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Housing



Chapter 3 Housing

Aim; *To show how the Plan intends to accommodate the full range of current and future housing needs of all members of society throughout the county while giving clear guidance on making provision for specialised housing requirements and providing for the needs of communities in order to deliver sustainable residential communities across the county.*

3.1 Introduction

National and regional policy reinforces the need for ‘healthy placemaking’ and the delivery of well-designed, affordable, adaptable, infill and brownfield development close to existing services and facilities. The overall aim of the *Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland (2021)*, is that everyone in Ireland should have access to sustainable, good quality housing to purchase or rent, at an affordable price, in the right location.

Such development should be supported by universal design and improved urban amenities, including public spaces and parks, social and community infrastructure, as well as enhanced permeability, accessibility and connectivity.

Creating and maintaining successful urban neighbourhoods to underpin sustainable communities requires the efficient use of land at densities which ensure the viability of a range of facilities, amenities, services and good public transport connections. All of these components should be set within a high-quality built environment in order to enhance liveability and create a good quality of life for all.

In line with the settlement strategy, this chapter seeks to secure the provision of new homes tailored to the needs of the existing and projected population. In this way, supporting an all-community approach, with better quality of life, more efficient use of land, and greater integration of infrastructure and services.

3.2 Strategy

The delivery of quality homes and sustainable communities for County Kildare is a key and cross-cutting issue in ensuring that the county remains competitive as a place to live and invest in. The approach is to build on the policies of the last development plan and implement the Core Strategy through:

- Providing for the right quantity of appropriate housing in the right locations that are accessible and affordable for all residents of the county through the implementation and delivery of the Housing Strategy and Housing Need & Demand Assessment (HNDA).
- Implementation of adopted Local Area Plans (LAPs) to drive the delivery of sustainable, dynamic urban centres, in line with the settlement strategy.
- Supporting implementation of the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) which seeks the sustainable development of the Dublin Metropolitan Area.
- Delivery of good quality housing to cater for diverse housing needs - mix of tenures and typologies to meet people’s full lifecycle.

- Engaging in active land management to promote regeneration including utilising the Vacant Sites Register and other future vehicles, including the Zoned Land Tax.
- Collaboration with all internal Council departments to actively seek funding for housing and social infrastructure from national and European funding streams including Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF), Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF), Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF), Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVR), Serviced Sites Fund (SSF) and Affordable Housing Fund (AHF).
- Ensuring that planning applications for residential developments over 20 units and commercial developments over 2,000m² are accompanied by an audit of social and community infrastructure and an implementation and phasing programme in relation to social and community infrastructure, so that facilities identified as needed are provided in a timely and co-ordinated fashion.

3.3 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:

- Affordable Housing Act 2021 (Part V);
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities – Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes and Sustaining Communities (2007);
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2020);
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009);
- Urban Design Manual: A Best Practice Guide (2009);
- Urban Development and Building Heights – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018)
- Housing Options for our Aging Population 2020;
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (2019).

Policy

It is the policy of the Council to:

HO P1	<p>Have regard to the DHLGH Guidelines on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities – Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes and Sustaining Communities (2007); - Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2020); - Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009); - Urban Design Manual: A Best Practice Guide (2009); - Urban Development and Building Heights – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018) - Housing Options for our Aging Population (2020) and Age Friendly Principles and Guidelines for the Planning Authority (2021);
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	- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (2019).
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3.4 Strategic Context

3.4.1 Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework (NPF)

The National Planning Framework sets out that ‘the long-term vision for Ireland’s housing future aims to balance the provision of good quality housing that meets the needs of a diverse population, in a way that makes our cities, towns, villages and rural areas good places to live now and in the future’. The NPF identifies a number of national core principles to guide future housing as follows:

National Core Principles to Guide Housing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a high standard of quality of life for future residents as well as environmentally and socially sustainable housing and placemaking through integrated planning and consistently excellent design. • Allow for choice in housing location, type, tenure and accommodation in responding to need. • Prioritise the location of new housing provision in existing settlements as a means to maximising better quality of life for people through accessing services, ensuring a more efficient use of land and allowing for greater integration with existing infrastructure. • Tailor the scale and nature of future housing provision to the size and type of settlement where it is planned to be located. • Integrate housing strategies where settlements straddle boundaries (county and/or regional). • Utilise existing housing stock to meet future demand.

The NPF acknowledges that the physical format of urban development is one of our greatest national development challenges and identifies compact growth as one of the National Strategic Outcomes. This entails delivering a greater proportion of residential development within existing built-up areas of settlements and moving away from a reliance on greenfield development to meet our development needs. In order to avoid urban sprawl, the NPF advocates for increased residential densities in urban areas.

The NPF recognises that planning affords an opportunity to facilitate and deliver a more socially inclusive society through better integration and greater accessibility at all stages of the lifecycle. It supports the provision of lifetime adaptable homes that can accommodate the changing needs of households over time. Specifically, the NPF requires that local housing policy will be developed with a focus on meeting the needs and opportunities of an ageing population.

The NPF warns against the intensification of social housing in areas that are already dense with social housing and advocates for the development of diverse neighbourhoods with a balance of public and private housing to create healthy communities. The NPF states that in addition to the significant investment in social

housing we also need to ensure that more affordable homes are built for sale or rent, particularly in our cities, towns and villages, enabling people to choose to live within their communities and closer to where they work. It indicates that this will be facilitated through more proactive land management and coordinated and efficient provision of enabling infrastructure, particularly on local authority and State-owned lands, as well as providing flexibility on design and density, particularly in our urban cores, to enable more cost-efficient construction and provide a variety of homes aimed at first-time buyers.

3.4.2 Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES)

The Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Region (EMRA) recognises that housing affordability and supply issues are impacting upon health and wellbeing, due to overcrowding, with people residing in substandard accommodation or becoming homeless. The slow growth of housing stock compared to rates of population growth and household formation has led to an increase in the average number of persons per household to around 2.8 in the Region, based on the 2016 census, which saw a reversal of the long-term decline in the average household size. The RSES points out that there is a need to incentivise mobility in the housing market, to address social isolation among older people and to offer more choice by way of an increased supply of accommodation for all life stages. The RSES highlights the importance of housing quality to secure positive health outcomes and that achieving compact growth targets will require active land management responses to ensure that land and building resources within existing settlements are used to their full potential.

Policy

It is the policy of the Council to:

HO P2	Accord with the provisions of the National Planning Framework 2018, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region 2019 (including the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan) and the Ministerial Circular relating to Structural Housing Demand in Ireland and Housing Supply Targets, and the associated Section 28 Guidelines: Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning (2020) and make provision for the scale of population growth and housing supply targets outlined in these plans and guidelines
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3.5 Housing Strategy

The preparation of a Housing Strategy is a mandatory requirement under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). The purpose of the strategy is to ensure that provision is made for the housing needs of the existing and future population of the plan area. Section 94(3) of the Act stipulates that the housing strategy shall take into account:

- the existing need and likely future need for housing for the purposes of the provision of social housing support and; of housing for eligible households, both within the meaning of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions Act) 2009
- the need to ensure that housing is available for persons who have different levels of income
- the need to ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of the different categories of households, as may be determined by the planning authority, and including the special requirements of older people and persons with disabilities, and
- the need to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds.

The NPF acknowledges that the housing sector is more complex since the requirement for housing strategies was introduced under the Planning and Development Act 2000. Accordingly, the NPF has identified that an enhanced methodology is required - a Housing Need Demand Assessment - to support the preparation of housing strategies.

The purpose of the Housing Need Demand Assessment tool is to:

- Assist local authorities to develop longer-term strategic views of housing need across all tenures;
- Provide a robust evidence base to support decisions about new housing supply, wider investment and housing related services that inform an overall national housing profile;
- Inform policies about the proportion of social and affordable housing required; and
- Provide evidence to inform policies related to the provision of specialist housing and housing related services.

In tandem with a need to increase housing supply, is the need to facilitate improved housing choice to cater for evolving demographics across County Kildare, as analysed in the HNDA. By providing good housing choice, existing residents can remain within their local communities and new residents to Kildare will have better housing options to choose from.

The Housing Strategy and Kildare HNDA process complements the Core Strategy in providing the quantitative evidence base to articulate the medium to longer term spatial development strategy of the functional area of the Local Authority. In so doing, it demonstrates that the County Development Plan and its objectives are consistent with national and regional development objectives.

In accordance with NPO 37, Kildare County Council has undertaken a Housing Need & Demand Assessment (HNDA). The HNDA has been prepared in line with 'Guidance on the Preparation of a Housing Need and Demand Assessment' (DHLGH, April 2021), and is set out over four Sections:

1. Key Housing Market Drivers
2. Housing Stock Profile and Pressures, Existing Need and Management Issues
3. Estimating Future Housing Need and Demand
4. Specialist Provision

The HNDA evidence base includes a range of housing data, along with wider economic, demographic and affordability trends, to understand key housing market drivers and give a statistical estimate of future housing needs by tenure. The Housing Strategy and HNDA address the provision of housing for the existing and future population of County Kildare and take account of:

- The existing need and likely future need for housing for the purposes of the provision of social housing support and of housing for eligible households;
- The need to ensure that housing is available for persons who have different levels of income;
- The need to ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of the different categories of households, as may be determined by the Planning Authority and including the special requirements of older people and persons with disabilities;
- The need to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds;
- The provision of good housing mix in all developments will be encouraged to ensure that residents have access to a range of house types and tenures.

The Kildare County Council Housing Need & Demand Assessment (HNDA) and Housing Strategy address many issues associated with housing in the county, including housing need, improving social mix and catering for those with particular needs including older people, the Traveller community, homeless people and people with disabilities.

The HNDA provides long-run estimates for housing need based on projected housing market affordability and finds that for the period 2023 to 2031, c. 30.2% of new households formed will need social housing support, 31.5% will be able to buy a home, 27.7% will be able to rent, and 10.6% will need affordable housing (affordable purchase or cost rental).

While the Housing Strategy has found that there is rationale for seeking 20% of eligible residential development to be reserved for social and affordable housing during the strategy period of 2023-2031, this only addresses social housing needs that will arise during that period and does not take into account the considerable demand for such housing that has built up to date. It is also clear that the combination of the Council's own construction, acquisitions and Part V will only cater for a proportion of the population experiencing affordability problems in the County. The Council must continue to utilise all policy avenues open to it and any new schemes that become available to ensure the greatest delivery of social and affordable housing possible and to ensure a regionally equitable balance of housing delivery.

