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Draft Kilmacow Local Area Plan

Kilkenny County Council 2009-2015

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DRAFT KILMACOW LOCAL AREA PLAN

KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Plan

The Kilmacow Local Area Plan (LAP) 2009 – 2015 has been prepared by Kilkenny County Council to replace the Kilmacow Development Plan 2002-2008. It aims to respond to the development issues facing Kilmacow and the need to provide a positive framework for future sustainable development and improvement of the village that is consistent with the policies and objectives contained in Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014. It is a key objective of the LAP that it satisfies the needs, aspirations and requirements of the local community and other stakeholders as far as they relate to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Kilmacow is located in the administrative area of Kilkenny County Council and is ranked fifth on the six-tiered County Settlement Hierarchy in the '*smaller towns and villages*' category as set out in the County Development Plan 2008-2014. The village functions primarily as a local service centre to both local residents from within the villages and from the larger Kilmacow parish area and rural population. Kilmacow is several centuries old with the Lower Village reported to be one of the oldest villages in the country and has developed along the route of the River Blackwater, which is responsible for the village's industrial past. The settlement has developed historically on a series of narrow winding roads, the routes of which have been influenced by local topography and the course of the River Blackwater, with stone bridges marking both key entrances into Kilmacow (at the Lower Village and Dangan). The narrowness of many of these old roads restricts the flow of two-way traffic and provides limitations to road capacities.

The settlement has experienced considerable development pressure in recent decades as a result of its location within close proximity to Waterford City, its attractive rural setting and strong sense of community, making it a desirable place to live. This has manifest itself in the form of single one off houses radiating out from the core of the villages during the 1970's and 1980's and in more recent times, in typical suburban housing schemes.

1.2 Kilmacow Village Context

Kilmacow with a population of approximately 764 people is situated in south Kilkenny, close to the border with County Waterford. It is positioned along the River Blackwater, which is responsible for the village's industrial past and the number of historic mills positioned in and round the settlement. The village is located approximately 6.5km north-west of Waterford City and almost equidistant from two major national primary routes - the N24 Waterford to Clonmel Route and the N9, which links the two cities of Kilkenny and Waterford.

The new roads and infrastructure improvements planned for Waterford City including completion of the City By-pass and the Outer Ring Road will improve access and relieve traffic congestion on route from Kilmacow to the Waterford area and to the entire south east region. The by-pass includes a new river crossing and a new Western Link Road that will connect to the M/N9 and N24 in close vicinity to Kilmacow. It is a key development and investment priority of the National Development Plan 2007- 2013 to complete the M/N9 Dublin –Waterford road and N25 by-pass by 2010. The new route runs to the east of the villages beyond the existing N9 which will be downgraded once the new motorway is operational.

In addition to this, Kilmacow Sewerage Scheme commenced in 2008 and is expected to be completed in early 2010. Once operational the new scheme will cater for a population equivalent of 2,500 with ability to be extended if required to a total design capacity of 5,000PE.

The village is linear in character stretching for approximately 2km and there is a marked distinction between different areas within the village envelope. The village can be broken down into three separate character areas – the Upper Village to the north (Dangan and Narrabaun North) contains the bulk of development, the Lower Village to the south which is older in origin and so has a greater selection of historic buildings, while the area in between is pre-dominantly rural in character, containing primarily agricultural lands with some community facilities including playing fields, changing facilities and related development known as the Sports Complex. The fact that Kilmacow has two separate, yet linked village centres with one overall community is an unusual feature that makes Kilmacow distinctive and gives it a unique identity – one that the local community is proud of.

The location advantages of Kilmacow close to a major employment centre and with new roads and access links being developed between Waterford City and the entire south east region, have led to a growing pressure for development in and around the village. Development pressure is expected to increase as the planned new water services infrastructure comes online. The village, with its easy commute time to Waterford City has become an attractive location for development over the years.

1.3 The Plan Area

Kilmacow Parish, which includes the four older parishes of Dunkitt, Gaulskill, Kilmacow and Ullid incorporates some 10,357 acres¹. The Kilmacow Plan Area incorporates only a small portion of this (approximately 753 acres / 305 hectares).

¹ *The History of Kilmacow - A South Kilkenny Parish*, Kathleen Laffan, 2005, pg. 9

The boundary of the current plan area has been delineated in order to:-

- Cater for the existing pattern of development in the village core and the anticipated development envelope required for Kilmacow and its wider hinterland area not only for the 6 year plan period but also for the medium to longer term growth of the village.
- To ensure that village growth occurs in a sustainable manner and that new development contributes towards the consolidation of the village rather than its continuous outward spread.
- To maintain and enhance the unique character of Kilmacow and its two village concept.
- Provide consistency and continuity with the Plan area boundaries delineated in the previous 2002-2008 Development Plan for Kilmacow.

The lands contained within Local Area Plan boundary encompass five townlands known as Dangan, Narrabaun South, Narrabaun North, Kilmacow and Greenville, which form a part of the three Electoral Divisions of Ullid, Aglish and Rossinan.

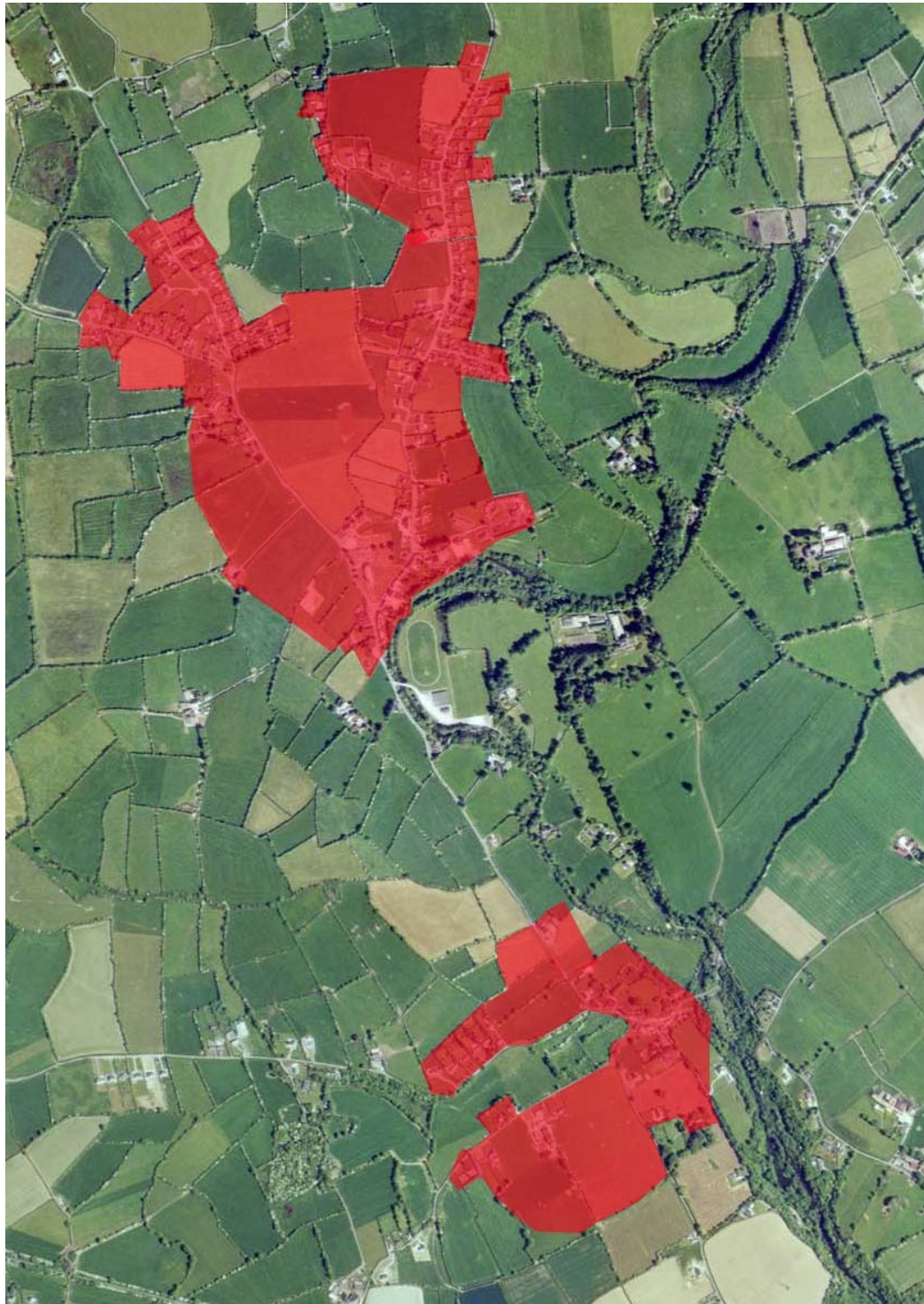


Figure 1.1: An Aerial View of the Upper and Lower Villages of Kilmacow

1.4 The Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the Plan is as follows:-

- To interpret national, regional and local planning policy and relate it at a local level to the Plan area.
- To give guidance on the nature (type), location, scale, form and design of development that is appropriate to this locale and which may possibly be accommodated within the Plan area as well as the infrastructure necessary to service it.
- To set out a common vision or strategy for Kilmacow that is generally supported by the local community and that provides a positive framework for guiding private development and public investment in the village.
- To encourage a sustainable level of development that is appropriate to the character, heritage, amenity and strategic role of Kilmacow that allows for the enhancement of the village character, services, facilities and amenities,
- To identify those aspects of the receiving environment which are at risk from unplanned inappropriately located development and to establish policy / measures to protect and enhance those aspects of the environment.
- To establish the carrying capacity of the local environment to accommodate new development and consequently to fashion local policies and objectives which take account of these relevant constraints and opportunities.
- To ensure that a balance is struck between meeting the needs and demands of modern life but in a way that is sensitive and responsive to the past.
- Ensure that a full understanding of this cultural and natural heritage informs the location and design approach of new development.

1.5 The Legal Status of the Plan

The Planning and Development Acts 2000-2006 provide the legislative basis for preparing a Local Area Plan (LAP). The Act promotes sustainable development and the need to balance social, economic, environmental and cultural considerations in the planning process. It requires public consultation to be undertaken as an integral part of the preparation of a LAP.

A Local Area Plan must be consistent with the objectives of the County Development Plan and in this regard, the Proposed Local Area Plan for Kilmacow is consistent with the objectives of the 2008–2014 Kilkenny County Development Plan. In its making, the LAP has also had regard to other relevant planning and environmental policy and legislation including European Union directives,

Ministerial guidelines and other national, regional and county plans and policies. The LAP has also taken into account the outcomes of the Pre-Draft Public Consultation exercises which were carried out in March / April 2008 and October 2008.

Once adopted, Kilmacow LAP will provide a statutory framework for guiding development and decision-making on planning applications and Council activities in the area covered by the LAP. It is a legal document that will remain in place for a period of six years. When making a planning decision, the Planning Authority and An Bord Pleanála are required to have regard to the provisions of an adopted LAP.

The LAP will help to ensure that the development pressure in Kilmacow is appropriately managed, that development occurs in a sustainable manner in accordance with a common vision for the area and that it is in the interests of local residents and other stakeholders in the area.

1.6 The Plan Hierarchy

The planning context is the platform on which a Local Area Plan stands and so the Kilmacow Local Area Plan must be consistent with national and regional planning guidance and Government policy and with the County Development Plan.

Figure 1.2 below shows the links that the Local Area Plan will have with other plans and the planning context within which it will sit. The LAP will form a component within a vertical hierarchy of spatial plans from the National Spatial Strategy, the South East Regional Planning Guidelines and Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014. It will also be informed horizontally by other relevant plans, strategies and programmes at national, regional and local levels such as for example, the National Development Plan 2007-2013, Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland (1997) and its 2002 review, Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2005, Residential Density Guidelines for Planning Authorities 1999, Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas - Guidelines 2008 and accompanying Urban Design Manual.

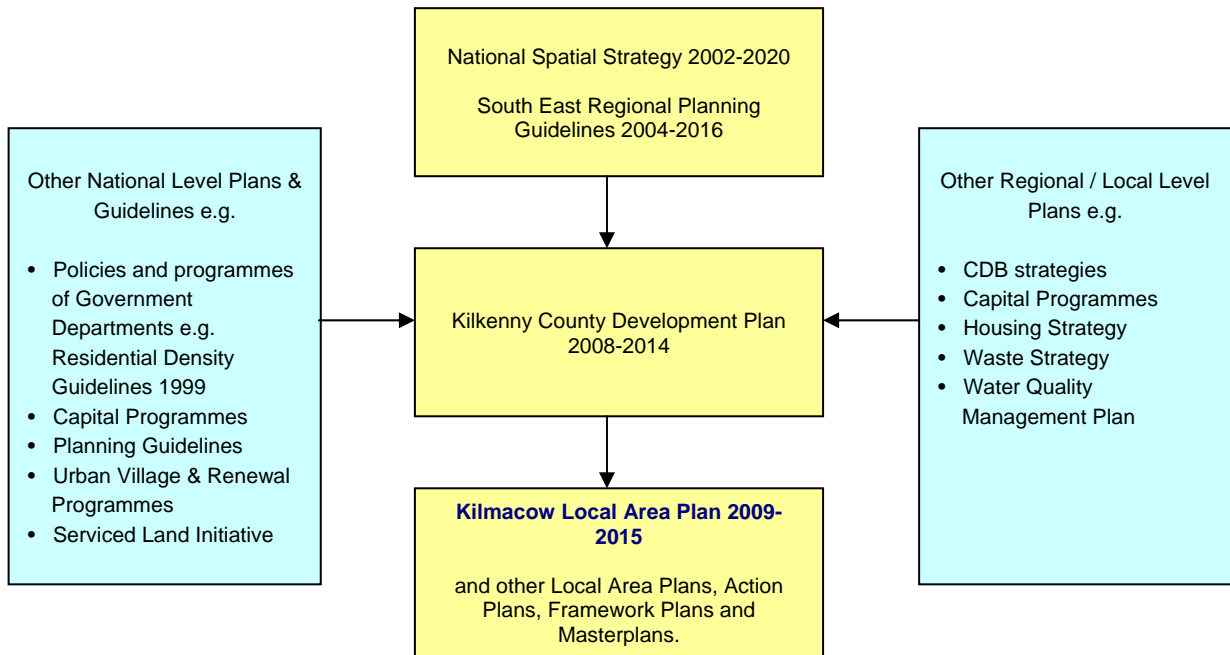


Figure 1.2: Kilmacow Local Area Plan – Links with other Plans and Government Guidelines

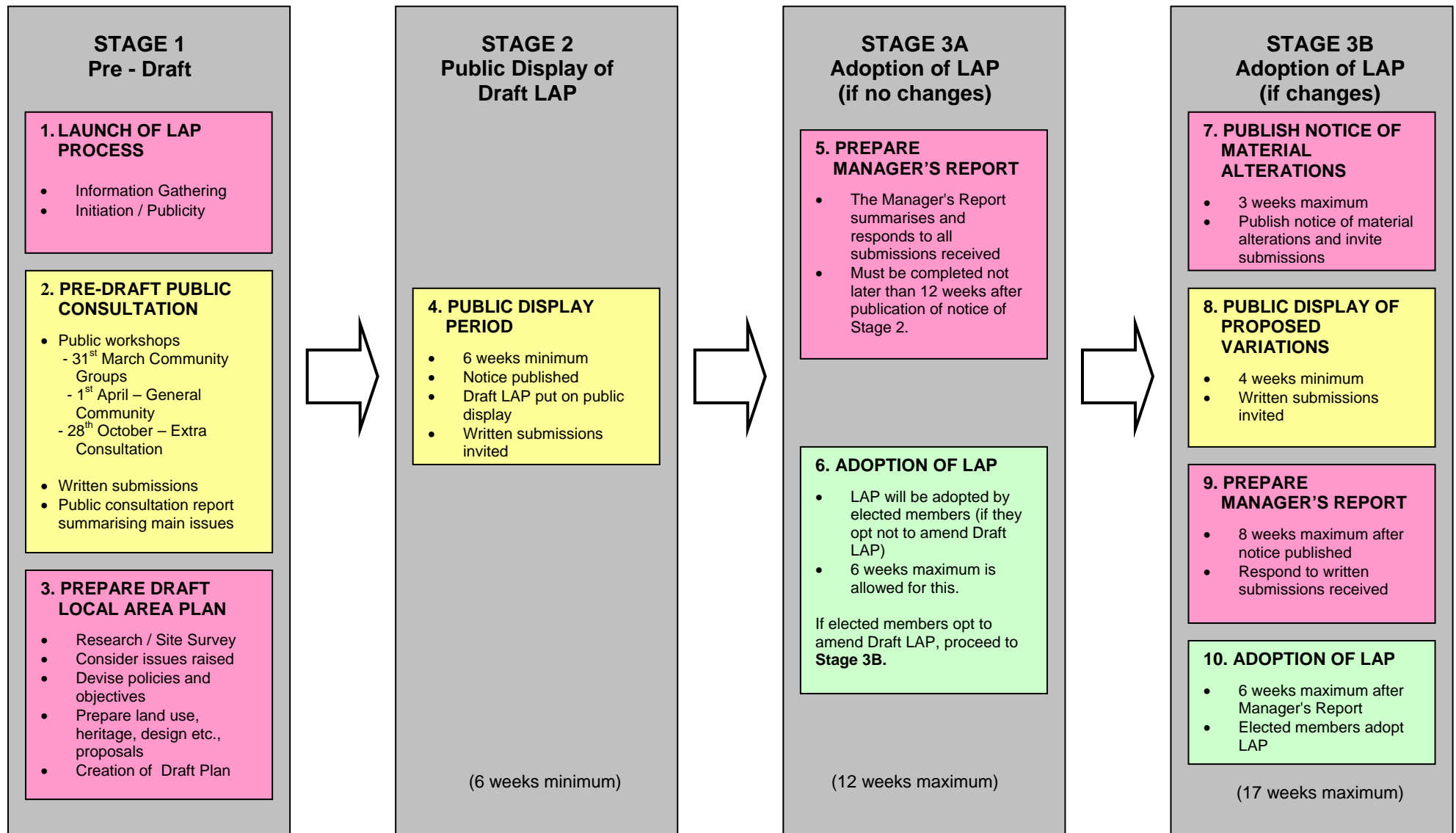
1.7 The Plan Preparation Process

A Local Area Plan is a legal document and must be prepared and adopted in a particular manner and within a strict timescale as set out in Part II Section 20 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2006.

The overall process of preparing an LAP can be split into four main stages of action as shown in Figure 1.3 which illustrates the plan preparation process in blue, the key phases of the plan preparation process in grey, the key phases of public consultation in yellow, the technical steps in pink and the political adoption / material alteration steps in green.

The preparation of a LAP has a pre-draft and post-draft phase and both phases must be accompanied by public consultation. A pre-draft public consultation process was undertaken to inform the preparation of the plan and to ensure that the local community and other stakeholders were consulted at an early stage and were able to have their say about the future of the area. This included a number of public workshops and the submission of written comments and distribution of information leaflets and questionnaires.

Figure 1.3: Timetable for the Preparation of Kilmacow Local Area Plan 2008-2014



The LAP is presently at Stage 2 in the process involving the statutory 6 week public display of the Draft LAP and the submission of further written comments. The submissions received at the end of this period will be taken into consideration in the finalisation of the LAP.

1.8 Public Consultation

Three public workshops were held in Kilmacow – the first took place on Monday 31st March 2008 at the Parish Hall, Upper Kilmacow; the second took place on Tuesday 1st April at Foxes Den Pub, Upper Street from 7pm onwards and the third took place in the Community Hall on 28th October 2008. The purpose of the workshops were to inform and provide information about the Local Area Plan (LAP) process for Kilmacow (pre-draft stage) and to gain people's views, comments and aspirations for their area in order to inform the Draft LAP.

The first workshop accommodated local community groups and committees, while the second workshop was an open invitation to individuals from the local community. The aim was to get as many people involved in the process as possible. For the first workshop, invitation letters were sent out to 35 no. different community groups operating in and around Kilmacow. A total of 32 people, representing various community groups attended that evening. On the second evening a total of c.100 people attended – a large and impressive turnout. The second workshop was advertised via a public notice published in the local newspaper; on Kilkenny County Council's website; a notice in the parish newsletter and via the distribution of approximately 300 no. information leaflets/questionnaires that advertised the LAP process.

The leaflets were deposited around a number of shops and services in both the upper and lower villages e.g. post office, church, grocery stores/newsagents, petrol station, schools, community hall, pubs, etc. for people to take at their leisure. They were also available to download from Kilkenny County Council's website and handed out at the public workshops. The leaflets were designed to introduce the Local Area Plan process for Kilmacow and explain the key stages in its preparation. Their aim was to inform the local community of the importance of the Local Area Plan and to highlight how the LAP, when completed, will help shape how the villages will look in the future, how big they may grow, what type of services they will receive and what character they will develop over the next 6 years and beyond.

Another key aim of the leaflet was to invite and encourage the local community and key stakeholders to participate in the preparation of a Local Area Plan for Kilmacow through making a submission and/or attending the public workshops. Also, each leaflet included an optional questionnaire the purpose of which was to gain people's views on the positive and negative aspects of Kilmacow and what changes, if any, they would like to see take place there. The questionnaire aimed to reach a wider number of people than the public notice, and to gain the views of those who did not want to sit down and write up an individual submission, or to speak out openly at the public workshops.

Public Consultation Exercise No. 2

In response to the first two consultation evenings and the 54 no. submissions received (including 28 no. completed questionnaires), it was decided to hold a third public workshop on the evening of 28th October in the Community Hall. The purpose of this workshop was to discuss the settlement size and village character in more detail. A leaflet of the proposals put forward at this workshop was then produced and circulated through different premises (e.g. church, local shop, post office etc.) within the villages. This was intended to inform a wider range of people from Kilmacow on the latest proposals and to invite them to submit any comments to Kilkenny County Council within a 2-week timeframe. The leaflet was also intended to reach out to people who had not attended the evening consultation evening or those who attended the event but may have wanted time to reflect on the workshop discussions before making any comments. A total of 4 written submissions were received in response to the workshop and the distributed leaflet.

An understanding of resident's views and aspirations for Kilmacow is essential part of the plan making process and is necessary in order to set out options for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The workshops provided a great opportunity for sharing comments and gaining valuable local knowledge in relation to the villages and their development in the past, present and future. While a wide range of views and opinions were expressed, a strong sense of community spirit and genuine interest in the future of the villages was evident at every stage. Tremendous local effort was made by the local community to attend the consultation events and to get involved in the process and is a testament to the impressive extent of community organisation in Kilmacow.

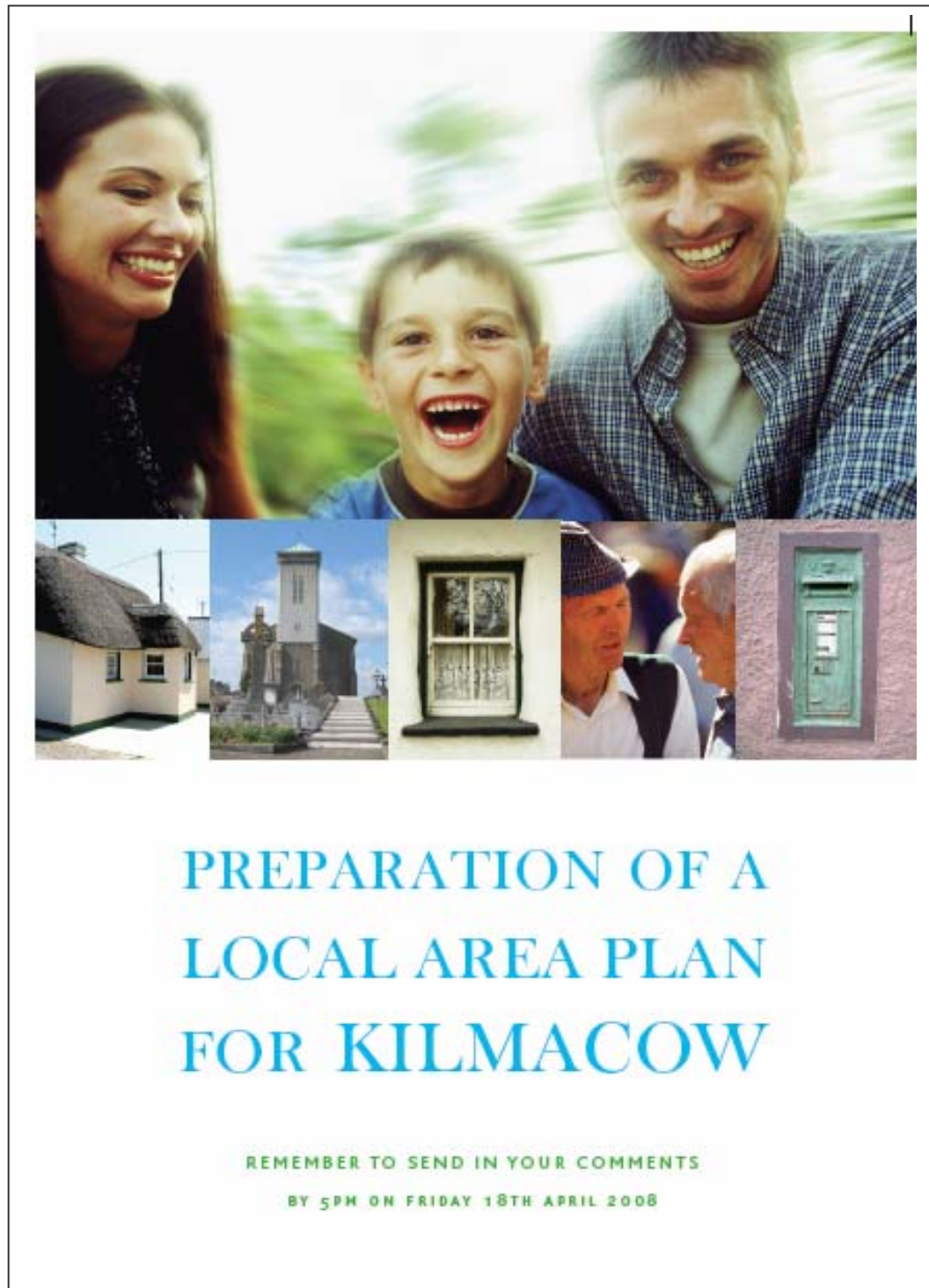


Figure 1.4: Cover of the leaflet and questionnaire.

1.9 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely environmental effects of implementing a proposed plan, or other strategic action, in order to ensure that any negative effects are appropriately addressed at the earliest stage of decision-making on a par with economic and social considerations.

This was determined by carrying out a detailed SEA Screening Report which took into account the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004. These are the criteria required to be taken into account in determining whether or not significant effects on the environment would be likely to arise. Furthermore, the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government (DoEHLG) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) were formally consulted to confirm the planning authority's decision that no SEA is required in this case.

Having regard to the SEA Screening Report for Kilmacow and the comments received from the Environmental Authorities, it is considered that the development of the lands which are subject to the proposed LAP will have localised environmental effects. However, such effects are not considered to be either significant or strategic and can be reduced and mitigated against by conditions attached to individual planning applications.

It is considered that the SEA process for Kilmacow Local Area Plan is therefore not required and so will not be commenced and the Environmental Authorities have been formally informed of this decision.

1.10 Structure of the Plan

The Local Area Plan comprises of a Written Statement and Maps (including a zoning map).

Should a discrepancy exist between the Written Statement and the Maps, the Written Statement shall take precedence.

1.11 Plan Challenges

The challenge for Kilmacow is to capitalise on the village's strengths while protecting the unique and attractive features of the village. Development needs to be consolidated and growth directed to appropriate locations within the village envelope, allowing more sensitive areas and landscape features to be protected from inappropriate and unsympathetic development. The village should grow in a sustainable manner in partnership with the local community to improve the physical, economic and social amenity value of the area and this should be addressed in the preparation of a new Local Area Plan for Kilmacow.

The Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development published by the DoEHLG in 2008 note that in Ireland:-

*'Many smaller towns and villages, particularly those within easy commuting range of the principal cities and towns or in scenic parts have experienced a wave of development in recent years, particularly residential developments. In many cases such development has brought positive benefits in the form of extra housing supply and enhancement of the viability of local shops and public services. However, in some cases, concerns have been raised about the impact of rapid development and expansion on the character of smaller towns and villages through poor urban design and particularly the impact of large housing estates with a standardised urban design approach on the character of towns and villages that have developed slowly and organically over time.'*²

This recent trend applies to Kilmacow. In the past Kilmacow had developed at a slower and more organic rate over time. However, the much faster pace of new residential development in recent years has failed to be responsive and sensitive to village character.

Furthermore, Kilmacow is deficient in the provision and quality of infrastructure and services such as footpaths, public lighting, adequate sewerage, quality and consistent water supply facilities and community and recreational facilities that are necessary to accommodate the needs of the existing community and any additional development.

Other challenges to achieving the proper planning and sustainable development of Kilmacow, many of which have been highlighted through the pre-draft public consultation process, which must be addressed through the LAP include the following:

- **Population growth and development has continued to take place** in Kilmacow in recent years, which is changing the character of the area from a small village to a settlement centre with an increasingly suburban character.
- The ongoing **pressure for further development in Kilmacow**, particularly for suburban style housing estates in the village, excessive ribbon development which has occurred on its edges and key approach routes and one-off housing in the rural surroundings, and the potential for Kilmacow to evolve as a dormitory extension of Waterford City if current trends continue unchecked.
- The concerns of the local community regarding **the scale, extent, nature and design of recent development** in Kilmacow and its relationship with existing residential development.

² Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, Section 6.1, pg. 40

- A key challenge for Kilmacow is **ensuring that the settlement is sufficiently serviced in terms of sewerage facilities, water supply, flood protection and other key infrastructure** in order to be able to accommodate local development needs in an orderly and sustainable manner. The roll out of Kilmacow sewerage scheme, although now under construction was delayed by many years causing undue strain on the capacity of Kilmacow to accommodate new development
- There is a **lack of basic community infrastructure** such as footpaths, public lighting, amenity walks and cycle lanes within the village making walking and cycling dangerous for many residents and ensuring an unnecessary dependency on the car remains. This needs to be alleviated so that local people can walk safely from their homes to the village centres to access local shops and services there. This is particularly relevant given the Upper and Lower Villages and the separation between them.
- **Local roads are narrow and some are in a state of disrepair.** Maintenance and improvement such as resurfacing is required to accommodate the safe movement of traffic through and between the villages.
- **Flooding is occurring more frequently in Kilmacow in recent years** as is the case in many Irish settlements today. This needs to be addressed where possible at a local level, in order to alleviate unnecessary flood damage to existing premises.
- **The River Blackwater is a largely untapped natural resource** in Kilmacow that has potential to attract visitors and tourists to Kilmacow through the sensitive development of an amenity walk and wildlife conservation area and acts as a valuable amenity for the local community.
- **Kilmacow has a rich heritage and unique character** that should be maintained and enhanced.

It must be stressed that many of improvements proposed in the 2002 Development Plan were subject to the installation of the sewerage scheme that was proposed as an objective of that Plan. Funding for the improvement of community facilities and general improvements in the village (e.g. footpaths, public lighting, resurfacing of roads) in general could not be secured in advance of the sewerage infrastructure being in place.

The delay in the provision of the sewerage scheme therefore put all major improvements on hold. However, the construction of Kilmacow Sewerage Scheme has now commenced (2008) with completion expected in early 2010. The completion of that scheme will allow for much needed general improvements for the villages to be pursued during the lifetime of this new Local Area Plan for Kilmacow 2009-2015, as set out in Chapter 3.0.

1.12 Policy Informants

This Plan has considered a range of inputs, guidelines and best practice in developing the options, policies and objectives put forward in the LAP in order to guide the proper planning and sustainable development of Kilmacow. The main informants relevant to the Draft Lap are as follows:-

- **Legislative Context**, including the Planning & Development Act 2000 as amended; the Planning & Development Regulations 2001; EU Directives, such as the Water Framework Directive 2000, and associated Irish legislation; Environmental Law, etc.
- **Strategic Planning Context**, including national and regional plans, strategies and guidelines in particular the Sustainable Development Strategy for Ireland 1997 and its 2002 review, the National Development Plan 2000-2006, the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, the Regional Planning Guidelines for the South East Region 2004-2016, the National Biodiversity Plan 2002, the National Heritage Plan 2002, Draft Sustainable Residential Development Planning Guidelines with accompanying Urban Design Manual – A best practice guide (DoEHLG Feb. 2008), Development Plans – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG 2007), Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities, (DoEHLG 2005), Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2005, Landscape and Landscape Assessment, Draft Guidelines, 2000, Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities – updated 2005, Guidelines on Childcare Facilities, 2001,
- **Statutory Planning Context**, including the previous Kilmacow Development Plan 2002-2008 and the need for compliance and consistency with the Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014.
- **Public Consultation** including the input received through the public workshops, written submissions, completed questionnaires; and from speaking with local people and other stakeholders to inform the Plan
- **Best Practice**, including innovative approaches to land use planning, village design, environmental management and service provision, best practice approaches to Local Area Plan preparation, policy formulation and the provision of local infrastructure, facilities and amenities.
- **Principles of proper planning and sustainable development.**

1.13 Implementation

The realisation of the objectives and policy set out in this Local Area Plan, over a period of time will benefit the villages, ensuring their 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, for example, Kilmacow Development Group, Kilmacow Sports Complex Committee and Kilmacow Parish Hall Committee, can play an important and central 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 where possible.

2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 National and Regional Planning Policy Context

2.1.1 THE NATIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) published by the Department of the Environment in 2002 provides a 20 year planning framework that is designed to achieve a better balance of social, economic and physical development between the regions and a better spatial distribution of population growth in Ireland. To achieve its objectives, the NSS identifies broad spatial development patterns for areas and sets down indicative policies in relation to the location of industrial, retail, residential and rural development; the location of services, tourism and Ireland's heritage. In doing so, the NSS adopts a hierarchy of development locations based around major centres that have, or have the potential to achieve, critical mass i.e. 'Gateways' with regional 'hubs' identified to transmit the driving force of the gateways. Critical mass relates to size and concentration of population that enables a range of services and facilities to be supported. This in turn can attract and support higher levels of economic activity and improved quality of life.

The NSS designates Waterford as a Gateway, while Kilkenny and Wexford are designated as Hubs. Other towns, villages and rural areas are identified in the NSS as having important roles that are to be fostered, developed and diversified to complement the functions of gateways and hubs.

In a rural context, the NSS outlines measures through which rural potential and alternative employment can be developed. These measures build upon local strengths in agriculture, enterprise, tourism, local services, land and marine based natural resources. The NSS also identifies an important need to support the role of rural towns and villages at the local level, as a focus for investment, economic activity and housing development, which at the same time will support the vitality of wider rural areas.

2.1.2 THE SOUTH EAST REGIONAL PLANNING GUIDELINES 2004- 2016

The Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) for the South East Region 2004 - 2016 comprises the counties of Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford and give effect to the National Spatial Strategy at regional level. They act to strengthen local authority development plans by setting out broad regional planning objectives.

The RPGs identify development roles for different types of urban centres including Waterford City Gateway and Kilkenny City Hub. However, the Guidelines also acknowledge the extensive network of small towns and villages across the region, which play particularly important roles as service/retail/residential centres. The RPGs stress that:-

'These towns and villages need to be developed in a way that respects their existing character while at the same time strengthening their role as local service centres.'

The RPGs consider that achieving the right balance between encouraging development in towns and villages and the scale and nature of such development is critical and stress that it is important to ensure that new residential development in smaller towns and villages is of a design, layout, character and scale which fits well with the town or village involved and presents a high quality living environment.

