

The Glen of Aherlow Local Area Plan 2004

Proposed Local Area Plan

Prepared by

Cunnane Stratton Reynolds
Town Planners and Landscape Architects
21-23 Oliver Plunkett Street
Cork

&

3 Molesworth Place
Dublin 2

With assistance from

South Tipperary County Council
County Hall
Clonmel
Co. Tipperary

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Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This Proposed Local Area Plan (PLAP) is intended to propose a strategy, policies and objectives to ensure that the future development of the Glen of Aherlow is sustainable and is in accordance with the overall proper planning and development of the County as a whole.

This PLAP has been prepared to recognise that the Glen of Aherlow has a distinctiveness, character and importance to the County as an amenity and as a "Living Countryside". Having regard to this, the PLAP will attempt to promote a sustainable mix of policies and objectives to ensure that the area;

- continues as a viable agricultural area,
- can develop an improved range and mix of employment and development opportunities,
- develops a suitable range and mix of settlement opportunities to meet local needs. And
- encourages sustainable development into the future.

1.1 The Study Area

The PLAP area covers a physical area of over 90 sq. km. It is bounded to the north by the Slievenamuck Mountains and to the south by the Galtees.

The Glen is also home to a number of villages and settlements including Lissvarrinane and Rossadrehid within the Glen proper, and in Bansha at the eastern approach to the Glen. There are also Co. Limerick villages, such as Galbally, that can be described as being within the Glen but outside the area covered by this PLAP. These settlements are important locations in the Glen as they are a focus for potential development.

1.2 What is a Local Area Plan?

The PLAP is a statement of planning policies for the area of the Glen of Aherlow within the administrative area of South Tipperary County Council over a 6-year period.

The western end of the Glen of Aherlow is within the administrative area of Limerick County Council. Limerick County Council has been consulted in the preparation of the PLAP. In establishing development objectives for the

area, the PLAP attempts to identify where both public and private investment should be focussed to promote the development of the Glen in a sustainable and planned manner.

The Proposed Local Area Plan will address the following issues including the:

1. formulation of a vision for the area.
2. identification and development of a social and economic profile of the area.
3. identification of a geographic and historical background of the area.
4. promotion of sustainable patterns of development.
5. formulation of development strategies for:
 - Residential development
 - Tourism and amenity development
 - Environmental Protection
 - Employment opportunities
 - Infrastructural development
6. identification of development objectives for the villages of Bansha, Lisvarrinane and Rossadrehid.
7. identification of impacts that the proposed plan will have on the Environment (*Section 19(4)(a) Planning and Development Act 2000*).

The PLAP will also have regard to the overall objectives of the County Development Plan 2003 and all relevant County Policy in respect of development in upland and scenic areas.

Map 1 Plan Boundary

Executive Summary

- 1.0 The Glen of Aherlow is a unique resource in South Tipperary. It has a unique location with a very distinct environment and amenity potential and consequently the overall principles expressed above will be applied with reference to the need for any development in the area to have regard to:
- Local Character and Identity: The need to protect and promote the distinct landscape and character of the area.
 - Promoting Sustainable Settlement: The development of sustainable patterns of settlement whereby local development 1) does not adversely impact on the overall amenity of the Glen of Aherlow and 2) will integrate with existing resources and development centres will be a key factor in developing the area as a 'Living Countryside'.
- 2.0 The Proposed Local Area Plan has been prepared to reflect the policies and objectives of the following plans and reports. All plans combined have an important role in the development of the plan area.
- County Development Plan 2003
 - The Tipperary Integrated Resource Development / Chamber of Commerce Land Use and Economic Development Strategy 2000
 - The Tipperary Town and its Environs Development Plan 2001
- 3.0 The key development areas that must be considered include:
- Residential development
 - Tourism and amenity development
 - Environmental Protection
 - Employment opportunities
 - Infrastructural development
- 4.0 The survey and analysis carried out (Appendix B) has identified a number of key issues that must be addressed in the PLAP. These include:
- The apparent in-migration of individuals into the area.
 - The extensive in-migration and development of new dwellings in the Clonbeg DED.
 - The increase in the age of the population in the area.
 - The decrease in the numbers employed in agricultural activity.
 - The lack of employment opportunities for individuals with third level educational backgrounds.

The Living Countryside

The countryside is created as much by human activity as by natural forces. The Glen of Aherlow is an example of this whereby much of the area's distinctive character and identity has been formed by the interrelationship between natural form (mountains, valleys and landscape) and human activity (farming, settlement, roads and development). Over time this relationship has promoted the development of a distinctive character and identity which requires careful management and planning in order to ensure future sustainable development.

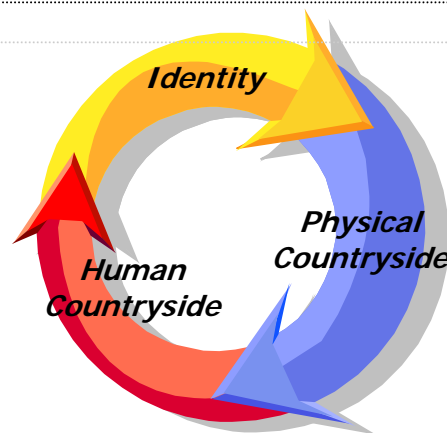


Figure 1: Links in Rural Development – The Living Countryside

Village Development, Urban Design and Rural Design

(Bansha, Lisvarrinane and Rossadrehid)

2.0 Introduction

It is an objective of the Council to improve the physical appearance and character of Bansha, Lisvarrinane, and Rossadrehid.

2.1 Bansha

There are a number of important and historical buildings in Bansha that have the potential to be attractions. These buildings, such as the Olde Church, also add to the employment base, as they are used for small business enterprises.

A development strategy for the Village of Bansha is set out overleaf. This demonstrates and identifies the key development opportunities in the area that should be promoted in order to:

- Reinforce the village character.
- Promote infill development.
- Calm traffic flows.

The village currently displays a good design character consistent with the overall appearance of West Tipperary villages. However, in specific areas, the presence of undeveloped sites and derelict sites within the village, detracts from the character of the village. These sites should be redeveloped so as to be consistent with the design features and building style common in this area of West Tipperary (see Table 2.1). Any development should also be consistent with the design guidance set out in the County Development Plan 2003.

The village also has the potential to form as a link point for any potential rural transport initiative in the Glen of Aherlow. These initiatives are currently progressing throughout counties Carlow, Kilkenny, Limerick and South Tipperary and have the potential to offer a 'joined up' solution to the problem of rural transport difficulties. Bansha is well placed as the location of an interchange as a link point for National (and sub-regional) operators due to its location on the N24 and the Council will assist in the development of a bus stop / shelter in the village if necessary.

Objectives for Bansha follow.

2.2 Lisvarrinane

Lisvarrinane has a very active GAA sport club, and a dynamic Tidy Town group. The village generally fulfils a residential function and has an elongated layout that offers potential for the development of additional infill developments. Such development will not, however, be encouraged in locations where it would limit the operational effectiveness of existing sanitary services or result in a traffic hazard.

Objectives for Lisvarrinane follow.

2.3 Rossadrehid

Rossadrehid has been a frequent winner of regional awards IN the Tidy Towns competition but is currently experiencing a decline in fortunes with the closure of important services such as its Post Office.

Objectives for Rossadrehid follow.

2.4 Urban Design and Rural Design

The following pages also set out design guidance for key areas of the Glen of Aherlow and the methods that should be employed in developing key rural areas and village settlements. These are widely applicable principals and represent good design guidance.

