of retail floorspace, is the Parade. This is an established honey pot for local people and visitors alike in view of the nationally and internationally renowned profile anchor of the Kilkenny Design Centre. There is scope to build on this by ensuring that planning policies provide the framework and mechanisms for this to be achieved.

b) Edge of Centre
Given that the Mc Donagh Station scheme is now underway, the only other key edge of centre site is the Kmart site. As identified in the 2002 Plan, the Kmart site with the Mc Donagh Station site provide the potential for the expansion of the City Centre and meeting the demand and need for additional retail floorspace and other City Centre activities and uses. This objective was incorporated into the City Centre Local Area Plan 2005. The identification and zoning of the two sites underpins the objective of no one site dominating the retail landscape of the City or providing an alternative to the City Centre/Core shopping Area.

The Kmart site was identified as providing the basis for the second phase expansion of the City Centre and this position is confirmed in this Plan.

c) Out of Centre
Within the City's environs, over the timescale of the City and County Development Plans, issues and opportunities are identified in respect of:

- Convenience floorspace
- Bulky goods/ retail warehousing floorspace.

Convenience Floorspace
The environs of the City are rapidly expanding and there is a need to ensure that convenience and local services needs around the area are met in an efficient, equitable and sustainable way. The 2001 Strategy recognised that the Western Environs Area would require a Neighbourhood centre. This has been planned for in the 2004 Western Environs Local Area Plan. The potential remains for the Neighbourhood Centre to grow into a District Centre but this should be considered in the wider context of the City & Environs.

A further neighbourhood centre is planned for the Loughmacask area as outlined in the Loughmacask Local Area Plan.

For the foreseeable future, in view of the residential development that is taking place, the location for additional neighbourhood centres is in the western environs rather than the eastern suburbs of the City.

Bulky Goods/Retail Warehousing Retail Parks:
A range of sites and locations for expansion of existing retail parks and new retail parks were identified in the 2002 Development Plan as reviewed.

The 2001 strategy restricted the size of retail parks. This was adjusted in the 2004 review in the light of the following considerations:

- It constrained the potential of retail warehousing in and around the City and County.
- It was not consistent with the approaches in neighbouring counties and therefore had the potential to weaken the competitiveness of the City & county.
- It was not consistent with the RPG's which did not set a cap on the size of retail parks.
- Responding to market demand, the cap inhibited securing the necessary anchor tenants to attract other operators

- According to consumer demand in 2004 some 25% of the County's residents were travelling to other locations to meet bulky goods retail needs.

The removal of the cap was adopted as policy. The sites identified in the 2004 review were considered in terms of their immediate, medium and long term development. The priority sites for delivery of retail warehousing floorspace were identified as Smithland and Ormonde Retail Parks. These proposals have now been delivered or are on course to be delivered. They have resulted in the City significantly improving its retail warehousing offer.

However, no further retail warehousing parks should be granted in and around the City for the foreseeable future for the following reasons:

- There are constraints on the expenditure capacity for additional comparison floorspace over the period 2008 - 2014.
- New comparison floorspace should be located in the City Centre and edge of centre sites to enhance the attraction and competitiveness of the City and County in the National and Regional retail hierarchies.
- There is an over-representation of bulky goods floorspace in the comparison offer of the City & Environs.
- The concerns that the retail warehousing floorspace is competing with the comparison offers of the City Centre and the District Towns.
- The issue of saturation of the retail warehousing market around the City and concerns that not all of the space will be built out.

Exceptions to this policy will only be considered where it can be proven that a proposal unequivocally introduces uniqueness and innovation to the city & county's retail offer which cannot be met in the City Centre or on edge of centre locations.

The policy in the 2002 - 2008 Development Plan of establishing retail warehousing parks in each quadrant of the city and environs still holds true but the timescales have been revised to take account of greater focus on the City Centre and the issues of expenditure capacity for additional retail floorspace.

POLICY

- **ED19 Over time, but unlikely to be in the timescale of this Development Plan, retail warehousing parks should be located in all quarters of the City's Environs**
- **ED20 Provision of infrastructure to ensure traffic impacts are minimised should be a key determining factor in the selection of appropriate sites, with public transport and other modes of access also being achievable**
- **ED21 Relocation and upgrading of existing operations should be encouraged**

5.8.5.2 Waterford City Environs

The 2002 County Development Plan identified a requirement for a district centre in the Ferrybank area of the Waterford City Environs to meet the needs and potential of this significant expanding suburb of Waterford City. This scheme is now under construction.

Having regard to the importance of retail development for Ferrybank, the rapid growth of population in the South Kilkenny area and the need to provide for a wide and improved range of services including additional comparison and convenience retail to serve that population, then an integrated retail study must be completed as quickly as possible.

ACTION: To complete an integrated retail study by September 2008 which will inform the members of Kilkenny County Council as to whether a centre for Ferrybank should be designated as a town or district centre.

ED22 It is the policy of the Council to engage with the other local authorities in the South East Region in the preparation and adoption of a joint retail strategy for the greater Waterford area.

5.8.5.3 The District Towns

The review of the retail strategy has identified the need to provide a framework for ensuring that the vitality and viability of the four District towns is not only sustained but enhanced. The health checks carried out for the towns identified that there are some key opportunities for the reuse of existing town centre buildings/sites which will serve to consolidate their retail offer and more importantly provide the mechanism for the effective regeneration of these profile sites. It is not envisaged that other sites would be precluded from development but that each site should be considered on its individual merits and potential contribution to sustaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of the towns.

Strategic Response

Every retail planning strategy must be clear as to its purpose and what it is intended to achieve. The objectives and policies set out in this Development Plan seek to consolidate and build on the 2002 strategy with a specific additional objective for the District Towns.

The objectives of the strategy set the framework for the strategic policies and specific proposals. They give a clear definition of what is intended to be achieved in the City and across the County over the period 2008 – 2014 and beyond to 2020.

Objectives:

Objective 1: To sustain and improve the retail profile and competitiveness of Kilkenny City and County within the retail economy of the South East Region and beyond.

Objective 2: To provide the retail land use and planning policy framework that responds to the potential of Kilkenny City's role as a Hub within the national and regional economies and to ensure that the City and County fully play their role in achieving the objectives and targets of the NSS and the Regional Guidelines.

Objective 3: To confirm a hierarchy which assists in achieving the Regional Settlement Strategy and its objectives and provides clear guidance on where major new retail floorspace would be acceptable.

Objective 4: To ensure that the retail needs of the City and County's residents are met as fully as possible within the County, taking due cognisance of the Regional Retail and Settlement Hierarchy.

Objective 5: To address leakage of retail expenditure from the County by providing the means to strengthen the range and quality of its retail offer.

Objective 6: To ensure an equitable, efficient and sustainable spatial distribution of main centres across the County.

Objective 7: To sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the role and potential of the four District Towns and to ensure that this is not compromised by the growth of Kilkenny City and Environs or any other competing centre.

Objective 8: To encourage and facilitate the preservation and enhancement of the retail role of smaller villages and centres around the County.

Objective 9: To encourage and facilitate innovation and diversification in the County's retail profile and offer.

Objective 10: To encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings for retail uses, with due cognisance to the Sequential Approach as indicated in the RPG.

Objective 11: To promote and sustain the importance of retailing in the County's tourism economy.

Objective 12: To provide the criteria for the assessment of retail development proposals.

5.8.6 Strategic Policy Framework

The strategic policy framework is set by:

- The retail hierarchy;
- The core retail areas;
- The sequential approach;
- Spatial distribution of new retail development;
- Consideration of need; and
- Responding to the implications of the NSS and Regional Guidelines.

5.8.6.1 Retail Hierarchy

As set out in section 5.8.1 above the retail hierarchy for the County is as follows:

Level/Retail Function	**Centre**
Level 1 Major Town Centre/County Town	Kilkenny City & Environs
Tier 1 Level 2 Sub county town	Callan Thomastown
Tier 2 Level 2 Sub County Town	Castlecomer Graiguenamanagh
Level 3 Town	No designated centre
Level 4 Village Centre	
Level 4 Neighbourhood Centre	As designated for Kilkenny City & Environs and Waterford Environs

The hierarchy needs to be monitored and reviewed in the next review of the retail strategy.

5.8.6.2 Core Retail Areas

The core retail area remains the same as in the 2002 Development Plan and is dealt with in detail in section 5.8.2.

5.8.6.3 The Sequential Approach

In meeting the aims of the Strategy, policies and proposals in respect of the location of retail development must be in accordance with the principles set by the **Sequential Approach** in the RPG. It defines that:

- The preferred location for new retail development, where practicable and viable, is within a town centre (or district or major village centre);
- Where it is not possible to provide the form and scale of development that is required on a site within a town centre then consideration can be given to a site on the edge of the town centre so as to encourage the possibility of one journey serving several purposes. An edge of centre site is taken to be one that is unlikely to be more than 300 - 400 metres from the edge of the prime shopping area, and less in smaller settlements. The distance considered to be convenient will however vary according to local circumstances; and
- Only after having assessed the size, availability, accessibility and feasibility of developing sites and premises, firstly within a town centre and secondly on the edge of a town centre, should alternative out of centre sites be considered where it can be demonstrated that there are no town centre or edge of centre sites which are suitable, viable and available.

In formulating specific policies and proposals, it is recognised that in general retail warehouses do not fit easily in to town centres given their size requirements and the need for good car parking facilities and ease of servicing. As such, in some instances it may be possible to locate retail warehouse groups on the edge of town centres.

5.8.6.4 Spatial Distribution of New Retail Development

The City and County Retail Strategy, in accordance with the RPG, provides the strategic policy framework for the spatial distribution of new retail development. The emphasis is on strategic guidance on the location and scale of major retail development. The Strategy does not seek to inhibit small scale retail development in centres around the County, particularly in smaller centres. It should be taken to be implicit in the aims of the Strategy that such developments should be encouraged and facilitated to enhance the sustainability, vitality and viability of smaller centres, including smaller main centres in the County Retail Hierarchy. The following provides guidance on how the Retail Strategy defines the distribution of strategic and non-strategic retail floorspace within the Retail Hierarchy:

- Level 1: Major convenience and comparison
- Level 2: Middle order convenience and tourism related comparison in sub county towns.
- Level 3: No centres are currently identified at this level in the county retail hierarchy
- Level 4: Predominantly additional convenience but not excluding tourism related comparison.

Additionally, the Strategy recognises the need to ensure that local needs, primarily convenience shopping and local services, are met in an equitable, efficient and sustainable way in major existing or new residential areas in and around main settlements through the designation of locations for Neighbourhood Centres in development plans.

5.8.6.5 Consideration of Need

The floorspace capacity assessment indicates that there is spare capacity for additional convenience and comparison floorspace to 2014 but of a lesser quantum than that between 2014 and 2020. Post 2014 the potential for both additional convenience and comparison floorspace considerably improves, particularly in respect of comparison floorspace capacity.

One of the main reasons why there is a lack of capacity for additional comparison floorspace is the quantum of retail warehousing which has been granted planning consent in accordance with the 2002 Development Plan strategy. However, this review identified that retail warehousing captures the gross expenditure potential which effectively curtails the delivery of any significant quantum and quality of new mainstream/high street comparison floorspace in the City Centre/edge of centre until post 2014.

This is not a position which can be endorsed or adopted in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the City and County.

Table 5.3 illustrates that when retail warehousing extant permissions are excluded, there is potential for a considerable quantum of mainstream comparison floorspace. The removal of retail warehousing from the capacity assessment is necessary as its inclusion results in there being a lack of potential for any new mainstream comparison floorspace in Kilkenny City Centre until post 2014. As a consequence, the long held objectives of securing the regeneration of the Kmart site and the development of Bateman Quay would not be delivered. This is clearly not consistent with the policies and objectives of the City and County Retail Strategy particularly in respect of:

- Sustaining and improving the retail profile and competitiveness of the City & County.
- Delivering the retail planning framework that responds to the City's role as a Hub in the regional and national economies and ensuring that the City and County play their full role in achieving the targets and objectives of the NSS and SERPG;
- Ensuring that the retail needs of the City & County's residents are met as fully as possible in the County;
- Addressing the leakage of comparison expenditure from the County by providing the means to strengthen the range and quality or its retail offer.

Consistent with the RPG's, while a capacity assessment should inform the guidance on the additional quantum of floorspace required, other factors should also be taken into account with need, market interest, regeneration and strategic policy objectives being considered on the whole more important planning issues.

The City must continue to improve and renew its offer and attraction in the light of the new schemes emerging in competing centres and further afield. There is therefore, a need for additional convenience and mainstream/high street comparison floorspace in the City Centre/expanded City Centre over the period of the 2008 – 2014 Development Plan.

To ensure that there is both consolidation and expansion of the City centre, the Kmart site and Bateman Quay are identified as the priority locations for the development of new comparison floorspace over the short and medium term.

The loss of the two sites due to capacity issues would not serve the long term planning of the City as the alternative would be that shopping needs would require to be met in purpose-built out of town shopping centres.

POLICY

- **ED23 No further retail warehousing parks will be granted in and around the City & Environs due to constraints on the expenditure capacity for additional comparison floorspace over the period 2008 - 2014.**

Exceptions to this policy will only be considered where it can be proven that a proposal unequivocally introduces uniqueness and innovation to the City & County's retail offer which cannot be met in the City Centre or on edge of centre locations.

5.8.6.6 Responding to the NSS

The City as a Hub under the NSS

Three elements are key to the City achieving the objectives of both the NSS and SERPG in respect of retail expansion and policy:

- There are three major sites (McDonagh Station, the Kmart site and Bateman Quay) that will enable substantial expansion of the City Centre,
- A framework for a network of district, neighbourhood and local centres to meet the needs of the residential expansion of the City's environs and
- Key strategic locations have delivered retail warehouse parks around the City and Environs.

The 2002 Development Plan identified the need to significantly enhance the quality and quantum of the City and County's retail warehousing offer in the interests of both sustaining and enhancing their competitiveness in the regional and national hierarchies. This has now been achieved and the priority over the period of this plan is focusing on the enhancement of the City and County's mainstream/high street comparison offer if the City is to continue to sustain and enhance its regional and national competitiveness.

Waterford City Environs
The Waterford City Environs within County Kilkenny are a key part of Waterford achieving its potential and targets as a Gateway under the NSS and the SERPG. A policy of the 2002 Plan was to work with the other local authorities in the South East Region in the preparation of a Regional Retail Strategy in accordance with the RPG's which identify the Greater Waterford Area as an area where comprehensive retail and policies should be prepared by the constituent local authorities.

This is important in setting the Ferrybank area squarely in its wider Waterford Gateway context. Given that the Waterford Environs Area is growing significantly there is a need to establish a retail strategy for the greater Waterford area.

POLICY
- **ED24 To engage with the other local authorities in the South East Region in the preparation and adoption of a joint retail strategy for the greater Waterford area.**

5.9 Specific Policies and Proposals

The specific policies and proposals of the City and County Retail Strategy are designed to facilitate achievement of the aims of the Strategy. They are formulated to ensure:

- The policy framework is in place to address existing or emerging issues in the City and County's retail profile,
- The City and County have the policy framework to ensure strategic and local convenience and comparison shopping needs are met and the competitiveness of the County's main centres is enhanced
- The expenditure capacity potential for additional floorspace is harnessed over the timescale of the Strategy.

5.9.1 Kilkenny City & Environs

A holistic approach and vision for the City and its future is required to achieve further enhancement of the City's retail importance. This includes:

- Expansion of the City Centre;
- Continuing improvement in the quality and quantum of its retail offer;
- Continuing improvement of its cultural, arts and tourism/supporting tourism infrastructure;
- Introduction and implementation of road programmes and traffic management initiatives;
- Signage and linkage;
- Environmental improvements;
- Heritage and interpretation strategies;
- Working in partnership.

POLICY

- **ED25 Over the timescale of the 2008 – 2014 City and Environs Development Plan the development and delivery of mixed use proposals for Bateman Quay – including a large component of high order comparison and speciality shopping - is a priority retail planning objective in order for the City Centre to retain its role as the premier shopping destination in the City and County.**
- **ED26 The realisation of the McDonagh Station site, the Kmart site and Bateman Quay is a key objective of the retail strategy.**
- **ED27 That there is an equitable distribution of new retail floorspace and town centre uses between McDonagh Station, the Kmart site and Bateman Quay to ensure that no one site dominates the retail landscape of the City or provides an alternative to the City Centre/Core shopping Area.**
- **ED28 To carry out environmental improvements to The Parade, Rose Inn Street and Canal Square.**
- **ED29 To continue progress with the programming and implementation of strategic road proposals.**
- **ED30 To implement the car parking strategy in the City Centre Local Area Plan 2005.**
- **ED31 To develop a heritage and interpretation strategy linked to environmental improvement/enhancement proposals to ensure an integrated approach is adopted.**
- **ED32 To work in partnership with local businesses, business and trade organisations, other agencies and groups and local people to deliver the expectations and targets of the City's designation as a Hub.**
- **ED33 That planning permissions for retail warehousing floorspace will contain clear planning conditions restricting the sale of non-bulky goods as defined within the Retail Planning Guidelines. The compliance with such planning conditions will be monitored and strictly enforced**
- **ED34 To implement the provisions of the City Centre Local Area Plan 2005.**

5.9.2 District Towns

The 2007 Review identifies the need to facilitate the enhanced vitality and viability of the four District Towns. To achieve this, the following is recommended:

i. **Callan:** the continued expansion of the town's retail offer should be encouraged and facilitated. The priority will be to consolidate retail activity within the town centre. However, this may not always be possible in view of the size of site and parking requirements of modern convenience operators. There is a need to consider better meeting the local shopping and services needs of the growing residential areas to the north of the King's River. This should doubly serve to help regenerate Bridge Street. In parallel, it is recommended that a environmental strategy is prepared for the town centre which helps to create a sense of place and space.

ii. **Castlecomer:** requires to witness a substantial improvement in its retail floorspace and have as its objective over the timescale of the emerging City and County Development Plans achieving designation as a Tier 1 Level 2 Sub County Town Centre and, thus, parity with Callan and Thomastown in the County Retail Hierarchy. To achieve this, enhanced awareness of the market

potential of the town and its hinterland is required. Castlecomer should harness its tourism potential which will serve to enhance the town's attraction as a place for living, working, leisure and shopping. Key building blocks are its proximity to Kilkenny City, the Dunmore Caves and Jenkinstown Park with the asset of the Castlecomer Estate Yard being the catalyst for further retail and tourism supporting infrastructure. This recommendation should be pursued in conjunction with Kilkenny Tourism Board.

iii. **Graiguenamanagh:** a holistic approach to the regeneration of the town is required and the framework for this is set down in the 2006 Graiguenamanagh – Tinnahinch Development and Economic Study jointly commissioned by Kilkenny County Council and Carlow County Council. The catalyst for the regeneration of the town centre is identified as being tourism market driven. The key assets are the town's heritage, its annual festivals and its location on the Barrow Navigation and two National Waymarked Ways. Graiguenamanagh is identified as having potential to develop as a 'commercial services centre or hub' within the local and regional tourism economies. Through this means, there will be greater inflows of spend to help sustain and enhance the town's retail offer and attraction. An important recommendation is the need for environmental improvement and heritage interpretation strategies which provide the springboard for regeneration.

iv. **Thomastown:** the continued expansion of the town's retail offer should be encouraged and facilitated to ensure that Thomastown fulfils its role in the NSS and as a designated District Town in the SERPG. The priority will be to consolidate retail activity within the town centre and secure the re-use and regeneration of key buildings and sites. However, this may not always be possible in view of the size of site and parking requirements of modern convenience operators. For the town to sustain its shopping and market attraction there requires to be continued investment in the public realm and the streetscape.

5.9.3 General Policies

In addition to the specific policies and initiatives, a range of general policies incorporated into the strategy are summarised in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Summary of General Policies

Policy	Objective
ED35 Corner Shops and Smaller Villages/Crossroads	To retain, encourage and facilitate the retail role of corner shops and small villages around the County
ED36 Enhancement of Towns and Villages	To encourage and facilitate the enhancement and environmental improvement of the County's towns and villages
ED37 Re-Use and Regeneration of Derelict Land and Buildings	To encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings
ED38 Retailing in Tourism and Leisure	To encourage and facilitate the development of retailing within the tourism and leisure sectors
ED39 Innovation in the City and County's Retail Offer	To encourage and facilitate innovation in the City and County's retail offer and attraction

5.9.4 Criteria for Assessing Future Retail Proposals

All applications for significant retail development should be assessed against a range of criteria. Different thresholds were set in the 2001 Retail Strategy for Kilkenny City and its Environs and the four sub County Towns. These will remain as follows:

Kilkenny City and its Environs/Waterford City Environs: Developments of 1,000m^2 (gross) convenience and 2,000m^2 (gross) comparison will be tested by the criteria.

District Towns/Other Settlements: Proposals for 500m^2 (gross) convenience and comparison developments should be considered against the criteria.

The criteria to be considered in the assessment of significant applications will include:

- The expenditure capacity within the relevant catchment area, taking account of all extant planning permissions and development proposals/opportunities identified in the City and County Development Plans, including those for the District Towns and other settlements;
- The impact on town and village centres, including cumulative impact;
- The baseline information and capacity/impact assessment is fit for purpose and transparent;
- There is demonstrable need for development;
- The relationship of the application to any development plan allocation;
- Its contribution to town/village centre improvement;
- Its contribution to site and/or area regeneration;
- The quality of access by all modes of transport and by foot and bicycle;
- Its role in improving the competitiveness of the County, in particular Kilkenny City Centre;
- Its role in sustaining rural communities;
- The extent to which it is relevant to consider the imposition of restrictions on the range of goods permitted for sale; and
- Any other relevant development plan policies and allocations. The development of the retail offer in each settlement will be assessed within the context of the existing quality, character and distinctiveness of each settlement. See Chapter 10 for the relevant Design Guidelines.

All significant development shall also be subject to an assessment that follows the Sequential Approach. The objectives of this approach to development have been summarised previously and the following is added to that summary:

- In all cases, to select the site which offers the optimum accessibility options by all transport modes, including walking and cycling.
- Particularly if a town centre site is not being promoted, to demonstrate that all town centre development options have been fully evaluated and that flexibility has been adopted in regard to the retail format.

If the retail proposal, whether significant or not, accords with Development Plan policies and proposals in all material respects it should expect to meet with approval. In accordance with the RPG, in such instances, it should not be necessary for the applicant to provide additional supporting background studies.

However, the onus is on an applicant to demonstrate convincingly that the proposal does comply closely with the Development Plan. Where there is doubt on any aspect of a planning application, the local authorities will require a detailed justification related to the matter that is questionable.

5.9.4.1 RIS/RIA Guidance to Applicants

The Borough and County Councils wish to ensure that retail proposals which accord with the relevant Development Plans and the City and County Retail Strategy proceed as expeditiously as possible through the planning process. To assist in achieving this, as part of the review of the Retail Strategy, the Councils requested that guidance notes be prepared for applicants on what should comprise a Retail Impact Statement (RIS)/Retail Impact Assessment (RIA) and what the sought outputs are. These guidance notes are provided in Appendix A of the Retail Strategy.

5.9.5 Monitoring & Review

The review was part of the making of the new County and City Development Plans and was commissioned in recognition of the fact that the retail sector is one of the most dynamic sectors of the economy and trends, influences and information change over time. This commitment to monitoring and review requires to be endorsed to ensure that:

- The Retail Strategy and its baseline data are kept as up-to-date as possible;
- There is a means of monitoring progress with the implementation of policies; and
- There is a mechanism that can enable change that is responsive to emerging trends and opportunities.

To ensure that the Strategy and its policies remain valid and up-to-date, it is the policy of the Councils to:

- Carry out annual monitoring of expenditure and population forecasts.
- Monitor planning permissions for both new retail floorspace and change of use to keep the floorspace data up to date.
- Review the Retail Strategy's policies and objectives again in 3 years.
- Update the household and shopper survey data at the next review

5.10 Derelict Sites

POLICY

- **ED40 To implement the Derelict Sites Act 1990 in order to ensure the removal of dereliction within the Plan period as resources permit.**

6 Rural Development

6.1 Introduction

As can be seen from the results of the 2006 Census, County Kilkenny is still predominantly a rural county. Almost sixty five percent of the county's population live in rural areas[6]. In addition, in 2002 a relatively high proportion of the workforce was dependant on agriculture (10%), as opposed to a national proportion of 5.4%.

The Government's Rural White Paper: 'Ensuring the Future – a Strategy for Rural development in Ireland' (1999) sets out a vision and a framework for the development of rural communities. In this, the Government committed to 'ensuring the economic and social well-being of rural communities, by providing the conditions for a meaningful and fulfilling life for all people living in rural areas'. It identifies a need for diversification (both on- and off-farm) and alternative enterprises to broaden the rural economy, support farming families and complement an efficient agriculture sector.

Rural areas have a vital contribution to make to the achievement of balanced regional development. This involves utilising and developing the economic resources of rural areas, particularly in agriculture and food, marine, tourism, forestry, renewable energy, enterprise and local services, while at the same time capitalising on and drawing strength from vibrant neighbouring urban areas. In this way rural and urban areas are seen as working in partnership, rather than competing with each other

Growth prospects for rural areas will be assisted by the degree to which settlements, including villages, smaller and larger towns can be strengthened to accommodate, sustain and drive various types and levels of development including residential, employment and commercial activities.

6.1.1 National Spatial Strategy

The National Spatial Strategy sets out in broad terms how rural areas will support and drive the attainment of more balanced regional development.

Three policy measures are advocated:

- Strengthening the rural economy,
- Strengthening communities, and
- Strengthening environmental qualities.

In order to strengthen the rural economy, in general it will be necessary to:

- Secure agriculture, where it has the capacity to remain strong and viable, by maintaining the maximum possible number of family farms, while at the same time ensuring that smaller farmers have the opportunity to supplement their farm income through off-farm work.

[6] Table 3, Volume 1, Census of Population 2006, CSO

- Diversify rural employment options and stabilise population through
  - resource based development in sectors such as forestry, marine and natural resources, enterprise and local services
  - tourism development through quality market-responsive products, enhanced access and co-ordinated promotion of a tourism product, which offers a range of complementary visitor experiences
  - protecting landscape, water resources and habitats.

Information and Communications Technology is opening up enormous possibilities for business, social and cultural interactions between enterprises, communities and people. The rapid development of Information and Communications Technology and increasing convergence with the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors hold short term prospects of very positive benefits and can act as a catalyst for the development of rural areas.

To strengthen communities:

- Settlement policies are needed that take into account varying rural development contexts. Policies are needed for areas with declining populations as well as policies to deal with areas in which there are overspill issues associated with proximity to urban centres. (The rural settlement strategy is outlined in Chapter 3)
- Enhanced accessibility must be linked with integrated settlement policy to revitalise rural communities. This enhanced accessibility will be attained by the continued investment in transport and communications as detailed in Chapter 9 of this plan.

Strengthening environmental qualities:
In addition the environmental quality of all natural resources must be protected through sensitive development and conservation. Policies in relation to the protection and strengthening of environmental qualities such as water quality are detailed in Chapter 9 of this plan.

6.1.2 National Development Plan 2007 – 2013

The National Development Plan notes that despite the decline in employment in agriculture, forestry and the marine sector they nonetheless continue to play a major role in the economy and the social fabric of rural areas, both in terms of the significant numbers of people who will continue to earn their livelihood in these areas and in terms of their contribution to maintaining indigenously-based exports and economic activity. According to the NDP, the rural economy will need to diversify and develop in coming years to take account of the ongoing demographic and economic changes that impinge directly on rural areas and rural communities.

6.2 Council's Response

The Council is committed to the overall strategy for rural development as outlined in the National Spatial Strategy, National Development Plan and the White Paper on Rural Development.

The Council recognises the need to manage rural change and to guide development in order to:

a) Maintain and enhance the existing rural community to ensure vibrant sustainable rural areas,
b) Support the maintenance of a sufficient income and employment opportunities to allow individuals and families to live with dignity,
c) Allow rural communities to participate effectively in the structures and decision making processes affecting them in an inclusive way,
d) Maintain the cultural identity of rural communities,
e) Ensure that the rural environment will be respected and that development in rural areas will take place in a sustainable manner,
f) Support initiatives to tackle poverty and social exclusion in rural areas,
g) Achieve a vibrant and sustainable rural community where individuals and families have a choice as to whether to stay in, leave, or move to rural areas,
h) Promote a broad concept of rural development and not one based solely on agriculture or other dominant natural resource.

The framework within which the Council will seek to achieve these goals is through the Government's National and Regional development strategy as outlined in the NSS, the South East Regional Planning Guidelines and the NDP 2007-2013. The strategy will be to focus on the indigenous strengths of the rural economy and, at the same time, to facilitate wider economic development.

POLICY

- **RD1 To implement the Council's investment programme for waste water treatment and water supply schemes in the towns and villages and rural areas of the County.**
- **RD2 To improve the attractiveness of the built environment in rural towns and villages as places in which to work and live and as locations for industry, services and tourism investment.**
- **RD3 To access and utilise government schemes, such as the Village Renewal Programme to improve the quality of the built environment of towns and villages.**
- **RD4 To ensure that the necessary physical and telecommunications infrastructure is provided to enable existing and new high growth business to thrive.**
- **RD5 To combat isolation and disadvantage by encouraging the use of information technology in education and commerce and in the home.**
- **RD6 To encourage the sustainable development of resources in rural areas to foster economic development in such sectors as agriculture, tourism including agri-tourism, forestry, farm diversification, and renewable energy resources.**
- **RD7 To continue to prepare town, village, and area plans for various parts of the County as the need arises in a manner that involves participation through consultation with the local population.**
- **RD8 To co-operate and facilitate the development of rural tourism in the County and to seek to develop that market from the established and growing tourism base of Kilkenny City.**
- **RD9 To encourage the utilisation of natural resources to foster economic development by expanding rural tourism, developing renewable sources of energy, promoting agri-environment measures and the planting of new woodlands.**
- **RD10 To preserve and retain high quality agricultural land from unsympathetic development.**

6.3 Natural Resources

6.3.1 Agriculture

Agriculture is an important part of the economic life of the County. Agriculture has undergone considerable change under the Common Agricultural Policy, and despite its continuing decline in economic and employment significance it is still a major driver for sustaining, enhancing and maintaining the rural economy and culture.

Alternative income generating opportunities for off-farm activities are vital if rural populations are to benefit from economic growth. The Council will support and facilitate agricultural restructuring and diversification in order to integrate the sector more closely with rural development, in pursuit of environmental, social and economic objectives.

Kilkenny County Council recognises the role and importance of the equine industry as part of the agricultural community within the county and in particular the breeding, rearing and training of thoroughbred horses.

6.3.2 Diversification

The Council recognises the need for farm diversification to enable farming to remain a viable part of the county's economy. It will facilitate and support farmers in the change from full to part-time farming. Part-time employment opportunities, which enable farmers to continue to maintain a viable farm, will be encouraged.

Farming has been diversifying into areas such as horticulture, forestry and agri-tourism. The Council will support the development of agriculturally related industries, which are environmentally sustainable and considered a suitable use, subject to the protection of heritage and amenities.

The County Council will support national policy for agriculture by;

a) Supporting improvements in the competitiveness of farm structures,
b) Supporting improvements in the quality of product,
c) Supporting and facilitating the development of organic farming, horticulture, forestry, horses and deer farming as alternative enterprises.
d) Supporting improvements in farm waste management,
e) Supporting and facilitating better animal welfare,
f) Supporting the implementation of the Rural Environment Protection Schemes.

POLICY

- **RD11 Support and facilitate the work of Teagasc and other farming bodies within the County in the promotion of the rural economy, including agriculture development and rural diversification.**
- **RD12 Liaise with Teagasc and other farming bodies in order to prevent pollution from farm activities.**

- **RD13 To co-operate with rural development agencies such as Teagasc and BNS Leader in the development of initiatives which:**
  - **• facilitate and support farm families and other small holders in the change from full to part-time farming;**
  - **• create vibrant, inclusive rural communities by promoting the social inclusion of new residents, older people and rural women; and**
  - **• improve access and services in rural areas, in particular, rural transport and other similar initiatives operational in the county.**
- **RD14 Facilitate farm development to meet market and environmental requirements.**
- **RD15 To encourage the development of environmentally sustainable agricultural practices, to ensure that development does not impinge on the visual amenity of the countryside and that watercourses, wildlife habitats and areas of ecological importance are protected from the threat of pollution.**
- **RD16 Support the development of alternative income-generating opportunities from off-farm activities.**
- **RD17 Co-operate and be proactive with regard to proposals from the National Rural Development Programme and BNS Rural Development in generating opportunities for off-farm employment.**
- **RD18 Facilitate farm diversification and encourage the sustainable development of alternative rural enterprises and the conversion of redundant farm buildings of vernacular importance for appropriate owner-run enterprises, as a way of supporting a viable rural community subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.**
- **RD19 Require a high standard of design and maintenance in all developments in rural areas**
- **RD20 To require buildings and structures in visually sensitive areas:**
  - **to be sited as unobtrusively as possible;**
  - **to be clustered to form a distinct and unified feature in the landscape;**
  - **to utilise suitable materials and colours; and**
  - **to utilise native species in screen planting**
- **RD21 To support the improvement and expansion of the equine industry within the county.**

6.3.3 Fishing

The Barrow, Nore and Suir are historically renowned as premier salmon and coarse fishing rivers in Ireland. The Kings River is also an important fishing river. Fishing remains an important natural resource for the county which has potential for development in its own right and as a resource for tourism development. Fishing as a resource can assist in the development of tourism within the county and in rural diversification.

