



South-East Regional Authority



Regional Planning Guidelines for the South-East Region 2010-2022

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South-East Regional Authority



Regional Planning Guidelines for the South-East Region 2010-2022



Made by the South-East Regional Authority on 26th July 2010

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| | | | |
|------------------|---|--------------------|---|
| AA | Appropriate Assessment (also known as Habitats Directive Assessment) | LAP | Local Area Plan |
| CEB | City/County Enterprise Board | LCA | Landscape Character Assessment |
| CERT | Training and Research body in the Tourism & Hospitality Sector | LEADER | EU Community Initiative for Rural Development implemented through a network of 36 Local Action Groups |
| CFRAMS | Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies | LUTS | Land Use and Transportation Studies |
| CLÁR | Ceantair Laga Ard-Riachtanais. (Rural areas of special disadvantage that benefit from Targeted Investment Programmes) | MAN | Metropolitan Area Network (telecommunications) |
| CSO | Central Statistics Office | MIU | Major Inter Urban routes (roads) |
| DCENR | Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources | MMP | Mobility Management Plans |
| DoEHLG | Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government | MNC | Multinational Company |
| DoT | Department of Transport | MW | Megawatt (Electricity) |
| DSL | Digital Subscriber Line | NAPS | National Anti-Poverty Strategy |
| ECJ | European Court of Justice | NATURA 2000 | European Network of Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas |
| EIRGRID | Ireland's independent electricity transmission system operator | NCPF | National Cycle Policy Framework |
| ELC | European Landscape Convention | NDP | National Development Plan |
| EPA | Environmental Protection Agency | NLS | National Landscape Strategy |
| ESB | Electricity Supply Board | NRA | National Roads Authority |
| EU | European Union | NSS | National Spatial Strategy |
| FÁS | National Training & Employment Authority | NTA | National Transport Authority |
| FDI | Foreign Direct Investment | OPW | Office of Public Works |
| FORFÁS | National Advisory Body for Enterprise and Science | PLUTS | Planning, Land Use and Transportation Study |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product | PPO | Planning Policy Objective |
| GSI | Geological Survey of Ireland | PPP | Public Private Partnership |
| GVA | Gross Value Added, used to measure regional output | QBC | Quality Bus Corridor |
| HDA | Habitats Directive Assessment (also referred to as AA - Appropriate Assessment & Habitat Impact Assessment) | QNHS | Quarterly National Household Survey |
| HEI | Higher Education Institute | R&D | Research and Development |
| HGV | Heavy Goods Vehicle | RAPID | Revitalising Areas by Planning Investment and Development |
| HLC | Historic Landscape Characterisation | RBD | River Basin District |
| HPSU | High Potential Start-up Businesses | RBMP | River Basin Management Plan |
| HSE | Health Service Executive | RO RO | Roll-on/Roll-off Ferries |
| ICT | Information & Communications Technology | RPG | Regional Planning Guidelines |
| ICZM | Integrated Coastal Zone Management | SAC | Special Area of Conservation |
| IDA | Industrial Development Agency | SEISS | South-East Information Society Strategy |
| INTERREG | EU Community Initiative that helps Europe's regions form partnerships to work together on common projects | SEA | Strategic Environmental Assessment |
| IT CARLOW | Institute of Technology, Carlow | SERA | South-East Regional Authority |
| KV | Kilovolt (Electricity) | SFI | Science Foundation Ireland |
| LA | Local Authority | SME | Small and Medium Enterprise |
| | | SPA | Special Protection Area |
| | | SuDS | Sustainable Drainage Systems |
| | | TI | Tipperary Institute |
| | | VEC | Vocational Education Committee |
| | | WFD | Water Framework Directive |
| | | WIT | Waterford Institute of Technology |
| | | WWTP | Waste Water Treatment Plant |

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Foreword

Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG) for the South-East Region were made by the South-East Regional Authority on 24th May 2004. Those RPG have been reviewed and the Authority made new Guidelines for the region on 26th July 2010.

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) published in November 2002 has as its main objective the achievement of more balanced regional development. The changing economic and social environment over recent years has posed challenges for policy makers in ensuring that development is regulated and managed in a balanced and sustainable manner in the best interests of the nation and its regions. The Regional Authorities have been entrusted with the important responsibility of implementing the NSS at regional level. This is a role that they have embraced with enthusiasm and commitment.

The Planning and Development Act, 2000 conferred on the Regional Authorities the power to make Regional Planning Guidelines for their functional areas. The RPG, which also incorporate a socio-economic development strategy, are intended to constitute a strategic planning framework for the period 2010-2022 for the development of each region and for inter-regional cooperation. The strategic policies and objectives set out in the RPG will form the backdrop for socio-economic planning by national and regional agencies and will constitute the policy framework within which county, city, town and local area development plans will be made. The Planning and Development (Amendment) Act, 2010 confers an important role and responsibilities on Regional Authorities with respect to the making, review and variation of Development Plans.

The South-East Region covers Waterford City and counties Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford. The preparation of these RPG has taken account of the key issues affecting the development of the region, such as population and settlement; economic and employment trends; industrial and commercial development; transportation; water supply and waste water facilities; energy and communications; education, healthcare, retail and community facilities; environmental protection. In addition, they have taken account of the changed global and national economic environment, new and updated planning and environmental policies and legislative requirements relating to strategic infrastructure, strategic environmental assessment, potential impacts on habitats, flood risk assessment etc. A Regional Competitiveness Agenda, prepared by Forfás, provided a basis for the employment and economic development strategy element of the RPG.

During the RPG review process the Regional Authority engaged in wide ranging consultation with interested bodies and individuals and in public consultation. In preparing and in making the RPG the Authority considered and had regard to all submissions received. I believe that the RPG made by the Regional Authority and the regional vision and policies contained in them will make a valuable contribution to the proper planning, sustainable and balanced development and growth of the South-East Region over the coming years.

I wish to acknowledge the support and cooperation received by the Regional Authority in this important process from the constituent local authorities, government departments and agencies, public and private sector bodies and individuals. In particular, I wish to express thanks and appreciation to the members of the Steering Committee and the Working Group, chaired and directed by Mr. Joe Crockett, Kilkenny County Manager, to the RPG Officer, Mr. Dominic Walsh, the SEA Officer, Ms. Bernadette Guest, and to the Director and staff of the Regional Authority for their work in bringing this process to a successful conclusion.

Finally, I wish to thank and compliment my fellow members of the Regional Authority for their valuable input into the process and for the enlightened manner in which they approached the consideration and making of the RPG in the interest of the future development of the South-East Region.

Cllr. John Cummins
Cathaoirleach
July 2010

Executive Summary

The South-East Regional Authority is a statutory authority covering the five counties in the South-East Region of Ireland - Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford.

The Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, requires Regional Authorities to make Regional Planning Guidelines in respect of their region and to review the Guidelines at intervals not exceeding six years.

The Regional Planning Guidelines provide a strategic planning framework for the South-East Region with the objective of implementing the National Spatial Strategy at regional level and achieving balanced regional development. Regional Planning Guidelines for the South-East Region were first adopted in 2004 and revised Regional Planning Guidelines covering the period 2010 to 2022 were made by the Regional Authority on 26th July 2010. The RPGs incorporate high level policies which inform and advise local authorities in the preparation and review of their respective Development Plans, thus providing clear integration of planning and development policy from national to regional to local level.

This Executive Summary summarises each Section of the Guidelines.

Section 1

Section 1 sets out the legislative framework for regional and national policy covering planning and environmental issues. Key national policies that inform the Regional Planning Guidelines include the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, the National Development Plan 2007-2013, '*Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future*', the Water Framework Directive, as well as guidance from the DoEHLG on planning policy.

Key regional policies include the Waterford Planning, Land Use and Transportation Study (PLUTS), the Broad-band Infrastructure Project, the Joint Waste Management Plan for South-East Region, the N24 Prioritisation Study, the South-East Region Bio-energy Implementation Plan and River Basin District Management Plans for river catchments in the South-East Region.

Section 1 also includes an assessment of progress made on implementation of the 2004 Regional Planning Guidelines and a summary of infrastructure project completions/achievements during the period 2004–2010.

Section 2

Section 2 sets out National and Regional population figures from the 2006 Census and provides a profile of the region looking at the cultural, social, economic, infrastructural and environmental issues across the South-East.

The section concludes with a spatial analysis of the different and diverse components of the region.

Section 3

Section 3.1 sets out the **Strategic Vision** and the **Strategic Goals** for the region. The Strategic Vision is for the South-East Region to be a distinct and cohesive region that is prosperous and competitive, where the benefits of economic success are shared equitably throughout the region and throughout society and which offers a good quality of life in an environment rich in heritage and landscape value.

The **Settlement Strategy** sets out the Settlement Hierarchy for the region. Waterford is designated under the National Spatial Strategy as the Regional Gateway. Kilkenny and Wexford are designated as Hubs and Carlow, Clonmel and Dungarvan are the County Towns. The Settlement Strategy places the Gateway, Hubs and County Towns in the urban structure of the region and describes the role of these principal settlements in achieving critical mass and balanced regional development and as the focus for sustainable population growth and sustainable development.

Population targets have been set for the region and for the Gateway and Hubs by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Within the region, population targets are set for each local authority area and for the main urban centres to provide a guide for population growth in the region.

The population targets for each local authority area and for the main settlements in the region are set out in the tables below:

| TABLE 3.1 SOUTH-EAST REGION POPULATION TARGETS 2010-2022 | | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| LOCAL AUTHORITY AREA | 2006 | 2010 | 2016 | 2022 |
| WATERFORD CITY | 45,748 | 48,500 | 51,000 | 55,000 |
| KILKENNY | 87,558 | 96,872 | 105,598 | 111,903 |
| WEXFORD | 131,749 | 146,139 | 156,065 | 166,083 |
| CARLOW | 50,349 | 56,155 | 59,451 | 63,536 |
| SOUTH TIPPERARY | 83,221 | 91,302 | 96,863 | 104,483 |
| WATERFORD COUNTY | 62,213 | 68,932 | 73,223 | 79,495 |
| TOTAL | 460,838 | 507,900 | 542,200 | 580,500 |

The population targets for each of the main settlements in the region are set out in Table 3.2

| TABLE 3.2 SOUTH-EAST REGION POPULATION TARGETS 2010 - 2022 | | | | |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| MAIN SETTLEMENTS | 2006 | 2010 | 2016 | 2022 |
| WATERFORD CITY & ENVIRONS | 49,213 | 52,500 | 56,500 | 62,500 |
| KILKENNY CITY | 22,179 | 24,000 | 25,800 | 28,200 |
| WEXFORD TOWN | 18,163 | 21,000 | 23,500 | 26,700 |
| CARLOW TOWN | 20,724 | 22,126 | 23,768 | 25,000 |
| CLONMEL | 17,008 | 20,750 | 23,000 | 25,000 |
| DUNGARVAN | 8,362 | 10,000 | 11,600 | 13,400 |

The Settlement Strategy is to be implemented through the Development Plans of each local authority with the adoption of an evidence-based Core Strategy to implement population targets and policies for sustainable development. Key to the success of the Settlement Strategy is improved infrastructure, particularly public transport and the increased use of sustainable modes of travel. The Strategy emphasises the strategic link between transport and land use planning and the importance of economic development to sustain major population centres.