A key objective of the RPGs is to encourage local authorities to set out clear policies in their development plans and in other local plans to guide development within smaller towns and villages. The overall aim of this is to reduce pressure for urban related development in the open countryside ensuring that existing towns and villages become attractive settlement centres and assist in the long-term vitality and viability of the rural parts of the South-East.

2.1.3 THE SUSTAINABLE RURAL HOUSING: GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING AUTHORITIES (DoEHLG, April 2005)

The Sustainable Rural Housing: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, April 2005) develops and expands on the key concepts and policies for rural housing as set out in the NSS. The *Guidelines* set out how Government policies on rural housing are to be implemented by Planning Authorities in the making of development plans and in the operation of the development management system. The *Guidelines* stress the need to accommodate the type and scale of development in rural areas necessary to sustain rural communities; the need to guide development to the right locations in rural areas in the interests of protecting natural and man-made assets in those areas, the need to tailor planning policies to differing types of economic, social and physical circumstances in different rural areas; and the need to manage pressure for overspill development from urban areas in the rural areas closest to the main cities and towns.

The Guidelines indicate that people who are part of the rural community (rural generated housing need) should be facilitated by the planning system in all rural areas and it suggests different definitions of *'rural generated housing need'*, including people who are an intrinsic part of the rural community, persons working full-time or part-time in rural areas, returning emigrants to rural areas and individuals with exceptional health circumstances who are required to live in a particular rural environment or close to family support.

In respect of planning applications the *Guidelines* clearly set out the role the Planning Authority has in developing and facilitating an efficient planning service for would-be applicants. Similarly, the Guidelines outline the need when assessing applications to safeguard, as appropriate, national and regional roads, roadside boundaries, water quality and natural and cultural heritage. Finally, the

importance of the preparation of design guides to ensure new housing development integrates well with its physical surroundings is highlighted.

2.1.4 SUSTAINABLE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN URBAN AREAS - GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING AUTHORITIES, 2008

On 10th February 2008 new Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas were launched by the Minister of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The new Guidelines are intended to act as a blueprint for the future sustainable development of Irish cities, towns and villages in the coming years. They are focused on creating sustainable communities by incorporating the highest design standards and providing a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of essential infrastructure and services.

The guidelines recognise that the ever-expanding footprint of our urban areas is not sustainable and in line with the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines, implements policies and practices that aim to consolidate our urban areas by providing high-density residential development built to the highest possible standards in the right locations - locations which are well-served in terms of public transport and community facilities.

The Guidelines have developed through recognition of the increased demand for housing throughout the country, brought about through the rapidly changing demographics and settlement patterns in recent years, which has led to a consequential pressure on existing infrastructure. In meeting new housing needs in the cities, towns and villages across the country over the next 20 years, the Guidelines aim to ensure that more and better suited accommodation for families is supplied, higher quality urban design is achieved and high standards in terms of environmental quality and energy efficiency are applied. Such development should be focused at locations that capitalise on current public transport facilities or future transport plans.

The objectives of the new Guidelines are to:-

- Set out stronger planning requirements to facilitate the development of sustainable communities through strengthening planning and the provision of necessary support services and amenities;
- Help achieve the most efficient use of urban land through housing densities that are appropriate to the location involved and availability of supporting services and infrastructure, particularly transport; and
- Set high standards in terms of space and facilities to meet the needs of the Irish context.

Importantly, for the first time, the guidelines address specific issues and considerations for residential development not only in the larger urban areas but

in small towns and villages. The key policy recommendation in the Guidelines in relation to Small Towns and Villages is that:-

- Planning authorities should not consider extensive proposals for new development including residential development, in smaller towns and villages in the absence of an adopted local area plan;
- New development should contribute to maintaining compact towns and villages. "*Leap-frogging*" of development at some distances from the built-up area should be avoided;
- In central sites, densities of 30-40+ dwellings per hectare (12-16 per acre) may be appropriate for mainly residential or mixed-use schemes.
- At edge of town centre sites, under controlled circumstances, densities of 25-30 dwellings per hectare (10-12 dwellings per acre) with a variety of dwelling types will be appropriate.
- At edge of small town/village, under controlled circumstances, densities lower than 15-20 dwellings per hectare (6-8 dwellings per acre) may be appropriate as long as such low-density development does not exceed 20% of the total new planned housing;
- The scale of new development should be in proportion to existing development, and such development should provide for easy connectivity, especially by pedestrians and cyclists, to existing facilities

The key policy recommendation in the Guidelines in relation to the role of Development Plans and Local Area Plans is that:-

- They should contain policies and objectives, which will underpin the creation of sustainable residential developments;
- They should also include clear guidelines on implementation measures, particularly with regard to the phased and co-ordinated provision of physical infrastructure, public transport and community facilities.

Pending finalisation of the guidelines, planning authorities should have regard to the recommended design standards for new residential development, when preparing or varying development plan and local area plan, particularly where their current plans incorporate older standards.

2.1.5 URBAN DESIGN MANUAL – A BEST PRACTICE GUIDE, FEBRUARY 2008

The Guidelines are accompanied by a best practice urban design manual which illustrates how the guidelines can be implemented effectively and consistently across the different scales of urban development around the country. The

Manual is an invaluable source of information to those proposing a residential scheme as it sets out best practice advice and the key design considerations to take on board in ensuring well designed sustainable neighbourhoods that will stand the test of time.

2.2 Local Planning Context

2.2.1 KILKENNY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2008 – 2014

The Kilkenny County Development Plan is the overarching document for the County area including the district towns and other towns and villages in the settlement hierarchy. However, separate Local Area Plans have been prepared for the district towns and for other settlements within the county including Kilmacow. This LAP is consistent with the objectives of the County Development Plan, and contains objectives for the zoning of land and other objectives to ensure the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Within the County Settlement Strategy, Kilmacow is classed as '**a smaller town or village**' and is placed fifth on a tiered system of six. The strategy states that smaller towns and villages need to be developed in a way that strengthens their role as local service centres whilst respecting their existing character. Achieving the right balance between encouraging development in smaller towns and villages and the scale and nature of such development is critical according to the County Development Plan. It stresses that it is important to ensure that new residential development in smaller towns and villages is of a design, layout, character and scale which fits well with the town or village and presents a high quality living environment.

Kilmacow is also classed in the County Plan as being within an '*Area Under Urban Influence*', which is defined as an area that displays the greatest pressure for development due to their close commuting catchments of larger cities and town; rapidly rising population and ready access to good road network with ready access to the larger urban areas. The importance of facilitating the housing requirements of the local rural community on the one hand subject to satisfying all technical considerations, while on the other hand, directing urban generated development to areas identified for housing through zoning and the settlement hierarchy, is identified in the County Development Plan for these areas.

However, the Council also acknowledges the need to facilitate the housing requirements of the local rural community and it is therefore the policy of the Council to permit single houses in areas of strong urban influence, for persons where they can fulfil the criteria set out in section 3.4.2 of the County Development Plan.

3.0 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

3.1 Overview and Strategic Vision for Kilmacow

3.1.1 OVERVIEW

Kilmacow has a unique character as a result of its position along the River Blackwater, its rich industrial past and association with the milling industry, its two village concept, its attractive rural setting and its close proximity to Waterford City. Recent growth in the villages has led to changes in their character with continued pressure for growth and development likely to continue into the near future. This is as a result of the new roads and road improvements either planned or underway in the vicinity of the village e.g. N25 Waterford Bypass and upgrade of the N9; the sustained growth within County Kilkenny and Waterford City populations and the desire of many to live in a more rural setting with a small community atmosphere.

In addition to this, Kilmacow faces many other challenges for example deficiencies exist in the provision of much basic yet essential community infrastructure including footpaths, public lighting and adequate road surfaces. It suffers from inadequate water supply and water quality and up until recently had no sewerage scheme, although this is being remedied with the installation of Kilmacow Sewerage Scheme, which will be operational by 2010. Furthermore, the desire of many of the residents for the village to remain small, and for growth to be restricted, conflicts with their desire for improved amenities, better services and increased facilities within the villages.

All the above factors present a substantial challenge for the preparation of a Local Area Plan for Kilmacow to provide an appropriate framework to guide future development and growth in a manner that is sustainable, that achieves the overall objectives set for Kilmacow in the Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014, that reflects the existing character, environment, heritage and amenity of the villages and that improves the quality of life of the local community.

3.1.2 STRATEGIC VISION

The future growth and planning of Kilmacow should be guided by a common vision that is generally supported by the local community and which provides a positive framework for guiding private development and public investment in the village. This Local Area Plan provides a vision for Kilmacow that has been informed by the following:-

- The in-depth **pre-draft public consultation workshops** that were undertaken and the views, needs and aspirations expressed by the local community and other key stakeholders.

- The **input received through written submissions and completed questionnaires** made by members of the local community, landowners and other key stakeholders.
- The role of Kilmacow within **the Settlement Strategy, the Retail Strategy and the Housing Strategy for Kilkenny County** as set out in the County Development Plan 2008-2014 and the relevant policies, objectives and standards set out in that Plan.
- The **existing character, heritage (both built and natural), environment, amenity and unique landscape of the villages.**
- **Principles of proper planning and sustainable development.**

3.1.3 STRATEGIC VISION FOR KILMACOW

The vision for Kilmacow, over the lifetime of this Local Area Plan and beyond, is as follows:-

'To develop Kilmacow into an attractive and prosperous settlement with a high quality built and natural environment and with an appropriate range of supporting services, facilities and amenities and a high quality of life for the local community. Kilmacow should grow in a manner that is consistent with the county settlement strategy and policy framework contained in both the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines, with a quantum and scale of development that is sustainable and sufficient to accommodate local growth and local needs. Kilmacow's strong sense of community spirit, civic pride, social inclusiveness and local identity should be fostered and its built, cultural and natural heritage protected and enhanced for future generations to enjoy.'

3.2 Population, Village Growth and Housing

3.2.1 EXPLANATION OF FORMAT

This section of the Local Area Plan firstly examines the existing situation in Kilmacow in terms of population, village growth and housing and then puts forward a strategy, or vision, for its future growth. The strategy is a long-term plan of action designed to achieve particular goals and is intended as a general framework to provide guidance for actions to be taken. The strategy provides the bridge between the policy and objectives for Kilmacow's future growth and housing supply. The policy and objectives for Kilmacow in relation to this are then listed at the end of this section.

3.2.1.2 Policy Informants

In developing the options, policies and objectives of this section a range of inputs, guidelines and best practice has been considered, in particular the following:-

- **Analysis of demography and recent planning applications in Kilmacow.**
- **Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014** and its policies, objectives and proposals as appropriate to Kilmacow, in particular Chapter 2 dealing with Demographic and Socio-Economic trends and Chapter 4 dealing with Housing and Community Facilities.
- **National and regional planning guidelines** which are applicable including the Residential Density Guidelines, Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development and accompanying Urban Design Manual etc.
- **Public Consultation** including the input received through the public workshops, written submissions, completed questionnaires and through speaking with other stakeholders.
- **Principles of proper planning and sustainable development.**

3.2.2 EXISTING SITUATION

Kilmacow has continued to grow in recent years and there is continued pressure for further development in and surrounding the villages. The Plan accordingly provides guidance on the level of growth and development that is appropriate for the village.

3.2.2.1 Kilkeny County Development Plan and Settlement Strategy

The Settlement Strategy set out in the Kilkeny County Development Plan 2008-2014, identifies a hierarchy of towns, villages and nodes, which caters for the balanced and sustainable growth of the County while providing a varying range of residential choices. The Settlement Strategy identifies Kilmacow as '**a smaller town or village**' and is placed fifth on a settlement hierarchy comprising six tiers.

The strategy states that smaller towns and villages need to be developed in a way that strengthens their role as local service centres whilst respecting their existing character. Achieving the right balance between encouraging development in smaller towns and villages and the scale and nature of such development is critical according to the County Development Plan. It stresses that it is important to ensure that new residential development in smaller towns and villages is of a design, layout, character and scale which fits well with the town or village and presents a high quality living environment.

Kilmacow is also classed in the County Plan as being in an '*Area Under Urban Influence*', which is defined as an area that displays the greatest pressure for development due to their close commuting catchments of larger cities and town; rapidly rising population and ready access to good road network with ready access to the larger urban areas. It is the Council's policy for areas of urban influence, as set out in Kilkeny County Development Plan 2008-2014 to facilitate the housing requirements of the local rural community, subject to satisfying all technical considerations, while on the other hand directing urban generated development to areas identified for housing through zoning and the settlement hierarchy.

3.2.2.2 Growth and Development Trends

Population Profile

Explanation of the Area Assessed

The smallest geographical units distinguished by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) are Electoral Divisions (previously called District Electoral Divisions or Wards). Kilmacow is located within the boundaries of three Electoral Divisions (E.D.s) of Ullid, Aglish and Rossinan as defined by the Central Statistics Office. While the E.D.s spread in extent well beyond the development boundary of Kilmacow, their geographical area comprises the Catchment Area of Kilmacow – an area defined as the 5-minute drive from the centre of the village.

The three E.D.s equate to Kilmacow's catchment area due to their proximity and subsequent influence on the residential, service and employment sector within the local area. For ease of reference, the three E.D.s will be referred to collectively as Kilmacow's Catchment Area or 5-minute drive time, in the following sections of this Local Area Plan.

The most recent census of population taken by the Central Statistics office (CSO) was on the 23rd April 2006 and the resultant data is now published. Demographic trends are analyzed at state, county, and local levels in this Local Area Plan for comparison purposes.

The 2006 Census of Population

The population change within Kilmacow's Catchment Area is recorded in Table 3.2.1 below.

Table 3.2.1 Population Change within Kilmacow's Catchment Area

Population Change 1996 - 2006

	Kilmacow (within 5 minute drive time)	Kilmacow (within 5 minute drive time) % Change:	Kilkenny County	Kilkenny County (% Change)	Ireland	Ireland (% Change)
Total Population 1996	2,386	-	75,336	-	3,626,087	-
Total Population 2002	2,501	4.82%	80,339	6.6%	3,917,203	8.03%
Total Population 2006	2,569	2.72%	87,558	9.0%	4,239,848	8.24%

Population has continued to grow in Kilmacow from 1996, albeit at a much lower rate than County and State levels. The 2006 population in the Kilmacow 5-minute drive time is recorded as being 2,569, which is an increase of 68 persons (+2.72%) from 2002. However, it is almost half that which occurred in the area (Kilmacow 5 minute drive time) between 1996 and 2002, where a 4.82% population growth rate was achieved. During 1996 to 2002 population in County Kilkenny grew at 6.6% which was lower than the State average at 8.03%. However during 2002-2006 the County population grew at 9.0% overtaking that of the State which grew at 8.24% during the same period. In comparison, population growth in Kilmacow has occurred at a much lower, yet more sustainable rate.

Population Estimates – Kilmacow Village

In July 1997, Kilmacow Development Group carried out a survey which recorded a population of 710 people living within Kilmacow development boundary as defined in the previous Kilmacow Development Plan 2002-2008. As population statistics available from the CSO for the village do not accurately reflect all areas contained within the current village settlement limit, it is necessary to estimate the population currently residing within the village development boundary. In order to do this, the following calculation can be applied:-

- *Apply the average growth rate that has occurred in all DEDs within Kilmacow Catchment Area to the 1997 recorded population within the village boundary.*

When the above calculation is applied to the 1997 recorded population of 710, we can estimate that in 2002, Kilmacow had a population of 744 (+4.82%) which in 2006 rose to approximately 764 persons (+2.72%). The estimated population change within **Kilmacow Village Development Boundary** is recorded in Table 3.2.2 below.

Table 3.2.2: Kilmacow Population Change 1996 - 2006**Population Change 1996 - 2006**

	Kilmacow Village	(% Change):	Kilkenny County	Kilkenny County (% Change)	Ireland	Ireland (% Change)
Total Population 1997	710	-	75,336	-	3,626,087	-
Total Population 2002	744	4.82%	80,339	6.6%	3,917,203	8.03%
Total Population 2006	764	2.72%	87,558	9.0%	4,239,848	8.24%

Population Projections

The County Housing Strategy set out in Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014, provides projections of population for Kilkenny County along with Kilkenny City and Environs. The central and low projections for the years have been estimated using a cohort model.³ The output from this process gives us a future natural change in population.

Three scenarios were examined in the Housing Strategy based on the following rationale:

1. High Scenario: This is based on current trends observed between 2002 to 2006 through to 2020 and assumes annual growth in population of 2.13%
2. Central (preferred) Scenario: takes the Department of the Environment and Local Government (DoEHLG) latest population projections for the South East
3. Low Scenario: The CSO's 2004/5 projections for population and labour force.

For the purposes of this LAP, the same rate of population growth predicted for the County will be applied to Kilmacow. Although a variable rate of population growth between the County and Kilmacow Villages has occurred in the past, it is not expected that population growth in Kilmacow will exceed that of County levels. Tables 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5 below shows projected population based on the 'high' trends, 'central' DoEHLG and 'low' CSO scenarios outlined above.

Table 3.2.3: Population High Scenario A

High Scenario	2006	2008	2014	2020
Kilkenny County	87,558	91,328	103,639	117,609
Kilmacow	764	797	904	1,026
Change County	-	4.3%	18.4%	34.3%
Change Kilmacow	-	4.3%	18.4%	34.3%

³ See *Kilkenny Population Study and Housing Strategy* prepared by Colin Buchanan.

Table 3.2.4: Population Central Scenario B

High Scenario	2006	2008	2014	2020
Kilkenny County	87,558	91,629	102,157	111,005
Kilmacow	764	799	891	968
Change County	-	4.6%	16.7%	26.8%
Change Kilmacow	-	4.6%	16.7%	26.8%

Table 3.2.5: Population Low Scenario C

High Scenario	2006	2008	2014	2020
Kilkenny County	87,558	90,708	98,745	104,962
Kilmacow	764	791	862	916
Change County	-	3.6%	12.8%	19.9%
Change Kilmacow	-	3.6%	12.8%	19.9%

The above results envisage an increase in Kilmacow's (lands within the development boundary) population of a minimum of 152 (19.9%) and maximum of 262 (34.3%) by 2020 resulting in a population of between 916 and 1,026 by that time. The projected population of Kilmacow at 2020 will equate to approximately 0.9% of the total projected population for the County during that year. Thus the Plan sets out to maintain the current status of Kilmacow within the county into the future by planning to retain its percentage share of the County's population.

All three scenarios, as illustrated in the tables above suggest that the County's population including that of Kilmacow will continue to climb upwards over the next decade and beyond.

The preferred scenario as detailed in the County Development Plan 2008-2014 is scenario B which is based on the most recent population projections from the DoEHLG and represent a more likely situation than the higher, and possibly more unsustainable projections, in Scenario A and the lower, possibly unduly 'pessimistic' projections in Scenario C.

Planning History and Housing Demand

Household Size

The Census 2006 records that the total number of households in Kilmacow's 5-minute drive is 822. Given that the 2006 population for the same area is recorded at 2,569, an average household size of 3.12 is calculated. This is below the 3.22 average household size recorded in 2002, and an average household size of 3.41 recorded in 1996. This gradual fall in household size is in line with national trends in household composition which have continued to fall during each census period.

The average household size in Kilmacow and its adjoining hinterland area is significantly higher than County and State levels. This is likely attributable to the number of families who choose to live in Kilmacow rather than single or co-habiting

persons. For County Kilkenny an average household size of 3.26 persons was recorded in 1996, decreasing to 3.03 persons in 2002 and to 2.95 persons in 2006. This is above State levels where an average household size of 3.14 persons was recorded in 1996, reducing to 2.94 in 2002 and most recently to 2.81 in 2006 (source CSO Ireland).

The change in average household size within Kilmacow's 5-minute drive time in comparison with the County and State is recorded in Table 3.2.6 below.

Table 3.2.6: Average Household Size 1996 - 2006

	Kilmacow (within 5 minute drive time)	Kilkenny County	Ireland
Average Household Size 1996	3.41	3.36	3.21
Average Household Size 2002	3.22	3.13	3.04
Average Household Size 2006	3.12	2.88	2.88

Source: GAMMA, 2008

Growth in Residential Development

A planning search was undertaken to determine the number of planning permissions for new dwellings that were obtained in Kilmacow from 1996 to the start of 2008. This is to give an indication of the level of new residential development taking place within the village development boundary and to highlight any development pressures, should they exist. Table 3.2.7 overleaf illustrates the findings.

Table 3.2.7: Permitted Residential Units in Kilmacow 1996 - 2007

Timeframe	Total Applications for Residential Units (Full Permission)	No. Refused Permission	No. Granted Permission	Total No. of Dwellings Permitted	% single dwellings	% in Residential Schemes
1996 – 2001	23	2	21	24	100%	0%
2002 - 2007	20	10	10	93	9%	91%

What the search revealed was that between 1996 and 2002 a total of 23 no. planning applications were submitted to Kilkenny County Council seeking full permission for new residential dwellings. Of those submitted, 21 no. applications received a grant of planning permission allowing a total of 24 residential units to be built during that 6-year period (1 no. application included 3 no. residential units). All of the permissions, bar one, were for single dwellings on individual sites within the village boundary.

Between 2002 and 2007 (the period of Kilmacow Development Plan) a total of 20 no. planning applications seeking full permission for new residential units were submitted to Kilkenny County Council. Of those, 10 no. were refused permission while the remaining 10 no. received a grant of permission. However, the number of residential units permitted via the granted permissions amounted to 93 in total. Sixty of those were included in a single planning application in 2005 and were to be contained within a housing scheme at Kilmacow Upper (reduced by the planning authority from the 72 no. units that were applied for – Reg. Ref.: 04757). Twenty-five units were then proposed in a single planning application in 2006 (Reg. Ref.: 041842), to be

contained in a residential scheme in Narrabaun North (reduced by the planning authority from the 36 no. units that were applied for). The remaining 8 no. permissions were for single dwellings on individual plots of land within the village boundary.

These findings illustrate that while the number of planning applications actually reduced during 2002-2007, the scale and intensity of residential development that was proposed, significantly increased. It reflects a greater pressure for more urban generated residential development in Kilmacow in recent years. This is demonstrated in the two approved residential schemes comprising collectively 85 new residential units within the village boundary. The proximity of Kilmacow to Waterford – a designated Gateway in the National Spatial Strategy and major centre of employment along with Kilmacow's rural setting and village atmosphere, makes it appear as an attractive alternative place to reside, within commuting distance of the city. The concern for Kilmacow is that as traffic congestion from Kilmacow into Waterford City is reduced with the construction of the planned new bridge into Waterford over the River Suir (as part of the N25 Waterford City Bypass) that more pressure will be placed on the villages for further residential development, as it will be viewed by many as a more desirable place to reside. In this regard, it is a key objective of this Local Area Plan to manage any development pressure so that the village grows in an organic and sustainable manner in line with the NSS, RPGs, the County Settlement Strategy and Government Guidelines on sustainable residential development.

Existing Number of Houses in Kilmacow

There are estimated to be around 310 no. existing dwellings in Kilmacow (within the development boundary) in 2008. This figure was arrived at from an analysis of current O.S. Maps, analysis of the number of permitted units since the last Development Plan in 2002 and from a walk-around and manual count of dwellings in Kilmacow. In addition to this, permission was granted in 2006 for 25 no. residential units, on a site in Narrabaun North. Although to date, that scheme has not been constructed, the permission will not expire until 2011. Therefore, including those 25 no. permitted units; the housing stock in Kilmacow is calculated at 335 units.

Recommended Level of Residential Growth over the Lifetime of the Local Area Plan

The new DoEHLG Guidelines for Planning Authorities entitled '*Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas*' identifies that smaller towns and villages (defined as settlements with a population ranging from 400 to 5,000 people) are a very important part of Ireland's identity, attractiveness and the distinctiveness of its regions.

The Guidelines acknowledge that many smaller towns and villages have experienced a wave of development in recent years, particularly residential developments. In many cases such development has brought positive benefits in the form of extra housing supply and enhancement of the viability of local shops and public services. However, in some cases, concerns have been raised about the impact of rapid

development and expansion on the character of smaller towns and villages through poor urban design and particularly the impact of large housing estates with a standardised urban design approach on the character of towns and villages that have developed slowly and organically over time. There is evidence to suggest that this form of inappropriate development has begun taking place in Kilmacow, with pressure mounting for further development.

In order for small towns and villages to thrive and succeed, the Guidelines suggest that their development must strike a balance in meeting the needs and demands of modern life, but in a way that is sensitive and responsive to the past. For example, the development of new building forms and technologies to a standardised format, used on a large scale, and added to an existing historic small town or village can work against diversity of design and successful integration between old and new.

In order to manage the mounting pressure for this form of residential development in villages such as Kilmacow, the Guidelines recommend that the scale of new development should be proportionate to existing development. Because of the scale of small villages, it is generally preferable that their development proceeds on the basis of a number of well integrated sites within and around the urban centre in question, rather than focusing on one very large site

Phasing of Existing Residential Zoned Land

According to the County Housing Strategy, there are 37.2 hectares of undeveloped residential zoned lands in Kilmacow. This is a result of the amount of land that was zoned in the previous Kilmacow Development Plan 2002-2008. The Housing Strategy estimates that the housing capacity of those undeveloped residentially zoned lands is 919 units - calculated by taking the area in hectares and multiplying it by the established Model Housing Strategy average figure of 24.71 homes per hectare. Even using the County average for low-residential density of 5 units per acre / 12 units per hectare, the 37.2 hectares of undeveloped residential zoned lands in Kilmacow has a capacity to accommodate as many as 446 new residential units. This provision would be above that which is required during the lifetime of this Local Area Plan (as set out on pg.39 which is approx. 100 people). It should be noted that this figure is considered modest as it doesn't take into account the potential for higher density development in the village core areas and the potential redevelopment of existing properties at higher densities in these areas.

The County Development Plan aims to ensure that the greatest share of projected population growth in the County is directed to the urban centres in the upper tiers of the Settlement Hierarchy such as Kilkenny City & Environs, Waterford Environs, the large town of New Ross and the district towns of Callan, Castlecomer, Thomastown and Graiguenamanagh with more limited development taking place in the small towns and villages of the County – development that is more closely linked to local growth rather than regional growth. This is consistent with the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines.

Therefore this LAP proposes no additional residential land over and above that zoned in the last Development Plan. Furthermore, the LAP proposes a Residential Phasing Sequence (i.e. phasing) for the release of residentially zoned land in order to ensure

that the LAP accords with the County Settlement Strategy and policy framework contained in both the NSS and RPGs. The residentially zoned land in Kilmacow LAP has been reviewed to ensure that the quantum and scale of residential development projected to take place during the lifetime of the LAP, will be accommodated whilst at the same time allowing for a reasonable level of choice in location. In this regard, approximately 15.3 hectares of residential zoned land will be included in Phase 1, which will be released in this Local Area Plan period – 2009-2015. Please note that a portion of these Phase 1 lands (approx. 8.4 ha.) are zoned ‘General Development’ and therefore accommodate mixed-use development of which residential forms a component – please see Chapter 3.3 for further information on land use zoning. The priority for Phase 1 lands is the consolidation of the village centre.

Remaining residential zoned lands (approximately 29 ha.) are classified as Phase 2 and their future release will be subject to review at the time of the next Local Area Plan. The location of lands within Phase 1 and Phase 2 are mapped out on the Land Use Zoning & Phasing Map of this LAP (Map 1).

All undeveloped residential zoned lands in Kilmacow will be serviced by the new Kilmacow Sewerage Scheme which is expected to be operational by early 2010.

3.2.3 POPULATION, VILLAGE GROWTH AND HOUSING POLICIES

VGH 1: Growth of Kilmacow

To ensure that the growth and development of Kilmacow shall be directed to meet the needs of the local community in Kilmacow and be in keeping with the existing character, amenity, heritage and landscape of the village. Growth of the settlement will be in accordance with the provisions of KCDP 2008-2014, in particular the County Settlement Strategy.

VGH 2: Service Centre Role

To strengthen the local service centre role of Kilmacow to cater for the village's current population, its future population and that of the adjoining rural hinterland area and in accordance with the provisions of the County Settlement Strategy.

VGH 3: Adequate Zoned Lands to Accommodate Anticipated Growth

To ensure that an adequate amount of land is included in the development boundary of the villages to cater for their planned expansion over the period of the plan.

VGH 4: The Provision of Adequate School Facilities

To facilitate where appropriate the expansion or amalgamation of the schools in Kilmacow, as and when necessary, to accommodate any growth in village population.

VGH 5: The Protection of Residential Amenity

To protect the residential amenity enjoyed by residents of existing dwellings in Kilmacow. Any development proposed on adjoining lands to residential areas must not detract from residential amenity in terms of privacy, traffic, parking or visual intrusion.

VGH 6: Efficient Use of Land

To revitalise the upper and lower villages through the promotion of suitable development within them (particularly on infill sites, vacant sites and on backlands, where appropriate).

VGH 7: Planned Housing Development

To encourage planned housing development on serviced lands within the development boundary. The Planning Authority will require that serviced/serviceable lands will be developed at sustainable densities in keeping with the existing character and scale of the settlement. The use of degraded or brown field sites will be preferred and should be utilised where possible in order to improve the environmental character and sustainable development of the villages.

VGH 8: Quality of Design

To ensure a high standard in architecture, design, layout, provision of open space, landscaping and variation in house type in new residential developments.

VGH 9: Mix of Dwelling Types

To promote a mix of housing types to cater for all sections of the community at all ages. There is a particular emphasis on providing attractive and affordable options in

housing to ensure that local people are not disadvantaged and to cater for a range of people including families, single persons, first time buyers and elderly members of the community.

VGH 10: Pedestrian and Bicycle Links

To encourage the provision of landscaped pedestrian and bicycle links between and within residential areas and the villages' centres.

VGH 11: Master Plans for New Residential Development Schemes

To permit housing development on residentially zoned lands identified under Phase 1 of the Residential Phasing Sequence for Kilmacow, subject to development being in accordance with an agreed master plan for the proposed site and all contiguous and neighbouring residential lands to be prepared by the developer(s)/applicant(s) to the agreement of the Council. A Master Plan will be required in the case of development comprising of 5 no. residential units or greater.

The master plan(s) must include provision for:

- a) the establishment of building design and urban design guidelines in compliance with the objectives of the LAP,
- b) appropriate facilities necessary to support the development provided through the inclusion of necessary childcare facilities and children's play areas in compliance the objectives of the LAP,
- c) priority of movement and accessibility throughout the development and connecting with adjoining urban areas, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists,
- d) incorporation of existing vegetation, hedgerows, trees and natural features into the proposed development,
- e) satisfactory mix of housing types and sizes, including affordable, family and adaptable housing, and
- f) single access points onto the public road
- g) The necessary services, infrastructure and facilities must be in place to serve the additional housing prior to its construction.

VGH 12: The Provision of Adequate Infrastructure

To ensure that the necessary infrastructural investment to facilitate the overall level of housing output is in place before development occurs or can be delivered in tandem with the proposed housing.

VGH 13: Provision of Schools

Planning applications for substantial residential development (5 no. residential units or greater) in Kilmacow, must be accompanied by a report identifying the demand for school places likely to be generated by the proposals and the capacity of existing schools in the vicinity to cater for such demand.

VGH 14: Footpaths and Cycleways

To require that all new residential schemes in Kilmacow must be designed to incorporate footpaths and cycle ways that link dwellings within the scheme and also link the scheme to the village centre to encourage walking and cycling.

VGH 15: High Quality Sustainable Residential Communities

The establishment and maintenance of high quality sustainable residential communities will be encouraged and regard should be had to the “Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities” guidelines of the DoEHLG, 2007. The Council wish to guide and control development in order to achieve the qualities in the design set out in the table below. The table includes the aspect of quality that is desired and a corresponding policy aimed at achieving it.

Table 3.2.8: Aspects of Quality Design

Aspect	Policy
<p>Character A place with its own identity</p>	<p>To promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive design patterns of development, landscape and culture.</p>
<p>Continuity and Enclosure A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished</p>	<p>To promote the continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of space by development that clearly defines private and public areas.</p>
<p>Quality of the Public Realm A place with attractive and successful outdoor areas</p>	<p>To promote public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe, uncluttered and work effectively for all in society, including disabled and elderly people.</p>
<p>Ease of Movement A place that is easy to get to and move through</p>	<p>To promote accessibility and local permeability by making places that connect with each other and are easy to move through, putting people before traffic and integrating land uses and transport.</p>
<p>Legibility A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand</p>	<p>To promote legibility through development that provides recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way around.</p>
<p>Adaptability A place that can change easily</p>	<p>To promote adaptability through development that can respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions.</p>
<p>Diversity A place with variety and choice</p>	<p>To promote diversity and choice through a mix of compatible developments and uses that work together to create viable places that respond to local needs.</p>

Source: Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014, Section 10.3, pg. 10-3

VGH 16: Quality Design & Architecture

To require high standards of architecture, design and layout from all developments so as to ensure the creation and development of an attractive residential and employment environment. High standards of landscaping and amenity areas will also

be required in order to promote the development of a sustainable environment capable of serving local needs.

VGH 17: Traffic Calming at Design Stage

Traffic safety should be considered at the design stage of any residential development and traffic calming taken into account so that remedial measures such as speed bumps and chicanes are not required. Design features should ensure that wherever possible appropriate traffic speeds are managed by the arrangements of buildings and spaces.

VGH 18: Density

That a maximum density of 15–20 houses per hectare (6-8 houses per acre) be permissible in Kilmacow on greenfield sites within the village boundary, in accordance with the DoEHLG Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, as detailed in Section 2.1.4 of this Local Area Plan. (Please note that the density for Phase 2 lands will be reviewed during the next LAP review process).

Within the core urban area of the upper and lower villages (particularly on lands zoned 'General Development') the maximum density of 20 per hectare will not apply and each case will be considered on its merits and in light of the recommendations set out in Government Guidelines including *'The Residential Density Guideline, 1999'* and *'Draft Planning Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, 2008'* (DoEHLG). In addition to this, residential density in such cases, will be determined by reference to the key principles of good urban design, as referred to previously in this section, in conjunction with the following factors:-

- Existing densities in adjoining residential areas
- Compliance with quantitative and qualitative development control standards
- Capacity of the infrastructure to absorb the demands created by the development existing features on the site
- Specified rear garden sizes.

As set out in the County Development Plan, the intention of the Council is not to prescribe maximum residential density standards. The emphasis is on providing quality-housing environments based on innovation and a design led approach.

VGH 19: Public Open Space in New Residential Development

The County Council will not normally permit new residential development unless public open space is provided within the development to a minimum standard of 2.4 hectares per 1,000 population or greater. A reduction to this standard will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances as determined by the local authority. Where such a relaxation occurs the provision of open space within any scheme should not be below 10% of the site area.

Rationale:

The above standards are intended to work as safeguards in order to avoid over-development and to assist the planning authority in their assessment of planning applications. 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 the open space, the area of roads, grass margins, roundabouts, footpaths and visibility splays shall not be taken into account.

VGH 20: Design of Open Space

To require that the precise location, type and design of open space provision be designed and set according to the specific characteristics of the development, the site and its content by suitably qualified landscape architects or similar design professionals so as to ensure a high standard and consistency with good design and layout practice.

The Planning Authority will normally expect all public open space provision to take account of the following general principles:

- Public open space should be provided in a comprehensive and linked way and designed as an integral part of the development, rather than as an afterthought.
- Wherever possible the majority of open space should be multi-functional. Areas providing for informal amenity and children's play can often successfully be combined.
- Public open space should be well designed from a visual perspective as well as functionally accessible to the maximum number of dwellings within the residential area.
- Attractive natural features should be protected and incorporated into open space areas.
- Public open space areas should be provided with a maximum amount of surveillance from dwellings within the estate.

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.

