

**KILDARE**  
**COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN**  
**1999**



**Planning Department**  
**Kildare County Council**  
**St. Mary's**  
**Naas**  
**May 1999**

**As amended by Variation No's 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 8**



## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART ONE .....	1
INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW .....	1
1.1 PLANNING AREA.....	2
1.2 PERIOD OF THE PLAN .....	2
1.3 AIMS OF THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN .....	2
1.4 THE PLAN.....	2
1.5 REGIONAL CONTEXT AND STRATEGIC SETTLEMENT ISSUES.....	3
1.5.1 Introduction.....	3
1.5.2 Strategic Settlement Issues in Kildare - Summary.....	3
1.5.2.A. Population.....	3
1.5.2.B. Employment.....	4
1.5.2.C. Transportation.....	4
1.5.2.D. Retailing and Wholesaling.....	5
1.5.2.E. Housing.....	5
1.5.2.F. Services.....	5
1.5.2.G. Settlement and Environment.....	5
1.5.3 Existing Programmes and Plans .....	6
1.5.3.A. Mid-East Regional Report .....	6
1.5.3.B. Dublin Regional Authority Report.....	6
1.5.3.C. The Dublin Transportation Initiative (DTI) and its impact on Kildare .....	7
1.6 LANDSCAPE .....	10
1.6.1. The East Kildare Uplands .....	10
1.6.2. The Plainlands of Kildare .....	10
1.6.2.A. The Plain of Central and Southern Kildare.....	10
1.6.2.B. The West Central Lowlands.....	11
1.6.2.C. North-West Kildare.....	11
1.6.3. The Chair and Newtown Hills .....	11
1.7 SOILS.....	12
1.7.1. Grey-Brown Podzolics.....	12
1.7.2. Gleys.....	12
1.7.3. Peats.....	12
1.8 AGRICULTURAL LAND USE.....	12
1.9 BLOODSTOCK INDUSTRY.....	13
1.10 FOREST LANDS.....	14
1.11 TOWNS AND VILLAGES.....	14
1.11.1. Urban Districts.....	16
1.11.1.A. Athy.....	16
1.11.1.B. Naas.....	16
1.11.2. North-East Kildare Towns.....	17
1.11.3. Naas/Droichead Nua/Kilcullen .....	17
1.11.4. Other Towns and Villages within the Influence of Dublin.....	17
1.11.5. Towns and Villages in the General County Area .....	18
1.11.6. Other Settlements.....	18
1.11.7. Special Villages.....	19
1.11.7a. Town of Special Townscape / Heritage Character.....	19
1.12 RURAL DEVELOPMENT .....	20
1.13 POPULATION.....	21
1.13.1. General.....	21
1.13.2. Structure of the Population .....	22
1.14. POPULATION PROJECTIONS .....	22
1.15. EMPLOYMENT .....	24
1.15.1. Industry.....	25
1.15.1 A. Enterprise Ireland Assisted Indigenous Industry in Co. Kildare.....	25
1.15.1 B. Overseas Companies In Co. Kildare .....	25

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

1.15.1 C. Other Small and Medium Enterprises (SME).....	26
1.15.2. Service Sector Employment.....	26
1.16. RETAILING AND DISTRIBUTION.....	26
1.16.1. RETAILING.....	26
1.16.2. Warehousing/Distribution.....	27
1.17. TRANSPORTATION.....	27
1.17.1 Roads.....	27
1.17.2 Rail Transportation.....	28
1.17.3 Bus Transportation.....	29
1.17.4. Hackney/Taxi Services.....	29
1.17.5. Dublin Transportation Initiative (DTI).....	29
1.18. SERVICES.....	30
1.18.1. Water Supply.....	30
1.18.2. Sewerage.....	30
1.18.2 A. Lower Liffey Valley Regional Sewerage Scheme.....	30
1.18.2 B. Upper Liffey Valley Regional Sewerage Scheme.....	30
1.18.3. Waste Disposal.....	31
1.18.3.A. Household Waste.....	31
1.18.3 B. Commercial/Industrial Waste.....	32
1.18.3.C. Toxic and Dangerous Waste.....	32
1.18.3.D. Miscellaneous Waste.....	32
1.18.4. Sillioth Hill Landfill Site.....	32
1.18.5. Unauthorised Dumping.....	32
1.18.6. Recycling.....	33
1.18.7. Electrical Services.....	33
1.18.8. Fire Service.....	34
1.18.9. Telecommunications.....	34
1.18.10. Natural Gas.....	35
1.19 HOUSING.....	35
1.19.1 Social Housing.....	35
1.19.1A Affordable Housing.....	36
1.19.2 Private Housing.....	37
1.19.2A Social and Affordable Housing.....	37
1.20 TRAVELLING PEOPLE.....	37
1.21 RECREATION.....	37
1.21.1 Countryside Recreation.....	37
1.21.2 Recreational Sports Clubs And Facilities.....	38
1.22 TOURISM.....	38
1.22.1. The Wicklow Mountain Area.....	39
1.22.2. The Barrow.....	39
1.22.3. The Grand and Royal Canals.....	39
<b>1.23 AREAS OF HIGH AMENITY.....</b>	<b>41</b>
1.23.1 The Curragh and Environs.....	41
1.23.2 The Valley of the River Liffey.....	41
1.23.3 The Valley of the River Barrow.....	41
1.23.4 Pollardstown Fen.....	42
1.23.5 Castletown and Donaghcumper Area.....	42
1.23.6 The East Kildare Uplands.....	43
1.23.7 Carton Demesne.....	43
1.23.8 Robertstown Countryside.....	44
1.23.9. Donadea Forest.....	44
<b>1.24 BOGLANDS.....</b>	<b>44</b>
1.25 CANALS.....	45
1.25.1. The Royal Canal.....	45
1.25.2. The Grand Canal.....	45
1.26 RACE COURSES.....	46
1.27 <b>AREAS OF SCIENTIFIC INTEREST.....</b>	<b>47</b>

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

1.28	ITEMS OF ARCHITECTURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC INTEREST.....	47
<b>PART TWO .....</b>		<b>48</b>
<b>POLICY .....</b>		<b>48</b>
2.1	POLICY .....	49
2.2	BASIC POLICY AIMS.....	49
2.3	REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY .....	50
2.4	FUTURE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR CO. KILDARE.....	50
2.4.1	<i>Modifying existing planning policies in the light of the current trends, established policies and the DTI.....</i>	50
2.4.2	<i>Possible Strategies.....</i>	50
2.4.3	<i>Recommended Strategy .....</i>	51
2.4.3.A.	<i>Strategy for the Expanding Areas of the County.....</i>	51
2.4.3.B	<i>Strategies for the Disadvantaged Areas of the County.....</i>	52
2.5	COUNTY DEVELOPMENT POLICY .....	52
2.6	DEVELOPMENT OF TOWNS.....	54
2.7	DEVELOPMENT OF VILLAGES AND OTHER SETTLEMENTS .....	55
2.8	SPECIAL VILLAGES/TOWNS OF SPECIAL TOWNSCAPE/HERITAGE CHARACTER.....	55
2.9	RURAL DEVELOPMENT .....	56
2.9.1.	<i>Housing in the Rural Countryside.....</i>	56
2.9.2.	<i>Other Developments in the Rural Countryside.....</i>	57
2.10.	INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT .....	58
2.11.	BLOODSTOCK INDUSTRY .....	58
2.12.	SERVICES.....	60
2.12.1.	<i>Utility Services.....</i>	60
2.12.2.	<i>Waste Disposal.....</i>	60
2.12.3.	<i>Water Pollution .....</i>	61
2.12.4.	<i>Air Pollution.....</i>	61
2.12.5.	<i>Cemeteries.....</i>	61
2.13	LITTER ACT.....	61
2.14	TRANSPORTATION.....	62
2.14.1	<i>Roads.....</i>	62
2.14.2	<i>Specific Roads Objectives.....</i>	62
2.14.3	<i>Public Transportation .....</i>	65
2.15	HOUSING .....	65
2.16	COMMUNITY FACILITIES.....	65
2.16.1	<i>Third Level Education.....</i>	66
2.16.2	<i>Childcare Facilities.....</i>	66
2.17	LIBRARIES.....	66
2.18	MUSEUMS.....	67
2.19	THE ARTS.....	67
2.20	RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE.....	67
2.21	COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION.....	68
2.22	TOURISM AND AMENITIES.....	68
2.23	AREAS OF HIGH AMENITY.....	68
(a)	<i>The Curragh and Environs .....</i>	69
(b)	<i>The Valley of the River Liffey.....</i>	69
(c)	<i>Valley of the River Barrow.....</i>	70
(d)	<i>Pollardstown Fen.....</i>	70
(e)	<i>Castletown and Donaghcumper Area .....</i>	70
(f)	<i>East Kildare Uplands.....</i>	71
(g)	<i>Carton Demesne .....</i>	71
(h)	<i>Robertstown Countryside.....</i>	71
(i)	<i>Donadea Forest .....</i>	72

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

2.24	2.24 VIEWS AND PROSPECTS.....	72
2.25	2.25 BOGLANDS.....	72
2.26	2.26 CANALS.....	73
2.27	2.27 RACECOURSES.....	73
2.28	2.28 HILL OF ALLEN, CHAIR OF KILDARE AND NEWTOWN HILLS, DUNMURRY HILL, BOSTON HILL.....	73
2.29	2.29 EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES.....	73
2.29.1	2.29.1 Sand and Gravel and Rock Quarrying.....	73
2.29.2	2.29.2 Minerals.....	74
2.30	2.30 HERITAGE ITEMS.....	74
2.30.1	2.30.1 Areas of Scientific Interest.....	75
2.30.2	2.30.2 Natural Heritage Areas/Areas of Special Conservation.....	75
2.30.3	2.30.3 Items of Artistic, Historical, Architectural & Archaeological Interest.....	75
2.31	2.31 WILDLIFE ACT.....	75
2.31A	2.31A HEDGEROWS.....	77
2.32	2.32 QUALITY OF EXISTING BUILT ENVIRONMENTS.....	77
2.32.1	2.32.1 Infill Development.....	77
2.32.2	2.32.2 Shop Fronts.....	77
2.32.3	2.32.3 Advertising.....	77
2.32.4	2.32.4 Overhead Services.....	77
2.33	2.33 AMENITY SCHEMES.....	77
2.34	2.34 RIGHTS OF WAY.....	78
2.35	2.35 OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT.....	78
2.36	2.36 THE QUALITY OF NEW DEVELOPMENT.....	78
2.36.1	2.36.1 New Development Generally.....	78
2.36.2	2.36.2 New Residential Development.....	78
2.36.3	2.36.3 Commercial Vehicle Parking.....	80
2.37	2.37 TREES.....	80
2.38	2.38 CARAVAN PARKS.....	80
2.38.1	2.38.1 Tourist Parks.....	80
2.38.2	2.38.2 Residential Caravan Parks.....	80
2.39	2.39 TRAVELLERS SETTLEMENTS.....	80
2.40	2.40 OBSOLETE AREAS AND RENEWAL.....	81
2.41	2.41 CASUAL TRADING.....	81
2.42	2.42 GAMING/AMUSEMENT ARCADES.....	81
2.43	2.43 CARNIVALS, CIRCUSES AND FESTIVALS.....	81
2.44	2.44 ACCESS FOR THE DISABLED.....	81
2.45	2.45 ARTERIAL DRAINAGE ACT 1945.....	81
2.46	2.46 AIRPORT.....	82
2.47	2.47 CONTRIBUTIONS.....	82
2.48	2.48 FINANCIAL LIMITATIONS.....	82
2.49	2.49 RESOURCES AND ORGANISATION.....	82
2.50	2.50 BONDING.....	82
2.51	2.51 RENEWABLE ENERGY.....	82
	PART THREE.....	85
	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES.....	85
3.1	3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	86
3.2	3.2 PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF HERITAGE ITEMS.....	86
3.2.1	3.2.1 CAVES, SITES, FEATURES OR OTHER OBJECTS.....	86
3.2.2	3.2.2 BUILDINGS, OTHER STRUCTURES OR INTERNAL FIXTURES OR FEATURES.....	120
3.3	3.3 AREAS FOR PRESERVATION.....	137
3.3.1	3.3.1 Natural Heritage Areas.....	137
3.3.2	3.3.2 Special Areas of Conservation.....	137
3.3.3	3.3.3 Areas of Scientific Interest.....	138

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

3.3.4	<i>Areas of Scenic Interest</i> .....	138
3.4	<b>  VIEWS AND PROSPECTS</b> .....	139
3.5	<b>    ZONING OBJECTIVES</b> .....	144
3.5.1	<i>NAAS ENVIRONS</i> .....	144
3.5.2	<i>KILCOCK ENVIRONS</i> .....	144
3.5.3	<i>APPLICATION OF ZONING OBJECTIVES</i> .....	145
<b>PART FOUR</b> .....		<b>147</b>
<b>DEVELOPMENT CONTROL STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES</b> .....		<b>147</b>
4.1	GENERAL.....	148
4.2	PRESERVATION OF AMENITY.....	148
4.3	UNAUTHORISED DEVELOPMENT.....	148
4.4	SITE COVERAGE AND PLOT RATIO.....	148
4.5	WESTON AERODROME SAFETY STANDARDS.....	150
4.6	RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS.....	152
	<i>Residential Density</i> .....	152
	<i>Minimum Rear Garden Size</i> .....	152
	<i>Road Layout</i> .....	152
	<i>Boundaries</i> .....	153
	<i>Services</i> .....	153
	<i>Street Lighting</i> .....	154
	<i>Road Names</i> .....	154
	<i>Standard of Construction</i> .....	154
	<i>Open Space and Landscaping</i> .....	154
4.7	INDIVIDUAL (ONE-OFF) HOUSING.....	156
4.8	BONDING TO SECURE COMPLETION OF DEVELOPMENT.....	156
4.9	CONTRIBUTIONS.....	156
4.10	INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT.....	156
4.11	PARKING.....	157
4.12	BUILDING LINES.....	159
4.13	BUILDING HEIGHT CONTROL.....	159
4.14	CARE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.....	159
4.15	TOURIST CARAVAN PARKS.....	160
4.16	GAMING AND AMUSEMENT ARCADES.....	160
4.17	ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT.....	160
4.18	ADVERTISING AND SHOPFRONT DESIGN STANDARDS.....	160
	<i>Shop-Fronts</i> .....	160
	<i>Advertising</i> .....	162
	<i>Canopies</i> .....	162
	<i>Roller Shutters</i> .....	163
	<i>Brand and Corporate Advertising</i> .....	163
	<i>Outdoor Advertising Structures</i> .....	164
4.19	AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT.....	164
	<i>General</i> .....	164
	<i>Pollution Control</i> .....	164
	<i>Design</i> .....	164
	<i>Tree Planting/Hedgerows</i> .....	164
4.20	AGRICULTURAL-RELATED INDUSTRY.....	165
4.21	DRAINAGE AND INDIVIDUAL HOUSES.....	165
4.22	SAND AND GRAVEL EXTRACTION.....	165
1.	<i>Duration of Permissions</i> .....	165
2.	<i>Rehabilitation</i> .....	165
3.	<i>Bonding</i> .....	166
4.	<i>Submission Details</i> .....	166
4.23	CLONAGH AREA.....	167

**Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

<b>4.24 EAST KILDARE UPLANDS PLAN</b> .....	<b>167</b>
4.24.1 <i>Introduction</i> .....	<i>167</i>
4.24.2 <i>Policy</i> .....	<i>167</i>

**Appendix A. County Kildare Housing Strategy 2001 – 2005**



**PART ONE**

**INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW**

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

### 1.1 PLANNING AREA

The area to which this Plan relates is the administrative area of the Council of the County of Kildare. This Plan sets out the strategic development policies of the Council for the county-at-large and the objectives whereby these are to be achieved. Separate Development Plans have been made or are being prepared for the towns of Newbridge (Droichead Nua), Kildare, Maynooth, Celbridge, Monasterevin, Leixlip, Kilcock, Clane, Kilcullen, Rathangan and Castledermot, of the villages of Kill, Johnstown, Ballitore, Straffan, Robertstown, Sallins, Ballymore Eustace, Athgarvan, Killeel, Moone/Timolin, and Prosperous. Reference to "the Council" in this Plan refers to the Council of the County of Kildare. Reference to the "county" refers to the administrative area of the Council of the County of Kildare, for the purposes of the Planning Acts, with the exception of the towns and villages named above. The Housing Strategy 2001-2005 set out in Appendix A shall apply to the County of Kildare.