POLICY

- **RD22 Liaise with the Southern Fisheries Board and with Angling Clubs and to facilitate the Board within the limits of its powers as Planning Authority in its development programme.**
- **RD23 To encourage and support initiatives to embrace traditional fishing practices and investigate and improve the fisheries in co-operation with the Department of the Marine, the Southern Fisheries Board, community organisations and other relevant bodies.**

- **RD24 Require that adequate provisions are made to accommodate free upstream and downstream migration of all fish in development proposals.**
- **RD25 Continue to take measures to protect streams and rivers from pollution and will encourage appropriate angling-related tourism, fish farming and mariculture in the County's waters. Protection of water quality will be a primary consideration in relation to assessing development proposals.**

6.3.4 Extractive Industries

The County has a large lead–zinc deposit at Galmoy. In addition there are numerous sand and gravel and stone resources within the County currently in operation. The Council recognises the importance of extractive industries to the local and national economy as valuable sources of raw material for industry in general and the construction industry in particular and as an important source of employment. The products are the essential building materials for the provision of housing and infrastructural projects. The industry is therefore essential to the continued development of the county and the achievement of the objectives in the National Development Plan.

However the industry can have serious detrimental impacts on the landscape and amenities generally. It can create conflicts with other land uses such as agriculture and can cause damage to the public road network.

Because the extraction industry is a very significant industry serving the construction, industrial and energy sectors, it is important to facilitate development, particularly by safeguarding mineral reserves so that inappropriate development does not occur in the vicinity and cause difficulties in exploiting the resource. The Council will therefore seek to safeguard these valuable resources for future extraction.

During the life of the plan the Council will endeavor to map the aggregate resources of the County subject to the availability of financial resources.

The Councils will have regard to the Quarry Planning Guidelines, the ICF Environmental Code and the EPA Guidelines for Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry. The Councils will require adherence to the EPA Guidelines- Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry as a standard for the extractive industry in Kilkenny.

POLICY

- **RD26 Where important mineral resources have been identified and are suitable for extraction, the Council will seek to protect the extractive potential of such resources**
- **RD27 In general encourage the development of extractive industries where it is not detrimental to the protection of the landscape, the continued operation of agriculture and the preservation of the amenities of local residents generally**
- **RD28 To minimise environmental and other impacts of mineral extraction through rigorous application of licensing, development control and enforcement requirements for quarry and other associated developments including, but not limited to, consideration of visual impacts, methods of extraction, noise levels, dust prevention, protection of ground and surface waters, impacts on residential and other amenities, impacts on the road**

network (particularly with regard to making good any damage to roads), road safety, phasing, re-instatement and landscaping of worked sites.

- **RD29 Ensure that all existing workings shall be rehabilitated to suitable land uses and that all future extraction activities will allow for the rehabilitation of pits and proper land use management.**

6.4 Forestry

Forestry has direct benefits for local communities through the establishment of plantations, in spin-off effects in support services, through industries ranging from woodcraft to industrial processing, to rural tourism, and contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gases by absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

The Strategic Plan for forestry in Ireland, set out in the document *'Growing for the Future - A Strategic Plan for the Development of the Forestry Sector in Ireland'*, published in 1996, foresaw the output of timber from Irish forests increasing four-fold between 1996 and 2030. The National Development Plan 2007 – 2013 and the National Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 both include measures to support the development of forestry. The Government's strategy for the development of forestry is to substantially increase the land area under forestry.

Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)
Sustainable forest management is the sustainable development and management of forests and forest lands in a way that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions, at local national and global levels and that does not cause damage to other ecosystems. The Forest Service is implementing SFM with a view to ensuring that all timber produced in Ireland is derived from sustainably managed forests. This is supported by the Irish National Forest Standard, the Code of Best Forest Practice and a suite of environmental guidelines (relating to water quality, landscape, archaeology, biodiversity and harvesting) as well as the work of the Forestry Inspectorate and the ongoing review of Irish forest legislation.

An Indicative Forest Strategy (IFS) is a planning tool used to assess opportunities for new forest planting in a given area. The objective of an IFS is to identify the potential that future afforestation can make towards the establishment of high quality forests serving a variety of purposes including timber production, forest industry development, off-farm incomes, tourism, amenity and the enhancement of the environment.

Under EU Rural Development regulations, a national forestry strategy is a prerequisite for funding and consequently, a National Indicative Forestry Strategy is being developed by the Forest Service, and is due for completion by late 2007. This strategy will identify areas of opportunity for the creation of new forests and areas environmentally sensitive to afforestation. It will provide the context within which forestry applications will be assessed.

Following completion of the national Indicative Forestry Strategy the Council will assess the necessity of completing a strategy for the county.

In the interim, the Council will have regard to "*Forestry Development – Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities*" published by the Department of the Environment and Local Government in 1997.

POLICY

- **RD30 To support the production of the National Indicative Forestry strategy and Indicative Forestry Strategy for the County and to have regard to this strategy in exercising its development control functions. On the completion of the national Indicative Forestry Strategy the Council will assess the need for the preparation of an Indicative Forestry Strategy for the County.**
- **RD31 To encourage a diversity of species in afforestation proposals and in particular to require a proportion of all new forestry development to consist of native hardwood species in order to extend the range of potential end uses and to reduce the potential for adverse impact on the landscape resulting from monoculture.**
- **RD32 To encourage the development of farm forestry as a means of promoting rural diversity and strengthening the rural economy.**
- **RD33 To encourage public access to forests for amenity and recreation purposes and the development of amenity forestry projects of local social, economic and tourism benefit.**

6.5 Rural Transport

The Council will seek to co-operate with the various public and private agencies who are transport providers within the County in the provision of and co-ordination of new services and supporting infrastructure. In particular the Council will support initiatives in rural areas which will help to improve communications and reduce isolation. The Council will continue to work to implement the South-East Regional Passenger Transport Strategy 2002-2012.

Ring a Link is Kilkenny's rural transport initiative which serves rural communities in County Kilkenny. This community-based rural transport service provides flexible, door to door services to meet the needs of people who cannot access public or private transport locally.

POLICY

- **RD34 Continue with the Council's planned transport infrastructure investment in National, Regional and local roads on a phased and planned basis to support people living and working in rural areas.**
- **RD35 Support and facilitate local and community based initiatives, Rural Transport Initiative, to provide rural transport services within the County. This will improve accessibility and promote social inclusion.**
- **RD36 To integrate rural transport with any urban public transport provision.**
- **RD37 To investigate the establishment of a Transport Forum to oversee transport policy for the county, in conjunction with the County Development Board and/or the Transport SPC.**

7 Recreation, Tourism and the Arts

7.1 Introduction

The island of Ireland has long had an image of a less crowded and green environment, beautiful scenery, welcoming people and a distinctive and accessible heritage and culture. Tourism based upon these natural and cultural resources has in turn provided an economic and social benefit. However, there are challenges in ensuring that these natural resources; upon which tourism depends, are maintained and enhanced in the future.

Sustainable tourism provides a high quality product based on, and in harmony with, a high quality natural environment. Adverse impacts upon local communities, built heritage, landscapes, habitats and species are minimised while the economic benefits accruing to local communities are maximised. Tourism is continually evolving and the product offered must reflect this evolving market.

Nationally there has been a general increase in leisure time and expenditure in leisure, recreational and tourist-related activities. This has been accompanied by increased participation in a wider range of sport and leisure activities. Co. Kilkenny possesses extensive natural resources and an environment of nationally significant scenic value. This, combined with its attractive towns and vibrant cultural heritage, provides a major opportunity for the development of tourism and recreation.

Co. Kilkenny can offer visitors to the county a wide range of tourism and recreational activities including: walking, angling, cycling, equestrian activities, bird watching, canoeing, golf and heritage. In addition, there are annual festivals of national and international standard.

The numbers of visitors to Ireland continues to rise with over 7.4m overseas tourists visiting Ireland in 2006; of which 1,090,000 visited the South-east providing €302m of revenue. Between 2001 and 2006, the number of overseas visitors to Co. Kilkenny has increased from 254,000 to 288,000; and Co. Kilkenny's proportion of overseas visitors to the South-east region has remained relatively steady at around 26%. However, given the importance of tourism to the local economy it is of concern that the County's revenue share from visitors to the South-East has declined from a high of 25.1% in 2004 to 19.5% in 2006 (See Table 7.1)7.

Table 7.1: Tourism Statistics for Kilkenny and South East Region (Overseas Visitors)

	Area/Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Kilkenny	Visitors (000's)	254	238	256	290	296	288
	% Regional Visitors	26.7	26.2	28.3	26.3	27.5	26.4

[7] Fáilte Ireland

	Revenue (€m)	54	56	61	67	53	59
	% Regional Revenue	20.3	22.1	23.3	25.1	21.1	19.5
	€ per visitor	213	235	238	231	179	205
South East Region	Visitors (000's)	953	910	905	974	943	962
	Revenue (€m)	266.4	253.3	261.4	267	252	302

While the total number of visitors to the South-east region in 2006 was 2.02m, over half of these, or 1.04m1, were domestic visitors i.e. visitors from Ireland. Kilkenny has traditionally benefited from the domestic tourism market, particularly for short visits and this market is likely to become increasingly important. Although Fáilte Ireland collates regional domestic visitor number/revenue data, this data is not currently collected at county level.

The Council will support the development of sustainable tourism as an essential element in Kilkenny. This will be achieved through co-operation between Fáilte Ireland, Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny County Development Board. Tourism and agri-tourism can play an important role diversifying rural economies and sustaining their communities. The Council will encourage the creation of high quality employment in tourism, in related support industries and also appropriate part-time job opportunities. The challenge for the future is to attract greater numbers to the county, provide better facilities and attractions and to foster a longer stay and greater regional and seasonal spread holiday product.

7.1.1 Sustainable Tourism

Strategies for tourism cannot be developed in isolation from an overall framework for management of the environment. Unmanaged tourism has the potential to become the greatest threat to the character of the landscape and local environment.

Sustainable tourism depends upon:

- ensuring the economic stability of host communities
- preventing tourism from excluding other forms of economic development

and is defined as:
- socially and environmentally considerate
- drawing on the natural beauty and character of the area
- small in scale and developing slowly
- supporting the local economy and employing local people
- caring about quality
- bringing conservation and recreation benefits
- developing at a pace and scale which ensure that the assets of the area, both natural and cultural, are not diminished in the long term.

POLICY

- **RTA1 To sustainably increase the volume of visitors, revenue per visitor, their average length of stay and seasonal spread; whilst protecting and conserving those natural, built and cultural features that form the resources on which the County's tourist industry is based.**
- **RTA2 To encourage and support increased coordination, cohesion and linkages between agencies such as Fáilte Ireland South East, Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny County Development Board and between these agencies and their equivalents in neighbouring counties.**
- **RTA3 To support and work to secure the implementation of the Kilkenny Tourism and Development Strategy 2006-2011; and the Fáilte Ireland Strategic Tourism Plan for the South East.**

7.1.2 The Tourism Product

The tourism industry is based upon products which are marketed and sold to visitors. As well as accommodation and transport (and arguably landscape and culture) these may include paying attractions such as museums; and recreational facilities such as walks and cycle tracks, which are also used by the local community. New and repeat visits are encouraged by ensuring that the quality of the tourism product remains high and diverse.

Tourist attractions in the county outside the City include Mount Juliet Estate, Castlecomer Demesne and Interpretative Centre, Brandon Hill, the Dunmore caves, Jerpoint Abbey, Rice House in Callan, Duiske Abbey in Graignamanagh, Kells Priory, Woodstock Estate and the river valleys. Kilkenny's international reputation as a centre of design and high quality craft production is a proven asset. Festivals such as Kilkenny Arts Week and the Cats Laughs comedy festival have raised the profile of Kilkenny City as a tourism destination.

POLICY

- **RTA4 To investigate funding opportunities for the development of flagship tourism products; suggested products for development would include Rothe House and walking cycling trails development.**
- **RTA5 Encourage the provision of indoor and activities based tourism facilities and events which extend the tourism season.**

Retail is one of the key factors in the development of tourism throughout the County and the continued vitality of established tourist destinations. Retail can enhance a cultural experience as well as bring economic benefits to an attraction. To encourage international visitor expenditure appropriate shops and services will be facilitated, to enable the County to better exploit its tourism potential. These may include hotels, arts and crafts galleries, craft outlets/villages, tourist shops at important tourist destinations, and local markets and shops specialising in outdoor pursuits, such as angling and water sports.

POLICY

- **RTA6 Promote collective public and private sector marketing of County Kilkenny as a leisure and retail tourist destination, within Ireland and abroad.**

Events such as festivals, fairs and concerts present enormous opportunities for retailers and consideration should be given to this in encouraging the development of new events and developing a countywide programme of activities for visitors.

POLICY

- **RTA7 Support the development of existing festivals and support the establishment of new festivals in appropriate locations where there is a demonstrable demand and market for them, to promote increased retail tourism throughout the County.**

7.1.3 Integrated Rural Tourism

While seeking to ensure that most tourism development locates in or close to towns and villages, the Council recognises that by its nature, some tourism development may require alternative locations. Such development may be acceptable if it accords with Landscape Character policies and provides a range of facilities which would also be made available to the local community.

Integrated Rural Tourism is directly and positively linked to the economic, social, cultural and natural resource in rural areas. It is an approach to tourism development, which is sensitive to the nature of local resources, traditions and opportunities and endeavours to optimise the use of resources and shares the benefits throughout the area.
In order to promote balanced regional development, while also preserving the rural character and amenity of the open countryside and boosting rural tourism, an area needs to be self sufficient with a full range of services. This may include for example accommodation, farmer's markets, organic produce, activity holidays, walking/cycling facilities, golf, fishing, boating and swimming facilities.

There is an existing range of special interest and other attractions that can be further developed for tourists while also preserving the rural character and amenity of the open countryside, these include on-farm tourist accommodation, fishing, equestrian pursuits and other secondary activities such as health spas, cooking schools, adventure centres etc. Although rural tourism remains a relatively small niche in the overall tourism industry it can play a vital role for local communities including a supplementary role for the farming community. These activities all serve to encourage visitors to stay longer in the County.

POLICY

- **RTA8 To support the development of niche activities, such as those relating to food (particularly value-added products), forestry (e.g. wood products), crafts, eco-tourism and agri-tourism, for example farmhouse accommodation, open farms, farm holidays, health farms, equestrian activities, bird-watching holidays; painting/photography tuition, angling tourism, field studies and hill-walking (with the co-operation of the landowners).**
- **RTA9 To facilitate the development of agri-tourism, consideration will be given to tourist facilities and tourism accommodation on agricultural holdings where the proposed units involve the reuse and refurbishment of under-utilised agricultural buildings which will remain an integral part of the landholding.**

7.1.4 Tourist Facilities and Infrastructure

High quality safe and well located facilities and infrastructure are essential in creating a good experience for visitors. This includes infrastructure such as walking and cycling trails, transport and signage.

POLICY

- **RTA10 To encourage and assist development and tourist bodies in the provision of adequate recreational and tourism infrastructure and to further develop tourist orientated facilities in the County.**

7.1.4.1 Walking and Cycling Trails

Walking and cycling trails can make a great contribution to sustainable tourism development. Policies for the development of such trails are also outlined with the Recreation section of this chapter.

POLICY

- **RTA11 The Council shall investigate the potential of and opportunities for the funding of walking and cycling trails in the county; and for the development of linkages between existing trails and others in adjoining counties; and support national trail development policy including the Irish Trails Strategy.**
- **RTA12 Encourage and promote cycling-based tourism in the city and county and to support Fáilte Ireland's Strategy for the Development of Irish Cycle Tourism, South East Regional Report**

7.1.4.2 Transport

Many overseas and domestic tourists rely on private motor vehicles to access tourist attractions and recreational facilities. Innovative transport methods can reduce reliance on such forms of transport and increase the use of other, more sustainable, means of transport such as bus and cycle.

7.1.5 Tourism Accommodation

Key towns and villages act as tourist centres and the facilities and services they provide are crucial to the development of the tourist potential of the County. Appropriate tourist accommodation and facilities must be provided throughout the county for this purpose.

POLICY

- **RTA13 In general, direct tourism based development, into existing settlements where there is adequate infrastructure to service development and where they can contribute to maintenance of essential rural services.**

While touring caravan sites tend to be less obtrusive than static sites, the provision of new facilities will be assessed against strict planning, design and environmental criteria: development will be resisted in areas already well provided for and in areas of landscape vulnerability and sensitivity. Reference should be made to Fáilte Ireland's 'Registration Regulations and Classification Criteria for Caravan and Camping Parks' (1990).

7.2 Recreation and Amenities

The Kilkenny Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study was commissioned by Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Borough Council to provide guidance on the future development of open space, sports and amenity policies in County Kilkenny. In response to this Study, a Variation was adopted in 2003, which amended the policies and objectives of the 2002 Development Plans. These policies have now been augmented and refined in order to further define and support the Study.

The overall aim of the Study was to identify and meet the recreational needs of Kilkenny City and its Environs, provide for the needs of the County as a whole and to meet these needs with an integrated strategy capable of delivering, maintaining and managing the facilities to meet these needs.

Open space performs a wide range of roles in enhancing the livability of cities, towns and rural villages. Protecting open space for its amenity, ecological, educational, social and community benefits are now well established as planning principles among planning authorities and wider interests. The protection of open space is consistent with the principles of sustainable development. Playing fields, parks, gardens and informal open spaces are not only important as a recreational resource but also provide valuable green areas for wildlife corridors and habitats, act as buffers between conflicting land uses, enhance visual amenity especially in developed areas and contribute to the health and quality of life of citizens.

Since the publication of the Study, local sports policy has developed in a number of ways in County Kilkenny. The Borough Council, County Council and the County Development Board have progressed with the formulation of sports and recreation policy, programmes and objectives in a consistent and progressive manner.

The Council is committed to the protection and sustainable development of the amenities of the county for recreational purposes to benefit the residents of the County and to aid in the promotion of tourism.

POLICY

- **RTA14 Use its powers under the Planning & Development Acts to ensure that adequate recreational open space and facilities are provided for all groups of the population at a convenient distance from their homes and places of work.**

7.2.1 Protection of Open Space

The Planning Authority will not normally permit development which would result in the loss of public or private playing fields, parks, children's play space, amenity open space or land zoned for recreational or open space purposes. An exception may be considered where one or more of the following requirements are demonstrably met:

- There is a clear excess of playing fields or open space provision within the area. This should take into account the long-term needs of the community, the type, recreational, amenity value and accessibility of such provision.

- Alternative compensatory provision is made which is both accessible to and of equal or greater quality and benefit to the community served by the existing open space.
- The continued use, proper maintenance and enhancement of the amenity/facility can best be achieved by the redevelopment of a small part of the site that will not adversely affect its overall sporting, recreational and/or amenity value of the facility.
- The site is indicated for an alternative use in the development plan.

Playing fields, parks, gardens and informal open spaces are not only important as a recreational resource but also provide valuable green areas for wildlife corridors and habitats, act as buffers between conflicting land uses, enhance visual amenity especially in developed areas and contribute to the health and quality of life of citizens. Only where it is clearly established that open space and playing fields are no longer required for their original purposes, and the County Council has considered the need for other forms of recreational and amenity open space in the locality will it permit alternative development proposals. Many existing areas of open space are of considerable value and are therefore worthy of protection in their own right.

7.2.2 Provision of Public Open Space

The Council will endeavour to make provision for a hierarchy of parks, open spaces and outdoor recreation areas within the County so that the population can participate in a wide range of active and passive recreational pursuits within easy reach of their homes and places of work.

The prerogative to maintain and enhance existing open space, sport and recreational facilities as well as providing new facilities permeates all levels of national planning advice.

POLICY

- **RTA15 Kilkenny County Council will seek to develop a strategic approach to the development of open space amenity and recreation provision throughout Kilkenny City and County as outlined in the Kilkenny Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study.**

The implementation of the study's policies and recommendations will be subject to the availability of finances and resources.

The County Council will seek to ensure that the current and future needs are:

- guided by appropriate policies and recommendations;
- reflect the need to develop a hierarchy of sports and recreational opportunities;
- targeted geographically;
- implemented and promoted by all statutory undertakers in the area; and
- appropriately funded.

The Council, with the assistance of the County Development Board and the Local Sports Partnership, will seek to:

a. Enhance planning of sport and recreation at local level through the Local Area Sports Partnership.
b. Promote Kilkenny City, its environs and the county as a whole as a healthy area.
c. Increase levels of local participation and promote the development of opportunities for all groups to become involved in sports and amenity. This is particularly relevant in the case of disadvantaged groups and specific target groups such as older people, girls and women, people with disabilities, unemployed people and those who live in disadvantaged communities or areas lacking amenity infrastructure.
d. Improve access to all sectors of the population, especially the socially disadvantaged to a range of sport, recreation and leisure facilities.
e. Encourage where appropriate better use of existing facilities and assist in the provision of new facilities.
f. Encourage and provide facilities to enable progression through the sporting pathway of "foundation, participation, performance and excellence."

It will be Council's policy to maximise the use of resources. The appropriate standards are detailed in the Chapter 10 of the Plan.

7.2.2.1 Recreational Facilities

It will be the policy of the Council to co-operate with local development organisations, community groups, the County Kilkenny Vocational Educational Committee, and others in the development of recreational facilities throughout the county and to enter into joint venture arrangements where appropriate for the provision of such facilities.

A wide range of proposals (based on the hierarchy of facilities identified as an ideal recommendation) have been set out. The purpose of the hierarchy is to ensure that investment decisions are focused so as to enable efficient planning and investment decisions.

Regional Facility

There is potential for the development of a Regional facility in the City & Environs given:

- The designation of the City as a 'Hub' in the National Spatial Strategy.
- The ability of such a centre to serve a wider area and the surrounding towns of Clonmel, Carlow and Portlaoise (and their hinterlands).

City/County Scale Facilities

While ideally, the development of a City/County level facility should be located on one individual campus, Kilkenny City and its environs contain the potential to develop a number of established and proposed sporting facilities cumulatively, as a City/County or possible as a Sub-Regional facility.

Sub-County Scale Facilities

Sub-County scale facilities should be developed in Thomastown, Castlecomer and the Environs of Waterford City in County Kilkenny.

District-Scale Facilities
District-scale facilities should be provided in Callan, Graiguenamanagh, Johnstown, Piltown and Mullinavat.

Neighbourhood Facilities
Neighbourhood facilities should be developed on the basis of the criteria set out in Table 7.2 and the Facility Development Protocol set out in Section 7.3.2.2. No specific locations have been identified for the development of neighbourhood facilities but areas within the City and towns or villages within the county subject to Local Area Plans would be prioritised.

Table 7.2: Guide to Hierarchies

LEVEL	REGIONAL	CITY/SUB COUNTY	DISTRICT	NEIGHBOUR-HOOD
OPTIMUM LOCATION	On national road. Located in environs of Kilkenny City if possible.	Convenient to national roads. Located on convergence of bus routes.	On bus routes.	Accessible to pedestrians and non-car users.
CATCHMENT IN KMS	50-75km	10-20km	3-10 km	1-2km
ACCESS	University students, and national teams, national and regional elite teams and athletes.	Public, clubs and local elite	Public and clubs	Public and community based
SPORTING FACILITIES				
Pool	50m x 20m	25m x 6m	None / Leisure	None
Hall	12 min. state of the art facility designated for specific purposes.	6 plus suite of smaller halls.	4 or more	2
Pitches	High quality training	Suite of pitches for training/local leagues	_ pitches training/local leagues	1 no. pitch training
Multipurpose/ Synthetic	2 full size ATPs	1 full size multifunctional Astroturf and 1 full size ATP	1 full size multifunctional Astroturf	1 training all weather pitch
Lights	Television/ competition quality	Astroturf and ATP at competitive level	Astroturf at competitive level/training level	Lights to training standard. Where appropriate no lighting should be

				considered in areas where passive observation cannot be encouraged at after dark times.
Level of sporting performance	Excellence/ Performance competition specialist (specialist equipment)	Performance	Competition/Recreation	Recreation
ACTIVITIES				
Daytime	Exclusively Sport	Sport mainly but health and community	Sport, recreation, health and community	Recreation, health and community
Night time	Exclusively Sport	Sport	Sport, recreation and community	Recreation and community
Play Areas	None	None	District play areas as per open space study recommendations	Neighbourhood play area as per open space study recommendations
Child Care Facilities	Yes	Yes	Optional	Optional/Not necessary

7.2.2.2 Protocol for the Development of Facilities

The provision of new facilities within the hierarchy may not always be preferred as it may be more appropriate to upgrade, refurbish and improve existing facilities, particularly in established settlements. A protocol for the development of facilities will be utilised to ensure that development occurs in an orderly, sustainable manner.

The following protocol should be considered as a sequential approach to developing or improving (where existing) facilities.

a. **Bring into use a redundant or infrequently used facility.** This could be a redundant sports hall or a community hall that is not used for recreational or sports facilities.

b. **Make better / more frequent use of existing sports facilities.** For example, bring an existing school into dual use so that it can be used outside school hours and at weekends.

c. **Improve management procedures within existing facilities.** This would be considered as a final opportunity to improve facilities before embarking on physical works.

d. **Refurbish facilities within the existing footprint.** This will usually not require planning permission and is an option before physically extending existing facilities. This may involve moving existing walls / pitches catering for other uses.

e. **Extend existing facilities.** This may entail physically extending facilities and the physical footprint of the existing sports facility. It may entail providing for other sports (i.e.) providing new rather than shared pitches as indicated in (d) above.

f. **Provide a new stand-alone facility.** This should be considered as a last option once
options (a) to (e) have been explored.

ACTION

- **It is an objective of the Council in conjunction with Kilkenny Borough Council to complete the development of the new swimming pool which incorporates other sports and leisure facilities at Scanlon Park.**

7.2.2.3 Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership

The Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership was set up in 2004, with the support of the Irish Sports Council, with the aim of increasing participation in sport and ensuring that local resources were used to best effect. Kilkenny Local Authorities is one of twelve organisations represented on the Board of Directors. A *Strategic Plan 2006-2009* has been produced with to promote participation in recreational and sporting activity in the county. This Strategic Plan contains a number of objectives under five strategic areas to increase participation in sport in the county.

POLICY

- **RTA16 To support the goals and objectives of the Kilkenny Sports Partnership.**

7.2.2.4 Hierarchy of Open Space

Recreation, leisure and sport are important components of a good quality of life and have major land use implications. Adequate and accessible provision of open space, sport and recreational facilities is an important consideration in assessing the quality of life in a town or area. It is likely to become more important as the focus within new developments will be on building sustainable communities

POLICY

- **RTA17 Ensure that all residents have reasonable access to a range of different types of open space.**
- **RTA18 Implement as a priority the hierarchy of open space identified in the Kilkenny Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study for the City and County.**

7.2.2.5 Regional and/or City Parks and Corridors

The setting of Kilkenny in the Nore river valley with associated tributaries provides an opportunity for establishing open spaces and networks of open spaces of strategic value and importance to the cities self image as well as recreational needs.

Following the completion of the Recreational Needs Strategy, a park building strategy was commenced throughout the county. To date a number of parks have been completed or are at various stages of planning or construction, including facilities at Garringreen, Loughboy Park and the Nore Linear Park in the city, Church Avenue in Castlecomer, and in Mullinavat.

River Nore Linear Park

The River Nore corridor holds huge potential for open space in the core of Kilkenny. Essentially the river bank and floodplains are largely undeveloped, with the exception of a stretch within the city centre, between Green's Bridge and John's Bridge. The central location of these riverside areas means the area is accessible to the greatest number of people. There is potential to create countywide links along the river corridors.

Construction work on the initial stages of the River Nore Linear Park began in 2006 and Phase 1A was completed in early 2007. The Nore Linear Park is an ambitious project to provide a network of footpaths and cycleways along the River Nore in Kilkenny City and Environs combined with a sequence of high quality public spaces.

Within the City, a walk between Talbotsinch and Ossory Bridge is proposed. Much of this walk is already in existence, but it needs to be upgraded. It is intended that it will be accessible to all users, including cyclists, people with disabilities, people using buggies, etc.. The remedial works will involve surfacing, public lighting, and seating. It is also proposed to develop the walk as a loop which will require the reinstatement of a pedestrian bridge at Talbotsinch, and possibly also at Ossory Bridge. Other features will be examined such as the reinstatement of the Bandstand at Dukesmeadows and the second Tea House near Smithwick's Brewery. Due to the size of the project, it will be completed in phases.

Due to the level of expense involved in development of the routes, the project will take a number of years. However, it is envisaged that it will be complete within the lifetime of this Plan.

ACTION

- **Complete the River Nore Linear Park within the lifetime of the Plan.**

Pococke & Breagagh River Corridors

Sections of the Pococke River to the east of the city centre are designated open space. The course of the river follows alongside sections of the ring road extension currently under construction.

This open space designation has been extended further in the City and Environs Development Plan having regard to the encroachment of development pressures

on the river. There is potential to link the Pococke open space areas back to the existing residential developments and the River Nore walking route/River Nore Park. A playground facility has been developed at Garringreen.

POLICY

- **RTA19 To seek the establishment of public parks along the Pococke and Breagagh Rivers.**

Links to Surrounding Countryside

The countryside of Kilkenny holds vast potential to develop outdoor recreation activities to benefit both tourism and local residents. There are many river courses throughout the county and there is scope to form an interconnecting network of routes along these courses and as part of a greater trail for walking. Routes along the River Nore could be extended out of the City, both North and south linking into other towns including Thomastown and Woodstock Estate at Inistioge to the south.

District/Neighbourhood Parks

The Regional and City wide parks in a city the size of Kilkenny will provide the major concentrations of amenity within the city, however, the day to day recreational provision to local communities will be provided by a series of district or neighbourhood parks.

In the larger county towns a park of this nature may be appropriate and lands have been zoned for:

- Thomastown (floodplain)
- Castlecomer
- Callan (Old Friary)
- Graignamanagh (Abbey street, riverside)

These 'town parks' are generally in a very central location and easily accessible. They should provide facilities for both formal and informal recreation in a parkland environment.

Local parks

There is a series of open spaces throughout the built-up areas of Kilkenny city, which can provide a range of informal, passive and active recreational spaces. In the smaller villages throughout the county a similar approach should be taken to the creation of a village green or similar amenity in a central location. This may also coincide with a larger open space within which facilities can be provided.

7.2.2.6 Soccer Pitches

There are four playing pitches currently under the control of Kilkenny County Council in the City at Bishop Birch Place, Garringreen, Millennium Court and Newpark Marsh. The County Council will continue to maintain these facilities to the highest possible standards and will work with local community and voluntary groups to provide similar facilities at Urlingford and Ballyragget. These facilities are available for licensing on an annual basis to interested clubs.

ACTION

- **Develop a playing pitch and other recreational/community facility at the Johnswell Road Amenity Area.**
- **Support other local communities in the provision of similar facilities.**

7.2.2.7 Children's Play Facilities

It is the policy of the Council to provide, maintain and manage a children's play area in areas where it is appropriate as finance and resources permit. Kilkenny County Council recently developed and will continue to maintain and extend playgrounds at the following locations: Garringreen (City), Mooncoin, Callan, Castlecomer, Mullinavat and Thomastown. Following the completion of these facilities it is intended to develop playgrounds at a number of additional locations, including the Environs of Waterford City.

The Council will also require provision for children's play or developer contributions towards providing children's play facilities in association with new residential developments. This will be required in areas where statutory plans exist or are prepared in the future. Within new residential developments where there is a significant family residential component the whole environment should be designed so as to permit children to play in safety.

7.2.2.8 Play Policy

The Kilkenny Interagency Play Forum *Play Plan 2006 to 2012* was developed through Strategic Policy Committee 5 (SPC 5) and the Kilkenny County Development Board. The development of the play policy was based on the National Play Policy "Ready, Steady, Play". The policy advocates a child-centered approach to the development of play facilities.

POLICY

- **RTA20 Create a child-friendly and safe environment where the importance of play is recognised for a child's development.**
- **RTA21 Improve the quality and safety of playgrounds and play areas.**

ACTIONS

- **Develop three playgrounds at Newpark Close, Graiguenamanagh and Ballyhale.**
- **Advance the planning for the provision of playground facilities at Freshford, Goresbridge, Inistioge, Gowran, Piltown, Stoneyford, Ballyragget, the Scouts Den and Loughboy Park.**
- **To undertake a mapping exercise that identifies existing play services, facilities and amenities as well as highlights gaps in these areas across the county.**

7.2.2.9 Outdoor Recreation in the Countryside

The Council will normally permit development proposals for outdoor recreational use in the countryside where all the following criteria are met:

- It will not result in damage to sites of nature conservation importance or features of the archaeological and built heritage;
- It will not result in the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land;
- It will not cause harm to the appearance and character of the local landscape and can be readily absorbed into its surroundings by taking advantage of existing vegetation and /or topography;
- The amenity of the people living nearby or the enjoyment of other countryside users is not adversely affected by the nature, scale, extent, frequency or timing of the recreational activities proposed including any noise likely to be generated;
- Any ancillary built development is small in scale, designed to a high standard and sympathetic to the surrounding environment in its siting, layout and landscape treatment.
- Consideration is given to access to the proposed facility by means of transport other than the private car and;
- The local road network can safely handle the extra traffic the proposal would generate and satisfactory arrangements are provided for access, parking, drainage, litter and sewage.

