

# **Variation of the Kilkenny County Development Plan Vol. 1 2002**

## **Variation No. 3 Kilkenny Retail Strategy Review**

The retail strategy for the City and County as adopted in 2002 recommended that a review of that strategy take place after 3 years.

Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Borough Council commenced this review in April 2004. Following on from that review a revised strategy has been formulated.

The complete text of the variation is given below.

**This text will replace the existing text of Chapter 6 from paragraphs 6.8 to paragraph 6.8.27 inclusive of the Kilkenny City and Environs Development Plan 2002 and paragraph 3.4 to 3.4.27 of the County Development Plan 2002. Map 3.4 in both plans is not affected by this variation.**

**In addition to this change outlined above the text of section 10.2.2 of the Plan will be amended under the variation as follows :**

### **Change from**

“Open for consideration :

Bed and breakfast establishments and guesthouses, lock up garages.

Retail shops of local convenience not more than 100m sq in gross area, public house, hotel restaurant.

Use by owner occupier of part of a private residence as a studio, for a light industrial activity, a clinic or surgery, professional office, or as a playgroup or crèche.”

### **To**

“Open for consideration :

Bed and breakfast establishments and guesthouses, lock up garages.

Retail shops of local convenience, public house, hotel restaurant.

Use by owner occupier of part of a private residence as a studio, for a light industrial activity, a clinic or surgery, professional office, or as a playgroup or crèche.”

This proposed change omits the 100m sq limit on size on local convenience shops.

## Table of Contents for Variation no. 3

<b>3.4</b>	<b>RETAILING.....</b>	<b>3</b>
3.4.1	Retail Planning Guidelines .....	3
3.4.2	Retail Hierarchy .....	4
3.4.2.1	Major Town Centre/County Town.....	4
3.4.2.2	Sub County Town Centre.....	5
3.4.2.3	District Centre – Waterford City Environs .....	5
3.4.2.4	Village Centre/Neighbourhood Centre .....	5
3.4.3	Definition of the core shopping area of towns.....	6
3.4.4	Broad Assessment of the requirement of additional retail floorspace and strategic locations.....	6
3.4.5	Strategic Location of Floorspace .....	8
3.4.5.1	Kilkenny City & Environs .....	8
3.4.5.2	Waterford Environs District Centre .....	13
3.4.6	Strategic Response .....	14
3.4.7	Strategic Policy Framework.....	14
3.4.7.1	Retail Hierarchy .....	15
3.4.7.2	Core Retail Area .....	15
3.4.7.3	Sequential Approach.....	16
3.4.7.4	The Spatial Distribution of New Retail Development.....	16
3.4.7.5	Need .....	17
3.4.7.6	Implications of the NSS and the Regional Planning Guidelines .....	19
3.4.8	Specific Policies & Proposals .....	19
3.4.8.1	Kilkenny City & Environs .....	20
3.4.8.2	Level 2 Sub County Town Centres.....	24
3.4.8.3	Waterford City Environs.....	24
3.4.8.4	New Ross Environs.....	25
3.4.8.5	General Policies .....	25
3.4.9	Criteria for Assessing Future Retail Proposals .....	26
3.4.10	RIS/RIA Guidance to Applicants.....	27
3.4.11	Monitoring and Review .....	27

### **3.4 RETAILING**

A review of the Kilkenny City and County Retail Strategy arises from a key recommendation of the first Retail Strategy adopted by Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Borough Council in 2002, to review the Strategy after three years.

The context for the review of the City and County Retail Strategy is set by the following:

1. The Department of the Environment and Local Government (and now the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government DOEHLG) Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning authorities , December 2000 and
2. Kilkenny Retail Study/Kilkenny City and County Retail Strategy 2001 as adopted in the City and County Development Plans.

Since the first strategy was prepared a number of key data and other guiding documents have been issued which have implications for the retail planning and potential of the City and County. These are:

1. The final results of the 2002 Census of Population;
2. National Spatial Strategy 2002 – 2020; and
3. Regional Guidelines for the South East Region.

The commitment in the development plans to review the 2001 strategy reflects the Councils' recognition that the retail sector is one of the most dynamic in the economy and that there is a need to ensure that planning policies and objectives and the baseline data upon which they are founded remain up to date and valid.

#### **3.4.1 RETAIL PLANNING GUIDELINES**

The Retail Planning Guidelines require the following matters to be included in development plans:

- i Confirmation of the retail hierarchy, the role of centres and the size of the main town centres;
- ii Definition in the development plan of the boundaries of the core shopping area of town centres;
- iii A broad assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace;
- iv Strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development;
- v Preparation of policies and action initiatives to encourage the improvement of town centres; and
- vi Identification of criteria for the assessment of retail developments.

### 3.4.2 RETAIL HIERARCHY

Following review of the County Retail Hierarchy against the factors and influences that have changed since the adoption of the 2001 Retail Strategy, specifically the RPG, NSS and the Regional Guidelines for the South East Region, the County Retail Hierarchy is revised as illustrated Table 3.4.2. This slightly modifies the 2001 hierarchy through introducing a differentiation between the Level 2 Sub County Town Centres and clarifying what are Level 4 Village Centres and Neighbourhood Centres. In respect of the former, the modification recognises the greater importance of Thomastown against the other Sub County Town centres due to the following:

- It is specifically identified in the NSS as a town which should have its strengths capitalised on by a variety of means, including planning and development promotion activities
- It is recognised as a District Town – Expansion Opportunity in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the South East Region
- It is the location for the decentralisation of the Health and Safety Authority
- It has a larger population, more retail floorspace and a more diverse town centre offer.

<b>Table 3.4.2 County Retail Hierarchy</b>	
<b>Level/Retail Function</b>	<b>Centre</b>
<b>Level 1: Major Town Centre/County Town</b>	Kilkenny City
<b>Tier 1 Level 2 Sub County Town Centre</b>	Thomastown
<b>Tier 2 Level 2 Sub County Town Centre</b>	Callan Castlecomer Graigenamanagh
<b>Level 3 District Centre</b>	Ferrybank East Waterford City Environs
<b>Level 4 Village Centre</b>	Mullinavat Slieverue Upper and Lower Kilmacow Urlingford
<b>Level 4 Neighbourhood Centre</b>	Poulgour Townland Ross Road Rockshire Hill Belmont Centre Rathculliheen/Abbeylands

#### 3.4.2.1 Major Town Centre/County Town

Kilkenny City is the only centre within this tier. The City Centre is dominated by comparison floorspace that serves an extensive catchment area reflecting its County Town function. Kilkenny City is recognised as the key centre in the County and also

within the wider Region and country. The County Retail Hierarchy designation of the City as the Level 1 centre in the County therefore remains appropriate.