The Section includes a more detailed analysis of the roles of all the towns in the region and sets out the rural settlement policy.

Section 4

Section 4 sets out an Economic and Employment Strategy for the South-East Region. The Strategy draws on the priorities set by the Government Strategy, *'Building Ireland's Smart Economy – A Framework for Sustainable Economic Renewal'*.

The guiding principles which underpin the Regional Economic Strategy are:

- The need for a critical mass of population in the region and in the main settlements.
- The establishment of a University in the South-East by utilising and building upon the existing network of third and fourth-level educational establishments at Waterford, Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford and Clonmel. The Waterford Knowledge Campus has the potential to be a significant element in driving the knowledge economy in the region, offering a cluster for academia, business and entrepreneurship.
- Development of a range of skills and innovation capacity.
- Improved access and transport linkages.
- An environment which is attractive for people to live in.
- The Regional Competitiveness Agenda developed by Forfás.

Specific sections on the Gateway, Hubs, County Towns and Other Towns highlight the key strategic infrastructure and economic sectors which local authorities should prioritise in support of economic development. The significant potential of tourism to both the urban and rural areas is recognised in policies to support the development of diverse tourist and visitor facilities and attractions.

The Economic Development Strategy supports rural diversification and encourages provision for small scale on-farm rural enterprises and enterprise development in the smaller towns and villages, particularly to accommodate the different economic sectors. New uses of agricultural land, such as afforestation and enterprises based on the processing of the natural produce of an area, and sustainable development of renewable energies should be supported by the development plans and policies of local authorities, subject to environmental considerations.

The Higher Education, Research and Development and the Training and Skills sectors are key drivers of the regional economy and a range of policies is included to support their development. Retailing is a major contributor to the regional economy and is a significant factor in achieving the vitality and viability of town and city centres. The Retail Strategy sets out principles for City/Town Centre retail development and supports the development of a Joint Retail Strategy for Waterford City and its environs.

Section 5

Section 5 sets out the sustainable transport policy for the region and the Development Plan Implications for Planning Authorities. There is a strong emphasis on modal shift from private means of transport to more sustainable transport modes and also on the development of rail freight, particularly to/from the region's ports.

Section 5 sets out the priorities for road and rail investment and also policies to promote cycling, walking, the development of park and ride facilities and policies for public (including rural) bus transport services.

The importance of the Waterford Regional Airport and the commercial and passenger ports of Rosslare Europort, New Ross and Waterford to the region is recognised and policies to support the sustainable development of these important gateways to the region are included in Section 5. The adoption of River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) to comply with the Water Framework Directive and other environmental legislation, such as Shellfish Water Regulations and Waste Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations, places specific obligations on local authorities and on other bodies to comply with quality standards for water services. Measures to upgrade treatment facilities and to improve drinking water standards must be considered in the context of the Core Strategy and related to the prioritisation and phasing of such infrastructure.

Section 5 recommends appropriate measures to implement Water Conservation Programmes and to address water leakage rates in local water supplies. Sustainable Drainage Principles should be followed in all development including major transport infrastructure proposals. The Section also sets out the priorities for the Joint Waste Management Plan for the region and the need to make provision for changes in technology and approaches to waste management.

Section 6

The provision of advanced communications infrastructure is vital to the region and to the development of a knowledge economy. The Regional Authority has been involved in the roll-out of broadband infrastructure and Section 6 sets out policies to support the provision of telecommunications infrastructure, including broadband.

Section 6 also sets out policies aimed at sourcing energy generation within the region and policies to support the sustainable development of the electricity grid including Gate 3 connections for renewable energy.

The region has substantial renewable energy resources. These include wave power, wind power, anaerobic digestion, biofuel and bio-ethanol based systems. The development of wind power requires that a consistent approach be taken to the management of such resources at a regional and inter-regional level. In this regard, reference should be made to the DoEHLG Guidelines to Planning Authorities on Wind Energy.

The Regional Authority will work in partnership with local authorities and Energy Agencies to develop a Regional Climate Change Strategy and Local Climate Change Strategies that aim to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and promote renewable energy sources. The Climate Change Strategy will seek to achieve the 40% renewable energy target for 2020 set by Government.

Section 7

Section 7 contains policies to support and develop community, health, education and social infrastructure. The Section advocates the retention and development of health care facilities to serve local communities, recognising the investment made in the provision of modern health facilities in recent years. The land needs of the regional and community health facilities should be taken into account when land use allocations are being considered by Planning Authorities.

Provision should be made and land reserved for primary and secondary educational needs within the principal settlements of the region and for shared community and sporting facilities for use by the community outside of school hours.

Development Plans are obliged to include policies for childcare and community facilities and for incorporating such facilities into new developments, including employment generating developments. The Section highlights the role of local authorities in promoting social inclusion and in tackling poverty. When Development Plans are being prepared they should be proofed for their impact on poverty in both urban and rural areas and for their impact on the quality of life of other marginalised groups in society.

Section 8

Section 8 contains policies to promote a sustainable approach to development and planning in order to protect heritage and environment for the present and future generations. The Section also highlights the richness and diversity of the natural and built heritage and how this can contribute to the economic life of the region and to a high quality of life for all.

The Section includes policies for landscape protection and the need to manage the provision of forestry and renewable energy development, particularly in vulnerable areas such as uplands and peatlands.

Section 8 advocates common approaches by Planning Authorities to the conservation of the built heritage, including Protected Structures.

Section 8 also states that local authorities should ensure that common approaches are taken to the protection of surface, ground, coastal and estuarine water bodies. These approaches should, *inter alia*, ensure that –

- Joint actions are taken to positively address the attainment of the standards required by the Water Framework Directive, South East and South West River Basin District Management Plans and associated Programme of Measures.
- Developments do not interfere with the attainment of the standards required by the Water Framework Directive.

In this regard, City/County Development Plans and Local Area Plans should incorporate relevant specific policies, objectives and measures for individual water bodies and the range of protected areas set out in the South East and South West River Basin Management Plans, including protection of aquifers and the protection of waters used for bathing within the South-East Region and protection of the status of Blue Flag Beaches.

The Section sets out policies to support and develop use of Irish and Irish speaking social networks in the Gaeltacht and throughout the region. Planning Authorities should take cognisance of the need to preserve place names at local level through appropriate policies on naming streets and other developments.

Section 8 also sets out policies to promote provision of open space in urban areas and access to open space and facilities for recreation, including cycling and walking. It also requires that local authorities deliver a strategic and comprehensive approach to the conservation and enhancement of heritage through the preparation and implementation of Local Heritage and Biodiversity Action Plans. The network of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) requires special protection and local authorities should ensure protection of the Natura 2000 sites in compliance with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive by carrying out screening for Appropriate Assessment at all levels in the planning process where required.

Section 9

The key message of Section 9 is that an integrated approach to river catchment management is essential to manage and avoid increasing flood risk. As part of this approach Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Managements Studies (CFRAM studies) are used to assess the spatial extent and degree of flood hazard and risk of the rivers in the region and to develop a long term strategy for managing flood risk. The Section emphasises the need for completion of CFRAM Studies in support of a strategic approach to flood risk management in the region.

Section 9 sets out how Development Plans should include Strategic Flood Risk Assessments and all future zoning of land for development in areas at risk of flooding should follow the sequential approach set out in the 2009 Guidelines on Planning and Flood Risk Management (DoEHLG). The inclusion of policies and actions to support Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems is recommended in future developments as a major component of flood management and prevention.

The importance of flood risk assessment for all existing Strategic Infrastructure and future projects is also emphasised in Section 9.

Section 10

Section 10 sets out the mechanisms and structures for implementation of the Regional Planning Guidelines, with a primary focus on the investment priorities for the region. These are known as the Critical Enabling Investment Priorities and they are grouped under the 5 headings:

1. To develop the Smart Economy.
2. To improve transport infrastructure and services.
3. To deliver first class energy and communications.
4. To foster urban regeneration and improved quality of life for all.
5. Full implementation of the Joint Waste Management Plan for the South-East.

The Section emphasises the key role of Planning Authorities in implementation. Each Planning Authority should ensure that policies across different areas in the Development Plan are aimed at implementation and achievement of these Investment Priorities.

Outcome Indicators are identified which will provide an assessment of how effective the Regional Planning Guidelines are in realising the Vision for the Region, the Strategic Goals and the Critical Enabling Investment Priorities.

Appendix 1 contains projected numbers of residential units and zoned residential land for each local authority and for the main settlements. Appendix 1 also contains the population targets for the years 2010, 2016 and 2022 in flow chart form.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA)

Separate processes of Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Directive Assessment have been carried out as an integral part of the review and preparation of the Regional Planning Guidelines. These reports should be read in conjunction with the Regional Planning Guidelines.

Planning and Development (Amendment) Act, 2010

Enactment of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act, 2010 post-dated the making of these Regional Planning Guidelines. The 2010 Act contains important provisions relating to the preparation of Development Plans and Local Area Plans, the requirement for planning authorities to ensure, when making such plans, that they are consistent with Regional Planning Guidelines in force in their areas and that each Development Plan contains an evidence-based Core Strategy that will provide relevant information to demonstrate how the plan and the housing strategy are consistent with the RPG and NSS. The Core Strategy is required to take account of government policy in relation to national and regional population targets and it must provide the policy framework for Local Area Plans and for zoning at LAP level.

These Regional Planning Guidelines should be read and construed in the context of the provisions of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2010.

