

## **Chapter 1 Introduction to the Development Plan**

### **1.0 Introduction**

The County Development Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Development Plan Guidelines issued by the DoEHLG in June 2007. The Plan was formally adopted on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2011 and came into operation on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2011. It sets out the overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County for the period 2011-2017. The development strategies for Portlaoighaire, Lismore and Trillick are set out in their respective Local Area Plan's (2007-2013) and will be reviewed within 2 years of the date of the adoption of this Plan. This Development Plan, which may be subject to interim variations, replaces the County Development Plan 2005-2011.

### **1.1 Legal Context**

The Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) sets out those matters which must be included in a County Development Plan, as well as matters which may be included. Consideration can only be given to matters that relate to the proper planning and sustainable development of the County. The Development Plan is required to include objectives for:

- a) The zoning of land for a specified use;
- b) The provision or facilitation of the provision of infrastructure;
- c) The conservation and protection of the environment;
- d) The integration of the planning and sustainable development of the area with the social, community and cultural requirements of the area and its population;
- e) The preservation of the character of the landscape;
- f) The protection of structures, or parts of structures, which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest;
- g) The preservation of the character of architectural conservation areas;
- h) The development and renewal of areas in need of regeneration;
- i) The provision of accommodation for travellers;
- j) The preservation, improvement and extension of amenities and recreational amenities;
- k) The control of developments with Major Accidents potential;
- l) The provision, or facilitation of the provision, of services for the community,
- m) The protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht; and
- n) The promotion of sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas.

The preparation of the County Development Plan involved a detailed consultation process involving the public, prescribed bodies and on-going meetings with the elected members of the County Council. The making of a development plan is a reserved function of the elected members of County Waterford.

The Plan consists of:

- Volume 1:** A written statement indicating the development objectives and policies for County Waterford and is consistent, as far as possible, with the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines;
- Volume 2:** Map Booklet;
- Volume 3:** Book of Appendices;
- Volume 4:** Strategic Environmental Assessment; and
- Volume 5:** Appropriate Assessment.

## 1.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Under the Planning & Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004, the Planning Authority is obliged to carry out an assessment of the likely environmental effects arising from the implementation of the objectives and policies contained in the County Development Plan.

The function of the SEA is to ensure that the environmental consequences of a plan are identified during the preparation of the Plan and before its final adoption. Due consideration has been given to the SEA in the preparation of the Plan and the Environmental Report should be read in conjunction with this Plan.



Meadow Area

## 1.3 Habitats Directive Assessment

The Habitats Directive was transposed into Irish law by the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 as amended. Under this Directive, the Planning Authority is obliged to carry out an appropriate assessment of the ecological implications of the Plan on the Natura 2000 sites within the County as part of the County Development Plan process. Natura 2000 sites consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and provide for the protection of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

The strategic nature of many of the policies and objectives contained in this Plan will require an Appropriate Assessment screening to be carried out at individual plan and project level to ensure there is no negative impact on the integrity and conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites and that the requirements of Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive are fully satisfied. Support of policies contained in other policy/strategy and guideline documents shall be subject to AA screening where required, prior to implementation by the Local Authority.



Ardmore Strand

#### **1.4 Structure and Format**

This Plan consists of a written statement containing policies, objectives and development standards, and accompanying maps and appendices. Each chapter deals with a topic and the Council's policy in respect of each topic is clearly identified. The document also provides a comprehensive guide to the development standards required for new development. The zoning maps provide a graphic representation of the proposals of the Plan illustrating the various landuses, conservation and scenic landscape designations as well as a schedule of development objectives for each zoned settlement within the County. Should a discrepancy arise between the maps and the statement, the statement shall prevail.

The support documents are set out in the appendices and include the Housing Strategy, Population projections, the Rural Area Types Map, the Record of Protected Structures (RPS), the Scenic Landscape Evaluation, Tree Preservation Orders, etc.

The format and content of each Chapter is outlined as follows:

**Preface:** Vision/Mission Statement sets out the framework context for the future growth of the County and its people.

**Chapter 1** highlights the legal context of the Development Plan, and outlines its format.

**Chapter 2** outlines the Framing Documents which have informed the Plan.

**Chapter 3** sets out the Core Strategy which illustrates how the Plan is consistent with National and Regional policies and strategies.

**Chapter 4** consists of the policies and objectives with respect to Settlement and the development strategies for each settlement within the chapter.

**Chapter 5** focuses on Housing issues within the County, and should be read in conjunction with the Housing Strategy set out in Appendix A1.

**Chapter 6** deals with Economic Development in the County and includes policies to help create a balanced and sustainable employment base.

**Chapter 7** relates to Infrastructure, and includes information on future Council investment proposals and schemes.

**Chapter 8** outlines the Council's approach to protecting the natural and built environments.

**Chapter 9** looks at Social and Community Development, examines issues relating to social exclusion and the provision of community facilities.

**Chapter 10** sets out the Development Standards, and other issues that the Planning Authority will consider when processing an application for planning permission. Some of the relevant guidelines, to which applicants must have regard, are also identified.

The County Development Plan is the statutory framework within which all development in County Waterford will take place over the next 6 years. It lays down the physical development policies for County Waterford over the lifetime of the Plan, which will facilitate economic and employment growth in the County in a manner that preserves and improves the quality of the environment. It also explains the means to be used to achieve these objectives.