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CHAPTER 5
Housing

5 HOUSING

The following chapter should be read in conjunction with Appendix 5.

5.1 Background

The Council has statutory obligations to ensure that sufficient land is zoned for all types of housing to meet the County's projected housing requirements over the period of the plan and to ensure that an undue shortage will not arise. One of the basic aims of any local authority is to promote the balanced social, physical and economic development of the county. A key element in the achievement of this is to ensure that there is an adequate supply of housing of varying features and sizes to cater for demand. The availability of housing for a diverse range of housing needs is important for sustaining communities and for enhancing quality of life.

The 2002 Census of Population showed the population of County Kildare to be 163,995 persons. This represents an increase of 29,003 persons over the 1996 figure of 134,992, or a 21.5% rate of increase for the inter-censal period and shows Kildare to be one of the fastest growing counties in the country in that period.

The location of Kildare in close proximity to Dublin together with its attractive living environment and expanding facilities makes it a very attractive place to live.

Table 5.1 Population Change since 1971

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%
2002	163,995	1996-02	+21.5%	3.58%

Source: Census of Population, CSO

5.2 Zoned Land

The County Development Plan 1999 set out a strategy for the development of the county. This strategy set out indicative new residential zonings for each of the major towns in the county. During the period 2001 to 2003 Town or Local Area Plans were prepared for Castledermot, Clane, Kill, Maynooth, Kilcock, Celbridge, Kilcullen, Newbridge, Kildare, Monasterevin,

Rathangan, Sallins, Straffan, Leixlip, Derrinturn, Moone/Timolin/Ballitore/Crookstown. The review of these plans resulting in the zoning of additional lands for residential purposes has ensured that Kildare County Council has fulfilled its statutory obligation to ensure that there is sufficient land zoned for housing purposes. It is estimated that there is currently in excess of 2,700 acres of land zoned for residential purposes in County Kildare. This will ensure that the availability of zoned land will not be a constraining factor in the housing market and there will be sufficient choice available for both the developer and the purchaser.

5.3 Housing Completions

The number of housing completions in Kildare in recent years averages approximately 2,500 per annum as shown in Table 5.2 hereunder:

Table 5.2 Housing Completions in the Greater Dublin Area 1998-2002

Date	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
City Council	3,777	2,804	2,362	3,091	4,124
Fingal	2,618	4,296	4,044	3,602	4,308
South Dublin	2,013	2,049	2,139	1,746	3,406
DLRCC	549	886	860	1,166	785
Dublin Region	8,957	10,035	9,405	9,605	12,623
Kildare	2,509	2,419	2,366	2,426	3,126
Meath	1,422	1,480	2,303	2,553	2,924
Wicklow	1,335	1,294	1,484	1,914	2,002
Mid-East Region	5,266	5,193	6,153	6,893	8,052
Total	14,223	15,228	15,558	16,498	20,675

Source: *Housing Statistics Bulletin, March Quarter 2003, DoEHLG*

5.4 Goal

To ensure that every household has accommodation suitable to its needs, located in an acceptable environment, at a price or rent it can afford.

5.5 Objectives

- (1) To ensure the implementation of the Housing Strategy and to integrate housing provided under Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2004 into private development in a layout that prevents segregation and promotes good design and layout. A minimum of 20% social and affordable housing will be required on all sites that are zoned for residential development or a mixed-use site that includes residential. The social and affordable housing requirements shall be met as set out in the Housing Strategy which indicates an apportionment of 8% for social housing and 12% for affordable housing

- (2) To carry out the Council's responsibilities under the Housing Acts and to provide Local Authority dwellings, affordable, voluntary co-operative housing and private sites as the need arises and as finances permit.
- (3) To promote a high standard of architecture in the design of new housing developments and to encourage a variety of house types, sizes and tenure in individual schemes and variety, interest and social mix in private and social housing developments.
- (4) To ensure that the Council's housing policy and objectives are linked with employment, environmental and infrastructural policies and objectives with the aim of improving the quality of life and the attractiveness of the county's towns and villages.
- (5) To ensure the necessary infrastructural investment to facilitate the overall level of housing output required to meet the current and anticipated levels of demand in a planned and coherent fashion.

5.6 County Housing Strategy - Part V - Planning and Development Act 2000-2004

The preparation of a Housing Strategy is a requirement under Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2004, Part V and Part II of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2002.

The Housing Strategy must include an analysis of demand and supply for the different sectors of the housing market, forecast future needs and shortfalls, and propose objectives to balance demand with supply in a sustainable manner. The procedures for the preparation of a Housing Strategy are set down in the Act.

