

## **Chapter 4 County Settlement Strategy**

### **4.0 Introduction**

This Chapter sets out the overall Settlement Strategy for County Waterford. The Settlement Strategy forms the basic framework for the development of the County by identifying an integrated network of service centres where population growth should take place. The objective is to encourage the development of the County by providing critical masses in the towns and villages to support economic development and employment opportunities, to sustain local services and to strengthen local communities in these centres and their hinterlands. The provision of infrastructural services, the need to maintain and enhance essential community and social services and to ensure that future development is carried out in a sustainable, coordinated manner has been a key factor influencing the Settlement Strategy.

### **4.1 Development Within the Last Plan Period**

The last Plan period saw substantial residential development and pressure for houses in both the towns and villages and the rural countryside. House completions in the County totalled 7,700 over the period of the Plan. The net number of new households was 4,360<sup>1</sup> over the same period. According to figures from the ESB on new house connections to the electricity supply, 1,621 individual houses were constructed in County Waterford from 2005 to June 2008 (Annual Housing Statistics Bulletin).

This unprecedented growth has placed pressure on the County's physical infrastructure (roads, water supply and wastewater treatment) and social infrastructure. In zoned areas, the level of housing permitted has absorbed most of the wastewater treatment plants' capacity. Additional water connections have resulted in limited or no spare capacity, with a need to protect existing users' pressure and supply. Development on the edge of towns and villages has given rise to a need for investment in extensions of the sewerage network, footpaths and public lighting. Increases in population have led to demands for educational and social facilities, community facilities and amenities such as playgrounds, parks, etc.

In rural areas, the number of one-off houses constructed has resulted in an increase in the number of entrances opened onto public roads with a resultant increase in traffic movements and journeys and a decrease in road safety and carrying capacity. There has been an increase in the number of septic

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<sup>1</sup> Estimate based on data from the 2002 and 2006 Census of Population.

tanks and individual wastewater treatment plants discharging to ground. The environmental capacity of an area is limited in terms of the number of septic tanks/wastewater treatment plants and their associated discharge of effluent that it can accommodate without giving rise to a risk of ground water pollution, and this threshold is being reached in some areas. This is a major environmental factor given that 21% of water supplies in County Waterford come from ground water (The national figure is 9%). The capacity of the landscape is also limited in the amount and type of development that it can accommodate and retain its rural character.

However, there have been positive aspects of this growth too. Housing has become more affordable. Prospective house buyers had opportunities to live in towns or smaller rural villages. The construction of housing in rural areas for members of the local community has sustained local communities.

More recently, changes in the property market have seen a decline in demand for housing and an associated fall-off in the number of house completions. Whilst this can be viewed as an opportunity to allow infrastructural, social and community facilities to keep pace with the residential growth, there is also a need to ensure that residential development which commenced in this period is completed to a satisfactory standard.

## **4.2 Population**

The population of County Waterford grew from 56,952 in 2002 to 62,213 persons in 2006, representing a 9.2% increase in population. The population of Waterford City and Environs grew by 2,477 people within this period. However, while this rate of growth was less than the average for larger urban areas across the region, significant population increases were recorded in towns and rural areas surrounding Waterford City.

Dungarvan and Tramore experienced population increases during the last census period, up 8.2% and 13.3% respectively. Notably, the environs of these settlements along with the environs of Clonmel and Waterford City have experienced the most significant population increases within the County. In general, there has been strong growth in the populations of coastal Electoral Divisions (EDs) within easy commuting distance of the larger urban centres.

Of the larger urban centres in the County, Dunmore East experienced a decline in population during the last census period. This represents a reduction from the 22.4% growth rate experienced in the

1996 – 2002 inter-censal period and can be attributed to the proliferation of holiday homes in the area that were vacant on the date of the 2006 Census.

Parts of the County experiencing significant new development continued to increase their population (e.g. Portlaw, Lismore, Tallow and Ballinroad) whilst several of the smaller settlements (e.g. Cappoquin, Ardmore, Lemybrien and Aglish) experienced population decline.

