

Kilkenny — Our Plan 2014-2020

Kilkenny County Development Plan
Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan



A guide to having
your say

May 2012

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Introduction

One of the most important functions of Kilkenny Local Authorities is the making of Development Plans for the City and County. Kilkenny Local Authorities officially start the preparation of new Development Plans for the County and City on the **15th June 2012**. The next County and City Development Plans will provide for the future planning and sustainable development of Kilkenny up to 2020.

This Issues Paper is the first step in the preparation of a new Plan. The process of making a Development Plan is set out below.

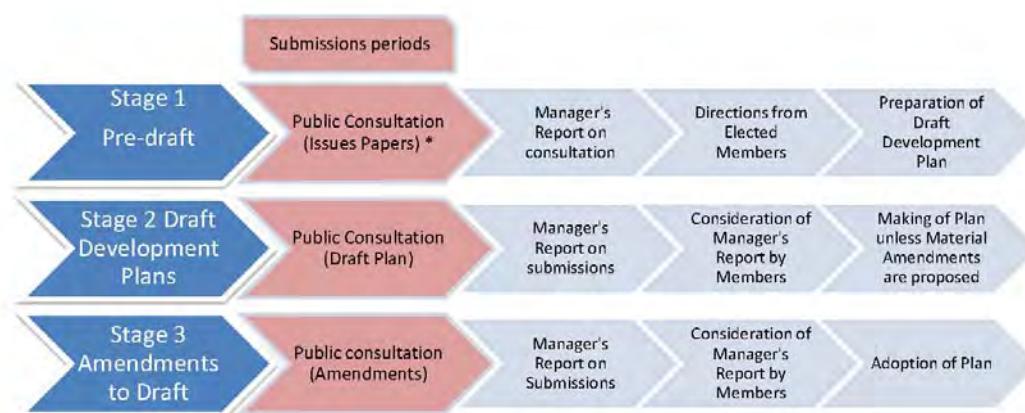
At this stage, we need to hear from you!

The Development Plan can help to create a more inclusive, attractive, competitive and safe city and county. The success of the next Kilkenny City and County Development Plans depends on your active participation.

Kilkenny is Your County and we want you to have Your Say.

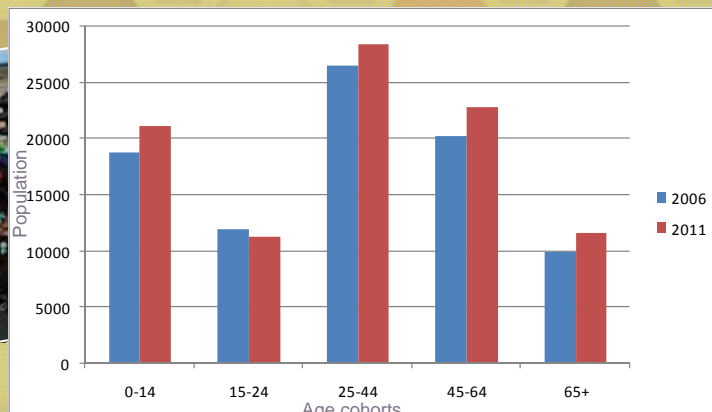
John McCormack
Director of Services, Planning

Process of Making a Development Plan



*Note: Submissions relating to a request or proposal for zoning of particular land for any purpose cannot be considered at this stage.

Population



Did you know that.....?

According to Census 2011 average household size in Co. Kilkenny is 2.8 persons per household. This is greater than the National household size of 2.7.

The average age in County Kilkenny is 37.3 years compared with 36.1 years for the State.



Questions:

- ⇒ How can the housing needs of all groups in our county be adequately catered for including: disabled, students, older people, travellers, homeless etc?
- ⇒ What, if any, particular pressures have you experienced as a result of growth in the County, how can these be addressed?
- ⇒ How can we ensure that we build communities and not just houses?

Census 2011 results show that Ireland's population has continued to grow strongly since 2006, increasing by 348,404 persons to 4,588,252 persons. This represents an increase of 8.2% over the 5 year intercensal period. At a County level the population increased by 8.98 % to 95,419 persons, which was an increase of 7,861 over the same period .

The changing demographic profile of the County is illustrated on the chart above. The population has increased in all age cohorts except age group 15-24. This decrease was due to the decline in births in the late 1980's and early 1990's combined with the effects of migration, particularly on those in their mid-twenties. On the one hand while the graph may illustrate an ageing profile it is notable that persons in the 0-14 age cohorts has also increased. This has implications for the type of services required presently and in future years e.g. in terms of demand for school places, health services and employment opportunities and one which we will address in the new Development Plan 2014-2020.

