

4. HOUSING



AIM

To facilitate the provision of high quality residential developments at appropriate locations in line with the settlement strategy. To ensure the provision of appropriate densities at suitable locations; to include an appropriate mix of house sizes, types and tenures in order to meet a variety of household needs and to promote balanced and sustainable communities.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The Council has statutory obligations to ensure that sufficient land is zoned for all types of housing to meet the projected housing requirements of the county over the Plan period 2017-2023. A core objective of the National Housing Policy Statement DCLG (2011) is:

'to enable each household to have access to good quality housing that is appropriate to its circumstances and in a community of its choice.'

With rapid housing growth in the period 1991 to 2011, Kildare experienced a 71.5% increase in its population. The more recent growth rate of population from 2006 to 2011 of 12.9% is the second highest in the State. Over 72% of the county's population live on 5% of the county's total land area, with the northeast of the county having the highest population densities.

Expansion will focus on the creation of sustainable communities at locations that can be served by the necessary infrastructure. This approach will make the best use of the county's land and infrastructure resources by ensuring that new development is linked to existing transport services, physical and social infrastructure and amenities.

Housing provision will be informed by the housing needs of the county while having regard to the following in relation to Kildare:

- Larger than average household size;
- Rapidly increasing number of people 65 years and over; and
- Third youngest population in the State.

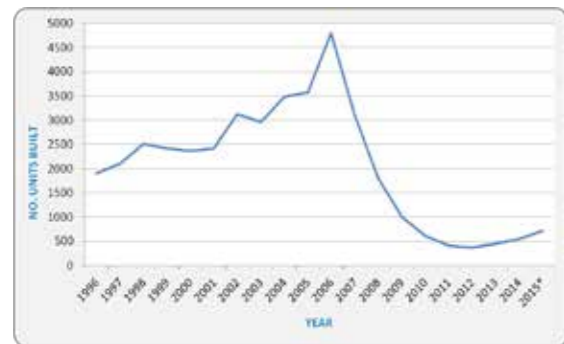


Figure 4.1
House Completions Co. Kildare 1996-2015

4.1.1 Policy Context

A number of national policy publications provide guidance on how to deliver quality urban areas and sustainable urban communities.

Planning applications in towns, villages and settlements should take cognisance of the following documents:

- Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 (Part V);
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2015);
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013) (DMURS);
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009);
- Urban Design Manual A Best Practice Guide (2009).
- Government Policy on Architecture 2009-2015 (2009);
- Best Practice Guidelines Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (2007).

4.1.2 Housing Strategy

The preparation of a Housing Strategy which is included in Appendix 1 of this Plan is a mandatory requirement of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). The Housing Strategy shall estimate the need for social and affordable housing in the county. Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires that in preparing a Housing Strategy a planning authority shall take into account:

- Most recent social housing needs;
- Consultation with approved housing bodies in its functional area; and
- Government policies and objectives that relate to housing and in particular social integration.

The Housing Strategy also assesses the mix of housing types and tenures that are required to serve the needs of the county's forecast population and sets out a range of measures to address housing segregation and provide social housing including the reservation of lands for social housing. The Strategy is based on the population and housing projections set out in the Core Strategy, the most recent summary of social housing assessment within the county, the Social Housing Strategy 2020 (2014) and the Implementation Plan on the State's Response to Homelessness (2014).

The Core Strategy projects a likely need for **32,497** additional housing units in Kildare over the period 2016-2023. The Housing Strategy forecasts that 1,283 social housing units will need to be provided up to 2023.

Pursuant to Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), a 10% social housing requirement will be applied to planning permissions for new residential development on lands zoned solely for residential, or a mixture of residential or other uses.

Policy: General Housing

It is the policy of the Council to:

- HS 1** Implement the Housing Strategy 2017-2023 (and any superseding Housing Strategy agreed by the Council) and to carry out a review of the Housing Strategy following adoption of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy. Where this review outlines that new or revised housing needs have been identified since the adoption of the County Development Plan, the Council will take appropriate steps to adjust the Housing Strategy.

Objectives: General Housing

It is an objective of the Council to:

- HSO 1** Secure the implementation of the Housing Strategy 2017-2023.
- HSO 2** Apply a 10% social housing requirement, pursuant to Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) to all sites that are zoned solely for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses.
- HSO 3** Increase the stock of social housing within the county in order to meet the long term housing needs of those households on the local authority housing list.
- HSO 4** Promote social integration and facilitate a diverse range of dwelling tenures within housing developments, including social housing within all Municipal District Areas of the county.



- HSO 5** Build and support the delivery of new housing appropriate to the needs of the county in terms of the demand for social housing, the needs of older people, homeless people, students, people with disabilities and the Traveller community.

- HSO 6** Meet the county's housing need for social housing provision through a range of mechanisms, including Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), a social housing building programme, acquisition, leasing, the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) scheme, the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) and the utilisation of existing housing stock.

- HSO 7** Work in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies in assessing and addressing the needs and requirements of individuals for housing in Kildare.

- HSO 8** Ensure that an appropriate mix of housing types and sizes is provided in each residential development.

4.2 HOUSING SUPPLY

The Core Strategy identifies a likely need for approximately **32,497** housing units in the county up to 2023. Chapter 3 sets out growth targets for towns, villages, settlements and rural areas during the Plan period. Growth is directed based on the status of the town or settlement within the settlement hierarchy and the capacity of physical and social infrastructure and the environment to accommodate growth.

The Plan will support consolidation through infill development and the redevelopment of areas that are in need of renewal and the sustainable extension of established urban areas.

Policy: Housing Supply

It is the policy of the Council to:

- HU 1** Seek to ensure that sufficient zoned land continues to be available at appropriate locations to fulfil the housing requirements of the county as set out in the Core Strategy.

Objective: Housing Supply

It is an objective of the Council to:

- HUO 1** Ensure that sufficient and appropriately located land is zoned to satisfy development needs within the county, in compliance with the Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy set out in this Plan.

4.3 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Creating a sustainable neighbourhood requires the provision of a range of facilities and services to cater for all, such as schools, care centres, cultural spaces and good public transport links, all within walking distance of each other. Sustainable neighbourhoods must also incorporate quality living spaces, amenity areas and green infrastructure. The provision of such social facilities and services involves a number of agencies and requires an inter-agency response to ensure the timely delivery of necessary infrastructure. Central to the delivery of social infrastructure is to ensure the optimum use of community facilities and services between neighbourhoods and communities.

Policy: Sustainable Communities

It is the policy of the Council to:

- HC 1** Support the development of sustainable communities and to ensure that new housing development is carried out in accordance with Government policy in relation to the development of housing and residential communities.

Objectives: Sustainable Communities

It is an objective of the Council to:

- HCO 1** Have regard to the Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities – Design Guidelines, DEHLG (2007), which provide guidance on the efficient use of land, infrastructure and energy, the design and

orientation of dwellings, the optimum use of renewable sources of energy and the use of scarce natural resources in the construction, maintenance and management of dwellings.

- HCO 2** Encourage appropriate densities for new housing development in different locations through the local area plan process while recognising the need to protect existing residential communities and the established character of the area.
- HCO 3** Ensure that all new urban development is of a high design quality and supports the achievement of successful urban spaces and sustainable communities.
- HCO 4** Require the submission of a design statement with planning applications that incorporate 10 or more residential units.

4.4 RESIDENTIAL URBAN DESIGN

Guidelines for Planning Authorities in relation to residential development advocate a holistic approach to the creation of sustainable communities and residential neighbourhoods with an emphasis on the design of quality urban environments.

The Guidelines on Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities, DEHLG (2007) advise that successful design and good quality sustainable housing developments require a balance between a range of issues such as accessibility, security, safety, privacy, community interaction, availability of appropriate services and the provision of adequate, good quality space.

The Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (2009) set out urban design criteria that should be used in the design of all residential areas. Best practice examples of the implementations of these urban design criteria are illustrated under the companion Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide, DEHLG (2009). This Manual sets out a series of non-prescriptive questions which should be considered during the design process.

The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, DTTAS & DEHLG (2013) provides further guidance in relation to the design of streets and presents a series of principles, approaches and standards to be applied to streets to create safe and successful places.

Policy: Housing Urban Design

It is the policy of the Council to:

- HD 1** Ensure that all new residential development within the county is of high quality design and complies with Government guidance on the design of sustainable residential development and urban streets.

Objectives: Housing Urban Design

It is an objective of the Council to:

- HDO 1** Ensure that residential development contributes to the creation of sustainable communities in accordance with the requirements of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (2009) and the companion Urban Design Manual- A Best Practice Guide, DEHLG (2009).
- HDO 2** Ensure that residential development provides an integrated and balanced approach to movement, place making and streetscape design in accordance with the requirements of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, DEHLG (2013).
- HDO 3** Encourage appropriate design and densities for new residential development while recognising the need to protect existing residential communities and the established character of the area. Where appropriate, local area plans may incorporate additional guidance in the form of design briefs for important, sensitive or larger development sites.

4.5 LOCATION AND DENSITY

The Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (2009) outline sustainable approaches to the development of urban areas. The guidelines recognise that land is a scarce resource that needs to be used efficiently.

These guidelines set out a range of appropriate residential densities for different contexts based on site factors and the level of access to services and facilities, including transport.