The Council is aware of the considerable recreational potential which is available in the mountain, hill areas and river valleys both in the county and just outside its borders. The council will co-operate with the adjoining authorities and with other interested parties such as Fáilte Ireland, An Taisce, mountaineering, game clubs, and other appropriate organisations to protect the potential of these areas and to carry out appropriate developments as and when resources permit. Such developments would comprise the laying out of walks, bridle paths, access points to streams and lakes, new access roads and car parks, lay-byes and picnic sites, climbing huts and hostels.

7.2.2.10 Intensive Sports Facilities

The Council will normally permit development proposals for intensive sports facilities where all of the following criteria are met.

- The proposal is compatible with development plan zonings.
- There will be no detrimental impact on residential amenity.
- It is located so as to be accessible to its catchment population and gives priority to walking, cycling and public transport and does not generate unacceptable levels of traffic.
- It is designed so as to minimise the impact of noise and light pollution.
- There is no significant detrimental impact on the natural environment or features of the archaeological or built heritage.
- The proposal is of high quality design and respects and contributes to the character of its location and townscape.
- Public access is provided.
- Ancillary facilities are provided such as childcare facilities.

Intensive sports facilities include stadia, leisure centres, sports halls, swimming pools and other indoor and outdoor sports facilities that provide a wide range of activities as well as facilities attracting significant numbers of spectators and use outside normal sporting periods. The location of intensive sports facilities can often be contentious. They can attract large numbers of people, particularly in the evenings and at weekends. They often also generate high levels of noise,

operate long and late hours, attract a large number of vehicle movements and can require large parking areas. Specific concerns may also arise where floodlighting is proposed. On occasion the Council may need to be satisfied that a management plan is in place to ensure that there is no detrimental impact on surrounding residential amenity. Planning conditions may be imposed to this effect.

7.2.2.11 Major Sports Facilities and Stadia

Proposals for, and extensions to, major sports stadia will be supported by the County Council where they will be accessible by a range of forms of transport other than the car, and will not cause unacceptable impact to the amenity of nearby residents by way of noise and disturbance.

The Council requires major stadia to be in appropriate locations and to follow the principles of sustainability. For major schemes an Environmental Impact Assessment may be required. Where the Council is concerned at possible effects on traffic a Transport Impact Assessment may be required. Where it is demonstrated that proposals would generate significant impact on the transport network a Travel Plan may be required.

7.2.2.12 Noise Generating Sports

The Council will not normally permit development proposals for sport or recreational uses generating high levels of noise unless the following criteria are met.

- There will be no unacceptable disturbance to local residents.
- There will be no unacceptable disturbance to farm livestock and wildlife.
- There will be no conflict with the enjoyment of areas used for informal recreation.
- The ambient noise level in the area is already high and the noise likely to be produced by the new activity will not be dominant.

The impact of noise is an important issue in assessing proposals for activities such as motor sports. Appropriate sites for the regular use of these sports are not easy to identify and will depend on the type of activity, the tone, level and duration of any noise generated, local topography and the amount of existing proposed screening. Proposals for noisy sports will only be acceptable where the likely impact can be contained and minimised by landform or woodland. Other suitable sites may include degraded land, former mineral workings or land adjacent to an existing source of noise. In certain cases the Borough and County Councils may only consider it appropriate to grant a temporary permission to allow the impact of noise levels and any potential disturbance or nuisance to be more fully assessed.

7.2.2.13 Floodlighting of Recreational Facilities

The Council will normally only permit proposals for the floodlighting of recreational facilities where the amenities of adjacent residents will not be significantly impaired and the visual amenity and character of the locality will not be adversely affected.

7.2.3 Open Space in new residential development

- **RTA22 It is the policy of the Councils, in considering applications for new development, to require the provision of appropriately located and designed open space, recreational and amenity areas.**

Developers will be required to make provision for sports and recreational infrastructure commensurate with the needs generated by that development and the capacity of existing facilities in the area to cater for existing and future needs. Residential planning applications in excess of 200 units will require a recreational needs assessment. This assessment should have regard to the Kilkenny Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study for the City and County and any future developer contribution scheme. Recreation provision should form an integral element of development proposals. Where provision is not provided on-site it may be directly provided off-site.

The Council will apply the following as guidelines:

Table 7.3: Amenity Development Thresholds

Site Capacity **No. of Dwellings**	**Minimum quantity and type of leisure facilities required**
<25	Development Contribution in lieu of Open Space or 2.4 hectares per 1,000 people (a minimum of 0.25 hectares must be provided)
25 or over	Open space 2.4 hectares per 1,000 people (a minimum of 0.25 hectares must be provided)
100 – 199	Public open space to include a Neighbourhood Play Area
200 – 499	Equipped public open space to include: One full size grass sports pitch; One local Play area; and One court multi-use games area with Community association/club movement.
500 – 599	Public space to include: One full size grass sports pitch; One district play area or one local play area and additional neighbourhood play areas; One court multi-use games are; and Two tennis courts / basketball courts etc.
600 +	Equipped public open space to include: Two full size grass sports pitches; One district play area or one local play area and additional neighbourhood play areas; One court multi-use games area, and two tennis courts / basketball courts etc.
1,000+	One community / leisure Building including full size badminton / basketball court with community association / club movement within. Equipped public open space to include: Two full size grass sports pitches; One district play area or one local play area and additional neighbourhood play areas; One court multi-use games area; and two tennis courts/ basketball courts etc.

The above standards will be applied as a minimum requirement for on-site provision as part of residential development or for off-site provision. In the interests of meeting strategic needs the Council may pool together the requirements of individual and relatively smaller developments to provide facilities and amenities of a strategic nature at the higher end of the hierarchy. Developer contributions may also be sought and may be applied to improve existing facilities nearby.

In areas where new development is proposed and the cumulative impact of the development of new houses will, or is expected to exceed the volume of housing development identified above as thresholds, developers will be required to provide financial contributions or lands towards the development of sports and recreation facilities that will be developed to meet the needs of their development in conjunction with the expected needs of other nearby developments. In instances where this includes, or is expected to include the acquisition of lands this requirement will be specified. This is particularly important in the case of the Western Environs of Kilkenny City and the Waterford Environs area.

7.2.3.1 Development Contributions

Where on-site provision is not appropriate the County Council will levy a sum of money from each housing unit in lieu of the provision of public open space/recreation facilities.
The County Council will impose a levy for provision of open space/recreational facilities in accordance with Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act. Development contributions will be used to assist in the provision of open space and recreational facilities while security will be required for the satisfactory completion of open spaces in private developments until taken in charge as per the provisions of section 34(4)(g) and (j) of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

7.2.4 The Rivers Nore, Suir and Barrow

It is the policy of the County Council to promote the natural amenity potential of the River Nore in order to facilitate the development of amenity, recreational, ecological and tourism benefits for the city and region generally. The River Nore has considerable potential both waterside and landside to be used as recreational asset for the city, the county and the region as a whole.

POLICY

- **RTA23 Protect and improve the natural amenity potential and accessibility of the Rivers Nore, Suir and Barrow.**
- **RTA24 Liaise with neighbouring counties where appropriate, regarding development along the rivers.**

7.2.4.1 Riverside Development

The Council will seek to ensure that proposals along the Rivers Nore, Suir and Barrow will achieve an appropriate balance of uses commensurate with the sensitivity of the natural environment. Factors that will be taken into account when considering proposals affecting the rivers include:

1) Any landscape or nature designation for the area,
2) Any proposals to increase the extent of public access,
3) The extent of any environmental improvements to the water environment and its surroundings,
4) The nature of any recreation use proposed; and
5) Any conflict or compliance with proposals for walking or cycling routes.

7.2.4.2 Development associated with Water Sports

The County Council will normally only permit proposals for development associated with water sports adjacent to waterways and inland lakes where all the following criteria are met.

- The proposed facilities are compatible with any existing use of the water, including non-recreational uses;
- It will not result in damage to sites of nature conservation importance or features of the archaeological and built heritage;
- The development can be satisfactorily integrated into its landscape or townscape surroundings;
- The development will not have an unacceptable impact on visual amenity especially in areas of high amenity or other locally important scenic areas; and
- The development will not result in over intensification of use leading to pollution, excessive noise and nuisance.

Water sports cover a wide range of activities from tranquil uses such as angling, sailing, canoeing, rowing and sail boarding to powered activities such as water-skiing and powerboat uses. The Council may require management plans for particular water areas to address the compatibility of such varying demands.

Most development associated with water sports such as slipways, boathouses, toilet and changing facilities, parking areas and access will require planning permission. In considering such development proposals the Council will assess the impact of the visual amenity and character of the area. Where permission is granted the Council will require high levels of design both in terms of layout, buildings and other structures and in the treatment of boundaries either adjacent to the road or the actual waterway. The Council will normally require details of landscaping and surface treatments to accompany all planning applications.

7.2.5 Walking and Cycling Routes and Trails

The Irish Sports Council has published an *Irish Trails Strategy*, which outlines the numerous benefits of recreational trails, including significant economic benefits. There are a number of major walking and Slí na Sláinte routes available to Kilkenny, such as at Woodstock Estate, Castlecomer and the South Leinster Way.

The countryside of Kilkenny holds vast potential to develop outdoor recreation activities to benefit both tourism and local residents. There are many river courses throughout the county and there is scope to form an interconnecting network of routes along these courses and as part of a greater trail for walking or other. Routes along the River Nore could be extended out of the City, both north and south linking into other towns including Thomastown and Woodstock Estate at Inistioge to the south.

It is the intention of the Council in conjunction with the Borough Council to identify, promote and maintain a series of walking routes within the city and to link these to a strategic network of trails into the county.

The Council will encourage the development of facilities that are accessible to those who walk and cycle. The Council will also work with other local authorities, agencies and organisations to provide a network of walking routes.

The setting of Kilkenny in the Nore river valley with associated tributaries provides an opportunity for establishing open spaces and networks of open spaces of strategic value and importance to the city's self image as well as recreational needs.

7.2.5.1 Proposed River Nore Walking Route - Kilkenny to Inistioge

A rural walk is in the course of development between Kilkenny and Inistioge, to be designed for walkers only (i.e. no cycles, buggies, animals etc.) and will have minimum impact on the environment. Kissing gates, stiles, fencing, signage, marker posts, small footbridges and minimal surfacing are being provided where necessary.

The walk is divided into three sections: Kilkenny to Bennettsbridge, Bennettsbridge to Thomastown, and Thomastown to Inistioge. It is intended that the walk will be part of the National Waymarked Way Network, and insured under that scheme. Kilkenny County Council and BNS LEADER are heavily involved in forging this gateway between county and city.

POLICY

- **RTA25 To investigate the potential of and opportunities for the funding of walking and cycling trails in the county; and for the development of linkages between existing trails and others in adjoining counties; and support national trail development policy including the Irish Trails Strategy.**
- **RTA26 Encourage and promote cycling-based tourism in the city and county and to support Fáilte Ireland's Strategy for the Development of Irish Cycle Tourism, South East Regional Report**
- **RTA27 Continue to assist and co-operate with BNS Leader in the development of the River Nore Walking Route between the City and Inistioge/Thomastown.**
- **RTA28 Working with development agencies, landowners, other legal occupiers and potential users, to develop a sustainable policy on the use of walking routes throughout Kilkenny.**

- **RTA29 Require that development along rivers set aside land for pedestrian routes that could be linked to the broader area and any established settlements in their vicinity.**
- **RTA30 Impose a development levy to provide walking amenities and facilities**

ACTION

- **Research and map the existing network of traditional paths used for leisure purposes with the intention of determining the legal basis and status of their use.**

7.2.5.2 Public Rights of Way

The Council will use its powers under the Planning Acts to preserve and maintain existing rights of way, to create new ones where appropriate, and to promote their greater use in amenity areas. In addition the Council may seek to incorporate the provision of pedestrian ways as a condition of planning permission to link amenities, facilities and points of interest.

Kilkenny County Council is aware that providing such routes can cause concern as these may give rise to anti-social behaviour particularly along unsupervised and secluded laneways. Every effort shall be made to avoid such a situation, through public lighting, appropriate layout and landscaping.

The Council will examine existing rights of way, paths, access points to the Rivers Nore, Suir and Barrow and other amenity areas to determine where public rights exist and where public rights of way should be created, for the provision of walking routes along the rivers and amenity areas of the County.

POLICY

- **RTA31 Preserve and protect existing rights of way and create new rights of way in the interest of amenity as the opportunity or need arises.**
- **RTA32 Encourage the provision of access routes to amenity areas in co-operation with landowners and protect amenity areas from infringement by inappropriate development.**
- **RTA33 Seek to improve the provision of local parks and play spaces and extend those spaces and pathways that can usefully form green links, footways and cycle ways to connect residential areas with parks and open spaces and with each other.**
- **RTA34 Make existing areas of open space as user-friendly as possible. As well as seeking to ensure that new open space is well integrated to proposed development it is essential that open space has good pedestrian, cyclist and disabled access.**

ACTION

- **Undertake a survey of existing public rights of way in the county and establish a register within two years of the adoption of the Plan**

7.3 The Arts/Cultural Development

Cultural development should be seen as an integral part of the overall development of the county. The culture of a county, city or town is one of the crucial aspects which distinguishes it from other counties or cities. It includes

speech, language, theatre, music painting, dance, literature, photography, architecture and more. Knowledge and awareness of the distinct cultural experience of a place or an area is necessary if cultural development is to take place; such knowledge links the past with the present and the future and helps provide a community with a sense of place of its cultural identity.

The Council Arts Office provides financial assistance within the limits of its resources towards the development of the Arts and considers that a multi-faceted cultural activity has an important contribution to make in the lives of residents in the county as well as in tourism development.

The Kilkenny Arts Strategy 2005 - 2009 aims to provide an appropriate policy framework to support, stimulate and further develop the arts so that provision and access, participation in the arts and employment and economic return is maximised.

Kilkenny Arts Festival, the National Craft Gallery and the Cats Laughs Comedy Festival have fulfilled an important role in the cultural development of the county and have raised its international profile.

7.3.1 Arts Infrastructure

Kilkenny is served by a variety of general venue, performance and exhibition spaces including council-managed exhibition spaces for the visual arts, namely the Watergate 'Gallery Upstairs', County Hall and 72 John Street. Independent venues include the internationally-recognised Butler Gallery, Rothe House, the National Craft Gallery (Crafts Council of Ireland), city and county libraries, the city based Kilkenny Art Gallery and the Berkeley Gallery in Thomastown. The Arts Strategy has identified a need for a small, flexible venue in the county to fulfil a multiplicity of roles ranging from space for community groups, dance, band rehearsal, theatre rehearsal and storage facilities, etc.

7.3.1.1 Kilkenny Integrated Cultural Facility

Kilkenny local authorities and Butler Gallery are exploring the feasibility of establishing an Integrated Cultural Facility for Kilkenny, combining Butler Gallery contemporary art gallery and a proposed museum. Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Borough Council, the Board of the Butler Gallery, the Heritage Council, The Arts Council, the National Museum and the Crafts Council have been involved in preliminary discussions. It is anticipated that the proposed facility will strengthen the cultural identity of art, heritage and design and will support the heritage and visual arts sectors in Kilkenny.

POLICY

- **RTA35 Promote the development of the Arts in the City and County through the implementation of the Kilkenny Arts Strategy.**
- **RTA36 Provide studio/rehearsal/performance space.**
- **RTA37 Establish an Integrated Cultural Facility for Kilkenny, in co-operation with the Board of the Butler Gallery, the Heritage Council, The Arts Council, the National Museum and the Crafts Council.**

8 Heritage

8.1 Introduction

County Kilkenny has a rich and varied heritage. It includes our rivers, woodlands, landscape, hedgerows, our historic churches and abbeys, our medieval towns and villages and much more. Kilkenny's heritage is that which makes the county unique, what gives it its special character and its 'sense of place'. It is a reflection and expression of our values and traditions.

POLICY

- **H1 To prepare and implement, in partnership with the Kilkenny Heritage Forum and relevant stakeholders, a County Heritage Plan and County Biodiversity Action Plan.**
- **H2 To support and facilitate the Kilkenny Heritage Forum**
- **H3 To continue and to develop the Council's advisory/educational role with regard to Heritage matters through the Heritage Plan and to promote awareness and understanding of and access where appropriate to heritage.**

8.2 Natural Heritage & Biodiversity

Natural heritage includes flora and fauna, wildlife habitats, inland waterways, landscapes and geology. There is a great variety of natural heritage in County Kilkenny, including our rivers and woodlands, hedgerows, mammals, birds, plants, and diverse landscapes and geological features.

Biodiversity is the variety of life. It includes all aspects of natural heritage.

POLICY

- **H4 To protect, conserve and enhance County Kilkenny's natural heritage and biodiversity, to include the diversity of habitats found in the county e.g watercourses and waterbodies; trees; woodlands and hedgerows; fens; marshes; estuaries and wetlands; geological and geomorphological sites/features; improved and semi-natural grasslands; etc.**

8.2.1 Designated Natural Heritage Sites of International and National Importance

Habitats in the county, of international and national importance, are designated under EU and national legislation. The four categories of designated site in effect in County Kilkenny are:

i. Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
SAC's have been, and are being designated, under the EU Habitats Directive to conserve habitats and species of European importance.

ii. Natural Heritage Areas (NHA)
NHA's have been, and are being, designated to conserve habitats and species of national importance and sites of geological interest, under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000.

iii. Statutory Nature Reserve
Nature reserves, designated under the Wildlife Act 1976 and Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000, are wildlife habitats which meet certain scientific criteria, are worthy of conservation, and where nature conservation is the primary objective and takes precedence over all other activities.

iv. Wildfowl Sanctuary
Wildfowl Sanctuaries are designated under the Wildlife Act 1976 and Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000 to protect ducks, geese and waders from hunting.

At present there are 36 designated natural heritage sites of international and national importance in County Kilkenny, covering approximately 4.5% of the county. See Table 8.1 and Figure 8-1 for further information.

The designation of these sites at a national level is the responsibility of the National Parks and Wildlife Division of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The designation of these sites is an ongoing process as boundaries are revised and adjusted and new sites added. The Council will take cognisance of any change in boundaries that may occur in designated sites within the life of this plan. Please consult with the National Parks and Wildlife Service for further details and for the most up to date data.

Table 8.1: Designated Natural Heritage Sites of International & National Importance

Site Name	Site Code/Ref	cSAC	pNHA	SNR	WF
Cullahill Mountain	000831	✓			
Hugginstown Fen	000404	✓	✓		
Galmoy Fen	001858	✓	✓		
Lower River Suir	002137	✓			
River Barrow & River Nore/ Abbeyleix Wood Complex	002162/000698 002076	✓	✓ ✓		✓
Spa Hill & Clomantagh Hill	000849	✓			
The Loughans	000407	✓			
Thomastown Quarry	002252	✓			
Archersgrove	002051		✓		
Ardaloo Fen	000821		✓		
Ballykeeffe Woodland	000400		✓	✓	
Barrow River Estuary	000698		✓		
Brownstown Wood	000827		✓		
Clohastia	000830		✓		
Coan Bogs*	002382		✓		
Dunmore Cave	000401		✓		
Dunmore Complex	001859		✓		
Esker Pits	000832		✓		
Fiddown Island	000402		✓	✓	
Garryrickin Nature Reserve	000403		✓	✓	
Grannyferry	000833		✓		
Ice House near Inistioge, Co Kilkenny	002094		✓		
Inchbeg	000836		✓		
Inistioge	000837		✓		
Kilkeasy Bog	000839		✓		
Kyleadohir Wood Nature Reserve	000405		✓	✓	
Kylecorragh Wood	000842		✓		
Lough Cullin	000406		✓		✓
Lough Macask	001914		✓		
Mothel Church, Coolcullen	000408		✓		
Mount Juliet	000843		✓		
Murphy's of the River	000844		✓		
Newpark Marsh	000845		✓		
Rathsnagadan Wood	000409		✓		
Red Bog, Dungarvan	000846		✓		
Thomastown	000410		✓		
Tibberaghny Marshes	000411		✓		
Whitehall Quarries	000855		✓		

cSAC	candidate Special Area of Conservation	pNHA	Proposed Natural Heritage Area
		*	Designated Natural Heritage Area
SNR	Statutory Nature Reserve	WF	Wildfowl Sanctuaries

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014

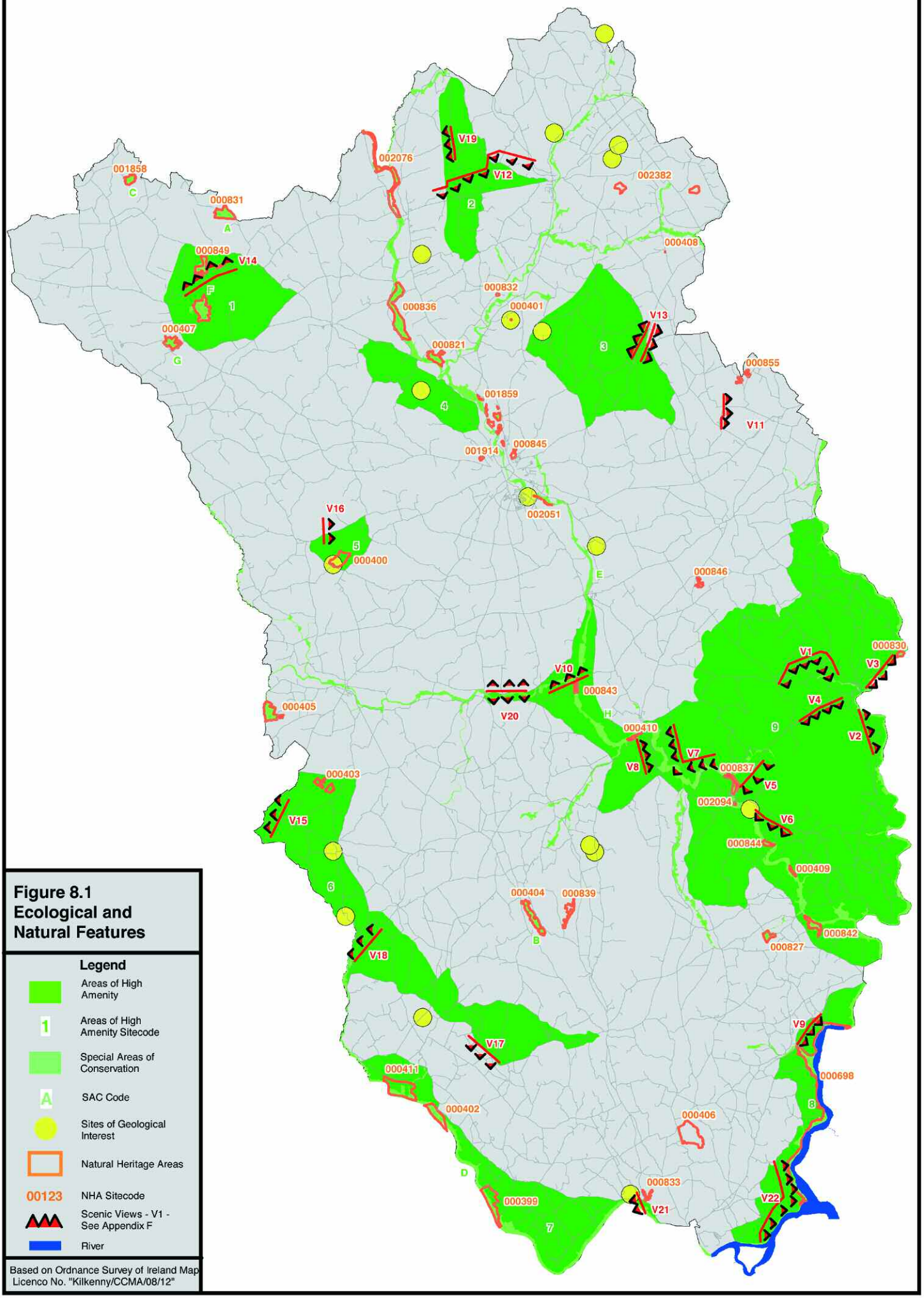


Figure 8.1
Ecological and Natural Features

Legend

- Areas of High Amenity
- 1 — Areas of High Amenity Sitecode
- Special Areas of Conservation
- A — SAC Code
- Sites of Geological Interest
- Natural Heritage Areas
- 00123 — NHA Sitecode
- Scenic Views - V1 - See Appendix F
- River

Based on Ordnance Survey of Ireland Map Licenco No. "Kilkenny/CCMA/08/12"

POLICY

- **H5 To protect natural heritage sites designated in National and European legislation. This includes sites proposed to be designated or designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Natural Heritage Areas (NHA), Nature Reserves and Wildfowl Sanctuaries. This protection will extend to any additions or alterations to sites that may arise during the lifetime of this plan.**

- **H6 To assess all proposed developments (individually or in combination with other proposals, as appropriate) which are likely to impact on designated natural heritage sites or those sites proposed to be designated.**

- **H7 To consult with the prescribed bodies and relevant government agencies when assessing developments which are likely to impact on designated natural heritage sites or those sites proposed to be designated.**

- **H8 To ensure that any development in or near a designated natural heritage site will avoid any significant adverse impact on the features for which the site has been designated.**

- **H9 To require an appropriate environmental assessment in respect of any proposed development likely to have an impact on a designated natural heritage site, or those sites proposed to be designated.**

ACTION

- **To provide Supplementary Planning Guidance, in relation to conserving and enhancing biodiversity in the context of development.**

8.2.2 Protected Species

Certain plant, animal and bird species are protected by National and European law. This includes plant species listed in the Flora Protection Order 1999 (or other such Orders) and animals and birds listed in the Wildlife Act, 1976 and subsequent statutory instruments, those listed in Annex IV if the Habitats Directive, and those listed in Annex 1 of the Birds Directive.

POLICY

- **H10 To protect and, where possible, enhance the plant and animal species and their habitats that have been identified under EU Habitats Directive, EU Birds Directive, the Wildlife Act and the Flora Protection Order.**

- **H11 Ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact on plant animal or bird species protected by national or European legislation.**

- **H12 Consult with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, and take account of any licensing requirements, when undertaking, or approving development which is likely to affect plant, animal or bird species protected by national or European legislation.**

8.2.3 Nature Conservation Outside of Designated Areas

Much of the biodiversity and many of our landscape features of importance in the county occur in areas outside of sites which are subject to legal protection under National or EU law. These habitats and features are particularly important in contributing to the biodiversity, landscape value and sense of place of the county. These features include: hedgerows, ditches and banks, stone walls, woodlands, estates and parklands, rivers, streams and associated riparian zones, reservoirs, ponds and canals.

Habitats and landscape features have an important role to play as ecological "corridors" or "stepping stones" i.e. they allow for the movement of species, and help to sustain the habitats, ecological processes and functions necessary to enhance and maintain biodiversity. It is important that these areas are conserved and managed well.

POLICY

- **H13 Identify, in co-operation with the relevant statutory authorities and other relevant groups, sites of local nature conservation interest, not otherwise protected by legislation.**

- **H14 To protect and enhance wildlife habitats and landscape features which form part of habitat networks, such as river corridors and associated habitats.**

- **H15 To ensure that any development in or near sites of local conservation interest will minimise any significant adverse impact on the features for which the site has been designated.**

- **H16 Minimise the loss of habitats and features of the wider countryside (hedgerows, ponds, streams, wetlands, trees etc) through the planning process, which are not within designated sites.**

- **H17 Where the loss of habitats and features of the wider countryside is unavoidable as part of a development, to ensure that appropriate mitigation and/or compensation measures are put in place, to conserve and enhance biodiversity and landscape character.**

8.2.4 Local Biodiversity Action Plan

Biodiversity, or biological diversity, is the variety of life on earth. The term refers to the diversity of ecosystems, individual species of flora and fauna, and also genetic diversity. The National Biodiversity Plan (2002) sets out the framework for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and requires local authorities to prepare and implement a Local Biodiversity Action Plan. The Kilkenny Biodiversity Plan will be prepared, in association with the Kilkenny Heritage Forum, using guidelines produced by the Heritage Council and Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

POLICY

- **H18 Prepare a County Bio-Diversity Plan, in accordance with the National Bio-diversity Plan (2002), and to liaise with all relevant agencies and community groups in its preparation and implementation.**

- **H19 Integrate bio-diversity considerations into Council plans, programmes and activities.**

8.2.5 County Geological Sites & Geological Heritage Areas

The predominant underlying bedrock geology of County Kilkenny is dominated by limestone. To the south of the county are older sedimentary and igneous rocks such coarse red sandstone, mudstone and granite. Deposits of glacial materials such as clay, sand and gravel overlie much of this bedrock.

The geology of the county has influenced the landscapes, soils, habitats, economic activities such as quarrying and features of local cultural interest such as stonewalls, limekilns etc

The Council recognises the need to identify sites of geological and geomorphological interest within the county and to protect these sites, or parts of these sites, in the interest of protecting our geological heritage. The Geological Survey of Ireland, in partnership with Kilkenny County Council, has developed a list of County Geological Sites (CGS), as part of the Irish Geological Heritage Programme and in accordance with the National Heritage Plan, 2002. These are sites of local geological and geomorphological interest, or sites which contain a feature of local geological and geomorphological interest (see Table 8.2). Some of these sites, which are of national significance, may in the future, be proposed by the Geological Survey of Ireland and the National Parks and Wildlife Service, as geological Natural Heritage Areas (NHA's).

Table 8.2: County Geological Sites

Site Name	Summary	Townland(s)/district
Archersgrove Quarry	One of the original Kilkenny Black Marble Quarries	Archersgrove, Kilkenny
Ahenny	Disused Quarries Exposing Slate	Ahenny
Ballyfoyle Channels	Glacial Meltwater Channels	Ballyfoyle
Ballykeefe Quarry	Disused Quarry Exposing Limestone	Ballykeefe
Ballyraggett Quarry	Working Quarry Exposing Limestone	Ballyragget (town)
Bennettsbridge	Working Quarry Exposing Dolomite	Bennettsbridge (town)
Coolbaun Hill	Working Open-Cast Quarry	Coolbaun, Castlecomer
Coolbaun Valley	Disused Coal Mines	Coolbaun, Castlecomer
Deer Park Mine	Disused Coal Mines	Deer Park
Dunmore Cave	Glacially Derived Caves	Mohil
Granny Quarries	Disused Quarry Exposing Limestone	Granny

Inistioge	Glacial Meltwater Channels	Inistioge
Threecastles Quarry	Working Quarry producing Kilkenny Black Marble	Threecastles
Kiltorcan New Quarry,	Fossil Locality	Kiltorcan
Kiltorcan Old Quarry	Fossil Locality	Kiltorcan
Piltown	Boreholes. Jurassic -Cretaceous Geology	Piltown
Windgap Artesian Borehole	Artesian Well	Windgap
Swan, Castlecomer	Braided River Channel and Meanders	Swan

POLICY

- **H20 Maintain, and where necessary facilitate, the enhancement of the conservation values of those features or areas of county geological and or geomorphological importance.**

- **H21 Protect from inappropriate development, County Geological Sites, or parts thereof, and geological Natural Heritage Areas that become designated during the lifetime of this plan.**

- **H22 To consult with the Geological Survey of Ireland when assessing developments which are likely to impact on County Geological Sites, or geological Natural Heritage Areas which may be designated during the lifetime of this plan.**

- **H23 To assess all proposed developments with respect to geology (individually or in combination with other proposals, as appropriate) which are likely to impact on County Geological Sites, or geological Natural Heritage Areas that become designated during the lifetime of this plan.**

- **H24 Ensure that any development in or near County Geological Sites will avoid any significant adverse impact on the features for which the site is considered important.**

- **H25 To consult with the Geological Survey of Ireland in advance of any proposals for major developments that will entail significant ground excavation, such as quarrying, road cuttings, major drainage works and foundations for major buildings/building complexes.**

8.2.6 Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows

Woodlands, trees and hedgerows are an environmental, economic, amenity and landscape resource of great importance. Trees, hedgerows and woodlands are an integral part of the county's biodiversity, as they form part of a network of habitats, ecological 'corridors' and 'stepping stones' essential for wildlife to flourish and move between and within habitats. In some cases, trees within the

curtilage and/or attendant grounds of a Protected Structure can be important to the character and special interest of the structure and could contribute to its landscape setting. Hedgerows also have historical significance as townland and field boundaries.

The Tree Register of Ireland (TROI) is a database of outstanding trees in Ireland compiled by the Tree Council of Ireland. The TROI identified approximately 180 significant trees in the county, based on characteristics such as age, height, diameter, historical or folklore connections.

A Woodland Survey of Kilkenny, undertaken in 1997, identified the amenity potential of woodlands in the county.

There are a number of legislative measures which recognise the importance of trees and woodlands and provide for their protection. These include:

i. Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)
Under the Planning and Development Act 2000, TPOs allow for the protection of trees, groups of trees and woods of amenity value. Trees, which are the subject of a TPO, cannot be felled unless the owner also obtains planning permission. At present there are five TPOs in County Kilkenny.

Table 8.3: Tree Preservation Orders in County Kilkenny

Site	TPO Ref No.
Oldcourt, Inistioge	1/85
Keatingstown	1/84
Barna, Freshford	1/92
Sawney's Wood, Castlecomer	1/67
Christendom Wood, Ferrybank	1/2008

ii. Forestry Act, 1946
Under the 1946 Forestry Act, with certain exceptions, it is illegal to uproot a tree over ten years of age or cut down a tree of any age unless notice of intention to do so has been given in accordance with the Act.

iii. Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000
The Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000 seeks to prohibit the cutting of hedges within the bird nesting period (1st March until September 1st).