In particular the Act specifies that the Housing Strategy will:

- Estimate the existing and likely need for housing in the area, and ensure sufficient zoned and serviced land is made available to meet such needs.
- Ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is provided to meet the needs of different categories of households, including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities
- Counteract undue segregation between persons of different social background.
- Provide that as a general policy a specific percentage (not exceeding 20%) of the land zoned in the Development Plan for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be reserved for those in need of social or affordable housing in the area.

Thus the Housing Strategy encompasses both the role of the Authority as the provider of social and special housing and its broader land use planning responsibilities.

The Council's first Housing Strategy 2001-2006 was adopted on 1st October 2001. The analysis which underpinned the Strategy suggested that there was a social and affordable housing requirement in Kildare amounting to 29% of all housing. However legislation provided that the maximum amount of zoned land that could be reserved for social and affordable

housing was 20%. A recent review carried out by the Housing Department with the assistance of Jon Blackwell & Associates concluded that the requirement in this regard remains unchanged. While the provision of housing units under Part V of the Planning & Development Act 2000-2004 has been limited to date, this is expected to change significantly in the short term. The preferred option for compliance with Part V is the provision of completed housing units followed by serviced land or land. Compliance with Part V through the payment of financial contributions will only be acceptable in exceptional circumstances.

5.7 Social and Affordable Housing

The National Development Plan 2000-2006 has identified a need to increase the supply of social housing to meet rising demand.

This need will be met by the Council in a number of ways as a Housing Authority, including through:

- The sale of sites under Low Cost Sites Scheme.
- Providing houses under its multi-annual housing programme.
- Assembling land banks.
- Co operating with and assisting the Private and Voluntary Sectors.
- Implementing the Affordable Housing/Shared Ownership Schemes/Affordable Housing Initiative and other housing initiatives.
- Participating in estate management and involving residents' associations through the Council's community liason programme.
- Full utilisation of Part V of the Planning & Development Act 2000-2004.
- The Capital Assistance Scheme and the Capital Loan and Subsidy Scheme.
- The Disabled Persons Grants Schemes.
- The Essential Repairs Grant and other measures.
- The Traveller Accommodation Plan.
- The Homeless Action Plan.

5.8 Travelling People

The Council will implement measures, as required by law and National policy and in accordance with the Housing Strategy, The Traveller Accommodation Programme 2005-2008, to provide accommodation for members of the Travelling community.

This accommodation may be provided through the development of residential caravan sites/halting sites, or by housing, as may be appropriate.

The Council currently has halting sites for Travellers within the county, at Newbridge (Tankardsgarden), near Monasterevin (Cloncarlin), at Maynooth (Dublin road) and at Athy (Ardrew - within Athy Urban District). Group housing has been provided at Maynooth and further group housing is planned for Ardrew, Athy.

Should it become necessary to meet a particular local need, any suitable site can be considered on its merits, having due regard to normal requirements.

5.9 Residential Density

Since the adoption of the 1999 Development Plan the National policy has evolved to promoting increased densities in appropriate locations. The National strategy outlined in the document “Sustainable Development - A strategy for Ireland” and The Residential Density Guidelines (1999) sets out the Government policy of encouraging more sustainable urban development by the avoidance of excessive suburbanisation and the promotion of higher residential densities in appropriate locations [appropriate locations are considered to be those close to transport nodes, in town centres, and brownfield sites adjacent to town centres]. This will result in:

- More economic use of existing infrastructure and serviced land
- A reduced need for the development of ‘greenfield’ sites, urban sprawl and ribbon development
- Reduced need for investment in infrastructure
- Better access to existing services and facilities
- More sustainable commuting patterns

The Council recognises that higher densities will not be appropriate in every circumstance. In achieving higher densities the protection of the amenities of existing developments and those of the residents of the proposed development will be a primary consideration. Appropriate siting and a high quality urban design product are essential if increased residential densities are to be acceptable. The Council will seek adherence from developers to the densities and standards set out in this Plan as well as the Local Area Plans/Town Plans and relevant Action Area Plans.

5.10 Infill Housing

Infill housing in existing built up areas of the towns and villages of the county will be encouraged. Any proposals should be designed to integrate successfully with the existing pattern of development in terms of housing type, scale and details such as materials, finishes, building lines etc. In all cases the protection of the amenities of existing development should be a significant consideration.

5.11 Design Considerations - Rural Areas

The appearance of new housing development can have a substantial impact on the landscape. Inappropriately sited and designed houses can detract from the rural character of an area while appropriately sited and designed houses may enhance a rural area.