### 1.2 PERIOD OF THE PLAN

The period of this Plan should be taken as five years from the date of its adoption by the Council, or until the Plan is varied or a new Plan is made.

### 1.3 AIMS OF THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The following are the basic aims of the Development Plan, which underpin the development objectives of the Council:-

1. To promote balanced social, physical and economic development in County Kildare.
2. To promote environmental sustainability.
3. To ensure orderly and balanced use of the resources of the county.
4. To preserve and improve the amenities of the county, both natural and man-made.
5. To make maximum use of, and participate in, European Union initiatives..

### 1.4 THE PLAN

This Development Plan consists of this written statement and accompanying maps, including the rural detail areas set out in Table 1, and the Zoning and Other Maps set out in Table 2 and the County Kildare Housing Strategy 2001-2005 contained in Appendix A of this plan.

TABLE 1 RURAL DETAIL AREAS

Area	Map Reference No.
Pollardstown Fen	Map.No. 1.1
Castletown/Donaghcomper	Map.No. 1.2
East Kildare Uplands	Map No. 1.3
Carton Estate Area	Map No. 1.4
Robertstown Countryside	Map No. 1.5
Clonagh Area	Map No. 1.6
Donadea Forest	Map No. 1.7

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

TABLE 2 ZONING and OTHER MAPS

Map Name	Map Reference No.
Rural Detail Map (Index Map)	Map No. 1
Landscape Structure	Map No. 2
Areas of High Amenity	Map No. 3
Rural Development Policy	Map No. 4
Natural Heritage Areas/Special Areas of Conservation	Map No. 5
Areas of Scientific Interest	Map No. 6
Areas of Scenic Interest	Map No. 7
Views	Map No. 8
Naas Environs	Map No. 9
Kilcock Environs	Map No. 10

### 1.5 REGIONAL CONTEXT AND STRATEGIC SETTLEMENT ISSUES

#### 1.5.1 Introduction.

Kildare, Meath and Wicklow form the Mid-East Region. These three counties at the edge of Dublin are experiencing considerable population growth and development levels. However, these growth levels are widely varying within the counties themselves and in some parts of each of these counties there is static population or decline.

In the preparation of this Plan, account has been taken of the Mid-East Regional Report (1996), the Dublin Regional Authority Report "Dublin: A Regional Focus" (1996), the Dublin Transportation Initiative (DTI), the County Enterprise Board's "Enterprise Action Plan 1995-97" and "Enterprise Action Plan 1998 - 2000", the Leader II Company's Programmes (KELT), and County Kildare Tourism Action Plan (1995). The impact of the Mid-East and Dublin Regional Reports and the DTI are discussed below. Account has also been taken of the Operational Programmes for the period 1994 - 1999, and proposed Plans for the East and Southern Region 2000 - 2006, in the various sectors.

#### 1.5.2 Strategic Settlement Issues in Kildare - Summary.

Below is a summary of some of the strategic issues facing the county. These are discussed in greater detail in the different sections of the plan e.g. population, transportation and services.

##### 1.5.2.A. Population

- County Kildare is now the fastest growing county in Ireland. The rapid population increase is concentrated in the area adjacent to Dublin with resultant population imbalance in the county.
- The area which can be regarded as functionally related to Dublin, i.e. in the north-east and centre of the county, increased in population by c. 19,000 to over 90,600 persons in the decade 1986 to 1996.
- In contrast the remainder of the county experienced a slight decline of c. 400 persons to 44,261 persons over 1986 to 1996 period. However in the last five year period there is evidence of a slight increase in population in the remainder of the county.
- Some 60% of the population of the county is now living in urban areas (i.e. in towns with a population of more than 1,500 persons).

## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

---

- Analysis of birth place of county residents in 1986 shows that 45% of the population of the county had been born in another county.
- Average natural increase in the county population in the period 1991 - 1996 is twice that of the State while estimated migration into the county is higher than for any other county.
- Rural population is declining in both relative and absolute terms.
- Population loss has been most severe in the south.

### **1.5.2.B. Employment**

- There has been a substantial increase in employment in the county overall.
- However employment in the south and west has fallen. This corresponds with the pattern of population change.
- Employment in the services sector is now dominant: it is more than twice that of manufacturing and nearly four times that of primary production i.e. agriculture, forestry etc.
- Recent industrial development has concentrated in the North-East corner of the county. Industrial development has also spread along national routes to towns such as Naas and other centres close to Dublin.
- There has been a decline in employment in primary production and traditional industries.
- Employment in Co. Kildare by overseas companies has more than doubled over the 1991 - 1995 period.
- A significant proportion of employment in the bloodstock and tourism industries is located, or has the potential to be located, in already advantaged areas, and it is necessary that this employment be better spread throughout the county.
- There is a concentration of unemployment on the west side of the county while there are relatively low rates in the central and eastern portions of the county.

### **1.5.2.C. Transportation**

- It is estimated that over 15,000 journeys are made from the county into Dublin on a daily basis.
- Three quarters of these journeys are by car.
- Inward flows to Dublin from Kildare have tripled over the last decade.
- Improvements to the road, bus and rail network have improved the attractiveness of North and Central Kildare and resulted in the spread of population outwards with consequent increased commuting.
- Motorway construction has enabled the development of the by-passed towns to be approached in an orderly manner.
- Traffic bottlenecks exist in many towns e.g. Clane, Kildare and Monasterevin.
- There are poor north and south road connections and poor access to the north-west of the county.

## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

---

### **1.5.2.D. Retailing and Wholesaling**

- Retail activity in the county is hampered by the proximity to Dublin city centre and by the new regional shopping centres on the outskirts of the city.
- There is a relatively low retail turnover per head of population. This suggests underdevelopment of higher order shopping functions in the county.
- The central part of the county i.e. Naas/Newbridge is more self sufficient in shopping facilities than the north - east of the county.
- Wholesaling and distribution firms with a regional or national market are located for the most part along the N7 corridor, although there are clusters of this type of development in South Kildare (Castledermot, Athy), serving adjoining counties in the south east.

### **1.5.2.E. Housing**

- Some 5,658 houses have been completed between 1991 and 1995 - mostly in the north - east and centre of the county.
- Recent infrastructural and public transport improvements have impacted on centres such as Droichead Nua, Sallins and Clane - all of which have come under pressure for housing.
- Growth is overspilling into unserviced settlements and the rural areas of the north-east and centre.
- There is evidence of rising land and house prices in the north-east and centre of the county and these aspects are dealt with in further detail in the Housing Strategy 2001-2005.
- The Housing Strategy 2001-2005 identifies that a total 18,563 dwelling units need to be provided during the period of the Strategy.

### **1.5.2.F. Services**

- Planned improvements to the Osberstown and Leixlip Treatment Plants will impact on domestic, industrial and commercial developments, thus encouraging growth and expansion.
- The two schemes will create the possibility of further development in both the north-east and centre.
- Eventually development will be limited by the assimilative capacity of the River Liffey.
- The demand for water is growing rapidly in Co. Kildare. The supply is currently dependent on the Liffey, but alternative sources of supply are to be examined during the period of the Plan.
- Availability or lack of availability of water will impact on development growth.
- Development in South Kildare is also restricted by the current supply of water which is mainly from ground water. The absence of a regional water supply scheme creates a barrier to the development of this area.

### **1.5.2.G. Settlement and Environment**

- Spread of towns and villages out from their original centres increases the need to use private transport within towns with consequent reduction in effectiveness of traffic improvements.

## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

---

- The three towns in the north-east (Celbridge, Maynooth and Leixlip), if permitted to grow too much, will join and form a quasi-conurbation. It is necessary to maintain the separate identities of these three towns and to restrict further residential development in Leixlip which has reached the limits of its development within the currently defined development boundary.
- There has been an increased trend for town dwellers to move out into unserviced small settlements and the countryside.
- Many current rural and urban development trends are unsustainable due to, for example limitations of infrastructure, proliferation of septic tank systems, pressure on road system, cutting off of backlands, urban sprawl, encroachment on rural and amenity areas, pressure for increased public expenditure.

### **1.5.3 Existing Programmes and Plans**

#### **1.5.3.A. Mid-East Regional Report**

This outlines the needs and development requirements of the Mid-East Region, the provision and co-ordination of the constituent development plans and the inter-relationship of the region with Dublin.

Among the planning and transportation issues identified are:-

- It admits that the dominance of Dublin is leading to an unsustainable transport and settlement pattern in the area adjacent to the city.
- It states that the River Liffey is under threat from a variety of sources, and that there is a need to investigate the long-term sustainable utilisation of this important river.
- It proposes that the focus of development should be on major growth centres in the three counties of the Region.
- It suggests that there should be increased emphasis on public transport.
- It raises the possibility of nodal linear development along the rail lines.
- It proposes a Settlement Strategy to counter over-emphasis on the Liffey Valley and to counter scattered rural development.
- It proposes a strategic regional route from Drogheda to Wicklow - an outer and an inner route which would be outside the M50.
- It recommends the preparation of a Regional Settlement Strategy to control and guide development in all three constituent counties.

#### **1.5.3.B. Dublin Regional Authority Report.**

"Dublin: A Regional Focus" published by the Authority reviews the needs and requirements of the region, reviews the development plans in the region and reviews the provision of public services in the Region. It also recognises the link between the Dublin and the Mid-East Region as was required in the Order establishing the regions. The report advocates the need for a strong inter-regional development plan incorporating the two regions to act as a framework for the Development Plans of the constituent local authorities and outlines strategic policies for the provision and co-ordination of public services in the two regions.

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

---

The Report sees this Plan as addressing a number of issues:-

- Planning and land use strategy.
- EU Regional Policy
- Environmental sustainability.
- Social exclusion.
- Public service policy statements
- Specific Strategies for both regions e.g. emergency response, waste, marketing and energy management.

### 1.5.3.C. The Dublin Transportation Initiative (DTI) and its impact on Kildare

#### (a) Proposals

The DTI proposals include a number of elements which are specific to County Kildare. These are:

- Upgrading of rail services on both the Maynooth and the Kildare lines
- Park and ride facilities located on the C-ring
- Improvements to the N7 radial route (as part of the national roads strategy)
- M50 development
- Integrated ticketing system
- A land-use strategy

However, the principal matter is the last named - settlement strategy. One of the key objectives of the DTI is to favour development of the metropolitan centre of Dublin and to ensure that access to it is enhanced.

The study says that "*The provision of infrastructure and supporting policy measures is to be targeted mainly within the existing built-up area of Dublin (including the Western Towns). This will have the effect of assisting development within these areas, so long as the strategy is supported by co-ordinated development policy in the future.*"

The study suggested that Local Authorities should - "*give particular consideration to the adoption or modification of planning policies which will support and reinforce the strategy as set out in this report and as reviewed from time to time.*"

In this regard, key issues with regard to land use is identified in the following terms:

- *Development restraint to counter the dispersal tendencies encouraged by arterial national road (and to a lesser extent by rail) improvements.*
- *Encouraging higher density development along strategic public transport corridors in development areas.*

The study declares that "*outside the city centre, the key land-use concern centres on the development requirements of the three Western Towns (and especially Lucan/Clondalkin and Blanchardstown)*"

#### (b) Likely Scenario for Kildare arising from current DTI Strategy

If fully carried through, including the approach to land-use policy, the DTI strategy would have the following impacts on the County of Kildare

## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

- No further significant housing development in North-East Kildare, despite the huge growth in jobs expected in the area. In turn, this could lead to overheating of the land market and distortions in house prices. It could also create severe difficulties for Maynooth College in terms of staff and student accommodation.
- Effective denial of shopping and other higher order services in the County as a result of concentrating such facilities in the Western Towns of County Dublin.
- Greatly increased commuting flows to the capital as well as a greatly increased reverse commuting flow to industrial developments in the North East by workers whose only housing opportunities will be in Dublin.
- A possible further scattering of housing development to remoter locations, because of the sheer pressure for development, with resultant non-sustainable forms of regional development.
- The DTI is silent on the Naas/Kilcullen/Newbridge development triangle proposed by Myles Wright in the "Advisory Regional Plan for the Dublin Region" and supported by Kildare County Council. It provides no guidance on development at this strategic location. If it were to call for a policy of restraint here also, there would be a significant impact on remoter rural areas of the County, since service and other development at the centre of the County, which would be effective in raising the possibility of development elsewhere, will be curtailed.

### **(c) Problems with the DTI Strategy from a Kildare Perspective**

The basic message of the DTI for County Kildare is one of restraint. A number of shortcomings may be identified in this approach from a Kildare perspective.

- No consideration appears to have been given to the development policy to be adopted for the Kildare/Newbridge/Kilcullen development triangle. This is now growing quickly and is clearly related to Dublin.
- Rapid growth has taken place in the North East of the County. No clear policies are articulated in the DTI regarding shopping and recreational strategies for its population.
- Though the DTI study speaks of concentration, the market has voted for dispersal, effectively outdating the basis on which the strategy was conceived.
- There is going to be massive employment creation in the North-East of County Kildare - Intel, Hewlett Packard and NUI Maynooth may between them account for 20,000 students and workers directly in 10 to 15 years. The implications of this are enormous if further development in the County is going to be restrained. Significant reverse commuting flows from Kildare will be encouraged. Instead of population in the Western towns of Co. Dublin being linked to the city centre, they will be further disconnected from it.
- Further transportation initiatives will, in the absence of an overall development strategy, reinforce the role of central Kildare as a dormitory area for Dublin.
- It is difficult to expect Kildare County Council to develop a land-use strategy in accordance with the DTI in the absence of a DTI wide strategy agreed by all the Authorities. This is called for by the DTI but has never been produced.
- The Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area, which have been published recently, and which broadly confirm the strategic direction of the county development policy, as set out in this Development Plan, will provide this overall land use/transportation strategy.



## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

---

Kildare County Council must consider what best will promote the development of the County as a whole as well as taking into account the needs of the metropolitan capital as far as this is practicable.

In short, though the County Council should capitalise on the transportation proposals included in the DTI study, and maximise the benefit of them by ensuring development can be related to public transport access - and in particular by access to rail transport - it is in general the case that policies will have to be adopted which recognise the reality of the present position rather than a scenario suggested by the DTI which is effectively not functioning.

A Strategy for the future development of the county is set in Part Two of the Plan at Paragraph 2.5.

## **1.6 LANDSCAPE**

The basic resource of the county is its landscape. The landscape of County Kildare can be divided into three distinctive landscape areas. These are:-

1. The East Kildare Uplands.
2. The Plainlands of Kildare.
3. The Chair and Newtown Hills.

### **1.6.1. The East Kildare Uplands**

These hills cut off the Wicklow Mountains and Blessington town from the Central Lowlands of Ireland. In the past it was an important historical frontier zone. Most of the hills are composed of Silurian slates and greywhacks which outcrop in the summit areas and are covered on the middle and lower slopes with deposits of boulder clay and gravels left by the retreating ice sheets of the Late Midlandian Glaciation.

The field and farm pattern varies from that of large fields of mixed pasture and tillage with mature woodlands on the lower ground, to that of undulating agricultural land of mainly small fields with treed hedgerows on the higher land. In recent times, many of the stands of mature trees have been felled, due to a combination of increased farming activity and the age of the tree stock.

In the past the characteristic settlement form has been that of the dwelling house and outbuildings on isolated farms. While this form is still evident in certain areas, many of the farm buildings have been replaced by modern houses and bungalows which in general have not been so successfully integrated into the landscape. Much of this recent development has taken place in uncoordinated linear fashion along roadsides, bearing little relationship to existing settlement patterns.

The predominant land uses in this area have been mixed farming, sheep rearing, slate quarrying, and sand and gravel extraction. In recent times, the sand and gravel extraction has intensified, and has left a residue of worked-out pits which are visually objectionable. The overall natural beauty of the area, combined with its location close to large areas of urban population, has led to an increased demand for recreational uses. Conflicts between the competing land uses have to be addressed to ensure that the natural amenities of the area are protected, and that uncoordinated development does not take place.

### **1.6.2. The Plainlands of Kildare**

To the west of the Hills of East Kildare is the beginning of the Central Plains of Ireland. Within County Kildare, these plainlands can be divided into three categories:

#### **1.6.2.A. The Plain of Central and Southern Kildare**

This plain varies from very flat to strongly undulating topography which has been formed on rocks of the Carboniferous Limestone series and the variable covering of boulder clay, and sand and gravel, that overlies them throughout most of the area. The southern part of this area is underlain by granite around Castledermot. These lands are mainly well drained with only isolated areas of badly drained land.

This lowland area has been the most important area of settlement in the county since at least prehistoric times. This prosperous and well-ordered rural landscape, with its wide roads, large farms, and extensive regularly shaped fields enclosed by a combination of ditches and hedgerows, is a legacy of the agricultural improvements sponsored by the landowners of the 18th and 19th centuries. Recent landscape changes, especially towards the south of the county, have seen the removal of many of the hedgerows and the amalgamation of fields into larger units, mainly for tillage enterprises.

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

---

### 1.6.2.B. The West Central Lowlands

The boglands of west-central Kildare have been formed during post-glacial times from old shallow lake basins. The sluggish headwaters of the Barrow and Boyne follow indirect courses between the raised bogs and their frequent flooding has spread alluvial silt over wide tracts of land adjacent to their courses.

The boglands extend from north of Kilberry to south of Edenderry and penetrate eastwards to Robertstown and Prosperous. There is an outlying area of bogland south of Kildare town between Kingsbog and Maddenstown South.

This area of badly drained bog and alluvial land has remained unattractive to agricultural settlement. The area is thinly populated, but the recreation and tourism potential is recognised. A study "The Recreational Resources of the Robertstown Area and their Potential Development" (An Foras Forbartha 1978), outlined the potential uses of the Robertstown Countryside Area. The agricultural and forestry potential of cut-away bogs is also under active investigation.

### 1.6.2.C. North-West Kildare

North-West Kildare lies outside a line from Johnstownbridge to Edenderry. It is underlain predominantly by rocks of the Carboniferous Limestone Series. Topography varies from gently undulating boglands, esker and moraine ridges to steep slopes which occur on the limestone relief knoll of Castle Carbury. The fields are relatively small, due in part to the complexity of the local topography and are bounded by thorn hedges.

### 1.6.3. The Chair and Newtown Hills

Two groups of hills interrupt the continuity of the Plains of Kildare. North of Kildare Town a discontinuous ridge forms the summits of Red Hills, Dunmurry Hill, Chair of Kildare and Hill of Allen. These hills rise from 400 feet to over 600 feet, the highest being Dunmurry Hill, whose summit is 768 feet.

These hills are composed of a variety of Ordovician and Old Red Sandstone sediments which include limestone, sandstone, shales and conglomerates. Andesite and basalt occur on Grange Hill and the Hill of Allen.

The Newtown Hills are a small area of higher ground that rises from 300 feet to over 500 feet in north-central Kildare. The area is underlain by shales and sandstone of Middle Carboniferous age. These are covered by a thin drift of limestone and shale rubble.

These hills all have a significant landscape impact, because of their isolation within the overall flat plainlands. Their use for telecommunications masts, and for scattered housing development, has been generally resisted by the Council. Their continued protection is essential to the preservation of their landscape importance.

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

---

### 1.7 SOILS

An important resource of the county is its soils, as these have a direct bearing on agricultural land-use, and on future development prospects in this sector. There are three major soil groups which dominate in County Kildare. These are Grey-Brown Podzolics, Gleys and Peats.

#### 1.7.1. Grey-Brown Podzolics

In general, the grey-brown podzolics are developed on limestone parent materials and are some of the most inherently fertile soils in the county. These well drained soils constitute roughly 53% of the soils of the county.

(a) Light - Medium Textured Grey-Brown Podzolics are good all-purpose soils and when adequately manured and managed are very productive for most agricultural enterprises. These soils occur mainly in the south of the county and they are largely responsible for South Kildare's reputation as a tillage area.

(b) Medium - Heavy Grey-Brown Podzolics occur chiefly in the east or northern part of the county. They are ideally suited for grassland but are also good tillage soils. A high proportion of stud farms and dairy farms in the county are located on these soils.

#### 1.7.2. Gleys

Gleys are soils on which the effect of drainage impedance dominate and which have developed under conditions of permanent or intermittent waterlogging. Over 25% of the soils of the county are Gleys. They are generally of limited use range, but can be improved by drainage schemes and by use of fertilisers to become good grasslands.

#### 1.7.3 Peats

Fourteen per cent of the total area of the county consists of various peat formations ranging from true peat fen to deep Sphagnum Bog. Bogs have a very limited use range, rough grazing and meadows are common, but a large amount of the more uneven areas are devoted to forestry.

There appear to be few problems in producing a wide range of crops on cutaway bogs where there is a sufficient depth left over after cutting, while grassland and forestry are potentially good on the shallower cutaway areas.

### 1.8 AGRICULTURAL LAND USE

Agricultural land use in County Kildare closely follows the suitability and use range of the soils. The south of the county is predominantly a tillage and livestock area, with an area of intensive horticulture around Athy. The north and east of the county is devoted mostly to dairying and bloodstock production, with some small areas of market gardening producing goods for the Dublin metropolitan area. The central area of the county is an area of mixed farming. There is very little agricultural production on the boglands, and the production of peat based products predominates. This situation will change as the peat resource is exhausted. The north-western area of the county is devoted mainly to dry cattle production.

There is a total of 169,550 hectares (418,644 acres) of land in County Kildare. Of this, 84% - 141,750 hectares (350,591 acres) is given over to crops and pasture, and 2% - 3,645 hectares (8,972 acres) is

## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

taken up by woods and plantations. The remaining 14% of the land area - 24,300 hectares (59,081 acres) is covered by bogs, rough grazing and built-up areas.

There is a total of approximately 5,500 farms in the county. Almost 70% are under 20 hectares (50 acres) in size, while 6% of all farms are over 80 hectares (200 acres) in size. Over 20% of the farms have holders over 65 years old, which is lower than the national average, and almost 40% of the soils in the county are classified as either limited or very limited in their agricultural land use potential. Nearly a third of farms have holders who have another gainful activity, whereas the national figure is approximately one quarter.

Cattle production is by far the most important enterprise in the county in terms of output, utilisation of land and numbers of farmers involved. Dairying is the second most important enterprise in terms of output in the county. The tillage enterprise ranks as the third most important enterprise in the county, producing wheat, barley (malting and feeding), oats and root crops. The nursery stock industry is of importance to areas around the boglands in the county.

Recent changes in price support mechanisms and structural changes in farming, arising from the EU CAP reforms and the GATT 1993 Agreement, have led to serious problems for the agricultural wealth of the county. It is necessary that pro-active measures be put in place to ensure that farm families retain income-generating enterprises on their farm holdings.

### **1.9 BLOODSTOCK INDUSTRY.**

The bloodstock industry is one of the most significant land uses in the county. In terms of area, approximately 8,842 hectares (21,832 acres) of land is attached to stud farms in County Kildare, representing 6.2 % of the total arable land. Some 162 stud farms and training establishments exist, providing considerable levels of employment, and representing a high level of wealth generation.

In 1980, of the 15,420 thoroughbred horses in Ireland, 4,000 were in County Kildare, representing approximately 26% of all thoroughbreds in the State. This is the equivalent of one thoroughbred horse for every 30 persons in the county. These figures illustrate the relative importance of this industry to the economic life of the county, and the necessity to protect it from any developments which would interfere with its continuance and further development, particularly in view of the high standard of environmental quality that such industry requires.

Recent trends in the industry have been an influx of foreign investment, particularly from the Middle East, in the larger stud farms, and an expansion of the number of smaller stud farms and training establishments.

A comprehensive survey of stud farms of the county was undertaken in the mid-1970's by the Council and was reviewed during the 1980's. It is the intention of the Council to carry out a further review of the survey during the period of this Plan.

In 1979, the Irish Equine Foundation Ltd established the Irish Equine Centre on a site close to Johnstown village. The function of this centre is to provide veterinary services for the bloodstock industry and also to undertake research into diseases associated with the industry. The Centre expanded during the period of the last Plan. It now provides training programmes validated by the University of Limerick. There are also plans to establish independent, third level affiliated programmes to improve excellence in bloodstock activities in Kildare.

In 1975, Goffs bloodstock Sales Ltd established a Bloodstock Sales complex on a 48.6 hectare (120 acre) site at Kill. This complex includes approximately 400 stables, veterinary service area and the main building which includes the sales ring, bars, restaurant and reception. During the period of the last Plan, planning permission was obtained for the development of a 120 bedroom hotel in the site. The complex is one of the major bloodstock sales operations in the State, and attracts a large volume of overseas trade into the county. Most of the horses sold are Irish bred.

## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

The Racing Apprentice Centre for Education (R.A.C.E.) was established on a site in Kildare town, adjoining the Curragh, in 1973 . This provides training for jockeys and other persons seeking employment in the bloodstock and horse racing industries including training programmes in conjunction with the Army Equitation School on the Curragh.

The Racecourses at Punchestown, Naas and the Curragh are nationally-important centres for horse-racing and provide valuable employment, tourism revenue and promotional outlets for the county as a whole. The Council has supported recent improvement and development works there.

There are a number of other associated enterprises, dependent on the bloodstock industry, which have been established in the county, and which provide employment and wealth creation. These include bloodstock insurance agencies, bloodstock transport companies and the national bloodstock passport agency, Wetherbys. The headquarters of the Turf Club are located adjoining the Curragh Racecourse.

It is estimated that the bloodstock industry employs approximately 5,500 persons directly within the county, with an associated employment of an additional 10,000 persons in industries and services dependent on it. It is therefore of significant importance to the county, and its expansion is one of the primary goals of the Council as a development agency.

### **1.10 FOREST LANDS**

There are approximately 7,200 hectares (17,912 acres) of forest in county Kildare, which represents 4.25% of the land area of the county. This represents a doubling of the area under forest since the last plan. Approximately 55% of the forestry is owned by Coillte - the remainder is owned by the private sector.

Trends during the period of the last Plan have shown an increase in the level of planting, by both Coillte and by private landowners, farmers and investors. Grant aid for afforestation is available, with an emphasis on broad-leaved forestry, especially oak and beech.

It is recognised that the existing stock of broadleaved tree planting in the county, which lends such distinctiveness to a generally flat landscape, is ageing, and many trees are in their last decades of maturity. This has implications for the future landscape of the county, and it is therefore considered important that the emphasis should be placed on broadleaved tree planting. It is Council policy to encourage broadleaved tree planting within the county, both in forestry plantations and in smaller plots and screen belts.

It is the policy of the Council to have regard to the Department of the Environment's "Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Forestry Development", and to prepare an Indicative Forest Strategy which would identify areas of opportunity for the creation of new woodland, and would specify areas of the county sensitive to afforestation.

### **1.11 TOWNS AND VILLAGES**

The towns and villages in the county can be divided into the following categories:-

- (1) Urban Districts
- (2) North East Kildare towns
- (3) Naas/Droichead Nua/Kilcullen
- (4) Other towns and villages within the influence of Dublin
- (5) Towns and villages in the general county area (including Special Villages)
- (6) Other settlements.

## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

---

Table 2 below shows the population of the main towns in the county over the last 15 years and the rates of growth of these towns.

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

TABLE 2. Main towns and their environs (1,500 persons +) in Co. Kildare ranked by size 1981-1996.

Naas UD	8,345	10,017	11,141	14,074	20.0%	11.2%	26.3%
Leixlip	9,306	11,938	13,194	13,451	28.3%	10.5%	1.9%
Newbridge and environs	10,716	11,503	12,069	13,363	7.3%	4.9%	10.7%
Celbridge	4,583	7,135	9,629	12,289	55.7%	35.0%	27.6%
Maynooth	3,388	4,768	6,027	8,528	40.7%	26.4%	41.5%
Athy UD	5,565	5,449	5,204	5,306	-2.1%	-4.5%	2.0%
Kildare	4,016	4,268	4,196	4,278	5.6%	-1.7%	2.0%
Clane	1,718	1,767	1,822	3,126	2.9%	3.1%	71.6%
Monasterevin	2,146	2,143	2,224	2,302	-0.1%	3.8%	3.5%
Kilcock	1,150	1,414	1,551	1,825	23.0%	9.7%	17.7%
Kill	1,268	1,503	1,518	1,711	18.5%	1.0%	12.7%
Kilcullen	1,537	1,693	1,664	1,604	10.1%	-1.7%	-3.6%

### 1.11.1. Urban Districts

Athy and Naas Urban Districts are separate Planning Authorities within the county. Each Urban District is responsible for the preparation of the Development Plan for its area. Some functions of these Councils are shared with, or are undertaken by, Kildare County Council.

