

KILDARE COUNTY Development Plan 2017-23

Your county, your future



ISSUES
PAPER



Kildare County Council



Welcome from the Chief Executive

Kildare County Development Plan 2017- 2023

Kildare County Council commences the preparation of the 2017 - 2023 County Development Plan on 2nd April 2015. This Plan-making process must be completed within two years by March 2017.

The review and preparation of the Kildare County Development Plan is one of the most important functions of the Council. The new County Development Plan will set out the strategy for the future planning and sustainable development of County Kildare up to 2023 and beyond.

The County Development Plan review has come at a time of change globally, nationally and locally. After a period of contraction and limited economic growth the outlook for the next County Development Plan is increasingly optimistic. Kildare is in an excellent position to benefit from the growing positive economic outlook. We have one of the youngest, fastest growing and largest working populations in Ireland. The County Development Plan needs to meet the needs of Kildare's population by creating sustainable communities through housing delivery, job creation, enterprise promotion, tourism support, provision of services and community facilities within the context of a healthy well planned natural and built environment.

The Council seeks to balance the need to facilitate new development and further growth with the need to protect both the concerns of residents and communities and also the distinctive heritage and environment of the towns and rural areas of Kildare.

The Development Plan making process includes periods of consultation during which the input of the public is invited and welcomed. The County Development Plan will be adopted following consideration by the Elected Members of the Council.

The publication of the Issues Paper is the first step in the making of the new County Development Plan. This consultation document presents an overview of the main planning and development issues in Kildare and seeks to encourage public debate on what broad issues should be considered in the new County Development Plan.

The issues highlighted in this document are important but they are by no means exhaustive. It is vitally important that as many individuals and groups are involved in this process as possible so that the final County Development Plan reflects public concerns and aspirations whilst having regard to national and regional policies and guidelines. Everybody is entitled to give an opinion on any aspect of the County Development Plan. At this stage we are particularly interested in encouraging submissions on strategic and 'big picture' issues. More detailed issues such as requests for the zoning of land should be left to the Draft County Development Plan consultation phase or be dealt with during the preparation of the local area plans which cover many towns and villages in the county.

We look forward to hearing from you.



Peter Carey
Chief Executive
Kildare County Council

Have your say

Submissions should be marked

'County Development Plan Review'

and sent to the following address:

Senior Executive Officer
Planning Department
Kildare County Council
Áras Chill Dara
Devoy Park
Naas
County Kildare

Or online:

www.kildarecoco.ie/planning

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

Public information sessions will be held during the month of May across the County, details will be advertised in the local press.

Please make your submission by one medium only i.e. in hard copy or by email. This will avoid the duplication of submission reference numbers and will streamline the process. Your assistance on this issue is appreciated.

We must receive your submission no later than:

4pm on Friday 29th May 2015.



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Background

Kildare County Development Plan 2017- 2023

Introduction

The purpose of the County Development Plan is to set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Kildare. It sets out the Council's policies and objectives in relation to a wide range of development issues over the six year period covered by the Plan and beyond.

Focus of Development Plan

The focus of the County Development Plan review at this stage is on the "big picture" planning issues that affect the County. These will include development policies, objectives, guidelines and standards together with the strategic planning context for the zoning of lands.

In preparing the County Development Plan it is essential that the community is involved in establishing:

- A vision for the County;
- Aims that the plan intends to achieve;
- Policies and proposals for sustainable development;
- Land use objectives and development control standards; and
- A balance between development and conservation needs

The Planning Acts require that a Development Plan incorporates mandatory objectives as outlined in Appendix I. However the legislation does not limit the generality of what may be included as development objectives.

What stage are we at now?

The preparation of the County Development Plan will take place in three stages comprising:

- 1 Pre-draft Plan consultation;
- 2 Preparation of the draft Plan with further consultation; and
- 3 The making of the Development Plan.

Right now we are at the 'Pre-draft Plan Consultation' stage of reviewing the County Development Plan. Public input can inform the initial stages of preparation, in advance of the draft Plan. We must receive your submission by the 29th May 2015.

What is an Issues Paper?

The Issues Paper has been prepared in order to stimulate debate on planning issues that the County Development Plan may address. It deals with some of the main issues under various topic headings. The list is not exhaustive and you are invited to raise other matters you consider relevant to planning and development in County Kildare.

This document can be downloaded at www.kildarecoco.ie/planning





Strategic Planning

Kildare County Council operates within a planning framework established at European, National and Regional level. The County Development Plan must have regard to a number of objectives, strategies and plans.

EU Directives

In order to fully incorporate environmental considerations into the plan making process, the Council will carry out a number of environmental assessments in parallel with the plan process. These assessments are Strategic Environmental Assessment, Appropriate Assessment and Flood Risk Assessment.

National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) is a 20-year framework for balanced regional development across Ireland and forms the basis for Regional Planning Guidelines nationally. The NSS recognises the role that Kildare plays in the economic life of the region and country, as a driver of the national economy. The County Development Plan must be consistent with the NSS which sets a broad national planning framework which informs decisions as to where development (and Government investment) should take place. Due to the strong functional relationship between Dublin and the Mid East Region (Kildare, Meath and Wicklow) it is known and considered collectively for strategic planning as the Greater Dublin Area (GDA).

The NSS seeks to physically consolidate the growth of the Metropolitan Area (i.e. north-east Kildare together with Dublin City and County) while concentrating development in the Hinterland of the Metropolitan Area into urban centres.



The NSS also calls for a Green Structure to be put in place to prevent urban sprawl, to reduce the loss of agricultural and other land to urban uses, to protect rural identity, to create a green setting for cities and towns, to conserve and enhance biodiversity and to protect buildings, structures and other physical elements of the cultural heritage. The NSS is now 12 years old and is due to be updated in 2015-2016 and replaced by the National Planning Framework (NPF). The review of the County Development Plan will have to take account of the forthcoming NPF.

Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022

The Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022 set out the planned direction for growth within

the GDA up to 2022 by giving regional effect to the NSS. The RPGs indicate two planning policy zones (Metropolitan and Hinterland Areas) and designate large growth towns and moderate growth towns within the GDA. North East Kildare is designated within the Metropolitan Area, while the remainder of the County is located in the Hinterland Area.

The RPGs set out housing targets for each County based on data available from the 2006 Census. These targets have yet to be updated to reflect the 2011 CSO Census and the recently published CSO Regional Population Projections 2016 – 2031, which has revised population projections downwards.



In the RPGs, the Metropolitan area includes the towns of Celbridge, Kilcock, Leixlip and Maynooth with the remainder of the County comprising the Hinterland area. Urban centres within the County have been classified on the basis of size and function. Naas and Newbridge, located in the Hinterland area, Maynooth and Leixlip located in the Metropolitan area have all been identified as Large Growth Towns. The roles of these towns are to act as important self sustaining regional economic drivers for the GDA with strong, high quality transport links. Celbridge, Kildare, Monasterevin, Kilcullen, Kilcock and Athy are identified as Moderate

Sustainable Growth Towns. The long term objective for these areas is to create self sustaining towns.

The Government's policy document on the reform of local government 'Putting People First (2012)' envisages a stronger and more explicit direct role for new Regional Assemblies in promoting economic development and enterprise within their regions in Ireland. Following the enactment of the Local Government Reform Act 2014, the current RPGs 2010-2022 will be replaced in 2016 with a Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES). A new target population for Kildare will form part

of the RSES review. Until such time as the RSES review takes place, the population target for Kildare will be as per the current RPGs (i.e. a population target of 234,422 people in 2016).

Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area

The National Transport Authority's transport strategy up to 2030, seeks to ensure the integration of transport and land use planning across the GDA. Parts of the strategy include the long term plan for the development of a Leinster Outer Orbital Route from mid Kildare to Drogheda.



Core Strategy

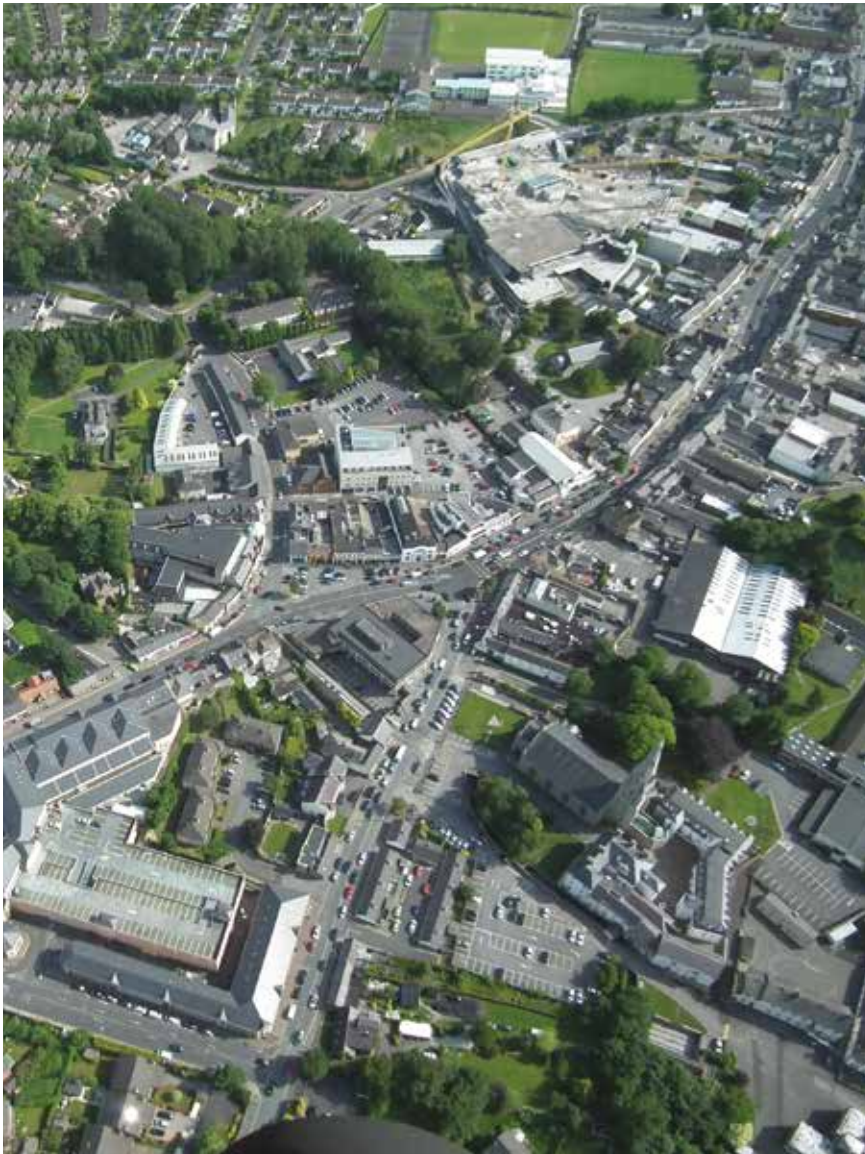
The current County Development Plan (2011 – 2017) put in place the Core Strategy for Kildare. The Core Strategy guides where new development should take place in the County and is closely aligned with the RPGS 2010-2022. The Core Strategy provides for varying scales of urban centres from large growth towns to small towns to more rural villages and settlements. A total of 12 towns and

