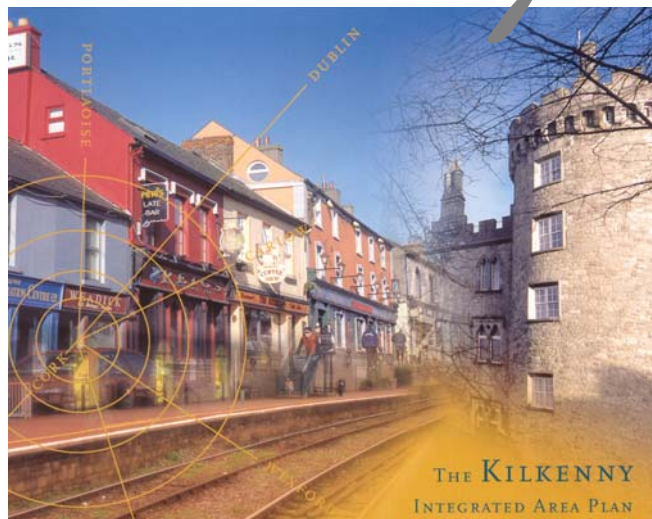


Integrated Area Plan

Kilkenny



Annual Report 2003

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Chairman's Report



The I.A.P. is extremely important to the social and economic development of Kilkenny and represents an important Government initiative. The I.A.P. monitoring group have been active in promoting the concept of the plan and in working with the local community. The group represents a strong partnership between all of the state agencies, the local authority, community developers and commercial interests. The outcome of our deliberations will hopefully bear fruit for all concerned and underline the community projects which are an integral part of the I.A.P.

I wish to thank all members of the monitoring group, both past and present, for their valued commitment and contribution.

John McGuinness TD

Introduction

Under the 1999 Urban Renewal Scheme the Minister for Housing and Urban Renewal approved the Integrated Area Plan (IAP) for Kilkenny. The area designated in the IAP encompasses the Railway Station, Chadwicks, the County Council Machinery yard, the County Hospital ,Gas Works and the property surrounding Jame's Green, Johns St and Padmore & Barnes. It is intended that the Integrated Area Plan will raise the profile of these areas and will directly benefit those living and working in the immediate and surrounding areas. The IAP Plan is a vital part of a wider strategic development plan which encompasses planning, roads, environment, housing and community development

Early in 1999 Kilkenny City was designated for tax incentives under the 1999 Urban Renewal Scheme. This designation was based on the Kilkenny Integrated Area Plan, submitted to the Department of the Environment and Local Government. A total of 5 sub areas were designated, comprising the commercial heart of the city, civic buildings, residential properties, under utilised/derelict areas and areas zoned for residential use and industrial use. Incentives allow for the following types of development:

- Commercial car park
- Commercial office
- Commercial/Retail/other
- Industrial
- Residential-Owner-Occupier/new build
- Residential-Owner-Occupier/Refurbishment
- Residential Investor/Refurbishment
- Hotel

The designated areas are divided into the following 5 main zones:

- a) John Street Lower
- b) John Street Upper
- c) McDonagh Railway Station
- d) John's Green
- e) Wolfe Tone Street

The area comprises 24 acres approximately of prime city property. As an integrated area plan, the plan was drawn up after comprehensive local consultation and careful consideration of the desired social, environmental and infrastructural elements of the area. The area has examples of late 18th and early 19th century buildings, including the railway station, old Co. Council machinery yard, old military hospital, workhouse and gasworks.

The aim of the plan is to create a modern city that retains its unique historic and creative character, while creating equal opportunities for all its people.

The residential tax incentives came into effect from 1 st March, 1999, and the commercial and industrial tax incentives came into effect from 1st July, 1999. The incentives were applicable up to the 31st December, 2002 within the current year this was extended to the 31st of December 2004.

