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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Legal Basis

As part of Kilkenny County Council's settlement strategy adopted in the County Development Plan 2002 it is the policy of the Council to carry out an extensive programme of Local Area Plans for settlements throughout County Kilkenny. This Local Area Plan for Mooncoin is part of that policy initiative.

The legal basis for this plan is provided by the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Sections 18 and 19). The Act provides for the preparation of Local Area Plans for any part of the functional area of a planning authority. A Local Area Plan must be consistent with the objectives of the County Development Plan.

It must contain a written statement and maps indicating the objectives of the planning authority for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which it applies including detail on community facilities and amenities and on standards of design of developments and structures.

In the text of this proposed plan the plan itself maybe referred to as "the Plan" or "this Plan". In this Plan "the Council" or "the Planning Authority" shall mean Kilkenny County Council.

The Local Area Plan will remain in statute for a period of six years from the date of adoption (20th October 2003), notwithstanding any review of the County Development Plan. The Planning Authority may amend or revoke a Local Area Plan at any time. The Local Area Plan will cease to have effect in respect of the Mooncoin area where it is inconsistent with the provisions of the County Development Plan as reviewed. A Local Area Plan must be reviewed at least six years from the making of the previous Local Area Plan.

1.2 Planning Context

It is an objective of the County Development Plan, 2002, (CDP, 2002) Paragraph 7.8.2.1, to prepare Local Area Plans for particular areas, whether rural, urban or suburban as the need arises and as resources permit during the term of the Development Plan. Mooncoin is a designated centre under the CDP, 2002. It will be a policy of the Council to encourage housing development to locate in the designated towns and villages where infrastructural and social services exist or are planned to be provided.

The previous plan for Mooncoin prepared by Kilkenny County Council was the 'Mooncoin Village Study', which was published in the mid 1980's. Mooncoin was also the subject of a report in 2000 by Fewer McGinley Associates, in conjunction with Kilkenny County Council for the purposes of the Town Renewal Scheme.

1.3 Locational Context

Mooncoin is located in the extreme south of County Kilkenny, in the valley of the River Suir. Mooncoin is ringed by uplands, with Slievenamon to the northwest, an outlier of Slievenamon to the north and the Comeragh Mountains to the west.

Mooncoin is situated on the N24, the National Primary Route linking Waterford City to Limerick via Carrick-on-Suir. Mooncoin is approximately six miles from Waterford city and thirty miles from Kilkenny City. The Waterford-Limerick railway line runs to the north of the village, through Ballytarsney.

1.4 Historical Development

Mooncoin developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as a result of rural settlement occurring in a linear form around the new road being constructed. According to O'Kelly¹, the name Mooncoin derives from an anglicized version of Moin Chaidhn, which, when translated literally, means Coyne's Bogland. Coyne Grant was a member of the Grant family who were property owners in Pollrone, Dungooly and Ballynabooly prior to the Cromwellian confiscation of their lands.

The Presentation nuns began teaching in the village in 1829, when the then Parish Priest, Rev. Nicholas Carroll, bought the order a house in the centre of the village. The Convent school was built next to the Church in 1871. The Catholic Church, which is single cell, was built in 1869 and is listed in the Record of Protected Structures in the CDP, 2002.

1.5 Urban Structure

The present form of the town is linear, spread along a considerable stretch of the N24, the main Waterford – Carrick-on-Suir road, with minimal development to the north and south of this. The town is characterised by a variety of building types and scales, including traditional cottages, large private dwellings and public amenities and services such as the church, schools, parish hall, petrol station and shops. Mooncoin lacks a coherent village centre in the traditional sense of layout and form. The extent of the Main street between the two crossroads is narrow and does give some sense of enclosure, but the original settlement has now largely decayed, leaving gaps in the streetscape.

The western end of the town is well defined by the presence of the Church, convent and school, and the housing on the opposite side of the street. The eastern approach to the town is less structured, with a number of large stand-alone buildings set in their own grounds, such as the two schools, and the Rosedale Furniture Shop. The open space of Comeragh View also serves to give an open feel to this part of the town.

Recent development proposals, particularly the development of four shops, four apartments, a licensed premises and a residential development on Main Street, beside the

¹ O'Kelly, *History of Kilkenny*, 1969

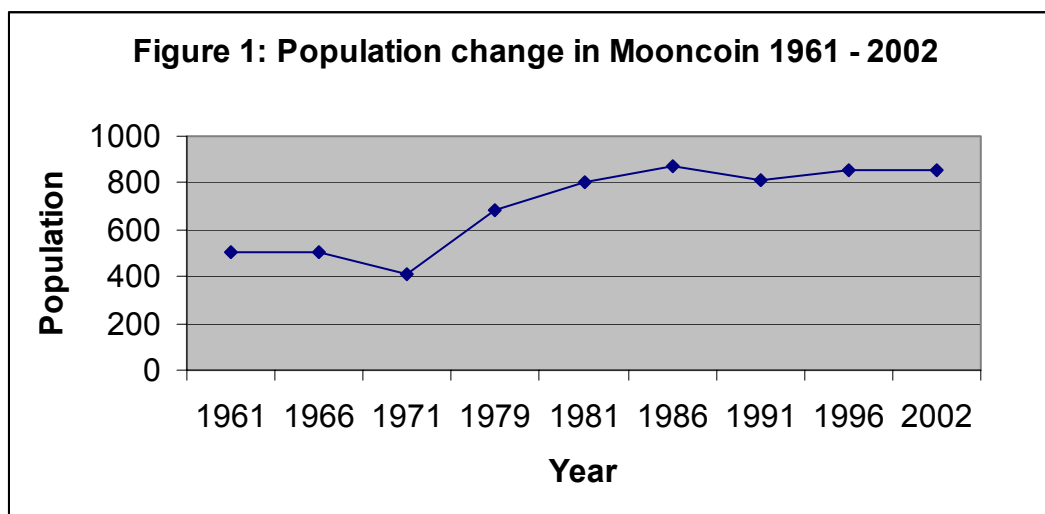
Health Centre and to the rear of the Credit Union should serve to consolidate the streetscape of the Main Street.

1.6 Population

Mooncoin had a population of 854 recorded at the 2002 Census. The recent trends in population are shown in Table 1 below and illustrated in Figure 1.

Table 1 : Population in Mooncoin between 1961 and 2002

| Year | Population |
|------|------------|
| 1961 | 507 |
| 1966 | 505 |
| 1971 | 413 |
| 1979 | 684 |
| 1981 | 806 |
| 1986 | 868 |
| 1991 | 810 |
| 1996 | 855 |
| 2002 | 854 |



From the graph, it can be seen that the population has undergone numerous fluctuations from the lowest level of 413 in 1971 to the highest level of 868 in 1986 to its present level of 854. Between 1996 and 2002 the population decreased from 855 to 854, a decrease of 0.1%. This contrasts with the trend shown in the county as a whole, which increased from 75,336 to 80,421 for the period 1996 to 2002, an increase of 6.7%.

1.7 Planning History

An examination of recent planning history in the town gives some indication of the development trend. Recent grants of permission include a residential development of 109 houses to the rear of the Credit Union, a 50-bedspace nursing home beside the Church, and 4 shops, 4 apartments and a licensed premises on Main Street. In addition, an application for a mixed use development including multiple unit residential development is pending a decision at present. If these proposals are all implemented, it is anticipated that the population of the town will increase significantly during the period of this plan.

1.8 Designations

Mooncoin is situated to the north of a designated Natural Heritage Area (NHA), the Lower River Suir, (Site Code 000399). Natural Heritage Areas are landscape areas with particular scientific, amenity and natural interest. This area includes the Coolfin and Darrigal Marshes, in County Waterford, and the Ballybrassil riverside marshes in County Kilkenny, just south of Mooncoin. This area supports nationally important numbers of overwintering Greylag Geese amongst other species. This area is also a candidate Special Area of Conservation, which are NHA's selected as prime wildlife conservation areas on the basis of the EU Habitats Directive.

1.8.1 Record of Protected Structures

Mooncoin has only one protected structure recorded in the County Development Plan, 2002, Record of Protected Structures, which is the Catholic Church. As part of this plan an architectural assessment of the existing buildings in the town has been carried out. The Record of Protected Structures is shown in Appendix 1.

1.9 National Spatial Strategy

The National Spatial Strategy was published in 2003, and this has set out a strategy for the location of development in the region. This has identified Kilkenny City as a hub, and Waterford City as a gateway².

The Strategy also makes reference to the network of villages that has developed throughout the south east region, with the support of a traditionally prosperous agricultural base. In the context of falling farm-based employment the Strategy states that there is a need to address the development of these villages, and to enhance the attractiveness of them as residential areas and locations for other functions, such as tourism, drawn to the region by the Waterford gateway and the extensive network of larger urban centres throughout the region. Such initiatives could include local infrastructure servicing programmes either by local authorities or in partnership with the private sector, the acquisition of key sites that unlock potential for back-land

² Gateway – a nationally significant centre, whose location and scale supports the achievement of the type of critical mass necessary to sustain strong levels of job growth

Hub – a town that links the capability of the gateways to other areas

development and complementary policies to encourage people to live in villages by making them more pleasant places to live.

1.10 Public Consultation

The Planning and Development Act 2000 introduced statutory Local Area Plans and a requirement that planning authorities take whatever steps they considered necessary to consult the public in preparing a Local Area Plan.

The first step undertaken in the public consultation process was the preparation of an information leaflet, which notified the public of the date and time of a consultation meeting. This leaflet also contained an explanation of the Local Area Plan process and some background information. Leaflets were distributed to local retail outlets and posted to representatives of local community groups and organisations which had been identified through the County Development Board. Statutory bodies and Government agencies were also notified and sent a leaflet. In addition, the meeting was advertised on the Council website, on local radio and in the local press.

A public consultation meeting was held on the 23rd October 2002 in Mooncoin Community Hall, which was very well attended. This meeting was held in order to obtain local knowledge to assist in compiling a profile of the area, and to learn the views of the participants, which would be an input into the preparation of the Local Area plans. The entire group was divided into six smaller groups, to discuss a number of topics with the aid of a facilitator. Each group dealt with four headings from the following list:

Housing and Population

Infrastructure

Employment and Economy

Education and Training

Transport

Community Facilities – Recreation

Amenity Enhancement

Community Supports – Social Services

Much useful, detailed information was provided at the meeting, which was used to compile a profile of the area, and the views and recommendations raised by the participants in relation to each topic were recorded. These points have been considered in full, and have contributed to the drafting of the objectives and policies within this proposed Local Area Plan.

Following this meeting, a leaflet was drawn up outlining the issues raised and the next steps in the Local Area Plan process. This was circulated to the attendants of the meeting, and copies were also made available in local retail outlets.

Each of the headings is discussed in the next section, with the results of the public consultation being used to devise policies and objectives for Mooncoin.

2 POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

A total of eight headings were discussed at the public consultation meeting. Each heading is dealt with below, in a structured format. First, the issues raised by the participants at the public consultation are outlined. Second, the existing situation, based on survey, research work and local information gathered, is discussed. These are then used to formulate policies and objectives under each heading.

2.1 Housing and Population

At the public consultation, it was emphasised that any development should be controlled, and should proceed only in a gradual, integrated manner, with services. The large proportion of social housing in Mooncoin was noted, and the need for a more balanced social mix as part of any new development, in addition to a range of house types and sizes, was discussed.

Another important view to emerge through consultation was that the public appreciated the consultation, and wanted to participate in decisions affecting their area. Increased community participation is an objective of the Kilkenny County Development Board Strategy, and consultation forms an integral part of this Local Area Plan process.

2.1.1 Development Strategy

Mooncoin had a population of 854 recorded at the 2002 Census. At present there is an extant permission for an additional 109 houses and a crèche. To apply the 1996 County Kilkenny household occupancy rate of 3.26 this gives a potential additional population of 355. This is in addition to another extant permission for a small development of four units. This population increase is of a significant magnitude relative to the existing population, and will lead to a demand for an expansion of services, across a whole range, such as social, educational and recreational. This population increase will have an effect on the community fabric and small town character of Mooncoin.

The capacity of Mooncoin to accommodate growth can be examined by assessing the capacity of the services available, such as infrastructural, community and educational services. With regard to infrastructural services, there is spare capacity available in the water supply network, but at present there is no spare capacity in the sewerage network. However, this is being addressed and there spare capacity will be available in the near future. Mooncoin has well developed community and educational services, some under-utilised housing stock and a large demand for housing, fuelled largely by its proximity to Waterford.

The Council's policy is to encourage housing development to locate in the designated towns and villages where infrastructural and social services exist or are planned to be provided, and therefore it will be Council policy to encourage the controlled expansion of Mooncoin.

An excessive rate of expansion of the town's population could have negative social consequences, such as a lack of assimilation between the existing population and the new population. Much of this growth would be likely to be commuter driven, due to Mooncoin's proximity to Waterford, and a lack of restriction on this would lead to the development of Mooncoin as a dormitory settlement, or suburb of Waterford.

A development strategy to improve the existing built environment in Mooncoin, allowing for controlled development, and focusing on improving the existing provision of services to match any increase in population, is considered more appropriate in this instance. The development strategy for Mooncoin therefore will provide for the consolidation of the existing built-up area and infill development, in a gradual manner, proportionate to the existing town, which will be socially cohesive and will support appropriate service expansion.