Table 2.1 Design Features of West Tipperary Villages

Some Characteristic Features

- i. Building heights generally no more than 2 story's. On main streets building height can be up to 3 story's.
- ii. Buildings normally finished in plaster and painted.
- iii. Decorative mouldings used around windows and at the corners of buildings (quoins).
- iv. Roofs finished in black / grey slate.
- v. Ridge tiles occasionally finished in red clay.
- vi. Roof pitch normally in the region of 30 degrees.

(Also see Section 2.4)

In general the Council will have regard to the provisions of the County Development Plan in determining planning applications throughout the Plan area. Specific recommendations with respect to certain areas within the Glen of Aherlow are made in the following section. These are intended to both guide developers and promote the development of a more appropriate form of building and development.

Building Line Recommendations

Specific areas have been identified in Bansha where a new development should be consistent with the established building line. Backland development will not be required to conform with established building lines although will be required to promote pedestrian friendly environments with the use of shared surface areas and traffic calming.

Height Controls

No new dwelling in the area should normally exceed two stories in height. Attic conversions will be considered.

Roof Pitch & Finish

All roofs should be finished in a blue / black slate finish or similar. Red roof tiles or similar are not acceptable and will not be permitted.

Building Finish

All external walls of buildings must be finished in a plaster render.

Red brick will not be permitted as part of the front, rear or gable wall of any development. However, limited use of brick may be considered for chimneys, coigns, window reveals, etc.

Boundary Details

New development should reflect established styles of boundary treatment in the local environment.

Development proposals should have regard to the existing boundary treatment of individual sites where existing boundaries are formed of "ditch and wall" construction or simple stone wall construction. In all cases new boundary construction should complement the existing boundary treatment

All developers should also demonstrate that proposed boundary treatment works are developed are consistent with the Conservation Guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment and Local Government.

Landscape / Planting

An essential part of all developments will be the requirement for them to be adequately landscaped so that they do not adversely impact on the amenity of the area and the character of the landscape. It is important that all development ensure that where planting and landscaping is proposed that a full and detailed planting plan is provided and that indigenous species are used. Species that are not characteristic of the Glen of Aherlow will generally be discouraged, particularly invasive or intrusive planting such as Lelandii.

Development Contributions

Development Contributions will be required in accordance with the provisions of Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000. These contributions will be in accordance with the South Tipperary Development Contribution Scheme.

Development Strategies, Policies and Objectives

3.0 Development Strategies

3.1 Survey and Analysis

The survey and analysis carried out (Appendix B) has identified a number of key issues that must be addressed in the PLAP. These include:

- The migration of individuals into the area.
- The extensive development of new dwellings in the Clonbeg DED.
- The increase in the age of the population in the area.
- The decrease in the numbers employed in agricultural activity.
- The lack of employment opportunities for individuals with third level educational backgrounds.

These will be addressed in the proposed policies for the PLAP.

3.2 Key Development Issues

The key development issues that must be considered are:

- Residential development
- Tourism and amenity development
- Environmental Protection
- Employment opportunities
- Infrastructural development

3.3 Residential Development

The Proposed Local Area Plan supports and is consistent with the policies and objectives of the County Development Plan 2003.

Many new houses have been developed in the Glen of Aherlow over recent years. Many of these are in highly visible, prominent locations in the Glen.

The potential for large volumes of one-off residential development in upland areas (such as the approach roads to Lissvarnane, as viewed from the southern road through the Glen, and the upland areas to the south of Rosadrehid as viewed from both Christ the King and the R663) to have a negative impact

on the overall amenity of the area must be considered in all planning applications.

The diversity of housing development within the Glen of Aherlow has also been recognised. Development occurs as either village centred development, as one-off houses in the countryside or as clusters of development in the countryside. The development of one-off housing in the area is governed by the policy of the County Development Plan 2003. The County Development Plan 2003 also sets out guidance for the development of cluster development. This is possible in the Glen of Aherlow but must, where proposed, have due regard to the sanitary services capacity of the area and the capacity of the landscape to accommodate additional development.

Where one-off houses, residential clusters or commercial developments are proposed in upland areas, for which policies and objectives exist in the South Tipperary County Council Landscape Character Assessment, development will be closely monitored. Any such development in this area may be required to carry out a visual impact assessment to demonstrate that the development does not harm the area's amenities. It is noted that the upland areas of the Glen of Aherlow appear to have the capacity to accommodate additional housing development. Pilot studies of the townlands of Longford, Moneynabolla, Drumleagh and Tooreen have all demonstrated that these areas have historically accommodated more housing developments than are currently located there. These areas may be less sensitive to the impacts of over development but other areas such as the lands adjacent to the R663 are likely to be adversely affected by additional development.

Housing Policy & Objectives

AHSG 1 It is the policy of the Council to apply Policies HSG 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8¹, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 of the County Development Plan to the Glen of Aherlow.

¹ This is detailed overleaf.

Table 3.1 Policy HSG 8: Rural Housing in the Open Countryside (As included in the County Development Plan 2003)

It is the policy of the Council to permit new houses in the open countryside where the following criteria are met:

- a) The proposal is for an individual house; and
- b) It is being made by any one of the following persons:
 - (i) a farmer of the land;
 - (ii) a landowner;
 - (iii) the owner of land within the curtilage of an existing dwelling (e.g. rural cottage, etc);
 - (iv) a direct descendant of (i), (ii) or (iii) above;
 - (v) a person who has lived in a rural area within 10 kilometres of the proposed location for any 10 year period of that person's life;
 - (vi) a person who establishes a need to reside at that particular location (refer to Appendix 10: Guidelines to Establish a Need for Rural Housing);
- c) The house design is in accordance with the Guidelines for Rural Housing as set out in Appendix 2 of the County Development Plan 2003;
- d) The house is for that person's own use; and
- e) The applicant can demonstrate that he/she is eligible under the above criteria.

AHSG 2 It is the policy of the Council to discourage the development of holiday homes and second homes generated by non-local demands. Commercial holiday home developments of two or more units will be considered only where they are developed as part of an established tourist facility such as an hotel.

This policy is to ensure that the amenities of the area and the potential for housing sites to meet local demands are not limited by excessive non-local demands.

AHSG 3 It is the policy of the Council to ensure that the development objectives and policies of the Tipperary Town and its Environs Development Plan 2001 are not undermined as they are relevant to the rural housing objectives for the Glen of Aherlow. In particular, the Council will support the objective of HSG 6 of the Tipperary Town Development Plan 2001.

This policy is intended to ensure that residential housing pressures in the rural areas surrounding Tipperary Town are controlled while facilitating those with a genuine need for living in the countryside.

AHSG 4 It is the policy of the Council to restrict the development of new residential properties in areas where population increase has exceeded the County average (i.e. +4.9 %). Such unexpected population increases are considered to be the result of non-local generated housing demand given their accessible and attractive locations.

The relevant areas include the Clonbeg DED and Bansha DED. However, within these areas residential development will be considered in areas where population decline can be demonstrated and for the redevelopment of derelict properties.

AHSG 5 It is the policy of the Council that proposed developments in upland areas be required to demonstrate that they do not adversely impact on the visual amenities of the Glen of Aherlow.

Visual Impact Statements may be requested where developments that the Council Landscape Character Assessment deem inappropriate for upland areas of the Glen are proposed.

