

**Kilkenny County Council and
Corporation**

**KILKENNY HOUSING
STRATEGY**

October 15th 2001

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (the Act) requires that housing strategies be drawn up by planning authorities and integrated into their development plans. The strategy is to have regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of an area and will be concerned with the overall supply of housing within the administrative area of the Local Authority.
- 1.2 The Act states that the needs for social and affordable housing shall be a material planning consideration which must be taken into account in formulating development plan policies, preparing the housing strategy and deciding on planning applications.
- 1.3 The Act places a statutory obligation on the Planning Authority to ensure that sufficient land is zoned for housing in its development plan to meet the projected housing requirement over the period of the plan and to ensure that shortage will not arise.

The housing strategy shall:

- (a) include an estimate of, and provision for, the existing need and the likely future need for housing in the area covered by the development plan. The Planning Authority shall ensure that sufficient and suitable land is zoned in its development plan for residential use (or for a mixture of residential and other uses), to meet the requirements of the housing strategy and to ensure that a scarcity of such land does not occur at any time during the period of the development plan.
- (b) take into account the need to ensure that housing is available for persons who have different levels of income, and in particular for those in need of social or affordable housing in the area. A housing strategy shall therefore provide that as a general policy a specified percentage, not being more than 20% of the land zoned in the development plan for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be reserved for social and/or affordable housing.
- (c) ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of the different categories of households, as may be determined by the Planning Authority, including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities.
- (d) counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds. The Planning Authority may indicate in respect of any residential area that there is no requirement for social/affordable housing in

respect of that area, or that a lower percentage than that specified in the housing strategy may instead be required.

- 1.4 The development plan must be amended to incorporate the housing strategy and shall include objectives to secure the implementation of the strategy, including objectives requiring that a specified percentage of lands zoned for residential development be made available for social and affordable housing. A Planning Authority or An Bord Pleanála on appeal, may include a condition on a grant of permission requiring the applicant to enter into an agreement regarding the provision of social housing. This might only be applied to some areas where specific objectives are included in the development plan.
- 1.5 The Manager must prepare a report for the elected members two years after the adoption of a development plan, which shall include a review of the progress achieved in securing the objectives of the plan. This shall include progress made in implementing the housing strategy. Where the report indicates that new or revised housing needs have been identified, the Manager may recommend that the housing strategy be adjusted and that the development plan be varied accordingly. The Manager may also bring such a report to the members if he or she considers that there has been a change in the housing market or in the regulations made by the Minister for the Environment under the Act that significantly affects the housing strategy.
- 1.6 The current Kilkenny County Development Plan was adopted in 1994. The making of a new development plan is underway and a Draft Development Plan was published in December 2000.
- 1.7 The process for adoption of the housing strategy must be commenced by the 1st August 2001. The adoption of the housing strategy will therefore require a variation to the relevant development plan extant on the 1st August 2001.
- 1.8 A housing strategy may be prepared jointly by two or more Planning Authorities. The housing strategy for Kilkenny City and County is being prepared jointly by Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Corporation. In the preparation of the housing strategy regard was had to the *Model Housing Strategy* and step-by-step guide issued by the Department of Environment and Local Government (DoELG) as part of the Housing Supply Guidelines (December 2000).
- 1.9 Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Corporation advertised in the local press seeking submissions prior to the preparation of the draft strategy. A list of those that responded is given in Appendix B. The Council and the Corporation acknowledge with thanks the input of those bodies.

2. NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 In this section, we consider the implications for the housing strategy of the following national policy statements and documents :

- The National Development Plan 2000-6
- Sustainable Development : A Strategy for Ireland 1997
- Residential Density Guidelines for Planning Authorities 1999
- Social and Affordable Housing and Accommodation : Building the Future 2000
- Action on Housing 2000
- Draft Planning Guidelines on Childcare Facilities 2000.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2000-6

2.2 A key housing priority of the National Development Plan (the Plan) is to increase social housing output in accordance with increased needs. It is recommended that this be achieved by:

- an increase in the provision of local authority housing (both social and affordable housing)
- encouraging and facilitating an increase in housing provision by voluntary housing associations
- the promotion of the shared ownership scheme.

2.3 The National Development Plan provides that £6 billion will be allocated between 2000 and 2006 for the provision of social and affordable housing. The Plan necessitates the provision of an additional 35,000 local authority housing units across Ireland over the course of the Plan. This figure has since been increased to 41,500 units i.e. 1,000 extra in each year from 2001 to 2006. It also provides for an additional £385 million towards the necessary provision of water and wastewater services to develop land for housing and for commercial use, and £31 million for activities such as urban and village renewal. Support will be provided to assist the voluntary housing sector increase housing output from under 500 units in 1998 to 4,000 units per annum.

- 2.4 Resources are also provided under the Plan to local authorities for the re-development and refurbishment of their housing stock, and to supply appropriate housing (and schemes for private house improvements) for people with special needs such as the elderly, homeless persons, Travellers and people with disabilities.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT : A STRATEGY FOR IRELAND 1997

- 2.5 This document sets out the Government policy of encouraging more sustainable urban development using techniques such as minimising suburbanisation, promoting higher residential densities where appropriate and improving public transport. It also promotes the maintenance, refurbishment and re-use of existing building stock and infrastructure as a means of promoting sustainability and reducing greenfield developments. Caution is given however, with respect to ensuring that high densities are not achieved at the expense of poor amenity.

RESIDENTIAL DENSITY GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING AUTHORITIES 1999

- 2.6 In 1999 the DoELG, following a process of public consultation, issued guidelines to all Planning Authorities on residential density. The Planning and Development Act 2000 requires Planning Authorities to have regard to such planning guidelines.
- 2.7 The density guidelines point out that:
- (a) Falling household sizes in Ireland, coupled with economic prosperity, will have significant implications for the scale and type of future housing stock. A more varied range of dwelling type and size than has been provided heretofore will be necessary; and
 - (b) The Government is concerned at the rise in house prices. Despite an increase in housing completions in Ireland in recent years, housing demand still remains high relative to supply. The present difficulties experienced by first-time buyers, particularly in the Dublin area, can be addressed by the provision of more dwellings. The use of zoned and serviced residential land to its maximum will assist in achieving this objective. More compact, innovative house types may result in cheaper construction costs also.

- 2.8 Planning Authorities are therefore required by the DoELG to promote increased residential density where appropriate to do so, including :
- in town and city centres
 - on 'brownfield' sites, especially close to existing or future public transport corridors
 - on inner suburban/infill sites, again where close to existing or planned public transport corridors
 - on outer suburban/'greenfield' sites.
- 2.9 The guidelines stress that firm emphasis must be placed by Planning Authorities on the importance of qualitative standards in relation to design and layout, in order to ensure that the highest quality of residential environment is achieved.

SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND ACCOMMODATION : BUILDING THE FUTURE 2000

- 2.10 Published by the National Economic and Social Forum, this report states that the need for local authority housing increased by 43% in the three years up to 2000, whilst provision of such housing remained unacceptably low. Recommendations coming out of the report included :
- Good quality, secure and affordable housing is a social right and should be given statutory backing
 - Social housing provision should be substantially increased, with the aim of setting a timetable for the elimination of waiting lists
 - Public housing management systems should be radically reformed and modernised
 - Priority should be given to those most excluded from good quality, secure and affordable accommodation, particularly those with low incomes and specific housing need such as older people, people with disabilities, single people, the homeless, Travellers, some people in rural areas and those needing crisis accommodation.

ACTION ON HOUSING 2000

- 2.11 This document provides a summary of the recommendations coming out of the report *The Housing Market in Ireland : An Economic Evaluation of Trends and Prospects, 2000* prepared by Peter Bacon and the action being taken by Government to :
- Maximise housing output to meet the continuing strong demand for housing
 - Curb short-term speculative demand
 - Strengthen the position of first-time purchasers in the market
 - Increase the supply of social and affordable housing to meet rising housing needs
 - Improve the institutional arrangements to facilitate the delivery of housing related infrastructure and increase overall housing supply
 - Increase the capacity of the construction sector.

DRAFT PLANNING GUIDELINES ON CHILDCARE FACILITIES 2000

- 2.12 In May 2000, the DoELG issued draft guidelines for Planning Authorities on childcare facilities. National policy on childcare is to increase the number of places available and to improve the quality of childcare services for the community. The guidelines are intended to assist Planning Authorities in their efforts to make suitable provision for childcare in their development plans. Policies should be positive and pro-active and facilitate the provision of such facilities in appropriate locations, including larger new housing developments (especially those comprising more than 75 dwelling units).

3. LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 Housing policy in County Kilkenny is founded on the following documents :

- Kilkenny County Draft Development Plan 2001
- Kilkenny City and Environs Draft Development Plan 2000
- Draft Action Area Plan for the Waterford Environs Area 2000
- Kilkenny County Council Policy Statement on Counteracting Undue Social Segregation in Housing
- Kilkenny County Council Accommodation Programme for Traveller Families 2000 - 2004
- Kilkenny Homeless Forum Action Plan 2001-2003

3.2 Below we summarise the key local housing policies from these documents.

- To operate an integrated and sustainable housing policy for the Borough and the Environs
- To ensure that sufficient and suitable land is zoned in the development plan and serviced for residential development (whether solely for residential use, or a mixture of residential and other uses) to meet the requirements of the strategy and to ensure that a scarcity of such land does not occur at any time during the period of the strategy
- To provide the necessary infrastructural investment to facilitate the overall level of housing output required to meet the current and anticipated levels of demand in a planned coherent fashion
- To strive for the highest quality built environment in the development of new housing, through the promotion of a high standard of architectural design in the siting and design of new developments
- To encourage economy and efficiency in the use of land and services
- To encourage a variety of house types, sizes and tenure in individual schemes and to encourage variety, interest and social mix in private and social housing developments
- To ensure that County housing policy and objectives are linked with employment, environmental and infrastructural policies and objectives with the aim of improving the quality of life and the attractiveness of the County's towns, villages and open countryside
- To meet social and affordable housing needs in the towns, villages and rural areas of the County in a balanced way avoiding over-concentration in any one particular area by:

-
- Providing houses under its multi-annual housing programme
 - Assembling land banks
 - Co-operating with and assisting the Private and Voluntary Sectors
 - Implementing the Affordable Housing/Shared Ownership Schemes and other housing initiatives
 - Participating in estate management and involving residents associations through the Council’s community liaison programme.
- To ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of the different categories of households, as may be determined by the Planning Authority, including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities by:
 - The provision of suitable accommodation by the County Council and Corporation and voluntary housing groups and by encouraging private sector development of smaller housing units, and specialist housing
 - To operate Part V of the Act in a way that encourages and facilitates a level supply of housing which will meet the demands of all sectors of the market
 - To ensure a degree of flexibility in the design of housing units to ensure that units are adaptable to change and can reflect changing requirements and demands of people.

4. ESTIMATING HOUSING DEMAND

4.1 An assessment of the anticipated level of demand for housing in the County (including social and affordable) is essential to the development of an effective housing strategy. To be able to do this, future changes in population, incomes and house prices need to be estimated. This section of the strategy addresses this, closely following the methodology outlined in the *Model Housing Strategy*.

POPULATION ESTIMATES AND FORECASTS FOR KILKENNY

4.2 Below we consider the following issues in order to estimate population growth over the 1996-2000 period and forecast for the 2001-06 period:

- Historical population trends
- Household structures
- Housing market assessment.

Historical Population Trends

4.3 In 1996, County Kilkenny had a total population of 75,336 persons (Census of Population 1996). Of that, 45.4% were classified as living within towns. The largest urban area, Kilkenny City & Environs, contained 54.6% of the urban population. The remainder of the urban population was distributed among the four Scheduled Towns of Callan, Castlecomer, Graiguenamanagh, Thomastown, the suburbs of Waterford City and 17 villages. With the exception of Kilkenny City, all towns within the County have less than 2,000 persons. These population figures represented an increase of 2.3% in the County since 1991, (below the 2.8% increase observed for the State over the same period). More than half of this increase took place in Kilkenny City and Environs.