Rationale:

Integrated pleasant, attractive and landscaped open space should form an intrinsic element of new residential development. It can be provided in a variety of ways e.g. open spaces both formal and informal, semi-natural areas such as wetlands, woodlands, meadows and green corridors, as well as formal gardens, and seating areas. Also, the use of hard landscaping elements, such as paving or cobbled areas

play an increasingly important role in the design and presentation of open space concepts.

VGH 21: Private Open Space

An adequate amount of private open space must be provided within the curtilage of each dwelling. In general the requirement will be **60 to 75 square metre** minimum for houses with **3/4/5 bedrooms** in order to ensure that most household activities are accommodated and at the same time offers visual delight, receive some sunshine and encourage plant growth.

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.

The following open space requirements apply:

Private Open Space Requirements	
Type of Unit	Required Open Space
3/4/5 bedroom houses	60-75 sq.m
1/2 bedroom houses	48 sq.m

Source: Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014, Table 10.3, pg. 10-12

VGH 22: Play Space

It is Council policy that a minimum standard of 10 sq. m. of dedicated playable space per residential unit is to be provided as an integral part of each new development. This playable space can form part of the overall open space provision of a development but must be dedicated to play.

This space is to be distributed throughout the development and should take into account the presence or lack of existing off-site provision. The total space requirement should be broken down into the relevant typologies taking account of the maximum walking distances from residential units given below. All children and young people should have access to play space which should be within a reasonable and safe walking distance from home.

To ensure that children and young people are guaranteed this access to play space the following standards should be observed when new residential developments are being laid out:

Play Space Type	Maximum walking distance from residential unit
Doorstep Playable Space	100m
Local Playable Space	400m
Neighbourhood Playable Space	800m
Youth Space	800m

Source: Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014, Section 10.7.2.3, pg. 10-11

VGH 23: Provision of Sports and Recreational Facilities

Developers are required to make provision for sports and recreational infrastructure commensurate with the needs generated by that development and the capacity of existing facilities in the area to cater for existing and future needs. Recreation provision should form an integral element of development proposals. Where provision is not provided on-site it may be directly provided off-site.

VGH 24: Bin Storage Standards

Each residential unit is required to have adequate storage for three wheeled bins. Residential units with no rear access shall provided adequate storage for the bins to the front of the development, in contained units.

VGH 25: Separation Distance between Houses

A minimum of 2.3 metres shall be provided between the side walls of detached, semi-detached and end of terrace dwellings to ensure privacy and ease of access. A property boundary should ideally occur mid-way along this dimension.

VGH 26: Boundary Treatment of House Sites

Where the flank or rear boundaries of house sites abut roads, pedestrian ways or public open space, suitably designed screen walls 1.8 metres in height shall be provided. Where concrete screen walls are proposed they shall be suitably rendered and capped in an acceptable manner.

3.2.4 POPULATION, VILLAGE GROWTH AND HOUSING KEY ACTIONS**KEY ACTION VGH 1: Implement the Housing Strategy**

To implement the Housing Strategy as set out in Appendix A of the County Development Plan 2008-2014.

3.3 Land Use Development

3.3.1 EXPLANATION OF FORMAT

This section of the Local Area Plan firstly examines the existing situation in Kilmacow in terms of land use development then puts forward a strategy, or desired vision in relation to it. The strategy is a long-term plan of action designed to achieve particular goals and is intended as a general framework to provide guidance for actions to be taken. The strategy provides the bridge between the policy and objectives for future land use development in Kilmacow. The policy and objectives are then listed at the end of this section.

3.3.1.1 Policy Informants

In devising an appropriate land use strategy for Kilmacow, the Plan has been informed by a wide range of considerations, including the following:-

- **The input of the local community and other stakeholders** through the pre-draft public consultation process including the interactive workshops, completed questionnaires/leaflets, submissions made and discussions with individuals.
- **The existing character, amenity, landscape and heritage of Kilmacow.**
- **The existing land use pattern, development trends and recent pressure for continued growth**, that has occurred in Kilmacow in recent years largely owing to its location close to Waterford City, its accessibility, unique character, setting and quality environment.
- **The nature, location, design and density of existing and recently constructed developments in the villages.**
- **The policy, objectives, land-use and development control provisions of Kilmacow Development Plan 2002-2008**, the current Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014, the Residential Density Guidelines 1999, Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines 2005, Draft Sustainable Residential Development Guidelines 2008 by the DoEHLG, the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 and the Regional Planning Guidelines
- **The proper planning and sustainable development of the area**, in particular the need to provide sufficient lands in the Plan Area for the anticipated growth of the village to accommodate local need and associated land use developments, including community facilities, adequate infrastructure and services and local amenities.

In addition to this, the development boundary for the villages has been designated taking into consideration the following factors:-

- **The need to provide a compact and accessible village** and to reduce its continuous outward spread, in order to promote the efficient use of land and of energy, to reduce pressure for one-off housing on rural lands, to minimise unnecessary transport demand, encourage walking and cycling and to enhance the existing built environment, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.
- **The need to encompass the anticipated development envelope required for Kilmacow and its wider hinterland area** not only for the 6 year plan period but also for the medium to longer term growth of the village.
- **The need to offer locational choice and housing mix** to serve local needs.
- **The existing built environment and road structure.**
- **The desire to maintain and enhance the unique character of Kilmacow and its two village concept.**
- **Proximity to existing and potential community and commercial facilities.**
- **Existing permitted / committed development.**
- **The need to provide consistency and continuity with the Plan area boundaries** delineated in the previous 2002-2008 Development Plan for Kilmacow.

3.3.2 EXISTING SITUATION

There is a range of existing land uses in Kilmacow which accommodate different development uses. One of the most instantly recognisable characteristics of Kilmacow is its two separate village centres – Upper and Lower Kilmacow. A large portion of the green wedge of land which separates them originally belonged to the old Greenville Estate. The lands there are now primarily agricultural with the exception of the Sports Complex, which accommodates a range of outdoor sporting facilities for the local community. This is a distinct land use characteristic that is unique to Kilmacow.

Commercial and retail uses including local shops and services like pub, post office, grocery store, hair salon etc. are focused in the heart of both village centres. The Upper village contains a wider range of uses than the Lower village. Both villages contain residential development that is clustered at a higher density in the village cores, but which reduces in density as it spreads outwards and away from the village centres and into the surrounding area.

There are a range of community uses including the church, parish/community hall, retirement home (Rosedale), the Sports Complex, crèche and two local schools. The majority of these uses are located within or adjoining the Upper Village and are in reasonably close walking distance to one another. They are not as easily accessible from the Lower Village by foot or cycle, which is compounded by the lack of a footpath to link the villages.

A more recent characteristic of Kilmacow's land use development is the spread of one-off housing along the main routes in and out of the village cores, creating a ribbon development pattern in many parts of the plan area. This is particularly focused in the upper village and extending along Narrabaun North and Dangan. This form of development has tended to 'suburbanise' the surrounding countryside as a result of the linear pattern of development. It results in the removal of roadside hedges and replacement with residential boundaries such as walls or fences.

In more recent years, the development of a medium-density residential estate in the upper village has brought about a change in the physical fabric and character of the village and has furthered the development of a more urban, or suburban character. In addition to this, permission was granted in 2006 (planning reg. ref.: 04/1842) for a second residential estate comprising 25 units at Narrabaun North, although construction has not yet commenced.

Building heights in Kilmacow vary mostly between 1 and 2-storeys in the village centres and in the outer residential areas. However, greater building height does exist in the villages, and can be found in many of the historic mill buildings e.g. Brownes Mill and Gooch's Mill at Greenville, which are 3-4 storeys in height.

The land use pattern in Kilmacow has been shaped historically by its position along the River Blackwater and the arrangement of local roads including that which links the villages, the stone bridges and its buildings. Today, the land use pattern has been influenced by the on-going development of one-off houses in the countryside, and recent residential developments in the upper village.

3.3.3 LAND USE STRATEGY

The land use strategy for Kilmacow is to provide for the proper planning and sustainable development of Kilmacow for the period 2008-2014, while also promoting the aims of national policy and objectives. It aims to ensure the orderly growth and development of Kilmacow in a manner that respects the existing character, heritage and amenity of the villages and that contributes to the creation of a high quality environment for the local community and visitors to the area.

The land use strategy identifies lands that will be suitable for possible development during the plan period by zoning them. 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. 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.

Given the availability of a substantial amount of undeveloped residential zoned lands, in excess of that required for the 6-year plan period (further details on this are set out in Section 3.2.2. of the LAP), a Residential Phasing Sequence (i.e. phasing) has been applied to Kilmacow to ensure that future development is strategically directed to best achieve orderly development at a sustainable level. Phasing of zoned land has also been introduced in order to ensure that the Local Area Plan accords with the county settlement strategy and policy framework contained in both the NSS and RPGs.

In addition to this, the land use strategy aims to facilitate the following:-

- The consolidation of the village cores, rather than their continuous outward spread.
- Prevention of unplanned ribbon development.
- The safeguarding of residential amenity.
- The strengthening of Kilmacow's role as a local service centre by promoting a greater level and diversity of uses in the village centres.

New development should contribute towards maintaining a compact settlement and so "leap-frogging" of development at some distance from the existing built up areas in Kilmacow village centres should be avoided. This is reflected in the location and phasing of zoned lands as set out in this Local Area Plan.

3.3.4 LAND USE ZONING

The land use zoning objectives are detailed below and are shown on the Land Use Zoning and Phasing Map (Map 1).

In the following paragraphs:

- **Permitted 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.

3.3.5 LAND USE ZONING OBJECTIVES

Residential

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

Permissible Uses

Dwellings, open spaces, places of worship, community centres, halting sites, public service installations, playgroup or crèche, nursing home, home-based economic activity.

Open for Consideration

Bed and breakfast establishments and guesthouses, lock up garages, retail shop of local convenience not more than 100m. sq in gross area, hotel, public house, 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

General Development – Village Cores

Objective: To provide for the development and improvement of appropriate village centre uses in order to sustain and strengthen the role of Kilmacow as a local service centre, whilst respecting its existing character.

The purpose of this zone is to protect and enhance the village centres of Kilmacow and to provide for and improve retailing, residential, commercial, office, cultural and other uses appropriate to village centre.

Permissible Uses

Dwellings, retailing, offices, public buildings or places of assembly, cultural or educational buildings, recreational buildings, hotels, motels, guest houses, private

garages, open spaces, public service installations, medical and related consultants, restaurants, cafes, takeaways, public houses, car parks, halls or discotheques, and other uses as permitted and open for consideration in residential zoning.

Open for Consideration

Open space, workshop or light industry

Mixed Use Developments in 'General Development' Zones

In order to promote mixed-use developments within the areas zoned for 'General Development' the following mechanism will be applied in appropriate locations:-

- (a) No less than two separate planning uses will normally be allowed (i.e. retail/residential or retail/offices etc.);
- (b) Where two separate planning uses are proposed, no one singular use will prevail in terms of >70% of the total gross floorspace;
- (c) Where more than two separate uses are proposed, no one singular use will prevail in terms of >50% of the total gross floorspace.

Without such a mechanism it is recognised that one predominant use may prevail on such designated lands. Mixed use developments in village centres are appropriate in attaining sustainable development objectives, creating opportunities to live, work, shop etc. within urban environments and reduce the propensity to travel by the private car.

In exceptional circumstances the planning authority may consider one singular use on these sites however this would have to be discussed with Kilkenny County Council at pre-planning consultation stage.

Recreation and Open Space

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

Permissible Uses

Open space, club house and associated facilities

Open for Consideration

Sports clubs, recreational/cultural buildings, stands, pavilions, agricultural uses, public service installations that would not be detrimental to the amenity of these zoned lands, car park for recreational purposes, community facility, craft centre/craft shop, golf course, tea room, kiosk.

Community Facilities

Objective: To protect, provide and improve community facilities.

Permissible Uses

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

Open for Consideration

Public service installations, community enterprise 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.

Rural Conservation Area

Objective: To provide for the development of agriculture and to protect the high amenity value and rural character of the area.

Permissible Uses

Agriculture and related developments, development related to the equine industry, outdoor recreation, rural housing in accordance with the provisions set out for rural housing in '*Areas under Urban Influence*' in Chapter 3, Section 3.4 of the County Development Plan 2008-2014, small scale light industries and enterprises within existing or disused buildings which do not detract from the character of the area.

Open for Consideration

Public open space, guesthouse, restaurant, nursing home, private open space, other uses that are consistent with the conservation objective and which are not contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Applications will be considered case by case and assessment is based on the general development criteria set out in the County Development Plan.

Transitional Areas

While the zoning objectives indicate the different uses permitted in each zone, it is important to consider the use and scale of development located at the boundary of adjoining land uses zones. It is important to avoid developments at such locations, 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, density and appearance of development proposals and to landscaping and screening proposals in order to protect the amenities of these residential areas.

3.3.6 LAND USE DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

LUD 1: Sequential Approach

It is policy of the Council to encourage the sequential development of the village cores from the centre outwards, in order to ensure that the higher order facilities and the higher density development is located on the most central lands with optimum access and the highest level of services.

LUD 2: Adequate Land

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that an adequate amount of land is included in the development boundary of the villages to cater for their growth over the period of the plan in accordance with the role of Kilmacow in the County Settlement Strategy.

LUD 3: Adjoining Lands

It is policy of the Council to assess any new development having regard to the development potential of adjoining land.

LUD 4: Way Leaves

It is policy of the council to preserve free from development the way leaves of all public sewers and public water mains.

LUD 5: Sustainable Servicing

It is the policy of the Council to prioritise developments that demonstrate that they can be sustainably and cost-effectively serviced by public infrastructure. Where public infrastructure is generally unavailable, a high standard of private services may be considered subject to appropriate environment and amenity safeguards.

LUD 6: Home Based Economic Activity

The Planning Authority supports minor changes to allow for home based economic activity provided the use remains ancillary to the main residential uses; that the applicant continues to reside in the house and the use has no adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring dwellings.

In determining applications for developments involving working at home, the Planning Authority will have regard to the following considerations:

- The effect on the amenities of adjoining occupiers, particularly in relation to hours of work, noise and general disturbance
- The nature and extent of the work
- Anticipated levels of traffic generated by the proposed development
- Arrangements for the storage of refuse and collection of waste.

Note: Home-based economic activity is defined as small scale commercial activity carried out by residents of a house, being subordinate to the use of the house as a single dwelling unit and including working from home. The Planning Authority recognises that such arrangements can benefit individuals, families and

the local community in addition to contributing to more sustainable land use patterns by reducing the need for commuting.

LUD 7: Fast Food Takeaways

To prevent an excessive concentration of takeaways in the village centres and to ensure that if proposed that the intensity of such a use is in keeping with both the scale of the building and the pattern of development in the area.

The provision of such facilities will be strictly controlled having regard to the following, where appropriate:-

- The effect of noise, general disturbance, hours of operation, litter and fumes on the amenities of nearby residents
- The need to safeguard the character and vitality of the town core and to maintain a suitable mix of retail uses.
- Traffic considerations
- Litter control
- The number or frequency of such facilities in the area.
- The need to integrate the design of ventilation systems into the design of the building.
- The Council will require, prior to granting of permission that appropriate cleansing/anti-litter measures be agreed with the Planning Authority.



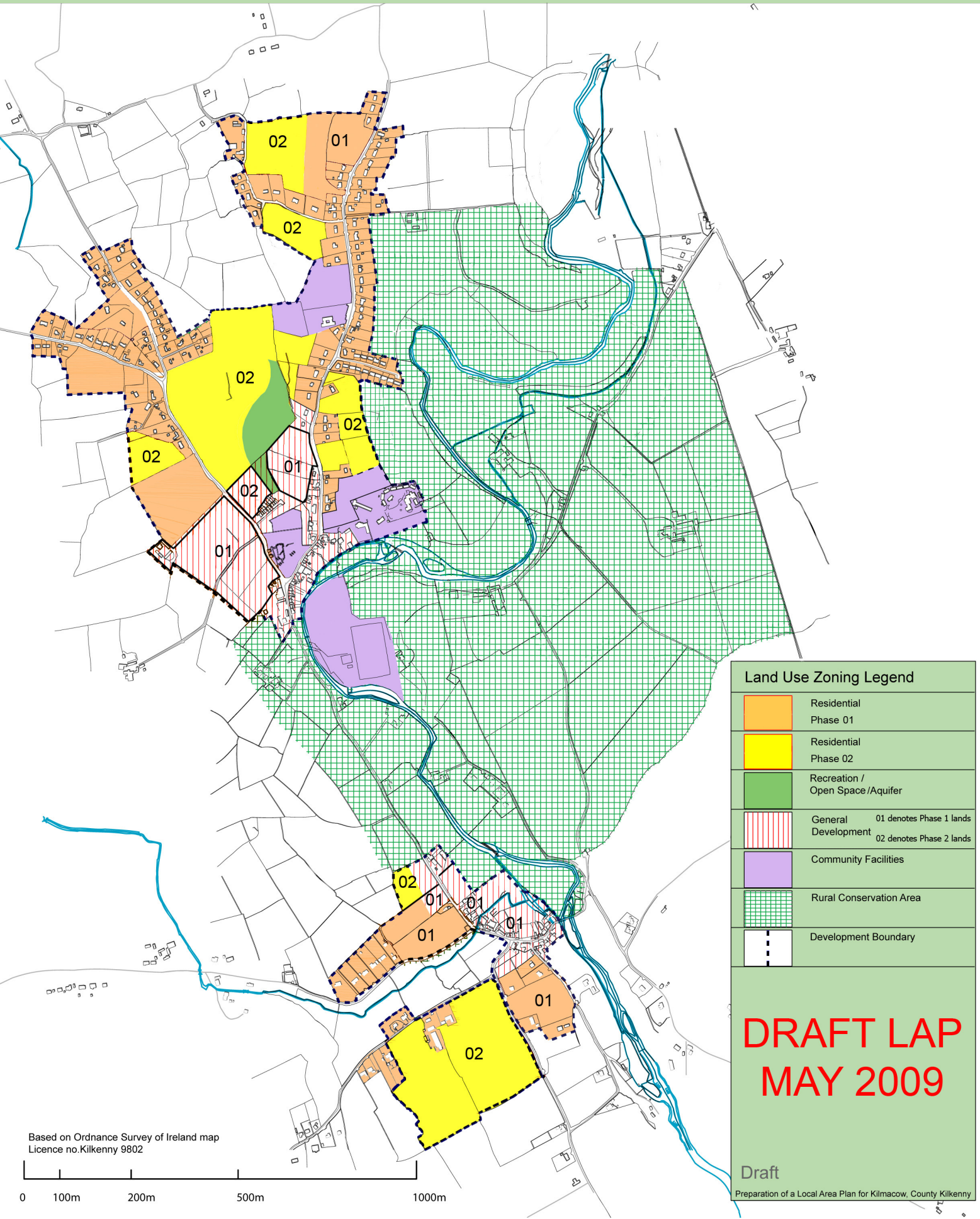
Kilmacow Draft Local Area Plan

Kilkenny County Council
Map 1 : Zoning and Phasing Map

BDP.

Blackhall Green
Dublin 7, Ireland

T +353 [0]1 474 0600
F +353 [0]1 672 7536
www.bdp.com

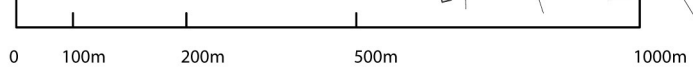


Land Use Zoning Legend	
	Residential Phase 01
	Residential Phase 02
	Recreation / Open Space / Aquifer
	General Development 01 denotes Phase 1 lands 02 denotes Phase 2 lands
	Community Facilities
	Rural Conservation Area
	Development Boundary

**DRAFT LAP
MAY 2009**

Draft
Preparation of a Local Area Plan for Kilmacow, County Kilkenny

Based on Ordnance Survey of Ireland map
Licence no. Kilkenny 9802



3.4 Village Character & Design

3.4.1 EXPLANATION OF FORMAT

This section of the Local Area Plan firstly examines the existing situation in Kilmacow in terms of village character and design and then puts forward a strategy, or vision, in order to maintain the existing character of the village cores and to promote quality design in new buildings. The strategy is a long-term plan of action designed to achieve particular goals and is intended as a general framework to provide guidance for actions to be taken. The strategy provides the bridge between the policy and objectives, which are then listed at the end of this section.

3.4.1.1 Policy Informants

In developing the options, policies and objectives of this section a range of inputs, guidelines and best practice has been considered, in particular the following:-

- **Public Consultation** including the input received through the public workshops, written submissions, completed questionnaires and through speaking with other stakeholders and concerns of the local community regarding the scale, density, height and location of substantial recent developments in Kilmacow.
- **Analysis of the existing village character and main built heritage features in Kilmacow.**
- **Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014** and its policies, objectives and proposals as appropriate to Kilmacow, in particular Chapter 8 dealing with the natural, built, archaeological and landscape heritage of the County and Chapter 10 detailing requirements for new development.
- **Best practice approaches to urban and rural design**, including the concept of '*rural clusters*' and general principles of good urban design including legibility, permeability, responsiveness, human scale, enclosure, site responsiveness etc.
- **National and regional planning guidelines** which are applicable including the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development and accompanying Urban Design Manual, the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines and the Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines both by the DoEHLG etc.
- **The need to accommodate additional growth** in accordance with the County Settlement Strategy balanced against the need to consider the optimum location and design of development.

- **Principles of proper planning and sustainable development.**

3.4.2 EXISTING SITUATION

Linear Settlement Pattern

The overall layout of Kilmacow is linear stretching for approximately 2.5km from the Lower Village to the extremity of the Upper Village to the northwest.

The River Blackwater

The River Blackwater is an important feature in Kilmacow that has played a key part in the historical location of development within the village. Kilmacow has evolved primarily on the west side of the River Blackwater which is a tributary of the River Suir. It has defined the contour of the Upper Village where the river bends and changes direction and to a lesser extent has influenced the settlement pattern of the lower village. The topographical features of the lower village indicate that the River Blackwater was used as an important artery of communication in medieval times. It would have been used as a mode of transportation that was very important in those days when the countryside was thickly wooded and existing paths were narrow.

The River has also contributed significantly to Kilmacow's industrial past and is responsible for the number of mills that operated from the area in the past. It is recorded that a total of 14 mills operated in Kilmacow in the late 1800s, when this form of industrial activity was at its highest. A few of the old mill buildings dispersed in and around the villages have visible remains today with a small number occupied by local businesses or other related activities.

Village Setting and Form

One of the most distinctive features of Kilmacow is that it has two village centres; one known as Upper Kilmacow and the other as Lower Kilmacow. Each is separated from the other by a large green wedge of primarily agricultural land that stretches for approximately 1km (referred to below as the intervening area). This is a unique feature of Kilmacow's settlement structure – one that is rarely seen in single Irish settlements. Its development into two parts is an important part of Kilmacow's history that has survived generations of change. Today, it contributes towards Kilmacow's unique identity and local distinctiveness and is a feature that maintains a strong sense of community ownership and pride. Whilst Kilmacow maintains a two village concept, it also maintains a single and united community - one that is proud of its local identity and cultural heritage.

The Lower Village

The lower village or '*lower street*' of Kilmacow is thought to be much older in origin than the upper village, dating back to early ecclesiastical Pre-Norman times. The street layout, remaining buildings and features of Lower Kilmacow are therefore older in origin than that of the Upper Village. While an element of dereliction still remains such as the large Mill House at the bridge, great improvements have taken place in the lower village in recent years with the majority of ruined or vacant houses being completely and sensitively refurbished, retaining the historical character of the village. The old graveyard was recently restored and is maintained by members of the local community.

In terms of commercial activity, the lower village now contains a Public House & Restaurant (Cooke's), a Health Board Dispensary and on its outer edge, a petrol station with supermarket. Remaining buildings in the Lower Village comprise renovated cottages and townhouses with some farmhouses and outbuildings dispersed around the core area.

The Upper Village

The Upper Village is considered to have developed as an alternative to the older Pre-Norman lower village around the end of the 18th century. The Upper Village developed as one of the few industrial villages in South Kilkenny and has a significant number of mills – most of which no longer operate as such today. Many of the early houses in the upper village are thought to have been built to house the workers employed in the building of, and later, as workers in the mills.

Upper Kilmacow, also known as '*Upper Street*' is divided between the townlands of Dangan and Narrabaun South. It now functions as the centre of social life of the parish and contains the majority of commercial, education and community facilities. It contains St. Senan's Parish Church which is situated in the heart of the upper village where it dominates the streetscape. The church spire is also a very prominent feature in the skyline and functions as a local landmark while the tall boundary wall of the church is a dominant feature at street level. Also located in the Upper Village is St. Senan's Boys National School, St. Joseph's Girls National School, a Montessori, Rosedale Residential Home and voluntary housing for the elderly, the Community Hall and Gym, post-office, a supermarket/bakery, public houses and hairdressers.

The upper village has experienced significant pressure for residential development in recent years, something that has been less prevalent in the Lower Village. The bulk of new development has occurred in the area to the north of the Upper Village at Dangan and Narrabaun North. One-off rural housing has spread extensively, almost unchecked in the past decade, along the two main roads that extend north from the Upper Village, to form extensive ribbon development. The heart of the Upper Village, while it still retains an intimate character with a traditional narrow streetscape winding towards the village junction, has suffered because of the unsustainable spread of ribbon development that has caused the village boundary to lose definition and has increased traffic levels on the narrow winding roads. More recently, the upper

village has come under pressure for more suburban forms of residential development, evidenced by a number of planning applications for schemes ranging from 20 – 60 units. There has been a shift from a village to a more urban, or suburban character in Upper Kilmacow as a result of the recent construction of the large scale residential development known as Chapelgate.

For the most part there has been insufficient provision and quality of the necessary services, amenities and infrastructure (including roads, footpaths, sewerage scheme and quality water supply) accommodate the scale, form and location of this new residential development and the associated increase in population. The important issue for the villages is that any increased pressure for development is carefully managed to ensure that Kilmacow grows in an organic and sustainable manner, in keeping with the historical character of the village and its setting. It is also essential and that the corresponding level of amenities, services and physical infrastructure required to support both the current population as well as any increase in population, can be supplied in tandem.

The Intervening Area

The intervening area between the upper and lower villages retains a rural character and is primarily in agricultural use (grazing). The Sports Complex known locally as *'The Farm'* and a small number of residential and agricultural buildings are located in this area. Also located there, are some attractive old stone walls which contribute to the rural character of the area.

Lands within this area, on the west side of the River Blackwater contain a number of large historic houses and their gate lodges set in extensive rural grounds including Kilcronagh, Ida House and Greenville House which remain occupied today. Also in this area are a number of old stone mills including Greenville Mill (including mill owner's house) - a once thriving old Mill, currently occupied by a local business involved in the manufacture of electrical and mechanical components. Gooch's Floor Mill is also located in this area, which has been recently renovated and is in use as a private residence. These historic buildings and their rural setting are an attractive historic feature in Kilmacow's landscape that adds to the character of the place. In order to maintain this unique and worthy feature and protect it from inappropriate forms of development, the intervening area was zoned as a Rural Conservation Area in the previous Kilmacow Local Area Plan 2002 and will continue to be so zoned in this Local Area Plan.

Vacancy & Dereliction

Despite the level of new residential development that has taken place in the upper village, there still remains a level of vacancy and some dereliction in and around the village centres, including the old creamery building across from the Girls National School, the old house at Kilmacow Bridge known locally as *'The Barracks'* (next to the old corn mill) and a small number of buildings on approach into the village from the lower village. These buildings, although they all have historical interest, in their current state tend to detract from the aesthetic quality of

the village centre. Their renovation, reuse or restoration would be desirable. However, it is noteworthy that over the past number of years many vacant and derelict buildings particularly a number of old cottages in the lower village have been restored, renovated and now occupied by local people which is a great achievement for Kilmacow.

3.4.3 VILLAGE DESIGN STRATEGY

The Village Design Strategy for Kilmacow is to promote the development of a high quality, sympathetically designed, well landscaped and appropriately scaled environment that is in keeping with the existing character, amenity, environment, heritage and landscape of the villages. New buildings should contribute towards maintaining a sense of place and identity in Kilmacow by drawing inspiration from the village's indigenous character, setting and context. The design of new development should be responsive to its contextual surroundings and interact appropriately between settlement and landscape always aiming to enrich the existing qualities of the villages. High quality in design, the use of materials and layout will be essential in order to ensure that new development contributes positively to Kilmacow and does not detract from the attractive built fabric of the historic village cores.

The Village Design Strategy for Kilmacow also seeks to promote the retention, re-use and refurbishment of derelict or abandoned buildings where possible and where they can make a positive contribution to the character, appearance and quality of the built environment and village character and identity. The renovation and re-use of Gooch's Mill is a good example of how this can successfully be achieved.

3.4.4 VILLAGE CHARACTER & DESIGN POLICIES

VCD 1: The Promotion of High Quality Development

To promote the development of a high quality, sympathetically designed, well landscaped and appropriately scaled environment that is in keeping with the existing character, amenity, environment, heritage and landscape of the villages.

VCD 2: Quality in Design, Layout and Use of Materials

To ensure a high standard in design, layout and use of materials in new developments and to encourage development that is sensitive to its context and sustainable.

VCD 3: Maintain the Intervening Area between the Villages

To maintain the intervening green area between the villages free from inappropriate forms of development that would interfere with its attractive rural setting and agricultural use (refer to Section 3.3.5 for permitted uses in this area).

VCD 4: Availability of Services, Infrastructure and Amenities

To only allow new residential development having regard to the availability of services, infrastructure, recreational and community facilities required to serve such development.

VCD 5: Building Height

To restrict building height to a maximum of 2-3 storeys in keeping with existing development

VCD 6: Expansion & Consolidation of the Villages

To ensure that an adequate amount of land is included in the development boundary of the villages to cater for their expansion over the period of the plan and to encourage consolidation of the villages and prevent its continued outward spread.

VCD 7: Re-Use & Rehabilitation of Vacant or Derelict Buildings

To encourage the sympathetic re-use or rehabilitation of any attractive and historic vacant, abandoned or derelict buildings within the plan area and encourage their sensitive conversion to residential or tourist accommodation or other appropriate use.

VCD 8: Protect & Preserve Unique Landmarks & Historical Features

To protect and preserve unique landmarks and historic, heritage or cultural features in Kilmacow.

VCD 9: Adequate Car Parking Spaces

To ensure adequate car parking spaces are provided in all new developments and to apply the car parking standards set out in the County Development Plan to new developments within the village.

VCD 10: Development in the Intervening Green Area

The intervening area between the upper and lower villages shall remain free from any form of development that would interfere with its attractive rural setting and use for agricultural and related purposes. Appropriate forms of development are as follows:-

- Development related to agriculture and the equine industry
- Development related to the residential amenity and enjoyment of existing residences (should be ancillary to the main residence).
- Outdoor recreation e.g. parks, playing fields, walking routes, wildlife areas, park benches etc.
- Where the re-use of old buildings, including mills, for employment based uses is proposed, this will be considered in terms of how it impacts on the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- New single dwellings in the intervening area will only be allowed in limited cases as set out in Chapter 3.2 of this Local Area Plan.

Rural and open space lands in the intervening area between the upper and lower villages can provide opportunities for passive and active recreational facilities and amenities, such as parks, playing pitches, riverside walks, nature / wildlife areas, for views and prospects of the landscape and for agricultural purposes and this should be explored wherever possible (refer to Section 3.3.5 for further information on permitted uses in this area).

VCD 11: Development Adjoining the Village Character Areas (ACA)

Where new development adjoins the Village Character Areas and abuts the road the development should provide a positive frontage to the road which extends and enhances the existing VCA streetscape (please refer to Section 3.7.2 for explanatory notes on the Village Character Areas).

VCD 12: Building Design and Layout

In all areas, particular attention will be focused on issues such as avoiding undue overlooking, maintaining privacy and ensuring good individual house design in line with accepted standards. While ensuring sensitive and sympathetic building design should be the driving aim in all new development proposals. This should not be seen as a constraint on architects and designers wishing to pursue innovate and carefully considered contemporary solutions to the design and construction of new development.

VCD 13: The Provision of Essential Facilities and Infrastructure

All new development in Kilmacow shall be carefully thought out and planned to facilitate the provision of much-needed footpaths, cycle routes and public lighting that link the village centres and connect them to the adjoining residential areas. All new development must incorporate these facilities, where appropriate.

VCD 14: Design Principles and Approaches

It is the policy of the Council to promote the use of design principles and approaches that will help to create high quality built and natural environments and

that are appropriate to context and landscape setting of Kilmacow. The following design principles will be promoted in Kilmacow:-

a) Context-based design

New development should be responsive to its site context and be in keeping with the village character, amenity, heritage, environment and landscape.

b) Quality Place-Making

Buildings and public spaces should be designed to create quality places that are suited to their context, that have a recognisable identity and that contribute to the creation of a high quality public realm.

c) Making Connections

Provision, maintenance or improvement of sustainable movement systems e.g. the roads, streets, footpaths, cycle routes, public transport routes, green corridors and systems for providing service utilities, all of which improve urban life, must be considered carefully and planned for in all new development proposals.

d) Built Form

New development should seek to improve on the existing built form but at the same time be sensitive to its context and in keeping with the scale and character of the existing development, particularly the historic buildings in the village core areas.

e) Connectivity, Permeability & Legibility

Developments should provide for a high level of connectivity and permeability, to enable and encourage walking and cycling and to promote linkages between areas, together with an adequate level of legibility (sense of place). The provision of basic facilities such as footpaths and cycle ways to allow walking and cycling to and between different parts of the villages must be considered in the layout of all new development proposals.

VCD 15: Building Materials & Finishes

High quality and traditional materials where possible, shall be used in any new development in Kilmacow. This means using, where possible:-

- Materials that are relative to the local area - this promotes sourcing materials locally thus reducing transport costs.
- Natural materials or recycled materials.
- External walls such as lime rendered or traditional locally sourced cut limestone is desirable (as many of the older buildings in Kilmacow use these materials).
- Windows and doors should be hard wearing timber.
- Door and window openings should be simple and restrained.

- Slate roofs should be of a colour consistent with the Kilmacow area.

VCD 16: Sustainable Design

New buildings should be sustainable in their siting, orientation, design and construction. Passive solar design techniques, high energy efficiency, low impact construction methods and the use of local building materials and craftsmanship can all help to ensure that new developments minimise their environmental impacts and long term costs, thus offering a more sustainable development solution.

VCD 17: Building Widths

Building widths are encouraged to reflect vernacular forms with narrow floor plans that provide benefits in terms of dual aspect and views, solar gain, reduced ridge heights, less monolithic buildings, greater opportunities for creating enclosure, defined street edges, courtyards, etc.

VCD 18: The Re-use and Refurbishment of Derelict or Abandoned buildings

To encourage the refurbishment and conversion of existing unfit, derelict and abandoned buildings in the village centre or inner village areas in order to safeguard the historical building fabric of Kilmacow and the retention of the traditional village character. The reuse and refurbishment of other abandoned and derelict buildings outside these core areas such as old mills and creamery buildings will also be promoted by the Council.

Rationale:

The retention, rehabilitation and re-use of older buildings can play a pivotal role in the sustainable development of a settlement and can give a sense of maturity and of individual place. Kilmacow contains a number of examples of buildings, which although not protected, have historic or architectural merit. A number of these currently lie vacant, abandoned or in a state of disrepair however they are attractively designed buildings that have stood the test of time and form a part of the settlements unique history and character. Kilmacow also contains many features of industrial heritage and related artefacts and plant, remnants of its former relationship with the milling industry.