#### 1.11.1.A. Athy

The population of Athy Urban District, as enlarged following a boundary extension in 1986, was 5,306 persons in 1996, which represents an increase of 102 persons (2.0%) from the 1991 Census figure. A Development Plan was prepared for the Urban District in 1990. There is ample room for future expansion of the town within the Development Boundary adopted in that Plan for the foreseeable future.

#### 1.11.1.B. Naas

The population of Naas Urban District in 1996 was 14,074. This represents a very significant increase of 2,933 persons (26.3%) over the 1991 Census figure. This level of increase, re-establishes the high growth rates in the town experienced in the 1970's and early 1980's, and shows the continuing influence of the Dublin area, as well as the role of the supply of zoned land. A Development Plan for Naas Urban District was prepared in 1992. There is room for continued expansion of housing, commercial and industrial development within the Development Boundary adopted in that Plan for the foreseeable future.



## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

---

### 1.11.2. North-East Kildare Towns

The four towns in the North Kildare Area - Leixlip, Maynooth, Celbridge and Kilcock - have seen strong population growth over the last twenty-five years. The four towns are likely to continue to grow at a sustained high level over the period of the Plan. The completion of the M4 Motorway By-Pass of these towns in early 1995 has led to increased pressure for development of these towns, as commuting times are reduced, and as the environmental conditions of the towns are improved.

These towns have a combined population of 36,093 persons. This represents an increase of 20.1% on the 1991 figure. It is noted that the population of both Maynooth and Celbridge increased substantially more than this rate.

The Development Plans for Leixlip, Maynooth, Celbridge and Kilcock are currently under review and it is anticipated that this will culminate in the adoption of the Kilcock, Maynooth and Celbridge Development Plans and Leixlip Local Area Plan in 2002. There are many factors to be taken into account in determining the future development of these towns including the need to ensure that sufficient land is zoned to meet the needs of the communities and in particular the Kildare Housing Strategy 2001-2005, the need for adequate social and community facilities, the need to maintain a sense of place and identity and to maintain a break between the towns, the need for passive and active open space, the need to preserve and conserve amenities (including at Castletown, Donaghcumper and Carton Demesnes, and the Rye and Liffey Valleys) and the need to ensure that there are adequate employment opportunities locally thus reducing the need for daily commuting to Dublin City.

### 1.11.3. Naas/Droichead Nua/Kilcullen

This group of towns was identified in the 1960's in the Myles Wright 'Advisory Regional Plan and Final Report for the Dublin Region' as a potential development area, and has been promoted as such by the Council in successive Development Plans since then. The three towns have a good base in manufacturing and service-sector employment, and are located strategically in the county. The provision of the Naas, Newbridge and Kilcullen motorway By-Passes has increased accessibility and improved their attractiveness for investment and development.

Between them, these towns have a combined population of 29,041 persons in 1996, which represents an increase of 4,167 persons (16.8%) over the 1991. Their proportion of the total county population has risen slightly to 21.5%.

Separate Development Plans have been prepared for Naas, Newbridge and Kilcullen. Their continued growth is to some degree dependent on the expansion of the treatment plant at Osberstown, Naas, and the provision of an extension from this plant to serve Kilcullen. (It is expected that these works will be carried out during the period of the Plan.) More than adequate land is available within the Development Boundaries of these towns to meet foreseeable needs for residential, commercial and industrial development.

### 1.11.4. Other Towns and Villages within the Influence of Dublin

Apart from the towns mentioned in the categories above, there are a number of towns and villages in the county which are strongly affected by commuter pressures arising from the influence of the Dublin metropolitan area. These comprise the towns of Clane and Kildare, and the villages of Straffan, Sallins, Kill, Johnstown, Killeel, Prosperous, Athgarvan and Ballymore Eustace. All are within twenty eight miles of Dublin and under pressure because of increased mobility and the residential preferences of people who work in Dublin but who wish to live outside it. These settlements have all experienced population growth, to a lesser or greater degree, during the period of the last Plan.

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

In order to control this growth, while providing for a balanced mixture of new housing, job opportunities and amenities, separate Development Plans have been or will be prepared for these settlements.

It is likely that further towns and villages may come under the influence of Dublin in the future, as a result of the provision of new motorways and national roads improvements, and the consequent time savings for commuters. It will be a policy of the Council to contain this pressure, and to channel it into the balanced growth of these centres.

### 1.11.5. Towns and Villages in the General County Area

There are some towns and villages in the County which have experienced some growth, and others that have suffered decline, during the period of the last Plan. This is partly a function of their peripheral locations within the county, and partly because they have not been as much influenced by the development pressures of the Dublin area as those mentioned above. These include the scheduled town of Monasterevin, and the villages of Castledermot, and Rathangan.

Further development of these centres will be as much dependent on local enterprise development, housing and services provision, and employment creation, as outside factors. It is likely that they will grow at a steady, if modest rate, over the period of this Plan. In order to guide their growth and development, separate Development Plans have been or will be prepared for them.

In addition, the villages of Robertstown and Ballitore have a special significance as heritage tourism centres, and have the potential for growth based on this resource. Accordingly, separate Development Plans have been prepared for them.

### 1.11.6. Other Settlements

At a lower level in the hierarchy of population centres within the county are hamlets and settlements which have a basic nucleus of community facilities and services, (in the form of shops, school, church or community hall) but lack the full range of facilities and services that would be characteristic of towns and larger villages. They perform a role as local service centres for their rural environs, and have potential as locations for limited infill housing, which in turn will help to ensure the retention of their limited range of facilities and services. Many of these are unserved and some of them in the vicinity of Dublin and the rapidly expanding towns within the county have come under pressure for housing.

These settlements are:-

Allen/Kilmeague	Allenwood	Arclough
Ballyroe	Ballyshannon	Ballyteague
Booleigh	Brannockstown	Broadford
Brownstown	Cadamstown	Caragh
Calverstown	Carbury	Castlemitchell
Clogherinkoe	Clongorey/Blacktrench	Crookstown
Cutbush	Derrinturn	Ellistown
Johnstownbridge	Kilberry	Kildangan
Kildoon	Kilkea	Killina
Kilmead	Kilshanroe	Lackagh/Mountrice
Levitstown/Maganey	Lullymore	Maddenstown
Milltown	Moyvalley	Narraghmore
Newtown	Newtownmoneenluggagh	Nurney
Rathcoffey	Rathmore/Eadestown	Staplestown
Suncroft	Timahoe	Ticknevin
Tirmoghan	Two Mile House	Williamstown

### 1.11.7. Special Villages

A number of the villages in the categories set out above are designated as "Special Villages" because they possess an overall special amenity character and special quality. It will be the policy of the Council that this character and quality will be retained, and that all new developments will have to conform to this. It will also be Council policy to encourage amenity and environmental improvements schemes to these villages, so as to enhance their character.

The Special Villages are:-

Athgarvan	Ballitore
Ballymore Eustace	Brannockstown
Carbury	Coill Dubh
Johnstownbridge	Kildangan
Kilmeague	Kilteel
Narraghmore	Newtown
Nurney	Rathmore
Robertstown	Straffan

### 1.11.7a. Town of Special Townscape / Heritage Character

A number of the villages of the county, which have grown in recent years to become towns, have centres which were the former village nuclei, and which possess a special townscape or heritage character. While these towns are scheduled for expansion, it is important that this character be retained. It will be the policy of the Council that this character and quality will be respected, and that new developments in these centres will have to conform to this. It will also be Council policy to encourage amenity and environmental improvements in these towns, so as to reinforce and enhance their special townscape or heritage character.

These Towns are:-

Castledermot	Johnstown
Kill	Kilcullen
Prosperous	Rathangan
Sallins	



## **1.12 RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Because of the location of the county on the periphery of the Dublin metropolitan area, the rural areas, outside the towns and villages identified above, are themselves undergoing persistent pressure for development, particularly from scattered urban-generated housing. This pressure is most acute in the areas under the influence of the Dublin, and the growing urban concentrations in the north-east and centre of the county, but is also evident in areas close to the Carlow border.

This pressure for urban-generated housing is less acute in other parts of the south of the county, and in the north-west of the county, where the population is declining, and where the distances from Dublin are greater.

Most of the pressure for this one-off housing development is arising from persons residing in the Dublin area, or in the rapidly expanding towns of the north-east and centre of the county, the nature of whose employment does not require them to live in the rural countryside, and who are not employed agriculture or other rural activities. The need for the existing farm holders to provide housing for their families is recognised, and is a small component of the overall pressure.

The pressure for such one-off housing development has created five major problems for the sustainable development of the county.

- The spread of housing has an detrimental economic impact on existing agricultural enterprises, because of increases in the price of land, particularly for smaller plots of less than twenty acres. This trend has been increasing in recent years.
- The influx of non-rural residents has led to restrictions being placed on the normal operations of farming, including limitations by court action on farm uses such as milking parlours (noise) and silage making (smells). Such normal farming operations can give rise to an increased risk of pollution of domestic wells of one-off houses. The Irish Farmers Association has made a submission to Government, expressing its concern on this matter.
- The building of large numbers of houses of a 'suburban' type has tended to change the visual character of the countryside, with consequent problems for the expansion of tourism and leading to the creation of long term difficulties for the bloodstock industry.
- The impact of such scattered housing on the county road network, and on basic services such as water, has been detrimental. A multiplicity of septic tanks poses risks for public health. In some cases, private water supplies for houses from groundwater (through wells) have been polluted by the septic tank systems of neighbouring houses.
- Frequently such one-off houses have impaired road drainage through the construction of new entrances, boundary walls etc., leading to deterioration in road surfaces and to increased instances of flooding on roads.

County Kildare does not possess the dominant features such as mountains and lakes which characterise other counties, and which are such an important part of their attractiveness for tourism. Kildare's landscape qualities are subtle and easily spoiled unless great vigilance is adopted. It is primarily an agricultural county with special emphasis on the bloodstock industry. Because of its location in relation to the expanding metropolitan area, it is important that such scattered housing development is controlled.

In order to allow balanced development of the villages and smaller settlements, on the one hand, and to prevent a decline in the rural population of those parts of the county which are in decline, on the other, it is reasonable to adopt a policy of restriction for some parts of the county (where the pressure is greatest, and where the rural population is expanding), and a less restrictive policy for others (where there is less pressure and where the rural population is in decline). This policy is set out in paragraph 2.9.

### 1.13 POPULATION

#### 1.13.1. General

The population of the county has increased by 87.4% since 1971. The 1996 Census of Population shows the population of County Kildare to be 134,992 persons. This represents an increase of 12,336 persons over the 1991 figure of 122,656, or a 10.1% rate of increase for the five year period. This rate of increase makes Kildare, as a whole, the fastest expanding county in the State without exception (although Galway County Borough grew by 12.6%). The rate of increase in the population between 1991 and 1996 quickened, with the rate of growth in the 1991-96 period being almost twice that of the previous period.

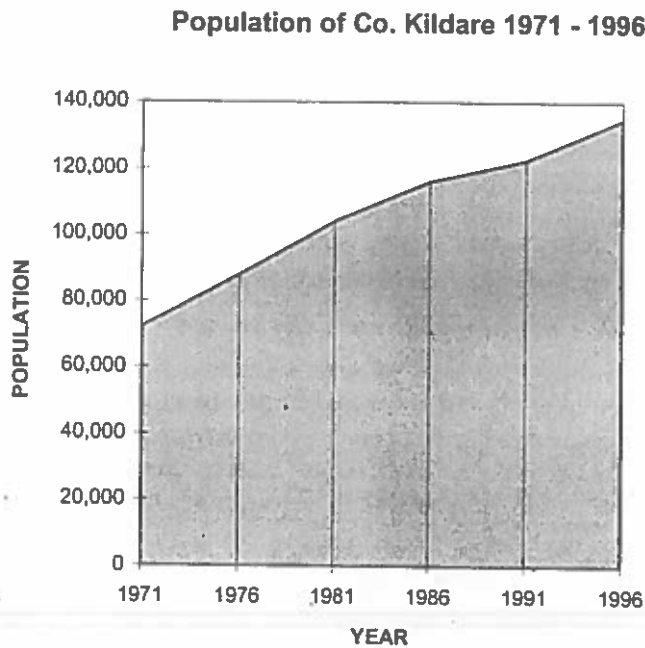
Table 3 and Figure 1 below shows the population growth over the last 25 years while Table 1 also shows the rate of population increase.

**TABLE 3. Population of County Kildare 1971 - 1996.**

YEAR	POPULATION	INTERCENSAL PERIOD	RATE OF INCREASE %	AVERAGE ANNUAL RATE OF INCREASE %
1971	71,977	-	-	-
1981	104,122	1971-81	+44.7%	4.5%
1986	116,247	1981-86	+11.6%	2.3%
1991	122,656	1986-91	+ 5.5%	1.1%
1996	134,992	1991-96	+10.1%	2.0%

Source: Census of Population, CSO

**FIGURE 1.**



## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

---

It is expected that the County will continue to grow rapidly over the next twenty years but at a declining rate for reasons set out below. Kildare doubled its population between 1966 and 1996. This experience will not be repeated in terms of either absolute numbers or rates of change.

### **1.13.2. Structure of the Population**

The growth in the county's population as a whole masks quite significant changes that have taken place within the county. In the twenty years between 1971 and 1991, two-thirds of the county's population growth occurred in two particular areas - the North-East area comprising Leixlip, Maynooth, Kilcock, Celbridge and Donaghcomper, and the Naas/Newbridge/Kilcullen triangle as well as smaller settlements within commuting distance from Dublin. The density of population in Celbridge RD is almost three times the county average.

Though this growth has been spurred in recent years by major inward investment in high technology industry, the growth in population in these areas is also dependent on factors largely outside the economic performance of the county. These factors include:-

- The overall growth in the population of the greater Dublin area;
- The developing communications system, and in particular the radial routes from Dublin and their influence on commuting times and ease in travel in general;
- Tastes and preferences for residential location within the Greater Dublin area, including factors related to pricing within the housing market, as well as counter-urbanisation trends;
- Energy prices (related to transport and journey to work distances);
- The planning restrictions and infrastructural constraints of the areas adjoining Dublin within the other two counties surrounding Dublin (Meath and Wicklow).

The remainder of the county, while it showed some variation as between specific areas, with some experiencing modest increases in population, and others decline, has remained static in population terms in the period 1981 - 96. In the previous period, it showed only modest growth patterns.

## **1.14. POPULATION PROJECTIONS**

In view of the past experience, and in particular that over the last fifteen years, it is clear that any projection of future population will have to take into account the fact that there are two separate units within the county - the North-East Kildare area and the Naas/Newbridge/Kilcullen area on the one hand and the remainder of the county, on the other.

This dichotomy is recognised in the Council's proposal for an extension of the area of study and investment covered by the Dublin Transportation Initiative (see paragraph 2.4.1 below).

The approach used in the population projection process is therefore as follows:-

Separate and independent projections are made for:-

- Celbridge Rural District
- Naas Urban and Rural Districts
- Athy Urban and Rural Districts and Edenderry Rural District.