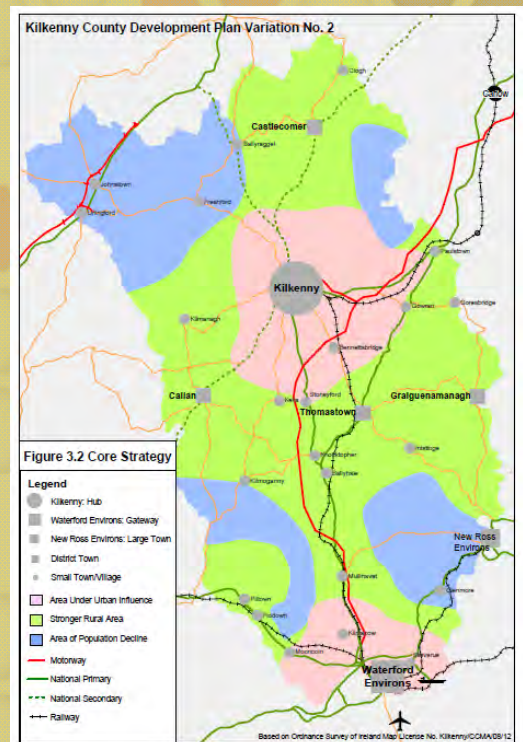
The Regional Planning Guidelines for the South East (2010) project that Kilkenny will achieve a population of approx. 109,600 by 2020. That means an additional 14,000 people from the 2011 Census figure. The new Development Plan will guide where this population growth should go.

Settlement Strategy



Did you know that?

House completions in County Kilkenny have experienced a decline in recent years, from an output of 1,544 units in 2007 to 244 units in 2011. 12% of the housing stock in the County was vacant on Census night 2011. This vacancy rate has remained the same since 2006.



A key element of the settlement strategy is the hierarchy of towns, which sets out the role of various towns and villages in the county and the services that should be provided in the various categories of urban centre. The current County Settlement hierarchy is as follows:

Gateway	Waterford (Ferrybank/Belview)
Hub	Kilkenny
Large Town	New Ross Environs
District Towns	Callan, Castlecomer, Graigueanagh & Thomastown
Smaller Towns/Villages	Local Area Plans e.g. Gowran
Smaller settlements	

Questions:

- ⇒ Is Kilkenny achieving its objective to provide quality housing located in balanced sustainable communities?
- ⇒ Do you think there is a need for a more / less restrictive rural housing policy?
- ⇒ What type and scale of employment, shopping, service, leisure and recreational activities should we provide for in town, village and local centres?

Under the current Settlement strategy, a total of 58 settlements have been classified based on their size and range of function, and from a social, economic and community perspective. A settlement hierarchy is important as it influences the investment programmes of various sections of the Council, such as Water Services, Roads etc. In a time of scarce resources, it is important that investment will be targeted in the right places and that it will support and underpin the settlement hierarchy. As discussed under the Population topic, the Regional Planning Guidelines for the South East (2010) project that Kilkenny's population will increase by 14,000 persons to 2020. This equates to an estimated housing requirement of approximately 2,600 units during the life time of the plan (2014-2020). The updated County Development Plan will have to determine how and where to accommodate this additional housing stock.

Community Development



Did you know that...?

In 2006, a total of 18,853 people in the county were aged between 0 and 14 (21.5% of the county's population) whilst 9,992 (11.4%) were aged 65 or over.

There are a total of 16 playgrounds in the County which are maintained by the Parks Department.

Questions:

- > Is there an adequate provision of schools and educational facilities throughout the County?
- > What community facilities are most required in County Kilkenny and should these be distributed in line with the settlement hierarchy?
- > Are community facilities for older people, disabled and minority groups adequately met? If not, how do we meet these needs?

Community facilities are vital to the life of the county. Schools and other educational facilities, libraries, churches and other places of worship, crèches, youth clubs, meeting spaces, cultural centres (such as Kilkenny Arts office and the Butler Gallery), health centres, clinics, hospitals and social service centres, all help to maintain and nurture a sense of community as well as providing for the educational, cultural, social and health needs of citizens. Similarly a diverse range of recreation and open space facilities such as sports pitches, public parks and demesnes, indoor sports centres (like the Watershed), and walking and cycling routes, are vital to the health and wellbeing of the residents of the county.

Kilkenny has a range of high quality open space, recreational and community facilities provided by the public, private and voluntary sectors. However there continues to be a need for additional facilities and improvements to existing resources to raise standards and serve an expanding population.