County Waterford is rural in character with almost 55% of the population living in the rural area. Figure 4.1 shows the urban /rural profile of the County as per the 2006 Census (CSO). The rural EDs in the north west of the County experienced marginal population decrease although in most cases, the rural EDs recorded an increase in population.

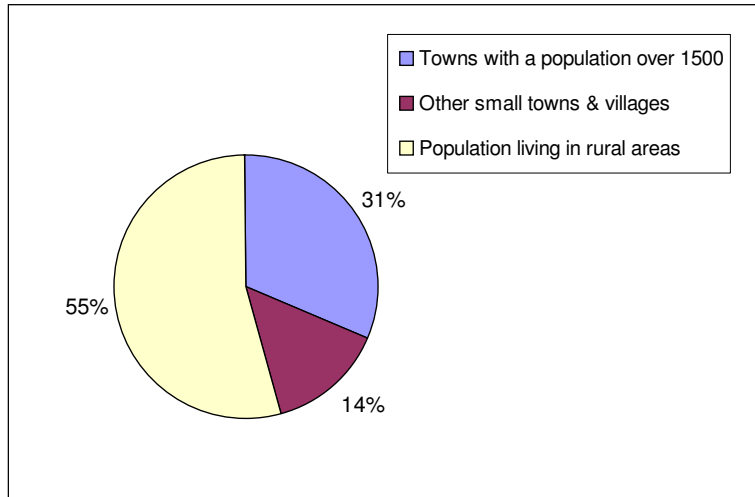


Figure 4.1 Urban /Rural Profile for County Waterford, 2006

The Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 have set out population and housing growth targets for the future population of the Region. Working with population targets for the Region set by the DoEHLG, the Guidelines identify population targets for the regionally significant urban centres as well as breaking down the regional targets into county growth target figures.

Population target	2006	2010	2016	2022
Waterford County	62,213	68,932	73,223	79,495
Waterford City & Environs	49,213	52,500	56,500	62,500
Dungarvan	8,362	10,000	11,600	13,400

Table 4.1 Population Targets as per the Regional Planning Guidelines 2009

By simple interpolation of the growth rate in the period 2016 to 2022, population targets for 2017 for the County, Waterford City Environs and Dungarvan are projected to be 74,233; 57,458 and 11,882 respectively.

### 4.3 County Settlement Strategy

The Settlement Strategy for the County has always been to encourage the growth of the County's towns and villages, whilst catering for genuine housing needs in the rural countryside. The Waterford County Development Plan 1999 saw the identification of 34 no. settlements. This was expanded to 51 settlements in the County Development Plan 2005 to focus on developing the critical mass of the towns and villages, to optimise the investment in infrastructure and to alleviate the pressure for rural housing.



Bunmahon Streetscape

The Development Plan Guidelines issued by the DoEHLG in 2007 require Local Authorities to match the area of land zoned to the projected housing land requirement, thereby avoiding the overprovision of zoned lands and the resultant pressure on limited infrastructure, potential leap-frogging of undeveloped lands and pressure for development in unserved areas. Equally the under provision of land is to be avoided to discourage artificially inflating the property market.

In addition, to setting population targets for the County, the Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 have also identified the principal settlement issues for its sub-regional areas. County Waterford falls between three sub-regional areas, but the key issues can be summarised as follows:

- Development of critical mass of Gateway is a priority;
- Pivotal role of Dungarvan in the Atlantic Corridors Strategy;
- Larger towns such as Tramore to be strengthened;
- Smaller towns and villages to be strengthened;
- Urban generated rural housing to be carefully monitored and controlled;
- Sustainable Rural Development; and
- Sensitive coastal and upland landscapes to be protected.

Having regard to the above, the County Settlement Strategy as set out in this Plan is to acknowledge the role of Dungarvan as the County Town, to continue to support the development of Tramore and to strengthen the towns and larger villages where there are infrastructural capacity and social and

community facilities. Sustainable rural development and the growth of local communities will be supported through a Rural Settlement Strategy that focuses on meeting the housing needs of the community whilst protecting sensitive landscape areas.