#### **3.4.2.2 Sub County Town Centre**

The sub county town centres are Callan, Castlecomer, Graigueamanagh and Thomastown. They support a range of floorspace, both convenience and comparison which confirms their role as market towns serving their hinterlands. In terms of appropriate shopping provision the sub county town centres are identified as appropriate for middle and lower order comparison and middle order convenience floorspace.

#### **3.4.2.3 District Centre – Waterford City Environs**

To meet the needs of the significant planned residential growth of Ferrybank, which is a key suburb of Waterford City, the 2001 Retail Strategy recommended that the area required a District Centre. The review confirms that this remains an objective of the City and County Retail Strategy.

The 2001 Strategy however noted that this should be considered against the following:

- Retail development in advance of substantial residential/mixed use development would be difficult to defend against Sequential Test arguments; and
- The District Centre could provide the catalyst to get people and investment to locate north of the River Suir.

In respect of the former, it was acknowledged that residential land use zonings within the area were for 4,400 residential units. Since the Strategy was published, these zonings have materialised in development and full planning permissions. At present, there is planning permission for some 2,500 units and additional applications are in the pipeline. The issue of promoting retail development in advance of large scale residential development is therefore superseded by action on the ground. The Ferrybank area within the County, and adjacent areas that are within the Waterford City Council administrative area, are emerging as a significant residential suburb of Waterford City and of a scale that is equivalent to many large sized towns and county towns across the country. This progress, and emerging need, serves to substantiate the County Council's zoning of lands at Ferrybank as a District Centre within the County Development Plan. The review of the Retail Strategy further endorses this.

#### **3.4.2.4 Village Centre/Neighbourhood Centre**

This definition captures the tier above that of simply a Corner Shop and comprises a small range of mainly convenience outlets to serve a very local population.

The list in table 3.4.2 is an indicative list only and is not a full list of all such village and neighbourhood centres within the County.

##### **Western Environs of Kilkenny City**

Poulgour Townland is in the Western Environs of Kilkenny City. In the Development plan, there are substantial lands zoned for housing. The total population will be over 5,000 in time. Given the proximity to the City Centre and other existing floorspace, reflecting the small size of the forecast population over the remaining period of the Plan,

the zoning for a Neighbourhood Centre in Poulgour Townland was adopted. The nature of the development, in line with the RPGs definition is:

“Small groups of shops, typically comprising a newsagent, small supermarket/general grocery store, sub-post office and other small shops of a local nature serving a small, localised catchment population.”

The position with regard to progress on residential development at Poulgour Townland should be kept under review over the plan period to ensure that the expanding population’s needs are met not solely in respect to shopping but wider community, cultural, commercial and social needs.

### **3.4.3 DEFINITION OF THE CORE SHOPPING AREA OF TOWNS**

In the 2001 Strategy, a Core Shopping Area was only defined for Kilkenny City Centre as the four level two sub county Towns were viewed as being of too small a scale to warrant such an approach. This was revisited as part of the review and it is confirmed that the position should remain the same with only Kilkenny City having a defined Core Shopping Area.

The policies in the Development plan seek to promote and reinforce the primary shopping area and to protect the retail function of that area. The main retail frontage areas in the City Centre streets are covered by the following streets: Parliament Street/Market Cross, High Street, Patrick Street, The Market Yard/St Kieran’s Street, Rose Inn Street and John Street, but not all can be termed the core shopping area floorspace. Core shopping areas are normally characterised by a mix of factors including:

- Prime pitch rentals
- No vacancies and high demand
- Predominance of national and international multiples and few leisure and non-retail uses
- High pedestrian foot flow.

Taking account of the above factors, the core shopping area more appropriately comprises: Parliament Street/Market Cross; High Street; Rose Inn Street; and St Kieran’s Street. This, plus the 400m edge of centre isochrone are identified in Map 3.4 of the existing Development Plan.

### **3.4.4 BROAD ASSESSMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT OF ADDITIONAL RETAIL FLOORSPACE AND STRATEGIC LOCATIONS**

The 2001 Retail Strategy covered the period 2001 – 2007. In the review of the Strategy, to be consistent with the City and County development plans, we cover the six year period from 2002 – 2008. In addition, the assessment looks at the next development plan period 2008 – 2014 and the 2020 planning horizon of the Regional Guidelines and the NSS. In respect of looking beyond 2008, this enables a longer term view of retail

planning and its potential to be considered which is consistent with the Regional Guidelines.

The capacity assessment is the mechanism used to estimate the amount of additional expenditure that will occur in the County over the period of the Strategy (to 2008 and 2014) and beyond the Strategy timescale to 2020. The inclusion of consideration of capacity up to 2020 is for the following reasons:

- Given Kilkenny City's designation as a Hub under the NSS and the large increase in population projected over the period of the NSS to 2020, then it is important for strategic land use planning purposes that a longer term view/vision is taken; and
- The review of the City and County Retail Strategy will become part of the City and County development plans, both of which have to have regard to the NSS and Regional Guidelines which provide spatial and policy planning guidance to 2020.

The key inputs and outputs to the capacity assessment are derivation of the following:

**Step 1:** Population and Expenditure Estimates

**Step 2:** Turnover Estimates

**Step 3:** Turnover Ratios

**Step 4:** Gross Additional Expenditure Potential

**Step 5:** Future Sources of Retail Sales

**Step 6:** Capacity Potential.

The net expenditure capacity growth provides estimates of the net floorspace potential available in the County. In addition, for the 2002-2008 period, capacity of 1,993m<sup>2</sup> is added to reflect the extent of overtrading identified previously. The figures are set out in Table 3.4.4.

<b>Table 3.4.4</b>				
<b>Indicative Net Floorspace Potential in the County (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>				
<b>Period</b>	<b>Convenience</b>		<b>Comparison</b>	
	Low	High	Low	High
Capacity indicated by overtrading	1,993	1,993	-	-
2002-2008	1,433	2,000	4,716	6,039
<b>2002-2008 Total</b>	<b>3,426</b>	<b>3,993</b>	<b>4,716</b>	<b>6,039</b>
<b>2008-2014</b>	5,007	5,931	21,476	24,488
<b>Total 2002-2014</b>	<b>8,433</b>	<b>9,924</b>	<b>26,192</b>	<b>30,527</b>
<b>2014-2020</b>	4,362	5,484	22,738	27,165
<b>Source:</b> DTZ Piedad Consulting, 2004				

The floorspace capacity assessment indicates that there is spare capacity for additional convenience and comparison floorspace to 2008.

The capacity assessment indicates that there is potential for up to about 9,000m<sup>2</sup> of new convenience and 26,000m<sup>2</sup> of new comparison floorspace over the period to 2014. This is floorspace that is additional to that which has already been granted full planning permission. The assessment takes due account of the level of overtrading that currently prevails in the County's convenience floorspace.