Policy

It is the policy of the Council to:

HO P3	Implement, in conjunction with the Housing Section, the Housing Strategy and Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA) to meet the projected population, changing household size and housing needs, including social and affordable housing requirements for County Kildare over the lifetime of the County Development Plan.
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Objective

It is an objective of the Council:

HO O1	To secure the implementation of the Kildare County Housing Strategy in accordance with the provisions of national legislation and relevant policies and standards.
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3.6 Housing Supply

The Core Strategy outlines a housing supply target of approximately 9,144 housing units for the county to the end of 2028, being the end of the Plan period. Chapter 2 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

It is the policy of the Council to:

HO P4	Ensure that sufficient zoned land continues to be available at appropriate locations to fulfil the housing requirements of the county.
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Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

HO O2	Ensure that sufficient land is zoned at appropriate locations in compliance with the Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy of the Development Plan, in order to meet the likely future housing demands identified in the Housing Strategy and HNDA.
HO O3	Co-operate with the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly in planning for new homes and meeting housing needs for the Dublin Metropolitan Area (which includes Maynooth, Leixlip, Celbridge, and Kilcock) through the implementation of the Dublin Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan.

3.7 Residential Density and Building Height

Density

A key objective of the NPF and RSES is to increase the density of development in all built up areas, in order to achieve the indicated population targets in a compact and sustainable manner. Increased densities will facilitate optimising the use of serviced lands and maximising the viability of investment in social and physical infrastructure, in particular public transport. Integration of land use and transport planning is crucial to deliver the 10-minute settlement concept ('Guiding Principle' of the RSES) and this will be supported with higher densities at appropriate locations.

The NPF also acknowledges that there is a need for more proportionate and tailored approaches to residential development. This means that it is necessary to adapt the scale, design and layout of housing in towns and villages, to ensure that suburban or high-density urban approaches are not applied uniformly, and that development responds appropriately to the character, scale and setting of the town or village.

County Kildare has a significant settlement network of differing scales, functions and infrastructure provision. Some of our larger settlements perform an important role within the wider region, with particular influence within the Dublin Metropolitan Area, while other towns are more self-sustaining, local drivers of development.

The Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (2009) and Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines, DHLGH (2018) outline appropriate densities and building heights applicable to settlements of various size and location within these settlements.

The average housing densities, that determine the residential yield from sites depends on the location of that site, which settlement it belongs to, where that settlement fits within the settlement hierarchy, the site's position with respect to the urban core, the proximity to public transport corridors and to major employment zones. Where communities live in areas of medium to high residential densities, the prospects improve for local services and amenities, use of sustainable transport modes for daily journeys and the reduction of unsustainable travel patterns.

Table 3.1 outlines the density levels for different settlement types as per Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas - Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DEHLG (2009).

Category	Location for New Residential Development	General Density Parameters (Units per Hectare)
Larger Towns (Population > 5,000)	Town Centre & Brownfield Sites	Site Specific
	Public Transport Corridors	50 units per ha
	Inner suburban/infill	Site Specific
	Institutional Lands	35-50 units per ha
	Outer Suburban /'Greenfield'	30-50 units per ha
Smaller Towns & Villages	Centrally located sites	30-40+ units per ha

	Edge of centre sites	20-35 units per ha
	Edge of small town/village	15-20 units per ha with lower density in some cases (refer to Section 6.12 of the Guidelines)
Rural Settlements	Infill, backland and edge of centre sites within Rural Settlements	15 units per ha with lower density in some cases

Table 3.1 - Appropriate density levels as per the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas - Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DEHLG (2009)

The guidance and density ranges provided in Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas - Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DEHLG (2009) have been considered in preparing the Core Strategy table contained in Chapter 2 of the Plan. The Core Strategy table includes a Target Residential Density (Units per Hectare) for each settlement based on its function within the settlement hierarchy.

Circular letter NRUP 02/2021 was issued to Planning Authorities to provide clarity in relation to the interpretation and application of current statutory guidelines in respect of how residential densities are applied to towns and villages. The Circular highlights that in certain locations, particularly at the edges of towns in a rural context, more compact forms of development may include residential densities at a lower level than would be considered appropriate in a city or large town context.

Accordingly, the Circular clarifies the application of the Sustainable Residential Development Guidelines to ensure that when carrying out their planning functions, An Bord Pleanála and Planning Authorities apply a graduated and responsive, tailored approach to the assessment of residential densities in Peripheral and/or Less Accessible Urban Locations, as defined in the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments, DHLGH, 2020, and as they apply to towns of all sizes, to ensure that such places are developed in a sustainable and proportionate manner.

Development at the Edge of Larger Towns

The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas - Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DEHLG (2009) states that the greatest efficiency in land usage on Outer Suburban / 'Greenfield' sites in Larger Towns will be achieved by providing net residential densities in the general range of 35-50 dwellings per hectare and such densities (involving a variety of housing types where possible) should be encouraged generally. Furthermore, the Guidelines state that development at net densities less than 30 dwellings per hectare should generally be discouraged in the interests of land efficiency, particularly on sites in excess of 0.5 hectares.

Circular letter NRUP 02/2021 provides the following clarification with respect to applying the above densities to Outer Suburban / 'Greenfield' sites in Larger Towns:

- The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas - Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DEHLG (2009) define larger towns as having a population in excess of 5,000 people up to the accepted city scale of 50,000 people.

- Given the very broad extent of this range and variety of urban situations in Ireland, it is necessary for An Bord Pleanála and Planning Authorities to exercise discretion in the application and assessment of residential density at the periphery of large towns, particularly at the edges of towns in a rural context.
- Accordingly, the full range of outer suburban density, from a baseline figure of 30 dwellings per hectare (net) may be considered, with densities below that figure permissible to facilitate a choice of housing types provided that, within a neighbourhood or district as a whole, average densities achieve the minimum recommended standards of the Guidelines.

Development within Smaller Towns and Villages

Circular letter NRUP 02/2021 points out that the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas - Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DEHLG (2009) cautions against large scale, rapid development that may overwhelm and detract from the quintessential character of towns and villages that have developed slowly and organically over time, and furthermore, clarifies that there is already clear scope for greater variation in density in smaller towns, but that this should not lead to provision for disproportionate development in such places through excessive zoning.

Building Heights

Aligned with the principle of greater densification, will be the requirement to consider greater height in appropriate locations. It is important to note however, that higher density does not necessarily equate to high rise buildings and plot ratio and site coverage all contribute to the density of a particular built form. Appropriate higher density schemes can often be achieved by using mid-rise typologies and key to the success of such development is high quality design and placemaking.

The Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines for Planning Authorities published in December 2018 state that increasing prevailing building heights has a critical role to play in addressing both the scale and density of development. The guidelines also note that increased building height is a factor in assisting modern placemaking and improving the overall quality of our urban environments. The strategic approach, therefore, is to promote more intensive forms of development, including increased height, whilst ensuring that high quality places and a good quality of life are achieved.

The Guidelines include 4 no. Specific Planning Policy Requirements (SPPR), which the Planning Authority must apply in carrying out its functions. SPPR 1 relates to increased building heights and density in locations with good public transport accessibility. SPPR 2 seeks to ensure that an appropriate mix of uses is delivered as part of increased building heights. SPPR 3 relates to localised environmental issues to consider for higher buildings. SPPR 4 cross-references the application of residential density:

SPPR 4

It is a specific planning policy requirement that in planning the future development of greenfield or edge of city/town locations for housing purposes, planning authorities must secure:

1. the minimum densities for such locations set out in the Guidelines issued by the Minister under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), titled “Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2007)” or any amending or replacement Guidelines;
2. a greater mix of building heights and typologies in planning for the future development of suburban locations; and
3. avoid mono-type building typologies (e.g. two storey or own-door houses only), particularly, but not exclusively so in any one development of 100 units or more.

Circular letter NRUP 02/2021 clarifies that the Guidelines referred to in Point 1 above, are in fact the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas - Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DEHLG (2009), and that it follows that discretion may be applied in the assessment of residential density at the periphery of larger towns, with net residential densities below 35 dwellings per hectare permissible in certain cases, as set out above. Accordingly, ‘minimum’ densities should not be equated with 35 dwellings per hectare in all contexts and may be lower than that figure.

Policy

It is the policy of the Council to:

HO P5	Promote residential densities appropriate to its location and surrounding context.
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Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

HO 04	Ensure appropriate densities are achieved in accordance with the Core Strategy in Chapter 2 of this Plan, and in accordance with the principles set out in Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Urban Development (Cities, Towns and Villages), DEHLG, 2009, Urban Design Manual: A Best Practice Guide, DEHLG, 2009; Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018); and with reference to Circular Letter NRUP 02/2021 (April 2021).
HO 05	Ensure a strategic approach to building height in urban settlements that accords with The Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018) and in particular, Specific Planning Policy Requirements (SPPR) 1 to 4.

HO 06	Encourage increased densities that contribute to the enhancement of a town or village by reinforcing street patterns or assisting in redevelopment of backlands and centrally located brownfield sites
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3.8 Protecting Existing Residential Amenity

Residential amenity is influenced by a range of factors, such as private outdoor amenity space, privacy and natural light. The relationship of buildings to each other and their individual design can have a significant impact on these factors and on residents' comfort. In older residential areas, infill development will be encouraged, while still protecting the existing residential amenity of these areas.

Objective

It is an objective of the Council to:

HO 07	Ensure a balance between the protection of existing residential amenities, the established character of the area and the need to provide for sustainable residential development is achieved in all new developments.
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3.9 Regeneration, Compact Growth and Densification

A key objective of the NPF and RSES is to increase the density of development in all built up areas, in order to achieve the indicated population targets in a compact and sustainable manner. Increased densities will facilitate optimising the use of serviced lands and maximising the viability of investment in social and physical infrastructure, in particular public transport.

It will be necessary to make the best possible use of under-utilised land and buildings, including 'infill', 'brownfield' and publicly owned sites and vacant and under-occupied buildings, with higher housing and jobs densities, serviced by existing and proposed facilities and public transport. The existing housing stock of County Kildare provides a valuable resource in terms of meeting the needs of a growing population and its retention and management is of considerable importance.

Carefully managing the sustainable growth of compact cities, towns and villages will add value and create more attractive places in which people can live and work. Activating these strategic areas and achieving effective density and consolidation, rather than the creation of further urban sprawl, is a top priority.

