

CHAPTER 4. HOUSING

4.0 Introduction

The settlement strategy for the County for the period 2009 - 2015 is set out in Chapter 3, Location and Pattern of Development. This Chapter identifies the Council's policy towards the achievement of residential development as part of the settlement strategy.

As noted in Chapter 2, the expected population range for the county up to 2020 is between 104,000 and 116,000. On the basis of a household size of between 2.4 and 2.8 persons, the number of housing units required, not accounting for units becoming obsolete, is set out in Table 4.1 below and takes into consideration a low and high rate of population increase at the two different household sizes.

Table 4.1 Housing Unit Requirements 2009-2020						
Population Change	2006* Population	2020 Population	Difference	Units @ 2.8	Units @ 2.4	Units P/A**
Low (18% of Region)	83,221	104,000	20,779	7,421	8,657	674-787
High (20% of Region)	83,221	116,000	32,779	11,706	13,657	1,064-1,241

*Household formation rate, which in 2006 was at the national average of 2.7 persons per dwelling.

**Housing units required per annum 2009-2020.

Table 4.2 shows the levels of zoned residential land in the District and Local Service Centres and Settlement Nodes, amounting in total to 623 hectares. Applying a mean density figure of 17.5 units per hectare (7 units per acre¹) to the figures in Table 4.1, there will be a requirement to provide between 269 and 364 hectares (644 to 899 acres) of land for new residential development over the life of the County Development Plan. This represents a total residential land bank of between 1.7 and 2.3² times to accommodate housing development for the projected population to 2015. The total area of residentially zoned land and its location will allow for flexibility and choice within the housing market for all purposes.

Table 4.2. Provision of Zoned Residential Lands		
Centre Classification	Hectares	Acres
District Service Centres	390	965
Local Service Centres	118	290
Settlement Nodes	115	285
Total	623	1,540

As outlined in Chapter 3, the distribution of houses in the District Service Centres will be 20% of the County. Table 4.3 below shows the total number of housing units required to achieve this aim taking account of the low and high population growth scenarios outlined in Table 4.1 above.

¹ Seven units per acre is acceptable mean value taking into consideration high, medium and low densities of housing envisaged in the Settlement Strategy along with the need to provide serviced sites at the rate of approximately four per acre.

² The figures do not include for the 202 hectares (498 acres) zoned for Village Centre development which can accommodate mixed-use developments.

Table 4.3. Required Housing Units in District Service Centres (Based on accommodating 20% of Population in these Centres over the Development Plan Period)				
Settlement	2006 Population	Current Units ³ & (% of total)	Proposed Additional Units ⁴	Proposed Additional Units ⁵
Fethard	1,374	624 (19)	179	285
Ardfinnan	747	242 (7.3)	70	110
Ballyclerihan	678	247 (7.5)	71	112
Killenaule	597	288 (8.7)	82	130
Kilsheelan	520	205 (6.2)	59	95
Clogheen	509	229 (6.9)	65	105
Mullinahone	372	166 (5.0)	48	75
Holycross	357	127 (3.8)	36	57
Cappawhite	328	169 (5.1)	48	75
Ballyporeen	304	152 (4.6)	44	70
Emly	293	111 (3.3)	32	50
Bansha	272	122 (3.7)	35	55
Golden	255	121 (3.7)	35	55
Newcastle	245	101 (3.0)	29	45
Dundrum	191	79 (2.4)	24	36
Ballingarry	129	80 (2.4)	24	36
Limerick Junction	N/A	112 (3.3)	32	50
Lisvarrinane	N/A	41 (1.2)	12	20
New Inn	N/A	63 (1.9)	19	28
Total		3279 (100)	944	1,489

4.1 Current Housing Strategy

Table 4.4 identifies the numbers of actual house builds at the start of the strategy review period and the number of projected housing units to be delivered by 2009. The capital allocation under the Social Housing Investment Programme for 2007 is €14,500,000 and provides for land acquisitions, direct provision of dwelling units, regeneration and remedial works programme, extensions and ongoing maintenance and provision of services. The Council will continue to provide a suite of housing unit and tenure options during the life of the new County Development Plan in order to address demands.