#### 4.4 Settlement Hierarchy

The fundamental component of the County's Settlement Strategy will be to continue to encourage population growth in settlements throughout the county. This strategy will help deliver a range of house types, facilities, infrastructure, amenities and an efficient transport system. This in turn will facilitate linkages between settlements, support their expansion and consolidation, and in so doing, will help create high quality living environments. The strategy will provide for the creation of a settlement hierarchy reflecting the development role of each settlement type, and assist the council in formulating realistic objectives, that can be delivered through the policies of the Plan. The Development Objectives for each of the settlements is set out in the County Development Plan Map Booklet.

In total, 39 no. settlements are identified in this Development Plan. These settlements which have been or can be serviced are considered best positioned geographically and from a social, economic and community perspective, to ensure balanced county development.

<b>Table 4.2 County Settlement Hierarchy</b>	
<b>Primary (County) Service Centre</b>	Dungarvan
<b>Secondary Service Centre</b>	Tramore
<b>District Service Centres (14)</b>	Ardmore, Ballyduff Lower (East), Cappoquin, Cheekpoint, Crooke, Dunhill, Dunmore East, Kill, Kilmacthomas, Kilmeaden, Lismore, Portlaw, Stradbally, Tallow
<b>Local Service Centres (9)</b>	Aglish, Ballyduff Upper (West), Ballymacarbry, Bunmahon/Knockmahon, Clashmore, Clonmel Environs, Clonea-Power, Maoil na Choirne, Villierstown
<b>Settlement Nodes (14)</b>	Annestown, Baile na nGall, Ballinroad, Ballylaneen, Bawnfune, Fenor, Heilbhic, Knockanore, Lemybrien, Passage East, Piltown, Rathgormuck, Sean Phobal, Touraneena

#### 4.4.1 Primary (County) Service Centre

Dungarvan is designated a County Town in the National Spatial Strategy. The Regional Planning Guidelines recognise the pivotal role that the Town can play in the development of the Atlantic Gateway corridor between Cork and Waterford.

In terms of functions, Dungarvan has other service roles including education, tourism, financial and retail for a large hinterland that includes An Rinn Gaeltacht. From an employment perspective, Dungarvan continues to be an important contributor to the County's economy, especially with respect to the industrial sector, the principal products being pharmaceuticals and software.

The Planning framework for Dungarvan is set out in the Dungarvan Town Development Plan 2006.

#### 4.4.2 Secondary Service Centre

Tramore is the Secondary Service Centre and functions as a support to the development of the Gateway of Waterford City.

Located within the catchment of the Gateway, Tramore possesses a good base for population and services that could attract investment and employment activities. It has the critical mass to support its own services and industry. It is recognised that Tramore must strengthen and widen its economic base so as to retain its population, and promote a balanced spatial structure to ensure its continued vitality and development. However, it is also acknowledged that the continued expansion of the town must be regulated to ensure that community, social and retail developments keep pace with recent rapid phases of mainly residential development. Land use planning in Tramore is guided by the Tramore Local Area Plan 2007-2013.



Tramore Promenade

#### 4.4.3 District Service Centres

*(Ardmore, Ballyduff Lower (East), Cappoquin, Cheekpoint, Crooke, Dunhill, Dunmore East, Kill, Kilmacthomas, Kilmeaden, Lismore, Portlaw, Stradbally, Tallow)*

The District Service Centres are so designated, because they are important resources for their hinterlands, providing community and infrastructural facilities and services and the population base to maintain them. A key factor in the designation of the District Service Centres has been the availability, or anticipated provision within the Plan period, of wastewater treatment facilities, thereby allowing for the potential growth of these settlements. The Waterford Grouped Towns & Villages Sewerage Scheme will provide wastewater treatment plants in Ardmore, Ballyduff/ Kilmeaden, Cappoquin, Dunmore East, Kilmacthomas, Stradbally and Tallow.