The figures presented in the capacity assessment provide a broad assessment of the requirement for additional new floorspace. They should thus be taken as indicative and as guidance on the quantum that will be required and are in no way intended to be prescriptive. It is not the purpose of the capacity assessment to place a cap on the scope for future retail developments in the County. In developing the Retail Strategy's objectives, the capacity assessment needs to be viewed within the context of the following factors and issues:

- The strengths and weaknesses of the City and County's retail profile and how these are best harnessed and addressed respectively;
- The actions required to sustain and grow retail activity particularly in the light of the increasing attraction of Waterford City for residents in the south of the County;
- The apparent strength, evidenced by high trade draw, of Kilkenny City for clothing and footwear;
- The importance of tourism related retailing and the importance of retailing to the City and County's overall tourism offer; and
- Transportation improvements (e.g. M9/N8) which will make it easier for the County's residents to go to competing centres.

### **3.4.5 STRATEGIC LOCATION OF FLOORSPACE**

The baseline review and analysis show that the key locations for **additional major new retail floorspace** remain as those identified in the 2001 Strategy, namely:

- Kilkenny City and Environs; and
- Waterford City Environs.

In respect of the four **Level 2 sub-county Towns**, these are not anticipated to be centres where there will be significant market interest or development of major additional retail floorspace for the foreseeable future. This should however not deter applications coming forward and each will be considered on their merits and against the assessment criteria, objectives and policies set out in the Retail Strategy.

#### **3.4.5.1 Kilkenny City & Environs**

In reviewing the potential of the City and its environs, as with the 2001 Strategy, the structure is provided by the Sequential Approach:

- a) City Centre;
- b) Edge of Centre; and



c) Out of Centre.

#### **a) City Centre**

As with the 2001 Strategy the starting point in the appraisal of retail potential is the City Centre reflecting its role and importance in the hierarchy and the need for it to be the priority location for additional floorspace. The review of potential sites and locations conducted overall, confirmed the findings of the 2001 Strategy, namely:

- There are **no** sites or buildings of any substantial size available for retail development within what is termed the **Core Retail Area**
- The Conservation Area policies covering the City Centre effectively remove any potential now and in the future for major redevelopment of space within the City Centre
- There is potential for improvement and enhancement of the City Centre offer, both retail and leisure, by utilisation of vacant floorspace, conversions and gap infilling and this can be addressed under normal development control policies and procedures.

The above noted there are two potential sites that require further examination. These are Bateman's Quay and Dalton's lands between Friary Street and Ormonde Street.

#### **Bateman's Quay**

This is a prime City Centre site sitting on the edge of the 2001 Core Shopping Area and on the River Nore. It is a site that was identified in the 2001 Strategy and has been examined in further detail in the review. At the time of the preparation of the 2001 Retail Strategy, Bateman's Quay was earmarked for civic and cultural uses.

The vision of the site has grown since then and while it remains the identified location for civic and/or cultural uses the site should harness its unique location along the river and its proximity to the commercial heart of the city centre.

This recognises the importance attached to the site and its role in the future development profile and attraction of the city. The retail component of the project will be important in the overall equation but will be ancillary to the major enhancement of retail floorspace in and around the city centre.

#### **Dalton's Land**

The second site that has emerged is behind the Hibernian Hotel. This is certainly a site that has retail potential but it is small in size and therefore limited in what it can deliver in respect of major retail floorspace.

#### **b) Edge of Centre**

Looking beyond the Core Shopping Area, as with 2001 Retail Strategy, only two edge of centre sites emerged in the site appraisal that had the potential for major retail development. Both are just beyond the 400 metres guideline in the RPG for edge of centre sites, but irrespective of this provide potential for the expansion of the City Centre

and meeting the demand and need for additional retail floorspace and other town centre activities. Both were identified as important sites in the 1999 Integrated Area Plan for key parts of the City. They are the McDonagh Station Site and the Livestock Mart Site.

### **McDonagh Station Site**

This site was identified in the 2001 Retail Strategy as the priority location for the first phase expansion of the City Centre primarily as it was the site that was available at that time for regeneration and development. Subsequently, in line with the objectives of the Strategy, a planning application for major mixed use proposals for the site was submitted to the Borough Council. Following a period of refinement and assessment, common to the majority of major applications, the Borough Council approved the application with planning conditions in April 2004. That decision has been appealed to An Bord Pleanála and a final decision is awaited from the Board.

The review confirmed that the site remains a key location for the expansion of the City Centre. It remains a priority in the expansion of the City Centre but the development plan timescale, the longer term planning horizons of the Retail Strategy and the Regional Guidelines plus the need for ensuring that the City grows into its role as a Hub, open the door to other locations being considered in parallel on an equal basis. This approach is further substantiated by the longer term expenditure capacity assessments and the retail potential identified for the City and County.

### **Livestock Mart Site**

The 'Mart' Site is on the north side of the River Nore bounded by the N77 Castlcomer Road, Barrack Street, Wolfe Tone Street and New Road. It is approximately 14 acres in size. It was identified as a potential retail/City Centre expansion location in the 2001 Strategy but more medium and longer term than the McDonagh Station site because at that time it was currently in active use as a livestock mart. This remains the case but substantial progress has been made, in the interim, in respect of the Mart's relocation to lands at Leggetsra East to the north of the N10 Dublin Road.

From submissions to the review of the Strategy it is understood that the Mart site will become available for comprehensive regeneration in the short to medium term. While the McDonagh Station Site is the most advanced of the two, and in accordance with the 2001 Strategy remains the priority, the Mart Site is now one that provides the basis for the second phase expansion of the City Centre.

However, the design year for the retail components of the scheme will be post the current development plan timescale of 2008.

It will be a requirement that the potential and diversity of uses on the site are compatible with meeting the objectives for the City Centre and its expansion. It will also need to be determined how this site and the area surrounding it will link and relate to the existing city centre as well as the proposed ring road extension and the inner relief road. These

issues will be addressed in detail in a local area plan proposed under the heading of specific policies and proposals.

A smaller site emerged from the review which is also what would be defined as an edge of centre site. This is **‘The Butts/Water Barrack’** site at Deans Street/Irishtown which is currently the Environmental Protection Agency Headquarters and a Council Storage Yard. It is well located within an existing and expanding residential area with a number of community facilities nearby. The site therefore has potential for the provision of small scale convenience and local services infrastructure. It will require the relocation of the existing uses on the site and therefore is likely to have medium potential.

### **c) Out of Centre**

Within the City’s environs, over the timescale of the City and County development plans, there are two key pressures and areas of market demand. These are for:

- Convenience floorspace
- Bulky goods/ retail warehousing floorspace.

