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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Legal Basis

As part of Kilkenny County Council's settlement strategy adopted in the County Development Plan 2002 it is the policy of the Council to carry out an extensive programme of Local Area Plans for settlements throughout County Kilkenny. This Local Area Plan for Kells is part of that policy initiative.

The legal basis for this plan is provided by the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Sections 18 and 19). The Act provides for the preparation of Local Area Plans for any part of the functional area of a planning authority. A Local Area Plan must be consistent with the objectives of the County Development Plan.

It must contain a written statement and maps indicating the objectives of the planning authority for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which it applies including detail on community facilities and amenities and on standards of design of developments and structures.

In the text of this proposed plan the plan itself maybe referred to as "the Plan" or "this Plan". In this Plan "the Council" or "the Planning Authority" shall mean Kilkenny County Council.

The Local Area Plan will remain in statute for a period of six years from the date of adoption, notwithstanding any review of the County Development Plan. The Planning Authority may amend or revoke a Local Area Plan at any time. The Local Area Plan will cease to have effect in respect of the Kells area where it is inconsistent with the provisions of the County Development Plan as reviewed. A Local Area Plan must be reviewed at least six years from the making of the previous Local Area Plan.

1.2 Planning Context

It is an objective of the County Development Plan, 2002, (CDP, 2002) Paragraph 7.8.2.1, to prepare Local Area Plans for particular areas, whether rural, urban or suburban as the need arises and as resources permit during the term of the Development Plan. Kells is a designated centre under the CDP, 2002. It will be a policy of the Council to encourage housing development to locate in the designated towns and villages where infrastructural and social services exist or are planned to be provided.

1.3 Locational Context

The village of Kells has developed adjacent to the floodplain of the King's River, on its south side. The King's River originates some 25 kilometres northwest in the Slieveardagh Hills, and eventually feeds into the Nore River some 6 kilometres east. The surrounding landscape is undulating, with a mix of tillage and grazing lands.

Kells lies approximately 8 miles south of Kilkenny city. It is situated on the R697 which is a Regional road linking Kilkenny to Carrick on Suir.

1.4 Historical Development

The village of Kells, County Kilkenny dates back to the 12th century when in c.1192 Strongbow's seneschal of Leinster, Geoffrey FitzRobert de Monte Marisco, built a castle by the banks of the Kings River and founded a town.

As part of his new village he built a priory in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary for the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine. Four monks were brought from Bodmin in Cornwall to establish and run the new monastery, which was richly endowed, receiving tithes from many parishes in the neighbourhood. The first prior to the monastery was Reginald de



Aclond, one of the four monks brought from Cornwall. The last official prior was Philip Howleghan or O'Holohan, who surrendered the Priory to the representatives of Henry VIII in 1540. Unofficially however, priors continued to be elected to Kells for another century. In 1650, Patrick Comerford, the last prior of St. Mary's Priory was banished by Oliver Cromwell¹.

The Priory, Kells

In the five hundred years that the priory was active, it shaped not only the spiritual but also the economic and social life of Kells and the surrounding areas. At its height, the priory covered five acres of land and consisted of an upper and lower court enclosed behind a tall fortified wall with towers and a central gateway. The ruins of the priory survive today as a National Monument and a reminder of the rich history of the locality.

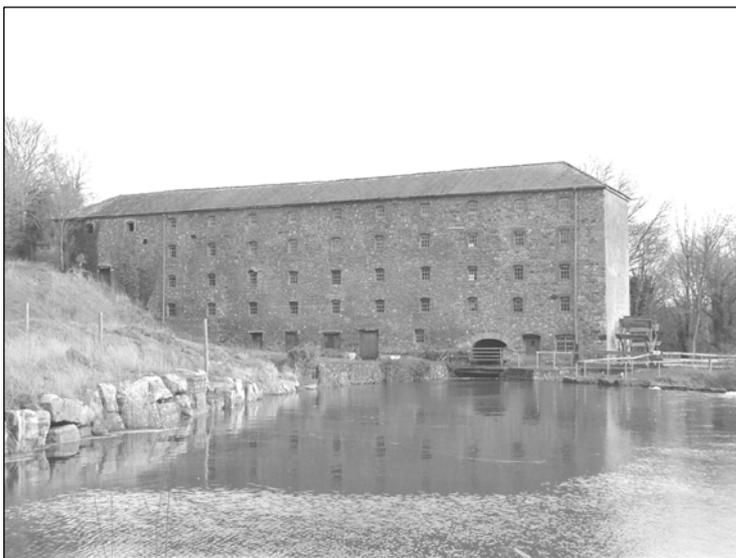
The continuity of religious activity in Kells is demonstrated by the presence of both the Roman Catholic and Church of Ireland Churches. The ancient pre-Norman Roman Catholic church dedicated to St. Kieran stood on the site of the now ruined former Church of Ireland church. This church pre-dated the Augustinian Priory and accounts from the register of the priory detail that there were four Irish priests serving at this church when the priory was founded. The register also notes that the ancient village of

¹ Lanigan, T.G, Kells, Old Kilkenny Review, No. 4, 1951

Kells was concentrated around this site. The church survives in a much-altered and ruined state. Set into an adjacent wall on the roadside is the remaining part of an effigy that comprises a torso with its right hand held high².

The striking fortified priory was not the only legacy that Geoffrey FitzRobert left to the village of Kells. As part of his plans to create a new town, he brought with him the skills to build and run a watermill. He built a mill on the site of the present Mullin's Mill, north of the village on the banks of the river. In the charter written between 1204 and 1206 he specifically granted fishing rights to the priory 'between my mill, which is before the gate of my castle of Kells and the lands of Ennisnag'. The priory also built a mill approximately half a mile upriver from FitzRoberts' Mill. It is believed to have been on or near the site of Boland's Mill. Water-powered mills remain as an important legacy and dominated the industrial activity of the village and surrounding areas until recently.

Grain production and milling in Ireland changed considerably after 1846. The repeal of the Corn Laws in that year allowed cheaper grain to be imported from the US and Canada into England. England had been an important market for Irish producers and when the market declined, farmers had to diversify into other types of food production. This had direct consequences for the mills in Ireland and many were forced to close.



The mills in Kells and their wealthy owners dominate the modern history of the locality. The Hutchinson family, a prominent Protestant family from the area, ran Boland's Mill from 1872 until the 1950s, creating employment and fuelling the economy of the small village. The same family built the impressive Hutchinson Mill downriver from the Mullin's Mill in the early nineteenth century.

Hutchinson's Mill, Kells

Kells village today stands as a predominantly mid- to late nineteenth-century village clustered around a crossroads south of Kings Bridge and west of the Priory. The village enjoyed a boom-time during this period with the building of the new Hutchinson Mill and the construction of the fine Roman Catholic church, north of the village, and the impressive Church of Ireland church and rectory to the south-east.

² Smith, Albert, *A Brief History of Kells Co. Kilkenny*, 1993

1.5 Urban Structure

Kells village is bounded to the north and west by the Kings River and to the east by the twelfth-century Augustinian Priory.

There are three distinct areas of Kells, each with its own individual character and unique qualities. These areas are definable by their contrasting architectural types and the distinctive use character. The first area is the village proper; the crossroads at the centre of the village. The second area is the industrial sector located on the Kings River. The third area is the ecclesiastical district of Kells including the historic site of Kells Priory.

1.5.1 Village centre

The ancient village of Kells was sited to the south-east of the present village and grew up around the old Roman Catholic Church that was located on the site of the now ruined Church of Ireland church. When the Priory was founded in c.1192, most of the village activity was centred on it. Accounts of the Priory describe it as having been a complex divided into upper and lower courts with the upper (north) court containing the priory buildings and cruciform church and the lower court being used to shelter the laity that serviced the priory.



Today, the village is dispersed with the main concentration of development occurring at the crossroads with further development to the north, which is separated from the village proper by a bridged floodplain. The architecture of the village comprises predominantly nineteenth and early twentieth-century terraces of two-storey rendered structures with pitched slate roofs.

Comerfords Grocery and Bar at the crossroads, Kells

The overall effect is one of uniformity and regularity. However, there are some later detached late twentieth-century houses on the north side of the road running west out of the village and a modern commercial unit located on the corner of the north side of the north road leading into the crossroads. Infill developments such as these break with the traditional urban grain established by the terraces. The mixed use character of the village is an interesting combination of residential, commercial and social use. Located at the crossroads are two public houses, the post office, a local grocery shop, a mechanic's garage, a hardware and home store, the village's squash and handball courts and private dwellings. North of the bridged flood plain is a local newsagent's shop with petrol

pumps, a public house, the village's recycling facilities, the community hall, the Roman Catholic church and private dwellings. New housing developments in the village occur on the road leading to the Church of Ireland church, behind the terrace of houses on the south side of the road running west out of the village and opposite the squash and handball courts on the west side of the road leading north out of the village.

1.5.2 Industrial Kells – King's River mills and weirs

The heart of the industrial area of Kells village is located along the Kings River. The earliest mill was established on the site of Mullin's Mill in the late twelfth century. This new technology introduced to the area by the Anglo-Normans suited the fall and flow of the river and the good arable land surrounding the village provided the produce to be processed.



The mills are landmark buildings and principal features located on the outskirts of the village. They contribute significantly and positively to the landscape and more particularly to the riverscape. With the construction of mills on the river came a need to harness the river's energy as a power source. This resulted in the construction of weirs, sluice gates and mill races, all of which transformed the river's character.

Mullin's Mill - Mill Museum

Mullin's Mill was bought in 1997 by the Kells Regional Economic and Tourism Enterprise (KRETE) and today functions as a milling museum, coffee shop, reception venue, art and craft gallery and the offices of the organisation. The building has been sensitively restored and together with Kings Bridge, creates an attractive approach to Kells village on the road from Kilkenny. Hutchinson's Mill, a little further downstream is an impressively massive mill building that is no longer in use and falling into disrepair. An additional production site within the study area is Killinny Mill, otherwise known as Boland's Mill. These mills are only three of the sixteen mills that were operational along the Kings River between the village of Callan and Ennisnag, indicating the economic and social importance of the milling industry to this region in County Kilkenny.

1.5.3 Ecclesiastical Kells – Kells Priory



The historical and archaeological dimension to this area is integral to the understanding the village's evolutionary process. Located to the east and south-east of the village, the ecclesiastical zone encompasses the historic Kells Priory, the ruined St. Kieran's Church, St. Mary's Church of Ireland Church and the associated rectory. St. Mary's Augustinian Priory in Kells is unquestionably the principal feature in the village. Founded in the twelfth century, the priory is the largest monastic enclosure in Ireland and has shaped the development of the village for centuries. Even now, with only the ruins of the priory remaining, the site still plays a major role in the economy of the village as a cultural tourist attraction, generating revenue for the community.

St. Mary's Church of Ireland Church

The ruined St. Kieran's Church is a landmark structure on the outskirts of the village. Located on the roadside, it is a prominent feature of the landscape. A car park and viewing area beside the church offer visitors access to both the church and the priory. St. Mary's Church of Ireland Church, located east of the ruined St. Kieran's Church, dates to the mid-nineteenth century. While modest in scale the church is notable for its carved granite detailing and unusual granite bellcote with finial and side niches, which is clearly the work of skilled craftsmen. The rectory associated with the church is a fine example of late Georgian residential architecture in Ireland complete with gate lodge, walled garden and stable yard. This rectory is unusually big for a glebe house and displays fine architectural detailing, making it an important contributor to the architectural heritage of the area. The house is used for parish and public meetings and every year during May a week-long art-and-crafts exhibition called 'Pictures at the Priory' is held in the house

1.6 Population

Kells had a population of 176 recorded at the 2002 Census. This was the first time that the village of Kells was enumerated separately in the Census. Kells is situated in the Electoral Division of Kells, which had a population of 506 recorded at the 2002 Census. The recent trends in population are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Population in Kells ED between 1981 and 2002

Year	Population
1981	438
1986	417
1991	413
1996	403
2002	506

The percentage growth in population between 1996 and 2002 was 25.6%, which is significantly higher than the percentage increase for the county as a whole of 6.7%.

1.7 Planning History

An examination of recent planning history in the village gives some indication of the development trend. Recent grants of permission include a two storey resource centre, including hall, meeting rooms, childcare centre etc., a residential development of 11 houses and another for 16 houses.

1.8 Designations

1.8.1 River Barrow and River Nore Proposed SAC (Code No. 2162)

Kells is situated on the King's River and as such is part of a candidate Special Area of Conservation, Site Code 002162, River Barrow and River Nore. A full copy of the site synopsis for this SAC is included in Appendix A.

1.8.2 Archaeology

Kells is identified in the Urban Archaeological Survey, County Kilkenny, 1993, as having a Zone of Archaeological Potential. These zones have been identified by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the Islands for general protection. Details of monuments within the zone of archaeological potential are shown on maps accompanying the Urban Archaeological Survey and these documents can be inspected at the County Council's planning office. The zone of archaeological potential is illustrated on Map 3.

The Records of Monuments and Places (RPM) of County Kilkenny identifies archaeological sites throughout the county. These recorded monuments are protected under the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994. The maps (i.e. the sites and Monuments record for County Kilkenny) showing the archaeological sites throughout County Kilkenny are subject to updating. The RMP is not an exhaustive list of all archaeology in existence. The RMP for County Kilkenny is available for inspection at the Planning Department in County Hall.

1.8.3 Record of Protected Structures

Kells has a number of protected structures recorded in the County Development Plan, 2002, Record of Protected Structures. As part of this plan an architectural assessment of the existing buildings in the village has been carried out, and the Record will be amended in accordance with this assessment under a separate statutory process. The existing Record of Protected Structures is shown in Appendix 1.

1.9 National Spatial Strategy

The National Spatial Strategy was published in 2002, and this has set out a strategy for the location of development within the County. This has identified Kilkenny City as a hub, and Waterford City as a gateway³. The Regional Planning Guidelines for the South East, published in 2004, set out a strategy for the location of development in the region.

These Planning Guidelines are designed to achieve a better spatial balance of social, economic and physical development throughout the region. The Guidelines are intended to strengthen local authority development plans and address issues such as settlement, transportation, industrial development, community facilities and environmental protection.

In terms of settlement strategies, it is the common aim of all the planning authorities in the south east to:

- Encourage new residential development to locate in existing towns, villages and smaller settlements, where services are already available or can be economically provided, in order to consolidate and strengthen the population base within those settlements and facilitate the maximum economic use of their physical and social infrastructure.
- Retain rural populations and support the sustainable development of rural communities and their services (such as schools, small shops etc.) in order to maintain their vitality.

1.10 Public Consultation

The Planning and Development Act 2000 introduced statutory Local Area Plans and a requirement that planning authorities take whatever steps they considered necessary to consult the public in preparing a Local Area Plan.

The first step undertaken in the public consultation process was the preparation of an information leaflet, which notified the public of the date and time of a consultation meeting. This leaflet also contained an explanation of the Local Area Plan process and some background information. Leaflets were distributed to local retail outlets and posted

³ Gateway – a nationally significant centre, whose location and scale supports the achievement of the type of critical mass necessary to sustain strong levels of job growth
Hub – a town that links the capability of the gateways to other areas

to representatives of local community groups and organisations which had been identified through the County Development Board. Statutory bodies and Government agencies were also notified and sent a leaflet. In addition, the meeting was advertised on the Council website, on local radio and in the local press.

A public consultation meeting was held on the 25th March 2004 in Kells Community Hall, which was very well attended. This meeting was held in order to obtain local knowledge to assist in compiling a profile of the area, and to learn the views of the participants, which would be an input into the preparation of the Local Area plans. The entire group was divided into six smaller groups, to discuss a number of topics with the aid of a facilitator. Each group dealt with four headings from the following list:

Housing and Population
Infrastructure
Employment and Economy
Education and Training
Transport
Community Facilities – Recreation
Amenity Enhancement
Community Supports – Social Services

Much useful, detailed information was provided at the meeting, which was used to compile a profile of the area, and the views and recommendations raised by the participants in relation to each topic were recorded. These points have been considered in full, and have contributed to the drafting of the objectives and policies within this proposed Local Area Plan.

Following this meeting, a leaflet was drawn up outlining the issues raised and the next steps in the Local Area Plan process. This was circulated to the attendants of the meeting and copies were also made available in local retail outlets.

Each of the headings is discussed in the next section, with the results of the public consultation being used to devise policies and objectives for Kells.

2 POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

A total of eight headings were discussed at the public consultation meeting. Each heading is dealt with below, in a structured format. First, the issues raised by the participants at the public consultation are outlined. Second, the existing situation, based on survey, research work and local information gathered, is discussed. These are then used to formulate policies and objectives under each heading.

2.1 Housing and Population

At the public consultation there were a number of different views expressed in relation to population growth and housing development. It was emphasised that any population growth would have to proceed in a gradual, integrated manner, with service provision.

With regard to residential layout, the importance of amenity provision in all residential developments was noted. The development known as Priory Grove was cited as a pleasant example of a housing scheme. The importance of variety in design and house type was discussed, particularly in relation to offering a range of affordability.

2.1.1 Development Strategy

Kells ED had a population of 506 recorded at the 2002 Census, with 176 in the village itself. The capacity of Kells to accommodate population growth can be examined by assessing the capacity of the services available, such as infrastructural, community and educational services.

With regard to the infrastructural services, at present there is no spare capacity available in either the water supply or sewerage networks. The sewerage network is being upgraded at present and spare capacity will be available in the near future.

The development strategy for Kells will provide for the consolidation of the existing built-up area and infill development, proportionate to the existing village, which will be socially cohesive and will support appropriate service expansion. The Council will encourage the planned housing development of serviced lands within the development boundary. Development on any zoned land must be at appropriate densities.

