

Chapter 5 Economic Development

5.0 Introduction

After a prolonged period of significant economic growth, Ireland is currently experiencing a challenging economic environment.

Dungarvan Town Council has to prioritise Economic Development. The plan for the Town is to implement a combination of short to medium term economic stimulus, such as festivals and events and enterprise support programmes, and long term planning for the sustainable economic growth of the Town. For future employment, it is necessary that the Council continues to support and facilitate small indigenous and medium enterprises and to attract alternative key economic drivers into the Town which have a more robust growth base. This shall have to be provided for through proactive and enabling policies and objectives that will facilitate the economic development of the Town over the Plan period.

The South East Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 recognise that the types of industries that now offer long-term prospects for generating revenues are in the new technologies and knowledge based areas such as Information and Communications Technology, Medical Devices, Biotechnology, Pharmaceuticals, the Green Economy and Renewable Energy. Dungarvan is strategically positioned to harness opportunities in these sectors. In addition, Dungarvan Town Council is working with third and fourth level academic institutions to put in place programmes to ensure that the Town can compete in the Knowledge Economy.

Policy ECD 1

To support sustainable economic development of the Town by both building the indigenous enterprise sector and by continuing to attract foreign direct investment, particularly in emerging knowledge based sectors.

5.1 Dungarvan Town Economic Profile

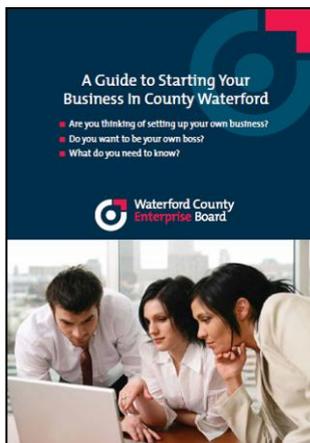
The economy of Dungarvan Town traditionally depended on strong manufacturing sector. While building on this strength, the Town is restructuring its economy to higher value-added activities in the pharmaceutical, life science, engineering and international business services sectors. The Town is now host to a diverse cross section of retail, commercial and industrial businesses. Employment

opportunities in the Town cover a broad spectrum including; Bio-technology, ICT and engineering, manufacturing and processing, professional services, tourism and hospitality and local services.

Dungarvan services are to a high standard and have the capacity for future growth to facilitate the town's economic progression. Broadband infrastructure is a vital element in assisting development within Dungarvan. In this regard, a Metropolitan Area Network (MAN) has been established and is accessible within Dungarvan. (See Map *Metropolitan Area Network*)

The sewerage scheme for the Town was designed to cater for the existing domestic, commercial and industrial needs as well as providing the necessary infrastructure to meet the needs of population growth for 20 years. The plant has a population equivalent of 25,000. The wastewater treatment plant is capable of modular expansion should the need arise.

5.2 Sustainable Economic Development



The Town faces a number of challenges which include declining employment and growth in the levels of commuting. Employment creation is dependent on economic development. It is the aim of the Council to maximise the strategic location of Dungarvan and to take full advantage of the economic development potential of the Town in order to achieve balanced and sustainable patterns of growth through economic investment in jobs and services so as to sustain the future population of the Town.

Policy ECD 2

It is a policy of the Council to support and facilitate, where possible, the County Waterford Economic Plan 2010 - 2014, or any revision of same. This will be implemented in cooperation with agencies and the local community.

Policy ECD 3

Support the designation of Waterford City and Cork as a Gateway and the strategic location of Dungarvan between Cork and Waterford.

Policy ECD 4

Co-operate with the private sector and agencies such as IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, FÁS, Waterford Institute of Technology, Waterford LEADER Partnership, Udarás na Gaeltachta and Waterford County Enterprise Board to help deliver the Town's economic development priorities.

Policy ECD 5

Support micro enterprises and the development of Dungarvan Enterprise Centre.

Policy ECD 6

Develop a sustainable community as an attractive place to live and work.

Policy ECD 7

Address, where feasible, infrastructural deficiencies that may be hindering economic development and aim to ensure that sustainable infrastructural development precedes economic development.

