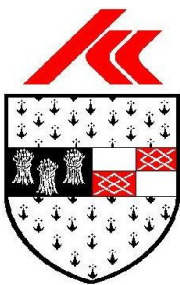


**KILKENNY CITY & ENVIRONS
DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2008 – 2014**

&

**KILKENNY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2008 – 2014**

A GUIDE TO HAVING YOUR SAY



July 06

INTRODUCTION

Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Borough Council will start the preparatory process for the new Kilkenny County Development Plan and the new Kilkenny City and Environs Development Plan on 28th July 2006

Both Plans must be finished within two years.

The Plans will set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County and the City & Environs for a six-year period i.e. 2008-2014.

Plan preparation is in three stages

- Stage 1: Pre-draft
- Stage 2: Preparation of Draft Plan
- Stage 3: Making of Development Plan

Within each of these stages there are four common requirements:

- **Public notification:**
- **Public consultation**
- **Manager's Report and**
- **Preparation of Plan.**

Public input at the start of the plan making process is important so that the Development Plans reflect public aspirations and concerns, as well as Government Policy, Strategies and Guidelines. This Position Paper has been prepared as part of Stage 1 of the process. It is intended to stimulate public debate on the planning issues that the 2008 – 2014 Development Plan might address. It deals with some of the main issues under various headings. These issues are not exhaustive, and you are invited to raise other matters you consider relevant to the plan.

WHAT IS A DEVELOPMENT PLAN?

The main instrument for regulation and control of development is the Development Plan. Each planning authority is required to publish notice of its intention to review its plan, not later than 4 years after the making of a development plan. A new plan must be made every 6 years (i.e. 2 years after the notice of the intention to review the plan has been published). The plan states the authority's policies for land use and for development control and promotion in its area.

The development plan is a blueprint for the planning and development of your area for the next six years. For example, it sets out where roads, water supplies, sewerage are to be provided and it zones land for particular purposes (housing, shopping, schools, factories etc.). This will affect what type of buildings can be constructed and the use to which land can be put. It affects many facets of daily economic and social life where you can live, what services are available and where developments with job opportunities are to be sited.

EXISTING COUNTY & CITY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

The existing Development Plan consists of three volumes, vol. I – county wide policies and objectives, vol. II Plans for the scheduled towns of Callan Castlecomer, Graigueamagh and Thomastown as well as plans for Waterford City Environs, Kilmacow and the Environs of New Ross, vol. III being the Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan.

In order to marry the form of the existing Plan with the Planning & Development Acts 2000 – 2002a twinned tracked approach is being adopted in this review.

The new draft County Development Plan will consist of a revised and updated vol. I and there will be a revised and updated Kilkenny City and Environs Development Plan.

Local Area Plans for the towns of Callan Castlecomer Graigueamagh and Thomastown, as well as Kilmacow and the Waterford City Environs will be 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.

WHAT PLANNING ISSUES WOULD YOU LIKE TO RAISE?

It's important to have your input from the beginning so that we can make sure that the final Plan reflects your wishes and concerns - as well as Government strategies and guidelines.

We have prepared this Position Paper so that we can stimulate public debate on the planning issues that the next Development Plans will address. Throughout the document you will see references to the main planning issues under a number of headings.

These headings are to stimulate your thinking (i.e. the Development Plans will not focus only on these areas) and we have attempted to highlight the most significant areas of potential interest to you.

Population & Future Housing Trends
Community Development
Enterprise and Employment
Infrastructure
Towns, Villages & Local Centres
Transportation/Movement
Rural Areas
Heritage & Conservation
Recreation, Tourism & The Arts
Future Development of the City & Environs

WHAT ABOUT THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PICTURE - CAN WE IN KILKENNY DO WHAT WE LIKE?

The next County & City Development Plans must take account of a number of national and regional strategies and guidelines. The two key documents that will have an impact here are The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) The South East Regional Planning Guidelines (SERPG).

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS)

The NSS sets out a strategy for balanced development all over Ireland. The NSS has identified Kilkenny City as a Hub.

The focus of the NSS is to bring people, jobs and services closer together. It will mean a better quality of life for us all with less traffic, less commuting, better environmental care and easier access to services like health, education and leisure.

The South East Regional Planning Guidelines (SERPGs)

The SERPGs were published in May 2004 and the document constitutes a 20 year strategic planning framework for the development of the region. This planning framework is based on the national development strategy set out in National spatial Strategy.

These and other guidelines will be referred to elsewhere in the text, but due to the brevity of this document not all relevant national and regional documents will be mentioned.

In addition the Plan will take account of the Kilkenny County Development Board Strategy for Economic Social and Cultural Development. City and County Development Boards were created under the Local Government Act 2001 and comprise representatives from the local authority, local development bodies, state agencies and the social partners.