Table 4.1: Population of Town Areas in Kilkenny:

	1991	1996	Percentage Change
Kilkenny City & Environs	17,669	18,696	+5.8
Suburbs of Waterford	1,525	1,615	+5.9
Thomastown	1,487	1,581	+6.3
Castlecomer	1,396	1,380	-1.1
Callan	1,246	1,224	-1.8
Graiguenamanagh	1,112	1,113	+0.1

Source: 1996 Census of Population, CSO

- 4.4 There are only five other towns within the County that have a population of over 1,000 persons (see table 4.1 above), with Thomastown and the suburbs of Waterford being the only areas to register a significant increase in population between 1991 and 1996. Nearly two-thirds of the rest of the population of Kilkenny live outside of the City and these five towns, highlighting the relatively rural structure of the County’s population.
- 4.5 The age structure of Kilkenny shows that it has a higher proportion of persons in the marginal age groups (under 15 and over 65) and a lower proportion of ‘young adults’ (15-24) relative to the State. The strongest growth in Kilkenny’s population between 1991 and 1996 was in the 45-64 age group, while the under 15 age group fell by 9.5 %. Most notably over this period, Kilkenny experienced a slower rate of growth in the 25-44 age group and a faster rate of growth in the over 65 age group in comparison to the State.

Table 4.2: Age Structure of the Population in Kilkenny and the State

	As a Proportion of the Total Population, 1996		Percentage Growth Rate in Each Age Cohort 1991-96	
	Kilkenny	State	Kilkenny	State
0-14	24.7	23.7	-9.5	-8.6
15-24	15.9	17.5	5.3	5.2
25-44	27.4	28.0	3.8	6.0
45-64	19.7	19.4	14.5	13.2
65+	12.3	11.4	4.9	2.7

Source: 1996 Census of Population, CSO

- 4.6 County Kilkenny registered very small estimated net out-migration of people between 1991 and 1996. However, substantial out-migration occurred in the 15-24 age group between 1991 and 1996, possibly a result of the movement of third-level students to other areas, given there is no university or Institute of Technology in the County. This was largely offset by in-migration in other age groups, particularly in the 5-14 and 25-39 age groups, typically young families moving into the County. Consultations with officials indicate that this was at least partially attributable to :
- Significant numbers of people returning to the County after emigrating in search of work
 - Significant inward investment in the County over the period on the part of high-value-added service companies.

Officials indicated that these trends became even more significant in the 1996-2001 period.

- 4.7 The annual number of births in the County has remained relatively steady between 1991-2000, averaging just under 1,000 births p.a. (Kilkenny Development Plan Review 1999).

Household Structures

- 4.8 Census data indicate that the average household size in Kilkenny in 1996 was 3.26 persons per household, above the national average of 3.14¹. However, as with the rest of the country, average household size in Kilkenny fell, by 0.17 persons between 1986 and 1991 and by 0.20 persons between 1991 and 1996.
- 4.9 Single and two-person households in Kilkenny accounted for 41.2% of the total number of households in 1996, an increase from 38.6% in 1991. This can partly be explained by an increase in the proportion of people aged over 65 that were living alone from 20.7% in 1991 to 23.3% in 1996. The number of lone parents was at 8.0% in 1996, relatively unchanged from the 1991 level of 7.9% and slightly below the average for the State of 9.4%.
- 4.10 It is therefore likely that average household size in Kilkenny will continue to fall for the foreseeable future. This assumption is based on the following observations:
- average household size for the State is forecast to continue to fall to about 2.6 persons per household by 2011 (CSO projections)
 - the fall in the proportion of the population in Kilkenny represented by the 0-14 age group along with the fall in the total fertility rate does point to smaller family size
 - the increase in the older age groups, in particular those aged over 65, along with the increase in the number of one and two-person households looks set to continue
 - the improved economic status of younger people over the 1996-2000 period increased the percentage that were able to enter the housing market for the first time.

Housing Market Assessment

- 4.11 DTZ Sherry FitzGerald carried out an analysis of the demand for housing within the County for the period 1996-2000. This comprised a survey of local auctioneers/estate

1. Note that average household size is calculated as the total number of persons in private households as a proportion of the total number of private households.

agents and consultation with local authority officials. The assessment is provided in Appendix A. A number of key points from this analysis have been identified:

- Demand for residential property is largely indigenous to the County
- From research carried out for the National Spatial Strategy up to 50% of new housing in the County has been one-off housing built for long-term owner occupation in unzoned land (and therefore does not fall under the remit of the Housing Strategy)
- Kilkenny has not experienced the same demand for housing from commuters travelling to Dublin, unlike in neighbouring County Carlow, and the proportion of commuters travelling from Kilkenny to Waterford is negligible
- There is considerable potential for the continued attraction of high-value-added service companies into the County over the next five years. (This is further evidenced by recent investments from Bank of Ireland, VHI, Deutsche International [Ireland] Ltd. and InFoScore in and around Kilkenny City).

4.12 The assessment indicated that demand for housing outside Kilkenny City has remained relatively stable over the period 1996-2000. This would not include however the building of 'one-off' houses outside zoned areas, such as those associated with the smaller villages in the County as these would not pass through an auctioneer/estate agent.

4.13 Demand for housing in Kilkenny City has been strong over the 1996-2000 period, largely as a result of the City being the main centre of employment within the County.

Population Estimates and Forecasts

4.14 Based on the sets of analysis above, while the population growth rate will not be quite as high in 2001-2006 as in 1996-2000, it is likely that the reduced average household size in tandem with increased inward migration on the back of inward investment to the County will maintain relatively high demand for new housing provision.

4.15 It is therefore assumed that the number of houses built across the County in 2001-6 will be the same as in 1996-2000. This equates to 667 p.a. (*Annual Housing Statistics Bulletin 2000*) It is assumed that each house completion is equivalent to one household formation.

Table 4.3 : Forecast Household Formations in Kilkenny, 2001-2006

2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
667	667	667	667	667	667

- 4.16 In order to translate this projected demand for new housing into a projected population increase, we have used the simple formula outlined in the *Model Housing Strategy* set out below:

$$\text{Population} = (\text{Average Household Size}) \times (\text{Number of Households})$$

- 4.17 The total number of households in Kilkenny in 2001 is estimated as the number of households in Kilkenny in 1996 (from the 1996 Census of Population) plus the total number of new households formed in Kilkenny between the years 1996 and 2000 (*Annual Housing Statistics Bulletin 2000*).
- 4.18 Taking account of anticipated future trends, the assumption is made that the average private household size in County Kilkenny is set to continue to fall by 0.04 persons per annum over the period 1996-2006, (the same rate of decline observed over the 1991-96 period, as per the assumptions made in the *Model Housing Strategy*). This implies that average household size in Kilkenny should fall to 3.06 in 2001 and to 2.86 in 2006.
- 4.19 Taking these facts into consideration the above formula estimates and projects the population increase in County Kilkenny as follows :

Table 4.4 : Population and Household Estimates and Forecasts for Kilkenny

	1996	2001	2006
Population	75,336	80,919	85,168
Households	23,109	26,444	29,779
Average Household Size	3.26	3.06	2.86
% Change on Previous Period	2.3%	7.4%	5.3%

- 4.20 Consultation with officers identified that most of the increase in the population is expected to be around Kilkenny City and the Environs and Waterford Environs while the towns of Thomastown and Callan should all see some increase.

DISPOSABLE INCOME IN KILKENNY

- 4.21 Table 4.5 presents baseline estimates for average annual disposable household income and the number of households within each income group for the County in 1995. Disposable income is defined in the *Model Housing Strategy* as gross income less income tax and pay related social insurance.
- 4.22 We have considered the distribution of annual disposable income across ‘income brackets’ that equate to the following **weekly** 1994/95 disposable income ranges used in the *Model Housing Strategy*. We then took *CSO 1994/5 Household Budget Survey* figures for the number of households which fall into each of these brackets and what their average annual disposable income was.

Table 4.5 : National Disposable Income Distributions 1994/95

Disposable Income Bracket	Weekly Disposable Income Range	Percentage of Households	Average Annual Disposable Income
Lowest bracket	Less than £77.92	11.6%	£3,263
2 nd lowest bracket	£77.92 - £121.60	10.5%	£5,109
3 rd lowest bracket	£121.60 - £154.70	9.5%	£6,960
4 th lowest bracket	£154.70 - £206.39	9.6%	£9,033
5 th lowest bracket	£206.39 - £268.76	9.7%	£11,188
6 th lowest bracket	£268.76 - £340.89	9.6%	£13,730
7 th lowest bracket	£340.89 - £425.89	9.8%	£16,723
8 th lowest bracket	£425.89 - £524.18	9.6%	£19,989
9 th lowest bracket	£524.18 - £698.69	9.8%	£24,436
Highest bracket	More than £698.69	10.3%	£36,156

- 4.23 The CSO *national* disposable income figures are then adjusted using County ‘deflators’ which represent the **actual** difference in disposable income relative to the national average at that time (taken from the CSO Household Incomes – Regions and Counties). This process is detailed for Kilkenny in Table 4.6 :

Table 4.6 : Estimated Distribution of Household Disposable Income in County Kilkenny, 1994/5

Income Range	Average Annual Disposable Household Income - National (£)	Kilkenny Deflator	Average Annual Disposable Household Income – Kilkenny (£)	% of All Households in Category
Lowest bracket	3,263	89.3%	2,914	11.6%
2 nd lowest bracket	5,109	89.3%	4,562	10.5%
3 rd lowest bracket	6,960	89.3%	6,215	9.5%
4 th lowest bracket	9,033	89.3%	8,066	9.6%
5 th lowest bracket	11,188	89.3%	9,991	9.7%
6 th lowest bracket	13,730	89.3%	12,261	9.6%
7 th lowest bracket	16,723	89.3%	14,934	9.8%
8 th lowest bracket	19,989	89.3%	17,850	9.6%
9 th lowest bracket	24,436	89.3%	21,821	9.8%
Highest bracket	36,156	89.3%	32,287	10.3%

4.24 Although this is the approach to estimating disposable income distribution used in the *Model Housing Strategy*, it must be highlighted that the calculations assume that both the income distributions and deflator value will remain constant from 1994 through to 2006. This is unlikely to be the case but there are no reputable statistics which can enable refinement.

4.25 In order to account for inflation we have included estimates and projections on **national** income growth rate from the following sources :

- 1996-98 - CSO National Income and Expenditure Accounts (**actual**)
- 1999-02 - ESRI's March 2001 Quarterly Economic Commentary
- 2002-06 - DTZ Piedad Consulting assume that the income growth rate will continue be that originally projected in the ESRI's Medium Term Review used in the *Model Housing Strategy*)

- 4.26 The resultant projected national average household disposable income growth rates are detailed below in Table 4.7:

Table 4.7 : Estimated and Projected National Household Disposable Income Growth 1996-2006

1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
8.2%	11.2%	12.3%	10.3%	13.2%	13.1%	10.5%	7.8%	7.7%	8.0%	7.2%

- 4.27 As in the *Model Housing Strategy*, our calculations assume that these national growth figures apply directly to Kilkenny over the 1996-2006 period. Table 4.8 applies these growth figures to estimated 1995 Kilkenny disposable income figures.