Densities should take account of the location of a site, the proposed mix of dwelling types and the availability of public transport services. As a general principle, higher densities should be located within walking distance of town and district centres and high capacity public transport facilities.

Policy: Location and Density

It is the policy of the Council to:

- LD 1** Promote residential densities appropriate to its location and surrounding context.

Objectives: Location and Design

It is an objective of the Council to:

- LDO 1** Ensure that the density of residential development maximises the value of existing and planned physical and social infrastructure and makes efficient use of zoned lands in accordance with the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (2009).
- LDO 3** Require higher residential densities at appropriate locations as set out in the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (2009).
- LDO 4** Recognise that lower densities /serviced sites in certain towns and villages may be considered on serviced land where the demand for the development of single houses in the rural area is particularly high.



Table 4.1

Guidance on appropriate locations for new residential development

Locations Appropriate for New Residential Development	
Town Centre and Brownfield Sites Large towns often contain central sites of strategic importance, some of which may be brownfield in nature. These sites have the greatest potential for the creation of sustainable patterns of development. They can also assist in regeneration, making more intensive use of existing infrastructure, support local services and employment, encourage affordable housing provision and sustain alternative modes of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport.	Outer Suburban / 'Greenfield' Sites Outer Suburban or 'Greenfield' sites are the open lands on the edge of large towns. The development of these sites may require the provision of new infrastructure, roads, sewers and ancillary social and commercial facilities, schools, shops, employment and community facilities. It is therefore necessary to achieve net residential densities that make efficient use of these lands in the context of their location and provide a variety of housing types in order to justify the development of these sites. In certain cases, to facilitate a choice of housing types within the county, limited provision may be made within large towns for lower density schemes provided that, within a neighbourhood or district as a whole, appropriate densities are achieved.
Public Transport Corridors To maximise the return on transport investment, it is important that land use planning underpins the efficiency of public transport services by sustainable settlement patterns – including appropriate densities – on lands within existing or planned transport corridors. Walking distances from public transport nodes (e.g. stations /bus stops) shall be used in defining such corridors within local area plans. Higher densities shall be determined on a site by site basis for sites within 500 metres walking distance of a bus stop, or within 1km of a rail station with decreasing densities with distance away from such nodes. These densities shall take into account the capacity of public transport.	Centrally Located Sites within Small Town / Village The emphasis in designing and considering new proposals should be on achieving a good mixed quality development that reinforces the existing urban form, makes effective use of premium, centrally located land and contributes to a sense of place by strengthening, for example, the street pattern or creating new streets. Innovation and flexibility will be essential in the interpretation of standards so that they do not become inflexible obstacles to the achievement of an attractive village and small town character in new developments.
Inner Suburban / Infill The existing built fabric of large towns often contains residential areas where additional dwellings can be accommodated without compromising the existing residential amenity or residential character of the area. The provision of additional dwellings within inner suburban areas of towns can be provided either by infill or by sub-division. Infill residential development may range from small gap infill, unused or derelict land and backland areas, up to larger residual sites or sites assembled from a multiplicity of ownerships. Sub-division of sites can be achieved where large houses on relatively extensive sites can accommodate new residential development without a dramatic alteration in the character of the area or a negative impact on existing residential amenities. Sub-division shall be considered subject to safeguards regarding residential amenity, internal space standards, private and public open space, car parking and maintenance of the public character of the area.	Edge of centre sites within small town/village The emphasis is on achieving successful transition from central areas to areas at the edge of the smaller town or village. Development of such sites tends to be predominantly residential in character and given the transitional nature of such sites, densities in the range of 20-35 dwellings per hectare will be appropriate including a wide variety of housing types from detached dwellings to terraced type accommodation.
Institutional Lands Institutional lands may be located in suburban areas and characterised by large buildings set in substantial open lands which in some cases may offer recreational or amenity open space opportunity to the wider community. Where a local area plan has indicated that such lands should be developed for residential purposes, it may be appropriate to retain some of the open character of the lands. The quantum, type and nature of open space to be retained shall be determined by an assessment of the nature of the existing site and the quality and provision of existing or proposed open space in the area generally. Proposed development must also have regard to the policies and objectives for architectural and archaeological heritage set out in Chapter 12 of this Plan. The relevant local area plan shall set targets for density yields, recreational uses and urban form with a clear objective of retaining the open character. In the absence of such detail, any application for development of institutional lands shall be accompanied by a masterplan outlining proposals for the entire landholding.	Edge of small town / village In order to offer an effective alternative to the provision of single houses in surrounding unserviced rural areas, it is appropriate to consider proposals for developments with densities of less than 15 - 20 dwellings per hectare along or inside the edge of smaller towns and villages, as long as such lower density development does not represent more than 20% of the total new planned housing stock of the small town or village in question. Such development also needs to ensure the definition of a strong urban edge that defines a clear distinction between urban and the open countryside. The quality of new development will also be key.
	Rural Settlements The emphasis is on the sequential development of lands in small rural settlements in a sequence extending outwards from the centre, with undeveloped lands closest to the settlement core being given first priority. In order to offer an effective alternative to the provision of single houses in surrounding unserviced rural areas, proposals for developments with densities of 15 dwellings per hectare will be considered. The sequencing of development should avoid significant "leap-frogging" where development of new residential areas takes place at some remove from the existing contiguous settlement. The overall expansion of larger rural settlements should proceed on the basis of a number of well-integrated sites within and around the village core. Individual housing schemes will generally not be larger than about 10-12 units. A strong emphasis will also be placed on encouraging infill opportunities.

Source: Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (2009)

Note: Not all locations for new residential development as listed in the table above will be considered appropriate in every circumstance and in order to avoid 'leapfrogging' of development that new residential development will only be considered in some of these circumstances where it can be demonstrated that it is sequential in nature.

Table 4.2
Indicative Density Levels

Category	Location for New Residential Development	General Density Parameters (Units per Ha)	
Large Towns (Pop >5,000)	Town Centre & Brownfield Sites	Site Specific	Subject to the design principles and standards set out in: Chapter 12 Architecture and archaeological Heritage Chapter 16 Urban Design Guidelines Chapter 17 Development Management Standards
	Public Transport Corridors	50 units per ha	
	Inner suburban/infill	Site Specific	
	Institutional Lands	35-50units per ha	
	Outer Suburban /'Greenfield'	30-50 units per ha	
Small Towns & Villages I (Pop 2,000-5,000) and Small Towns & Villages (Pop 400-2,000)	Centrally located sites within Small Towns/Village	30-40 units per ha	
	Edge of centre sites within Small Town/Village	20-35 units per ha	
	Edge of Small Town/Village	15-20 units per ha with lower density in some cases	
Rural Settlements (Pop 50-600)	Infill, backland and edge of centre sites within Rural Settlements	15 units per ha with lower density in some cases	

Source: Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (2009)

4.6 MIX OF DWELLING TYPES

The average household size is 2.94 persons in Kildare. This is down from 3.19 in 2002 and 3.01 in 2006. Kildare has a rapidly increasing '65 and over' age cohort, representing 7.9% of residents in the county. The county also has a high level of population in the 0-4 and 5-12 age cohorts. Therefore, this Plan sets out to ensure that new residential development provides a wide variety of housing types that reflect and cater for the diverse housing needs of the county's population.

Housing variety and mix will be carefully considered when assessing planning applications for all residential developments. Where required a statement should detail the proposed housing mix and why it is considered appropriate, having regard to the issues outlined above.

Policy: Mix of Dwelling Types

It is the policy of the Council to:

- MD 1** Ensure that a wide variety of adaptable housing types, sizes and tenures are provided in the county in accordance with the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and the accompanying Urban Design Manual to support a variety of household types.

Objectives: Mix of Dwelling Types

It is an objective of the Council to:

- MDO 1** Require that new residential developments provide for a wide variety of housing types, sizes and tenures.

- MDO 2** Specify target housing mixes, as appropriate, for certain sites and settlements as part of the Local Area Plan, Small Town Plan or Settlement Plan processes.

- MDO 3** Require that applications for residential or mixed use development with a residential element are accompanied by a Statement of Housing Mix, in accordance with Table 17.3, to address the mix of dwelling types proposed. The Statement of Housing Mix should demonstrate a need for such accommodation, based on local demand and the demographic profile of the area.

4.7 SPECIFIC NEEDS HOUSING

Housing for older people

The changing nature of the age profile of the county requires greater consideration of the housing needs of the elderly. There are two aspects which need to be addressed in order to provide housing for older people:

- Sheltered housing, nursing homes and other residential facilities catering specifically for older people should be appropriately located close to public transport, community facilities, retail and other amenities.
- For those who wish to continue to live independently in their community but wish to downsize, it is important to provide a range of attractive and appropriately located accommodation choices which will in turn address the underutilisation of larger houses, particularly in more established areas.

Student Accommodation

The provision of appropriate student accommodation will enable Maynooth University to continue to develop as a national and international centre for education and research.

Purpose built student accommodation is generally of a higher density with a range of ancillary facilities appropriate for student living. Student accommodation should be located convenient to the University by foot, bicycle or public transport and generally, either within the college campus or appropriately zoned and located lands within Maynooth Town.

Traveller Accommodation

The Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018 sets out the Council's policy regarding the provision of Traveller Accommodation. The Council will, as necessary, continue to update its accommodation programme for the Travelling Community. The Council will endeavour to provide accommodation for members of the Travelling Community.