Regional Planning Guidelines for
the South-East Region 2010-2022

| | Population | | Change | |
|------------------|------------|---------|--------|-------------|
| | 2002 | 2006 | Actual | Per-centage |
| Carlow | 46,014 | 50,349 | 4,335 | 9.4% |
| Kilkenny | 80,339 | 87,558 | 7,219 | 9.0% |
| South Tipperary | 79,121 | 83,221 | 4,100 | 5.2% |
| Waterford County | 56,952 | 62,213 | 5,261 | 9.2% |
| Waterford City | 44,594 | 45,748 | 1,154 | 2.6% |
| Wexford | 116,596 | 131,749 | 15,153 | 13.0% |
| Regional Total | 423,616 | 460,838 | 37,222 | 8.8% |

While the South-East Region has a strong urban structure, much of the Region is rural in character with almost 57% of the population living in the rural area (i.e. in villages less than 1,500 population and in the countryside). In terms of urban settlements, there is an extensive network of towns and villages throughout the region that have developed with the support of a traditionally prosperous agricultural base.

The region's urban settlement structure is balanced as follows:

Urban Centres in 2006

| Greater than 15,000 | | 5,000-15,000 | |
|---------------------|--------|-----------------|-------|
| Waterford City | 49,213 | Tramore | 9,634 |
| Kilkenny | 22,179 | Enniscorthy | 9,538 |
| Carlow | 20,724 | Dungarvan | 8,362 |
| Wexford | 18,163 | New Ross | 7,709 |
| Clonmel | 17,008 | Gcroy | 7,193 |
| | | Carrick-on-Suir | 5,906 |
| | | Tipperary Town | 5,065 |

Some of the most significant growth rates seen in the South-East were recorded in urban areas along the north-eastern fringe of the region. There is evidence of significant levels of commuting from the towns and villages in the north of the region to the Greater Dublin area.

The population of Waterford City and Environs grew by 2,477 people between 2002 and 2006. However, this rate of growth was less than the average for larger urban areas across the region. Significant population increases were recorded in towns and rural areas surrounding Waterford City.

The proportion of the regional population in the Hubs and County Towns declined slightly from 19.05% in 2002 to 18.75% in 2006. However, while increases were above the national and regional rates were recorded in Carlow and Dungarvan, disappointing rates of growth were recorded for Clonmel, Kilkenny, Wexford and Waterford City.

Section 1: Context

The South-East Region, although straddling the provincial boundary between Leinster and Munster, is a homogeneous and compact geographical entity consisting essentially of the catchment areas of four rivers - the Slaney, the Barrow, the Nore and the Suir. The South-East Region comprises the five counties of Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford. The region has an area of 9,406 sq. kms., which is about 13.5% of the area of the state. The 2006 Census of Population recorded a population of 460,838, an increase from 423,616 in 2002, or about 11% of the national population.

Map 1: South-East Region



The South-East Regional Authority is one of the eight regional authorities established in Ireland with effect from 1st January 1994 under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1991 (Regional Authorities) (Establishment) Order, 1993.

The Regional Planning Guidelines, developed by the Regional Authority, represent a planning framework for the period 2010-2022 designed to achieve a better spatial balance of social, economic and physical development throughout the region. It is intended that the Guidelines will provide the necessary strategic framework for local authority development plans and will address issues such as settlement, transportation, energy and communications, industrial development, community facilities and environmental protection. Its focus is on people, on places and on building sustainable communities. Through closer matching of where people live with where they work, the region will be able to sustain a better quality of life for people, a strong competitive economic position and an environment of the highest quality.

1.1 Planning and Development Acts

These Regional Planning Guidelines are a revised and updated set of Guidelines from the Regional Planning Guidelines originally adopted for the South-East Region in 2004 and have been prepared by the South-East Regional Authority in accordance with the Planning and Development Acts, 2000–2006* and the Planning and Development (Regional Planning Guidelines) Regulations, 2009. The Regional Planning Guidelines provide a framework for local authority development plans by enhancing the strategic dimension of planning at regional and local levels and building upon the approach taken by the National Spatial Strategy.

* The making of these RPG pre-dated the enactment of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act, 2010 – see also p.12

These Guidelines address the following matters:

1. Employment and Economic Development.
2. Population Growth and Settlement Strategy.
3. Transportation.
4. Environmental Issues, Water Services and Waste Management.
5. Energy and Telecommunications.
6. Education and Health Care.
7. Agriculture, Marine and Rural Development.
8. Community Development.
9. Recreation, Amenity and Culture.
10. Heritage and Conservation.
11. Inter-Regional Issues.
12. Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

The Guidelines put the overall planning system in the South-East in context. They seek to promote an understanding of wider processes of change and identify how our physical surroundings can be optimised to meet broader socio-cultural, economic and environmental objectives.

Development Plans and Local Area Plans made by a planning authority must have regard to Regional Planning Guidelines in force for its area*. Where the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government is not satisfied that the planning authority has taken adequate steps to address inconsistencies in a Development Plan with Regional Planning Guidelines or national policies, the Minister may issue directions where necessary to ensure that planning authorities comply with Regional Planning Guidelines.

Following the making of Regional Planning Guidelines for their area, planning authorities will be required to review the existing development plan and consider whether any variation of the development plan is necessary in order to achieve the objectives of the Regional Planning Guidelines.

1.2 National Policy

Planning authorities have a duty, in the performance of their functions, to implement or to have regard to policies on a wide range of issues and objectives of the Government or any Minister insofar as they may affect or relate to their functions. National policies on sustainable development and the National Development Plan and the National Spatial Strategy are pre-eminent in this regard. In particular, planning authorities are required to demonstrate that Development Plans are consistent with the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines. There is a wide variety of other national level policy documents that have also been taken account of in the preparation of the guidelines such as: *the National Climate Change Strategy*, *the National Biodiversity Plan 2002 (revised 2005)*, *the National Heritage Plan* and *the National Anti-Poverty Strategy 1997 (revised 2002)*, *National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016*, and *'Building Ireland's Smart Economy – A Framework for Sustainable Economic Renewal.'*

In addition, the following guidance documents have been issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, which set out policy and direction on a range of issues:-

- Guidelines on Development Management
- Guidelines on Development Plans
- Best Practice Urban Design Manual – Part 1
- Best Practice Urban Design Manual – Part 2
- Childcare Facilities Guidelines
- Design Standards for new Apartments
- Landscape and Landscape Assessment
- Provision of Schools in the Planning System
- Quarries and Ancillary Activities
- Retail Planning Guidelines
- Rural Housing Policies and Local Needs Criteria in Development Plans
- Strategic Environmental Assessment

* Enactment of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act, 2010 post-dated the making of these RPG. Section 16 of the Act includes the provision that: 'A planning authority shall ensure, when making a development plan or local area plan, that the plan is consistent with any regional planning guidelines in force for its area'.

- Sustainable Rural Housing
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities
- Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities
- Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures
- Wind Energy Development
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines.

1.2.1 Updated and Amended Policy Documents

From time to time the national policy and guidance documents referred to above may be updated or amended. It is, therefore, important to consult with the relevant Government Department to ascertain the most up-to-date policy document or guidelines.

The Regional Authority and the Planning Authorities must also take into account a series of EU Directives, most notably the Water Framework Directive, the Floods Directive, the Habitats Directive and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive.

1.2.2 Government Policy on Sustainable Development

Ireland is now faced with uncertain economic times. Population and settlement patterns have not evolved in line with national spatial policy; environmental infrastructure is under-developed and a situation exists where unevenly applied environmental controls are impacting on environmental quality both nationally and locally.

'Making Ireland's Development Sustainable' sets out policy priorities in relation to sustainable development and states that, from the point of view of strategic spatial planning, sustainable development will, among other things, mean:

- maximising access to and encouraging use of public transport, cycling and walking
- developing sustainable urban and rural settlement patterns and communities to reduce distance from employment, services and leisure facilities and to make better use of existing and future investments in public services, including public transport
- promoting cost-effective provision of public services like roads, drainage, waste management facilities, lighting, public amenities and schools
- contributing to the evolution of socially integrated communities in both urban and rural areas
- minimising the consumption of non-renewable resources like soils, groundwater and agricultural land
- avoiding adverse impacts on environmental features such as landscapes, habitats and protected species, river catchments, the maritime environment and the cultural heritage
- ensuring that construction design is of a high quality and appropriate to the scale and context of its surroundings
- development of renewable energy to help meet the Government target of 40% renewable energy output by 2020.

The challenges involved in making development more sustainable are now supported by other areas of national policy such as *'Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future'* (Department of Transport) and also by the development of River Basin Management Plans for implementation of the Water Framework Directive in each river basin. The objectives of these policies are set out in more detail in the following paragraphs of this section.

1.2.3 National Development Plan 2007-2013

The National Development Plan 2007-2013 sets out a detailed development strategy for the country supported by investment in the key areas of infrastructural development, education and training, the productive sector and the promotion of social inclusion. The Plan also contains a commitment to support in the National Spatial Strategy in the promotion of more balanced regional development.

The theme for the National Development Plan for the period 2007-2013 is 'Transforming Ireland – A Better Quality of Life for All'. The objective of improving the quality of life for all requires integrated development and progressing of social and economic policies as well as a productive and competitive economy and the availability of rewarding employment opportunities.

Many of the key elements of this Plan underpin these common and interlinked objectives:-

- **Decisively tackle structural infrastructure deficits** that continue to impact on competitiveness, regional development and general quality of life and to meet the demands of the increasing population;
- **Enhance enterprise development, Science, Technology and Innovation, working age training and skills provision** to improve economic performance, competitiveness and our capacity to generate new enterprise ‘winners’ from the indigenous sector as well as continue to attract high added value foreign direct investment;
- **Integrate regional development within the National Spatial Strategy framework** of Gateway cities and Hub towns to achieve the goals of economic growth in the regions and provide for major investment in the rural economy;
- **Invest in long-term environmental sustainability** to achieve our national goal of preserving the integrity of our natural environment for future generations as well as meeting our international responsibilities and Climate Change obligations; this also involves a more balanced, efficient and sustainable use of our land resources;
- **Realise the opportunities of strengthened all-island collaboration in areas of mutual interest** to build up the island’s competitive strengths particularly in the areas of infrastructure, R&D, skills and innovation and to enhance the provision of public services on the island;
- **Deliver a multi-faceted programme for Social Inclusion** and improvements in the quality of life across all age groups and among all population cohorts; and
- **Provide Value for Taxpayers’ Money** through robust and transparent appraisal, management and monitoring systems for NDP investment.