VCD 19: Relaxation of Zoning Objectives for Restoration of Derelict Buildings

To encourage uses which are compatible with the character of existing historic and derelict or vacant buildings in the villages of Kilmacow. In certain cases, the Planning Authority may relax site zoning restrictions in order to secure the restoration and re-use of such buildings, particularly in the core village areas. These restrictions, including site development standards, may be relaxed if the building is being restored to high standards and the setting and special character of the building is retained, and the use and development is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

VCD 20: Policy on Landmarks and Unique Features

The unique cultural heritage features and landmarks of Kilmacow, as identified in Section 3.7 of this Local Area Plan, shall be preserved and maintained for future

generations to enjoy and also, to safeguard the historical character of the villages. These include such features as Kilmacow's stone bridges, the mass bush, St. Senan's Well, the pump at Narrabaun and many others.

Any unique historical features of local importance which may not be included in this LAP, but which are known by local residents, will also be safeguarded in appropriate circumstances and where made known to the Council.

VCD 21: Policy on Gap Sites / Infill Development

Investment in new or improved services in Kilmacow (e.g. the new sewerage scheme; the upgrade of Mooncoin Regional Water Supply Scheme, road improvements) must be utilised properly through the prioritisation of development that either re-uses brownfield development land, such as sites in or adjoining the village centres, or appropriately located backland sites. Development of such sites will be subject to the relevant design standards and safeguards outlined in this Local Area Plan, where the protection of existing residential amenity will be paramount.

Rationale:

It is important that new development contributes to maintaining a compact village in order to prevent its continuous outward spread and encroachment into the rural countryside, which is unsustainable and would, in turn, lead to an uncoordinated and potentially costly approach to the provision of much needed social and physical infrastructure in Kilmacow. This is a trend which has occurred previously in Kilmacow and caused hardship to local residents, so is therefore to be avoided.

VCD 22: Availability of Services

If substantial development is proposed for Kilmacow, it shall be considered having regard to the availability of, or proposals for, the provision of any recreational, community, infrastructure or other facilities required in the area as identified by the Council.

VCD 23: Pre-planning Meetings

To encourage pre-application discussions with potential applicants so that there is clarity around sequencing priorities of the development plan, the vision statement and phasing objectives of the local area plan and how they relate to the applicant's land. The role of non-statutory design briefs or design statements (see POL VCD 24 below) should be agreed at this stage. Pre-application meetings should also inform the quality, design and layout of any proposed development to ensure that it appropriately addresses the policies and objectives of the Local Area Plan.

Design Principles for New Development

VCD 24: Submission of a Design Statement

It is policy of the Council to encourage all designers of residential or commercial development within the Plan boundary to carry out an appraisal of the distinctive character of the area adjoining the site, and to consider how the design and

layout of the proposed development responds to, and preferably enriches that character. This will form the basis of a design statement that should include or summarise the character appraisal and be submitted with a planning application. By explaining the planning proposal in more detail, setting out the design decisions that have been made, a proposal can be more easily appreciated and accepted.

Some information on how best to prepare a design statement is set out in the box below.

BEST PRACTICE INFORMATION SHEET – PREPARING A DESIGN STATEMENT

The design criteria set out in the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government's Urban Design Manual 2008 – a best practice guide, provides a framework for the systematic appraisal for applications for residential development in urban areas and should be referred to in preparing a design statement. The core aim of the Guide is to provide developers, designers and planners with the information and backing they need to improve the design quality and sustainability of the development proposals that they are involved with and aid their process through the planning system.

In preparing a design statement the Urban Design Manual recommends that the following criteria should be considered and documented by the designer:-

- 1 **Context:** How does the development respond to its surroundings?
- 2 **Connections:** How well connected is the new development
- 3 **Inclusivity:** How easily can people use and access the development?
- 4 **Variety:** Does the proposed use, scale, materials and housing type complement those that already exist so that a balance is struck?
- 5 **Efficiency:** How does the development make appropriate use of resources, including land?
- 6 **Distinctiveness:** How do the proposals create a sense of place?
- 7 **Layout:** How does the proposal create a people friendly place and spaces?
- 8 **Public realm:** How safe. Secure and enjoyable are the public areas?
- 9 **Adaptability:** How will the building/s cope with change?
- 10 **Privacy and Amenity:** How does the development provide a decent standard of amenity
- 11 **Parking:** How will the parking be secure and attractive
- 12 **Detailed design:** How well thought through is the building and landscape design?

The twelve elements are based on the known elements of successful places and all are explained in more detail in the Urban Design Manual which is available to download at the website for the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government at www.environ.ie Kilkenny County Council refer applicants of all new development within Kilmacow to refer to the Manual and to incorporate its recommendations, where appropriate, into the design and layout of buildings.

Source: DoEHLG Urban Design Manual, Feb. 2008

VCD 25: Plot Ratio

A maximum plot ratio of 1.0 is set for the county. This will apply to brownfield lands located within or adjoining to the village centres. Outside of these areas

and on greenfield sites, a maximum plot ratio of 0.25-0.35 will apply in keeping with the recommendations of the Residential Density Guidelines for Planning Authorities 1999 (DoEHLG).

The Planning Authority will permit higher plot ratios only in cases where exceptional design standards of design are achieved on brownfield sites within or adjoining the core village areas.

Plot ratio is the relationship between the site area and the total floor area of the buildings erected on it. The plot ratio is calculated by dividing the gross floor area of the building by the site area.

Plot ratio = Gross floor area divided by / gross site area

The purpose of plot ratio is to prevent adverse effects of both over-development and under-development on the amenity and layout of buildings to achieve desirable massing and height of buildings, to balance the capacity of the site and street frontages.

VCD 26: Housing Densities

Given the nature of how the village has developed in the past and in order to ensure that new development will reflect the general ambience and character of the area a density of 15-20 houses per hectare is set for greenfield sites within the development boundary.

Within the core urban area of the upper and lower settlements increased densities of development may be considered acceptable but only where they contribute to the enhancement of village form by reinforcing the street pattern or assisting in the redevelopment of brownfield or backland sites. In such cases, special care will be required to protect the architectural and environmental qualities and special character of Kilmacow. Densities in excess of 20 houses per hectare for mainly residential schemes may be appropriate including a wide variety of housing types including family sized accommodation, starter homes and homes for elderly persons.

In general apartment developments are not acceptable in Kilmacow. However, in certain mixed use schemes individual apartments may be appropriate.

VCD 27: Site Coverage

Site coverage = Ground floor area divided by the gross site area.

It is Council policy that the maximum normal site coverage for all uses is 65% in Kilmacow. In some cases, a higher percentage may be allowed, such as on any redevelopment of commercial sites in the village centres, but these will be subject to the proposed planning and sustainable development of the area. The purpose of site coverage control is to prevent over development, to avoid overshadowing and to protect rights to light of adjoining properties.

Site coverage is a control for the purposes of preventing the adverse affects of overdevelopment and thus safeguarding sunlight and daylight within or adjoining proposed layouts or buildings. The site coverage index is determined by dividing the total area of ground covered by buildings by the total ground area within the curtilage of the buildings, excluding any land lying between the building line and the public street.

VCD 28: Building Lines

In the village cores and inner village areas, where development is well established, the Planning Authority will normally seek to ensure that development is not carried out in front of established building lines. Generally, in the village centre areas of Kilmacow it will be an aim to create a continuous building line along a street edge. Development, which would infringe on an existing building line and would be prejudicial to residential amenity, or orderly development will not be allowed.

Building lines may be relaxed in the following cases:

- to incorporate key landscape features into the development layout,
- to incorporate key landmark buildings,
- for innovative designs which can positively enhance the townscape, for innovative housing layouts, where the traditional set back from the public
- footpath is flexible due to new designs, with a decreasing emphasis on the minimum required space to the front of dwellings,
- to provide important areas of public open space, i.e. squares, pocket parks.

VCD 29: Parking and Loading

All new development will normally be required 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 established building lines in each development and shall be screened. The dimension of car parking bays shall be 4.8m by 2.4m. Car parking areas shall be constructed having regard to drainage, surfacing and ancillary matters. They should be provided with proper public lighting facilities and shall be clearly demarcated. All 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.

In all developments of a light industrial or commercial nature, developers will be required to provide loading or unloading facilities sufficient to meet the demand of such development. Off-street loading facilities shall conform to the following requirements:

- Each required space shall not be less than 3.75m in width, 6.0m in length and 4.25m in height, exclusive of drives and manoeuvring space and located entirely on the site being served.
- There shall be appropriate means of access to a street or road as well as adequate manoeuvring space.
- The maximum width of the driveway opening onto the street boundary will be 6m and the minimum width shall be 3.75m.
- The Planning Authority 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.

Table 3.4.1 Car Parking Standards

Land Use	Parking Spaces per Unit
Dwelling House	2 parking spaces per dwelling 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 space per bedroom
Public house, including hotel bar	1 space per 10m ² of bar and lounge floor area
Hotel function rooms	1 space per 10m ² gross floor area
Supermarkets	1 space per 25m ² gross floor area
Shops	1 space per 20m ² gross floor area
Restaurants, cafes	1 space per 20m ² gross floor area
Banks and offices	1 space per 15 m ² gross floor area
Industry / Light industry	1 space for every 60 m ² of gross industrial floor area and operational space to be determined by the Planning Authority
Warehousing	Each application will be determined by the planning authority
Retail warehousing	1 car space for every 35 m ² of net retail floorspace
Golf	4 car spaces per hole
Par 3 golf courses or Pitch & Putt courses	2 spaces per hole
Golf driving ranges, shooting ranges	1 space per bay / trap plus 3 spaces
Clinics and medical practices	3 car spaces per consulting room plus staff
Hospital	1.5 spaces per bed
Nursing Home	1 space per 4 bedroom plus staff

Source: Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014, Table 10.4, pg. 10-19

VCD 30: Infill Development

Infill development will be required to maintain established building lines and rooflines and proportions. Infill within existing terraces will also be required to take cognisance of roof pitch, fascia level, parapet, eaves and cornice lines, the line of window heads and string courses. As a general principle the numbers of facing materials used on a building should be kept to a minimum and materials should be consistent with the local vernacular.

VCD 31: Rural Housing⁴

The rural settlement policy for the county is set out in section 3.4 of the County Development Plan 2008-2014. The Council recognises that Kilkenny has a long tradition of people living in rural areas and it is the Council's intention to support this in a way that is sustainable. The rural housing policy for the County shall apply to any proposals for residential development on lands zoned 'Rural Conservation Area', or 'Agricultural' in Kilmacow, on unzoned lands or on phase 2 lands.

VCD 32: Shopfronts and Signage

The Council will require shopfronts in Kilmacow (including integral shops signs) to:

- a) Be of a high standard of design and materials and relate to the architectural composition of the building on which they are fitted.
- b) Be in keeping with the surrounding scale and streetscape and enhance the street scene.
- c) Not result in the loss of a traditional shopfront.
- d) Where appropriate, utilise traditional materials and retain existing details such as pilasters, brackets and cornices.
- e) Ensure that any fascia or projecting signs are located within the traditional fascia level and are appropriately positioned and illuminated for the locality.
- f) Ensure that blinds are traditionally designed and retractable and that shutters are fully perforated to enable a clear view of the shop window when closed.
- g) Permit safe and convenient access for people with disabilities and people with young children.

It is the policy of the Planning Authority to encourage the maintenance of original shop fronts, where they exist, or the reinstatement of traditional shop fronts where poor replacements have been installed. However, in the interest of creating a lively street scene with a clear identity however, the Council will encourage modern contemporary shopfront design where a traditional shop front has been lost in previous years or in a new building. The design, however, must be sensitive to the architectural order of the rest of the building and contribute positively to the neighbouring buildings and street scene. In designing a modern shopfront careful consideration should be given to proportions, materials and the

⁴ Please note that this policy applies to lands located within the intervening area in Kilmacow between the Upper and Lower Villages. It will also apply to any unzoned lands, or lands zoned for agriculture, rural conservation area or on rural lands within or outside the village boundary.

resolution of all construction details, in order to ensure a shopfront of the best quality.

In designing shopfronts, whether traditional or modern, the following general considerations should be taken into account:

- **The context and street scene**
It is important to consider the effect of the design on the rest of the street and local area. Proportions, materials and details should maintain and reflect the local variations as appropriate. The new shopfront should not seek attention or dominate its surroundings unnecessarily.
- **The building as a whole**
It is important to consider the effects of the design on the building as a whole. Sensitive design should enhance the buildings character, reflect and respond to the building's rhythms and organisation and acknowledge the adjoining properties as appropriate.
- **The shopfront details**
Careful and thoughtful resolution of the details is equally important. Original ornamental elements and other architectural details provide visual interest and should be retained, where they exist

VCD 33: Advertising and Signposting

To strictly control all advertising signs in relation to their location, design, materials and function. Advertising shall be controlled as follows:

- Signs will not be permitted where they interfere with the safety of pedestrians, the safety and free flow of traffic or if they obscure road signs.
- Signs shall be sympathetic in design and colouring, both to the building on which it will be displayed and its surroundings.
- Signs shall not obscure architectural features or details.
- Signs will not be permitted above eaves or parapet levels.
- Traditional painted sign writing or solid block individual lettering will be encouraged as will traditional or wrought iron hanging signs. The use of neon, plastic, PVC, Perspex flashing, reflectorised or glitter type signs on the exterior of buildings or where they are located internally but visible from the outside will be prohibited.
- Projecting signs, banners and flagpoles will be restricted in size and number to prevent clutter.
- Temporary hoardings may be approved where they can be used for the screening of building sites or land, which is unsightly.

- Signs attached to buildings are preferable to those on freestanding hoardings.
- Signs shall not be permitted to project above the roofline of buildings.
- Favourable consideration may be given, in consultation with business groups, to the erection of composite advance signs on which the facilities available in the city, towns and villages will be declared. Due to the damage which a proliferation of large, competitive advance signs can cause to the appearance and image of the important entrance routes into the towns and villages, individual advance signage will be phased out and well-designed and located composite signage will be sought as the opportunity arises.
- 'B&B' signage will be restricted to 1 sign per premises and no directional finger post signs will be permitted.

Rationale:

Advertising signs, separately, or more particularly in groups, can often cause injury to visual amenities, and can detract from the appearance of an area or a building; this is especially so when they are out of scale and character with their surroundings. They can also be a major distraction to road users and frequently result in traffic hazard.

VCD 34: Automatic Teller Machines

The planning authority will strictly control the location of Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) having regard to the following:

- The need to protect the character of the street, building or shop front into which they are to be incorporated into especially buildings on the Record of Protected Structures.
- The design and location must be such that they are safe and easily accessible.
- Canopies, signs and logos shall be discreetly incorporated into the overall design the avoidance of a traffic hazard.
- Satisfactory arrangements are made in relation to litter control.

The provision of ATMs at petrol stations will be encouraged to facilitate drivers. In general, ATMs will not be provided where customers queuing may cause disruption to pedestrians.

VCD 35: Fast Food Takeaways

Proposals for the development of these facilities will generally only be acceptable in the village centres. Planning applications for new fast food take-away uses will

be considered on their own merits. Regard will be had to the impact of the take-away on the amenities of the area, including noise, odour and litter.

The Planning Authority may impose restrictions on opening hours of such uses as a condition of a planning permission. Full shopfront details will be required at application stage to assess the visual suitability of proposals in the area. Please also see policy LUD 7 in section 3.3.6, which refers to the controls in place to prevent an excessive concentration of takeaways in the village centres.

VCD 36: Childcare Facilities

In developing proposals for housing schemes, developers are encouraged to liaise with the County Childcare Committee in advance of preparing planning applications in order to ascertain the local requirements.

It is the policy of the Councils to implement the *Childcare Facilities – Guidelines for Planning Authorities* as published by the DOELG in 2001. Where a large housing development is proposed, i.e. seventy five houses or more the planning authority will require the provision of a purpose built unit for childcare on the site which shall have regard to the existing level of childcare provision in the area. Where lesser units are proposed, even in cluster developments, applicants are encouraged to include childcare facilities to cater for the expected new resident population. The Council will operate this requirement in a flexible manner.

VCD 37: Cycle Facilities

To require that cycle facilities be provided with any new development proposals. Bicycle parking stands should be provided in a secure and safe location, which is overlooked and provides easy access to entrances and exits. The number of stands required will be one quarter the number of car parking spaces required for the development, subject to a minimum of one stand.

VCD 38: Agricultural Developments

To require that in the construction and layout of agricultural buildings that the buildings are sited as unobtrusively as possible and that the finishes and colours used will blend the development into its surroundings.

The Council will require that agriculture developments be constructed and located so as to ensure that there is no threat of pollution to ground or surface waters. In assessing planning applications for agriculture developments the Council will have regard to the European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations, 2006.

VCD 39: Waste Water Treatment

The Council is aware of its obligations to sustainable development with respect to the treatment and disposal of waste water. The Council will insist that all new developments are connected to the new public sewerage system in Kilmacow once it is fully installed and operational.

Where connection to the public sewer is not possible dwellings must provide their own private means of effluent disposal and treatment. Kilkenny County Council

requires that sites will be assessed in accordance with the EPA manual entitled *Wastewater Treatment Manuals: Treatment Systems for Single Houses (2000)*. The person carrying out the assessment will be suitably qualified.

VCD 40: Tree and Hedgerow Preservation

The Council encourages the preservation of mature trees and/ or hedgerows which occur on development sites and roads, and as part of the application process may require the submission of tree and hedgerow surveys to accompany applications for development. All trees with a diameter of 75mm and above (measured at a height of 1.4m above ground level) should be included in the survey. Hedgerows should be surveyed by reference to species, branch canopy, spread, shape, height and condition.

Remedial works should also be indicated where appropriate and trees should be identified on site with suitable tags. Provision should be made in the site layout for incorporating specimen trees that are in good condition.

3.4.5 VILLAGE CHARACTER & DESIGN KEY ACTION

KEY ACTION VCD 1: Protected Structures

To protect the existing protected structures in Kilmacow and to include the proposed protected structures in Kilmacow (which are detailed in Section 3.7 of this Plan) in the Record of Protected Structures for County Kilkenny.

3.5 Community Facilities & Amenities

3.5.1 EXPLANATION OF FORMAT

This section of the Local Area Plan firstly examines the existing situation in Kilmacow in terms of community facilities and amenities and then puts forward a strategy, or vision, for their future provision or upkeep. The strategy is a long-term plan of action designed to achieve particular goals and is intended as a general framework to provide guidance for actions to be taken. The strategy provides the bridge between the policy and objectives, which are then listed at the end of this section.

3.5.1.1 Policy Informants

In developing the options, policies and objectives of this section a range of inputs, guidelines and best practice has been considered, in particular the following:-

- **Analysis of existing community facilities and amenities in Kilmacow** and the demand for additional facilities.
- **Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014** and its policies, objectives and proposals as appropriate to Kilmacow, in particular Chapter 4 dealing with Housing & Community Facilities.
- **National and regional planning guidelines** which are applicable including the Childcare Facilities Guidelines 2001 published by the DoEHLG and the Primary School Guidelines 2000 published by the Department of Education & Science.
- **Public Consultation** including the input received through the public workshops, written submissions, completed questionnaires and through speaking with stakeholders, and the concerns raised by the local community regarding the need for expanded, upgraded or new community facilities in Kilmacow.
- **Principles of proper planning and sustainable development**

3.5.2 EXISTING SITUATION

Overview

There is a range of existing community facilities and services in Kilmacow that form an integral part of the community life of the village. This includes educational, religious, public/institutional, sports and recreational facilities.

The natural and physical environment in Kilmacow also has a number of features and amenities that offer both active and passive recreational opportunities and provide important wildlife habitats. These include the River Blackwater and the green lands that stretch alongside it, which provide a natural habitat for much wildlife as well as being an attractive place for fishing or walking. The Pond – a natural water pool has been used by local residents for decades as a leisure facility and is an important natural feature in Kilmacow that is used for recreational purposes. The attractive and well maintained rural grounds and entrance lane leading to Kilcronagh and onwards to the gate lodge at Greenville House are enjoyed by many members of the local community as a place to walk and exercise their dogs, while the Sports Complex, comprising playing fields, sports pitches, tennis courts, running track and changing rooms is an important active recreational facility that is central to Kilmacow's keen sporting community and is used by many sports clubs as well as the local schools.

In addition to this, Kilmacow has a strong network of active community and sports groups that represent a large percentage of the local community. There are over 35 different community groups which operate in and around Kilmacow including the Kilmacow Development Group which was founded during the early 1990's. In October 1998, the Group prepared its own Village Study of Kilmacow that was aimed at better informing and assisting the planning process and thus resulting in optimal development for present and future generations in Kilmacow. This study, although some years old now, continues to be a valuable source of information on the settlement of Kilmacow and a testament to the dedication and *'love of the place'* of many of its inhabitants.

The Role of the Planning Authority

A recurring problem with respect to the provision of community facilities is its timely provision in conjunction with new housing. The Local Area Plan will seek to resolve this current problem by linking the provision of community facilities to increases in residential population, introducing appropriate planning policy for new development and the phasing of zoned residential lands (the Residential Phasing Sequence endorsed in this LAP).

Educational Facilities

There are two schools located within the Kilmacow plan area. St. Senan's National Boy's School located in Dangan and St. Joseph's National Girls School adjoining the Upper Village and adjacent to Rosedale.

St. Senan's National Boy's School

St. Senan's Boys School was officially opened in its current location in 1983. In 2008, it had 4 classrooms, 4 teachers and 101 pupils plus a general practice room. St. Senan's also has a sports court for tennis/basketball, a football pitch and outdoor space.

St. Joseph's National Girls School

St. Joseph's National Girls School was officially opened in 1972 and today caters for approximately 83 pupils but is expected to increase to 93 pupils by September 2008. It has a small playground, a car park supplying approximately 40 no. car parking spaces and plans to build a new camogie pitch.

The school also has a maximum capacity to accommodate 114 pupils so it currently has room to accommodate more children. There are 4 teachers at the school and should the maximum of 114 pupils be reached, an extra teacher would be required.

The school had a prefabricated classroom installed last year and funded by the Department of Education & Science. It is the policy of the Department of Education & Science to propose the amalgamation of primary schools located within a single settlement, rather than their individual expansion.

The level of new residential development that has taken place in Kilmacow in recent years has increased the pressure for more school places. The introduction of the new sewerage scheme and road improvements to the adjoining area including the N25 Waterford City Bypass and upgrade of the N9, will make Kilmacow appear a more attractive location for people to live. It is therefore vitally important that sufficient land is reserved in the Local Area Plan to meet likely future demands for school facilities as they arise beyond the lifetime of the LAP.

Existing Public / Institutional / Religious Facilities

Community Hall

Kilmacow Community / Parish Hall is located just off the Upper Village and occupies the old Girls Convent School which was built in 1912 by the Presentation Nuns. It has been in use as a Parish Hall from 1972, after the new Girl's School was opened and so has a long-established relationship with the local community of Kilmacow.

The Parish Hall is used intensively by local clubs and organisations in Kilmacow and on a daily basis. It is continuously in demand to accommodate various community events throughout the year. The hall, which was refurbished in 1994, contains meeting rooms, kitchen, badminton court/indoor soccer, toilets and a store room. The hall accommodates a range of different uses including community/group meetings, sport, various classes e.g. craft and dancing and caters for large gatherings of people such as after funerals. It is also accommodates a playschool during daytime hours. The parish hall therefore plays a vital role in the community life of Kilmacow.

Childcare Facilities

Kilmacow has a Montessori School at Dangan, which opened in 2005. The Montessori /childcare facility is open from 8.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. and caters for up to 20 children. In addition to the owner, it employs an additional number of staff.

A second childcare facility to accommodate up to 20 children is to be provided on-site within the newly completed Chapelgate residential development. The childcare facility forms a part of the planning permission granted for the overall Chapelgate development.

Church

There is one church within the plan area – St. Senan's Church, which is located at the junction of the Upper Village. St. Senan's and its grand entrance gates, railings and wall is situated on an elevated site and is by far the most dominant building in the Upper Village. It dates back to 1803 when the first foundation stone was laid and is named after the patron saint of the parish – St. Senan. In 1951 a fire broke out at the back of St. Senan's which destroyed the entire rear section of the church. Over the space of one year the church was reconstructed and repaired and reopened in 1952.

The graveyard to the rear of St. Senan's Church is a more recent addition which opened in 1981. Previous to that burials took place at the graveyard located to the side and front of the church.

Graveyards

There are two graveyards located within the plan area – one at the Lower Village and one at the Upper Village. The graveyard in the Upper Village is located in the grounds of St. Senan's church and remains in use today with almost all burials taking place there since the early 1900s.

The graveyard in the Lower Village has been in use as a burial place since early times for Catholics and later on, for Protestants also. The oldest recorded headstone there dates back to 1543. The graveyard fell into a state of disrepair in previous years however the local development group instigated a programme of restoration and maintenance during the later 1990s significantly improving the appearance and condition of the graveyard. An archaeological report of the graveyard was produced by a professional archaeologist in 1996.

A survey of historic graveyards was carried out in 2005, entitled 'The Historic Graveyards of the City and County of Kilkenny: An Inventory'.

Most historic graveyards in Ireland are afforded legal protection through the National Monuments (Amendment) Acts or the Planning and Development Acts. The Graveyard in Lower Kilmacow is on the Record of Monuments and Places (SMR No. KK0-43-016001) and so is protected under the National Monuments Act.

Sports Facilities

Indoor Sports Hall & Gary's Gym

A 6,500 sq. feet sports hall has recently been completed which caters for all indoor sports including soccer, badminton, volleyball, basketball etc. It is also used as a meeting room and for drama and includes a fully equipped gym known as Gary's Gym. The new facility adjoins the Community Hall and is a recent addition to Kilmacow.

'The Farm' - Sports Complex

Kilmacow Sports Complex, also known locally as *'The Farm'* is a long-established and valuable community amenity in Kilmacow. Established in the late 1970s by Kilmacow Parish, it encompasses approximately 8 acres of parish lands on the east side of the River Blackwater. The title to the lands rests with the Diocesan Property Committee while a locally elected committee manages the facility on behalf of the Parish. The entire project was established and paid for by Kilmacow's many Sports Clubs, Parishioners and members of the wider community. Its success is representative of the strong community spirit and determination that exists in Kilmacow.

The Sports Complex includes an athletic track, children's playground, hurling and football pitches, soccer pitch, tennis court, skittle ring and ancillary facilities including dressing rooms, stores, toilets and car park.

The facilities are accessed via a separate road bridge or pedestrian bridge that crosses the River Blackwater from Upper Road. There is also a rear entrance from Lower Street (Gouche's Road).

The Sports Complex is regularly used by St. Senan's Hurling and Football Club, St. Senan's Athletic Club and Kilmacow F. C. (Soccer) while local schools and members of the local community and wider hinterland area also use the facilities regularly. Numerous sporting and recreational events are held at The Farm throughout the year. Kilmacow as a village has long sporting history through which the local community has developed a strong sporting ethos. Casual walkers also use the Sports Complex along routes inside it and via 'The Lawn' for recreational use either to walk their dogs or as part of a general fitness regime.

Children's Playground

There was once a children's playground in Kilmacow located adjacent to the River Blackwater near the dressing rooms of the Sports Complex, however, due to the ages of the equipment, insurance difficulties and safety concerns regarding the proximity of the river, the facility has since been removed. There is currently no children's play area within Kilmacow.

Health Facilities and Care for the Elderly

Healthcare

A doctor's surgery and waiting room is located in the Upper Village while the Lower Village contains a Health Board Dispensary

Rosedale (Kilmacow) Voluntary Housing Association

Rosedale is a residential care facility for the elderly located in Dangan in the Upper Village. It occupies a building that was once the convent of the Presentation Sisters, who vacated the property in 1986. On lands adjoining the convent building 16 bungalows were built and are used as sheltered housing for the elderly of the Parish. Both facilities are operated by Rosedale (Kilmacow) Voluntary Housing Association Limited and the convent building was extended in the 1990s to provide additional bedrooms and a day-care centre to accommodate elderly people that are not resident in Rosedale. Rosedale today is funded by the Health Services Executive, local fund-raising, donations from friends, families and business and fees paid by residents.

Rosedale is an important community facility in Kilmacow which is of great benefit to the elderly residents and their families. Its location close to the village centre with shops, post-office, bus stop and other facilities makes it an easily accessible and convenient place for elderly residents and their visitors.

Recreational Activities

A range of passive recreational facilities and amenities exist in Kilmacow including the following:-

- The Pond – a natural swimming and leisure facility located just east of the Upper Village which used to be a popular swim, picnic and volley ball area. A walk to the pond area was developed recently, however a flood subsequently damaged the route and the area is now largely overgrown.
- The River Blackwater – used for fishing, swimming and riverside walks
- Accessible Green Open Space – according to Kilkenny Open Space, Sports and Recreation Needs Study 2002 there are around 7.28 ha of accessible green open space in Kilmacow. The majority of this open space is focused along the route of the River Blackwater close to the Upper Village in the vicinity of The Pond and Greenville Mill. These open spaces are primarily used for passive recreational use, mostly walking. A single parcel of open space extends northwards to the rear Shamrock Grove in Kilmacow, but it not used or accessed to the same extent for recreational purposes.

Figure 3.5.1: Map of Kilmacow's Open Space and Community Facilities from County Kilkenny's Recreational Needs Study 2002



Public Transport

Bus & Rail Services

Kilmacow had its own railway station from around 1850 to the mid 1900s which formed a part of the Kilkenny/Waterford Railway line. It had its own platform, signal cabin and Station Master House, however, the station finally closed in 1960 due to the rationalisation of the railway system. There is now no trace of the station house or signal cabin because of road widening.

Today Kilmacow, like most small villages, has no rail service however the local community is served by a daily bus service that transfers people between Kilmacow and Waterford City, where major employment, services and amenities including large convenience shopping are available.

Kilmacow benefits from a Ring a Link public transport service. Ring a link is supported by the Rural Transport Initiative of the National Development Plan. It offers innovative flexible transport services using a 'demand respond transport' (DRT) system. DRT is based on the concept that instead of running a fixed route

system, the transport operator will offer flexible routes and services suitable to the area and the prospective customers. Funded by central Government and administered locally, what was originally a pilot project has been put on a permanent footing since 2006 and serves Kilmacow.

The Fiddown to Waterford Service via Kilmacow is provided on a six-day basis. On Monday to Friday the Ring a Link bus leaves Fiddown at 7.45am and travels along a route through Cloncunny, Clogga, Ballinaboly and Kilmacow and is scheduled to arrive in Waterford at 8.45am. There is a return service for this route that leaves Waterford at 4.15pm and at 5.45pm.

On Saturday there are two services – one leaves Fiddown at 9.10am and the other is an afternoon service, leaves at 2pm. The return services from Waterford for these are at 12.45pm and 5.45pm respectively.

There are two additional services for Kilmacow. These are provided on Wednesdays and Fridays. The departure time from Kilmacow is 10.30am and the return time is 2.45pm.

The South Kilkenny Bus Committee have a very important role in monitoring the services being provided, making recommendations if change is required and feeding back the comments of passengers to the management of Ring a Link.

3.5.3 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND AMENITIES STRATEGY

The Community Facilities and Amenities Strategy for Kilmacow is:-

- To support the provision of an adequate level and distribution of community facilities and amenities that meets the needs of the local community as they arise and as resources permit;
- To maximise the use of existing sporting facilities and aid in extending and improving facilities, where possible;
- To have community facilities and amenities in appropriate locations that are easily accessible by the majority of the local community on centrally located sites where possible;
- To promote community facilities and amenities that are clustered or linked together, where facilities are complementary and it is practicable to do so in order to allow for shared and multi-purpose use of facilities;
- To support community facilities and amenities in appropriate locations that promotes the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3.5.4 COMMUNITY NEEDS

Kilmacow's community is proud of its existing community facilities, many of which, including Rosedale and the Sports Complex, they funded, provided and continue to operate and maintain themselves. However, one of the major issues raised through the pre-draft public consultation process undertaken in Kilmacow is the need to improve existing community facilities and to provide additional facilities and amenities to serve the growing population. In particular, through public consultation, the local community has identified the need to provide:-

- **Provision of land to enable the schools to expand** now and in the future, due to their limited spare capacity and expansion potential to accommodate future pupil demand, the lack of outdoor playing areas particularly at the girls school and inadequate car-parking and drop-off facilities at the Boy's School.
- **The lack of outdoor playing areas particularly at the Girls School**
- **Inadequate car-parking and drop-off facilities at the Boy's School**
- **Additional or expanded sports facilities to serve the growing population and local youth** due to pressure on the existing facilities which serve the wider Kilmacow Parish area and not just the village communities, and the difficulties in sourcing and funding adequate land to provide these facilities. Additional floodlighting for the existing Sports Complex is also desired.

- **A green park or amenity open space to serve the village** with associated facilities and amenities to potentially include seating, picnic areas, wildlife sanctuary, conservation area, river-side walks, fishing and children's play area. There is support for this type of recreational facility to be provided on the green lands or '*intervening area*' located between the two villages and including lands along the route of the River Blackwater.
- **Improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists**, including footpaths, walking/cycling routes, amenity walks including a river-side walk. This is particularly important given the shortage of safe routes for walking, cycling and jogging in Kilmacow and the separation of the two villages.
- **Improved public transport services to serve the current population as well as any future growth** in population given that there is a very limited and infrequent daily bus service to and from Waterford City – the place of employment for most residents. Currently the majority of working residents commute by private car.
- **Additional services are considered necessary for the village** centres such as for example a cafe, restaurant, chemist and other local shops and services to accommodate existing and future needs and to strengthen Kilmacow as a local service centre, in line with the County Settlement Strategy.

3.5.5 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND AMENITIES OPTIONS

The Plan has considered a number of options for the provision of facilities and amenities required by the local community in Kilmacow. This has been guided by the input received through the pre-draft public consultation process and by the need to provide sites of sufficient size in central locations within walking/cycling distance of the main population and with good vehicular access for the broader area to ensure that children, the elderly, other vulnerable groups and the community as a whole can access the facilities and amenities.

Primary Schools Expansion

Lands within Kilmacow have been considered to accommodate the individual expansion of each of the existing two schools - St. Josephs G.N.S and St. Senan's B.N.S. In addition to this, while the existing school arrangement works well, it is appropriate to consider a location to accommodate the amalgamation of the two schools, as it is possible that this may be proposed by the Department of Education & Science during the lifetime of the LAP, in line with the Departments current policy. A site of sufficient size at a suitable location, needs to be identified that would accommodate an amalgamated school.

The Planning Guidelines for Primary Schools issued in 2000 by the Department of Education & Science recommends a range of site areas to accommodate

various school sizes. The Guidelines recommend the following site areas to accommodate various school sizes:-

Table 3.5.1: Recommended Site Areas to Accommodate Various School Sizes

School Size	Area in Hectares	Area in Acres
School with 1 - 3 class units	0.60	1.5
School with 4 class units	0.71	1.75
School with 5 class units	0.81	2.0
School with 6 class units	0.91	2.25
Schools with 7 to 9 class units	1.01	2.5
Schools with 10 and 11 class units	1.12	2.75
Schools with 12 to 31 class units	1.22	3.0
School with 32 class units.	2.03	5.0

Source: Planning Guidelines for Primary Schools, DOE&S, 2000

The area required also depends on the shape of the site, site access, availability of site utilities, and the capacity of the site to meet specific criteria set out in the Guidelines.

Each of the two sites identified below is a minimum size of 3.0 acres which according to the Guidelines would comfortably accommodate a primary school size of 12 and 31 class units. This will allow for the expansion of the two schools to accommodate additional pupils well into the future and beyond the lifetime of this Local Area Plan and will also allow for ancillary uses such as outdoor play areas. The two sites are described below in order of suitability.

Site 1 – St. Joseph’s G.N.S

School Expansion

Previously, the site of St. Joseph’s National Girls School was landlocked and there were no available lands on which to expand. However in recent years the Bishop signed over adjoining lands to the school’s Board of Management to enable it to expand as, and when, necessary. That land parcel (c. 3.0 acres / 1.22 ha) which is now under the control of the school has recently accommodated a new car park with c. 40 parking spaces, to the front of the school, while a Camogie pitch is planned on another portion of the landholding. The remaining portion has been rezoned from residential to community use in this Local Area Plan, to facilitate the future expansion of the existing school. Please refer to the Land Use Zoning & Phasing Map (Map 1).