Stradbally Streetscape

Dunmore East has been identified in the Regional Planning Guidelines as a town where more measured growth is desirable in a manner that allows community, social and retail development to catch up with recent residential development. The settlements of Lismore and Portlaw are guided by the Lismore Local Area Plan 2007-2013 and the Portlaw Local Area Plan 2007-2013 respectively.

#### 4.4.4 Local Service Centres

*(Aglish, Ballyduff Upper (West), Ballymacarbry, Bunmahon/Knockmahon, Clashmore, Clonea-Power, Maoil na Choirne, Villierstown)*

The Local Service Centres provide a lower range of services and facilities for the population of the immediately surrounding hinterlands. They act as the focus of social interaction in the area, and provide linkages to the smaller settlement nodes in their districts. A limiting factor in the growth of these settlements will be the availability of infrastructure, specifically wastewater treatment facilities.

#### 4.4.5 Settlement Nodes

*(Annestown, Baile na nGall, Ballinroad, Ballylaneen, Bawnfune, Fenor, Heilbhic, Knockanore, Lemybrien, Passage East, Piltown, Rathgormuck, Sean Phobal)*

Settlement Nodes are the lowest tier of the settlement hierarchy. These areas have a limited service base and are to a large extent founded on the local primary school catchment area. These nodes provide opportunities for future expansion/ provision of services such as a local shop, pub, petrol outlet etc and have the potential to attract a population seeking to live in a rural environment. Development growth should be low density, relative to the scale of the settlement, located as near as is practicable to the core area.

#### 4.5 Sustainable Community Settlement

The County Settlement Strategy is aimed at ensuring that towns and villages offer attractive and affordable housing options to meet the housing needs of urban and rural communities. Sensitively scaled and phased residential developments, with an appropriate housing-mix, will be encouraged in settlements to create sustainable communities and to help deliver the critical mass of population needed for the provision and support of educational, community and social services, improved amenities and sustainable employment opportunities.

This approach to delivering the Settlement Strategy will promote compact urban forms, make optimum use of infrastructural and community facilities, and reduce unnecessary and unsustainable travel demand patterns. It will also assist in mitigating excessive levels of pressure for urban generated development in rural areas, especially those closest to the environs of cities and town, and thereby enhance the availability and affordability of sites and housing in rural areas to meet the housing needs of the established rural community.



Clashmore Village



Type of Settlement	Population			Households			New build 2006 - 2017	Undeveloped land available 2009 & density of development in hectares				Housing capacity of lands to 2017 <sup>2</sup>	Surplus of housing unit availability
	2006	2017	Increase	2006	2017	Increase		Higher Density Urban (30)	R1 (20)	R2 (10)	R3 (post 2017)		
Primary Centre	8,362	11,882	3,520	2,893	4,385	1,491	2,610	142.0	28.24	-	19.41	4,825	2,215
Secondary Centre	9,634	10,924	1,290	3,334	4,031	697	1,221	199.7	25.7	59.8	-	5,992	4,771
District Centre	8,614	12,940	4,326	2,981	4,775	1,794	3,140	-	264.1	30.20	107.3	5,584	2,444
Other centre	4,803	7,687	2,884	1,662	2,836	1,174	2,055	-	77.79	77.8	37.16	2,334	279
Remainder	30,800	30,800	0	10,657	11,365	708	1,239	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>62,213</b>	<b>74,233</b>	<b>12,020</b>	<b>21,527</b>	<b>27,392</b>	<b>5,865</b>	<b>10,264</b>	<b>341.7</b>	<b>395.8</b>	<b>167.8</b>	<b>163.9</b>	<b>18,735</b>	<b>9,709</b>

**Table 4.3 Allocation of Population and Household Growth to Settlement Hierarchy. Includes, Dungarvan, Tramore, Portlaw and Lismore. (Refer to Appendix A2)**

#### 4.6 Infrastructural Constraints on Settlement Growth

Wastewater treatment and disposal is one of the major issues facing the development of zoned settlements in this Plan period. A significant number of settlements in County Waterford have wastewater treatment systems that are operating at capacity or near capacity and require upgrading to accommodate any additional loading. Other settlements do not have any existing municipal wastewater treatment systems (refer to Appendix A4). Ever increasing environmental controls and the need to protect groundwater sources, means that the proliferation of septic tanks and individual wastewater units and interim treatment systems are no longer sustainable options for wastewater treatment and disposal in our towns and villages. Therefore the further expansion of some settlements will be dependant infrastructural upgrades over the life time of the Plan.