Homelessness

The Council will continue to work in conjunction with voluntary groups and other agencies in the provision of emergency accommodation for the homeless and for those in need of crisis facilities.

Special Needs Housing

The Council will support the provision of housing to cater for the needs of persons with special needs, such as persons with physical disabilities and/or learning disabilities. This accommodation should be appropriately located close to facilities and services.

Policies: Specific Needs Housing

It is the policy of the Council to:

- SN 1** Seek to ensure that groups with special housing needs, such as the elderly, people with disabilities, the homeless, those in need of emergency accommodation and Travellers are accommodated in a way suitable to their specific needs.
- SN 2** Support the provision of accommodation for older people in established residential and mixed use areas that offer a choice and mix of accommodation types to older people for independent living, semi independent living and assisted living.
- SN 3** Provide for and facilitate the provision of accommodation to meet the needs of older people and to encourage the provision of a range of housing options for elderly persons in central, convenient and easily accessible locations and to integrate such housing with mainstream housing.
- SN 4** Implement the Draft Kildare County Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018 (and any superseding programmes agreed by the Council) in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

Objectives: Specific Needs Housing

It is an objective of the Council to:

- SNO 1** Support:
- (a) The provision of housing for groups with specific housing needs, including the elderly, people with disabilities, the homeless, those in need of emergency accommodation and Travellers, at appropriate locations and in accordance with the policies and objectives of this Plan.
 - (b) Geographical balance in the provision of housing for groups with specific housing needs.
- SNO 2** Ensure the housing mix of new residential schemes takes account of the needs of older people in terms of appropriately designed, located and sized units.
- SNO 3** Provide for the sub division of large houses or amalgamation of smaller houses within established areas for the purpose of providing semi-independent or nursing home accommodation. Such development should be subject to the normal development management standards set out in Chapter 17 of this Plan.
- SNO 4:** Identify locations in Local Area Plans, Small Town Plans or Settlement Plans to cater for the needs of the elderly and promote co-location of other facilities where appropriate.
- SNO 5** Carry out, during the lifetime of this Plan, a comprehensive study of options for housing for older people in those parts of the county with the highest proportions of older people and to make specific recommendations for housing provision in these areas.
- SNO 6** Facilitate the development of appropriately located and designed student accommodation to allow Maynooth University to continue to develop as a national and international centre for education and research.
- SNO 7** Ensure that Traveller accommodation is located in proximity to key services including education, community, health, recreation and public transport facilities.

- SNO 8** Provide longer term sustainable Traveller accommodation development, while ensuring proper provision of infrastructure for all accommodation including halting sites.
- SNO 9** Facilitate the provision of purpose built standalone dwellings within mixed schemes for people with special needs in conjunction with voluntary groups and other agencies.
- SNO 10** Facilitate the provision of accommodation close to key services and public transport facilities that are appropriate to the needs of persons with disabilities in conjunction with the HSE, voluntary bodies and the private sector.

4.8 DESIGN AND LAYOUT

High quality design should be guided by the principles set out in the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009), the companion Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide (2009) and the Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2015). Standards in relation to the quality of residential development including public open space, private open space, dwelling unit sizes, privacy and aspect are set out under Chapter 17 of this Plan. The standards are framed by the policies and objectives set out below.

Policy: Design and Layout

It is the policy of the Council to:

- DL 1** Promote a high quality of design and layout in new residential developments and to ensure a high quality living environment for residents, in terms of the standard of individual dwelling units and the overall layout and appearance of the development.

Objectives: Design and Layout

It is an objective of the Council to:

- DLO 1** Create high quality living environments for residents in terms of individual dwelling units and the overall layout, design and function of the developments through the implementation of the standards set out in Chapter 17 Development Management Standards and the principles set out in the

Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009) and the companion Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide (2009) and the Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2015).

- DLO 2** Promote new residential developments that take account of energy efficient and renewable energy opportunities.
- DLO 3** Support dwellings that are designed to be sufficiently adaptable to enable people to live comfortably through different stages of their lives and changing household needs.
- DLO 4** Promote the carrying out of basic habitat assessments to inform the design of new developments in order to ensure that proposals for development integrate the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure, biodiversity and landscape features (including trees and hedgerows) where possible and minimise adverse impacts on existing habitats (whether designated or not), by including mitigation and/or compensation measures, as appropriate.
- DLO 5** Develop typologies for adaptable housing types that meet the life cycle needs of communities having regard to CSO socio-demographic data.

4.9 PRIVATE AND SEMI PRIVATE OPEN SPACE

Appropriate provision shall be made for functional and attractive public open space and amenity areas as an integral part of any new development proposal. Refer to Chapter 17, Development Management Standards.

Policy: Private and Semi Private Open Space

It is the policy of the Council to:

- OS 1** Ensure that all dwelling units have access to high quality, functional private open space that is carefully integrated into the design of new residential developments.

Objectives: Private and Semi Private Open Space

It is an objective of the Council to:

- OSO 1** Ensure that all private open spaces for dwellings, apartments and duplexes are designed in accordance with the standards set out in the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Design Standards for New Apartments (2015), the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and the companion Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide (2009).

4.10 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

The provision of public space that is functional, appropriately designed and well located is a key element of high quality residential environments. Larger public open space should have active and passive recreation areas that enhances the visual character, identity and amenity of the area. Refer to Chapter 17, Development Management Standards.

Policy: Public Open Space

It is the policy of the Council to:

- PS 1** Ensure that all residential development is served by a clear hierarchy and network of high quality public open spaces that enhances the visual character, identity and amenity of the area.



Objectives: Public Open Space

It is an objective of the Council to:

- PSO 1** Ensure that public and semi private open space in new residential development complies with the quantitative and qualitative standards set out in the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and in Chapter 17 of this Plan.
- PSO 2** Ensure that there is a clear definition between public, semi private and private open space and that all public and semi private open spaces benefit from passive surveillance from residential development.

4.11 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN ESTABLISHED URBAN AREAS - INFILL, BACKLAND, SUBDIVISION OF SITES AND CORNER SITES.

The development of additional new housing, which respects the amenity and character of the existing residential area and is coherent and well designed, can contribute to enhancing the vibrancy and character of an existing area while also contributing to the efficient sustainable use of serviced lands.

Sustainable intensification of existing residential areas can be achieved through infill development, the subdivision of larger houses, backland development, family flats and extension to dwelling houses. Refer to Chapter 17 of this Plan for standards in relation to this type of development.

Housing in Town Centres

The Council will generally take a supportive approach to accommodating the provision of new or refurbished housing development in town centre locations where such proposals positively contribute to the overall vitality and vibrancy of the town/village. The onus will be on the developer to demonstrate that any such proposal is complementary to the overall function of the town centre and does not detract from the main commercial offering. The Council will be particularly supportive of proposals which aim to bring back into use underutilised upper floor areas in town centres for residential use subject to meeting satisfactory design and accommodation standards for such development.

Urban Infill and Backland Development

The development of underutilised infill and backland sites in existing residential areas is generally encouraged. A balance is needed between the protection of amenities, privacy, the established character of the area and new residential infill. The use of contemporary and innovative design solutions will be considered for infill and backland development and connections to the surrounding area and services should be identified and incorporated into proposals.

Extensions to Dwellings

Domestic extensions are an effective way for homeowners to adapt to changing household needs without having to move house. The design, scale and layout should have regard to the amenities of adjoining properties, particularly as regards overshadowing and privacy.

Family Flat

Family flats are a way of providing additional accommodation with a level of independence for an undefined temporary period of time. Applications for family flats will be considered subject to criteria set out in Chapter 17 of this Plan.

Sub-Division of Dwellings

New households in existing residential areas may be catered for through the sub-division of existing dwellings. The subdivision of dwellings will generally only be considered for exceptionally large dwellings on relatively extensive sites in urban areas and subject to compliance with the relevant development management standards set out in Chapter 17.

Policy: Sustainable residential development in established urban areas

It is the policy of the Council to:

- SR 1** Support sustainable residential development in established urban areas at appropriate locations, to support the ongoing viability of social and physical infrastructure and services, and to meet the future housing needs of the county. Standards in relation to residential development in established urban areas are set out under Chapter 17 of this Plan.

Objectives: Sustainable residential development in established urban areas

It is an objective of the Council to:

- SRO 1** Encourage the consolidation of existing settlements through well designed infill developments in existing residential areas, located where there are good connections to public transport and services and which comply with the policies and objectives of this Plan.
- SRO 2** Consider backland development generally only where development is carried out in a planned and coordinated manner.
- SRO 3** Facilitate the extension of existing dwellings in accordance with the standards set out in Chapter 17 of this Plan.
- SRO 4** Facilitate the provision of a family flat or mews type development in circumstances where the planning authority is satisfied that the proposal complies with the standards set out in Chapter 17 of this Plan.

SRO 5 To facilitate sub division of larger dwellings on extensive sites in urban areas that are well served by public transport and subject to adherence to the relevant standards set out in Chapter 17 of this Plan.