Potential for Future Amalgamation

It is considered that Site 1 would be ideal to accommodate the amalgamation of the two schools should it be proposed by the Department of the Education & Science in the future. The site adjoining St. Joseph’s not only offers ample space for the school to expand but is considered a suitable place to accommodate the relocation of St. Senan’s, should it be required, for the following reasons:-

- The size of the site is appropriate to accommodate the expansion of St. Joseph's and a new school
- The (majority of the) site is already school property.
- There is already a new, dedicated, school car park at the Girls' school and drop-off area with convenient vehicular access
- The new Sports Hall is immediately adjacent to the site.
- The Church, village centre amenities and the Sports Complex are convenient to the site
- The site offers better opportunity for clustering with complementary facilities and/or linkages to nearby facilities and amenities
- The site would pose limited environmental and landscape impact
- Building a new school on these lands could proceed without interfering with the operation of the existing schools – both St. Josephs and St. Senan's.

Site 2 – St. Senan's B.N.S

School Expansion

A large parcel of lands extending to the north and west of St. Senan's Boys School is zoned for community facilities in this Local Area Plan to accommodate the future expansion of the school as and when it is needed. The school have discussed at previous Board of Management meetings potentially expanding the school in the next 5-6 years time to accommodate more pupils.

Land availability for future expansion is not currently an issue for the St. Senan's due to the presence of zoned community lands to the rear of the school.

Potential for Future Amalgamation

Should amalgamation of the two schools be required by the Department, Site 1 is the preferred choice given that it is the most central site with easy access to more residents and to other important facilities and services and allows for the clustering with complementary facilities. The majority of lands are already in the school's ownership. However, Site 2, while more remote from the village centre, is still reasonably well located. It has potential for easier access with the provision of new footpaths and an improved drop-off area and would be an alternative option, should Site 1 not be possible. Site 2 would however require a car park and vehicular access to be provided were it to accommodate the schools amalgamation.

Sports Facilities

Kilkenny County Council is committed to assisting the community where possible and where resources permit, in providing new or upgraded sports facilities and acquiring sites on which to accommodate them. The Plan has considered a potential site for new or expanded sports facilities. This has been guided by the need to provide a site of sufficient size with potential for good vehicular,

pedestrian and cycling access from the residential population and for potential clustering of community facilities in Kilmacow. It has also been guided by the key recommendations of a detailed report carried out in May 2007 by ILC on behalf of Kilmacow Community on the Sports Complex Redevelopment. The report entitled *'The Farm / Kilmacow Sports Complex Report and Recommendations'* considers the present role of the Complex and its future potential and identifies and prioritises recommendations regarding its development, so as to assist in its ongoing relevance as a recreation and sports space for Kilmacow and its environs.

Land adjoining the existing Sports Complex to the east (also known as the *'Upper Field'*) is considered the best option for accommodating additional and improved sports facilities such as training pitches, cross county tracks, additional walking routes and other recreational facilities that may be required in the future. Those lands which are located on higher ground are owned by the Parish and afford a number of opportunities for the provision of additional training areas. Discussions are underway with the diocese regarding the future use of the land as a sports facility. Those lands will continue to be zoned as 'rural conservation area' in this Local Area Plan, to protect them from inappropriate forms of development, however outdoor recreation such as playing fields and associated development are permissible uses (please refer to Section 3.3) on such lands. This should enable Kilmacow Community to extend its current facilities there. The use of the *'Upper Field'* for the future growth of the Sports Complex has been recommended in the report undertaken by ILC.

The ILC report refers to the fact that *'The Sports Complex'* and in particular the soccer pitch and car park are key flood plain areas for the River Blackwater which is a critical development issue in maintaining or expanding the facilities there. It is suggested that flooding is becoming more regular and more significant. The report suggests that:-

'The tidal nature of the river, approximately 500 metres downstream, from Lower Kilmacow, has resulted in water flow from the river, backing up to Kilmacow. Hence the flood plain afforded by the Complex site, acts as an important reservoir during these flood periods'⁵

For this reason, blocking the overflow of the river or displacing the floodplain capacity via for example, raising the soccer pitch, or building barriers to surround the complex and exclude the floodwater is not a likely option due to the site's role as a floodplain. Measures to minimise the impact of this flooding are therefore required, in order to allow the continued use, maintenance and future expansion of the Sport Complex facilities.

The ILC report suggests that before any work takes place in the Complex that a Flood and Drainage Survey of the site is undertaken to identify the site specific flooding causes, the specific erosion impacts on the Complex site and flood prevention, drainage and erosion amelioration measures. It is therefore a policy

⁵ ILC Report *'Kilmacow Complex Redevelopment'*, May 2007, Section 2.2.1, pg. 8

of the County Council, if and where funds are available, to work in partnership with Kilmacow community to undertake such a study, to enable any proposed development works by the local community to improve the Complex facilities, to proceed in the most sustainable and cost-efficient manner.

The ILC Report looks at two options for the future development of the Sports Complex:-

- 1) **Refurbish** – *To refurbish the present sports infrastructure with some additional new facilities in the upper field including a training/overflow area*
- 2) **Extend** – *Develop the higher site as a partial replacement of the facilities in the present complex that is beset by flooding.*

The first option – the Refurbishment approach is recommended by ILC due to the significant costs surrounding the redevelopment of all facilities in the upper field. While the costs of the refurbishment option are still significant, a long-term view should be taken into account where the current problems associated with the annual flooding could be improved considerably, if appropriately researched and addressed at the outset. The ILC Report sets out an Action Plan for the future provision of the refurbishment and expansion of the Sports Complex facilities as proposed, breaking it into several, more achievable phases. Figure 3.5.2 shows a graphic representation of the refurbishment option taken from the ILC Report.

Kilkenny County Council supports the findings of the ILC Report and the Action Plan with regard the Sports Complex lands and will endeavour to assist the Kilmacow Community and Sport Complex representatives, in carrying out the recommendations of the report as resources and finance permit, in order to accommodate the refurbishment and expansion of sports facilities.

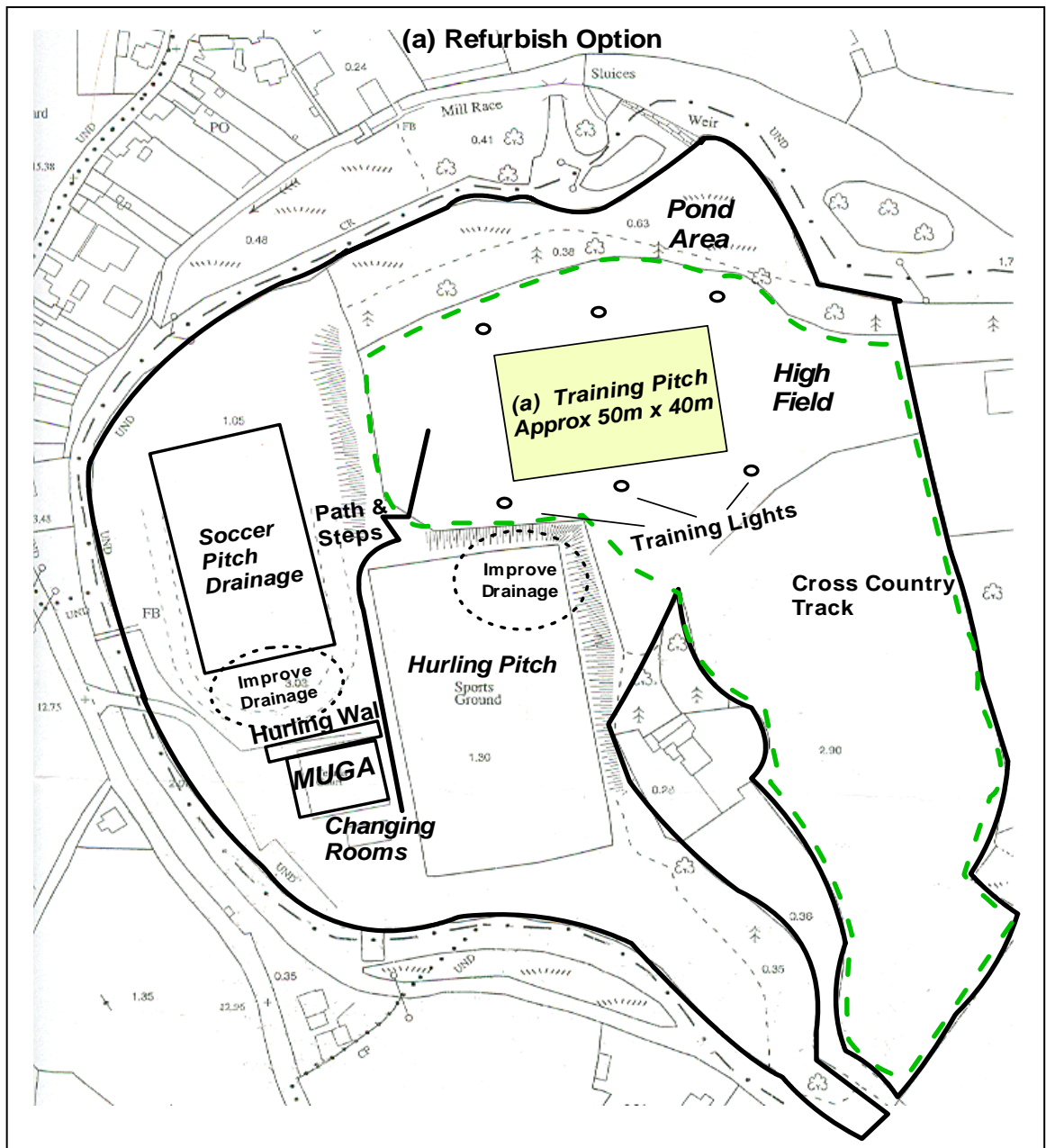


Figure 3.5.2: A graphic representation of the 'Refurbishment Option' from the ILC Report

Walking Route / Linear Park

The Plan has considered a potential option for the provision of a walking route where a linear riverside park, could evolve on lands along its route. This is identified on Figure 3.5.3.

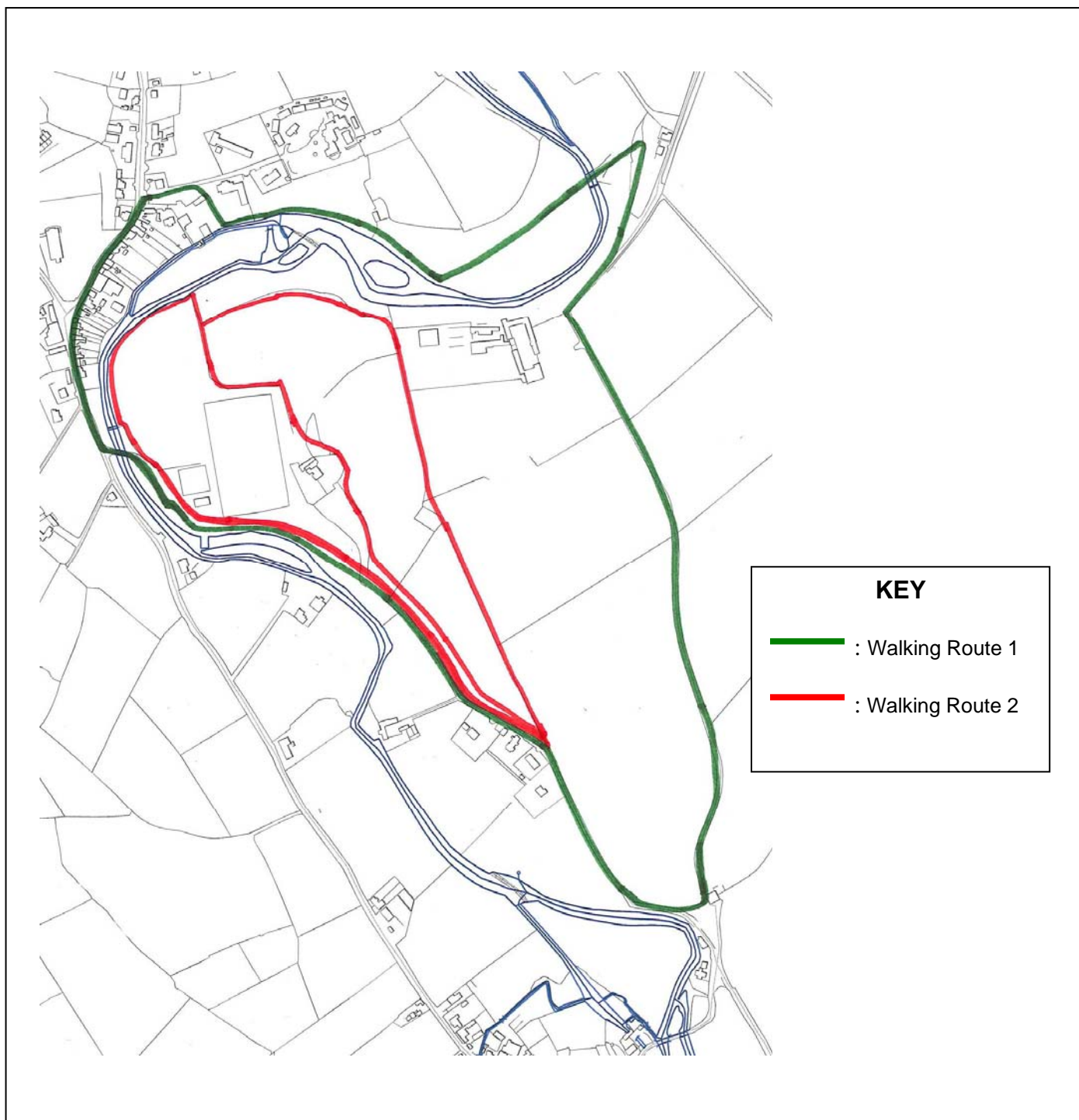


Figure 3.5.3: Key Walking Routes which could be developed at and near the Kilmacow Complex as identified in the ILC report.

The route is already used by locals as a walking route which is a popular physical recreational activity for adults in Kilmacow. The walk links into the Sports Complex, utilising the existing athletics track which is already used regularly for walking, and then continues past the Pond. It also links to local roads that are regularly used for casual walking e.g. the lanes towards Ida House and Gooch's Mill and the lane to Kilcronagh at Greenville. By identifying this walking route in the LAP the aim is to formalise it and to promote the further development of the

route that is consistent with the overall development of the Complex. The potential of developing a linear riverside park along portions of the route should also be investigated, once the walk is formally established.

The Plan considers that the walking route and a linear riverside park would be desirable and achievable for the following reasons:-

- It is desired and supported by the local community
- The availability of land along the route.
- The need to establish a setback from the River for environmental reasons, flooding issues, property protection etc.
- It would provide for the passive recreation needs of the local community and allow relief from the more built up areas in the village centres.
- The route would help link Upper Kilmacow and the Complex to Lower Kilmacow.

Pedestrian and Cycling Routes

The Plan identifies a number of routes where footpaths are necessary in Kilmacow in order to ensure the safe movement of people from residential areas to the village centres and also to link the Upper Village to the Lower Village. Currently Kilmacow is deficient in the provision of safe, convenient and quality footpaths with the majority of local roads lacking footpaths. For instance, from the Boys School to the village centre there is no dedicated footpath, which raises safety concerns for school children and parents. The topic of footpaths, cycling routes and public lighting is dealt with in more detail in Section 3.6 of this LAP which considers Infrastructure and Services in Kilmacow.

This Local Area Plan identifies the route which links the Upper Village to the Lower Village, and from the schools into the village centres, as Priority Routes in Kilmacow for the provision of footpaths. The provision of footpaths on these priority routes will be pursued by the County Council during the lifetime of this plan.

The Council will require the provision of cycle paths as part of any new development in the village.

It should be noted however, that dedicated and safe cycle trails may be difficult to provide given the width and rural nature of the existing roads in Kilmacow. The provision of footpaths to allow the safe and convenient movement of people in and around the villages will be prioritised. It may be possible to accommodate a dual function footpath and cycle paths, but this will only be realised after a more detailed analysis of the existing roads.

3.5.6 COMMUNITY FACILITIES & AMENITIES POLICIES

CFA 1: Protect Existing Leisure & Recreational Facilities

To preserve and improve recreational facilities within the village and to ensure that appropriate facilities are available to all members of the community and to all age groups.

Rationale:

Leisure facilities in Kilmacow are currently of a high standard given the size of the settlement and this is in large due to the tremendous local effort in the community. It is essential that the adequacy of existing facilities is monitored as the village expands in order to meet an increased demand and that provision is made for the expansion of leisure facilities as the need arises.

CFA 2: Seating Areas

To investigate the potential of providing seating areas such as benches or picnic tables along the proposed walking route, linear riverside park, within the village centres and public open spaces, or the Sports Complex, where appropriate and where resources permit.

Rationale:

Seating areas significantly enhance the role of recreational areas and walks as they encourage social interaction and resting and viewing places for users.

CFA 3: The Provision of Play Facilities

The Council will require provision for children's play facilities or developer contributions towards providing children's play facilities in association with new residential developments. Within new residential developments where there is a significant family residential component the whole environment should be designed so as to permit children to play in safety.

Refer to Section 3.4 for development control standard on children's play areas in residential areas

CFA 4: Multi-Use of Existing Community Facilities

To investigate opportunities for the multi-purpose use of community facilities to ensure that the community is best served without duplication of effort. It is important that the greatest possible use of a facility is made, thereby providing community and leisure facilities close to the areas where they are needed. The existing community hall in Kilmacow is a good example of a facility where multi-use already occurs.

Note: Please refer to Section 3.6 'Infrastructure & Services' of this Local Area Plan which sets out objectives and policy in relation to the provision or improvement of footpaths, cycle ways and public lighting.

CFA 5: Community Facilities

To support the provision of an adequate level of community facilities and amenities in appropriate, accessible locations to serve the needs of the local community of Kilmacow as the need arises and resources permit.

CFA 6: Linking Community Facilities to the Residential Population

To link the provision of community facilities to increases in residential population through appropriate conditions attached to planning permissions and phasing arrangements in the Local Area Plan, to ensure the timely provision of facilities.

CFA 7: Co-operation with Community Groups

To liaise with community groups and to assist community initiatives subject to the availability of resources.

CFA 8: Clustering of Community Facilities

To ensure that, where practicable, community, recreational and open space facilities are clustered, with the community facilities being located in local centres or combined with school facilities as appropriate. Community facilities should be located close to or within walking distance of housing, accessible to all sectors of the community and facilitate multi-use functions through their design and layout.

CFA 9: Conserve and Enhance the River Blackwater

To conserve and enhance the amenity of the River Blackwater including the landscape, water environment and wildlife habitats and, where consistent with this, to encourage increased public access and provision of walkways.

CFA 10: Public Transport

To support improved transport initiatives in Kilmacow including the Ring a Link service, which help to improve communications and reduce isolation and to promote further and more frequent bus services in Kilmacow in response to demand.

CFA 11: Bus Shelters

To facilitate the provision of bus shelters in Kilmacow as appropriate.

CFA 12: National Schools

To support the upgrading and expansion of both St. Joseph's Girls National School and St. Senan's Boys National School to accommodate increased pupil capacity, more expansive recreational facilities and improved and safer access. Two sites have been identified as suitable sites to accommodate both school's expansion, and the amalgamation of both schools, should this be proposed by the Department of Education & Science in the future. These sites and the surrounding lands should not be developed until such time as the extension/amalgamation plans are confirmed to the satisfaction of both the Planning Authority and the DoEAS.

CFA 13: Community/Parish Hall

To support the retention of the existing community hall for community use and support and promote its use as a multi-purpose community centre providing a range of facilities for the local community, including community meeting rooms, badminton court/indoor soccer and the various classes e.g. craft and dancing that the hall caters for including the weekly playschool facility.

CFA 14: Indoor Sports Hall

To support the completion of the adjoining sports hall, which is a valuable facility for the local community and the schools in Kilmacow.

CFA 15: Amenity Walks – Ancillary Development

To co-operate with local community groups, interested parties such as Failte Ireland, An Taisce, game clubs and other appropriate organisations to protect the recreational potential of the River Blackwater and lands adjoining it and to carry out appropriate developments where resources permit including the laying out of walks, bridle paths, access points, new access links and picnic sites.

CFA 16: Sports and Recreation Facilities

To support the Sports Complex facilities and its future expansion to provide an appropriate level of sports and recreation facilities to service the needs of the local community.

3.5.7 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND AMENITIES KEY ACTIONS

Key Action CFA 1: Flood Survey & Flood Works

To work in partnership with Kilmacow community as appropriate and where resources permit, to produce a Flood Survey of the Sports Complex lands, a safety inspection of the both bridges leading into the site and in improving the existing flood wall defence at the Pond area which has fallen in disrepair.

Key Action CFA 2: Establishment of a Linear Riverside Walk

To investigate the opportunity of providing the walking route as identified in Figure 3.5.3 or else an alternative walking route, as appropriate, in partnership with Kilmacow community. Should the walking route be formally established and agreed with landowners and the local community, the Council will investigate the potential of providing suitable signage, bin facilities and ultimately a linear riverside park in co-operation with the local community.

Rationale:

Lands located within and around the Sports Complex, along the route of the River Blackwater and in the rural intervening area between Upper and Lower Villages in Kilmacow provide an attractive and mature green landscape. There is potential to increase the accessibility onto these lands or certain portions of them and to facilitate their usage as a recreational walking route and linear riverside park. This would make a positive contribution towards the quality and quantum of leisure facilities in Kilmacow.

Key Action CFA 3: The Sports Complex

The Council will support the findings of the ILC Report with regard the Sports Complex lands and will endeavour to assist, where appropriate and where resources permit, the Kilmacow Community and Sport Complex representatives, in carrying out the recommendations of the report in order to accommodate the refurbishment and expansion of Kilmacow's sports facilities.

Key Action CFA 4: Children's Playground

The Council aims to increase the provision of play facilities for children in Kilmacow, where finance and resources permit. The Council will consider developing a new public playground in Kilmacow, subject to the availability of resources and the identification of a site.

3.6 Infrastructure & Services

3.6.1 EXPLANATION OF FORMAT

This section of the Local Area Plan firstly examines the existing situation in Kilmacow in terms of infrastructure and services and then puts forward a strategy, or vision, for their future provision and upkeep. The strategy is a long-term plan of action designed to achieve particular goals as set out in the strategy and is intended as a general framework to provide guidance for actions to be taken. The strategy provides the bridge between the policy and objectives, which are listed at the end of this section.

3.6.1.1 Policy Informants

In developing the options, policies and objectives of this section a range of inputs, guidelines and best practice has been considered, in particular the following:-

- **Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014** and its policies, objectives and proposals as appropriate to Kilmacow,
- **Resources** available to Kilkenny County Council to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and services.
- **National and regional planning guidelines** which are applicable.
- **Public Consultation** including the input received through the public workshops, written submissions, completed questionnaires and through speaking with other stakeholders
- **Best practice** including innovative approaches to sustainable drainage systems etc.
- **Principles of proper planning and sustainable development.**

3.6.2 EXISTING SITUATION

Overview

Kilmacow has experienced substantial development pressures in recent years and this has placed increasing pressure on the infrastructure and services in the villages and surrounds. Deficiencies exist in relation to waste water disposal and water supply although these are currently being addressed via the provision of a sewerage scheme and the upgrade of the Mooncoin Regional Water Supply Scheme.

Deficiencies also exist in the provision of basic yet essential community infrastructure including footpaths, cycle paths, public lighting and adequate road surfaces. There have also been disruptions to local roads as a result of the installation of new infrastructure, which has caused much nuisance and exacerbated traffic congestion in and out of the villages.

There is a need to plan for and provide sufficient infrastructure and services to accommodate existing development in Kilmacow as well as the future development and continued growth of the village in line with the provisions of the County Settlement Strategy.

Water Supply

Kilmacow is currently served by the Mooncoin Regional Water Supply Scheme at the reservoir in Clunassy, Mullinavat. In September 2007, the water supply to Kilmacow was upgraded when a new water source at Silversprings (located approx. 2.5km north of Mooncoin) was brought into operation. This extra source now brings an additional and more consistent water supply to Kilmacow.

In addition to this, the upgrading of the Mooncoin Regional Water Supply Scheme is on the Governments Water Services Investment Programme with an estimated cost of €9m.

The upgrading of the Mooncoin Water Supply Scheme will provide additional water supply to facilitate future domestic and commercial demand in the regional supply area, up to the year 2021. It is also intended to facilitate the development of Strategic Industry in the Belview Port and Industrial area and facilitate further industrial growth in the area.

Waste Water (Foul Sewerage)

A new sewage treatment scheme for Kilmacow is currently being completed. Work on the new sewerage scheme commenced in 2008 with completion expected in early 2010. There are two main phases to the scheme – the first involves the construction and laying of pipework and the second involves construction of the wastewater treatment plant. The main trunk sewer will run between Dangan and the upper village, with individual spurs linking this to Narrabaun and the intervening lands. These will be linked to the lower village along the road where other spur sewers will connect this to the outer areas of the village. The entire network of sewers will be connected to the treatment works located in Lower Kilmacow on the west bank of the river, upstream of the bridge.

The construction of the treatment plant will lead to an improvement in the groundwater and surface water quality in the vicinity of Kilmacow. All new developments will be required to be piped with a system for foul waste and sewerage with a separate system for surface water to allow maximum capacity utilisation of the treatment plant.

Previous to this, Kilmacow had no public sewerage scheme and all buildings, private and commercial were served by individual septic tanks. The new scheme will greatly improve the situation in Kilmacow by promoting the efficient and economic servicing of lands and will be beneficial to the whole community.

The project forms a part of the investment program under the National Development Plan 2000-2006 to provide new or upgraded infrastructure in County Kilkenny and will cause wastewater to be treated to the highest European standards bearing significant environmental benefits for residents of Kilmacow and its environs.

The scheme will cater for a population equivalent of 2,500 with ability to be extended to a design capacity of 5,000 population equivalent. The project will cost in the region of €5.9 million, and is being funded by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government under the Water Services Investment Programme 2007-2009.

Flooding

Although the River Blackwater is generally well contained within its channel between the upper and lower villages, lands that extend along its route are susceptible to flooding and this fact is recorded on the Office of Public Works (OPW) National Flood Maps.

Flooding occurs frequently on the link road (LP3401) that links Kilmacow Upper to Kilmacow Lower, on the adjoining lowlands around Kilmacow Sports Complex and to the west of the Lower Village. Lands there flooded at least three times at the end of 2006 and a number of times during 2007 also during heavy rainfall. Generally, lands adjoining the River Blackwater in the intervening area between the upper and lower villages remain unsuited to development, owing to its susceptibility to flooding and unsuitable topography. It has restricted development from taking place at there in the past.

Flash flooding has also occurred frequently in recent years on Upper Street (LP3403) in the area to the front of the hairdressing salon, causing flood damage to the business premises there. At times of heavy rain, the water level behind the Creamery builds up quickly until it escapes through the Creamery and out onto the road, where the existing shores cannot take the flow. Kilkenny County Council is aware of this problem and funding has been allocated in the 2009 programme to address this problem by intercepting this excessive surface water and diverting it to the local stream.

The OPW National Flood Maps identify a large area of low lying land at Narrabaun extending to Ballynearla as subject to flooding or poor drainage. The majority of these lands, while outside the plan boundary, impact on the growth of development to the west of the village. The lands have been known to flood in the past, but new drainage pipes installed at Dangan circa 1995 are considered to have reduced the severity of the flood problem there.

Figure 3.6.1: OPW Flood Hazard Mapping of Kilmacow



Map Scale 1:41,834

Source: OPW National Flood Hazard Mapping

Map Legend	
	Flood Points
	Multiple / Recurring Flood Points
	Areas Flooded
	Hydrometric Stations
	Rivers
	Lakes
	River Catchment Areas
	Land Commission *
	Drainage Districts *
	Benefiting Lands *

* Important: These maps do not indicate flood hazard or flood extent. Their purpose and scope is explained in the Glossary.

Note: Benefiting Land Maps are a dataset prepared by the Office of Public Works that identify land that might benefit from the implementation of Arterial (Major) Drainage Schemes (under the Arterial Drainage Act 1945) and indicating areas of land subject to flooding or poor drainage.

Suir Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study 2007-2010 (SUIR CFRAM Study)

Flooding has become a growing problem for many local authorities as changes in climate, ongoing development and other pressures are predicted to increase flood risk in many areas, with particular focus on lands adjoining major rivers and their tributaries. To address this issue, a number of Local Authorities in co-operation with the OPW are undertaking detailed studies of catchment flood risk and management in their respective areas. The local authority areas included in this study area:- North Tipperary County Council, South Tipperary County Council, Kilkenny County Council, Waterford County Council, Waterford City Council and Limerick County Council.

The Office of Public Works (OPW) has identified the levels of existing flood risk in and around the River Suir and its tributaries, which includes the River Blackwater. In co-operation with various Local Authorities within its catchment area, including Kilkenny County Council, the OPW are currently conducting a 'Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study' of the entire catchment area which covers approximately 3,520km² including lands at Kilmacow.

The study is to focus primarily on developed areas and areas subject to significant development pressure known to have experienced flooding in the past or believed to be at risk of flooding in the future.

The study involves three main stages:-Stage 1 involves assessment and mapping of flood risk areas throughout the entire catchment area which will include Kilmacow. It will include some modelling and will analyse the area in general detail. Stage 2 will focus in detail on the 'priority' areas and will identify and assess potential flood risk management options before choosing preferred options. Stage 3 will involve developing and publishing a Catchment Risk Management Plan which will follow on from in-depth public consultation. Public consultation in the form of meetings with key stakeholders, environmental stakeholders and the local authority is due to take place by mid to late 2010. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Flood Risk Assessment Management Plan (FRAMP) will be carried out by appointed consultants and will cover the entire study area including Kilmacow. The SEA as well as the FRAMP will be the subject of detailed public consultation and will be placed on public display for all to see.

Surface Water Drainage

There is no comprehensive surface water network servicing Kilmacow at present, however there are a limited number of existing water sewers in the Upper Village at present.

It was condition of the permission granted for Chapelgate residential development (04/757 – 60 units) that surface water is not permitted to drain onto the adjoining public road. This necessitated the provision of water gullies and storm drainage pipes that have now been laid to deal with surface water run-off caused by the new development. The storm drainage pipes extend from Chapelgate, along the public road and exit into the River Blackwater close to the Sports Complex.

It is the intention of Kilkenny County Council that these pipes be further utilized in the future with new links provided to safely dispose of excess surface water during times of heavy rainfall.

The permitted residential development for 25 units at Narrabaun north (although not yet constructed) must also provide its own storm water drainage system as surface water is not permitted to drain onto the public road. It is also a requirement that the developer continue to maintain indefinitely, the surface water drainage system that is installed. Surface water gullies are also required to be provided along the public road in the front of the site. This will aid in preventing additional flooding in Narrabaun from new development.

Kilkenny County Council will adopt a best practice approach with regard to surface water drainage through the promotion of catchment management and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) (see the box below for more details). This will help ensure that the amount of surface water is minimised and that the role of

the receiving environment (mainly watercourses) as conveyer is protected and enhanced. In relation to catchments, it should be noted that what happens in the catchment will affect water quality and potential flood risk along the route of the River Blackwater and adjoining lands. Kilkenny County Council will also refer to the September 2008 published Draft Guidelines on The Planning System and Flood Risk Management in determining applications for planning permission in line with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development (see Policy IS 10 below for further information on these guidelines).

BEST PRACTICE INFORMATION SHEET - SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) refers to an approach to the management of surface water drainage that involves the reduction, attenuation on site and/or slowing or surface water runoff to more closely follow the natural run-off patterns. SuDS provide a more sustainable approach to surface water management than conventional methods, which generally involve piping surface water directly to the nearest water course or river. SuDS can help to reduce the environmental impacts of development and stormwater runoff, provide a more cost-effective surface water drainage system and create more appealing, ecologically functional and useable open space environments and amenities in developed areas. SuDS falls into three main groups which aim to:-

1. Reduce the quantity of run-off from the site (source control techniques). Examples include the use of permeable car parking surfaces, infiltration trenches, infiltration basins etc.
2. Slow the velocity of runoff to allow settlement, filtering and infiltration (permeable conveyance systems). Examples include filter (or French) drains and surface water swales.
3. Provide passive treatment to collected surface water before discharge into land or to a watercourse (end of pipe systems). Examples include filter strips, detention basins, retention ponds, constructed wetlands, etc.

SuDS have been successfully used in the UK, Europe, the US, New Zealand and Australia. Examples in an Irish context include the recently completed Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study and the North Drogheda Environs Draft Master 2006, which both recommend the use of SuDS.

Roads

Kilmacow is strategically placed approximately 6.5km northwest of Waterford City and almost equidistant from two major national primary routes – the N24 Waterford to Clonmel Route via Mooncoin and the N9, which links Waterford to Kilkenny.

New roads and infrastructure improvements planned for Waterford City include the completion of the City by-pass and the Outer Ring Road. While these roads are outside the village boundary, they will improve access and travel time from

Kilmacow to the Waterford area and the entire south east region. The by-pass includes a new river crossing and a new Western Link Road that will connect to the N9 and N24 to the southeast of Kilmacow and it is hoped it will relieve the severe level of traffic congestion currently experienced when trying to enter the City during rush hours.

The location advantages of Kilmacow and the improvements in the roads infrastructure and link with Waterford City - a major centre of employment and to the entire south east region will likely increase pressure for development, primarily residential, in and around the village. Development pressure is expected to increase as the planned new infrastructure comes online and Kilmacow is viewed as an attractive place to live and an alternative location to city living.

The main roads into Kilmacow are primarily local routes and many sections of these are in need of repair. Ponding of water, brought about during heavy rainfall and periods of flooding, still occurs in certain sections of these roads, despite remedial works having been undertaken by the County Council at Dangan in the past.

Road Improvements

Under Kilkenny County Council Roadworks Scheme 2007 funding was allocated to the restoration of the LP3402 non-national route at Upper Kilmacow and of the LP3401 which links Lower Kilmacow with Upper Kilmacow. Funding was also allocated for the maintenance and restoration of the LP3405 route, which comprises improvements to the bend at Lower Kilmacow.

To date, these improvement works involving resurfacing have been completed on the road between the Lower Village to the Upper Village; the road from the Upper Village to the boy's school in Dangan; and on a section of the Forge Road. Other roads in Kilmacow and the adjoining area are under review and will be considered for improvement under the next 3-year plan.

Footpaths

The existing provision of footpaths in Kilmacow is substandard at present and is inadequate to cater for the existing population and any future growth in population. Relatively few footpaths exist in the villages with the exception of those provided within individual housing developments and the footpath provided in the Upper Village, just outside the local shop. However, these fail to link up and so safe pedestrian movement in and around the villages is restricted for all members of the community. In addition to this, many of the footpaths that do exist are in bad condition or badly sited on the wrong side of the road and do not adhere to pedestrian desire lines. For instance, the footpath that is intended to link the Upper Village to the Sports Complex is substandard and under-utilised because it is situated on the wrong side of the road, causing pedestrians to cross outside the sports complex or walk on the roadside in order to get to the sports facilities.

There is no footpath linking St. Senan's Boys School with the Upper Village, which is vitally important to ensure the safe movement of school children between the two. A new footpath is required to run along the same side of the road as the school and into the village, in order to prevent pupils crossing the road outside the school.