Policy

It is the policy of the Council to:

HO P6	Promote and support residential consolidation and sustainable intensification and regeneration through the consideration of applications for infill development, backland development, re-use/adaptation of existing housing stock and the use of upper floors, subject to the provision of good quality accommodation.
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Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

HO 08	Promote, where appropriate and sensitive to the characteristics of the receiving environment, increased residential density as part of the Council's development management function and in accordance with the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities and the accompanying Urban Design Manual, DEHLG, May 2009.
HO 09	Support new housing provision over the Plan period to deliver compact and sustainable growth in the towns and villages in the County, and supporting urban renewal, infill and brownfield site development and regeneration, to strengthen the roles and viability of the towns and villages, including the requirement that at least 30% of all new homes in settlements be delivered within the existing built-up footprint.
HO 010	Promote the transformation of key brownfield sites and identified regeneration areas into successful socially integrated neighbourhoods and promote area regeneration in parts of the urban centres which require physical improvement and enhancement in terms of quality of life, housing and employment opportunities.
HO 011	That the future development of institutional land be cognisant of the historical and cultural importance of the land including through, inter alia, the quantitative and qualitative provision of open space required under Section 15.6.6 (Chapter 15 – Development Management Standards) and the sensitive reuse of Protected Structures within the site.
HO 012	Support the revitalisation of the social and physical fabric of town and village centres by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Resisting, and where the opportunity arises, reversing the loss of residential use on upper floors.b) Supporting the use of the upper floors of existing town and village centre buildings for appropriate uses, including residential.
HO 013	Support and promote the renovation and re-use of obsolete, vacant and derelict homes, through the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) Encourage the redevelopment and reuse, including energy retrofitting, of the existing housing stock.(ii) Support Government programmes and incentives to bring empty homes into use through various means, including potential expansion of the Town and Village Renewal Scheme as referred to in the Government's Rural Development Policy 2021-2025.(iii) Maximise the effective use of local authority housing stock and minimise local authority housing stock vacancy, including

	<p>through effective refurbishment and retrofitting of older stock where appropriate.</p> <p>(iv) Promote the conversion of vacant properties into new social and affordable homes through schemes including the Repair and Leasing Scheme and the Buy and Renew Scheme. Kildare County Council will endeavour to promote these schemes and encourage owners of vacant properties to avail of these schemes, directly or in co-operation with Approved Housing Bodies.</p>
HO 014	Promote the design and delivery of environmentally sustainable and energy efficient housing, including through the refurbishment and upgrading of existing stock.
HO 015	Continue to work with developers and residents of private residential developments, where possible, to address public safety and environmental/infrastructural issues within unfinished housing estates.

3.10 Mix of Dwelling Types

The impact of population growth, social changes including more people living alone or in smaller households and an ageing population with specific housing needs means that the mix of house types and sizes required needs to become more diverse.

Over a 20-year period (1996 to 2016), Kildare experienced a 64.8% (+87,512) increase in its population base - the second highest rate in the State, compared to the state average of 31.3%. This is explained by high levels of natural increase (birth rate) and a strong performance in estimated net migration.

The population of County Kildare is expected to rise by c. 44,000 persons between 2016 and 2031, which equates to a 19.7% increase.

Census 2016 recorded an average household size of 3.0 persons for County Kildare, up from 2.94 in 2011, but down from 3.19 in 2002 and 3.01 in 2006. Notwithstanding the modest increase in household size between 2011 and 2016, it is likely that household size will start to fall again. The National Planning Framework indicates that the average household size is expected to decline nationally to 2.5 persons by 2040. By the end of the HNDA period, 2031, it is forecast that the average household size for County Kildare will fall to 2.77.

Kildare has a rapidly increasing '65 and over' age cohort. According to Census 2016, there were 22,104 people over 65 living in Kildare in 2016, representing 10% of the county's population, a figure which represents a 32.2% increase in that cohort of the population from the 2011 census. The Kildare Age Friendly Strategy 2019-2021, reports that the ageing of the population from this point onwards will represent one of the most significant demographic and societal developments and challenges that Ireland has encountered. It is projected that by 2031, 16% of the population of County Kildare will be over the age of 65 years, with this rate increasing to 21% by 2040.

The county also has a high level of population in the 0-14 age cohort. In addition, according to Census 2016, 79% of all 2 person households were either a married couple or cohabitating couple household with no children, compared to the State average of 66%, and while a proportion of these may be 'empty nesters', there is a strong likelihood that many of these households could expand to 3 or 4 person households within the lifetime of this strategy.

The mix of house types proposed in an area should be influenced by a range of factors including the desirability of providing for mixed communities and a range of housing types and tenures; the nature of the existing housing stock in the area and the need to provide a choice of housing, suitable to all age groups and persons at different stages of the life cycle; the existing social mix in the area; the need to cater for specialist groups such as the elderly or disabled and the saleability of different types of housing. A neighbourhood with a good mix of unit types should include houses and apartments of different sizes.

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

It is the policy of the Council to:

HO P7	Encourage the establishment of sustainable residential communities by ensuring a wide variety of housing typologies and tenures is provided throughout the county.
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Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

HO O16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Require that new residential developments provide for a wide variety of housing types, sizes and tenures. b) Specify target housing mixes, as appropriate, for certain sites and settlements as part of the Local Area Plan process. c) Require the submission of a 'Statement of Housing Mix' with all applications for 10 or more residential units. d) Require that all new residential developments in excess of 5 residential units provide for a minimum of 20% universally designed units in accordance with the requirements of 'Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach' published by the National Disability Centre for Excellence in Universal Design. <p>Further detail in respect of unit mix is set out in Chapter 16: Development Management Standards</p>
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HO 017	Promote the provision of high-quality apartments within sustainable neighbourhoods by achieving suitable levels of amenity within individual apartments, and within each apartment development, and ensuring that suitable social infrastructure and other support facilities are available in the neighbourhood. Apartment development must be designed in accordance with the provisions of Sections 15.2, 15.3 and 15.4 (Chapter 15), where relevant, to ensure a high standard of amenity for future residents.
HO 018	Require new apartment developments to comply with the Specific Planning Policy Requirements and standards set out in the Apartment Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Department of Housing, Environment and Local Government, 2020), where relevant particularly in relation to paragraph 3.8(a) of same which requires that the majority of all apartments in any proposed scheme of 10 or more apartments shall exceed the minimum floor area standard for any combination of the relevant 1, 2 or 3 bedroom unit types, by a minimum of 10% (any studio apartments must be included in the total, but are not calculable as units that exceed the minimum by at least 10%).
HO 019	Support high-quality design in new housing and to promote housing that is attractive, safe, and adaptable to the needs of existing and future households. Kildare County Council will support innovative construction methods to deliver sustainable and adaptable housing.
HO 020	Support housing design that contributes to climate resilience and climate mitigation, including innovative low carbon construction methods and the reduction of embodied energy in newly built homes, in line with Goal 3 of the Kildare County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 – 2024.

3.11 Specialist Provision

The National Planning Framework supports continued progress towards achieving a more inclusive society that supports our citizen's basic human rights and assists in helping people to gain access to a better quality of life.

It is a strategic principle of the development plan to develop a network of sustainable neighbourhoods which have a range of facilities, a choice of tenure and universally designed adaptable house types, promote social inclusion and integration of all minority communities. Social inclusion is about ensuring that everyone has equal opportunity to participate in and contribute to, community life regardless of their age, ability, nationality, ethnic group, religion or any other of the many characteristics that contribute to diversity in our communities and society.

There are a number of groups with specific design and planning needs that must be considered in the planning and design of the built environment and in the location of social and community facilities. These groups include older people, children and young people, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and the Traveller community.

Policy

It is the policy of the Council to:

HO P8	Ensure that groups with specialist housing needs, such as the elderly, people with disabilities, the homeless, Travellers, those in need of emergency accommodation including those fleeing domestic violence, are accommodated in a way suitable to each of their specific needs.
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3.11.1 Older People

The Kildare Age Friendly Strategy 2019-2021 reports that the ageing of the population from this point onwards will represent one of the most significant demographic and societal developments and challenges that Ireland has encountered. ESRI projections indicate that the number of people over the age of 65 in Ireland will reach 1.3 million by 2040 or about 23% of the total population, compared to 13.5% in 2016. According to Census 2016, there were 22,104 people over 65 living in Kildare in that year, representing 10% of the county's population. It is anticipated that by 2031, 16% of the population of County Kildare will be over the age of 65 years, with this rate increasing to 21% by 2040.

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 rightsize / 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.

Older people require housing that is appropriate and responsive to more complex needs, enabling them to enjoy more active, healthy and socially connected lives and to age healthily and safely within their community.

The NPF recognises that in providing a more seamless and appropriate continuum of housing choices with appropriate supports for older people and a built environment that is attractive, accessible and safe, older people will be supported and motivated to enjoy more active, healthy and connected lives and to age confidently and comfortably in their community.

The '*Housing Options for Our Ageing Population Policy Statement*', jointly published in 2020 by the Department of Housing Planning and Local Government and the Department of Health refers to McAuley Place in Naas as a case study which highlights the importance of location when choosing appropriate housing and how a suitable location can help older people to age in place. McAuley Place consists of 53 self-contained apartments in the centre of Naas town, on the grounds of the former

Convent of Mercy. It is a managed service providing centrally located housing for older people who are capable of independent living.

Kildare County Council acknowledges McAuley Place as a national exemplar model of housing for older people and will seek to identify further opportunities in towns in each MD throughout the County for the Council (and other appropriate bodies) to expand this supported housing market.

Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

HO 021	Support the delivery of housing options to meet the needs of older people and support older people to live independently in active retirement, where possible.
HO 022	Require the provision of alternative accommodation, such as age-appropriate homes, independent and assisted living units, day-care facilities, nursing homes and specialised care units (e.g. dementia specific units) to meet the needs of older people and to facilitate the provision of a range of housing options for elderly persons in central, convenient and easily accessible locations, integrating such housing with mainstream housing through the designation of specific land uses at appropriate and optimised strategic locations in mandatory Local Area Plans in County Kildare.
HO 023	Support the provision of specific purpose-built accommodation, including assisted living units and lifetime housing and adaptation of existing properties, which will include opportunities for 'downsizing' or 'right sizing' within communities.
HO 024	Promote co-location of facilities (including childcare facilities and facilities for the elderly) at sustainable locations where they can avail of existing and planned social and community infrastructure, in particular, and to examine a range of community facilities and to encourage meanwhile use in some cases.
HO 025	Support the implementation of the Kildare Age Friendly County Strategy 2019-2021 (and any subsequent strategy), promoting the delivery of Lifetime Homes and to support the provision of housing that is adaptable for an ageing population. The Council will also support and promote, in a timely manner, the delivery of specialist accommodation appropriate to the specific needs and wishes of older people in co-operation with the voluntary sector, AHBs, the HSE, and other relevant bodies.
HO 026	Engage and develop strategies with the Approved Housing Bodies with responsibility for housing for older people to develop

	accommodation in town centres more suited to those with reduced mobility.
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Actions

The Council will:

HO A1	Promote McAuley Place, Naas, as a national exemplar model of housing for older people and will seek to identify further opportunities in towns in each MD throughout the County for the Council (and other appropriate bodies) to expand this supported housing market.
HO A2	Undertake an evidence-based qualitative assessment to establish the demand for age-specific housing options, including 'right-sizing' within County Kildare

3.11.2 People with Disabilities

Kildare County Council is committed to implementing the framework for the delivery of housing for disabled people as set out under the '*National Housing Strategy for Disabled People*' 2022-2027.

The Vision for the Strategy is to facilitate disabled people to live independently with the appropriate choices and control over where, how and with whom they live, promoting their inclusion in the community and to further enable equal access for disabled people to housing, with integrated support services.

Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

HO 027	Support access for people with disabilities, to the appropriate range of housing and related support services, delivered in an integrated, timely and sustainable manner, which promotes equality of opportunity, individual choice and independent living.
HO 028	Support and direct funding into the provision of specific purpose-built accommodation, including assisted/ supported living units, lifetime housing, and adaptation of existing properties in a manner that would not cause any undue delay to the delivery of same.
HO 029	Support and provide housing that meets the diverse needs of disabled people and to implement the County Kildare Access Strategy - A Universal Access Approach 2020-2022 (and any subsequent reviews and plans). The Council will support and promote the principles of Universal Design in new and refurbished housing and in community buildings in the County.

Actions

The Council will:

HO A3	Ensure that all Kildare County Council new build housing stock is in compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations.
HO A4	In line with the Objectives and Actions in respect of Accessible Housing contained in the 'County Kildare Access Strategy - A Universal Access Approach 2020-2022', to ensure, measure and monitor that 10% of acquired housing stock meets the needs of those with a disability and 12% of Kildare County Council new builds are universally designed, and have regard to any revised actions in updated versions of the Access Strategy.
HO A5	Monitor the number of housing acquisitions and new builds and ensure that they meet the needs of those with a disability

HO A6	Promote Ballymore Eustace as a national exemplar model of an age-friendly, climate-friendly village and seek to facilitate and support this model for other settlements within County Kildare.
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3.11.3 Homeless

Homelessness requires an inter-agency approach to provide housing options for those who need it. In line with the RSES and the Mid-East Region Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2023, the Council will continue to implement the Homeless Action Plan 2019-2021 and 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.

Objective

It is an objective of the Council to:

HO O30	Support means of preventing homelessness and provide tangible and timely pathways out of homelessness for households, working in co-operation with public and voluntary bodies and actively seeking solutions for same.
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3.11.4 Travellers

Kildare County Council has an adopted Traveller Accommodation Programme, which outlines the accommodation needs, policy and implementation measures to address the accommodation needs of the Traveller Community. The accommodation programme for the period 2019-2024 has been prepared in accordance with the provisions set out in the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998. The Council's Traveller Accommodation Programme sets out the range of social housing supports for Travellers, including standard Local Authority Housing, Approved Housing Body Housing and the Rental Accommodation Scheme, Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) for private rented accommodation, Local Authority Home Loan, Group Housing and Halting Site Bays. The council has received social leasing targets to the end of 2023, thereafter, no further leased units will be provided.

The current Traveller Accommodation Programme sets out a combined accommodation need assessment for the period 2019 to 2024, aiming to deliver 73 homes to Traveller families over the five-year period, with 28 of these units proposed as additional Traveller-specific accommodation. To date, 43 standard housing units and 6 Traveller-specific accommodation units have been provided (to December 2021). The TAP is subject to a mid-term review (2022) and this will demonstrate an update on existing and future needs.

The Traveller accommodation need assessment and delivery figures include a target of 28 additional Traveller specific accommodation units over the lifetime of the 2019 – 2024 Traveller Accommodation Programme. The additional Traveller specific accommodation will be provided in line with the following identified need:

Tankardsgarden, Newbridge

A redevelopment project at the Tankardsgarden site was discontinued due to a change in the housing needs of the families on site and technical constraints associated with the erosion of land along the banks of the River Liffey, which runs alongside the site. Currently, the Tankardsgarden site comprises 1 bay and 1 caravan.

Athy

Consultation undertaken for the TAP 2019-2024, established demand for additional group housing in Athy. The council is progressing plans for the construction of 5 houses and the upgrading of existing bays at Ardrew, Athy.

Countywide

An update on existing and future needs will be provided as part of the forthcoming review of the Traveller Accommodation Plan.'

Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

HO 031	Support the delivery of the Kildare County Council Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 - 2024 (and any superseding programmes agreed by the Council) in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.
HO 032	Implement the delivery targets, of the Kildare County Council Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024 (and any superseding programmes agreed by the Council) and to meet the delivery targets as a minimum, including to identify and develop sites for Traveller specific housing and to provide accommodation appropriate to the identified needs of members of the Traveller community.
HO 033	Ensure that Traveller accommodation is located in proximity to key services including education, community, health, recreation and public transport facilities, and to support those communities in accessing Council services in their widest provision (including arts and culture).
HO 034	Recognise the separate identity, culture, tradition and history of the Travelling people in order to reduce the levels of disadvantage that Travellers experience, consistent with UN Sustainable Development Goal No. 10 - 'Reduced Inequalities.

3.11.5 International Protection Applicants

The Council will continue to liaise and work with the relevant agencies and stakeholders in securing appropriate accommodation for refugees and asylum seekers in appropriate locations throughout County Kildare.

Objective

It is an objective of the Council to:

HO O35	Continue to work with Central Government and relevant State Agencies to support the provision of housing for International Protection Applicants (asylum seekers/ refugees) in County Kildare, and to support those communities in accessing Council services in their widest provision (including arts and culture.).
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3.11.6 Third Level Students

Students are an increasingly important part of the housing landscape in Kildare, particularly in Maynooth. According to Census 2016, 20,559 residents of County Kildare reported their principle economic status as students (12.2% of all those aged 15 and over). Also recorded by Census 2026 was that 25.3% of the population of Maynooth town over the age of 15 are students, compared to an average of c. 11% for the other towns within the vicinity, including Leixlip and Kilcock which are connected to Maynooth via a rail line and also compared to the state average of 11.4%. Maynooth University is the only third level institution in County Kildare and it has a total enrolment of 13,700 students.

Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

HO O36	Support the provision of purpose-built student accommodation in appropriate locations and of appropriate design (including adequate communal facilities and external communal space), to meet demand for student housing in accordance with the National Student Accommodation Strategy.
HO O37	Support increased supply of student accommodation in Maynooth, Kilcock, Leixlip and Celbridge to meet the anticipated student accommodation demand generated by Maynooth University. Applications for change of use from student housing to any other form of housing will be resisted without adequate demonstration that an over-provision of student housing exists.

3.11.7 Domestic Violence Refuge

The Council will work with other statutory agencies to facilitate and support appropriate accommodation for people experiencing domestic violence and to improve the range and quality of services available.

Objective

It is an objective of the Council:

HO O38	To proactively facilitate and support Túsla, the Child and Family Agency, service providers and other relevant agencies in the provision of domestic violence refuges within each Municipal District in the county.
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3.12 Social, Affordable Purchase and Cost Rental Housing

The government's 'Housing for All - a New Housing Plan for Ireland' (2021) estimates that Ireland will need an average of 10,000 social homes each year over the next five years, with 9,500 of these being new-builds, and an average of 6,000 affordable homes for purchase or rent. An overarching governance structure will be established in the Department of the Taoiseach to oversee the implementation of Housing for All. Government departments, State agencies, Local Authorities, Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs), the Land Development Agency (LDA) and other delivery partners will work with the delivery office to achieve the implementation of the plan.

The Housing Strategy and HNDA set out in Appendix 1, are the key planning mechanisms for the delivery of new affordable housing and sustainable communities.

The statutory context for the provision of social and affordable housing has changed under the Affordable Housing Act 2021. Kildare County Council will seek to facilitate the maximum allowable provision under the Planning Act (as amended) for affordable and social housing provision as part of future planning permissions, reflecting the high levels of demand within the county.

- The Affordable Housing Act provides for a requirement that any new planning permission granted for housing subject to the Act will have a 20% Part V requirement on that land where;
 - At least half of the land or equivalent net monetary value obtained under Part V must be used for social housing support.
 - The remainder can be used for affordable purchase housing, cost rental housing or both.
 - If there is no requirement for affordable housing, the remainder can be used as an additional discount on construction costs, or for more social housing.
- The Planning Authority will review the Part V requirements contained in this Plan if the legislation underpinning this requirement is amended.

The HNDA reports that the total number of social housing applicants, as of 2 November 2021, was 3,417 (households). This figure excludes households currently on the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) scheme, accommodation provided under the

Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS), and accommodation provided under the Social Housing Capital Expenditure Programme (SHCEP) schemes.

In addition to the existing social housing need, the HNDA provides longer-run estimates (to 2031) for housing need based on projected housing market affordability (future house prices, rental values and income). The longer-run estimates facilitated by the HNDA tool incorporates the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage/ ESRI Convergence Scenario for Housing Supply Targets at a County Level. On this basis, Kildare County Council has produced an estimate of housing need to 2031, broken down by tenure type, as outlined in Table 3.1, while Table 4.2 shows housing need broken down by year to 2031.

The results show that c. 30.2% of new households formed between 2023 and 2031 will require social housing support while 10.6% will fall within the bracket of 'affordability constraint' and therefore will require affordable housing, either affordable purchase or cost rental. In terms of figures, the HNDA Tool output estimates that based on a housing supply target of 13,840 units to 2031, 3,934 households will require social housing support and a further 1,818 households will require affordable housing, either affordable purchase or cost rental.

