Draft Report on
Housing Strategy element of
South Tipperary
Development Plan Review

1. Introduction

1.1. Objectives

The Housing Strategy for South Tipperary County Council is prepared as part of the County Development Plan Review. The housing strategy has a key role in this review and has a n umber of purposes as follows –

- To identify the total number of housing units required in the County during the period of the development plan
- To identify an appropriate distribution of housing provision that can then be reflected in the policies and strategies of the County Development Plan
- To identify the need for serviced land to accommodate the anticipated number of housing units and to identify any shortfalls in such provision that may exist
- To identify the number of households that are not in a position to provide their own housing and to identify responses to this need through the variety of mechanisms that are available to the Council
- To identify the specific needs of particular marginalised groups and to make provision for them

The legislation requires that the housing strategy of the Development Plan take into account—

(a) the existing need and the likely future need for housing

(b) the need to ensure that housing is available for persons who have different levels of income,

(c) 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 elderly persons and persons with disabilities, and

(d) the need to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds.

1.2. Special Needs

The legislation also requires that the housing strategy include an estimate of the amount of housing required in the area of the development plan during the period of the development plan for persons who are homeless; for travellers; for persons who are living in accommodation that is unfit for human habitation or is materially unsuitable for their adequate housing; for persons living in overcrowded accommodation; for persons sharing accommodation with another person or persons and who, in the opinion of the housing authority, have a reasonable requirement for separate accommodation; for young persons leaving institutional care or without family accommodation; for persons in need of accommodation for medical or compassionate reasons; for persons who are elderly; for persons who are physically & intellectually disabled; and for persons who are in the opinion of the housing authority, not reasonably able to meet the cost of the accommodation which they are occupying or to obtain suitable alternative accommodation and for the need for affordable housing,

The act also requires that a housing strategy provide that as a general policy a specified percentage, not being more than 20 per cent, of the land zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be reserved under Part 5 for the provision of housing for those in the categories outlined above or affordable housing or both.

Part Four of this report addresses the matter of housing provision for those with special needs.

1.3. Affordable Housing

When considering the provision of affordable housing, the planning authority is required to take the following into account inter alia –

(i) the supply of and demand for houses generally, or houses of a particular class or classes, in the whole or part of the area of the development plan;

(ii) the price of houses generally, or houses of a particular class or classes, in the whole or part of the area of the development plan;

(iii) the income of persons generally or of a particular class or classes of person who require houses in the area of the development plan;

(iv) the rates of interest on mortgages for house purchase;

(v) the relationship between the price of housing under subparagraph (ii), incomes under subparagraph (iii) and rates of interest under subparagraph (iv) for the purpose of establishing the affordability of houses in the area of the development plan;

Part Three of this report addresses the provision of affordable housing.

1.4. Strategic Environment

When the procedures to address these issues were first proposed by the Department of the Environment following the passing of the 2000 Planning and Development Act, there was a limited programmatic approach to housing provision and the information available regarding housing matters was limited. However, since that time there has been a major change in the context within which the Housing Strategy must be prepared. These changes can be categorised as financial changes, information availability and the development of targeted housing programmes within the Local Authorities themselves.

Financial Changes
The particular changes that have occurred in the financial market relate primarily to the range of mortgage offerings that is now available. The period over which mortgages are offered is now as high as 40 years; mortgages that provide lower introductory rates are available; there is a range of interest rate options from fixed rate to tracker and there are other options such as interest only mortgages available. This more complex set of arrangements is considerably different to the much more simple financial environment that existed when the first housing strategies were prepared.

Information changes
When the first strategies were prepared a range of consultation and calculation exercises had to be carried out in order to gather the information necessary to come to informed decisions. However, this situation has also changed radically. Far more information is now available from web-based resources as well as from Government Departments and the CSO. Amongst the information that has been gathered in this way is the cost of dwelling units; the cost of mortgage repayments; the average cost of housing loans; current income deciles.

Other plans and strategies
There has been a considerable change in the range of strategies and other documents that have informed this housing strategy. Amongst these are the following –

- The South East Regional Planning Guidelines, particularly regarding population projections
- The Social and Affordable Housing Strategy of South Tipperary County Council
- Working papers for the County Development Plan Review
- The Traveller Accommodation Strategy of South Tipperary County Council
- Various policies and strategies of the housing authority

In carrying out this review, therefore, regard was had to a far wider range of data sources and strategies that were available at the time of the development of the original housing strategy.

In general the approach of the review has been to accept the data and perspectives of the specialised strategies and programmes and incorporate them into the review rather than to seek to create a whole new approach. This would be both wasteful of time and would be likely to give rise to difficulties if different conclusions were reached.

1.5. Structure of review

The structure of this review seeks to follow a logical process that will enable reasonable and realistic conclusions to be reached. The following is an outline of the overall approach –

Population
Using data from the Regional Authority and the CSO the population of the county during the period of the plan and the number of dwelling units needed to accommodate that population, having regard to the need to replace unfit dwellings, is calculated. The nature of the units required is identified having regard to population structure. A possible distribution of this population is also suggested having regard to development plan and NSS policies.

Available land
An audit of zoned and serviced land has been provided by the Local Authority. This is used to match dwelling demand with available infrastructure and any significant shortfalls are identified

Population not able to provide for its own dwelling needs
The scale of this population that is not in a position to provide for its own dwelling needs is identified having regard to the cost of mortgages and the income profile of the households in the county. This assessment is used to suggest that social and affordable housing requirements in the county in the context of Part V of the 2000 Planning and Development Act.

Needs of specific at-risk populations
The provision of dwellings for particular at-risk populations is identified using existing strategies, the figures from which are extrapolated.

Partnership in housing provision
Partnership mechanisms through which housing can be provided are identified and the different roles for the various partners are identified.

2. Population and House Construction

This part of the report addresses the issue of population and house construction for the county as a whole, including the Borough and Town Council areas. This is because some statistics are only provided at county level and it is more effective to address the overall issues in the context of the county at large, since there is clearly a close inter-relationship between what takes place in the county and the major urban areas. At the end of this element of the report the specific figures for the county area are provided separately and these figures are those that should be used for the County Development Plan.

2.1. Current Population Size

The most recent assessment of the current population of the county is as outlined in the 2006 Census. The following are the figures from that census.

The total population of the county in 2006 was 83,221 which was an increase of 4100 on 2002.

	Total 2002	Total 2006	Males 2006	Females 2006	Change	% Change	% in Private Households
South Tipperary	79121	83221	42250	40971	4100	5.2	97.8

The following are the figures with regard to the more significant settlements.

Settlement	2002	2006	Change	% Change
Ardfinnan	779	747	-32	-4.1
Ballingarry,	314	129	-185	-58.9
Ballyclerahan,	408	678	270	66.2
Ballyporeen,	295	304	9	3.1
Bansha,	302	272	-30	-9.9
Cahir	2794	3381	587	21.0
Cappawhite,	340	328	-12	-3.5
Carrick-on-Suir Town*,	5542	5856	314	5.7
Carrick-on-Suir Environs (Waterford)	44	50	6	13.6
Carrick on Suir Total	*5586*	*5906*	*320*	*5.7*
Cashel Town*,	2403	2413	10	0.4
Cashel Environs,	367	523	156	42.5
Cashel Total	*2770*	*2936*	*166*	*6.0*
Clogheen,	550	509	-41	-7.5
Clonmel Borough*	15739	15482	-257	-1.6
Clonmel Environs (Incl. Waterford)	1171	1526	355	30.3
Clonmel Total	*16910*	*17008*	*98*	*0.6*
Dundrum,	191	191	0	0
Emly,	278	293	15	5.4
Fethard,	1388	1374	-14	-1
Golden,	268	255	-13	-4.9

Settlement	2002	2006	Change	% Change
Gortnahoo,	207	219	12	5.8
Holycross (Incl. North Tipperary)	610	700	90	14.8
Killenaule	715	597	-118	-16.5
Kilsheelan	497	520	23	4.6
Mullinahone	348	372	24	6.9
Newcastle	201	245	44	21.9
Rosegreen,	-	201	N/A	N/A
Tipperary Town*	4546	4415	-131	-2.9
Tipperary Environs	418	650	232	55.5
Tipperary Town Total	4964	5065	101	2.0

