3 Development Plan Strategy

3.1 Introduction

The underlying principle of the development of the City and Environs over the last thirty years has been a commitment to balanced growth, coherence of urban form and a good spatial distribution of services. The development strategy outlined here is intended to continue and improve upon this tradition by creating a compact, vibrant and sustainable City, in line with the City Vision as outlined in Chapter 1, and the Aalborg Charter.

Kilkenny City is the capital of the county and the principal service centre for the wider hinterland. The development of Kilkenny over the last three development plans has been primarily concentrated to the south and east of the City, influenced by the availability of services and good road connections. The City accommodates vital services for the County such as the headquarters of Kilkenny County Council, the Health Services Executive offices, the Garda, Court Services and St Luke’s General Hospital. It also serves a wide hinterland in terms of community facilities, fire services, law enforcement and education.

Currently 25.4% of the population of Kilkenny County resides within Kilkenny City & Environs and consequently it is the dominant population centre in County.

3.2 Compact City

A balanced, compact form combined with efficient public transport links between employment and residential locations will facilitate easier circulation and mobility within the City and Environs. The resulting density and scale of population will support a wider range of retail, commercial, social and civic services than would be the case in a more dispersed city. The provision of a wide range of dwelling types and densities within the City and Environs will be critical in counteracting the current trend of leakage of residential development into the surrounding towns and rural areas. By providing residential accommodation within a compact city form there are substantial economies of scale to be made in terms of the costs of service provision.

A compact, balanced and focused city will place greater emphasis on the role of the central core in maintaining the vitality of the city. This approach is in complete harmony with the economic development role envisaged for Kilkenny in the NSS, not only in terms of the development of a hub, but also in terms of protecting and maintaining the rural environment which surrounds the city and in terms of reducing the demand for travel by the reduction of commuting.

For the purposes of this Plan ‘city centre’ is defined as the area contained within the Kilkenny City Centre Local Area Plan 2005.
3.3 Background

The Kilkenny City and Environs Study Structure Plan (1978) set out that the major expansion of the City was to occur in the Environs in phased blocks. The Structure Plan took into account the Land Use and Transportation Study which was completed in 1977 for the City and Environs. This philosophy was continued through subsequent development plans in 1986, 1994 and 2002.

Four areas were identified for the development of neighbourhoods:

1. Loughboy/Archerstreet
2. Newpark Upper/Eastern Environs
3. Loughmacask
4. Poulgour/Wetlands/Western Environs.

These four neighbourhoods comprise sustainable extensions to the compact city, providing residential and other uses to service an expanding population, within convenient walking/cycling distance of the city centre.

These neighbourhood areas are linked by a transport strategy providing for new and improved roads, cycleways and footpaths. The potential for a public bus based transport system within the City Environs is being taken into account. (See Figure 3-1.)

1. Loughboy/Archerstreet
An Action Area Plan was prepared for the phased development of the Archerstreet/Loughboy area. The Loughboy area has been successfully built out, and incorporates a neighborhood centre containing a mix of uses including retail and community services. Development potential in this area consists mainly of infill.

2. Newpark Upper/Eastern Environs
Under the Structure Plan, the Eastern Environs was identified as containing growth potential for a new neighbourhood. An Action Area Plan was prepared in the early 1980’s and during the last two Development Plan periods, this area accounted for the major expansion in population of Kilkenny City and Environs. The Eastern Environs area is now well advanced in its development, with limited potential for further significant residential development.

3. Loughmacask
A Draft Local Area Plan for the development of 114 hectares (283 acres) of land in the Loughmacask area has been prepared and will be published while this draft plan is on public display. This plan will be adopted late in 2007 and it is anticipated that development will commence in late 2008.
4. **Poulgour/Wetlands/Western Environs**

During the period of the last plan a Local Area Plan was prepared for the Western Environs. This area contained 114 hectares and is bounded by the Circular Road on the east, the Kilmanagh Road to the north, the Callan Road to the south and by the line of the Outer Ring Road to the west. Planning permission has been granted for approximately 540 residential units along with two local parks and other mixed uses. There are a total of 94 hectares of development land remaining.

