

# DRAFT KERRY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028



**VOLUME ONE -  
WRITTEN STATEMENT**



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# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION





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## 1.0 Introduction

This Chapter sets out the legislative background to the Plan, the context in which the Plan is produced and the overall structure of the Plan. This Chapter also sets out the context for the Council's 10 Main Goals which are underpinned by the Strategic Core Principles (as set out in 3.4). These permeate all Policy Objectives in the Plan and are supported through an increased focus on implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

### 1.1 Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028 - Purpose, Vision, and Goals

The Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028 incorporates aims, objectives, policies, and guidelines to provide for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Kerry. The County Development Plan is a spatial planning framework that gives effect to the delivery of sustainable and planned economic and social development in a manner consistent with higher level plans and strategies such as Project Ireland, 2040 National Planning Framework Ireland and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES), 2020. Essentially it establishes a broad framework for the way in which our economy, society, environment, and the use of land should evolve over its lifetime.

**The Vision of the Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028 is as follows: -**

“The Vision is to provide for the development of County Kerry as an attractive, competitive and sustainable place to live, visit and do business, and where the quality of employment and educational opportunities, natural and built environment, cultural experiences and the strength and viability of its rural and urban communities are to the highest standards”

**The Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028 has ten main goals for the future development of the county:**

1. The growth of a **Sustainable and Strong Economy**
2. The transition to a **Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society**
3. Attract inward **Investment and People** into the County
4. Enhance **Physical and Digital** connectivity internally, across the broader region and internationally
5. Promote a **Socially Inclusive** County
6. Create attractive **Vibrant Compact Settlements** that provide a high quality of life for our citizens
7. Strengthen the fabric of **Rural Areas and Villages** and support the communities who live there
8. Maintain and provide additional **Services** for our citizens, investors, and visitors
9. Protect and enhance the **Natural and Built Environment**
10. The development of Kerry as a **Healthy and Age friendly** County with **Life-Long Learning** opportunities



## 1.2 County Overview

The administrative area of Kerry covers an area of over 4,807km<sup>2</sup> and is the second largest county in Munster. It adjoins Cork to the east and Limerick to the north. The strong functional relationship between these three counties results in Kerry being a vital supporting partner in the development of a strong Southern region.

Kerry has a population of over 147,707 people<sup>1</sup> accommodated in a network of attractive towns, villages and across its rural area. Many of these settlements have a high degree of self-containment, operating as significant local employment and service centres for large rural hinterlands.

The County possesses a diverse range of landscapes, including extensive areas of impressive coastlines and sizeable mountain ranges including Ireland's highest mountain peak, Carrauntoohil. Kerry's coastal areas contain some of our most vibrant and culturally distinctive communities and form an integral part of the State's heritage and have a special significance in Irish culture. Kerry is renowned internationally for its attractiveness and as one of Ireland's premier tourist destinations.

Kerry is a rural county undergoing a transformation into a modern, ambitious, vibrant, and outward-looking county. It is a diverse county, with important regional towns, a landscape of outstanding beauty, rich culture and heritage, major marine potential and is home to significant national, international, and global leading companies, a tourism industry of both national and international significance and a thriving agriculture, fishery, and forestry sector.

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<sup>1</sup> Census 2016

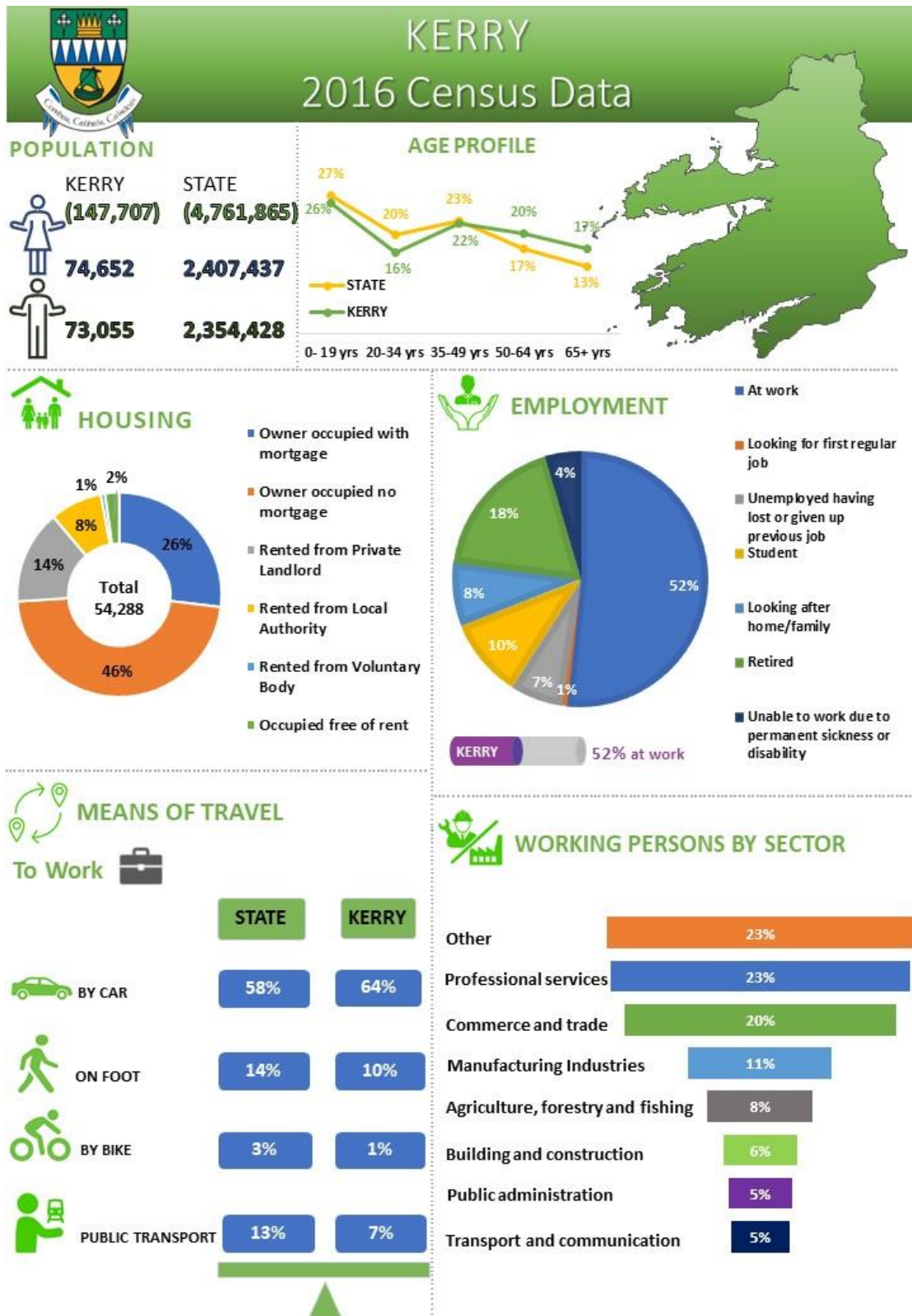


Figure 1.1: Kerry at a Glance



Kerry through its geographical location has strong economic, educational, cultural and access links to both Limerick (Mid-West) and Cork (South-West), and this has been evident through Kerry's association with Limerick and Cork at various times through regional planning, tourism, and economic development bodies. Links to Cork have recently been strengthened with the merger of Tralee and Cork Institutes of Technology to form the Munster Technological University.

Kerry is also located within the Atlantic Economic Corridor region and on the Wild Atlantic Way tourism route, both drivers of economic growth and investment. Kerry has a strong internal economic core comprising of the linked hub towns of Tralee, Killarney and by extension Killorglin forming a knowledge triangle (Kerry Hub & Knowledge Triangle). Both Tralee, Killarney and by extension Killorglin offer a higher range of functions than similarly sized towns nationally, including the new third level Munster Technological University, infused with local job supported platforms and local industry, public and private hospitals, and a strong and vibrant internationally renowned tourism industry.

In spite of Kerry's proximity to the major adjacent urban metropolitan areas of Limerick and Cork, research based on commuting workflow patterns shows that Kerry residents remain largely dependent on economic activity within the county to generate employment opportunities.

Sustaining population growth in the county and retaining graduates requires a dynamic internal economy based on expanding indigenous industries, enhancing the reputation of the county through the development of centres of excellence and in attracting industry to the county. The Kerry Hub & Knowledge Triangle is identified in the Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) as an economic driver for the Region and its future growth is key to the sustainable development of the county through the provision of employment opportunities, high level training and research opportunities as well as being a catalyst for further economic activity in the more peripheral areas of the county.

### **1.3 Legal Context**

The legal basis, function and adoption process for Development Plans is set out in the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). The County Development Plan sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the county. It sets out the policy framework and a Core Strategy within which development throughout the county is promoted and regulated over the six-year period of the plan.

The Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2018 enacted legislative requirements, to enable the co-ordinated and timely incorporation of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the relevant RSES into each City or County Development Plan. Section 11(1) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 as amended, sets out legal provisions which either suspended or deferred county development plan processes, or required plans to commence variation or review processes within six months of the making of the RSES. The RSES for the Southern Region came into effect on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020.

Subsequent to this legislation an order made under Section 251A of the Planning and Development, Act 2000, as amended, on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2020 has also resulted in an extension of time for a range of specified/appropriate periods and timelines under this Act, and a number of other related Planning Acts and associated regulations. These two legislative amendments delayed the commencement of the review of the Development Plan until June 2020.

### **1.4 Plan Review Process**

The review of the Kerry County Development Plan commenced on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2020 with an initial phase of Public Consultation based on the Strategic Issues Document prepared to promote discussion. Due to the Covid 19



pandemic public open days were not held as per government guidelines. Two public webinars were held at which planning officials were present. A total of 204 submissions (written, online and e-mail) were received.

The Chief Executive's Report on submissions received was considered by the Elected Members and directions regarding the policies and objectives to be contained in the Plan were issued to the Chief Executive at a meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021. This Draft Plan has been prepared having regard to the directions received from the Elected Members. Following the preparation of the Draft plan it was considered by the Elected Members at a series of meetings on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of October and the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> of November and this Draft Plan now incorporates amendments made by the Elected Members at those meetings. The Draft Plan will go on Public Display for a period of 10 weeks. The Development Plan Review Process and Indicative Timeline set out in Table 1.1 outlines the entire process involved in the preparation and adoption of the Development Plan.

The Schedule set out in **Table 1.1** below outlines the statutory process and indicative key dates involved in the preparation and adoption of this plan.

<b>Development Plan Review Process and Indicative Timeline</b>	
Publication of Council's intention to review County Development Plan – initial phase of Public Consultation (Strategic Issues Paper prepared in consultation with Elected Members)	June 2020
Presentation of Chief Executive's Report on submissions received during initial phase of Public Consultation	March 2021
Direction from Members to Chief Executive to prepare Draft Development Plan	March 2021
Draft Plan prepared for presentation to the Members of the Council	Sept 2021
Consideration and adoption of Draft County Development Plan by the Members of the Council	Nov 2021
Draft Plan (as amended by elected members) on Public Display for minimum period of 10 weeks	Dec 2021
Preparation of Chief Executive's Report on Draft Plan	Estimate Feb 2022
Member's consideration of Chief Executive's Report and any amendments to Draft Plan	Estimate April 2022
Public consultation on amendments – 4 weeks	Estimate Aug 2022
Members consider Chief Executive's Report on submissions and amendments and Adoption of County Development Plan	Estimate Sept 2022

**Table 1.1: Development Plan Review Process and Indicative Timeline**

## 1.5 Implementation and Monitoring

It is important for a Plan to be monitored to assess its effectiveness and to ensure the implementation of its objectives. A development plan must also be able to respond to changing circumstances during its lifetime.



Monitoring will identify issues with objectives and allow suitable corrective action to be taken. It will also identify whether the Plan remains consistent with national and regional policy, and where changes occur at national and/or regional level, advise whether the Plan should be varied as necessary to ensure consistency with these higher-level plans.

In accordance with Section 15 of the Act, within two years of making the Plan, the Chief Executive must give a report to Members of the Planning Authority on the progress achieved in securing the objectives in the Plan. The Planning Authority can take such steps within its powers as may be necessary for securing the objectives of the Plan.

The Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2007 and the recently published draft Guidelines 2021 (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government) recommend that an annual monitoring and evaluation report is prepared. This report will facilitate the identification of any issues concerning the implementation of the Plan. It will inform the two-year review required by Section 15 of the Act. It will also inform the mandatory review of the existing Plan and preparation of a new Plan required by Section 11 of the Act, which must be commenced not later than four years after the making of the Plan. See Volume 1, Appendices for further information on Implementation and Monitoring.

### **1.6 Public Participation**

Consultation with the public is fundamental to the Plan making process. However, having regard to COVID restrictions a number of alternative consultation methods were employed including the use of webinars, online workshops with all SPC's and the use of video conferencing with members of the public and relevant stakeholders. These methods of consultation proved successful as there was a 264% increase in submissions received on the Strategic Issues document published in June 2020 compared to that published in March 2013 that began the process of preparing the previous County Development Plan.

The various issues arising from the consultation process informed the preparation of this Draft Plan. Further Public Consultation will be undertaken at later stages in the Plan process as set out in **Table 1.1** above.

### **1.7 Sustainable Development Interpretation**

Throughout the Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028 the term "*Sustainable*" is used widely. Sustainable development is defined as that which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

For the purposes of this plan, the conservation of species and habitats in accordance with the requirements of the EU Habitats and Birds Directives is considered to be a vital component of sustainable strategies, policies, and objectives. Similarly, where the term '*at appropriate locations*' is used within this plan, the protection of the Natura 2000 network inherently applies. Therefore, all policies and objectives supported by the plan are required to be carried out in a manner which does not adversely affect Natura 2000 sites. In addition, the plan only supports strategies plans and projects or aspects of same which are compatible with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

### **1.8 Format and Content of the Plan**

This Draft Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and fully complies with the mandatory requirements for preparation of a Development Plan. These consist of, inter alia, objectives for the zoning of land, the provision of infrastructure, the conservation and protection of the environment, and the integration of the planning and sustainable development with the social, community and cultural requirements of the area and its population. It is also a requirement to prepare a 'core strategy' for the County, which must be consistent, as far as practicable, with National and Regional development objectives as set out in the National Planning Framework (NPF) and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES).

The County Development Plan does not seek to duplicate or re-invent other County strategies such as Tourism and Economic development strategies for the County. While these allied strategies influence its preparation, the focus of the Plan is on physical development and land-use and how it can help to achieve the sustainable economic and social development of the County.

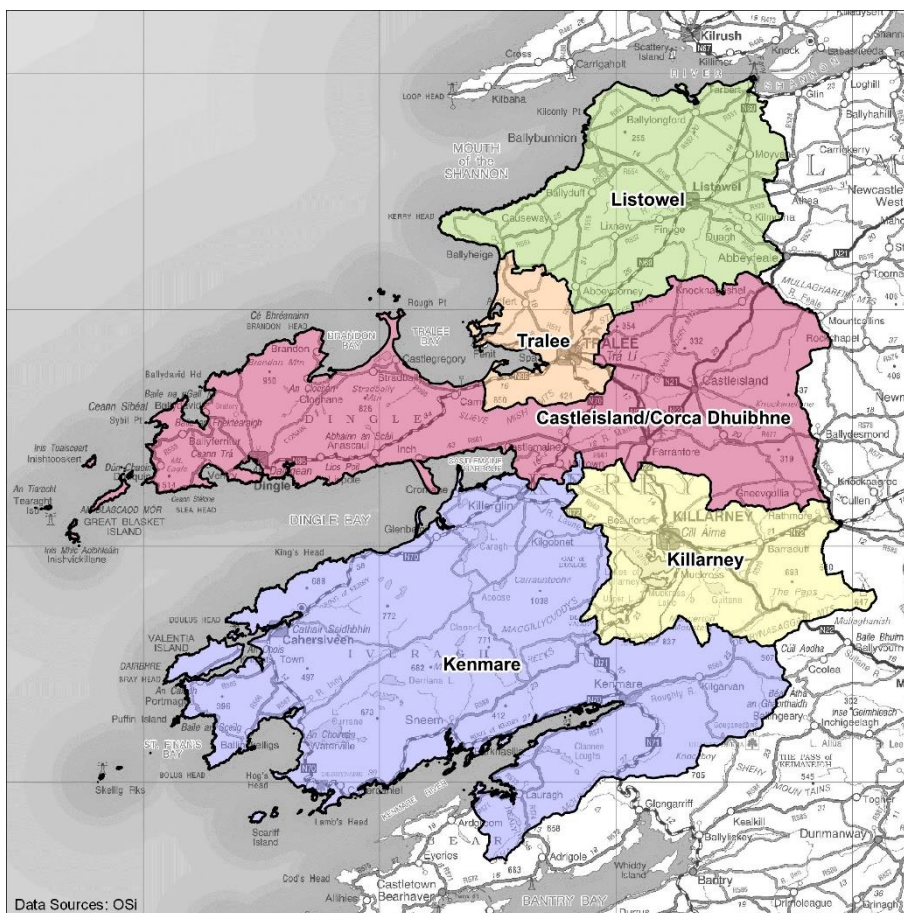
### 1.8.1 Tralee, Killarney, and Listowel Town Development Plans 2019-2015 (as extended & varied)

The Tralee, Killarney, and Listowel Town Development Plans 2009-2015 (as extended and varied) are being incorporated into this plan and they are contained in Volume 2. This CDP is the first consolidated County Development Plan for the entire County of Kerry, (including the former Town Council areas of Tralee, Killarney, and Listowel). The County Plan includes updated land use and zoning frameworks in respect of the towns of Tralee, Killarney and Listowel and consolidates their associated written texts. This plan will set out the policies and objectives for the future development of the towns of Tralee, Killarney, and Listowel, including compliance with the core strategy for the County. The land-use zoning maps for each town are included in Volume 2.

### 1.8.2 Municipal Districts/Electoral Areas

The electoral structure of the County was reconfigured following the re-organisation of local government in 2014. The County is now divided into five municipal districts, for electoral and local government purposes. The five districts are:

- Tralee
- Killarney
- Listowel
- Kenmare
- Castleisland/Corca Dhuibhne



Map 1.1: County Kerry Municipal Districts



### 1.8.3 Local Area Plan Programme

A planned programme to prepare Local Area Plans (LAPs) in respect of Municipal Districts and other defined geographical areas commenced in 2018 and will continue following the completion of the County Development Plan.

Recently adopted LAPs for the following Municipal Districts are as follows:

- Tralee MD LAP 2018-2024
- Killarney MD LAP 2018-2024
- West Iveragh LAP 2019-2025
- Listowel MD LAP 2020-2026
- Corca Dhuibhne EA LAP 2021-2027

The indicative timescale for the remaining South Kerry (East Iveragh) LAP is Q4 2022.

### 1.8.4 Structure of the Development Plan

This Plan consists of 6 Volumes.

#### Volume 1

Main written statement which covers topic-based strategies. Each topic includes policies and objectives to assist in achieving the goals of the Plan.

#### Volume 1 A

- Written Statement Appendices

#### Volume 2

Contains the Town Development Plans and Zoning Maps for:

- Tralee
- Killarney
- Listowel

#### Volume 3

Consists of a number of Appendices which also form part of this Plan.

- List & Maps of Public Rights of Way
- National Monuments & Registered Monuments
- Archaeological Landscapes
- Record of Protected Structures
- Architectural Conservation Areas

#### Volume 4

This volume contains the following maps associated with the Plan:

- Tralee, Killarney & Listowel Zoning Maps
- Rural Area Types
- Visually Sensitive landscapes & Views/Prospects
- Wind Zoning
- Ballylongford Landbank and Tarbert Island

#### Volume 5

The Plan preparation process requires 3 no. different Environmental Assessments. The environmental assessments provide information on a number of environmental factors and inform policy makers and the public of the effects the plan, when implemented, will have on certain elements of the environment. The three assessments are:





1. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) which assesses the likely significant effects the Plan will have on the environment.
2. An Appropriate Assessment (AA), contained in a Natura Impact Report (NIR), which assesses the likelihood for adverse effects on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network
3. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) of flood risk in the plan area.

### **Volume 6**

Consists of a number of Strategies and policy documents which also form part of this Plan.

- Development Management Standards & Guidelines
- Land-Use Zoning and Zoning Matrix
- Housing Strategy/Housing Demand Need Assessment (HDNA)
- Biodiversity Action Plan

## **1.9 Planning Policy Context**

The preparation of this Development Plan which is a land use plan has been influenced by a number of strategic international, national, regional, and local strategies/reports. The preparation has also been influenced by the Covid 19 Emergency and Brexit.

### **1.9.1. Global Context**

#### **1.9.1.1 Covid 19 Emergency and Brexit**

This preparation of the Plan has come at a challenging time as society and the economy emerge from the severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The recovery of our economy and the rebuilding of our social and community networks will pose significant challenges in the immediate future and will be crucial for the overall development of the County. Kerry County Council has with key stakeholders from the public, private and community sectors in the County co-ordinated a response to the economic and social challenges that COVID-19 has brought. In July 2021 a multisectoral COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan 2021 was agreed by Council which sets out the opportunities and actions which will support this recovery. The Covid 19 emergency has also highlighted many of the County's strengths including community spirit and the importance of outdoor amenity spaces and high quality urban and rural environments.

The impacts of Brexit will only become apparent over the lifetime of the Plan. While it is too early to assess the long-term impacts of these trends it is important to continue monitoring and adjusting policies as required over the Plan period. While there may be negative impacts there will also be opportunities created in the County.

#### **1.9.1.2 UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030**

The UN 2030 Agenda is a plan of action for people, the planet and prosperity which seeks to better incorporate sustainability into planning and policy. The plan sets out 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that integrate the three indivisible dimensions of sustainable development – 1) Economic, 2) Social and 3) Environmental (see Figure 1.2).



**Figure 1.2: UN Sustainable Development Goals**

Subsequently Ireland prepared a Sustainable Development Goal National Implementation Plan 2018-2020 which provides a framework for how Ireland will achieve the 17 no. SDGs domestically by 2030 and support their global implementation. It reflects Ireland's 'whole-of-government' approach to the SDGs, which will see the mainstreaming of the SDGs across national policies. Many of the measures through which Ireland will achieve the SDGs will take place within the context of Project Ireland 2040 (made up of the National Planning Framework to 2040 and the National Development Plan 2018-2027), which is the Government's overarching policy initiative to make Ireland a better country for all people. These in turn filter down into regional and accordingly Development Plan policy.

Compliance with the Sustainable Development Goals is a main tenet of this Development Plan. These thematic goals have been deeply embedded within the Policies and Objectives of the Plan and consideration of same forms part of the plans reporting and monitoring requirements.

The context for same is further set out in Chapter 2: Achieving a Sustainable Future. As part of this a particular focus is given to Climate Change which is a global threat with local consequences. While uncertainties surround the magnitude and extent of climate change impacts, the Council is committed to addressing climate change in a proactive manner through the careful consideration of policy guidance and strategies. Unprecedented pressures on the world's biodiversity are also recognised.

## 1.9.2 European Context

### 1.9.2.1 Europe 2020

European spatial planning is closely interlinked with a number of trans-national, regional, economic, and environmental policies and programmes. The European Union's cohesion policy is currently divided into 11 no. Thematic Objectives (TO) (see Figure 1.3), aimed at reducing disparities in the development of its territories and to contribute to the priorities of smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth envisaged by the Strategy 'Europe 2020'.



**Figure 1.3: 11 EU Thematic Objectives**

Europe 2020 Strategy is the European Union's (EU) agenda for growth and jobs, emphasising smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth as a way to overcome the structural weaknesses in Europe's economy, improve its competitiveness and productivity and underpin a sustainable social market economy. The next EU programming period 2021-2027 is under development, and there is an emerging convergence of territorial and cohesion policy in this process, which will give greater focus on the delivery of national and regional spatial policy. The European Commission has proposed a new framework for the future Regional Development and Cohesion Policy that identifies 5 no. main objectives:

1. A smarter Europe (innovative and smart economic transformation).
2. A greener, low-carbon Europe (including energy transition, the circular economy, climate adaptation and risk management).
3. A more connected Europe (mobility and ICT connectivity).
4. A more social Europe (European Pillar of Social Rights).
5. A Europe closer to citizens (sustainable development of urban, rural, and coastal areas and local initiatives).

These have been translated and integrated into the County Development Plan policy as appropriate. By ensuring good policy alignment, the Development Plan can drive investment that is targeted towards identified priorities at European, national, regional, and local scale, assisting in identifying partnership opportunities and leveraging funding from EU Regional Operational Programmes.

### 1.9.2.2 European Green Deal - 2019

The European Green Deal is a new growth strategy that aims to transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient, and competitive economy where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050 and where economic growth is decoupled from resource use. It is about improving the well-being of people, making Europe climate neutral and protecting the natural habitat which will be good for people, the planet, and the economy. The aims of the Green Deal are for Europe to become climate-neutral by 2050; to protect human life, animals, and plants by cutting pollution; to help companies become world leaders in clean products and technologies; and to help ensure a just and inclusive transition.

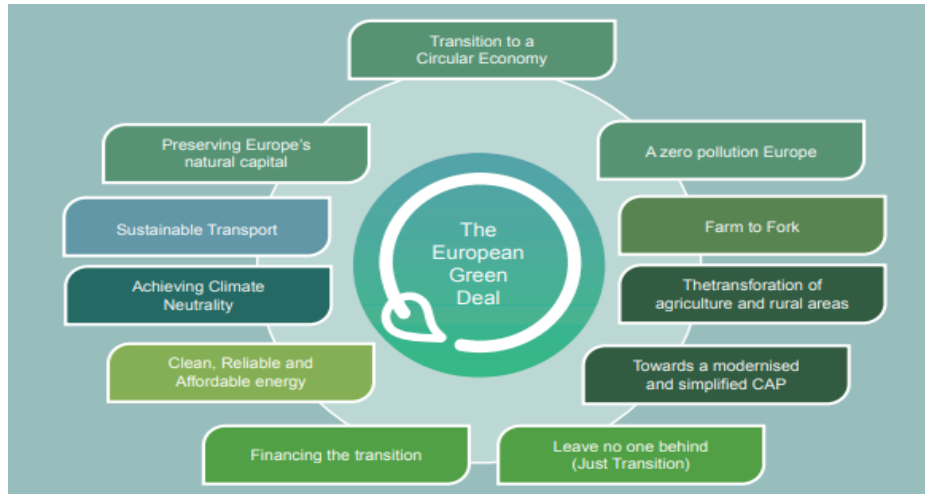


Figure 1.4: The European Green Deal



Figure 1.5: National Strategic Outcomes - NPF

**1.9.3. National Planning Context**

**1.9.3.1 Project Ireland 2040**

Project Ireland 2040 is the Government’s overarching policy initiative to make Ireland a better country for all, a country that reflects the best of who we are and what we aspire to be. Project Ireland 2040 comprises the National Planning Framework 2040 (NPF) and the National Development Plan 2018-2027.

**1.9.3.2 National Development Plan**

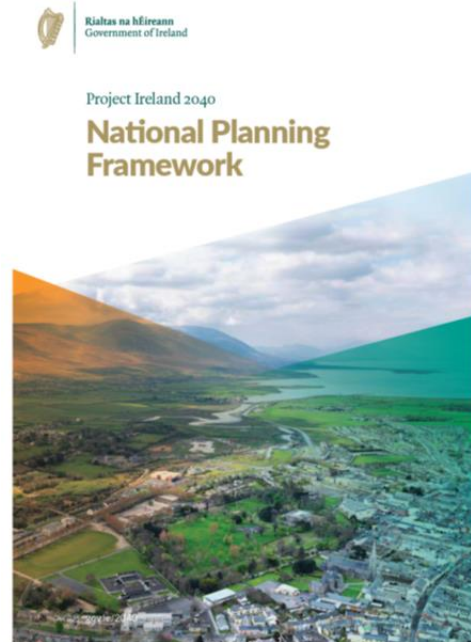
The National Development Plan 2018 - 2027 (NDP) sets out the investment priorities that will underpin the implementation of the National Planning Framework.

**1.9.3.3 National Planning Framework**

The NPF projects that our national population will grow by one million in the next 20 years. This will require an enormous shift in thinking to plan how and where people live, work, and travel, and to ensure a more balanced growth away from the overconcentration of population, homes, and jobs in the Greater Dublin Area. The plan is guided by the National Strategic Outcomes and the Strategic Investment Priorities in the NPF.

The NPF's sets the context for Regional and Development Plans through 10 National Strategic Outcomes (NSO's).

1. **Compact Growth;** Creating more attractive places in which people can live and work through managing the sustainable growth of compact towns and villages.
2. **Enhanced Regional Accessibility;** Enhancing accessibility between key urban centres of population and their regions.
3. **Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities;** Strengthening rural areas to play a key role in defining our identity, in driving our economy and our high-quality environment.
4. **Sustainable Mobility;** As part of the national climate mitigation plan support the use of electric vehicles and smarter travel initiatives in the county.
5. **A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills;** Building regional economic drivers and by supporting opportunities to diversify and strengthen the rural economy, to leverage the potential of places.
6. **High-Quality International Connectivity;** Improving access to our ports and airports.
7. **Enhanced Amenities and Heritage;** Ensuring that our towns and villages are attractive and can offer a good quality of life. Investing in well-designed public realm, which includes public spaces, parks, and streets, as well as recreational infrastructure. Providing amenities in rural areas, such as national and forest parks, activity-based tourism, and trails such as greenways, blueways and peatways.
8. **Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society;** The National Climate Policy Position establishes the national objective of achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050.
9. **Sustainable Management of Water, Waste, and other Environmental Resources;** Conserving and enhancing the quality of these resources will also become more important in a crowded and competitive world as well as our capacity to create beneficial uses from products previously considered as waste, creating circular economic benefits.
10. **Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services;** Good access to a range of quality education and health services, relative to the scale of a region, city, town, neighbourhood, or community is a defining characteristic of attractive, successful, and competitive places. Compact, smart growth in urban areas and strong and stable rural communities will enable the enhanced and effective provision of a range of accessible services.



This framework sets out the vision for the future development and investment in Ireland until 2040. In terms of overall population and employment growth and new housing provision, the five cities of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway, and Waterford will be targeted to accommodate 50% of overall national growth between them, with Ireland's range of large and smaller towns, villages and rural areas accommodating the other 50%.

An efficient use of land is essential for sustainable development. The National Planning Framework (NPF) acknowledges that the physical format of urban development is one of our greatest national development challenges and identified compact growth as one of the National Strategic Outcomes. This entails delivering a greater proportion of residential development and other development within the existing built-up area of settlements and moving away from a reliance on greenfield development to meet our development needs.



Creating more compact development has been traditionally more difficult to achieve than a continuous process of pushing development onto Greenfield locations.

In order to address rural decline, a significant proportion of national population and economic growth will be targeted at building up the fabric of smaller towns, villages and rural areas with emphasis placed on redeveloping derelict and under-utilised lands inside small towns and villages.

Specifically, the NPF requires that 30% of all new homes will be delivered within the existing built-up footprint of settlements. This applies to all scales of settlements within the County, from the Key towns to villages. This will require making better use of underutilised land including infill and brownfield sites.

The NPFs, National Policy Objective 15 supports the sustainable development of rural areas by encouraging growth and arresting decline in areas that have experienced low population growth or decline in recent decades and by managing the growth of areas that are under strong urban influence to avoid over-development, while sustaining vibrant rural communities.

While the National Planning Framework has a long-term vision to 2040, the specific focus of this County Plan is to 2028. The level of change required by the NPF cannot be implemented immediately and it will take several cycles of the County Development Plan process to achieve change to long-term patterns of sustainable development. This County Plan is primarily concerned with setting the course to embed that long-term sustainable change.

#### 1.9.3.4 Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025

Our Rural Future provides a National framework for the development of rural Ireland over the coming years. As a predominantly rural county the policy document is of particular relevance to Kerry. The policy document seeks to put the development and regeneration of our rural towns and villages at the heart of decision making so that they are vibrant centres where people can live, work, and socialise, with walking, cycling and public transport options connecting people and places. Key deliverables contained in the policy document relate to the following areas: -

- Remote working – supported by the rollout of the National Broadband Plan,
- Revitalising Rural Towns and Villages,
- Jobs for Rural Ireland,
- Rural Living,
- Rural Ireland’s Unique Tourism, Culture & Heritage,
- Supporting Communities to create their own future,
- Agriculture, the Marine and Forestry,
- Island and Coastal Communities,
- Transitioning to a climate neutral economy.

These considerations have been integrated throughout the plan including within the Core Strategy of the plan and Chapter 9 Economic Development.

#### 1.9.3.5 Housing for All - a New Housing Plan for Ireland

‘Housing for All - a New Housing Plan for Ireland’, which was launched in September 2021, is the government’s housing plan to 2030. It is a multi-annual, multi-billion euro plan which targets the improvement of Ireland’s housing system and delivery of more homes of all types for people with different housing needs. The government’s overall objective is that every citizen in the State should have access to good quality homes: -



- to purchase or rent at an affordable price
- built to a high standard and in the right place
- offering a high quality of life

The government's vision for the housing system over the longer term is to achieve a steady supply of housing in the right locations with economic, social, and environmental sustainability built into the system. It is estimated that Ireland will need an average of 33,000 new homes to be provided each year from 2021 to 2030. The policy has four pathways to achieving housing for all: -

- supporting home ownership and increasing affordability
- eradicating homelessness, increasing social housing delivery, and supporting social inclusion
- increasing new housing supply
- addressing vacancy and efficient use of existing stock

**Housing for All** impacts on the policies contained in the Development Plan in relation to the regeneration of towns and villages, accelerating the delivery of residential accommodation, land acquisition, diversification of housing types, the provision of housing for needs, unlocking vacant dwellings, heritage properties and land, developing a skilled workforce, the provision of water & wastewater infrastructure, and dealing with construction waste. At the time of publication of this Draft Plan the **Housing for All** objectives and actions have recently been announced and will be refined over the coming months particularly through the publication of Section 28 guidelines and other amending regulatory provisions. The plan supports the implementation of the objectives of the Housing for All Plan.

#### **1.9.3.6 Straitéis 20 Bliain Don Ghaeilge 2010-2030 (20 Year strategy for the Irish language)**

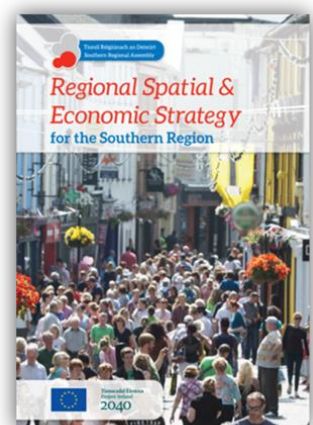
The Strategy 2010-2030 outlines the economic, social, and cultural development policies for the Gaeltacht and contains particular policies for cultural and linguistic initiatives and language-based projects. In this context, particular importance is attached to the preservation and promotion of Irish in the Gaeltacht in relation to conserving and protecting the heritage, culture, and richness of the language where it remains as a household and community language.

#### **1.9.4 Regional Planning Context**

##### **1.9.4.1 Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Southern Region 2020 (RSES)**

RSES provides a long-term, strategic development framework for the future physical, economic, and social development of the Southern Region. The RSES sets out the following vision for the Southern Region:

- Nurture all places to realise their full potential
- Protect, and enhance the environment
- Successfully combat climate change
- Achieve economic prosperity and improved quality of life for all our citizens
- Accommodate expanded growth and development in suitable locations



The RSES seeks to achieve balanced regional development and full implementation of Project Ireland 2040 – the National Planning Framework. It will be implemented in partnership with local authorities and state agencies to deliver on this vision and build a cohesive and sustainable region. The RSES came into effect on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020.

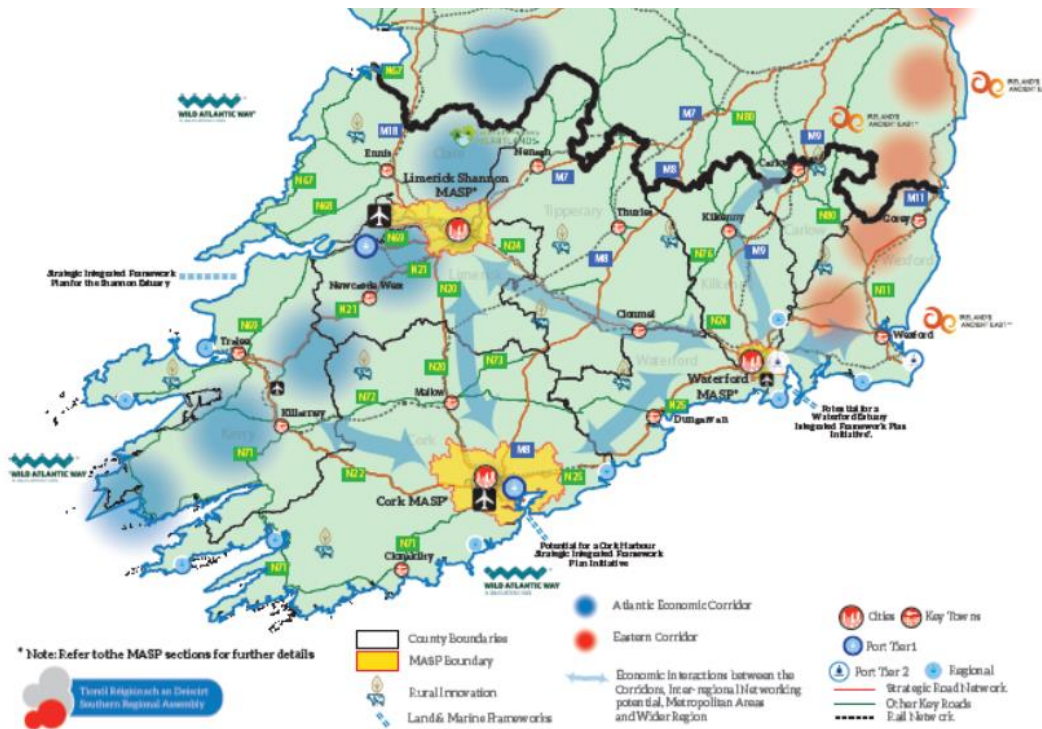


Figure 1.6: RSES Strategy Map

#### Key Elements of RSES include:

- RSES consolidates the NPF National Strategic Outcome of compact growth, through strengthening the 3 three cities, while identifying Key towns for growth throughout the region including Tralee & Killarney.
- In relation to enhanced regional connectivity, the RSES provides for upgraded transport and digital links in the Region.
- RSES provides for the strengthening of and improving quality of life in the Regions' diverse rural areas.
- RSES supports the provision of sustainable mobility, through public transport, walking, cycling and electric vehicles.
- The ambition is for a competitive, innovative and productive economy in the region.
- RSES prioritises actions of Climate Change across the Region, driving the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient economy.
- RSES seeks to optimise the Region's international connectivity.
- The strategy supports the Region's diversity, language and culture, the recreational assets and the natural and build heritage.
- Sustainable plan-led development.
- RSES supports the concept of a Healthy and learning Region and an inclusive International Region.

The policies and objectives that are appropriate to the needs and future growth of the County have been influenced by the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) for





the Southern Region. The themes and objectives outlined above are expanded through the policies and objectives contained in the various sections of the County Development Plan.

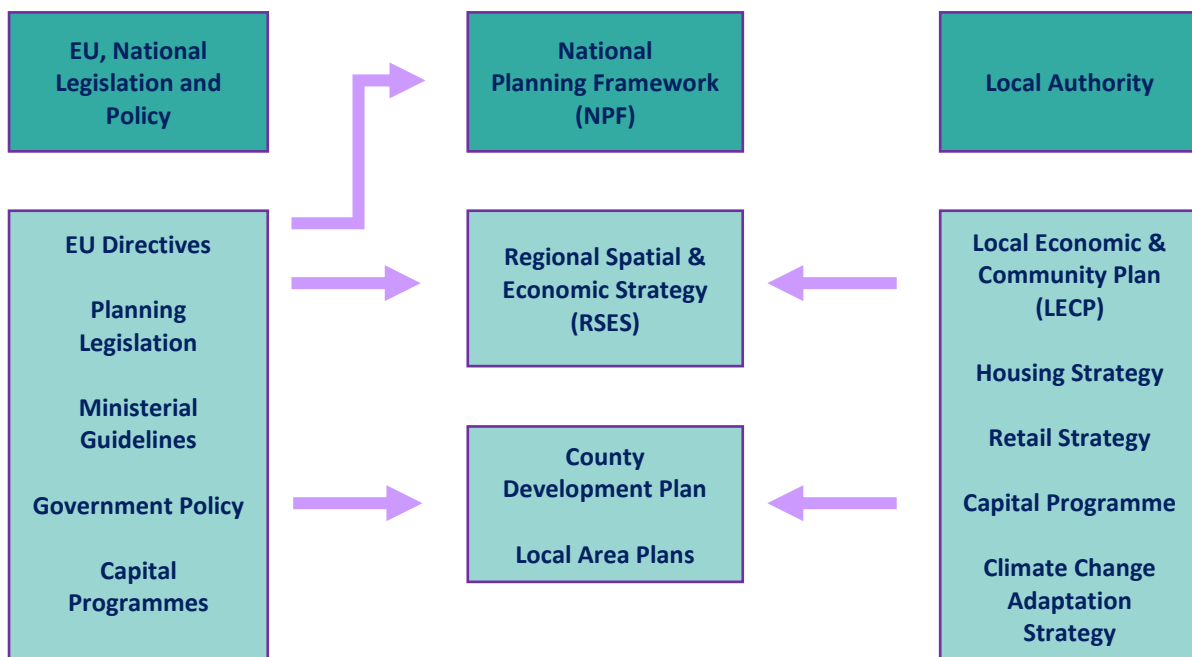
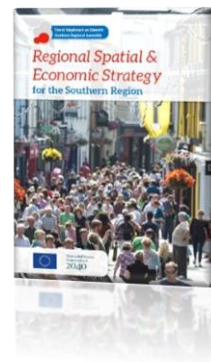
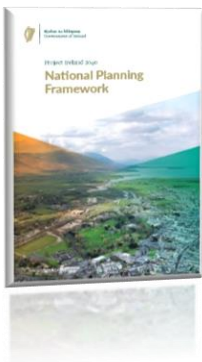
**1.9.4.2 South West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020**

This plan builds on the success of the Action Plan for Jobs for the South-West Region 2015-2017. This Plan has identified particular strengths and opportunities in the South West. Like the National Action Plan for Jobs, the Plan for the South West sets out a series of commitments on the part of public bodies, complemented by some actions from the private sector, which will support enterprise growth and job creation. The plan seeks to ensure that it remains effective and that it continues to deliver jobs across the South-West region and can be robust to address the challenges we face, including Brexit.

**1.9.5 Local Context**

**1.9.5.1 Kerry Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2022**

The Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2022 sits alongside the County Development Plan providing a stronger and clearer role for local government in economic and community development. This framework underpins the vision set out in the *Putting People First: Action Programme for Effective Local Government* (DoECLG). The Local Economic Community Plan 2016-2022 is a key document that significantly influences the Development Plan.



**Figure 1.7: Development Plan Context**



Central to the LECP is the marketing of the county as a place to invest, live and to visit. While this will be led by the public sector, existing firms in the county will play a pivotal role in promoting the positive experience of both doing business and living in Kerry. It is crucial to build on the history of entrepreneurship in the county, through brand leaders such as Kerry Group (Listowel), Dairymaster (Causeway), Dingle Distillery (Daingean Uí Chúis) and Fexco (Killorglin).

#### **1.9.5.2 County Kerry Tourism Strategy & Action Plan 2016-2022**

The Tourism Strategy forms an integral part of Kerry County Council's Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2022. The strategy sets out to maximise, in a sustainable manner, tourism's contribution to the quality of life, economy, employment and local community development, paying particular attention to nurturing and protecting the natural, built, cultural and linguistic heritage of the county.

#### **1.9.5.3 KCC Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024**

Kerry is located within the Atlantic Seaboard South Climate Action Region and is one of 4 Climate Action Regions. This region is considered the most climate susceptible of the four Climate Action Regions in Ireland, given its location with regards prevailing wind/storms and Atlantic weather fronts.

This Climate Change Adaptation Strategy is the start of the process of adaptation planning in Kerry County Council and is the first step in increasing knowledge and understanding of our changing climate, growing resilience, and enabling effective responses to the threats posed by climate change.

Kerry County Council's Vision is to *fulfil a leadership role in assessing and responding to the impacts of climate change, be fully engaged with the risks and opportunities of a changing climate and build a resilient future for and together with, the communities of County Kerry*. The Vision is promoted through the implementation of actions set out under high-level goals.

#### **1.9.5.4 Kerry County Council 2019-2024 Corporate Plan (as amended)**

The plan sets out the strategic direction, vision, and goals of Kerry County Council for the period to 2024.

The 8 strategic objectives are:

- Deliver Excellent Public Services to our Citizens
- Promote Economic Development, Support Enterprise, and Employment Creation
- Build Strong Influential Partnerships to maximise the County's potential
- Promote sustainability and support the transition to a Low Carbon Economy and Lead on Climate Action
- Develop organisational capacity through innovation and staff excellence
- Build sustainable infrastructure to meet the needs of our citizens, communities, and business needs for the future
- Engage the Wider Community, increase participation while promoting social inclusion, equality, human rights, and age friendly measures
- Deliver an effective COVID-19 Response & economic recovery programme



The mission statement of the **Kerry County Council Corporate Plan 2019-2024** is to *'lead the economic, social, cultural and environmental improvement of our county in a sustainable manner to make our county a great place to live, visit, learn, work, do business and invest. We will honour the past and embrace the future, recognising our unique cultural and social and sporting heritage and our Gaeltacht. Gach rud is féidir a dhéanamh chun saol na ndaoine agus na gcuairteoirí a fheabhsú (To do all that we can to improve the lives of the people and visitors)'*

#### **1.9.5.5 County Kerry's COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan 2021**

The County Kerry's COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan 2021 provides an overall framework for the economic development of the County in the short to medium term and has been developed as a response to the challenges and opportunities facing the Kerry Economy. This document has been integrated into the plan, as appropriate and is also included as an appendix to the plan for reference purposes.

### **1.10 Environmental Statement and Assessments**

Pursuant to Section 10 (1)(D) of the Planning & Development Acts as amended, a development plan must include a written statement which shows that the development objectives in the development plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with the conservation and protection of the environment.

#### **1.10.1 Environmental Assessments and Considerations**

The County Development Plan preparation process requires 3 (no.) separate Environmental Assessments. The environmental assessments provide information on a number of environmental factors and inform policy makers and the public of the effects the plan, when implemented, will have on certain elements of the environment.

The three assessments are: -

- A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) which assesses the likely significant effects the Plan will have on the environment.
- An Appropriate Assessment (AA), contained in a Natura Impact Report (NIR), which assesses the likelihood for adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites (Natura 2000 sites)
- A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) of flood risk in the plan area.

In addition, the Plan is required to and has taken into consideration other relevant environmental legislation and guidance including, the Water Framework Directive, Shellfish Directive, Wastewater Treatment Directive, the Wildlife Acts, National Monuments Acts, and Waste Management Acts.

#### **1.10.2 Environmental Statement**

This draft plan has undergone a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). None of these assessments have identified development objectives likely to have significant effects on the Environment or adverse impacts on Natura 2000 sites. It is therefore considered that the development objectives as set out in the Draft Plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with the conservation and protection of the environment.

The SEA, AA and the SFRA are ongoing assessments and will continue through the plan making process as amendments are made to this Draft Plan.



### **1.11 Statement of Implementation of Ministerial Guidelines**

In accordance with Section 28 of the Planning & Development Acts 2000-2019, a Planning Authority shall append to the Draft Development Plan, a statement that: -

- Demonstrates how the Planning Authority has implemented the policies and objectives of the Minister contained in Section 28 Guidelines when preparing the Draft Plan.
- If applicable, where a Planning Authority formed the opinion that it is not possible because of the nature and characteristics of the area, or part of the area, to implement certain policies and objectives of the Minister contained in the Guidelines; it shall give reasons for the forming of the opinion and why the policies and objectives of the Minister have not been so implemented.

It is considered that Ministerial Guidelines issued to Planning Authorities regarding their functions under the Planning Acts have been fully considered in the making of this Plan in accordance with Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended. These are outlined in Appendix 2 which is contained in Volume 1: Appendices.

## CHAPTER 2

# CLIMATE CHANGE & ACHIEVING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE







- 2.0 Climate Change and Achieving a Sustainable Future**
- 2.1 Introduction**
- 2.2 Climate Change**
- 2.3 Planning Context**
  - 2.3.1 Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)**
  - 2.3.2 National Policy – Context and Overview**
  - 2.3.3 Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021**
  - 2.3.4 National Adaptation Framework (NAF 2018)**
  - 2.3.5 Local Authority Adaptation Strategy Development Guidelines (2018)**
  - 2.3.6 Climate Action Plan (2019)**
  - 2.3.7 Project Ireland 2040**
  - 2.3.8 Programme for Government**
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- 2.5 Local Context**
  - 2.5.1 Kerry County Council Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024**
- 2.6 Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028 – Climate Action**
  - 2.6.1 Sustainable Land Use and Resource Efficiency**
  - 2.6.2 Sustainable Land Use and Decarbonisation**
    - 2.6.2.1 Transition to a Carbon Neutral Economy and Society**
    - 2.6.2.2 Energy Policy and Planning**
  - 2.6.3 Sustainable Land Use and Climate Resilience**
  - 2.6.4 Summary of Mitigation and Adaptation Measures Incorporated into the Plan**







## 2.0 Climate Change & Achieving a Sustainable Future

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out broad principles to provide for the sustainable development of County Kerry in a way which supports people and employment while transitioning to a low carbon society and which safeguards and enhances the environment. The policy context for sustainable development has previously been outlined in Chapter One (Introduction). Sustainable development principles including the UN Sustainability Goals have been integrated throughout the plan with a view to achieving a sustainable future for all.

### 2.2 Climate Change

Climate change includes major changes in temperature, precipitation or wind patterns that occur over several decades or longer. Climate change and the effects associated with it, present a significant challenge to everyone. It is acknowledged that global warming is contributing to climate change and that global warming is largely associated with human activity. The Council recognises that Climate Change is a global threat with local consequences. If unmanaged, climate change will have dramatic adverse effects on peoples' lives, the environment and the prospects for growth and development.

While uncertainties surround the magnitude and extent of climate change impacts, the Council is committed to addressing climate change in a proactive manner through the careful consideration of policy guidance and strategies. It is therefore necessary to address the long-term causes of climate change through reducing our greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) (mitigation), while adapting to its effects over the short, medium, and longer terms (adaptation).

Responding to climate change will pose challenges for Kerry and all of Ireland in the immediate future from now to 2030 and beyond to 2050. There are also opportunities, particularly in the areas of placemaking and offshore wind energy (the construction and servicing of same and potential spin off 'green' technologies and industrial development).

### 2.3 Planning Context

#### 2.3.1 Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires development plans to include various types of objectives, including those relating to climate mitigation and adaptation. Provisions for climate change are set out within Section 10 (2) (n). This includes requirements to:

- reduce energy demand in response to the likelihood of increases in energy, and other costs due to long-term decline in non-renewable resources.
- reduce anthropogenic (manmade) greenhouse gas emissions, and
- address the necessity of adaptation to climate change; in particular, having regard to location, layout, and design of new development. It is also a statutory requirement for local authorities to incorporate the promotion of sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas.

#### 2.3.2 National Policy - Context and Overview

The National Policy Context has been developed from International and European Climate Change Policies and Agreements, including the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol 1997, The EU Adaptation Strategy 2013, Paris Agreement 2015, UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2015, EU Climate and Energy Framework 2021-2030 and the European 'Green Deal' 2020.

At a national level, the National Policy Position on Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (2014) set out the national objective of achieving a transition to a low carbon economy. This was given legislative effect by the Climate Action and Low Carbon Act 2015. The Act provided for the development of a National Adaptation Framework (NAF) and the Climate Action Plan 2019. The NAF requires sectoral and local adaptation strategies



to be developed and the Council's Climate Adaptation Strategy is set in this context. The Climate Action Plan (2019) puts in place a decarbonisation pathway to 2030 consistent with the adoption of a net zero carbon emissions target at EU level by 2050. Current national policy is set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021.

### **2.3.3 Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021**

The Act provides for a national climate objective, which commits to pursue and achieve no later than 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity-rich, environmentally sustainable, and climate-neutral economy. Ireland is therefore now on a legally binding path to net-Zero emissions no later than 2050, and to a 51% reduction in emissions by the end of this decade.

The Act requires local authorities to prepare and update every five years individual Climate Action Plans which will include both mitigation and adaptation measures. The Act also requires that Local Authority Development Plans be aligned with their Climate Action Plan and that more generally that public bodies are required to take account of Climate Action plans in the performance of their functions.

### **2.3.4 National Adaptation Framework (NAF 2018)**

The National Adaptation Framework (NAF 2018) specifies the national strategy for the application of adaptation measures in different sectors, and by local authorities in their administrative areas, in order to reduce the vulnerability of the State to the negative effects of climate change and to avail of any positive effects that may occur. A key action under the NAF requires each local authority in the country to prepare local climate adaptation strategies, which KCC completed in 2019. The NAF also aims to improve the enabling environment for adaptation through ongoing engagement with civil society, the private sector, and the research community.

### **2.3.5 Local Authority Adaptation Strategy Development Guidelines (2018)**

The Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCA) developed the Local Authority Adaptation Strategy Development Guidelines 2018, in order to provide local authorities with support in developing their Climate Change Action Plans (CCAPs). In addition, the government has established 4 no. Climate Action Regional Offices (CAROs). In the case of County Kerry, the Atlantic Seaboard South office plays a central role in supporting and coordinating climate actions in the County.

### **2.3.6 Climate Action Plan (2019)**

The national Climate Action Plan 2019 put in place a decarbonisation pathway to 2030 consistent with the adoption of a net zero carbon emissions target at EU level by 2050. The Climate Action Plan initiates a set of policy actions to achieve a net zero carbon energy systems objective for Irish society. It highlights the requirement for a transformational shift of our economies and societies towards climate resilient and sustainable development and a profound change in the systems and practices which support our lifestyle.

It sets out that in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, climate action must be seen as complementary to other important policy objectives, such as promoting sustainable economic development pathways, improving energy security, and addressing air pollution impacts on human health. Many of the changes that are required will have positive economic and societal co-benefits, including cleaner air, warmer homes, and a more sustainable economy for the long term. It is anticipated that a new Climate Action Plan 2021 is to be published in October 2021 following on from the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021.

### **2.3.7 Project Ireland 2040**

Two national plans exist under the umbrella of Project Ireland 2040 – The National Planning Framework and the National Development Plan. The National Planning Framework's national strategic outcomes of a Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society (NSO 8), Compact Growth (NSO 1), Sustainable



Mobility (NSO 4), and the Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and other Environmental Resources (NSO 9) ensure that climate action is enshrined in spatial planning in order to tackle Ireland's higher than average carbon-intensity per capita and enable a national transition to a competitive low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050

### 2.3.8 Programme for Government

The Programme for Government 2020 has a strong focus on climate action including a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 7% a year on average over the next 10 years. The Government will commit to an allocation of 10% of the total transport capital budget for cycling projects and an allocation of 10% of the total capital budget for pedestrian infrastructure. The Government's commitment to cycling and pedestrian projects will be set at 20% of the 2020 capital budget (€360 million) per year for the lifetime of the Government. In relation to new transport infrastructure, the Government is committed to a 2:1 ratio of expenditure between new public transport infrastructure and new roads over its lifetime. This ratio will be maintained in each Budget by the Government.

## 2.4 Regional Context

### 2.4.1 The Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES)

The Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy places climate action at its heart, presenting climate change as the most serious threat to human life and the environment. It identifies three priority areas for action to address climate change and to bring about a transition to a low carbon economy and society:

- Decarbonisation,
- Resource efficiency,
- Climate resilience.

## 2.5 Local Context

### 2.5.1 Kerry County Council Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024

Kerry County Council's Climate Adaptation Strategy (2019) sets out a framework of actions and measures that Kerry County Council propose to undertake to further embed adaptation into all of the local authority's areas of responsibility.

This strategy is based around 6 thematic goals around which this plan is aligned. The following themes have been taken into consideration in the formulation of policy with the resultant objectives and actions incorporated throughout the plan. The Thematic Goals set out in Kerry County Council's Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024 are:

1. Local Adaptation Governance and Business Operations
2. Infrastructure and Built Environment
3. Landuse and Development
4. Drainage and Flood Management
5. Natural Resources and Cultural Infrastructure
6. Community Health and Wellbeing





This plan augments the “integration” of climate action into planning policy directly through policies and objectives that support climate action but also indirectly through spatial and physical planning. The latter needs to dictate a vision for the future development of the County that for example supports local transport initiatives; provision of green and blue infrastructure; appropriate zoning/development of lands in urban cores and addressing of flooding issues. Taken in combination these clear synergies between plan making and the implementation of preferred adaptation options will ultimately and cumulatively form part of the local, regional, and ultimately national response to climate change. It will be necessary to make choices about how the County balances growth with more sustainable approaches to development and land use and to examine how planning policy can help shape infrastructural decisions. Climate change policy ultimately supports population growth in a compact, connected, and sustainable way which is less transport intensive through better planning, remote and home-working and modal shift to public transport.

Of note is that this plan recognises the importance of biodiversity and nature conservation as a means to both mitigate and adapt to climate change. As international and national trends show a rapid decline in biodiversity, this plan seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity in the county. Nature-based solutions that provide multi-functions/co-benefits are driving many responses to the challenges of climate change.

## **2.6 Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028 – Climate Action**

The Kerry County Development Plan forms an important part of the County’s Climate Action Response. As part of this, the plan takes forward the three priority areas for action outlined in the Southern Regional RSES: - Decarbonisation, Resource efficiency and Climate resilience. The County Development Plan is also mindful of the carbon emission reduction requirements set out in the Climate and Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021.

### **2.6.1 Sustainable Land Use and Resource Efficiency**

Kerry is a County rich in natural capital and resources, including land, soil, water, clean air, aggregates, onshore and offshore wind energy. Sustainable development requires the efficient and effective use of these resources. The Kerry County Development Plan as the strategic land use planning document for the County sets out the framework for the sustainable development of the County, in line with the UN Sustainability Goals and National and Regional Guidance.

In catering for population and economic growth and a move towards alternative energy sources and a low carbon society, there is likely to be a demand for land and locations for bioenergy supply, waste management, food production, forestry, and other land services alongside the need to build more houses, schools, and other facilities. Competition for land resources needs to be carefully managed by maximising the re-use of sites which are no longer required for their initial use (brownfield lands) and ensuring that the environment is protected and enhanced where necessary. The identification of greenfield lands for development will be underpinned by the principles of sustainability. Expansion of settlements will generally be from the centre out and supported by an appropriate level of infrastructure and services.

County Kerry is advancing its development as a circular and bioeconomy where the value of all products, materials and resources is maintained for as long as possible thereby significantly reducing or eliminating waste. Further developing the circular economy will require greater efficiency with raw materials, energy, water, space, and food by constantly reusing natural resources wherever possible.

This circular economy approach is also applicable to land use management. The development of infill lands and the reuse of brownfield sites will compact and increase the density of our existing settlements, facilitating the co-location of uses, increased opportunities for smarter travel (walking/cycling) and public transport. This approach maximises the use of urban serviced land and facilitates urban renewal.



The bioeconomy involves the production of renewable biological resources and their conversion into food, feed, bio-based products, and bioenergy. It includes agriculture, forestry, fisheries, food, pulp, and paper production, as well as parts of chemical, biotechnological and energy industries. Its sectors have a strong innovation potential to support Ireland's transition to a more integrated sustainable, low carbon economy.

### **2.6.2 Sustainable Land Management and Decarbonisation**

It is an objective of the Southern Regional RSES to develop a Regional Decarbonisation Plan to provide a framework for action on decarbonisation across all sectors. Kerry County Council supports the preparation of such a plan and the decarbonisation of the region.

#### **2.6.2.1 Transition to a Carbon Neutral Economy and Society**

The transition to a low carbon energy future will require a wide range of responses across the public and private sectors and in communities to change how we use energy at home, in our work and how we travel. Fundamental to this is a change to more sustainable settlement patterns. The focus on compact growth of our towns and villages, placemaking, sustainable transport, and focus on the location of development in sustainable locations will bring fundamental benefits to climate change mitigation.

The Council will facilitate the provision of a framework, and work with all stakeholders for action on decarbonisation across all sectors including agriculture, transport, electricity, and the built environment. It is the policy of the Council to identify, promote and develop a Decarbonising Zone(s) in the county. The Council will work with the Dingle Creativity and Innovation Hub to pilot Dingle as a decarbonising zone for the county. It will be the policy of the Council to subsequently transfer the learnings of this pilot to other areas of the county. The council, in conjunction with stakeholders will facilitate low-carbon and renewable energy generation (electricity and heat) technologies. The plan is also supportive of improved energy efficiency projects and initiatives.

This plan aims to support the increased use of sustainable modes of transport; the integration of spatial planning with transport planning; enhanced county and regional accessibility; the transition to a low carbon energy efficient transport system; and the development of a safer, more efficient, effective, and connected transport system within County Kerry. Cutting GHG emissions in the carbon intense transport sector is a particular challenge for Ireland and indeed Kerry. This is due to our traditional dispersed settlement pattern and low population density. These factors are a particular feature of a rural county like Kerry and result in a high proportion of journeys being made by private car and/or due to a lack of public transport or active travel substitutes. It is an objective of this plan to prioritise the development of infill and brownfield sites to facilitate the compact growth of settlements, to prioritise active modes of transport and the integration of land use planning and transport provision.

The council will also support measures identified in the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine's *Ag Climatise, 2020* to promote the reduction of GHGs in the agricultural sector, decarbonisation of energy sources; carbon sequestration, capture and storage and improved manure and soil management.

#### **2.6.2.2 Energy Policy and Planning**

Kerry County Council recognises that the transition to a low carbon economy is an integral part of Ireland's climate change strategy and that renewable energies form a core component of reducing our reliance on fossil fuels. In particular, decarbonisation of the heating and transport sectors are challenges of significance to this plan.

The main sources of renewable energy are the sun (solar energy), wind, moving water (hydropower, wave, and tidal energy), heat below the surface of the earth, (geothermal energy) and biomass (wood, waste, energy crops, and biogas).



National renewable energy targets are acknowledged and to date, Kerry has made a significant contribution towards realising these targets, having regard to wind energy developments already constructed and permitted in the County. Detailed policy in relation to renewable energy including micro generation and community consultation is contained in Chapter 12 of this plan. In addition, the plan facilitates the development of offshore wind energy proposals and associated 'green' industry.

### **2.6.3 Sustainable Land Use and Climate Resilience**

The National Adaptation Framework sets out an overall approach for developing climate resilience. Climate adaptation aims to reduce the vulnerability of our environment, society and economy to the risks posed by climate change. Within the context of this plan, the maintenance of critical infrastructure and the management of water resources and flood risk are given high priority. The Southern Regional RSES highlights the importance of including measures to support flood risk management as an action to build resilience to Climate Change.

The frequency, pattern and severity of flooding are expected to increase as a result of climate change, becoming more uncertain and more damaging. Climate change could potentially have a very significant effect on flooding in the longer term. Higher sea-levels and wetter winters, with more intense rainstorms, together with possible increases in storminess could significantly increase both the frequency and intensity of flooding. To address this issue, the Council will comply with the provisions of the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management" Guidelines by ensuring that, where relevant, flood risk is a key consideration in preparing development and local area plans and in the assessment of planning applications.

The plan also recognises that climate change is likely to place additional pressures on existing critical infrastructure such as bridges and existing defences which are vulnerable to extreme weather events. The issue of flood risk is dealt with in more detail in the Environment Chapter and in the Development Management Guidelines. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment of this Plan has also been carried out and is included in Volume 5.

### **2.6.4 Summary of Mitigation and Adaptation Measures Incorporated into the Plan**

Mitigation and adaptation are important strategies in responding to climate change and land use planning has a role in both. Mitigation deals with the causes of climate change and works to reduce man-made effects on the climate system by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, using renewable energy sources, increasing energy efficiency, and moving to a low carbon economy. Climate adaptation refers to actions taken to reduce the negative effects of climate change or to take advantage of emerging opportunities.

#### **Mitigatory measures in this plan include the following:**

- Integrating land use and transport planning
- Delivering compact growth
- Implementing the avoid shift improve approach to transport policy
- Delivering the 10-minute town concept
- Promoting energy efficiency
- Promoting repowering of windfarms, renewable energy technologies, spin off industry and enterprise,
- Enhancing and protecting biodiversity
- Facilitating smart/remote working
- Promoting climate change awareness and behavioural change
- Promoting mainstreaming of climate change in decision making

#### **Adaptation measures in this plan include the following:**

- Flood risk management
- Promotion of nature-based systems for water management services



- Enhancement and protection of green infrastructure and biodiversity
- Promotion of climate action through high quality design, including in placemaking and public realm (e.g., shade, shelter, and provision of EV charge points).

### Climate Change and Achieving a Sustainable Future

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

<b>KCDP 2-1</b>	Support and implement the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the NPF Strategy and National Policy Objectives (NPOs) on sustainability and the RSES Strategic Statements, as appropriate.
<b>KCDP 2-2</b>	Facilitate and support national climate change objectives contained in the Climate Action Plan 2019 and the actions contained in the KCC Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024 and successor strategies.
<b>KCDP 2-3</b>	Facilitate the development of a Regional Decarbonisation Plan to provide a framework for action on decarbonisation across all sectors and support the Dingle Decarbonisation Zone as a pilot initiative to identify and develop additional Decarbonising Zones within the County.
<b>KCDP 2-4</b>	Support measures to build resilience to climate change throughout the county to address impact reduction, adaptive capacity, awareness raising, providing for nature-based solutions and emergency planning.
<b>KCDP 2-5</b>	Support the development of sustainable communities that enhance the health and wellbeing of our people and places.
<b>KCDP 2-6</b>	Promote and support enterprises that create and employ the use of green technologies.
<b>KCDP 2-7</b>	Support social enterprises and the circular economy within local communities to benefit environmental protection, employment generation and community development.
<b>KCDP 2-8</b>	Support the circular and bio economy through greater efficiency in sustainable land management, greater use of renewable resources and the development of sustainable supply chains.
<b>KCDP 2-9</b>	Promote the development of a more sustainable agri-sector, having regard to the measures and environmental objectives of the forthcoming 'Common Agricultural Policy Strategy for Ireland, Ag Climatise 2020 – the National Climate & Air roadmap for the agriculture sector'.
<b>KCDP 2-10</b>	Support nature-based solutions to climate change challenges and also initiatives aimed at increasing soil carbon retention, sequestration, and storage.
<b>KCDP 2-11</b>	Improve the efficiency and sustainability of transport including improved and expanded public transport capacity and walking and cycling infrastructure, improved traffic management and bus priority.
<b>KCDP 2-12</b>	Support investment in the sustainable development of Electric Vehicle charging facilities in appropriate public locations and to integrate Electric Vehicle charging point infrastructure within residential, commercial, and mixed-use developments.
<b>KCDP 2-13</b>	Promote energy conservation, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources in existing buildings, including retro fitting of energy efficiency measures in the existing building stock, energy efficiency in traditional buildings and initiatives to achieve Nearly Zero-Energy Buildings (NZEB) standards in line with the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD).





## CHAPTER 3

# CORE & SETTLEMENT STRATEGY







- 3.0 Core & Settlement Strategy**
- 3.1 Introduction**
- 3.2 Setting out the Core Strategy**
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### 3.0 Core & Settlement Strategy

#### 3.1 Introduction

This Chapter sets out the Core Strategy which is the settlement and growth strategy for the entire County. The Core Strategy is the key component of the County Development Plan. It sets out, in line with the overarching hierarchy of national and regional plans, and the Development Plan Core principles, the quantum and location of development in the County over the lifetime of the Plan. This will provide for the development of County Kerry as an attractive, competitive, and sustainable place where the quality of its economy, natural and built environment, culture and the strength and viability of its communities are of the highest standards.

#### 3.2 Setting out the Core Strategy

The purpose of the Core Strategy is to set out an evidence-based strategy for the future spatial development of the Plan area. The Core Strategy is required to demonstrate that the Plan is in accordance with National and Regional planning policy outlined in the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region, as far as practicable.

The plan complies with the **RSES Strategy Statements** by:



1. Compact Growth

Strengthening and growing our towns and villages through quality development; regeneration and compact growth; building on the strong network of towns and supporting our villages and rural areas



2. Enhanced Regional Accessibility

Enhancing regional and county accessibility through upgraded transport infrastructure and digital connectivity allied to transformed settlement hierarchy



3. Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities

Strengthening the role of and improving quality of life in the County's diverse rural areas and communities and valuing our rural areas as dynamic, resilient, and outward looking.



4. Sustainable Mobility

Transforming our transport systems towards well-functioning, sustainable integrated public transport, walking and cycling and electric vehicles



5. A Strong Economy

Building a competitive, innovative, and productive economy.



6. High-Quality International Connectivity

Optimising our international connectivity through investment and increased capacity in Fenit port and Kerry Airport and provision of high-quality digital connectivity throughout the County and wider region.



7. Diversity, Language, Culture and Heritage Enhancement

Strengthening and protecting our County's diversity, language and culture, our recreational assets, and our natural and built heritage



8. Low Carbon,  
Climate Resilient and  
Sustainable Society

Safeguarding and enhancing our environment through sustainable development, prioritising action on climate change across the Region and County, driving the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society



9. Sustainable, Planned  
and Infrastructure-led  
Development

Outlining a strategy for development and services in a sustainable, planned and infrastructure-led manner to ensure the sustainable management of water, waste and other environmental resources



10. A Healthy and  
Learning Region

Achieving improved education, health and public services and facilities for all citizens and communities



11. Inclusive  
International Region

Building an inclusive outward looking county within an international region on the global stage

The Core Strategy includes details of the settlement hierarchy and where future growth is to be distributed in the County together with details of population and household projections.

By 2031, the population of the County will most likely grow by 19,000-23,000 people to reach a potential population of 170,500 people<sup>1</sup>. This growth will require new homes and new jobs. It raises questions as to where our future population will live and work, what kind of quality of life will we enjoy and how we can adapt to the challenges we face such as climate change, county and regional disparity and global uncertainty.

This Plan is underpinned by a strategic vision which is intended to guide the future development of the County in a sustainable manner, in a way that reflects the existing character and amenities of the county and improves quality of life for the existing and future population.

In line with this the promotion and consolidation of the towns and villages of the plan through reuse, restoration and regeneration, and the creation of a vibrant urban form, resulting in settlements that are attractive places in which to live, work and visit is essential. The regeneration of the urban core of towns and villages will set the framework for the creation of a sustainable economic base to facilitate integrated communities while balancing future development with the conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment of each settlement and surrounding areas.

The following will be prioritised to achieve the vision of the County Development Plan:

- Emphasis will be on the settlements outlined in the settlement strategy as the principal locations for future investment in housing, employment, infrastructure, social and community facilities.
- Re-positioning of settlements as the focal point for services serving their surrounding rural hinterland. The level of service provision will be commensurate with the size of settlement, infrastructural provision and demand from the rural hinterland served.
- The County's intrinsic qualities, including social, recreational, cultural, linguistic, and environmental assets, will be protected which when combined with high quality employment opportunities will provide a unique location and quality of life for the residents and visitors.

<sup>1</sup> Implementation Roadmap for the National Planning Framework, 2018 (DoHPLG)



- The provision of adequate water and wastewater infrastructure to facilitate the sustainable development of towns and villages without adverse impact on the environment.
- The creation of employment opportunities, capitalising on the roll out of the National Broadband Scheme and societal shifts towards remote working.

### 3.3 Context – National and Regional Policy

#### What Project Ireland 2040 and the RSES means for the Southern Region and for County Kerry

The NPF projects that the population of the Region will grow by 380,000 to almost 2 million by 2040, with around 225,000 additional people in employment. There will be between 196,000 and 235,500 additional people up to 2026 and between 280,000 and 343,500 up to 2031 living in the region. This will require up to 86,000 new homes by 2026 and 125,000 by 2031. Additionally, to cater for our changing population additional housing responses will be required including a requirement to provide a social housing mix, facilitate upgrading and replacement of older and poor-quality stock and provide housing for smaller families and an ageing population.

The NPF places an emphasis on consolidating and compacting the development of places that grew rapidly in the past decade or so with large scale commuter driven housing development. It also has a focus on addressing local community and amenity facility provision through targeted investment and town, village, and rural rejuvenation through the Urban and Rural Regeneration and Development Funds.

The RSES recognises the strategic role played by all areas, both urban and rural, in achieving the set regional and national targets and objectives. The RSES also supports sustainable enterprise growth, services, physical and social infrastructure investment, and the sustainable growth of all communities in the Region. The overall strategy builds on cities and their associated metropolitan areas as engines of growth and seeks, in parallel, to re-position the Southern Region's strong network of towns, villages and diverse rural areas in an economically resilient, imaginative, and smart way to foster sustainable competitive advantage.

It is a mandatory requirement that there is consistency in the spatial planning hierarchy between national, regional, and local plans. The County Development Plan will therefore be aligned, in so far as is practicable, with the national and regional policy objectives set out in the NPF and RSES.

	2016	2026	2031
<b>Mid-West</b>	385,000	436,000-446,000	460,500-475,500
<b>South-East</b>	509,500	561,000-572,000	581,500-598,500
<b>South-West</b>	690,500	784,000-802,500	823,000-854,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,585,000</b>	<b>1,781,000-1,820,500</b>	<b>1,865,000-1,928,500</b>
<b>Kerry</b>	147,500	161,000-163,500	166,500-170,500

**Table 3.1: Regional Distribution of Growth (RSES)**

### 3.4 Principles of the Core Strategy

The Core Strategy considers all aspects of what is needed to deliver sustainable communities having regard also to the availability of infrastructure, the carrying capacity of the environment and the need to support economic development. The following are the key areas considered in the preparation of the Core Strategy:

**Climate Action and Renewable Energy** - To transition to a low carbon and climate resilient county, with an emphasis on reduction in energy demand and greenhouse gas emissions, through a combination of effective mitigation and adaptation responses to climate change; whilst increasing the resilience of our Natural and Cultural Capital to climate change by planning and implementing appropriate adaptation measures.



**Housing** - To facilitate the sustainable growth of all rural areas, towns and villages throughout the county by seeking to accommodate, as far as possible, all persons in their choices to live in our rural areas, towns and villages; by supporting and strengthening the rural economy to sustain vibrant rural communities and by promoting consolidation and compact development of all urban and rural settlements in an attractive setting that provides a suitable mix of housing with supporting amenities; and by ensuring coordinated investment in infrastructure that will support economic competitiveness and create a high quality living and working environment.

**Settlements** - To develop Kerry's settlements as a network of attractive, liveable towns and villages in the county with sustainable levels of population, employment activity and enhanced levels of amenity which encourage a high quality of life and well-being and support a sustainable synergy with the rural countryside.

**Key Towns**- To prioritise the sustainable development of the Key Towns of Tralee and Killarney within the Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle in line with the RSES.

**Sustainable Communities** - To develop and support vibrant sustainable communities in Kerry where people can live, work, and enjoy access to a wide range of community, health, educational facilities, and amenities, suitable for all ages and needs, in both urban and rural areas, thereby supporting a high quality of life for all to enjoy.

**Economic Development** - To promote and enhance Kerry's economic development potential through increased resilience in the county's enterprise, underpinned by talent and innovation, thereby ensuring that Kerry is best placed to excel in the long-term delivery of sustainable jobs and an enhanced standard of living for all.

**Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle**- To seek investment for and to facilitate development within the Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle as the economic core of the county.

**Tourism Development** - To develop Kerry as the leading tourism destination through continued sustainable expansion of the tourism sector, with a focus on creating high-quality visitor services and the continued development and enhancement of visitor attractions and activities, capitalising on our natural and cultural heritage assets, whilst safeguarding these resources for future generations.

**Mobility and Transport** - To support increased use of sustainable modes of transport; the integration of spatial planning with transport planning; enhanced county and regional accessibility; the transition to a low carbon energy efficient transport system; and the development of a safer, more efficient, effective, and connected transport system within Kerry.

**Infrastructural Development** - To protect, improve and provide water, wastewater, surface water and flood alleviation services throughout the county, and to facilitate the provision of high-quality information communication technology, broadband, telecommunication information and electricity network required to support and enhance the key aims of best place to live, work, visit and invest.

**Built Environment** - To recognise and enhance the unique identity, character and built heritage of Kerry's towns, village, and rural areas, to improve quality of life through the application of healthy placemaking, underpinned by good urban design with the creation of attractive public spaces that are vibrant, distinctive, safe, and accessible and which promote and facilitate positive social interaction.

**Natural Environment** - Continue to protect and enhance the county's natural heritage and biodiversity and ensure that networks of green and blue infrastructure are identified, created, protected and enhanced to





provide a wide range of environmental, social and economic benefits to communities; To also improve the knowledge and understanding of the county’s landscape and coast, and enhance the overall characteristics, qualities and diversity of landscape character, its sense of place and local distinctiveness in recognition of the amenity potential of the county.

**Funding-** To maximise and utilise all available funding streams to implement the objectives of this plan. Promote the sustainable implementation of innovative, collaborative projects through the URDF, the RRDF and other sources of EU and national funding.

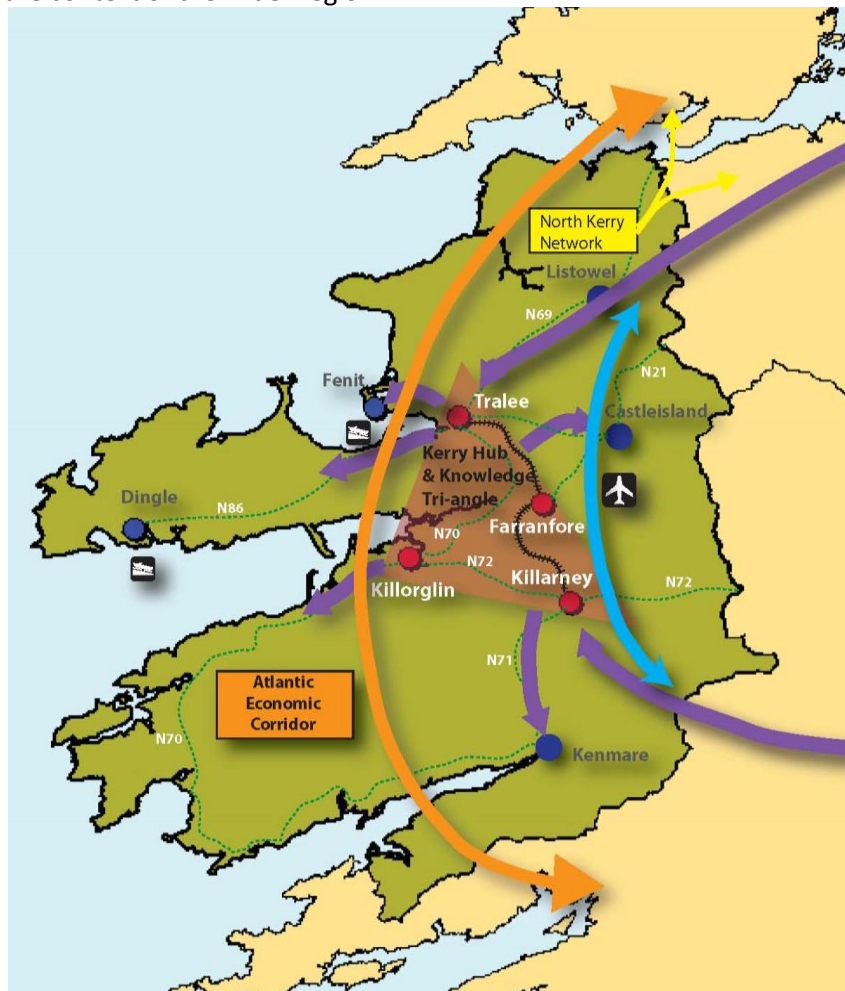
**Strategic Principles of the Core Strategy**

It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 3-1** Promote the Sustainable Development of the County in line with the Strategic Core Principles of the Core Strategy.