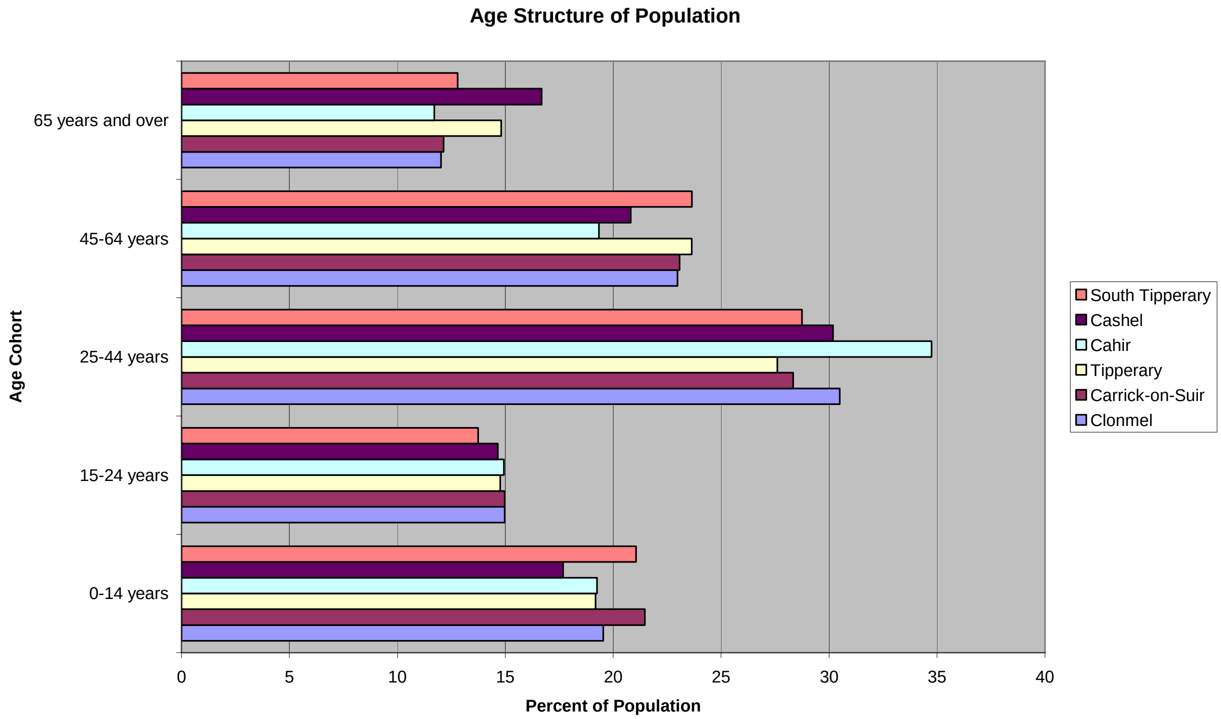
In general it can be seen from this that there was considerable variation in the performance of settlements with regard to population growth throughout the county. Some settlements experienced considerable growth while others lost population. In general, the larger settlements and those within the influences of those settlements performed best, though there does also seem to have been a certain element of chance in the way settlements developed. It is somewhat worrying to note, however, that nearly 50% of settlements were either static in population terms or lost population in the 2002-2006 inter-censal period.

2.2. Population Structure

The structure of the South Tipperary population in 2006 was as follows -

Age Group	0-14 years	15-24 years	25-44 years	45-64 years	65 years and over
Clonmel	19.54	14.97	30.50	22.98	12.02
Carrick-on-Suir	21.47	14.97	28.34	23.08	12.14
Tipperary	19.19	14.77	27.60	23.63	14.81
Cahir	19.25	14.94	34.75	19.34	11.71
Cashel	17.68	14.65	30.18	20.81	16.69
South Tipperary	21.06	13.74	28.75	23.64	12.80

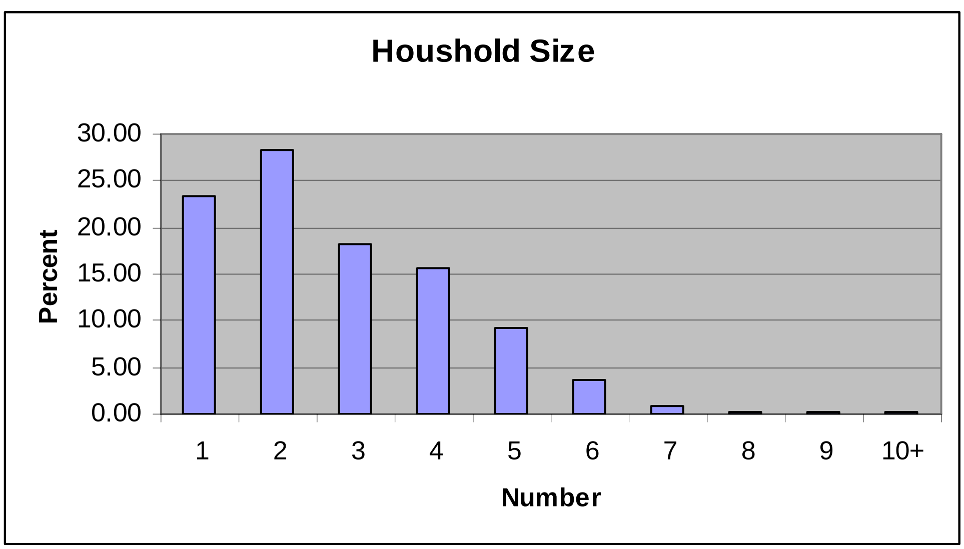
It will be noted from this and the Chart below, that there is a general pattern to the age structure of the population in the county and in the major towns, though there is some variation between the towns and the county as a whole. It is also noticeable that there is a somewhat older population in Cashel than elsewhere. This may, in part at least, be explained by the degree of Institutional care provided for older residents in the town.



2.3. Household Size

The average household size in South Tipperary in 2006 was 2.7 which is about the national average.

The average household size figure, however, conceals the distribution of household size. It will be noted that 50% of households are within the one and two person household categories.



It will also be noted that small numbers of households exceed 4 in size. These include one – parent households with children as well as two-parent households.

2.4. Future Population and Housing Need

The future population of the County that is catered for must have regard to the CSO regional population projections as assigned to the various counties in the South East Region on the basis of the Regional Planning Guidelines. Having regard to these guidelines and assuming that the growth in population takes place at a relatively even pace between 2006 and 2020, the anticipated population in 2014 is 95,995 or say 96,000. If, however, the county's share of the population were to rise to 20% from its present 18%, then the county population in 2014 would be about 106,000.

If the urban/rural population split were to remain approximately the same and if average county household size continues to decline at the 2002-2006 rate (which was from 2.91 to 2.77) this would give rise to a dwelling unit requirement of 6,750 between 2006 and 2014 to accommodate new household formation or 10,500 dwellings if the share increased to 20%. Assuming that the provision is made on an equal annual basis this would require an annual average provision of between 750 and 1,200 dwelling units per annum approximately. This does not allow for the replacement of unfit houses, for the replacement of houses that are in an unsuitable location and for frictional vacancies - (these are vacancies that arise through household movement for example where a household moves from one dwelling to another and there is a gap in time before the vacated dwelling is occupied). It is difficult to know what allowance to make for these matters. However, in 2006 vacancies (including long-term non-occupancy and holiday homes) amounted to 12.7% and it is possible that this figure will drop somewhat if housing output declines as appears to be likely. If, say, even 1600 of the vacant dwellings were to become occupied over the period, this would reduce the annual need by over 200 to 550 and 1000 respectively.

The allowance for unfit dwellings is also difficult to assess. However, looking at the number of applications for social housing on these grounds and the number of dwellings without water or sewerage treatment in 2006 it is likely to be small.

If, however, average household size does not decline at the same rate (and economic circumstances make this uncertain) but say it was to decline to 2.75, this would give rise to an average annual demand needs of 550 and 1000 respectively for the two population scenarios although these would drop to 350 and 800 if the vacancy rate were to fall as suggested above.

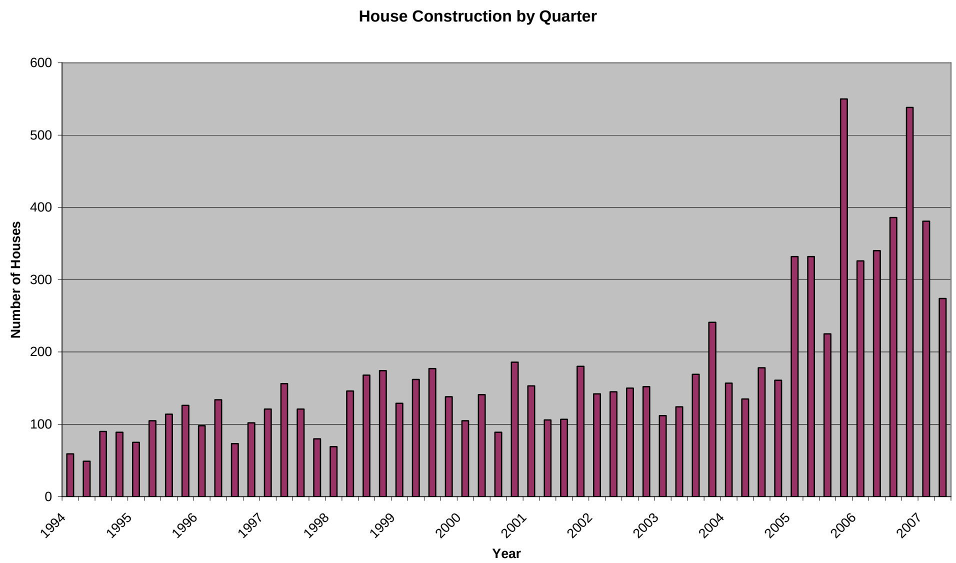
These possible scenarios are summarised in the following table which indicates the average number of dwellings that would be need under different assumptions.

Population in 2014	Average household size as per trend		Average household size static	
	Vacant numbers same	**Vacant Numbers fall by 1600**	**Vacant numbers same**	**Vacant Numbers fall by 1600**
96,000	750	550	550	350
106,000	1200	1000	1000	800

In considering future demand, regard must also be paid to the fact that between the taking of the Census in 2006 and September 2007 there were nearly 2200 house completions in South Tipperary or an average of approximately 1450 dwellings per annum. This is more than double the output for the years between 1995 and 2005 and is likely to have added excess capacity to the stock of housing. This is likely to have a dampening effect on the level of housing demand in the short run so the figures above should be treated with caution.