Table 4.4 Housing Supply Per Sector. (Excluding Primary Service Centres)		
	2003 Delivered Units	2009 Projected Units
Private Sector (Non Part V)	1,122	1,505
Local Authority Programme	335	1,080
Voluntary and Co op Sector	115	631
Private Sector (part V)	4	504
Total Social and Affordable	453	2,215

4.2 Housing Strategy Review 2009-2015

The Council has commenced a review of the Housing Strategy, based on the same population figures set out in the Draft County Development Plan. When completed, in the first quarter of 2008, this will form part of the Draft County Development Plan. The projected social housing and accommodation requirements identified in the Review are set out in Table 4.5 below.

The Review has also identified that of the total social housing requirement, approximately 50% of households are 1 and 2 person households and only a small percentage of households exceed 4

³ Based on the number of habitable dwellings and those under construction, identified in the Geodirectory as of the 1st January 2006.

⁴ Based on current trends and providing for a total of 4,722 units in the County over the life of the Development Plan utilising the per-annum unit figure for a population projection of 104,000 in 2020 as set out in Table 4.1 based on a 2.4 household formation rate.

⁵ Based on current trends and providing for a total of 7,446 units in the County over the life of the Development Plan utilising the per-annum unit figure for a population projection of 116,000 in 2020 as set out in Table 4.1 based on a 2.4 household formation rate.

persons. If dwellings were to be provided to facilitate this current requirement it would be expected that house sizes would range from approximately one quarter one-bedroom units to a small number of dwellings with more than four bedrooms.

A critical objective of the Housing Strategy Review, having regard to Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), will be the provision of an adequate supply of social and affordable housing and to promote social integration. The Review has identified the continued need for 20% social and affordable housing as part of developments subject to Section 94 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Generally, the 20% shall be comprised of an equal provision of social and affordable housing, though the Council reserves the right to require that the full 20% provision be for an alternative mix of social and affordable units, as it deems necessary

Table 4.5 Categories of persons in need of housing/accommodation.	Total 2009-2015	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. Disabled or handicapped 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

in each particular case. In relation to developments that have commenced or have been completed to date, agreements have been finalised for the provision of 96 social units and 125 affordable units. A further 43 Social units & 42 Affordable units have been agreed in principle from housing schemes already under construction.

The Housing Strategy Review and the Draft County Development Plan will seek to ensure that a range of dwelling sizes and types are provided to meet the needs of the total population, including those that are in need of housing being provided for them under the social and affordable housing obligations of the Council. The continued provision of dwelling types and mix, and in particular two-bed units will be central to meeting the housing needs of the County. In supplying these units, the Council will have regard to the Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities Design Guidelines 2007 as produced by the DEHLG and any revision thereof. It is also the intention to facilitate a flexible approach in the design of private schemes, promoting mixed developments which include executive style housing, extendible housing, serviced sites etc, so that families can remain in their initial community of establishment.

The Housing Section of South Tipperary County Council is proactive in facilitating developers reaching an agreement with the local authority in relation to providing the 20% social and affordable housing requirement as per Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Detailed Part V information and information on the design of social housing is available from the Housing Section.

Policy HSG 1: Housing Strategy
 It is the policy of the Council to have regard to the South Tipperary County Housing Strategy when implementing local authority housing programmes and when assessing proposals for private residential development. The Council will facilitate the provision of appropriate housing accommodation to meet the needs of the community in a way that achieves social integration.

