

Integrated Area Plan Kilkenny



**Annual Report
2005**

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2005 was another busy year for members of the Integrated Area Plan Monitoring Committee. During the year we engaged with all of the community groups who expressed a wish to be part of the 'Work House' project. Their proposals are diverse and exciting. The final decision regarding the organisations, which will be offered space in the centre, will be taken this year.

The construction phase of the development is continuing and it is expected that it will be completed in 2007.

It is our challenge to ensure that there are tangible benefits for the local community. I look forward to continuing our work with all of the interested parties to achieve that goal.

My sincere thanks to past and present members of the monitoring committee, and the groups and agencies we work with, for their continued co-operation and help.

Yours sincerely,
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, Chadwick's, and the County Council Machinery yard, the County Hospital, Gas Works and the property surrounding James'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.

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:	John McGuinness TD, Cllr. Martin Brett Cllr. Andrew McGuinness Cllr. Joe Cody Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick Timothy Haide, Tony Walsh Kieran Fitzgerald Ronan Ryan Mr. Coilin O' Driscoll	Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce Kilkenny Borough Council Kilkenny Borough Council Kilkenny County Council Kilkenny County Council Kilkenny Trade Council Director of Community & Enterprise Kilkenny Local Authorities SE CEDO (RAPID) Kilkenny Archaeological Society John Street Traders & Business Association Kilkenny County Enterprise Board Kilkenny Community Action Network (KCAN) Community Representative (COG) Community Representative (OssoryPark) Community Representative (COG)
	Joan Williams Ray Scanlon,	
	Claire Kenealy Billy McCullagh Marie Fogarty	

Update

Chesterbridge Developments Limited, the company developing the lands adjacent and including McDonagh station were granted planning permission from Kilkenny Borough Council in 2004 following an oral hearing from An Bord Pleanála. As a necessary part of the planning process, a comprehensive Environmental and Traffic Impact Studies was provided as part of the planning application. The planning application 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. The construction of the development is well underway and it is envisaged that 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. It will 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 businesses. 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.

Johns Green

Continuous progress has been made in 2005 in the development of the Johns Green area. Two mixed-use developments are nearing completion; Johns Gate, which is a development of apartments and retail units at Barrack Street the Castlecomer Road, and The Arches, a development of apartments, retail units and restaurant at Barrack Street and Gas House lane.

Planning permission was granted in 2004 for a development at the site of the existing hostel, to convert the hostel and construct a new building of apartments and shops. Planning permission was also granted for an office and retail development at the site of the auto-electric workshops on Johns Green. The Borough Council is currently considering an application for a substantial office development on Barrack Street and an extension to Lenehans Public House on the Castlecomer Road.

A Local Area Plan is currently being prepared for Kilkenny City Centre. Johns Green has been earmarked as one of 11 intrinsic sites in the future development of the city. It is envisaged that the Local Area Plan will build on the achievements of the IAP and establish Johns Green as a vibrant urban square enjoyed by residents and workers alike.

The Borough Council granted planning permission at no. 25 and 26 Johns Street for an infill development of retail use at ground floor, office use at first floor and hotel accommodation on the second floor. No. 25 Johns Street is currently a semi-derelict building and no. 26 is a vacant site. The re-development of these sites is important to the streetscape and vitality of Johns Street.

Ossory Park Housing Scheme. The Department of the Environment has approved a Remedial Works Scheme for the refurbishment work to 67 houses of which 37 are rented and 30 are privately owned. A housing liaison officer continues to work directly with residents. Phase 3 which comprised of the extension and internal renovation of 4 houses was completed in 2005.

Planning Permission has been granted by Kilkenny Borough Council for Phase IV which proposes the demolition of 4 no. dwellings and their replacement with 9 No. dwelling units at Bottom St. Works have commenced on the preparation of the Tender Documentation for these works.

Discussions have continued and questionnaires issued to the private house owners in Bottom Street with a view to reaching a consensus on the scope of the works for the completion of Bottom Street. It is envisaged that the external renovation works will be completed concurrently with the proposal to erect the new units.

Negotiations with individual house owners in Bottom Street are not yet complete. When agreements in principle have been reached Kilkenny Borough Council propose to advance a proposal through the formal Planning Process for the demolition of a number of units in Top Street and their replacement with new Residential Units, a Community Building and public open space. The external refurbishment of the remaining houses in Top Street can then be undertaken in a manner similar to Bottom Street.

IAP Marketing

A number of mediums continue to be used to market the Kilkenny IAP development including the use of the local newspaper, the Kilkenny County Council website, The County Development Board website and the RAPID Kilkenny Website. IAP related information has also been published on the 2005 RAPID community newsletter which specifically targeting the RAPID communities directly surrounding the IAP site. An additional newsletter with an update on the IAP development will be circulated in July 2006.

Amenities



Work has been completed on the soccer pitch in Millennium Court and a recreational amenity/Playground in the Garringreen area. Additional recreational amenities will be provided in 2006 through funding under the RAPID programme and Local Authority resources.