The Regional Authority is supportive of these objectives and will seek the provision by Government of appropriate financial support for their implementation.

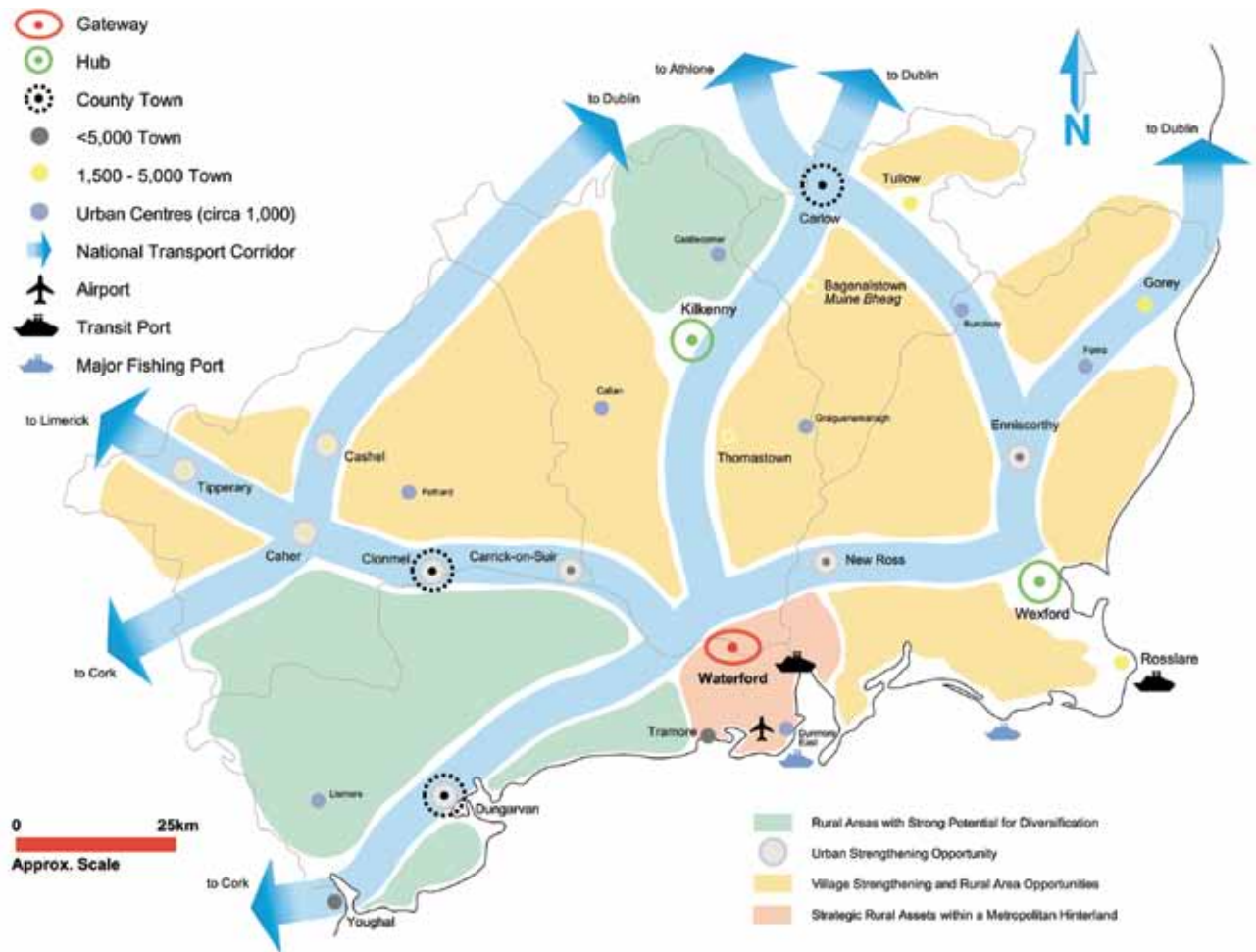
1.2.4 National Spatial Strategy

The National Spatial Strategy for Ireland sets out the basis on which all areas of the country will have the opportunity to develop to their potential within a national spatial planning framework for the period up to 2020. These Regional Planning Guidelines aim to implement the objectives of the National Spatial Strategy as they relate to the South-East.

The National Spatial Strategy has determined that in the South-East Region critical mass will be enhanced through Waterford performing as a “gateway”, supported by Kilkenny and Wexford as “hubs”. Critical mass relates to size and concentration of population that enables a range of services and facilities to be supported. This in turn can attract and support higher levels of economic activity and improved quality of life.

There is a distinctive settlement pattern in the South-East Region which distinguishes the region from other regions where one Gateway City may be particularly dominant. Waterford, as the Gateway, is the largest city in the region but the region possesses a strong urban structure unlike other regions. There is a network of sizable urban settlements in the region, including Hubs and County towns, each with its own hinterland and sphere of influence, and extensive services, including the presence of third and fourth-level education institutes.

Waterford, as the Gateway, Kilkenny and Wexford and the County Towns of Carlow, Clonmel and Dungarvan will drive regional growth by providing a large and skilled population base, substantial capacity for additional residential and employment related functions and an improving transport network. These main urban centres will be complemented by development in surrounding and adjacent towns, which, combined with the gateway and hub approach, provides a strong platform for balanced regional development.

Map 2: National Spatial Strategy – South-East Region

A characteristic of the spatial structure of the South-East is the strong urban structure with a network of medium to large – sized towns across the region which act as service centres for surrounding rural areas. There is also an extensive network of villages throughout the region that has developed with the support of a traditionally prosperous agricultural base. The traditional stability and prosperity of both the villages and their associated rural areas can be ensured through initiatives such as rural economic development and enterprise supported by local infrastructure servicing programmes, the acquisition of key sites that unlock potential for backland development and complementary policies to encourage people to live in villages. Many of the more rural areas of the South-East have the capacity to augment their established agricultural strength through initiatives such as the development of specialist tourism attractions and other off-farm income generation enterprises. This process of adding additional types of economic activity in rural areas will be based on the region's extensive and attractive coastline, river valleys and uplands.

1.2.5 Development Corridors

1.2.5.1 The NSS identifies a 'National Transport Framework' as a basis around which spatial development should be structured. The framework incorporates Strategic Radial and Strategic Linking Corridors and sees Gateways and Hubs as particular focal points within this overall corridor framework.

Across the entire island, two major corridors are of particular relevance, namely the Dublin-Belfast corridor and a corridor along the western/south western side of Ireland called the Atlantic Gateways Corridor. The South-East Region is located at one end of the Atlantic Gateways Corridor.

1.2.5.2 Atlantic Gateways

The aim of the Atlantic Gateways Initiative is to advance in a complementary way the development of the Waterford, Cork, Limerick/Shannon and Galway Gateways. The initiative is seen as part of a wider process of strengthening the urban structure along this southern and western seaboard and developing stronger linkages between these Gateways.

Population growth in the four Atlantic Gateways relative to national growth has been slowing since 1996 (73% of the national population growth rate in the 1996-2002 period; 54% in the 2002-2006 period). However, in the case of the Gateways and their commuter catchments, population growth has been somewhat above the national growth rate in both census periods (111% of the national rate in 1996-2002; 104% above in 2002-2006).

Population growth along the corridors between the Atlantic Gateways has been variable, in some cases suggesting the emergence of stronger corridors. In addition, different patterns of corridor growth have taken place. In some cases the growth has been somewhat like a 'beads on a string' model where the main growth has occurred in or nearby the towns and villages along the corridor (the 'beads') whereas in others there have been higher levels of more continuous growth along or nearby the corridors (i.e. in countryside areas as well as in the nodes).

Routes N24 and N25 and the Waterford – Limerick Junction Railway line form the transport corridors from Waterford to Cork and Waterford to Limerick/Shannon and it is considered that the opportunities for growth along these corridors should be exploited through the upgrading of these transport links and the public transport services (Inter-urban Bus and Rail) operating along these transport corridors.

1.2.6 'Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future'

The main objectives of this Department of Transport policy are:

1. To achieve sustainable communities through the integration of land use and transport planning.
2. To encourage smarter travel, i.e. to reduce overall travel demand.
3. To maximise the efficiency of the transport network.
4. To reduce reliance on fossil fuels and therefore to reduce transport emissions.
5. To improve accessibility to transport.

For the region to function more effectively and to achieve a more sustainable transport future, the region needs to tackle high levels of reliance on the private car and to radically improve public transport. Radical improvements to public transport in the region would mean that people could commute and travel (for work, social and recreational purposes) between all the main settlements within the region with ease. This would require major settlements to be linked by bus and train services operating at regular intervals which would continue into the evening, providing the flexibility and options required to make public transport more accessible.

Inter-urban public transport not only needs to be more accessible but also needs to be faster. In many cases, journey times have become slower, particularly on the railway lines that operate through the region. As the road network improves and driving times become shorter, the journey times between settlements need to improve in order to deliver the real advantages of rail travel – avoidance of congestion – to passengers using rail services.

1.2.7 National Climate Change Strategy 2007–2012

The National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012 sets out a range of measures to achieve the necessary emission reductions primarily through actions in the areas of energy, transport, housing, industrial and commercial, agriculture and waste as well as cross-sectoral actions.

1.2.8 National Heritage Plan 2002

The National Heritage Plan sets out a clear and coherent strategy and framework for the protection and enhancement of Ireland's national heritage. The core objective of the Plan is to protect the national heritage as well as promoting it as a resource to be enjoyed by all.

1.2.9 National Biodiversity Plan 2002

The cornerstone of the National Biodiversity Plan recognises that conservation and enhancement of biological diversity are essential for sustainable development and for maintaining the quality of human life. All sectors and actors are responsible for advancing the conservation of biological diversity in their respective areas.

1.2.10 National Anti-Poverty Strategy 1997 (revised 2002)

The objective of the National Anti-Poverty Strategy is to reduce consistent poverty in Ireland or, ideally, to eliminate it. The themes identified as needing particular attention are Income adequacy; Unemployment; Educational disadvantage; Rural poverty; Poverty in disadvantaged urban areas; Child poverty; Women's poverty; Health and poverty; Older people's poverty; Housing and accommodation and New and emerging forms of poverty, such as racism.