**3.5 Core Strategy Map**

The Core Strategy Map (Map 3.1) set out below provides a conceptual overview of the spatial planning strategy for the County. This map illustrates the designated growth centres and strategic transport corridors in the county, set within the context of the wider region.



Map 3.1: Core Strategy Map



### **3.5.1 Strategic Economic Drivers within County Kerry**

The core and settlement strategies are shaped by the key strategic economic drivers within the county and the wider region. These strategic economic drivers have the potential to drive real transformational change for Kerry, making the county one of the most attractive places to live, work, invest and visit in Ireland. Map 3.1 above illustrates the spatial influence of the strategic economic drivers for County Kerry. The map highlights the influence of the Atlantic Economic Corridor, Kerry International Airport and the Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle to the county.

#### **3.5.1.1 Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC)**

Kerry is strategically located along the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC). The AEC aims to combine the economic hubs, clusters, and catchments of the area to attract investment, improve competitiveness, support job creation, and contribute to an improved quality of life for the people who live there. The AEC has significant potential for future economic growth of/in County Kerry and the wider region. The advancement of Kerry's economic growth clusters; Ireland Kerry International Airport, key capital infrastructural projects under Project 2040; and the potential future opening of the Southern greenway will all consolidate the AEC. The success of the AEC initiative will attract more enterprise and people to the county and the region, progressing balanced regional development, whilst sustaining strong and vibrant communities.

#### **3.5.1.2 Key Towns and Regional Towns**

The economic development of Kerry will be further enhanced through the development of its two key towns (Tralee / Killarney) and eight regional towns (Ballybunion, Cahersiveen, Castleisland, Dingle/Daingean Uí Chúis, Kenmare, Killorglin, Listowel, Milltown). These towns seek to harness and develop the complementary strengths and synergies between the settlements and their functional hinterland, to create highly connected centres of scale, with the necessary critical mass, in terms of population and employment, to enable them to compete and grow to fulfil their potential and drive regional development in tandem with regional and national policy.

#### **3.5.1.3 Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle**

The Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle is identified in the Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) as an economic driver for the Region and its future growth is key to the sustainable development of the county through the provision of employment opportunities, high level training and research opportunities as well as being a catalyst for further economic activity in the more peripheral areas of the county.

#### **3.5.1.4 North Kerry/West Limerick/Shannon Estuary/Clare Settlement Network**

Kerry County Council supports the economic role and potential of the established towns of Listowel, Abbeyfeale, Newcastle West (Key Town) and Kilrush as economic drivers in a potential North Kerry/West Limerick/Clare network connected with the Shannon Estuary. This includes the Shannon Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) area and strategic locations identified under the SIFP as a Shannon Estuary Coastal Network.

#### **3.5.1.5 Kerry International Airport**

Kerry International Airport acts as a magnet to draw people and investment to the county and the region, driving economic activity in the form of business and investment as well as tourism and travel.

### **3.6 Layout and Content of the Core Strategy**

The content of Core Strategies is set out in Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act and must include:

- Population Targets,
- Future household targets and quantification of requirements for zoning of lands for residential and or a mix of residential and other uses; and



- Proposed existing and future distribution of population within the plan area within a settlement hierarchy.

### 3.7 Sustainable Countywide Development

This Plan identifies the importance and key role of Kerry's rural communities in contributing to positive growth and economic development throughout the County.

County Kerry's rural communities are an asset to be valued and nurtured. The diversity in the opportunities that our rural communities give rise to is significant and has the potential to differentiate the County from other places, particularly in terms of the quality of life offering that is available. The County's towns and villages are at the centre of rural communities because they are important locations for service delivery, gathering, expression of identity, rural enterprise and social and community supports. This Plan recognises the importance of rural towns and villages in supporting the wider rural community and therefore seeks to enable their revitalisation and regeneration as a key strategic intervention. To this end, the Core Strategy of the Plan, targets some 54% of the projected population growth towards that part of the County outside Tralee and Killarney.

This approach is consistent with national policy (the NPF) and in particular through the Government's publication, *'Realising Our Rural Potential - Action Plan for Rural Development'* (January 2017). This Action Plan highlights the vital role that rural Ireland plays in shaping Ireland's economic success and aims to unlock the potential of rural Ireland's positive attributes through a framework of supports at National and local level.

Villages and small village settlements play an important role and provide vital services in every rural area. Rural areas identify with these particular settlements, hence the identification and inclusion of a number of small village settlements throughout the county.

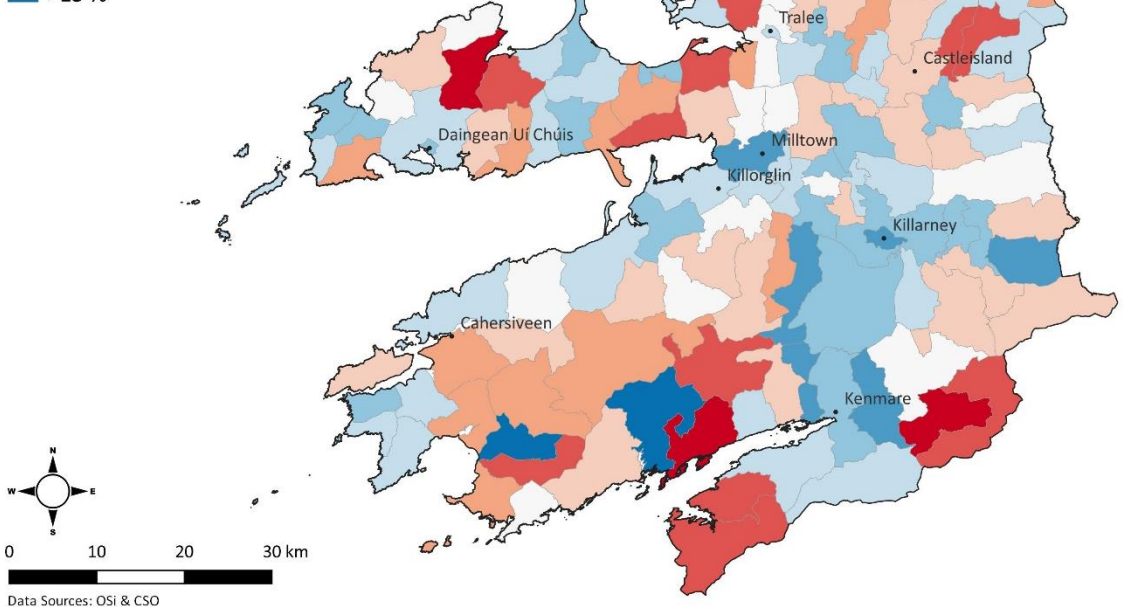
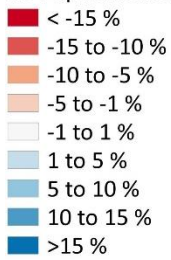
### 3.8 Population Projections & Spatial Distribution

Census 2016 indicated that the population of County Kerry was increased from 145,502 in 2011 to 147,707, an increase of 1.5%. This percentage increase was amongst the lowest in the State, with the State showing an overall increase of 3.8% over the same period. These increases show a significant reduction in growth compared to the previous intercensal period (2006-2011) where Kerry's population increased by 4.1%.

The population increase between 2011 and 2016 is dispersed across the county. The more peripheral areas to the west and south west of the County and parts of the north and east experienced population decline while the EDs adjacent to the towns of Tralee and Killarney, Kenmare and Killorglin experienced the highest levels of growth.



ED Population Change 2011-2016



**Map 3.2: Population Change 2011-2016**

### 3.9 Future Population Growth

#### 3.9.1 Population Growth

The population projections for County Kerry are detailed in Table 3.2 below. Population growth projections contained in Appendix 1 of the RSES and Appendix 2 of the Implementation Roadmap for the NPF, have formed the basis for the population and growth predications for the future development of the County, which has been included in this Development Plan. The NPF/RSES figures have been extrapolated to work out the population projections in the county between 2022 and 2028.

	<b>2011 Census</b>	<b>2016 Census</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>Uplift 2016 to 2026</b>	<b>2031</b>
<b>Population</b>	145,502	147,707	161,000	13,500	166,500
			-	-	-
			163,500	16,000	170,500

**Table 3.2: Population Projections (NPF/RSES)**

As indicated in this table the NPF/RSES indicate higher and lower population projections for Kerry to 2026 and 2031. The lower of the 2026 projected figures would see a 9% increase on the population of the county in 2016, with the higher figure seeing the county’s population increase by 11%. There is a pressing need to increase national housing supply to meet existing, unmet demand, to the greatest extent possible in the



shortest time possible, while also accommodating projected national housing demand. In the context of the housing supply target as shown in Table 3.4, the higher population projection is considered appropriate.

Table 3.3 extrapolates this population projection and apportions it to 2028, intended duration of the CDP.

	2022	2028	Total Uplift 2022 to 2028
<b>Population</b>	156,902	166,265	9,363

**Table 3.3: Kerry Population Projections 2022-2028**

### 3.9.2 Housing Growth

In the Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning Guidelines (December 2020), planning authorities must provide for housing in their development plan that is consistent with national and regional planning objectives, including the achievement of compact growth and the consolidation of towns and cities, in order to move away from a development pattern characterised by dispersed sprawl and unsustainable levels of long-distance commuting.

County development plans must therefore plan to provide housing to the extent identified in the established NPF Roadmap population projections for their local authority and in accordance with the NPF 50:50 scenario as set out in the Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (December 2020). These guidelines place an obligation on Planning Authorities to take into consideration (in addition to the NPF population projections) household demand, actual new housing supply since 2017 and homeless households. Detailed information in relation to these factors has been provided by the ESRI and taken into consideration in the Core Strategy.

		Total Households
A	ESRI NPF scenario projected new household demand 2017 to Q3 2028 (plan end)	7,279
B	Actual new housing supply 2017 to Q2 2021	1,934
C	Homeless households and unmet demand	192
D	Plan Housing Demand {(A+C)-B}	5,537
E	Adjustment to end 2026 portion of plan period to facilitate convergence to NPF strategy	
E1	ESRI Baseline scenario new household demand 2017 to end 2026	9,155
E2	ESRI NPF scenario projected new household demand 2027 to Q3 2028 (plan end)	1,050
E3	Mid-point between E1 and A-E2 (ESRI NPF and Baseline scenarios to end 2026)	7,692
E4	<b>Adjusted Total Plan Demand</b> {(E2+E3+C)-B}	<b>7,000</b>

**Table 3.4: Methodology for the application of NPF population and housing projections**

This housing demand has been divided across the settlements of the County in proportion to projected population growth as per the Core Strategy.



### 3.9.3 Headroom

The transitional population projections set out in Appendix 2 of the Implementation Roadmap for the NPF includes 'headroom' provision. Further 'headroom' not exceeding 25% can be considered in counties where population growth is projected to be at or above the national average baseline. Kerry is not included in the list of counties where this additional 'headroom' can be applied.

#### Core Strategy

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>KCDP 3-2</b> | Support the sustainable growth and prioritise development of the county's settlements in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy and the Core Strategy. |
| <b>KCDP 3-3</b> | Identify and support investment opportunities with infrastructure providers to deliver the Core Strategy.  |

### 3.10 Settlement Strategy

A strong network of settlements is important for sustaining healthy population levels and enhancing quality of life. This section identifies the different settlements throughout the County having regard to their areas of influence and their strategic roles for the future.

#### 3.10.1 Principles of the Settlement Strategy

The main principles of the Settlement Strategy are to:

- Ensure the sustainable development of the Key towns of Tralee & Killarney to fulfil the roles identified in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.
- Ensure the sustainable development of a network of towns and villages in the county to act as service and employment centres for the surrounding hinterland.
- Facilitate the provision of housing and services having regard to settlement type.
- Facilitate the sustainable future development of infrastructure to serve identified settlements.

#### 3.10.2 Settlement Hierarchy

Section 3.3 of the RSES includes a settlement typology which sets out the settlement structure for the Southern Region. This settlement typology identifies the Cities/Metropolitan Areas and Key Towns including Tralee and Killarney. The position of the remaining settlements in this typology had regard to the criteria set out in section 3.3 and to the following:

- Recent trends in population, employment, the level of services available in the settlements.
- Accessibility and geographical influence in a regional/sub-regional and county context.
- Character of local geography and accessibility as a service centre for remote and long-distance rural hinterlands.
- Infrastructure provision or planned infrastructure investment and their ability and appropriateness to accommodate future growth.



Settlement Type	Description
Key Town	Large population scale urban centre functioning as self-sustaining regional drivers, and strategically located urban centres with accessibility and significant influence in a sub-regional context.
Regional Town	Towns which provide a housing, employment, or service function. The category is broad and ranges from large commuter towns to more peripheral towns.
District Town	Towns that serve a rural hinterland as service centres.
Village	Smaller settlements that serve a rural hinterland with less of a variety of services available.
Small Villages Settlements	Serve smaller rural catchments. They provide local services with some smaller scale rural enterprises in a number of such villages.

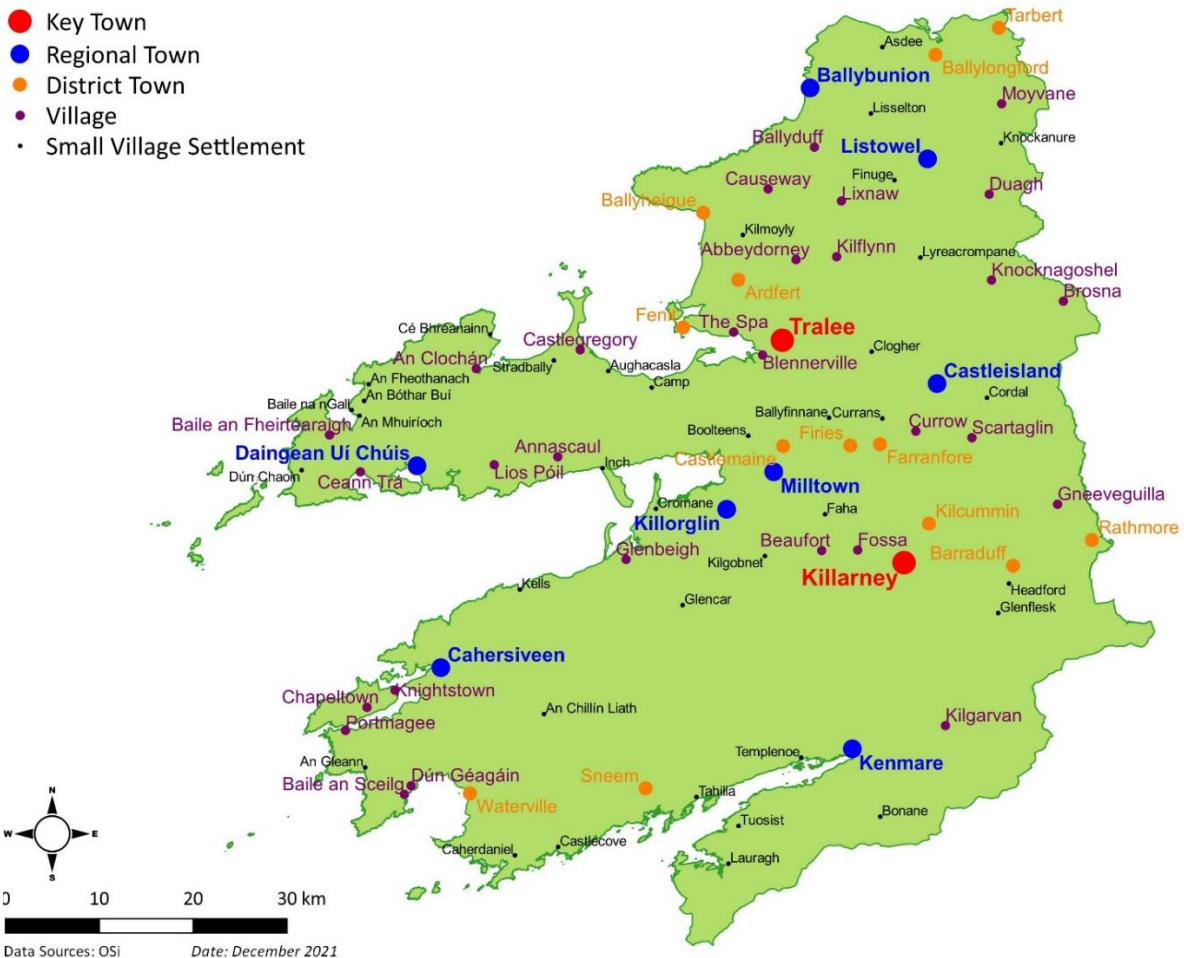
Table 3.5: Settlement Types

Hierarchy	Settlement
Key Towns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tralee</li> <li>• Killarney</li> </ul>
Regional Towns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ballybunion</li> <li>• Cahersiveen</li> <li>• Castleisland</li> <li>• Dingle / Daingean Uí Chúis</li> <li>• Kenmare</li> <li>• Killorglin</li> <li>• Listowel</li> <li>• Milltown</li> </ul>
District Towns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ardfert</li> <li>• Ballyheigue</li> <li>• Ballylongford</li> <li>• Barraduff</li> <li>• Castlemaine</li> <li>• Farranfore</li> <li>• Fenit</li> <li>• Fieries</li> <li>• Kilcummin</li> <li>• Rathmore</li> <li>• Sneem</li> <li>• Tarbert</li> <li>• Waterville</li> </ul>
Villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abbeydorney</li> <li>• Annascaul</li> <li>• Baile an Fheirtéaraigh</li> <li>• Baile an Sceilg</li> <li>• Ballyduff</li> <li>• Blennerville</li> <li>• Beaufort</li> <li>• Brosna</li> <li>• Castlegregory</li> <li>• Causeway</li> <li>• Ceann Trá</li> <li>• Chapeltown</li> <li>• Cloghane</li> <li>• Currow</li> <li>• Duagh</li> <li>• Dún Géagáin</li> <li>• Fossa</li> <li>• Glenbeigh</li> <li>• Gneeveguilla</li> <li>• Kilflynn</li> <li>• Kilgarvan</li> <li>• Knightstown</li> <li>• Knocknagoshel</li> <li>• Lios Póil</li> <li>• Lixnaw</li> <li>• Moyvane</li> <li>• Portmagee</li> <li>• Scartaglin</li> <li>• The Spa</li> </ul>
Small Villages Settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Bóthar Buí</li> <li>• An Chillín Liath</li> <li>• An Fheothanach</li> <li>• Currans</li> <li>• Dun Chaoin</li> <li>• Finuge</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Gleann</li> <li>• An Mhuiríoch</li> <li>• Asdee</li> <li>• Aughacarla</li> <li>• Baile na nGall</li> <li>• Ballyfinnane</li> <li>• Bonane</li> <li>• Boolteens</li> <li>• Brandon</li> <li>• Caherdaniel</li> <li>• Camp</li> <li>• Castlecove</li> <li>• Clogher</li> <li>• Cordal</li> <li>• Cromane</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faha</li> <li>• Glencar</li> <li>• Glenflesk</li> <li>• Headford</li> <li>• Inch</li> <li>• Kells</li> <li>• Kilgobnet</li> <li>• Kilmoyley</li> <li>• Knockanure</li> <li>• Lauragh</li> <li>• Lisselton</li> <li>• Lyreacrompane</li> <li>• Stradbally</li> <li>• Tahilla</li> <li>• Templenoe</li> <li>• Tuosist</li> </ul>
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Table 3.6: Settlement Hierarchy



Map 3.3. Settlements

**Settlement Strategy**

**It is an objective of the Council to:**

**KCDP 3-4** Deliver at least 30% of all new homes in the Key Towns of Tralee and Killarney within the existing built-up footprint of the settlements.





**KCDP 3-5** Strengthen the social and economic structure of rural towns and villages by supporting the re-use of existing buildings and the regeneration of under-utilised buildings and lands.

### 3.10.3 Population Distribution

The population growth allocation for Tralee and Killarney is 4,293. This growth allocation will ensure that these Key Towns will grow by over 30% by 2040 (in accordance with the RSES) positioning these settlements as sufficiently sized urban zones to attract additional employment and population, which will increase their competitiveness and attractiveness as national and regional investment locations.

Settlement		Population & Housing			
		Population 2016 (CSO)	Population 2022 (est.)	2022-2028 Pop. Growth	Housing Target
<b>County</b>		<b>147,707</b>	<b>156,902</b>	<b>9,363</b>	<b>7,000</b>
<b>Key Town</b>	Tralee	23,691	25,297	2,663	2,087
	Killarney	14,504	15,487	1,630	1,277
		<b>38,195</b>	<b>40,784</b>	<b>4,293</b>	<b>3,364</b>
<b>Regional Town</b>	Listowel	4,820	5,127	529	415
	Castleisland	2,486	2,644	359	281
	Kenmare	2,376	2,527	261	204
	Killorglin	2,199	2,339	320	251
	Dingle/Daingean Uí Chúis	2,050	2,181	282	221
	Ballybunion	1,413	1,503	204	160
	Cahersiveen	1,041	1,107	129	101
	Milltown	928	987	273	214
		<b>17,313</b>	<b>18,417</b>	<b>2,357</b>	<b>1,847</b>
<b>District Town</b>	Ardfert	749	797	78	61
	Ballyheigue	724	770	77	60
	Ballylongford	391	416	45	35
	Barraduff	170	308	57	45
	Castlemaine	176	187	37	29
	Farranfore	175	186	42	33
	Fenit	538	572	130	102
	Fieries	558	594	46	36
	Kilcummin	435	463	40	31
	Rathmore	790	840	73	57
	Sneem	288	306	27	21
	Tarbert	540	574	57	45
	Waterville	462	491	52	41
		<b>5,996</b>	<b>6,505</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>596</b>
<b>Villages</b>		<b>6,698</b>	<b>7,125</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>432</b>
<b>Small Village Settlements</b>		<b>1,547</b>	<b>1,646</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>186</b>
<b>Rural Area</b>		<b>77,958</b>	<b>82,425</b>	<b>936</b>	<b>575</b>

Table 3.7: Population & Housing Growth 2022-2028



In allocating future population growth to other settlements, the following guiding principles were considered:

- Scale of population and its existing performance.
- Scale of employment provision, number of jobs, jobs-to-resident worker's ratio, and net commuting flows; Balance between population growth and employment provision.
- Compliance with the NPF (NPO 72) on a standardised, tiered approach that differentiates between zoned land that is serviced and that which is serviceable within the life of the plan.
- Linking Core Strategies to an evidence base on the availability and deliverability of lands within the existing built-up footprints.
- Extent of local services and amenities including education, health, leisure, and retail.
- Extent to which sustainable modes of travel can be encouraged (walking, cycling or public transport).
- Rate and pace of past development and the extent to which there are outstanding requirements for infrastructure and amenities.
- Accessibility and influence in a regional/sub-regional/county context.
- Character of local geography and accessibility as a service centre for remote and long-distance rural hinterlands.
- Environmental and infrastructural constraints.
- The appropriate density and scale of development relative to the settlement and location, incl. differing rates and nature of development experienced.
- Need for attractive, alternative options to rural housing within smaller towns and villages.

The remaining population growth of 5,070 is allocated to other towns in the County and the rural area. This will ensure that development in these towns is commensurate with the scale of these towns and the provision of additional employment.

### 3.11 The Zoning of Land for Residential Development

The zoning of lands in the current Municipal District / Electoral Area Local Area Plans (LAP's) is consistent with the existing and proposed core strategy.

These LAP's will be updated/replaced over the lifetime of this plan (in line with the core strategy) in a logical and informed manner which will provide for the long-term sustainable development of the settlements and of the County as a whole.

This Plan does not set out a quantum of lands to be zoned residential in order to meet the proposed population growth. The zoning of residential land will occur as part of the relevant settlement Local Area Plan (LAP) taking into consideration the level of housing demand indicated in the core strategy (see also Section 3.10).

The zoning of residential land (outside of the settlements of Tralee, Killarney, and Listowel) will occur as part of the relevant settlement Local Area Plan (LAP) taking into consideration the level of housing demand indicated in Table 3.7. This quantum will be calculated taking cognisance of the Ministerial guidelines; *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas* and *Urban Development and Building Heights* in relation to densities. In general housing densities will be higher closer to the town and village centre and lower towards the edge of settlement. In the majority of settlements infill and vacant sites are available within close proximity to the town/village centre. It is proposed to prioritise the development of residential units on these vacant and infill sites.

However, a lower residential density figure may have to be applied to some settlements and development sites, depending on their tier within the settlement hierarchy and location within a settlement. Where lower densities are identified within settlements, the rationale for so doing will be based on the requirement to meet



the housing needs for both urban and rural areas, with particular focus on providing a real alternative to urban generated development in the open countryside and providing scope and choice within the housing market.

### Residential Zoning

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 3-6** Zone land for residential purposes in accordance with the Tiered approach outlined in the National Planning Framework.
- KCDP 3-7** Prepare a local area plan for each settlement identified in the settlement hierarchy.

### 3.12 Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA)

National Policy Objective 37 in the NPF includes a requirement to prepare a Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA) in order to support the preparation of the housing strategy and all related housing policy outputs including the county development plan, local area plans and traveller accommodation plans. A HNDA has been prepared which informs housing policies, the housing strategy and associated land use zoning policies as well as assisting in determining where new policy areas or investment programmes are to be developed.

### Housing Need Demand Assessment

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 3-8** Ensure the implementation and integration of the findings of the Housing Need Demand Assessment into the Housing Strategy for the county.

### 3.13 Core Strategy Statement

The Core Strategy has been prepared in the context of section 10(2A) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The Core Strategy articulates a medium to longer-term quantitatively based strategy for the spatial development of the county and in so doing demonstrates that the Development Plan and its objectives are consistent with national and regional development objectives set out in the NPF, the RSES, and specific planning policy requirements in section 28 Guidelines.

The Core Strategy provides a transparent evidence-based rationale for the amount of land proposed to be zoned residential and a mix of residential and other uses in the Development Plan and existing / future Local Area Plans. It identifies the quantum, location, and phasing of development for the Plan period linked back to a county population target, in the form of a settlement hierarchy.

*The population growth and the level of housing proposed in the Core Strategy in the draft Kerry County Development Plan 2022 -2028 is in line with the population target specified for County Kerry in the NPF and RSES. The land use strategies for Tralee, Killarney and Listowel as contained in Volume 2, and the following local area plans, Tralee MD LAP 2018-2024, Killarney MD LAP 2018-2024, West Iveragh LAP 2019-2025, Listowel MD LAP 2020-2026 and Corca Dhuibhne EA LAP 2021-2027, are consistent with the Core Strategy.*



# CHAPTER 4

# TOWNS & VILLAGES







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## 4.0 Towns & Villages

### 4.1 Introduction

One of the main tenets of the **National Planning Framework** is delivering compact growth within the heart of our towns and villages and is a new direction in planning for the country's future growth. This ambition has cascaded down through the **Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies** and is central to the delivery of the recently published **Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland and Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025**. This chapter sets out the policies and objectives that will protect and enhance the unique identity and character of our towns and villages and improve quality of life and well-being. This will be delivered through good placemaking underpinned by urban design, with the creation of attractive vibrant town centres and public spaces that promote and facilitate positive social interaction and support the needs of a healthy active inclusive community.

The settlement structure in the County consists of different categories of settlements ranging from large urban towns to small rural villages. These settlements have an important function at a local, county and regional level. The ongoing evolution and regeneration of our towns and villages is vital in providing important retail uses, and also the provision of a range of other uses.

#### 4.1.1 Climate Change

Kerry County Council will seek to incorporate the policies of the National Climate Action Plan, The European Green Deal, and the principles of The European New Bauhaus into the regeneration of all the towns and villages as part of its commitment to tackling the challenge of climate change.

The future development of towns and their revitalisation will focus on the development of higher-density neighbourhoods, co-working opportunities, smarter use of information technologies, reduction in vehicular traffic and the development of a circular economy.

##### 4.1.1.1 Renovation Wave Strategy

The Renovation Wave Strategy is a new concept which seeks to achieve a deep renovation of a significant amount of the existing building stock across the EU. It is used as a mechanism to reduce energy consumption and consequently carbon emissions and has been identified by the EU as one of the flagships for the Recovery and Resilience Facility that will help rebuild our economy after Covid 19. In addition, the 2030 Climate Target Plan points to energy efficiency as an essential component for action and identifies renovation as key to closing the energy efficiency gap and delivering further energy savings by 2030. It is the policy of the council to encourage the renovation and reuse of existing underutilised properties.

### 4.2 Urban Regeneration and Compact Growth

Kerry County Council recognises that there is a changing profile and function of towns and villages and that they have faced considerable challenges in recent years to retain vibrancy and vitality. Building critical population mass and addressing the challenges of town centre/village renewal is a key objective of this Plan to ensure the long-term sustainability of many of the settlements in terms of sustainable jobs growth and retail sales.

Kerry's towns and villages all have their own strengths and character from a social, cultural, heritage and economic perspective. They create local distinctiveness, identity and sense of place and are traditionally where major social and economic activity takes place. They are a place for people to meet, shop, engage with their community, act as central places for rural areas, and also provide a base for local government and public services.



### 4.2.1 Policy Context

#### Town Centres First

The Programme for Government 2020 committed to a ‘Town Centre First’ policy approach, founded on the Town Centre Health Check research, to ensure that our cities and towns become vibrant places for living and working in by bringing vacant and urban building stock back into use.

The Town Centre First approach recognises the town centre’s role at the core of a vibrant community. The approach prioritises a Town Centre First approach to the regeneration of our towns and villages, using the Town Centre Health Check (TCHC) framework to gather data and lead actions. The Government has indicated that it is committed to this approach and it is anticipated that further policy at a national level will be developed in this area over the lifetime of the Plan. Where appropriate public services like education, health and government offices should be located in town centres, adding to the overall mix of facilities, amenities and activities which are on offer.

When considering advancing local authority initiatives, and submitted development proposals, the Council will adopt the town centre first approach in a manner consistent with the principles of compact growth and mixed-use development, as committed to in the ‘Programme for Government’.

Kerry County Council aims to achieve this through consolidation, active land management and by prioritising development on infill and brownfield sites. The Plan aims to provide a suitable mix of housing and supporting amenities, co-ordinated investment in infrastructure to support economic competitiveness and create an attractive, high-quality living and working environment. A tailored approach to urban development will be applied and will be linked to the emerging objectives and actions of **Housing for All** and to investment through the **National Rural and Urban Regeneration and Development Funds**, with a particular focus on:

- Tackling vacancy, dereliction, and underutilisation of properties/land
- Encouraging a balance between employment and population growth
- Reversing the stagnation or decline of many smaller settlements, by identifying and establishing new roles and functions and enhancement of local infrastructure and amenities
- Addressing the legacy of rapid unplanned growth/edge of town growth, by facilitating amenities and services catch-up

By engaging an integrated approach to making the town centre more accessible to visitors through a variety of methods, including improved signage, public realm and by highlighting key buildings, parks, and open spaces it is hoped the deep historical and cultural identity of the town centre will emerge and that towns will become more appealing as a place to live, work and visit.

It is the policy of the Council to recognise and emphasise the potential for greater residential and commercial use within the historic cores of the towns and villages where many opportunities for intensification of residential uses exist.

It is Council policy to be proactive in piloting combined local authority and private investment to stimulate high quality individual housing or private site development to attract population growth and further investment in villages, subject to resource availability.

#### Town Centre Health-Check (TCHC)

The National Planning Framework (NPF) 2040 supports the revitalisation of the historic county town. The Heritage Council – RGDATA National Pilot TCHC training programme has been a catalyst for bringing key stakeholders together to ensure a vibrant future for towns and to enhance the quality of life for citizens and visitors alike.



The Town Centre Health-check programme raises awareness, understanding and appreciation of the critical role that historic town centres play and the wide-ranging impacts that their vitality and viability have on overall socio-economic, environmental, and cultural growth and development, and on quality of life for citizens and visitors alike. The local authority has a key role to play in this area, both by directly carrying out works in town centres and also by coordinating the work of relevant stakeholders.

A number of Town Centre Health Checks have been carried out across the county. The council will continue to undertake and support the preparation of these reports. The results of each of these analyses will inform policy responses and initiatives in collaboration with communities and stakeholders to support the vibrancy and vitality of town centres.

#### 4.2.2 Brownfield Sites

A number of these development sites have been specifically identified as opportunity sites. These sites will be a key focus for the delivery of sustainable compact growth objectives. These sites are strategic in nature and scale and have been or will be subject to a regeneration plan or master plan. The sites are identified in the three town plans of Tralee, Killarney, and Listowel and in the existing and future local area plans.

#### 4.2.3 Vibrant Cores and Compact Growth

The pattern of urban growth targeted in the NPF and RSES is population and employment led, recognising that enterprise development is drawn to urban locations by market forces, accessibility, innovation supported by higher education institutions and quality of life. Kerry County Council is committed to a plan led approach to regeneration and compact development to sustain existing and create new sustainable communities in line with the shared vision of the NPF and RSES and to transition to a low carbon, climate resilient county.

COVID 19 has had a huge impact on all of our lives. The global pandemic has highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of our urban areas and at the same time has generated ideas for change and adaptation for the future of towns and villages. Remote working has become a reality for many people and there are opportunities for co-working hubs which would decrease travel and commuting and would also help in revitalising our town centres in terms of increased footfall which would in turn support local shops and businesses.

This plan aims to harness these new employment opportunities and maximise new funding streams to improve the quality of Kerry's Towns and Villages by applying the principles of Placemaking. Placemaking involves supporting existing communities, and the creation of new sustainable communities by providing accessible, safe, and distinct built environments that reflect the unique character, heritage and identity of each settlement supported by the creation of safe and attractive public places.

### Urban Regeneration and Compact Growth

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| <b>KCDP 4-1</b> | Support and facilitate the objectives and actions in Housing for All (HfA) to regenerate towns and villages, to tackle dereliction, vacancy, to deliver site assembly opportunities and to promote the sustainable development of land to achieve compact growth and increased population in these centres. |
| <b>KCDP 4-2</b> | Facilitate and support the sustainable development of towns and villages of sufficient scale and quality to be drivers of growth, investment, and prosperity.   |
| <b>KCDP 4-3</b> | Preserve the architectural heritage of towns and villages and promote conservation-led regeneration and the re-use of buildings where possible.   |

<b>KCDP 4-4</b>	Target a range of current national funding mechanisms to facilitate the rejuvenation of town centres and public realms in towns and villages.
<b>KCDP 4-5</b>	Support Town Centre Health Check Reports in the county's towns and use the results to inform policy responses and initiatives in collaboration with communities and stakeholders.
<b>KCDP 4-6</b>	Facilitate and support the development of an Action Plan for Town Centre Renewal for Key Settlements in collaboration with communities and stakeholders.

#### 4.2.4 Placemaking

Quality design and placemaking are emphasised throughout the NPF and RSES, as mechanisms to improve quality of life for all. The NPF states that: “quality of design is critical for making places attractive and distinctive. Architectural quality and well-designed spaces can help to enhance our urban areas and create desirable places in which people want to live, work or visit and contribute to ongoing quality of life and well-being.”

Placemaking is a people centred approach to the planning, design and management of all public spaces and built form areas. It has been shown to have a positive effect on the vitality and vibrancy of our town centres and villages. Creating a sense of place fosters engagement and a sense of belonging within our settlements encouraging economic vitality and enhancing the character of our urban spaces. It can enhance wellbeing through the provision of green space, active space, and social space. In addition to achieving compact growth, placemaking strengthens the connection between people and the place they live and work and serves the needs of the whole community.

Placemaking encompasses the following:

- Urban Design and Built Environment
- Accessibility and Mobility
- Public Realm
- Sustainable Travel
- Sense of Place
- Healthy Communities
- Environment and Green Infrastructure
- Enterprise Development

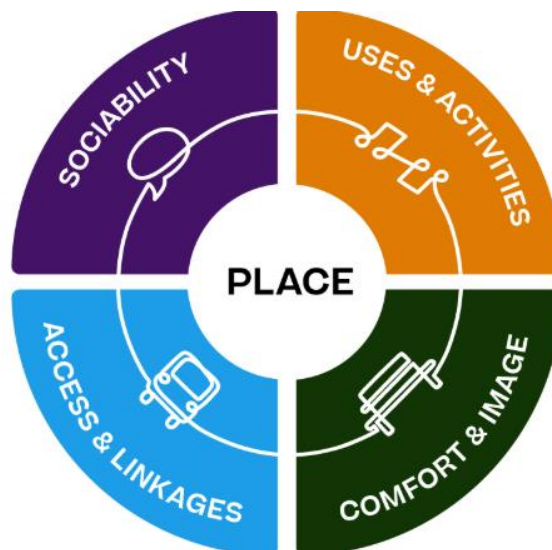


Figure 4.1: The Place Diagram – From the Project for Public Spaces, Inc.



It is the policy of the Council to support initiatives to strengthen and improve the physical environment of towns and villages and encourage positive place-making. The council promotes the development of a quality public realm and supports the initiatives for renewal and regeneration of the towns and villages by placing a particular focus on identified ‘retail core areas’ and designated regeneration and opportunity sites.

**Placemaking**  
**It is an objective of the Council to:**  
**KCDP 4-7** Ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high-quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy an enhanced quality of life and well-being.

**4.2.5 Urban Design and Built Environment**

People friendly Universal design is essential in the creation of an attractive urban environment that can be used by all people. Sustainable models of urban development can deliver quality and maximise the advantages and opportunities of more compact growth based on increased population and employment density. The quality of design is critical for making places attractive and distinctive.

The council will promote high architectural quality and well-designed spaces in order to enhance urban areas and create desirable places in which people want to live, work, or visit and contribute to ongoing quality of life and well-being.

As the majority of future population growth will need to be accommodated in urban areas, it is critical that the Key Towns and the other main towns of the County are in a position to sustain balanced regional development by attracting people and investment.

The quality of the urban environment on offer in these urban areas is critical in this regard and urban design has a key role to play in creating and maintaining successful places. The defining qualities of successful urban places include a pride of place, ease of movement, quality of the public realm and inclusivity.

Kerry County Council has sought to improve the overall appearance of the County’s towns and villages in recent years through Pride of Place Initiatives, Tidy Towns Initiatives, Built Heritage investment schemes and through policies contained within Local Area Plans and through effective development management and enforcement.

It is the policy of the Council to work closely with local communities in implementing village design plans that have been prepared in a public consultation process whilst ensuring that such plans are consistent with adopted Local Area Plans and development objectives contained in the County Development Plan.

The role of urban design in creating sustainable communities with particular reference to design and layout of housing schemes needs to be promoted.



**Figure 4.2: Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide 2009**



It is the policy of the council to ensure that development proposals are cognisant of the need for proper consideration of context, connectivity, inclusivity, variety, efficiency, distinctiveness, layout, public realm, adaptability, privacy and amenity, parking, wayfinding, and detailed design.

### Urban Design and Built Environment

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 4-8** Facilitate and support initiatives to strengthen and improve the physical environment of the towns and villages with enhanced streetscapes, appropriate shopfront design and provision of improved street lighting, public footpaths, and street furniture.
- KCDP 4-9** Facilitate and support the undergrounding of cables in urban areas.
- KCDP 4-10** Facilitate and support the implementation of Village Design Plans and other community led projects, in a sustainable manner, to enhance village environments and promote consultation and engagement with local communities and stakeholders.
- KCDP 4-11** Ensure compliance with TII Publications DN-GEO-03084 (The Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads) in the interests of consistency in design approach and road safety.
- KCDP 4-12** Promote the guidance principles set out in the 'Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide' (2009), and in the 'Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets' (2019) and promote a more pedestrian friendly environment through the provision of traffic calming measures and improved pedestrian infrastructure.

#### 4.2.6 Accessibility and Mobility

Improved Accessibility and Mobility are essential to ensure that town centres across the County are accessible and accommodate all forms of transport, especially sustainable transport options. Accessibility is a measure of how people of all ages and abilities can use an area. Car park locations, surface quality, pavement and building design can all contribute to the level of accessibility in a given area. Enhancing accessibility, to ensure that everyone can enjoy the amenities and services of town centre areas, is therefore essential. To reverse the trend of car dependency in town centres, and increase enjoyment of town centre areas, it is critical to enhance mobility. Efforts are needed to make town centres across the County more pedestrian and cyclist-friendly to ensure that sustainable modes of travel are encouraged and supported.

##### 4.2.6.1 10-Minute Town

The typical suburban development pattern seen in recent decades in our towns has consisted of individual housing areas often resulting in poor connectivity between these residential areas and key community facilities.

The transport networks associated with this development pattern have been centred on private vehicles, with little attention paid to pedestrian and cycle accessibility. This has fostered car dependency and has tended to undermine the viability and attractiveness of more sustainable modes of travel in towns and villages across the county. Regional Planning Objective 176 of the Southern RSES sets out a detailed objective to attain sustainable, compact settlements within the 10-minute town concept.

The '10-Minute' Town concept is about creating compact connected communities, that can provide high quality and safe links to public transport, services, green spaces and to other neighbourhoods, which will reduce the need to travel and therefore reduce carbon emissions.



Our urban communities need sufficient densities to sustain important local services, public transport networks and realise 10-minute town concepts. A critical mass density is required which can only be achieved by consolidation, compact growth, and walkable communities.

Significant economic, health, climate action and social benefits are to be derived from the realisation of the 10-minute town concept and requires thoroughly integrated land use and transport as well as a proactive, infrastructure led approach to the promotion of attractive active modes. It will be complemented by the Town Centre First policy outlined in the Programme for Government which takes a strategic approach to regeneration of settlements to promote residential occupancy in our towns and villages.

### Accessibility and Mobility

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 4-13** Ensure that all new town centre developments, including developments relating to the enhancement of civic spaces and streetscapes, are based on the principles of universal access.
- KCDP 4-14** Facilitate the development of sustainable compact settlements with the “10-minute” town concepts, whereby, a range of community facilities and services are accessible in short walking and cycle timeframes from homes, with walkways and link routes to Greenways or are accessible by high quality public transport services connecting people to larger scaled settlements delivering these services.
- KCDP 4-15** To prioritise walking routes and to deliver a high level of priority and permeability for walking, cycling and public transport modes, in accordance with the principles of movement, place and permeability as laid out in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets 2019, All to ensure when consolidating development of higher densities within existing urban centres we create accessible, attractive, vibrant, and safe, places to work, live, shop and engage in community life.

### 4.2.7 Public Realm

The ‘Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets’ (DMURS) (2019), provides comprehensive guidance in relation to developing and enhancing the public realm. It emphasises particularly how the delivery of permeability and high-quality public realm can assist the promotion and delivery of healthy and sustainable communities. It is also recognised that the integration of nature-based solutions in the public realm, to manage for example urban water run-off, can also have co-benefits for biodiversity and water quality.

It is the policy of this plan that all development proposals, whether in established settlements or in new growth areas, should contribute positively to an enhanced public realm and should demonstrate that the highest quality in public realm design is achieved.

It is also the policy of the council and an objective of this plan to identify, connect and protect green infrastructure resources and enhance their environmental and human benefits. This policy will require partnership and stakeholder engagement from state agencies, local communities, and interest groups.

### Public Realm

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 4-16** Facilitate the preparation of Public Realm Plans to address the challenges relating to the development of the town centre, focusing on the physical enhancement and improvement of the town centre through urban design measures and improved traffic management.
- KCDP 4-17** Support retrofitting initiatives in towns and villages for buildings and public realm spaces.



- KCDP 4-18** Protect, enhance and ensure that existing and proposed developments located within or adjacent to areas of Green Infrastructure incorporate any important biodiversity features into the overall development in a sustainable manner.
- KCDP 4-19** Encourage and facilitate, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, the development of green infrastructure that recognises the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the following:
- Provision of open space amenities
  - Sustainable management of water
  - Protection and management of biodiversity
  - Protection of cultural heritage
  - Protection of protected landscape sensitivities

#### 4.2.8 Shop Fronts, Advertising and Signage

The key towns, historic towns and villages of County Kerry have a variety of traditional and contemporary shop fronts which reflect and complement the character of the settlements. Quality shop fronts enhance the overall attractiveness and character of a town/village centre and make an important contribution to the vibrancy of the towns and villages across the County. Commercial businesses must have specific regard to the importance of quality design in terms of shop fronts, signage, and advertisements. Further details can be found in the KCC Shopfront Design Guidelines published in 2018.

##### Shop Fronts, Advertising and Signage

It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 4-20** Ensure that traditional shopfronts and signage are retained and that works to existing shopfronts, new shopfronts and streetscape developments are in accordance with Kerry County Council's Shopfront Design Guide 2018 and are of a high-quality architectural design and finish.

#### 4.2.9 Enterprise Development

The concept of placemaking is critical from the perspective of enterprise and wider economic development. Creating vibrant, attractive places to live can enable key economic conditions such as attracting and retaining talent and incentivising Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and other investment. Government policy recognises this and placemaking is identified as a key differentiator in Enterprise 2025, Ireland's National Enterprise Policy 2015-2025. (See Chapter 9 Economic Development).

##### Enterprise Development

It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 4-21** Promote development and actively seek public and private partners to utilise available space, that can generate more jobs and activity within existing towns and villages, subject to developments meeting appropriate planning standards and in line with growth targets.

#### 4.3 Active Land Management

The achievement of compact growth targets and regeneration will be supported through the implementation of active land management measures which promote the development of infill and brownfield lands, and strategically located greenfield sites that support the principles of consolidated growth.

In addition, there are significant portions of well-located lands adjacent to town and villages centres served by public transport facilities, some of which are in public ownership. Building on the higher policy objectives





set out by the Housing for All Plan relating to the delivery of a new approach to active land management and to increase Social Housing Delivery and broader housing delivery, the Council will work together with the Housing Agency and Land Development Agency to facilitate the assembly/acquisition, financing, and appropriate redevelopment of these sites.

The Council will consider interventions such as site assembly using CPO, demolition and clearance or decontamination and the provision of facilitating infrastructure. When sites are acquired the Council will decide on the most appropriate mechanism to ensure appropriate rejuvenation which may include redevelopment for civic or amenity uses, public and private housing or the release of the land back to the market for redevelopment.

The Council will actively source and leverage funds including the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF), Urban and Rural Regeneration and Development Funds, Climate Activation Fund and Disruptive Technologies Fund to achieve compact growth and regeneration of our towns and villages. In this regard priority will be given to projects which result in social and economic rejuvenation and regeneration and the provision of amenities and services where these are deficient.

#### **4.3.1 Sustainable Infill and Brownfield Development**

In accordance with RPO 43 Regeneration, Brownfield, and Infill Development a number of sites have been identified in the town plans for potential redevelopment. An increased level of density will be permitted on these sites subject to appropriate design and integration. Additional incentives to develop these lands also applies such as reduced development contributions and parking requirements.

It is an objective of this plan to encourage the redevelopment and renewal of town and village cores rather than continual expansion and sprawl of settlements out into the countryside. A target of at least 30% of new housing should be delivered within the existing built-up areas of settlements on infill and/or brownfield sites.

#### **4.3.2 Development Contributions Scheme 2017**

In order to support the redevelopment of brownfield and infill sites in settlements, Kerry County Council's Development Contributions Scheme 2017 contains reductions for developments on brownfield sites and designated opportunity sites and regeneration areas identified in Local Area Plans and Town Development Plans.

#### **4.3.3 Vacant Sites**

The Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 introduced a vacant site levy which can be applied annually by a local authority at a rate of 3% increasing to 7% of the market valuation of the vacant site from 2019.

The levy is intended to act as a site activation and release mechanism to incentivise the development of vacant/backland or idle sites in urban areas identified by planning authorities. The levy also intends to ensure a more efficient return on state investment in enabling infrastructure and to counteract unsustainable urban sprawl.

A vacant sites' register has been set up in accordance with section 6 of the Act and Kerry County Council will explore the use of the register and levy in areas there are large tracts of residentially zoned but undeveloped lands and where there are distinct pressures for housing.

One of the key objectives of **Housing for All** is that where land is zoned for residential purposes and permissions granted that these proposals come to fruition as quickly as possible. This strategy has identified future mechanisms for the unlocking of vacant sites and these proposals are likely to be legislated for over the period of the plan.



#### 4.3.4 Derelict and Vacant Properties

Sustainable development practices require vacant or derelict sites within urban areas to be developed prior to greenfield sites on the outskirts of urban areas where development of such sites is achievable. The development of derelict sites and underutilised sites and buildings will be encouraged in urban areas in the interest of achieving the most efficient use of urban lands and to stimulate regeneration. It is a policy of the Plan to identify sites in a poor state of repair or neglect under the Derelict Sites Act 1990. Derelict sites should be sympathetically renovated in keeping with the character of the area and should be finished in suitable materials.

#### 4.3.5 Repair & Leasing Scheme

The purpose of the Repair and Leasing Scheme is to bring vacant properties in need of repair, back into use for social housing. The scheme aims to rejuvenate properties suitable for town centre housing that would otherwise slip from vacancy and low repair costs into dereliction and prohibitive repair costs. The scheme provides a positive contribution to the socio-economic development of the county's towns.

#### 4.3.6 Buy & Renew Scheme

As an alternative and to complement the Repair and Leasing Schemes the "The 'Buy and Renew' scheme aims to support Local Authorities and Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) to purchase and renew housing units that require remediation and make them available for social housing use in areas of housing need. The focus under the scheme, is on older stock, and in particular derelict properties which when complete will improve streetscapes and provide much needed accommodation.

#### 4.3.7 Upper Floors/ 'Living over the Shop'

One of the guiding principles of the RSES 2019-2031 is to, 'Set out measures to reduce vacancy and the underuse of existing building stock and support initiatives that promote the reuse, refurbishment and retrofitting of existing buildings within urban centres'. It is desirable to maintain an element of residential use in or close to town centres as it provides night-time activity. Further, a more substantial residential presence adds to the vitality and viability of a town centre. Unfortunately, residential uses in some of our towns and villages have become limited. As such, proposals for the residential conversion of the upper floors of retail and commercial premises will be favourably considered. Any proposed residential use must respect the historic fabric (if relevant), whilst also providing adequate residential amenity.

In recognising the need to protect the historic fabric of our towns/villages while encouraging people to live in upper floors of retail/ commercial premises, it is not always possible or practical to achieve current residential standards. In this regard, at the discretion of the Planning Authority and subject to protecting residential amenity, a reduction in open space and car parking standards may be considered for 'living over the shop' accommodation proposals particularly in town centre locations. Minimum standards in relation to overall floor areas, storage space and natural light must be complied with in order to protect residential amenity.

### Active Land Management

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 4-22** Implement a programme of active land management to tackle dereliction, vacancy and underutilisation of lands and fragmented patterns of land ownership up to and including compulsory acquisitions and support the implementation of Policies included in Housing for all – A New Housing Plan for Ireland in relation to active land management, dereliction and vacancy, including the emerging Residential Zoned Land Tax.
- KCDP 4-23** Prioritise the regeneration of underused town centre and brownfield / infill lands in order to achieve the sustainable delivery of new housing within the existing urban footprint of settlements in the County.



<b>KCDP 4-24</b>	Facilitate the management of a database of strategic brownfield and infill sites to be regularly updated and monitored so that brownfield re-use can be managed and coordinated with multiple stakeholders.
<b>KCDP 4-25</b>	Support the re-use of existing vacant buildings within town/village centres for various uses including co-working facilities.
<b>KCDP 4-26</b>	Utilise, where appropriate, the provisions of Section 48 and 49 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) to generate financial contributions towards the capital costs of providing local and strategic transport infrastructure, services, or projects in the county, and to incentivise and achieve the National Strategic Outcomes of the National Planning Framework.
<b>KCDP 4-27</b>	Promote the development of vacant residential and regeneration sites in all development centres in the County, as appropriate, in accordance with the provisions of Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland.
<b>KCDP 4-28</b>	Use the Derelict Site legislation to identify and address issues of dereliction within the towns and villages of the County and actively seek to use CPO where necessary.
<b>KCDP 4-29</b>	Encourage the development and renewal of areas, identified in the Town and Local Area Plans, having regard to the Core Strategy, that are in need of regeneration, in order to prevent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adverse effects on existing amenities in such areas, in particular as a result of the ruinous or neglected condition of any land</li> <li>• Urban blight and decay</li> <li>• Anti-social behaviour and</li> <li>• A shortage of habitable houses or of land suitable for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses.</li> </ul>
<b>KCDP 4-30</b>	Encourage residential, social and employment uses in existing under-utilised or vacant building stock as a mechanism to combat vacancy in town centres.
<b>KCDP 4-31</b>	Encourage and support the use of town centre regeneration schemes, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repair &amp; Leasing scheme</li> <li>• Buy &amp; Renew scheme</li> <li>• Living over the shop scheme</li> </ul>
<b>KCDP 4-32</b>	Promote and encourage the refurbishment and reuse of the upper floors of retail/commercial premises for residential purposes in town and village centres.
<b>KCDP 4-33</b>	Facilitate a flexible approach in relation to development proposals for residential accommodation in the upper floors of retail/commercial premises based on high-quality design that ensures minimum floor areas, storage space and natural light.
<b>KCDP 4-34</b>	Require that a separate and distinctive point of entry with an identifiable address be provided as part of any proposals for residential development in the upper floors of retail/commercial premises.



### 4.3.8 Residential Densities and Building Heights

The Ministerial Guidelines, Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009) and the Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines (2018) outline appropriate densities and building heights applicable to settlements of various size and location within these settlements. In addition, Circular letter NRUP 02/2021 also gives further clarity in relation to appropriate densities at the edges of larger towns and within small towns and villages. It is an objective of this plan that residential development proposals have regard to these guidelines and allied Ministerial Guidelines, Sustainable Urban Design Standards for New Apartments (2020).

#### Residential Densities and Building Heights

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 4-35** Ensure that developments have regard to the Ministerial Guidelines, Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments - Guidelines for Planning Authorities the DHPLG (2020), Urban Development and Building Heights – Guidelines for Planning Authorities DHPLG (2018) and Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns & Villages) DEHLG (2009).

### 4.4 Retail

Retail centres throughout the County have experienced significant changes and challenges in recent years. Reduced demand for certain retail goods is complex and multifaceted with some commentators contributing it to a lack of central finance, the emergence of the new digital world and online shopping and greater competition from out-of-town shopping centres and retail parks.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also added to the pressures faced by retailers in relation to public health restrictions which has led to a long-term change in consumer behaviour. It has pushed many SMEs to embrace the online trend and the 'shop local' initiative including 'click and collect', and 'selling direct' via smartphone shopping from social media platforms. It is imperative however that experience driven 'bricks and mortar' shops are retained within our retail core areas in key towns, towns, and villages. The creation of retail hierarchies, improvements in sustainable transport, a usable, safe, public realm and good quality design will improve the attractiveness of town centres thus increasing footfall and vibrancy.

#### 4.4.1 Policy Context

The retail planning policy context for the Development Plan is informed by retail guidance documents at the national and regional levels. The National Development Plan (NDP) sets out a broad strategy aimed at promoting more balanced sustainable development (including retail) throughout Ireland. The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020 (RSES) identifies Kerry's main towns of Tralee and Killarney as Key Towns highlighting that retail developments in these larger centres are needed to ensure economic vitality and viability within their shopping cores. Notwithstanding this, the smaller towns and villages within Kerry are also recognised for their important retailing function, albeit on a smaller scale, to serve the day-to-day needs of the people in their hinterlands. The RSES further supports the preparation of a Retail Strategy in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012.

It is the policy of the Council to have regard to the 'Guidelines for Planning Authorities, Retail Planning' (2012), in determining planning applications for retail development. These Guidelines have five key policy objectives, namely: -Ensuring that retail development is **plan-led**.

- Promoting **town/village centre** vitality through a sequential approach to development.
- Securing competitiveness in the retail sector by actively enabling **good-quality development proposals** to come forward in suitable locations.
- Facilitating a shift towards **increased access** to retailing by walking, cycling and public transport which combined can deliver **quality urban design** outcomes.



#### **4.4.1.1 Land-Use Planning and Retail**

It is the policy of this plan to reinvigorate the retail sector in the towns and facilitate the potential for further retail growth whilst also retaining the historic character of the town centres. Other aspects of town centre enhancement and economic growth will also be progressed.

A multi-faceted approach to land-use planning is required to achieve this objective including:

- The identification of sites to allow for town centre expansion and to accommodate the needs of modern retail formats,
- Public realm interventions to enhance the character, vibrancy, accessibility, and physical appearance of the town,
- Enhancement of the appearance and usability of public spaces,
- Improved car parking and mobility,
- Actions to make streets more pedestrian and cyclist friendly,
- Working in coordination with landowners and relevant stakeholders to optimise the appearance and use of derelict, vacant and under-utilised sites in the town centre.

#### **4.4.2 Diversity of Town Centre Uses**

Maintaining the health of town or village centres requires diversity in the services on offer to the catchment population. A wide variety of different functions in town and village centres is a key element in ensuring the on-going vitality of an area. This vitality is threatened by an overconcentration of one particular type of outlet.

##### **4.4.2.1 Office/Commercial/Educational Developments**

The appropriate locations for office/commercial/educational developments would generally be in the Key, Regional and District town centres. These developments need to be flexible to facilitate growth and will be assessed in accordance with relevant development management standards, the size of the proposal in comparison to the size of the centre, the need to ensure a variety of uses in the centre to fully serve its catchment area and the capacity of the centre to absorb any such proposal. These locations should be well served by existing and/or proposed public transport facilities in line with the principles of sustainable development.

It is the policy of the Council to facilitate significant office/commercial/educational development in town centres zoned mixed use (M2).

##### **4.4.2.2 Leisure and Entertainment**

Leisure and Entertainment facilities form an essential component of the mix of use required to ensure town centre vibrancy and vitality. They make a particularly important contribution to retaining vibrancy outside of regular business hours.

##### **4.4.2.3 Evening and Late-Night Uses**

A healthy night-time economy contributes greatly to the vitality and viability of a town centre. There is a need to ensure that adequate provision is made for evening and late-night activities such as cafes, restaurants, public houses, taxi offices, hot food takeaways and other similar uses. A vibrant night-time economy brings many benefits including increased visitor numbers, passive surveillance, and the creation of a destination for artistic and cultural events.

##### **4.4.2.4 Outdoor Dining**

Outdoor dining can make a positive contribution to the vibrancy and vitality of a town/village centre providing passive supervision, increased footfall, and an enhanced atmosphere.

Outdoor dining has become part of the everyday running of hospitality businesses. It has enabled businesses to make the most effective use of the space they have available, both within their establishments and adjacent areas in the public realm. In particular outdoor dining has been an essential element in assisting businesses



to continue to trade during the COVID 19 pandemic. The Council will continue to facilitate outdoor dining (pursuant to licences under section 254) in areas of the public realm, including footpaths and roads where adequate provision can be made for pedestrian and vehicular safety and settlement car parking requirements.

#### 4.4.2.5 Casual Trading

Casual trading at suitable locations can provide useful seasonal dining and/or services. Such entities can also create a vibrant atmosphere and increase footfall. Care however must be had in relation to such facilities so as to ensure that established traders and rate payers are not undermined.

It is Council policy to designate sites as Casual Trading Areas in suitable locations where deemed appropriate. In the implementation of this policy the Council will have regard to the terms of the Casual Trading Act 1995 (or as may be amended from time to time). It is also Council policy to promote organic producers and producer-only products through supporting 'Farmer Markets' and to promote seasonal and craft markets throughout the county.

#### Diversity of Town Centre Uses

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

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| <b>KCDP 4-36</b> | Facilitate a mix of compatible uses that will contribute to an enhanced provision of a range of town centre uses and to consolidate the retail core of towns, including a mix of day and night-time uses.  |
| <b>KCDP 4-37</b> | Promote the development of the town centre as the primary location for retail and as an attractive location for shopping, business, tourism, residential and community life.   |
| <b>KCDP 4-38</b> | Protect the vitality and viability of town centres by ensuring that all significant retail & office developments, with the exception of neighbourhood shops are located in the town centre.  |
| <b>KCDP 4-39</b> | Facilitate outdoor dining proposals pursuant to a licence under section 254 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) in suitable areas of the public realm including footpaths and roads subject to pedestrian and vehicular safety and maintaining adequate car parking to serve the settlement. |
| <b>KCDP 4-40</b> | Designate sites as Casual Trading Areas in suitable locations where deemed appropriate. In the implementation of this policy the Council will have regard to the terms of the Casual Trading Act 1995 (or any subsequent review of, or amendment to this Act.).  |
| <b>KCDP 4-41</b> | Promote organic producers, craft makers and producer-only products through 'Farmers Markets' at appropriate town and village centres throughout the county.  |

#### 4.4.3 Occurrence of Vacancy

Vacancy is a by-product of reduced demand and is more pronounced in certain towns within the County. Relocation of retailing to more peripheral and out of centre locations has the potential to threaten the vibrancy and vitality of many core shopping areas and this plan aims to address this issue in a plan-led, evidence-based approach. There will be a presumption in favour of town centre developments as opposed to large out of town shopping centres and retail parks.

The main retail/commercial area is predominately located along the main street in towns. It is imperative that the vitality and viability of these areas are protected.

It is an objective of this plan to encourage the sustainable expansion in the range and number of retail and commercial services within the designated towns which in turn will provide local employment and improve



the quality of life of the local community. Future mixed use and other non-residential development will be encouraged in the town core on brownfield and infill sites first where appropriate and on sites zoned for such uses or open to consideration under the relevant zoning.

#### Occurrence of Vacancy

It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 4-42** Support and facilitate measures to reduce town centre retail vacancy.

#### 4.4.4 Retailing in the County

A successful retail sector that safeguards existing retail floorspace, as well as providing additional floorspace has an important role to play in revitalising towns centres. The aims of this section are to:

- Ensure that the retail needs of the County's residents are met, in so far as possible, within County Kerry
- Promote retail activity in the core areas of towns and villages in the County
- Ensure that town and village centres are pleasant, safe, accessible, and vibrant and attract the public for shopping and social purposes
- Improve accessibility and ease of movement for all forms of transport in town and village centres.
- Ensure the towns and villages fulfil their retail potential, providing retail services appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement and the surrounding hinterland
- Examine mechanisms that will assist in bringing forward and deliver the development of town centre sites as well as the redevelopment/rejuvenation of underutilised, vacant, and derelict sites for appropriate town centre uses

It is the policy of Kerry County Council to support the vitality and viability of existing town and village centres and facilitate a competitive and healthy environment for the retailing sector into the future, by ensuring that future growth in retail floorspace responds to the identified settlement hierarchy, the town centre first / sequential approach, the appropriate protection of the built environment and the needs of the projected population of the settlement area.

#### Retailing in the County

It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 4-43** Complete a town centre and retail strategy for the entire county within the lifetime of this plan.

**KCDP 4-44** Require that new significant retail development be directed to the higher Levels in the Retail Hierarchy for the County and specifically to the core retail areas identified for these settlements.

**KCDP 4-45** Ensure that sufficient lands are appropriately zoned for retail development in the settlements of County Kerry to support a level, quantum and form of retail activity that is appropriate to the position of the settlement on the Settlement Hierarchy for the County.

**KCDP 4-46** Have regard to the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities and associated Retail Design Manual (2012) in the assessment of planning applications for all retail developments.

**KCDP 4-47** Encourage the sustainable expansion in the range and number of retail, commercial and community services/facilities within the settlements in tandem with population growth which in turn will provide local employment and improve the quality of life of the local community.



<b>KCDP 4-48</b>	Maintain and strengthen the vitality, viability and regeneration of the County's Key Towns, Regional Towns, District Towns, Villages, and other settlements by providing for civic, leisure, cultural and tourism attractions while ensuring that retailing remains a core function of these centres, in line with the Retail Hierarchy.
<b>KCDP 4-49</b>	Support the measures and actions identified in the report 'Local Authority Retail Support: Improving our Cities and Towns, June 2015' and the Town Centre Action Plan outlined in 'A Framework for Town Centre Renewal 2017' to address the negative issues associated with vacancy and to ensure that the potential benefits associated with retailing activities is captured for the County's town and village centres.
<b>KCDP 4-50</b>	Ensure the development of Regional Towns as sustainable, vibrant, and prosperous Town Centres within the Retail Hierarchy for the County to meet the retailing needs and offer sufficient retail choice to their local populations and catchment populations.
<b>KCDP 4-51</b>	Facilitate and encourage appropriate year-round retail uses in tourist town centres.
<b>KCDP 4-52</b>	Encourage and facilitate where possible appropriate sustainable retail developments in vacant retail units in town centres.

#### 4.4.4.1 Retail Hierarchy

In keeping with the approach required in the Retail Planning Guidelines (2012) and having regard to the Core Strategy, this table below outlines the retail hierarchy for the county.

<b>Retail Hierarchy</b>	<b>Settlement Hierarchy</b>	<b>Appropriate level of Retail Development</b>
<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Key Towns</b>	Key Towns should offer a full range of types of retail services from newsagents to specialist shops, large department stores, convenience stores of all types, shopping centres and a high level of mixed uses. Key Towns should be well serviced by public transport.
<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Regional Towns</b>	Regional Towns will vary in terms of scale of provision and the size of catchment. Generally, where the town is not close to a Key town and there is a large catchment there should be a good range of comparison shopping with a mix of uses and services. These towns should contain at least one supermarket and smaller scale comparison department store to cater for local needs.
<b>Level 3</b>	<b>District Towns</b>	District Towns should generally provide for one small supermarket ranging in size commensurate with its population and surrounding catchment, a limited range of local shops, supporting services such as a health centre, community facilities and recreation uses. This type of centre should meet the day to day needs of the local population and surrounding catchment.
<b>Level 4</b>	<b>Villages</b>	These centres should meet the basic day to day needs of the surrounding population. These shops can present as a rural focal point with a local post office near to the local primary school or GAA club.
<b>Level 5</b>	<b>Small Village Settlements</b>	These small villages settlements serve smaller rural catchments. They provide local services (often a single shop) with some smaller scale rural enterprises in a number of such villages.

**Table 4.1: Summary of Appropriate Level of Retail Development**





#### 4.4.4.1.1 Key Towns

Tralee is the highest order retail town in the County having the greatest sphere of influence, catchment population and range of retail facilities and as such is the foremost centre of comparison goods. Killarney is recognised for its importance in tourist retailing and is well connected by public transport and also serves a large population catchment. Both towns have a significant retail base, including both convenience and comparison goods. Additional large-scale comparison shopping should be encouraged to locate in these two Key town centres.

##### Key Towns

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 4-53** Encourage sustainable large-scale convenience and comparison retail development in the County to be principally focused at appropriate locations in the Town Centres of the Key towns of Tralee and Killarney in line with the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities and associated Retail Design Manual (2012).
- KCDP 4-54** Develop and promote the Key towns of Tralee and Killarney as sustainable, vibrant, and prosperous Town Centres operating at the highest retail Level within the Retail Hierarchy for the County, and to further strengthen, improve and diversify the retailing performance of Tralee and Killarney within a regional context.
- KCDP 4-55** Facilitate improvements to the quantum and quality of retail offering and function in Tralee and Killarney, and ensure their sustainable development by consolidating, intensifying, and enhancing their existing core retail areas, and by directing new retail opportunities into the core retail areas identified for each.

#### 4.4.4.1.2 Regional Towns

The Regional Towns of Ballybunion, Cahersiveen, Castleisland, Dingle/Daingean Ui Chúis, Kenmare Killorglin, Listowel and Milltown are economically vibrant and vary in terms of scale of retail provision and size of catchment. Generally, these towns have good transport links to larger towns and cities. Where the town is not close to a Key town and there is a large catchment there should be a good range of comparison shopping with a mix of uses and services. These towns should contain at least one supermarket and smaller scale comparison department store to cater for local needs.

##### Regional Towns

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 4-56** Facilitate appropriately scaled improvements to the quantum and quality of retail offer and function in the Regional Towns, and ensure their sustainable development by consolidating, intensifying, and enhancing their existing core retail areas, and by directing new retail opportunities into town centres.
- KCDP 4-57** Ensure that the Regional Town Centres have a retail offer that is sufficient in terms of scale, type, and range without adversely impacting on or diverting trade from the higher order retailing locations.
- KCDP 4-58** Encourage and facilitate sustainable tourism related retail developments and initiatives, of appropriate scale, in the vicinity of tourist town centres.



#### 4.4.4.1.3 District Towns, Villages and Small Village Settlements

##### District Towns

Generally, these are smaller settlements which provide basic convenience shopping and comparison shopping on a limited scale. They provide typically a small supermarket / general grocery store and sub-post office. The challenge for these towns is to ensure they maintain and where possible expand the choice of convenience and comparison shopping to service their residential population.

##### Villages and Small Village Settlements

Villages and Small Village Settlements act as local service centres providing retailing shops which serve the immediate daily needs of their resident population and in many cases consist of a local grocery store. They have a small sphere of influence and do not compete with higher order retail locations. It would not be appropriate for these centres to undergo significant growth in retail and shopping functions given their relative inaccessibility and nature of their existing population catchments. The challenge will be to ensure that convenience shopping is maintained at an appropriate level.

This plan seeks to ensure the vitality and long-term functioning of towns and villages as it is critically important to ensure vibrant rural communities and making better places to live, work in and visit. It is imperative that development is focused in rural towns and villages to increase the viability of retail and services on the main street.

It is the policy of this Council to prioritise the sustainable development of the main towns in the County to achieve their target populations and enhance their capacity to attract new investment in employment, services, and public transport for the benefit of their own populations and that of their rural hinterlands.

#### District Towns, Villages and Small Village Settlements

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

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| <b>KCDP 4-59</b> | Ensure the development of District Towns, Villages and Small Village Settlements as sustainable, vibrant, and prosperous local centres performing at a level within the Retail Hierarchy for the County to meet the retailing needs of immediate local populations and catchment populations. |
| <b>KCDP 4-60</b> | Ensure that any new development in District Towns, Villages and small village Settlements respects the scale and character of the existing settlement.  |

#### 4.4.4.2 Other Types of Retail

##### 4.4.4.2.1 Online Shopping

Online shopping has a major presence in the Irish retail market. The growth in the online shopping trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future and retailers will need to build for greater online capacity and plan for safe customer-experience shopping.

#### Online Shopping

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

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|------------------|---|
| <b>KCDP 4-63</b> | Support and promote the Kerry Local Enterprise Office in supporting all existing retail business with an on-street presence in all Core Retail Areas to establish an online sales platform. |
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#### 4.4.4.2 Tourism Related Retail Developments

It is an objective of the Council to support niche tourism and innovative tourist enterprises to enhance the diversity and quality of local visitor experiences and to stimulate increased visitor numbers in all parts of the county. Any such proposals should not adversely impact Natura 2000 sites'.

##### Tourism Related Retail Developments

###### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 4-64** Encourage and facilitate the delivery of sustainable tourism-related retail developments and initiatives, of appropriate scales, located in the vicinity of tourism attractions and amenities.

#### 4.4.4.3 Development Management

All planning applications for all new retail developments will be assessed in accordance with the criteria set out in Volume 6 - Development Management, Standards and Guidelines.

##### 4.4.4.3.1 Fast Food Outlets, Takeaways, Off Licences and Betting Offices.

Fast food outlets, takeaways, off licences and betting offices have the potential to cause noise, littering and can detract from the amenities of an area. Therefore, proposals for new or extended Fast Food Outlets, Takeaways, Off Licences and Betting Offices will be carefully considered, particularly in locations where a proliferation of such uses already exists.

##### Fast Food Outlets, Takeaways, Off Licences and Betting Offices

###### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 4-65** Prevent an over-supply or dominance of fast-food outlets, takeaways, off licences, and betting offices in the main streets of towns and villages and shopping centres to ensure that injury is not caused to the amenities of these streets and centres through the loss of retail opportunities.

##### 4.4.4.3.2 Edge of Centre and Out of Centre Retailing

Edge-of-centre sites are generally no more than 300-400m from the primary retail areas in the town whereas out-of-centre retail development is clearly separated from the town centre but within the urban areas identified in the Development Plan. Retail developments of this nature will be directed to town centre locations where it can be demonstrated that there will not be a negative impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre. Proposals for edge-of centre and out of centre retail developments will be assessed having regard to the considerations set out in 'Retail Planning – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012'. In the interest of protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of town and village centres, it is not envisaged that out-of-centre retail developments will be permitted during the lifetime of this Plan.

##### Edge of Centre and Out of Centre Retailing

###### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 4-66** Apply the sequential test to new retail development proposals for edge-of-centre and out of centre retail developments and to assess the impact on the existing town centre having regard to the criteria and considerations set out in 'Retail Planning – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012'.

##### 4.4.4.3.3 Retail Warehousing and Retail Parks

Retail warehousing or a retail park comprises an agglomeration of retail warehouses grouped around a common carpark selling mainly bulky goods. In keeping with the Retail Planning Guidelines (2012) there will be a presumption against further development of out-of-town retail parks in the county.



### Retail Warehousing and Retail Parks

It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 4-67** Limit the uses within the retail warehousing parks to those defined in the Guidelines for Planning Authorities: Retail Planning (2012), and where it can be demonstrated that there will be no negative impact on the vitality and viability of existing town centres.

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## CHAPTER 5

# RURAL HOUSING







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- 5.2 Policy Context**
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## 5.0 Rural Housing

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the general planning policies and principles for the provision of rural housing in County Kerry. The Council recognises that supporting sustainable rural communities requires a holistic approach, one which recognises the functional relationship between settlements and their hinterlands. The careful management of all our rural assets is a key component of this plan, to ensure that these important assets are protected and will continue to support the communities who rely on them. The policies and objectives contained in this chapter, ensure that the housing needs of all rural communities, which have many distinctive needs from those in urban areas, are identified, and that policies are put in place to ensure that the type and scale of development in rural areas, at appropriate locations, necessary to sustain rural communities is accommodated.

Kerry is home to a diverse range of land uses including agriculture, centres of local food production, recreational and tourist activities, established villages and rural housing. These combine to provide both residents and visitors with a quality environment to live, work and enjoy.

Rural areas make a major contribution to Kerry's identity and to overall development in economic, social, cultural, and environmental terms. Rural areas hold much of Kerry's natural resources, scenic landscapes, biodiversity, environmental qualities and contribute in a unique way to the County's culture.

Rural areas are also a focus for working and for recreational activities including the agri-food and tourism sectors. Kerry has faced challenges in recent decades, such as the loss of traditional industries and employment, emigration, and poor connectivity. The emergence of new technologies, improved infrastructural connectivity and remote working provide opportunities for diversification into new employment sectors and to build on the success of many Irish and foreign-owned companies supporting employment in rural areas.

Agriculture is the predominant land use in Kerry with approximately 226,000 hectares of farmed land in the County, however, according to Census 2016 data, only 8% of Kerry's population is employed in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sectors. Given the relatively low agricultural employment figures, it is recognised that the promotion of farm diversification and new employment opportunities within the agriculture sector is necessary to sustain rural communities and ensure viability of existing community services. Additionally, the sustainable use of our natural resources including forest and aggregate reserves (sand and gravel pits) needs to be carefully considered and managed to achieve balanced growth while protecting the natural environment particularly water quality and biodiversity. See chapter 9 Economic Development and Chapter 10 Tourism & Outdoor Recreation for further information.

This chapter sets out the policies required for the *continued* sustainable development of rural County Kerry, in a manner that is consistent with the guidance, strategies and policies at National and Regional level and are based on the following important principles:

1. The specific land use requirements of agricultural activity will be accommodated as a first priority.
2. A focus on supporting vibrant rural communities centred on a network of rural village settlements is a cross cutting theme of this Plan.
3. Rural Kerry is an important national and international tourism and heritage asset, and its environmental assets will be protected.



4. Encouragement and support for restoration and refurbishment of the existing built fabric in rural areas.
5. The requirement to transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society, necessitates consideration of the spatial pattern of development focusing on elimination of unnecessary trips, more efficient use of resources and opportunities to provide centralised and communal public services.

The balance between housing delivery in our towns, villages and rural areas needs to be carefully balanced so as not to undermine the long-term viability of the individual towns and villages ensuring in particular that key local community facilities are retained and continue to be viable. This will also allow for more sustainable travel patterns to be maintained and improved on into the future.

## 5.2 Policy Context

### 5.2.1 National Policy

#### National Planning Framework

The National Planning Framework (NPF) acknowledges the contribution of rural areas to the economic, social, and cultural development of the country. It seeks to strengthen rural communities, improve connectivity, and address decline by focusing on the potential for the renewal and development of smaller towns and villages. The document identifies a link between the spatial imbalance created by one-off housing and the impact this has had on the decline of smaller settlements and the level of services available. There is therefore a strong emphasis on revitalising towns and villages and focusing local housing and employment growth in these locations. The NPF developed an evidence-based approach to the identification of rural areas under pressure for development, by including a definition of the functional urban area or commuter catchment around a city or large town. Any rural areas located within the commuter catchment of a Key, Regional or District town are considered to be areas under urban influence. Applications for one-off rural dwellings in these locations are to be considered with regard to an economic and/or social need to live in the rural area, siting and design criteria and the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements.

#### Our Rural Future – Rural Development Policy 2021-2025

'Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025', is the Government's plan for rural Ireland's development over the next five years. It proposes to invigorate rural Ireland, its towns, and villages by a number of incentives both financial and physical. The plan contains a number of themes which includes remote/blended working, town and village renewal, community engagement and the provision of enhanced services and infrastructure.

The Policy advocates a holistic, place-based approach to rural development, which encourages and supports rural communities to develop cohesive and integrated plans to meet the long-term needs of their own particular area. This approach recognizes that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to meet the developmental needs of every area. The policy will help rural economies and rural communities to recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and to maximise the opportunities afforded by improved digital connectivity, town centre regeneration, the resilience and leadership of local communities, and the transition to a climate neutral society

It is the policy of this strategy to:

- Invest significantly in remote working infrastructure to provide an opportunity for people to continue to live in rural communities while following their career ambitions
- Invest in rural towns and villages as hubs of economic and social activity



- Transform the opportunity for the diversification of rural economies through the delivery of high-speed broadband to every part of the country
- Adopt a place-based approach to rural development to meet the needs of different areas in a holistic way and maximise the impact of investment in those areas
- Invest in and empower rural communities to design and deliver responses that meet their local needs.
- Actively involve young people in rural areas in decisions that affect them and their future

The policies and objectives contained in this policy document is supported in this Development Plan.

### 5.2.2 Regional Policy

#### Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES)

The Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES) recognises that in planning for rural areas, a balance is required between managing urban generated demand and supporting the sustainable growth of rural communities and economies. The Strategy highlights the significant levels of growth experienced in rural areas close to large urban settlements and the need to manage the level of growth in these locations. There is an acknowledgement that support for housing and population growth within rural towns and villages would provide a viable alternative to one-off rural housing. This is confirmed in the policy objective supporting the development of a 'New Homes in Small Towns and Villages' initiative, which seeks to create opportunities within the footprint of existing settlements for people to build their own homes.

#### 5.2.3 Rural Development and Climate Change

In achieving a balance of supporting rural communities and protecting the countryside, consideration must be given to the impact of the pattern of development associated with urban generated one-off housing on the climate and environment. As we strive to mitigate against the impacts of climate change, it is important that future development patterns reduce our carbon footprint, protect our environment, and promote more sustainable ways of living.

### 5.3 Planning for the Future Growth and Development of Rural Areas

There are many examples of vibrant rural communities in villages and the countryside and different types of rural areas and rural communities due to the scale, accessibility, the influence of adjacent urban areas, and access to infrastructure and services. As a result of their location (and peripherality), some areas are highly dependent on tourism and agriculture and have a very strong sense of identity.