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| Policy: | To ensure the controlled development of Mooncoin which reflects the character of the existing town in terms of structure, pattern, scale, design and materials with adequate provision of open space |
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2.1.2 Urban Form

The need for any new development to respect and reflect the existing scale and character of Mooncoin, and not to impinge on existing residential amenity was a view expressed at the public consultation.

Mooncoin's urban structure could be broken down into three distinct areas; the eastern end of the town, which has an open character, established by large stand-alone buildings set in their own grounds, and the open space of Comeragh View. The centre of the town delimited by the two crossroads, is quite different, with a more enclosed character, determined by the remnants of the original settlement with their traditional location on the street, with no set-back. The western end of the town again has a different character, and is well defined by the presence of the Church, convent and school, and the housing on the opposite side of the street.

There is a need for consolidation of the streetscape through the centre of the town, to give an identity and sense of place to Mooncoin. The historical building line of the Main Street has been interrupted in more recent years, with individual dwellings being set back from the road. This issue needs to be addressed in any infill or large scale development proposal. The objective is to create an attractive and coherent streetscape pattern. This will be achieved in the various design proposals by having regard to the arrangement and design of plots, buildings and materials, roads and footpaths, street furniture, open space and planting.

New developments shall seek to:

- Reflect the local development patterns,

- Avoid substantial repetition of one house type,
- Respect the local characteristics and context of the site,
- Respond to typical settings and garden forms of the town,
- Refer to local buildings and variety of proportions and design,
- Refer to local distinctive details and materials,
- Provide adequate privacy for individual houses, flats etc
- Provide adequate car parking, open space, landscaping and planting
- Integrate successfully with existing development and the preservation of features on site

To the north of Main street, there is a large triangular shaped tract of undeveloped land, enclosed by the Ballytarsney and New roads. This land has only been developed along its road frontage, and the potential exists for in-depth, quality urban design in this area. This tract of land has been subdivided into Phase 1 and Phase 2 development. Phase 1 development is land which will be zoned for development during the lifetime of this plan. Phase 2 development is the land which will not be zoned for development during the lifetime of this plan, as the services capacity does not exist for its development. It is important that the development of both phases is examined in an integrated manner, as the development of land in Phase 1 must not prejudice the development of land in Phase 2.

An indicative line for a proposed link will be reserved to link between Main street and New road. An area of public open space will be zoned adjoining this link. This open space should serve as a pleasant green area with in the centre of Mooncoin, linking the Main street to the New road. Further details on the open space are discussed in Section 2.6.

All development proposals in this area will need to take cognisance of the development potential of the adjoining lands, and the objectives for a link and public open space. Any development along the road frontage of New road should address the road. At present this road is not wide enough for two cars to pass, so a set-back will be required to allow for the upgrading and widening of this road, and the construction of footpaths and public lighting. This level of development will not take place during the lifetime of this plan, but it is important to highlight the long term goal so that development on Phase 1 land does not prejudice the development of land in Phase 2.

Objectives:

1. To protect the residential amenity of existing dwellings
2. To reserve an adequate area of land to provide for a link between Main Street and New road
3. To provide an area of public open space in the centre of Mooncoin
4. To ensure a high standard in design, layout, provision of open space, landscaping and variation in house type and size in new residential developments
5. To apply the rural housing policy of the County Development Plan, 2002 outside the development boundary

6. To encourage the provision of landscaped pedestrian and bicycle links between and within residential areas and the town centre
7. To ensure that infill development is integrated successfully with existing development in the vicinity in terms of scale, character, finishes, building line and architectural features
8. To ensure that the local community participates and has access to the planning system
9. To implement the Housing Strategy contained in appendix A of the County Development Plan 2002
10. To ensure that an adequate amount of land is included in the development boundary of the town to cater for its expansion over the period of the plan
11. To ensure the maintenance and preservation of housing within the town centre, and to encourage continued residential use of upper floors. To encourage the building of new residential infill development where vacant plots exist
12. To facilitate the improvement and enhancement of the existing council built housing estates in partnership with the residents
13. To encourage planned housing development of serviced lands within the development boundary. The Planning Authority will require that serviced/serviceable lands will be developed in depth and at sustainable densities. The use of degraded or brown field sites will be preferred and utilised where possible in order to improve the environmental character of the town
14. To encourage sensitive conversion and reuse of historic structures to residential or tourist accommodation, where an original use has become redundant

2.1.3 Social Mix

There are currently 75 Local Authority dwellings in Mooncoin, and a further 10 will be completed shortly. This equates to approximately 30% of households. This figure does not represent the historical proportion of social housing in Mooncoin, as a large proportion of Local Authority constructed dwellings have been sold under the Tenant Purchasing Scheme.

There is a need to encourage a greater balance in the future development of Mooncoin. In any application for multiple unit residential schemes, in addition to accommodating the needs of first-time buyers and implementing the Housing Strategy the Council will seek a predominance of larger, higher value, family homes.

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| Objective: | To have a good social mix in new residential developments providing a range of unit types/sizes and to require that a predominance of the dwellings in any multiple unit residential scheme are large, higher value, family dwellings |
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2.1.4 Serviced sites

In addition to the above objective, another method of securing higher value dwellings in Mooncoin is to provide for serviced sites on the edge of town which can allow people to

design their own homes on their own sites. A secondary benefit of this could be the alleviation of pressure for ribbon development and urban generated rural housing on the approaches into Mooncoin. Maximum recommended densities for this zoning would be in the range of two to five to the acre, depending on the quality of design. Design guidance on this is available in Chapter 4.

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| Objective: | To zone an area of land for the sale of serviced sites for the development of large, detached, low density dwellings |
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2.1.5 Integration of Residential Developments

In assessing any new development in Mooncoin, the Council may have regard to the development potential of adjoining land and will assess any application, with a view to providing for the development of these lands in an integrated manner. This has already been discussed in relation to the Phase 1 and Phase 2 lands. This applies to any land parcel, and relates to all aspects of development including open space provision, access arrangements and pedestrian and cycle links. For example, any development adjoining the land for which a housing development has been granted under file reference 00/678, to the south of Main street, must take cognisance of the layout of the scheme which has been granted. In this scheme, the open space adjoins the site boundary to the north and northeast. A development proposal on the adjoining land must have regard to this open space, and could provide for the integrating of the public open space with that proposed. In particular, a pedestrian and cycle link should be provided, linking the two. The distinction between the two residential schemes should be maintained by the use of design and detailing, to give each its own distinct identity.

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| Objective: | To assess any new development having regard to the development potential of adjoining land |
| Objective: | To ensure the integration of adjoining residential schemes, where appropriate, in relation to pedestrian and cycleway links, public open space provision and scheme layout |

2.2 Infrastructure

2.2.1 Sewerage Network

Mooncoin is served by a sewerage scheme with primary treatment, which was constructed in 1975. This has a design Population Equivalent of 975, and is currently operating with a population equivalent of 1046. During the public consultation the need to increase capacity to cater for future development was discussed.

It is proposed to enter into a Partnership Agreement with local developers to upgrade the sewage treatment and disposal system in Mooncoin to full secondary treatment, with a design population of 2,000. This type of treatment will be likely to be modular and capable of extension as required to meet future sewage disposal needs.

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| Policy: | To ensure that the necessary sewerage facilities to serve the needs of all development within the town and to prevent pollution are provided |
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| Objective: | To maintain and improve sewerage services |
| Objective: | To prohibit the connection to the sewerage system of any proposed development out of phase with the overall development of the town or where the existing services are committed for other development |
| Objective: | To preserve free from development the way leaves of all public sewers |
| Objective: | To secure the upgrading of the existing sewerage treatment plant through agreements with developers and/or landowners under the serviced land initiative administered by the Department of the Environment |

2.2.2 Surface Water Drainage

At the public consultation, surface water on roads in Mooncoin was identified as a problem, particularly on the Doornane, Ballytarsney and New roads.

There is no existing system specifically for stormwater disposal in Mooncoin. The proposed Partnership Agreement as outlined above will also cater for stormwater disposal. In relation to the issue of surface water on the Doornane Road, it is expected that the piping of the open drain to the Suir will form part of the storm water disposal system for the residential development granted under 00/678 at Pollrone.

| | |
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| Objective: | To provide for the piping of the open drain on the Doornane road |
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2.2.3 Water supply

At the public consultation concerns were expressed with the existing water supply, with problems identified with seasonal variations in the quality of supply.

Mooncoin is served by the combined Mooncoin and Fiddown Water supply scheme. This scheme has a design population of 12,950 and is currently serving approximately 9,004. Although the issue of water quality was raised at the public consultation, Water Quality Analyses over the years show that water quality in the area is excellent. However, as outlined in the County Development Plan, 2002, there is a policy of continuous monitoring by the Council of all water sources to ensure that water quality remains high.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Policy: | To provide water in sufficient quantity and quality to serve the needs of the existing and future population, and future commercial development |
| Objective: | To provide sufficient water to serve all lands zoned for development in this plan |
| Objective: | To continuously monitor water quality in the area to ensure the maintenance of high water quality standards |
| Objective: | To preserve free from development the way leaves of all public water mains |

2.2.4 Waste

Issues raised at the public consultation included an expression of support for the extension of recycling facilities to include the collection of more items such as plastics or newspapers. It was felt that the dissemination of information could be improved to raise awareness of environmental issues, particularly amongst the adult population. The fees charged by the waste collectors was also raised as an issue.

Kilkenny County Council has adopted the South East Regional Authority Waste Management Strategy, and the policy for Kilkenny is set out in the Waste Management Plan for the period 2000-2004.

Waste collection was privatised by the Council in the 1990's and waste is now collected in Mooncoin by private contractors once weekly. European Union environmental policy dictates that the 'Polluter pays principle' be applied, which means that the full costs associated with environmentally sound recovery and disposal of waste are charged to the customer.

With regard to recycling, it is Council and regional policy that bottle banks for clear, green and brown glass and aluminium cans are provided at villages throughout the county. There is a bottle bank in Mooncoin at present, located at Blanchfield's Centra, where glass bottles and drinks cans can be recycled. The aim is to have one bottle bank per 1000 head of population by the end of 2005. Kerbside collections for recyclables is proposed for 2003. These collections will cover newspapers, cardboard, magazines, food cans, drink cans and plastic. Bottles will still be disposed of at the Bottle banks.

The South East Regional Waste Management Plan has an objective to provide a recycling centre for the South of the County, and a site will be identified for this centre in 2004. This will be a one-stop-shop centre for all recyclables including paper, cardboard, steel food cans, household hazardous waste etc.

The importance of education and awareness in the encouragement of recycling and promoting more sustainable practices is acknowledged by Kilkenny County Council, and endorsed by the appointment of an Environmental Awareness Officer in 2002. This Officer provides regular dissemination of information through group meetings, leaflets and other promotional materials, and any community can access these services. These services will continue to improve the level of environmental awareness throughout the county.

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Policy: | To continue to encourage and facilitate recycling and the minimisation of waste in line with the South East Regional Waste Management Plan objectives |
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|-------------------|--|
| Objective: | To ensure Mooncoin has an adequate solid waste collection system |
| Objective: | To continue to work with and encourage the prevention, minimisation, re-use, recycling and safe disposal of waste in line with the South East Regional Waste Management Plan |

2.2.5 Telecommunications

Telecommunications have become centrally important to the prospects of any local economy, and their role in the development of Mooncoin is acknowledged. One issue raised at the public consultation was the lack of broadband infrastructure in Mooncoin. This is a national issue, and is examined in the National Development Plan, 2000 - 2006. Broadband in Kilkenny will be rolled out in accordance with the funding available under the NDP, but is not planned to service Mooncoin.

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|----------------|--|
| Policy: | To ensure that the necessary telecommunications and electricity supply are available for the existing and future development of Mooncoin |
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2.3 Employment and Economy

At the public consultation, the significant role that commuting to Waterford plays in Mooncoin's economy was discussed. It was considered that there would be additional pressure for industrial development in Mooncoin, given its proximity to Waterford. Additional employment sources would be welcomed, but the type of industry should be carefully considered, and should not detract from the pleasant residential character of Mooncoin.

At present, the single largest employer in Mooncoin is the Consort Case Company, which currently employs 23 employees. The services sector accounts for a number of employees, in retail outlets such as Rosedale Furniture Superstore, Blanchfield's Centra and Post Office, Mooncoin Stores & Service Station and Croke's Grocery.

Any sustainable land-use policy must provide for a balance between the provision of housing and the provision of employment opportunities. If the provision of residentially zoned land exceeds the potential for employment opportunities, this will result in a high level of commuting, which is unsustainable. The creation of employment opportunities should be matched to the growth of the town.

The Council will ensure that sufficient land is zoned to allow for the provision of a suitable employment mix. The zoning of the town centre will include provision for a mix of employment sources, and additionally, a site specific for the development of industry will be designated. The Council will also encourage the creation of community led employment opportunities. The lands zoned for industrial purposes would be intended to facilitate the setting up or expansion of local enterprise initiatives and should not be used for warehousing/distribution facilities which would have very low levels of employment relative to floor area and would also have relatively low levels of skills based employment.