villages in Kildare are or will be subject to Local Area Plans (LAPs): Naas, Celbridge (including Castletown), Clane, Kilcock, Sallins, Monasterevin, Kilcullen, Leixlip (including Collinstown), Newbridge, Athy, Maynooth and Kildare. A LAP sets out a strategy for a particular area and detailed objectives for its proper planning and sustainable development. An LAP must be consistent with the County Development Plan.

6 Small Town Plans form part of the current County Development Plan- Kill, Prosperous, Rathagan, Athgarvan, Derrinturn and Castledermot. These settlements have been identified to accommodate limited growth and reduce the pressure for one off residential development in the surrounding countryside. 14 Village Plans and 21 Rural Settlement Strategies also form part of the current County Development Plan. The remaining 23 settlements in the County are designated as Rural Nodes.

The scale of growth in all settlements must be considered in light of their capacity to absorb development with the necessary supporting social, community and physical infrastructure.

While growth has occurred in a number of settlements, a significant and sustained demand remains for one-off residential dwellings in the rural areas. The Council acknowledges the need to manage and monitor rural population growth in a way that protects the resources of the County and allows rural settlements to grow and develop in an appropriate manner.





Strategic Direction/ Vision

The County Development Plan must set out a strategic direction for the County. This direction will guide the development of Kildare in terms of physical growth, economic, social and cultural activity and environmental protection and enhancement. The strategic direction must be based on a vision for the County. As part of this review process we are seeking your views on your vision for the County up to 2023 and beyond. This vision will inform the preparation of the Draft County Development Plan.



In particular we wish you to consider how the Plan can deliver on;

- Developing a unique identity and building on the strengths of the County;
- Facilitating the provision of high quality employment and economic opportunities at appropriate locations;
- Building sustainable communities with appropriate educational, community and recreational facilities;
- Creating high quality urban and rural environments; and
- Providing sustainable infrastructure with necessary internal and external connections.

Have your say...!



- 1 Is there a vision you consider should drive the review of the County Development Plan?
- 2 Is the current pattern of development in the County sustainable?
- 3 Do you agree with the structure of Kildare's settlement hierarchy?
- 4 What level of development is appropriate for Kildare's smaller towns, villages and settlements?
- 5 Should population growth be the only consideration to be taken into account in managing our smaller settlements?
- 6 What type of development and services do you think are required in rural settlements and rural areas in order to support existing rural communities?
- 7 How should we ensure the protection of the countryside while providing for sustainable rural housing which meets the genuine needs of rural dwellers?
- 8 Should we be placing an emphasis on clear demarcation between urban and rural areas?
- 9 Do you think there is a need for more or less restrictive rural housing policy?
- 10 What rural areas do you consider to be under severe development pressure?



Population and Housing

While there was a significant upward trend in population between 2001 and 2011, the economic downturn has hindered growth in more recent years. The full effects of the economic downturn on population and housing in Kildare will become evident in the 2016 census. Notwithstanding this, Kildare remains a key driver of growth in the region.

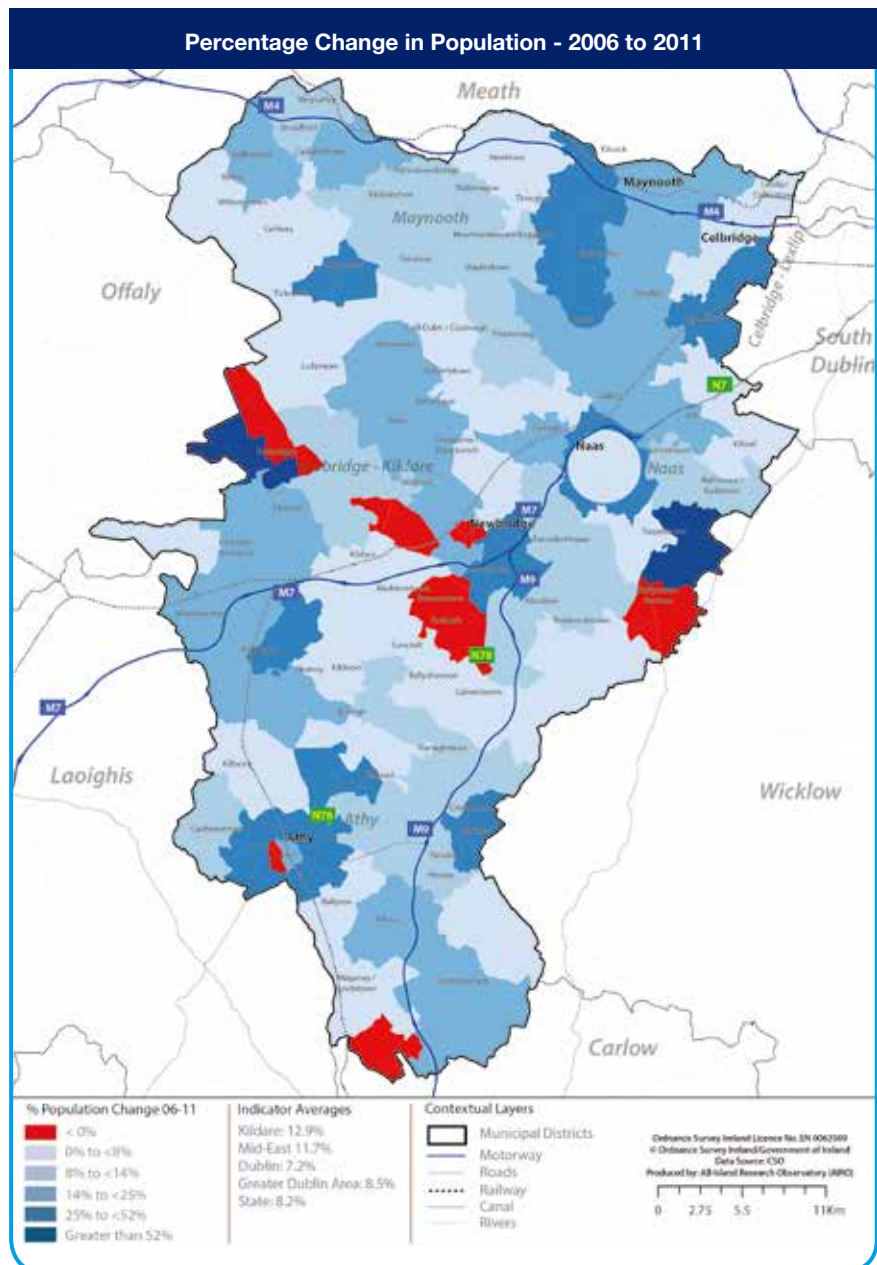


Population Change

With a population of 210,312 in 2011 Kildare has the 5th highest population in Ireland. The population living within Kildare is now equivalent to 4.6% of the State total (4.58 million).

In the 5 years since 2006 Census, Kildare experienced the 6th highest rate of population growth with an increase of 23,977 (13%) people from the 2006 figure of 186,335. Nationally, there was an increase of 8.2% over the same period.

Much of this population growth has occurred in the main commuter areas of the County (see Map 1) where there have been high levels of new residential developments (Naas, Clane, Sallins, Kilcock, Maynooth, Celbridge and Leixlip etc). As a result of this increase, the population structure in Kildare is now one of the youngest in the State. With 28.3% of its population aged '0-18' years, Kildare has the 3rd youngest population of all local authorities in Ireland.



Map 1

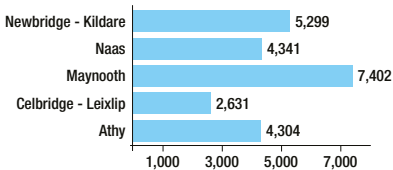


Population Density & Distribution

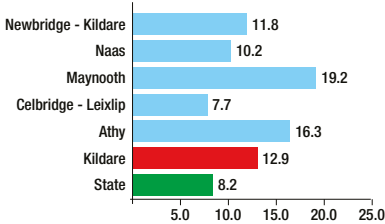
The most populated areas in Kildare are within and close to the main urban settlements of Newbridge, Naas, Celbridge, Leixlip, Maynooth and Athy. At the Municipal District level, the population breakdown is as follows: Newbridge and Kildare (50,106), Naas (46,855), Maynooth (46,037), Celbridge and Leixlip (36,630) and Athy (30,648). As illustrated below Maynooth (+ 19.2%) had the largest increase in population since the 2011 Census while Celbridge and Leixlip had a modest increase of 7.7%, well below the 12.9% average for the County.

