

County Development Plan

2014

2020



Kilkenny County Council
Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh

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1 Introduction

County Kilkenny is situated in the South East of Ireland. It has a land area of 2,062 sq. kilometres and a recorded population in the 2011 Census of 95, 419¹.

The main urban centre is Kilkenny City and Environs. The next largest urban areas in the County are the Ferrybank area, adjacent to Waterford City, and the district towns of Callan, Castlecomer, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown.

This Development Plan sets out Kilkenny County Council's policies and objectives for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County from 2014 to 2020. Part II, Chapter I of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires a planning authority to prepare a development plan for its functional area every six years.

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 provides for the mandatory objectives which are to be included in development plans as set out in the Planning and Development Acts.

1.1 Legislative Framework

Under the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2011, Kilkenny County Council is obliged to make a Development Plan every six years which comprises of a written statement and accompanying maps that give a graphic representation of the objectives contained in the Plan. Planning legislation sets out a number of mandatory and discretionary objectives to be addressed in Development Plans. In accordance with the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2011 the Plan will come into effect four weeks from the date of its adoption.

1.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before the decision is made to adopt the plan or programme. The purpose is to *“provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development”*². In accordance with [European Directive 2001/42/EC](#), this Development Plan is the subject of SEA.

¹ <http://www.cso.ie/en/census/census2011reports/census2011thisisirelandpart1/>

² EU, [Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment](#), Article 1

1.3 Appropriate Assessment

Article 6(3) of [European Council Directive 92/43/EEC](#) on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive) requires competent authorities to undertake an Appropriate Assessment of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects.

Kilkenny County Council is the competent authority and an appropriate assessment has been carried out for the County Development Plan.³

All plans, programmes and projects being carried out by public or private organisations and individuals need to be screened for the potential impact on Natura 2000 sites.

Appropriate Assessment means an assessment, based on best scientific knowledge, of the potential impacts of a plan or project, wherever located, on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site and the inclusion, where necessary, of mitigation or avoidance measures to preclude negative effects. The impacts assessed must include the indirect and cumulative impacts of the plan or project. Therefore whether a plan or project is located within, or is at a geographically remote area from a Natura 2000 site, if significant impacts cannot be ruled out then the plan or project must be subject to an appropriate assessment. Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive and Section 177 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), require that any plan or project with the potential to impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site must be screened to determine if appropriate assessment of the plan or project is required. In the event that the screening indicates that potential significant impacts cannot be ruled out then the plan or project will require an appropriate assessment.

Objectives:

- 1A To implement the provisions of Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive.**
- 1B To ensure that any plan or project within the functional area of the Planning Authority is subject to appropriate assessment in accordance with the Guidance *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities, 2009*⁴ and is assessed in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive in order to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity and conservation objectives of the site.**

These objectives will apply to all plans and projects whether public or private and across all sectors of development.

³ The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (*Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities-2009*).

⁴ *ibid*

1.4 Sustainability

The World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland 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”.⁵

In formulating this development plan, the Council has integrated the principles of sustainability across all of the Plan sections.

1.5 Structure of the Plan

The Plan consists of a written statement and accompanying maps and includes strategies and objectives for the County at large. **The entire Plan is a statement of Council policy.** The first eleven chapters contain objectives and Development Management Standards in relation to specific areas and topics. It must be noted that each chapter is not a stand-alone chapter, but should be read in conjunction with all other chapters.

In assessing any development in the County, the overall context will be informed by all relevant sections, including the settlement strategy, housing, community, economic, heritage and infrastructure considerations, underpinned by the strategic aims. Therefore, no one item takes precedence over another, but rather all plan provisions converge, founded as they are on the goal of sustainable development. All chapters should also be read in conjunction with Chapter 12: Requirements for Development.

Objective:

1C To implement the Development Management Standards as set out in the Plan as appropriate.

1.6 Policy Context

1.6.1 Climate Change

The [National Climate Change Adaptation Framework](#)⁶ provides a strategic policy focus to ensure adaptation measures are taken across different sectors and levels of government to reduce Ireland's vulnerability to the negative impacts of climate change. It provides for climate change adaptation to be addressed at national and local level.

The *first phase* is focused on identifying national vulnerability to climate change. The *second phase* involves the development and implementation of sectoral and local adaptation action plans which will form part of the comprehensive national response to the impacts of climate change.

⁵ Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: [Our Common Future](#), 1987, Transmitted to the General Assembly as an Annex to [document A/42/427](#) - Development and International Co-operation: Environment

⁶ Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, [National Climate Change Adaptation Framework](#), 2012

The Council has had regard to the [National Climate Change Adaptation Framework](#) in framing this development plan and has already sought to introduce planning and development measures in the overall approach to adaptation to climate change, for example by ensuring that risks of flooding are identified and integrated into the planning process. The local authority recognises that a pro-active approach, in which the challenges posed by climate change are integrated into the development of policies, plans and programmes is essential.

The recently published [National Climate Change Adaptation Framework](#) provides for local authorities to prepare local adaptation plans through the development plan review process. As the Kilkenny County Development Plan was well under way it was not possible to commence an adaptation plan for inclusion into this plan within the timeframe set under the review process. It is an objective therefore to prepare such a plan as soon as possible following the adoption of the development plan.

Objective:

1D To prepare a Climate Change Adaptation plan following the adoption of the Development Plan.

1.6.2 National Spatial Strategy

The [National Spatial Strategy](#) (NSS)⁷ sets out Government policy in relation to achieving balanced regional development over a twenty year time frame from 2002 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 NSS. 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.

A review of the NSS has been announced by Government and the implications of that review for the county plan will be monitored and amendments will be made to the Plan accordingly should the need arise.

1.6.3 The National Development Plan 2007-2013

The National Development Plan (NDP) set 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. Strong urban centres are directly related to regional growth and development, affecting employment, incomes and quality of life throughout the regions.

⁷ Department of the Environment and Local Government, [The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, People, Places and Potential](#), 2002

The investment framework and strategy of the NDP will assist and enhance physical and spatial planning.

1.6.4 The National Recovery Plan

The [National Recovery Plan 2011-2014](#)⁸ provides a blueprint for a return to sustainable economic growth for the county. In particular it:

- Sets out the measures that will be taken to restore order to our public finances
- Identifies the areas of economic activity which will provide growth and employment recovery
- Specifies the reforms the Government will implement to accelerate growth in those key sectors.

Overall, the Recovery Plan aims to build on Ireland's strengths in ICT, health/life sciences, international financial services, agri-food and other internationally traded services.

1.6.5 Our Sustainable Future – A Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland

The green economy and sustainable development agendas are key elements of Ireland's economic recovery strategy and [Our Sustainable Future – A Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland](#)⁹ sets out the range of environmental, economic and social measures required to move these agendas forward from vision to reality.

1.6.6 Ministerial Guidelines and Directives

In accordance with Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) a statement has been appended to this Plan which includes information which demonstrated how the Planning Authority has implemented the policies and objectives of the Minister contained in Section 28 Guidelines when preparing the Plan. Where the Planning Authority has decided not to implement certain policies or objectives of the Minister contained in the Guidelines, the statement must give the reasons why. This is contained in Appendix K.

1.6.7 Food Harvest 2020 Strategy

The Department of Agriculture published [Food Harvest 2020, A vision for Irish agri-food and fisheries](#)¹⁰ in 2010. The agri-food and fisheries sector is Ireland's most important indigenous industry. It is widely recognised as having a key role to play in Ireland's export-led economic recovery.

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

⁸ Stationery Office Dublin, [The National Recovery Plan 2011-2014](#), 2011

⁹ Government of Ireland, [Our Sustainable Future – A Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland](#), 2012

¹⁰ Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, [Food Harvest 2020, A vision for Irish agri-food and fisheries](#), 2010

1.6.8 South East Regional Planning Guidelines

The [South East Regional Planning Guidelines](#)¹¹ 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.

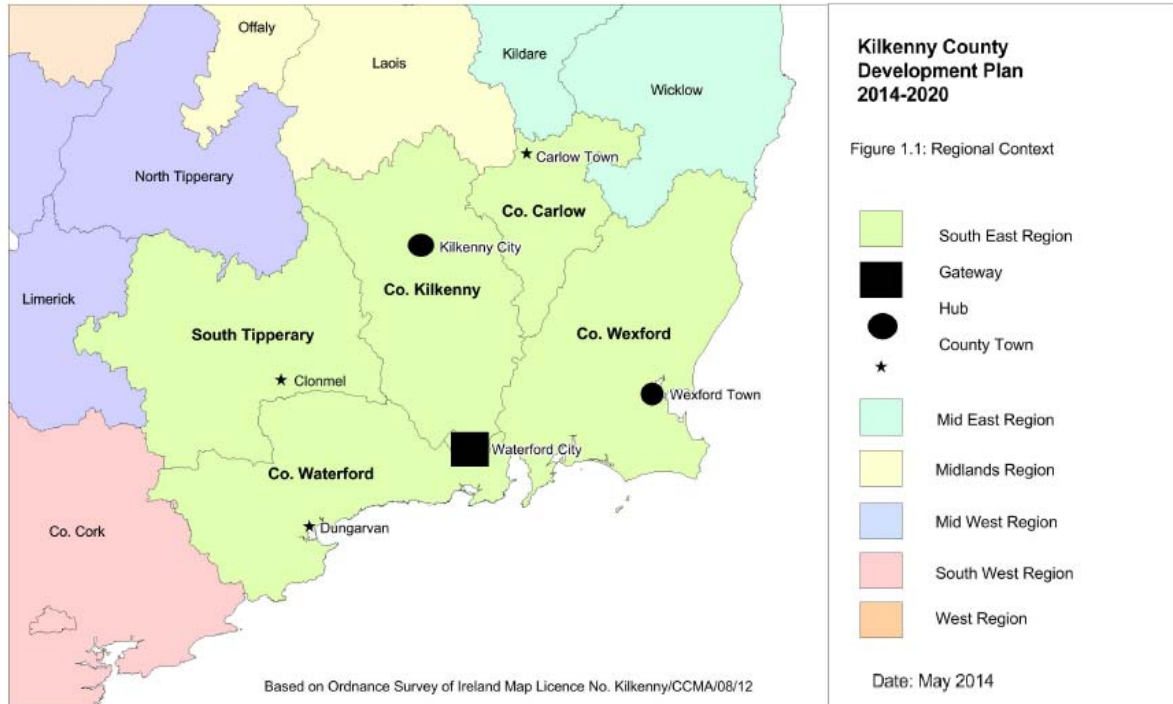


Figure 1.1 Regional Context

1.6.9 South East River Basin Management Plan

The [Water Framework Directive](#)¹² aims to improve water quality and sets very strict deadlines for meeting water quality objectives. Ireland is committed to managing its waters through a catchment based process. The [South East River Basin Management Plan](#)¹³ aims to protect all waters within the South-East River Basin District, and where necessary, improve waters and achieve sustainable water use.

¹¹ South East Regional Authority, *Regional Planning Guidelines for the South East Region 2010-2022*, 2010

¹² EU, [Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy](#), 2000

¹³ South Eastern River Basin District, [South East River Basin Management Plan](#), 2010

1.6.10 Waterford Planning and Land Use Transportation Study

The Waterford Planning and Land Use Transportation Study (PLUTS)¹⁴ 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 to 2020.

At a county level, the Plan takes account of:

1.6.11 Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development 2002- 2012

[Kilkenny 2002-2012, A Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development](#)¹⁵ sets out the agreed strategy for the social, economic and cultural development of Kilkenny. This document sets the framework within which the Kilkenny County Development Board operates.

1.7 Mission Statement

Kilkenny Local Authorities' mission statement from the [Corporate Plan](#)¹⁶ is as follows:

“Kilkenny Local Authorities aim 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.”¹⁷

This is the ethos behind the preparation of the Development Plan, from the public consultation through to the formulation of policy and the objectives in the Plan.

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. The Development Plan objectives are listed in Appendix L of this Plan.

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.

The Council will aim to implement all the provisions of this Plan, subject to the availability of resources.

¹⁴ Atkins, *Waterford Planning and Land Use Transportation Study 2004-2020*, 2004

¹⁵ Kilkenny County Development Board, [Kilkenny 2002-2012, A Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development](#), 2002

¹⁶ The Councils of the County and City of Kilkenny, [Corporate Plan 2009-2014](#)

¹⁷ The Councils of the County and City of Kilkenny, [Corporate Plan 2009-2014](#), p.10

2 Demographic and Socio-Economic Trends

2.1 Population

Census 2011 records the population of County Kilkenny as 95,419 which is an increase of 7,861 over the population recorded in 2006¹⁸. This is a 9% population increase for the county over the period and compares well with the State which averaged an increase of 8%.

Kilkenny City (environs and borough area combined) recorded a population of 24,423 in 2011 which is an increase 2,244 (10.1%) over the population recorded in 2006.

	1996	2002	2006	2011
Kilkenny County	75,336	80,399	87,558	95,419
Kilkenny City¹⁹	18,696	20,735	22,179	24,423

At a regional level Kilkenny County performed well compared to its neighbours, with County Wexford being the only county within the south east recording a higher percentage population increase.

	2006	2011	Percentage change
Carlow	50,349	54,612	+ 8.5%
Kilkenny	87,558	95,419	+9%
South Tipperary	83,221	88,432	+6.3%
Waterford City	45,748	46,732	+2.2%
Waterford County	62,213	67,063	+7.8%
Wexford	131,749	145,320	+10.3%

2.1.1 Population Trends

Census 2011 shows that the country continued to undergo strong population growth, with an 8.2% increase in the population of the State from 2006. The State has shown strong population growth since 1996 with increases in the region of 8% in each of the inter-censal periods. Kilkenny County has reflected this trend also with growth rates of 6.7%, 8.9% and 9% within the inter-censal periods.

¹⁸ <http://www.cso.ie/en/census/census2011reports/census2011thisisirelandpart1/>

¹⁹ Figure for Kilkenny city is for the Borough Council area plus the environs of the City within the County area.

Migration into the state has fallen from the high levels between 2002 and 2006 when it averaged 45,000 per annum to about 25,000 p.a. between 2006 and 2011. While this is a large fall in the number of immigrants the increase in immigrants over the period is still significant given the economic downturn since 2007. Kilkenny has reflected this trend also with net migration of 3,895 (49% of total population increase) into the county between 2006 and 2011. The corresponding figure for 2002 to 2006 was 4,986 (69% of total population increase).

2.1.2 Population Change

2.1.2.1 Urban Areas

The major focus for expansion in population has been in the Environs of Kilkenny City and the Ferrybank area (Environs of Waterford City within County Kilkenny). An increase of 2,244 persons was recorded in the Environs of Kilkenny City in the period 2006 to 2011 while the Ferrybank area (Waterford City Environs within County Kilkenny) recorded an increase of 1,322 persons over the same period. Those two areas alone combined accounted for 44% of the total population increase within the County.

It is also significant to note that the Ferrybank area has consolidated itself as the second largest urban area within the County after Kilkenny City. Its population has increased by 123% since 2002.

	2002	2006	2011
Callan	1,325	1,771	2,330
Castlecomer	1,482	1,531	1,456
Graigenamanagh ²⁰	1,166	1,097	1,252
Thomastown	1,600	1,837	2,273
Ferrybank Area	2,142	3,465	4,787

This shows that Callan and Thomastown have performed well in terms of population increase since 2002 while Castlecomer and Graigenamanagh have mixed performances showing both increases and decreases respectively in both census periods.

The population of the County within aggregate town areas as defined by the census has increased from 35.3% in 2006 to 37% in 2011. This shows that the proportion of the population living in urban areas²¹ is increasing.

²⁰ These figures do not include the Tinnahinch area in Graigenamanagh, located within Co. Carlow.

²¹ Urban areas as defined by CSO i.e. towns with populations of 1,500 or more. If Tinnahinch is included within Graigenamanagh, then the population of the town would be 1,543.

2.1.2.2 Rural Areas

Figure 2.1 shows the population change across all Electoral Divisions (EDs) in the county between 2006 and 2011. There are 113 Electoral Divisions in the county and of these 12 experienced a decrease in population. The most significant of these was Castlecomer ED which experienced an actual decrease of 114 persons.

2.1.3 Household size

The changing nature of household patterns is an important consideration for the Plan. In 2002 the average household size was 3.3. In 2006 the average household size had decreased to 2.88. The 2011 Census records an average of 2.8 people per household throughout the county (the state average is 2.7). This shows a continuing trend towards the formation of smaller households.

	No. of households	Persons in households	Average household size
2002	25,603	75,965	3.03
2006	29,651	84,973	2.88
2011	33,619	94,342	2.8

Source: CSO 2002, 2006, 2011

If we examine the urban areas of the County, a similar trend exists but the occupancy rate is lower. For Kilkenny City and the Ferrybank area the average household size is 2.57. This has implications for the amount of zoned land required in these settlements.

	No. of households	Persons in households	Average household size
2002	8,239	22,713	2.75
2006	11,355	29,536	2.6
2011	13,250	34,089	2.57

2.1.4 Population Forecasts

The population targets for the City & County are set by the [South East Regional Planning Guidelines](#)²², which were adopted in 2010 for the period 2010 – 2022. The targets set for the City and County are set out in Table 2.6 below.

²² South East Regional Authority, [Regional Planning Guidelines for the South East Region 2010-2022](#), 2010

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020

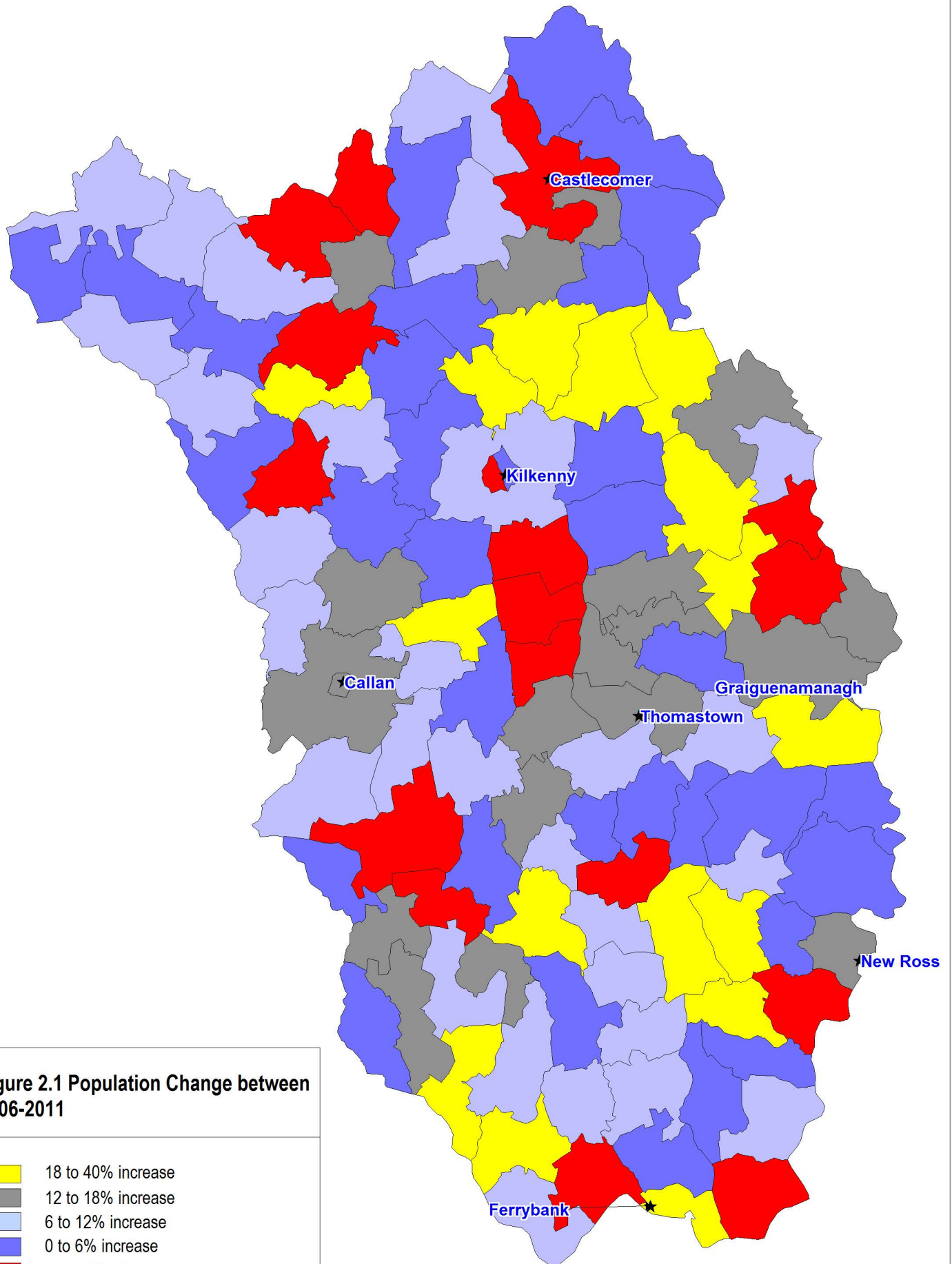


Figure 2.1 Population Change between 2006-2011

- 18 to 40% increase
- 12 to 18% increase
- 6 to 12% increase
- 0 to 6% increase
- 0 to -18% decrease

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 300,000 @A4

Based on Ordnance Survey Ireland Map Licence No "CCMA/08/12"

Table 2.6 Regional Planning Guidelines population figures					
	2010	2014	2016	2020	2022
Kilkenny County	96,872	102,689	105,598	109,802	111,903
Kilkenny City	24,000	25,200	25,800	27,400	28,200
Ferrybank/Belview	4,000	4,667	5,000	6,000	6,500

The 2011 Census recorded an actual population figure of 95,419 for the County. This figure for 2011 is lower than the baseline figure for the RPG's targets set for 2010. It is prudent then therefore that the figures for the population targets be adjusted to take account of the Census 2011 results. Accordingly Table 2.7 below gives a population target using the RPG figures but adjusted to take account of the 2011 results.

Table 2.7 Adjusted Regional Planning Guidelines figures						
	2011 Actual	2012	2014 ²³	2016	2020	2022
Kilkenny County	95,419	96,873	99,781	105,598	109,802	111,903
Kilkenny City	24,423	24,723	25,323	25,800	27,400	28,200
Ferrybank/Belview	4,787 ²⁴	4,953	5,287	5,412	6,412	6,500

The figures for 2020 are derived from applying the annual average increase predicted by the [South East Regional Planning Guidelines](#) to the period between 2016 and 2020.

2.2 Housing Vacancy Rates

The 2011 Census recorded a vacancy rate of 11.9% for the County²⁵. This rate has not decreased substantially since 2006. The national average was recorded at 14.5%. The vacancy rate within Kilkenny City was recorded at 11.3%. The vacancy rates within the county since 1991 are indicated Table 2.8 below. It can be seen that before 2006 the vacancy rate ranged between 6.4 and 7.7%. There has been a significant increase in the vacancy rate since then.

Table 2.8: Vacancy rates in Co. Kilkenny 1991-2011					
Year	1991	1996	2002	2006	2011
Vacancy rate	7.7%	6.4%	6.6%	12%	11.9%

Source: CSO, [Profile 4, The Roof Over our heads](#), 2011

²³ The 2014 figures are obtained by disaggregating the RPG figures and applying the same growth rates to the 2011 Census figure.

²⁴ The population increase allocated to the Environs of Waterford is 1,000 people from 2010 to 2016, a rate of 166.6 per year. This figure is for the Kilculliheen & Aghlish EDs only, it does not relate to the entire Ferrybank/Belview Local Area Plan area.

²⁵ CSO, [Profile 4, The Roof Over our heads](#), 2011

2.3 Socio-Economic profile

2.3.1 Kilkenny's Economy

Kilkenny has developed a strong profile as a services centre with companies such as State Street, VHI, Banking 365, Connect Ireland and Taxback.com. The city itself also acts as an administration centre for a number of state and semi-state agencies including the regional HQ of the Health & Safety Authority (HSA) and the Health Services Executive (HSE), the national HQ of the Patents Office, the Crafts Council of Ireland and The Heritage Council.

Kilkenny boasts a strong indigenous industry in sectors such as food and drink (e.g. Glanbia and artisan food producers) as well as the craft sector. The city has a high profile nationally and internationally as a centre for tourism, festivals, heritage and the arts. Infrastructural improvements such as the completion of the telecoms Metropolitan Area Network (MAN) around Kilkenny City and the opening of the M9 motorway has increased opportunities for inward investment.

2.3.2 Employment

Employment in the county has declined in the period 2006 to 2011 in line with the recession in the World and European economies. The largest fall has been in the construction sector with manufacturing also showing significant losses.

Industry	2006	2011
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	3,247	3,011
Building and construction	6,154	2,117
Manufacturing industries	5,472	4,482
Commerce and trade	9,218	8,761
Transport and communications	1,564	1,834
Public administration	1,968	2,238
Professional services	7,268	9,042
Other	6,048	5,400
Total	40,939	36,885

Source: CSO 2011, 2006

2.3.3 Broadband

Between 2006 and 2011 the county showed a strong increase in broadband accessibility. The total number of houses with a broadband connection in 2006 was 3,919 with 14,283 housing having no internet connection. By 2011, the corresponding figures were 19,818 with a

²⁶ Source: Census 2006 and 2011

broadband connection and 8,806 with no internet connection out of a total of 33,679 households²⁷. This is a broadband penetration of 58.8% compared to just 13.2% in 2006.

2.3.4 Travel to Work

The travel modes used by people travelling to work, school or college in the county is set out below for 2006 and 2011.

Year	On foot	Bicycle	Bus, mini bus or coach	Train	Motor cycle or scooter	Car driver	Car passenger	Other	Not stated	Total
2006	7223	891	5,568	175	204	24,974	11,094	7,374	692	58,195
2011	7229	751	4,464	221	108	25,481	11,942	6,283	1,540	58,019

The overwhelming majority use the private car as a means of transport with 61.9% of the total numbers travelling using the car either as a passenger or as driver in 2006, and this had increased to 64.5% in 2011.

2.3.5 Unemployment

Unemployment in the county has increased significantly since the adoption of the last plan. This has been due to the very severe economic downturn that has affected the economy. The unemployment rates are as follows:

Year	Unemployed Persons	% Rate
2006	3,233	7.5%
2011	8,992	19.4%

Source: CSO, [This is Ireland Table 2A](#), 2011

The labour force within the County in 2006 was 43,042 and this had increased to 46,265 in 2011²⁸.

²⁷ CSO, [This is Ireland Part 2, Table 26A](#), 2011

²⁸ CSO, [This is Ireland, Part 2, Table 3A](#), 2011

2.4 Physical Development Trends

The expansion of the major urban centres has continued within the County. It is notable that Kilkenny City is performing well as a Hub for the region, with its population expanding at a rate slightly above the national average.

Ferrybank also, as part of the Waterford Gateway, is growing significantly and is consolidating itself as the second largest urban area within county. Physical infrastructure has been delivered and improved during the 2008 – 2014 plan period, including:

- the extension of the ring road around Kilkenny City from the Carlow Road to the Athy/Castlecomer road (N77),
- the opening of the M9 motorway,
- the N25 Waterford bypass,
- the waste water treatment plant at Belview Port in conjunction with Waterford City Council, and
- the delivery of substantial water supply to Belview Port in conjunction with the IDA.
- The Central Access Scheme for the city has been approved by An Bord Pleanála and it is anticipated that that scheme will be constructed during the life-time of the plan.

Substantial investment is taking place at Belview as a result of the infrastructural improvements, including the construction of a new milk processing plant by Glanbia. As a result of that investment, a new natural gas supply will also be delivered in conjunction with the Glanbia development.

In Kilkenny City a substantial investment in tourism development has been approved through the development of the Medieval Mile project which will see investment in the public realm between Kilkenny Castle and St Canice's Cathedral, the restoration of St Mary's hall, the construction of a new Butler Gallery at Evan's Home and the further development of the linear walk along the River Nore with the creation of a great garden in the city centre.

Continued progress has taken place in the provision of services through the Water Services Investment programme. This investment is set to continue through the 2014 to 2020 development plan with the construction of water and waste water schemes throughout the county.

2.5 Key issues for Plan

The key issues to be addressed in this Plan are as follows:

- ★ Economic recovery; positioning of the county to avail of any economic upturn
- ★ Underpinning the settlement hierarchy within the county and compliance with the requirements of the Regional Planning Guidelines through the core strategy.
- ★ Renewable energy strategy including wind energy policy
- ★ Continued protection of the natural and built heritage
- ★ Planning frameworks for smaller towns and villages
- ★ Identification of key infrastructure for the County to bolster its development.

3 Core Strategy

Strategic Aim: To implement the provisions of the Regional Planning Guidelines and to target the growth of Kilkenny City, Ferrybank/Belview, the District Towns, the other settlements in the hierarchy and rural areas to advance sustainable development.

3.1 Introduction

The Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2013 require the written statement of a Development Plan to contain a Core Strategy which shows that the development objectives in the development plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives set out in the [National Spatial Strategy](#) (NSS) and relevant Regional Planning Guidelines ([South East Regional Planning Guidelines](#)).

The Core Strategy will set out an evidence based rationale for the settlement hierarchy for the Plan area and give details on:

1. Designations under the [NSS](#) and [South East Regional Planning Guidelines](#).
2. Policies and objectives of the Government in relation to national and regional population targets.
3. Classification of roads within the Plan area,
4. Inter urban commuter rail routes,
5. Rural areas where the [Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines](#) apply.

3.2 Development Strategy

The purpose of the Core Strategy is to articulate a medium to longer term quantitatively based strategy for the spatial development of the County and to demonstrate that the Development Plan and its objectives are consistent with national and regional development objectives set out in the [NSS](#) and [South East Regional Planning Guidelines](#) (RPGs).

The current [South East Regional Planning Guidelines](#) were adopted on the 26th July 2010. They were based on revised national and regional population projections prepared by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in October 2009²⁹. In the promotion of development generally, the Local Authority will focus on opportunities for the redevelopment and renewal of areas in need of regeneration, whether urban or rural.

Objective:

3A To promote the redevelopment and renewal of areas in need of regeneration.

²⁹ *National Population Projections and Regional population Targets 2010-2022(2009) and Gateway and Hub Population Targets (2009)*

3.3 Settlement Hierarchy

The settlement hierarchy for the purposes of the Core Strategy is set out on Table 3.1 and illustrated on Figure 3.1, Core Strategy Map.

Type of Urban Centre	Town/Centre
Gateway	Waterford (Ferrybank/Belview in Co. Kilkenny)
Hub	Kilkenny City
Large Town	New Ross (Environs of in Co. Kilkenny)
District Town ³⁰	Callan, Castlecomer, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown
Smaller Towns and Villages	Ballyhale, Ballyragget, Bennettsbridge, Clogh-Moneenroe, Dungarvan, Fiddown, Freshford, Glenmore, Goresbridge, Gowran, Inistioge, Johnstown, Kells, Kilmacow, Kilmanagh, Kilmoganny, Knocktopher, Mooncoin, Mullinavat, Paulstown, Piltown, Slieverue, Stoneyford and Urlingford.

3.3.1 Kilkenny City & Environs

Kilkenny City has been identified as a Hub in the [NSS](#), and is a key driver which can help promote more balanced regional development. Under the [NSS](#) and [South East Regional Planning Guidelines](#) Kilkenny City has a target population of 28,200 to be reached by the year 2022. 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.

3.3.2 Waterford Gateway (Ferrybank/Belview)

Waterford is the principal city in the South-East Region and is the designated Gateway under the National Development Plan and the [NSS](#). Development priorities for the City include enhancing its critical mass to allow it to perform as a Gateway city and implementing a co-ordinated

³⁰ Graiguenamanagh did not exceed the 1,500 population threshold at the time of the 2006 Census and so was not included as a District Town in the RPG's. The town possesses many of the characteristics of a district town such as having primary and second level schools and its population is close to the population threshold.(1,252 census 2011 a 14% increase over 2006). It is therefore included in the County hierarchy as a district town.

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020

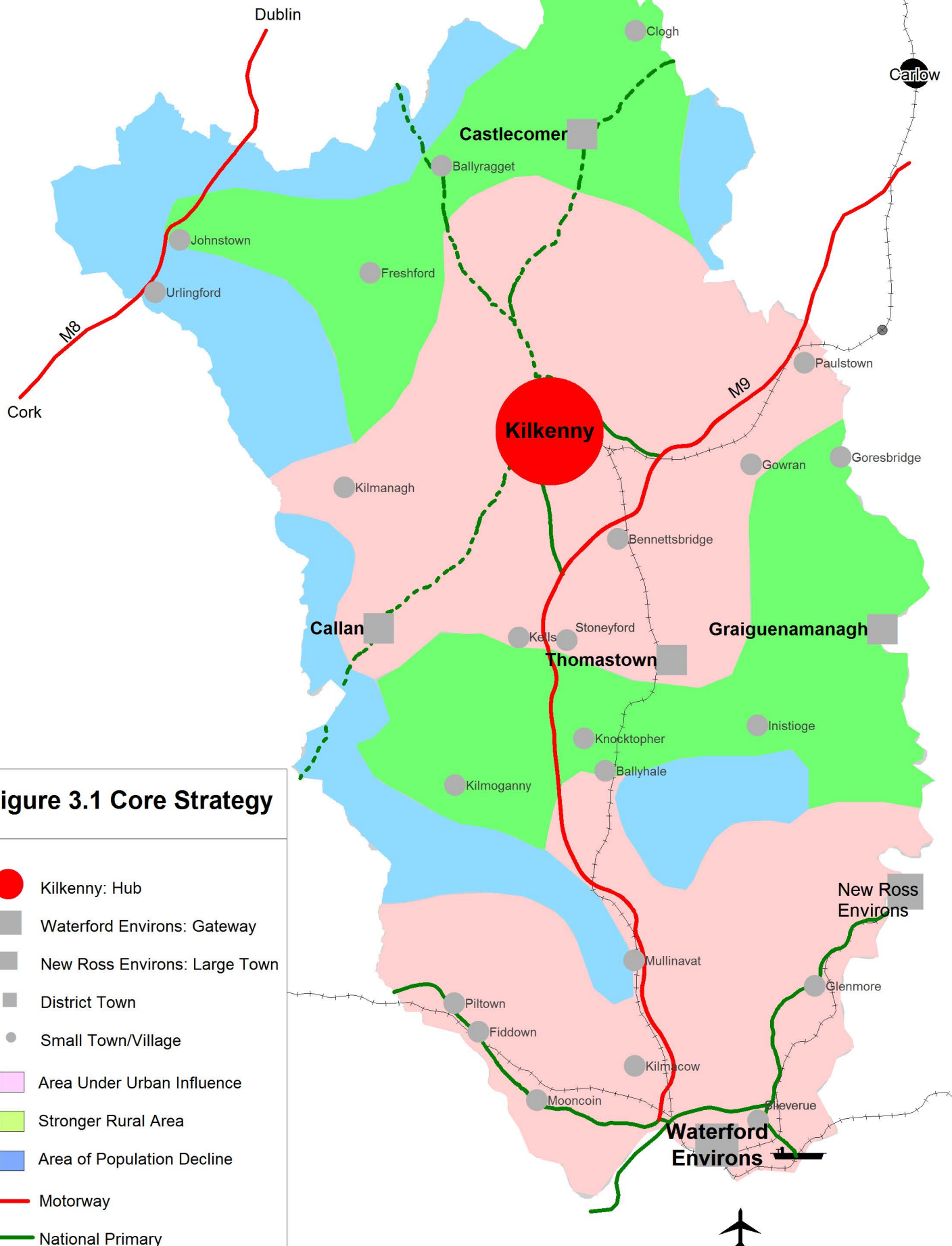


Figure 3.1 Core Strategy

- Kilkenny: Hub
- Waterford Environs: Gateway
- New Ross Environs: Large Town
- District Town
- Small Town/Village
- Area Under Urban Influence
- Stronger Rural Area
- Area of Population Decline
- Motorway
- National Primary
- - - National Secondary
- + + + Railway

Date: May 2014
 Scale: 1: 300,000 @A4

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



approach to the development of the various parts of the city and its environs, which cross local authority boundaries.

In 2004, an integrated Planning, Land Use and Transportation Study (PLUTS) was prepared for the Greater Waterford area which set out a vision for the development of Waterford city as a Gateway³¹. This has 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 has facilitated 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 has ensured, through a separate Local Area Plan for the environs of Waterford within County Kilkenny ([Ferrybank/Belview LAP](#) 2009), 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 the Ferrybank/Belview area 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.

Objectives:

- 3B** To implement the [NSS](#) and [South East Regional Planning Guidelines](#) by encouraging developments into the designated Hub of Kilkenny and the environs of the Waterford Gateway.
- 3C** To review the County Development Plan in the light of any emerging replacement to the [NSS](#) and [South East Regional Planning Guidelines](#) and vary the Development Plan accordingly if necessary.

³¹ Atkins, Waterford Planning Land Use and Transportation Study, 2004-2020 (2004)

3.3.3 Large Town – the Environs of New Ross

The [South East 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 23 km from Waterford City, its capacity for growth and its 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 in conjunction with New Ross Town Council and Wexford County Council. Zoning objectives for the Environs of New Ross are set out in Chapter 12.

Objective:

3D 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 between Kilkenny County Council, New Ross Town Council and Wexford County Council.

3.3.4 District Towns

District towns are identified in the [RPGs](#) as containing a population of between 1,500 and 5,000 in the 2006 census. The [RPGs](#) included Callan, Castlecomer and Thomastown in this category.

Graiguenamanagh, while it does not exceed this 1,500 population threshold, possesses many of the characteristics of a district town as identified in the [RPGs](#), such as being close to the population level of 1,500 and having primary and second level schools. In the 2011 Census the population of Graiguenamanagh was recorded at 1,252, which was a 14% increase over the 2006 census figure. It is therefore included.

Table 3.2 Population of District towns as a percentage of county population

	Population 2011	% of County Population
County	95,419	
Callan	2,330	2.4%
Castlecomer	1,456	1.5%
Graiguenamanagh ³²	1,252	1.3%
Thomastown	2,273	2.3%

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 for the District Towns were adopted by the Council in 2009. The LAPs were amended following the adoption of the Core Strategy in September 2011 and phasing

³² These figures do not include the Tinnahinch area in Graiguenamanagh

of land for development was introduced in each LAP. It is intended to commence the review of the District Town LAP's on completion of the County Development Plan review in 2014. The Ferrybank-Belview Local Area Plan will be reviewed within 2 years from the adoption of the Development Plan.

See also Sections 4.6.3 (Economic Development) and 4.8.3 (Retail).

Objectives:

- 3E 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.**
- 3F Promote enterprise and economic development in Graiguenamanagh in line with the [Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch Development and Economic Study, 2006](#)³³**

3.3.5 Smaller Towns and Villages

For the smaller towns and villages within the County seventeen Local Area Plans were prepared since 2003. In addition four LAPs were prepared for the district towns bringing the number of LAPs to 21³⁴.

The towns and villages where these were prepared are as follows: Ballyhale, Ballyragget, Bennettsbridge, Knocktopher, Fiddown, Freshford, Goresbridge, Gowran, Inistioge, Kells, Kilmacow, Mooncoin, Mullinavat, Piltown, Slieverue, Stoneyford and Urlingford.

Six of these plans (Ballyhale, Ballyragget, Inistioge, Knocktopher, Mooncoin and Urlingford) expired between October 2009 and July 2010 and so are no longer the statutory plans for those areas.

A further 6 Local Area Plans have expired since the adoption of the Core Strategy Variation to the County Development Plan in September 2011. These are Freshford, Goresbridge, Kells, Mullinavat, Slieverue and Stoneyford.

Settlement boundaries are drawn up having regard to:

- The need to provide a compact and accessible town in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.
- The existing built environment and road structure.
- Potential population growth and demand for housing.
- The need to offer location choice and housing mix.

³³ Carlow County Council and Kilkenny County Council, [Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch Development and Economic Study, 2006](#)

³⁴ There are 6 other LAPs within the County: 3 within Kilkenny City plus Ferrybank/Belview, New Ross and Woodstock

- Proximity to existing and potential community and commercial facilities and the need to encourage sustainable growth.
- Linkages (transport) to other larger settlements.
- The level of provision of existing and proposed infrastructure.
- Existing planning permissions.

3.3.5.1 Expired LAPs

The Local Area Plans for Ballyhale, Ballyragget, Freshford, Goresbridge, Inistioge, Kells, Knocktopher, Mooncoin, Mullinavat, Slieverue, Stoneyford and Urlingford have expired.

For the purposes of this core strategy, these 12 towns will not be assigned a separate population projection, but will be considered as part of the remaining area of the county in the core strategy table. Each of these towns will be subject to a map within this Plan which depicts a settlement boundary within which development will be considered in accordance with the policies outlined below (see Figures 3.2-3.13). There will be no land use zoning objectives in these settlements. Development proposals within the boundary will be considered on their merits against the policies and objectives contained in this core strategy and the Development Plan generally.

The expired LAP's are no longer the statutory plans for their areas but the plans do contain a significant amount of information on natural and built heritage and other planning issues. The expired plans will be used as supplementary guidance documents for planning purposes. Housing development within the settlement boundary of these towns will not be subject to the rural housing policy as outlined in section 3.5.

Where a smaller town or village does not have a statutory Local Area Plan or a development boundary in existence at the time of this development plan then for development management purposes it will be considered as part of the County's rural area i.e. there is no change in its status.

The local authority will, if the need arises, prepare Local Area Plans or other appropriate planning framework documents for areas within the County whether urban or rural. The Council will review the development objectives and development management requirements for villages with expired LAP's during the life of the Plan.

3.3.5.2 Existing LAPs

Extant LAP's are in place for the towns and villages of Bennettsbridge, Fiddown, Gowran, Kilmacow, and Piltown.