The methodology used in the projection of population is the Cohort Survival Technique, which is internationally recognised as providing the most accurate estimates because it divides the population into the principal elements of change:-

- (a) Births;
- (b) Deaths;

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

---

### (c) Migration

and also examines the age structure of the population

#### (a) Births.

These were obtained by establishing the fertility of women of child-bearing age and projecting the fertility rates into the future.

Fertility has declined markedly in Ireland over the last thirty years, but until 1980 this decline was counterbalanced by an increased marriage rate and a growing number of women in the child-bearing age groups. This has changed since 1980, and there has been a rapid fall in the number of births since then, with only a slight recovery in the last three/four years. In County Kildare, this decline has been of the same order, although the fertility rate in the county is slightly higher than that for the State as a whole.

For projection purposes it has been assumed that the fertility rate will continue to fall to the year 2001, at which point it will level out at a point where fertility is just sufficient to maintain population renewal

#### (b) Deaths

Deaths are the most stable element of population change. Mortality rates were applied to the population in County Kildare in order to project deaths by age and sex. While mortality rates are changing very gradually over time, the effect of this change will not be felt in the short or medium term, and in any event will not have sufficient impact to alter materially the overall projection results.

#### (c) Migration

Migration is by far the most volatile element of population change. While births are only slowly changed by social and economic factors, and while deaths changed hardly at all, migration may respond in quite a rapid and marked way to job opportunity and relative income levels.

In the early 1980's, there was a net immigration to the county (i.e. more people came into the county than left it). In the period 1986-91, there was net outmigration (i.e. more people left the county than came into it) This is a highly significant change, since it was the first time that net outmigration has happened in County Kildare since the early 1960's. This proved the exception to the trend which reverted to net-immigration in the period 1991-96.

An examination of migration trends in the period 1991-96 shows that in the areas influenced by Dublin migration ignored shifts in national emigration patterns and continued unabated from the previous period. Migration elsewhere was sensitive to national patterns and reflected the improved overall position, which was close to net nil migration over the period.

In accordance with this observation for projection purposes, migration in the Celbridge RD and Naas RD areas taken as a whole is assumed to be at the 1991-96 level to 2001. The rate is assumed to halve in the period 2001-2011 and halve again in the period 2011-2016. Migration in the remainder of the county is set at net nil levels (whereby the total of in and out migration over all age groups adds to zero). This may be regarded as a reasonable assumption, given the favourable economic outlook at national level. In addition, population change in this area is slow and any errors which might arise will therefore be slight. The projection is presented as PROJECTION B below.

The assumptions for migration adopted for Celbridge RD and Naas UD and RD are in line with the assumption made in an independent projection for the proposed extended DTI area of County Kildare (J. Blackwell & Associates for Kildare County Council 1996). However, growth in Celbridge RD has been modified for projection purposes to produce an out-turn by 2016 whereby approx. one-third of the anticipated population growth of this RD in this period, due to migration, has been re-allocated to central Kildare (Naas UD and RD).

For comparative purpose, a natural increase projection is also presented, which shows a situation in which migration is nil in every age group and that population change is simply a result of births and deaths, PROJECTION A below.



## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

Comparison of the results in Projections A and B below enables an assessment of the impact of migration to be made.

A summary of the projections is illustrated as follows:-

**TABLE 4. PROJECTION A. Natural Increase throughout the County.**

AREA	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Celbridge RD	32,199	37,494	43,237	45,675	48,082	50,594	52,985
Naas UD and RD	56,536	58,112	64,282	67,727	70,578	73,158	75,442
Athy UD and RD, Edenderry RD	27,512	27,050	27,473	28,021	28,690	29,570	30,476
<b>TOTAL COUNTY</b>	<b>116,247</b>	<b>122,656</b>	<b>134,992</b>	<b>141,423</b>	<b>147,350</b>	<b>153,322</b>	<b>158,903</b>
<i>Extended DTI Area</i>	71,585	78,950	90,729	95,792	100,314	104,674	108,659
<i>Non-DTI Area</i>	44,662	43,706	44,263	45,631	47,036	48,648	50,244

**TABLE 5. PROJECTION B Based on migration patterns area by area 1991-96, as modified\***

AREA	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Celbridge RD	32,199	37,494	43,237	47,328	51,176	55,266	60,075
Naas UD and RD	56,536	58,112	64,282	70,954	76,205	80,836	83,149
Athy UD and RD, Edenderry RD	27,512	27,050	27,473	27,921	28,436	29,031	29,529
<b>TOTAL COUNTY</b>	<b>116,247</b>	<b>122,656</b>	<b>134,992</b>	<b>146,203</b>	<b>155,817</b>	<b>165,133</b>	<b>172,753</b>
<b>Change</b>		6,409	12,336	11,322	9,614	9,306	7,631
<b>Percent Change</b>		5.5	10.1	8.4	6.6	6.0	4.6
<i>Extended DTI Area</i>	71,585	78,950	90,729	101,687	110,561	119,347	125,863
<i>Non-DTI Area</i>	44,662	43,706	44,263	44,516	45,256	45,776	46,890

\* Projection B implies that there would be a shift of some of the population increase from the north-east of the county to the centre with resultant benefits for the south and west. Without such intervention, it is estimated that by 2016, four in every ten persons in the County will reside in the north-east ( as opposed to less than three in ten persons in 1986)

The foregoing projections set out in this plan shall be considered in the light of the projections in the Housing Strategy 2001-2005 contained in Appendix A of this plan.

### 1.15. EMPLOYMENT

There has been a substantial increase in employment in the county since 1971. Since 1981 while employment of the residents of Naas and Celbridge Rural Districts has increased, employment in the West and South has fallen. Employment in agriculture, forestry and turf production, as well as mining and quarrying, has fallen to the point where it now accounts for only 14% of total employment. The North-West has seen a marked decline in the peat-based economy in recent years, as a result of rationalisation, chiefly by Bord na Mona and the ESB. Employment in the services sector is now dominant accounting for 54% of total employment in the county.

However, while employment trends within the county are generally positive, long-term unemployment levels are high, particularly of males over 45 years of age. These tend to be located proportionately more in the older population centres such as Athy and Newbridge than in newer centres. This has

## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

implications not only for enterprise training, but also for the type of industrial and other enterprises that the Council must seek to encourage, as part of its developmental role, within the county.

### **1.15.1. Industry.**

Locational advantages presented to Kildare by reason of its proximity to the Dublin Region are reflected in the growth of manufacturing led industry in the county. This has led to the concentration of industry in the north-east corner of the county, with the pattern of industrial location spreading along national road routes.

There has been a decline in employment in traditional sectors such as timber & furniture, clothing & footwear, and food & drink. Growth has been most marked in metals & engineering - a category which includes computer manufacture.

#### **1.15.1 A. Enterprise Ireland Assisted Indigenous Industry in Co. Kildare.**

Enterprise Ireland was established in 1994 to assist the development of indigenous Irish industry, including small businesses and entrepreneurs. During 1994-1995 Enterprise Ireland assisted a total of 133 firms, mostly manufacturing and export related/orientated firms. The largest concentrations of Enterprise Ireland firms are located in the main population centres and their respective peripheral areas including Naas/Kill with 36 firms, Droichead Nua (19) and Athy (16). Generally, Enterprise Ireland firms are more geographically dispersed than IDA supported companies which tend to concentrate in North East Kildare.

Data supplied by Enterprise Ireland, for the period 1994 to March 1995, disclose that the majority of the firms are small, employing between 1 to 50 workers. The largest collection of Enterprise Ireland companies is located in the Central Kildare area, along the N7 National Primary Route. Production activity of Enterprise Ireland supported firms in South and West Kildare is varied, with emphasis on agricultural related activities.

#### **1.15.1 B. Overseas Companies In Co. Kildare**

The attractiveness of Kildare to overseas industrial investment is influenced by three main factors including:-

- Proximity to the Greater Dublin Region.
- Road/infrastructural access improvements.
- Access to population centres within the county.

The county has a strong existing industrial network with firms such as Intel, Oral B, Stream International and Wyeth Medica, all significant large employers. Buoyancy in overseas investment in the county is reflected in the attraction of Hewlett Packard to Leixlip. Overseas investment in the county is dominated by pharmaceuticals, engineering firms, computer and electronic orientated companies. Proximity to Dublin has meant that international traded services are in Dublin.

**TABLE Employment in Co. Kildare by Overseas Companies 1991-1995.**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>PERSONS</b>
1991	2,382
1992	2,681
1993	3,169
1994	3,875
1995	5,307

Source: IDA Ireland

## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

---

### **1.15.1 C. Other Small and Medium Enterprises (SME).**

Companies in this sector range from small manufacturers, producer services, crafts, nurseries and equestrian activities. The geographical distribution of small enterprises is quite uneven. Over three-fifths of the total are located in Naas and Droichead Nua postal districts while only about one-seventh are located in the south and north-west. Manufacturing and distribution activities are the dominant sectors in all parts of the County with the exception of the north-east where services are the largest sector<sup>1</sup>.

In recent years, the small and medium enterprise sector has been assisted with the emergence of local development assistance companies. SMEs in South and North-West Kildare are assisted by the County Enterprise Board, by Action South Kildare and the North-West Kildare Local Development Company Limited. SME initiatives are also supported by Kildare County Enterprise Board and by Kildare Leader II initiatives as well as by Enterprise Ireland in the form of enterprise centres.

### **1.15.2. Service Sector Employment.**

The buoyancy of jobs held by Kildare residents in this sector in the 1986 to 1991 is evident, but it is unclear how many of these jobs are based in Kildare. The data on the extent of job creation in the service sector within the county is not comprehensive. However, it is evident that there has been substantial growth in recent years.

Some of the major public sector employers are:- Kildare County Council, primary and second level schools, Maynooth College and NUI Maynooth, Hospitals, and the Department of Defence. The great bulk of employment, arising from these activities is located in the central corridor of the county. In general, employment in this sector is static, and recent proposals for rationalisation of the Defence Forces could lead to serious job losses in this area. The exception is NUI Maynooth, which has grown quickly since the early 1980's.

Other major employers in the service sector in Kildare are in the bloodstock related support services, tourism and retailing.

## **1.16. RETAILING AND DISTRIBUTION.**

### **1.16.1. Retailing.**

Retail facilities in the towns of the county are a combination of existing town centre functions and shopping centres. Towns such as Naas, Maynooth and Droichead Nua combine main street functions with anchor stores located at the edge of the town centre. There have been no major retail planning permissions or applications in the county in recent years. Planning policies regarding retail functions are set out in the individual Town Development Plans and in all cases prohibit out-of-town retail developments.

The close proximity of the north-east to Dublin, the ease of access along the N7 to the city and Tallaght Town Centre and the connection to the Arrow Suburban Rail Network impacts on retail functions within the county.

The base data for retailing are only available for three towns:- Naas, Droichead Nua and Maynooth. This indicates an overall absence of higher order functions and illustrates that the central area of the county is more self-sufficient in shopping than the North-East. The latter area, though it contains 31

---

<sup>1</sup> Kildare County Enterprise Board *Enterprise Action Plan 1995-1997*.

## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

per cent of the population, has just 19 per cent of the retail turnover and floorspace. This indicates that there is a greater dependence on shopping in Dublin in the North-East than in the central belt.

The apparent mismatch between the location of shopping and the pattern of population growth is important from a strategic planning perspective.

It is essential, if the vitality and retailing employment of the towns of the county is to be maintained, that out-of-town retailing continues to be prohibited.

### **1.16.2. Warehousing/Distribution.**

With regard to warehousing and distribution it would appear that Kildare will be most attractive to firms who are distributing on a nation wide or regional basis. Such firms are showing tendencies to move to the periphery of large metropolitan areas. An inventory of firms located in Kildare confirms these trends. Most are located in the central area along the N7, close to Dublin. The fastest growing area is food distribution.

## **1.17. TRANSPORTATION**

### **1.17.1 Roads**

The Council proposes, in co-operation with the National Roads Authority and the Department of the Environment and Local Government, during the period of the Plan, to continue to design and construct major road systems which will in effect by-pass all major towns. The Council also proposes, where appropriate, to improve sections of the existing national road network. All these national roads will be to the standard dictated by traffic needs and consistent with national policy.

The towns of Naas and Droichead Nua (Newbridge) on the N7 have been by-passed. Proposals for the By-Pass of Kildare Town have received Ministerial approval, and detailed design has commenced. The Minister has annulled the Compulsory Purchase Order made in respect of the proposed interchanges at Kill and Johnstown, and a new order is currently being prepared. Alternative designs are under consideration, in conjunction with Laois County Council, affecting Monasterevin. It is proposed to investigate the provision of a new motorway between the Naas By-Pass and the County boundary with South County Dublin.

On the N9, Kilcullen has been by-passed; work has been completed at Bolton Hill; the Moone/Timolin/Ballitore Hill Compulsory Purchase Order has been approved, and detailed design has commenced. Design will be progressed on the remainder of the N9 and construction will proceed in phase with the finance provided. Alternative designs are under consideration for a by-pass of Castledermot.

On the N4, the Kilcock/Maynooth/Leixlip Motorway has been completed. A line has been identified for its continuation, the Kilcock-Kinnegad Motorway. It is proposed to locate an interchange at Kilcock, where the Courtown Road crosses the M4. It is also proposed to locate an interchange between Maynooth and Leixlip, to serve, inter alia, Celbridge.

Where lines have been identified or alternative designs are under consideration, an area on either side of these lines, which might be affected, will be protected from development. The full implementation of this programme will depend on the availability of finance. Because the National Roads Authority (NRA) now has overall responsibility for the national roads, all design construction and maintenance of these roads will be done in co-operation with the NRA.

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

---

The roads in the county are now divided into five categories:

*(a) Motorways*

These roads primarily serve long and middle distance traffic. They are characterised by being declared Motorways by the Minister for the Environment and Local Government, by having no access except at interchanges and having no at-grade junctions. Special care is required with regard to building lines, signs and external lighting when considering development near this type of road. It is anticipated that construction will commence on the Kildare Town By-Pass during the period of the plan. Design and construction will be progressed on the other major routes in phase with the finance provided.

*(b) National Primary Routes (Non-Motorway)*

The National Primary Routes (Non-Motorway) in the county are those sections of the N4 (Dublin - Galway), N7 (Dublin - Cork/Limerick), and N9 (Naas - Waterford), which have not been by-passed. These roads primarily serve long and medium distance traffic passing through the county. Many of these roads are reaching the limits of their traffic bearing capacity and need improvements to cater for current and projected traffic needs. On the sections working within capacity some improvement will be needed to the geometrics of these roads.

*(c) National Secondary Roads*

There are two National Secondary Roads passing through the county, the N78 (Kilcullen - Athy) and the N81 (Dublin - Baltinglass). They serve long and medium distance traffic, and also cater for local traffic. These roads are operating within capacity at present, but in some areas would need improvement to their geometrics.

*(d) Regional or Main roads*

These roads link the principal towns in the county and also serve local traffic. They are generally of a high standard and in some cases carry very considerable volumes of traffic. However, certain regional roads urgently require major improvements, more particularly the most heavily trafficked, those providing access to motorways, and those serving industry, commerce or tourism.