Traffic Management

The eastern environs link road opened in August of last year and has had a significant impact in reducing traffic congestion on Castle corner Road, Ball bought Street, Hebron road and Dublin Road. The N77 Kilkenny Ring Road Extension is currently under construction with works expected to be completed in summer 2007.

The design of the Inner Relief Road is ongoing and it is hoped to proceed with statutory processes towards the end of the year including public consultation. Works on the improvement of Ballybought Street, Golf Links Road, New Orchard Road and Lovers Lane will commence in 2006.

Access to Employment

Gaining access to employment opportunities for the local residents is a key objective of the Kilkenny Integrated Area Plan monitoring committee. A number of local sub-contractors continue to be recruited by the developers

As highlighted in the 2004 annual report a number of people were called for interview by FAS and these names were also forwarded to the developers for consideration. New

names expressing interest in employment on the development continue to be forwarded to FAS and the developers as they are received. The Kilkenny IAP Monitoring Committee as part of its role in partnership with FAS will continue to work with the surrounding communities and contractors to ensure that every effort is made to encourage that local labour is employed where possible and that contractors fulfil their obligations to employ local labour in Kilkenny.

Social & Community Benefits

The social and community benefits continue to be an integral part of the objectives of the IAP monitoring committee. The IAP monitoring committee have commissioned a business plan has to investigate the development of a mixed use sustainable community facility and this is near completion. Some of the findings highlighted cover.

Additional Space

Agreement was obtained from the reps that consideration will be given to the provision of further space in order to accommodate organisations as the total space allocated of 5,962 sq ft will not allow the IAP Committee to accommodate all of the needs of the group.

Tenants

The list of likely community facility tenants was recently reviewed and there was agreement that all fitted within the criteria set out by Chesterbridge. Chesterbridge will lease entire facility to one client who will in turn take responsibility for all units.

Whilst Chesterbridge had a strong desire to see the units occupied by micro-enterprises particularly within the craft sector to compliment the shopping experience at the centre, they approved the list.

Childcare Centre

Chesterbridge has included this centre in its plans in order to comply with the requirement in the provision of residential units on the site (20 child places for every 75 dwellings.) It would look favourably on the IAP Committee taking this facility into its management provided that their obligations under the planning act are met. This facility is designed to accommodate 30 childcare places and would be fitted out to comply with the Childcare Act and approved by the Health Executive. (17 x 2-6 yr olds / 8 x 1-2 yrs / 7 x 0-1 yr olds

Architects

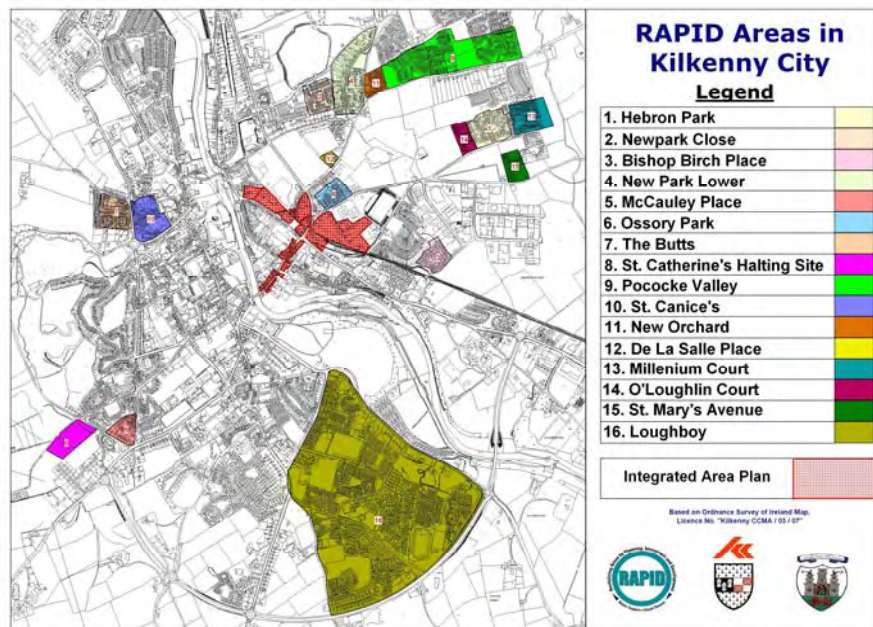
A number of meetings took place between MF and Reddy Architects to complete the exercise of fitting all of the approved IAP tenants into the available space of 5,962 sq ft. Based on the details provided by each group.

The RAPID programme continues to play a key role in the establishment of the IAP sub committees “



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 prioritised RAPID projects and new investment was approved for funding in the identified RAPID areas in 2005. 70 % of all of the identified RAPID areas are surrounding the Kilkenny IAP area (please to map below). Targeted areas selected under the Kilkenny RAPID programme include Hebron Park, Loughboy, Bishop Birch Place, Ossory Park, De La Salle Place, Newpark Close, O'Loughlin Court, Millennium 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 map above highlights the location of the Integrated Areas and the RAPID areas in Kilkenny City for further details on investment on the programme please refer to www.rapidkilkenny.ie