County Development Plan

2014 2020

Kilkenny County Council
Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh

siting) and will not significantly interfere or detract from scenic upland vistas, or when viewed from public areas, scenic routes, viewpoints or settlements.

• To have particular regard to the potential impacts of new development on sensitive upland areas, and to materially consider the difficulty of establishing and maintaining screening vegetation when assessing development proposals in these areas.

• To continue to permit development that can utilise existing structures and settlement areas whilst taking account of the local visual absorption opportunities provided by existing topography and prevailing vegetation and to direct new development whenever possible towards the vicinity of existing structures and mature vegetation in the Lowland Areas, River Valleys and Transitional Areas.

• To recognise that in the Lowland Areas which are comprised of low lying open environments, tall and bulky development sometimes can have a disproportionate impact against the landscape particularly when viewed from the predominantly low lying areas of the public realm. Visually obtrusive and/or insensitive development shall be discouraged in such instances.

• To ensure that development in the River Valleys will not adversely affect or detract from either protected views (see Appendix H) (especially from bridges) or distinctive linear sections of river valleys (especially open floodplains) when viewed from settlements.

• To maintain the visual integrity of areas of greater sensitivity in the county and ensure that any development in these areas is appropriately sited and designed. Applicants shall demonstrate that the proposed development can be assimilated into the landscape and will not have a disproportionate visual impact on the landscape.

8.3   Built Heritage

Built heritage includes all man-made features, buildings, and structures in the environment. It includes our rich and varied archaeological and architectural heritage.

8.3.1   Archaeological Heritage

Archaeology is defined as the study of past people through the physical traces left by them in the landscape, often in the form of monuments, sites, features or objects. Our archaeological heritage contributes to our understanding of our past and also to our cultural, educational and tourism assets. Archaeological sites and monuments vary in form and date. They include earthworks (e.g ringforts), megalithic sites; Fulachta Fiadh; early Christian ecclesiastical sites, churches, graveyards, medieval buildings; castles, industrial archaeology and underwater sites. Archaeological remains may not always be isolated finds or sites but may have been linked at one time with other archaeological monuments in the immediate vicinity or sometimes in more distant locations – creating historic landscapes. The Council will promote awareness of, and

facilitate access to, the archaeological inheritance of County Kilkenny and will provide guidance to developers and property owners regarding the archaeological implications of proposed developments.

The National Monuments Acts 1930 – 2004 provide for the protection of the archaeological heritage. The principles set out in the *Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage* (1999) provide the national policy framework in relation to archaeological heritage.

There are different levels of monument protection under the National Monuments Acts. A level of universal protection is afforded to all monuments listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP). A lesser number of monuments are accorded a higher level of protection, that is, some are entered on the Register of Historic Monuments, and some are deemed to be of national significance and are National Monuments. While the RMP lists those sites above and below ground that are known to exist, due to the time span and density of human settlement in Co. Kilkenny the possibility always exists of finding previously unrecorded archaeology. See www.archaeology.ie for notification and consent procedures, from the National Monuments Section of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, in relation to works on monuments.

The RMP for County Kilkenny can be viewed in the Council's Planning Department and online at the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's website www.archaeology.ie.

A list of National Monuments in State Care[128] is available at:
http://archaeology.ie/NationalMonuments/NationalMonumentsinStatecarebycounty/

A list of Monuments subject to Preservation Orders is available at:
http://www.archaeology.ie/media/archeologyie/PDFS/PO10V1_AllCounties.pdf

Archaeological structures may, in some situations, be considered as architectural heritage and, therefore, may appear on both the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and the Record of Protected Structures (RPS). This means that these structures are protected by both the National Monuments Acts and the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010. An archaeological assessment of a site or a building may be required before carrying out works. It is advisable to arrange a pre-planning consultation with the Council before embarking on such works in this regard.

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[128] For all other monuments in private and public ownership, clarification as to whether they are deemed to be national monuments can be obtained by contacting the National Monuments Service of the Department of the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Development management standards

- Endeavour to preserve in situ all archaeological monuments, whether on land or underwater, listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), and any newly discovered archaeological sites, features, or objects by requiring that archaeological remains are identified and fully considered at the very earliest stages of the development process and that schemes are designed to avoid impacting on the archaeological heritage.
- To require archaeological assessment, surveys, test excavation and/or monitoring for planning applications in areas of archaeological importance if a development proposal is likely to impact upon in-situ archaeological monuments, their setting and archaeological remains.
- Ensure that development within the vicinity of a Recorded Monument is sited and designed appropriately so that it does not seriously detract from the setting of the feature or its zone of archaeological potential. Where upstanding remains of a Recorded Monument exist a visual impact assessment may be required to fully determine the effect of any proposed development.
- Require the retention of surviving medieval plots and street patterns and to facilitate the recording of evidence of ancient boundaries, layouts etc. in the course of development.
- Safeguard the importance of significant archaeological or historic landscapes from developments that would unduly sever or disrupt the relationship, connectivity and/or inter-visibility between sites.