A Strategy for the Economic, Social and Cultural Development of Kilkenny 2002-2012, adopted by the board in 2002, sets out the agreed strategy for the social, economic and cultural development of Kilkenny for a 10-year period. The two underlying principles driving the Strategy are the need for comprehensive integrated public service delivery throughout the County and the promotion of the concept of social inclusion as a fundamental tenet of all policies that affect the public.

MAKING YOUR VIEW HEARD

It's easy to make your views heard.

We must receive your views in writing on what the new Kilkenny County Development Plan and Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan should contain and what issues are concerning you. Send your submission to:

**The Director of Services,
Planning Department,
Kilkenny County Council,
County Hall,
Johns Street
Kilkenny.**

OR

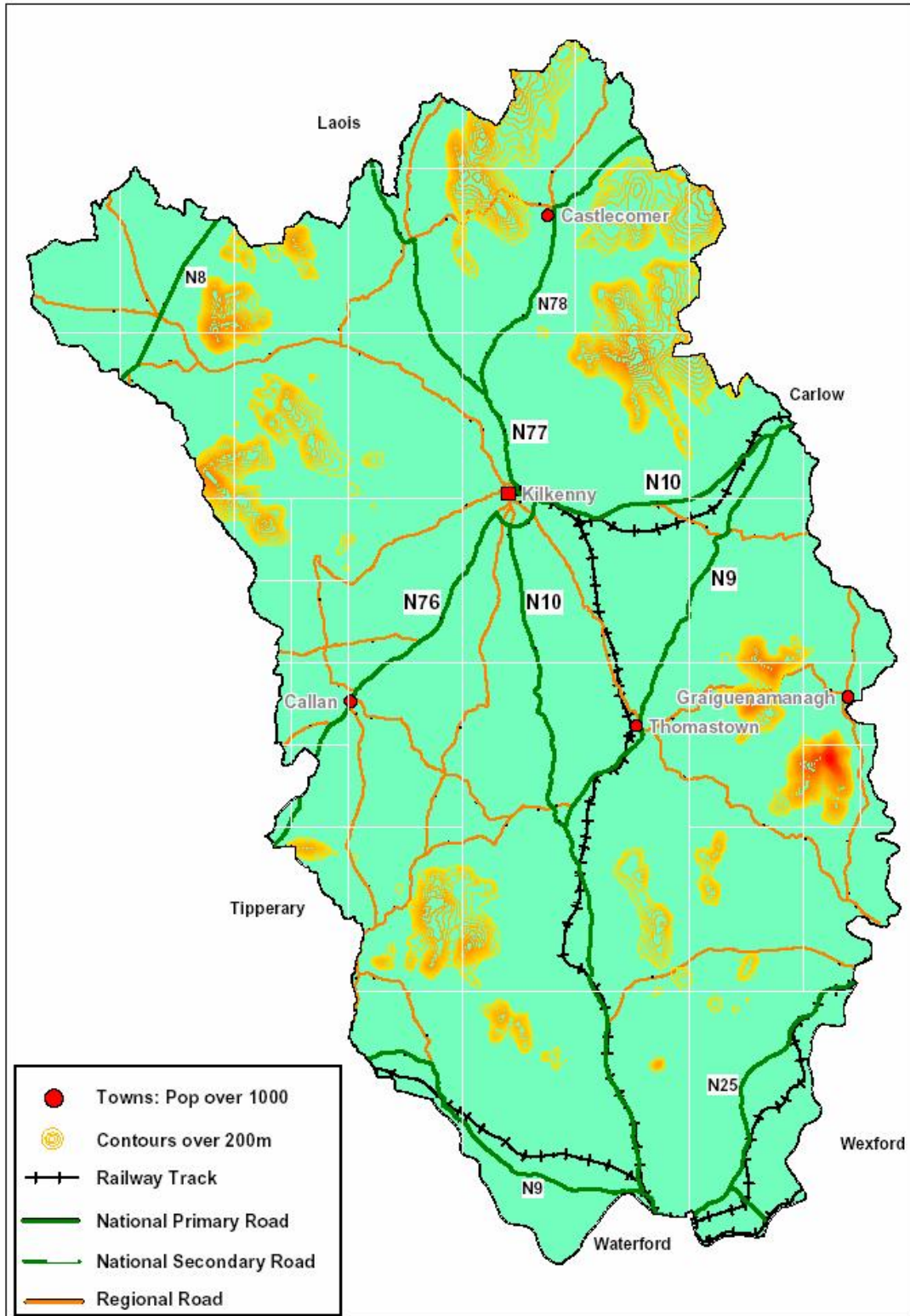
You can make your submission by e-mail to: - devplan@kilkennycoco.ie

For legal reasons we cannot accept submissions until the 28th July 2006 and they can be made anytime after that date up to and including Friday the 6th October 2006. Don't forget to give us your name and if it's relevant to you, who you represent (i.e. is it a submission on your own behalf or are you writing to give the views of your community group, resident association etc.)