**Convenience Floorspace:** The environs of the City are rapidly expanding and there is a need to ensure that convenience and local services needs around the area are met in an ‘efficient, equitable and sustainable way’. This was recognised in the 2001 Strategy which identified the need for a Neighbourhood Centre at Poulgour Townland. This remains the case today but other factors and influences require to be considered in the post 2008 strategic retail planning of the City and its environs.

These include:

- The need to identify a hierarchy of local, neighbourhood and potentially district centres to meet the local needs of the expanding population; and
- Ensuring that proposed locations have sufficient land to enable future growth in their roles and potential.

At present, Poulgour Townland is the only identified new Neighbourhood Centre. There is a need, given the rapid expansion of residential areas in the environs, to review its future potential to grow into a District Centre and to identify potential additional Neighbourhood Centres and locations for Local Centres in other parts of the environs. In addition to residential expansion, a key criterion will be the capacity of the local road network to accommodate centres of different levels in the ‘local’ retail hierarchy.

**Bulky Goods/Retail Warehousing Retail Parks:** From submissions and review of the 2001 Strategy a range of sites and locations for expansion of existing retail parks and for new retail parks have been identified and examined. The outcome of the review of each of these locations has been to consider them in respect of the following facts and criteria:

**Immediate Potential:** land is available and has good strategic road infrastructure accessibility for development today to meet immediate retail needs – potential within the current City and County development plans’ period to 2008.

**Medium Term Potential:** lands that will be opened up with the completion of the link road to the Waterford-Dublin motorway and the extension of the Ring Road, towards the end of/immediately post the current City and County development plans’ period – near to or post 2008.

**Long Term Potential:** lands dependent on the implementation of both strategic and local road programmes – post 2008.

**No Potential in the Foreseeable Future:** lands dependent on implementation of the western arm of the City Ring Road – a longer term objective which is not in any current programme, potential likely to be post 2014.

### **Immediate Potential**

**Smithslands Site:** This site is already under development and appropriately zoned. It is located some 2 kilometres from the City Centre on the south side of the City, east of the Waterford Road. Good access is therefore a key attribute of the site. Further land is available for retail warehousing. The constraint to the further development of this site is the cap on retail warehousing floorspace set in the development plan;

**Ormonde Retail Park:** is located some 2 kilometres to the east of the City Centre adjacent to the current N10 Carlow Road. It is already partially developed and is appropriately zoned for retail warehousing floorspace. Further land is available on the site for additional retail warehousing. As with the Smithsland Site, the constraint to the further development of this site is the cap on retail warehousing floorspace set in the development plan.

### **Medium Term Potential**

**Hebron House Site:** this is a site of considerable strategic importance given its location on both the N10 Link Road and the City Ring Road Extension. It is located approximately 2 kilometres from the City Centre on the eastern side of the Ring Road Extension. The site is appropriately zoned for retail warehousing and this should remain in place. Its full potential will be realised with the implementation of the two strategic road proposals but the completion of the Ring Road Extension will enable its development.

**De Loughrey Site:** is located some 1.2 kilometres to the west of the City Centre and sits on the eastern side of the proposed route of the Inner Relief Road, to the south of the Kilmanagh Road. The development of the site will require implementation of the Inner Relief Road. It is a site that has zoning for retail warehousing but there is also scope for a range of uses within this growing residential suburb of the City.

**EPA site:** A small site with potential as a small neighbourhood centre

The conclusion of the appraisal is that in the short term the key locations for additional retail warehousing floorspace are **Smithsland** and **Ormonde Retail Parks**. To enable their expansion the cap on retail floorspace set down in the City and County development Plans 2002 require to be removed.

The review confirms the strategic principles set down in the 2001 Retail Strategy. These are:

- Over time, but beyond the timescale of the City and County development plans, retail warehousing parks should be located in all quarters of the City's Environs
- Provision of infrastructure with capacity to ensure traffic impacts and congestion are minimised should be a key determining factor in the selection of appropriate sites, with public transport and other modes of access also being achievable
- Relocation and upgrading of existing operations should be encouraged
- There is a need to consider additional retail warehousing floorspace as a separate item to the broad assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace in the interests of sustaining and enhancing the City and County's competitiveness as a hub under the NSS.

### **3.4.5.2 Waterford Environs District Centre**

The Waterford Environs Development Plan proposes a District Centre at Ferrybank East along with new local centres at Rockshire Hill, Belmont and Rathculliheen/Abbeylands. It states that the new District Centre at Ferrybank East will cater for the planned 12,000 population for the area. The Plan recognises that there are some existing neighbourhood facilities at Rockshire Hill, however due to the nature of the site and population envisaged to locate there, some additional services may need to be provided. Both Belmont and Rathculliheen/Abbeylands neighbourhoods are envisaged to accommodate a population of 4,000 each. There are no facilities at these locations at present but they will be required as the population grows. Only limited shopping and local services are envisaged at these locations with the main centre for the area being Ferrybank.

The Ferrybank area of the Waterford City environs is set to grow to some 15,000 which will be over 25% of the Regional Guidelines 2020 population target for the city.

This progress, and emerging need, serves to substantiate the County Council's zoning of lands at Ferrybank as a District Centre within the County Development Plan. The review of the Retail Strategy further endorses this. However, looking beyond the timescale of the current development plan, these needs require monitoring and reviewing to ensure that retail and other services provision keeps pace with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. This will be best addressed through the mechanism of the proposed Joint Retail Strategy for the Greater Waterford Area.

It is the policy of the Council to engage with Waterford City Council, Waterford County Council and Wexford County Council in the preparation and adoption of a joint retail strategy for the greater Waterford area.

### **3.4.6 STRATEGIC RESPONSE**

The objectives of the Retail Strategy set the framework for the strategic policies and specific policies and proposals. They provide a clear definition of the purpose of the Strategy and what it is intended to achieve in the City and across the County over the period to 2014, and beyond to 2020. They are:

- Objective 1:** To sustain and improve the retail profile and competitiveness of Kilkenny City and County within the retail economy of the South East Region and beyond
- Objective 2:** To provide the retail land use and planning policy framework that responds to the potential of Kilkenny City's role as a Hub within the national and regional economies and to ensure that the City and County fully play their role in achieving the objectives and targets of the NSS and the Regional Guidelines
- Objective 3:** To confirm a hierarchy which assists in achieving the Regional Settlement Strategy and its objectives and provides clear guidance on where major new retail floorspace would be acceptable
- Objective 4:** To ensure that the retail needs of the City and County's residents are met as fully as possible within the County, taking due cognisance of the Regional Retail and Settlement Hierarchy
- Objective 5:** To address leakage of retail expenditure from the County by providing the means to strengthen the range and quality of its retail offer
- Objective 6:** To ensure an equitable, efficient and sustainable spatial distribution of main centres across the County
- Objective 7:** To encourage and facilitate the preservation and enhancement of the retail role of smaller villages and centres around the County
- Objective 8:** To encourage and facilitate innovation and diversification in the County's retail profile and offer
- Objective 9:** To encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings for retail uses, with due cognisance to the Sequential Approach as indicated in the RPG
- Objective 10:** To promote and sustain the importance of retailing in the County's tourism economy
- Objective 11:** To provide the criteria for the assessment of retail development proposals.