	% Tenure Breakdown	Number of New Dwellings 2023-2031	Number of New Dwellings per Annum
New private ownership homes	31.50%	4360	436
New private rental homes	27.70%	3834	427
New affordable homes (Affordability Constraint)	10.60%	1467	164
New Social Housing homes	30.20%	4180	466
	100%	13,840	

Table 3.2 - Forecasted housing need by tenure type

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	Total
New private ownership homes	519	492	469	464	475	491	477	466	471	4324
New private rental homes	439	420	420	420	430	429	417	393	396	3764
New affordable homes (Affordability Constraint)	93	119	146	177	196	249	258	281	299	1818
New Social Housing homes	530	499	458	448	442	424	397	374	362	3934
Total Housing Need	1581	1530	1493	1509	1543	1593	1549	1514	1528	13840

Table 3.3 - Forecasted housing need by tenure type

As stated in the DHLGH ‘Guidance on the Preparation of a Housing Need and Demand Assessment’ the HNDA Tool is intended to “give broad, long-run estimates of what future housing need might be, rather than precision estimates”. It offers ‘policy-off’ forecasts with its outputs subject to the inputs, scenarios, and assumptions built into the model. The HNDA results show a continuing demand for social housing support and a rising demand for affordable houses.

Current data indicates that there are 2,040 social housing units in the pipeline for County Kildare to be delivered over the next 1-3 years, comprising SHIP Construction Turnkey, CAS, CALF, PPP, Part V and leasing¹, of which 537 are under construction, 907 are at an advanced stage of funding approval and a further 596 social housing units are at a ‘Proposal’ stage. These current delivery streams represent c. 31.5% of existing social housing need across the County.

To reflect the high levels of demand within the County for social and affordable housing, the Council will require the maximum allowable provision under the Planning Act (as amended) for Part V social and affordable housing provision as part of future planning permissions.

In addition to the implementation of Part V, the Council will work in partnership with the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, Approved Housing Bodies and other key stakeholders to deliver and manage social and affordable housing. Other mechanisms of delivery will include direct build, acquisitions, void management, long term leasing, enhanced leasing, repair to lease, private rental (RAS and HAP) and the Buy and Renew Scheme.

Policies

It is the policy of the Council to:

HO P9	<p>Promote the provision of social and affordable housing in accordance with the Council’s Housing Strategy, Housing Need Demand Assessment and Government policy as outlined in the DHPLG Social Housing Strategy 2020 and to ensure, where applicable:</p> <p>(a) That 20% of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) lands zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, in respect of which permission for the development of 5 or more houses is granted, and (ii) any land which is not zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, but in respect of which permission for the development of 5 or more houses is granted,
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¹ Social Housing Capital Investment Programme (SHCIP or SHIP)
Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS)
Capital Advanced Leasing Facility (CALF)
Public Private Partnership (PPP)
Enhanced Leasing (25-year term)

	<p>shall be reserved for the provision of social housing, affordable housing and cost rental housing; with at least half the 20% to be used for social housing support, and the remainder to be used for affordable housing, which can be affordable purchase, cost rental or both, social housing, or a combination of affordable and social housing, in accordance with the Affordable Housing Act 2021 and Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)</p> <p>Or</p> <p>(b) Where</p> <p>(i) planning permission was granted before 1 August 2021, or</p> <p>(ii) where land was purchased between 1 September 2015 and 31 July 2021 in respect of which new planning permission was granted between 3 September 2021 and 31 July 2026,</p> <p>Kildare County Council will require that 10% of lands zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, in respect of which permission for the development of 5 or more houses is granted, shall be reserved for the provision of social housing, in accordance with the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 and Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)</p> <p>(c) Where Part V provision on planning applications is being accepted off site, that the units offered be located within a 5km catchment of the area.</p>
HO P10	<p>Support the provision of new student accommodation at suitable locations. Where sites are developed for student accommodation, the portion of the site relating to this will be exempt from the social and affordable housing requirements of Section 96(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).</p>

Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

HO O39	<p>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, Repair and Lease Scheme, the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) scheme, the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) and the utilisation of existing housing stock.</p>
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HO O40	Support Government's affordable housing initiatives, including the Affordable Purchase Scheme and First Home / Share Equity Scheme, introduced by the Affordable Housing Act 2021.
HO O41	Support local authorities, approved housing bodies and other sectoral agencies in the provision of a greater diversity of housing type and tenure, including social and affordable housing, new models of cost rental and affordable homeownership and co-operative housing.
HO O42	Support and, where feasible, work in partnership with the Land Development Agency (LDA) in the provision of social and affordable housing in County Kildare.

3.13 Sustainable Rural Housing

The NPF and ‘Our Rural Future’, Ireland’s Rural Development Policy 2021-2025’, (DRCD, 2021) are clear in their support for the need to plan for sustainable communities and to reinforce our rural communities. These transformative national policy documents set out that this will be achieved through attracting new and existing residents to live in rural areas, to encourage and promote the reuse of vacant homes and to make provision for housing in the countryside for those who demonstrate a need to live in our rural areas.

The NPF acknowledges that rural towns across Ireland function as local drivers for their surrounding areas through well-established economic, administrative and social functions. They support clusters of services, have a significant share of homes and jobs, and act as transport hubs for a much wider rural community. The NPF also highlights that rural town living requires a proportionate and tailored approach to residential development. This means that it is necessary to tailor the scale, design and layout of housing in rural towns to ensure that a suburban or high-density urban approach is not applied to a rural setting and that development responds to the character, scale and density of the town.

While acknowledging the potential of our rural settlements, it is recognised that there is a continuing need for housing provision for people to live and work in the countryside.

The **National Planning Framework (NPF)** sets out clear guidance and policy objectives (**Objective 19**) relating to the future growth and development of rural areas across Ireland. It is recognised within NPF that there is a continuing need for housing provision for people to live and work in Ireland’s countryside. Careful planning is required to manage demand in our most accessible countryside around cities and towns.

For guidance, NPF describes large towns and employment centres as towns with a population of **more than 10,000 people or more than 2,500 jobs**. NPF also suggests the use of a standard EU/OECD definition to map the commuter catchments **where 15%** of the local workforce is employed in the selected towns and centres of employment (at Electoral Division (ED) level).

For the case of Kildare, this means an analysis of commuting flows to **Dublin Metropolitan Area, Naas, Newbridge, Maynooth, Celbridge, Leixlip, Kildare Town, Athy, Kilcock, Sallins, Portlaoise, Portarlington, Edenderry, Carlow Town and Blessington**.

While commuting levels are the primary evidence-based factor, documentation published by the OPR (Rural Settlement and Local Authority Plan-Making: Practical Advice) also suggest that an evidence-based approach should be based on **both data analysis** and **local knowledge**.

The identification of **Areas Under Strong Urban Influence** in County Kildare took account of the following:

- High levels of commuting pattern (as per NPF/RSES guidance above)
- Proximity to cities/towns or to major transport corridors with ready access to urban areas
- Ready access to a good road network with ready access to the larger urban areas

The Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines (2005) state that it is ‘vitally important that a process of research and analysis be carried out into population and development trends in rural areas’ before planning authorities draft the written statement of the development plan which should include the identification of the location and extent of ‘Rural Area Types’, to include -

- Areas under Strong Urban Influence
- Stronger Rural Areas
- Structurally Weak Areas
- Areas with clustered settlement patterns

3.13.1 Defining our Rural Housing Policy Zones

Careful planning is required to manage demand in our most accessible countryside around cities and towns, focusing on the elements required to support the sustainable growth of rural economies and rural communities.

Further guidance on rural housing policy is also available through the Eastern and Midland’s *Regional, Spatial and Economic Strategy* (RSES) (RPO 4.80).

Based on this guidance (NPF and RSES) and as a means of informing the updated rural housing policy within the County Development Plan (CDP) review, Kildare County Council engaged the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) at Maynooth University to delineate areas within Kildare that are classified as *Rural Areas Under Strong Urban Influence (Rural Category 1)* and *Stronger Rural Areas (Rural Category 2)*. The following section outlines the methodology used to identify and formulate the Areas Under Strong Urban Influence Map, 2021.

3.13.2 An Evidence-based Approach

This methodology is primarily driven by the NPF/RSES definition for the identification of *Areas Under Strong Urban Influence*.

For Kildare, this means a commuting analysis of flows to the Dublin Metropolitan Area (DMA) and then the individual settlements of Naas, Newbridge, Maynooth, Celbridge, Leixlip, Kildare Town, Athy, Kilcock, Sallins, Portlaoise, Portarlington, Edenderry, Carlow Town and Blessington. As with all previous functional area mapping carried out by AIRO for the National Planning Framework and the EMRA RSES, the selected settlements are based on the National Transport Authority ‘Urban Core’ boundaries which are based on amalgamations of CSO Settlement boundaries that also include key employment locations on the outskirts of settlements (i.e., M7 Naas Business Park included as part of Naas CSO settlement).

While commuting levels are the primary evidence-based factor in the delineation of *Areas Under Strong Urban Influence*, the project team have also consulted recent documentation published by the OPR (*Rural Settlement and Local Authority Plan-Making: Practical Advice*²) that suggests an evidence-based approach should be based on both data analysis and local knowledge within local authorities. In particular, the development of an *Areas Under Strong Urban Influence Map* should take account of the following:

- High level of commuting patterns (as per NPF/RSES guidance above)
- Proximity to cities/towns or to major transport corridors with ready access to urban areas
- Ready access to a good road network with ready access to the larger urban areas
- Avoid a 'patchwork approach' with multiple categories/ lots of small rural area designations.
- Option to 'layer' planning and environmental constraints

It is also important to consider, in parallel with the NPF definition, the existing CDP delineation of Rural Area Zones in Kildare, recent demographic trends on population loss and stagnation over the last twenty-year period (1996 to 2016), and existing density of one-off housing developments in rural areas.

The following steps comprised the overall analysis.

- **Step 1:** Mapping of Existing Rural Housing Zone 1 (2017)
- **Step 2:** Mapping of NPF/RSES Definition (2021)
- **Step 3:** Local Refinement of NPF/RSES Definition (2021) to respond to local conditions
- **Step 4:** Validation of Areas Under Urban Influence Map for Demographic, One-Off Density and Environmental Factors

Further analysis is set out in Appendix 10 (*Development of Areas Under Strong Urban Influence Map, 2021*) which accompanies this Draft plan.

In accordance with the findings of the evidence-based report, the approach outlined below will apply to the Zones identified on Map 3.1.