Rural communities, and particularly those engaged in farming, operate as custodians of the landscape by undertaking agricultural land management at varying scales. However, the viability of many landholdings is such that just over half (52.5%) of farm families nationally now depend on off-farm employment, much of which is focused on urban settlements<sup>1</sup>.

Villages and small village settlements are intrinsically linked to rural areas, providing a focal point and location for services and facilities. However, some of these settlements have remained static in recent years and have suffered the loss of population, services, and facilities.

This is due to a number of factors including the dependency of the rural agrarian population on the larger urban centres for off farm income and the employment of family members from small agrarian holdings in urban areas who have built a dwelling on the family landholding.

This settlement pattern has been predominantly landownership driven as opposed to settlement driven and has resulted in significant levels of car dependency in rural areas. This has led to the utilisation of services and

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<sup>1</sup> Teagasc National Farm Survey 2019



facilities in larger urban centres particularly in conjunction with employment commuting at the expense of smaller villages and settlements.

However, there is evidence of a strong enterprise culture, social vibrancy, and resilience in rural communities. The development of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) is of particular relevance to smaller towns and villages. Rural areas have significant potential in these sectors, and as digital links and opportunities for remote working and new enterprises continue to grow, employment is likely to increase in areas such as agri-tech, ICT, multi-media and creative sectors, tourism, and an added value bio-economy and circular economy. Improved digital connectivity, through the roll-out of the National Broadband Plan, offers unprecedented opportunities for businesses in rural areas to offer new services and to reach new markets over the coming years.

In support of the overall pattern of development in rural areas, this Plan seeks to protect areas that are under strong urban influence from unsustainable over-development, and to encourage the potential of economic development outlined above and population growth to be sustained in rural towns and villages. (See Chapter 9 Economic Development and objectives KCDP 5-12 to KCDP 5-14)

### Planning for the Future Growth and Development of Rural Areas

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| <b>KCDP 5-1</b> | Facilitate the development of the rural economy by supporting a sustainable and economically efficient agricultural and food sector, together with forestry, fishing and aquaculture, energy and extractive industries, the bio-economy and diversification into alternative on-farm and off-farm activities, harnessing technology and opportunities for remote working, while at the same time noting the importance of maintaining and protecting the natural landscape and built heritage which are vital to rural tourism. |
| <b>KCDP 5-2</b> | Protect and promote the sense of place and culture and the quality, character and distinctiveness of the rural landscape that make Kerry's rural areas authentic and attractive places to live, work and visit.   |
| <b>KCDP 5-3</b> | Support the initiatives and policies contained in "Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025", to sustainably strengthen economic activity and employment in rural areas.  |
| <b>KCDP 5-4</b> | Ensure that future housing in all rural areas complies with the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2005 (DoEHLG), circular PL2/2017, National Planning Framework (NPOs 15 & 19) and the Development Management Guidance of this Plan.  |
| <b>KCDP 5-5</b> | Ensure the careful and sustainable management of the countryside / rural areas in order to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.   |
| <b>KCDP 5-6</b> | Recognise and promote the value of agricultural land to ensure sustainable food supply and the landscape value of the rural area.   |
| <b>KCDP 5-7</b> | Facilitate and support the objectives and actions of "Housing for All, a New Housing Plan for Ireland" in relation to policy initiatives for rural housing.   |

#### 5.4 Cluster Developments in Village Settlements

Rural towns and villages function as focal points and as local drivers for their surrounding areas through well-established economic, administrative, and social functions. They support a collection of services, have a significant share of homes and jobs, and act as transport hubs for a much wider rural community. However, it



has been challenging to retain and/or develop community services and social facilities due to a stagnation or decrease in population, and the recent development of one-off housing outside of these settlements.

As a consequence of these changing settlement patterns, building vacancy in rural towns and villages has become increasingly prevalent, resulting in the demise of the historic vibrancy and vitality of town and village centres. The re-use and regeneration of these buildings are essential catalysts to transforming the capacity and potential of smaller towns and villages in Kerry. It is an objective of this plan to proactively address building vacancy in towns and villages and, where necessary to utilise the derelict site legislation to address issues of dereliction.

In order to support this objective Kerry County Councils 2017 Development Contribution Scheme contains reductions for the reuse of vacant properties and reduced car parking levies (see also Chapter 4 – Towns & Villages). The Council will support the proportionate growth of and appropriately designed developments in rural towns and villages that will contribute to their regeneration and renewal, including interventions in the public realm, the provision of amenities, the acquisition of sites and the provision of services. Opportunities exist to create the conditions to support residential development in rural towns and villages, whether through parking and streetscape improvements, the provision of open spaces or playgrounds, the acquisition of key sites and/or the opening up or amalgamation of ‘backlands’ for residential development and the provision of services such as waste-water treatment.

It is the policy of Kerry County Council to seek to strengthen and diversify rural towns and villages to be a focus for local housing. The Council will ensure the scale, design, and layout of housing in rural towns and villages reflects the character, scale and density of the town or village.

The Council will also facilitate and support Irish Water and other stakeholders to deliver investment in the sustainable development of water and wastewater and other infrastructure for towns and villages, to enable small villages to grow and sustain rural places.

It is the policy of the Council to encourage people who wish to reside in the countryside to live in villages or small village settlements where services are available. As an alternative to one-off housing, it is an objective of this plan to permit clusters of housing served by individual wastewater treatment systems in the small villages and small village settlements listed in Table 5.1 where there is no wastewater infrastructure or no plans for such infrastructure. The strategy for these clusters within these settlements is to facilitate a small number of additional dwellings and/or small enterprises to consolidate the existing pattern of development around these focal points and utilise existing services in the area.

An Bóthar Buí	Faha
An Chillín Liath	Finuge
An Gleann	Glencar
Asdee	Glenflesk
Aughacasla	Headford
Baile na nGall	Inch
Ballyfinnane	Kells
Beaufort	Kilgobnet
Bonane	Kilmoyley
Boolteens	Knockanure
Camp	Lauragh
Castlecove	Lisselton
Chapelstown	Lyreacrompane
Clogher	Scartaglin



Cordal	Stradbally
Cromane	Tahilla
Currans	Templenoë
Currow	The Spa
Dún Chaoin	Tuosist

**Table 5.1: Settlements where clusters served by individual treatment systems may be considered**

The Council will facilitate and support stakeholders and allied entities to implement a “*New Homes in Small Towns and Villages*” initiative in the county as outlined in the NPF and RSES. This scheme involving Irish Water, communities and other stakeholders will seek to provide services and serviced sites to create “build your own home” opportunities within the existing footprint of rural settlements.

#### Cluster Developments in Small Village Settlements

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 5-8** Facilitate and support stakeholders and allied entities to develop a programme for ‘new homes in small towns and villages’ with public infrastructure agencies such as Irish Water and local communities to provide serviced sites with appropriate infrastructure to attract people to build their own homes and live in small towns and villages.
- KCDP 5-9** Facilitate the development of small-scale residential cluster developments in villages and small village settlements listed in Table 5.1 served by individual onsite wastewater treatment systems where there are no plans to provide a capital wastewater scheme and where the design, layout and scale of the residential cluster is commensurate with the scale and layout of the existing settlement.
- KCDP 5-10** Support Irish Water’s Small Towns and Villages Growth Programme (STVGP) 2020-2024, which will provide water and wastewater growth capacity in smaller settlements.
- KCDP 5-11** Develop and publish guidelines for cluster housing developments within the existing footprint of villages and small village settlements.

### 5.5 Rural Housing

County Kerry is essentially a rural County with 54.6% of the population recorded in the 2016 census as living in the rural area (i.e., outside of Key Towns, Regional Towns, District Towns & Villages), with the corresponding national figure for those living in the rural area being 30% (i.e. outside of cities, towns & villages). The countryside however is a finite resource and is a valuable asset both environmentally and economically. It is critical that this asset is protected and enhanced.

Based on the GeoDirectory registers between 2015 and 2020, 1,840 new addresses were added to its register. Of these 1,079 (59%) have taken place outside of the County’s urban areas including small Towns and Villages and consist of private housing. By comparison a significant portion of the development undertaken within the county’s towns and villages comprises social housing (either direct build or turnkey).

This pattern of development contributes to a spatial and social imbalance and the decline in population of smaller settlements. As a result, many key services have closed, in part due to population decline and dropping income levels leaving more marginalised and vulnerable citizens without access to those services.

In order to address the socio-economic imbalance of our settlements, to retain existing and sustain new services and facilities in small villages, to reduce car dependency and meet the county’s obligations to mitigate climate change, it is essential that a balance be struck between facilitating people with an economic or social



need to live in the rural area while ensuring that other housing demand is facilitated and encouraged within Towns and Villages.

The policy for single housing in the countryside in this Draft Plan has been guided by national and regional policy.

It is the policy of the Council to:

- Enhance the vitality and viability of the rural towns and villages, to strengthen their role as rural service centres and protect existing community uses and services in the villages
- Maintain a stable population base in the rural areas with a strong network of rural service centres in villages and small towns
- Sustainably provide cluster developments within (small) villages at a density that reflects the existing footprint of the settlement
- Protect sensitive landscapes and other environmentally sensitive areas from unsustainable development

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that future housing in rural areas complies with all National Policy documents including the National Planning Framework (NPO 15 & 19), the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2005 (DoEHLG), RSES and Circular PL 2/2017 and this will be achieved through greater emphasis on the following:

- (a) Establishing that there is a genuine economic or social need for permanent occupation.
- (b) Prioritising the reduction of residential vacancy rates in all the Rural Areas in preference to new residential development.
- (c) The renovation or modification of existing structures in rural areas for residential use.
- (d) Encouraging people who wish to reside in the countryside to live in existing villages or small village settlements where there are services available.

### 5.5.1 Identifying Rural Area Types

The Rural Area Types map has been prepared in accordance with the *Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines* (2005) which state that it is vitally important that a process of research and analysis be carried out into population and development trends in rural areas.

Population, Housing, Employment and Commuting patterns have been used in this analysis which has been derived from the Census and has been compared against previous years to measure change. This has been done at Electoral Division (ED) level and using the 1km<sup>2</sup> grid cells as published by the CSO. The 1km<sup>2</sup> cells have been used to get a clearer picture of the spatial distribution of population across the county. The statistics have been weighted and have then been combined to give a total score for each area, with the scores grouped to define the type of area. In this case, population and the level of commuting are more important, reflecting in their increased weighting.

An analysis of this data identifies the different types of rural areas. From the analysis carried out, the areas under significant urban influence, areas under urban influence and other rural areas have been identified and are shown on Map 5.1.

#### 5.5.1.1 Rural Areas Under Significant Urban Influence

These are areas which exhibit characteristics such as proximity to the immediate environs or close commuting catchment of the larger towns and villages, rapidly rising population, evidence of considerable pressure for development of housing due to proximity to such urban areas, or to major transport corridors with ready access to the urban area, and pressures on infrastructure such as the local road network.



These areas also contain the following settlements with lands zoned or where cluster developments can be facilitated in accordance with Objective 5-12.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ardfert</li> <li>• Ballybunion</li> <li>• Barraduff</li> <li>• Blennerville</li> <li>• Cahersiveen</li> <li>• Castleisland</li> <li>• Castlemaine</li> <li>• Dingle / Daingean Uí Chúis</li> <li>• Fenit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fieries</li> <li>• Fossa</li> <li>• Kenmare</li> <li>• Killarney</li> <li>• Killorglin</li> <li>• Listowel</li> <li>• Milltown</li> <li>• Rathmore</li> <li>• Tralee</li> </ul>	Settlement with some form of wastewater treatment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beaufort</li> <li>• Currow</li> <li>• Headford</li> <li>• Kilcummin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Spa</li> </ul>	Settlement with no form of wastewater treatment.

**Table 5.2: Settlements in Rural Areas Under Significant Urban Influence**

### 5.5.1.2 Rural Areas Under Urban Influence

In these areas, population levels are generally stable within a well-developed town and village structure and in the wider rural areas around them. This stability is supported by a traditionally strong rural/agricultural economic base. The key challenge in these areas is to maintain a reasonable balance between development activity in the extensive network of smaller towns and villages and housing proposals in wider rural areas.

These areas also contain the following settlements with lands zoned or where cluster developments can be facilitated in accordance with Objective 5-13.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abbeydorney</li> <li>• An Fheothanach</li> <li>• An Mhuiríoch</li> <li>• Annascaul</li> <li>• Baile an Fheirtéaraigh</li> <li>• Baile an Sceilg</li> <li>• Baile na nGall</li> <li>• Ballyduff</li> <li>• Ballyheigue</li> <li>• Ballylongford</li> <li>• Brosna</li> <li>• Castlegregory</li> <li>• Causeway</li> <li>• Ceann Trá</li> <li>• Cloghane</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duagh</li> <li>• Dún Géagáin</li> <li>• Farranfore</li> <li>• Glenbeigh</li> <li>• Gneeveguilla</li> <li>• Kilflynn</li> <li>• Kilgarvan</li> <li>• Knightstown</li> <li>• Knocknagoshel</li> <li>• Lixnaw</li> <li>• Moyvane</li> <li>• Portmagee</li> <li>• Sneem</li> <li>• Tarbert</li> <li>• Waterville</li> </ul>	Settlement with some form of wastewater treatment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Bóthar Buí</li> <li>• Asdee</li> <li>• Aughacarla</li> <li>• Ballyfinnane</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finuge</li> <li>• Glencar</li> <li>• Glenflesk</li> <li>• Inch</li> </ul>	Settlement with no form of wastewater treatment.





<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bonane</li> <li>• Boolteens</li> <li>• Camp</li> <li>• Cé Bhréannain</li> <li>• Chapeltown</li> <li>• Clogher</li> <li>• Cordal</li> <li>• Currans</li> <li>• Dun Chaoin</li> <li>• Faha</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kells</li> <li>• Kilgobnet</li> <li>• Kilmoyley</li> <li>• Knockanure</li> <li>• Lios Póil</li> <li>• Lisselton</li> <li>• Scartaglin</li> <li>• Stradbally</li> <li>• Templenoe</li> <li>• Tuosist</li> </ul>	
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**Table 5.3: Settlements in Rural Areas Under Urban Influence**

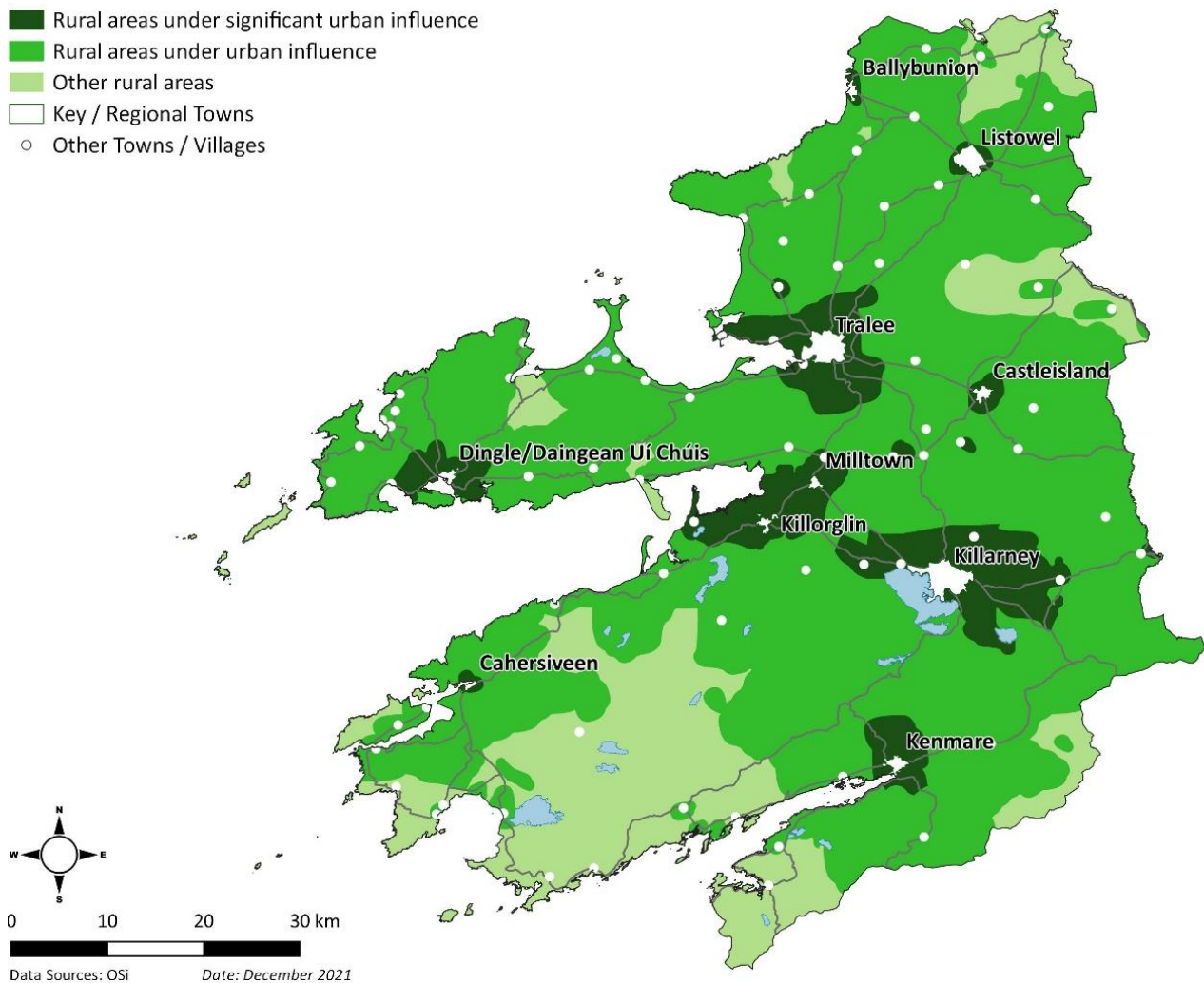
### 5.5.1.3 Other Rural Areas

Some of these areas have low population density and by virtue of their location and topography are isolated. In these areas, the challenge is to stop sustained population and economic decline with a focus on both villages and rural areas.

These areas also contain the following settlements with lands zoned or where cluster developments can be facilitated in accordance with Objective 5-14.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Chillín Liath</li> <li>• An Gleann</li> <li>• Caherdaniel</li> <li>• Castlecove</li> <li>• Cromane</li> <li>• Lauragh</li> <li>• Lyreacrompane</li> <li>• Tahilla</li> </ul>	Settlement with no form of wastewater treatment.
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**Table 5.4: Settlements in Other Rural Areas**



Map 5.1: Rural Area Types

### 5.5.2 Rural Settlement Policy

The following Objectives apply to the three rural area types:

#### Rural Settlement Policy

It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 5-12** In Rural Areas under Significant Urban Influence applicants shall satisfy the Planning Authority that their proposal constitutes an exceptional rural generated housing need based on their social and / or economic links to a particular local rural area, and in this regard, must demonstrate that they comply with one of the following categories of housing need:
- a) Farmers, including their sons and daughters or a favoured niece/nephew where a farmer has no family of their own who wish to build a first home for their permanent occupation on the family farm.
  - b) Persons taking over the ownership and running of a farm on a full-time basis, who wish to build a first home on the farm for their permanent occupation, where no existing dwelling is available for their own use. The proposed dwelling must be associated with the working and active management of the farm.



c) Other persons working full-time in farming or the marine sector for a period of over seven years, in the local rural area where they work and in which they propose to build a first home for their permanent occupation.

d) Landowners including their sons and daughters who wish to build a first home for their permanent occupation on the landholding associated with their principal family residence for a minimum of ten years prior to the date of the planning application.

e) Persons who have spent a substantial period of their lives (i.e., over seven years), living in the local rural area in which they propose to build a first home for their permanent occupation.

Preference shall be given to renovation/restoration/alteration/extension of existing dwellings on the landholding before consideration to the construction of a new house.

**KCDP 5-13** In **Rural Areas under Urban Influence** applicants shall satisfy the Planning Authority that their proposal constitutes an exceptional rural generated housing need based on their social and / or economic links to a particular local rural area, and in this regard, must demonstrate that they comply with one of the following categories of housing need:

a) Farmers, including their sons and daughters or a favoured niece/nephew where a farmer has no family of their own who wish to build a first home for their permanent occupation on the family farm.

b) Persons taking over the ownership and running of a farm on a full-time basis, who wish to build a first home on the farm for their permanent occupation, where no existing dwelling is available for their own use. The proposed dwelling must be associated with the working and active management of the farm.

c) Other persons working full-time in farming or the marine sector for a period of over seven years, in the local rural area where they work and in which they propose to build a first home for their permanent occupation.

d) Landowners including their sons and daughters who wish to build a first home for their permanent occupation on the landholding associated with their principal family residence for a minimum of seven years prior to the date of the planning application.

e) Persons who have spent a substantial period of their lives (i.e., over seven years), living in the local rural area in which they propose to build a first home for their permanent occupation.

Preference shall be given to renovation/restoration/alteration/extension of existing dwellings on the landholding before consideration to the construction of a new house.

**KCDP 5-14** In **Other Rural Areas** accommodate demand for permanent residential development as it arises subject to good sustainable planning practice in matters such as design, location, wastewater treatment and the protection of important landscapes and environmentally sensitive areas. Preference should be given to renovation /restoration/alteration/extension of existing dwellings on the landholding before consideration to the construction of a new house.



### 5.5.2.1 Occupancy Condition and Section 47 Agreements

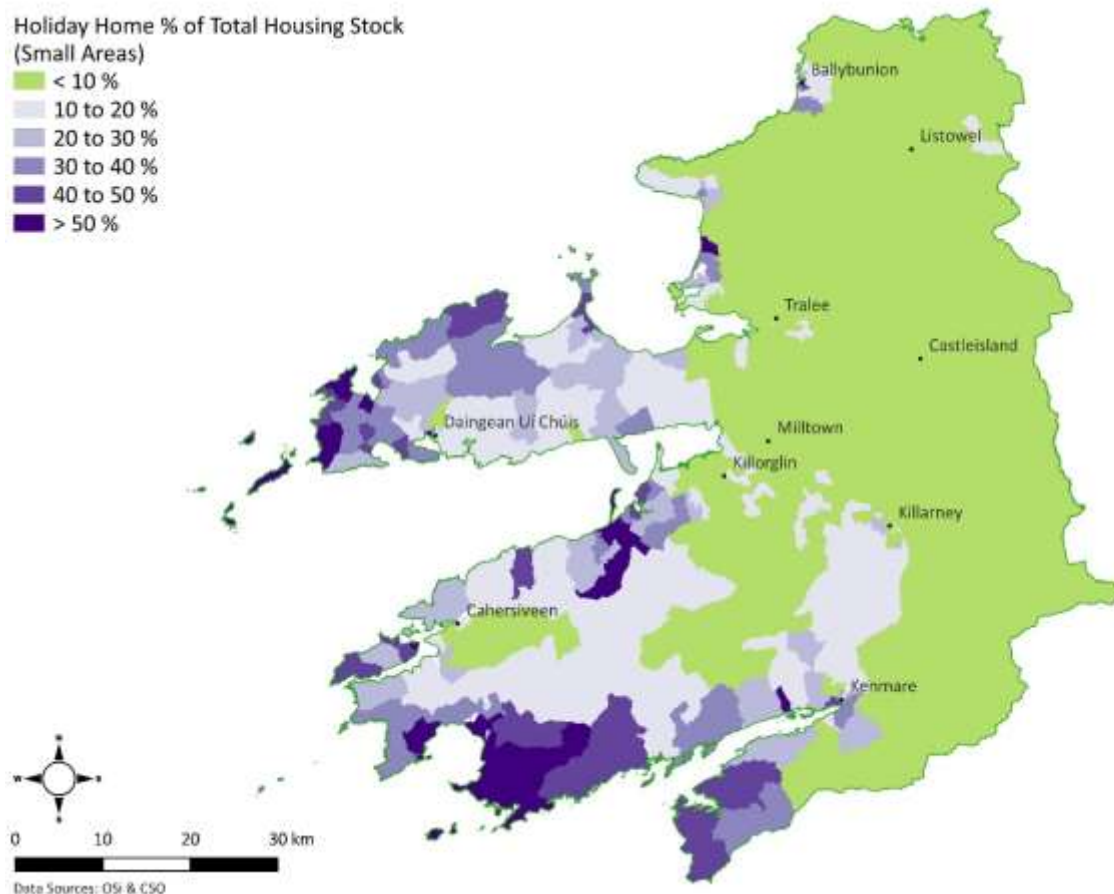
Occupancy Condition: All permission granted for rural housing shall be subject to an occupancy condition restricting the use of the dwelling to the applicant or members of his/her immediate family as a place of permanent residence for a period of seven years from the date of first occupancy.

Section 47 Agreements: In areas where significant levels of rural housing development have taken place on the edges of urban areas within the county and where the Council considers such areas are becoming over developed the council may seek agreement under Section 47 of the Planning Act if it considers it necessary to regulate development in the area.

Rural Housing	
It is an objective of the Council to:	
<b>KCDP 5-15</b>	Monitor the trends in rural housing and population during the lifetime of the plan to ascertain if further rural housing policy responses are required during the plan period.
<b>KCDP 5-16</b>	Give favourable consideration to the sustainable development of permanent places of residence on vacant sites within unfinished developments where services have already been completed to the satisfaction of the local authority.
<b>KCDP 5-17</b>	Ensure that the provision of rural housing will not affect the landscape, natural and built heritage, economic assets, and the environment of the county.
<b>KCDP 5-18</b>	Ensure that all permitted residential development in rural areas is for use as a primary permanent place of residence and subject to the inclusion of an Occupancy Clause for a period of 7 years.
<b>KCDP 5-19</b>	Ensure that all developments are in compliance with normal planning criteria and environmental protection considerations.
<b>KCDP 5-20</b>	Ensure that the design of housing in rural areas comply with the Building a house in Rural Kerry Design Guidelines 2009 or any update of the guidelines.

### 5.7 Holiday / Second Homes

The County experiences pressure for holiday / second homes particularly in visually sensitive landscapes. It is apparent from the Census 2016 that the level of holiday homes in some areas far exceeds the local indigenous population. The overall result of this sporadic one-off development is an incremental deterioration of the visual and in some cases, the ecological qualities of the landscape.



**Map 5.2: Holiday Homes as a % of Total Housing Stock by ED**

In order to underpin the basis for sustainable long-term economic development of the County, particularly in the rural areas, holiday home developments shall be concentrated in and adjacent to existing towns, villages and small village settlements thereby minimising the impact on the open landscape. Such developments should respect the existing fabric of the settlement, both in scale and design. The level and scale of development permitted shall relate to the availability of infrastructure and services and the scale of the existing settlement.

It is the policy for the Council that one-off holiday / second homes will not be permitted in rural areas.

#### Holiday/Second Home

It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 5-21** Ensure that holiday / second homes shall be located in established settlements in towns or villages and not in the rural landscape.

### 5.8 Renovation and Restoration of Existing and Vacant Buildings Situated in Rural Areas. (See also Chapter 10 Tourism and Outdoor Recreation)

A key component of the rural landscape of the County is the legacy of traditional dwellings and buildings, many of which have been neglected in preference for new dwellings, or because traditional buildings have become unsuitable as farming practices have changed.

In the interest of preserving the County's vernacular architecture and built heritage, the Planning Authority shall give priority and positive consideration to the renovation and restoration of existing structures and vacant buildings in the rural countryside for use as permanent primary residences.



The Council consider that vernacular rural dwellings and vernacular structures are an important element of our built heritage. Accordingly, it is the Council's policy to seek to retain and preserve vernacular dwellings and structures whilst promoting their sympathetic renovation and continued use rather than replacement. There will be a presumption against the demolition of vernacular dwellings and structures where restoration or adaptation is a feasible option.

The replacement of an existing dwelling house may be considered in limited circumstances where the renovation or restoration of the building is not feasible given best conservation practices.

The following provisions shall apply:

- The structure to be restored/renovated shall constitute an identifiable dwelling, with the walls and roof being intact.
- In the case of refurbishment and extension proposals, the scale and architectural treatment of proposed works shall be sympathetic to the character of the original structure and the surrounding area including adjoining or nearby development.

Where necessary surveys on protected species may need to be undertaken in order to assess the impact of restoration and renovations on these protected species.

The Planning Authority will also consider the limited conversion of outhouses and other structures attached to country houses or other heritage structures for tourism accommodation as part of an existing tourism accommodation facility where acceptable conservation practice is observed in line with the other policies and objectives of this Plan, where relevant protected species have been assessed and where acceptable site suitability has been established in terms of access, car parking, open space, wastewater disposal and of maintaining the setting and amenities of the main structure.

### Renovation and Restoration of Buildings

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

<b>KCDP 5-23</b>	Enhance, integrate, and protect the special physical, social, economic, and cultural value of built heritage assets through appropriate and sensitive use now and for future generations.
<b>KCDP 5-24</b>	Seek to preserve traditional or vernacular rural houses in order to protect the varied types of housing stock in the County and to preserve the rural built heritage.
<b>KCDP 5-25</b>	Promote the viable re-use of vernacular dwellings and buildings without losing their character and to support applications for the sensitive restoration of disused vernacular or traditional dwellings as permanent places of residence.
<b>KCDP 5-26</b>	Facilitate the sensitive restoration and conversion to residential use of disused vernacular or traditional buildings as permanent places of residence.
<b>KCDP 5-27</b>	Facilitate the sensitive restoration and reuse of traditional farm buildings within an existing farmyard for tourism accommodation or ancillary tourism purposes.
<b>KCDP 5-28</b>	Develop and publish guidelines on the renovation & reuse of farm buildings during the lifetime of the plan.
<b>KCDP 5-29</b>	Facilitate and support the objectives and actions of the plan "Housing for All, a New Housing Plan for Ireland" to tackle vacancy and the efficient use of existing housing stock in relation to vacant, derelict structures including heritage buildings.

## CHAPTER 6

# SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES









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## 6.0 Sustainable Communities

### 6.1 Introduction

The Council recognises that the proper provision of community and social infrastructure of a high standard, in the most appropriate locations and in tandem with housing and other development is important for all ages and abilities in society and is an essential component of building sustainable and properly planned communities. This chapter seeks to provide high quality social and community facilities that meet both current and future needs and are accessible to people of all ages and abilities that will improve people's quality of life and create and support vibrant and sustainable urban and rural communities. Chapter 7, Housing for all, builds on the concepts of Sustainable Communities and should be read in conjunction with the broad policies listed hereunder.

This Section focuses on those elements that contribute to supporting healthy, sustainable, inclusive, and attractive communities in a manner that both enhances people's quality of life and connection to place, while minimising their carbon footprint.

The Council, in the implementation of Planning Policy in this broad area, is supportive of the strong interagency and community framework that exists in the County, including the Local Community Development Committee and the Public Participation Network. The delivery of the policy outcomes in this section of the Plan are developed in the context of broad policy areas in relation to Healthy Ireland, the Age Friendly, Disability and Minority Group Programmes as well as the National Health & Educational policies.

The Institute of Sustainable Communities defines a sustainable community as one "that is economically, environmentally, and socially healthy and resilient". Common elements of a sustainable community include healthy and safe surroundings in which the needs of everyone are met, a strong economy with employment opportunities and an environment that is appreciated.



**Figure 6.1: Elements of Sustainability and Quality of Life. Source: Adapted from Egan's wheel on sustainability and quality of life (2004)**



The above figure reflects the factors involved in providing sustainable communities and which influence quality of life.

The spatial implementation of this plan in conjunction with the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) focuses on the creation of 'live work' communities by promoting economic development in tandem with an inclusive and diverse community structure. This will allow people not just to live in the County, but also to invest, work and learn in Kerry.

The creation of a sustainable community can be achieved through well designed buildings and spaces, which promote social interaction, ensure ease of access, and create an open and safe environment. An attractive and well-maintained environment also creates a sense of identity that promotes a sense of community in a local neighbourhood.

This Plan aims to promote the development of sustainable communities by supporting a suitable mix of housing units, services, employment, community facilities, and associated infrastructure in appropriate locations. It is desirable that, where practicable, community, recreational and open space facilities are clustered, in settlements at 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.

It is the policy of the council to ensure that housing, transport, services, and facilities including public realm are developed with a focus on meeting the needs and opportunities of an ageing population.

### Sustainable Communities

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

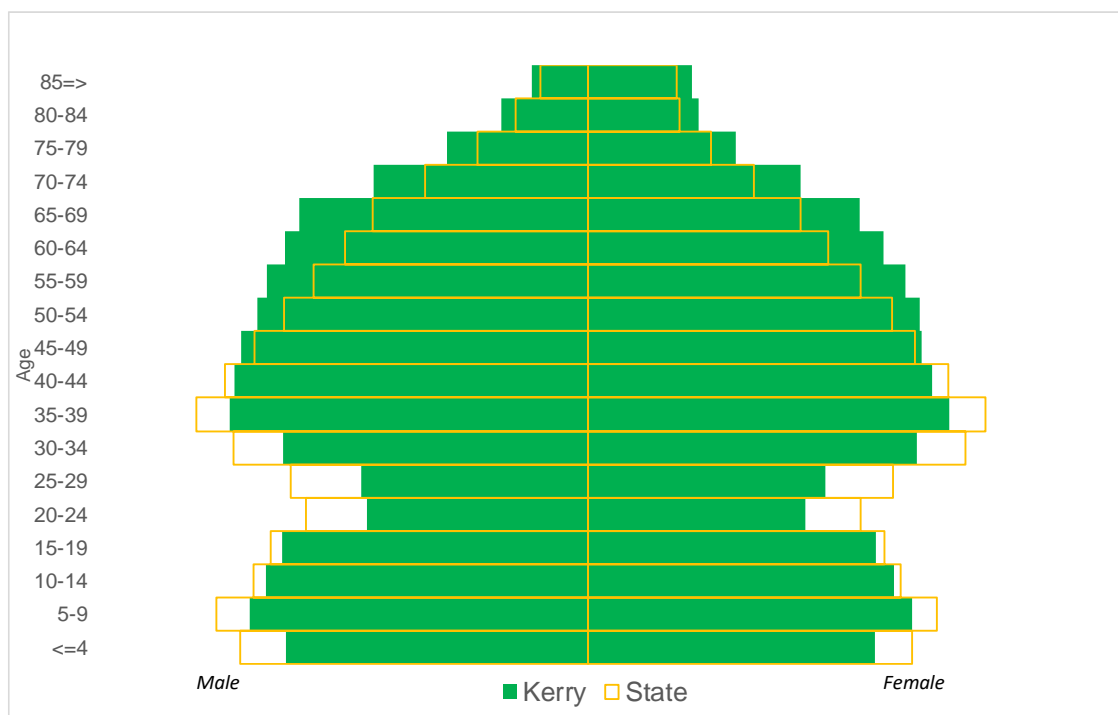
**KCDP 6-1** Develop and support vibrant sustainable communities in Kerry where people can live, work, and enjoy access to a wide range of community, health, educational facilities, and amenities, suitable to all ages and needs, in both urban and rural areas, thereby supporting an enhanced quality of life for all people.

#### 6.1.1 Population & Community Profile

Understanding the County's demographic structure is central to preparing a strategy which will address future community needs. Kerry's population is older than the state average. The average age in the County in 2016 was 40.2 years (second highest in the State), while 17% of the population was over the age of 65.

Kerry has a higher age dependency ratio<sup>1</sup> than the rest of the country: 27% versus 20%. Figure 6.2 indicates the age profile of the county in comparison to the Country.

<sup>1</sup> People over 65 as a % of the working population.



**Figure 6.2: Age Profile of Kerry/State (CSO)**

In line with national population trends the County's population is living longer which will require specific responses to ensure the delivery of age friendly communities into the future. This response will influence design and location of housing and community facilities including the delivery of transport.

A collaborative approach by all stakeholders i.e., state, local authority, voluntary and community groups and the private sector on the identification and provision of community facilities is required on an on-going basis to ensure that appropriate facilities are provided, when necessary. The Council plays an integral role in facilitating and supporting these identified needs.

### Population & Community Profile

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 6-2** Support the provision and distribution of a range of community infrastructure facilities in accordance with the Settlement and Core Strategies to meet the needs of the County's population structure in conjunction with other statutory, voluntary, private sector agencies and community groups.

### 6.1.2 Climate Action and Sustainable Communities

The spatial planning of our communities can play a significant role in climate action. In this regard, the planning authority will, inter alia:

- Ensure childcare, education, health care, specialist residential and community facilities are developed in settlements so as to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by allowing people to travel to these facilities by sustainable transport modes where possible including public transport, walking, and cycling.
- Ensure new developments are Nearly Zero Energy Building Standard and ensure the design and layout of sites and buildings have regard to climate change impacts.
- Support community submissions for the upgrading and the retrofitting of all community facilities to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.
- Encourage the retention and expansion of green infrastructure in these developments.



- Through the Kerry Public Participation Network, raise awareness and assist our communities to become climate resilient.
- Support community-based initiatives that promote awareness of food production, the minimisation of food waste and allied initiatives that encourage climate resilience and mitigate climate change.

### Climate Action & Sustainable Communities

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

<b>KCDP 6-3</b>	Continue to support the creation of sustainable communities throughout the County by facilitating the creation of attractive neighbourhoods where there are strong links and connections to local services, community facilities and employment areas and where walking, cycling, and public transport is prioritised.
<b>KCDP 6-4</b>	Facilitate and support community-based initiatives that promote awareness of food production, the minimisation of food waste and allied initiatives that encourage climate resilience and mitigate climate change.
<b>KCDP 6-5</b>	Promote high levels of energy conservation, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources in existing buildings, including retro fitting of energy efficiency measures in the existing building stock and energy efficiency in traditional buildings.
<b>KCDP 6-6</b>	Require new buildings to achieve the Nearly Zero-Energy Buildings (NZEB) standard in line with the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD).

#### 6.1.3 Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

The Local Government Act 2014 provides that each Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) will be established as a committee of the Local Authority. The Kerry LCDC was established in July 2014. The LCDC comprises of representatives who are members of the Local Authority, other state agencies, community and voluntary sector and social partners. The balance of representation between the sectors is intended to be balanced in favour of the non-statutory sector (private sector).

The collaborative relationship between the LCDC and LDCs (Local Development Companies) is central to ensure programme delivery. LDCs continue to remain at the forefront promoting community development through a bottom-up approach in the areas of social inclusion, inequality, and local development. Kerry has 3 local development companies which deliver a wide range of programmes, including but not limited to LEADER, Local Community Development Programme, Rural Social Scheme, Tus, Rural Recreation, Community Employment, Local Employment Services, and local training initiatives.

#### Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

<b>KCDP 6-7</b>	Support the work of the Kerry Local Community Development Committee.
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#### 6.1.4 The Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2022

The Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2022 sits alongside the County Development Plan in providing a stronger and clearer role for local government in economic and community development. This framework underpins the vision set out in the Putting People First: Action Programme for Effective Local Government (DoECLG). The LECP significantly influences and outlines the role Kerry County Council in partnership with other community development stakeholders, has in promoting and supporting local and community development.



The three socio economic statements in the LECP reflect specific individual aims in terms of enhancing Kerry's economy, Kerry's quality of life offering and reducing inequality and social exclusion in the county (Table 6.1). These specific ideals target both economic and community development and are all interrelated in creating the overarching vision for Kerry. The socio-economic statements led to the development of a number of higher-level goals in relation to: Economic Development and Job Creation, Quality of Life and Community and Social Inclusion.

<b>1</b> <b>Economic Development and Job Creation</b>	To promote a robust and diverse economy, supported by a well-developed education and training model, enabling a sustainable population and vibrant communities throughout the county.
<b>2</b> <b>Quality of Life</b>	To promote a high quality of life, based around a clean natural environment, good quality local services, a strong sense of place and culture and meaningful participation in decision making.
<b>3</b> <b>Community and Social Inclusion</b>	To promote social and economic inclusion and reduction of social inequalities, particularly targeting areas and communities in Kerry experiencing social disadvantage, marginalised groups, or those at risk of exclusion.

**Table 6.1: LECP Socio-Economic Statements**

#### Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 6-8** Support and facilitate the actions contained in the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2022, and any successor plan.

#### 6.1.5 Kerry Public Participation Network (PPN)

The Council recognises the essential contribution that voluntary groups, community groups and sporting groups make to the quality of life that residents in the county enjoy.

The Kerry Public Participation Network (PPN) which comprises community and voluntary groups from across the county, is one of the main links through which the local authority connects with the community, voluntary and environmental sectors. It provides the opportunity to create greater synergies between local government and community development, placing community development at the heart of local government. The PPN will assist the work of the Council regarding the needs of the community and the Council will actively engage with the Network when implementing the objectives of this Plan.

#### Kerry Public Participation Network (PPN)

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 6-9** Promote the delivery of social infrastructure and high-quality services, at appropriate locations, through collaboration with the Kerry Public Participation Network (PPN).



## 6.2 Sustainable Living

In recent decades Kerry's residents have become better educated, outward looking, technologically focused, productive and diverse. This adaptability and change have enabled us to become more prosperous, successful and resilient as a county.

Continued economic success will ensure sustained improvements in living standards and quality of life for all our citizens. It also provides the best possible platform from which to pursue key social and environmental goals, such as tackling disadvantage and responding to climate change.

As society changes, people's needs and preferences will change, particularly as more of us become older. Kerry now has an ageing population. How future development in Kerry is planned will continue to be a significant determinant of people's quality of life. Location and place have an important influence on the quality of life that people enjoy.

This is why place is intrinsic to achieving good quality of life - the quality of our immediate environment, our ability to access services and amenities, such as education and healthcare, shops and parks, the leisure, and social interactions available to us and the prospect of securing employment, all combine to make a real difference to people's lives.

In making choices about where to live, work and invest, the level of service provision is an essential consideration. It is therefore the policy of the Council to ensure that our towns are places where high level service provision is available across a range of sectors and where there is accessibility to these services. Equally, more local service provision is appropriately provided for at a small town or village settlement scale.

Kerry County Council acknowledges the need for new ways of engaging people, and empowering community and voluntary groups, to ensure that the various values of towns (cultural, heritage, innovation, service centres, incubators of enterprise) are encouraged and developed. Community led economic development strategies are needed for a coordinated and integrated approach towards the sustained development of the settlements.

### 6.2.1 Live Work Communities

The value and potential of our towns and villages is changing due to new patterns of work and lifestyles. In this context, community interaction and support and access to a range of services will be increasingly important. As part of this plan the Council promotes the creation of 'live-work' communities in our towns and villages. This is a more integrated approach to settlement growth which promotes the location of employment, including digital hubs, close to residential areas and services such as schools and shops.

There are a number of benefits to the implementation of this model, including:

- A reduced travel time to work which results in people having more time to participate in local activities, which improves the level of social interaction and the sense of community in settlements.
- Improved health and quality of life. People working near home, are more inclined to walk/cycle to work and participate in other physical activities.
- Fewer cars travelling long distances which leads to a reduction in congestion which benefits the environment and reduces the carbon footprint of the County.

By providing a mix of house types in these communities there is a greater capacity for people to buy a house that suits their needs and will allow people to live in the same neighbourhood through all stages of life if they so desire.





### Live Work Communities

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 6-10** Promote 'live work' communities to ensure that settlements throughout the County continue to act as important local service centres that maintain sustainable communities, help to ensure a good quality environment, provide public transport, and provide an enhanced quality of life for its citizens.

### 6.2.2 Healthy Communities

Sporting, leisure, and recreational facilities are essential to promoting good health, social cohesion, a sense of community and enhancing quality of life and wellbeing. Nationally there has been, in recent years, an increased focus on fitness, sports and recreation generally. Therefore, the provision of facilities for sports and recreation to serve our growing communities has become an increasingly important planning issue. Thus, the appropriate provision of these facilities is a key issue for Development Plans.

"Healthy Ireland" is a Government initiative which seeks to improve the health and wellbeing of the citizens of Ireland. The World Health Organisation's priorities for a healthier world are set out in Health 2020. NPO 26 of the NPF seeks to support the objectives of public health policy including Healthy Ireland and the National Physical Activity Plan, through integrating such policies, where appropriate and at the applicable scale, with planning policy.

Healthy Ireland, A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025, published by the Department of Health, is the national framework for Government and society action to improve the health and wellbeing of people living in Ireland. Through its National Physical Activity Plan and its Healthy Workplaces initiative it recognises and promotes the role of active travel. The National Physical Activity Plan notes that 'being physically active is one of the most important steps that people of all ages can take to improve their health and wellbeing'.

The Healthy Kerry Programme aims to increase participation in sports and physical activity throughout the County and to provide more quality sports and physical activity opportunities, participation, and resources available to and to be enjoyed by all citizens.

The Healthy Kerry Framework 2021 is currently being prepared. The vision of this strategy is for a Healthy County where everyone can enjoy a good standard of physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility. The Plan has two key objectives:

- To create the appropriate environmental conditions to enable citizens to make healthier lifestyle choices.
- To inform, support and encourage citizens to take responsibility for their own health by making healthier lifestyle choices.

Our health and our environment are inextricably linked. Specific health risks that can be influenced by spatial planning include heart disease, respiratory disease, mental health, obesity, and injuries. By taking a whole system approach to addressing the many factors that impact on health and wellbeing and which contribute to health inequalities, and by empowering and enabling individuals and communities to make healthier choices, it will be possible to improve health outcomes, particularly for the next generation of citizens.



The changing nature of society has resulted in greater car dependence and reduced levels of physical activity being undertaken by people over time. Physical design affects people’s behaviour at every scale - buildings, communities, villages, towns, and regions. The places in which we live, work, and play can affect both our physical and mental well-being.



**Figure 6.3: Ten indicators of a Healthy Street**

Communities that are designed in a way that supports physical activity, e.g., generously sized footpaths, safe cycle lanes, safe attractive stairways, and accessible recreation areas, all encourage residents to make healthy choices and live healthier lives. Countries with extensive cycle infrastructure report higher levels of cycling and lower rates of obesity. It is an objective of this plan to create places and communities close to existing facilities and services on infill and brownfield sites in order to reduce car dependency and to prioritise walking and cycling as everyday means of transport.

The Healthy Streets Approach is a human-centred framework for embedding public health in transport, public realm, and planning.

The Healthy Streets approach aims to improve air quality and congestion, reduce car dependency, and make active travel more attractive and to create a streetscape fit for community interaction.

Within the Government’s “Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19” there is a commitment to deliver:

- A local campaign to promote awareness of and participation in local programmes, initiatives, and amenities.
- A citizen empowerment programme supported by Sláintecare through the Healthy Ireland fund, will be delivered by KCC with local partners, including activities supporting healthy living, physical activity, community food, creativity, managing chronic diseases and positive ageing, including for those living in long-term residential care.



It is the policy of Kerry County Council to support the creation of healthy and sustainable communities that encourages and facilitates walking and cycling and general physical activity through the implementation of best practices in urban design that promotes permeability and interconnecting spaces.

<b>Healthy Communities</b>	
<b>It is an objective of the Council to:</b>	
<b>KCDP 6-11</b>	Support the objectives of public health policy including Healthy Ireland/Kerry and the National Physical Activity Plan.
<b>KCDP 6-12</b>	Implement the recommendations of the Healthy Kerry Framework in conjunction with all relevant agencies.
<b>KCDP 6-13</b>	Support the provision of a range of community infrastructure within clusters located in easily accessible areas.
<b>KCDP 6-14</b>	Support the Government's Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19.

### 6.2.3 Housing for Sustainable Communities

A core strategic aim of the plan is to develop and support vibrant sustainable communities where people can live, work, and have an enhanced quality of life. The provision of sustainable housing is essential to achieve this. It is the policy of the Council to facilitate the provision of high-quality residential developments, in accordance with the County's settlement hierarchy, in sustainable residential environments.

The Council has a dual role as the Planning and Housing Authority. Through its statutory powers as a Planning Authority, the Council regulates and manages private housing development through the development management procedures as set out in the Planning and Development Acts. In its role as the Housing Authority, the Council provides dwellings for residents in need of accommodation who are unable to obtain such accommodation through their own resources. The Council also assists other agencies that contribute to the housing requirements of the County. (See Chapter 7 Housing for All)

This section sets out the policies and objectives for the provision of housing in the County and to facilitate the creation of sustainable communities. These are further elaborated on in Chapter 7. The Housing Strategy included in Volume 6 is underpinned by all national policies and legislation and is applicable for the same timeframe as the Development Plan. It is in accordance with the core strategy and the settlement strategy set out in the Development Plan. The Council works in partnership with the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and Approved Housing Bodies to deliver and manage social housing. In addition to Part V, the delivery of social housing is achieved through Direct Build, Acquisitions, Void Management, Long Term Leasing, Enhanced Leasing, Repair to Lease, Private Rental (RAS and HAP), and the Buy and Renew Scheme.

The overall aim of Housing Policy is to enable every resident/citizen to have an affordable dwelling of good design, suited to their needs, in a quality environment and, as far as practicable, at the tenure of their choice. This also refers to people with specific needs, e.g., older people or those who have a disability, either physical or intellectual. The Housing Strategy acknowledges the need to meet the housing requirements of those who are homeless and to provide suitable accommodation for the Traveller Community.

It is a policy of Kerry County Council to:

- Encourage and foster the creation of attractive mixed-use sustainable communities which contain a variety of housing types and tenures with supporting community facilities, public realm, and residential amenities.



- Require a high standard of design in all new residential schemes that are built in a style and scale that is appropriate to the landscape/urban setting.
- Integrate new housing into the existing social and urban fabric of the County's settlements.
- Recognise the need for people with disabilities to enjoy a decent living environment in the County and to support local communities, health authorities and other agencies involved in the provision of facilities to people with disabilities.
- Support the concept of independent living for older people and people with disabilities and ensure where possible that housing for such groups is integrated into mainstream housing in their existing communities.
- Provide appropriate accommodation in accordance with the identifies Housing Need identified in the Housing Needs Demand Assessment, Housing Strategy in accordance with the principals outlined in Housing for All. (See Chapter 7)
- Support proposals for day/resource centres for people with disabilities within, or close to towns, villages, and neighbourhood centres, subject to normal planning requirements.
- Ensure that all new housing is designed in a way that is adaptable and flexible to the changing needs of the homeowner, and has regard to the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government 'Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities – Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities (2007).
- Support a sequential approach to residential development in which the first-choice location for new housing is within the built-up area of towns and villages, while maximising under-utilised infill and brownfield lands within town and village centres.
- Promote rainwater harvesting, nature-based surface water management solutions and energy efficiency both during the construction phase and during the lifetime of residential development by sensitive design and layout taking into account topography, orientation, and surrounding features.
- Promote biodiversity, the use of SuDs and other nature-based solutions in the design, construction and maintenance of residential developments.

The Council will promote the provision of public (including social and affordable) housing by prioritising sites for servicing that have a potential for public (including social and affordable) housing.

### Housing for Sustainable Communities

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>KCDP 6-15</b> | Facilitate the provision of suitable housing for people with specific needs in their local communities through actively providing / assisting the provision of housing in settlements.                        |
| <b>KCDP 6-16</b> | Have regard to and promote increased residential densities in the towns and other appropriate locations in accordance with the 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas' Guidelines 2009 (DoEHLG). |
| <b>KCDP 6-17</b> | Promote integration of social housing and ensure a housing mix within developments in order to promote a socially balanced and inclusive society.   |
| <b>KCDP 6-18</b> | Ensure that housing developments are completed to a standard that is in accordance with Kerry County Council's Taking in Charge Policy for Private Housing Developments.                                      |



**KCDP 6-19** Support the development of specialist housing, including the concept of independent living for older people and people with a disability and ensure where possible that housing for such groups is integrated with mainstream housing.

#### 6.2.4 Universal Design

One of the Strategic Priorities of the National Disability Authority Strategic Plan 2019-2021 is to continue to build awareness and adoption of the concept of Universal Design, maximising independence, and participation for all. The Council will promote Universal Design and Lifetime Housing in all new developments. This type of housing allows for the future adaption of units as needs present throughout the life cycle of the occupier/owner. It is a proactive step in addressing the housing needs of people with a disability, older people and the diversity of the family unit as well as increasing the value and sustainability of buildings in the long-term. The provision of housing for older people allows for the option of downsizing, thereby releasing larger houses to the market to meet the needs of young families.

The Council will support the provision of appropriate housing accommodation for people with disabilities and older people. Such facilities should be integrated wherever possible into established areas in towns and villages, where residents can avail of reasonable access to local services by walking.

#### Universal Design

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 6-20** Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages.
- KCDP 6-21** Identify and promote best practice with regard to universal design of the built and external environment in line with “Building for Everyone – A Universal Design Approach” and to increase the likelihood that people will be able to remain in their own homes longer and function better as they face aging-related disabilities.
- KCDP 6-22** Prioritise the adoption of technologies that allow for greater access to facilities and services for all citizens regardless of age and technological competency.

#### 6.2.5 People with a Disability

There were approximately 20,000 people with a disability in Kerry in 2016, comprising around 14% of the population. A significant proportion of the population will experience disability at some stage in their lives, particularly as the population of the County is ageing.

	2006	2011	2016
Total Population	139,835	145,502	147,707
Total number of people with a disability	13,186	19,168	19,965
Number of people with a disability as a % of total population	9.4%	13.2%	13.5%
Actual change in the number persons with a disability	1,689	5,982	797
Percentage change in persons with a disability since previous census	14.7%	45.4%	4.2%

**Table 6.2: Number of Persons Registered with a Disability (CSO)**

Many planning-related issues relevant to disabled people are similar to those that affect older people, including the need to facilitate independent living, access, and mobility in relation to buildings and the



environment and full integration with society generally. As many people with disabilities are of working age, access and proximity to employment are also important.

The Council will promote disability awareness and improve equal access for all through universal design for public transport access, housing, social, cultural, and recreational facilities, and the public realm to improve quality of life equally for abled and disabled citizens. The Council shall ensure that decision-making in relation to investment in infrastructure and facilities is informed by engagement with representatives of disability support organisations to ensure that perspectives of those they represent (e.g., wheelchair users) are understood and an appropriate level of environmental assessment.

#### People with a Disability

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 6-23** Ensure that all buildings, public and open spaces, recreational and amenity areas are accessible for people with disabilities, having regard to the Building Regulations, the objectives of 'Building for Everyone' (National Disability Authority) and 'Access for the Disabled' (No. 1 to 3) (National Rehabilitation Board).

### 6.2.6 Age Friendly Communities

Kerry has an ageing population and is likely that the population over 80 will quadruple by 2040. As people get older, they are likely to have increasingly complex healthcare needs, with a requirement for services and facilities to support provision of suitable and necessary care.

The 'Age Friendly Ireland' Initiative provides leadership and guidance in identifying the needs and opportunities of an ageing population and is embedded within the local government system, which, is best placed to respond to change at a local level.

The Council is committed to this initiative and the current Kerry Age Friendly County Strategy 2018-2022 sets out actions under the key themes of outdoor spaces and buildings, transport and access, home & where you live, community support & health services, respect & social inclusion, social participation, communication & information, civic participation & employment, transportation, and services & information.

The Council shall support Smart Ageing and National Positive Ageing policies and An Garda Síochána Older People Strategy (2010) and ensure that local planning, housing, transport/accessibility, and leisure policies meet the needs and opportunities of an ageing population.

Our aging population have specific housing needs relating to access, medical care, security, and personal safety. In addition to the concept of Universal Design the location of housing is an important issue for older people particularly those who live alone and are reliant on public transport and local services. Dwellings and other residential facilities catering specifically for older people should be located in close proximity to convenience shops, community facilities and public transport nodes. Living close to local services and facilities creates a convenient lifestyle for older people and encourages them to remain active and healthy. It is the policy of KCC to support older people to live with dignity and independence in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. Consideration should be given to providing single storey properties in large residential developments that would provide older people with the option of downsizing if so desired. This would have the positive knock-on effect of releasing larger homes for younger families. The adaptation of existing homes to meet the changing needs of older people is also supported.

This further reinforces the need for well-designed lifetime adaptable infill and brownfield development close to existing services and facilities, supported by universal design and improved urban amenities, including public spaces and parks as well as direct and accessible walking routes. (Housing Policy for older people outlined in Chapter 7)



### Age Friendly Communities

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 6-24** Support the implementation of the Age Friendly Kerry Strategy, 2018- 2022 (and any successor strategy) in consultation with the relevant agencies and authorities.

### 6.2.7 Towards a more Diverse and Inclusive Kerry

In moving towards a more diverse society over the last decade, Kerry's population is more varied than ever before, comprising a range of ethnicities and nationalities. In addition, the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy sets out Government Actions to create an Ireland that cherishes its LGBTI+ people equally. The County Development Plan supports the strategy's mission to promote inclusion, protect rights and to improve quality of life and well-being for the LGBTI+ community to enable them to participate fully in Ireland's social, economic, cultural, and political life.

However, providing access of opportunity to everyone is not a finite exercise, particularly where distinct and tailored solutions are required to continually address the needs of all, particularly those who remain vulnerable or marginalised.

This Plan will facilitate and deliver a more socially inclusive society through better integration and greater accessibility at all stages of the life cycle. Housing, education, health, and transport are four key areas where social inclusion can be improved; for example, through universal design of buildings to deliver greater accessibility for all, or co-location of community facilities and uses to ensure communities are active during the day and into the evening.

The Council supports continued progress towards achieving a more inclusive society that supports our citizen's basic human rights and assists in helping people to gain access to a better quality of life. This Plan contains measures aimed at tackling poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion and its implementation will make a positive contribution to communities in the county. Social infrastructure plays an important role in developing strong and inclusive communities

The Council will work to support the implementation of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) which aims to tackle poverty, social exclusion and long-term unemployment through local engagement and partnership between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies.

### Towards a more Diverse and Inclusive Kerry

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 6-25** Facilitate for a more diverse and socially inclusive society that targets equality of opportunity and a better quality of life for all citizens, through improved integration and greater accessibility in the delivery and the provision of associated services.

**KCDP 6-26** Support the implementation of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP).

**KCDP 6-27** Improve access to quality childcare, education, and health services through initiatives and projects under the National Development Plan, alignment with Healthy Ireland and support development of outreach and community services for an expanding and ageing population.

**KCDP 6-28** To facilitate and support the actions of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy to promote inclusion, protect rights and to improve quality of life and wellbeing for Kerry's LGBTI+ community to enable them to participate fully in the Counties social, economic, cultural, and political life.



### 6.2.7.1 Ethnic Minority Groups

Kerry also has vibrant ethnic minority groups and nationalities with diverse cultures. It is estimated that c12.5% of the population is within this category. Kerry is home to people from diverse cultures and Kerry County Council, through its Community Unit and Municipal District Offices, supports awareness of cultural diversity and intercultural engagement, by supporting cultural showcases that encourage intercultural understanding and dialogue. As Saint Patrick's Day is celebrated across the world to reflect what it is to be Irish, the Council supports celebratory cultural days to celebrate the diverse cultures living in Kerry.

This Development Plan has an important role in promoting social inclusion in the County and includes a range of strategies to promote access to housing, community facilities, amenities, participation in cultural life etc. It is the policy of the council to work with all relevant stakeholders to help tackle disadvantage and social exclusion, to secure improvements in quality of life and to promote equality of access to public and social services. The council will work with all ethnic minority groups, the Traveller community, refugees, and migrants, to advance their physical, social, and cultural integration.

#### Ethnic Minority Groups

It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 6-29** Support and work with all ethnic minority groups, including the Traveller community, refugees, and migrants, to advance their physical, social, and cultural integration.

### 6.3 Community Infrastructure, Services and Facilities

Community infrastructure is an essential part of all communities. Facilities such as community centres, sports centres, libraries, and playgrounds can serve as a focal point for communities they serve, and provide venues for local sporting, cultural, community, education, and social events. The Council recognises that the provision of good quality community facilities in existing and developing areas is a key element in the development of sustainable, healthy communities across the County. There are a large number of voluntary agencies and community initiatives that continue to play a central role in contributing to the delivery of a wide variety of local social infrastructure.

The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines (2009) emphasise the need to integrate housing with the provision of supporting community and social infrastructure. The Guidelines acknowledge that community facilities should be located within, or close to, neighbourhood centres and be well served by public transport.

Different levels of service provision are appropriate to settlements of different sizes, it is therefore important that the Council ensures that an appropriate range of community facilities are provided in all communities, taking account of the population profile and growth targets identified in the Core Strategy.

In designing new facilities, it is essential to ensure that they are adaptable over time to meet the changing needs of the population and to provide potential for maximising their dual usage during evenings/weekends/school holidays. When considering proposals for development, the Planning Authority may take into account benefits to the public in the form of community facilities. Where new social and community facilities are being retrofitted into established neighbourhoods, the issue of potential adverse impacts on residential amenity and increased pressures on limited on streetcar parking spaces will be addressed in a sensitive manner. The Council will also support improvements to and/or redevelopment of existing community facilities throughout the County as appropriate.





### Community Infrastructure, Services and Facilities

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 6-30** Support local sports groups, community groups and other groups in the development of facilities, at appropriate locations, throughout the county.

#### 6.3.1 Sporting, Leisure Facilities and Open Space

The provision of sporting, recreation, and amenity facilities, which can cater for the demands of an increasing population and which will be accessible for all sectors and age groups of the population is a central element in the delivery of sustainable communities. The Council recognises the role that good quality open space, recreation and amenity facilities can play in creating healthy and active lifestyles to ensure the wellbeing and improved quality of life of the entire community.

The Council will normally favour any development proposals for sustainable recreational facilities for the community in a suitable location, Site selection should take into account biodiversity and wider sustainability considerations.

It is the policy of the Council to:

- Encourage and support local sports, community groups and other groups in the sustainable provision and development of outdoor and indoor sporting and community facilities.
- Support local sports groups, community groups and other bodies in the sustainable development of facilities through the reservation of suitable land at appropriate locations for such facilities.
- Cater for the sporting and recreational needs of all sectors and ages of the community and promote the integration of those with disabilities into the sporting and recreational environment.
- Support the provision of public open spaces throughout the county.

### Sporting, Leisure Facilities and Open Space

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 6-31** Facilitate the sustainable provision of sports facilities having regard to local recreational needs.

**KCDP 6-32** Implement the recommendations of 'Developing Play in Kerry' Policy', in a sustainable manner, in conjunction with all relevant agencies.

**KCDP 6-33** Support the 'Sláintecare' and 'Healthy Kerry' initiatives.

**KCDP 6-34** Resist the loss of existing sporting facilities unless the facility is provided on an alternative site or it can be demonstrated that there is no longer sufficient demand to sustain such a facility.

**KCDP 6-35** Provide multifunctional open spaces at locations deemed appropriate providing for both passive and active uses.

#### 6.3.2 Libraries

The Council recognises the importance of libraries in the community and has responsibility for the public library service countywide. The Kerry Library service has a physical network of 9 branch libraries, 2 mobile libraries and a dedicated local history and archives section. Through the library website [www.kerrylibrary.ie](http://www.kerrylibrary.ie) online services are now a core part of the library offering with free access to a range of resources including public internet and Wi-Fi, e-books, e-audio books, e-newspapers, e-magazines, e-language courses, and e-learning. Ongoing programming includes literacy and schools support, reading development, an events and exhibitions programme and the Kerry roll out of the national Right to Read, Work Matters and Healthy Ireland at Your Library initiatives.



Kerry County Council will continue to promote library services as a key community resource and encourages groups and individuals to avail of the growing range of both physical and online library services.

#### Libraries

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 6-36** Support, expand and promote the services provided by the Libraries to local communities across the County in line with the Kerry Library Development Plan 2016-2021 and the libraries national strategy *Our Public Libraries 2022: Inspiring, Connecting and Empowering Communities* (and any successor plans).
- KCDP 6-37** Provide and improve access to library facilities and services and to encourage an integrated approach to the delivery of library, arts, and other related services.
- KCDP 6-38** Continue the sustainable development of library infrastructure and make provision for new library facilities at appropriate locations, or extensions and refurbishment of existing facilities, sufficient in their overall extent, quality, and distribution to meet needs for library services.

### 6.3.3 Health Services

Healthcare facilities are essential to ensure that the residents of the County have access to the care that they need. Health care is provided by a range of private, community and charitable service providers. HSE policy reflects a shift away from traditional hospital-based care, towards more community-based care with increased emphasis on meeting people's needs at local level within primary care teams. Kerry County Council will seek to facilitate the provision and expansion of built facilities at appropriate locations to ensure accessible healthcare services are integrated into communities throughout the County.

The Council will support the Health Service Executive and other statutory and voluntary agencies in the provision of appropriate healthcare facilities, including the development of both the system of hospital care and the provision of community-based primary care facilities.

#### Health Services

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 6-39** Facilitate the provision of health services and other health related facilities and their integration within new and existing communities and facilitate public, private, and community-based agencies to provide appropriate health related facilities throughout the County.
- KCDP 6-40** Facilitate and encourage the accommodation of emergency services including fire services, rescue services, heli-pads and acute care in appropriate locations that facilitate ease of access, effectiveness, and safe functioning with respect to the road network.

### 6.3.4 Education and Lifelong Learning

Education has been critical to Kerry's transformation over recent decades. Education, training, and life-long learning are key enablers and are central to sustaining economic success and building strong communities. In knowledge-based economies, education underpins growth as it is the main driver of technological innovation and productivity. Accessing a high standard of education is a priority now and in the future.

Decisions on the future requirements for educational facilities are primarily a matter for the educational authorities. However, the 'Provision of Schools and the Planning System, A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities' (2008) outlines that the planning system plays a critical role in anticipating future development and co-ordinating the provision of essential supporting infrastructure such as transport, water services,



schools, amenity and community facilities through the actions of the planning authorities, the investment programmes of government departments and their agencies and through the private sector.

The primary role of the Council is to reserve sufficient land within the identified development centres to meet likely future demands for community facilities including education. The provision of educational facilities should be planned and implemented in concert with residential development, especially where this is undertaken in the context of Local Area Plans or Masterplans.

The Council shall support a planned approach to location of school facilities such that both proposed locations and existing schools are accessible by cycling/walking from the main catchment areas and by public transport.

In the Higher Education sector, the development of the Munster Technological University has the potential to deliver significant economic benefits to students in the county and wider region, and to the broader local economy and society. By creating institutions of scale and strength, multi-campus technological universities will bring greater social and economic benefits to their regions through a strengthened role in research and innovation and the delivery of a broad range of high-quality education and training in each of their campuses.

The Council also recognises the value and necessity for lifelong learning. It is the policy to support the further development of the Region as a Learning Region support the expansion of the Learning City initiative to other urban and rural centres of population and support the initiatives of the Irish Network of Learning Cities and preparation and implementation of a Learning Region Strategy.

The Council will promote co-ordinated investment in infrastructure comprised of regional education and training providers, local government agencies and industry to facilitate a collaborative approach to regional/county skills development, aligned to the needs and opportunities of regional economies and to promoting lifelong learning to all citizens.

It is the policy of the Council to:

- Facilitate the sustainable development of primary, post primary, third level, outreach, research, adult, and further educational facilities in appropriate locations to meet the needs of the County.
- Ensure the provision and implementation of primary and secondary education facilities in conjunction with the planning and development of residential areas in order to maximise the opportunities for walking, cycling and use of public transport.
- Ensure that adequate lands and services are zoned and reserved in appropriate locations to cater for the establishment, improvement, or expansion of primary and post-primary educational facilities in the County. The Council supports the concept of multi-campus educational facilities.
- Co-operate with all relevant agencies in the preparation of an integrated County strategy for education and training provision.
- Encourage, support, and develop opportunities to open up schools to wider community use.

### Education and Lifelong Learning

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 6-41** Facilitate the Department of Education & Skills and Kerry Education and Training Board, other statutory and non-statutory agencies in the necessary provision of primary, post primary and third level educational facilities throughout the County by reserving lands, at appropriate locations, for such uses in the Local Area Plans.
- KCDP 6-42** Facilitate where possible, that proposals for future developments are located as close as possible, to community facilities such as sports facilities, libraries etc. so that these can be shared between the school and the community.



<b>KCDP 6-43</b>	Promote the sustainable provision of dedicated facilities for adult and community education and encourage the retention and expansion of all tiers of educational services and associated educational and skills training programmes.
<b>KCDP 6-44</b>	Have regard to the DoEHLG and Department of Education and Skills document titled The Provision of Schools and the Planning System – A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities (2008).
<b>KCDP 6-45</b>	Promote the expansion and consolidation of Higher Education facilities including Munster Technological University, and to retain and enhance the Regional Skills Fora as a permanent part of the education and training infrastructure.
<b>KCDP 6-46</b>	Encourage and promote the shared use of school facilities with community groups where possible.

### 6.3.5 Children and Young People

ESRI projections indicate that the average age of people in Kerry as a whole will increase, but the overall number of young people will not decrease significantly. This means that the continued provision and enhancement of facilities and amenities for children and young people, such as childcare, schools, playgrounds, and sportsgrounds, remains necessary and will need to be maintained at similar levels for the foreseeable future thereafter.

It also means that, if a significant proportion of future population growth occurs within or close to the current built-up footprint of settlements as targeted, it will be possible to maximise the use of existing facilities near where children and young people live.

#### Children and Young People

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

<b>KCDP 6-47</b>	Work with the relevant agencies and authorities to advance the physical, social, and cultural needs of children and young people.
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### 6.3.6 Childcare

Access to affordable and high-quality childcare is an essential requirement for an equitable society, a thriving economy and sustainable communities and is a critical part of our nation's infrastructure. Childcare provision in Kerry is reaching capacity and new planning approaches and sustained investment are required, to ensure effective access to childcare provision is maintained.

#### Childcare

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

<b>KCDP 6-48</b>	Facilitate the provision of childcare facilities and new and refurbished schools on well-located sites within or close to existing built-up areas, that meet the diverse needs of local populations.
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### 6.3.7 Places of Worship, Burial Grounds and Crematoria

The Council recognises the valuable contribution that places of worship have in a community context and will endeavour to accommodate and facilitate their provision and/or extension, where appropriate. The Council also has a responsibility for the provision of burial grounds including as necessary, the acquisition of lands and the undertaking of any necessary works on these lands. The Planning Authority has a role in ensuring that adequate land is reserved to accommodate such a use in accordance with future needs within the county. A number of these burial grounds may need to be extended and/or new sites identified over the period of this Plan. The use of crematoriums has increased significantly in recent years but there is currently no such facility



serving the County. In recognition of the multi-cultural population of the county and the changing trends in end-of-life service, the Council will support the development of crematorium in the county, where appropriate.

#### Places of Worship, Burial Grounds and Crematoria

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 6-49** Facilitate the sustainable provision of new burial grounds and the extension of existing cemeteries as appropriate to cater for the needs of the County. Develop all new burial grounds in the open lawn style with adequate provision of car parks. Facilitate a designated section for ashes, such as a garden or a columbarium wall for ashes in burial grounds.
- KCDP 6-50** Encourage local community groups to develop, manage and maintain (new) burial facilities, in a sustainable manner.
- KCDP 6-51** Facilitate the establishment of a crematorium in Kerry at an appropriate location.
- KCDP 6-52** Facilitate the change of use of premises into places of worship subject to the adequate provision of parking and minimal loss of existing residential amenities.

#### 6.3.8 Fire Stations

The Council will continue to support the development and upgrading of the fire service in the provision of the County's fire service.

#### Fire Stations

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 6-53** Continue to support the provision of a modern and efficient fire service.



# CHAPTER 7

# HOUSING FOR ALL









- 7.0 Housing for All**
- 7.1 Introduction**
- 7.2 The Housing Strategy and the Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA)**
- 7.3 Housing Policies**
- 7.4 Homelessness**
- 7.5 People with a Disability**
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- 7.7 The Kerry Traveller Community**
- 7.8 Community Integration for Refugees**
- 7.9 Increase Land Availability for Residential Development**
- 7.10 Address Vacancy in Housing**



## 7.0 Housing for All

### 7.1 Introduction

This Chapter builds on the policies contained in the preceding Chapters that set the overall Settlement Policy Framework for the County and specifically provides for the implementation of the objectives of ***Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland.***

**Chapter 3** Establishes the settlement and growth strategy for the County, including the quantum and location of development over the lifetime of the Plan.

**Chapter 4** Builds on the core strategy by establishing the principles of development in the County's towns and villages and by delivering on the vision of both the NPF and RSES in relation to compact growth, including the concept of regeneration of town and village cores, and the reuse of brownfield, vacant and derelict sites.

**Chapter 5** Focuses on Rural Housing, the strengthening of rural communities, through the regeneration of rural towns and villages and providing policies for the specific needs of sustaining population in rural areas.

**Chapter 6** Targets the requirements for establishing and maintaining healthy, sustainable and inclusive communities through the provision of community and social infrastructure, appropriate housing and broader social inclusion policy across a range of sectors.

This section deals with Housing Policy based on the housing needs identified in the Housing Needs Demand Assessment and Housing Strategy for Kerry in Volume 6 of this Plan.

#### Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland

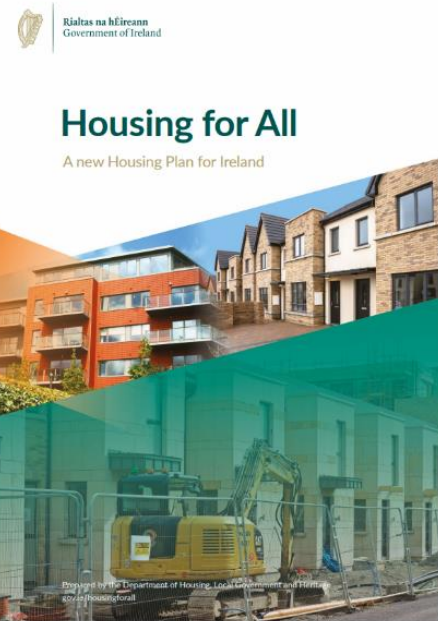
The Government has committed to addressing the state's Housing system through the Housing for All Plan. The overall aim of the new housing plan for Ireland is that: *Everyone in the State should have access to a home to purchase or rent at an affordable price, built to a high standard and in the right place, offering a high quality of life.*

***Housing for All*** provides four pathways to achieving four overarching objectives:

- Supporting Homeownership and Increasing Affordability;
- Eradicating Homelessness, Increasing Social Housing Delivery and Supporting Social Inclusion;
- Increasing New Housing Supply; and
- Addressing Vacancy and Efficient Use of Existing Stock.

Under each of these pathways there are a suite of actions, which require intervention including Statutory Change at national and local level.

At the time of publication of this Draft Plan the ***Housing for All*** objectives and actions have recently been announced and will be refined over the coming months particularly through the publication of Section 28 guidelines and other amending regulatory provisions. The Development Plan supports the implementation of the objectives of the Housing for All Plan.





## 7.2 The Housing Strategy and the Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA)

The preparation of a Housing Strategy is a mandatory requirement under Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). The purpose of a Housing Strategy is to evaluate the housing needs of the existing and future population in County Kerry over the Draft Plan period. In addition, the NPF identified the need to carry out a Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA), in conjunction with the Housing Strategy, the purpose of which is to assist Local Authorities to develop long term strategic views of housing need across all tenures, including social and affordable housing and specialist housing. The purpose is also to provide a robust evidence base to support decisions about new housing supply, wider investment and housing related services that inform an overall housing profile.

As outlined in Chapter 6, the development of sustainable communities is a core policy of the County Development Plan and in tandem with a need to increase housing supply, is the need to facilitate improved housing choice to cater for evolving demographics across the County, as analysed in the HNDA. By providing good housing choice, existing residents can remain within their local communities and the necessary choice of accommodation will be available for new households.

The Housing Strategy and the HNDA process complements the Core Strategy in providing the quantitative evidence base to articulate the medium to longer term spatial development strategy of the functional area of the Local Authority. In so doing, it demonstrates that the Draft Plan and its objectives are consistent with national and regional development objectives.

A Draft Housing Strategy and Draft HNDA for Kerry has been prepared and is set out in Volume 6. It provides a detailed analysis of Kerry's existing housing profile, which forms a basis for housing demand generally and social housing provision. The provisions of the Draft Housing Strategy will guide new residential developments in terms of the form of housing that may be required within Kerry over the lifetime of the Draft Plan.

The Draft Housing Strategy and Draft HNDA addresses the provision of housing for the existing and future population of Kerry and takes account of:

- The existing need and likely future need for housing for the purposes of the provision of social housing support and of housing for eligible households;
- The need to ensure that housing is available for persons who have different levels of income;
- The need to ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of the different categories of households, as may be determined by the Planning Authority and including the special requirements of older people and persons with disabilities;
- The need to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds;
- The provision of good housing mix in all developments will be encouraged to ensure that residents have access to a range of house types and tenures.

## 7.3 Housing Policies

The County Development Plan mirrors the overall policy contained in ***Housing for All***, and the policies outlined in Chapter 6 for the development of vibrant sustainable communities including that everyone in the County should have access to a home to purchase or rent at an affordable price, built to a high standard and in the right place, offering a high quality of life.

This policy refers to people irrespective of their age, ability or social or ethnic background. The Housing Strategy in particular provides for older people or those who have a disability, either physical or intellectual. The Housing Strategy acknowledges the need to meet the housing requirements of those who are homeless and to provide suitable accommodation for the Traveller Community and minority groups.



It is a policy of Kerry County Council to:

- Support the pathways identified in ***Housing for All*** to ensure that everyone in the County should have access to a home to purchase or rent at an affordable price, built to a high standard and in the right place, offering a high quality of life.
- Encourage and foster the creation of attractive mixed-use sustainable communities which contain a variety of housing types and tenures with supporting community facilities, public realm and residential amenities.
- Require a high standard of design in all new residential schemes that are built in a style and scale that is appropriate to the landscape/urban setting.
- Integrate new housing into the existing social and urban fabric of the County's settlements.
- Recognise the need for people with disabilities to enjoy a decent living environment in the County and to support local communities, health authorities and other agencies involved in the provision of facilities to people with disabilities.
- Support the concept of independent living for older people and people with disabilities and ensure where possible that housing for such groups is integrated into mainstream housing in their existing communities.
- Provide appropriate accommodation for the Traveller Community, minority ethnic groups, migrant groups and homeless.
- Ensure that all new housing is designed in a way that is adaptable and flexible to the changing needs of the homeowner, and has regard to the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government 'Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities – Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities (2007).
- Support a sequential approach to residential development in which the first-choice location for new housing is within the built-up area of towns and villages, while maximising under-utilised infill and brownfield lands within town and village centres.
- Facilitate consultation with approved Voluntary and Co-operative Housing Associations on an ongoing basis in order to identify and agree opportunities for their participation in the provision of all social housing delivery options.
- Promote rainwater harvesting and energy efficiency both during the construction phase and during the lifetime of residential development by sensitive design and layout taking into account topography, orientation and surrounding features.

The Council will promote the provision of public (including social and affordable) housing by prioritising sites for servicing that have a potential for public (including social and affordable) housing.

### Housing Policies

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 7-1** Prepare a housing Delivery Action Plan in accordance with *Housing for All* and deliver on the actions outlined therein over the lifetime of the Plan to supply adequate levels of social and affordable housing to ensure all sectors of society have access to housing including a range of accommodation types for members of the traveller community, the homeless, people with disabilities and ethnic minority groups.