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| Policy: | To promote enterprise creation opportunities and initiatives, in line with the growth of Mooncoin |
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| Objective: | To encourage a mix of land use and job/employment creation initiatives and provision on appropriately zoned and serviced land |
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|-------------------|---|
| Objective: | To have all new industrial developments appropriately landscaped and screened |
|-------------------|---|

2.3.1 Retail

One of the issues raised at the public meeting was that additional shopping facilities are required to serve the area. There is one large comparison shop in Mooncoin, the Rosedale Furniture Superstore, to the east of the village. There are a number of small convenience stores including Blanchfield's Centra and Post Office, Mooncoin Stores & Service Station and Croke's Grocery.

The *Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities* sets out Government policy in relation to shops in small towns and rural areas³. The vital role that foodstores and supermarkets play in maintaining the quality and range of shopping in smaller rural town centres and assisting in the anchoring of the surrounding local economy is recognised. Planning policies should be supportive of local facilities in small towns and villages which provide an effective and valuable service to the local economy.

The facilitation of additional commercial activities to serve future development will be done through appropriate zoning in accordance with the CDP 2002 and the Retail Planning Guidelines, 2000. There will be a clear presumption in favour of centre locations for new developments, i.e. in the town centre zone.

³ Department of the Environment and Local Government, 2000 *Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities*

Where it is not possible to provide the form and scale of development that is required on a site within the town centre, then consideration can be given to a site on the edge of the town centre. An edge of centre location is one within easy and convenient walking distance from the town centre, and providing parking facilities that serve the centre as well as the new development, thus enabling one trip to serve several purposes.

Out of centre retail developments will not be allowed if their provision is likely to lead to a reduction in the range of local facilities in towns and villages or affect the diversity of shops or lead to the loss of general food retailing from the centre of smaller towns. Out of centre locations are clearly separate from a town centre but within the urban area, including planned extensions to the urban area.

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Policy: | To facilitate the expansion of the retail base to serve the needs of the current and future population, in accordance with the policies as laid out by the County Development Plan 2002 and the Retail Planning Guidelines, 2000 |
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|-------------------|---|
| Objective: | To encourage the upgrading and expansion of existing retail outlets and the development of new outlets in the town centre to serve local need |
|-------------------|---|

2.3.2 Tourism

During the public consultation, the tourist potential of Mooncoin was discussed. It was felt that this potential was not being exploited. Some suggestions included that its location in proximity to the River Suir could be exploited in the development of water-based recreational activities at Pollrone. The lack of facilities for tourists was identified as a restriction and the possibility of capitalising on snap-net fishing which is unique to the area. A suggestion was the creation of an event centred around fishing.

In relation to tourism, the National Spatial Strategy has made reference to the capacity of the areas of the south east to augment their established agricultural strength through specialist tourist attractions, based on the region's attractive coastline, river valleys and uplands.

Mooncoin's location in the Suir river valley endows it with potential for the development of tourism, based around unique attractions in the area. There are a number of possibilities which could form the basis of a tourist development. One of these would be the development of tourism based around the village settlements of Licketstown, Glengrant, Luffany, Corludy and Portnahully which are located just southeast of Mooncoin, in the loop of the River Suir.

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Policy: | To co-operate in the development of a tourist development strategy for the town and its hinterland in association with Kilkenny City and |
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| County Tourism, SERTA, Bord Fáilte, the local Development Association, BNS and Leader, local community groups and business interests |
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|-------------------|---|
| Objective: | To facilitate and encourage the development of facilities catering for tourists in Mooncoin |
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2.4 Education and Training

At the public consultation the need for advance planning for educational facilities to serve any future expansion of the town was highlighted. The lack of a hall at the Girl's National School was identified as a deficit.

2.4.1 Primary Education

Mooncoin is served by two primary schools, the Presentation Girl's National School and the Boy's National School. The Girl's school has 108 pupils and the Boy's school has 93. There are five classrooms in the Girl's School, four of which are used as permanent classrooms, and the fifth of which is used for computers and learning resources. The Boy's school has two empty classrooms, and has plenty of capacity for more students.

The Girl's School has a basketball court to the rear, which can also serve as a tennis court, but the school has no assembly hall for indoor activities. The school hires the GAA hall for physical education between the months of November to April, but this causes problems with regard to the safety of the children walking to the hall.

The Boy's school has a grass playing field and also a hard surfaced basketball court. It also has a well-equipped assembly hall.

2.4.2 Secondary Education

At secondary level, there is a Vocational School located beside the Boy's School to the southeast of the village. At present the Vocational School has 239 pupils, but has capacity for 275 pupils. This school has a grass playing pitch for hurling and soccer and also two hard surfaced multi-purpose courts for basketball/ volleyball and tennis.

The provision of adequate facilities to serve these schools should be examined in conjunction with the Department of Education. All three schools are situated on large sites, and have room for further expansion, should the need arise.

2.4.3 Third level Education

The nearest third level facility is located in Piltown, and this is the Kildalton Agricultural College. This offers a variety of agricultural and horticultural courses. Waterford City also has an Institute of Technology, with a wide range of courses.

2.4.4 Adult Education

The consultees felt that adult education was well provided for in Mooncoin. Concern was expressed with the cut-backs to the Fás Scheme.

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| Objective: | To facilitate the development of educational opportunities and facilities to meet the needs of the existing and future population |
| Objective: | To co-operate with the Department of Education in the provision of an adequate number of school places to serve the needs of the town's population |
| Objective: | To co-operate with the Department of Education in the provision of an assembly hall for the Girl's National School |
| Objective: | To co-operate with the Department of Education in the provision of adequate facilities to serve the schools in the town |
| Objective: | To support the continuation of the Fás Community Employment Scheme or other equivalent/replacement scheme |

2.5 Transport

2.5.1 Roads

The main road running through Mooncoin is the N24. There are a number of other local roads, along which some residential development has taken place. There are two crossroad junctions on the Main street – one with the Doornane Road running south and New road running northwest, and another at the pub with the Pollrone road running south and the Ballystarsney road running north.

2.5.2 Footpaths and Lighting

The priority areas identified for footpaths at the public consultation was the improvement and widening of the existing footpaths on Main street, and the extension of lighting and footpaths down the Doornane Road and Pollrone Road.

The footpaths through Mooncoin are of varying quality in terms of width and structure. Some remedial works were undertaken on these footpaths in 2002, and this programme will be continued. Any new developments in the area should be levied to improve both footpaths and public lighting throughout the village.

Main street is well served by public lighting. New public lighting will be required as part of any new residential development. The extension of lighting to the Doornane Road and the Pollrone Road will be examined as part of a review of public lighting after 2003.

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|----------------|---|
| Policy: | To provide quality lighting and footpaths throughout the town that will secure the safe movement of pedestrians, cyclists and drivers alike |
|----------------|---|

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|-------------------|---|
| Objective: | To improve and widen the footpaths along Main street |
| Objective: | To require appropriate public lighting as part of any new residential development |
| Objective: | To carry out a review of public lighting after 2003, and examine its extension to the Doornane and Pollrone Roads |

The securing of these objectives will be dependent on the availability of finance and the inclusion of the objectives in the Council's work programme for the area.

2.5.3 Traffic calming

At the public consultation meeting there were a number of issues in regard to traffic calming. These included the extension of the speed limits further out of town.

Traffic calming measures have been introduced on both approaches into Mooncoin, in the form of traffic calming gateways.

2.5.4 Traffic at the Schools

One of the main safety concerns raised related to traffic at the schools. It was considered that parking facilities at all three schools were inadequate, and there was a need for a pick-up/drop-off area at each. There was also a need identified for pedestrian crossings at the schools and on Main street.

Staff parking at the three schools is provided within the curtilage. The Church car park is located adjacent to the Girls National School and this provides adequate parking. The church car-park does not have any markings, which does lead to haphazard parking. The provision of markings would be in the interests of safety.

The Boys National School has some parking available outside the school, but it is insufficient for the volumes of traffic at peak times. A pick-up/drop off area should be provided at this school.

The Vocational School has approximately 20 car spaces within the curtilage of the school with a large paved area outside the school also available for parking. Buses have a designated set-down/ pick-up area here, but there is insufficient space for cars.

The need for some type of pedestrian crossing facility for all the schools is acknowledged.

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| Policy: | To provide a safe traffic system through Mooncoin that will prioritise and secure the safe movement of children |
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|-------------------|---|
| Objective: | To prepare a traffic management plan for the town having regard for the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists and motorised transport alike on completion of the bypass |
| Objective: | To provide for the delineation of car-parking spaces and a circulation area in the Church car park |
| Objective: | To implement a safe car-parking system at both the Boys National School and the Vocational School |
| Objective: | To investigate how a safe pedestrian crossing facility can be provided at the Girls National School, the Boys National school and vocational school having regard to the need criteria and financing. |

In relation to speeding and speed limits, Kilkenny County Council carry out a general review of speed limits every two to three years and Mooncoin's speed limits will be reviewed during the period of this Plan.

At the consultation, one problem identified was unregulated and unsafe patterns of pedestrians crossing Main street, particularly outside the Centra. A safe pedestrian crossing facility on Main Street is considered appropriate. The provision of pedestrian facilities within the town will be required to have regard to need criteria and financing and will be examined on a case by case basis.

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Policy: | To provide a safe management system in the town that will secure the safe movement of pedestrians, cyclists and drivers alike |
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|-------------------|--|
| Objective: | To provide a safe pedestrian crossing facility on Main Street in the town having regard to the need criteria and financing |
| Objective: | To review the speed limits in Mooncoin during the period of this Plan |

2.5.5 Linkages within the Town

As discussed in Section 2.1.5, in assessing any new development in Mooncoin, the Council may have regard to the development potential of adjoining land. One of the elements of this integration will be the provision of pedestrian and cycle linkages between all new developments, to provide for a pleasant network of routes and walkways interlinking the town. One of the areas of the town where a link shall be provided is between Suir Crescent and the Ballytarsney road, where there is an existing pedestrian link.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Objective: | To provide for appropriate pedestrian and cycleway linkages between all new and existing developments |
| Objective: | To prepare a traffic management plan for the town, having regard for the safe movement of pedestrians, cyclists and motorised transport alike on completion of the bypass |

2.5.6 Public transport

At the public consultation it was discussed that the existing bus stop, located at the Church was insufficient, and that there was a need for an additional bus stop. The need for a bus shelter at this location was mentioned.

Kilkenny County Development Board recently published a report entitled ‘Rural Transport Audit Report and Needs Assessment’⁴, which was carried out by WSP Ireland Ltd. This found that Mooncoin was well serviced with scheduled bus services. The number of bus services daily are illustrated below.

| Frequency of Daily Bus Services serving Mooncoin | | |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|
| | From Mooncoin | To Mooncoin |
| Waterford | 13 | 10 |
| Limerick | 6 | 7 |
| Clonmel | 2 | 3 |
| Carrick-on-Suir | 2 | 3 |

The comfort and safety of the existing bus stop should be improved, but the practicality of having two stops in a town such as Mooncoin is uncertain. Alternatively, the location of the existing bus stop should be reviewed, with a view to relocating it to a more central location, subject to safety criteria being satisfied.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Objective: | To co-operate with Bus Operators to improve the comfort of the existing bus stop |
| Objective: | To review the location of the existing bus stop in the town so as to obtain an optimum location |

In relation to local bus services, a recently launched initiative known as Ring-a-link bus service provides a local bus service to parts of Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary. This bus service offers a service to customers who ring in to avail of the service. This service currently covers parts of southwest Kilkenny.

⁴ Kilkenny County Development Board, 2002 *County Kilkenny Rural Transport Audit – Rural Transport Audit Report and Needs Assessment*

| | |
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| Policy: | To improve the accessibility to public transport services |
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2.5.7 Parking

At the public consultation, the lack of parking space at the Health Centre was identified as an issue, and a need was identified for double yellow lines throughout Main street.

Off street parking in Mooncoin is provided at Blanchfield's Centra, the Community Hall, and at the Church. Some parking takes place on street, particularly at the Health Centre and at Centra. This shall be prohibited with the use of double yellow lines. Provision for car parking should be made within the curtilage of the Health Centre, or in a lay by. The Health Centre has recently received funding for an upgrade, and parking should be provided as part of this upgrade.

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| Policy: | The Council will consider proposals for additional car parking on suitable sites and seek appropriate provision of adequate car parking in any new developments |
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|-------------------|---|
| Objective: | To ensure adequate car parking spaces are provided in all new developments |
| Objective: | To provide double yellow lines on both sides of Main street and to implement parking control enforcement |
| Objective: | To co-operate with the SEHB in order to provide adequate car parking arrangements at Mooncoin Health Centre |
| Objective: | To provide disabled car parking spaces at appropriate locations throughout the town |

2.6 Community Facilities – Recreation

2.6.1 Open space

At the public consultation meetings, it was noted that there was no provision of public open space in Mooncoin. It was suggested that water based recreational facilities could be provided at Pollrone. The lack of a playground in the town was identified as a deficit.

In relation to the provision of public open space, there are two areas of open space attached to the two main housing developments in the village – one at Comeragh View to the southeast of the village, and the other to the north of the village, at Suir Crescent.

Mooncoin needs a green/open space or town park as a focal point for social and community events. This open space should be designed in accordance with best practice. Guidance on this is given in Chapter 4.

