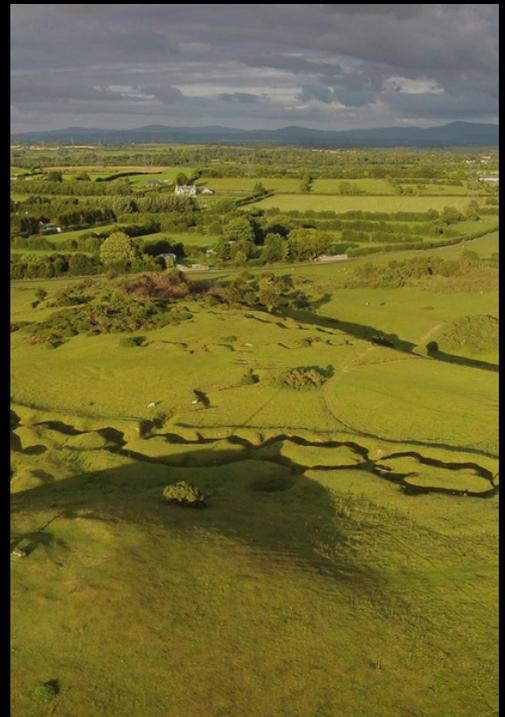
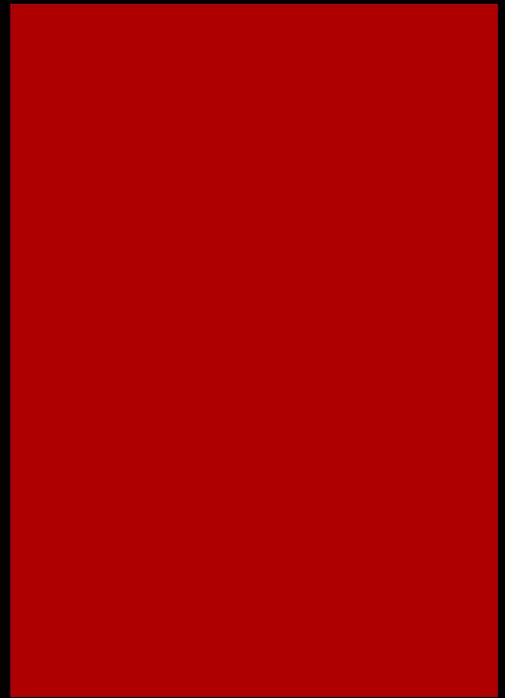


KILDARE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023-2029

ISSUES PAPER

11TH JANUARY 2021



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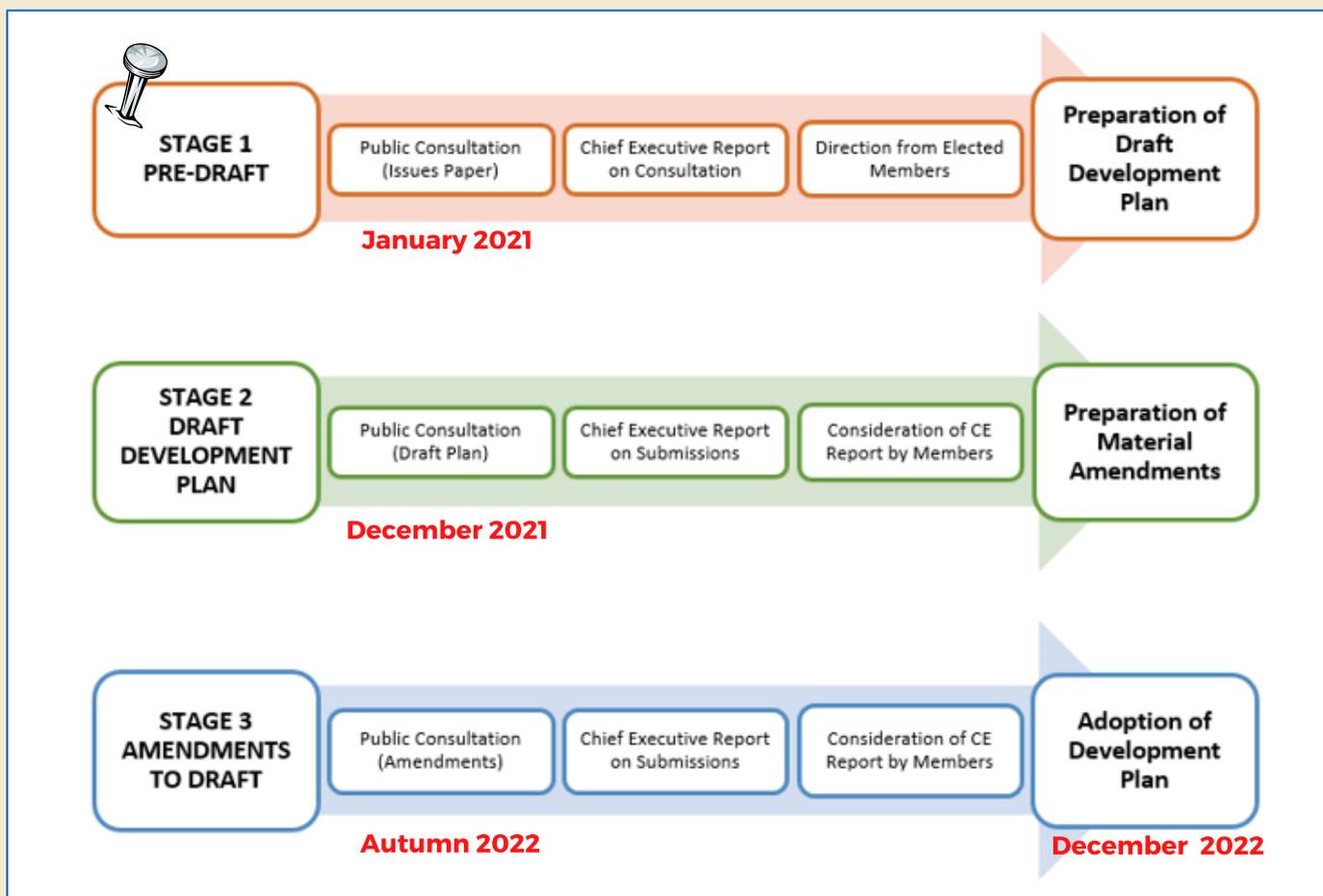