*(e) Local or County roads*

These are generally the local roads of the county and their principal function is to serve local traffic. There has been a serious deterioration in the whole system of county roads in the recent past due to inadequate maintenance funding. A plan backed by the necessary finance is urgently required to return these roads to a reasonable state of repair within a specified time. Such a plan is currently being prepared in respect of all regional and county roads in the county. This will be implemented in phase with finance during the period of the Development Plan. Improvements may be required at specific locations where local traffic conditions and other considerations permit.

### 1.17.2 Rail Transportation

Kildare is served by two mainline rail passenger services, the Dublin to Limerick/Cork/Waterford mainline, and the Dublin to Sligo mainline. Services on these lines stop at Newbridge, Kildare and Athy, and at Maynooth. In addition, there are commuter services utilising the mainlines, in the case of North Kildare serving Leixlip (Confey and Louisa Bridge) and Maynooth, and in the case of central Kildare serving Celbridge (via Hazelhatch), Sallins and Naas (via Sallins), Newbridge and Kildare - the "Arrow" services.

It is likely that demand for these services, and particularly the commuter services, will increase due to population increases in the towns served, and due to changing commuting patterns and economic and social/environmental factors. Usage on the line serving Maynooth increased by 14% in 1996.

It is considered that commuter stations should be opened in Kilcock and in Monasterevin, to service these towns, that the rail line serving Leixlip, Maynooth and Kilcock should be double tracked as far as Kilcock, that a third station should be opened in Leixlip opposite the Intel complex, and that the level

## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

---

of service on all routes should be upgraded as demand increases. In addition, consideration should be given to extending the commuter service to Enfield, as this will help to serve north-west Kildare. The doubling of the commuter lines, together with improved rolling stock and new signalling equipment is considered to be desirable in order to improve these services and to encourage a greater shift from private modes of transportation to public transportation.

It is the policy of the Council to support and promote the use of public rail transportation, especially to deal with commuting traffic to the Dublin area, and to facilitate the development of improved services in this area. It is the policy of the Council to seek the extension of the commuter service to Athy and the improvement of the service on the central line by the provision of improved links within Dublin City Centre from Heuston station to the Dart system and to the proposed "Luas" Light Rail System.

### **1.17.3 Bus Transportation**

Kildare is served by a variety of bus and coach operations. Parts of the county, including the towns of Leixlip, Celbridge, Kilcock and Maynooth and the village of Ballymore Eustace, are served by Dublin city bus services operated by Dublin Bus. The remainder of the county is served by the provincial bus network operated by Bus Eireann, with both commuter routes and the longer distance routes.

In addition, there are a number of private bus and coach operators serving parts of the county, and also serving other counties, of which residents of the county make use.

It is the policy of the Council to co-operate with the bus and coach providers in the development and expansion of the bus network, and to support and promote the use of public bus transportation, especially to deal with commuting traffic to the Dublin area.

It is considered that there is a need for a cross-county service, particularly between the towns of the north and north-east and those of central and south Kildare. It is Council policy therefore to actively encourage public and private bus and coach operators to provide an adequate service between north and central Kildare and the south and south-west of the county.

### **1.17.4. Hackney/Taxi Services**

There are a number of hackney and taxi services in the towns of the county. The Council recognises the role of these services in the transportation mix within the county. The regulation and licensing of these services is now the responsibility of the Council.

It is Council policy to ensure that a high quality service is available in all towns in the county, but one which will not cause disturbance or disamenity to residents in the vicinity of taxi ranks and hackney offices.

### **1.17.5. Dublin Transportation Initiative (DTI).**

The DTI an integrated approach to transportation in the Dublin commuting area was established during the period of the last Plan. Part of the county is included in the DTI study area.

The recommendations of the DTI Study will impact on the development of the county and these are discussed in paragraph 1.5.3.C above

## **1.18. SERVICES**

### **1.18.1. Water Supply**

Two regional water supply schemes supply the bulk of water to settlements in the county.

(a) The Mid Regional Water Supply Scheme takes its supply from the Dublin Corporation works at Ballymore Eustace. It extends from Carbury in the north west of the county to Nurney in the mid-west and east to Ballymore Eustace. The towns and villages supplied are Naas, Newbridge, Kildare, Rathangan, Clane, Sallins, Kill, Johnstown, Prosperous, Ballymore Eustace, Straffan, Derrinturn and Carbury, as well as the rural hinterlands of these towns. Some small group schemes are also supplied from the regional supply scheme.

(b) The North East Regional Water Supply Scheme is supplied from the Fingal County Council treatment Plant at Leixlip. This scheme supplies the towns of Kilcock, Maynooth, Celbridge and Leixlip, as well as the rural hinterlands of these towns. There is also in existence a limited supply to Celbridge from the Dublin Corporation aqueduct at Keatings Park, near Rathcoole. Some small group schemes are also supplied from the regional water supply scheme.

Other areas of the county have their own water supply and distribution systems. These include Monasterevin, Castledermot, Ballitore, Kilberry, Kildangan and Rathmore. There are large private group schemes in Killeel, Narraghmore and Gormanstown.

In all approximately 85% of the present population of the county have mains water supply.

It is hoped within the period of the Plan to provide the South Regional Water Supply Scheme, which will be a further extension of the Mid-Regional Scheme. This will meet the requirements of the rural areas as far south as a line from Grangemellon to Moone, as well as providing water to Athy Urban District.

It is also proposed to connect the Monasterevin Water Supply scheme to the Mid-Regional Scheme.

The Council recognises the special environmental, amenity, sporting and tourism value of the River Liffey, is committed to its protection, and will promote the examination and adoption of alternative sources of water supply to meet the additional needs of the county.

### **1.18.2. Sewerage**

Two major Regional Sewerage Schemes provide facilities for development in the most populated areas of the county. These are the Lower and Upper Liffey Valley Regional Sewerage Schemes.

#### **1.18.2 A. Lower Liffey Valley Regional Sewerage Scheme**

This scheme services the towns of Leixlip, Kilcock, Maynooth and Celbridge. It is also intended to serve Straffan in the future.

The treatment plant at Leixlip is capable of treating the discharge from a population equivalent of 45,000 persons. It is anticipated that this capacity will be exceeded during the period of the Plan, and it is proposed to extend the plant to cater for this increased demand.

#### **1.18.2 B. Upper Liffey Valley Regional Sewerage Scheme**

## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

This scheme services Naas, Newbridge, Clane, Sallins, Kill and Johnstown. It is intended to link Prosperous, Kilcullen, Caragh and Athgarvan into the scheme during the period of the Plan if finances are made available through the Department of the Environment and Local Government.

The treatment plant, located at Osberstown near Naas, is designed to treat the discharge from a population equivalent of 40,000 persons, and is currently at full capacity. It is proposed to expand the plant during the period of the Plan to meet any anticipated demands which will occur.

All remaining towns and villages not included in the Regional Schemes are served by independent sewerage systems. The Council is continuing to review the situations in these settlements, and improvements will be made where necessary subject to the availability of finance.

### **1.18.3. Waste Disposal**

Under the 1996 Waste Management Act and the European Communities (Waste) Regulations 1979, the Local Authority is responsible for the planning, organisation, authorisation and supervision of waste operations in their area. Recent legislation (much of it motivated by European Union Directives) including the Waste Regulations 1979, Toxic and Dangerous Waste Regulations 1982, Water Pollution Acts 1977 and 1990, Transfrontier Shipment of Waste Regulations 1994 and Waste Oils Regulations 1992, reflects the serious environmental hazards which can be associated with the disposal of waste.

These Regulations require each Local Authority to prepare a Waste Plan and a Toxic and Dangerous Waste Plan. A Waste Disposal Plan was published by the Council in 1981, and Waste Management Plan and strategies are currently being prepared. The Council has prepared a Toxic and Dangerous Waste Plan. These Plans cover the following:-

- The type and quantity of waste for disposal;
- General technical requirements;
- Suitable disposal sites;
- Any special arrangements for particular wastes;
- Control of private waste operations through a system of permits and licences.

At present, Kildare County Council disposes of waste by sanitary landfilling. This involves the tipping of refuse into prepared sites and the covering of waste with soil. Safeguards are taken to prevent environmental pollution which can be in the form of pollution of water courses or ground water, aerial pollution by methane from dumps, visual impact on the landscape and the creation of a health hazard.

The waste arising in the county can be categorised as follows:-

- A) Household waste;
- B) Industrial/commercial waste;
- C) Toxic and Dangerous Waste;
- D) Miscellaneous waste.

#### **1.18.3.A. Household Waste**

Household waste is defined as solid waste arising from the normal occupancy of a premises used as a house, educational establishment, hospital or similar institution, but not including waste which is excluded from the normal domestic waste collection service. Refuse from approximately 26,000 dwellings is collected weekly by the Council collection service and by private contractors. A weekly service collecting refuse from 16,000 households is provided by the Council and the remaining households have their refuse collected by private waste contractors who provide a wheel bin service. In view of its popularity, the Council has introduced a wheel bin system, and it is expected that the number



## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

---

of customers will increase in the coming years. In 1993 approximately 40,000 tonnes of household refuse was disposed of in the central Council landfill site at Silliot Hill, near Kilcullen.

### **1.18.3 B. Commercial/Industrial Waste.**

Commercial waste is defined as all non-hazardous waste, other than household waste, arising from the use of premises, either wholly or in part, for the purposes of trade, business or leisure activities. Industrial waste comprises of all non-hazardous waste of a solid or semi-solid nature originating from industrial or public utility premises or from food processing premises, construction and demolition sites, mines and quarries. Most large firms and businesses arrange for the collection and disposal of their waste by private waste disposal contractors. The total quantity of commercial and industrial waste disposed of in the Silliot Hill landfill site in 1993 was approximately 58,000 tonnes.

### **1.18.3.C. Toxic and Dangerous Waste.**

Toxic and dangerous waste is defined as waste containing or contaminated by the twenty seven substances listed in Appendix 1 of the European Communities (Toxic and Dangerous Waste) Regulations 1982, of such a nature, in such quantities or in such concentration as to constitute a risk to health or the environment. A draft Toxic and Dangerous Waste Plan has been prepared outlining the quantity, type and source of this waste generated in the county. The total quantity of toxic and dangerous waste produced in County Kildare per annum is approx. 2150 tonnes. The disposal of this waste is strictly regulated by consignment notes as set out in the E.C. (Toxic and Dangerous Waste) Regulations 1982 and the E.U. (Transfrontier Shipment of waste) Regulations 1994.

### **1.18.3.D. Miscellaneous Waste**

This waste category includes items such as abandoned cars, bulky items, waste oils etc. Collection and recycling facilities are provided on the Silliot Hill landfill site for items such as scrapped cars, refrigerators (after CFC gas removal), cookers, washing machines, batteries, waste oils, glass, plastic, paper and florescent lamps. From April to September each year, the Council operates a skip scheme for housing estates for bulky items and garden waste. The disposal of waste oil is controlled by the E.C. (Waste Oils) Regulations 1992, which makes the local authority responsible for the planning, organisation and supervision of waste oils collection and disposal through the operation of a permit system.

### **1.18.4. Silliot Hill Landfill Site.**

Since the 1980's, the Council's policy has been to operate a major centrally located landfill site, which has achieved economies of scale in the disposal of waste. This is currently at Silliot Hill, near Kilcullen. This will cease to be the major landfill in the medium term. The Council is currently investigating alternative disposal facilities. As the landfill is centrally located, the Council proposes to provide transfer stations ("civic amenity sites") in the north and south of the county, with a view to making the collection and recycling service more effective for areas remote from Silliot Hill and to mitigate the effects of unauthorised dumping of bulk items of waste.

### **1.18.5. Unauthorised Dumping**

The Council has been successful in closing a number of unauthorised landfill sites in the county over the period of the last Plan, and will continue to do so. The operators of a privately run landfill are required to submit an Environmental Impact Statement with their planning application, and, if permission is granted, will then have to apply to the Council for a licence to operate a landfill under the

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

E.C. (Waste) Regulations. The planning considerations that will govern the location of any privately run landfill site are set out in the Policy and Development Standards Sections of this Plan.

### 1.18.6. Recycling

The Sillioth Hill landfill site accepts scrap cars, fridges, old cookers etc., which are removed by a scrap metal company for recycling of the metal recovered. The CFC's are removed from the fridges for reuse. There is a waste oil collection point as well as a bottle, can and textile bank. The Council is currently investigating the viability of composting of household waste. A number of bottle banks and other collection facilities have been provided on a private basis by private organisations, with financial and other assistance from the Council, and are located at various urban locations within the county.

It is the policy of Kildare County Council to encourage the reduction at source, reuse, recycling and recovery of waste. This policy has been incorporated into the planning conditions for the more recent and larger industries in the county.

### 1.18.7. Electrical Services.

At present Kildare has a very adequate electricity supply. Within the county a 220/110 kV transformer station at Maynooth acts as a bulkfeed for much of Dublin as well as Kildare. A 400kV transformer station was erected at Dunstown, near Kilcullen, during the period of the last Plan. The Liffey hydro-electric generation station also supplies power to the county. 110/38 kV. stations at Liffey (Poulaphouca), Allenwood, Griffin Rath and Droichead Nua are connected to the main 110 kV. grid system and they, together with 110/38 kV. stations outside the county, supply 38 kV. stations at Naas, Allenwood, Kildare, Sallins, Kilcullen, Celbridge, Leixlip, Droichead Nua, Athgarvan, Kildare and Athy.

Due to the proximity of the county to the Metropolitan area of Dublin and its large demand for industrial, commercial and domestic supplies of electricity, County Kildare is traversed by a extensive network of transmission lines. The 400 kV network involves two mainly single circuit 400 kV. lines from Moneypoint Generating Station, County Clare; one to the Dunstown Transformer Station and the other to Woodland near Dunboyne in County Meath. At some future stage, it is intended to construct a further 400 kV. line from Woodland to Dunstown.

The 200 kV. network will be further extended by the looping in to Dunstown of the existing 220 kV. line from Great Island to Turlough Hill at Maynooth where this line crosses the station site. It is also intended to tie in the existing 220 kV. line from Maynooth to Carrickmines into Dunstown by building a double circuit line from Dunstown to a tee point on the line in the Saggart area.

The development of a peat-fired Generating Station adjoining the county ("Europeat 1") will be of significance to Kildare, not only in terms of employment opportunities for residents of the county, but also as most of its raw material will come from the boglands resource of the county. It is important that the Council should facilitate this development, though encouragement of the peat extraction, other than in Natural Heritage Areas and Areas of High Amenity, and in processing the necessary electricity supply distribution network arising from it.

#### *Amenity Aspects*

The multiplicity of these electricity lines, largely as a result of Dublin's development, require extreme care in planning to avoid deterioration of the rural environment and the landscape through which they pass. The Council is prepared to co-operate with the E.S.B. in the provision of these lines, subject to the preservation of amenity.

It is Council policy that development, particularly dwellings, close to high tension power lines will be restricted, and that new high tension lines (110 kV and above) will not be permitted adjoining existing dwellings, except where no other alternative can be shown to exist.