There is an area of vacant land adjoining the public open space in Suir Crescent, and a pathway has now been created through informal usage, linking this area to the street to the east, to the north of Croke's Store. The only areas of formal open space in the village are to the street side of the Church, at the northwest of the village and opposite the Credit Union. It is important to provide sufficient open space to meet the present and future needs of the population.

Two areas of open space will be reserved in this Plan. An area of open space will be provided in Suir Crescent. An area of land adjoining Suir Crescent has been zoned for residential development. Any residential development on this site must address the open space, to provide for its passive supervision and encourage its usage.

An area of public open space will be reserved to the north and rear of the Telephone exchange and Comerford's Pub. This open space will adjoin the proposed link (see Section 2.1.2) and will provide a pleasant green route from the proposed link to the Ballytarsney road and on to Suir Crescent. It will be an objective of this plan to provide a children's play area as part of this open space. Funding for children's play areas is available through the National Children's Strategy from the National Children's Office to provide facilities and services for children, including play areas and play equipment.

Policy:

1. The Planning Authority will not normally permit development which would result in the loss of public or private playing fields, parks, children's play space, amenity open space or land zoned for recreational or open space purposes. An exception may be considered where all of the following requirements are demonstrably met:

- a) There is a clear excess of playing fields or open space provision within the area. This should take into account the long-term needs of the community, the type and recreational and amenity value and accessibility of such provision.
- b) Alternative compensatory provision is made which is both accessible to and of equal or greater quality and benefit to the community.
- c) The continued use, proper maintenance and enhancement of the amenity/facility can best be achieved by the redevelopment of a small part of the site that will not adversely affect its overall sporting, recreational and/or amenity value of the facility.
- d) The site is indicated for an alternative use in the development plan.

2. It is the policy of the Council to provide, maintain and manage a children's play area in Mooncoin within public open spaces or other suitable locations where it is appropriate and as finance and resources permit.

3. The Council will investigate ways of improving the quality and capacity of existing sporting and recreational facilities.

4. The Council will investigate ways of assisting in the provision of new sporting recreational and leisure facilities through initiatives in both the public and private sector.

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Objective: | To provide quality open space to meet the needs of the existing and future population |
| Objective: | To ensure that all residential developments address adjoining open space to provide for their passive supervision |
| Objective: | To protect existing open spaces and recreational uses from encroachment by other uses |
| Objective: | To support the provision of a suitably equipped playground, in line with EU standard EN1176 for the design and management of play area equipment, in conjunction with the provision of open space, in an appropriate location to serve the town's population |

2.6.2 Recreation

Although satisfaction was expressed with recreational facilities generally, one of the issues raised was the location of the soccer club, at Ashgrove, and the difficulty posed in transporting the children there.

Mooncoin is well served by recreational facilities. The main community facilities in Mooncoin are the Church and Parish Hall, located to the northwest end of the village. Current activities in the hall include Badminton, Youth Club, Young at Hearts Club and Drama.

The GAA have an extensive Clubhouse/Sports complex to the rear of the Parish Hall. The GAA also own the pitch to the rear of Suir Crescent, which is in use for camogie and hurling. The Vocational School has a playing pitch, 2 basketball courts, and sports hall. Their pitch is currently used by the Athletics Club. The hall at the Boys School is used occasionally, on an informal basis, by different groups for activities such as dancing classes, and meetings of Residents Associations.

There is a soccer club in Mooncoin, but the pitch is located approximately a mile from the town, and this does cause difficulty for transport to training sessions and games. It is an objective of this plan to find an appropriate location for the soccer club, possibly through its incorporation into an existing facility to allow for dual use.

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| Objective: | To facilitate the provision of facilities for the soccer club in or nearer the town |
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2.7 Amenity Enhancement

A number of issues with regard to amenity enhancement in Mooncoin emerged at the public consultation. A number of positive remarks were made, in relation to the appearance of the some of the estates, including Comeragh view. The excellent work of the Tidy Towns Committee was acknowledged, with the area around the Girls school and the Church being highlighted as being very well kept and attractive.

The need to protect and enhance the character of the town was discussed, with issues such as the need for control of design of shopfronts being highlighted. It was felt that litter was an issue, despite the best efforts of Tidy Towns, and that additional litter bins are required to be provided, with regular collections. Planting was also discussed as a method of improving the appearance of the town.

2.7.1 Conservation

Mooncoin has only one protected structure listed in the County Development Plan, 2002. Buildings identified for conservation at the public consultation included the three thatched buildings in the town. As part of this plan an assessment of the existing buildings in the town has been carried out with a view to revisiting the Record of Protected Structures. This may lead to the inclusion of additional structures in the Record, and the proposed additions to the list of Protected Structures are listed in Appendix 1.

It is an objective of the Council to preserve Protected Structures. Alterations to Protected Structures normally require planning permission and should be subject to early consultation with Kilkenny County Council's Conservation Officer and/or Dúchas, the Heritage Service. Generally, all repair and maintenance works should be carried out on a 'like for like' basis and in accordance with the Conservation Guidelines published by the Department of Environment & Local Government, 1996. In addition, the Council will assess any application for redevelopment or infill for its contribution to the streetscape. Further guidance on this is available in Chapter 4.

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| Policy: | To protect and enhance the amenity and built environment of Mooncoin |
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|-------------------|---|
| Objective: | To seek the conservation and preservation of the buildings listed in the Record of Protected Structures |
| Objective: | To seek the undergrounding of all utility cables in the town |
| Objective: | To preserve the appearance of the town, with control of shopfronts and advertising |

2.7.2 Dereliction

The majority of the buildings in Mooncoin are in good condition, with only a few examples of dereliction or vacant sites within the town. Guidelines for the redevelopment of sites are outlined in Chapter 4.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Objective: | To encourage and provide for the sensitive redevelopment of derelict sites in the town |
| Objective: | To implement the Derelict Sites Act 1990 in order to ensure the removal of dereliction within the Plan period as resources permit |

2.7.3 General Appearance

The issue of litter has been dealt with under Infrastructure – Waste. Appropriate planting can be used to enhance the environment and additional planting would add to the amenity of the town, and would also add to any new developments. Landscaping requirements for new developments are outlined in Chapter 4.

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| Policy: | To provide an aesthetically pleasing appearance for both the built and natural environment of the town |
|----------------|--|

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|-------------------|---|
| Objective: | To require appropriate planting of semi-mature trees in any new development and to preserve and augment existing mature trees and hedgerows |
| Objective: | To encourage the appropriate planting of semi-mature trees through the centre |

2.7.4 Ecology

An Ecological Survey of the Mooncoin area was carried out by an Ecologist as part of this plan process. A number of areas of interest were identified, and this report is included as Appendix 2. Within the development boundary, two tree groups in hedges were identified as areas of interest. The first is to the north of Main Street, and is a hedge with beech, alder and oak. The second is a hedge, located between the Convent and the Girls National School. This hedge contains horse chestnut, beech and sycamore and some Lawson's Cypress. Both of these hedges are important habitats for wildlife, and should be protected. The protection of all the areas of ecological interest as identified will be an objective of this plan.

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| Objective: | To ensure the protection and/or conservation as appropriate of the non designated sites outlined as areas of ecological interest in the plan and to control development which would be inimical to the preservation or conservation of their essential character |
|-------------------|--|

2.8 Community Supports – Social Services

2.8.1 Services

At the public consultation, the good level of service provision in Mooncoin was noted. The main service deficits identified included those relating to specific target groups, such as the elderly and the youth, in addition to the lack of a pharmacy, a library service and the perceived inadequate cover by An Garda Síochána.

Mooncoin is generally well served by commercial premises. Mooncoin's service base should expand to keep pace with development and to maintain its role in the local rural area.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Objective: | To maintain and enhance the role of Mooncoin as a local market centre for its rural catchment area and as a centre to service its anticipated expansion during the period of the Plan |
|-------------------|---|

2.8.1.1 Garda Síochána

Mooncoin has one Sergeant and one Garda. The Garda is attached to the Garda station on a permanent basis. Mooncoin Garda station comes under the administrative control of the Area Administrator at Ferrybank Garda station.

2.8.1.2 Library Service

The provision of a library service in Mooncoin is an objective of the Kilkenny County Library Development Plan, 1996. The achievement of this is dependent on available funding.

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| Objective: | To provide a library service in Mooncoin |
|-------------------|--|

2.8.2 Target groups

The two target groups identified at the public consultation were the youth and the elderly. Issues raised included the lack of a youth worker, and for the elderly the need for a day care centre and transportation to services.

There is a junior youth club in Mooncoin at present, and the youth are also well catered for in terms of sports facilities. The Kilkenny County Development Board Strategy contains an objective for the development of youth services, which relies on the development of Youth Work Committees. The operation of a youth group can be supported by the Community and Enterprise Section of Kilkenny County Council.

| | |
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| Policy: | To support the development of youth services in conjunction with the Community and Enterprise section |
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In the context of an ageing population, services for the elderly in the community are becoming more important. There is a Young at Heart Club catering for the elderly. The provision of transport to this club would result in the service being available to a wider range of people.

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Policy: | To facilitate and support the expansion of the range of facilities catering for the elderly population |
|----------------|--|

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|-------------------|--|
| Objective: | To support the provision of a transport service for the elderly to the Young at Heart Club |
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2.8.3 Healthcare

As set out in Section 7.15 of the County Development Plan 2002, it is the policy of the Council to facilitate the development by the South Eastern Health Board of a comprehensive range of health and social care services and in particular services for the elderly including the development of community, hospital, community nursing and day care services throughout the County. There is a Health Centre in Mooncoin, and a nurse, but no local doctor, or dentist. The Health Centre has recently received funding for an upgrade. Permission has just been granted for a 50 bedroomed nursing home near the Church.

The need for a day care centre in Mooncoin was identified at the public consultation, and the provision of a facility of this nature will be supported. The provision of a dispensing chemist and a resident doctor will also be supported.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Objective: | To co-operate with the SEHB in the provision of any health care services for the town |
| Objective: | To support the upgrading of the existing Health Centre and the provision of adequate parking facilities to serve it |
| Objective: | To support the provision of a day care centre for the elderly in Mooncoin |
| Objective: | To support the provision of a dispensing chemist to cater for the needs in the town |
| Objective: | To support the local community in seeking the provision of a resident doctors service for the town |

2.8.4 Childcare

According to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Childcare Facilities, "Government policy on childcare is to increase the number of childcare places and

facilities available and to improve the quality of childcare services for the community”⁵. Section 3.5.1. of the County Development Plan sets out the policies of Kilkenny County Council in relation to childcare provision. Kilkenny County Development Board have also published a Childcare Strategy 2002-2006, to “inform the development and delivery of quality services for children in the County”⁶ between 2002 and 2006.

There is a Montessori school in the area, and a toddlers group meets twice a week, but there is no full day-care service available. The provision of quality childcare services will be facilitated and encouraged by the Council, in suitable locations. Regard will also be given to the Guidelines for Best Practice in the Design of Childcare Facilities issued by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Policy: | To ensure the provision of an adequate range of quality childcare facilities in appropriate locations |
|----------------|---|

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Objective: | To facilitate the development of a crèche in conjunction with the relevant statutory bodies and the local community on a suitable site within the town in line with the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Childcare Facilities |
|-------------------|---|

⁵ Department of the Environment and Local Government, 2001, p. 3 *Childcare Facilities – Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, Stationery Office

⁶ Kilkenny County Childcare Committee, 2002 *Childcare Development Plan 2002 - 2006*

3 DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

3.1 Introduction

This section of the Proposed Plan sets out specific objectives for the development of Mooncoin. Some of the objectives can be carried out directly by the County Council, but in others, for which the Council is not directly responsible, the Council will have a facilitative role.

Achievement of the objectives for which the Council is directly responsible, will, in many cases be dependent upon adequate finance being made available to the Council from the Department of the Environment and Local Government and other sources. For many of the other objectives, a co-ordinated approach will need to be taken by both the Council and local community. The Council, through its Planning and Community and Enterprise Departments, intend to facilitate and build the capacity in the community to follow these objectives through.

Where possible, specific objectives are illustrated on the map accompanying this plan. However some objectives are not site specific and therefore cannot be illustrated on the map.

3.2 The Development Boundary

The development boundary for the town has been designated taking into consideration the following factors:

- The need to provide a compact and accessible village in accordance with the principles of sustainable development
- The existing built environment and road structure
- Potential population growth and demand for housing
- The need to offer locational choice and housing mix
- Proximity to existing and potential community and commercial facilities and the need to encourage sustainable growth
- Linkages (transport) to other larger settlements
- The level of provision of existing infrastructure
- Existing planning permissions

3.3 Land Use Zoning

The purpose of zoning is to indicate to property owners and the general public the types of development which the Council considers most appropriate in each land use category. The land use zoning objectives are detailed below and are shown on the Land Use zoning and specific objectives map. It is the intention of the Planning Authority that the zoning

of particular areas for a particular use shall not in itself exclude other uses in that area provided they are compatible with the dominant use.

Zoning is designed to reduce conflicting uses within areas, to protect resources and, in association with phasing, to ensure that land suitable for development is used to the best advantage of the community as a whole.

In the following paragraphs:

- **Permissible uses** means a use, which is acceptable in the relevant zone. However, it is still the subject of the normal planning process.
- **Open for consideration** means a use which may be permitted where the Council is satisfied that the individual proposal or development will be compatible with the policies and objectives for the zone, and will not conflict with the permitted uses and also conforms with the proper planning and development of the area.