Introduction

The preparation of a County Development Plan is one of the most important functions of a Planning Authority. The review of the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 will take two years to complete and that process begins on 11th January 2021 with the publication of this Issues Paper. The new Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 will set out a vision for the future planning and sustainable development of County Kildare to 2029 and beyond.

This review has come at a time of significant and unprecedented challenges arising from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, Brexit and Climate Change. It is essential that the County Development Plan responds to these challenges and identifies opportunities to support economic recovery and improve quality of life for the people of County Kildare.

There are 3 stages involved in the preparation of a new County Development Plan, which are set out in the diagram below. The entire process takes approximately 2 years and it is anticipated that the Plan will be adopted by December 2022, coming into effect in January 2023.



What is an Issues Paper?

An Issues Paper is the first step in the preparation of a new Development Plan. At this early stage in the process, we are considering the “big picture” issues in the county and seeking to encourage public debate on what strategic issues should be considered. The issues highlighted in this document are important, but the list is not exhaustive.

It is important that as many individuals and groups as possible are involved in this process so that the final County Development Plan reflects public concerns and aspirations whilst having regard to national and regional policies and guidelines.

The Development Plan can help to create a more inclusive, vibrant, competitive, climate resilient county and **YOUR** input will be key to its success.



What guides a County Development Plan?

It is a statutory requirement of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended) that every Planning Authority prepares a County Development Plan. The policies and objectives of the new Plan must align with national and regional planning policy.

Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework (NPF)

The NPF is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of the country to the year 2040.

The NPF sets out 10 National Strategic Outcomes (as per the diagram to the right) and 75 National Policy Objectives. The purpose of the NPF is to enable all parts of Ireland, whether rural or urban, to successfully accommodate growth and change, by facilitating a shift towards Ireland's regions and cities other than Dublin, while also recognising Dublin's ongoing key role.

The NPF is implemented at a regional level through the Regional Spatial Economic Strategies (RSES) and at county level through the development plan.



National Strategic outcomes from NPF

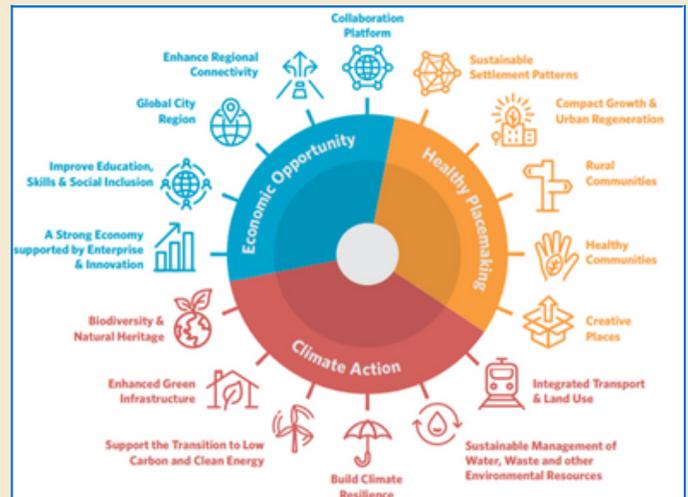
Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2021-2031 for the Eastern and Midland Regional Area (EMRA)

The aim of the RSES is to strengthen the settlement structure of the Region and to capitalise on the individual and collective strengths of the region's cities, towns and rural areas. It provides policy responses in the form of Regional Policy Objectives to ensure that people's needs, such as access to housing, jobs, ease of travel and overall well-being are met.