We should be grateful if you could make your submission as early as possible to give us plenty of time to include it. Remember that we are on a strict timeframe that is set out in Government legislation.

YOU MUST HAVE YOUR SUBMISSION TO US BY Friday the 6th October 2006.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE AREA OF KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL



Note:
Due to the scale of the map the Borough Councils administrative area is not shown

POPULATION AND FUTURE HOUSING TRENDS

The population of the County and Kilkenny City & Environs is growing all the time how will we cater for future growth and population?

The Census of population 2002 indicated that the population of the County was 80,339. This was an increase of 5,085 persons or 6.6% over the population of 75,336 in 1996.

The census of population 2006 indicates that the population of the County is now 87,394. This is an increase of 7,055 persons or 8.8% over the 2002 population.

Kilkenny City & Environs had a population of 20,735 in 2002 which was an increase of 2039 persons over the 1996 figure of 18,696 or 10.9 %

It is estimated from the preliminary census results and the number of house completions that the population of the City and Environs is now approximately 22,500¹.

The City & Environs grew moderately faster than the State as a whole 10.9% Vs 8.0% during the period 1996 to 2002.

For the period 2002 to 2006 it is estimated that the City & Environs has grown by approximately 1800 persons which is an 8.6% increase.

This is just ahead of the increase in the state as a whole at 8.1%.

Under the National Spatial Strategy Kilkenny City was designated as a Hub with a target population of 30,000+ by the year 2020.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN HOUSING ISSUES YOU SHOULD THINK ABOUT?

1. Where should the main increases in population within the County be directed?
2. How will we cater for all the different housing needs in the County first time buyers, families, homeless persons, mobility-impaired persons, Travelers and elderly people?
3. What response should there be to the trends to smaller household size?
4. The development of high-density residential areas is seen by some as a solution; what do you think? What density should we build at in Kilkenny City & Environs?
5. How can we ensure that we facilitate the development of real communities with a clear identity and not simply soulless housing estates
6. What social supports are required by communities- are these retail, transport, education, childcare, recreational/leisure and community supports?
7. Which of these is a priority for you? How should these be planned? Are there other supports not identified?
8. Development land is a limited valuable resource. Should we zone additional land in Kilkenny City & Environs for future residential development to 2014, and if so how much and where?
9. Where should social and affordable housing be provided.
10. What should our rural housing policy try to achieve.
11. How should rural generated housing be defined?
12. Where should urban generated housing needs be met?
13. Has the development of individual houses helped to retain the social infrastructure of rural areas i.e. schools shops, post offices, sports clubs?

¹ It has been assumed that the Kilkenny rural ED increase of 1800 approximates to the City and Environs increase.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Creating safe, healthy and inclusive communities is a priority for us all so where does community development fit in?

Community facilities are vital to the life of the County. Schools, colleges, libraries, childcare facilities, crèches and local and community services (such as post offices, banking facilities, youth clubs and meeting spaces) help to maintain and nurture a sense of community.

In relation to community facilities, schools have a huge role to play. Opening up local school facilities for community access can cater for the needs of many groups in our community; older people, children, young people, the unemployed, parent's etc. inclusion of a variety of needs should be central to any good community policy.

Older people too need to be catered for and the inclusion of the needs of the older citizen should be central to any good community policy.

Childcare

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. Childcare Guidelines recommend that Development Plans that development plans encourage a broad range of facilities i.e. part time, full daycare, after-school care etc.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN ISSUES IN RELATION TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT?

Childcare

1. What policies to support childcare provision should be included in the new Development Plan?
2. Development Plan?
3. How best can childcare facilities including crèches be provided for in residential areas?
4. Should we require new businesses and Industrial parks and other employment-intensive developments to provide childcare facilities to serve the needs of employees?

Education

5. How can Kilkenny County Council help to influence the wider use of school buildings and grounds?
6. How should we encourage walking and cycling to school?

Other Community Facilities

7. What types of non-commercial community facilities (such as Community and Recreation
8. Centers, meeting rooms, all-weather play areas) should be provided as standard at local and neighbourhood level?
9. How can we best cater for the needs of our young people?
10. Should we protect small or local convenience outlets (and other commercial facilities) given the trend towards larger purpose built commercial centers?
11. What local services do people require in a local centre?
12. Should medical/dental surgeries and crèches be located in local shopping centers rather than in residential areas?
13. Where should we locate nursing homes?