Population change at Municipal District (MD) Level 2006-2011

Population Change 2006-2011



% Population Change 2006-2011



Household Size

By 2011 the total number of households in Kildare had increased to 70,763 (up from 60,957 in 2006 and 39,041 in 1996) with the average household size decreasing to 2.97 persons compared to 2.7 persons nationally.

Forecasts anticipate a further reduction in household sizes nationally to 2.39 persons per household by 2020. Housing requirements and demands will continue to change to reflect the decreasing household size and other socio-economic factors. The 2011 Census also indicated that there were approximately 6,439 vacant residential units in the County, representing 8.1 % of the total stock.

Housing Strategy

Proposed amendments to Part V of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2014 require developers to provide 10% social housing. Affordable housing will no longer be provided under Part V.

The economic downturn has had a significant impact on the number of units being provided in the social housing sector in Kildare. Social house building has practically ceased while unemployment rose significantly. These factors, coupled with a net population growth of over

23,000 people, have placed additional strains on the housing stock.

A new Housing Strategy will form part of the County Development Plan. This strategy will provide a clear framework for the sufficient supply of land and housing units to meet the broad range of housing needs arising in the County.

Our Future Population

Following on from the enactment of the Local Government Reform Act 2014, the current Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) will be replaced in 2016 with a Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES). The RSES will provide a detailed framework for spatial and economic development at local government level. The RSES will contain a new target population for Kildare. Until such time as the review RSES takes place, the population target for Kildare will be as per the current RPGs (i.e. a population target of 234,422 people by 2016).

Have your say...!



- 1 How best can the County Development Plan cater for the projected population growth in the County over the lifetime of the plan?
- 2 Where should the increase in population within the County be directed?
- 3 Development land is a limited valuable resource. How best do we maximise the development of appropriate land to create sustainable communities?
- 4 How can Council policy protect areas within the County currently under severe pressure for one-off dwellings?
- 5 How can the housing needs of all sectors of our community be adequately addressed?
- 6 Where should social housing be provided?
- 7 Are changes needed in the type of housing to reflect the reducing household size?
- 8 How can new housing development be part of the growth of sustainable communities and neighbourhoods?
- 9 How should housing construction be divided between urban and rural areas?



Economic Development, Enterprise and Employment

Planning and development policies are becoming increasingly important for economic development, employment growth and prosperity. The Government's policy document for reform of local government 'Putting People First (2012)' envisages a stronger and more explicit role for local authorities in promoting economic development within their functional areas.



Having regard to the projected growth in the Irish economy over the life of the County Development Plan, it is important that the plan review process places Kildare in a position to be part of economic recovery and to play an active role in the wider region.

Economic Strategy

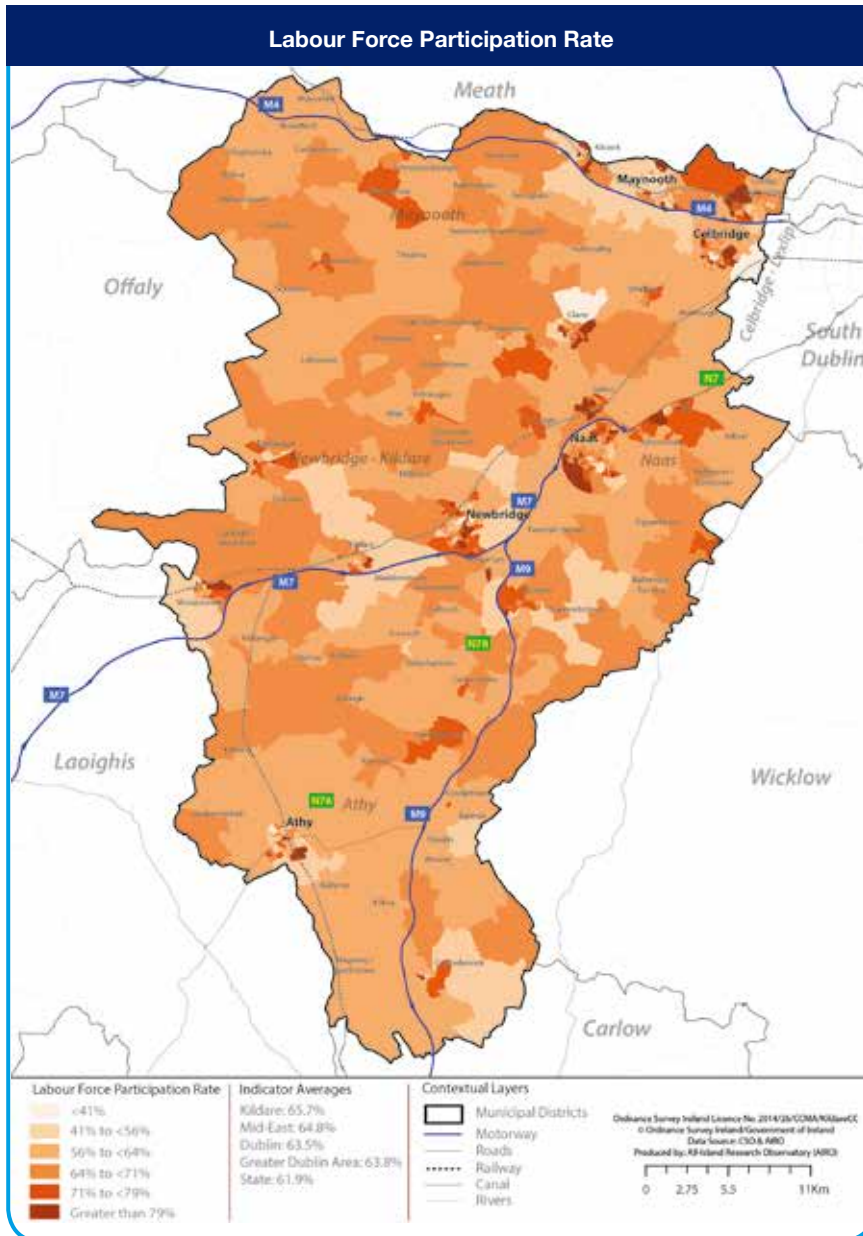
The Council is in the process of drawing up Kildare's first 'Local Economic and Community Plan' (LECP). This six year objectives and actions plan will have a wider remit than the County Development Plan in the area of economic development, and is being prepared through a separate process. The LECP and the County

Development Plan are however closely linked. The LECP must be consistent with the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan and the County Development Plan will need to underpin the aims of the new LECP where there are overlapping 'land use' or 'development' related objectives. The public will be invited in due course to input into the LECP plan making process.

The County Development Plan will focus on the promotion of a strategic, sustainable economic development strategy that identifies an appropriate hierarchy of employment centres that are related to the overall development strategy of the County and areas of residential development. In our main towns, economic development must focus on the different land uses namely, industry, enterprise, retail and commercial development.

The County Development Plan will have regard to the Government's framework for economic recovery including, "The Medium Term Economic Strategy 2014 – 2020" (MTES) and the enterprise strategy as set out in "Making it Happen – Growing Enterprise for Ireland", as well as other national policy initiatives under the "Action Plan for Jobs (2015)".





Map 2

Employment Trends in Kildare

Labour Force

According to the 2011 Census, Kildare with a total of 104,226 persons has the 5th highest labour force in the State.

The County accounts for 4.7% of the State's labour force, 40% of the Mid-East Region and 14% of the labour force in the GDA. Between 2006 and 2011, the labour force in Kildare actually increased by 6.65% (+6,507) but conversely there has been a significant increase of 19.5% (+8,911) in the non-labour force (as a result of an increase in the retired/out of work population).

Over 82% (85,587) of the County's labour force was 'At Work', with employment numbers decreasing by -6.5% (-5,994) since 2006. This decrease reflected the national economic crisis which occurred during this period.

Map 2 above details the spatial variations in the Labour Force Participation (LFP) rate across Kildare in 2011. In general, rates are higher within and in close proximity to main urban centres (Naas, Newbridge, Maynooth, Celbridge etc) and lower in more rural areas and to the south of the County.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is an important element of Kildare's employment profile, with large employers like Intel, Hewlett Packard, Pfizer and more recently Kerry Group, being major employers in the County. In 2011, 27.5% (15,346) of all jobs in the County were in companies supported by enterprise development agencies and 18.2% (10,159) were with foreign owned companies.