4.3 Traveller Accommodation

From Table 4.5 above, the Draft Housing Strategy Review 2009-2015 addresses the provision of accommodation for the traveller community. The Council has adopted the South Tipperary County Traveller Accommodation Programme 2004-2008 and the Council will facilitate the provision of accommodation for the travelling community in accordance with the Programme. There is currently a need to provide 6 additional accommodation units by the end of the Programme period. The design and layout of all accommodation will be undertaken in conjunction with members of the travelling community, having regard to the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998, and to the Revised Guidelines for Residential Caravan Parks for Travellers 1997 (DEHLG). In addition, where traveller accommodation needs has been identified, the Council will ensure such is catered for in an integrated way as part of the social housing programme. Traveller accommodation encompasses halting sites, group housing and standard housing.

Policy HSG 2: Traveller Accommodation

It is the policy of the Council to provide accommodation for the travelling community in line with the South Tipperary County Traveller Accommodation Programme and the South Tipperary County Housing Strategy.

4.4 Housing Design and Development on Zoned Lands

A central function of this Draft County Development Plan is to ensure that new residential developments present a high quality private and public living environment based on the principles of social integration and affordability. Residential developments will be required to provide a mix of house types and site sizes to cater for the needs of the community and that are accessible to persons with disabilities. The main challenge for future development is to provide urban design and housing layout options that deliver an excellent environment, with strong community services and facilities to encourage people into villages and towns and at the same time fulfil the social requirements of the population. In this regard, planning applications for multiple housing units will be required to include a Development Impact Assessment (DIA) with the application identifying the impact of the development on existing services and community facilities in the settlement and identify how they propose to address any deficiencies. In this regard developers will be encouraged to consult with local community group representatives in order to identify any such deficiencies and possible solutions that can be facilitated as part of the proposed development.

The requirement to provide facilities as part of the DIA will depend on the size and nature of the proposed development and the range of existing facilities available within each settlement and the wider community. Minimum requirements are set out in Chapter 9 Development Management with regard to general amenity provision; however, the Council will assess each development on its own merits, having regard to the specific features of the development, the nature and use(s) proposed, significant cumulative effects and the range of existing services available to the community.

The Council will require financial contributions as per the adopted Development Contribution Scheme (see Chapter 9) towards the capital expenditure necessary for the provision of infrastructure works required which facilitate development. Such works include drainage, water supply, roads, footpaths and traffic management, open space, community facilities, bus stops, bus shelters and car parking. The Council will also require adequate security by way of a cash deposit or bond to ensure the satisfactory completion and maintenance of multi-unit developments.

Policy HSG 3: Housing Mix and Development Impact Assessment (DIA)

It is the policy of the Council to require the following to be submitted in support of proposals for new multi-unit residential development;

- Proposals for complying with Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).
- A Development Impact Assessment in support of the development.

4.5 Dwelling Design in the Open Countryside

Residential development in the open countryside in compliance with the criteria set out in the Settlement Strategy (Chapter 3) and the Development Management Standards (Chapter 9) shall be informed by the Rural Design Guide for Individual Houses in the Countryside, included as Appendix 4 of the Draft County Development Plan. The guidelines have been informed through a process of consultation with architects/agents, the Elected Members and the Planning Section.

Policy HSG 4: Design of Individual Houses

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all new individual houses in the Open Countryside, including the refurbishment and extension of existing structures, are sited, designed and landscaped having regard to the criteria outlined in the Rural Design Guide for Individual Houses in the Countryside set out in Appendix 4 of the Draft County Development Plan.

4.6 Nursing Homes/Retirement Villages

To cater adequately for an ageing population, the council considers that the development of nursing homes and retirement villages will be a feature of future development in the County. The development of nursing homes and/or retirement villages will only be facilitated on suitably zoned lands in serviced settlements, particularly Primary, Secondary and District Service Centres in order to ensure that direct access to services such as shops, places of worship, medical care etc is available and to ensure integration of such centres into the local community.

Policy HSG 5: Nursing Homes/Retirement Villages

It is the policy of the Council to encourage and facilitate the sustainable development of nursing homes and retirement villages on appropriately zoned land in Primary, Secondary and District Service Centres. All proposals shall comply with the Development Management Standards set out in Chapter 9 of the Draft County Development Plan.