Open space forms an important part of the network of green spaces around us, sometimes referred to as our 'green infrastructure'. 'Green infrastructure' planning can help us to plan for open space in the county as a central part of the planning process.

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

Arts & Libraries



Did you know that.....?

The 2011 Arts Festival contributed over €6 million to the local economy.

The library provides free internet access and free access to online government services



Questions:

- > How can the Development Plan serve to support the living, working and exhibition needs of artists, particularly emerging artists?
- > What elements of culture/heritage should be highlighted and promoted in the Development Plans?

The Arts Culture is one of the main elements in a city's identity. Culture is a key factor in attracting people to live, work and visit and is an essential ingredient in local place-making and quality of life for its citizens. Kilkenny's Arts Office continues to develop, co-ordinate, motivate, inspire, strengthen and cultivate the arts sector throughout the county. All of our activities serve as an investment for the community, the local economy, and the tourism and heritage sector. Permission was granted in 2011 for the new Butler Gallery to relocate to Evan's Home, off John Street. This will be a significant addition to the city.

Libraries There are a total of 8 libraries around the county (Callan, Castlecomer, Thomastown, Graiguenamanagh, Loughboy, John's Green (Local Studies), John's Quay & Urlingford). An additional library, to serve the south of the county, is due to be opened in Ferrybank in 2012.

Infrastructure



Did you know that.....?

A total of seven wind farms now have planning permission in Co. Kilkenny.

Flooding

In recent years, we have become increasingly aware of the importance of factoring the risk to people, property, the overall economy and the environment from flooding into the planning system. In 2009, the Government produced Guidelines to integrate Flood Risk Management into the planning process. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was carried out for the county in 2011, and this will be revised as part of this Development Plan. This assessment will establish the areas of flood risk and will ensure that development takes due account of this risk. This report will be published as part of the Draft Plan and will be available for comment.

Questions:

- ⇒ How can we ensure that the County has a strong communications network?
- ⇒ Are there places in Kilkenny where wind farms should or shouldn't be developed?
- ⇒ What can we do to minimise the risk of flooding to existing and new buildings?

Huge amounts of energy are needed to heat homes and offices, fuel transport, power industry and generate electricity. However, energy saving and renewable energy technologies can reduce our carbon emissions and dependence upon fossil fuels.

The existing gas pipeline in Kilkenny is located in the north of the county and connects Ballyragget and Kilkenny to the Dublin/Cork gas main. Under the Strategic Infrastructure Act, Bord Gáis have applied for permission from An Bord Pleanála for a natural gas pipeline through the County from Baunlusk, south of the city, to Ballinlaw, near Slieverue in the south. This pipeline will connect the Dublin/Cork gas main to the Great Island power station in County Wexford.

The County is served by a network of 38KV, 110KV and 220KV electricity supply. This can be augmented to respond to the demands of industry.

Information and communication technology, including broadband, is essential for local communities and the national economy. Investment in broadband infrastructure is essential for economic development. The County needs an expanded high quality network.

A Waste Management Plan for the South East Region was adopted in 2006. The Plan was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Waste Management Act 2003 and aims to radically alter the approach of waste through a hierarchy of preferential modes of waste management such as prevention, minimisation and recycling. An evaluation of the Waste Management Plan must be completed by the end of 2012.

Transportation



Did you know that.....?

A train carrying over 100 passengers would use the same amount of fuel as 10 cars carrying only 20 people!

Train frequency along the Waterford-Dublin line increased 89% between 2000 and 2010.

Questions:

- ⇒ Are cycling and walking feasible alternatives to cars? What can be done to promote alternative means of transport ?
- ⇒ How can we cater for people who have mobility difficulties? Is there a need for more traffic calming measures in our towns and villages?

A multi-modal transport network is vital for the County to ensure accessibility, improve connectivity and economic and industrial competitiveness and success. The provision of transportation infrastructure including road and rail together with public transport projects must be integrated with a sustainable settlement strategy.

Significant improvements have been made during the life of the current Development Plan including the M8 and M9/M10 motorways. The completion of the Waterford to Dublin route is seen as a critical piece of enabling infrastructure for the county. The rail service has also been significantly improved. Investment has occurred in rolling stock and track with faster and more frequent trains. The County is served by two railway lines: the Waterford to Dublin rail route serves the City and Thomastown with daily services. Belview port is served by rail which facilitates the movement of freight to and from the port.

Kilkenny City adopted a Mobility Management Plan for 2009-2014 which introduced a series of measures which will improve the attractiveness of using public transport, cycling and walking, and car-pooling. Objectives within the plan include provision of 50 kilometres of cycle lanes in the city and Environs and improvement of pedestrian facilities.