SRO 6 Support and facilitate the provision of new or refurbished residential development in town centres, particularly at upper floor locations, where such proposals positively contribute to the overall vitality and vibrancy of the particular town/village, and to operate flexibility in relation to the open space and car parking standards set out in Chapter 17 of this Plan where it can be demonstrated that the amenities of future occupants and the surrounding area will not be compromised and subject to compliance with specific policy objectives and / or standards contained in Guidelines issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).



4.12 HOUSING IN RURAL AREAS

Aim

To encourage the sustainable provision of one off rural housing in accordance with the settlement strategy and to ensure that development of rural areas takes place in a way that is compatible with the protection of key economic, environmental, natural and cultural heritage resources of the county.

4.12.1 Introduction

Chapters 2 and 3 set out in the Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy for County Kildare. Population and housing targets have been allocated to towns, villages, settlements and rural areas based on the strategic recommendations of the *Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022* (RPGs).

The Council acknowledges the distinct characteristics of rural communities in Kildare and through the policies and objectives of this Plan, will endeavour to sustain and renew rural communities. The Plan seeks to facilitate housing in rural areas for people who have a genuine need to live in rural areas and who will contribute to the rural community, while protecting rural areas from housing that would adversely impact on landscape character, environmental quality, the rural economy and the rural character of the area. The Settlement Strategy makes provision to accommodate up to 8% of the county's projected housing growth over the Plan period in rural areas. Other projected housing growth will be directed into the settlements, villages and towns of the county.

4.12.2 Policy Context

In recognition of the sustained pressure for one-off dwellings in the State a number of policy documents have been issued over the last decade outlining the policy and operational approaches for rural one-off housing. Key elements of the relevant policy documents are summarised as follows:

The *National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020* (NSS), advises planning authorities to ensure that key assets in rural areas are protected. It recognises that the demand for one-off housing tends to come from two distinct areas – rural generated housing demand and urban generated housing demand.

- Rural generated housing demand arises from persons who are an intrinsic part of the rural area by way of family links to the area and/or who work in a type of employment, intrinsic to the rural economy, which requires them to live in a rural area, to be close to their rural based employment.
- Urban generated housing demand is defined as housing in rural areas sought by people living and working in urban areas. The NSS states that urban generated housing should take place, as a general principle, within the built up areas and on lands identified, through the development plan process, for integrated, serviced and sustainable development. The strategy states that towns and villages have a key role in catering for this type of housing demand in a sustainable manner.

The NSS recognises that the challenge is to ensure that the towns and villages of the county offer a variety of attractive and affordable housing options to meet the housing needs of urban communities. This will assist in mitigating excessive levels of pressure for urban generated development in rural areas, especially those closest to the environs of larger towns.

It will also enhance the availability and affordability of housing in rural areas to meet the housing needs of the established rural community and accommodate sustainable population growth in a way that supports the viability of rural services provision.

The NSS advise that where local needs assessment criteria have been satisfied and subject to satisfying good practices in relation to site location, landscape / environmental sensitivities and design, rural generated housing needs should be accommodated where they arise.

Sustainable Rural Housing - Guidelines for Planning Authorities, issued by the DEHLG in 2005 identify that Kildare falls within areas under strong urban influence and also within stronger rural areas. The guidelines require that only people who are part of the rural community are facilitated for one-off housing and that there is careful management of the rural environs of major urban areas to ensure their orderly development in the future.

The DEHLG *Circular Letter SP5/08* (2007) provides guidance in relation to local need and occupancy conditions.

The EPAs – *Code of Practice for Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses* (2009) provides a framework of best practice in relation to the development of wastewater treatment and disposal in rural areas for the protection of the environment and water quality.

4.12.3 Local Context

Based on the rural typologies set out in the NSS, the rural area of Kildare falls within the 'areas under strong urban influence' and 'stronger rural areas' categories. This is evident at a local level through a strong demand for rural one-off housing. Kildare County Council commissioned the All Island Research Observatory (AIRO), Maynooth University to undertake a study of rural housing development in the county to inform the review of the County Development Plan. The Kildare Rural Housing Study 2016, AIRO, quantifies the extent of rural housing that has occurred between 1998 and 2015 in County Kildare using GeoDirectory and Census data.

There were a total of 80,096 housing units in Kildare in 2015 and of these 19,465 or 24.2% are classified as rural one-off dwellings. A total of 8,959 rural one-off dwellings were constructed between 1998 and 2015 (Figure 4.2 refers). This is an average of 530 dwellings per annum.

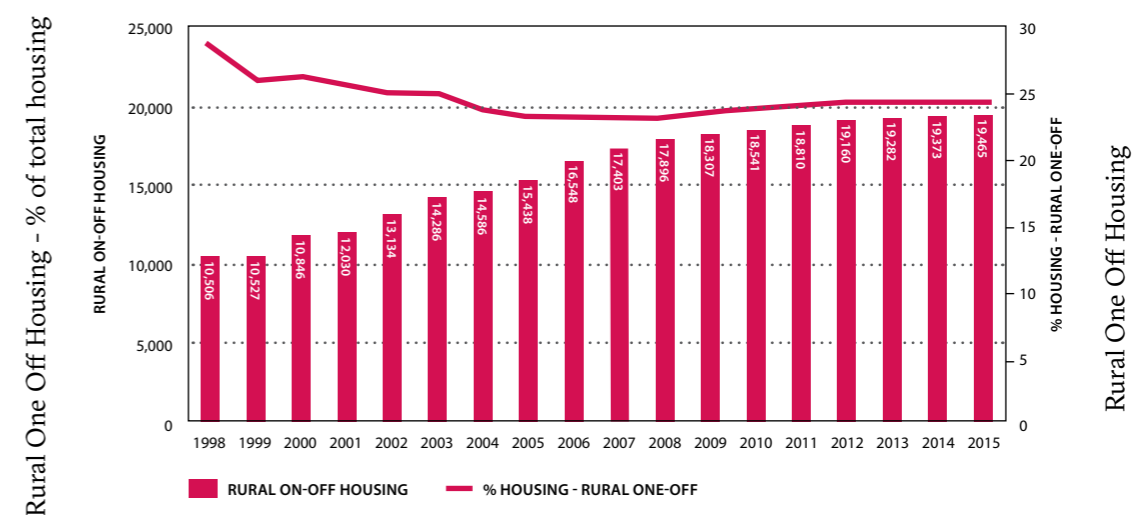


Figure 4.2
Rural One-Off Housing in Kildare 1998-2015

¹ This refers to all dwellings situated outside of the towns, villages and settlements identified in the Kildare CDP 2011-2017.

The key findings of the Kildare Rural Housing Study, AIRO, 2016 are as follows:

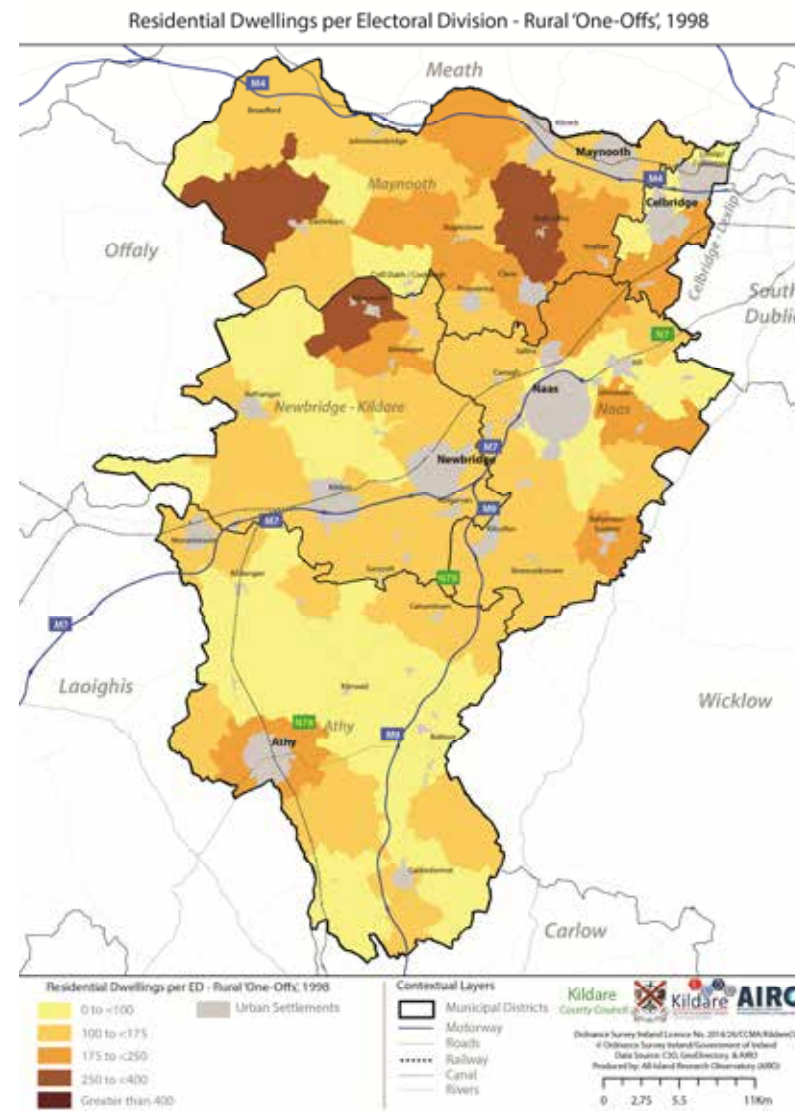
- In 1998, there were 10,464 rural one-off dwellings in County Kildare;
- In 2015 there were 19,371 rural one-off dwellings in County Kildare.
- A total of 8,959 rural one-off dwellings were constructed between 1998 and 2015, at an average of 530 dwellings per annum.
- In 1998 a total of 3 Electoral Divisions had more than 250 rural one-off dwellings and no Electoral Division had more than 400 rural one-off dwellings.
- In 2015 a total of 34 Electoral Divisions had more than 250 rural one-off dwellings and of these 7 Electoral Divisions had more than 400 rural one-off dwellings.
- Rural dwellers in Kildare have a 64% higher travel time to key services when compared to occupants of dwellings in designated towns, villages or settlements in Kildare.
- The cost of providing key services such as roads, public transport, postal services, electricity and communications to dispersed rural communities in Ireland is higher than the cost of provision in designated towns, villages or settlements.