AHSG 6 It is the policy of the Council that where housing is proposed on rural roads, other than the main east-west roads through the Glen of Aherlow, all applicants will be required to provide a passing bay as part of the development to allow for the safe passage of traffic (including the replacement of natural hedgerows where necessary).

4.0 Tourism and Amenity Development

4.1 Issues

The potential of the Glen of Aherlow as a tourism location and attraction has not been fully exploited. However, the development of future tourism and amenity features must be carried out in a sensitive manner so that the elements that make the Glen attractive and unique are not lost. The Glen is currently home to a range of features and attractions that include:

- i. The natural environment such as the upland areas of the glen and the enclosed river valley.
- ii. Hotels.
- iii. Guesthouses.
- iv. Craft Industries.

However, there are other areas that have yet to be fully developed as tourism features and attractions. These include geology, archaeology, walks, fishing, farm holidays etc. These could benefit from additional:

- i. promotion at a broader County level.
- ii. improved public transport links in the Glen as investigated by the *South Tipperary Rural Transport Audit and Needs Assessment*.
- iii. additional information about the Glen of Aherlow being made available through Council operated websites.

Tourism and Amenity Policies & Objectives

TA 1 It is the policy of the Council to assist, where possible, all community enterprises in the area in promoting the development of Tipperary and the Glen of Aherlow as tourism and amenity attractions.

This policy is to ensure that the amenities of the area are promoted in a sustainable manner.

TA 2 It is the policy of the Council when assessing the proposed development of tourist facilities and amenities in the area to encourage and assist, where possible, the diversification of the area's tourism attraction and economic base.

This policy is to ensure that the amenities of the area are promoted in a sustainable manner while reflecting the need to promote additional income sources and jobs given the decline in agricultural activity.

TA 3 It is the policy of the Council to generally discourage the development of one-off holiday homes in the Glen of Aherlow. However exceptions may be made where holiday home developments (with more than one unit) are proposed in locations where they are incorporated as part of established tourist developments, such as hotels.

This policy is to ensure that the amenities of the area are promoted in a sustainable manner while facilitating the development of tourist resources. This reflects the need to promote additional income sources and jobs given the decline in agricultural activity.

TA 4 It is the policy of the Council that proposals for the provision of tourist caravan parks or other additional tourist development at an existing tourist facility will be assessed subject to the following criteria.

- a) Location of the development relative to existing services including retail and social facilities.
- b) Availability of services to accommodate the development.
- c) Impact on existing residential amenities in terms of overlooking, increased traffic generation and other amenity considerations.
- d) Capacity of existing road to cater for the development.
- e) Type and size of development - caravans for all-year occupation will not be permitted.
- f) Landscaping - every application for a caravan park will be accompanied by a comprehensive landscaping plan, both proposed and existing.
- g) Adherence to Bord Failte's publication entitled 'Model Standards for Caravan and Camping Parks' will also be assessed.

This policy will control the potentially negative impacts that the development of visually

intrusive tourist facilities such as caravan parks may have in the Glen of Aherlow.

TA 5 It is the policy of the Council to assist the Regional Fisheries Board in developing the objectives identified in their Draft Development Plan for the Aherlow River where they are consistent with the status of the river as an SAC.

This policy will assist in the promotion of the River Aherlow as a sustainable tourist resource.

TA 6 It is the policy of the Council to protect all structures in the LAP area identified in the County Development Plan 2003 as Protected Structures.

This is to promote the conservation of the character and appearance of important monuments and archaeological features in the area.

TA 7 It is the policy of the Council to discourage poor quality signage and encourage the improvement of existing signage.

This is to promote the conservation of the character and appearance of important monuments and archaeological features in the area.

The Northern Slopes of the Glen of the Glen of Aherlow



The Southern Slopes of the Glen of the Glen of Aherlow





Tourist Facilities



Aherlow Caravan Park

Aherlow Fáilte



Good Quality Signage



Good Quality Signage



Poor Quality / Cluttered Signage

5.0 Environmental Protection

5.1 Issues

o *Heritage Areas*

The Glen of Aherlow incorporates several environmentally sensitive areas. There are Proposed Natural Heritage Areas and Special Areas of Conservation within and adjoining the Glen.

It is important that these areas, the upland mountain areas and the River Aherlow, are protected from future development that would adversely affect their quality and uniqueness. These NHA / SAC areas face a number of threats due to the proximity of agricultural activities and the increase in leisure activities in the area. Intensive agricultural activities can have an adverse impact on the amenities and resources of the area. However, consultations appear to suggest that the water quality in the River Aherlow has not been adversely affected by the agricultural activities and run-off from the land. It is apparent however that the quality of the upland areas is being negatively affected by leisure activities, such as quad biking and motor bike scrambling. Both these activities are having a negative impact on upland bogland areas.

o *Agricultural Activity*

Given the established role of the area as a location for agricultural production, the impact that agricultural activity has on the environment is also recognised. However, the role that the regulatory systems of the Department of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, the Planning and Development Acts and Regulations and the EPA Act has on the operation of intensive agricultural activity is also noted. Having regard to this, the impacts that intensive agricultural activities have on the area have been identified and include the following:

- i. Visual impacts of large commercial agricultural buildings (piggeries, mushroom production etc.).
- ii. Emissions (primarily spreadlands).

o *Rivers*

The Glen of Aherlow has a number of river and stream systems. These are important environmental features.

o *Water & Services Infrastructure*

The provision of sanitary services and water supply infrastructure in the area has improved in recent years. However, many of the smaller settlements have limited provision of sanitary services and the recently developed Regional Water Supply scheme near Rossadrehid while improving the water supply situation does not positively contribute to the visual amenities of the area.

o *Interaction With Adjoining Local Authorities*

The Glen of Aherlow is an extensive area that extends into Co. Limerick. Despite the vast majority of the Glen being located in South Tipperary the role of Limerick County Council in the management of the Glen is recognised as an important issue.

Environmental Protection Policies & Objectives

EP 1 It is the policy of the Council that the screening, with native species, of all commercial developments in the Glen of Aherlow will be required.

This policy is to ensure that the environmental amenity of the area is protected and promoted.

EP 2 It is the policy of the Council that spreadland areas, as identified in the Glen of Aherlow, should be retained free from development. Additional spreadlands within the Glen will not be encouraged. Established spreadland areas within the Glen will be encouraged to remain free from commercial (other than commercial agricultural development) and residential development.

Facilitating agricultural development, along with encouraging the ongoing operation of commercial agricultural processing activities in the area, is a policy objective of the Council, given the decline of agriculture as an activity.

EP 3 It is the policy of the Council to liaise with Limerick County Council on a regular basis in the interests of promoting a comprehensive approach to the management of the Glen of Aherlow.

This policy is to ensure that the overall development of the Glen is carried out in a coordinated manner and that broader sub - regional considerations are taken into account.

EP4 It is the policy of the Council not to permit any commercial recreational / tourism facilities that promote the development of quad biking, off road scrambling or other similar activities. The operation of such facilities is not consistent with the protection of rural amenities and upland areas.

This policy is intended to promote the protection of upland amenity areas from harmful recreational activities

EP 5 It is the policy of the Council that slurry spreading will be encouraged to use established spreadlands.

EP 6 It is the policy of the Council that development within and adjoining the NHA / SAC areas (such as the Aherlow River and the upland areas of the Glen of Aherlow) will generally be restricted so as to avoid inappropriate impacts on amenity and the environment.

Analysis over the period from 1986 – 1996 highlights the significant decrease in the number of people employed in agriculture, which fell from 48.8% to 33.9%. During the same period, the number of people employed in other sectors such as manufacturing, commerce, professional services and transport showed an increase of 8.4 %.

