

Chapter 2 Development Context and Framing Documents

2.0 Introduction

County Waterford is a coastal county located in the south-east of Ireland, bordering the counties of Cork, Tipperary and Kilkenny. Dungarvan is the administrative centre for the County but in terms of population Tramore is the largest urban settlement. The County is otherwise predominantly rural in character. Waterford City exerts a strong influence over the physical, social and economic development of the County. In addition, a number of other large urban centres border the County including Clonmel, Youghal, Carrick-on-Suir and Fermoy. These centres manifest their influence on the County in terms of various ‘push-pull’ factors.

The Gaeltacht area of An Rinn/Seanphobal with its own particular heritage and culture is situated to the south-east of Dungarvan.

2.1 Physical Context

The County occupies a geographic area of 1,839km². It is defined by the impressive Comeragh and Knockmealdown mountain ranges, the Rivers Suir, Blackwater and Colligan and a number of natural harbours, the largest of which is Waterford Harbour (which leads into the Port of Waterford). Smaller harbours are located in Dunmore East, Dungarvan and Heilbhc.



Upland Area

2.2 Infrastructure

The N25 National Primary Route traverses the County linking the Gateways of Cork and Waterford and connecting up with the M9 which serves the Capital. The N25 also serves Rosslare Europort. The west of the County is served by the N72 National Secondary Road which connects Dungarvan with the Kerry/Limerick region. A map of the Roads network is set out in Appendix A5.

Other important transport links include Belleview Port and Waterford Regional Airport.

2.3 National Documents

2.3.1 National Development Plan 2007 – 2013

The National Development Plan (NDP) 2007-2013 identifies key areas of investment for development in the areas of health, social and community facilities, roads, education, rural development and industry. The strategies



and funding as set out in the NDP 2007-2013 feed into the National Spatial Strategy and promote balanced regional development, sustainable economic development and greater social inclusion.

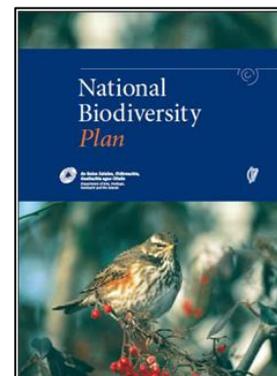
2.3.2 National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) 2002-2020 is a planning framework designed to achieve a sustainable balance of social, economic, and physical development and population growth, at both the micro and macro levels within the 8 Regional Authority areas. The NSS emphasises the central role of the designated Gateways, Hubs and County Towns in functioning as the economic drivers for their respective regions.

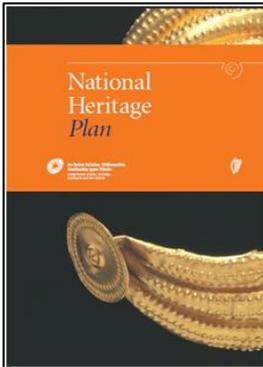


2.3.3 The National Biodiversity Plan 2002

The cornerstone of the National Biodiversity Plan recognises that conservation and enhancement of biological diversity is essential for sustainable development, and for maintaining the quality of human life. All sectors and actors are responsible for advancing the conservation of biological diversity in their respective areas. This includes preparation and implementation of Local Biodiversity Action Plans by local authorities. The first Biodiversity Action Plan for County Waterford was published by Waterford County Council in 2008.

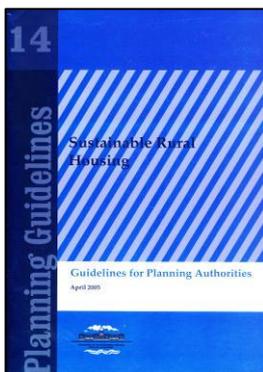


2.3.4 The National Heritage Plan 2002



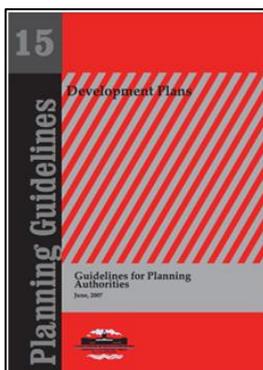
The National Heritage Plan sets out a clear and coherent strategy and framework for the protection and enhancement of Ireland's National heritage. The core objective of the Plan is to protect the National heritage as well as promoting it as a resource to be enjoyed by all. A key objective of the plan is the preparation and delivery of County Heritage Plans. The County Waterford Heritage Plan 2006 - 2010 has regard to this National Plan. Its aim is to inform people of what the County has, how it can be managed, and the range of organisations involved in heritage.