The county’s scenic areas are an economic resource of growing importance. Where development is acceptable in principle a high standard of siting and design will be required to protect the character of the area

5.12 Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Council:

- H 1 To ensure that sufficient and suitably located land is zoned to satisfy development needs within the period of the Plan and in accordance with a strategy to ensure the balanced development of the county.
- H 2 To acquire additional lands during the period of the plan to meet the housing requirements of the county as outlined in the Housing Strategy. 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, will be acquired and developed.
- H 3 To ensure that in implementing the Housing Strategy Kildare County Council will:
 - (a) seek to ensure that housing is available for persons who have different levels of income,
 - (b) seek to ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes are developed to reasonably match the requirements of the different categories of household and include the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities, and
 - (c) seek to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds.
- H 4 To pursue all necessary housing initiatives in response to the needs identified in the Housing Strategy.
- H 5 To continue to meet social housing needs in towns, villages and rural areas of the County and to integrate housing provided under Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2004 into private developments in small schemes so as to prevent segregation and promote good design and layout.
- H 6 To ensure that 20% of any land zoned solely for residential use or for a mixture of residential and other uses shall be made available for the provision of social/affordable housing in accordance with the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the Housing Strategy. Any submission made in compliance with a developer's responsibilities under Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 and the Council's Housing Strategy 2001-2005 shall provide for a minimum of 8% social housing and 12% affordable housing, unless otherwise agreed by the Planning Authority due to the exceptional circumstances of any particular case.

- H 7 To give preference to the option, for compliance by developers with Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2004, where developers build the required houses and then make them available to the Council in order to:
- (a) ensure the fullest achievable degree of social integration
 - (b) ensure complete and efficient development of building sites and
 - (c) to facilitate the implementation of policy with regard to social and affordable housing
- H 8 To support and facilitate the expansion of the role played by the Voluntary Sector in meeting social housing need.
- H 9 To take action as may be necessary to acquire land needed to enable the implementation of housing programmes for both the social housing and private housing sectors, and in particular for the provision of Low Cost Sites, Co-Op housing schemes and Voluntary Low Cost Schemes.
- H 10 To facilitate the provision of services for the community including, in particular, schools, crèches, playgrounds and other education and childcare facilities
- H 11 To ensure the development of community facilities for the population of the county and to co-operate with other organisations in their provision.
- H 12 To facilitate the provision of additional primary and second level schools in appropriate locations where residential expansion is planned.
- H 13 To ensure the provision of recreational facilities keeps pace with residential developments.
- H 14 To require the provision of Childcare Facilities in all new residential developments as appropriate. The indicative standard is one childcare facility, accommodating 20 children, for each 75 dwellings. This standard may be modified in any particular case where there are significant reasons for doing so. Criteria that may be taken into account in such an assessment include the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of the area. (chapter 4 also refers).
- H 15 To ensure that a high standard of design be incorporated in structures and layout, with the design of estate development such as to facilitate pedestrian safety, and restrict vehicular traffic speeds.
- H 16 To require diversity in the density of development and in the form, size and type of dwelling within residential areas.
- H 17 To place an emphasis on well-designed and integrated housing schemes appropriate to the scale and character of the area in the Council's house building programme.

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- H 18 Applicants for significant developments will be requested to submit a social infrastructure assessment which demonstrates the facilities available to adequately service their development. This should include details regarding the following essential facilities: education, childcare, health, recreational facilities and others such as shops and post offices.
- H 19 All developments must comply with statutory fire, health and safety, and building regulations. The council encourages the design of houses to allow for future adaptability.
- H 20 To prohibit the development of areas zoned open space amenity or areas which have been indicated in a previous planning application as being open space.
- H 21 To facilitate and promote the provision of suitable accommodation at appropriate locations for the elderly.
- H 22 To ensure the necessary infrastructure investment to facilitate the overall level of housing output required to meet the current and anticipated levels of demand in a planned and coherent fashion.
- H 23 To provide safe and adequate accommodation for Members of the Travelling Community at appropriate locations and in an appropriate format.
- H 24 To work with the County Development Board to ensure that services and accommodation for members of the Travelling Community are provided in an integrated and co-ordinated manner.
- H 25 To work with voluntary housing associations to assist in reaching the aim of Social & Affordable Housing (Planning & Development Act 2000-2004, Part V)
- H 26 To encourage the regeneration of existing, derelict housing stock.
- H 27 To ensure that housing suitable to the needs of persons with disabilities is available.
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