Although the number of males employed in agriculture decreased by 82 between 1986 and 1996, there was not a corresponding decrease in the overall male employment figure, which suggests that those formerly in agricultural employment made the transition to alternative sectors.

o *Established Employment Providers*

The Glen of Aherlow is home to a number of traditional / established employment sources. Agriculture is the main employment source but is declining in terms of the absolute numbers employed (as demonstrated above). Forestry, while a user of extensive areas of land both in and around the Glen, does not generate a high number of employment opportunities.



Established Employers

Commercial agricultural enterprises are present in the Glen of Aherlow and these, while providing good employment opportunities are increasingly pressurised by environmental and commercial matters. This may have significant impacts in the future as commercial enterprises in agricultural sectors may face greater challenges and demands for efficiencies may lead to the amalgamation of established commercial operations.

o *Emerging Opportunities*

There are few opportunities in the Glen of Aherlow for the development of mass employment sources outside of agricultural activities. However, the development of small commercial enterprises, such as Mandy

6.0 Employment Opportunities

6.1 Issues

o *Recent Trends*

Surveys carried out as part of the assessment of the socio – economic profile of the area have demonstrated that the area is highly dependent on agricultural incomes, although this is decreasing.

Parslows Pottery, demonstrates that small-and medium-sized enterprises have the capacity to operate efficiently from the Glen of Aherlow.

Tourism based employment opportunities are slowly emerging as potential sources of income in the area. Increasingly, the opportunity exists for the Glen of Aherlow to present itself as part of a range of attractions in the South Tipperary along with features such as the Rock of Cashel, the Tipperary Excel Centre, the Swiss Cottage in Cahir, and historic towns such as Fethard.

Employment Policies & Objectives

EMP 1	<p>It is the policy of the Council to facilitate where appropriate, the development of alternative sources of employment / income on agricultural facilities and farms within the Glen of Aherlow.</p> <p>This policy is to ensure that the employment opportunities are facilitated where they promote and support the ongoing sustainability of rural lifestyles and economic activities.</p>
EMP 2	<p>It is the policy of the Council to promote the development of tourism related attractions as a means of enhancing the potential of employment opportunities in the area. These facilities will be encouraged to locate in:</p> <p>a) Existing villages. b) Nodal locations such as the junction of the R633 and the Coach Road.</p> <p>This is to ensure that tourist facilities, where developed, are placed in locations where synergy between existing and proposed facilities is likely to occur.</p>
EMP 3	<p>It is the policy of the Council to assist in the promotion of the development objectives of the Glen of Aherlow Fáilte society.</p> <p>This is to promote synergy in the development of employment opportunities between statutory and local community organisations.</p>

7.0 Infrastructural Development

7.1 Roads and Transportation

The area is traversed by a number of County and local roads. The two main roads in the area, the R663 and the southern road that passes through Rossadrehid, are linked by rural roads that traverse the Glen in a north - south direction.

It is likely that with improvements to the National Roads infrastructure that the Glen of Aherlow will become more accessible to the surrounding local towns. While this is likely to have a positive impact in terms of improving the accessibility to the area's attractions it may also bring additional development pressures.

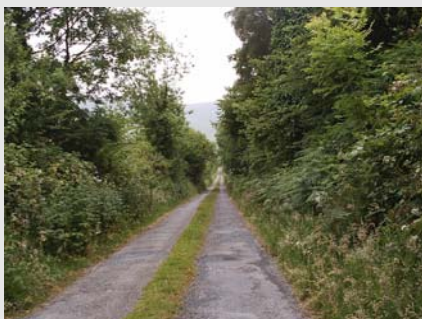
Roads and Transportation Policies & Objectives

R 1	<p>It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all roads in the area are properly maintained. Local road improvements will be carried out where new developments require improved carriageway conditions.</p> <p>This policy is to ensure road safety.</p>
R 2	<p>It is the policy of the Council to support the development of a Rural Transport Initiative in the Glen of Aherlow.</p> <p>This policy is to promote the development of suitable transportation and modal choice opportunities for all residents and tourists in the Glen of Aherlow.</p>

R 3 It is the policy of the Council to encourage the development of bus parking facilities in key locations within the LAP area to enable the development of any future Rural Transport Initiative. These will be encouraged at Bansha, Rossadrehid, Lissvarrinane and the junction of the Coach Road and the R663. The provision of parking facilities in these locations will encourage linkage to the established walking routes in the area.

This policy is to promote the development of suitable transportation and modal choice opportunities for all residents and tourists in the Glen of Aherlow.

R 4 It is the policy of the Council that where development is proposed on rural roads other than the main east-west roads through the Glen of Aherlow, all applicants will be required to provide a passing bay as part of the development to allow for the safe passage of traffic.



This policy is to promote the development of road safety. Some of the narrower roads may have the capacity to accommodate housing development with the use of natural screening but would require carriageway improvements as a safety mechanism. Boundaries, such as natural hedgerows, shall be replaced.

7.2 Sanitary Services and Water Provision

The provision of public sanitary services is available in Bansha where improved facilities are proposed. However, the development of improved sanitary services facilities in the villages of Lisvarrinane and Rossadrehid is only likely to occur in the future with the development of additional public and private sector housing schemes. Planning permissions have already been granted for development, such as in Rossadrehid, where treatment systems to provide for a number of houses have been proposed. This is an effective manner of providing additional treatment capacity.

The Council has also prepared a River Catchment Management Plan for the River Suir that makes provision for the River Aherlow. This, along with measures such as the Council's Sludge Management Plan, will have a positive impact on the environment and sustainability of the area.

The Council will also have due regard to its obligations in the promotion and protection of water resources in the area and will carry out its obligations under the *Local Government (Water Pollution) Act 1977 (Water Quality Standards for Phosphorus) Regulations 1998*². The Council has also prepared a *Strategy for Sustainable Pigmeat Production* in South Tipperary (1999), given the implications that spreadland development associated with commercial piggeries has for the overall amenity of the area. The Glen of Aherlow is home to large areas of spreadlands. Having regard to the location of these spreadlands, the protection of water resources in proposals to develop future spreadlands will be an important consideration. This need is emphasised by the *Council's Ground Water Protection Scheme* of 1998.

² S.I. No. 258 of 1998

Sanitary Services Policies & Objectives

S 1 It is the policy of the Council where public treatment systems are unavailable, or where there is insufficient capacity to cater for a proposed development in a village or identified development node (such as the junction of the R633 and the Coach Road), to promote the development of private treatment facilities to cater for new development. Such treatment facilities should be capable of:

a) Providing for the treatment of effluent from at least 8 houses and be capable of management by a private management company.

b) Have an appropriate discharge point that will not cause a loss of environmental amenity.

c) Promote amenity of adjoining developments and lands.

This policy is to enable development proposals that would meet residential and commercial (employment) needs in the area to proceed where they can be appropriately serviced.

S 2 It is the policy of the Council to investigate means to improve the treatment facilities available in Bansha, Rossadrehid and Lissvarrinane.

This policy is to enable the improvement of treatment facilities in established development centres.