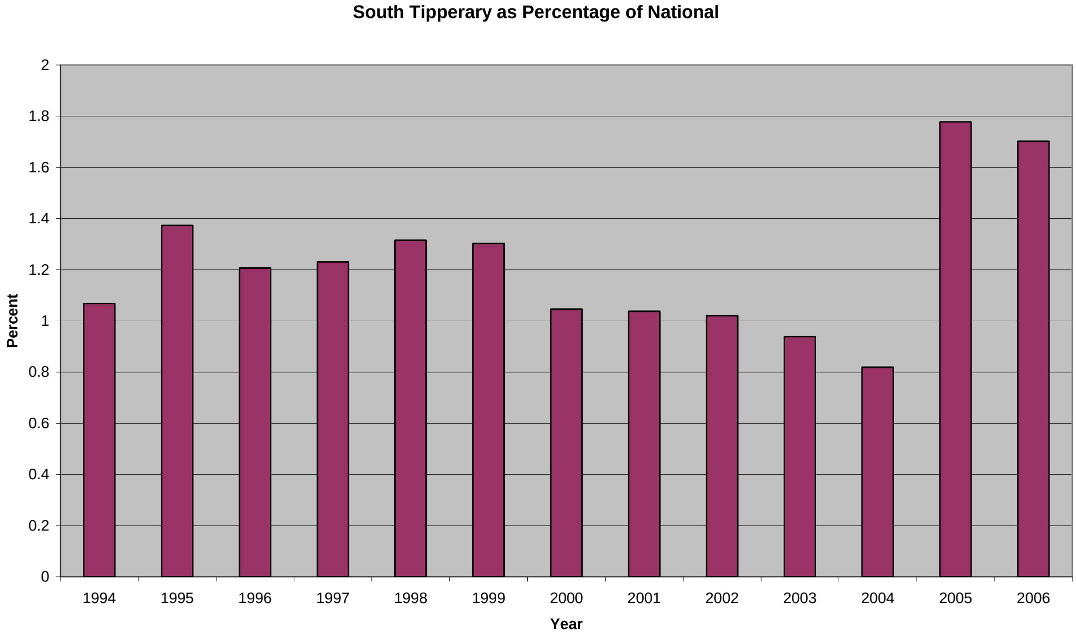
2.5. Recent House Construction

The following chart indicates the levels of house construction in South Tipperary during the last 10 years or so, on a quarterly basis.



The average number of dwellings constructed per quarter over the period was 174 but if account is taken of the unusually high numbers between 2005 and 2007 the average drops to 134 per quarter or about 540 per year.

The following table indicates housing construction in South Tipperary as a percentage of national construction during that period.



It will be noted that the figure was generally a little over or under 1% for the period though it rose rapidly in 2005 and 2006. If it is assumed that the percentage of the national dwelling construction taking place in South Tipperary is between 1.2% and 1.5% over the next period of time and if national levels of house construction fall to around 60,000 units, then a construction figure in South Tipperary of between 720 and 900 per annum can be anticipated which should be sufficient to deal with any emerging demand at the lower end of the population projection, though a higher level of construction would be required for the higher rate of population increase.

2.6. Housing Stock Approach

In the 2006 Census 34,206 houses were recorded in South Tipperary. Of these, 29,221 were occupied by their normal residents and 525 were temporarily unoccupied as their occupants were temporarily absent. This would suggest that 29,746 or 87% of dwellings were permanently occupied at that time.

Approximately 2200 additional dwellings were constructed between the taking of the Census and September 2007, giving a total of approximately 36, 200 units by June 2007. Assuming a population of 96,000 in 2014, a percentage in private households of 98% as per the 2006 census and a vacancy rate of 10%, would give rise to a housing stock need of between 38,250 and 43,000 depending on average household size, which has been calculated for ranges between 2.4 and 2.7. This would require provision of between 2,050 and 6,800 dwellings between mid 2007 and 2014 or a period of 7.5 years. This would suggest a provision of between 275 and 900 dwellings per year during the plan period. If population rises to 106,000, however, the average requirement would rise to between 800 and 1500 per year.

It will be noted that the rate of dwelling construction suggested in this section is very wide. Given the number of assumptions involved this is not surprising, since vacancy levels, household size, housing stock distribution and population movements are all factors that are very difficult to predict or even influence.

2.7. Housing Type

The structure of household size in 2006 is noted at 2.3 above. If dwellings were to be provided in accordance with this ratio it would be expected that house sizes would range from approximately one quarter one-bedroomed units to a small number of dwellings with more than four bedrooms. However, housing provision does not reflect household size, with many single person households occupying three-bedroomed houses. It is not the intention of the housing strategy to seek to unduly control the size of dwelling being provided as this is a matter that will, to some extent at least, reflect market trends. However, as noted below, it will be the intention to ensure that a range of dwelling sizes and types are provided to meet the needs of the whole population, including those that are in need of housing being provided for them under the social and affordable housing obligations of the local authority. It is also the intention to facilitate a flexible approach in house design so that families can remain in their initial community of establishment more easily.

2.8. Distribution of House Construction

This is an issue about which it is difficult to be precise as it is likely that more land will be zoned for development than will be required in order to ensure flexibility in the market and to guard against monopoly profits being gained by the owners of zoned land. This issue may also be impacted on by Guidelines currently being considered by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government regarding the pace of growth of smaller towns. If, however, new house construction were to be distributed amongst the significant settlements on the basis of their percentage of the 2006 total population, the following would be the outcome –

Town	Dwellings at present distribution	Dwellings with increase to 60% of total
Ardfinnan	40	47
Ballingarry	7	8
Ballyclerahan	37	44
Ballyporeen	16	19
Bansha	15	18
Cahir	183	216
Cappawhite	18	21
Carrick-on-Suir Town	319	377
Cashel Town	159	188
Clogheen	28	33
Clonmel Borough	920	1088
Dundrum	10	12
Emly	16	19
Fethard	74	87
Golden	14	17
Gortnahoo	12	14
Holycross	38	45

Town	Dwellings at present distribution	Dwellings with increase to 60% of total
Killenaule	32	38
Kilsheelan	28	33
Mullinahone	20	24
Newcastle	13	15
Rosegreen	11	13
Tipperary Town	274	324
Total	**2284**	**2700**

Note: Populations include settlements and environs as noted in Census returns.

Column 1 suggests that on the basis of current patterns, approximately 50% of new dwellings would be provided in the county's more significant settlements and their environs. If it is intended to seek to alter the balance of provision somewhat and to raise this figure to say 60% of new dwellings it would give rise to the numbers indicated in the right-hand column in the table above. It will be noted that this has minimal implications for most settlements though it does have some significant implications for the larger settlements. It should also be noted that this is an exercise only and that some settlements that lost significant population during the 2002 to 2006 period might be considered for particular development while some settlements that experienced significant levels of growth during that period may not wish to have that level of growth repeated.

If future households were to be distributed on the basis of the average share of county population in 2002 and 2006 assuming a total provision of 750 dwelling per annum over the period 2009 to 2014, the distribution would be as in Column 1, with Column 2 containing the figures that would arise if 60% of new dwellings were accommodated in these areas.

Town	Dwellings at present distribution	Dwellings with increase to 60% of total
Ardfinnan	41	50
Ballingarry	12	14
Ballyclerahan	29	35
Ballyporeen	16	19
Bansha	16	19
Cahir	167	201
Cappawhite	18	22
Carrick-on-Suir Town	311	374
Cashel Town	154	186
Clogheen	29	34

Town	Dwellings at present distribution	Dwellings with increase to 60% of total
Clonmel Borough	917	1104
Dundrum	10	12
Emly	15	19
Fethard	75	90
Golden	14	17
Gortnahoo	12	14
Holycross	35	43
Killenaule	35	43
Kilsheelan	27	33
Mullinahone	19	23
Newcastle	12	15
Rosegreen	5	7
Tipperary Town	271	326
Total	**2240**	**2700**

It should be noted, as discussed below, however, that the population growth in the Borough Council and Town Council areas has been static. It is likely, therefore, that future population growth in these major centres will be in their environs rather than in the town areas themselves.

2.9. Housing Land Availability

As of June 2006, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government estimated that 856 Hectares of serviced housing land existed in the county with the capacity to provide 22,033 dwelling units. This provision assumes a density of approximately 26 dwelling units per hectare or 10 per acre. Even if a more conservative estimate of 20 units per hectare were adopted a total land capacity for over 17,000 dwellings exists within zoned and serviced land. Assuming an average provision of, say, 750 units per year in total for the county, with 450 of these being within larger settlements and their environs, this would give a capacity for approximately 40 years from 2006 or say until the year 2045.

In the 2004-2009 Housing Strategy Review, lands zoned for new residential development were identified. These details are outlined at Appendix One. The total area of land in question is approximately 1800 ha. These figures should be treated with some caution as it includes some land that is currently developed for residential purposes and some new residential land. In addition, not all of this land is serviced or actively available for development. Nevertheless, when account is taken of the needs from 2009 to 2014 (c.100 to 120 ha. within settlement areas) it is clear that there is a comfortably adequate supply of housing development land available in the county.

It is also worth noting that this land is widespread throughout the county and, though there is a concentration in some major centres, there is a capacity to accommodate housing development in many centres throughout the county.

2.10. Specific data applying to South Tipperary functional area

While, as noted above, some data regarding housing, house construction and so on is only available at a county level, it is necessary to conclude this part of the report with a statement as to the principal data that is relevant to the County Council's functional area. Of course, some of this area is located in the environs of the principal settlements and will have to have regard to occurrences within those areas also. The following is the key county only data which assumes pro-rata allocations where total county data only is available.

Population

The following is the population in the county area in 2002 and 2006.

Area	2002	2006
County area population	50891	55055
Percent in county area relative to total	64.32	66.15

From this it can be seen that the population of the county area grew at a faster rate than the county as a whole. If this trend were to be continued to the future it would result in the county area population rising to over 68% of the total in 2010 and approximately 70% in 2014. It is in fact likely that this trend will continue since the size of households in urban areas is declining and there is less land available for dwelling development.