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020

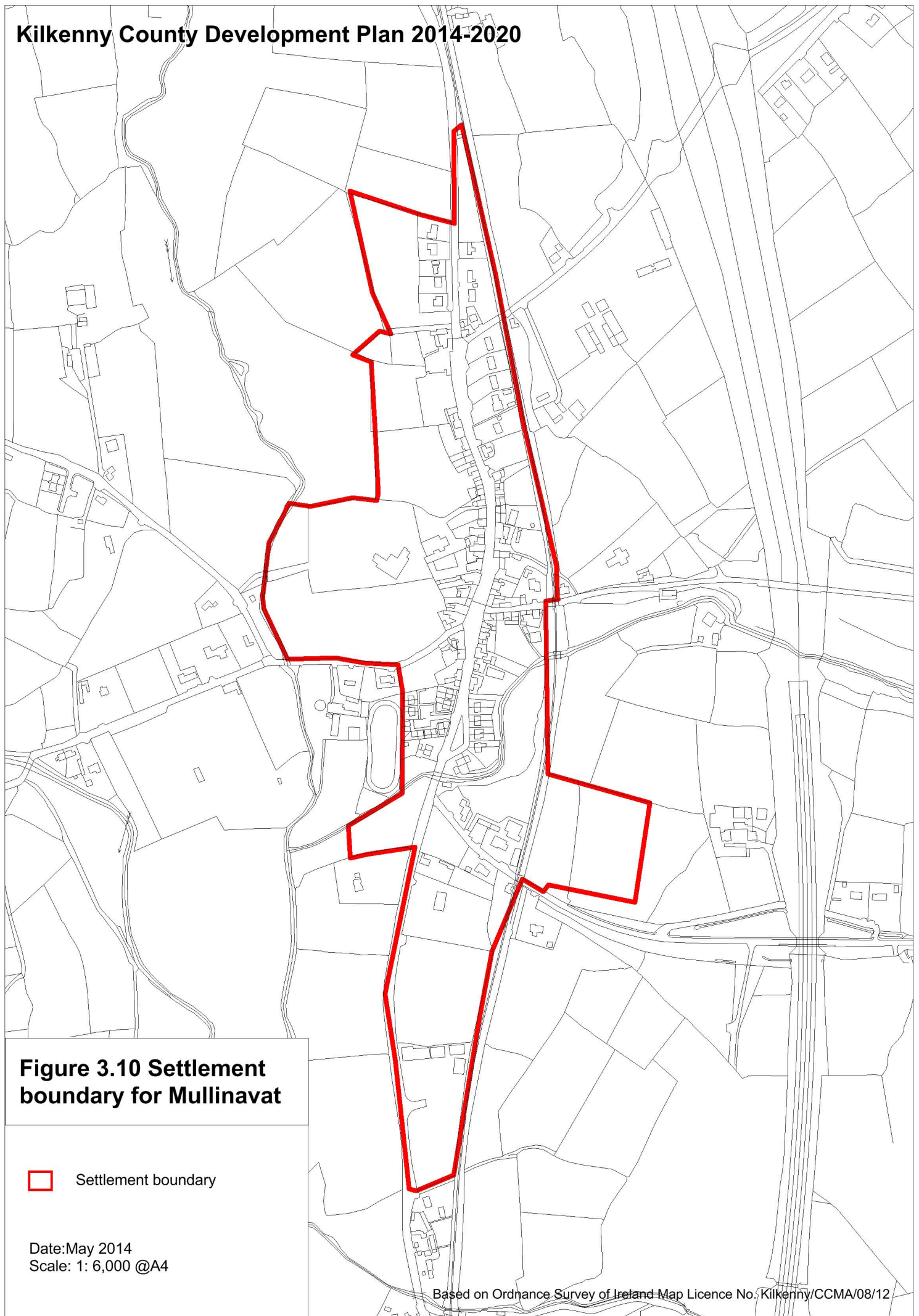


Figure 3.10 Settlement boundary for Mullinavat

 Settlement boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 6,000 @A4

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

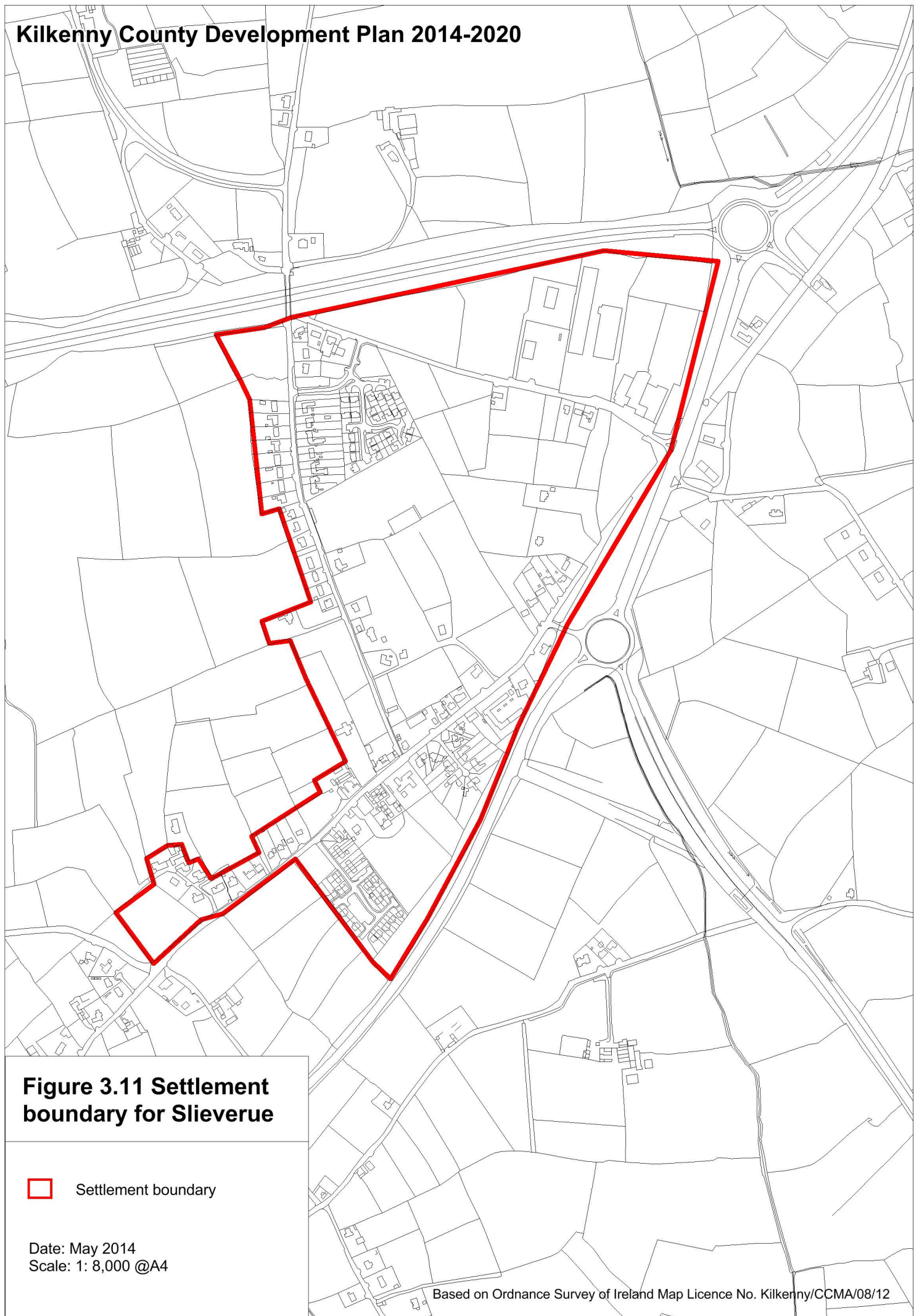


Figure 3.11 Settlement boundary for Slieverue

 Settlement boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 8,000 @A4

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020

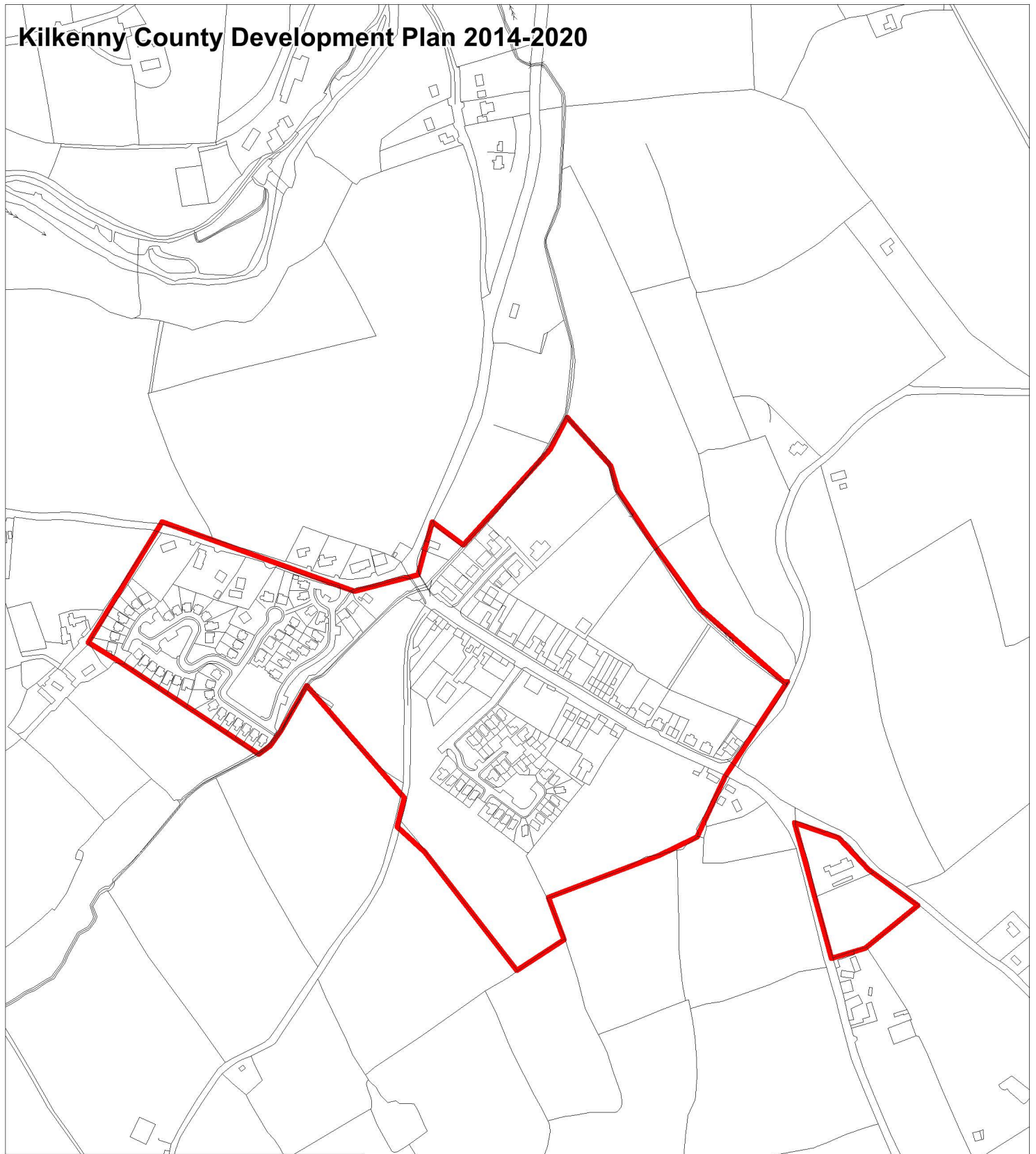


Figure 3.12 Settlement boundary for Stoneyford

 Settlement boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 6,000 @A4

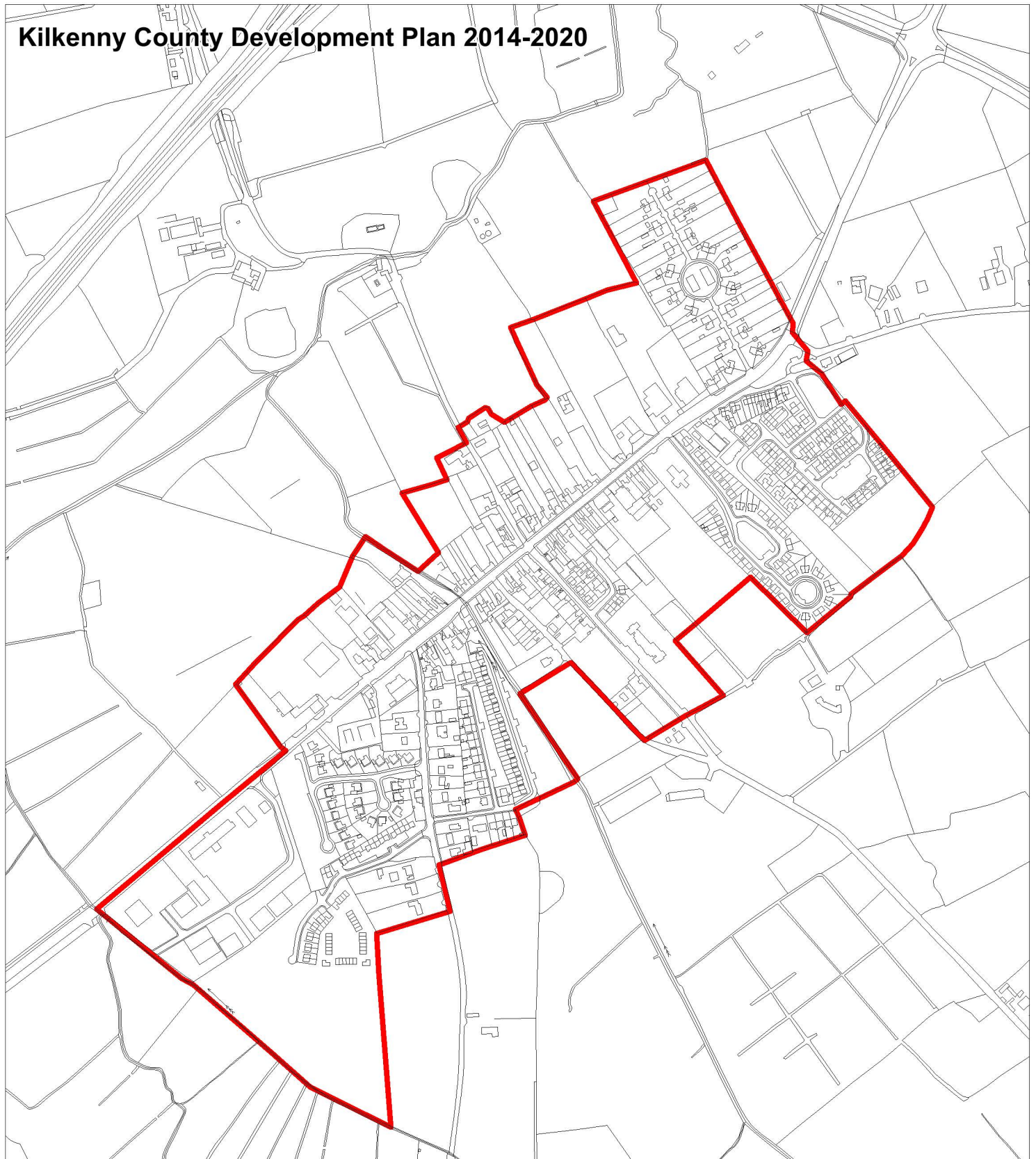


Figure 3.13 Settlement boundary for Urlingford

 Settlement boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 8,000 @A4

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

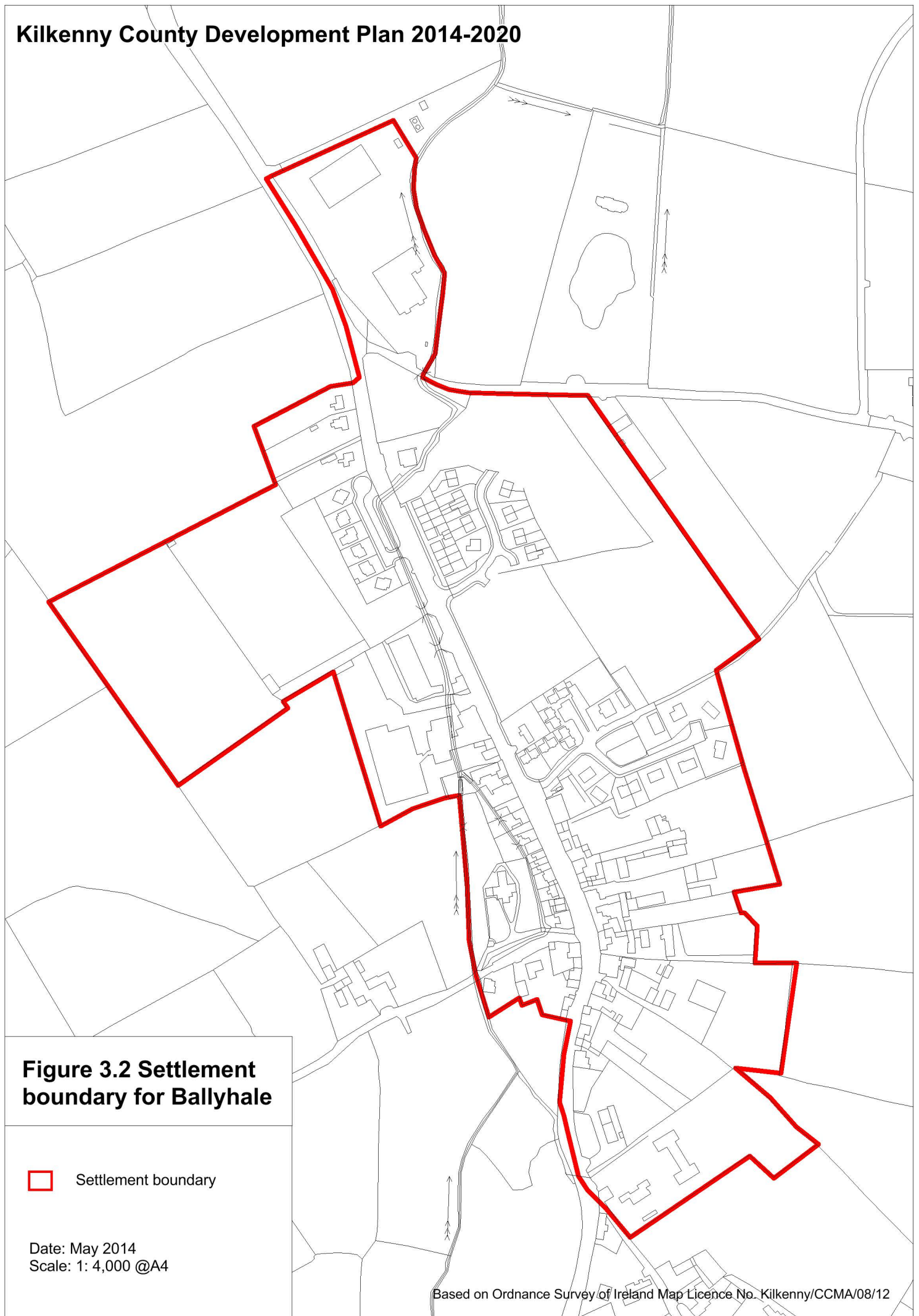


Figure 3.2 Settlement boundary for Ballyhale

 Settlement boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 4,000 @A4

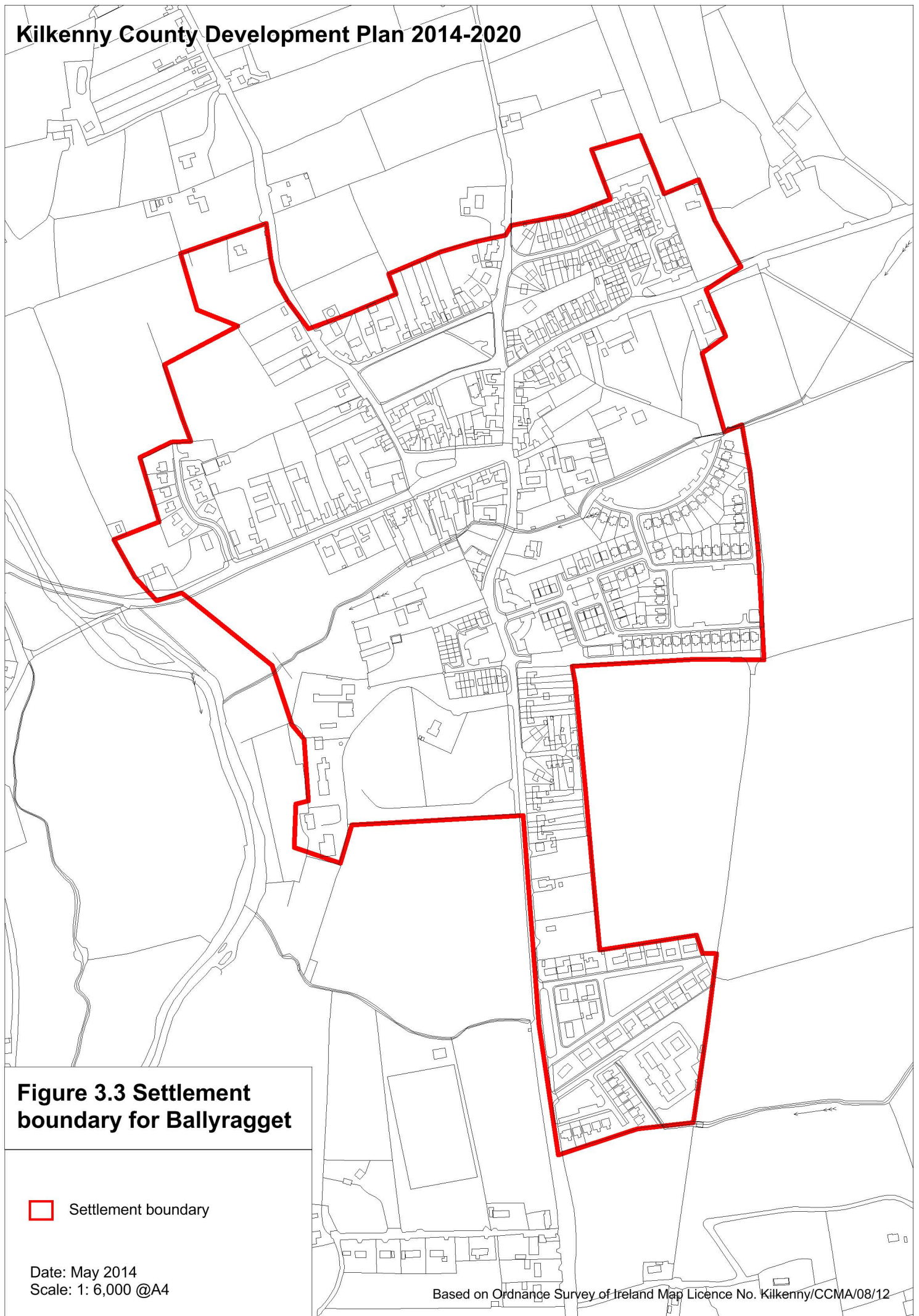



Figure 3.3 Settlement boundary for Ballyragget

 Settlement boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 6,000 @A4

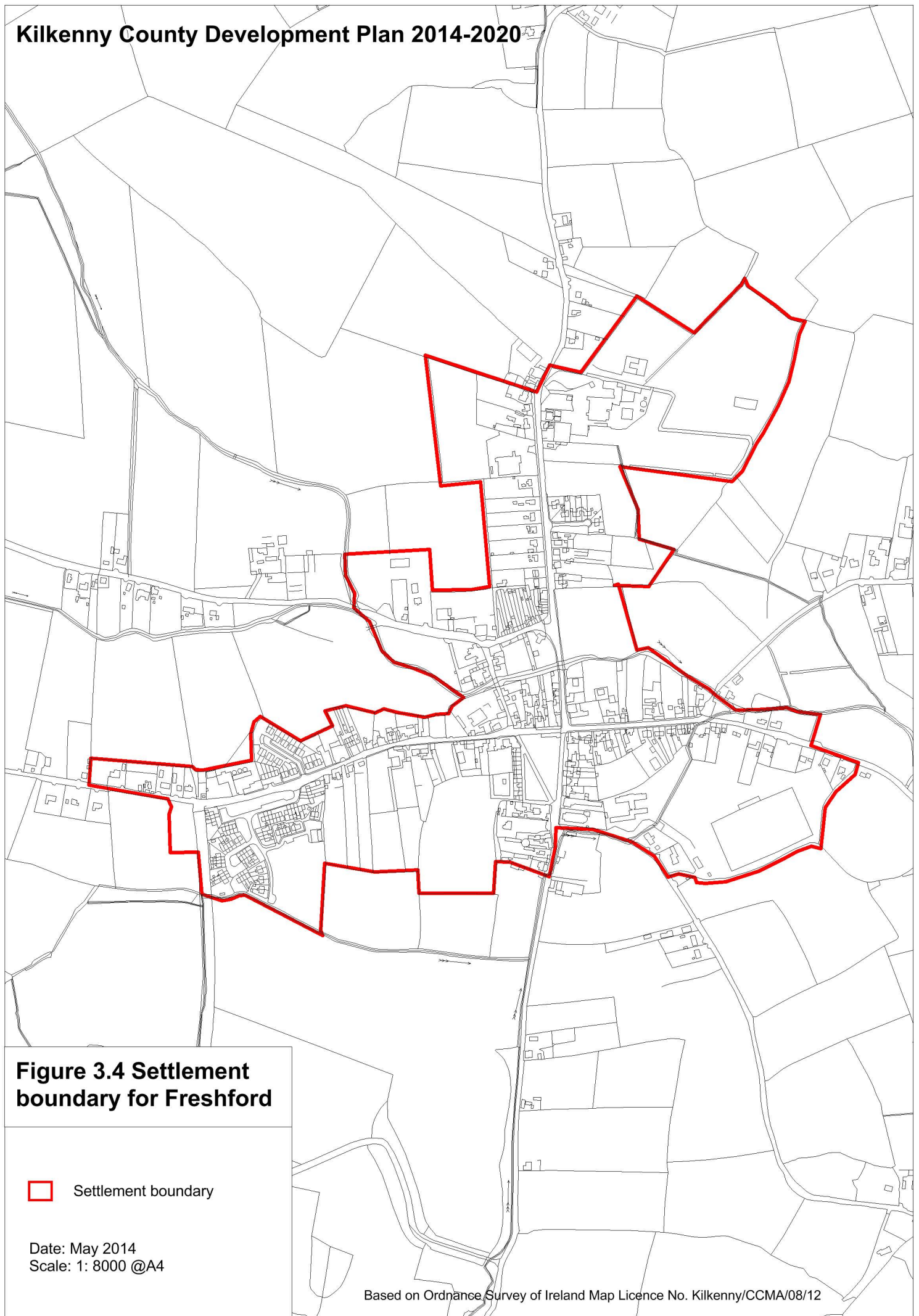


Figure 3.4 Settlement boundary for Freshford

 Settlement boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 8000 @A4

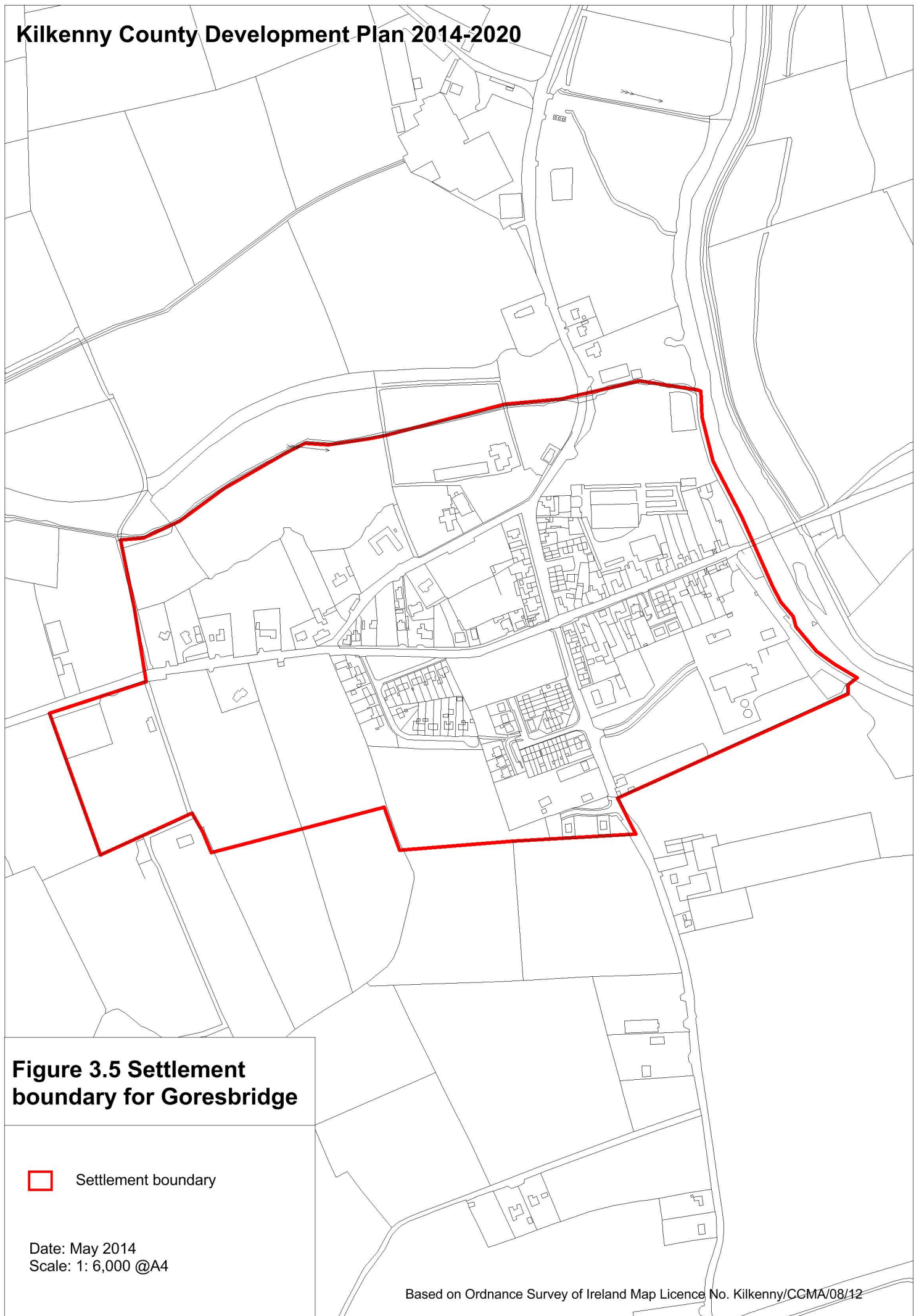


Figure 3.5 Settlement boundary for Goresbridge

 Settlement boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 6,000 @A4

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

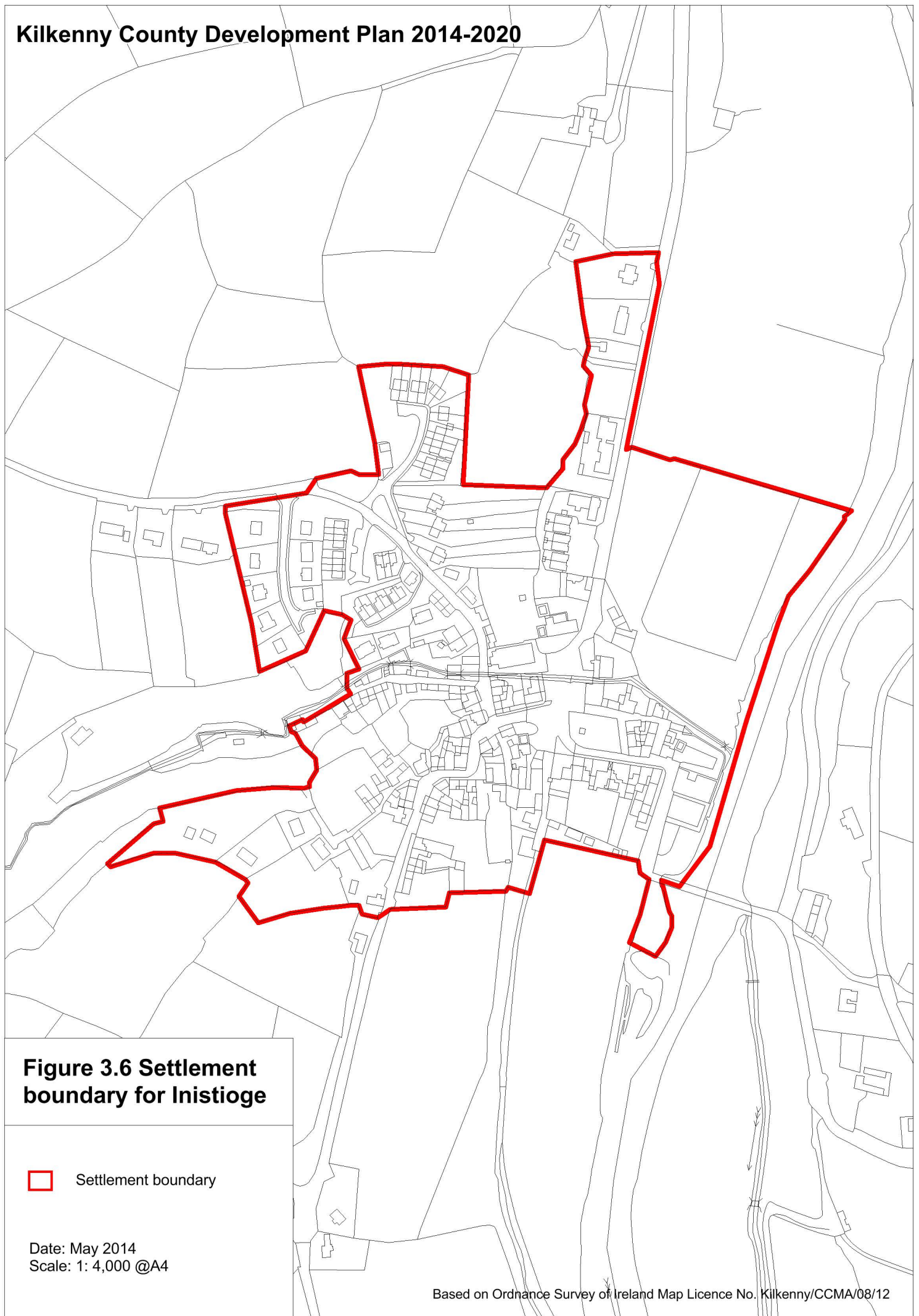


Figure 3.6 Settlement boundary for Inistioge

 Settlement boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 4,000 @A4

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020

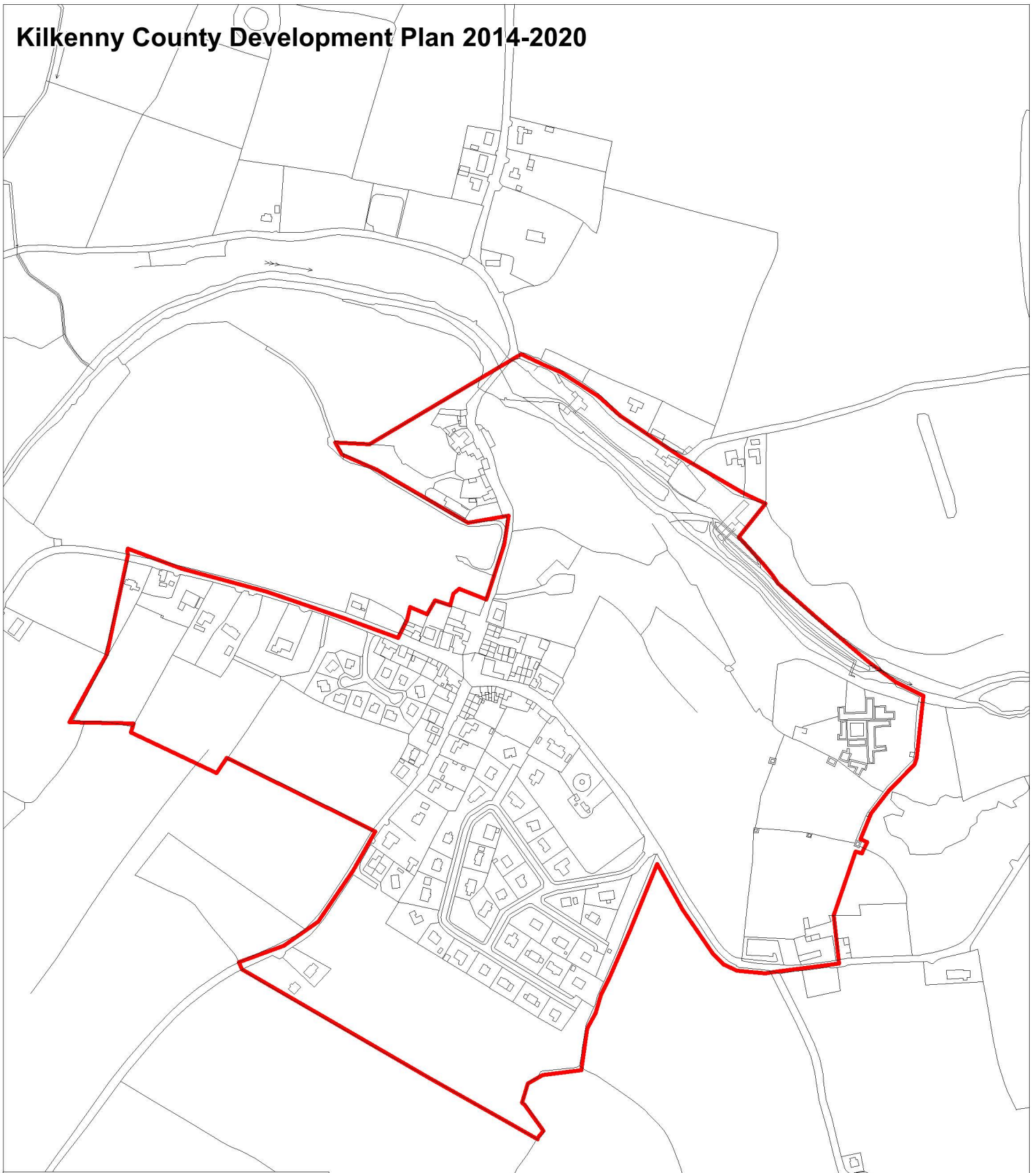


Figure 3.7 Settlement boundary for Kells

 Settlement boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 6,000 @A4

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020

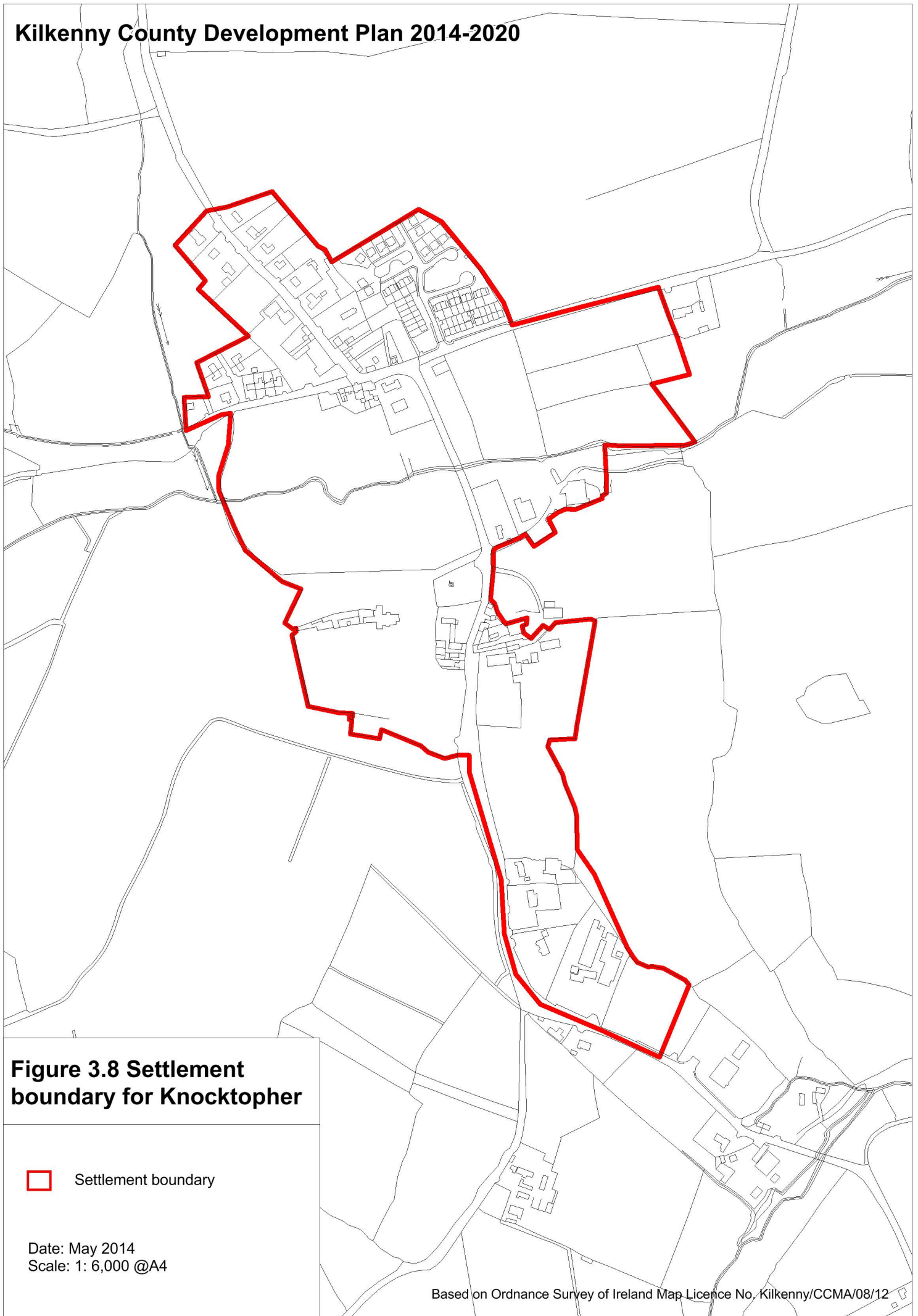


Figure 3.8 Settlement boundary for Knocktopher

 Settlement boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 6,000 @A4

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

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020

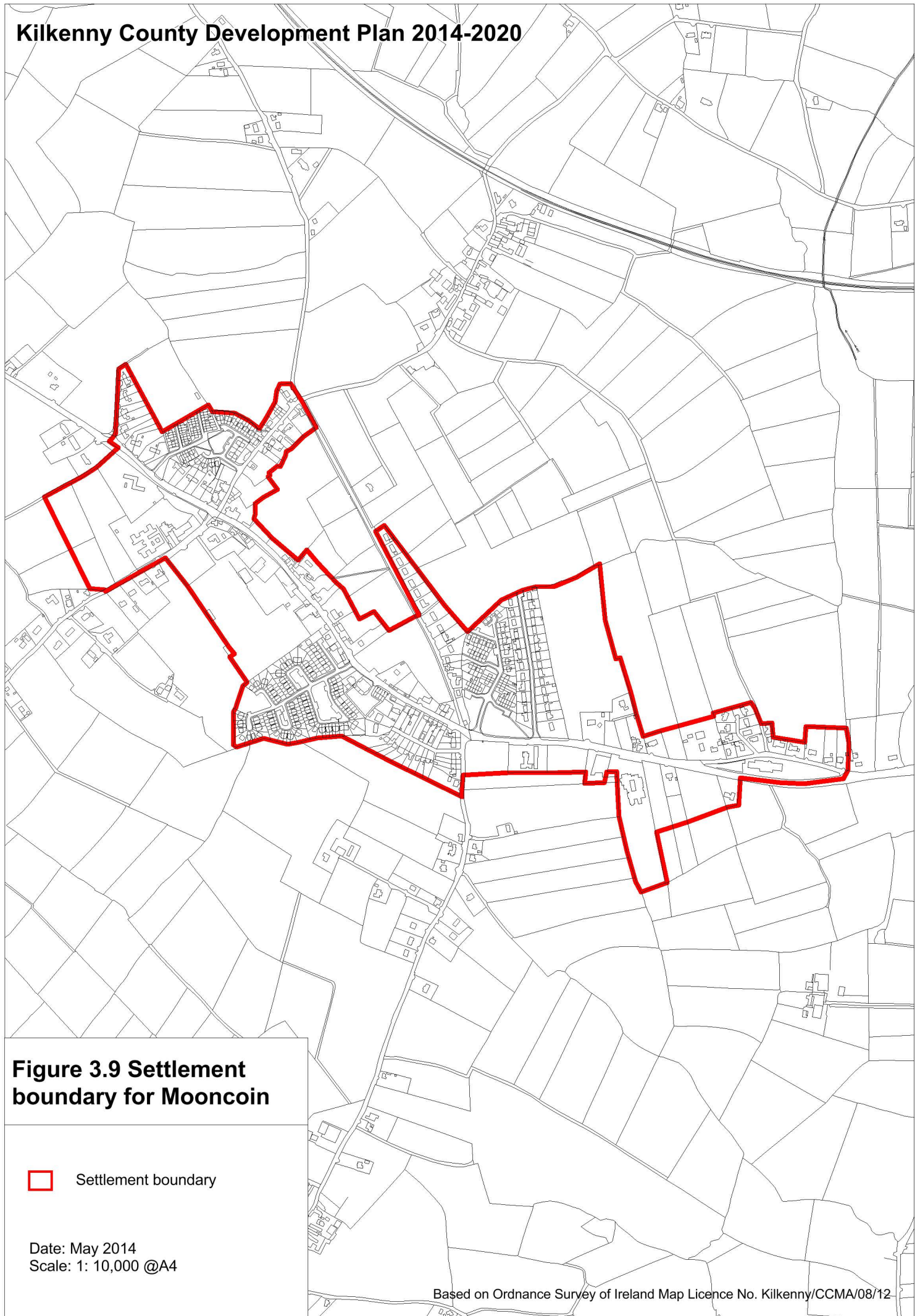


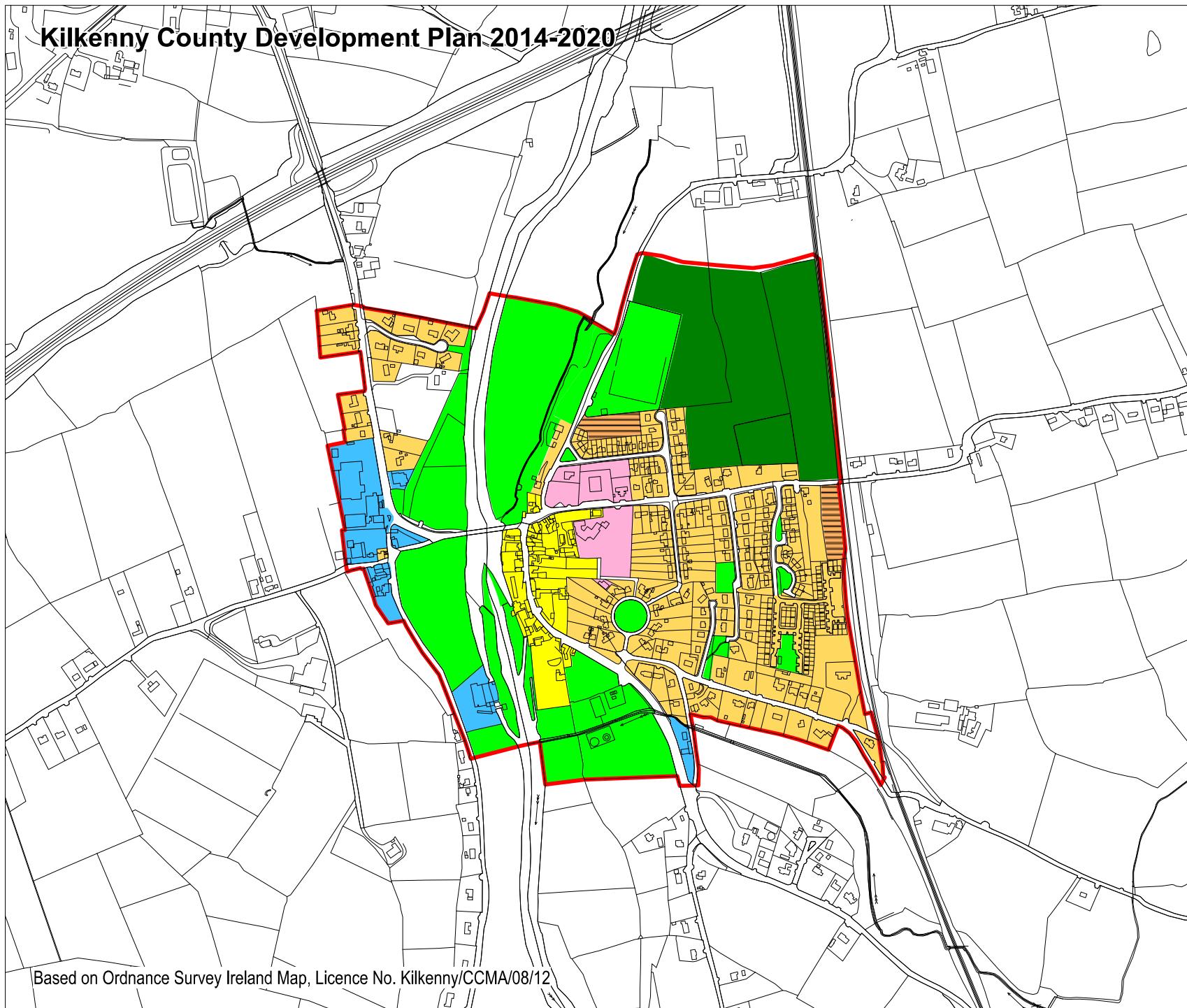
Figure 3.9 Settlement boundary for Mooncoin

 Settlement boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 10,000 @A4

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

Figure 3.14
Bennettsbridge



- Plan Boundary
- Agriculture
- Amenity / Green links / Biodiversity conservation / Open Space / Recreation
- Community Facilities
- Existing Residential
- Industrial / employment
- Phase 1 Residential
- Phase 2 Residential
- Village Centre

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020

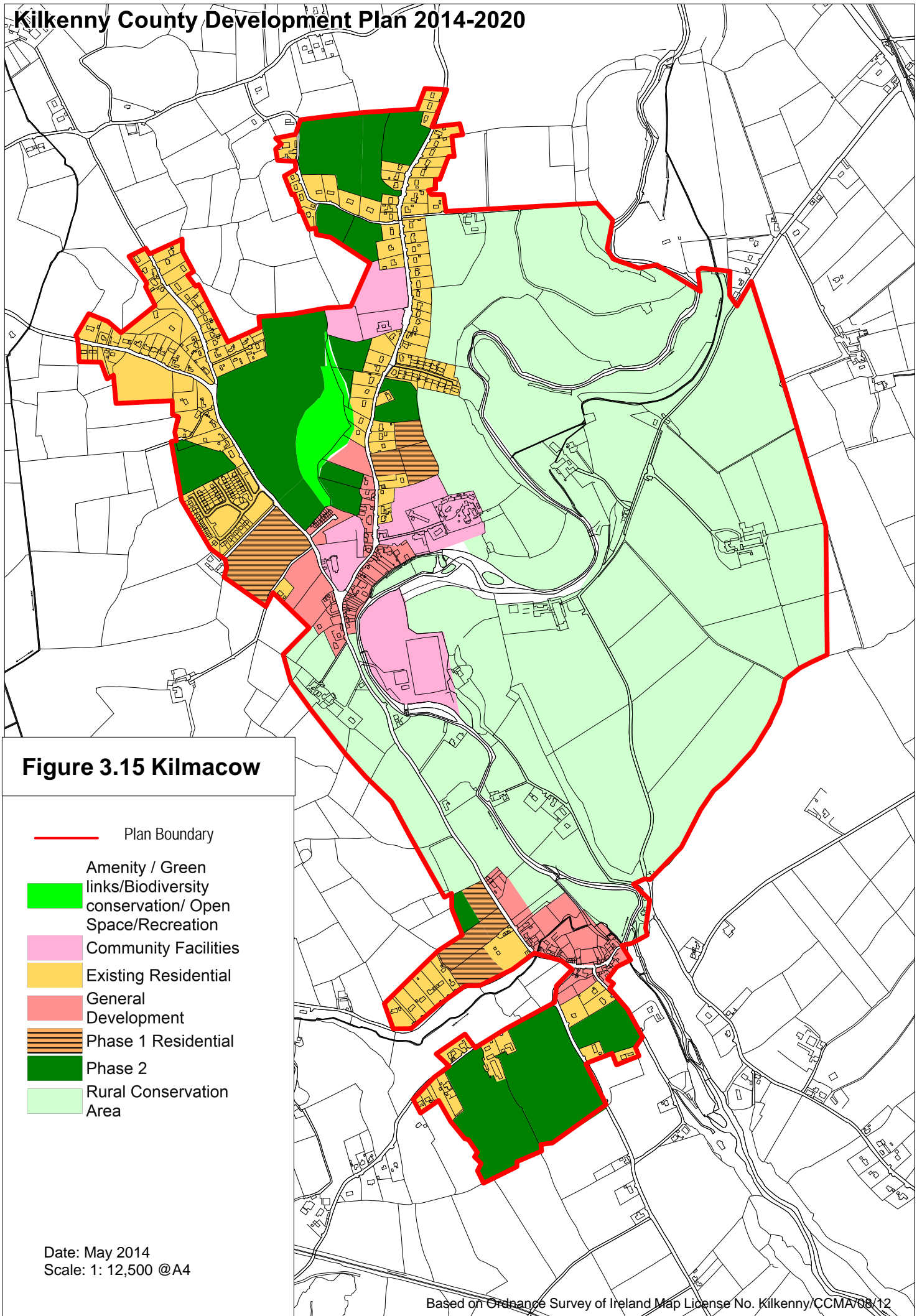
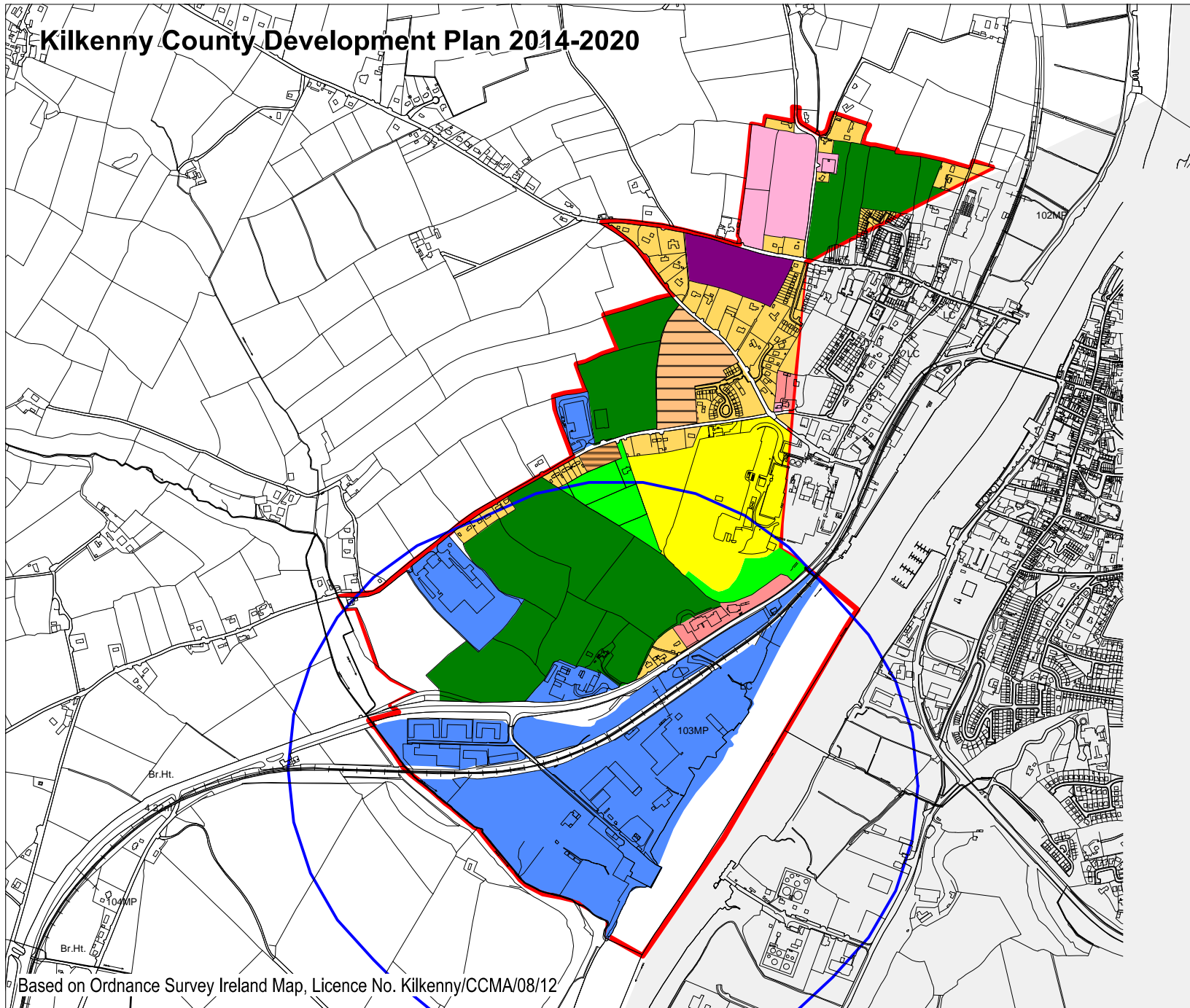


Figure 3.15 Kilmacow

- Plan Boundary
- Amenity / Green links/Biodiversity conservation/ Open Space/Recreation
- Community Facilities
- Existing Residential
- General Development
- Phase 1 Residential
- Phase 2
- Rural Conservation Area

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 12,500 @A4

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020



**Figure 3.16
New Ross
Environs**

- Agriculture
- Amenity / Green links/
- Biodiversity conservation/ Open Space/ Recreation
- Community Facilities
- Existing Residential
- General Development
- Industrial
- Mixed Use
- Phase 1 Residential
- Phase 2 Residential
- Residential (Low Density)

- Plan Boundary
- 700m Consultation distance for Nitrofert (Seveso II) site

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

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 15,000 @A4

Towns with existing LAPs are targeted for growth having regard to their position within the settlement hierarchy of the County and the scale and character of the individual settlement i.e. commensurate with their position within the hierarchy.

As can be seen in Table 3.3, the smaller towns and villages with extant LAPs contain 13.6 hectares of undeveloped residentially zoned land within their Plans. If an average density of 15 units per hectare is applied (6 per acre) the 13.6 hectares could yield 204 housing units which could accommodate 603 persons assuming an average occupancy of 2.96 persons per unit.

Where a smaller town or village has an extant Local Area Plan with zoning objectives then this core strategy sets out a phasing map for the land within the Local Area Plan. These maps supersede the original zoning map within the relevant Local Area Plan, see Figures 3.14 – 3.16.

The Ferrybank-Belview LAP will be reviewed within 2 years from the adoption of this Development Plan.

Table 3.3: Existing & Lapsed Local Area Plans for smaller towns & villages

		Date Adopted	Expiry date (Expired)	Zoned land (ha)	Dev Plan response
1	Ballyhale	19 th July 2004	19 th July 2010	0	Development boundary
2	Ballyragget	19 th July 2004	19 th July 2010	0	Development boundary
3	Bennettsbridge	20 th July 2009	20 th July 2015	0.94	LAP
4	Fiddown	17 th Jan. 2011	17 th January 2017	2.36	LAP
5	Freshford	17 th Oct. 2005	17 th October 2011	0	Development boundary
6	Goresbridge	17 th Oct. 2005	17 th October 2011	0	Development boundary
7	Gowran	20 th Dec 2010	20 th December 2016	1	LAP
8	Inistioge	19 th July 2004	19 th July 2010	0	Development boundary
9	Kells	17 th Oct. 2005	17 th October 2011	0	Development boundary
10	Kilmacow	21 st Dec.2009	21 st December 2015	7.8	LAP
11	Knocktopher	19 th July 2004	19 th July 2010	0	Development boundary
12	Mooncoin	20 th Oct. 2003	20 th October 2009	0	Development boundary
13	Mullinavat	16 th Oct. 2006	16 th October 2012	0	Development boundary
14	Piltown	17 th Jan. 2011	17 th January 2017	2.5	LAP
15	Slieverue	16 th Oct. 2006	16 th October 2012	0	Development boundary
16	Stoneyford	16 th Oct. 2006	16 th October 2012	0	Development boundary

17	Urlingford	19 th July 2004	19th July 2010	0	Development boundary
	Total			13.6	

3.3.5.3 Development Objectives for smaller towns and 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.

The scale and density of development will depend on number of factors including the:

- ★ Availability of infrastructure including appropriate waste water treatment facilities, water supply,
- ★ Contribution to the enhancement of the village form by reinforcing the street pattern or assisting in the redevelopment of backlands
- ★ Contribution to the protection of the architectural and environmental qualities of the village
- ★ Capacity of the existing services in the village to accommodate the proposed development.

Future growth in the smaller towns and villages will be incremental, small in scale and appropriate to the size, scale and character of the village.

Development within all the settlements of the County must be of a scale that reflects the scale and character of the particular settlement and its function within the settlement hierarchy. Housing development within the development boundary of these towns will not be subject to the rural housing policy as outlined in section 3.4 of the Development Plan.

Objective:

3G To facilitate development of housing, economic development, services and infrastructure in the smaller towns and villages of the county at a scale and character which is appropriate in order to sustain and renew population and services in these areas.

Development Management

- For smaller towns and villages, no one proposal for residential development should increase the existing housing stock³⁵ by more than 12.5% within the lifetime of the plan.
- For villages of under 400 in population, any individual scheme for new housing should not be larger than about 10-12 units.
- The Planning Authority may limit the extent of development on any one site within the smaller towns and villages having regard to the overall water services capacity and the availability of land for development within the village.

³⁵ Including permitted and committed development

- **Have regard to existing framework plans/community action plans including existing Village Design Statements that have been prepared in consultation with the local community, and with relevant agencies, as supplementary planning guidance documents.**

3.4 Core Strategy Table

The implementation of the [NSS](#) and [RPGs](#) at the County level will:

- ★ Allow the sustainable development of rural areas of the county,
- ★ Allow the sustainable growth of the Gateway, Hub and District Towns, smaller settlements and rural areas within the County,
- ★ Avoid the overprovision of zoned lands,
- ★ Avoid the potential of unsustainable leapfrogging of undeveloped lands,
- ★ Avoid the pressure for excessive development in unserved areas,
- ★ Ensure that adequate land is zoned to more than meet 1.5 times the population targets set in the RPG's.

3.4.1 Population Change

From Chapter 2 the following table outlines the population changes to be planned for within the county.

Table 2.7 Adjusted Regional Planning Guidelines figures						
	2011 Actual	2012	2014 ³⁶	2016	2020	2022
Kilkenny County	95,419	96,873	99,781	105,598	109,802	111,903
Kilkenny City	24,423	24,682	25,200	25,800	27,400	28,200
Ferrybank/Belview	4,787 ³⁷	4,953	5287	5412	6,412	6,500

According to the adjusted [RPGs](#) figures above, the population increase projected for the county between 2014 and 2020 is 10,021. The figure for 2020 is derived from applying the annual average increase predicted by the [RPGs](#) to the period between 2016 and 2020. The population increase for the County over the Development Plan 2014 to 2020, is therefore 10,021.

³⁶ The 2014 figures are obtained by disaggregating the RPG figures and applying the same growth rates to the 2011 Census figure.

³⁷ The population increase allocated to the Environs of Waterford is 1,000 people from 2010 to 2016, a rate of 166.6 per year. This figure is for the Kilculliheen & Aglis EDs only, it does not relate to the entire Ferrybank/Belview Local Area Plan area.

Table 3.4: Core Strategy 2014 - 2020

(1)	Core Strategy population allocation 2014 - 2020 (2)	Housing land requirement (hectares including 50% over zoning for 2014 - 2020) (3)	Existing Zoning (hectares) (4)	Proposed Zoning (Hectares) (5)
County Kilkenny	10,021			
Kilkenny City	2,077	40.4 ³⁸	62.23	63.5
Ferrybank/Belview (Part Gateway)	1,125	22	53.3	53.3
District Towns				
(a) Callan	2.4% (240) ⁴⁰	8.3 ⁴¹	15.21	15.21
(b) Castlecomer	1.5% (150)	3.4	12.38	12.38
(c) Graiguenamanagh ³⁹	1.3% (130)	4.5	4.35	4.35
(d) Thomastown	2.38% (238)	8.3	11.85	11.85
Remainder area to include smaller towns and villages and environs of New Ross and the rural area of the county	5,929	250 ⁴²	18.6	18.6
Total	10,021	337	177.9	179

³⁸ 2,077 divided by 2.57 = 808 hh divided by 30units/ha(12/acre) = 26.9ha x1.5 = 40.4ha. This same method applies to Ferrybank/Belview.

³⁹ Graiguenamanagh has been included as a district town even though it was below the threshold of 1,500 population in the 2011 Census.

⁴⁰ The figure in brackets is the population allocation for the District Town, which was derived by assuming each District town would retain its proportionate share of the County's population as pertained in 2011 census. See table 3.2 above

⁴¹ 2.4% equates to an additional 240 persons to accommodate. At 2.88 persons per household this gives 83.3 households @ average density of 15/ha this gives a requirement of 5.5 ha. 150% of 5 = 8.3ha.

⁴² 5,929 divided by 2.96pph = 2,003 households divided by 12 units/ha = 167ha x 1.5 = 250ha

3.5 Rural Settlement Strategy

The rural settlement strategy is based on the [Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#)⁴³. 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:

- 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.
- Protect natural resources such as minerals and construction aggregates
- Protect areas where sustainable energy production is feasible, such as high lying areas where wind energy production is acceptable in principle.

Approximately 63% of the county's population live in rural areas⁴⁴. 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.

3.5.1 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](#). This policy was carried through in the County Development Plan 2008-2014. Between January 2006 and August 2012, a total of 2,043 permissions were granted for one-off houses in Kilkenny rural areas.

At this stage, the current rural housing policy is in operation approximately 6 years. As is evident from the number of housing applications granted over this period, the demand for rural housing remains strong. There has been a significant decline in the number of applications lodged in the past three to four years, but this decline is reflective of general economic decline since 2008 rather than any underlining change in housing demand. The potential demand for rural housing remains strong, which could quickly be reflected in applications once the housing market and mortgage availability improves.

⁴³ Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, [Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#), 2005

⁴⁴ According to the Census of Population 2011

The population of the county increased by 9% during the last intercensal period (2006 -2011), with the state average at 8%. The aggregate rural areas of the county increased by 6.1%⁴⁵ over the same period while the aggregate town areas increased by 14.1%. Over the period of the policy (2006 -2014), the distribution of housing applications has been fairly equal throughout the County. However, certain areas have been shown to be more attractive for rural settlement, particularly around the major centres such as Kilkenny and Waterford. The trends observed over this period show that the county as a whole experienced strong population growth with the increase in urban areas being stronger than the aggregate rural areas. Therefore the thrust of the existing policy, with slight variations, will be retained. The changes reflect appropriate responses to changes in housing demand over the period of the previous plan.

The County can be divided into three broad categories as follows:

1. Areas under Urban Influence
2. Stronger Rural Areas
3. Peripheral Areas of Population decline

See Figure 3.17: Rural Housing Strategy.

3.5.2 Rural Housing 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 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.

The following definitions and associated policies will be used:

Urban Area: A city or town with a population of 1,500 or more at the time of the 2011 Census of Population (This definition is consistent with the CSO and the [Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines](#)). In 2011, the population of Castlecomer and Graiguenamanagh was recorded at 1456 and 1252 respectively. Both of these towns are considered to be 'urban areas' for the purposes of this Plan.

Urban Generated Rural Housing: Housing in rural areas sought by persons living and working in urban areas, including second homes. The Council will endeavour to accommodate urban-generated housing within the development limits of all towns and villages subject to appropriate servicing arrangements This approach has been adopted because of the problems that arise from a proliferation of one-off houses, including those listed below, being

⁴⁵ [CSO Volume 1 Table 3](#)

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020

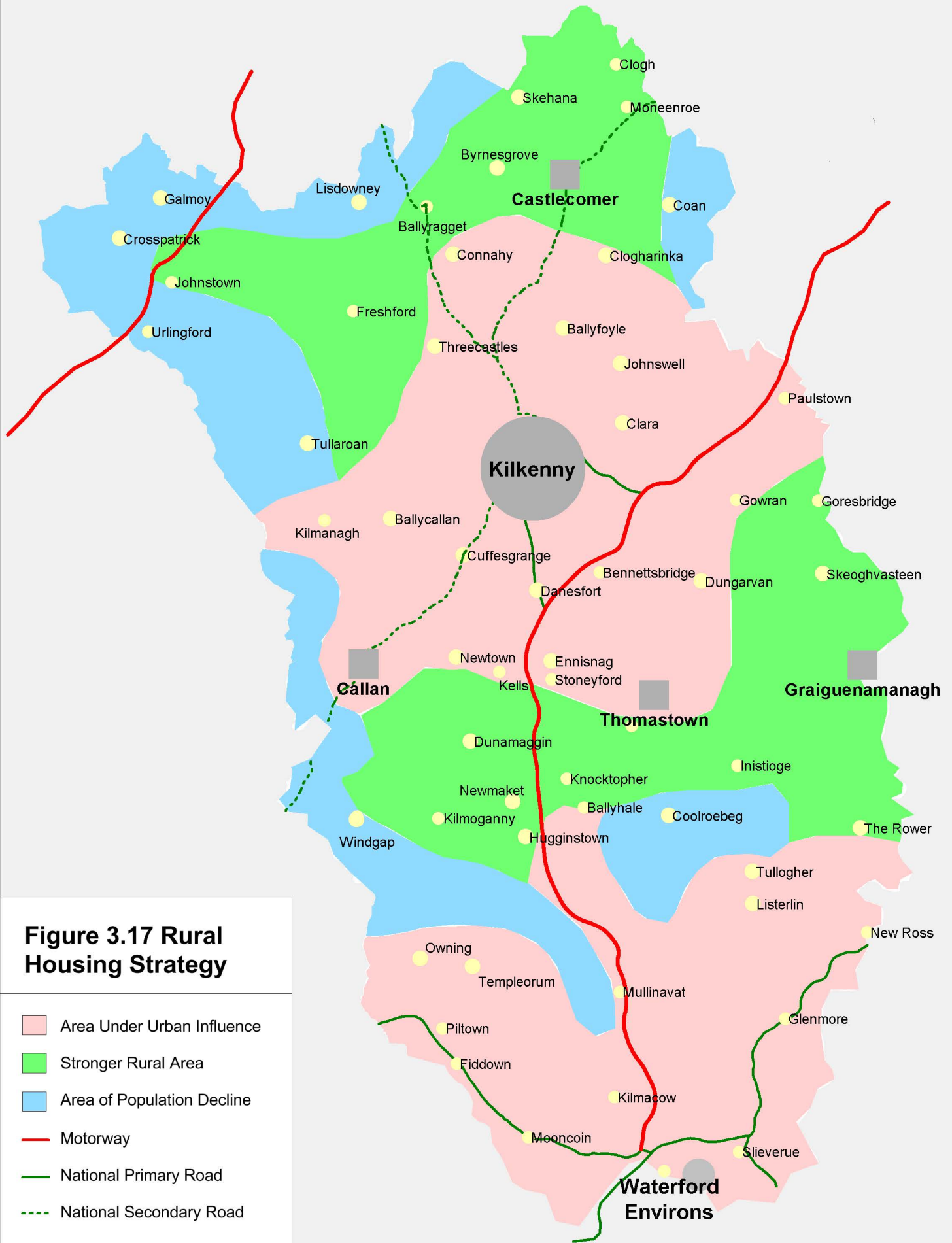


Figure 3.17 Rural Housing Strategy

- Area Under Urban Influence
- Stronger Rural Area
- Area of Population Decline
- Motorway
- National Primary Road
- National Secondary Road

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 300,000 @A4

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

- creation of demands for the subsequent provision of public infrastructure (i.e. roads and utilities);
- proliferation of septic tanks in areas with poor soils that do not have the capacity to absorb effluent;
- contamination of local water supplies and a reduction in water quality;
- rising land values that push up prices for those with a genuine local housing need;
- higher energy consumption and transportation costs arising from increased car-based commuting;
- profound effects on landscape character, with potentially harmful effects on the tourism sector, which
- depends on high-quality landscapes;
- loss of investment in rural towns and villages, leading to dereliction and vacancy;
- relocation of younger and more affluent people from settlements to the surrounding rural areas.

Rural Generated Housing: Housing needed in rural areas within the established rural community by persons from that community or whose occupation is intrinsically linked with that particular rural area as defined in Section 3.5.2.3 below.

Subject to satisfying good practice in relation to site location and access, drainage and design requirements, rural generated housing need should be facilitated as close as possible to its origin to ensure that strong local ties are maintained and that the applicant remains an intrinsic part of the local community.

Ribbon Development: is defined as existing where there are 5 or more houses on any one side of a given 250 metres of road frontage. If four houses exist on any one side of a given 250 metres of road frontage, it is likely that ribbon development may be created with an additional house.

Ribbon Development is discouraged for a variety of reasons, including road safety, future demand for the provision of public infrastructure and visual impact. The Planning Authority will have discretion to allow well spaced infill ribboning to complete a particular settlement pattern only, but not where it will lead to further gap infill sites or the coalescence of separate ribbons of development or, in combination with other ribbons, lead to the over proliferation of houses resulting in overdevelopment creating ribbon development, wastewater disposal difficulties, traffic or other serious planning issues in the immediate area.

Consideration will be given to granting permission for development for a house which would extend an undesirable pattern of ribbon development in an area provided:

- There is no other family land that can be put forward as a site for the applicant under planning considerations.

- That the applicant has not sold off sites to third parties (i.e. non-family members) or obtained planning permission for a dwelling previously, and
- That the applicant or the landowner has not obtained planning permission(s) previously for the houses which have contributed to the ribbon development adjacent to the proposed site.

If these criteria are met the Council may consider granting permission provided all other technical criteria are met and provided the further dwelling will not lead to over development of the area.

Local Area: Local area is defined as within approximately 10km from the site, excluding defined urban areas. Where the site is of a greater distance but the applicant can demonstrate significant ties with the area for example immediate family or well established landownership then these applications will be considered on their merits.

Backland Development: Where a development (most commonly associated with but not restricted to one-off housing) is positioned loosely to the rear of another so as to create a piecemeal and disorderly form of development, which could potentially impact neighbouring residential amenities, and gives rise to negative environmental or traffic issues, such development will be classed as backland development and in general will be considered contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3.5.2.1 Areas under Urban Influence

Areas classified as under Urban Pressure are located close to the immediate environs or commuting catchment of cities and towns or to major transport corridors with ready access to urban areas. They are characterised by rapidly rising populations and/or considerable pressure for housing development. It is the Council's objective for areas of urban influence to facilitate the rural generated housing requirements of the local rural community (as identified in this section) while on the other hand directing urban generated rural housing to areas zoned for new housing development in the city, towns and villages.

Areas under urban influence display the greatest pressures for development due to⁴⁶:

- Close commuting catchments of larger cities and towns,
- Population increases well above the average for the aggregate rural areas of the county.
- Ready access to a good road network with ready access to the larger urban areas.

Occupancy Condition

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

⁴⁶ Fig 3.17 of the plan reflects this position.

his/her immediate family as a place of permanent residence for a period of seven years from the date of first occupancy.

Sterilisation Agreements

In areas where significant levels of rural housing development have taken place on the edges of urban areas within the county and where the Council considers such areas are becoming over developed the council will seek agreement under Section 47 of the Planning Act (sterilisation agreement) if it considers it necessary to regulate development in the area.

3.5.2.2 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, the Council will endeavour to:

- Accommodate proposals for individual rural generated houses subject to compliance with the rural housing policy and normal siting and design criteria.
- Promote the development of houses in the designated settlements and villages in the county subject to appropriate servicing.

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

Planning permission granted for rural housing within Stronger Rural Areas shall be subject to a condition restricting the permission (until completed and ready to occupy) to the applicant/s only for a period of five years. The permission can, within this five year period, be transferred to another person only with the written consent of the Planning Authority where the prospective purchaser complies with the applicable rural housing policies.

3.5.2.3 Rural Generated Housing need

In areas under urban influence and in stronger rural areas the Council will permit (subject to other planning criteria) single houses for persons where the following stipulations are met:

1. Persons who are employed full-time in rural-based activity such as farming, 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 such teachers in rural schools or other persons by the

nature of their work have a functional need to reside permanently in the rural area close to their place of work.

2. A fulltime farm owner or an immediate family member (son, daughter, mother, father, sister, brother, heir) wishing to build a permanent home for their own use on family lands.
3. Persons who have no family lands but who wish to build their first home , on a site within a 10 km radius of their original family home, (the local rural area) in which they have spent a substantial and continuous part of their lives(minimum 5 years)⁴⁷
4. Persons who were born and lived for substantial parts of their lives (minimum 3 year) in the local area and wish to return to live in the local area (returning migrants).
5. A landowner who owned property prior to 14th June 2013⁴⁸ wishing to build a permanent home for his/her own use or a son or daughter. (This provision is to deal with historical land issues which might arise close to existing settlements where families could be excluded from building a home for their own lands for their own occupation due to emerging development trends over previous plan periods. This cut off date is a definitive time frame which will not be revised in subsequent Development Plans.)

3.5.2.4 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.

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.

3.5.2.5 Refurbishment and Replacement Dwellings in rural areas

The Council will encourage and facilitate the appropriate refurbishment of existing housing stock and other structures in rural areas and in certain limited cases the replacement of existing dwellings subject to the criteria outlined below.

⁴⁷ This is an increase from 3 years in the previous plan

⁴⁸ The date of commencement of the review of the Development Plan.

Development management standards

- The emphasis should be on the retention, refurbishment and reuse of the structure as part of the development proposal.
- The scale and architectural treatment of proposed works should be sympathetic to the character of the original structure and the surrounding area including adjoining or nearby development.
- In the case of replacement dwellings, to require proof that the original structure was last used as a dwelling and was habitable so as not to invoke the policies under section 3.5.2 that applies to new dwellings (Replacement dwellings will be subject to all usual development management criteria also).
- In cases where retention or reuse of the existing dwelling is not technically feasible, the size and scale of any replacement dwelling should reflect the site's characteristics and context and shall accord with best practice in rural house design.

Where an original structure was not habitable, if an applicant can demonstrate that their proposals will ensure the sensitive restoration of vernacular and traditional buildings in the rural area, thereby respecting and maintaining the integrity and scale of the original building, and does not compromise any other development management considerations, such proposals shall not be subject to the policies in Section 3.5.2 that applies to new dwellings (see Section 8.3.10 Vernacular built heritage).

3.5.3 Rural House Design Guidance

A [Rural Design Guide](#) was produced in 2008 for County Kilkenny. The [Design Guide](#) acts as an instrument to develop best practice in the design and siting of one-off rural housing. Those intending to build houses in the countryside are advised to consult the [Rural Design Guide](#) for advice on site choice, local design and landscaping at an early stage in their preparations.

Further guidance is given in Section 12.10 Rural Housing and Section 11.7.3 Access to National Roads.

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 other supplementary guidance documents, where appropriate.

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

Objective:

- 3H To monitor the trends in rural housing and population during the lifetime of the plan to ascertain if further rural housing policy responses are required during the plan period.**

3.7 Retail Strategy

The County Retail Strategy confirms a retail hierarchy, as set out in Table 4.1. This hierarchy is consistent with the [Retail Planning Guidelines](#) and the [South East Regional Planning Guidelines](#). The County Retail Strategy is set out in Chapter 4 of this plan.

Appendix A gives the detailed methodology used in the preparation of the retail strategy.

3.8 Housing Strategy

Section 94 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires a Development Plan to include a strategy for the purposes of ensuring that the proper planning and sustainable development of the area provides for the housing of the existing and future populations of the County. This strategy is known as the Housing Strategy.

The Housing Strategy is set out in detail in Appendix B and is supported by Chapter 5 of this plan.

The Strategy is consistent with the [National Spatial Strategy](#), the [South East Regional Planning Guidelines](#) and regional population targets set therein.

Objectives are included in Chapter 5 to secure the implementation of the Housing Strategy.

4 Economic Development

Strategic Aim: To provide a framework for the implementation of the Council’s economic strategy and the protection of the environment and heritage, to position the county for sustainable economic growth and employment.

4.1 Introduction

The economic situation in Ireland is dramatically different now to when the last Development Plan (2008 – 2014) was adopted. Measured against the standard indicators of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Gross National Product (GNP), new housing output, tax revenues, and employment levels, economic performance has dropped sharply. Since that time, Ireland has experienced rising unemployment, a banking crisis and a collapse in the property market.

Local authorities play a central role in supporting economic development and enterprise at local level. They do this in a number of ways, including through their capital and current budgets which goes towards funding their core functions. These include physical planning and development, undertaking socioeconomic research and analysis, the provision of local infrastructure, including transport and water infrastructure, which is vital for enterprises as well as community infrastructure. They are also a key agent for delivery locally of national policy objectives.

At national level there are a number of Government publications which the local authority has had regard to in compiling this Plan and the economic strategy within this chapter, as follows:

- [Supporting Economic Recovery and Jobs – Locally](#)⁴⁹
- [Action Plan for Jobs](#)⁵⁰
- [Our Sustainable Future – A Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland](#)⁵¹
- [Delivering our Green Potential - Government Policy Statement on Growth and Employment in the Green Economy](#)⁵²
- [Food Harvest 2020](#)⁵³

⁴⁹ Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, [Supporting Economic Recovery and Jobs – Locally](#) Local Government Sectoral Strategy to Promote Employment and Support Local Enterprise, 2012

⁵⁰ Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, [Action Plan for Jobs](#), 2012

⁵¹ Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, [Our Sustainable Future – A Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland](#), 2012

⁵² Government of Ireland, [Delivering our Green Potential - Government Policy Statement on Growth and Employment in the Green Economy](#), 2012

Protection of the environment and conservation of biodiversity is crucial for the achievement of the targets under Food Harvest 2020, and the maintenance of a high quality of life and the attractiveness of cities, towns, villages and other locations which is important for investment decisions by both foreign and domestic business investors.

The Development Plan is a pre-requisite which underpins economic growth and employment. This Plan contains objectives for the protection and enhancement of water quality and the protection and enhancement of built and natural heritage which are seen as essential in the drive for sustainable economic recovery.

4.2 The Green Economy

A central plank of Ireland's economic recovery will centre on the development of a green economy that recognises:

- the opportunities for investment and employment creation in emerging sectors such as renewable energy, energy efficiency and waste and water management, and
- that this sustainable approach to economic development complements the core strength of the economy in the use of natural resources in the agriculture, forestry, fisheries, tourism and energy sectors.

Key drivers of the growth of the Green Economy globally include emissions reduction targets, increasing fossil fuel prices, diminishing natural resources, the impact of climate change, environmental legislation and consumer preferences. Development of the Green Economy provides an opportunity for business to reduce costs, improve their environmental performance and engage in the shift to a new economic paradigm.

Local government is part of the network of assistance to business and industry in delivering this, including through action under the green public procurement action plan, [Green Tenders](#)⁵⁴ and [Our Sustainable Future – A Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland](#) which is underway and sets out the range of environmental, economic and social measures required to move these agendas forward from vision to reality. Enhanced environmental protection will continue to underpin the agri-food sector and secure down-stream employment.

4.3 Economic Development & Heritage

The identity and economic development of County Kilkenny is intrinsically linked to its heritage. The county's character and culture are vital assets that help the county compete as a tourism destination and a location of choice for investment.

⁵³ Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, [Food Harvest 2020, A vision for Irish agri-food and fisheries](#), 2010

⁵⁴ Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, *Green Tenders: An Action Plan on Green Public Procurement, 2012*

Heritage and cultural tourism is growing worldwide and it is estimated that cultural tourism is worth over €2bn annually to the Irish economy and is one of the fastest growing sectors of tourism. In 2011 tourism was worth a total of €5.7bn to the Irish economy and domestic tourism alone was worth €1.8bn. In annual surveys tourists repeatedly stated that heritage is one of the key attractions for them in choosing to visit Ireland and two in every three visitors go to a heritage site or visitor attraction⁵⁵. In a survey of visitors conducted by Kilkenny Tourism 78% of visitors identified heritage as the main reason they visited Kilkenny⁵⁶.