Map 3

8.0 Impacts that the proposed plan will have on the Environment (Section 19(4)(a) Planning and Development Act 2000)

Policy / Area	Natural Environment			Bio Diversity	Social Community & Needs				Heritage and Culture		Commentary
	Appraisal Criteria	Ground and Surface Water	Environmental Quality		Landscape	Nature Conservation	Housing	Employment Opportunity	Support Agriculture	Transport and Accessibility	
The Preparation of a PLAP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p><i>Commentary</i> ✓ = Positive Impact on the Environment x = Negative Impact on the Environment - = Neutral Impact on the Environment</p> <p>The preparation of a PLAP for the Glen of Aherlow will have a positive impact on the overall environment of the area as it will allow for area specific policies and objectives to support sustainable development and proper planning.</p>
Residential Development											
AHSG 1	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	-	-	✓	Applying the policies of the County Development Plan for housing settlement will ensure that the overall sustainable development and proper planning of the county can be achieved.
AHSG 2	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	-	-	✓	The restriction of holiday home development to areas where they are most suitably located, i.e. where existing tourist facilities exist, is a more sustainable approach to the development of the area's tourist attractions while ensuring that the capacity of the area to provide additional residential opportunities for locals is not restricted by non-resident needs.

Policy / Area	AHSG 3	AHSG 4	AHSG 5	AHSG 6	Landscape	Environmental Quality	Ground and Surface Water	Natural Environment				Nature Conservation	Bio Diversity				Social Community & Needs				Heritage and Culture				Natural Heritage	Built Environment	Commentary
								Appraisal Criteria	Appraisal Criteria	Appraisal Criteria	Appraisal Criteria		Appraisal Criteria	Appraisal Criteria	Appraisal Criteria	Appraisal Criteria	Appraisal Criteria	Appraisal Criteria	Appraisal Criteria	Appraisal Criteria	Appraisal Criteria	Appraisal Criteria	Appraisal Criteria	Appraisal Criteria			
					-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<p><i>Commentary</i></p> <p>✓ = Positive Impact on the Environment x = Negative Impact on the Environment - = Neutral Impact on the Environment</p>		
					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Supporting the development of Tipperary Town and the implementation of the policies of the Tipperary Town & its Environs Development Plan 2001, particularly as it relates to rural housing, is important as the Glen may be adversely affected by development pressures emanating from the town.		
					-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Managing rural housing pressures in sensitive locations will have a positive impact on the sustainable development of the area.		
					-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Ensuring that development in areas experiencing population increase is assimilated into the landscape, has positive benefits, such as the reuse of derelict properties, and provides for local needs is a positive and sustainable approach.		
					-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Development on rural roads must also facilitate improved traffic safety.		

Policy / Area Tourism & Amenity Development	Commentary ✓ = Positive Impact on the Environment x = Negative Impact on the Environment - = Neutral Impact on the Environment
	Built Environment
	Natural Heritage
	Heritage and Culture
	Transport and Accessibility
	Support Agriculture
	Employment Opportunity
	Housing
	Social Community & Needs
	Nature Conservation
Bio Diversity	
Ground and Surface Water	
Environmental Quality	
Landscape	
Natural Environment	
Appraisal Criteria	
Policy / Area	

Tourism & Amenity Development

TA 1	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	Assist the development of community enterprises. This is a sustainable objective, promoting the development of the active community groups to foster care for the Glen of Aherlow.
TA 2	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Promote tourism development in the Glen of Aherlow. This is a potentially sustainable form of development that may allow for the diversification of rural farming activities.
TA 3	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	-	-	✓	The development of holiday homes will be discouraged where they may harm the amenities of the environment and the landscape.
TA 4	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	x	-	-	✓	✓	The control of developments such as caravan parks, which provide a valuable, but often intrusive, tourist amenity is a necessary sustainability measure. This may however, limit employment opportunities.

Policy / Area	Natural Environment Appraisal Criteria	Landscape	Environmental Quality	Ground and Surface Water	Bio Diversity	Nature Conservation	Social Community & Needs	Housing	Employment Opportunity	Support Agriculture	Transport and Accessibility	Heritage and Culture	Natural Heritage	Built Environment	Commentary
															✓ = Positive Impact on the Environment × = Negative Impact on the Environment - = Neutral Impact on the Environment
TA 5		-	✓	✓		✓		-	-	-	-		-		Promote the implementation of the objectives of the Fisheries Board Draft Management Plan for the River Aherlow to enable more sustainable forms of development.
TA 6		✓	✓	-		-		-	-	-	-		-		Protecting heritage features is an important element in ensuring that cultural and amenity potential is not adversely affected.
TA 7		-	✓	-		-		-	✓	-	✓		-		Improved signage will improve the attractiveness of the Glen of Aherlow as a tourist location.
Environmental Protection															
EP 1		✓	✓	-		-		-	-	-	-		✓	-	Screening of commercial buildings will limit the adverse environmental impact on the visual amenities of the area.
EP 2		-	✓	✓		✓		-	-	-	-		-	-	The restriction of spreadlands will limit the potential for pollution.
EP 3		✓	-	-		-		-	-	-	-		-	-	Promoting links with Limerick County Council will ensure that the planning of the Glen of Aherlow will reflect its important role in both South Tipperary and Co. Limerick.

Policy / Area	Appraisal Criteria	Natural Environment			Nature Conservation	Social Community & Needs	Housing	Employment Opportunity	Support Agriculture	Transport and Accessibility	Heritage and Culture	Built Environment	Natural Heritage	Commentary
		Ground and Surface Water	Environmental Quality	Landscape										
EP 4		-	✓	✓	-	-	x	-	-	-	-	-	-	Commercial recreational facilities involving activities that harm the environment are not desirable. This may limit employment opportunities.
EP 5		✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-	✓	Slurry spreading will be controlled
EP 6		-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-	✓	Development adjacent to or in an SAC / NHA will be carefully managed and controlled.

Employment Opportunities

Policy / Area	Appraisal Criteria	Natural Environment			Nature Conservation	Social Community & Needs	Housing	Employment Opportunity	Support Agriculture	Transport and Accessibility	Heritage and Culture	Built Environment	Natural Heritage	Commentary
		Ground and Surface Water	Environmental Quality	Landscape										
EMP 1		-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	Encouraging the diversification of activities on farms may improve the long term viability of many farm enterprises. This will encourage the continued good stewardship of the landscape and the rural environment by the farming community.
EMP 2		-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	Promotion of tourism related facilities is important in encouraging the diversification of economic activities in the area. This may have positive employment benefits.
EMP 3		-	✓	✓	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Assisting the Glen of Aherlow Fáilte Society will ensure that community involvement in the Glen of Aherlow is promoted.

Policy / Area	Appraisal Criteria	Natural Environment	Ground and Surface Water	Environmental Quality	Landscape	Nature Conservation	Bio Diversity	Social Community & Needs	Housing	Employment Opportunity	Agriculture	Support Agriculture	Accessibility	Transport and Accessibility	Heritage and Culture	Natural Heritage	Built Environment	Commentary ✓ = Positive Impact on the Environment x = Negative Impact on the Environment - = Neutral Impact on the Environment

Infrastructure

R 1	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	Maintain roads and provide for local improvements where necessary.
R 2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	Support any RTI that provides for public transport facilities in the Glen of Aherlow.
R 3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	Encourage the development of bus parking facilities and locations to assist public transport and any RTI.
R 4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	Provide improved road safety
S1	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Provide improved treatment facilities.
S 2	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	Improve treatment facilities in the villages. This will have positive impacts on environmental quality.

Appendix A – Public Consultations – Expressing a Local Vision

Local inputs were identified as an important element in the Cork Declaration in promoting rural development. This need was reflected in local consultations and workshops (10th July 2002) carried out as part of this plan's preparation.