If this situation does arise, then the population in 2014 in the county area would be 67200 or 74200 approximately depending on whether the 18% or 20% of the regional share is used.

Household size

In 2006 the household size in the aggregate rural area was slightly higher than that in the aggregate town area. When the population within the Borough and Town Council areas is omitted, virtually the whole of the rest of the population is located within the aggregate rural area. Therefore, the average household size within the county area should reflect that. While average household size dropped for the county as a whole between 2002 and 2006 that within the aggregate rural area fell at a slightly higher rate. If this rate of decline continued it would give an average household size in the rural areas which comprises virtually all the county area, of 2.87 in 2014.

Number of households and overall housing requirement

If the population sizes outlined above are used and if the total population is reduced to take account of the members of the population not residing in private households, (about 1.3% in 2006), the total number of households in the county area in 2014 would be 22,900 or 25,300 depending on the projection chosen. This compares with approximately 16,700 households in 2002 and 19,000 households in 2006. Assuming that the provision of new housing units were done at an equal rate over the eight years between 2006 and 2014, that would require a provision of between 500 and 800 per year in the county area.

This approach assumes, however, that some of the additional population growth will take place within the Borough and Town Council areas. This is not what happened between 2002 and 2006 when those populations remained static and such a trend has been noted in other counties also. If, therefore, all the population growth took place within the county area (which includes some of the environs of the towns), it would suggest a requirement of between 660 and 1100 in the county area. assuming an average household size based on the trend of the aggregate rural areas in the 2002 to 2006 period. This would increase to approximately and 780 and 1250 if the average county trend were used.

Of course account must be taken of the vacancies that exist as noted at 2.4 above, and if these figures were taken into account the need would fall into a range between 460 and 1050. Hence it is suggested that a figure of 750 be adopted as a middle range figure for the purposes of this strategy.

2.11. Conclusion

As can be seen from this discussion predicting household trends is a very fraught exercise and market forces have a great sway on outcomes. However, the various figures that have been discussed suggest a middle-range expectation over the 2009 to 2014 period of between 600 and 800 dwellings per annum and it is suggested that 750 be adopted for calculation purposes while recognising that significant departure from this figure will generally not have serious consequences. This fits well with the longer term trend of housing provision and suggests that the construction industry is well capable of providing such a scale of development. It is also clear that adequate land is currently zoned for housing provision, so that land market limitations should not unduly hamper the provision of new dwellings.

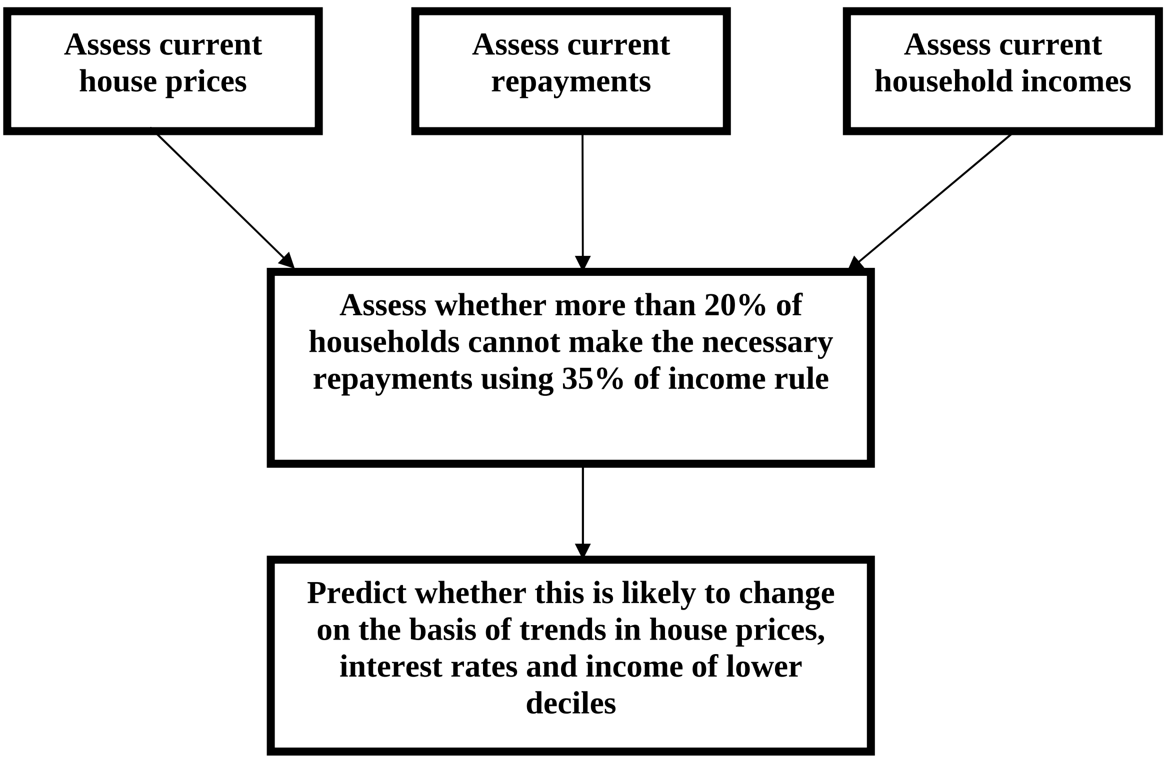
3. Affordability

Section 93(1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, defines a person eligible for social housing as someone,

> "Who is in need of accommodation and whose income would not be adequate to meet the payments on a mortgage for the purchase of a house to meet his or her accommodation needs because the payments calculated over the course of a year would exceed 35 per cent of that person's annual income net of income tax and pay related social insurance".

3.1. The model for testing affordability

A key requirement of the housing strategy in South Tipperary is to identify the number of eligible persons that might be anticipated over the duration of the development plan. An assessment of the likely number of such eligible persons (or eligible households) requires that a comparison be made between projected house prices for the county and projected ranges of disposable incomes of different households, subject to the consideration that a maximum of 20% of housing developments on zoned land can be reserved for social and affordable housing. Rather than use an unduly complicated model, the following has been used to assess the need for the provision of affordable housing in South Tipperary is as follows –



If more than 20% of the population cannot afford to purchase their own housing at present, it is predicted that this situation will not improve if house prices and interest rates increase and therefore repayments are likely to increase at a rate greater than the rate of increase in income of the lower income deciles.

Drawing upon the "35%" definition of housing affordability contained in the Act, a simple "annuity" formula has been developed to assess affordability against four key variables that are central to the analysis. These are:

- household income;
- house price;
- mortgage interest rate; and
- loan to value ratio.

By combining the projected figures for disposable income distribution and house prices for the county as well as projecting future affordability using maximum house prices, and repayment estimates based upon a 4.5% APR, 25 year mortgage (as a medium range mortgage period), and a 100% LTV ratio (in view of the fact that 100% mortgages are now available), it is possible to establish levels of affordability.

3.2. Estimating Household Income

3.2.1. Household Income

The method used in this review to assess and project Household Disposable Income, is similar to that used in the last strategy. Disposable income in this context corresponds with the income definition set out at Section 93(1) of the Act.

The income distribution for South Tipperary was arrived at by combining the following factors.

EU SILC Survey

The 2006 EU-SILC Survey has been used to find a national household income distribution in this strategy. It is important to identify the distribution of incomes across households, as the households at the bottom end of this distribution are those most likely to experience affordability difficulties. This survey divides households into 10 deciles or tenths. Using this distribution of income it is possible to identify the number of households that will be able to afford a mortgage in accordance with the rule that not more than 35% of disposable household income should be spent on mortgage repayments.

Deflation factors for South Tipperary

The average incomes were adjusted on the basis of assumptions made about the gap between South Tipperary and national levels of household income. CSO data on county-level household incomes was used as the basis for adjustment. Between 1995 and 20034, household income in South Tipperary fluctuated between 86% and 91.9 % of the national average. Over the period this deflation factor averaged 90%. This adjustment enabled the production of an income distribution table for South Tipperary on the basis that the distribution of incomes across the county (once adjusted by the average deflator for South Tipperary) mirrors the national trend.

The following table indicates the distribution of disposable household income in South Tipperary in the immediate past, using the SILC, the average county deflator and an assumed 10% increase in household income in 2007.

Decile	Upper Income Threshold	Average Income
10	<221.55	184.28
20	344.88	274.86
30	442.13	380.42
40	590.61	484.02
50	765.82	602.47
60	1,000.13	750.06
70	1,251.18	893.95
80	1,581.60	1,080.38
90	2,130.89	1,347.46
100	>2130.89	2,367.75

Projecting For Future Income Growth

This is a difficult issue to predict, dependent as it is upon many national and international factors. However, recent indications are that the rate of growth in incomes in the lower income deciles (the deciles of interest for this exercise) is unlikely to be greater than the rate of inflation. Indeed, given that state benefits are now at the levels indicated in the programme for Government and given observations regarding the need for wage restraint and predictions regarding a slowing in the rate of economic growth, it is likely that wage inflation over the next period of time will be relatively moderate. As indicated below, it is not considered necessary to carry out a detailed prediction of likely disposable income in South Tipperary, firstly because of the inaccuracies it is likely to contain and secondly because it is the relative movement of house prices, income and interest rates that is the important factor in determining likely future affordability.