While there is a need to recognise the genuine needs of people living and working in rural areas and the contribution that they make to rural community life, the incremental level of rural housing development in the county is considered to be unsustainable in the longer term.

The open rural character of many areas has been eroded by piecemeal housing development and the capacity of the environment and the road network to accommodate new development is reaching its capacity in many areas of the county. This, coupled with a sustained demand for rural housing that will continue into future generations, creates an imperative to carefully manage future rural housing development in County Kildare and to facilitate the provision of more sustainable housing options for rural communities.

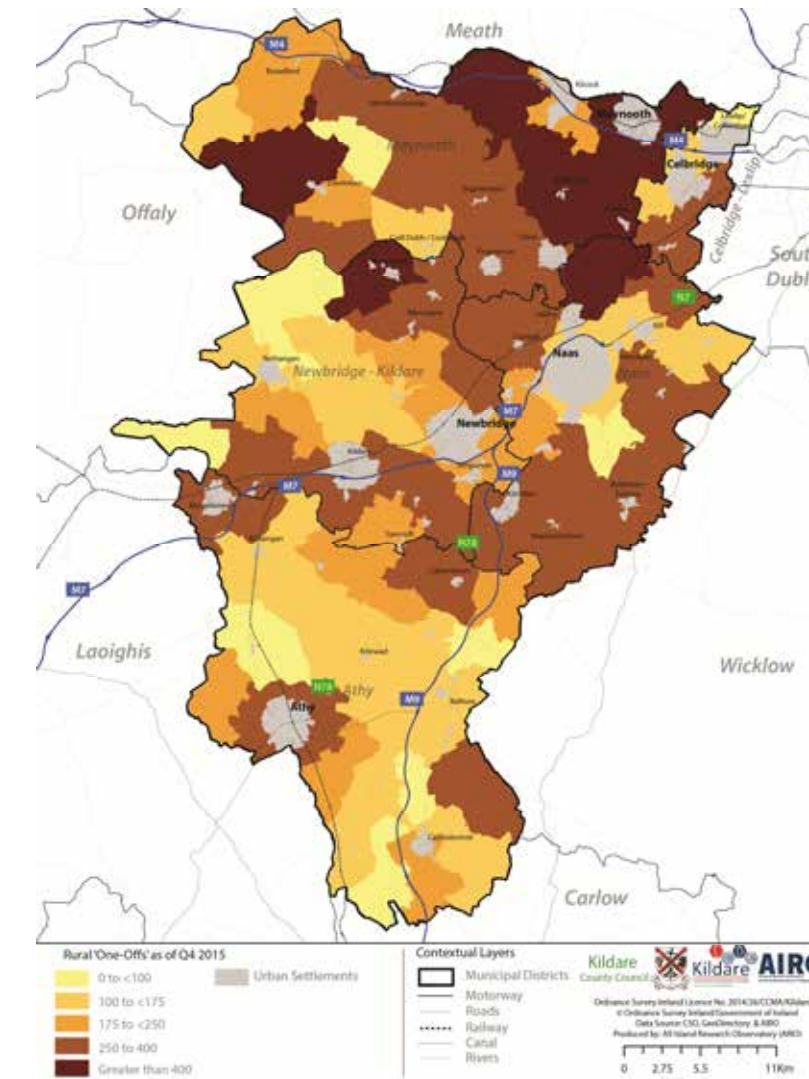
There is a need to strike a reasonable balance between the need to support sustainable development, the diversification of the rural economy, the promotion of economic development, and the protection of the environmental and natural heritage resources of the county. Maps 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 detail the increase in rural housing between 1998 and 2015 by Electoral Division.

Map 4.1
Rural One Off Dwellings in 1998 (by Electoral Division)



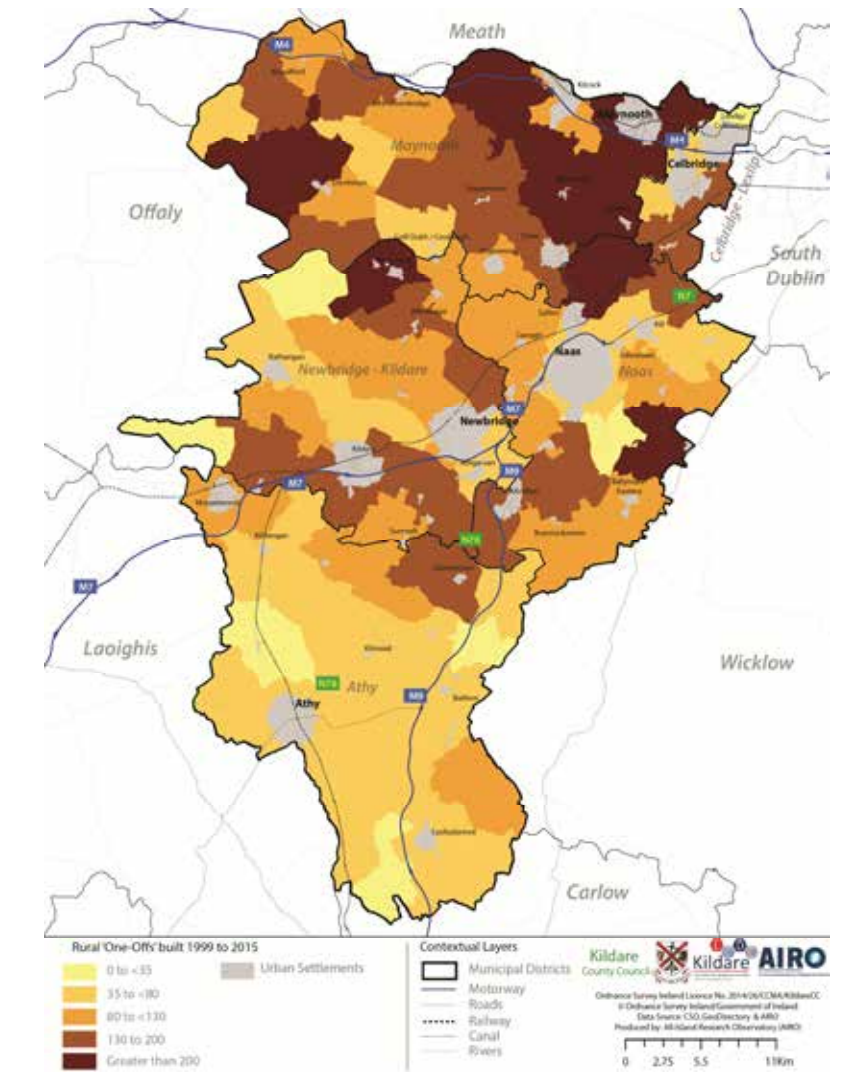
Map 4.1 shows all dwellings located in the rural Kildare by the end of 1998 with the majority of Electoral Divisions (EDs) accommodating up to 175 rural one-off dwellings. Three EDs have greater than 250 rural one off dwellings i.e. the areas surrounding Rathcoffey, Allenwood and Derrinturn. No ED had more than 400 rural one off dwellings.

Map 4.2
Rural One Off Dwellings as of Q 4 2015 (by Electoral Division)



Map 4.2 shows the total number of rural one off dwellings per ED by the end of 2015. This illustrates a more widespread pattern with high concentrations of rural one off housing development i.e. over 250 units, in a much greater number of EDs. Map 4.2 also shows eight EDs with more than 400 new units per ED.

Map 4.3
Rural One Off Dwellings built between 1999 and 2015 (by Electoral Division)



Map 4.3 shows the number of dwellings built per ED during the period 1999 to 2015. A significant level of development is evident in the north-east and north-west, with EDs surrounding Rathcoffey, Straffan, Kilcock, Derrinturn, Maynooth, Celbridge and Leixlip experiencing significant growth of greater than 200 new rural one off dwellings in the period. Almost the entire central area of the County has experienced growth of up to 200 new rural one off dwellings per ED e.g. areas surrounding Naas, Kildare, Monasterevin, Newbridge, Kilcullen and Calverstown.