Policy:	To ensure the controlled development of Kells, which reflects the character of the existing village in terms of structure, pattern, scale, design and materials with adequate provision of open space
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Objectives:
1. To protect the residential amenity of existing dwellings
2. To ensure a high standard in design, layout, provision of open space, landscaping and variation in house type and size in new residential developments

3. To have a good social mix in new residential developments providing a range of unit types/sizes
4. To control development of one off houses on the fringes of the Kells development area in order to maintain a clear line between the built up area and the rural countryside.
5. To encourage the provision of landscaped pedestrian and bicycle links between and within residential areas and the village centre
6. To implement the Housing Strategy contained in appendix A of the County Development Plan 2002
7. To ensure that an adequate amount of land is included in the development boundary of the village to cater for its consolidation over the period of the plan
8. To encourage planned housing development of serviced lands within the development boundary. The Planning Authority will require that serviced/serviceable lands will be developed in depth and at sustainable densities. The use of degraded or brown field sites will be preferred and utilised where possible in order to improve the environmental character of the village

2.1.2 Urban Form

The village is centred on the cross roads of the Regional route 697 (to Kilkenny) and the road to Stoneyford, thereby providing it with a simple crucifix form, with evidence of consolidation in the backland areas. A little further north of the village centre and close to the bridge is a small cluster of buildings, providing some other uses and services related to the village's function.

On the north side of the river there are two mills and some other buildings providing a loose linear pattern close to the river. The other and perhaps most distinguishing feature of the village is the network of impressive stone buildings and stone walls associated with the medieval Kells Priory, situated to the east of the village and close to the river. The Priory is not contiguous to the village, but is separated by a field that provides fine uninterrupted views of the priory complex.

South of the Priory on the eastern approach road to the village is the remains of an old church and graveyards (anciently called St. Kieran's Church) in addition to the Church of Ireland Church. Dispersed in the hinterland are some farm complexes, some fine country houses in addition to other one-off rural houses.

2.1.3 Buildings and Spaces in the Village

Character Area 1: Village Centre

A fairly tight and coherent streetscape is to be found within approximately one hundred metres from the crossroads in the centre of the village (This area is shown as Character Area 1 in the Urban Design Map). This provides a strong sense of enclosure and sense of arrival. There are several terraces with uniform building lines and roof profiles emanating from the centre. However, some of the buildings in the very centre of the village are large commercial structures on very prominent sites, whose scale and

architectural treatment are out of character with the traditional image of a small country village.



There are a few examples of simple, though fine late 19th Century residential dwellings with characteristic features of the period, including traditional timber two-over two sash windows, fenestration pattern and doorway entrances. More commonly, however, there are buildings of traditional scale and composition, but with modern windows and doors and it could be argued that they detract from the overall streetscape.

Stone cottage, Stoneyford Road

On the Stoneyford Road close to the village centre, there is a noteworthy stone cottage of some architectural historic interest. The neighbouring house appears to have been recently rebuilt and incorporates a historic crest or plaque on its gable end.

Beyond the immediate centre of the village, the building pattern disperses somewhat reflecting the lower density of development associated with road frontage dwellings.



Historic crest on gable end of house

In recent years, there have been some residential housing schemes developed within this basic frame provided by the crossroads, consisting of infill development and backland development, close to the village core.

North of the village centre and close to the bridge there is a small nucleus of development comprising the Catholic Church, a shop, pub and community hall, in addition to some

residential development. The sinuous street pattern and tighter pattern of development provides visual containment to this area.

Character Area 2: Kings River, Mills and Weirs

Another important grouping of buildings and spaces in the village relates to the Kings River in the townland of Kellsborough. Kells Bridge is a unique bridge that consists of a double archway system, that consists of six small arches on the upstream side and four archways on the downstream side, the two central ones spanning a greater width – which appears to indicate a widening of the bridge on the downstream side at a later date. Commencing at the bridge and running south-eastwards is a series of older buildings, including the refurbished mill/museum; a thatched cottage and adjoining refurbished stone dwelling; a modern timber clad bungalow and a much larger and impressive stone mill building by the second weir. This mill building is five storeys high and comprised of eleven bays and like the refurbished mill upstream, it still retains the mill wheel. The loose pattern of development gives this area a distinctive character associated with the country lane and the amenity value of the river.



Kells Bridge



Mullin's Mull and Museum



Thatch cottage



Hutchinson's Mill



Timber clad bungalow

Character Area 3: Kells Priory

Another important component to the general structure of Kells is the medieval complex associated with Kells Priory, with its ruined abbey, cloisters, its walled enclosures and impressive towers. This has been known locally as ‘the Seven Castles’. It is separated from the village by a field and this sets it apart even more, emphasising it as a self contained entity close to the rest of the settlement. This field acts as an important buffer zone, to protect the important historical context and its landscape setting. Close by on the Stoneyford Road there is an old graveyard and church ruins, St. Kieran’s. A distinctive plaque, with the torso of a body sculpted of stone, can be found incorporated into the stone walls surrounding the old church and graveyard.



Plaque at old church

St. Kieran’s appears to have been superseded at a later date by the Church of Ireland building and graveyard in the general vicinity. This complex relates to the glebe house and in the field to the south.

Objectives:

- 1 To ensure that infill development is contextually compatible as is outlined in Appendix 4
- 2 To use our powers under the Derelict Sites Act to redevelop derelict sites as opportunities arise
- 3 To ensure the maintenance and protection of housing within the village centre, and to encourage continued residential use of upper floors. To encourage the building of new infill development where vacant plots exist
- 4 To encourage sensitive conversion to residential or tourist accommodation use of historic structures, including old industrial buildings, whose original use has become redundant

2.1.4 Social Mix

There are currently no social houses in Kells.

There is a need to encourage a greater balance in the future development of Kells. In any application for multiple unit residential schemes, in addition to implementing the Housing Strategy, the Council will seek a good social mix, and will seek to accommodate the needs of first time buyers.

Objective:	To have a good social mix in new residential developments providing a range of unit types/sizes
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2.1.5 Serviced sites

It will be an objective of this Plan to provide for serviced sites on the edge of Kells which can allow people to design their own homes on their own sites. This would have the potential to alleviate pressure for ribbon development and urban generated rural housing on the approaches into Kells. Maximum recommended densities for this zoning would be in the range of 2 to 5 per acre, depending on the quality of design and servicing arrangements. Design guidance on this is available in Chapter 4.

Objective:	To zone an area of land for the development of serviced sites for the development of low density dwellings
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2.1.6 Integration of Residential Developments

In assessing any new development in Kells, the Council may have regard to the development potential of adjoining land, and will assess any application, with a view to providing for the development of these lands in an integrated manner. This applies to any land parcel, and relates to all aspects of development, including open space provision, access arrangements and pedestrian and cycle links.

The distinction between any residential schemes should be maintained by the use of design and detailing, to give each its own distinct identity.

Objective:	To assess any new development having regard to the development potential of adjoining land
Objective:	To ensure the integration of adjoining residential schemes, where appropriate, in relation to pedestrian and cycleway links, public open space provision and scheme layout

2.2 Infrastructure

2.2.1 Sewerage Network

Kells is served by a sewerage scheme with secondary treatment, which was constructed in 1965 and upgraded in 1996 and has a capacity equivalent to a population of 300 persons. This plant is currently operating at or slightly above its design capacity and requires upgrading to a Design Population of 750 Population equivalent (PE) to accommodate future development. This will allow for adequate future development growth.

Policy:	To ensure that the necessary sewerage facilities to serve the needs of all development within the village and to prevent pollution are provided
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Objective:	To secure the upgrading of all water services, including surface water drainage and water supply, through agreements with developers and/or landowners as appropriate where new developments are proposed on zoned lands.
Objective:	To prohibit the connection to the sewerage system of any proposed development out of phase with the overall development of the village or where the existing services are committed for other development
Objective:	To preserve free from development the way leaves of all public sewers

2.2.2 Surface Water Drainage

It is an objective of the Council to secure the disposal of surface water associated with developments to avoid increase in the risk of flooding. This objective is to be achieved in keeping with modern good practice and having regard to the characteristics and attributes of each site.

Policy:	To seek positive surface water drainage incorporating discharge flow attenuation for all green field site developments other than those that are isolated and small in scale and unlikely to increase the risk of flooding.
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This means that all storm water shall be collected in a storm water pipe network with attenuation and disposed of to a watercourse, and shall not be directed to a soakpit. It will be the responsibility of the developer to prove that the pipe network and/or watercourse into which discharge is proposed has an adequate capacity, and will not give rise to flooding off site.

Ground soakage for roof water from houses may be permitted subject to the developer establishing that the site is suitable.

The onus is on the developer to establish that the receiving drainage system and/or watercourse can cater for the discharge without increased risk of flooding off site.

Objective:	To secure the disposal of surface water associated with developments to avoid increase in the risk of flooding
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2.2.3 Flooding

Flooding is an issue at the King's river floodplain, at the mill and bridge, and on the Haggard Road. Flooding was also mentioned as being an issue at Burgess Court, on the Stoneyford Road at Rathduff Lower and on the Kilmoganny Road. The development strategy for the village should be to avoid areas for development which may be subject to flooding.

Surface water disposal from lands adjacent to the Haggard Road causes problems at times of heavy rainfall at present. Any proposed development in this area will need to address the potential impact of the proposed development on the existing surface water system with a view to addressing the impacts.

Objective:	To seek positive surface water drainage incorporating discharge flow attenuation for all green field site developments other than those that are isolated and small in scale and unlikely to increase the risk of flooding
Objective:	To ensure that any new development shall address the flooding issue in the area by means of appropriate surface water drainage.

2.2.4 Water supply

At the public consultation water supply was noted as being adequate, with one concern expressed with the level of limescale in the water.

Kells is served by the Bennetsbridge Regional Water Supply Scheme. At present, water supply volumes in the scheme are inadequate to meet any further development, and any new developments will be required to provide a temporary private water supply, which shall be maintained indefinitely until the public water supply is upgraded. The public water supply will be upgraded, subject to adequate funding being available, as part of the National Water Services Investment Programme.

As outlined in the County Development Plan, 2002, there is a policy of continuous monitoring by the Council of all water sources to ensure that water quality remains high. Limescale (caused by hardness) is not a health issue and for this reason funding for treating water for hardness is not generally made available.

Policy:	To provide water in sufficient quantity and quality to serve the needs of the existing and future population, and future commercial development
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Objective:	To provide sufficient water to serve all lands zoned for development in this plan
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Objective:	To continuously monitor water quality in the area to ensure the maintenance of high water quality standards
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Objective:	To preserve free from development the way leaves of all public water mains
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2.2.5 Waste

Issues raised at the public consultation included an expression of support for the extension of recycling facilities, and for kerbside facilities. There were some problems identified with the coverage of refuse collection that it only extends as far as the speed limits. Also, the need for better monitoring of the bottle banks was noted, as littering and illegal dumping can be a problem there.

Kilkenny County Council has adopted the South East Regional Authority Waste Management Strategy, and the policy for Kilkenny is set out in the Waste Management Plan for the period 2000-2004.

Waste collection was privatised by the Council in the 1990's and waste is now collected in Kells by private contractors. European Union environmental policy dictates that the 'Polluter pays principle' be applied, which means that the full costs associated with environmentally sound recovery and disposal of waste are charged to the customer.

With regard to recycling, it is Council and regional policy that bottle banks for clear, green and brown glass and aluminium cans are provided at villages throughout the county. There is a bottle bank in Kells at present, located in the car park, where glass bottles and drinks cans can be recycled. This is considered an appropriate location for a

bottle bank and could be integrated in the future with the recently granted Resource centre.

The aim is to have one bottle bank per 1000 head of population by the end of 2005. A kerbside collection for recyclables was introduced in late 2003. These collections cover newspapers, cardboard, magazines, food cans, drink cans and plastic. Glass is still disposed of at the Bottle banks.

The South East Regional Waste Management Plan has an objective to provide a civic amenity site for a full range of household recyclables including hazardous and non-hazardous waste. This is located in Dunmore, at the existing landfill facility.

The importance of education and awareness in the encouragement of recycling and promoting more sustainable practices is acknowledged by Kilkenny County Council, and endorsed by the appointment of an Environmental Awareness Officer in 2002. This Officer provides regular dissemination of information through group meetings, leaflets and other promotional materials, and any community can access these services. These services will continue to improve the level of environmental awareness throughout the county.

Policy:	To continue to encourage and facilitate recycling and the minimisation of waste in line with the South East Regional Waste Management Plan objectives
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Objective:	To ensure Kells has an adequate solid waste collection system
Objective:	To continue to work with and encourage the prevention, minimisation, re-use, recycling and safe disposal of waste in line with the South East Regional Waste Management Plan
Objective:	To re-examine the location and monitoring of the bottle banks in the car-park

2.2.6 Telecommunications

Telecommunications have become centrally important to the prospects of any local economy, and their role in the development of Kells is acknowledged. At the public consultation it was noted that there is poor mobile network coverage at present. It was considered that an objective for obtaining broadband supply should be included.

Policy:	To ensure that the necessary telecommunications and electricity supply are available for the existing and future development of Kells
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Objective:	To support the provision of broadband infrastructure in Kells
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2.3 Employment and Economy

At the public consultation, it was noted that commuting to Kilkenny plays a significant role in Kells' economy. There are very limited employment opportunities within the village.

Any sustainable land-use policy must provide for a balance between the provision of housing and the provision of employment opportunities.

The need for the provision of start-up units for the village was discussed at the public consultation. The development strategy for Kells is one of consolidation of the existing fabric. It is not envisaged therefore that there will be any significant level of demand for employment. Employment opportunities will develop through the provision of services locally and the development of tourism in the village. Employment generating opportunities will be considered on their merits as they arise.

If the provision of residentially zoned land exceeds the potential for employment opportunities, this will result in a high level of commuting, which is unsustainable. The creation of employment opportunities should be matched to the growth of the village. The need for a provision of start-up units was discussed.

The Council will ensure that sufficient land is zoned to allow for the provision of a suitable employment mix.

Objective:	To encourage job/employment creation initiatives in the area.
Objective:	To facilitate, or assist in identifying agencies which can facilitate, community-led job creation schemes

2.3.1 Retail

The *Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities* sets out Government policy in relation to shops in small towns and rural areas⁴. The vital role that foodstores and supermarkets play in maintaining the quality and range of shopping in smaller rural town centres and assisting in the anchoring of the surrounding local economy, is recognised. Planning policies should be supportive of local facilities in small towns and villages which provide an effective and valuable service to the local economy.

The facilitation of additional commercial activities to serve future development will be done through appropriate zoning in accordance with the CDP 2002 and the Retail Planning Guidelines, 2000. There will be a clear presumption in favour of centre locations for new developments, i.e. in the village centre zone.

⁴ Department of the Environment and Local Government, 2000 *Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities*

Where it is not possible to provide the form and scale of development that is required on a site within the village centre, then consideration can be given to a site on the edge of the town centre. An edge of centre location is one within easy and convenient walking distance from the town centre, and providing parking facilities that serve the centre as well as the new development, thus enabling one trip to serve several purposes.

Out of centre retail developments will not be allowed if their provision is likely to lead to a reduction in the range of local facilities in towns and villages or affect the diversity of shops or lead to the loss of general food retailing from the centre of smaller towns. Out of centre locations are clearly separate from a town centre but within the urban area, including programmed extensions to the urban area.

Policy:	To facilitate the expansion of the retail base to serve the needs of the current and future population, in accordance with the policies as laid out by the County Development Plan 2002 and the Retail Planning Guidelines, 2000
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Objective:	To encourage the upgrading and expansion of existing retail outlets and the development of new outlets in the village centre to serve local need
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2.3.2 Tourism

The many attractions of Kells for tourism development were discussed at the public consultation. These include the two mills, the King's River, the Priory and the village's historic and scenic setting.

Constraints to the exploitation of tourism included a lack of availability of accommodation such as B & B's and self catering in the vicinity, the lack of facilities for campers, lack of signage and poor promotion of the Kells product.

The King's River is perhaps the most significant natural amenity in the village. Future development should preserve the river corridor as a broad linear park for passive recreational use. This would keep the floodplain free from development, and would also benefit wildlife along the river bank. This should serve as a tourism attraction in the village.

Objective:	To facilitate the development of a looped walk walking route through the village for the benefit of tourists and locals in conjunction with the local community.
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2.3.2.1 The Priory

It was acknowledged that the Priory has huge potential for the development and marketing of Kells as a tourist destination. During Arts Week the Priory serves as a successful exhibition gallery. To maximise its potential, there is a need for the development of the Priory, in terms of tours, accessibility, facilities and information.

The Priory is in the guardianship, not the ownership of the State and access to it is legally by means of a right of way from the car park to the south beside the ruined church. The Office of Public Works National Monuments Section is currently carrying out a programme of works to the upstanding ruins to conserve them and make them safe. This will include the re-roofing of the priory's tower to the south of the chancel of the church which is intended to be used as a storage area for carved stone. When the works are completed, full access will be available to the public to all areas of the monument, subject to safety constraints.

Policy:	To co-operate in the development of a tourist development strategy for the village and its hinterland in association with Kilkenny Tourism, SERTA, Bord Fáilte, the local Development Association, KRETE, BNS Leader, local community groups and business interests
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Objective:	To facilitate and encourage the development of facilities catering for tourists in Kells
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2.4 Education and Training

At the public consultation there was general satisfaction expressed with the existing primary school in the village. Capacity is adequate at present, but there were concerns about the need for additional capacity into the future.

2.4.1 Primary Education

Kells is served by one primary school, which is a mixed school with 32 pupils and 2 teachers. There are 2 classrooms and 1 room for other activities in the school. The existing school has very limited space for recreational activities for the attending children. Two possible sites have been identified for the provision of recreational facilities for the school.

2.4.2 Secondary Education

There is no secondary school in Kells, and students attend either, Ballyhale, Callan or Kilkenny schools. There was an issue with the bus to Ballyhale and Callan, in that it departs too early and returns too late. Many students were being brought to Stoneyford instead to get on the bus from there.

2.4.3 Third level Education

The nearest third level institution is located in Carlow, the Carlow Institute of Technology, and this offers a wide range of courses.

2.4.4 Adult Education

There was a need identified for adult training courses in Kells. Classes are provided in Ballyhale VEC and Callan CBS. Affordable childcare was identified as an inhibiting factor in accessing adult education.

The new Resource Centre should offer potential for adult education, with computer and other classes.

It is acknowledged that childcare is a valuable mechanism in supporting social and economic development.