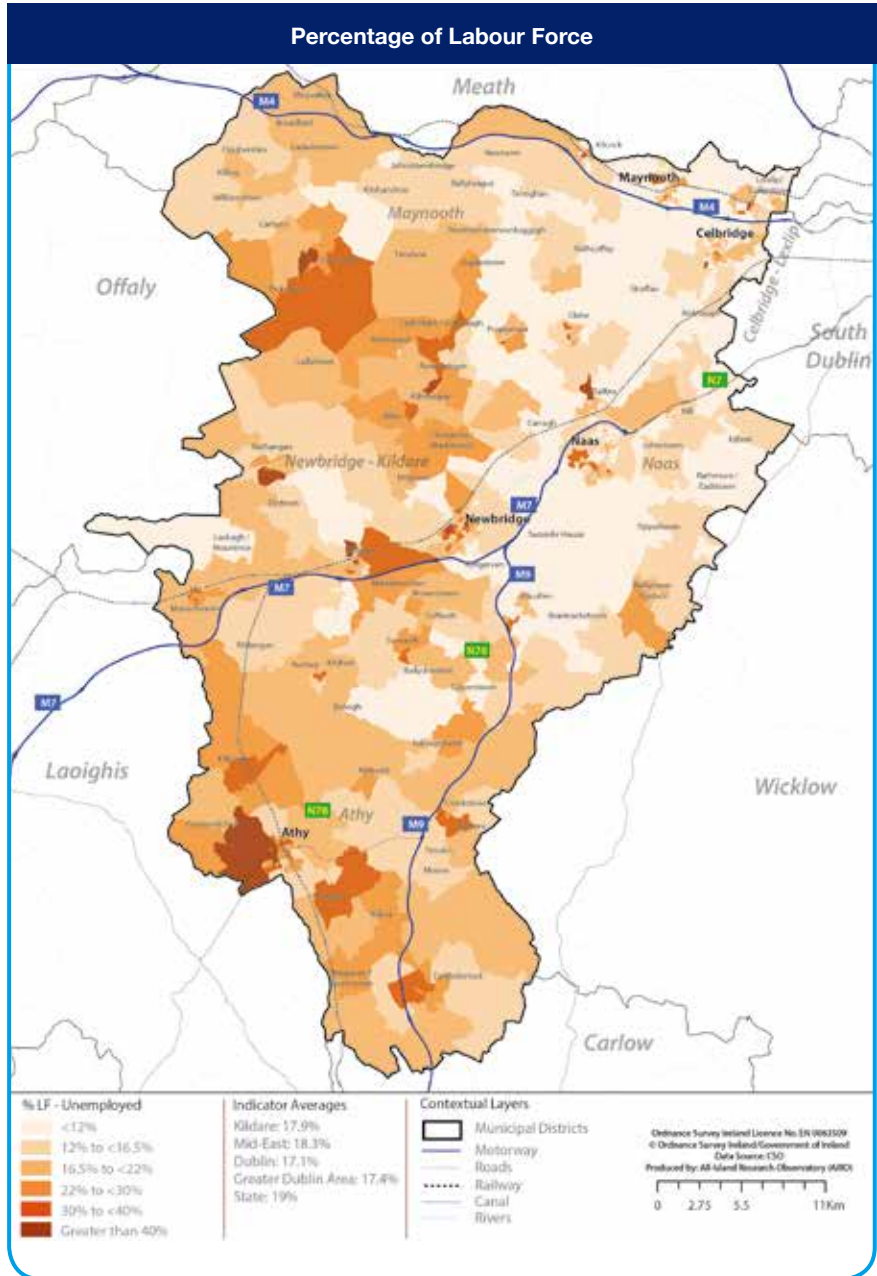
The employment profile of Kildare is also heavily shaped by its close proximity to the national economic gateway of Dublin. Nearly 40% of the County's working population are employed outside the County, with Dublin accounting for the vast majority (over 85%) of these commuters.



Unemployment

Since 2006, the total population classed as unemployed (both unemployed and looking for a first job) increased by 203% (+12,501) from 6,138 in 2006 to 18,639 in 2011. This figure represents an unemployment rate of 17.9% of the total labour force. Comparing all local authorities in Ireland, Kildare had the 4th lowest rate of unemployment but the 6th highest total number of unemployed.

Map 3 opposite details the distribution of unemployment rates across Kildare. There is a clear spatial pattern evident with higher rates in the west and south of the County. High rates are also notable in local areas within the large urban centres across Kildare, in particular within Athy. More recently, with an improving national economic environment, the national rate of unemployment has significantly decreased from a decade high of 15.1% (February 2012) to 10.1% (February 2015).



Map 3



Retail and Commercial

Retail and commercial services are important requirements in any economy. Currently, a substantial proportion of the day to day shopping by Kildare residents is carried out within the County. However, a significant proportion of shopping for comparison purchases is done outside Kildare. During the period of the current County Development Plan the retail

environment of shopping patterns have changed, with pressure for the development of out of town/edge of town centre sites, the development of newer forms of shopping (Lidl and Aldi) and in some instances the closure of smaller shops. Many of the County's town centres have suffered from increases in the levels of vacancy and dereliction rates and higher numbers of lower value retail users in their core retail areas.



It is necessary to develop a quality shopping and commercial environment in the County. A Retail Strategy will be prepared, as part of the County

Development Plan review, to help guide future retail development. The Strategy will have regard to the Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area.



Kildare County Council's Role

Council aims to facilitate economic development and employment generating opportunities by providing the necessary infrastructure, to implement urban and rural economic initiatives and provide the strategic context for appropriate land use zonings for employment activities.

The Council will continue to promote the County through appropriate initiatives and engage with the Enterprise Board, IDA, Enterprise Ireland, Forfas, Fáilte Ireland and relevant stakeholders and interest groups to deliver sustainable economic development.

Have your say...!



- 1 What are Kildare's 'key drivers', 'strengths' or 'competitive advantages' which can be harnessed to increase employment growth and enterprise development within the County?
- 2 How can Kildare be promoted in attracting inward investment in employment and enterprise?
- 3 How can the County Development Plan best support new and evolving work patterns which reduce the demand to travel, including e-business, flexible work hubs, home based economic activity and increase employment in the County?
- 4 How can the new County Development Plan support indigenous small scale enterprise, agriculture and rural enterprise?
- 5 What policies should be introduced to further support town centre retailing and commercial activities that enhance the vitality and vibrancy of our town and village centres?
- 6 Should small-scale local shops be protected or are larger commercial centres the way forward?
- 7 How can the County Development Plan policies help integrate enterprise land uses with other forms of land use such as residential, transportation and tourism, etc?
- 8 How can the County Development Plan policies assist high potential start ups and ICT/digital businesses?
- 9 What policies and objectives can the County Development Plan include to encourage sustainable economic development in Kildare?



Movement and Transportation

One of the key elements of the County Development Plan will be movement and transport policy which will endeavour to improve access and movement within and through Kildare. All modes of transport including pedestrian, cyclist, public transport, private car and all through traffic will be provided for. Transportation policy in the County will seek to create more sustainable traffic movements with less car dependency as advocated by policy at national and regional level.



Kildare has undergone significant growth over the last 30 years which has resulted in a major increase in travel demand within and through the County. The provision of transportation infrastructure including road and rail together with public transport projects must be integrated with a sustainable settlement strategy.

Road and Rail Infrastructure

The provision of road and rail infrastructure has improved greatly in recent years. The main transportation corridors linking Dublin to much of the Country pass through Kildare and include the M4/N4, M7/N7 and M9/N9.

A number of mainline railway passenger services traverse the County: the Cork/Limerick line, Galway/Mayo line, the Waterford line and the Sligo line; together with two important suburban services between Kildare and Heuston and Maynooth and Connolly.

Roads Projects

Much of the planned national roads infrastructure in Kildare has been developed. Other national projects are in planning or have the appropriate consents in place and are dependent on funding to develop them. Schemes in planning include the upgrade of the N81 (Tallaght to Baltinglass) which passes through east Kildare and the Athy Southern Distributor Road. Permitted schemes include the M7 widening between the Maudlins and Newhall junctions and the upgrading of the Newhall junction and the Osberstown interchange/Sallins Bypass.

Various distributor and relief roads are also planned throughout the County subject to funding becoming available. It is also envisaged that the Maynooth Outer Orbital Route will be completed in the next 5 years subject to development contributions.

Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS)

DMURS replaces existing design standards for new or upgraded roads and streets in Irish cities, towns and villages. It requires greater priority to be given to accommodating the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, places new emphasis on creating a 'sense of place' and provides a range of design measures to control vehicular speed.

In addition to developing principles that create more pleasant spaces in our towns and villages we need to create more sustainable movement patterns. The street patterns in many of the County's settlements are not conducive to walking and cycling due to low levels of connectivity. Development proposals that make better use of the existing road space by prioritising walking, cycling and public transport will be encouraged.



Public Transport

The Government's "Transport 21" Investment Framework 2005-2016 and the "Smarter Travel A Sustainable Transport Future for Ireland 2009-2020", place an increased emphasis on the provision of public transport, a critical feature of a sustainable and integrated transportation network. Trains and buses can transport large numbers of people efficiently and can provide transport for those people who do not have access to a car. The National Transport Authority's "Integrated Implementation Plan 2013-2018 for the GDA" outlines a programme of investment and development amounting to almost €900 million. One of the key priorities of the plan is to improve rail access for people travelling between Kildare and Dublin City Centre.



on previous strategies and investment programmes including the aforementioned Transport 21 and the Smarter Travel Policy.

Rural transport provision is currently being restructured. Kildare Local Transport Link Ltd has been established to provide rural transport and integrate with other public transport providers.

Car Parking

Car parking is an essential element of overall land use and transportation policy. A key consideration in the review of the County Development Plan is to ensure adequate car parking provision while encouraging a changeover to other forms of transport particularly in our

urban centres. In working towards better integration of land use and transport, a review of existing car parking standards will be undertaken.

Walking And Cycling

Walking and cycling are indispensable parts of the transport system of many towns. Walking and cycling networks need to be continuous and cover large areas of towns with links to longer distance routes. Protecting the alignment of existing walking and cycling routes is imperative if such networks are to achieve maximum usage. It is the policy of the Council to continue to promote and facilitate the development of walking and cycling facilities in the county.



The Draft Transport Strategy for the GDA 2011-2030 (once adopted) will set out the Strategic Transport Plan for the Greater Dublin Area including Kildare for the period up to 2030. The Transport Strategy builds

Have your say...!



- 1 How can the County Development Plan make sure that there is a better co-ordination between land use and transportation facilities in order to achieve more sustainable development?
- 2 Where should major public transport facilities (strategic park and ride, transport interchanges, freight hubs) be located within the County to service both demand to Dublin and demand within Kildare?
- 3 What areas of the County would benefit from greater access to transportation (public and private)?
- 4 How can the movement of goods and services, including heavy goods vehicles within Kildare be improved in rural and urban areas?
- 5 Should parking standards for new developments reflect the need to reduce car dependency?
- 6 How can the safety of vulnerable road users (cyclists/ pedestrians) be improved?
- 7 How can we develop successful streets that easily facilitate vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians in our towns and housing areas?
- 8 How do we achieve greater linkages and permeability between existing and proposed housing areas that also connect successfully into existing town and village centres and out into the countryside?
- 9 What policies and objectives can the County Development Plan implement to better link transportation infrastructure to sustainable economic development in Kildare?



Infrastructure

To facilitate sustainable development, population and economic growth the availability of high quality infrastructure is a necessity. The provision of water, wastewater, waste management, energy and telecommunication infrastructure are fundamental to ensure the continued sustainable development of Kildare. Council does not have direct responsibility for the provision of all these services. However the County Development Plan will provide a framework for the delivery of infrastructure in the County.