The Strategy is underpinned by three key principles-

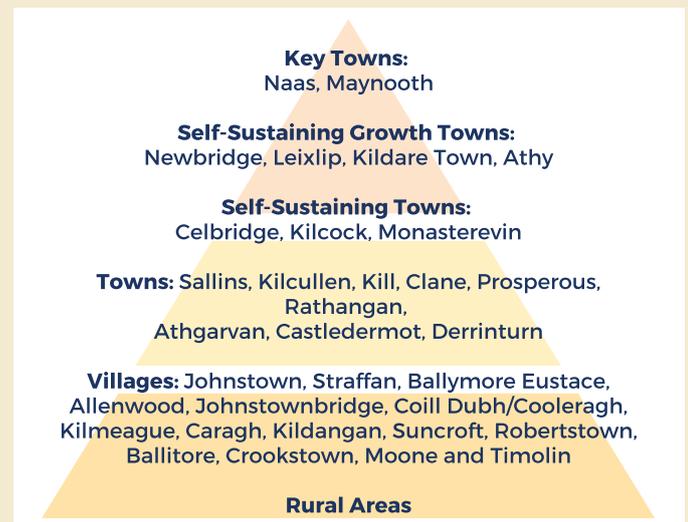
- Healthy Placemaking
- Climate Action, and
- Economic Opportunity

The new Kildare County Development Plan will need to include policies to encompass these principles and to deliver the Regional Strategic Outcomes (as shown in the diagram on the right).



Key principles and Regional Strategic outcomes from RSES

The current RSES also provides for a Settlement Hierarchy of Key Towns, Self-Sustaining Growth Towns, Self-Sustaining Towns, Towns, Villages and Rural Areas. Naas and Maynooth are acknowledged in the Strategy as being Key Towns for the Region (as shown in the current hierarchy to the right). A Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) forms part of the Strategy, which identifies several large scale strategic residential and economic development areas, that will deliver significant development in an integrated and sustainable manner in the metropolitan area, of which Maynooth, Leixlip, Celbridge and Kilcock form part (northeast of the county).



Settlement Hierarchy

Climate Change

The National Climate Change Adaptation Framework 'Building Resilience to Climate Change' was published by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in 2012. Kildare County Council has published a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 – 2024, which informs policy making at a county and local level in the future. The purpose of the Adaptation Strategy is to:

- Ensure that a proper understanding of the key risks and vulnerabilities of climate change is attained.
- Bring forward the implementation of climate resilient adaptation actions in a planned and proactive manner.
- Ensure that climate adaptation considerations are mainstreamed into all plans and policies and integrated into all operations and functions of the local authority.

The Climate Change Adaptation Strategy is the first step towards achieving the national objective of becoming a more climate resilient society and economy by 2050 with the capability to tackle the many challenges that climate change can present. The County Development Plan seeks to promote a series of policies and objectives throughout that will ameliorate the effects of climate change and introduce resilience to its effects to support the implementation of the National Climate Change Strategy 2007- 2012, DEHLG (2007), the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework Building Resilience to Climate Change, DECLG (2012) and to deliver National Strategic Outcome No. 8 of the NPF which requires a transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society.

Environmental Reports

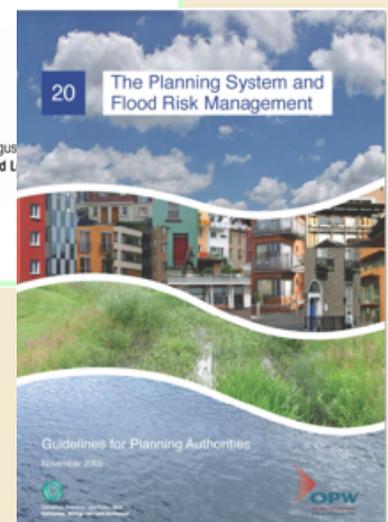
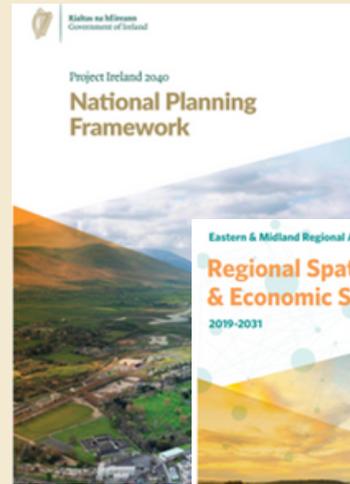
In preparing the Plan, the environmental impacts of change as a result of new development must be considered at each step in an iterative process, whereby the plan is tweaked and improved at each stage. This will ensure that the implementation of the Plan will not result in a negative or adverse impact on the environment.