ENTERPRISE & EMPLOYMENT

At present significant areas of industrial land is 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 is 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 smaller towns and villages in the County.

There are a number of agencies involved in the promotion of job creation at local and national level which include:

The Kilkenny County Enterprise Board,
BNS Leader,
Enterprise Ireland
IDA Ireland

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 total in the labour force in the County in 2002 was 35,824.

Retailing within the City and County is due for significant expansion over the remaining life of the current Plan and into the next Development Plan period 2008 -2014. The McDonagh shopping centre in the City is under construction and there is a further proposal for the development of the Mart site off Barrack Street.

There is also a proposal for a District shopping centre in Abbeylands in the Environs of Waterford City. These centres will provide significant levels of employment both during construction and when in full operation.

Third level Education

Third level educational facilities include an outreach centre based in St. Kieran's College associated with Maynooth College.

There is an aspiration to have a university in the South East Region located in Waterford City.

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.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN ENTERPRISE AND EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

1. How can we encourage greater links between employment and third level education within the City and County? Should part of the South East University be located in the City?
2. What are the most appropriate locations in County Kilkenny for employment and enterprise?
3. What type of employments and enterprises could co-exist within residential areas?
4. Should traditional industrial areas provide a variety of services such as crèches, shops, restaurants and leisure facilities to facilitate workers in these areas?
5. Should new office development be permitted in industrial areas or only in the City centre?
6. Should we designate lands near the proposed motorway interchanges for different employment types?
7. What policies or actions do we need to support new start up businesses?
8. How should we support small enterprises such as e-business, start up units, and enterprise centres?
9. What can be done to ensure that the benefits of increased economic activity in Kilkenny City is transferred into the rest of the towns and villages and rural parts of the County?
10. What kind of physical units are required for new employment opportunities? Is there a need for starter/incubator units of various sizes?
11. How can we support local agriculture and rural enterprise?

INFRASTRUCTURE

Water Supply, Waste Water Services, Surface water disposal, Power and Telecommunications Waste disposal and Energy.

The provision and safeguarding of infrastructure investment is a critical component of any sustainable development strategy for the City and County. Without offering environmentally sound means of supplying water, disposing of waste water and solid waste the principles of sustainable development cannot be met.

Water Supply

The water services investment programme 2005 – 2007 identifies water and sewerage schemes for investment.

The water schemes are:

- Gowran/Goresbridge/Paultown wss
- Kilkenny City Regional wss²
- Bennettsbridge wss
- Ballyragget/CLogh/Castlecomer/Urlingford/Johnstown wss
- Callan/Graiguenamanagh/Thomastown/Inistioge wss
- Mooncoin Regional wss.

Waste Water Services

The sewerage schemes are:

- Kilkenny City wwtp³
- Kilkenny Sludge Management
- Freshford, Johnstown & Goresbridge wwtp³.

Waste

Waste management objectives and strategies are set out in the Waste Management Plan for the South East Region. A new plan was made in early June 06. It covers the period from 2006 to 2011.

Telecommunications

In terms of mobile communications the County is well served by the existing licensed operators. The policy in the current Plan is based on the Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, July 1996. This policy encourages co-sharing and clustering of masts. Many applications for masts have been subject to considerable public opposition.

² wss = water supply scheme

³ wwtp= waste water treatment plant

Energy

The Council strongly supports national and international incentives for limiting emissions of greenhouse gases and encouraging the development of renewable energy resources such as wind, solar, hydro, and energy from biomass and waste.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES YOU SHOULD BE THINKING ABOUT

Water & drainage

1. How can we make sure that we have enough water and drainage facilities to cope with the County's growth for houses, business, industry, farming etc?
2. What should be the infrastructural investment priorities within the City and County?
3. How should we priorities infrastructural investments by the local authority?
4. How can we ensure that developments within the County do not contribute to the deterioration in surface and ground water quality?

Waste

5. What do we need to do to promote waste reduction in Kilkenny?
6. What do we need to do to promote recycling and re-use?
7. How can the Development Plan build upon and implement the South East Waste Management Plan?

Energy

8. What policies should we include in the Development Plan to encourage the use of renewable energy resources?
9. What policies or strategies should we include in the development plan to discourage the use of non renewable energy resources?
10. Should we have policies on the energy efficiency in new buildings?

Telecommunications

11. How can we ensure that the City and County is served by up to date telecommunications?
12. What should the Council's policy be in relation to the location of mobile telephone masts and antennae?

TOWNS & VILLAGES, DISTRICT & LOCAL CENTRES WITHIN THE COUNTY.