3.3. Estimating Future House Prices

Any assessment of housing affordability must correlate estimated incomes with appropriate house price data. The price data used in this analysis has been based upon a review of houses being offered by auctioneers and estate agents at different prices within South Tipperary. This review suggests the following –

- A small amount of housing is available at less than €150,000 though some of these require renovation
- There is a small supply of housing available at prices between €150,000 and €175,000
- The majority of housing is available at prices over €175,000

On this basis it is proposed that €150,000 be adopted as the minimum current house price for the purposes of this review.

In order to predict future house costs, these value ranges are projected forward based on assumptions about the direction of house prices. For this exercise ‘average price increases’, on a national basis are derived from a variety of considerations. While there has been very high house price inflation over the past number of years, housing demand and prices have fallen somewhat in recent months. It has been predicted that as supply more nearly meets demand, house price fluctuations are more likely to stabilise. However, it is clear from recently expressed opinion that there is no clearly agreed outlook for the future of house prices during the period covered by this review. A variety of predictions include –

1. House prices will experience a continuing significant reversal
2. House prices will start to increase again but at a lower rate
3. House prices will stabilise

The most recent assessment of house prices suggests that they will continue to fall in 2008, perhaps by 5%, but that they will then start to increase again.

The different scenarios reflect different possibilities regarding influential factors that lie outside national control. These include –

1. Future population growth and especially that driven by immigration
2. Interest rate trends
3. The performance of the world economy
4. The impact of the sub-prime mortgage issue

There are also a number of domestic factors that may impact on demand –

1. Availability of development land
2. Planning policy
3. Capacity and dwelling completion rates in the construction sector
4. Amount of public sector infrastructure investment
5. Investor sentiment
6. National fiscal policies relating to housing including stamp duty

Due to the variety of factors and the difficulty in predicting them it is not surprising that there are different predictions as to the future of the housing market in Ireland. It must also be borne in mind that the rate of decline in house prices in rural areas is not as great as that in major urban areas, since the rate of house price inflation the price/cost ratios were already lower.

For the purposes of projecting house prices in this review, a middle range assumption has been made that house prices will stabilise initially and then will increase at a modest rate. Therefore, it is suggested that the current assumptions should be retained for the future.

This projection is also based on the assumptions that reasonable levels of house provision in South Tipperary will continue and that there will not be any specific factors increasing demand significantly out of line with the national average.

3.4. Estimating repayments

The level of repayment that will be required of any household will be based on the value of the house, the loan to value ratio and the interest rate.

House Value
As noted above in the context of the house price review, a minimum house price of €150,000 has been adopted as it is unlikely that significant numbers of dwellings will come on the market under that price and those that do will tend to require considerable work to be carried out on them to bring them to a modern standard.

Loan to value ratio
100% loans are now available for first time buyers. It has been assumed that a 100% LTV ratio will apply in terms of repayments as it is unlikely that those in the lower income deciles will be in a position to accumulate the deposit element that would reduce the ratio.

Repayment periods
Repayment periods are increasing all the time. This can have an effect on the loan repayments. For the purposes of this exercise the implications of a number of different housing repayment rates and periods have been considered below.

Interest rates
A number of mortgage providers were consulted to assess the repayments that would be required. There is now a wide variety of mortgage products available on the market, with different interest rates and terms and conditions applying to them all. A number of different combinations have been considered though some of the more unusual approaches (interest only mortgages for example) have not been considered.

3.5. Testing for affordability

In assessing the likely movement in housing need this review focuses on the lower end of the housing market and income levels. It is unlikely that any significant amount of new housing will be developed at prices lower than €170,000. While some older housing may become available within this category it will be very limited in amount and will generally require that remedial works be carried out. In addition, a review of available housing at present within South Tipperary suggests that the amount of new property that will be available between €150,000 and €170,000 will be limited since the majority of smaller-scale new housing provision is within a price range between €175,000 and €225,000.

Given the range of mortgage products that are available in the market, it was decided to carry out an assessment of a variety of mortgage amounts, mortgage terms and interest rates. The monthly repayments expected for such a range of products is set out below.

		Term in Years		
Mortgage	**Rate**	**20**	**25**	**30**
	4.50	1103.21	968.58	882.38
	4.75	1126.47	993.05	908.00
€175,000	**5.00**	1149.97	1017.81	933.96
	5.25	1173.71	1042.86	960.24
	5.50	1197.68	1068.19	986.84
	4.50	1008.65	885.56	806.74
	4.75	1029.21	907.93	830.17
€160,000	**5.00**	1051.40	930.57	853.91
	5.25	1073.11	953.47	877.93
	5.50	1095.03	976.63	902.25
	4.50	945.61	830.21	756.32
	4.75	965.54	851.18	778.29
€150,000	**5.00**	985.69	872.41	800.54
	5.25	1006.04	893.88	823.06
	5.50	1026.59	915.59	845.86

Account must also be taken of the level of income that would be required if a household were to be able to afford these various levels of repayment and not expend more than 35% of disposable income on those repayments. These income levels are set out in the following table in terms of necessary disposable household income per week.

		Term in Years		
Mortgage	**Rate**	**20**	**25**	**30**
	4.5	727.39	638.62	581.79
	4.75	742.73	654.76	598.68
€175,000	5	758.22	671.08	615.80
	5.25	773.87	687.60	633.13
	5.5	789.68	704.30	650.66
	4.5	665.04	583.89	531.92
	4.75	678.60	598.64	547.36
€160,000	5	693.23	613.56	563.02
	5.25	707.55	628.66	578.85
	5.5	722.00	643.93	594.89
	4.5	623.48	547.39	498.67
	4.75	636.62	561.22	513.16
€150,000	5	649.91	575.22	527.83
	5.25	663.32	589.37	542.68
	5.5	676.87	603.69	557.71

When these figures are compared with those in the household income distribution table set out above, it suggests that considerably more than 20% of households would be unable to afford to purchase a dwelling at current interest rates and house prices using the 35% rule and even assuming a 4.5% interest rate, a 30 year term and a price of €150,000.

It might be argued that a 40 year term should be used and that a small number of would fall within an affordability threshold if such an assumption were to be made and a 4.5% interest rate adopted. Even if such an approach were used, however, considerably more than 20% of households would still be unable to afford to purchase their own houses.

This approach presumes that the decile distribution of household incomes fully reflects the profile of those that are seeking housing. It is possible that more of those seeking housing may be in the higher rather than in the lower income deciles and that those in the lower deciles may already be in adequate housing. Even if this is the case, however, it is still likely that the number of households that cannot afford to purchase their own dwellings would be greater than 20%.

Numbers applying for social housing

The numbers applying for social housing on an annual basis in South Tipperary can act as a check on the number of households that cannot afford their own dwellings. If it is assumed that the population growth between 2002 and 2006 was spread evenly across the years and that household numbers also increased in the same way, the annual increase in households would have been about 740 in the overall county. In 2007 it is estimated that the numbers applying for social and affordable housing in the county was 720. This would appear to suggest that virtually no new household is capable of affording their own dwelling. This is, of course, not the case. The figure of 720 includes some ineligible applicants (even though most applicants have, historically been deemed eligible) and it also includes some duplicate applicants. The most important factor, however, is that the figure of 720 new households refers to 720 net new households taking into account those that have ceased either through migration or death and newly formed households. The figure for newly formed households is, therefore, considerably higher than 740. Nevertheless, the figure of 720 applicants in County Tipperary does indicate the large number of households that are not capable of providing their own housing.

Overall, therefore, when regard is had to existing social and affordable housing needs, the distribution of household incomes and the cost of mortgage repayments, it is a safe conclusion that considerably more than 20% of households are not in a position to provide their own housing within the 35% rule.

3.6. Projecting Affordability

In order to project the likely movement in affordability, it is useful to consider the likely relative movement of house prices, interest rates and income as well as income distribution.

House Prices

As noted above, there is a general expectation that house prices will continue to ease as supply catches up with demand. There is some disagreement amongst commentators on this matter. However, in the shorter term it is likely that house prices will not rise. It is also likely, however, that house prices will not fall significantly and that as supply is cut back significantly, the recent trend of reductions in house prices is unlikely to continue.

Interest Rates
Interest rates have been at a historic low in the immediate past though they have been increasing in recent times. While it is difficult to predict the precise movements in interest rates and trend is likely to be upwards over the next period of time and they are most unlikely to drop below their present rates in the medium term, though there may be some short-term reductions in response to the current slow-down in the world economy.

Income
Assuming no major economic shocks, the Irish economy is likely to continue to grow during the course of the period with which the review deals although growth rates are likely tp be considerably less than those experienced in the recent past. However, the predicted levels of income growth are not likely to offset the combined effects of rising interest rates and house price increases, particularly for those in the lower income deciles. Therefore, those that find difficulty in providing their own accommodation are likely to continue to experience those difficulties in the future.

3.7. Conclusion

This section of the report suggests the adoption of a middle range requirement of 700 additional units per year over the coming five years in South Tipperary. This figure is based on historic house completion data and assumes a continued level of in-migration equal to the average of that which occurred between 2002 and 2006.
The critical issue addressed in this section is the level of affordability projected for future housing in South Tipperary. Using existing and projected income data, existing and projected house prices and existing and projected interest rates, it is clear that at least 20% of the population will not be able to afford to purchase their own dwelling presently and that this situation is unlikely to change significantly in the period to 2014. If house prices and income deciles change at the levels predicted, then, even at current interest rates, the numbers of households not in a position to afford to purchase their own dwelling would remain static.

This analysis has assumed relatively static house prices. If, however, as supply decreases, prices were to increase by a greater amount and if interest rates also increase as they may, the situation would be even more problematic.