There are three formal environmental processes.

1. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
2. Appropriate Assessment (AA)
3. Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

Guidelines for Planning Authorities

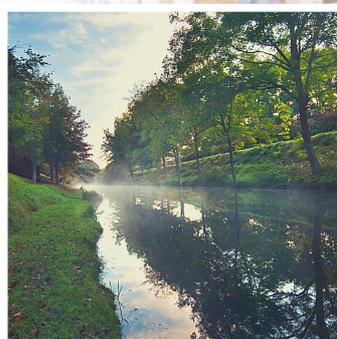
The Plan must have regard to guidelines issued by the Government, known as Section 28 Guidelines. Examples include Guidelines for Appropriate Assessment, Development Plans, Retail Planning, Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, Sustainable Rural Housing, Flood Risk Management and Urban Development and Building Heights.



Some Key Achievements since the adoption of the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023

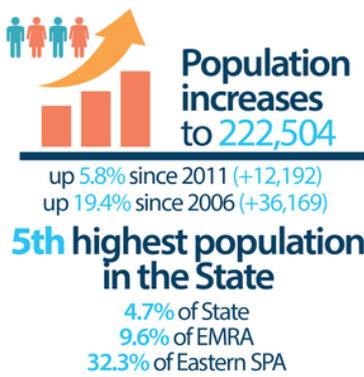
The following is a list of some key achievements of the current County Development Plan.

- Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
- MERITS Digital Hub (Completion due in March 2021)
- M7 Upgrade and development of Junction 9A/Sallins By-Pass
- New Playgrounds in Caragh, Eadestown, Sallins & Castledermot
- Outdoor gyms in Moone, Kilcullen, The Lakes, Naas, Kildare Town & Timahoe
- Significant progress made on the delivery of the Barrow Blueway, with 10km of the total 48km Blueway complete in 2020. The remaining 38Km will be complete by mid-2022.
- 100% funding for the delivery of the first 11km of the Grand Canal Greenway from Aylmer Bridge to Sallins has been secured. Work will commence on the delivery of this phase of the Grand Canal Greenway in early 2021 and will take approx. 9 months to complete.
- Member of the EU 'Covenant Of Mayors'.
- Best Disability Access & Inclusion Initiative-A County Kildare Access Strategy-A Universal Approach 2020-2022 & Working to make County Kildare Accessible to All (Award)
- 1km walking loop and all weather pitch for Kilcock Celtic
- Prosperous Town Park
- Kildare Market Square – Tactile Urbanism Project
- Play Policy 2018-2028
- Masterplan for Cherry Avenue Park, Kildare Town
- Community Garden in Kilcock
- Athy Library (conversion of St Dominic’s Church)
- Athy Primary Care Centre the first Age Friendly Primary Care Centre (PCC) in the country.
- Significant progress on the development of Equine Hub and a Food Hub in the County