The lack of a footpath linking the Upper and Lower Villages restricts the safe movement of people from one end of Kilmacow to the other. This in effect segregates pedestrians in the upper and lower villages and is unsustainable as it encourages people to use their cars to make this relatively short journey. A footpath is required that would run from the along the southern side of the street in the lower village between the bridge and the Waterford Road. This should be continued into Upper Kilmacow, thus linking the two villages, thereby allowing the petrol station and supermarket to be accessed safely on foot. There was originally an old footpath which ran between the villages at this location (it was located on the right hand side of the road if travelling from the Upper Village to the Lower Village), but it has been eroded away over time due to flooding and lack of maintenance.

Other footpaths are needed throughout the villages to service housing areas and link them safely to the village cores.

Public Lighting

Public lighting in Kilmacow is considered insufficient at present according to many members of the local community who highlighted this issue through the public consultation process. Lights are primarily provided via a number of individual properties in the Upper and Lower Villages including some shops and services, but it is considered haphazard and uncoordinated. A comprehensive public lighting scheme which respects and enhances the character of the villages and their buildings, to include additional new lights is needed in all areas in order to improve levels of safety and security for residents during evenings and early mornings. This is even more necessary in winter months where daylight hours are limited. New lighting needs to be planned in tandem with any proposed new footpaths and cycle paths.

Areas of greatest priority for new public lighting are on the Dangan Road to increase safety for parents and children attending St. Senan's Boys School and areas within the upper village, especially leading to, and around, the junction in front in St. Senan's Church where the protruding church wall reduces visibility in evening hours and during winter.

Waste Management

Best practice waste management recommends that as much waste as possible be dealt with by prevention, reduction and recycling and with as little as possible remaining to be disposed of. Kilkenny County Council will advise people of the steps they can take to achieve this goal. The Plan aims to support the provision

of waste infrastructure such as bring banks at locations which will not adversely affect residential amenities.

A waste recycling bank for glass and drinking cans is located at Shamrock Grove in Kilmacow, while at Newrath Area Office there is a bring bank to accommodate plastic bottles, cardboard and paper. In addition to this, a new civic amenity site is proposed at Granagh in the Environs of Waterford City.

Regionally Important Aquifer

There is a green field area in Upper Kilmacow just north of Shamrock Grove that is identified as an Rkd/E a Regionally Important Aquifer where groundwater is extremely vulnerable to contamination – it comprises Karsified Bedrock dominated by diffuse flow / extreme. It is important that the extremely vulnerable area of the aquifer remains free from any form of development that would cause its contamination and should be used for open space / recreational purposes only.

Energy Conservation

The majority of the energy sources currently used in Ireland are non-renewable and cause damage to the environment. The Plan strongly supports national initiatives for reducing the energy requirements of buildings and encouraging the development of renewable energy resources.

Power and Telecommunications

Developments require adequate power and telecommunications services, including electricity supply, telephone services and broadband. These are provided by a number of different service providers and will be subject to their requirements.

3.6.3 INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES STRATEGY

The Infrastructure and Services Strategy for Kilmacow is to provide sufficient infrastructure and services to accommodate the existing community and to remedy any inadequacies that currently exist. Adequate infrastructure and services should also be provided to support new development in the Plan in a manner that is sustainable, efficient, cost effective, environmentally appropriate and that protects public health. Wherever practicable, services and infrastructure should be delivered in an integrated manner and should be planned and provided for in advance of development. No significant new development should take place in Kilmacow unless there are adequate levels of infrastructure and services available to support it.

3.6.4 INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES POLICIES

IS 1: Infrastructure and Services

Appropriate infrastructure should be provided to cater for development proposals, with particular reference to sewerage services, water supply, surface water disposal, street lighting, and public footpaths. Priority will be given to the provision of adequate infrastructure in advance of any development.

Rationale:

There is a need to plan for and provide sufficient infrastructure and services to accommodate existing development in Kilmacow as well as the future development and continued growth of the village in line with the provisions of the County Settlement Strategy. Kilmacow is deficient in a range of basic infrastructure including footpaths, a comprehensive public light scheme, cycle paths, adequate supply and quality of water etc.

IS 2: Cycle Paths

The council will ensure the provision of cycle paths as part of any new residential development in the village.

IS 3: Energy Efficient Buildings

To encourage 'A' energy ratings for all new dwellings and non-residential buildings, in conjunction with the Carlow-Kilkenny Energy Agency.

IS 4: Wastewater Harvesting Systems

To promote the use of Wastewater Harvesting Systems where possible and appropriate.

INFORMATION SHEET – WASTEWATER HARVESTING SYSTEMS

Rainwater harvesting is the gathering, or accumulating and storing, of rainwater. Traditionally, rainwater harvesting has been practiced in arid and semi-arid areas, and has provided drinking water, domestic water, water for livestock, water for small irrigation and a way to replenish ground water levels.

In domestic situations, the system consists of a storage tank to store the water and piping (to guide the water in). Additionally, extra pressuring equipment as pressure vessels, inline pump controllers or pressure sensitive pumps may also be required. Finally, water purifying equipment as water-purifying plants, UV-lights or distillation equipment is sometimes (depending on local conditions) added to purify the collected water. The system is then called a Greywater treatment system. Greywater systems are usually preferred over regular water harvesters as they allow the system to not only treat the rainwater, but water from other sources as well (e.g. the watercloset; if plants are used). However, this feature may also be averted by using a UV-lamp and composting toilet instead.

Depending on local circumstances, a gravity-fed system may already be enough to have a pressured water collection system. In the latter case, no pumps/pressure vessels are thus required to have a pressured system. In practice, gravity-controlled systems are usually created by placing the water harvester on an elevation (e.g. rooftops).

As water conservation is becoming more and more popular, more people have begun to make their own homebrew installation. These systems range from traditional technologies like rain barrels to more complex greywater systems. Through the internet, plans and accurate construction information have become available. Depending on the degree of personal skill and preference, a more basic (regular water tank and piping) -or more advanced (e.g. pressured systems with water treatment) -system is chosen.

IS 5: Adequate Infrastructure and Services

All proposals for new development must be accompanied by supporting information detailing how the development is to be served by:

- sewerage facilities
- water supply
- surface water disposal
- street lighting and
- public footpaths

IS 6: Flooding

Development that is sensitive to the effects of flooding will generally not be permitted in flood prone or marginal areas. Appropriately designed development, which is not sensitive to the effects of flooding, may be permissible in flood plains provided it does not reduce the flood plain area or otherwise restrict or redistribute flow across floodplains. (Examples of such development might include park areas and sports pitches). Such development, should only be permitted provided it incorporates adequate measures to cope with the ever-existent flood risk, e.g. adequate drainage systems, safety measures, emergency response facilities and/or warning and response systems and where it is considered that flooding would not result in significant hardship/financial loss or cost.

The Flood Risk Management Draft Guidelines were published jointly by the DoEHLG and Office of Public Works (OPW) and aim to provide for comprehensive consideration of flood risk, both in preparing plans and in determining applications for planning permission. The core objectives of the Guidelines are to:

- Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding;
- Avoid new developments increasing flood risk elsewhere, including that which may arise from surface run-off;
- Ensure effective management of residual risks for development permitted in floodplains;
- Avoid unnecessary restriction of national, regional or local economic and social growth;
- Improve the understanding of flood risk among relevant stakeholders; and
- Ensure that the requirements of EU and national law in relation to the natural environment and nature conservation are complied with at all stages of flood risk management.

The Guidelines recommend the application of the sequential approach for taking account of flood risk. The sequential approach works by guiding development away from areas that have been identified through a flood risk assessment as being at risk from flooding. The Guidelines also outline details of a justification test which assesses whether a development proposal within an area at risk of flooding meets specific criteria for proper planning and sustainable development and demonstrates that it will not be subject to unacceptable risk nor increase flood risk elsewhere.

With regard to project-level developments, the Guidelines require developers and their agents to:

- Carefully examine their development proposals to ensure consistency with the requirements of the guidelines including carefully researching whether there have been instances of flooding on specific sites or potential for flooding and declaring any known flood history in the planning application form as required under the Planning and Development Regulations 2006.

- Engage with the planning authorities at an early stage, utilising the arrangements for pre-planning application consultation with regard to any flood risk assessment issues that may arise.
- Carry out a site-specific flood risk assessment, as appropriate, and comply with the terms and conditions of any grant of planning permission with regard to the minimisation of flood risk.

Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs) aim to identify, quantify and communicate to decision-makers and other stakeholders the risk of flooding to land, property and people. The purpose is to provide sufficient information to determine whether particular actions (e.g. approving applications for proposed development) are appropriate.

The purpose of a site-specific flood risk assessment is to assess all types of flood risk for a new development. FRAs identify the sources of flood risk, the effects of climate change on this, the impact of the development, the effectiveness of flood mitigation and the residual risks that remain after those measures are put in place. The responsibility to screen for and carry out a FRA lies with those proposing the development in consultation with the LA and emergency planners.

In addition to flooding from coasts and rivers, the Guidelines include advice on assessing flood risk from other sources, for example overland flow and areas prone to surface water flooding.

In areas at risk from flooding, a precautionary approach will apply and—the methodology set out in the Planning Guidelines ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’ will be applied to development proposals.

IS 7: Surface Water Run-Off

Development must so far as is reasonably practicable incorporate the maximum provision to reduce the rate and quantity of runoff. e.g.:-

- Hard surface areas (car parks, etc.), should be constructed in permeable or semi-permeable materials,
- On site storm water ponds to store and/or attenuate additional runoff from the development should be provided,
- Soak-aways or French drains should be provided to increase infiltration and minimise additional runoff.

IS 8: Development Adjacent to Watercourses

For developments adjacent to watercourses of a significant conveyance capacity, particularly in areas at risk of flooding, any structures (including hard landscaping) must be set back from the edge of the watercourse to allow access for channel clearing/maintenance. A setback of 5m-10m is required depending on the width of the watercourse. Development consisting of construction of embankments,

wide bridge piers, or similar structures will not normally be permitted in or across flood plains or river channels

IS 9: Floodlighting

Proposals for lighting schemes should include details of the size, type, siting and number of fixtures, as well as wattage, colour of light source, light pattern and potential impact on the building material. Proposals should demonstrate how lighting schemes would enhance and protect the character of an area or group of protected structures and/or co-ordinate with any adjacent lighting schemes. Powerful wide angled over lighting which can diminish the architectural features of a building or area will be discouraged

IS 10: Groundwater Protection

In decision-making on the location, nature and control of development and activities, the Council will have regard to the Groundwater Protection Scheme and the regionally important aquifer located in Kilmacow in order to protect groundwater and keep it free from contamination. On lands just north of Chapelgate the aquifer is recorded as extremely vulnerable to contamination and it essential that it is protected from inappropriate forms of development.

IS 11: Surface Water Drainage & Disposal

Individual developments facilitated under the guidance of this local area plan shall be obliged, in all cases where surface water drainage measures are required, to provide a surface water drainage system separated from the foul drainage system. In the following particular circumstances different surface water drainage requirements shall apply, as follows:

i) One-Off Dwellings & Extensions

In the case of one-off rural dwellings or extensions (except in circumstances where an existing surface water drainage system is available to the proposed site for development and which, in the opinion of the planning authority has adequate capacity to accommodate the identified surface water loading), surface water shall be disposed of, in its entirety within the curtilage of the development site by way of suitably sized soak holes. In the case of driveways drainage measures shall be provided to a detail acceptable to the planning authority so as to avoid run-off from the site to the adjoining public road.

ii) Other Green-field Developments

For all other green-field developments it shall, in general, be the policy of Kilkenny County Council, to require the limitation of surface water run-off to pre-development levels. Where a developer can clearly demonstrate that capacity exists to accommodate run-off levels in excess of green-field levels then the planning authority shall give consideration to such proposals on a case by case basis.

iii) Brownfield Development

In the case of brown-field development, while existing surface water drainage measures will be taken into account, some attenuation measures for surface

water may be required at the discretion of the planning authority in the interests of balanced and sustainable development.

IS 12: Sustainable Drainage Systems

In line with the above it is the policy of Kilkenny County Council to implement SUDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems) as the preferred solution for the disposal and treatment of surface water run-off for all proposed developments.

New developments will be required to adhere to the principles of Sustainable Urban Drainage. In the design of new developments consideration should be given to incorporating some of the following measures:

- On site water ponds to store and/or attenuate additional runoff from the development should be provided
- Soak-aways or French drains should be provided to increase infiltration and minimise additional runoff
- Surface water run-off should be passed through a litter screen and petrol/oil interceptor before discharged off site to watercourses.

Attenuation measures should be designed such that the SUDS features will not overflow during a 30-year return period rainfall event. Overflow from the attenuation measures is to be retained within the site area up to the 100 year event.

3.6.5 INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES KEY ACTIONS

Key Action IS 1: Road Improvements

It is a key action of the Council to⁶:-

- Promote road safety for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists through the provision of traffic calming measures within and between the villages of Kilmacow Upper and Lower.
- Provide road improvements at St Senan's boys school to improve functioning and safety of the existing set down area.

Rationale:

The local county road network in Kilmacow on which the villages have developed historically, are substandard in alignment and in a poor state of repair and there are often speeding cars around sensitive areas, for example, outside schools. This raises many safety concerns for both car users and pedestrians and needs to be addressed in the Local Area Plan.

⁶ These works will be carried out with minimal interference to traditional stone walls, mature hedges and other natural features. The above objectives to maintain, develop and improve existing roads in Kilmacow will be carried out where necessary and as needs arise and resources permit.

Key Action IS 2: Footpaths

Kilkenny County Council will investigate the possibility of providing new footpaths or the reinstatement or upgrade of existing footpaths, which will run between and through Kilmacow Lower and Upper Villages, to make them more accessible, safer for pedestrians to move through, and to encourage walking and cycling.

Rationale:

The Council recognises the necessity for additional footpaths in Kilmacow and the importance of providing for a safe and adequate pedestrian network in the villages. It also recognises that the repair and upgrading of existing footpaths is also urgently required. This includes the reinstatement of the footpath between the upper and lower villages. These works should be undertaken after the installation and successful operation of the new sewerage system for Kilmacow and in conjunction with any proposed road improvement schemes (for example resurfacing) for the area.

Key Action IS 3: Public Lighting

To provide appropriate street lighting within the village area where they are currently lacking, to ensure safety of residents and road users, as resources permit.

Rationale:

The Council recognises the necessity for additional public lighting in Kilmacow, as existing levels are inadequate and raise safety concerns for pedestrians and road users. The Council will seek to redress this inadequacy in public lighting provision. These works should be undertaken in conjunction with other road improvements and once the new sewerage scheme is fully installed and operating successfully.

Key Action IS 4: Flooding

To investigate the potential flooding issues associated with the river corridor and to restrict development within the areas which are sensitive to the effects of flooding.

Rationale:

It is suggested that flooding is becoming more regular and more significant in Kilmacow. The *'Sports Complex'* comprises part of the floodplain of the River Blackwater while the road into the Upper Village from Dangan has been prone to the effects of flooding. It is therefore necessary that a flood survey is undertaken to determine the specific flooding causes, any specific erosion issues and flood prevention, drainage and erosion amelioration measures. It is also essential that development that is sensitive to the effects of flooding is not permitted in flood prone or marginal areas.

3.7 Environment & Heritage

3.7.1 EXPLANATION OF FORMAT

This section of the Local Area Plan firstly examines the existing situation in Kilmacow in terms of its built heritage and natural heritage and then puts forward a strategy, or vision, for their future provision and upkeep. The strategy is a long-term plan of action designed to achieve particular goals and is intended as a general framework to provide guidance for actions to be taken. The strategy provides the bridge between the policy and objectives for Kilmacow's heritage and the environment, which are then listed at the end of this section.

3.7.1.1 Policy Informants

In developing the options, policies and objectives of this section a range of inputs, guidelines and best practice has been considered, in particular the following:-

- **The main natural and built heritage features in Kilmacow.**
- **Legislative requirements and Policy Guidelines** including EU Directives, such as the Habitats Directive, Groundwater Directive and Water Framework Directive, and relevant Irish legislation and policy.
- **Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014** and its policies, objectives and proposals as appropriate to Kilmacow, in particular Chapter 8 dealing with the natural, built, archaeological and landscape heritage of the County.
- **Resources** that is available to Kilkenny County Council to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and services.
- **National and regional planning guidelines** which are applicable including the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2004 and the Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines both by the DoEHLG.
- **The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.**
- **Public Consultation** including the input received through the public workshops, written submissions, completed questionnaires and through speaking with other stakeholders.
- **Principles of proper planning and sustainable development.**

3.7.2 BUILT HERITAGE

3.7.2.1 Existing Situation

Overview

Built heritage includes both architectural heritage and archaeological heritage. Kilmacow has a number of significant features of both architectural and archaeological heritage that form a part of the history, heritage, special interest and character of the villages. Historic structures can be read as historic evidence and can aid the understanding of past conditions of how society changes and are a unique resource and expression of the richness and diversity of our past. The Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, 2004) state that:-

'The built heritage consists not only of great artistic achievements, but also of the everyday works of craftsmen. In a changing world, these structures have a cultural significance which we may recognise for the first time only when individual structures are lost or threatened. As we enjoy this inheritance, we should ensure it is conserved in order to pass it on to our successors.'

(Para. 1.1.1, pg. 13)

Section 8 of the Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014 provides for the protection of architectural and archaeological heritage in County Kilkenny.

Architectural Heritage

The architectural heritage of County Kilkenny is a unique and valuable resource that forms an important and irreplaceable part of the character and heritage of Kilmacow. An Introduction to the Architectural Heritage of County Kilkenny was published by the NIAH in 2006, and offers an illustrated introduction to the architecture of the county.

Part 4 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, makes provision of the protection of architectural heritage which includes a requirement to:

1. *Include in the development plan a Record of Protected Structures*
2. *Include in the development plan an objective to consider the designation of Architectural Conservation Areas*

In addition to this, the DoEHLG has issued guidelines for planning authorities in respect of Part 4 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 entitled Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2004.

Record of Protected Structures - Explanation

A protected structure is a structure that the Planning Authority considers to be of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view. In County Kilkenny these are afforded protection under the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) in the Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014. The RPS may be amended by the addition of entries as part of the making of the County Development Plan or via Section 55 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) at any time during the life of the Development Plan.

A protected structure, unless otherwise stated in the RPS, includes '*any building, structure, excavation, or other thing constructed or made on, in or under any land, or any part of a structure*'. In relation to a protected structure or proposed protected structure, the meaning of the term 'structure' is expanded to include:

- i) the interior of the structure;
- ii) the land lying within the curtilage of the structure;
- iii) any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors, and
- iv) all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of the above structures.

Owners or occupiers of a protected structure can ascertain the specific details of the nature and extent of protection for each individual structure by seeking a declaration under Section 57 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

Under Section 54 (2) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) all works which would materially affect the character of a protected structure or a proposed protected structure, will require planning permission.

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) is a unit within the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government engaged in compiling an evaluated record of the architectural heritage of Ireland. The purpose of the NIAH is to identify record and evaluate the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland, uniformly and consistently as an aid in the protection and conservation of the built heritage. NIAH surveys provide the basis for the recommendations of the Minister of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government to the planning authorities for the inclusion of particular structures in their Record of Protected Structures (RPS). Where an NIAH survey of a particular area has been published, relevant planning authorities are provided with information on structures within the area of that survey. The planning authority must then assess the content of, and the evaluations in, an NIAH survey with a view to the inclusion of structures in the RPS according to specific criteria.

The NIAH survey of 2006 describes and appraises 28 structures within the Kilmacow LAP area and these can be viewed at the NIAH website

(www.buildingsofireland.ie). In the making of this Local Area Plan the Council has responded to the Ministerial recommendation made in 2006 in relation to Kilmacow and has considered structures included in the survey and rated Regional and some Local (which are considered to be of significance to the local community and to preserving the unique character of Kilmacow), for inclusion in the RPS. There are already 7 no. protected structures in Kilmacow on the existing RPS. Of these, 5 no. are also included on the NIAH list while 2 no. are not. The Council proposes that the remaining 24 no. structures from the NIAH list for Kilmacow, be added to the RPS as protected structures. Details of existing protected structures already on the existing RPS and proposed protected structures are set out below.

Please note that any additions proposed to the RPS must be made via the County Development Plan process (via a Variation to it) and cannot be made through the Local Area Plan process. The proposed protected structures in this LAP are therefore recommended to be added to the RPS. Inclusion of these structures on the RPS will be made at a later stage via Section 55 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 and owners or occupiers of each building will be individually notified; a notice published in a local newspaper; information on each of the proposed protected structures placed on public display for a period of 6-weeks and the public invited to make a submission in relation to the proposal before a final decision is made by the planning authority.

Record of Protected Structures in Kilmacow

Currently Kilmacow has a total of 7 no. protected structures which are listed in County Kilkenny's Record of Protected Structures. One of these (No. 2 - Grain Mill) includes two protected structures on the same site i.e. a grain mill and cast-iron aqueduct.

1. **Grain Mill** (RPS No. D131) (NIAH No. 12404304)
Known locally as Dullard's Mill
Location: Dangan

Three-storey mill on Blackwater with traces of great spurwheel gearing



2. **Grain Mill** (RPS No. D130) (NIAH NO. 12329022)
Known locally as Brown's Mill

Location: Greenville

Five-storey flour mill on left bank of Black Water near Kilmacow. Francis turbine survives along with traces of machinery. Impressive cast-iron **aqueduct** dated 1885 (by R. Graham of Waterford) conveys headwater to mill (the wheelpit now houses a modern electricity-generating turbine, 371:2).



3. Kilmacow Bridge (RPS No. D65) (NIAH NO.12329008)

Location: Lower Kilmacow

Carrying a minor road over the Black Water the bridge comprises 6 equi-sized gothic arches (5 of which are in normal use); a millrace is also accommodated on its western approach.



4. Gooch's Flour Mill (RPS No. D66) (NIAH NO. 12329011)

Location: Greenville

Flour mill complex, dated 1802. It includes an attractive collection of buildings arranged about a shared courtyard forming an important element of the industrial heritage of Kilmacow having served as a flour mill, and later as a corn mill throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although having since been decommissioned much of the complex has survived to the present day with each range retaining some of the original qualities, thereby contributing to the historic integrity of the site: of additional interest are the various inscribed stones throughout the complex each bearing the initials "B.G." or "L.F." spanning a date bracket of 1802 to 1880. Positioned overlooking the River Blackwater the complex forms an appealing feature in the landscape, thereby contributing positively to the scenic value of Kilmacow and the environs. In use as Corn mill complex, 1903, including: (i) Attached six-bay two-storey mill owner's house. (ii) Attached three-bay four-storey flour mill with attic perpendicular to north with two-bay three-storey recessed flanking block. (iii) Detached three-bay single-storey outbuilding with attic to south with square-headed carriageway to left.

**5. Dangan Bridge (RPS No.D67) (NIAH No. 12404305)**

Location: Dangan

Six equi-sized semi-circular spans, with angled cutwaters, carry a minor road over Black Water north of Kilmacow.



6. St. Senan's Catholic Church (RPS No. C191) (NIAH NO.12329004)

Location: Upper Kilmacow

Early C19th totally modernised but with elaborate late C19th gates.

Where a structure is protected, the protection includes the structure, its interior and the land within its curtilage and other structures within that curtilage (including their interiors). In this regard, included in the protection of the church are the two stone single-storey buildings situated within the church grounds to the west of the church and which date back to c. 1825. One of the buildings was originally used as a schoolroom as part of the 'Old Preparatory College' in Kilmacow which finally closed in 1896 when its need had passed.



7. House (RPS no. C192)

Location: West Side

Three-bay, two- storey house



Proposed Protected Structures in Kilmacow

8. Kilmacow Creamery

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329001

Location: Upper Kilmacow

A middle-sized creamery building representing an important element of the architectural heritage of Kilmacow on account of having traditionally supported much of the economy of the agricultural hinterlands. Well-composed the external aspect of the building is enlivened by features including a gabled entrance bay together with a variety of glazing patterns to the window openings, all of which contribute to the architectural design quality of the site. Although now disused and somewhat neglected the survival of the original composition attributes together with substantial quantities of the historic fabric maintains much of the character and integrity of the site.



9. Detached three-bay two-storey house, c.1900

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329002

Location: Upper Kilmacow adjacent to Peggy Ruffle's Hair Salon

A pleasantly-composed middle-size house of modest appearance presenting an early aspect with much of the early fabric surviving intact both to the exterior and to the interior, thereby making a positive impression in an historic setting.



10. Harney's Shop

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329003

Location: Upper Kilmacow

End-of-terrace three-bay single-storey mono-pitched commercial building, c.1950. Now disused. A small-scale purpose-built commercial building forming a distinctive feature in the centre of Kilmacow Upper on account of individualist attributes including a pared-down Modernist architectural theme, the wall surface treatment, the chrome and Bakelite accents forming a frontage of some design merit, the pitch of the roof, and so on. Although now disused the building retains all of the original character, thereby enhancing the diverse quality of the street scene.



11. Kilmacow Flour Mill (known locally as Cronin's Mill)

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329005

Location: Upper Kilmacow adjacent to the community hall

The remains of a flour mill complex constructed c.1750 and subsequently in use as creamery in 1903. It includes a collection of modest-scale ranges forming an important element of the industrial heritage of Kilmacow having been built as part of a flour mill complex, later functioning as a creamery supporting much of the local agricultural economy. Although having since been put out of commission each range retains many of the original composition attributes together with substantial quantities of the early fabric, thereby maintaining the integrity of the assemblage despite the loss of the mill building proper in the mid twentieth century.



12. End of Terrace Cottage

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329006

Location: Lower Kilmacow next to Kilmacow Bridge

End-of-terrace four-bay single-storey house with dormer attic, c.1800, possibly originally thatched with single-bay single-storey lean-to end bay (outbuilding) to left. Reroofed - c.1950. It comprises a picturesque modest-scale range of vernacular heritage significance on account of attributes including the informal arrangement of the openings in the long, low range together with the probability that the house was originally thatched: the present covering to the roof meanwhile is often considered a vernacular quality. Well maintained to present an early aspect the house makes a positive contribution to the historic character of the street scene.



13. Two-Storey House, End of Terrace

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329007

Location: Lower Kilmacow

End-of-terrace three-bay two-storey house, c.1900, possibly incorporating fabric of earlier house, c.1800. Part refenestrated. Pitched slate roof with clay ridge tiles, red brick irregular bond chimney stack, rendered coping, and iron rainwater goods on rendered eaves. It is a modest-scale house of informal quality presenting an early character, thereby contributing positively to the visual appeal of the street scene.



14. Kilcronagh House & Adjoining Farmyard Complex (Greenville Park House)

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329009 & 12329018

Location: Greenville, Kilmacow

Detached seven-bay, two-storey, over basement double-pile house built in c.1750. The house was part refenestrated in c.1850 and mostly refenestrated, pre-1889.

Kilcronagh House is an impressive classically-composed substantial house forming an attractive landmark in the locality. Sparsely detailed the architectural design value of the composition is enhanced by attributes including the balanced distribution of openings centred on a fine doorcase while supplementary cut-limestone dressings display high quality craftsmanship. Having been well maintained the house presents an early aspect with substantial quantities of the historic fabric surviving intact both to the exterior and to the interior. The house remains of additional significance for the historic associations with the Green (builder), the de la Poer (owners, 1870s-c.1925), and the Quinlan families.

The adjoining farmyard complex includes an appealing collection of substantial agricultural outbuildings arranged about a courtyard contributing to the group and setting values of the Kilcronagh House (Greenville Park House) estate: the ensemble is of additional interest as evidence of the services put in place to facilitate the operation of a large-scale landholding in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Although presently in various states of repair each unit retains most of the essential qualities together with much of the historic fabric, thereby making a positive contribution to the character of the setting.



15. Gate Lodge and Gateway to Kilcronagh House, (Greenville Park House)

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329010 & 12309021

Location: Set in the grounds of Kilcronagh House, Kilmacow

Detached four-bay single-storey gate lodge, built c.1825. It is a picturesque small-scale gate lodge enlivened by distinctive attributes including the pointed-arch openings lending a muted Gothic quality to the design together with the open veranda fronting at least two sides of the composition. Presenting an appealing feature at the entrance to the grounds of Kilcronagh House (Greenville Park House).

Adjacent to the Gate lodge is a gateway constructed c.1825, comprising a pair of limestone ashlar piers with moulded capping, and wrought iron double gates having cast-iron finials. The gateway forms a pleasant feature at the entrance to the grounds of Kilcronagh House (Greenville Park House) an appealing gateway of modest quality displays fine stone work with attractive iron ware enhancing the aesthetic value of the composition.



16. Ida House (Kilmacow Glebe House)

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329012

Location: East side of the Sports Complex at Greenville

Detached three-bay two-storey part-double-pile 'Board of First Fruits' glebe house, built 1818, with two-bay two-storey side (south) elevation (forming single-bay two-storey shallow return to west). The house was converted to private residential use, pre-1903 and renovated in c.1975, projecting open porch added to ground floor.

This is a middle-size house forming an important element of the architectural heritage of the locality on account of the original intended purpose as an ecclesiastical residence sponsored by the Board of First Fruits (fl. c.1711-1833) for the Church of Ireland clergy: the glebe house survives as one of the last reminders of the once-prosperous Church of Ireland community in Kilmacow following the loss of the church (built 1818; demolished, post-1903) in the twentieth century. Although now accommodating a private residential use the house has been carefully maintained to present an early character, thereby contributing positively to the visual appeal of the landscape.



17. Kilmacow Lower Corn Mill (known locally as Kelly's Mill)

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329013

Location: Kilmacow Lower

Corn mill complex constructed c.1825, comprising: (i) Detached seven-bay two-storey corn mill on an L-shaped plan with round-headed carriageway to left ground floor, and two-bay single-storey projecting bay to right. In use, 1903. Now in ruins. Set back from line of road with overgrown forecourt.

The corn mill comprises a collection of modest-scale ranges forming an important element of the industrial heritage of Kilmacow having operated as a corn mill from the early nineteenth century. Although now in ruins the elementary form and massing of each range remain substantially intact, thereby providing an indication of the original appearance of the complex. The site at present forms a picturesque feature of some romantic quality in the landscape.



18. Greenville House

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329014

Location: Greenville

Detached seven-bay two-storey house constructed c.1875, possibly over basement and incorporating the fabric of an earlier house constructed pre-1840. Subsequently in use as De La Salle college, pre-1965 but now in residential use.

This is a well-appointed large-scale house evocative of the work of John Skipton Mulvaney (1813-71) in nearby County Waterford and has fine rendered accents throughout which enhance the architectural design value of the composition, while lending an Italianate quality reminiscent of Mayfield House (1857) and Woodlock House (1861-4), both in Portlaw. Archival editions of the Ordnance Survey indicate a range in the grounds in the mid nineteenth century, so the present house represents the continuation of a long-standing presence on site. Having been reasonably well maintained the house presents an early aspect with substantial quantities of the historic fabric surviving intact both to the exterior and to the interior. The house remains of additional significance for the associations with the Green family and the De La Salle order who established a college in the house prior to relocation to Faithlegg House, County Waterford, in the late twentieth century.



19. Gates/Railings/Wall at Entrance to St. Senan's Church

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329017

Location: Narrabaun South

Gateway, c.1875. A very fine elaborately-detailed gateway forming an attractive landmark in the centre of Kilmacow Upper. Robust Gothic details including primary piers reminiscent of church towers having spires identify the architectural design significance of the composition while exhibiting very high quality stone masonry: meanwhile, decorative wrought iron ware enhances the artistic design importance of the site. Standing in contrast to the comparatively plain quality of the church (12329004/KK-43-29-04) the gateway forms an important element of the Saint Senan's Catholic Church complex.

**20. Gates/Railings/Wall at Entrance to Kilcronagh House**

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329019

Location: Entrance to Kilcronagh House at Greenville

Gateway, c.1825, comprising pair of limestone ashlar piers with moulded capping, and wrought iron double gates having cast-iron finials. Set at entrance to grounds of Kilcronagh House (Greenville Park House).

Forming a pleasant feature at the entrance to the grounds of Kilcronagh House (Greenville Park House) an appealing gateway of modest quality displays fine stone work with attractive iron ware enhancing the aesthetic value of the composition.



21. Greenville House – Gate Lodge & Entrance Gates

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329020 & 12329021

Location: Greenville, Kilmacow

Detached two-bay single-storey double-gable-fronted Gothic-style gate lodge with dormer attic, c.1900, with single-bay single-storey recessed end bay to right. The house was refenestrated in c.1975, and is now in private residential use.

This is a pleasant small-scale gate lodge retaining most of the original composition qualities together with substantial quantities of the early fabric. Forming a neat self-contained group along with the attendant gateway, the resulting ensemble makes a positive contribution to the group and setting values of the Greenville House estate.

Alongside the gate lodge is an elegantly-appointed gateway c. 1900, which makes a positive visual statement at the entrance to the grounds of the Greenville House estate: cast-iron and rendered details enhance the architectural and artistic design values of the composition in the street scene.



22. Outbuilding in the Grounds of St. Senan's Church

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329023 & 12329024

Location: Narrabaun South

Detached three-bay two-storey outbuildings, c.1825. Set in grounds shared with Saint Senan's Catholic Church. One was possibly originally a school with single-bay single storey gabled projecting lower porch to centre. Refenestrated c. 1950 with some openings remodelled. Now disused.

Exhibiting a traditional construction in locally-sourced County Kilkenny limestone with dressings displaying high quality stone masonry a modest-scale utilitarian range makes a pleasant contribution to the aesthetic value of the Saint Senan's Catholic Church grounds. Despite having undergone a renovation project in the mid twentieth century the retention of most of the composition attributes together with substantial quantities of the historic fabric maintains much of the integrity of the site.



23. Kilmacow National School

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329025

Location: Upper Kilmacow

Detached six-bay single-storey national school, c.1900, with two-bay single-storey gabled projecting central bays. The building has been mostly refenestrated and has experienced many changes in recent years including a recent extension. It is now in use as a community hall.

The building forms an important element of the early twentieth-century architectural heritage of Kilmacow a modest-scale school built to a standard design prepared by or derived from the output of the Board or Office of Public Works represents one of the earliest-surviving purpose-built educational facilities in the locality. Despite having been superseded in the late twentieth century the essential composition attributes prevail together with much of the historic fabric, thereby maintaining some of the integrity of the site.



24. Railings from Kilmacow Presentation Convent

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329026

Location: Upper Kilmacow

Section of iron railings constructed c.1900, on plinth. The railings are set back from road in grounds shared with Kilmacow Presentation Convent (now the Community Hall).

Making a pleasing impression in the locality a substantial section of iron work exhibiting modest aesthetic aspirations contributes pleasantly to the group and setting values of the Kilmacow Presentation Convent grounds.

Please note that the railings along the laneway leading to the Community Hall in Kilmacow have been installed at various different dates however, the original railings and gate, a portion of which is shown below, are worthy of protection.



25. House in Kilmacow Upper

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329028

Location: Dangan, Upper Kilmacow

End-of-terrace single-bay single-storey house with half-dormer attic, c.1800. Reroofed, c.1900. Now disused. Pitched roof with replacement corrugated-iron, c.1900, having iron ridge, rendered chimney stack, and remains of iron rainwater goods on rendered eaves having iron ties. Road fronted with concrete footpath to front.

Representing an artefact of the urban vernacular legacy of Kilmacow a small-scale house exhibits qualities indicating a considerable vintage including the steep pitch of the roof, and so on. Although having fallen into disrepair following a prolonged period of disuse the essential attributes survive in place together with much of the historic fabric, thereby maintaining the positive contribution made to the character of the street scene.



26. Postbox

NIAH Ref. No.: 12329028

Location: Lower Kilmacow

Wall-mounted cast-iron post box, dated between 1881-1901, with raised "VR" royal cipher. Set in painted roughcast wall with rendered surround.