Table 4.8 : Average Annual Household Income Distribution for Kilkenny, 1995-2006

Average Annual Disposable Household Income (Kilkenny)	Average Annual Household Disposable Income 1996 - 2006 (IR£)											
	Year	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Growth	0%	8.2%	11.2%	12.3%	10.3%	13.2%	13.1%	10.5%	7.8%	7.7%	8.0%	7.2%
Lowest bracket	2,914	3,153	3,506	3,937	4,343	4,916	5,560	6,144	6,623	7,133	7,703	8,258
2 nd lowest bracket	4,562	4,936	5,489	6,165	6,799	7,697	8,705	9,619	10,370	11,168	12,062	12,930
3 rd lowest bracket	6,215	6,725	7,478	8,398	9,263	10,486	11,859	13,104	14,127	15,214	16,432	17,615
4 th lowest bracket	8,066	8,728	9,705	10,899	12,022	13,609	15,391	17,008	18,334	19,746	21,326	22,861
5 th lowest bracket	9,991	10,810	12,021	13,499	14,890	16,855	19,063	21,065	22,708	24,457	26,413	28,315
6 th lowest bracket	12,261	13,266	14,752	16,567	18,273	20,685	23,395	25,851	27,868	30,013	32,414	34,748
7 th lowest bracket	14,934	16,158	17,968	20,178	22,256	25,194	28,495	31,486	33,942	36,556	39,480	42,323
8 th lowest bracket	17,850	19,314	21,477	24,119	26,603	30,115	34,060	37,636	40,571	43,695	47,191	50,589
9 th lowest bracket	21,821	23,611	26,255	29,484	32,521	36,814	41,637	46,009	49,597	53,416	57,690	61,843
Highest bracket	32,287	34,935	38,848	43,626	48,119	54,471	61,607	68,075	73,385	79,036	85,359	91,505

HOUSE PRICES

4.28 In line with the *Model Housing Strategy* we have used the DoELG’s estimated housing stock value distribution figures for Kilkenny County 2000 as tabulated below (i.e. in 2000 the DoELG estimated that 28% of **existing** houses in Kilkenny were valued at less than £80K). However, it should be noted that these figures:

- Are an average of all stock, from the extremely rural to city centre
- Include houses that were not necessarily habitable and would require significant renovation if they were to be inhabited.

Table 4.9 : DoELG Estimated 2000 Housing Stock Value Distribution for Kilkenny

Less than £80,000	£80,000 to £100,000	£100,000 to £120,000	£120,000 to £140,000	£140,000 to £160,000	£160,000 to £180,000	£180,000 to £225,000	£225,000 to £300,000	Greater than £300,000
28.0%	30.9%	16.9%	10.8%	5.3%	2.8%	3.3%	1.1%	0.9%

4.29 However, DoELG Circular HS4/00 states that “*planning authorities should construct their own forecasts of house price trends in the light of experience and local circumstances*”. Having regard to this and consultations with local property auctioneers/estate agents and Council/Corporation officers, it has been necessary to inflate the DoELG existing housing stock value brackets by 8%, bringing them to a more realistic level for *new housing prices* in Kilkenny 2000. The impacts of this inflation are tabulated below. It should be noted that these figures take an average price across all housing in zoned areas, which includes one bedroom apartments.

Table 4.10 : Estimated 2000 New House Price Distribution for Kilkenny

Less than £86,400	£86,400 to £108,000	£108,000 to £129,600	£129,600 to £151,200	£151,200 to £172,800	£172,800 to £194,400	£194,400 to £243,000	£243,000 to £324,000	Greater than £324,000
28.0%	30.9%	16.9%	10.8%	5.3%	2.8%	3.3%	1.1%	0.9%

4.30 In line with the *Model Housing Strategy*, it is assumed that the percentage distribution of new houses across the total price range will remain constant between 2000-2006. However, it will be necessary to take house price inflation into consideration over the period (i.e. while the % distribution remains the same the value of the price brackets will increase).

4.31 Over the coming years the growth in house prices in the City and Environs is likely to slow as activity in the housing market eventually levels off in line with national trends

and projections (*The Housing Market in Ireland : An Economic Evaluation of Trends and Proposals 2001-05*). Consultations with local auctioneers/estate agents and officers indicated that across the rest of the County, average house prices are expected to remain steady. Overall, the growth in average house prices for Kilkenny is expected to remain relatively stable over the coming years in comparison to the strong growth experienced in the latter half of the 1990s. For these reasons, it is assumed that house price inflation will approximately follow trends in the rate of inflation. This is forecast to gradually fall from 5% in 2001 to 2.5% in 2006.

Table 4.11 : Estimated Kilkenny House Price Inflation Rates 2001-06

2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
5%	4%	3.5%	3%	2.5%	2.5%

- 4.32 It is assumed that house prices within each price bracket all increase at the same rate and that the distribution of new houses built across the different price bands remains unchanged for the period 2001-2006. This fall in inflation is broadly in line with forecasts from the ESRI.
- 4.33 If these house price inflation figures are applied to the house price distributions from Table 4.10 and the 667 p.a. new houses built are distributed over the price brackets, we can estimate how many houses will be built in each year and in what price range. This is illustrated below in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12 : Number of New Houses Forecast to be Built Within Price Bracket 2001-06

2001	Less than £90,720	£90,720 to £113,400	£113,400 to £136,080	£136,080 to £158,760	£158,760 to £181,440	£181,440 to £204,120	£204,120 to £255,150	£255,150 to £340,200	Greater than £340,200	Total
	187	207	113	73	33	20	20	7	7	667
2002	Less than £94,349	£94,349 to £117,936	£117,936 to £141,523	£141,523 to £165,110	£165,110 to £188,698	£188,698 to £212,285	£212,285 to 265,356	£265,356 to £353,808	Greater than £353,808	
	187	207	113	73	33	20	20	7	7	667
2003	Less than £97,651	£97,651 to £122,064	£122,064 to £146,477	£146,477 to £170,889	£170,889 to £195,302	£195,302 to £219,715	£219,715 to £274,643	£274,643 to £366,191	Greater than £366,191	
	187	207	113	73	33	20	20	7	7	667
2004	Less than £100,581	£100,581 to £125,726	£125,726 to £150,871	£150,871 to £176,016	£176,016 to £201,161	£201,161 to £226,306	£226,306 to £282,883	£282,883 to £377,177	Greater than £377,177	
	187	207	113	73	33	20	20	7	7	667
2005	Less than £103,095	£103,095 to £128,869	£128,869 to £154,643	£154,643 to £180,416	£180,416 to £206,190	£206,190 to £231,964	£231,964 to £289,955	£289,955 to £386,606	Greater than £386,606	
	187	207	113	73	33	20	20	7	7	667
2006	Less than £105,672	£105,672 to £132,091	£132,091 to £158,509	£158,509 to £184,927	£184,927 to £211,345	£211,345 to £237,763	£237,763 to £297,204	£297,204 to £396,272	Greater than £396,272	
	187	207	113	73	33	20	20	7	7	667

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

4.34 The *Model Housing Strategy* sets out that the following mortgage assumptions should be made in housing strategies :

- Each household will obtain a mortgage equal to 90% of the house value
- Each mortgage will be repaid over a 25 year period
- Mortgage interest will be at 6% APR for the whole period
- The maximum repayment that a household can afford is 35% of their monthly disposable income.

4.35 Using the data from Table 4.8 on disposable household income and the annuity formula below (from the *Model Housing Strategy*), it is possible to estimate the maximum affordable house price for each disposable income bracket. This is presented in Table 4.13 for the years 2001-2006. As in the *Model Housing Strategy*, this assumes that the distribution of households within each income group follows that observed for the State and remains unchanged over the period 1995-2006.

$$PV = Pt \left[\frac{1 - (1 + i)^{-n}}{i} \right]$$

PV = total loan size

Pt = monthly repayment

i = monthly interest rate

n = duration of loan in months

**Table 4.13 : Maximum Affordable House Prices Across Kilkenny
Disposable Income Distribution (IR£)**

Kilkenny Disposable Income Distribution	2001 (£)	2002 (£)	2003 (£)	2004 (£)	2005 (£)	2006 (£)
Lowest bracket	27,900	30,900	33,300	35,800	38,700	41,500
2 nd lowest bracket	43,700	48,300	52,100	56,100	60,600	65,000
3 rd lowest bracket	59,600	65,900	71,000	76,500	82,600	88,500
4 th lowest bracket	77,400	85,500	92,200	99,300	107,200	114,900
5 th lowest bracket	95,800	105,900	114,200	123,000	132,800	142,400
6 th lowest bracket	117,600	130,000	140,100	150,900	163,000	174,700
7 th lowest bracket	143,300	158,300	170,700	183,800	198,500	212,800
8 th lowest bracket	171,300	189,300	204,000	219,700	237,300	254,400
9 th lowest bracket	209,400	231,400	249,400	268,600	290,100	311,000
Highest bracket	309,800	342,400	369,100	397,500	429,300	460,200

Affordability Analysis

- 4.36 Using the data in Tables 4.6 and 4.13, it is possible to estimate how many new households formed over the 2001-06 period in Kilkenny will fall into each disposable income bracket, and therefore what their maximum affordable house price will be. This is set out in Table 4.14.

- 4.37 Using the data in Tables 4.12 and 4.14, the requirement for housing in each disposable income bracket by maximum affordable price can be compared to the projected distribution of new houses across price ranges. According to Table 4.14, in 2001 77 new households will have a maximum affordable price of £27,900 70 will be able to afford £43,700, 63 will be able to afford £59,600, 64 will be able to afford £77,400 and 65 will be able to afford £95,800.
- 4.38 As in the *Model Housing Strategy* it is assumed that the cheapest available house price in 2001 (£90,720) is equal to the top of the lowest price bracket (see Table 4.12).
- 4.39 Assuming that there is an even distribution of new households across the income range, this would suggest a total of 321 new households have an upper affordability threshold of £90,720². Given that Table 4.12 shows that only an estimated 187 new housing units will be built with a price of up to £90,720, this implies there will be of the order of 134 remaining households in the social and affordable housing category. This represents 20.1% of the total number of new houses expected to be built during 2001.
- 4.40 Repeating this exercise for the remaining years up until 2006, Table 4.15 presents the estimated demand for social and affordable housing in Kilkenny over the period of the strategy.

2. In other words, assuming the incremental number of households is spread equally across the house price range. The figure of 321 is calculated as follows:

In 2001, 339 households (77+70+63+64+65) are likely to have a maximum affordable price lower than £95,800. To calculate the number of households for whom £90,720 is the maximum affordable house price, divide 339 by 95,800 and multiply the answer by 90,720, yielding 321.

Table 4.15 : Social and Affordable Housing Requirements in Kilkenny

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
No. of households that can only afford houses in the lowest price bracket	321	302	290	277	264	252	1706
No. houses currently projected to be built in the lowest price bracket by the private sector .	187	187	187	187	187	187	1122
No. households that will require the provision of additional social and affordable houses	134	115	103	90	77	65	584
Percentage of total (667)	20.1%	17.2%	15.4%	13.5%	11.5%	9.7%	14.6%

Existing Demand

- 4.41 The main source of information on existing households who are currently in housing need is the local authority social housing register. Access to social housing is largely determined by registration on the local authority waiting list – particularly given that housing associations have to take 75% of applicants from the local authority waiting list. It is therefore a good proxy for actual demand.
- 4.42 At the time of the preparation of the Housing Strategy there were 344 applicants for local authority housing on the Corporation's Housing Waiting List and 819 applicants on the County Council's list. Table 4.16 of the strategy provides a breakdown of the housing requirements of those currently on the housing waiting list in Kilkenny.

Table 4.16 : Housing Waiting List in Kilkenny

	Corporation	County Council	Total
Single applicants (excluding elderly)	103	225	356
Couples without children (excluding elderly)	28		
Couples with 1 child	27	79	106
Couples with 2 children	21	50	71
Couples with 3 or more children	10	67	77
Lone parent with 1 child	78	207	285
Lone parent with 2 children	25	69	94
Lone parent with 3 or more children	21	46	67
Elderly applicants (single and couples)	31	76	107
Total	344	819	1,163

- 4.43 Small households make up a significant proportion of applicants on the housing list. Single persons, couples without children and elderly persons account for approximately 40% of all applicants on the lists. Lone parents constitute 38% of the waiting list, the largest proportion being lone parents with one child (25% of the total housing list).
- 4.44 Some applicants on the housing waiting list are accommodated in good private rented dwellings and are on the list in order to qualify for rent supplement allowance. Other applicants are on the list in order to qualify for tenancy transfer, entering the shared ownership scheme or obtaining affordable housing. From the current list of 1163 it would reasonably be expected that **the local authorities and voluntary sector would be required to house between 450 and 500 applicants over the duration of the plan** depending on the economic outlook. (A slow down in economic activity would lead to a higher demand.)