Sea access to Kilkenny is provided through the deep water port at Belview.

Water Services



Did you know that.....?

The new treatment plant for Thomastown cost €2,1 million.
Turning the tap off when brushing your teeth can save over 7,000 litres of water per year.



Questions:

- > In the context of the current economic climate, how can we best prioritise water services investment?
- > How can we best strike a balance between the protection of water quality whilst encouraging new development?
- > In what way should River Basin Management Plans be integrated into the Development Plans?

Kilkenny has grown rapidly. This growth has greatly increased the demand for water services, waste management, telecommunications and energy.

The Council's Water Services Investment Programme sets out how water services will be prioritised around the county.

Schemes recently completed are:

- *South Kilkenny Water Supply Phase 1A
- *Kilmacow Waste Water Treatment Plant and Network
- *Thomastown Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrade
- *Gowran Waste Water Treatment Plant
- *Tullaroan Waste Water Treatment Plant
- *Gowran Goresbridge Paulstown Water Improvements

The provision of water services infrastructure is linked to the County's settlement hierarchy. Future development can only proceed with the appropriate infrastructure in place.

Huge change is imminent in this area with the centralisation of the water services function to a national Water Authority. The EU Water Framework Directive has stipulated that authorities must take a holistic approach to river basin management, and the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan was published in 2010. This is available at <http://www.serbd.com/>

Rural Areas



Did you know that.....?

In 2006, 8.1% of Co. Kilkenny's workforce was employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing, compared to 4.6% nationally.

Questions:

⇒ How can Council policy support sustainability of all aspects of life in rural areas?

⇒ How can we support and sustain essential local services in rural areas?

Rural areas face a challenge to protect their unique character and heritage whilst providing sustainable working and living environments for the community. The numbers employed in agriculture continue to fall, despite an upturn in the sector. Protection of agricultural land is critical to ensure viable farms for the future. New opportunities of diversification are available and require support. In particular, local food specialty enterprises such as Knockdrinna and Lavistown have been very successful.

Other rural employment sources such as extractive industries, renewable technologies and forestry need to be carefully managed.

Demand remains for new 'one off' rural housing. The Government is introducing increased regulation of septic tanks, to prevent pollution in rural areas.

Tourism continues to offer employment creation opportunities. Scenic areas attract the greatest interest, and consequentially are most at pressure from development.

Fuel prices have risen steadily; this affects the community network and isolation in rural areas. The role of rural transport initiatives such as Ring a Link will become more significant.

Enterprise, Retailing & Economy



Did you know that...?

In 2009, Ireland ranked second highest for shopping centre space per capita in Europe, after the Netherlands, in research by Jones Lang LaSalle of 25 countries, with approximately 440sqm of shopping centre stock for every 1,000 people.



Questions:

- ⇒ What type of employment should Kilkenny seek to encourage and where should it be located?
- ⇒ Does Kilkenny City need to improve its retail offer to its citizens and visitors?
- ⇒ How could Kilkenny improve its retailing offer?
- ⇒ How can Kilkenny promote high quality design?

Kilkenny local authorities have the objective of positioning and promoting Kilkenny as one of Ireland's most competitive business locations. The collective efforts of the public and private sector need to be harnessed and aligned in order to maximise this objective. Considerable changes have taken place in terms of the dynamics that shape and drive the Irish economy since the last Development Plan (2008 – 2014). Kilkenny's economic competitive position is very much influenced by the competitive strength of the economy generally. Competitiveness of places are now judged on quality of design, amenities, and efficiency of transport. The Development Plan has a key role in this. Prioritisation of critical infrastructure requirements for enterprise will be required in the context of tighter budgetary conditions for the immediate future.

Good design adds quality to the places we live, work and enjoy. Ensuring high quality design adds value to the city, towns, villages and countryside and improves our quality of life. The Development Plan will promote high quality design by encouraging its integration into every aspect of the plan. From an enterprise and competitiveness perspective there is full recognition that a high quality of life is a key component in competitiveness. A variety of lifestyle choices can be accommodated in the diverse physical landscape and settlement patterns across the county.

Heritage and Conservation



Did you know that.....?

County Kilkenny has the only known population in Ireland of the rare, beautiful and protected plant, Autumn Crocus.



Questions:

- ⇒ How can we manage change to maintain the quality, character and amenity value of our landscapes? And of our streetscapes?
- ⇒ Are there buildings or other structures that should be Protected as part of our Heritage ?
- ⇒ How can we manage Kilkenny's natural heritage while sustaining local populations and facilitating economic and rural development?