Monitoring Committee

The 1999 Urban Renewal Scheme Monitoring Guidelines provides for the establishment of a monitoring committee to monitor progress on the implementation of the IAP. The IAP Monitoring Committee consists of the following members: Some changes have been made to the monitoring committee and they are as follows

Chairman:	Cllr. John McGuinness,	T.D., Kilkenny Co. Council (Replacing Don O’Sullivan of the Kilkenny County Council
	Annette Fitzpatrick,	Kilkenny County Council (replaced Martin Butler)
	Alison McGrath,	Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce (Replacing David Fitzgerald)
	Timothy Haide,	Kilkenny Trade Council
	Liam Keane	(former Chair of KCAN)
	Tony Walsh	(Director of Community & Enterprise
	Ronan Ryan	(RAPID Co-ordinator replacing Liam Keane)
	Rev. Sean O’Doherty,	Kilkenny Archaeological Society
	Jerry O’Reilly,	John Street Traders & Business Association
	Pat O’Shea,	Kilkenny County Enterprise Board
	Ray Scanlon,	Kilkenny Community Action Network (KCAN)
	Cllr. Phil Hogan,	T.D., Kilkenny Co. Council
	Cllr. Evelyn White,	Kilkenny Corporation

IAP Marketing

Following the marketing launch of the IAP in late February, 2000, over 650 brochures were circulated throughout the county and further afield. Newspaper articles and articles in business and construction magazines followed the launch. A number of newspaper clippings have also been printed during 2003, also over 2,500 RAPID newsletters are presently in the process of being developed which will include information on the IAP site targeted towards residents.

A number of enquiries have been received, both prior to and since the public launch concerning proposed developments within the designated area. In accordance with the guidelines, all applications must be certified by Kilkenny County Council, outlining that the works being undertaken comply with the specific conditions and recommendations of the Kilkenny Integrated Area Plan.

Joint Marketing of Lands

Kilkenny County Council & CIE entered into an agreement for the joint marketing of lands in their ownership and a marketing brochure was prepared by CIE. The joint lands were offered for sale by way of public tender.

Four companies tendered and submitted an outline scheme for preliminary or outline certification to determine whether the scheme complied with the requirements of the IAP. Two of the tenders were subsequently withdrawn. A tender panel was set up to adjudicate on the remaining tenders received.

The tender assessment panel recommended the acceptance of the submission made by Chesterbridge Developments Ltd. who also secured an agreement with Chadwicks for their site which forms part of zone “C”.

During the period this report covers, i.e. from 1st March, 2002 to 28th February 2003 no further applications were received by Kilkenny County Council for certification.

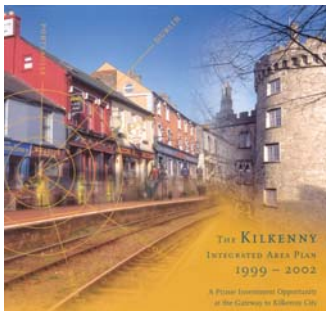
Update

Chesterbridge Developments Limited, the company developing the lands adjacent and including McDonagh station have submitted their planning application to Kilkenny Borough Council.

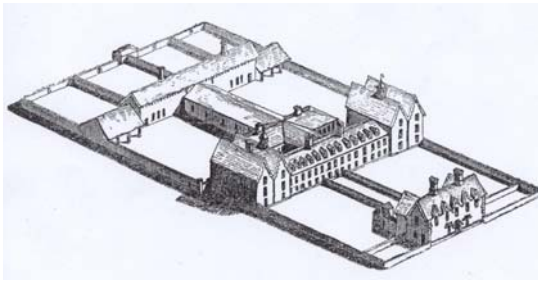
As a necessary part of the planning process, a comprehensive Environmental and Traffic Impact Studies are being provided as part of the planning application.

The planning application has sought permission for a mixed-use project which will involve an investment of in excess of €100 million and when completed will create at least 500 new jobs for Kilkenny It is hoped that construction on the site will get underway late 2003.

In the region of 500 extra jobs will also be created at the height of the construction phase of the project.



The project, which aims to give a new lease of life to a number of existing heritage buildings in the Project Area such as the Old Kilkenny Work House, and also create a number of new structures which together with existing structures will provide a mixed use development of 12 – 14,000 square metres of shopping, with appropriate car parking, and in addition, hotel, restaurants/bars, offices, residential accommodation as well as community and cultural uses.



As part of the redevelopment of the McDonagh Station area the partnership have set aside a portion of the site, the Old Workhouse building, for appropriate community use as crèche, training center and incubator units for

new business

The creation of a number of public squares and open spaces with scope for the



accommodation of open air cultural and community events as well as the incorporation of community organisations and enterprises integral part of the ambitious scheme.

It is expected that the development will be a major attraction for visitors which will benefit the

entire city by considerably increasing the numbers of people visiting Kilkenny.

Johns Green

The Johns Green area forms an important focal point in context of the Integrated Area Plan. Therefore every effort is being made to secure the development of the area be developed within the context of the Integrated Area Plan. In this context the owners of property in the Johns Green area have been involved in several discussions with officials of Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Borough Council. These meetings expressed the importance of the total area being developed being developed in a coherent manner.