Policy:	To facilitate the provision of childcare facilities in a sustainable manner in appropriate locations in Kells.
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Objective:	To facilitate the development of educational opportunities and facilities to meet the needs of the existing and future population
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Objective:	To co-operate with the Department of Education in the provision of an adequate number of school places to serve the needs of the town's population
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Objective:	To support the continuation of the FÁS Community Employment Scheme or other equivalent/replacement scheme
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2.5 Transport

2.5.1 Roads

The main road running through Kells is the R697 which is the regional route linking Kilkenny to Carrick-on-Suir. This road runs from north to west through the village, with a junction at the crossroads. The other roads meeting at the crossroads are the Stoneyford road to the east and the Haggard road to the south.

2.5.2 Footpaths and Lighting

The priority areas identified for footpaths at the public consultation were the Stoneyford road to the Priory car park and the connection of the upper village to the lower village, as there is no footpath on the bridges at present. In addition, around the cross roads in the centre of the village, there is a need for footpaths at Comerford's pub and shop, Shirley's pub and Smith's garage.

The provision of footpaths in the village is variable. There is a distinctive rough path, (grassed along parts) alongside the Stoneyford road (on its northern side) to St. Mary's Church which is delineated by limestone kerbing, and which was laid c.1820. The path does not however run into the centre of the village. On the south side of the Stoneyford road there is a small section of the street where there is a footpath and this also runs for a short distance along the Haggard road leading south from the centre of the village, in front of the terrace on that street. There are no footpaths serving the other three corners of the village centre and the only other footpath runs along a portion of the Kilmoganny road to the entrance to the Priory estate.

Appropriate public lighting will be required as part of any new development.

There was a need for a footpath along the Stoneyford Road to Burgess Court to cater for all existing development.

Policy:	To provide quality lighting and footpaths throughout the village that will secure the safe movement of pedestrians, cyclists and drivers alike
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Objective:	To require appropriate public lighting as part of any new residential development
Objective:	To carry out repairs and provide new footpaths in Kells under a Special Works scheme as resources and finances permit.
Objective:	To maintain and protect the limestone kerbing on the Stoneyford road, as far as is practical
Objective:	To provide a safe pedestrian facility from Burgess Court to the cross roads to accommodate pedestrian movement in consultation with the local community and affected residents.
Objective:	To ensure that development proposals on zoned lands along the Haggard Road and the Kilmoganny Road address the upgrading of the existing road network (public footpaths and lighting etc.) to the village cross roads.

2.5.3 Traffic calming

There were a number of issues raised in relation to traffic calming. Speeding was identified as a problem, particularly on the Stoneyford road. It was suggested that all roads would benefit from the speed limits being moved further out, and the provision of 40 mph speed limit signs.

Issues arising from the consultation were the layout of the junction at the cross roads being confusing and dangerous. It was suggested at the consultation stage that there is a need for improved road markings and signage and also a need to slow traffic at this junction.

There are no pedestrian crossings in Kells at present and there was a need identified for one at the church, at the handball alley and at the site of the new Resource centre.

Objective:	To prepare a Traffic Calming Scheme for Kells within the period of this Plan
Objective:	To investigate how a safe pedestrian crossing facility can be provided in the village having regard to the need criteria and financing

2.5.4 Traffic at the Schools

One of the issues raised at the public consultation meeting related to traffic at the school.

The school is located on the Stoneyford road. There was a need identified for further warning signage on the approaches to the school and a rail at the front boundary. There is also a need for a continuous footpath from the cross to Burgess Court, on the southern side of the road.

There is no staff car-parking provided within the curtilage, and the staff park on the street. There is no designated bus set down area at the school.

2.5.5 Linkages within the Village

As discussed in Section 2.1.5, in assessing any new development in Kells, the Council may have regard to the development potential of adjoining land. One of the elements of this integration will be the provision of pedestrian and cycle linkages between all new developments, to provide for a pleasant network of routes and walkways interlinking the village.

Objective:	To provide for appropriate pedestrian and cycleway linkages between all new and existing developments
Objective:	To seek to establish a pedestrian link from the lands north of the Kilmoganny Road to the Resource Centre lands.
Objective:	Vehicular access to be provided for low density residential lands to the north through these lands (T14 on zoning objectives map)

Objective:	The lands zoned low density on the Kilmoganny Road to facilitate pedestrian and cycle access for the low density zoned lands to the south of this site. (T15 on zoning objectives map)
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2.5.6 Public transport

There is a Ring-a-link service which operates once a week to Kilkenny, this service is available every Thursday in Kells.

2.5.7 Parking

At the public consultation it was noted that there was only a problem with car-parking at peak times, such as mass times, when unregulated parking causes a problem, especially on the bridge.

Parking in Kells is mainly provided on street, with car parking available around the crossroads. There is a small car park which serves the church and community centre, on the site of the new Resource centre.

There is also a car park at the Priory, on the Stoneyford road which provides access to the Priory. This car park is community owned and the community have provided a picnic area, with seating.

Policy:	The Council will consider proposals for additional car parking on suitable sites and seek appropriate provision of adequate car parking in any new developments
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Objective:	To ensure adequate car parking spaces are provided in all new developments
Objective:	To provide disabled car parking spaces at appropriate locations throughout the village

2.6 Community Facilities – Recreation

At the public consultation meeting, it was considered that Kells was well served by recreational facilities generally.

2.6.1 Open space

There are no formal areas of public open space in the village, though there is a very significant amenity area, in the form of a linear walkway alongside the river with a small pocket park associated with the refurbished mill and museum. A footbridge connects the 'linear park' across the river to Kells Priory. There is also public access to Kells Priory which is also a very significant amenity area. Associated with the Priory is a small

amenity area with picnic table at the car park on the Stoneyford approach road to the village.

The King's River is a significant amenity feature in the village and provides a focus for the open space provision in the village. The existing linear park should be protected and extended by the zoning objectives of this Plan. A pleasant walking route should be provided, along by the two mills, linking across the river to the Priory, and back in the Stoneyford road into the village centre.

The carrying out of amenity or maintenance works could have an adverse impact on the quality of the SAC, and therefore prior to any works being carried out it is advisable to consult with the Wildlife service.

Policy:

1. The Planning Authority will not normally permit development which would result in the loss of public or private playing fields, parks, children's play space, amenity open space or land zoned for recreational or open space purposes. An exception may be considered where all of the following requirements are demonstrably met:

- a) There is a clear excess of playing fields or open space provision within the area. This should take into account the long-term needs of the community, the type and recreational and amenity value and accessibility of such provision.
- b) Alternative compensatory provision is made which is both accessible to and of equal or greater quality and benefit to the community.
- c) The continued use, proper maintenance and enhancement of the amenity/facility can best be achieved by the redevelopment of a small part of the site that will not adversely affect its overall sporting, recreational and/or amenity value of the facility.
- d) The site is indicated for an alternative use in the development plan.

2. It is the policy of the Council to provide, maintain and manage a children's play area in Kells within public open spaces or other suitable locations where it is appropriate and as finance and resources permit.

3. The Council will investigate ways of improving the quality and capacity of existing sporting and recreational facilities.

4. The Council will investigate ways of assisting in the provision of new sporting recreational and leisure facilities through initiatives in both the public and private sector

Objective: To provide quality open space to meet the needs of the existing and future population

Objective:	To ensure that all residential developments address adjoining open space to provide for their passive supervision
Objective:	To protect the banks of the King's River and develop a river walk along it, in conjunction with the relevant statutory bodies and voluntary groups
Objective:	To protect existing open spaces and recreational uses from encroachment by other uses

2.6.2 Recreation

There are a number of sporting groups in the village, as identified at the public consultation. Sports available include GAA, handball, squash and soccer. However there is no sports pitch available in the village.

The existing community hall in Kells is located opposite the Church. Planning permission has recently been granted for a Resource centre. This new Centre is a community built and operated facility and should provide modern accommodation for much of the community's recreational needs.

Once the new centre is in use, there will be no need for the old community centre. Some suggestions from the public consultation included keeping the hall as a covered area as a bandstand and picnic area. This would allow for opening up the view of the River and Mills.

Objective:	To ensure the maximisation of the Resource Centre as a facility for the community
Objective:	To facilitate an appropriate alternative use for the existing Community Hall and site in conjunction with the relevant voluntary groups

2.7 Amenity Enhancement

A number of positive remarks were made in relation to the amenity value of the river and the heritage and scenic value of Kells at the public consultation. The positive contribution of the voluntary groups to the upkeep and appearance of the village was noted.

Litter was identified as an issue, with a need for additional bins and regular collections.

Policy:	To protect and enhance the amenity and built environment of Kells and to provide an aesthetically pleasing appearance for both the built and natural environment of the village
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Objective:	To continue to facilitate and support the local community in developing and fostering a spirit of local civic pride.
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2.7.1 Conservation

Kells has a number of protected structures listed in the County Development Plan, 2002. As part of this plan an architectural assessment of the existing buildings in the village has been carried out, and the Record will be amended in accordance with this assessment under a separate statutory process. The existing Record of Protected Structures for the Village is shown in Appendix 1.

It is an objective of the Council to preserve Protected Structures. Alterations to Protected Structures normally require planning permission and should be subject to early consultation with Kilkenny County Council's Conservation Officer. Generally, all repair and maintenance works should be carried out on a 'like for like' basis and in accordance with the Conservation Guidelines published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government, 1996. In addition, the Council will assess any application for redevelopment or infill for its contribution to the streetscape. Further guidance on this is available in Chapter 4.

Objective:	To seek the conservation and protection of the buildings listed in the Record of Protected Structures.
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Objective:	To seek the refurbishment and/or reinstatement of derelict or vacant historic properties and their historic setting which are listed in the Record of protected Structures or which contribute to the visual coherence of the streetscape or the landscape. The Council supports the replacement of former structures such as the four former Mill Cottages, which originally formed part of Hutchinson's Mill complex, the replacement of which would help to reinstate the historic setting of the protected Mill structure.
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2.7.2 Archaeology

It is Council policy, in considering development proposals which would affect the sites as outlined in Chapter 1, to have regard to the recommendations of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government concerning archaeological assessment and the monitoring of excavations during construction.

Objective:	To have regard to the recommendations of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, concerning archaeological assessment and the monitoring of excavations during construction, in considering development proposals which would affect any archaeologically designated sites
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2.7.3 Dereliction

Dereliction is not a significant problem in Kells. There are no registered derelict sites in the village.

Policy:	To encourage and provide for the sensitive redevelopment of derelict sites in the village
Objective:	To implement the Derelict Sites Act 1990 in order to ensure the removal of dereliction within the village

2.7.4 Litter

The Litter Management Plan 2003 – 2006 has been published recently, and this sets out the Council’s policy with regard to tackling the problem of litter. One of the objectives of this is to provide additional and improved litter bins in strategic locations and to maintain, or to make arrangements for, the maintenance of existing bins.

A Litter Bin Survey is being carried out throughout the county and this will consider requirements for additional bins and replacements. There is a sponsorship scheme in place whereby local communities provide 50% sponsorship for each litter bin sought. Litter bins are emptied by private refuse collectors. Where possible, and subject to available resources, Kilkenny County Council will enter into arrangements with private refuse collectors to maintain litter bins by contractual agreement.

Objective:	To provide additional and improved litter bins in strategic locations and to maintain, or to make arrangements for, the maintenance of existing bins
Objective:	To implement the provisions of the Litter Management Plan

2.7.5 Shopfronts

Given the few commercial premises in the village, signage is not overly dominant and is generally in keeping with the character of the village. In order to retain the character of the village, it is important to ensure that the scale of shopfront signs and nameplates is neither out of scale with the ground floor façade area of a building nor out of character with the overall composition of the building.

Objective:	To seek the undergrounding of all utility cables in the village centre as the opportunity arises and financing permits
Objective:	To preserve the character of the village, with control of shopfronts and advertising
Objective:	To ensure that the scale of shopfront signs and nameplates is not out of scale with the ground floor façade area of a building nor out of character with the overall composition of the building. See Appendix A of this Plan.

2.7.6 Planting

Appropriate planting can be used to enhance the environment and additional planting would add to the amenity of the village, and would also add to any new developments.

Landscaping requirements for new developments are outlined in Chapter 4.

Objective:	To require appropriate planting of semi-mature trees, using native species where appropriate, in any new development and to preserve and augment existing mature trees and hedgerows
Objective:	To encourage the appropriate planting of semi-mature trees through the village using native species where appropriate

2.7.7 SAC and Ecology

As described in Section 1.8.1 Kells is situated on the King's River and as such is part of a candidate Special Area of Conservation, Site Code 002162, River Barrow and River Nore. It is important that any development that takes place within the area defined as the SAC does not adversely impact on the SAC which includes water quality. Therefore the nature and extent of development considered within the SAC lands will be determined by its likely environmental impact. The Council will consult with the Heritage Service of the DOEHLG and other relevant bodies with regard to any proposed development within the boundaries of the SAC designation.

An Ecological Survey of the Kells area was carried out as part of this plan process. In addition to the SAC, one area of interest was identified within the development boundary, to the southeast of the Priory.

This report is included as Appendix 2.

Objective:	To ensure the protection and/or conservation as appropriate of the non designated sites outlined as areas of ecological interest in the plan and to control development which would be inimical to the preservation or conservation of their essential character
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Some tree groups have also been identified as being of amenity significance and the preservation of these will be an objective of this plan. These have been identified in the urban design map in Appendix 4 and are shown on the zoning objective map 3.

Objective:	To retain the trees as identified in the zoning objectives map except where their removal is due to the interests of public safety and good design or the trees are in an unhealthy state
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2.8 Community Supports – Social Services

2.8.1 Services

At the public consultation, the lack of an ATM, and the need for a café in the village were identified as service deficits.

Kells contains a few service outlets, such as 3 pubs and a shop. Its service base should expand to keep pace with development and to maintain its important role in the local rural area.

Objective:	To maintain and enhance the role of Kells as a local market centre for its rural catchment area and as a centre to service the anticipated expansion during the period of the Plan
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2.8.1.1 Garda Síochána

Kells is located in the area covered by the Thomastown garda station, which is a stretched service, according to the community.

2.8.2 Youth

The public consultation identified year round facilities and activities suitable for all interests and age levels as a need in Kells. It was thought that for those young people who did not have an interest in sport, there was little for them to do.

There is no youth club in the village, although there used to be a Foróige club. The resumption of this youth club should be examined, in conjunction with Ossory Youth and with Foróige.

Objective:	To support the development of youth services in co-operation with the local community and appropriate agencies
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2.8.3 Elderly

Facilities for the elderly in Kells should improve with the opening of the Resource Centre. The present hall is unsuitable for a day care centre and the nearest bingo is available in Stoneyford, 8 miles away.

Objective:	To facilitate and support the expansion of the range of facilities catering for the elderly population
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2.8.4 Healthcare

As set out in Section 7.15 of the County Development Plan 2002, it is the policy of the Council to facilitate the development by the South Eastern Health Board of a

comprehensive range of health and social care services and in particular services for the elderly including the development of community, hospital, community nursing and day care services throughout the County. The new Resource Centre could provide rooms for letting to the Health Board.

Objective:	To co-operate with the Health Service Executive in the provision of health services for the town
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2.8.5 Childcare

According to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Childcare Facilities, “Government policy on childcare is to increase the number of childcare places and facilities available and to improve the quality of childcare services for the community”⁵. Section 3.5.1. of the County Development Plan sets out the policies of Kilkenny County Council in relation to childcare provision. Kilkenny County Childcare committee which is a sub group of the Kilkenny County Development Board have also published a Childcare Strategy 2002-2006, to “inform the development and delivery of quality services for children in the County”⁶ between 2002 and 2006.

The provision of quality childcare services will be facilitated and encouraged by the Council, in suitable locations. Regard will also be given to the Guidelines for Best Practice in the Design of Childcare Facilities issued by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. The new Resource Centre will be supported in its provision of childcare services.

Policy:	To ensure the provision of an adequate range of quality childcare facilities in appropriate locations
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⁵ Department of the Environment and Local Government, 2001, p. 3 *Childcare Facilities – Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, Stationery Office

⁶ Kilkenny County Childcare Committee, 2002 *Childcare Development Plan 2002 - 2006*

3 DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

3.1 Introduction

This section of the Proposed Plan sets out specific objectives for the development of Kells. Some of the objectives can be carried out directly by the County Council, but in others, for which the Council is not directly responsible, the Council will have a facilitative role.

Achievement of the objectives for which the Council is directly responsible, will, in many cases be dependent upon adequate finance being made available to the Council from the Department of the Environment and Local Government and other sources. For many of the other objectives, a co-ordinated approach will need to be taken by both the Council and local community. The Council, through its Planning and Community and Enterprise Departments, intend to facilitate and build the capacity in the community to follow these objectives through.

Where possible, specific objectives are illustrated on the map accompanying this plan. However some objectives are not site specific and therefore cannot be illustrated on the map.

3.2 The Development Boundary

The development boundary for the village has been designated taking into consideration the following factors:

- The need to provide a compact and accessible village in accordance with the principles of sustainable development
- The existing built environment and road structure
- Potential population growth and demand for housing
- The need to offer locational choice and housing mix
- Proximity to existing and potential community and commercial facilities and the need to encourage sustainable growth
- Linkages (transport) to other larger settlements
- The level of provision of existing infrastructure
- Existing planning permissions

3.3 Land Use Zoning

The purpose of zoning is to indicate to property owners and the general public the types of development which the Council considers most appropriate in each land use category. The land use zoning objectives are detailed below and are shown on the Land Use zoning and specific objectives map. It is the intention of the Planning Authority that the zoning of particular areas for a particular use shall not in itself exclude other uses in that area provided they are compatible with the dominant use.

Zoning is designed to reduce conflicting uses within areas, to protect resources and, in association with phasing, to ensure that land suitable for development is used to the best advantage of the community as a whole.

In the following paragraphs:

- **A permissible use means** a use, which is acceptable in the relevant zone. However, it is still the subject of the normal planning process.
- **Open for consideration** means a use which may be permitted where the Council is satisfied that the individual proposal or development will be compatible with the policies and objectives for the zone, and will not conflict with the permitted uses and also conforms with the proper planning and development of the area.

3.3.1 Residential

Objective: To protect and improve residential amenities and to provide for new residential development appropriate to the scale and character of Kells.