Drinking Water and Wastewater

Since January 2014 Irish Water has responsibility for the development and operation of public water services in Ireland. Investment in new or additional capacity in water services will be informed by national, regional and local planning policy and addressed through Irish Water's Capital Investment Plans.

Kildare currently has a daily demand of approximately 80,000 cubic metres of water. In the short to medium term, estimated demand increases can be supplied by a combination of the existing regional water treatment plants in the area (Ballymore Eustace, Leixlip and Srowland Water Treatment Plants) and the local well fields (Johnstownbridge and Rathangan).

In the longer term additional capacity is required to serve the Midlands and Eastern region (including Co. Kildare). To this end Irish Water is engaging in a public consultation exercise to inform the forthcoming "Water Supply Project" (WSP) for the Eastern and Midland Region. However, this project is likely to take some considerable time to deliver and in the meantime a significant effort is required to use water resources wisely and to

conserve current supplies. In addition, it is essential that current water sources (River Liffey, River Barrow and groundwater) and their contributing catchments are protected from pollution.

Kildare's largest wastewater treatment plants are located at Leixlip (serving Kilcock, Maynooth, Celbridge, Leixlip and Straffan) and Osberstown (serving Naas, Newbridge, Kilcullen, Athgarvan, Prosperous, Sallins, Clane and Kill). Each plant has an existing design capacity of 80,000 population equivalent (PE) and both treatment plants are in the process of being upgraded. The design capacity of Osberstown is being increased to 130,000 PE and Leixlip will have a design capacity of 150,000 PE. Network capacity is currently constrained in the areas of Newbridge, Sallins, Kill, Naas and Clane and investment in these networks will be addressed by Irish Water. However, even with the delivery of planned increased capacity at Osberstown and Leixlip, significant development may be constrained in Kildare due to a future lack of wastewater treatment capacity. Irish Water is currently investigating the most efficient way of relieving this constraint.

Water Ecosystems

The European Union Water Framework Directive and Groundwater Directive require that water systems are managed and water quality protected to ensure that all natural waters achieve "good ecological" status.

Waterbodies in Kildare, both surface water and groundwater, have been assessed through the Eastern and South Eastern River Basin Management Plans. The development of the second cycle of River Basin Management Plans for the period 2015 – 2021 is now underway. The Plan(s) will be implemented by the Council and other stakeholders over the next six years (and beyond) and will have implications in terms of land use policy, investment priorities, regulatory arrangements etc.

Surface Water, Flooding and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)

Surface water drainage is the responsibility of the Council, with the Office of Public Works (OPW) having a responsibility for



Flood Risk Management. The River Liffey and River Barrow and their tributaries are currently the subject to Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies (CFRAMS) being carried out by the OPW in conjunction with the Council. Comprehensive consideration of flood risk is now a key requirement in the preparation of development plans and in determining planning applications. The 'Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines' emphasise the importance of identifying areas at risk of flooding and protecting these areas either by preventing further development or mitigating against the effects of possible flood events. Strategic flood risk assessment will be carried out as part of the preparation of the new County Development Plan.

Waste Management

Council promotes waste prevention and minimisation through source reduction, producer responsibility and public awareness. At present the Council operates a main central waste management facility including a recycling centre and transfer station at Silliot Hill and a Civic Amenity Centre at Athy. There is also a network of bring banks located throughout Kildare. The Council also operates a litter warden service to deal with illegal dumping. A number of private operators also operate waste facilities in the County. The Eastern and Midland Regional Waste Management Plan 2015-2020 is currently being adopted. The emphasis of the new Waste Management Plan will be towards minimisation and treatment of waste produced in the region.

Along with waste infrastructure and enforcement of waste legislation, the Council works with a range of community groups in relation to minimisation of waste. Events such as the annual National Spring

Clean community initiative are promoted locally along with a network for the Tidy Towns groups in Kildare.

Electrical and Gas Supply

The supply of electricity and gas throughout Kildare is an important factor in the provision and location of employment. The Council will continue to work alongside key energy providers in facilitating the further development of the electricity and gas networks in Kildare.

The improvement and development of networks and energy infrastructure is very important for strategic economic development. The Government has endorsed the major investment underway and proposed in the high voltage electricity system under Eirgrid's Grid 25 Programme. Variation No 3 of the current County Development Plan 2011 – 2017 provides policy for the sustainable development of energy infrastructure in Kildare whilst also requiring appropriate consideration of landscape, residential and environmental considerations.

The development of high quality transmission infrastructure is necessary for economic and social development to ensure security of supply and to facilitate renewable energy projects.

Telecommunications and Broadband

The Council recognises the importance of the telecommunication sector, including its availability, price and quality and acknowledges its role in attracting inward investment. Antennae and support structures are necessary to facilitate a high quality communications network. However their location is an important planning consideration.

The Council will continue to work closely with the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources to implement the National Broadband Plan in Kildare. It recognises that high speed broadband is essential as an economic facilitator in a knowledge based economy. Some of the more rural areas of the County have been identified for state intervention to upgrade the broadband service.

Have your say...!



- 1 Are there any significant factors (national or local) contributing to deterioration in the water quality of groundwater or rivers?
- 2 How do we protect and promote good quality water whilst ensuring the sustainable development of our County?
- 3 How can the County Development Plan build upon and enable the implementation of the Regional Waste Management Plan?
- 4 What do we need to do to promote waste reduction in the County?
- 5 Are there adequate recycling facilities available to serve County Kildare? Where should new facilities be located? For example should they be located in residential or commercial areas?
- 6 How can the County Development Plan support the provision of electricity, gas, renewable energy, telecommunication and broadband infrastructure?



Environment

The County Development Plan must ensure that a balance is achieved in terms of land use and development and the protection of our environment. In order to be fully mindful of environmental considerations during the making of the County Development Plan a number of environmental assessments will be carried out in tandem with the plan making process.



Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The Council is required to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment on the County Development Plan 2017-2023. This process ensures that environmental considerations are fully integrated into the preparation and adoption of the Plan.



The objective of the SEA process is to provide a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of the Plan with a view to promoting sustainable development. It is carried out in parallel with the review and will also include for public consultation. An Environmental Report will be published in conjunction with the draft County Development Plan.

Appropriate Assessment (AA)

The EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) seeks to protect a number of habitats with flora and fauna of European importance by designating these sites as Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas collectively known as Natura 2000 sites. Kildare has eight of these sites and it is a requirement of the directive that an Appropriate Assessment be carried out on the implications of any plan or project either individually or in combination with other plans or projects on the protected conservation sites. The draft County Development Plan 2017-2023 will have to be screened to ascertain whether it would be likely to have any significant impact on a Natura site.

Climate Change

Climate change is recognised as a significant global environmental problem. Ireland's climate is changing. Evidence of this can be seen in the changes to our average temperature, rainfall intensity / patterns, increased flooding and extreme weather events. It is accepted that this is likely to continue and that we need to adapt to these changes. In December 2012 the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DoECLG) published the "National Climate Change Adaptation Framework". The framework requires local authorities to integrate climate change adaptation into development planning. Climate change adaptation will inform policies and objectives throughout the plan process with increased emphasis on sustainable development and travel patterns, energy use and the protection of green infrastructure.



Building Regulations

Research has indicated that CO² emissions from buildings across the EU could be reduced by 22% through improved energy efficiency. Part L of the Building Regulations has raised the standards to which buildings are to be designed and constructed with regard to heat loss and CO² emissions. The Government has taken further measures to reduce CO² emissions by introducing schemes such as the EU Energy Performance of Building Directive (EPBD) which require a Building Energy Rating Certificate (BER) to be carried out for all buildings.



Kildare has the potential to generate a proportion of its power requirements from renewable sources. Naturally occurring energy sources include the sun, wind and water. Geothermal energy, plant material and combustible or digestible agricultural, domestic or industrial waste are emerging as renewable sources of energy. The Council is currently preparing a Wind Energy Development Strategy which will be informed by the review of the DECLGs “Wind Energy Development Guidelines” (currently under review) and the methodology for “Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategies” prepared by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland.

Renewable Energy

Development of alternative energy sources is a priority at National and European level for both environmental and energy policy reasons. The context in Ireland is set by Government policies for the provision of electricity from renewable and indigenous sources in line with official European and United Nations targets for reducing dependency on fossil fuels and emissions of greenhouse gases.

Major Accidents Directives

Two industries in Kildare are affected by the Major Accidents Directive: Irish Industrial Explosives at Clonagh, Enfield; and Intel Ireland Ltd at Collinstown, Leixlip. The Directive seeks to prevent major accidents that involve dangerous substances and limit potential consequences for humans and the environment. The focus of the County Development Plan will seek to ensure that facilities take into account the need to prevent major accidents involving hazardous substances and safeguard both the public and the environment.

Noise

Noise pollution has become an important issue as it affects the quality of life and also has health impacts. A Noise Action Plan for Kildare has been prepared to limit and manage noise from major roads and within areas of large conurbations. It also requires the integration of noise management into the planning process.

Have your say...!



- 1 What are the main environmental issues that currently face Kildare?
- 2 What additional measures should be taken to protect the environment?
- 3 How can the County Development Plan address matters such as adaptation to climate change?
- 4 What methods should Council encourage to maximise renewable energy provision, both for developments and individual homes?
- 5 Where should wind turbines be encouraged / discouraged?
- 6 Are there areas of Kildare that should be earmarked for wind farms?
- 7 What should the Council be doing to promote bio-energy production from waste streams, agri-food effluents, manures, municipal solid waste, sewage sludge and purpose grown energy crops?
- 8 What measures should be introduced to reduce noise nuisance?