<b>KCDP 7-2</b>	Implement the policies contained in Housing for All to increase Social Housing delivery in the County
<b>KCDP 7-3</b>	Utilise Public Private Partnerships (PPPS) to deliver social housing.
<b>KCDP 7-4</b>	Acquire suitable land to deliver a sustainable housing programme, based on existing land banks, the level of social housing to be delivered under Housing for All, and Kerry County Council's Housing Delivery Action Plan.
<b>KCDP 7-5</b>	Utilise the available schemes contained in Housing for All to deliver affordable housing in the County in accordance with the identified demand.
<b>KCDP 7-6</b>	Facilitate the housing needs of people in their local communities through actively providing / assisting the provision of housing in settlements as identified in the Settlement Strategy and the Housing Strategy.
<b>KCDP 7-7</b>	Ensure that arrangements for the provision of Social Housing are made having regard to the current Housing Strategy in accordance with Part V of the Planning & Development Act 2000 as amended.
<b>KCDP 7-8</b>	Have regard to and promote increased residential densities in the towns and other appropriate locations in accordance with the policies of the NPF, RSES, Housing for All and the 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas' Guidelines 2009 (DoEHLG).
<b>KCDP 7-9</b>	Promote integration of social housing and ensure a housing mix within developments in order to promote a socially balanced and inclusive society.
<b>KCDP 7-10</b>	Ensure that housing developments are completed to a standard that is in accordance with Kerry County Council's Taking in Charge Policy for Private Housing Developments.
<b>KCDP 7-11</b>	Support the development of specialist housing, including the concept of independent living for older people and people with a disability and ensure where possible that housing for such groups is integrated with mainstream housing, in line with Housing for All objectives.

#### 7.4 Homelessness

Reducing and preventing homelessness is a central tenet of ***Housing for All***. It identifies the availability of social housing as one of the key factors in addressing homelessness and the availability of one-bed homes for individuals that are homeless.

Housing First is a housing-led approach that enables people with a history of rough sleeping or long-term use of emergency accommodation, and with complex needs, to obtain permanent secure accommodation, with the provision of intensive supports to help them to maintain their tenancies. The Housing First National Implementation Plan 2018-2021 was designed to provide this response and contains tenancy targets for each Local Authority. An updated National Implementation Plan will be published by year end and Kerry County Council will support the delivery of the targets contained in the Plan.



### Homelessness

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 7-12** To support the implementation of homelessness strategy for the county, which is currently under development, as well as to work with relevant agencies towards the Housing for All objective of ending homelessness by 2030, including the DHLGH, HSE, Tusla, the National Homeless Action Committee (when established).

## 7.5 People with a Disability

Under the guiding principle of *Housing for All* and underpinned by the national and local housing strategies for people with a disability, Kerry County Council will work to deliver appropriately designed and specified housing for people with a disability, in line with the vision and principles of universal design. Kerry's Housing Delivery Action Plans will set out how dedicated social housing provision for people with a disability will be delivered by the Council and social housing delivery partners, matching the scale and extent of housing need identified, and having regard to forecasts in the Department of Health's July 2021 Disability Capacity Review.

The Council must also consider the needs of people with a disability in the wider planning process. In this regard, the new HNDA Framework, referenced above, also specifically requires consideration of the housing needs of people with a disability. The evidence garnered through the HNDA process on disability included in the Kerry County Council Housing Strategy ensures that the planning process fully considers how to provide for the housing needs of people with a disability. (See Chapter 6 Sustainable Communities for broader policy context).

### People with a Disability

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 7-13** Set out in the Kerry Housing Delivery Action Plan how dedicated social housing provision appropriate to the needs of people with a disability will be delivered matching the scale and extent of housing need identified for people with a disability.

**KCDP 7-14** Consider the housing needs of people with a disability through the Housing Need and Demand Assessment Framework included in the Housing Strategy.

## 7.6 Housing Options for Older People

Kerry has an ageing population and it is likely that the population over 80 will quadruple by 2040. As people get older, they are likely to have increasingly complex healthcare needs, with a requirement for services and facilities to support provision of suitable and necessary care. Chapter 6 - Sustainable Communities considers the broader policy areas for Age Friendly Communities and the policies contained in the Kerry Age Friendly County Strategy 2018-2022. The housing needs of this sector of the population are considered hereunder, focusing on the policies included in *Housing for All*.

Our aging population have specific housing needs relating to access, medical care, security and personal safety. In addition to the concept of Universal Design the location of housing is an important issue for older people particularly those who live alone and are reliant on public transport and local services. Dwellings and other residential facilities catering specifically for older people should be located in close proximity to convenience shops, community facilities and public transport nodes. Living close to local services and facilities creates a convenient lifestyle for older people and encourages them to remain active and healthy. It is the policy of KCC to support older people to live with dignity and independence in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. Consideration should be given to providing single storey properties in large residential developments that would provide older people with the option of downsizing if so desired. This would have the positive knock-on effect of releasing larger homes for younger families. The adaptation of existing homes to meet the changing needs of older people is also supported.



This further reinforces the need for well-designed lifetime adaptable infill and brownfield development close to existing services and facilities, supported by universal design and improved urban amenities, including public spaces and parks as well as direct and accessible walking routes.

### Housing Options for Older People

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 7-15** Set out in the Kerry Housing Delivery Action plan how dedicated social housing provision appropriate to the needs of older people will be delivered matching the scale and extent of housing need for older people identified.
- KCDP 7-16** Facilitate the development of housing for older people in accordance with Housing for All across Kerry's towns and villages as well as rural areas which is appropriate in order to improve the quality of living for our ageing population. Any new residential development should be fully aligned to the targets of national policy as enumerated under Housing Options for Our Ageing Population: Policy Statement or any subsequent guidance or national policy issued by the Department for Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
- KCDP 7-17** Facilitate and support the provision of semi supported/assisted living development at appropriate locations in settlements close to facilities and services.
- KCDP 7-18** Provide and facilitate the provision of suitable accommodation in appropriate locations to meet the needs of older people and to encourage the provision of a range of sustainable housing options for older people in central, convenient and easily accessible locations and to integrate such housing with mainstream housing where possible.
- KCDP 7-19** Ensure that dependent relative accommodation is integral to the existing dwelling house, capable of being reintegrated to the main house, and subordinate to the main dwelling house.

## 7.7 The Kerry Traveller Community

Travellers are recognised as an ethnic minority. The Council has adopted a Traveller Accommodation Plan following the prescribed process.

The Council working with the Traveller community will continue to address the specific needs of travellers, ensuring that targeted provision is achieved in line with those needs and that this is also incorporated into housing and traveller accommodation strategies.

Kerry County Council recognises the distinct requirements of the Traveller Community in relation to the provision of accommodation and other facilities, the socio-economic issues relevant to the Travelling Community and the link between adequate accommodation, employment, health and education.

### The Kerry Traveller Community

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 7-20** Support the provision of housing suited to the need of the travelling community and to Implement the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024.

## 7.8 Community Integration for Refugees

Local Authorities played a central role in the successful first round of the Irish Refugee Protection Programme, with 2,871 persons (571 families) accommodated across 23 counties. Local Authorities are required to agree national spatial distributions for the accommodation of the 2,900 refugees under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme 2020-2023 and will source and provide accommodation, as well as supporting integration of refugees and their families into local communities. Kerry County Council will work with the relevant agencies





at local and national level to implement this strategy recognising the needs of the individuals, families and receiving communities.

#### Community Integration for Refugees

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 7-21** Support the implementation of the Housing for All objective to provide housing and supports to facilitate community integration for Refugees with relevant local and national agencies.

### 7.9 Increase Land Availability for Residential Development

Under *Housing for All*, the Government is bringing forward a suite of measures to address the need to increase land availability for residential development, including the introduction of a significant new measure to achieve Land Value Sharing and a strong Land Development Agency. The Government will make public land available for residential housing purposes. It will increase the sites available to the LDA to build housing and continue to fund Local Authorities to purchase land for social housing. It will make the necessary reforms to the planning system to make the development process as streamlined as possible.

Another mechanism included in *Housing for All* is the concept of The Urban Development Zone (UDZ). The UDZ mechanism takes the planning focused Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) concept and expands it to address development and regeneration of urban areas with significant potential for housing. UDZ designation will be applicable to large-scale areas in single or multiple land ownerships that could include public and/or private lands and sites and transport-led development areas.

Kerry County Council will support the implementation of these new measures as they apply to the delivery of housing lands in the County. (Chapter 4 Towns & Villages Sec 4.3 Active Land Management).

#### Increase Land Availability for Residential Development

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 7-22** Support the implementation of the Housing for All objective to Deliver a new approach to active land management and implement the Land Value sharing mechanisms and the new Urban Development Zone policies as they emerge through the lifetime of the County Development Plan.

### 7.10 Address Vacancy in Housing

*Housing for All* has addressed vacancy and the efficient use of existing stock through a number of strategic objectives and through the use of prioritised existing and new grants and funding opportunities. The Urban and Rural Regeneration and Development Funds are targeted at the activation of vacant properties. The national policy also supports the Town Centre first initiative which seeks to align policies and to target available resources to deliver the best outcomes for town centres including the promotion of residential occupancy in rural towns and villages.

The Housing Plan also proposes new programmes for CPO of vacant properties for resale on the open market and for the provision of serviced sites for housing to be delivered by local authorities to attract people to build their own homes and also to support the refurbishment of vacant properties enabling people to live in small towns and villages (Croí Cónaithe Fund). Policies are included in relation to resolving issues of unfinished housing estates, the utilisation of heritage buildings, the issues of short-term lettings in relation to their impact on the availability of permanent housing.

**Address Vacancy in Housing****It is an objective of the Council to:**

- KCDP 7-23** Support the implementation of the Housing for All objective to address in housing, through existing and emerging policies.
- KCDP 7-24** Continue to utilise the Rural & Urban Regeneration and Development Funds to incorporate activation of vacant, derelict and underutilised properties in towns in Kerry.
- KCDP 7-25** Work with appropriate stakeholders to resolve issues within estates still categorised as unfinished with a view to minimising vacancy levels.
- KCDP 7-26** Support the implementation of the Housing for All objective to make more efficient use of existing housing stock, by utilising the interventions outlined including planned maintenance programmes, supporting the use of heritage buildings for residential development where appropriate, targeted acquisitions of vacant and under-utilized properties and through the repair and leasing scheme.

# CHAPTER 8

# GAELTACHT AREAS, CULTURE & HERITAGE







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## 8.0 Introduction

This chapter contains the general planning policies and principles which recognises the importance of identifying, valuing, and safeguarding our linguistic, archaeological, architectural, and cultural heritage for future generations through appropriate protection, management, and enhancement measures or via the sensitive development of this resource

The County's wealth of built heritage makes it exceptional in Ireland. It includes the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Skellig Michael, the historic/heritage towns of Listowel and Kenmare, great country houses, demesne landscapes and a significant number of vernacular houses to industrial mills. The identity of the County is linked to its linguistic and cultural heritage and is central to how we see ourselves as individuals, communities and as a County. Our unique heritage is an intrinsic part of the character and attractiveness of the County and is a catalyst in attracting tourism and investment.

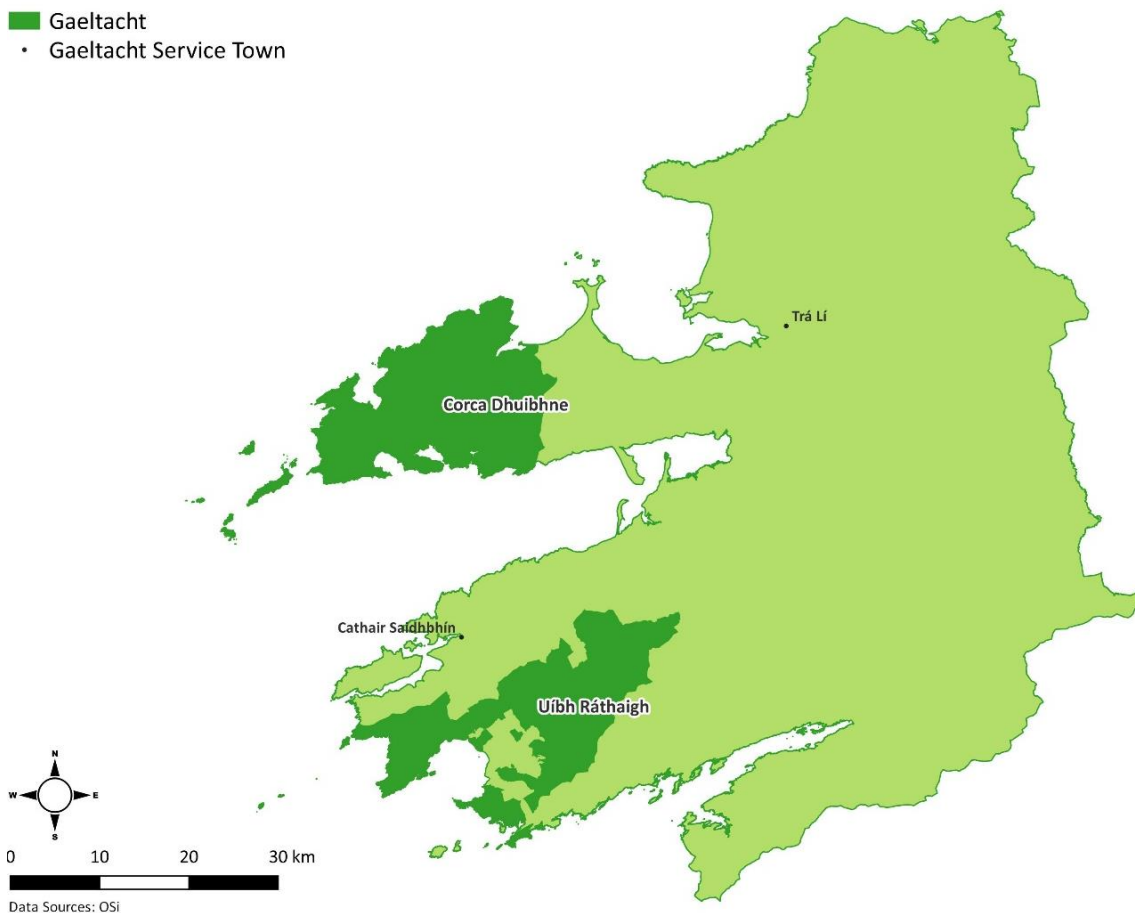
## 8.1 Gaeltacht Areas

The Gaeltacht areas of Corca Dhuibhne and Uíbh Ráthaigh constitute an important part of the linguistic, social, and cultural tradition of the county. These areas are also rich in traditional ways, folklore, writing, music, and historic and archaeological sites. Every effort must be made to preserve and maintain Gaeltacht traditions.

In particular, these areas are identified by their linguistic heritage as being the remaining areas in the Country where the Irish language is spoken. The preservation of the Irish language is of paramount importance to the Gaeltacht areas and the Country as a whole. It is the policy of Kerry County Council to preserve and promote the use of Irish as a living daily-use language and Gaeltacht communities will be supported in order to strengthen and expand the social networks that nourish Irish as the community language.

The population of the Gaeltacht areas in the county increased marginally from 8,729 in 2011 to 8,756 in 2016.

- Gaeltacht
- Gaeltacht Service Town



Data Sources: OSI

**Map 8.1: Gaeltacht Areas & Service Towns**



### 8.1.1 Policy Context

#### 8.1.1.1 National Policy

The NPF recognises that the existence of areas where Irish lives as a community language is an important cornerstone in the building of a bilingual society in Ireland and provides an environment where the language can evolve naturally in a modern setting.

It is vitally important for the maintenance of the Irish language as the vernacular of the Gaeltacht and for the promotion of the language outside the Gaeltacht that ongoing supports be provided for the language planning process and that support for the Gaeltacht development authority, Údarás na Gaeltachta, be strengthened.

NPO 29 aims to support the implementation of language plans in Gaeltacht Language Planning Areas, Gaeltacht Service Towns, and Irish Language Networks.

New initiatives to plan and develop the Gaeltacht areas and use of the Irish language were introduced by the Gaeltacht Act 2012. The key measures include the development of Language Planning Areas (LPAs) and the development of Gaeltacht Service Towns (GST). The designation of GSTs is a recognition of the provision of services required to support Gaeltacht areas including digital and educational resources.

#### 8.1.1.2 Regional Policy

The RSES promotes and supports cultural diversity in our communities throughout the county, recognising the importance of our cultural heritage, the Irish language and Gaeltacht areas, our music, arts, folklore, and games.

The RSES also supports the statutory functions of Údarás na Gaeltachta under the Gaeltacht Act 2012. The RSES recognises the designation of GST and the location of LPAs in the Region as spatial designations which support the growth and sustainability of Gaeltacht areas. There are two LPAs in the county, Chorca Dhuibhne (Ciarraí Thiar/West Kerry), and Uibh Rathaigh (Ciarraí Theas/South Kerry). The designated GSTs are Daingean Uí Chúis, Cahersiveen and Tralee. The Gaeltacht Act 2012 places a new emphasis on language planning and each of the LPAs and GSTs are required to prepare a language plan, to be prepared by a lead organisation.

#### 8.1.2 Current use of the Irish Language

The issue of preserving the Irish language is difficult and complex and needs a much broader range of measures than can be included in the County Development Plan. It is important, however, that the County Development Plan supports the Irish language and that the policies contained within the plan are broad and wide-ranging enough to facilitate any future strategies and initiatives that seek to sustain and augment the daily use of Irish. Table 8.1 outlines the daily Irish speakers by Language Planning Area.

	2011			2016		
	Population (3+ years)	Speaks Irish daily outside education system	%	Population (3+ years)	Speaks Irish daily outside education system	%
Chorca Dhuibhne (Ciarraí Thiar)	6,714	2,380	35.4	6,708	1,928	28.7
Uibh Rathaigh (Ciarraí Theas)	1,735	148	8.5	1,753	121	6.9

**Table 8.1: % Daily Irish Speakers by language Planning Area (CSO)**





### 8.1.3 Preservation of the Irish Language

The main factors that need to be considered in the preservation of the Irish language (within the context of this land use plan) are demographics, economic factors, facilities, and infrastructure. In recent years the Council has been particularly proactive in the promotion of the Gaeltacht areas in Kerry. The Kerry County Council Scéim Gaeilge IV, 2018-2021 aims to promote the provision of services through the Irish language for the people of the Gaeltacht. Such proactive measures are important in ensuring the survival of the Irish language and its associated Gaeltacht culture. It is considered important that facilities be provided which facilitate the teaching of the Irish language to those who desire it.

The Council in the performance of its duties pursuant to the Official Languages Act 2003 has drafted its own plan towards providing:

- A clear policy towards bi-lingual signage,
- Attending the needs of the public and providing services in Irish,
- Attend the needs of the Gaeltacht completely in Irish, and,
- Assign persons with Irish to provide services through Irish, as required.

It is the policy of Kerry County Council to support and promote the Tobar Dhuibhne 2017 (Language Plan for West Kerry), the Plean Teanga Dhaingean Uí Chúis and the Uíbh Ráthach Gaeltacht Interagency taskforce (2019). Kerry County Council will promote the use of traditional Irish signage on all shopfronts, advertising, housing estate names/plaques etc. Kerry County Council also recognises the economic and social contribution that the Coláiste Samhraidh and Gael-Scoileanna make to the area and will facilitate the further development of these facilities.

The Gaeltacht has a significant cultural and economic impact on the towns which serve it. Similarly, those towns have a significant impact on the Gaeltacht itself. Under the Gaeltacht Act 2012, Gaeltacht Service Towns (Tralee, Dingle and Cahersiveen) are defined as those towns situated in or adjacent to Gaeltacht Language Planning Areas and which have a significant role in providing public services, recreational, social, and commercial facilities for those areas. 26 Gaeltacht Language Planning Areas have been recognised for the purposes of the Act. Kerry County Council supports policies to foster and reinforce the positive impact these towns can have on the Irish language as the community and family language of the Gaeltacht.

Kerry County Council actively facilitates those individuals with an intrinsic and economic need to live in the rural Gaeltacht area. Between March 2015 and June 2021, 71.4% of all rural one-off housing planning applications were granted in the Corca Dhuibhne and Uíbh Ráthach Gaeltacht. However, it must be noted that according to the 2016 Census (CSO) there are 2,068 holiday homes in Gaeltacht areas representing 32.5% of Gaeltacht housing stock. In some rural ED's over 50% of the housing stock comprises of holiday homes. The pressures of such development and associated migration of non-Irish speakers have the potential to affect the viability of the Irish language.

#### 8.1.3.1 Irish Language Policies

Policies and initiatives to preserve and promote the daily use of Irish need to consider the following:

- Demographics  
A sufficiently large and young population is needed to maintain the vibrancy of the language.
- Economic Factors  
A vibrant economy is necessary so that the indigenous population has adequate opportunity to remain within Gaeltacht areas. Economic activity of a scale and nature that would not require the in-migration of large quantities of workers that do not speak the language.
- Facilities



A range of facilities which would provide adequate opportunity for the teaching of Irish to a range of age groups and people of different backgrounds. Facilities that would provide for the needs of the community to work, learn, and socialise in a linguistic/cultural appropriate environment

- **Infrastructure**  
The reflection of the Irish language and culture in the material assets of the area, such as buildings, signage etc.

It is important to ensure that any developments within the recognised Gaeltacht areas are of benefit to the Irish language and the Gaeltacht communities of Corca Dhuibhne and Uíbh Ráthaigh.

Certain areas within the Gaeltacht reflect the unique traditions and culture of the area. In particular, the Blasket Islands, with their tradition of literature and island life, represent a cultural tradition of National importance.

Therefore, it is of critical importance to maintain the proportion of active integrated Irish speakers above 67% and ensuring that the proportion of young people speaking Irish is increased. It is the policy of the council to:

- Support and empower younger generations of young Gaeltacht parents to raise their children through Irish.
- Ensure that the education system supports parents in raising children through Irish and results in an Irish medium socialisation process.
- Engage with young people on the vulnerability of the language and the importance of their language behaviour on the future viability of the language.
- Focus on the linguistic rights and needs of native Irish speakers.
- Formulate an integrated strategic language planning process for the Gaeltacht and Gaeltacht proofing all activities undertaken by state organisations.
- Devise language centred economic development strategies for the Gaeltacht.
- Provide incentives and advice to local businesses with regard to good language processes.
- Preserve a percentage of multi-unit developments for Irish speakers.

### **8.1.3.2 Linguistic Impact Statements & Occupancy Clause**

Kerry County Council shall require the submission of a Linguistic Impact Statement for housing proposals for three or more houses in the Gaeltacht area in order to protect and strengthen the Irish language and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht areas. All applications for three or more dwellings in the Gaeltacht area will be referred to An Coimisinéir Teanga for comment. A Language Enurement Clause of 15 years duration shall apply to approved developments, of three or more units. The standard of fluency in Irish required to demonstrate compliance with the Language Enurement Clause shall be the standard required to pass Level B2 Meánleibhéal 2 in the Teastas Eorpach na Gaeilge (TEG) exams and shall relate to a nominated adult member of the household.

Kerry County Council is cognisant of its obligations under Section 10(2)(m) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) to include objectives for the protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht including the promotion of Irish as the community language. However, the Council also has obligations under the Housing Act to take into consideration the housing need of social housing applicants irrespective of linguistic ability. Where non-Irish speakers are allocated housing in the Gaeltacht areas, the Council will encourage and support new tenants to acquire Irish language skills through existing language education facilities.



### Preservation of the Irish Language It is an objective of the Council to:

<b>KCDP 8-1</b>	Promote and develop the Gaeltacht as a centre of linguistic and cultural heritage in tandem with policies which will encourage sustainable economic development in order to ensure vibrant communities.
<b>KCDP 8-2</b>	Seek to enhance the unique cultural identity and secure and sustainability of the Gaeltacht communities into the future.
<b>KCDP 8-3</b>	Encourage the provision of facilities for the teaching / learning of the Irish language and for the production of traditional entertainment and the presentation of culture through the medium of Irish.
<b>KCDP 8-4</b>	Ensure that Council services are provided in the Gaeltacht through Irish in accordance with the Official Languages Act 2003.
<b>KCDP 8-5</b>	Encourage the development of Irish Language schools/Coláiste Samhraidh, at appropriate locations, in the area.
<b>KCDP 8-6</b>	Facilitate and support Tobar Dhuibhne (2017), Plean Teanga Dhaingean Uí Chúis and Plean Teanga Chiarraí Theas (2019) language plans.
<b>KCDP 8-7</b>	Ensure that developments of multiple residential units (3 or more) in An Ghaeltacht settlements shall be subject to linguistic and occupancy requirements in order to protect the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht areas including the promotion of Irish as the community language.
<b>KCDP 8-8</b>	Ensure that a minimum of 66% of Housing Developments on R1 and R4 zoned lands within the Gaeltacht areas shall be reserved for Irish Speakers. The standard of Irish required shall be determined and assessed by Kerry County Council.
<b>KCDP 8-9</b>	Facilitate and promote in cooperation with Údarás na Gaeltachta and all other statutory development agencies, sustainable tourism development in the Gaeltacht areas of the County.
<b>KCDP 8-10</b>	Sustainably support and promote our Gaeltacht areas as key Irish Language Tourism destinations.

#### 8.1.4 Gaeltacht Stakeholders & Economic Development

Kerry County Council recognises the importance and work carried out by all bodies and will continue to support Údarás na Gaeltachta and other stakeholders in their aims to preserve and strengthen Irish as a living language and nurturing of enterprise/employment.

A fundamental role of An tÚdarás is consolidating the economic foundation in Gaeltacht areas. Mindful of the socio-linguistic distinction of the Gaeltacht, an tÚdarás provide measures to promote the Gaeltacht's competitive advantages for enterprise.

The Council will support the Údarás na Gaeltachta Strategic Plan 2021-2025. This plan seeks to Enable and Strengthen the Sustainability of the Gaeltacht with an overarching aim of developing the Gaeltacht as a creative, innovative, and sustainable region. This strategy is launched at a critical juncture for the Gaeltacht with the goal of encouraging thriving, sustainable Gaeltacht communities. Údarás Na Gaeltachta has two main



objectives and five strategic objectives to guide the development of new initiatives and investment in human, natural, and capital resources in the Gaeltacht for the benefit of the community and the environment. Their main language planning objective is to be implemented in 26 language planning areas and three Gaeltacht service towns by the end of 2025.

Údarás na Gaeltachta also works closely with community groups to administer community employment schemes, support youth clubs and community enterprise schemes. It offers incentives and supports to businesses to start, develop, or locate a business in the Gaeltacht area. It provides gteic digital hubs that include hot desk and shared space facilities for remote workers and eWorkers in addition to fully equipped office spaces and incubation units with high-speed internet access to facilitate innovation and concept development.

The council will also endeavour to work with Comhaontas Turasóireachta Chorca Dhuibhne/ Dingle Peninsula Tourism Alliance, Uíbh Ráthach Gaeltacht Interagency Taskforce and all other community groups to promote and develop the tourism and related sectors in the Gaeltachtaí area.

#### **8.1.4.1 Uíbh Ráthach Task Force**

The Uíbh Ráthach Gaeltacht Interagency Taskforce published an integrated cross sectoral regeneration plan for the region in July 2019 with the focus on employment and quality of life. The plan seeks to create 145 full-time jobs and a 3% increase in population with a focus on developing innovations in alternative farm enterprises, the development of a digital hub and an increase in tourist visitors. The report also targets a 5% increase in daily Irish speakers and the re-establishment of an Irish language summer college, in order to combat falling levels of spoken Irish in the area. This Plan supports the ambitions of the Uíbh Ráthach Task Force and any reports/plans/actions that they promote.

#### **8.1.4.2 Údarás Na Gaeltachta**

Údarás na Gaeltachta works as a statutory regional development authority whose responsibilities are outlined under The Gaeltacht Act, 2012. These include socio-economic and socio-linguistic Gaeltacht development and the sustainability of the Gaeltacht areas in matters of economics, linguistics, culture, and social interaction.

Údarás na Gaeltachta has developed a national network of digital hubs in all Gaeltacht areas known as ‘Gteic’. As part of the network there is space for enterprise, offices, and ancillary activities. These facilities will improve infrastructure and facilities for those who run a business or practice remote working in the Gaeltacht. This will lead to extra facilities, services, and opportunities for people to work from these Gaeltacht locations. These hubs provide a wide range of facilities and services, for example, private office space, shared office space, meeting rooms, and online conference facilities. This network is important in the context of enterprise development in Gaeltacht areas, and also offers facilities/services for remote working. See chapter 9 for further information on co-working hubs.

#### **8.1.4.3 Dingle Creativity & Innovation Hub**

The Dingle Creativity and Innovation Hub (Dingle Hub) is located at the Udárás na Gaeltachta Business Park in Cúilín, Dingle. The Dingle Hub is a community enterprise initiative supported by Enterprise Ireland, Eir, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Kerry County Council, Net Feasa, and the Dingle Business Chamber. It aims to foster opportunities, through collaborative projects, to improve core skills, assist the development of new skills and help develop entrepreneurship on the Dingle Peninsula. It is an objective of this plan to facilitate and support the hub.

Údarás na Gaeltachta’s Regional offices are located at Páirc Ghnó Dhaingean Uí Chúis. Comharchumann Forbartha Chorca Dhuibhne Teo and Meitheal Forbartha na Gaeltachta Teoranta in Baile an Fheirtéaraigh offer further economic opportunities for the area.



#### 8.1.4.4 Dingle Peninsula 2030

This is an initiative for a more environmentally and economically sustainable future on the Dingle Peninsula. The goal is the transition of the peninsula into a low-carbon society. The projects and initiatives include the Energy master plan, Precision Farming, Marine-water Quality monitoring and Sustainable tourism & transport. The council will support and facilitate projects and initiatives contained therein subject to compliance with planning and environmental standards.

#### Gaeltacht Stakeholders & Economic Development

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 8-11** Support Údarás na Gaeltachta and other stakeholders in their aims to preserve and strengthen Irish as a living language and nurturing of enterprise/employment.
- KCDP 8-12** Support the designation of suitable locations as Irish language networks in recognition of community development work in the use of Irish in communities outside of the Gaeltacht.
- KCDP 8-13** Support the provision of high-quality broadband and the development of the Údarás Gaeltacht network of digital hubs.
- KCDP 8-14** Promote the Gaeltacht areas as economic loci and support the role of Údarás na Gaeltachta in developing economic strengths and opportunities in the Gaeltacht and mechanisms to support access to employment and social enterprise.
- KCDP 8-15** Facilitate and support the actions arising from the Uíbh Ráthach Gaeltacht Interagency Taskforce Report and Action Plan 2019-2022 and its successor strategies.
- KCDP 8-16** Facilitate and support the Dingle Creativity & Innovation Hub (Dingle Hub).

## 8.2 Culture

The County possesses a distinctive and rich heritage and culture. In addition to its intrinsic value, culture provides important social and economic benefits. The County contains many national monuments, Killarney National Park, Kerry Biosphere Reserve, Na Blascaodaí, nature reserves, cultural institutions, historic towns, and villages.

In addition, the rich cultural tapestry can be seen in the people and communities, Siamsa Tíre, the art galleries, museums, theatres, our Gaeltacht areas as well as the festivals that bring great life and colour to many locations. The management of our built and cultural heritage plays an important role in creating vibrant communities and sustaining local economies.

The Council will promote and support cultural diversity in our communities throughout the county, recognising the importance of our cultural heritage, the Irish language and Gaeltacht areas, our music, arts, folklore, and games, as well as fostering our cultural diversity to foster a more sustainable future; and harnessing our collective attributes to showcase the County to the world.

Kerry County Council is committed to protecting and promoting our culture, language, arts, libraries, and heritage, and to encouraging existing and new cultural forms to flourish. It is an aspiration of the Council that by 2028, Kerry's reputation as a leader in culture will be strengthened by this commitment. The Council believes that to invest in arts, culture, heritage, and language is a commitment to a healthier, more fulfilled, prosperous, enriched, and successful county.



### 8.2.1 Arts & Culture

The County has a vibrant living culture that is engrained in the local community, this includes the Irish language, a wealth of heritage and traditional arts, design & crafts as well as contemporary arts practice, across disciplines. The county continues to attract creative people as a place to live and create work, who are inspired by the landscape, seascape and living culture of the area. Importantly, this creative culture enhances the visitor offerings for those visiting the area.

The Plan supports the Creative Ireland Programme/Clár Éire Ildánach and in its enabling work focussed on the Five Pillars of Creative Ireland/Cúig Cholún a bhaineann le Éire Ildánach while supporting the development of a network of community arts and cultural hubs providing space for arts and culture in local communities.

Research for both the Kerry County Arts Strategy 2016-2021 and the Creative Ireland Kerry Creativity and Cultural Strategy 2018-2022 detailed the need for more physical space to support creative practitioners to create, showcase and share their work. This is very evident in settlements such as Daingean Uí Chúis, Listowel, Castleisland, Killarney, where demand for space to create and show work remains high. It is the policy of the plan to support and implement the aims of the Kerry County Arts Strategy.

The council recognises the value of supporting and enabling creative and vibrant communities and artistic engagement. The Council will work in partnership with all stakeholders and continue to advocate for citizen well-being through creative engagement and local interests to best meet the needs of the creative sector, support investment in infrastructure, by facilitating the use of workspaces for cultural activities, upgrading of existing cultural facilities and supporting the adaptation and bringing back into use of heritage buildings.

#### Arts & Culture

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>KCDP 8-17</b> | Support and implement the aims and actions of the Kerry County Arts Strategy 2016-2021 and successor strategies.   |
| <b>KCDP 8-18</b> | Preserve the cultural and linguistic heritage of Gaeltacht areas through the settlement strategy and development objectives of this Plan.  |
| <b>KCDP 8-19</b> | Promote the development of a vibrant cultural and creative sector in the County as a key enabler for enterprise growth, innovation, regeneration, place-making and community development, health and well-being and support measures under Culture 2025, Creative Ireland Strategy 2017-2022, and Action Plan for Rural Development. |
| <b>KCDP 8-20</b> | Support development of a vibrant network of community arts and cultural hubs as locations for collaboration and creativity.  |
| <b>KCDP 8-21</b> | Support investment in infrastructure and initiatives that develop the role of arts, heritage and culture in the county.  |

### 8.3 Archaeological Heritage

The archaeological and architectural heritage of the County is a unique and special resource, which forms a distinctive element of the landscape and local historical identity. The County's attractive streetscapes, built fabric, archaeological structures and monuments contribute to the historic character and appeal of our settlements and rural areas.



Recorded archaeological remains abound throughout the County ranging in date from the Mesolithic (c.6,000 BC) at Ferriter's Cove on the Dingle Peninsula to the late medieval churches that occur in many of the County's graveyards. Building activity and changing farming methods has placed the archaeological and architectural heritage of the County under increasing threat. The archaeology and built heritage of the County is not a renewable resource and it is the efforts of this generation that must ensure its protection and preservation for the future. The council will ensure that decision-making on heritage-related projects and developments are informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment including assessment of impacts on other environmental receptors such as protected species.

### **8.3.1 Recorded Archaeological Monuments**

There are 8,221 individual monuments listed in the Record of Monuments & Places for County Kerry. Since the Record of Monuments & Places was compiled 1997 on foot of the provisions of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 many further monuments and features have come to light and the Sites & Monuments Record (SMR) lists 11,388 individual monuments in the county.

In addition, there remains a wealth of undiscovered archaeological material in locations throughout the county. The true number of archeological sites and monuments may number up to 12,500.

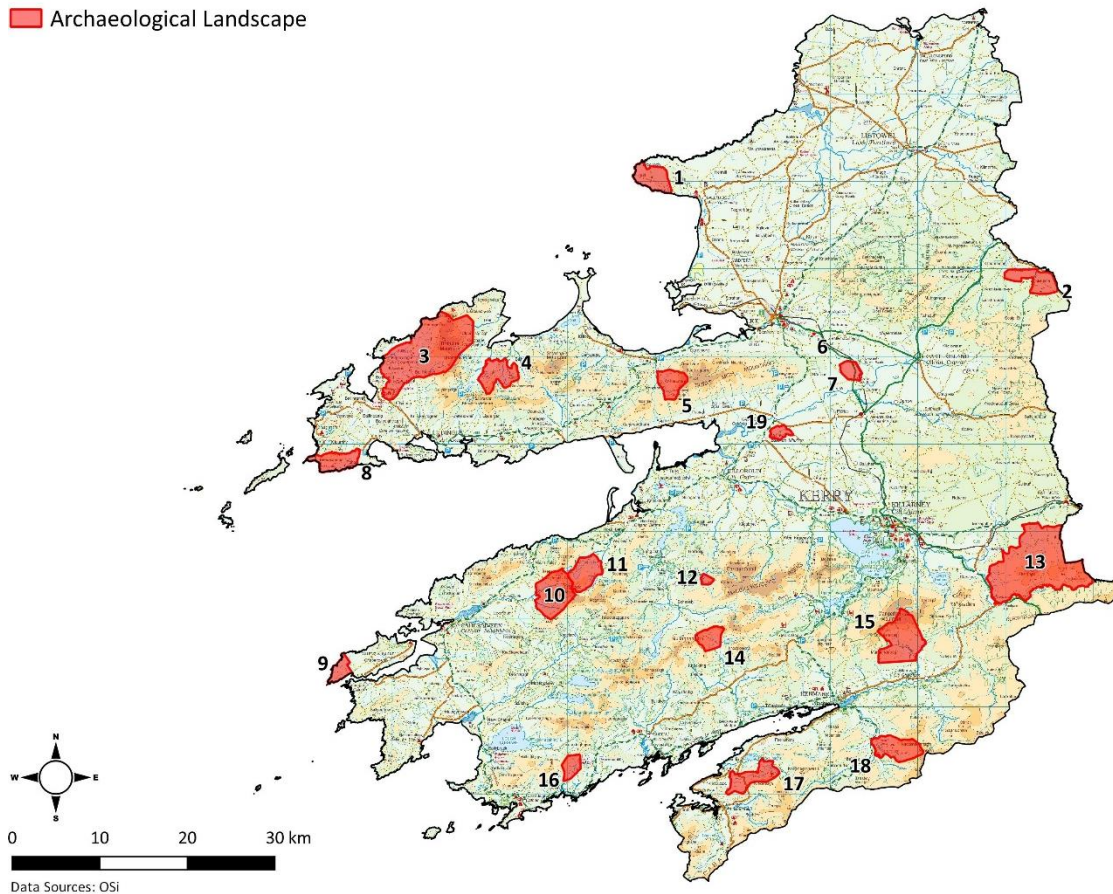
These recorded monuments include a number of monuments that have been afforded special protection by being in the ownership or guardianship of the state. The details of these monuments are available at <https://www.archaeology.ie/sites/default/files/media/pdf/monuments-in-state-care-kerry.pdf> The county also contains the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Sceilg Mhichíl and three monuments that are included in the Western Stone Forts nomination on Ireland's 'Tentative Listing' – Staigue, Caherconree & Benagh.

### **8.3.2 Archaeological Landscapes**

Given the richness of the archaeological heritage of the County it is of little surprise that there are a number of very significant archaeological landscapes around the County. These landscapes are of regional, national and in some cases international significance and every effort should be made to ensure their protection and preservation. The nineteen landscapes identified are described in detail in Volume 3. These important landscapes are listed for special protection with special emphasis on objectives that protect the monuments and their landscape settings but also their visual aspect and monument inter-visibility.



■ Archaeological Landscape



**Map 8.2: Identified Significant Archaeological Landscapes**

1. Tiduff/Glenderry (Kerry Head)
2. Brosna West/Carrigeenwood/Meenyvoughaun
3. Mount Brandon & Area
4. Lough Adoon/Kilmore/Ballyhoneen
5. Caherconree/Beheenagh/Curracllenagh
6. Ballycarty
7. Glanbane/Garraundarragh
8. Coumeenoole North & South/Fahan/Glanfahan
9. Bray, Valentia
10. Teeromoyle/Gortnagulla/Caherlehillian/Coulagh
11. Kealduff Upper & Lower, Letter West and Coomasaharn
12. Derrynafeana
13. The Paps
14. Ballaghbeama/Dereeny
15. Mangerton/Cumeenduvassig/Bausheen/Slaght/Knockeens
16. Staigue
17. Drombohilly Upper and Lower/Uragh
18. Dromagorteen/Crinagort/Curragraigue/Erneen
19. Killaclohane/Brackhill





### 8.3.3 Underwater Archaeology

Kerry has a rich underwater cultural heritage in its marine, coastal, and inland waterways. Marine sites include well-known shipwrecks such as the Armada vessels *Santa Maria De La Rosa* and *Trinidad*; and the French naval vessels *La Bayonnesse* and *La Vipere*.

There are no verified crannóg sites in the county but that does not mean that the numerous lakes do not contain finds or features relating both to sites located onshore and activity within/on the lakes and rivers themselves – bridges, fish-traps, and platforms. Artefacts may also be deposited in lakes and rivers as part of a ritual deposition or as a result of accidental loss, particularly at crossings or fording points.

A number of artefacts have been recovered from watercourses including a sunflower pin from a fording point on the River Laune, a hoard of copper axes from the Carhan river near Cahersiveen, bronze horns from Lough Leane, and a number of artefacts from the dunes at Ballyeagh near Ballybunion. Increasing levels of erosion due to climate change are likely to expose even more coastal and intertidal artefacts and features in the future.

The Underwater Archaeology Unit (UAU), Department Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht is engaged in the compilation of an inventory of shipwrecks recorded in Irish waters, including the Kerry Coast. The Shipwreck Inventory of Ireland includes all known wrecks for the years up to and including 1945 and approximately 7,000 records have been compiled and integrated into the shipwreck database thus far.

The Council acknowledges the Climate Change sectoral Adaptation Plan for Built and Archaeological Heritage (2019) and will facilitate the rolling out of the actions and priorities contained therein.

#### Archaeological Heritage

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 8-22** (i) Secure the preservation in situ of all sites, features, and objects of archaeological interest within the county. In securing such preservation the Council will have regard to the advice and recommendations of the National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht, the National Museum of Ireland, and the County Archaeologist.
- (ii) Ensure that proposed development (due to location, size, or nature) which may have implications for the archaeological heritage of the county will be subject to an Archaeological Assessment which may lead to further subsequent archaeological mitigation – buffer zones/exclusion zones, monitoring, pre-development archaeological testing, archaeological excavation and/or refusal of planning permission. This includes areas close to archaeological monuments, development sites which are extensive in area (half hectare or more) or length (1km or more) and development that requires an Environmental Impact Assessment.
- KCDP 8-23** Ensure the protection and preservation of archaeological monuments and features, not yet listed in the Record of Monuments & Places (RMP), Sites & Monuments Record (SMR) and such unrecorded, through on-going review of the archaeological potential of the plan area. In securing such protection the council will have regard to the advice and recommendations of The National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht, and the County Archaeologist.
- KCDP 8-24** Protect and preserve the underwater archaeological heritage of the county. In assessing proposals for development, the Council will take account of the Archaeological Potential of rivers, lakes, intertidal and sub-tidal environments.



<b>KCDP 8-25</b>	Ensure that development (including forestry, renewable energy developments and extractive industries) within the vicinity of a recorded monument, zone of archaeological potential or archaeological landscape does not detract from the setting of the feature and is sited and designed appropriately and sympathetically with the character of the monument/feature/landscape and its setting.
<b>KCDP 8-26</b>	Ensure the active protection of the 19 identified, significant archaeological landscapes outlined in Volume 3 with particular emphasis on the landscape settings, views to and from the landscapes and monument/feature inter-visibility within these landscapes.
<b>KCDP 8-27</b>	Protect archaeological/historical graveyards within the county and to encourage and promote their maintenance in accordance with legislation, conservation principles and best practice.
<b>KCDP 8-28</b>	Protect and preserve the industrial, military, and post-medieval archaeological heritage of the county as reflected in such sites as mills, lighthouses, harbours, Valentia cable station, gun batteries, towers, and demesnes. Proposals for refurbishment, works to or redevelopment of these sites should be subject to a full architectural and archaeological assessment.
<b>KCDP 8-29</b>	Promote public awareness and facilitate appropriate access to archaeological monuments through public engagement and appropriate advisory guidance.
<b>KCDP 8-30</b>	Promote awareness of the impact of climate change on the archaeology of the county, and promote appropriate identification, assessment, and adaption measures to reduce climate risk and develop resilience strategies for the archaeology of the county.
<b>KCDP 8-31</b>	Continue to research and record the archaeological heritage of the county and to promote the timely public access to the results of archaeological research and excavation.

## 8.4 Built Architectural Heritage

### 8.4.1 Built Heritage

Kerry has a rich architectural heritage which not only comprises buildings of national importance, including country houses, churches, but also more modest structures including thatched dwellings, traditional shopfronts, and post boxes. It reflects the development of the County through the ages, linking the past to the present and maintaining an intrinsic aspect of the County's cultural identity. The wide variety of building types contributes to the special character of the County and is a unique resource, which once lost or damaged, cannot be replaced. The County's historic buildings and townscapes should be treated as an asset and positively conserved and enhanced for the benefit of residents and visitors alike.

Part IV of the Planning and Development Act provides the legal basis for the conservation of Kerry's built heritage. The Record of Protected Structures lists those structures which are afforded statutory protection for their special categories of significant interest. The Act also allows for the protection of groups of structures and places which are of special character under Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) designation. It is the policy of the council to seek the protection and conservation of protected structures and their settings and designated architectural conservation areas.

Kerry's built environment is vulnerable to climate change, particularly in terms of increased rainfall, warmer conditions, storm surges, maladaptation, pests and moulds, soil movement and storm damage. These potential impacts can cause loss of historic fabric (damage to roof, interiors, loss of detailing, increased dry and wet rot infestation, flooding damage, destabilisation of foundations, increased risk of vacancy due to damage etc). These structures can also support protected species such as bats and barn owls, species now



synonymous with our built heritage. The potential loss of historic structures from the landscape can also negatively affect biodiversity. It is the policy of the Council to seek to address the impact of climate change on its built heritage assets.

It is also the policy of the Council to support the retention of existing buildings in recognition that rebuilding creates significant quantities of carbon emissions, as well as the loss of the pre-existing embodied carbon. In particular, the Council acknowledges the role of these historic structures to mitigate climate change, in recognition of their embodied energy, use of local natural materials and to deliver compact growth outcomes.

The council will continue to advise and work with the owners of historic properties, protected structures, and properties in Architectural Conservation Areas through the Kerry Building Conservation Project. As part of this the Council will continue to deliver conservation seminars, practical workshops and training, advice guidelines, grant workshops, toolkits, and traditional skills videos.

### Built Heritage

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 8-32** Prepare an Architectural Heritage Plan for the County including marine, industrial, and agricultural heritage.
- KCDP 8-33** Support and facilitate the rejuvenation of Kerry's historic built environment through the Kerry Building Conservation project.
- KCDP 8-34** Address the impact of climate change in accordance with the Built and Archaeological Heritage Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan and Kerry County Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024.
- KCDP 8-35** Facilitate and support the growth and development of Architecture Kerry (Creative Ireland Kerry Programme).
- KCDP 8-36** Seek the retention and appropriate repair and upgrading of historic, buildings, structures, road bridges, railway bridges and tunnels throughout the county, subject to environmental assessment.
- KCDP 8-37** Ensure that rejuvenation and placemaking projects in the county enhance the physical, social, architectural, and historic settlement pattern of the locality.

#### 8.4.2 Record of Protected Structures (RPS)

The Council has prepared a Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and the full list of Protected Structures and Proposed Protected Structures can be found in Volume 3. A structure may be added to the RPS if it is of special architectural, archaeological, historical, cultural, artistic, scientific, social, or technical interest. Unless expressly outlined, the protection includes the interior and exterior of the structure, including fittings and fixtures, and all structures within its curtilage. Curtilage typically refers to the land associated with the protected structure, but each case is assessed on its merit. The owner/occupier of a protected structure is legally obliged to ensure that the structure is preserved and not endangered through harm, decay, or damage.

Planning permission is required where works and development would materially affect the structure or any element of the structure. An owner or occupier may apply for a declaration under Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) from the Planning Authority as to the type of work that would not materially affect the character of the structure and which works would or would not require planning permission.



### Record of Protected Structures

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 8-38** Ensure that any development, modification, alteration, or extension affecting a protected structure and/or its setting including designed landscape features and views, is compatible with the special character of that structure.
- KCDP 8-39** Support owners of protected structures to carry out conservation-led repair and rejuvenation of their protected structures.
- KCDP 8-40** Prohibit demolition or inappropriate alterations and replacement of elements of protected structures where they would adversely affect the essential character of a protected structure.
- KCDP 8-41** Review the Record of Protected Structures as needed during the lifetime of the Plan.

### 8.4.3 Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)

Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) are specially chosen for their contribution to the character and heritage of County Kerry. An ACA is a place, an area or a group of structures or streetscapes of special interest and can be urban or rural. An ACA may or may not include Protected Structures. The Council recognises the significant role the county's ACAs play in terms of unique and attractive places, visual amenity, sense of place and tourism and seeks to ensure their special character is protected and enhanced in all development proposals. In an ACA the carrying out of works to the exterior of a structure will be exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of the area. Planning permission must be obtained before significant works can be carried out to the exterior of a structure in an ACA, which might materially alter its character. This designation allows the evolution and development of an area while maintaining its essential character and distinctiveness.

### Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 8-42** Ensure developments in an ACA have a positive impact on the intrinsic character of the area, respect the existing streetscape and layout, and are compatible in terms of design, materials, traffic, views, and intensity of site use.
- KCDP 8-43** Resist demolition in an ACA and avoid the removal of structures and distinctive elements including boundary detailing, historic street furniture, cobblestones, flagstones, post boxes, water pumps and ensure new elements are respectful of the character of the historic ACA environment.

### 8.4.4 Vernacular Architecture

Vernacular Architecture is generally classified as the homes and workplaces of the general population built by local people using local materials. This architecture was once commonplace but is becoming increasingly rare. The loss of traditional thatched buildings in the county is increasing and every effort will be made by the Council to encourage and facilitate the survival of the remaining examples. Notably, vernacular architecture can teach us many lessons, including appropriate siting of a dwelling to maximise "free" energy and the ability to work with the landscape.

By its very nature, vernacular buildings are typically the most sustainable form of construction, built with local materials in a style responding to local conditions, with a low energy use. It is the policy of the Council to promote the retention of vernacular buildings, both urban and rural, throughout the county and to seek their incorporation into development proposals in light of their positive contribution to the landscape quality of the County, their embodied energy, and to help deliver compact growth.



### Vernacular Architecture

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>KCDP 8-44</b> | Encourage the retention, appreciation and appropriate revitalisation of the vernacular-built heritage of Kerry by deterring the replacement of good quality older buildings with modern structures and by protecting these buildings where they contribute to the character of an area and/or where they are rare examples of a structure type. |
| <b>KCDP 8-45</b> | Promote the sympathetic maintenance, adaptation, and re-use of the county's vernacular-built heritage, including thatched structures, in recognition of their role in tourism, economic revitalisation, climate change, placemaking and quality of life.  |
| <b>KCDP 8-46</b> | Complete the vernacular survey of the Dingle Peninsula and carry out a vernacular survey of the Iveragh Peninsula during the lifetime of the Plan.  |

### 8.4.5 Historic Landscapes

Historic gardens, demesnes, parks, woodlands and estates were deliberately planned and laid out, for artistic affect. At times, natural features such as woodlands, water bodies, landscape contours, were used to create a specific view or setting, at other times, these changes were artificially made. Buildings, walled gardens, gate lodges, boundary walls, decorative gates and statues were used to create a particular view or vista, and at times, to present a public image of the estate to the surrounding population. Historic landscapes and demesnes reflect a tangible link with our past, the traditions, skills of design and execution, of a society and economy.

A survey completed by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage of the historic gardens of Kerry revealed almost 150 historic demesnes or gardens, within the country, many of which have disappeared. Further study and analysis are required to properly assess the integrity of the remaining features of this important resource.

Key elements of a designed landscape can include:

- Setting associated with a protected structure, buildings within the curtilage of a protected structure, presence of architectural conservation area
- Follies, gate lodges, statues
- Views and terminal vistas
- Groves, groups of trees, planted avenues leading to a historic building or place
- Deer parks or walled gardens and orchards
- Parkland – often large in scale and provided setting for the principal house, now defined by wide expansive space without internal boundaries, with groups of trees, woodlands, specimen trees and avenues
- Water features – large scale such as canals or rivers, or ponds, lakes or indeed, the coastline

### Historic Landscapes

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>KCDP 8-47</b> | Carry out further research and analysis to identify, survey and promote the conservation of historic landscapes in Kerry.  |
| <b>KCDP 8-48</b> | Require that proposals for development within historic designed landscapes be sensitive to and respect the built heritage elements and green space values of the site. |



#### 8.4.6 Valentia Transatlantic Cable UNESCO Project

Valentia Transatlantic Cable Foundation has sought UNESCO World Heritage site status for the cable station and associated buildings. This application is fully supported by Kerry County Council, and the local authority will work closely with the Valentia Island Development Company, Valentia Island Trans-Atlantic Cable Foundation, and Department of Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht and other state agencies and institutions in Ireland and abroad to achieve this goal.

#### Valentia Transatlantic Cable UNESCO Project

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 8-49** Facilitate and support measures to secure the designation of Valentia Trans-Atlantic Cable Station, Cable Terrace, “First Message” Building, Structure in the Telegraph Field, and ensemble of associated sites as a trans-national serial UNESCO World Heritage Site with its partner site in Hearts Content, Newfoundland, Canada.

# CHAPTER 9

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT









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## 9.0 Economic Development

### 9.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the planning policies and objectives in support of the economic development of the County and puts in place a spatial planning framework which will deliver the required development patterns that maximise the conditions for sustainable economic development in Kerry. The plan is supported by National and Regional economic strategies that seek to achieve this by identifying regional areas and the settlements within them which can, through targeted sustainable growth, create the critical mass in population, infrastructure, skills and connectivity necessary to compete with other economies and drive national economic growth.

#### 9.1.1 Economic Resilience

Strategic development plans are shaped by the socio-economic, environmental and related challenges that prevail at given times. The health of the economy is impacted by both global impacts such as climate change, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, political decisions such as Brexit, government policy and the investment decisions of companies as well as the opportunities for staff mobility and the ability of locations to attract investment and skills. The economic crisis caused by COVID-19 has had widespread, rapid and profound economic consequences globally. In particular, the Kerry economy has been negatively exposed to the impacts of COVID-19. The dominant economic sectors in Kerry are tourism and related services, wholesale and retail, agriculture, manufacturing and local services all of which towns, villages and their hinterlands rely on to generate economic activity.

Ireland's trading relationship with the UK is presenting both challenges and opportunities arising from Brexit.

This draft plan aims to provide a spatial land-use planning framework that demonstrates Kerry's ability to adapt and react to these dual economic challenges.

Policy formulation in the County Development Plan must acknowledge the significant economic challenges posed by both COVID-19 and BREXIT in affected sectors while at the same time taking cognisance of new economic opportunities in the form of remote working, the use of new technologies and access to new markets. These opportunities have been coupled with a greater appreciation of the quality of life that Kerry offers both to residents and visitors.

The ***Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum*** was convened in April 2020 to support the economic recovery of the County in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Chaired by Kerry County Council, this **interagency** and business response is supported by a dedicated governance structure that led the co-ordination of COVID-19 business supports and resilience in the County.

The Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum has, in consultation with key stakeholders, developed an **Economic Recovery Plan for County Kerry - 2021** in June 2021.

The Economic Recovery Plan is referenced throughout the County Development Plan as its pillars impact across a range of topics including the regeneration of our towns & villages, enhanced connectivity, education and training, marketing the county and also addresses the need to build resilience and diversification into the County's economy to respond to the additional challenges and opportunities faced by businesses in Kerry. The content of the Economic Recovery Plan is further detailed in Section 9.2.3.1.2

### 9.2 Policy Context

Economic development policy transects many Government departments, regional bodies and local agencies, resulting in a wealth of policy documents, plans and guidelines. This policy context focuses on economic development policy from a spatial planning perspective.



In the preparation of this chapter of the draft Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028, regard has been had for key National, Regional and Local policy documents and initiatives including:

### 9.2.1 National Policy

The government's economic policies have been directed towards attracting inward investment and driving future economic growth through the development of growing knowledge and technology-based industries and balanced regional development. The globalisation of the world's economy and the changing needs of new technology present opportunities for new investment and employment growth.

Job creation is supported at a national level by the Industrial Development Agency (IDA) which promotes Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into Ireland and Enterprise Ireland (EI) which works with Irish companies to help them develop and grow their business in global markets. Enterprise Ireland forecast that Ireland has the potential to win new investment that will create thousands of high-quality jobs. These investments will come from the development of existing client companies, industries and markets and also from new types of companies, in new areas like green technology.

#### National Planning Framework – Project Ireland 2040

All of the National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) relate either directly or indirectly to economic development and creating the conditions to support growth in the economy and employment while protecting our urban and rural areas, our environment and the natural and built assets.

NSO 6 aims to develop a strong economy, supported by enterprise, innovation and skills. This is dependent on creating places that can foster enterprise and innovation and attract investment and talent. It can be achieved by building regional economic drivers and by opportunities to diversify and strengthen the rural economy, to leverage the potential of places. This outcome will require the co-ordination of growth and place making with investment in world class infrastructure, including digital connectivity, and in skills and talent to support economic competitiveness and enterprise.

NSO 3 recognises that rural areas play a key role in driving our economy and they must be a part of our country's strategic development to 2040.

NSO 2 and NSO 4 are focused on achieving enhanced regional accessibility (transport) and high-quality international connectivity (digital), opening up opportunities to attract investment and growth.

The remaining NSOs focus on creating the conditions to make places more attractive to live and work in and to ensure that supporting social infrastructures, such as childcare and education, are in place to attract workers, enable people to work and provide an educated workforce. Under the umbrella of the National Planning Framework and National Development Plan the following key policy documents, the objectives of which will be expanded on in the relevant sections have influenced this plan.

- Our Rural Future Rural Development Policy 2021-2025
- IDA Ireland 'Driving Recovery and Sustainable Growth' (2021-2024)
- Food Vision 2030 – A world Leader in Sustainable Food Systems
- Economic Recovery Plan 2021
- Future Jobs Ireland (2019)
- Climate Action Plan 2019 - Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021
- National Marine Planning Framework
- Making Remote Work: National Remote Work Strategy



## 9.2.2 Regional Policy

### Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES)

The economic strategy of the RSES is focused on building an innovative and smart economy and its economic vision for the region is to enable sustainable, competitive, inclusive and resilient growth. The strategy also addresses the importance of digital and transport connectivity to underpin the Region's economic drivers.

The strategy is based on five key principles and requires employment development to follow the settlement hierarchy to deliver the greatest geographical alignment between future population and jobs growth including:

- Smart Specialisation
- Clustering (for business)
- Placemaking for Enterprise Development
- Knowledge Diffusion
- Capacity Building

Key towns are also highlighted as regional economic drivers, with a need to develop centre of scales in these towns to perform this role, and to attract further economic development and investment. Regional and district towns perform sub-regional economic roles, and the RSES support the strengthening of their service and employment functions.

The RSES contains a range of supporting objectives to guide economic development including: Locations for economic development (RPO 62), developing the region's tourism potential (RPO 53), developing the low carbon economy (RPO 56) developing skills and talent in the region through investments in education (RPO 63), supporting entrepreneurship (RPO 64 and 65) and growing the blue economy (RPO76-86).

The RSES also focuses on the economic role of the rural economy, and while it remains dependent on traditional sectors of agriculture, forestry, construction and fishing, there is a need to focus on rural diversification, optimising the many opportunities offered by tourism, leisure and recreation and renewable energy production.

### South West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020

The South-West Regional Enterprise Plan (SWREP) is one of the key policy documents through which the Government seeks to achieve balanced regional development and to enhance the overall enterprise environment in each region. In light of Covid-19 it is important that the impacts of the pandemic and the economic recovery need to be considered from a regional perspective. The Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024 South-West is currently under development with the Regional Enterprise Steering Committee and is expected to be finalised by Q1 2022.

### Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC)

Kerry is part of the Atlantic Economic Corridor network along the western seaboard. The NPF identifies the AEC as an enabler for regional growth and it is highlighted in the RSES as one of the Southern Region's economic drivers of collaboration and growth (RSES).

It is an objective to develop the Atlantic Economic Corridor initiative as a driver for enterprise growth, investment and attracting entrepreneurial skills and talent to rural settlements as an economic complement to the role of metropolitan areas and larger urban centres on the AEC. The RSES recognises the combined advantages and opportunities of the AEC including delivering a high-value and low-carbon economy.



### 9.2.3 Local Policy

Kerry County Council has a primary responsibility in relation to the economic development of the county, and through its structures provides both political and executive leadership in meeting the challenges that face Kerry.

#### 9.2.3.1 The Role of the Council in Economic Development and Economic Recovery

Kerry County Council will continue to engage with the National Economic Development and Employment Creation Agencies; the IDA, Enterprise Ireland; the Education Sector within the County and Region, the wider business community in the Public and Private Sector as well as the community development agencies to promote the economic development of the County. The Council will continue to work with these agencies in the implementation of National, Regional and Local plans.

The Economic Development, Enterprise, and Community Strategic Policy Committee brings the knowledge and expertise of people working with external socio, economic and community bodies throughout the County and inputs in assisting and advising the Council in the formulation, development and review of policy and its implementation. The Elected Council is represented on the Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum structure by both the Mayor and the Chair of the Economic and Community Strategic Policy Committee (SPC).

Kerry County Council recognises that much of the County's economy is underpinned by environmental attributes unique to the County and seeks to protect these environmental attributes by supporting the sustainable development of all sectors of the economy. Therefore, any plans, projects and activities requiring consent arising from economic development policy outlined in this chapter will be subject to the relevant environmental assessments including SEA, EIA and AA where appropriate.

##### 9.2.3.1.1 Kerry Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021

The County Kerry Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 (LECP) will be reviewed in parallel with the review of the Kerry County Development Plan and a new plan will be developed in line with national guidelines. This Draft Plan continues to support the Economic Development and Job Creation Higher Level Goals of the 2016-2021 LECP and will inform the development of the new LECP. The review of the Economic Goals of the new LECP will be significantly influenced by the work undertaken by the interagency Economic Stakeholders Group in the development of County Kerry's COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan 2021 and the Economic Development, Enterprise and Community Strategic Policy Committee.

#### Economic Development and Job Creation Higher Level Goals

- Supporting existing businesses in Kerry
- Attracting investment to Kerry
- Sustainably maximise growth opportunities for Kerry
- Diversifying the Kerry Economy
- Marketing
- Skills Development
- Smart Technology
- Networking/Collaboration
- Natural Resources
- Energy
- Connectivity
- Social Enterprise

Higher Level Goals of the Kerry LECP 2016-2021 include Economic Development and Job Creation, Quality of Life and Community and Social Inclusion. (See Chapter 6 – Sustainable Communities for further information.)



### 9.2.3.1.2 County Kerry's COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan 2021

County Kerry's COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan 2021 has been developed in response to the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic and provides an overall framework for the economic development of the County in the short to medium term.



**Figure 9.1: Pillars for Economic Recovery & Growth**

The 9 pillars for Economic Recovery & Growth contained in the plan contribute to the county's economic development and are shaped and influenced by the strategic objectives of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES). Both the vision of the NPF and the RSES are led by the need for transformative change in a greater regional structural realignment of population and economic activity across the state and to achieve the ambitious targets set will require investment of an equally ambitious and targeted nature. The Economic Recovery Plan is also aligned with national, regional and local policy and plans, including the recently published National Economic Recovery Plan, which sets out a high-level framework outlining the Government's priorities for a jobs-led sustainable and inclusive recovery; and the Government's 5-year strategy for rural development 'Our Rural Future', that represents the Irish Government's blueprint for a post-COVID-19 recovery and development of rural Ireland over the next five years.

The Plan focuses on the broad themes of Digital Transformation, the Transition to a Low Carbon Economy, building on Kerry's Natural Resources and the necessary Training and Education to support these structural changes. The Plan also concentrates on the challenges of Regenerating our Towns and Villages, the overall Marketing of the County in relation to attracting investment, talent and visitors and the development of our Tourism, Culture, Heritage and Amenities to support the quality of life in the County both for its resident and visiting populations.

There will be a continued support of existing business in the efficient delivery of National Schemes and the prioritisation of local supports in training, mentoring, supporting the transition to online trading and lean programmes and assisting the National Pathways to Work Programme 2021-2025.

The delivery of key infrastructure through public sector investment is a central tenet in achieving economic recovery, in the provision of enabling infrastructure in digital and physical transport links, water and wastewater infrastructure, the delivery of an expanded social and affordable housing programme, investment in enterprise space and the development of key educational facilities.



The continued development of the County's tourism infrastructure, the enhancement of the public realm in towns and villages, universal access, facilities in our blue flag beaches, greenways, amenity trails, outdoor dining and recreation facilities and supporting infrastructure all generate economic activity and support the County's major tourism industry and deliver on the overall attractiveness of the County. The actions and investment proposed under these pillars are designed to stimulate vibrancy in our towns and villages, support sustainable growth of our key economic sectors and the futureproofing of our economy and environment.

This Economic Recovery Plan is a 'county-wide' plan developed through the Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum. It has been developed in partnership with a number of stakeholders and its successful implementation will require continued collaboration across the County. While this plan is broad in ambition it is not intended to reflect the entire work plans of individual agencies and communities. Each of the partners involved in developing this plan will monitor the implementation of their actions. The Economic Development, Enterprise, Tourism Strategic and Policy Committee (SPC) will review the implementation of the plan annually. Following this review a progress report will be presented to the Elected Members of the Council for review. There will be on-going engagement with the Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum partners who will support the implementation of actions contained within the plan. The Economic Recovery Plan as previously stated is not a statutory plan. However, the plan will inform the development of the new Kerry Local Economic and Community Plan, County Tourism Strategy and South West Regional Enterprise plan 2021-2024. It is intended that the plan is a living document and projects may arise in the future which can be included as part of the plan taking into account the uncertain economic operating environment post COVID-19 and post Brexit.

### **9.3 Sustainable Economic Development and Climate Action**

Local government has a critical role to play under the Government's Climate Action Plan to tackle Climate Change, which sets ambitious targets for all public sector bodies by 2030 and identifies local authorities as key enablers of change. Kerry County Council has developed and is implementing a Climate Adaptation Strategy (2019), supported by the Atlantic Seaboard South Climate Action Regional Office (CARO).

The government's Action Plan for Jobs called for an assessment of the potential of Ireland's bioeconomy to further contribute to economic development and the transition to a low-carbon economy. Project Ireland 2040 highlights the potential of the bioeconomy in promoting the more efficient use of renewable resources while supporting economic development and employment in rural Ireland. In 2018, as part of Project Ireland 2040, the government published the first National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy. This commitment recognises that the bioeconomy is crucial for sustainability while also providing an impetus to rural and regional development and employment.

The Green Economy is a term which is used to categorise a wide range of economic activities which contribute to lower greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and better resource usage while also functioning as commercial businesses. There are a number of key sectors which have been associated with the green economy including, renewable energies, the manufacture of energy efficient products and green tourism.

Kerry has a number of strengths which it can leverage to create 'green' employment and growth opportunities both for indigenous companies and for foreign direct investment (FDI) in the county. Strengths include renewable energy and water resources; sectoral strengths including engineering, information and communication technologies (ICT), Fin-tech, science technology and research and development (R&D). It is the policy of the council to support initiatives that will contribute to the growth of Kerry's green/blue economy.

Kerry County Council recognises the need for a 'Just Transition' to a low carbon economy which can offer significant opportunities to achieve sectoral diversification in the Green Economy and lead the way to a greener future including the following:





- Support businesses and activities to transition to a low carbon economy, finding ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in their work practices such as Work Travel Plans and improving energy efficiencies in their operations, and to support them to become climate resilient.
- Encourage the integration of environmental considerations into the construction and design of buildings.
- Support the development of the green economy including appropriate renewable energy and bioenergy economic developments that will assist in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and assist with the transition to a low carbon economy.
- Support the agriculture sector to transition to economically and environmentally viable farming methods that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, are beneficial for local biodiversity and rural communities whilst still delivering high quality food and providing a high standard of animal welfare.
- Continue to create job opportunities within our county to counteract unsustainable commuting out of the county for work, to focus on developing jobs in our settlements, reduce the distance that people have to travel to work and to develop more sustainable modes of travel.
- Support the further development of remote/blended working in co-working hubs
- Sustainably support economic development to ensure that it does not contribute to coastal erosion or have a negative impact on areas vulnerable to flood risk.

Kerry County Council is also committed to transitioning to a Circular Economy and to embracing the opportunities and supporting businesses to reuse, repair, focus on resource consumption and reduce contamination levels. See Chapters 2 and 13 for more information.

### Sustainable Economic Development and Climate Action

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

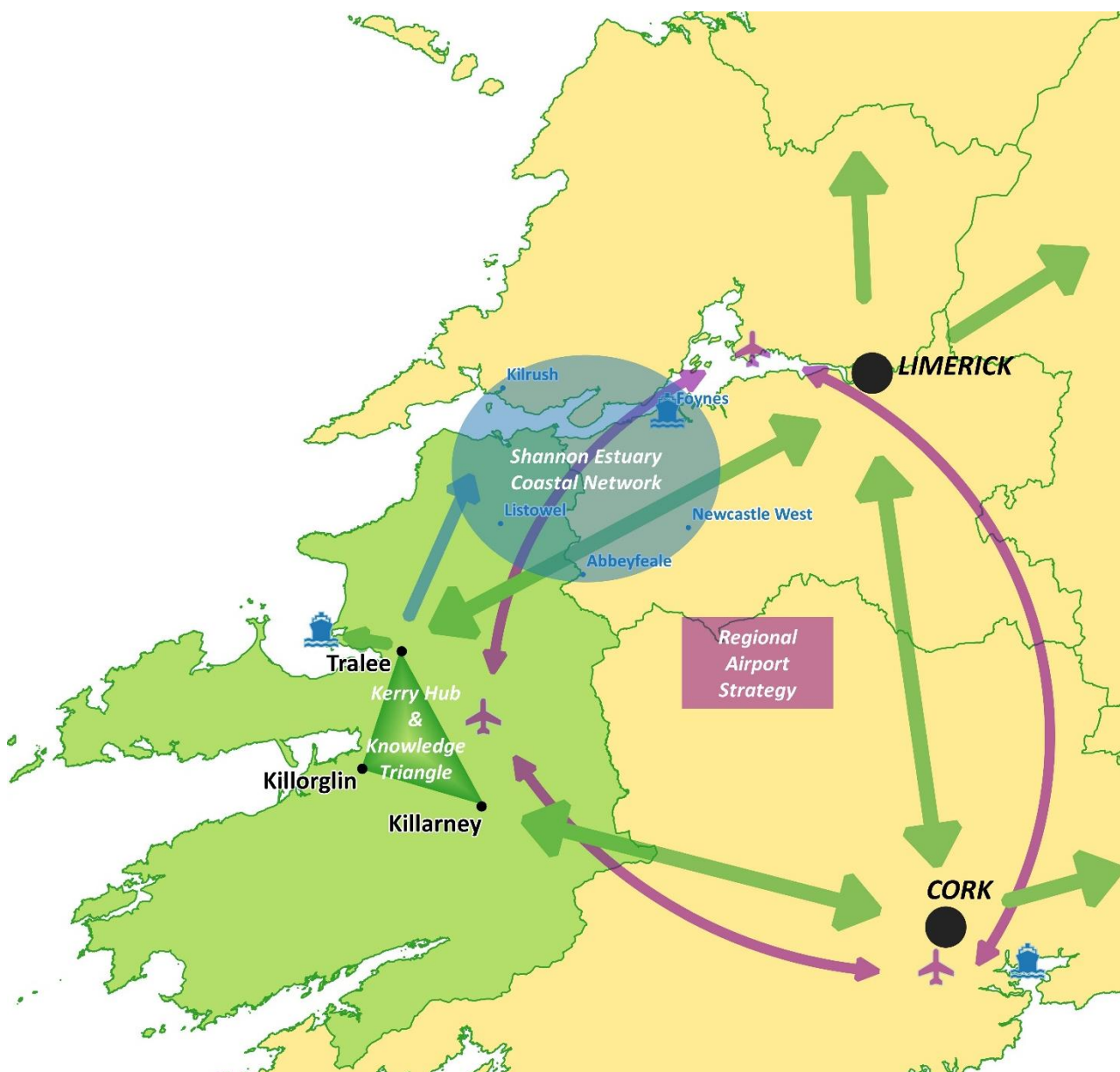
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|-----------------|--|
| <b>KCDP 9-1</b> | Ensure that a sustainable approach is taken to enterprise development and employment creation across all sectors of the Kerry economy.   |
| <b>KCDP 9-2</b> | Engage with all relevant government stakeholders, enterprise agencies and sectoral representatives in pursuing 'green' approaches to economic development, and actively collaborate with key industry and educational bodies to promote Kerry based initiatives across the economic sectors. |
| <b>KCDP 9-3</b> | Facilitate and support employment opportunities for rural communities in areas such as renewable energy, sustainable tourism, energy retrofitting, the Bioeconomy and the Circular Economy.  |

## 9.4 Economic Regions of Regional Economic Significance

The Draft County Development Plan supports the sustainable economic development of the entire County with appropriate level economic activity. National and Regional planning policy has recognised two areas within the County that have the potential of Economic Development of Regional significance due to the existing level of population, employment, education and research facilities and potential due to location as part of a wider regional economic zone.

### 9.4.1 Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle

The Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle is an Innovative economic hub within the established network of Killorglin, Tralee, Killarney and the Atlantic Economic Corridor. The RSES recognises the important economic role of Killorglin in this network and its strong association with Tralee, Killarney and third level institutions.



**Map 9.1: Economic Regions of Regional Economic Significance**

**9.4.2 North Kerry/West Limerick/Shannon Estuary/Clare Settlement Network**

The Council supports the economic role and potential of the established towns of Listowel, Abbeyfeale, Newcastle West and Kilrush as economic drivers in a potential North Kerry/West Limerick/Clare network connected with the Shannon Estuary. This includes the Shannon Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) area and strategic locations identified under the SIFP as a Shannon Estuary Coastal Network which includes the Tarbert/Ballylongford Landbank.

**Strategic Economic Objectives**

It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 9-4** Facilitate and support County Kerry’s economic recovery through the sustainable implementation of County Kerry’s COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan and the emerging Kerry Local Economic and Community Plan, focusing on a transition to a low carbon and digital economy [assisted by the encouragement of Smart Villages] and through sustainably



	expanding the county's economic sectors, increasing innovation, product exports and access to new markets.
<b>KCDP 9-5</b>	Promote Kerry as a Regional, National and International location for investment, building on its outstanding natural environment, and the county's proven entrepreneurial success.
<b>KCDP 9-6</b>	Engage and collaborate with Regional Partners, Local Authorities, Third Level Education Sector and the broader business community as appropriate, to promote the continued development of the Kerry economy on a regional basis in the context of the Southern Regional Enterprise Plan, the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) and other regional initiatives.
<b>KCDP 9-7</b>	Actively seek and facilitate continued opportunities for investment in and development of FDI and indigenous enterprises at appropriate locations in the County through engagement and collaboration with relevant agencies.
<b>KCDP 9-8</b>	Support the further development of the Kerry Hub & Knowledge Triangle and the North Kerry/Shannon Estuary Networks and their potential to create substantial economic benefit to the County.
<b>KCDP 9-9</b>	Maximise the amount of employment growth and enterprise creation across all economic sectors and ensure that growth is distributed in a sustainable manner across the County in accordance with the Settlement Strategy.
<b>KCDP 9-10</b>	Support economic growth within the Key Towns through consolidating, strengthening and promoting the strategic importance of Tralee and Killarney and of key employment locations around the county.
<b>KCDP 9-11</b>	Encourage employment growth in rural towns to support the population of these towns and their wider rural catchments.
<b>KCDP 9-12</b>	Prioritise the regeneration of areas in need of renewal, for instance in underperforming or outdated commercial and/ or industrial areas, brownfield land and in town and village centres where higher vacancy rates exist.
<b>KCDP 9-13</b>	Support and promote the recovery of the Tourism Sector in Kerry as it recovers from the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic and re-establishes itself as one of the county's key economic drivers.
<b>KCDP 9-14</b>	Undertake a review of the LECP and Tourism Strategy in tandem with the review of the CDP and ensure consistency with the overall Objectives of same.

## 9.5 Employment Profile

The POWSCAR<sup>1</sup> data identify the towns of Tralee (16,613 jobs) and Killarney (10,835 jobs) as the dominant employment anchors in the County.

Together the two towns hold more than two-thirds (68 %) of all jobs located in the specified urban and rural employment nodes – and both have positive commuting balances.

<sup>1</sup> POWSCAR (Place of Work, School or College - Census of Anonymised Records) Data 2016



Killorglin records the strongest positive commuting balance, indicating a relatively strong economic performance, particularly for a town of its size. <b>Labour Force Employed by Sector</b>	2011	% of at work 2011	2016	% of at work 2016	Change 2011/2016	% Change 2011/2016
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	8,205	14.7%	8,250	13.5%	45	0.5%
Human health and social work activities	6,226	11.2%	6,839	11.2%	613	9.8%
Accommodation and food service activities	5,483	9.8%	6,450	10.5%	967	17.6%
Manufacturing	5,033	9.0%	5,782	9.4%	749	14.9%
Industry not stated	3,444	6.2%	5,380	8.8%	1,936	56.2%
Education	4,864	8.7%	5,215	8.5%	351	7.2%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	5,461	9.8%	4,913	8.0%	-548	-10.0%
Construction	3,135	5.6%	3,439	5.6%	304	9.7%
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	2,994	5.4%	2,945	4.8%	-49	-1.6%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	2,087	3.7%	2,368	3.9%	281	13.5%
Administrative and support service activities	1,598	2.9%	1,791	2.9%	193	12.1%
Financial and insurance activities	1,744	3.1%	1,697	2.8%	-47	-2.7%
Transportation and storage	1,415	2.5%	1,602	2.6%	187	13.2%
Other service activities	1,194	2.1%	1,225	2.0%	31	2.6%
Information and communication	1,020	1.8%	1,159	1.9%	139	13.6%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	883	1.6%	1,009	1.6%	126	14.3%
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	372	0.7%	460	0.8%	88	23.7%
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	230	0.4%	280	0.5%	50	21.7%
Real estate activities	202	0.4%	212	0.3%	10	5.0%
Mining and quarrying	121	0.2%	121	0.2%	0	0.0%
Activities of households as employers producing activities of households for own use	55	0.1%	79	0.1%	24	43.6%
Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies	1	0.0%	6	0.0%	5	500.0%
Total at work	55,767		61,222		5,455	9.8%
Unemployed looking for first regular job	921		835		-86	-9.3%
Unemployed, having lost or given up previous job	12,598		7,866		-4,732	-37.6%
Total in labour force	69,286		69,923		637	0.9%

**Table 9.1 Total Labour Force Employed by Sector in County Kerry 2011-2016 (CSO)**

Of the estimated 69,000 people at work in Kerry the largest employment cohort is in the retail and wholesale trade with hotels and restaurants (accommodation and food services) shortly behind. Accommodation and food services are the core of the tourism sector, but parts of the transportation and 'other' also include tourist dependent activities.



Town	Workers	Jobs	Commuting Balance	Jobs/Workers
Tralee	11,726	16,613	4,887	1.42
Killarney	7,836	10,835	2,999	1.38
Listowel	2,085	3,111	1,026	1.49
Killorglin	1,231	2,432	1,201	1.98
Castleisland	1,246	1,765	519	1.42
Abbeyfeale	813	1,533	720	1.89
Dingle/Daingean Uí Chúis	962	1,441	479	1.50
Kenmare	986	1,222	236	1.24
Cahersiveen	592	897	305	1.52
Rathmore	369	205	-164	0.56
Tarbert	205	190	-15	0.93

**Table 9.2: Economic Strength of the Principal Urban Settlements**

### 9.5.1 Key Sectors and Employers

Kerry Employment by Sector		
Sector	Employment	% of Total
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	5729	8.3
Industry	8783	12.7
Construction	4431	6.4
Wholesale and retail trade	10107	14.6
Transportation and storage	1908	2.8
Accommodation and food service activities	10076	14.5
Information and communication	1622	2.3
Financial, insurance and real estate activities	1769	2.6
Professional, scientific and technical activities	2747	4.0
Administrative and support service activities	3137	4.5
Public administration and defence	2590	3.7
Education	4790	6.9
Health and social work	8563	12.4
Other NACE (Arts, Entertainment, Recreation)	3076	4.4
All NACE economic sectors	69328	100.0

**Table 9.3 Source: Extracted from CSO Labour Force Survey, Q4 2019.**

This chart on Employment by Sector shows the comparison of employment by sector with the rest of the country. It illustrates the importance of employment in the tourism and hospitality sectors (Accommodation and Food, Transportation) and the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries sector relative to the State.