Zone 1 - Areas under Strong Urban Influence

In 'Areas under Strong Urban Influence', it will be an objective of the Council to facilitate the provision of single housing in the countryside based on the core considerations of:

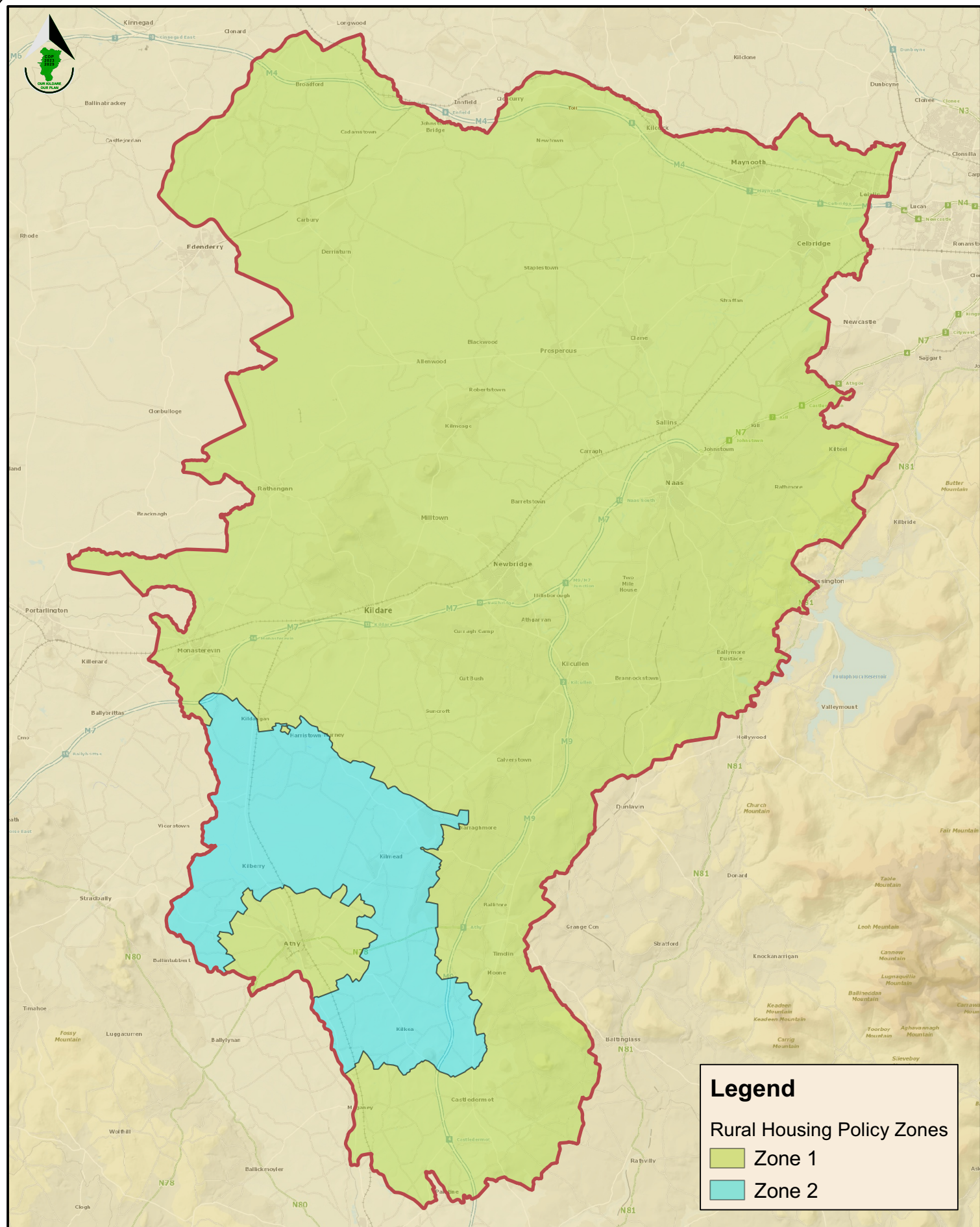
- demonstrable 'economic or social' need to live in a rural area and build their home, and
- siting, environmental and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans

² <https://www.opr.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/May-2021-Councillor-Training-Webinar-Anne-Marie-OConnors-Presentation-1.pdf>

having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements and the provision and availability of serviced sites in these areas.

Zone 2 – ‘Stronger Rural Areas’

In ‘Stronger Rural Areas’, it will be an objective of the Council to facilitate the provision of single housing in the countryside based on siting, environmental and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans, having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements. It is also recognised that certain parts of the county are of significant scenic value and must be protected to maintain and protect their landscape quality.



Kildare County Council
Planning & Strategic
Development Department
Áras Chill Dara,
Devoy Park, Naas, Co Kildare.

Draft County Development Plan 2023-2029

Rural Housing Policy Zones

Stage	Date	Description
Draft County Development Plan	12/12/2021	Draft Plan Issued to the Elected Members
Draft County Development Plan	14/02/2022	Draft Plan Issued for Public Consultation

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Scale: N.T.S.

Map Ref: V1-3.1

Date: Feb 2022

Drawing No.: 200/22/1217

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Date 07/02/2022

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L Crawford
Date 07/02/2022

Approved By:
C O'Donnell
Date 07/02/2022

**This drawing is to be read in conjunction
with the written statement**

0 4 8 12

3.13.3 Compliance with the Rural Housing Requirements

Rural generated housing demand will be facilitated having regard, *inter alia*, to the applicant's genuine local and housing need, together with the protection of key economic, environmental, natural and heritage assets, such as the road network, water quality, sensitive landscapes, habitats and the built heritage. The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage have indicated that new Rural Housing Guidelines are being prepared to address rural housing issues and to take account of the Flemish Decree, the NPF and broader settlement context. In the interim, Kildare Draft Development Plan must establish a policy to facilitate those who can demonstrate a genuine housing need and a social and/or economic need to live in rural County Kildare. Urban generated rural housing³ will not be considered.

For the purposes of demonstrating compliance, this plan has provided a definition of 'Economic' and 'Social' need in the context of rural housing policy, as set out below;

Economic:

A person (or persons) who is (are) actively engaged in farming/agricultural activity on the landholding on which the proposed dwelling is to be built, meeting either of the following:

- ① A **farmer** of the land or **son, daughter, niece or nephew** of the farmer who it is intended will take over the operation of the family farm.

Note; A farmer (for this purposes) is defined as a landowner with a holding of >15ha which must be in the ownership of the applicant's immediate family for a minimum of seven years preceding the date of the application for planning permission. The leasing of agricultural land to supplement lands within an applicant's ownership for farming, may be considered for the purposes of calculating the minimum land area of 15ha. The applicant shall submit details of said lease with the relevant planning application indicating that the lease is in place for a period of 10 years or more from the date of the application.

or

- (ii) An **owner and operator of a farming/horticultural/forestry/bloodstock/animal husbandry** business on an area less than 15ha, who is engaged in farming activity on a daily basis, where it is demonstrated through the submission of documentary evidence that the farming/agricultural activity forms a significant part of their livelihood.

Social

- i. A person who has **resided** in a rural area for a substantial period of their lives i.e. 16 years within **5km** (Zone 1) or **5km** (Zone 2) of the site where they intend to build.

Cluster type developments may be considered in rural areas on family farm holdings

³ Urban Generated Rural Housing is, for the purposes of this CDP, housing pressure generated by proposals, or an application made for a dwelling in a rural area by persons originating and/or working in urban areas.

for applicants who are family members and comply with the social or economic element of the rural housing policy.

Table 3.4 - Schedule of Local Need Criteria in accordance with the NPF (NPO 19)

Applicant Category	Rural Housing Need Assessment Criteria	
Category A – Economic	Zone 1 Areas under Strong Urban Influence	Zone 2 Stronger Rural Areas
<p>(i) A farmer of the land or the son/daughter/ niece/ nephew of the farmer who it is intended will take over the operation of the family farm</p> <p>or</p> <p>(ii) An owner and operator of a farming/horticultural/forestry/bloodstock/ Animal husbandry business on an area less than 15ha.</p>	<p>A farmer (for this purpose) is defined as a landowner with a holding of >15ha which must be in the ownership of the applicant's immediate family for a minimum of seven years preceding the date of the application for planning permission.</p> <p>The owner/operator [as referred to in Category A (ii)] must be engaged in that farming activity on a daily basis, as their main employment. Same must be demonstrated through the submission of documentary evidence to include confirmation that the farming/agricultural activity forms a significant part of the applicant's livelihood</p>	
Category B - Social	Zone 1 Areas under Strong Urban Influence	Zone 2 Stronger Rural Areas
<p>(i) A person who has resided in a rural area for a substantial period of their lives within an appropriate distance of the site where they intend to build on the family landholding.</p>	<p>Applicants must have grown up and spent 16 years⁴ living in the rural area of Kildare and who seek to build their home in the rural area</p>	<p>Applicants must have grown up and spent 16 years⁵ living in the rural area of Kildare and who seek to build their home in the rural area on</p>

⁴ Documentary evidence will be required. Examples of appropriate documentary evidence include, but are not limited to, copies of original birth certificates, bank statements, utility bills and copies of official school records.

⁵ Documentary evidence will be required. Examples of appropriate documentary evidence include, but are not limited to, copies of original birth certificates, bank statements, utility bills and copies of official school records.

	on their family landholding. Where no land is available in the family ownership, a site within 5km of the applicant's family home may be considered.	their family landholding. Where no land is available in the family ownership, a site within 5km of the applicant's family home may be considered.
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Note: Applications for rural one-off dwellings will be considered, subject to the policies and objectives set out in the County Development Plan. Applicants will be expected to comply with all other requirements of the plan and 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 the existing development and the extent of development on the original landholding will be considered.

Policies

It is the policy of the Council to:

HO P11	Facilitate proposals for dwellings in the countryside outside of settlements in accordance with NPF Policy NPO 19 for new Housing in the Open Countryside in conjunction with the rural housing policy zone map (Map 3.1) and accompanying Schedule of Category of Applicant and Local Need Criteria set out in Table 3.4 and in accordance with the objectives set out below. Documentary evidence of compliance with the rural housing policy must be submitted as part of the planning application.
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Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

HO O43	Require applicants to demonstrate that they do not own or have not been previously granted permission for a one-off rural dwelling in Kildare.
HO O44	Restrict residential development on a landholding, where there is a history of development through the speculative sale or development of sites to an unrelated third party, notwithstanding the applicant's compliance with the local need criteria.
HO O45	Restrict occupancy of the dwelling as a place of permanent residence for a period of ten years to the applicant who complies with the relevant provisions of the local need criteria.
HO O46	Recognise and promote the agricultural and landscape value of the rural area and prohibit the development of urban generated housing in the rural area.
HO O47	Recognise that exceptional health circumstances, supported by relevant documentation from a registered medical specialist, 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 ten-year occupancy condition.
HO O48	Encourage the appropriate re-use and adaptation of the existing rural residential building stock as a sustainable alternative to new build.