The County has a distinctive settlement pattern characterised by one large settlement (Kilkenny City) and a high number of well dispersed small towns and villages.

Kilkenny City is the largest urban settlement within the County with an estimated population of 22,500⁴ persons.

The next five largest settlements within the County are The Environs of Waterford City, Thomastown, Castlecomer, Callan, and Graiguenamanagh.

These centres provide a focus for a range of commercial and community activities, appropriate to their location and function within a settlement hierarchy.

The City is the main commercial residential and cultural centre of the county. With increased mobility people are now able to access and use neighbouring centres (e.g. Carlow & Waterford). The retail function of the city is subject to competition as a result.

The other towns and villages play an important role as service/retail/residential centres and act as local service centres assisting the long term vitality and viability of rural areas.

The district centre designated for the Environs of Waterford city reflects the needs and potential of the area.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN ISSUES FOR TOWNS AND VILLAGES AND LOCAL CENTRES WITHIN THE COUNTY?

1. What needs to be done to make our existing City towns and villages attractive locations within which to live, work and socialise?
2. How do we enhance and facilitate the retail function of the City in the face of competition and anticipated growth?
3. What targets should we set for the expansion of our towns and villages?
4. What type and scale of employment, retail, service, leisure and recreational activities should the Development Plans provide for in Kilkenny City district centre(s), the towns and villages throughout the county?
5. How should we determine the extent and design of future development in individual villages?
6. Should land be zoned within the villages for development?
7. How can we control the pace of growth in our villages to ensure that design, layout, character and scale of new development is acceptable?

⁴ It has been assumed that the Kilkenny rural ED approximates increase approximates to the City and Environs increase.

TRANSPORTATION/MOVEMENT

Transport plays a central role in the economy of the County. It is essential to have an efficient strategic transport system for the future economic social and physical development of the County. Transport planning and land use planning are fundamentally linked.

Land uses should be structured so that the need for transport and reliance on the private car is minimised.

The transport system should permit the efficient movement of goods and persons in the interests of commerce and enterprise.

Good quality public transport alternatives to the private car for commuting need to be provided as an alternative to the private car.

Improved pedestrian and cycle facilities through out the City & County will be required to encourage more sustainable modal choices.

Roads.

The Council's long term objective is to implement the Governments strategy for National routes within the County. The completion of the Waterford to Dublin Route is seen as a critical piece of enabling infrastructure. Roads improvements have been carried out to the County & City road network improving efficiency and capacity. The M8 and M9/M10 high quality dual carriageways are due to be completed in 2010.

Rail.

The County is crossed by four railway lines with a spur From the City connecting to the Dublin to Waterford line at Lavistown. Belview port is served by rail which facilitates the movement of freight to and from the port.

The Waterford to Dublin rail route serves the City and Thomastown with daily services to and from Dublin

There have been improvements to this service during the current plan period.

Bus Services.

Bus Eireann operates expressway services connecting Kilkenny with Dublin, Waterford and other centres.

There are other private operators within the County which operate services to and

from the City to the larger towns and villages.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN TRANSPORT ISSUES FACING THE CITY AND COUNTY.

1. What transportation improvements are needed throughout the County?
2. How should we plan now for the advent of the new high quality dual carriageways/motorways that will cross the County by 2010 i.e. the M8 & M9/10?
3. How best can we co-ordinate and integrate transport and land use planning in order to reduce the demand for travel and dependence on private car transport?
4. How can we encourage better use of public transport and alternative ways of travelling such as cycling and walking?
5. How can we cater for people who have mobility difficulties?
6. How can we ensure adequate car parking while encouraging alternatives methods of transport?
7. What should we do to produce sustainable policies covering land-use, public transport, roads, traffic management, cycling, walking facilities for the mobility impaired and parking?
8. Do we need a bus service in Kilkenny City and how should it be funded?

HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION

Heritage is defined under the Heritage Act, 1995, as including the following:

Archaeological objects, Landscapes, Heritage parks and gardens, Heritage objects, Seascapes, Inland waterways, Architectural heritage, Flora, Wrecks, Fauna, Wildlife habitats, Geology.

Cultural heritage is a very important aspect of our shared heritage. It may include aspects of our heritage such as local history, language, sport, music, genealogy, museums & archives.

Heritage Plan

A Heritage Plan is currently being prepared by the Kilkenny Heritage Forum (facilitated by Kilkenny Local Authorities). The Heritage Plan is a 5 year, non-statutory, strategic plan for the management of heritage in the county. The Heritage Plan will cover the period 2007 – 2011.

Built Heritage

Architectural Heritage

Architectural heritage includes all structures, buildings and groups of buildings including streetscapes and urban vistas which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific or technical interest together with their setting, attendant grounds, fixtures and fittings.