POLICY

- **H26 To protect existing woodlands, trees and hedgerows which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/or contribute to landscape character of the county, and to ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management, when undertaking, approving or authorising development.**
- **H27 To ensure that when undertaking, approving or authorising development that sufficient information is provided to enable an assessment of impacts on woodlands, trees, and hedgerows.**

- **H28 To conserve important trees, groups of trees or woodlands, using Tree Preservation Orders, as appropriate.**
- **H29 In partnership with the Forest Service, to provide guidance to developers and others on requirements and procedures in relation to tree felling.**
- **H30 Have regard to sites of significance identified in the Kilkenny Woodland Survey 1997 in the assessment of planning applications.**
- **H31 Have regard to, and seek the conservation of, the trees of County Kilkenny identified in the Tree Register of Ireland.**
- **H32 Support the provisions of Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, which seeks to prohibit the cutting of hedges within the bird nesting period (1st March until September 1st).**
- **H33 Retain hedgerows, and other distinctive boundary treatment such as stone walls, when undertaking, authorising or approving development, where possible.**
- **H34 Where the loss of hedgerows is unavoidable, for health and safety reasons, as part of a development, to ensure that a new hedgerow is planted using native species, and species of local provenance. (See Appendix E.)**
- **H35 Where the loss of stone wall is unavoidable, for health and safety reasons, as part of a development, to ensure that the wall is re-built using local stone and local design.**
- **H36 Discourage the felling of mature trees to facilitate development and encourage tree surgery rather than felling, where possible.**
- **H 37 Ensure that new development incorporates the planting of native broadleaved species, and species of local provenance, as appropriate.**
- **H38 Continue to co-operate with Coillte and other forestry bodies to seek an increase in appropriate afforestation, particularly of native species, and maintain and improve access to woodlands for recreational purposes.**
- **H39 Seek, where appropriate and feasible, the extension of existing woodlands and/or creation of new woodlands, based on planned planting and management schemes, and favouring the use of native species.**
- **H40 Kilkenny County Council will promote the planting of native tree and shrub species, by committing to using native species (of local provenance wherever possible) in its landscaping work and on County Council property.**

ACTION

- **To carry out surveys of significant trees and hedgerows in the county during the lifetime of this plan, as appropriate and feasible.**
- **Investigate the possibility of updating the Woodland Survey of Kilkenny, in partnership with relevant stakeholders**
- **To develop and implement a Hedgerow Management Awareness and Conservation Strategy in consultation with all relevant agencies as part of the Heritage Plan.**

8.2.7 Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes

Historic gardens and designed landscapes are of natural heritage, architectural, landscape, cultural and historical importance. In addition, they are often the important setting of a Protected Structure.

The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG), through the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) carried out a

preliminary survey of historic gardens and designed landscapes in 2003-2005. A total of 196 potential historic gardens and designed landscape sites in County Kilkenny were identified. Further work is required to be undertaken to determine the actual heritage significance of each of these sites, and to determine appropriate protection and conservation measures.

POLICY

- **H41 Co-operate with the (Heritage Section) DEHLG and other interested parties to facilitate the protection, promotion and enhancement of significant historic gardens and designed landscapes in the county and to support public awareness, enjoyment of and access to these sites.**

- **H42 Have regard to the historic gardens and designed landscape sites in County Kilkenny, identified in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.**

- **H43 Discourage development that would lead to a loss of, or cause damage to, the character, the principal components of, or the setting of parks, gardens and demesnes of special historic interest.**

- **H44 Preserve, protect and where necessary encourage the use of, heritage/traditional varieties of plants and trees that form part of the local/regional biodiversity resource, and that contribute to local identity.**

8.2.8 Woodstock Gardens

In the Victorian era Woodstock was regarded as one of the great gardens of Ireland and it has been identified in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH). It suffered from years of neglect, vandalism and indifference but the main framework of the gardens remained intact. The Woodstock garden restoration project is an example in environmental partnership between Kilkenny County Council, Coillte, the Tighe Estate, Great Gardens of Ireland Restoration Programme, Inistioge Heritage Society, FAS and the local community.

In order to secure a long term strategy for Woodstock Gardens and the Demense the Council commissioned the preparation of a Local Area Plan for Woodstock.

POLICY

- **H45 To continue and complete the Woodstock Gardens Restoration Project.**
- **H46 To complete the Woodstock Local Area Plan.**
- **H47 To have regard to the policies regarding historic gardens and designed landscapes outlined in section 8.2.7 of this plan.**

8.2.9 Mount Juliet Estate

Mount Juliet Estate and the adjoining Ballylynch estate are situated in the Nore valley to the west of Thomastown. Mount Juliet is generally recognised as a high quality tourism and sporting resource of significant local, national and international importance. It is also a significant built, natural and cultural heritage resource. An action plan was developed for the estate in 2000 to set out the guiding principles and overall future direction for the development of the

estate. The relevant elements of this action plan have been updated to provide guidance for the estate during the period of this development plan.

The Mount Juliet Area Action Plan was drawn up in 2000, before changes in the architectural heritage protection legislation had been put into practice. Any future proposals for development at Mount Juliet and Ballylinch will be assessed against the carrying capacity of the estates and their ability to absorb development without detracting from the landscape character and built and natural heritage context of each estate. Significant development proposals should be made in the context of a long-term vision for the entire estate.

8.2.9.1 Mount Juliet Action Plan Strategy

The strategy was based on the following principles:

- The entire Action Area is a sensitive environment.
- Some degree of future development was anticipated and the objective was to regulate and order development rather than presume against development.
- Development trends at that time (2000), either planned or constructed, were taken as indicators and the basis on which predictions of future growth and development patterns were made.
- Where particular development trends or intentions were identified, areas and site specific proposals were made.
- Existing planning permissions on the estate were incorporated into the plan and where appropriate further measures were proposed to integrate previously approved development.

For this development plan period a review of the policies and objectives contained in the 2002 to 2008 Development Plan took place and the following Development Policies and Objectives are proposed (See Figure 8.2).

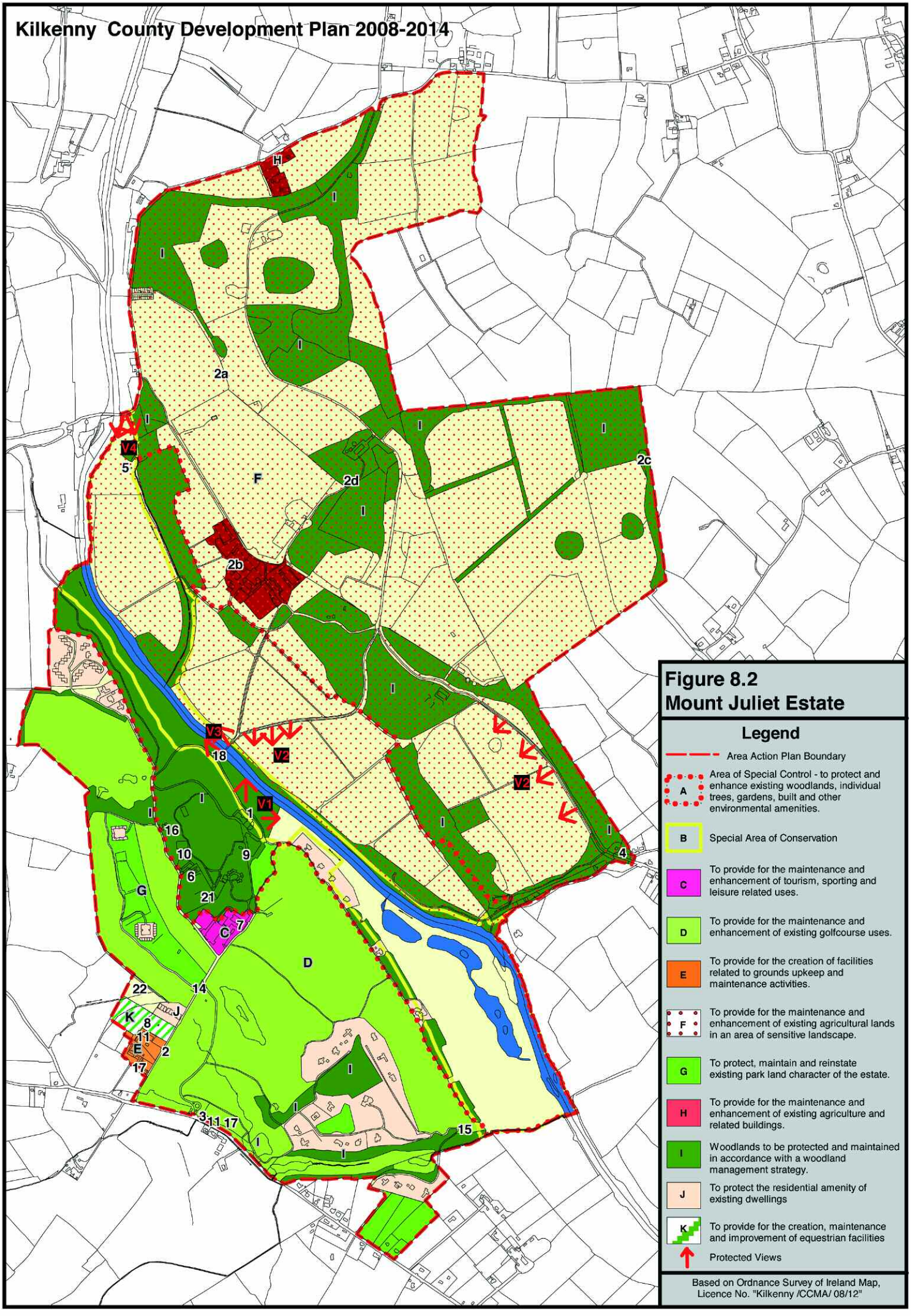


Figure 8.2
Mount Juliet Estate

Legend

- Area Action Plan Boundary
- A — Area of Special Control - to protect and enhance existing woodlands, individual trees, gardens, built and other environmental amenities.
- B — Special Area of Conservation
- C — To provide for the maintenance and enhancement of tourism, sporting and leisure related uses.
- D — To provide for the maintenance and enhancement of existing golfcourse uses.
- E — To provide for the creation of facilities related to grounds upkeep and maintenance activities.
- F — To provide for the maintenance and enhancement of existing agricultural lands in an area of sensitive landscape.
- G — To protect, maintain and reinstate existing park land character of the estate.
- H — To provide for the maintenance and enhancement of existing agriculture and related buildings.
- I — Woodlands to be protected and maintained in accordance with a woodland management strategy.
- J — To protect the residential amenity of existing dwellings
- K — To provide for the creation, maintenance and improvement of equestrian facilities
- Protected Views

Based on Ordnance Survey of Ireland Map, Licence No. "Kilkenny /CCMA/ 08/12"

Table 8.4: Mount Juliet Development Policies

Area	Objectives	Permissible uses/Developments	Uses open for consideration
A	To protect and enhance the Protected Structure, its curtilage and attendant grounds, existing woodlands, individual trees, gardens, built and other environmental amenities.	Sport and leisure facilities such as croquet, tennis putting or bowling lawns.	Temporary tented or other temporary enclosures.
B	River Barrow/River Nore Special Area of Conservation: To protect and enhance existing landscape, ecological and other environmental amenities. To provide for the protection of water quality and the ecological integrity of the watercourse.		
C	To provide for the maintenance and enhancement of tourism, sporting, leisure and related uses.		
D	To provide for the maintenance and enhancement of existing golf course uses.	Planting and ground works related to golf course uses.	Temporary tented or other temporary enclosures.
E	To provide for the creation of facilities related to grounds upkeep and maintenance activities	Stores, machinery storage/repair & office uses related to maintenance of estate lands.	
F	To provide for the maintenance and enhancement of existing agricultural lands in an area of sensitive landscape.		
G	To protect and maintain and reinstate existing parkland character of the estate.		
H	To provide for the maintenance and enhancement of existing agricultural and related buildings.		
I	Woodlands to be protected and maintained in accordance with the woodland management strategy.		
J	To protect the residential amenity of existing dwellings		
K	To provide for the creation, maintenance and improvement of equestrian facilities		

Table 8.5: Mount Juliet Site-specific Objectives

Area	Objective
1	To protect and enhance Mount Juliet House (protected structure), its curtilage and attendant grounds and allow for its extension as appropriate.
2	To protect and enhance existing archaeological features: 2a Ecclesiastical Remains 2b Castle and Mansion 2c Enclosure 2d Enclosure
3	To protect and enhance the existing south western entrance to the estate, gate lodges, boundary walls and road frontage.
4	To protect and enhance the existing Thomastown entrance to the estate, gate lodges, boundary walls and road frontage.
5	To provide for the enhancement of the cricket pavilion facilities.
6	To provide for the development of a health spa/wellness centre at the Walled Gardens as approved in planning permission 04/1153.
7	To provide for the development of an extension at Hunters Yard to cater for health spa requirements, golf reception, members area, restaurant, bar, additional bedroom accommodation, and conference facilities.
8	To provide for the creation of equestrian facilities as approved in planning permission 06/1455.
9	To provide for the development of 6 no. apartments adjoining the existing Rose Garden apartments associated with the estate's sporting and recreational functions
10	Provide for the development of 10 no. two storey houses previously approved in planning permission 06/1134, associated with the estate's sporting and recreational functions.
11	Provide for wet sand and dry sand storage areas to facilitate the on-going maintenance of the golf course uses.
12	Provide for an extension to the existing golf maintenance facility to include changing area and other associated staff uses.
13	Provide for the development of a tennis court, pavilion and croquet lawn.
14	Provide for 2 no. helipads as approved in pp. 07/219.
15	Provide for the development of 3 no. detached houses associated with the estate's sporting and recreational functions.
16	Provide for a house at the maintenance facility building previously approved under planning permission 05/925 associated with the estate's sporting and recreational functions
17	Provide for an administration building for the on-going management of the estate
18	Provide for the abstraction of water from the River Nore for fire fighting purposes in line with the Chief Fire Officer's requirements.
19	Provide for Mount Juliet staff offices at an appropriate location to replace the existing temporary facility
20	Provide for estate maintenance/administration area at an appropriate location to replace existing maintenance facility building
21	Provide for conservation works within the Walled Gardens in accordance with the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines (DoE, 2004).
22	Provide for the development of 9 no. houses at the Kennels site similar to those at the Gallops subject to the capacity of the estate to absorb development without detracting from the estate's landscape character and built and natural heritage context.

Table 8.6: Mount Juliet Protected views

View	Description
V1	From Mount Juliet House to Ballylinch Stud
V2	Approach from Thomastown gate towards Mount Juliet House and the Inch
V3	River valley from White bridge
V4	River valley from Ballylinch bridge

8.2.10 Inland Waters, Rivers, Streams and Wetlands

The waterways and wetlands of Kilkenny are of great importance, in terms of their influence on the landscape, as a wildlife habitat and as an amenity resource.

The River Nore, and its many tributaries runs from the north to the south of the county; the River Suir and its tributaries flows along the south west county boundary and the Barrow Navigation System runs along the eastern border with Counties Carlow and Wexford. In addition, to the main waterways there are a number of smaller wetland areas of significance.

POLICY

- **H48 Protect and enhance the natural heritage and landscape character of waterway corridors and wetlands and to maintain them free from inappropriate development.**

- **H49 In partnership with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Waterways Ireland and other relevant stakeholders to facilitate public access to, and understanding of, waterways corridors and wetlands where feasible and appropriate.**

- **H50 Protect items of architectural heritage and industrial archaeological interest associated with waterways corridors.**

- **H51 To consult with the Southern Regional Fisheries Board and the National Parks and Wildlife Service prior to undertaking, approving or authorising any works or development which may have an impact on rivers, streams and waterways.**

8.3 Landscape

The landscape of County Kilkenny is a dynamic and valuable resource which incorporates all aspects of the natural, built and cultural heritage. Landscapes provide a sense of place and characterise the county for local residents and visitors alike both in terms of a place to live and also for recreational and tourism purposes.

Developments by their nature are likely to have some varying degree of visual impact on a landscape's character profile depending on the type, use and scale of development proposed. It is important that Kilkenny's landscape as a resource is sensibly managed and protected. Consequently, the onus shall be on the developer to satisfactorily demonstrate that such new development can be

adequately absorbed into its surrounding landscape without significant adverse visual impacts to its overall landscape value.

Ireland has signed and ratified the European Landscape Convention which means that we are committed to introducing policies to effect landscape protection and management. The Planning and Development Act, 2000 includes both mandatory and discretionary development plan objectives in relation to landscape.

The management of the county's landscapes involves:

- Sustaining, conserving and enhancing the landscape diversity, character and quality; and
- Protecting sensitive areas from injurious development, while providing for development and change that will benefit the rural community.

8.3.1 Areas of High Amenity

The Planning Authority established Areas of Special Control within the County in the 1986 Development Plan and this designation was continued in the 1994 Development Plan. The 2002 Plan amended this designation by defining these areas as Areas of High Amenity.

It is intended that the Landscape Character Assessment will be the main guiding force into the future for the assessment of developments within County Kilkenny. However it is intended to retain the designation of Areas of High Amenity within the Development Plan. This is to allow the development of the Landscape Character Assessment policies in a historical policy context. As with all areas of the county a high standard of design and siting will be required for all development in the Areas of High Amenity.

8.3.2 Views and Prospects

There is a need to protect and conserve views and prospects adjoining public roads and river valleys throughout the county where these views are of high amenity value. In conserving views, it is not proposed that this should give rise to the prohibition of development along these routes but development, where permitted, should not seriously hinder or obstruct these views and should be designed and located to minimise their impact. The views and prospects to be preserved and protected are contained in Appendix F to the Plan and are shown on Figure 8.1.

POLICY

- **H52 To preserve and improve places or areas from which views or prospects of special amenity value exist, as identified in Appendix F.**

8.3.3 Landscape Character Assessment:

A Landscape Character Assessment report was prepared for County Kilkenny in 2003 (in accordance with the Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2000). This complete document is attached in Appendix C. In summary, the Landscape Character Assessment divided the

county into four broad categories of landscape unit types – i.e. the identified landscape character areas with similar physical and visual characteristics were combined to define the major landscape areas in the County. These broad landscape areas are:

1) Upland Areas,
2) Lowland Areas,
3) River Valleys, and
4) Transitional Areas.

These are identified in Map 1 of the Landscape Character Assessment (Document 3) which is incorporated into this Development Plan as Figure 8.3.

POLICY

- **H53 Seek to preserve and protect the landscape character, quality and distinctiveness of County Kilkenny.**
- **H54 Assess developments having regard to the guidance set out in the Landscape Character Assessment. Proposed developments should be consistent with the various landscape policies outlined for each landscape character area specified in the this plan whilst also seeking to minimise their visual impact, particularly in areas designated as sensitive and vulnerable landscapes.**
- **H55 To require that any necessary assessments, including visual impact assessments, are made when undertaking, authorising or approving development.**

In the process of reviewing the recommendations of the Landscape Character Assessment, the Council has incorporated the following policies into the plan for assessing development proposals in each of the broad landscape area types.

8.3.3.1 Policies for Upland Areas

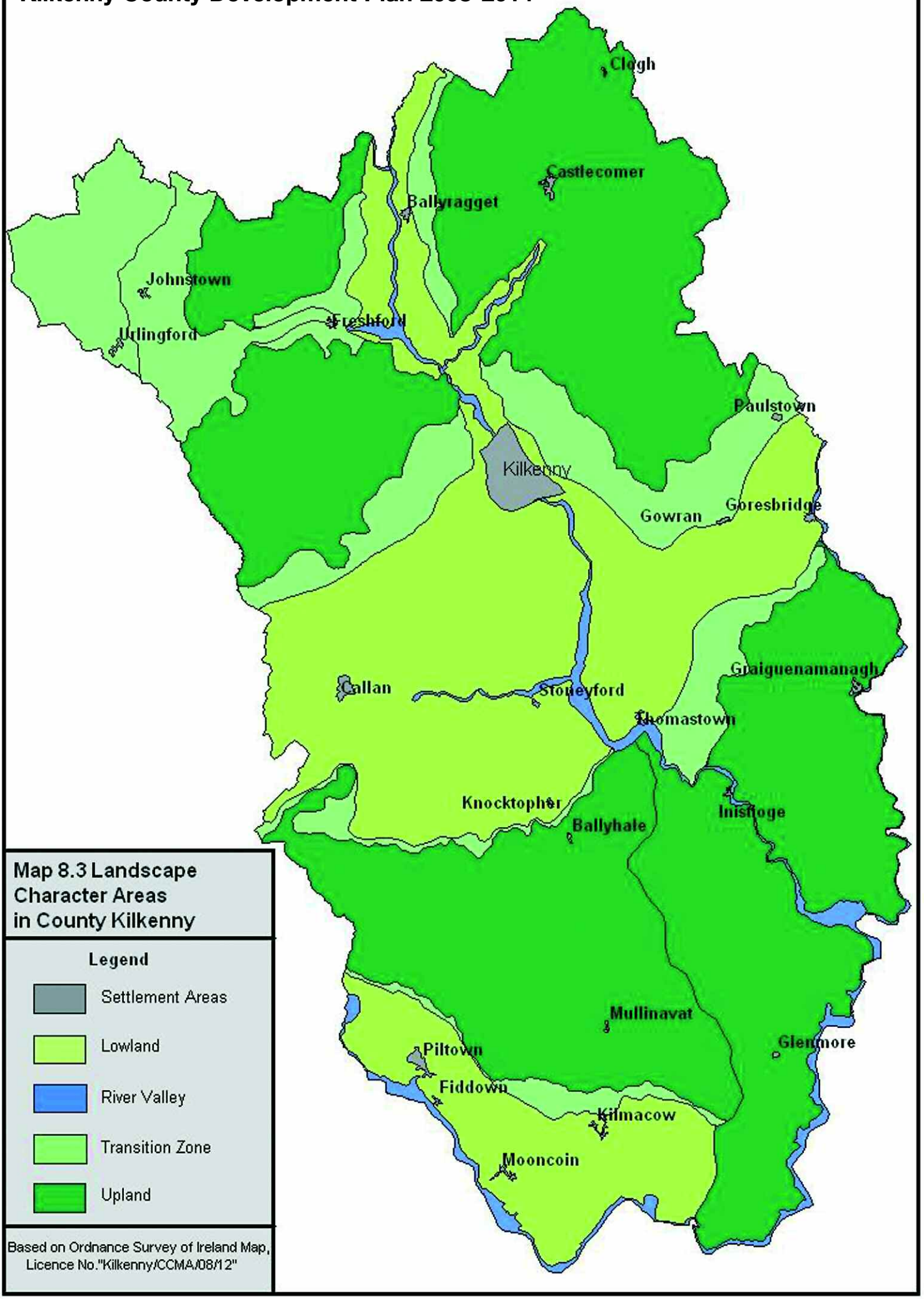
H56 To consider development on steep slopes, ensuring that it will not have a disproportionate or dominating visual impact on the surrounding environment as seen from areas of the public realm.

H57 To ensure that development will not have a disproportionate visual impact (due to excessive bulk, scale or inappropriate siting) and will not significantly interfere or detract from scenic upland vistas, as identified in the Development Plan, when viewed from areas nearby scenic routes, viewpoints or settlements.

H58 To facilitate developments that have a functional and locational natural resource requirement to be situated on steep or elevated sites (e.g. reservoir, telecommunications or wind energy structures) with reference to the appropriate County strategies currently in place, which ensure that any residual adverse visual impacts are minimised or mitigated.

H59 To maintain the visual integrity of areas, which have retained a predominantly undisturbed upland character.

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014



H60 To have particular regard to potential impacts of new development on any sensitive upland areas.

H61 To facilitate appropriate development that reflects the scale, character and sensitivities of the local landscape.

H62 The difficulty of establishing and maintaining screening vegetation shall be a material consideration when evaluating proposals for development within sensitive areas of the uplands.

8.3.3.2 Policies for Lowland Areas

H63 To recognise that the lowlands are made up of a variety of working landscapes that are critical resources for sustaining the economic and social well-being of the County.

H64 To recognise that this policy area contains the majority of the County's population. These also incorporate most of the major national primary and regional roads.

H65 To continue to permit development that can utilise existing infrastructure, whilst taking account of local absorption opportunities provided by the landscape and prevailing vegetation.

H66 To continue to facilitate appropriate development in a manner that respects the scale, character and sensitivities of the landscape, recognising the need for sustainable settlement pattern and economic activity within the County.

H67 To recognise that in this low lying open environment, tall and bulky development sometimes can have a disproportionate impact against the landscape particularly when viewed from the predominantly low lying areas of the public realm. Visually obtrusive and/or insensitive development shall be discouraged in such instances.

8.3.3.3 Policies for River Valleys

H68 To direct new development whenever possible towards the vicinity of existing structures and mature vegetation.

H69 To ensure that development will not detract from scenic vistas, especially from bridges, as identified in the development plan, and visible from relevant scenic routes and settlements.

H70 To continue to permit development that can utilise existing structures, settlement areas and infrastructure, whilst taking account of the visual absorption opportunities provided by existing topography and vegetation.

H71 To control development that will adversely affect distinctive linear sections of river valleys, especially open floodplains, when viewed from relevant scenic routes and settlements.

H72 To facilitate appropriate development that reflects the scale, character and sensitivities of the local landscape.

8.3.3.4 Policies for Transitional Areas

H73 To maintain the visual integrity of areas, which have retained a predominantly undisturbed upland character.

H74 To facilitate appropriate development that reflects the scale, character and sensitivities of the local landscape recognising the need for sustainable patterns and economic activity within the County.

H75 To recognise that the lowlands are made up of a variety of working landscapes that are critical resources for sustaining the economic and social well-being of the County.

H76 To continue to permit development that can utilise existing infrastructure, whilst taking account of local absorption opportunities provided by the landscape and prevailing vegetation

8.4 Built Heritage

Built heritage includes all built features, buildings, archaeological sites, industrial archaeology, and structures such stone walls and bridges.

POLICY

- **H77 To conserve and enhance the built heritage of County Kilkenny.**

8.4.1 Archaeological Heritage

The principles set out in the *Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage* (1999) provide a framework for the policies to be included in relation to archaeological heritage. The archaeological heritage includes National Monuments in the care of the State, archaeological and architectural monuments and sites in the Record of Monuments and Places and the Register of Historic Monuments, zones of archaeological potential in Historic Towns; the underwater archaeological heritage, including Historic Wrecks; unknown and unrecorded archaeological sites (including subsurface elements with no visible surface remains); potential sites located in the vicinity of large complexes of site or monuments, present or former wetlands, unenclosed land, rivers or lakes, or the inter-tidal zone.

The National Monuments Acts 1930 – 2004 provide for the protection of the archaeological heritage. The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) was established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 and structures, features, objects or sites listed in this Record are known as Recorded Monuments.

As well as extending protection to all known sites, now identified as Recorded Monuments, the National Monuments Acts 1930 – 2004 extends protection to all previously unknown archaeological items and sites that are uncovered through ground disturbance or the accidental discovery of sites located underwater. Where necessary, the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government will issue preservation orders to ensure protection is afforded to sites believed to be under threat.

(Please consult the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government's Record of Monuments and Places for the location of Recorded Monuments and Zones of Archaeological Potential in County Kilkenny.)

8.4.1.1 Zones of Archaeological Potential

Kilkenny has a rich archaeological heritage which ranges from megalithic tombs, to early ecclesiastical enclosures, medieval earthworks and buildings, and industrial archaeology. Ballyragget, Callan, Castlecomer, Dungarvan, Freshford, Gowran, Graignamanagh, Inistioge, Kells, Knocktopher, Thomastown are of particular archaeological significance with very important medieval structures surviving intact above ground and the potential of archaeological finds below ground.

These towns have Zones of Archaeological Potential delineated by the National Monuments Section of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG), around their cores to protect their significant archaeological heritage. The Record of Monuments and Places should be consulted in this regard. All development proposals within the Zones of Archaeological Potential or which relate to Recorded Monuments and Places must be referred to the National Monuments Advisory Service of the DoEHLG.

8.4.1.2 Industrial Archaeology

Kilkenny has a wealth of industrial archaeological sites, sites of past industrial activity. This includes sites and machinery relating to extractive industries (e.g. mines and quarries), manufacturing (e.g. corn and textile mills), service industries (e.g. main drainage, water supply, gas, electricity), power (windmills, watermills, steam engines) and transport and communications (e.g. roads, bridges, railways, canals, harbours, airfields). Although some of this heritage extends back to prehistoric times, most of what now survives relates to the last 250 years, the period during which Ireland became progressively industrialised.

An Industrial Archaeology Survey of County Kilkenny (1990) was commissioned by Kilkenny County Council and this identified significant sites which were added to the Record of Protected Structures.

The Draft County Heritage Plan has identified an action to undertake a review of mining heritage structures and features, and to use this as a pilot for the review of the Industrial Archaeological Survey.

ACTION
In partnership with the Kilkenny Heritage Forum, to carry out a review of mining heritage, structures and features and to use this as a pilot for the review of the Industrial Archaeological Survey.

8.4.1.3 Underwater Archaeology

Wrecks and underwater archaeological objects do not appear on the Record. However much archaeology exists underwater and it does form part of the archaeological heritage.

8.4.2 The Record of Monuments and Places

The record for the County was established under section 12.3 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994. It identifies sites and monuments and areas within the county which were known when this section of the Act became statutory in December 1997. The record consists of two documents i) a set of constraint maps and ii) a list. Previously unidentified monuments, sites and areas will come to light from time to time and will be included in updates of the record.

POLICY

- **H78 Protect and enhance archaeological sites, monuments (including their setting), underwater archaeology, including those that are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places, and in the Urban Archaeological Survey of County Kilkenny or newly discovered sub-surface archaeological remains.**
- **H79 To ensure the preservation in-situ, or preservation by record of:**
  (a) The archaeological monuments included in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under section 12 of the National monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 and in the Urban Archaeological Survey of County Kilkenny.
  (b) Any other sites and features of historical or archaeological interest.
  (c) Any subsurface archaeological features that may be discovered during the course of infrastructural/development works.
- **H80 Provide guidance to developers and property owners regarding the archaeological implications of a proposed development.**
- **H81 Promote pre-planning consultations in relation to the archaeological heritage with the planning authority and with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in its capacity of being charged with the implementation of the National Monuments Acts.**
- **H82 To require an appropriate archaeological assessment to be carried out in respect of any proposed development likely to have an impact on a Recorded Monument, a Zone of Archaeological Potential, or their settings.**
- **H83 To ensure the protection of archaeological material in situ by ensuring that only minimal impact on archaeological layers is allowed.**
- **H84 To require that sites of archaeological interest shall be subject to archaeological investigations and recording according to best practice, in advance of redevelopment where preservation in situ is not feasible.**

- **H85 Facilitate the dissemination of the results of archaeological excavation in a timely and appropriate manner.**
- **H86 To acknowledge the importance of underwater archaeology by requiring that any proposed developments that may have implications for the underwater heritage shall be subject to an underwater archaeological assessment in advance of works.**
- **H87 Facilitate and where feasible create public rights of way to sites of archaeological and historical interest and to National Monuments in state and Local Authority ownership in the county. The Council will also seek the preservation, maintenance and improvement of all existing right of ways to such areas where appropriate.**
- **H88 Require the retention of surviving medieval plots and street patterns in the villages and towns of Kilkenny and to facilitate the recording of evidence of ancient boundaries, layouts etc. in the course of development.**
- **H89 To facilitate the implementation of conservation plans[8] prepared with the support of the County Council over the lifetime of this plan.**
- **H90 To ensure that development in the vicinity of a Recorded Monument or Zone of Archaeological Potential does not seriously detract from the setting of the feature, and is sited and designed appropriately.**

8.4.3 Historic Graveyards

The historic graveyards of Kilkenny, in addition to being the resting places of our ancestors, are an important part of the heritage of the county. They contain a wealth of architectural and archaeological features and are refuges for many species of plant and animal. A survey of historic graveyards was carried out in 2005, entitled 'The Historic Graveyards of the City and County of Kilkenny: An Inventory'.

Most historic graveyards are afforded legal protection through the National Monuments (Amendment) Acts or the Planning and Development Acts.

POLICY

- **H91 Conserve and protect historic graveyards and churches within Kilkenny and to encourage their maintenance in accordance with conservation principles and as resources allow.**
- **H92 To continue to support and assist communities in the care and conservation of historic graveyards through the Historic Graveyards Grants Scheme.**

8.4.4 Architectural Heritage

County Kilkenny is rich in structures and places of historic and architectural value that are symbols of the social, economic and cultural development of the county and which contribute to its essential character. *An Introduction to the*

[8] A conservation plan is a document which explains why a site is significant and how that significance will be retained in any future use, alteration, development or repair. Conservation plans provide a framework for the care and management of sites of heritage significance.

Architectural Heritage of County Kilkenny was published by the NIAH in 2006, and this offers an illustrated introduction to the architecture of the county. Part IV of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 sets out the statutory provisions for protecting the architectural heritage which includes a requirement to:

1. Include in the development plan a Record of Protected Structures.
2. Include in the development plan an objective to consider the designation of Architectural Conservation Areas.

8.4.4.1 Record of Protected Structures

Each planning authority has a statutory responsibility, under the Planning and Development Act 2000, to include a Record of Protected Structures (RPS) in its Development Plan.