### **3.4.7 STRATEGIC POLICY FRAMEWORK**

To achieve the Strategy's objectives requires due cognisance to be taken of the strategic policy framework that underpins specific policies and proposals. This framework is set by:

- The retail hierarchy;
- The core retail areas;
- The sequential approach;
- Spatial distribution of new retail development;
- Consideration of need; and
- Responding to the implications of the NSS and Regional Guidelines.

### 3.4.7.1 Retail Hierarchy

As set out in paragraph 3.4.2, following the review of the County Retail Hierarchy against the factors and influences that have changed since the adoption of the 2001 Retail Strategy, specifically the RPG, NSS and the Regional Guidelines for the South East Region, a revised County Retail Hierarchy was adopted. Table 3.4.2 is repeated here for ease of reference.

Table 3.4.2 County Retail Hierarchy	
Level/Retail Function	Centre
<b>Level 1: Major Town Centre/County Town</b>	Kilkenny City
<b>Tier 1 Level 2 Sub County Town Centre</b>	Thomastown
<b>Tier 2 Level 2 Sub County Town Centre</b>	Callan Castlecomer Graigenamanagh
<b>Level 3 District Centre</b>	Ferrybank East Waterford City Environs
<b>Level 4 Village Centre</b>	Mullinavat Slieverue Upper and Lower Kilmacow Urlingford
<b>Level 4 Neighbourhood Centre</b>	Poulgour Townland Ross Road Rockshire Hill Belmont Centre Rathculliheen/Abbeylands

### 3.4.7.2 Core Retail Area

Paragraph 3.4.3 defines the core retail area of the main centres in the County – Kilkenny City and the four level 2 sub county Towns. It confirms that, as with the 2001 Strategy, the **Core Shopping Area** relates only to Kilkenny City Centre and that the four level 2 sub county Towns are of too small a scale to warrant such an approach. The Core Shopping Area for Kilkenny City Centre and the 400 metre **Edge of Centre** boundary are illustrated on map 3.4.

### 3.4.7.3 Sequential Approach

In meeting the aims of the Strategy, policies and proposals in respect of the location of retail development must be in accordance with the principles set by the **Sequential Approach** in the RPG. It defines that:

- The preferred location for new retail development, where practicable and viable, is within a town centre (or district or major village centre);
- Where it is not possible to provide the form and scale of development that is required on a site within a town centre then consideration can be given to a site on the edge of the town centre so as to encourage the possibility of one journey serving several purposes. An edge of centre site is taken to be one that is unlikely to be more than 300 - 400 metres from the edge of the prime shopping area, and less in smaller settlements. The distance considered to be convenient will however vary according to local circumstances; and
- Only after having assessed the size, availability, accessibility and feasibility of developing sites and premises, firstly within a town centre and secondly on the edge of a town centre, should alternative out of centre sites be considered where it can be demonstrated that there are no town centre or edge of centre sites which are suitable, viable and available.

In formulating specific policies and proposals, it is recognised that in general retail warehouses do not fit easily in to town centres given their size requirements and the need for good car parking facilities and ease of servicing. As such, in some instances it may be possible to locate retail warehouse groups on the edge of town centres.

### 3.4.7.4 The Spatial Distribution of New Retail Development

The City and County Retail Strategy, in accordance with the RPG, provides the strategic policy framework for the spatial distribution of new retail development. The emphasis is on strategic guidance on the location and scale of major retail development. The Strategy does not seek to inhibit small scale retail development in centres around the County, particularly in smaller centres. It should be taken to be implicit in the aims of the Strategy that such developments should be encouraged and facilitated to enhance the sustainability, vitality and viability of smaller centres, including smaller main centres in the County Retail Hierarchy. The following provides guidance on how the Retail Strategy defines the distribution of strategic and non-strategic retail floorspace within the Retail Hierarchy:

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>Level 1:</b> | major convenience and comparison   |
| <b>Level 2:</b> | middle order convenience and tourism related comparison                            |
| <b>Level 3:</b> | major convenience and middle order comparison, including bulky goods floorspace    |
| <b>Level 4:</b> | predominantly additional convenience but not excluding tourism related comparison. |



Additionally, the Strategy recognises the need to ensure that local needs, primarily convenience shopping and local services, are met in an equitable, efficient and sustainable way in major existing or new residential areas in and around main settlements through the designation of locations for District or Neighbourhood Centres in development plans.

#### **3.4.7.5 Need**

Quantitatively, at the County level, significant need is identified in the broad assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace over the timescale of the City and County Retail Strategy. This reflects the considerable growth in both population and consumer expenditure which will result in increasing potential expenditure to support new floorspace.

Over the current and next City and County development plan periods and to 2020, the population of the County will expand from an estimated **80,339** at 2002 to **86,355** by 2008, **93,016** by 2014 and **100,411** by 2020. The increase in population combined with significant consumer expenditure growth will result in considerable potential spend to support further retail floorspace development in the County.

There is a need to harness the considerable potential identified in the table and redress the increasing leakage of resident's expenditure from the County for main food shopping and clothing and footwear.

The leakage of convenience expenditure has increased by almost 10% to 27% since the 2000 household and shopper surveys were undertaken. Against the majority of comparator counties, this is found to be an extremely high level of leakage and a level of the order of 10% should be the planning target over the period of the Retail Strategy.

The level of comparison expenditure leakage has increased. It is clear that the City and County are failing to hold the attraction of residents. The issue is the lack of national and international high street brands and department stores and, although it has been noted that Kilkenny City performs well in this respect against competing centres/its comparators, it is clearly not providing the offer that local people seek. The capacity potential is there for this issue to be redressed and leakage to be reduced.

In response to the planned major expansion of the Waterford Environs and particularly the parts located within the County's administrative area, land at Ferrybank was designated as a District Centre in the 2001 Strategy, and incorporated in the County Development Plan. The need for a District Centre responded to the residential land use zonings. This District Centre zoning has been validated by the exceptional number of houses granted planning permission and given this foresight then there is real potential for the centre to be delivered in parallel to the major expansion of population. Potentially, not far beyond the development plan timescale, a major new residential suburb of the city will have emerged. There is a need to look at the wider implications of this and this is reviewed under consideration of the implications of the NSS and the Regional Planning Guidelines below.