1.3 Regional Policy**1.3.1 Regional Authority Plans and Programmes****BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT**

The South-East Region Phase I and II Broadband projects were managed by the Regional Authority, in partnership with its constituent local authorities. The projects, carried out under the terms of the government's Regional Broadband Programme, involved the installation of a state-of-the-art fibre-optic broadband telecommunications network known as a MAN (Metropolitan Area Network) in eleven centres in the South-East: Cahir, Carlow, Carrick-on-Suir, Cashel, Clonmel, Dungarvan, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Thomastown, Waterford and Wexford. Beneficiaries of the infrastructure include the region's largest companies, small and medium enterprises and the community at large, the Institutes of Technology campuses in the region, local authority and HSE offices, industrial and business parks, and many other public and private enterprises.

The South-East Regional Information Society Strategy and Action Plan (SEISS) was the catalyst for these projects. As part of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR) considerations for a Phase III of the Broadband Programme, the Regional Authority has submitted a priority list of nine towns – Enniscorthy, New Ross, Gorey, Tramore, Bagenalstown, Tullow, Callan, Castlecomer and Dunmore East.

JOINT WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE SOUTH-EAST REGION

The six local authorities in the South-East Region have prepared a Joint Waste Management Plan, which was adopted in 2002 and reviewed in 2006. It is an objective of the Regional Authority to ensure that maximum realistic recycling and reuse targets set down in the Joint Waste Management Plan for the South-East Region are achieved and that the balance of materials is treated or disposed of in accordance with the Joint Waste Management Plan and subject to the application of Best Available Technologies. It is envisaged that the major integrated facility, which will incorporate thermal and biological treatment, will be in place by 2013.

RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT PLANS

The South-East Region is covered by three River Basin Management Plans (RBMP). RBMPs implement the objectives of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and provide a framework for the protection of inland surface waters, transitional waters and groundwater. As such, the RBMPs form an important part of the environmental protection for the region and include a programme of measures which require Planning Authorities to take cognisance of the impact of development on these rivers basins.

SOUTH-EAST REGION BIO-ENERGY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The primary aim of the Plan is to promote the sustainable deployment of bioenergy within the South-East Region and to increase the production and consumption of bioenergy within the region. With the active promotion of the Plan by the SERA in conjunction with SEAI and Teagasc and its six constituent local authorities the realisation of the plan will deliver important benefits to the region.

The implementation of the Plan will significantly increase the production and consumption of energy from biomass in the South-East Region. By achieving the targets set out in the Plan the region will reduce its reliance on imported

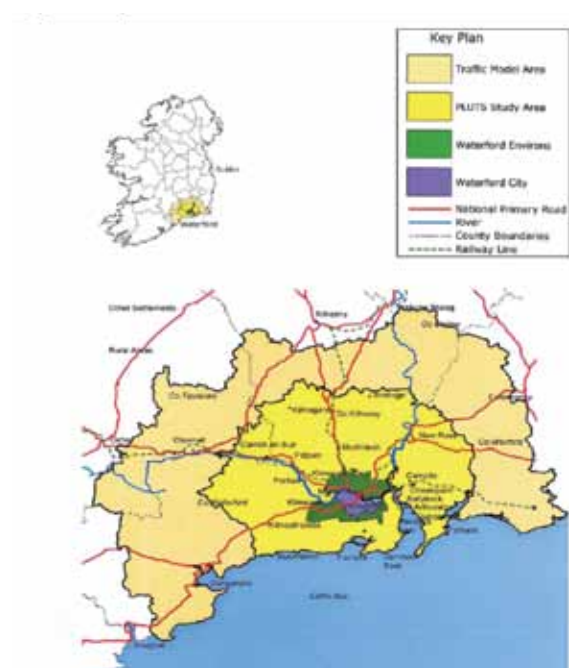
finite fossil fuels and will benefit from reduced carbon emissions and will create opportunities to support employment creation and regional development.

N24 PRIORITISATION STUDY

The current N24 is of variable standard and is certainly not consistent with its status as a National Primary route. This results in a number of problems, principally arising from congestion and safety issues. The Study, published in 2008, sets out the case for upgrading the route on the grounds of safety, efficiency and strategic importance of the route for the economic performance of the region. It is an objective of the Regional Authority to prioritise upgrading of the N24.

1.3.2 Sub-regional Land Use and Transportation Planning

Map 3: Map of Waterford PLUTS Area



WATERFORD PLANNING, LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION STUDY

The population of Waterford City and its environs is currently in the region of 50,000 people. The City has developed principally to the south of the River Suir and, over the last 25 years, a trend of low density residential growth has prevailed, primarily to the south and east of the City. Historically, development to the north of the Suir has been constrained by difficult topography, the availability of adequate amounts of development land on the southern bank of the River, local authority boundary issues, the location of port facilities, the existence of only one river crossing and by the width of the River itself. Waterford City Council, Waterford County Council and Kilkenny County Council adopted the *Waterford Planning, Land Use and Transportation Study* (PLUTS) in 2004 to redress the unsustainable development trends and provide a strong planning framework for the future development of the City and Environs.

The PLUTS Strategy is consistent with the policy direction and requirements of the National Spatial Strategy. It supports and fosters balanced spatial development at a national, regional, city and local level. A key element of the Strategy is the achievement of critical mass to allow the City to reinforce and develop its role as the economic driver of the South-East Region of Ireland.

The PLUTS Strategy provides guidance on the location, scale and form of development so that the City and its environs can be developed in a balanced, sustainable, transport friendly and attractive way to provide a high quality of life and opportunities for all its citizens over the period covered by the strategy. It reflects spatial planning guidance from the NSS and the National Development Plan (NDP) to develop as the focus of a successful and innovative region. The PLUTS provides a coherent, long-term spatial context within which the more detailed statutory City and County Development Plans can be developed over the 20-year

Study period.

The objectives of Waterford PLUTS have now been incorporated into the Waterford City Development Plan 2007-2013, the Kilkenny County Development Plan 2008-2014 and, more recently, the Ferrybank/Belview Local Area Plan (LAP) 2009-2015 in County Kilkenny and the Waterford County Development Plan 2005-2011 which is currently under review. The Ferrybank/Belview Local Area Plan 2009-2015 will be a significant part of the implementation of the Waterford PLUTS objectives. The N25 Waterford by-pass and associated infrastructure and the new waste water treatment plant will support the development and expansion of the Gateway north of the River Suir in a co-ordinated way that is consistent with the adopted plans and PLUTS Strategy.

1.4 Progress on Implementation of the Regional Planning Guidelines for period 2004–2016

1.4.1 Population

The population in the South-East in 2008 was 487,800 (11.0% of the national population). In the 1991 to 1996 period population growth in the region was only at 77% of the national rate, but picked up substantially in subsequent years to grow at marginally above the national rate from 2002 to 2006 (105.0% of the national rate).

1.4.2 Economy

At September 2009, 202,500 people were employed in the region (Q3NHS, Jul-Sept 2009). While there was strong growth in employment over the 10 years up to 2007, the downturn since then in the economy has resulted in increasing levels of unemployment and the number of unemployed stands at 36,100 or 15.1% (Q3NHS, July-Sept 2009).

The value of goods and services produced per worker in 2007 was significantly below the national value (73.4% of the national level). These below national patterns are reflected in the fact that the disposable incomes per capita (€20,743 in 2007) were below the national average and were amongst the lowest four regional levels (along with the Border, West and Midland regions).

1.4.3 Settlement

Population growth in Waterford, Wexford and Kilkenny over the period from 2002 to 2006 was considerably below the national rate (Waterford at 65% of the national population growth rate; Wexford at 66% and Kilkenny at 65%). As is the case in relation to other urban areas, the most rapid growth linked to these NSS designated urban centres took place in their hinterland commuter catchment areas (Waterford at 130% of the national population growth rate, Wexford at 155% and Kilkenny at 95%). Population growth in urban areas in the region over the 2002-2006 period was modestly above the national population growth rate (115.0% of the national rate) while population growth in the countryside exactly matched the national population growth rate. This level of countryside population growth was by far the highest of all regions and represents a rate which is 154% of the national countryside population growth rate.

In 2008 the region had a land bank of 1,674ha of residentially zoned undeveloped land which could provide for about 39,470 dwellings (*State of the Regions Report*, DoEHLG, April 2009).

1.4.4 Transportation

As is the case in most other regions, the main means of transport to get to work is a car or van (77.6% of all work trips in 2006). Travel to work distances and times tend to match those in the regions outside the GDA and the Midland region. At around a quarter of all trips to work, the use of green modes of transport approximately matches the proportion using these modes in other regions, with the exception of Dublin which has a substantially higher use of green modes. In the South-East a unique commuter pattern exists in which the Waterford Gateway and the Kilkenny and Wexford Hubs have approximately similar size commuter 'footprints'. The catchments together provide a strong coverage of the whole surrounding area.

The Settlement and Transportation Strategies incorporate the objectives of *Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future* that will be implemented through measures aimed at increasing the use of sustainable modes of transport.

1.4.5 Overview and Challenges

The pattern of growth in the Gateway and Hubs has been below appropriate levels, mainly because much of the

growth linked to these NSS designated areas has occurred in the surrounding commuter catchments. Data also reveals that value of goods and services added per worker is significantly below the national average. The two key challenges facing the region are to enhance the rate and value adding potential of economic growth and to achieve more sustainable patterns of settlement with the Gateway and Hubs as key areas for growth.

The progress on the ten Critical Enabling Investment Priorities contained in the RPGs adopted in 2004 is set out in the table below.