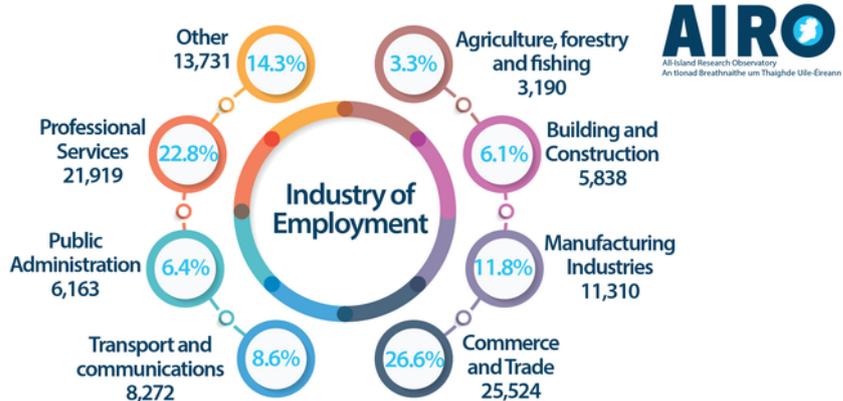
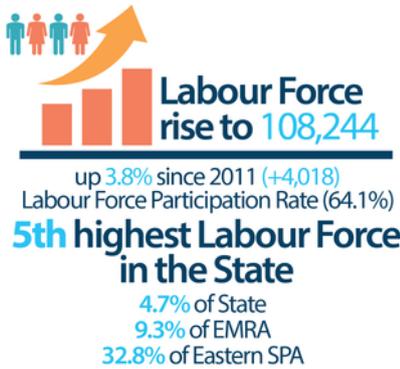
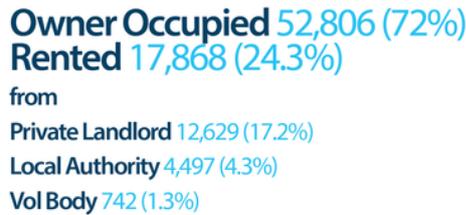
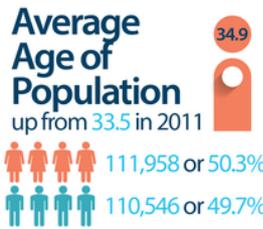
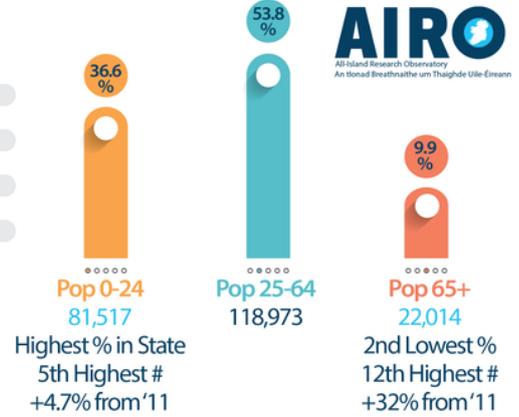
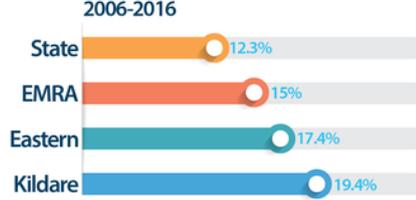


County Profile

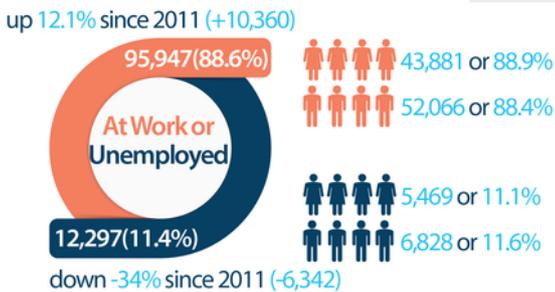
The most recent census in Ireland was in 2016. The graphics below highlight some information from that Census which provides a profile of the County. This tells us that County Kildare has a young population and the County's population is increasing at a rate higher than the national average.



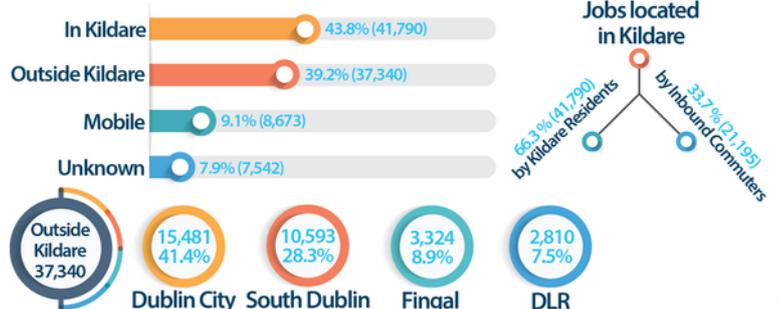
Population Change 2006-2016



Economic Status



Where do Kildare residents work?



Key Opportunities and Challenges

To start a discussion about the development of County Kildare to 2029 and beyond, this Issues Paper focuses on 7 strategic themes which are:

- **Healthy Placemaking: People and Places**
- **Economic Opportunity: Innovation, Enterprise and Employment**
- **Climate Action: Environment, Climate Change and Adaptation**
- **Sustainable Mobility: Movement and Transport**
- **Creative Places: Social, Community and Cultural Development**
- **Enhanced Amenity and Heritage: Landscape and Green Infrastructure**
- **Making it happen: Infrastructure, Energy and Communications**

Each of these issues is discussed further in the following pages and some key questions are posed for your consideration.



Current Core Strategy Map 2017-2023

How can we make Kildare a more attractive county to live, learn, work, visit and do business in?

What do you think are the most important issues for the next 6 years?

What issues do you see in your community that the Plan should address?

What is your vision for County Kildare?

What do you think?

What lessons have been learned from the Covid pandemic that should be considered and addressed in the Plan?

Healthy Placemaking: People and Places



The NPF Implementation Roadmap and RSES provides for population projections for all Cities, Regions and Counties to 2031. The population of County Kildare is projected to increase by between 36,500 and 44,000 to the year 2031. The Development Plan will play a crucial part in creating the conditions to accommodate these ambitious targets, by implementing sustainable settlement patterns at appropriate locations, facilitating compact growth and urban regeneration and encouraging healthy urban and rural communities in tandem with the delivery of the required social infrastructure.