It is important to ensure that new economic and employment opportunities are developed in tandem with the provision of new housing development, in order to provide sustainable travel patterns whereby people have the opportunity to live closer to work and reduce the need for commuting.

5.3 Labour Force

An important element in supporting and developing economic development is the availability of a skilled and well educated workforce. Dungarvan Town is in close proximity to three of Ireland's third level institutions, Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT), Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) and University College Cork (UCC) with a total student population of 43,000. Dungarvan is strategically located within the catchment of a well educated workforce and one of the priorities of this Town Development Plan is to retain this workforce within the Town through sustainable job creation. The Town supports the overall county objectives to prioritise the development of academia in the County.

In addition, County Waterford can attract high level skills from outside the region. A skills register was established by Waterford County Council through www.workinwaterford.ie.

Policy ECD 8

To assist in the provision of a well educated labour force by:

1. To strengthen industry – academic links in Dungarvan by engaging with academic institutions to continue to foster outreach programmes.
2. Supporting the development of a University in the South East Region; and

5.4 Employment Creation

One of the key objectives of the Town Development Plan is to provide sustainable job creation by way of economic development and growth. There are a number of factors which come into play when attracting an industry into the Town such as strategically located land banks, a



well educated workforce, high quality transport networks, excellent infrastructure, a good communication network etc. Over recent years, Dungarvan Town Council has invested in the provision of key infrastructure and zoning of additional employment lands. It is critical that the Town can offer high quality places to reside, a strong community and good educational and social facilities in order to attract people to live and work in Dungarvan Town.

Policy ECD 9

To continue to work in partnership with employment agencies and private enterprises in order to ensure continued job creation in Dungarvan Town and to co-operate with higher education authorities as a means of supporting and encouraging Research & Development and knowledge-related industries in the Town and County.

5.5 Location of Employment

There are a number of agencies whose responsibility it is to deliver/facilitate the delivery of jobs. In this regard, the Council has a critical role to play in ensuring that there are adequate appropriately zoned lands to facilitate such development.

The Planning Authority has addressed employment land use within the zone of Light Industry. There are approximately 49ha of land zoned for light industry in the Town, of which approximately 31.7ha are undeveloped.

The lands zoned for light industry and other related land use zones in the Town have been provided to facilitate industrial development and encourage employment growth.

Policy ECD 10

To support and facilitate the sustainable development of light industry lands for employment growth within Dungarvan.

5.6 Enterprise Centre

An Enterprise Centre is being developed in Dungarvan. This will join the network of centres for start-up businesses throughout County Waterford.

Policy ECD 11

To promote the sustainable development of Enterprise Areas as the primary location for the development of employment uses that are inappropriate to town centre locations and require environmental standards higher than those in industrial areas such as business parks or industrial estates. The development of inappropriate uses, such as light industry and retailing will not, normally be encouraged.

Objective ECD 1

To ensure that the highest standards of design, layout and hard and soft landscaping, including use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) where appropriate, are applied to new enterprise centres, and that pedestrian/cycling and public transport access is provided for.

5.7 Green Economy

It is anticipated that the Green Economy will yield significant results for businesses. A range of opportunities exist in renewable energies for businesses. In addition, the provision of renewable energy solutions will help attract globally mobile industries to the Town, as it provides a cheaper, cleaner solution that reduces the carbon footprint.

Policy ECD 12

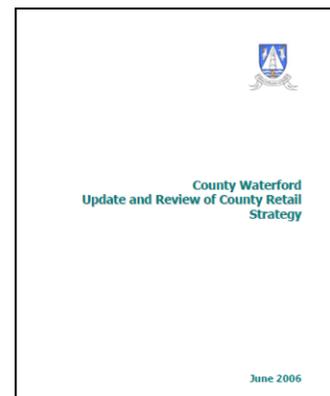
To facilitate appropriate renewable energy infrastructure and promote the use of renewable energy among businesses and households throughout the Town.