In the light of the above it is appropriate that the adoption of a figure of 20% by the Planning Authority as the level of provision of Social and Affordable Housing required for the purposes of the Part V of the 2000 Planning and Development Act as amended is the appropriate course of action.

4. Particular Categories of Social Housing Need

This chapter of the report will examine the nature, level and dispersion of housing needs in South Tipperary.

The context within which these matters fall to be considered is significantly different from the circumstances that existed when the last strategy was prepared. In 2004 all Housing Authorities were required to prepare a Social and Affordable Housing Action Plan and this plan addressed the majority of the issues that were addressed under the Social and Affordable Housing Needs part of the last strategy.

It is considered that it would not be appropriate to prepare a strategy that did not take into account the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy prepared by the Housing Authority, particularly since it involved considerable consultation with the same stakeholders that were consulted in the preparation of the previous Housing Strategy.

4.1 Analysis of South Tipperary Social Housing Needs.

The following is an assessment of the breakdown between the various categories of need with respect to approved applicants on the social housing list and as drawn up by the South Tipperary Local Authorities in 2003. The total approved of 736 relates to a total number of applicants of 1327.

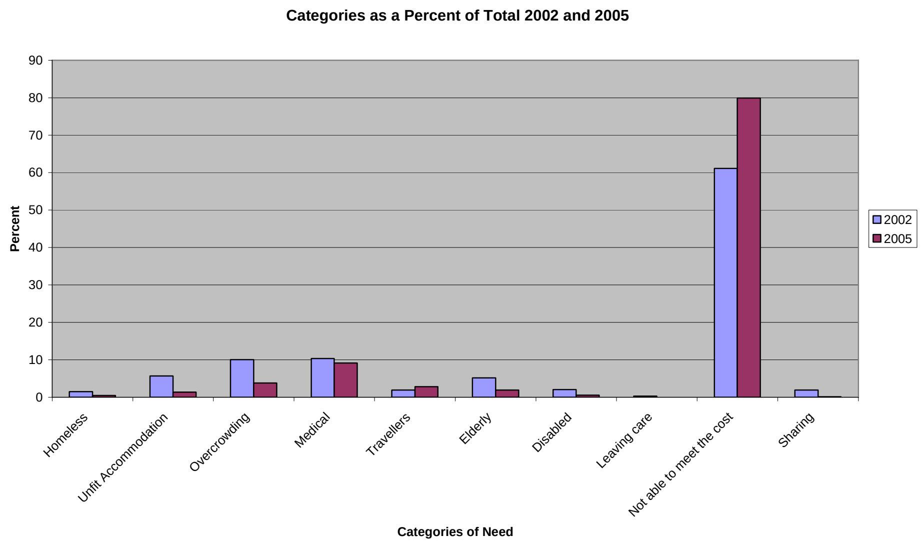
Category	ST County Council	Clonmel Borough Council	Carrick Town Council	Cashel Town Council	Tipp Town Council	Total for County	Percent of Total
1. Homeless	0	0	0	0	11	11	1.49
2. Persons living in accommodation that is unfit or materially unsuitable	25	0	3	12	2	42	5.71
3. Persons living in overcrowded accommodation	36	21	2	8	7	74	10.05
4. Persons in need of accommodation on medical and compassionate grounds	37	19	11	7	2	76	10.33
5. Travellers	4	3	0	2	5	14	1.9
6. Elderly persons	12	6	4	5	11	38	5.16
7. Physically & intellectually disabled persons	4	5	0	3	3	15	2.04
8. Young persons leaving institutional care	0	0	0	0	2	2	0.27
9. Persons not reasonably able to meet the cost of the accommodation or to obtain suitable alternative accommodation	106	138	78	20	108	450	61.14
10. Persons sharing accommodation in-voluntarily	6	4	0	0	4	14	1.9
TOTAL	**230**	**196**	**98**	**57**	**155**	**736**	**100**

By 2005, when the most recent assessment of need was carried out, the following were the relevant figures -

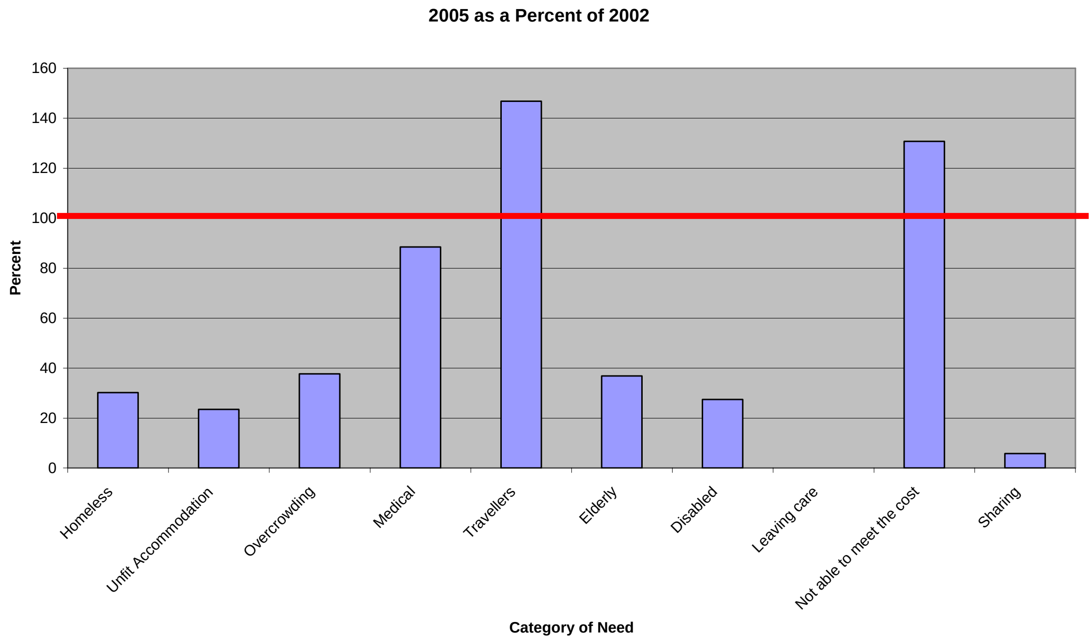
Category	ST County Council	Clonmel Borough Council	Carrick Town Council	Cashel Town Council	Tipp Town Council	Total for County	Percent of Total
1. Homeless	4	0	0	0	0	4	0.45
2. Persons living in accommodation that is unfit or materially unsuitable	10	0	1	1	0	12	1.34
3. Persons living in overcrowded accommodation	15	6	4	9	0	34	3.79
4. Persons in need of accommodation on medical and compassionate grounds	39	22	9	12	0	82	9.14
5. Travellers	16	1	0	3	5	25	2.79
6. Elderly persons	8	3	1	3	2	17	1.9
7. Physically & intellectually disabled persons	0	2	1	2	0	5	0.56
8. Young persons leaving institutional care	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9. Persons not reasonably able to meet the cost of the accommodation or to obtain suitable alternative accommodation	376	143	72	59	67	717	79.93
10. Persons sharing accommodation in-voluntarily	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.11
TOTAL	**469**	**177**	**88**	**89**	**74**	**897**	**100**

From these two tables it can be seen that there has been a considerable change in the categories of need between 2002 and 2005. These are indicated in the following diagrams.

This diagram indicates the relative percentages of each category of need in 2002 and 2005.



This shows that most categories of need declined as a percentage between the two years with the exception of travellers which showed a small increase and those not reasonably in a financial position to provide accommodation rising significantly. The following diagram also demonstrates this.



This diagram shows the 2005 shares of each category as a percentage of the 2002 figure. A figure of 100% (as shown by the red line) would indicate no change, while categories above the line show an increase and those below the line a decrease.

From these figures and diagrams it can be seen that the financial capacity reason for households not being in a position to provide their own accommodation is by far the biggest category and a category that is increasing. This is understandable as new development and refurbishment removes some of the other categories. It should also be noted that the absolute numbers in some categories are very low and can be dealt with easily in an ongoing manner through the Housing Authority.

Another matter worth referring to is the changing distribution of need between authorities between 2002 and 2005. This is shown in the following diagram which indicates that the need in the County area is growing as a percent of the total from just over 30% in 2002 to just over 50% in 2005.

It will be noted that the greatest percentage of applicants were from those that were not reasonably able to meet the cost of accommodation or to obtain suitable alternative accommodation which stood at 60% of the total. The Action Plan also noted that –

> *It is clear that the greatest growth category is in the single parent with a dependent who are unable to afford their own accommodation. However there are significant growth trends in other categories including the single male applicant with no*

dependents, an increase in young single applicants as a result of the changes in the rent subsidy and the number of separated couples are also increasing.

It was also noted in that report that

There is an increase in single male applicants; an increase in lone parents; resulting from changes in rent subsidy – an increase in young single applicants; the number of separated applicants are increasing; and also an increase in applicants previously housed in social rented housing in other counties and the UK (in particular).

In a housing report prepared in November 2007 the following was noted as being the situation with respect to social housing –

Local Authority	Applicants on hands	Percentage of Total
South Tipperary County Council	476	38%
Clonmel Borough	433	34%
Carrick-on-Suir Town Council	105	8%
Tipperary Town Council	182	15%
Cashel Town Council	61	5%
Total	**1257**	**100%**

The breakdown of the County Council applicants was the following –

Electoral Area	No. of Applicants	%
Cahir	145	30%
Cashel	75	16%
Clonmel	80	17%
Fethard	109	23%
Tipperary	67	14%
Total	**476**	**100%**

This indicates that the demand for social housing is spread throughout the county though there is some obvious clustering. The figure of 476 includes both approved applicants and those under investigation.