Table 1.1 Progress on Critical Enabling Investment Priorities

| Investment Priority | Progress |
|--|---|
| 1. Development of a high quality dual carriageway roadway and improved public transport services (road and rail) along the central strategic transportation corridor, as identified in Section 3 of the National Spatial Strategy, to link Waterford City with Dublin via Kilkenny and Carlow. | The M9 Motorway from Waterford to Dublin via Kilkenny and Carlow was completed in 2010. |
| 2. Supporting the development of the internal road network between the Gateway and the Hubs in the region and between the Gateway, Hubs and the County Towns. Development of the N8 South West Corridor that links Limerick and Cork to Dublin via Cahir, Cashel and Urlingford. | M8 Motorway from Portlaoise to Cork completed through County Kilkenny and South Tipperary. |
| 3. Development of the N25 Waterford City Bypass and Outer Ring Road as well as an additional downstream river crossing facilitating the extension of the Outer Ring Road northwards to the N25 and to securing the future balanced development of the regional Gateway. | N25 Waterford City Bypass and Outer Ring Road opened October 2009. Downstream crossing at route selection stage. |
| 4. Developing linkages on the N11 from Rosslare Europort and Wexford to Dublin, to the region and the rest of the country focussing particularly on the New Ross By-Pass, the Rosslare Harbour Access Road, town bypasses on the N11 and N24 and improvements along the N80 between Enniscorthy and Carlow and onwards to Athlone and Dundalk. | N11/M11 extended towards Wexford. N11 Enniscorthy to Rosslare at planning stage. Lack of progress on internal road links in region, particularly on N80, N24, N25. |
| 5. A targeted land servicing measure, in terms of water services and access investments to release serviced land for residential and commercial purposes in the Gateway, Hubs and County Towns. | Each local authority has undertaken targeted land servicing during the review period. |
| 6. Developing the innovation potential in the region through development of a University of the South-East, supported by continued investment in established third and fourth-level institutions focusing on strengthening academic-industrial linkages and the further development of educational outreach facilities throughout the region. | Little progress on establishment of University of South-East. Outreach facilities expanded at Wexford and Kilkenny. Significant progress on academic – industry linkages by WIT, IT Carlow and Tipperary Institute. Development of the Waterford Knowledge Campus will play a key role in the academic infrastructure of the region. |
| 7. Targeted investment in the development of <i>first</i> class business locations at the Gateway, Hubs and County Towns with first class infrastructure capable of facilitating new indigenous start-ups in advanced sectors and attracting Foreign Direct Investment against competing locations nationally and internationally. | The region has had some success in attracting FDI to the major settlements. Each local authority has facilitated the provision of infrastructure to develop attractive business locations. |
| 8. Significant expansion of the commercial, cultural and civic centre of Waterford City through investment in, and support for, the re-development of the North Quays. | Significant urban renewal has taken place in the commercial, cultural and civic centre of Waterford City. Following some delays, development of the North Quays will take place on a phased basis over the coming years. |
| 9. Development of the full potential of the South-East Regional Airport, Waterford, through extension of the existing runway, improved transport linkages between the airport, Waterford City and the region and facilities for additional operators offering services from this location. | While facilities for passengers have been upgraded and road access improved, the planned extension of the runway has not proceeded. There is a need to provide for and expand aviation-related industry around the airport. |
| 10. Full implementation of the Joint Waste Management Plan for the South-East Region. | All local authorities in the region have worked together to implement the Joint Waste Management Plan for the South-East Region. |

Investment in Infrastructure

The South-East Region has made significant progress in provision of critical infrastructure across the Region. The successful implementation and completion of the projects set out below shows that the South-East Region is a well located and well connected region with 21st century infrastructure which will facilitate existing and new industry and business and which provides a high quality of life to its inhabitants and to those who chose to locate in the region.

LIST OF MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS COMPLETED 2004-2010

Carlow

- Opening of 'Visual' in Carlow Town
- Broadband MAN in Carlow Town
- M9 Motorway – Carlow Bypass
- Carlow Town Centre Relief Road
- Carlow Eastern Relief Road
- Completion of up to 500 housing units by the local authority
- Restoration of Duckettsgrove
- New Forest Park at Oak Park
- Facilitating works at St. Mullins
- New recreation hall in Bagenalstown
- New Town Parks in Carlow and Tullow
- New Civic Offices in Tullow
- Restoration of civic offices in Bagenalstown
- Provision of new library and civic centre in Borris
- Provision of new fire stations in Carlow Town and Hacketstown
- New civil defence headquarters in Bagenalstown
- Facilitation of wireless broadband in Bagenalstown, Tullow and rural Carlow
- Provision of care centres at Tullow, Bagenalstown and Carlow

Kilkenny

- M8 Cullahill to Cashel
- Kilkenny City Ring Road Extension
- Graignamanagh Relief Road
- Public realm improvements to The Parade at Kilkenny Castle
- Completion of "The Watershed", a multi-purpose sports and leisure facility in Kilkenny City
- Expansion of Maynooth University Outreach, Kilkenny City
- Improvements to waste water and water supply to Kilkenny City
- Works have commenced on the water supply to Belview Port (completion 2010)
- Contract signed for Thomastown Waste Water Treatment Plant
- Broadband MANs in Kilkenny City and Thomastown.

South Tipperary

- M8 from Cashel south to Cork County Boundary
- M8 from Cashel north to North Tipperary County Boundary and then on to Kilkenny County Boundary
- Broadband MANs in Clonmel, Carrick-on-Suir, Cashel, Cahir and Tipperary Town
- A portal website www.southtipperary.ie promoting industry and living in South Tipperary
- Postgraduate Research Centre established in TI Clonmel campus
- Ballingarrane Science and Technology Park development progressing with the provision of infrastructure (including broadband, access roads, footpaths and public lighting), the purchase of 50 acres by the IDA and the agreement to relocate TI Clonmel campus to the Park
- Significant building programme completed in South Tipperary General Hospital in Clonmel
- Establishment of Cahir by Fáilte Ireland as a Centre of Excellence for Brown Trout Fishing in the South-East and the relevant infrastructure in place to meet this standard
- Department of Justice decentralisation to Tipperary Town progressing
- Over €8 million invested in community and recreational facilities throughout the rural community
- Provision of 1,052 childcare places
- Civic amenity site established in Cashel

- Marina developed in Carrick-on-Suir
- Opening of two additional hotels in South Tipperary (Limerick Junction and Clonmel)
- Phase 1 of Flood Alleviation Scheme in Clonmel
- Bord Gáis network extended to Cashel
- Waste Water Treatment Plants completed in Emly and Cappawhite and 12 Design/Build/Operate Agreements in place for other locations.

County Waterford

- Dungarvan & Environs Sewerage Scheme (including Dungarvan WWTP)
- Tramore Waste Water Treatment Plant
- Increased treatment capacity at East Waterford Water Supply Scheme
- WWTPs at Aghlish, Clashmore, Villierstown, Pilltown, Kill and Crooke
- Kinsalebeg Road Realignment Scheme
- R708 Waterford Airport Road Realignment
- Clonea Strand Access Road Realignment
- Tallow Link Road – Phase 1
- Broadband MAN in Dungarvan
- Sludge Hub Centre at Dungarvan
- Sewerage collection systems at Tallow, Kilmacthomas and Cappoquin.

Waterford City

- The M9 motorway, the N25 Waterford City By-Pass and the Outer Ring Road
- The East Waterford Water Supply Scheme which increased the capacity by 65% and secures the city's water supply into the future
- The completion of the Waste Water Treatment Plant providing significant capacity for future industrial development
- The provision of a broadband infrastructure MAN
- The delivery of major building programmes at Waterford Institute of Technology and Waterford Regional Hospital
- The carrying out of significant urban renewal and conservation projects in the city centre
- The provision of significant recreational, cultural and community facilities, including new parks, the redevelopment of the Regional Sports Centre, refurbishment of the Theatre Royal and Garter Lane Arts Centre and the provision of neighbourhood based childcare facilities
- House of Waterford Crystal Visitor Centre
- Provision of pumping and transfer wastewater networks between city and new WWTP and sewerage collection system for City and environs (Co. Kilkenny), Kilbarry and Killure at Belview
- New water supply system for south city and north-west city area
- Water conservation rehabilitation works.

Wexford

- Wexford Opera House
- Broadband MAN in Wexford Town
- M11 Gorey Bypass
- N30 Enniscorthy - Clonroche
- Holmestown Landfill & Civic Amenity Site
- New Ross Civic Amenity Site
- Enniscorthy Civic Amenity Site
- New Ross Sewerage Scheme
- Rosslare Harbour Sewerage Scheme
- Gorey Regional Water Supply Pipeline Scheme
- Enniscorthy (Clonhaston) Sewerage Scheme
- Taghmon Water Supply Scheme
- Coolgreaney Sewerage Scheme
- Wexford WWTP extension 30k pe - 45k pe
- Bunclody Sewerage Scheme
- Carraig-on-Bannow Sewerage Scheme
- County Wexford Water Conservation Project.

1.4.6 Inter-regional Issues

The South-East does not exist in isolation and there are issues that require a degree of inter-regional co-operation. Also, there are areas at the periphery of the region that might not be as fully integrated and as well serviced as they might be.

Issues to be addressed include the development of strategic proposals for the networking of adjacent cities in the Waterford - Cork - Limerick - Galway Corridor to achieve a critical mass of population and to identify complementary functions so that these urban centres can develop as a networked counterbalance to the development of Dublin and the Mid-East.

In relation to areas within the influence of the Greater Dublin Area it is particularly important to estimate the level of development that might happen in the South-East driven by Dublin and effects on both the South-East towns and the Greater Dublin Area strategy.

There are towns located on or close to regional boundaries, such as Carlow Town, where the development of the town will have implications for surrounding rural areas within the functional area of another Regional Authority. These inter-regional issues need to be discussed between authorities and policies devised which will allow the orderly and sustainable development of each.

The National Spatial Strategy has identified locations where clear linkages exist within areas outside of the national territory. One such instance is the South-East where there are linkages with South West Wales. The strategic development of trans-boundary transport links and partnering opportunities present opportunities for mutual development. The South-East Regional Authority is involved in active consultation with the Welsh Assembly and has regard to emerging Welsh spatial policy regarding issues of common concern.

1.5 Local Policy

Successful implementation of the Regional Planning Guidelines relies on the implementation of policy objectives at local level:

1.5.1 City/County Development Plans

Each of the planning authorities in the South-East has identified broadly similar goals and objectives for their functional areas. These can be summarised as planning for sustainable new development and provision for the highest quality environment in both urban and rural areas.

1.5.2 Local Area Plans

The Planning and Development Act, 2000 states that a Planning Authority may prepare a Local Area Plan for any area within its jurisdiction for which it considers such a plan is suitable and required. Local Area Plans are a useful vehicle for planning of settlements or part of a settlement at a detailed level and the Regional Authority supports and encourages the continued use of such plans, including plans for settlements which are below the minimum threshold specified in the Planning and Development Acts.

1.5.3 City/County Development Board Strategies

The City and County Development Boards play a role in developing the social, cultural and economic potential of communities at local level. This includes developing strategies to create employment, to foster enterprise and innovation and support economic development.