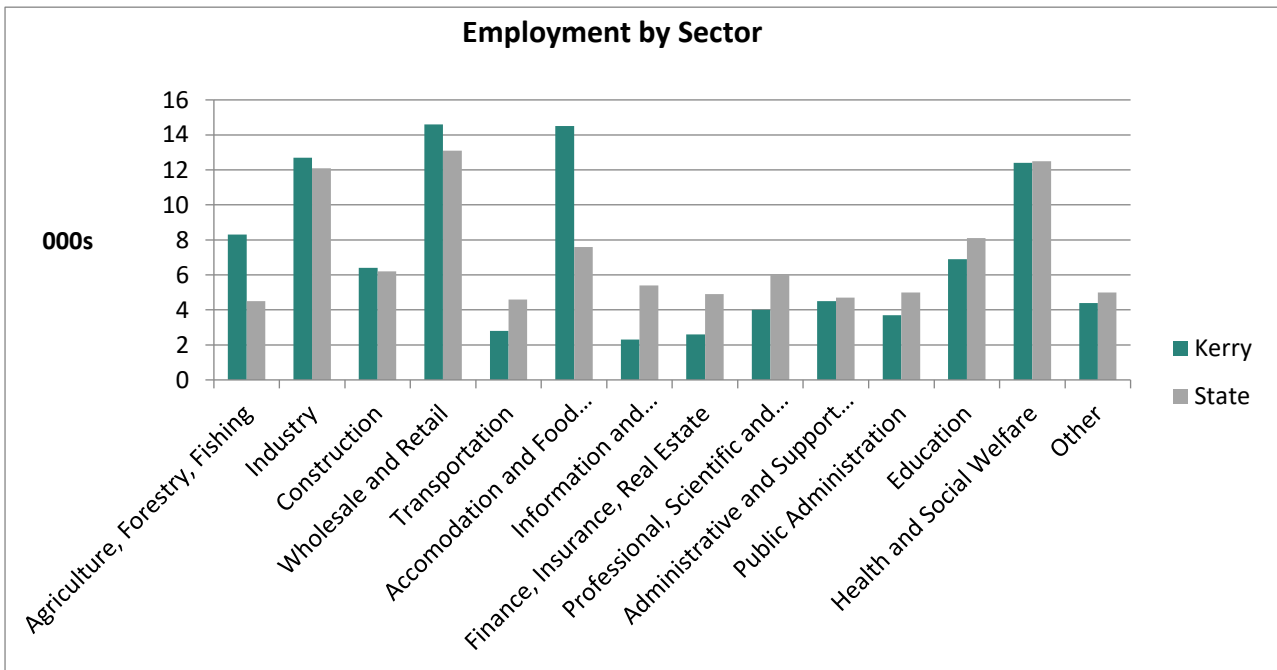


Fig: 9.2 Employment by Sector

**Tackling Unemployment**

The Council recognises that areas of higher unemployment, specifically among the younger population, do not always benefit from a focus on Further and Higher Education, jobs in the IT sector or enterprise and would benefit more by the provision of training and skills development as well as traditional forms of employment. The Council will support and facilitate a policy which will seek to employ skilled trades people to facilitate the employment of apprentices.

**9.5.2 Travel to Work**

In developing the Settlement Hierarchy, the plan recognised that population and employment size are not the sole determinant of a settlement’s functional role or in the consideration of its strategic regional significance. Some towns with a large population base located within the catchment of the Key Towns have emerged mainly as commuting towns, with a level of function significantly lower than their population base. Conversely, other towns have a level of function higher than their population base and play a key regional role. (See Chapter 4 Towns & Villages and Chapter 14 – Connectivity for further information.)

**Employment Profile**

**It is an objective of the Council to:**

- KCDP 9-15** Support the actions contained in the Kerry Economic Recovery Plan 2021 incorporating the Kerry Employment Creation and Retention Plan to support employment within the County.
- KCDP 9-16** Ensure there is sufficient quantity and appropriate types of lands zoned for commercial, enterprise and/ or industrial uses to facilitate a range of enterprise development and a mix of employment creation across all business and industry sectors in settlements in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy.
- KCDP 9-17** Facilitate and support reskilling and retraining as opportunities arise with the transition to low carbon economy.



**KCDP 9-18** Support the work undertaken by the Education and Training Boards, in relation to courses provided under SOLAS and the establishment of Community Training Centres, Local Training Initiatives and Specialist Training Provision in Kerry.

## 9.6 Land Use Planning for Economic Development

The attractiveness of an area and a sense of place are important elements in realising economic development potential and attracting new investment and employees. The Council will actively pursue place making activities and local improvement measures including public realm improvements, regeneration of urban areas, the protection and enhancement of heritage towns and other measures to enhance the local environment. Placemaking is further discussed in Chapter 4 Towns & Villages.

Sustainable enterprise thrives in supportive business environments that enhance competitiveness and productivity with good supporting infrastructure. There are also critical links between the quality of urban place-making and business investment/job creation. This means that many sectors, but in particular those related to the information economy and knowledge development, tend to be very place specific. High skilled individuals are attracted together, as firms 'agglomerate' in the larger skilled labour markets found in the Kerry Hub & Knowledge Triangle (Tralee, Killarney and Killorglin).

In addition to scale and density, this is dependent on the attractiveness of places to highly skilled potential employees as well as having a steady stream of local talent and innovation associated with the Munster Technological University & Kerry Technology Park. International connectivity is also important, where short travel times to Kerry Airport with a good choice of destinations is a critical factor.

Infrastructural investment is critical for future economic development activity. It is essential therefore that infrastructure providers, such as Irish Water, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, National Transport Authority Connecting Ireland and electricity and broadband providers, support Kerry County Council's vision for economic development through their service provision. The Core & Settlement Strategy contained in Chapter 3 of this Development Plan, sets out envisaged levels of economic development and growth for the towns and villages of County Kerry based on their position on the Settlement Hierarchy which will ensure that lands are appropriately zoned to meet the needs of different users and to encourage a diversity of employment-generating development throughout the County. This approach aims to ensure that settlements fulfil their roles, and that the density of employment is achieved to maximise the efficiency of existing infrastructure and have regard to accessibility by sustainable transport modes to reduce car dependency.

The primary location for new commercial development will be in the Key towns and development in other towns and villages shall be commensurate with their level in the Settlement Hierarchy.

It is an objective of this plan to improve urban infrastructure and amenities, liveability/quality of life and the quality of the built environment to create appropriate conditions to attract enterprise development.

### 9.6.1 Economic Development Land Use Zonings

Whilst a range of employment uses are generally permitted in principle or open for consideration across a range of land use zonings, the County Development Plan seeks to guide enterprise and employment development to appropriate locations by identifying appropriate areas for sustainable future development. There are c.640 hectares of land zoned for enterprise and employment related uses in the County. Of this c.463 hectares remain undeveloped, offering potential for future economic development. There are c.52 hectares of brownfield land zoned for more intensive enterprise and/or residential led development. In addition, this plan provides 437 hectares for industrial related development and employment creation opportunities in the Tarbert/Ballylongford strategic landbank



In accordance with RPO 43 Regeneration, Brownfield and Infill Development a number of sites have been identified for potential redevelopment. An increased level of density will be permitted on these sites subject to appropriate design and integration and used for new employment generating enterprises. Such developments contribute to regeneration and enhance the visual appearance of an area, make more effective use of land and stimulate economic activity in urban and rural areas. Additional incentives for the development of these lands also applies including reduced development contributions and parking requirements.

Development Management Standards and Guidelines are contained in Volume 6 and set out the appropriate uses for each land use zoning objective included in the County. In addition to these economic development land use zonings there is also significant potential for employment generation in Town Centre zonings particularly for office use, co-working facilities and existing retail within the existing Mixed Use/ Opportunity Sites/ Industrial /Enterprise / Employment/Retail zones.

### Land Use Planning for Economic Development

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 9-19** Identify business parks and industrial estates that are in need of regeneration and revitalisation in line with sustainable measures and engage with all relevant stakeholders and interested parties to encourage their regeneration and revitalisation.
- KCDP 9-20** Ensure that employment areas maximise infrastructural provision and public transport networks.
- KCDP 9-21** Ensure that sufficient land is reserved around site boundaries, in both individual sites and industrial parks to accommodate landscaping which will soften the visual impact and reduce the biodiversity loss of the development and improve the quality of the environment.

#### 9.6.1.1 Shannon Estuary

##### Shannon Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP)

The Shannon Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) is a land and marine based framework plan to guide future development of the Shannon Estuary. It has identified 9 no. strategic development locations in counties Clare, Limerick and Kerry and aims to build on existing industry connectivity and synergy as well as the existing infrastructure to create a more sustainable and attractive network for further investment. The RSES recognises the national and international importance of the Shannon Estuary, its potential to attract multinational development and the significant work that has been undertaken to progress its promotion and development.

##### Atlantic Offshore Energy Hub / Shannon Estuary Offshore Wind Potential Study

The Irish government has through Project Ireland 2040, the Climate Action Plan and most recently the Marine Planning and Development Management Bill, set ambitious plans for offshore renewable energy resource development in Ireland. There are significant opportunities to grow offshore wave and wind renewable energy in the Shannon Estuary reflecting the key natural assets of wave and wind energy, together with the presence of grid connections.

The development of the Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) industry is critically dependent on the development of enabling infrastructure.

##### Tarbert-Ballylongford Landbank

The Strategic Development Location (SDL) at Tarbert/Ballylongford in North Kerry is recognised for its potential as an Energy Hub and for industrial development at a regional and national level. There are 437 Hectares of zoned lands available for development on the Southern shore of the Shannon Estuary with access





to deep water (up to 23m). It is the policy of the council to support sustainable the development of the Shannon Estuary, in line with the SIFP and the recommendations of its environmental assessment, and recognise its potential as an Energy Hub.

### Shannon Estuary

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>KCDP 9-22</b> | Support and promote the delivery of the Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) as set out in the SIFP for the Shannon Estuary subject to the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in the SEA and AA undertaken on SIFP and zoned in the Local Authority Development Plans.  |
| <b>KCDP 9-23</b> | Support the promotion, marketing and seeking of financial and expert support for the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary and specific projects emerging from the plan. Projects shall be subject to the relevant environmental assessment requirements including SEA, EIA SFRA and AA as appropriate.  |
| <b>KCDP 9-24</b> | Promote and facilitate the sustainable development of the Tarbert-Ballylongford landbank for industry, utilising the presence of deep water, existing infrastructure, natural resources, and waterside location to harness the potential of this Strategic Location. Proposals for marine related industry, general industrial development, and particularly those industries creating a synergism with existing uses and contributing to the development of a strategic energy hub at this location will also be encouraged. |
| <b>KCDP 9-25</b> | Safeguard the role and function of the Power Plant Hub at Tarbert, including the NORA Strategic Oil Reserves Plant, as a key driver of economic growth in the Region, encouraging its sustainable growth and diversification, in accordance with Regional and National Energy Objectives.   |

### 9.6.2 Supporting Infrastructure

The NPF aims to enhance accessibility and connectivity between the key urban centres and their regions. Connectivity in terms of both digital and information systems and transport are equally important. The need to improve connectivity between Cork, Limerick, and the regions is essential. Good quality accessibility and connectivity between the Key towns and cities in the region and the larger centres of population in Kerry is key to ensuring that people can access higher order services in a sustainable way using high quality public transport.

Kerry International Airport acts as a catalyst to encourage people and investment to the county and the region, driving economic activity in the form of business and investment as well as tourism and travel. It is the policy of the Council to encourage and support the further development of Kerry International Airport in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and the County. (See Chapter 14 Connectivity for further details)

### Supporting Infrastructure

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>KCDP 9-26</b> | Require that proposals for economic development are served by quality supporting infrastructure with sufficient capacity. A sequential approach may be used for assessing economic developments to ensure their appropriate and sustainable delivery. |
| <b>KCDP 9-27</b> | Encourage high quality sustainable design, permeability and pedestrian and/ or cyclist friendly environments within business parks and industrial areas.  |



- KCDP 9-28** An objective of the Council to Protect sites of significant historical military importance along the Shannon Estuary, including the Battery on Carrig Island, Carrigafoyle Castle, the Bastioned Star Shaped Fort in Tarbert and the core area of Fort Shannon at Ardmore point.
- KCDP 9-29** Facilitate and support public service providers in ensuring that zoned lands for economic development purposes are serviced in a timely fashion to facilitate opportunities for employment and enterprise creation.
- KCDP 9-30** Prepare Local Area Plans or Masterplans where indicated on economic development generating lands in collaboration with key stakeholders, relevant agencies and sectoral representatives.
- KCDP 9-31** Support sustainable innovative policies to boost the economic role of Kerry International Airport including through marketing partnerships with airlines, hotels, attractions and other hospitality and tourism sector stakeholders.

## 9.7 Economic Sectors and Opportunities

### 9.7.1 Knowledge Economy

The Council recognises the importance of the link between industry and higher education in providing for the economic and social wellbeing of the County's population. The development of a knowledge-based economy is dependent on a large number of sectors interacting in a focused manner to achieve the conditions for growth. The knowledge-based industries located with the Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle are extensive and include computer technology, life sciences, research and development, high-tech manufacturing, communications, business, finance, insurance and other market services.

One of the primary drivers of structural change in the global and national economy is the transformation to digital, accelerated by technological breakthroughs for e.g., digital technologies, artificial intelligence, automation, 3D printing, bio-based production, and nanomaterials. These technological changes are transforming the production and distribution of goods and services, creating new businesses and business models, and delivering private and public services in new ways (OECD, 2018b; World Bank, 2019)<sup>2</sup>.

There is evidence that the transition to digitalisation can lead to high quality jobs, however there are also risks to some roles in the context of deployment across the economy. Continuous development of the workforce will be the primary driver of jobs and sectoral resilience and inclusive transformation. This will be delivered through **research, upskilling and reskilling** to match new opportunities.

**Kerry ETB** supports the transition to a digital economy through Further Education and Training (FET) courses that deliver digital literacy skills to citizens and communities across Kerry, as well as business and industry in the region. Provision such as Software Development, Programming, Cyber Security, Digital Media Production and Social Media and Marketing are essential for the new digital era. ICT skills and technology enhanced learning are an important element of professional development for teaching and learning, management, and administration staff. These skills are incorporated into the everyday curriculum in schools and FET centres. Kerry ETB as part of its sustainability strategy is progressing the move to paperless delivery with advanced Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) implementation across all Further Education and Training provision.

As a Technological University, the **Munster Technological University (MTU)** is rooted in its regional connectedness, while reaching out nationally and internationally through its teaching, learning and research collaborations. As a research-driven University, MTU researchers play a key role in preparing our students, our

<sup>2</sup> Addressing Employment Vulnerability as Part of a Just Transition in Ireland, National Economic & Social Council (NES) No 149 March 2020.



industries and businesses, and our society for a rapidly changing world with a focus on the needs of our surrounding regional economy and society. MTU researchers, located in six campuses across Munster, work on projects that address the needs of Ireland's South West region and beyond. The University campuses in Kerry, support a thriving research community of over 200 researchers including academic staff, research professional staff and research students many of whom are linked to one of our three research centres: Shannon ABC, IMaR and the UNESCO Chair. MTU's research is multi-disciplinary, sustainable and takes advantage and cognizance of the socio-economic profile of our surrounding region. MTU's activities support social and economic development through partnerships and delivers the talented individuals and informed leaders needed to respond to external challenges now and in the future.

MTU Kerry has always worked closely with employers, both regionally and nationally to ensure programmes are relevant to specific industry sectors. Uniquely, MTU Kerry is a campus with a Technology Park. This proximity has further enabled the development of links with a range of cutting-edge start-ups, global companies, and internationally recognised research centres. Companies operating from Kerry Technology Park provide work placement opportunities for students and work opportunities for graduates. In fact, 25% of those working in the Technology Park are MTU Kerry graduates. Also located on the Kerry Campus at Kerry Technology Park is the **Tom Crean Business Centre**. Funded by Enterprise Ireland, this business incubation centre celebrates 15 years in operation in 2021, during which time well over 100 sustainable jobs have been created by businesses at the Centre, and over €1 million investment raised. Today, the Tom Crean Business Centre is home to 30 businesses, directly employing over 70 people.

A collaboration of Kerry's skills and talent have been applied to develop several **Centers of Excellence**; **The Agritech Centre of Excellence** is an initiative of MTU Kerry in collaboration with Dairymaster, McHale Engineering, Abbey Machinery and supported by Enterprise Ireland and Kerry County Council. The centre will identify, research, share and implement best practice in innovation, processes and systems, people skills, company capability and internationalisation to deliver sustainable market growth. The project is a step change in the Agri-tech sector and offers a new and exciting approach to sectoral learning and development, through e-learning and virtual reality. **RDI Hub** is a world-class centre for design-led, digital innovation located in Ireland's South West. A first of its kind, RDI Hub focuses on digitisation, ideation and commercialisation of innovation and research in the Digital, AI, Data and related technologies' sectors. RDI Hub is a not-for-profit partnership between Private Enterprise (Fexco), Third level (MTU Kerry), Enterprise Ireland and Government (Kerry County Council).

The **Skellig Centre for Research and Innovation (Skellig CRI)** is a unique higher education and community development partnership between Kerry County Council, University College Cork (UCC), South Kerry Development Partnership (SKDP) and the local community. The Centre is based locally in Cahersiveen Library and facilitates the delivery of higher education programmes, research and practice locally in the Skellig Coast region.

**KerrySciTech** has always been focused on increasing career interest & awareness in STEM, on-boarding and integrating talent in our region and ultimately retaining and developing our talent to ensure that we have the leaders to drive our industries and create more jobs for the next generation of scientists, engineers and technologists. Over the last year KerrySciTech has significantly increased its activities in the areas of creating a robust STEM talent pipeline in the Kerry region.

### Knowledge Economy

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 9-32** Recognise the strong link between a well-educated workforce and economic prosperity, support continued educational investment in the County and promote collaboration with third level institutions and other educational facilities.



**KCDP 9-33** Facilitate and promote synergies between education, technology and industry with an emphasis on participation on education labour market activation measures in order to improve economic development and life-long learning in Kerry.

**KCDP 9-34** Support existing companies, such as those in the manufacturing, fin-tech, and agri-food sectors, and promote new and emerging business opportunities across all economic sectors within the County.

### 9.7.2 Information & Communication Technology

Ireland has developed a world-leading reputation for Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector development, and this has resulted in the formation of indigenous enterprises and service providers, ranging from research and development (R&D) enterprises, to large-scale manufacturing.

The newly established MTU will have a substantial economic impact on the region and will contribute both to direct economic activity and economic development. Kerry County Council, Munster Technological University (MTU) and companies such as Fexco and DairyMaster, who are global leaders in the Fin-Tech and Smart Agri disciplines are exploring the potential for targeted growth of these sectors within the Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle and throughout the wider Southern Region. There will be opportunities to build on the existing enterprise base in Kerry and develop strengths in emerging digital sectors and in the strategic growth areas of analytics and data.

It is the policy of the council to support the provision of ICT infrastructure for existing and emerging technologies which may arise which will assist in the economic development of the county.

#### Information & Communication Technology

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 9-35** Promote the continued growth of the ICT and Fin-tech sector in Kerry by facilitating the conditions conducive to such development including the creation of high-quality physical environments offering a range of building and office accommodation types, supported through the provision of the necessary services and transport infrastructure.

**KCDP 9-36** Engage and collaborate with key stakeholders, relevant agencies, and sectoral representatives to develop the ICT and Fin-tech sectors in Kerry and to ensure that the economic potential of the sectors is secured for the benefit of the local and national economy.

### 9.7.3 Rural Economy

The rural economy of Kerry consists of the district towns, villages and open countryside. Within these rural areas, traditional employment attached to resource-based activities such as agriculture, forestry, marine activity, aquaculture, mineral extraction, energy and hugely significantly tourism and recreation is very important. This economic activity is undertaken in the context of County Kerry's rich natural environment which includes a wealth of features that encompass the character of the County. These include the highest mountain ranges in the country, a diversity of wildlife, ecological sites of importance including Killarney National Park, coastal areas including blue flag beaches and sites of geological importance. It is necessary for these features to be protected to the standards required by national legislation and European Directives, whilst accommodating sustainable development in appropriate locations to facilitate sustainable economic growth and development.

In addition to having its own intrinsic value, the natural environment is an immense economic and amenity asset, providing a platform for the County's major employment sectors as outlined above, while simultaneously providing sustainable recreational activities, enhancing the quality of life of residents and



visitors alike and contributing natural resources such as drinking water and raw materials which can facilitate sustainable development. These resources are generally located in rural areas providing employment and contributing to the economy of these rural communities. The continued sustainable development of these resources at appropriate locations will serve to diversify and strengthen the economy of the County.

Rural economic activity has significant potential for expansion, due to advances in technology, digital connectivity and the potential for economic diversification across rural Ireland. Our Rural Future – Rural Development Policy 2021-2025 DRCD, published in March 2021 outlines the Governments Vision for Rural Development to 2025.

#### **Our Rural Future Rural Development Policy 2021-2025**

Our Rural Future provides a framework for the development of rural Ireland over the next five years. The Vision outlined in the policy *“is for a thriving rural Ireland which is integral to our national economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing and development, which is built on the interdependence of urban and rural areas, and which recognises the centrality of people, the importance of vibrant and lived-in rural places, and the potential to create quality jobs and sustain our shared environment.”*

#### **Our Rural Future focuses on the following thematic objectives:**

- Optimising the opportunities for rural communities from high-speed broadband
- Supporting improved quality employment and career opportunities in rural areas
- Assisting the regeneration, repopulation and development of rural towns and villages
- Enhancing the participation, leadership and resilience of rural communities
- Enhancing public services in rural areas
- Supporting a Just Transition to a climate neutral economy
- Supporting the sustainability of Agriculture, the Marine and Forestry
- Supporting the sustainability of our island and coastal communities
- Nurturing our culture and heritage

This Development Plan supports the objectives of “Our Rural Future”, both in this section in relation to rural economy and throughout the policies of the County Development Plan. Rural areas have a vital contribution to make to the achievement of balanced, sustainable economic development. This involves utilising and developing the economic resources of rural areas, particularly in agriculture and food, tourism, forestry, renewable energy, enterprise and local services, while ensuring that development does not affect the unique rural charter of the county. While the rural economy and society is changing rapidly, in many instances it remains dependent on traditional sectors of agriculture, fishing, construction and tourism. Rural areas need diversification to retain their population and supplement income.

The development of a strong enterprise culture is central to the economic and social vibrancy of rural communities, in particular the development of micro enterprises and small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) is of particular relevance to the sustainability of smaller towns, villages and rural areas. Rural areas have significant potential in these sectors, and as digital links and opportunities for remote working and new enterprises continue to grow, employment is likely to increase in areas such as agri-tech, ICT, multi-media and creative sectors, tourism, and an added value bio-economy and circular economy. Improved digital connectivity, through the roll-out of the National Broadband Plan, offers unprecedented opportunities for businesses in rural areas to offer new services and to reach new markets over the coming years.

The primary/natural resource base offers many opportunities for diverse enterprise development, renewable energy production as well as tourism, leisure and recreational development. As Kerry is largely a rural County, there are opportunities to broaden the rural economy of the County by promoting small-scale retail services in the countryside that will not have a significant impact on retailing in the larger centres. Local village shops, small scale tourist related retail and farm shops ancillary to farm complexes will be considered in a rural location, where they do not have an impact on adjacent villages. Specific products and services, such as organic



or fresh and processed products, including artisan foods, are developing as important enterprises in the county. The council will support farm diversification initiatives where the main agriculture use is maintained, where there is no significant loss of productive agricultural land, and where the residential and visual amenity of the area is protected.

In the face of declining farm incomes farming enterprises are expanding the range of economic activities they engage in as a means of supplementing farm incomes. Farm shops are one such enterprise and are becoming an increasingly common feature of rural Ireland. Farm shops can meet the demand for fresh produce and providing new sources of employment and services and may also serve a tourist related function, so contributing to the diversity and strength of the rural economy. The Council recognises the value of this form of retailing and will consider such retailing, where they do not have an adverse impact on the visual, environmental and traffic amenities of the area or affect the vitality of existing retail centres, or adjacent villages.

The Council supports innovation and technology as vital to the diversification and strengthening of the rural economy.

### Rural Economy

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 9-37** Support and facilitate the thematic objectives outlined in “Our Rural Futures”, rural development policy 2021-2025, to strengthen economic activity and employment in rural areas.
- KCDP 9-38** Promote employment growth in rural towns to support the population of the towns and their wider rural catchments.
- KCDP 9-39** Facilitate and support sustainable employment initiatives and the development of value-added opportunities linked to food, horticulture and agriculture and also support the development of village shops in villages and small village settlements where the scale of the development is compatible with the rural character of the area.
- KCDP 9-40** Support investment in the sustainable development of fully accessible infrastructure that strengthens rural connectivity including rural public transport services.
- KCDP 9-41** Support rural development and facilitate Farm diversification and new employment / enterprise opportunities within the agriculture sector, subsidiary to agricultural uses, and where there is no significant loss of productive agricultural land and the residential and visual amenity of the area is protected, including initiatives addressing climate change and sustainability.
- KCDP 9-42** Support farm shops in rural areas where it is ancillary to an existing farm complex.

#### 9.7.3.1 Capital and Social Investment in the Rural Economy

Kerry is home to a number of social enterprises who work to support communities to find innovative solutions to social and environmental challenges to make a difference in their local communities.

There is a suite of investment opportunities available to assist in the development of the community and economic infrastructure of the county. Kerry County Council has been hugely successful in availing of these funding streams and delivering projects across a number of areas, through its own Council projects and in collaboration with partners throughout the county.

Some of the available funding schemes include:



- Rural Regeneration & Development Fund
- Enterprise Ireland Regional Development Fund
- Community Support Fund
- Town & Village Renewal Grants
- Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme
- Clár Scheme
- LEADER
- Social Inclusion and Community Activation Fund

These and other grants offer significant opportunities for investment in our communities and in developing projects that will have long-term social and economic benefits for the county. The objectives of the Kerry County Development Plan provide the overall framework to guide the types of projects that can be delivered under these schemes and can contribute in the most effective way to the long-term sustainable development of the County.

### Capital and Social Investment in the rural Economy

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 9-43** Facilitate and support community innovation hubs, digital hubs, food hubs, start-ups and centres of excellence (with particular opportunities for innovation in agri-food, agri-tech, marine research, creative industries, knowledge economy etc.) as local drivers for growth.
- KCDP 9-44** Support community groups to avail of funding schemes for the development of the community and economic infrastructure.
- KCDP 9-45** Facilitate and support the development of the Social Enterprise sector in Kerry and develop appropriate fit for purpose land and buildings as spaces to enable development and growth of new services and products.

#### 9.7.4 Remote/Blended Working and Enterprise Hubs

The COVID-19 pandemic has rapidly accelerated the adoption of remote or blended working as a model of work. *'Making Remote Work'* is the new national Remote Work Strategy. The objective of this is to ensure remote work is a permanent feature in the Irish workplace and sets out actions to support this objective. The National Rural Policy 2021-2025 *'Our Rural Future'* identifies the investment in remote working infrastructure and supports as a key deliverable to enable more people to live and work in rural communities, with good career prospects, regardless of where their employer is headquartered.

Remote or blended working presents opportunities for Kerry, as employees or employers are no longer tied to a particular location. It has benefits for attracting and retaining talent that might otherwise locate to larger cities, improving work/life balance, supporting and revitalising local communities, potentially reducing the amount of time spent commuting and as a result, reducing transport related carbon emissions. It opens up possibilities for companies to locate outside of the major cities.

The **Kerry Hub Network** is comprised of a number of well-established and quality enterprise hubs. These include a mix of public and privately funded enterprise hubs, with a geographical spread throughout the County.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tom Crean Business Centre (Tralee)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dingle Creativity and Innovation Hub (Dingle)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Killarney Innovation Hub (Killarney)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RDI Hub (Killorglin)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sneem Digital Hub (Sneem)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Castleisland Carnegie Coworking (Castleisland)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gteic Baile an Sceilg</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HQ Tralee and Listowel</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office Light (Cahersiveen)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kenmare Enterprise Hub (Kenmare)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Box Cowork (Killarney)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valentia Cable Station (Valentia)</li> </ul>

**Table 9.4 Enterprise Hubs in Kerry**

Kerry is part of the **Atlantic Economic Corridor**, a linear network along the western seaboard supported by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Western Development Commission. The **Connected Hubs Network** is operated by The National Hub Network, a Government of Ireland initiative that provides a vehicle for individual hubs to come together under a shared identity to maximise the economic opportunity of remote working. The Kerry Hub Network forms part of the Connected Hubs Network. The Connected Hubs network of Enterprise Hubs has a key role to play in supporting clients, their employees and companies looking for solutions to retain their staff and productivity. Enterprise hubs provide not only office space but can also act as the conduit for entrepreneurship and innovation. They are an important element in the economic landscape of our towns and villages and have the potential to offer larger employers 'dispersed' office solutions.

The Council considers it vital to maximise the opportunities afforded for remote-based working by developing infrastructure, technology and broadband access in hubs/co-working spaces in towns and villages as these developments can contribute significantly to the local economy and reduce the need to commute. It is the policy of the council to support remote working in co-working hubs. See Chapter 14 Connectivity for further information.

#### Remote/Blended Working and Enterprise hubs

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 9-46** Facilitate and support co-working hubs/co-working spaces within the settlement network, preferably on Town/Village Centre Sites and encourage the reuse of existing vacant buildings within town/village centres for such purposes.

**KCDP 9-47** Recognise and promote the need for remote working throughout the County, either from a designated hub/co-working space or an existing dwelling, which offers employees flexible work arrangements and contributes to a lower carbon output through the associated reduction in commuting.

#### 9.7.5 Home-Based Economic Activity

Home-Based Economic activities are generally small-scale commercial activities undertaken by the owner/occupier of a dwelling which represents a subsidiary use to residential accommodation. Such an activity represents an important source of employment and the Council recognises the significant role played by this sector.

However, it is essential that that such uses, or activities remain subsidiary to the main use of the dwelling as a residence, does not involve the employment of staff or visiting members of the public or consist of services and facilities that are normally located in town and villages centres. This is necessary to protect the residential amenity of adjacent property owners, to prevent the loss of services from and to maintain the vitality and vibrancy of towns and villages, to reduce car dependency and achieve climate mitigation targets.





### Home-Based Economic Activity

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 9-48** Support home-based economic activities where the activity is subsidiary to the main residential use, does not involve the employment of staff or visiting members of the public, is not normally located in a town or village and does not have an impact on the residential amenity of adjacent property owners.

### 9.7.6 Agriculture, Agri-Food and Agri-Tech

Agriculture has traditionally been the most important contributor to rural economies, and it remains important as a significant source of income, providing both direct and indirect employment and as an integral component of the economy of Kerry. However, agricultural practices are changing and modernising and this can bring challenges including the need to restructure, source new markets and put in place measures to mitigate against climate change. An economically efficient agricultural and food sector, together with forestry, natural resources, new advancements in technology and diversification into alternative on-farm and off-farm activities, are essential components for the development of the rural economy.

In formulating this plan Kerry County Council has had particular regard to the Dept of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Strategy Document 2021-2024 and associated Action Plan. Sustainable agriculture means protecting incomes, food safety, animal welfare standards and soils. It also includes progression on action on climate and farmland biodiversity. Farm and farmlands vary as will sustainable agricultural practices and development. The transition to a low carbon energy future will require a wide range of responses across the agri-food sectors and in the wider agricultural rural communities.

A challenge for the agriculture sector is to meet the National Policy Position on Climate Action, which sets a national objective to achieve carbon neutrality, without compromising the capacity for sustainable food production. This plan will be supportive of developments and initiatives aimed at increasing agricultural and resource efficiency, biodiversity, water quality, climate adaptation and resilience outcomes.

**Agri-food, fisheries and forestry** represent Ireland's largest indigenous industry. Agriculture output in Kerry is valued at €358m (5.3% of the State) with additional output from farming amounting to €262m. Forestry and Aquaculture output is valued at €12m and €4.7m respectively.

The agriculture sector employs approximately 5,000 directly, at 9% of Kerry working population, it is 3% higher than South West and double the State average. According to the IFA agriculture supports an additional 2,800 jobs indirectly in food and drink processing alone, with further employment in the wider agri-industry, including input suppliers, agriculture contractors, jobs in transport and engineering, accountancy, legal, veterinary and other agri-advisory services.

Agriculture will continue to be an important component of the economy. The agricultural sector will continue to innovate and adapt to the challenges posed by modernisation, restructuring, market development and the increasing importance of environmental issues. An economically efficient agricultural and food sector, together with forestry, sensitive exploitation of natural resources and diversification into alternative on-farm and off-farm activities, are essential components for the development of the rural economy.

One of the aims of this plan is to heighten the sustainability of the traditional sectors of tourism and agriculture and ensure that they continue to play a significant role in driving Kerry's economy. This plan includes actions centred on diversifying both the tourism and agriculture sectors through further expansion of Kerry's local food economy.

### Food Vision 2030 – A world Leader in Sustainable Food Systems

The Food Vision 2030 Strategy is a new ten-year Strategy for the Irish agri-food sector (taken to include primary agriculture, food and drink processing and manufacturing, fisheries, aquaculture and fish processing, forestry and forestry processing and the equine sector). Its Vision is that Ireland will become a world leader in



Sustainable Food Systems (SFS) over the next decade. This will deliver significant benefits for the Irish agri-food sector itself, for Irish society and the environment. In demonstrating the Irish agri-food sector meets the highest standards of sustainability – economic, environmental, and social – this will also provide the basis for the future competitive advantage of the sector. By adopting an integrated food systems approach, Ireland will seek to become a global leader of innovation for sustainable food and agriculture systems, producing safe, nutritious, and high-value food that tastes great, while protecting and enhancing our natural and cultural resources and contributing to vibrant rural and coastal communities and the national economy.

At the heart of the Strategy are four high level Missions underpinned by a series of key goals and actions, which seek to strike this balance:

1. A climate smart, environmentally sustainable agri-food sector.
2. Viable and resilient primary producers with enhanced wellbeing.
3. Food, which is safe, nutritious and appealing: Trusted and valued at home and abroad.
4. An innovative, competitive and resilient agri-food sector, driven by technology and talent.

The Kerry agri-food industry operates globally and is experiencing both significant challenges and opportunities from economic changes in the world economy, however, it continues to be a strong economic driver of local economic recovery. Much of the economic benefits in the agri-food sector are dispersed throughout the country making it particularly vital to rural areas and economic development generally. Continued development of the agri-food sector will be supported through the implementation of strategic objectives of Food Vision 2030. This plan seeks to underpin and support the future sustainable development and expansion of this industry. It is the policy of Kerry County Council to support the sustainable development of the agri-food and associated sectors.

#### **AgriTech Centre of Excellence – ACE**

**The Agritech Centre of Excellence** is an initiative of MTU Kerry in collaboration with Dairymaster, McHale Engineering, Abbey Machinery supported by Enterprise Ireland and Kerry County Council. ACE is a new and exciting approach to Agritech sectoral learning, development and research. ACE uses immersive learning technologies such as e-learning and virtual reality platforms to deliver excellence in learning and development for the Agritech sector. Industry-led, ACE works to enhance the capabilities of Ireland's Agritech companies, enabling them to expand their reach and global ambition. The vision is to position Ireland at the forefront of the international Agritech industry.

The Council promotes the use of Agri-tech which is the use of technology for farming that is developed to improve efficiency and profitability. It aims to improve farming through information monitoring and data analysis.

##### **9.7.6.1 Food Hubs**

The development and expansion of the Food-Hub Network in the County is an important element in the growth of the indigenous food industry in Kerry, supporting local producers and locally sourced ingredients producers. The **Kerry Food Hub** provides production facilities for start-up food entrepreneurs and growth directed food businesses. Blending naturally into the local environment, phase one (Concept to Launch) of this purpose-built facility on a greenfield site near Firies village began operations in 2016 with four units of 1000 ft<sup>2</sup> each finished to food-grade industry standards. Kerry Food Hub is a community run facility that aims to support job creation, encourage up-skilling, promote food tourism and will provide an online platform to connect buyers with artisan food producers. The Kerry Food Hub is currently expanding its facilities. The **Listowel Food Hub** will deliver a 12,000 ft<sup>2</sup> food hub facility at Clieveragh Business Park, Listowel, comprising of five food production units and a fully fitted Research and Development suit. The Listowel Food Hub will provide space for mobile projects and enterprises to graduate from the food hub to their own facilities.



### Agriculture, Agri-Food and Agri-Tech

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 9-49** Support and facilitate the implementation of the strategic objectives of Food Vision 2030 – A World Leader in Sustainable Food Systems to sustainably develop the agricultural and food sectors that contribute enormously to the economic development of rural areas
- KCDP 9-50** Facilitate and support the development of sustainable agricultural practices and facilities within the county, subject to normal planning and environmental criteria and the development management standards contained in Volume 6 of this plan.
- KCDP 9-51** Protect good quality agricultural lands from large scale development which could be accommodated elsewhere and that would undermine the future agricultural productivity of the lands or irreversibly harm the commercial viability of existing or adjoining agricultural land.
- KCDP 9-52** Facilitate the sustainable modernisation of agriculture and to encourage best practice in the design and construction of new agricultural buildings and installations to protect the environment, natural and built heritage and residential amenity.
- KCDP 9-53** Ensure agricultural waste is managed and disposed in a safe, efficient and sustainable manner having regard to the environment and in full compliance with the European Communities Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Waters Regulations (2010-2020) and any subsequent updates and relevant best practice guidelines.
- KCDP 9-54** Ensure that intensive agriculture units will only be considered where it is clearly demonstrated by the applicant to the Council that the proposed development will not give rise to negative impacts on animal welfare, the environment, natural or built heritage or residential amenity. The scale and intensity of operations, including the cumulative impact of similar type developments in close proximity, shall be clearly detailed in the application and shall inform the assessment. All applications for such development shall be required to demonstrate that the proposal complies with the development management standards in Volume 6 of this plan.
- KCDP 9-55** To support and facilitate the development of food-hubs as a contributor to the growth of the indigenous food industry in Kerry, supporting local producers and locally sourced ingredients producers.
- KCDP 9-56** Recognise and promote the value of agricultural land to ensure sustainable food supply and the landscape value of the rural area.
- KCDP 9-57** Engage and collaborate with key stakeholders, relevant agencies, sectoral representatives and local communities to develop the agri-food sector in Kerry, to promote and showcase the agri-food sector, and to ensure that the economic potential of the sector is secured for the benefit of the local and national economy.
- KCDP 9-58** Support the maintenance of a vibrant and healthy agricultural sector based on the principles of sustainable development whilst at the same time allowing for engaging in alternative employment in or close to rural areas to sustain rural communities.
- KCDP 9-59** Ensure the economic benefits associated with promoting the County’s agri-food sector are balanced with due consideration for the conservation and protection of the rural environment.
- KCDP 9-60** Support and facilitate research and development in the Agritech sector.



### 9.7.6.2 Natural Resources

County Kerry has a number of naturally occurring resources that contribute to the social and economic fabric of the County. These include water resources, soil, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, renewable energy and extractives. These resources are generally located in rural areas providing employment and contribute to the economy of these rural communities. The continued sustainable development of these resources at appropriate locations will serve to diversify and strengthen the economy of the County. Kerry's offshore resources are also considerable.

The nature and scale of the development and operations required to develop these resources can have a significant environmental impact that can damage other economic sectors such as tourism and recreation. Protecting the environment from undesired impacts is key to the development of sustainable communities and the preservation of our countryside and environment. Therefore, proper planning and sustainable development of natural resources require a balanced approach with appropriate policies for the growth and development of these resources while ensuring adverse effect on the environment and/or European sites.

#### Natural Resources

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>KCDP 9-61</b> | Maximise the economic potential and development of natural resources in a sustainable manner.  |
| <b>KCDP 9-62</b> | Maximise the employment potential of the natural resources within the County in a sustainable way through the promotion of associated industries at appropriate locations. |
| <b>KCDP 9-63</b> | Ensure that the development and exploitation of natural resources does not result in any significant adverse effects on the local community.                               |

#### 9.7.6.2.1 Extractives Industry

The extractive industry provides essential raw materials for the construction industry as well as providing employment and economic growth in the local and regional economy. The continual supply of aggregates, including recycled construction and demolition material is necessary for continual economic growth, which is an integral requirement for the implementation of the National Development Plan, Transport 21, and private sector development. Reserves of suitable material are finite, and extraction can only take place where these reserves are found.

Quarry extraction works and ancillary activities have the potential to impact on the environment (e.g., noise, dust, vibration, visual intrusion, hydrological disruption, water pollution, loss or fragmentation of habitat, traffic generation, adverse impact on road network and archaeological impacts). In certain instances, quarries can also be beneficial to the environment, particularly at the decommissioning phase when opportunities for habitat creation and alternative uses can arise.

Extractive industries are resource and location based and the resource is often located in visually and environmentally sensitive areas and in close proximity to residential areas. It is however a necessary and vital resource for the future development of the County. Consideration of this form of development is a difficult issue where environmental, heritage and visual considerations have to be weighed against economic, employment and development considerations.

Aggregate materials also form a key component of road making and road maintenance products. In particular having regard to the circular economy the reprocessing and reuse of these materials is increasingly important. This necessitates the use of reprocessing and bitumen plants. The council will look favourably on the siting and design of these facilities within existing quarry sites subject to detailed environmental assessment. The council will have regard to the Quarries and Ancillary Activities-Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2004).



### Extractives Industry

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 9-64** Facilitate the sustainable development of the extractive industry and seek to ensure the ongoing availability of an adequate supply of aggregates for the construction industry.
- KCDP 9-65** Facilitate and support the development of bitumen plants and reprocessing aggregate facilities within existing quarries subject to environmental assessment.
- KCDP 9-66** Ensure all extractive development proposals comply with the objectives of this plan including development management standards, flood risk management requirements and the protection of landscape, biodiversity, infrastructure, water and air quality, built and cultural heritage.

#### 9.7.6.2 Foreshore Extraction

The extraction of material from the foreshore, beaches, sand dunes and watercourses can have serious adverse impacts on the environment. It can alter the ecosystem in an area and in certain instances initiate or contribute to erosion. The Council will seek to prohibit such extraction from occurring.

#### Foreshore Extraction

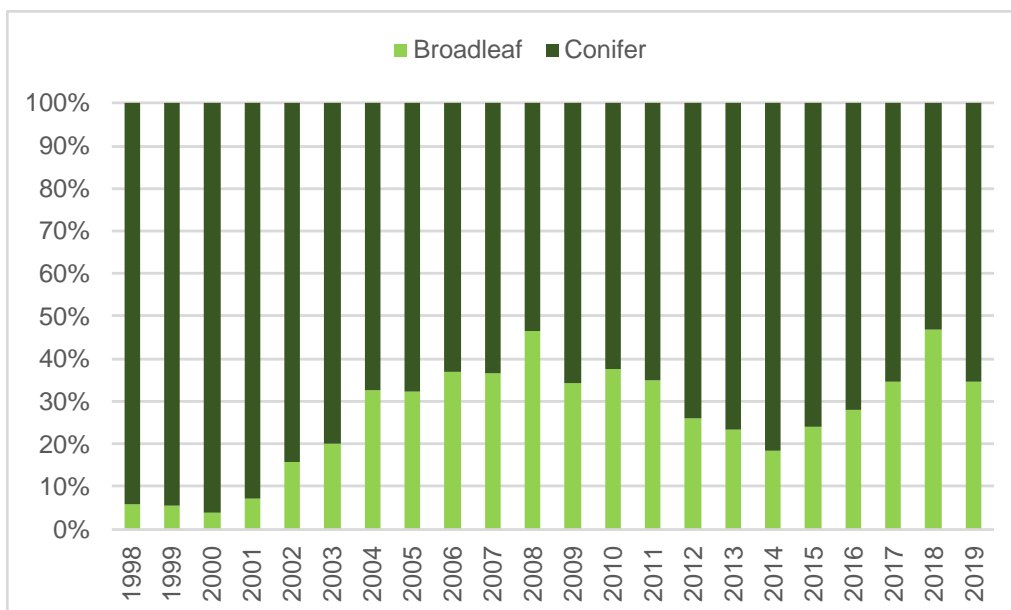
##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 9-67** Prevent, where appropriate, the extraction of inorganic material from the foreshore and watercourses. Proposals necessary for the purposes of flood risk management or navigation route protection will be considered on their merits and will be subject to detailed environmental assessment. As part of this the potential for impact on fisheries and Natura 2000 sites will be taken into consideration.

#### 9.7.6.2.3 Forestry

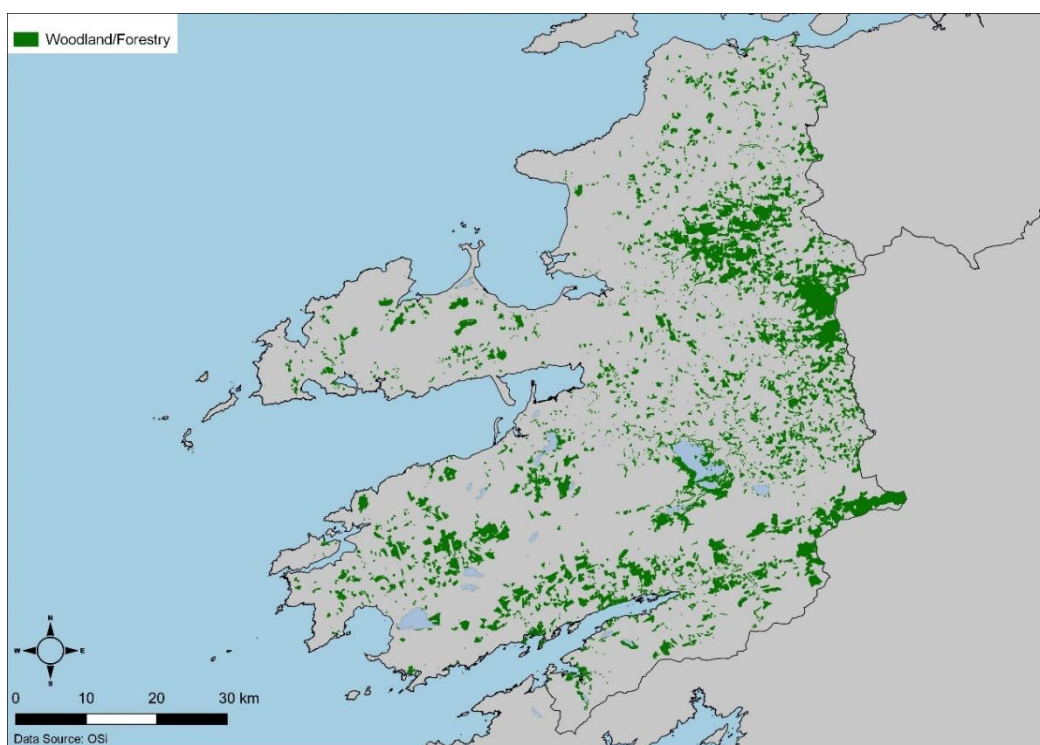
The forest industry, comprising the growing, harvesting and processing of forest products makes a significant and increasing contribution to the Irish economy. Forestry is an important renewable resource with a major role to play in sustainable rural development. In addition to the direct benefits of planting, in terms of valuable crops and employment, forestry has an important impact on rural economies through the development of related industries, locally produced sustainable energy and rural tourism opportunities. The expansion of forestry is also a national objective specifically supported by the Climate Action Plan 2019.

Ireland's forests play an important role in helping with climate change mitigation, through carbon sequestration in forests and the provision of renewable raw materials. Irish forestry is a major carbon sink and afforestation is the most significant mitigation option that is available to Ireland's land use sector. As part of the Government's Climate Action Plan, there is an annual afforestation target of 8,000ha. The creation of new woodlands and the wider forestry sector have a critical role in contributing to carbon sequestration, decarbonisation and contributing to a post-carbon and climate resilient economy.



**Fig. 9.3: Type of Planting (DoAFM)**

The Department has introduced a Woodland Environmental Fund that provides an access point for business to further incentivise landowners to plant Native Woodland. Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine afforestation statistics show that there has been an increase in broadleaf planting, with 21% of all planting in the county since 1998 being broadleaf.



**Map 9.2: Forests/Woodland in the County**

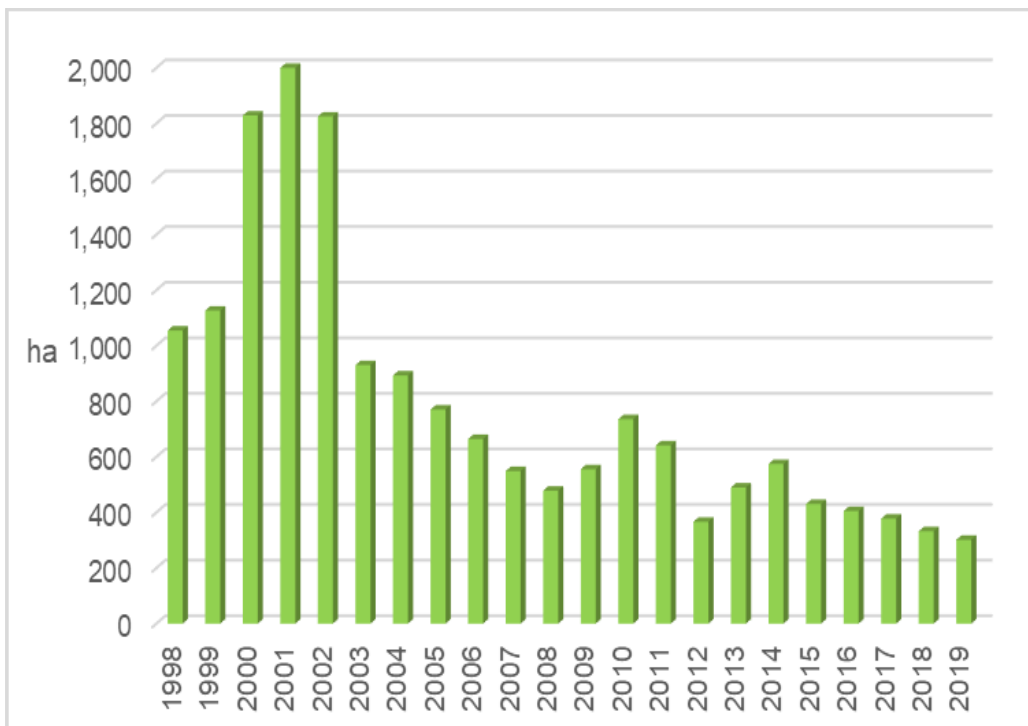
The strategic plan for the development of the forestry sector *Growing for the Future* published by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine aims to increase the national forest estate to 17% of land cover by 2030. This target size for the sector will provide the critical mass necessary to support the range of



associated processing industries and related sectors, which provide much of the wealth and employment generated by forestry.

The total amount of land under forestry in the county according to CORINE (2018), all types, is 49,436.6 hectares. Of this figure, 18,427.7 hectares, are located at an elevation of over 200m above sea level. This equates to 37.3% of all forestry being over 200m. This elevation, combined with the area and height of the trees, contributes to a greater impact on the landscape.

The forest estate in Kerry is relatively unique to the rest of the country in that it is predominantly in private ownership. Over the last 20 years, as illustrated in Figure 9.4, the amount of forestry planted has reduced on an annual basis.



**Fig. 9.4: Forestry Planting in County Kerry (DoAFM)**

Over the last number of years there has been a move to divert forestry resources into biomass production with the view to penetrating the national and local heat markets. The use of the County’s forestry resources in biomass is supported by the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine and the Teagasc Forestry Development Unit as well as other local partners.

Notwithstanding this the Council recognises that afforestation can have less favourable visual and environmental impacts unless it is appropriately located and of a scale and design that is sympathetic to the physical nature of the landscape and environment. The *Irish National Forest Standard* is published by the Forest Service and follows the principles of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM). As the national regulatory body for forestry, the Forest Service implements SFM through environmental guidelines that acknowledge environmental considerations at all stages in the forestry sector. In addition, there are a suite of guidelines from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine that cover water quality and other environmental issues including *Forestry and Water Quality Guidelines*, *Forestry and Freshwater Pearl Mussel Requirements*, *Forest Biodiversity Guidelines*, *Forest Harvesting and Environmental Guidelines*; *Forestry and Archaeology*; *Forestry and Landscape*, *Forest Protection Guidelines*, *Forestry and Otter Guidelines*, *Forestry and Kerry Slug Guidelines* and *Bats and Forestry Guidelines*.



The Council will, therefore, in conjunction with the relevant authorities, encourage the sustainable development and expansion of forestry, in a manner that is compatible with the environmental guidelines listed above.

<b>Forestry</b>	
<b>It is an objective of the Council to:</b>	
<b>KCDP 9-68</b>	Support sustainable forestry developments at appropriate locations in the County and the continued sustainable expansion and diversification of the forestry sector.
<b>KCDP 9-69</b>	Support the appropriate use of forests for timber, energy, biodiversity, recreation and tourism and development of associated businesses and enterprise at local level.
<b>KCDP 9-70</b>	Ensure that the County's valuable remaining non-plantation native woodlands are protected and enhanced through the use of appropriate planning and development measures.
<b>KCDP 9-71</b>	Support sustainable forestry development, including the planting of native trees, throughout the County where it is deemed appropriate and to ensure that the development is compatible with the protection of the environment and nature conservation areas including sensitive areas, water supplies and fisheries.

#### **9.7.6.2.3.1 Forestry Location**

The Council will co-operate with the National Parks and Wildlife Services, Coillte, The Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine/Forestry Service and any other relevant authority in the preparation of the strategy for the County and in identifying environmentally sustainable locations. The Council in its consultative role shall support the sustainable implementation and further development of best forest practice, as defined by the Forest Service's publication '*Forest Service Guidelines and the Code of Best Forest Practice*' for all forest developments and operations.

Under the planning code initial afforestation does not require planning permission. In addition, development (other than the replacement of broadleaf high forest by conifer species) that is licensed or approved under section 6 of the Forestry Act 2014 (No. 31 of 2014) and that consists of the thinning, felling or replanting of trees, forests or woodlands, or ancillary works, is also exempted development.

The planting of large-scale forestry can impact on the residential amenity of adjacent landowners and adversely affect the maintenance of public roads. There are also concerns regarding the impact of forestry, coniferous forestry in particular, on the landscape of the county. Careful consideration to these impacts therefore needs to be given when planting.

The Forest Service prepared a national *Indicative Forestry Strategy*<sup>3</sup> which identifies areas in the state suitable for forestry, having regard to the sensitive areas of high amenity, listed views, archaeological sites and Natural Heritage Areas. The strategy also has regard to the impact on water quality, bogs, wildlife, rural dwellings and the need for sustainable development generally.

#### **9.7.6.2.4 Fishing / Aquaculture**

<sup>3</sup> Forest Service Indicative Forestry Strategy 2008, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.





Fishing, fish distribution, processing, aquaculture<sup>4</sup> and related activities generate significant levels of employment and remain an important resource for the County which has potential for further sustainable development.

It is essential that a balance is achieved between generating a sustainable and economically viable industry on the one hand and complying with EU policies and quota on the other hand. The Council will support the sustainable development of the operations of the fishing and aquaculture industry while protecting and preserving the biodiversity and ecosystems in our oceans and watercourses, so they can continue to provide essential monetary and non-monetary goods and services.

While in recent years there has been a decline in the marine fishing industry due in part to the EU quota restrictions, there has been an expansion in the aquaculture and secondary sectors of the industry as a whole and overall fishing remains an important and vital sector in the economy of the County.

Aquaculture and food processing both have the potential to continue to expand in the County, while opportunities for the development of a service industry exist particularly in South Kerry with approximately 300-400 Irish and foreign fishing vessels operating off the coastline. The Council recognises the importance of the industry as a whole to the economy of the County and will continue to play a supportive role to ensure fishing and aquaculture is managed and assisted where necessary.

In addition to commercial fishing and aquaculture the aquatic environment (marine, estuarine and freshwater) supports smaller scale fishing and angling activities. The protection and support of water quality and habitats as natural resources necessary to safeguard these activities is therefore of importance.

It is the policy of the Council to support and promote the sustainable development of the marine/aquaculture sector in order to maximise its contribution to employment and growth in coastal communities and the economic wellbeing of the County.

#### Fishing/Aquaculture

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>KCDP 9-72</b> | Support and promote the sustainable development of the marine and aquaculture sectors.   |
| <b>KCDP 9-73</b> | Facilitate and support aquaculture developments where the cumulative effects of existing and proposed aquaculture developments will not have a significant negative effect on the visual amenity of the area.              |
| <b>KCDP 9-74</b> | Support the sustainable use of existing port facilities for the catchments and processing of fish as an economic activity that contributes to the food industry in the County.   |
| <b>KCDP 9-75</b> | Support added-value marine and freshwater foods and service industries in a sustainable manner and at appropriate locations where they comply with the general policies and development management standards of this plan. |
| <b>KCDP 9-76</b> | Support the protection of water quality, key habitat, and other natural resource requirements necessary to safeguard coastal, estuarine and freshwater fisheries.  |

<sup>4</sup> Aquaculture includes the culture or farming of fish, aquatic invertebrates, aquatic plants or any aquatic form of food suitable for the nutrition of fish.



### 9.7.7 Manufacturing

The Local Authority will continue to support investment in the future development of manufacturing facilities at appropriately zoned locations throughout the county. Manufacturing encompasses a broad range of activities from research and development through design, production, logistics and distribution and production activities in food, pharmaceuticals, engineering and green technologies.

It is the policy of Kerry County Council to stimulate the opportunities in the manufacturing sector, thereby promoting the County as the location of choice for a range of manufacturing enterprises and create high-quality built environments offering a range of building sizes and formats, supported by necessary infrastructure.

#### Manufacturing

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 9-77** Promote the growth of the manufacturing sector in Kerry by responding to the varying needs and requirements of the different components within the sector and by supporting the development of high-quality built environments offering a range of building sizes and formats, supported by the targeted provision of necessary infrastructure.

### 9.7.8 Retail Sector

The future growth of the retail sector plays an important role in the economy of Kerry and it is the policy of the Council to support this growth throughout the County. See Chapter 4 Towns & Villages for further information on Retailing in Kerry.

### 9.7.9 Marine Sector

The National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF) promotes the sustainable development of a thriving marine economy and the development of vibrant, accessible and sustainable rural coastal and island communities while realising the potential of marine resources in a fair, balanced and transparent manner. The Framework focuses on the development of key marine assets including aquaculture and fisheries, energy, marine aggregates and mining, ports, harbours and shipping and tourism.

The marine economy provides employment to many people in coastal areas making a valuable economic contribution to local communities in the county and marine economic activities include ports, fisheries and tourism. Kerry County Council recognises the strategic importance of Fenit Sea Port and Dingle Fishery Harbour Centre as amenity, commercial and important transportation links to facilitate the growth of the marine economy.

The NMPF supports the development of offshore renewable energy (ORE) in Ireland as a driver to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and accelerate the move to cleaner energy in line with national and EU policy. The NMPF advises that opportunities for land-based, coastal infrastructure that is critical to and supports development of ORE should be prioritised in plans and policies, where possible.

The opportunities offered by the Marine Sector are discussed further in Chapter 14 Connectivity and Chapter 12 Energy.



## Marine Sector

### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 9-78** Support the existing diverse nature of the marine sector in Kerry, and identify and promote sustainable growth opportunities, while protecting European sites. This shall be achieved through engagement and partnership with the relevant agencies, sectoral representatives and local communities.
- KCDP 9-79** Ensure that proposals for economic development associated with the marine sector are cognisant of the sensitivities of Kerry's coastal locations and that relevant environmental issues are appropriately considered.
- KCDP 9-80** Support the sustainable growth and development of the marine sector and marine economy through the implementation of the National Marine Planning Framework and by facilitating marine related development at appropriate locations in the towns, villages, ports and harbours of the county subject to compliance with the relevant Directives, the relevant objectives in this Plan and normal planning and environmental criteria.
- KCDP 9-81** Support the export, fisheries, marine tourism and marine economy potential of ports and harbours in the county. All development proposals will be subject to environmental assessment, implementation of mitigation measures outlined in applicable SEAs and AAs and feasibility studies to establish that any expansions can be achieved without adverse effects on any European sites and within the carrying capacity of the receiving environment of the ports.
- KCDP 9-82** Facilitate the sustainable development of the fisheries and aquaculture and support its diversification at appropriate locations having regard to best environmental practice in order to maximise its contribution to employment and the economic well-being of rural coastal communities.
- KCDP 9-83** Support the National Marine Planning Framework, the Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDP)2014 and its successors in the progressive sustainable development of Ireland's offshore renewable energy potential and cooperate with state and semi-state agencies in relation to the implementation of these and supporting projects in the Shannon Estuary in a sustainable manner.
- KCDP 9-84** Support the sustainable development of land-based, coastal infrastructure that is critical to and supports development of Offshore Renewable Energy, including the sustainable development of port infrastructure to service such developments.
- KCDP 9-85** Ensure that adequate measures are taken to protect designated shellfish areas as an important economic and employment sector.
- KCDP 9-86** Ensure that the highest environmental standards and controls are maintained in dealing with proposals relating to the extraction of marine aggregates and mining sector and protects the amenities of local communities.
- KCDP 9-87** Sustainably improve road networks that link port facilities to the larger urban centres.



## 9.8 SEVESO Sites

The SEVESO III Directive (2012/18/EU) is the main EU legislation dealing with the control of on-shore major accident hazards involving dangerous substances. The Directive is implemented in Ireland through the Chemicals Act (Control of Major Accident Hazards involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations 2015. A Major Accident Hazard Site (SEVESO Site) is a site where the occupier has notified the Health and Safety Authority that they meet a specified threshold for quantities of hazardous substance as outlined in the above-mentioned Regulations.

### SEVESO Sites

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 9-88** Control the following, for the purposes of reducing the risk or limiting the consequences of a major accident (regard will be had to the provisions of the SEVESO III Directive and any regulations, under any enactment, giving effect to that Directive)
- The siting of Major Accident Hazard sites.
  - The modification of an existing Major Accident Hazard site; or
  - Specified development in the vicinity of a Major Accident Hazard site.

## CHAPTER 10

# TOURISM & OUTDOOR RECREATION







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## 10.0 Tourism & Outdoor Recreation

### 10.1 Introduction

The County Development Plan, in parallel with County Kerry's Economic Recovery Plan 2021, the emerging Local Economic and Community Plan and the Tourism Strategy strives to retain, promote, and drive Kerry's position as a premier international tourism destination, with a focus on developing green and sustainable tourism. The policies outlined in the Development Plan are supportive of aligning the growth of the tourism industry with the fundamental principles of protecting the environment, safeguarding the needs of host communities, job creation and working with the industry in developing practices that promote the circular economy and climate action.

Kerry has a range of natural, cultural and built heritage resources of outstanding value and the tourism sector is an extremely important driver of economic activity in the county. The tourism sector in Kerry is a job intensive sector, which encompasses a range of economic activities including, aviation, hotels, B&Bs, pubs and restaurants, festivals, sport, exhibitions, outdoor adventure and activities, cultural entertainment, visitor attractions and business conferences. Kerry boasts some of Ireland's most iconic scenery including the Lakes of Killarney, the MacGillycuddy Reeks, the Dingle and Iveragh peninsulas and Valentia Island, Skellig Michael, the Sleah Head Drive, the pristine beaches of North Kerry and has the longest section of the Wild Atlantic Way.

It is the aim of this plan to protect and enhance Kerry's natural environment, built, cultural and linguistic heritage, upgrade existing facilities and provide a world class experience for tourists which will ensure the continued success of the Tourism Sector for the county.

#### 10.1.1 Sustainable Tourism and Climate Action

Sustainable tourism is defined as 'tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities'<sup>1</sup>. Sustainable tourism development involves a concern for the impact of the industry on the host community, climate change and on the physical environment. Sustainable tourism planning therefore requires a balance to be struck between the needs of the visitor, the place, heritage assets and the host community. Erosion and damage to pathways and vegetation associated with multiple uses, particularly in relation to mountain trails, is a concern and such uses may need to be managed to protect these areas for current and future generations.

This Plan provides a policy and objective framework for the development of a more diversified and sustainable tourism sector. In the implementation of this Plan however, it is recognised that tourism and heritage policies need to integrate with related policies – such as connectivity, environment, economic development, and settlement policies.

It is also recognised that the development of a diversified and sustainable tourist industry will require a coordinated approach by the local community, public and private bodies in Kerry to support the recovery of the tourism industry. It is the policy of KCC to work with Fáilte Ireland - South West Region to pursue a strategy for the development of a sustainable tourism industry which minimises adverse impacts on local communities, built heritage, landscapes, habitats, and species leaving them undiminished as a resource for the future, while supporting social and economic prosperity.

#### Sustainable Tourism and Climate Action

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 10-1** Adhere to the principles of sustainable tourism and have regard to its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts on local infrastructure, sensitive areas and sites, water quality, biodiversity, soils, ecosystems, habitats and species, climate change.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations World Tourism Organisation



- KCDP 10-2** Facilitate sustainable tourism development throughout the County and particularly in areas where tourism is currently underdeveloped and where there is a need for local tourism development initiatives including Greenways, Blueways, Peatways, Cycleways, Walkways and Marine Leisure.
- KCDP 10-3** Liaise with strategic partners such as Fáilte Ireland (South West Region), the National Parks and Wildlife Services, Inland Fisheries Ireland, Waterways Ireland, Coillte, other relevant national bodies and the local tourism sector on the identification of land use strategies for areas, focusing on their tourism, environmental and heritage value.
- KCDP 10-4** Facilitate and support the sustainable development of tourism along, or in close proximity to public transport routes.

## 10.2 Policy Context

One of the challenges in the preparation of this chapter has been the complex and everchanging situation in relation to the re-opening of Tourism related businesses due to the COVID-19 pandemic and national health advice. In the preparation of this chapter of the draft Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028, regard has been had for key policy documents and initiatives including:

- National Planning Framework – Project Ireland 2040
- National Climate Action Plan 2019
- National Economic Recovery Plan 2021
- Our Rural Future - Rural Development Policy (2021-2025)
- Tourism Recovery Plan 2020-2023
- People, Place and Policy - Growing Tourism to 2025 (Department of Media, Tourism, Arts, Culture, Sport and the Gaeltacht, 2019)
- Tourism Development and Innovation – A Strategy for Investment 2016 – 2022 (Failte Ireland, 2016)
- Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (2020)
- County Kerry Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2022
- Kerry Local Economic and Community Plan (2016-2021)
- The Economic Impact of COVID-19 on the Economy of County Kerry
- County Kerry’s COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan (2021)

### 10.2.1 National Policy

#### National Planning Framework

The National Planning Framework (NPF) highlights the importance of tourism. NPO22 outlines the importance of facilitating tourism development focussing on networks of greenways, blueways and peatways. The importance of protecting our natural landscapes from a rural tourism perspective has been highlighted within NPO 23. The NPF has also emphasised the importance of co-ordination and promotion of an all-island tourism initiatives through continued co-operation between the relevant tourism agencies and Tourism Ireland within NPO 49.

### 10.2.2 Regional Policy

#### Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (2020)

The RSES acknowledges the importance of tourism as a significant economic activity and seeks to increase tourist numbers, support sustainable jobs through targeted tourism initiatives, develop activity tourism and



leverage natural and built heritage assets. In terms of Kerry's tourism assets RSES states that it is an objective to support the utilisation and realisation of the existing and emerging tourism assets outlined in RPO53.

### 10.2.3 Local Policy

#### 10.2.3.1 Kerry Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021

The County Kerry Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 (LECP) will be reviewed in parallel with the review of the Kerry County Development Plan. This Draft Plan continues to support the Economic Development and Job Creation Higher Level Goals of the 2016-2021 LECP.

#### 10.2.3.2 County Kerry Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2022 (KCC, 2016)

The Kerry County Council Tourism Unit together with the Destination Kerry Forum and other stakeholders, prepared a Kerry Tourism Strategy & Action Plan 2016-2022 to support the development of tourism in Kerry. The Kerry Tourism Strategy sets out in detail the importance of this industry both in economic and social terms.

The Tourism Strategy works to the principles of the National Tourism Policy as outlined in 'People, Place & Policy – Growing Tourism to 2025' and forms an integral part of the County Kerry Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2022.

The Vision for Kerry Tourism is 'to maximise, in a sustainable manner, tourism's contribution to the quality of life, economy, employment and local community development, paying particular attention to nurturing and protecting the natural, built, cultural and linguistic heritage of the county'<sup>2</sup>

Strategic Priorities include to:

- Protect and enhance Kerry's natural environment, built, cultural and linguistic heritage.
- Ensure the continued success of the Tourism Sector for the county.
- Organise relevant regular research to facilitate the development of sustainable, successful new tourism projects throughout the county.
- Provide a world class experience for the visitor.
- Lead to further collaboration between state agencies, product providers and local communities.
- Embrace new up-to-date technologies for both the visitor and research purposes.

The strategy was developed at a time of optimism and significant economic growth in Kerry. However, recently the tourism sector has been significantly impacted by the COVID -19 pandemic. In response to the unprecedented impact of the pandemic, Kerry County Council launched the multifaceted Safe Destination Programme in 2020, supported by Fáilte Ireland, the Irish Hotels Federation and the Kerry Tourism Industry Federation. It ensured that those who visited Kerry, could do so in the knowledge that it is a safe place to visit and stay which proved successful in keeping the County safe and contributed to Kerry being Ireland's most popular home holiday destination in 2020 and 2021.

In recognition that tourism is integral to the economic recovery and is uniquely positioned to contribute strongly to job creation and reversing unemployment in communities, Kerry County Council established a Tourism Taskforce in 2020. The primary aim of the taskforce is to look at how best the tourism sector can adapt and recover from the pandemic. A primary role of the taskforce is to review the current Tourism Strategy for Kerry (2016-2022) and develop a new plan for the recovery of Tourism. This plan will be launched in 2021 and will identify actions for the short, medium and longer-term recovery.

<sup>2</sup> County Kerry Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2022



### 10.3 Tourism in County Kerry

Kerry has a very strong tourism offering with many opportunities to enhance the visitor experience. This plan will facilitate the further development of a tourism industry which will act as a key economic driver in a socially and environmentally sustainable manner by ensuring that tourism developments are built in appropriate locations, and at a pace and scale which ensures that the natural and cultural assets are protected in the long term.

The Kerry tourism sector had been performing very well and the total value of the tourism industry to Kerry in 2019 was approximately €550 million and employment statistics show that 18% of Kerry's work force was employed in tourism and related sectors<sup>3</sup>. COVID-19 has severely impacted Kerry's tourism sector. The county needs to plan and position itself so that it can rebuild and capitalise on future growth in the domestic tourist market and recover and grow its international markets once international travel resumes. In order to achieve its full potential, the county needs to reopen safely and protect and conserve the natural and cultural assets which have attracted visitors to Kerry for generations. It needs to attract visitors throughout the year and disperse them geographically around the county.

Over the 10-year period to 2019 there was a 56% increase in overseas visitors to Ireland, however, this has been completely reversed as a result of Covid-19. The Ernst & Young Report on the *Potential impact of Covid-19 on Irish Tourism in April 2020*, highlights that the tourism sector was the first to be impacted and likely to be the last to fully recover from the crisis.

Tourist behaviour will undoubtedly be impacted in the long-term by this pandemic, for geopolitical, economic and psychological reasons. Since COVID-19 there has been a growing shift in the nature of tourism demand away from tour led holidays to independent tourists seeking the infrastructure to allow them to move freely and conveniently between attractions in the County. This has particular implications for the integration of tourism, land use and transportation policies. Integrated land use and transport planning will enhance the tourist product and visitor experience and encourage longer term stays in the County. This integration requires transport infrastructure to develop stronger links with the hierarchy of visitor attractions, support the provision of eVehicle charging facilities, access to appropriate accommodation and a well signed and interpreted landscape. Transport and ease of access to the County is probably the most significant factor determining the growth of the tourism sector in Kerry.

#### 10.3.1 Wild Atlantic Way (WAW)

The Wild Atlantic Way is Ireland's first long-distance touring route, stretching along the Atlantic coast from Donegal to West Cork. The overall aim of the project is to develop a long-distance touring route that will achieve greater visibility for the west coast of Ireland in overseas tourist markets.

The Wild Atlantic Way was devised as a new 'experience' and 'destination' by Fáilte Ireland to present the West Coast of Ireland as a compelling international tourism product of scale and singularity. It is an overarching brand which individual destinations and businesses can trade collectively with much greater potential visibility and clarity of message in the international marketplace.

Over 450km of the 2,500km route (20%) is located in County Kerry. Along the route a number of Discovery Points have been identified, consisting of viewing points and lay-bys. These Discovery Points are generally located in remote coastal areas outside of the main towns and villages. As such, they are intended to provide visitors with a viewing opportunity as they travel along the route, and also as a device to entice visitors to the more remote and peripheral areas of the coast, thus potentially increasing overnight stays. Kerry County Council are committed in conjunction with Fáilte Ireland to sustainably improve facilities along the WAW route subject to appropriate environmental assessments.

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<sup>3</sup> The Economic Impact of COVID-19 on the Economy of County Kerry – May 2020 (KCC)



### Tourism in County Kerry

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 10-5** Engage and collaborate with strategic partners such as Fáilte Ireland, the National Parks and Wildlife Services, OPW, Inland Fisheries Ireland, Waterways Ireland, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Coillte and other relevant bodies and local communities to develop the tourism sector in Kerry and to ensure that the economic potential of the tourism sector is secured for the benefit of the local economy.
- KCDP 10-6** Promote and facilitate tourism as one of the key economic pillars of the County's economy and a major generator of employment and to support the provision of facilities such as hotels, aparthotels, tourist hostels, cafes, restaurants and visitor attractions.
- KCDP 10-7** Support the implementation of the County Kerry Tourism Strategy and Action Plan (2016-2022) including the upgrading and repurposing of existing attractions, the development of the tourism projects and the preparation and adoption of successor strategies.
- KCDP 10-8** Facilitate and support the implementation of the Fáilte Ireland Visitor /Destination Experience Development Plans, Heritage Town and Destination Town Plans.
- KCDP 10-9** Establish destination branding as a marketing strategy tool for Kerry to build market opportunities and attract new visitors.
- KCDP 10-10** Encourage tourism developments, visitor accommodation, interpretation centres, and commercial / retail facilities serving the tourism sector to be located within established settlements thereby fostering strong links to a whole range of other economic and commercial sectors and sustaining the host communities.
- KCDP 10-11** Work with Fáilte Ireland, for the further enhancement and promotion of the Wild Atlantic Way touring route, subject to environmental assessment.
- KCDP 10-12** Facilitate the sustainable development of the Wild Atlantic Way touring route by:
- Facilitating the sustainable development of viewing points and other facilities at appropriate locations along the Wild Atlantic Way,
  - Facilitating road improvement works, the provision of lay-bys/passing spaces and parking spaces at appropriate location
  - Addressing traffic and visitor management issues having regard to environmental sensitivities and designations in the area.

### 10.3.2 Major Attractions

Sustainable tourism facilities, when properly located and managed and particularly if they are easy to get to by a range of transport modes, will encourage longer visitor stays, help to extend the tourism season and add to the vitality of settlements throughout the year<sup>4</sup>

In order to increase visitor numbers and visitor spend throughout the County, Kerry must upgrade its existing attractions and new signature attractions capable of competing with attractions nationally and internationally.

It is the policy of the Council to support existing and new major attractions in County Kerry.

<sup>4</sup> Fáilte Ireland-Guidance on Sustainable Tourism (2016)



### Major Attractions

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 10-13** Support inter-agency initiatives to secure the establishment of visitor attractions focused around key tourist sites and attractions in conjunction with adjoining local authorities, Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland and other key stakeholders in appropriate locations and subject to the principles of sustainable development.

### 10.3.3 Festivals and Events

Kerry is synonymous with festivals and events covering a variety of themes including international gatherings, food fairs, literary and music which provide opportunities for artists, musicians, and food producers to showcase their talents and products. Kerry has a number of festivals including the Rose of Tralee, Listowel Writers Week and Puck Fair in Killorglin, all of which attract visitors not only from all over Ireland but many also from abroad and make an important contribution to the local economy.

It is the policy of the Council to support existing festivals and cultural events which take place in the county and to promote the development of a variety of new festivals and events, especially outside the peak summer months, to appeal to a range of different visitors and to increase and build the profile of the county as a key tourism destination.

### Festivals and Events

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 10-14** Support new and existing festivals and cultural events at suitable locations within Kerry subject to the appropriate licensing arrangements, in consultation with stakeholders such as community groups, local businesses and residents where feasible and practical, and to protect and safeguard the amenities and the natural and built heritage of the area.

**KCDP 10-15** Promote and support the use of suitable public open spaces in towns and villages for outdoor events of interest to both locals and tourists.

**KCDP 10-16** Support and facilitate the adoption of a green standard for environmental sustainability performance for all major festivals held in County Kerry.

### 10.3.4 Tourism Infrastructure

The provision of well-planned and attractive tourist infrastructure is important to the overall quality of the county's tourism product to create a positive and good experience for visitors. While the county is in the fortunate position to possess some of the best destinations and experiences in the country it is important that the support services and high-quality infrastructure are in place to meet the needs of these visitors when they come to the county. Tourism-related development proposals will be required to demonstrate a high standard of design, potential impact in terms of scale and intensity and the potential for the proposal to add significantly to the quality of the visitor experience.

In order to enhance the tourism offering in Kerry it is recognised that towns and villages in the county provide a range of tourism attractions, facilities and services and are themselves destinations to which tourists come and this plan is focused on directing tourism development to our towns and villages and it is important that tourist destinations are accessible, attractive and vibrant places to visit. While rural based tourism offers significant potential for the county, it is prudent that it is carefully managed to protect these areas which are, in themselves, are a tourism product. Accordingly, tourist development in rural areas will be carefully considered in accordance with the objectives and exceptions set out in this chapter.



The Council will consider proposals for tourist infrastructure on a case-by-case basis having regard to the type of tourist attraction, its setting and character and the ability to successfully integrate the proposal on, or adjoining, the site.

Kerry County Council will continue to liaise with bodies such as Failte Ireland, the tourism industry and other stakeholders to identify visitor services in areas that require enhanced facilities. The Council will support tourist bodies and local community groups in the provision of adequate recreational and tourism infrastructure.

### Tourism Infrastructure

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 10-17** Promote the sustainable integration of land use and transportation policies to ensure that the unique needs of the tourism sector including the provision of public bus services/transport links to visitor attractions are addressed.
- KCDP 10-18** Facilitate and support the provision of tourist related facilities, such as information offices and cultural centres, in town and village locations to support and strengthen the existing economic infrastructure of such centres.
- KCDP 10-19** Promote and support the sustainable development of all weather and family-friendly attractions and amenities in appropriate locations that will contribute to the dispersal of tourism throughout the County.
- KCDP 10-20** Facilitate the development of the necessary tourism infrastructure, visitor attractions and supporting facilities at appropriate locations in the County in a manner that does not have an adverse impact on the locality and environment.
- KCDP 10-21** Facilitate the sustainable provision of parking including coach parking facilities within and on the edge of towns and villages and at appropriate scenic viewing points and tourist facilities.