Permissible Uses: Dwellings, open spaces, places of worship, community centres, halting sites, public service installations, playgroup or crèche, Nursing home.

Open for Consideration: Bed and breakfast establishments and guesthouses, lock up garages, retail shop of local convenience, hotel, restaurant, use by owner or occupier of part of a private residence as a studio, for a light industrial activity, a clinic or surgery, professional office, or as a playgroup or creche.

3.3.2 Village Centre

Objective: To provide for the development and improvement of appropriate village centre uses and allow for the development of Kells as a focus for local services, sustaining and strengthening its role as a population centre.

The purpose of this zone is to protect and enhance the centre of Kells and to provide for and improve retailing, residential, commercial, office, cultural and other uses appropriate to the centre of a village. It will be an objective of the Council to encourage the development of backlands. Generally two storey buildings will be preferred.

Permissible Uses: Dwellings, retailing, retail warehousing, wholesale outlets, offices, public buildings or places of assembly, cultural or educational buildings, recreational buildings, halting sites, hotels, motels, guest houses, clubs, private garages, open spaces, public service installations, medical and related consultants, restaurants, public houses, car parks, halls or discotheques, and other uses as permitted and open for consideration in residential zoning.

Open for Consideration: workshop or light industry

3.3.3 Recreation, Amenity and Open Space

Objective: To preserve, provide and improve recreational open space.

Permissible Uses: Open space

Open for Consideration: Sports clubs, recreational buildings, stands, pavilions, agricultural uses, public service installations.

3.3.4 Community Facilities

Objective: To protect, provide and improve community facilities.

Permissible Uses: Educational, religious and cultural facilities, public buildings, crèches, schools, churches, hospitals, convents, community centres and halls, school playing fields, colleges, orphanages, hostels, halting sites, cemeteries, libraries and medical centres, nursing homes

Open for Consideration: Public service installations, Village Centre uses which would not conflict with the other objectives of the Plan and which would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3.3.5 Industrial/Warehousing

Objective: To provide for industrial and related uses.

Permissible Uses: Industrial premises and ancillary offices, open spaces, warehouses, car and heavy vehicle parks.

Open for Consideration: Petrol filling stations, service stations, car showrooms, advertisement structures, wholesale premises, public service installations, play school/creche.

3.3.6 Transitional Areas

While the zoning objectives indicate the different uses permitted in each zone, it is important to avoid abrupt transitions in scale and use at the boundary of adjoining land uses zones. In these areas, it is necessary to avoid developments, which would be detrimental to the amenities of the more environmentally sensitive zone. For instance, in zones abutting residential areas particular attention must be paid to the uses, scale and density and appearance of development proposals and to landscaping and screening proposals in order to protect the amenities of these residential areas.

3.4 Specific Objectives

As a result of the discussion under each of the eight headings as outlined in Section 2, certain objectives have been formulated. The objectives under each heading are set out below, in table form, in addition to the expected time frame for their realisation and the agencies responsible for their implementation.

3.4.1 Housing and Population

Specific Objective	Map Ref	Action By	Funding and Support Services	Time scale
To protect the residential amenity of existing dwellings	H1	Local Authority through the development control process	Developers, landowners and local authority through the development control process	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To ensure a high standard in design, layout, provision of open space, landscaping and variation in house type and size in new residential developments	H2	Developers, Landowners and Local Authority	Developers, Landowners and Local Authority through development control process	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To have a good social mix in new residential developments providing a range of unit types/sizes	H3	Developers, landowners and local authority	Developers, landowners and Local Authority through development control process	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To encourage the provision of landscaped pedestrian and bicycle links between and within residential areas and the village centre	H4	Developers, landowners and local authority	Developers, landowners and local authority	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To implement the Housing Strategy contained in Appendix A of the County Development Plan 2002	H5	Local Authority	N/A	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To ensure that an adequate amount of land is included in the development boundary of the village to cater for its consolidation over the period of the plan	H6	Local Authority	N/A	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To encourage planned housing development of serviced lands within the development boundary. The Planning Authority will require that serviced/serviceable lands will be developed in depth and at appropriate densities. The use of degraded or brown field sites will be preferred and utilised where possible in order to improve the environmental	H7	Developers, Landowners and local authority	Developers, landowners and local authority through the development control process	Ongoing from adoption of plan

character of the town				
To ensure that infill development is contextually compatible as is outlined in Section 4 and Appendix 4 of this Plan	H8	Developers, landowners and local authority	Developers, landowners and local authority	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To implement the Derelict Sites Act 1990 in order to ensure the removal of dereliction within the village.	H9	Local authority, landowners	Local authority	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To ensure the maintenance and preservation of housing within the village centre, and to encourage continued residential use of upper floors. To encourage the building of new infill development where vacant plots exist	H10	Developers, landowners and local authority	Developers, landowners and local authority through the development control process	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To encourage sensitive conversion to residential or tourist accommodation use of historic structures, including old industrial buildings, whose original use has become redundant	H11	Local authority and developers, community organisations, Dúchas, DoELG	Local authority and developers, community organisations, Dúchas, DoELG	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To have a good social mix in new residential developments providing a range of unit types and sizes	H12	Local authority and developers	Local authority, developers	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To zone an area of land for the development of serviced sites for the development of low density dwellings	H13	Local authority	Landowners and developers	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To assess any new development having regard to the development potential of adjoining land	H14	Local authority	Landowners and developers	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To ensure the integration of adjoining residential schemes, where appropriate, in relation to pedestrian and cycleway links, public open space provision and scheme layout	H15	Local authority, landowners and developers	Developers, landowners and local authority through the development control process	Ongoing from adoption of plan

3.4.2 Infrastructure

Specific Objective	Map Ref	Action By	Funding and Support services	Time scale
To secure the upgrading of all water services, including surface water drainage and water supply, through agreements with developers and/or landowners as appropriate where new developments are proposed on zoned lands.	I1	Local Authority, developers	Local Authority & DoEHLG, developers through the development control process	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To prohibit the connection to the sewerage system of any proposed	I2	Local authority through the	Local authority	Ongoing from

development out of phase with the overall development of the village or where the existing services are committed for other development		development control process		adoption of plan
To preserve free from development the way leaves of all public sewers	I3	Local authority through the development control process	Local authority, developers, landowners	Ongoing form adoption of plan
To seek the positive disposal of storm water in all developments	I4	Local authority, developers through the development control process	Developers	Ongoing form adoption of plan
To provide sufficient water to serve all lands zoned for development in this plan	I5	Local authority, developers	Local authority, DoEHLG	Ongoing form adoption of plan
To continuously monitor water quality in the area to ensure the maintenance of high water quality standards	I6	Local authority, developers	Local authority, developers through the development control process	Ongoing form adoption of plan
To preserve free from development the way leaves of all public water mains	I7	Local authority through the development control process	Local authority, developers, landowners	Ongoing form adoption of plan
To ensure Kells has an adequate solid waste collection system	I8	Local authority	Local authority, private waste collectors	Ongoing form adoption of plan
To continue to work with and encourage the prevention, minimisation, re-use, recycling and safe disposal of waste in line with the South East Regional Waste Management Plan	I9	Local authority, Tidy Towns, residents' associations, local community	Local authority, DoELG, local community	Ongoing from adoption of plan

3.4.3 Employment and Economy

Specific Objective	Map Ref	Action By	Funding and Support services	Time scale
To encourage job/employment creation initiatives on appropriately zoned and serviced land	E1	Local Authority, BNS, Enterprise Ireland, IDA, Landowners, developers	Local authority, BNS, Enterprise Ireland, IDA, landowners and developers	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To facilitate, or assist in identifying agencies which can facilitate, community-led job creation schemes	E2	Local authority, BNS, Enterprise Ireland, IDA, Landowners and developers	Local Authority, BNS, Enterprise Ireland, IDA, landowners and developers	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To encourage the upgrading and expansion of existing retail outlets and the development of new outlets in the village centre to serve local	E3	Local authority, landowners and developers	Local authority, landowners and developers	Ongoing from adoption of plan

need				
To facilitate and encourage the development of facilities catering for tourists in Kells	E4	Kilkenny Tourism, SERTA, Local authority, local community, developers	Kilkenny Tourism, SERTA, Local authority, local community	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To facilitate the development of a looped walk walking route through the village for the benefit of tourists and locals in conjunction with the local community.	E 5	Kilkenny Tourism, SERTA, Local authority, local community	Kilkenny Tourism, SERTA, Local authority, local community,	Ongoing from adoption of plan

3.4.4 Education and Training

Specific Objective	Map Ref	Action By	Funding and Support services	Time scale
To facilitate the development of educational opportunities and facilities to meet the needs of the existing and future population	ET1	Local authority, school, in conjunction with Department of Education	Department of Education	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To co-operate with the Department of Education in the provision of an adequate number of school places to serve the needs of the village's population	ET2	Local authority, school, in conjunction with the Department of Education	Department of Education	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To support the continuation of the FAS Community Employment Scheme or other equivalent/replacement scheme	ET3	FAS, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment	FAS, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment	Ongoing from adoption of plan

3.4.5 Transport

Specific Objective	Map Ref	Action By	Funding and Support services	Time scale
To require appropriate public lighting as part of any new residential development	T1	Local authority through development control process	Developers	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To carry out repairs to footpaths in Kells under a Special Works scheme and to provide new footpaths and public lighting to serve new developments	T2	Local authority, landowners and developers	Local authority, landowners and developers through the development control process	Medium term
To prepare a Traffic Calming scheme for Kells within the period of this plan	T3	Local authority	Local authority, local community	Medium term
To investigate how a safe pedestrian crossing facility can be provided in the village having regard to the need	T4	Local Authority	Local Authority	Medium term

criteria and financing				
To ensure adequate car parking spaces are provided in all new developments	T7	Local authority	Local authority, local community	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To identify an appropriate site for car parking within the village centre	T8	Local authority, local community, development association	Local authority, local community	Medium term
To provide disabled car parking spaces at appropriate locations throughout the town	T9	Local authority	Local authority	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To provide a safe pedestrian facility from Burgess Court to the cross roads to accommodate pedestrian movement in consultation with the local community and affected residents.	T10	Local Authority	Local authority	Medium Term
To maintain and protect the limestone kerbing on the Stoneyford Road	T11	Local authority	Local authority	Short term
To carry out repairs to existing footpaths and provide new footpaths in Kells as detailed, under a special works scheme or other appropriate mechanism as resources and finances permit	T12	Local authority	Local authority	Medium Term
To provide a replacement concrete footpath between shop at the cross roads and the Priory Grove estate.	T13	Local authority	Local authority	Medium Term
Vehicular access to the low density lands on the Kilmoganny Road to be obtained through the low density lands to the south of this site.	T14	Local authority through development control process	Local authority, landowners and developers through the development control process	Ongoing from adoption of plan
The low density zoned lands on the Kilmoganny Road to facilitate pedestrian and cycle access for the low density land to the south of this site	T15	Local authority through development control process	Local authority, landowners and developers through the development control process	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To seek to establish a pedestrian link from the lands north of the Kilmoganny Road to the Resource Centre lands.	T16	Local authority through development control process	Local authority, landowners and developers through the development control process	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To ensure that development proposal on zoned lands along the Haggard Road and the Kilmoganny Road address the upgrading of the existing road network (public footpaths and lighting etc.) to the village cross roads.	T17	Local authority, developers through development control process	Local authority, landowners and developers through the development control process	Ongoing from adoption of plan

3.4.6 Community Facilities – Recreation

Specific Objective	Map Ref	Action By	Funding and Support services	Time scale
To provide quality open space to meet the needs of the existing and future population	R1	Local authority, landowners and Developers	Local authority and Developers	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To ensure that all residential developments address adjoining open space to provide for their passive supervision	R2	Local authority, developers through development control process	Local authority and developers	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To protect the banks of the Kings River and develop a river walk along it, in conjunction with the relevant statutory bodies and voluntary groups	R3	Local authority, Tidy Towns, Residents' associations, Development Associations	Local authority, Tidy Towns, Residents' associations, Development Associations	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To protect existing open spaces and recreational uses from encroachment by other uses	R4	Local authority, local organisations, local community	Local authority	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To facilitate an appropriate alternative use for the Community Hall and site in conjunction with the relevant voluntary groups	R5	Local authority, local organisations, local community	Local authority, landowners and developers through the development control process	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To ensure the maximisation of the proposed Resource Centre as a facility for the community	R6	Local authority, local community	Local community	Ongoing from adoption of plan

3.4.7 Amenity Enhancement

Specific Objective	Map Ref	Action By	Funding and Support services	Time scale
To seek the conservation and protection of the buildings listed in the Record of Protected Structures	A1	Local Authority, DoEHLG, Landowners	Local authority, DoEHLG, landowners	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To seek the refurbishment of derelict or vacant properties which detract from the visual amenity of the village	A2	Local Authority, DoEHLG, Landowners, developers	Local Authority, DoEHLG, Landowners, developers	Ongoing from adoption of plan
New development should be appropriate in form and use to its corner, infill or backland location. Established views to local landmarks such as the Priory should be maintained	A3	Local Authority, DoEHLG, Landowners, developers	Local Authority, DoEHLG, Landowners, developers	Ongoing from adoption of plan
New development should relate closely to the established character of	A4	Local Authority, DoEHLG,	Local Authority, DoEHLG,	Ongoing from

the town, respecting the disciplines of established building form, massing, height, alignment, orientation and window proportions. Further guidance in this regard is contained in Appendix 4 of this plan		Landowners, developers	Landowners, developers	adoption of plan
To have regard to the recommendations of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, concerning archaeological assessment and the monitoring of excavations during construction, in considering development proposals which would affect any archaeologically designated sites	A5	Local authority, developers, DoEHLG	DoEHLG	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To provide additional and improved litter bins in strategic locations and to maintain, or to make arrangements for, the maintenance of existing bins	A6	Local authority, Tidy Towns, Residents' associations, Development Association	Local Authority, Tidy Towns, Residents' associations, Development Association	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To implement the provisions of the Litter Management Plan	A7	Local authority, Tidy Towns, Residents' associations, Development Association	Local authority, Tidy Towns, Residents' associations, Development Association	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To seek the undergrounding of all utility cables in the village centre as the opportunity arises and financing permits	A8	Local authority, service providers	Local Authority, service providers	Medium term
To preserve the character of the town, with control of shopfronts and advertising	A9	Local authority through development control process	Local authority, developers, shop owners, businesses	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To ensure that the scale of shopfront signs and nameplates is not out of scale with the ground floor façade area of a building nor out of character with the overall composition of the building	A10	Local authority through development control process	Local authority, shop owners, businesses	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To require appropriate planting of semi-mature trees in any new development and to preserve and augment existing mature trees and hedgerows	A11	Local authority, developers	Local authority, Tidy Towns, Residents' associations, Development Associations	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To ensure the protection and/or conservation as appropriate of the non designated sites outlined as areas of ecological interest in the plan and to control development which would be inimical to the preservation or conservation of their essential character	A12	Local authority, landowners, developers	Kilkenny tourism, SERTA, An Bord Fáilte, BNS Leader	Ongoing from adoption of plan

To retain the trees as identified in the zoning objectives map except where their removal is due to the interests of public safety and good design or the trees are in an unhealthy state	A13	Local authority, developers, landowners, Tidy Towns, Development Association	Local authority	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To seek the refurbishment and/or reinstatement of derelict or vacant historic properties and their historic setting which are listed in the Record of protected Structures or which contribute to the visual coherence of the streetscape or the landscape. The Council supports the replacement of former structures such as the four former Mill Cottages, which originally formed part of Hutchinson's Mill complex, the replacement of which would help to reinstate the historic setting of the protected Mill structure.	A14	Local authority, developers, landowners	Local authority, developers, landowners	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To continue to facilitate and support the local community in developing and fostering a spirit of local civic pride.	A15	Local authority, local organisations, local community	Local authority, Tidy Towns, Residents' Associations, Development Associations	Ongoing from adoption of plan

3.4.8 Community Supports – Social Services

Specific Objective	Map Ref	Action By	Funding and support services	Time scale
To maintain the role of Kells as a local market centre for its rural catchment area and to enhance its role as a centre to service its anticipated expansion during the period of the Plan	S1	Local authority, local retailers	Local authority, local retailers	Ongoing from adoption of plan
To facilitate and support the expansion of the range of facilities catering for the elderly population	S2	Local authority, HSE, developers	Local authority, HSE	Long term
To co-operate with the HSE in the provision of any health care services for the village	S3	Local authority, HSE	HSE	Ongoing from adoption of plan

3.5 Implementation

The realisation of these objectives over a period of time will it is felt, significantly benefit the town, ensuring its orderly development and improvement.

The achievement of the objectives will be dependent on the availability of finance and the inclusion of the objectives in the work programmes of the County Council and the responsible agencies. The local community, through local associations such as Residents Associations and Tidy Towns, can play a huge role in contributing to the achievement of some of the objectives above. Kilkenny County Council's policy will be to facilitate and aid local organisations in this capacity.

This is intended to be an integrated plan, and the progression of formulating objectives from issues identified in the public consultation is the first step in enabling an integrated approach to implementation. Kilkenny County intends to fully participate in an Inter-Agency Working Group and to co-operate with other development and community agencies, such as BNS Leader to secure the implementation of this plan.

4 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section of the Proposed Plan is to ensure a high standard of design, layout and function for all new development, to conserve what is good in the existing built and natural environment, and to protect the amenities of the town.

In general, the development standards as outlined in Chapter 10 of the County Development Plan, 2002 will be adhered to in Kells with the following stipulations attached. Where there is a conflict between the County Development Plan standards and the Kells Plan the latter shall take precedence.

4.2 Design Guidance Principles

The aim for new development should be to enhance the traditional character of the village streetscape. This section of the plan, combined with Appendix 4, Urban Design Guidelines on Future Development, is aimed at giving landowners, developers and their architects a clear view as to how the design of new development should be considered. It will also be used by the Planning Authority when judging planning applications in the town.

When designing for new building, consideration should be given to the existing building fabric, for it is the existing pattern and appearance of these buildings, related to the unique history and morphology of a place that makes one village or town different from the next. The building fabric therefore is a reflection of the character of a place and if we permit this character to be eroded, either through dereliction, decay and/or demolition and replacement with insensitive new build, then we erode the uniqueness of the place.