Social, Community and Cultural Development

Kildare faces significant challenges in meeting the needs of its growing community in relation to planning and development and in the provision of necessary physical and social infrastructure. A central objective of the County Development Plan is to seek to promote and facilitate the development of 'Sustainable Communities' through land use planning, by providing for land uses capable of accommodating community, leisure, recreational and cultural facilities. Successful, sustainable communities need facilities that are fit for purpose, accessible and adaptable.

The provision of a sufficient range and capacity of community facilities has a positive impact on social cohesion, enhancing quality of life and helping to create attractive and sustainable neighbourhoods where people choose to live, work and engage in recreational activities throughout their lifetime.



Many community facilities are provided by government departments and agencies, local authorities and increasingly by commercial and community interests. There is a requirement to ensure that they are located so that they can be used in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The review of the County Development Plan presents an opportunity to review existing provision across the County in the context of settlement and population characteristics and to plan for future needs in a strategic and evidence based manner.

Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)

Separate to the County Development Plan review, the Council is responsible for developing a six year Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for Kildare. This Plan will set out economic and community objectives that will promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the County. The LECP will address a wider range of community issues, including developing infrastructure to address social exclusion, poverty and disadvantage,

reverse social and economic decline and to realise growth potential and the sustainability of communities. The public will be invited, in due course, to input into the LECP plan making process.





Community Facilities

Social and community facilities include educational facilities, local and community services, places of worship, hospitals, health centres, libraries, community halls, play and recreational facilities, etc. The provision of buildings to serve communities is costly and multi use of community and public buildings will become a priority.

The County Development Plan will outline key policies to support the delivery of such facilities at the most appropriate locations throughout the county. The types of social and community facilities to consider when thinking about sustainable communities are listed below.

Social, Community & Cultural Facilities

Childcare

- Creches
- Afterschool clubs

Elderly Care

- Nursing Homes
- Convalescent Homes

Education

- Primary
- Secondary
- Third Level

Cultural

- Arts
- Library
- Places of Worship

Recreational

- Parks
- Cycleways
- Walking routes

Sport

- Playing fields
- Swimming pools
- Tennis courts

Play

- Skatepark
- Playground

Others

- Post office
- Garda stations
- Health services



Arts & Culture

The Council's Arts Office continues to develop an Arts Service which engages the citizens of the county. It aims to place arts at the centre of the economic, social and cultural development of Kildare.

Libraries

The Council has a network of 15 branch libraries throughout the County. There is also a Mobile Library service, a Local Studies (Kildare Collections and Research Service) with a genealogy service, the County archives, a recording studio and a Quaker Museum.

Kildare Library Development Plan 2015-2019 - "Ideas Realised: Spreading the Word" provides a roadmap to guide and modernise the delivery of library services. The Library Development Plan places the service at the heart of the community and seeks to respond to community needs.

Nursing Homes

Data from the HSE indicates that there are 19 private nursing homes and one public facility in Kildare. An analysis of the location of nursing homes relative to persons aged over 65 illustrates a mismatch between the location of facilities and the distribution of older people. In particular south Kildare and the north east of the County are poorly serviced with facilities.

Social, Community and Cultural Development



Education and Childcare

Currently there are over 155 educational centres in Kildare including primary schools, second level schools, VEC centres, special needs schools and the University in Maynooth. The County Development Plan will consider the future demands for schools having regard to the “Code of Practice on Provision of Schools and the Planning System” published jointly by the Department of Education and Science and the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Approximately 206 childcare services are located throughout the County. Council will work with the

private sector and other interested parties to facilitate the delivery of childcare facilities through the local area plan and development management process.

Social Inclusion/ Accessibility

The Council has developed an accessibility implementation plan to ensure that all services are delivered and provided in an accessible manner. Good urban design practices can encourage and facilitate appropriately designed public spaces, public buildings, special needs housing and accessibility for all.





Open Space and Recreation

The Council has a small parks and recreation service. Council is reliant on working with community groups to provide and deliver open space and recreational facilities. The Council has supported groups with the amenity grant scheme, community grant schemes and festival

grant schemes and has delivered a number of recreational facilities throughout the County. It is important, that the development of public open spaces and active recreational facilities, such as sports pitches, in addition to areas for passive recreation and children's play are provided at the most appropriate locations to support sustainable communities.

Other Local Services

Other local services such as small shops, post offices and local public houses provide an important service for communities and their retention is an important consideration in the sustainable development of communities. Significant development proposals throughout the County must have regard to appropriate social infrastructure to support the potential increase in population.

Fire Service

A Fire Brigade service is provided by six fire stations located in Newbridge, Naas, Athy, Maynooth, Monasterevin and Leixlip with agreements in place with adjoining Counties regarding responses to emergency calls.

The fire service responds to fire, road traffic incidents, flooding and other incidents in the County and in areas adjoining other Counties.

Have your say...!



- 1 How can the County Development Plan assist in meeting community infrastructure needs?
- 2 How can the multiuse of existing facilities such as schools, health centres and community halls be encouraged?
- 3 What policies should be included in the County Development Plan to support and enhance childcare and nursing home provision throughout the County?
- 4 How can the County Development Plan ensure that provision is made to facilitate current and future educational requirements in appropriate locations?
- 5 How can the County Development Plan assist the library service to continue to play an active role in the area of Social Inclusion in all communities?
- 6 How can the County Development Plan ensure the delivery of a range of active and passive open space and recreational infrastructure, such as Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGA) for children, local and regional parks, long distance walking routes (canal network, access to uplands, etc) and looped walks in urban and rural areas?
- 7 Are the current standards for public open space provision associated with new developments appropriate?
- 8 What policies and objectives need to be put in place to ensure recreational and community resources meet the demand of Kildare's growing population, while protecting existing resources from inappropriate development?



Urban Design and Architecture

The quality of our built environment affects the quality of our lives. The rate of growth in Kildare in the past decade has had an impact on the urban fabric and the built environment of towns, villages and rural areas. Through the planning process, Council plays a key role in relation to the creation of the built environment and in delivering good quality design for successful and sustainable places.

Urban design is essentially a tool to assist in the craft of creating quality urban spaces; it is about how buildings are put together to shape and enliven our streets and civic spaces. Good urban design supports the economic, social, cultural and sustainability goals of the County. It also creates attractive and sustainable neighbourhoods.

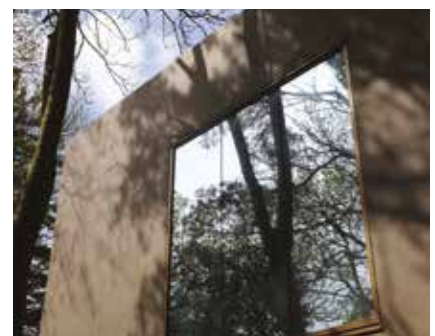


Architecture, if done properly, contributes to the quality of life and reinforces civic pride. Good architecture recognises that most buildings work quietly as a backdrop to our towns and villages and, in turn, allows our places to be distinctive.

Density

Extensive suburban development primarily of a semi-detached and detached form has resulted in low residential density development throughout many of the towns and villages in Kildare. It is generally accepted that higher density development provides for a more sustainable use of land which is a valuable and limited resource and allows for the provision of more efficient delivery of services.

However, higher densities should not compromise creating attractive neighbourhoods that foster a sense of place and encourage interaction between residents.





Urban Public Space

Public spaces are important elements and features of our towns and villages in Kildare. They provide the locations where we interact as a community at neighbourhood level and are a physical demonstration of how we present ourselves to others. Our public spaces and streets are vital to our daily life and this importance requires us to understand it and plan for their future.



Rural Design

Rural design is mostly manifested in terms of 'one-off' dwellings in the countryside. These are an expression of their owner's preferences. Given the quantity of 'one-off' houses built in the countryside each year, there is a need to recognise and respond to the character of the environment, by being guided by landscape, environmental and design considerations. Architecturally, rural housing should respond to a specific site and area, embrace what is good about traditional rural design and deliver this in a contemporary form.

Town and Village Development

The economic downturn has resulted in changes to the social and economic fabric of our towns and villages. Retailing, and in particular the way retail activities are conducted, have changed in the past decade. Populations in our towns have also decreased. There is increasing pressure for 'edge of centre' development rather than re-investing in the historic town/village centres. These issues, coupled with high levels of vehicular traffic, vacancy levels, dereliction, and unsympathetic shop fronts, have had a negative impact on our towns and villages.

Successful and attractive town and village centres:

- have a diversity of shops and activities;
- provide a safe and attractive environment;
- have good urban design; and
- are accessible in terms of pedestrian, vehicular, cyclist movement and served by public transport.

Kildare needs to re-assert the importance of the historical towns and villages. Regeneration of key urban spaces and streetscapes is required in many towns while appropriate uses need to be identified in conjunction with local businesses to support the re-vitalisation of main streets.

Have your say...!

- 1 How can we make our towns and villages more attractive places to live in?
- 2 How should the countryside be enhanced through better design?
- 3 In achieving sustainable densities how can the County Development Plan achieve high quality urban environments?
- 4 How can we achieve sustainable densities and create good neighbourhoods where people will want to live and work?
- 5 How can the County Development Plan promote improvement in the quality of the built environment in urban and rural areas?
- 6 How can the County Development Plan encourage sustainable design and efficient use of land?
- 7 How can the County Development Plan ensure that development is appropriate to its location?
- 8 How can the County Development Plan revitalise our towns and villages?
- 9 How can rural housing be designed to a high standard?





Landscape and Heritage

The County Development Plan seeks to manage change, by balancing the preservation and promotion of the Kildare's landscape and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty.



Heritage

Kildare is rich in heritage. This is expressed in the unique natural sites of the Curragh Plains and Pollardstown Fen, in the monuments representative of all periods from the early pre-Christian sites to the magnificent Palladian mansion of Castletown and its estate village of Celbridge to the peatlands and to the cultivated landscape of the south.



Heritage is more than just buildings, rivers, trees, landscape and archaeological sites alone. It is the interrelationship between all these elements and their relationship with mankind. The heritage of an area makes it unique, gives it a character and defines its "sense of place". Some aspects of the Kildare's heritage are important in their own locality and some are of national or international importance, protected by legislation. Whatever their inherent importance all aspects of heritage serve to enhance the quality of life for all who live or are associated with the County.