The Development Plan will include a Core Strategy that will set out inter alia key locations for population and housing. The focus will be on developing the Key Towns of Naas and Maynooth, as provided for in the RSES, to act as economic drivers and provide for strategic employment locations supported by the regionally important self-sustaining growth towns (Newbridge, Kildare, Athy and Leixlip) and self-sustaining towns (Celbridge, Monasterevin and Kilcock). Provisions must also be made for the sustainable development of the County's towns, villages and rural areas.

While the Settlement Strategy guides the development of designated settlements within the county, there remains considerable pressure for the development of single homes in rural areas across County Kildare. The Council acknowledges this demand and seeks to ensure that a balance is struck between facilitating housing for people who have a genuine rural housing requirement (demonstrating economic and social need) while ensuring that balanced sustainable development takes place in our towns and villages.

A CORE STRATEGY is a medium to long term quantitatively based strategy for the spatial development of the area of the planning authority which must be consistent with national (NPF) and regional (RSES) development objectives.

Questions to Consider

- What tools can be used to deliver compact growth to assist in the regeneration of our towns and villages?
- How should we ensure the protection of the countryside and the regeneration of our towns and villages while providing for sustainable rural housing which meets the genuine housing needs of rural dwellers and protects finite environmental resources?
- How can we encourage the delivery of multi-generational housing schemes to cater for our aging population and what models of housing can be developed to enable their preference to remain living in their own communities?
- How can we protect and enhance the quality of our built and natural environment to enable a more active, healthier lifestyle?
- How do you think vacant and derelict buildings can be brought back into use?
- Are there measures we could include in the Plan to address the issues associated with the current housing crisis?
- What lessons can we learn from the Covid-19 pandemic on how we use our buildings or land?
- How can we move towards higher density housing developments which are attractive, practical and viable? Are there areas of the County that could accommodate taller buildings?
- How can we effectively address the Climate Change Crisis and the Biodiversity Crisis, through the Development Plan process?



Economic Opportunity: Innovation, Enterprise and Employment



With the international Covid pandemic and post-Brexit era, we currently face economic challenges, which require a proactive, coordinated response to enable us to rebuild a strong economy and reconnect our communities.

The pandemic has had a significant impact on the way we live our lives and on how and where we work. Kildare is strategically positioned to benefit from local, national and international markets owing to its location, excellent transport links, access to a highly educated population and its unique natural and built heritage assets.

A key focus of the plan will be to ensure that the conditions for the creation of enterprise and innovation are embraced and developed. The NPF together with the RSES for the region place a strong emphasis on compact, smart, sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

Tourism will play an increasingly significant role in the growing economy of Kildare, particularly with the development of the Royal Canal Greenway, the Grand Canal Greenway, the Barrow Blueway and the significant potential of 'Peatways'. The Plan has a key role in the protection of tourism assets and landscape whilst enabling appropriate development to support and develop Kildare's tourism potential and in public realm enhancements in our towns and villages.

Who Makes a Development Plan?

The County Development Plan will be made by the Elected Members (Councillors) of Kildare County Council.

Questions to Consider

- How can we secure an economic environment for County Kildare which will future-proof its current jobs, attract new jobs into the future and provide an economic environment which is adaptable to change?
- How can the Plan ensure a strong economy, supported by enterprise and innovation?
- How can the Plan support indigenous small-scale enterprise, agriculture, the equine industry and rural enterprise?
- How can the Plan support the education and skills sector?
- What are the infrastructural shortfalls which are hindering economic growth and development in the County?
- How can we support and protect traditional on-street retailing with the increase of online shopping and encourage new business looking to locate within our town centres?
- How can the Plan best support new and evolving economies in an era of e-business, work patterns that reduce the demand to travel and promote home based economic activity?
- What policies and developments can support increased employment in the County, such as co-working hubs, 'maker spaces,' incubation hubs, creative hubs/town initiatives and synergies with Maynooth University?
- What can the Plan do to support tourism in Co Kildare? Are there areas that have the potential to be developed for tourism and recreational purposes?
- What measures are required to make our towns and villages more vibrant and attractive as places to live in, work in, shop and visit?
- Are there economic opportunities associated with climate change mitigation that the Plan can harness?



Climate Action: Environment, Climate Change and Adaptation



One of the cross-cutting principles of this plan must be to initiate a transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society, a necessary measure that is also a National Strategic Outcome (NSO 8) of the National Planning Framework (NPF).

The recent Kildare County Council Climate Adaptation Strategy will inform policies and objectives throughout the Development Plan process with increased emphasis on sustainable development and travel patterns, energy use and the protection of green infrastructure.