Map 4.1

Rural One Off Dwellings in 1998
(by Electoral Division)

Map 4.2

Rural One Off Dwellings as of Q 4 2015
(by Electoral Division)

Map 4.3

Rural One Off Dwellings built between
1999 and 2015 (by Electoral Division)



4.12.5 Rural Housing Strategy

The focus of this rural housing strategy is to facilitate in a sustainable manner the legitimate needs of rural communities or those who by their occupation make a significant contribution to community life in the county. It is equally important to recognise the role of the rural countryside in the economic development of the county and the need to protect the rural area as an environmental and economic resource. The rural housing strategy seeks to:

- Formulate policies which guide residential development to the most appropriate locations in rural areas, in the interests of protecting natural and manmade assets. Key assets in rural areas such as water quality, natural / cultural heritage and the quality of the landscape must be protected;
- Apply appropriate policy criteria to regulate the provision of rural housing in accordance with the relevant national and regional guidelines; and
- Ensure best practice is applied regarding site location, landscape and environmental sensitivities, design, layout, access, drainage and impacts on soils, flood risk assessment and management, water table and water quality.

4.12.6 Rural Policy Zones

To facilitate the management of rural one-off housing, Map 4.4 identifies two rural policy zones which have been identified on the basis of a number of key considerations and challenges.

These comprise:

- Consideration of environmental sensitivities as informed by the Strategic Environmental Assessment which divides the county into five environmentally sensitive areas comprising:
 - Most Sensitive - unique landscape areas including The Curragh and Pollardstown Fen;
 - Sensitive - being special landscape areas including the Chair of Kildare, the Northern Hills, River Liffey and River Barrow.
 - High Sensitivity - landscape areas including the Western Bogland and Eastern Uplands located to the north west and south east of the county;
 - Medium Sensitivity - landscape areas including Eastern Transition Lands and Southern Eastern Uplands;
 - Low Sensitivity - landscape areas including the North Western Lowlands, Northern Lowlands, Central Undulating Lands and Southern Lowlands.

- Consideration of landscape character areas and landscape sensitivities (see Chapter 14). A landscape sensitivity rating is a measure of the ability of the landscape to accommodate change or intervention without suffering unacceptable impacts. The sensitivity of the landscapes in the county is rated as low, medium, high, special and unique. In general, the uplands and river valleys / water corridors have been given a high rating, transition lands a medium rating and the lowland plains and boglands a mix of low and medium rating.

- Consideration of the Kildare Rural Housing Study, AIRO, 2016 which details the level of rural housing across the county.
- The ability of the rural area to absorb further development. This has been informed by considerations of the density of development arising from the 2011 Census and the Geo-Directory 2015 which maps one-off dwellings throughout the county. The highest concentrations of population in the rural area are located in the north east of the county and on the periphery of the main towns of Leixlip, Maynooth, Celbridge, Clane, Naas, Newbridge and Athy.

In addition there are significant levels of one-off dwellings in the rural environs of towns and villages such as Allenwood, Derrinturn, Kilcock, Kildcullen, Kildare, Prosperous, Rathangan and Sallins and in the peripheral areas of rural villages such as Allen, Caragh, Carbury, Cutbush, Kilmeague, Nurney, Rathcoffey, Suncroft, Calverstown, Brannockstown and Two Mile House and in particular along the regional and local roads serving these areas.

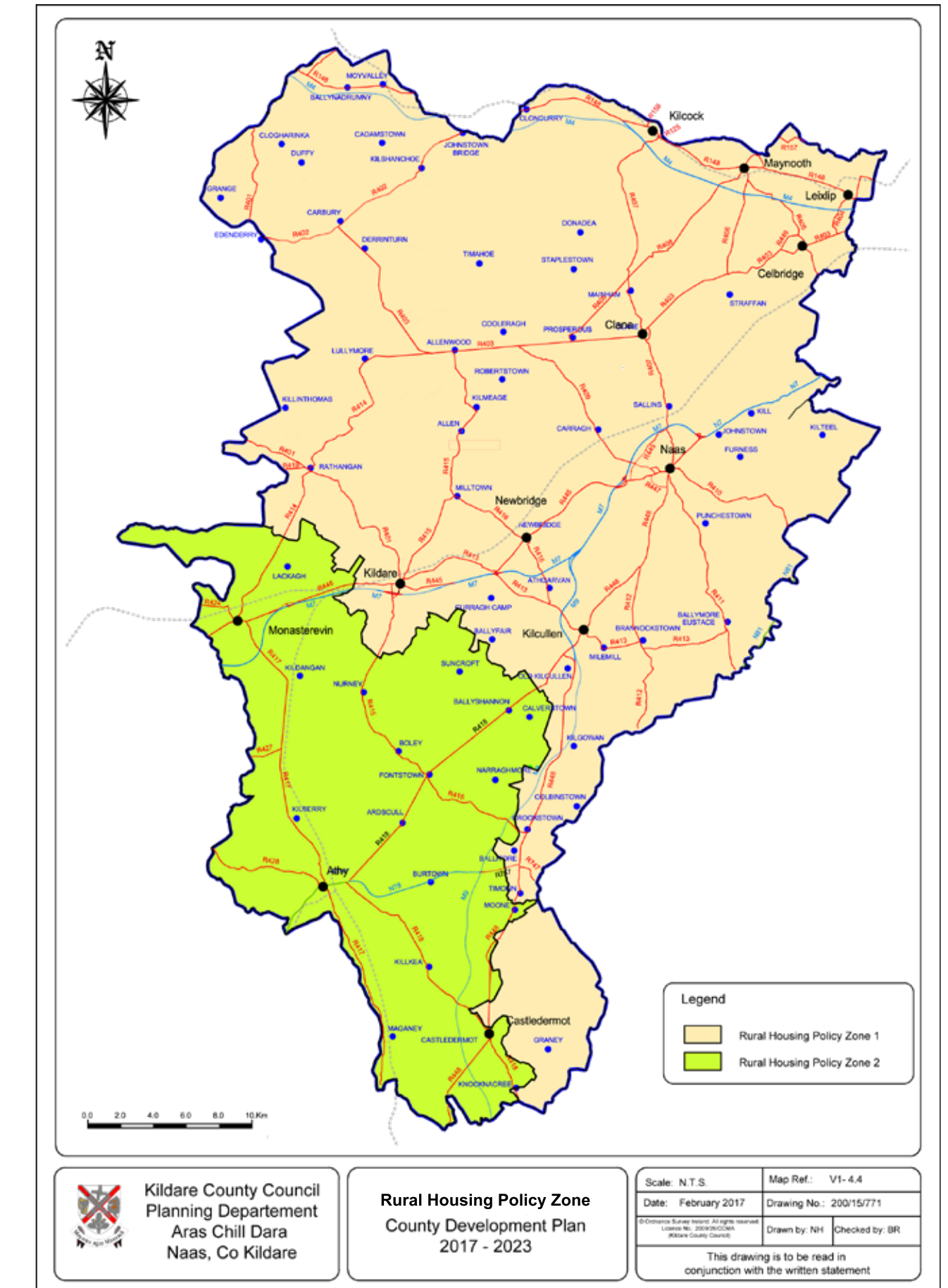
Consideration of (i) – (iv) above results in a categorisation of the county into rural areas with particular characteristics. These characteristics have informed the classification of the county into the following 'Rural Housing Policy Zones' (See Map 4.4):

- Rural Housing Policy Zone 1: Northern, central and eastern areas of the county (along the border with Wicklow) – more populated areas with higher levels of environmental sensitivity and significant development pressure.
- Rural Housing Policy Zone 2: South west of the county – areas under pressure for development but with lower concentrations of population and lower levels of environmental sensitivity.

The two Rural Housing Policy Zones have different local need criteria, which have been tailored in accordance with the sensitivity of the location (see Table 4.3). An applicant must comply with either Category of Applicant 1 or Category of Applicant 2. The applicant must also meet one of the local need criteria in order to be considered eligible for a rural one off house.

Map 4.4

Rural Housing Policy Zones



4.12.7 Rural Housing Policy

Rural generated housing demand will be managed having regard, *inter alia*, to the applicant's genuine local need, together with the protection of key economic, environmental, natural and heritage assets, such as the road network, water quality, important landscapes, habitats and the built heritage. In order for an applicant to be considered for a one-off dwelling in the rural area of Kildare, an applicant must:

<p>(A) Meet one of the following categories of applicant:</p> <p>1. A member of a farming family who is actively engaged in farming the family landholding.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>2. A member of the rural community.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>(B) Meet one of the local need criteria set out in Table 4.3 (a) and (b) Schedule of Local Need.</p>

Table 4.3(a)
Schedule of Local Need Category of Applicant 1

Category of Applicant 1	
<p>A member of a farming family who is actively engaged in farming the family landholding. The applicant must demonstrate a genuine local need to reside in the area through active and direct involvement in the running of the family farm. The farm must be in the ownership of the applicant's immediate family¹ for a minimum of seven years preceding the date of the application for planning permission.</p>	
Local Need Criteria	
Rural Housing Policy Zone 1	Rural Housing Policy Zone 2
(i) Persons engaged full time in agriculture (including commercial bloodstock/ horticulture), wishing to build their home in the rural area on the family landholding and who can demonstrate that they have been engaged in farming at that location for a continuous period of over 7 years, prior to making the application.	(i) Persons engaged full time in agriculture (including commercial bloodstock/ horticulture), wishing to build their home in the rural area on the family landholding and who can demonstrate that they have been engaged in farming at that location for a continuous period of over 5 years, prior to making the application.

¹ Immediate family members are defined as mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister or guardian.