Natural Heritage/ Biodiversity

Lying between the east coast and Ireland's central plain with the Wicklow Mountains to the south, Kildare is blessed with a wealth of different habitats supporting a wide variety of biodiversity, much of it distributed throughout the wider countryside. One reason for the County's riches lies in the underlying limestone and the presence of the Rivers Barrow and Liffey providing a great deal of diversity.

Important habitats in the County have been designated for nature conservation including Special Areas of Conservation, a Special Protection Area and Natural Heritage Areas. Sites of geological interest have also been designated by the Geological Survey of Ireland.

Biodiversity means the variety of living things, including our rare plants and animals as well as the common species that show the richness of our local environment. These species exist everywhere even outside the boundaries of designated sites. As part of our land use planning and development policies, the management of features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild flora and fauna must be encouraged.

Landscape

Kildare is characterised by various landscapes, comprising the large fertile plain of the Curragh broken only by a few small hills such as the Hill of Allen and Dunmurry Hill, with more steeply rolling uplands to the east and the low-lying bog lands of the west. The valleys of the River Liffey and River Barrow are two of the strongest features of the county's landscape along with the Grand Canal and the Royal Canal. All these features contribute to the County's high quality environment. Landscape is an important part of the quality of life for people everywhere: in urban areas and in the countryside, this landscape must accommodate many social, economic and environmental uses and functions. The Kildare Landscape Character Assessment, which has been incorporated into County Development Plans since 2005, details how combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, field patterns and human settlement create character and local distinctiveness.

Archaeological Heritage

Archaeology is the study of past societies through the examination of material remains left by human activity. Kildare has a rich and varied archaeological heritage. Many sites still remain hidden beneath the surface but new advances in technology are aiding their discovery. The National



Monuments Acts affords protection to approx 1400 recorded monuments within the County. Urban Archaeology Surveys have also been undertaken for a number of settlements in the County. These surveys have identified areas containing a significant number of recorded monuments and therefore have the potential to contain more undiscovered sites. Areas within these settlements have been identified as Zones of Archaeological Potential. Many archaeological sites are discovered during the course of development work.



architecture, and a wealth of non structural items, including stone walls and street furniture. Many building types are unique to the County and include the Wonderful Barn at Barnhall, the Hermitage thatch at Carnalway, the Quaker meeting house at Ballitore. Our built heritage is a finite and irreplaceable resource expressing the richness and diversity of our past.

technical and social interest. There are 1,439 structures on the list most of which are of regional significance or above. The RPS will be reassessed and further additions / deletions may be made in light of survey work.

Areas of the County which have special character and architectural interests may be protected through the designation of Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). An ACA is a place, area or group of structures or townscape, whose character it is an objective of a development plan to preserve. An ACA provides a framework that will permit a degree of flexibility in terms of design consistent with the maintenance and improvement of the special character of the area.

Architectural Heritage

Kildare boasts a rich architectural heritage comprising of country houses and demesnes such as Carton and Castletown, planned towns such as Maynooth and Monasterevin, vernacular structures, industrial heritage, ecclesiastical

The Council has a statutory obligation to maintain a Record of Protected Structures (RPS) that gives protected status to all structures that are considered to be of special interest. Categories of special interest include architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific,

Have your say...!



- 1 How can County Development Plan increase awareness, understanding and access to the heritage of Kildare?
- 2 What aspects of the built and natural heritage of Kildare do you consider to be important and worthy of conservation?
- 3 How can a balance be achieved between the conservation of heritage and development pressures?
- 4 Are there policies which should be included in the County Development Plan to protect natural, built and cultural heritage?
- 5 How can greater access to the natural, built and archaeological heritage be facilitated, while having regard to the sensitive nature of many sites?
- 6 How can natural heritage and biodiversity be enhanced outside protected sites?
- 7 How can change to the quality, character and amenity value of Kildare's landscape be managed? Should areas of special landscape quality be identified and protected? How can the heritage assets and local distinctiveness within our towns and villages be enhanced?
- 8 How can change to the quality, character and amenity value of our landscapes be managed? Should areas of special landscape quality be identified and protected?
- 9 How can the County Development Plan encourage the reuse of protected structures that have fallen into disuse?
- 10 How can the County Development Plan conserve or re-use vernacular buildings (thatched cottages and traditional farm complexes) throughout the county?
- 11 Are there additional streetscapes/areas worthy of Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) consideration?
- 12 How can Kildare's industrial heritage be conserved/protected?
- 13 How can archaeological information be made more accessible to the community and professionals?
- 14 What type of archaeology projects should be undertaken?



Rural Development and Natural Resources

Kildare has experienced significant and sustained demand for the expansion of urban areas over the past twenty years. The continued demand to accommodate projected population growth while protecting our rural and natural environment to support appropriate rural activities and enterprises is a key consideration for the County Development Plan.



Agriculture

The total area of land farmed in Kildare is approximately 112,518 ha comprising 66% of the overall area of the County. The topography of County Kildare consists of a large, fertile plain broken only by a few hills such as Dunmurray Hill and the Hill of Allen, with upland areas mainly on the eastern boundary with County Wicklow. Agricultural land use in the north and east of the county is dominated by pastureland. In the south, tillage farming assumes major importance while mixed farming dominates the central area, with dry stock farming comprising the main activity in the north west of the county. Agriculture remains an important economic activity in the County; however with only approximately 3% of the labour force working in agriculture, diversification

and other employment opportunities are encouraged in order to sustain rural communities. A number of alternative schemes have been identified by Teagasc that are considered suitable for farmers to enter into for the purposes of diversification including production of dairy products (such as cheese and yogurt), forestry, equine enterprises, adventure tourism, conversion of redundant farm and renewable technologies to name but a few.

Bloodstock

Kildare's equine industry is a recognisable asset and is hugely important to the economy of the County. Since 2011, the number of stud farms operating in Kildare has reduced from 142 to 104. However Kildare continues to have the largest concentration of stud farms and trainers operating in the County. There are a number of other associated enterprises, dependent on the bloodstock industry and the Irish Sport House industry, that have been established in the County and which provide employment and wealth creation.





Sand and Gravel Extraction

Aggregates are a significant natural resource. By their nature, aggregates can only be worked where they occur. It is important that these resources are developed with the principles of sustainable development and environmental management in mind. However, the operation of quarries can give rise to land use conflicts and environmental issues which require to be mitigated and controlled through the planning system. There is therefore a need to protect aggregate resource areas in the County, to ensure an adequate supply of aggregates to meet the likely scale of future demand while at the same time protecting the County's natural and cultural heritage.



Forestry/Bogland

It is estimated that 32% of the land in Kildare is considered marginal and as such large areas of forestry and bogland are prevalent throughout the County. It is important that a balanced approach

is taken to the development of these resources in order to minimise the negative impact on biodiversity, archaeological and cultural heritage. The location of rural enterprise and employment opportunities will be encouraged subject to appropriate planning considerations.

Have your say...!



- 1 What is your vision for Kildare's rural areas and how should it be achieved?
- 2 What type of development and services are required in rural areas in order to support existing rural communities?
- 3 How can the Council support sustainable agriculture, the equine industry and rural based industry?
- 4 How can the countryside be protected from the loss of habitats and visual amenities caused by inappropriate development?
- 5 Can the amenities and economic resources of the countryside be protected while providing for sustainable rural housing?
- 6 How can the Kildare's aggregate reserves be developed in a manner that is sustainable and least damaging to the environment?

Tourism and recreation make a positive contribution to the economic and social wellbeing of the County. Kildare's close proximity to Dublin offers significant opportunities to expand the existing tourism offer and brand for the County.

With Dublin being the 6th most popular city region in Europe for city breaks, Kildare's location, rich built and natural heritage along with its horse racing and golfing attractions provide opportunities to attract spin off tourism from the city region and also from neighbouring County Wicklow.

Kildare's tourist attractions are therefore important assets for the development of the County and fundamental to the enjoyment by both visitors and residents. The key focus for the south East Fálte Ireland region (in which Kildare is located) will be the further development and promotion of the local culture and heritage product.

Tourism/Recreation and Kildare's Economy

A Fálte Ireland Report analysing tourism figures across the country from 2009-2012 indicated that overseas visitor numbers and expenditures had been in decline during this period in the Mid East region (Kildare, Laois, Longford, Louth, Meath, Wicklow, Offaly (east) and Westmeath). While this decline certainly affected visitor numbers and expenditure in Kildare, detailed analysis revealed that Kildare continued as a major visitor destination within the region. Visitor numbers and expenditure have since increased with c.772,000 overseas tourists visiting the Mid East region in 2013. Of this figure 168,000 (c.21%) visited Kildare. Overseas



visitor revenue from tourism generated €286.9m in the Mid East region in 2013, with Kildare accounting for €52 million (c.18%) of this figure. Notwithstanding the decline in tourism revenue in the region in recent years, numbers are recovering and Kildare holds a strong position from which to further develop, promote and expand the tourism industry within the County.

In recognition of this, Fálte Ireland alongside Kildare and Wicklow Tourism prepared the "Kildare – Wicklow Destination Development Strategy". This strategy sets out a number of strategic goals and objectives aimed at promoting linkages for tourism between the two counties and thus increasing the visitor numbers within each County.



The Kildare/Wicklow Tourism Destination Development Strategy

County Kildare along with neighbouring County Wicklow has been identified as one of 10 key destinations by Fáilte Ireland. Kildare as a destination has the necessary concentration of product, attractions and accommodation to become a tourism destination of significance. Kildare's proximity to Dublin offers significant latent potential to grow and attract visitor numbers and revenue. The overall aim of the strategy is for Kildare and Wicklow to capitalise on their geographical location in order to draw more visitors into the area, staying for longer periods and experiencing the range of product on offer.