3.13.4 Siting and Design

The design of all new dwellings in rural areas should respond sensitively and appropriately to the characteristics of the receiving environment. Dwellings should be designed to be absorbed into the existing landscape features, including topography, existing field boundaries and green infrastructure. Applying good rural design principles and appropriate site selection criteria will ensure that new dwellings will integrate with the character and natural setting of the specific rural area while also delivering high quality, energy efficient homes. Further to the policies and objectives set out below, detailed guidance is provided in the Kildare Rural Housing Design Guide in Appendix 4.

Policies

It the policy of the Council to:

HO P12	Ensure that the siting and design of any proposed dwelling shall integrate appropriately with its physical surroundings and the natural and cultural heritage of the area whilst respecting the character of the receiving environment. Proposals must comply with Appendix 4 Rural House Design Guide and Chapter 15 Development Management Standards.
HO P13	Restrict further development which would exacerbate or extend an existing pattern of ribbon development, defined as 5 or more houses along 250 metres on one side of any road.
HO P14	<p>The Council will seek to resist further development which would serve to extend ribbon development, save in circumstances where a “gap site” is evident within the existing ribbon pattern, where one individual dwelling is proposed. Such proposals will be considered only in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The applicant can demonstrate an Economic or a Social Need (as outlined in Table 3.4), (ii) existing or shared accesses are used where practicable, and it is demonstrated (through the submission of documentary evidence) that no alternative site exists outside of the ribbon where the development is proposed. (iii) a ‘Gap Site’ is defined as a site located within a line of existing and permitted dwellings, where one dwelling only will be accommodated, and other than agricultural access

	<p>to lands to the rear (if required), the site should fully occupy the gap between existing and permitted dwellings.</p> <p>(iv) All other technical considerations are addressed.</p> <p>Proposals for development which would extend the ribbon will not be considered under this policy.</p>
HO P15	<p>Preserve and protect the open character of transitional lands particularly the approach roads to towns and villages and areas immediately outside of settlement boundaries 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 and to protect the integrity of the agricultural uses in these areas.</p>
HO P16	<p>Consider proposals for backland development for family members only. Proposals for such development must demonstrate that the proposed development would not have a negative impact on third parties/neighbouring property owners by way of overlooking/orientation of dwelling. Sufficient screening will be required to be provided and proposal for this shall be submitted with the planning application and must be in place prior to occupation of the dwelling. Particularly sensitive design approaches should be considered in these instances.</p>

Objectives

It is an objective of the Council:

HO O49	<p>Require that new dwellings incorporate principles of sustainability and green principles in terms of design, services and amenities with careful consideration in the choice of materials, roof types (i.e. green roofs), taking advantage of solar gain/passive housing and the provision of low-carbon and renewable energy technologies as appropriate to the scale of the development. Other sustainable principles could include the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (such as attenuation ponds and grass lined swales), the use of gravel or grasscrete rather than permanent paving/tarmac for driveways, landscaping and planting for biodiversity/pollinators and adequate waste segregation and storage space, as set out in Section 15.4 of Chapter 15 (Development Management standards) and the Rural House Design Guide contained in Appendix 4.</p>
HO O50	<p>Require that all applications demonstrate the ability to provide safe vehicular access to the site where the necessity to remove extensive stretches of native hedgerow and trees or can demonstrate existing hedgerow is not native and provide a landscape design to reinstate a hedgerow to outline proposals for replacement of same or comparative.</p> <p>Note; The need for the removal of extensive roadside hedgerow may indicate that the site is unsuitable for development.</p>
HO O51	<p>Retain, sensitively manage and protect features that contribute to local culture heritage and distinctiveness including;</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • heritage and landscape features such as post boxes, pumps, jostle stones, etc. • hedgerows and trees, • historic and archaeological features and landscapes, • water bodies, • ridges and skylines, • topographical and geological features and • important scenic views and prospects.
HO O52	Protect and maintain all surface water drainage within the curtilage of the site. Where site works impact on surface water drainage effective remedial works will be instated.

3.13.5 Restoration/Refurbishment of Traditional Structures

Kildare has a significant number of attractive vernacular structures within the rural area. Rather than risk the loss of the built heritage of Kildare through dereliction, the Council will promote and encourage the retention and sensitive refurbishment of vernacular buildings within the county. There are also quite a number of derelict dwellings across the rural countryside. Such structures, present opportunities for restoration and/or partial or full demolition, as the case may be.

Policies

It is the policy of the Council to:

HO P17	Promote the re-use and sensitive restoration of existing dwellings, particularly those of traditional 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.
HO P18	<p>Encourage the sensitive restoration of derelict traditional structures as an alternative to the construction of a one-off dwelling elsewhere subject to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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 3.4). <p>Normal planning, siting and design considerations will be taken into consideration.</p>
HO P19	Support and encourage the appropriate refurbishment, conversion and adaptation of existing rural building stock, such as former schoolhouses

	stone outbuildings and coach houses, where feasible, as a sustainable alternative to new build.
HO P20	<p>Facilitate, where it is demonstrated by an applicant that a dwelling is no longer suitable for habitation, its replacement with a new dwelling subject to the applicant demonstrating and submitting the following with the application:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. The structure must last have been used as a dwelling and the external walls must be identifiable/visible. II. A report from a suitably qualified competent person shall be submitted to verify that the dwelling is habitable (or not) and that replacement of the dwelling is the most sustainable option. III. Documentary evidence of the most recent date of occupation. IV. Normally a condition to demolish the existing dwelling will be included in any grant of permission. V. Normal planning considerations will be taken into account in the assessment of planning applications for replacement dwellings. VI. 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.

3.13.6 Areas Bordering Adjoining 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.

Policy

It is the policy of the Council to:

HO P21	Consider, 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 need, siting and design are complied with. The applicant shall also fully demonstrate that they are building their rural dwelling and that it will be for their permanent place of residence.
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3.13.7 Providing a sustainable alternative to One Off Housing

Project Ireland 2040 is clear in its intention regarding the role of rural areas in Ireland. It acknowledges that people in Ireland have a strong connection with rural areas for a number of different reasons. For some, it is the place in which they have chosen to live and work, where the land not only provides a home, but also provides an income. There are many examples of vibrant rural communities right across County Kildare, in towns, villages and the countryside as well as on our islands. There are clearly differences between types of rural areas and rural communities, including scale, accessibility, the

influence of neighbouring urban centres, natural resource assets and access to infrastructure and services. The many small towns and villages in County Kildare boast a unique character in the form of their streetscapes, their vernacular architecture and their people. The local pub, church, community centre and GAA and other local sports clubs are unique aspects of rural life, to be valued, protected and strengthened. Over past decades, the fabric and role of rural villages has changed, with population decline and the loss of built fabric and traditional services. Re-establishing and maintaining the future viability of our villages is critical for rural Ireland and is one of the most important challenges for national and local policy makers, stakeholders and communities. It is a priority of this development plan to establish a framework for these challenges to be addressed in a meaningful and practical way.

It is therefore a priority of this plan to put the policy provisions in place to implement this objective, by providing a model for serviced sites in established communities, as a sustainable alternative to one of housing in the open countryside. It is envisaged that the establishment of a “County Kildare Serviced Sites Initiative” will attract new residents in to live in our villages and sustain the communities and economies of these areas.

Policies

It is the policy of the Council to:

HO P22	Promote and facilitate the provision of sustainable alternatives to one off housing through the designation of lands specifically for serviced sites across a series of villages and rural settlements in County Kildare.
HO P23	Ensure that all development on sites designated “Serviced Sites” in Volume 2 of the Draft County Development Plan 2023-2029 comply, in full, with the KCC Serviced Sites Initiative Scheme. No development shall take place on sites designated “Serviced Sites” until such time as the KCC Serviced Sites Initiative Scheme is agreed by the Elected Members of Kildare County Council. Any development proposal submitted in advance of the schemes will be considered premature pending adoption of the KCC Serviced Sites Scheme.

Objectives

It is an objective of the Council:

HO O53	Identify a series of pilot project sites (private and local authority owned lands) for the initiation of a “County Kildare Serviced Sites Initiative” and progress their delivery.
HO O54	Ensure that any applicant for the provision of a dwelling unit on lands designated “Serviced Sites” complies in full with the local need criteria as set out in Table 3.4 which must be satisfactorily demonstrated through the submission of documentary evidence to illustrate compliance with all housing need requirements.
HO O55	Ensure that the development of any serviced sites;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequately addresses infrastructural requirements, including water, wastewater and surface water drainage as well as footpaths and lighting which shall link with the respective town/village/rural settlement - Provide for small scale housing developments (no more than 10 units per hectare) - Include a Design Statement for the overall site to inform the design, mix and type of the proposed dwellings - Include a clear timeframe for the delivery of the required infrastructure to service the development proposed
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Actions

It is an action of the Council:

HO A7	Engage with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to leverage funding through the 'Croí Cónaithe' (Towns) Fund ⁶ to deliver serviced sites in towns and villages to cater for sustainable alternatives to one off housing in accordance with NPO 18b of the National Planning Framework
HO A8	<p>Prepare a Kildare County Council Serviced Sites Scheme Policy Document to guide the development of serviced sites, no later than 6 months after the adoption of this Plan. This policy document shall;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ensure that the delivery of 'serviced sites' be determined following close consultation with the relevant landowners, service providers and all other relevant stakeholders 2) Consider how best to deliver the overall scheme whether by co-operative group(s) or otherwise 3) Explore mechanisms to support the delivery of affordable homes

⁶ Pathway 4; Housing for All (DoEHLG, September 2021)

3.14 Rural Residential Density

A quarter of the building stock (in both rural and urban areas) in County Kildare is comprised of rural one-off housing and this figure is generally consistent with the national average, however, when assessing the overall density per square kilometre of single rural dwellings nationally, in 2002, Kildare was just one of six counties to have an average rural density in excess of 7 dwellings per square kilometre.

National guidelines and the County Development Plan policy has generally been formulated to manage rural housing to avoid a proliferation of one-off houses, extensive ribbon development, piecemeal and haphazard development that erode the intrinsic character of the Irish countryside, which is both an economic resource and a tourism asset.