3.3.1 Residential

Objective: To protect and improve residential amenities and to provide for new residential development appropriate to the scale and character of Mooncoin.

Permissible Uses: Dwellings, open spaces, places of worship, community centres, halting sites, public service installations, playgroup or crèche, Nursing home.

Open for Consideration: Bed and breakfast establishments and guesthouses, lock up garages, retail shop of local convenience not more than 100m sq in gross area, public house, hotel, restaurant, use by owner or occupier of part of a private residence as a studio, for a light industrial activity, a clinic or surgery, professional office, or as a playgroup or crèche.

3.3.2 Low density residential

Objective: To provide for low density residential development appropriate to the scale and character of Mooncoin.

The maximum residential density to be permitted here shall be 5 dwellings to the acre.

Permissible Uses: Dwellings, open spaces

Open for Consideration: Places of worship, community centres, halting sites, public service installations, playgroup or crèche, Nursing home, Bed and breakfast establishments and guesthouses, lock up garages, retail shop of local convenience not more than 100m sq in gross area, hotel, public house, restaurant, use by owner or occupier of part of a private residence as a studio, for a light industrial activity, a clinic or surgery, professional office, or as a playgroup or crèche.

3.3.3 Town Centre

Objective: To provide for the development and improvement of appropriate town centre uses and allow for the development of Mooncoin as a focus for local services, sustaining and strengthening its role as a population centre.

The purpose of this zone is to protect and enhance the centre of Mooncoin and to provide for and improve retailing, residential, commercial, office, cultural and other uses appropriate to the centre of a town. It will be an objective of the Council to encourage the development of backlands. Generally two storey buildings will be preferred.

Permissible Uses: Dwellings, retailing, retail warehousing, wholesale outlets, offices, public buildings or places of assembly, cultural or educational buildings, recreational buildings, halting sites, hotels, motels, guest houses, clubs, private garages, open spaces, public service installations, medical and related consultants, restaurants, public houses, car parks, halls or discotheques, and other uses as permitted and open for consideration in residential zoning.

Open for Consideration: workshop or light industry

3.3.4 Recreation, Amenity and Open Space

Objective: To preserve, provide and improve recreational open space.

Permissible Uses: Open space

Open for Consideration: Sports clubs, recreational buildings, stands, pavilions, agricultural uses, public service installations.

3.3.5 Community Facilities

Objective: To protect, provide and improve community facilities.

Permissible Uses: Educational, religious and cultural facilities, public buildings, crèches, schools, churches, hospitals, convents, community centres and halls, school playing fields, colleges, orphanages, hostels, halting sites, cemeteries, libraries and medical centres, nursing homes

Open for Consideration: Public service installations, Town Centre Uses which would not conflict with the other objectives of the Plan and which would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3.3.6 Industrial/Warehousing

Objective: To provide for industrial and related uses.

Permissible Uses: Industrial premises and ancillary offices, open spaces, warehouses, car and heavy vehicle parks.

Open for Consideration: Petrol filling stations, service stations, car showrooms, advertisement structures, wholesale premises, public service installations, play school/crèche.

3.3.7 Transitional Areas

While the zoning objectives indicate the different uses permitted in each zone, it is important to avoid abrupt transitions in scale and use at the boundary of adjoining land uses zones. In these areas, it is necessary to avoid developments, which would be detrimental to the amenities of the more environmentally sensitive zone. For instance, in zones abutting residential areas particular attention must be paid to the uses, scale and density and appearance of development proposals and to landscaping and screening proposals in order to protect the amenities of these residential areas.

3.4 Specific Objectives

As a result of the discussion under each of the eight headings as outlined in Section 2, certain objectives have been formulated. The objectives under each heading are set out below, in table form, in addition to the expected time frame for their realisation and the agencies responsible for their implementation.

3.4.1 Housing and Population

| Specific Objective | Map Ref | Action By | Funding and Support Services | Time scale |
|--|----------------|---|--|-------------------------------|
| To protect the residential amenity of existing dwellings | H1 | Local Authority through the development control process | Developers, Landowners & Local Authority through development control process | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To reserve an adequate area of land to provide for a link between Main Street and New road | H2 | Developers, Landowners & Local Authority | Developers, Landowners & Local Authority through development control process | Long term |
| To provide an area of public open space in the centre of Mooncoin | H3 | Developers, Landowners & Local Authority | Developers, Landowners & Local Authority through dev.control process | Long term |
| To ensure a high standard in design, layout, provision of open space, landscaping and variation in house type and size in new residential developments | H4 | Developers, Landowners & Local Authority | Developers, Landowners & Local Authority through development control process | Ongoing from adoption of plan |

| | | | | |
|---|-----|---|--|------------------------------------|
| To apply the rural housing policy of the County Development Plan, 2002 outside the development boundary | H5 | Local Authority | Local Authority | Ongoing |
| To encourage the provision of landscaped pedestrian and bicycle links between and within residential areas and the town centre | H6 | Developers, landowners & Local authority | Developers, landowners & Local authority | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To ensure that infill development is integrated successfully with existing development in the vicinity in terms of scale, character, finishes, building line and architectural features | H7 | Developers, landowners & Local authority | Developers, landowners & Local authority | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To ensure that the local community participates in and has access to the planning system | H8 | Local Authority, local community, community development organisations | Local Authority, Community Development Organisations | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To implement the Housing Strategy contained in appendix A of the County Development Plan 2002 | H9 | Local Authority | N/A | Ongoing from adoption of the plan |
| To ensure that an adequate amount of land is included in the development boundary of the town to cater for its expansion over the period of the plan | H10 | Local Authority | N/A | On going from adoption of the plan |
| To ensure the maintenance and preservation of housing within the town centre, and to encourage continued residential use of upper floors. To encourage the building of new residential infill development where vacant plots exist | H11 | Local authority through the development control process | Developers, landowners & local authority through the development control process | On going from adoption of the plan |
| To facilitate the improvement and enhancement of the existing council built housing estates in partnership with the residents | H12 | Local authority housing section, SEHB and local residents association | Local authority housing section, SEHB & local residents association | On going from adoption of the plan |
| To encourage planned housing development of serviced lands within the development boundary. The Planning Authority will require that serviced/serviceable lands will be developed in depth and at sustainable densities. The use of degraded or brown field sites will be preferred and utilised where possible in order to improve the environmental character of the town | H13 | Developers, landowners & local authority | Developers, landowners & local authority through the development control process | On going from adoption of the plan |
| To encourage sensitive conversion and reuse of historic structures, possibly to residential or tourist accommodation, where an original use has become redundant | H14 | Local Authority, Developers/ Community Organisations, Duchas, DOELG | Local Authority, Developers/ Community Organisations, Duchas, DOELG | On going from adoption of the plan |

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|---|-----|---|--|------------------------------------|
| To have a good social mix in new residential developments providing a range of unit types/sizes and to require that a predominance of the dwellings in any multiple unit residential scheme are large, higher value, family dwellings | H15 | Developers, landowners & local authority | Developers, landowners & local authority through the development control process | On going from adoption of the plan |
| To zone an area of land for the sale of serviced sites for the development of large, detached, low density dwellings | H16 | Local Authority | Developers, Landowners | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To assess any new development having regard to the development potential of adjoining land | H17 | Local Authority through the development Control process | Developers, landowners & local authority through the development control process | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To ensure the integration of adjoining residential schemes, where appropriate, in relation to pedestrian and cycleway links, public open space provision and scheme layout | H18 | Local Authority through the development Control process | Developers, landowners & local authority through the development control process | Ongoing from adoption of plan |

3.4.2 Infrastructure

| Specific Objective | Map Ref | Action By | Funding and Support services | Time scale |
|--|----------------|---|--|-------------------------------|
| To maintain and improve sewerage services | I1 | Local Authority | Local Authority, DOELG | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To prohibit the connection to the sewerage system of any proposed development out of phase with the overall development of the town or where the existing services are committed for other development | I2 | Local Authority through the development control process | Local Authority | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To preserve free from development the way leaves of all public sewers | I3 | Local Authority through the development control process | Local Authority, Developers, Landowners | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To secure the upgrading of the existing sewerage treatment plant through agreements with developers and/or landowners under the serviced land initiative administered by the Department of the Environment | I4 | Local Authority, Developers, Landowners | Local Authority, Developers, Landowners, DOELG | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To provide for the piping of the open drain on the Doornane road | I5 | Local Authority, Developers, Landowners | Local Authority, Developers, Landowners, DOELG | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To provide sufficient water to serve all lands zoned for development in this | I6 | Local Authority | Local Authority, DOELG | Ongoing from |

| | | | | |
|--|-----|---|---|-------------------------------|
| plan | | | | adoption of plan |
| To continuously monitor water quality in the area to ensure the maintenance of high water quality standards | I7 | Local Authority | Local Authority | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To preserve free from development the way leaves of all public water mains | I8 | Local Authority through the development control process | Local Authority, Developers, Landowners | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To ensure Mooncoin has an adequate solid waste collection system | I9 | Local Authority | Local Authority, Private Waste Collectors | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To continue to work with and encourage the prevention, minimisation, re-use, recycling and safe disposal of waste in line with the South East Regional Waste Management Plan | I10 | Local Authority | Local Authority | Ongoing from adoption of plan |

3.4.3 Employment and Economy

| Specific Objective | Map Ref | Action By | Funding and Support services | Time scale |
|---|----------------|---|---|-------------------------------|
| To encourage a mix of land use and job/employment creation initiatives and provision on appropriately zoned and serviced land | E1 | Local Authority, BNS, Enterprise Ireland, IDA, landowners, developers | Local Authority, BNS, Enterprise Ireland, IDA, landowners, developers | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To have all new industrial developments appropriately landscaped and screened | E2 | Local Authority in conjunction with developers | Developers | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To encourage the upgrading and expansion of existing retail outlets and the development of new outlets in the town centre to serve local need | E3 | Local Authority, landowners, developers | Local Authority, landowners, developers | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To facilitate and encourage the development of facilities catering for tourists in Mooncoin | E4 | Kilkenny Tourism, SERTA, Local Authority, local community, developers | Kilkenny Tourism, SERTA, Local Authority, local community | Ongoing from adoption of plan |

3.4.4 Education and Training

| Specific Objective | Map Ref | Action By | Funding and Support services | Time scale |
|----------------------------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| To facilitate the development of | E & | Local Authority, | Department of | Ongoing |

| | | | | |
|--|--------|--|---|-------------------------------|
| educational opportunities and facilities to meet the needs of the existing and future population | T1 | schools, VEC, in conjunction with Department of Education | Education, VEC | from adoption of plan |
| To co-operate with the Department of Education in the provision of an adequate number of school places to serve the needs of the town's population | E & T2 | Local Authority, Schools, VEC, in conjunction with Department of Education | Department of Education, VEC | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To co-operate with the Department of Education in the provision of an assembly hall for the Girl's National School | E & T3 | Girl's National School, Department of Education, Local Authority | Girl's National School, Department of Education | Long term |
| To co-operate with the Department of Education in the provision of adequate facilities to serve the schools in the town | E & T4 | Schools, VEC, Department of Education, Local Authority | Schools, Department of Education, VEC | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To support the continuation of the Fás Community Employment Scheme or other equivalent/replacement scheme | E & T5 | Fás, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment | Fás, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment | Ongoing from adoption of plan |

3.4.5 Transport

| Specific Objective | Map Ref | Action By | Funding and Support services | Time scale |
|---|----------------|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| To improve and widen the footpaths along Main street | T1 | Local Authority, landowners, developers | Local Authority | Medium term |
| To require appropriate public lighting as part of any new residential development | T2 | Local Authority through development control process | Developers | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To carry out a review of public lighting after 2003, and examine its extension to the Doornane and Pollrone Roads | T3 | Local Authority | Local Authority | Medium term |
| To provide for the delineation of car-parking spaces and a circulation area in the Church car park | T4 | Local Authority | Local Authority | Long term |
| To prepare a traffic management plan for the town having regard for the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists and motorised transport alike on completion of the bypass | T5 | | | |
| To implement a safe car-parking system at both the Boys National School and the Vocational School | T6 | Local Authority, Schools | Schools, Local Authority | Medium term |
| To investigate how a safe pedestrian crossing facility can be provided at the Girls National School and at the Boys | T7 | Local Authority, Schools | Schools, Local Authority | Medium term |

| | | | | |
|---|-----|--|---|-------------------------------|
| National School and Vocational School having regard to the need criteria and financing | | | | |
| To provide a safe pedestrian crossing facility on Main Street in the town having regard to the need criteria and financing | T8 | Local Authority | Local Authority, NRA | Long term |
| To review the speed limits in Mooncoin during the period of this plan | T9 | Local Authority | Local Authority, NRA | Medium term |
| To assess any new development having regard to the development potential of adjoining land | T10 | Local Authority through development control process | Developers, landowners, Local Authority | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To provide for appropriate pedestrian and cycleway linkages between all new and existing developments | T11 | Local Authority, developers through development control process | Local Authority and Developers | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To prepare a traffic management plan for the town, having regard for the safe movement of pedestrians, cyclists and motorised transport alike on completion of the bypass | T12 | Local Authority | Local Authority | Medium term |
| To co-operate with bus operators to improve the comfort of the existing bus stop | T13 | Local Authority and Bus operators | Bus operators | Medium term |
| To review the location of the existing bus stop in the town so as to obtain an optimum location | T14 | Local Authority and Bus operators | Local Authority and Bus operators | Medium term |
| To ensure adequate car parking spaces are provided in all new developments | T15 | Local Authority and Developers through development control process | Developers, Local Authority | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To provide double yellow lines on both sides of Main street and to implement parking control enforcement | T16 | Local Authority | Local Authority, NRA | Medium term |
| To co-operate with the SEHB in order to provide adequate car parking arrangements at Mooncoin Health Centre | T17 | Local Authority, SEHB | SEHB, Local Authority | Medium term |
| To provide disabled car parking spaces at appropriate locations throughout the town | T18 | Local Authority | Local Authority, developers | Medium term |