In the 2001 Strategy, there was recognition that the City and County had to greatly improve their retail warehousing/bulky goods floorspace offer if competitiveness was to be sustained and improved. To achieve this, then it was identified that a critical mass of retail warehousing floorspace was required and that this should not be constrained by the broad assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace, as set out in the capacity exercise. This approach has been successful in attracting investment and operators. There were, however, concerns at the time in respect of the potential impact of such developments on the City Centre particularly given the scale and potential of the emerging McDonagh Station site retail proposals. As a consequence, the Borough and County Councils introduced guidelines on what levels of retail warehousing development were acceptable and incorporated these in their respective development plans.

These in summary were as follows:

- The maximum gross floor area for retail warehousing in the City and County would be 12,000m<sup>2</sup>, with the maximum for the City and Environs being 8,000m<sup>2</sup>;
- No one park was to be in excess of 7,000m<sup>2</sup>; and
- No more than one park would be permitted on any one individual block of land zoned for Industrial/Business in the City and Environs Development Plan.

This caution was appropriate at that time and the role of the review of the 2001 Retail Strategy is to assess whether this remains appropriate in 2004. The conclusion is that this approach is no longer appropriate for the following reasons:

- So far, the Borough and County Councils were the only planning authorities which placed a cap on retail warehousing development within their retail strategies.
- Competing centres are approving large scale retail parks that are attracting anchor stores and related developments that cannot locate within the City and wider County. This is restricting competitiveness
- Key anchor stores can have a gross floor area up to the RPG cap of 6,000m<sup>2</sup>.
- The City has been identified as a Hub under the NSS and the Regional Guidelines, which reaffirms its role and importance at both the national and regional levels. For the City to grow to 30,000 by 2020, this requires the City and County to ensure that they sustain and enhance their competitiveness as locations for living, working and leisure. Shopping is an increasingly important factor in that equation
- The County has witnessed a decline in its attraction for shopping for its residents – this requires to be redressed across all of the retail sector markets
- While there is considerable market interest in securing zonings that allow retail warehousing/retail park developments in and around the City and Environs, the actual market is finite and there is a point of saturation or where anchors will not be secured – essentially the scheme will not happen.
- Given that there are a number of new schemes, then in accordance with the RPG any new application in the City and Environs will require to demonstrate that it has no adverse retail impact either by itself or cumulatively on the City Centre (or any other centre). Through this process, the concerns of the two Councils will be addressed.

Based on the above, the cap(s) in respect of retail warehousing floorspace is removed and the guidance set by the RPG on the size range (8,000 – 15,000m<sup>2</sup>) which is unlikely to have a material adverse impact ‘*on the more important town centres in the retail hierarchy*’, of which Kilkenny City is one, will be used in the assessment of planning applications for retail development.

In order that the City and County’s competitiveness are sustained and enhanced, that the capacity assessment should not be a constraint on retail warehousing/retail park proposals coming forward as any issues will be identified through application of the criteria for assessing major retail developments, which are set out in section 3.4.9.

#### **3.4.7.6 Implications of the NSS and the Regional Planning Guidelines**

In the review of need set out above, the focus is on addressing the immediate issues that face the City and County’s competitiveness and how this can and should be sustained. This requires to be taken to a further level that looks into the future and how retail planning responds to a greatly expanding City and County and their role in the spatial and economic development of the country and the Region, as prescribed in the NSS and Regional Planning Guidelines for the South East Region. An important part of this is the role of the Waterford environs area that is within County Kilkenny’s jurisdiction and how this contributes to the city achieving its targets and objectives. Acknowledging this has been inherent in the approach adopted in the review of the Strategy and the incorporation of 2020 forecasts in the capacity assessment of the requirement for additional floorspace.

Looking first to the City and how it develops its status as a Hub, the forecasts and expenditure assessments provide a sound and defensible basis for the City achieving the objectives of both the NSS and the Regional Guidelines in respect of retail expansion and policy. There are at present two major sites that will enable substantial expansion of the City Centre, an emerging framework for a network/hierarchy of district, neighbourhood and local centres to meet the needs of the residential expansion of the City’s environs and key strategic locations identified for the short, medium and longer term development of retail warehouse parks around the City. This framework is informed by the capacity assessment but takes a longer term view.

The Waterford Environs, within Kilkenny County Council’s jurisdiction, are a key part of Waterford City achieving its potential and targets under both the NSS and the Regional Guidelines. It is a major expanding area of the City’s suburbs and the needs of this community require to be met locally on a scale that is appropriate.

#### **3.4.8 SPECIFIC POLICIES & PROPOSALS**

The specific policies and proposals of the City and County Retail Strategy are designed to facilitate achievement of the aims of the Strategy. They are formulated to ensure:

- The policy framework is in place to address existing or emerging issues in the City and County's retail profile
- The City and County have the policy framework to ensure strategic and local convenience and comparison shopping needs are met and the competitiveness of the County's main centres is enhanced
- The expenditure capacity potential for additional floorspace is harnessed over the timescale of the Strategy.

The policies and proposals are identified and reviewed in the following order:

- Kilkenny City and Environs;
- The level 2 sub county towns
- Waterford City Environs;
- New Ross Environs;
- Greater Waterford Area Retail Strategy; and
- General Policies.

#### **3.4.8.1 Kilkenny City & Environs**

The specific policies and proposals for Kilkenny City and Environs are detailed under the following headings:

- a) City Centre
- b) Edge of Centre
- c) Out of Centre
- d) Retail Hierarchy.

##### **a) City Centre**

It has been demonstrated that against competitor and comparator centres that Kilkenny City Centre is performing well and is sustaining its role, profile and importance as a Level 1 Tier 3 centre in the national retail hierarchy and within the South East Region. The City's designation as a Hub under the NSS and Regional Guidelines further differentiates the importance of the City in the national and regional economy and provides the catalyst for the City to further enhance its importance in national and regional shopping patterns to the benefit of the City and County's population. To achieve this will require a holistic approach and vision for the City and its future including:

- Expansion of the City Centre;
- Continuing improvement in the quality and quantum of its retail offer;
- Continuing improvement of its cultural, arts and tourism/supporting tourism infrastructure;
- Introduction and implementation of road programmes and traffic management initiatives;
- Signage and linkage;
- Environmental improvements;
- Heritage and interpretation strategies;
- Working in partnership.
- Local Area Plan

**Expansion of the City Centre:** The review of retail development potential confirmed that, as with the 2001 Strategy, there is not the size of sites available within the City Centre to accommodate the scale of new additional retail floorspace that the City requires to sustain and improve its retail profile and importance. Bateman's Quay is identified as the location for a new flagship civic and cultural building and is thus not available for the scale of retail development required although it is likely that retail floorspace will form a significant component of the overall project. Therefore, the review confirms that sites outside the immediate City Centre will require to be looked to if expansion is to be achieved.