The *Cork Declaration* was issued by the *European Conference on Rural Development* held in Cork, Ireland, in November 1996. This declaration emphasised the promotion of a ten point programme in the future planning of rural areas. The objectives were to promote:

- i. Rural Preference
- ii. An Integrated Approach
- iii. Diversification
- iv. Sustainability
- v. Subsidiarity
- vi. Simplification
- vii. Programming
- viii. Finance
- ix. Management
- x. Evaluation and Research

The consultation workshops carried out provided valuable inputs from local residents of the Glen of Aherlow as to the issues and concerns that they considered central to the future development of the area. In summary, their issues and concerns were examined through structured workshops whereby a group meeting of over 90 persons was broken down into groups that examined the following issues;

o *Workshop One: SWOT Analysis.*

This workshop requested participants to identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) that they perceive as affecting the area. This exercise was useful in exploring the issues that local residents view as important influences on the Glen.

o *Workshop Two: Priorities.*

Participants in this exercise were requested to identify the key priorities for the Glen so as to allow appropriate forms of development and to address any perceived difficulties that exist there currently.

o *Workshop Three: Time Line.*

Participants in the time-line exercise were requested to comment on the area's *Past – Present – Future*. This workshop allowed for the local participants to identify the changes that have taken place over time and to identify the future changes that may take place.

o *Workshop Four: Map Features.*

The key features from the perspective of a local resident are often not detailed on national mapping data. This workshop allowed local residents to identify the elements of the landscape that are important from their viewpoint. Very often these features have a historic and cultural importance that requires particular attention from the viewpoint of both planning policy and objectives while they also retain a potential to act as features in the development of alternative tourist attractions.

There was an element of overlapping where individual workshop topics were considered by more than one group. However, this allowed for a comprehensive assessment of the issues that ensured that as much information as possible was obtained through the consultation process.

The issues raised in the workshops have been addressed in this PLAP through the development of policies, objectives and design guidance specific to the Glen of Aherlow. In summary, the PLAP has sought to prepare policies for the key areas that need particular attention in the Glen of Aherlow including;

- o Residential Development
- o Tourism Development
- o Environmental Protection
- o Employment Opportunities, and

- Infrastructural Development

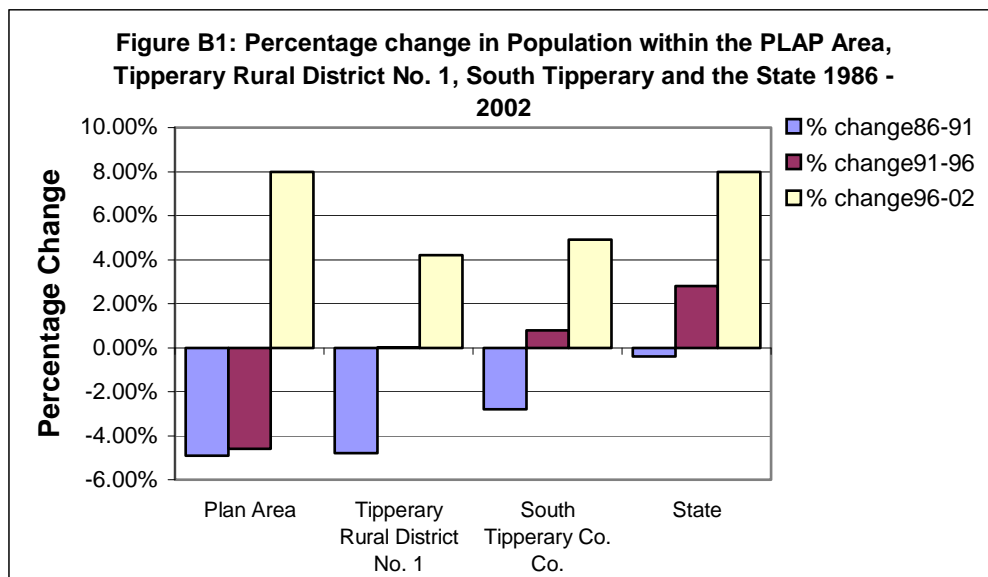
In addressing the issue of residential development opportunities the manner in which the development of the key settlements in the area has also been addressed through specific design guidance looking at the opportunity sites in the area and the specific design styles that should be followed.

Appendix B – Social & Economic Profile

Plan Area

A detailed survey and analysis has been carried out within the PLAP Area. Reference was made to the adjoining DED's, where necessary. The socio – economic assessment is an important element of any PLAP as the underlying, population, skills and employment background of the area often indicate where development opportunities or threats exist.

The assessment of the overall socio – economic conditions of the area had regard to the District Electoral Divisions (DED's) of Bansha, Clonbeg, Killadrieffe and Templeineiry. DED's adjacent to the PLAP Area include Kilfeakle, Bruis and Tipperary Rural.



Data Source

The 1986, 1991, 1996 and 2002 Census of Population were used in this study as demographic and socio-economic data sources.

Population

The census of population statistics shows evidence of rural depopulation within the PLAP area between 1986 and 1996. The most recent census data in 2002 highlight a significant increase in population between 1996 and 2002, as illustrated in Figure B1 and Table 1 below. These intercensal changes are considered in more detail in the following sections.

Table 1. Population Levels from 1986 to 2002 by DED, PLAP Area, Tipperary Rural District No. 1, South Tipperary and the State

	1986	1991	% change 86-91	1996	% change 91-96	2002	% change 96-02
Bansha	881	817	-7.3	799	-2.2	858	7.4
Clonbeg	689	630	-8.6	602	-4.4	649	7.8
Killadrieffe	547	534	-13	496	-7.1	552	11.3
Templeineiry	380	394	3.7	368	-6.6	388	5.4
Tipperary Rural District No. 1	12,397	11,800	-4.80%	11,798	0.02%	12291	4.20%
Tipperary South Riding	77097	74,918	-2.80%	75514	0.80%	79213	4.90%
PLAP Area	2497	2375	-4.90%	2265	-4.60%	2447	8.00%

- 1986 - 1996

The population within the PLAP area was 2497 persons in 1986 which decreased by 9.3% during the following decade to 2265 persons in 1996. The population decline was relatively consistent throughout the intercensal periods 1986-1991 and 1991-1996 at -4.9 % and -4.6% respectively. This is in contrast to Tipperary Rural District No. 1 which experienced a comparable rate of decrease in population from 1986-1991 but stabilised between 1991 and 1996. At county level, the population of Tipperary South Riding decreased by 2.8% between 1986 and 1991 but showed a slight increase of 0.8% between 1991 and 1996. The PLAP area performed considerably below the national growth percentage of 2.8% between 1991 and 1996. Contributing to population decline at that time may have been attributable to factors such as out-migration, high mortality rates, low fertility rates or a combination of these.

Within the PLAP area, the most significant population decrease occurred in the DED of Clonbeg which fell by 12.6% between 1986 and 1996. Population decline within the DED's of Bansha, Killadriffe and Clonbeg was greatest during the intercensal period 1986-1991. Templeineiry was the only DED which showed a population increase between 1986 and 1991 but experienced a significant decline between 1991 and 1996.

- 1996 – 2002

The 2002 census showed a marked increase in population in the PLAP area in line with national trends. The population increase of 8% was significantly higher in the PLAP area than in Tipperary Rural District No. 1 and South Tipperary which increased by 4.2% and 4.9% respectively. Within the PLAP area, the increase in population ranged from 5.4 % in Templeineiry to 11.3% in Killadriffe.