Making a pleasing, if subtle visual impression in the street scene a post box represents an important, if small-scale artefact of early mass-produced cast-iron work. Raised dressings identifying the aesthetic concerns of the composition include a cipher of significance as a tangible reminder of the period when Ireland formed part of the British Empire.



Features of Cultural Heritage Interest

In addition to the structures listed above, there are a number of attractive or unusual features that contribute to the local distinctiveness and character of Kilmacow and which are considered in Kilmacow Local Area Plan as '*Features of Local Interest.*' They comprise mostly historic features that help 'tell the story' of Kilmacow and are part of its unique heritage. Any proposals for development should ensure minimum intervention with these Features of Local Interest as detailed in the objectives and policy section below.

Proposed Features of Local Interest

1. The Mass Bush

Location: Dangan

In the 1700s, four local churches in the Kilmacow area were seized by the Established Church. This led to the local community conducting open-air masses for a short period at secret locations known as the '*Mass Bush.*' According to local tradition there were at least three mass bushes located in Kilmacow Parish including one at Dangan, which is marked today by an inscribed stone at the top of '*Priests Hill.*' The Mass Bush site in Kilmacow is a part of the local

community's cultural heritage that played an important function for Kilmacow's ancestors.



2. The Water Pump

Location: Narrabaun

There is an attractive old water pump located at Narrabaun on the west side of Upper Street that was used for drinking water. The water pump can be seen upon entering the Upper Village and is a well-known local landmark and is also used as a bus-stop. Recently the local community have landscaped a small area around the pump and introduced some floral arrangements to enhance this feature and the character of the area.

3. The Pond

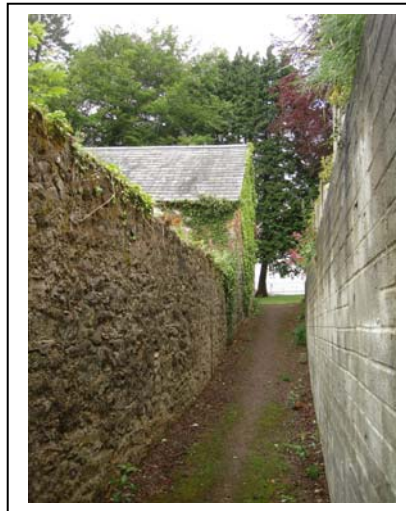
Location: Upper Village, Adjoining the Sports Complex

The pond is a water feature off the River Blackwater which adjoins the Sports Complex. It has been used as a leisure facility and for swimming by the local community for generations and holds many fond memories for many people.

4. Stone Walls

Location: Dispersed throughout Kilmacow

There are a number of fine stone walls spotted throughout Kilmacow mostly constructed of limestone that are a testament to the craftsmen who built many years ago and the use of local traditional materials. It is considered that some of them date back as far as Famine times. These walls or what remains of them (some are in a state of disrepair), add great character to Kilmacow and can be seen especially well in the two stone bridges which mark the entrance to the villages both at Dangan and in the Lower Village.



For a full and detailed description on each of the Proposed Protected Structures set out above, and an appraisal on each, the NIAH list for Kilmacow should be referred to. It is available to view at the following website www.buildingsofireland.ie.

Kilmacow Mills

Kilmacow has had a long relationship in the past with the milling industry. Early in the 1700s, John Greene of Greenville, introduced the first Mill to Kilmacow - a Linen Paper Mill built on what is known as the 'Farm' or 'Knock' close to Kilmacow Sports Complex. Little trace of the mill remains today however the Greene family of Greenville went on to construct a further seven mills in Kilmacow. In addition to this, a further 7 no. mills were opened by other mill-owners, leading to a total of 14 mills operating from Kilmacow at one stage. The many mills produced between them flour, linen, paper and corn milling and were known as follows:-

- | | | | |
|-----|----------------------|---|-----------------------|
| 1) | Linen Paper Mill | - | Farm (Sports Complex) |
| 2) | Greenvale Linen Mill | - | Greenville |
| 3) | Dullard's Mill | - | Dangan |
| 4) | Scroder's Mill | - | Skeard |
| 5) | Brown's Mill | - | Greenville |
| 6) | Cronin's Mill | - | Upper Kilmacow |
| 7) | Gouche's Mill | - | Lower Greenville |
| 8) | Loughry's Mill | - | Lower Greenville |
| 9) | Kelly's Mill | - | Lower Street |
| 10) | Carding Mill | - | Lower Street |
| 11) | Farrell's Mill | - | The Pill |
| 12) | Forristal's Mill | - | Newtown |
| 13) | Strangs Mills | - | Strangsmills |
| 14) | Gaulsmill | - | Gaulsmills |

Historically the mills provided a high level of employment in the area and were a focus of inward migration as people came to Kilmacow in search of employment during the 1800s. Only seven of the mills have visible ruins today including:-

Dullard's Mill at Dangan,
Scroder's Mill at Skeard,
Brown's Mill at Greenville,
Cronin's at Upper Kilmacow,
Loughry's at Lower Kilmacow,
Gouche's at Lower Kilmacow
Kelly's Mill at Lower Kilmacow

The most intact of these includes Brown's Mill at Greenville which is partly occupied today by a manufacturing business that produces electrical and mechanical components for various industries throughout Ireland. Kelly's Mill in the Lower Village is derelict and roofless while Dullard's Mill in Dangan remains standing and reasonably well intact, although it has been closed and boarded up for many years.

Two of the mills are already on the Record of Protected Structures – these are Dullard's Grain Mill at Dangan and Brown's Mill at Greenville. Furthermore, three of the Mills are proposed for protection, including Kelly's Mill and Gouche's Mill at Lower Kilmacow, and Cronin's at Upper Kilmacow. The aim is to have the latter three mills added to Kilkenny County Council's Record of Protected Structures to ensure their protection as unique structures that contribute to the character of Kilmacow.

Proposed Village Character Areas

It is proposed in this Local Area Plan to designate the village cores of both Upper and Lower Kilmacow as '*Village Character Area*' (VCA). The area to which this designation extends is identified on Figure 3.7.2.1 below.

The Village Character Areas are designated in order to protect and enhance those parts of Kilmacow villages that have special character or historic interest. The village cores are designated as VCAs due to their attractiveness and their special architectural and historical interest which gives Kilmacow its distinctive character. The aim of the designation is to guide the evolution of the Lower and Upper Villages in ways that protect their special characteristics and distinctive features and will over time add new qualities. Conservation seeks to promote an understanding of that character and ensure its continuity by encouraging sensitive development without necessarily replicating the past.

The designation includes some protected structures and proposed protected structures (as detailed above) but the majority of buildings within the VCA are not protected structures. The VCA will be protected by policy and objectives contained within this Local Area Plan as set out in Section 3.7.2.3.3.

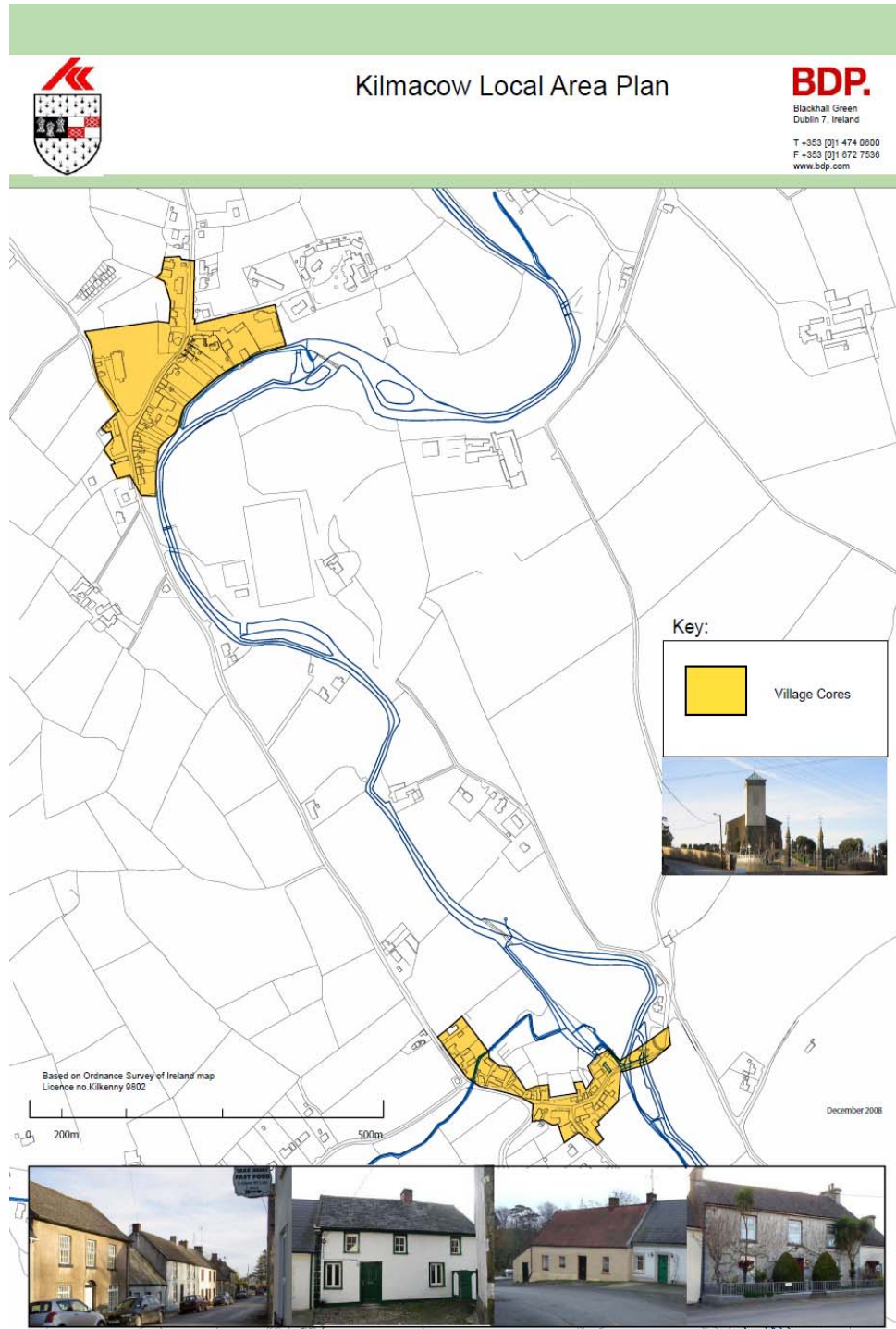
Description of the Village Character Areas

Village Character Areas (VCAs) have been identified in both the Upper and Lower villages of Kilmacow. The VCAs are characterised by the historic hearts of the villages which are clearly evident in the tight urban grain and distinctive vernacular buildings clustered around the road junctions. Many of the buildings and features within the VCAs have already been recognised for their individual architectural merit through their inclusion in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) and County Record of Protected Structures (RPS). The VCA seeks to recognise the collective importance of the NIAH and RPS buildings and features and the unique interrelationship between these buildings and the remaining buildings within the VCA which are not included in the NIAH and RPS. It is the character of these vernacular buildings and their physical relationship with one another and the spaces around them which gives the Upper and Lower villages of Kilmacow their unique identity and sense of place.

In Kilmacow Upper the VCA is dominated by the imposing St Senan's Catholic Church with its imposing 19th century gates, railings and wall which wraps around the site. The area immediately in front of the church forms the focal point for the Upper Village with activity concentrated around the church, shops and public house. Of further note is the small terrace of single and two storey houses which hug the road as it approaches the front of St Senans and sweeps around the eastern boundary of the church towards the now disused Kilmacow Creamery. In addition to terraced cottages there are a number of larger residential properties within the VCA including those identified as numbers 7 (RPS no C192) and 9 (NIAH No 12329002) in Section 3.7.2.1 Protected and Proposed Protected Structures.

Kilmacow Lower village VCA is typified by attractive and individually distinctive vernacular buildings of a more modest scale than the Upper Village. The River Black Water plays a dominant role in shaping the character of the village with the mill site and historic stone bridge marking the eastern boundary of the VCA. The riverside setting and cluster of small scale vernacular buildings following the curve of the road give Kilmacow Lower its unique identity and charm.

Figure 3.7.2.1: Location of Village Character Areas



Source: BDP



Figure 3.7.2.1: Photos of Kilmacow showing examples of buildings and streetscapes in the villages that have special character or historic interest.

Development in the vicinity of the VCA needs to respond appropriately to the existing character of the buildings within the VCA in terms of their design, height, material treatment, etc. The aim should be to create a coherent streetscape character with high quality architectural design, responsive building edges and adequate pedestrian and civic spaces that reinforce the built heritage of Kilmacow Lower and Kilmacow Upper.

Archaeological Heritage

Archaeological heritage includes monuments, places and artefacts. The archaeological heritage of Kilmacow is a unique resource and forms an important and irreplaceable part of the character and heritage of the villages.

Record of Monuments and Places

There are a number of monuments and places within Kilmacow that are included on the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) produced by the DoEHLG. These monuments and places are afforded statutory protection under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 and the policies set out under Section 8.4.2 of the County Development Plan 2008-2014. There are Zones of Archaeological Potential (ZAPs) around the monuments and places in the RMP and these should be considered in any proposed developments in the vicinity.

In relation to development, as specified in the County Development Plan all development proposals within the Zones of Archaeological Potential or which relate to Recorded Monuments and Places must be referred to the National Monuments Advisory Service of the DoEHLG. In addition to this, Section 12 (3) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 requires that any interference/work to a known archaeological site should be notified in writing to the Minister two months prior to the commencement of work.

Record of Monuments and Places in Kilmacow

There are four items of archaeological interest in Kilmacow on the Record of Monuments and Places. These are as follows:-

1. **St. Senan's Well (SMR No.: KK043-006)**

Location: Lower Kilmacow

Like many old parishes, there is a Holy Well located near the site of the ancient church of Kilmacow in the bog at the back of Phelan's house in Lower Kilmacow. Today there is no trace of the ancient church of Kilmacow that was situated in the old graveyard in Lower Kilmacow, however the Holy Well remains. The reason that many old Holy Wells found in association with early Christian churches and burial grounds have survived is because they were rarely destroyed for fear of supernatural reprisals.

The Holy Well in Kilmacow is called the well of St. Senan and is a well known local landmark.

2. **Church (SMR No.: KK043-016001)**

Location: Lower Kilmacow

There is little trace of the ancient Church of Kilmacow that was situated in the old graveyard in Lower Kilmacow. According to *'The History of Kilmacow'* a book written by Kathleen Laffan, the Church was closed during the reign of Queen Elizabeth about 1587 when it was taken over for Protestant worship.

3. **Graveyard (SMR No.: KK043-016002)**

Location: Lower Kilmacow

The graveyard in Lower Kilmacow has been in use as a burial place since early times for Catholic and late on for Protestants also. The oldest recorded headstone, which was set against the east wall of the graveyard, was dated

1543, although no trace of this headstone can now be found. Around 1889 the Catholic section of the graveyard was reported as being overcrowded and from the early 1900s almost all burials have taken place in the cemetery in Upper Kilmacow.

The graveyard fell into a state of disrepair in previous years; however the local development group instigated a programme of restoration and maintenance during the later 1990s significantly improving the appearance and condition of the graveyard. An archaeological report of the graveyard that researched its history and layout and which put forward proposals to enhance and maintain the graveyard was produced by a professional archaeologist in 1996.

4. Grabslab (SMR No.: KK043-016003)

A graveslab is a stone designed to be recumbent and marking a grave. A graveslab located in the old graveyard in Lower Kilmacow and dated around AD 1550 is included on the Record of Monuments and Places.

There is also a Ringfort located on rural lands at Dangan beyond Upper Kilmacow which is included on the Record of Monuments and Places; however, it is located outside the plan boundary (SMR Number KK043-002).

3.7.2.2 Built Heritage Strategy

The built heritage strategy is to ensure the protection and enhancement of the archaeological and architectural heritage of Kilmacow. This should be achieved by implementing the policy guidance contained in Chapter 8 of Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014, by having regard to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2004 produced by the DoEHLG and by ensuring that the relevant legislative provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (and as amended) that relate to architectural heritage and archaeology are implemented accordingly. These mechanisms should help ensure that aspects of Kilmacow's unique history, built and cultural heritage, special interest and character of the villages is maintained as much as is reasonable, for future generations to enjoy.

3.7.2.3 Built Heritage Policies

Architectural Heritage Policies

EH 1: Record of Protected Structures

To protect the existing protected structures in Kilmacow which are on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) for County Kilkenny.

EH 2: Proposed Protected Structures

To include the selected buildings and structures in Kilmacow which are identified on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, on the 'Record of Protected Structures' (RPS) for County Kilkenny. The proposed protected structures are as follows:-

Proposed Protected Structures in Kilmacow*		
Description	NIAH No.:	Location
Kilmacow Creamery	12329001	Upper Kilmacow
Detached three-bay two-storey house	12329002	Upper Kilmacow across from Peggy Ruffle's Hair Salon
Harney's Shop	12329003	Upper Kilmacow village centre
Kilmacow Flour Mill (known locally as Cronin's Mill)	12329005	Upper Kilmacow adjacent to the community hall
End of Terrace Cottage	12329006	Lower Kilmacow next to Kilmacow Bridge
Two-Storey House, End of Terrace House	12329007	Lower Kilmacow
Kilcronagh House & Adjoining Farmyard Complex	12329009 & 12329018	Greenville
Gate Lodge and Gateway to Kilcronagh House	12329010 & 12309021	Set in the grounds of Kilcronagh House, Kilmacow
Gooch's Flour Mill	12329011	Greenville
Ida House (Kilmacow Glebe House)	12329012	East side of the Sports Complex at Greenville
Kilmacow Lower Corn Mill (known locally as Kelly's Mill)	12329013	Kilmacow Lower adjacent to the River and Kilmacow Bridge
Greenville House	12329014	Greenville
Gates/railings/wall at entrance to St. Senan's Church	12329017	Narrabaun South
Gates/railings/wall at entrance to Kilcronagh House	12329019	Greenville
Greenville House – Gate Lodge & Entrance Gates/Railings/Walls	12329020 & 12329021	Greenville
Stone Outbuildings in grounds of St. Senan's Church	12329023	Narrabaun South
Kilmacow National School (now the community hall)	12329025	Upper Kilmacow adjacent to Rosedale
Railings from Kilmacow Presentation Convent	12329026	Upper Kilmacow along laneway into Community Hall
End of terrace cottage in Kilmacow Upper (single storey with half dormer attic and corrugated iron roof)	12329027	Dangan, Upper Kilmacow
Postbox	12329028	Lower Kilmacow

* Further details including photographs on each of the above structures are set out in the earlier part of this Section.

EH 3: Retention, Re-Use and Rehabilitation of Protected Structures

To encourage the sympathetic retention, reuse and rehabilitation of protected structures and their setting.

EH 4 Protection of Buildings on the RPS

To seek the conservation and protection of the buildings listed in the Record of Protected Structures.

EH 5: Works to Protected Structures

Any works or alterations to Protected Structures that will materially affect the character of the protected structure, its interior or the land or any structures within its curtilage, will require planning permission and should be subject to early consultation with Kilkenny County Council's Conservation Officer and/or the Heritage Service of the Department of Environment, heritage and Local Government.

General Advice:

Generally, all repair and maintenance works should be carried out on a 'like for like' basis and in accordance with the Architectural Heritage Guidelines published by the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government, 2004. In addition, the Council will assess any application for redevelopment or infill for its contribution to the streetscape.

EH 6: Assessing Proposals to Protected Structures

It is policy of the Council to have regard to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2004 issued by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government when assessing proposals for development affecting a protected structure.

EH 7: Best Practice in Conservation

To promote the principles of best practice in conservation and the use of appropriate materials and repair techniques through the administration of the Conservation Grants Scheme funded by The Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government.

EH 8: Regular Maintenance of Protected Structures

To provide assistance to owners of protected structures in undertaking essential repairs and maintenance by the provision of relevant information.

EH 9: Attendant Grounds

To protect elements of designed landscapes of special interest located within the attendant grounds of Protected Structures, including boundary features.

EH 10: Architectural Impact Assessment

To require an architectural impact assessment/conservation method statement for developments within the grounds of country house estates which are Protected Structures.

EH 11: Alterations and Removal

To resist any unnecessary demolition or substantial modification of any building, group of buildings or item of architectural significance, which contribute to the built heritage of the village and which are included in the RPS, unless a conclusive case on technical evidence is made for its alteration or removal. A detailed justification as to the need for any such proposed works must accompany a planning application.

EH 12: New Works

To encourage that any new works contribute positively to the architectural and historic character of the area, its present and future life. In general, new development should relate closely to the established character of the town, respecting the disciplines of established building form, massing, height, alignment, orientation and window proportions.

Features of Cultural Heritage Interest Policies**EH 13: Encourage the Refurbishment of Historic Built Environment**

To positively encourage and facilitate the careful refurbishment of the historic built environment in Kilmacow for sustainable and economically viable alternatives.

EH 14: Features of Cultural Heritage Interest

To preserve, protect and where necessary enhance significant heritage objects such as mass rocks and/or other significant features of cultural interest that form part of the cultural heritage of Kilmacow.

EH 15: Protection of Features of Cultural Heritage Interest

To protect any structures or features of Cultural Heritage Interest by requiring new development to have regard to their character. Their loss will be resisted and a strategy of minimum intervention in relation to proposals that involve any feature of cultural heritage interest will be adopted.

Village Character Areas Policies**EH 16: Establish Village Character Areas**

It is the policy of the Council to establish the proposed Village Character Areas (VCA) in Kilmacow Upper and Lower and to protect existing street patterns, built form and vernacular features which contribute to the Village Character Areas.

EH 17: Setting of VCA

It is the policy of the Council to ensure the preservation of the special character of each VCA particularly with regard to building scale, proportions, historical plot sizes, building lines, height, general land use, building materials, vernacular features, historic street furniture and paving.

EH 18: Planning Application Information

It is the policy of the Council to require planning applications for development in a VCA to submit drawings showing the proposed buildings/works in the context of their setting or otherwise demonstrate the impact of the development on the VCA.

EH 19: Development that is Sympathetic

Development within the VCAs should be sympathetic to existing development in terms of its height, design, material treatment etc. Established heights, building lines and village character should be respected.

EH 20: Resist the Loss of the Existing Building Stock

It is the policy of the Council to resist the loss the existing building stock within the VCAs. Demolition of structures or parts of structures or redevelopment of any site within a VCA will in principle only be permitted where the structure, or parts of a structure are considered not to contribute to the special or distinctive character and where the replacement structure would significantly enhance the special character more than the retention of the original structure.

EH 21: Extensions within the VCAs

Any building extensions in the VCA areas shall be sympathetic to the existing built form and character of the area in terms of design, scale, massing and material treatment.

EH 22: Retention & Repair of Structures within a VCA

To ensure the retention and repair rather than replacement of original/early features in buildings which contribute to the character of an VCA such as chimney stacks, roof coverings, roof profiles, external wall treatments, doors and windows, shopfronts and pub fronts and to ensure the use of appropriate materials and repair techniques when repairs are being carried out.

EH 23: New Development with Road Frontage that Adjoins the VCAs

Where new development adjoins the VCAs in both the Upper and Lower Villages and abuts the road the development should provide a positive frontage to the road which extends and enhances the existing VCA streetscape.

EH 24: Use of Materials

To ensure that inappropriate materials such as windows, doors and rainwater goods constructed in aluminium or uPVC are not introduced to buildings within VCAs.

EH 25: High Quality Design

It is the policy of the Council to encourage high quality, contemporary design and materials where appropriate when new buildings are being introduced into a VCA.

EH 26: Assessing Proposals in Advertising

To ensure the preservation of the character of a VCA when assessing proposals for advertising.

EH 27: Historic Items of Street Furniture

To retain historic items of street furniture where they contribute to the character of the VCA and to protect historic items of street furniture and roadside items as appropriate.

EH 28: Historic Shop Fronts

To promote the conservation of historic shop fronts and pub fronts.

EH 29: Retention of Mature Trees & Significant Planting

To seek the retention of mature trees/significant planting (those in good condition) which contribute to the character of each VCA where appropriate.

EH30: Appraisal of the Village Character Area

It is an objective of Kilkenny County Council to undertake a detailed appraisal of the Village Character Areas identified in Kilmacow Upper and Lower villages in order to inform future consideration of Architectural Conservation Area status for the identified areas in the next review of the Local Area Plan.

Archaeological Heritage Policies**EH 30: Sites of Established Archaeological Interest**

To safeguard the archaeological value of the sites (and their settings) in Kilmacow that are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (see section 3.7.2). In assessing proposals for development the County Council will have regard to the recommendations of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

EH 31: Protect and Enhance Archaeology

To protect and enhance the archaeological sites and monuments (including their setting) in Kilmacow including those that are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places, and in the Urban Archaeological Survey of County Kilkenny or newly discovered sub-surface archaeological remains.

EH 32: Preservation In-Situ

To ensure the preservation in-situ or preservation by record of:

- (a) The archaeological monuments in Kilmacow that are included in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 and in the Urban Archaeological Survey of County Kilkenny.
- (b) Any other sites and features of historical or archaeological interest.
- (c) Any subsurface archaeological features that may be discovered during the course of infrastructural/development works.

EH 33: Advice to Developers

To provide guidance to developers and property owners in Kilmacow regarding the archaeological implications of a proposed development.

EH 34: Archaeological Assessment

To require an appropriate archaeological assessment to be carried out in respect of any proposed development likely to have an impact on a Recorded Monument, a Zone of Archaeological Potential, or their settings.

EH 35: Protection of Archaeological Material In-Situ

To ensure the protection of archaeological material in situ by ensuring that only minimal impact on archaeological layers is allowed.

EH 36: Protection of Archaeological Material In-Situ

To require that sites of archaeological interest shall be subject to archaeological investigations and recording according to best practice, in advance of redevelopment where preservation in situ is not feasible.

EH 37: Development in the Vicinity of a Recorded Monument

To ensure that development in the vicinity of a Recorded Monument or Zone of Archaeological Potential does not seriously detract from the setting of the feature, and is sited and designed appropriately.

3.7.3 NATURAL HERITAGE

3.7.3.1 Existing Situation

Overview

The natural heritage of Kilmacow includes a wide range of natural features and processes that make an important and essential contribution to the environmental quality, landscape character, visual amenity, ecological diversity, passive recreational activities and public health of both villages and surrounding countryside. All of these aspects are considered in greater detail below.

Landscape Character

Kilmacow is situated in an area of expansive lowlands with a gentle topography to the southwest of the County. The area is characterised by open lands with regular (medium sized) field patterns and medium sized hedgerows act as field boundaries where few trees can be found. Rock outcroppings are a feature of South Kilkenny Lowlands that occur in rural Kilmacow. Open lands with medium sized field patterns allow good and extensive visibility to the surrounding environs.

The Landscape Appraisal of County Kilkenny as set out in the County Development Plan 2008-2014 states that this landscape character area is perceived as being special in landscape terms, particularly around Piltown, Mooncoin and Kilmacow. It perceives the area as being generally suitable for tourism development and other types of projects can be acceptable in the environs of Waterford City. The policies for lowland areas are set out in Section 8.3.3.2 of the County Development Plan.

The Landscape Appraisal acknowledges that the smooth terrain and generally gentle topography of lowlands characteristic of this area, can as a result have a disproportionate visual impact in areas, due to an inherent inability to be absorbed either visually or physically.

Overall, Kilmacow is rural in character and farming has had a central and defining effect on not only the landscape, but also on the identity of the community of Kilmacow. Land use surrounding and dividing both the upper and lower villages is mainly devoted to grass to facilitate dairying and beef production (with the exception of the Sports Complex lands).

Greenville Parkland Landscape

The rural lands located in the intervening area between the upper and lower villages and located to the east of the main road, comprise attractive green lands of high local amenity value and have historical significance for Kilmacow, as set out below. They play a large and important part of the cultural heritage and character of the villages as we know them today and is an area that is used

regularly by many locals as a place to walk and enjoy some green relief from the more built up areas of the village centres. It is considered a significant feature and asset for the local community that should be protected from inappropriate development where possible.

Greenville Park – The Historical Significance of the Landscape

The lands at Greenville historically formed a part of Greenville Estate, later known as Greenville Park. John and Catherine Greene and their six children returned to live in Kilcrouney Manor, known more recently as Kilcrounagh House, in 1690. When their eldest son married in 1710, as part of the young couple's marriage settlement they were given Kilcrouney Manor, which then consisted of '517 *plantation acres*⁷ as well as some additional lands in the surrounding area. They then renamed Kilcrouney as 'Greenville'. In 1740 the present house was built and a deer park was added. Greenville House was originally built by the Greene's as a Dower House for the family. Later, the Greenes went on to build a Linen and Paper Mill and five Flour and Corn Mills, for which Kilmacow later became famous. The most well-known of these is Greenville Mill, also known locally as Browns Mill, located on the Greenville Estate and which is still standing today and occupied by Greenville Electronics. Through the milling business, the Greene's provided lots of local employment and remained on good terms with the local people. Today the property is owned and maintained by a farmer and his family who purchased the property in 1922 and continue to farm the lands today. Greenville House is now occupied by a Stud Farm.

The River Blackwater

The River Blackwater is a small tributary of the River Suir, which it joins just upstream of Waterford. The lower reaches of the Blackwater is tidal to a point 0.45km downstream of Kilmacow Bridge, which leads to some flooding in the valley bottoms, especially on spring tides. The Blackwater is an important natural feature in Kilmacow and is a habitat of ecological interest. The Blackwater River has a good diversity of instream and riparian habitat. The river and the mature trees, woodland and grasslands on lands adjoining its course, provide a suitable habitat for many animal species including the otter, the Irish hare, bats, many species of breeding and non-breeding (feeding) birds, many species of insects including dragonflies, damselfly and butterflies, common frogs and possibly badgers. The River Blackwater is of high local ecological value for aquatic flora and fauna.

The Southern Regional Fisheries Board considers the Blackwater River to be a very important salmonid nursery and spawning water. O'Reilly (2004) reported that good stocks of trout up to 25cm are present in the river between Kilmacow and Mullinavat despite the fact that much of the river is overgrown and difficult to fish.⁸

Although the river has not been subjected to a modern arterial drainage scheme, it is nonetheless a modified watercourse that has been deepened and straightened in the past for the purposes of drainage and waterpower. The remains of at least nine

⁷ *The History of Kilmacow – A South Kilkenny Parish, by Kathleen Laffan, pg. 464*

⁸ *EIS – Main Report for Mooncoin Regional Water Supply Scheme, RPS, Section 4.3.2.4*

watermills are present on the river and two small hydroelectric schemes are operational at old watermill sites at Kilmacow.

According to the Environmental Impact Statement completed in December 2007 relation to the Mooncoin Regional Water Supply Scheme *‘there has been no significant change in the water quality between 2003 and 2007. The results are within the Environmental Quality Standards currently set for surface waters by the EPA.’*⁹

Field Patterns, Hedgerows and Stone Walls

Kilmacow's landscape retains the numerous ditches, hedgerows, old stone walls and tree stands that historically, and currently, continues to function primarily as field boundaries. These play an important part of the visual identity of Kilmacow's landscape and are visual elements that are an integral to the character and attractiveness of the area. These features should be retained where possible.

Topography

The lands in and around Kilmacow are generally flat, with slightly lower lying areas located adjoining the River Blackwater, to the west of the lower and upper villages. Lands rise to 450 feet to Moolum Rock, part of the low hills known as the Walsh Mountains to the northwest. Tory Hill, which is located beyond the boundary of Kilmacow Parish to the northeast, past Dangan, rises to 980 feet.

Surface Water Drainage

Kilmacow is located within the River Blackwater drainage catchment area which extends well outside the Plan area and serves the adjoining hinterlands as well as the village areas.

Groundwater Vulnerability

Kilmacow is located in an area of high groundwater vulnerability as recorded in the Geological Survey of Ireland and OSI. It is situated above the boundary of a major aquifer and a minor local one, furthering the need for proper sewerage treatment in this area to accommodate any future development needs and the natural growth of village.

In Upper Kilmacow situated on green field lands between Dangan and Narrabaun South, just north of Shamrock Grove is the core of a Regionally Important Aquifer of Karstified Bedrock dominated by diffuse flow where groundwater is extremely vulnerable to contamination (RKd/E). Also, in Lower Kilmacow just northeast of Kelly's Mill and north of Kilmacow Bridge, adjacent to the River Blackwater is a second Regionally Important Aquifer where groundwater is recorded as being

⁹ EIS – Main Report for Mooncoin Regional Water Supply Scheme, RPS, Section 4.4.2.14

extremely vulnerable to contamination (RKd/E). (Refer to location on Zoning and Phasing Map – Map 1).

It is important that the most sensitive cores of these regionally important aquifers remain free from forms of development that have potential to contaminate groundwater.

Geology

Parts of Kilmacow lie on part of the great Limestone Plain that intersects Ireland, being the lower Limestone series of the carboniferous system, and on the margin of the Old Red Sandstone formation which runs in a northerly direction from Waterford towards Thomastown and by which the lands are surround in three sides. The Limestone Rock, which outcrops the surface in several locations, is of a superior quality. The junction of the 'Limestone Group' and 'Red Sandstone Formation' in the locality ensures the existence of the principal elements of a fertile soil.

Soils

Soils in Kilmacow and the surrounding lowland area are recorded as Acid Brown Earths/Grey Brown Podzolics. This information is derived from the National Soils Survey of Ireland, 1979.

Ecological and Natural Designations

There are no recorded Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA) or designated areas of High Amenity or Scenic Views in Kilmacow or its adjoining hinterland area.

The nearest recorded sites to Kilmacow are Grannyferry pNHA (Site Code 00833) located approximately 2.5km to the northeast, close to Strangsmills and Lough Cullin pNHA (Site Code 00406) located approximately 3.5km to the east.

Local Amenities

There are some local amenities related to the natural heritage in Kilmacow including lands within and adjoining the Sports Complex lands, some areas along the route of the River Blackwater and the entrance walk towards Kilcronagh House and routes around the old Greenville Estate.

3.7.3.2 Natural Heritage Strategy

The Natural Heritage Strategy for Kilmacow is to ensure the protection and enhancement of the natural heritage of Kilmacow including its landscape character, open spaces, vegetation, drainage channels, vulnerable aquifers of regional importance, etc., The aim is to protect and conserve existing environmental designations, biodiversity within the plan area and on adjoining lands, landscape character areas and flora and fauna and to provide for the passive and active recreational needs of users. In addition to this, high quality landscaping and open spaces areas should be provided on developed lands to provide important visual relief from the built environment and resting places for users of the development.

3.7.3.3 Natural Heritage Policies

EH 38: The Banks of the River Blackwater

To protect the banks of the River Blackwater and develop a river walk along it, where possible, in conjunction with the relevant statutory bodies and voluntary groups. Proposals for developments which encroach on the river corridor must be accompanied by an assessment of the potential impact on natural habitats and the wider riparian environment.

EH 39: Lands at Greenville

To promote the protection and enhancement of the picturesque Greenville parkland landscape located between the two villages.

Rationale

This land is historically associated with the Greenville Estate, which has played a large part in the development of Kilmacow's villages and their relationship with the milling industry. The lands are now in agricultural use and have been well maintained by a local farm family since 1922. The old estate lands and the historic houses it holds are an attractive and scenic part of Kilmacow's landscape and a significant heritage feature which contribute to the unique character of the settlement. In this regard, it is important to promote the protection and enhancement of this landscape and its continued agricultural use and maintenance.