The “Invest Kilkenny” initiative (established by Kilkenny Local Authorities to promote and facilitate investment from new and existing companies in Kilkenny) recognises and promotes the heritage, cultural life and quality of life of the city and county. In a survey conducted by IPSOS Mori for the Heritage Office in 2007⁵⁷, 93% of respondents identified heritage as being either very important or fairly important in improving the quality of life in Kilkenny.

A study commissioned by the Heritage Council⁵⁸ outlined the economic rationale for investment in built heritage. It identified that the historic environment is a highly significant contributor to Ireland’s national economy, directly supporting almost 25,000 full time equivalent jobs. When indirect effects are included, it is estimated that the sector supports approximately 40,000 full time equivalent posts in Ireland. In addition, the historic environment is estimated to account for some €1.5 billion to the nation’s Gross Value Added. Therefore, there are significant economic benefits to promoting the value of the built heritage and investing in its protection, management and improvement.

Kilkenny is marketed as a heritage destination and has a large number of visitor attractions associated with heritage. There is vast potential to build on the contribution of heritage to the economic development of Kilkenny. It is the intention of this Development Plan to actively support the protection, conservation and enhancement of the cultural heritage in Kilkenny to benefit the people of Kilkenny and to target cultural tourism as a major economic driver in the county. This is consistent with the approach to tourism outlined in the economic strategy and with the overall vision for the Development Plan.

Natural heritage is a further significant asset for the county. It provides a variety of services for free which bring many benefits to society and the economy. A high quality, natural environment supports the economy by attracting employers, visitors and inward investment. Research commissioned by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government estimates that biodiversity and ecosystems contribute €2.6bn to the Irish economy each year.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Fáilte Ireland. 2012. *Tourism Facts 2011*.

⁵⁶ Kilkenny Tourism. 2004. *Kilkenny Tourism Research Programme*.

⁵⁷ IPSOS Mori. 2004. *Market Research on Heritage Awareness and Attitudes in Co. Kilkenny*.

⁵⁸ Ecorys & Fitzpatrick Associates, 2012. *Economic Value of Ireland's Historic Environment*.

⁵⁹ Bullock, C. et al. 2008. *The Economic and Social Aspects of Biodiversity — Benefits and Costs of Biodiversity in Ireland*. Government Publications.

The value gained from biodiversity is reliant on its ongoing sustainable protection and management. Green infrastructure should be provided as an integral part of sustainable development alongside other infrastructure such as utilities and transport networks if the maximum benefit from natural assets is to be obtained. It recognises the importance of Green infrastructure *“as an asset that can have a particularly high tourism amenity value.”*⁶⁰ A section on Green Infrastructure is included in Chapter 7.

4.4 Economic Strategy for Kilkenny

At a strategic level within the City and County of Kilkenny, five sectors were identified for specific development initiatives by the Local Authorities. These were:

- Third and Fourth Level Education and Research Development
- Agri-Food
- Services Development
- Tourism, Arts and Leisure
- Life Sciences (including Pharma with specific focus on Belview)

4.4.1 Third and Fourth Level Education and Research Development

Work is complete on the provision of a 3rd/4th level Research and Innovation unit at St. Kieran’s College. This is a joint venture between Kilkenny Local Authorities, Waterford Institute of Technology (Telecommunications Software & Systems Group or TSSG) and Carlow Institute of Technology. The centre focuses on next generation internet services and service innovation. The centre will be assisted by collaboration with the National University of Ireland Maynooth, (N.U.I.M.) and other 3rd level institutions. The Kilkenny Centre will create a hub for information and communications technology (ICT) expertise and for next generation internet development for companies in the finance, banking and insurance sectors.

Work is continuing with the N.U.I.M steering committee for the development of the lifelong learning campus at St. Kieran’s college.

The Programme for Government provides for a Technological University of the South East. There is a further potential role for local authorities to use research and innovation as a means to support employment creation and to promote a greater integration of local institutions in the delivery of supports for the local enterprise sector. Local authorities can develop a more proactive approach to embrace and integrate aspects of the work undertaken by universities, institutes of technology and research institutions in provision of its business supports and develop a stronger working relationship with academic institutions. Kilkenny Local Authorities will actively support the development of a Technological University for the South East Region.

⁶⁰ Historic Towns in Ireland. Maximising Your Tourism Potential. Fáilte Ireland

Objective:

- 4A To increase co-operation between Kilkenny Local Authorities, existing third level institutions and the proposed Technological University for the South East to support employment creation, innovation and lifelong learning.**

4.4.2 Agri-Food

A high level food group has been established with representatives from the agri-food sector including S.M.E's and Leader to progress the county under [Food Harvest 2020](#). This group is concerned with four areas;

- a) expansion of the milk supply post 2015
- b) food sustainability
- c) improved routes to market for S.M.E's
- d) development of a food excellence centre(s)

A technical working group has also been established with representatives of Teagasc, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Dept. of Agriculture, the Dept. of the Environment, Community and Local Government, the River Basin Catchment Management Team and the Council to examine environmental management issues in relation to the expansion of the milk supply. This group links to work being done at national level by the Dept. of Agriculture and by River Catchment Management. Kilkenny will be a pilot programme. This initiative represents an important development of Kilkenny as a site for artisan food production and for 'ahead of the curve' environmental infrastructure under the Harvest 2020 brand.

Objective:

- 4B To ensure the highest standards of environmental protection in the assessment of planning applications for all development proposals.**

4.4.3 Services Development

Linkages are being developed with multi-national companies in the I.T. and Financial Services sectors. The initiative under 3rd /4th level education and research is targeted at the financial, banking and insurance sectors. The T.S.S.G research work looks at the next generation of applications in these sectors.

The investment in the Research and Innovation Centre at St. Kieran's establishes Kilkenny for the first time as an important centre for ICT and establishes new national capability for internationally traded services and more specifically for the finance, banking and insurance sectors. The centre will be a new resource and attraction for ICT and finance operations of all major companies.

Objective:

4C To ensure an adequate amount of employment land on a campus type environment is available within the County for ICT and technology office based industry at the appropriate strategic locations.

4.4.4 Tourism Arts and Leisure

Tourism has been identified as a significant driver of the local economy. Tourism plays an important economic role within the county, and income derived from tourist activity is distributed across a wide range of economic sectors. Fáilte Ireland estimates that the tourism industry was worth upwards of €360 million in visitor expenditure to the South East region in 2010 and sustains at least 10,000 jobs⁶¹. Building on what Kilkenny already had in terms of tourism product, the local authorities sought to assemble a number of tourism infrastructure initiatives which would add value to the Kilkenny tourist product.

From that analysis, a package known as the 'Medieval Mile' was developed, which is based on 6 projects. Grant funding was secured from Fáilte Ireland in 2012. The projects are:

1. Public realm improvement from The Parade to Irishtown
2. A new museum of National and local attraction to be housed in a restored St. Mary's Hall,
3. A great garden along both banks of the River Nore between Johns bridge and Greens bridge,
4. The restoration of Evans home to include a new Butler Gallery,
5. A new tourist office to be housed within the Tholsel, and
6. A vertical garden structure located at Irishtown adjacent to the entrance to the Smithwick's brewery site.

Initial detailed planning and consultation has commenced on the public realm with design work also commenced on the St Mary's Hall project. A total investment of €15m will be involved for all six projects over the life of the 2014 to 2020 Plan.

The development of these attractions in the city along with other flagship projects in the county will assist in the enhancement of the tourism product for the county leading to an increase in tourist numbers and increased economic activity. Developments within the county include Castlecomer Demesne, Woodstock Gardens, the River Nore Walking Route and Mount Juliet Estate amongst others.

Objectives:

4D To deliver and implement the 6 projects associated with the Medieval Mile proposals during the lifetime of the Plan 2014 – 2020 for the city and county.

4E To continue the development of major flagship tourism projects within the county to enhance the tourism product for the county.

⁶¹ Fáilte Ireland, *Destination South-East A Strategic Plan and Work Programme 2011-2013*, March 2011

4.4.5 Life Sciences including Pharma with specific focus on Belview

Kilkenny County Council, the IDA, and the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government have invested over €13m in water infrastructure in the Belview strategic development zone. In addition to this there is significant reserved capacity in the waste water treatment plant serving Waterford city which is located at Belview.

This has provided a fully serviced site and surrounding area primed for strategic development and foreign direct investment. The Belview area became the site of choice for an investment of €150m by the multinational food company Glanbia in its planned expansion for increased milk supply post 2015. Work has commenced on the project in Belview.

The economic strategy outlined above was adopted by both local authorities in June 2010.

4.5 County Development Board Strategy

Through the County Development Board (CDB) each Planning Authority 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 Kilkenny strategy was prepared in 2002 and was revised and updated in 2005 and again in 2010. Regard was had to the strategy in the preparation of this Development Plan.

4.6 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. The four District Towns also provide an important role in driving development within the county.

4.6.1 Kilkenny City

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

- The administrative capital of the County;
- A reasonably sized city and environs with population of 24,423 (in 2011)
- Designated as a Hub under the National Spatial Strategy;
- Motorway connections to Dublin, Waterford and Belview Port.
- Containing excellent infrastructure in terms of roads, rail, airports and seaports – only 120 km from Dublin airport and 45 km from the port facilities at Belview in South Kilkenny and the South East Regional Airport at Waterford;
- Excellent social and leisure amenities with good quality urban and natural environment;

- Proximity to various third-level colleges in the south-east and developing third level connections with Waterford and Carlow Institutes of Technology and continued development of outreach facilities from NUI Maynooth.

Objective:

4F To ensure that an adequate quantity and range of land is available for enterprise development and that the appropriate infrastructure is provided.

4.6.2 Belview Port

The Belview Port area is located approximately 5km downstream of Waterford City in the River Suir estuary. 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 PLUTS document identifies Belview as one of four key locations for future employment location for Waterford City.

The port has excellent road connections to the national motorway network via the N29 and N25 routes and has benefited significantly in terms of access through the provision of the Waterford Bypass and onward connections via the M9 motorway.

A Local Area Plan was prepared by the Planning Authority in 2009 for the Ferrybank/Belview area which is a detailed plan for the area. This local area plan will be reviewed in 2015.

While broadband is available in the Belview Port Area it is not of sufficient quality to support modern day industrial requirements. The local authority has advanced a proposal to deliver high speed broadband to the area.

Following on from the investment by Glanbia, it may be possible to deliver a natural gas supply to the Belview area. The local authority will fully support the provision of natural gas to the port area and will proactively assist the statutory undertaker if and when required.

Objectives:

4G To deliver high speed broadband to the Belview port area within the lifetime of the Plan.

4H To assist in the provision of natural gas supply to the port area within the life time of the plan

- 4I To review the Ferrybank Belview Local Area Plan in 2015 continuing with the policy of partnership with the local community.**

4.6.3 District Towns

The District Towns perform an important role in driving development in the County and have much potential that can be capitalised upon. Indigenous industry and SME's are important to these areas. Their strengths lie in their capacity to accommodate employment, residential and other functions on the basis of their comparative advantage in terms of lower costs and a quality of life which is attractive to many people.

Each district town (Callan, Castlecomer, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown) has a statutory local area plan which was adopted in 2009. These plans will be reviewed again in 2015. See also Sections 3.3.4 (Core Strategy) and 4.8.3 (Retail).

Objectives:

- 4J To ensure the sustainable development of the District towns in the County to achieve their target populations and enhance their capacity to attract new investment in employment, services and public transport for the benefit of their own populations and that of their rural hinterlands.**
- 4K To promote a diverse and sustainable local economy through the designation of sufficient lands for employment related uses, including facilities, to promote SME growth through the local area plans for the District towns.**
- 4L To review the local area plans for the District towns in 2015 following the adoption of the county development plan.**

4.6.4 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.

4.7 Retail Strategy

Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Borough Council adopted the first Kilkenny City and County Retail Strategy in 2002. There have a number of reviews of the strategy since then (in 2005 and again in 2008). The 2008 strategy was adopted prior to the economic collapse which occurred in September of that year.

The 2008 strategy operated in a set of economic circumstances where prospects for economic growth, disposable incomes and population growth are lower than anticipated in 2007/2008 when the strategy was prepared.

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
- 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

The objective of the review was to ensure that the requirements of the [Retail Planning Guidelines](#)⁶² 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.

4.7.1 Overview of Progress

Since the adoption of the 2008 Retail Strategy, developments in retailing in the city and county have included the development of discount retailers in four sites within Kilkenny City and environs, and in Callan. The Ferrybank shopping centre has been completed but is un-opened.

In general the convenience offer of the city and county has been improved during the period of the last plan. McDonagh Junction shopping centre has been trading and established itself since

⁶² Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, [Guidelines for Planning Authorities, Retail Planning](#), 2012

late 2007 and it has offered additional comparison and convenience retailing to Kilkenny City & Environs in a high quality setting.

4.7.2 County Retail Hierarchy

Following a review of the retail hierarchy in the 2008 strategy against the factors and influences that have changed since the adoption of the 2008 strategy the following hierarchy is proposed.

Level/Retail Function	Centre
Level 1 Major Town Centre/County Town	Kilkenny City & Environs
Level 2 District Centre	Ferrybank (part of Waterford environs)
Level 3 District/sub county town	Callan Thomastown Castlecomer Graigenamanagh
Level 4 Neighbourhood Centre	As designated for Kilkenny City & Environs (Newpark, Loughboy, Loughmacask, Western Environs) and Ferrybank/Belview area in the Environs of Waterford City
Level 5 Small Town/village centre/Rural Area	Various

The modifications are that the level 3 designation is simplified into one District/sub county town category to cater for all of the district towns in the county and the designation of the Ferrybank shopping centre as a district centre. This hierarchy is consistent with the core strategy and the [Retail Planning Guidelines](#).

4.7.3 Core Retail Area

The review of the main centres within the county confirms that the Core Retail Area remains relevant only to Kilkenny City Centre and that the four District Towns are of insufficient scale to warrant such an approach. It is considered that the approach for the development of these towns should be in keeping with the scale and character of existing development and guided by the provisions of the [Retail Planning Guidelines](#) and the relevant Local Area Plan. This will be reviewed again during the life of the plan having regard to the performance of the District Towns over time.

The core retail area for Kilkenny City Centre and the 400metre edge of centre boundary are shown in Figure 4.1. The core retail area comprises the following streets: High Street including Market Cross Shopping Centre, Rose Inn Street, and St Kieran's Street.

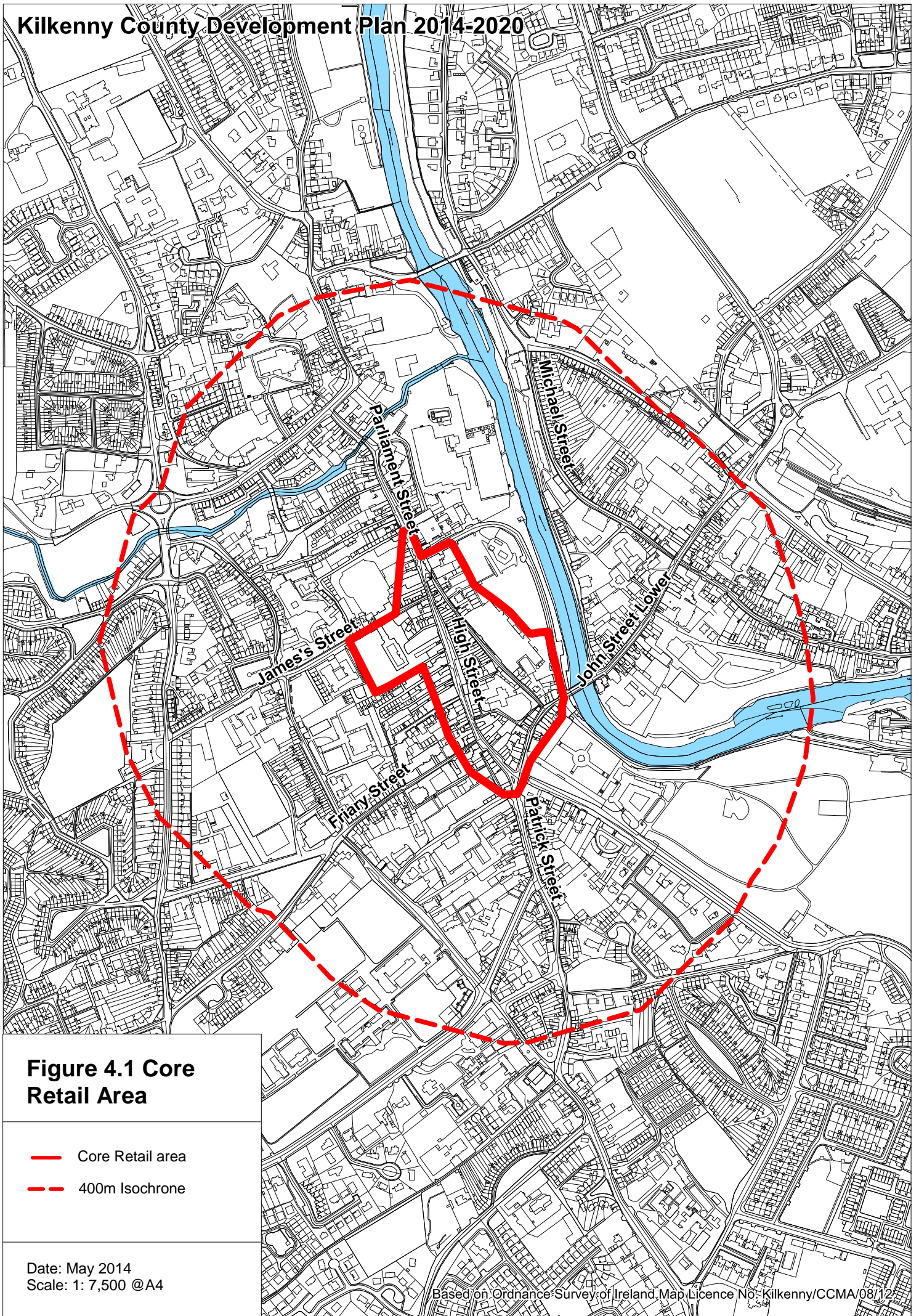


Figure 4.1 Core Retail Area

- Core Retail area
- - - 400m Isochrone

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 7,500 @A4

The review confirms that the existing core retail area should be retained in the best interests of the retail future of the city centre and the city and county as a whole.

Key considerations in arriving at this conclusion include:

- The larger the defined core retail 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.

4.7.4 Broad Assessment of Additional Retail Floorspace

This review covers the period 2014 to 2020 and in spatial planning terms takes a longer term view beyond the 2020 horizon of the plan period. The capacity assessment itself does not go beyond the 2020 timeframe due to the volatility and uncertainty of the economic climate, the difficulty in reliably projecting economic trends into the future and the need for periodic reviews of the strategy to take account of revised national and regional population figures and changing economic circumstances.

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 broad assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace is provided by projecting the future population changes and the growth in consumer spending. This strategy takes account of the proposed changes to the population over the plan period, updated information on expenditure, retail floorspace, extant planning permissions and the findings of the 2010 household and shopper surveys.

The estimates are intended to provide broad guidance as to the potential additional quantum of convenience and comparison floorspace provision. It is intended that the figures are not treated in an overly prescriptive manner are not intended to inhibit competition in the market place.

The key inputs and outputs to the capacity assessment are a derivation of the steps below⁶³:

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

⁶³ The detailed calculations and methodology for calculating the broad assessment of retail floor space is contained in Appendix A

Step 6: Capacity Potential

The following broad assumptions were made in calculating the capacity assessment. Since 2008 disposable incomes have fallen and both direct and indirect taxes have and will affect disposable income into the immediate future. Taking this into account and reviewing the expected growth in the economy in the short to medium term it has been decided to take a conservative view in relation to expenditure growth per capita.

It is assumed that expenditure growth in convenience spend will be zero between 2013 and 2015. This is because most households' requirements in respect of convenience products have been largely satisfied and because of the national budgetary corrections. It is also assumed that expenditure growth in comparison spend will be zero between 2013 and 2015 as the austerity measures will last until the 2015 national budget with further money being taken from the economy in addition to the personal and indirect taxes already imposed such as property tax, water charges etc. prior to 2013.

The Central Bank of Ireland ([2013 Quarterly bulletin](#)⁶⁴) predicts a fall in consumer spending of 0.4% this year (2013) and a rise of 0.2% next year (2014). The ERSI in its [Quarterly Economic Commentary](#) of Winter 2012⁶⁵ sees domestic demand contracting further due to continued fiscal adjustment and deleveraging. From 2015 onwards it is anticipated that there will be modest growth in the national economy of the order of 2 – 3 per cent per annum.

From 2015 to 2020 therefore it is assumed that growth in convenience expenditure will be 0.5% per annum and 1.5% in comparison spend.

For 2014 it is assumed that the inflows and outflows remained the same as at 2010. From 2015 onwards it is assumed that convenience inflows and outflows will remain the same as at present as there is no proposal to bring forward a significant convenience proposal for the city or county.

Based on these assumptions the available per capita expenditure is predicted as follows:

Table 4.2: Projected Expenditure per Capita		
	Convenience	Comparison
2012	3992	3312
2015	3992	3312
2020	4092	3567

Source: Capacity Assessment, Appendix A

Total Available Expenditure

This is calculated by multiplying the population by the expenditure per capita for each category.

⁶⁴ Central Bank of Ireland, Q1 Central Bank Quarterly Bulletin, January 13

⁶⁵ ESRI, [Quarterly Economic Commentary](#), Winter 2012

Population

The population estimates for the county are as follows using the Regional Planning Guideline targets, adjusted to take account of the CSO 2011 Census of population.

	2011 (actual)	2012	2014	2020
County Population	95,419	96,873	99,781	109,802

Source: Population projections are taken from Chapter 2 of this plan.

Therefore the total available expenditure for the county is as follows:

Year	Total
2012	€386.71m
2014	€398.32m
2020	€449.30m

Different levels of turnover will apply to comparison goods such as clothing and footwear and smaller household durables than would apply to bulky household goods sold in retail warehouses. Retail warehouses have a distinct function and are generally located outside of a city or town centre. It is necessary to split the available comparison expenditure between bulky and non-bulky comparison goods.

Having regard to the [Household Budget Survey](#)⁶⁶ and experience elsewhere in this respect, it is estimated that approximately 20% of comparison expenditure will be accounted for by bulky household goods in retail warehouse type premises. Based on this 20% proportion, the total available comparison expenditure split between bulky and non-bulky goods is set out below.

Year	Bulky Goods	Comparison excl. bulky goods
2012	€64.17m	€256.67m
2014	€66.10m	€264.37m
2020	€78.23m	€312.93m

To obtain the indicative floorspace figures, the surplus of expenditure that can maintain additional retail floorspace within the county is obtained by subtracting the turnover of existing convenience, comparison and bulky goods expenditure (for 2012) from the total available expenditure projected forward to 2014 and 2020.

⁶⁶ CSO, [Household Budget Survey](#), 2012

In order to calculate the requirements for additional retail floorspace within the County, the turnover per sq. m. of new retail floorspace is divided by the surplus spend available set out above⁶⁷.

Table 4.6: Future Indicative Floorspace Requirements			
	2012	2014	2020
Convenience	7040m ²	7701m ²	10,709m ²
Comparison	13,136m ²	14,415m ²	22,392m ²
Bulky Goods	- 6820m ²	-5992m ²	-1,400m ²

The table above shows that there is potential for additional convenience and comparison floorspace in the county in the period between 2014 and 2020. However these figures do not take into account extant permissions since 2010 which have been delivered or will be delivered during the next plan period.

Convenience

Since the compiling of the floorspace figures used in this analysis the following significant convenience retailing space has been granted in the City and Environs of Kilkenny.

- Two Aldi discount stores with 1,125m² and 1,144m² of net retail space.
- A discount store for Lidl was granted with 1,274m² of net retail space.

These are all trading and the total net retail space provided is 3,543m².

- A further Aldi store of 990m² net retail area is under construction in Callan and will open in 2013.

A further point to note is that Ferrybank District centre comprises 4,577m² of granted convenience floorspace and has not yet opened. It is assumed that the Ferrybank shopping centre will not open until 2014 at the earliest.

Comparison

Since the floorspace survey was carried out in 2010 no significant comparison floorspace has been granted permission within the county. At that time extant floorspace was permitted at the Kilkenny Retail Park. This, plus vacant space totalled 2991m² for bulky goods. MacDonagh Junction had 1,549m² of vacant floorspace and in Ferrybank 4,341m² was constructed and is anticipated will not trade before 2014.

It is assumed that the Kilkenny Retail Park floorspace will trade post 2014. Factoring these figures into the derived figures, as set out in Table 4.6, gives a final adjusted floor space requirement.

⁶⁷ See detailed capacity assessment in Appendix A

	2012	2014	2020
Convenience	3,497m ²	-1,409m ²	1,599m ²
Comparison	11,587m ²	8,525m ²	16,502m ²
Bulky Goods	- 6820m ²	-5992m ²	-4391m ²

It must be borne in mind that these figures are produced on the basis of population targets set out in the [South East Regional Planning Guidelines](#) for 2016 and 2020, adjusted to take account of the 2011 Census. The 2011 Census showed that the county, while performing above the national average in terms of population growth, did not reach the target as set out in the [South East Regional Planning Guidelines](#) for 2011.

Table 4.7 indicates a demand at present for an additional 3,497m² of convenience retail space within the county, even allowing for the opening within the last two years of a number of discount retailers within the city and environs.

A further discount retail unit will open in 2013 in Callan, and assuming the Ferrybank shopping centre opens in 2014, this uses up a substantial portion of the projected convenience capacity assessment up to 2020. However capacity assessment is only one element of the criteria used to assessment significant retail proposals. See Section 4.9.2 below.

The effect on capacity when the Ferrybank shopping centre is included is of concern. It has the potential to impact on the development of additional significant convenience floorspace being developed over the period of the strategy.

Having regard to the population growth within the City and Environs and the shopping patterns within the county as evidenced by the household and shoppers surveys, it is considered that there is room for additional convenience capacity within Kilkenny City and environs during the plan period notwithstanding the build out capacity of the Ferrybank shopping centre.

The extent of that floorspace would need to be verified and justified through any planning application by means of a detail retail impact statement.

With regard to comparison, Table 4.7 illustrates that there is capacity for additional comparison floorspace from now until 2020.

The bulky goods figures justify the rationale of not allowing further retail warehousing parks within the Environs of the city during the last plan period 2008 – 2014. It is considered reasonable to continue that policy for the period 2014 – 2020 in the light of the figures in this revised strategy.

4.8 Review of Retail Potential

4.8.1 Kilkenny City & Environs

During the 2008 – 2014 plan period, the main focus for retail development in the City & Environs has been the delivery of additional convenience floorspace in the form of discount retailers (Aldi and Lidl). Each of these retailers has now a presence in and around the neighbourhood centres of Newpark and Loughboy. As before, in reviewing the potential of the City and its environs the strategy is guided by the sequential approach. The city can be divided into three areas as follows:

- City Centre (core retail area)
- Edge of Centre
- Out of centre

4.8.1.1 City Centre

The review confirms that there are a limited number of sites with retail potential within the existing core retail area. One potential building within the core area is the Kilkenny Arcade which has a floor area of 1915m² with access from High Street linking through to James' Street. This is the only partially vacant site of notable size within the core retail area. Permission has recently been granted by An Bord Pleanála for a gaming arcade at this location.

In addition to this it is noted:

- There are no other 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.

4.8.1.2 Edge of Centre

In the 2008 – 2014 Development Plan the former Kilkenny Mart site was identified as providing the basis for the second phase expansion of the city centre. Since that time, another significant site has emerged for redevelopment. The drinks company Diageo has taken a decision to terminate brewing at the former Smithwick's brewery site adjacent to the Rivers Nore and Breaghagh. The site is approximately 5.4ha in extent with existing vehicular access from Irishtown and Bateman Quay.

In December 2011 permission was granted by An Bord Pleanála for the construction of the Central Access Scheme which dissects the Smithwick's site. It is anticipated that brewing will cease on the site at the end of 2013 and that Kilkenny Local Authorities will take possession of the land in 2014 following decommissioning of the site. Kilkenny local authorities already own 0.8ha of land car parking along Bateman Quay which is adjacent to the brewery site and immediately adjacent to the core retail area.

The former Kilkenny Mart site is 5.5ha in extent and has been vacant since 2007. An Bord Pleanála refused permission for a substantial mixed use development on the site in 2007. The site is dissected by the Central Access scheme.

Effectively therefore, there are two edge of centre sites located in the City which could accommodate mixed use expansion.

Having regard to the sequential approach to retail development, the potential for synergy between the Smithwick's site and the existing retail core area, the potential to deliver other planning objectives linked to the public realm and tourism and the potential contribution of the Smithwick's site to the vitality and vibrancy of the city centre area generally, it is considered that the Smithwick's site should be the focus for retail expansion in the city and environs over the plan period. This strategy will ensure both consolidation and expansion of the city centre, the Bateman Quay area and the Smithwick's site over the short, medium and long terms.

There are constraints to the Smithwick's lands such as potential flooding and heritage issues. These will be major considerations and how to harness and maximise the potential of the site and the heritage assets will require an in-depth examination and analysis.

Objective:

4M The Local Authority will prepare an urban framework document to assist in the development of the Smithwick's site and adjacent lands including lands along Bateman Quay.

4.8.1.3 Out of Centre

There will be a general presumption against large out-of-centre retail development, in particular those located adjacent or close to existing, new or planned national roads/motorways. It is recognised in the [Retail Planning Guidelines](#) that in general retail warehouses do not fit easily into town centres given their size requirements and the need for good car parking facilities. The Smithlands (Kilkenny Retail Park) and Ormond Retail parks were identified as locations for retail warehousing. The 2008 – 2014 Retail Strategy indicated that no further retail warehousing parks should be developed in and around the City. Having reviewed the indicative floorspace capacity and the amount of vacant retail warehousing space in and around the City and Environs it is considered reasonable to continue that policy for the period of the new plan as:

- 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 are concerns that the retail warehousing floorspace is competing with the comparison offers of the City Centre and the District Towns.
- The indication in the indicative capacity assessment of the over-provision of retail floorspace in the City and county.
- The level of vacancy in the existing retail warehousing parks.

Objective:

4N No further retail parks will be granted permission in and around the City and Environs over the period 2014 – 2020. In this regard, a cautious approach will be taken regarding further such developments over the period of the strategy.

4.8.2 Ferrybank/Belview (Waterford City Environs)

The Ferrybank shopping centre was completed during the 2008 – 2014 Development Plan period. However it remains unopened for retail use. It has permitted convenience floor space of 4,577m² and comparison floorspace of 4,341m². It also has the potential to deliver a range of retail and non-retail service functions (e.g. banks, post office, local offices, restaurants, public houses, community and cultural facilities) for the community at a level consistent with the function of that centre in the Ferrybank/Belview area of the Waterford Gateway within County Kilkenny.

In 2012 Kilkenny County Council developed a new area office and branch library within the centre. The Ferrybank shopping centre is a district centre within the retail hierarchy of the county. It is also designated as a district centre within the retail strategy of Waterford City Council.

The [Retail Planning Guidelines](#) requires that for the Waterford strategy area, that the local authorities of Waterford City and County with Wexford, Kilkenny and Tipperary prepare a joint or multi-authority retail strategy. With a view to securing sustainable retailing within the region and, more particularly within the Gateway Spatial Area, Waterford City Council has committed to engaging with the Local Authorities of Counties Waterford, Kilkenny, Tipperary and Wexford with a view to preparing a Joint Retail Strategy for the Gateway.

Objective:

4O To engage with the other relevant local authorities within the region in the preparation of a joint retail strategy for the greater Waterford City area.

4.8.3 The District Towns

The District towns are placed at level 3 within the County hierarchy. They have populations in the range from 1,500 to 2,300 approximately. They are centres that perform an important role in serving the employment, retail and community needs of their surrounding hinterland. Each of the district towns has a statutory local area plan. See also Sections 3.3.4 (Core Strategy) and 4.6.3 (Economic Development).

Objective:

4P To sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the role and potential of the four District Towns.

4.9 Spatial Distribution of New Retail Development

The City and County Retail Strategy, in accordance with the [Retail Planning Guidelines](#), 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, recognising Kilkenny City in its role as a Hub performing an important retailing function.

Level 2: District Centre: To perform an important function for the local community with a good range of convenience shopping and middle order comparison with a range of non-retail services such as banks, library, offices, public houses, restaurants serving the local community.

Level 3: District towns: District Towns play an important role within the county's retail hierarchy. They provide convenience shopping, alongside a level of comparison shopping, serving the population of the immediate catchment of the town and surrounding areas such as small scale hardware, retail pharmacies and clothes shops.

Level 4: Neighbourhood centres: Predominantly additional convenience but also post offices and small scale comparison such as pharmacies, hardware etc. serving the local neighbourhood.

Level 5: Small town/village centre/rural area: village stores/post offices in rural areas.

Objectives:

- 4Q To improve convenience market share retained within the county to 80% post 2020⁶⁸**
- 4R To improve comparison market share retained within the county to 75% post 2020**
- 4S To increase convenience trade draw from 8% to 15% post 2020**
- 4T To maintain comparison trade draw at 58% post 2020**

4.9.1.1 Strategic Guidance on Location

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

- Current and pending strategic infrastructure investment;
- Promoting city/town centre vitality through a sequential approach to development,
- Securing competitiveness in the retail sector by actively enabling good quality development proposals to come forward in suitable locations,
- Facilitating a shift towards increased access to retailing by public transport, cycling and walking in accordance with the Smarter Travel strategy,
- Ensuring that retail development is plan led,
- Delivering quality urban design outcomes,
- Ensuring that the current strength and importance of Kilkenny City and Environs in County, Regional and national shopping patterns is sustained and enhanced,
- That the outflows of both convenience and comparison expenditure are redressed over time by providing the means to improve the attractiveness of the City and County's retail offer for residents of the City and County,
- That the decline in inflows of convenience expenditure are addressed through the enhancement of the City and County's convenience offer,
- That the increasing inflows of comparison expenditure from visitors to the County from neighbouring counties and further afield are sustained and enhanced,
- The vitality and viability of the District Towns and the measures required to sustain and enhance this;
- The role of retail warehousing in the City's retail offer.

4.9.2 Criteria for Assessing Future Retail Proposals

All applications for significant retail development should be assessed against a range of criteria.

Kilkenny City and its Environs/Ferrybank District Centre/Waterford City Environs: Developments of 1,000m² (gross) convenience and 2,000m² (gross) comparison located outside the core retail area of the city or District Centre will be tested by the criteria.

⁶⁸ Not taken into account in the capacity assessment. These are targets to be achieved should proposals come forward for significant retail development that would affect inflow and outflow patterns.

District Towns/Other Settlements: Proposals for 500 m² (net) convenience and comparison developments should be considered against the criteria.

4.9.2.1 Sequential Approach

The overarching objective of the [Retail Planning Guidelines](#) is to enhance the vitality and viability of city and town centres in all their functions through sequential development. Sequential development means that:

1. The overall preferred location for new retail development is within city and town centres. Retail development may also be appropriate within District Centres identified in the settlement hierarchy at a scale appropriate to the needs of the area. and
2. Subject to the requirements below, only where the applicant can demonstrate and the planning authority is satisfied, that there are no sites or potential sites within a city, town centre or designated district centre should an edge-of-centre site be considered. In addition, only in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that there are no sites or potential sites available either within the centre or on the edge of these centres should an out-of-centre site be considered.

In addition to the sequential test, 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 baseline information and capacity/impact assessment is fit for purpose and transparent;
- Support for the long term strategy for city/town centre as established in the Retail Strategy/Development Plan
- The potential to increase employment opportunities and promote economic regeneration;
- The potential to increase competition within the area and thereby attract further consumers to the area;
- Respond to consumer demand for its retail offering and not diminish the range of activities and services that an urban centre can support;
- Cause an adverse impact on one or more city/town centres, either singly or cumulatively with recent development or other outstanding planning permissions sufficient to undermine the vitality or viability of the city/town centre or its wider function in the promotion and encouragement of the arts, culture, leisure, public realm function of the town centre critical to the economic and social life of the community;

- Cause an increase in the number of vacant properties in the primary area that is likely to persist in the long term;
- How a shift towards increased access to retailing by public transport, cycling and walking in accordance with the Smarter Travel strategy is facilitated, so that the proposal is easily accessible by all sections of society; and /or links effectively with the town centre/core retail area so that there is likely to be commercial synergy.
- The contribution of the development towards site or area regeneration and its contribution in terms of urban design
- The role of the development in improving the competitiveness and retail offer of the city against other competing centres.

4.10 Monitoring & Review

This retail strategy is designed to ensure that the Development Plan plays a key role in ensuring competitiveness in the retail sector advancing choice for the consumer while promoting and supporting the vitality and viability of the city centre and town centres in the county and contributing to a high standard of urban design and encouraging a greater use of sustainable transport. The retail sector is one of the most dynamic sectors of the economy and trends, influences and information change over time. To ensure that the Strategy and its policies remain valid and up-to-date, the Councils will:

- Carry out annual monitoring of expenditure and population forecasts and review strategy if required.
- 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 2016.
- Update the household and shopper survey data at the next review.

5 Housing and Community

Strategic Aim: To integrate the planning and sustainable development of the county with regard to the housing, social, community and cultural requirements of the county and its population.

5.1 Introduction

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.

5.2 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 2014 - 2020 for both Kilkenny Borough and County Councils. This Strategy is incorporated into the Development Plan in Appendix B.

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

- A total of 3,570 new households are required to meet the population targets set for County Kilkenny in the [Regional Planning Guidelines](#) for the period 2014 to 2020.
- The existing local authority waiting list is c.2,852⁶⁹
- 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.
- The availability of zoned land is not expected to act as a constraint over the course of the Development Plan 2014 – 2020

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.

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 Housing Strategy also identified that there will be a requirement for a greater mix of unit types due to an increase in the number of single persons requiring accommodation.

The following preferred options are available to satisfy the requirements of the housing strategy:

- The payment of a monetary contribution
- The transfer of a portion of the site subject to the planning application,
- The transfer of completed dwellings elsewhere,

⁶⁹ Housing Section, March 2013.

- 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 the required number of completed dwellings on the site,
- The transfer of land at another location,

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 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,

- 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.
- Travellers Accommodation programme

5.3 Travellers

The Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) 2010-2013 which was adopted by Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Borough Council in January and February 2009 respectively outlines the key strategic areas for provision of Traveller accommodation.

A review of the programme has commenced in accordance with Section 17 (1) (a) of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998.

Objectives:

- 5A To implement the Housing Strategy contained in Appendix B.**
- 5B 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 housing.**
- 5C To require that a mixture of residential unit types and sizes are developed to reasonably match the requirements of different categories of households within the city and county.**
- 5D Complete the review of the Traveller Accommodation programme.**
- 5E To implement the Kilkenny Travellers Horse project**
- 5F To redevelop the Wetlands halting site as a group housing scheme.**
- 5G To implement the provisions of the Traveller Accommodation programme**

5.4 Residential Development

The settlement hierarchy as set out in Chapter 3 outlines the range of settlements within the county. 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.

In continuing to facilitate an increase in the number of houses the Council must ensure that it achieves quality in terms of single rural houses as well as quality in urban areas of the county. It must also ensure that there is choice in terms of location and the tenures available.

Designers of single houses are referred to the [County Kilkenny Rural Design Guide](#) prepared and published by the Planning Department.

Quality in the context of urban developments means the development of a high quality built environment through the promotion of high quality urban design. The Council will have regard to and apply the [Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas](#) and its companion document [Urban Design Manual: A best practice guide](#)⁷⁰, in assessing and dealing with housing developments. (See section 12.1 for detailed requirements)

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. Please refer to Chapter 12 for detailed residential design guidance.

5.5 Universal Design

People of diverse abilities should be able to use buildings and places comfortably and safely, as far as possible without special assistance. People should be able to find their way easily, understand how to use building facilities such as intercoms or lifts, and know where pedestrian facilities are, and know where they may encounter traffic.

Given the wide diversity of the population, a universal design approach, which caters for the broadest range of users from the outset, can result in buildings and places that can be used and enjoyed by everyone. That approach eliminates or reduces the need for expensive changes or retrofits to meet the needs of particular groups at a later stage.

In all development proposals it will be the policy of the Council to promote Universal Design and Lifetime Housing in accordance with best practice and the policies and principles contained in [Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach](#)⁷¹ and [Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas](#) and its companion document [Urban Design Manual: A best practice guide](#).

⁷⁰ Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, [Urban Design Manual: A best practice guide](#), 2009

⁷¹ National Disability Authority, [Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach](#), 2012

5.6 Unfinished Estates

In 2011, Kilkenny County Council set up a dedicated team to focus on the resolution of unfinished estates in its functional area. The Council has used a range of powers available to it under building control, dangerous Places/structures, planning and other relevant legislation in an integrated way and has worked proactively with developers, financial institutions/NAMA and local communities in securing the satisfactory resolution of unfinished housing developments. The Council will assess and monitor unfinished developments and will play a key role in the co-ordination of Site Resolution Plans with other key stakeholders. The Council will have regard to [Managing and Resolving Unfinished Housing Developments - Guidance Manual](#)⁷², in particular sections 7.1 and 7.2.

5.7 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 and burial grounds.

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 Council will reserve sites for community facilities as appropriate and seek to remedy deficiencies in existing developed areas. The Council will locate community facilities within existing settlements and where population levels warrant a particular service, and will liaise with community groups and to assist community initiatives.

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. The Council will 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.

5.8 Education & Childcare

5.8.1 Childcare Facilities

The provision of childcare and early education facilities is recognised as a strategic piece of social infrastructure required to enhance children's early learning experiences and enable people to participate more fully in society, particularly in accessing employment, education and

⁷² Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, [Managing and Resolving Unfinished Housing Developments - Guidance Manual](#), 2011

social networks. National policy on childcare facilities is set out in [Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#)⁷³. Government planning policy on childcare is to improve the quality of childcare services for the community. The primary role of the Planning Authority is to facilitate childcare facilities in appropriate locations to high development standards.

The Government's ten year framework [Towards 2016](#)⁷⁴ aims to ensure that every family should be able to access childcare services which are appropriate to the circumstances and needs of their children. The [National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016](#)⁷⁵ sets out a number of goals for early childhood development which includes the provision of income supports and an increase in the provision of childcare facilities by 100,000 to 2016. The [National Strategic Plan 2011-2013 \(Early Childhood Care and Education Programmes\)](#) also includes key objectives to develop childcare and early education services and to consolidate investment in the childcare sector. With the current economic situation it will be important to ensure that capital investment is targeted to need. The [National Strategic Plan](#) aims to ensure this through the development of a national database which identifies childcare provision by area and type, using indicators such as population, income demographics and projected birth rates to highlight both gaps and over-supply in this sector.

Childcare provision in the city and county grew significantly over the last decade with the support of government investment. More recently, however, the increase in unemployment levels has led to a decrease in the demand for full day care services. As a result, any available funding is now being targeted at quality improvement in terms of provision and upgrading existing facilities.

The current [National Strategic Plan for Early childhood Care and Education programmes 2011-2013](#) is coming to a close and a new strategy is in process with expected completion in July 2013. This will provide the over-arching policy framework for the provision of childcare and early education in the city and county. Local annual plans are developed based on the priorities of the national strategy.

Kilkenny Local Authorities has worked with Kilkenny County Childcare Committee, through its role on the County Development Board, to improve the quality, provision and affordability of childcare in the city and county. Kilkenny County Council will continue to work with the County Childcare Committee in responding to the changing needs of society in terms of childcare demand and services under the new structures of the Socio-Economic Committee.

The Planning Authority will ensure that any new facilities are suitably located, are of a high quality and are inclusive of all children, including children with disabilities. Developers are encouraged to liaise with the County Childcare Committee in advance of preparing planning applications in order to ascertain the local requirements. In so far as possible, the provision of childcare and early childhood education facilities should be adjacent to, or co-located with, other facilities required for other community use.

⁷³ Department of Environment and Local Government, *Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, 2001.

⁷⁴ Department of the Taoiseach, *Towards 2016*

⁷⁵ The Office for Social Inclusion, [National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016](#), 2007

Objective:

- 5H The Council will facilitate the provision of childcare and early childhood education 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.**

The Council will assess, in conjunction with the Kilkenny County Childcare Committee and the new Socio-Economic Committee, the continuing needs around childcare and related facilities and review progress on the provision of same during the period of this Plan.

5.8.1.1 Childcare Development Management standards

The Councils will implement the [Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#). 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 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 comply with the [Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#), Child Care (Pre-School Services)(No. 2) Regulations 2006 and the Child Care (Pre-School Services) (No2) (Amendment) Regulations 2006 and We Like This Place - Guidelines for Best Practice in the Design of Childcare Facilities (2005) (or any such other relevant standards and legislation that may be enacted) and 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 arrangements for both parents and staff.

5.8.2 Primary, Post Primary & Third Level Education

5.8.2.1 Primary & Post-Primary Schools

Census 2011 results show that the County's level the population increased by 8.98 % to 95,419 persons, which was an increase of 7,861 since 2006. It is notable that persons in the 0-14 age cohorts has also increased, which has implications for the need for educational facilities.

The Minister for Education and Skills announced significant proposed capital investment in educational facilities in January 2012⁷⁶; whilst no new schools have been identified for construction in Kilkenny city or county within this period, several schools have been identified for expansion.

Decisions on the future requirements for educational facilities are primarily a matter for the Educational Authorities. However, the [Provision of Schools and the Planning System, A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities](#)⁷⁷ outlines that the planning system plays a critical role in anticipating future development and co-coordinating the provision of the essential supporting infrastructure such as transport, water services, schools, amenity and community facilities.

The primary role of the Council is to reserve sufficient land within the identified development centres to meet likely future demands for community facilities including education. The provision of educational facilities should be planned and implemented in concert with residential development. In accordance with [Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas](#) no significant residential development should proceed without an assessment of the capacity of existing schools or the provision of new school facilities in tandem with the development.

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.

Objective:

- 5I The Council will liaise with the Department of Education and Skills, and all providers of education, to assist where possible in the development of adequate education centres, and to identify and facilitate of suitable sites for new educational facilities.**

⁷⁶ Department of Education and Skills, Press Release 27 June 2011 <http://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2011-Press-Releases/PR11-06-27.html>

⁷⁷ Depts of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Education and Science, [Provision of Schools and the Planning System, A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities](#), 2008

5.8.2.2 Dual Use of School Buildings

Schools 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.

Where lands and buildings can be beneficially used by the community, the Council will promote such uses. Where new schools or community facilities are proposed, opportunities will be sought to ensure that they are designed in such a way as to facilitate multi-use of the buildings.

5.8.2.3 Third Level Education

The 2011 Census shows that 21% of persons aged 15 years and over in the county whose full time education has ceased had attained a third level qualification. This is slightly under that of the national average of 24.6%.

Work is complete on the provision of a 3rd/4th level Research and Innovation unit at St. Kieran's College (This is a joint venture between Kilkenny Local Authorities, Waterford Institute of Technology (Telecommunications Software & Systems Group or TSSG) and Carlow Institute of Technology. The centre focuses on next generation internet services and service innovation. The centre will be assisted by collaboration with the National University of Ireland Maynooth, (N.U.I.M.) and other 3rd level institutions, see Section 4.3.1).

St. Kieran's College Campus also incorporates an outreach campus of the National University of Ireland Maynooth.

Kildalton Agricultural and Horticultural College is located in Piltown in the south of the county. Kildalton is the largest agricultural college in the country. It is a leading provider of training in Equine Studies, Machinery, Agriculture and Horticulture.

A range of further education and training courses are also run in a number of Vocational Colleges throughout the county.

Objective:

- 5J To increase co-operation between Kilkenny Local Authorities and existing third level institutions and the proposed Technological University for the South East to support employment creation, innovation and lifelong learning.**

5.9 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.

Kilkenny Local Authorities are committed to the Agenda 21 process of building partnerships between local authorities and local development 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 Kilkenny Age Friendly County Initiative, Kilkenny Integration Forum as well as capital projects involving local community leadership. The Council will promote the development of social capital by providing opportunities for interaction, participation and the co-ordinated provision of public services.

[Putting People First: An Action Plan for Effective Local Government](#)⁷⁸ was published in October 2012. It sets out a vision for Local Government that it will be the main vehicle of governance and public service at local level leading economic, social and community development and representing citizens and local communities effectively and accountably. The actions it proposes in support of this vision include the establishment of a Socio-Economic Committee (SEC) in each City and County Council area with the responsibility for planning and oversight of all local and community development programmes. The SECs will have responsibility for developing a 5-year City and County local and community plan, encompassing all State and EU funded local and community development interventions. The enhanced alignment of local government and local development represents a notable change, towards an approach based on even greater collaboration. This also gives the opportunity to better target public funding and to avoid overlaps. The outcome sought is better area-based planning and better impacts from the various local and community development services and funding, for the benefit of citizens and communities.

While the main representation for the voluntary sector in County Kilkenny is through the Community and Voluntary Forum there are a number of fora operating that address specific issues including; the Older People's Forum, The Traveller Interagency Group, the Local Drugs Task Force, Kilkenny Integration Forum, and the Groups for Social Justice. It is envisioned under the new SEC structures that these fora will come together to form an expansion of the former Social Inclusion Measures Group that will be representative of the existing forums and groups operating within the County and City at community and county level.

Kilkenny Local Authorities will work with relevant organisations, through the new expanded Social Inclusion Measures Groups and/or the SEC and its key forums in the city and county, to facilitate the provision of public and social services in areas of identified need throughout the county and to advance social inclusion and development by developing the co-ordinated delivery of services and facilities in the city and county.

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

Objective:

5K To integrate the planning and sustainable development of the county with regard to the social, community and cultural requirements of the county and its population.

⁷⁸ Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, [Putting People First: An Action Plan for Effective Local Government](#), 2012

5.10 Social Integration

According to Census 2011, 13.5% of Ireland's population now identify themselves with ethnic groups with roots in other countries and whose cultures are quite different to that of the majority population; while a further 0.7% at least are re-affirming their distinct Traveller cultural identity. The corresponding figures for Kilkenny are a little lower at 9.4% and 0.5% respectively, but no less significant.

The Kilkenny Integration Forum was established in January 2010 as a broad forum of multiple stakeholders interested in promoting integration from a diverse range of different community and service provider backgrounds with the overall aim: 'To recognise diversity and promote intercultural harmony in County Kilkenny by providing opportunities for community, business and statutory sectors to interact regularly and support collaborative initiatives'.

Kilkenny Integration Forum, with the support of Kilkenny County Development Board (CDB) and The Integration Centre, coordinated the development of a long-term strategy to advance integration in County Kilkenny - [Kilkenny Integration Strategy 2013-2017](#)⁷⁹.

The strategy includes an Action Plan 2013-2017 which is centred on five broad thematic headings, which are derived from policy document parameters agreed at EU-level: (1) Employment and Economic Activity, (2) Education and Training, (3) Active Civic and Civil Participation, (4) Social Inclusion (engaging and interacting with service providers), (5) Social Inclusion (expressing culture and identity; addressing discrimination). Strategic aims and specific actions have been developed under each of the headings, with strategic partner agencies identified to help achieve these aims.

The Council will support the Kilkenny Integration Forum to achieve the aims and objectives set out in the Kilkenny Integration Strategy 2013-2017.

5.11 Library Service

Kilkenny County Library's mission statement is to provide a quality, accessible service which enhances the lives of the communities of Kilkenny, through the provision of a knowledge resource promoting imagination, lifelong learning and culture.

The role of the library as a community resource is to:

- Encourage a love of reading
- Educate and entertain, supporting lifelong learning and relaxation
- Inform and challenge, aiding informed life choices, critical thinking, active Citizenship and intellectual freedom
- Assist personal development
- Extend literacy and encourage the reluctant reader
- Develop a wider reading outlook
- Develop an audience and provide a source of inspiration and imagination for the Arts and Music
- Encourage economic activities and sustainable communities

⁷⁹ Kilkenny Integration Forum, [Kilkenny Integration Strategy 2013-2017](#)

- Promote accessibility and social inclusion through materials in different formats and reflecting community diversity
- Increase knowledge of local and other cultures and heritage
- Preserve and enhance the collective memory of Kilkenny City and County
- Enable and promote access and use of ICT and e-Government

The Library Service continues to address issues and areas identified in *Wider Horizons: The Library Development Plan 2009-2013* under the areas of: Access and Participation; Infrastructure; Information Technology; Libraries Collections and Information; Management and Staffing; and Marketing and Promotion.

Ferrybank Library opened in December 2012, bringing to fruition Kilkenny County Council's capital project priority of a permanent branch Library in the south of the county. This investment of over €1,000,000 in a state-of-the-art facility provides an important service for the south of the county. It incorporates Children's and Adult Services, a Teen Zone, a Community/Meeting room, eight public computers,

The proposed new City Library at County Hall in Kilkenny City will be a flagship building and accessible community resource for current and future generations, embracing new technologies and services. The proposed plans for the new City library include the provision of a public park through the opening up of the grounds of County Hall.

The Council will continue to improve the library service for all and to develop internal and external partnerships, resource sharing and 24/7 services.

Objective:

- 5L To progress and achieve the completion and opening of the new City Library at County Hall.**

5.12 Health

Healthcare and medical facilities are provided by public, private and voluntary agencies within Kilkenny City and County. The Health Service Executive is the primary organisation responsible for the delivery of health care and personal social services to the people of Kilkenny. 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 city and 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. 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.

The Health Service Executive's policy approach reflects a shift away from traditional hospital-based care towards more community-based care with increased emphasis on meeting people's needs at local level within primary care teams. The Department of Health and Children

published “The Primary Care Strategy” in 2001 and this promotes a team-based approach to service provision, designed to make available a fully integrated primary care service. A Primary Care Team is a team of health professionals who work closely together to meet the needs of the people living in the community. They provide a single point of contact to the health system for the person. Consequently, practices wishing to develop their premises are encouraged to provide a “one stop” primary health and community care service integrated into one building. One-stop primary care medical centres and GP practices will be encouraged at locations which are easily accessible to members of the wider community.

There are two primary health care centres in County Kilkenny – one in Kilkenny city and another in Callan. An additional six primary care teams operate throughout the county through a network of health centres working together.

Healthcare facilities may include health centres, day centres, community nursing units, family resource centres, nursing homes/convalescent homes, community residences, sheltered workshops, activation centres and residential facilities for children and adolescents. These facilities require locations which are integrated with new and existing communities and which are easily accessible.

5.12.1 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.

5.12.1.1 Development management standards

Nursing homes and residential care homes should be integrated wherever possible into the residential areas of towns and villages where residents and staff can avail of reasonable access to local services. The Council recognises that nursing homes should not only be provided in established urban areas but also in appropriate rural areas. In rural areas it is preferable that nursing homes be located within the existing network of smaller towns and villages within the county to serve rural demand.

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:

- Compliance with the standards as laid down in Health Act 2007 (Care and Welfare of Residents in Designated Centres for Older People) Regulations 2009 and the Health Act 2007 (Care and Welfare of Residents in Designated Centres for Older People) (Amendment) Regulations 2010 (or any such other relevant standards and legislation that may be enacted);
- The proximity to local services and facilities,
- The affect on the amenities of adjoining properties
- Whether such a use would not give rise to a traffic hazard
- Adequate visitor and employee car parking spaces and turning areas;
- Adequate access and turning areas for emergency vehicles;
- Adequate provision of private open space;
- Pedestrian linkages to existing social and community facilities within the settlement;

- Facilities to cater for a range of occupants ranging from those seeking semi-dependant living accommodation to those requiring a high level of care
- Whether the size and scale is appropriate to the area.

5.12.2 Hospitals

Kilkenny City and County is served by a number of hospitals. St. Luke's Hospital and Lourdes Orthopaedic Hospital, Kilcreene are the acute hospitals in Kilkenny. There are plans for an extension to St. Luke's General Hospital to include a new emergency department, a new medical assessment unit and a new day-services ward. The residents of the county also have access to hospitals in the surrounding counties such as Waterford Regional Hospital. There are two district hospitals operating in the county which primarily serve the needs of the elderly and also provide a step-down facility, and St Canice's Mental Health Hospital is located in Kilkenny City. In addition to public facilities private operators provide healthcare facilities throughout the county including Aut Even Private General hospital.

The Council will facilitate the development and expansion of health and medical care facilities in the city and county which meet the needs of and are easily accessible to local service users throughout the city and county, subject to normal planning and environmental criteria and the development management standards.

5.13 Positive Ageing

Kilkenny Local Authorities has been actively engaged in the Age Friendly County Initiative since 2010. Kilkenny is the second County in Ireland to become an Age Friendly County. The concept of an Age Friendly Community is linked to an initiative of the World Health Organisation started in 2007. The Age-Friendly County initiative seeks to engage older people and their communities in making their communities better, healthier and safer places for older people to live and thrive.

Based on county-wide consultation the [Kilkenny Age Friendly County Strategy](#)⁸⁰ was developed by the Age Friendly Alliance; the vision of the strategy states that '*People of all ages benefit when communities are designed to be age-friendly, and where older people live life to their greatest potential [and] Older people's talents, life experience and wisdom are valued and tapped into*'.⁸¹ The strategy covers seven specific areas for action to benefit older people - (1) Respect and Social Inclusion and Social Participation, (2) Transport, (3) Home, (4) Communication and Information, (5) Community Support and Health Services, (6) Outdoor Spaces, Physical Environment and Public Services and (7) Civic Participation and Employment. The Older People's Forum, which was established as part of the Kilkenny Age Friendly County Programme, have been actively involved to ensure the implementation of actions outlined in the Strategy and have raised issues as part of the consultation process for this plan. Issues raised in the strategy and by the Older People's Forum are addressed in other sections of this plan – including Housing, Transport, Health, Requirements for New Development and

⁸⁰ Age Friendly Alliance. [Kilkenny Age Friendly County Strategy](#). Modern Printers, Kilkenny, 2009.

⁸¹ Age Friendly Alliance. [Kilkenny Age Friendly County Strategy](#). Modern Printers, Kilkenny, 2009, p5.

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Recreation. Also the Plan adopts the concept of Universal Design (as outlined earlier) and proposes that planning for the built environment should facilitate accessibility, mobility and involvement of people of all ages, including those with disability for the durations of their lifetimes.

In relation to the built environment, several studies have identified that the adequate provision of well-maintained footpaths, seating in public places and buildings, and access to transport (particularly in rural areas) enable older people who are less mobile to more fully participate in society.⁸² The Council will support the aims of the [Kilkenny Age Friendly County Strategy](#) and make Kilkenny an Age Friendly County.

⁸² Shannon, Sinead. [The New Agenda on Ageing - To Make Ireland the Best Country to Grow Old In](#). Aging Well Network, Dublin, 2012.

6 Rural Development

Strategic Aim: To manage rural change and guide development to ensure vibrant and sustainable rural areas whilst conserving and sustainably managing our environment and heritage.

6.1 Introduction

As can be seen from the results of the [2011 Census](#), County Kilkenny is still predominantly a rural county. Sixty three percent of the county's population live in rural areas⁸³. In 2011 a total of 7.3% of Kilkenny's labour force was classified into Broad Industrial Group A – Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing, compared with 4.1% nationally⁸⁴.

The Council recognises the need to manage rural change and to guide development and will work to:

- Maintain and enhance the existing rural community to ensure vibrant sustainable rural areas,
- 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.
- Ensure that the rural environment will be respected and that development in rural areas will take place in a sustainable manner
- Promote a broad concept of rural development and not one based solely on agriculture or other dominant natural resource and encourage the sustainable development of resources in such sectors as agriculture, tourism including agri-tourism, forestry, farm diversification, and renewable energy resources.

6.2 Agriculture

Agriculture is a vital part of the economic life of the County and is a major driver for sustaining, enhancing and maintaining the rural economy and culture. In recent years agriculture has contributed to the growth in export revenue.

Kilkenny has a well established agri-food sector with food and drink production and processing representing a sizeable proportion of the local economy. The major companies operating in this sector within the county are Glanbia PLC and Connollys Redmills, complemented by an emerging artisan food producer base of approximately 40 micro and medium sized food producers.

⁸³ CSO 2011, Population by Area, Table 3: Persons, males and females in the aggregate town and aggregate rural areas of each province, county and city and the percentage of the population in the aggregate town area

⁸⁴ CSO 2011, Profile 3, At Work - Employment, Occupations and Industry Table 3: Persons aged 15 years and over at work in each county and city, classified by broad industrial group (NACE Rev. 2)

Commonage Land

Commonage land is land owned by more than one person. There are a few examples of commonage land in Co. Kilkenny, including some land in the townlands of Ballygub New, Brandonhill, Danganbeg, Grangefertagh, Rochestown and Weatherstown⁸⁵. In the future, commonage and other rough grazing land should be regarded primarily as an environmental/recreational resource.

Fencing

It is a requirement of the Planning Regulations 2001 Art 9(l)(a)(x) that the fencing of land open to or used by the public during the ten years preceding such fencing or enclosure, for recreational purposes or as a means of access to any seashore, mountain, lakeshore or other place of natural beauty or recreational utility requires planning permission. Wire fencing constitutes visual pollution and destroys the “away from it all” feeling which makes the upland areas such an attraction for both local people and visitors.

6.2.1 Food Harvest 2020

The [Food Harvest 2020](#) report⁸⁶ is a strategy for the medium-term development of the agri-food (including drinks), fisheries and forestry sector for the period to 2020. The Report sets out targets to achieve by 2020 relating to increases in the value of agri-food. These financial targets are underpinned by the following sectoral targets:

- 50% increase in milk production
- 20% increase in value of beef output
- 20% increase in value of sheep output
- 50% increase in value of pigmeat output
- 10% increase in value of poultry output
- 78% increase in aquaculture production

The Council will support the expansion of agriculture to meet these sectoral targets whilst sustainably managing our County’s environment and heritage resources.

Sustainable agricultural practices will be encouraged to ensure that development does not impinge on the visual amenity of the countryside or on the architectural heritage of the County and that watercourses and areas of ecological importance are protected from the threat of pollution. The implementation of schemes such as the Rural Environment Protection Scheme and the Agri-Environment Options Scheme will be supported.

See also Section 8.2.1.3 Rare or Protected Species and their Habitats.

⁸⁵ <http://www.commonage.agriculture.gov.ie/Search.asp>

⁸⁶ Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, [Food Harvest 2020, A vision for Irish agri-food and fisheries](#), 2010

6.2.2 Equine

The Council recognises the role and importance of the equine industry and in particular the breeding, rearing and training of thoroughbred horses and will support the improvement and expansion of the equine industry within the county.

6.2.3 Diversification

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. In particular, the Council will encourage the conversion of redundant farm buildings of vernacular importance for appropriate owner-run enterprises. Further detail on economic development within rural areas is included in Chapter 4 Economic Development.

6.2.4 Development Management Standards

- A high standard of design and maintenance will be required in all developments in rural areas.
- Agriculture developments will be constructed and located so as to ensure that there is no threat of pollution to ground or surface waters.
- Buildings and structures in visually sensitive areas will be required to:
 - o be sited as unobtrusively as possible;
 - o be clustered to form a distinct and unified feature in the landscape;
 - o utilise suitable materials and colours; and
 - o utilise native species in screen planting
- Fencing in upland or highly scenic areas (See Section 8.2.10 Landscape) will not normally be permitted unless such fencing is essential to the viability of the farm and that it conforms to the best agricultural practice. The nature of the material to be used, the height of the fence, and in the case of a wire fence the type of wire to be used will be taken into account. Barbed-wire will not be used for the top line of wire. Stiles or gates at appropriate places will be required.