### 1.18.8. Fire Service

The fire service provides a fire fighting and rescue service on a county basis, controlled from the Central Fire Station in Droichead Nua, and operating out of fire stations in Droichead Nua, Naas, Athy, Leixlip, Maynooth and Monasterevin. Since the last plan, a new Central Fire Station with County Command and Control facilities and vehicle workshop was provided in Droichead Nua, and a new station was built in Leixlip.

It is intended within the life of this Plan that new fire stations be provided in Athy and Naas, where the present facilities are very poor, and to upgrade and improve the facilities in Monasterevin. It is also proposed to provide a Fire Brigade county training building in Newbridge Station, where space was provided for this purpose during the building of the new Central Station.

### 1.18.9. Telecommunications

The Council is mindful of national policy in relation to the provision of telecommunications infrastructure, and recognises that the development of such infrastructure is a key component of future industrial and employment creation.

Accordingly, it is Council policy to support this national policy and to co-operate with the realisation of the policy, provided that the distinctive characteristics of the County's landscape, particularly the needs of the bloodstock industry, and the county's rich architectural, archaeological, historic and visual heritage, and the needs of the tourism industry, will not be adversely affected.

On grounds of visual amenity, it is the general policy of the Council that telecommunications infrastructural services should be located underground, and that existing overhead cables and associated equipment should progressively be located underground.

However, it is also recognised that some telecommunications services, such as mobile telephony, may have to be served by the provision of overground masts and antennae/satellite dishes. The same may also be true of television receptors and masts. It is the policy of the Council to permit such masts and their antennae, satellite dishes and equipment in the rural areas of the county generally, except in specified types of locations, as set out below.

The location of masts and associated equipment, antennae and satellite dishes, will not be permitted:-

- (a) in Areas of High Amenity (as set out in Section 2.23 of this Plan), or
- (b) adjoining or within the setting of listed buildings, structures and items, as set out in Section 3.2 of this Plan), or
- (c) on or within the setting of archaeological sites, structures and zones (as set out in Section 3.2 of this Plan), or
- (d) in, or in the visual setting of, Natural Heritage Areas, Areas of Special Conservation and Areas of Scientific Interest (as set out in Section 3.3 of this Plan), or
- (e) adjoining, or within the visual setting of, rivers and canals;

Similarly, such masts, antennae, dishes and associated equipment will not generally be permitted on elevated sites where no existing screening is available or can be obtained.

## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

Within the towns, villages and settlements covered by this Development Plan, it is the policy of the Council that telecommunications masts, antennae, satellite dishes and associated equipment should be located on existing masts or pylons, or in industrial or utility areas. They may be permitted on high buildings of utility or industrial types, such as water towers, fire station towers or grain elevators, but will not be permitted on churches or other civic buildings, nor in the vicinity of schools or residential areas.

### Design Aspects.

The Council will expect that the design and visual appearance of masts, antennae and satellite dishes, and their associated equipment, shall be as unobtrusive as possible. Methods of achieving this, such as painting of masts and antennae, and the redesign of masts from the standard lattice type in order to minimise visual impact, will be expected of operators. The use of screening, including the location of masts in forested areas, will be encouraged.

The Council will strongly encourage the use of existing masts or pylons for the location of additional services. In accordance with national policy, the Council will encourage the co-location of antennae and dishes by different operators, and will not generally permit the erection of additional masts by different operators at the same location.

### Temporary Permissions

In view of the fact that the technology associated with telecommunications is rapidly changing, and in order to permit the impact of a particular mast or antennae to be considered over a period of time, it is the normal policy of the Council, where permission is granted for the erection or maintenance of telecommunications masts, antennae, satellite dishes and associated equipment, that it be granted only on a temporary basis, and that at the end of the temporary period they shall be removed. Such permissions will include requirements preventing further development and expansion without prior planning permission.

### 1.18.10. Natural Gas

The natural gas pipeline from Cork to Dublin passes through the east of the county, and feeder lines from this main pipeline have been laid to service Naas, Newbridge and adjoining towns.

A feeder line from the Dublin network serves Leixlip, and has recently been extended to serve Maynooth and Celbridge. It is envisaged that the supply will be shortly extended to Athy, and this will allow for the potential of servicing other towns and villages in south Kildare, including Castledermot, Moone, Timolin and Ballitore.

It is the policy of the Council to co-operate with Bord Gais in the servicing of all towns in the county. Planning permission for excavation of gas lines is required, under the 1994 (Planning and Development) Regulations, within archaeological sites, zones and areas which are preserved, as defined in the Development Plan.

## 1.19 HOUSING

### 1.19.1 Social Housing

## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

---

The Council completed approximately 552 houses for applicants on the waiting list for the period 1985 - 1994. During this period also the Rental Subsidy Scheme and the Capital Assistance Scheme came into operation. Under the Rental Subsidy Scheme, 20 houses were completed, 69 units are under construction and another 50 units, approx. , are planned. Ninety-one units have been provided under the Capital Assistance scheme.

As the Council's land bank is now considerably reduced, subject to the availability of finance and taking account of the land to become available from agreements under Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, it is the policy of the Council to acquire additional lands during the period of the plan to meet the housing requirements of the the county as outlined in the Housing Strategy 2001-2005. Any land acquisition will have regard to the Plan for Social Housing (published by the Department of the Environment), which requires the Council to avoid the building of large estates of new dwellings, and requires that new housing comprises smaller well-designed schemes integrated as far as possible with housing development in the area. Where possible, infill sites in existing settlements, as outlined above, will be acquired and developed.

### **1.19.1A AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

All necessary housing initiatives will be pursued by the Council in response to the needs identified in the Housing Strategy. In particular the Council will require the transfer of 20% of lands for social/affordable housing in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 and the Housing Strategy.

### **1.19.2 Private Housing**

Approximately 5,700 private houses have been built in the county in the period 1990 - 1995. These include estate houses, built in the towns and villages of the county, and one-off individual houses, built in the open countryside. Much of this development, of both types, has taken place in the North-East of the county, and in the Naas/Newbridge/Kilcullen areas, to satisfy demands for housing from the Dublin metropolitan area. This has led to substantial increases in the price of land, both serviced and unserviced, and has contributed to a trend for the subdivision of farm holdings.

It is likely, with the increased accessibility of the central and north-west of the county as a result of road and motorway construction, that this trend will intensify and spread over a wider proportion of the county. It is important that this trend is properly controlled through planning policy, and through the provision of necessary servicing of lands in the towns and villages.

### **1.19.2A SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

It is the policy of the Council to integrate housing provided under the Planning and Development Act 2000, Part V, into private development in a layout that prevents segregation and promotes good design and layout.

## **1.20 TRAVELLING PEOPLE**

The Council currently has halting sites for travellers within the county, at Newbridge (Tankardsgarden), near Monasterevin (Hybla), at Maynooth (Dublin road) and at Athy (Ardrew - within Athy Urban District). Planning permission has recently been granted for upgrading of the Ardrew site. Improvements to the Tankardsgarden site have commenced. The policy in respect of settlements for travelling people in the county is set out in paragraph 2.39 of this Plan. The Council shall seek to provide accommodation for Travellers in accordance with the Housing Strategy 2001-2005.

## **1.21 RECREATION**

Recreation for the purposes of this section, can be divided into two main areas:

- (1) Countryside recreation, involving predominantly the use of the natural countryside on an individual and unorganised basis, e.g. walking, cycling, motoring trips, fishing, though often in great numbers.
- (2) Recreational provision in terms of open space for sports clubs and non-sports clubs and recreation organisations.

### **1.21.1 Countryside Recreation**

The Council recognises that the countryside has an important function in providing outdoor recreational facilities not only for the population of Kildare, but also for the whole Dublin Metropolitan area. It is also recognised that the provision of tourist facilities is an integral part of the provision for outdoor recreational facilities in the countryside but that the two types of demand are not necessarily the same.

The amenities of County Kildare, particularly those in the north and east of the county adjacent to population centres, are used to a considerable extent by motorists from Dublin seeking pleasant landscape in relatively traffic free roads for pleasure driving. Bridle paths are projected for the East Kildare Uplands. Long distance walking routes have been developed in Kildare to link into the national

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

system under the aegis of Cospoir. Extensive use is made of the canal system and the River Liffey for boating and fishing.

### *Forestry*

The recreational and amenity aspect of forestry has become of great importance in County Kildare and so far seven forestry areas have been opened up for public use as follows:

Forest Amenity Areas	Facilities
(1) Donadea Forest Park	Car Park, Picnic Site, Castle Ruins, Forest, Lakeshore Walks.
(2) Blackwood	Forest Walks.
(3) Dunstown	Picnic Site, Forest Walks.
(4) Kilkea Castle	Picnic Site, Forest Walks, Wishing Well, Ring Fort.
(5) Moore Abbey	Picnic site and Forest Walks.
(6) Rahan, Nr. Kinnegad	Lay-By, Picnic Site.
(7) Russellwood Nr. Edenderry	Forest Walks.

In the case of Forest Parks generally, with the exception of Donadea Forest Park, it is the policy of the Council to co-operate with Coillte and other bodies in bringing forward proposals which would secure the development and maintenance of these parks for the people of the county. Donadea Forest Park is designated as an Area of High Amenity, and the policy in relation to this area is set out in Sections 1.23 and 2.23.

### 1.21.2 Recreational Sports Clubs And Facilities

In the period since the last Plan, trends have indicated that, while there remains a serious lack of recreational facilities and open space within the county, and the provision of some amenities has increased. Nonetheless, there remains a lack of amenities and recreational facilities, especially in the fastest growing areas of the county - the north-east area and the Naas/Newbridge area.

The number of multi-sports clubs has increased since the last Plan, and purpose-built community halls exist in Leixlip, Kilcullen and Droichead Nua and a renovated one in Athy. The Council purchased large tracts of land for recreational purposes in Naas, Celbridge, Leixlip, Droichead Nua and Kilcock in the 1980's.

As part of its overall community development policy, the Council has prepared a leisure, amenity and recreational strategy, including the provision of assistance with funding for capital projects by sports clubs. This will be implemented over the period of the Plan, as finances permit, and in line with the needs of these clubs.

It is the policy of the Council to undertake, during the period of this Plan, a revised detailed survey on recreation provision, which will form an important input into future policy. If required, a thematic variation to the Plan will be prepared to implement any recommendations arising out of this revised survey.

## 1.22 TOURISM

## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

The overall responsibility for the promotion and development of tourism at national level is at present vested in Bord Failte Eireann. Recent policy initiatives at central level may lead to changes in this situation. At the regional level, efforts to promote tourism are undertaken by Regional Tourism Organisations. At county level, tourism promotion is carried out by the Council and by Kildare Failte Ltd as well as by the industry itself.

The Local Authorities contribute towards the finances of the Regional Tourism Authorities and have representatives nominated to their governing boards. County Kildare is in the area catered for by the Midlands-East Regional Tourism Authority (M.E.R.T.A.).

Tourism is beginning to play an important role in the economy of Kildare, and this has been reflected in increased interest and involvement on the part of the tourism industry in the county in the planning and promotion of tourism. Kildare Failte's Five Year Strategic Tourism Plan is one example of this increased involvement.

County Kildare is the first county en route from Dublin to the popular tourist areas in the south, south-west and west of the country and presents the first view that visitors will get of the Irish countryside. M.E.R.T.A. estimates that approximately half of the tourists arriving in Ireland travel through Kildare and the county should optimise on this fact. The landscape of the county is considered a major attraction and three separate tourist zones can be identified:

### **1.22.1. The Wicklow Mountain Area**

This tourist zone covers part of east County Kildare and includes the towns of Naas, Ballymore Eustace and Kill, etc. The area relates mainly to the East Kildare Uplands, in respect of which a detailed policy has been adopted by the Council since the 1980's.

### **1.22.2. The Barrow**

This tourist zone is based on the river and the canal link to the main Grand Canal line at Lowtown. The northern boundary runs through Lowtown. The main County Kildare towns in this zone are Droichead-Nua, Rathangan, Kildare, Athy, Castledermot, Ballitore, Moone, Monasterevin, Robertstown and Kilmeague. This zone encompasses the Curragh with its distinct bloodstock associations.

### **1.22.3. The Grand and Royal Canals**

This tourist zone is based on the Grand and Royal Canals and their environs. They bisect the county, stretching from the County Kildare border near Celbridge and Leixlip to the River Shannon and it is contiguous to the Barrow zone to the south. The main Kildare towns in this zone are Leixlip, Celbridge, Maynooth, Kilcock, Clane, Prosperous, Robertstown, Rathangan, Monasterevin, Athy and Sallins. The canals are an invaluable tourism asset which is under-utilised at present.

The basic raw material of Irish tourism is the natural landscape and the environment as a whole. The County Kildare landscape has qualities which, while not spectacular, are of a subtle and varied nature, including pastoral landscape and plains, boglands and hilly areas.

Other tourist attractions in the county are the Liffey Valley, amenity and heritage items and specialist facilities, such as coarse fishing, hunting, shooting and golf.

Among recent initiatives at national level has been the establishment of Heritage Towns, which are being marketed on a unified national basis. Two towns in the county, Athy and Kildare, have been designated as Heritage Towns, and the Council is supporting these initiatives, which are being developed by locally-based Heritage Companies.



## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

---

The Council is satisfied that a case exists for the designation of Maynooth as a third Heritage Town in the county, having regard to its stock of historic buildings, its "planned village" urban form, and the opportunities presented by the canal harbour and Maynooth Castle in particular.

The potential of the county's archaeological, historic and architectural heritage is recognised by the council, and efforts to develop this heritage and promote it to visitors form an important part of the policies of the Council in relation to tourism. Heritage interpretation is considered to be a valuable tourism development, and it is the Council's policy to support such provision, subject to the preservation of the existing amenities of the area or item being interpreted, and to the preservation of the visual and historic landscape of the county.

## **1.23 AREAS OF HIGH AMENITY**

County Kildare contains some areas which can be classified as major areas of high amenity as follows:

- The Curragh and Environs.
- The Valley of the River Liffey.
- The Valley of the River Barrow.
- Pollardstown Fen Area. Rural Detail Map No. 1.1
- Castletown/Donaghcumper Area. Rural Detail Map No. 1.2
- East Kildare Uplands. Rural Detail Map No. 1.3
- Carton Estate Area. Rural Detail Map No. 1.4
- Robertstown Countryside. Rural Detail Map No. 1.5
- Donadea Forest. Rural Detail Map No. 1.7

Descriptive notes on these areas are given below and policies in relation to specific items are set out in the relevant section of the policy statement (Section 2.24 of the Plan).

### **1.23.1 The Curragh and Environs**

The open landscape of the Curragh Plains is one of the major amenity areas in the State. This type of elevated flat landscape is very fragile and any development will have a major impact.

### **1.23.2 The Valley of the River Liffey**

The Council recognises the great amenity, environmental and recreational value of the River Liffey to the county and the region, and also its functions in relation to electrical power generation and as a clean water source for development areas. The river valley is considered an important tourist attraction, the main recreational uses being fishing, canoeing, swimming and picnicking.