The application of such criteria as haphazard and piecemeal development patterns, while generally clear to the planner undertaking the assessment, can be problematic for the applicant to decipher. In order to provide some guidance on the matter, the Planning Authority will (in association with other relevant criteria) assess applications for one-off housing in the countryside having regard to the overall rural residential density in the area.

When the density or intensity of one-off houses becomes overly concentrated in any one particular area, the rural character of the area is gradually eroded, as bungalows replace vernacular dwellings, as modern buildings replace traditional local materials, as hedgerows are replaced with a wide range of boundary treatments (including non-native hedging, timber fencing – painted or treated in different colours, metal/weldmesh fencing, brick/concrete block/rendered/pebble dashed walls), and access lanes and boreens are replaced with tarmac driveways. The intrinsic rural character is gradually transformed into a suburban, peri-rural character.

One of the evaluation criteria is the examination of Single Rural Dwelling Density (SRDD) at the scale of a square kilometre surrounding the proposed site for a one-off house.

- In general, SRDDs of less than 15 units per square kilometre will be acceptable.
- In very enclosed landscapes with well-defined hedgerows and/or mature trees, which would partly screen or enclose one-off houses, RRDs of c. 15 – 25 per square kilometre may be open for consideration⁷.
- Where the RRD exceeds 25 units per square kilometre there will be a presumption against further one-off houses.

This guideline provides a quantitative assessment of qualitative criteria such as piecemeal and haphazard development. It is not intended to be a rigid tool and there may be instances where the existing pattern of development may facilitate some

⁷ Pre 1971 the greatest concentration of single rural dwellings was up to 13 per square kilometre and close to urban centres.

consolidation of one-off housing due to the prevailing pattern in the area, local topographical conditions or in very enclosed country (defined by mature trees and hedgerows). In these instances, the planning authority may deem a site to have the capacity to absorb additional residential unit/s without any significant adverse visual/physical/environmental impact on the countryside. Generally, such one-off housing would be facilitated only in very exceptional circumstances, where there is a significant need demonstrated, for example, those actively engaged in agricultural or in an occupation heavily dependent on the land.

It is important to note however, that environmental considerations and relevant standards in relation to the suitability of soils for percolation and/or potential impact on the receiving waters will take precedence to these guidelines as the environmental implications for ground water supplies and the water quality in local rivers is a serious concern. In terms of the application of these guidelines, Kildare County Council will be seeking to avoid a monotone, standardised density emerging across the countryside. For this reason, backland development will be prohibited (and ribbon development controlled) - though exceptions will be made for backland sites to active farmers and others who are applying for planning permission on their own land and whose livelihood depends on the land and who can justify a need to live at their landholding, i.e., animal husbandry.

The National Planning Framework is explicit in acknowledging the contribution rural areas make to Ireland's identity and to overall national development in economic, social, cultural and environmental terms. It further acknowledges that the Irish countryside is, and will continue to be, a living and lived-in landscape focusing on the requirements of rural economies and rural communities, based on agriculture, forestry, tourism and rural enterprise, while at the same time avoiding ribbon and over-spill development from urban areas and protecting environmental qualities. It is further recognised in the NPF and RSES that there is a continuing need for housing provision for people to live and work in Ireland's countryside, and notes that careful planning is required to manage demand in our most accessible countryside around cities and towns, focusing on the elements required to support the sustainable growth of rural economies and rural communities.

Fundamental to all of the above is the understanding that the rural landscape is a finite and to some extent now, limited resource and it is therefore critical and vitally important that this plan meets the housing needs of those who have a demonstrable and genuine economic or social need to reside in a rural area.

Policy

It is the policy of the Council to:

HO P24	<p>Sensitively consider the capacity of the receiving environment to absorb further development of the nature proposed through the application of Kildare County Councils 'Single Rural Dwelling Density' Toolkit (see Appendix 11) and facilitate where possible those with a demonstrable social or economic need to reside in the area. In this regard, the Council will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• examine and consider the extent and density of existing development in the area,• the degree and pattern of ribbon development in the proximity of the proposed site.
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Objective

It is an objective of the Council:

HO O56	<p>Carefully manage Single Rural Dwelling Densities to between 15 and 25 units per square kilometre and ensure that the density of one-off housing does not exceed 25 units per square kilometre, unless the applicant is actively engaged in agriculture, or an occupation that is heavily dependent on the land and building on their own landholding.</p>
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Note: In calculating the Single Rural Dwelling Density, key landscape features shall be excluded from the calculation area, for example, if the application site adjoins a large area of important habitat such as a natural peatland or extensive cut-away bog, a Natural Heritage Area, a Special Area of Conservation, a Special Protection Area or notable open landscape such as the Curragh, Punchestown Racecourse, Pollardstown Fen, Mouds Bog or a large protected demesne landscape (such as Castletown House or Carton House), such areas may be excluded from the calculation area and the Single Rural Dwelling Density will be applied on a pro-rata basis for the remainder of the 1 square kilometre catchment area. This is to avoid a more intense proliferation of one-off housing immediately adjoining key landscape and habitat features or a much higher density of development emerging immediately adjoining such key landscape features which might erode the intrinsic rural character, amenity value or environmental quality of the landscape.

Action

It is an action of the Council:

HO A9	<p>Continue, in conjunction with All Island Research Observatory (AIRO), Maynooth University, to monitor and map the level and pattern of one-off housing in rural areas during the period of the Development Plan as a means of monitoring and informing the rural housing policy.</p>
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3.15 Environmental and Technical Considerations

3.15.1 Domestic/On site Wastewater Treatment Systems

The Council will implement the provisions and standards of the Code of Practice for Domestic wastewater treatment systems (EPA, 2021) (and any amendment thereof) and the development management standards as set out in Chapter 15.

Proposals for new development outside of settlements which are by accompanied by septic tanks, proprietary effluent treatment systems and percolation areas, New residential developments will be required to connect to the public water network or group water scheme where available or likely to become available.

Policy

It is the policy of the Council to:

HO P25	Require all applications to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the proposed development site can accommodate an on-site wastewater treatment system in accordance with the EPA Code of Practice for Wastewater Treatment Systems for single houses (2021), the County Kildare Groundwater Protection Scheme, and any other relevant documents / legislation as may be introduced during the Plan period.
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3.16 Access and Entrances

New dwelling will only be permitted where the applicant has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, that the proposed development provides a safe option in terms of access and egress and meets the road traffic safety requirements as set out in the Development Management Standards set out in Chapter 16.

Policies

It is the policy of the Council to:

HO P26	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 5), through the creation of excessive levels of individual entrances and to secure investment in non-national roads.
HO P27	Require that proposals retain and maintain existing hedgerows in all instances, with the exception only of the section required to be removed to provide visibility at the proposed site entrance. On such cases, proposals for replacement hedgerows, including details of composition and planting must be submitted with any application which requires such removal.
HO P28	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 Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs). 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.

HO P29	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.
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3.17 Flood Risk Management

Applicants will be required to comply with the requirements of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DEHLG (2009) where appropriate and applicable.

Policy

It is the policy of the Council to:

HO P30	Require that site specific flood risk assessments are carried out where required, in accordance with the requirements of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities
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3.18 Technical Considerations for Rural Housing Proposals in County Kildare

In order to provide guidance and assist those engaging in the planning application process for a new home in a rural area in County Kildare, the Council has developed a set of basic principles under which an application would be considered (in addition to additional design and siting considerations outlined in Appendix 4). The principles set out below are intended to be a high-level checklist for applicants (or agents acting on their behalf) to consider when determining the suitability of a site or applicant for a new rural dwelling.

Technical Considerations for Rural Housing Proposals in County Kildare	
1. Genuine Housing Need and Future Occupancy (Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines)	An applicant seeking permission for a new rural dwelling must be building their home for their permanent occupation, must demonstrate a genuine housing need ⁸ in accordance with the requirements of the NPF and the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities (April 2005, or any subsequent updates). Applicants must not already own or have been permitted a dwelling, save in demonstrable exceptional circumstances. An application for a dwelling in the rural area must be made in the name of the person for whom it is intended, and an 'Occupancy Condition' will be attached to any grant of permission requiring that the applicant must live in the dwelling for the first 10 years after its construction. Documentary evidence to demonstrate compliance with the above will be required to accompany all planning applications.
2. Site Selection and Appropriate Design (Appendix 4)	The 'Kildare Rural Housing Design Guidelines' and Development Management Standards as set out in Chapter 15, will apply to all planning applications in Zones 1 and 2 as defined above. It is important that all proposals for new dwellings in rural areas in County Kildare respond to the specific characteristics and sensitivities of the receiving environment and selected site and landscape where the dwelling is proposed. New dwellings should be designed to take advantage of these specific characteristics so as to assimilate into the landscape. Applicants must also be satisfied that the dwelling would not contribute or extenuate an existing pattern of " <i>Ribbon Development</i> " ⁹ .
3. Rural Residential Density (Appendix 11)	Determine the Rural Residential Density in the proximity of the proposed development site through the use of the Single Rural Dwelling Density - A guideline for prospective applicants and agents.
4. Sustainable Low Carbon Design and Function	Where feasible, new dwellings should incorporate low-carbon and renewable energy technologies in services, functions, finishes and amenities. For example, use of SUDS for outdoor ground works and drives, planting for biodiversity and adequate waste segregation and storage space, as set out in the Development Management standards set out in Chapter 15.

⁸ Speculative sale of a house is not considered to generate a genuine housing need

⁹ Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines, 2005 defines Ribbon Development where 5 or more houses exist on any one side of a given 250 metres of road frontage

5. Roads, Access and Traffic Safety	<p>The Council will seek to protect the carrying capacity of and safety of roads across County Kildare. Therefore, a new dwelling will only be permitted where the applicant has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, that the proposed development provides for a safe option in terms of access and egress and meets the road traffic safety requirements as set out in the Development Management Standards set out in Chapter 15.</p> <p>Applicants should retain and maintain existing hedgerows in all instances, with the exception only of the section required to be removed to provide visibility at the proposed site entrance.</p>
6. Environment, Flooding and Cultural Heritage	<p>The applicant, through documentation submitted with the application, must demonstrate that the proposal meets the standards and policies as they relate to protection of the environment (e.g SAC/NHA), water quality and source protection, flood risk management and cultural heritage protection standards as set out the development management standards.</p> <p>All applications are required to comply with the EPA Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (March 2021)</p>