The Council is utilising compulsory purchase to provide essential pieces of infrastructure in the form of roads and sewers and the first phase of the major public parks. It is envisaged that construction of this infrastructure will commence late in 2007.

### 3.4 Development Strategy

This strategy underpins the development of a compact urban area for Kilkenny City and Environs. The development strategy proposed is designed to reinforce the City centre as a place for work, shopping, services and living. The City centre will be supported by a series of neighbourhoods.

The lands zoned can accommodate approximately 4,080 housing units at relatively low densities of 24/ha (10 per acre) or another 5,718 units at densities up to 35/ha (14 per acre). Applying an average house occupancy of 2.5 people this equates to a potential range of additional population of between 10,200 and 14,291 persons giving a total of between 32,379 to 36,470 persons. This exceeds the target set in the NSS of 30,000+ by the year 2020.¹

There are a further 242 hectares of land within the plan’s development boundary which are at present zoned for agriculture and which can be used into the future for further development of the City & Environs.

### 3.5 Phasing

Over the period of the last Development Plan (2002-2008), the emphasis was on the development of the Poulgour/Wetlands (Western Environs) area. This area has now commenced with the rolling out of development. The Kilkenny Western Environs Roads Infrastructure scheme has been confirmed and this will allow the provision of essential infrastructure to enable the remainder of the lands in the area to come forward for development.

During the period of this Plan (2008-2014) it is the intention of the Council to facilitate the expansion of the City through the development of the Western Environs and Loughmacask Local Area Plans.

¹ This does not take into account the lands zoned for low-density residential in the Draft Plan or lands available for mixed use development
Further Local Area Plans will be completed for the areas identified on Fig 3.1 of the Draft Plan as areas of planned expansion for the City & Environs.

**ACTION**

To prepare Local Area Plans for the areas of planned expansion as identified over the lifetime of this Plan.

### 3.5.1.1 Future Neighbourhood Development

Three areas are identified for future neighbourhood expansion to the west of the City between the Freshford Road and the Tullaroan Road, the Tullaroan Road and the Kilmanagh Road and the lands south of the City between the Callan road and the existing Ring road.

These are identified on the zoning objectives map for the City & Environs. The preparation of one or more Local Area Plans for all of these lands will be completed during the period of this Plan.

The release of lands within the development boundary in a co-ordinated and timely manner will ensure the sustainable development of a compact urban core and will prevent pressure to expand the City through sprawl.

The strategy aims to:

- Increase the population within the Borough Council’s boundary;
- Maximise the opportunity to create replacement and infill housing within the City;
- Ensure the continued vitality and viability of the City Centre;
- Achieve an efficient use of land through residential densities appropriate to its context while avoiding the problems of over-development;
- To encourage balanced development patterns and to offer locational choice within the City and Environs in a sustainable manner linked to the transportation strategy for the City & Environs.
- Ensure that the new neighbourhoods are viable for a regular bus service and public transport to an from the historic City;
- Ensure that the development of the Western Environs area and Loughmacask area are run in tandem over the period of the plan;
- To facilitate and encourage the release of zoned lands to ensure an adequate supply of housing units through the plan period.
3.6 The Development Boundary

The Development Boundary proposed for the City and Environs has been designated following detailed consideration of the following factors:

i. The existing form of the developed areas of the City and Environs.
ii. The road structure, and in particular the reserved line for Phase II of the Eastern By-Pass, and the proposed line of the Western by-pass route of the City.
iii. The anticipated expansion of the City in the Western Environs during the Plan period.
iv. The need to offer locational choice within the City and Environs in so far as practicable.
v. The clear benefits of utilising areas of land in which infrastructural investment has been made or is planned.
vi. The need to avoid blighting large areas of good agricultural land for which no Action Area Plan has been prepared.

The development boundary is shown by the heavy blue dashed line on the zoning objectives map.
Fig 3.1
Development Strategy Map

Legend

- **Proposed Roads**
- **Main Routes**
- **Rail Line**
- **Neighbourhoods**
- **Planned Expansion**

Based on Ordnance Survey Of Ireland Map, Licence No."Kilkenny/CCMA/03/07"