The Council will give priority to development in settlements with adequate wastewater and water supply infrastructure, and those settlements targeted for infrastructural investment under the Waterford Grouped Towns and Villages Sewerage Scheme, and which have an adequate water supply. Further details on infrastructural provision is set out in Chapter 7, Infrastructure with servicing options for the provision of wastewater treatment outlined in Section 10.6 of the Development Standards.

#### **Policy SS1**

To ensure that development takes place in an orderly, rational and sustainable manner avoiding environmental degradation and in accordance with the recommendations of the DoEHLG publications; the *Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines* (2005), the *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2009) and any subsequent Guidelines issued by the DoEHLG.

<sup>2</sup> As R3 is not available until after 2017, it is excluded from Housing capacity of land to 2017.

**Policy SS2**

To give priority to the development in settlements with adequate wastewater and water supply infrastructure and those settlements targeted for infrastructural investment within the plan period.

**4.7 Rural Settlement Strategy**

The success of the County Settlement Strategy will be dependent on the ability of the Council to channel development into the identified zoned settlements. Whilst the measures outlined in Section



Waterford's Rural Landscape

4.3 will promote this, a key factor in the success of the County Development Strategy will be the degree to which development outside of the designated nodes can be managed. To do this, it is necessary to establish a Rural Settlement Strategy, which will set out how it is envisaged that development will take place outside of the zoned areas.

The Rural Settlement Strategy, as set out in the Plan is based on the *National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020*, the *Regional Planning Guidelines 2009* and the *Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities* issued by the DoEHLG in 2005.

**4.8 Rural Housing Policy**

The rural housing policy must find a balance between reinforcing and strengthening rural communities whilst protecting the rural environment from over-development.

The Council is committed to the maintenance and growth of strong rural communities living in rural villages and in the open countryside and to facilitating and supporting this through its rural investment programmes, policies and objectives. In meeting this commitment, the Council recognises the need to permit the development of rural housing in suitable locations, on a scale and pace, which will not diminish County Waterford's high quality rural environment. The Council's aims in this regard are to:

- Minimise the amount of sporadic speculative development which would be more appropriately located on serviceable lands in towns and villages; and
- Meet the genuine housing need of rural people and their families who have strong ties to a particular locality and to those who need to reside in rural areas for employment, economic and social reasons subject to the applicant demonstrating a Genuine Local Housing Need.

#### **4.9 Identification of Rural Area Types**

In line with the recommendations of the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines, in the last Plan, the Council identified three broad rural area types within the County:

- Areas Under Urban Pressure;
- Stronger Rural Areas; and
- Structurally Weak Rural Areas.

Whilst the demand for development in the Areas Under Urban Pressure and the Stronger Rural Areas remained constant, there was a marked increase in the demand for development in the Structurally Weak Rural Areas, particularly adjacent to the urban centres of Clonmel, Lismore and Cappoquin and to the north of the River Blackwater. Having regard to this pressure for development, and the level of development which has taken place in these areas, the Stronger Rural Area and the Area under Urban Pressure has been extended at these locations to ensure the sustainable development of these areas and that the development which is taking place is to meet the needs of the existing community. The Rural Area Types Map is shown in Appendix A3.

##### **4.9.1 Areas Under Urban Pressure**

Areas classified as Under Urban Pressure are located close to the immediate environs or commuting catchment of cities and towns or to major transport corridors with ready access to urban areas. They are characterised by rapidly rising populations or are under considerable pressure for housing development.

The key development plan objectives in this area are, on the one hand, to facilitate the housing requirements of the local rural community, subject to satisfying site suitability and technical considerations, whilst on the other hand directing urban generated development to areas zoned for housing in the adjoining service centres and settlement nodes.