8.3.1.1   *Walled Towns*

County Kilkenny has a rich medieval heritage and contains a number of walled towns and villages, of which Kilkenny city is perhaps the best known. There are also other towns and villages throughout the county which are known to have been walled, including Callan, Gowran, Inistioge and Thomastown[129]. Town defences are considered to be monuments for the purposes of the National Monuments Acts, 1930-2004. The Council will support the National Policy on Town Defences[130] which sets out national policy for the protection, preservation and conservation of the defences of towns and cities.

8.3.1.2   *Underwater Archaeology*

Any development near watercourses, be they freshwater or in marine/coastal areas, should take into account the potential to encounter underwater cultural heritage. Such sites may include sources of underwater cultural heritage such as shipwrecks, fishtraps, fording points, bridges, intertidal kelp grids, etc. as well as artefactual material from an underwater context. Due regard to the Shipwreck Inventory of Ireland database and Ports and Harbours Archive, as held by the Underwater Archaeology Unit in the National Monuments Service, should be consulted as part

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[129] Thomas, A, *The Walled Towns of Ireland*, 1992

[130] Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, National Policy on Town Defences, 2008

of this aspect of archaeological heritage. Any development either above or below water, including to river banks or coastal edges, within the vicinity of a site of archaeological interest shall not be detrimental to the character of the archaeological site or its setting. Planning applications will be referred to the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in this regard where relevant.

The brochure "Archaeology in the Planning Process" is available from www.archaeology.ie . Data on underwater archaeological sites (marine, coastal and inland waterways), including the Shipwreck Inventory of Ireland and the Ports and Harbours Archive) are available from the Underwater Archaeology Unit, in the National Monuments Service.

8.3.2 Industrial Archaeology
Kilkenny has a wealth of industrial archaeological sites - sites of past industrial activity. This includes sites and machinery relating to extractive industries (e.g. mines and quarries), manufacturing (e.g. corn and textile mills), service industries (e.g. main drainage, water supply, gas, electricity), power (windmills, watermills, steam engines) and transport and communications (e.g. roads, bridges, railways, canals, harbours, airfields). Although some of this heritage extends back to prehistoric times, most of what now survives relates to the last 250 years, the period during which Ireland became progressively industrialised.

An Industrial Archaeology Survey of County Kilkenny (1990) was commissioned by Kilkenny County Council and this identified significant sites which have since been added to the Record of Protected Structures. Contact the Heritage Office of the County Council for further details.

Objective:

8I   Protect archaeological sites and monuments (including their setting), underwater archaeology, and archaeological objects, including those that are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places, and in the Urban Archaeological Survey of County Kilkenny or newly discovered sub-surface and underwater archaeological remains.

8.3.3 Conservation Plans
Conservation Plans have been prepared for significant archaeological and architectural sites in County Kilkenny. These include St. Lachtain's Church, Freshford[131] and Newtown Jerpoint[132].

Objective:

8J   To facilitate and support the implementation of existing (and any further) conservation plans, as resources allow.

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[131] Heritage Council, St. Lachtain's Church, Freshford Conservation Plan, 2004
[132] Heritage Council, Newtown Jerpoint Conservation Plan, 2007

8.3.4   Historic Graveyards

The historic graveyards of Kilkenny, in addition to being the resting places of our ancestors, are an important part of the heritage of the county. They contain a wealth of architectural and archaeological features and are refuges for many species of plant and animal. Most historic graveyards are afforded legal protection through the National Monuments (Amendment) Acts or the Planning and Development Acts.

Kilkenny County Council commissioned an inventory of the historic graveyards of the County. The data from this survey has been mapped and is available at for inspection on the council's website[133]. In addition, recordings of the headstone in historic graveyards have been collected by community groups with support from the Council and can be accessed at www.historicgraves.ie.

"*Guidance for the Care, Conservation and Recording of Historic Graveyards*" (Heritage Council, 2010) provides best practice guidance and advice on caring for and recording historic graveyards[134]. The Council will conserve and protect historic graveyards and churches within Kilkenny and encourage their maintenance in accordance with conservation principles and as resources allow.

8.3.5   Architectural Heritage

8.3.5.1   *Record of Protected Structures*
Protecting architectural heritage is an important function of the planning authority, particularly in a county like Kilkenny where the built heritage has such a strong role to play in ensuring the continued economic prosperity of the place. Each development plan must include policy objectives to protect structures or parts of structures of special interest within its functional area. The primary means of achieving this is to include a Record of Protected Structures (RPS) for the functional area within the development plan. A planning authority is obliged to include in the RPS every structure, which, in its opinion, is of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

A protected structure, unless otherwise stated in the RPS, includes the interior of the structure, land lying within the curtilage, any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors, plus all fixtures and features which form a part of the interior or exterior of any of these structures.

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http://www.kilkennycoco.ie/eng/Services/Digital_Mapping/Google_Maps_Applications/Burial_Grounds/
[134]http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/Archaeology/Guidance_Historic_Graveyards.pdf