4.7 Retaining Buildings of Merit and Building Reuse.

The Council recognises that there are a number of underutilised and disused dwellings and other buildings in both the settlements and the open countryside that are capable of accommodating a new use and offer an alternative to new build. The Council considers that these structures provide an opportunity for reuse and in the open countryside they provide an opportunity to persons who may not meet the housing criteria to build in the open countryside as set out in the Settlement Strategy (Chapter 3). Where reuse is proposed, the Council will require that existing entrances and services be upgraded to the requirements set out in Chapter 9 of the Draft County Development Plan.

Policy HSG 6: Retaining Buildings of Merit

It is the policy of the Council to seek the retention and reuse, where practicable, of existing buildings and structures which are of aesthetic merit and which make a positive contribution to the unique character of the streetscape and/or countryside. The refurbishment of underutilised dwellings in the open countryside is encouraged provided that the structure is suitable to be used as a dwelling and can be adequately serviced to comply with the development management standards set out in Chapter 9.

4.8 Sustainable Building Design

The National policy document Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities supports the adoption of new technology and innovative approaches to design and construction of dwellings, aimed at improving productivity and enhancing their quality and energy performance over their lifetime. The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government has also published the National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012, which states that one way of meeting our international commitments on climate change is through the integration of climate change considerations into all policy areas. Taking cognisance of these National policies, the Council seeks to ensure that all new developments contribute positively towards ensuring reduced energy consumption and the

associated carbon footprint of the county. Development proposals will be required to demonstrate reduced energy consumption in their design and construction, seeking ultimately to provide developments with zero-heating requirements by way of innovative design solutions and high performance building/insulation materials in their construction. It is widely considered that the best time to introduce energy and carbon dioxide saving measures is when specifying, designing and or constructing a new building. This provides the opportunity to:

- Optimise the location and orientation within a site;
- Make use of the layout, form and fabric to moderate energy needs;
- Reduce heat demand by using high insulation standards with heat recovery ventilation systems;
- Meet the remaining heat demand with efficient plant and controls;
- Minimise cooling needs through the use of fabric;
- Maximise the use of natural ventilation;
- Consider the use of renewable energy sources; and,
- Meet residual cooling needs with innovative plant and controls.

Designs should incorporate alternative energy technologies such as bio-energy, solar energy, heat pumps, heat recovery while larger developments could consider the use of district/block heating/cooling systems, combined heat and power and wind energy.

Policy HSG 7: Sustainable Building Design

It is the policy of the Council to require that all dwellings and buildings shall be designed and constructed to have minimum energy requirements [A3-B1 BER (50-100KWh/sqm/year)] and dwellings in excess of 250 sqm floor area shall have further reduced energy requirements [A1/A2 BER (<50 KWh/sqm/year)]. Developers will be required to submit relevant supporting documentation/energy audits which identify the sustainable building technologies incorporated in the development in order to achieve same at planning application stage.

4.9 Specific Housing Objectives.

- SHO 1: As opportunities arise the Council will acquire lands in villages in order to provide serviced sites so as to stimulate growth and to assist in meeting the rural housing requirements of the County.
- SHO 2: The Council will seek streetscape and roadside improvements as part of new development that contributes to traffic calming and improvement in the visual appearance of villages and their approach roads.
- SHO 3: As need arises, the Council will seek to provide permanent/temporary traveller accommodation on suitably zoned land located within settlement boundaries identified in the Draft County Development Plan and in so doing will consult with the Traveller Accommodation Committee where appropriate.
- SHO 4: Through the implementation of the South Tipperary County Housing Strategy, the Council will require the provision of 20% social and affordable housing units where development is proposed on land zoned for residential or village centre use which is subject to the provisions of Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.
- SHO 5: During the life of the Draft County Development Plan, the Council will obtain the services of an appropriate professional to draw up, in consultation with the local communities, a minimum of 15 village physical enhancement plans and commence implementation of same.