2.3.5 Sustainable Rural Housing - Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DoEHLG



These statutory guidelines were issued in 2005 to inform Local Authorities of the manner in which national rural housing policies are to be practically implemented in their respective forward planning and development management systems. The guidelines which aim to ensure a vibrant future for all rural areas are a material consideration in relation to the preparation of development plans and the processing of planning applications. The Guidelines require the classification of different Rural Area Types and the development of policies to suit each area.

2.3.6 Development Plans – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DoEHLG

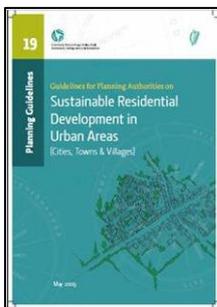


The Development Plan Guidelines issued in June 2007 provide guidance on the production, content, presentation, implementation and subsequent monitoring of development plans. By building on the legislative framework of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and through the employment of knowledge gained from past experience these guidelines detail how Ireland can develop an increasingly dynamic, objective, and inclusive planning system so as to structure future development that will meet wider socio-economic, environmental and heritage objectives.

The guidelines state that development plans should:

1. Be strategic in nature;
2. Be a catalyst for positive change and progress;
3. Anticipate future needs on an objective basis; and
4. Have a role in protecting the environment and heritage.

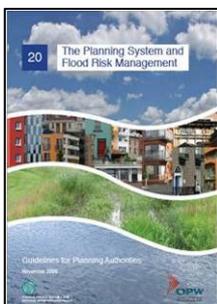
2.3.7 Planning Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas - DoEHLG



The Guidelines issued in May 2009 are informed by the '1999 *Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Residential Density*'. The aim of the guidelines is to set out the key planning principles which should be reflected in development plans and local area plans, and which should guide the preparation and evaluation of planning applications for residential developments in urban areas. The objectives of the new guidelines are as follows:

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

2.3.8 The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities



These Guidelines were issued in November 2009 and seek to ensure that flood risk is taken fully into account both in the preparation of regional plans, development plans and local area plans, and in the determining of applications for planning permission. The Guidelines also address environmental considerations including the need to manage the potential impacts of climate change.

2.3.9 Water Framework Directive

The Water Framework Directive¹ (WFD) represents a major revision of EU water policy and establishes a framework for the protection of inland surface waters, transitional waters and groundwater. The WFD sets out that Member States shall implement the necessary measures to prevent deterioration of the status of all bodies of surface water, and shall protect, enhance and restore all bodies of surface water with the aim of achieving good status by 2015. One of the main requirements of the Water Framework Directive is the development of River Basin Management Plans and the designation of a competent authority for each river basin district (RBD).



County Waterford is covered by the South East River Basin Management Plan and the South West River Basin Management Plan. These management plans set out programmes of measures which require planning authorities to take cognisance of impacts of development on the river basin. Also included is a list of specific measures for Freshwater Pearl Mussel Catchments where investigations and risk assessment show specific pressures need to be remediated to restore pearl mussel catchments to favourable conservation status. This list involves around 60 measures of which 23 are assigned to local authorities as the lead authority for that action.

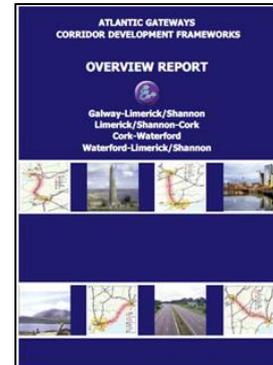
2.3.10 The Regional Planning Guidelines Review, Gateway and Hub Population Targets, 2009

This document recommends that, in the areas beyond Gateways and Hubs, a strategy is put in place for a distribution of future development in relation to housing, employment and retailing by achieving compact sustainable urban development; integrating future housing, employment, retailing and other community services; implementing the planning guidelines on Sustainable Rural Housing; and promoting development at locations both along existing or future planned public transport corridors and or that have been serviced or have good prospects of being serviced by water services infrastructure and in line with the availability of public resources. It also sets out population targets for the State and the Regions.

¹ The European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (S.I. 722 of 2003) transposed Directive 2000/60/EC (the Water Framework Directive, WFD) into Irish Law.

2.3.11 Atlantic Gateways Corridor Overview Report

The National Spatial Strategy provided for an integrated approach to regional development in Ireland. It identified that the development of the Gateway cities of Cork, Limerick/Shannon, Galway and Waterford – otherwise known as the Atlantic Gateways – would be key to more balanced regional development. This would be achieved through the establishment of a linked metropolitan region in the western and southern parts of Ireland. It is envisaged that this region would have the critical mass of population, connectivity and infrastructure capable of sustaining and attracting new development.