Record of Protected Structures

Each planning authority has a statutory responsibility to include a Record of Protected Structures in its Development Plan. The local authority can add or delete from the record at any time but the review of the Development Plan is a good time to consider these changes. There are currently approximately 800 items listed on the Record of Protected Structures for Kilkenny City & County.

Architectural Conservation Areas

The 2000 Planning Act provides for the inclusion of objectives for preserving the character of places, areas, groups of structures or townscapes of special interest. Such areas are designated as Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA's).

In Kilkenny City there are 9 such conservation areas.

In the County there are ACA's within Gowran, Freshford, Inistioge, and Ballyragget.

Archaeological Heritage

Archaeology can be considered as the material remains left by past societies and the evidence of their environment. Kilkenny has a rich archaeological heritage which ranges from megalithic tombs, to early ecclesiastical enclosures, and medieval earthworks and buildings.

The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is a statutory inventory of known archaeological sites and areas with accompanying maps, on which sites are marked and numbered. There are over 5000 RMP sites in County Kilkenny. The RMP also includes Areas of Archaeological Potential (AAP's), also known as Zones of Archaeological Potential.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN ISSUES IN RELATION TO OUR BUILT HERITAGE?

1. What conservation principles should be set out in the Development Plan in order to retain the historic heritage of the City and County?
2. Are there structures which would warrant inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures?
3. Have you any suggestions for Architectural conservation areas?
4. How can we achieve a balance between development pressures and the conservation of protected structures and archaeological sites?
5. How can the Development Plan contribute to the protection and appreciation of Protected Structures and archaeological sites?
6. How can the Plan conserve and enhance elements of our cultural heritage?

HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION

Geology

The landscape, soils and watercourses of County Kilkenny owe their unique expression to the underlying geology. Geology is recognised as an intrinsic component of natural heritage. The Heritage Act and Planning Regulations place responsibility upon local authorities to ensure that geological heritage is taken into consideration with Heritage Plans and County development Plans. The Geological Survey of Ireland is developing a national list of County Geological Sites (CGS) and a list of sites to be designated as geological Natural Heritage Areas (NHA's).

Natural Heritage

Kilkenny has a rich and varied natural heritage which includes our natural and semi-natural habitats and native species of flora and fauna.

Kilkenny's natural heritage or biodiversity and landscapes are major assets and contribute environmental, economic, recreational, social and cultural benefits and opportunities.

The need to conserve biodiversity generally is underlined in the Convention on Biological Diversity which Ireland has signed and ratified.

As part of Kilkenny Local Authorities commitment under the National Biodiversity Plan 2002, a Local Biodiversity Plan will be prepared as a component of the Kilkenny Heritage Plan.

Nature Conservation Designations

Our most significant habitats are afforded protection under European and National legislation through designations such as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs). There are a number of SACs and pNHAs in Kilkenny City & County.

In addition, we have a wide range of important habitats of local and regional significance which do not have any formal legal protection.

Landscape

Kilkenny County contains a rich and varied landscape which is the basis for the high level of amenity in the County.

The importance of developing policies in relation to our landscapes is underlined in the Planning and Development Act 2000

and the European Landscape Convention which Ireland has signed and ratified.

The new Plan will contain a landscape character assessment which will identify specific policies for the various character landscapes within the County.

Trees, Tree Preservation Orders and Hedgerows

Trees and hedgerows contribute significantly to biodiversity and the landscape character of Kilkenny. A number of significant trees in the city and county have been afforded protection through Tree Preservation Orders (TPO'S).

WHAT ARE THE MAIN ISSUES IN RELATION TO OUR NATURAL HERITAGE?

1. How should we respond to development pressures on our high amenity areas and in relation to our natural heritage generally?
2. How can the Plan address the conservation and enhancement of our natural heritage/biodiversity resources?
3. How can we promote the development of walking routes and way marked trails?
4. Is renewable energy development such as windfarms, consistent with landscape conservation?
5. How should access to heritage and amenity sites over private lands be dealt with?
6. How can we manage and promote the natural amenities of our rivers?
7. How can we best achieve a balance between economic development and landscape conservation?
8. How can we best protect habitats of local or regional significance which are not afforded legal protection?
9. How can the plan best offer protection to trees and hedgerows?

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Council recognises the need to manage rural change and to guide development in order to maintain a vibrant rural sustainable rural community where individuals and families have a real choice as to whether to stay in, leave or move to rural areas.

The challenges facing rural communities can be viewed in the context of changes in population, agriculture, employment, and the environment

The rural environment is a major plus for the County providing economic, recreational, social and cultural benefits and opportunities.

Agriculture is still an important part of the economic life of the County. It is the predominant land use and a significant source of employment.