SUMMARY / Development Plan Implications

Section 1 sets out the legislative framework for regional planning and national policy covering planning and environmental issues, including guidance from the DoEHLG on planning policy.

Primary planning legislation is the Planning and Development Acts, 2000–2006*. The Planning and Development Regulations, 2009 on Regional Planning Guidelines set out statutory procedures to be followed for review of RPGs. Department Circular SP4/09 of 1st October 2009 relating to the RPG Review provides Population Targets for Gateways and Hubs which are required to be incorporated into the Regional Planning Guidelines.

The key national policies that inform these Guidelines are:

- National Development Plan 2007–2013
- National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020
- 'Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future'
- Water Framework Directive
- SEA Directive (2001/42/EC).

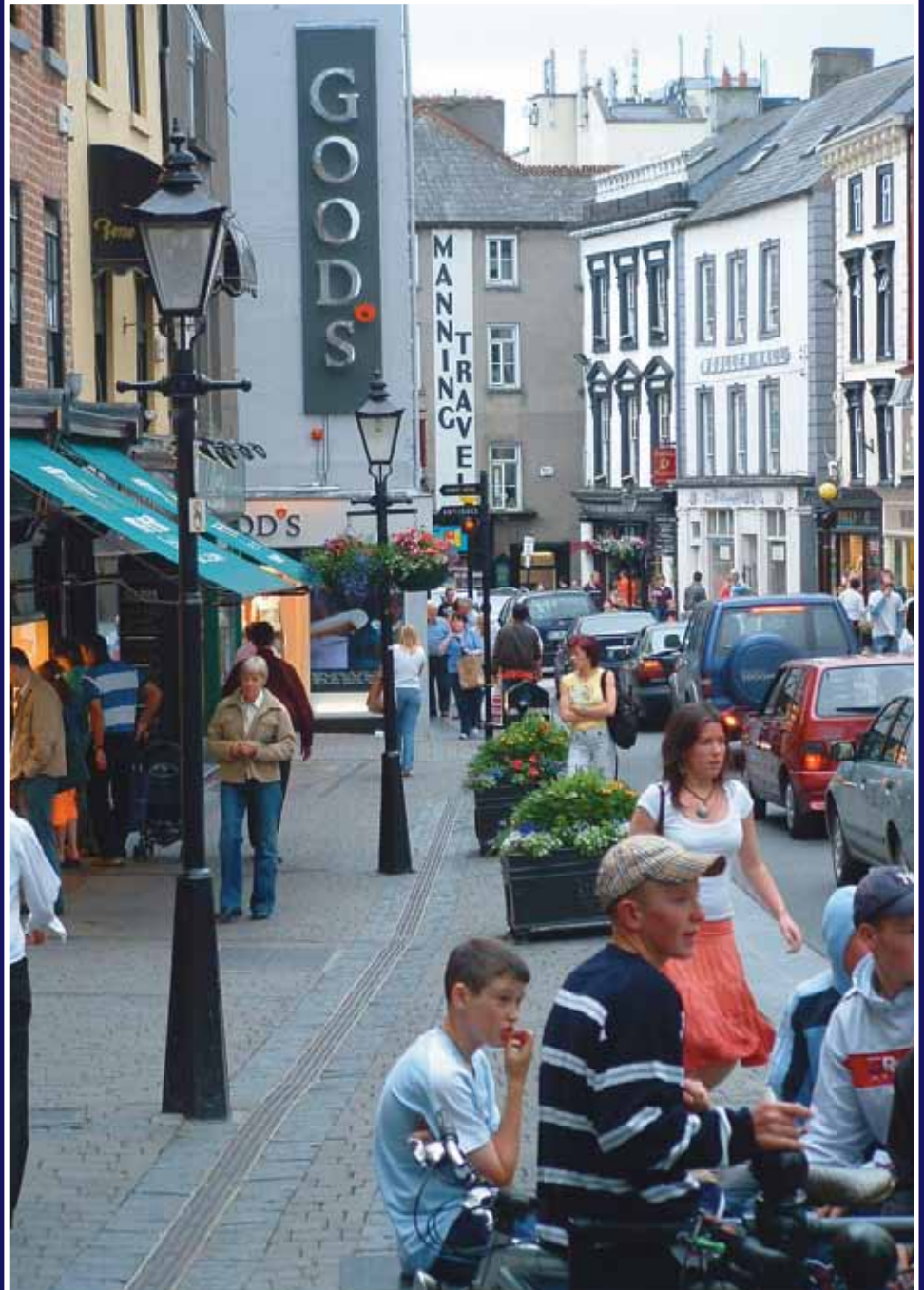
Key regional policies are:

- Waterford PLUTS
- Broadband Infrastructure Project
- Joint Waste Management Plan for South-East Region
- South-East Region Bio-energy Implementation Plan
- River Basin District Management Plans for river catchments in the South-East Region
- Provision of Water Services Infrastructure.

Section 1 also includes a summary of infrastructure project completions/achievements during the period 2004–2010.

*The making of these RPG pre-dated the enactment of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act, 2010 – see also p.12





Section 2: Population & Regional Profile

2.1 National Population Growth Patterns

Public policies and investments, the performance of the economy and national, regional and local planning policies have changed over the last six years since the adoption of the Regional Planning Guidelines for the South-East Region in 2004. The Regional Planning Guidelines provide the regional framework for implementation of the National Spatial Strategy.

The current challenge is to build on the good progress made in infrastructure delivery and in strategic and plan-led development and, taking account of the additional challenges posed by the current economic and fiscal context, to tackle in a collaborative and positive manner some of the downsides of Ireland's spatial development.

More recently, the national economic situation has deteriorated markedly, such that in the short term at least implementation of the NSS will take place in a very different developmental environment. The regional development challenge is shifting from one of managing growth to stimulating economic activity in a positive and sustainable manner.

Within the context of the current economic downturn, a national and regional spatial development strategy like the NSS has even greater relevance because it provides the framework for co-ordinating the expenditure of even more scarce public and private resources. It also has the potential for achieving economies of scale and efficiencies leading to long term benefit. Furthermore, it has the potential to identify economic and other growth opportunities and to provide the framework within which they can be elicited.

Notwithstanding the challenges Ireland currently faces, maintaining as far as possible investment in capital infrastructure (until recently one of the highest in Europe relative to the size of the economy, expenditure being at 5% of GNP) under the NDP 2007-2013 is a critical requirement in creating the basis for long term and sustained economic progress. Such investment would need to be coupled to:

1. Tightly focused and well prioritised regional planning policies in the second round of Regional Planning Guidelines (to be adopted in 2010) as a framework to better co-ordinate planning at city and county levels;
2. Better governance and leadership arrangements at regional and especially Gateway level to be considered in the forthcoming White Paper on Local Government Reform; and
3. Action derived from strong regional economic strategies across the enterprise agencies, regional and local authorities, government departments and the private sector to promote economic renewal at the regional level.

2.2 Regional Profile

This section profiles the region as it currently stands and charts the main factors that will affect the development of the region in the future, in socio-cultural, economic, physical and policy terms.

2.2.1 Population and Settlement

The population of the South-East Region increased from 423,616 to 460,838 persons between 2002 and 2006, an increase of 37,222 people or 8.8%. In 2008, the population of the region was estimated to be 487,800 (*State of the Regions Report*, April 2009, DoEHLG). The figures from the 2006 Census are as follows:

Table 2.1 Population Change by Local Authority Area 2002-2006

| Local Authority Area | Population | | Change | |
|----------------------|------------|---------|--------|------------|
| | 2002 | 2006 | Actual | Percentage |
| Carlow | 46,014 | 50,349 | 4,335 | 9.4% |
| Kilkenny | 80,339 | 87,558 | 7,219 | 9.0% |
| South Tipperary | 79,121 | 83,221 | 4,100 | 5.2% |
| Waterford County | 56,952 | 62,213 | 5,261 | 9.2% |
| Waterford City | 44,594 | 45,748 | 1,154 | 2.6% |
| Wexford | 116,596 | 131,749 | 15,153 | 13.0% |
| Regional Total | 423,616 | 460,838 | 37,222 | 8.8% |

While the South-East Region has a strong urban structure, much of the region is rural in character with almost 57% of the population living in the rural area (i.e. in villages less than 1,500 population and in the countryside). In terms of urban settlements, there is an extensive network of towns and villages throughout the region that have developed with the support of a traditionally prosperous agricultural base.

The region's urban settlement structure is balanced as follows:

Table 2.2 Population of Larger Urban Centres in 2006

| Greater than 15,000 | |
|---------------------|--------|
| Waterford City | 49,213 |
| Kilkenny | 22,179 |
| Carlow | 20,724 |
| Wexford | 18,163 |
| Clonmel | 17,008 |

| 5,000-15,000 | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Tramore | 9,634 |
| Enniscorthy | 9,538 |
| Dungarvan | 8,362 |
| New Ross | 7,709 |
| Gorey | 7,193 |
| Carrick-on-Suir | 5,906 |
| Tipperary Town | 5,065 |

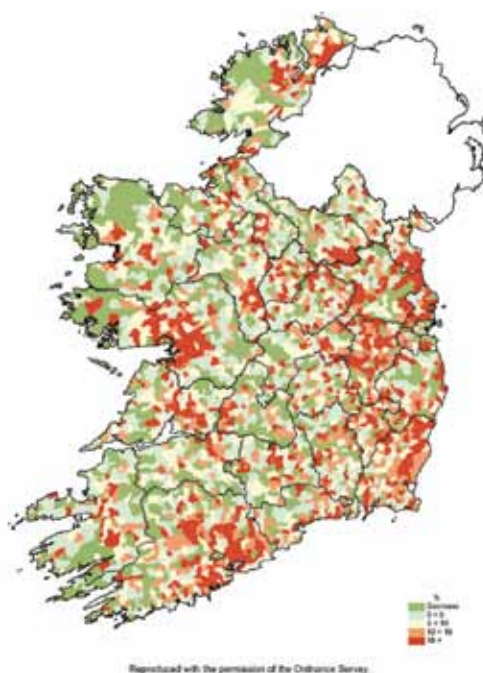
| 1,500-5,000 | |
|----------------------|-------|
| Cahir | 3,381 |
| Tullow | 3,048 |
| Cashel | 2,936 |
| Bagenalstown | 2,735 |
| Bunclody/Carrickduff | 1,863 |
| Thomastown | 1,837 |
| Callan | 1,771 |
| Castlebridge | 1,624 |
| Dunmore East | 1,547 |
| Castlecomer | 1,531 |

Some of the most significant growth rates seen in the South-East were recorded in urban areas along the north-eastern fringe of the region. There is evidence of significant levels of commuting from the towns and villages in the north of the region to the Greater Dublin Area.