6.3 Fishing

The Barrow, Nore and Suir are historically renowned as premier salmon and coarse fishing rivers in Ireland although salmon fishing no longer takes place on the River Barrow. 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 and appropriate angling-related tourism, fish farming and mariculture will be encouraged. The Council will liaise with and facilitate the Southern Fisheries Board in this regard.

6.3.1 Development Management Standards

- Require that adequate provisions are made to accommodate free upstream and downstream migration of all fish in development proposals.
- Protection of water quality will be a primary consideration in relation to assessing development proposals.

6.4 Extractive Industries

The County had a large lead–zinc deposit at Galmoy, which was worked as Galmoy mines, but which is now closed. 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. However the industry can have serious detrimental impacts on the landscape and amenities generally, including traffic generation, vibration, dust, noise, water pollution and visual intrusion. [Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Quarries and Ancillary Activities](#)⁸⁷ were published in 2004.

6.4.1 Aggregate Potential Mapping

As part of a National Development Plan funded programme, Aggregate Potential Mapping (APM) has been carried out by the Geological Survey of Ireland for County Kilkenny⁸⁸. Aggregate consists of any hard, inert material, used in variously-sized fragments, either loose or in bound form, in the building of roads and other construction. Aggregate in Ireland is acquired from (a) sands and gravels, known as granular, and (b) bedrock which is blasted and crushed in quarries. The APM has identified both the Granular Aggregate Potential (GAP) and the Crushed Rock Aggregate Potential (CRP).

The GAP map shows very high potential in the north of the county, along the Rivers Nore, Dinin and Nuenna, see Figure 6.1. The CRP map shows great variation throughout the county in levels of potential⁸⁹, see Figure 6.2. These maps are acknowledged to be preliminary, as further detailed data can be added to the analysis. Any revised mapping from the GSI will be duly noted.

Because the extraction industry is a very significant industry serving the construction, industrial and energy sectors, it is important to facilitate development with due regard to mineral reserves so that inappropriate development does not impinge on the viable exploitation of the resource.

⁸⁷ Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, [Quarries and Ancillary Activities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#), 2004

⁸⁸ <http://spatial.dcenr.gov.ie/APM/index.html>

⁸⁹ The maps are available for viewing on the GSI's website [here](#).

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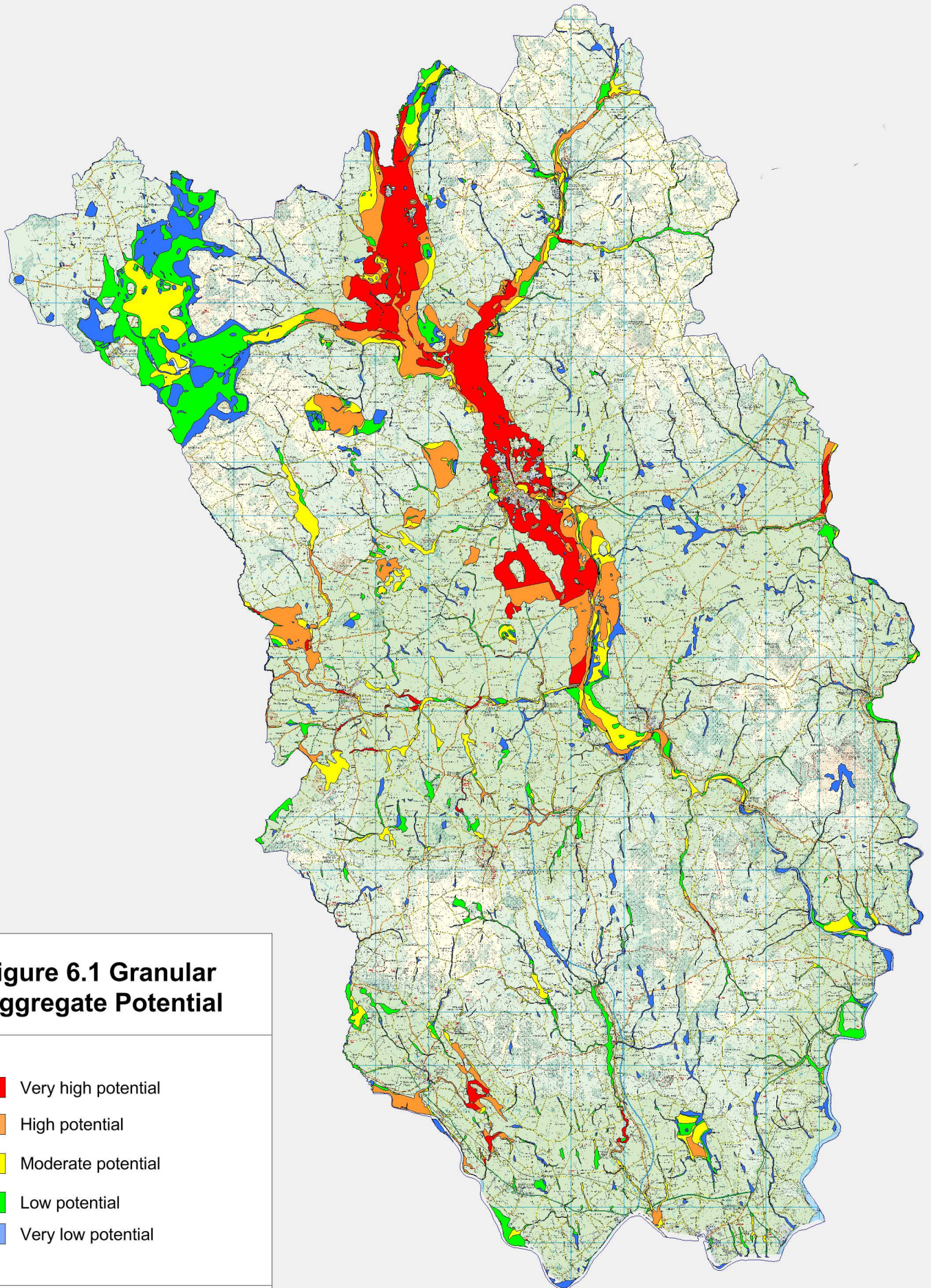


Figure 6.1 Granular Aggregate Potential

- Very high potential
- High potential
- Moderate potential
- Low potential
- Very low potential

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 300,000 @A4

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020

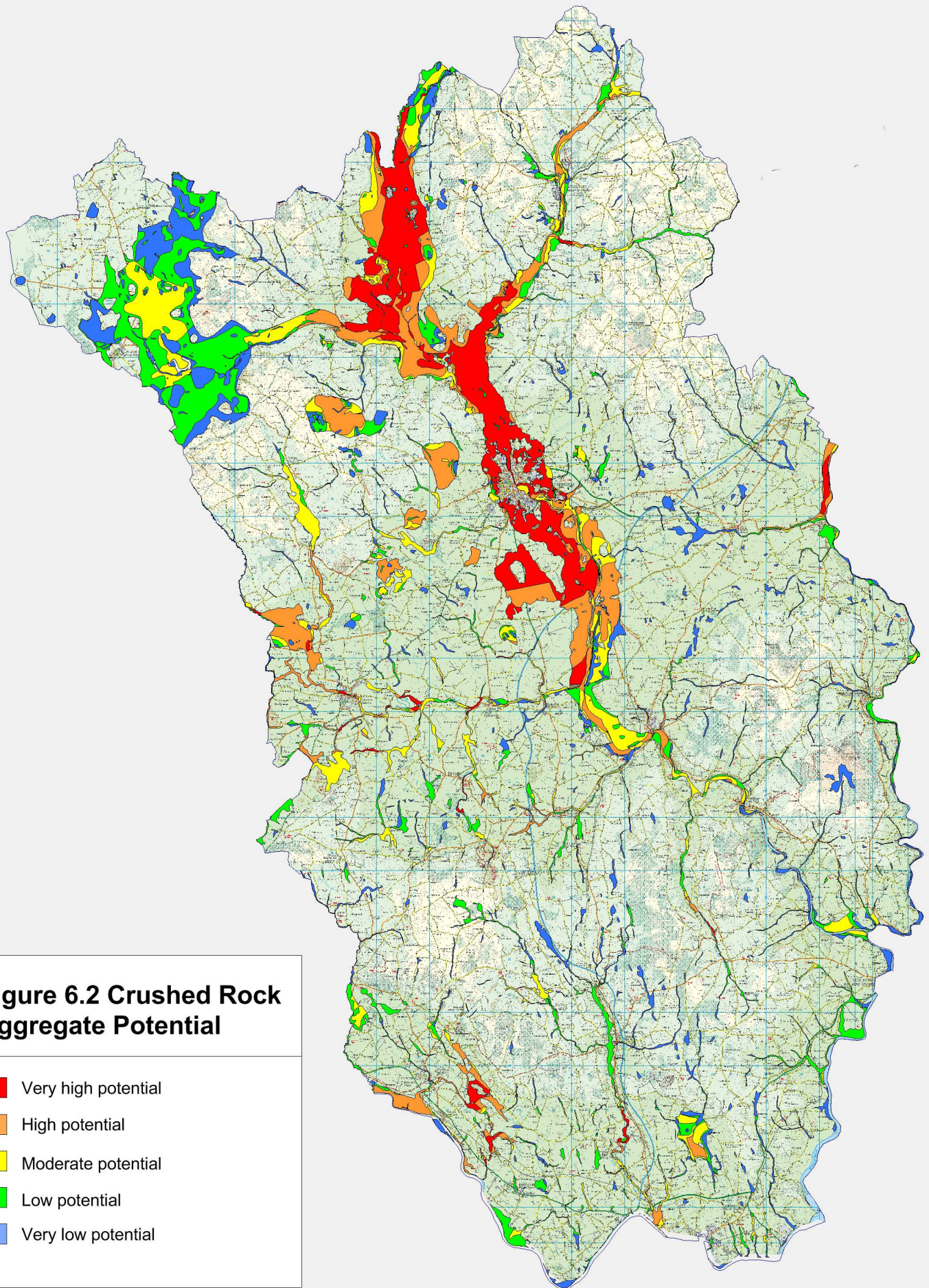


Figure 6.2 Crushed Rock Aggregate Potential

- Very high potential
- High potential
- Moderate potential
- Low potential
- Very low potential

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 300,000 @A4

6.4.2 Development Management Standards

- The Council will have regard to the following:
 - [Quarries and Ancillary Activities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#)⁹⁰,
 - the [ICF Environmental Code](#)⁹¹
 - [Environmental Management Guidelines, Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry](#)⁹².
 - [Undertaking non-energy extractive activities in accordance with Natura 2000 requirements.](#)
 - To NPWS [Guidelines for the protection of Biodiversity within the Extractive Industry](#) and the GSI's [Geological Heritage Guidelines for the Extractive Industry.](#)
 - [The Archaeological Code of Practice](#) agreed between the ICF and the National Monuments Division in Section 6.4.2 Development Management Standards.
- The Council will require adherence to the EPA Guidelines- [Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry](#) as a standard for the extractive industry in Kilkenny.
- Ensure that all existing workings shall be rehabilitated and that all future extraction activities will allow for the rehabilitation of pits and proper land use management.
 - The Council may require that development is phased and that each phase is rehabilitated before the next phase is developed/commenced;
 - The Council shall require applicants to submit a restoration programme with their application on the manner and timing of restoration;
 - The Council will consider the current land/quarry resource of the applicant and may seek that current quarries are restored before new sites are developed.
- 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.
- Ensure that any extractive development does not significantly impact on existing public rights of way, walking routes, or tourist or recreational activities.
- The Council will consider the current land/quarry resource of the applicant and may seek that current quarries are restored before new sites are developed.

6.5 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

⁹⁰ Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, [Quarries and Ancillary Activities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#), 2004

⁹¹ Irish Concrete Federation, [Environmental Code](#), 2005

⁹² EPA, [Environmental Management Guidelines, Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry](#), 2006

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](#)⁹³, published in 1996, foresaw the output of timber from Irish forests increasing four-fold between 1996 and 2030. The Government's strategy for the development of forestry is to substantially increase the land area under forestry. Forestry policy is under review at present but the Government's policy is still to increase the forest area in accordance with sustainable forest management principles⁹⁴. According to the Forest Service, 7.8% of the county was in forest cover in 2007⁹⁵. This has increased since then to 9.98% which is a total of 20,573ha in 2011⁹⁶. Nationally, 10.92% of land is under forest cover.

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Forest Service published an [Indicative Forest Statement](#) in 2008⁹⁷. This Forestry Statement provides high-level, national guidance in relation to the suitability of land for afforestation. It contains a map which gives an overview of all the opportunities and constraints which exist for forestry at a national level.

Forestry activities must be appropriate in terms of nature and scale to the surrounding area, so that they are not visually obtrusive in the landscape. The Landscape Character Assessment in Chapter 8 should be consulted to facilitate guidance on areas which contain opportunities for the creation of new woodland and areas which might be sensitive to new forestry proposals.

Woodlands provide recreational opportunities in addition to their heritage and economic benefits. They are also important as links in the county's green infrastructure network. Coillte have provided access to many of their forests and support the use of the forests for recreational uses. Coillte's [Recreation Policy – Healthy Forest, Healthy Nation](#)⁹⁸ states that Coillte recognises that forests provide an excellent landscape for a wide range of recreational activities, and Coillte will continue to provide recreation that is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

⁹³ Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, [Growing for the Future - A Strategic Plan for the Development of the Forestry Sector in Ireland](#), 1996

⁹⁴ [Forests, products and people. Ireland's Forest Policy – a renewed vision. Recommendations of the Forest Policy Review Group Draft Report for Public Consultation June 2013](#)

⁹⁵ Forest Service, [National Forest Inventory](#), 2007

⁹⁶ Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Forest Service, [Afforestation Statistics](#), 2011

⁹⁷ Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Forest Service, [Indicative Forest Statement](#), 2008

⁹⁸ [Recreation Policy – Healthy Forest, Healthy Nation](#), Coillte, 2005 (www.coillte.ie)

The Council will encourage and promote access to forests, including private forestry, in co-operation with Coillte, the Forest Service and other agencies, for walking routes, mountain trails, bridle paths, orienteering, cycling and other recreational activities (see Chapter 7).

6.5.1 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](#)⁹⁹, the [Code of Best Forest Practice](#)¹⁰⁰ 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.

To ensure that SFM is implemented, the Forest Service published a suite of six Guidelines as follows:

- [Forestry and Water Quality Guidelines](#)
- [Forestry and the Landscape Guidelines](#)
- [Forestry and Archaeology Guidelines](#)
- [Forest Biodiversity Guidelines](#)
- [Forest Harvesting and Environmental Guidelines](#)
- [Forest Protection Guidelines](#)

6.5.2 Development Management Standards

- To have regard to the [Indicative Forest Statement](#) and the suite of *Forest Service Guidelines* in the assessment of any forestry applications.
- To encourage sustainable forest management and require 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.
- Forestry shall not obstruct existing public rights of way and established walking routes.

⁹⁹ Department of Marine and Natural Resources, Forest Service, [Irish National Forest Standard](#), 2000

¹⁰⁰ Department of Marine and Natural Resources, Forest Service, [Code of Best Forest Practice, Ireland](#), 2000

6.6 Rural Transport

Bus services are particularly important in low-population density, dispersed, rural areas, where population mobility levels can be low. Rural transport projects, such as 'Ring-a-Link', have a key role to play in providing public transport services, particularly in peripheral areas, and in providing access to the services located in towns. Ring-a-Link is a 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.

Rural bus services play a vital social role in urban and rural communities, linking rural areas with settlements and essential services, such as schools and healthcare facilities. Bus services, both public and private, will continue to be the principal form of public transportation service in the region. To improve the effectiveness of rural transport services, the following measures are required:-

- (a) Improved connectivity to inter-regional bus services at connection points.
- (b) Development and use of new technology to support demand response services.

The Council will support and facilitate local and community based initiatives, to provide rural transport services within the County. This will improve accessibility and promote social inclusion.

7 Recreation, Tourism & the Arts

Strategic Aim: To protect and improve recreational, tourism and arts facilities for the benefit of residents and for the promotion of tourism.

7.1 Introduction

Open space performs a wide range of roles in enhancing cities, towns, rural villages and the wider countryside, including functions relating to amenity, biodiversity, education, social and community benefits, and health benefits. 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 different land uses, enhance visual amenity especially in developed areas and contribute to the health and quality of life of citizens.

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. The Council will 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.

Residents of, and visitors to, Kilkenny City and County benefit from a rich natural heritage, including its rivers valleys, wetlands, woodlands and uplands. These natural heritage components plus open spaces and playing fields form part of the interconnected networks of Green Infrastructure in the county and its urban areas.

7.2 Provision of Public Open Space & Recreational Facilities

The Council will endeavour to make provision for a hierarchy of parks, open spaces and 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 Council, with the assistance of the Social Economic Committee, agencies and sporting organisations in Kilkenny, will seek to:

- Increase levels of local participation, improve access and promote the development of opportunities for all groups to become involved in sports and recreation, in conjunction with Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership (www.krsp.ie). This is particularly relevant in the case of low participation groups such as disadvantaged groups, older people, girls and women, people with disabilities, unemployed people and those who live in disadvantaged communities or areas lacking amenity infrastructure.
- Encourage where appropriate better use of existing facilities and assist in the provision of new facilities.

Objective:

- 7A The Council shall seek the preservation and improvement of amenities and recreational amenity facilities, and shall facilitate and provide for the extension of recreational amenities in the county where appropriate, subject to environmental and heritage considerations.**

7.2.1 Protection of Open Space

The Planning Authority will not normally permit development which is not compatible with or would result in the loss of green infrastructure 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.
- The site is indicated for an alternative use in the development plan.

7.3 Recreation and the Countryside

7.3.1 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 or lighting 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 water services.

7.3.2 Walking and Cycling

The Irish Sports Council has published an [Irish Trails Strategy](#)¹⁰¹, which outlines the numerous benefits of recreational trails. There are a number of walking routes available in Kilkenny, through publicly owned and private lands – including long distance and looped walks and hiking routes¹⁰². Current trails (and rights of way) are depicted on Figure 7.1. Kilkenny Local Authorities will continue to identify and promote a series of walking routes within the city and county and to link these to a strategic network of trails within the city, county and adjoining counties where feasible.

Long distance walking routes in the county include the South Leinster Way stretching from Graiguenamanagh to Piltown and the Nore Valley Walk. The walk is divided into three sections: Kilkenny to Bennettsbridge (completed), Bennettsbridge to Thomastown (under development), and Thomastown to Inistioge (completed). Trail Kilkenny are the lead agency in the development of this walk. A long distance walking route also exists along the River Barrow.

Objective:

7B The Council will continue to assist with and support the development of the Nore Valley Walk and protect its route from encroachment by unsympathetic development.

There are also a number of looped tracks and trails throughout the county that have been developed by various agencies. Trail Kilkenny has developed nine ‘looped’ walking trails to Fáilte Ireland standards, with another eight in development. There are also a number of walks developed through Coillte forestry lands and in nature conservation sites that are open to the public. The Council recognises the value of looped walkways with public lighting in towns and villages such as those in Paulstown and Callan, and will facilitate further development of such walks where feasible.

Long distance cycling trails have been developed or are in various stages of development throughout the county through the work of a number of agencies. The [National Cycle Network Scoping Study](#), published by the National Roads Authority in 2010, identified potential route corridors between urban centres of 10,000 population and upwards. The study shows the potential in providing a cycle network linking Kilkenny to Carlow and Clonmel. Trail Kilkenny have developed the east (65km) and north (83km) cycle routes and are in the process of developing a long distance cycle route in the south of the county. Under the National Cycle Network funding scheme a route links Kilkenny City with Carlow town with a total length of 44.5km. The Council will seek central funding to design and progress the cycle network along

¹⁰¹ The Irish Sports Council, [Irish Trails Strategy Promoting and developing activity in the Irish outdoors](#), 2007

¹⁰² A list of existing walking and cycling routes is included in Appendix C to this plan and shown on Figure 7.1.



Figure 7.1 Walking, Cycling and Rights of Way

- Walking Routes & Trails ●
- Long Distance Walking Routes - - -
- Cycling Routes - - -
- Public Rights of Way ★

Date May 2014
Scale: 1:300,000 @A4

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

the N76 from Kilkenny to Clonmel, as part of Corridor 10 (Naas to Mallow) of the National Cycle Network Scoping Study published by the NRA.

The Council will investigate the potential of and opportunities for the funding of walking and cycling greenways and trails in the county, including off-road cycling routes; and for the development of linkages between existing trails and others in adjoining counties; and support national trail development in conjunction with other local authorities, agencies and organisations. Kilkenny Local Authorities will continue to support and facilitate the on-going development of walking and cycling routes and trails in the city and county in conjunction with agencies such as Trail Kilkenny (see <http://www.trailkilkenny.ie>) and will support the proposals as set out in the *Trail Kilkenny Development & Business Plan*¹⁰³.

Objective:

7C To develop a walking and cycling strategy within the life of this plan.

Disused railways lines provide opportunities for off-road walking and cycling routes. The Council in conjunction with Laois County Council, Trail Kilkenny and Abbeyleix Community Development are currently examining the feasibility of using the former Kilkenny to Portlaoise railway line as a trail; and the Suir, Nore and Barrow Railway Heritage Co. Ltd. with Trail Kilkenny and Kilkenny County Council are examining the feasibility of a walking, cycling and tourism narrow gauge rail service along the old New Ross to Waterford line.

The Council will explore the possibility of cycle-ways in parks and recreational areas in Kilkenny and along river banks subject to environmental and heritage considerations. Issues of accessibility such as car parking for walkers and cyclists to the trails will be addressed in any strategy. Possibilities for improved signage and maps should be facilitated to ensure wider access to the county's recreational assets.

In addition the Council may seek to incorporate the provision of pedestrian and cycle ways as a condition of planning permission to link amenities, facilities and points of interest. The Council will also encourage the provision of access routes to amenity areas in co-operation with landowners and protect amenity areas from infringement by inappropriate development, and will 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.

Objectives:

7D To protect the New Ross to Waterford railway line from encroachment by development and to retain its continuity.

¹⁰³ <http://www.trailkilkenny.ie/about-us/trail-kilkenny-development-and-business-plan/>

- 7E To protect the Kilkenny to Portlaoise former railway line and spur line to Castlecomer from encroachment by development and support the development of a trail if feasible.**

7.3.3 The Rivers Nore, Suir and Barrow

The Rivers Nore, Suir and Barrow (known as the “Three Sisters”) are the principal rivers flowing through County Kilkenny, and they form part of the Natura 2000 network (see Section 8.2). These rivers, together with their tributaries offer significant opportunities for recreational opportunities both water and landside, including an interconnecting network of routes for walking and cycling which also provide access for water-sports such as swimming, angling, boating, kayaking and nature trails amongst others. Routes along the river have the potential to connect to other trails and routes along the River Nore have been extended out of Kilkenny city to link with routes in the countryside.

The Council will promote the natural amenity potential of the Rivers Nore, Suir and Barrow in order to facilitate the development of amenity, recreational, biodiversity and tourism benefits for the city and county generally, and will work with adjoining local authorities agencies and communities to improve access and facilities along the rivers in appropriate locations subject to the availability of resources.

7.3.3.1 River Nore

The setting of Kilkenny city in the Nore River Valley provides an opportunity for establishing open spaces and networks of open spaces of strategic value and importance within the city. During the formulation of the Kilkenny Heritage Plan, the River Nore was identified as one of the county’s most important heritage resources. The river encompasses built, natural and cultural heritage; is strongly identified with, and has had a very significant influence on, the life and development of the county. The [River Nore Heritage Audit](#)¹⁰⁴ has been undertaken as an action of the Heritage Plan. The study provides a comprehensive mapped dataset of the built, natural and cultural heritage of the study area, and the resulting report (which is in the final stages of completion) and database is a very significant resource for community, heritage and tidy towns groups; it has the potential to inform planning and management of the area; and is a baseline against which change can be assessed¹⁰⁵.

Kilkenny County Council and Trail Kilkenny are working together using the findings of this study on the ‘Explore the Nore’ project to further develop, promote and protect the recreational, tourism, heritage and educational potential of the river and associated heritage.

¹⁰⁴ Kilkenny Heritage Forum, [River Nore Heritage Audit](#), 2009

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.kilkennycoco.ie/eng/Services/Heritage/>.

7.3.3.2 River Barrow

The River Barrow flows along the eastern boundary of the county from north of Goresbridge to just north of Belview Port where it joins the River Suir to flow into Waterford Harbour. The River Barrow towpath is a significant amenity resource which runs along the riverbank on the County Carlow side of the river. An outdoor tourism hub is being developed in Graiguenamanagh to enhance the tourism potential of the area.

An inter-agency project has been carried out involving Kilkenny County Council and lead by Waterways Ireland [The Barrow Corridor – Recreational, Tourism and Commercial Product Identification Study 2011](#)¹⁰⁶. The study incorporates an Action Plan to increase the tourism and recreation potential of the river under the seven programme groups – Navigation Infrastructure Development, Activity Hubs and Tourism Trails, Boating and Cruising Development, Raising the Tourism Profile of the Barrow, Nature and Wildlife Sites, Barrow Way and South Leinster Way Trail Enhancement and Coarse Angling Centre of Excellence. The Council will support proposals to enhance the tourism and recreation potential of the area subject to environmental, economic and heritage considerations.

Further to the findings of the study an interagency project involving Kilkenny Leader Partnership *Unlocking the Barrow Strategic Plan 2013*¹⁰⁷ focuses on the navigation potential and problems of the River Barrow and the report sets out proposals to address the areas limiting the full navigation potential of the river.

7.3.3.3 River Suir

The Suir River Valley also offers significant opportunities for the development of tourism and recreation in the south of the county.

7.3.4 Riverside Development

Factors that will be taken into account when considering proposals affecting the rivers include:

- Any landscape or nature, built heritage or archaeological designation for the area (refer to Chapter 8 Heritage for guidance),
- Any proposals to increase the extent of public access,
- The extent of any environmental improvements to the water environment and its surroundings,
- The nature of any recreation use proposed,
- Any conflict or compliance with proposals for walking or cycling routes, and
- Require that development along rivers set aside land for recreation routes that could be linked to the wider network of green infrastructure and any established settlements in their vicinity, subject to environmental considerations and compliance with the Habitats Directive.

¹⁰⁶ Waterways Ireland, [The Barrow Corridor – Recreational, Tourism and Commercial Product Identification Study 2011](#).

¹⁰⁷ Kilkenny Leader Partnership, *Unlocking the Barrow A Strategic Plan*, 2013

7.3.4.1 Development associated with Water Sports

The 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 have adverse impacts on any Natura 2000 site, 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, having regard to the landscape character assessment; 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, and all will require screening for Appropriate Assessment. The Council will require a high quality of design 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.

7.3.5 Public Rights of Way

A public right of way is a person's right of passage along a road or path, even if the road or path is not in public ownership. They can be created by use from time immemorial, by statute or by dedication by the full owner of the land. The Council recognises the legal rights of all landowners and that rights of access to their lands may only be obtained with their permission where an existing right of way does not exist. A list of existing known rights of way in the county are included as on Appendix D to this plan and are shown on Figure 7.1. Known existing rights of way at the time of writing this Plan are listed, however this is not a comprehensive list, and further work will be carried out during the life of this plan to provide a more extensive listing.

The Council will use its powers under the Planning Acts to preserve, protect, maintain and enhance existing rights of way, to determine where public rights exist and where public rights of way should be created, and to promote their greater use in amenity areas – including access points to the Rivers Nore, Suir and Barrow and other amenity areas of the County.

Development Management Standard:

- The Council will ensure that development does not impinge on public walking routes or on public rights of way.

Objectives:

- 7F The Council shall preserve and protect existing public rights of way which give access to seashore, uplands, riverbank or other places of natural beauty or recreational use (A list of existing known rights of way in the County is included in Appendix D to this plan and is shown on Figure 7.1).**
- 7G To undertake a survey to establish any additional existing public rights of way in the county and establish a register within the life of the Plan.**

7.4 Urban Recreation – Parks

7.4.1 Regional Parks

Recreational space is provided in parks of various sizes throughout the county – such as the Castle Park and through privately owned estate lands such as Castlecomer Demesne and the Woodstock Estate in Council ownership.

Following on from the *Kilkenny Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study* a park building strategy was commenced. To date a number of parks have been completed or are at various stages of planning or construction, including the Nore Linear Park in the city and a proposal for urban enhancement of the areas between John’s Bridge and Green’s Bridge as part of the Medieval Mile project. There are also public parks in Thomastown, Castlecomer and Callan; and ‘tone zones’ comprising areas of exercise equipment have been incorporated into these parks to improve their recreational value.

7.4.1.1 Nore Linear Park

The Nore Linear Park project provides a network of footpaths and cycleways along the river in the City and Environs combined with a sequence of high quality public spaces, which is a significant recreational asset to the city. Within the City, a walk between Talbotsinch and Ossory Bridge has been developed and upgraded to make it accessible to all users, including cyclists, people with disabilities and people using buggies. It is also proposed to develop the walk as a loop which will require potentially three pedestrian bridges: one at Talbotsinch, one along Bateman quay and also at Ossory Bridge. Other features will be examined such as the reinstatement of the Bandstand at Dukesmeadows and the second Tea House near the Smithwick’s site. Due to the size of the project and level of expense, it will be completed in phases over a number of years; however, it is envisaged that it will be complete within the lifetime of this Plan. The Nore Linear Park also connects with countryside riverside trails to the south, and this is the starting point of the Nore Valley Walk.

The Council shall ensure that parks in public ownership continue to be appropriately managed.

Kilkenny Local Authorities are investigating the location of outdoor recreational facilities to enhance the existing public space within a central urban area in Kilkenny City, such as The Mayor's Walk, in conjunction with the Older People's Forum, Comhairle na nÓg and the Kilkenny Access Group.

Objectives:

- 7H Complete the development of the River Nore Linear Park within the lifetime of the Plan.**
- 7I To establish an environmental management plan for the River Nore Linear Park.**

7.4.2 Neighbourhood Parks

The Regional and City wide parks as outlined above 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 neighbourhood parks.

In the larger county towns a town park may be appropriate and these 'town parks' are generally in a very central location and easily accessible – such as those in Castlecomer, Thomastown, Callan and Graiguenamanagh. They should provide facilities for both formal and informal recreation in a parkland environment. Works are on-going for the development of an outdoor tourism hub in Graiguenamanagh as part of a multi-agency initiative on lands owned by the Council to be ceded to the Barrow Valley Community Development Ltd.

Development Management Standard:

- New open space must be well integrated to any proposed development and should have good pedestrian and cyclist linkages and access for persons with disabilities.

7.5 Play Policy

The Kilkenny Interagency Play Forum *Play Plan 2007 to 2012*¹⁰⁸ was developed based on the National Play Policy [Ready, Steady, Play! A National Play Policy](#)¹⁰⁹. The policy advocates a child-centered approach to the development of play facilities. The Council will seek to maintain the quality and safety of playgrounds and play areas and create a child-friendly and safe environment where the importance of play is recognised for a child's development.

A number of playgrounds have been developed in various locations throughout the city and county as follows (see Figure 7.2):

¹⁰⁸ Kilkenny Interagency Play Forum, [Kilkenny County Play Policy 2007-2012 & Kilkenny Implementation Plan](#), 2007

¹⁰⁹ Department of Children & Youth Affairs, [Ready, Steady, Play! A National Play Policy](#)

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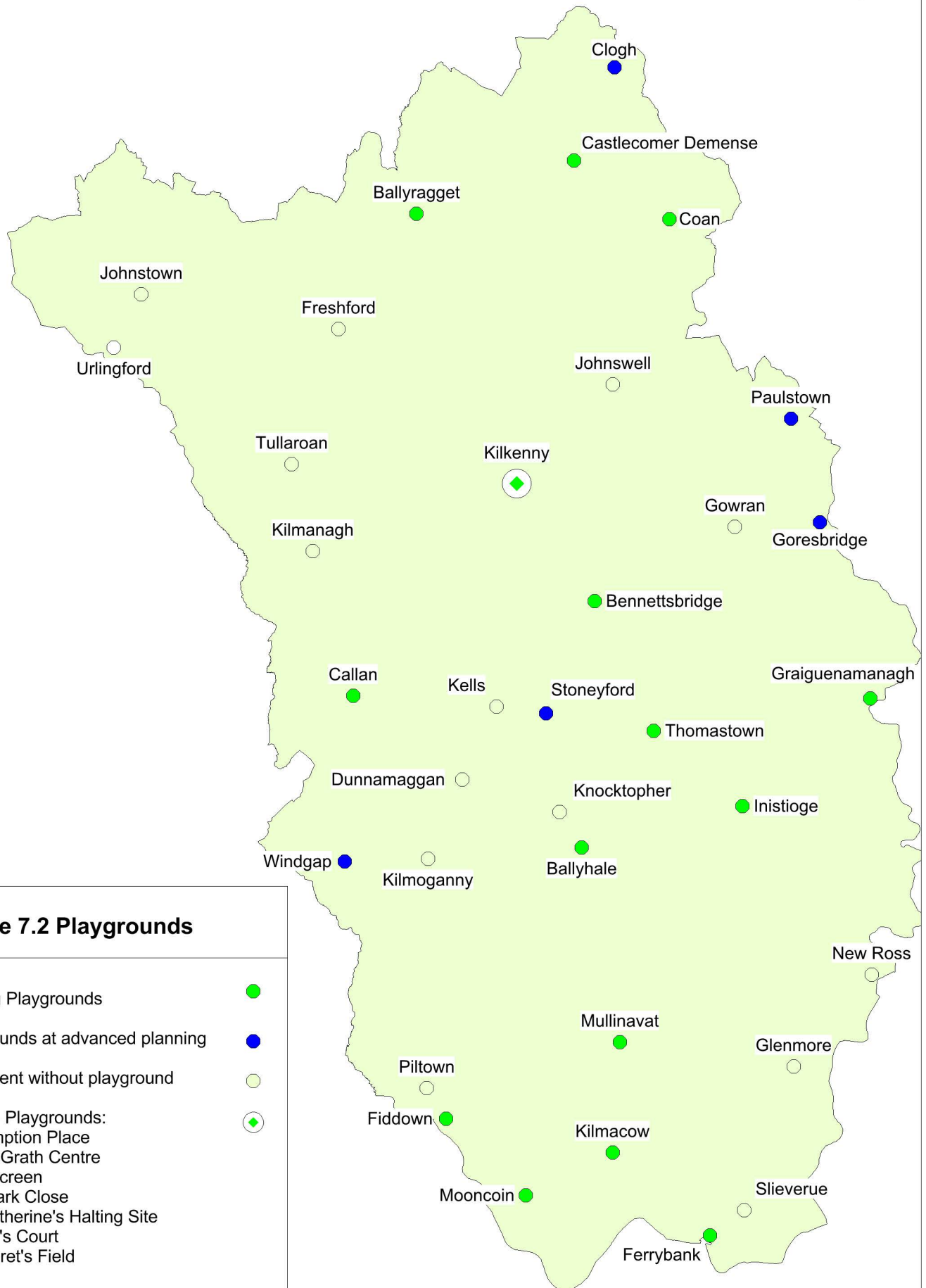


Figure 7.2 Playgrounds

Existing Playgrounds



Playgrounds at advanced planning



Settlement without playground



Multiple Playgrounds:



- Assumption Place
- Fr. McGrath Centre
- Garrincreen
- Newpark Close
- St. Catherine's Halting Site
- Talbot's Court
- Margaret's Field

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1:300,000 @A4

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

Kilkenny City: Assumption Place, Fr. McGrath Centre, Garringreen, Newpark Close, St. Catherine's Halting Site, Talbot's Court.
County: Ballyhale, Ballyragget, Bennettsbridge, Callan, Castlecomer Demesne, Coon, Ferrybank – Blackthorn Hills, Fiddown, Graiguenamanagh, Kilmacow, Mooncoin, Mullinavat, Thomastown, Woodstock, Inistioge

At advanced planning stage: Paulstown, Goresbridge, Stoneyford, Clough.

The Council has undertaken a mapping exercise that identifies existing play services, facilities and amenities and highlights gaps in these areas across the county; refer to Figure 7.2 for further detail.

The Council in conjunction with Kilkenny Leader Partnership will investigate the development of playgrounds in the county, as resources permit and will assist communities in the development of the playgrounds. 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. 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.

7.6 Active Recreational Facilities

There are a large number of built recreation and sporting facilities provided throughout the county through a mix of public, private, schools, community facilities and voluntary organisations – both indoor and outdoor facilities. Hurling and equestrian pursuits are of considerable importance to the county. Outdoor facilities include playing pitches, golf courses, pitch and putt courses, and athletic running tracks. Some of these facilities also combine other uses – such as the walking tracks developed around playing pitches and some facilities also combine locations with indoor facilities including swimming pools, gyms and community and sports halls catering for indoor sports – such as at the Watershed in Kilkenny City.

The Council will co-operate with local development organisations, community groups, sporting organisations and other stake holders in the development of active recreational facilities throughout the county and to enter into joint venture arrangements where appropriate for the provision of such facilities.

7.6.1 Protocol for the Development of Facilities

The provision of new facilities may not always be preferred as it may be more appropriate to upgrade, refurbish and improve existing facilities, particularly in established settlements. The following protocol will be used to ensure that development occurs in an orderly, sustainable

manner, and should be considered as a sequential approach to developing or improving facilities (where existing).

- a. Bring into use a redundant or infrequently used facility.
- b. Make better / more frequent use of existing sports facilities.
- c. Improve management procedures within existing facilities.
- d. Refurbish facilities within the existing footprint.
- e. Extend existing facilities.
- f. Provide a new stand-alone facility, to be considered as a last option once options (a) to (e) have been explored.

The final option (f) should be chosen after all other options have explored and ruled out.

7.7 Development Management and Recreation

7.7.1 Intensive and Major Sports 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 attracting significant numbers of spectators, that may have long opening hours. The location of intensive sports facilities can often be contentious.

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.

7.7.2 Noise Generating Sports

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 and 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 it may be considered appropriate to only grant a temporary permission to allow the impact of noise levels and any potential disturbance or nuisance to be more fully assessed.

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.

7.7.3 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.

7.8 Open Space in new residential development

Applicants will be required to make provision for sports and recreational infrastructure commensurate with the needs generated by any development and the capacity of existing facilities in the area to cater for existing and future needs.

For details of the requirements for the provision of open space within residential developments refer to Section 12.8.

7.9 Tourism

County Kilkenny has much to offer as a tourist destination, in particular its rich natural, physical and cultural heritage and vibrant city. County Kilkenny offers visitors a wide range of recreational activities including walking, golf, angling, cycling, equestrian activities, bird watching and canoeing. In addition, there are annual festivals of national and international standards.

As with other areas of the economy, the tourism sector has experienced significant challenges in recent years. Fáilte Ireland statistics show that the numbers of visitors to Ireland has declined significantly since 2007, with the total number of overseas tourists visiting Ireland dropping from 7.7 million in 2007 to 5.9 million in 2010; however there was an increase to 6.3 million overseas visitors in 2011¹¹⁰. The South-East welcomed an estimated 685,000 overseas visitors in

¹¹⁰ Fáilte Ireland, [Tourism Facts 2011](#), December 2012

2010 providing revenue of €175 million, of which 206,000 visited Kilkenny providing revenue of €30 million¹¹¹.

Domestic tourism (that is, residents of Ireland visiting sites or going on holiday in Ireland) resulted in expenditure of over €1,822 million; in 2011 the South-East attracted approximately 14% of domestic tourism¹¹². Kilkenny has traditionally benefited from the domestic tourism market, particularly for short visits and this market is likely to become increasingly important¹¹³.

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 Local Authorities, Kilkenny Tourism, Kilkenny Leader Partnership and neighbouring counties in the South East Region.

7.9.1 Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism provides a high quality product based on and in harmony with a high quality built and 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.

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

The term Green Infrastructure is increasingly being used to describe the interconnected networks of land and water all around us that sustain environmental quality and enrich our quality of life. This includes the nature conservation areas, parks, open space, rivers, floodplains, wetlands, woodlands and farmland which surround and are threaded through our villages, towns and urban areas. These are elements that Kilkenny's tourism is built upon and enrich the experience of the tourist to the county, which in turn has economic benefits. Protection of the county's natural resources is necessary to sustain economic growth.

Fáilte Ireland's [Historic Towns in Ireland](#)¹¹⁴ publication states that sustainable tourism development should not only increase revenue for the town's businesses but should also deliver on conservation, environmental and social goals.

The Council will facilitate measures to sustainably increase the volume of visitors, revenue per visitor, their average length of stay and seasonal spread; whilst protecting the built heritage and

¹¹¹ Fáilte Ireland, [Tourism to the South East \(Preliminary Data\) 2010](#)

¹¹² Fáilte Ireland, [Tourism Facts 2011](#), December 2012

¹¹³ Fáilte Ireland, [Destination Kilkenny A Strategic Plan and Work Programme 2011/2013](#)

¹¹⁴ Fáilte Ireland, [Historic Towns in Ireland. Maximising Your Tourism Potential](#), 2012

green infrastructure that form the resources on which the County's tourist industry is based. Kilkenny Local Authorities will support the implementation of the Strategic Marketing Plan for Kilkenny Tourism 2012 and the Fáilte Ireland *Destination South East*¹¹⁵ and *Destination Kilkenny*¹¹⁶ Development Strategies.

7.9.2 The Tourism Product

County Kilkenny has a diverse range of tourist attractions which can be capitalised on to develop a strong, year-round, high quality sustainable tourism industry.

Fáilte Ireland research in 2008 found that over €2.2 billion was generated by visitors to sites of historical/ cultural interest in Ireland¹¹⁷. Cultural /heritage tourism contribute 54% to total overseas tourism revenue, whilst those based on the county's green infrastructure contribute a combined 18% of overseas revenue including hiking and walking, golf, cycling, angling and equestrian¹¹⁸. Also culture and heritage tourists tend to stay in Ireland for longer and spend more¹¹⁹. Therefore the heritage of the county has direct economic benefits for the county and care must be taken to manage development of these assets whilst ensuring that they are also protected and conserved.

The Arts is also an integral part of the cultural, tourism and economic development of the county and is discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

Visitor surveys by Fáilte Ireland in 2010 found that Kilkenny Castle (192,777 visitors) and Nicholas Mosse Pottery (95,000 visitors) were amongst the top 10 attractions in the South-East Region¹²⁰. Tourist attractions in the county outside the City include Mount Juliet Estate, Castlecomer Demesne and Interpretative Centre, Brandon Hill, Dunmore Caves, Jerpoint Abbey, Rice House in Callan, Duiske Abbey in Graiguenamanagh, 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

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. Festivals such as Kilkenny Arts

¹¹⁵ Fáilte Ireland, *Destination South East A Strategic Plan and Work Programme 2011-2013*

¹¹⁶ Fáilte Ireland, *Destination Kilkenny A Strategic Plan and Work Programme 2011/2013*

¹¹⁷ Fáilte Ireland, [Historic Towns in Ireland. Maximising Your Tourism Potential](#), 2012

¹¹⁸ Fáilte Ireland, [Historic Towns in Ireland. Maximising Your Tourism Potential](#), 2012

¹¹⁹ Fáilte Ireland, [Historic Towns in Ireland. Maximising Your Tourism Potential](#), 2012

¹²⁰ Fáilte Ireland, [Tourism to the South East \(Preliminary Data\) 2010](#)

Festival, The Cat Laughs Comedy Festival, Rhythm and Roots Festival, Savour Food Festival, Celtic Festival and Kilkenomics have raised the profile of Kilkenny City as a tourism destination. Festivals such as Éigse, Slieverue and the Iverk Show are long-running shows that contribute to tourism in the county.

The Council will 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.

7.9.2.1 Flagship Projects

The development of flagship projects will assist in the diversification of the tourism product – including varied projects such as the Medieval Mile (as discussed in Chapter 4), the River Nore Walking Route and Rothe House. Mount Juliet Estate is discussed in further detail in section 7.9.5. The Councils will support the development of flagship tourism products, in the city and county.

7.9.2.2 Trails in Kilkenny

A series of trails focusing on different themes have been developed by Trail Kilkenny throughout the county. These include trails focusing on Craft, visiting craftspeople in their workshop throughout the county, a food trail and activity trails including walking and cycling trails. Walking and cycling trails can make a significant contribution to sustainable tourism development. The council will encourage and promote walking and cycling-based tourism in the city and county through its policies and its role in development management.

7.9.3 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, farmers'

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 and adventure centres. 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.

Development Management Standards:

- The Council will support the development of niche activities, such as those relating to food (particularly value-added products), forestry (such as wood products), crafts, eco-tourism and agri-tourism, for example farmhouse accommodation, open farms, farm holidays, health farms, equestrian activities including bridle paths, bird-watching holidays; painting/photography tuition, angling tourism, field studies and hill-walking.
- 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.

7.9.4 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, river based infrastructure for angling and river amenities, transport and signage.

The councils will 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. The councils will improve tourism infrastructure throughout the County such as signage, public realm upgrading, parking facilities, traffic management, and amenities and service/rest facilities as resources permit.

7.9.4.1 Tourism Accommodation

The County offers high quality hotel accommodation and guesthouse accommodation which, together with tourist attractions, will encourage people to visit the County and encourage these visitors to stay longer.

Key towns and villages act as tourist centres and the facilities and the 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.

7.9.5 Mount Juliet Estate

Mount Juliet Estate and the adjoining Ballylinch Stud 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. The golf course and stud are recognised on an international scale, with the stud in operation since 1914 and the golf course has played host to international competitions. The estate and stud are a significant source of direct and indirect employment in the county. 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 objectives of the action plan have been largely delivered over the intervening period. The provisions of the action plan have been incorporated into this plan which now aims to facilitate appropriate development in a manner which respects the sensitive nature of the landscape, heritage and environmental attributes of the estate and seeks to ensure their protection and enhancement, see Figure 7.3.

Mount Juliet Development Management Standards

- To protect and enhance the Protected Structure, its curtilage and attendant grounds and woodlands. To protect and enhance existing landscape, ecological, water quality and other environmental amenities and in particular to provide for the protection of the River Nore (designated cSAC and SPA).
- To provide for the maintenance and enhancement of tourism, sporting, leisure and related uses, and of existing agricultural and equestrian lands and buildings in an area of sensitive landscape.
- To protect the residential amenity of existing dwellings.

Permissible uses/ developments:

- Equestrian, sport and leisure facilities.
- Stores, machinery storage/repair & office uses related to maintenance of estate lands.

Uses open for consideration:

- Temporary tented or other temporary enclosures.

Table 7.1: 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

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020

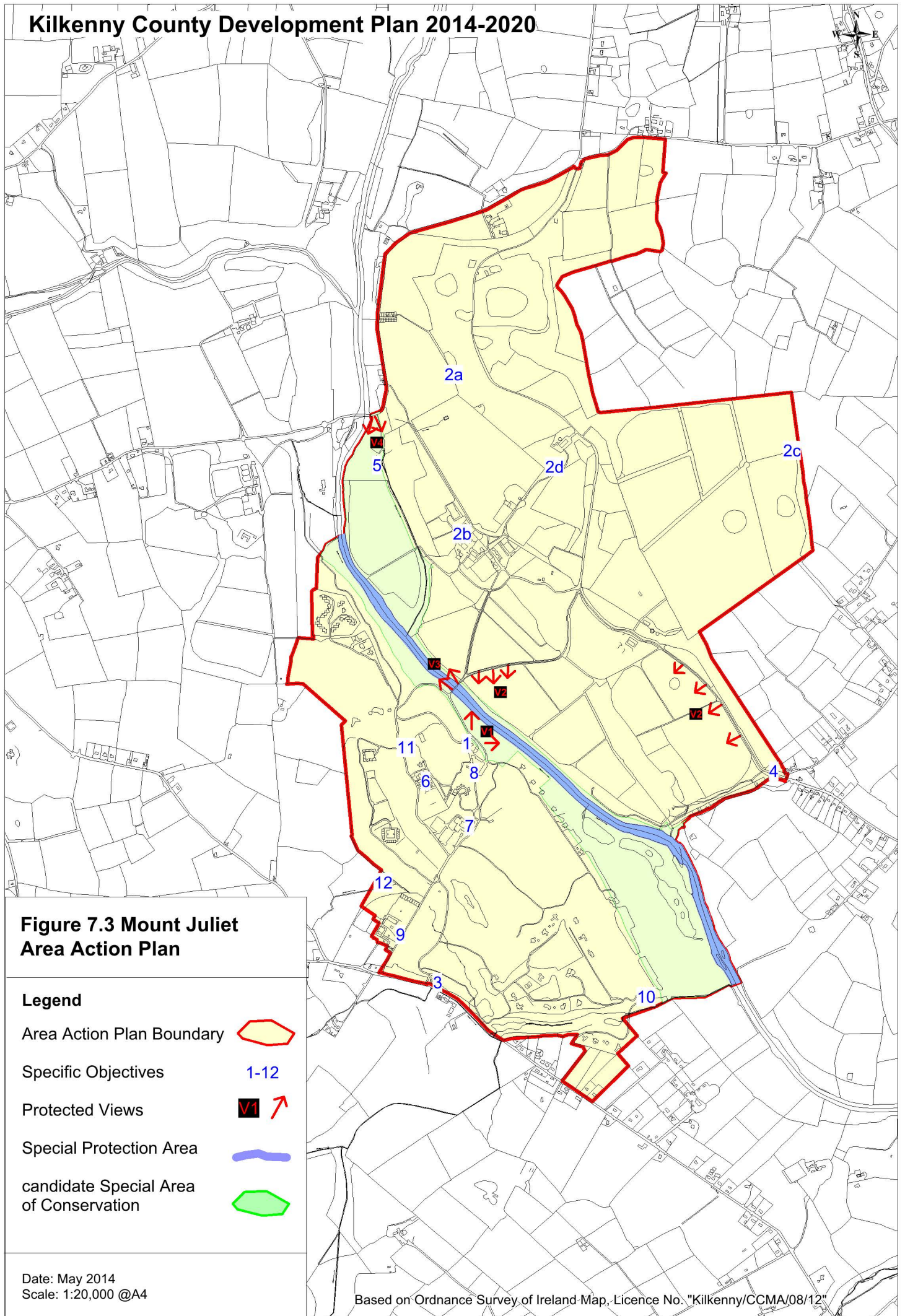





Figure 7.3 Mount Juliet Area Action Plan

Legend

- Area Action Plan Boundary 
- Specific Objectives 1-12
- Protected Views 
- Special Protection Area 
- candidate Special Area of Conservation 

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1:20,000 @A4

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

Table 7.2: Mount Juliet Site-specific Development Management Standards	
Map Ref.	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 & 7	To provide for the enhancement and development of tourism, leisure and recreational facilities and related activities at appropriate locations within the estate, including the Hunters Yard and the Walled Garden, without detracting from the estate's built and natural heritage.
8	To provide for the development of additional lodges adjacent to the existing Rose Garden lodges associated with the estate's tourism, leisure and recreational functions without detracting from the estate's landscape character and built and natural heritage.
9	Provide for an extension to the existing golf maintenance facility to include changing area and other associated staff uses.
10	Provide for the development of 3 no. detached houses associated with the estate's sporting and recreational functions.
11	Provide for a house at the maintenance facility building associated with the estate's sporting and recreational facilities.
—	Provide for estate maintenance/administration area at an appropriate location to replace existing maintenance facility building for the on-going management of the estate.
12	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.

7.10 Arts and Cultural Development

Kilkenny City and County has an extensive, illustrious and spirited tradition within the arts. The arts continue to be a significant ingredient largely contributing to the progression of the social, cultural, creative, economic, and political future of Kilkenny.

Cultural development is 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 distinguish it from other counties or cities and the capacity to regenerate communities and a claim to the world's attention and investment is very much based on the county's cultural offerings. Cultural development creates cultural heritage.

Kilkenny County Council's Arts Office works to develop, co-ordinate, motivate, inspire and empower artistic activity throughout the city and county. The office promotes the arts as a worthwhile activity for all, providing advice and support for groups and individuals, and works to strengthen Kilkenny's position as a centre of excellence for the arts and ensure a successful and prosperous arts environment. The Council works to ensure that there is continued support in this sector, not simply for its intrinsic value, but as a driver of major economic development.

7.10.1 Arts Organisations

Kilkenny's cultural and arts organisations span a diverse breadth of disciplines and activity including Barnstorm Theatre Company, the Butler Gallery, Kilkenny Arts Festival, the National Craft Gallery, the Cat Laughs Comedy Festival, Savour Food Festival, Kilkenomics, Kilkenny Collective for Arts Talent (KCAT) inclusive Arts Centre, Young Irish Filmmakers, Devious Theatre Company and Cartoon Saloon. All of these fulfil important roles within the arts and cultural development of the county and have raised its profile nationally and internationally. The Council are cognisant of the reality of the location market and that cities and regions are competing to attract businesses, direct investments and creative talents. In order to succeed it is necessary to offer diversified cultural offerings and quality of life and lifestyle. Both of these are extremely important to society today. The support of existing organisations and creative industries is crucial and successful business and cultural activity attracts further business and complementary industry to locate and relocate to specific regions. Essentially our culture strengthens the position of the county and acts as an inspirational, enriching and enticing ambassador.

7.10.2 Arts Infrastructure

Kilkenny is served by a selection of general venue, performance and exhibition spaces, including the internationally-recognised Butler Gallery, the National Craft Gallery (Crafts Council of Ireland), the Watergate Theatre, Rothe House, St. Canice's Cathedral city, pop up spaces and the

libraries. The [Arts Strategy](#)¹²¹ 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, performance and storage facilities.

Objectives:

- 7J To develop an arts venue within the county to fulfil a multiplicity artistic uses**
- 7K To implement the Kilkenny Local Authorities Arts Strategy**

¹²¹ Kilkenny County Council, *Arts Strategy 2005-2009*

8 Heritage

Strategic Aim: To seek the protection and sustainable management of heritage for the benefit of current and future generations; to encourage the collection of knowledge to inform its protection; and to promote access to, awareness of and enjoyment of heritage.

8.1 Introduction

County Kilkenny has a rich and varied built, natural and cultural heritage resource. Landscapes, rivers, woodlands, hedgerows, geology, plants and animals are all part of our natural heritage. Archaeological sites and many other buildings and structures such as houses, shops, churches, bridges and mills are features of our built heritage. Our cultural heritage includes aspects of heritage, such as traditions, practices, knowledge and skills, which are an expression of our culture.

Kilkenny's heritage is that which makes the county unique, what gives it its special character and its 'sense of place'. It is a valuable economic resource. It is the basis for Kilkenny's tourism industry, and brings significant economic benefits to the county. Heritage is also vital for the health, well-being and quality of life of communities.

The *National Heritage Plan* and the *National Biodiversity Plan 2011-2016* recognise the key role that local authorities, and locally-led action, plays in heritage awareness and management. A key element of both plans is an enhanced role for local authorities in heritage management, to be given effect through the preparation and implementation of County Heritage Plans and Biodiversity Action Plans.

Under this remit the Council will seek the protection and sustainable management of the heritage of County Kilkenny for the benefit of current and future generations. Through its policies and actions, the Council will promote increased awareness of the heritage of the county.

Objective:

8A To prepare and implement, in partnership with the Kilkenny Heritage Forum and all relevant stakeholders, a County Heritage Plan and County Biodiversity Plan.

8.2 Natural Heritage

Natural heritage includes the variety of life we see around us every day, often referred to as biodiversity, including rivers and woodlands, hedgerows, mammals, birds and plants. It also includes geology and landscape.

Our natural heritage provides significant economic benefits for the county. It underpins important economic sectors such as agriculture, tourism and recreation, and is a core component of the county's green infrastructure. Protection of the county's natural resources is regarded as necessary to sustain economic growth¹²².

It is the aim of the Council to conserve, enhance and manage the County's natural heritage including its biodiversity, landscapes and geological heritage and to promote understanding of and sustainable access to it.

8.2.1 Protecting Biodiversity in Kilkenny

A number of areas in County Kilkenny have been identified as being of exceptional importance for wildlife at a national and/or international level. These areas are protected through national and European legislation. In addition, certain plant, animal and bird species found in the county are considered rare or vulnerable and are protected by Irish law.

8.2.1.1 Protected Areas of International Importance: Natura 2000

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are being, or have been, designated to conserve habitats and species of European importance pursuant to the EU Habitats and Birds Directives. These sites are part of a pan-European network known as Natura 2000. The designation of candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC) is to conserve habitats and species of European importance and the aim of designating Special Protection Areas (SPA) is to protect birds which are rare, in danger of extinction or vulnerable to changes in habitat, and which need protection.

The designation of these sites is the responsibility of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) division of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Up-to-date information regarding these sites is provided on the NPWS website (www.npws.ie). Current Natura 2000 sites in County Kilkenny are listed in Table 8.1 and shown on Figure 8.1.

Conservation Management Plans have been drawn up for a number of Natura sites, but for only one in Kilkenny to date, for Cullahill Mountain SAC. Such plans include descriptive information and a management framework section that outlines objectives and strategies. The National Parks and Wildlife Service will be requested to prioritise the preparation of Conservation Management Plans for Natura 2000 Sites which are located in County Kilkenny. This is in order to examine how the Conservation Objectives of the sites can be achieved in the context of the proper planning and sustainable development of the county.

A [National Raised Bog SAC Management Plan](#) has also been published by the DoAHG.

¹²² [Delivering our Green Potential](#), Government of Ireland 2012 p5

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020

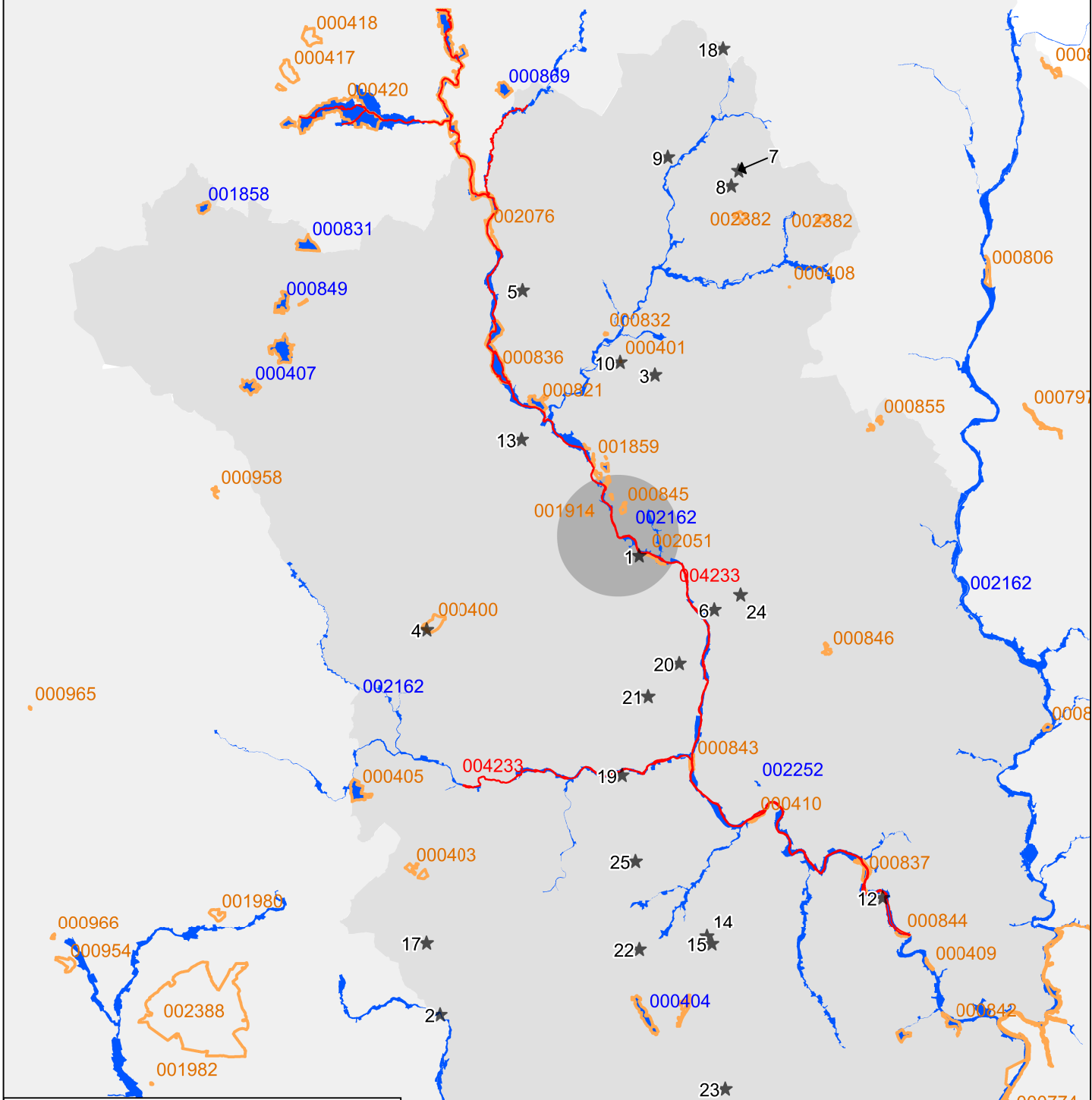


Figure 8.1 Natural Heritage

- Candidate Special Area of Conservation Site Code (See Table 8.1)
- Special Protection Area, Site Code (See Table 8.1)
- Natural Heritage Area, Site Code (See Table 8.1)
- ★ County Geological Sites (See Appendix E)

Date: May 2014
 Scale: 1:300,000 @A4

Based on Ordnance Survey of Ireland Map License No. Kilkenny/CCMA/08/12
 Data on protected sites is from National Parks and Wildlife Service,
 See <http://www.npws.ie/protectedsites>

Appropriate Assessment

As set out in Chapter 1, appropriate assessment means an assessment, based on best scientific knowledge, of the potential impacts of a plan or project, wherever located, on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site and the inclusion, where necessary, of mitigation or avoidance measures to preclude negative effects.

The Council will ensure that an Appropriate Assessment, in accordance with Articles 6(3) and Article 6(4) is carried out in respect of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site, but likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site(s), either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of the site's conservation objectives.

8.2.1.2 Protected Areas of National Importance

Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) have been designated to conserve species and habitats of national importance under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000. There are also a small number of Statutory Nature Reserves and Wildfowl Sanctuaries in County Kilkenny, established under the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000; these are areas where nature conservation is the primary objective and takes precedence over all other activities. The designation of these sites is the responsibility of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) division of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. The boundaries of the protected areas may change during the lifetime of the plan and additional areas may be designated. Up-to-date information regarding these sites is provided on the NPWS website (www.npws.ie). Current protected areas of national importance in County Kilkenny are listed in Table 8.1 and shown on Figure 8.1.

8.2.1.3 Rare or Protected Species and their Habitats

Certain plant, animal and bird species are rare and threatened and are protected by law. This includes plant species listed in the Flora Protection Order, 1999 (or other such Orders) and their habitats; animals and birds listed in the Wildlife Act, 1976 and subsequent statutory instruments; animals and plants listed in Annex IV of the Habitats Directive; and birds listed in Annex 1 of the Birds Directive. For further information on protected species and their habitats see www.npws.ie.

The Planning Authority will consult with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (a) in respect of any proposed development where there is a possibility that such development may have an impact on a protected area of international or national importance, and (b) 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.