The Strategy aims to do this through a coordinated and cooperative approach with Fáilte Ireland as facilitator to enhance, develop and create new products, services and amenities that will result in new innovations and a competitive destination for overseas and domestic visitors.



The key actions set out in the strategy aim to:

- Maintain and improve existing infrastructure;
- Provide a high quality workforce with strong communication skills;
- Develop a defined tourism product; and
- The development of a strong marketing campaign for the destination.

The Barrow Blueway

Kildare Fáilte published the Kildare Strategic Tourism Development Plan 2013-2016. This Strategy focuses on the core product is Kildare itself, its people, its places, its culture and experiences. Arising from the objectives set out in this and other strategies, Waterways Ireland

in conjunction with Kildare, Carlow, Laois and Kilkenny County Councils, LEADER Companies and Fáilte Ireland have set out a strategy to develop the existing track way along the Barrow Line of the Grand Canal and Barrow River as a 112 km shared use trail for tourism and recreational purposes, branded the Barrow Blueway. This Strategy also proposes to open up the Canals across Kildare to link with Dublin, the Barrow River system and Mullingar to the west, so that visitors can enjoy walkways, cycle paths and navigational improvements for recreational purposes. The development of such greenways elsewhere in the country has stimulated and created significant new visitor activity and expenditure.





Kildare's Tourism and Recreational Package

One of the key advantages Kildare possesses is the potential for diversification in the tourism product on offer with the location and varying landscapes of the County providing a strong baseline from which to develop and market a strong tourism product in a sustainable manner that is distinct from any other region within the County.

There are a number of key tourism assets that provide for a wide range of tourist attractions suitable to meet a variety of tourist needs in order to create a memorable and diverse holiday experience within the County such as, horse racing and breeding, golfing, angling, stately homes, gardens, built and natural heritage, shopping, lakes, boglands, waterways, adventure activities and accommodation.

The Challenges Facing Kildare's Tourism and Recreational Package

While the County's numerous and diverse attractions provide a sound base for the existing tourism industry, the proximity to Dublin acts as a doubled edged sword in that while Kildare can attract the tourist footfall to the County it fails to keep hold of the majority of these people for overnight stays or longer trips.

This is a missed opportunity within the County as there are significant benefits from the revenue that could be generated from these over night or longer stay visits. Given the extent of the ever expanding outdoor recreational activities available within the County, alongside the existing heritage and cultural assets, significant opportunities arise to develop a more joined up approach with towns and villages working together to create a more coherent tourism approach throughout the County.





The County Development Plan And Its Role In Tourism And Recreation

From a land use perspective the County Development Plan has a limited yet important role to play in the development of this key economic industry with the overall aim of maintaining and facilitating the expansion of the tourism product within the County. In this regard the County Development Plan can influence the tourism product provided within the County by:

- Facilitating the expansion of the existing tourism product within the County;
- Identifying strategic sites capable of accommodating new tourism ventures while also ensuring the preservation of the natural landscape of the area;
- Ensuring the effective management and enhancement of the appearance of towns through appropriate development;



- Setting out specific criteria for towns in order to enhance the public realm and create a more attractive place to visit;
- Ensuring a high quality of design and scale of product type; and
- Facilitating the development of alternative products such as eco tourism, craft and artisan studios and spaces.

Have your say...!



- 1 What actions, with a land use remit, can help promote and protect the development of the Kildare-Wicklow destination project?
- 2 How can the correct balance be achieved in terms of exploiting Kildare's assets through the promotion of tourism activity, whilst protecting the natural and built environment of the County?
- 3 Should large scale integrated tourism developments be encouraged or should the focus be put on encouraging smaller local/craft/agricultural/recreational tourism products?
- 4 How can the County Development Plan best facilitate the expansion of existing and the development of new amenity routes?
- 5 What key advantage has Kildare to offer to help distinguish it from other areas and attract increased tourist numbers to the area? Are there any particular niche tourism products that Kildare can deliver and should be facilitated?
- 6 What areas within Kildare have the potential to be developed as key tourism attractions in a sustainable manner?
- 7 What areas within Kildare have the potential to form part of the development of a comprehensive tourist trail within the County and how in your opinion could this be developed?



Appendix I

Mandatory Objectives



Development Plans should contain 16 mandatory objectives as set out in Section 10 (2) of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2014.



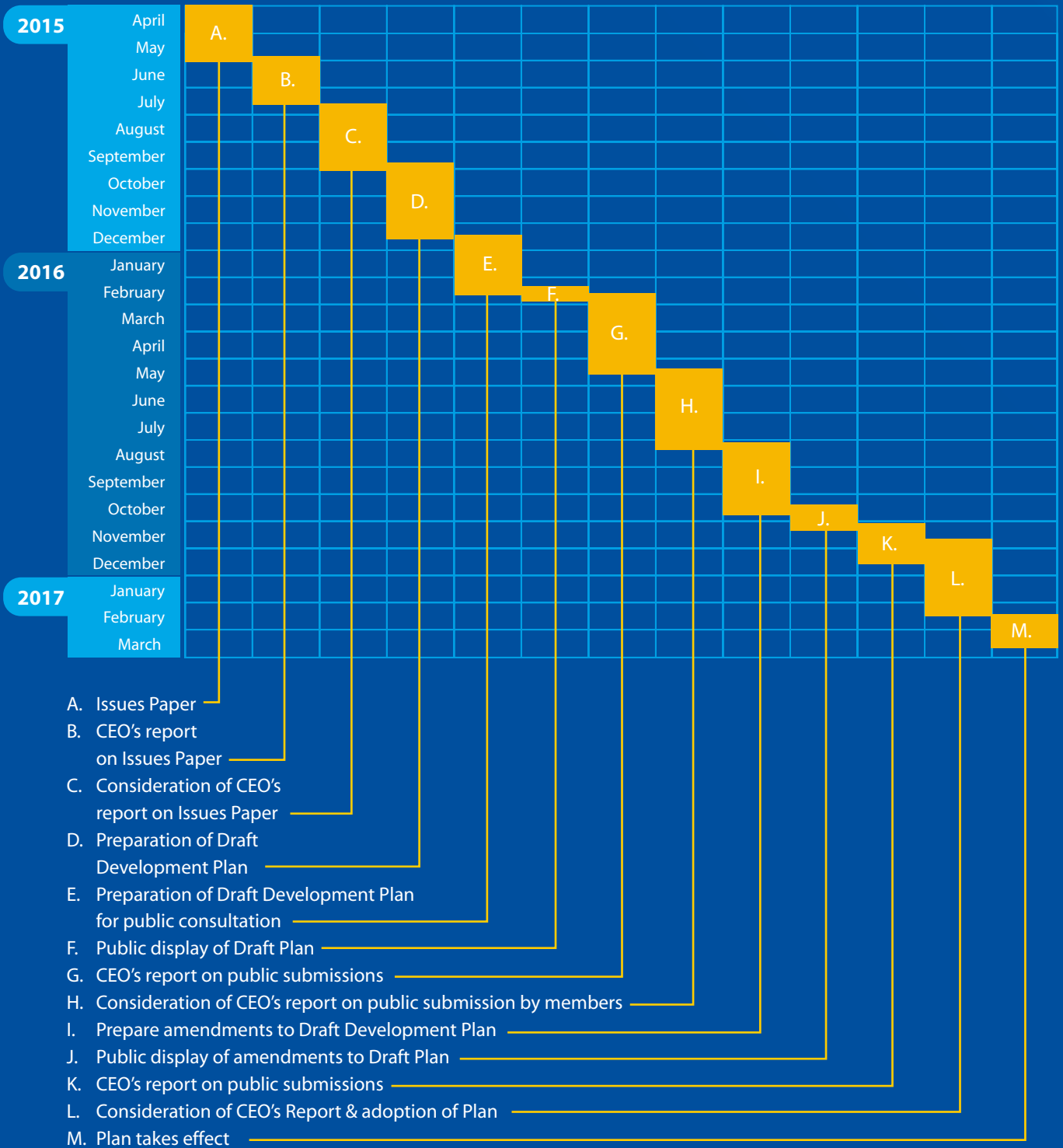
- 1 Zoning of land uses (residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, open space or mixture of those uses).
- 2 Provision of infrastructure (transport, energy, communication facilities, water supplies, waste recovery, disposal facilities, waste water services, ancillary facilities).
- 3 Conservation and protection of the environment.
- 4 Integration of social, community and cultural requirements with the planning and sustainable development of the area.
- 5 Preservation of the character of the landscape (preservation of views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest).
- 6 Protection of structures or parts of structures of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.
- 7 Preservation of the character of architectural conservation areas.
- 8 Development and renewal and of areas in need of regeneration.
- 9 Provision of traveller accommodation.
- 10 Preservation, improvement and extension of amenities and recreational amenities.
- 11 Major Accidents Directive (siting of new establishments, modification of existing establishments, development in the vicinity of establishments).
- 12 Provision of community services (schools, crèches, childcare facilities and other educational facilities).
- 13 Protection of Gaeltacht areas (linguistic and cultural heritage).
- 14 Promotion of sustainable settlements and transportation strategies (having regard to the location, layout and design of new development in order to reduce energy demand, greenhouse gases and address climate change).
- 15 Preservation of public rights of way (which give access to seashore, mountains, lakeshore, riverbank or other place of natural beauty or recreational utility).
- 16 Provision of a framework for the identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes.



Appendix II



Programme for the Review of the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023





KILDARE COUNTY Development Plan 2017-23

Your county, your future



ISSUES
PAPER

HAVE YOUR SAY... YOUR OPINION COUNTS!

Submissions or Observations to:

Online: www.kildarecoco.ie/planning

By Post: Senior Executive Officer,
Forward Planning Section, Áras Chill Dara,
Devoy Park, Naas, Co. Kildare.

(Please mark envelope
County Development
Plan Review)

The final date
for submission is

**4pm on Friday
29th May 2015**



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Kildare County Council