**Continuing Improvement of the Quality and Quantum of the Retail Offer:** Expansion of the City Centre will enable substantial improvement in the City Centre's retail offer. However, in accordance with the Sequential Approach, the Core Shopping Area and areas immediately surrounding do remain and will remain the primary retail area. Through the regeneration and re-use of buildings for retail uses then the critical mass of shopping floorspace will be sustained and enhanced. Bateman's Quay will provide an exciting opportunity for riverside niche and speciality shopping to complement the offer of the Core Shopping Area. This is likely to come forward in the second half of the Retail Strategy, that is post 2008.

**Continuing Improvement of Cultural, Arts and Tourism/Supporting Tourism Infrastructure:** While retailing will remain the predominant land use in the heart of the City Centre, the City's attraction to local people and visitors alike for culture, eating, meeting and greeting requires to be sustained and continually reviewed as part of the retail-leisure/tourism experience. It is an objective of the Borough and County Councils that the Bateman's Quay project should make a significant new addition to the City's profile regionally, nationally and internationally.

**Introduction and Implementation of Road Programmes and Traffic Management Initiatives:** The congestion in the City Centre continues to grow and conflicts with pedestrians are increasing in parallel. Full traffic management planning and increased pedestrianisation/pedestrian priority measures cannot come forward without programmed strategic road infrastructure being completed as this will reduce traffic through the City Centre. These include the Eastern Ring Road and the Inner Relief Road. The completion

of the Eastern Ring Road Extension is therefore an important step in the process. More immediate to the City Centre is the Inner Relief Road proposal which will enable diversion of local traffic from the City Centre. This is a specific objective of the City and Environs Development Plan following variation no.2. Parking continues to be an issue and was a key area of dissatisfaction in the household and shopper surveys. To redress the issues.

It is an objective of the Plan to:

- Continue to implement the strategic road proposals for the City.
- Prepare a car parking strategy for the City centre.

**Signage and Linkage:** Kilkenny City, in common with the majority of centres, has poor directional signage and it detracts from the experience of the City. The issue relates to both vehicular and pedestrian modes and the former specifically in respect of parking. At present, the City Centre is compact and easy to get around for the more mobile in the community. As it expands, then there will be a greater need to for the signage to be in place to achieve the linkages that will be required to ensure an integrated and cohesive City Centre and not a centre of parts.

It is an objective of the Plan to improve existing commercial and tourist linkages throughout the City.

**Environmental Improvements:** As with the 2001 Strategy there is a need to prepare design briefs for environmental improvement and/or enhancement to John Street, St Kieran's Street and the Parade. Bateman's Quay is excluded from the list as it requires a wider development and design brief for the project as a whole. The Parade is a particularly important asset which currently poorly serves the City. It provides the potential for creating a high quality designed gateway to the City Centre and a more formalised location for visiting farmers, French and craft markets.

It is an objective of the Plan to urban design frameworks for specific areas/sites to enhance and improve the environmental quality of the City.

**Heritage and Interpretation:** The County and its towns have a wealth of history. This is an important asset in the national and international visitor market that is drawn to Kilkenny City in particular. In common with other centres around the country, the story is there but it is not being told as well as it could or creatively. To do this well would further distinguish the City and enhance its appeal. The review therefore confirms the 2001 Retail Strategy recommendation that a heritage and interpretation strategy is required which is linked to the environmental improvement/enhancement proposals to ensure an integrated approach is adopted.

It is an objective of both Local Authorities working in partnership with Kilkenny tourism and in co operation with Bord Failte and SERTA (South East Regional and Tourism Authority)to prepare a comprehensive tourism development and management

plan with regard to the marketing and promotion of the City and County as a special tourism destination.

It is an objective of the Borough and County Councils to identify a location for a flagship civic/cultural project which will consolidate the role and importance of the City as a key regional, national and international location for the arts.

**Working in Partnership:** The stewardship of the City Centre rests not only in the hands of the Borough Council – local businesses, business and trade organisations, other agencies and groups and local people are all important stakeholders. The potential and vision for the City Centre will not be achieved by the Local Authorities alone – it requires the Councils and the different stakeholders to work in partnership to help deliver the expectations and targets of the City’s designation as a Hub.

**Local Area Plan:** To establish a vision for the City centre ensuring its continued vitality and viability, striking a balance between preserving its architectural and archaeological heritage and facilitating modern living a **Local Area Plan** will be prepared. The issues and opportunities that have been highlighted above will be addressed and responded to within the Local Area Plan.

It is an objective of the Borough and County Councils to prepare a Local Area Plan for the City centre to improve existing commercial and tourist linkages, prepare urban design frameworks for specific sites, assess the core retail area and propose strategies for its future development, and propose a framework for existing and future carparking requirements and general directional signage.

#### **b) Edge of Centre**

From the review of retail development potential, the following two edge of centre locations have been confirmed as the locations for the expansion of the City Centre over the lifetime of the Retail Strategy: McDonagh Station Site and the Mart Site.

While the development of both sites could be advanced within the 2008 timescale of the current development plan, the **design year** of both, that is the first full year of retail trading following opening, will be post 2008. The capacity assessment, undertaken as part of the review of the 2001 Retail Strategy, indicates that there is sufficient expenditure capacity over the timescale of the City and County Retail Strategy to enable both sites to come forward.

#### **c) Out of Centre**

The review of retail development potential identifies a strategy for the development of additional retail warehousing floorspace in out of centre locations over the timescale of the Retail Strategy and beyond. This is dealt with in section 3.4.5.1.

The review of the 2001 Retail Strategy identifies that the following guidance is required in respect of retail warehousing/retail parks in the Kilkenny City Environs:

- There will be no retail warehousing floorspace caps for the City and County in the interests of the competitiveness of the City and County;
- The size range for retail parks that is appropriate is 8,000 – 15,000m<sup>2</sup>, as indicated in the RPG;
- The RPG cap of 6,000m<sup>2</sup> (gross), including any ancillary garden centre, as per the RPG on individual retail warehouse units shall apply. This will be automatically amended, as appropriate, in the light of any review of the cap by the DoEHLG;
- In accordance with the RPG, any new applications for retail warehousing floorspace, including expansion of existing retail parks, in the City and Environs will require to demonstrate that they have no adverse retail impact either by themselves or cumulatively on the City Centre (or any other centre). Through this process, the concerns of the two Councils in relation to the City Centre will be addressed; and
- The consideration of retail impact and cumulative impact will determine the scope for additional retail warehouse floorspace and not the Strategy's broad review of the requirement for additional retail floorspace.