See also Section 9.2.8.1 Water Frameworks Directive.

Objectives:

- 8B To protect and, where possible, enhance the natural heritage sites designated under EU Legislation and National Legislation (Habitats Directive, Birds Directive, European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 and Wildlife Acts). This protection will extend to any additions or alterations to sites that may arise during the lifetime of this plan.**
- 8C To protect and, where possible, enhance the plant and animal species and their habitats that have been identified under European legislation (Habitats and Birds Directive) and protected under national Legislation (European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI 477 of 2011), Wildlife Acts 1976-2010 and the Flora Protection Order (SI94 of 1999).**

Development Management standard

Ensure that an ecological impact assessment is carried out for any proposed development likely to have a significant impact on rare and threatened species including those species protected by law and their habitats. Ensure appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are incorporated into development proposals as part of any ecological impact assessment.

Table 8.1 Protected Natural Heritage Sites of International & National Importance						
Site Name	Site Code/Ref	cSAC	SPA	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	✓		✓ ✓		✓
River Nore	004233		✓			
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
 SNR Statutory Nature Reserve * Designated Natural Heritage Area
 Area
 WF Wildfowl Sanctuaries
 SPA Special Protection Areas

See www.npws.ie for further information on protected areas.

8.2.2 Green Infrastructure

The term Green Infrastructure (GI) can be defined as strategically planned and interconnected networks of green space and water capable of delivering ecosystem services and quality of life benefits to people. The South East Regional Planning Guidelines advocate the development of a green infrastructure approach at all levels in the planning system and the preparation of Green Infrastructure Strategies at County/City level.

Green Infrastructure is designed and managed to provide and facilitate the following:

- a high-quality environment which will provide economic benefits by attracting inward investment and new business
- high quality open spaces which provide health and social benefits for people through the provision of play areas, safe and attractive areas and routes for meeting, walking and cycling

- opportunities and space for contact with nature, which is considered essential for good health and wellbeing
- adaptation to the impacts of climate change and flooding.
- local food production - in allotments, gardens and through agriculture
- space for biodiversity (nature and wildlife) to flourish
- a sense of place and local distinctiveness

The emergence of Green Infrastructure planning is a response to the growing recognition of the many benefits which green space provides to society and of the need to plan for its protection, provision and management in tandem with plans for growth and development. It has a significant role to play in assisting in the protection of Natura 2000 sites and biodiversity

Objective:

8D To prepare and support the implementation of a Green Infrastructure Strategy for County Kilkenny, as resources allow.

8.2.3 Nature Conservation Outside of International and National Protected 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. They also have an important role to play as ecological “corridors” or “stepping stones”, that is, they allow for the movement of species, and help to sustain the habitats, ecological processes and functions necessary to enhance and maintain biodiversity. They provide vital links and corridors to allow movement of plant and animals between the network of protected sites. These features include: hedgerows, ditches and banks, stone walls, woodlands, estates and parklands, rivers, streams and associated riparian zones, reservoirs, ponds and canals. Such corridors or interconnected networks are the basis of our Green Infrastructure. It is important that these areas are conserved and managed well.

Article 10 of the Habitats Directive outlines our obligations in relation to natural heritage in the wider countryside. It provides that, through land use planning and development policies, Planning Authorities shall endeavour to improve the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network and encourage the management of landscape features that are of major importance for wild fauna and flora. Such features are those which, by virtue of their function and structure are essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species and form part of the network of green infrastructure.

Kilkenny County Council has commissioned habitat assessments and Green Infrastructure surveys of a number of towns and villages throughout the county (Kilkenny City, Gowran, Fiddown, Piltown, Johnstown, Urlingford, Ballyragget, Ballyhale, Mooncoin, and Knocktopher). The findings of these surveys are vital to improving our understanding of biodiversity resource in

the county and will be used to inform the development management process. Based on the findings of these habitat assessments policies and objectives for the protection and enhancement of the habitats within the local area plan boundaries of Gowran, Fiddown and Piltown have been adopted. These reports are available to view at the Planning Offices of Kilkenny County Council. Further work is required to be undertaken to map the habitats and Green Infrastructure networks associated with the remaining settlements. See also Section 9.2.8.1 Water Frameworks Directive.

Objective:

8E To protect and where possible enhance wildlife habitats and landscape features which act as ecological corridors/networks and stepping stones, such as river corridors, hedgerows and road verges, and to minimise the loss of habitats and features of the wider countryside (such as ponds, wetlands, trees) which are not within designated sites. Appropriate mitigation and/or compensation measures to conserve biodiversity, landscape character and green infrastructure networks will be required where habitats are at risk or lost as part of a development.

8.2.4 Geological Heritage

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) has assessed the geological heritage of County Kilkenny and produced two reports entitled *The Geological Heritage of Kilkenny (2007)* and *An Audit of Geological Sites in County Kilkenny, Phase 2 (2012)*. Both reports are available on the Council's website (www.kilkennycoco.ie). In these reports the GSI identified sites of geological and geomorphological importance in the County and recommended their protection as County Geological Sites (See Appendix E). Some of these sites may be designated by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the GSI as Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) because of their geological interest from a national perspective. In the interim, the Council will seek to maintain the geological value of these sites and to protect, and where appropriate, enhance the geological and geomorphological heritage values of County Geological Sites listed in Appendix E. The locations of the sites are shown on Figure 8.1.

Development management standard

- The Council will consult the Geological Survey of Ireland when considering undertaking, approving or authorising developments which are likely to affect County Geological Sites and encourage and promote access to geological and geomorphological features.

8.2.5 Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows

Woodlands and trees are an environmental, economic, amenity and landscape resource of great importance. They contribute significantly to the biodiversity and landscape character of the county and form part of a network of habitats, ecological 'corridors' and 'stepping stones' essential for wildlife to flourish and move between and within habitats. They are also an important part of our townscapes.

The Tree Register of Ireland (TROI) is a database of outstanding trees in Ireland compiled by the Tree Council of Ireland. The TROI identified significant trees in the county, based on characteristics such as age, height, diameter, historical or folklore connections. A copy of the TROI for Kilkenny is available to view from the Parks Department of Kilkenny County Council.

A Woodland Survey of Kilkenny, commissioned by Kilkenny County Council in 1997, identified the amenity potential of woodlands in the county. A copy of the survey is available to view from the Parks Department of Kilkenny County Council.

The National Survey of Native Woodlands (NSNW)

The NSNW surveyed a total of 58 sites in Kilkenny as part of a National Survey (BEC consultants 2003-2008). A range of data types from both the general site survey (e.g. area, occurrence of rare species, presence of hydrological features) and a sample dataset of the trees (e.g. structural diversity, regeneration status) was used to produce a conservation score for each of the woodlands surveyed.

Ancient woodlands

Ancient woodlands are defined in Ireland as areas which have been wooded since 1660. Possible ancient woodlands (PAWS) and long established woodlands (LEWS) were identified from documentary and archaeological evidence by the NPWS. A total of 28 PAWS and LEWS were identified in Co. Kilkenny.

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. See Appendix F for list of current TPO's in the county. This list may be added to over the course of this Plan. Consult with the Parks Department of the County Council for the most up-to-date list. The Council will conserve important trees, groups of trees or woodlands, using Tree Preservation Orders, as appropriate.
- ii. **Tree Felling**
Under the 1946 Forestry Act, with certain exceptions, it is illegal to uproot or cut down any tree unless notice of intention to do so has been given in accordance with the Act. The Council will provide guidance to landowners on the legal requirements and procedures in relation to tree felling in order to protect the landscape character and biodiversity of the county.

8.2.5.1 Hedgerows

Hedgerows contribute significantly to the biodiversity and landscape character of County Kilkenny. They have an important farming function, they are wildlife habitats, and wildlife corridors between habitats, and they also have historical significance as townland and field boundaries.

Hedgerows are afforded protection under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000, prohibiting the cutting of hedges within the bird nesting period (1st March -1st September).

Kilkenny County Council has undertaken surveys of hedgerows in a number of areas/settlements around the county, as part of Habitat and Green Infrastructure Assessments, undertaken to inform Local Area Plans. See Section 8.2.3 Nature Conservation Outside International and National designations.

Development management standards:

- 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.
- 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.
- Have regard to, and seek the conservation of (a) sites of significance identified in the Kilkenny Woodlands Survey 1997, and (b) the trees of County Kilkenny identified in the Tree Register of Ireland, (c) Survey of Mature Trees in Kilkenny City and Environs in the assessment of planning applications, and (d) the National Survey of Native Woodlands and Ancient Woodlands
- Retain hedgerows, and other distinctive boundary treatment such as stone walls, when undertaking, authorising or approving development; where the loss of the existing boundary is unavoidable as part of development, to ensure that a new hedgerow is planted using native species, and species of local provenance to replace the existing hedgerow and/or that the wall is re-built using local stone and local vernacular design.
- Discourage the felling of mature trees to facilitate development.
- Require the planting of native broadleaved species, and species of local provenance, in new developments as appropriate. See Appendix G for a list of native trees and shrubs.

Objective:

- 8F 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.**

8.2.6 Inland Waters, Rivers, Streams, Wetlands and Groundwater

The rivers and streams, wetlands and groundwater in County Kilkenny are important for biodiversity and provide amenity and recreational resources, particularly angling tourism. Groundwater is important for supplying water and maintaining wetlands and river flows in dry periods. The County's rivers and streams and are also a key component of our Green Infrastructure (see section 8.2.2).

The Rivers Barrow, Nore and Suir (known as the "Three Sisters") are the principal rivers flowing through County Kilkenny. They are protected heritage sites under European legislation – all being designated as cSACs and with part of the River Nore designated as an SPA, see Section 8.2.1.1 above. The rivers of the county are susceptible to impacts from developments carried out at geographically remote areas outside of the site boundary through hydrological links with the designated site, including water abstraction, discharges from wastewater treatment plants, surface water or surface water attenuation. See also Section 9.2.8.1 Water Frameworks Directive.

The development of riverside walks has enabled greater access to the waterways corridors, whilst the rivers themselves are used for water-pursuits including angling, boating, canoeing and kayaking, and swimming. The rivers also provide a rich landscape setting for the towns and village of the county and are often the primary green infrastructure network in urban settings. The economic benefits of the rivers are significant. In 2010 some 127,000 overseas visitors engaged in angling while in Ireland, resulting in a spend of €89 million¹²³. Kilkenny County Council has undertaken a heritage audit of the River Nore, identifying and mapping the built, natural and cultural heritage of the River Nore corridor in County Kilkenny. See section 7.2.3.2 for further details. The data from the audit is being used to inform an interpretative strategy for the River Nore corridor, funded by Kilkenny County Council and Trail Kilkenny.

Because of their importance all rivers and streams will be maintained in an open semi-natural condition, wherever possible. Their corridors and valleys will be protected and maintained for their biodiversity and landscape values, including flood protection where practicable. The natural floodplains along the rivers serve as buffer areas and also as flood attenuation areas. In partnership with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Inland Fisheries Ireland, Waterways Ireland and other relevant stakeholders the Council will facilitate public access to, and understanding of, waterways corridors and wetlands where feasible and appropriate.

Development management standard

- To consult with Inland Fisheries Ireland 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.

¹²³ Fáilte Ireland. *Activity Product Usage among Overseas Visitors in 2010*

- Proposals must demonstrate that they will not adversely affect any habitats and/or species of interest or compromise the river's function as a green infrastructure corridor.

8.2.7 Peatlands

Peatlands are important ecosystems sustaining a range of animal and plant species. The distribution of peatland in Kilkenny is shown on Figure 8.3. This amounted to approximately 1.3% of the total land area of Co. Kilkenny in 2006. Industrial extraction of peat for energy and horticulture in Kilkenny is limited to a small area in the northwest of the county, adjacent to the Tipperary county boundary. Damage to peatlands can occur from domestic peat extraction, afforestation, wind farms, recreational activities and invasive species. Peatlands may contain archaeological artefacts (refer to Chapter 8). A [National Peatland Strategy](#) is being prepared by the Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht and the Peatlands Council.

Development Management Standard

To protect peatlands from inappropriate development having regard to their amenity and biodiversity value and their visual sensitivity.

8.2.8 Invasive Species

Invasive non-native plant and animal species (animals and plants that are introduced accidentally or deliberately into a natural environment where they are not normally found) are a significant threat to biodiversity. They can negatively impact on native species, can transform habitats and threaten ecosystems causing serious problems to the environment, buildings and the economy. The current estimate of the annual cost of invasive species in Ireland is €261 million¹²⁴. There is potential for the spread of invasive species during development works and recreational activities. A number of invasive species are prevalent in Kilkenny. For more information on invasive species see (www.invasivespeciesireland.com). The Council will raise awareness of, and promote best practise in the control of, invasive species.

Development management standard

Ensure, as far as is possible, that the potential for spread of invasive species is examined as part of any application.

8.2.9 Native Plant Species

Where possible, the use of native plants and seeds from indigenous seed sources should be used on all developments and landscape projects/treatments. This is important as it:

¹²⁴ Kelly J.,Tosh D K., and Jodson A., 2013. The economic cost of invasive species in Ireland and Northern Ireland. A report prepared for the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and the National Parks and Wildlife Service as part of Invasive species Ireland.

- Contributes to national commitments on the conservation of biological diversity by establishing native habitats and reducing the planting and dispersion of non-native plants
- Ensures a reduction in the threat posed by the importation of pests and diseases carried on non-native (and non-indigenously sourced) plant material, which have potential for major impact on native flora and fauna, the landscape, agriculture and forestry
- Restores or compensates for loss of habitat
- Maintains regional identity, landscape character and diversity

Development Management Standard

- To promote the use of native plants and seeds from indigenous seed sources in all landscape projects

8.2.10 Landscape

"Landscape" is defined as an area whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors. 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.

The County's landscapes offer a significant economic asset, in particular, the agricultural and tourism potential of the rivers and upland landscapes. The protection and promotion of the landscape as an economic product is therefore critical.

The European Landscape Convention promotes the protection, management and planning of European landscapes. The Convention was adopted by the Council of Europe in October 2000 and came into force in March 2004. The Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht has signalled its intention to publish a National Landscape Strategy, and in September 2011 it published a public consultation paper on the issues to be considered in the preparation of the strategy¹²⁵. The Council will support and implement the provisions of the National Landscape Strategy following its publication.

¹²⁵ Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, [A National Landscape Strategy for Ireland Strategy Issues Paper for Consultation](#), 2011.

8.2.10.1 Landscape Character Assessment

Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is a process which describes, maps and classifies landscapes objectively. Defining landscape character enables an understanding to be formed of the inherent value and importance of individual landscape elements and the processes that may alter landscape character in the future.

Having regard to the European Landscape Convention a Landscape Character Assessment report was prepared for County Kilkenny in 2003 (in accordance with the [Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#), 2000¹²⁶). The Landscape Character Assessment identified four landscape character types, which are subdivided into 14 landscape character areas, with some areas identified as being of special landscape character value and also identified features and areas of high landscape sensitivity.

Objective:

8G To protect and sustainably manage the landscape character of County Kilkenny, having regard to the findings of the landscape character assessment and the development management standards as set out in this chapter for the sustainable development of the county and appropriate conservation of its landscape character.

8.2.10.2 Landscape Character Types

Landscape Character Types are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogenous in character and are generic in nature in that they may occur in different localities throughout the county, but share similar combinations of geology, topography, land cover and historical land use, for example, Upland Areas.

The Landscape Character Assessment divides the county into four landscape character types (LCTs). These are:

- Upland Areas,
- Lowland Areas,
- River Valleys, and
- Transitional Areas.

8.2.10.3 Landscape Character Areas

LCTs are sub-divided into 14 geographically specific Landscape Character Areas. Landscape character areas and types are identified in Figure 8.2 (for further details please refer to the Landscape Character Assessment, which formed Appendix C to the 2008 Development Plan, and

¹²⁶ Department of the Environment and Local Government. [Landscape and Landscape Assessment Consultation Draft of Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#), 2000.

Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020

Landscape Character Types

- Lowland
- Transition zone
- Upland
- River valleys

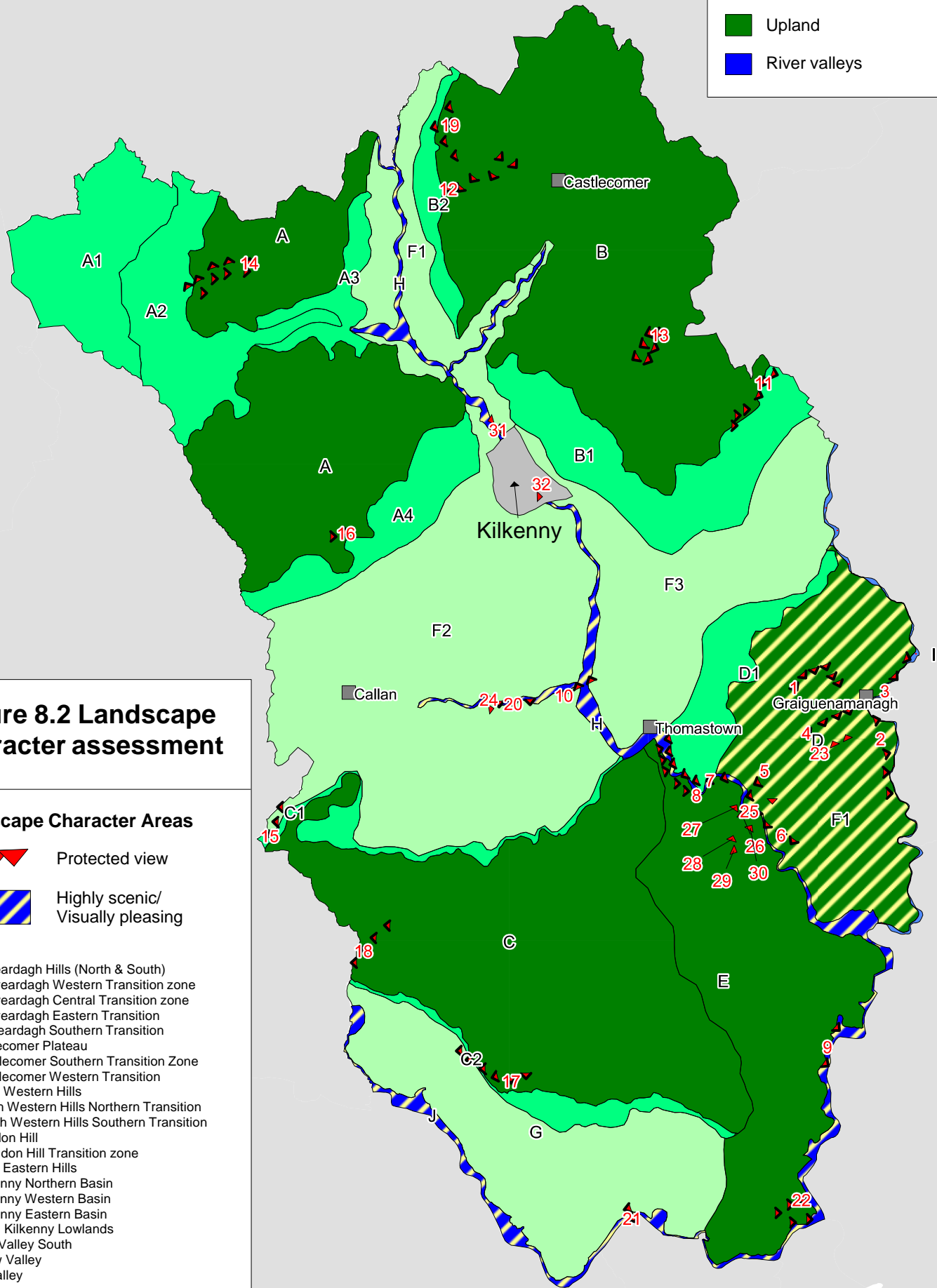


Figure 8.2 Landscape character assessment

Landscape Character Areas

- Protected view
- Highly scenic/
Visually pleasing

- A - Slieveardagh Hills (North & South)
- A1 - Slieveardagh Western Transition zone
- A2 - Slieveardagh Central Transition zone
- A3 - Slieveardagh Eastern Transition
- A4 - Slieveardagh Southern Transition
- B - Castlecomer Plateau
- B1 - Castlecomer Southern Transition Zone
- B2 - Castlecomer Western Transition
- C - South Western Hills
- C1 - South Western Hills Northern Transition
- C2 - South Western Hills Southern Transition
- D - Brandon Hill
- D1 - Brandon Hill Transition zone
- E - South Eastern Hills
- F1 - Kilkenny Northern Basin
- F2 - Kilkenny Western Basin
- F3 - Kilkenny Eastern Basin
- G - South Kilkenny Lowlands
- H - Nore Valley South
- I - Barrow Valley
- J - Suir Valley

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 300,000 @A4

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

is reproduced in full on the Council's website¹²⁷ and available for inspection at the Planning Section of the Council). Landscape Character Areas are units of the landscape that are geographically specific and have their own character and sense of place. Each has its own distinctive character, based upon patterns of geology, landform, landuse, cultural, historical and ecological features.

8.2.10.4 Landscape Character Values

In addition to the physical and visual characteristics of the landscape, communities or individuals attach certain values to the landscape. Landscape values can be described as the environmental or cultural benefits (including services and functions) derived from various landscape attributes.

Landscape Areas of Highly Scenic and Significant Visual Amenity Value

The Landscape Character Assessment highlights the special landscape value of several of the Landscape Character Areas illustrated in Figure 8.2 – in particular Brandon Hill Uplands and the River Valley Areas of the Rivers Nore, Barrow and Suir have been identified as being highly scenic and visually pleasing, and as having significant visual amenity value and tourism potential within the county.

Development management standard

To ensure that development within the Landscape Character Areas of Brandon Hill Uplands and the River Valleys of the Nore, Barrow and Suir, which are highly scenic and visually pleasing, and of significant visual amenity value, are carefully sited and designed and can be successfully assimilated into the landscape.

8.2.10.5 Landscape Character Sensitivity

The sensitivity of the Landscape Character Areas is defined as its overall resilience to sustain its character in the face of change and its ability to recover from loss or damage to its components.

Areas of Greater Sensitivity

The Landscape Character Assessment identified areas throughout the county that are highly sensitive to development and have a low capacity for change. These areas are identified on Figure 8.3. These areas take account of areas of higher altitude in the county and of land cover. In general areas of elevated topography, with low growing or sparse vegetation and little existing development are landscapes of high sensitivity and have a low potential to absorb new development.

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http://www.kilkennycoco.ie/resources/eng/Services/Planning/DevelopmentPlans/Appendix_C_Landscape_Character_Assessment.pdf

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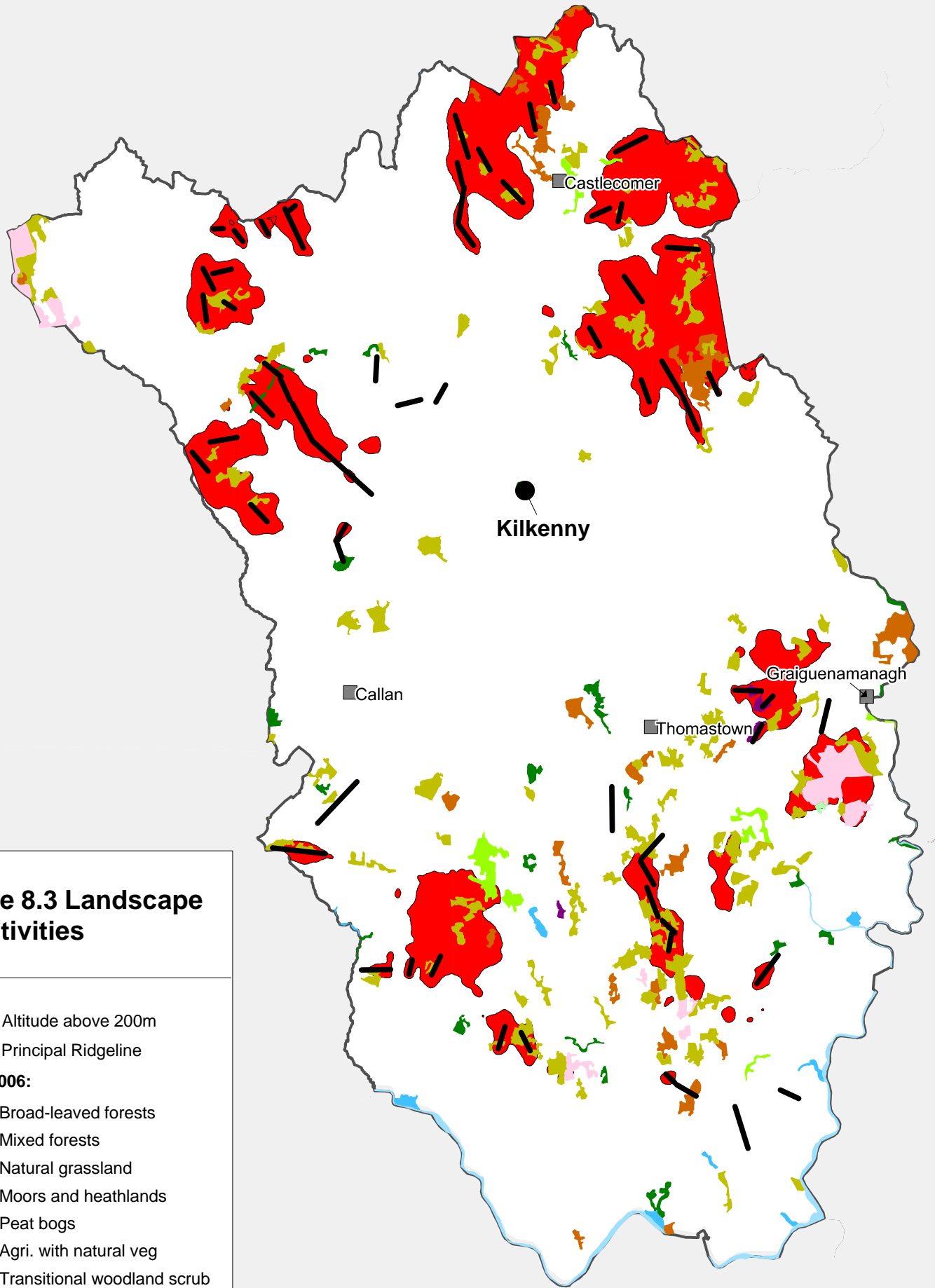


Figure 8.3 Landscape sensitivities

- Altitude above 200m
- Principal Ridgeline
- Corine 2006:**
- Broad-leaved forests
- Mixed forests
- Natural grassland
- Moors and heathlands
- Peat bogs
- Agri. with natural veg
- Transitional woodland scrub
- Inland marshes
- Stream courses

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 300,000 @A4

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

Sensitive land-use categories include areas which are open and exposed with sparse or low growing vegetation cover which is insufficient to provide screening. Even if planting is introduced, the exposed nature of these areas will not support any significant tall vegetation. Due to this, any development would be visible over a wide area. The exceptions to this are broadleaved, mixed forest and transitional woodland scrub areas which do support tall vegetation with potential to screen development. However these categories are sensitive due to their natural character and their longevity in the landscape; any loss to their structure (for example, through felling) would have a visual impact over a wide area.

8.2.10.6 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 protected are contained in Appendix H to the Plan and are shown on Figure 8.2. The Planning Authority will be cognisant of the impact of developments within the county on views from neighbouring counties.

Objective:

8H To preserve and improve places or areas from which views or prospects of special amenity value exist, as identified in Appendix H and on Figure 8.2.

Development Management Standards:

- To protect the landscape character, quality and local distinctiveness of County Kilkenny, and have regard to the guidance set out in the Landscape Character Assessment.
- Where necessary, to require that applications are accompanied by a visual impact assessment, particularly in upland areas, river valleys and areas of greater sensitivity.
- To facilitate appropriate development that reflects the scale, character and sensitivities of the local landscape throughout the county, and require that developments minimise the loss of natural features such as trees, hedgerows and stone walls.
- To facilitate, where appropriate, 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, and to ensure that any residual adverse visual impacts are minimised or mitigated.
- To ensure that development in upland areas or on steep slopes will not have a disproportionate or dominating visual impact (due to excessive bulk, scale or inappropriate

siting) and will not significantly interfere or detract from scenic upland vistas, or when viewed from public areas, scenic routes, viewpoints or settlements.

- To have particular regard to the potential impacts of new development on sensitive upland areas, and to materially consider the difficulty of establishing and maintaining screening vegetation when assessing development proposals in these areas.
- To continue to permit development that can utilise existing structures and settlement areas whilst taking account of the local visual absorption opportunities provided by existing topography and prevailing vegetation and to direct new development whenever possible towards the vicinity of existing structures and mature vegetation in the Lowland Areas, River Valleys and Transitional Areas.
- To recognise that in the Lowland Areas which are comprised of low lying open environments, 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.
- To ensure that development in the River Valleys will not adversely affect or detract from either protected views (see Appendix H) (especially from bridges) or distinctive linear sections of river valleys (especially open floodplains) when viewed from settlements.
- To maintain the visual integrity of areas of greater sensitivity in the county and ensure that any development in these areas is appropriately sited and designed. Applicants shall demonstrate that the proposed development can be assimilated into the landscape and will not have a disproportionate visual impact on the landscape.

8.3 Built Heritage

Built heritage includes all man-made features, buildings, and structures in the environment. It includes our rich and varied archaeological and architectural heritage.

8.3.1 Archaeological Heritage

Archaeology is defined as the study of past people through the physical traces left by them in the landscape, often in the form of monuments, sites, features or objects. Our archaeological heritage contributes to our understanding of our past and also to our cultural, educational and tourism assets. Archaeological sites and monuments vary in form and date. They include earthworks (e.g ringforts), megalithic sites; Fulachta Fiadh; early Christian ecclesiastical sites, churches, graveyards, medieval buildings; castles, industrial archaeology and underwater sites. Archaeological remains may not always be isolated finds or sites but may have been linked at one time with other archaeological monuments in the immediate vicinity or sometimes in more distant locations – creating historic landscapes. The Council will promote awareness of, and

facilitate access to, the archaeological inheritance of County Kilkenny and will provide guidance to developers and property owners regarding the archaeological implications of proposed developments.

The National Monuments Acts 1930 – 2004 provide for the protection of the archaeological heritage. The principles set out in the *Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage* (1999) provide the national policy framework in relation to archaeological heritage.

There are different levels of monument protection under the National Monuments Acts. A level of universal protection is afforded to all monuments listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP). A lesser number of monuments are accorded a higher level of protection, that is, some are entered on the Register of Historic Monuments, and some are deemed to be of national significance and are National Monuments. While the RMP lists those sites above and below ground that are known to exist, due to the time span and density of human settlement in Co. Kilkenny the possibility always exists of finding previously unrecorded archaeology. See www.archaeology.ie for notification and consent procedures, from the National Monuments Section of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, in relation to works on monuments.

The RMP for County Kilkenny can be viewed in the Council's Planning Department and online at the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's website www.archaeology.ie.

A list of National Monuments in State Care¹²⁸ is available at:

<http://archaeology.ie/NationalMonuments/NationalMonumentsinStatecarebycounty/>

A list of Monuments subject to Preservation Orders is available at:

http://www.archaeology.ie/media/archeologyie/PDFS/PO10V1_AllCounties.pdf

Archaeological structures may, in some situations, be considered as architectural heritage and, therefore, may appear on both the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and the Record of Protected Structures (RPS). This means that these structures are protected by both the National Monuments Acts and the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010. An archaeological assessment of a site or a building may be required before carrying out works. It is advisable to arrange a pre-planning consultation with the Council before embarking on such works in this regard.

¹²⁸ For all other monuments in private and public ownership, clarification as to whether they are deemed to be national monuments can be obtained by contacting the National Monuments Service of the Department of the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Development management standards

- Endeavour to preserve in situ all archaeological monuments, whether on land or underwater, listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), and any newly discovered archaeological sites, features, or objects by requiring that archaeological remains are identified and fully considered at the very earliest stages of the development process and that schemes are designed to avoid impacting on the archaeological heritage.
- To require archaeological assessment, surveys, test excavation and/or monitoring for planning applications in areas of archaeological importance if a development proposal is likely to impact upon in-situ archaeological monuments, their setting and archaeological remains.
- Ensure that development within the vicinity of a Recorded Monument is sited and designed appropriately so that it does not seriously detract from the setting of the feature or its zone of archaeological potential. Where upstanding remains of a Recorded Monument exist a visual impact assessment may be required to fully determine the effect of any proposed development.
- Require the retention of surviving medieval plots and street patterns and to facilitate the recording of evidence of ancient boundaries, layouts etc. in the course of development.
- Safeguard the importance of significant archaeological or historic landscapes from developments that would unduly sever or disrupt the relationship, connectivity and/or inter-visibility between sites.

8.3.1.1 Walled Towns

County Kilkenny has a rich medieval heritage and contains a number of walled towns and villages, of which Kilkenny city is perhaps the best known. There are also other towns and villages throughout the county which are known to have been walled, including Callan, Gowran, Inistioge and Thomastown¹²⁹. Town defences are considered to be monuments for the purposes of the National Monuments Acts, 1930-2004. The Council will support the [National Policy on Town Defences](#)¹³⁰ which sets out national policy for the protection, preservation and conservation of the defences of towns and cities.

8.3.1.2 Underwater Archaeology

Any development near watercourses, be they freshwater or in marine/coastal areas, should take into account the potential to encounter underwater cultural heritage. Such sites may include sources of underwater cultural heritage such as shipwrecks, fishtraps, fording points, bridges, intertidal kelp grids, etc. as well as artefactual material from an underwater context. Due regard to the Shipwreck Inventory of Ireland database and Ports and Harbours Archive, as held by the Underwater Archaeology Unit in the National Monuments Service, should be consulted as part

¹²⁹ Thomas, A, *The Walled Towns of Ireland*, 1992

¹³⁰ Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, [National Policy on Town Defences](#), 2008

of this aspect of archaeological heritage. Any development either above or below water, including to river banks or coastal edges, within the vicinity of a site of archaeological interest shall not be detrimental to the character of the archaeological site or its setting. Planning applications will be referred to the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in this regard where relevant.

The [brochure](#) "Archaeology in the Planning Process" is available from www.archaeology.ie. Data on underwater archaeological sites (marine, coastal and inland waterways), including the Shipwreck Inventory of Ireland and the Ports and Harbours Archive) are available from the Underwater Archaeology Unit, in the National Monuments Service.

8.3.2 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 have since been added to the Record of Protected Structures. Contact the Heritage Office of the County Council for further details.

Objective:

8I Protect archaeological sites and monuments (including their setting), underwater archaeology, and archaeological objects, 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 and underwater archaeological remains.

8.3.3 Conservation Plans

Conservation Plans have been prepared for significant archaeological and architectural sites in County Kilkenny. These include [St. Lachtain's Church, Freshford](#)¹³¹ and [Newtown Jerpoint](#)¹³².

Objective:

8J To facilitate and support the implementation of existing (and any further) conservation plans, as resources allow.

¹³¹ Heritage Council, [St. Lachtain's Church, Freshford](#) Conservation Plan, 2004

¹³² Heritage Council, [Newtown Jerpoint](#) Conservation Plan, 2007

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

Kilkenny County Council commissioned an inventory of the historic graveyards of the County. The data from this survey has been mapped and is available at for inspection on the council's website¹³³. In addition, recordings of the headstone in historic graveyards have been collected by community groups with support from the Council and can be accessed at www.historicgraves.ie.

"Guidance for the Care, Conservation and Recording of Historic Graveyards" (Heritage Council, 2010) provides best practice guidance and advice on caring for and recording historic graveyards¹³⁴. The Council will conserve and protect historic graveyards and churches within Kilkenny and encourage their maintenance in accordance with conservation principles and as resources allow.

8.3.5 Architectural Heritage

8.3.5.1 Record of Protected Structures

Protecting architectural heritage is an important function of the planning authority, particularly in a county like Kilkenny where the built heritage has such a strong role to play in ensuring the continued economic prosperity of the place. Each development plan must include policy objectives to protect structures or parts of structures of special interest within its functional area. The primary means of achieving this is to include a Record of Protected Structures (RPS) for the functional area within the development plan. A planning authority is obliged to include in the RPS every structure, which, in its opinion, is of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

A protected structure, unless otherwise stated in the RPS, includes the interior of the structure, land lying within the curtilage, any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors, plus all fixtures and features which form a part of the interior or exterior of any of these structures.

¹³³

http://www.kilkennycoco.ie/eng/Services/Digital_Mapping/Google_Maps_Applications/Burial_Grounds/

¹³⁴ http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/Archaeology/Guidance_Historic_Graveyards.pdf

Works which would in the opinion of the planning authority have a material effect on the character of the protected structure require planning permission. Those with an interest in a protected structure may seek a Declaration under Section 57(2) which would offer practical guidance in relation to the protection of the structure. Section 57(10)(b) of the Planning and Development 2000 provides that permission may only be granted for the demolition of a 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 RPS (as correct at time of publication) is listed in Appendix I.

Objectives:

- 8K** To 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.
- 8L** To carry out a review of the Record of Protected Structures.
- 8M** To complete digital mapping of the Record of Protected Structures.
- 8N** 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 and the Structures at Risk Fund, funded by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- 8O** To provide assistance to owners of protected structures in undertaking essential repairs and maintenance by the provision of relevant information.

Development management standard

- The Council will have regard to the [Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines](#)¹³⁵ when assessing proposals for development affecting a protected structure.
- To encourage the sympathetic retention, reuse and rehabilitation of protected structures and their setting.

8.3.5.2 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) survey for Kilkenny was published in 2006 (www.buildingsofireland.ie). The planning authority is obliged to consider for inclusion in its Record of Protected Structures any buildings rated as being of Regional, National or International importance by the NIAH and to give consideration to including structures rated of local importance. Kilkenny City and County Councils are continuing to process, on a phased basis, the addition to the RPS of all NIAH buildings recommended for inclusion by the Minister.

¹³⁵ Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, [Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#), 2004

This may be done as part of the development plan review process or separately under Section 55 of the Planning and Development Act.

Objective

8P 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, and to consider for inclusion those rated of local significance.

Development management standard

To have regard to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines when assessing applications and proposals for development affecting structures included in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

8.3.5.3 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 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) has 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. For further information see <http://www.buildingsofireland.ie/Surveys/Gardens/>

Development management standard

To seek the protection and sustainable management of historic gardens, parklands and designed landscapes in the county, their setting and their visual amenity.

8.3.6 Architectural Conservation Areas

Each development plan must include a policy objective to preserve the character of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) within its functional area. An ACA is a place, area, group of structures or townscape, taking account of building lines and heights, that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or that contributes to the appreciation of a protected structure, and whose character it is an objective of the development plan to preserve.

The purpose of designating an ACA is to manage change, affording greater control over the form of development and reducing instances of inappropriate development and demolition. The character of an ACA is often derived from the collective value of an area's buildings, their

setting, landscape and other locally important features developed gradually over time. It is usually an expression of our culture and identity and contributes significantly to the quality of our lives.

There are nine existing ACA's located within Ballyragget, Bennettsbridge, Callan, Castlecomer, Freshford, Gowran, Graiguenamanagh, Inistioge and Thomastown which were identified during the preparation of Local Area Plans for these villages. It is proposed to designate an ACA for Johnstown in this plan. There may be other ACA's designated within the lifetime of this county development plan. The ACAs for Callan, Castlecomer, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown are set out in the local area plans for those towns which were published in 2009 and 2010.

A general set of policies for all ACAs within the County is set out below. A statement of character has been devised for each of these ACAs in order to identify the character that is worthy of protection. Any works proposed to the exterior of a building within an ACA which would affect the special character of the area would not be considered exempted development. For example replacement of timber sash windows with inappropriate alternatives (eg uPVC) would not be exempted development within an ACA. Where applications are made for works outside an ACA which would have the potential to impact on the character of the ACA, these applications will be assessed using the criteria set out in the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for assessing developments within the attendant grounds of protected structures (Section 13.8 AHPG). Guidance on the criteria the planning authority will use to assess proposals for new development and proposals for demolition within an ACA are given in section 3.10 of the [Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines](#).

The following table lists the conservation areas in the county.

Table 8.2: Architectural Conservation Areas, County Kilkenny (excluding Kilkenny city)
Ballyragget
Bennettsbridge
Callan
Castlecomer
Freshford
Gowran
Graiguenamanagh
Inistioge
Johnstown
Thomastown

Implications for Planning and Development

The objective of the ACA designation is to protect the special character of an area through rigorous control and positive management of any changes made to the built environment. Owners and occupiers of non-protected structures in any ACA should be aware that works which in the opinion of the planning authority would materially affect the character of the area as outlined here would require planning permission under Section 82(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

General ACA Objectives:

- 8Q** To ensure the preservation of the special character of each ACA listed (Table 8.2) above and within the county particularly with regard to building scale, proportions, historical plot sizes, building lines, height, general land use, building materials, historic street furniture and paving.
- 8R** To designate ACAs where appropriate and provide a local policy framework for the preservation of the character of these areas.

General ACA Development Management Guidance

- To have regard to the [Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines](#), when assessing proposals for development affecting the character of an ACA
- 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.
- To ensure that inappropriate materials such as windows, doors and rainwater goods constructed in aluminium or uPVC are not introduced to buildings within ACAs.
- 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
- To ensure the preservation of the character of an ACA when assessing proposals for advertising
- 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.
- 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.
- To seek the retention of mature trees/significant planting (those in good condition) which contribute to the character of each ACA where appropriate.

8.3.6.1 Ballyragget ACA

Description and historical Background

Ballyragget is the Anglicised version of Béal Átha Ragadh meaning mouth of Ragget's Ford and it takes its name from Richard le Ragget, an Anglo-Norman landowner who held these lands in the 13th century. The layout of the town lends support to its Anglo Norman origins. The Square was originally laid out as a wide main street to accommodate markets and the famous 'fair day' which took place here right up to the 1960s when people bought and sold farm animals.

Older names of the settlement include 'Donoughmore' (Irish: *Domhnach Mór* 'Large Church'). There is some debate as to the meaning of Donoughmore. The very first Journal of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society "Old Kilkenny Review, Number 1 (1946–1947) January 1948" has an article about Ballyragget and its environs and states the belief that *Domhnach Mór* means Big Sunday and relates to the fact that thousands of people congregated at the now ruined church in Donoughmore for its opening on a Sunday and the name stuck.

ACA Boundaries

See Figure 8.4.

Statement of Character

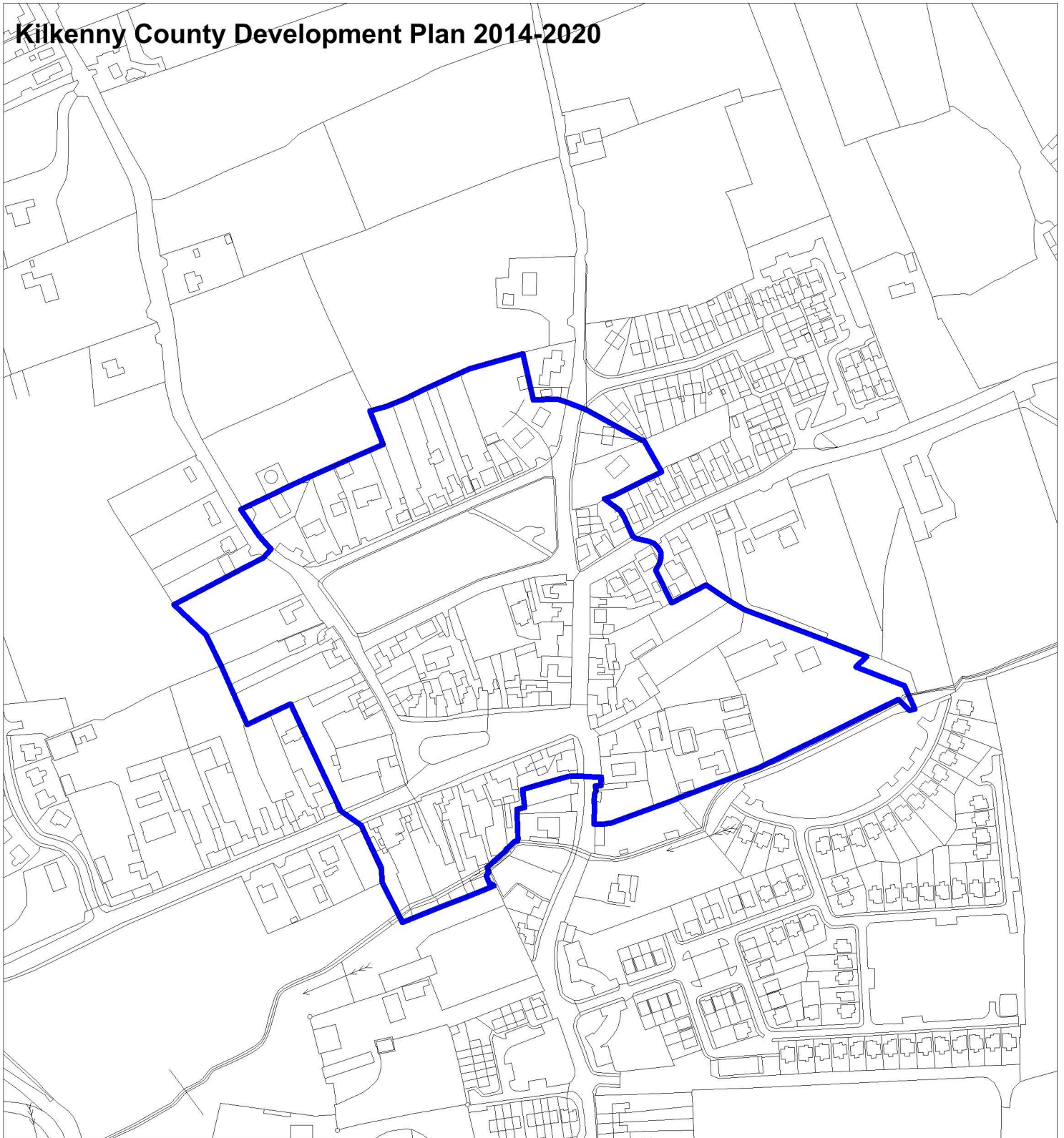
Ballyragget's unique character is formed by:

1. The urban street pattern, characteristic of a town rather than a village, with streets leading off the square in different directions and a complete urban block between the Square and the Fair Green.
2. A generally coherent streetscape as a backdrop to the public realm, made up for the most-part of 18th and 19th century structures of consistent architectural scale, proportion and finish, particularly around the square.
3. The contrast between the town's principal open spaces...
4. The well-contained space and triangular shape of the Square which allows attractive oblique views of the complete streetscapes from most vantage points.
5. By contrast, the open nature of the Fair Green which allows long views to landmark buildings like the Church and Stephouse.

The characteristics as set out above combine to create an urban quality of very pleasant scale in Ballyragget and this gives the town a strong identity and a unique 'sense of place'.

ACA Development Management Standards based on assessment of special character

- BACA 1 Care should be taken during works on external wall finishes, the practice of removing render to expose stonework significantly alters the character of the structure and can damage the fabric of the building.
- BACA 2 The roofscape of Ballyragget is part of its special character. Original elements and profiles should be retained where possible and repaired and reused rather than replaced.
- BACA 3 Original window and door fittings should be retained where possible and reused rather than replaced.



**Figure 8.4 Ballyragget
Architectural
Conservation
Area**

 ACA boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 3,000 @A4

- BACA 4 To seek the retention of materials and finishes, massing, height, alignment, orientation and window proportions that reflect the existing character of the area
- BACA 5 To seek the protection of the existing landscaping and features within the public realm that contribute to the character of the town
- BACA 6 Carriage arch openings are a feature of many of the buildings around the square. These openings should be retained with planning permission required for alterations.
- BACA 7 Planning permission is required for the alteration of commercial frontages whether a structure is within an ACA or not. Original/early shopfronts should be retained or repaired where possible.
- BACA 8 New signage must not detract from the character of the ACA. Locations of bus stops and advertising must be carefully considered within the ACA
- BACA 9 To seek the retention, repair and maintenance of the buildings which make up the streetscape of the ACA.
- BACA 10 To seek the refurbishment of derelict or vacant properties which are of historic interest or which contribute to the visual coherence of the streetscape.
- BACA 11 New development should be appropriate in form and use to its corner, infill or backland location. Established views to local landmarks should be maintained.
- BACA 12 New development should be of a very high standard of design, and should contribute to the visual enhancement of the area and respect the character of the ACA as set out in the above statement of character.
- BACA 13 Where a planning application is made for the demolition of a structure within an ACA on the grounds of structural defects or failure, a report produced by a suitably qualified and experienced professional specifying the existing condition and outlining reasons why repair options and remedial works are not deemed suitable in this case will be required.

8.3.6.2 Freshford ACA

Description and historical Background

The square in Freshford was not laid out as a planned space but instead developed and evolved organically as an urban centre to facilitate the needs of the community. Its appearance as a planned settlement is due to the work of the Eyre family of Upper Court Demesne and particularly, Thomas Eyre.

During the late nineteenth-century the landowner Thomas Eyre undertook a programme to formalise the centre of the village. His ambitious plans included the construction of two schools, housing for his estate workers, a new Roman Catholic Church, installation of water pumps and construction of a new formal entrance to his property, Upper Court House, on the south side of the square.

The two schools were realised. Separate male and female schools were built and were officially opened by their patron, Thomas Eyre on 10th May 1876. These fine two-storey rendered buildings with tooled limestone dressings continue to flank the south side of the square. It was Thomas Eyre's intention to construct the new entrance to Upper Court House in the space

between the schools. This was never built and instead the void was gradually filled with extensions to the schools. These buildings are now in use as a community nursing home called Prague House.

The town's water pumps were installed by the same member of the Eyre family in 1878. A large pump was installed in the centre of the Square with limestone slabs and drains around it. Thomas Eyre's patronage of the project was recorded on one of the limestone slabs. The second smaller water pump is located on the west side of the square.

Thomas Eyre also undertook the construction of estate workers' cottages on the west side of the square. He was responsible for the first four to six cottages at the south end of the west side of the square known as 'New Row'.

By the late nineteenth century the formalised square had become the central focus of the town, accommodating schools, the doctor's house and the town's dispensary, the constabulary barracks, the canon's house, local shops and public houses. In c.1910 Emma Browne Clayton built a town hall and donated it to the community. Located on the north side of the square, it is the only three-storey structure on the square.

In c.1913 Stanislaus Eyre planted the horse chestnut trees around the green. These trees formalise the square's character and contribute greatly to the setting of the architecture. In the past the square was used as a public meeting area, recreational grounds and fair green. Charles Stewart Parnell delivered his speech from the steps of Dr. Hourigan's house (a large detached house on the east side of the square) when he visited Freshford in 1890.

ACA Boundaries

The ACA boundary as shown in the 2004 LAP shall remain. See Figure 8.5.

Statement of Character

Freshford is arranged around a tree-lined square. The Square forms not only the physical centre of the town but also its social and commercial heart. It is the hub from which all local roads radiate, bringing life into the community. The green is surrounded by nineteenth-century terraced houses, the Roman Catholic Church, a community hall and various shops and public houses.

The square is flanked to the east by a long wide road leading to the Catholic Church and to the local primary school located to the rear of the Church. The entrance to Uppercourt Demesne is located further out this road. The west side of the square consists of a terrace of eleven two-storey houses and the south side consists of the former girls and boys school, now Prague House, a community nursing home. The north side of the square has a predominantly commercial character and forms a thoroughfare west out of the town.

ACA Development Management Standards based on assessment of special character

- See policies above relating to all ACAs
- FACA 1 Care should be taken during works on external wall finishes, the practice of removing render to expose stonework significantly alters the character of the structure and can damage the fabric of the building.

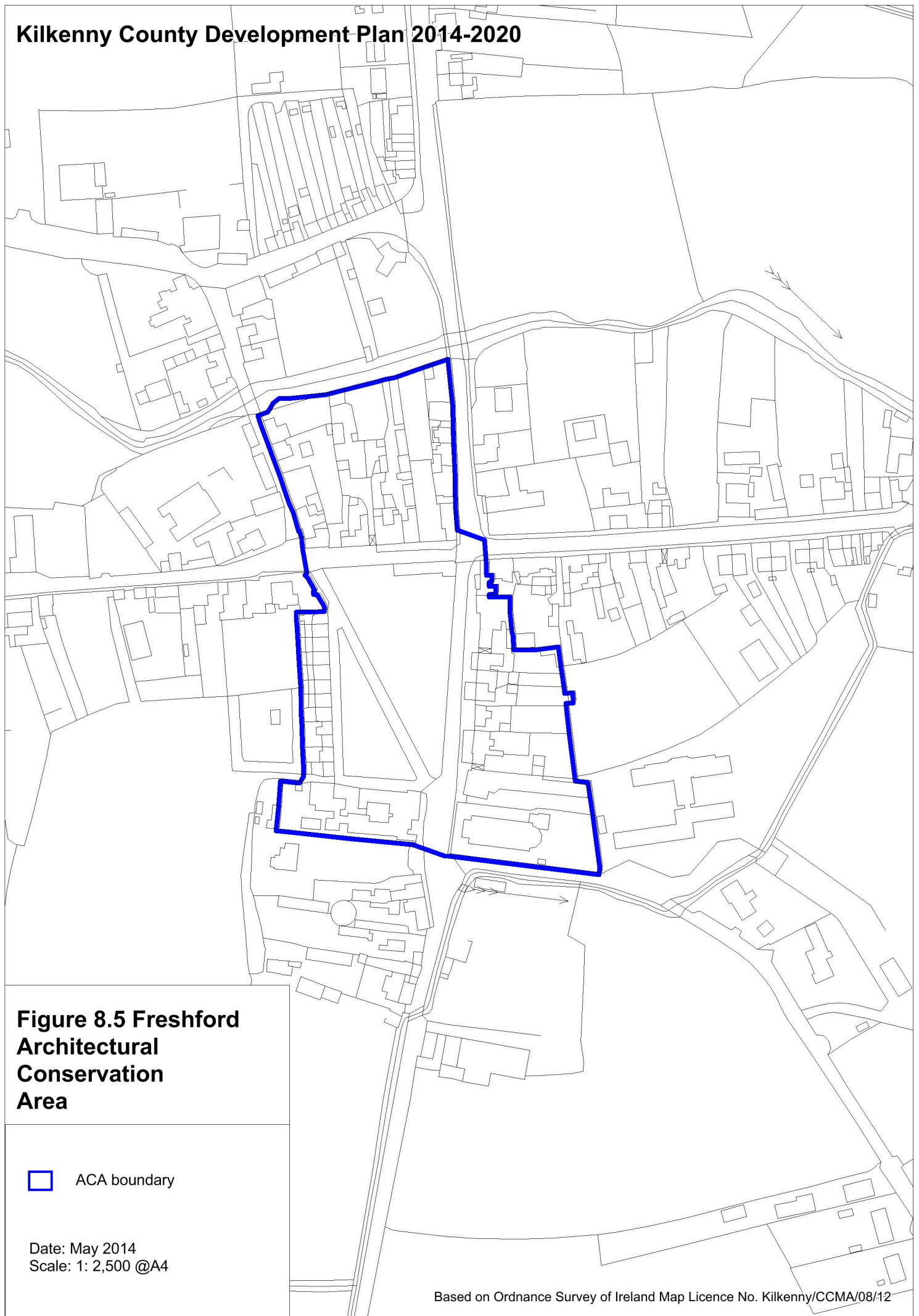


Figure 8.5 Freshford Architectural Conservation Area

 ACA boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 2,500 @A4

- FACA 2 The roofscape of Freshford is part of its special character. Original elements and profiles should be retained where possible and repaired and reused rather than replaced.
- FACA 3 Original window and door fittings should be retained where possible and reused rather than replaced.
- FACA 4 To seek the protection of the Square in Freshford, and maintain its importance as natural amenity. No development shall be permitted that in any way negatively impacts on the pivotal nature of the square in the town.
- FACA 5 To maintain the height lines of the structures particularly the relationship of the Community Hall to its surrounds to the north of the square.
- FACA 6 To seek the protection of the existing landscaping and features within the public realm that contribute to the character of the town. To retain the horse chestnut trees around the green.
- FACA 7 To seek the retention of materials and finishes, massing, height, alignment, orientation and window proportions that reflect the existing character of the area
- FACA 8 New signage must not detract from the character of the ACA. Locations of bus stops and advertising must be carefully considered within the ACA
- FACA 9 To seek the retention, repair and maintenance of the buildings which make up the streetscape of the ACA.
- FACA 10 To seek the refurbishment of derelict or vacant properties which are of historic interest or which contribute to the visual coherence of the streetscape.
- FACA 11 New development should be appropriate in form and use to its corner, infill or backland location. Established views to local landmarks should be maintained.
- FACA 12 New development should be of a very high standard of design, and should contribute to the visual enhancement of the area and respect the character of the ACA as set out in the above statement of character.
- FACA 13 Where a planning application is made for the demolition of a structure within an ACA on the grounds of structural defects or failure, a report produced by a suitably qualified and experienced professional specifying the existing condition and outlining reasons why repair options and remedial works are not deemed suitable in this case will be required.

8.3.6.3 *Inistioge ACA*

Description and Historical Background

Inistioge may have originated as a Viking settlement as it is located at the lowest crossing point of the River Nore and we know that the Osraige defeated Olaf Cuaran, King of Dublin, at Inistioge in 964. The area was granted to Thomas FitzAnthony in 1169 and he established the Augustinian Priory in 1206. The priors developed the settlement but Inistioge declined after the dissolution of the Monasteries in 1540, and in 1566 the Priory lands were granted to Sir Edmond Butler.

Inistioge was incorporated as a town by James 1st in 1608 and weekly markets on a Friday and an annual fair on December 13th were established. In 1649 the town was besieged and captured by the Cromwellians. Much evidence of medieval Inistioge can still be seen today.

- The vestibule of the church of Ireland was part of the original priory and fragments from the cloister have been incorporated into the north and east wall of the Catholic Church.
- The Black Castle in the churchyard behind the Church of Ireland was part of the Augustinian Priory and is now the Tighe (Woodstock Estate) family mausoleum.
- The motte of Thomas FitzAnthony's first fortification is located behind the houses halfway up the hill from the Square and survives to a height of 10 metres. The ruin of a three-storey fortified town house can be seen on the west side of the Square and between the Square and the river is another two-storey medieval structure. The upper level is a later remodelling on the original base and we know this building was used as a courthouse during part of its history.
- St. Columbkille's Holy Well, tucked away in the north-east of the village has an elaborate entranceway incorporating a number of 16th century carved stone panels which were probably salvaged from the priory. There is mention of a town wall in the 1608 charter but knowledge of the line of the wall over most of its length has been lost. However there appears to be remains incorporated into the boundary walls of the houses running south from the fortified houses of the square.

Inistioge prospered in the 18th and 19th centuries and its development was intertwined with that of the Woodstock Estate. Woodstock was built by Francis Bindon in the late 1740's for the Fownes family and although the House is remote from the village, the main approach to Woodstock, the River gate, lower avenue and lodge and the almshouses on the Square all attest to the importance of the Estate in the development of the village.

The combination of the steep hill and the earlier medieval walled settlement pattern resulted in a dense concentration of buildings by the end of the 19th Century with a high proportion of fine two and three storey structures.

The relative density and elegance of much of this development gives Inistioge an urban quality which is unusual in such a small town and the concentration of public buildings set out informally round a sheltered space away from the River would be more typical of pre-renaissance Italy.

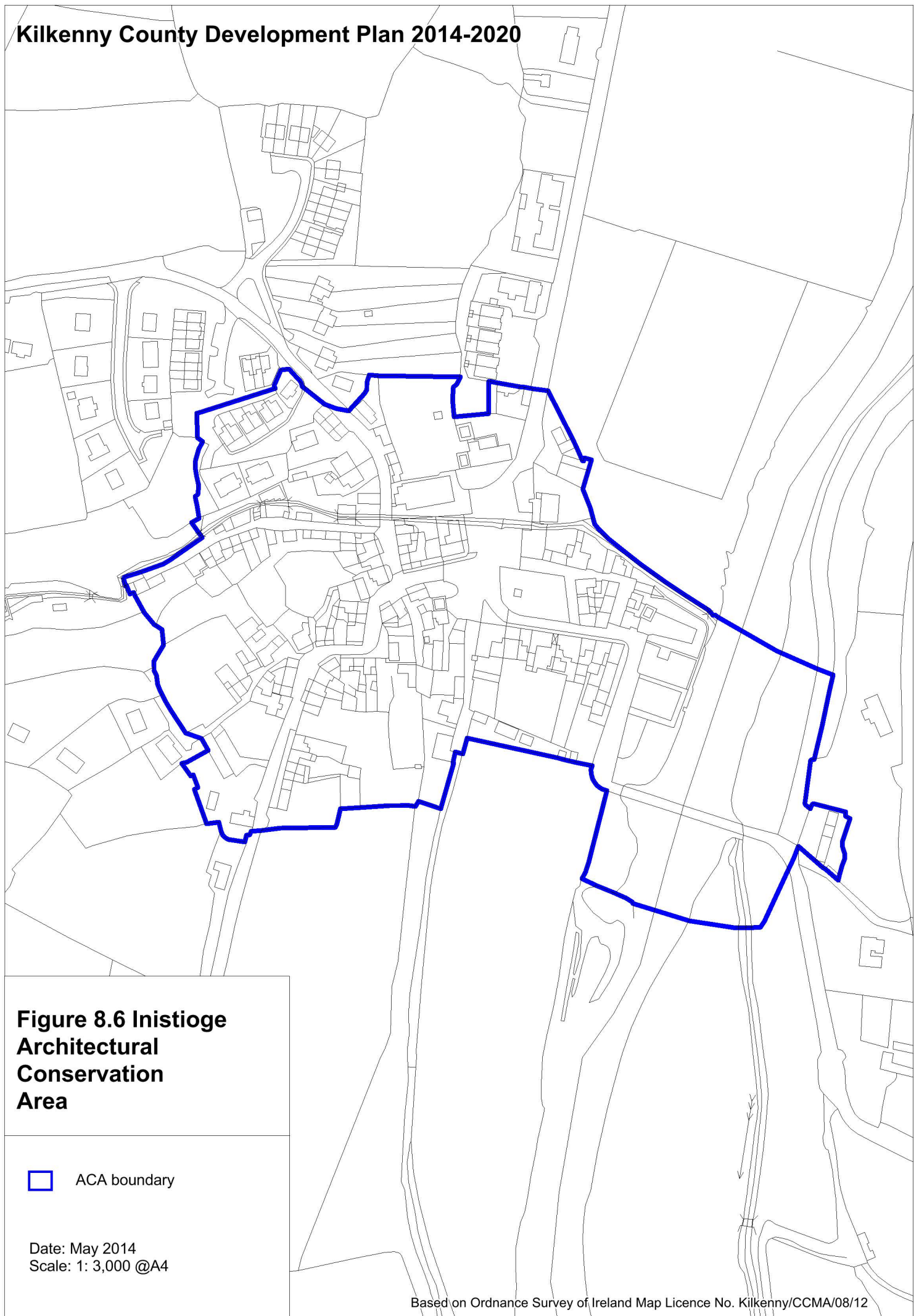
The Catholic Church was built in 1836. The Church of Ireland Church incorporates sections of the mediaeval Augustinian abbey, with a belfry and clock donated by William Tighe, the local landlord, in 1876. With his wife, Lady Louisa, he is more famous for the development of the 19th century Woodstock Gardens and Arboretum now restored and managed by Kilkenny County Council. Inistioge is identified as a National Monument due to its rich archaeological heritage and is protected under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994.