A Protected Structure, unless otherwise stated in the RPS, includes the interior of the structure, the land lying within its curtilage, any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors, plus all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of any of these structures. Structures, or parts of structures, can be added to the Record if they are deemed of special interest under one or more of the following headings: architectural, artistic, historic, archaeological, cultural, scientific, social, technical.

Guidance on the categories of special interest for considering the inclusion of protected structures in the RPS is given in Section 2.5.4 to 2.5.20 of the 'Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2004' issued by the Department of the Environment Heritage and local Government.

The term 'protected' is defined in the 2000 Planning and Development Act as including 'conservation, preservation and improvement compatible with maintaining the character and interest of the structure or part thereof'. Therefore, works which would, in the opinion of the Council, have material effect on the character of the protected structure, require planning permission. Owners or occupiers of a protected structure may seek a Declaration under Section 57 (2) setting out which works would materially affect the character. Section 57(10) (b) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 provides that permission may only be granted for the demolition of a protected structure or a proposed protected structure in exceptional circumstances.

There are now approximately 700 buildings, structures and features listed in the RPS and the Record will continue to be added to as structures, buildings and features of special interest are identified and as resources permit. The Record of Protected Structures (as correct at time of publication) is listed in Appendix G. An up-to-date RPS, incorporating any additions or deletions within the lifetime of this plan, will be maintained on the Council's website or can be checked at the Planning Department in County Hall.

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) has been completed by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, for County Kilkenny. Descriptions and appraisals of over 2000 structures can be viewed at the NIAH website. The Council will respond to the Ministerial recommendation made in 2006 to consider structures included in the survey and rated Regional and above for inclusion in the RPS and additions will be made to the RPS on a phased basis.

POLICY

- **H93 Ensure the protection of the architectural heritage of County Kilkenny by including all structures considered to be of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest in the Record of Protected Structures.**
- **H94 To have regard to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government in 2004 when assessing proposals for development affecting a protected structure**
- **H95 To encourage the sympathetic retention, reuse and rehabilitation of protected structures and their setting.**
- **H96 To promote principles of best practice in conservation and the use of appropriate materials and repair techniques through the administration of the Conservation Grants Scheme funded by The Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government.**
- **H97 Ensure the protection of the architectural heritage through promoting the importance of regular maintenance of structures contained within the Record of Protected Structures.**
- **H98 Provide assistance to owners of protected structures in undertaking essential repairs and maintenance by the provision of relevant information.**
- **H99 Promote by example the principles of best practice in conservation of the built heritage through the custodianship of Protected Structures in the Council's ownership/care.**
- **H100 To protect elements of designed landscapes of special interest located within the attendant grounds of Protected Structures, including boundary features.**
- **H101 To require an architectural impact assessment/conservation method statement for developments within the grounds of country house estates which are Protected Structures.**

ACTION

- **To respond to the Ministerial recommendation to include in the Record of Protected Structures, structures which have been identified as being of Regional, National or International significance in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage survey of the city and county published in 2006.**
- **To carry out a review of the Record of Protected Structures.**

8.4.4.2 Architectural Conservation Areas

The Planning and Development Act, 2000 provides for the inclusion of objectives for preserving the character of places, areas, groups of structures or townscapes where the planning authority is of the opinion that such an area:

(a) is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or
(b) contributes to the appreciation of protected structures.

Such areas are designated as Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA's). Guidance on the categories of special interest for considering the designation of Architectural conservation Areas is given in Sections 3.3 and 3.4 of the 'Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2004'.

There are ACA's within Gowran, Freshford, Inistioge and Ballyragget which were identified during the preparation of Local Area Plans for these villages.

It is the purpose of the Architectural Conservation Area designation to preserve the general character of the area with regard to building scale, proportions, historical plot sizes, materials, building lines, and height, historic street paving and street furniture, as well as general use.

Works to the exterior of a building within an ACA which, in the opinion of the local authority, would affect the character of the area, would require planning permission. Guidance on the criteria the planning authority will use to assess proposals for new development and proposals for demolition within an Architectural Conservation Area are given in section 3.10 of the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines, 2004, issued by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government.

A detailed survey, character appraisal, and set of policies and objectives have been produced for each ACA. The identification of new ACA's and the modification of existing ACA's may be proposed during the lifetime of the Plan. The re-assessment of existing or the designation of new ACA's will form part of each Local Area Plan.

POLICY

- **H102 To ensure the preservation of the special character of each ACA particularly with regard to building scale, proportions, historical plot sizes, building lines, height, general land use, building materials, historic street furniture and paving.**
- **H103 To have regard to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines, issued by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government when assessing proposals for development affecting the character of an ACA**
- **H104 To consider the designation of Architectural Conservation Areas where appropriate and provide a local policy framework for the preservation of the character of these areas.**
- **H105 To ensure the retention, repair rather than replacement and the regular maintenance of original/early features in buildings which contribute to the character of an ACA such as chimney stacks, roof coverings, roof profiles, external wall treatments, doors and windows, shopfronts and pubfronts and to ensure the use of appropriate materials and repair techniques when repairs are being carried out.**
- **H106 To ensure that inappropriate materials such as windows, doors and rainwater goods constructed in aluminium or uPVC are not introduced to buildings within ACAs.**
- **H107 To encourage high quality, contemporary design and materials where appropriate when new buildings are being introduced into an ACA and the retention of the historic scale and plot size**
- **H108 To ensure the preservation of the character of an ACA when assessing proposals for advertising**

- **H109 To retain historic items of street furniture where they contribute to the character of the ACA and to protect historic items of street furniture and roadside items as appropriate.**
- **H110 To ensure the conservation of historic shopfronts and pubfronts. Where replacement is necessary, to encourage the introduction of shopfronts and pubfronts of contemporary high quality design and materials.**
- **H111 To seek the retention of mature trees/significant planting (those in good condition) which contribute to the character of each ACA where appropriate.**

ACTION

- **To designate Architectural Conservation Areas as appropriate and to provide a local policy framework for the preservation of the character of the designated areas.**

8.4.4.3 Townscapes

Formal townscape is about placing the everyday parts of a town in a layout of relationships which we can identify, understand and enjoy. The formal layout of some towns is easily readable. However there are also, in other towns, carefully composed arrangements of buildings and spaces placed in such a way that their roles are much less obvious but equally effective.

The use of Local Area Plans (LAP's), Village Design Statements, or other appropriate mechanisms, will be encouraged to integrate new development within the existing built fabric.

POLICY
H112 To protect, conserve and where necessary restore or enhance, the quality, character and distinctiveness of the townscapes of the county.

8.4.4.4 Street Furniture and Roadside Features

Items of street furniture are an important part of our built and cultural heritage. They are also important elements in establishing the character and interest of an Architectural Conservation Area. Such items could include the following; lamp standards, seats and benches, bollards, railings, street signs, freestanding or wall mounted post boxes, telephone kiosks, horse troughs, water pumps, drinking fountains, jostle stones, milestones, paving, kerbstones, cobbles and setts, pavement lights, coal hole covers, weighbridges, statues, plaques and other monuments.

POLICY
- **H113 Protect and enhance historic items of street furniture and roadside features, as appropriate.**

8.4.4.5 Features of Cultural Heritage Interest

Features of cultural heritage interest such as mass rocks, mass paths, rag trees etc are locally significant and add to the distinctive character and sense of place of an area.

POLICY

- **H114 To preserve, protect and where necessary enhance, significant heritage objects such as mass rocks and holy wells and/or other significant cultural features that form part of the cultural heritage of the County.**

8.4.4.6 The Vernacular Built Heritage

The vernacular built heritage consists of buildings and settlements created by the people from local materials and resources to meet local needs following local traditions. The response to the local environment gave rise to construction techniques which vary from region to region, often with great subtlety. This type of building is often undervalued because it does not represent 'great architecture' and because of associations with poverty and a perception that the buildings have become obsolete. The value of these buildings lies in the regional distinctiveness and identity that they confer on a place and their importance as an embodiment of the accumulated wisdom and cultural traditions of the people who built and lived in them.

One of the most vulnerable elements of the built vernacular tradition in County Kilkenny (as elsewhere in Ireland) is the tradition of thatch. This vulnerability has been recognised and recommendations made to address it in the recently published 'Report on the Present and Future Protection of Thatched Structures in Ireland' (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2005). This document has been considered when devising policies and actions to safeguard the vernacular built heritage of Co. Kilkenny.

POLICY

- **H115 To apply the conservation principles and guidelines in practice as set out in the ICOMOS Charter on the Built Vernacular Heritage (Mexico 1999) when considering proposals to adapt vernacular buildings to meet contemporary living standards and needs.**
- **H116 To promote the retention and re-use of the vernacular built heritage through increasing public awareness of its potential for re-use and its adaptability to change.**

ACTION

- **To respond to the Ministerial recommendation for addition to the RPS of all vernacular structures of Regional rating and above included in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage for County Kilkenny.**
- **To carry out a review of the existing surveys of thatched structures carried out in the county in the 1990's.**
- **To consider for inclusion in the RPS all thatched structures of special interest.**

8.4.4.7 Farm Villages of South Kilkenny

A number of villages in South Kilkenny can be considered distinctive on a national level due to their nucleated and clustered settlement pattern. These are collectively known as the farm villages of South Kilkenny. An essay by Jack Burtchaell entitled "The South Kilkenny Farm Villages" published in 1988 in the collection of historical geography essays entitled *New Ground* (Smyth *et al,* 1988), identifies these villages and provides detail on their origins and significance. A cultural heritage assessment of the farm village of Listrolin was undertaken in 2004. The aim of the study was to establish an understanding of the cultural heritage of the village, assess its significance, analyse the factors affecting its significance, and make recommendations for the future.

Although Burtchaell identified a total of 57 such villages, six have been identified as being worthy of further study, namely: Listrolin, Licketstown, Glengrant, Luffany, Corludy, and Portnahully located in the parish of Mooncoin.

The Council will examine measures to protect the importance of these farm villages.

ACTION

- **To investigate the possibility of preparing Conservation Plans and possibly the designation where appropriate of ACAs for the villages of Licketstown, Glengrant, Luffany, Corludy, and Portnahully (located in the parish of Mooncoin) and Listrolin (Mullinavat parish), and to be proactive in encouraging preservation of the character of these unique village settlements.**

8.4.5 Floodlighting

The floodlighting of buildings and structures is often regarded as a means of highlighting the significance of a structure and reflects the substantial pride that communities have in individual heritage sites and structures. Notwithstanding this, floodlighting has the potential to negatively impact on both natural and built heritage. It can contribute to light pollution, impinge on protected species such as bats, and affect the architectural and archaeological significance of a site.

A successful lighting scheme will relate to the architectural form of the building and will sensitively utilise the detailing and features of such buildings with low wattage light sources and discreet light fixtures. It will also minimise the spillage of potential obtrusive light to adjacent areas and will avoid unnecessary over lighting, which can alter the appearance of a building or area. Successful schemes may also combine exterior lighting with interior lighting; however, in certain cases interior lighting only may be appropriate.

Proposals for lighting schemes should include details of the size, type, siting and number of fixtures, as well as wattage, colour of light source, light pattern and potential impact on the building material.

To avoid conflict, proposals should demonstrate how lighting schemes would enhance and protect the character of an area or group of protected structures and/or co-ordinate with any adjacent lighting schemes. Powerful wide angled

over lighting which can diminish the architectural features of a building or area will be discouraged.

POLICY

- **H117 To require an appropriate assessment of the potential impacts of proposals to floodlight buildings and structures.**
- **H118 To ensure the protection of the special character and setting of protected structures and of an ACA when considering proposals for floodlighting.**
- **H119 To ensure the avoidance of the spillage of potential obtrusive light to adjacent areas and to avoid unnecessary over lighting.**
- **H120 To provide guidance to developers and others in relation to floodlighting**

8.4.6 Place names

Place names are a very important part of our cultural heritage. They provide a link to the past and reflect the natural, built and cultural heritage of a locality. It is important that place names of all new developments reflect the local topography, history, culture, ecology or significant people and events and incorporate traditional and Irish language place names from the locality. Resources to aid in the naming of new developments include Foras na Gaeilge's booklet entitled "*Name your place – Logainmneacha Cuid dar nOidhreacht*" and the Placenames Commission.

POLICY

- **H121 To preserve historic place names and historic street names.**
- **H122 To ensure that the names of all new developments shall reflect local historical, heritage or cultural associations.**
- **H123 To encourage the use of bi-lingual and Irish-Language place names and signs.**
- **H124 To place a condition on grants of planning permission requiring the agreement of place names between the developer and the Planning Authority.**
- **H125 To provide guidance to developers and others in relation to naming of new developments.**

9 Infrastructure and Environment

9.1 Introduction

It is the aim of the Council, through the efficient management of a wide range of engineering services and infrastructure to provide for the sustainable social and economic development of the county. These services include the following:

- Transport,
- Energy,
- Telecommunications,
- Environment,
- Water Services, and
- Fire Services.

The primary objective of these services is to provide a safe environment and a range of services which are essential for the health and safety of the population of the county. In providing these services the Council will comply with the relevant national and E.U. legislative requirements.

9.2 Climate Change

The Council has had regard to the *National Climate Change Strategy* (2007-2012) in framing its policies and objectives in this development plan and will seek to play its part towards the achievement of the national targets set out in therein. Two principles as espoused in the NSS have been applied to reduce transport-related energy consumption;

- The formulation of a settlement strategy which is intended to guide urban and rural settlement patterns and communities to reduce distance from employment, services and leisure facilities and to make use of existing and future investments in public services; including public transport.
- Maximising access to, and encouraging use of, public transport, cycling and walking.

In addition, Council support of renewable technologies and encouragement of more sustainable energy-efficient building methods will further reduce our dependence on non-renewable energy sources. All new developments must allow for Climate Change as set out in the GDSDS Technical Documents, Volume 5, Climate Change and must take proper account of its potential effects on the existing flood regime where necessary.

ACTION:

- **To prepare a County Climate Change Action Plan over the course of this Development Plan.**

The Council will investigate the preparation of a County Climate Change Action Plan over the course of this Development Plan.

9.3 Transport

Transport plays a central role in the economy. The development of an efficient strategic transport system in line with national policy is essential to the future economic, social and physical development of the county. Transport policy and planning, and land use policy are fundamentally linked.

9.3.1 Transport 21

Transport 21, published in 2005, is the Government's capital investment framework through which the transport system in Ireland will be developed over the period 2006 to 2015. *Transport 21* takes account of the major economic, social and demographic changes in Ireland over the past decade, the impact of these changes on transport demand, the strategic policies developed for areas relating to and impacting on transport, the National
Spatial Strategy (NSS) and the need to provide a modern transport network for the future.

A core aspect of the approach is the enhancement of connectivity at national, regional and local levels. The availability of an efficient, predictable and sustainable national transport network is a key factor underpinning economic growth and competitiveness and in improving quality of life.

Kilkenny County Council recognises the importance of walking and that an essential element of any integrated transport system is to provide for the needs of cyclists and pedestrians. The increased provision of cycle lanes and safer facilities for pedestrian is identified as a key action in the Government's *Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland* and has been enshrined in the European Charter of Pedestrian Rights.

POLICY

- **IE1 Develop an integrated sustainable system of transport for the county involving road, rail, bus, cycling and walking.**
- **IE2 To facilitate the development of alternative transport initiatives particularly in rural areas in order to reduce isolation and promote social inclusion.**
- **IE3 Co-operate with the National Roads Authority in the development of an integrated road network for the County.**
- **IE4 To improve facilities for pedestrians and access facilities for people with special mobility needs in line with the aims of the European Charter of Pedestrian Rights.**

9.4 Road Network

9.4.1 National Road Network

The National road network through the county caters for the efficient and safe movement of long distance traffic through the country. The network also provides strategic links for the towns within the county and within the South-East region as a whole. In order to protect the investment in these roads and to maintain their primary function in an era of rapid growth in car ownership, it will be necessary to restrict access and junctions to the network to a minimum.

The Councils recognise the strategic importance of the motorway network within the county, in particular at locations where the motorway network, the national road network and rail network converge. The Council will seek to harness the advantages of such locations.

In formulating policy in relation to the County's road network, regard has been had to the National Roads Authority policy statement "*Development Management and Access to National Roads*".

POLICY

- **IE5 To safeguard the capacity of the National Road network within the county by the restriction of access points to the network and the significant intensification of existing access points.**
- **IE6 To preserve free from development proposed road realignment/improvement lines and associated corridors where such development would prejudice the implementation of National Roads Authority or County Council plans.**
- **IE7 To continue to implement the Government's strategy for road safety.**
- **IE8 To maintain, develop and improve existing roads and to construct new roads as needs arise and resources permit.**
- **IE9 To assist and facilitate the development of the National road network in accordance with Transport 21 and with the policy of the National Roads Authority as it applies to the provision of national routes from Dublin to Cork (N/M8) and Dublin to Waterford (N9 & N10) and their ancillary roads and services.**
- **IE10 To co-operate with the National Roads Authority to identify the need for service areas and/or rest areas for motorists along the route of the N8/N9 dual carriageway and to assist in the implementation of suitable proposals for provision of service and/or rest areas.**

9.4.2 Development Assessment Criteria

New development requiring direct access to the National Primary and National Secondary Roads outside the 50 kph speed limits within the County shall be restricted to the following categories:

1. A dwelling for a full-time farmer on a National Route
2. An existing inhabited dwelling in need of replacement
3. A second family dwelling on a farm where this is required for management of the farm
4. A further dwelling on a Council plot for a family member, provided access is taken from an agreed suitable access point
5. Industrial development where it is locationally tied to a fixed natural resource

Permission may be granted in the above instances subject to the following stipulations:

a) That an alternative site with access onto a minor road is not available.
b) That the proposed development would not constitute a traffic hazard.

c) That the development would not:
   i. create a public health nuisance, or
   ii. detract from the visual amenities and character of the area
d) Access to the development shall comply with the standards and requirements set down by the National Roads Authority *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges* (NRA- DMRB) as published by the NRA Dublin.

In all cases the onus will be put on the developer to provide evidence that an exception is justified.

9.4.3 Regional Routes

Regional roads provide important strategic linkages within the county and to the National road network and other counties. They serve rural areas and help to advance rural development and diversification, indigenous industry, local enterprise agriculture agribusiness and tourism.

In order to protect the investment in these roads and to maintain their strategic function it will be necessary to exercise control over new development requiring access to these roads by restricting new access points to a minimum in the interests of safety. Planned investment will enhance the role and capacity of these routes.

POLICY

- **IE11 Exercise control over new developments requiring direct access to regional roads by restricting new access points to a minimum to preserve their strategic function and in the interests of traffic safety.**

9.4.4 Local Roads

In its programme of spending over the plan period, the County Council will prioritise its spending on local roads which are deficient according to the strategic benefits and improved traffic and pedestrian safety which will result. The Council will have regard to the transportation needs of development generally, particularly that associated with agribusiness, tourism and the need to promote rural development and diversification in the prioritising of its spending.

9.4.5 Road Improvement Projects

Transport 21 identified significant levels of investment to be made in the national road network in County Kilkenny and includes the development by 2010 and 2015 of the following routes in their entirety to motorway/high quality dual carriageway standard;

- Cork to Dublin (N/M8) Completion date 2010
- Waterford to Dublin (N9) Completion date 2010
- Waterford City Bypass (N25) Completion date 2010
- Rosslare to Waterford (N25) Completion date 2015

Further major improvements on other national primary routes outlined in Transport 21 within the county include the N24 and N25 routes, which are an integral part of the western corridor from Sligo through Limerick to Rosslare.

The Regional Planning Guidelines identified other National and Regional Roads which provide critical intra-regional and inter-regional linkages. Improvements to this road network will enhance connectivity between the Hubs, County Towns and neighbouring regions. The priorities as identified by the RPGs in Kilkenny are:

- N76 Kilkenny to Clonmel
- N77 Kilkenny to Durrow
- R700 Kilkenny to New Ross

Specifically, it is an objective to complete the following major road improvement projects over the plan period:

National Primary Routes

a) To complete the N8/M8 route (Cullahill to Cashel) to Motorway or Dual carriageway standard.
b) To complete the N9 (Waterford to Dublin) to motorway /dual carriageway standard.
c) To complete the Waterford bypass and second river crossing along the N25 to dual carriageway standard.
d) The upgrading of the N25 route between Waterford and New Ross with a bypass for New Ross.
e) The completion of the upgrading of the N24 Waterford to Carrick-on-Suir route including a bypass for Mooncoin.
f) Continue with the pavement improvements on the existing N9, N10, N24 and N25 routes.
g) Improvement of the existing N10 Ring road, from the Carlow Road Roundabout to the Waterford Road Roundabout.
h) Improvement of the existing N10 from the Carlow Road Roundabout to the Leggetsrath Roundabout.
i) To improve, in accordance with best design standards and in accordance with proper planning, the connectivity between the existing N10 National Primary Route and the proposed N9 link. The location of connection to be decided following full spatial planning, technical and economic evaluation and in consultation with the National Roads Authority.

National Secondary Routes

a) The completion of the outer ring road to Kilkenny City from the N10 Carlow road to the N77 Castlecomer Road
b) The realignment of the N76 Callan to Kilkenny road
c) The realignment of the N77 from the Castlecomer roundabout to the county boundary with Laois
d) To identify and protect a route corridor for the northward extension of the Waterford outer ring via a third river crossing to the N25.

Regional Roads

a) Completion of the relief road for Graiguenamanagh.(R705)

b) Continue the pavement improvement programme for the Regional Road Network
c) To seek an upgrade of the R700 between New Ross and Kilkenny to National Secondary status and to provide a relief road for Thomastown.
d) Improvement of the Kells Road, (R697) from Upper Patrick Street to the N76 Ring Road.
e) To improve substandard sections of regional roads throughout the County, in particular those most heavily trafficked, and those providing access to existing or proposed industrial, residential or commercial developments.
f) To seek an upgrade of the Kilkenny to Urlingford road (R693) to National Secondary status and to improve the road realignment in its entirety.

Local Roads

a) To continue with the restoration and improvement of the local road network within the county under the Multi-Annual Roadworks Programme.
b) To improve substandard sections of local roads throughout the county, in particular those most heavily trafficked, and those providing access to existing or proposed industrial, residential or commercial developments.

9.4.6 Traffic Assessments

All significant development proposals will be required to have transport and traffic assessments and a Road Safety Audit carried out in accordance with the publication "*Traffic Management Guidelines*" published by the DoEHLG/DoT/DTO.

9.5 Public Transport

Government policy as stated in the National Development Plan is to promote a switch from car usage to public transport. This is necessary to promote efficiency, quality of life, competitiveness and environmental sustainability.

Developments which have a large potential impact on trip generation may be required to draw up and implement Mobility Management Plans. Mobility management plans are deemed to be a suitable mechanism by which development can manage the mobility needs of their users and achieve balanced modal split for the trips to/from them.

In line with DTO advice notes the Council considers mobility management to be a suitable mechanism by which new developments can support the objectives of sustainable development and the achievement of reduced car dependency.

Development for which mobility management could be applied includes the following:

- Office
- Office based industry
- Other industry
- Retail (large one-off stores and major town/district centre developments)
- Retail warehousing
- Warehousing and distribution
- Places of education

A mobility management plan may take the form of a formally published document, which outlines its measures and targets. Alternatively it may simply evolve over time as different initiatives are piloted.

POLICY

- **IE12 Support the development of a comprehensive and integrated public transport network in the South-East Region in consultation with the relevant service providers and the Regional Authority.**
- **IE13 Encourage the use of public transport accessible by all, in preference to the private car, both on grounds of sustainability, and on grounds of proper planning and development.**
- **IE14 To facilitate parking provision for tourist buses in towns and villages and at tourist attractions.**

9.5.1 Rail

The county is crossed by four railway lines with a spur from Kilkenny City to connect to the Dublin-Waterford line at Lavistown. Belview Port is served by rail which facilitates the movement of freight.

Passenger Rail

The *Regional Planning Guidelines* (2004) identified a need for the upgrading and redesigning of services between Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow and Dublin to include additional services throughout the day coupled with early morning and late evening trains so as to facilitate business users.

Major investment has taken place with the completion of network resignalling on the Dublin to Waterford intercity line. This improved journey times and safety across the network. Further investment will come on stream with the provision of new rolling stock and this will allow improved service frequencies on a phased basis on all intercity routes. Delivery of these units began in March 2007 and will continue until mid-2008.

Under this investment programme by Iarnroid Eireann it is envisaged that there will be enhanced rail services on the Dublin to Waterford intercity route, with two hourly services during the day. This will allow for improved passenger facilities, in particular commuter and tourist services, which will help to facilitate economic growth and assist in the sustainable development strategy for the county as a whole.

Rail Freight

There is major potential for more innovative and additional carriage of freight via the rail network and the *Regional Planning Guidelines* identified a need for the development of rail cargo depots at Belview and Maddockstown. There are enormous environmental benefits in carrying freight using rail and properly run freight services offer huge potential to industry in the region, particularly within the Belview industrial zone and the Ports. The use of the rail network for freight services will be promoted.

POLICY

- **IE15 Seek to implement the South-East Regional Passenger Transport Strategy 2002-2012.**
- **IE16 Seek the improvement of services to and from Kilkenny City in particular the provision of commuter services between major urban centres and towns within the county, the region and to and from Dublin City for the benefit of the commercial and tourism sectors.**
- **IE17 To protect and reserve free from development the line of the Waterford – New Ross railway.**
- **IE18 To promote and encourage the intensified use and further development of the Rosslare to Limerick rail link for freight and passenger traffic in the interests of promoting sustainable commuting patterns and assisting in the development of the Atlantic Gateways Initiative.**
- **IE19 To assist and promote the development of rail cargo depots and rail connections at Belview and Maddockstown in co-operation with the relevant stakeholders and encourage a move to rail freight.**

9.5.2 Bus & Taxis

In areas of low to medium population, bus-based public transport can offer the most flexible means of providing services both for urban and inter-urban travel and can be introduced within a short time frame and at relatively low cost. Bus Eireann and a number of private operators operate services in County Kilkenny.

Ring a Link Rural Transport Initiative
In 2002 a community transport company, known as Ring a Link, began operations in the three county area of Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary, offering innovative flexible transport services using a 'demand respond transport' (DRT) system. DRT is based on the concept that instead of running a fixed route system, the transport operator will offer flexible routes and services suitable to the area and the prospective customers. Funded by central Government and administered locally, what was originally a pilot project has been put on a permanent footing since 2006. Ring a link is supported by the Rural Transport Initiative of the National Development Plan.

Small public service vehicles (taxis, hackneys, and limousines) are also an important part of the transport infrastructure.

As part of the *Waterford Planning, Land Use and Transportation Study* Kilkenny County Council will co-operate in the development of a high-quality bus-based public transport system in the Waterford City & Environs supported by Park and Ride facilities located north and south of the River.

POLICY

- **IE20 Co-operate with the various public and private agencies responsible for transport services within the County in the provision of new services and supporting infrastructure.**
- **IE21 Support and cooperate in the development of a high-quality bus-based public transport system in the Waterford City & Environs**

- **IE22 Support transport initiatives in rural areas which will help to improve communications and reduce isolation.**
- **IE23 To facilitate the provision of bus shelters as appropriate.**

9.6 Ports & Rivers

The National Development Plan recognises that Ireland's commercial seaports are vital transport arteries, carrying 99% by volume of the island's external trade. The ports of Waterford/Belview and New Ross service the county and the South East region. New Ross Port is Ireland's only inland port, some 32 kms. from the sea on the River Barrow. The port specialises in handling dry and liquid bulk.

9.6.1 Belview

Waterford/Belview has two freight terminals at Belview and at Great Island electricity generating station. The original inner city port is no longer in use as a freight terminal, and Kilkenny County Council supports the redevelopment of the docklands on the northern bank of the River Suir as an extension of Waterford City Centre.

Belview port was developed in 1992 and its subsequent growth has been one of the most significant economic developments in the county in recent times. An Area Action Plan for Belview was completed in 2002, which aimed to provide for portal and industrial development within a planning framework which safeguarded local environmental resources. This Action Area Plan will be updated as part of a separate Local Area Plan.

Belview is served by two railway lines; the Waterford to Rosslare line and the Waterford to New Ross line. Belview has direct access, via the N29 road, to and from National Primary Route N25 (Euroroute E30). The development of a rail cargo depot at Belview with freight and container handling equipment would facilitate the continued improvement of this important regional asset.

Belview has been identified in the Regional Planning Guidelines as containing much potential for the development of an industrial park of regional and national importance due to:

- Proximity to the centre of critical mass at the Regional Gateway – Waterford City
- Proximity to Waterford Institute of Technology and the potential future development of a University of the South-East in Waterford City
- Developing access, telecommunications and energy supply infrastructure
- Proximity to Belview Port and direct access to railway line
- Strong existing industrial base
- Availability of suitable land banks.

POLICY

- **IE24 Facilitate and promote portal development and associated industrial and distribution activities by means of reservation or purchase of land and by the upgrading of access routes.**

- **IE25 Seek the upgrading of intra-regional and national routes giving access to Belview Port.**
- **IE26 Seek the upgrading of those elements of the national rail network which serve Belview and to develop a rail cargo depot with freight and container handling equipment.**
- **IE27 Continue to develop a flagship industrial park of regional and national importance at Belview, in association with the IDA, Waterford Port Authority and other development agencies as appropriate.**

ACTION

- **To prepare a Local Area Plan for the Waterford Environs incorporating the area identified in the Area Action Plan (2002) as Belview Port.**
- **To deliver water supply to the Belview area.**
- **To extend the gas pipeline to Belview.**
- **To extend and improve telecommunications services, particularly broadband, at Belview.**

9.7 Airports

The Council recognises the importance of air travel in improving the attractiveness of the county for industrial, commercial and tourism development. The South-East Regional Airport is located close to Tramore Bay, about six miles by road from Waterford City centre. Aer Arann operates commercial service to the UK and France. The Irish Coast Guard operates an air/sea rescue service from the airport. The Council recognises that Waterford Airport is a valuable asset to the South East region and must be developed to ensure that the South East Region has a viable regional airport. This is important if enhanced regional accessibility to air services is to be provided. To develop the Regional Airport into a strategic asset, the following key components are required:

- The extension of the existing runway to accommodate larger aircraft,
- Improved transport linkages and services between the airport, and the entire South-East Region, i.e. roads and public transport,
- Additional operators offering services from this location.

There is an aerodrome located three miles to the west of Kilkenny City. It is a privately owned public use airfield. Principally it has a leisure use but it does have potential for expansion.

POLICY

- **IE28 Support the continued development of airport facilities and services at the South East Regional Airport to the benefit of industrial commercial and tourism development.**
- **IE29 Support the continued development of airport facilities at Kilkenny aerodrome.**
- **IE30 Facilitate the future development of Kilkenny aerodrome by reserving air corridors as necessary.**

9.8 Energy and Telecommunication Facilities

The availability of energy is of critical importance to facilitate new development. The National Development Plan 2007-2013 sets out policies for the provision of electricity from both renewable and non-renewable sources.

9.8.1 The National Grid

In support of sustainable development and efficient energy utilisation, Kilkenny County Council supports the infrastructural renewal and development of electricity networks in the region, including the overhead lines to provide the required networks, subject to amenity and health considerations.

9.8.2 Gas

Industry needs efficient, reliable, cost effective and environmentally friendly energy. The extension of the natural gas pipelines to the centres of industry and commerce will be an extra boost to the economic growth of the region.

Subject to appropriate commercial and technical evaluation, Kilkenny County Council will support an extension of the gas network to Belview and will support its extension to other significant population centres in the county.

ACTION

- **To secure an extension of the gas network to Belview.**

9.8.3 Renewable Energy

The development of renewable energy sources is a priority at national and European level for both environmental and energy policy reasons. The Council strongly supports national and international incentives for limiting emissions of greenhouse gases and encouraging the development of renewable energy resources. The planning and land use policies in the development plan are intended to promote efficiency in the use of energy, transport and natural resources.

9.8.3.1 Kilkenny Sustainable Energy Forum

The Kilkenny Sustainable Energy Forum was set up in early 2007, as the result of an action identified under the County Development Board Strategy 2002-2012. This Forum is composed of various statutory bodies, non governmental organisations and industry and construction representatives, amongst others.
The Forum aims to promote the use of sustainable energy in Kilkenny, by supporting sustainable energy initiatives, providing best practice examples and through advocacy.

9.8.3.2 Carlow-Kilkenny Energy Agency

The Carlow Kilkenny Energy Agency was established to provide sustainable energy information, support and services to the people of Carlow and Kilkenny, to local businesses and community groups and to the Local Authorities. The objectives of the Agency are achieved through five focus areas:

1. Energy awareness and dissemination campaigns
2. Energy Management for the Councils
3. Energy efficiency and renewable energy projects
4. Sustainable energy training
5. Energy Policy Development

POLICY

- **IE31 Work with all relevant agencies to support the development of alternative forms of energy where such developments are in accordance with the proper planning and land use evaluation of the area.**
- **IE32 Encourage high standards of energy efficiency in all building developments and encouraging developers, owners and tenants to improve the environmental performance of the building stock, including the deployment of renewable energy.**

9.8.3.3 Wind Energy

Kilkenny County Council recognises the need to support the development of renewable energy resources. A Wind Energy Study was carried out by CAAS (Environmental Services) Ltd for Kilkenny County Council in 2003. As part of this Development Plan this Study was reviewed and updated as a Wind Energy Development Strategy. This Strategy advances the information and recommendations of the Wind Energy Study whilst also taking into account the *Wind Energy Atlas of Ireland* (2003) and the *Wind Energy Development Guidelines* published by the DoEHLG in June, 2006.