5.8 Retail

5.8.1 Retail Planning Guidelines

The Retail Planning Guidelines, which came into effect on 1st January 2001, were published as a response to the changing retail environment with the aim of producing an optimal spread of retail development accessible to the widest possible population. Further to changes in the sector and to address over restrictive guidance, the amended Retail Planning Guidelines (January 2005) removed the floorspace cap on retail warehouses within the functional areas of the four Dublin Local Authorities and in the other National Spatial Strategy Gateways.

The Waterford County Retail Strategy 2003 was reviewed in 2005 and makes projections for retail floor space requirements for both convenience and comparison goods shopping up to 2011. The Retail Strategy highlighted that leakage of retail shopping (both convenience and comparison) from County Waterford is considerable and that this matter needs to be addressed through the implementation of the policies of the Strategy. It is envisaged that the Retail Strategy shall be updated during the lifetime of this Plan and the Waterford County Development Plan.



Objective ECD 2

The Council shall have regard to the National Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities and the County Retail Strategy (or any revision of same) when guiding and regulating retail development.

5.8.2 County Retail Hierarchy

The purpose of the Retail Hierarchy is to indicate the role and importance of the various urban centres of the County in order to enable the Council to protect each centre's overall vitality and viability whilst allowing each centre to perform its overall function within the County's settlement hierarchy. Identifying key centres which can accommodate major retail floorspace assists the market by bringing certainty and thus improving the County's competitiveness.

County Retail Hierarchy	
Level/Retail Function	Centre
Level 1: County Town Centre	Dungarvan

Table 5.1 County Retail Hierarchy

In order to maintain the town centre primacy in retailing, the Retail Planning Guidelines recommend applying the ‘*Sequential Approach*’ in the determination of planning applications for retail development. This essentially recognises the importance of sustaining the retail importance, vitality and viability of the town centres and ensuring that development takes place in an orderly fashion from the main core centre in an outwardly direction. Proposals for major retail schemes are required to select an appropriate site using the sequential approach as follows:

- In the first instance, the priority should be in locating new retail development within town centre;
- If town centre locations are not readily available within a reasonable and realistic timescale, then edge of centre sites should be looked to. In the Retail Planning Guidelines, these are defined as sites that are within 300m – 400m of the Core Retail Area; and
- Only after options for town centre and edge of centre are exhausted, should out of centre locations and sites be considered.

The core shopping area correlates with the Town Centre zoning.

Policy ECD 13

To facilitate and encourage the development of retail development and services that consolidate and strengthen the core retailing area and to meet the needs of the existing and future population over the lifetime of this Plan. All proposals for retail development shall be subjected to the Sequential Test.

5.8.3 Neighbourhood Centres

Neighbourhood centres generally serve smaller, more localised communities where many of the inhabitants are able to shop for their daily needs within easy reach of their homes, preferably within walking distance. The Council shall look favourably on appropriate uses in neighbourhood centres such as:

- Local community and social facilities;

- Crèche/childcare facility;
- Convenience shop;
- Doctor/Dental surgery/medical centre/pharmacy;
- Limited retail/office development; and
- Café/restaurant.

Objective ECD 3

To identify within expanding new residential areas, locations for neighbourhood centres to enable convenience needs to be better met locally and thus minimise unnecessary journeys, demand on car parking, etc.

5.8.4 Retail Warehousing and Retail Parks

Retail warehouses comprise of large stores specialising in the sale of household goods and bulky items catering mainly for car-borne customers. The Retail Planning Guidelines set thresholds of a maximum size of 6,000 square metres gross and a minimum of 700 square metres gross. The range of goods is generally restricted to the sale of bulky household goods including carpet /furniture /white electrical goods, etc. The goods listed above are not an exhaustive list of acceptable goods; however it is an indication of the type of goods that will be considered in such locations.

Retail parks involve the development of three or more retail warehouses, together comprising 8,000 to 15,000 square meters around a shared car park. The development can be anchored by a single unit of up to 6,000 square meters.