ACA Boundaries

The boundaries as shown in the 2004 Local Area Plan should be maintained, see Figure 8.6.

Statement of Character

Inistioge is a settlement which has prospered down through the ages, located on the river, once a major thoroughfare and source of fresh water and sheltered by hills into which it nestles, its topography is a key contributor to its success as a settlement and to the sense of place which it



**Figure 8.6 Inistioge
Architectural
Conservation
Area**

 ACA boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 3,000 @A4

retains to this day. The unique character of Inistioge is formed by its siting as a compact urban settlement in a panoramic landscape, allowing Inistioge to be viewed as an entity from the surrounding hills. The rectilinear street pattern of the village and the numerous sharp turns provide shelter from the elements within the settlement but also frame beautiful and unexpected views out to the surrounding landscape.

The urban quality of Inistioge is founded in part on a remarkable hierarchy of public open space. The ready perception of the surrounding landscape, the open but gentle river front, the formal urban streetscape round the square, the effective civic core at the bottom of the hill sheltered and surrounded by public buildings, churches, restaurants and public houses, the more informal townscape of the rising streets with miniature gardens and picturesque porches. The incidence of such a variety of urban space, contained so neatly within a small settlement is rare indeed, almost as if a city in miniature had evolved on the historic crossing of the River Nore.

ACA Development Management Standards based on assessment of special character

- See policies above relating to all ACAs
- IACA 1 Care should be taken during works on external wall finishes, the practice of removing render to expose stonework significantly alters the character of the structure and can damage the fabric of the building.
- IACA 2 The roofscape of Inistioge is part of its special character. Original elements and profiles should be retained where possible and repaired and reused rather than replaced.
- IACA 3 Original window and door fittings should be retained where possible and reused rather than replaced.
- IACA 4 To seek the retention of materials and finishes, massing, height, alignment, orientation and window proportions that reflect the existing character of the area
- IACA 5 To seek the protection of the hierarchy of public open spaces within Inistioge.
- IACA 6 To seek the protection of the existing landscaping and features within the public realm that contribute to the character of the town
- IACA 7 To maintain front garden walls and railings. Any proposals to convert front gardens for use as off street parking will not be permitted.
- IACA 8 New signage must not detract from the character of the ACA. Locations of bus stops and advertising must be carefully considered within the ACA
- IACA 9 To seek the retention, repair and maintenance of the buildings which make up the streetscape of the ACA.
- IACA 10 To seek the refurbishment of derelict or vacant properties which are of historic interest or which contribute to the visual coherence of the streetscape.
- IACA 11 Planning permission is required for the alteration of commercial frontages whether the structure is within an ACA or not. Original/early shopfronts should be retained or repaired where possible.
- IACA 12 New development should be appropriate in form and use to its corner, infill or backland location. Established views to local landmarks should be maintained.
- IACA 13 New development should be of a very high standard of design, and should contribute to the visual enhancement of the area and respect the character of the ACA as set out in the above statement of character.
- IACA 14 Where a planning application is made for the demolition of a structure within an ACA on the grounds of structural defects or failure, a report produced by a suitably

qualified and experienced professional specifying the existing condition and outlining reasons why repair options and remedial works are not deemed suitable in this case will be required.

8.3.6.4 Johnstown ACA

Description and Historical Background

Johnstown is so-called from John Hely of Foulkscourt who laid the first foundations of the town in about 1770. Previous to this date there was not even a small village here and previous to the building of the town the site was known as Hely's crossroads (Carrigan II, 299-300). Johnstown or Baile Sheáin and traditionally Foulkscourt or Cúirt an Phúca, is characterised by four roads converging on a formally laid out square at the cross-roads. The town has changed little since it was mapped in the first half of the 19th century by the Ordnance Survey. This 1st edition OS map shows such landmarks as the Church of Ireland Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the formally laid out square, and a grouping of several country houses and their grounds occupying the fields on the southern approach to the town. By the turn of the century when the second edition OS map was published a smithy and two schools had been added to the town's infrastructure and the pattern of development that had begun in the late eighteenth/early nineteenth centuries had been consolidated. The 25" OS map dating to the early part of the twentieth century shows the addition of a courthouse, constabulary barracks and hotel to the square, and a post office, dispensary and a further smithy to the town. The town was known for its health-giving spa waters during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Ballyspellan spa well having been visited by the famous Dean Swift in 1728.

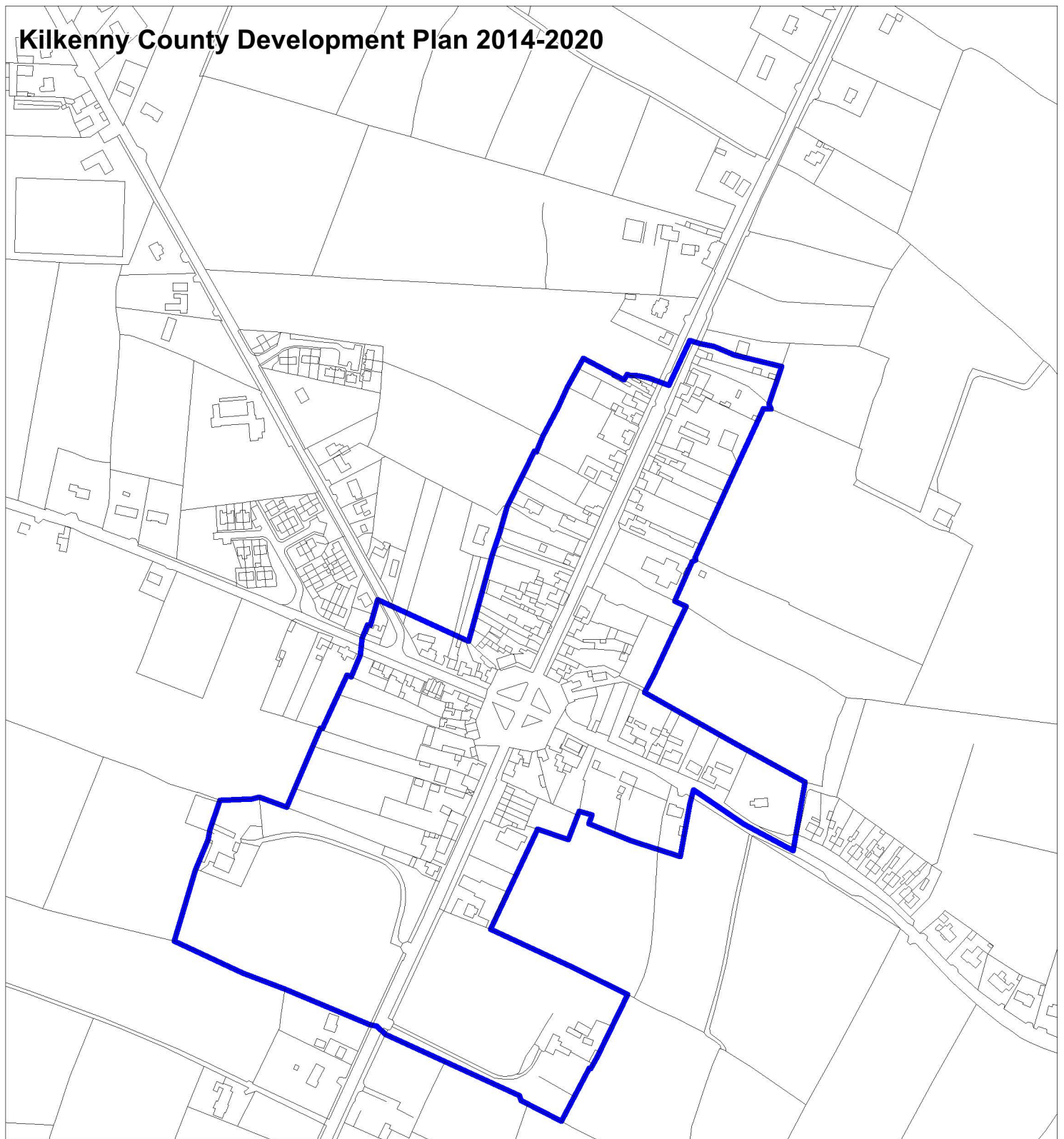
The extremities of the town as they existed on the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map have been chosen as the boundaries for the ACA and include the grounds of Ellen Ville and Melrose House forming the southern entrance to the town and the Church of Ireland Church which formed the boundary to the eastern approach. Canal Road which forms the western approach has been included as far as the junction with the Rathdowney Road and the boundary on the northern approach route to the town, Chapel Street, has been taken as the point at which development had reached by the time the 2nd edition OS map was published. The Glebe lands and Rectory have been omitted from the ACA because of their physical distance from the core of the town and from the eastern thoroughfare. It is envisaged that protection will be afforded to the rectory buildings through their addition to the RPS as recommended by the Minister for the Environment following the NIAH survey.

ACA Boundaries

See Figure 8.7.

Statement of Character

The town is characterised by the essentially two-storey, late eighteenth-century principally residential structures which line the four roads converging on the formally laid out octagonal square. The houses on the square are for the most part in the classical vernacular style, their character imbued by their rendered and painted facades with simple classical window and door proportions which at one time would all have been enhanced by timber sash windows and solid timber doors. The roofs are simple pitched roofs often gable-ended but sometimes hipped, and



**Figure 8.7 Johnstown
Architectural
Conservation
Area**

 ACA boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1: 4,000 @A4

traditionally covered with natural slate. The approach from the south, Urlingford Road, is characterised by open fields which form the semi-formalised grounds of a number of middle sized classical country houses, set well back from the road and symbolising the level of prosperity derived from the rich agricultural hinterland. The approach from the east, Church Street, is dominated by the presence of the Church of Ireland Church, a Board of First Fruits design set in its own grounds back from the road and on a slightly raised piece of ground. The views from the Square to this Church make an important contribution to the character of the town. The approach route from the west, Canal Road, is much less formal and retains more modest vernacular buildings associated with less well-off occupants. The commercial end of the town lines the principal thoroughfare which is the route to the north of the square, and as its name, Chapel Street, suggests, forms the setting for the impressively sited and scaled Roman Catholic Church on its east side, set well back from the street and also on higher ground. Chapel Street is characterised by more two-storey rendered structures, often with a commercial element in the form of a shopfront at ground floor and often with a carriage arch leading to stable yards and other ancillary buildings to the rear.

ACA Development Management Standards based on assessment of special character

- See policies above relating to all ACAs
- JACA 1 To seek the retention, repair and maintenance of the buildings which make up the streetscape of the ACA.
- JACA 2 To seek the refurbishment of derelict or vacant properties which are of historic interest or which contribute to the visual coherence of the streetscape.
- JACA 3 Care should be taken during works on external wall finishes, the practice of removing render to expose stonework significantly alters the character of the structure and can damage the fabric of the building. Works such as sandblasting, repointing ashlar stone work, repainting of natural stone or brick require planning permission.
- JACA 4 The roofscape of Johnstown is part of its integral special character. Original elements and profiles should be retained where possible and repaired and reused rather than replaced. Removal or alteration of roofing materials or features of the roofscape requires planning permission.
- JACA 5 There is no tradition of dormer windows within the Johnstown ACA and their installation will not be deemed appropriate by the local authority.
- JACA 6 Original window and door fittings should be retained where possible and reused rather than replaced.
- JACA 7 A characteristic of Johnstown is the survival of a number of wrought iron gates on Chapel Street leading between buildings to the rear yards of properties. These gates should be retained in situ and repaired where necessary rather than being replaced.
- JACA 8 Carriage arch openings are a feature of many of the buildings around the square. These openings should be retained with planning permission required for alterations.
- JACA 9 Planning permission is required for the alteration of commercial frontages whether the structure is within an ACA or not. Original/early shopfronts should be retained or repaired where possible.
- JACA 10 New signage must not detract from the character of the ACA. Locations of bus stops and advertising must be carefully considered within the ACA
- JACA 11 New development should be appropriate in form and use to its corner, infill or backland location. Established views to local landmarks should be maintained. The view

- from the Square towards the Church of Ireland church on Church Street is of significance in Johnstown.
- JACA 12 New development should be of a very high standard of design, and should contribute to the visual enhancement of the area and respect the character of the ACA as set out in the above statement of character.
 - JACA 13 Where a planning application is made for the demolition of a structure within an ACA on the grounds of structural defects or failure, a report produced by a suitably qualified and experienced professional specifying the existing condition and outlining reasons why repair options and remedial works are not deemed suitable in this case will be required.

8.3.6.5 Bennettsbridge ACA

Description and Historical Background

Bennettsbridge is located on the main Kilkenny to Thomastown road (R700) which passes over the bridge, curving southwards towards the centre of the village. The historic footprint of the village centres on the bridge and Gowran Road junction and then extends southwards in the direction of Thomastown. The village is dominated by the presence of the river, the bridge and the mills on both sides of the river south of the bridge. However, the heart of the village is located on the main street which turns its back on the river and runs parallel with it.

The village is recorded as being dedicated to Saint Benet from which it derives its name. The early bridge is clearly delineated on the Down Survey map of 1654. This bridge was washed away in the great flood of 1763 and replaced by the distinctive landmark bridge which exists today. The industrial origins of the village are evident in the two landmark mills situated on either bank of the river, and these have been in existence since at least the eighteenth century. The village provided a significant local civic centre for the surrounding rural hinterland. This is evident in the number of civic and public buildings marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (c. 1829). The village is shown as being well established by this date with buildings such as the original school, the RC church, a police station situated to the west of the bridge, and two flour mills and a weir all downstream of the bridge.

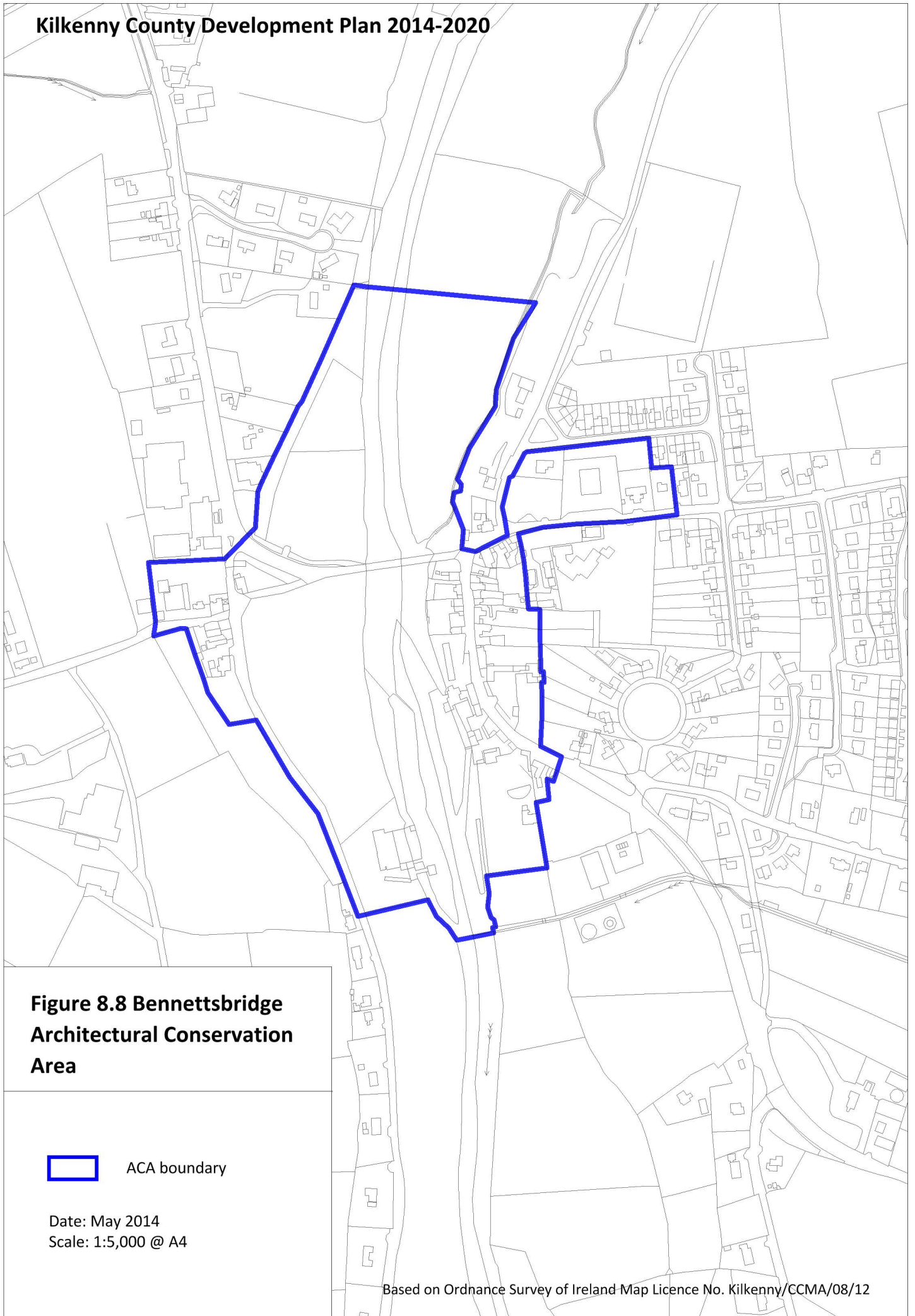
Since the publication of the early OS maps the village has changed little. A school was constructed in 1914 (now a community hall following the construction a replacement school in the 1990s). The church built in 1822 was replaced by a new structure in 1967 and residential development has continued over time concentrated on the east side of the village.

ACA Boundary

The boundary is as shown in the 2009 LAP. See Figure 8.8.

Statement of Character

Bennettsbridge is located within a gently undulating landscape of fields dedicated to livestock grazing or tillage. The historic heart of the village pivots on the riverscape, the mill buildings and the landmark structure of the bridge. These structures were responsible for the development of the village and provide it with its historical identity which is further expressed in the collection



**Figure 8.8 Bennett'sbridge
Architectural Conservation
Area**

 ACA boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1:5,000 @ A4

of vernacular buildings on Main Street, the undulating roof lines and modest vernacular detailing contributing to the character of the village. Even though Bennettsbridge has expanded over time with an extension along Main Street to the south and further residential development to the East, the centre of the village has not changed and remains strongly linked to its origins. The views of the river and the surrounding countryside are an important aspect of the character of the village.

Development Management Standards based on assessment of special character

- BBACA1: The Council shall ensure that development in the Bennettsbridge Architectural Conservation Area will be controlled in order to protect, safeguard and enhance their special character and environmental quality.
- BBACA 2: Within Architectural Conservation Areas, all those buildings, spaces, archaeological sites, trees, views and other aspects of the environment which form an essential part of their character, will be protected.
- BBACA 3: It is Council policy to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the urban public domain within Architectural Conservation Areas.
- BBACA 4: It is a policy of the Council that planning permission will be required for extensions to residential dwellings within Architectural Conservation Areas.
- BBACA 5: The design of any development in Architectural Conservation Areas, including any changes of use of an existing building, should preserve and/or enhance the character and appearance of the Architectural Conservation Area as a whole.
- BBACA 6: The Council will actively support and promote schemes for the conservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of this Architectural Conservation Area.
- BBACA 7: It will be Council policy to retain, restore and repair historic items of street furniture and paving within this Architectural Conservation Area.
- BBACA 8: It will be Council policy to seek the placing underground of all electricity, telephone and television cables within this Architectural Conservation Area.
- BBACA 9: There is great potential for shopfronts to contribute positively to the character of the ACA proposals for modifications or insertion of new shopfronts should consider using materials and design aspects appropriate to this ACA. Traditional-style shopfronts are acceptable. However the Council will also favourably consider high-quality design proposals for shopfronts that are more modern in style, providing that they respect the established pattern, scale, materials and proportions of the buildings within the ACA. Modern design that makes a positive contribution to this ACA will be considered.
- BBACA 10: No development shall be permitted that in any way negatively impacts on the Main street/Riverscape, including any proposals that would dwarf the streets prominence, that would cause visual impacts or any development that would negatively impact on the current vibrancy and pivotal nature of the square in the town.
- BBACA 11: The designation of an Architectural Conservation Area does not prejudice against innovative and contemporary design, on the contrary in principle design of a contemporary and minimalist style will be encouraged within ACA's provided it does not

detract from the character of the area. It is considered that new buildings should be of their own time in appearance and should not replicate the style and detailing of heritage buildings. The replication of historic architectural styles is considered to be counter-productive to heritage conservation in principle as it blurs the distinction between what is historic and what is contemporary and can lead to the emergence of poorly considered and inauthentic buildings.

- BBACA 12: The council accepts that it is necessary to encourage the continued growth and development of Bennettsbridge. However in doing so the council will have regard to the presence of protected structures and features contained within the designated Architectural Conservation Area. Any new development will be carried out in line with the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines published by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government.
- BBACA 13: The use of materials such as stone, slate, timber windows and doors, and decorative render work are often vernacular in nature and reflect indigenous craftsmanship and resources. They often reflect the simplicity and modest scale used in the execution of finishes to buildings. Their importance should not be underestimated in their contribution to the make up and aesthetic appearance of an ACA. The council will support the retention, repair and re-use of such materials.
- BBACA 14: The council will have regard to the Heritage Protection Guidelines as published by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government in regard to any work to protected structures located within Bennettsbridge Architectural Conservation Area.
- BBACA 15: As part of the continued development of Bennettsbridge the council will promote the re-use of derelict buildings and sites located within an Architectural Conservation Area, as a means to further enhance its preservation.

8.3.6.6 Gowran ACA

Description and Historical Background

Gowran developed as a settlement in Norman times. It was granted a charter by Theobald Fitzwalter in 1206. It was one of County Kilkenny's walled towns, having defences with stone gatehouses by the early 15th century. The principal evidence of medieval Gowran lies in the ruins of the collegiate church of St. Mary's in the centre of the town which was built in 1275.

Gowran continued to grow in the 18th century in a typical urban linear pattern with the construction of single and two-storey buildings. The Fair Green is in effect a small Georgian Square and other contemporary structures such as Byrne's opposite the green and Loughlin's at the junction for Kilkenny attest to the prosperity of the town at the time. The influence of the benevolent landlord of Gowran Demesne is also in evidence in the former Almshouse at the top of the town and later in the estate cottages and picturesque semi-detached houses dispersed along Main Street. The result is a streetscape which unfolds in an interesting and distinctive way as one passes through the town.

ACA Boundary

The boundary is as shown in the 2010 LAP, see Figure 8.9.

Statement of Character

Gowran derives much of its special architectural interest from a curving streetscape with a significant change in level from high ground at its eastern entry point to its lowest level where it crosses the river at the western end of town. This combination of curving streetscape and change in levels brings a lively dynamic of movement and drama to the streetscape as the visitor proceeds from east to west or vice versa. The influence of its topographical setting is enhanced by the four nodal points in the town which encourage the visitor to linger before moving on; these points are: (i) the entrance to Gowran Demesne, (ii) the medieval church of St. Mary's and formal 18th century square with mature trees opposite (Fair Green), (iii) the interesting grouping of curved and corner buildings at the Kilkenny Road junction and (iv) the formal quality of the entry point at the western end of the town.

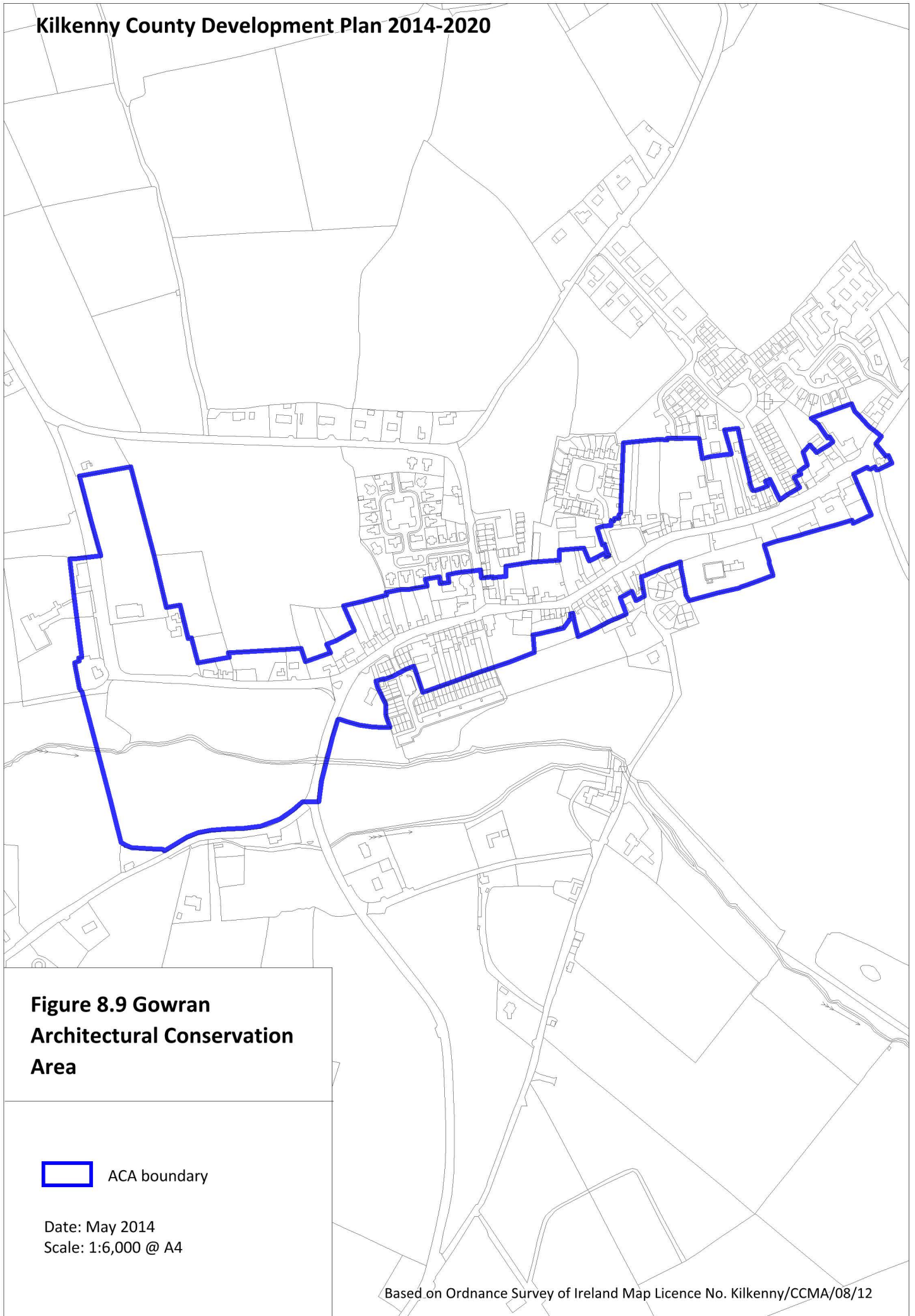
The streetscape is composed of mostly vernacular buildings principally two storeys in height, rendered and painted with classically proportioned window openings and wall to window ration. Timber sash windows, classical timber doors, external painted render, natural slate roofs and early timber shopfronts are significant details which contribute to the character of the area. There is a small number of buildings which depart from this vernacular including the formal stone building beside the entrance to Gowran Demesne (the former Court House), Gowran Castle gate lodge, the Tudor Revival former Curate's House, and several terraces of both single storey and two storey estate workers' houses built by the local Big House owner. The sinuous streetscape and interesting unfolding of buildings is framed within the rich agricultural setting of the County Kilkenny countryside.

An area separate to the main streetscape in both location and character is the grouping of ecclesiastical and educational buildings on the western fringe of the town to the north of the river's flood plain. The school, Catholic Church and presbytery are characterised by their relative isolation on the western edge of town and derive much interest from the sense of open parkland which characterises their setting.

The designation of the area as an ACA is further justified by the special historic interest of the town which retains a very representative collection of buildings spanning the centuries. This includes the 13th century Church of St Mary, a classical courthouse, an urban vernacular streetscape dating to the 18th and 19th centuries, reflective of the prosperity of the area due to the richness of the surrounding agricultural landscape, and picturesque examples of estate village houses indicating the benevolent influence of the improving landlords of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Development Management Standards based on assessment of special character

- GACA1 Details which contribute to the character of the area should be retained. This includes timber sash windows, classical timber doors, external painted render, natural slate roofs and early timber shopfronts. Only timber sash windows should be installed where existing windows are being replaced in vernacular buildings. Where windows were originally of a material other than timber and a design other than sash, the original intended materials and design should be followed. uPVC windows and doors are



**Figure 8.9 Gowran
Architectural Conservation
Area**

 ACA boundary

Date: May 2014
Scale: 1:6,000 @ A4

considered to have a negative impact on the character of the ACA and where an opportunity arises to replace them they should be replaced with more appropriate alternatives. Windows which contribute to the character of the structure should be repaired rather than replaced. All doors which contribute to the character of the structure should be retained and repaired rather than replaced.

- GACA2 External renders should not be removed unless failing and then should be replaced with painted lime renders.
- GACA3 Where roofs are being repaired/replaced natural stone slate only should be used.
- GACA4 The creation of visual clutter should be avoided when making proposals for street signage, advertising, street furniture etc.
- GACA5 New development should make use of good contemporary design and a strong emphasis should be placed on sensitive integration into the existing character of the area.

8.3.7 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 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) has 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. For further information see <http://www.buildingsofireland.ie/Surveys/Gardens/>

Development management standards

- To protect elements of designed landscapes within the attendant grounds of Protected Structures, including boundary features.
- To require an architectural heritage impact assessment/conservation method statement for proposed developments within the attendant grounds of country houses which are Protected Structures.

8.3.8 Townscapes

The townscape in towns and villages of rural Kilkenny is comprised mostly of two- and three-storey 18th and 19th century terraced structures interspersed with public buildings, places of public worship, and very often medieval ruins, these structures built of more expensive materials and often with elaborate detailing providing a focal point/s within many of the county's towns. Features which contribute to the special character of Kilkenny's towns are the detailing of the urban vernacular - the classical wall to window ratios, the rendered facades, the timber sash windows and doors, the slate roofs. All of the towns have evolved organically over time often since medieval times and have a good representation of building stock from all of the major periods of historical development since then.

Development Management Standard:

- To protect, conserve and where necessary restore and manage sustainably the quality, character and distinctiveness of the townscapes of the county, whether or not the townscape has been designated an ACA or forms the setting for protected structures; and to give consideration to its visual amenity and its relationship to its setting.
- Support existing framework plans/community action plans including existing Village Design Statements that have been prepared in consultation with the local community, and with relevant agencies as supplementary planning guidance documents.

8.3.8.1 Kilkenny Farm Villages

Statement of Character

The farm villages of South Kilkenny are a settlement type consisting of a unique clustering of houses, outbuildings and haggards, and often lacking public buildings like shops, church or post office. According to architects Patrick and Maura Shaffrey in their 1985 publication *Irish Countryside Buildings*, the settlement patterns in the Irish countryside have been influenced by the tradition of farmers living on their farms, which has meant that in Ireland we tend not to have farming villages, which are common in other parts of Europe. However, there are exceptions [as] in south Kilkenny, where there are clusters of farm buildings grouped together in an informal manner with the physical sense of a village. Only rarely do they include social or community facilities. Dwellings are often string out along a narrow laneway, or street and share a common entrance. Ownership boundaries are blurred and the land associated with the farm buildings may be some distance away and intermixed with other holdings. Shaffrey goes on to say that in the farm villages of south Kilkenny, in places like Licketstown, Glengrant and Corluddy, sometimes the sense of timelessness and history is quite unique. The buildings are huddled together on high ground above the river Suir. Defence considerations may have influenced the location of these groupings, and as this estuary was a probable landing place during Viking and Norman times their foundation may go back a long time indeed. These are among the oldest settlement patterns and are based on the ancient rundale system of farming, whereby strips of land with ill-defined boundaries were owned by different families, but often worked on a co-operative basis. This type of settlement is frequently located in relatively good farming land, so it is not a question of subsistence or part-time farming, but an old and distinctive settlement pattern¹³⁶.

¹³⁶ Patrick and Maura Shaffrey, *Irish Countryside Buildings, Everyday Architecture in the Rural Landscape*, The O'Brien Press, Dublin 1985, p. 30.

In an article on the unique nature of these settlements which was published by historical geographer Jack Burtchaell in 1988,¹³⁷ these villages display a settlement pattern that is broadly different to that of other village types throughout the country. Burtchaell describes the villages as having a 'nucleated and agglomerated' rural settlement pattern. It is likely that this settlement pattern is medieval in origin and that these villages have enjoyed continuous and settled occupation since early medieval times. This phenomenon is likely due to the continued political stability of this part of county Kilkenny particularly during the seventeenth century when the overlordship of the Ormonde Butlers, which spanned almost 400 years from 1319 until the end of the 17th century, provided protection to this part of Kilkenny from the rapid change that was taking place in other parts of the country during this time.

Burtchaell identifies a number of characteristics which he claims are typical of the farm villages of South Kilkenny.

1. Unlike the 'clachan' model, the South Kilkenny farm villages did not house just farmers, but instead displayed a socially varied and economically prosperous cross section of rural society.
2. They display a degree of social segregation between an 'old' village and a 'new' village again which distinguishes them from the 'clachan' model.
3. The 'farm villages are not marginal in either location or function, they are local centrepieces of a rich agricultural heartland. It is the fundamental stability of the areas, accompanied by social diversity, commercial agriculture, medieval roots and geographic location that mark the distinctiveness of these farm villages from the so-called western-type clachan.

These villages display a unique morphology having grown organically over time following the local topography. The houses are often clustered quite close together and arranged in an apparently random configuration, but one which allows each house to retain its own privacy from adjacent farmsteads and shelter from the elements. The villages are often characterised by a network of laneways, roadways and sometimes raised walkways. The high density of this type of housing and its associated network of roads and lanes is very distinctive and has given one of the villages (Listrolin) the name of 'Little London'.¹³⁸

Jack Burtchaell identifies 57 villages in south Kilkenny which fit into this category. The following are mentioned by him in his study: Licketstown, Portnahully, Corluddy, Kilmacow, Ballytarsney, Listrolin, Moonveen, Glengrant, Portnascully, Carrigeen, Ballybrasil, Doornane, Pollrone, Clonmore, Killinaspick, Ullid, Aglish, Dunkitt, Rathcurby, Ballygorey, Dungooly, Arderra, Weatherstown, Kilmakevoge, Rathinure, Kilcraggan, Davidstown, Rochestown, Ballykillaboy,

¹³⁷ Jack Burtchaell, 'The South Kilkenny Farm Villages', *Common Ground: Essays on the Historical Geography of Ireland*, ed. William J Smyth and Kevin Whelan, pp. 110-23, Cork University Press.

¹³⁸ John Cronin and Associates, Cultural Resource Management, *A Cultural Heritage Assessment of Listrolin Village*, April 2004.

Curraghmartin, Ballyfasy, Grange, Bearstown, Ballincrea, Tinnaranny, Carranroe, Killahy, Baunskeha, Rahillakeen, Ballynamuck, Owing, and Boolyglass.

These villages are of great historical and social significance and their distinctive physical pattern and visual character should be retained where possible.¹³⁹ While this settlement type is not unique to South Kilkenny, it is here that the villages have the strongest links with their medieval origins given the political and social stability of this part of the country during some of the turbulent 16th and 17th centuries. They can therefore be considered to be of National significance.

Farm Villages Development Management Standards:

- To seek the preservation of the unique morphology of the south Kilkenny Farm Villages, the unique clustering of buildings, outbuildings and haggards, their relationship to the public spaces between and the scale of the buildings which make up the villages.
- To protect the special character of the spaces between the various elements of these villages; created by the relationship between buildings and their outhouses and between the outbuildings and the public roadways, paths and laneways through and around these settlements.
- To seek the retention of the vernacular quality of the buildings and their associated outbuildings and boundary structures including walls, embankments and gates.
- To seek the retention of surviving traditional materials used in the construction of the houses and outbuildings – thatch, natural slate, rubble stone walling, traditional wrought iron gates, rendered finishes; and to require the use of traditional building finishes such as lime plasters and mortars, timber windows and doors and natural slates in the repair and refurbishment of existing buildings and in proposed new developments.
- New developments in or adjacent to these villages should not dominate their surroundings but should sit comfortably in their setting, respecting the local character, and should be of good quality contemporary design using a palate of good quality materials which complement the traditional setting.
- Extensions to existing structures within these villages should respect their setting in terms of scale, materials and design.

8.3.9 Street Furniture and Roadside Features

Items of street furniture are an important part of our built and cultural heritage in both an urban and rural context. They are also important elements in establishing the character and interest of an area, whether designated an ACA or not. Such items could include the following; lamp standards, seats and benches, bollards, railings, street signs, freestanding or wall mounted

¹³⁹ Patrick and Maura Shaffrey, *Irish Countryside Buildings, Everyday Architecture in the Rural Landscape*, The O'Brien Press, Dublin 1985, p. 30.

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, gates and other monuments.

Development Management Standard:

- To protect and sustainably manage historic items of street furniture and roadside features, as appropriate.

8.3.10 The Vernacular Built Heritage

The vernacular built heritage consists of buildings and settlements historically created by local 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. Vernacular styles of architecture and their importance in modern buildings in the countryside is discussed and illustrated in the publication [County Kilkenny Rural Design Guide](#)¹⁴⁰.

One of the most vulnerable elements of the built vernacular tradition in County Kilkenny (as elsewhere in Ireland) is the tradition of thatch.

Development Management Standard:

- 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.
- 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. See [Re-use of Farm Buildings](#) Laura Bowen and Nicki Matthews, Kildare County Council, 2007 and [National Rural Network Case Study, Conservation of Old Farm Buildings](#).
- To promote the refurbishment of vernacular built heritage in rural areas as per development managements standards set out under the Rural Settlement Strategy (Section 3.5.3) of this Plan: ‘Where an original structure was not habitable, if an applicant can demonstrate that their proposals will ensure the sensitive restoration of vernacular and traditional buildings in the rural area thereby respecting and maintaining the integrity and scale of the original building, and their proposals do not compromise any other development management considerations, such proposals shall not be subject to the policies in Section 3.5.2 that applies to new dwellings’.

¹⁴⁰ Kilkenny County Council, [County Kilkenny Rural Design Guide](#)

8.3.11 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.

Draft guidance “*Guidelines on the Floodlighting of Monuments*” has been prepared by the National Monuments Section of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Development Management Standards

- To require an assessment of the potential visual, heritage and environmental impacts of proposals to floodlight buildings and structures.
- To ensure the protection of the special character and setting of protected structures, ACAs and Recorded Monuments, and protected species when considering proposals for floodlighting.
- Floodlighting will be discouraged in rural areas and discouraged as part of advertising schemes in urban areas.

8.4 Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage includes aspects of heritage such as traditions, practices, knowledge and skills which are an expression of our culture. In Kilkenny our cultural heritage includes oral history, placenames, folklore, local history and sport. It also encompasses features of cultural heritage interest such as mass rocks, mass paths, rag trees and vernacular gates which are locally significant and add to the distinctive character and sense of place of an area. The Council will 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.

8.4.1 Placenames

Placenames are an important and disappearing part of our cultural heritage. They provide a link to the past and reflect the natural, built and cultural heritage of a locality. There are few written records of traditional placenames and fieldnames as they were usually passed down by word-of-mouth. Kilkenny County Council has undertaken surveys, in partnership with local communities, to record and map traditional place and fieldnames through the Townlands project and the River Nore Heritage Audit (Section 7.2.3.2).

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*" see www.logainm.ie and the Placenames Commission www.coimisineir.ie.

Development Management Standards

- To ensure that the names of all new developments shall reflect local historical, heritage or cultural associations.
- To encourage the use of bi-lingual and Irish-Language place names and signs.

9 Infrastructure & Environment

Strategic Aim: To provide a framework for the protection of the environment, including water quality, the avoidance of flood risk and the provision of a high quality telecommunications infrastructure.

9.1 Water services

9.1.1 Achievements

During the period of the last plan, significant improvement works were carried out to water services infrastructure in the county, including to the following schemes:

- Belview Strategic Water Supply Scheme Phase 1A (Part of Mooncoin Regional Water Supply Scheme) - Completed 2010
- Kilmacow Wastewater Treatment Plant and Network - completed 2011
- Thomastown Waste Water Treatment Plant - completed 2011
- Gowran Waste Water Treatment Plant - completed 2010
- Tullaroan Waste Water Treatment Plant - completed 2011
- Gowran Goresbridge Paulstown Water Supply Scheme access road and UV disinfection - completed 2011
- Coan Waste Water Treatment Plant - completed 2012
- Kilkenny City Water Supply: Radestown Reservoir repair - completed 2012
- Kilmaganny Waste Water Treatment Plant - completed 2012
- The Water Conservation programme resulted in substantial benefits

9.1.2 Water Supply

There are 20 public water supply schemes within County Kilkenny operated by Kilkenny County Council, see the list below. The quality of our drinking water supplies is of utmost importance. Water quality is monitored on a daily basis in accordance with the EPA requirements. This is done by the Council itself, by external laboratories on behalf of the Council and by the Health Service Executive and the EPA Regional Water Laboratory on an agency basis, on behalf of the Council.

The Council shall consult the EPA publication 'The Provision and Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland' (which is reviewed and published on a periodic basis) and the EPA's 'Remedial Action List' in the establishment and maintenance of water sources in the County.

Scheme name
Ballyragget
Bennettsbridge
Callan
Castlecomer (Old)
Clogh-Castlecomer

Glenmore
Gorteen
Gowran Goresbridge Paulstown
Graiguenamanagh
Inistioge
Kilkenny City (Radestown)
Kilkenny city (Troyswood) Regional
Kilmaganny
Lois Na Si
Mooncoin Regional
New Ross WSS (Wexford County Council)
Piltown
South Kilkenny
Thomastown
Urlingford - Johnstown

9.1.3 Water Conservation

Water supplies are a scarce and expensive resource. A Water Conservation Programme is underway across the county at present. The first stage of this project divided the water supply schemes into different zones and installed meters to establish where and how much water was being lost. The second stage is active leakage control, which includes detecting and repairing leaks. This process is a permanent feature of water conservation and will continue for the foreseeable future. The third stage is mains rehabilitation, which involves the replacement or rehabilitation of those mains deemed to be the source of most leakage. This programme has reduced unaccounted for water (UFW) to less than 40%, and has resulted in improvements to overall levels of service. The Council will continue to conserve valuable water supplies through the Water Conservation Programme. The Planning Authority will normally require rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling in new large scale developments and in smaller schemes except where not practical or feasible.

9.1.4 Waste water services

There are 35 public wastewater treatment schemes within the county, of varying size and complexity, see list below.

Settlement/ Name of plant	Level of treatment
Ballyhale/Knocktopher	Secondary
Ballyragget	Secondary
Bennettsbridge	Primary
Callan	Secondary
Castlecomer	Secondary
Clogh-Mooneenroe	Secondary
Coan	Primary
Deerpark, Moneenroe	Primary
Dunamaggin	Secondary
Dungarvan	Primary
Fiddown	Primary
Freshford	Primary
Glenmore	Primary
Goresbridge	Primary
Gowran	Secondary
Graiguenamanagh	Secondary
Inistioge	Primary
Johnstown	Primary
Kells	Secondary
Kilkenny City Purcellsinch	Secondary
Kilkenny (Sion Road)	Primary
Kilmacow	Secondary
Kilmaganny	Primary
Kilmanagh	Primary
Mooncoin	Secondary
Ballygriffin, Mooncoin	Primary
Mullinavat	Primary
New Ross (Environs)	Secondary (operated by Wexford County Council)
Paulstown	Secondary
Piltown	Secondary
Skeaghvosteen	Primary
Slieverue	Secondary
Stoneyford	Secondary
Thomastown	Secondary
Tullaroan	Primary
Urlingford	Secondary
Windgap	Primary

9.1.5 Prioritisation of Investment

The areas to be prioritised for water services infrastructure investment are aligned to the County Settlement Strategy, ensuring that adequate water services are in place to cater for the county's growth. In addition the continued improvement and provision of this infrastructure is

necessary to meet the requirements of the E.U. [Urban Wastewater Treatment](#)¹⁴¹ and [Water Framework](#)¹⁴² Directives. Prioritisation of investment is agreed with the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, and is set out in the Water Services Investment Programme (WSIP) 2010-2013. The Council will endeavour to extend water services to meet the expanding domestic, commercial and industrial needs of the County and to improve the provision of water services in those areas where deficiencies exist at present.

The water supply schemes (WSS) to be prioritised for investment are as follows:

- Inistioge/Thomastown WSS
- Kilkenny City Regional WSS
- Mooncoin Regional WSS
- Gowran, Goresbridge Paulstown Regional WSS
- Clogh/Castlecomer WSS

The waste water treatment plants (WWTP) to be prioritised for investment are as follows:

- Kilkenny City (Purcellsinch)
- Freshford
- Johnstown
- Goresbridge
- Paulstown (outfall)
- Ballyhale
- Urlingford
- Stoneyford
- Castlecomer
- Piltown
- Fiddown
- Bennettsbridge
- Mullinavat
- Inistioge
- Clogh Moneenroe

From 2014, Irish Water will be the new water authority with responsibility for prioritisation of investment.

¹⁴¹ EU, [Council Directive \(91/271/EEC\) of 21 May 1991 concerning urban waste water treatment](#), 1991

¹⁴² EU, [Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy](#), 2000

9.1.6 Water Services Objectives:

9A Implement the programme as outlined in the Water Services Investment Programme.

9B Meet in full the requirements of the E.U. [Urban Waste Water Treatment](#) and [Water Framework](#) Directives and the [Drinking Water Regulations](#).

9.1.7 Sludge Treatment

A Sludge Management Plan for Kilkenny 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. The Council will continue to implement the Sludge Management Plan and in accordance with this, all sludge being generated in the county is disposed of as fertiliser at present.

9.2 Environment

9.2.1 Pollution Control

The importance of a clean environment for the economic and social life of the county is recognised. In this regard, continuous effective monitoring and enforcement in relation to pollution control measures is imperative and will continue over the period of this Plan.

9.2.1.1 Air Quality

The Council's role in relation to air quality is mainly to promote a reduction in air pollution, through the implementation of relevant legislation and through the provision of advice and guidance on best practice. The Council also implements the provisions of the [Air Pollution Act 1987](#) and [Air Pollution \(Licensing of Industrial Plant\) Regulations 1988](#).

9.2.2 Noise Mapping

In 2006, the Government made regulations relating to Environmental noise ([S.I. 140 of 2006](#)). Environmental noise is defined in the Regulations as unwanted or harmful outdoor sound created by human activities, including noise emitted by means of transport, road traffic, rail traffic, air traffic, and from sites of industrial activity.

The regulations require that a Noise Mapping Action Plan must refer to places near major roads, major railways and major airports, and within any relevant agglomeration. A [Noise Action Plan](#)¹⁴³ was finalised for Kilkenny in 2009. In Kilkenny the following areas are within the subject criteria of the Regulations:

- Sections of the N9 in the Environs of Waterford City
- Sections of the N10 in the Environs of Kilkenny City

¹⁴³ Kilkenny County and Borough Councils, [Noise Action Plan 2008](#), 2009

- Sections of the N25 in the Environs of Waterford City and New Ross
- Sections of the N77 in the Environs of Kilkenny City

The Action Plan is designed with the twin aims of;

- Avoiding significant adverse health impacts from noise and
- Preserving environmental noise quality where it is good

This Noise Action Plan is being updated at present.

9.2.2.1 Noise control

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.

9.2.3 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, may pose a traffic hazard 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.

9.2.4 Pollution Control Objective

9C To update Noise Mapping in accordance with revised or updated thresholds for Noise Mapping.

9.2.5 Pollution Control Development Management Standards

- To ensure that developments which are subject to the requirements 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.
- To seek to minimise noise and dust through the planning process by ensuring that the design of developments incorporate measures to prevent or mitigate the transmission of dust, noise and vibration, where appropriate.
- Ensure traffic noise levels are considered as part of all new developments along major roads/rail lines.
- To ensure that lighting is carefully and sensitively designed
- To require that the design of external lighting minimises the incidence of light spillage or pollution into the surrounding environment.

9.2.6 Potentially Contaminated Land

Contaminated land is generally considered to be lands where there are substances which could cause significant harm to the environment and/or endanger health. Examples of land uses that may have caused such contamination include gas works, landfill sites and scrap yards.

9.2.7 Development Management Standards

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.

9.2.8 Water Quality

9.2.8.1 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](#)¹⁴⁴ (WFD). 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.

For the purposes of implementing the WFD, Ireland has been divided into eight river basin districts that are drained by a large river or number of rivers. County Kilkenny is located in the South Eastern River Basin District. The [South East River Basin Management Plan \(Water Matters\) 2009-2015](#) was published in 2010¹⁴⁵. This sets out the standards and objectives for water quality in the river basin.

The Council has responsibilities for the protection of all waters including rivers, lakes, estuarine waters and groundwater. The work includes implementation of pollution control measures,

¹⁴⁴ [Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy](#)

¹⁴⁵ South Eastern River Basin District, [South East River Basin Management Plan \(Water Matters\) 2009-2015](#), 2010

licensing of effluent discharges, implementing and monitoring compliance with environmental legislation, and drawing up pollution contingency measures.

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 sewage discharges, with other sources also making a contribution.

The Council will continue to take appropriate measures in relation to all development in order to prevent ground and surface water pollution and will implement the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan.

9.2.8.2 Groundwater

Groundwater is used to supply some water supply schemes, and is also 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 groundwater (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](#)¹⁴⁶. 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. The GSI will be updating the vulnerability mapping for the County in 2013.

¹⁴⁶ GSI, Kilkenny County Council, [County Kilkenny Groundwater Protection Scheme Volume I: Main Report](#), 2002

9.2.8.2.1 Source Protection Areas

Groundwater sources, particularly for public, group scheme and industrial supplies, are of critical importance. Consequently, Source Protection Areas are delineated around groundwater sources to provide protection by placing tighter controls on activities within those areas. Source Protection Areas are divided into Inner Protection Areas and Outer Protection Areas.

Development within Source Protection Areas shall be subject to stringent requirements in accordance with the Groundwater Protection Scheme and the Water Services Acts 2007 & 2012. Developments which include on-site wastewater treatment in Inner Source Protection Areas of Extreme Vulnerability shall be subject to strict Development Management standards.

In practical terms, protection of 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.

9.2.8.3 Water Quality Objectives

- 9D** To promote compliance with environmental standards and objectives established—
- for bodies of surface water, by the European Communities (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009;
 - for groundwater, by the European Communities (Groundwater) Regulations 2010;
- which standards and objectives are included in the South East River Basin Management Plan.
- 9E** To complete the mapping of source protection areas and to map Source Protection Areas for any new public water supply schemes as appropriate.
- 9F** To ensure that Source Protection Areas are identified for any multiple unit housing developments with private water supplies.

9.2.8.4 Water Quality Development Management Standards

- To assess all new applications for single houses in accordance with the EPA manual entitled [Code of Practice – Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems serving Single Houses](#)¹⁴⁷ (p.e. ≤ 10), also referred to as EPA 2009 or such guidance as may replace this guidance. The person carrying out the assessment will be suitably qualified and in the local authority's opinion, be competent to do so.
- To ensure that all industrial development is appropriately located, to seek effluent reduction and 'clean production' where feasible, and require that waste water treatment facilities are adequate, and that effluents are treated and discharged in a satisfactory manner.

¹⁴⁷ EPA, [Code of Practice – Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems serving Single Houses](#), 2009

- To have regard to the Groundwater Protection Scheme and to comply with the Water Services Acts 2007 & 2012 in decision-making on the location, nature and control of developments and activities in order to protect groundwater.
- 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.

9.2.9 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 the lead agency for flood risk management in Ireland. The [Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#) were published in 2009 and these are incorporated here.

The [Guidelines](#) outline three key principles that should be adopted by regional authorities, local authorities, developers and their agents when considering flood risk. These are:

- Avoid the risk, where possible,
- Substitute less vulnerable uses, where avoidance is not possible, and
- Mitigate and manage the risk, where avoidance and substitution are not possible

Avoidance of development in flood risk areas

Flood zones are geographical areas within which the likelihood of flooding is in a particular range and they are a key tool in flood risk management within the planning process as well as in flood warning and emergency planning. There are three types or levels of flood zones defined for the purposes of the guidelines:

- Flood zone A – where the probability of flooding is highest (greater than 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding or 0.5% or 1 in 200 for coastal flooding) and where a wide range of receptors would be vulnerable;
- Flood zone B – where the probability of flooding is moderate (between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 and 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding and between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 year and 0.5% or 1 in 200 for coastal flooding); and
- Flood zone C – where the probability of flooding is low (less than 0.1% or 1 in 1000 for both river and coastal flooding).

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out for the County as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment. This did not categorise the county into Flood Zones, but has identified areas within which development proposals shall be the subject of a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment. This FRA shall be appropriate to the type and scale of the development being proposed and shall be carried out in line with the [Guidelines](#).

The South East Catchment Flood Risk Management Plan (SECFRAM) is being produced at present, and is scheduled for completion in 2016. When finalised, the findings of this will be integrated into the Development Plan Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

9.2.9.1 Flood Management Objective

9G To adopt a comprehensive risk-based planning approach to flood management to prevent or minimise future flood risk. In accordance with the [Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#), the avoidance of development in areas where flood risk has been identified shall be the primary response.

9.2.9.2 Development Management Standard

Where flood risk may be an issue for any proposed development, a flood risk assessment shall be carried out that is appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and the risks arising. This shall be undertaken in accordance with the [Flood Risk Assessment Guidelines](#). Proposals for mitigation and management of flood risk will only be considered where avoidance is not possible and where development can be clearly justified with the [Guidelines'](#) Justification Test.

9.2.10 Surface Water Drainage

Surface water drainage systems are designed to channel stormwater (rainwater) to the nearest suitable river. Rain falling on impervious surfaces is usually directed into surface water drainage

systems. Best practice is to separate the surface water drainage system from the foul drainage system to maximise the efficiency of our waste water treatment plants.

Surface water drainage systems are effective at transferring surface water quickly, but they can cause the volume of water in the receiving watercourse to increase more rapidly thereby increasing flood risk. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) can play a role in reducing and managing run-off to surface water drainage systems as well as improving water quality.

9.2.11 Development Management Standards

- 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.
 - The Planning Authority will normally require that all new large scale developments (such as commercial, mixed use and apartment schemes), and in smaller developments where feasible, include rainwater harvesting and/or grey water recycling in their design.
- Individual developments 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 in general the limitation of surface water run-off to pre-development levels will be required. 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).
- For developments adjacent to watercourses of a significant conveyance capacity any structures (including hard landscaping) must be set back a minimum of 5-10m from the edge of the watercourse to allow access for channel clearing/maintenance. Any required setback may be increased to provide for habitat protection. See also Section

- 7.3.3.1 for recreational requirements. 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:-
 - 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.)
 - 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](#)¹⁴⁸ and associated GSDS technical documents.

9.2.12 Waste Management

Waste management in Ireland is regulated by the Waste Management Act, 1996 as amended. The local authorities of Carlow County, Kilkenny County, Waterford City and County, Wexford County, and South Tipperary County have made a [Joint Waste Management Plan for the South East region](#)¹⁴⁹.

The JWMP was evaluated in 2012 and the outcome of that evaluation is that the Plan needs to be reviewed. The review commenced in 2013, under the new Regional structures where Kilkenny forms part of an expanded Southern Region. The replacement plan will have regard to the national waste management policy as outlined in [A Resource Opportunity, Waste Management Policy in Ireland](#)¹⁵⁰.

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 relevant waste management plan. Therefore this plan is deemed to contain the policies and objectives of the Joint Regional Waste Management Plan, as replaced.

9.2.12.1 Waste Management Objective

9H To implement the Joint Waste Management Plan for the South East Region.

¹⁴⁸ Greater Dublin Local Authorities, [Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works](#), 2006

¹⁴⁹ South East Region Local Authorities, [Joint Waste Management Plan for the South East region](#), 2006

¹⁵⁰ Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, [A Resource Opportunity, Waste Management Policy in Ireland](#), 2012

9.2.12.2 Waste Management Development Management Standards

To have regard 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 in urban areas must be appropriately laid out to enable the implementation of three bin collection systems, see Chapter 12.
- Proposed apartment, housing and commercial developments must be either serviced by existing infrastructure or make appropriate provision for bring sites in their layout. 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. Adequate access must be provided in developments to service proposed bring sites.
- For significant construction/demolition projects, 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](#)¹⁵¹. 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.

9.2.13 Control of Major Accident Hazards Directive (Seveso II Directive)

The [Major Accidents Directive](#)¹⁵² (known as the Seveso II Directive), seeks to reduce the risk and to limit the consequences to both man and the environment, of accidents at manufacturing and storage facilities involving dangerous substances.

There are a total of three Seveso (Control of Major Accident Hazards Directive) sites in the county; Grassland Fertilisers (Kilkenny) Ltd. Palmerstown on the Tullaroan Road in Kilkenny City, Nitrofert Ltd, Raheen, near New Ross and Trans-Stock Warehousing and Cold Storage in Christendom, Ferrybank. There are also two sites in close proximity to Co. Kilkenny, see list below. It should be noted that these are the only sites currently identified and that there may be additional sites designated in the future.

¹⁵¹ Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, [Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects](#) (2006)

¹⁵² EU, [Major Accidents Directive](#) (96/82/EC), 1996

Establishment Name	Establishment Address
Grassland Fertilisers (Kilkenny) Ltd.	Palmerstown, Kilkenny City
Nitrofert Ltd.	Raheen, New Ross, Co. Kilkenny
Trans-Stock Warehousing and Cold Storage Ltd	Christendom, Ferrybank, Co. Kilkenny
Nearby sites:	
Goulding Chemicals Ltd	Stokestown, New Ross, Co. Wexford
SSE Generation Ireland Ltd (Formerly Endesa Ireland Ltd) Great Island Generating Station	Campile, New Ross, Co. Wexford

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.

9.2.13.1 Seveso Objective

91 To control the following for the purposes of reducing the risk or limiting the consequences of a major accident:

- The siting of Major Accident Hazard sites
- The modification of an existing Major Accident Hazard site
- Development in the vicinity of a Major Accident Hazard site

9.2.13.2 Seveso Development Management Standards

The Councils will consult with the Health & Safety Authority when assessing proposals for development of, in or near sites which are identified under the COMAH (Seveso II) Directive.

9.2.14 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. The Council will upgrade and replace fire stations and replace and provide new equipment and vehicles as the need arises.

9.3 Energy

The availability of energy is of critical importance to facilitate new development.

9.3.1 The National Transmission/Distribution network

The existing transmission network in County Kilkenny comprises mostly 110 kilovolt (kV) circuits and one 220 kV circuit in the south of the county. There is one transmission substation, Kilkenny, which is served by two 110 kV overhead lines. Kilkenny County Council recognises the need to increase electrical infrastructure.

[Grid25](#)¹⁵³ is the national programme being rolled out by Eirgrid, the state owned independent transmission operator. Two projects are being developed by Eirgrid, in or affecting Kilkenny as follows;

- the Laois–Kilkenny Reinforcement Project to increase the quality and security of supply to an area which includes Counties Carlow, Kildare, Kilkenny, Wicklow and Laois, and
- Grid Link, which will link Cork and Kildare via Great Island in Wexford with a 400 kV line.

Other new projects may arise also to facilitate electricity demand growth and the connection of new electricity generation projects.

9.3.2 Grid Development Management Standards

Kilkenny County Council will facilitate the provision of energy networks in principle, provided that it can be demonstrated that –

- the development is required in order to facilitate the provision or retention of significant economic or social infrastructure;
- the route proposed has been identified with due consideration for social, environmental and cultural impacts;
- the design is such that will achieve least environmental impact;
- the lines should be planned to avoid areas of high landscape sensitivity;
- preference should be given to undergrounding services where appropriate;
- the proposed infrastructure complies with all internationally recognised standards with regard to proximity to dwellings and other inhabited structures including best practice and new accepted research on the impacts on health;
- new power lines and power installations should be sited in accordance with the requirements of the “Health Effects of Electromagnetic Fields” Report issued by the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources in 2007, and
- where impacts are inevitable, mitigation features have been included.

¹⁵³ Eirgrid, [Grid 25, A Strategy for the Development of Ireland’s Electricity Grid for a Sustainable and Competitive Future](#).

In considering facilities of this nature that traverse a number of counties or that traverse one county in order to serve another, the Council will consider the proposal in light of the criteria outlined above. The Council will also treat the proposal as if it were required to service a development within Kilkenny County Council.

Sections 9.3.1 and 9.3.2 of the Plan will be reviewed when the report from the Independent Expert Panel considering Eirgrid Projects is published.

9.3.3 Gas

Kilkenny City and Ferrybank are the only locations in the County served by the natural gas network. 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.

9.4 Telecommunications

The Council recognises the importance of advanced communications infrastructure for an information-based society, and as a key support for business, education and research. The Council will 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. The Council will also encourage the further co-ordinated and focused development and extension of telecommunications infrastructure including broadband connectivity in the county, particularly in the District Towns, as a means of improving economic competitiveness.

9.4.1 Broadband

The implementation of broadband is under the remit of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources. In 2012, the Department published a national broadband plan entitled "[Delivering a Connected Society: A National Broadband Plan for Ireland](#)"¹⁵⁴. This identified high speed broadband connectivity as a core to competitiveness and has set out targets for achieving higher speeds.

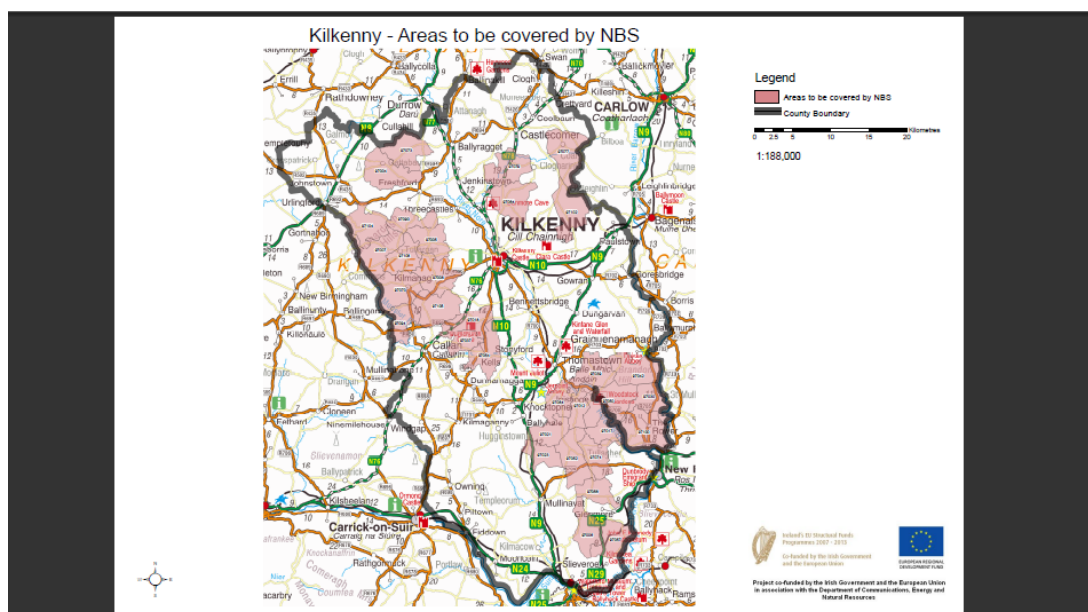
Three regional broadband schemes have been rolled out to advance broadband connectivity across the country:

National Broadband Scheme

This scheme ran from 2008 to 2010. The objective of the National Broadband Scheme (NBS) was to deliver broadband to certain target areas in Ireland in which broadband services were deemed to be insufficient. Under the contract, the successful tenderer, '3', were required to

¹⁵⁴ Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, [Delivering a Connected Society: A National Broadband Plan for Ireland](#), 2012

provide services to all premises in the NBS area who sought a service. In order to facilitate competition in the area, '3' were also required to provide wholesale access to any other authorised operator who wishes to serve premises in the NBS area. The rollout of the provision of NBS services was completed in October 2010. The map below illustrates the 33 designated NBS Electoral Divisions in Co. Kilkenny¹⁵⁵.