This Strategy will manage the predicted expansion of wind energy development in a 'plan-led' manner, while ensuring that Kilkenny contributes to national targets for renewable energy. The complete Wind Energy Development Strategy is contained in Appendix D.

As part of this Strategy, a Wind Energy Development Strategy Map was produced (See Figure 9.1), with the methodology based on the step-by-step guidance provided in the *Wind Energy Development Guidelines*. The Wind Energy Development Strategy Map divides the county into 3 separate categories which include areas 'Acceptable in Principle', 'Open for Consideration' and 'Not Normally Permissible'. An assessment of wind energy applications in each of these areas will be guided by the following policies.

POLICY
(i) Allow development in all areas highlighted as being 'Acceptable in Principle'. All permissions shall have a 20-year life and it is anticipated that all windfarm sites within this Strategy Area will be intensified in the future by;-

- Taller turbines with larger swept areas.
- Higher densities (closer spacing of turbines).
- More advanced technology with higher efficiencies of energy capture.

(ii) The boundaries of the current Strategy Areas will be reviewed once substantial wind energy development has occurred within them – with a view to extending the designated 'Acceptable in Principle' areas having regard to:

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008 to 2014

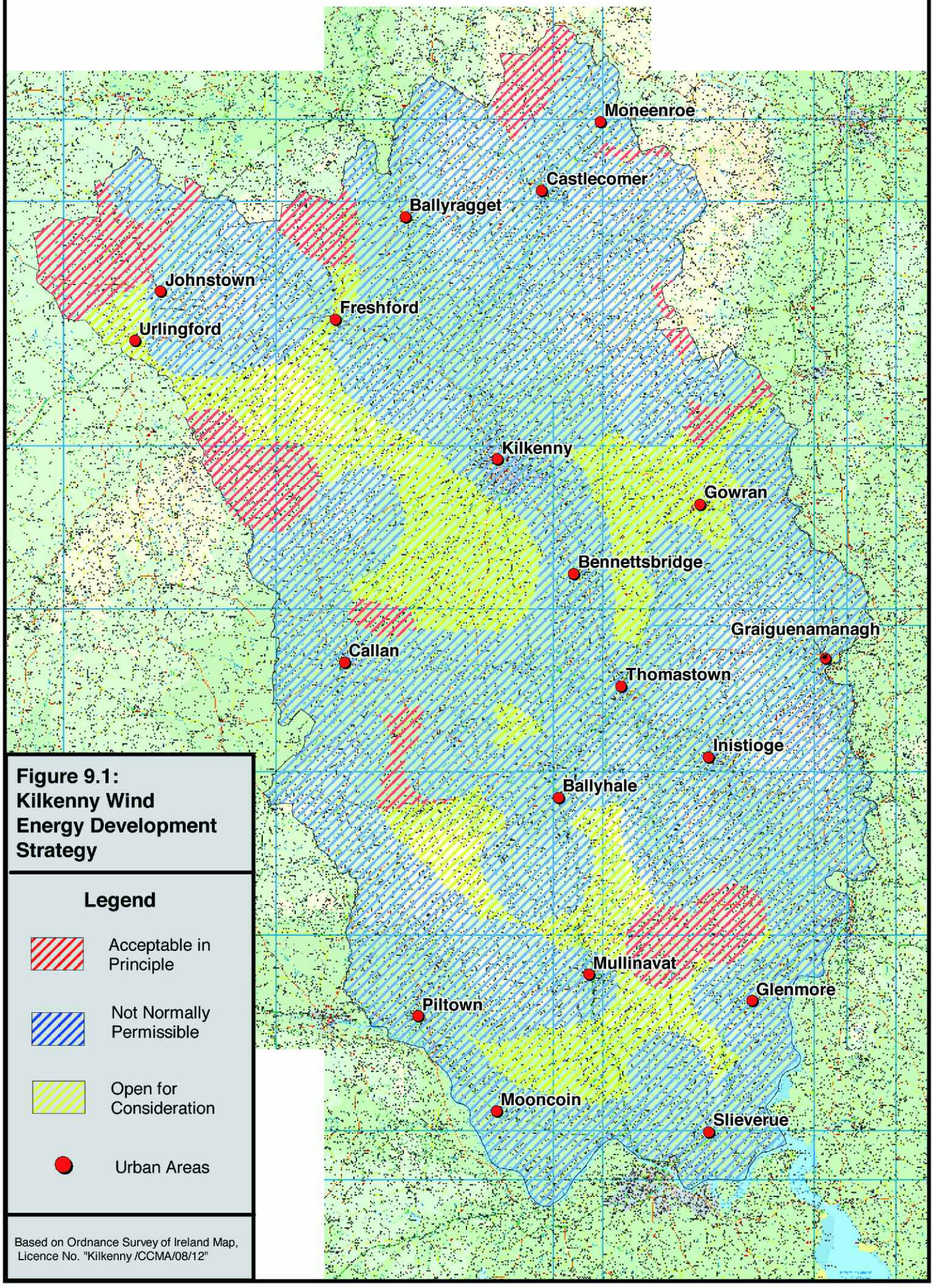


Figure 9.1: Kilkenny Wind Energy Development Strategy

Legend

- Acceptable in Principle
- Not Normally Permissible
- Open for Consideration
- Urban Areas

Based on Ordnance Survey of Ireland Map, Licence No. "Kilkenny /CCMA/08/12"

- The alteration to the landscape character of the area due to the proximity of established windfarm projects.
- The requirements for alternative energy at that time.
- The configuration and availability of grid connections.

In addition, guidance is also provided on different scales of wind energy development. The Council's policy on such development is as follows:

(iii) Large-Scale Wind Energy Developments
The clustering of large-scale wind energy developments will in usual circumstances only be considered in the areas identified on the Wind Energy Map as being 'Acceptable in Principle'. The rationale behind this policy is to minimise the visual impacts of such large scale developments, in addition to effects on the environment of County Kilkenny as a whole, as well as to facilitate appropriate grid connections.

(iv) Small-Scale Wind Energy Developments
The Council recognises that there is growing interest in developing small-scale community based wind energy projects in rural areas, particularly as a means to diversify the rural economy and thereby allowing the local community to benefit directly from the local wind energy resource. In the policy areas identified as being 'Acceptable in Principle' and areas 'Open for Consideration' in the Wind Energy Strategy Map, the following proposals will be considered on a case-by-case basis:

- comprising no more than 5 turbines,
- where the total output is not greater than 5 megawatts,
- where the wind turbine heights do not exceed 30m above ground level measuring to the upper most tip of a vertically extended blade, and
- where the availability of access to the electricity grid is suitably demonstrated.

Any such proposals must also satisfy the necessary technical considerations including visual and noise impacts.

(v) Individual Wind Turbines
It is recognised that landowners in rural areas may wish to harness wind energy for private use. This is considered a reasonable use of renewable natural resources that also provides opportunities to augment farm incomes.

Planning applications for individual wind turbines shall be considered on their merits subject to the general provisions of the Development Plan and to the specific guidance on individual wind turbines below:-

- Turbines shall be limited to 1 per holding
- Turbine height shall not exceed 20 metres measuring to the upper most tip of a vertically extended blade
- Turbines shall generally be coloured mid to dark grey and shall not contrast with surrounding colours.

vi) Autoproducer
Another category is termed the "Autoproducer" which is where an industry/large energy user uses a wind turbine to feed its own energy consumption.

These will be considered on their merits but will generally only be acceptable where:

- the turbine proposed is for a significant energy user,
- the location of the turbine is within the curtilage of the facility or immediately adjacent.
- The site already contains significant industrial scale buildings and structures.

All wind farm applications shall be referred to RTENL (RTE Transmissions Network Limited).

Wind farm development will not be allowed within 2km of any registered thoroughbred stud farm facility.

9.8.3.4 Hydro Energy

In responding to planning applications for hydro-electric generation schemes, Kilkenny County Council will expect best practice in the preparation of applications to ensure that the proposed hydro development does not present a negative impact on amenity or on the indigenous fish population, including seasonal migration. The *Guidelines on the Construction & Operation of Small-Scale Hydro-Electric Schemes and Fisheries* prepared by the Central & Regional Fisheries Board & the Department of Communications, Marine & Natural Resources recommends guidelines from a fisheries perspective which should be followed for proposed small-scale hydro-electric schemes.

All proposed developments will be assessed having regard to current capacities in the national grid to accommodate such inputs. Kilkenny County Council will consult with all relevant service providers in this regard at a very early stage in the assessment of such proposals. Appropriate proposals for the reinstatement of mills and associated power generation will be welcomed by the County Council subject to amenity considerations.

9.8.3.5 Bioenergy

Bioenergy is energy derived from biomass. Biomass is all organic material and can be either the direct product of photosynthesis, (for example plant matter such as leaves or stems, etc.) or the indirect product of photosynthesis (for example animal mass resulting from the consumption of plant material). Types of biomass that are used to provide bioenergy include; residues from forestry and related industries, recycled wood, agricultural residues, agri-food effluents, manures, the organic fraction of municipal solid waste, separated household waste and sewage sludge, and purpose grown energy crops (e.g. short rotation forestry & miscanthus grass). Biomass can be converted into useful heat and/or electricity through a number of processes such as combustion, gasification and anaerobic digestion. Liquid biofuels can also be derived from biomass crops such as oilseed rape, beet and wheat, as well as recovered vegetable oils and tallow.

There is huge potential for the development of biomass in Ireland. Although this industry is currently modest in scale, Ireland's growth rate, technological advances, and the deregulation of the electricity industry together with stricter controls on waste management will result in an increase in applications for biomass installations.

The South-East Regional Authority is currently developing a Regional Bio-Energy Implementation Plan. The aim of this project is to establish a structured regional framework to allow the region to play its part in national compliance with EU policy and to maximise the resource potential. The overall objective of the project is to raise awareness and to increase the production and consumption of bio-energy in the Region.

POLICY

- **IE31 Facilitate the development of projects that convert biomass to energy.**
- **IE32 Locate biomass installations in areas that do not affect residential or visual amenity and which are served by public roads with sufficient capacity to absorb increased traffic flows.**

9.8.3.6 Energy Recovery from Waste

As our need for energy increases, the recovery of energy trapped in waste materials can benefit the environment by replacing energy from non-renewable sources. Even after extensive recycling, the residual waste stream still has a high combustible content available for energy recovery. The Waste Management Plan for the South East Region 2006-2011 sets out the policies in relation to energy from waste, and a key policy of that Plan is that an integrated waste facility incorporating thermal treatment and energy recovery will be developed in the region.

POLICY

- **IE33 Seek to respond positively to applications for waste to energy projects in the context of a sustainable energy policy and the Joint Waste Management Plan.**
- **IE34 Examine the feasibility of recovering energy from the landfill gas at Dunmore Landfill.**

9.8.4 Sustainability and Energy Efficiency in Buildings

The recently published Government White Paper entitled *Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland 2007-2020* and the *National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012* commit the Government to reviewing the Building Regulations with the aim of reducing energy demand by 40% relative to current standards. In addition, the Government is committed to providing 15% of electricity consumed from renewable sources by 2010 and 33% by 2020. The Council is committed to these targets.

The Government is reviewing the Building Regulations (*Technical Guidance Document L - Conservation of fuel and energy)* which is due to be completed in 2008.

Dwelling Energy Assessment Procedure (DEAP) is the official Irish procedure for calculating and assessing the energy performance of dwellings. Published by Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI), the procedure takes account of the energy required, for space heating, ventilation, water heating and lighting, less savings from energy generation technologies. It calculates both the CO_2 emission rate and energy consumption per annum. This is a useful tool for designers when considering and comparing options to conserve energy and reduce CO_2 emission. The right design decisions in relation to building form, dwelling layout, levels of insulation, amount and orientation of glazing, utilisation of solar energy, heating system and fuel type, use of draught lobbies, construction materials and measures to conserve potable water, can contribute greatly to sustainability. In addition these will lead to cost savings, in the long term, while raising the level of comfort for the occupants of the dwelling.

DEAP is also used to calculate the Building Energy Rating (BER) of a dwelling. The BER is a label containing the energy performance of the dwelling, expressed as primary energy use per unit floor area per year (kWh/m^2/per annum) and illustrated as an Energy Rating (A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, B3, etc) for the dwelling, it also includes a Carbon Dioxide (CO_2) Emissions Indicator ($kgCO_2/m^2/yr$) associated with this energy use and an advisory report.

Guidance and assistance on these and other matters pertaining to the sustainable use of energy is available from Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI) and the Carlow Kilkenny Energy Agency.

The Department Guidelines on *Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities* (2007) set out how sustainable energy considerations should be incorporated into all stages of the design process, and these are outlined in Chapter 10.

The design of any building should consider the following:

- Site layout and associated bio-climatic/passive solar design measures
- Enhanced levels of insulation in walls, floors, glazing and doors
- Reduced uncontrolled air infiltration losses
- Use of healthy and controllable ventilation systems
- Heat recovery systems
- Use of daylight
- Water conservation measures
- More sustainable building materials
- Improved heat generation appliance efficiency, e.g. condensing boilers
- Intelligent heating system configuration and time/temperature/zone/function controls
- Efficient provision of domestic hot water
- Fuel switching to low or zero CO_2 emitting fuels
- Energy efficient lighting systems
- Incorporation of renewable energy systems e.g. active solar, heat pumps, biomass
- Provision of appropriate group or district heating systems.

In the case of non-domestic buildings additional options include:

- Heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems
- Electrical energy use including motive power
- Efficient lighting systems and controls
- Building Energy Management Systems
- Occupancy Controls
- Monitoring and Targeting Systems
- Combined Heat and Power (CHP).

During the course of this Plan the Council will develop a Sustainability Checklist in conjunction with the Carlow-Kilkenny Energy Agency, which will be utilised in the assessment of any new developments.

POLICY
IE35 To devise a Sustainability Checklist in conjunction with the Carlow-Kilkenny Energy Agency.

9.8.4.1 Alternative Energy Systems

For large buildings over 1,000m^2, the Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations (S.I. No. 666) 2006 require that due consideration has been given to the technical, environmental and economic feasibility of installing alternative energy systems in the proposed building, and that the use of such systems has been taken into account, as far as practicable, in the design of that building. This shall also apply to all housing schemes of ten or more units.

The preferred methodology for assessing the feasibility of such alternative energy systems shall be the Sustainable Energy Ireland software tool or other acceptable methodology as defined in S.I. No. 666 of 2006.

POLICY
- **IE36 Encourage 'A' energy ratings for all new dwellings and non residential buildings, in conjunction with the Carlow – Kilkenny Energy Agency and Sustainable Energy Ireland.**
- **IE37 Require that as part of any planning application, a statement of intent with calculations be submitted showing how the proposal will comply with Part L of the Building Regulations in relation to the energy performance coefficient and carbon performance coefficient.**
- **IE38 Require that planning applications demonstrate that due consideration has been given to the technical, environmental and economic feasibility of installing alternative energy systems in a proposed large building, as defined in S.I. No. 666 of 2006, and that the use of such systems has been taken into account, as far as practicable, in the design of that building.**

9.8.5 Telecommunications

Telecommunications has been a key driver of growth in the Irish economy over the last decade. The availability of advanced broadband technologies in particular is seen as a critical factor for Ireland to develop as an eBusiness hub, but more importantly for the promotion of regional development.

A progress report, published in 2004, on the Government Action Plan on the Information Society '*New Connections'* reiterated that widespread availability of open-access, affordable, always-on broadband infrastructure for businesses and citizens remains the most important aspect of government policy on broadband. The implementation of broadband is under the auspices of the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources. The NDP will facilitate continued growth in the telecommunications sector. It is anticipated that significant drivers of change will include advances in existing technologies, the development and deployment of new technologies, the changing role of market players and changes in consumer expectations. These changes will increase the availability of broadband and will make it an even more essential and powerful tool than it is today, for both business and residential consumers.

9.8.5.1 SERPANT: South-East Broadband Project

The South-East Regional Authority, in partnership with its constituent local authorities, is managing the roll-out of the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources' regional broadband programme in the South-East, known as SERPANT. This programme provides high speed, open access broadband networks in major towns and cities, known as Metropolitan Area Networks (MANs). The MANs are publicly owned, while allowing all telecommunication operators open access to the networks. Kilkenny city and Waterford were included in the Phase 1 MANs, and the networks were completed in 2005. Thomastown was included in the Phase 2 MANs and work is ongoing.

9.8.5.2 County and Group Broadband Scheme

The objective of the County and Group Broadband Scheme (CGBS) is to promote the rollout of broadband access through the establishment of sustainable broadband services in towns, villages, rural hinterlands and underserved areas of larger towns on the basis of local/regional authority coordination and community driven initiatives. Government funding of up to 55% of infrastructure costs is available to support service providers or communities in bringing broadband to these areas. Castlecomer was approved under the 1st call of the Group Broadband Scheme and Ballyragget, Urlingford, Gatabaun, Johnstown, and Callan were approved under the 2nd Call.

POLICY

- **IE39 Work with the South-East Regional Authority and all other relevant agencies to ensure the swift and efficient roll-out of broadband telecommunications infrastructure to smaller towns and rural areas in the region.**
- **IE40 Support and facilitate the provision of advanced communication networks and services to the extent required to contribute to national, regional and local competitiveness and attract inward investment.**
- **IE41 Encourage the further co-ordinated and focused development and extension of telecommunications infrastructure including broadband connectivity in the county as a means of improving economic competitiveness and enabling more flexible work practices e.g. teleworking.**

- **IE42 Ensure the provision for development in connection with telecommunications is made in ways which will maximise the use of existing masts and sites so as to limit the impact of development.**

9.8.5.3 Telecommunications Antennae

The County Council recognises the importance of a high quality telecommunications service for the county, the South East Region and the country, taking into account both National and Regional planning guidance.

When considering proposals for telecommunications masts, antennae and ancillary equipment, the Council will have regard to the following:

(a) the visual impact of the proposed equipment on the natural or built environment, particularly in areas of sensitive landscape or historic importance;
(b) the potential for co-location of equipment on existing masts; and
(c) Department of the Environment and Local Government "Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures - Guidelines for Planning Authorities" (July 1996), or any amendments thereto.

The Council will seek to achieve a balance between facilitating the provision of telecommunications services in the interests of social and economic progress of the County and sustaining residential amenities, environmental quality and public health.

The Council will discourage proposals for telecommunications masts, antennae and ancillary equipment in the following locations, save in exceptional circumstances where it can be established that there would be no negative impact on the surrounding area and that no other location can be identified which would provide adequate telecommunication cover:

(i) Highly scenic areas or areas specified as such in any landscape character assessment carried out for the County;
(ii) In close proximity to schools, churches, crèches, community buildings, other public and amenity/conservation areas; and,
(iii) In close proximity to residential areas.

Proposals within the County for telecommunications antennae and support structures must show:

a) the alternative sites considered and why the alternatives were unsuitable,
b) the potential impact on public health,
c) the number of existing masts within the County,
d) the long term plans of the developer in the County and the potential for further masts,
e) and the plans of other promoters and any prior consultations which the developer may have had with other mast owners.

The Council will only grant temporary planning permissions (for periods of 5 years). This will allow review and reassessment in relation to numbers and

concentrations, technology and the general dynamic nature of both the industry and the receiving environment within which these masts are sited.

POLICY

- **IE43 To support the provision of new and innovative telecommunications infrastructure, subject to normal proper planning consideration.**

- **IE44 To recognise that the development of telecommunications infrastructure is a key component of future economic and social development of the County.**

9.9 Air Quality

The National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012 emphasises that reducing greenhouse gas emissions will benefit air quality. Some progress has already been made to date through the ban under the Air Pollution Act, 1987 (Marketing, Sale and Distribution of Fuels) (Amendment) Regulations, 2000, in October 2001 on the marketing, sale and distribution of bituminous coal in Waterford City Environs and the extension of this ban to Kilkenny City and Environs under the Air Pollution Act, 1987 (Marketing, Sale and Distribution of Fuels) Regulations, 2003. The role of the Council in this regard is to protect, enhance and control air and noise pollution and to ensure the provision of the highest standards.

The Council supports the Polluter Pays Principle and will have regard to the Local Government (Planning and Development) General Policy Directive 1988 (or as may be amended from time to time) and any regulations (such as the Smokeless Fuel Regulations and Solvent Regulations) issued by the Minister for the Environment relating to air quality standards nationally, including:

- Air Framework Dirctive of 1996 (Due for revision 2007)
- Air Quality Standards Regulations 2002
- Ozone in Ambient Air Regulations, 2004

POLICY

- **IE45 Implement the provisions of national policy and air pollution legislation, in conjunction with other agencies as appropriate.**
- **IE46 Ensure that the developments, which are subject to the requirement of the Air Pollution Act 1987 and Air Pollution (Licensing of Industrial Plant) Regulations 1988 or any subsequent regulations meet appropriate emission standards and other relevant national and international standards.**
- **IE47 Support public transport and non motorised transport as a means of reducing locally generated air emissions and to encourage landscaping and tree planting as a means of purification and filtering of the air.**

9.9.1 Noise and Dust

Excessive noise and Dust levels can have an adverse impact on the county's environment. The Council will seek to minimise noise through the planning process by ensuring that the design of future developments incorporate

measures to prevent or mitigate the transmission of noise and vibration, where appropriate.

POLICY:

- **IE48 To seek to minimise the noise and dust through the planning process by ensuring that the design of future developments incorporate measures to prevent or mitigate the transmission of dust, noise and vibration, where appropriate.**

9.9.2 Light Pollution

While adequate lighting is essential to a safe and secure environment, light spillage from excessive or poorly designed lighting is increasingly recognised as a potential nuisance to surrounding properties and a threat to wildlife, and can reduce the visibility of the night sky. Urban and rural locations can suffer equally from this problem. Lighting columns and other fixtures can have a significant effect on the appearance of buildings and the environment and where proposals for new lighting require planning consent, the Council will ensure that they are carefully and sensitively designed. Lighting fixtures should provide only the amount of light necessary for the task in hand and shield the light given out so as to avoid creating glare or emitting light above a horizontal plane.

POLICY

- **IE49 To require that the design of external lighting minimises the incidence of light spillage or pollution into the surrounding environment.**

9.10 Water Supplies

9.10.1 Surface Water

The main source of water in Kilkenny for industrial and domestic use is surface water abstracted from rivers and streams. The Rivers Nore, Blackwater, Dinan and Duiske are the principal sources of supply for the county's urban and industrial supplies. The Rivers Barrow and Suir act as county boundaries and are the shared responsibility of several counties. The River Nore provides Kilkenny City and a number of other settlements with their water supply. The Rivers Barrow, Nore and Lower River Suir have Special Area of Conservation status.

POLICY

- **IE50 To protect, maintain, improve and enhance the quality of watercourses and rivers in the County.**

9.10.2 Groundwater

Underground water supplies are used by a significant number of households in the county who are dependent on private wells. A number of group schemes are also dependant on underground aquifers. Underground aquifers are exploited commercially for bottled water, which can be a significant economic resource. Groundwater also contributes to the river system.

The Geological Survey of Ireland has completed a Groundwater Protection Scheme for County Kilkenny. The overall aim of a Groundwater Protection

Scheme is to preserve the quality of groundwater, for drinking water, surface water ecosystems and terrestrial ecosystems, for the benefit of present and future generations. The groundwater protection schemes are based on information provided by a suite of maps, including:

- Groundwater protection zones, hydrogeological data
- Aquifers
- Vulnerability
- Outcrop and depth to bedrock
- Subsoils geology
- Bedrock geology

The Groundwater Protection Scheme provides guidance for Kilkenny County Council in decision-making on the location, nature and control of developments and activities in order to protect groundwater.

Source Protection Areas
Development within source protection zones shall be subject to more stringent requirements in accordance with the Groundwater Protection Scheme. Developments which include on-site wastewater treatment in Inner Source Protection Areas of Extreme Vulnerability shall be subject to strict Development Assessment Criteria.

When new public water supply schemes come on stream, source protection areas shall be mapped as appropriate.

For multiple housing developments with private water supplies it will be the policy of the Council to identify source protection areas for that supply.

In practical terms protection of the groundwater can be achieved through the encouragement of best practice in agricultural and industrial activities and through best practice in the installation and use of wastewater treatment systems.

Kilkenny County Council requires that sites will be assessed in accordance with the EPA manual entitled *Wastewater Treatment Manuals: Treatment Systems for Single Houses (2000)* as may be replaced or updated by the EPA's *Code of Practice – Wastewater Treatment Systems for Single Houses*. The person carrying out the assessment will be suitably qualified.

9.10.2.1 Development Control Assessment

New developments which include on-site wastewater treatment in an Extreme Vulnerability Inner Source Protection Area shall be restricted to the following categories:

1. A dwelling for a full-time farmer
2. An existing inhabited dwelling in need of replacement
3. A second family dwelling on a farm where this is required for management of the farm

Permission may be granted in the above instances subject to the following stipulations:

a) That an alternative site outside the Extreme vulnerability Inner Protection Area is not available
b) The existing water quality of the source is not subject to any significant nitrate and / or microbiological contamination

POLICY

- **IE51 Ensure that septic tanks and proprietary treatment systems, or other waste water treatment and storage systems, where required as part of a development, comply with relevant guidelines and that they are employed where site conditions are appropriate.**
- **IE52 Have regard to the Groundwater Protection Scheme in decision-making on the location, nature and control of developments and activities in order to protect groundwater.**

ACTION

- **Ensure the completion of the mapping of source protection areas**
- **Set up a Panel of Approved Site Characterisation Assessors for the purpose of assessing planning applications.**

9.10.3 Water Quality

The importance of water for life and as a key to development is becoming increasingly clear. As the demand for water for domestic, industrial, and recreational purposes increases, so also does the need to protect it to ensure an adequate supply of clean water for all, including the flora and fauna that also dependent on it.

The Council is responsible for the protection of all waters including rivers, lakes, estuarine waters and groundwater. The work includes implementation of pollution control measures, licensing of effluent discharges, implementing and monitoring compliance with environmental legislation, and drawing up pollution contingency measures. Current and pending European directives such as the Water Framework Directive and the Nitrates Directive will have implications for Kilkenny in dealing with the problems associated with preserving water quality in the county.

Eutrophication of waterways has been identified as a strategic challenge facing Ireland's environment. Eutrophication arises from excess inputs of nutrients (mainly nitrogen and phosphorus) to waters leading to excessive plant growth, depletion of oxygen and habitat degradation. The major sources of nutrient loss to waters are agriculture and municipal sewage discharges, with other sources also making a contribution.

The Council will continue to take appropriate measures in relation to agricultural, industrial and residential development in order to prevent ground and surface water pollution.

9.10.3.1 Water Framework Directive

In response to the increasing threat of pollution and the increasing demand from the public for cleaner rivers, lakes and beaches, the EU developed the Water Framework Directive. The directive establishes a framework for the protection of all waters including rivers, lakes, estuaries, coastal waters, groundwater, canals and other artificial water bodies for the benefit of everyone. The protection of water for wildlife and their habitats is also included under the directive.

Management of water resources must be planned and implemented, through Management Plans, in a way that achieves the best possible balance between the protection and improvement of the water environment and the interests of those who depend on it for their livelihood and quality of life. Good ecological and chemical status for all waters must be achieved by 2015 with no deterioration in existing status in the meantime.

To facilitate this process a statutory river basin district advisory council has been established in each river basin district to consider matters relating to the preparation of river basin management plans and other matters relevant to the protection and use of the aquatic environment and water resources in the district and to advise and make recommendations on these matters to the relevant public authorities. The South-East River Basin Advisory Council is the relevant authority in the South East.

Kilkenny County Council is participating in the preparation of a River Basin Management Plan in relation to the South Eastern River Basin District which is due to be completed by mid-2009.

POLICY

- **IE53 To actively participate in the implementation of the Water Framework Directive**
- **IE54 To jointly with other local authorities and the relevant Public Authorities, participate and co-operate in the South Eastern River Basin District Management Project**
- **IE55 To implement the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan**
- **IE56 To increase public awareness of water quality issues and the measures required to protect and where required, improve the quality of all waters**
- **IE57 To take account of the findings of the National Programs of Measures Studies being developed for the River Basin Management Plans**

9.10.3.2 Phosphorus Regulations

The Water Quality Standards for Phosphorus Regulations, 1998 (S.I. 258 of 1998) require that water quality be maintained or improved and set out water quality targets for lakes and rivers. The targets set in the Regulations must be met by 2007 at the latest for waters surveyed by the EPA in the 1995-97 period and within a maximum of ten years for waters first surveyed after 1997.

9.10.3.3 Dangerous Substances Regulations

The Dangerous Substances Regulations (S.I. No. 12 of 2001) prescribe water quality standards in respect of 14 dangerous substances in surface waters, e.g., rivers, lakes and tidal waters. The substances concerned include pesticides

(atrazine, simazine, tributyltin), solvents (dichloromethane, toluene, xylene) metals (arsenic, chromium, copper, lead, nickel, zinc) and other substances (cyanide, fluoride).

The Council will have regard to both the Phosphorus Regulations and the Dangerous Substance Regulations in the assessment of all planning applications.

9.10.3.4 Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Waters

Statutory Instrument S. I. 378 of 2006, European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Waters) Regulations, 2006 consolidates and provides the statutory basis for earlier recommendations/guidelines provided for in the Nitrates Directive, Phosphorus Regulations and the Water Framework Directive. The role of Kilkenny County Council shall be to ensure that agricultural practices falling under the remit of the Regulations are consistent with the Regulations insofar as they minimize the potential for water pollution.

POLICY

- **IE58 Ensure the sustainable and economic provision of an adequate supply of good quality water for industrial, domestic and other beneficial uses, including the propagation of healthy fish stocks.**
- **IE59 Implement its adopted Water Quality Management Plans in order to prevent pollution and to ensure that beneficial uses of the waters e.g. industrial, domestic and agricultural abstraction, fishing and recreation, are protected.**
- **IE60 Ensure the protection of sources of potable water and will continue the process of monitoring the quality of water resources.**
- **IE61 Prevent industrial water pollution by ensuring that development is appropriately located, by seeking effluent reduction and 'clean production' where feasible, by requiring that waste water treatment facilities are adequate, and that effluents are treated and discharged in a satisfactory manner.**
- **IE62 Prevent pollution of water by means of development management and enforcement measures.**
- **IE63 Implement the measures quoted under the Water Quality Standards Reports for Phosphorous and Dangerous Substances Regulations.**
- **IE64 To implement the Water Quality Management Plans for the Barrow, Nore and Suir Rivers pending adoption of the South East River Basin Management Plan**

9.10.4 Water Services

There are 16 public water supply schemes within County Kilkenny operated by Kilkenny County Council. The quality of our drinking water supplies is of utmost importance. Water quality is monitored on a daily basis by the Council's staff, in accordance with the HSE requirements. Testing is also carried out by the Health Service Executive and the Regional Water Laboratory on an agency basis.

9.10.5 Prioritisation of Investment

Recent developments have put additional pressures on the capacity of water and sewerage facilities. Kilkenny County Council recognises that the provision of a

high quality and efficient water supply and drainage infrastructure will ensure the long-term physical, environmental, social and economic development of the county.

An examination of the main water schemes show that most are at, near or below capacity. This situation has lead to poor pressure problems on schemes such as Bennettsbridge Regional, Mooncoin Regional, Clogh-Castlecomer, Gowran-Goresbridge, Kilkenny Regional, Ballyragget, Urlingford-Johnstown, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown. Proposed developments which would normally be served by these schemes including individual dwellings are being advised to provide their own wells.

There is consequently a need for updating and renewal. A very substantial investment is required in both water supplies and wastewater treatment works over the coming years to ensure satisfactory facilities throughout the county. The Council made a submission, in January 2007, to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government which identified Schemes which should be included in the Water Services Investment Report for funding under the Major Scheme initiative or the Serviced Land Initiative. The submission excluded schemes which will be funded privately and schemes likely to be funded under the Small Schemes programme.

The areas to be prioritised for water infrastructure investment should follow the County Settlement Strategy.

9.10.5.1 Water Conservation

Water supplies are a scarce and expensive resource and cannot be wasted and in this regard water conservation policies are now mandatory on the Council and are in accordance with the principles of sustainability.

POLICY

- **IE65 Implement the capital programme outlined in the Provision of Water and Wastewater Infrastructure in Kilkenny City and County, March 2007.**
- **IE66 Extend water supplies to meet the expanding domestic, commercial and industrial needs of the County.**
- **IE67 Improve the provision of services in those areas where deficiencies exist at present.**
- **IE68 Encourage the economic use of existing service.**
- **IE69 Conserve valuable water supplies by eliminating leakages and through raising public awareness of the need for water conservation.**
- **IE70 Conserve and protect sources of supply through the application of the principles of sustainability in their development and controlling development in their vicinity, which would give rise to adverse impacts.**

9.11 Waste water services

The provision of wastewater treatment infrastructure is imperative to facilitate the economic, social, and physical development of the county and to support the settlement strategy. In addition the continued improvement and provision of this infrastructure is necessary to meet the requirements of the E.U. Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive.

There are 38 major wastewater treatment schemes within the county, of varying size and complexity.