Of the total of 476, 230 were approved applicants and the breakdown of dwellings sought was approximately 22% one- bedroomed, 47% two-bedroomed, 30% three-bedroomed and a small amount of four-bedroomed.

In addition, of 168 approved applicants analysed, nearly three-quarters were in need for financial reasons, with about three percent in the elderly category and one quarter in the other needs category.

Annual rate of application

As noted at Part 3.8. above, the total number of applicants for social housing in South Tipperary in 2007 was estimated at 720. This was broken down as follows –

Local Authority	Applicants	Percentage of Total
South Tipperary County Council	270	38
Clonmel Borough	200	28
Carrick-on-Suir Town Council	90	12.5
Tipperary Town Council	90	12.5
Cashel Town Council	70	10
Total	**720**	**100**

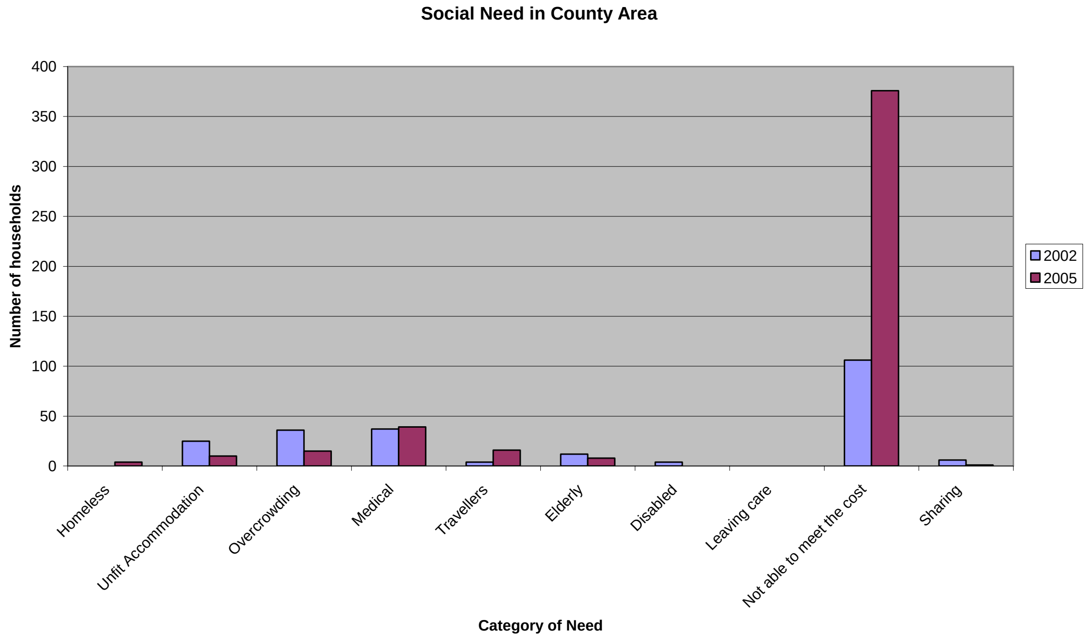
4.2. Need in the County Council Area

The accumulated need for the County Council area alone in 2002 and 2005 are as follows –

Category	2002	2005
1. Homeless	0	4
2. Persons living in accommodation that is unfit or materially unsuitable	25	10
3. Persons living in overcrowded accommodation	36	15
4. Persons in need of accommodation on medical and compassionate grounds	37	39
5. Travellers	4	16
6. Elderly persons	12	8

Category	2002	2005
7. Physically & intellectually disabled persons	4	0
8. Young persons leaving institutional care	0	0
9. Persons not reasonably able to meet the cost of the accommodation or to obtain suitable alternative accommodation	106	376
10. Persons sharing accommodation in-voluntarily	6	1
TOTAL	**230**	**469**

These figures are shown diagrammatically on the following chart. It is clear from the figures that the demand in the county area is rising and that the numbers not being in a financial position to provide their own accommodation is rising rapidly while many other categories are static or falling. Particular attention, therefore, is needed for this category, particularly since the absolute numbers in the other categories are relatively small.



4.3. Future Social Housing Needs

From the Social and Affordable Housing action plan it is noted that approximately nine applications for social housing were received in the County Council area each week in 2003. This would give rise to an annual number of applicants of approximately 450 on the basis of the population at that time. Given that the net number of private households in County Tipperary increased by about 750 per annum between 2002 and 2006 it is clear that a considerable percentage of new households applied for social housing in that period.

The Social and Affordable Housing Strategy addresses the issue of Social and Affordable Housing up to and including the year 2008.

It is suggested that the figures in this Action Plan be extended to the year 2014 having regard to the anticipated changes in population and house price/income differentials.

If it is assumed that the social housing need categories remain stable over the period of time, then the total required in each category between 2009 and 2014 would increase in line with the population growth, this would give rise to the needs outlined in the following table. If it is assumed that 35% of net new households in the county area require assistance with housing provision, then assuming an average of 750 new households per year as a middle range projection, would give rise to a total need over the six year period in the county area of about 1575 with the following distribution.

Category	Total 2009-14	Annual Average
1. Homeless	7	2
2. Persons living in accommodation that is unfit or materially unsuitable	21	4
3. Persons living in overcrowded accommodation	60	10
4. Persons in need of accommodation on medical and compassionate grounds	144	24
5. Travellers	44	7
6. Elderly persons	30	5
7. Physically & intellectually disabled persons	10	2
8. Young persons leaving institutional care	0	0
9. Persons not reasonably able to meet the cost of the accommodation or to obtain suitable alternative accommodation	1259	210
10. Persons sharing accommodation in-voluntarily	2	1
Total	**1577**	**265**

While this pattern may not, of course, be fully reflected in the future, it does indicate the overwhelming demand of the financial category.

4.4. Provision of housing for those in different need categories

4.4.1. Mechanisms Available

The Local Authority will address the housing needs of those that are not in a position to provide their own housing through a variety of mechanisms. The overall strategy of the Authority will, as far as possible, to assist those that can, with such assistance, provide their own accommodation; to use the private rental sector to assist those who may not require long-term accommodation; to provide rental accommodation for those that require longer term accommodation; and to work with voluntary organisations to provide accommodation for those in particular need categories.

These mechanisms that will be used by the Authority include –

The Rental Accommodation Scheme

This scheme was announced by the Government in July 2004 to transfer responsibility for housing SWA Rent Supplement recipients who are deemed to have a long term housing need to local authorities over a four year period. The RAS is a collaborative project between the Department (DEHLG), local authorities, the Department of Social and Family Affairs and the community welfare service. Administered by local authorities the scheme is intended to provide an additional source of good quality rented accommodation for eligible persons, through the Local Authority entering into long-term contracts with landlords for the provision of high quality rental property to appropriate categories of household in need of housing.

From the Development Plan perspective, this scheme highlights the need to facilitate the provision of appropriate rental accommodation within suitably located residential developments throughout the county.

Affordable Housing

As noted above at Part 3, many households are not in a position to obtain a mortgage for the purchase of a dwelling at full market rates. Some households, however, would be able to purchase a dwelling if the cost of a mortgage were lowered. Through the Affordable Housing Scheme the Housing Authority can facilitate some households to purchase dwellings at a price they can afford. However, unless the price of housing is reduced considerably it is not likely that many will be able to afford a mortgage even at the reduced house price.

The Council will seek to improve the uptake of the Affordable Housing scheme as it considers that it is one of most efficient, effective and socially desirable methods of facilitating home ownership. It will do this in a number of ways as follows –

1. By requiring that a range of dwelling types and sizes are provided in residential developments. The type and size of dwellings sought will have regard to the size and structure of the population in a particular area and to the needs for social and affordable housing
2. By relating the cost of affordable housing to the capacity of a household to pay an appropriate mortgage and by setting the dwelling cost at a price related to the household's ability to pay.

   In considering this matter the Council will have regard to the following –

   a. The net disposable income of the household
   b. Whether or not members of the household have been and are in secure employment
   c. The savings history of the household and any savings they currently hold
   d. The household's accommodation needs in terms of dwelling size and, in particular, sleeping accommodation needs
   e. The size of the mortgage that can be obtained by the household on the basis of repayments that do not exceed 35% of the household's net disposable income

f. The connection of the household with the community bin which the wish to reside

In any event the Council will not reduce the cost of a house below that which would equate to a mortgage amount the repayment of which would be equal to 35% of the net household income. The Council will also generally not reduce the price of a dwelling by more than a certain percentage which it will set from time to time.

3. By continuing to promote and market the scheme through a variety of methods and in a variety of contexts

The Council will also take steps to ensure that this system is not abused. These steps may include –

1. The inclusion of covenants on the deeds of the dwelling requiring repayment of the price differential to the Council in the event of the disposal of the dwelling
2. Requiring purchasers to sign a declaration that they will remain as the owner/occupiers of the dwelling
3. By requiring annual sworn declarations by purchasers that they remain as owner occupiers

Shared Ownership Scheme

Under this scheme which is available to certain categories of those with housing need, the Local Authority and the applicant both take a share in the dwelling with the intention being that the Local Authority share will decrease over time. The precise structure of this scheme has meant that it has not been widely used but it will continue to be made available by the Local Authority

1999 Affordable Housing Scheme

Under the 1999 affordable housing scheme, local authorities provide newly built houses at a discounted price on their own lands. This scheme will be used where appropriate for the provision of a certain amount of housing need.

Provision of Affordable Sites

This scheme will also be considered by the Housing Authority in certain circumstances where it is clear that there are households who would be in a position to provide their own housing if they were in a position to obtain a building site at an affordable cost.