3.4.6 Community Facilities – Recreation

| Specific Objective | Map Ref | Action By | Funding and Support services | Time scale |
|---|----------------|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| To provide quality open space to meet the needs of the existing and future population | R1 | Local Authority, landowners and Developers | Local Authority and Developers | Ongoing from adoption |

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|--|----|---|---|-------------------------------|
| | | | | of plan |
| To ensure that all residential developments address adjoining open space to provide for their passive supervision | R2 | Local Authority, developers through development control process | Developers | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To protect existing open spaces and recreational uses from encroachment by other uses | R3 | Local Authority, developers through development control process | Developers | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To support the provision of a suitably equipped playground, in line with EU standard EN1176 for the design and management of play area equipment, in conjunction with the provision of open space, in an appropriate location to serve the town's population | R4 | Local Authority, Residents Associations, Community development groups | Local Authority, Residents Associations, Community development groups | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To facilitate the provision of facilities for the soccer club in or nearer the town | R5 | Local Authority, Soccer club, landowner | Local Authority, Soccer club, landowner | Long term |

3.4.7 Amenity Enhancement

| Specific Objective | Map Ref | Action By | Funding and Support services | Time scale |
|---|----------------|--|--|--|
| To seek the conservation and preservation of the buildings listed in the Record of Protected Structures | A1 | Local Authority, Duchas, DoELG, Landowners | Local Authority, Duchas, DoELG and landowners | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To seek the undergrounding of all utility cables in the town | A2 | Local Authority, Service Providers | Local Authority, Service Providers | Medium term |
| To preserve the appearance of the town, with control of shopfronts and advertising | A3 | Local Authority through development control process | Local Authority, Developers, Shop owners, businesses | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To encourage and provide for the sensitive redevelopment of derelict sites in the town | A4 | Local Authority, developers, through development control process | Local Authority, developers, community development organisations | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To implement the Derelict Sites Act 1990 in order to ensure the removal of dereliction within the Plan period as resources permit | A5 | Local Authority | Local Authority | Implement as derelict sites are identified |
| To require appropriate planting of semi-mature trees in any new development and to preserve and augment existing mature trees and hedgerows | A6 | Local Authority, Developers, through development control process | Local Authority, Developers | Ongoing from adoption of plan |
| To encourage the appropriate planting of semi-mature trees through the centre | A7 | Local Authority, Developers, Tidy towns, Development | Local Authority, Developers, Tidy towns, | Medium term |

| | | | | |
|--|----|--|---|------------------------------------|
| | | Association | Development Association | |
| To ensure the protection and/or conservation as appropriate of the non designated sites outlined as areas of ecological interest in the plan and to control development which would be inimical to the preservation or conservation of their essential character | A8 | Dúchas, Local Authority, community, landowners | Dúchas, Kilkenny Tourism, SERTA, An Bord Fáilte, BNS and Leader | On going from adoption of the plan |

3.4.8 Community Supports – Social Services

| Specific Objective | Map Ref | Action By | Funding and support services | Time scale |
|--|---------|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| To maintain and enhance the role of Mooncoin as a local market centre for its rural catchment area and as a centre to service its anticipated expansion during the period of the Plan | S1 | Local Authority, Local retailers | Local Authority, Local retailers | Medium term |
| To provide a library service in Mooncoin | S2 | Local Authority | Local Authority | Long term |
| To support the provision of a transport service for the elderly to the Young at Heart Club | S3 | Local Authority, local community, SEHB, BNS | SEHB, local community, BNS | Medium term |
| To co-operate with the SEHB in the provision of any health care services for the town | S4 | Local Authority, SEHB | SEHB | Ongoing from adoption of the plan |
| To support the upgrading of the existing Health Centre and the provision of adequate parking facilities to serve it | S5 | SEHB, Local Authority | SEHB, Local Authority | Short term |
| To support the provision of a day care centre for the elderly in Mooncoin | S6 | SEHB, Local Authority, local community | SEHB, local community | Long term |
| To support the provision of a dispensing chemist to cater for the needs in the town | S7 | SEHB, Local Authority, local community | SEHB, local community | Long term |
| To support the local community in seeking the provision of a resident doctors service for the town | S8 | S.E.H.B. Local Authority | S.E.H.B. Local Authority | Long term |
| To facilitate the development of a crèche in conjunction with the relevant statutory bodies and the local community on a suitable site within the village in line with the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Childcare Facilities | S9 | Local Authority / Local development group, County childcare committee | NDP county childcare committee, local authority, Department of Justice | Short Term |

3.5 Implementation

The realisation of these objectives over a period of time will, it is felt, significantly benefit the town, ensuring its orderly development and improvement.

The achievement of the objectives will be dependent on the availability of finance and the inclusion of the objectives in the work programmes of the County Council and the responsible agencies. The local community, through local associations such as Residents Associations and Tidy Towns, can play a huge role in contributing to the achievement of some of the objectives above. Kilkenny County Council's policy will be to facilitate and aid local organisations in this capacity.

This is intended to be an integrated plan, and the progression of formulating objectives from issues identified in the public consultation is the first step in enabling an integrated approach to implementation. Kilkenny County intends to fully participate in an Inter-Agency Working Group and to co-operate with other development and community agencies, such as Barrow Nore Suir Development to secure the implementation of this plan.

4 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section of the Proposed Plan is to ensure a high standard of design, layout and function for all new development, to conserve what is good in the existing built and natural environment, and to protect the amenities of the town.

In general, the development standards as outlined in Chapter 10 of the County Development Plan, 2002 will be adhered to in Mooncoin with the following stipulations attached. Where there is a conflict between the County Development Plan standards and the Mooncoin Plan the latter shall take precedence.

4.2 Infill Development and Streetscape

As described in Section 2.1.3, there is a need for consolidation of the streetscape through the centre of the town, to give an identity and sense of place to Mooncoin. Streetscape refers to the look of a particular road, regarding the arrangement and design of plots, buildings and materials, roads and footpaths, street furniture, open spaces and planting. Attractive and coherent streetscapes happen when all of these features reinforce and work with one another.

4.2.1 Building line

The historical building line of the Main Street has been interrupted in more recent years, with individual dwellings being set back from the road. This issue of building line needs to be addressed in any infill or large scale development proposal. The objective is to create an attractive, coherent streetscape pattern and a sense of enclosure. This will be achieved in the various design proposals by having regard to the arrangement and design of plots, buildings and materials, roads, footpaths, street furniture, open spaces and planting. See section 4.3 of the plan.

4.2.2 Height

In Mooncoin, there is a considerable variation in eaves height. New development should keep a level within the existing range of eaves and should have regard to the number of storeys of adjacent buildings.

4.2.3 Roofs

Most of the buildings in Mooncoin are slated or tiled. A new pitched roof should match existing roofs in pitch, span and covering material. Gabled roofs are to be encouraged, instead of hipped roofs.

4.2.4 Proportion

A typical street consists of a series of vertically proportioned units linked together. Large developments should be subdivided into a series of bays, especially at ground floor level, to be more in keeping with the pattern of the existing street frontage. Long horizontal lines look out of place and should be avoided; a fascia which extends across several bays should be broken up by pilasters or other vertical divisions. Strong emphasis at fascia level to form a distinct divide between ground floor and upper storeys is an important feature of townscapes and should be included in any new development.

4.3 New Residential Development

There are a number of sites designated in this Plan which could contain multiple unit residential schemes. The design of these schemes must contribute to the creation of a pleasant residential environment in a good quality urban design setting in the town of Mooncoin.

New developments shall seek to:

- *Reflect the local development patterns*
- *Avoid substantial repetition of one house type*
- *Respect the local characteristics and context of the site*
- *Respond to typical setting and garden forms of the town*
- *Refer to local buildings and variety of proportions and design.*
- *Refer to local distinctive details and materials*
- *Provide adequate privacy for individual houses, flats etc*
- *adequate provision for car parking, open space, landscaping and planting*
- *integration successfully with existing development and the preservation of features on site*

The triangular tract of land to the north of Main Street has been subdivided into Phase 1 and Phase 2 lands. Lands which have been designated as Phase 2 development will not be developed during the lifetime of this plan, as the services capacity does not exist for its development. This tract of land has only been developed along its road frontage, and the potential exists for in-depth, quality urban design in this area. An indicative line for a link road/ street will be reserved to link between Main street and New road. An indicative area of public open space will also be reserved bordering this link road. This open space should serve as a pleasant green link to connect the link road through to the graveyard and out to the Ballytarsney road.

All development proposals in this area will need to take cognisance of the development potential of the adjoining lands, and the objectives for a link road and public open space. Any development along the road frontage of New road should address the road. At present this road is not wide enough for two cars to pass, so a set-back will be required to allow for the upgrading and widening of this road, and the construction of footpaths and public lighting. A uniform building line at the back edge of the footpath should be applied. This level of development will not take place during the lifetime of this plan, but

it is important to highlight the long term goal so that applications on Phase 1 land does not prejudice the development of land in Phase 2.

4.3.1 Building Layout and Orientation

It is intended to create a coherent and environmentally comfortable public realm throughout Mooncoin. Accordingly, proposed layouts shall optimize solar orientation to both adjoining buildings and outdoor spaces. Layouts shall also have careful regard to prevailing wind direction with a view to reducing wind speeds in outdoor areas.

It is an aim to discourage the enclosure and isolation of individual housing estates and to promote the physical and social connectivity in a permeable network of streets and public spaces. Layouts shall promote this connectivity between phases of development. Large residential areas shall be broken into small functional and visual groups, which fulfil a social and aesthetic need for identity. These shall be designed to create safety for young children, facilitate social interaction and introduce a variety into the visual environment whilst avoiding a monotonous repetitive type development. Each group of houses should have its own visual identity, variation being achieved by layout, including building lines, house design, colour and hard and soft landscaping.

Long straight roads are not desirable in residential estate developments. Estate roads should incorporate gentle curves and physical traffic calming measures within the estate should be included at the planning application stage.

The provision of services and road layout of the development must have regard to 'Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas', Department of the Environment and Local Government.

All new residential development should take full account of the characteristics of the natural and built environment of the site, the views and vistas to and from the site, and its surrounding areas.

Passive supervision of the Public Realm is the most consistent and effective means of preventing anti-social behaviour. All public open spaces (hard and soft landscaped) shall be overlooked by adjoining accommodations to ensure passive surveillance. Back-land spaces, rear access lanes, blind corners and long side-garden walls shall be avoided so as to minimize the risk of anti-social activity.

Layouts, which give priority to the pedestrian and cyclists, will be encouraged. This can be achieved in smaller developments through shared surfaces for pedestrians and vehicles. Well-lit pedestrian links, separate from the main carriageways should be provided within the estate. These links should be overlooked as far as possible by dwellings and right angled bends should be avoided for security reasons.

4.3.2 Density

There is no set maximum or minimum density recommended. A high standard of architectural design and layout will be required in residential developments. The Council will seek to ensure that new developments have an individuality and a sense of place which is generated by the interaction between the physical characteristics and features of the site and its surroundings and the layout, landscaping and design of the new housing. It is the policy of the County Council that this high standard should not be diluted in newly constructed developments and that designs and layouts will be welcome which pay regard to the qualities and appearance of the existing area.

In determining suitable density, the character and amenities of the site and of the surrounding area will be considered along with the need for a variety of site sizes and house designs to encourage social mix and choice. In infill sites or in areas adjacent to the town centre, higher densities will be permitted subject to exceptional quality of design and finishes, proper provision for active and passive recreation and good living conditions, including privacy and adequate natural light, within each accommodation unit.

Regard should be had to 'Residential Density – Guidelines for Planning Authorities', Department of the Environment and Local Government, September 1999. This states (Par. 3.6.2) that on serviced lands in towns or villages not served by quality public transport, increased densities would be acceptable if they contributed to the enhancement of town or village form such as by reinforcing street patterns or assisting in the re-development of backlands.

As there will be no set minimum or maximum density specified in the Plan, the emphasis will be on providing a quality housing environment based on innovation and a design led approach.

In preparing applications for housing developments, designers and developers alike are advised to consult relevant publications for guidance such as

- *Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, Department of the Environment and Local Government, September 1999,
- *Essex Design guidelines for Residential and Mixed use areas* by Essex County Council and Essex Planning Officers Association, 1997.

4.3.3 Design

A variety of house types in developments of multiple housing will be encouraged with variations in house size, colour, materials, and designs.