5. ESTIMATING HOUSING SUPPLY

BACKGROUND

5.1 This section of the housing strategy deals with those factors that influence housing supply and addresses the planning and management of the physical environment in County Kilkenny. An important consideration in the equation is the emphasis on the application of principles of sustainable development within the County.

5.2 In recent years, Central Government policies on sustainable Government have been aimed at reducing the demand for travel and the promotion of higher residential densities. The underlying principles seek to:

- Reduce the need for the development of “greenfield” sites
- Limit urban sprawl and ribbon development
- Ensure more economic use of existing infrastructure
- Enhance access to existing services and facilities
- Create more sustainable commuting patterns.

5.3 These principles have been set out in the policy documents Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland, and Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Residential Density.

5.4 The first document sets out national policy in respect of encouraging more sustainable development by seeking to avoid excessive suburbanisation and through the promotion of higher residential densities in appropriate locations in harmony with an improved public transport network and system. It was published by the DoELG in 1997. This was followed in 1999 by the Department’s guidelines on residential density. Weight has been added to these guidelines by the Planning and Development Act 2000. The Act requires Planning Authorities to have regard to such guidelines. As highlighted in section 2, they stress that firm emphasis must be placed by Planning Authorities on the importance of qualitative standards in relation to design and layout in order to ensure the highest quality of residential development is achieved.

5.5 The population and household scenarios presented in Section 4 of this strategy have been used as a basis for determining the likely future scale and distribution of development in County Kilkenny. The drafting of this housing strategy, and the land-use planning system it represents, has sought to support the national objectives of sustainable development in a number of ways at County level through:

- Promotion of higher residential densities especially in proximity to town centres, public transport nodes and access points
- Encouragement of mixed use developments

- Ensuring a clear demarcation between urban and rural land-use
- Promotion of the redevelopment of brownfield sites
- Protection and enhancement of the natural environment
- Location of new developments in an environmentally sustainable and sensitive manner.

5.6 The decreasing household size and increases in development pressure in the County require a more efficient and sustainable use of serviced land. This requires an increase in the density of residential developments throughout the County especially close to public transport routes and on serviced land.

INFLUENCING FACTORS

5.7 The influencing factors on housing land supply are identified below and examined in the paragraphs that follow:

- Development plans
- Development pressures
- Infrastructure; and
- Development capacity

Development Plans

5.8 At present, as has been set out in Section 3, there are three draft plans covering County Kilkenny, the City and its Environs and the Waterford Environs. They are:

- Draft County Development Plan 2000
- Draft Kilkenny City and Environs Plan 2000
- Draft Action Area Plan for the Waterford Environs Area 2000

5.9 Section 9 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, requires Planning Authorities to make a development plan every six years. The housing strategy follows the development plan process and will require to be incorporated as a variation to the plans by members of both local authorities for the administrative areas they cover.

Existing Zoned Land

5.10 Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 only applies to zoned land. At present in the draft plans, there are six areas in the County that are covered by land-use zoning plans and therefore contain residential zonings. The areas include Kilkenny City and Environs, Waterford Environs and the four Scheduled Towns of

Castlecomer, Callan, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown. Table 5.1 summarises the current position in relation to residential zoned lands.

Table 5.1 : Undeveloped Residential Zoned Lands

Development Plan	Residential Zoned Land
Draft County Kilkenny Development Plan 2000	206 ha (509 ac)
Draft Kilkenny City and Environs Plan 2000	195 ha (482 ac)
Draft Action Area Plan for the Waterford Environs Area	163 ha (403 ac)
Total	564 ha (1394 ac)

Draft County Development Plan 2000

5.11 County Kilkenny in 1996 had a total population of 75,336 persons. Of that, 45.4% were classified as living within towns. The largest urban area Kilkenny City & Environs contained 18,696 persons or 54.6 % of the urban population. The remainder of the urban population is distributed among the four Scheduled Towns, the Environs of New Ross and Waterford City and the 17 villages. With the exception of Kilkenny City, all towns within the County have less than 2,000 persons. It is predominantly a rural County, influenced by the presence of some large towns close to the County boundary, such as Waterford City, New Ross and Carrick-on-Suir.

512 Outside of Kilkenny City and Environs, the four scheduled towns of Callan Castlecomer Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown, the village of Kilmacow and the suburbs of Waterford City there are no areas zoned for residential development. A number of settlements outside these areas have been identified as having potential to accommodate further development. A programme has been prepared for the preparation of local area plans for these settlements as a matter of priority following the adoption of the Housing Strategy in order to ensure that development in these areas comes within the compass of the Housing Strategy. These areas are listed below in Section 5.16.

513 Where there is a deficiency in the existing infrastructural services for the village concerned it will be the policy of the Council to use its powers under the Sanitary Services Small Schemes Programme and Group Sewerage Schemes Programme in conjunction with local development groups and/or private individuals/developers to facilitate the development of waste water treatment facilities and water supplies. It will be the policy of the Council not to encourage private treatment works within villages where there are existing municipal treatment plants.

Draft Kilkenny City and Environs Plan 2000

5.14 The relative compactness of the City and the clear distinction which generally remains between the urban and rural areas are important to the well being of the inhabitants of

the City and its Environs in terms of the quality of life which this affords. A decline in the population over recent decades has been halted and it is expected that this will show an increase when the next Census is undertaken. The residential land zonings reflect that this trend will continue over the timescale of the housing strategy.

Draft Action Area Plan for the Waterford Environs Area 2000

- 5.15 The settlement structure of the Waterford Environs area comprises the Waterford Suburbs, Kilmacow and the village of Slieverue. The draft plan provides for the strategic guidance of the physical development of the area. It provides for the significant expansion of the Waterford suburbs that include the areas of Rockshire, Abbeylands, Christendom and Rathculliheen along with limited expansion of Slieverue and Kilmacow villages. This is consistent with National Development Plan objectives for Waterford as a gateway and regional capital.

Development Pressure

- 5.16 Pressure is being experienced in areas where land has not been zoned for development, thereby lying outside the area covered by the aforementioned development plans. These areas do not come under Part V of the Act but for completeness require to be identified. The pressure has occurred where there is a certain level of social and infrastructural services available. These areas include :

- Urlingford
- Ballyragget
- Bennettsbridge
- Gowran
- Moneenroe
- Clogh-Chatsworth
- Inistioge
- Fiddown
- Slieverue
- Goresbridge
- Glenmore
- Balyhale
- Paulstown
- Mooncoin
- Freshford
- Stoneyford
- Knocktopher
- Kells

- 5.17 The County Council's policy in relation to these villages is to allow development on a limited basis within the context of a development study for each village. There is also development pressure within the County for one-off housing and this is anticipated to continue throughout the 2001-06 period. It is a component in meeting housing need and choice and is an important part of the affordable housing equation.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- 5.18 One of the primary statutory requirements of a housing strategy is to ensure that there will be an adequate supply of zoned and serviced land within the County to meet housing need. Below we set out the status and ability of transportation, sanitary services, amenities and socio-economic infrastructure in the County to meet this need. As detailed in Table 5.1, the area of residential zoned lands in the County over the

period 2001-06 is 564 ha (1394.76 ac). The infrastructure status of this land is summarised in Table 5.2 below. This has the capacity for some 9,462 units (using the *Model Housing Strategy* figure of 24.71 housing units per hectare). Zoned lands currently being serviced will add further capacity for almost 2,588 housing units by June 2002 and between 2002 and 2006 an additional 1,900 units. In summary, County Kilkenny has the capacity to accommodate some 13,951 additional units on zoned land under Part V of the Act.

Table 5.2 : Service Status of Zoned Land in County Kilkenny

(a) Total zoned undeveloped land that is presently serviced and ready for residential development at 30 June 2001 (includes sites under construction and not yet completed).	382.99 ha
(b) Total zoned undeveloped land that is proposed for servicing between July 2001 and June 2002.	104.75 ha
(c) Total zoned undeveloped land that is proposed for servicing between July 2002 and June 2006.	76.92 ha

- 5.19 As set out in Section 4, based on previous trends, County Kilkenny will require to provide an additional 4,002 new residential units over the period from 2001 to 2006 - an average of a total of 667p.a. Based on land zoned in the development and action plans, there is zoned land that can accommodate the projected 2001-2006 requirement almost three and a half times over. It therefore meets the requirement of providing capacity beyond the timescale of current development plans as set out in the guidelines.

Sanitary Services

- 5.20 The development of sanitary service facilities is fundamental to the creation of larger settlements as well as being essential for sustaining employment opportunities, such as tourism and commercial and industrial activities. The provision of public drainage and water supply facilities in and adjacent to settlements is also essential. Table 5.3 sets out the position statement on these services for the County:

Table 5.3 : The Provision of Sanitary Services in County Kilkenny		
Location	Area Zoned for Housing	Sanitary Services
Kilkenny City & Environs	482.37 acres (195.29ha)	No water or sewerage constraints to development on the zoned land identified in the draft plan.
Waterford City & Environs.	402.97 acres (162.35 ha)	No infrastructural constraints on development.
Castlecomer	62.98 acres (25.35 ha)	No infrastructural constraints to development.
Callan	83.70 acres (34.55 ha)	Sewerage constraint.
Graiguenamanagh	49.34 acres (19.74 ha)	New sewerage scheme under construction. Completion date 2002. The lack of an adequate sewer is constraining development.
Thomastown	146.4 acres (59.82 ha)	New sewerage scheme to commence 2001 for completion in 2002. The lack of an adequate sewer is constraining development.
Kilmacow	105 acres (42.37 a)	No sewerage scheme in village. Scheme awaiting approval.
New Ross Environs	62 acres (25.01ha)	Serviced by sewers in New Ross U.D.C. New scheme under construction.
Total	1394.76 acres (564.48ha)	

Transportation

- 5.21 Kilkenny City is the major focus of the County, with major arteries connecting the City with other population centres. It has a key nodal position astride a number of important transportation routes including Dublin to Cork, Dublin to Waterford and Limerick to Rosslare. A total of five national primary routes and three national secondary routes traverse the County. A major investment programme is proposed for these routes within the County in the coming years. The completion of Stage 2 of the Kilkenny City Eastern bypass connecting the Carlow Road to the Castlecomer Road is priority. The development strategy for national roads will include the development by 2007 of the following routes in their entirety to motorway/high quality dual carriageway standard - Cork to Dublin N8 and Waterford to Dublin N9. Completion of these will be the mechanisms for linking the County into the national network. Given the timescale for this investment, they are beyond that of the housing strategy. The potential is however well recognised and this is reflected in the projected housing completions over the period of the housing strategy.
- 5.22 The County is crossed by four railway lines, with a spur from Kilkenny City to connect to the Dublin-Waterford line at Lavitstown. The service between Dublin and

Waterford is infrequent and at present does not meet modern Intercity standards. National investment in the network will enhance the attraction and accessibility of the County, particularly the City itself. Together with the road improvements in the pipeline, the County has become increasingly attractive for both decentralisation of companies from Dublin and now inward investment. These factors have been taken into account in our projections.

Social and Economic

- 5.23 Kilkenny City provides the most concentrated focus for education within the county with two third-level 'outreach' campuses, ten primary schools and six secondary schools. There are primary and second level schools located within the Scheduled Towns of Castlecomer, Callan, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown. Employment levels have increased in the County in recent years. St. Lukes hospital is located in Kilkenny City with hospital facilities also located in Thomastown and Castlecomer.
- 5.24 Kilkenny City is a thriving creative cultural and artistic city that is renowned for its craft industry. It is also a major tourist destination founded not only on its general attraction and ambience but also its success in hosting festivals and events. As such, it has attracted and sustained a wide variety of retail outlets ranging from well-known brand multiples to specialist antique and craft shops. It is a popular entertainment destination with numerous pubs, restaurants, cafes and cinema. These factors plus its attraction for relocations/inward investment add to local demand across all sectors of the market.