These figures illustrate that the population of the PLAP and the adjoining rural areas close to towns such as Tipperary Town all experienced population increase in recent years after many years of sustained decline. In summary however, this means that the 2002 population of the plan area is now at a level comparable to the 1986 population level.

PLAP Area, Population Change and Implications

Population projections were prepared for 2001 based on the continuation of trends between 1986 and 1996. This projection was chosen to ensure consistency with the 5 year intercensal projections established by the Census of Population were continued. In forecasting the population projections the following factors were taken into consideration:

- natural increase,
- age cohorts,
- in-migration and out-migration.

These were based on a continuation of the trends established over the period 1986 to 1996. The results of the projections are set out in Table 2 below along with the recorded population levels from the 2002 population. These demonstrate that the recorded 2002 population is higher than the predicted 2001 population based on the areas established population characteristics and structure over the period 1986 to 1996.

Table 2: Projected and Actual Population Changes in the PLAP Area

Area	1996	2001	2002
	Actual	Projected	Actual
Bansha	799	769	858
Clonbeg	602	566	649
Killadriffe	496	547	552
Templeineiry	368	381	388
PLAP Area	2265	2263	2447

Table 3. Age Structure Variations at DED, PLAP Area, County and State level in 1996

1996	0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+
Bansha DED	26.30%	14.00%	29.40%	18.70%	11.60%
Clonbeg DED	20.80%	17.90%	24.40%	23.40%	13.50%
Killadriffe DED	22.80%	15.90%	25.00%	22.00%	14.30%
Templeneiry DED	23.90%	16.30%	24.20%	22.60%	13.00%
PLAP Area	23.70%	15.80%	26.30%	21.30%	12.90%
Tipperary South Riding	24.60%	15.90%	26.90%	19.80%	12.80%
State	23.70%	17.40%	28.00%	19.40%	11.50%

The difference in numbers suggests that despite the variance between 2001 and 2002 that migration into the area has been higher than would normally be expected.

The actual population growth rate of 8% between 1996 and 2002 suggests a significant level of in-migration into the PLAP area. The CSO net migration figures estimate that net immigration accounted for 52.5% of the population growth in Tipperary South Riding between 1996 and 2002. The preceding intercensal period of 1991 to 1996 revealed that net out migration was a contributory factor in the marginal growth rate at county level.

The increase in population has been most notable in areas such as Clonbeg DED which includes Lisvarrinane and much of the intervening area between it and the Coach Road along the R663. This is an area where there has been a high concentration of development over recent years. Bansha DED has also demonstrated a greater than expected increase in population although this is consistent with the attractiveness of the R663 for residential development³ and the status of the village as one of the main settlement locations in the area.

Population Structure

The population within the PLAP Area is largely dispersed. Bansha, within the DED of Bansha, is the main settlement within the PLAP area. It is located on the main Cahir to Tipperary Road (R24). The population of Bansha decreased from 317 people in 1986 to 293 people in 1991 with a further decline to 288 people by 1996. This represents consecutive decreases of 7.6% and 1.7% over the intercensal periods 1986 to 1991 and 1991 to 1996 respectively.

The age structure variations between the PLAP area, Tipperary South Riding and the State in 1996 are illustrated in Table 3 below.

Analysis of the age structure shows that the characteristics of the PLAP area are broadly in line with the larger enumeration areas. The population within the 65+ age cohort, at 12.9%, is slightly higher than the national average of 11.4%. The percentage of those aged under 15 years of age and over 65 years of age reveals a dependency ratio of 36.6% which is marginally higher than the national average of 35%. This gradual aging of the population is also evident in the change in the population structure over the period 1986 to 1996.

From these figures it is evident that the proportion of the population under 20 years of age declined from 39.4% in 1986 to 32.7% in 1996. This reflects a trend towards smaller family sizes. The average number of persons per household decreased from 3.93 in 1986 to 3.42 in 1996.

The charts demonstrate a decline in population in the 25-29 and 30-34 age group cohorts. The proportion of the population between 35 and 54 increased from 23.5% to 32.9% over the ten year

³ This road is within the Bansha DED area.

period. While there have been losses in older age groups up to 74, the remaining age groups, 75+, have shown marginal increases.

Population Density

Population density within the area is low with 15 people per square km or 39 people per square mile compared to the national average of 52 people per square km or 135 people per square mile.

Socio Economic Characteristics

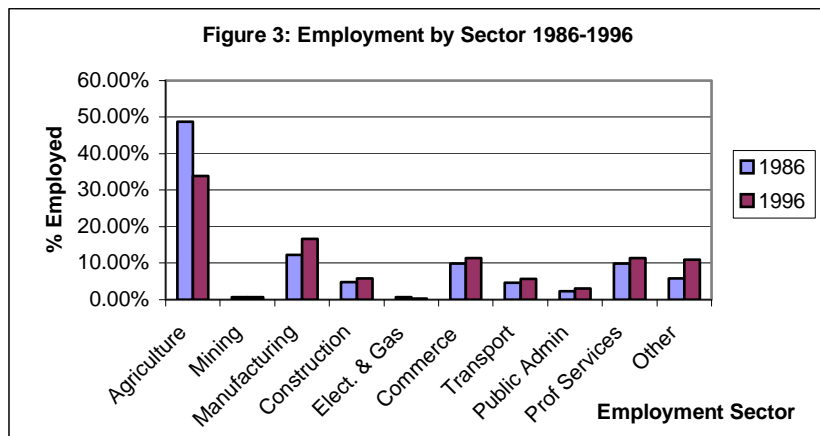
Employment

The number of people employed in the PLAP area increased by 4% between 1986 and 1996. The composition of the workforce changed with the number of females employed as a percentage of the workforce increasing from 21.5% in 1986 to 28.6% in 1996.

In 1996, there were 117 people unemployed in the PLAP area which represents 12.9% of the labour force. This is below the national average of 14.8% for the same year. The 1996 figure represents a decrease of 2.5% since 1986.

Recent data from the Live Register highlights the fall in unemployment from 1996 to 2002 in each of the local offices of the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs in Cahir, Cashel and Tipperary. While there are no defined administrative boundaries, these local offices cover an extended area around the PLAP area. Data from these three offices shows that the level of unemployment decreased by 45.9% between June 1996 and June 2001. This compares to a decrease in unemployment at county and state level of 41.2% and 50% respectively. Between June 2001 and June 2002, the level of unemployment increased by 14.9% across the three local offices.

This compares to a lower rate of increase of 10.4% at county level and a higher rate of increase of 16.6% at state level. It is not possible to say from the Live Register figures whether or not the decline in unemployment is due to increased levels of migration or due to increased employment opportunities or due to natural changes brought about by persons leaving the workforce by other means.



Employment by Sector

The 1996 census reveals that the majority of those employed within the PLAP area were employed in the agricultural sector, as illustrated in Figure 3 and Table 4. In 1996, the percentages of the workforce employed in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors were 33.9% and 16.7% respectively. Both the commercial and professional services sectors employed 11.4% of the workforce.