Well-designed places and buildings can improve our resilience to climate change impacts and a reduction in carbon emissions can be achieved, for example, through good physical connections with surrounding areas which encourages walking and cycling and by having easier access to public transport.

DID YOU KNOW ?

The Eastern and Midlands Climate Action Regional Office (CARO) is one of four regional climate action offices set up in 2018 in response to the 2018 National Adaptation Framework (NAF) – Planning for a Climate Resilient Ireland. Kildare County Council is the lead Local Authority for the 17 East and Midland Counties and as such wants to be an exemplar in terms of its Planning Strategies, Plans and Policies.

What is climate mitigation and adaptation?

Mitigation refers to measures to reduce climate change by limiting greenhouse emissions whilst adaptation refers to actions which seek to manage and reduce the risks and effects associated with existing or anticipated climate change.



Questions to Consider

- How can the Plan best address the challenges of climate change?
- How can the plan support our transition to a low carbon climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy?
- How can the Plan achieve a balance between the growth of the County and the protection of the environment?
- How can the Plan address flood risk and build resilience to better cope with the increasing frequency of extreme weather events?
- How can the Plan increase the levels of renewable energy production and energy efficiency in the county while protecting the environment, the landscape and public amenity?
- What methods should be encouraged to maximise renewable energy provision for commercial developments and individual homes?
- What are the main environmental issues that currently face the county?
- What measures can be introduced to protect and safeguard the water quality of our rivers and groundwater?
- Are there adequate recycling facilities in the county and if not, where should they be located?
- Should we encourage greater use of green roofs, green streets or other green infrastructure approaches (e.g. tree planting) in new or existing development to provide solutions in relation to water management and the need to adapt to the predicted impacts of climate change?
- What measures or strategies can be included in the Plan to support the protection and enhancement of our environment in our daily lives?
- How can the Plan support sustainable energy communities in County Kildare?

Sustainable Mobility: Movement and Transport



It is vital to have an efficient strategic transport system for the future economic, social and physical development of the county. The Plan must promote and facilitate movement to, from, and within the County, by integrating land use with a high quality, sustainable transport system that prioritises walking, cycling and public transport. How we consider mobility also has an impact on climate change.

Questions to Consider

- What should be done to encourage people to walk, cycle or use public transport more?
- How can we reduce the need to travel and/or travel more sustainably beyond Co. Kildare, for example, for work, retail or recreation purposes?
- Is new or improved transport infrastructure required in the County and, if so, where?
- How should we manage private car access and parking in our towns while at the same time making our towns vibrant places?
- How can rural living be more sustainable and rural isolation reduced with greater accessibility?
- How can we create successful streets that easily facilitate the needs of cyclists, pedestrians and vehicles, in our towns and residential areas?
- How best can we co-ordinate and integrate transport and land use planning in order to reduce the demand for travel and dependence on private car transport?
- Do we need more Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points in our towns/villages? If so, where?
- Where are the most suitable locations for Park and Ride or Park and Stride facilities?
- How can we promote best use of Transport Infrastructure, existing and planned, and promote sustainable and active modes of travel?

Creative Places: Social, Community and Cultural Development



Central to ensuring the county thrives is the provision of services including schools, other educational facilities, libraries, places of worship, crèches, open space, amenity, playgrounds, youth clubs, meeting spaces, cultural centres, health centres, primary care centres and social service centres for example. These services help to maintain and nurture a sense of community, which is key to creating healthy communities.

Kildare has a wide variety of recreational and community facilities. However, there continues to be a need for additional facilities and improvements to existing resources to ensure that all ages and abilities of the population are served. The Development Plan, through promoting good quality urban design (placemaking), will have a key role to play in creating a more socially inclusive, healthy society.

Questions to Consider

- Are there adequate community facilities in our towns and villages throughout the County? If not, where are the deficiencies/gaps?
- What policies should be included in the Plan to support and enhance childcare and retirement living options in the transition to nursing home provision throughout the County?
- How can the Plan promote social inclusion and equality for all our citizens?
- Are the current standards for public open space provision associated with new developments appropriate?
- What policies and objectives need to be put in place to ensure recreational and community resources meet the demand of Kildare's growing population, while protecting existing resources from inappropriate development?
- How can the value of existing community facilities be maximised?

Enhanced Amenity and Heritage: Landscape and Green Infrastructure



Kildare is rich in heritage. Heritage is more than just buildings, rivers, trees, landscape and archaeological sites alone. It is the interrelationship between all these elements and their relationship with mankind. The natural, built and cultural heritage of an area makes it unique, gives it character and defines its “sense of place”.

Kildare’s heritage and green infrastructure are key strategic assets and are a valuable economic resource; the basis for our tourism industry. Heritage is vital for the health, well-being and quality of life of communities. We require a balanced approach, and must seek to protect, restore and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity whilst satisfying economic and social need.