Rural Broadband Scheme

The Rural Broadband Scheme was established to enable a basic broadband service to be provided to individual rural premises which were not capable of obtaining a broadband service from existing internet service providers. The Scheme aimed to identify the premises that could not obtain a service and once all of these premises were identified, to ascertain whether existing telecommunications operators could provide a service directly to these premises. The application phase of the Rural Broadband Scheme closed on 29th July 2011.

The third programme is the broadband to schools initiative. Its aim is to equip second-level schools in Ireland with 100 Mbps of broadband connectivity and Local Area Networks (LAN) on a phased basis. The initial pilot phase of this project has been completed and delivered to 78 schools throughout the country. Under this programme all second-level schools will have 100Mbps broadband installed by the end of 2014. The roll out of broadband to schools in County Kilkenny is currently underway.

¹⁵⁵ <http://www.dcenr.gov.ie/NR/rdonlyres/85B1C229-9754-4B4E-BF3A-96694A4D4D81/0/Kilkenny.pdf>

9.4.1.1 Metropolitan Area Networks

The Metropolitan Area Network (MAN) is a network of ducting and fibre optic cable laid within a metropolitan area which can be used by a variety of businesses and organisations to provide services including but not limited to telecoms, Internet access, television, telematics and CCTV.

The MANs are publicly owned, while allowing all telecommunication operators open access to the networks. They are fibre-based and technology neutral resilient networks, which will ensure adequate capacity for generations to come. To date, Kilkenny City, Waterford and Thomastown have been included in the MANs.

Objective:

9J To facilitate the delivery of high quality broadband to the District Towns in the county.

Broadband Development Management Standards

- To support the installation of carrier neutral ducting during significant public infrastructure works such as roads, water and sewerage, where feasible.
- To ensure development proposals include the provision of carrier neutral ducting for fibre based data services and in particular broadband services, as appropriate.
- 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.

9.4.2 Telecommunications Antennae

The Council recognises the importance of a high quality telecommunications service and will seek to achieve a balance between facilitating the provision of telecommunications services in the interests of social and economic progress and sustaining residential amenities and environmental quality.

9.4.2.1 Telecommunications Antennae Development Management Standards

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 and access infrastructure on the natural or built environment, particularly in areas of sensitive landscape (See Chapter 8 Heritage) or historic importance;
- b) the potential for co-location of equipment on existing masts; and
- c) [Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures - Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#)¹⁵⁶ and [Circular Letter PL 07/12](#)¹⁵⁷.

¹⁵⁶ Department of the Environment and Local Government [Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures - Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#), 1996

¹⁵⁷ Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, [Circular Letter PL 07/12](#), 2012

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 the landscape character assessment, such as Mount Brandon and the River Valleys; in such cases the developer shall demonstrate an overriding technical need for the equipment which cannot be met by sharing of existing authorised equipment in the areas and the equipment is of a scale and is sited, deigned and landscaped in a manner which minimises adverse visual impacts.
- (ii) In close proximity to schools, churches, crèches, community buildings, other public and amenity/conservation areas; and,
- (iii) In close proximity to residential areas.

In the assessment of individual proposals, the Council will also take the impact on rights of way and walking routes into account.

To avoid proliferation, which could be injurious to visual amenities, the Council will encourage co-location of antennae on existing support structures and require documentary evidence as to the non-availability of this option in proposals for new structures. The shared use of existing structures will be required where the numbers of masts located in any single area is considered to have an excessive concentration.

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 number of existing masts within the County,
- c) the long term plans of the developer in the County and the potential for further masts,
- d) and the plans of other promoters and any prior consultations which the developer may have had with other mast owners.

9.4.2.2 Telecommunications Antennae Objective

9K To set up and maintain a register of approved telecommunications structures which will provide a useful input to the assessment of future telecommunications developments and would also be useful from the point of view of maximising the potential for future mast sharing and co-location.

10 Renewable Energy Strategy

Strategic Aim: To promote and facilitate all forms of renewable energies and energy efficiency improvements in a sustainable manner as a response to climate change.

10.1 Introduction

Renewable energy sources are defined here as *inexhaustible natural resources which occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment*. These sources include the wind, oceans, plant life and falling water.

This renewable Energy Strategy for the County Development Plan was prepared in conjunction with the Carlow-Kilkenny Energy Agency, having regard to the [Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, Methodology for Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategies](#), 2013.

This Strategy consists of four elements. First, the policy context for all renewables is outlined. This is followed by an analysis of each type of renewable energy within the county, covering three aspects as follows:

- An analysis of the resource potential and existing operations,
- An outline of development management guidelines including potential impacts and
- Policies for their future development.

10.2 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

The CKEA has over ten years experience in supporting energy efficient and renewable energy projects for public and private clients, in particular for community developments.

10.3 Kilkenny Sustainable Energy Forum

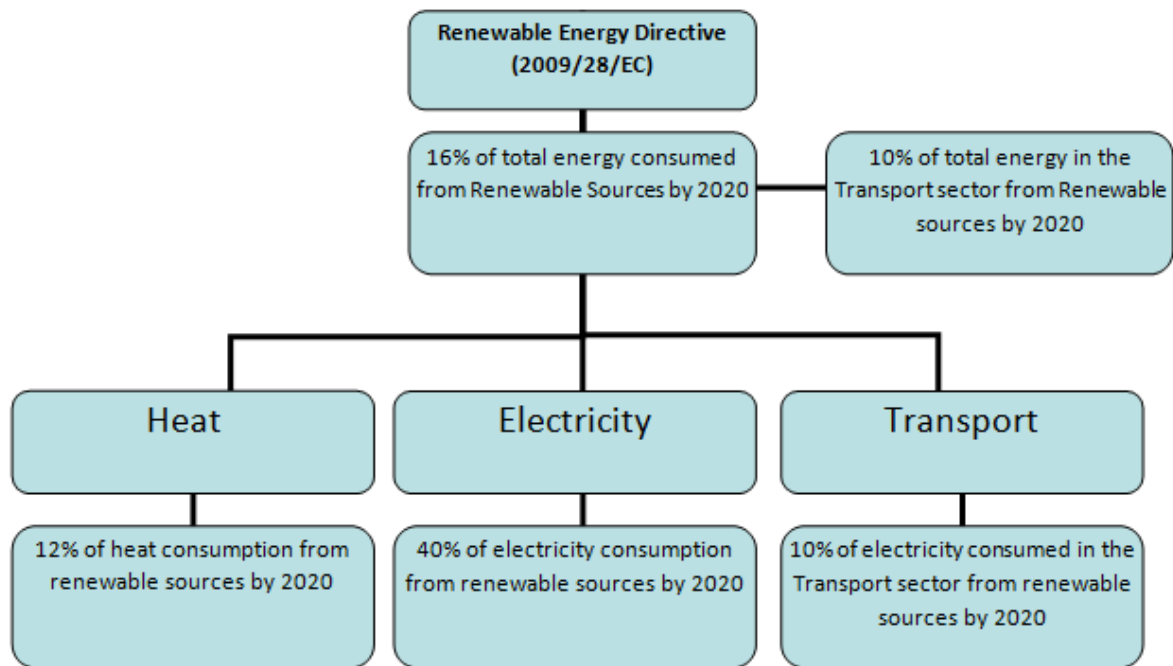
The Kilkenny Sustainable Energy Forum was set up in early 2007, as the result of an action identified under the County Development Board Strategy 2002-2012. This Forum is composed of various statutory bodies, non-governmental organisations and industry and construction representatives, amongst others. The Forum aims to promote the use of sustainable energy in Kilkenny, by supporting sustainable energy initiatives, providing best practice examples and through advocacy.

10.4 Policy context

The main driver for the implementation of renewable energy policy is the [Renewable Energy Directive](#)¹⁵⁸. Ireland is legally obliged to ensure that by 2020, at least 16% of all energy consumed in the state is from renewable sources, with a sub-target of 10% in the transport sector. This directive requires that each Member State adopt a national renewable energy action plan (NREAP) to be submitted to the European Commission.

Ireland submitted its [National Renewable Energy Action Plan](#)¹⁵⁹ to the European Commission in July 2010. The plan set out national targets for the share of energy from renewable sources consumed in transport, electricity and heating and cooling in 2020, with actions to meet the overall national target (Figure 10.1: National and European policy drivers).

The [Strategy for Renewable Energy 2012 - 2020](#)¹⁶⁰ sets out the Government’s approach to the development of renewables in terms of strategic goals and key actions. Strategic goals include progressively more energy from wind power and a sustainable Bioenergy sector. Renewables in Ireland are supported by means of the Renewable Energy Feed in tariff (REFIT)¹⁶¹. REFIT was first announced in 2006 and three REFIT schemes have been rolled out to date, which all have provided support for renewable technologies.



¹⁵⁸ [Renewable Energy Directive \(2009/28/EC\) on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources](#)

¹⁵⁹ Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, [National Renewable Energy Action Plan](#), 2010

¹⁶⁰ Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, [Strategy for Renewable Energy 2012-2020](#), 2012

¹⁶¹ For further information on REFIT, see the Dept.’s website at <http://www.dcenr.gov.ie/Energy/Sustainable+and+Renewable+Energy+Division/REFIT.htm>

10.4.1 South East Regional Authority Bioenergy Implementation Plan

At regional level, the [Bioenergy Implementation Plan 2013-2020](#) has been produced by the South East Regional Authority. This set a target of 16% of Total Final Consumption in the region to be provided by bio-energy by 2020. The overall objective of the project is to raise awareness and to increase the production and consumption of bio-energy in the Region. Individual sectoral targets for heat, electricity, and transport have been established with the emphasis on bioenergy consumption for heating and transport purposes.

The Council will support the implementation of national and regional renewable energy targets and work with all relevant agencies to support the development of alternative forms of energy.

10.5 Wind energy

The sun heats the earth unevenly, creating thermal air currents. In order to achieve equal temperatures around the earth these air pockets move about the earth as global wind. Energy that travels in the wind can be captured and converted to provide electricity through turbines. Turbines can be located onshore and offshore.

10.5.1 Current status

To date, a total of 7 wind farms have permission in Co. Kilkenny, four of which are constructed, see the table below.

Table 10.1 Status of Wind farms in Co. Kilkenny

No.	Planning Ref. no.	Wind Farm name	Applicant	Townland	No. Turbines	Built?	Status/Gate app. ref.
1	10/145	Bruckana	Bord na Móna	Rathpatrick, Bruckana & Baunmore, Johnstown	8	Yes	Gate 3 TG 84
2	05/1256 11/461 12/378	Foylature	Art Generation	Foylature, Courtstown, Tullaroan	4	No	Gate 3 DG157
3	02/1072 08/735 12/194 12/533	Ballybeagh	ART Generation Ltd.	Ballybeagh, Tullaroan	5	No	Gate 3 DG131
4	03/1585 07/2140	Ballymartin Phase 1	Bord Gáis Energy/ Paul Martin/ ART Generation	Ballymartin, Smithstown	3	Yes	Built

			Ltd.				
5	07/2141 10/576	Ballymartin Phase 2	Bord Gáis Energy/ ART Generation Ltd.	Smithstown , Tullagher	4	Yes	Built
6	03/1117 07/2253 08/595	Rahora	Ecopowers Developments Ltd.	Guillkagh More, Brownstow n	5	Yes	Built
7	08/1511 12/172	Lisdowney Community	Matt Bergin and Thomas McEvoy	Lisdowney Ballyragget	4	No	Gate 3 DG285

10.5.2 Wind Energy Development Strategy

A Wind Energy Study was first carried out by CAAS (Environmental Services) Ltd. for Kilkenny County Council in 2003. This Study was reviewed and updated as a Wind Energy Development Strategy for the 2008 Development Plan. As part of this Plan, the strategy has been revised; see Appendix J for the full Strategy.

10.5.3 Development Management Guidance

All wind farm applications will be assessed in accordance with the [Wind Energy Development Guidelines](#)¹⁶² and the Wind Energy Development Strategy, as outlined in Appendix J. This has divided the areas of highest wind speeds in the county into three wind strategy categories, see [Figure 10.2](#) as follows:

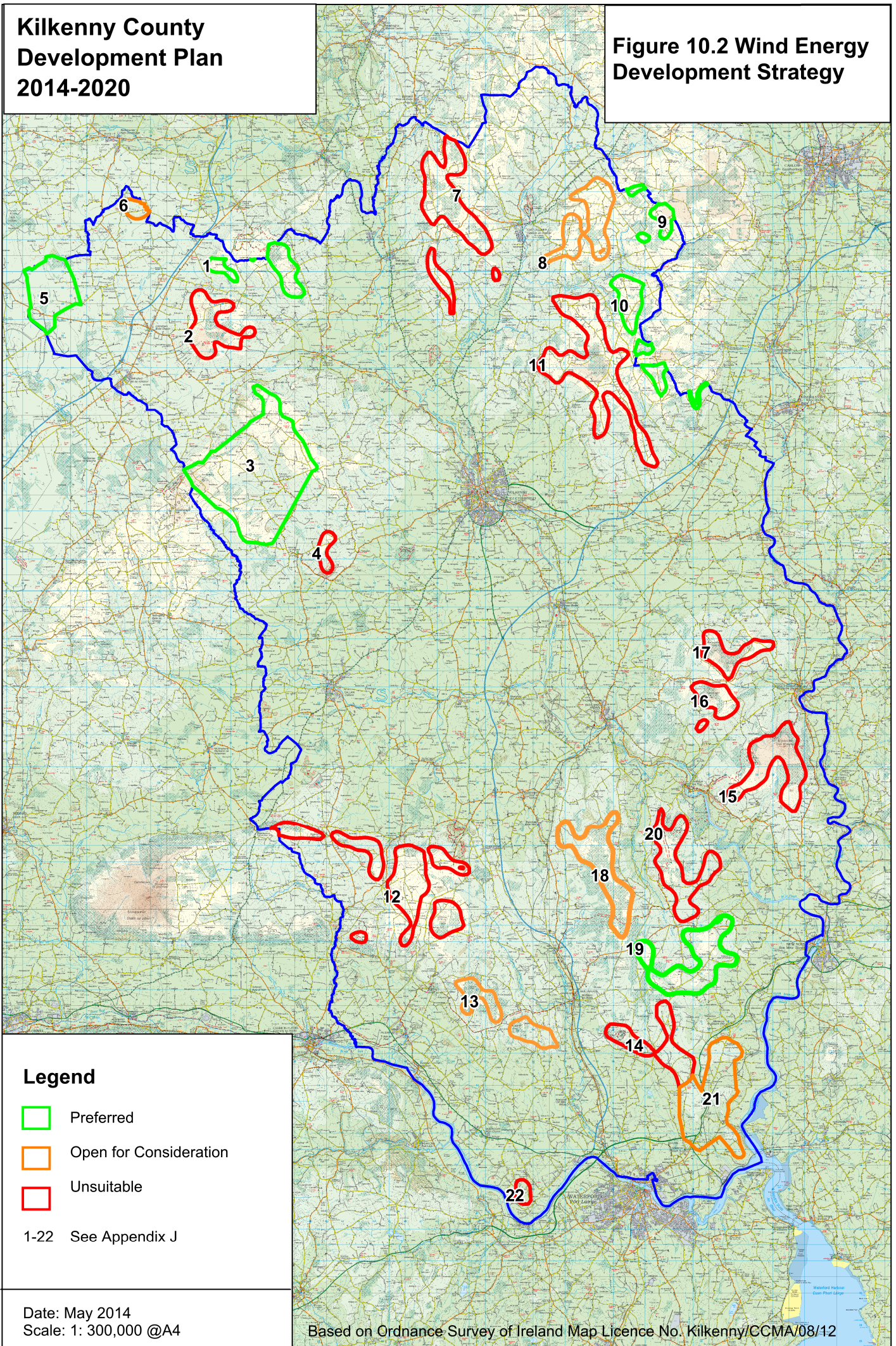
1. Preferred
2. Open for consideration
3. Unsuitable

The 6 areas identified as ‘Preferred’ all correspond to the Hilly and Flat Farmland landscape category as outlined in Section 6.9.2 of the Guidelines, so the layout of such windfarms should correspond to the guidance.

Pre-planning public consultation

Applicants for small or large scale wind farms shall be required to engage with the local population in the vicinity of any proposed wind farm, prior to lodging their application. Such consultation shall follow the format of Appendix 2 of the [Wind Energy Development Guidelines](#).

¹⁶² Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, [Wind Energy Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#), 2006



Residential amenity

The two main impacts on residential amenity from any wind farm development are noise and shadow flicker. These two elements must be examined as part of any application. The [Guidelines](#) indicate that noise is unlikely to be a significant problem where the distance from the nearest turbine to any noise sensitive property is more than 500 metres. Where any proposed distance between a wind farm and neighbouring offices or buildings is less, the Council will look for additional noise and shadow flicker mitigation.

Ground Conditions/Geology

In accordance with the [Wind Energy Development Guidelines](#), information on the underlying geology shall accompany any wind farm development application.

Flora and Fauna

Any impacts on birds or rare flora, mammals, amphibians and fish need to be assessed. For the purposes of this Development Plan, a registered thoroughbred stud farm is considered to be a noise and flicker sensitive property as referred to in the Wind Energy Guidelines. In particular, the provisions of the Wind Energy Guidelines in relation to noise and flicker will apply to registered thoroughbred stud farms.

Access to grid

Details of consultations with the electricity transmission operators regarding the nature and location of a proposed grid connection should be submitted as part of the pre-planning consultation.

Proximity to Roads and Railways

At a minimum, turbines shall be set back a distance equalling the blade tip height of the turbine from National and Regional roads and railways. Set-back from other roads will be site specific and determined at application stage.

Interference with communication systems

Any wind farm applicant should contact individual broadcasters to inform them of the proposals. A list of the licensed operators is available on www.comreg.ie. Mobile phone operators should also be informed. Contact should also be made with the Irish Aviation Authority. The outcome of such consultations shall accompany planning applications.

Landscape Impact Assessment

All applications shall be accompanied by a Landscape Impact Assessment Report, as set out in Appendix 3 of the [Wind Energy Development Guidelines](#), to include an assessment of the impact on any existing rights of way and established walking routes. Applicants should refer to Development Management Standards in Section 8.2.10.6 View and Prospects for further guidance.

On the publication of the new Wind Energy Development Guidelines, this section of the Plan will be re-assessed to ensure compliance with the Guidelines.

10.5.4 Wind Energy Policy Areas

Wind energy developments can be divided into four categories depending on their scale, as follows:

- (a) Individual wind turbines
- (b) Autoproducer
- (c) Small scale wind developments (5 or less turbines and output less than 5MW)
- (d) Large scale wind developments

The county has now been divided into three policy areas for the development of wind farms, based on an assessment of viability against other considerations; Preferred, Open for Consideration and Unsuitable. A matrix is set out below outlining which of the various category scales will be considered in each Wind Strategy area.

Strategy area	Preferred	Open for consideration	Unsuitable	Rest of county
Project category				
Individual turbine	✓	✓	✓	✓
Auto producer	✓	✓	✓	✓
Small scale wind farm	✓	✓	X	X
Large scale wind farm	✓	X	X	X

Detail on the project categories and policies for their development are set out below.

(a) Individual Wind Turbines

It is recognised that landowners may wish to harness wind energy for private use. Planning applications for individual wind turbines (subject to a limit of 1 per holding) shall be considered throughout the county.

(b) Autoproducer

An “Autoproducer” is where an industry/large energy user uses a wind turbine to feed its own energy consumption.

These will be considered throughout the county subject to the following:

- 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 development to reduce the visual impact of the turbine(s).

(c) Small-Scale Wind Energy Developments

In the policy areas identified as being ‘Preferred’ and ‘Open for Consideration’ in the Wind Energy Strategy Map (Figure 10.2), the following proposals will be considered:

- Comprising no more than 5 turbines,
- Where the total output is not greater than 5 Megawatts,
- Turbine heights do not exceed 65m to hub height

(d) Large-Scale Wind Energy Developments (>5MW)

Large-scale wind energy developments will, in usual circumstances, only be considered in ‘Preferred’ areas. 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. These will be assessed in accordance with the [Wind Energy Development Guidelines](#).

Note: Some restrictions may apply to these exemptions in certain circumstances (Article 9 of the Planning and Development Regulations). It is advisable to liaise with the Planning Department in relation to specific sites prior to availing of the following exemptions.

[S.I. No. 83 of 2007](#)¹⁶³, Planning and Development Regulations set out that a single wind turbine which meets the standards as set out (to include turbine height not more than thirteen metres, and rotor diameter of six metres and other standards as detailed in the Regulations), is considered to be “exempted development” which does not require planning permission when placed within the curtilage of a house.

[S.I. No. 235 of 2008](#)¹⁶⁴, Planning and Development Regulations set out that a single wind turbine which meets the standards as set out (to include turbine height not more than twenty metres, and rotor diameter of eight metres and other standards as detailed in the Regulations), is considered to be “exempted development” which does not require planning permission when placed within the curtilage of an agricultural holding or the curtilage of an industrial or light business premises building.

Note: [S.I. No. 235 of 2008](#)¹⁶⁵, Planning and Development Regulations set out that a single wind turbine which meets the standards as set out (to include turbine height not more than twenty metres, and rotor diameter of eight metres and other standards as detailed in the Regulations), is considered to be “exempted development” which does not require planning permission when placed within

¹⁶³ <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2007/en/si/0083.html>

¹⁶⁴ <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2008/en/si/0235.html>

¹⁶⁵ <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2008/en/si/0235.html>

10.6 Bioenergy

Bioenergy may be defined as the energy derived from biomass. Biomass is defined in the [Renewable Energy Directive](#) as the biodegradable fraction of products, waste and residues from agriculture (including vegetal and animal substances), forestry and related industries including fisheries and aquaculture, as well as the biodegradable fraction of industrial and municipal waste. Biomass can be used to generate electricity, heat and transport fuels.

In the domestic or small scale context, Biomass systems comprise of the following key components:-

- Fuel delivery
- Storage facilities
- Stoves/Boilers – to provide heating and hot water to the building
- Flue / ash extraction
- Connecting pipework

Kilkenny, as in Ireland as a whole, has significant bioenergy potential in the form of agricultural land, forestry, recycled waste from municipal treatment plants, agriculture and industrial sources.

The SEAI publishes a mapping resource, the Bioenergy Mapping System¹⁶⁶, which gives information on the location of potential and actual bioenergy crops, forestry, biomass and waste locations.

10.6.1 Wood Energy Supply Chain

Wood fuels are available in a number of generic forms. These include wood wastes, forest residues and energy crops. Some wood fuels are processed to provide a higher quality and more user friendly product such as wood pellets and wood chips. There are considerable forestry plantations in the county, c.20,500 hectares or almost 10% of the county's land area¹⁶⁷. In Kilkenny it is likely that forestry will provide the main source of biomass for the foreseeable future.

There are a number of non-domestic establishments in the county using wood fuels, including the following:

- Camphill Community
- There is a district heating system in place in Callan, which is fuelled by locally sourced materials. This system serves the Callan Friary complex's five buildings, using a 200kW centralised wood chip boiler which feeds a network of pipes that carry heated water to the end users.
- St. Columbus Hospital, Thomastown is a HSE hospital which switched over to a 400kW wood chip boiler to provide hot water and space heating for the entire hospital.
- Kilkenny College, Castlecomer Road has installed a boiler fuelled by wood pellets.
- The WaterShed (Leisure Centre) uses a woodchip boiler.

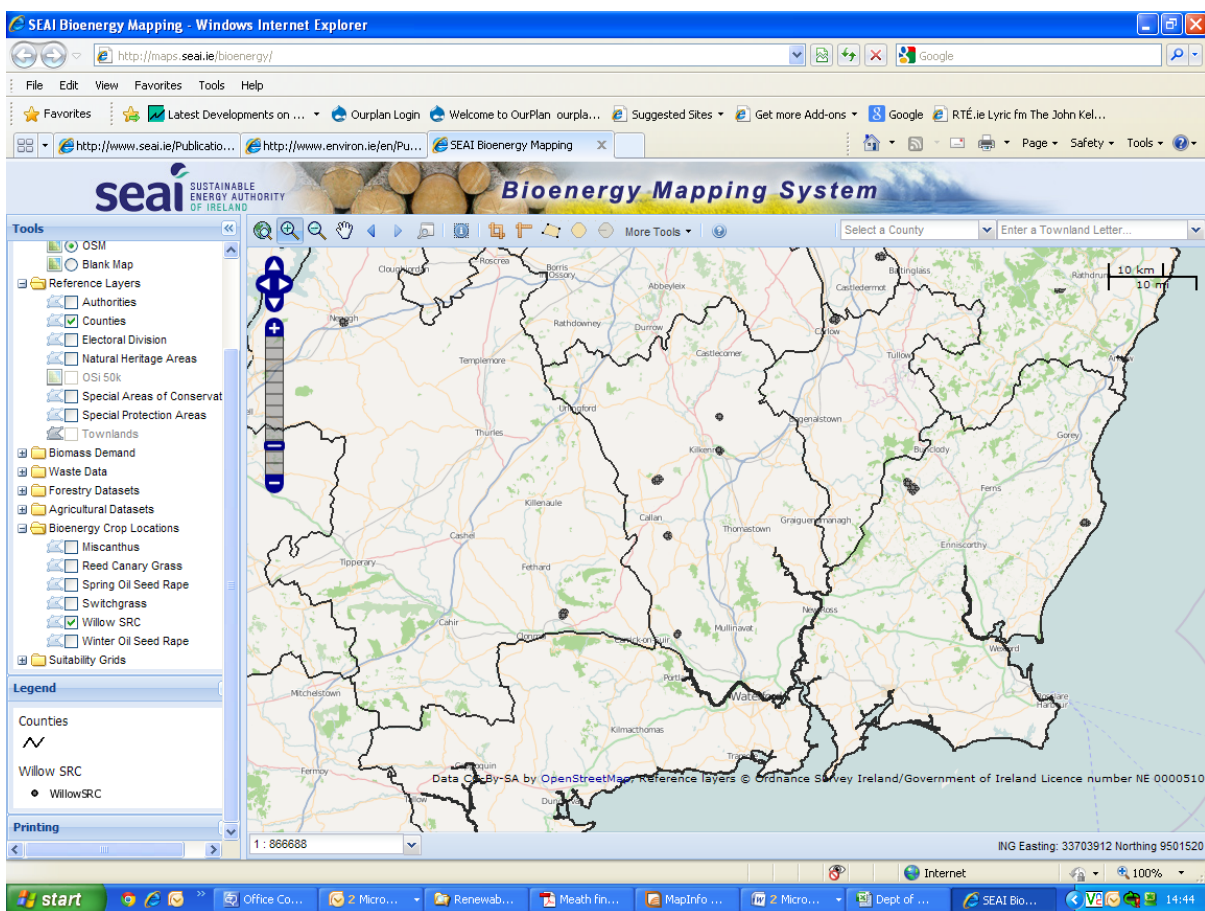
¹⁶⁶ <http://maps.seai.ie/bioenergy/>

¹⁶⁷ [Forest Service, Afforestation Statistics, 2011](#)

10.6.2 Short rotation forestry

Short rotation forestry is the production of wood fuel through the cultivation of high-yielding trees at close spacing on short time rotations. Species such as willow and poplar are ideal for short rotation forestry, as they are easy to establish, fast growing, suitable for a variety of sites and resistant to pests and disease.

Statistics on the growth of willow is available from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine which operates a Bioenergy Grant Scheme for Willow and Miscanthus and from the Bioenergy Map. According to the grant statistics¹⁶⁸, there is very little land under willow plantation in Kilkenny (no hectares were subject to a grant between 2007-2012, with only 11 hectares applied for in 2013) and the [Bioenergy map](#) (accessed January 2013) shows that there are very few willow plantations in the county.

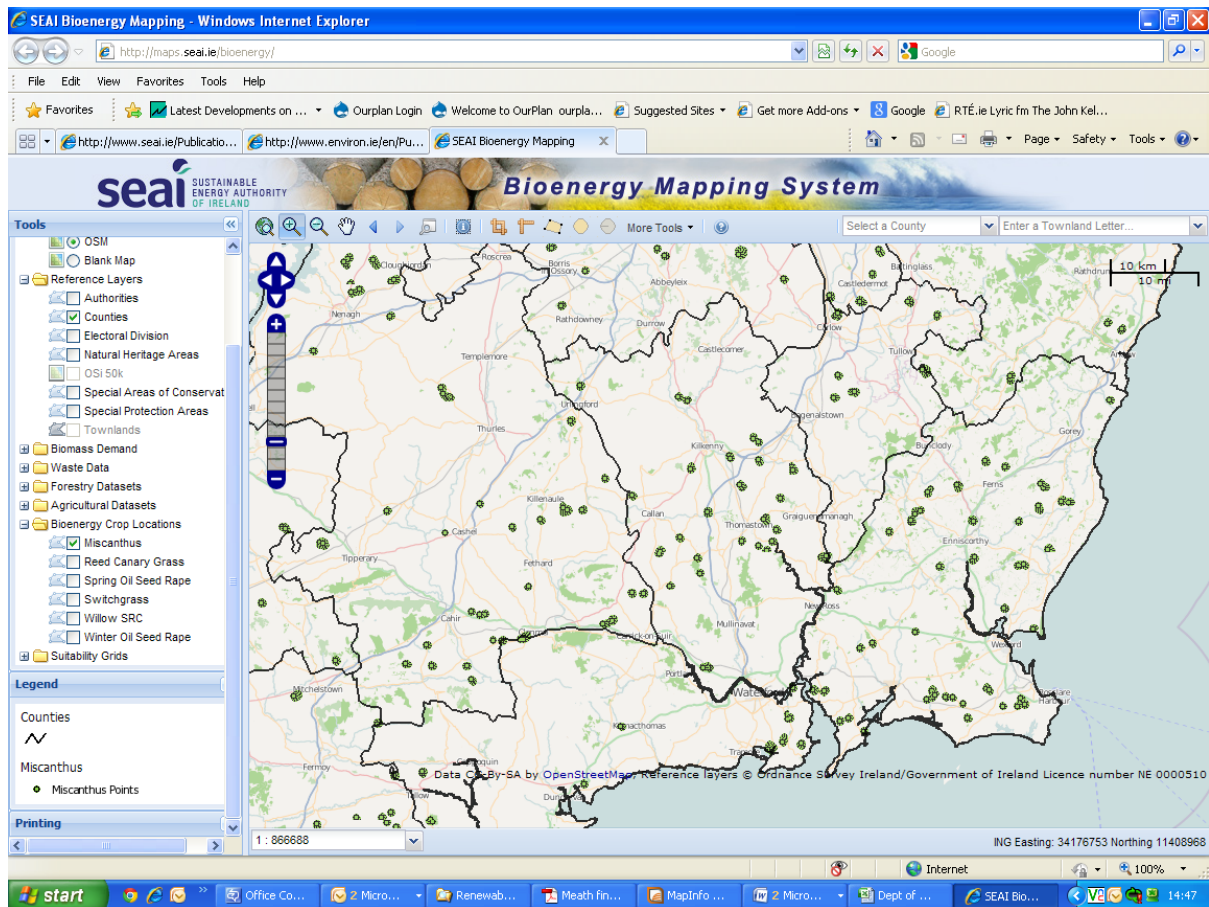


10.6.3 Energy crops

The main commonly grown energy crop in Ireland is Miscanthus. Miscanthus is a grass which can be used as a fuel in special Miscanthus boilers which are made to handle and burn it efficiently. It can also be burnt in Biomass-Combined Heat and Power units and for co-firing in power stations.

¹⁶⁸ Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Bioenergy Grant Scheme for Willow and Miscanthus, statistics obtained January 2013

Between 2007 and 2010 a total of 223 hectares of land were subject to a Miscanthus establishment grant, which equates to over 7% of the entire country's Miscanthus area. The [Bioenergy Map](#) shows that there are numerous examples of Miscanthus plantations in the county (accessed January 2013).



10.6.4 Liquid Biofuels

Liquid biofuels are derived from biomass crops or by-products that are suitable for use in vehicle engines or heating systems. Biofuels can be considered as potential replacements or extenders for mineral fuels such as diesel or petrol. They can be sub-divided into a number of categories, the principal two being:

1. Vegetable oils/animal fats which can be used in unprocessed form or converted to biodiesel;
2. Bio-ethanol produced from the fermentation of organic materials such as sugar beet, cereals, etc.

There is one biofuel supplier in the county; Goldstar Oils Ltd. in Oldcourt, Inistioge. This company manufactures Pure Plant Oil (PPO). PPO is a form of biodiesel which is produced by pressing oilseeds from rapeseed and filtering the resulted oil. Other oils like soya or palm oil are also possible feedstocks. The oil can be used as a fuel in a diesel engine whose engine has been fitted with an appropriate modification kit.

10.6.5 Anaerobic Digestion

The process of Anaerobic Digestion (AD) involves the breakdown of organic matter by bacteria and enzymes in an oxygen-free environment. The end product of this process is biogas which is a gas with a high methane content. This methane can be captured and burned to produce heat, electricity or a combination of the two.

It is used widely in the agricultural sector in the form of small on-farm digesters producing biogas to heat farmhouses and other farm buildings. The main types of organic material feedstock used in AD are:

- sewage sludge
- farm slurry
- municipal solid waste (MSW)

An Anaerobic Digestion plant typically comprises of:

- a digester tank
- buildings to house ancillary equipment such as a generator, a biogas storage tank
- a flare stack (3-10m in height)
- associated pipework.

Plants can vary in scale from small schemes treating the waste from an individual farm through medium-sized centralised facilities dealing with wastes from several farms (potentially supplemented by crops such as maize grown specifically to feed the digester) to sizeable industrial AD plant handling large quantities of municipal solid waste. In the case of small plants it is likely that the plant can be accommodated within the vicinity of existing farm buildings. Some forms of biomass produce digestate and other end products which must be disposed of.

The Camphill community in Ballytobin uses an anaerobic digester which performs centralised co-digestion of farm slurry with mixed food waste. This generates energy (heat and power) to meet the requirements of the 90 people living in Ballytobin Camphill Community.

Permission was granted (P.12/354) for an anaerobic digester at a piggery in Piltown.

10.6.6 Combined Heat and Power

Combined Heat and Power (CHP) is a technology that uses the energy produced in the combustion of fuel to produce both useful heat energy and electricity. CHP can refer to gas fired CHP or to biomass CHP. Biomass CHP is a form of renewable energy. In Ireland most CHP plants burn gas. CHP Systems will comprise the following key components:-

- Fuel delivery and storage facilities (if fuelled by biomass)
- Boiler/turbine
- Connecting pipework
- Heat exchanger/heat recovery generator

CHP plants are available in a range of scales, from micro-CHP domestic applications, small scale CHP plants, medium size plants serving an office block to large industrial applications and CHP plants serving district heating schemes. There are no medium or large scale CHP plants in the county.

10.6.7 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 Joint 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. (The JWMP was evaluated in 2012 and the outcome of that evaluation is that the Plan requires to be reviewed. The review will take place in 2013.)

10.6.8 Development Management Guidance

Possible impacts from the generation of fuel from biomass for a small or community sized plant are set out in the table below.

Issue	Potential impact
Visual	Impact on character of structure of an externally fitted flue
Noise	During construction and during operation from plant operation and deliveries
Light pollution	If operation is proposed on 24/7 basis
Ecology	Impact on bats from new flue installation
Air quality	Odour, dust and emissions
Traffic and transport	Increase in vehicle movements to and from the property
Architectural heritage	Impact on character of protected building from any new flue or structure

Taken from *Generating your own Energy, Biomass*, Welsh Assembly Government, 2011 Pages 5-7

The impacts from commercial scale biomass plants are similar, but include the visual impact from grid infrastructure in addition to the plant itself. Biomass plants on a commercial scale will be directed to appropriately zoned lands, in order to reduce any impacts on residential amenity. Another consideration is the disposal of end products from the plant. For any such projects, the potential for traffic generation will be an important consideration. To minimise traffic impacts, locations should be close to the point of demand and be served by public roads with sufficient capacity to absorb increased traffic flows and adjacent to transport corridors.

Possible impacts from an anaerobic digester plant are set out in the table below. Proposals for anaerobic digestion will be required to specify suitable outlets for any residues e.g. land banks for landspreading, as part of a planning application.

Table 10.3: Summary of potential impacts from anaerobic digestors

Issue	Potential impact
Visual	Impact of plant and structures
Hydrology	Potential for pollution from operational procedures, e.g. spillages and from digestate
Noise	During construction and during operation from plant operation and deliveries
Air quality	Odour from storage of wastes and feedstock, digestion process, transport, and disposal of digestate, dust and emissions.
Light pollution	If operation is proposed on 24/7 basis
Traffic and transport	Increase in vehicle movements to and from the property; use of rail freight or shipping could be considered
Architectural heritage	Impact on character of setting of protected building

Taken from *Generating your own Energy, Anaerobic Digestion*, Welsh Assembly Government, 2011 Pages 5-8

Possible impacts from a CHP plant are set out in the table below.

Table 10.4: Summary of potential impacts from CHP

Issue	Potential impact
Visual	Impact of plant, storage facility, structures. Domestic scale; Impact of flue and storage structures
Light pollution	If operation is proposed on 24/7 basis
Noise	During construction and during operation from plant operation and deliveries
Air quality	Emissions from vehicles during construction and operation
Traffic and transport	Increase in vehicle movements to and from the property with fuel deliveries
Architectural heritage	Impact on character or setting of protected building

Taken from *Generating your own Energy, Combined Heat and Power*, Welsh Assembly Government, 2011 Pages 5-7

10.6.9 Bioenergy Objectives

- 10A** Kilkenny County Council recognises the need to support the development of bioenergy resources. It will support suitable projects and recommends that anyone considering a project should consult the South East Regional Authority of Ireland's current [Bioenergy Implementation Plan](#).
- 10B** Facilitate the development of projects that convert biomass to energy.
- 10C** In general, direct commercial bioenergy plants to locate on brownfield sites which are adjacent to industrial areas or on lands which are reserved for industrial uses in any development plan. Brownfield sites in rural areas may also be considered.
- 10D** Ensure that any commercial bioenergy plant is close to the point of demand and is served by public roads with sufficient capacity to absorb increased traffic flows and adjacent to transport corridors.
- 10E** Seek to respond positively to applications for waste to energy projects.

10.7 Hydro Power

Hydroelectricity is electricity derived from the power harnessed from the flow of falling water, typically from fast-flowing streams and rivers, impoundment, or in the form of pumped hydro schemes.

Carlow-Kilkenny Energy Agency published a report on hydro power potential in the county, entitled [Reclaiming Lost Power, Kilkenny's Potential Hydro power sites](#) in 2010¹⁶⁹. According to that report, there was a total of 185 KW being generated through hydro power in 2010, see Table below.

Table 10.5 Hydro power generating sites in Co. Kilkenny			
Generating station	Address	Operator	Capacity (kW)
Inch Mills	Sion Road Kilkenny	Inch Hydro Ltd	40
Greenville Mill	Kilmacow	Benedict Behal	75
Drying Plant	Bennettsbridge	Nicholas Mosse Pottery	28
Milling Plant	Bennettsbridge	Nicholas Mosse Pottery	42
Total			185

Source: [Reclaiming Lost Power, 2010](#)

In 1985, the Department of Energy published a document entitled *Small-scale Hydroelectric Potential of Ireland*¹⁷⁰. In this, 32 potential hydro sites were identified in County Kilkenny. [Reclaiming Lost Power](#) assessed these 32 sites and identified 20 sites for prioritisation. These sites are shown in [Figure 10.3](#).

¹⁶⁹ Carlow-Kilkenny Energy Agency, [Reclaiming Lost Power, Kilkenny's Potential Hydro power sites](#), 2010

¹⁷⁰ Department of Energy, [Small-scale Hydroelectric Potential of Ireland](#), 1985

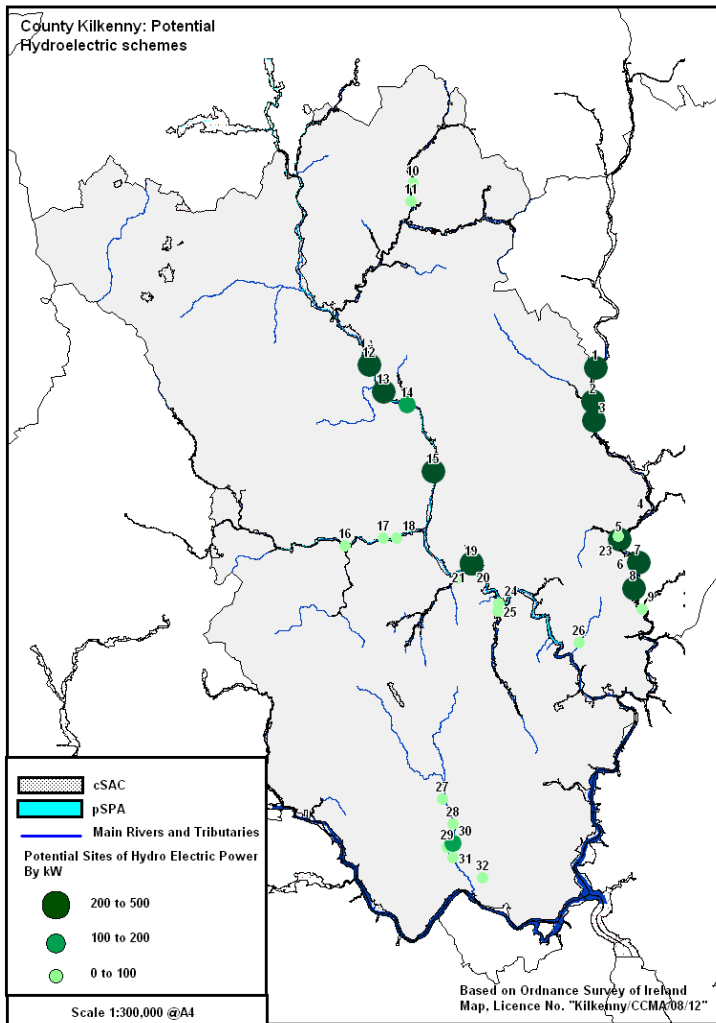


Figure 10.3: Potential hydroelectric schemes

10.7.1 Types of scheme

The *flow rate* in the river is the volume of water passing per second. The *gross head* is the maximum available vertical fall in the water from the upstream level to the downstream level. Two hydro projects with the same power output could be very different; one using a relatively low volume of high-speed water from a mountain reservoir and the other using a high volume of water in a slow flowing river. As such, hydro schemes are classified as low, medium or high head schemes.

10.7.1.1 Low head schemes

Low head systems typically have a gross head of less than 10m. *Reclaiming Lost Power* identified the potential of low head hydro resources existing in disused mill sites, weirs and untapped areas around the county. These low head sites (< 10 m) have the potential to create employment, revenue and further enhance the green economy for County Kilkenny.

Low head systems are generally located in lowland areas, abstracting water from rivers through the use of weirs with diversion of a proportion of river flow to a leat (millrace) and from there to a

turbine house. Water is returned to the river downstream of the turbine through a tailrace. Low head schemes are very dependent on flow, and may shut down during periods of low rainfall.

10.7.1.2 Medium-high head schemes

While there is no explicit definition, medium head systems typically have a gross head of between 10 – 50m, and high head schemes typically have a gross head of >50m. Medium and high head schemes typically, but not always, are larger in terms of installed generation capacity. In any case, there is little scope for development of these types of schemes in County Kilkenny. Only one site, on the River Blackwater is a high head scheme and the Greenville Mill hydroelectric scheme is already in place there.

10.7.2 Development Management Guidance

In the assessment of proposals for hydroelectric schemes the Council will have regard to the provisions of the [Guidelines on the Planning, Design, Construction and Operation of Small Scale Hydro-Electric Schemes and Fisheries](#)¹⁷¹, or any amending or replacement document. In addition, it is recommended that anyone considering a hydro-electrical project should consult the following documents (or any updates thereto);

- [Reclaiming Lost Power, Kilkenny’s Potential Hydro power sites](#)
- [Requirements for the protection of Fisheries Habitat during Construction and Development Works at River Sites](#)¹⁷²

In addition to the effects on fisheries as covered by the [Guidelines](#), possible impacts from hydro energy developments are outlined in the table below.

Table 10.6: Summary of potential impacts from hydro-power scheme	
Issue	Potential impact
Visual	Impact on character of landscape, scenic views (turbine houses, embankments, structures, access routes and power lines)
Ecology	Impact on habitats, fish populations and protected species such as otters and bats
Hydrology	Possibility of pollution, effect on water quality and regime, must show compliance with River Basin Management Plan
Noise	During construction and operation
Archaeology	There may be underwater archaeology present
Architectural heritage	Many weirs and mills are protected structures

Taken from *Generating your own Energy, Hydropower*, Welsh Assembly Government, 2011 Pages 5-7

¹⁷¹ Central and Regional Fisheries Boards, & the Department of Communications, Marine & Natural Resources [Guidelines on the Planning, Design, Construction and Operation of Small Scale Hydro-Electric Schemes and Fisheries](#), 2007

¹⁷² Eastern Regional Fisheries Board, [Requirements for the protection of Fisheries Habitat during Construction and Development Works at River Sites](#), 2009

An Environmental Impact Assessment may be required for some hydro electric schemes in accordance with Schedule 5 Part 2(h) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001. An EIS may also be required for schemes not meeting this threshold, but where the Council considers that the potential environmental impact is such that an EIA is warranted.

As can be seen from Figure 8.1, many of the county's rivers are designated as SACs or SPAs (see Section 8.2). As with all developments, for any location within or adjacent to a Natura 2000 site, an assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive will be required (See section 1.3).

As part of any planning application for a hydro electric scheme, an Environmental Management Plan will be required to address all environmental issues arising during the construction and operation of the scheme.

The following types of scheme are likely to be detrimental to the fisheries resource and may be rejected by the planning authority:

- New low head schemes that may cause significant obstacles to fish movement.
- In catchments / sub-catchments of importance such as a spring salmon fishery.
- Placing structures / weirs at the outlet of lakes or creating new impoundments.
- The transfer of water from one catchment to another.
- River channel sections of high fisheries value where the impacts of the proposed hydro scheme development would be unacceptable from a fisheries perspective, i.e. in an area of important spawning or nursery area
- Where there are existing competing uses of the water resource, such as water abstractions, dilution of licensed discharges etc
- Where there may be an impact on river continuity, fish migration, or fish mortality.

10.7.3 Hydro Power Objectives

10F Facilitate the development of appropriate projects that convert hydro power to energy.

10G Have regard to the provisions of the [Guidelines on the Planning, Design, Construction and Operation of Small Scale Hydro-Electric Schemes and Fisheries](#)

10.8 Solar energy

The three main forms of solar energy are Passive Solar Design, Solar Heating and Solar Electricity.

10.8.1 Passive Solar Design (PSD)

Virtually all buildings enjoy free energy and light from the sun; the objective in PSD is to maximise this benefit by using simple design approaches which intentionally enable buildings to function more effectively and provide a comfortable environment for living or working. PSD has always been a feature of traditional vernacular architecture. A structure employing PSD is unlikely to cost more than a structure built without the benefit of passive solar design. Design, infrastructure and site layout are key to achieving energy efficient development by optimising passive solar gain in

domestic and non-domestic buildings. PSD is a central principle of the Guidelines on [Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas](#)¹⁷³ and the [Kilkenny Rural House Design Guide](#)¹⁷⁴.

10.8.2 Solar Heating

A solar collector is a device that captures solar heat and transfers it to heat water, most commonly for sanitary hot water production, or in cases where a building has a very low heat demand, then often for both space heating and hot water. Larger scale active solar thermal technologies can also be used for cooling and steam production. Steam produced in this way can be used to drive turbines for electricity production.

There are two types of collector; flat plate collectors or evacuated tube. Building-mounted flat plate collectors can be positioned both "in-roof" and on-roof due to their structure (heavy, rigid, robust box-like structure). The efficiencies of flat plate collectors make them very suitable for domestic installations or for installations where very high temperatures aren't required.

Building-mounted evacuated tube collectors can only be mounted on-roof due to their lightweight structure, which is most commonly individual tubes mounted on a frame. Evacuated tube collectors will provide approximately 20% more yield per m² than flat plates, which means that less installed area is required for similar heat outputs.

10.8.3 Solar Electricity

The production of solar electricity relies heavily on active solar technology. The most commonly encountered system for solar electricity production is solar photovoltaic. Solar photovoltaics (commonly referred to as "PV") is the term given to the conversion of light energy to electricity and also describes the active solar technology (Solar photovoltaic systems) which produces electricity from solar radiation using solar cells joined together in panels called PV modules.

PV systems exploit the direct conversion of daylight into electricity in a semiconductor device, with the most common form being a number of semi conductor cells which are interconnected and form a solar panel or module. There is considerable variation in appearance, but many solar modules are dark in colour and have low reflective properties. Solar modules are typically 0.5 to 1m² with a peak electrical output of 70 to 160 watts. A number of modules are usually connected together in an array, the area of which can vary from a few square metres to several hundred square metres. A typical array on a domestic property might have an area of 9 to 18m², and would produce 1 to 2 kW peak output¹⁷⁵.

¹⁷³ Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Guidelines for Planning Authorities on [Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas \(Cities, Towns and Villages\)](#), 2009

¹⁷⁴ Kilkenny County Council, [County Kilkenny Rural Design Guide](#), 2008

¹⁷⁵ [Technical Advice Note 8: Planning for Renewable Energy](#), Planning Policy Wales, Welsh Assembly Government, July 2005, Page 46-47

10.8.4 Development Management Guidance

The main impact from the installation of solar energy technologies is visual. The installation of solar panels on a building can impact on the building's character. There are exemptions contained within the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 to 2008 ([S.I. No. 83 of 2007](#) and [S.I. No. 235 of 2008](#)), regarding the placing of solar technology on domestic structures, and on buildings used/associated with industrial, light industrial, business and agricultural purposes, subject to certain criteria. Planning permission is required to install solar technology on a Protected Structure. Sensitive design and location is important so that the overall character is not diminished.

Public buildings and schools are not included within the Regulations. The Council will support applications to install solar panels on these buildings within the county should the opportunity arise.

10.8.5 Solar Energy Objectives

- 10H The Planning Authority will support and facilitate the development of passive solar design proposals for the development of houses in rural and urban areas, and will draw on the recommendations of the [Kilkenny Rural House Design Guide](#), and the Guidelines on [Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas](#).
- 10I The Planning Authority will make available advice on Passive Solar Design in preplanning consultations for domestic and commercial buildings.
- 10J Consider impacts of overshadowing on the efficiency of existing solar technologies when assessing planning applications.
- 10K Support applications to install solar panels on public buildings and schools within the county should the opportunity arise.

10.9 Geothermal Energy

Geothermal energy refers to heat energy stored in the ground. Heat is supplied to the ground from two sources, namely the hot core of the planet and the sun. It can be classified as either 'deep' or 'shallow' depending on the depths involved. For deep geothermal energy extraction, developments drill into the earth's crust to reach 'hot rocks', such as granite whose radioactive elements generate heat at great depth. The second source of heat in the ground is from radiation from the sun. Solar thermal radiation is absorbed by the surface of the earth each day. This energy can be regarded as stored energy which stays relatively warm throughout the year. This type of solar energy is extracted from the first few metres of the earth's crust and can be harvested using heat pumps.

Heat pump systems extract the heat stored in the ground (ground source heat pumps), bodies of water (water source heat pumps) or air (air source heat pumps). This heat can then be used to heat the spaces in buildings, heat water or enable a building to be cooled. Through compression, heat pumps can 'pump up' heat at low temperature and release it at a higher temperature so that it may be used again. A heat pump looks similar and can perform the same functions as a conventional gas or oil boiler, i.e. space heating and sanitary hot water production. For every unit of electricity used to operate the heat pump, up to four units of heat are generated. Therefore for every unit of electricity used to pump the heat, 3-4 units of heat are produced. The collector can be "closed loop" where the same fluid (usually water and antifreeze) always flows

through the collector pipes or “open loop” where new water (e.g. from a well) flows through the heat pump.

Ground source heat pumps (GSHP) operate on the fact that the ground maintains a constant temperature between 11°C and 13°C, several metres below the surface. Ground source heat pumps use a 'closed loop' system of water/anti-freeze to collect the soil heat. In general terms the ground area required for the collector is approximately equal to that of the foot-print of the house or building to be heated¹⁷⁶.

Air source heat pumps (ASHP) use the surrounding air as a heat source to heat a building. Air source heat pumps can be located in the roof space or on the side of the building. They are similar in appearance to air conditioning boxes.

Water source heat pumps (WSHP) extract heat from large bodies of water or rivers. These are generally 'open loop' collectors, i.e. the water is passed through and discarded, unlike the 'closed loop' systems.

10.9.1 Deep Geothermal

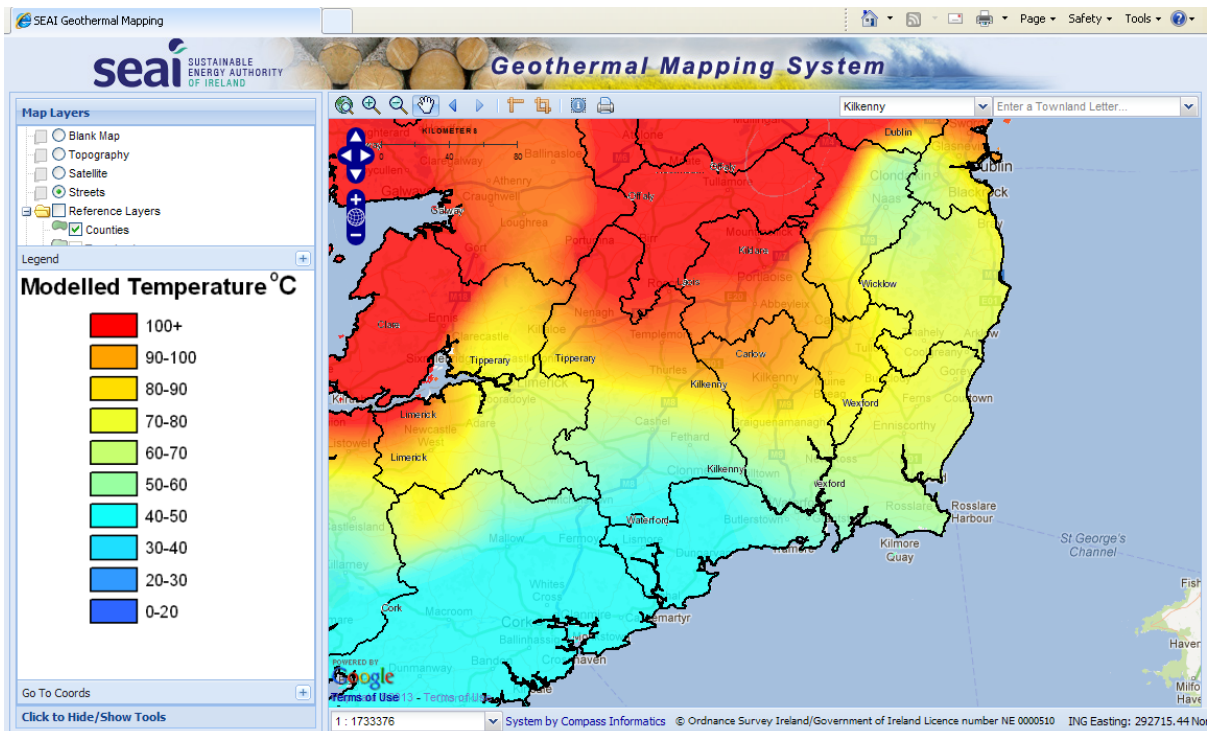
In 2004, CSA Group completed a [study](#) commissioned by SEAI which aimed at identifying the potential resources of geothermal energy in Ireland. Co. Kilkenny does not have significant potential for deep geothermal, as the study concluded that “the best proven potential for medium and deep geothermal resources in the Republic of Ireland are in the northeast (Navan area) and northwest midlands... and in the west Clare and east midlands areas”¹⁷⁷.

One of the outcomes of the project was to create a series of [geothermal maps](#)¹⁷⁸ for Ireland. Subsurface temperatures increase from south to north in County Kilkenny. The map below shows the geothermal temperatures at 5,000m.

¹⁷⁶ CSA Group, [Geothermal Energy Resource Map of Ireland, Final Report; 2004; Report prepared for Sustainable Energy Ireland](#), 2004, Page 17

¹⁷⁷ CSA Group, [Geothermal Energy Resource Map of Ireland, Final Report; 2004; Report prepared for Sustainable Energy Ireland](#), 2004, Page 82

¹⁷⁸ SEAI, [Geothermal Mapping System](#)



However, in the short term it is unlikely that deep geothermal will be utilised in Ireland. The first deep geothermal plant in Ireland was granted permission by South Dublin County Council in 2011 for Greenogue Business Park in Newcastle.

10.9.2 Development Management Guidance

The various possible impacts from the three types of heat pumps, and from deep geothermal are set out in the Table below.

Table 10.7: Summary of potential impacts from heat pumps

Potential impact	Ground source heat pump	Air source heat pump	Water source heat pump
Visual		X	
Ecology	X		X
Hydrology (risk of contaminating wells, aquifers and watercourses)	X		X
Hydrology (abstraction & disturbance)			X
Traffic & Transport	X		
Noise	X	X	X
Geology	X		
Archaeology	X		
Architectural heritage		X	
Building Design (structural impact)	X		X

Taken from [Generating your own Energy, Heat Pumps, Welsh Assembly Government, 2011 Pages 7-11](#)

Table 10.8: Summary of potential impacts from Deep Geothermal energy

Issue	Potential impact
Visual	Plant and power infrastructure, there may also be structures around any tunnels
Ecology	Habitat and species disturbance
Hydrology	Risk of contaminating wells, aquifers and watercourses
Traffic & Transport	Vehicle movements during operation and also construction & decommissioning
Noise	Noise creation from drilling
Geology	Seismic factors associated with drilling near faults, risk factors from gas pockets and other sub-surface substances. Risk of ground subsidence.
Archaeology	There may be archaeology present.

10.9.3 Geothermal Energy Objective

10L Support the development of geothermal energy and heat pumps

10.10 Sustainability & Energy Efficiency in Buildings

According to the EU, buildings account for 40% of total energy consumption in the Union¹⁷⁹. Therefore, increasing energy efficiency in buildings has a huge role to play in meeting Ireland's renewable energy targets.

10.10.1 Kilkenny Local Authorities Energy Efficiency

Kilkenny Local Authorities have adopted an *Internal Climate Change Strategy and Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2010-2014* which has been developed in line with the National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012. An internal Climate Change Committee was established to implement this.

Kilkenny Local Authorities have signed up to Energy Map training and an Energy Management Action Plan delivered by Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI). An Energy team was established under the Energy Map programme consisting of personnel from across the various sections. In signing this agreement Kilkenny Local Authorities are committed to reducing their energy consumption by 33% by 2020. It is acknowledged that only by ensuring that employees from all areas of the organisation are involved that a local authority can successfully integrate energy efficiency and management into its culture.

Objective:

10M To review the progress of the Climate Change Strategy, report on the progress to date, and thereafter develop a new strategy and action plan in line with national policy.

¹⁷⁹ [Directive 2002/91/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2002 on the energy performance of buildings](#)

10.10.2 Energy Performance of Buildings

The 2002 [EU Directive on the Energy Performance of Buildings](#) (EPBD)¹⁸⁰ contained a range of provisions aimed at improving the energy performance of residential and non-residential buildings, both new and existing. This Directive was adopted into Irish law as the Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations ([S.I. No. 666 of 2006](#)).

From 2013, the EPBD will be superseded by the [recast EPBD](#)¹⁸¹. Under the recast Directive, Member States must establish and apply minimum energy performance requirements for new and existing buildings, ensure the certification of building energy performance and require the regular inspection of boilers and air conditioning systems in buildings. Moreover the Directive requires member states to ensure that by 2021 all new buildings are constructed as so-called ‘nearly zero-energy buildings’ and by 2019 new buildings occupied and owned by public authorities are nearly zero-energy buildings. (A zero energy building means a building that has a very high energy performance. The nearly zero or very low amount of energy required should be covered to a very significant extent by energy from renewable sources, including energy from renewable sources produced on-site or nearby.)

In Ireland, the Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations, ([S.I. No. 666 of 2006](#)) provides the regulatory framework for the time being.

10.10.2.1 Alternative Energy Systems for Large Buildings

For large buildings over 1,000m², [S.I. No. 666 of 2006](#) requires 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.

The preferred methodology for assessing the feasibility of such alternative energy systems shall be the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland software tool or other acceptable methodology as defined in ([S.I. No. 666 of 2006](#)).

This shall also apply to all new planning application for housing schemes of ten or more units.

10.10.2.2 Dwelling Energy Assessment Procedure

Dwelling Energy Assessment Procedure (DEAP) is the official Irish procedure for calculating and assessing the energy performance of dwellings. Published by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), 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 CO₂ emission rate and energy consumption per annum. This is a useful tool for designers when considering and comparing options to conserve energy and reduce CO₂ emission. The right design

¹⁸⁰

[Directive 2002/91/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2002 on the energy performance of buildings](#)

¹⁸¹ [Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings \(recast\)](#)

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/m²/per annum) and illustrated as an Energy Rating (A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, B3, etc) for the dwelling, it also includes a Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) Emissions Indicator (kgCO₂/m²/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 Authority of Ireland (SEAI) and the Carlow Kilkenny Energy Agency.

10.10.3 Building design

The [Urban Design Manual](#)¹⁸² sets out how sustainable energy considerations should be incorporated into all stages of the design process.

The Building Regulations, Part L – Conservation of Fuel and Energy – set out the requirements for dwellings¹⁸³ and for buildings other than dwellings¹⁸⁴. In order to ensure that the Building Regulations are fully taken into account in the design of any proposed dwelling, it will be a requirement that all planning applications be accompanied by a provisional BER cert stating that the proposed dwelling is in accordance with the current Technical Guidance Document L - Conservation of fuel and energy.

10.10.3.1 Passive Houses

A passive house is an energy-efficient building with year-round comfort and good indoor environmental conditions without the use of active space heating or cooling systems. The Passivhaus Standard is a construction standard developed by the Passivhaus Institut in Germany (<http://www.passiv.de/en/index.php>). The Standard can be met using a variety of design strategies, construction methods and technologies and is applicable to any building type.