The State has recently purchased lands along the Liffey Valley between Leixlip and Lucan for amenity and recreational purposes, and the Council, in conjunction with Fingal and South Dublin County Councils, will oversee its development in this regard.

The Council recognises the tremendous appeal of the river valley for individuals wishing to erect houses. Such development tends to detract from the amenity, restrict public access to the river banks and those on septic tanks contribute to the pollution of the waters, due to the proliferation of septic tanks.

#### *The Liffey at Victoria Bridge*

The Council considers the Liffey and riverside area at Victoria Bridge to be a local area of high amenity. The river, weir, mill, and millrace, combined with mature trees and riverside walks constitute an attractive area which is widely used by the public for active and passive leisure activities.

The council will restrict any proposed development impinging on the Valley of the River Liffey unless such development is specifically envisaged by a Town Development Plan or Local Area Plan which has been adopted by this Council.

### **1.23.3 The Valley of the River Barrow**

The valley of the River Barrow is of great amenity and recreational value in the county and the region. The river has great tourist potential and is linked to the Grand Canal mainline system at Lowtown. The main recreational use of the Barrow is for game and coarse fishing, picnicking and

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

---

swimming. The river also has development potential for boating, canoeing and cruising as part of the Barrow Navigation System. The tributaries of the Barrow and the canal system also have good fishing.

Although the Barrow valley is not under the same pressure for development as the Liffey Valley, its qualities are similar, and the same dangers in relation to its amenities and recreational capacity exist.

### 1.23.4 Pollardstown Fen

Pollardstown Fen, located north of the Curragh, is a site of international scientific importance since it is the largest and best developed true fen in the country. The fen is the site for several rare species of plants and invertebrates, but is most important in the manner in which its community of organisms inter-relate in its own individual ecosystem. It is a proposed candidate Special Area of Conservation under the E.U. Habitats Directive.

The 1978 County Development Plan sought to have the then Minister of Forestry and Fisheries designate the area as a nature reserve under the Wildlife Act, 1976. In 1980, the Department of Forestry and Fisheries adopted this policy and began to acquire additional areas of the Fen from local landowners. The Department already owned approximately 48.6 hectares (120 acres) of which over 20.25 hectares (59 acres) had been planted in the 1950s. An additional 24.3 hectares (60 acres) was handed over by Bord na Mona. The Fen was designated as a nature reserve and is now in the care of the Parks and Wildlife Division of the Department of Arts, Gaeltacht, Heritage and the Islands. Controlled walks and a bird hide have been developed.

### 1.23.5 Castletown and Donaghcumper Area:

This area is situated beside the town of Celbridge on both banks of the River Liffey. It contains Donaghcumper, St. Wolstan's and Castletown House and Demesne

Castletown House was built for William Conolly (1662-1729), speaker of the Irish House of Commons. Begun c.1722 and completed in 1732, it is the earliest and the greatest of the great Irish Palladian Houses. The initial design was by the Italian Architect Alessandro Galilei with further design and supervision by the Irish Architect, Edward Lovett Pearce. Following the completion of the House, the park was laid out in the ensuing decade, in the formal French style with the main vistas and enfilades in the house being extended into the surrounding landscape by avenues which run on axes through orderly plantations of trees. The obelisk (Conolly's Folly) on a two-and-a-half mile vista from the west front of the House also forms a visual link with Carton.

Compared with Carton Estate, which was being developed at the same time, the landscape at Castletown is modest but it is developed in a manner complementary to the vast scale of the House and its necessary setting.

The avenue to Castletown, the axial views between the house and Conolly's Folly and the Wonderful Barn, Leixlip, and other landscape items are listed elsewhere for protection. The views from the House to the River and across the back parterre together with the view from the main avenue to the River Liffey are shown on Map 1.2 as being views of special amenity value and special interest to be protected.

The link between Castletown House and the town of Celbridge is established by the entrance gates and gate lodges. These, together with the Church of Ireland church, and with the Batty Langley gate lodge on the Leixlip side, are listed for preservation.

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

---

Housing development has taken place in the area and there is severe pressure for further extensive housing developments. The House itself is in the care of the Office of Public Works, and currently is undergoing extensive restoration by that body. The Office of Public Works have commissioned a detailed management Plan for the House and Demesne, which will set future policy.

Donaghcomper and St. Wolstans are located on the southern bank of the Liffey opposite Castletown, and form an important parkland setting for it, as well as being significant historic and landscape areas in their own right. They form an important amenity feature along the Liffey, and act as a partial buffer zone between Celbridge and Leixlip, as well as a "green lung" to these developing towns.

Achieving a balance between the continued existence of these estates, the transfer of lands to full protection through public ownership and the achievement of public access to what are essentially, privately owned lands are not without difficulties. Nonetheless it is recognised that a balance must be achieved between competing demands and therefore limited development is proposed in the Celbridge Development Plan to allow for the expansion of the Town Centre and for low density residential development. The proposed zoning includes a substantial area of land which is zoned amenity including an area along the river Liffey. The landowners have agreed to transfer this amenity land to Kildare County Council on behalf of the community. The development proposals for Donaghcomper will only be considered following the preparation by Kildare County Council of an Action Area Plan and such development shall be in accordance with the Action Area Plan as adopted.

### 1.23.6 The East Kildare Uplands

This is a unique area of high amenity and a detailed rural plan has been prepared for it. The area is described in detail in Section 4.42

### 1.23.7 Carton Demesne

Carton Demesne is of great historical, artistic and architectural interest, having been the principal residence of the Fitzgerald family for over 200 years. The house was remodelled by Richard Cassels for the 19th Earl of Kildare in 1740 and the grounds were developed in the latter half of the 18th century in the "picturesque" style of landscape gardening. The "Sheet of Water" which was considered the most attractive feature of the park and which is now overgrown, dated from this time. Further woodlands were planted in the 19th century which also saw the creation of the lake. The Rye Water Valley at Carton is a candidate Special Area of Conservation under the E.U. Habitats Directive.

As the house and its landscaped setting, including the avenue with its natural environs, have survived virtually unchanged since the 18th century, they constitute an internationally important example of the heritage of that period.

An Foras Forbartha was commissioned to carry out a survey of the house and Demesne lands. This report evaluated the items of artistic and historic interest in the house and grounds and included a detailed evaluation of the trees and woodlands (part of which are in Co. Meath). While there has been some changes in the meantime, especially due to the age and fragility of some of the individual trees, the overall integrity of the Demesne remains intact.

The formal avenue connecting the Demesne to the town of Maynooth is in the ownership of the Council (excluding the front walled garden, adjoining car parking space and driveway of Carton Lodge, which is in private ownership) and will be retained, and protected, as a public amenity in its original form.

## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

---

### 1.23.8 Robertstown Countryside

The Robertstown area is highly important in respect of development of the waterways for recreational purposes. Robertstown Countryside contains large areas of bogland, which are being developed by Bord na Mona, Robertstown and Rathangan canal villages, Donadea Forest Park and Ballinafagh Lake, listed as a wild fowl refuge, the Hill of Allen and a canal system fed from nearby Pollardstown Fen.

In 1978 a study was completed on the "Recreational Resources of the Robertstown Area and their Potential Development". The study was carried out by An Foras Forbartha at the request of Kildare County Council and the Eastern Regional Tourism Organisation in association with Muintir na Tire.

A major portion of the report considered how large areas of cut-away bog which the area contains might be used for amenity and recreational purposes by the creation of lakes for amenity use.

A large number of additional after uses suggested for these bogs ranged from agriculture, forestry and horticulture to recreation. This view was echoed in the report of the Independent Expert Committee on the Future Use of Cutaway Bog (Department of Energy 1991)

A co-ordinating committee for Robertstown Countryside was set up in 1981 to achieve the objectives for this area, such as the use of canal tow paths as linear parks, the setting up of long distance walking routes and the establishment of a Farm Interpretation Centre. A number of these objectives have been achieved, although the major development, the creation of the amenity lakes, has yet to take place.

The importance of the area for tourism development has been recognised both by Bord Failte and Kildare County Council. The provision of an Interpretative centre at Lullymore has greatly strengthened the tourism attractiveness of this area, as have allied private sector developments in the vicinity. The development of a canal boat centre at Lowtown/Robertstown (see section 1.25 below) will also have a major impact on tourism in the area.

### 1.23.9 Donadea Forest

Donadea Forest, which includes the entire area of the Forest Park, together with some adjoining lands which were formerly part of Donadea Demesne, and the associated Lime Avenue to the east, is an important Area of High Amenity in the north west of the county. It is of significant local and regional recreational value, and has been developed as a Forest Park by its current owners, Coillte.

Donadea includes important woodlands, dating mainly from its establishment as a Demesne, together with a number of heritage buildings associated with the Alymer family, including the Castle, with 17th - 19th century additions, Canopied tomb and medieval church ruins, Towers, a wall-walk to the Chapel, a medieval fireplace, Castellated gateway and gate piers, walls, Chough Gate and Lodge, and St Peter's Church, with Aylmer tomb within its interior.

Donadea Forest is also a proposed Natural Heritage Area.

## 1.24 BOGLANDS

At present there is a total of 9,000 hectares (20,000 acres) of bogland in the county. Most of this is being, or has been worked, by Bord na Mona, although in recent years there has been a small increase in private working of the bogs.



## Kildare County Development Plan 1999

---

Practically all of the raised bogland in the county has been cut away or is being developed. It is considered important for educational and heritage reasons that at least one intact raised bog area should be preserved in County Kildare because of its location in the east of the county. It is considered that Carbury Bog, because of its international importance as an area of scientific interest and its status as being the most intact of the raised bogs in the East Midlands, should be considered for this preservation.

The after-use of cut away bogs in the Robertstown Countryside area is set out in the preceding section of this Plan. The policy in respect of Boglands generally is set out in paragraph 2.23 of this Plan.

### 1.25 CANALS

County Kildare contains stretches of both the Royal and Grand Canals, the Barrow Navigation System, their feeders and links.

#### 1.25.1. The Royal Canal

The Royal Canal passes for 24 km. (15 miles) through the north of the county serving the towns of Leixlip, Maynooth and Kilcock. In its short journey through the county, the canal leaves and then re-enters Kildare three times. The longest continuous stretch in Kildare is that from the County Dublin boundary near Leixlip to about 3 km (2 miles) west of Kilcock - a total of 17 km. (10.75 miles) and containing 4 lock systems. The other two shorter stretches (2.4 km. and 5 km.) pass through Cloncurry and Moyvalley respectively. The canal traverses a very scenic route from Leixlip to Maynooth, crossing the Rye by an impressive aqueduct at Leixlip Spa and skirting Carton Demesne, Maynooth College and running on through Kilcock. West of Enfield the canal crosses the River Blackwater and re-enters County Kildare where it passes through an attractive wooded stretch near Moyvalley.

The canal has enormous potential as a recreational amenity for the expanding populations of Leixlip, Maynooth and Kilcock. The County Council has contributed to the work of restoration being carried out by voluntary bodies on the canals and locks, enabling its full amenity potential to be developed in a sustainable fashion. The Royal Canal Corridor Study sets out national policy in respect of part of the canal, including that section of the canal within the county between the Dublin County boundary and Kilcock.

#### 1.25.2. The Grand Canal

The point of entry of the Grand Canal into County Kildare is marked by Lyons Lock (13th Lock) where Lyons House and estate provide a very scenic setting. The canal passes westwards through two lock systems (14th and 15th) before reaching Sallins beyond which there is the junction with the Naas and Corbally Branch at Soldiers Island. The Mainline continues to cross the River Liffey by the fine four-arch Leinster Aqueduct. Beyond this point the canal skirts a ridge of high ground with attractive views over the Liffey valley and continues through the 16th, 17th and 18th Locks after which it is joined by the Blackwood Feeder which was built to supply the canal with water from springs and from Ballinafagh storage reservoir. It continues to Robertstown, 40 km. from Dublin, where the old canal hotel has been designated for use as a tourist centre.

Just to the west of Robertstown the canal reaches Lowtown where it is joined by the Barrow Line. A boat centre has been designated by the Office of Public Works for this location. The Milltown feeder, which is supplied by the "Seven Springs" on the northern edge of the Curragh, joins near this point also. The Barrow Line diverges to the south after leaving Lowtown, while

## **Kildare County Development Plan 1999**

---

the Main Line continues westward mainly through a bogland setting and passes into Co. Offaly just to the east of Edenderry.

From Lowtown the Barrow Line passes through flat bogland country running parallel to the Slate river until it reaches Rathangan. From Rathangan it passes through attractive scenery and two lock systems before reaching Monasterevin where the branch to Mountmellick diverges. A complex of items of architectural and historical interest associated with the canal including two warehouses, bascule bridge, agent's house and aqueduct over the Barrow are to be found here.

South of Monasterevin the canal leaves County Kildare and re-enters it again north of Athy. It runs parallel to the River Barrow until it reaches Athy where they join and form the Barrow Navigation system.

These stretches of the Grand Canal and the Barrow Line constitute important recreational and amenity facilities. They are both used extensively for boating and fishing and their towpaths provide walkways and potential linear parks.

### **1.26 RACE COURSES**

There are three major race courses in County Kildare. The Curragh and Punchestown race courses are located in the county area, while Naas Race Course is contained within the area of Naas Urban District. This concentration of race courses within the county is a reflection of the importance of the area to the bloodstock industry and in its proximity to the Dublin Metropolitan area.



## **1.27 AREAS OF SCIENTIFIC INTEREST**

The county contains many areas of scientific interest, including Pollardstown Fen which is of international importance. Areas of National importance include Carbury Bog, which is of ecological interest, the Chair of Kildare/Grange Hill which is of geological interest, the Curragh, which is of both geological and ecological interest, and the Liffey Valley, which is of geomorphological and ecological interest.

Some of the areas, which were listed in the last Plan, have been designated by the Office of Public Works as Natural Heritage Areas and Special Areas of Conservation. While this will confer additional protection under national legislation, it is considered that their inclusion in the Development Plan remains warranted on planning grounds.

## **1.28 ITEMS OF ARCHITECTURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC INTEREST**

County Kildare is remarkably well provided with representative monuments of all periods. The Standing Stones of Punchestown and Kilgowan, the Great Mounds of Ardsnull and Mullaghmast, the Royal Ritual Site and Hill Fort at Dun Ailinne are some of the many pre-Christian examples. From the Christian period, there are well preserved remains of settlements at Castledermot and Kilcullen and numerous remains of individual churches, high crosses and graveyards, including the walled burial mound at Kileen Cormac, and the whole of the Curragh of Kildare.

The Norman period is represented by the castles of Maynooth, Athy, Killeel and Kilkea and many remains of churches and monasteries.

From 1600 on, County Kildare is more richly endowed with country houses, both from the largest to the smallest, than any other county. Eighteenth century country houses are very numerous and range from Castletown House and Carton Demesne, to the more modest category represented by Corbally, the Shrubbery and Boakfield.

Surveys have been carried out to identify items of architectural, archaeological and historic interest in the county. Such items as have been identified are listed in Part 3 of this Plan.

**PART TWO**

**POLICY**