Example of an Area Under Urban Pressure

**Policy SS3**

To cater for the housing requirements of members of the local rural community who have a genuine local housing need in areas under urban pressure as set out in the Criteria in Section 4.10.

**Policy SS4**

To direct urban generated housing development in Area Under Urban Pressure into the adjoining zoned settlements.

**4.9.2 Stronger Rural Areas**

In these areas, population levels are generally stable, both within well-developed town and village structures, and in the wider rural hinterlands around them. This stability is supported by a traditionally strong, agricultural economic base and the level of individual housing pressure in these areas, tends to not to be as strong as in the areas adjoining the larger urban centres. The criteria for facilitating development in these areas will be to accommodate individual houses in rural areas and actively stimulate the development of houses in settlements so as to provide for balanced urban and rural choices in the new housing market.

The overall policy approach to facilitating the above is the identification of the following:

- Areas of pressure (including pockets of significant levels of individual housing) where applicants will be required to satisfy the requirements for Genuine Local Housing Need and the relevant criteria as set out below in Section 4.10; and
- Areas at risk of population decline where proposals for permanent residential development will be assessed as set out above in Structurally Weak Rural Areas.

The capacity of the landscape to accommodate development as set out in the Scenic Landscape Evaluation (Appendix A9) and Chapter 8 (Environment & Heritage) will also be a key factor.

**Policy SS5**

To cater for the housing requirements of members of the local rural community who have a genuine local housing need in Stronger Rural Areas as set out in the Criteria in Section 4.10.

**Policy SS6**

To direct urban generated housing development in Stronger Rural Areas into the adjoining zoned settlements.

**Policy SS7**

Where appropriate, to facilitate and redirect development into areas identified as being at risk of population decline in ways that do not adversely affect the landscape, water quality or wildlife habitats.

**4.9.3 Structurally Weak Rural Areas**

These areas exhibit characteristics such as persistent population decline as well as a weaker economic structure. These areas, to a large extent correspond with the designations of high visual and scenic amenity as identified in the Scenic Landscape Evaluation Map (Appendix A9) and otherwise vulnerable areas such as the Nature Conservation Designations (Appendix A10). As such, the capacity of the landscape to absorb development will be a major consideration in the assessment of proposals in such areas.

Potential development areas (such as Knockanore, Piltown, etc), where appropriately located and designed clustered development will be encouraged, will act as focal points and strengthen communities through the process of agglomeration and the creation of a critical mass of population. These settlements and the District and Local Service Centres will provide employment generating opportunities for surrounding rural areas.

Further revitalisation of these areas will be achieved by implementing other Plan policies which will enhance development opportunities by stimulating the regeneration of these Structurally Weaker Rural Areas e.g. through the promotion and support of economic development initiatives like agri-tourism, cottage type industries and local enterprise, as referred in Chapter 6, Economic Development. To achieve these aims, the Council will protect against the indiscriminate construction of individual dispersed housing that will only achieve short-term demographic gain, and will instead promote real and long-term community consolidation and growth.

The Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines promote the provision of appropriate levels of tourist housing at suitable locations in Structurally Weaker Rural Areas. Waterford County Council will have

regard to the ability of such proposals to stimulate economic activity and population growth, whilst ensuring that these areas are not damaged.

**Policy SS8**

To facilitate proposals for permanent residential and appropriate holiday home development in order to tackle declining population levels in ways that do not adversely affect the landscape, water quality or wildlife habitats and in accordance with the Regional Planning Guidelines. The Council will monitor the effectiveness of this policy over the Plan period so as to avoid excessive levels of, or inappropriately located development.