¹⁸² Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, [Urban Design Manual, A best practice guide](#) 2009

¹⁸³ Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, [Building Regulations 2011 Technical Guidance Document L Conservation of Fuel and Energy – Dwellings](#)

¹⁸⁴ Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, [Building Regulations 2008 Technical Guidance Document L Conservation of Fuel and Energy – Buildings other than dwellings](#)

10.10.4 Building Energy Performance Objectives

- 10N** Encourage high standards of energy efficiency in all building developments and encourage developers, owners and tenants to improve the environmental performance of the building stock, including the deployment of renewable energy.
- 10O** Require a provisional BER certificate as part of any planning application, showing how the proposal will comply with Part L of the Building Regulations
- 10P** To require that planning applications for large buildings, as defined by the Energy Performance of Building Regulations, demonstrate 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 applications for ten or more housing units.

11 Transport

Strategic Aim: To co-ordinate transport and land use planning, reducing the demand for travel and the reliance on the private car in favour of public transport, cycling and walking.

11.1 Sustainable Transport/Smarter Travel

In 2009 the Government published [Smarter Travel-A Sustainable Transport Future- A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020](#)¹⁸⁵. The main objectives of this are:

- 1) To encourage smarter travel, i.e. to reduce overall travel demand,
- 2) To maximise the efficiency of the transport network,
- 3) To reduce reliance on fossil fuels and therefore to reduce transport emissions, and
- 4) To improve accessibility to transport

The Council will promote walking, cycling, public transport and other more sustainable forms of transport as an alternative to the private car, together with the development of the necessary infrastructure and promotion of the initiatives contained within [Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future 2009 – 2020](#).

Objective:

11A To investigate the establishment of a Transport Forum to oversee transport policy of the county.

11.1.1 Cycling and Walking

In line with Smarter Travel, the Plan will promote cycling and walking as efficient, fast and relatively inexpensive forms of transport. The design and location of residential development can minimise the need for car journeys and by encouraging walking and cycling. Providing a network of safe, well-lit and convenient footpaths and cycleways within new residential areas with links to schools, local neighbourhood centres, public transport stops and workplaces will encourage walking and cycling.

Various initiatives can contribute to an increase in walking and cycling. An example of this is the Walking bus, which consists of adults walking groups of pupils to and from school along set routes, with children joining the walking bus at various pick-up points along the route. This programme encourages children to walk, and so get used to this means of travel.

¹⁸⁵ Department of Transport, [Smarter Travel-A Sustainable Transport Future- A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020](#), 2009

A [National Cycle Policy Framework](#)¹⁸⁶ was published in 2009. This sets out a series of interventions and instruments to reverse the decline in cycling numbers, which includes planning and infrastructure measures. The approach recommended is a hierarchy of measures, including:

- reducing volumes of through-traffic, especially HGVs, in city and town centres and especially in the vicinity of schools and colleges;
- calming traffic / enforcing low traffic speeds in urban areas;
- making junctions safe for cyclists and removing the cyclist-unfriendly multi-lane one-way street systems.

Other interventions include the following:

- Schools will be a strong focus of the National Cycle Policy Framework.
- Support for the provision of dedicated signed rural cycling networks building on Fáilte Ireland's [Strategy to Develop Irish Cycling Tourism](#)¹⁸⁷. This will cater for recreational cyclists as well as visitors.
- Ensuring that all surfaces used by cyclists are maintained to a high standard and are well lit.
- Ensuring that all cycling networks – both urban and rural – are sign-posted to a high standard.
- Supporting the provision of secure cycling parking at all destinations of importance to the cyclist.

11.1.1.1 Cycling Objective

11B The Council will implement the provisions of the [National Cycle Policy Framework](#) where possible.

11.1.1.2 Development Management Standard

Require planning applications to demonstrate the development proposal's accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists. Planning applications for residential/commercial or mixed use developments need to:

- i. Demonstrate detailed layouts and design which reflect the importance of walking and cycling by providing safe and direct access to local services and public transport nodes.
- ii. Demonstrate how walking and cycling is integrated with open space provision.
- iii. Demonstrate that the proposal is easily accessible to pedestrians and cyclists alike with the layouts displaying high internal pedestrian and cyclist permeability.

¹⁸⁶ Department of Transport, [Ireland's First National Cycle Policy Framework](#), 2009

¹⁸⁷ Fáilte Ireland, [A Strategy for the development of Irish Cycle Tourism, Conclusions Report, New Executive Summary](#), 2007

- iv. Show a high quality of internal routes which are safe, secure and convenient for users.
- v. Require that adequate covered facilities for the secure parking of bicycles are provided at convenient locations close to building entrances in order to encourage cycling. The number of bicycle parking spaces required will be in accordance with Table T1 below.
- vi. Require a full range of facilities for cyclists and pedestrians such as showers and lockers in new retail/employment developments, where the cycle parking requirements exceed 5 spaces.

Table 11.1: Bicycle parking requirements

Land Use	Bicycle Parking Requirement GFA = gross floor area
Residential	
Apartment, Townhouse	1 space per unit
Student Accommodation/Residential schools, colleges or training centre	1 space per bedroom and 1 visitor space per 5 bed spaces
Guest Houses and Hotels	1 space per 10 bedrooms and 1 space for every 5 members of staff
Nursing Homes	1 visitor space for every 10 residents and 1 space for every 5 members of staff
Retirement Homes/Sheltered Accommodation	1 visitor space for every 6 residents and 1 space for every 5 members of staff
Hostels	1 space per 5 beds
Hospital	To be determined by Planning Authority
Retail	
Convenience	1 space per 150sq m GFA
Shopping Centre	1 space per 300sq m GFA
Non food Retail	1 space per 300sq m GFA
Retail Warehouse	1 space per 250sq m GFA
Retail Offices	1 space per 200sq m GFA
Food and Drink	1 space per 50sq m of dining/drinking area
Employment	
General Offices	1 space per 50sq m GFA
Light Industry, Business and Technology	1 space per 100sq m GFA
Warehouses and Distribution	1 space per 200sq m GFA
Financial and Professional Services	1 space per 50sq m GFA
Culture, Leisure and Sports Use	
Cinema/Theatre	1 space for every 5 members of staff and 1 space per 30 seats
Museums, Exhibition Venues	1 space for every 5 members of staff. Visitors spaces to be determined by Planning Authority
Sports/Fitness Centre including Swimming Baths	1 space for every 50sq m net floor area or 1 space for every 30sq m of pool area and 1 space for every 30

	seats provided for spectators
Non-Residential Institutions	
Place of Worship, public halls and community centres	1 space per 20 persons
Primary schools	Cycle spaces to be provided for 20% of children and 1 space for every 5 members of staff
Post primary schools	Cycle spaces to be provided for 33% of children and 1 space for every 5 members of staff
Further and Higher Education	1 space per 5 members of staff and 1 space for every 4 students
Creches	1 space for every 5 members of staff and 1 space for 20 children
Clinics/Surgeries	1 space for every 5 members of staff and 0.5 spaces per consulting room

In the case of any use not specified above, the Council will determine the bicycle parking requirements, having regard to the likely trip generation of the development. Where a number of uses are contained within one development, and the applicant can demonstrate that parking spaces will be utilised throughout the day by a number of different users, the Council may take this into account when assessing the spaces required.

In general, bicycle parking facilities should be within 25m of a destination for short term parking (shops) and 50m for long term parking (offices, schools etc). Cycle stands should generally be protected from the weather, in particular all long term (more than 3 hours) cycle stands.

11.2 Workplace Travel Plans

Developments which have a large potential impact on trip generation may be required to draw up and implement Workplace Travel Plans (also known as Mobility Management Plans). Workplace Travel Plans are a mechanism by which developments can manage the mobility needs of their users and work towards reduced car dependency.

Development for which a Workplace Travel Plan 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 Workplace Travel 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.

Development Management Standard

To require Workplace Travel Plans for proposed trip intensive developments and for town centre developments where onsite parking cannot accommodate the parking standards set out in this plan.

11.3 Public Transport

The development of public transport is critical in achieving more sustainable travel patterns and a reduced reliance on the car. The local authority does not provide any public transport services but can facilitate their provision through infrastructural works.

The Council will 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.

11.3.1 Rail

There are two passenger railway lines in use in the county. A spur from Kilkenny City at Lavistown connects to the Dublin-Waterford main passenger line. The Waterford-Limerick passenger line runs in the south of the county, serving Waterford and Carrick-on-Suir stations. Belview Port is served by rail, connecting to the Waterford line, which facilitates the movement of freight.

The [Regional Planning Guidelines](#)¹⁸⁸ set out priority rail improvements for the South East Region. This included increased frequency of services and reduced journey times between Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow and Dublin. It also included improvements to the Rosslare-Waterford-Limerick Junction line (although the Rosslare to Waterford connection is no longer operational since 2010). The Council supports increased frequency of services and reduced journey times between Kilkenny and Waterford/Dublin.

Rail Freight

There is major potential for more innovative and additional carriage of freight via the rail network. The [Regional Planning Guidelines](#) identified that rail cargo depots at Belview and Maddockstown (east of Kilkenny city) would facilitate the development of logistics businesses at these locations and would help to divert some heavy commercial traffic from the public road network. There are enormous environmental benefits in carrying freight using rail and properly run freight services offer huge potential to industry in the region, particularly at Belview. The

¹⁸⁸ SERA, [Regional Planning Guidelines for the South East Region](#), 2010 p.88

use of the rail network for freight services will be promoted through appropriate land use measures.

There are two disused rail lines in the county; the Waterford to New Ross line and the Kilkenny to Ballyragget/Attanagh line, with a spur to Castlecomer. A feasibility study is underway for a greenway along the Ballyragget line (See section 7.2.2 Recreation). The track-bed of the Waterford-New Ross railway line shall be preserved for future re-opening and and/or cycling or walking use.

11.3.2 Bus

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 Éireann and a number of private operators operate services throughout County Kilkenny.

Kenneally's bus operates a regular city bus service in Waterford city, serving the area north of the bridge, including Ferrybank and Slieverue.

The *Waterford Planning, Land Use and Transportation Study*¹⁸⁹ (PLUTS) proposed a cross-city bus (Green) route linking Belview and the North Quays to the existing City Centre and WIT. It is an objective of the Waterford City Development Plan to complete the implementation of all remaining Green Routes phases during the lifetime of the plan (2013-2019).

In conjunction with this, the PLUTS proposed a Park and Ride facility on the northern side of Waterford city. It is an objective of the Waterford City Development Plan (2013-2019) that a detailed study will be carried out, in co-operation with the neighbouring Local Authorities, to identify a specific optimum site location for the R711 (Belmount Road) Park and Ride facility.

Kilkenny County Council will co-operate in the development of a high-quality bus-based public transport system in the Waterford City & Environs and in the identification of an optimum site for a Park and Ride facility.

11.3.2.1 Bus Objectives

11C To facilitate the provision of bus shelters as appropriate.

11D To facilitate parking provision for tourist buses in towns and villages and at tourist attractions.

¹⁸⁹ Waterford PLUTS, 2004

11.3.2.2 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. (See section 6.6.)

11.4 Ports & Rivers

The [Regional Planning Guidelines](#) note that the ports of Belview, New Ross and Rosslare are of strategic importance to the region.

New Ross Port is Ireland's only inland port, some 32 kilometres from the sea on the River Barrow. New Ross Port Company operates from Marshmeadows, to the east of the Barrow in Co. Wexford. Stafford's Shipping yard is in operation in Rosbercon, in Co. Kilkenny.

11.4.1.1 Belview

Belview port was developed in 1992 and its subsequent growth has been a significant driver of economic development in the county. Belview is located on the River Suir about 10 miles upstream from the open sea, adjacent to the Dublin/Waterford M9 motorway. An Area Action Plan for Belview was completed in 2002, which aimed to provide for port and industrial development within a planning framework which safeguarded local environmental resources. To update this, a Local Area Plan (LAP) was made for the area of Ferrybank and Belview in 2009¹⁹⁰.

During the course of the last Development Plan the Council along with the Ida and Department of Environment Community and Local Government invested significantly in upgrading water services at Belview. With improvements to the Belview Strategic Water Supply Scheme and the Gorteens Waste Water Treatment Plant, the port can now cater for a large increase in suitable employment enterprises, as set out in the LAP.

Belview is served by the Limerick to Rosslare line. Belview has direct access, via the N29 road, to and from National Primary Route N25 (Euroroute E30).

Belview was identified in the [Regional Planning Guidelines](#) as containing potential for the development of an industrial park of regional and national importance and this should be

¹⁹⁰ Kilkenny County Council, [Ferrybank Belview Local Area Plan](#), 2009

exploited by developing it as a flagship location for regional industrial development initiatives. IDA Ireland owns the Belview Strategic Site, which is suitable for large-scale projects¹⁹¹.

The Council will facilitate and promote portal development and associated industrial and distribution activities.

11.5 Airports

The Council recognises the importance of air travel in improving the attractiveness of the county for industrial, commercial and tourism development. The nearest airport to Kilkenny is the South-East Regional Airport, located close to Tramore Bay, south of Waterford City centre.

11.5.1 Kilkenny Airfield

There is a privately owned public use airfield located three miles to the west of Kilkenny City. Principally it has a leisure use but it does have potential for expansion.

The Council will support the continued development of airport facilities at Kilkenny aerodrome and will facilitate the future development of Kilkenny aerodrome by reserving air corridors as necessary.

11.6 Universal Design

Street design must be inclusive and provide for all, regardless of age, size, disability or ability. Streets and footpaths should be designed in accordance with the principles of Universal Design, as set out in *Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach, External Environment and Approach*¹⁹². The Council will ensure as far as feasible that areas are accessible to the broadest range of users, based on the principles of Universal Design. (See section 12.3)

11.7 Road Network

11.7.1 Achievements

Since the last Development Plan, the following projects have been completed:

- Two motorways; the M8 and M9 have opened, which have resulted in increased accessibility through the county.
- Completion of the section of the N25 in the south of the county bypassing Waterford, including the second River Suir bridge.
- Completion of the N77/N78 Hennebry's Cross Roundabout.

¹⁹¹ <http://www.idaireland.com/connect-and-invest/waterford/>

¹⁹² Centre for Excellence in Universal Design, *Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach, External Environment and Approach*

- Completion of the Ring Road from the Old N10 Dublin Road to the N77 Castlecomer Road.
- Completion of the N10 and N76 Ring Road Improvement Scheme.

11.7.2 National Road Network

The national road network caters for the efficient and safe movement of long distance traffic. 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, it will be necessary to restrict access and junctions to the network to a minimum.

There are 8 national roads in the county as follows:

Road name	Classification	Description
N9	Primary	Between the M9/N24 roundabout and the N25 junction at Grannagh
N10	Primary	Kilkenny-Danesfort (M9 junction)
N24	Primary	Carrick-on-Suir – Grannagh
N25	Primary	Cork-Rosslare
N29	Primary	Belview access
N76	Secondary	Kilkenny-Clonmel
N77	Secondary	Kilkenny-Portlaoise
N78	Secondary	Kilkenny-Castlecomer-Kildare

11.7.3 Access to National Roads

National policy in relation to access to national roads is set out in the [Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines](#)¹⁹³ and followed here. The [Guidelines](#) state that *“The policy of the Planning Authority will be to avoid the creation of any additional access point from new development or the generation of increased traffic from existing accesses to national roads to which speed limits greater than 60kmh apply. This provision applies to all categories of development, including individual houses in rural areas, regardless of the housing circumstances of the applicant.”*¹⁹⁴

It is the intention of the Planning Authority to develop and agree a policy for two sites with access off the national roads in conjunction with the NRA; Glanbia at Ballyconra, Ballyragget on the N77 and the Leggetsrath roundabout on the N10.

¹⁹³ Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, [Spatial Planning and National Roads - Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#), 2012

¹⁹⁴ Section 2.5 of *Spatial Planning and National Roads*, 2012

Objective:

- 11E To develop and agree an appropriately planned policy response to access for Glanbia and the Leggetsrath roundabout in conjunction with the National Roads Authority.**

11.7.3.1 N29 Belview Port

The N29 National route was developed to service the Belview Port area. A speed limit of 100 kph currently applies along this route. Section 2.6 of the [Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines](#) provides for exceptional circumstances, where planning authorities may identify stretches of national roads where a less restrictive approach may be applied. Such a less restrictive approach may be adopted in the case of developments of national and regional strategic importance, which by their nature are most appropriately located outside urban areas, and where the locations concerned have specific characteristics that make them particularly suitable for the developments proposed. (See section 4.6.2 Economic Development.)

As set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines, Belview Port is of strategic importance to the region. The lands around the port are designated for industrial and port related services, which will benefit from high quality access, including intermodal transfer facilities (from port to rail and road). In this case, the Port satisfies the criteria of exceptional circumstances, and the NRA agree that a less restrictive approach may apply.

It is the intention of the Planning Authority to develop and agree a policy for the N29 in conjunction with the NRA.

Objective:

- 11F To develop and agree an appropriately planned policy response to access from the N29 Port road to industrial zoned lands in the Belview area in conjunction with the National Roads Authority.**

11.7.4 Regional Roads

Regional roads provide important strategic linkages within the county and to the national road network and other counties. 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.

11.7.5 Local Roads

In its programme of spending over the plan period, the 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.

11.7.6 Road improvement projects

The Council, with the support of the NRA, is progressing/developing a number of schemes within County Kilkenny as follows:

- N24 Mooncoin bypass
- N24 Tower Road Overbridge
- N24 Carrick on Suir bypass
- N25 Waterford – Glenmore
- N76 Callan Road realignment
- N77 Ballynaslee
- N78 Damerstown Improvement Scheme

The [Regional Planning Guidelines](#) also identified regional roads which provide critical linkages. Improvements to this road network will enhance connectivity between the Hubs, County Towns and neighbouring regions. The priorities as identified by the RPGs which affect Kilkenny are:

- Upgrading of the R700 Kilkenny to New Ross to National Secondary status
- Support the completion of the Kilkenny Ring Road
- The development of a downstream river crossing in Waterford City

In addition to the above, the Council also has the following priorities:

- A relief road for Thomastown.
- An upgrade of the Kilkenny to Urlingford road (R693) to National Secondary status

11.7.7 Traffic Assessments

Development proposals may generate significant trips/travel, including road traffic, with potentially significant implications for national and non-national roads. Traffic and Transport Assessment is a methodology used to assess the transport impacts of a proposed development, incorporating any subsequent measures necessary to ensure roads and junctions and other transport infrastructure in the vicinity of the development remain fit for purpose and encourage a shift towards sustainable travel modes.

11.7.8 Road Safety Audit

A road safety audit can aid in the identification of any appropriate measures required to maintain safety standards. Guidance on the preparation of road safety audits is included in the NRA Design Manual for Roads and Bridges¹⁹⁵.

¹⁹⁵ National Roads Authority, Design Manual for Roads and Bridges

11.7.8.1 Road Objectives

- 11G To support the implementation of the NRA projects as outlined above.
- 11H 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 (See Figure 11.1)
- 11I To seek an upgrade of the R700 between New Ross and Kilkenny to National Secondary status and to provide a relief road for Thomastown.
- 11J To seek an upgrade of the Kilkenny to Urlingford Road (R693) to National Secondary status and to improve the road realignment in its entirety.
- 11K To seek an upgrade of the New Ross to Mullinavat Regional Road (R704).
- 11L Reserve the proposed line of the western bypass for the city from the Castlecomer Road to the Waterford Road free from development.
- 11M To complete the R697 Kells Road Improvement Scheme.
- 11N 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.

11.7.8.2 Roads Development Management Standard

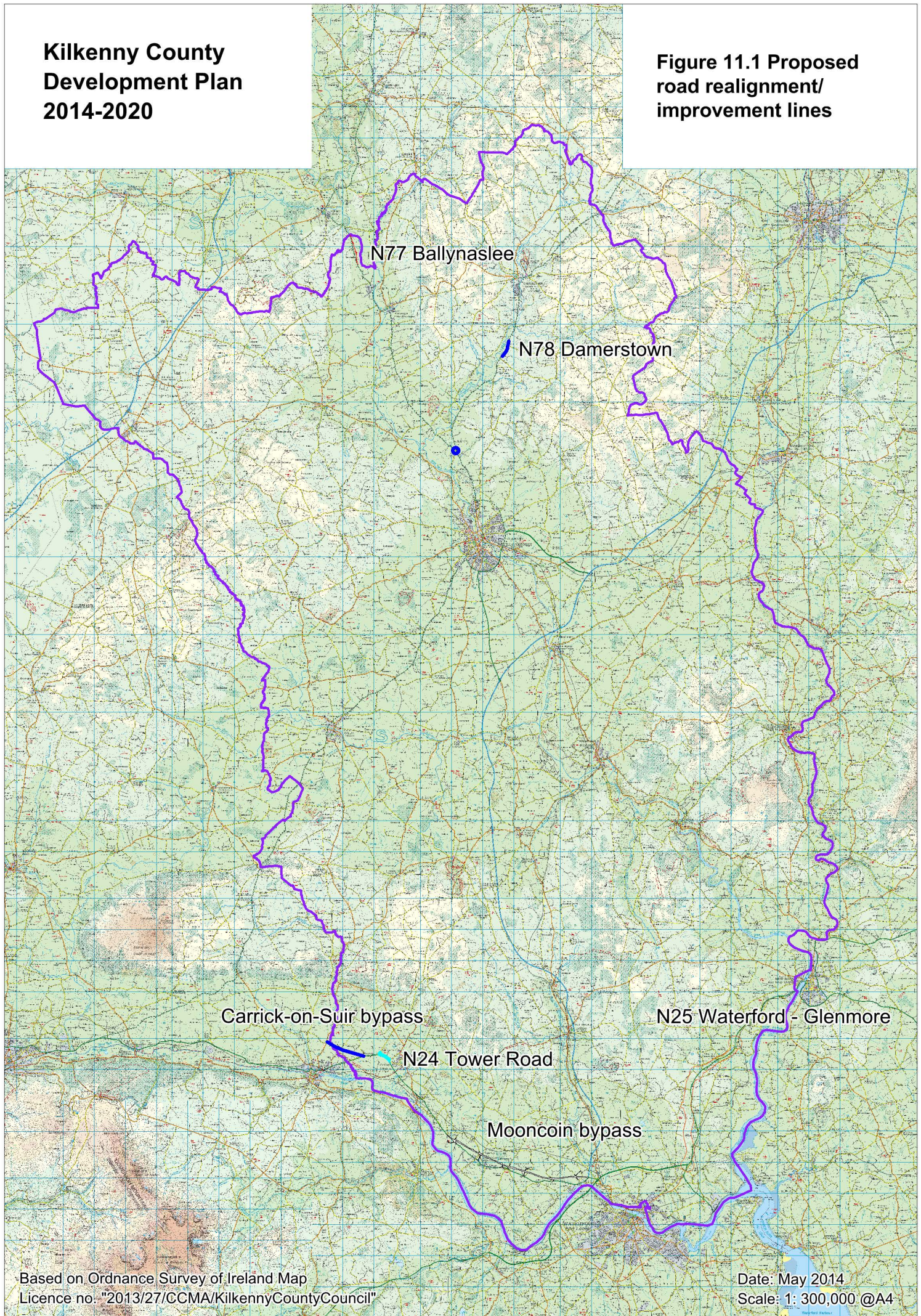
- To ensure that future development affecting national primary or secondary roads shall be assessed in accordance with the guidance given in [Spatial Planning and National Roads - Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#).
- To maintain, develop and improve existing roads and to construct new roads as needs arise and resources permit in accordance with the Annual Roadworks programme.
- To co-operate with the National Roads Authority to identify the need for service areas and/or rest areas for motorists along the routes of the M8/M9 and to assist in the implementation of suitable proposals for provision of service and/or rest areas.
- Restrict new access points to a minimum on Regional Roads to preserve their strategic function and in the interests of traffic safety.
- To ensure that the required standards for sight distances and stopping sight distances are in compliance as far as possible, with current road geometry standards as outlined in the NRA document *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges*¹⁹⁶ (DMRB) specifically Section TD 41-42/09 when assessing planning applications for individual houses in the countryside. Such standards should not be achieved by the extensive removal of hedgerows, ditches, embankments, trees or old walls, and should be in accordance with Section 2.8 of the [Rural Design Guide](#)¹⁹⁷.
- All significant development proposals will be required to have transport and traffic assessments carried out in accordance with the publication *Traffic Management Guidelines*¹⁹⁸ and the *Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines*¹⁹⁹ (where the development affects a national road).

¹⁹⁶ National Roads Authority, Design Manual for Roads and Bridges

¹⁹⁷ Kilkenny County Council, [Rural Design Guide](#), 2008

¹⁹⁸ Department of Environment & Local Government, Department of Transport, Dublin Transportation Office, *Traffic Management Guidelines* (2003)

¹⁹⁹ National Roads Authority, *Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines*, 2007



- Planning applications involving a new access or significant changes to an existing access to a national road, are required to include a Road Safety Audit.

11.7.9 Car parking

In assessing development proposals the Planning Authority will use the standards set out in the Table below. Such facilities shall cater for the immediate and anticipated future demands of the development, and where car parking provision on site is not possible, or desirable for other valid reasons, the Council may consider the payment of a financial contribution in lieu.

Where car parking is provided on site, spaces 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. Disabled parking bay (including transfer hatching to side and rear) shall be 6.0m x 3.7m. Developers should consult [Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach](#). 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.

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. On greenfield sites, 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 11.2: 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	1 space per 15m ²
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
Crèche/Childcare	1 space per 4 children plus 1 space per employee

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.

In cases where complete on-site provision of parking is not possible, the Planning Authority will insist on a Mobility Management Plan submitted as part of the application in weighing up the total requirements and possible financial contribution.

11.7.10 Electric vehicles

As outlined in the [National Renewable Energy Action Plan](#)²⁰⁰, the Government has a target for 10% of Ireland's vehicles to be electric by 2020. Developing the infrastructure for alternatively fuelled vehicles will be a vital step in encouraging consumers to make more environmentally friendly transport choices. ESB is responsible for the roll out of electric car charge points in Ireland. The Council will support the Government's target on Electric vehicles by facilitating the roll out of charging infrastructure for electric vehicles.

²⁰⁰ Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, [National Renewable Energy Action Plan](#) 2010

12 Requirements for Developments

Strategic Aim: To encourage the creation of living and working environments of the highest quality by ensuring a high quality 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.

12.1 Introduction

Development Management will be exercised by the Council in a positive manner, having regard to the provisions of the Planning & Development Act, 2000-2011, 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 general principles. Decisions regarding individual applications for development will be determined on a case-by-case basis in accordance with circumstances at the time an application is submitted. Applicants 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 objectives in this Plan, and in such cases all issues will be assessed in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the County.

12.2 Pre-Planning Meetings

The Council provides a pre-planning consultation service which allows applicants the opportunity to engage in discussions with the Planning Authority, prior to making a planning application. Applicants are encouraged to avail of this service for all development proposals but particularly for one-off rural houses, or large scale projects. As stipulated in Section 247 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the carrying out of such consultations shall not prejudice the performance by a Council of any other of its functions under this Act, or any regulations made under this Act, and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or in legal proceedings.

12.3 Universal Design

The Council requires that all future developments used by the public (including public spaces, car parking, footpaths) are accessible to and usable by everyone. The requirements of people with disabilities, the elderly, parents and carers and others who may be temporarily impaired must be incorporated into the design. It is considered that Applications for large-scale projects should be accompanied by an Access Statement (as detailed in Appendix 6 of Buildings for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach, National Disability Authority, 2012).

Guidance on the access requirements for public buildings and for residential dwellings is set out in Part M of the Building Regulations (S.I. No. 179 of 2000) and Part M of the Building Regulations 2010 (S.I. No. 513 of 2010) and Buildings for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach (National Disability Authority, 2012). Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2009) and its companion documents Urban Design Manual-A Best Practice Guide (Part 1& 2) (DEHLG, 2009).

12.4 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.

Kilkenny Local Authorities will ensure that all new developments enrich the quality of its surroundings which means encouraging a distinctive response which complements the setting. A high standard of design is considered essential to this process. Creating a distinctive sense of place, taking into account site history and setting, is important.

The Councils will aim to create sustainable, high quality environments – attractive, vibrant and safe places which function effectively. High quality design will be required for all new developments.

In new residential areas, it is the sense of place which should have priority. It is the relationship between buildings and the creation of elegant functional spaces which will have priority. The Planning Authority will require a high level of residential amenity conducive to a good quality living environment in new residential developments.

Planning applications for new housing development shall have regard to the provisions of the following Guidelines:

- [Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets](#)²⁰¹
- [Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas](#) and its companion document, [Urban Design Manual: A best practice guide](#)
- [Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments](#)
- [Government Policy on Architecture-Towards a Sustainable Future: Delivering Quality within the Built Environment](#)²⁰²
- [Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach](#)
- [Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities](#)²⁰³

²⁰¹ Depts. of Transport, Tourism and Sport, and Environment, Community and Local Government, [Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, 2013](#)

²⁰² Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, [Government Policy on Architecture, Towards a Sustainable Future: Delivering Quality within the Built Environment, 2009](#)

²⁰³ Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, [Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities, 2007](#)

New residential developments will be assessed in accordance with the following 12 design criteria for sustainable residential developments.

The 12 criteria are:

- Context: How does the development respond to its surroundings?
- Connections: How well is the new neighbourhood / site connected?
- Inclusivity: How easily can people use and access the development?
- Variety: How does the development promote a good mix of activities?
- Efficiency: How does the development make appropriate use of resources, including land?
- Distinctiveness: How do the proposals create a sense of place?
- Layout: How does the proposal create people-friendly streets and spaces?
- Public realm: How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas?
- Adaptability: How will the buildings cope with change?
- Privacy and Amenity: How do the buildings provide a high quality amenity?
- Parking: How will the parking be secure and attractive?
- Detailed Design: How well thought through is the building and landscape design?

A site specific Design Statement will be required in the case of large-scale or sensitively located developments. A design statement is a short document which enables the applicant to explain why a particular design solution is considered the most appropriate for a particular site and it shall demonstrate how design policy and issues of accessibility have been taken into account.

12.4.1 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. 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.

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 this Plan (including the 12 design criteria);
- 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.

These criteria will be applied to development proposals involving an increase in density on existing housing sites in addition to greenfield sites.

12.4.2 Gated Communities

Gated communities serve to exclude and divide communities and in no way support the creation of permeable, connected and linked communities. The Council will discourage new housing developments that include gated communities in their plans.

12.4.3 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.

12.4.4 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.

12.4.5 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.

12.4.6 Housing Developments and Noise

In 2006, the Government made regulations relating to Environmental noise ([S.I. 140 of 2006](#)). Environmental noise is defined in the Regulations as unwanted or harmful outdoor sound created by human activities, including noise emitted by means of transport, road traffic, rail traffic, air traffic, and from sites of industrial activity.

The Council will require (where necessary) that planning applications for future developments within the zone of influence of existing national roads include noise mitigation measures and/or a sound impact assessment to guard against an unacceptable increase in noise levels affecting noise sensitive properties. Developers should adhere to the Environmental Noise Regulations referred to above.

12.4.7 Naming of Housing Developments

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. (See section 8.4.1)

12.5 Apartments

The design and layout of new apartments should provide comfortable 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, including [Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments](#). All apartment schemes should provide for a mix of units; comprising of one bedroom, two-bedroom and family units.

A planning application for an apartment scheme shall be accompanied by a detailed schedule of the proposed development including total number of apartments proposed by type, apartment floor area, number of bedrooms, open space area, storage area etc. Failure to submit this schedule with the planning application may result in delays as a result of a request for further information.

In general, apartments will be required to have the following minimum floor areas measured internal wall to wall (the required minimum floor areas are 10% larger than those stated in [Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments](#)):

Apartment Type	Minimum Floor Area
One bedroom	50 sq.m
Two bedrooms	80 sq.m
Three bedrooms	99 sq.m
Four Bedrooms	117sqm

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. 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.

12.5.1 Apartments-Private and Public 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. Roof gardens will only be considered provided they are easily accessible, secure

and attractively landscaped. Private open space at ground floor level should receive some sunlight, but also needs some form of screening to ensure privacy.

The following open space requirements apply:

Apartment Type	Minimum Floor Area
One bedroom	10 sq.m
Two/three bedrooms	15-20 sq.m
Four bed	15-20sq.m

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.

Apartment Type	Minimum Balcony Floor Area
One bedroom	5sqm
Two bedrooms	7sqm
Three bedrooms	9sqm
Four Bedrooms	13sqm

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.

12.5.2 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.

12.5.3 Storage Areas and Communal Facilities

Provision should be made in apartments for general storage areas (additional to minimum kitchen presses, bedroom furniture and hot presses) for bulky items such a child’s buggy, a suitcase, sport equipment etc. As a rule, no individual storage room within an apartment should exceed 3.5 sq metres.

Table 12.4: Minimum storage space requirements for apartments	
Apartment Type	Minimum Apartment Storage Space Required
One bedroom	3sqm
Two bedrooms/ 3 persons	6sqm
Three bedrooms /4 persons	8sqm
Three or more Bedrooms	9sqm

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 serves 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.

12.5.4 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. However, such use will not normally be permitted in apartments.

12.5.5 Family Flat

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 ‘family’ 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 family flat extension is that the family flat shall generally not exceed 50% of the floor area of the main dwelling. In the case of a two-storey family flat, an internal connecting door will normally be required at both levels. External doors will normally only be permitted to the side and rear of the house, with the presumption against an independent front door. Access shall be from an internal door only or by side doors well screened from the front elevation or to the front within an enclosed porch shared with the existing front door. 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, materials and finishes.

12.5.6 Domestic Extension

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. Where an existing dwelling is being remodeled and extended, the proposed extension will be considered on its own merits. A high standard of modern design and materials will be encouraged in this instance.

12.5.6.1 Parking in Front Gardens

The cumulative effect of removal of front garden walls and railings damages the character and appearance of suburban streets, contributes to an overall reduction in permeable surfaces vital to flood relief and the introduction of multiple vehicular accesses reduces the level of communal on-street parking. Consequently proposals for off street parking need to be balanced against the loss of amenity and communal spaces. The removal of front garden walls and railings will not generally be permitted where they have a negative impact on the character of streetscapes or reduce the level of communal parking to an unacceptable degree.

Where permitted, “drive-ins” should:

- Not have outward opening gates;
- Have a vehicular entrance not wider than 3m;
- Have a vehicle entrance not wider than 50 per cent of the width of the front boundary;
- Have an area of hardstanding (parking space of 2.5m x 5m);
- Suitably landscape the balance of the space;
- Have gates, walls/fence and railings made good.

12.5.6.2 Subdivision of Existing Residential Units

Applications for permission to subdivide or change the use of existing residential will be considered on their merits. The design of developments shall be such that it complements the existing layout or streetscape and shall not interfere with the residential and other amenities of the area and shall provide a suitable quality of residential amenity for all the proposed units.

12.6 Phased Residential Development

The Council shall seek a phased approach to large housing developments. Applications for residential development shall illustrate the phasing for the scheme. Phasing proposals shall ensure that open space and infrastructure to serve dwellings in a given phase e.g. public lighting, footpaths, is completed to the satisfaction of the Council prior to the initiation of the succeeding phase. Each phase must be completed in full (including infrastructure, public open space etc) before the next phase commences. The Council will apply a sequence to the phasing to ensure that each phase is served by adequate services and infrastructure.

12.7 Open space

12.7.1 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 bedroom 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 rear building line.

The boundaries of rear gardens should generally be provided with a permanent durable barrier with a minimum height of 1.8m.

Table 12.5: Private Open Space Requirements for houses

Type of Unit	Minimum Private Open Space
1/2 bedroom houses	48 sqm
3 bedroom houses	60 -75sqm
4 + bedroom houses	60 - 75 sqm

12.7.2 Public Open Space Requirements

12.7.2.1 Design of Open Space

The Council will require a detailed high quality open space and landscape design plan including specifications, prepared by suitably qualified professionals, to be submitted with all planning applications for multi-unit residential developments.

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.

Applications shall have regard to the qualitative standards outlined in Section 4.18 of the [Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas](#).

The following must be taken into consideration when designing open space:

- Open space should be of a high visual standard so that it is functional and accessible to all;
- Open space should be designed so that passive surveillance is provided.
- Open spaces should not be located to the side or the rear of housing units.
- Provide multifunctional open spaces at locations deemed appropriate whereby both passive and active uses are delivered.
- Ensure open space provision is suitably proportioned. Inappropriate narrow tracts of land are not acceptable and will not be included in the calculation of open space for a proposed development nor any area due to its nature (e.g. marshy) or topography (slope) which is deemed unsuitable.
- Include proposals for drainage of the public open space
- Hard landscaping elements should also be identified, such as paving or cobbled areas which play important role in the design and presentation of open space concepts
- Retention of existing natural features (which should be protected and incorporated into open space)
- Appropriate pedestrian and cycle linkages between open spaces should be shown on the site layout plan;
- All children and young people should have access to play space which should be within a reasonable and safe walking distance from home.
- Play spaces should be made identifiable by appropriate 'play' signage
- Pedestrianisation in the vicinity of such areas should be maximised, and traffic should be eliminated or traffic calming measures put in place
- Lanes within housing estates or connecting housing estates should be designed to allow for the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists and should be adequately overlooked and lit and not be excessive in length.

12.8 Open Space in new residential development

Applicants will be required to make provision for sports and recreational infrastructure commensurate with the needs generated by any development and the capacity of existing facilities in the area to cater for existing and future needs.

The Council will require a minimum public open space provision of 2.4 hectares per 1,000 population. **For the purposes of this calculation, public open space requirements are to be based on residential units with an occupancy rate of 2.8 persons per unit.**

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.

Residential planning applications in excess of 200 units will require a recreational needs assessment. Recreation provision should form an integral element of development proposals. The Council will apply the standards as set out in Table 12.6 as a minimum requirement for on-site provision as part of residential development or for off-site provision. The minimum standards for children's play spaces to be applied are set out in Section 12.8.1 below. 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 in Table 12.6, 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.

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.

Table 12.6: Amenity Development Thresholds

Site Capacity No. of Dwellings	Minimum quantity and type of leisure facilities required
<25	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 One Tone Zone/Outdoor gym
200 – 499	Equipped public open space to include: One full size grass sports pitch; One court multi-use games area with Community association/club movement; and Two Tone Zones/Outdoor gyms.
500 – 599	Public space to include: One full size grass sports pitch; Two Tone Zones/Outdoor gyms One court multi-use games area; and Two tennis courts / basketball courts etc.
600 +	Equipped public open space to include: Two full size grass sports pitches; Three Tone Zones/Outdoor Gyms 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: Three Tone Zones/Outdoor Gyms; Two full size grass sports pitches; One court multi-use games area; and two tennis courts/ basketball courts etc.

Note: One piece of multifunctional equipment is to be provided within the Tone Zones/Outdoor Gyms for each 20 residential units or part thereof within the development.

Where a proposed development is located in close proximity to an established park area or zoned open space, the open space requirement may be relaxed depending on the nature and quality of existing provision. However, a financial contribution will be required towards the improvement and extension of the existing facility to cater for extra demand.

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.

12.8.1 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 the required open space for 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 play 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.

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 local playable space should include a mixture of rockers, swings, carousels, junior and senior multi units, slides, 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.

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.

Formal and informal games/recreational areas for adults and older persons should also be integrated within schemes (e.g. Tone Zones).

12.9 Scale of Development

12.9.1 Plot Ratio

Plot ratio is the relationship between 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. It is recommended that a maximum plot ratio of 2.0 be set for urban areas and 1.0 for all other areas. The Planning Authority will permit higher plot ratios only in cases where exceptional standards of design are achieved.

12.9.2 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 urban areas, site coverage may be allowed to increase up to 85% or up to the existing site coverage. 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.

12.10 Rural Housing

The rural settlement policy is set out in Chapter 3. The Planning Authority has completed a [County Kilkenny Rural Design Guide](#) which is intended to provide assistance to people who are considering the development of a single house in the countryside.

The following guidance may be of assistance in planning for a single house in the countryside:

- Existing mature landscaping, particularly trees and hedges, should be retained where possible. Existing trees, buildings, slopes and other natural features can provide a setting. Where possible, well established boundaries (on all sides) which assist in assimilating the site naturally into its surroundings is encouraged. Sites which are carved out of the centre of larger fields are discouraged.
- Sites which lead to ribbon development is not considered to be in the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development and is strongly discouraged

- Reuse, adapt or extend existing rural structures where possible. Where historic or vernacular buildings are located on the site or land holding, consideration should seriously be given to their retention, and incorporation into any proposed development.
- In siting a new dwelling, it is essential to look at the attributes and restrictions of the particular site, the site contours and the scale, form and orientation of any proximate or adjoining dwellings. The location, siting, orientation and the design of a proposed new dwelling in a rural location should be sensitive to its surroundings and should seek to integrate as much as possible into the landscape and not be a prominent feature that visually dominates its rural surroundings.
- Full consideration should be given to solar gain. The orientation of the proposed dwelling and internal layout should seek to maximise energy efficiency.
- Cutting and filling of sites is not desirable (see [Kilkenny Rural Design Guide](#) for positioning a house on a steep slope)
- Houses ideally should not break or significantly impose on the skyline when viewed from nearby roads or distant locations.
- Direction should be taken from the historic building stock of the area, reflecting regional or local patterns in terms of scale, height, mass, form, layout, proportions, materials and architectural details/features.
- Any proposed finish will only be permitted where the Council is satisfied that such finishes are in harmony with the surrounding landscape and the vernacular architecture.
- Dwellings which are dominant, intrusive, or incongruous in a rural setting, will not be permitted.
- Particular attention should be paid in achieving correct proportions (such as wall to roof ratio), which can improve and assist the blending of the house into the landscape. Complicated roof layouts and fenestration patterns should be avoided.
- Driveways should follow the contours of the site
- The design of entrance gates should be in keeping with the rural setting. Applications for a dwelling in a rural area should include detailed drawings and specifications for entrance treatments. The roadside boundary should ideally consist of a sod and stone wall/earth mound planted with a double row of native hedgerow species e.g. Hawthorn, field maple, holly, blackthorn, hazel etc. Block walls and ornamental features will be discouraged.
- The location for a house may impact on the exploitation of natural resources. Refer to Section 6.4 Extractive Industries in this regard.

Access and Sight Lines

The applicant must demonstrate that safe vehicular access to and from a proposed site is provided in terms of visibility from a proposed entrance, but also in terms of impact on road traffic on the adjoining public road, through generation of turning and stopping movements by vehicles leaving and entering the proposed site. Applicants must adhere to the [National Roads Authority-Design Manual for Roads & Bridges](#)²⁰⁴.

Wastewater Treatment Systems

Kilkenny County Council requires that sites will be assessed in accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency's Code of Practice - Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (EPA, 2009). The person carrying out the assessment must be suitable qualified. Water and wastewater systems for new rural developments shall be located within the subject site.

²⁰⁴ National Roads Authority, [Design Manual for Roads & Bridges](#), 20

12.11 General Standards

12.11.1 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.

12.11.2 Rainwater Harvesting

The Planning Authority will normally require that all new large scale developments (such as commercial, mixed use and apartment schemes) include rainwater harvesting and/or grey water recycling in their design.

12.11.3 Building Regulations

All new dwellings must comply with the Building Regulations. The Planning and Building Regulations are independent of each other and therefore a grant of planning permission does not necessarily mean that any proposed structure complies with the Building Regulations. It is important that the Building Regulations inform and direct the pre-planning of any new structure as attempting to implement the Building Regulations at a later stage could significantly compromise any grant of planning permission.

12.11.4 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 wider urban 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.

12.11.5 Building Lines

The Planning Authority will normally seek to ensure that development is not carried out in front of established building lines. Generally, it will be an aim to create a continuous building line along a street edge. Consistent building lines will also be encouraged in the design of neighbourhood centres and in new industrial/business park developments, where buildings will have a clear relationship with each other. In built up areas, 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.

12.11.6 Infill Development

Within urban areas, infill development and refurbishment schemes will be required to pay particular attention to the local scale and plot size and the requirements of any Architectural Conservation Area within which the site is located. In general, infill and backland development will also have to pay particular attention to the local character of the area in terms of blocks, plots and buildings. Development will only be considered if it:

- Will not detract from the character of the area,
- Will not be detrimental to the residential amenities of the area,
- Will not be prejudicial to the proper planning and development of the area.

12.11.7 Shopfronts

Shopfronts are one of the most important elements in determining the character, quality and image of retail streets in urban areas. In order to conserve this distinctive character the Planning Authority will:

- Encourage the maintenance of original shopfronts.
- Encourage the reinstatement of traditional shopfronts where poor replacements have been installed.
- Promote modern design and high quality materials where new shopfronts on new or modern buildings are being proposed. Where existing shopfronts are of no special merit, total replacement with a contemporary design is acceptable and if sensitively handled can greatly enhance the appearance of the street.
- Encourage the use of high quality natural materials in shopfront design.

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 removal of street doors giving separate access to upper floors will not be permitted unless alternative separate access is provided.

12.11.8 Fascia Signage

As a general principle, fascia signs should be simple in design and not excessive in illumination or size. The following basic guidelines will be applied in assessing planning applications for fascia signage in architectural conservation areas (the term 'shopfront' is used to refer to all commercial ground floor facades including restaurants, public houses etc.):

- Hand painted timber fascias will be encouraged in existing traditional shopfronts.
- Plastic derived fascias will not be permitted in new or existing shopfronts.
- Internally illuminated box fascias will not be permitted.
- Natural materials (e.g. wood, metal etc.) will be permitted. Man-made materials (e.g. plastic, uPVC etc.) will not be permitted.
- The construction of nameplate fascias linking two or more buildings is generally unacceptable.

12.11.9 Security Shutters

The installation of security shutters on the external façade of a building can have a detrimental impact on the character of the shopping streets at night and thereby detract from the visual amenity of the area. The Planning Authority will discourage the use of such shutters.

Alternatives to roller shutters, such as the use of demountable open grilles, will be preferred where security needs are involved. Demountable grilles can be attractively designed and can positively contribute to the character of the shopfront and the street.

The erection of a security shutter and its associated screening requires planning permission. Where security shutters are considered to be essential because of the type of business transacted or goods stored, the Planning Authority may in exceptional circumstances permit them provided that they meet the following criteria:

- They must be open grille type (not perforated or solid)
- The colour must match the shopfront colour scheme.
- Where possible they must be located, together with their associated housing, behind the window display.

12.11.10 Canopies and Blinds

Planning permission is required for the erection of canopies. Each planning application will be considered on the basis of need for and function of the canopy. Full details of the canopy structure will be required at planning application stage, i.e. materials proposed, canopy size (open and closed), blind box location and arm design. The following basic guidelines will be applied in assessing planning applications for canopies and awnings:

- Canopies of traditional design and materials will be favoured, i.e. canvas canopy, wrought iron arms, timber blind box etc.

- The use of plastic and/or uPVC will not be permitted. Curved or Dutch canopies will not be permitted.
- Canopies and awnings shall not be used for advertising purposes other than the name of the premises.
- Canopies shall be positioned to avoid covering any distinctive architectural elements such as fascia or pilasters. They will not be permitted where they detract from the character of the shopfront or buildings of special architectural interest.

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.

12.11.11 Lighting

Internally illuminated fascias or projecting box signs will not be permitted. Concealed strip or flood lighting and spotlights may be an acceptable alternative. The internal lighting of the shop window is preferable to the external lighting of the building or shopfront.

12.11.12 Signage and Advertising

The over-riding principle is the avoidance of visual clutter and an improvement in the quality of the commercial character of the towns and villages throughout the county. It is also regulated in the interests of road safety. Advice and guidance in respect of signage on national roads concerning major tourist and leisure features is outlined in the NRA's [*Policy on the Provision of Tourist & Leisure Signage on National Roads*](#)²⁰⁵.

Advertising signs, either individually or particularly in groups, can have either a positive or negative impact on the character of a building, street or area depending on their design, size and location.

The Planning Authority will strictly control all advertising signs in relation to their location, design, materials and function and will restrict non-essential advertising structures or any advertising structure which would impact injuriously on amenity, the built environment or road safety. The following basic guidelines will be applied in assessing planning applications for signs and advertising structures:

- Individual signs should be designed for the building it will be displayed on. A bespoke sign can be a piece of art in its own right if carefully designed and made of high quality natural materials. Signs shall be sympathetic in design and colour both to the building and its surroundings.
- Plastic/Vinyl banner-type signs will be discouraged. Projecting signs, banners and flagpoles will be restricted in size and number to prevent clutter.
- Natural high quality materials (e.g. wood, metal etc.) will be encouraged. Man-made materials (e.g. plastic, uPVC etc.) will not be permitted in ACA's. The use of neon, LED or similar lighting, plastic, PVC, Perspex flashing, reflectorised or glitter type signs on the exterior of buildings will be prohibited. Traditional painted signs and wrought iron hanging signs will be encouraged.

²⁰⁵ National Roads Authority, [*Policy on the Provision of Tourist & Leisure Signage on National Roads*](#), 2011

- The use of contact signage, applied directly to the glass of a shop window, is an undesirable form of signage as it creates a visual barrier between the shop floor and the street. This will be actively discouraged.
- Signs shall not obscure architectural features or details. Signs will not be permitted above eaves or parapet levels or to project above the roofline of buildings.
- 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 attached to buildings are preferable to those on freestanding hoardings. The Planning Authority will strictly control roadside signage in the interests of visual amenity and road safety. The [Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines](#) provide guidance in this regard, see Section 3.8.
- Favourable consideration may be given, in consultation with business groups, to the erection of composite advance signs on which the facilities available in the settlement 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 an area, the local authorities will seek to phase out individual advance signage as the opportunity arises.

Applicants should note that signposting requires a licence from the Local Authority and the requirements of the Traffic Signs Manual (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports, 2010) should be adhered to.

12.11.13 Fast food Take Away

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.

12.11.14 Petrol/Filling Stations

- All new petrol stations and refurbished existing stations will require a high standard of design and layout. The forecourt canopy should be integrated into the overall design and sited so that it does not dominate the surrounding buildings.
- Petrol stations will not generally be permitted in residential areas, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that no significant damage to residential amenities will occur by reason of factors such as noise, visual obtrusion, safety considerations or fumes and smells. Consideration may also be given to the limiting of the hours of operation of petrol stations in these circumstances. Car washing facilities should be sited so as not to interfere with residential amenities.
- Any application for a new petrol filling station should provide sufficient road frontage, clear visibility, two points of access, sanitary convenience for public use
- Landscaping and suitable screening shall be required to protect the amenity of the surrounding area and enhance the appearance of the development
- In rural areas petrol stations will not be permitted where they will have a detrimental impact on the surrounding views and prospects, scenery or general amenities.

- Signs should be limited in number and design and located so as to generally form part of the buildings or other structures on site. The placing of signs of any description on footpaths, grass verges or any part of a public roadway will not be permitted. In certain circumstances and depending on the location, the use of standard corporate designs and signage for petrol stations may not be acceptable
- Forecourt lighting, including canopy lighting, should be limited to that which is necessary for the safe operation of a petrol station and should not interfere with the amenities of adjoining premises
- The sale of goods from a petrol station may only be permitted as an ancillary small scale facility which would remain secondary to the use as a petrol filling station where it would not adversely affect local amenities. As per the Retail Planning Guidelines (DECLG, 2012), the petrol/filling station shops floorspace cap is 100m² net. Planning applications for the provision of such shops shall be specifically applied for.
- Parking bays/aisles must be located so as to minimise pedestrian/vehicular conflict

12.11.15 Development Contributions

The Council will require financial contributions in accordance with a development contributions scheme adopted by the Council under S.48 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2011 (or other relevant legislation as may be enacted from time to time). Such contributions are in respect of the capital expenditure necessary for the provision of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the County, and that is provided, or that it is intended will be provided, by or on behalf of the Council.

12.11.16 Bonds

To ensure that developments undertaken by 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. In the case of residential developments, the bond will only be released when the estate has been fully completed to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and has been formally taken in charge by the Planning Authority.

12.11.17 Tree and Hedgerow Preservation

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/bond 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, or are listed in the Survey of Mature Trees in the City and Environs. 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 replacement of hedgerows/trees shall have due regard to the ecological function of hedgerows as a wildlife corridor. When planting new hedgerows a mixture of native species shall be proposed and this shall occur at the commencement of building works and should link to existing hedgerows to aid ecological networks.

Where trees and hedgerows are identified and affected by a proposed development, a survey will be required and completed in accordance with BS 5837 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations 2012.

In General the following requirements should be addressed where the protection of existing trees and landscaping issues arise:

- Topographical Survey - Accurately measured showing all relevant site features.
- Soil assessment – where appropriate to determine whether a soil is shrinkable, that may cause the potential for indirect damage. Soil structure composition and PH for the provisions of new planting.
- A tree survey - details trees and hedgerows identified on the topographical survey and on land adjacent to the development site, including individual trees, groups of trees and woodlands. Identifying tree dimensions, quality and retention value in accordance with the context of the proposed development (see sections 4.5 Table 1+2 of BS 5837).
- The tree survey - should identify the constraints posed by trees, both above and below ground, which will inform the site layout design. Constraints include, the presence of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), the existing and eventual crown spreads of trees and their unreasonable obstruction of light etc.
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment - a report should be compiled by an arboriculturist using the data collated from the site survey. The report should assess the impact and the effects the proposed design has directly and indirectly on the trees and where necessary recommends mitigation.
- A Tree Protection Plan – details the proposed design layout shown on a plan with all trees clearly identified with their root protection areas (RPA) annotated based on the topographical survey to include all trees. The classification of each tree and the required protection measures during development.

New Planting – takes account of existing landscape features and is essential for consideration in the layout, design and future use of a proposed development. New planting should account for the future growth of canopies, stems and root systems to maturity and their potential effects on existing site structures.

- Arboricultural Method Statements – demonstrates how unavoidable construction operations may take place within the RPA or crown spread of trees (whichever is greatest), clearly demonstrating how these operations will have a little detriment to retained trees. These operations may include but are not exclusive to: -
 - a. Temporary access
 - b. Installation of service runs

- c. Construction of hard standing
- d. Foundation excavations
- e. Subterranean structures e.g. basement extensions

12.12 Zoning objectives

Three zoning maps are included as part of this Development Plan; New Ross Environs, Bennettsbridge and Kilmacow, see Figures 3.14, 3.15, 3.16.

The purpose of zoning is to indicate to property owners and the general public the types of development which the Council considers most appropriate in each land use category. It is the intention of the Planning Authority that the zoning of particular areas for a particular use shall not in itself exclude other uses in that area provided they are compatible with the dominant use.

Zoning is designed to reduce conflicting uses within areas, to protect resources and, in association with phasing, to ensure that land suitable for development is used to the best advantage of the community as a whole.

In the following paragraphs:

- **Permissible use** means a use, which is acceptable in the relevant zone. However, it is still the subject of the normal planning process.
- **Open for consideration** means a use which may be permitted where the Council is satisfied that the individual proposal or development will be compatible with the policies and objectives for the zone, and will not conflict with the permitted uses and also conforms with the proper planning and development of the area.

12.12.1 Agriculture

Objective: To conserve and protect agricultural land from interference from non-agricultural uses. To prevent development of agricultural land adjacent to development areas.

Permissible uses: Agriculture, horticulture, public service installations

Open for consideration: Public open space, guesthouse, restaurant, nursing home, dwelling houses in certain limited cases, halting site, private open space, other uses not contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

12.12.2 Community Facilities

Objective: To protect, provide and improve community facilities.

Permissible Uses: Educational, religious and cultural facilities, public buildings, crèches, schools, churches, hospitals, convents, community centres and halls, school playing fields, colleges, orphanages, hostels, halting sites, cemeteries, libraries and medical centres, nursing homes

Open for Consideration: Public service installations, Town Centre uses which would not conflict with the other objectives of the Plan and which would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

12.12.3 General Development (Kilmacow & New Ross)

Objective: To provide for the development and improvement of appropriate uses in areas where existing commercial uses have established and allow for the development of the settlement as a focus for local services, sustaining and strengthening its role as a population centre.

The purpose of this zone is mainly to reflect the existing uses that have established in this zone and to allow for their improvement and expansion as necessary to improve retailing, residential, commercial, office, cultural and other uses appropriate to the further development of the settlement.

Permissible Uses: Dwellings, retailing, wholesale outlets, offices, public buildings or places of assembly, cultural or educational buildings, recreational buildings, halting sites, hotels, motels, guest houses, clubs, private garages, open spaces, public service installations, medical and related consultants, restaurants, public houses, car parks, halls or discotheques, and other uses as permitted and open for consideration in residential zoning.

Open for Consideration: workshop or light industry, retail warehousing.

Mixed Use Developments in 'General Development' Zones in Kilmacow

In order to promote mixed-use developments within the areas zoned for 'General Development' the following mechanism will be applied in appropriate locations:-

(a) Residential use will be limited to 80% of the site area during the lifetime of this plan. (The intention is to review the use of the remaining 20% of the area at the end of the plan period (if undeveloped) or on build out of the 80% of the site area).

(b) Where two separate planning uses are proposed, no one singular use will prevail in terms of >80% of the total site area.

12.12.4 Industrial

Objective: To provide for industrial and related uses.

Permissible Uses: Industrial premises and ancillary offices, open spaces, warehouses, car and heavy vehicle parks.

Open for Consideration: Petrol filling stations, service stations, car showrooms, advertisement structures, wholesale premises, public service installations, play school/crèche.

12.12.5 Industrial/Employment (Bennettsbridge)

Objective: To provide for employment and related uses subject to the provision of necessary infrastructure

The zoning objective identifies areas suitable for employment provision, including, inter alia, industrial premises, light industry, warehouses, small and medium sized enterprise, office employment and retail, appropriate to the scale and character of the village. Particular consideration should be given to the further development, enhancement and facilitation of the crafts industry in the village. All development proposals need to demonstrate adequate provision of necessary physical infrastructure. Residential use would be considered only where no less than two separate planning uses are proposed (i.e. retail/residential or industry/residential etc.) and the residential component shall not comprise greater than 50% of the total gross floorspace. Any residential use will be subject to satisfactory arrangements in relation to the disposal of waste water.

12.12.6 Mixed Use (New Ross Environs)

Objective: To encourage the development of underutilised and brownfield lands with a view to consolidating and adding vitality to these areas and ensuring the efficient use of urban lands. A mix of uses such as residential, commercial, community, tourism and recreation are envisaged. Any retail development proposed shall comply with the requirements of the Retail Strategy.

Significant development proposals on this site must be made in the context of a masterplan/design statement for the former Albatross site, situated in both the Kilkenny County Council and New Ross Town Council jurisdictions. This master plan shall be prepared in consultation with both these authorities. There shall be an emphasis on the attainment of an appropriate mix of uses to include recreation, leisure, tourism, offices, residential and public open spaces.

Uses open for consideration will reflect the zoning objective above and will be agreed through the Master Plan process.

12.12.7 Amenity / Green links/Biodiversity conservation/ Open Space/Recreation

Objective: To allow for green links and biodiversity conservation and to preserve, provide and improve recreational open space.

Permissible Uses: Open space

Open for Consideration: Sports clubs, recreational buildings, stands, pavilions, agricultural uses, public service installations.

12.12.8 Phase 2

This land will not be released for development during the lifetime of this plan unless the following criteria are satisfied:

- At least 75% of phase 1 lands have been fully committed to development (i.e. where planning permission has been granted) and where construction is underway.

The situation will be monitored on an ongoing basis.

Expansion of existing land uses within the lands will be considered on a case by case basis having regard to the potential impacts on the strategic nature of the phase 2 lands and general planning considerations.

Objective: To prohibit new residential development of phase 2 lands in the settlements of Bennettsbridge, Kilmacow and New Ross Environs during the lifetime of the County Development Plan, unless the criteria above are met.

12.12.9 Existing Residential

Objective: To protect and improve residential amenities and to provide for new residential development appropriate to the scale and character of the settlement.

Permissible Uses: Dwellings, open spaces, places of worship, community centres, halting sites, public service installations, playgroup or crèche, Nursing home.

Open for Consideration: Bed and breakfast establishments and guesthouses, lock up garages, retail shop of local convenience not more than 100 sqm in gross area, hotel, restaurant, and use by owner or occupier of part of a private residence as a studio, for a light industrial activity, a clinic or surgery, professional office, or as a playgroup or crèche.

12.12.10 Residential (low density)

Objective: To provide for low density residential development appropriate to the scale and character of the settlement. The maximum residential density to be permitted here shall be 5 dwellings to the acre, depending on servicing arrangements.

Permissible Uses: Dwellings, open spaces

Open for Consideration: Places of worship, community centres, halting sites, public service installations, playgroup or crèche, Nursing home, Bed and breakfast establishments and guesthouses, lock up garages, retail shop of local convenience, hotel, public house, restaurant, use by owner or occupier of part of a private residence as a studio, for a light industrial activity, a clinic or surgery, professional office, or as a playgroup or crèche.

12.12.11 Phase 1 Residential

Objective: To provide for new residential communities and protect and enhance amenities of existing residential areas.

This land use zoning identifies areas suitable for new residential development. Generally, residential densities should be in the region of 20 units to the hectare and residential design needs to be subject to the policies and standards set out in the Local Area Plan and County Development Plan. Ancillary uses such as crèches, nursing homes, local convenience shops (not exceeding 100sqm GFA), GP clinics or surgeries and guesthouses/B&Bs will generally be permissible subject to safeguards in relation to residential amenity.

12.12.12 Rural Conservation Area (Kilmacow)

Objective: To provide for the development of agriculture and to protect the high amenity value and rural character of the area.

Permissible Uses: Agriculture and related developments, development related to the equine industry, outdoor recreation, rural housing in accordance with the provisions set out for rural housing in 'Areas under Urban Influence' in Chapter 3, Section 3.4 of the County Development Plan - 2014-2020, small scale light industries and enterprises within existing or disused buildings which do not detract from the character of the area.

Open for Consideration: Public open space, guesthouse, restaurant, nursing home, private open space, small scale light industries in new buildings which do not detract from the character of the area, other uses that are consistent with the conservation objective and which are not contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

12.12.13 Village Centre

Objective: To provide for the development and improvement of appropriate town centre uses and allow for the development of the village as a focus for local services, sustaining and strengthening its role as a population centre.

The purpose of this zone is to protect and enhance the centre of the settlement and to provide for and improve retailing, residential, commercial, office, cultural and other uses appropriate to the centre of a settlement. It will be an objective of the Council to encourage the development of backlands. Generally two storey buildings will be preferred.

Permissible Uses: Dwellings, retailing, retail warehousing, wholesale outlets, offices, public buildings or places of assembly, cultural or educational buildings, recreational buildings, halting sites, hotels, motels, guest houses, clubs, private garages, open spaces, public service installations, medical and related consultants, restaurants, public houses, car parks, halls or discotheques, and other uses as permitted and open for consideration in residential zoning.

Open for Consideration: workshop or light industry

12.13 Non-Conforming Uses

Throughout the County there are uses which do not conform to the zoning objectives for the area. Extensions and improvement of premises accommodating these uses may be permitted where the proposed development would not seriously injure the amenities of the area or prejudice the proper planning and development of the area. In some cases, the Planning Authority may encourage relocation of permitted incompatible uses, for example by exchange of sites.