Provision of Loans for House Purchase and Improvement

These loans can be provided to certain categories of person who have been refused loans by banks and building societies. There are certain eligibility criteria for these loans and a maximum as to the size of loan that can be provided.

Social Housing for Rent

While particular categories of person in need of housing can be assisted by the provision of housing other than being provided with rented housing by the Local Authority, there will be many who will need housing provided for rent by the Housing Authority through its building and dwelling purchase schemes.

The implication of this for the Development Plan is that adequate land is available for provision by the Housing Authority of dwellings for rental occupancy.

Improvement works in lieu of housing

The Housing Authority can carry out work in lieu of the provision of housing if such work is needed to relieve overcrowding or to remedy structural or other defects. This approach can be particularly effective in helping to maintain households within their communities and to provide additional accommodation as a household expands.

The implication of this for the Development Plan is that provision would be made for the expansion of some smaller dwellings when they are being constructed so that works in lieu can be considered by the Housing Authority.

Special needs provision

Though the numbers are small, special provision needs to be made for the elderly and disabled. Again adaptation and improvement grants are the preferred option in these cases as they facilitate households and individuals remaining within their communities. For older populations living in more isolated areas, relocation to a settlement may be the appropriate outcome. This can be particularly effective where developments are specifically designed with older people in mind. Community and voluntary-based housing schemes can play a particularly effective role in this. As the population of the country ages which will happen over the coming decades, the need for this type of accommodation is likely to increase.

The implications for the Development Plan is that where lands in settlements are being identified for development, some areas particularly well located with regard to their proximity to the services required by older people would be reserved for those purposes.

The travelling community has particular accommodation needs that need to be catered for also. The Traveller Accommodation Plan is the principal mechanism through which this is put into effect.

Partnership with Voluntary Housing Associations

Voluntary and Community managed housing can provide a significant number of dwellings for a variety of different categories of household. Voluntary organisations can be particularly effective in providing accommodation for those with particular needs where additional services can be incorporated into the housing development. Community-based schemes that address the needs of older people can also be particularly effective within specific areas.

4.4.2. Particular Categories

Those not in a financial position to provide their own housing

As noted in previous sections this is substantially the biggest category of need for those not in a position to provide their own housing. All mechanisms will be used to provide for this category of household.

In particular, for younger single-person households, the RAS will be availed of. This is to allow such households and individuals to advance in their working lives and to enhance the possibility of their entering the private housing market.

For single-parent families and new households forming as a result of family dissolution, the RAS may also be appropriate but it is more likely that such families will be accommodated in social housing rented by the Housing Authority.

For families who are not in a position to purchase their own accommodation similar provision will be made, though the possibility of families availing of the affordable housing opportunities will also be investigated.

Traveller Community
As noted above a range of mechanisms will be used to provide for the traveller community as laid down in the traveller action plan. It is anticipated that the level of provision of 10 dwellings per year will be continued or increased slightly over the period of the Development Plan. The Development Plan should make provision for some group housing sites following consultation with the Housing Authority. In the 2007 Traveller Census 22 families were noted as having applied for accommodation.

Older People
As noted a range of solutions (dwelling improvement, voluntary and community housing schemes and specially designed Local Authority rental housing) will be used to satisfy this need although the RAS may also be suitable.

People with a disability
The carrying out of improvement works and the provision of grants will be the principal mechanisms used to satisfy this need. If a greater need becomes apparent in a particular area voluntary housing organisations will be encouraged to provide appropriate accommodation. Otherwise, the small level of need can be dealt with on an ad hoc basis.

Homeless people, young people released from institutional care and other minor categories.
Very few are expected to fall into these categories and can be addressed on an ad hoc basis.

4.5. Conclusion

The provision of housing for those with special needs is addressed in the Council's Social and Affordable Housing Action Plan. This strategy notes the major demand arising from the cost of housing and the lack of capacity of many to address this need for themselves. The Local Authority will address these needs through a variety of the mechanisms outlined above but while the relativity between the cost of housing and incomes remains as it is, the demand may well exceed supply.

5. Housing Strategy

The following is the housing strategy statement for the county of South Tipperary in the light of the analysis outlined above and other considerations generally within the development plan.

5.1. Overall Objective

It is the overall objective of this strategy to facilitate where possible through Development Plan policies, the provision of adequate, flexible accommodation for the future population of South Tipperary having regard to the different needs of different sectors.

5.2. Strategic Approach

The strategic approach being adopted in this Development Plan is as follows –

1. To have regard to the provision of housing in the functional areas of Clonmel Borough Council, Carrick-on-Suir Town Council, Cashel Town Council and Tipperary Town Council when considering the need for the provision of housing in the functional area of South Tipperary County Council

2. To facilitate the use of the full range of housing support mechanisms available to the Housing Authorities for those that need assistance in the provision of dwellings for themselves

3. To facilitate, where possible, households remaining within their own communities of origin or initial settlement

4. To facilitate the provision of a mix of dwelling types to respond to the variety of housing needs throughout the county

5. To facilitate the provision of a range of tenure types to address the needs of different sectors of the community

6. To make specific provision for the accommodation needs of the travelling community

7. To make provision for affordable housing in all parts of the county

8. To have regard to the character of different settlements when considering the nature of the housing to be provided and, in particular, that being provided to accommodate those with particular housing needs

9. To encourage prior consultation with the Housing Authority when schemes of significant scale are being developed

10. To have regard to the need both for social integration and the maintenance of safe, secure and harmonious living environments for all dwelling occupants

5.3. Policies

In order to facilitate the achievement of the overall objective of this strategy and the specific strategic goals the following policies will be adopted by the Planning Authority.

1. In order to facilitate the provision of a range of housing types, it will be a policy of the Planning Authority to require that in larger schemes a mix of house types and sizes be provided. This requirement will be reviewed from time to time and the specific requirements will be related to the nature of household formation and change, demographic change and other considerations.

2. In order to facilitate the development of a range of tenure types and, in particular, to facilitate the Housing Authority in entering into agreements under the Rental Accommodation Scheme, it will be a policy of the Planning Authority to require that apartments be included as part of the dwelling mix in larger residential developments where a mix of tenure types is proposed. The design and scale of apartment blocks shall be appropriate to the nature, scale and built form of the settlements in which they are being provided. In considering the scale of development to be provided the Planning Authority will consult with the Housing Authority regarding the need and availability of such housing types. In areas adjacent to the functional areas of other Planning Authorities, the Planning Authority will have regard to the availability and/or proposals for the provision of apartments for rent within the functional areas of those authorities.

3. In order to facilitate the provision of flexible accommodation that can grow with the needs of a household it will be the policy of the Planning Authority to require that developers will provide for the future extension of smaller individual dwellings and incorporate such flexibility in dwelling design.

4. In order that that the design of one and two-bedroom dwellings have regard to the impact on the quality of life of households or their capacity to accommodate overnight visitors, it will be the policy of the Planning Authority to require that such needs be considered in dwelling design and that any applications for permission made under the Planning and Development Act demonstrate how such need can be accommodated

5. In order to facilitate the provision of affordable housing and housing for those that have particular housing needs, generally to require that 20 per cent, of the land zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, be reserved for the provision of housing for those in the categories outlined in Part 1.3. above or affordable housing or both.

6. In order to facilitate the orderly management of social housing while ensuring that the occupants are not unduly segregated from others, it will be the policy of the Planning Authority to require that such housing be provided in small clusters within larger housing schemes but in a manner that does not unduly identify it as segregated or as not being part of the overall scheme. The design,

layout and access to such dwelling clusters shall be used to ensure compliance with this policy objective.

7. In order to facilitate the provision of housing for older people at appropriate locations it will be a policy objective of the Council to identify and reserve areas of land within settlements and close to facilities for that purpose.

8. In order to facilitate the provision of accommodation for travellers it will be a policy objective of the Planning Authority to identify and reserve land for the provision of group housing for travellers.

Appendix One

Town / Village	Area (ha)
Larger Towns	
Greater Clonmel Environs	152.59
Cahir	136.4804
Cashel	88.52
Carrick on Suir	75.1645
Fethard	50.2099
Tipperary Town	242.458
Killenaule	25.9563
Smaller Towns	
Ahenny	11.62650
Annacarthy	8.02517
Ardfinnan	52.10730
Ballingarry	14.90810
Ballinure	17.37820
Ballylooby	12.95140
Ballyneill	15.05440
Ballynonty	11.1410
Ballyporeen	42.38630
Ballysloe	5.32060
Bansha	34.9190
Boherlahan	31.11550
Burncourt	14.60720
Cappawhite	28.67010
Clogheen	72.45370
Cloneen	17.84390
Clonoulty	29.72720
Coalbrook	9.68858
Commons	12.80670
Cullen	24.74660
Donaskeagh	15.32110

Town / Village	Area (ha)
Donohill	5.65957
Drangan	17.9340
Dualla	12.21040
Dundrum	46.31550
Emly	27.53830
Faugheen	8.37868
Glengoole	10.35980
Golden	21.76950
Gortnahoo	20.12540
Gouldscross	22.09210
Grange	8.44924
Grangemockler	15.33910
Hollyford	33.80580
Kilfeackle	18.09580
Killusty	9.75913
Kilross	4.13196
Knockavilla	17.17780
Lattin	14.73910
Limerick Junction	14.55160
Lisvarrinane	17.21010
Monard	19.14960
Moyglass	16.52410
Mullinahone	53.57280
Newcastle	21.93750
Newinn	29.50550
Ninemilehouse	12.13370
Rosegreen	19.79580
Rossadrehid	4.40431
Rossmore	9.15827
Solohead	13.47280
Thomastown	13.87290