#### 10.3.4.1 Accessible Tourism

Ensuring that services are more accessible to people with mobility issues, people with learning disabilities, visual or hearing impairment, young children and older people creates a more inclusive society. In order to increase tourism numbers within these groups the appropriate infrastructure, such as ramps, footbridges, lifts, suitable toilet facilities must be in place to cater for their needs and increase access to the countryside and coastline at appropriate locations. Information on accessibility to tourist venues and activities should be readily available so that these groups can plan their trips. Information should be disseminated through all information sources used by holiday makers and in the range of formats required by groups with different types of disabilities.

It is the policy of the Council through its role as a planning authority and a building control authority, to ensure that there is a wide range of accessible tourism experiences available throughout the County. While the Council acknowledges that some existing sites by reason of their environmental sensitivity, historical design, siting or location may have accessibility limitations, the Council will make every effort to ensure tourism developments and ancillary developments are accessible to everyone.

### Accessible Tourism

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 10-22** Recognise the importance of universal accessibility to tourist services, facilities, and tourist sites and undertake enhancements to overall accessibility where appropriate in conjunction with key stakeholders.



### 10.3.4.2 Tourism and Wayfinding Signage

The provision of tourist related signage is important as it allows visitors to travel effortlessly between their destinations and to points of interest along the way. While the Council acknowledges the importance of signage for local businesses, there is also a need to avoid a proliferation of signage for reasons including traffic safety and visual amenity. The proliferation of new signage should be avoided within the rural landscape.

In this regard, there is a need for a co-ordinated and regulated approach to signage. The council will facilitate business and community groups in the provision of tourism and wayfinding signage at appropriate places.

#### Tourism and Wayfinding Signage

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 10-23** Facilitate Fáilte Ireland in the maintenance and upgrading of the branded signage relating to the Wild Atlantic Way touring route.

**KCDP 10-24** Require that existing and proposed tourism and wayfinding signage be improved and/or regularised where possible subject to normal planning and environmental criteria without detracting from the visual amenity of the tourism asset.

### 10.3.4.3 Tourism Developments and Tourist Facilities

In order to encourage longer stays in the County and to facilitate the achievement of a greater yield per visitor, it is important to maximise the integration of tourism products. This is essential to ensure that visitors can easily access services, attractions and amenities in the County from their accommodation base. It is also important to create greater cohesion and linkages between tourism-based activities and businesses in different parts of the County in order to encourage tourists to visit a wider array of attractions/activities throughout the County.

In this regard it is the policy of the council to support the provision of high-quality information for visitors, for example through local tourist offices, local and national websites, accommodation providers and at attractions themselves.

#### Tourism Developments and Tourist Facilities

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 10-25** Support and encourage the creation of linkages between tourism activities and businesses in key areas and work with all relevant stakeholders to achieve an integrated and co-ordinated tourism product.

### 10.3.5 Visitor Accommodation

Kerry is fortunate to have a varied accommodation offering for its many visitors. The Fáilte Ireland Accommodation Capacity Report 2019 states that Kerry has the greatest number of Guesthouses (27) in the Country and the greatest concentration of hotel rooms outside of Dublin. The county has a total of 23,878 bedstock available for guest accommodation in 2019<sup>5</sup>. This accommodation is provided within 79 hotels, 27 Guesthouses, 155 Bed and Breakfasts, 58 Self Catering Units, 14 hostels, 15 Caravan and Camping Parks and 33 businesses accredited with Fáilte Ireland's Irish Welcome Standard.

The Council recognises that the provision of varied accommodation types is essential to enable growth in the tourism sector. Traditionally, tourism growth has followed accommodation growth. The distribution of hotel accommodation in Kerry is concentrated in the towns of Killarney, Tralee, Dingle and Kenmare. The Council supports the development of tourism throughout the county by encouraging the provision of a wide range of tourist accommodation types and will therefore direct new tourist accommodation including hotels,

<sup>5</sup> Summary of National Accommodation Capacity 2019 – Fáilte Ireland Research





guesthouses, hostels, B&Bs and holiday homes to towns and villages. The provision of tourist accommodation in a given location should be on a scale that a settlement can sustain on a year-round basis and should not interfere with the economic or social viability of that settlement.

The provision of new tourist facilities should respect the outstanding quality and variety of the natural and built environment of Kerry and it is the policy of the council to restrict development that would be likely to impact negatively on the local environment.

#### **10.3.5.1 Camping/Glamping, Campervans and Caravans**

Kerry County Council recognises that the provision of suitable sites for camping/glamping, campervans and caravans is an important element in the range of tourist accommodation offers.

Data from the National Vehicle and Driver File, a database of all 2.5 million vehicles in the country, shows the number of campervans in the country rose from about 11,200 in 2018 to almost 12,600 in April 2020 and had reached 13,700 by October of that year.

While the Council considers that camping sites should be located on appropriately zoned land within established/or adjacent to existing settlements, small scale camping sites may be appropriate to complement tourism assets in rural and coastal locations within or adjacent to existing settlements. The planning authority may facilitate proposals for camping sites which support rural tourism initiatives subject to proper planning and sustainable development.

It is the policy of the council to support developments locating in existing settlements where such proposals demonstrate the provision of safe pedestrian links to the settlement or at established centres which provide existing services to tourists, subject to the capacity of the site and the location to facilitate the proposal.

#### **10.3.5.2 Farmhouse/Farmstay Accommodation**

Diversification into suitable alternative on-farm and off-farm activities can offer opportunities while at the same time maintaining and protecting the natural landscape and built heritage which are vital to rural tourism.

Farmhouse/Farmstay Accommodation / self-catering developments on a farm holding shall be provided by farmhouse extension or by the utilisation of other existing dwellings / structures on the property. Only where it has been demonstrated that these are not viable options, will permission be considered for new build development. Any new build development shall be in close proximity to the existing farmhouse.

#### **10.3.5.3 Short-Term Letting**

There has been a significant increase in short-term letting and hosting across Ireland in recent years through platforms such as Airbnb and has become an attractive option for many tourists and visitors. However, care needs to be exercised to ensure that the short-term letting of properties does not displace/remove properties from the long-term rental market.

It is the policy of the council to maintain established and newly constructed residential areas as places of permanent residential occupation by owner/occupiers and/or long-term tenants.

The Council will consider on a case-by-case basis the change of use of properties or part of a structure to short-term letting where the structure by virtue of its location, condition and/or layout would not ordinarily be suitable as a place of permanent residential occupation. It will be necessary to demonstrate that any such proposed development will not have a negative impact on the long-term rental market or the residential amenity of adjacent properties in the vicinity.

Under the Residential Tenancies (Amendment) Act 2019 and the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Exempted Development) No.2 Regulations 2019 reforms have been introduced to the short-term letting sector. These reforms are aimed at addressing the impact on the private rental market by the use of residential



homes for short-term tourism type letting in areas of high housing demand. These provisions only apply to areas designated as 'Rent Pressure Zones' under the Residential Tenancies Act (as amended).

### Visitor Accommodation

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 10-26** Support best practice environmental management including energy efficiency, e-charging, waste management and recycling in accommodation providers and tourism enterprises in the County.
- KCDP 10-27** Direct tourism-based development including Hotels, Guesthouses and B&Bs to towns and villages where there is adequate infrastructure to service the development, except where the proposal involves the re-use or diversification of an existing building, subject to normal planning criteria.
- KCDP 10-28** Encourage the sensitive redevelopment and / or return to suitable use, of derelict, vacant or redundant buildings, in appropriate locations in order to provide for visitor accommodation and tourism development.
- KCDP 10-29** Support the development of appropriately scaled camping/glamping, campervan and caravan type accommodation located within/or adjacent to existing settlements, established tourism assets or adjacent to a main farmyard complex on suitable sites and at an appropriate scale subject to normal planning considerations.
- KCDP 10-30** Ensure that future caravan, camping and parking facilities in coastal areas will not be visually intrusive or impact on sensitive coastal environments (e.g., sand dune systems).
- KCDP 10-31** Prohibit the change of use of residential properties to short-term letting in established residential areas and newly constructed residential developments.
- KCDP 10-32** Consider the change of use of derelict/vacant buildings to short-term letting where such buildings are not suitable for long-term residential accommodation and will not have a negative impact on the long-term rental market or the residential amenity of the area.

## 10.4 Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Categories

### 10.4.1 Adventure Tourism

County Kerry has excellent natural outdoor recreation assets including mountains, forests, lakes, rivers, and beaches and has the capacity to become a year-round international outdoor activity destination. Other assets include internationally renowned golf courses, adventure centres and marine based water activities. It is recognised that such uses often require a rural location which may be high in natural and cultural heritage values which must be protected.

#### 10.4.1.1 Walking and Cycling

Walking is Kerry's signature activity product, and the county has successfully positioned itself as a walking and cycling destination. Infrastructural developments include the consolidation, development and enhancement of trailhead facilities, combining with other activities such as cycling and water-based activities, to optimise the infrastructural investment. The Council will facilitate ongoing investment in the maintenance and upkeep of existing trails to international best practice standard. The Council will facilitate the sustainable development of the trailheads, subject to environmental assessment. The provision of recreational and leisure facilities and



limited commercial services will be facilitated at the trailheads. Limited commercial facilities and services may be considered along the greenway route and will be dealt with on a case-by-case manner.

Kerry is internationally and nationally renowned as a centre for walking and cycling holidays and has a well-established network of long distance walks; including The Beara Way, The Kerry Way, The Dingle Way, The Saint's Walk (Cosán na Naomh), The North Kerry Way and The Shannon Way, which combined, extend to a network of over 500km. Kerry County Council will continue to support the sustainable development of additional walks within the County and facilitate where appropriate, recreational activities that will enhance the outdoor recreational tourism experience.

In addition, the Macgillicuddy Reeks, Mount Brandon, Caha Mountain, and the Slieve Mish range provide a stunning backdrop to many of the County's towns and villages. The Council recognises that sustainably developed and maintained walking routes are of considerable benefit to the economies of the areas through which they run as well as providing an invaluable educational, recreational and conservation role. The Council recognises that these routes cannot come into existence or remain in existence without the full co-operation of the owners of private property on the routes.

Cycling and active travel are growing in popularity as safe routes are being developed throughout the county. There are a number of initiatives both nationally and internationally that can be used to promote and develop cycling tourism within the County including the promotion of the EuroVelo Route 1 which passes through Abbeyfeale-Listowel-Tralee-Dingle (Slea Head) along the Ring of Kerry to Beara. There are a wide range of opportunities across all parts of the County to further expand the network of walking and cycling trails available. The National Cycle Policy Framework 2009-2020 is currently under review.

It is the policy of the Council to support and facilitate the development of an integrated network of walking trails and cycleways along suitable corridors with local connections to villages and tourist attractions and to take account of the environmental sensitivities along these corridors. (See also Chapter 14 Connectivity and Volume 3 including Public Rights of Way).

#### **10.4.1.2 Greenways/Blueways/Peatways**

In addition to the County's existing walking and cycling infrastructure, the Council recognises the potential of Kerry's old railway lines, riverbanks and other potential linkages to act as Greenways for walking and cycling tourism. The Council will therefore continue to protect the routes of such potential greenways through the policies of this plan and will actively work with all stakeholders to facilitate the development of Greenways and walking and cycling routes throughout the County.

The revitalisation of the rural economy is a critical component of continued and sustainable growth in the County. The opening of the Greenways in Kerry provides the opportunity for positive economic benefits to communities based along the routes. Kerry County Council will work closely with local business, the wider community and Failte Ireland to promote the Greenways to tourists within Ireland and internationally. See Chapter 14 for further information on Active Travel.

Blueways are a relatively new water-based tourism and outdoor recreation alternative to Greenways in Ireland that aim to encourage more people to experience and enjoy our inland waterways, lakes, rivers and coastal areas around the island of Ireland. Blueways and associated infrastructure need to be developed in sustainable manner with minimal impact on sensitive habitats and sensitive species.

Peatways are walkways which can be developed through bog lands and offer a unique alternative walking experience for both locals and tourists in rural Kerry. It is the policy of the council to promote tourist development potential of peatlands for recreation and environmental protection.

The Council actively supports the provision of greenway, blueway and peatway infrastructure within the county and recognises the benefits from a tourism and an active travel perspective. Pillar 3 of the National Action Plan for Rural Development focuses on 'Maximising our Rural Tourism and Recreational



Potential', with a specific recommendation to promote the development of greenways and blueways, and other recreational opportunities, and to support sustainable rural jobs through targeted tourism initiatives. The Council will continue to support and facilitate the provision of greenways/blueways/peatways where appropriate within the county where it can be demonstrated that such development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. These are further examined in Chapter 11 Environment.

### Adventure Tourism

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 10-33** Promote and facilitate the sustainable development of outdoor activities, in appropriate locations, such as walking, rambling, cycling, land and sea-based activities with specialised centres and facilities in association with Munster Technological University, Fáilte Ireland, National Trails Office, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Local Development Companies, Sport Ireland, Healthy Ireland, Local Development Companies, Kerry Education and Training Board and other relevant national and County based departments and agencies.
- KCDP 10-34** Promote and facilitate opportunities to create an integrated pedestrian and cycle network linking key tourist destinations in the County and to the national network.
- KCDP 10-35** Facilitate and support community groups in the development, maintenance and enhancement of sustainable walking routes at appropriate locations throughout the County.
- KCDP 10-36** Facilitate and promote a link between The Beara Way, The Kerry Way, The Dingle Way, The Saint's Walk (Cosán na Naomh), The North Kerry Way and The Shannon Way to create a walking trail subject to ensuring that no significant adverse effects on the environment and the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.
- KCDP 10-37** Support the MacGillycuddy Reeks Mountain Access Forum and initiatives in addressing aspects of social, environmental and economic development of the MacGillycuddy Reeks while ensuring no significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites.
- KCDP 10-38** Support the provision of sustainable mountain bike facilities at suitable locations subject to compliance with the policies and objectives of this Plan particularly as they relate to the protection of the natural environment.
- KCDP 10-39** Support the sustainable development of a National Cycle Network and the development of the EuroVelo project, in particular the Atlantic Coast Route where it passes through the County.
- KCDP 10-40** Support and facilitate the development of new greenways and protect the functionality of existing greenways as keys components of an overall green tourism infrastructure and as standalone tourism products in their own right.
- KCDP 10-41** Support the linking and extension of existing greenways, long distance walking routes, blueways, and peatways within the county and the integration and linkage of them with other existing / proposed greenways, long distance walking routes, blueways and peatways both within and outside County Kerry.
- KCDP 10-42** Facilitate and support the sustainable development of tourism infrastructure and recreational developments at appropriate locations along greenway routes and trailheads subject to normal planning conditions.



**KCDP 10-43** Support and facilitate stakeholders, agencies and community groups with regards to tourism related uses of cut-away bogs and support the development of peatways at appropriate locations.

### 10.4.1.3 Water-Based Tourism

County Kerry has an extensive coastline of over 1000km which is a major tourist and environmental asset. The county has 14 blue flag beaches which are a popular resource for a number of water sports activities including surfing, swimming, paddle boarding and kayaking and also for activities such as walking and wellbeing in a coastal setting. The protection of the coastline as a tourism asset is of huge importance to ensure long-term benefits from tourism activities.

The waterways, rivers and lakes of County Kerry are rich natural resources that attract many visitors to the County each year. In addition, they provide significant leisure and amenity opportunities including fishing, sea-angling, sailing, birdwatching and pleasure boating. Ensuring access to the lakes and waterways and the sustainable management of activities taking place on the water, on the lakeshore and in the riparian zone of waterways is essential to ensure a balance between tourism development and conservation of natural heritage in these areas. The importance of biosecurity and protection of our watercourses from invasive species is particularly recognised due to the potential negative impacts on fisheries, water quality and angling/other water-based amenity tourism.

Given the extent of the County's marine heritage and the indigenous strengths of the region's coastal environs it is an objective of the Council, to encourage the sustainable development of waterways, rivers and lakes for marine tourism related uses.

#### Water-Based Tourism

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 10-44** Sustainably promote, in co-operation with the various statutory and relevant organisations, at appropriate locations the more extensive use of the coastal strip for such activities as touring, sight-seeing, walking, pony trekking as a sustainable tourism and recreational resource for the residents of County Kerry and other visitors.
- KCDP 10-45** Promote opportunities for enterprise and employment creation in marine tourism where it can be demonstrated that the development will not impact negatively on the marine environment.
- KCDP 10-46** Support and facilitate the maintenance, enhancement and promotion of Blue Flag beaches, and seek to identify any additional locations which may satisfy the criteria for Blue Flag status.
- KCDP 10-47** Promote the Green Coast award schemes in association with An Taisce.
- KCDP 10-48** Support the sustainable expansion of non-commercial fishing activities in coastal communities and the development of complementary on-shore landing and hospitality facilities/services.
- KCDP 10-49** Support and promote, with the co-operation of landowners improved access to the coastline where sustainable and appropriate and in line with the objectives of this Plan.
- KCDP 10-50** Facilitate the sustainable development of improved access and associated facilities to the waterways and islands of Kerry.



- KCDP 10-51** Work in partnership with local community organisations, angling clubs, Inland Fisheries Ireland and other relevant bodies to sustainably upgrade angling related infrastructure including access, stands and signage at appropriate locations.
- KCDP 10-52** Support in collaboration with the National Parks and Wildlife Service and other relevant stakeholders, the management and monitoring of aquatic vessels in relation to the spread of invasive alien aquatic species by leisure craft.
- KCDP 10-53** Support the provision of appropriately designed and located toilet and changing facilities at blue flag beaches in the county and at other locations subject to need assessment and environmental compatibility.

#### 10.4.2 Arts, Craft and Food Tourism

Kerry is home to many artisan food producers, artists and craft makers located throughout the county. Many crafts workers and artists reside and work in more rural parts of the County and are supported by the Original Kerry and Taste Kerry trails which promote and support these enterprises.

Food tourism and the Agri-Food sector is one of Kerry's most important industries and plays a vital role in the local economy. Internationally, food related activities and events are viewed as a key factor in attracting increased numbers of visitors to particular localities and Kerry is well positioned to maximise the potential of this market.

In Kerry, the Dingle Peninsula Food Festival (host of the Blás na hEireann food awards), the Listowel Food Fair, the Kenmare Food Festival, the Grow Your Own movement and Transition Town Tralee are all capturing the growing interest in local food. The availability of good quality local restaurants can be a deciding factor in destination choice for many independent visitors. Food and drink represent the largest amount of visitor expenditure and exceeds the average spent on accommodation.

Kerry County Council supports the development of artisan food production hubs and the sustainable development of the food tourism sector and will facilitate relevant agencies to ensure further growth within this sector.

#### Arts, Craft and Food Tourism

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 10-54** Support the development of arts performance spaces through the adaptation of suitable outdoor public spaces and also the use of existing vacant properties for arts and performance projects, taking into account the potential for undue wildlife disturbance and impact.
- KCDP 10-55** Support the sustainable development of the arts and crafts sector and liaise with other relevant agencies to facilitate growth within this sector.
- KCDP 10-56** Support the sustainable development of Kerry's food and drink sector, especially locally sourced organic food, and liaise with other relevant agencies to facilitate growth within this sector.
- KCDP 10-57** Support and promote the development and marketing of foods and crafts of Kerry through networking and developing trade links with regions, locally, nationally and internationally.

#### 10.4.3 Culture and Heritage Tourism

Kerry has established itself as a significant destination for culture and heritage-based activity holidays through the appropriate development of our built, cultural, and natural assets. The unique arts, culture and heritage



of Kerry form a significant element of the tourism industry in the County and often supports other holiday experiences and can result in greater visitor spend and increased length of time visitors stay in the County.

Kerry has many renowned historic sites, castles, houses and gardens notably the internationally recognised heritage site Sceilig Mhichíl which was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1996 and Valentia Trans-Atlantic Cable Ensemble has begun its journey towards eventual World Heritage inscription. Throughout the County there are a number of centres for traditional culture and music.

Museums and interpretative facilities are an important part of the holiday experience providing a cultural, historical, and educational aspect to the tourist experience. Throughout the County there are a range of museums and heritage centres, which offer audio-visual presentations on the County's landscape, monuments, towns, and traditions.

County Kerry has a number of important tourist towns which are in themselves destinations to which tourists come because of their unique historic qualities. Retaining the character and uniqueness of these towns is important in differentiating the County's tourist product and also promoting the 'Kerry – Your Natural Escape' tourist brand. There are 2 Gaeltacht areas in Kerry which are home to a range of heritage attractions, arts, traditional music and cultural activities. The arts, culture, heritage and the unique linguistic heritage of Kerry form a significant element of the tourism industry in the County.

While it is important to recognise the economic contribution that is made through heritage tourism, there is the potential to further enhance heritage tourism development in the county. The integration of activities, including our heritage assets, our unique culture including linguistic, and the local history can further enhance this area. The Council will support the protection and appropriate enhancement of our heritage tourism sites for the advancement of the tourism sector.

The Council acknowledges the importance of and wealth of heritage tourism which is located within the county and supports stakeholders and local communities to maximise their potential to sustainably expand built, natural and cultural heritage tourism throughout the County.

### Culture and Heritage Tourism

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 10-58** Protect and promote the County's built heritage assets and towns and villages that are the focus for tourism development and seek opportunities to sustainably enhance their tourism potential while adhering to best practice standards in relation to the environmental management of tourism enterprises.
- KCDP 10-59** Sustainably support and promote, with the co-operation of landowners, public access to heritage sites and features at appropriate locations.
- KCDP 10-60** Support and promote the sustainable development of architectural and heritage trails, at appropriate locations ensuring that development does not result in negative impacts on the fabric or setting of Kerry's heritage assets.
- KCDP 10-61** Support and facilitate relevant stakeholders including the OPW, the Heritage Council, Fáilte Ireland, Údarás Na Gaeltachta, the Arts Council, Waterways Ireland, local communities and businesses to support the development of heritage and cultural tourism in Kerry.
- KCDP 10-62** Facilitate and support measures to secure the designation of Valentia Trans-Atlantic Cable Station, Cable Terrace, "First Message" Building, Structure in the Telegraph Field and ensemble of associated sites as a trans-national serial UNESCO World Heritage Site with its partner site in Hearts Content, Newfoundland, Canada.



#### 10.4.4 Rural Tourism

The tourism industry makes a significant contribution to the vitality and sustainability of a wide variety of local enterprises, particularly in rural areas, and has the capacity to directly and indirectly sustain communities, create employment and deliver real social benefits for rural Kerry.

The importance of tourism to rural economies is growing and in some instances is critical to the economy of these areas and the support and buy-in of local communities, landowners, local authorities, and other State agencies is critical to the successful implementation of rural tourism initiatives. The Plan seeks to facilitate and enable an integrated and sustainable high-quality, year-round tourism product.

There are two official Gaeltacht areas in the County –Gaeltacht Chorca Dhuibhne on the Dingle Peninsula and Gaeltacht Uíbh Ráthaigh on the Iveragh Peninsula. These Gaeltacht areas are rich in language, tradition, literature, folklore, music, historical and archaeological sites. It is the policy of the Council to support tourism initiatives in these areas. See Chapter 8 for more information on Gaeltacht areas.

##### Rural Tourism

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 10-63** Promote opportunities for enterprise and employment creation in rural-based tourism where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have a negative impact on the rural environment.
- KCDP 10-64** Support sustainable agri-tourism initiatives in the form of on-farm or farm related tourism developments such as health and wellbeing, craft villages, organic food production, food centred activities, heritage and nature trails, pony trekking and boating.
- KCDP 10-65** Encourage appropriately scaled agri-tourism on- farm accommodation development to locate within existing or adjacent to farmyard complexes, such as the renovation of barns, outhouses or other existing structures or the siting of appropriately scaled camping, [glamping or similar] type accommodation within existing farmyard complexes for owner run agri-tourism / rural business use as short-term holiday home accommodation, subject to normal planning considerations.

#### 10.4.4.1 Plantation Forest Recreation

While the county's plantation forestry's primary role is a natural renewable resource some forested areas due to their topography and location can be utilised in a secondary role as an amenity for the local community and / or visitors to an area. Using the forest for simple quiet enjoyment or for a particular sport or adventure activity promotes fitness, health and a sense of well-being. Forest recreation also creates the basis for a wide range of related enterprises and opportunities for income generation. The Council recognises the tourist and recreational benefits of forested areas and will seek to encourage the sustainable management of forest lands for recreational and tourism purposes.

##### Plantation Forest Recreation

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 10-66** Encourage the sustainable development of forest parks and other tourist related facilities and amenities at appropriate locations within forested areas.

#### 10.4.5 Business, Education and Conference Tourism

Kerry continues to grow in popularity as a destination for hosting international conferences, conventions and events. The Council will continue to work with hotels across the county that offer conference facilities to ensure that they can maximise the potential of this sector. Business tourism offers many potential spin-offs





for the local area and economy and it is important that local tourist activities and facilities are supported by marketing and promotion by these venues. The growth of business tourism is seen as a key ingredient in extending the season and generating sustainable employment opportunities throughout the year.

It is the policy of the council to promote tourism as a key driver for the county's economy, particularly through making the county attractive for visitors, international education, business tourism and conventions.

#### Business Tourism

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 10-67** Work with key stakeholders, businesses and the Kerry Convention Bureau to sustainably support and facilitate the growth of Kerry as a destination for business and conference tourism by maximising Kerry's strong and competitive brand value and extend the tourist season.

**KCDP 10-68** Support and facilitate the development and promotion of education tourism in Kerry e.g., language schools, Gaelcólaiste /Cólaiste Samhraidh, Gaeltacht experience, academic conferences and environmental studies.

#### 10.4.6 Niche and Innovative Tourism

Niche tourism has the capacity to develop in locations throughout the County and as such can contribute to the sustainable economic development of peripheral and rural areas. This includes tourism initiatives including but not limited to eco, astro, and film tourism.

Ecotourism is suited to tourism development in scenic, un-spoilt locations focusing on nature conservation, biodiversity and reduced environmental impacts.

The film industry is hugely important from both a local and national perspective and generates significant positive spin-offs in terms of the provision of support services and the tourism generated from international spotlight on an area. The future expansion of the film industry in Kerry has the potential to have a significant positive impact on job creation and economic growth in the County.

The Council will consider development proposals for these unique tourism offerings subject to the protection of the integrity of the built and natural heritage of the County.

#### Niche and Innovative Tourism

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 10-69** Facilitate and support the sustainable development of the tourism sector and provide for the delivery of a unique combination of niche tourism opportunities and potential future attractions in County Kerry.

**KCDP 10-70** Support astro-tourism initiatives, including the extension of the Kerry Dark Sky Reserve, to leverage the economic benefits of the International Gold Tier Dark Sky Reserve Designation for the local communities and County.

**KCDP 10-71** Facilitate and support the growth of the film industry in Kerry by maximising the opportunities for screen tourism through the development of tourism facilities and infrastructure related to the film industry, including appropriately located film trails / routes, signage and visitor attractions with the potential to portray the county in a positive light and generate economic activity and employment.



# CHAPTER 11

# ENVIRONMENT







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## 11.0 Environment

### 11.1 Introduction

This Chapter contains the general planning policies and principles which will ensure that the natural environment, biodiversity and ecosystems are protected, delivering benefits essential for all sectors of society and that it contributes to efforts to reverse the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems and the environment. This Chapter is complimented by Chapter 13 Water and Waste Management.

Environmental protection is a core component of the RSES, County Development Plan and the Core Strategy which underlines the need to safeguard and enhance our environment through sustainable development, transitioning to a carbon neutral, biodiversity rich and climate resilient society and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050.

County Kerry's natural environment includes a wealth of features that encompass the character of the County. Kerry's diverse landscapes form part of its 'green' persona and there is much to be proud of. These features are influenced by its geographical location, its climatic conditions, the changing global impact on environmental and climatic conditions as well as the impact of human behaviour at local level.

The county's natural environment encompasses; its unique world renowned landscape, including the country's highest mountain ranges, Killarney & Derrynane national parks, salmonoid rivers, dramatic coastal formations incorporating sheer cliff faces to extensive sandy beaches, its renowned islands including the UNESCO world heritage site of Sceilig Mhichil and the Great Blasket Islands, its significant peninsulas from the Kenmare River in the South to the Mouth of the Shannon in the North; its ecological diversity from the protected landscapes of the Kenmare Region to the harsh exposure of West Kerry and upland areas, the Kerry UNESCO Biosphere incorporating Killarney National Park and the Macgillicuddy Reeks, the rich pastures of North Kerry and the upland moorland areas; its wildlife, including the Killarney Native Deer, natterjack toad and pearl mussels. This natural environment is framed by and constantly changed by the influence of the temperate climate of high rainfall and prevailing south westerly winds and the impact of the Atlantic Ocean.

In addition to having its own intrinsic value, the natural environment provides opportunities for sustainable recreational activities, employment and tourism and provides natural resources such as drinking water and raw materials which can facilitate sustainable development. It is necessary for these features to be protected to the standards required by national legislation and European Directives, whilst accommodating sustainable development in appropriate locations to facilitate sustainable economic growth and development.

The conservation of biodiversity is also of particular significance in Kerry given its rich natural heritage of wildlife habitats, species, geological features and landforms, including some of international importance.

### 11.2 Biodiversity

In recent years "biodiversity" has come to replace more familiar words such as "wildlife", "natural heritage" or "nature". Simply defined as "all life on Earth" biodiversity plays a key role in how "nature" all around us functions providing us with many services. Called "ecosystem services" they include providing clean air, water, food, fuel, medicines, recreation, and protection from extreme weather. Biodiversity also supports pollination; soil fertility and regulates our climate. It underpins and supports many of our economic activities particularly food production. However, biodiversity also underpins our health and well-being. COVID-19 and the associated restrictions has shown many the value of the natural environment for our physical health and mental wellbeing.

In short, biodiversity is crucial to our lives. It underpins and supports nearly all our activities. Alarming, many international reports continue to report an unprecedented decline in global biodiversity. This is reflected in the EPA's most recently published 2020 State of the Environment Report. Similarly, the EPA's published



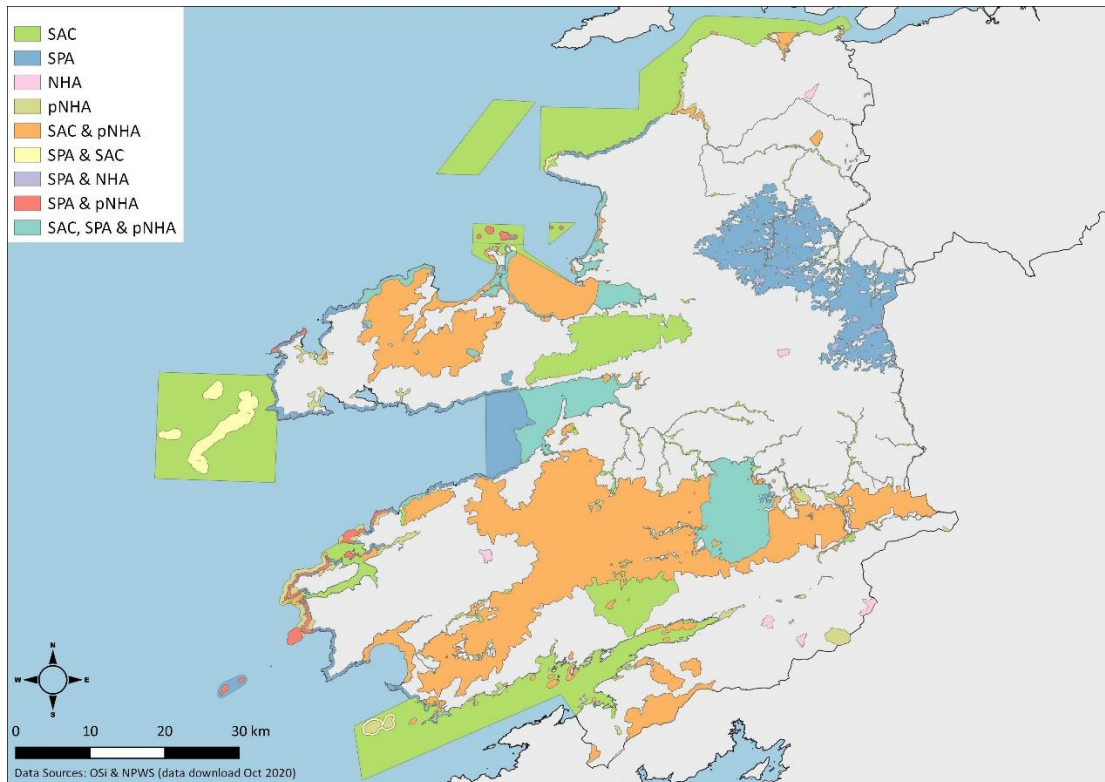
reports on the Status of Water Quality in Ireland, 2013-2018 (published in 2019) indicates some worrying national trends on the ecological health and water quality of Ireland’s rivers, lakes, estuaries, groundwater, and coastal waters. Coupled with these alarming trends in the natural world is the unprecedented challenges faced by climate change. Ireland, or indeed Kerry, is not immune to these global trends.

Kerry has a diverse and varied biodiversity. Over 40% of the county is designated under the Natura 2000 network highlighting the significance of the county’s natural heritage at a European level. The primary threats to biodiversity both within and outside designated areas are from habitat loss, degradation and/or fragmentation. As a land use plan, the CDP has an important role to play in guiding sustainable development patterns thereby ensuring the protection and sustainable management of our biodiversity including natural resources. Biodiversity as a means to both mitigate and adapt to climate change has also recently gained momentum. In particular, it offers possible nature-based solutions to many of the climate challenges facing us. A multi-beneficiary or co-benefits approach to the conservation of biodiversity is supported in this CDP. Objectives/policies are included that seek to protect the county’s biodiversity, augment its ability to offer positive/multi-beneficiary/co-benefit responses to climate change and reverse declining trends.

**11.2.1 European/National Designations**

Biodiversity protection is afforded by International, European and National legislation, most particularly the EU Habitats and Birds Directives, the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act, 2001 (as amended), the EU (Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 and the Irish Wildlife Acts (1976 and 2000).

Natura 2000 sites (also referred to as European Sites, the terms are used interchangeably in this plan), are a pan-EU wide network of nature protection areas known as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). They are the centrepiece of EU nature & biodiversity policy and are derived from the Habitats and Birds Directives. The aim of the Natura 2000 network is to assure the long-term survival of Europe’s most valuable and threatened species and habitats. This plan seeks to protect and manage the Natura 2000 Network in the County. The Planning Authority will assess all plans and projects for compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive in accordance with the DEHLG (2010) *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland*.



**Map 11.1: Designated Sites (SAC/SPA/NHA/pNHA)**





Exempted development is de-exempted (i.e., the development requires planning permission) where such works/development require an Appropriate Assessment. A Section 5 declaration may be sought from the Council as to whether any proposed work (i) is or is not development and (ii) is or is not exempted development.

Nationally designated conservation areas include Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs). NHAs are a national designation introduced by the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. In Kerry there are 9 NHAs all designated for peatland habitats. pNHAs are sites which have not progressed to NHA status but nonetheless are likely to have ecological or geological value. There are 61 pNHAs in Kerry (many overlapping with Natura 2000 sites) protected by the provisions of the CDP.

A list of all nature conservation designations within the county is provided in Volume 1: Appendices and shown in Map 11.1.

<b>Biodiversity</b>	
<b>It is an objective of the Council to:</b>	
<b>KCDP 11-1</b>	Ensure that the requirements of relevant EU and national legislation, are complied with by the Council in undertaking its functions, including the requirements of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives.
<b>KCDP 11-2</b>	Maintain the nature conservation value and integrity of Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs). This shall include any other sites that may be designated at national level during the lifetime of the plan in co-operation with relevant state agencies.
<b>KCDP 11-3</b>	Work with all stakeholders in order to conserve, manage and where possible enhance the County's natural heritage including all habitats, species, landscapes and geological heritage of conservation interest and to promote increased understanding and awareness of the natural heritage of the County.
<b>KCDP 11-4</b>	Promote nature-based solutions to meet national objectives towards achieving a carbon neutral economy by 2050.
<b>KCDP 11-5</b>	Support and facilitate the actions in the National Biodiversity Action Plan and Kerry County Councils Biodiversity Action Plan 2022 – 2028.
<b>KCDP 11-6</b>	Support community groups undertaking biodiversity projects and any opportunities that may arise from biodiversity funding/grants.
<b>KCDP 11-7</b>	Support the sustainable provision of access and information at natural heritage sites around the county, at appropriate locations.
<b>KCDP 11-8</b>	Support the recording of biodiversity data in the county and its referral to National Biodiversity Data Centre.
<b>KCDP 11-9</b>	Support Agri-environment schemes; the MacGillycuddy Reeks Mountain Access Reeks Forum, the Magharees Conservation Association; EIPs; EU LIFE projects and other existing or proposed biodiversity programmes being undertaken in the county.



### 11.2.2 Killarney National Park and Kerry UNESCO Biosphere Reserve

Killarney National Park contains many features of national and international importance such as native oakwoods and yew woods together with an abundance of evergreen trees, shrubs, rare bryophytes and lichens which thrive in the mild Killarney climate.

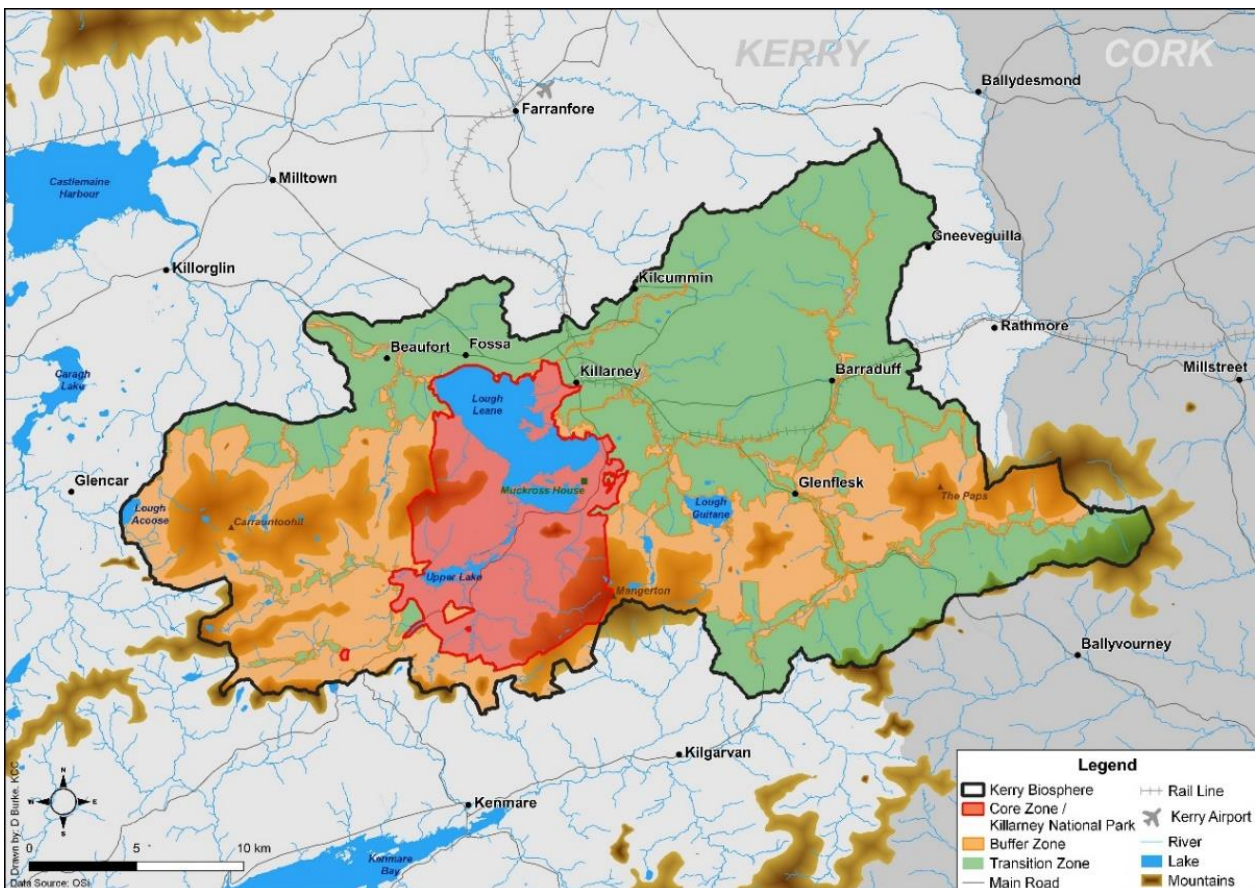
The former Killarney National Park Biosphere Reserve managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) has been redesigned, re-named and extended according to UNESCO Biosphere Reserve criteria. The Kerry Biosphere now includes Killarney National Park as its core, with the Macgillycuddy Reeks and other parts of the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) to the south and east of the National Park as a buffer, and with Killarney town and the Lough Leane catchment as a transition zone. Outside of the National Park Kerry County Council is an active partner with NPWS in the management of the buffer and transition zones of the biosphere reserve in support of NPWS.

#### Killarney National Park and Kerry UNESCO Biosphere Reserve

It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 11-10** Support the NPWS in the ongoing management of Killarney National Park.

**KCDP 11-11** Work with NPWS and other partners to support the Kerry UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and the implementation of initiatives contained in the Periodic Review 2017.



Map 11.2: Kerry Biosphere Reserve

### 11.2.3 Wetlands

Wetlands have a valuable and beneficial role in flood regulation, water purification, wildlife habitat, and recreation. Wetlands include a wide range of habitats including swamps, marshes, peatlands, wet heath and inter-tidal areas. Several ecologically diverse peatlands are designed in the county including a number within



SACs and NHAs. Wetlands, in particular peatlands, can be important carbon sinks and can contain archaeological features of interest. A number of wetlands in the County offer educational, recreational and micro business opportunities, most notably the Tralee Bay Wetlands Centre.

Two Ramsar Sites, an international designation for wetland sites that support significant populations of wintering waterfowl, occur in the county. These sites which are located in Castlemaine Harbour and Tralee Bay, overlap with SPA designations.

Proposals for the drainage/reclamation of wetlands are governed by provisions of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended). This includes the relevant provisions relating to the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive. This plan supports the protection of wetlands as defined in the regulations and in the Draft Guidance for Planning Authorities on Drainage and Reclamation of Wetlands, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, 2011 (or future versions).

### Wetlands

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>KCDP 11-12</b> | Support the sustainable use of wetlands, including our Ramsar sites, for educational, recreational and or tourism uses where appropriate and compatible with environmental protection designations. |
| <b>KCDP 11-13</b> | Support actions identified in <i>Ag Climitise</i> including on-farm measures to sequester carbon by the establishment of wetlands at appropriate locations.   |

#### 11.2.4 Invasive Species

Invasive plant and animal species are often cited as the second greatest threat to biodiversity worldwide after habitat destruction. They can negatively impact on native species, can transform habitats and threaten whole ecosystems causing serious problems to the environment, agriculture and the economy. Introduced invasive species tend to reproduce rapidly and are difficult to eradicate once established. Roadsides and brown field/derelict lands are of particular risk due to their accessibility and to the high concentrations of disturbed soil generally found at these locations. It is therefore very important to prevent the movement of earth contaminated with propagule material (e.g., seeds, rhizomes / roots, cuttings from hedge trimming or other fragments) from one area to another.

### Invasive Species

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>KCDP 11-14</b> | Ensure invasive species are managed in compliance with the provisions of the EC (Birds and Habitats) Regulations (SI 477 of 2011), as amended, particularly Sections 49, 50 and the Third Schedule. Best practices, as produced and updated by relevant authorities, are to be adhered to in the management of invasive species particularly on sites proposed for development. |
| <b>KCDP 11-15</b> | Facilitate, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders increased awareness and the implementation of biosecurity measures to prevent the spread of invasive species, particularly along watercourses.  |
| <b>KCDP 11-16</b> | Facilitate the provision of an appropriate site in the County for the disposal and management of invasive species and contaminated soil, further to best practice guidelines and the provisions of the EC (Birds and Habitats) Regulations (SI 477 of 2011), as amended.  |



### 11.2.5 All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025

The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025 sets out natural management measures to increase habitats and food for wild pollinators. Actions include a change in the management of grasslands, reduction in the use of pesticides, management of hedgerow cutting and the retention of unmanaged roads and park areas. The council supports the implementation of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025 (and any replacement plans) and will have regard to the actions of this Plan when managing parks, open spaces, and roadside verges.

#### All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 11-17** Support actions from the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan including the plan's recommendations for grassland management and pollinator friendly species.

### 11.2.6 Green and Blue Infrastructure - Ecological Corridors

Ecological corridors/ steppingstones are habitat patches that may not necessarily be of high conservation value themselves but serve to maintain ecological connectivity in the landscape. An ecological corridor permits the movement of wildlife between areas of high conservation interest or through areas that have little ability to support these species. Examples of ecological corridors include field boundaries comprising of stone walls, hedgerows and treelines, which support biodiversity by providing food and shelter for plants and animals. These may form part of green infrastructure proposals. Ecological corridors can also be classed as blue infrastructure essentially watercourses. They also act as pathways along which species travel and disperse though the wider countryside. Urban Blue Corridors can provide many co-benefits including more effective management of urban flood risk, improved access, additional and more useable public open space, and improved biodiversity. Given the extent of the Tarbert Ballylongford landbank and its location relative to areas of nature conservation value, it is of particular importance that ecological connectivity at a landscape level is taken into account as part of development proposals for this area.

A primary threat to biodiversity both within and outside protected areas is habitat degradation, fragmentation and loss of these ecological corridors. The cumulative impact of loss of ecological corridor features on an incremental or site-by-site basis over time can have significant repercussions for biodiversity in the County, including both designated and non-designated habitats and species. To address this issue, Kerry County Council will, where it is considered necessary, require planning applications to be accompanied by habitat mapping of the proposed development site. Habitat mapping can also be useful at a strategic level in identifying landscape features of ecological value. In recent years, habitat maps have been prepared for the towns of Tralee, Killarney, Listowel, Cahersiveen and Tarbert. The CDP supports the ongoing mapping of habitats at a strategic level to inform future land use planning in the County and Municipal Districts.

#### Green and Blue Infrastructure – Ecological/Urban Blue Corridors

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 11-18** Require, where necessary, proposals to be accompanied by a habitat map prepared in accordance with the Heritage Councils Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Survey and Mapping, 2011.

**KCDP 11-19** Encourage and facilitate the retention and creation of features of local biodiversity value, ecological corridors and networks that connect areas of high conservation value such as watercourses, woodlands, hedgerows, earth banks and wetlands.

**KCDP 11-20** Identify key areas in the County, in collaboration with other relevant bodies, where habitat mapping would be of particular benefit to record existing features of local biodiversity and where applicable to integrate this information in the development management and plan preparation process.



**KCDP 11-21** Promote the integration and improvement of natural watercourses in development proposals having regard to the IFI's guidance *Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment*.

### 11.2.7 Urban Ecology

Urban habitats are sometimes viewed as being less important than rural habitats, however urban settlements are often located near biodiversity hotspots, such as along rivers or on the coast. In urban areas, artificial habitats such as parks and water features also support wildlife, and this can be enhanced through improved wildlife friendly management. Studies have also found brownfield sites, in certain instances to be diverse for flora, particularly those that persist longer on nutrient poor substrate or under disturbance. Private gardens can also encourage wildlife and buildings can incorporate biodiversity through features such as green roofs and living walls. These features can play an important role in supporting biodiversity in urban areas.

#### Urban Ecology

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 11-22** Support projects such as the swift nesting project (that are compatible with protection of our architectural heritage); pollinator friendly initiatives, tree planting, nature based sustainable urban drainage systems and other actions that seek to enhance urban wildlife.

### 11.2.8 Woodlands and Trees

Trees and woodlands, particularly those that are broadleaf deciduous, provide a valuable resource in terms of both biodiversity and by contributing to a varied, interesting, and attractive landscape. Kerry County Council will seek to protect trees, groups of trees and woodland areas of particular importance due to their biodiversity or visual amenity value. Careful consideration will be given to the potential impact of proposed developments on trees. Landowners and developers will be encouraged to retain existing trees and hedgerows, where practicable and to plant additional trees of native species, locally provenanced and grown where possible. Local provenance refers to the use of plantings derived from local seed or other propagule material. Plants sourced from outside of the Country can bring diseases which can threaten native stocks (e.g., Ash die back). Where the Council is satisfied that existing trees cannot be retained, for example due to poor condition or location within the site it will require acceptable replacement planting using native species. The Council will also have regard to the Tree Preservation Guidelines in this matter.

The Tralee MD Tree Management Strategy 2020-2025 sets out the Tralee MD's approach to managing trees in its care in urban centres so as to maximise their long-term benefit within the built environment. Tree management strategies are to be undertaken for all Municipal District areas in the county.

#### Woodlands and Trees

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 11-23** Facilitate and support the actions of the tree management strategy for the respective municipal districts.

**KCDP 11-24** Support the preservation and enhancement of the general level of broadleaf tree cover throughout the County in both urban and rural areas and ensure that development proposals satisfactorily retain existing trees and/or provide additional native planting. A Tree Survey Report shall inform applications where appropriate.

**KCDP 11-25** Encourage the provision of locally provenanced native tree species including those recommended by the *All-Ireland Pollinator Plan* as part of development landscaping schemes.



**KCDP 11-26** Work with stakeholders to protect and sustainably enhance the biodiversity and where appropriate the landscape and recreational interests of woodlands in the County.

### 11.3 Air, Noise and Light Pollution

The creation of a cleaner environment is essential for a healthy and vibrant community. The improvement of air and noise quality is paramount to prevent people being exposed to unacceptable levels of pollution that can impact on their health and/or well-being.

#### 11.3.1 Air Pollution

The latest EPA Air Quality in Ireland Report 2019 reports that particulate matter from the burning of solid fuels, including wood, coal and peat, poses the greatest threat to human health with the problem most acute in small towns and rural areas. The second biggest cause of pollutants is nitrogen dioxide from cars, particularly heavily trafficked urban areas. The protection of air quality requires cross-sectoral policy responses to address air pollution emissions from transport (diesel) energy (peat, biomass) and home heating (solid fuel). Tralee and Killarney are included as “Low Smoke Zones” under the Smoky Coal Ban Regulations 2012-2020.

The Council will continue to seek to improve air quality by having regard to National Emissions Ceiling Directive (NECD) and the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 180 of 2011) which implements Directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe. The Council will also encourage the use of the best available technology (BAT) in specific industrial facilities likely to give rise to emissions concerns, including air and odour.

The policies and objectives of this plan also take inspiration from and are consistent with the Climate Action Plan 2019 and the NPF. In particular, this plan integrates land use and planning, prioritises the development of infill and brownfield sites, priorities walking, cycling and public transport over the private car and encourages energy efficient buildings and green infrastructure. This will make a significant contribution over the lifetime of this plan to reducing atmospheric particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide and GHG emissions thereby greatly improving air quality.

#### 11.3.2 Noise Pollution

Noise pollution can occur in various locations including building sites, heavily trafficked roads, industrial sites, all of which can have significant impacts on an environment and on the quality of life of individuals, residential amenities and communities in an area.

The EPA Act, 1992 identifies noise as a form of environmental pollution and contains provisions for dealing with noise “*which is a nuisance or would endanger human health or damage property or harm the environment*”. The WHO recognises the growing understanding of health impacts from exposure to environmental noise as outlined in their 2018 *Environmental Noise Guidelines for the European Region*.

Existing noise legislation in Ireland provides for the strategic control of environmental noise from major infrastructure and industry. Legislation also provides for control of noise at specific sources and the method in which this can be undertaken. The Environmental Noise Directive (2002/49/EC) aims to put in place a European wide system for identifying sources of environmental noise, informing the public about relevant noise data and taking the necessary steps to avoid, prevent or reduce noise exposure. The Directive was transposed in Ireland by SI 549 of 2018 European Communities (Environmental Noise) Regulations 2018. Under these regulations a Noise Action Plan (2019) has been prepared by TII and KCC to address environmental noise from major national roads in the county.

The EPA’s IPC Licensing terms require that certain bodies must limit environmental pollution caused by industrial activities in order to obtain a license to operate. The criteria relating to noise pollution are outlined



in the EPA publication “Guidance Note for Noise: Licence Applications, Surveys and Assessment in Relation to Scheduled Activities (NG4)”, published in January 2016. This document recommends a “Best Available Technique” approach to the assessment and mitigation of noise pollution. The document contains typical limit values for daytime (55dB LAr,T), evening (50dB LAr,T) and night time (45dB LAr,T) noise, at sensitive locations, from licensed facilities.

In line with NPO 65 of the NPF, the Council will promote the pro-active management of noise where it is likely to have significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life and will continue to manage environmental noise through land-use planning, traffic management and control of noise sources. This is to ensure that all future developments are designed and constructed to minimise noise disturbance.

### Air and Noise Pollution

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>KCDP 11-27</b> | Improve and maintain good air quality and support measures to prevent harmful effects on human health and the environment in our urban and rural areas.  |
| <b>KCDP 11-28</b> | Promote the development of energy efficient buildings and homes, heating systems with zero local emissions, green infrastructure planning and innovative design solutions and promotion of measures that improve air quality including provision and management of green infrastructure. |
| <b>KCDP 11-29</b> | Promote a modal change from private car use to other types of travel and to promote the use of public transport as a means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving air quality.   |
| <b>KCDP 11-30</b> | Carry out traffic management measures such as reduction of speed limits, traffic flow control, mitigation of environmental noise hotspots, traffic congestion management, road surface improvements and road maintenance and the promotion of the use of electric vehicles.              |
| <b>KCDP 11-31</b> | Support measures, as they evolve nationally, from the Climate Action Plan 2019 and subsequent plans to introduce low- and zero-emission driving zones.   |
| <b>KCDP 11-32</b> | Ensure that any application with the potential to create noise nuisance is appropriately assessed and that suitable measures to mitigate any nuisance are proposed and implemented.  |
| <b>KCDP 11-33</b> | Support the KCC’s 2019 <i>Noise Action Plan, Round 3</i> and future iterations over the lifetime of this plan.   |
| <b>KCDP 11-34</b> | Incorporate the aims of the present and future Noise Action Plans into relevant local area plans, protecting larger areas from road noise. Special consideration will be given to zoning objectives, speed limits and established settlements within the area.                           |
| <b>KCDP 11-35</b> | Undertake a strategic approach, where deemed appropriate, to manage environmental noise in order to prevent members of the community being exposed to high noise levels in new developments.   |
| <b>KCDP 11-36</b> | Assess all planning applications with respect to noise and their potential impact on noise sensitive receptors in accordance with the WHO and EPA Guidelines ‘ <i>Environmental Noise Guidelines for the European Region</i> ’ 2018, and the UK publication ‘ProPG: Planning &           |



Noise, Professional Practice Guidance on Planning & Noise New Residential Development, May 2017'.

**KCDP 11-37** Ensure all new road infrastructure projects will be assessed in accordance with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Guidance and mitigation measures provided where deemed appropriate.

### 11.3.3 Light Pollution

When used inappropriately or excessively, artificial lighting can cause light pollution. This has adverse effects on the environment, our health, biodiversity, and our climate (through energy waste).

There are four components of light pollution:

- Glare - excessive brightness that causes visual discomfort.
- Skyglow - brightening of the night sky over inhabited areas.
- Light trespass - light falling where it is not intended or needed.
- Clutter - bright, confusing and excessive groupings of light sources.

#### 11.3.3.1 Kerry International Dark-Sky Reserve

International Dark Sky Reserves ([www.darksky.org](http://www.darksky.org)) are areas recognised as possessing an exceptional or distinguished quality of starry nights and nocturnal environment specifically protected for scientific, natural, educational, cultural, heritage or public enjoyment. The Kerry International Dark-Sky Reserve measures approximately 700 km<sup>2</sup> and includes Kells/Folimore, Cahersiveen, Portmagee, Valentia Island, Dromid, The Glen, Ballinskelligs, Waterville and Derrynane/Caherdaniel.

The plan recognises the potential of the Dark-Sky reserve as a significant tourism attraction, and as a result the control of light pollution in this area is important. This is particularly true of mountainous and peatland areas where there is little or no light pollution, serviced by adjoining rural communities.

It is an objective of this plan and where resources allow to replace the public lighting system throughout Kerry with a more energy efficient, money saving, dark-sky compliant lighting system. The council will also encourage measures to support the Kerry International Dark-Sky Reserve throughout the lifetime of the Plan.

#### Light Pollution

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 11-38** Require proposals for development that include the provision of external lighting, to clearly demonstrate that the lighting scheme is the minimum needed for security and working purposes and also to ensure that external lighting and lighting schemes are designed so that the incidence of light spillage is minimised ensuring that the amenities of adjoining properties, wildlife and the surrounding environment are protected.

**KCDP 11-39** Support the Kerry International Dark-Sky Reserve and ensure that all new external lights comply with the objectives of the Kerry International Dark Sky Reserve.

#### 11.3.3.2 Lights and Biodiversity

Excessive or directional lighting can also impact on nocturnal species effecting their ability to forage (feed) or commute. Bat species vary in their sensitivity to light pollution. Kerry has international important populations of the annexed II Lesser Horseshoe bat, a bat species particularly vulnerable to light pollution and habitat loss and fragmentation arising from same.





### Lights and Biodiversity

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 11-40** Take into consideration the Bat Conservation Trust 2018 Note 08/18 *Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK* Guidelines when choosing lighting specifications for developments and/or Bat specialist advice, so as to ensure the requirements of the Habitats Directive are adhered to, including Article 10.

### 11.4 Marine

Kerry has 684km of coastline which is a significant resource in terms of visual amenity, recreation, tourism, biodiversity, ports/harbours, fishing and mariculture/ aquaculture. The coast has a diverse range of habitats, including those of national and international importance and an intrinsic natural scenic and special amenity value, all of which must be adequately protected.

Directive 2008/56/EC, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), establishes a framework within which EU Member States are required to take the necessary measures to achieve or maintain Good Environmental Status (GES) in the marine environment by 2020. The Directive aims to protect Europe's marine waters by applying an ecosystem-based approach to the management of human activities, while enabling the sustainable use of marine goods and services for present and future generations. The Directive requires each Member State to produce a marine strategy, which involves defining GES, setting environmental targets and indicators, implementing monitoring programmes for ongoing assessment and developing and implementing Programmes of Measures to achieve or maintain GES.

This is of particular relevance to Kerry's coastline and offshore islands which are of significant ecological importance and is demonstrated by the number and extent of designated Natura 2000 sites on islands, peninsulas and estuaries and the numerous protected species in these areas.

### Marine

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 11-41** Support and facilitate the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework (and/or any other resultant strategy) under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC).
- KCDP 11-42** Take an ecosystems-based approach to the assessment of the potential impact of development proposals on coastal and maritime areas. Proposals will be required to demonstrate that there will be no likely significant adverse impact on key environmental attributes.

#### 11.4.1 Marine Spatial Planning

The County is ideally placed to improve economic growth through the sustainable use of its marine resource. The National Marine Planning Framework 2021 (NMPF) forms a framework for coordinated, integrated and transboundary approach to promote the sustainable development and growth of the maritime and coastal economies. The Council will seek to play an active part in implementing the objectives of NMPF.

It is the policy of the council to support the integration of different uses in the marine environment and ensure consistency and alignment between high-level plans such as the National Marine Planning Framework, regional based approaches to maritime spatial planning and localised coastal management plans and local integrated coastal zone management plans.

The council acknowledges the special role of our coastal settlements by recognising that the tourism and leisure sectors can help support and promote traditional and new marine-based industries and activities. Fishing and Aquaculture are also significant to the economy of the coastal areas and offer opportunities for



growth through diversification and development of bio resources including food, aquaculture and offshore renewables.

The council will seek investment in the sustainable development of infrastructure (physical and social), access (upgraded pier infrastructure, landing facilities and passenger and cargo ferry services), regional connectivity (transport networks and digital), enterprise growth and deliver initiatives by Local Authorities, Údarás na Gaeltachta, local communities and other stakeholders to strengthen and sustainably grow the island and coastal communities subject to robust site selection and environmental feasibility.

### Marine Spatial Planning

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

<b>KCDP 11-43</b>	Support and implement the objectives of the National Marine Planning Framework 2021 (NMPF).
<b>KCDP 11-44</b>	Ensure alignment, and consistency between land use and ocean-based planning, and to ensure co-ordination, which supports the protection of the marine environment and the growth of the marine economy.
<b>KCDP 11-45</b>	Support the development of new coalitions amongst productive sector enterprises, coastal communities and public agencies to support the sustainable development of the marine resource and Blue Economy.
<b>KCDP 11-46</b>	Support and promote investment and the sustainable development and improvement of marine infrastructure in order to maximise its contribution to employment and growth in coastal communities.

#### 11.4.2 Coastal Erosion

Coastal erosion is a dynamic natural process involving the wearing away of land and the removal of sediment. This process normally takes place slowly but in certain instances the rate of erosion may be accelerated, for example as a result of climate change. The European Commission study, living with Coastal Erosion in Europe, which was completed in 2004, highlighted some important findings including the fact that some previous interventions, while solving erosion problems locally, have exacerbated coastal erosion at other locations or generated other environmental problems. The mechanisms at play in erosion and accretion (deposition) can be very complex and must be understood to ensure appropriate management regimes are put in place.

It has been found that extensive areas of soft coastline around the Irish coast, particularly in the east, are currently undergoing rapid erosion.

Kerry has experienced ongoing coastal erosion in recent years. Areas of soft coastline at Rossbeigh/Inch, Banna/Ballyheigue and along the Maharees peninsula have been particularly vulnerable. In order to understand coastal erosions in these large coastal cells, two coastal studies, the Tralee Bay Coastal Study and the Dingle Bay East Castlemaine Harbour Coastal Study, have been commissioned. The studies are likely to be completed over the lifetime of this plan.

The overall aim of these two studies is to undertake detailed coastal flood and erosion risk management investigation and to develop an appropriate plan to best manage the risks identified to human health, the environment (with a specific focus on European Sites), cultural heritage and economic activity. The studies will also provide baseline information on erosion and sedimentation patterns in the coastal cell areas and how these patterns could be affected as a result of coastal and flood protection measures. It is envisaged that this information will inform future interventions if necessary. The studies acknowledge and are informed by the



fact that any potential interventions recommended will have to be in compliance with relevant EU legislation – notably but not limited to the Habitats, EIA and Water Framework Directives.

### Coastal Erosion

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 11-47** Support and facilitate the implementation of the recommendations and actions arising from the ongoing Tralee Bay and the Dingle Bay East/Castlemaine Harbour Coastal Studies, subject to compliance with the EIA and Habitats Directive.
- KCDP 11-48** Prohibit any coastal protection works which have not been the subject of a recognised design process and have not been assessed in terms of their likely impact on the marine and coastal environments.
- KCDP 11-49** Restrict development in coastal areas where the natural erosion process is likely to threaten the viability of such development.
- KCDP 11-50** Facilitate and support site specific interventions to reduce the risk of coastal erosion, subject to environmental assessment.
- KCDP 11-51** Facilitate and support the maintenance and/or appropriate replacement of existing defensive coastal infrastructure to protect existing critical infrastructure.

### 11.4.3 Sand Dunes

Sand dunes form an effective natural coastal defence and interference with dunes can have a serious impact on the coast. Serious sand dune erosion continues to occur in many of the well-known recreational areas in the County.

The Council proposes to support the protection of these areas, where possible, by undertaking appropriate management measures in consultation with relevant agencies and landowners.

The county has a variety of spectacular sand dune physical features and associated biodiversity which combined produce some of the most intriguing natural environment in Ireland. In particular, the Maharees, Banna, Inch, Rossbeigh and Castlegregory are designated for annexed sand dune habitats and species, however, these habitats are facing a number of pressures. These include long-term pressures from sea erosion likely to be exacerbated by climate change, to short-term pressures for recreation and tourism activities. Recreational and amenity pressure must be developed and managed in a sustainable manner so as to ensure that the quality of the underlying environment is not unduly compromised. In particular the potential for wildlife disturbance (light, noise etc.), trampling and erosion of sensitive vegetation / sand-dunes and the potential for the introduction / spread of invasive introduced species, must be carefully managed by all relevant stakeholders.

### Sand Dunes

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 11-52** Prohibit the removal of beach material, aggregates, sand and gravel, including the removal of material from sand dune ecosystems.
- KCDP 11-53** Protect the sand dunes of the County, (which include annexed habitats), and prohibit any development that would damage the integrity (ecological and visual) of these areas.
- KCDP 11-54** Provide car parking and regularise beach related commercial facilities in the Sand Dune area/coastal areas of the Maharees, Inch, Banna and other coastal locations so as to



protect the overall integrity of the sand dunes. Any proposal must have regard to nature conservation and landscape designations. Any works proposed must be in compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

**KCDP 11-55** Work with local stakeholders and community-based organisations to facilitate and support community led initiatives to protect the coastal areas from erosion and to mitigate the effects of climate change, subject to environmental assessment.

#### 11.4.4 Coastal Squeeze

Coastal squeeze is defined as the squeeze of coastal ecosystems (e.g., beaches, salt marshes, mud, and sand flats) between rising sea levels and naturally or artificially fixed shorelines, including hard engineering defences.

According to the European Commission 2004 study ‘living with Coastal Erosion in Europe’, the combined effect of coastal erosion, infrastructure, development and the erection of defences to protect them have created, in many areas, a narrow coastal zone.

Coastal squeeze typically effects low-lying and inter-tidal areas, which would otherwise naturally adjust to changes in sea level, storms and tides but cannot do so as a result of the presence of physical barriers.

#### Coastal Squeeze

It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 11-56** Ensure that Coastal Squeeze is taken into account when formulating and assessing coastal development proposals.

#### 11.4.5 Blue Flag Beach and Green Coast Awards

The Blue Flag beach system is operated in Ireland by An Taisce-The National Trust for Ireland on behalf of the Foundation for Environmental Education. The Blue Flag is one of the world’s most recognised eco-labels. Beaches and marinas that achieve this accolade must comply with a specific set of criteria relating to water quality, information provision, environmental education, safety and beach management. At beaches the bathing water must comply with the excellent standard in accordance with the EU Bathing Water Directive<sup>1</sup>.

The Green Coast Award is for beaches which have excellent water quality, but which are also prized for their natural, unspoilt environment and therefore are often located in more rural / remote areas.

#### Blue Flag Beach and Green Coast Award

It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 11-57** Support coastal initiatives such as the Green Coast Award and Blue Flag scheme and seek to ensure that coastal areas and bathing waters are maintained to the highest level to provide a valuable recreational resource in the County.

**KCDP 11-58** Facilitate and support community groups in the provision and management of toilet, changing and parking facilities at blue flag beaches and other suitable coastal locations, where appropriate and subject to environmental assessment.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.beachawards.ie/>



### 11.5 Land Use & Flood Risk Management

Flooding is a natural process and can happen at any time in a wide variety of locations. It constitutes a temporary covering of land by water and presents a risk to people, communities, property, infrastructure and the environment.

Locating development in an area at risk from flooding can lead to property damage, human stress and hardship, problems obtaining property insurance and consequential demands for the expenditure on flood protection works. Understanding flood risk is therefore an essential step in managing the associated impacts of flooding and in making informed decisions in addressing such impacts.

The planning system plays a major role in land use and flood management and is central to the strategic flood risk management pillar - Prevention. The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009 sets out a framework for the assessment of flood risk at all stages in the planning process.

The guiding principles are the avoidance of development in areas of risk (unless it can be justified on wider sustainability grounds), the substitution to less vulnerable uses where avoidance is not possible and the mitigation and management of the risk where avoidance and substitution are not possible. It is critical for the long-term sustainable management of flood risk that planning decisions take full account of existing and potential future flood risk to avoid or minimise the creation of new flood risks that could otherwise arise through inappropriate future development.

There are essentially two major causes of flooding, coastal and inland. Coastal flooding is caused by higher sea levels than normal, largely as a result of storm surges, resulting in the sea overflowing onto the land. Inland flooding is caused by prolonged and/or intense rainfall and includes overland flows, river flooding, flooding from artificial drainage systems, groundwater flooding and estuarial flooding. Flooding can also arise from the failure of water infrastructure.

The development of lands can also increase both the rate and volume of runoff from rainfall events to existing sewer networks and watercourses. Such increases can in certain circumstances lead to flooding. It is an objective of this plan to ensure that surface water runoff from completed developments are restricted to their greenfield rate and that appropriate measures through design or sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDs) are implemented.

#### 11.5.1 CFRAM and ICPSS Programmes (See also S13.2.4 Storm Water Management)

The Office of Public Works (OPW) is the lead organisation for flood risk management in Ireland. The OPW undertook the national Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) programme which delivers on core components of the National Flood Policy (2004) and on the requirements of the EU Floods Directive [2007/60/EC], in co-operation with local authorities and other public bodies.

In 2011, the national Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) identified communities at potentially significant flood risk referred to as the Areas for Further Assessment (AFAs), which were then the focus of the CFRAM Studies and the resultant Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) in each River Basin District (UOM). Data collection included historic flood event and rainfall records, high resolution floodplain surveying, and detailed channel/structure surveys of selected rivers. Hydraulic models determined flood hazard (where rivers or the sea is likely to flood in extreme events) and flood risk (the resultant impact on people, the economy and the environment).

There are 15 AFA areas in County Kerry including Abbeydorney, Ballylongford, Banna, Castleisland, Dingle, Glenflesk, Kenmare, Killarney, Listowel, Milltown, Moneycashen, Portmagee, Tarbert Power Station, Tralee and Tullig (Castleisland). The relevant FRMPs for these area catchments (UOM21, UOM22, UOM23, UOM24) set out the strategy, including a set of proposed measures, for the cost-effective and sustainable, long-term



management of flood risk, including the areas where the flood risk has been determined as being potentially significant. The OPW has published predictive fluvial flood maps prepared through the CFRAM programme for the AFAs, including Flood Zone maps.

In addition, the OPW's Irish Coastal Protection Strategy Study (ICPSS) provides strategic current scenario and future scenario (up to 2100) coastal flood hazard maps and strategic coastal erosion maps for the national coastline.

### Land Use and Flood Risk Management

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>KCDP 11-59</b> | Continue to work with the Office of Public Works to implement, subject to environmental assessment, the adopted Flood Risk Management Plans arising from the CFRAM study and address existing and potential future flood risks arising from coastal, fluvial, pluvial, groundwater and sources of flood risk. |
| <b>KCDP 11-60</b> | Support the sustainable development of capital works under the flood capital investment programme and Flood Risk Management Plans for UOM24, UOM23, UOM22 and UOM21 developed under the CFRAM process and further to environmental assessment.  |
| <b>KCDP 11-61</b> | Take into consideration areas identified at risk of flooding under the CFRAM and ICPSS studies and any other studies/analysis commissioned by the Council/allied state agencies to inform planning policy, development management decisions and capital projects.   |
| <b>KCDP 11-62</b> | Have regard to and implement the recommendations and provisions of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management guidelines (DoEHLG 2009).  |
| <b>KCDP 11-63</b> | Liaise with the OPW on all issues involving river drainage and flood relief, especially when dealing with any development consent applications in the vicinity of important drainage channels.  |
| <b>KCDP 11-64</b> | Protect and sustainably enhance, where appropriate, flood conveyance, retention and storage features in the landscape, including wetlands.  |
| <b>KCDP 11-65</b> | Ensure that developments in upland areas provide sufficient storm water attenuation to avoid the occurrence of river erosion or flooding downstream subject to hydrological and ground/peat stability assessments.  |

#### 11.5.2 Flood Risk Vulnerability

The vulnerability of development to flooding depends on the nature of the development, its occupation and the construction methods used. The classification of different land uses and types of development as highly vulnerable, less vulnerable or water-compatible is influenced primarily by the ability to manage the safety of people in flood events and the long-term implications for recovery of the function and structure of buildings. The Planning Guidelines on the Planning System and Flood Risk Management (DoEHLG 2009) and classifies different types of development according to Flood Risk Vulnerability.



Vulnerability Class	Land uses and types of development which include*:
<b>Highly vulnerable development (including essential infrastructure)</b>	Garda, ambulance and fire stations and command centres required to be operational during flooding. Hospitals. Emergency access and egress points. Schools. Dwelling houses, student halls of residence and hostels. Residential institutions such as residential care homes, children’s homes and social services homes. Caravans and mobile home parks. Dwelling houses designed, constructed or adapted for the elderly or, other people with impaired mobility; and Essential infrastructure, such as primary transport and utilities distribution, including electricity generating power stations and sub-stations, water and sewage treatment, and potential significant sources of pollution (SEVESO sites, IPPC sites, etc.) in the event of flooding.
<b>Less vulnerable development</b>	Buildings used for: retail, leisure, warehousing, commercial, industrial and non-residential institutions. Land and buildings used for holiday or short-let caravans and camping, subject to specific warning and evacuation plans. Land and buildings used for agriculture and forestry. Waste treatment (except landfill and hazardous waste). Mineral working and processing; and Local transport infrastructure.
<b>Water compatible development</b>	Flood control infrastructure. Docks, marinas and wharves. Navigation facilities. Ship building, repairing and dismantling, dockside fish processing and refrigeration and compatible activities requiring a waterside location. Water-based recreation and tourism (excluding sleeping accommodation). Lifeguard and coastguard stations. Amenity open space, outdoor sports and recreation and essential facilities such as changing rooms; and Essential ancillary sleeping or residential accommodation for staff required by uses in this category (subject to a specific warning and evacuation plan).
*Uses not listed here should be considered on their own merits	

**Table 11.1 Classification of vulnerability of different types of development  
(The Planning Guidelines on the Planning System and Flood Risk, 2009)**

It is the policy of the council to promote the use of natural flood management methods for development and redevelopment to reduce flood risk to communities. Natural flood management is the alteration, restoration or use of landscape features to manage surface water in order to reduce flood risk.

#### **11.5.2.1 Sequential Approach Justification Test**

The sequential approach ensures that development, particularly new flood vulnerable development, is first and foremost directed towards land that is at low risk of flooding.

The Justification Test as outlined in the *Planning Guidelines on the Planning System and Flood Risk Management (DoEHLG 2009)* has been designed to rigorously assess the appropriateness, or otherwise, of flood vulnerable zonings and developments that are being considered in areas of moderate or high flood risk.



Spatial planning can play a significant role in ensuring that the design of developments prevent and reduce surface water run-off and diffuse pollution, through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). The council will also ensure the diversion of surface water from combined sewers where possible.

It is the policy of the Planning Authority to:

- Adopt a sequential approach to flood risk management in the making of subsidiary plans and local area plans and to guide flood vulnerable development away from undeveloped areas that have been identified as being at risk of flooding.
- Zone/designate land for flood vulnerable development in areas with a high or moderate risk of flooding (Zone A & B) only where it can be clearly demonstrated, on a solid evidence base, that the zoning or designation will satisfy the justification test set out in the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (DoEHLG 2009).
- Adopt a strategic, integrated, sustainable and proactive approach to catchment management in the County to reduce and manage flood risk.
- Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and integrate sustainable water management solutions (such as SuDS, the minimisation of non-porous surfacing and green roofs) to create safe places in accordance with the guidelines.
- Avail of opportunities to enhance biodiversity and amenity and to ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive sites and habitats.
- Where applicable develop flood storage areas and/or other nature-based solutions to flood risk.

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out for this plan and has informed the land use zonings. Flood Maps indicating those areas in Tralee, Killarney and Listowel that are at risk of flooding are also included in Vol 2.

#### Sequential Approach Justification Test

It is an objective of the Council to:

<b>KCDP 11-66</b>	Support investment in subsequent projects by capital spending agencies to deliver flood relief schemes, further to environmental assessment.
<b>KCDP 11-67</b>	Support the use of nature-based solutions in flood schemes and coastal protection works.
<b>KCDP 11-68</b>	Support measures for the management and protection of coastal resources and communities against coastal erosion, flooding and other threats.

### 11.6 Landscape

*“The landscape has an important public interest role in the cultural, ecological, environmental and social fields, and constitutes a resource favourable to economic activity and whose protection, management and planning can contribute to job creation; contributes to the formation of local cultures and is a basic component of the European natural and cultural heritage, contributing to human well-being and consolidation of the European identity; is an important part of the quality of life for people everywhere: in urban areas and in the countryside, in degraded areas as well as in areas of high quality, in areas recognised as being of outstanding beauty as well as everyday areas; is a key element of individual and social well-being and its protection, management and planning entail rights and responsibilities for everyone” (European Landscape Convention, 2000).*

#### 11.6.1 National & Regional Policy

The National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025 sets out a high-level policy framework to achieve balance between the protection, management and planning of the landscape and ensure compliance with the European Landscape Convention, which came into force in 2004.





NPO 61 in the NPF aims to facilitate landscape protection, management and change through the preparation of a National Landscape Character Map and the development of guidance on the preparation of guidance on local landscape character assessment including (including historic landscape characterisation) to ensure a consistent approach to landscape planning.

The RSES notes that our regions diverse landscapes and seascapes are key assets which require careful protection. It is an objective of the RSES (RPO 129) to develop a Regional Landscape Strategy to facilitate landscape protection, management and development of guidance on local landscape character assessments, (including urban and historic landscape characterisation) to ensure a consistent approach to landscape character assessment, particularly across planning and administrative boundaries.

The National Landscape Character Map and Regional Landscape Strategy have not, to date been completed. Therefore, in order to inform this plan the Council has undertaken its own detailed *Landscape Review* to inform areas of visual sensitivity and protected views. Any future review of the CDP will take into account the National and Regional Strategies once completed.

### 11.6.2 Landscape Sensitivity

The outstanding landscapes of Kerry are one of the County's defining features and one of its most important economic assets. There are significant areas of landscape importance, which are important not only for their intrinsic value as places of natural beauty but also because they provide a real asset for residents and visitors alike in terms of recreation, tourism and other uses. Few counties possess the variety of different landscapes that are found here - from the beautiful unspoilt beaches and rolling hills and pastureland of North Kerry to the rugged coastline and elevated mountainous wilderness of South & West Kerry.

Tourism is a sector most likely to deliver jobs to rural areas in the short to medium term. In addition, the landscape is also an important contributor to the quality of life that underpins the attractiveness of Kerry as a location for inward investment. It is critical, therefore, that Kerry's landscapes are protected, and this is a key objective of this Development Plan.

The importance of landscape and visual amenity and the role of planning in its protection are recognised in the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), which requires that Development Plans include objectives for the preservation of the character of the landscape, including the preservation of views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest.

The *Landscape Review* of County Kerry can be found in Volume 1 – Appendices. This review includes a process of identifying and describing variations in the landscape. It seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features (characteristics) that make landscapes distinctive.

In the Landscape Review, the landscapes of the county are described in terms of their type, the impact of various types of development on these landscapes are assessed, landscape areas are defined, with the visual of sensitivity of these landscape then determined.

Finally, the review identifies landscapes and views that should be protected in the County Development Plan.

#### Landscape Sensitivity

It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 11-69** Have regard to any future National Landscape Character Assessment, Regional Landscape Assessments and Landscape Character Map, and the publication of Section 28 Guidelines on Landscape Character Assessment.



<b>KCDP 11-70</b>	Protect the landscapes of the County as a major economic asset and an invaluable amenity which contributes to the quality of people's lives.
<b>KCDP 11-71</b>	Protect the landscapes of the County by ensuring that any new developments do not detrimentally impact on the character, integrity, distinctiveness or scenic value of their area. Any development which could unduly impact upon such landscapes will not be permitted.