Arising from these discussions the three architects acting for the interests in Johns Green were encouraged to meet with a view to adopting a complimentary approach and this work is ongoing. Two of the property owners have made planning applications for the development of their lands and a further application is pending

Activities on Johns Street

During the period which this report covers one application for planning permission (ref. P117/99) was refused by Kilkenny Corporation in respect of the IAP area. This application was in respect of the development of a 125 bed roomed hotel with leisure facilities, bar and conference facilities and associated car- parking at John's Green, Kilkenny. The proposed development did not qualify for tax incentives. A planning application for 22 bedroom extension, new hotel lobby etc. at John Street was granted on 27/06/00. However, this development does not qualify for tax incentives under the IAP.

On lands immediately adjacent to the core area and within the wider context of the overall area the following developments have received planning permission under the following headings:

We are presently in communication with a number of property owners regarding proposals to provide accommodation on the upper floors.

Housing- Public.

Hebron Park General Area -Respond Housing - 46 houses were finished in early 2001 with an additional 13 for the elderly or disadvantaged. In addition construction commenced on 17 Council houses in this area. (now completed)

11 private sites were also sold in this area and houses have been constructed thereon. Construction also started on 84 affordable housing units in the area.

Remedial Scheme

Ossory Park Housing Scheme. The Department of the Environment has approved in principle a Remedial Works Scheme. Preliminary work has been carried out in relation to the necessary refurbishment work to a total of 67 houses of which 37 are rented and 30 are privately owned.

Amenity

Work has commenced on the proposed soccer pitch for the Hebron area. It is expected that this development will cost in the region of €100,000 (approx) and is being funded by the County Council through its development charges fund.

Traffic Management

A new traffic management plan has recently been approved incorporating the junction of Castlecomer Road / Ballybought Street / and Barrack Street. The plan will reduce traffic problems and facilitate the planned developments in the area.

Economic Benefits

It is expected that when construction commences within the IAP area, significant employment opportunities will be created. In the longer term, commercial & retail initiatives will provide a small number of job opportunities for the local population, but moreover will increase the range of facilities and services available to the local population, further consolidating Kilkenny as a commercial/retail centre. The increased importance of Kilkenny as a commercial/retail and industrial centre and residential area will entice additional shoppers to the city and provide increased employment, resulting in further economic benefit to existing commercial and retail businesses.

Social & Community Benefits

The social and community benefits are an integral part of the objectives of the IAP. RAPID and the Kilkenny Community Action Network (KCAN) is very active within the residential areas, and it is the aim of the IAP to make a positive impact on the residential area surrounding the designated area. The impact area includes Assumption Place, Ballybough Street, Bishop Birch Place, De la Salle Place, Hebron Park, O'Loughlin Court, O'Loughlin Road, Ossory Park, Newpark Close and all other areas and residential developments in that area.

The IAP is an enormously positive opportunity for everyone immediately living in that area and its environs to benefit from the re-energising of the area and from the aesthetic enhancement of this very historic part of Kilkenny City.

The growing need for additional recreational facilities for the area's young population and the provision of a leisure and recreational facility was highlighted in the draft plan submitted to the Department of the Environment and Local Government.

Other Benefits to the local Community will include

1. Facilities e.g. leisure facilities in the IAP campus
2. Employment opportunities
3. A community resource in the campus

1. Facilities

There are over 400 houses in local authority/voluntary body estates in the catchment area. Over forty percent of residents are U-18 years. This suggests a concentration of younger people. There are no youth facilities in this general housing area such as a bowling club, games rooms, meeting place etc. The provision of youth facilities in this parish will alleviate delinquency in the IAP area. The provision of a facility for youth and some leisure facilities such as bars were strongly requested for the John's Parish area. The 1996 census showed a Kilkenny city population of 20,146 of whom 8,216 were U-26 years and of these 4,818 were U-15. This represents ¼

approximately as U-15 years in the city and this figure is much higher in the local authority/voluntary body estates.

2. Employment

In May 2002 there were 1,462 on the live register with a breakdown as follows;

Males 0-25	699		
Males U-25	205	U-25	327
Females 0-25	436		
Females U-25	122	0-25	1135

It is not possible to break these down by estate. However, in 2000 figures show Kilkenny urban 1 with 247 unemployed and Kilkenny urban 2 with 592 unemployed thus the IAP catchment area has approximately seventy percent of Kilkenny city unemployment and approximately 1000 unemployed. Generally seventy percent of these are 0-25 years. Youthlynx and FAS are commencing a pre-employment course with youths from the catchment area with the view to expanding this to meet the need as the plans become available.