The pattern of land use, the shape of the landscape and the quality of rivers and ground waters are influenced by many factors, including farming practices, urban expansion, rural housing and settlement patterns, economic development in tourism, industry and enterprise, extractive industries and increased car usage.

We must examine the many pressures on the countryside and see how we can find solution to the problems these pressures generate.

Examples of pressures would be rural housing, extractive industries, forestry development, windfarm developments, and leisure and tourism development.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN ISSUES WITH REGARD TO RURAL DEVELOPMENT

1. How can the Development Plan support farming and rural enterprises?
2. How can we promote and maintain essential rural services?
3. How can we protect the water quality of our rivers and ground waters from the pressures of modern lifestyles?
4. How can we optimise the provision of infrastructural services, which are expensive to provide in rural areas?
5. How can we achieve forestry development, while minimising adverse landscape impacts?
6. What are the challenges facing rural sustainability?
7. What options are there regarding the economic diversification of rural areas?

RECREATION AND TOURISM & THE ARTS

Recreation:

A detailed recreation policy was adopted by the Council following a recreational needs study carried out by the Council in 2003. From that study a number of specific recreational projects have been established such as: the provision of playgrounds within the City and around the County, the establishment of a parks department within the Council and the development of a linear park along the River Nore within the City. The development of a walking route from the City to Inistioge.

A standard of 2.4ha of open space per 1,000 population is the adopted open space provision standard for the City and County.

Tourism

Tourism and the Arts together are a major service industry that has brought significant economic and social benefits to the City and County. Kilkenny Local Authorities in association with Kilkenny Tourism have prepared a report that will guide tourism sector from 2006 to 2011

The Arts

The policies of the Kilkenny Local Authorities include supporting and facilitating the Kilkenny Arts Festivals, Watergate Theatre, and children's and schools workshops, music, the theatre and networking events for Artists etc.

Then local authorities have produced an Arts strategy which will span the next five year period. It will give guidance for Kilkenny to develop its vision for the future of the Arts within the City and County.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RECREATIONAL, TOURISM AND ARTS ISSUES?

1. What indoor and outdoor leisure facilities should we provide for the residents of the City & County?
2. How best can we cater for a diverse range of recreational and cultural activities while retaining quality and meeting user needs with finite resources?
3. Have we currently got the right open space standards?
4. How our heritage both can build and natural play a role in our tourism development?
5. How can we ensure that our tourism leisure and amenity policies are consistent with our policies in other sectors such as conservation, rural development and employment?
6. Should we confirm/create more rights of way?
7. How should we develop the arts more in the City and County with finite resources?
8. Should we have more festivals/events based around the arts?

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY & ENVIRONS

Kilkenny City & Environs had a population of 20,735 in 2002 which was an increase of 2039 persons over the 1996 figure of 18,696 or 10.9 %

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For the period 2002 to 2006 it is estimated that the City & Environs has grown by approximately 1800⁵ persons which is an 8.6% increase.

This is just ahead of the increase in the state as a whole at 8.1%.

The population within the borough boundary since 1991 has begun to increase but very slowly increasing from 8,507 in 1991 to 8,625 in 2006.

It is the aim of the Kilkenny Local Authorities to ensure that Kilkenny City & Environs achieves its full social and economic potential in a sustainable manner which provides and enhances the existing built and natural environment.

"Kilkenny is designated as a Hub in the National Spatial Strategy. Appendix V of the NSS sets out the rationale for Kilkenny's designation as a Hub: Kilkenny is a centre with a substantial population base, a highly successful tourism sector, improving accessibility due to a location on the national road and rail networks with links to an international seaport, and a strategic location between Dublin and Waterford. Kilkenny also has substantial capacity for development in land and water services terms and is a centre with both the critical mass and distance from Dublin to be capable of being successful in sustaining itself in employment terms, thereby

⁵ It has been assumed that the Kilkenny rural ED increase of 1800 approximates to the City and Environs increase.

resisting the tendency towards commuter driven development."

Urban Form

The underlying principle of the development of the City and Environs over the last 25 years has been a commitment to balanced growth, coherence of urban form and good spatial distribution of services.

Action area plans were prepared for the phased development of Archerstreet/Loughboy and the Eastern Environs. The Loughboy area was successfully developed and the Eastern Environs is well advanced in its development.

A local Area Plan has been completed for the Poulgour /Wetlands area (The Western Environs) the aim of which is develop an area with its own sense of place. A village centre to act as a focal point for the new community while new neighbourhoods with their own character will develop around the village centre.

These new neighbourhoods have developed over the last 30 years around the existing City which has a magnificent heritage and ambient medieval core. It has a thriving cultural and artistic base which makes the City a major tourist and visitor destination as well as an attractive place to live and work.