An examination of the waste water situation shows that there is some capacity for development in Mooncoin, Johnstown, Graiguenamanagh, Callan and Ferrybank. Currently the wastewater systems at Freshford, Thomastown, Piltown, Castlecomer, Kilmoganny are overloaded and there are severe load fluctuation difficulties with the Purcellsinch Treatment Plant.

9.11.1.1 Prioritisation of Investment

The areas to be prioritised for waste water infrastructure will follow the County Settlement Strategy. Schemes will be progressed under the Major Schemes Programme, the Serviced Land Initiative and the Small Schemes Programme.

Partnership Arrangements
Where appropriate, water and waste water services can be provided via agreements between the local authority and private developers.

9.11.1.2 Sludge Treatment

It was an objective of the 2002 County Development Plan to carry out a Sludge Management Plan for Kilkenny, which was prepared in 2003. This Sludge Management Plan considered all forms of nonhazardous sludge arising and predicted to arise in the county over the next 20 years and proposed sustainable management strategies for them.

POLICY

- **IE71 Extend waste water treatment to meet the expanding domestic commercial and industrial needs of the County.**
- **IE72 Improve the provision of treatment services in those areas where deficiencies exist at present.**
- **IE73 Encourage the economic use of existing treatment service.**
- **IE74 Meet in full the requirements of the E.U. Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive.**
- **IE75 Ensure that arrangements for the treatment and disposal of effluent from all forms of development are sustainable and meet environmentally acceptable standards.**
- **IE76 Implement the Sludge Management Plan for the county.**

9.12 Waste Management

Waste management in Ireland is regulated by the Waste Management Acts, 1996 to 2007. The local authorities of Carlow County, Kilkenny County, Waterford City and County, Wexford County, and South Tipperary County prepare a Joint Waste Management Plan for the South East.

The current *Joint Waste Management Plan for the South East Region (JWMP)* sets out the policies and objectives for waste management for the period 2006 to 2011. The purpose of this JWMP is to:

- Promote waste prevention and minimisation through source reduction, producer responsibility and public awareness.
- Provide a management plan for the recovery/recycling/disposal of waste arisings on a regional basis.

Section 4 of the Waste Management Amendment Act 2001 provides that the development plan in force in an area shall be deemed to include the objectives contained in the waste management plan made by the local authority. Therefore this development plan is deemed to contain the policies and objectives of the Joint Regional Waste Management Plan, as reviewed.

POLICY

- **IE77 To reduce to a minimum the cost of recycling to the consumer in County Kilkenny.**

9.12.1 Waste Infrastructure

The Dunmore Landfill and Civic Amenity site is located in Dunmore on the Castlecomer Road approx 5km from Kilkenny city centre. This facility accepts all non-hazardous waste for disposal in addition to providing recycling facilities for hazardous and non-hazardous waste. It is expected that the landfill element will close during the lifetime of this plan, to be replaced by an integrated regional facility, as outlined in the JWMP.

Under the JWMP, a 3 bin collection system will be mandatory from 2008 throughout urban areas greater that 1,000 persons for household, industrial and commercial waste or as otherwise determined by the Region. This third collection bin will be utilised to collect bio-waste.

9.12.2 Litter Management Plan

Under the Litter Pollution Act, 1997, each local authority is required to adopt a litter management plan (LMP). The Litter Management Plan 2003 – 2006 is under review and the new Plan for 2007 – 2010 will be completed by mid-2007.

A clean and well-presented local environment is a sign of good civic organisation and pride. This has been reflected locally in the good performance of the towns and villages of the county in the National Tidy Towns Competition.

POLICY

- **IE78 Prepare and implement Litter Management Plans and carry out its statutory functions in relation to the Litter Pollution Act 1997.**
- **IE79 Build on the achievements to date in the Tidy Towns and to develop a civic spirit which fosters pride in a clean and litter free county.**

- **IE80 Continue in its partnership approach with the Tidy Towns Associations, community groups, farming organisations, trade unions, the business community, the local media, sporting organisations, tourism bodies and Gardai in the support and fostering of anti-litter initiatives within the county.**

9.12.3 Development Assessment Criteria

In assessing planning applications, regard will be had to the waste produced by proposed developments including the nature and amount of waste produced and proposed method of disposal. Proposed apartment and housing developments must be appropriately laid out to enable the implementation of three bin collection systems.

The Council will ensure that proposed apartment, housing and commercial developments are either serviced by existing infrastructure or make appropriate provision for bring sites in their layout. Adequate access must be provided in developments to service proposed bring sites.

In assessing significant construction/demolition projects, the Council will require that the developer shall include construction and demolition waste management plans, to be prepared in accordance with the *Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects (2006)* as published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. These plans should seek to focus on waste minimisation in general and optimise waste prevention, re-use and recycling opportunities, and shall provide for the segregation of all construction wastes into recyclable, biodegradable and residual wastes.

For any development, the developer shall ensure that all operations at the site during the construction and demolition phase shall be managed and programmed in such a manner as to minimise waste production and that procedures are in place to deal with any litter arising.

POLICY

- **IE81 Implement the Joint Waste Management Plan for the South East Region.**
- **IE82 Fully participate in the preparation, adoption and implementation of future Joint Regional Waste Management Plans.**
- **IE83 To use its statutory powers to protect the environment from indiscriminate and unsightly dumping in order to protect the appearance of rural and urban areas, and in the interests of public health.**
- **IE84 To develop and implement education programmes that increase the awareness and understanding of local government decision makers, educators, business and industry personnel, general public and students of the need to effectively reduce and manage solid waste through the continued work of the Environmental Education and Awareness Officer.**
- **IE85 Encourage the provision of recycling facilities in appropriate quarry developments, construction sites and landfills for the recycling/recovery of construction & demolition waste, subject to normal planning and environmental sustainability considerations, and in accordance with the Joint Waste Management Plan.**
- **IE86 Require the provision of bring banks, bottle banks or other appropriate recycling facilities as part of the overall development, as deemed necessary. The sites shall be made available to the Council at the developer's own expense and will be maintained by the Council or its agents.**

- **IE87 Consider, when undertaking development or when authorising or permitting development, the provision of facilities within developments**
- **IE88 Have regard to the *Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects 2006***

ACTION:
In order to promote reuse, recovery and recycling of materials, the County Council will establish a second civic amenity centre to serve the south of the county.

9.12.4 Surface Water Drainage

Individual developments facilitated under the guidance of this development plan shall be obliged, in all cases where surface water drainage measures are required, to provide a surface water drainage system separated from the foul drainage system.

In the case of one-off rural dwellings or extensions, except in circumstances where an existing surface water drainage system is available to the proposed site for development and which, in the opinion of the planning authority has adequate capacity to accommodate the identified surface water loading, surface water shall be disposed of, in its entirety within the curtilage of the development site by way of suitably sized soak holes. In the case of driveways drainage measures shall be provided to a detail acceptable to the planning authority so as to avoid run-off from the site to the adjoining public road.

For all other green-field developments it shall, in general, be the policy of Kilkenny County Council, to require the limitation of surface water run-off to pre-development levels. Where a developer can clearly demonstrate that capacity exists to accommodate run-off levels in excess of green-field levels then the planning authority shall give consideration to such proposals on a case by case basis.

In the case of brown-field development, while existing surface water drainage measures will be taken into account, some attenuation measures for surface water may be required at the discretion of the planning authority in the interests of balanced and sustainable development.

In line with the above Kilkenny County Council will consider all drainage proposals consistent with SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems).

To give adequate allowance for climate change in designing surface water proposals a multiplication factor of 1.2 shall be applied to all river return periods up to 100 years except in circumstances where the OPW have provided advice specifying the particular multiplication factor for return periods up to 100 years. In the case of rainfall a multiplication factor of 1.1 shall be applied to rainfall intensities to make allowance for climate change requirements.

In the design of surface water systems, regard shall be had to the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works and associated GDSDS technical documents.

9.12.5 Flooding

Flooding is a natural phenomenon of the hydrological cycle. There are many factors that influence flood behaviour and the degrees of risk that it possesses. Like other natural processes, flooding cannot be completely eliminated, but its impacts can be minimised with proactive and environmentally sustainable management. The accepted national policy response to flood protection is now to manage the risk to life and property as sustainably as possible and to consider flood risk and its related impacts on development on a catchment basis, rather than on an individual location basis. This will facilitate sustainable development through the reduction of future flood damage, and hence reduce the associated potential economic and social costs.

The Office of Public Works (OPW) is charged at a national/central government level to monitor and address situations pertaining to flooding and is in the process of preparing comprehensive guidelines to enable Planners to contribute substantially to the management of flooding related issues in consultation with the Department of the Environment Heritage & Local Government and other relevant stakeholders. Initial draft guidelines "*Flood Risk & Development - Suggested policy/ Guidelines for inclusion in Development plans*" have been published and are incorporated here.

9.12.5.1 Development Assessment Criteria

Development that is sensitive to the effects of flooding will generally not be permitted in flood prone or marginal areas. Appropriately designed development, which is not sensitive to the effects of flooding may be permissible in flood plains provided it does not reduce the flood plain area or otherwise restrict flow across floodplains. (Examples of such development might include park areas, sports pitches, certain types of industry, warehousing, etc. designed to be flood resistant and/or insensitive). Such development should only be permitted provided it incorporates adequate measures to cope with the ever-existent flood risk, e.g. adequate drainage systems, safety measures, emergency response facilities and/or warning and response systems and where it is considered that flooding would not result in significant hardship/financial loss or cost.

Development must so far as is reasonably practicable incorporate the maximum provision to reduce the rate and quantity of runoff. e.g.:-

- Hard surface areas (car parks, etc.), should be constructed in permeable or semi-permeable materials,
- On site storm water ponds to store and/or attenuate additional runoff from the development should be provided,
- Soak-aways or french drains should be provided to increase infiltration and minimise additional runoff.

For developments adjacent to watercourses of a significant conveyance capacity any structures (including hard landscaping) must be set back from the edge of the watercourse to allow access for channel clearing/maintenance. A setback of 5m-10m is required depending on the width of the watercourse. Development consisting of construction of embankments, wide bridge piers, or similar structures will not normally be permitted in or across flood plains or river channels.

All new development must be designed and constructed to meet the following minimum flood design standards:-

- For Urban areas or where developments (existing, proposed or anticipated) are involved - the 100 year flood
- For Rural areas or where further developments (existing, proposed or anticipated) are not involved - the 25 year flood
- Along Estuaries - the 200 year tide level
- Where streams open drains or other watercourses are being culverted - the minimum permissible culvert diameter is 900mm. (Access should be provided for maintenance as appropriate.)

All significant developments impacting on flood risk areas will be required to provide a Flood Impact Assessment to accompany the planning application to identify potential loss of floodplain storage and proposals for the storage or attenuation of run/off discharges (including foul drains) to ensure the development does not increase the flood risk in the relevant catchment.

The precautionary principle (an absence of existing information on flooding in a given location should not be taken to assume an absence of flood risk) and the principle of proportionality (assessments undertaken should be appropriate in nature and scale to the development proposed) shall apply.

POLICY

- **IE89 To adopt a strategic response to flooding and to actively engage with all relevant authorities to sustainably manage annually and consider flood risk and its related impacts on development on a catchment basis.**
- **IE90 Ensure that development that is sensitive to the effects of flooding will generally not be permitted in flood prone or marginal areas.**
- **IE91 Ensure that development must so far as is reasonably practicable incorporate the maximum provision to reduce the rate and quantity of runoff.**
- **IE92 Require that new development should not itself be subject to an inappropriate risk of flooding nor should it cause or exacerbate such a risk at other locations.**
- **IE93 Control development in the natural floodplains of all rivers and streams where such development may have a negative impact on flood control, access for channel maintenance or future flood control works or might contribute to environmental degradation were flooding to occur.**
- **IE94 Restrict development, which is sensitive to the effects of flooding in flood prone or marginal areas unless adequate mitigation measures, which may involve the preparation of a Flood Impact Analysis, are proposed to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.**

9.13 Control of Major Accident Hazards Directive (Seveso II Directive)

The E.U. Directive (96/82 EC) (known as the Seveso II Directive) was adopted on the 3rd February 1999. It was introduced into Irish law through statutory instrument; the EC (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations (S.I. No. 476 of 2000). The Directive aims to prevent major accident hazards involving dangerous substances and chemicals and the limitation of their consequences for man and the environment.

The Council is obliged to pursue the aims of the Directive through controls on the siting of new establishments, modifications to existing establishments and new developments. Any relevant proposals for development will be referred to the Health and Safety Authority whose technical advice is taken into account in the overall assessment of the development, in addition to normal planning criteria.

There is one Seveso II site within the county; Grassland Fertilizers (Kilkenny) Ltd Palmerstown, on the Tullaroan Road in Kilkenny City. It should be noted that this is the only site currently identified and that there may be additional sites designated in the future. There may also be sites in neighbouring counties that might impact on land in Kilkenny.

Article 12 of the Directive provides that appropriate consultation procedures must be put in place so as to ensure that, before decisions are taken, technical advice is available to Planning Authorities in respect of relevant establishments. The Health and Safety Authority (or the National Authority for Occupational Health and Safety NAOSH) provides such advice where appropriate in respect of planning applications within a certain distance of the perimeter of these sites.

POLICY

- **IE95 In order to reduce the risk and limit the consequences of major industrial accidents, it is the policy of the Councils to consult with the Health & Safety Authority when assessing proposals for development in or near sites which are identified under the COMAH (Seveso II) Directive.**

9.13.1 Potentially Contaminated Land

Contaminated land is generally considered to be lands where there are substances which could cause significant harm and endanger health. Examples of land uses that may have caused such contamination include gas works, landfill sites and scrap yards. Development will be encouraged and facilitated where it can be demonstrated that the development of the potentially contaminated site will result in a recreational and social benefit to the local area/community provided that identified remediation measures for the lands are carried out. The Council will require that a detailed investigation is carried out and appropriate measures are taken to ensure that the land is treated properly before development takes place. A register of contaminated sites within the county will be completed during the lifetime of this plan.

POLICY

- **IE96 Require the applicant to engage an environmental consultant to investigate and assess the possibility and extent of contamination and to recommend remediation measures for agreement within the Council, in relation to proposals for developments on land which is or may be contaminated.**

ACTION

- **Complete a register of contaminated sites within the county during the lifetime of this plan.**

9.14 Fire Service

The County Council is the Fire Authority for Kilkenny City and County. There are stations located in Kilkenny City, Freshford, Castlecomer, Urlingford, Graiguenamanagh, Thomastown and Callan.

POLICY

- **IE97 To upgrade and replace fire stations and to replace and provide new equipment and vehicles as the need arises.**

10 Requirements for New Development

The purpose of this section of the Plan is to encourage the creation of living and working environments of the highest quality by ensuring a high standard of design, layout and function for all development under the Planning Acts and Regulations, to conserve and build upon positive elements in the built and natural environment, and to protect amenities.

Development Control will be exercised by the Council in a positive manner, having regard to the provisions of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act 2000, and to the proper planning and sustainable development of the County, its amenities and the Council's policies and objectives.

It is intended that reference to these standards will provide guidance and assistance to those who seek permission for development. However, it should not be assumed that compliance with the standards contained herein will automatically or necessarily result in a granting of planning permission, since the standards are merely a statement of genera principles. Decisions regarding individual applications for development rest with the relevant planning authority and will be determined on a case-by-case basis in accordance with circumstances at the time an application is submitted. Developers are advised to consult with the Planning Authority prior to the preparation of detailed plans.

There may be instances where a conflict will arise between various policy objectives, and in such cases all issues will be assessed in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the County.

10.1 County Plan and Local Area Plans

The County Development Plan is the overarching document for the County area including the district towns and other settlements in the settlement hierarchy. Separate Local Area Plans will be prepared for the district towns and other settlements within the county as the need arises. These plans will be consistent with the objectives of the County Development Plan, and will contain objectives for the zoning of land and such other objectives as may be determined for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

10.2 Access for Persons with Disabilities and the Mobility Impaired

All new developments shall have access for persons with disabilities and those who are mobility impaired, incorporated into the design of the building as an integral part of the proposal. The Council, in all its developments, will make provision for accessibility for all persons with particular regard for measures to enhance access for persons with mobility and visual impairment.

10.3 Urban Design

Sustainable communities have a high quality natural and built environment. They are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They

meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well- planned, built and run, offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

Planning for future housing must take account of the needs of a modern, dynamic and multi-cultural society, reflecting a diversity of housing needs.

Sustainability involves the construction of homes that are structurally sound, energy efficient, environmentally friendly and adaptable over time to changing household needs. Best use must be made of the County's and City's land resources in the construction of new housing schemes by integrating housing provision with necessary transport and other physical infrastructure, social infrastructure and amenities.

POLICY
RND1 It is the policy of the Council to encourage the establishment and maintenance of high quality sustainable residential communities.

10.3.1 Qualities of Urban Design

Design is a creative, intuitive and subjective process. For planning to promote good design, it needs to guide and control the physical form of development. By guiding the physical form of development, the planning authority seeks to achieve quality defined by the attributes listed below.

Good urban design is rarely brought about by a local authority prescribing physical solutions, or by setting rigid or empirical design standards but by approaches which emphasise design objectives or principles.

The physical form of development can be described under the following headings:

Layout: urban structure The framework of routes and spaces that connect locally and more widely, and the way developments, routes and open spaces relate to one other. The layout provides the basic plan on which all other aspects of the form and uses of a development depend.
Layout: urban grain The pattern of the arrangement of street blocks, plots and their buildings in a settlement. The degree to which an area's pattern of blocks and plot subdivisions is respectively small and frequent (fine grain), or large and infrequent (coarse grain).
Landscape The character and appearance of land, including its shape, form, ecology, natural features, colours and elements, and the way these components combine. This includes all open space, including its planting, boundaries and treatment.

Density and mix The amount of development on a given piece of land and the range of uses. Density influences the intensity of development, and in combination with the mix of uses can affect a place's vitality and viability. The density of a development can be expressed in a number of ways. This could be in terms of plot ratio (particularly for commercial developments), number of dwellings, or the number of habitable rooms (for residential developments).
Scale: height Scale is the size of a building in relation to its surroundings, or the size of parts of a building or its details, particularly in relation to the size of a person. Height determines the impact of development on views, vistas and skylines. Height can be expressed in terms of the number of floors; height of parapet or ridge; overall height; any of these in combination; a ratio of building height to street or space width; height relative to particular landmarks or background buildings; or strategic views.
Scale: massing The combined effect of the arrangement, volume and shape of a building or group of buildings in relation to other buildings and spaces. Massing is the three-dimensional expression of the amount of development on a given piece of land.
Appearance: details The craftsmanship, building techniques, decoration, styles and lighting of a building or structure. This includes all building elements such as openings and bays; entrances and colonnades; balconies and roofscape; and the rhythm of the facade.
Appearance: materials The texture, colour, pattern and durability of materials, and how they are used. The richness of a building lies in its use of materials which contribute to the attractiveness of its appearance and the character of an area.

Successful streets, spaces, villages, towns and cities tend to have characteristics in common. There is considerable overlap between the objectives and they are mutually reinforcing. The planning authorities wish to guide and control development in order to achieve the following qualities in the design:

Aspects of quality

Aspect	Policy
Character A place with its own identity	To promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and culture.

Continuity and enclosure A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished	To promote the continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of space by development which clearly defines private and public areas.
Quality of the public realm A place with attractive and successful outdoor areas	To promote public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe, uncluttered and work effectively for all in society, including disabled and elderly people.
Ease of movement A place that is easy to get to and move through	To promote accessibility and local permeability by making places that connect with each other and are easy to move through, putting people before traffic and integrating land uses and transport.
Legibility A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand	To promote legibility through development that provides recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way around.
Adaptability A place that can change easily	To promote adaptability through development that can respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions.
Diversity A place with variety and choice	To promote diversity and choice through a mix of compatible developments and uses that work together to create viable places that respond to local needs.

10.4 Residential Development Standards

POLICY
RND2 It is the policy of the Planning Authority to encourage the well-planned and economic provision of residential accommodation on serviced lands.

Planning applications for residential development shall have regard to the following standards and guidelines and policies of the Development Plan. These standards will be reviewed to take account of the Government Guidelines on *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas* when adopted.

10.4.1 Housing Layout and Design

In new residential areas, it is the sense of place which should have priority. It is not the road layout, but the relationship of buildings to each other to create elegant spaces, which is paramount. It should be the aim of all involved in providing housing that new developments be based on a network of spaces rather than a hierarchy of roads, and a layout in which roads play their part but are not dominant.

The Planning Authority will require a high level of residential amenity conducive to a good quality living environment in new residential developments.

In all significant (the definition of significant being dependent on the particular local context) residential schemes a framework plan should be prepared at the outset and will be required as part of the application documents. The principle functions of the framework plan are:

- To establish that key characteristics are taken into account at the outset
- To establish the overall form of development based on the density and layout of the buildings and spaces
- To illustrate the contribution of the roads and streets network to the spatial hierarchy, as well as linking the development to the rest of the locality,
- To create a place of distinction, drawing inspiration from a neighbourhood's character,
- To harness intrinsic site assets and resources.

10.4.2 Density

As in the preceding Development Plan it is not intended to prescribe maximum residential density standards. The emphasis will be on providing quality-housing environments based on innovation and a design led approach. Local Area Plans may designate maximum or minimum densities particular to the areas for which plans are being prepared depending on the particular planning issues relevant at the time of making the plans. Densities will be decided on in the context of the policies and objectives as set out in the relevant Local Area Plan for any particular location.

A high standard of architectural design and layout will be required. The Planning Authority will seek to ensure that new developments have individuality and a sense of place, which is generated by the interaction between the physical characteristics and features of the site and its surroundings and the layout, landscaping and design of the new housing.

Residential density will be determined in principle by reference to the good urban design referred to above in conjunction with the following factors: -

- Existing densities in adjoining residential areas
- Compliance with quantitative and qualitative standards
- Capacity of the infrastructure to absorb the demands created by the development
- Existing features on the site
- Specified rear garden sizes.

In assessing applications for residential development the Planning Authority will have regard to the policies and objectives outlined in the *Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Residential Density.*

The appropriate residential density in any particular location will be determined by the following:-

i) The extent to which the design and layout follows a coherent design brief resulting in a high quality residential environment;
ii) Compliance with qualitative and quantitative criteria set out;
iii) Proximity to points of access to the public transport network;
iv) The extent to which the site may, due to its size, scale and location, propose its own density and character, having regard to the need to protect the established character and amenities of existing adjoining residential areas;
v) Existing topographical, landscape or other features on the site, and;
vi) The capacity of the infrastructure, including social and community facilities, to absorb the demands created by the development.

The same criteria will be applied to development proposals involving an increase in density on existing housing sites.

10.5 Bin Storage Standards

Each residential unit shall have adequate storage for three wheeled bins. Residential units with no rear access shall provided adequate storage for the bins to the front of the development, in contained units. In apartment schemes, bin storage shall generally be on the ground floor level of development, be adequately ventilated, screened from public view and adjacent to the block it serves. Where appropriate, the bin storage area shall be a separate structure to the apartment building.

10.5.1 Separation Distance between Houses

In general, there should be adequate separation (traditionally about 22 m between 2-storey dwellings) between opposing first floor windows. However, relaxation of this standard will be considered where the careful positioning of opposing windows can prevent overlooking even with shorter back-to-back distances. Windows serving halls and landings do not require the same degree of privacy as, say, balconies and living rooms.

A minimum of 2.3 metres shall be provided between the side walls of detached, semi-detached and end of terrace dwellings to ensure privacy and ease of access. A property boundary should ideally occur mid-way along this dimension.

10.5.2 Boundary Treatment of House Sites

Where the flank or rear boundaries of house sites abut roads, pedestrian ways or public open space, suitably designed screen walls 1.8 metres in height shall be provided. Where concrete screen walls are proposed they shall be suitably rendered and capped in an acceptable manner.

10.5.3 Naming of Housing Developments

It is the policy of the Councils that the naming of new residential development should reflect the local and historical context of its siting as far as possible such as local names which reflect the landscape, its features, culture or history of the area in which the development is located. Also considered will be the names of historical persons associated with the area. The use of Irish names will be encouraged. The naming of residential developments shall be approved by the Planning Authority prior to the launching of any advertising campaign for a development. Resources to aid in the naming of new developments include Forás na Gaeilge's booklet entitled "*Name your place – Logainmneacha Cuid dar nOidhreacht*" and the Placenames Commission.

10.5.4 Housing Developments and Road Noise

The Environmental Noise Regulations SI No. 140 2006 requires that planning applications identify and implement noise mitigation measures within the zone of influence of existing national roads. Planning applications for housing developments along existing or planned National Routes will be required to have regard to these regulations.

10.6 Apartments

The design and layout of new apartments should provide satisfactory accommodation for a variety of household types and sizes – including families with children - over the medium to long term. Regard should be given to relevant Government Guidelines on this, including *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for Apartments.*

In general, apartments will be required to have the following minimum floor areas measured internal wall to wall:

Table 10.1: Minimum apartment sizes

Apartment Type	Minimum Floor Area
One bedroom	46 sqm
Two bedrooms (3 persons)	65 sqm
Three bedrooms	93 sqm

The standards apply to units on one floor; duplexes should provide the additional floor area required to provide for stairways and landings in accordance with the Building Regulations (approximately 10 sq. metres). All apartment schemes should provide for a mix of units; comprising of one-bedroom, two-bedroom and family units.

All living rooms, kitchens and bedrooms should minimise overlooking of adjoining/adjacent residences and should be so located so to avoid facing towards nearby high boundary or gable walls.

10.6.1.1 Apartments Open Space

Private open space can be provided in the form of rear gardens or patios for ground floor units, and balconies at upper levels. It is important that in the latter case adequate semi-private or communal open space, in the form of landscaped areas, should also be provided. Roof gardens offer only limited potential in this regard, due to climatic and safety factors, and should not form the major share of such space. Private open space at ground floor level should receive some sunlight, but also needs some form of screening to ensure privacy.

Balconies (or glass-screened "winter gardens") need to be of a certain minimum width to be useful from an amenity viewpoint, being able to accommodate chairs and a small table. A minimum width of 1.5 metres for one-bedroom units, and 1.8 metres for apartments with 2 or more bedrooms, is recommended, generally extending for the full length of the external living room wall. While wider balconies might be desirable in certain cases, this has to be balanced against the need to avoid overshadowing the living room.

Site conditions, such as elevations facing north or overlooking busy streets, or tall buildings, may diminish the amenity value of balconies. Balconies may not be appropriate in historic areas. In such cases, it will be the designer's responsibility to provide some form of compensating amenity for the occupants. This might take the form, for instance, of above-average sized living rooms and generous landscaped communal open spaces.

Balustrading to balconies should be safe for children. Vertical privacy screens should generally be provided between adjoining balconies.

10.6.1.2 Daylight and sunlight

The amount of sunlight reaching an apartment significantly affects the amenity of the occupants. Dual-aspect apartments are likely to maximise the availability of sunlight, but this solution may not always be possible (e.g. with corner units). Single-aspect apartments should allow the main living rooms to face south or west; north-facing units should be excluded. Particular care is needed where windows are located on lower floors which may be overshadowed by adjoining buildings. The orientation of buildings within the site should maximise energy efficiency.

10.6.1.3 Storage Areas and Communal Facilities

Provision should be made in apartments for general storage areas (additional to minimum kitchen presses and bedroom furniture) for bulky items not in daily use, as the table below outlines.

Table 10.2: Minimum storage space requirements

Apartment	Storage Space Required
One bedroom	3 sq m
Two bedrooms / 3 persons	5 sq m
Two bedrooms / 4 persons	7 sq m
Three or more bedrooms	9 sq m

Lifts should be provided for all apartment blocks of three or more storeys. There is a need to provide two lifts where the apartment building has more than six storeys and serve more than 60 apartments, where it would be unreasonable to expect people to climb stairs in the event of a lift breakdown. Lifts should provide access to basement car parks.

10.7 Open Space Requirements

10.7.1 Public Open Space

Public open space is one of the key elements in defining the quality of the residential environment. It provides passive as well as active amenity and has important ecological and environmental aspects. In calculating the area of the open space, the area of roads, grass margins, roundabouts, footpaths and visibility splays shall not be taken into account.

10.7.2 Design of Open Space

Integrated pleasant, attractive and landscaped open space should form an intrinsic element of new residential development. The precise location, type and design of open space provision will be negotiated with developers according to the specific characteristics of the development, the site and its context. All open spaces proposed by developers should be designed and set out by suitably qualified landscape architects or similar design professionals so as to ensure a high standard and consistency with good design and layout practice.

Developers should consider providing a variety of open spaces both formal and informal semi-natural areas should be provided such as wetlands, woodlands, meadows, green corridors as well as formal gardens, and seating areas. These elements work best as part of a structure to the provision of open space.

The Planning Authority will normally expect all public open space provision to take account of the following general principles:

- Public open space should be provided in a comprehensive and linked way and designed as an integral part of the development, rather than as an afterthought.
- Wherever possible the majority of open space should be multi-functional. Areas providing for informal amenity and children's play can often successfully be combined.
- Public open space should be well designed from a visual perspective as well as functionally accessible to the maximum number of dwellings within the residential area.
- Attractive natural features should be protected and incorporated into open space areas.
- Public open space areas should be provided with a maximum amount of surveillance from dwellings within the estate.
- Open space should be suitably proportioned and narrow tracts, which are difficult to manage, should not be acceptable.
- The use of hard landscaping elements such as paving or cobbled areas should play an increasingly important role in the design and presentation of open space concepts.

- The provision of open space to serve new residential developments should be on a hierarchical basis varying in size from large regional parks to small children's play area and passive recreation spaces close to peoples' homes.

To ensure implementation of open space provision the Councils will attach appropriate planning conditions to permissions, and where necessary will enter into agreements with developers. These will provide for the laying out and landscaping of open space areas in accordance with a details scheme to be agreed with the Councils.

10.7.2.1 Open Space in New Residential Development.

The County Council will not normally permit new residential development unless public open space is provided within the development to a minimum standard of 2.4 hectares per 1,000 population or greater. A reduction to this standard will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances as determined by the local authority. Where such a relaxation occurs the provision of open space within any scheme should not be below 10% of the site area.

Where a proposed development is located in close proximity to an established park area or zoned open space this may be relaxed depending on the nature and quality of existing provision.

Developers will be required to make suitable provision for the future management and maintenance of open space required under this policy where spaces and facilities are not taken in charge by the Local Authority.

Reduced provisions may be acceptable in urban locations where there are more sustainable patterns of development and maximum use can be made of urban land or redevelopment schemes where open space is already available. With relatively high densities such as townhouses or apartments, good quality landscaped open space should be provided.

Open space provision for smaller residential developments and schemes catering for special needs such as accommodation for the elderly will be considered more flexibly on its merits and having regard to the requirements of likely future residents.

POLICY
RND3 To secure a high quality of design layout and landscaping in all new residential developments consistent with the Residential Density Guidelines.

10.7.2.2 Provision of Sports and Recreation Facilities

Developers will be required to make provision for sports and recreational infrastructure commensurate with the needs generated by that development and the capacity of existing facilities in the area to cater for existing and future needs. Residential planning applications in excess of 200 units will require a recreational needs assessment. This assessment should have regard to the Kilkenny Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study for the City and County and any future developer contribution scheme. Recreation provision should form an integral

element of development proposals. Where provision is not provided on-site it may be directly provided off-site.

The Council will apply Table 7.3 as guidelines.

10.7.2.3 Play Space

A standard of a minimum of 10 sq. m. of dedicated playable space per residential unit is to be provided as an integral part of each new development. This playable space can form part of the overall open space provision of a development but must be dedicated to play.

This space is to be distributed throughout the development and should take into account the presence or lack of existing off-site provision. The total space requirement should be broken down into the relevant typologies taking account of the maximum walking distances from residential units given below. All children and young people should have access to play space which should be within a reasonable and safe walking distance from home.

To ensure that children and young people are guaranteed this access to play space the following standards should be observed when new residential developments are being laid out:

Play Space Type	**Maximum walking distance from residential unit**
Doorstep Playable Space	100m
Local Playable Space	400m
Neighbourhood Playable Space	800m
Youth Space	800m

Doorstep playable space suitable for younger children can be included in smaller areas while the other play spaces will require larger areas. The doorstep playable space should be laid out to include a mixture of fixed equipment such as rockers, cradle swings, carousels, slides and junior multi units together with the use of sand, water and other materials for creative play. The use and manipulation of a site's topography and existing features such as trees, rocks, water courses etc. should be an integral part of the creation of the play space.

The local playable space should include a mixture of rockers, swings, carousels, multi units, space nets and balance beams among other items of fixed equipment suitable for children up to 12 years of age together with the use of sand, water and other materials for creative play. The use and manipulation of a site's topography and existing features such as trees, rocks, water courses etc. should be an integral part of the creation of the play space.

A neighbourhood playable space should be an extension of both the doorstep and local playable space with a wider range of play equipment and range of play opportunities providing a challenging, stimulating play environment.

Youth space should include detailed proposals to provide for the recreational requirements of young people over 12 of an area. Any set of proposals shall take into account the existing level of provision in the surrounding area and will attempt to deal with existing deficiencies.

The provision of playable space will be required as part of the overall Framework plan for any new residential development, see Section 10.4.1. It should be included in the proposed development from the outset to ensure that there is clarity about the location, size and function of facilities. The Parks Department of the Council should be consulted at the earliest possible opportunity during the preparation of a development proposal to ensure that the best possible outcome is achieved.