Amenity, Heritage and Recreation

- 5.25 There are a number of important natural resources in Kilkenny that cater for the recreational requirements of the County's population and attract great numbers into the City and County. These include Special Areas of Conservation, National Heritage Areas, and Areas of High Amenity. Many of these sites are located along the river valleys of the Nore Barrow, Suir and Kings rivers. Both the City and the County have an archaeological and architectural heritage of exceptional richness.
- 5.26 The pressure for residential development and especially one-off housing and small developments in and around the County has increased in recent years. The objective has been to control one off housing through appropriate policies and where development is allowed to take place to ensure that it is in keeping with its setting and does not cause a visual intrusion.

Development Capacity

5.27 Development capacity in County Kilkenny to accommodate future housing growth is dependent on a range of factors. The most important are:

- The amount of serviced and unserviced residential zoned land
- The amount of other land suitable for development
- Constraints and limits in the provision of water supply and drainage
- Constraints and limits in the provision of other physical and social infrastructure
- Access, including public transport
- Topographical constraints
- Areas of high amenity or nature conservation value.

5.28 An estimate of the capacity of lands currently zoned for residential use in Kilkenny is presented in Table 5.4. It is evident that existing zoned lands can accommodate the anticipated growth in household numbers in the period up to 2006 and well beyond. It is also assumed that additional residential development will be accommodated through infill development in existing residential areas as well as on land that is zoned for a mix of uses including residential.

Table 5.4 : Estimated Capacity of Residentially Zoned Land	
Location	Capacity in Housing Units
Kilkenny City and Environs	4,825
Waterford City and Environs	4,012
Castlecomer	626
Callan	854
Graiguenamanagh	488
Thomastown	1,478
Kilmacow	1,047
New Ross Environs	618
Total	13,948

Note 1: *Capacity of housing units has been calculated at 24.71 houses to the hectare.*

Note 2: *Capacity of housing units has excluded areas of land zoned for mixed uses.*

5.29 The table clearly identifies that there is considerable capacity in the County to absorb future housing requirements. Even at lower residential densities, and taking account of the fact that land zoned for mixed use has not been included, existing zoned land retains sufficient capacity to cater for projected housing needs. Based on current trends, this is sufficient for the next two housing strategies. As such, it is in accordance with the Housing Supply Guidelines set by the DoELG. This is particularly so in Kilkenny and Waterford City where almost 9,000 housing units are zoned. The development of all these lands would result in a population increase of approximately 26,000 in the Kilkenny City and Waterford City areas.

- 5.30 These estimates for the capacity of zoned land do not however, allow for lands that may not be released for development in the period between 2000 and 2006, or which might not be made serviceable on schedule and therefore fall outside the remit of the housing strategy.
- 5.31 Based on the estimate number of additional houses over the period of 2001 to 2006 and allowing for 50% of these to be constructed on unzoned land there is a need to accommodate 2001 houses on zoned land within the plan period. At an average density of 10 houses per acre this gives a requirement of 81 ha or 200 acres over the period of the plan.
- 5.32 The settlement strategy proposed for the County is one that sees the accommodation of the majority of the expanded population within the County being catered for in Kilkenny City and its Environs and in the Environs of Waterford City. The remainder of the population increase will be catered for in the designated towns and villages and the smaller settlements within the County. And other rural areas. In respect of the latter, this will be on unzoned lands that do not fall under Part V of the Act. These will be predominantly on sites of less than 0.2 hectares or for development of less than four units. In Counties of the nature of Kilkenny, such development on unzoned land will be an important component in meeting housing need and choice. This has implications in respect of what needs to be provided within the parameters of the guidelines.
- 5.33 It is recognised in the County development plan that there is a need to retain the rural population and permit the development of houses in rural areas in a manner that will not diminish County Kilkenny's high quality rural environment and distinctive character. Reflecting the above, the policies in relation to one off houses are outlined in detail in the County Development Plan.

SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLY

STATEMENT ON HOUSING POLICY IN THE COUNTY

- 5.34 Reflecting the overall aim of housing policy at national level, the primary objective of housing policy in County Kilkenny is 'to enable every household to have available an affordable dwelling of good quality, suited to its needs, in a good environment and insofar as possible at the tenure of its choice' (*Social Housing – The Way Ahead, 1995*). This objective is to be achieved by:
- Promoting home ownership and ensuring the provision of good quality residential developments in both the public and private sectors
 - Providing appropriate assistance for those in need especially vulnerable groups (travellers, elderly, disabled, ethnic minorities)

- Expanding the Council’s housing maintenance and upgrading programme and ensuring the provision of good quality housing stock
- Developing an integrated response, with the relevant agencies and voluntary bodies, to tackle homelessness and to combat poverty
- Encouraging and facilitating communities and tenants to manage, maintain and improve their housing environment.

5.35 A range of services, summarised in Table 5.5, are provided by Kilkenny County Council and Corporation to assist those who need financial assistance in finding accommodation.

Table 5.5: Housing Schemes in County Kilkenny

• Local Authority Housing	• Affordable Housing	• Mortgage Allowance
• Voluntary Housing (Capital Assistance Scheme and Rental Subsidy Scheme)	• Home Purchase Loans	• Low Cost Housing Sites
• Tenant Purchase	• Improvement Loans	• Improvement Works in Lieu of Local Authority Housing
• Shared Ownership	• Essential Repairs Grant	
	• Disabled Persons Grant	

5.36 National housing policy also plays an important role in attaining other central policy objectives in County Kilkenny, such as promoting social inclusion, reducing poverty, sustainable development and balanced regional development. This role has been further highlighted by the inclusion of a Housing Priority for the first time as part of the National Development Plan. A total investment of €9.1 billion (€1.986 billion in the Border, Midland and Western Region and €7.122 billion in the Southern and Eastern Region) is planned under this Priority to achieve the following objectives:

- To increase social and affordable housing output to meet rising need
- To enhance the role of the voluntary sector in meeting social housing need
- To facilitate access to affordable housing by lower income households
- To improve the physical condition of the social housing stock and of private housing occupied by certain categories of need, especially vulnerable groups
- To provide accommodation for groups with special needs.

5.37 It is expected that the target will provide an additional 52,500 dwellings across the country over the period 2000-2006. This represents 15% of the estimated housing requirement over this period.

PRIVATE RENTED ACCOMMODATION

5.38 In the context of social housing provision, the private rented sector plays an important role in the provision of accommodation for persons with lower incomes who are in receipt of rent subsidy and mortgage supplementation. The Commission that was established by the Government in 1999 to examine this sector concluded that :

“the private rented sector is a vibrant, thriving, well-managed and diverse sector which satisfactorily meets a range of housing needs, provides an adequate supply of secure, affordable, good quality accommodation and operates within a regulatory framework which protects the interests of tenants and landlords. The increasing diversity of housing requires a corresponding expansion of this sector. There is a growing range of housing needs which may be more appropriately met by the private rented sector than by home ownership (including aspirant home-owners, and as a tenure of choice for workers who wish to be able to move freely to avail of job opportunities). A refocusing of public policy is required so that the development of the private rented sector becomes more of a primary objective, rather than somewhat of a secondary goal of other objectives such as urban renewal. The need for incentives to encourage an increase in supply must be considered, as must measures to make the sector more attractive to prospective tenants, chiefly from the points of view of security of tenure and certainty about rent levels and reviews. Policies to drive expansion of the private rented sector should be devised on the basis that support for the sector should complement rather than conflict with support for other sectors such as home ownership and social housing”.

5.39 The Commission made recommendations on a range of issues affecting the private rented sector, including ways of dealing with disputes between tenants and landlords and measures to provide greater security of tenure for tenants etc. Following detailed and careful consideration of the Commission’s recommendations, the Government subsequently announced that it had given broad endorsement of the package of measures recommended by the Commission as the best way forward for the private rented sector and that they were proposing the following main reforms of the sector :

- The establishment of an ad-hoc basis by Autumn 2001 of a Private Residential Tenancies Board (PRTB) to deal primarily with disputes between landlords and tenants
- The enactment within a 2-year time frame of legislation to provide for :
 - Establishment of the PRTB on a statutory basis
 - Improved security of tenure from tenants and graduated notice to quit periods as recommended by the Commission
 - Rent levels to be no greater than the market rate and reviews no more frequent than once a year (unless there is a substantial change to the nature of the accommodation before the review date)
- The implementation of a range of the Commission’s recommendations in relation to tax and supply incentives, albeit on a limited basis in the case of

two of those recommendations. With regard to the accommodation for a review of the 9% stamp duty rate applicable to investment properties, the Government considered that it was too early to judge the impact of this measure, but that the strong duty regime and this measure will be kept under review in the light of changing circumstances in the housing market.

- 5.40 The Government believes that the package of reforms it has announced on foot of the Commission’s recommendations will, when they are brought to fruition, “go a long way towards achieving a better managed and more professional sector with improved security of tenure for tenants and greater certainty for both landlords and tenants”. The Government also believes that the measures approved by it “will be of real benefit to landlords and tenants and will result in a major step forward for the private rented sector”.
- 5.41 In County Kilkenny there are currently 225 landlords registered with the PRTB, and while there is thought to be a substantial number of unregistered landlords remaining in the County (perhaps the same number again), it is felt that the total number has dropped significantly as a direct result of national policy, particularly the 9% stamp duty regime. Relaxation of this requirement combined with increased inward investment in the County are set to significantly increase the size of this sector in the County over the 2001-2006 period.
- 5.42 In terms of student accommodation, the absence of any tertiary-level institutions in the County means that there is negligible requirement for this type of tenure. Although Waterford has an Institute of Technology, officers indicate that the number of students seeking private accommodation on the north side of the river is negligible.

PROFILE OF THE EXISTING STOCK OF SOCIAL HOUSING

- 5.43 Currently there are 1,653 dwellings owned by the local authorities in County Kilkenny. Of these, 30% are located in the Kilkenny City area, 16% are in Kilkenny City Environs and the remaining 54% are located around the County in housing estates or rural cottages. Table 5.6 shows that approximately 15% of the existing local authority housing stock was either constructed or acquired between 1996 and 2000.

Table 5.6 : Social Housing in County Kilkenny

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	Total
Local Authority						
Completions	30	26	36	33	38	163
Acquisitions	26	9	12	14	17	78
Sales	17	35	45	61	70	228
Net Increase	39	0	3	-14	-15	13
Voluntary/Co-operative						
Completions	34	16	20	39	27	136

- 5.44 A survey of the local authority housing stock in Kilkenny City shows that 263 (53%) are over 40 years old and that only 74 (15%) were built during the last decade. However, 82% of all local authority dwellings were classified as being in either good or very good condition, (i.e. were not in need of remedial work), but may have required the installation of central heating.
- 5.45 In the face of excessive demand for social housing in the 1980's, the County Council constructed around 150 'demountables' (or 'pre-fabs') as temporary dwellings, but in many instances these became substitutes for long-term accommodation. Generally housing single males, many units require major refurbishment and have poor sanitary conditions. In recent years the Council has provided more appropriate conventional housing for significant numbers of these occupants and the stock of demountable units has accordingly decreased to 87 from 118 in 1999. No further tenants are being allocated demountable units and Council policy is to replace the remaining ones with permanent one bedroom units over the 2001-06 period.
- 5.46 The Tenant Purchase Scheme, whereby a tenant of a local authority house can purchase the house they are renting from the local authority outright or through the Shared Ownership System, has been popular in the County and has further been assisted by the recent increase in the Share Ownership loan limit. As a result, sales of local authority houses have managed to keep pace with completions and acquisitions, as can also be observed in Table 5.6.

THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING SCHEME

- 5.47 Kilkenny County Council instigated this programme in 1998/99, by making seven acres of land available in the eastern environs of the City to provide 84 starter homes (2/3 bedrooms), in four phases to be made available between 2000 and 2003. As an example, the two-bedroom units were sold for £69,500, an estimated 18% cheaper than the market value. However, demand for these properties was slow, and it took a whole year of advertising to sell the 15 units in Phase 1. Of the 22 units in Phase 2, five remained unsold at the time of writing, and responsibility for promotion and sales had been transferred to a local auctioneer. The 30 houses of Phase 3 were under construction at the time of writing, with the remaining 17 to be built in 2002.
- 5.48 Consultations with Council officers and voluntary organisations indicated that the demand for affordable housing was set to decrease within the County, as a result of the expected slow down in house price inflation, combined with continuing strong growth in incomes. As a result of this, the Council plans to match the level of affordable housing provision in 2000-03 in the subsequent three year period, only if there is a clear demand.

THE VOLUNTARY/CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING SECTOR

- 5.49 In 1991 'A Plan for Social Housing' was introduced by the Government that envisaged a change in the role of local authorities from one of provider to one of facilitator.
- 5.50 Under the plan, the Rental Subsidy Scheme (RSS) was introduced to promote and provide financial assistance to the voluntary sector towards the provision of family-type accommodation, while the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) was updated and revised for the provision of housing for special categories of need. There has been concern expressed that the most acute needs had not always been catered for under the existing scheme. To address these concerns the CAS was substantially revised in 1992 and the local authority's role in ensuring that the right categories are accommodated was strengthened.
- 5.51 In County Kilkenny, input by the voluntary sector is actively promoted by the County Council and Kilkenny Corporation. Between 1995 and 2000, the Council has worked with the voluntary sector to provide 118 units of housing under the RSS and it is proposed that a further 98 be provided by the end of 2002 in Callan, Hebron Road, Paulstown and O'Loughlin Court. Similar levels of provision are projected for the 2003-06 period, and are likely to be within Kilkenny City and Waterford City and their Environs.
- 5.52 The voluntary sector has played a crucial role in the provision of family and special needs accommodation in the past and will continue to do so with the support of both local authorities. The County Council and Corporation accept that they must increase the level of partnership and co-operation with voluntary housing organisations in order to maximise the value added by this sector in the future housing market and to meet targets set in the National Development Plan.
- 5.53 Consultations with voluntary organisations indicated that they have the capacity to considerably increase the number of social and affordable houses planned across the County if the local authorities provide adequate advice and grant assistance, identify suitable lands and make lands available where possible i.e. agreements reached under Part V of the Act. Closer co-operation and planning between the two will become particularly important after 2002, when the local authority landbanks will have been exhausted. However, it will also be important for the local authorities to work in co-operation with voluntary organisations in order to strengthen their housing management capacity if the number of social and affordable housing programmes developed is to increase significantly and they are to have good and proper management.
- 5.54 In general, all projects funded under CAS are working well, and due to the invaluable inputs and efforts of the voluntary sector, housing is being provided in special categories of need which otherwise might not be catered for by the local authorities due to restrictions on housing starts imposed by the DoELG each year.

Disabled People

- 5.55 In recent years, Kilkenny County Council provided for the needs of disabled people by specifically adapting a small number of units in each new housing scheme for disabled people. The Council intends to continue this initiative by making provision for the needs of disabled people in all future housing new schemes. The Council must also deal with the needs of existing tenants who are disabled and whose accommodation is unsuitable to their needs. In some instances it is possible to adapt the existing accommodation to make it suitable for the needs of a disabled person by the installation of a walk-in-shower, ramps, grab rails, stair lift etc. under the Extensions Programme and Improvement Works in Lieu Scheme.
- 5.56 Over the last 15 years, the County Council has worked with the voluntary sector under the CAS to provide 144 new housing units for people with disabilities across the County (21 of which have been in 2001) and it is planned to provide a further 50 over the next two years. It is estimated that a further 50 units for people with disabilities will be built over the 2003-06 period. The local authority will also continue to provide assistance for disabled people through :
- Disabled Persons Grant Scheme
 - Essential Repair Grants Scheme
 - The Health Board's Special Aid for the Elderly Scheme
 - Extension Programme
 - Improvement Works in Lieu Scheme

Elderly People

- 5.57 Historically in the County, the housing needs of elderly people have been relatively well looked after by Parishes and community groups. The County Council also provides suitable housing for the elderly in co-operation with voluntary housing organisations under the CAS, amounting to 121 units since 1984. In addition the Council and voluntary sector plan to provide 54 housing units for the elderly in 2001/2 and estimate the provision of a further 40 units over the 2003-06 period. However, the Council policy is to assist all groups that wish to provide houses for the elderly under the CAS scheme, should the need exist.
- 5.58 The local authority CAS scheme allows for the provision of single accommodation units for the elderly mixed with family-type units, such as the scheme at Mullinavat where 6 elderly and 8 family units are contained within the same housing scheme. The local authority also assists the elderly with grant assistance to improve their current accommodation needs under the Essential Repairs Grant and 'Special Aid for the Elderly Scheme', which is administered by the South-Eastern Health Board.

- 5.59 There is a growing demand for ‘high support’ housing for the elderly in Kilkenny City and Environs along the same lines as that provided at St. Columbas, Thomastown (i.e. sheltered accommodation with internal medical facilities and support). The Council and Corporation will provide every assistance to the South Eastern Health Board to identify suitable locations and provide the necessary assistance and support to advance these projects.
- 5.60 There are three Parishes in Kilkenny City that currently provide housing facilities for special needs tenants:
- St Canice’s Parish has 20 houses for the elderly at Church Lane, which are managed by the parish. There are a further 4 houses on Granges Road.
 - St Patrick’s Parish has five houses for the elderly managed by the parish at College Green, 19 units at Switzer’s Asylum managed by the Church of Ireland and 13 units at Claddagh Court managed by the Irish Wheelchair Association.
 - St John’s Parish has 7 units of accommodation for the elderly at St John’s Court managed by the parish and the new Women’s Refuge Centre with six units located on the Dublin Road.

TRAVELLERS

- 5.61 “Traveller community” means the community of people who are commonly known as Travellers and who are identified (both by themselves and others) as people with a shared history, culture and traditions including, historically, a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland.
- 5.62 The Traveller Accommodation Act 1998 requires housing authorities in consultation with Travellers and the general public to prepare and adopt a 5 year programme to meet the existing and projected accommodation needs of Travellers in their area. The County Council accordingly established the Kilkenny Traveller Consultative Committee, which consists of nine members equally representing the elected members, officials and travelling community. The Committee had met on six occasions at the time of the preparation of this strategy. Its main functions are :
- To advise on the preparation and implementation of any accommodation programme for the functional area of Kilkenny City & County
 - To advise on the management of accommodation for Travellers
 - To provide a liaison between Travellers, members and officials.
- 5.63 The Traveller Consultative Committee subsequently developed the ‘Kilkenny County Council Accommodation Programme for Traveller Families 2000-2004’. The programme offers accommodation to those Traveller families who do not have the means or capacity to accommodate themselves and otherwise assists those families

who do have the means and/or capacity. The programme specifically targets indigenous newly married couples who would otherwise go on the roadside.

- 5.64 In 1999, there were 19 Traveller families requesting accommodation in County Kilkenny. The 2000-04 programme proposes the provision of 38 units of accommodation over the period. In addition, ten halting sites were developed up to 1999, and the 2000-04 programme plans to further develop these sites in consultation with the Traveller community, including the building of gates at the sites, provision of laundry facilities, public telephones and crèche facilities at associated community halls.

HOMELESS PEOPLE

- 5.65 The Kilkenny Homeless Forum was set-up in October 2000 as a response to homelessness in Kilkenny. It is an inter-agency forum including representation from the County Council, Corporation and South-Eastern Health Board addressing Government policy on social inclusion.
- 5.66 The Forum has developed an action plan for the 2001-2003 period which includes :
- The development and implementation of a comprehensive strategy to prevent homelessness
 - The provision of sufficient emergency short-stay and appropriate second stage accommodation
 - Counselling and support work to ensure re-integration towards independent living.
- 5.67 The action plan indicates that by the end of 2001, there will be around 75 units of accommodation for homeless families and individuals which cater for around 400 people each year. The accommodation is located in refuges and hostels around the County and targets various groups including survivors of domestic violence and homeless men. The Forum indicates that at least 50% of the homeless in Kilkenny are single men and are accommodated by the Good Shepherd Centre.
- 5.68 The Action Plan indicates that the Forum members will provide the following over the 2001-03 period :
- A night shelter facility ('wet room') providing basic accommodation and supervision, to eliminate the need for individuals to 'sleep rough'
 - 15 units/apartments for those individuals and families requiring second stage accommodation
 - A programme to develop existing literacy skills, general social skills and employment potential

- A settlement/outreach worker to monitor the progress of the homeless on engaging the services.

PLANS FOR THE PROVISION OF SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 5.69 Under the County Council's most recent multi-annual housing programme there are plans for the provision of 200 new local authority dwellings over the period 2001-2003. This includes 154 local authority starts in towns and villages around the County, the construction of 16 rural cottages and the acquisition of 30 existing dwellings.
- 5.70 The Corporation plans to provide a total of 54 new dwellings under its multi-annual housing programme for the period 2001-2003. This programme includes construction of 13 new local authority dwellings within the City, 25 new dwellings in the Western Environs of the City and the purchase of 16 dwellings.
- 5.71 Together these give a combined total of 254 new social housing units to be provided throughout the County between 2000 and 2003. The County Council and Corporation project similar housing provision in the 2003-06 period and this is detailed below in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7 : Programmed and Projected Social and Affordable Housing Provision

Social Housing Source	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
KCC Social Multi-annual Programme	80	60	60	40	34	29	303
Kilkenny Corp. Social Multi-annual Programme	18	18	18	12	10	8	84
Rental Subsidy Scheme	49	49	49	49	49	49	294
Capital Assistance Scheme	65	52	22	23	22	23	207
Total Social Housing Provision	212	179	149	150	149	150	888
KCC Affordable Housing Scheme	23	24	23	24	23	24	141
Total Social and Affordable Housing	235	203	172	174	172	174	929
Note : these figures exclude provision for Travellers and the homeless, who are provided for under separate schemes, the housing provision for which fall outside the remit of Part V of the Act.							

6 DETERMINATION OF REQUIREMENTS.

Demand or need

- 6.1 The elements of housing need or demand are made up of accumulated need and prospective need. Accumulated need is made up from the local authority social housing register and those with special needs. The prospective need is a percentage of households from the total number of new households requiring affordable or social housing based on projected income profiles.

Supply to meet demand or need

- 6.2 The supply to meet the demand is met by the local authority multi annual programme over the plan period, voluntary housing organisations projected completions the local authority's affordable housing scheme and supply from the private sector to meet open market demand.

Requirement for social and affordable housing.

- 6.3 The requirement for social and affordable housing stems from two main sources: existing households who cannot afford to meet their housing needs and new households who will be unable to afford either owner occupied or market rented accommodation.

Existing Social Housing Need

- 6.4 The main source of information on existing households who are currently in housing need is the local authority social housing register. Access to social housing is largely determined by registration on the local authority waiting list – particularly given that housing associations have to take 75% of applicants from the local authority waiting list. It is therefore a good proxy for actual demand.
- 6.5 Some applicants on the housing waiting list are accommodated in good private rented dwellings and are on the list in order to qualify for rent supplement allowance. Other applicants are on the list in order to qualify for tenancy transfer, entering the shared ownership scheme or obtaining affordable housing. From the current list of 1163 it would reasonably be expected that **the local authorities and voluntary sector would be required to house between 450 and 500 applicants over the duration of the plan** depending on the economic outlook. (A slow down in economic activity would lead to a higher demand.)

Special Needs Housing

- 6.6 In paragraphs 5.55 and 5.56 above it has been identified that there will be 194 units provided for special needs housing over the period of the plan. These units have been counted as a measurement of need.