Kilkenny has a rich and diverse stock of built, natural and cultural heritage. The built heritage of County Kilkenny includes upstanding archaeological remains, a legacy of Early Christian, Norman and Late Medieval structures and a collection of eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth century structures.

The county's natural heritage is focused around the rivers and river valleys that dissect the county and the wide range of wildlife habitats including grassland, woodland, hedgerows, fens, heath, blanket bog, rivers and wetland. Our cultural heritage is steeped in the Arts & Crafts, creativity, festivals and, of course, hurling.

What are the issues facing Heritage and Conservation in Kilkenny today?

Open Space, Recreation & Tourism



Did you know that.....?

There are 20 festivals listed on Kilkenny's Tourism website at www.kilkennytourism.ie/ including the Arts Festival, Savour Kilkenny, the Irish Conker Championships and the Kilkenny Walking Festival.

Questions:

- ⇒ How can Kilkenny's facilities be improved to strengthen our attraction as a tourist destination? Are there enough restaurants, hotels, campsites, galleries, museums, nightclubs etc.?
- ⇒ How can we best conserve areas of natural heritage value while maintaining access for recreation?

Open space is a multi-purpose land use that enhances our cities, towns and rural villages: it can be a recreational resource, a habitat for wildlife, and an oasis from the hustle and bustle of city living. A network of open spaces, from a city park to a modest kick-about space in a residential estate, plays a key role in achieving the sustainable development of our urban areas. The provision of a range of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities not only contributes to the health and quality of life of the county's citizens, but it has economic benefits too. The County has a wealth of natural and built recreational assets including the River Nore Linear Walks, the Castle Park, the Castlecomer Discovery Park, Woodstock Estate, the Watershed and the numerous sporting facilities including GAA clubs, the Gowran Race Track and Mount Juliet golf course.

Tourism is a key economic driver in Kilkenny. Tourists come to Kilkenny for many reasons: its heritage, arts & crafts, festivals, sporting occasions and its vibrancy. It is essential that tourism is nurtured and strengthened as an industry for the city and county.

Kilkenny City's Future Development



Did you know that.....?

From the recently published preliminary 2011 census data, the population of Kilkenny City and Kilkenny Rural ED increased by 1,611 people or by 6.7% between 2006 and 2011. The population of the City is now 24,423; an increase of 2,244 since 2006.



Questions:

- ⇒ **City living:** What makes the city special? How can it be improved? What should the future vision be for Kilkenny city?
- ⇒ **What uses should be encouraged in the Mart and Brewery sites?**
- ⇒ **The City Economy:** How can the city's employment opportunities be improved and fostered through the planning process? Where is there potential?
- ⇒ **The night time economy versus the day time economy:** are they both equally important?

Kilkenny city is the primary urban centre in County Kilkenny and it is a Hub in the South East region. It is a compact city, defined by its rich heritage and special character, recognised as a bustling marketplace and tourist destination. Considering the future development of the city raises many issues regarding how the fabric of the medieval city and contemporary living should be intertwined so that Kilkenny city remains a great city to live in, work and visit.

Significant city sites include St. Francis Abbey Brewery and the old mart. It is important to get the mix of uses on these sites right, to ensure the continued consolidation of the city centre.

The night-time economy is an important contributor to Kilkenny city's appeal in general. The requirements of this economy are different and distinctive from those of the day-time economy; a balance needs to be struck between the two.

How do I get involved?

The best way of keeping informed with the process is on our website at ourplan.kilkenny.ie. You can register on this site for updates as they become available.

You can also attend one of our public meetings. These are being held as follows:

Date	Time	Venue	Theme
Tues. 19th June	7.30pm	Kilkenny City, Parade Tower	Smarter Travel/ Pedestrianisation
Wed. 27th June	7.30pm	Thomastown, Grennan Community College	Retail & Tourism
Wed. 4th July	7.30pm	Callan, Friary House	Community & Rural development
Wed. 11th July	7.30pm	Castlecomer Community Hall	Heritage
Wed. 18th July	7.30pm	Abbey Community College, Ferrybank	Economy & Service provision
Tues. 24th July	7.30pm	Kilkenny City, Parade Tower	Retail/Heritage
Wed. 1st August	7.30pm	Graiguenamanagh, Scout Hall	Renewable Energy

You can make a submission between the 15th June and the 24th August. There are three ways to make a submission:

1. Write to the Director of Services, Planning, Kilkenny County Council, John Street Kilkenny
2. Email ourplan@kilkennycoco.ie
3. Use the submission option at ourplan.kilkenny.ie website

How do I stay involved?

1. Register for updates at <http://ourplan.kilkenny.ie/>
2. Ring 056-7794010 or
3. E-mail: ourplan@kilkennycoco.ie