Table 4.3(b)
Schedule of Local Need Category of Applicant 2

Category Of Applicant 2	
<p>A member of the rural community. The applicant must demonstrate a genuine local need to reside close to their family home by reason of immediate family² ties or their active and direct involvement in a rural based enterprise.</p>	
Local Need Criteria	
Rural Housing Policy Zone 1	Rural Housing Policy Zone 2
(i) Persons who have grown up and spent substantial periods of their lives (12 years) living in the rural area of Kildare as members of the rural community and who seek to build their home in the rural area on their family landholding and who currently live in the area. Where no land is available in the family ownership, a site within 5km of the original family home may be considered.	(i) Persons who have grown up and spent substantial periods of their lives (12 years) living in the rural area of Kildare as members of the rural community and who seek to build their home in the rural area on their family landholding and who currently live in the area. Where no land is available in the family ownership, a site within 8km of the original family home may be considered.
(ii) Persons who have grown up and spent substantial periods of their lives (12 years) living in the rural area of Kildare, as members of the rural community who have left the area but now wish to return to reside near to, or to care for immediate family members, seeking to build their home in the rural area on the family landholding or on a site within 5km of the original family home.	(ii) Persons who have grown up and spent substantial periods of their lives (12 years) living in the rural area of Kildare, as members of the rural community who have left the area but now wish to return to reside near to, or to care for immediate family members, seeking to build their home in the rural area on the family landholding or on a site within 8km of the original family home.
(iii) Persons who can satisfy the Planning Authority of their commitment to operate a full time business from their proposed home in the rural area where they have existing links to that rural area and that the business will contribute to and enhance the rural community and that the nature of such enterprise is location dependent and intrinsically linked to a rural location.	(iii) Persons who can satisfy the Planning Authority of their commitment to operate a full time business from their proposed home in the rural area where they have existing links to that rural area and that the business will contribute to and enhance the rural community and that the nature of such enterprise is location dependent and intrinsically linked to a rural location.

² Immediate family members are defined as mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister or guardian.

Note: Applications for rural one off dwellings will be considered, subject to the policies and objectives set out in the County Development Plan, where it is demonstrated that the development would not prejudice the environment and the rural character of the area. In this regard factors such as the sensitivity of the receiving environment, the nature and extent of existing development and the extent of development on the original landholding will be considered.

4.13 POLICIES: RURAL HOUSING

It is the policy of the Council to:

- RH 1** Ensure that the planning system guides development to the appropriate locations in rural areas thereby protecting natural and man-made assets in those areas.
- RH 2** Manage the development of one off housing in conjunction with the rural housing policy zone map (Map 4.4) and accompanying Schedules of Category of Applicant and Local Need Criteria set out in Table 4.3. Documentary evidence of compliance with the rural housing policy must be submitted as part of the planning application.
- RH 3** Require applicants to demonstrate that they are seeking to build their home in the rural area in Kildare for their own full time occupation. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that they do not own or have not been previously granted permissions for a one off rural dwelling in Kildare and have not sold this dwelling or site to an unrelated third party, save in exceptional circumstances.
- RH 4** Restrict residential development on a landholding, where there is a history of development through the speculative sale or development of sites, notwithstanding the applicant's compliance with the local need criteria.
- RH 5** Restrict occupancy of the dwelling as a place of permanent residence for a period of seven years to the applicant / occupant who complies with the relevant provisions of the local need criteria.
- RS 6** Recognise and promote the agricultural and landscape value of the rural area and prohibit the development of urban generated housing in the rural area.
- RH 7** Encourage the appropriate re-use and adaptation of the existing rural residential building stock in preference to new build.
- RH 8** Recognise that exceptional health circumstances, supported by relevant documentation from a registered medical practitioner, may require a person to live in a particular environment. Housing in such circumstances will generally be encouraged

in areas close to existing services and facilities and in Rural Settlements. All planning permissions for such housing granted in rural areas shall be subject to a seven year occupancy condition.

4.13.1 Siting and Design

It the policy of the Council to:

- RH 9** Ensure that, notwithstanding compliance with the local need criteria, applicants comply with all other normal siting and design considerations (Refer to Chapter 16 for further guidance) including the following:
- (i) The location and design of a new dwelling shall take account of and integrate appropriately with its physical surroundings and the natural and cultural heritage of the area and respect the character of the area. Development shall have regard to Chapter 16 Rural Design Guidelines (and any subsequent changes to these guidelines) and Chapter 17 Development Management Standards.
 - (ii) Appropriate landscaping of proposed development using predominantly native species as per Table 17.2 of this Plan.
 - (iii) The protection of features that contribute to local attractiveness including; landscape features, hedgerows, trees, historic and archaeological landscapes, water bodies, ridges, skylines, topographical features, geological features and important views and prospects.
 - (iv) The capacity of the area to absorb further development. In particular, the following factors will be examined; the extent of existing development in the area, the extent of ribbon development in the area, the degree of existing haphazard or piecemeal development in the area and the degree of development on a single original landholding.

- (v) The ability to provide safe vehicular access to the site without the necessity to remove extensive stretches of native hedgerow and trees. The need for the removal of extensive roadside hedgerow may indicate that the site is unsuitable for development.
- (vi) The ability of a site in an unserved area to accommodate an on-site waste water disposal system in accordance with the EPA Code of Practice for Wastewater Treatment Systems for single houses (2009), the County Kildare Groundwater Protection Scheme, and any other relevant documents / legislation as may be introduced during the Plan period.
- (vii) The ability of a site in an unserved area to accommodate an appropriate on-site surface water management system in accordance with the policies of the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (2005), in particular those of Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SuDS);
- (viii) The need to comply with the requirements of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DEHLG (2009).

RH 10 Control the level of piecemeal and haphazard development of rural areas close to urban centres and settlements having regard to potential impacts on:

- (i) The orderly and efficient development of newly developing areas on the edges of towns and villages;
- (ii) The future provision of infrastructure such as roads and electricity lines; and
- (iii) The potential to undermine the viability of urban public transport due to low density development.

RH 11 Preserve and protect the open character of transitional lands outside of settlements in order to prevent linear sprawl near towns, villages and settlements and to maintain a clear demarcation and distinction between urban areas and the countryside. This will not apply to persons building on family land where another family site is not available to them.

RH 12 Discourage ribbon development (defined as five or more houses alongside 250 metres of road frontage)⁴ The Council will assess whether a given proposal will exacerbate such ribbon development, having regard to the following:

- (i) The type of rural area and circumstances of the applicant;
- (ii) The degree to which the proposal might be considered infill development;
- (iii) The degree to which existing ribbon development would coalesce as a result of the proposed development;
- (iv) Local circumstances, including the planning history of the area and development pressures.
- (v) Notwithstanding the above, special regard will be given to the circumstances of immediate family members of a landowner on single infill sites in a line of existing dwellings with 5 or more houses along a 250 metres of road frontage.

RH 13 Consider applications for the provision of a recessed cluster form of development. The cluster shall be designed in such a way that is appropriate to the rural context and shall be set back into the landscape from the public road. Clusters shall not exceed five houses and will be subject to normal, planning, siting, design and local need considerations. Where there is a likelihood of more than one applicant seeking planning permission over a period of time, the Council will engage with the landowner to provide for an appropriate site layout capable of accommodating a recessed cluster development.

⁴ Appendix 4 of Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Rural Housing (2005).

RH14 Only consider family members for backland development. The proposed development shall have no negative impact on third parties/ neighbouring property owners and viable sites with sufficient independent percolation areas will be required in order to meet technical guidelines. Sufficient screening will be required to screen the house from adjacent homes and this has to be in place prior to occupation of the house. Only single storey bungalow (including attic accommodation) type houses will be allowed in such backland locations to limit visual impact and overlooking.

4.13.2 Access and Entrances

It is the policy of the Council to:

RH 15 Restrict new accesses for one-off dwellings onto regional roads, where the 80km/hr speed limit applies in order to avoid the premature obsolescence of regional roads, (see Chapter 6), through the creation of excessive levels of individual entrances and to secure investment in non-national roads. Where applicants comply with Policy RH 2 and cannot provide access onto a nearby county road and therefore need to access a Regional Road, permission will only be granted to maximise the potential of an existing entrance and the onus will be on applicants to demonstrate that there are no other accesses or suitable sites within the landowner's landholding.

RH 16 Strictly control developments which require vehicular access from public roads that were formerly towpaths or from existing towpaths along the Grand Canal and Royal Canal. This is in addition to restrictions relevant to the Canals' designation as Natural Heritage Areas. It is policy to consider housing applications for established families only along roads that were formerly towpaths along the Canals and that such developments will be strictly controlled.

RH 17 Require that the design of entrance gateways should be in keeping with the rural setting. All applications for a dwelling in a rural area should include detailed drawings and specifications for entrance treatments. The roadside boundary should

ideally consist of a sod/earth mound/ fencing planted with a double row of native hedgerow species (refer to Table 17.2) e.g. Hawthorn, field maple, holly, blackthorn, hazel etc. High block walls and gates and ornamental features will not be permitted.

4.13.3 Housing application on the basis of equine (or other) rural enterprise

Where an applicant seeks permission for a one-off house on the basis of a full time rural dependent business (equine or other) from their proposed home / landholding in the rural area and where it will contribute to and enhance the rural community the Council will consider facilitating such applicants in accordance with Local Need Criteria set out in Table 4.3.