Killinthomas Wood



Grand Canal, Naas



Irish National Stud, Tully

Questions to Consider

- How can we promote co-ordinated spatial planning to conserve and enhance the biodiversity of our protected habitats and species including landscape and heritage protection?
- How do we achieve and maintain a balance between development pressure and protection of our built and natural heritage?
- How should we protect and enhance Green Infrastructure and ecosystem services and promote the sustainable management of farmlands, peatlands, uplands, woodlands and wetlands?
- Are there any buildings or structures of special interest in your area that should be added to the Record of Protected Structures (RPS)?
- How can the Plan encourage the reuse of Protected Structures that have fallen into disuse?
- How can natural heritage and biodiversity be enhanced?
- How can greater access to the natural, built and archaeological heritage be facilitated, while having regard to the sensitive nature of many sites?
- How can we enhance, integrate and protect our arts, culture and heritage assets to promote creative places and heritage led regeneration?

Photographs: Lilian Webb, Celbridge Camera Club



Making it happen: Infrastructure, Energy and Communications



The provision of water, wastewater, waste management, energy and telecommunication infrastructure are vital to ensure the continued sustainable development of Kildare and quality of life for its citizens.

Irish Water has responsibility for the delivery, integration and implementation of water and wastewater projects and infrastructural improvement. Kildare County Council will continue to work closely with Irish Water and all key energy providers to inform and influence the timely provision of infrastructure within the County, in line with Kildare's Settlement Strategy. Sustainable resource management of our land and water resources is critical.

Kildare County Council supports a low carbon economy and the use of renewable energy for a cleaner future and will seek to ensure that all new developments contribute positively towards reducing energy consumption and the associated carbon footprint.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have transformed the way we interact and do business. Kildare County Council will endeavour to promote and facilitate the sustainable delivery of a high quality ICT infrastructure network throughout the County, taking account of the need to protect the rural and the urban environment, together with seeking to achieve balanced social and economic development.



Questions to Consider

- Are there infrastructural deficits which are inhibiting economic growth and development in the County?
- How can the Plan support the relevant external agencies in the provision of electricity, gas, water, wastewater, renewable energy, telecommunication and broadband infrastructure?
- How can we conserve and enhance our water resources to ensure clean water supply, adequate wastewater treatment and greater resource efficiency to realise the benefits of the circular economy?
- What nature-based solutions are there for surface water management and how can these be integrated into the Plan?
- Should the Plan give positive support to the development of renewable energy at the expense of other considerations?
- How can we encourage the use of renewable energy sources?
- Given the rapid expanse of the digital world, e-commerce, on-line shopping, social media platforms and cloud solutions, there is increasing demand for data centre developments - how can Kildare best respond to this emerging demand, space and electricity requirements?
- Are there economic opportunities associated with climate change mitigation that the Plan can harness?



Have your say!

This is **YOUR** opportunity to assist in developing a County Development Plan for a diverse, vibrant and climate resilient county that capitalises on Kildare's strategic location, infrastructure and unique heritage and assets.



Children, young adults or groups and associations representing the interests of children and young adults are particularly welcome to make submissions or observations.

For details of our Photographic Competition for Primary and Secondary school students, please see our website:
<https://consult.kildarecoco.ie/en/surveys>

Timeline

The consultation period for this stage of the plan (Pre-Draft) will run for 8 weeks from Monday the 11th of January to 8th March 2021. The deadline for receipt of submissions is 5pm ON MONDAY THE 8TH MARCH 2021.

How to find out more

Visit <https://consult.kildarecoco.ie> to view Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's). The current Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 is also available to view there.

How to make a submission

You must make your submission through our online portal <https://consult.kildarecoco.ie/en>

Alternatively, you may write to: Senior Executive Officer, Planning Department, Áras Chill Dara, Devoy Park, Naas, Co. Kildare, W91X77F.

- Please insert the heading 'County Development Plan Review' on your submission.
- Submissions/observations at this stage of the overall plan-making process should be strategic in nature and focus on 'big picture' issues.
- Submissions on land zoning cannot be considered at this stage. Any submissions received in this regard shall be returned. There will be an opportunity to make submissions on land zoning after the Draft County Development Plan is published in Q3/Q4 2021.
- Please make sure your submission is in one medium only i.e. by post or on-line.
- You may include a map if you wish to refer to particular locations.
- Please include your name and address on a separate page to your submission content in order to assist the Council in complying with the Data Protection Acts 1988 (as amended) and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.
- Please note that all submissions received will be published on the Council website. Your contact details will not be published. Please do not include personal, confidential or other sensitive information in submissions.



The deadline for receipt of submissions is:
5pm ON MONDAY THE 8TH MARCH 2021.

LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.