In support of the Council's policy of reducing social exclusion, the Council will encourage developers to have regard to the requirements of people with disabilities, the elderly, and children are catered for in the supply design and layout of residential development.

The design of dwellings should bear a relationship to the existing fabric of the settlement of Mooncoin. Natural features or landmarks such as mature trees or vistas should help to determine the layout and orientation of the housing. The creation of 'land marks' within the estate, whether through retention of existing features or by the introduction of new features will be encouraged.

Dormer windows and flush fitting roof lights will be considered where appropriate. The majority of dwellings proposed throughout the town should in general be two storeys in height.

New development must recognise and be sympathetic to the existing town and help to renew the specific architectural traditions of the area e.g. lime plaster render, vertical fenestration, blue/black slates and boundary treatment to individual plots.

4.3.3.1 Materials

When designing, the type of materials to be used in new developments or improvements to existing properties should

- a) Fit in with the prevailing character of Mooncoin, and be designed to reflect and respect nearby colours, textures, materials, shapes, styles and proportions
- b) Utilise materials for extensions which match those of the existing property
- c) Ensure that replacement windows and doors respect the age and character of the building
- d) Encourage the re-use of appropriate building materials from buildings which have been unavoidably demolished

Roof slates/tiles of black, blue/black or grey will be favoured. In general there should be one principal external material. New development designs should avoid monotonous repetition by inclusion of subtle variation.

Some components that comprise the character of Mooncoin and should be used in new and refurbishment proposals include –

- Up and down timber sash windows
- Slated roofs
- Traditional chimneys
- Pitched roofs
- Painted plaster
- Limestone window dressings
- Vertical emphasis

4.3.4 Social Mix

There is a need to ensure that the future development of Mooncoin takes place in a more socially balanced manner. To achieve this, it is considered appropriate to seek a predominance of larger, higher value, family homes in any multiple unit residential scheme.

4.3.5 Ecology & Bio-diversity

Layouts should encourage bio-diversity by preserving and providing cover for species and where appropriate avoiding the culverting of watercourses and providing new water areas. Planting should normally use native trees and shrub species and native stock; tree species with berries are important for wintering birds; trees which support a high biomass of insects in summer are important for breeding birds; the setting aside of maintenance free areas and the avoidance or limitation of the use of herbicides and pesticides are all practices which will encourage bio-diversity.

4.3.6 Car Parking

Car parking shall be carefully designed to integrate successfully into its location in terms of layout, surface treatment and screen planting. New development will normally be required by the Planning Authority to provide adequate off-street car parking facilities.

Communal car parking arrangements will also be acceptable in residential developments. For security reasons, car parking should always be overlooked by housing. There should not be an excessive amount of car parking grouped together. The visual impact of large areas of car parking can be reduced by the judicious use of screen planting, low walls and the use of textured or coloured paving for car parking bays.

4.3.7 Public Open Space

The Council will normally expect all open space provision to take account of the following principles:

- Open space should be provided in a comprehensive and linked way, designed as an integral part of the development.
- Areas should be of a demonstrated recreational or amenity value. Small dysfunctional open spaces should be avoided.
- Wherever possible the majority of open space should be multi-functional. Areas for informal amenity and children's play should be combined.
- Areas should be easily and safely accessible from all dwellings, which the space is designed to serve.
- The design, location and appearance of open space areas should have regard to the amenities of nearby dwellings, for example, areas where children may play should normally be overlooked by the fronts of nearby dwellings to provide for maximum surveillance and overlooking
- Public open space areas should not be located so close to adjoining dwellings so as to cause undue noise or nuisance to existing or proposed residents.
- Attractive natural features should be protected and incorporated into open space areas. Tree planting should normally form an integral part of such open space areas.

To ensure implementation of open space provision the Council will attach appropriate planning conditions to permissions, and where necessary will enter into agreements with

developers. These will provide for the laying out and landscaping of open space areas in accordance with a details scheme to be agreed with the Council.

The Council will not normally permit new residential development unless open space is provided within the development to a minimum standard of 2.4 hectares per 1,000 population (circa 300 dwellings) or greater. Where a proposed development is located in close proximity to an established park area or zoned open space this may be relaxed depending on the nature and quality of existing provision. This relaxation will only be considered where the development pays a financial contribution towards the improvement of the open space so as to improve its quality and carrying capacity

Developers will be required to make suitable provision for the future management and maintenance of open space required under this policy where spaces and facilities are not taken in charge by the Local Authority.

Reduced provisions may only be acceptable in urban locations where there are more sustainable patterns of development and maximum use can be made of urban land or redevelopment schemes where open space is already available. With relatively high densities such as flats, townhouses or apartments, good quality landscaped open space should be provided.

Open space provision for smaller residential developments and schemes catering for special needs such as accommodation for the elderly will be considered more flexibly on its merits and having regard to the requirements of likely future residents.

Developers may also be required to provide an equipped children's playground in association with open space provision where a development scheme would be greater than 800 metres from an existing easily accessible equipped children's playground.

Developers will be required to make suitable provision for the future management and maintenance of open space required under this policy either through management companies or agreements with the planning authority.

Adequate areas of open space should be an integral part of any new residential development to meet the needs generated by that development. The overall standard of 2.4 hectares per 1000 population is recognised in the Residential Density Guidelines for Local Authorities and will normally be applied in assessing proposals for open space for children's play and informal amenity. In developments, which are adjacent to and provide for easy access to significant areas of existing public open space a lesser standard of provision may be acceptable.

It is an objective of the Council to secure a high quality of design layout and landscaping in all new residential developments consistent with the Residential Density Guidelines.

Integrated pleasant, attractive and landscaped open space should form an intrinsic element of new residential development. The precise location, type and design of open

space provision will be negotiated with developers according to the specific characteristics of the development, the site and its context. All open spaces proposed by developers should be designed and set out by suitably qualified landscape architects or similar design professionals so as to ensure a high standard and consistency with good design and layout practice.

Developers should consider providing a variety of open spaces both formal and informal semi-natural areas should be provided such as wetlands, woodlands, meadows, green corridors as well as formal gardens, and seating areas. These elements work best as part of a structure to the provision of open space.

4.3.7.1 Management plan for Public Open Space

A detailed landscaping plan should be prepared as an integral part of the overall development of any residential estate and submitted as part of the planning application for the development. Landscaping is an integral part of any development, and should be designed for long term ease of maintenance. The potential of existing site features should be fully explored and planning applications should include an accurate landscape survey plan. Planting should be used as for screening purposes and as an essential element of visual amenity. Planting schemes should include characteristic varieties such as chestnut, oak, lime and beech trees. Existing trees and hedgerows should be retained wherever possible and incorporated into the development.

A management plan for the maintenance of open space should be provided as part of the development proposal. This plan will outline how, and by whom (whether a management company or the residents themselves), the open space will be maintained.

The landscaping should be appropriate to the function of the space and proposed long term maintenance plan. Thus, while seeding with grass may be appropriate for larger 'kick about' spaces, grass requires high maintenance. Tree and shrub planting or decorative paving, are lower maintenance alternatives which may be more appropriate in smaller and heavily trafficked spaces.

Passive supervision of the Public Realm is the most consistent and effective means of preventing anti-social behaviour. All public open spaces (hard and soft landscaped) shall be overlooked by adjoining accommodations to ensure passive surveillance. Back-land spaces, rear access lanes, blind corners and long side-garden walls shall be avoided so as to minimize the risk of anti-social activity.

4.3.8 Private Open Space

An adequate amount of private open space should be provided within the curtilage of each dwelling. In general the requirement will be 60 to 75 sq.m minimum for 3/4/5 bedroomed houses in order to ensure that most household activities are accommodated and at the same offers visual delight, receive some sunshine and encourage plant growth. A standard of 22 metres will normally be required between directly opposing first floor windows. However where adequate levels of privacy are provided this depth may be reduced.

The boundaries of rear gardens should generally be provided with a permanent durable barrier with a minimum height of 1.4 metres. Where rear gardens back onto public areas, excluding a public roadway, this height should be increased to 1.8 metres.

4.3.9 Integration of Residential Developments

In assessing any new development in Mooncoin, the Council may have regard to the development potential of adjoining land and will assess any application, with a view to providing for the development of these lands in an integrated manner.

This applies to any land parcel, and relates to all aspects of development including open space provision, access arrangements and pedestrian and cycle links.

For example, any development adjoining the land for which a housing development has been granted under file reference 00/678, to the south of Main street, must take cognisance of the layout of the scheme which has been granted. In this scheme, the open space adjoins the site boundary to the north and northeast. A development proposal on the adjoining land must have regard to this open space, and could provide for the integrating of the public open space with that proposed. In particular, a pedestrian and cycle link should be provided, linking the two. The distinction between the two residential schemes should be maintained by the use of design and detailing, to give each its own distinct identity.

4.3.10 Serviced sites

A site has been designated in the town for the development of serviced sites. This site has been selected as appropriate as it is level and well screened and appropriate access arrangements can be provided.

This site would provide for the development of sites for individuals seeking to build their own homes on large plots, and should provide for a range of house types and sizes. Maximum recommended densities for this zoning would be in the range of two to five to the acre, depending on the quality of design. The applicant for site development will be required to produce a house design brief in consultation with the Council which should be prepared by a qualified architect (RIAI or equivalent). The applicant for site development will also be required to seek permission for “other relevant works” which will include works additional to roads and services – i.e. common landscaping, building platform formation etc..

For any such development, there should be a continuity of design in terms of scale, compatibility and general harmony. Applicants will also be expected to employ the services of qualified architects (RIAI or equivalent) when applying for individual houses. No house should exceed 7.5 metres in height.

4.3.11 Road and Estate Names

The naming of residential developments shall be approved by the County Council. The names of residential developments shall reflect local and Irish place names for the locality as far as possible. No development work or advertising of housing schemes shall be allowed until the name has been agreed with the Planning Authority.

4.3.12 Services

All services including electricity, public lighting cables, telephone and television cables shall be provided underground in new housing developments. Provision should be made for the unobtrusive siting of transformer stations, pumping stations and other necessary service buildings.

4.3.13 Apartments/Duplex Style

In general apartments will be required to have the following minimum floor areas

| Apartment Type | Minimum Floor Area |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| One Bed | 46 m2 |
| Two Bed | 65 m2 |
| Three Bed | 93sq.m |

The internal dimensions of all rooms should be proportioned to allow for an adequate space for normal living purposes. The shape and layout of rooms should maximise the amenity of residents.

All living room, kitchens and bedrooms should minimise overlooking of adjoining/adjacent residences and should be so located so to avoid facing towards nearby high boundary or gable walls.

4.3.14 Access for People with Disabilities

Access requirements for physically disabled persons should be incorporated into the design of buildings and layouts of developments likely to be used by the general public and will be a material consideration of the Planning Authority in assessing applications.

Developers should have regard to the criteria set out in the following in the preparation of development proposals

- Access for the disabled – minimum design criteria, published by the National Rehabilitation Board
- Part M of the Building Regulations 1997 to 2000
- Buildings for Everyone – Access and uses for all the citizens, by the National Rehabilitation Board, 1998.

The needs of people with disabilities should be taken into account in the design and construction of footpaths and parking areas. Footpaths in private commercial and housing

developments and public housing developments shall be dished at junctions. Parking areas should make provision for spaces for disabled drivers and such spaces should be located in the most convenient locations for ease of use.

Tactile indicators are becoming increasingly more common. Tactile paving surfaces can be used to convey important information to visually impaired pedestrians about their environment. The provision of tactile surfaces for the visually impaired in all developments will be encouraged.

4.4 Car parking and Loading

New development will normally be required by the Planning Authority to provide adequate off-street car parking facilities. Such facilities shall cater for the immediate and anticipated future demands of the development, and shall be located within the site or in close proximity to such development. Car parking facilities shall generally be provided behind in a manner that reduces its visual impact to a minimum such as behind the building line and the use of screening.

The dimension of car parking bays shall be a minimum of 4.8m by 2.4m.

Where parking space is proposed in front of existing premises, existing railings or boundary walls shall be retained. They should be provided with proper public lighting facilities and shall be clearly demarcated. Car parking areas should be properly landscaped by the provision of trees, shrubs and grassed areas in order to ensure that damage to the visual amenities is avoided. Parking bays shall be adequately delineated.

Where the developer is unable to comply with the car parking standards for the development set out in the table below, a financial contribution may be acceptable in lieu of car parking provision, which will be related to the cost of providing such facilities.

In developments of an industrial or commercial nature, developers will be required to provide loading or unloading facilities sufficient to meet the demand of such development

Kilkenny County Council may modify the requirements of loading and unloading facilities in any particular case where it considers it would be in the interests of proper planning and sustainable development of the area to do so. Parking and service spaces must be located on site so as to prevent street obstruction and should be located where possible to the rear and side of the buildings and in such a manner to ensure minimal impact on the amenity of adjoining properties.

Where a number of uses are contained within one development, the various uses shall be separated and the overall parking requirements for the development shall be assessed relative to each separate use in order to compute the overall parking requirement for the development (e.g. in a hotel the function rooms, bars etc. shall be assessed as separate from the bedroom provision).

In addition to the above requirements, developers will be required to provide and maintain loading and circulation facilities sufficient to meet the likely demand of each development.