### 11.6.3 Landscape Designations

In the preparation of landscape designations for the County, the Planning Authority has had regard to the Landscape Review of County Kerry which outlines the quality of a landscape itself, but also the level of existing development and the ability of the landscape to absorb further development without altering it to an unacceptable degree.

Designations are not wholly dependent on a hierarchy of the quality of landscapes. Designations also reflect the importance of a landscape to the overall amenity of a locality and its importance to communities within these areas.

There are two landscape designations for the county.

- 1 **Visually Sensitive Areas**
- 2 **Rural General**

It is important that development in all areas be integrated into its surroundings in order to minimise the effect on the landscape and to maximise the potential for development. Development in areas outside of designated areas, should, in their designs take account of the topography, vegetation, existing boundaries and features of the area.

Permission will not be granted for development which cannot be integrated into its surroundings.

#### 11.6.3.1 Visually Sensitive Areas

Visually sensitive landscape areas comprise the outstanding landscapes throughout the County which are sensitive to alteration. Rugged mountain ranges, spectacular coastal vistas and unspoilt wilderness areas are some of the features within this designation.

These areas are particularly sensitive to development. In these areas, development will only be considered subject to satisfactory integration into the landscape and compliance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The County enjoys both a national and international reputation for its scenic beauty. It is imperative in order to maintain the natural beauty and character of the County, that these areas be protected.

#### 11.6.3.2 Rural General

Rural landscapes within this designation generally have a higher capacity to absorb development than visually sensitive landscapes. Notwithstanding the higher capacity of these areas to absorb development, it is important that proposals are designated to integrate into their surroundings in order to minimise the effect on the landscape and to maximise the potential for development.

Proposed developments should, in their designs, take account of the topography, vegetation, existing boundaries and features of the area. Permission will not be granted for development which cannot be integrated into its surroundings.



#### 11.6.4 Development in Designated Areas

As outlined above and in accordance with Objective 11-69 and Objective 11-70 the protection of the landscape is a major factor in developing policies for rural areas. It should be noted that the landscapes and scenery are not just of amenity value but constitute an enormous economic asset. The protection of this asset is therefore of primary importance in developing the potential of the County.

The capacity of an area to visually absorb development is also influenced by a combination of the following factors:

1. Topography - development in elevated areas will usually be visible over a wide area; development in enclosed areas will not.
2. Vegetation - areas which support (or which have the potential to support) trees, tall hedges and woody vegetation can screen new development from view. Areas which cannot easily sustain such vegetation will be unlikely to screen new development.
3. Development - new development is likely to be more conspicuous in the context of existing development in the landscape.

Visually sensitive landscapes are particularly notable by virtue of their scenic and visual quality and offer significant opportunities for tourism development and rural recreational activities. The Council will seek to ensure that a balance is achieved between the protection of sensitive landscapes and the appropriate socio-economic development of these areas. Development is not precluded in visually sensitive landscapes however, development proposals will be required to demonstrate that they integrate and respect the visual quality of the landscape.

The following provisions shall apply to development in Visually sensitive landscapes areas:

- There is no alternative location for the proposed development in areas outside of the designation.
- Individual proposals shall be designed sympathetically to the landscape and the existing structures and shall be sited so as not to have an adverse impact on the character, integrity and distinctiveness of the landscape or natural environment.
- Any proposal must be designed and sited so as to ensure that it is not unduly obtrusive. The onus is, therefore, on the applicant to avoid obtrusive locations. Existing site features including trees and hedgerows should be retained to screen the development.
- Any proposal will be subject to the Development Management requirements set out in this plan in relation to design, site size, drainage etc.
- The new structure shall be located adjacent to, or a suitable location as close as possible to, the existing farm structure or family home. Individual residential home units shall be designed sympathetically to the landscape, the existing structures and sited so as not to have an adverse impact on the character of the landscape or natural environment. Existing site features including trees and hedgerows shall be retained to form a part of a comprehensive landscaping scheme. Consideration must also be given to alternative locations.
- Extending development into unspoilt coastal areas is to be avoided.

Notwithstanding the landscape designation of a site, where infrastructure is proposed by the Local Authority or another prescribed body, these works will be considered on their own merits on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the proper planning and development of the area.

#### 11.6.5 Views and Prospects

County Kerry contains views and prospects of outstanding natural beauty which are recognised internationally. There is a need to protect and conserve these adjoining public roads throughout the County. Any development which hinders or materially affects these views/prospects will not be permitted.



The Wild Atlantic Way has a number of existing viewing points along its route. In order to maximise the potential of the Wild Atlantic Way these existing viewing points will be protected. The Council will work with Fáilte Ireland in the sustainable development of these viewing points, and the identification of additional viewing locations along the route.

### Views and Prospects

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>KCDP 11-72</b> | Preserve the views and prospects as defined on Maps contained in Volume 4.   |
| <b>KCDP 11-73</b> | Facilitate the sustainable development of existing and the identification of new Viewing Points along the route of the Wild Atlantic Way in conjunction with Fáilte Ireland, while ensuring the protection of environmental attributes in the area through the implementation of environmental protection objectives, standards and guidelines of this Plan. |
| <b>KCDP 11-74</b> | Prohibit developments that have a material effect on views designated in this plan from the public road or greenways towards scenic features and/or public areas.  |

### 11.7 Geological Heritage

There are many sites of geological interest located within the county. Highlights include an Amphibian trackway in Valentia, volcanic lavas in the Clogher Head area, Silurian fossils, Killarney chalk and numerous glacial deposits and features.

To date Geological Survey Ireland has identified over 100 County Geological Sites (CGS) in Kerry. Limited information on these sites is available and the CDP supports the further audit of the CGS in consultation with GSI. A list and approximate location of CGS are provided in Volume 1 - Appendices.

Kerry County Council recognises that extraction and the creation of rock cuttings also offers opportunities for increasing our understanding and awareness of our Geological Heritage.

### Geological Heritage

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>KCDP 11-75</b> | Seek to preserve and protect important features of geological interest and to maintain the conservation value of those features or areas of geological interest.  |
| <b>KCDP 11-76</b> | Facilitate and support the auditing of the geological heritage sites of the county in partnership with Geological Survey Ireland and support initiatives which increase geological understanding and awareness. |

# CHAPTER 12

# ENERGY







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## 12.0 Energy

### 12.1 Introduction

The availability of energy is of critical importance to the continued development and expansion of employment in County Kerry. It is vital that Kerry has sufficient capacity to meet current and future needs. Kerry County Council recognises the essential requirement for energy production and distribution. It is the policy of the Council to support and provide for the sustainable development of indigenous energy resources, with an emphasis on renewable energy supplies, in the interests of economic progress and the proper planning and sustainable development of the county.

The development of secure and reliable electricity transmission infrastructure is also recognised as a key factor for supporting economic development and attracting investment to the County. The Council supports the development of a safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity and to support and facilitate the development of enhanced electricity networks and facilitate new transmission infrastructure projects that might be brought forward in the lifetime of this plan under EirGrid's (2017) Grid Development Strategy.

In relation to power generation, Kerry is well placed to encourage and facilitate the sustainable development of power generation facilities in the county. The Council will continue to support the infrastructural renewal and sustainable development of electricity and gas networks. The County has, in terms of alternative energy, huge potential for the development of wind, solar, biomass, geothermal, hydro and wave energy. The wave and wind resources are among the richest in Europe.

The Council shall work in partnership with existing service providers to facilitate required enhancement and upgrading of existing infrastructure and networks (subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process) and support the safeguarding of strategic energy corridors from encroachment by other developments that could compromise the delivery of energy networks. This will ensure that the energy needs of future population and economic expansion within designated growth areas and across the county can be delivered in a sustainable and timely manner and that capacity is available at local and regional scale to meet future needs. In ensuring energy and growth are integrated, the Council will support the emerging climate action policy to align energy planning with spatial planning.

The Council supports the sustainable development of data centres which can be serviced with a renewable energy source (subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process) at spatially suitable locations that make efficient use of the existing transmission network. The potential to recover waste heat from data centres to support potential decarbonisation projects such as district heating schemes will be supported. The council also supports strengthened and sustainable local community renewable energy networks, micro renewable generation, climate smart countryside projects and connections from such initiatives to the grid.

As regards protection of the environment including residential amenity, any plans, projects and activities requiring consent arising from the energy policy outlined in this chapter will be subject to the relevant environmental assessments including SEA, EIA and AA where appropriate.

### Energy

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 12-1** Support and facilitate the sustainable provision of a reliable energy supply in the County, with emphasis on increasing energy supplies derived from renewable resources whilst seeking to protect and maintain biodiversity, archaeological and built heritage, the landscape and residential amenity and integration of spatial planning and energy planning in the county.



## 12.2 Gas Network

Gas Networks Ireland (GNI) operates, builds, and maintains the state-owned gas network (representing 30% of Ireland's primary energy). They aim to move to a "carbon neutral" gas network by 2050. Renewable gas is an extremely flexible and efficient fuel that can be fully accommodated into the existing gas network. The gas network also has the capacity to accommodate new loads as part of the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. Increased use of the gas network can provide enhanced energy security at a relatively low cost.

There is significant demand for renewable gas<sup>1</sup> from industry as a heating and transport fuel. In addition, the circular economy benefits will also deliver a major decarbonisation benefit for agriculture and industry. There is significant potential for the Region to lead in the integration of the biogas sector and biogas production as a core element of sustainable agriculture.

The Council supports the strengthening of the gas network to sustainably service settlements and employment areas in the Region, and to progress development of infrastructure to enable strategic energy projects in the county, including the Tarbert/Ballylongford Landbank, and the extension of the Gas Network from Listowel into the Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle settlements of Tralee, Killarney and Killorglin.

### Gas Network

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 12-2** Promote renewable gas leading to carbon emission reduction in agriculture, industry, heating and transport as well as sustainable local employment opportunities.
- KCDP 12-3** Facilitate the expansion of the gas network, including the facilitation of a gas importation facility in the Tarbert/Ballylongford Landbank, and the expansion of the network to the Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle settlements of Tralee, Killarney and Killorglin.
- KCDP 12-4** Support investment in sustainably developing renewable gas and provision of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) refuelling infrastructure.
- KCDP 12-5** Consider the sustainable development of Data Centres at appropriate locations powered by renewable energy where it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant adverse impact on the built and natural environment, visual character of the landscape or on residential amenities. Seek opportunities to recover waste heat to support potential decarbonisation projects such as district heating schemes.

## 12.3 Transmission Grid

The development of secure and reliable electricity transmission infrastructure is recognised as a key factor for supporting economic development and attracting investment to the County.

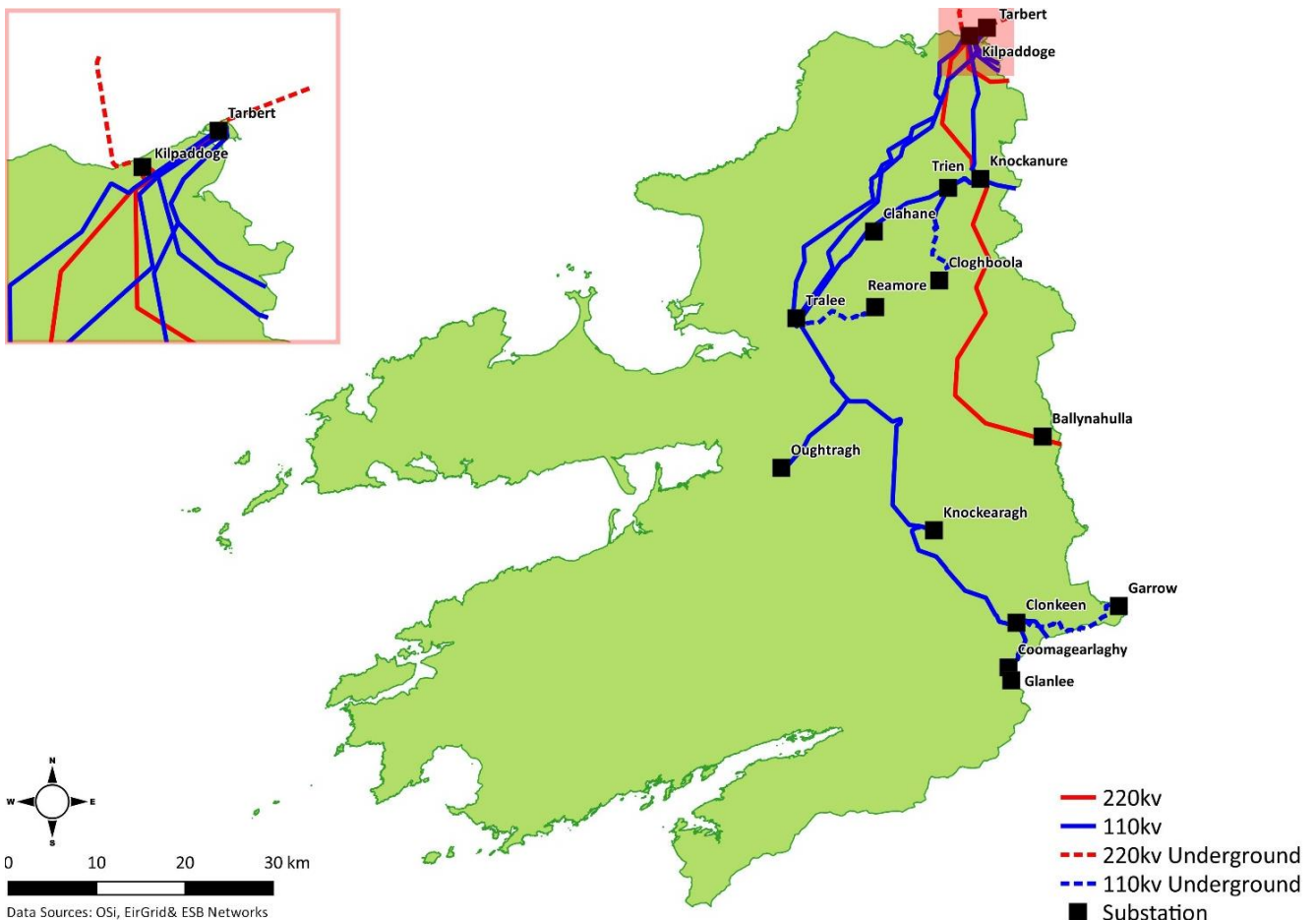
The supply of electricity has been opened up to increased competition and new generation plants may connect to the electricity network to transfer power from where it is produced to where there is a demand for it.

Kerry County Council supports the maintenance and upgrading of existing high voltage electrical infrastructure, and the provision of new high voltage transformer stations and new overhead transmission power lines subject to no significant adverse effects on the environment or Natura 2000 sites. Such

<sup>1</sup> Renewable Gas, often referred to as biomethane, is a clean, renewable and carbon neutral fuel. Its potential as a renewable fuel for heat, electricity and transport is well-recognised in response to the EU's commitment to becoming a highly energy-efficient, low carbon economy. Gas Networks Ireland recognises biomethane as a renewable fuel which can significantly improve the sustainability of the natural gas network and reduce dependency on imported natural gas.



infrastructure may be required for reinforcement of the transmission network, related to growing electricity demand from existing customers, as well as connection of new generation and large demand customers (i.e., industry).



**Map 12.1: Transmission Network & Substations**

**Transmission Grid**

**It is an objective of the Council to:**

- KCDP 12-6** Facilitate sustainable energy infrastructure provision, so as to provide for the further physical and economic development of the County.
- KCDP 12-7** Support and facilitate the sustainable development of enhanced electricity and gas supplies, additional electricity generation capacity, and associated networks, to serve the existing and future needs of the County.
- KCDP 12-8** Ensure that the siting of electricity power lines is managed in terms of the physical and visual impact of these lines on both the natural and built environment, the conservation value of Natura 2000 sites and especially in sensitive landscape areas. When considering the siting of powerlines in these areas, consideration will be given to undergrounding or the selection of alternative routes.



**KCDP 12-9** Support the sustainable implementation of EirGrid’s Grid 25 Investment Programme (and successor programmes), subject to landscape, residential, amenity and environmental considerations.

#### 12.4 Energy Conservation & Efficiency

Kerry County Council is committed to energy end use efficiency and increasing the use of renewable energy in all new building projects.

##### Energy Conservation & Efficiency

###### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 12-10** Promote energy conservation and efficiency through reduced consumption and incorporating renewable energy technology into building design standards.

**KCDP 12-11** Facilitate the sustainable provision of charging infrastructure for electric vehicles.

#### 12.5 Renewable Energy

Access to secure, clean and affordable energy is essential for the future economic and social development of the county. The Council will continue to support and facilitate the sustainable development of the renewable energy sector in line with the strategic goals set out by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and the Environment whilst balancing the need for new development with the protection of the environmental, cultural and heritage assets of the county.

Renewable energy (RE) and associated technologies can, if not managed, impact negatively on the County’s natural and built heritage, and on the amenity of residents. For this reason, while the County Development Plan puts in place a framework within which objectives and policies will maximise the harvesting of renewable energy resources, the Plan also includes policies and objectives to protect the County’s heritage values and residential amenities. In this way a balance can be struck between the provision of renewable energy developments and the preservation and conservation of the natural and built environment.

##### Renewable Energy

###### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 12-12** Maximise the development of all renewable energies at appropriate locations in a manner consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the County.

##### 12.5.1 National Targets and Responding to Climate Change

The Climate Action Plan<sup>2</sup> published by the Government in 2019 is committed to achieving a net zero carbon energy systems objective for Irish society and in the process, create a resilient, vibrant and sustainable country. The Climate Action Plan 2019 puts in place a decarbonisation pathway to 2030 consistent with reaching the EU target of Net Zero emissions by 2050. To meet the required level of emissions reduction, by 2030 it seeks to:

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.dccae.gov.ie/en-ie/climate-action/publications/Pages/Climate-Action-Plan.aspx>



- Reduce CO<sub>2</sub> eq. emissions from the sector by 50–55% relative to 2030 Pre-NDP projections.
- Deliver an early and complete phase-out of coal- and peat-fired electricity generation.
- Increase electricity generated from renewable sources to 70%, indicatively comprised of:
  - at least 3.5 GW of offshore renewable energy, this was revised upwards to 5GW in the 2020 *Programme for Government*
  - up to 1.5 GW of grid-scale solar energy
  - up to 8.2 GW total of increased onshore wind capacity
- Meet 15% of electricity demand by renewable sources contracted under Corporate PPAs.

**12.5.2 Policy Overview and Legislative Context**

This chapter has been prepared after consideration of relevant European, national legislation, and local planning frameworks which provides the statutory basis for planning policy for the development and use of renewable energy resources and for the protection of the environment. This chapter presents a vision that supports and promotes the development of renewable energy developments in a balanced and sustainable manner.

International/European		
EU Renewable Energy Directive 2009/28/EC on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable resources	Kyoto Protocol & EU 2030 Framework for climate and energy policies	Paris Agreement
European Green Deal European Climate Law 2020		



National							
National Climate Plan 2019 & National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) 2021-2030							
Strategy for Renewable Energy 2012-2020, (DCENR)	National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP) 2017	National Energy Efficiency National Plan (NEENP) 2017-2020	White Paper on Energy Policy – Ireland’s Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030 (DCENR)	Interim Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Statutory Plans, Renewable Energy and climate change (2017)	Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines (DHPLG 2019)	National Adaptation Plan 2018	Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS)



County	
Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028	Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2022

**Figure 12.1: Policy context for renewable energy policy**



### 12.5.2.1 Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy Renewable Energy Policy

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy supports the research and development of renewable energy resources throughout the southern region. In particular, RPOs 95-104 support renewable energy generation (both onshore and offshore), the upgrading of the grid to integrate renewable energy resources, and innovation and research (including energy storage and carbon capture).

RPO 98 states that it is an objective to support the development of a Regional Renewable Energy Strategy. Having regards to the significant contribution that Kerry has made to date in relation to the realisation of wind energy targets, it is imperative that any Regional Strategy takes cognisance of this installed capacity including permitted but not yet constructed developments, when assessing other suitable locations in the wider region.

### 12.5.2.2 Methodology for Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategies (LARES), SEAI 2013

This methodology aims to facilitate consistency of approach in the preparation of a Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy (LARES), and to assist local authorities in developing robust, co-ordinated and sustainable strategies in accordance with national and European obligations.

The key objectives of this methodology may be summarised as follows:

- to provide a structured approach to preparing a Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy (LARES).
- to provide information and support to local authorities wishing to create a LARES.
- to facilitate consistency in the generation of local authority renewable energy strategies.
- to support local authorities in the development of specific policies and objectives in their development plans.
- to assist local authorities in providing transparent information to the public and prospective developers on the future development of renewable energy within a local authority area.
- to facilitate a consistent identification of key renewable energy resources and development areas by local authorities.

The LARES has informed the preparation of this chapter.

The *Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2019* (DHPLG) have been used to identify areas suitable for wind development and to inform wind energy policy.

## 12.5.3 Existing Renewable Energy Development

A significant number of projects have been permitted and constructed of varying types across the County including, wind, solar, hydro, and bioenergy developments. Wind energy is by far the largest form of renewable energy completed in the county.

### 12.5.3.1 The Current Status of Wind Energy Development

To date, a total of 362 wind turbines have been constructed in the County. Planning permission exists for the construction of 12 additional turbines (24 turbines are the subject of appeals to An Bord Pleanála, and a 12 turbine Strategic Infrastructure application is currently being considered), which potentially could result in a total of 374 wind turbines in the County<sup>3</sup>. Map 12.2 highlights the location and distribution of the permitted and constructed wind developments in the County.

The 362 constructed wind turbines, made up of c.25 wind farms, can generate approximately 742MW of electricity, which equates to approximately 18% of the National wind generation total. County Kerry is making a substantial contribution towards meeting national renewable energy targets considering its land mass and population comprises 6.8% and 3.1% of the national totals respectively.

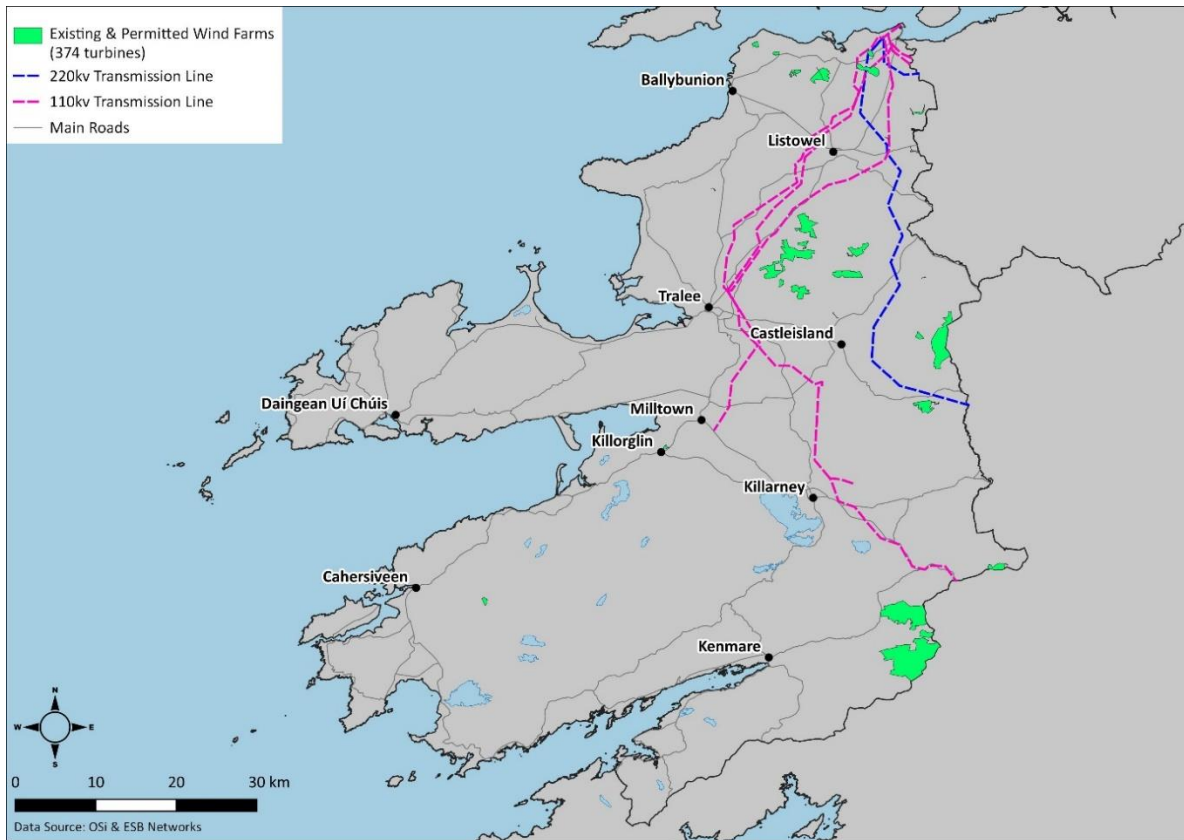
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<sup>3</sup> Position as of July 2021



No. of permitted wind turbines	374
No. of constructed wind turbines	362

**Table 12.1: Wind turbine construction in County Kerry**



**Map 12.2: Existing/Permitted Wind Energy Developments**

**12.5.3.2 Kerry’s Contribution in a Regional Context**

Table 12.2 indicates that the Southern Region<sup>4</sup> is contributing nearly 60% of wind energy generating capacity nationally. Kerry is contributing 742MW or 30.2% of the Regional total, yet the county’s population amounts to 9.3% of the region and Kerry’s landmass is 16% of the region.

Region	MW	% of Total
Southern	2483.314	59.3%
Northern & Western	1496.232	35.7%
Eastern & Midland	211.1903	5.0%

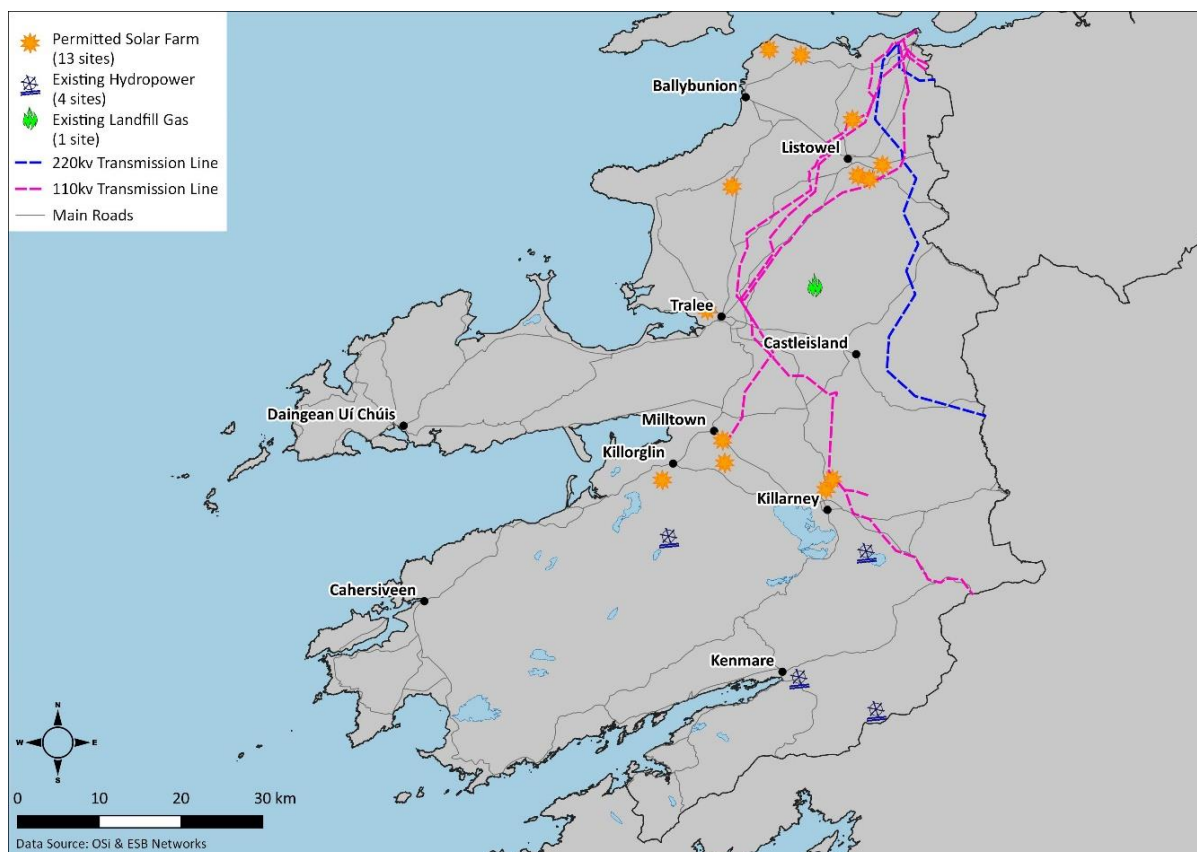
**Table 12.2: Wind generation by Region (February 2021)**

**12.5.3.3 The Current Status of Solar Energy Development**

To date, a total of 13 solar farms have been permitted in the County (1 application is currently being assessed). The location of these are shown on Map 12.3.

There is an increased number of a planning applications being made by homes, businesses and farms to install photovoltaic panels on roofs or within the curtilage of the premises. These will help meet their individual energy demands.

<sup>4</sup> Consists of counties Carlow, Clare, Cork, Kerry, Kilkenny, Limerick Tipperary, Wexford & Waterford.



**Map 12.3: Existing/Permitted Renewable Energy Developments**

#### 12.5.3.4 The Current Status of Hydropower Development

There are four hydro-electric schemes, small scale, in operation in the county, the locations of which are indicated on Map 12.3. Of these, three are connected to the national grid.

Name	River	MEC (mw)	Connected to Grid
Ashgrove Mill	Sheen	0.6	Yes
Trewell	Cottoners	1.2	Yes
Slaheny River Hydro	Slaheny	0.485	Yes
Kerry County Council	Lough Guitane	0.25	No

**Table 12.3: Hydro Power in Kerry**

#### 12.5.3.5 The Current Status of Bioenergy Development

The North Kerry Landfill at Muingnaminane has a system which has the capacity to generate 0.33MW of electricity and is connected to the Grid. There is scope to increase the size of this system in the future.

#### 12.5.4 Renewable Energy Policy

Kerry has seen significant development in terms of RE. With the resources that are available in the county, subject to the principles of proper planning and sustainable development, there is potential for additional development, but development is also subject to constraints. Policies have been developed accordingly, having regard to:

- Infrastructural Constraints
- Environmental Constraints
- Technological and Spatial Constraints
- Renewable Energy Potential within the Jurisdiction
- National Renewable Energy Policy Targets and Ability to Contribute





- Economic and Job Creation Objectives
- *Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines, 2019*
- *Interim Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Statutory Plans, Renewable Energy and Climate Change, 2017*

#### 12.5.4.1 Wind Energy

It is the policy of the Council to support, in principle and in appropriate locations, the sustainable development of wind energy resources in County Kerry. This policy document builds upon previous policies in place to develop an updated tool for identifying potentially suitable locations for wind energy development and to guide future assessment of wind energy planning applications in the County.

The Planning Authority is cognisant that renewable energy technology is constantly changing, and policy responses will need to adapt as necessary.

##### 12.5.4.1.1 Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2019 (DHPLG)

These Guidelines apply to planning applications and considerations for future wind energy development proposals, including the repowering and renewal of existing wind energy developments. The 2006 Guidelines are being revised to take account of current national and EU renewable energy policy and targets and to provide greater consistency of approach in planning for onshore wind energy development, as well as providing greater certainty and clarity to the planning system, to the wind industry and to local communities.

It should, however, be noted that these guidelines relate solely to land use and environmental issues related to on-shore wind energy and do not deal with issues concerning purchasing agreements, matters relating to grid capacity or off-shore wind energy.

The Specific Planning Policy Requirements (SPPR) as set out in the *Draft Wind Energy Development Guidelines* have been reflected in the policies in this chapter in relation to wind energy development. SPPRs must be applied by planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála in the performance of their functions.

#### Wind

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 12-13** Ensure that projects shall be designed and developed in line with the *Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines (DHPLG, 2019)* and any update of these guidelines in terms of siting, layout and environmental studies.

##### 12.5.4.1.2 Identification of Wind Development Areas

In order to assist planning authorities to identify key areas where there are wind energy resources capable of exploitation in a manner consistent with proper planning and sustainable development, a step-by-step approach is proposed in the *Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines (DHPLG, 2019)*. This ordered approach involves a sieve mapping analysis of the key environmental, landscape and technical criteria which must be balanced in order to identify the most suitable location for wind energy development. Areas have therefore been derived following a comprehensive analysis, the details of which are included in Volume 1, Appendix 6 (*Wind Zoning Methodology*).

Impact on the landscape was considered as part of the *Wind Zoning Methodology* to determine the sensitivity and capacity of landscapes to absorb wind development without significantly undermining the quality and integrity of the landscape in question.



Based on the outcome of this analysis and assessment, areas that are open to consideration for wind energy developments have been identified, see Map 12.4.

#### **12.5.4.1.3 Wind Energy Policy Areas**

In line with national guidance, areas of the County have been designated as 'Open for Consideration'. 'Repower areas' have also been identified. The methodology for the designation of these areas is outlined in *Wind Zoning Methodology Volume 1, Appendix 6*.

Applications for windfarms in these areas will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, subject to viable wind speeds, environmental resources and constraints and cumulative impacts in compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats and EIA Directives.

Areas outside 'Areas Open to Consideration' and 'Repower areas' are not deemed suitable for commercial wind farm development because of their overall sensitivity arising from landscape, ecological, recreational and or cultural and built heritage resources.

#### **12.5.4.1.4 Open-to-Consideration**

Having regard to the:

- Assimilative capacity of the landscape to absorb wind energy developments
- Cumulative impact of existing wind energy developments and proposed wind energy developments
- Cumulative impact of other existing and proposed developments
- Impact on sensitive receptors in the environment and European/Natura 2000 sites

Wind energy development in areas 'open to consideration' may be appropriate, depending on the character of the landscape and the potential impact of the proposed development. The capacity of these areas has limits and the cumulative impact of wind development in these areas will be monitored. Any proposal will be subject to proper planning sustainable development and guidelines set out in this chapter.

It is the policy of the Council to:

- Ensure that applications for wind development are accompanied by a technical assessment in relation to the slope stability, landslide susceptibility of the development site and the proposed project.
- Ensure that all proposals for wind energy development (including the grid connection) have regard to the cumulative effect of the development on the environment in conjunction with the entire development and other existing/permitted developments in the area.
- Ensure that all proposals demonstrate conformity with existing and approved wind farms to avoid visual clutter and demonstrate how they had regard to potential cumulative effects, where appropriate.
- Ensure that all applications have regard to the impact on existing built environment, particularly neighbouring residential properties and other sensitive amenity areas.
- Ensure that the development of wind turbines comprise a setback distance as detailed in the Draft Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2019 (DHPLG).
- Ensure that noise restriction limits are consistent with those as included in the Draft Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2019 (DHPLG).
- Ensure that no neighbouring property experiences the occurrence of shadow flicker and in accordance with the Draft Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2019 (DHPLG).
- Ensure that all applications have regard to the impact of any proposal for wind energy development on surrounding tourism and recreational related activities.
- Ensure that all applications are in compliance with Article 6 Habitats Directive, EIA Directive and Water Framework Directive, where applicable this should be informed by at least 2 years of annual (breeding and wintering) bird survey undertaken to best practices guidelines.



- Ensure that, at a minimum, turbines shall be set-back a distance equalling the blade tip height of the turbine from national roads and railways. Set-back from other roads will be site specific and determined at application stage.

### Wind Energy Development

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 12-14** Facilitate the sustainable development of wind energy development within open-to-consideration areas at appropriate locations where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the planning authority that there will be no significant adverse impact on residential amenity, on the built and natural environment, or on the visual character of the landscape.

#### 12.5.4.1.5 Separation Distances

There are a significant number of one-off houses in all rural areas throughout the County. The only exception to this is on the higher reaches of mountainous areas. There are, therefore, of necessity, houses located in the areas open to consideration for wind energy. In identifying sites and in the disposition of turbines, development proposals must carefully consider potential impacts on residential amenity, and any minimum setbacks as specified in the wind energy guidelines.

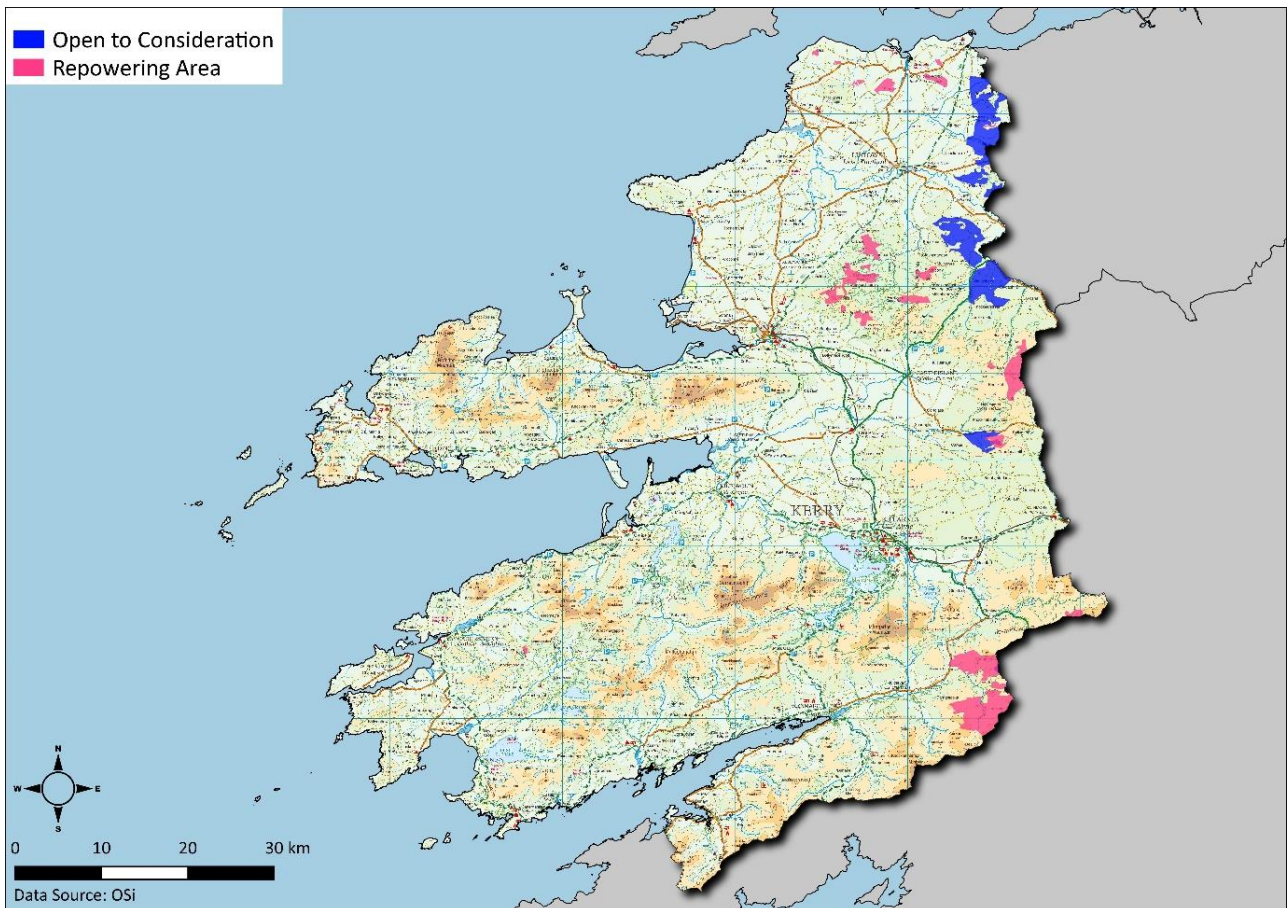
#### 12.5.4.1.6 Unsuitable for Wind Development

These areas are not considered suitable for wind farm development due to visual, environmental or ecological sensitivities or the potential impact on recreational or cultural facilities or on sensitive receptors.

### Wind Energy Projects

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 12-15** Ensure that commercial wind energy projects will not be considered in areas outside of 'Open-to-Consideration' and 'Repower Areas'.



**Map 12.4: Wind Energy Areas**

#### 12.5.4.1.7 Repower Areas

As wind turbine technology continues to advance, existing windfarms and sites developed today have the potential to greatly increase efficiency and capacity by upgrading older turbines with more efficient technology or their replacement with larger capacity turbines in the future. It is noted that in some cases the existing windfarms in the repower area predate the European Site designation.

Repowering of existing wind energy developments may be considered within or adjacent to European sites. These applications will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis in accordance with best practice environmental standards and compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

Given the outcome of the European Union Court of Justice (CJEU) Case C-164/17, wind farms in/adjacent to SPAs designated for Breeding Hen Harrier, when applying for repowering will require the submission of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) that is informed by this judgement. This will include upgrades, renewal, repowering or extension of existing planning permissions, for wind farms.

#### Repower Areas

**It is an objective of the Council to:**

- KCDP 12-16** (a) Facilitate the sustainable replacement of turbines or repower energy projects in areas shown as 'Repower areas' and areas 'Open-to-Consideration'.
- (b) Ensure that repowering proposals within or in proximity to SPAs designated for Breeding Hen Harrier shall not result in insufficient habitat for the Hen Harrier in line with the conservation objectives of the SPA. As part of this re-powering, proposals will not be permitted to result in the taking out of additional Hen Harrier foraging habitat within the SPA.



- (c) Ensure that all mitigation measures outlined in a Natura Impact Statement, submitted in support of Repowering proposals within or in proximity to SPAs designated for Breeding Hen Harrier shall be certain beyond all reasonable scientific doubt and shall be supported by robust evidence including at least 2 years of annual ornithological survey work.
- (d) Ensure that repowering proposals within or in proximity to SPAs designated for Breeding Hen Harrier do not constitute an unacceptable collision risk to Hen Harrier.

**KCDP 12-17** Ensure that all applications are accompanied by a Natura Impact Statement under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive if the site is located within or within close proximity to a (candidate) Special Area of Conservation or Special Protection Area or if the site is within the catchment of a (candidate) Special Area of Conservation.

#### 12.5.4.1.8 Extension to Existing Windfarms

In certain circumstances an extension to an existing wind farm may be considered subject to best practice environmental standards and where existing infrastructure can be used. Extension to existing windfarms will not be considered within Natura 2000 sites.

##### Extensions to Existing Wind Farms

###### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 12-18** Consider extensions to an existing windfarm where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the planning authority that there will be no significant adverse impact on residential amenity, the built and natural environment, or on the visual character of the landscape.

**KCDP 12-19** Ensure that extensions to existing windfarm developments located within Natura 2000 designations, are not permitted.

#### 12.5.4.1.9 Single User Turbines

It is the policy of the Council to facilitate, where appropriate, small scale wind energy development to serve a single use development such as a manufacturing plant or other commercial use, subject to the following criteria:

- The energy will be primarily generated for use on the site, with facility for export of excess generation to the National Electricity grid.
- The proposal shall not adversely impact on residential amenity/scenic views/tourist routes/architectural heritage, particularly as it relates to noise, shadow flicker and visual impacts.
- If located within or close to a SPA, SAC or NHA, a Habitats Directive Assessment and/or Environmental Impact Assessment may be required.

##### Single User Turbines

###### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 12-20** Facilitate where appropriate a small-scale wind energy development to serve single use developments subject to compliance with the County Development Plan and best practice environmental standards.

#### 12.5.4.2 Solar Energy

The most suitable sites for Utility Scale Solar Photo-voltaic (USSPV) schemes are flat areas or on lower slopes/within folds in gently undulating lowland landscapes rather than on prominent upland areas, highly visible slopes, or coastal headlands/areas. In addition, landscapes with a sense of enclosure (e.g., provided by woodland or high hedges) are better suited to solar PV development than open and unenclosed landscapes.



Solar technologies can in certain circumstances, have a negative impact on the visual amenity of rural and urban areas. The visual impacts on protected structures, architectural conservation areas and other historic properties and their curtilages also requires consideration. In considering proposals for solar developments applicants will be required to demonstrate that, within the constraints imposed by technical requirements, the proposed disposition of structures and panels minimises visual impacts. Designated amenity areas in the County will be protected from inappropriate development.

Section 9.7.6. of the County Development Plan supports sustainable agriculture and agricultural related development in County Kerry and seeks to strengthen the contribution that the agriculture and food sectors make to the local economy. This is further supported by Objective KCDP 9-52 and KCDP 9-53. The loss of high quality productive agricultural land in favour of solar farms would be at variance with these objectives and would therefore be resisted by the planning authority.

It is therefore the policy of the Planning Authority to ensure that planning applications for USSPV are accompanied by a detailed description of the application site lands including details of productivity, for the 10 years prior to the making of the planning application.

The Council will continue to support and facilitate the sustainable development of solar energy (USSPV) in appropriate locations, encourage passive solar design and solar water heating in new buildings and in retrofitting buildings, including agricultural buildings. In addition, where possible, the installation of solar power in public buildings, including schools will be encouraged.

### Solar Energy

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>KCDP 12-21</b> | Facilitate USSPV where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the planning authority that there will be no significant adverse impact on the built and natural environment, the visual character of the landscape, or on residential amenity. |
| <b>KCDP 12-22</b> | Prevent the loss of agriculturally productive land to Utility Scale Solar Photo-voltaic USSPV development.   |

### 12.5.4.3 Hydropower

Hydroelectricity can be generated using the following methods, run-of-the-river, impoundment (dams) or pumped storage.

#### 12.5.4.3.1 Environmental Impacts

Hydro power proposals must carefully consider visual impacts upon the landscape, geological impacts, impacts on ground water, impacts on terrestrial and freshwater ecology, the relevant River Basin Management Plan under the Water Framework Directive, and impacts from noise generated during construction and at the operational stage. Any proposals for hydro power generation sites will be required to address issues such as fish passage; fish protection / grating; retention of natural watercourse levels; and water quality. Applicants are advised to review IFI's *Guidelines on the Planning, Design, Construction & Operation of Small-Scale Hydro-Electric Schemes*.

#### 12.5.4.3.2 Location

Small scale hydro schemes including pumped storage will not be permitted in Natura 2000 sites or within designated and proposed Natural Heritage Areas where they adversely affect the integrity of these sites. Furthermore, such schemes will not be considered ex situ of these ecologically sensitive areas where proposals will adversely affect the conservation objectives and qualifying interests of Natura 2000 sites, impact on the ecological integrity of NHA/pNHAs, protected habitats and/or species as designated under National and European legislation.



## Hydropower

### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 12-23** Support the sustainable development of small-scale hydro energy plants in appropriate waterbodies where proposals comply with the recommendations contained in the “Guidelines on the Planning, Design, Construction and Operation of Small-Scale Hydro-Electric schemes” published by the Central Regional Fisheries Boards.
- KCDP 12-24** (a) Not permit hydro power developments in Natura 2000 sites or within designated and proposed Natural Heritage Areas or, ex situ of these ecologically sensitive areas where proposals will adversely affect the integrity of Natura 2000 sites; impact on the ecological integrity of NHA/pNHAs, or the habitats of protected species (without appropriate licence) as designated under National and European legislation.  
 (b) Not permit Hydro power developments in the following particularly sensitive water catchments:
- Lough Leane
  - Currane
  - Gearhameen
  - Kerry Blackwater
  - Caragh River
  - Owenmore
  - Munster Blackwater

#### 12.5.4.4 Bioenergy & District Heating

Kerry, as in Ireland as a whole, has a significant bioenergy potential in the form of agricultural land, forestry, recycled waste from municipal and domestic treatment plants, agriculture and industrial sources. All of these sources can be used to generate electricity, refined into fuel for the transport sector, provide heating/cooling for the building sector or as a source for biochemical raw materials for Irish industry.

##### 12.5.4.4.1 Location and Impacts

The generation of fuel from biomass, including anaerobic digestion, on a commercial scale is an industrial process potentially involving large structures and grid connections. Such plants should be located in brownfield sites, adjacent to industrial areas or co-located with other wood processing industries. Proposals for bioenergy plants will be considered on lands which are reserved for industrial uses. To minimise traffic impacts, locations should be close to the point of demand and be served by public roads with sufficient capacity to absorb increased traffic flows and adjacent to transport corridors.

Traffic considerations arise as biomass fuel must be delivered from the point at which it is produced to the plant itself. There is a need to ensure that the distances involved are not so great that carbon dioxide emissions from transportation significantly reduce any carbon benefit derived from the use of biomass. Issues related to the generation of traffic and the protection of the carrying capacity of roads will be a material consideration in the assessment of an application.

Noise (engines, boilers, handling equipment and traffic) may in some cases be sufficiently loud to affect the amenity of adjacent users, particularly in residential areas. Biomass plants may also have an adverse impact on visual amenity. Bioenergy installations will not be permitted in areas which may affect residential or visual amenity.

Some types of biomass installations have the potential to generate odours and emissions to air. Proposals will be required to demonstrate that these factors have been considered and the scheme will not generate emissions and odours. Applicants are advised to consult with the Council’s Environment Department to identify and develop mitigation measures where they are deemed to be necessary.



### Bioenergy & District Heating

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 12-25** Facilitate the sustainable development of bioenergy plants including anaerobic digestors, in compliance with the development management standards on appropriately zoned lands. Bioenergy installations shall not be permitted in areas where such developments may affect residential or visual amenity. They should be developed close to the point of demand and be served by public roads with sufficient capacity to absorb increased traffic flows and adjacent to transport corridors.
- KCDP 12-26** Consider in rural areas proposals for small scale developments for bioenergy plants including anaerobic digestors, close to the source material and where roads have capacity to absorb increased traffic flows. Such plants should, where possible, be located in proximity to existing agricultural buildings. Bioenergy installations shall not be permitted in areas where such developments may affect residential or visual amenity.
- KCDP 12-27** Prohibit bioenergy developments in Natura 2000 sites or within designated and proposed Natural Heritage Areas or, ex situ of these ecologically sensitive areas where proposals will adversely affect: the integrity of Natura 2000 sites; impact on the ecological integrity of NHA/pNHAs; the habitats of protected species (without appropriate licence) as designated under National and European legislation.
- KCDP 12-28** Promote and facilitate the installation of district heating schemes powered by renewable fuel sources that are produced in a sustainable manner.

#### 12.5.4.5 Ocean Energy

Ireland's maritime area extends to the edge of the continental shelf and covers almost 900,000km<sup>2</sup>. The greatest proportion of this lies to the west of Ireland, which includes areas off the coast of County Kerry. The extraction of marine energy is still in the early stages of development although, as with onshore wind, offshore wind is likely to be developed and operational more quickly. It is the intention of government that marine energy will make a significant contribution to the supply of domestic electricity and will be developed for export to other countries.

As noted, the *Climate Action Plan 2019* initially had a target for 3.5GW of renewable energy from offshore wind. This was increased to 5GW in late 2020. As offshore technology advances, in particular floating offshore wind technology, it is likely that the Atlantic coast, including parts of Kerry, will become suitable for the technology. The possibility to combine offshore wind with other forms of supporting "green" technologies such as "green" hydrogen are undergoing rapid research and development. This is likely to advance over the lifetime of this Plan.

##### 12.5.4.5.1 National Marine Planning Framework 2021

Ireland's ambitions for the offshore renewable energy sector are contingent on delivering a licensing and regulatory regime for offshore renewable energy. This will provide certainty to project promoters and provide a pathway to realising the necessary investment in offshore renewable energy. The framework sets out the Irish Government's long-term planning objectives and priorities for the management of our seas over a 20-year time frame. The framework sets out specific objectives and marine planning policies for all of the activities taking place in Ireland's seas, from aquaculture through to wastewater treatment. All of these activities are contextualised within the pillars of their economic, environmental and social considerations. The framework sets out the proposed future approach to the adoption of spatial designations for marine activities including offshore renewable energy development, or designated marine protected areas, taking account of the existing





network of designated European sites under the Birds and Habitat Directives by the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

The National Marine Planning Framework in terms of RE will support offshore energy proposals that assist the state in meeting its target of achieving 5GW of capacity in offshore wind by 2030.

### Ocean Energy

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 12-29** Support the sustainable development of onshore infrastructure, including grid connections, to facilitate the development of offshore energy projects at appropriate locations and further to environmental assessments.

#### 12.5.4.6 Battery Storage for Renewable Energy

Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) store energy from the grid or directly from source of generation. They contribute to the security and stability of the grid by storing electricity generated by intermittent renewable sources so that it can be released during times of heavy demand.

### Battery Storage for Renewable Energy

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 12-30** Facilitate the sustainable development of Battery Storage systems in appropriate locations at or adjacent to existing energy infrastructure, subject to requirements and considerations in relation to: residential amenity, landscape; cultural heritage; Natura 2000 sites and the Habitats & Birds Directive; the objectives of the Water Framework Directive; Flood Directive; electricity infrastructure; and health & safety.

#### 12.5.5 Community Consultation, Community Benefit & Microgeneration/Community Projects

Communities are being designed into the fabric of the new Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS). The RESS allows for increased community participation in, and ownership of, renewable electricity projects as part of the scheme. Policies and support measures are in place to ensure:

- a) Financial support for community-led projects across early phases of project development including feasibility and development studies
- b) Community Benefit and
- c) Fund and investment opportunities for communities and citizens in all RESS projects.

Kerry County Council acknowledges that a well-planned and facilitated community engagement process conducted with integrity and fairness can improve the likelihood of community acceptance of proposed renewable energy projects. It supports the principles of the *Just Transition* where no member of the community is left behind as we transition towards climate neutrality. The citizen as an active participant in our future energy systems is recognised in this plan and the council will seek to support such initiatives as Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC) as we transition to a low carbon society.

Acknowledging the huge contribution already being made by County Kerry to achieving the national targets for renewable-generated electricity, in this draft County Kerry Development Plan the Council strongly recommend and support the use of microgeneration and small-scale community-owned renewable energy generation (as specified in the Climate Action Plan 2021) as the optimum manner for achieving the overall targets for electricity generated from renewable energy required of Kerry County Council.

Microgeneration and small-scale generation have an important role to play in achieving National Climate Change targets. It also creates opportunities for domestic, community, farming, and small commercial customers to take the first steps towards investment in renewable technologies, which can play a role in shaping electricity demand and decarbonising homes and businesses. It is an Objective of this Plan to support



the sustainable development of micro generation schemes at appropriate locations. This will enable farmers, auto-generators and communities to maximise their participation in the energy transition.

In order to offset any potential impact of a renewable energy development on the community it is the policy of Kerry County Council to seek the developers to provide support to local communities by providing resources for Community Benefit Funds. It is considered reasonable that renewable energy developments contribute to the community within a 20km radius of the development site within the county, at a rate of €2/MWh.

It is the policy of the council to:

- Require that developers of proposed large-scale renewable energy projects carry out community consultation in accordance with best practice and to commence the consultation at the commencement of project planning.
- Ensure that all community benefits are distributed to projects in support of the community within a 20km radius, of the site, within the county only.
- Support sustainable community projects that apply to the Renewable Electricity Support Scheme and the National Microgeneration Support Scheme.

### Community Consultation, Community Benefit & Community Projects

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

<b>KCDP 12-31</b>	Support the principles of a Just Transition as the community moves towards a climate neutral society and economy.
<b>KCDP 12-32</b>	Support the transition towards low carbon economy and circular economy through mechanisms such as the Climate Action Competitive Fund and/or <i>Just Transition</i> Funding.
<b>KCDP 12-33</b>	Ensure that community benefits are derived from all renewable energy development in the county.
<b>KCDP 12-34</b>	Facilitate suitably scaled community owned/led sustainable renewable energy projects in appropriate locations. This will include requirements and considerations in relation to: residential amenity, landscape; cultural heritage; Natura 2000 sites and the Habitats & Birds Directive; the objectives of the Water Framework Directive; Flood Directive; and electricity infrastructure.
<b>KCDP 12-35</b>	Support strengthened and sustainable local/community renewable energy networks, micro renewable generation, climate smart countryside projects and connections from such initiatives to the grid.
<b>KCDP 12-36</b>	Working with stakeholders, support and lead the community in becoming active participants in the county's future energy systems

DRAFT KERRY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028

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## CHAPTER 13

# WATER & WASTE MANAGEMENT







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## 13.0 Water & Waste Management

### 13.1 Introduction

This Chapter contains the general planning policies and principles which underline the provision and improvement of water, waste/surface-water and waste management services so as to facilitate development, support the delivery of population, housing and growth targets and prioritised so as to protect public health and protect, restore and improve the receiving environment and water quality. Wider Environmental Management including Flood Risk Management policies are contained in Chapter 11 Environment. As we seek to promote more compact and efficient forms of development within our settlements, it is important to manage waste and water quality more proactively.

The strategic aim of the water and waste management strategy of this plan is to maintain and provide additional key infrastructure and to work with other agencies in the sustainable provision of infrastructure to attract new business investment and people into the County through the implementation of the policy and objectives below and the Development Management Standards and Guidance document of this Plan.

Infrastructure in this chapter refers to physical infrastructure required for water services and waste management. The Council is responsible for the provision of some forms of infrastructure, but the majority of infrastructure is provided by state agencies and private providers and in such cases the Council works to facilitate the provision of infrastructure. As indicated in other parts of this Plan, investment in infrastructure is a key element in economic growth, employment, wellbeing of our citizens and environmental sustainability.

The significant growth of the economy over the past number of years has increased the pressures on existing water and wastewater infrastructure in the County. It is important that such infrastructure is upgraded in certain areas and improved and extended in other areas, in order to comply with the EU Water Framework Directive, Drinking Water Regulations and EPA licensing requirements and to facilitate sustainable development.

The environment, when it is managed and protected ensures that the quality and integrity of the environment is retained. The quality of the infrastructure available within the County is of paramount importance in determining the quality of life for its citizens as well as being a major factor in attracting industry and employment to an area.

It is the policy of the Kerry County Council to facilitate and support water and wastewater infrastructural investment. This infrastructural investment must be plan-led and in accordance with the land use policy framework and population projections of this county development plan.

Kerry County Council will work in conjunction with other agencies, in the provision of a wide range of services including water, wastewater and treatment, solid waste management and supporting circular economy principles that minimise waste going to landfill and maximise waste as a resource.

### 13.2 Water Quality and Water Resources

The Council has statutory responsibilities to protect and manage water quality. It has responsibilities for maintaining, improving and enhancing the environmental and ecological quality of the county's waters by implementing a series of measures including pollution control and licensing of effluent discharges. The varying demands on water resources in the county must be balanced with the need to protect these resources to ensure an adequate supply of clean water for all and to protect the habitats and ecosystems that depend on it.

Water supplies in the county come from surface water and groundwater sources. The protection of these valuable resources is of vital importance to protect both human health and provide for a healthy environment



Surface waters include lakes, reservoirs, streams, rivers and coastal waters. The main pressures to water quality come from agricultural, forestry, outfalls from municipal wastewater treatment works, on-site wastewater treatment systems, and licensed and unlicensed discharges and storm water run-off.

Groundwater is important as a source of drinking water in the county, in particular, in our rural areas. Groundwater also supports river flows, lake levels and ecosystems. Groundwater is contained in aquifers which are underground layers of rock that contain water. Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) categorises aquifers according to their vulnerability to pollution, that is, the ease with which pollutants of various kinds can enter underground water. In this regard, development must be controlled and managed appropriately, particularly in areas of high groundwater vulnerability to avoid the transmission of pollutants into important aquifers.

Groundwater protection schemes aim to maintain the quantity and quality of groundwater by applying a risk-based assessment approach to ground water protection and sustainable development. These schemes provide guidance to the Council when carrying out its functions, in particular planning and licensing, and assists in decision making relating to controlling the location and nature of developments and activities of potentially polluting.

### 13.2.1 Water Supply

The county's drinking water supplies are derived from natural resources, either surface water or ground water and it is therefore important that these resources are protected so that reliable, safe, and good quality water supplies are always available. The provision of reliable water supplies is also critical to achieve the population growth planned for the county for the period of this plan.

#### 13.2.1.1 Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the National River Basin Management Plan

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) is an EU Directive aimed at protecting and improving water quality throughout member states. The directive applies to all waters including rivers, lakes, groundwater and coastal waters (marine and estuarine). The WFD requires an integrated approach to managing water quality on a river basin level. Implementation of the directive in Ireland is set out in the current national River Basin Management Plan. The plan sets out the status and quality of waters within Ireland, along with details of the water quality objectives to be achieved and the programme of measures to be implemented in order to achieve those objectives.

The Council will drive and support implementation of the River Basin Management Plan in the county. The focus of this work is to protect and improve water quality in rivers, lakes, groundwater, estuaries and coastal waters, as well as associated protected areas and ecosystems. It is important, therefore, that any proposals for development within County Kerry are assessed to identify any potential impact on the quality of the waters and to ensure consistency with the aims of the WFD.

The 3rd cycle of the WFD is underway (2022-2027) and it will overlap with the timeframe of this plan. *Priority Areas for Action* (PAA) are being identified by LAWPRO in collaboration with other stakeholders including KCC, for further measures as part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle. This will build on measures already implemented up to 2021. This plan will support the measures being implemented to achieve the objectives of the WFD in the county.

The drafting of the Kerry CDP is occurring within the context of the EPA's report on the *Status of Water Quality in Ireland, 2013-2018* (2019). The report provides an evaluation of the ecological health of Ireland's rivers, lakes, canals, groundwaters, estuaries and coastal waters. Data indicates some worrying national trends on the ecological health and water quality of Ireland's rivers, lakes, estuaries, groundwater and coastal waters. Several of these national trends are reflected in Kerry. The county maintains several high or pristine catchments; no waterbody dropped to poor or bad status while coastal waters maintain a good status. Nonetheless, other trends are worrying notably the continued loss of high-status waterbodies and as





important reservoirs of aquatic biodiversity their loss is a concern. It is the policy of the Council to work to protect and restore these high-status waters as outlined in the WFD 'Blue Dot Catchments Programme'.

Three significant impacts on water quality in County Kerry are discharges from wastewater treatment plants, pollution arising from agricultural activities and forestry. It is the policy of the council to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment from wastewater discharges is not exceeded and that increases from population growth do not contribute further to degradation of water quality.

Measures to address wastewater discharges are also being implemented through the Water Services Investment Programme which has been fully aligned with the environmental priorities identified in the RBMP. In addition, the EPA monitors wastewater discharges and conditions may be imposed in order to protect the environment. Diffuse pollution from agriculture is primarily addressed through the Nitrates Action Programme.

The rivers and lakes in County Kerry contain internationally important populations of water dependent species including Salmon, Freshwater Pearl Mussels, Lamprey and Otter. Maintenance of good water quality and flows, fish passage, spawning grounds and riparian vegetation are therefore of importance. There are also a number of formally designated shellfish areas around the coast of County Kerry. Pollution Reduction Programmes have been adopted for these and are currently being implemented. It is important, therefore, that any proposals for development within the catchments of these areas are assessed to identify any potential impact on the quality of the waters in question.

It is furthermore acknowledged that there is significant potential to deliver multi-functions/co-benefits for human health and for the environment in terms of biodiversity and climate from measures to improve water quality. Therefore, it is the policy of the council to ensure a cross-agency collaborative approach to implementing the RBMP, to promote a catchment-based approach to water management and to facilitate cross boundary collaboration and shared responsibility at a regional level. The RSES and CDP supports bottom-up community initiatives through this integrated catchment management approach.

#### **13.2.1.2 Drinking Water Source Protection**

The WFD sets out a clear approach to the protection and enhancement of the Country's water resources. The fundamental objective of the WFD is to maintain and improve the quality of all waters, and any associated protected areas such as drinking waters sources.

It is important that all current drinking water sources and potential future sources of water supply are protected. In this regard it is clear that proposed development must be assessed to identify any potential impact on the quality of these sources.

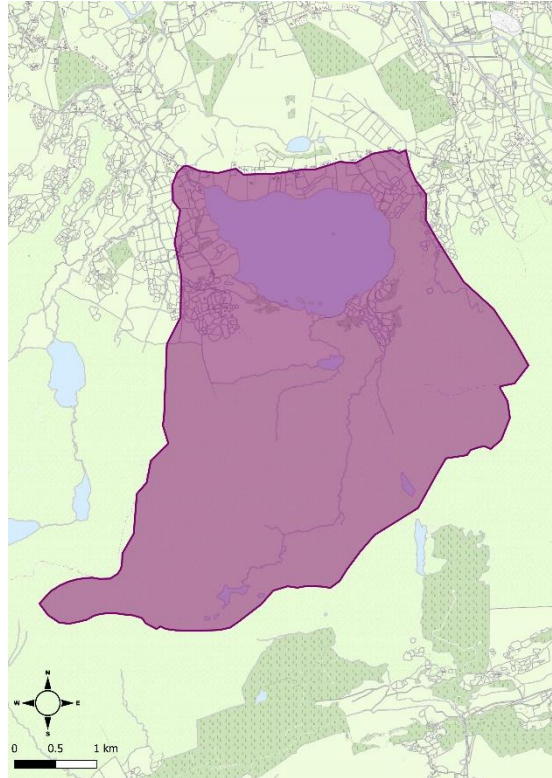
The Lough Guitane catchment is the source of the Central Regional Water Supply Scheme and is the largest single water supply source in County Kerry. In view of the impact of a contaminated water supply on the local economy and public health, it is critical that this source be protected.

It is the policy of the Council to implement a Water Safety Plan approach in order to protect the catchment area and the ground water zone of contribution. Development in the vicinity of the lake could result in increased risk of pollution to the water body, therefore the precautionary principle will be adopted with regard to development in its catchment area.

In areas not served by public or group schemes, groundwater is a significant source of water. In rural areas especially, the impacts of inappropriate development are potentially harmful to groundwater resources. The location of groundwater resources will therefore be taken into account when assessing Planning Applications.



There are in the region of 38,000 domestic onsite wastewater treatment systems in County Kerry of varying age and condition. It is a legal requirement that all septic tanks and wastewater treatment units are registered with the Local Authority. It is the policy of the Council to require that all individual effluent treatment systems and septic tank drainage systems be provided in accordance with the standards set out in the EPA Code of Practice (2010).



**Map 13.1: Lough Guitane Catchment**

**13.2.1.3 Wastewater Treatment Systems and Private Wells**

Many private wells are at risk of contamination from sources such as wastewater treatments systems. Recommended separation distances are specified in Table B.3 of the EPA Code of Practice. Distances may be increased where the bedrock is shallow, preferential flow paths are present or the effluent and bacteria enter the bedrock rapidly.

**13.2.1.4 Groundwater Protection Schemes**

Groundwater Protection Schemes seek to preserve the quality of groundwater in the county for drinking purposes, for the benefit of present and future generations. These schemes provide guidelines to the Council when carrying out its planning and licensing functions and assists in decision-making relating to controlling the location and nature of developments and activities of potentially polluting activities.

Water Supply	
It is an objective of the Council to:	
<b>KCDP 13-1</b>	Ensure compliance with the Water Framework Directive.
<b>KCDP 13-2</b>	Achieve water quality targets by implementing the national River Basin Management Plan (and associated programmes of measures).
<b>KCDP 13-3</b>	Facilitate Irish Water investment in capital projects over the lifetime of this plan to facilitate the population growth targets outlined in the Core Strategy of this plan.



<b>KCDP 13-4</b>	Prohibit any form of development within the catchment area of Lough Guitane (including the lake itself) that will have a potentially detrimental effect on the objectives of the WFD (Map 13.1).
<b>KCDP 13-5</b>	Ensure that planning applications are assessed with regard to the Groundwater Protection Scheme and the potential impacts the development may have on groundwater quality.
<b>KCDP 13-6</b>	Protect all sources and potential sources of public water supply, including their zones of contribution within the County from pollution resulting from any development and/or land use.
<b>KCDP 13-7</b>	Protect existing and potential water resources for the county, in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), the current National River Basin Management Plan and any amending or replacement version, the Pollution Reduction Programmes for designated shellfish waters, the provisions of the Groundwater Protection Scheme for the county and any other protection plans for water supply sources, with an aim to improving all water quality.
<b>KCDP 13-8</b>	Protect rivers, streams and other watercourses and where applicable ensure developments follow guidelines outlined in the IFI's <i>Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment, 2020</i> .
<b>KCDP 13-9</b>	Protect the County's waters from pollution by nitrates and phosphates from agricultural sources by facilitating changes in agricultural practices.
<b>KCDP 13-10</b>	Ensure that all wastewater treatment systems for single houses are designed, constructed, installed and maintained in accordance with the manufacturers guidelines and the E.P.A. Publication 'Code of Practice – Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses' or any amending/replacement guidance or standards.
<b>KCDP 13-11</b>	Protect, enhance and support the restoration of groundwaters and ensure a balance of abstraction and recharge, with the aim of achieving good groundwater status and to reverse any significant and sustained upward trends in the concentration of pollutants in groundwater.

### 13.2.1.5 Water Conservation

Water is a valuable resource, and the production and treatment of its supply must be managed in a sustainable manner in order to ensure its most efficient and economic use. Water conservation is key to the sustainable use of our water resources, and it is a priority in all areas of the county, whether served by public or private supplies. Irish Water is currently implementing a Leakage Reduction Programme which is focused on providing a reliable uninterrupted water supply, improved water quality, reduced leakages and improved supply connections. The Council will facilitate the delivery of this programme and encourage all new developments to incorporate appropriate water conservation measures.

#### Water Conservation

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

<b>KCDP 13-12</b>	Promote water conservation and responsible use of water by introducing and facilitating the provision of demand reduction measures.
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### 13.2.1.6 Public Water

It is a priority of the Council to increase the number of households served by public water in the interest of ensuring drinking water quality, protecting water resources, sustainable development and maximising investments in this infrastructure. In this regard, the Council will require developments to connect to public water supply, where available, rather than providing a private well on site.

### 13.2.1.7 Private Water Services

Group Water Schemes (and individual wells) also play an important role in the provision of a piped water supply to private households, farms and businesses in County Kerry. The responsibility for monitoring and assisting Group schemes remains with the Councils Group Scheme Section which continues to work on upgrading networks and treatment plants as well as preparing schemes for take over.

The Rural Water Programme facilitates the development of water services in rural areas, and it plays an important role in helping to improve deficiencies in group water schemes and private supplies where no alternative group or public water scheme is available. Investment under the programme is prioritised for upgrades which help to deliver measures identified in the National River Basin Management Plan, the Water Framework Directive and the requirements of the Drinking Water Directive.

The Council recognises that there is a need for a properly funded Group Sewerage Scheme programme in order to deal with some of the environmental and development problems which arise from inadequate on-site individual treatment plants. The Council will encourage and support communities in seeking such a scheme.

#### Private Water Services

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 13-13** Promote water conservation and responsible use of water by introducing and facilitating the provision of demand reduction measures.

### 13.2.2 Water Infrastructure

Continued investment in treated water supply infrastructure is vital for County Kerry. Without continued infrastructural development in drinking water, capacity may be a factor in restricting development. Climate change may affect the sustainability of some of our water sources and therefore new raw water sources need to be assessed and developed. Kerry has a predominance of surface water sources which are susceptible to drought and therefore ground water and impoundment / storage measures need to be developed over the medium term for resilience. Such proposals will require environmental assessment and should be compatible with Natura 2000 site conservation objectives.

Kerry has up to 60 water treatment plants. A number of these small plants need to be rationalised together with the expansion of larger plants. Additional storage is required for a number of plants to allow for future proofing, power outages, water security and capacity for growth. Leakage control and mains rehabilitation will provide additional capacity for the water schemes.

Current development needs for Water Services infrastructure include:

- Water Treatment Plant Expansion / Rationalisation
- Upgrading of Strategic Trunk Mains
- Increased strategic storage reservoir capacity
- Mains Rehabilitation
- Leakage Management and UFW Reduction
- Interconnectivity Between Networks
- Source Development
- Source Protection Works



### Water Infrastructure

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 13-14** Facilitate and support the sustainable provision of new and the upgrading of existing water and water treatment infrastructure in the county.

#### 13.2.2.1 Wastewater Treatment

The treatment and disposal of wastewater in an environmentally sound manner is important not only for human health but also for the social and economic development of the county. Pollution from wastewater treatment facilities arises where there is inadequate treatment; storm water overflows operating incorrectly; or direct discharges of untreated wastewater. It is essential that all wastewater is treated in accordance with best practice to ensure the protection of the environment and public health.

The provision of adequate wastewater infrastructure facilities is a main tenet of the development of settlements for residential and economic purposes. A significant number of smaller settlements in the county have inadequate wastewater treatment or limited capacity which restricts the development of these settlements. Having regard to the rural nature of Kerry, its peninsula nature, and its peripheral location in the Southern Region the economic importance of these smaller towns and villages are vital to sustaining rural communities. It is essential that Irish Water invest in wastewater infrastructure to enable these settlements to satisfactorily accommodate future population growth in line with the core strategy of this plan, to provide an alternative location for one-off rural housing and to sustain and enable rural economies to grow.

Kerry County Council has therefore identified 24 priority settlements in urgent need of wastewater infrastructure investment. These 24 settlements form part of a detailed submission made by Kerry County Council to Irish Waters Small Towns and Villages Growth Programme (STVGP). See Volume 1 Appendices- KCC Submission to Irish Water (STVGP).

The Council will support and facilitate Irish Water in the sustainable development of rural wastewater treatment programmes and supports the initiatives of Irish Water, communities and developers in small rural settlements to identify solutions subject to available funding for such services.

### Wastewater Treatment

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 13-15** Facilitate and support the sustainable provision of new and the upgrading of existing wastewater infrastructure to accommodate the future growth of settlements in the county in line with the Core Strategy.

**KCDP 13-16** Facilitate and support Irish Waters Investment Plan 2020-2024 and Small Towns and Villages Growth Programme (STVGP) and any other successor capital plans/ strategies in the county.

#### 13.2.2.3 Communal Private Wastewater Treatment Plants

Communal private wastewater treatment plants will not be considered for residential developments. Private wastewater treatment plants will be considered in exceptional circumstances for commercial and tourism uses. The Council will give careful consideration to such proposals, and at minimum will only consider proposals where the communal wastewater treatment system will be retained in single ownership. This is required to ensure that the system will be properly maintained. The Council must also be satisfied that the development complies with all relevant EPA guidance, EU Directives and sustainable development and environmental criteria.

The Council may consider alternative individual treatment systems for existing developments only, where ground conditions are such that the existing system, per the EPA Code of Practice, would not treat effluent satisfactorily (such alternatives may include zero discharge systems).



### Communal Private Wastewater Treatment Plants

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 13-17** Consider the development of private wastewater treatment systems to serve commercial and tourism uses (employment generating developments) outside of serviced settlements and in rural areas where the system is in single ownership and where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the proposed wastewater treatment system is in accordance with the 'Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment and Disposal System Serving Single Houses, EPA 2009 and Wastewater Treatment Manuals – Treatment Systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centre and Hotels, EPA 1999', and any updated versions of these documents during the lifetime of the Plan, the Water Framework Directive, the Habitats and Shellfish Waters Directives and relevant Pollution Reduction Programmes.

#### 13.2.2.4 Individual Private Wastewater Facilities in Rural Areas

The 2016 Census identified that 55% of private households in the county were served by a private individual septic tank or other type of individual treatment system. This rate was considerably higher than the State average of 28.8%. This is reflective of the rural settlement pattern and the lack of investment in public wastewater treatment plants in the rural villages of the county.

The provision of on-site wastewater treatment systems to serve new one-off rural housing must be carefully considered as these systems place significant pressure on water quality.

For new development where it is proposed to serve a dwelling house with a domestic wastewater treatment system, it must be demonstrated that the proposed onsite system can safely and adequately dispose of the effluent in accordance with the Code of Practice: Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems serving Single Houses (EPA, 2009) and that the proposal complies with the Water Framework Directive and the provisions of the relevant River Basin Management Plan.

It is essential that these systems are properly installed, regularly monitored, and maintained so as protect public health and the environment. The Council will continue to carry out inspections under the National Inspection Plan for Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems-the aims of which is to protect human health and water quality from the risks posed by these systems.

### Individual Private Wastewater Facilities in Rural Areas

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 13-18** Ensure that development proposals comply with the standards and requirements of the Irish Water: Code of Practice for Wastewater Infrastructure, (December 2016), and any updated version of this document during the lifetime of the Plan.

**KCDP 13-19** Ensure that proposed wastewater treatment system for single rural dwellings are in accordance with the 'Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment and Disposal System Serving Single Houses, EPA 2021' and any updated version of this document during the lifetime of the Plan, and are maintained in accordance with approved manufacturer's specifications and subject to compliance with the Water Framework Directive, the Habitats and Shellfish Waters Directives and relevant Pollution Reduction Programmes.



### 13.2.3 Public Conveniences

Kerry County Council has Public Conveniences at nineteen locations throughout the County. Seven of the facilities are operated on behalf of Kerry County Council by local community groups. It is necessary to ensure that public conveniences are provided in appropriate locations for the benefit of both locals and tourists. The Council will co-operate with local groups to facilitate the provision of toilet facilities in places where large numbers of people visit or gather and where there is an identified need. In certain environmentally sensitive areas, it may be more appropriate to provide or to upgrade facilities in a nearby settlement to address the need.

#### Public Conveniences

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 13-20** Facilitate and support community groups in the provision and management of public conveniences at appropriate locations.

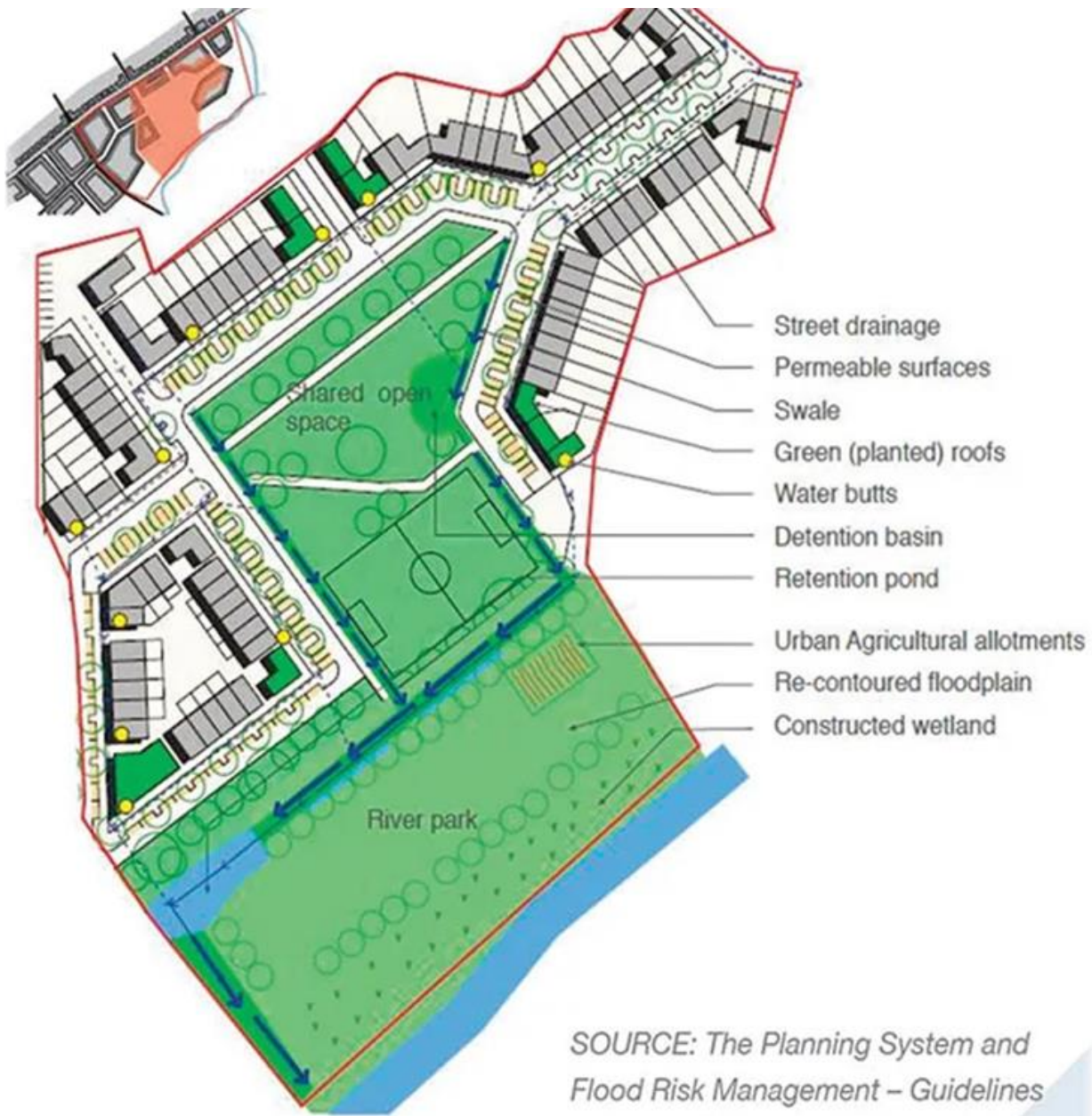
### 13.2.4 Storm Water Management

Storm water flows can have a significant detrimental impact on the available capacity of combined sewer networks and at treatment plants. Climate change is exacerbating the impact by way of more frequent and intense rainfall. This brings challenges in terms of drainage and capacity, traditionally addressed by hard engineering options (concrete gullies, pipes, drains etc).