Therefore, where possible, consideration should always be given to building conservation. Where conservation is not possible, as in cases where there is already a gap in the streetscape, or where a conservation architect or other specialist in the area considers a building as structurally unsound or prohibitively expensive to merit conservation, then consideration will need to be given to designing a new building. Detailed design guidance on new development is given in Appendix 4.

4.3 Design Elements in Kells

Streetscape refers to the look of a particular road, regarding the arrangement and design of plots, buildings and materials, roads and footpaths, street furniture, open spaces and planting. Attractive and coherent streetscapes happen when all of these features reinforce and work with one another.

4.3.1 Building line and Boundary Treatment

Within the centre of the village building lines and roof profiles are fairly consistent, contributing to a coherent streetscape. In some sections of the street, the building line and building heights will be consistent and almost perfectly straight. In such cases, new infill development will be expected to conform to the established building line. Typically however, the building line will be almost continuous, but will also be continuously deflecting, with subtle twists and turns. New infill development should respect this pattern and acknowledge it in its design. When a new infill opportunity spans across two traditional plots (as a result of plot amalgamation), the new design should consider introducing a deflection. Many examples exist in Kilkenny's towns and villages where an individual building façade introduces a deflection in its building line – typically on bends within the street. New infill development should avoid disrupting established building lines, as it reduces the sense of enclosure and composition of the streetscape.

Traditionally, a set-back in building lines was reserved only for important civic buildings, such as Churches, public libraries and other institutional buildings, and occasionally important town houses.

4.3.2 Height and roofs

Most buildings within the centre of the village are two storeys in height. Notable variations in building height occur within buildings of two storeys – the smaller ones reflecting former artisan dwellings and the larger ones in the form of finer village houses, usually provided with side entrances – this is particularly evident along the north side of Bridge street and on the south side of the Square.

The number of storeys is not a good judge of building heights. This is a very important principle of the Irish streetscape, as reflected in Kilkenny's towns and villages. This feature and the chimneys introduce a strong rhythm in the streetscape and should be acknowledged in new designs. This diversity does not disrupt the harmony of the streetscape because of the consistency in the other elements. The variety of rooflines conveys a feeling of diversity, but unity is provided by their common domestic scale and common characteristics.

Roofs are mainly of a traditional pitch, made of slate.

4.3.3 Materials

Some traditional building features found in Kells include simple round headed doorway entrance with decorative detailing on door and original two over two timber sashed window.

Minor alterations have been made to many of the facades of the buildings in the village centre, which do not respect the character of the buildings, in the form of pvc windows, doors and enlarged window openings.

4.3.4 Proportions

A typical street consists of a series of vertically proportioned units linked together. In Kells most of the vernacular buildings have simple, symmetrical proportions and a consistency in the position and proportion of windows and doors at ground and upper floor levels.

Large developments should be subdivided into a series of bays, especially at ground floor level, to be more in keeping with the pattern of the existing street frontage. Traditionally, plots in towns and villages are relatively long and narrow, reflecting medieval burgage plots. This is reflected in the facades of buildings and their narrow widths along the street front. Development that extends over more than one historic plot should address the plot through design, with variations in façade composition that echo the historical plot pattern (See Appendix 4).

Long horizontal lines look out of place and should be avoided; a fascia which extends across several bays should be broken up by pilasters or other vertical divisions. Strong emphasis at fascia level to form a distinct divide between ground and upper storeys is an important feature of streetscapes and should be included in any new development.

4.4 New Residential Development

The aim for greenfield sites on the edge of the existing built up area should be for the extension of spaces which are in harmony with the village character, and schemes should mainly be urban in form as opposed to suburban.

Where land is being developed for housing the following will be required to be incorporated:

- *All new buildings should be in harmony with existing old buildings in terms of architectural style and should reflect the style and materials of the older character of buildings within the town.*
- *The pattern of existing forms within the area where development is to be located should be used as a stimulus for creative adaptation so that it will fit more appropriately with the overall character of the town.*
- *Careful consideration shall be given to the design of components (such as doors, windows and the height, pitch and ridges of roofs) which should have regard to those already present in the vicinity of the site. This is particularly important with regard to the redevelopment and alterations to existing buildings which should strictly reflect the original building's characteristics in proportions of windows to walls and in the design of the roof.*

New development shall seek to:

- *Reflect the local development patterns*
- *Avoid substantial repetition of one house type*

- *Respect the local characteristics and context of the site*
- *Respond to typical setting and garden forms of the town*
- *Refer to local buildings and variety of proportions and design.*
- *Refer to local distinctive details and materials*
- *Provide adequate privacy for individual houses, flats etc*
- *Provide adequate provision for car parking, open space, landscaping and planting*
- *integrate with existing development and the preservation of features on site*

4.4.1 Building Layout and Orientation

It is intended to create a coherent and environmentally comfortable public realm throughout Kells. Accordingly, proposed layouts shall optimise solar orientation to both adjoining buildings and outdoor spaces. Layouts shall also have careful regard to prevailing wind direction with a view to reducing wind speeds in outdoor areas.

It is an aim to discourage the enclosure and isolation of individual housing estates and to promote the physical and social connectivity in a permeable network of streets and public spaces. Layouts shall promote this connectivity between phases of development. Large residential areas shall be broken into small functional and visual groups, which fulfil a social and aesthetic need for identity.

Long straight roads are not desirable in residential estate developments. Estate roads should incorporate gentle curves and physical traffic calming measures within the estate should be included at the planning application stage.

The provision of services and road layout of the development must have regard to 'Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas', Department of the Environment and Local Government.

All new residential development should take full account of the characteristics of the natural and built environment of the site, the views and vistas to and from the site, and its surrounding areas.

Passive supervision of the Public Realm is the most consistent and effective means of preventing anti-social behaviour. All public open spaces (hard and soft landscaped) shall be overlooked by adjoining accommodations to ensure passive surveillance. Back-land spaces, rear access lanes, blind corners and long side-garden walls shall be avoided so as to minimise the risk of anti-social activity.

Layouts, which give priority to the pedestrian and cyclists, will be encouraged. This can be achieved in smaller developments through shared surfaces for pedestrians and vehicles. Well-lit pedestrian links, separate from the main carriageways should be provided within the estate. These links should be overlooked as far as possible by dwellings and right angled bends should be avoided for security reasons.

Where large residential schemes are proposed, they shall be broken into small functional and visual groups, which fulfil a social and aesthetic need for identity. These shall be designed to create safety for young children, facilitate social interaction and introduce a variety into the visual environment whilst avoiding a monotonous repetitive type development. Each group of houses should have its own visual identity, variation being achieved by layout, including building lines, house design, colour and hard and soft landscaping. New development designs should avoid monotonous repetition by inclusion of subtle variation.

4.4.2 Density

There is no set maximum or minimum density recommended. A high standard of architectural design and layout will be required in residential developments. The Council will seek to ensure that new developments have individuality and a sense of place which is generated by the interaction between the physical characteristics and features of the site and its surroundings and the layout, landscaping and design of the new housing. It is the policy of the County Council that this high standard should not be diluted in newly constructed developments and that designs and layouts will be welcome which pay regard to the qualities and appearance of the existing area.

In determining suitable density, the character and amenities of the site and of the surrounding area will be considered along with the need for a variety of site sizes and house designs to encourage social mix and choice. In infill sites or in areas adjacent to the village centre, higher densities will be permitted subject to exceptional quality of design and finishes, proper provision for active and passive recreation and good living conditions, including privacy and adequate natural light, within each accommodation unit.

Regard should be had to 'Residential Density – Guidelines for Planning Authorities', Department of the Environment and Local Government, September 1999. This states (Par. 3.6.2) that on serviced lands in towns or villages not served by quality public transport, increased densities would be acceptable if they contributed to the enhancement of town or village form such as by reinforcing street patterns or assisting in the re-development of backlands.

As there will be no set minimum or maximum density specified in the Plan, the emphasis will be on providing a quality housing environment based on innovation and a design led approach.

In preparing applications for housing developments, designers and developers alike are advised to consult relevant publications for guidance such as

- *Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, Department of the Environment and Local Government, September 1999,
- *Essex Design guidelines for Residential and Mixed use areas* by Essex County Council and Essex Planning Officers Association, 1997.

4.4.3 Design

A variety of house types in developments of multiple housing will be encouraged with variations in house size, colour, materials, and designs.

In support of the Council's policy of reducing social exclusion, the Council will encourage developers to have regard to the requirements of people with disabilities, the elderly, and children in the supply, design and layout of residential development.

The design of dwellings should bear a relationship to the existing fabric of the settlement of Kells. Natural features or landmarks such as mature trees or vistas should help to determine the layout and orientation of the housing. The creation of 'land marks' within the estate, whether through retention of existing features or by the introduction of new features will be encouraged.

New development must recognise and be sympathetic to the existing village and help to renew the specific architectural traditions of the area as outlined above.

4.4.4 Ecology & Bio-diversity

Design layouts should aim to enhance and protect the biodiversity resources of the town. This can be achieved through the following:

- i. Retain and enhance existing vegetation including trees, shrubs and hedgerows, wherever possible and incorporate into the development. Under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000, it is prohibited, with certain exemptions, to remove or cut hedgerows during the bird breeding season of March 1st to 31st August.
- ii. Networks of wildlife sites are more ecologically valuable than isolated wildlife areas. Where possible create linking corridors of habitats.
- iii. Where possible, use native species. Trees and shrubs that grow naturally in the surrounding countryside are often the best choice for the town. A list of native trees and shrubs, with planting guidelines is contained in Appendix 3.
- iv. Where possible, use plants of local provenance (i.e. grown locally rather than imported)
- v. Tree and shrub species with berries are important for wintering birds
- vi. Trees and shrubs which support a high biomass of insects in summer are important for breeding birds
- vii. Where appropriate avoid the culverting of watercourses and provide new water areas.
- viii. Where possible, set aside maintenance free areas and avoid or limit the use of herbicides and pesticides

4.4.5 Car Parking

Car parking shall be carefully designed to integrate successfully into its location in terms of layout, surface treatment and screen planting. New development will normally be required by the Planning Authority to provide adequate off-street car parking facilities.

Communal car parking arrangements will also be acceptable in residential developments. For security reasons, car parking should always be overlooked by housing. There should not be an excessive amount of car parking grouped together. The visual impact of large areas of car parking can be reduced by the judicious use of screen planting, low walls and the use of textured or coloured paving for car parking bays.

4.4.6 Public Open Space

Public open space is one of the key elements in defining the quality of the residential environment. It provides passive as well as active amenity and has important ecological and environmental aspects. In calculating the area of open space, the area of roads, grass margins, roundabouts, footpaths, left over area, backlands, and visibility splays shall not be taken into account.

The Council will normally expect all open space provision to take account of the following principles:

- Open space should be provided in a comprehensive and linked way, designed as an integral part of the development.
- Areas should be of a demonstrated recreational or amenity value. Small dysfunctional open spaces should be avoided.
- Wherever possible, the majority of open space should be multi-functional. Areas for informal amenity and children's play should be combined.
- Areas should be easily and safely accessible from all dwellings which the space is designed to serve
- The design, location and appearance of open space areas should have regard to the amenities of nearby dwellings, for example, areas where children may play should normally be overlooked by the fronts of nearby dwellings to provide for maximum surveillance and overlooking
- Public open space areas should not be located so close to adjoining dwellings so as to cause undue noise or nuisance to existing or proposed residents
- Attractive natural features should be protected and incorporated into open space areas. Tree planting should normally form an integral part of such open space areas.

To ensure implementation of open space provision the Council will attach appropriate planning conditions to permissions, and where necessary will enter into agreements with developers. These will provide for the laying out and landscaping of open space areas in accordance with a detailed scheme to be agreed with the Council.

Reduced provisions may only be acceptable in urban locations where there are more sustainable patterns of development and maximum use can be made of urban land or redevelopment schemes where open space is already available. With relatively high densities such as flats, townhouses or apartments, good quality landscaped open space should be provided.

Open space provision for smaller residential developments and schemes catering for special needs such as accommodation for the elderly will be considered more flexibly on its merits and having regard to the requirements of likely future residents.

Developers may also be required to provide an equipped children's playground in association with open space provision where a development scheme would be greater than 800 metres from an existing easily accessible equipped children's playground.

Adequate areas of open space should be an integral part of any new residential development to meet the needs generated by that development. The overall standard of 2.4 hectares per 1000 population will normally be applied in assessing proposals for open space for children's play and informal amenity. In developments which are adjacent to and provide for easy access to significant areas of existing public open space a lesser standard of provision may be acceptable. This relaxation will only be considered where the developer pays a financial contribution towards the improvement of the existing public open space so as to improve its quality and carrying capacity.

It is an objective of the Council to secure a high quality of design, layout and landscaping in all new residential developments consistent with the Residential Density Guidelines.

Integrated, pleasant, attractive and landscaped open space should form an intrinsic element of new residential development. The precise location, type and design of open space should be negotiated with developers according to the specific characteristics of the development, the sites and its context. All open spaces proposed by developers should be designed and set out by suitably qualified landscape architects or similar design professionals so as to ensure a high standard and consistency with good design and layout practice.

Developers should consider providing a variety of open spaces. Both formal and informal semi-natural areas should be provided, such as wetlands, woodlands, meadows, green corridors as well as formal gardens and seating areas. These elements work best as part of a structure to the provision of open space. Planting schemes should include native species, where possible. A list of native tree and shrub species, and planting guidelines, is contained in Appendix 3. Existing trees and hedgerows should be retained wherever possible and incorporated into the development.

4.4.6.1 The River Walk

The provision of an area of public open space – linear park - along the banks of the King's River is an objective of this plan. The development control process will be utilised to secure the implementation of this objective.

This park will be an attractive feature in the village, linking some residential areas with the village centre. Safe and convenient access points should be provided to access this river walk.

It is an objective of this Plan to prepare an Amenity Scheme for this Park during the period of this Plan. The park should allow for a number of walks of varying lengths. A segregated cycle path should also be incorporated into this park. Any residential development bordering this linear park shall orient the maximum number of dwellings towards it, to allow for passive supervision.

Any residential development bordering the linear park shall be designed to interact with the open space. The use of low walls and hedging should be stipulated, as high boundary walls can create a discouraging environment and pose a security risk. Tree planting should be undertaken, to provide a pleasant leafy environment, which provides weather protection, but does not provide opportunity for concealment. In addition, only low sparse shrubs and flowers should be planted. A playground could also be provided at a suitable location in the park. In order to protect and enhance the existing ecological value of this area, where possible, emphasis will be given to the use of measures which enhance the value of the area, including the use of native trees and shrubs in the park design.

4.4.6.2 Management plan for Public Open Space

Developers will be required to make suitable provision for the future management and maintenance of open space required under this policy, where spaces and facilities are not taken in charge by the Council, either through management companies or agreements with the planning authority.

4.4.7 Private Open Space

An adequate amount of private open space should be provided within the curtilage of each dwelling. In general the requirement will be 60 to 75 sq.m minimum for 3/4/5 bedroomed houses in order to ensure that most household activities are accommodated and at the same offers visual delight, receive some sunshine and encourage plant growth. A standard of 22 metres will normally be required between directly opposing first floor windows. However where adequate levels of privacy are provided this depth may be reduced.

The boundaries of rear gardens should generally be provided with a permanent durable barrier with a minimum height of 1.4 metres. Where rear gardens back onto public areas, excluding a public roadway, this height should be increased to 1.8 metres.

4.4.8 Integration of Residential Developments

In assessing any new development in Kells, the Council may have regard to the development potential of adjoining land and will assess any application, with a view to providing for the development of these lands in an integrated manner.

This applies to any land parcel, and relates to all aspects of development including open space provision, access arrangements and pedestrian and cycle links. The distinction between residential schemes should be maintained by the use of design and detailing, to give each its own distinct identity.

4.4.9 Road and Estate Names

The naming of residential developments shall be approved by the County Council. The names of residential developments shall reflect local and Irish place names for the locality as far as possible. No development work or advertising of housing schemes shall be allowed until the name has been agreed with the Planning Authority.

4.4.10 Services

All services including electricity, public lighting cables, telephone and television cables shall be provided underground in new housing developments. Provision should be made for the unobtrusive siting of transformer stations, pumping stations and other necessary service buildings.

4.4.11 Apartments/Duplex Style

In general apartments will be required to have the following minimum floor areas

Apartment Type	Minimum Floor Area
One Bed	46 m ²
Two Bed	65 m ²
Three Bed	93sq.m

The internal dimensions of all rooms should be proportioned to allow for an adequate space for normal living purposes. The shape and layout of rooms should maximise the amenity of residents.

All living room, kitchens and bedrooms should minimise overlooking of adjoining/adjacent residences and should be so located so to avoid facing towards nearby high boundary or gable walls.

4.4.12 Access for People with Disabilities

Access requirements for physically disabled persons should be incorporated into the design of buildings and layouts of developments likely to be used by the general public and will be a material consideration of the Planning Authority in assessing applications.

Developers should have regard to the criteria set out in the following in the preparation of development proposals

- Access for the disabled – minimum design criteria, published by the National Rehabilitation Board
- Part M of the Building Regulations 1997 to 2000
- Buildings for Everyone – Access and uses for all the citizens, by the National Rehabilitation Board, 1998.

The needs of people with disabilities should be taken into account in the design and construction of footpaths and parking areas. Footpaths in private commercial and housing

developments and public housing developments shall be dished at junctions. Parking areas should make provision for spaces for disabled drivers and such spaces should be located in the most convenient locations for ease of use.

Tactile indicators are becoming increasingly more common. Tactile paving surfaces can be used to convey important information to visually impaired pedestrians about their environment. The provision of tactile surfaces for the visually impaired in all developments will be encouraged.

4.5 Car parking and Loading

New development will normally be required by the Planning Authority to provide adequate off-street car parking facilities. Such facilities shall cater for the immediate and anticipated future demands of the development, and shall be located within the site or in close proximity to such development. Car parking facilities shall generally be provided behind in a manner that reduces its visual impact to a minimum such as behind the building line and the use of screening.

The dimension of car parking bays shall be a minimum of 4.8m by 2.4m.