#### **d) Retail Hierarchy**

An emerging framework for the hierarchy of district, neighbourhood and local centres is identified around Kilkenny City and Environs. It is the policy of the local authorities to respond to the growing needs of existing and emerging residential areas around the City.

#### **3.4.8.2 Level 2 Sub County Town Centres**

It is not the purpose of the Strategy to inhibit market interest or retail development in any of the sub County Towns. All applications will be treated on their merits and as appropriate shall be reviewed against the Retail Strategy's criteria for assessing retail developments. This noted, important objectives for retail and other development in the level 2 sub county Towns are:

- Increasing the critical mass of commercial activity within the town centres through consolidation of key retail areas;
- To secure the re-use and regeneration of land and buildings within the town centres; and
- To contribute to the attraction of the towns as places to live, work, visit and invest in.

#### **3.4.8.3 Waterford City Environs**

To meet the significant residential growth of this key suburb of Waterford City, land is zoned at Ferrybank within the County Council's administrative area, for a District Centre. The review confirms that this remains an objective of the City and County Retail Strategy. It is a Strategy that takes due account of Waterford City's designation as a Gateway in the NDP, NSS and Regional Guidelines and the longer term timescale that is looked to. As the area will increasingly form a larger and larger part of the Waterford Metropolitan Area, then the strategy for Ferrybank requires to be examined in detail with



the City Council and the other councils in the South East Region as part of a Joint Retail Strategy for the Greater Waterford Area.

It is the policy of the Borough and County Councils to work with the other local authorities in the South East Region in the preparation of a **Regional Retail Strategy** which is in accordance with the RPG which identify the Greater Waterford Area as an area where comprehensive retail and policies should be prepared by the constituent local authorities.

#### **3.4.8.4 New Ross Environs**

In the interests of proper planning and sustainable development, the retail potential of lands in the New Ross Environs which are within the County Council's administrative area should be examined as part of a Joint Retail Strategy for the Greater Waterford Area. In the absence of such a strategy then the following factors and influences are identified as material considerations:

- The emerging Wexford County Retail Strategy
- The City and County Retail Strategy's criteria for assessing retail proposals.

#### **3.4.8.5 General Policies**

In addition to the specific policies and initiatives, the review of the 2001 Retail Strategy has identified a range of general policies which should be incorporated in the Strategy. These are summarised in Table 3.4.8.5.

<b>Table 3.4.8.5 Summary of General Policies</b>	
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Objective</b>
<b>Corner Shops and Smaller Villages/Crossroads</b>	<i>To retain, encourage and facilitate the retail role of corner shops and small villages around the County</i>
<b>Enhancement of Towns and Villages</b>	<i>To encourage and facilitate the enhancement and environmental improvement of the County's towns and villages</i>
<b>Re-Use and Regeneration of Derelict Land and Buildings</b>	<i>To encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings</i>
<b>Retailing in Tourism and Leisure</b>	<i>To encourage and facilitate the development of retailing within the tourism and leisure sectors</i>
<b>Innovation in the City and County's Retail Offer</b>	<i>To encourage and facilitate innovation in the City and County's retail offer and attraction</i>

### 3.4.9 CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING FUTURE RETAIL PROPOSALS

All applications for significant retail development should be assessed against a range of criteria. Different thresholds were set in the 2001 Retail Strategy for Kilkenny City and its Environs and the four sub County Towns.

These will remain as follows:

**Kilkenny City and its Environs/Waterford City Environs:** Developments of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> (gross) convenience and 2,000m<sup>2</sup> (gross) comparison should be tested by the criteria.

**Scheduled Towns/Other Settlements:** Proposals for 500m<sup>2</sup> (gross) convenience and comparison developments should be considered against the criteria.

The criteria to be considered in the assessment of significant applications will include:

- The expenditure capacity within the relevant catchment area, taking account of all extant planning permissions and development proposals/opportunities identified in the City and County development plans, including those for the Scheduled Towns and other settlements;
- The impact on town and village centres, including cumulative impact;
- The baseline information and capacity/impact assessment is fit for purpose and transparent;
- There is demonstrable need for development;
- The relationship of the application to any development plan allocation;
- Its contribution to town/village centre improvement;
- Its contribution to site and/or area regeneration;
- The quality of access by all modes of transport and by foot and bicycle;
- Its role in improving the competitiveness of the County, in particular Kilkenny City Centre;
- Its role in sustaining rural communities;
- The extent to which it is relevant to consider the imposition of restrictions on the range of goods permitted for sale; and
- Any other relevant development plan policies and allocations.

All significant development shall also be subject to an assessment that follows the Sequential Approach. The objectives of this approach to development have been summarised previously and the following is added to that summary:

- In all cases, to select the site which offers the optimum accessibility options by all transport modes, including walking and cycling.
- Particularly if a town centre site is not being promoted, to demonstrate that all town centre development options have been fully evaluated and that flexibility has been adopted in regard to the retail format.

If the retail proposal, whether significant or not, accords with development plan policies and proposals in all material respects it should expect to meet with approval. In accordance with the RPG, in such instances, it should not be necessary for the applicant to provide additional supporting background studies. However, the onus is on an

applicant to demonstrate convincingly that the proposal does comply closely with the development plan. Where there is doubt on any aspect of a planning application, the local authorities will require a detailed justification related to the matter that is questionable.

### **3.4.10 RIS/RIA GUIDANCE TO APPLICANTS**

The Borough and County Councils wish to ensure that retail proposals which accord with the relevant development plans and the City and County Retail Strategy proceed as expeditiously as possible through the planning process. To assist in achieving this, as part of the review of the Retail Strategy, the Councils requested that guidance notes to applicants be prepared on what should comprise a Retail Impact Statement (RIS)/Retail Impact Assessment (RIA) and what the sought outputs are. These guidance notes are provided in Appendix F of the study document.

### **3.4.11 MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The review of the retail strategy commissioned presents an interim review of the 2001 City and County Retail Strategy. The review was commissioned in recognition of the fact that the retail sector is one of the most dynamic sectors of the economy and trends, influences and information change over time. This commitment to monitoring and review requires to be endorsed to ensure that:

- The Retail Strategy and its baseline are kept as up to date as possible;
- There is a means of monitoring progress with the implementation of policies; and
- There is a mechanism that can enable change that is responsive to emerging trends and opportunities.

To ensure that the Strategy and its policies remain valid and up to date, it is the policy of the Councils to:

- Carry out annual monitoring of expenditure and population forecasts.
- Monitor planning permissions for both new retail floorspace and change of use to keep the floorspace data up to date.

#### **It is an objective of both Councils to:**

- Review the Retail Strategy's policies and objectives again in 3 years.
- Update the household and shopper survey data at the next review