Car Parking Standards for Various Land Uses

| <i>Land Use</i> | <i>Parking Spaces per Unit</i> |
|---|--|
| Dwelling House (Residential areas) | A minimum of 1 car space per dwelling unit 0.25 per dwelling for visitor parking |
| Flat or Bed-sitter | 1.25 spaces per unit |
| Schools | 1 space for every classroom plus 4 additional spaces |
| Churches, theatres, Public halls | 1 car space per 10 seats. |
| Hotels, hostels and guesthouses | 1 car space per bedroom |
| Hotel function rooms | 1 space per 10 sq. metres |
| Public houses, inc. hotel bar | 1 car space for every 5 sq. m of bar and lounge floor area. |
| Shopping centres, supermarkets, department stores | 5 car spaces for every 93 m ² of gross floor area. |
| Shops | 1 car space per 10sq. metres |
| Restaurants, cafes | 1 car space per 20 m ² gross floor area |
| Banks and offices | 1 car space per 15m ² of gross floor area and additional space to be determined by the Planning Authority. |
| Industry | 1 car space for every 60m ² of gross industrial floor area and operational space to be determined by the Planning Authority. |
| Warehousing | 1 car space for every 100m ² of gross floor area and additional parking space to be determined by the Planning Authority for each individual development. |
| Retail Warehousing | 1 car space for every 35 sq. meters of net retail floor space |
| Golf or Pitch and Putt courses | 4 car spaces per hole. |
| Golf driving ranges, shooting ranges | 1 space per 2m of base line/ per trap |
| Sports grounds and sports clubs | 1 car space for every 15m ² of floor area and 6 spaces for each pitch and additional operational space to be determined by the Planning Authority. |
| Hospital | 1.50 spaces per bed |
| Clinics/Medical practices | 2 spaces per consulting room |

In the case of any use not specified above, the Planning Authority will determine the parking requirements, having regard to the traffic levels likely to be generated as a result of the development.

In implementing the car parking standards, the Council will reserve the right to alter the requirements having regard to each particular development.

4.5 Public Utilities

The Planning Authority will require that all wires and cables for the provision of public utility services shall be ducted underground to preserve the amenity and visual character of an area, and in the interests of public safety.

4.6 Shopfronts and Advertising

The over-riding principle for the design of shopfronts and the design and placement of advertisements and signs should be restraint. Chapter 10 of the County Development Plan lays down specified standards, which will be adhered to in Mooncoin.

4.7 The Likely Significant Effects on the Environment of Implementing the Proposed Mooncoin Local Area Plan

The Planning and Development Act 2000 requires that a Local Area Plan shall include information on the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan.

4.7.1 Description of the Proposed Local Area Plan

The Local Area Plan lands comprise approximately 27 hectares (67 acres) of residential development and 8 hectares (20 acres) of mixed use development.

4.7.2 Identification of likely significant effects on the environment

The likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the proposed Mooncoin Local Area Plan are categorised as follows:

- Human beings (includes population, economic and social activity)
- Flora and fauna
- Material assets (includes infrastructure)
- Archaeology and cultural heritage
- Landscape.

Information on each likely significant effect together with proposed mitigation measures is outlined below.

4.7.2.1 Human beings

Environmental baseline: The population of Mooncoin ED was recorded as 855 at the 1996 Census. The lands identified for development are all contiguous to the existing built up area of Mooncoin and are within walking distance of the Main Street. There is limited employment associated with the current agricultural use of much of the zoned lands.

Likely significant effects:

- Development of additional residential units
- Population increase
- Greater demand for retailing, services, leisure and community facilities and amenities
- Increased demand for transport and travel

Proposed mitigation measures:

- Objectives to ensure the provision of adequate supporting services, facilities and amenities in association with new residential development
- Objectives for the provision of an adequate road network to cater for increased traffic
- Objectives for high quality architectural design, layout and landscape treatment of all buildings and spaces

4.7.2.2 Material Assets

Traffic:

Environmental baseline: There are a number of roads existing in Mooncoin at present.

Likely significant effects:

- The development of additional lands will increase the amount of local traffic

Proposed mitigation measures:

- Provision of an integrated network of walking and cycling routes
- Traffic calming – pedestrian crossings

Water Supply:

Environmental baseline: Mooncoin is served by the combined Mooncoin and Fiddown Water supply scheme. This scheme has a design population of 12,950 and is currently serving approximately 9,004. Water supply volumes in the scheme are adequate to meet future needs.

Likely significant effects:

- Increased demand for water supply

Proposed mitigation measures:

- New developments will only be permitted subject to adequate capacity in water supply being available

Foul and Surface Water Drainage:

Environmental baseline: The development of additional lands will lead to an increase in the demand for foul water and surface water drainage. Mooncoin is currently served by a primary sewerage treatment system with capacity for a PE of 975, but this is being upgraded to a full secondary system with a design population of 2,000.

Likely significant effects:

Infrastructure will be improved through additional development

Proposed mitigation measures:

Improved foul drainage facilities to cater for new housing developments

4.7.2.3 Flora and fauna

Environmental baseline: Consultants carried out a Flora & fauna study in order to survey and compile an inventory of the flora and fauna of the area.

Likely significant effects:

The principal effect will be the loss of habitat and bio diversity arising from developments on previously agricultural /rural lands.

Proposed mitigation measures:

- Identification of the significant areas of interest for flora and fauna.
- Objectives for the preservation of these areas through the zoning objectives of the plan.
- Much of any new development will occur on lands which are considered less important in terms of flora and fauna diversity.

4.7.2.4 Archaeology and cultural heritage

Environmental baseline:

There is a protected structures in the town at present, in addition to a number of proposed protected structures.

Likely significant effects:

- Possible degradation of buildings of architectural interest.

Proposed mitigation measures:

- The inclusion in the List of protected structures of the buildings of architectural and historic interest

4.7.2.5 Other possible effects

Other possible effects on the environment include those on air, water soils and climate. These are considered to be less significant in the context of the Local Area Plan than those outlined above.

4.7.3 Consideration of Alternatives: Could Development Take Place Elsewhere

The development of Mooncoin will have a significant impact as a result of the change of use of areas from agricultural and fallow use to residential, employment and social uses. It is a policy of the Council to encourage development within such designated towns and villages where the infrastructure and services exist. Development in such settlements constitutes a more efficient use of existing resources.

The development of land locally must however be seen in the context of providing for local development demands, and ensuring that realistic alternatives exist to the development of one off houses in the country side. The development of lands locally and in a centralised location is more sustainable type of development than the development of many individual houses in an uncoordinated manner.

APPENDIX 1 – PROTECTED STRUCTURES

Existing and Proposed Additions to Protected Structures in Mooncoin

| Protected Structure | Description | Location | Map Ref. No. | RPS No. |
|------------------------|--|--|--------------|---------|
| Catholic Church | Rectangular plan, single cell church of five bays, dated 1869 | Crossroads in town | 1 | C282 |
| Thatched House | Vernacular house of three bays and two storeys with a rectangular plan | North of Parish Hall, Main Street | 2 | |
| Thatched House | Three bay, single storey, rectangular plan house | Opposite Health Centre, Main Street | 3 | |
| Thatched House | Three bay, two storey, rectangular plan, gable-ended house flanked by single storey lean-tos | Opposite Health Centre, on Main Street | 4 | |

Note: Items with an RPS number are existing Protected Structures, those without are proposed additions.

APPENDIX 2 – ECOLOGICAL SURVEY

Ecological Survey of the Area
to be Included in the
Mooncoin Local Area Plan

Prepared for

Kilkenny County Council

By:

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February 2003

1. INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared on behalf of Kilkenny County Council prior to the preparation of a Local Area Plan for the village of Mooncoin, Co Kilkenny.

This study was undertaken by Roger Goodwillie, Ecologist, of CAAS (Environmental Services) Ltd. It gives an account of habitats within the environs of the village and assesses their ecological importance. It is based on fieldwork carried out in the early part of 2003 so cannot give a full description of flora and fauna. However the relative value of habitats can be assessed even at this time. Additional information from Padraig Comerford (Dúchas) is acknowledged with thanks.

2. DESCRIPTION OF AREA

*Note: Areas referenced are indicated on **Map 1** attached.*

The study area is mostly level land though it rises somewhat in the fields south of the old N24. There are three settlements variously linked by housing development - Mooncoin, Filbuckstown and Ballytarsney - the latter centred around a large farm. The land is all agricultural, except for a poorly-drained area south of Ballytarsney where there is forestry. Otherwise the fields are in intensive grass or tillage, involving potatoes and other vegetables.

In this landscape there is very little of habitat interest, no rivers or streams, no woodland and no glacial features or quarries: the only quarry at the northern end having been filled in. What is left is a region of poor drainage in the north centre where old laneways and ditches flood in winter and the fields are planted with conifers; also some tree groups around houses and a few hedges of above average interest.

2.1 Ditches South of Ballytarsney (Area 1)

The land at Ballytarsney drains southward into a flat area of small fields lined by ditches and drains. Some of the most significant floods cover old laneways where water from the two marginal ditches has met in the centre to form muddy pools shaded by the hedges above. Typically the hedges have willows *Salix cinerea* and privet *Ligustrum vulgare* and the water areas water starwort *Callitriche* spp, brooklime *Veronica beccabunga*, fool's watercress *Apium nodiflorum*, great willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum* and occasionally water crowfoot *Ranunculus omiophyllus*, water figwort *Scrophularia auriculata*, buckler fern *Dryopteris dilatata*, distant sedge *Carex remota* or reed grass *Phalaris arundinacea* (as beside the Bog road).

Where they are associated with more open sites these floods frequently have breeding frogs. In winter snipe were seen in several places and two teal were unexpected flushed from one pool.

2.2 Forested Area (Area 2)

Two central fields of wet grassland have been planted fairly recently with spruce and link into a larger area of ash outside the area. Some of the preceding flora still survives such as Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, soft rush *Juncus effusus*, lady's smock *Cardamine pratensis*, knapweed *Centaurea nigra* and meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis* and these grow between the trees where willows, gorse *Ulex europaeus* and a few young oaks *Quercus* sp. also find space.

A field adjoining the forest on the south-west shows the pre-existing vegetation of wet grassland. It was mown once in 2002 for hay (though the bales were left in the field) and adds hairy sedge *Carex hirta*, sharp-flowered rush *Juncus acutiflorus*, false oat *Arrhenatherum elatius* and sorrel *Rumex acetosa* to the list above. Purple loosestrife *Lythrum salicaria* grows in the ditches around it. It is likely to be planted itself in due course and is not of vegetational value.

The wildlife value of such stands of trees is limited. They offer cover for pheasant, fox, rabbit, pygmy shrew etc and provide nesting sites for a significant range of passerine (song) birds for example dunnock, wren, robin, stonechat, willow warbler, whitethroat, redpoll and linnet. All of these species potentially occur but the limited extent of the trees makes important numbers unlikely.

2.3 Laneways (Area 3)

Laneways to gain access to the agricultural lands are well developed, in keeping with the old settlements and divisions of land. In particular Ballytarnsey gives rise to a network linking eventually with the N24 east of the town. These lanes are characterised by tall banks/walls on each side, sometimes with hedges of hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* or elm *Ulmus procera*. Near to Ballytarnsey they are little clipped and the bushes reach 4-5m whereas behind Filbuckstown the walls themselves are more common, usually covered in ivy *Hedera helix* with nettles *Urtica dioica*. Trees are relatively few anywhere though there is a group of cherry *Prunus avium* beside the planted ash. Here and elsewhere the hedge flora is quite limited. It includes

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Lonicera periclymenum</i> | honeysuckle |
| <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i> | cow parsley |
| <i>Polystichum setiferum</i> | shield fern |
| <i>Phyllitis scolopendrium</i> | hartstongue |
| <i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i> | male fern |
| <i>Veronica chamaedrys</i> | germander speedwell |
| <i>Vicia sepium</i> | bush vetch |
| <i>Fragaria vesca</i> | wild strawberry |
| <i>Glechoma hederacea</i> | ground ivy |
| <i>Geum urbanum</i> | wood avens |
| <i>Umbilicus rupestris</i> | wall pennywort |

The lane at the western end of the area adds holly *Ilex aquifolium* (the only place it was seen in), primrose *Primula vulgaris* and false brome *Brachypodium sylvaticum* as well as much daisy *Bellis perennis* and bittercress *Cardamine hirsuta*.

2.4 Tree Groups (Area 4)

Trees are scarce in the hedges as noted so the presence of two groups, one in the town and one at the church, assumes more importance to wildlife than it might otherwise have.

The former consists of the beech, alder and oak planted around the garden of the Manor House and leading off into the more isolated ash of the hedges to the north. The main trees have a small rookery (?20 nests) and cover a ground vegetation of celandine *Ranunculus ficaria* and ivy *Hedera helix*. They have potential importance to bats as there are suitable roofs and cavities for roosting by these animals.

The other trees are made up of horse chestnut, beech and sycamore planted near the church and convent and the Lawson's cypress that run from here behind the adjacent school. Neither have a high value but there seem to be a few rooks' nests. The trees also provide habitat for mistle thrush, great tit, jackdaw, chiffchaff - species that do not take to hedges.

3. CONCLUSION

The Mooncoin area has little in the way of habitat or wildlife interest and the few features mentioned above are of minor importance. However if avoided by or fitted in to future developments they could provide a wildlife element of potential value to education and recreation.

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