Prospective Need

- 6.7 The affordability analysis in section 4 presents a measure of the affordability of new housing in County Kilkenny. This indicates that on average 14.6% or 584 households of **new households** formed will experience affordability difficulties over the period of the plan. This is the prospective need only and does not take into account the accumulated need as reflected by the Councils housing list.

Supply of social and Affordable Housing Units

- 6.8 Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Corporation will through their multi annual programme construct 254 new social housing units between 2001 and 2003. Having regard to the fact that the predicted demand in table 4.15 shows a fall off in the demand for social and affordable housing for new households from 20.1% in 2001 to 9.7% in the year 2006 and allowing for the fact that after 2003 through the implementation of Part V there is likely to be a re-balancing of local authority housing provision towards a greater partnership with the private sector. It is reasonable therefore to provide for the planned provision of housing under the multi-annual programme from 2004 to 2006 to be reduced in line with the expectation of a reduction in demand and a re balancing of local authority housing provision towards a greater partnership with the private sector.

6.9 It is assumed therefore that any multi annual programme after 2003 will reflect the anticipated reduction in social and affordable housing demand as indicated in table 4.15 for new households and the likely re-balancing in provision referred to above. Using 2001 as the base year a pro-rata reduction is applied to the annual social housing output of 60 by Kilkenny County Council and 18 by Kilkenny Corporation for the years 2004 to 2006. This is summarised in Table 6.1 below

Table 6.1 : Programmed and Projected Social and Affordable Housing Provision

Social Housing Source	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
KCC Social Multi-annual Programme	80	60	60	40	34	29	303
Kilkenny Corp. Social Multi-annual Programme	18	18	18	12	10	8	84
Rental Subsidy Scheme	49	49	49	49	49	49	294
Capital Assistance Scheme	65	52	22	23	22	23	207
Total Social Housing Provision	212	179	149	150	149	150	888
KCC Affordable Housing Scheme	23	24	23	24	23	24	141
Total Social and Affordable Housing	235	203	172	174	172	174	1029

Balancing need and demand.

6.10 The percentage required from the private sector will be X% and made up as follows:

The number of **New households** requiring social & affordable housing + the **special needs** cases (the elderly and people with disabilities) – (minus) The surplus from the planned provision of social and affordable housing over the accumulated need as measured by the waiting list. / (divided by) (Total no. of households to be formed over the period – all houses constructed on unzoned land)

6.11. The total no. of houses to be constructed over the period is 4002 as detailed in section 4.15 The total no of houses to be constructed on unzoned land is estimated at 50% of the total : i.e. 2001.

Therefore the calculation is as follows:

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 1. No. of new households requiring affordable or social housing | 584 |
| 2. Special needs housing identified | 194 |
| 3. Est. supply of social housing under the multi annual programme | 387 |

4. Output of voluntary sector $49 \times 6(0.75)^* + 207 \times (0.75)^*$	375
4(a) Kilkenny Co. Co voluntary housing scheme	141

Total (3+4+4a)	903

5. Surplus available to meet prospective social housing need $903 - 500 = 403$

* 0.75 is factored into the provision of houses by the voluntary housing sector as the voluntary housing sector are only obliged to take a minimum of 75 % of people from the Councils waiting list

** 500 is accumulated demand from the housing waiting list and is defined in paragraph 6.39 allowing for a less favourable economic outlook.

Therefore the required percentage X is

Numerator is $584 + 194 - 403 = 375$

Denominator is $4002 - 2001 = 2001$

$X = 375/2001 \times 100 = 18.7\%$

6.12. The requirement over the life of the plan is calculated therefore at 18.7%.

6.13. Section 94(4)(c) of the Act makes provision for up to 20% of residentially zoned land to be reserved for social and affordable housing. On this basis, (and the above requirements), it is intended that the Planning Authorities in the County will intervene as provided for in the Act to reserve 18.7% of residentially zoned lands for the purpose of providing social and affordable housing. This intervention will be focused on the main urban centres where there is adequate public transport, infrastructure, services and other facilities to sustain and accommodate these levels of social and affordable housing. The intervention will meet all the principles of sustainable development set by the national agenda, previously summarised.

6.14 Outside the main settlements, in towns and villages identified as Scheduled Towns in the Draft County Kilkenny Development Plan 2000, a figure of 18.7% will also be used for social and affordable housing. Where necessary, the breakdown of social and affordable housing in such circumstances will be weighted towards affordable housing, reflecting the relatively lower levels of services, facilities, and transportation alternatives in rural areas. However, given the levels of eligibility for social or affordable housing, a constant intervention of 18.7% will be applied in all settlements and areas in the County.

7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

7.14 The principal features to emerge from the analysis presented in this housing strategy are as follows:

- A total of 4,002 new households are expected to be formed in County Kilkenny over the 2001-2006 period.
- The existing Local Authority Housing Waiting List is 1130
- Over this period an average of **18.7%** of land zoned for residential, or for a mix of residential and other uses will be reserved to meet the accumulated and prospective need of social and affordable housing within the County As far as possible, the local authorities will address this need while maintaining an emphasis on sustainable development.
- The availability of zoned and serviced land is not expected to act as a constraint over the course of the development plan.
- As provided for in section 94(4)(c) of the Act, the local authorities will as a general policy reserve **18.7%** of land zoned for residential, or for a mix of residential and other uses for the purpose of providing social and affordable housing on land. In all planning applications regard will be had to the particular circumstances (existing housing mix, location, planning requirements, etc) in determining the breakdown between social and affordable housing provision of the development in question.
- The County Council and Corporation will consult with all relevant stakeholders in arriving at final decisions relating to housing mix and social integration.
- Both will seek to reduce the current housing waiting lists over the course of this housing strategy.
- The local authorities are intent on promoting the principles of sustainable development, and so the spatial distribution of future housing will reflect an emphasis on the continued ordered development of the principal urban centres of Kilkenny City and Environs, Waterford Environs and the four Scheduled Towns.

Appendix A - Kilkenny Housing Market Analysis

Introduction

A1.1 This paper comprises research and local commentary on house prices in the County between 1995-2000 and a forecast of house price inflation to 2006.

A1.2 We have had regard to the data supplied by the Department of the Environment (DoELG) on house prices and value distribution and have undertaken research into the evidence available on the price of houses which were sold in the County in recent years. This information was gathered through a survey of local estate agents active in the local market in recent years.

A1.3 Our findings are set out below, together with an overview of the market for housing in the County as background to the study.

A.2 Overview of the Residential Market 1995 – 2000

A2.1 The residential market in County Kilkenny over the period 1995 to 2000 has three distinct levels, as follows:

- the area identified in accordance with the current Draft Development Plan as Kilkenny City and its immediate environs
- other main centres of population
 - Castlecomer
 - Thomastown
 - Graiguenamanagh and New Ross
 - Callan

- Waterford and environs, (i.e. that part of the city which is situated north of the River Nore)
- smaller towns, villages and rural locations (Kilkenny County)

A2.2 The first two account for over 30% of the county's population (CSO 1996). However, due to the nature of the demand in the market and the availability of properties coming to the market, a significantly higher proportion of housing transactions in the County are concentrated in these areas. Below are summaries of each of the three market areas for the period to 2000.

Kilkenny City and Environs

A2.3 Kilkenny City and its immediate Environs is mainly a tourist, service, and retail centre. Traditionally, the City and its Environs were predominantly an administrative centre for the county and supported more recently by IDA backed industry. However, this has changed with the development of a substantial tourist industry over the last 20 years, which has provided the basis for a very specialised retail industry, including the Kilkenny Design Centre.

A2.4 The city is the retail centre for the county and has a national reputation, boasting a very good selection of national and upmarket local traders and one of the biggest Dunnes Stores in the country. The city provides further attractions with its selection of restaurants, bars, and quality arts movement.

A2.5 "Back-office" services have developed over the last 5 years in line with the State's economic and IT developments, and the city's employment opportunities have been enhanced with the arrival of major employers such as VHI, Deutsche Bank and InFoScore.

A2.6 As a result of the above attractions, the market for housing in the City has been good over the period 1995 to 2000, even though in the first

year or two there was a lack of serviced, accessible land. Throughout this period, the market followed the national trend with a reasonable level of turnover and transactions.

A2.7 This level of activity continued up to 1997 and there were few new housing developments. An unprecedented high level of sales followed this in 1998. Much of the activity resulted from the supply of a substantial number of new houses in the Johnswell Road area coming on stream, where it is estimated that up to 600 houses were built, including the Pocock, Fairways, Beechlawns, and Orchard developments. As result, a large proportion of the market in 1998, and to an extent 1999, was accounted for by new house sales rather than second hand sales.

A2.8 Notably, until 1998, there was a shortage of executive homes in the 4 bedroom plus range. Those who wished to upgrade to 4/5 bedroom houses had little or no choice within the city. However, The Weir and Richview developments on Castlecomer Road provided up to 200 houses from 1998 and largely absorbed this demand for larger new houses.

A2.9 While the vast majority of the city's early modern residential development took place on the west/south side of the River Nore, the substantial development in the last few years was concentrated to the northeast of the river, particularly around the Johnswell Road area. This northeast area accommodates the Hebron Industrial estate as well as a substantial amount of local authority housing.

A2.10 Between 1996-00, planning permission applications were received for 2091 units in Kilkenny City and Environs. At the time of writing, 230 of these had been built while a further 613 were under construction. These 843 represent some 28% of private builds in County Kilkenny over the period (according to DoELG figures).

A2.11 Currently, house prices for the city and environs start at approximately £100,000, are concentrated in the £120,000 to £140,000

band, and beyond £160,000 the market volume reduces substantially. The majority of properties sold within the city and environs fall within the £120,000 to £140,000 price bracket, and are typically modern semi-detached and terraced 3 bedroom houses. There is no established apartment market within the city, although there have been increasing numbers of small schemes in latter years, some offering tax incentives. These have largely been confined to the very centre of the city.

A2.12 Quality period properties rarely come on to the market and, those that do, sell quickly.

A2.13 The outlook is currently somewhat uncertain compared to the strength of recent years and the market is experiencing a "wait and see" response from all parties, primarily purchasers. This has been reflected in a tail off in enquiries and house viewings in 2001, relatively prolonged marketing periods, and a reduction in the volume of house sales. Some vendors have had to adjust their expectations, with certain properties in less sought after areas achieving below the asking price.

A2.14 The level of demand in the market can be demonstrated by the recent sell-out of a new development 61 units, which resulted from prospective purchasers queuing throughout the night. However, it is recognised that this situation is unlikely to repeat itself if a significant level of supply continues to come to the market in the City.

A2.15 Market activity has slowed following the peak of 1998/1999, and in our view the volume of transactions is likely to remain at the current level for the foreseeable future.

Scheduled Towns and Waterford Environs

A2.16 While there is some overlap with agents situated in Kilkenny City, the majority of transactions are dealt with by local estate agents who are in the main, land agents. The volume of house sales that these agents deal

with is comparatively low, and these transactions form only a small proportion of the overall property market within the context of County Kilkenny.

A2.17 In general, the housing stock in the majority of the scheduled towns is poor, and is characterised by both period housing and modern one off purpose built dwellings. In line with the County as a whole, purchasers tend to be native to the areas, including a significant proportion of returning emigrants.

A2.18 The scheduled towns are all situated within reasonable driving distance of Kilkenny city and comprise:

- Castlecomer (17 km)
- Thomastown (16 km)
- Graiguenamanagh (23 km)
- Callan (16 km)

A2.19 All these towns have populations of between 1,100 and 1,700 people (CSO 1996), which compare with a population of Kilkenny and environs of over 18,000 people. In this section we also consider the housing market in the Waterford Environs area.

A2.20 While over the 1991-96 period the populations of Graiguenamanagh and Waterford Environs remained relatively steady in size, the three other towns' populations' declined between 1991 and 1996.