A City Centre Local Area Plan was prepared in June 05. This set out a strategy for the City Centre in order to ensure its continued vitality and viability while trying to strike a balance between preserving its architectural and archaeological heritage and facilitating modern living.

Kilkenny Borough Council has signed the **Aalborg Charter of European Cities and Towns towards Sustainability**. on sustainable development.

Kilkenny Borough Council has adopted the principles enshrined in the **Barcelona Declaration " The City and the Disabled"**.

The City is the main commercial, residential and cultural centre of the County and thus faces major challenges and opportunities.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY & ENVIRONS

WHAT ARE THE MAIN ISSUES FOR THE CITY & ENVIRONS

1. The development of high-density residential areas is seen by some as a solution; what do you think? What density should we build at in Kilkenny City & Environs?
2. How will we cater for all the different housing needs in the County first time buyers, families, homeless persons, mobility-impaired persons, Travelers and elderly people?
3. How can we have higher density housing for families and children and provide a pleasant living environment for them?
4. Development land is a limited valuable resource. Should we zone additional land in Kilkenny City & Environs for future residential development to 2014, and if so how much and where?
5. How can we promote improvement in the quality of the built environment?
6. What response should there be to the trends to smaller household size?
7. How can we ensure that we facilitate the development of real communities with a clear identity and not simply soulless housing estates?
8. What social supports are required by communities- are these retail, transport, education, childcare, recreational/leisure and community supports?
9. Which of these is a priority for you? How should these be planned? Are there other supports not identified?

WHAT ARE THE MAIN ISSUES FOR THE CITY & ENVIRONS CONT.?

10. Do we need a bus service in Kilkenny City and how should it be funded?
11. How should establishments coming within the Major Accidents Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances be treated?
12. How best can we co-ordinate and integrate transport and land use planning in order to reduce the demand for travel and dependence on private car transport?
13. How can we encourage alternative ways of travelling such as cycling and walking within the City & Environs?
14. How can we ensure adequate car parking while encouraging alternatives methods of transport?
15. Where should social and affordable housing be provided?
16. Should we phase the development of land in line with the provision of infrastructure?

APPENDIX 1

Mandatory Objectives for a Development Plan

A Development Plan must set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area covered by the Plan and must also include the following development objectives:

- Zoning of land.
- Provision of infrastructure, including transport, energy, communication facilities, water supply, waste recovery and waste disposal facilities.
- Conservation and protection of the environment.
- Integration of planning and sustainable development with the social, community and cultural requirements of the area and its population.
- Preservation of the character of the landscape including views and prospects.
- Protection of structures of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.
- Preservation of the character of Architectural Conservation Areas.
- Renewal of areas in need of regeneration.
- Provision of traveler accommodation.
- Preservation, improvement and extension of recreational amenities.
- Control of establishments under the Major Accidents Directive.
- Provision of community services, including schools, crèches and childcare facilities.

In addition, a development plan may also include a wide range of other objectives relating to:

- Location and pattern of development.
- Control of areas and structures.
- Community facilities.
- Environment and amenities
- Infrastructure and transport.

**Note. This does not purport to be a legal interpretation.
For full details see Section 10 and the First Schedule of the Planning and Development Act, 2000.**

APPENDIX 2

Guidelines and Strategies to be considered when preparing the next City & Environs and County Development Plans include:

- Regional Planning Guidelines for the South East 2004
- The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020
- *Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland 1997
- *National Development Plan 2000 – 2006
- Kilkenny County Development Board Strategy 2002 – 2012
- Development Plans of adjoining Planning Authorities – Waterford City Council, Carlow, Laois, Tipperary North., Tipperary South and Waterford County Councils.
- Waterford Land Use and Transportation Study (PLUTS)
- Waste Management Plan for the South East Region 2006 – 2011
- Water Quality Management Plan
- Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, Housing Supply, Guidelines for Planning Authorities December 2000
- *Landscape and Landscape Assessment, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, Public Consultation Draft, June 2000
- Tree Preservation, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, March 1994
- *Wind Farm Development, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, June 2006
- *Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, July 1996
- *Residential Density, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, September 1999
- *Childcare Facilities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, June 2001
- *Draft Architectural Heritage Protection/ Guidelines for Planning Authorities December 2001
- *Retail Planning, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, December 2005
- *Action on Architecture 2002 – 2005, April 2002
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage Survey of County Kilkenny
- The National Heritage Plan 2002
- The National Biodiversity Plan 2002
- The National Climate Change Strategy

*** Denotes documents which may be available from Government Publications Office, Molesworth Street, Dublin 2. This list is not exhaustive and additional documents will be considered as appropriate.**