5.10.5 Discount Stores

Discount food/retail stores of up to 1,500 square metres gross have a potential role in extending the choice of retailing particularly for certain sectors of the community. Their customer catchment and retail offer is different to the mainstream superstores and supermarkets and their trade draw will be different. They provide a specialised form of shopping. This will be relevant when assessing impact, although the effect on neighbourhood centres and other shops should also be considered. Proposals for such developments will be considered in relation to the provisions of the Plan concerning the design, layout and impact of retail developments. Applications for discount food/retail stores must demonstrate that they will not have a significant negative impact.

Policy ECD 14

To facilitate the provision of discount food/retail stores subject to the retail hierarchy, and the need to confine their use.

5.9 Sustainable Tourism

Dungarvan is rich with natural amenities, a vibrant town, picturesque, with scenic coastline, within close proximity of neighbouring woodlands, mountains, bog lands and fertile pastures. These combine to provide both residents and visitors with an excellent environment to live in or visit. It also provides the retail, tourism and hospitality sectors with an opportunity to harness commercial opportunities in a sustainable manner. Offering an attractive tourist product that builds on the natural beauty of the Town, Dungarvan attracts discerning tourists who seek a quality product and experience.



A range of new festivals and events have raised the profile of the Town and County. These events build on the strengths of the both and seek to improve the well-being of participants and include: The Waterford Festival of Food; the Sean Kelly Tour of Waterford; and the John Treacy Classic Run. These add to the already successful: Féile na Déise in Dungarvan; along with the St Patrick's Day festivities.

The main objective of Fáilte Ireland South East is to consolidate the position of the tourism industry. This objective will be pursued through a number of collaborative initiatives, including; the ongoing development of festivals and events and the expansion of the Family and Activity Holiday destination programmes. It is intended that such measures will ensure that Dungarvan's tourism offering is fit for purpose.

Policy ECD 15

To continue building on the strengths of the Dungarvan, giving priority to sustainably developing the tourism product, festivals and events and to consolidate the retail, hospitality and tourism sectors in the Town.

Policy ECD 16

To encourage new investment in the Tourism sector with specific reference to accommodation in terms of choice, sustainable location and quality of product.

Policy ECD 17

To work with community groups and the private sector to raise the profile of Dungarvan and County Waterford as a place to visit using e-commerce, national and international media.

Objective ECD 4

To facilitate, where possible, the work of Fáilte Ireland in any analysis of the Tourism Activity/Sector of Dungarvan and County Waterford.

5.10 Sustainable Tourism and Recreation

Sustainable tourism provides for a high quality, competitive tourism product based on, and in harmony with, a high quality natural environment. It is important to enhance these areas for their continued development in the tourism industry, while at the same time protecting and conserving the qualities that make these areas attractive in the first instance. The Council will promote a sustainable approach to the development of the tourism sector while protecting the built and cultural heritage which forms the resources on which the Town and County's tourism industry is built upon. Dungarvan will act as a hub for these tourism activities.

Policy ECD 18

It is the policy of the Council to facilitate the expansion of tourist activities in appropriate locations where they can be supported by, and provide support for, the existing communities. In all cases, development will be required to comply with key sustainable tourism and environmental principles and the development management standards as set out in Chapter 10 of this Plan.

5.11 Walking and Cycling and Other Outdoor Pursuits

The scenic and varied landscape of the Town and County lends itself exceptionally well for walking and cycling activities. The Council over the past number of years has supported and encouraged the provision of infrastructure to facilitate both cycling and walking and shall continue to do so during the life time of this Plan. The development of cycle and walking tourism presents a particular opportunity to bring economic benefits of tourism to the Town.

Walking is steadily becoming one of the main recreational pastimes in the County. There are a number of strategic walking /amenity trails in the County that have the potential to be major tourism attractions including the disused Railway Line between Dungarvan and Waterford City.

A walking strategy has been prepared by Waterford County Council in association with the Regional Tourism Authority, Waterford Leader Partnership, Waterford Sports Partnership and other stakeholders, that examines the role of walking in the Tourism industry, particularly in terms of Green Sustainable Tourism. In the County Development Board's *'Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development of County*



Hill Walking in the Comeragh Mountains

Waterford 2002-2012' walking and walkways were identified as having major strategic potential and a specific objective of same is to *"enable Waterford to become the walking capital of Ireland.* The Waterford Recreational Trails Plan 2010-2012 sets out the framework for future trails development.