The Report sets out the strategic goals for the development of the rural and hinterland areas between the Atlantic Gateway cities whilst also ensuring that the policies adopted at local and regional level are consistent with enhancing critical mass and driving growth in the Gateways themselves.

Cork – Waterford Corridor

The specific Gateway corridor recommendations relating to the Cork-Waterford corridor include:

- **The delivery of the 2+2 dual carriageway/motorway** standard road connectivity between Waterford and Cork;
- **Focusing the location of research and development facilities in the Gateways** in conjunction with the third level institutions and enhanced co-operation between the institutes;
- **Upgrading of the Waterford Institute of Technology to University status** with the University retaining its technological/business bias and the Carriganore Campus being developed without delay;
- **The further development of Waterford Regional Airport** by way of better access, terminal/runway expansion and support facilities for passengers and improved infrastructure for the airport, making the South East/N25 Corridor more attractive to potential employers and add value to the employment potential of the area;
- **Metropolitan Area Networks (MAN)** has been provided in most of the larger towns and requires marketing and other measures to grow their usage by local businesses. Furthermore, **access to broadband in rural areas under the new National Broadband Scheme** must be quickly progressed;

- **The quality of the existing public transport services** within and between the Gateways need further enhancement through the provision of park and ride facilities and better integration with good rural public transport systems; and
- **Enhanced use of the existing rail trans-shipment facilities at Belview Port** is a vital part of the transport infrastructure required to improve efficiency of cargo movement through the Region and beyond and is seen as a vital determinant in the upgrade of the Corridor Rail network.

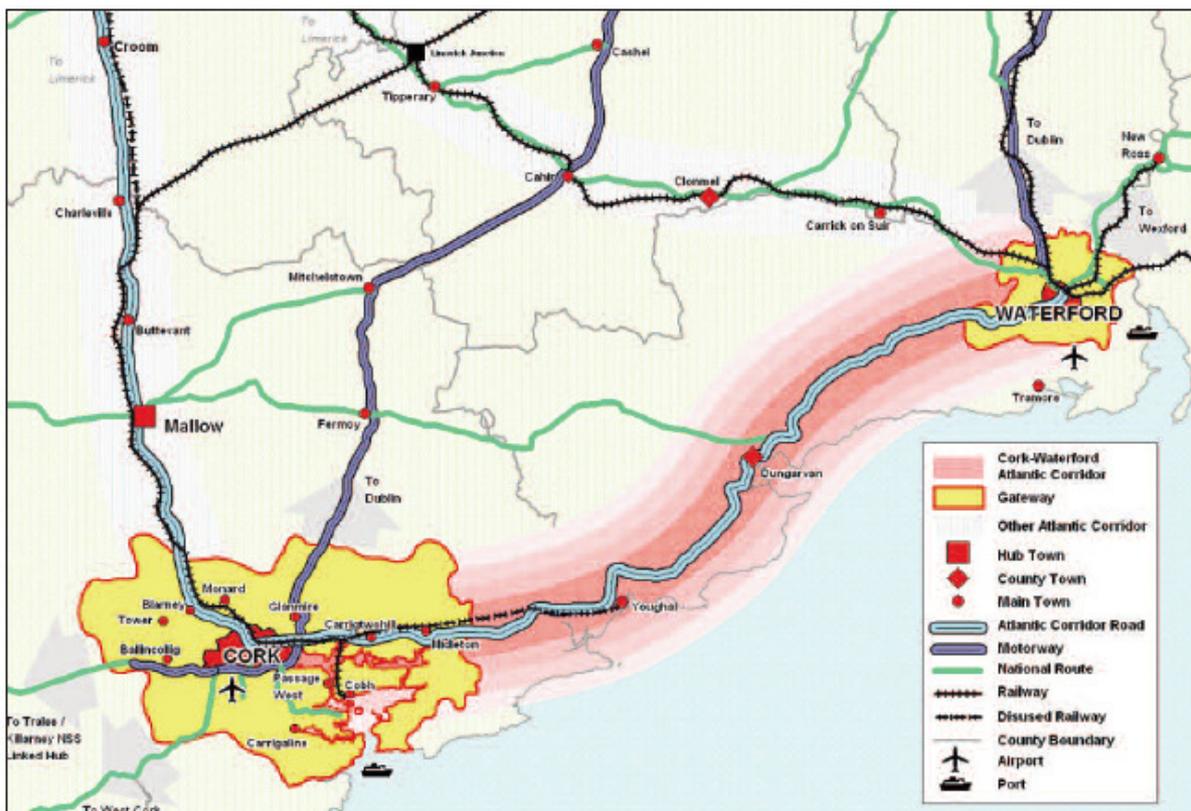


Figure 2.1 Cork – Waterford Corridor

Waterford – Limerick/Shannon Corridor

The specific Gateway corridor recommendations relating to the Waterford – Limerick/Shannon corridor include:

- **Implementation of the Waterford Planning and Land Use Transportation Study (PLUTS) and the Mid West Area Strategic Plan** will help to focus on the major development on Waterford City Centre including the redeveloped North Quays, Belview and

a Knowledge and Enterprise zone centred on Waterford Institute of Technology and the IDA Technology Park;

- **Upgrading the N24 National Route** as a major inter-urban corridor to reinforce the transport links between Waterford and Limerick Cities and allowing for greater access from the corridor to the multi-modal transport interchanges and national access points located at , inter alia, Waterford Regional Airport and Belview Port;
- **Accelerated development of key towns** along the Waterford – Limerick/Shannon corridor at **Carrick-on-Suir** and other larger towns with the hinterland of the corridor as attractive places to live and work;
- **Development of Limerick Junction** as a strategic transport gateway for the North-South and East-West road and rail traffic;
- **Enhancement of the existing Limerick-Waterford rail line services to provide rail commuter services** to and from Limerick and Waterford and inter-town connection between the towns of Carrick-on-Suir, Clonmel, Cahir and Tipperary/Limerick Junction and park and ride facilities and feeder bus services from more outlying rural areas; and
- **A plan-led approach to protecting, conserving and harnessing the corridor’s rural assets** in terms of landscape, small town and village structure, water quality and inland waterways.

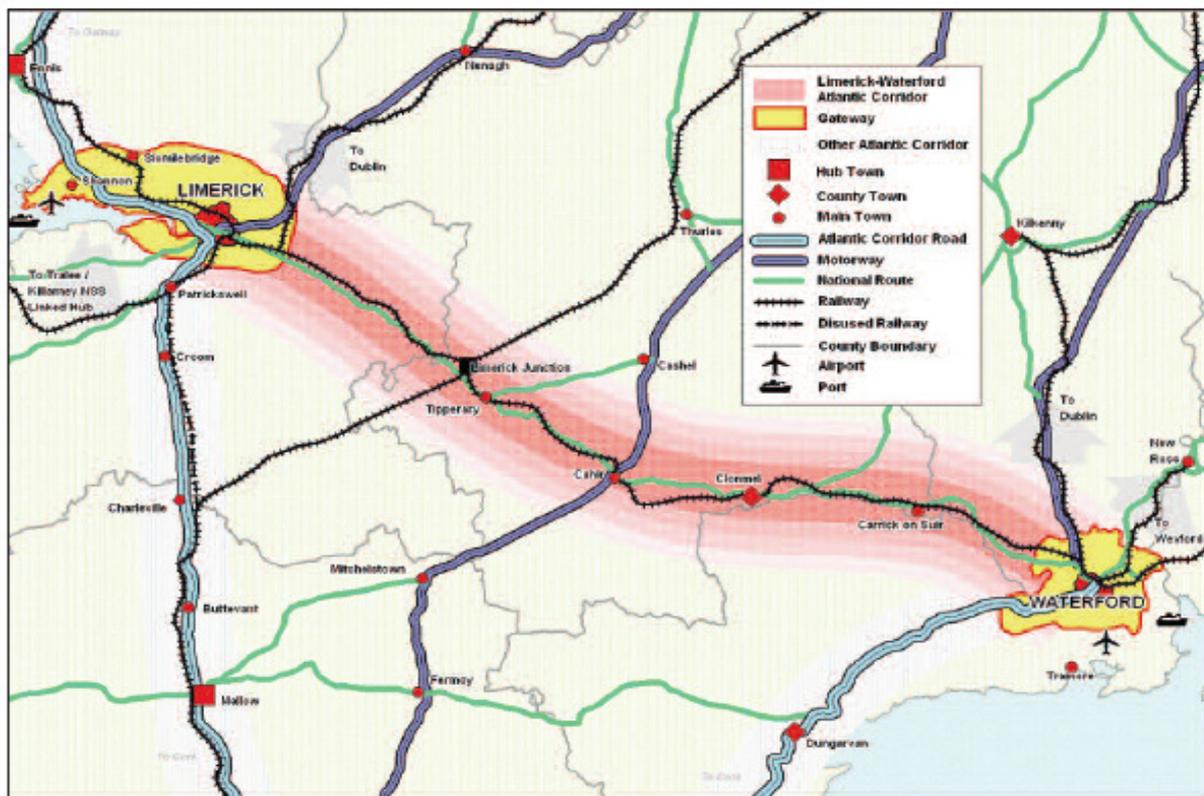
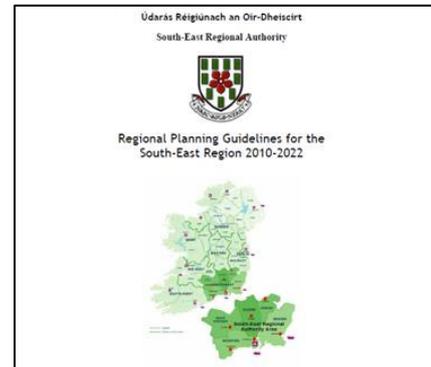