**4.10 Genuine Local Housing Need**

As stated above, applicants for housing in Areas Under Urban Pressure and in the Stronger Rural Areas will be required to demonstrate a Genuine Local Housing Need. The applicant must demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that he/she can comply with one of the following criteria:

- A landowner<sup>3</sup> who owned the property prior to 4<sup>th</sup> March 2004 wishing to build a permanent home for his/her own use;
- A farm owner or an immediate family member (son, daughter, mother, father, sister, brother, heir) wishing to build a permanent home for their own use on family lands;
- A favoured niece, nephew or heir (maximum of 2 persons per farm owner) of a farm owner with no children wishing to build a permanent home for their own use on family lands;
- Persons working fulltime or part-time on a permanent basis, in a specific rural area who by the nature of the work need to be close to the workplace;
- A son or daughter of an established householder (who has lived in the area for three years or more) wishing to build a permanent home for their own use to live immediately adjacent to their elderly parents to provide care;
- Persons who were born and lived for substantial parts of their lives (three years or more) in a specific rural area, who then moved away and who now wish to return to their home places to reside near other family members, to work locally, to care for elderly family members or to retire; and
- Persons who because of exceptional health circumstances – supported by relevant documentation from a registered medical practitioner and a disability organisation may require to live in a particular rural area or close to family support (or vice versa).

<sup>3</sup> Landowners are considered to be persons who have owned the land prior to the 4<sup>th</sup> of March 2004.

The Local Area is defined as the area within which it can reasonable to assume that the applicant's connection extends from the source of the specified need (whether that is the family home, rural workplace, etc). For the purposes of the implementation of the Genuine Local Housing Needs Criteria, the local area is defined as being within 10km of that source, provided that a higher order zoned settlement (Primary Service Centre, Secondary Service Centre and District Service Centre), that has the infrastructural capacity to accommodate a dwelling is not located between the source of the specified need and the proposed site.

#### **4.11 Green Belt and Buffer Zone Restrictions**

Within the Green Belt zones and on the outskirts of the zoned settlements, there will be restrictions on development to maintain a clear demarcation between the rural and urban areas, to support the sustainable development of the settlements, to reduce urban sprawl and to safeguard the potential expansion of the settlements in the future.

##### **Policy SS9**

To restrict development within the Green Belt zones surrounding towns and villages to <sup>3</sup>landowners and immediate family members only building a permanent dwelling for their own use.

##### **Policy SS10**

To restrict development within a buffer zone of 400m (for Settlement Nodes and Local Service Centres) and 750m (for all higher order settlements), measured from the edge of the settlement boundary, to landowners and immediate family members only building a permanent dwelling for their own use. This policy shall not apply north of the Military Road and along the Gold Coast Road (area zoned agriculture) in the Dungarvan Environs zoning map.

#### **4.12 Occupancy Condition**

To ensure that development which takes place in the Stronger Rural Areas and the Areas Under Urban Pressure is to cater for the needs of the local community and those with a Genuine Local Housing need, the Council will attach occupancy conditions to planning permission for houses in these areas. Such a condition will require an applicant to enter into an agreement with the Council under Section 47 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), restricting the occupancy of the dwelling for a period of 7 years from first date of occupancy to use as a permanent place of residence

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<sup>3</sup>Landowners are considered to be persons who have owned the land prior to the 4<sup>th</sup> of March 2004.

for his/her own use. Where deemed necessary, the Council may attach an occupancy condition to a dwelling in a Structurally Weak Rural Area.

#### 4.13 Site Suitability

Proposals for residential development in rural areas will be required to satisfy site suitability and technical considerations as set out in Chapter 10, Development Standards, and in making applications, will have particular regard to Chapter 4 of the DoEHLG Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines.

#### Objective SS1

The Planning Authority shall, subject to resources, prepare a set of Rural Housing Design Guidelines for Waterford County within one year of the adoption of the County Development Plan.

#### 4.14 Village Design Statements

Village Design Statements (VDS) act as a local development framework for towns and villages by identifying how new development should be carried out so that it is in harmony with its setting and makes a positive contribution to the local environment. The contents of these plans will serve to inform planning policy and decisions in relation to development proposals in these villages. It is proposed to prepare, subject to resources, VDS's for the towns and villages which are identified as District Service Centres and which have no LAP (refer to Section 4.4 Settlement Hierarchy). It is envisaged that these VDS's will be prepared either by the County Council or local communities in partnership with the County Council.



Dunmore East Streetscape