Where parking space is proposed in front of existing premises, existing railings or boundary walls shall be retained. They should be provided with proper public lighting facilities and shall be clearly demarcated. Car parking areas should be properly landscaped by the provision of trees, shrubs and grassed areas in order to ensure that damage to the visual amenities is avoided. Parking bays shall be adequately delineated.

Where the developer is unable to comply with the car parking standards for the development set out in the table below, a financial contribution may be acceptable in lieu of car parking provision, which will be related to the cost of providing such facilities.

In developments of an industrial or commercial nature, developers will be required to provide loading or unloading facilities sufficient to meet the demand of such development

Kilkenny County Council may modify the requirements of loading and unloading facilities in any particular case where it considers it would be in the interests of proper planning and sustainable development of the area to do so. Parking and service spaces must be located on site so as to prevent street obstruction and should be located where possible to the rear and side of the buildings and in such a manner to ensure minimal impact on the amenity of adjoining properties.

Where a number of uses are contained within one development, the various uses shall be separated and the overall parking requirements for the development shall be assessed relative to each separate use in order to compute the overall parking requirement for the development (e.g. in a hotel the function rooms, bars etc. shall be assessed as separate from the bedroom provision).

In addition to the above requirements, developers will be required to provide and maintain loading and circulation facilities sufficient to meet the likely demand of each development.

Car Parking Standards for Various Land Uses

<i>Land Use</i>	<i>Parking Spaces per Unit</i>
Dwelling House	2 car spaces per dwelling unit in suburban areas
Dwelling House (Residential areas)	1 space per unit in the city centre. 0.25 per dwelling for visitor parking
Flat or Bedsitter	1.25 spaces per unit
Schools	1 space for every classroom plus 4 additional spaces
Churches, theatres, Public halls	1 car space per 10 seats.
Hotels, hostels and guesthouses	1 car space per bedroom
Hotel function rooms	1 space per 10 sq. metres
Public houses, inc. hotel bar	1 car space for every 20m ² of bar and lounge floor area in the City Centre and 1 car space per 10 sq. m of bar and lounge floor area in all other locations.
Shopping centres, supermarkets, department stores	5 car spaces for every 93 m ² of gross floor area.
Shops	1 car space per 30 sq. metres in City Centre and 1 space per 20 square metres outside
Restaurants, cafes	1 car space per 20 m ² gross floor area
Banks and offices	1 car space per 15m ² of gross floor area and additional space to be determined by the Planning Authority.
Industry	1 car space for every 60m ² of gross industrial floor area and operational space to be determined by the Planning Authority.
Warehousing	Each application to be determined by the Planning Authority
Retail Warehousing	1 car space for every 35 sq. meters of net retail floor space
Full 18 hole Golf Course	4 car spaces per hole
Par 3 golf courses	2 car spaces per hole
Golf driving ranges, shooting ranges	1 space per bay/ trap plus 3 spaces
Sports grounds and sports clubs	Each application to be determined by the Planning Authority
Hospital	1.50 spaces per bed
Nursing Homes	1 space per 4 bedrooms plus staff
Clinics/Medical practices	3 spaces per consulting room plus staff

In the case of any use not specified above, the Planning Authority will determine the parking requirements, having regard to the traffic levels likely to be generated as a result of the development.

Where a number of uses are contained within one development, the various uses shall be separated and the overall parking requirements for the development shall be assessed relative to each separate use in order to compute the overall parking requirement for the development (e.g. in a hotel the function rooms, bars etc. shall be assessed as separate from the bedroom provision).

However, where a developer can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that parking spaces will be utilised throughout the day by a number of different users, availing of different facilities within a proposed development, the Planning Authority may, in the interest of sustainability, take this multi use into account when assessing parking needs.

In addition to the above requirements, developers will be required to provide and maintain loading and circulation facilities sufficient to meet the likely demand of each development.

In implementing the car parking standards, the Council will reserve the right to alter the requirements having regard to each particular development.

4.6 Public Utilities

The Planning Authority will require that all wires and cables for the provision of public utility services shall be ducted underground to preserve the amenity and visual character of an area, and in the interests of public safety.

4.7 Shopfronts and Advertising

The over-riding principle for the design of shopfronts and the design and placement of advertisements and signs should be restraint. Chapter 10 of the County Development Plan lays down specified standards, which will be adhered to in Kells.

4.8 The Likely Significant Effects on the Environment of Implementing the Proposed Kells Local Area Plan

The Planning and Development Act 2000 requires that a Local Area Plan shall include information on the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan.

4.8.1 Description of the Proposed Local Area Plan

The Local Area Plan lands comprise approximately 16 hectares (39.5 acres) of undeveloped residential zoned lands along with other land zonings.

4.8.2 Identification of likely significant effects on the environment

The likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the proposed Kells Local Area Plan are categorised as follows:

- Human beings (includes population, economic and social activity)
- Material assets (includes infrastructure)
- Flora and fauna
- Archaeology and cultural heritage
- Landscape

Information on each likely significant effect together with proposed mitigation measures is outlined below.

4.8.2.1 Human beings

Environmental baseline: The population of Kells Electoral Division was recorded as 506 at the 2002 Census. The lands identified for development are all contiguous to the existing built up area of Kells. There is limited employment associated with the current agricultural use of much of the zoned lands.

Likely significant effects:

- Development of additional residential units
- Population increase
- Greater demand for retailing, services, leisure and community facilities and amenities
- Increased demand for transport and travel

Proposed mitigation measures:

- Objectives to ensure the provision of adequate supporting services, facilities and amenities in association with new residential development.
- Objectives for the provision of an adequate traffic management system to cater for increased traffic.
- Objectives for high quality architectural design, layout and landscape treatment of all buildings and spaces.

4.8.2.2 Material Assets

Traffic:

Environmental baseline: There are a number of roads existing in Kells at present, including the R697, which is a Regional Road linking Kilkenny and Carrick-on-Suir.

Likely significant effects:

- The development of additional lands will increase the amount of local traffic

Proposed mitigation measures:

- Provision of an integrated network of walking and cycling routes
- Traffic calming – pedestrian crossings, footpath provision

Water Supply:

Environmental baseline: Kells is served by the Bennetsbridge Regional Water Supply Scheme. This scheme is at capacity.

Likely significant effects:

- Increased demand for water supply

Proposed mitigation measures:

- New water sources will be accessed and utilised to serve the area
- New developments will be required to provide a temporary private water supply, which will be maintained indefinitely until the public water supply is upgraded, or will only be permitted subject to adequate capacity in water supply being available

Foul and Surface Water Drainage:

Environmental baseline: The development of additional lands will lead to an increase in the demand for foul water and surface water drainage. Kells is currently served by a secondary sewerage treatment system, which is modular.

Likely significant effects:

Infrastructure will be improved through additional development

Proposed mitigation measures:

Improved foul drainage facilities to cater for new housing developments

4.8.2.3 Flora and fauna

Environmental baseline: Consultants carried out a Flora & Fauna study in order to survey and compile an inventory of the flora and fauna of the area.

Likely significant effects:

The principal effect will be the loss of habitat and biodiversity arising from developments on previously agricultural /rural lands.

Proposed mitigation measures:

- Identification of the significant areas of interest for flora and fauna.
- Objectives for the preservation of these areas through the zoning objectives of the plan.
- Much of any new development will occur on lands which are considered less important in terms of flora and fauna diversity.

4.8.2.4 Archaeology and cultural heritage

Environmental baseline:

There are a number of protected structures in the town. Consultants carried out an Urban Design Study and an Architectural Assessment of the village in order to compile a profile of the architectural character of the area.

Likely significant effects:

- Possible impact on sites of archaeological interest.
- Possible degradation of buildings of architectural interest.

Proposed mitigation measures:

- Policies and objectives to protect the archaeological heritage
- Archaeological assessment prior to the commencement of development, where required.
- The inclusion in the List of protected structures of the buildings of architectural and historic interest

4.8.2.5 Other possible effects

Other possible effects on the environment include those on air, water, soils and climate. These are considered to be less significant in the context of the Local Area Plan than those outlined above.

4.8.3 Consideration of Alternatives: Could Development Take Place Elsewhere

The development of Kells will have a significant impact as a result of the change of use of areas from agricultural and fallow use to residential, employment and social uses. It is a policy of the Council to encourage development within such designated towns and villages where the infrastructure and services exist. Development in such settlements constitutes a more efficient use of existing resources.

The development of land locally must however be seen in the context of providing for local development demands, and ensuring that realistic alternatives exist to the development of one off houses in the country side. The development of lands locally and in a centralised location is more sustainable type of development than the development of many individual houses in an uncoordinated manner.

APPENDIX 1 – PROTECTED STRUCTURES

Existing Protected Structures in Kells

Protected Structure	Description	Location	Map Ref. No.	RPS No.
Bridge	8 arch road bridge, built c.1770, extended to south east by 3 arches.		1	C181 D54
Catholic church	T-plan church built c. 1830 replacing an earlier Roman Catholic church. Modernised in mid-20 th century and renovated c.1980.	South of Kells bridge	2	C182
House	Detached 3 bay 2 storey house. Rendered walls with ruled and lined detail and stucco quoins. Square-headed window openings with replacement aluminium windows. Square headed door opening with decorative stucco surround and a replacement timber and glazing door.	North of church	3	C183
Mullin's Mill	Detached 4 bay 3 storey former water mill built c.1800, with single storey extension to north-west, return and extension to rear. Pitched and lean-to slate roofs with terracotta ridge tiles, brick chimneystacks, replacement rainwater goods and skylights to extension. Random coursed stone walls with buttress to rear. Segmental headed sluice opening with stone voussirs.	East of bridge	4	C184 D21
Boland's Mill/ Hutchinson's Mill	Detached multiple bay 5 storey former corn mill, built c. 1800 with single bay return to rear. Hipped slate roof with terracotta ridge tiles and cast-iron rainwater goods. Rendered rubble limestone walls with blocked limestone eaves course. Square-headed and segmental headed window openings with redbrick surrounds and replacement timber paned windows.	East of bridge	5	C185 D55
House	Gothic house built of rusticated limestone. Sandstone plaque bearing a shield with 3 sheaves of wheat separated by an inverted V. Carved in relief with a partially damaged monogram of CD with the Latin words 'Vica Rius' and dated 1868.	North side of Stoneyford road	6	C186
Effigy	Medieval effigy in the wall beside the disused Church of Ireland church. South west of enclosing wall.		7	C187

Priory	7 towered fortified priory of Augustinians		8	C188
Church of Ireland	Ruin with a long nave bellcote and distinct batter, probably C17th. Graveyard and trees.		9	C189
Glebe house and lodge	The Priory. Detached 3 bay 2 storey over raised basement rectory, built in 1830 with extension to west. Hipped slate roof with oversailing eaves, rendered chimneystack, lead flashing to ridges and cast iron rainwater goods. Roughcast rendered walls with tooled limestone sill course to ground floor and pulvinated cornice. Timber sash windows and blind openings with tooled limestone sills and security bars to basement. Tooled limestone doorcase with fanlight, panelled double doors and limestone threshold, accessed by limestone steps with wrought iron railings.	Southeast of village centre	10	C190

APPENDIX 2 – ECOLOGICAL SURVEY

**Flora and Fauna Report
Kells Local Area Plan
for
Kilkenny County Council**

January 2004

Prepared by White Young Green Environmental Limited,

Bracken Business Park,

Bracken Road,

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1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the current survey was to examine the ecological value of the study area and to assess the likely significant impacts of implementing the proposed Kells Local Area Plan. The assessment comprised a desk study and field survey.

The desk study comprised the following elements:

- Identification of all designated sites of nature conservation interest within the study area.
- Consultation with the Heritage Division, Dept. of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
- Consultation with the Southern Regional Fisheries Board.
- Assessment of fisheries/aquatic value of surface water bodies.
- Review of Ordnance Survey maps, and aerial photos where available.
- Review of relevant reports and literature for the areas.

The field survey comprised of a habitat assessment of the study area. The habitat assessment was conducted in general accordance with Phase 1 Habitat Survey Methodology (JNCC, 1993) and habitats were identified according to Fossit (2000). Plant identification follows Webb *et al.* (1996) and Rose (1981). The site visit was conducted on January 9th and 13th 2004. The weather varied from heavy rain to dry sunny cold weather.

1.1 Survey Constraints

As this study was conducted in January, a full description of the flora and fauna within the study area is not available. Nevertheless, it is possible to assess the habitats within the study area in terms of their relative importance.

2. DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AREA

Kells is situated approximately 13km south of Kilkenny in the Kings River valley. The Kings River and River Glory merge to the west of the study area before flowing in an easterly direction through the study area. The Kings River merges with the River Nore approximately 4km east of the study area. Kells has several ruins of archaeological significance especially towards the east of the study area.

3. DESIGNATED AREAS OF NATURE CONSERVATION

A review of the Heritage Divisions datasets indicates that the study area includes part of the River Barrow and River Nore Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (site code: 002162). A full copy of the site synopsis for this SAC is contained in Appendix A. The portion of the SAC within the study area is presented on Figure 1.

4. CONSULTATION

The Heritage Division, Dept. of Environment Heritage and Local Government, was consulted with respect to the Local Area Plan implementation (21st November 2003). Apart from highlighting the designated River Barrow and River Nore SAC, no specific ecological issues were raised with regard to Kells.

The Southern Regional Fisheries Board (SRFB) was consulted with respect to the Local Area Plan implementation (21st November 2003). The SRFB state that though the Kings River is not designated as a Salmonid River, it is however an important salmonid water. Furthermore, it feeds into the Nore which is a designated Salmonid water (*pers. comm.*). In addition the Kings River holds a significant crayfish population.

Salmonids require a very high quality environment. In terms of the Local Area Plan, the three principle issues of concern are that:

- water quality not be adversely impacted as a consequence of development,
- development is carried out so as not in any way to constitute a threat or barrier to the free movement of fish and fish life, and
- in terms of water quantity, river flows and levels are maintained so as to ensure that all currently wetted areas remain so, that there is adequate dilution for such effluent and waste water discharges as are made.

In relation to Kells, the SRFB state that “*while there is a secondary sewage treatment plant serving the village, it has no further capacity, and indeed there are problems as regards access to the site of the plant for routine care and maintenance*”. They further state that as a matter of policy, the SRFB objects to the granting of any further planning permissions including new and increased loadings to the public foul sewer at Kells.

A full copy of the written correspondence received from the SRFB is contained in Appendix B.

5. HABITAT ASSESSMENT

The most frequently occurring habitat type identified within the study area was Improved Agricultural Grassland. Arable land was also very common. Wet grassland predominates the river banks. Small areas of scrub and ash woodland were also identified. Figure 1 presents the habitats found within the study area. Note that hedgerows were not recorded for the purposes of this study although they are widespread throughout the study area and are important as wildlife corridors.

The species composition of Improved Agricultural Grassland (GA1) is dominated by perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*) with white clover (*Trifolium repens*) occasional to abundant. Other grasses that occur abundantly are Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*) and cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*). *Carex* sp. and *Juncus* sp. occur occasionally. Broadleaved herbs include sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), buttercups (*Ranunculus* sp.), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), cow-parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), cat's ear (*Hypochoeris radicata*), daisy (*Bellis perennis*), creeping cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*), willowherb (*Epilobium* sp.) and thistles (*Cirsium* sp.). The Arable Crop (BC1) habitat within the study area includes recently ploughed areas, areas planted with fodder beet and harvested areas. A small Scrub (WS1) area was noted associated with a ringfort to the north of the study area. Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and elder (*Sambuca nigra*) were the principle shrub species with bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) and gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) occasional. Shrubs reached heights of approximately 6m. The canopy is quite open, with a clearing in the centre. The ground flora is similar to that in the adjacent fields and is used for grazing.

Two areas of ecological significance were identified within the study area:

- The River Barrow and River Nore SAC (002162),
- Ash Woodland

5.1 River Barrow and River Nore SAC (002162)

This designation consists of the freshwater stretches of the Barrow/Nore River catchments as far upstream as the Slieve Bloom Mountains, and also includes the tidal elements and estuary as far downstream as Creadun Head in Waterford. Within the study area, this designated site consists largely of freshwater, wet grassland, scrub, dry calcareous and neutral grassland, improved grassland habitat and drainage ditches within the study area.

The Kings River, classified as Lowland/Depositing Rivers (FW2), contains fast-flowing water which was in spate at the time of survey. It varies in width throughout the study area, with the widest parts east of Kells Bridge up to the Belfry which includes a millrace on the northern side of the river. The river is largely unbounded throughout the study area. However, trees such as ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), crack willow (*Salix fragilis*), alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) and blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) line the waters edge towards the east of the study area. *Phalaris arundinacea* is frequent along the riverside. Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) were frequent around the mill area. Blackbird (*Turdus merula*) and sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) were observed in trees/scrub along the river.

Wet Grassland (GS4) is the dominant habitat alongside the Kings River and appears to vary in species composition. It tends to be periodically inundated with some flooding apparent in places at the time of survey. Common rush (*Juncus effusus*) dominates the sward in parts. However more diverse examples are widespread such as that listed below.

This habitat, south of the Kings River to the east of the study area, is largely dominated by scutch (*Elymus repens*) with *Phalaris arundinacea* abundant in patches. Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), common reed (*Juncus effusus*) and yellow flag (*Iris pseudocorus*) occur occasionally. Broadleaved herbs include marsh bedstraw *Galium palustre*, goose-grass (*Galium aparine*), meadow-sweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and willowherbs (*Epilobium* sp.) which occur abundantly. *Ranunculus* sp. and nettles (*Urtica dioica*) occur occasionally to frequently.

Along the northern bank, this habitat is co-dominated by tall vegetation, with yellow flag (*Iris pseudocorus*) and *Phalaris arundinacea* with meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) occurring abundantly. Marsh bedstraw (*Galium palustre*) and cuckoo-flower (*Cardamine pratensis*) occur frequently. St. John's wort (*Hypericum humifusum*), germander speedwell (*Veronica chamaedrys*) and heath speedwell (*Veronica officinalis*) all occur occasionally. A flock of lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) (50-60) and snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*) were noted within this area.