Dungarvan Town Council and Waterford County Council in conjunction with Waterford Sports Partnership, local cycling groups and community volunteers are actively promoting cycling in the County through the development of an annual cycling tour event *'The Sean Kelly Tour'*. The tour which has been running since 2007 is growing in popularity with entry numbers reaching in excess of 2,000 persons. To obtain the greatest benefit from this event *'Sean Kelly Cycling Routes'* have been developed throughout the Town and County and these routes are clearly signposted and available for the public to enjoy throughout the year.

Policy ECD 19

It is the policy of the Council to continue to promote and facilitate, where possible, the provision of high quality walking and cycling routes in the Town. Routes near the Special Protection Area will be subject to Habitats Directive assessment.

Policy ECD 20

It is the policy of the Council to promote Waterford as the *"Walking Capital of Ireland."*

Policy ECD 21

The Council supports the protection and sustainable development of coastal walkways in the interest of providing access to coastal heritage and scenic landscapes. Routes near the Special Protection Area will be subject to Habitats Directive assessment.

Objective ECD 5

To facilitate, as the opportunities arise, the sustainable development/enhancement of tourist trails and designated walking and cycling trails that do not cause landscape or environmental degradation throughout the town and connecting to adjoining areas. The Council shall also encourage the development of off-road cycling at appropriate locations. Trails near Special Protection Areas will be subject to Habitats Directive assessment.

5.12 Marine Leisure

Marine recreation relates to leisure activities in and on the sea, inshore and offshore and along the seashore. The Town boasts an extensive coastline and is well positioned to further develop its marine leisure product. Sailing is popular in Dungarvan and the Council shall encourage and promote water based tourism with associated land based activities on appropriately zoned land which would serve to attract local, national and international visitors and further contribute to the economy of the region.

Policy ECD 22

To develop the marine leisure sector of Dungarvan in a coherent and sustainable manner, including the development of marinas, water sport based activities, improvement of quays and slipways and enhanced interpretation and safety that do not cause landscape or environmental degradation and avoid adverse effects on the designated sites in the area. Developments likely to have an effect on the Special Protection Area will be subject to an appropriate assessment.

5.13 Heritage and Culture

Dungarvan has an array of architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage, which includes John's Castle, Dungarvan. Other highlights are the number of impressive buildings around the town that have the potential to become tourist attractions. The Council recognises that the natural and built heritage of the County is a key tourism resource and will seek to promote and enhance this asset for the enjoyment of the public and visitors to the Town.

Policy ECD 23

To protect and enhance Dungarvan's architectural and cultural heritage as a strong tourism product in a sustainable manner.

Objective ECD 6

To identify and develop visitor trails where appropriate and sustainable to promote heritage, open to the public and make accessible.

Objective ECD 7

To retain and protect the unique architectural heritage of Dungarvan .

5.14 Fisheries and Aquaculture

The harbour in the Town is active with a range of marine uses. Heilbhc, an active fishery and aquaculture area, is situated to the south of Dungarvan. The Council recognises the need to sustain and support fisheries and aquaculture whether directly or indirectly associated with the town. In this regard, development potential will be promoted and facilitated.

Policy ECD 24

To support and co-operate with the appropriate development agencies in the provision of vital infrastructure at appropriate sustainable locations for fisheries and aquaculture activity.

Policy ECD 25

To support and promote the sustainable development of the aquaculture sector, in order to maximise its contribution to jobs and the growth of coastal communities.

5.15 Prevention of Major Accidents

The Seveso Directive seeks to prevent major industrial accidents involving dangerous substances and to limit the consequences of accidents on people and the environment. Industrial developments coming within the ambit of the Seveso Directives shall be given special consideration, and shall be controlled under the EU Control of Major Accident Hazards involving Dangerous Substances Regulations 2000. (Refer to Development Standards, Chapter 10).

Policy ECD 26

To adhere to the Major Accidents Directive (Seveso 11) and the requirements of the Health and Safety Authority in the assessment of new development/expansion of existing developments involving hazardous substances.