Table 4. Employment by Sector 1986-1996

Sector	PLAP Area	PLAP Area	State
	1986	1996	1996
Agriculture	48.80%	33.90%	10.20%
Mining	0.70%	0.70%	0.40%
Manufacturing	12.30%	16.70%	19.10%
Construction	4.80%	5.90%	6.70%
Elect. & Gas	0.70%	0.30%	0.90%
Commerce	9.90%	11.40%	20.80%
Transport	4.70%	5.70%	6.00%
Public Admin	2.30%	3.10%	6.00%
Prof Services	9.90%	11.40%	18.50%
Other	5.90%	10.90%	11.40%

Analysis over the period from 1986 – 1996 highlights the significant decrease in the number of people employed in agriculture, which fell from 48.8% to 33.9%. During the same period, the

Table 5. Educational Status of the Labour Force within the Plan Area and the State 1996

Educational Status	Plan Area (%)	State (%)
Primary(incl no formal education)	17.9	17.6
Lower Secondary	23.7	21.3
Upper Secondary	36.0	33.4
Third level Degree or Higher	8.8	13.3
Third level (No Degree)	10.8	12.1
Not Stated	2.8	2.3
Total	100	100

number of people employed in other sectors such as manufacturing, commerce, professional services and transport showed an increase.

Although the number of males employed in agriculture decreased by 82 between 1986 and 1996, there was not a corresponding decrease in the overall male employment figure, which suggests that those formerly in agricultural employment made the transition to alternative sectors. The female participation rate within the workforce increased by 45.4% between 1986 and 1996.

Educational Attainment

The educational status of the workforce within the PLAP area is compared to the national average in Table 5. The level of educational attainment of the workforce within the PLAP area exceeds the national average at primary and secondary level. However, only 19.6% of the workforce reached third level education as opposed to 25.4% nationally.

Appendix C: The Geographic and Historical Background of the Area

Geomorphology and Geology

The geology of the area is dominated by Old Red Sandstone and Carboniferous Limestone, from Devonian period 300 millions years BP (before present). These movements which began on the European and African plates lost force as they approached Ireland, so that the effects are in primarily the south of the Country. The Old Red Sandstone and the overlying Carboniferous deposits were folded and faulted into pleats which ran east/west. These tectonic movements, allied with differential dissolution, produced the Galtees mountains.

The area has also been affected by glacial erosion and deposition. Features of glacial erosion and deposition such as cirque glaciers, moraines and rocks are visible in upland areas of the Glen. The cirques are often occupied by lakes which often have moraine (depositional features) in front of the lakes (for example in front of Lake Curra). Glacial erosion has had a major impact in shaping the landscape areas around Glabally between the Slievenamuck and Galtee Mountains. The forces of glacial erosion are also visible on the southern slopes of the Glen which are pock marked with three corries. These areas are designated as an Area of Scientific Interest and proposed as a Special Area of Conservation as good examples of a glacial lake site with erosional and depositional features.

River Ecosystem

The area is traversed by the River Aherlow, which flows for approximately 43km, (taking its spring near Anglesborough, in Co. Limerick) and is a major tributary of the River Suir (they meet near Knockgraffon Motte). The river flows for practically its full course in the valley between the Slievenamuck mountains and the Galtees; the Glen of Aherlow.

The water was qualified as unpolluted in biological surveys made in the period 1995-1997 by the E.P.A. It is a designated Salmonid River in accordance with the EEC Freshwater Fish Directive (78/659/EEC).

The EPA website indicates that the water quality of the River Aherlow is unpolluted with a Q value of 4-5. The following table shows the biological data for the River Aherlow over the period 1980 to 1999. The station code is 16A010600 and the location is the bridge 2km southwest of Foxfort.

Table 6: EPA Water Quality Results

Year	Quality
1999	4
1996	4
1993	4
1988	4
1985	4-5
1980	4

Long sections of the bank of the river are densely overgrown by tall trees, notably Ash, Sycamore, Beech, Willow, Alder, Chestnut, Hawthorn and occasionally Oak.

Part of the Glen of Aherlow and the Aherlow River is now designated as a Special Area of Conservation. The River Aherlow supports a population of white clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) and the freshwater pearl-mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) two extremely rare and threatened invertebrate species.

Brown trout, salmon parr and occasionally some eel are also found in the river. A fish population survey was carried out in 1985 and reported an adequate number of fish for angling. The Regional Fisheries Board has indicated that the river is not significantly threatened by pollution. Due to the diversity of habitats the area is an important location for birdlife. A study of the area's bird life was commissioned by Glen of Aherlow Fáilte.

The County Council has also prepared a River Catchment Management Plan for the River Suir that makes provision for the River Aherlow. This, along with measures such as the Council's Sludge Management Plan will have a positive impact on the environment and sustainability of the area.

The Council will also have due regard to its obligations in the promotion and protection of water resources in the area and will carry out its obligations under the *Local Government (Water Pollution) Act 1977 (Water Quality Standards for Phosphorus) Regulations 1998⁴*. The Council has also prepared a *Strategy for Sustainable Pigmeat Production* in South Tipperary (1999) given the implications that spreadland development associated with commercial piggeries has for the overall amenity of the area; the Glen of Aherlow is home to a large area of current and recent spreadlands. Having regard to the location of spreadlands in the area, the protection of water resources in proposals to develop future spreadlands will be an important consideration. This need is emphasised by the Council's Ground Water Protection Scheme of 1998. These documents will be referred to by the Council when considering all future development proposals within the Glen of Aherlow.

Mountain Ecosystem

The Galtee mountains are known as Ireland's highest inland mountain range and have a variety of peaks, the highest one is Galtymore mountain, at 919 metres. Stretching for some 29 kilometres, they offer a huge variety of landscapes from west to east with changes in relief, flora and fauna.

The Galtees are composed of many different ecosystem types depending on the topography, altitude, and soil composition. These include forests, blanket bogs, wet heath land, dry heath land, alpine heath land, upland grassland, lakes and rivers and the presence of exposed rock / rocky slopes. Each of these ecosystems presents a different type of flora and fauna habitat.

Forests cover the north and south slopes of the Galtees and are, for the most part, managed by Coillte on a commercial basis. Blanket bogs are present at altitude on the northern face of the mountains. Wet heathlands and less common alpine heathlands are also found near the Borheen, Curra and Muskry lakes (the alpine flora of the Galtees is rich in comparison with that of other Irish mountain regions). Exposed rocks are present at the top, near the 5 lakes (Curra, Muskry, Diheen, Borheen and Farbreaga).

Forest Ecosystem

Forests cover 2000 ha. in the area. The majority of these woods are composed of non-native, or introduced, species which are used for timber production (sitka spruce, lodgepole pine, Scots pine, Norway spruce, Douglas fir). The woods are accessible to the public and Coillte has an open forest policy (car park facilities and picnic areas).

Bansha Wood, on the Slievenamuck ridge, and Scaragh Wood, on the south side of the Galtees, were designated as Areas of Scientific Interest and proposed as Natural Heritage Areas.

Human Settlement

The Glen of Aherlow has a long history of human settlement that dates back to the Neolithic period (5700 – 4000 years ago). Three large stone graves remain from this period and are located at Darbys Bed (near Gabally), a Passage Tomb (Shrouth Bed) and the Corderry wedge tomb.

The Anglo-Norman influence in the area is also visible in two earthen sites at the Knockgraffon motte and Mount Bruis Motte. Abbeys and Churches remain at Clonbeg Church (Church and Graveyard), Moor Abbey in Galbally, the Olde Civil Parish Church of Templeirey in Bansha while other attractions, such as St Pecaun's well, St Berrihert's Kyle, and stones, old bread kiln, enclosures are dispersed throughout the Glen of Aherlow. This demonstrates that the Glen of Aherlow has, for many centuries, been a home to human activity and habitation that has had some lasting impacts on the landscape and environment.

⁴ S.I. No. 258 of 1998