Drainage Ditches (FW4) are abundant within this site. Typically they are approximately 3-4m wide and 0.5ft deep. Water-cress (*Nasturtium officinale*) is the dominant species occurring with the drains. The ditches were in spate at the time of the survey and were approximately 20cm deep. *Phalaris arundinacea* and yellow flag (*Iris pseudocorus*) grow along the edges.

A small dense Scrub (WS1) area is located adjacent to the Wet Grassland (GS4) habitat to the north of the river. Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) dominates this area reaching a height of approximately 3m. Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) occurs occasionally. Nettle (*Urtica dioica*), willowherb (*Epilobium*) and thistle (*Cirsium* sp.) are frequent along the edges.

The Dry Calcareous and Neutral Grassland (GS1) habitat appeared to be quite species diverse, although a summer survey would be required to fully evaluate it's composition. This habitat is located on a moderate slope in close proximity to the Kings River floodplain. The sward comprises of a several graminoid species including foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*) and cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*) which occur abundantly and perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*) and dog's tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*) which occurs frequently. Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), black knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), dandelion (*Taraxacum* sp.), buttercup (*Ranunculus* sp.) and white clover (*Trifolium repens*) are abundant. Wild carrot (*Daucus carota*) and lesser plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*) occur occasionally.

Improved Agricultural Grassland (GA1) occurs infrequently within the SAC.

This site, protected under the EU Habitats Directive, is of national ecological importance. Lapwing is a red listed species of high conservation concern. Snipe is recognised as an amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

5.2 Ash Woodland

This woodland, classified as Oak-Ash-Hazel Woodland (WN2), has a very open canopy and is dominated by mature ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) with good ivy (*Hedera helix*) cover. The woodland appears to have been possibly planted around an area previously quarried and has a number of rock faces within it. Occasional mature elder (*Sambuca nigra*) and hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) also occur. The woodland is not fenced and so does not exclude grazing. As a result, the understorey is poorly developed. Substantial poaching is evident in places. The ground is partly dominated by improved grassland species. Ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*) is abundant in places.

An Irish hare (*Lepus timidus hibernicus*) was observed in this woodland. This is a protected species in Ireland, but it is also classified as a game species and may be hunted under licence issued by the Heritage Division, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. It is listed in the Irish Red Data book as internationally important and in Annex V of the EU Habitats Directive as a species which may be exploited but not to the extent that its favourable conservation status is compromised.

The mature ash trees with ivy cover offer good bat potential especially in consideration of this woodlands close proximity to the King's River. In light of this factor, combined with the occasional use by the protected mammal species, the hare, this woodland should be considered of moderate local ecological significance.

6. OTHER PROTECTED SPECIES

According to the Southern Regional Fisheries Board, the Kings River holds a significant population of the White-Clawed crayfish (*Austopotamobius pallipes*). This species is listed in Annex II and V of the EU Habitats Directive and is protected under the Irish Wildlife Act

1976. Its distribution is restricted to calcium-rich waters, primarily from chalk- and limestone-bearing substrata. They usually occur where water quality is good, and are particularly intolerant of heavy metal pollution. They are also sensitive to physical changes to their environment, such as dredging, draining and channelisation (MCCreesh, 1999).

7. FISHERIES AND WATER QUALITY

Data obtained from the EPA website was examined in relation to the main waterbodies, the Kings River and River Glory, within the study area. The Kings River, approximately 2km upstream of the study area, was recorded as having slightly polluted waters from the period 1987 to 1998. Within the study area, results collected near Kellsborough House indicate similar results, with slight pollution usually recorded during the same time period, apart from 1995 when quality deteriorated to receive a moderately polluted rating. Results obtained for the River Glory at the bridge upstream of its confluence with the Kings River, indicate unpolluted waters from the period 1980 to 1998, again apart from 1995 when water quality similarly deteriorated to receive a moderately polluted rating.

According to correspondence received from the Southern Regional Fisheries Board, the Kings River is a very important salmonid water. Furthermore, it feeds into the designated Salmonid waterbody, the River Nore approximately 4km downstream of the study area.

8. OVERALL EVALUATION

The River Barrow and River Nore SAC covers a substantial portion of land within the Kells study area. This site is of national importance and is protected by the EU Habitats Directive.

Another site recognised of moderate local significance is an ash woodland with bat potential, south of the Kings River to the east of the study area.

Though the Kings River is not a designated salmonid river, it does contain important populations of salmonids. Furthermore, it merges with the Nore about 4km downstream of the study area which is designated for salmonids.

The Kings River holds an important population of the white-clawed crayfish which is protected under the EU Habitats Directive and under the Irish Wildlife Act 1976.

9. POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Potential Impacts

Impacts on ecology arising from the implementation of the local area plan can be broadly categorised into 3 headings:

- Direct habitat loss
- Indirect habitat changes

- Habitat fragmentation

Habitat loss

This involves the removal/destruction of a habitat.

Indirect habitat changes

This includes any changes brought about by alteration of drainage and discharges to surface water. The alteration of drainage can result in significant habitat changes to adjacent wetland habitats and the streams themselves. Furthermore, construction has the potential impacts of discharges to adversely impact on water quality of surface waters which will have knock-on effects on associated flora and fauna, such as the protected white-clawed crayfish. Discharges of cement, which has a very high pH value, or the washings of tools and equipment can result in dramatic increases in pH of receiving waters, with lethal effects on fish and fish life.

Habitat Fragmentation

This involves the break up of a habitat by a development, resulting in one or more smaller habitat areas. A reduction in the size of a habitat may cause a decline in species numbers, where the habitat area becomes too small to support viable populations. Particularly susceptible are those species such as birds and mammals with large ranges, and also short-lived species such as migratory insects and annual plants which need to re-invade each year.

These impacts are relevant to all habitats within the study area but should be regarded as significant where the two mentioned ecological areas are concerned.

9.2 Recommendations

It is recommended that the potential impacts listed above be avoided where the two areas identified as being of ecological interest, namely the area designated as part of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC and the Ash Woodland, are concerned. Furthermore, it is recommended that the Ash Woodland be fenced. This should allow the woodland structure to improve.

Throughout the study area, tree and scrub cover should be maintained where possible. Cutting of hedgerows and site clearance should ideally take place outside the bird-nesting period which starts on March 1st and ends 31st of August.

Native trees should be used in new planting schemes. Tree species planted should reflect the local species composition. Further planting along the Kings River is recommended to increase bankside cover. Tree species planted should reflect the local species composition, including willow species, alder and ash.

The SRFB suggest that the Local Area Plan recommend that developers make contact with the Regional Fisheries Board when carrying out any works on or adjacent to rivers. Issues of particular importance are as follows:

- It is an offence to interfere with the bed, bank or soil of any river, regardless of size, during the annual close season. This is to afford protection to adult spawning fish and to the young of such fish.
- People conducting construction works adjacent to waters should be made aware of the high pH of cement. Discharges of cement, or washings of tools and equipment in

waters can result in the dramatic increase of the pH of the receiving waters, with lethal effects on fish and fish life.

- The Fisheries Board should be consulted where works such as the laying of pipelines across, including under the river bed level, are being carried out. Developers should be aware that no construction should be carried out which, particularly during low flow situations, might interfere with the free movement of fish and fish life.

SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: RIVER BARROW AND RIVER NORE

SITE CODE: 002162

This site consists of the freshwater stretches of the Barrow/Nore River catchments as far upstream as the Slieve Bloom Mountains and it also includes the tidal elements and estuary as far downstream as Creadun Head in Waterford. The site passes through eight counties – Offaly, Kildare, Laois, Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Wexford and Waterford. Major towns along the edge of the site include Mountmellick, Portarlinton, Monasterevin, Stradbally, Athy, Carlow, Leighlinbridge, Graiguenamanagh, New Ross, Inistioge, Thomastown, Callan, Bennettsbridge, Kilkenny and Durrow. The larger of the many tributaries include the Lerr, Fushoge, Mountain, Aughavaud, Owenass, Boherbaun and Stradbally Rivers of the Barrow and the Delour, Dinin, Erkina, Owveg, Munster, Arrigle and King’s Rivers on the Nore. Both rivers rise in the Old Red Sandstone of the Slieve Bloom Mountains before passing through a band of Carboniferous shales and sandstones. The Nore, for a large part of its course, traverses limestone plains and then Old Red Sandstone for a short stretch below Thomastown. Before joining the Barrow it runs over intrusive rocks poor in silica. The upper reaches of the Barrow also runs through limestone. The middle reaches and many of the eastern tributaries, sourced in the Blackstairs Mountains, run through Leinster Granite. The southern end, like the Nore runs over intrusive rocks poor in silica. Waterford Harbour is a deep valley excavated by glacial floodwaters when the sea level was lower than today. The coast shelves quite rapidly along much of the shore.

The site is a candidate SAC selected for alluvial wet woodlands and petrifying springs, priority habitats on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The site is also selected as a candidate SAC for old oak woodlands, floating river vegetation, estuary, tidal mudflats, *Salicornia* mudflats, Atlantic salt meadows, Mediterranean salt meadows, dry heath and eutrophic tall herbs, all habitats listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The site is also selected for the following species listed on Annex II of the same directive - Sea Lamprey, River Lamprey, Brook Lamprey, Freshwater Pearl Mussel, Nore Freshwater Pearl Mussel, Crayfish, Twaite Shad, Atlantic Salmon, Otter, *Vertigo moulinsiana* and the plant Killarney Fern.

Good examples of Alluvial Forest are seen at Rathsnagadan, Murphy’s of the River, in Abbeyleix estate and along other shorter stretches of both the tidal and freshwater elements of the site. Typical species seen include Almond Willow (*Salix triandra*), White Willow (*S. alba*), Grey Willow (*S. cinerea*), Crack Willow (*S. fragilis*), Osier (*S.*

viminalis), with Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), Hemlock Water-dropwort (*Oenanthe crocata*), Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*), Thin-spiked Wood-sedge (*Carex strigosa*), Pendulous Sedge (*C. pendula*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*) and the Red Data Book species Nettle-leaved Bellflower (*Campanula trachelium*). Three rare invertebrates have been recorded in this habitat at Murphy's of the River. These are: *Neoscia obliqua* (Diptera: Syrphidae), *Tetanocera freyi* (Diptera: Sciomyzidae) and *Dictya umbrarum* (Diptera: Sciomyzidae).

A good example of petrifying springs with tufa formations occurs at Dysart Wood along the Nore. This is a rare habitat in Ireland and one listed with priority status on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive. These hard water springs are characterised by lime encrustations, often associated with small waterfalls. A rich bryophyte flora is typical of the habitat and two diagnostic species, *Cratoneuron commutatum* var. *commutatum* and *Eucladium verticillatum*, have been recorded.

The best examples of old Oak woodlands are seen in the ancient Park Hill woodland in the estate at Abbeyleix; at Kyleadohir, on the Delour, Forest Wood House, Kylecorragh and Brownstown Woods on the Nore; and at Cloghristic Wood, Drummond Wood and Borris Demesne on the Barrow, though other patches occur throughout the site. Abbeyleix Woods is a large tract of mixed deciduous woodland which is one of the only remaining true ancient woodlands in Ireland. Historical records show that Park Hill has been continuously wooded since the sixteenth century and has the most complete written record of any woodland in the country. It supports a variety of woodland habitats and an exceptional diversity of species including 22 native trees, 44 bryophytes and 92 lichens. It also contains eight indicator species of ancient woodlands. Park Hill is also the site of two rare plants, Nettle-leaved Bellflower and the moss *Leucodon sciuroides*. It has a typical bird fauna including Jay, Long-eared Owl and Raven. A rare invertebrate, *Mitostoma chrysomelas*, occurs in Abbeyleix and only two other sites in the country. Two flies *Chrysogaster virescens* and *Hybomitra muhlfeldi* also occur. The rare Myxomycete fungus, *Licea minima* has been recorded from woodland at Abbeyleix.

Oak woodland covers parts of the valley side south of Woodstock and is well developed at Brownsford where the Nore takes several sharp bends. The steep valley side is covered by Oak (*Quercus* spp.), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and Birch (*Betula pubescens*) with some Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) and Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*). All the trees are regenerating through a cover of Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*) Wood Rush (*Luzula sylvatica*) and Broad Buckler-fern (*Dryopteris dilatata*).

On the steeply sloping banks of the River Nore about 5 km west of New Ross, in County Kilkenny, Kylecorragh Woods form a prominent feature in the landscape. This is an excellent example of a relatively undisturbed, relict Oak woodland with a very good tree canopy. The wood is quite damp and there is a rich and varied ground flora. At Brownstown a small, mature Oak-dominant woodland occurs on a steep slope. There is younger woodland to the north and east of it. Regeneration throughout is evident. The understorey is similar to the woods at Brownsford. The ground flora of this woodland is developed on acidic, brown earth type soil and comprises a thick carpet of Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Hard Fern (*Blechnum spicant*), Cow-wheat (*Melampyrum* spp.) and Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*).

Borris Demesne contains a very good example of a semi-natural broad-leaved woodland in very good condition. There is quite a high degree of natural re-generation of Oak and Ash through the woodland. At the northern end of the estate Oak species predominate. Drummond Wood, also on the Barrow, consists of three blocks of deciduous woods situated on steep slopes above the river. The deciduous trees are mostly Oak species. The woods have a well established understorey of Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), and the herb layer is varied, with Brambles abundant. Whitebeam (*Sorbus devoniensis*) has also been recorded.

Eutrophic tall herb vegetation occurs in association with the various areas of alluvial forest and elsewhere where the flood-plain of the river is intact. Characteristic species of the habitat include Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), Marsh Ragwort (*Senecio aquaticus*), Ground Ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*) and Hedge Bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*). Indian Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), an introduced and invasive species, is abundant in places.

Floating River Vegetation is well represented in the Barrow and in the many tributaries of the site. In the Barrow the species found include Water Starworts (*Callitriche* spp.), Canadian Pondweed (*Elodea canadensis*), Bulbous Rush (*Juncus bulbosus*), Milfoil (*Myriophyllum* spp.), *Potamogeton x nitens*, Broad-leaved Pondweed (*P. natans*), Fennel Pondweed (*P. pectinatus*), Perfoliated Pondweed (*P. perfoliatus*) and Crowfoots (*Ranunculus* spp.). The water quality of the Barrow has improved since the vegetation survey was carried out (EPA, 1996).

Dry Heath at the site occurs in pockets along the steep valley sides of the rivers especially in the Barrow Valley and along the Barrow tributaries where they occur in the foothills of the Blackstairs Mountains. The dry heath vegetation along the slopes of the river bank consists of Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) species with patches of acidic grassland vegetation. Additional typical species include Heath

Bedstraw (*Galium saxatile*), Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*), Common Sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*) and Bent Grass (*Agrostis stolonifera*). On the steep slopes above New Ross the Red Data Book species Greater Broomrape (*Orobanche rapum-genistae*) has been recorded. Where rocky outcrops are shown on the maps Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) and Wood Rush (*Luzula sylvatica*) are present. At Ballyhack a small area of dry heath is interspersed with patches of lowland dry grassland. These support a number of Clover species including the legally protected Clustered Clover (*Trifolium glomeratum*) - a species known from only one other site in Ireland. This grassland community is especially well developed on the west side of the mud-capped walls by the road. On the east of the cliffs a group of rock-dwelling species occur, i.e. English Stonecrop (*Sedum anglicum*), Sheep's-bit (*Jasione montana*) and Wild Madder (*Rubia peregrina*). These rocks also support good lichen and moss assemblages with *Ramalina subfarinacea* and *Hedwigia ciliata*.

Dry Heath at the site generally grades into wet woodland or wet swamp vegetation lower down the slopes on the river bank. Close to the Blackstairs Mountains, in the foothills associated with the Aughnabrisky, Aughavaud and Mountain Rivers there are small patches of wet heath dominated by Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) with Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*), Carnation Sedge (*Carex panicea*) and Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*).

Saltmeadows occur at the southern section of the site in old meadows where the embankment has been breached, along the tidal stretches of in-flowing rivers below Stokestown House, in a narrow band on the channel side of Common Reed (*Phragmites*) beds and in narrow fragmented strips along the open shoreline. In the larger areas of salt meadow, notably at Carrickcloney, Ballinlaw Ferry and Rochestown on the west bank; Fisherstown, Alderton and Great Island to Dunbrody on the east bank, the Atlantic and Mediterranean sub types are generally intermixed. At the upper edge of the salt meadow in the narrow ecotonal areas bordering the grasslands where there is significant percolation of salt water, the legally protected species Borrer's Saltmarsh-grass (*Puccinellia fasciculata*) and Meadow Barley (*Hordeum secalinum*) (Flora Protection Order, 1987) are found. The very rare Divided Sedge (*Carex divisa*) is also found. Sea Rush (*Juncus maritimus*) is also present. Other plants recorded and associated with salt meadows include Sea Aster (*Aster tripolium*), Sea Thrift (*Armeria maritima*), Sea Couch (*Elymus pycnanthus*), Spear-leaved Orache (*Atriplex prostrata*), Lesser Sea-spurrey (*Spergularia marina*), Sea Arrowgrass (*Triglochin maritima*) and Sea Plantain (*Plantago maritima*).

Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand are found in the creeks of the saltmarshes and at the seaward edges of them. The habitat also occurs in small amounts on some stretches of the shore free of stones.

The estuary and the other Habitats Directive Annex I habitats within it form a large component of the site. Extensive areas of intertidal flats, comprised of substrates ranging from fine, silty mud to coarse sand with pebbles/stones are present. Good quality intertidal sand and mudflats have developed on a linear shelf on the western side of Waterford Harbour, extending for over 6 km from north to south between Passage East and Creadaun Head, and in places are over 1 km wide. The sediments are mostly firm sands, though grade into muddy sands towards the upper shore. They have a typical macro-invertebrate fauna, characterised by polychaetes and bivalves. Common species include *Arenicola marina*, *Nephtys hombergii*, *Scoloplos armiger*, *Lanice conchilega* and *Cerastoderma edule*.

The western shore of the harbour is generally stony and backed by low cliffs of glacial drift. At Woodstown there is a sandy beach, now much influenced by recreation pressure and erosion. Behind it a lagoonal marsh has been impounded which runs westwards from Gaultiere Lodge along the course of a slow stream. An extensive reedbed occurs here. At the edges is a tall fen dominated by sedges (*Carex* spp.), Meadowsweet, Willowherb (*Epilobium* spp.) and rushes (*Juncus* spp.). Wet woodland also occurs. This area supports populations of typical waterbirds including Mallard, Snipe, Sedge Warbler and Water Rail.