It is the policy of the Council to:

RH 18 Ensure that planning applications for a rural dwelling on the basis of the establishment of a full-time viable commercial equine or other rural enterprise on site will generally be favourably considered, having regard to the following criteria:

- (i) The landholding shall comprise a minimum of 5 Hectares.
- (ii) All other siting and design considerations will be taken into account in assessing the application.
- (iii) It must be demonstrated that the nature of the enterprise is location dependent and intrinsically linked to a rural location.

4.13.4 Restoration/Refurbishment of Vernacular Structures

Vernacular is a term used to describe something that is common to a specific area or place. When the term is used in relation to buildings or architecture it refers to the ordinary structures that functioned as the homes, farms, workplaces and community buildings of a locality. The buildings in Kildare tend to be simple in design and form. Kildare has a significant number of attractive vernacular structures within the rural area. Rather than continue to lose the vernacular built heritage of Kildare, the Council will promote the retention and appropriate refurbishment of vernacular buildings within the county.

It is policy of the Council:

RH 19 Protect the vernacular building stock in the rural areas of the county.

RH 20 Promote the re-use and sensitive restoration of existing dwellings, particularly those of traditional vernacular architecture. Regard should be had to Kildare County Council's "Reusing Farm Buildings – A Kildare Perspective", (2006) and any other design guidelines issued during the period of the Plan.

RH 21 Encourage the sensitive restoration of a derelict⁵ traditional vernacular structure as an alternative to the construction of a one-off dwelling elsewhere subject to the following:

- The vernacular dwelling must be capable of being suitably restored to habitable accommodation in keeping with its original character without the necessity to demolish or significantly alter it.
- Documentary evidence to include a structural survey and photographs.
- The distinctive character and original historic fabric of the structure is retained using appropriate traditional construction methods and materials.
- The applicants or proposed occupants will not be required to comply with local need criteria, identified in the Plan (Table 4.3).
- Normal planning, siting and design considerations will be taken into consideration.

4.13.5 Replacement of Existing Dwellings

It is the policy of the Council to:

RH 22 Accept the replacement of a dwelling other than a vernacular dwelling in circumstances where such a dwelling house is habitable, subject to the following:

- (i) The structure must last have been used as a dwelling and the internal and external walls and roof must be intact.

(ii) A report from a suitably qualified competent person shall be submitted to verify that the dwelling is habitable but that replacement of the dwelling is the most sustainable option.

(iii) Documentary evidence of the most recent date of occupation should be submitted with the application.

(iv) The design of the proposed replacement house shall be of a high standard and its scale and character appropriate to the site and to existing development in the vicinity and to the rural area.

(v) Normally a condition to demolish the existing dwelling will be included in any grant of permission.

(vi) Require applicants to comply with local need criteria identified in Table 4.3 of the Plan. Normal planning considerations will be taken into account in the assessment of planning applications for replacement dwellings.

(vii) In cases where an applicant/occupant wishes to replace an existing habitable dwelling on the same footprint and of the same or similar floor area there will be no requirement to comply with local need criteria identified in this Plan.

4.13.6 Replacement of Derelict Dwellings

It is the policy of the Council to:

RH 23 Facilitate the sensitive replacement of a structurally unsound derelict dwelling⁶ as an alternative to the construction of a one off dwelling elsewhere in the countryside. The scale of the replacement dwelling shall have regard to the site size. Documentary evidence in the form of a structural survey and photographs shall be submitted to accompany the application. The proposed applicant shall comply with local need criteria identified in the Plan and shall be subject to an occupancy condition.

⁵ The structure, including walls must be intact and capable of restoration.

⁶ Structure in a ruinous or dangerous condition.

4.13.7 Areas Bordering Neighbouring Counties

Where an applicant seeks permission for a one-off house on family land in County Kildare but is from a neighbouring county, the Council will consider facilitating such applicants.

It is the policy of the Council to:

- RH 24** Assess applications for one-off housing, in areas bordering neighbouring counties, where the proposed site is located on family land within County Kildare, at a distance of up to 2km located in Zone 1 and up to 5km located in Zone 2, from the county boundary. Applicants will be required to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the planning authority, that no suitable family owned site is available in the adjoining county and that all other aspects of rural housing policy including local need⁷, siting and design are complied with. The applicant shall also fully demonstrate that they are building their first rural dwelling and that it will be for their permanent place of residence.



⁷ Applicants will be required to demonstrate that their genuine local need albeit relevant to the adjoining county, is similar to that required under Table 4.3 (Schedule of Local Need Criteria), with appropriate supporting documentation demonstrating same.

4.13.8 Rural Nodes

Rural nodes, (see Table 4.4) comprise largely unserviced areas with limited social and community infrastructure. It is anticipated that each rural node can cater for a 10-15% population growth from their current population base over the period of the Plan.

Rural nodes are designated for limited development at a sustainable scale for immediate local need through the development of clusters.

Rural Nodes serve as areas where members of the rural community can live as an alternative to housing in the open countryside. The Settlement Strategy encourages appropriate levels of consolidation.

Many Rural Nodes have a more residential focus with fewer services available than the villages.

Existing nodes are diverse in their role and function within the rural area. Consideration of planning applications for development within the nodes will have regard to the role and form of the node within the wider rural area with particular care being taken that these settlements do not compete with villages in the services they provide or the role and function they play within the rural area.

It is the policy of the Council to:

- RH 25** Facilitate the following types of applications for housing in the rural nodes:
- (i) Individual one-off houses subject to applicants meeting the local need criteria identified in the Plan (refer to Map 4.4 and Table 4.3).
 - (ii) Small scale clusters of dwellings / serviced sites of not more than 5 housing units for applicants / occupants complying with local need criteria (refer to Map 4.4 and Table 4.3), and subject to the provision of appropriate physical infrastructure.

Table 4.4
Designated Rural Nodes

Rural Nodes	
Ballyshannon	Killina
Ballyroe	Kilshanchoe
Ballyteague	Lackagh / Mountrice
Booleigh	Lullymore,
Cadamstown	Moyvalley
Carbury	Newtown
Castlemitchell	Newtownmoneenluggagh
Clogherinka	Rathmore
Clongorey/ Blacktrench	Ticknevin
Eadestown	Tipperkevin
Ellistown	Tirmoghan
Kildoon	Timahoe
Kilkea	Williamstown

- RH 26** Ensure that all new developments in the rural nodes particularly cluster development, contribute to and integrate successfully with the existing settlement and to promote the development of central brownfield sites, if existing, as appropriate.
- RH 27** Require, in all cases, that special care is taken to protect the architectural and environmental quality identifying the character of the existing settlement form.

4.13.9 Specialised Care Facilities

It is the policy of the Council to:

- RH 28** Manage the provision of specialised care facilities, such as care homes, nursing homes etc in rural areas by encouraging applicants to locate in villages and settlements where services / facilities are more readily available and accessible.

4.13.10 Holiday Homes

It is the policy of the Council to:

- RH 29** Facilitate well located and appropriately scaled holiday home developments in locations that can best accommodate them, such as villages and settlements, where services / facilities are more readily available and accessible.
- RH 30** Restrict tourist accommodation on greenfield sites in the rural countryside. However, some tourist development, by its nature, may require a rural location and in this regard consideration may be given to:
- (i) The re-use of redundant farm buildings of vernacular importance for owner run agri-tourism enterprises. It will normally be a condition of permission that housing associated with agri-tourism enterprises should be retained within the farm complex ownership and shall not be sold.
 - (ii) Housing for tourists at golf courses, established equestrian centres, or as part of a major integrated tourism development proposals will only be acceptable in the rural countryside in exceptional circumstances where the proposal is of such strategic significance that it is of benefit on a county, regional or national scale. In such circumstances, all housing shall be retained within the ownership of the tourism enterprise and shall not be sold.
- RH 31** Require applications for holiday home development in demesne areas to be accompanied by an overall Masterplan for the entire demesne landscape.
- RH 32** Require planning permission for holiday home and tourist development on unzoned lands to be subject to an agreement pursuant to Section 47 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), prohibiting the sale of individual units.



4.14 Objectives: Rural Housing

It is an objective of the Council to:

- RO 1** Prepare a 'Kildare Single Rural Houses Design Guide' over the lifetime of the Plan. Until such time as this is prepared, all new housing in the rural countryside shall achieve the highest quality of layout and design in accordance with the standards set out in Chapter 16 of this Plan.
- RO 2** Continue to monitor and map, in conjunction with All Island Research Observatory (AIRO), Maynooth University, the level and pattern of one off housing in rural areas and rural nodes during the period of the Development Plan as a means of monitoring and informing the rural housing policy.

- RO 3** Implement the provisions of the Rural Housing Policy through the management of the provision of one-off housing in order to protect the physical, environmental, natural and heritage resources of the county, in conjunction with providing for rural housing for those persons who comply with the "Local Need" provision of the Plan.
- RO 4** Investigate the feasibility of providing/ facilitating serviced sites in rural nodes, villages, settlements and small town to cater for rural generated housing demand for persons who meet the criteria set out in Table 4.3 Schedule of Local Need, as an alternative to housing in the rural countryside.