Development will not be permitted within this protected area unless it fulfils all or one of the criteria listed below:-

- The development is related to agriculture
- The development is related to the amenity and enjoyment of existing residences
- The development is related to outdoor recreation and conserves the character of the area
- The development proposes the reuse of existing buildings either for conversion to residential accommodation or for employment use

New single dwellings will only be allowed in limited cases as set out in Chapter 3.1 of this Local Area Plan. All proposals will be considered in terms of the potential impact on the protected landscape and proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

EH 40: Protection of Open Space

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 only be considered where one or more of the following requirements are demonstrably met:

- 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, recreational, amenity value and accessibility of such provision.
- Alternative compensatory provision is made which is both accessible to and of equal or greater quality and benefit to the community served by the existing open space.
- 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.
- The site is indicated for an alternative use in the development plan.

Rationale:

Playing fields, parks, gardens and informal open spaces are not only important as a recreational resource but also provide valuable green areas for wildlife corridors and habitats, act as buffers between conflicting land uses, enhance visual amenity especially in developed areas and contribute to the health and quality of life of citizens. Only where it is clearly established that open space and playing fields are no longer required for their original purposes, and the County Council has considered the need for other forms of recreational and amenity open space in the locality will it permit alternative development proposals. Many existing areas of open space are of considerable value and are therefore worthy of protection in their own right.

EH 41: Regionally Important Aquifer

To protect the regionally important aquifer located at Upper Kilmacow, on lands to the north of Shamrock Grove (zoned Recreation/Open Space). No development will be permitted within the area identified as the 'extremely vulnerable zone' on the regionally important aquifer in Upper Kilmacow unless it can be proven that there will be no impact on it.

EH 42: Hedgerows and Trees

Where possible, existing hedgerows and trees should be retained, in particular those that form the boundaries of development sites. Boundary hedgerows and

trees which have to be removed must be replaced with a replacement hedge or indigenous trees and shrubs appropriate to the site conditions should be used. Where possible, hedges and trees should not be removed during the nesting season (March 1st to August 31st).

3.8 Economic Development & Tourism

3.8.1 EXPLANATION OF FORMAT

This section of the Local Area Plan firstly examines the existing situation in Kilmacow in terms of economic development and tourism and then puts forward a strategy, or vision. The strategy is a long-term plan of action and is intended as a general framework to provide guidance for actions to be taken. The strategy provides the bridge between the policy and objectives for economic development and tourism in Kilmacow, which are then listed at the end of this section.

It is important to note that the Local Authority does not have a direct role or remit in economic development or job creation but has a role to play in promoting economic development by the provision of policies and infrastructure to enable such growth.

Policy Informants

- **Existing employment sources and tourist attractions or potential in Kilmacow.**
- **Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014** and its policies, objectives and proposals as appropriate to Kilmacow, in particular Chapter 5, 6 and 7 dealing with economic development, rural development and tourism in the County.
- **Kilkenny Tourism and Development Strategy, 2006-2011** Linking Old and New, City and County and Kilkenny County Council's - **Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development, 2002.**
- **Resources** that is available to Kilkenny County Council to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and services.
- **National and regional planning guidelines** which are applicable including the Retail Planning Guidelines by the DoEHLG.
- **Public Consultation** including the input received through the public workshops, written submissions, completed questionnaires and through speaking with other stakeholders.
- **Principles of proper planning and sustainable development.**

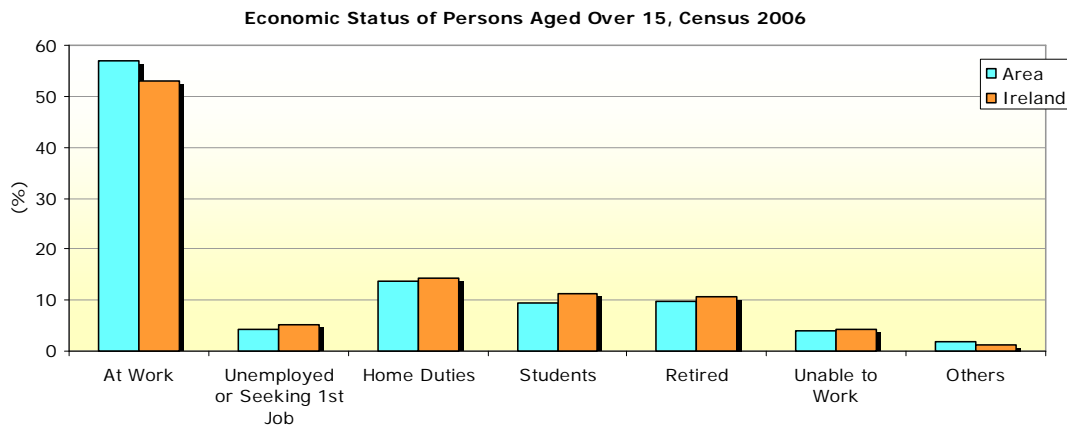
3.8.2 EXISTING SITUATION

Overview

Of the 2,569 total population recorded in Kilmacow Catchment Area (within a 5-minute drive time of the village centres) in 2006, 1,983 (77%) are aged over 15-years of age. Of those, 1,182 persons (59.61%) are recorded as being at work. The remaining 1,387 (40.39%) of those aged over 15 years of age are either students, retired, unable to work or carry out household duties. 586 of the total population (23%) in Kilmacow Catchment Area are under the age of 15.

Table 3.8.1 below illustrates the economic status of persons aged over 15 in Kilmacow Catchment Area as recorded in the 2006 census.

Table 3.8.1



Kilmacow’s economy is typical to that in south Kilkenny. Its main economic activities are Construction and Agriculture with a limited amount of Tourism. The majority of residents from the villages of Kilmacow who are employed but not involved in agriculture, commute to Waterford City to their place of work.

Kilmacow has a small services sector, including local shops, pubs, hairdressing, doctor’s surgery, post office etc. as well as an Electronic Company and Computer Company. The villages serve the basic needs of its local population and that of the surrounding hinterland area.

Employment

In addition to agriculture, the local shops, services and schools located in Kilmacow provide some employment opportunities for the local population. While there is some industry operating in and around the village, the majority of Kilmacow’s working population commute to Waterford or other larger urban centres located nearby to their place of work. Further information on Kilmacow’s main employment sources is set out below:-

Agriculture

Despite Kilmacow being steeped with an industrial past owing to its position on the Blackwater and the numerous Mills that previously operated form the area, Kilmacow's current prosperity owes much to a strong agricultural base. Up until recently, Kilmacow Creamery (later known as Avonmore Farmers and then Glanbia) which was established as far back as 1895 operated on lands in the Upper Village known as *'The Sand Pit'* or *'Commons'*, however it closed in June 2004. Despite this, agricultural employment still remains one of the largest employers in the area, however, in recent years, along with national trends there has been a national decline in the total number of farms along with a decline in employment in agriculture. Whilst noting its continuing decline in economic and employment significance, agriculture is still a major driver for sustaining, enhancing and maintaining the rural economy and culture of Kilmacow.

Industry & Enterprise

Another major employer in the local area is the Roadstone Quarry at Grannyknock which presently employs up to 100 people. It reportedly has in excess of 20 years in reserves of limestone available.

Kilmacow Stud Farm, located in Knockhouse continues to operate from Kilmacow also and is an important local enterprise.

Greenville House a once thriving old Mill in Lower Kilmacow, is currently occupied by Greenville Electronics Limited - a local business involved in the manufacture of electrical and mechanical components for various industries throughout Ireland.

Retail

There are a small number of local shops and services in Kilmacow including a supermarket, petrol station, post office, grocery store/newsagents, pubs, hair salon, health clinic, etc. that provide some employment opportunities for local residents. These facilities are important to serve local needs and that of the adjoining hinterland area (Kilmacow Parish) that depend on the village centres, particularly the Upper Village, for basic supplies and services.

Kilmacow is identified in the County Retail Strategy as a village centre and is positioned at Level 4 on a four-tiered retail hierarchy, along with neighbourhood centres. The retail strategy defines Level 4 centres as suitable for accommodating predominantly additional convenience retailing but not excluding tourism related comparison retailing.

The County Retail Strategy, in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines, provides a strategic policy framework for the spatial distribution of new retail development. The emphasis is however on strategic guidance on the location and scale of major retail development that should be focused within a town or district centre. However, the Strategy does not seek to inhibit small scale retail developments in smaller centres around the County such as Kilmacow, which

would enhance the sustainability, vitality and viability of the village centres. It is the policy of the County Development Plan 2008-2014 '*To retain, encourage and facilitate the retail role of corner shops and smaller villages around the County*'.¹⁰

When considering any retail proposals in Kilmacow, it will be the subject of the policies set out under Chapter 5 of the County Development Plan 2008-2014 which endorses the sequential approach in terms of considering the appropriate location for new retail development.

Tourism

Kilmacow and its hinterland have had only limited success in attracting tourists partly due to the lack of a coordinated tourist product and also the lack of bed spaces locally. While the facilities at the Sports Complex attract people from further afield, they usually visit to compete or take part in sports events but do not stay in Kilmacow or use any other amenities in the area. The local community and the Council recognise the potential for growth in tourism and related services and industries in Kilmacow.

Many of the policies and objectives of the Plan have as their ultimate aim the protection and enhancement of the natural and built environments, which are such an important feature of the village, and an important element in promoting tourism. The heritage of Kilmacow is paramount to development of the villages and shall be a major consideration in the decision making process.

The Council supports initiatives to improve the amenities in the town, including riverside walks, the installation and improvement of footpaths, public lighting, signage and cycle paths where possible, high quality housing that is in keeping with the character of the area and road improvements.

Community development initiatives seek to expand and improve the Sports Complex and to further improve and extend the existing riverside walks which will also add to the attractiveness and vibrancy of the village centres. The Council will facilitate proposed and future community initiatives where such proposals are deemed appropriate.

The village of Kilmacow and its surrounding countryside has many natural and historic attractions for recreation, leisure and tourist activities. These include the River Blackwater and associated walks, the old mills scattered throughout the area, the stone bridges and old graveyard in the Lower Village, lands at Greenville and the attractive historic streetscapes, the rural setting of the villages and the attractive vistas of the distant hills. Kilmacow's proximity to Waterford City also makes it an ideal location to draw in tourists. In addition, Kilmacow parish area includes the ruins of Grannagh Castle. A key aspect of Kilmacow in terms of promoting tourism is the wealth of historic buildings in and around the villages and Lower Kilmacow is often described as the one of the oldest settlements in the County.

¹⁰ *Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014, Section 5.9.3, Table 5.4*

It is the intention of the Council that disused properties in the village cores do not fall into disrepair and are maintained in a tidy condition so as not to distract from the visual amenity of the area.

The function of the Planning Authority will be to ensure a high quality of urban environment and protection and enhancement of the natural and built environments which are important heritage features of the village. In addition to this the Council will be active in developing and improving suitable walks in and around the River Blackwater and in linking, where appropriate the potential attractions in and around the villages.

It is an objective of the County Development Plan 2008-2014 to prepare a spatial plan for tourism within the county during the period of the Plan (Section 7.2.3). This Plan will take into account all settlements within the County including Kilmacow.

3.8.3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM STRATEGY

The economic development and tourism strategy for Kilmacow is as follows:-

- To facilitate enterprise and employment, and to co-operate with other agencies including the private sector in order to provide employment opportunities that are appropriate for the villages.
- To support and facilitate agricultural restructuring and diversification in order to enable farming to remain a viable and strong part of Kilmacow's economy.
- To strengthen Kilmacow as a local service centre through promoting new and expanded local shops, services and amenities that are in keeping with the existing character and scale of the area and are consistent with the County Retail Strategy.
- To support and facilitate private and community initiatives for enterprise, tourism and employment where such proposals are compliant with the policies of the Local Area Plan.
- To support the reuse of public buildings for suitable community and tourist facilities.
- To ensure a high quality urban environment and protection and enhancement of the natural and built environments which are important heritage features of the village, in order to promote tourism.

3.8.4 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM POLICY

Introduction

Any sustainable land-use policy must provide for a balance between the provision of housing and the provision of employment opportunities. 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. A high level of commuting already occurs in Kilmacow, given its close proximity to Waterford City, but if the villages are to grow in a more sustainable manner, land must be available to accommodate local employment opportunities in addition to agriculture. The creation of employment opportunities in Kilmacow should be matched to the growth of the villages.

The Council will ensure that sufficient land is zoned to allow for the provision of a suitable employment mix. The zoning of the village centre will include provision for a mix of employment sources, including small scale light industries or enterprise, which is considered compatible with surrounding uses. In considering economic development opportunities it is important to include tourism related enterprises. The Council will also encourage the creation of community led employment opportunities.

EDT 1: The Promotion of Enterprise

To promote enterprise creation opportunities and encourage job/employment creation initiatives in line with the growth of Kilmacow and on appropriately zoned and serviced land.

EDT 2: Community Led Job Creation

To facilitate, or assist in identifying agencies which can facilitate, community-led job creation schemes.

EDT 3: Growth in Retail

To encourage the upgrading and expansion of existing retail stores and services and the development of new shops and services in the village centres to serve local need, as appropriate and in accordance with Kilkenny County Retail Strategy.

EDT 4: Agricultural Diversification

To support and facilitate agricultural restructuring and diversification in order to enable farming to remain a viable part of the economy in Kilmacow and the County. The Council will support the development of agriculturally related industries, which are environmentally sustainable and considered a suitable use, subject to the protection of heritage and amenities.

Rationale:

Alternative income generating opportunities for off-farm activities are vital if rural populations are to benefit from economic growth. Farming has been diversifying into areas such as horticulture, forestry and agri-tourism in more recent years.

EDT 5: Promoting Tourism

To promote, encourage and facilitate the development of sustainable tourism in Kilmacow through the conservation, protection and enhancement of the built and natural heritage, in order to maximise upon the economic benefits arising from the industry.

Note: Section 3.7 of this Plan sets out more specific policy and objectives of the Council in relation to the conservation of Kilmacow's built and natural heritage.

EDT 6: Tourist Based Enterprises and Facilities

To co-operate with the appropriate agencies and local community groups in promoting tourism and securing the development of tourist based enterprises and facilities in Kilmacow.

EDT 7: Arts & Crafts

To support the development of arts and crafts based industry in Kilmacow through the promotion of appropriate workspace at appropriate locations to assist the crafts sector of Kilkenny County.

Rationale:

County Kilkenny has a strong Arts and Crafts base and has strong clusters of creative businesses located in and around the county including everything from graphic designers, artists, craftspeople and musicians. Approximately 10% of Kilkenny County Enterprise Board assistance has been directed towards the Craft Sector since 1993. As retailing is vitally important for many crafts people, the location of any proposed workspace is vital. Kilkenny County Council acknowledges the importance of the arts and crafts sectors to Kilkenny for tourism, employment and quality of life.

EDT 8: Employment Growth and Promotion

To facilitate enterprise and employment and to co-operate with other agencies including the private sector in order to provide employment opportunities in Kilmacow that are in keeping with the size and growth of the villages.

EDT 9: Retail 1

To liaise with community and business groups in order to promote the growth and provision of a quality retail sector in the villages to strengthen Kilmacow as a local service centre whilst respecting its existing character, with particular emphasis on the village centres.

EDT 10: Retail 2

To encourage and facilitate small scale retail developments in Kilmacow to enhance the sustainability, vitality and viability of the village centres and to serve local need.

EDT 11: Tourist Development Strategy

To investigate in the development of a Tourist Development Strategy for the villages and their hinterland in association with Kilkenny City and County

Tourism, SERTA, Bord Fáilte, Barrow Nore Suir Rural Development Group (BNSRD) and Leader, local community groups and business interests.

EDT 12: Equine Industry

To support the provision of facilities in Kilmacow which facilitate the expansion of the equine industry.

EDT 13: Agriculture

In relation to sustaining the agricultural base of Kilmacow, it is policy of the Council to:-

- i) Facilitate farm development to meet market and environmental requirements.
- ii) To encourage the development of environmentally sustainable agricultural practices, to ensure that development does not impinge on the visual amenity of the countryside and that watercourses, wildlife habitats and areas of ecological importance are protected from the threat of pollution.
- iii) Support the development of alternative income-generating opportunities from off-farm activities, particularly agri-tourism.
- iv) Facilitate farm diversification and encourage the sustainable development of alternative rural enterprises and the conversion of redundant farm buildings of vernacular importance for appropriate owner-run enterprises, as a way of supporting a viable rural community subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- v) Require a high standard of design and maintenance in all developments in rural areas
- vi) To require buildings and structures in visually sensitive areas:
 - to be sited as unobtrusively as possible;
 - to be clustered to form a distinct and unified feature in the landscape;
 - to utilise suitable materials and colours; and
 - to utilise native species in screen planting

4.0 KILMACOW DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK & DESIGN GUIDE

4.1 Introduction

The following guidelines are based on an analysis of the qualities and characteristics of Kilmacow which contribute to its distinctive identity, and which are appreciated and valued by local residents.

These design guidelines aim to preserve and enhance the important character features identified within this Local Area Plan, and seek to encourage proposals for new development based upon a considered understanding of the village's unique character. Their aim is to give landowners, developers and their architects a clear view as to how the design of new development within the settlement boundary should be considered. It will also be used by the Planning Authority when assessing planning applications for new development within the area.

The focus of the design guidelines is on residential development as this is the most predominant land use in Kilmacow and is likely to remain so, during the life time of this LAP. Section 4.2 of these guidelines is applicable to many forms of development including commercial, community uses and residential and should be considered in formulating the design and layout of any new building or extension in Kilmacow. The guidelines are adapted from the 'Best Practice Urban Design Manual (December 2008)' produced by the DoEHLG. Kilkenny County Councils publication 'Rural Design Guide' provides design guidance for rural houses and should be reference for information on the key design concepts. The Guidelines detail important factors that should be considered to conserve and maintain the existing village character and streetscape of Kilmacow.

4.2 Conserving and Maintaining the Existing Village Character – Design Guidance

In aiming to conserve and enhance the attractiveness and quality of Kilmacow's built and natural environment, the following factors need to be taken into account in new development proposals:-

4.2.1 UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD DESIGN

Good design can enhance the attractiveness and quality of a place, making it a place that people like to visit, work and live in. It therefore has many benefits for the entire community. Good design however, is not just about buildings, but also about the wider spaces around them. Urban design is concerned with the quality of the surroundings where people work, live and spend leisure time and affects how they feel about their area. It helps to create civic pride and promote cultural activity. Good design adds to the feeling of safety and security and health. It also

ensures convenient and easy access to facilities such as shops, leisure and employment.

When designing for a new building, consideration should always be given to the existing built fabric in the adjoining area, in particular Kilmacow's historic village cores, the natural landscape and topography of the site and its surrounding area. It is these features that outline the unique history and morphology of a place and which makes one village or town different from the next. The built fabric and natural landscape and how they relate to one another is therefore a reflection of the character of a place. If we permit this character to be eroded, either through ignoring it and building new structures insensitively, or alternatively, through dereliction, decay and/or demolition and replacement with inappropriate forms of development, then we erode the uniqueness of the place.

4.2.2 CONDUCTING A CHARACTER APPRAISAL OF THE SITE

Any new development should improve on the existing situation, and at the same time be sensitive to its context. Context is the character and setting of the area within which a projected development will sit. It is the natural as well as the human history; the forms of the settlement's buildings and spaces; its ecology and archaeology; its location, and the routes that pass through it. Context also includes people, the individuals living in or near an area and how communities are organised.

A thorough appreciation of the overall site context is the starting point for designing a distinct place. Those proposing a new development for example, new house/houses, shop, community building etc., will need to communicate an understanding of a site's context clearly and simply. Applicants will need to demonstrate that the design has undergone a thorough site analysis, context review and thus formulated an appropriate response.

In carrying out a contextual analysis of a site, the first step should be to undertake a character appraisal of the site and the local area. The key components to consider are as follows:-

- a. **Regional Identity** – what are the common characteristics of the region? This may relate to climate and physical geography, as well as socio-economic profile.
- b. **Linkages to Surroundings** – how the connections define Kilmacow's settlement characteristics should be considered for example, it is a linear settlement along a spine route that connects the village centres.
- c. **Local Character** – The elements of local distinctiveness should be established, both the form of the place and the way it is used. How these can be incorporated into a project should be carefully considered. For example, the distinctive local materials, building forms and vernacular features should be used as a source of inspiration.

- d. **Morphology** – What gives shape to the local morphology for example, historic routes, block patterns, building heights and massing, local vernacular and how this provides cues for appropriate design forms, should be considered.
- e. **Natural Features** – Particular ecological or geological characteristics that give a place its essential character should be examined.
- f. **Socio-Economic Profile** – The demographics of an area and its particular local traditions and events should influence the layout, design and form of the development.

4.2.3 THE VILLAGE STRUCTURE- DESIGN GUIDANCE

It is important in Kilmacow to preserve and respect the following features:-

- The setting and character of the historic village centres of Upper and Lower Kilmacow.
- The separation of the villages by a green wedge of attractive rural lands.
- The numerous features of architectural and archaeological significance, which form a part of Kilmacow's unique cultural heritage including the buildings in the village centres, the old mills, the old graveyards and the old stone bridges located at the entrance routes into Kilmacow.

The existing structure and shape of Kilmacow including the separation of the two villages should be respected as a product of the village's evolution and unique character. New development should be of a scale that does not overwhelm or engulf this settlement pattern.

New development should be of a low density (with the exception of the village core areas where the existing medium density should be respected) and a location that consolidates and strengthens the core of the villages, fanning out around the village cores, but keeping the intervening green area between the villages, free from inappropriate forms of development.

Walking routes in and around the villages, linking through lands at Greenville and the Sports Complex should be retained, and new routes established wherever possible to provide improved access to green open space, including access to and along the River Blackwater. Promotion of routes should be encouraged by means of improved signage and local tourism initiatives.

New development should consider opportunities to improve pedestrian access and links with other residential areas, the village centre and to key community

facilities within the villages including local schools, the church, parish hall and sports complex etc.

4.2.4 VILLAGE STREETScape – DESIGN GUIDANCE

The traditional buildings should be conserved and maintained as key assets of the villages. In recognition of the historical interest and character of the village centres., a Village Character Area has been designated in the heart of the both the Upper and Lower Villages Through the planning policies and objectives set out in Chapter 3.7 of the LAP, the VCA affords a level of protection from inappropriate or unsympathetic development.

Property owners should be encouraged to retain, maintain, and restore original vernacular and architectural details (such as ornate window frames and stone work, roof slates, rendered wall finishes etc) as important character features of the village.

Replacement windows and doors should be of a style and appearance that respects the building's age and character.

Traffic calming measures and enhanced pavements or the provision of footpaths where they are lacking, in order to improve pedestrian safety, should be a high priority for implementation throughout the village. This is especially important on routes from the upper village to the two schools, from both village centres to the Sports Complex lands and on the road linking both the upper and lower villages.

Where new development adjoins the Village Character Areas and abuts the road the development should provide a positive frontage to the road which extends and enhances the existing VCA streetscape in accordance with Policy POL VCD 3 and POL EH 18.

Improvements to the visual appearance of some buildings should be encouraged, perhaps with the provision of floral displays (such as window boxes, and wall-mounted baskets) to provide seasonal interest and enliven the village streetscapes. Painting the buildings in the village cores, particularly the Upper Village, should be promoted to enhance the existing village character and add visual interest to the streetscape.

Existing established planting, including mature trees should be preserved and managed to preserve them in good health. New and replacement planting in and around the villages, should be of species appropriate to the location and scale of the space. There is a preference for native species and where possible, avoidance of quick growing coniferous hedging, such as Leylandii. Open lawn areas around developments should be planted with trees where possible.

4.2.5 LANDSCAPE SETTING AND OPEN SPACE – DESIGN GUIDANCE

New development should respect the attractive, scenic village character and distinctive rural landscape setting of the village and avoid visual intrusion into key views of the village, especially on approach to the older Lower Village, on views towards the Upper Village from more elevated lands to the north and from the church.

New development should avoid direct or indirect damage to sites of known ecological interest surrounding the village, including the river, hedgerows and trees.

The River Blackwater is an asset to the village, and activities such as walking and fishing should be encouraged along its banks.

Similarly, new development should avoid direct or indirect damage to sites of archaeological interest or to any protected structures or features of cultural heritage in Kilmacow. These features mark the development and evolution of the settlement from early times and are a unique part of Kilmacow's local identity and cultural heritage that should be preserved for future generations to enjoy.

4.2.6 UTILISING NATURAL RESOURCES – DESIGN GUIDANCE

Maximum use of a site's natural resources should be pursued which places minimum demands on the environment. This involves taking a long term view of the possible environmental impact of a development and addressing how, in its design, to:-

- Make full use of rain water and drainage systems
- Utilise solar potential
- Use the potential of the ground for heating or cooling
- Harness wind energy
- Further reduce energy demands by, for instance, promoting biomass heating systems.

4.2.7 RE-USE & REPAIR THE EXISTING – DESIGN GUIDANCE FOR DEVELOPERS AND DESIGNERS

As a general principle, developers and their designers should focus on how to repair and re-use previously developed or damaged parts of the site, while retaining and respecting undamaged parts. This requires key considerations:-

- **Identify landscape assets to preserve** – Many of the most valuable spaces, places and landscape assets are precisely that because they have been left alone. Most ecological or landscape assets need respecting, rather than exploiting. The value of a landscape asset can easily be degraded. All hedgerows and trees where possible should be retained.
- **Re-use and repair brownfield land** – Many sites will be deficient in natural or semi-natural assets, such as topographical features, watercourses and planting. Furthermore, remediation may cause further impacts on the existing landscape. On such sites, the following should be considered:-
 - Introducing new landscape features and wildlife habitats,
 - Restoring damaged parts,
 - Integrating elements from the site's past life, such as routes, structures and buildings.
- **Strengthen the identity and structure of the landscape** –Landscape features that can be included in a scheme and which contribute towards the unique character of a site should be identified. Particularly on greenfield sites, every effort should be made to work with the 'grain' of the land and incorporate existing features of the landscape into a scheme. Reintroducing historic features provides opportunities to enrich outdoor space and can include natural and man-made elements, from watercourses and streams to ancient field boundaries and mature trees and hedgerows.

4.2.8 MAKING CONNECTIONS – DESIGN GUIDANCE

Successful development depends on good access and connections between it and the surrounding area – even for the smallest of developments. In Kilmacow safe connections for pedestrians and cyclists from residential development to and between the village centres, to the local schools and sports complex are the most important linkages to consider.

Understanding the existing movement network is an important element in designing a successful and sustainable development. This involves considering the following:-

- How routes from the new site will knit in with the existing infrastructure;

- The provision made for all forms of movement, with positive discrimination in favour of walking, cycling and public transport, where this is available
- How the new development can benefit the area as a whole, for instance by the introduction of a new footpath or the extension of an existing one to the village centre
- How movement will be provided for at all stages in the development

Walking and cycling are inherently sustainable modes of transport and the design, layout and implementation of a new residential development should encourage both. Development proposals should prioritise the pedestrian and cyclist in the layout and design of the public realm.

4.2.9 APPRECIATING LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS

Key to the success of a settlement is features which are particular to that place and which encourage people to call a place home. Successful communities have a distinct and special character that makes them recognisable and unique. All new development should aim to improve upon and enhance the distinct character of Kilmacow.

New developments which create or enhance a strong sense of place tend to evolve through a rigorous design process which includes learning from and incorporating local knowledge, experience and culture. However, while the design of new development should draw inspiration from Kilmacow's indigenous character the objective should be to move forward and not necessarily to mimic, but rather reflect and complement, the design of the past which will in itself, strengthen local identity.

Many sites contain features such as existing buildings, natural or pre-existing landscaped features such as boundaries, topography or movement routes that can be utilised or incorporated into a new development to lend a scheme identity. The removal of such features with otherwise serve to erode a site's cultural and historical context and may result in significant opposition to the development from local community groups. The challenge of integrating features into a new development will often result in a high quality creative response to layout design.



Above are some examples of the buildings and streetscapes in Kilmacow, which contribute towards its unique character.

4.2.10 DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

Design proposals for new development should respect the local characteristics of the site and its wider context, by working with, rather than against, key features including the existing contours of the slope and established boundaries. Development should be adapted to the site, and not the site adapted to the development.

New developments should be phased in pace with improvements to local infrastructure, village facilities and services, such as the sewage system, road improvements, footpaths, public lighting and recreational facilities. The policies and objectives set out in Chapter 3.6 – Infrastructure & Services should be referred to for further direction on this issue.

The established patterns of development within the village, including the village separation, the winding River Blackwater, contours/levels and road layout, should be used to guide the design of new development proposals. Careful consideration should be given to complementing the pattern and density of adjacent plot arrangements, building lines, setback levels, plot enclosure, building scale and massing, proportion of architectural features and the height/pitch/ridge of roofs.

Within the historic core of the villages, development should aim to complement visually and physically the established traditional character of the buildings. Materials used in any proposed new development should be sympathetic to the

prevailing character of the village, and be designed to reflect and respect nearby colours, textures, shapes, styles and proportions. Provision should be made within new development proposals to use any existing, but redundant buildings that contribute significantly to the village's character. These buildings and features should be sympathetically restored back into active use.

Monotonous repetition of standard housing types and design should be avoided. Variation in new building design should be encouraged within defined limits and based upon a common design 'theme' appropriate to the location. All new development should complement the character of Kilmacow and contribute towards the village's distinctive sense of place.

4.2.11 EXTENSIONS

Proposed extensions to buildings and boundary features such as front, rear and sidewalls, should use matching materials in a style to complement the original building and adjacent boundaries. The total energy used in development should be minimised as far as possible to encourage sustainable development practices in line with government initiatives and current legislation. This should encourage the use of locally sourced, 'environmentally friendly' and energy efficient materials for construction as well as minimise running costs.

4.2.12 ADAPTABLE DESIGN

For environmental and economic reasons, we need to ensure that the buildings we construct today will continue to fulfil their function for many years in the future. New buildings, whether residential or commercial, should be designed be adaptable and easily able to change to meet the needs of changing users. Buildings should also be energy efficient and equipped for challenges anticipated from a changing climate. The structures we build today need to continue to be useable in a climatically uncertain future and this involves considering how they are heated and cooled.

In new homes, insulation is an important factor to plan for at the design stage. Also, homes should be capable of being extended in the future by residents without ruining the character of the type, layout and outdoor space.

4.3 Residential Design Guidelines

While strategic considerations such as location, connections and sustainability will determine much of the success of a new dwelling or residential scheme, the finished quality of the built form can have a significant effect on a development's character, sense of place and legibility. Quality in the detail of the architecture and landscape design will help a new development to make a positive contribution to its surroundings and Kilmacow's local identity.

The housing design standards set out below seek to facilitate the development of high amenity sustainable residential areas within Kilmacow and, therefore, where possible, should be incorporated into new developments at the time of design.

4.3.1 RESIDENTIAL LAYOUT

In planning a successful layout, the following factors should be taken into consideration at the outset:-

Existing LAP Policy: The policy of the Council in relation to village growth and housing, as set out in Section 3.2.3 of this LAP, must be adhered to considering the design and layout of new residential development in Kilmacow.

Sunlight: Development should be designed to allow the living or working space full exposure to sunlight, avoiding overshadowing.

Shelter: Dwellings should be located in the landscape to exploit the natural shelter of hills, ridges, topography and vegetation.

Boundaries: Local types of stone and/or hedgerows and tree stands in boundaries should be incorporated into the layout of the development. Existing trees and hedges should be used to 'fit' a house next to another. Where possible all existing hedgerows and trees should be retained.

Road Frontage

Where new development adjoins the VCAs in both the Upper and Lower Villages and abuts the road the development should provide a positive frontage to the road which extends and enhances the existing VCA streetscape.

Planting for shelter: Local plant varieties should be used to provide appropriate shelterbeds to help:-

- shelter buildings from cold winds and driving rain,
- to reduce the fuel consumption of buildings,
- improve and soften the appearance of an area,
- encourage wildlife,
- add variety and interest to a development.

Contours / Topography: In order to ensure a layout that is sympathetic to landform, buildings should be parallel with the contours so that houses fit into the landform naturally. Excessive building up or digging into the landscape is not acceptable.

Privacy & Amenity: Privacy and amenity are basic human needs and should be considered in the layout and design of residential development. Good space standards, sound insulation and access to private open space are all important aspects that need to be provided in new dwellings in order to ensure adequate privacy and amenity standards.

The existing landscape should be used to secure privacy. Additional planting may be necessary to create private space where natural features do not exist.

All homes should have access to an area of outside space where the residents can sit comfortably without being directly overlooked. The space should also be orientated to get direct sunshine for at least 1 hour during the summer months.

Rather than establish a minimum window-to-window standard, the DoEHLG Urban Design Manual recommends that the aim should be to assess the impact on the privacy of the layout and home design based on:

- The site's location and residents expected levels of privacy.
- The size of the windows – both those overlooking and overlooked.
- Changes in level between overlooking windows.
- Ability to screen/partially obscure views through design or judicious use of planting.

Entrances: Entrances should promote safety by being obvious and should be designed in a manner that utilises the assets of the area, such as natural planting and any indigenous stone. Traditional features are favoured rather than more modern high iron gates. Where there is an existing boundary feature, every effort should be made to retain it.

Bin Storage: Each residential unit must have adequate storage for three wheeled bins. Residential units with no rear access should provide adequate storage for the bins to the front of the development, in contained units.

Recycling: Recycling is important and a central facility should be located on site along with refuse bins. Space for composters should also be provided in the case of new residential development.

Public Lighting: Careful consideration to the location of the public and private lighting within a new residential development should be considered. Public lighting should provide a sense of security and increase safety for pedestrian, cyclists and car users.

Car Parking: Car parking should be planned in the layout of any development with facilities for both residents and visitors. Where car parking for dwellings is provided in on street form as opposed to being provided in front gardens; a landscaped strip of private garden space with a minimum depth of 1.5metres should be provided to the front of each house. Additional guidance on car-parking in general is provided under Section 3.4 of this Local Area Plan and Section 10.17 of Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014.

Gardens: Large areas of open lawn should be avoided and tree and shrub planting considered instead, or as part of a landscaped lawn area. The garden should be considered as a productive element of rural living e.g. for growing vegetables. Linking a dwelling with its surrounding landscape is an important

aspect in the layout of a new development in Kilmacow. An effective rural garden layout and design will ensure that the dwellings and natural features complement each other. Suburban layouts should be avoided e.g. hard kerbing.

Outbuildings & Garages: Outbuildings such as garages, gas and oil tanks, storage sheds should be designed to complement houses and should be part of an overall scheme rather than an afterthought. They should be used to create a sense of enclosure and to help define spaces. The position of these structures should be considered at the outset of the design process.

Roads: New roads in residential areas should design in safety and play for children by incorporating traffic calming measures into the design and layout. Long straight stretches of road should be avoided at all times as this encourages speeding. Adequate road drainage must be considered as part of any residential development.

Public Open Space: This should be integrated into the overall layout of residential development and should take advantage of the existing landscape and allow for more passive use of open spaces. The recreational needs of new residents should also be taken into consideration and playgrounds for children and sheltered and landscaped areas for more relaxed recreational pursuits, incorporated in the layout wherever possible.

Open spaces in new development should be suitably proportioned and narrow tracts, which are difficult to manage, will not be acceptable. Smaller areas of useable open space and play grounds should be carefully sited within residential areas to be accessible and overlooked by dwellings so that the amenity is owned by the residents and is safe to use. Natural surveillance might be from windows of nearby houses or from people using the space or even drivers of passing vehicles. The feeling of safety generated by high levels of natural surveillance in public areas will encourage further use and participation in public life – which will itself reinforce high levels of surveillance.

Policies POL VGH 14, POL VGH 15, POL VGH 16 which are contained in Section 3.2 of this LAP, set out the applicable standards in relation to public open space provision.

Drainage & Services: New residential development should ensure high quality water treatment at all times. Quality of design and maintenance of effluent treatment systems must be in accordance with Kilkenny County Council guidance. New development will be expected to connect to the new Kilmacow Sewerage Scheme once operational.

Site Coverage: The maximum normal site coverage of any residential housing site shall be 65%.