The dunes which fringe the strand at Duncannon are dominated by Marram grass (*Ammophila arenaria*) towards the sea. Other species present include Wild Sage (*Salvia verbenaca*), a rare Red Data Book species. The rocks around Duncannon ford have a rich flora of seaweeds typical of a moderately exposed shore and the cliffs themselves support a number of coastal species on ledges, including Thrift (*Armeria maritima*), Rock Samphire (*Crithmum maritimum*) and Buck's-horn Plantain (*Plantago coronopus*).

Other habitats which occur throughout the site include wet grassland, marsh, reed swamp, improved grassland, arable land, quarries, coniferous plantations, deciduous woodland, scrub and ponds.

Seventeen Red Data Book plant species have been recorded within the site, most in the recent past. These are Killarney Fern (*Trichomanes speciosum*), Divided Sedge (*Carex divisa*), Clustered Clover (*Trifolium glomeratum*), Basil Thyme (*Acinos arvensis*), Hemp nettle (*Galeopsis angustifolia*), Borrer's Saltmarsh Grass (*Puccinellia fasciculata*), Meadow Barley (*Hordeum secalinum*), Opposite-leaved Pondweed (*Groenlandia densa*),

Autumn Crocus (*Colchicum autumnale*), Wild Sage (*Salvia verbenaca*), Nettle-leaved Bellflower (*Campanula trachelium*), Saw-wort (*Serratula tinctoria*), Bird Cherry (*Prunus padus*), Blue Fleabane (*Erigeron acer*), Fly Orchid (*Ophrys insectifera*), Broomrape (*Orobanche hederæ*) and Greater Broomrape (*Orobanche rapum-genistæ*). Of these the first nine are protected under the Flora Protection Order 1999. Divided Sedge (*Carex divisa*) was thought to be extinct but has been found in a few locations in the site since 1990. In addition plants which do not have a very wide distribution in the country are found in the site including Thin-spiked Wood-sedge (*Carex strigosa*), Field Garlic (*Allium oleraceum*) and Summer Snowflake (*Leucojum aestivum*). Six rare lichens, indicators of ancient woodland, are found including *Lobaria laetevirens* and *L. pulmonaria*. The rare moss *Leucodon sciuroides* also occurs.

The site is very important for the presence of a number of EU Habitats Directive Annex II animal species including Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera* and *M. m. durrovensis*), Freshwater Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*), Salmon (*Salmo salar*), Twaite Shad (*Alosa fallax fallax*), three Lamprey species - Sea (*Petromyzon marinus*), Brook (*Lampetra planeri*) and River (*Lampetra fluviatilis*), the marsh snail *Vertigo moulinsiana* and Otter (*Lutra lutra*). This is the only site in the world for the hard water form of the Pearl Mussel *M. m. durrovensis* and one of only a handful of spawning grounds in the country for Twaite Shad. The freshwater stretches of the River Nore main channel is a designated salmonid river. The Barrow/Nore is mainly a grilse fishery though spring salmon fishing is good in the vicinity of Thomastown and Inistioge on the Nore. The upper stretches of the Barrow and Nore, particularly the Owenass River, are very important for spawning.

The site supports many other important animal species. Those which are listed in the Irish Red Data Book include Daubenton's Bat (*Myotis daubentoni*), Badger (*Meles meles*), Irish Hare (*Lepus timidus hibernicus*) and Frog (*Rana temporaria*). The rare Red Data Book fish species Smelt (*Osmerus eperlanus*) occurs in estuarine stretches of the site. In addition to the Freshwater Pearl Mussel, the site also supports two other freshwater Mussel species, *Anodonta anatina* and *A. cygnea*.

The site is of ornithological importance for a number of E.U. Birds Directive Annex I species including Greenland White-fronted Goose, Whooper Swan, Bewick's Swan, Bar-tailed Godwit, Peregrine and Kingfisher. Nationally important numbers of Golden Plover and Bar-tailed Godwit are found during the winter. Wintering flocks of migratory birds are seen in Shanahoe Marsh and the Curragh and Goul Marsh, both in Co. Laois and also along the Barrow Estuary in Waterford Harbour. There is also an extensive autumnal roosting site in the reedbeds of the Barrow Estuary used by Swallows before they leave the country.

Landuse at the site consists mainly of agricultural activities – many intensive, principally grazing and silage production. Slurry is spread over much of this area. Arable crops are also grown. The spreading of slurry and fertiliser poses a threat to the water quality of the salmonid river and to the populations of Habitats Directive Annex II animal species within the site. Many of the woodlands along the rivers belong to old estates and support many non-native species. Little active woodland management occurs. Fishing is a main tourist attraction along stretches of the main rivers and their tributaries and there are a number of Angler Associations, some with a number of beats. Fishing stands and styles have been erected in places. Both commercial and leisure fishing takes place on the rivers. There is net fishing in the estuary and a mussel bed also. Other recreational activities such as boating, golfing and walking, particularly along the Barrow towpath are also popular. There is a golf course on the banks of the Nore at Mount Juliet and GAA pitches on the banks at Inistioge and Thomastown. There are active and disused sand and gravel pits throughout the site. Several industrial developments, which discharge into the river, border the site. New Ross is an important shipping port. Shipping to and from Waterford and Belview ports also passes through the estuary.

The main threats to the site and current damaging activities include high inputs of nutrients into the river system from agricultural run-off and several sewage plants, overgrazing within the woodland areas, and invasion by non-native species, for example Cherry Laurel and Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*). The water quality of the site remains vulnerable. Good quality water is necessary to maintain the populations of the Annex II animal species listed above. Good quality is dependent on controlling fertilisation of the grasslands, particularly along the Nore. It also requires that sewage be properly treated before discharge. Drainage activities in the catchment can lead to flash floods which can damage the many Annex II species present. Capital and maintenance dredging within the lower reaches of the system pose a threat to migrating fish species such as lamprey and shad. Land reclamation also poses a threat to the salt meadows and the populations of legally protected species therein.

Overall, the site is of considerable conservation significance for the occurrence of good examples of habitats and of populations of plant and animal species that are listed on Annexes I and II of the E.U. Habitats Directive respectively. Furthermore it is of high conservation value for the populations of bird species that use it. The occurrence of several Red Data Book plant species including three rare plants in the salt meadows and the population of the hard water form of the Pearl Mussel which is limited to a 10 km stretch of the Nore, add further interest to this site.

APPENDIX 3 – LIST OF NATIVE TREES AND SHRUBS

Choosing the right species of tree and shrub is very important in urban areas where there are restrictions on space. Where possible, always use native species. Below is a list of the trees and shrubs native to Ireland, and advice on the locations to which they are suited.

Common name	Latin name	Height (max)	Suitable for public open spaces	Suitable for streets and confined spaces	Suitable for tubs, containers, raised beds etc.	Guide to see key below
Alder	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	22m	Yes	No	Yes	ADPS
Alder buckthorn	<i>Frangula alnus</i>	6m	Yes	No	Yes	D
Arbutus (strawberry tree)	<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	8m	Yes	No	Yes	Not frost hardy
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	28m	Yes	No	No	ADIPS
Aspen	<i>Populus tremula</i>	24m	Yes	No	No	DPSV Not close to buildings or any services
Bird cherry	<i>Prunus padus</i>	14m	Yes	Yes	Yes	P
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	2m	No	No	No	C/H note: tends to be invasive
Broom	<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	2m	Yes	No	Yes	*
Burnet rose	<i>Rosa pimpinellifolia</i>	2m	Yes	No	Yes, but vigorous	C/H
Common (or European) gorse	<i>Ulex europeaus</i>	2.5m	Yes	No	In a rural setting	HV
Crab apple	<i>Malus sylvestris</i>	6m	Yes	No	No	AHIP
Dog rose	<i>Rosa canina</i>	2m	Yes	No	Yes. Vigorous	C/H
Downy birch	<i>Betula pubescens</i>	18m	Yes	Yes	Yes	ADIP
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	6m	In hedge	No	No	V
Guelder rose	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	4.5m	Yes	No	No	DH
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	9m	Yes	Yes	Yes	AHIPS

Common	Latin name	Height	Suit-	Suitable	Suitable for	Guide to
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name		(max)	able for public open spaces	for streets and confined spaces	tubs, containers, raised beds etc.	planting: see key below
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	6m	Yes	No	No	AHS
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	15m	Yes	Yes	Yes	AHPS
Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	climber	Yes	On walls	No	C
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>	climber	Yes	Yes	Yes	C
Juniper	<i>Juniperus communis</i>	6m	Yes	No	No	S
Pedunculate oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	30m	Yes	No	No	AI only suitable for large spaces
Privet	<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>	3m	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Purging buckthorn	<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>	4.5m	No	No	No	AHPV
Rowan or mountain ash	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	9m	Yes	Yes	Yes	ADHIP
Scots pine	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	24m	Yes	No	No	AI
Sessile oak	<i>Quercus petraea</i>	30m	Yes	No	No	AI only suitable for large spaces
Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	18m	Yes	Yes	Yes	ADIP
Sloe, blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	3m	Yes	No	No	AHPV
Spindle	<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	7.5m	Yes	No	No	H
Western (or mountain) gorse	<i>Ulex gallii</i>	1.5m	Yes	No	Yes	*
Whitebeam spp.	<i>Sorbus aria/S. anglica/S. devoniensis /S.hibernica/S. latifolia/S. rupicola</i>	12m	Yes	Yes	Yes	IPS
Wild cherry	<i>Prunus avium</i>	15m	Yes	Yes	Yes	AHI
Willow spp.	<i>Salix spp.</i>	6m	Some	No	No	V suitable buildings or services Not near
Wych elm	<i>Ulmus glabr</i>	30m	Yes		No	PS
Yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>	14m	Yes	No	Yes	AIPS

- A – Grows in a wide variety of soils
- C – Climber
- H – Suitable for hedging
- I – Suitable as an individual tree
- D – Tolerates or prefers damp conditions
- P – Tolerates smoke or pollution
- S – Tolerates shade
- V – Invasive
- * - Tolerates dry conditions

APPENDIX 4 – URBAN DESIGN STUDY

and

**Urban Design Guidelines for
Future Development**

Prepared for
Kilkenny County Council

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NATIONAL
BUILDING
AGENCY

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Urban Design Study for Kells

Character of the Landscape Setting

The village of Kells has developed adjacent to the floodplain of the Kings River, on its south side. The Kings River originates some twenty five kilometres northwest in the Slieveardagh Hills, and eventually feeds into the Nore River some six kilometres east. The surrounding landscape is undulating, with a mix of tillage and grazing lands. The landscape is punctuated by a number of fine mature trees.

Pattern and Shape of the Settlement

The village is centred on the cross roads of the Regional route 697 (to Kilkenny) and the road to Stoneyford, thereby providing it with a simple crucifix form, with evidence of consolidation in the backland areas. A little further north of the village centre and close to the bridge is a small cluster of buildings, providing some other uses and services related to the village's function.

On the north side of the river there are two mills and some other buildings providing a loose linear pattern close to the river. The other and perhaps most distinguishing feature of the village is the network of impressive stone buildings and stone walls associated with the medieval Kells Priory, situated to the east of the village and close to the river. The Priory is not contiguous to the village, but is separated by a field that provides fine uninterrupted views of the priory complex.

South of the Priory on the eastern approach road to the village is the remains of an old church and graveyards (anciently called St. Kieran's Church) in addition to the Church of Ireland Church. Dispersed in the hinterland are some farm complexes, some fine country houses in addition to other one-off rural houses.

Buildings and Spaces in the Village

Character Area 1: Village Centre

A fairly tight and coherent streetscape is to be found within approximately one hundred metres from the crossroads in the centre of the village (This area is shown as Character Area 1 in the Urban Design Map). This provides a strong sense of enclosure and sense of arrival. There are several terraces with uniform building lines and roof profiles emanating from the centre. However, some of the buildings in the very centre of the village are large commercial structures on very prominent sites, whose scale and architectural treatment are out of character with the traditional image of a small country village.

There are a few examples of simple, though fine late 19th Century residential dwellings with characteristic features of the period, including traditional timber two-over two sash windows, fenestration pattern and doorway entrances. More commonly, however, there are buildings of traditional scale and composition, but with modern windows and doors and it could be argued that they detract from the overall streetscape. On the Stoneyford Road close to the village centre, there is a noteworthy stone cottage of some architectural historic interest. The neighbouring house appears to have been recently rebuilt and incorporates a historic crest or plaque on its gable end. A distinctive, though somewhat similar plaque, with the torso of a body sculpted of stone, can be found incorporated into the stone walls surrounding the old church and graveyard on the road leading to the Priory.

Beyond the immediate centre of the village, the building pattern disperses somewhat reflecting the lower density of development associated with road frontage dwellings. In recent years, there

have been some residential housing schemes developed within this basic frame provided by the crossroads, consisting of infill development and backland development, close to the village core.

North of the village centre and close to the bridge there is a small nucleus of development comprising the Catholic Church, a shop, pub and community hall, in addition to some residential development. The sinuous street pattern and tighter pattern of development provides visual containment to this area.

Character Area 3: Kells Priory

There are two other important components to the general structure of Kells, including the medieval complex associated with Kells Priory, with its ruined abbey, cloisters, its walled enclosures and impressive towers. This has been known locally as 'the Seven Castles' – the area has been referred to as Character Area 3 in the Urban Design Map. It is separated from the village by a field and this sets it apart even more, emphasizing it as a self contained entity close to the rest of the settlement. This field acts as an important buffer zone, and should generally be maintained free from development so as to protect the important historical context and its landscape setting. Close by on the Stoneyford Road there is an old graveyard and church ruins, St. Kieran's, which appears to have been superseded at a later date by the Church of Ireland building and graveyard in the general vicinity. This complex relates to the glebe house and in the field to the south.

Character Area 2: Kings River, Mills and Weirs

The final important grouping of buildings and spaces in the town relates to the Kings River in the townland of Kellsborough (This area has been referred to as Character Area 2 in the Urban Design Map). Kells Bridge is a unique bridge that consists of a double archway system, that consists of six small arches on the upstream side and four archways on the downstream side, the two central ones spanning a greater width – which appears to indicate an widening of the bridge on the downstream side at a later date (see photo 12). Commencing at the bridge and running southeastwards is a series of older buildings, including the refurbished mill/museum; and a thatched cottage and adjoining refurbished stone dwelling; a modern timber clad bungalow and a much larger and impressive stone mill building by the second weir. This mill building is five storeys high and comprised of eleven bays and like the refurbished mill upstream, it still retains the mill wheel. The loose pattern of development gives this area a distinctive character associated with the country lane and the amenity value of the river. On this basis any new development should generally be restricted in the vicinity, north of the river.

The Nature of Open Spaces

There are no formal areas of public open space in the town, though there is a very significant amenity area, in the form of a linear walkway alongside the river with a small pocket park associated with the refurbished mill and museum. A footbridge connects the 'linear park' across the river to Kells Priory. There is also public access to Kells Priory which is also a very significant amenity area. Associated with the Priory is a small amenity area with picnic table at the car park on the Stoneyford approach road to the village.

Roads and Traffic

The village is a relatively quiet rural village with light traffic volumes. Apart from the public car park associated with the Priory, there is no off-street car park in the village. Public car parking is provided by means of on-street car parking, which appears to be adequate.

The rural roads are all in good condition, though the Stoneyford Road from the village centre to the new housing entrance is in need of re-surfacing.

The provision of footpaths in the village is variable. There is a rough path (grassed along parts) alongside the Stoneyford Road (on its northern side) which is delineated by traditional limestone kerbing. The path does not however run into the centre of the village. However, on the south side of this road, there is a small section of the street where there is a footpath and this also runs for a short distance along the road leading south from the centre of the village, in front of the terrace on that street. There are no footpaths serving the other three corners of the village centre and the only other footpath runs along a portion of the Kilmaganny Road (R697 southbound) to the entrance to Priory Estate.

Other Design Considerations

Street Furniture in the town consists of a number of street benches (three outside the Community Hall, south of the village) and one simple, though distinctive stone bench outside of Shirley's public house. There is also a traditional water pump outside of Smith's in the centre of the village.

Given the few commercial premises in the village, signage is not overly dominant and is generally in keeping with the character of the village. There are also some neat and attractive nameplates on entering the village, particularly from the north. The verges on these approaches are generally neat and well maintained.

Other notable features that provide character to the village and its setting, include the numerous stone walls; the distinctive stone bridge referred to above (Kells Bridge), and the mill wheels attached to the mill buildings.

Street trees have been planted to the front of some potential infill sites and while these are not necessarily permanent features they could restrict the future development of the site. On the street to Kells Bridge a new infill development has recently been completed and is a good example of how a small scheme of houses can be inserted into the fabric of the village making maximum use of the backland area.

Design Principles Based on Distinctive Local Character

- Maintain the stone walls and limestone kerbing on the roads leading out of the village, as far as is practical.
 - Protect the visual amenity and biodiversity of the river by restricting development proposals in the floodplain area close to Kells Bridge and the King's River.
 - Provide a visual buffer zone free from development around Kells Priory so as to protect its important historical context and the fine setting of this building complex.
 - Maintain the scale, composition and character of the streetscapes in the immediate vicinity of the village centre.
 - Consider an extension to the riverside walkway to the south side of the King's River.
 - Ensure the continuation of existing building lines within the village centre.
 - Encourage all focal sites and focal buildings to adopt good quality architectural designs. These sites are identified on the Urban Design Map.
 - Protect, reinstate and/or repair old stone walls in those areas identified, while allowing for necessary access to serve future development proposals.
 - Upgrade and resurface, as resources permit, those portions of existing footpaths along the south side of the Road to Kilmaganny.
 - Protect and maintain the old water pump as attractive feature of the streetscape.
-

- Encourage the comprehensive development of backlands (sites to the rear of plots) and ensure that developers have regard to the possible need to provide access to these areas in any future development scheme.
 - Have regard to the unique characteristics of the three Character Areas as shown on the Urban Design Map and outlined above.
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