Research:

Community facilities have been visited in both Ballymun and the HARP project in Dublin, The objective of the field trips was to gather information on examples of good practice and difficulties encountered. Specific meetings were organised around the management of the community facilities.

Environmental Benefits

The scheme offers a range of opportunities to improve the overall environmental setting. It proposes to re-vitalise the existing urban fabric with the provision of urban

squares at John's Green and Hebron Square. These will act as focal points for those who live and work in the area and the surrounding communities. The development will be a blend of existing and new buildings, ensuring that the essential character of Kilkenny will be maintained. Developments within the Kilkenny IAP must also conform to strict building and planning guidelines to preserve the existing features, building lines and overall appearance, thereby ensuring the survival of quality environment.

It is the intention of Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Corporation that the current review of the Development Plan will incorporate the changes inherent in this IAP.

Each development will be required to complete and maintain a landscaping scheme. The provision of public and semi-public open spaces is a priority of the IAP.

Identifiable & Substantive Barriers

There are a number of clearly identifiable barriers to the re-development of this area, as listed below:

- Obsolete buildings and uses, many of which are remnants of the old railway
- Affects of former industrial uses
- Poor market perception of the area.

It is the aim of the plan to address these issues in a positive way thereby enhancing the overall development of this area.

The attached report prepared by Ronan Ryan RAPID Co-ordinator details the present and future participation of the RAPID programme in the Kilkenny IAP.

‘ The RAPID programme will play a key role in the establishment of the IAP sub committees ‘



70 % of all of the identified RAPID areas are surrounding the Kilkenny IAP area.

Areas selected under the RAPID programme for Kilkenny include Hebron Park, Loughboy, Bishop Birch Place, Ossory Park, De La Salle Place, Newpark

Close, O'Loughlin Court, Millenium Court, St. Marys Avenue, New Park Lower, New Orchard, Poccocke Valley, The Butts, St. Canice's, McCauley Place, and St. Catherines.

The RAPID Programme is a focused Government response aimed at helping communities living in areas, which have not fully shared in our recent prosperity. The programme is made up of two Strands - Strand I (which was launched in February 2001), focuses on major urban areas and Strand II which deals with provincial towns, including the city of Galway (which was not included in Strand I). The CLÁR Programme for rural areas was launched in October 2001.

RAPID stands for *Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development*. As the name implies RAPID is about prioritising in a coherent, targeted and accelerated way, new and improved services and infrastructural investment to the communities living in RAPID areas. A number of new community groups/residents in the IAP area have been established under the RAPID programme and are being linked into existing community structures. The foundation of these structures will play a key role in the development of the necessary community links / structures with reference to the IAP. The Kilkenny **Area Implementation Team** will play a key role in the participation and development of sub-committees and working groups with reference to community engagement, examples include enterprise and employment the community facility management committee etc. Efforts are presently being made to establish the relevant committees through the RAPID process

Community Participants Mapping their Future



With the enthusiasm and co-operation from the people in RAPID areas a number of new community resident / development associations surrounding the proposed IAP development have been assisted / developed under the RAPID process. All new residents associations are been facilitated

through the RAPID Process. PRA (**Participatory Rapid Appraisal**) techniques are being used successfully to gather information about each community/neighbourhood quickly and effectively. The community appraisal is a rapid process, it can involve a wide section of the community who do not normally fill in questionnaires or go to meetings. Because it involves across-section of the local community coming together and "holding a mirror up " to their neighbourhood it also creates conditions for consensus-based action planning.

The IAP Communications Strategy



A RAPID/ IAP Communications strategy has been developed and this will play a key role in the provision of information to communities surrounding the Kilkenny IAP.

The PR strategy will

- Update communities on activities of the IAP's Monitoring committee and sub-committees activities

- Promote a partnership approach between the statutory, community and voluntary sectors.

Who do we want to communicate our message to?

- All residents in the identified areas
- All community, statutory and voluntary bodies on and outside of the AIT's
- All RAPID target groups and communities surrounding the Kilkenny IAP



How do we envisage communicating our message ?

- The Development of the RAPID Community Website
- IAP Information to be posted on the Kilkenny County Council Web-site
- On-going monthly newsletters
- Inclusion on the Community forum edition in the Kilkenny People