Sustainable Drainage Systems, commonly known as SuDS, is an approach that seeks to manage surface water runoff as close as possible to its origin by various engineering or nature-based solutions that replicate natural drainage processes before it enters the watercourse or network. The incorporation of SuDS techniques allows surface water to be either infiltrated to ground or conveyed more slowly to water courses using porous surface treatments, ponds, swales, filter drains or other installations. The benefits of taking a nature-based approach includes not just flood risk management benefits but also improved water quality, biodiversity and Climate adaptation and mitigation. To maximise effectiveness, nature-based surface water solutions requires consideration in the early design stages of land use planning, including during the preparation of masterplans and land use zoning objectives.

The Council will require the application of SuDS in new developments and proposals to extend existing developments. At a minimum surface water runoff will be restricted to greenfield runoff rates.

The application of SuDS techniques will be site-specific and will depend on the site's characteristics and will be required to demonstrate that climate change considerations have been incorporated into the design. All applications should include a commensurate drainage assessment which outlines the drainage design considerations/strategy in line with the flood risk, surface water management and climate change requirements and objectives in the CDP.



SOURCE: *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Local Authorities*. OPW 2009

Figure 13.1 SuDS examples.

**Storm Water Management**

**It is an objective of the Council to:**

- KCDP 13-21** Improve sustainable drainage and reduce the risk of flooding in the urban environment in accordance with the CIRIA SuDS Manual 2015.
- KCDP 13-22** It is an objective of the Council to identify opportunities for nature-based SuDS in tandem with the preparation of masterplans for urban areas and plan level Strategic Flood Risk Assessments.
- KCDP 13-23** Promote greater rainwater harvesting by households and businesses for the diversion of storm water from combined sewers.





<b>KCDP 13-24</b>	Support the incorporation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) in all public and private development in urban areas.
<b>KCDP 13-25</b>	Work alongside Irish Water to ensure the separation of foul and surface water drainage networks where feasible and undertake drainage network upgrades to help remove surface water misconnection and infiltration.
<b>KCDP 13-26</b>	Promote and support the retrofitting of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) in established urban areas. Where possible incorporate nature-based solutions.

### 13.3 Waste Management

Waste management throughout the Country is undergoing dramatic change at present. The implementation of the waste management hierarchy, greenhouse gas reduction targets, European and National policies such as the Landfill Directive and the National Biodegradable Waste Strategy is driving this change. In many instances change is being incentivised through government backed financial measures such as the Repak subsidy on dry recyclables or charges such as the Landfill Levy. Free-market economic forces are also increasing the value of recyclable waste as a commodity.

In the current climate the economics of waste management are constantly changing, and investment decisions are framed in the context of a very uncertain economic and regulatory environment. It is Government policy to discourage disposal of waste to landfill and the Landfill Levy will increase substantially over the next few years. The amount of waste deposited in landfill is progressively reducing, in particular in recent years there has been a significant reduction in the volume of organic waste deposited on landfill.

Kerry has actively improved its waste management systems, but it remains heavily reliant on export markets for the treatment of residual waste, recyclable wastes and hazardous waste. While the ultimate aim is to decouple, as much as possible, consumption from waste generation over time, additional investment in waste management infrastructure, and in particular different types of waste treatment, will be required. In managing our waste needs, this Plan supports circular economy principles that minimise waste going to landfill and maximise waste as a resource. This means that prevention, preparation for reuse, recycling and recovery are prioritised in that order, over the disposal of waste.

#### Waste Management

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

<b>KCDP 13-27</b>	Ensure the implementation of the Regional Waste Management Plan with particular emphasis on waste reduction, reuse and recycling and the sustainable disposal of residual waste in the most appropriate manner.
<b>KCDP 13-28</b>	Facilitate the implementation of the current Regional Waste Management Plan, and any replacement or amending plan, to include implementation of the waste hierarchy and maximising the diversion of waste from landfill in accordance with current national and European policy.

#### 13.3.1 Waste Management Infrastructure

The provision of a properly regulated, environmentally sustainable waste management infrastructure is a critical element of the County's infrastructure. Aside from protecting the natural environment it forms an integral part of the infrastructure necessary for industries to operate within the County in an environmentally sustainable manner.



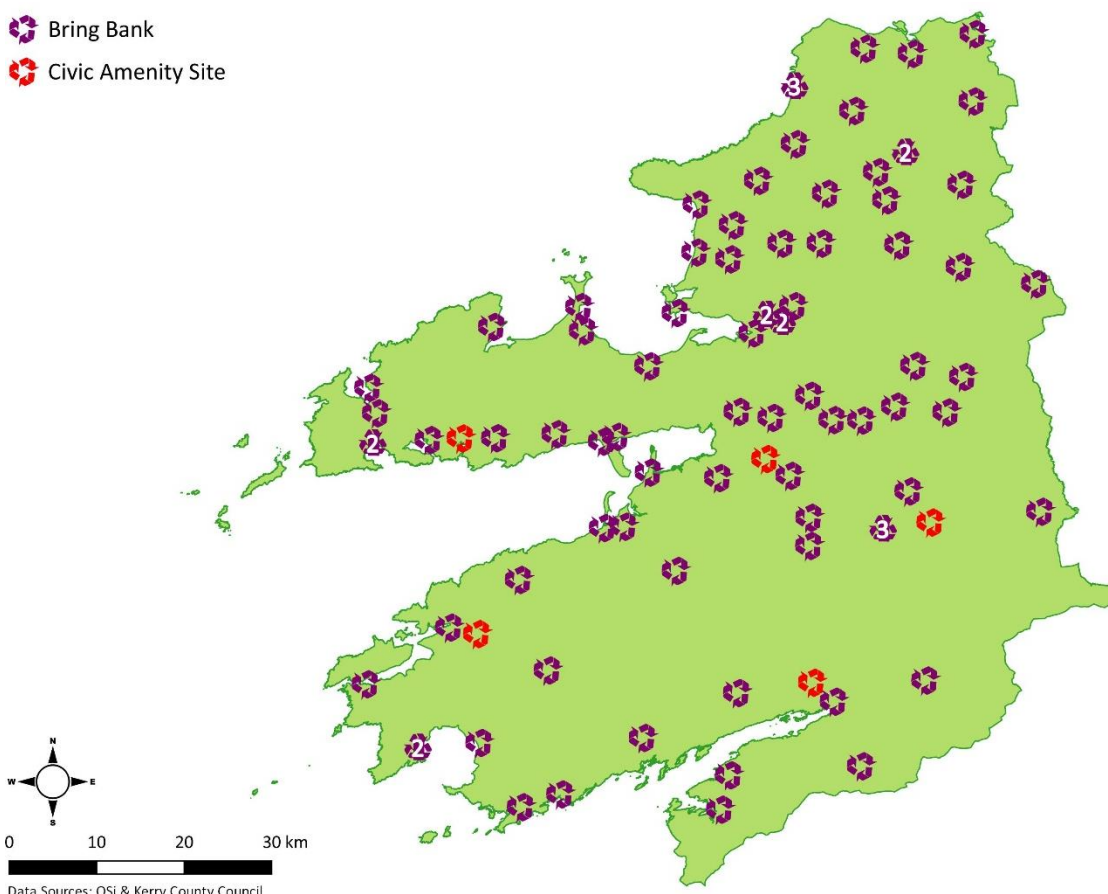
The vast majority of waste collection, management and disposal in the County is undertaken by private companies and is taken directly out of the County. The Council still operates a waste collection service in Killarney. The County Council operates five civic amenity sites at Killarney (Coolcaslagh), Milltown, Kenmare, Cahersiveen, and Dingle facilitating the compacting and onward transportation of various waste streams. These facilities are licenced by the EPA to accept a variety of waste types for disposal and recovery. In addition to these, there are also a number of privately-operated waste management facilities in the County, which are authorised by both Kerry County Council and the EPA. The Council will continue to promote waste prevention and minimisation initiatives to target all aspects of waste in the County, focusing on both commercial and domestic waste producers. It is considered that raising the awareness of citizens and businesses with regard to their responsibility is essential.

The Council will facilitate the sustainable provision of additional waste facilities at appropriate locations in accordance with the Waste Management Infrastructure Guidance for Siting Waste Management Facilities 2015-21.

### 13.3.2 Civic Amenity Sites

The Council also operates recycling facilities. These facilities allow for the recycling of a broad range of waste material. In addition, the Council has achieved its targets as set out in the Regional Waste Management Plan for the provision of Bring Banks, with a total of 88<sup>1</sup> Bring Banks located at various locations around the County. Private waste collectors also operate recycling facilities.

-  Bring Bank
-  Civic Amenity Site



**Map 13.2: Bring Banks & Civic Amenity Sites**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.kerrycoco.ie/environment/waste-recycling-litter/domestic-waste-recycling/>



### Civic Amenity Sites

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>KCDP 13-29</b> | Facilitate the sustainable provision of additional waste recycling/recovery facilities at appropriate locations.  |
| <b>KCDP 13-30</b> | Sustainably manage waste generation, support the investment in different types of waste treatment and support circular economy principles, prioritising prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery, to support a sustainable and healthy environment, economy and society.   |
| <b>KCDP 13-31</b> | Facilitate the sustainable development of waste management facilities including thermal treatment and mechanical/biological treatment at appropriate and sustainable locations.   |
| <b>KCDP 13-32</b> | Facilitate the on-going sustainable provision and maintenance of adequate licensed landfill capacity for the disposal of residual waste at an appropriate and sustainable location(s) in the County.  |
| <b>KCDP 13-33</b> | Encourage and facilitate the sustainable development of new alternatives and technological advances in relation to waste management such as Organic Waste to Energy/Combined Heat and Power schemes.  |
| <b>KCDP 13-34</b> | Require significant employers and significant retail developments to provide and maintain suitable locations for public bring-bank facilities (preferably underground), as determined by the Planning Authority.  |
| <b>KCDP 13-35</b> | Require the appropriate provision for the management of waste within developments, including the provision of facilities for the storage, separation and collection of such waste.  |
| <b>KCDP 13-36</b> | Support the provision of infrastructure, at appropriate locations, for composting and other forms of processing for bio-waste such as anaerobic digesters.  |
| <b>KCDP 13-37</b> | Ensure that the treatment and management of sludge waste is carried out in a safe, efficient and sustainable manner having regard to the protection of the environment and public health and in compliance with the Waste Framework Directive, the Nitrates Directive, the Waste Management Act and all relevant statutory instruments. |

### 13.3.3 Circular Economy

The traditional linear model where we consume resources and generate high waste volumes to be sent to landfill is unsustainable. Policy is now focussed on building a circular economy which recognises that all resources are scarce, and aims to maintain the value of all products, materials and resources through reuse, renewal and repair, so that products are reused continually, to minimise the generation of waste. The EU's Waste Framework Directive, sets out to prioritise waste prevention, followed by re-use, recycling, and recovery (where combustible waste through incineration is a waste resource for energy extraction) and finally disposal into landfill.

At regional level, the Circular Economy has been endorsed by all local authorities in the Regional Waste Management Plan for the Southern Region 2015-2021, with targets for waste reduction. The Council will, therefore, support the development of a Circular Economy and the implementation of *Closing the Loop – the EU Action Plan* for the Circular Economy at regional level.



The Council supports the use of smart technologies and innovative approaches to waste management which promotes waste prevention and increased reuse, recycling and recovery of waste, with additional environmental and economic benefits. The Council will promote and implement new measures and practices to develop the circular economy at county level.

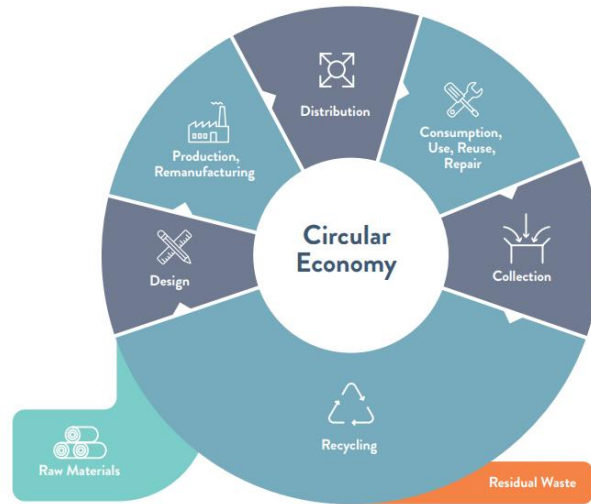


Figure 13.2: National Waste Prevention Programme

Circular Economy	
It is an objective of the Council to:	
<b>KCDP 13-38</b>	Support innovative initiatives that develop the circular economy through implementation of the Regional Waste Management Plan for the Southern Region 2015-2021 and its successor.
<b>KCDP 13-39</b>	Support the work of the Regional Waste Management Office and all state bodies in the Region to implement the <i>EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy-Closing the Loop</i> to ensure sustainable patterns of consumption and production.
<b>KCDP 13-40</b>	Support the preparation of a Bio-energy Implementation Plan for the Southern Region in conjunction with the Local Authorities and the Regional Waste Management Office.

**13.3.4 Litter Management**

Litter continues to be a significant challenge facing the Council. It is clear that the presence of litter detracts from the beauty of the county, both for residents and tourists alike. The County Council’s Litter Management Plan 2017-2019 (LMP) outlines the Council’s commitment to the environment and litter prevention in the County. It is the policy of this plan to prevent and minimise litter in the County as a whole, including the incidence of illegal dumping. This is to be achieved through education and awareness, community involvement, litter prevention and control and enforcement.

Litter Management	
It is an objective of the Council to:	
<b>KCDP 13-41</b>	Promote and encourage education and awareness on all issues associated with waste management, at household, industry, and community level.
<b>KCDP 13-42</b>	Promote and facilitate communities to become involved in environmental awareness activities and community-based recycling initiatives or environmental management initiatives that will lead to local sustainable waste management practices.



### **13.3.5 Hazardous Waste**

The current National Hazardous Waste Management Plan (NHWMP) 2014-2020 sets out the priorities to improve the management of hazardous waste. There is no commercial hazardous waste landfill in the State. There are limited hazardous waste treatment operations, however these are limited to oil recovery, healthcare waste treatment and solvent reclamation), meaning that Ireland is dependent on export for treatment of many hazardous waste streams. A progress report on the plan (October 2018) found that while many recommended actions had been advanced, stronger focus is needed in the areas of hazardous waste prevention and the development of hazardous waste management infrastructure to allow Ireland to become more self-sufficient in treatment and management of its hazardous waste. The Council will continue to require that hazardous waste is disposed of in a safe manner in accordance with the NHWMP and any subsequent amendments or revisions of this Plan.

### **13.3.6 Construction and Demolition Waste**

Construction and demolition waste (C&D waste) is generally associated with waste materials arising from construction, demolition and renovation activities. Landfill has traditionally been the main receiving point for the disposal of waste associated with construction and demolition building materials, but reuse and recycling of C&D waste is now recognised as a more sustainable alternative. The EC (Waste Directive) Regulations 2011 sets a 70% target for the re-use, recycling and recovery of man-made C&D waste in Ireland by 2020.

The Council will have regard to the requirements of the Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects (DEHLG, 2006) and any updated version of the guidelines when assessing planning applications for developments which will generate significant levels of C&D waste.



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# CHAPTER 14

# CONNECTIVITY









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## 14.0 Connectivity

### 14.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to maintain and provide additional key infrastructure and to enhance regional and county connectivity through the implementation of the policies and objectives below and the Development Management Standards and Guidance document of this Plan.

As a peripheral and rural County characterised by peninsulas, connectivity to and within the County and the quality of the infrastructure available (both physical and digital) is of paramount importance in determining the quality of life for its citizens. Similarly, proper transportation and broadband telecommunications constitute vital elements of this infrastructure and are a major factor in attracting industry and employment to an area.

The Council is responsible for the provision of some forms of infrastructure, but the majority of infrastructure is provided by state agencies and private providers. It is the policy of the Council, in conjunction with all relevant statutory agencies and infrastructure providers to provide or facilitate the provision of high-quality sustainable infrastructure at appropriate locations to attract new business investment and people into the County to serve the economic and social needs of the County.

It is also the policy of the Council to facilitate the improvement of the quality of life of all citizens of the County by providing quality transportation and communication infrastructure. This includes protection of the environment and any plans or projects requiring consent arising from connectivity policy outlined in this chapter will be subject to the relevant environmental assessments including SEA, EIA and AA where appropriate.

### 14.2 Planning Policy Context

The NPF and RSES acknowledge the importance of sustainably managing our infrastructural resources to secure the environmental and economic well-being of our future while also recognising the critical need for investment in infrastructure in order to accommodate the future projected population and economic growth predicted to 2040. The NPF seeks to promote balanced, regional development throughout Ireland, with enhanced regional accessibility. This national priority is further underpinned within the RSES, which acknowledges that the provision of prudently managed, critically enabling infrastructure is key to delivering a connected, vibrant, inclusive, resilient and smart region. The NPF and RSES also outline the need for more sustainable forms of transport to reduce energy demand and greenhouse gas emissions. The RSES further supports the delivery of digital infrastructure such as a high-quality ICT network and delivery of the National Broadband Plan (NBP) assisting in the creation of balanced regional development.

### 14.3 Sustainable Transport

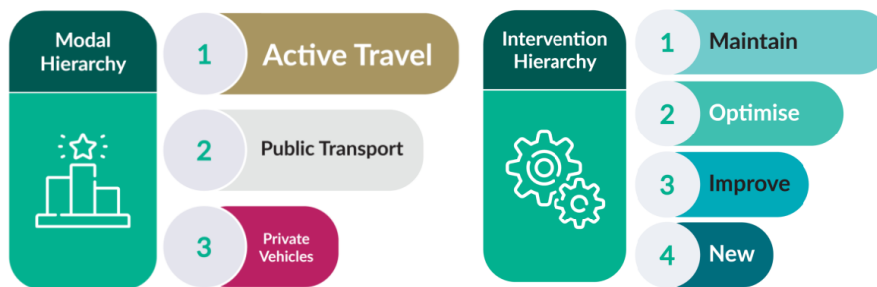
National and regional transport policy emphasises the need to reduce the demand for reliance on the private car in favour of public transport, cycling and walking. The concept of an integrated transport policy encompasses not only integration within and between different modes of transport, but also integration with environmental, social, recreational, economic, educational and health policies and objectives. No longer can the provision of transport facilities be considered or decided in upon isolation.

It is a strategic aim of this Development Plan to co-ordinate transport and land use planning. The effective integration of land-use and transportation will generate and reinforce sustainable settlement patterns that make the most efficient use of land, minimise the need for travel by car and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. This places a requirement on both the transport and settlement strategies to be mutually consistent, not only with each other, but with national direction as per the National Planning Framework, the Smarter Travel Policy and the National Transport Authority's policies and guidelines.

The Council will seek to ensure that improvements in transportation infrastructure and services support the strategic development and settlement strategy for the County and provide an appropriate level of accessibility to urban and rural facilities, services and opportunities.

The draft National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) is a high-level strategic framework for prioritising future investment in the land transport network. The draft framework identifies four investment priorities that are supplemented by two principle-based hierarchies – Modal & Intervention:

1. Decarbonization
2. Protection and Renewal
3. Mobility of People and Goods in Urban areas
4. Enhancing Regional and Rural Connectivity



**Figure 14.1 Modal and Intervention Hierarchy – NIFTI**

It is the policy of the Plan to promote the sustainable development of a transport system that provides a range of transport options for the County, including a safe road network, a range of bus services and rail services, adequate facilities for walking and cycling at appropriate locations and opportunities for air and water-based travel.

The Council is also committed to reducing the degree of commuting in the first instance by promoting the creation of additional jobs within the County and by capitalising on recent trends demonstrated by the Covid-19 pandemic towards remote working through the facilitation and support of co-working hubs in small towns and villages.

### 14.3.1 Sustainable Transport Planning

An effective and multi-modal transport system is reliant on the successful integration with land use planning. The Council will facilitate improved street design in settlements which will encourage more people to choose to walk, cycle or use public transport, by making the experience safer and more pleasant. This will lower traffic speeds, reduce unnecessary car use, and create a built environment that promotes healthy lifestyles and responds more sympathetically to the distinctive nature of individual communities and places. Other co-benefits include improved air quality.

The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) provides design guidance and standards for constructing new and reconfiguring existing urban roads and streets, to ensure they are safe for pedestrians and cyclists. It is an objective of this plan that new residential development and public realm improvement works are designed in accordance with these guidelines.

### 14.3.2 Sustainable Mobility

Sustainable mobility can be described as linking people and places in a sustainable way by supporting affordable journeys on greener transport.



Sustainable mobility is a challenge for County Kerry, which has one of the highest usage rates of private cars in journeys to work (71.1%), compared to the national average (65.6%). The dominance of the private car as the primary mode of transport is due to the dispersed settlement pattern and low population density of the county (23.3 people per sq. km, compared to the national average of 70 people per sq. km). Furthermore, the lack of viable alternative sustainable modes of transport is also a significant contributing factor. Less than 1.2% of commuters in Kerry use public transport to travel to work, compared to the national average of 9.3%.

Achieving sustainable mobility will require working with key stakeholders, including the National Transport Authority and through a suite of actions which involves:

- Focusing targeted population and employment growth in settlement areas.
- Providing alternative options to the car, namely, walking, cycling and public transport.
- Permeability and accessibility improvements.

Walking and cycling become increasingly viable as transport options when the distance between such services is reduced. Table 14.1 outlines the modal split in the main settlements. The Council will promote and ensure that alternatives to the car are integrated in the design of streets and public spaces, prioritising cycling, and walking as active transport modes. The council will ensure the effective management of space in town and village centres to deliver a high level of permeability for walking and cycling which results in accessible, attractive, and vibrant places to work and live.

The data in Table 14.1 confirms and highlights the challenges facing the County with regards to promoting a modal shift away from the car. Kerry County Council is committed to the promotion of sustainable modes of travel including public transport, walking and cycling, and where possible the encouragement of modal change from the private car and decarbonisation in transport. In planning for transport development, the Council will ensure that the needs of people with differing abilities are considered.

	Walk/Cycle			Public Transport			Vehicle		
	Work	School	Total	Work	School	Total	Work	School	Total
Tralee	20.1%	26.4%	22.7%	1.1%	8.3%	4.0%	71.1%	59.0%	66.2%
Killarney	23.9%	23.1%	23.7%	4.0%	6.6%	4.7%	61.5%	63.3%	62.0%
Listowel	15.4%	22.4%	18.1%	0.6%	13.2%	5.5%	81.1%	60.2%	73.1%
Castleisland	17.8%	32.6%	23.1%	1.3%	6.8%	3.3%	77.7%	57.7%	70.5%
Kenmare	19.2%	27.6%	21.9%	1.2%	5.8%	2.7%	71.7%	60.7%	68.2%
Killorglin	21.0%	30.0%	23.9%	1.0%	6.9%	2.9%	73.9%	58.2%	68.8%
Dingle/Daingean Uí Chúis	37.7%	43.2%	39.1%	1.1%	2.4%	1.5%	53.2%	51.4%	52.7%
Ballybunion	13.8%	21.5%	16.7%	1.2%	7.3%	3.5%	79.7%	63.8%	73.8%
Cahersiveen	31.0%	40.3%	34.1%	0.6%	1.7%	0.9%	64.3%	54.0%	60.9%
Milltown	7.4%	39.8%	18.3%	0.8%	7.3%	3.0%	88.6%	46.1%	74.3%

**Table 14.1 Main Settlements Transport Modal split (2016 CSO)**

The Council will allow a reduction in car parking standards in suitable town centre locations to encourage a modal shift away from the private car to more sustainable forms of transport, such as public transport, cycling and walking.

The Council will also ensure that the provision of appropriate Bicycle parking facilities (See Development Management Standards & Guidelines, Vol 6) form part of any new applications in urban areas to assist with



supporting a modal shift away from private cars to more sustainable modes of transport i.e., cycling, walking, public transport.

<b>Sustainable Transport and Mobility</b>	
<b>It is an objective of the Council to:</b>	
<b>KCDP 14-1</b>	Deliver sustainable transport infrastructure investments as identified for the road network, public/rural transport, and walking/cycling infrastructure.
<b>KCDP 14-2</b>	Facilitate and support the sustainable establishment of a network of greenways as outlined in the KCC Greenway Strategy in Map 14.1 and Table 14.2 within the County and the adjoining counties, further to environmental assessment.
<b>KCDP 14-3</b>	Support and promote the sustainable development of walking, cycling, public transport and other sustainable forms of transport, as an alternative to the private car, by facilitating and promoting the sustainable development of necessary infrastructure at appropriate locations and by promoting initiatives contained within “Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020” and the “National Cycle Policy Framework” and any future national sustainable mobility policy.
<b>KCDP 14-4</b>	Promote and support the expansion of the Electric Vehicle charging network (through direct provision by state agencies and in partnership with energy suppliers e.g., in the hospitality sector) and an increase in the numbers and usage of Electric Vehicles.
<b>KCDP 14-5</b>	Specify baseline figures and targets for modal share in new / varied Local Area Plans to encourage a modal shift away from the private car to more sustainable forms of transport, such as public transport, cycling and walking.
<b>KCDP 14-6</b>	Set modal share targets within the county in cooperation with the NTA, CARO, EMRA and other relevant stakeholders and in accordance with any relevant Guidelines that may come into effect.
<b>KCDP 14-7</b>	Promote and support the provision of new technologies on decarbonising transport.

### 14.3.3 Active Travel

Active Travel is travelling with a purpose (excluding leisure purposes) using your own energy including walking (including all users of footpaths) or cycling as part of a journey to school, to the shop or a commute to work.

An essential element of any integrated transport system is to provide for the needs of cyclists and pedestrians. Part of the Government's sustainability development strategy, Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland, identifies the increased provision of cycle lanes and safer facilities for pedestrians as a key priority. Cycleways and safe pedestrian routes should be encouraged as part of the design schemes for residential, educational, employment and recreational development.

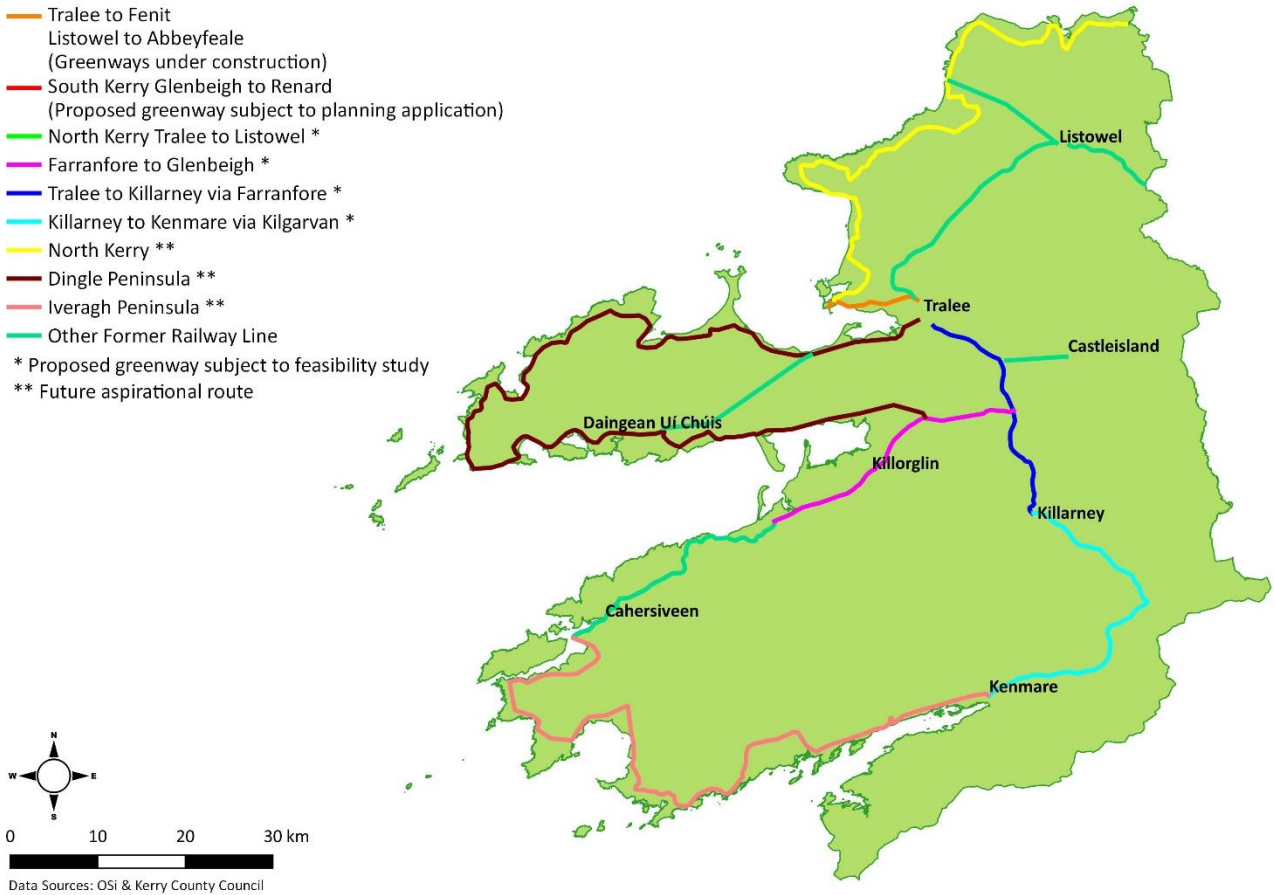
#### 14.3.3.1 Greenways

In addition to the County's existing walking and cycling infrastructure, the Council recognises the potential of Kerry's old railway lines and other potential linkages to act as Greenways for walking and cycling routes. Former railway lines in Kerry, have already been developed and others have the potential to be developed as 'greenways. (An indicative list is provided in Table 14.2) The Council will therefore continue to protect the



routes of such potential greenways through the policies of this plan and will actively work with all stakeholders to facilitate the development of Greenways and walking and cycling routes throughout the County.

The Council has developed a Greenway Strategy for the future development of routes throughout the county. The Council will seek to roll out the development on the greenways in a coordinated and linked up manner. (See Chapter 10 for further information on Greenways)



**Map 14.1: Kerry County Council Greenway Strategy**

<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
Listowel	Ballybunion
Tralee	Abbeyfeale (Co. Limerick) via Listowel
Tralee	Fenit
Tralee	Dingle/Daingean Uí Chúis, Castlegregory
Gortatlea	Castleisland
Farranfore	Cahersiveen/Renard
Headford	Kenmare

**Table 14.2: Former Railway Lines in Kerry**

**Active Travel & Greenways**

**It is an objective of the Council to:**

**KCDP 14-8** Promote a shift away from the private car to greater use of active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport.



<b>KCDP 14-9</b>	Continue to work with the relevant transport providers, agencies and stakeholders to facilitate the integration of active travel (walking, cycling) with public transport.
<b>KCDP 14-10</b>	Facilitate and support the development of Transport Mobility Plans for Tralee, Killarney and Listowel and the subsequent rollout of Active Travel related infrastructure in these towns.
<b>KCDP 14-11</b>	Develop in accordance with the National Cycle Manual and the NTA, an integrated network of cycle ways in our larger urban centres, to ensure permeability within and between residential areas, linking to town centres, schools and places of work informed by Transport Mobility Plans for Tralee, Killarney and Listowel.
<b>KCDP 14-12</b>	Protect established/historic railway corridors throughout the County for recreational development.
<b>KCDP 14-13</b>	Promote the sustainable development of the public footpath network, the walking and cycling routes and associated infrastructure in the County, including where possible the retrofitting of cycle and pedestrian routes into the existing urban road network and in the design of new roads.
<b>KCDP 14-14</b>	Ensure that all proposals for new greenways comply with the following strategy: Strategy for the Future Development of Greenways (DTTAS, 2017) and are subject to prior environmental assessment.
<b>KCDP 14-15</b>	Support accessibility to greenway and active travel walking routes for people of all ages and those with disabilities.
<b>KCDP 14-16</b>	Facilitate and support the provision of bicycle parking facilities throughout the county's settlements.
<b>KCDP 14-17</b>	Develop a masterplan for all cycle paths and greenways in the county and to improve connectivity within the region for walking routes and commuter cyclists in addition to recreational amenity functions.

#### 14.3.4 Land Use Integration & Local Transport Plans

The provision of high-quality transport infrastructure and protection of the existing extensive transport network in County Kerry is critical to the county's socio-economic development and will ensure quality levels of service, accessibility and connectivity to transport users. Kerry is strategically located along the AEC and along the south-western seaboard, with an international airport, railway and high quality national, regional and local road networks. The county has a significant advantage within the south-west region, in terms of its location and economic assets. These advantages must be progressed in tandem with the sustainable management and development of other essential infrastructure, whilst having regard to environmental responsibilities and complying with European and National legislation. A priority of this plan is the sustainable enhancement of the existing physical infrastructure network within the county and to strive to transition to a low carbon future, through greater support and promotion of more sustainable modes of transport in urban and rural areas.

Local Transport Plans (LTPs) will be prepared by the Council for the key towns of Tralee and Killarney, based on the Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) guidance produced by the NTA and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII). LTPs will be based on a clear set of objectives and include priorities for each settlement in terms





of public transport infrastructure and services, cycle investment, improvements to the pedestrian environment and road enhancements. LTPs and LAPs will be aligned to enable the integration of land use and transportation over the lifetime of this plan.

#### Land Use Integration & Local Transport Plans

It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>KCDP 14-18</b> | Enhance and improve regional connectivity through upgraded transport infrastructure.   |
| <b>KCDP 14-19</b> | Improve access for all vulnerable road users and people with disabilities to all modes of transport thereby increasing and improving transport facilities for all users.                     |
| <b>KCDP 14-20</b> | Protect and sustainably develop the County's principal transportation assets including ports, Kerry Airport, and strategic road and rail corridors.  |
| <b>KCDP 14-21</b> | Promote the sustainable development of all transportation links both within and out of the County in co-operation with adjacent Local Authorities to integrate different modes of transport. |
| <b>KCDP 14-22</b> | Prepare Local Transport Plans for the Key Towns and other settlements where appropriate, which shall be aligned to and integrated with relevant Local Area Plans.                            |

#### 14.4 Road Network

The Council is strongly committed to the promotion of sustainable means of travel including public transport, walking and cycling and the encouragement of modal change from private car, where possible. However, the council recognises that the private car will remain as a mode of transport for the foreseeable future.

The provision of proper external road infrastructural linkages from the County to national and international infrastructural networks greatly minimises the impact of peripherality. The provision of road infrastructure also makes the County more attractive for the location of industry and as a location in which to live, work and provide employment.

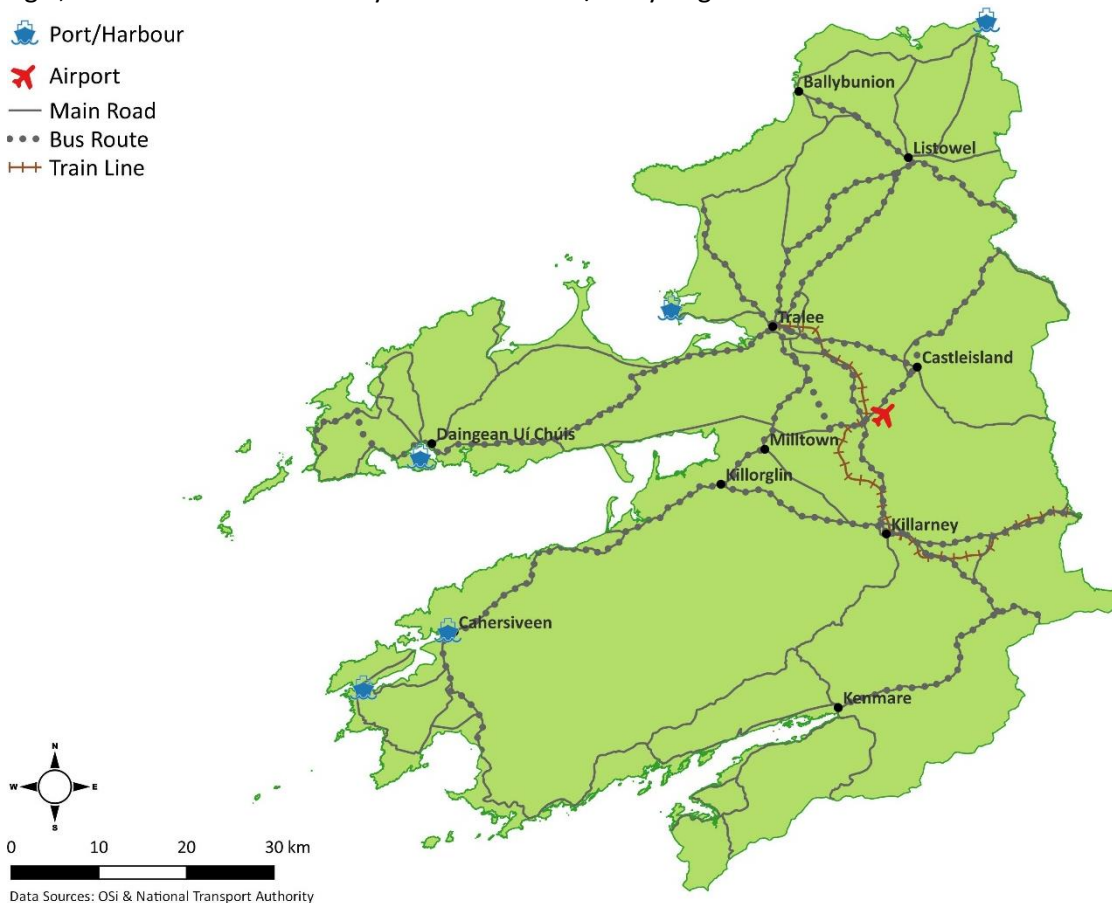
The total road network in the County comes under the four classifications: National Primary, National Secondary, Regional and Local roads measuring approx. 4,880km. The low density of population in County Kerry and the relatively low level of urbanisation accounts for a high dependency on the County's road infrastructure. Since the adoption of the last County Development Plan in 2015 several infrastructure projects have been completed or have commenced in the County. Examples include the opening of the N86 Lispolle to Ballynasare Lower and Ballygarret to Camp Road Improvement Scheme in 2018, and the N70 Kilderry Bends Improvement Scheme between Milltown and Killorglin.

The Council recognises its role in providing or facilitating the sustainable provision of physical infrastructure essential to support the existing and future population of the County and economic growth and in particular by improving links between the Key towns of Tralee and Killarney and to the cities in the Region (Cork and Limerick).

The coastal nature of the county, whilst internationally recognised as having a landscape of outstanding beauty, presents a particular challenge in relation to roads. Many roads such as the N86 (Tralee – Dingle / Daingean Uí Chúis), the N70 / N71 (Ring of Kerry), R561 Castlemaine to Annascaul and R549 / R559 Sleah Head tourist route are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and the consequences of same for lifeline links to towns including Dingle / Daingean Uí Chúis, Kenmare and Killorglin and their rural hinterlands.



Map 14.2 illustrates the strategic transportation network serving and linking the Key Towns, the Knowledge triangle, other towns in the County and the Tarbert / Ballylongford Industrial Landbank.



Data Sources: OSI & National Transport Authority

**Map 14.2: Strategic Transportation Network**

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy list key infrastructural projects required for balanced development of the Region and emphasise the link between the provision of infrastructure and land use planning. Building on the RSES, the priority road infrastructure requirements for the County over the plan period 2022-2028 and beyond include the following Schemes listed in Table 14.3.

<b>National Primary/Secondary Roads Projects</b>
N21/N22 Tralee to County Bounds
N22 Farranfore to Killarney including N22/N71 Southern Link
N23 Castleisland to Farranfore
N21 Abbeyfeale Bypass
N22 Killarney Junction Improvements (Upper Lewis Road, Aghadoe, Coolcashlagh & Ballycasheen)
N69 Listowel Bypass
N70 Milltown Bypass
N70/N72 Killorglin Bypass
N67 Tarbert to Ferry



N69 Tralee to Tarbert
N70 Tralee to Killorglin & N70 Killorglin-Cahersiveen-Kenmare
N71 Killarney-Kenmare (Tunnels)
N72 Killorglin to Rathmore
N86 Tralee to Dingle/An Daingean
<b>Non-National Roads</b>
Tralee Northern Relief Road (Phases 1 and 2)
Killarney Inner Relief Road
Dingle/Daingean Uí Chúis Relief Road (Phase 5)
Kenmare Relief Road (Phase 2)
Killarney Strategic Link Roads
R558 Tralee to Fenit (Phases 2 and 3)
Tralee Inner Relief Road - Clash to Ballymullen Phase 2
R561 Castlemaine to Annascaul
R549 / R559 Sleah Head tourist route

**Table 14.3: Priority Roads Infrastructure Projects**

#### Road Network

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 14-23** Seek to protect and safeguard the significant investment made in strategic economic infrastructure, in particular the network of roads, the existing rail line to Tralee and major water and wastewater projects, through the promotion of appropriate development and settlement patterns and the integration of land use and transportation activities.
- KCDP 14-24** Strengthen Steady State Investment in our existing road networks to ensure that existing networks are maintained to a high level to ensure quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity to transport users of all transport modes.
- KCDP 14-25** Provide, or facilitate the sustainable provision of all road infrastructure projects set out in Table 14.3 with priority given to infrastructure serving the Key Towns.
- KCDP 14-26** Support the development of the Adare, Newcastlewest and Abbeyfeale By-passes and N21 realignment as a strategic link corridor between Co. Kerry and Co. Limerick and support the completion of the Macroom By-pass and further improvements and realignments of the N22 corridor.

#### 14.4.1 National Primary and Secondary Routes

The national route network comprises both the National Primary and Secondary Roads within the County. These routes are of vital economic importance, linking the County with other major centres and ports and are important arteries within the County itself.



These routes due to the landscapes they traverse and, in some locations the established enclosed nature of the road corridor and verge treatment are of significant tourism importance, however their primary role remains as transport and economic corridors.

It is an overall objective of the Plan to provide for balanced growth throughout the County by promoting the strengthening of rural communities and to provide sustainable infrastructure to facilitate job creation in these areas. The road network throughout the County and particularly the national road network is a vital element of this infrastructure. It is essential that they are maintained to the highest standards possible and that their efficiency, safety and carrying capacity is maximised. The creation of additional entrances onto these roads reduces their carrying capacity and safety and is contrary to the overall objective of improving the infrastructure serving rural areas.

Kerry County Council, being the designated Action Planning Authority under Statutory Instrument 549 of 2018 European Communities (Environmental Noise) Regulations 2018 has prepared a Noise Action Plan to address noise from major roads in the county with traffic flows greater than 3 million vehicles per annum. Further information on this is included in Chapter 11 Environment.

#### 14.4.1.1 Access onto National Roads

The creation of an access or the intensification of usage of an existing access onto a National Road shall be only considered where it is in compliance with the *Spatial Planning and National Roads Planning Guidelines (DoECLG January 2012)*. Section 2.5/2.6 of the guidelines outline the following:

##### Lands adjoining National Roads to which speed limits greater than 60 km/h apply

It is an Objective of this plan to avoid the creation of any additional access point from new development or the generation of increased traffic from existing accesses to national roads to which speed limits greater than 60 km/h apply. This provision applies to all categories of development, including individual houses in rural areas, regardless of the housing circumstances of the applicant.

##### Transitional Zones

Access onto National Roads on the approaches to or exit from urban centres that are subject to a speed limit of 60 km/h before a lower 50 km/h limit (otherwise known as transitional zones) may be considered subject to a road safety audit and in accordance the TII publication; *The Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads DN-GEO-03084 (2018)*.

The proliferation of such entrances, which would lead to a diminution in the role of such zones, will be carefully controlled.

##### Lands Adjoining National Roads within 50 km/h Speed Limits

Access to national roads will be considered in accordance with normal road safety, traffic management and urban design criteria for built up areas.

#### National Primary and Secondary Routes

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 14-27** Protect the capacity and safety of the National Road and Strategically Important Regional Road network in the County and ensure compliance and adherence to the provisions of official Government policy outlined in the Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines 'Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DoECLG, 2012) in order to safeguard carrying capacity and safety of National Primary and Secondary Routes.

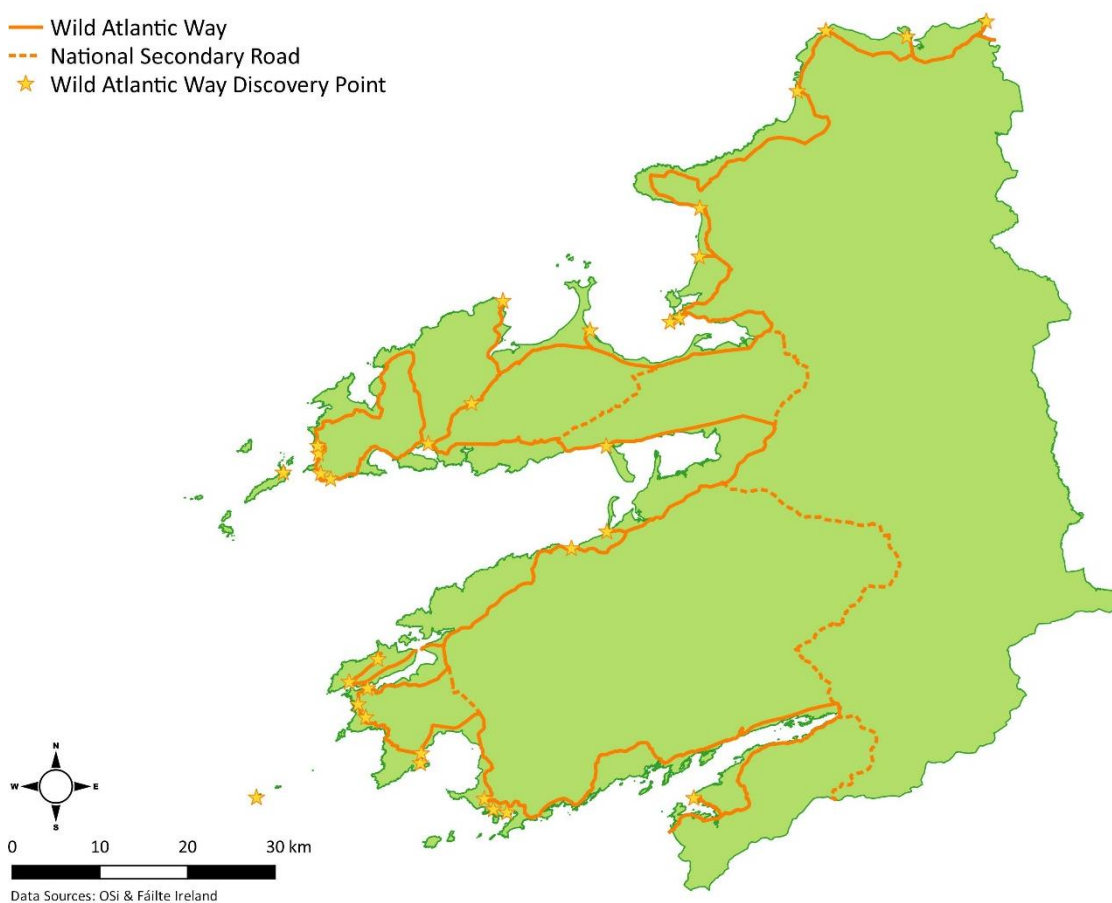
**KCDP 14-28** Avoid the creation of any additional access point from new development or the generation of increased traffic from existing accesses to National Roads to which speed limits greater



than 60 km/h apply. This provision applies to all categories of development, including individual houses in rural areas, regardless of the housing circumstances of the applicant.

- KCDP 14-29** Consider proposals for access onto National Roads on the approaches to or exit from urban centres that are subject to a speed limit of 60 km/h before a lower 50 km/h limit (otherwise known as transitional zones) subject to a road safety audit and in accordance the TII publication; *The Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads DN-GEO-03084 (2018)*.
  
- KCDP 14-30** Reserve lands and prohibit development in areas identified for both the immediate and long-term provision and improvement of roads throughout the County and the construction of roads as indicated in table 14.3.
  
- KCDP 14-31** Ensure a proportionate design response to the identified need for the projects listed in table 14.3 in order to minimise the impact of the scheme on unique road corridors and tourist routes.

- Wild Atlantic Way
- - - National Secondary Road
- ★ Wild Atlantic Way Discovery Point



**Map 14.3: Tourist Routes**



### 14.4.2 Regional and Local Roads

These routes are of vital importance, linking the national roads with the towns and villages and remaining rural areas within the County.

It is the policy of the Plan to continue the ongoing upgrading, strengthening and improvement works on all regional & local roads in a sustainable manner in accordance with the objectives of this Plan and in compliance with the annual Roads Programmes.

Regional and Local Roads	
It is an objective of the Council to:	
<b>KCDP 14-32</b>	Support the sustainable upgrading, strengthening and improvement to the existing Regional Road network including road schemes and by-passes outlined in Table 14.3.
<b>KCDP 14-33</b>	Sustainably strengthen and improve the road network including links, by-passes and relief roads with priority given to those serving the Key Towns and Regional/District Towns and interconnection between such settlements.
<b>KCDP 14-34</b>	Provide a safe road system throughout the County through Road Safety Schemes and to encourage the promotion of road safety in the County.
<b>KCDP 14-35</b>	Facilitate the upgrade and improvement of major tourist routes within the County (as shown on Map 14.3) including realignments, the provision of lay-bys, viewing areas, picnic areas and the improvement of finger-posting and access ways to points of interest, at appropriate locations and in a sustainable manner along such tourist routes.

### 14.4.3 Parking Provision

The provision of adequate car parking throughout the County is essential for the proper functioning of settlements and access to services. It is important in the siting and design of new car parks, that every effort is made to maintain the quality of the public domain. However, the provision of car parking in Town centres needs to be balanced against obligations to reduce overall car dependency and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in order to achieve Climate change targets.

Car parks are also needed in a rural context to access recreational facilities and amenities and to manage associated pressure. This parking must be provided in a sustainable manner taking cognisance of environmental designations, and minimising effects on the landscape. Where car parking demand is seasonal the provision of temporary facilities and solutions will be explored in order to reduce environmental impact.

Universal standards for car parking may not be applicable in all circumstances in town /village centre areas. Applications and developments shall be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

The Council will facilitate a reduction in car parking standards for 'living over the shop' accommodation proposals and other change of use/regeneration developments in town centre locations (M2), where considered appropriate by the Planning Authority. Furthermore, car parking standards shall not apply for developments located in the designated retail core areas (as shown in the town plans & Local area plans).

The Council are currently preparing a Parking Strategy for the county. Key Challenges to be addressed in this strategy include promoting town centre regeneration and a model shift in transport whilst meeting business needs, making Town Centres more accessible, meeting targets for electric vehicle charging points and



improving parking infrastructure for key Tourism sites/routes. The Strategy will also promote the move to cashless and online payment options and will encourage, through tariff setting, more off-street car parking and 'park and stride' access to town centres and areas susceptible to traffic congestion.

#### Parking Provision

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 14-36** Support and facilitate the sustainable provision of public parking facilities for all users at appropriate locations, including bus parking and electric vehicles within and on the edge of towns and villages, and at tourist and recreation sites such as beaches, walkway/cycleway trailheads, scenic viewing points and routes subject to compliance with any environmental designation requirements.
- KCDP 14-37** Support and facilitate the provision of electric charging facilities in car parks provided as part of commercial large retail or industrial developments.

#### 14.4.4 Roadside Signage

Kerry County Council has regard to the provisions of the DoECLG Policy on the Provision of Tourist & Leisure Signage on National Roads (March 2011) and Traffic Signs Manual, (Dept. of Transport, 2010) when erecting signage on all roadways.

Roadside signage is generally associated with commercial business and tourist accommodation and a licence (renewed annually) is required for private signage on public roads. Private signage will only be licensed if it will not damage the visual amenity, landscape, create visual clutter or a traffic hazard in an area. It is the policy of Kerry County Council to seek to have signage in both Irish and English. KCC will seek to remove all unauthorised signage. A detailed policy for the erection of signage is contained within the Development Management, Standards and Guidelines section of the Plan – Volume 6.

#### Roadside Signage

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- KCDP 14-38** Comply with the provisions of the DoECLG Policy on the Provision of Tourist & Leisure Signage on National Roads (March 2011) and Traffic Signs Manual (Dept. of Transport, 2010).
- KCDP 14-39** Seek to remove all unauthorised signage and advertisements erected on roadside verges and on private lands.
- KCDP 14-40** Facilitate and support the development of multimedia and social networking methods for directional and tourist information.

#### 14.5 Public Transport

Kerry County Council acknowledges the importance of the provision of high-quality public transport services and will facilitate transport service providers where possible in the expansion of services and improvements in the quality of services on offer. Future growth, both in terms of employment and residential development must be based on sustainable modes of transport.

In particular, the availability of public rural transport plays a major role in combatting rural isolation and acts as a catalyst in creating models of partnership, at all levels, where key sectors actively engage in transport provision, to ensure equality of access for all. This invaluable service provides access to public services,



employment, training, health and social facilities. In recognition of the importance of improving access to and from rural locations, the Council supports the extension of the Rural Transport Programme and other such initiatives, which respond to local travel needs throughout the County. Kerry County Council will facilitate and support the NTA in its preparation of a County Transport Strategy.

The Council in conjunction with other service providers will review the requirement for Park and Ride in the County, with consideration along the N21, N69 and N86 in Killarney, Listowel and Daingean Ui Chúis. Park and Ride facilities encourage shifts to public transport, reduce traffic congestion and parking demand and are essential component to meet climate change targets.

#### Public Transport

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 14-41** Promote the sustainable delivery of a reliable, integrated, low-carbon and cost-effective public transport system for the County.

#### 14.5.1 Rail Transport

The development of the rail network is important in terms of enhancing the economic and social development of the County thus achieving balanced regional development. The Council will therefore support land use policy, future development proposals and transportation strategies that ensure the viability of a rail service between centres of population. Iarnród Éireann in their strategic policy document “Rail Vision 2030: The Future of Rail Transport in Ireland” seek to provide for the maintenance and renewal of existing rail infrastructure. They also seek to avoid the asset being “run down” over time as the national Intercity and commuter network has a key role to play in promoting economic development.

The Dublin/Cork-Mallow-Tralee railway route is a vital connection between Kerry and the cities of Dublin and Cork and provides connectivity for the people of Kerry and tourists visiting the County.

#### Rail Transport

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

**KCDP 14-42** Support and encourage the provision of a high-quality rail network, commuter service and ancillary works for passenger and freight carriage to, from and within the County.

**KCDP 14-43** Support and facilitate investment in the rail network including (i) maintenance, improvement and strengthening of the rail network, (ii) upgrading and modernisation of infrastructure and passenger facilities, (iii) bike/park-and-ride and multi-modal transport interconnection facilities with rail networks and (iv) the removal of at-grade crossings to improve journey times.

**KCDP 14-44** Protect all existing or historic rail lines and associated facilities from redevelopment for non-transport related purposes to protect their future potential use as an operational transportation network or for cycle/walking routes.

#### 14.5.2 Bus Transport

The development of a quality bus system as an alternative to private car use is an essential element of an integrated and balanced land use transport system.

Bus services also play a vital social role in rural communities, linking rural areas with settlements and essential services such as schools and healthcare. Local Link Transport provide an invaluable service connecting rural communities with the towns and villages. However, the frequency of this service in some areas is low. Bus





services along the main transport corridors linking Tralee and Killarney are efficient and there are regular daily services between the Key towns and the other regional towns which provide the only public transport link. However, infrequent services present a challenge in achieving a modal shift to public transport in rural and the smaller peripheral settlements. The Council will work closely with a range of rural community development groups and allied stakeholders to identify and meet future bus transport requirements.

<b>Bus Transport</b>	
<b>It is an objective of the Council to:</b>	
<b>KCDP 14-45</b>	Facilitate the development and expansion of the Local Link Rural Transport Programme by the National Transport Authority (NTA).
<b>KCDP 14-46</b>	Facilitate improved rural public transport services including the provision of public and private bus services under the Rural Transport Programme and improved bus infrastructure including bus stops/shelters at appropriate locations.
<b>KCDP 14-47</b>	Facilitate and support the NTA in its preparation of a County Transport Strategy and Local Transport Plans.

### 14.6 Air Transport

The Local Authority recognises the strategic importance of Kerry International Airport (KIA) and Shannon and Cork Airports as a key factor in promoting the economic development of the County. Even during times of high emigration when many people are forced to work abroad it provides a vital link which enables families to be connected on a regular basis.

KIA is an important strategic asset to the County in strengthening transportation links both nationally and internationally. It is envisaged that future upgrading of the airport facilities will increase the potential for the airport to attract increased passenger numbers thereby making the County more accessible to other national and international transport hubs.

Air transport drives and facilitates wider economic activity through connectivity and is vital to businesses operating on an international scale and for the development of regions as business locations and tourist destinations. Safe, secure and reliable air transport links are essential to ensure a vibrant future for regional and local communities. They are essential in attracting inward investment and they improve the quality of life for those who live outside the main cities. The Council will encourage the development of further inbound dominated markets. More inbound passengers from these markets will support existing and create new jobs and support the national, regional, and local economy, particularly the Tourism sector.

It is important that the airport identifies opportunities for attracting new business within niche markets and that long-term viability is identified and supported, in partnership with relevant regional, tourism and industry bodies.

The location of Kerry International Airport with respect to the Kerry Technology Park, and centrally in the Kerry Hub & Knowledge Triangle, is important to ensuring that regional development continues. The ability for multinationals (both fully developed and incubating in the Technology Park) to have ready access to an airport with services to Dublin is an important consideration for the economic health of the region. Expanded services and routes would also benefit the county, both in terms of business and tourism.

It is the policy of the council to support improved connectivity between counties and the development of a Tri-Airport Strategy for the Southern Region (including Cork and Shannon airports) to be prepared by the



relevant stakeholders through consultation with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports, Local Authorities, Airport Authorities, TII, NTA and other relevant stakeholders in the Southern Region.

#### Air Transport

##### It is an objective of the Council to:

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>KCDP 14-48</b> | Promote and support the sustainable development of Kerry International Airport by optimising international/regional connectivity through investment and increased capacity and capitalise on the associated wider economic benefits for Kerry and the wider region. |
| <b>KCDP 14-49</b> | Promote and support the provision of infrastructure and facilities at Kerry International Airport so that it can develop further and operate to its maximum potential, whilst taking into account the impact on local amenities.                                    |
| <b>KCDP 14-50</b> | Facilitate and support the development of an integrated multi-modal transport system to and from the airport.   |
| <b>KCDP 14-51</b> | Facilitate and support the development of a coordinated regional air access strategy in co-operation with Shannon, Cork and Kerry International Airports.   |
| <b>KCDP 14-52</b> | Support the expansion of Kerry Airport routes to international European Hub airports.   |

### 14.7 Ports, Harbours & Piers

The establishment and maintenance of the piers, ports and harbours of the County are important to the local economic base of an area. There are many such facilities located along the length of the Kerry coastline. In particular the Shannon Estuary, Fenit Port, Dingle Port and by extension Foynes Port are of strategic importance in terms of their fishing and commercial base. The sustainable development of these facilities offers significant economic potential both to peripheral areas of the county and the wider region. The maintenance and development of these facilities including road access is essential to ensure ongoing navigational and operational effectiveness. It is an objective of this plan therefore to facilitate ongoing dredging and maintenance works to these facilities.

The Tarbert-Killimer Ferry and the Valentia Island Ferry are important links between Kerry, Clare and Valentia Island. These ferries form major components of established tourist routes including the Wild Atlantic Way and are of significant economic importance to their local hinterlands. It is an objective of this plan to facilitate and support the continuation and development of these essential links.

There are a large number of small piers along the coastline providing ferry facilities to neighbouring counties, ports and offshore islands as well as supporting local mariculture and leisure activities. Continued investment is required to further develop this infrastructure in a sustainable manner and to support local industry and tourism. It is the policy of the Council to maintain and sustainably improve these facilities in order to encourage their fishing, tourism and commercial base without significant adverse effects on the environment or the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.

County Kerry has all of the natural resources necessary to develop a vibrant and successful marine leisure and tourism sector. The sustainable establishment of a necklace of Marinas, located at appropriate and strategic locations around the coast, is important for the development of marine tourism. The protection of the environmental attributes which underpin the marine tourism industry is a key requirement of this plan and only developments that have no significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of the built, natural or cultural heritage will be considered.



### Ports, Harbours & Piers

#### It is an objective of the Council to:

<b>KCDP 14-53</b>	Support the carrying out of a feasibility study of port connections between Dingle and Fenit and European Destinations.
<b>KCDP 14-54</b>	Optimise international/regional connectivity through investment and increased capacity in our ports throughout the region/county.
<b>KCDP 14-55</b>	Support the sustainable development of a Ports and Harbour Strategy for the Southern Region to be prepared by all relevant stakeholders.
<b>KCDP 14-56</b>	Facilitate and support the development and improvement (including dredging and sediment removal) of existing ports, marinas, harbour facilities, piers, slipways, and associated shore facilities to maintain navigational and operational effectiveness.
<b>KCDP 14-57</b>	Promote and investigate the potential for sustainably developing harbours, marinas and piers for increased usage including cruiser stopovers and greater economic benefit.
<b>KCDP 14-58</b>	Sustainably improve marina, port and harbour infrastructure in the County and to safeguard lands in the vicinity of ports and harbours against inappropriate uses that could compromise the long-term economic potential (including access) of the port or harbour.
<b>KCDP 14-59</b>	Complement investment in port infrastructure by seeking the sustainable development of improved access infrastructure to ports from their regional catchments including the R556 to Fenit and the N86 to Dingle/Daingean Uí Chuis.
<b>KCDP 14-60</b>	Support the role of ports, where appropriate, in facilitating the sustainable development and operation of offshore renewable energy development.
<b>KCDP 14-61</b>	Safeguard and enhance the roles of Dingle/ Daingean Uí Chuis, Fenit, Portmagee, Cahersiveen as centres of fishing fleet activity, processing and ancillary services and to facilitate the sustainable diversification of such locations into new areas of appropriate investment and employment opportunities, including marine related economic activity.
<b>KCDP 14-62</b>	Facilitate and support the continuation and development of the Tarbert to Killimer and the Knightstown to Renard Ferry.

### 14.8 Public Rights of Ways

A Public Right of Way is defined as ‘a strip of land (normally a road or path), usually leading from a public place to a public space, along which the public has a legal right to travel’.

There are very few registered Public Rights of Way in Ireland that are not maintained public roads. Access to the countryside is usually obtained through ‘permissive rights of way’ i.e., with the landowners’ permission. Landowners have facilitated, through their goodwill and tolerance, access to the countryside through their lands. Ireland’s waymarked trails are ‘permissive routes’ and have been developed with the landowners’ agreement.

Public Rights of Way were listed and mapped as part of the Kerry County Development Plan 2015-2021, and these are appended to this Plan in Volume 3. It is important to note that this is not an exhaustive list. The



omission of a Right of Way from this list shall not be taken as an indication that such a right of way does not exist. In addition, the inclusion of a route in this plan does not create a public right of way.

Where no Public Rights of Way exist to important recreational areas, places of historic interest, architectural heritage, scientific sites and sites of cultural heritage, the Council will encourage the creation of such Rights of Way in co-operation with local landowners.

<b>Public Rights of Way</b>	
<b>It is an objective of the Council to:</b>	
<b>KCDP 14-63</b>	Ensure the preservation of Public Rights of Way which give access to seashore, mountain, lakeshore, riverbank and other place of natural beauty or recreational utility.
<b>KCDP 14-64</b>	Protect all existing Public Rights of Way (including those not listed in this plan) and ensure that development does not impinge on these routes.

### 14.9 Digital Connectivity

The importance of a modern, efficient telecommunications system for the future development of the County cannot be overstated and constitutes a vital element of the County's infrastructure. The Information Technology sector has huge potential for employment creation and access to resilient high-quality broadband is essential if the County is to be regarded as a viable location for the development of this industry and other service industries which rely on Broadband. Kerry County Council has been proactively involved in the provision of digital hubs. Through the council funding has been given for the Sneem Digital Hub and the RDI Hub in Killorglin.

Enhanced quality and provision of digital and mobile telecommunications infrastructure is critical for the revitalisation of cities, towns, villages and rural areas. Developments in information and communications technology (ICT) continues to fundamentally change how our society and economy functions.

A key factor in the determination of social and economic progress in the County is the development of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) network. This is particularly important if locations remote from cities are to attract investment and jobs and give local people quality access to information, education and entertainment. Telecommunications masts are an essential element in providing a communication network for the county. As with most technology they provide benefits, which must be balanced against associated loss of amenities.

The Council will facilitate the delivery by National Broadband Ireland (NBI) of high-speed broadband services to all businesses and households in line with the National Broadband plan for Ireland. The council recognises that the current infrastructure in this sector is deficient. Even with the schedules of the incumbent service providers for enhancements of their networks and exchanges in "Next Generation Network" investments, the county suffers an absence of carrier neutral and multi-carrier backhaul in most parts of the county. There is also an increased demand from the domestic and commercial sectors. The Council, therefore, aims to support the sustainable provision of telecommunications infrastructure throughout the county at appropriate locations.

It is the policy of the Council to:

- Promote the development of Smart County and Smart Towns as well as Smart Villages.
- Support the co-ordinated and focused sustainable development and extension of broadband infrastructure throughout the County at appropriate locations to ensure economic competitiveness for the enterprise and commercial sectors and in enabling more flexible work practices e.g., remote working in hubs in towns and villages.



- Facilitate the sustainable development of a modern efficient telecommunications network serving the County.
- Achieve a balance between facilitating the sustainable provision of telecommunications infrastructure in the interests of social and economic progress and sustaining residential amenity and environmental quality.

#### **14.9.1 Telecommunications & Broadband**

Efficient telecommunications and broadband are central to the development of a knowledge-based economy throughout the County. Broadband helps to combat social exclusion. Areas without broadband will be less able to take advantage of internet centred developments in education, banking, research and business. In considering locations for masts and other infrastructure requirements, Kerry County Council will have regard to the 'Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DoECLG, 1996) and Circular Letter PL07/12. The Council aims to support the sustainable development of mast infrastructure at appropriate locations which facilitates backhaul in the peninsula areas, and Broadband services to areas of the County with no Broadband service and with poor Broadband service.

#### **14.9.2 National Broadband Plan**

While Kerry is a county with reasonable broadband availability the quality of this broadband service in some areas is unsatisfactory and inadequate. The National Broadband Plan (NBP) is the government's initiative to deliver high speed broadband services to all premises in Ireland. This will be delivered through investment by commercial enterprises coupled with intervention by the State in those parts of the country where private companies have no plans to invest.

It aims to radically transform the country's broadband landscape through the delivery of quality, affordable high-speed broadband to all parts of Ireland where such services are not available commercially.

The NBP will ensure that all people and businesses have access to high-speed broadband, no matter where they live or work. Once completed, all parts of Ireland will have access to a modern and reliable broadband network, capable of supporting the communications, information, education and entertainment requirements of current and future generations.

The network will be designed, built and operated by National Broadband Ireland, using a combination of State subsidy and commercial investment. It will make its services available to all of the rollout area, which accounts for 23% of the population in about approximately 544,000 homes, farms, schools and businesses across the country.

National Broadband Ireland (NBI), the company delivering the NBP has set ambitious milestones in its deployment plan, leading to 100% high-speed broadband coverage across the national broadband rollout areas within seven years. By the end of the third year, it is projected that almost 40% of premises in the NBP (totalling over 205,000 premises) will be served by the NBI network. By year five, almost 95% of that entire population will have access to high-speed broadband.

##### **14.9.2.1 Kerry Digital Strategy 2021**

Kerry County Council is currently preparing a new digital strategy for the county. The strategy will be a key vision, opportunities and objectives document to developing business, skills, communities and capacity in the County to avail of digital technologies underpinned by the National Broadband Plan.

The overall aim of the new strategy is the creation of a Smart County, through Smart Communities. Smart Communities is a new approach to community development and activation through exposure to digital content and technology and supporting people to discover the value of using digital in their daily lives.

The key target areas for Smart Communities are to:

- Improve service efficiency and reduce service costs
- Create opportunities for young people
- Tackle social exclusion and isolation
- Develop skills for living and the labour force
- Improve health and wellbeing in communities

Kerry's Digital Strategy will drive and support connectivity and participation in communities and promote social cohesion to create a healthy digital society. It will promote opportunity and access to learning and employment, protect citizens, drive efficiencies and knowledge. The framework for the strategy is centred on a number of pillars under which high level objectives are established.



**Figure 14.2 Kerry Digital Strategy Pillars**

Digitalisation and smart technology are also recognised as a core pillar in national climate policy, particularly, in mitigating GHG emissions. The Climate Action Plan 2019 proposes to have smart meters installed in homes to promote efficient energy use. Smart meter technology, already available from many electricity suppliers, allow users more control over their own energy use. They facilitate “time of use tariffs” to incentive customers to move to lower rates thereby promoting better energy management and efficiency.

The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly illustrated the digital divide across geographical regions as well as socio-economic groups and the potential impact this may have on current economic and social activity as well as life opportunities. It is essential for our economic competitiveness and resilience to provide new and continual re-investment in the quality of our digital infrastructure networks across towns, villages and rural areas.

#### **14.9.2.2 Broadband Connection Points**

The first major deliverable for NBI will be to connect approximately 300 Broadband Connection Points (BCPs). The BCP initiative will allow rural communities to quickly get free public access to high-speed broadband while the larger NBP deployment continues. The 12 selected locations in Kerry are a mixture of Community Centres, Schools and Tourist sites and are concentrated in the ‘Amber’ or NBI areas where the EIR fibre rollout did not occur in order to maximise their potential. These sites will be open to the public to allow access to high-



speed broadband. Each site, depending on its particular context will offer a range of options from hot-desking for remote working to always on free Wi-Fi for connectivity. This offers opportunities for remote working, relocation from busy city areas in the state, and education. (see map 14.4)

### 14.9.2.3 Metropolitan Area Networks

A fibre optic infrastructure known as the Metropolitan Area Networks (MANs) is operated by Enet on behalf of the Irish government. These networks are capable of delivering virtually unlimited bandwidth. Tralee, Killarney, Listowel, and Castleisland formed part of Phase 2 of the project.

The MANs operate on an open-access basis meaning that all licenced carriers can have access. This model is contrary to traditional operators' exclusivity of network and allows for competition in a way that has not previously happened. The MANs have transformed the Irish telecommunications industry by stimulating competition, reducing bandwidth costs and accelerating Ireland's broadband position. The MANs underpin a policy of balanced regional development by removing a barrier to Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and there is demonstrable evidence to highlight that MAN towns now secure the vast majority of FDI jobs.

### 14.9.3 Digital Hubs/Co-Working Spaces

The way in which people work has changed and the COVID-19 pandemic has proven how important digital connectivity is in terms of supporting remote-working patterns and how it can have a positive effect on climate change and quality of life. The estimated number of private sector workers capable of operating remotely in Kerry amounts to 6,775<sup>1</sup>.

The provision of Digital Hubs/Co-working spaces helps to support growth in innovative local enterprises and provide technology enabled spaces, whilst also focusing on supporting local industries and the community. There are several 'Hubs/Co-working' spaces all over Kerry.

In Kerry, centres have won national awards under the Enterprise Ireland Regional Enterprise Development Fund. Examples of innovation centres include the Tom Crean Business Centre, the Service, Design and Innovation Hub Killorglin, Skellig Centre for Research and Innovation, Dingle Creativity and Innovation Hub, Sneem Digital Hub and Kenmare Innovation Centre. Examples of refurbishment projects for digital hubs and start up enterprise space includes projects in Valentia Cable Station in Knightstown and the Old Dingle Hospital.

The Gaeltacht network of Digital Hubs is being implemented across the Region's Gaeltacht areas. The RSES and CDP supports the development of a comprehensive strategy to better link and manage the work of 'enterprise' hubs in the AEC Region. This hub network is a valuable asset, contributing to the county's offering to investors, facilitating, attracting and retaining high-value talent and providing resources and facilities to attract further investment and economic growth and to support vibrant local communities.

It is the policy of the council that these jobs should generally be located within the settlement network, in co-working facilities location Town/Village Centre Sites and encourage the reuse of existing vacant buildings within town/village centres for such purposes.

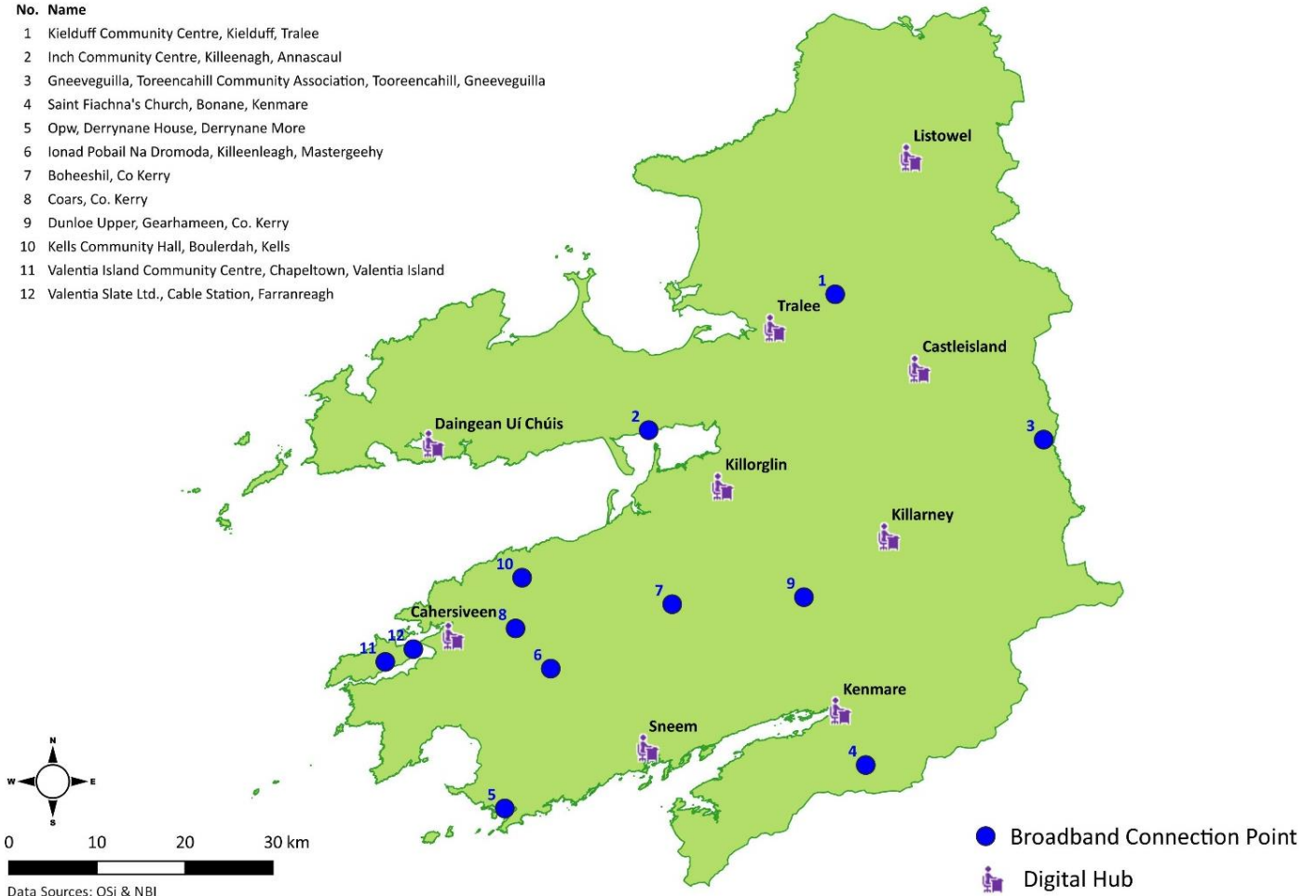
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<sup>1</sup> Regional Assemblies of Ireland – Regional Co-Working Analysis – November 2020



**No. Name**

- 1 Kielduff Community Centre, Kielduff, Tralee
- 2 Inch Community Centre, Killeenagh, Annascaul
- 3 Gneeveguilla, Toreenahill Community Association, Tooreenahill, Gneeveguilla
- 4 Saint Fiachna's Church, Bonane, Kenmare
- 5 Opw, Derrynane House, Derrynane More
- 6 Ionad Pobail Na Dromoda, Killeenleagh, Mastergeehy
- 7 Boheeshil, Co Kerry
- 8 Coars, Co. Kerry
- 9 Dunloe Upper, Gearhameen, Co. Kerry
- 10 Kells Community Hall, Boulderah, Kells
- 11 Valentia Island Community Centre, Chapeltown, Valentia Island
- 12 Valentia Slate Ltd., Cable Station, Farranreagh



**Map 14.4: Location of Digital Hubs Label & BCPs**

**Digital Connectivity**

**It is an objective of the Council to:**

- KCDP 14-65** Facilitate the sustainable delivery of high-speed, high-capacity digital and mobile infrastructure and support the continued investment and the delivery of ICT infrastructure, broadband networks and digital broadcasting in the County in line with the National Broadband Plan for Ireland.
- KCDP 14-66** Develop Smart Towns/Villages as engines for a Smart County (urban and rural) by supporting the initiatives of the All-Ireland Smart Cities Forum, seeking good practices yielded through living labs, testbeds and investment in the initiatives of stakeholders.
- KCDP 14-67** Support the sustainable provision of modern and innovative telecommunications infrastructure at appropriate locations.
- KCDP 14-68** Seek and support investment for initiatives in smart technology as an enabler for education and life-long learning in all locations.
- KCDP 14-69** Promote the preparation and support the implementation of a digital strategy, seek investment for actions identified, and support the role and initiatives of the Mobile and





Broadband Taskforce in addressing digital and mobile coverage blackspots and rural communications connectivity.

**KCDP 14-70** Facilitate and support the sustainable development of co-working hubs, community hubs and higher education and knowledge intensive hubs in towns and villages and work with key stakeholders, relevant agencies and sectoral representatives to achieve such developments.

**KCDP 14-71** Support and promote the AEC Enterprise Hubs Project Regional Networks.