Graiguenamangh

A2.21 Graiguenamangh has proved relatively popular in the last 2 years or so as a second home destination, being relatively accessible from

Dublin (less than 2 hours), while not as far or as expensive as Kilkenny City, close to the River Barrow and Blackstairs Mountains. Derelict cottages have proved popular with a view to refurbishment. However, infrastructural constraints have limited development potential, although there is currently a new sewerage scheme under construction with completion estimated 2002.

Castlecomer

A2.22 Castlecomer has no notable infrastructural constraints to house building, and despite good access to Kilkenny City, Carlow and the outskirts of Dublin, no applications in terms of major residential schemes have been made for the town over the 1996-2000 period.

Callan

A2.23 Despite planning applications for Callan including two major residential schemes totalling 433 units, only one new housing development (“Meadows”) has been constructed in this period. This comprised 26 houses built in 2000 adjacent to the town centre, which sold for between £115,000 and £150,000, to generally retired couples and some professionals. These prices are significantly higher than the average second hand price for the area of between £90,000 and £105,000. These new houses for the most part sold steadily, albeit to a limited market of predominantly native Callan inhabitants. There are no notable infrastructural constraints for future development, but the existing population size and market characterised by indigenous purchasers are likely to limit future speculative development.

Thomastown

A2.24 There was a relatively large number of planning applications made for the Thomastown area. However, the lack of an adequate sewer is constraining development and few houses have therefore been built.

Waterford Environs

A2.25 The Waterford Environs housing market has been relatively active. There are no infrastructural constraints on development, but there is an existing lack of amenities, such as shopping, in the area. However, purchasers on the Kilkenny County side of the River Nore are either native to the area, or migrants from the south side of the city who have been priced out of the city's south side market for similar quality housing. The rural area beyond Waterford in the direction of Kilkenny is currently not achieving the level of profit that would make it attractive to either developers, or parties building for their own occupation but anticipate future resale.

Summary

A2.26 While these urban areas are within easy commuting distance to Kilkenny City, the city still holds great appeal to many house purchasers in terms of its social and amenity aspects. The outlook for these smaller urban areas is likely to remain fairly steady, albeit overshadowed by the City and environs.

Kilkenny County

A2.27 Kilkenny County is largely rural, and the vast majority of towns and villages within the county have populations of less than 1,000 people. Of the 64 largest Co Kilkenny settlements covered by the Census, 23 of these areas, including New Ross environs, have populations that do not exceed 500 people.

A2.28 Demand within the County for residential property is largely indigenous. Beyond Kilkenny City and environs, (where a large proportion of the housing stock has been developed within the last 20 years), the market is characterised mainly by period houses and cottages, and one-off modern bungalows. A significant proportion of the older

cottages are in need of modernisation. The supply of property coming to the market was restricted and this led to a low turnover of the existing housing stock. For the period 1995 to 2000, house prices in relatively rural areas have not increased at the same rate as that seen in Kilkenny City and Environs and the larger towns.

A2.29 Planning permission for 2,125 individual dwellings in rural areas was sought from Kilkenny County Council during the period 1997 to 2000 and the majority of these were for owner occupation. Generally, speculative development is not undertaken outside the main urban areas. The building of individual houses therefore accounts for a significant level of supply of new housing to the county. In terms of such housing, one-off, purpose-built family bungalows are the norm, and there is a low turnover of these dwellings as second hand homes. Many of the older cottages coming to the market are sold for the purposes of substantial rebuilding or demolition, being replaced by modern dwellings.

A2.30 Second hand dwellings sold in the open market fall predominantly below the £100,000 price bracket, although this will vary with the amount of ancillary land being included within the sale. Dwellings falling within the £250,000 plus price band are exceptional and generally situated on substantial lands in rural locations. These may comprise period country houses or very extensive, purpose-built modern dwellings.

A2.31 The Urban Renewal Scheme identified 43 towns and cities across the country that will benefit from tax incentives during the qualifying period 1 March 1999 to 31 December 2002, of which 11 are located in County Kilkenny as follows

- Ballyragget
- Freshford
- Piltown
- Bennettsbridge
- Kilmacow
- Thomastown

- Callan
- Moneenroe
- Urlingford
- Castlecomer
- Mooncoin

A2.32 These are all areas that have been overshadowed in the last decade by the larger urban areas, and as many of these tax incentives are business related, there is considerable scope for future inward investment in the County.

A2.33 Due to the nature of County Kilkenny's property market, comprising a largely rural area, the outlook for the non-urban areas of the county is unlikely to see any significant change over that of the last 5 years.

A.3 Average House Prices and Price Increases

A3.1 In order to test the validity of the DoELG figures on house prices in Kilkenny (2000), DTZ Sherry FitzGerald carried out a study on property sales figures in the County between 1995-2000.

A3.2 The majority of estate agents practicing in the County were contacted seeking details of properties sold by them since 1995. The agents were visited directly, or faxed enquiries and followed up with telephone interviews. DTZ Sherry FitzGerald acknowledges the assistance provided and a list of the estate agents who responded to our enquiries is included at the end of this Appendix.

A3.3 As outlined above, Kilkenny City and environs sees the majority of housing activity within the county, followed by the scheduled towns and Waterford environs. For the outlying areas, activity is on a much smaller scale. Therefore in assessing the average price of houses sold in County Kilkenny for 1995 to 2000 the majority of the sales relate to

housing in the larger towns. Evidence of transactions in the more rural locations is more difficult to ascertain and many of the sales in the market are not relevant as they relate to sites or derelict cottages.

A3.4 Our calculations are based on a sample survey, and information provided to us comprises a snapshot of local estate agency business of all of the properties sold in the market. The information received in many cases was selective and findings are based on the figures provided by the agents. We understand that the DoE figures are based on information provided by the lending institutions only for dwellings on which mortgages are granted.

A3.5 From the information obtained by DTZ Sherry Fitzgerald in the market, average house prices were calculated on a year by year basis, and the results for the 5 year period are tabulated below, together with the benchmark DoE findings.

Average House Prices

1995 - 2000

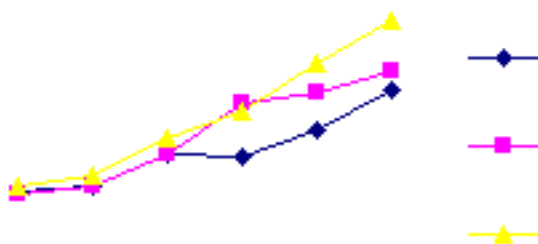
(IR£)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
National (DoE figures)	60,912	66,174	83,461	96,181	119,953	141,191
Kilkenny County (DoE Figures)	57,984	60,526	76,198	74,446	87,189	106,833
Kilkenny County (DTZ Figures)	57,038	60,505	76,193	100,705	106,327	115,512

A3.6 The above figures confirm that market for the County as a whole during 1995, 1996 and 1997 was relatively stable. Both County figures issued by the DoE and those figures calculated from the DTZ Sherry Fitzgerald sample accord very closely with each other for the period 1995 to 1997.

A3.7 The years 1998 and 1999 yielded the most significant activity over the 5 year period, particularly within the City and its environs. This was contributed to in part by the supply of new housing units in a market that had experienced little new development activity in the preceding years.

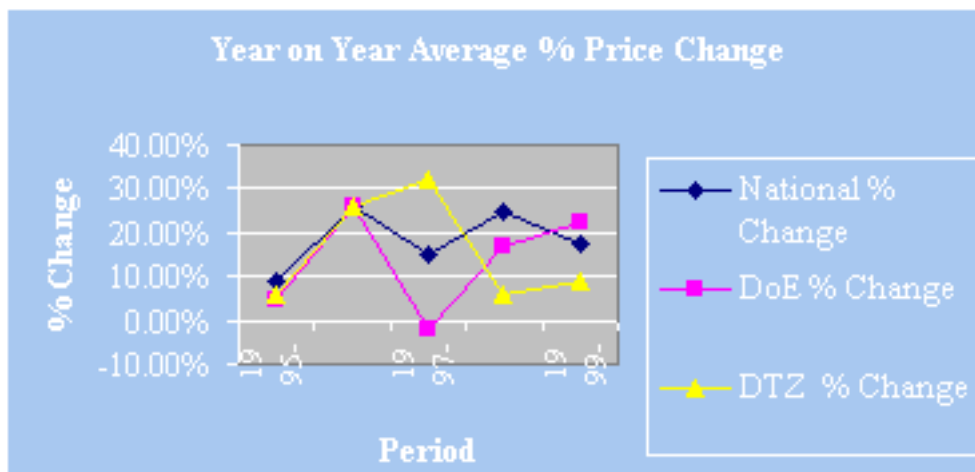
A3.8 The DoE figures for 1998 show a fall in County Kilkenny house prices of 2% while DTZ Sherry FitzGerald findings indicate this to be the year with the greatest single increase of the of the 5 year period of 32%. Due to the sample size taken by DTZ Sherry FitzGerald, fluctuations are likely to be greater than the DoE findings. The increases even out more in 1999 and 2000 so that the DoE figures indicate a total increase for 1998, 1999 and 2000 of 40% and DTZ Sherry FitzGerald's figures show 52% for the same period.



A3.9 The above calculations are set out below graphically, and the relationship between the DTZ Sherry Fitzgerald's findings and the DoE's findings are represented as follows:

A3.10 Notably DTZ Sherry FitzGerald's average house price calculated for the county rises above the average house price for the State in 1998. This may be due to a number of factors, but is largely influenced by the majority of activity for the county taking place in Kilkenny City and environs during this period. This is coupled with the fact that the market was dominated by the sale of new houses, which were relatively more

expensive than corresponding second hand houses on the market at the same time.



A3.11 We have displayed graphically the year on year change in average house prices for County Kilkenny, as calculated by DoE and DTZ Sherry FitzGerald, and compared these with the year on year change in average house prices for the country as a whole. This is arranged as follows :

A.4 Forecasts

A4.1 County Kilkenny has not experienced the same demand for housing from commuters travelling to Dublin to work as has been evident in those counties closer to Dublin. This demand has been significant in neighbouring County Carlow, being within closer proximity to the M7/M9 motorway network and therefore presenting a more reasonable commuting time. The proportion of commuters who travel from County Kilkenny to County Waterford, in particular to Waterford City, County Waterford's administrative centre, is not considered to be significant. The provincial area between Waterford and Kilkenny City is not considered a highly sought-after location to live in for Waterford residents.

A4.2 The average house price for the county as a whole is unlikely to experience any significant increase for the foreseeable future, due to the majority of activity taking place within the city and environs. The average house price for the county may even fall back slightly, due to a slowdown in activity in the Kilkenny city and environs market, before eventually levelling off. The slowdown in activity in the city market will come about as vendors adjust their expectations, and price pressures adjust to a further slowdown in demand satisfied to a large extent to the increased housing stock. The house buying “enthusiasm” that swept most cities throughout the country over the last few years has largely subsided, and purchasers now have more time to be discretionary in their purchases.

A4.3 The stability of the outlying areas, including those scheduled towns outlined above will mean that average house prices in these areas will continue to remain steady. Consequently, the main variable in average house prices for the county as a whole will be the influence of the city and environs market.

Estate Agents who Responded to House Price Survey Enquiries

Agent	Location
FitzGerald Auctioneers	Kilkenny
Sherry FitzGerald McCreery Brennan	Kilkenny
DJ Fennelly & Son	Callan
David Hughes	Kilkenny
Donoghue Properties	Kilkenny
Jas Fenlon	Graiguenamangh
John Rohan Auctioneers & Valuers	Waterford
Ganley Walters Boyd	Kilkenny
Michael F Grace	Callan

Sherry FitzGerald Walsh

Carrick-on-Suir

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Appendix B – Respondents to the Consultation Process

Respondents to the Consultation Process

- Kilkenny Community Action Network
- Irish Council for Social Housing
- Construction Industry Federation
- Colliery Christian Voluntary Housing Association
- Irish Wheelchair Association
- Threshold
- Rural Resettlement Ireland Ltd
- Clann Housing Association Ltd
- Kilkenny Access Group
- Community Care Headquarters
- National Training & Development Institute