10.7.3 Private Open Space

An adequate amount of private open space should be provided within the curtilage of each dwelling. In general the requirement will be 60 to 75 sq.m minimum for 3/4/5 bedroomed houses in order to ensure that most household activities are accommodated and at the same time offers visual delight, receive some sunshine and encourage plant growth. Private open space will be measured from behind the front building line.

The boundaries of rear gardens should generally be provided with a permanent durable barrier with a minimum height of 1.4 metres. Where rear gardens back onto public areas, excluding a public roadway, this height should be increased to 1.8 metres.

It should be noted that in the case of apartments and duplex apartments private open space will be provided in the form of landscaped areas, courtyards, terraces/patios and balconies. Roof gardens will also be considered provided they are easily accessible, secure and attractively landscaped. The following open space requirements apply:

Table 10.3: Private Open Space Requirements

Type of Unit	Required Open Space
3/4/5 bedroom houses	60-75 sq.m
1/2 bedroom houses	48 sq.m
1 bedroom apartment	10 sq.m
2/3 bedroom apartment	15-20 sq.m

10.8 Home-Based Economic Activities

Home-based activities are defined as small-scale commercial activities, which are secondary to the use of the premises as a residence. They are permitted where the primary use of the dwelling remains residential and where the amenity of surrounding residences is not adversely affected. The planning authority, in considering applications for such uses, will consider the following:

- The nature and extent of the work;
- The effects on the amenities of adjoining properties particularly as regards hours of operation, noise and general disturbance;
- The anticipated levels of traffic generation; and
- The generation, storage and collection of waste.

Over the counter services, business signage, advertising hoardings, security gates/grills and excessive security lights are not normally appropriate in a residential area and should be subject to appropriate restrictions. The local authority may grant a temporary permission of two/three years for home-based economic activities to facilitate on-going monitoring of the activity.

10.9 Granny flats/Extensions

A 'family' flat refers to a sub-division or extension of a single dwelling unit to accommodate a member of the immediate family and is generally acceptable, provided it is not a separate detached unit and that it is possible to provide direct access to the remainder of the house. There shall be no permanent subdivision of the garden. The flat shall not be let or sold, other than as part of the overall property and shall revert to being part of the original house when no longer occupied by a family member. The design should ensure that the flat forms an integral part of the main dwelling unit capable of reintegration for single family use.

The principal requirement for any proposed domestic extension is that the design should have regard to the need for light and privacy of adjoining properties. The form and design of the existing building should be followed and the extension should integrate fully with the existing building by using similar detailing and window proportions. The character and form of the existing building should be respected and external finishes and window types should match the existing.

10.10 Plot Ratio

Plot ratio is the relationship between the site area and the total floor area of the buildings erected on it. The plot ratio is calculated by dividing the gross floor area of the building by the site area.

Plot ratio = Gross Floor Area divided by gross site area.

The purpose of plot ratio is to prevent adverse effects of both over-development and under-development on the amenity and the layout of buildings, to achieve desirable massing and height of buildings, to balance the capacity of the site and street frontages. A maximum plot ratio of 1.0 is set for the county. The Planning Authority will permit higher plot ratios only in cases where exceptional standards of design are achieved.

Local Area Plans may apply higher plot ratios to certain locations if it is warranted on planning grounds.

10.11 Site Coverage

The purpose of site coverage control is to prevent over-development, to avoid overshadowing and to protect rights to light of adjoining properties. The maximum normal site coverage for uses in all areas is 65%. In some cases, a higher percentage may be allowed, subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the site.

Site coverage = Ground floor area divided by gross site area.

10.12 Rural Housing

The rural settlement policy is set out in section 3.4. The Planning Authority has completed a Design Guide for Rural Housing within County Kilkenny. The design guide is intended to provide assistance to people who are considering the development of a single house in the countryside.

10.12.1 Location

The surface character of an area, its topography, vegetation cover, fields and hedgerows, determine the impact of new development. Allied to surface character are the extent and pattern of existing development in a rural area and these factors will determine whether new development can be integrated successfully or not. For example, in areas of high exposed terrain, it may be difficult to find unobtrusive sites. In areas of enclosed fields with matures trees, stone walls, rolling topography and existing development, imaginative use of the site's natural features can integrate new building unobtrusively into the countryside. Areas of enclosed fields, agriculture-related development and mature tree cover can absorb new buildings without damaging the rural quality of the area more effectively than open landscapes. The 'location' criterion, therefore establishes whether the proposed development will be acceptable in principle having regard to the general characteristics of the site, its context and visibility from critical viewpoints.

10.12.2 Siting

The 'siting' criterion refers to specific site assessment. The site should be of sufficient size to accommodate a building set back from the road and make full use of natural features. The building should be sited so as not to break the skyline. Use should be made of backdrops of trees, rising land or other buildings. Orientation of the building relative to the road and existing development is important, especially where it is proposed to terminate a ribbon of development, 'round off' existing scattered development or achieve a cluster of development. Comprehensive landscaping including planting, excavation and mounding works, can mitigate the impact of new development and planning permission will normally contain such conditions. However, landscaping can take many years to become fully established especially on exposed upland sites and it is preferable to use existing features in siting a building.

10.12.3 Design

The 'design' criterion is aimed at ensuring that buildings enhance rather than dominate the visual character of the area. The scale, form, massing, proportions and detailing of a development will be assessed in relation to the character of the location, the existing traditional pattern of development and site features. Access roads and driveways should respect site contours and cross them gently in order to integrate the building with its entrance and site. New development should cut into sloping land and excessive underbuilding or 'deadwork' should be avoided.

Traditional hedgerows or stone walls should be retained in preference to ranch, paling, post and wire or other fencing. If a new hedge or wall must be partially or completely removed for the purpose of improving sight lines, a replacement hedge or wall should be erected behind the sight lines. In any planting scheme, indigenous trees and shrubs appropriate to the site conditions should be used.

10.13 Archaeology

It is the policy of the local authorities to ensure that archaeological material is not disturbed so that an opportunity will be given to investigate and record any material of archaeological value that may be found or to protect them in-situ on sites. Developers are advised to consult the Heritage Council's *Archaeology & Development: Guidelines for good practice for developers* (2000) in this regard.

In areas designated of Archaeological Interest in the Sites and Monument Record or the Urban Archaeological Survey by the Office of Public Works, developers shall consult with the Planning Authority at the earliest possible stage prior to development works, including the digging of trenches or foundations. Where development is permitted on or in the vicinity of a listed archaeological site, or within an area of known archaeological interest, it shall be normal to require the developer to make provision for archaeological remains to be retained in situ below new development.

In cases where permitted works will impinge on known archaeology, the developer will be required to:

- Employ a licensed archaeologist at the applicant's expense to carry out trial excavations in advance of development;
- To liaise and consult with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government on all matters affecting the sites and monuments in its charge;
- Adjust building lines and construction methods to avoid damage to remains so far as practicable.

Developers may be required to contribute to and to allow a reasonable time for excavation, monitoring, recording and/or removal of any features prior to the commencement of development. Important sites shall be left physically intact wherever feasible.

10.14 Standards of Construction

Standards for site development works and, in particular, footpaths, sewers, drains and water supply shall be in accordance with the Building Regulations and the *Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas* (1998) published by the Department of the Environment and Local Government.

In addition the following are the requirements of the Planning Authority:

- Road carriageway construction shall be of flexible type with bituminous surface or other approved paving.
- All pavement kerbs shall be ramped at pedestrian crossing points to facilitate ease of access.
- Grids on gullies shall be of lockable type and shall be set at right angles to the roadway.
- Nameplates to streets and estates to a standard satisfactory to the Planning Authority shall be provided and erected. The proposed name of the housing estate should be lodged with the planning application. All nameplates shall be bi-lingual, preferably making use of established local places names.

- Street furniture should be carefully located so as not to obstruct footpath users with prams or wheelchairs.
- Traffic signs shall be provided as required by the Planning Authority.
- All sewers to be taken in charge by the Planning Authority shall have a minimum diameter of 225mm.

The Planning Authority will normally require that all wires and cables for the provision of public utility services shall be ducted underground to preserve the amenity and visual character of an area, and in the interests of public safety.

10.15 Sustainable Building

10.15.1.1 Daylighting and Solar Gain

The creation of a satisfactory microclimate for a housing scheme requires a balance between the provision of wind shelter and optimising the availability of daylight, sunlight and solar gain. The orientation of the dwelling on site, the internal layout of the dwelling and window orientation, can affect significantly the level of daylighting within the dwelling and the impact of solar gain on internal temperature. Where feasible, the main habitable rooms should have south and/or west facades. It is also desirable that bedrooms have a southerly or easterly aspect. Circulation and ancillary areas may be located on the north side. For all dwellings, including apartments, at least one main living room should be facing within 90º of due south. As high a proportion as practicable of the glazed areas of the dwelling should be facing within 30º of due south so as to maximise solar gain. The amount of north facing glazing should be minimised. Depending on site layout and degree of over shading by trees or other buildings in summertime, it may be necessary to make provision for shading against excessive solar gain. For rooms likely to experience high levels of solar gain, at least some elements of the room enclosure should have high thermal capacity, e.g., masonry or concrete components.

10.15.1.2 Fuels and Heating

Efficiency, affordability and environmental impact, e.g., emissions of CO_2 and other harmful gasses, are particularly important in the context of sustainability. It is recognised that natural gas is the most efficient non-renewable source of fuel for space heating. However, where this is not available, designers may wish to consider the possibility of utilising renewable sources of energy such as solar collectors, photo-voltaic, hydropower, wind power, wood pellets, biogas, geothermal sources, or where available local source of waste heat energy etc.

For apartment buildings over 1000m2, the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, requires designers to carry out a feasibility assessment of alternative energy systems before construction. The preferred methodology for assessing the feasibility of such sustainable energy systems shall be the Sustainable Energy Ireland software tool or other acceptable methodology. This shall also be applied to residential developments of more than 10 units.

The Council will assess alternative methods for heating County Hall.

10.15.1.3 Construction Materials

The design should ensure that, as far as possible, standard sizes of materials and components can be used, with minimum need for on-site modification and associated construction waste. In addition, in relation to materials for internal finishes and fittings, designers should choose non-toxic materials. Care should be taken to limit emissions of pollutants such as formaldehyde, solvent vapours and other volatile organic compounds that can adversely affect indoor air quality.

External finishes should be durable and maintenance free, as far as possible, particularly in inaccessible areas or areas which cannot easily be reached for maintenance purposes.

10.15.1.4 Water

The design should aim to conserve potable water, insofar as practicable. Water saving fittings, e.g., showerheads, taps, toilet cisterns and other appliances should be used, where feasible and acceptable. Consideration should be given to the collection and safe storage of rainwater and its use for purposes other than human consumption.

10.15.1.5 Green Public Procurement

Green Public Procurement is the approach by which Public Authorities integrate environmental criteria into all stages of their procurement process, thus encouraging the spread of environmental technologies and the development of environmentally sound products, by seeking and choosing outcomes and solutions that have the least possible impact on the environment throughout their whole life-cycle.

POLICY

RND4 The Council will endeavour to use green public procurement where possible and will liaise with and seek support from ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability) to develop a procurement policy in line with National Guidelines and International Best Practice.

10.16 Building Height Control

The following considerations will be taken into account in deciding an application for high buildings and other high structures:

- Overshadowing and consequent loss of light caused to surrounding property
- Overlooking (particularly of residential property) and consequent loss of privacy to surrounding premises
- Disruption of scale of the streetscape
- Does it detract from historic buildings or spaces or important landmarks?
- Effect on existing buildings having special value (for example, a spire, dome, tower or other high building)
- Views obscured
- Obtrusion on the skyline

- Scale of the building in relation to its open spaces and buildings
- Is site large enough to give visual transition
- Purpose or civic importance of the building
- Effect on micro-climate
- The need to create a positive urban design
- Analyse impact at city wide and at a local scale

Where in the opinion of the Planning Authority, a location for a high building is acceptable the building itself should be of outstanding architectural quality, creating a building which is elegant, contemporary, stylish, and in terms of form and profile, makes a positive contribution to the existing skyline.

10.17 Building Lines

The Planning Authority will normally seek to ensure that development is not carried out in front of established building lines. Generally, in urban areas of the county it will be an aim to create a continuous building line along a street edge. Development, which would infringe on an existing building line and would be prejudicial to residential amenity, or orderly development will not be allowed.

Building lines may be relaxed in the following cases:

- to incorporate key landscape features into the development layout,
- to incorporate key landmark buildings,
- for innovative designs which can positively enhance the townscape,
- for innovative housing layouts, where the traditional set back from the public footpath is flexible due to new designs, with a decreasing emphasis on the minimum required space to the front of dwellings,
- to provide important areas of public open space, i.e. squares, pocket parks.

10.18 Parking and Loading

All new development will normally be required by the Planning Authority to provide adequate off-street car parking facilities. Such facilities shall cater for the immediate and anticipated future demands of the development, and shall be located within the site or in close proximity to such development.

Car parking facilities shall generally be provided behind established building lines in each development and shall be screened. The dimension of car parking bays shall be 4.8m by 2.4m. Car parking areas shall be constructed having regard to drainage, surfacing and ancillary matters. They should be provided with proper public lighting facilities and shall be clearly demarcated. All car parking areas should be properly landscaped by the provision of trees, shrubs and grassed areas in order to ensure that damage to the visual amenities is avoided. In residential schemes parking should be secure and attractive and should be provided as close as possible to the dwellings served.

Underground car parking facilities may be an alternative solution to the provision of car parking for inner city developments, subject to archaeological investigations.

In all developments of an industrial or commercial nature, developers will be required to provide loading or unloading facilities sufficient to meet the demand of such development. Off-street loading facilities shall conform to the following requirements:

- Each required space shall not be less than 3.75m in width, 6.0m in length and 4.25m in height, exclusive of drives and manoeuvring space and located entirely on the site being served.
- There shall be appropriate means of access to a street or road as well as adequate manoeuvring space.
- The maximum width of the driveway opening onto the street boundary will be 6m and the minimum width shall be 3.75m.

The Planning Authority may modify the requirements of loading and unloading facilities in any particular case where it considers it would be in the interests of proper planning and sustainable development of the area to do so. Parking and service spaces must be located on site so as to prevent street obstruction and should be located where possible to the rear and side of the buildings and in such a manner to ensure minimal impact on the amenity of adjoining properties.

Table 10.4: Car Parking Standards

Land Use	**Parking Spaces per Unit**
Dwelling House	2 car parking spaces per unit 0.25 spaces per unit for visitor parking
Apartments	1.25 spaces per unit 0.25 spaces per unit for visitor parking
Schools	1 space for every classroom plus 4 additional spaces
Churches, theatres, public halls	1 car space per 10 seats
Hotels, hostels and guesthouses	1 car space per bedroom
Public houses, inc hotel bar	1 car space per 10 m^2 of bar and lounge floor area
Hotel function rooms	1 space per 10 m^2
Shopping centres, supermarkets, Department stores	1 space per 25 m^2 gross floor area
Shops	1 space per 20 m^2 gross floor area
Restaurants, cafes	1 car space per 20 m^2 gross floor area
Banks and offices	1 car space per 15 m^2 of gross floor area and additional space to be determined by the Planning Authority
Industry	1 car space for every 60m^2 of gross industrial floor area and operational space to be determined by the Planning Authority.

Warehousing	Each application will be determined by the Planning Authority
Retail Warehousing	1 car space for every 35 m^2 of net retail floor space.
Golf	4 car spaces per hole
Par 3 golf courses or Pitch and Putt courses	2 spaces per hole
Sports grounds and sports clubs	Each application to be determined by the Planning Authority
Golf driving ranges, Shooting ranges	1 space per bay/ trap plus 3 spaces
Clinics and Medical Practices	3 car spaces per consulting room plus staff
Hospital	1.50 spaces per bed
Nursing Home	1 space per 4 bedrooms plus staff

In the case of any use not specified above, the Planning Authority will determine the parking requirements, having regard to the traffic levels likely to be generated as a result of the development. Where a number of uses are contained within one development, the various uses shall be separated and the overall parking requirements for the development shall be assessed relative to each separate use in order to compute the overall parking requirement for the development (e.g. in a hotel the function rooms, bars etc. shall be assessed as separate from the bedroom provision).

However, where a developer can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that parking spaces will be utilised throughout the day by a number of different users, availing of different facilities within a proposed development, the Planning Authority may, in the interest of sustainability, take this multi use into account when assessing parking needs. In addition to the above requirements, developers will be required to provide and maintain loading and circulation facilities sufficient to meet the likely demand of each development.

10.19 Infill Development

Infill development will be required to maintain established building and rooflines and proportions. Infill within existing terraces will also be required to take cognisance of roof pitch, fascia level, parapet, eaves and cornice lines, the line of window heads and string courses. As a general principle the numbers of facing materials used on a building should be kept to a minimum.

10.20 Shopfronts

In order to conserve the distinctive character of County Kilkenny's traditional shopfronts it is the policy of the Planning Authority to encourage the maintenance of original shop fronts, or the reinstatement of traditional shop fronts where poor replacements have been installed.

In new buildings the proposed shop fronts should have regard to the existing shop fronts in the vicinity and should complement both the building and the

location. In existing buildings the original fascia line should be maintained and not excessively enlarged or lowered. Modern 'multiple' formats which have adopted a 'corporate image' will not necessarily be allowed to use their standardised shopfront design, corporate colours and materials. Such companies should be encouraged to ensure that their particular fascia takes account of the character of the street and local area. The construction of nameplate fascias linking two or more buildings of different architectural design and character is generally unacceptable. The removal of street doors giving separate access to upper floors will not be permitted unless alternative separate access is provided.

10.20.1 Security Shutters

The installation of security shutters can visually destroy and deaden the shopping street at night and thereby detract from the environment of a town or village. The erection of a security shutter and its associated screening requires planning permission. The Planning Authority will discourage the use of such shutters.

Where security shutters are considered to be essential because of the type of business transacted or goods stored the Planning Authority may permit them provided that they meet the following criteria:

- They must be open grille type (not perforated or solid)
- They must be painted or coloured to match the shopfront colour scheme
- Where possible they must be located, together with their associated housing behind the window display.

Alternatives to roller shutters such as the use of demountable open grilles will be preferred where security needs are involved.

10.20.2 Canopies and Blinds

Blinds were traditionally incorporated into the shop front fascia and designed to retract into it when not required. This is still the best way to handle a blind where one is required. The curved or Dutch canopy is unsympathetic to the traditional streetscape. They also obscure the shopfront detail neighbouring advertising and they deteriorate with age. These will not be permitted. The use of plastic canopies will be discouraged.

10.20.3 Lighting

Internally illuminated fascias or projecting box signs will not be permitted. Concealed strip or flood lighting of fascias and traditional hand painted signs lit by spotlight may be an acceptable alternative.

10.21 Advertising and Signposting

Advertising signs, separately, or more particularly in groups, can often cause injury to visual amenities, and can detract from the appearance of an area or a building; this is especially so when they are out of scale and character with their surroundings. They can also be a major distraction to road users and frequently

result in traffic hazard. It is the policy of the Planning Authority to strictly control all advertising signs in relation to their location, design, materials and function.

Advertising shall be controlled as follows:

- Signs will not be permitted where they interfere with the safety of pedestrians, the safety and free flow of traffic or if they obscure road signs.
- Signs shall be sympathetic in design and colouring, both to the building on which it will be displayed and its surroundings.
- Signs shall not obscure architectural features or details.
- Signs will not be permitted above eaves or parapet levels.
- Traditional painted sign writing or solid block individual lettering will be encouraged as will traditional or wrought iron hanging signs. The use of neon, plastic, PVC, Perspex flashing, reflectorised or glitter type signs on the exterior of buildings or where they are located internally but visible from the outside will be prohibited.
- Projecting signs, banners and flagpoles will be restricted in size and number to prevent clutter.
- Temporary hoardings may be approved where they can be used for the screening of building sites or land, which is unsightly.
- Signs attached to buildings are preferable to those on freestanding hoardings.
- Signs shall not be permitted to project above the roofline of buildings.
- Favourable consideration may be given, in consultation with business groups, to the erection of composite advance signs on which the facilities available in the city, towns and villages will be declared. Due to the damage which a proliferation of large, competitive advance signs can cause to the appearance and image of the important entrance routes into the towns and villages, individual advance signage will be phased out and well-designed and located composite signage will be sought as the opportunity arises.
- 'B&B' signage will be restricted to 1 sign per premises and no directional finger post signs will be permitted.

10.22 Telecommunication Antennae

Telecommunications antennae should be located so as to minimise any negative visual intrusion on the surrounding area, especially on landscapes or streetscapes of a sensitive nature. The preferred location for telecommunication antennae is in industrial estates or areas zoned for industry or in areas already developed for utilities.

The use of tall buildings or other existing structures is always preferable to the construction of an independent antennae support structure. Sharing of installations (antennae support structures) will be encouraged where it is deemed to lead to a reduction in the visual impact on the landscape or townscape. All applicants must satisfy the Planning Authority that a reasonable effort to share the installations has been made.

10.23 Automatic Teller Machines

The planning authority will strictly control the location of Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) having regard to the following:

- The need to protect the character of the street, building or shop front into which they are to be incorporated into especially buildings on the Record of Protected Structures.
- The design and location must be such that they are safe and easily accessible.
- Canopies, signs and logos shall be discreetly incorporated into the overall design the avoidance of a traffic hazard
- Satisfactory arrangements are made in relation to litter control.

The provision of ATMs at petrol stations will be encouraged to facilitate drivers wishing to use them. In general, ATMs will not be provided where customers queuing may cause disruption to pedestrians.

10.24 Fast food take-aways

Proposals for the development of these facilities will generally only be acceptable in areas of mixed use activity such as town or village centres. Planning applications for new fast food take-away uses will be considered on their own merits. Regard will be had to the impact of the take-away on the amenities of the area, including noise, odour and litter.

The Planning Authority may impose restrictions on opening hours of such uses as a condition of a planning permission. Full shopfront details will be required at application stage to assess the visual suitability of proposals in the area.

10.25 Caravan and Camping Parks

Caravan parks are to comply generally with the guidelines published by Bord Fáilte in 1982, namely; '*Guidelines for Development of Caravan and Camping Sites'* and *Fáilte Ireland's 'Registration Regulations and Classification Criteria for Caravan and Camping Parks'* (1990). In general, a density of not more than 14 no. caravans and/or tent pitches per usable acre may be permitted. All proposed sites must have adequate water, sewerage, refuse collection and electricity services.

Proposals for caravan parks shall show detailed landscaping proposals for such developments covering both planting on the site boundaries, and the periphery of the site generally, and within the site, in order to ensure that such developments can be fully integrated and assimilated into their environments.

Caravan sites should be located adjacent to public roads which are of adequate width, alignment, and capacity and capable of being of developed without giving rise to traffic hazards or adding to or creating a risk of increased congestion on such roads. Caravan sites should be located on sites that are adequately screened from the public road, and will not generally be permitted where there is no natural screening.

10.26 Childcare Facilities

Kilkenny County Council recognises the social, educational and economic important of encouraging the development of a broad range of childcare facilities in urban and rural areas throughout the county. It also recognises that childcare must be conveniently located.

Childcare is taken to mean full day-care and sessional facilities and services for pre-school children and school-going children out of school hours. It includes services involving care, education and socialisation opportunities for children and therefore includes pre-schools, day-care services, crèches, playgroups and after-school groups. The provision of amenable and accessible childcare is an important aspect in the proper planning and sustainable development of new and existing communities.

It is the policy of the Councils to implement the *Childcare Facilities – Guidelines for Planning Authorities* as published by the DOELG in 2001. Where a large housing development is proposed, i.e. seventy five houses or more the planning authority will require the provision of a purpose built unit for childcare on the site which shall have regard to the existing level of childcare provision in the area. The Council will operate this requirement in a flexible manner.

In general childcare facilities will be assessed on the following:

- The suitability of the site/premises for the type and size of facility proposed, taking into consideration the effects on the existing amenities of the area.
- Adequacy of vehicular and pedestrian access and parking provisions, which may be required to include satisfactory and safe collection/drop-off areas where appropriate, for both customers and staff where it is merited by the scale of the development and the resultant intensity of vehicular movements.
- Provision of an adequate outdoor play area within the curtilage of all full day care facilities. This outdoor play area shall be so located to have minimum impact on the amenity of surrounding properties, particularly in residential areas and should also be separate from car parking and service areas.
- The design of the structure and capability of it being assimilated satisfactorily in to the built environment.
- Ease of accessibility for all.

Applications for crèches, playschools and pre school facilities shall be accompanied with information in relation to details of the proposed opening times, proposed number and age range of children, proposed number of staff, internal floor areas devoted to crèche, excluding areas such as kitchens, toilets, sleeping and other ancillary areas, details of external play areas and car parking arrangement s for both parents and staff. Developers are advised to refer to the Department of the Environment and Local Government Guidelines on Childcare Facilities.

10.27 Nursing Homes

The need for nursing homes in the county is anticipated to grow into the future and these facilities should be integrated wherever possible into the established settlements and communities where their residents, workers and visitors alike can avail of the demand for services generated by such facilities. The Council recognises that nursing homes should not only be provided in established towns and villages but also in appropriate rural areas.

In determining planning applications for a change of use from a residential dwelling or other building to a nursing home the following will be considered:

- Whether such a use would not give rise to a traffic hazard and off-street car parking,
- The proximity to local services and facilities,
- Whether the size and scale is appropriate to the area.

10.28 Petrol and Gas Filling Stations

A petrol station may include the following: petrol pumps, diesel pumps, gas dispenser, storage tanks, hose pipes and other vehicle services i.e. car washing, oil, water and air. It may also include the sale of goods related to motor trade, a cash kiosk, and a canopy over the pumps and provision of minor repairs, oil and tyre changes.

Ancillary retail uses may be permitted such as small convenience type shops with a floor area generally not exceeding 100 sq metres of sales space. However, planning applications for the provision of such shops shall be applied for specifically. The layout of the station forecourt should be arranged to allow dedicated parking for those shopping at the shop.

The most suitable location for petrol filling stations and associated commercial developments is on the outskirts of the city and within urban speed limits. They will not be permitted at locations where because of their appearance, noise, fumes etc. they would be injurious to the amenities of the area, nor will they be permitted in areas where there are traffic hazards or where hazards might be likely to arise.

Any application for a new petrol filling station should provide sufficient road frontage, clear visibility, two points of access, sanitary convenience for public use, and the surface of the forecourt shall be graded, surfaced with bitumen macadam or other suitable material and drained to the satisfaction of the planning authority. A petrol/oil interceptor trap shall be fitted to the surface water drainage system.

10.29 Control of Major Accident Hazards Directive (Seveso II Directive)

This EU Directive 96/82/EC seeks to prevent major industrial accidents involving dangerous substances and to limit the consequences of accidents on people and the environment.

It is an objective of the Planning Authority to control, having regard to the provisions of the EU Directive, and any regulations giving effect to that Directive the following:

- Developments within the vicinity of existing Seveso site areas;
- The proposed development of a new Seveso establishment; and
- The modification of an existing establishment.

It is an objective of the local authorities to reduce the risk and limit the consequences of major industrial accidents by, where appropriate, taking into account the advice of the Health and Safety Authority when proposals for development as outlined above are considered.

10.30 Cycle Facilities

Kilkenny County Council shall require cycle facilities to be provided with any new development proposals. Bicycle parking stands should be provided in a secure and safe location, which is overlooked and provides easy access to entrances and exits.

The number of stands required will be one quarter the number of car parking spaces required for the development, subject to a minimum of one stand.

10.31 Housing on Lands Zoned for Agriculture

On lands zoned for agriculture within the development boundary for Kilkenny City and Environs, Waterford City Environs, Callan, Castlecomer, Thomastown and Graiguenamanagh, housing will be restricted to the following categories of persons:

- Immediate members of farmer's families (sons & daughters) and/or
- Persons who primary employment is in agriculture, horticulture, forestry or bloodstock, or other rural based activity in the area which they wish to build.

The basis of this policy is to preserve the existing agricultural use of the areas zoned for this purpose, to prevent speculation in land and to prevent urban generated development which would interfere with the operation of farming and prejudice the future planning and development of the area.

It is not the intention of the Council that all land within a development boundary designated would be zoned for development in the short term but that the lands would be released on a phased basis over a medium to longer term. The mere inclusion within the boundary confers no additional rights to development and landowners should have no expectation that building development will be allowed.

10.32 Agricultural Developments

In the construction and layout of agricultural buildings the Council will require that buildings be sited as unobtrusively as possible and that the finishes and colours used will blend the development into its surroundings.

The Council will require that agriculture developments will be constructed and located so as to ensure that there is no threat of pollution to ground or surface waters. In assessing planning applications for agriculture developments the Council will have regard to the European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations, 2006.

10.33 Waste Water Treatment

The Council is aware of its obligations to sustainable development with respect to the treatment and disposal of waste water. The Council will insist that all new developments are connected to the public sewerage system where such exists.

Where connection to the public sewer is not possible dwellings must provide their own private means of effluent disposal and treatment. Kilkenny County Council requires that sites will be assessed in accordance with the EPA manual entitled *Wastewater Treatment Manuals: Treatment Systems for Single Houses (2000)*. The person carrying out the assessment will be suitably qualified.

10.34 Development Contributions

Kilkenny County Council, taking into consideration the capital expenditure necessary for the provision of infrastructure, will require financial contributions by way of conditions attached to planning permissions in relation to drainage, water supply, roads, open space and car parking which facilitate the proposed development. The amount of financial charge will be in accordance with the relevant development contribution scheme.

Contributions may also be required by way of a special contribution condition attached to planning permissions towards the cost of any public service or project which is carried out that is of benefit to the proposed development.

10.35 Bonds

To ensure that developments undertaken by the private developers are satisfactorily completed developers will be required to provide cash deposits or submit a bond from an insurance company or other financial institution acceptable to the Planning Authority for the satisfactory completion of developments and their ancillary services. This bond or surety is to be submitted before development is commenced.

10.36 Future Publications of Standards and Guidelines

The Planning Authority will continue, during the course of the Plan period, to prepare and make available to the public, technical and design guidelines on matters affecting planning and sustainable development of the county.

10.37 Tree and Hedgerow Preservation

The Council will encourage the protection of all mature trees and hedgerows which occur on development sites and roads, and as part of the application process may require the submission of tree and hedgerow surveys to accompany applications for development. All trees with a diameter of 75mm and above (measured at a height of 1.4m above ground level) should be included in the survey. Hedgerows should be surveyed by reference to species, branch canopy, spread, shape, height and condition. Remedial works should also be indicated where appropriate and trees should be identified on site with suitable tags. Provision should be made in the site layout for incorporating specimen trees that are in good condition.

10.37.1 Prevention of Damage and Protection of Trees/Hedgerows during site development

Where trees or hedgerows are to be preserved on a development site, it is essential that the trees and hedgerows be protected by the erection of secure fencing prior to any site or engineering works commencing and that no materials be stored within the fenced area and that no vehicles have access to the fenced area. To ensure that trees and hedgerows are protected on a site which has been the subject of a grant of planning permission, a cash lodgement may be required, the amount of which shall be determined by the Planning Authority.

Development will not generally be permitted where there is likely damage or destruction either to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order or those which have a particular local amenity or nature conservation value. Development that requires the felling of mature trees of amenity value, conservation value or special interest, even though they
may not be listed in the Development Plan, will be discouraged.

The Council will have regard to BS 5837 1991 'Guide for Trees in relation to Construction' and BS 3998 'Tree Works' in the assessment of any planning application.

Where felling of trees is unavoidable, new planting will be required using native species. Trees of local provenance, (i.e. grown from seed from plants growing locally) are preferable if available because they will be best adapted to growing in County Kilkenny.

Kilkenny County Council will promote the planting of native tree and shrub species, by committing to using native species (of local provenance wherever possible) in its landscaping work and on County Council property. (A list of native trees and shrubs in included in Appendix E.) It is important that new planting in the county serves not just to contribute to tree regeneration generally, but ensure that the age mix of trees within the county guarantees that there is always replacement stock at differing stages of growth.

Bibliography & List of References

National

National Spatial Strategy 2002 – 2020, (2002) Dept. of Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Stationery Office, Dublin

National Development Plan 2007 – 2013, (2007), Dept. of Finance, Stationery Office, Dublin

Planning & Development Act, 2000, (2000), Dept. of Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Stationery Office, Dublin.

Government Guidelines

Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, (2004), Dept. of Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Stationery Office, Dublin.

Childcare Facilities – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, (2001), Dept. of Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Stationery Office, Dublin.

Development Plans - Guidelines for Planning Authorities, (2007), Dept. of Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Stationery Office, Dublin

Residential Density – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, (1999), Dept. of Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Stationery Office, Dublin.

Retail Planning – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, (2005), Dept. of Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Stationery Office, Dublin.

Sustainable Rural Housing – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, (2005), Dept. of Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Stationery Office, Dublin.

Wind Energy Development Guidelines – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, (2006), Dept. of Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Stationery Office, Dublin.

Regional

South-East Regional Authority, **Regional Planning Guidelines – Implementing the National Spatial Strategy**, (2004), Kilkenny People Printing, Kilkenny.

Waterford Planning, Land Use and Transportation Study 2004 - 2020 (PLUTS), (2004), Atkins, Cork.

Local

Kilkenny County Development Plan (2002), Kilkenny County Council
Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan (2002), Kilkenny County and Borough Councils