Figure 2.2 Waterford – Limerick/Shannon Corridor

2.4 Regional Documents

2.4.1 South East Regional Planning Guidelines

In accordance with Section 24(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) the Regional Authorities are entrusted with the responsibility of implementing the National Spatial Strategy at the regional level. To this end, the members of the South East Regional Authority, Counties Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford prepared the Regional Planning Guidelines. These Guidelines constitute a 20-year strategic planning framework for the



development of the South-East region and contain policies and objectives relating to inter alia settlement, transportation, industrial development, community facilities and environmental protection. The Guidelines provide the framework within which county, city, town and local area development plans are prepared.

In order to enhance the strategic dimension of planning at local level the Planning Authority has given due consideration to the policies and objectives of the Guidelines in the preparation of this Development Plan.

2.4.2 Joint Waste Management Plan for the South East Region

The Joint Waste Management Plan for the South East Region seeks to secure the best environmental management of all waste (including prevention and minimisation) for the next 20 years and will be reviewed every 5 years. The purpose of the Plan is:

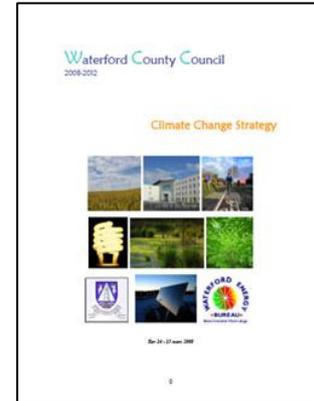


1. The promotion of waste prevention and minimisation through source reduction, producer responsibility and public awareness; and
2. The management for the recovery/recycling/disposal of waste arising on a regional basis.

2.5 County Documents

2.5.1 Waterford County Climate Change Strategy 2008 – 2012

It is now accepted that the world is warming up and that the developed world's consumption of fossil fuels such as oil, coal and gas is a major contributory factor to the temperature rise. In May 2007, Waterford County Council established an internal Climate Change Forum which meets periodically to develop practical policies and actions which seek to make the maximum contribution to the National effort to address climate change. The Climate Change Strategy has resulted from this forum and its recommendations will be implemented through statutory and non-statutory means.



2.6 Other Framing Documents

Other documents which were referred to in the preparation of this Plan include:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland- Guidance for Planning Authorities;
- Building for Everyone: Inclusion, Access and Use;
- Building Ireland's Smart Economy - A Framework for Sustainable Economic Renewal;
- County Waterford Groundwater Protection Scheme;
- County Waterford Needs Assessment 2009;
- County Development Plans of neighbouring counties;
- Development Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities;
- Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities 2007;
- European Charter of Pedestrian Rights (1998);
- Freshwater Pearl Mussel Sub Basin Management Plans (Licky, Clodiagh, Blackwater);
- Government Policy on Architecture 2009-2015 - Towards a Sustainable Future Delivering Quality within the Built Environment;
- National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012;
- Planning Guidelines on Design Standards for New Apartments;
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities, Best Practice Guidelines 2007;
- Regional Bio-Energy Implementation Plan for the South-East Region 2008-2013;

- Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future. A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 – 2020;
- South East Regional Biodiversity Management Plan;
- South West Regional Biodiversity Management Plan;
- Suir Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study;
- Sustainable Development - A Strategy for Ireland, 1997;
- Urban Design Manual, A Best Practice Guide 2009;
- Waterford Planning, Land Use and Transportation Study (PLUTS); and
- Waterford Sports Partnership Strategy 2007-2011.