The population of Waterford City and Environs grew by 2,477 people between 2002 and 2006. However, this rate of growth was less than the average for larger urban areas across the region. Significant population increases were recorded in towns and rural areas surrounding Waterford City.

The proportion of the regional population in the Hubs and County Towns declined slightly from 19.05% in 2002 to 18.75% in 2006. However, while increases well above the national and regional rates were recorded in Carlow and Dungarvan, disappointing rates of growth were recorded for Clonmel, Kilkenny, Wexford and Waterford City.

Map 4: Population Change by District Electoral Division 2002-2006



The Rural Districts in the immediate vicinity of the five major urban areas showed significant increases in population ranging upwards from 5%. Issues faced by rural areas relate primarily to development pressures for the expansion in suburban form of towns and villages, one-off housing, tourism and leisure.

2.2.2 Employment and Economic Development

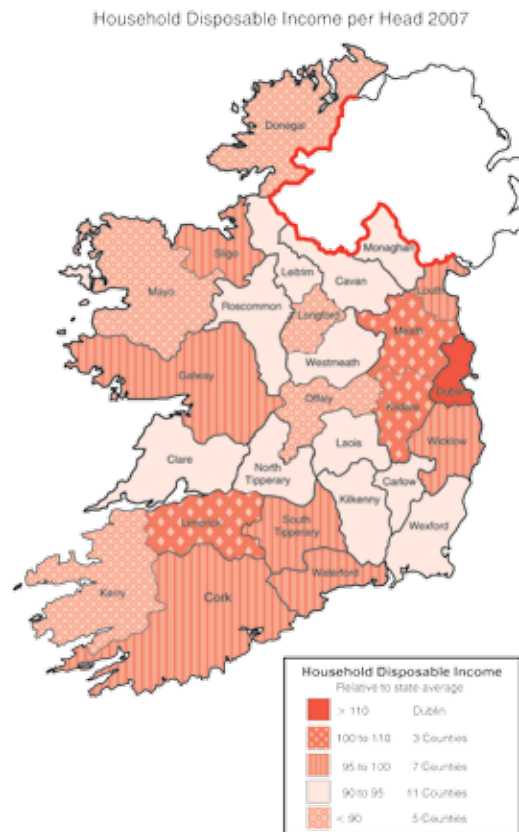
The regional economy of the South-East is based primarily on agriculture, manufacturing and services, tourism, fishing and aquaculture. The agriculture and food sector accounts for a significant proportion of output and employment, with the region having a higher than average reliance on this sector. However, the table below demonstrates the extent to which there has been a shift towards services employment in recent years with a consequent reduction in the proportion of the labour force employed in the agricultural sector.

Table 2.3 Changing Employment Profile of the South-East Region 2002-2006

| Sector | 2002 | 2006 |
|-------------------------|-------|------|
| Agricultural Employment | 11.6% | 10% |
| Industrial Employment | 31.5% | 33% |
| Services Employment | 56.9% | 57% |

The South-East Region has the highest rate of unemployment in the country at 15.1% (CSO, QNHS Q3, 2009) and income per capita is well below the national average (ranked 5th out of 8 regions in 2007, County Incomes and Regional GDP 2007, CSO). Map 5 illustrates the variations in per capita disposable income across the state. This clearly demonstrates that, despite being a constituent part of the Southern and Eastern Region (NUTS II), per capita disposable incomes in the South-East are below those recorded by many counties located within adjoining regions.

Map 5: Average Disposable Income by County



Key Issues for Employment and Economic Development

The key economic development issues relate to:

- the need to respond to the major employment losses associated with the downturn in construction and job losses in major export-led enterprises
- the need to provide appropriate enterprise land with adequate water and waste water services to accommodate the enterprise areas in which the region has some competitive advantage
- the need to create vibrant city and town centres with high levels of enterprise activity
- the need to provide the infrastructure needed to attract investment into the region
- the need to create stronger linkages between Higher and Further Education Institutions and the private sector and enterprise development
- the need to develop a critical population and labour-force mass by integrating Waterford and the main urban centres around the Gateway along the economic and transport corridors of the region
- the need to develop the tourism potential of the region while protecting the natural resources on which it relies
- the need to facilitate the appropriate development of enterprise in rural areas.

The successful development of the gateway, hubs and county towns will provide the region with locations of scale that will possess the population, skills, business services, infrastructure and existing enterprise base necessary to attract Foreign Direct Investment against similar competing locations nationally and internationally and to facilitate indigenous start-ups in advanced sectors – principally in the ICT sector.

Economic activity in indigenous companies is more widely dispersed across the region. The competitiveness of this sector will depend on local infrastructure, broadband and telecommunications and access improvements. Support for existing indigenous companies and companies starting up is particularly important. The Regional Authority, together with other public agencies, will support innovation and economic development, particularly in the new technologies (green technologies) sector.

A combination of strong locally based economic activity, with high added value inward investment, will be key to the future development of the region.

The types of industries that now offer long-term prospects for generating revenues are in the new technologies, such as green technologies, high added value and knowledge based areas such as Medical Devices, Biotechnology, Pharmaceuticals, Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Strengthened Research and Development (R&D) investment and innovation, improved links with third-level institutions and the adoption of new telecommunications technology will be required to further develop activity in these advanced sectors.

In addition to the above, development of the services sector, including retailing and tourism, will also be critical to the success of the regional economy.

2.2.3 Agriculture, Rural Development and the Marine

Agriculture

The agriculture and food sector accounts for a significant proportion of output and employment in the South-East Region, with the region having a higher than average reliance on this sector. In line with national trends the number of farmers in the South-East has decreased drastically in recent years. Also, the number of people employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing has been steadily declining.

The South-East is generally regarded as one of the more productive regions of the country. All of the counties in the South-East Region have average farm economic margins higher than the national average. However, with changes to agricultural support mechanisms, there is a need to engage in higher value, more land intensive practices such as horticulture or higher value practices such as organic farming (on-farm diversification) to maximise productivity on smaller landholdings.

Johnstown Castle Research Centre in Co. Wexford and Oak Park National Bio-Tech Research Centre at Carlow are national centres for agricultural research and are a strong asset in terms of developing the region's agricultural base.

The Regional Authority has previously stated its objective to maintain the rural economy which is vital to the future economic, social and environmental balance of the region and to maintain the maximum number of people in farming and land-based activity, thus sustaining the economic landscape of the region, by improving the efficiency of commercial and potentially viable farmers.

Traditional rural based sectors of employment in agriculture, forestry and fishing will continue to have key roles as a base for strong and diversified rural economies. Efficient agricultural, marine and natural resource sectors, together with significant and developing sectors such as tourism, enterprise, local services and other sources of off-farm employment, will be the mainstays of a strong rural economy. However, the mix and concentration in any one of these sectors will vary according to the potential of different places. This calls for tailored responses to the particular issues in various types of places.

It will be necessary to secure agriculture, where it has the capacity to remain strong and viable, by maintaining the maximum possible number of family farms, while at the same time ensuring that smaller farmers have the opportunity to supplement their farm income through off-farm work.

Rural Development

It is recognised that there will be locally generated growth in rural areas over the period of the RPGs and that consideration must be given at local level to assessing such local needs and applying the principles of the Department's 2005 Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines. The consideration and provision of such one-off housing will normally occur on unzoned lands in rural areas and so will be assessed separately to the extent of zoned and serviced lands in the towns and villages.

The White Paper, *'Ensuring the Future - A Strategy for Rural Development in Ireland'*, outlines the basic underlying characteristics and future of rural areas in Ireland. The Paper states that relative declines in incomes and remoteness have become important aspects of social exclusion in rural areas. Policies to address these issues are set out in the Settlement and Economic Strategies and in Section 7 on Social Infrastructure and Community Development.

Forestry

Forest cover in the South-East is slightly higher than the national average, with the highest rates of cover achieved in South Tipperary and County Waterford.

In addition, there is a significant non-timber value to forestry in the South-East Region, from biodiversity, amenity and landscape and the potential for recreation and outdoor pursuits.

The Marine

Ireland has the lowest per capita pleasure boat ownership in the EU. This is primarily due to the lack of facilities. There is obvious potential for sustainable economic growth in this area given that the South-East Region has 434 kms. of coastline, the most attractive climate in Ireland for outdoor activities and an abundance of existing harbours and marinas.

The South-East coastline has a vast range of marine tourism facilities with a number of coastal towns experiencing significant development pressure for holiday homes. The potential of marine tourism could be tapped while at the same time protecting these vulnerable landscapes and environments by identifying and facilitating the development of marine tourism clusters.

Fishing

Fishing Ports are an important part of the economy along the South-East coast, with Duncannon, Kilmore Quay and Dunmore East among the top 20 fishing ports in the country. In addition to these, there are significant levels of fishing activity at Helvick and Courtown. Extensive shellfish farming is carried out at Wexford Harbour, Carne/Ballytrant, Bannow Bay, Waterford Harbour and Dungarvan Bay. Pollution Reduction Programmes are in place for Dungarvan Bay, Waterford Estuary, Bannow Bay and Wexford Harbour to ensure compliance with environmental standards for Shellfish Waters.

Integrated Coastal Zone Management

Integrated Coastal Zone Management aims to implement sustainable development in coastal zones and to maintain coastal diversity. This involves collaborative management in establishing and maintaining optimum sustainable levels of use, development and activity in coastal zones and improving the state of the coastal environment.

ICZM is a key regional and inter-regional issue that needs to be addressed by the Regional Authority in consultation and co-operation with neighbouring authorities and the relevant state agencies. Almost 70% of the South-East coastline is categorised as Soft Coastline and more than 30 kms. of this coastline is designated as being at serious risk from erosion. Parts of the Wexford coastline are currently experiencing erosion rate of up to 2 metres per annum. Counties Wexford and Waterford have policies which are specific to the coastal zone.

Inland Waterways

The rivers of the South-East Region – Barrow, Nore, Suir, Slaney and Blackwater - are a unique feature of the landscape providing links between the physical, the historic, the environment and individuals. They are an important regional asset and of interest for their industrial heritage, habitat value and amenity corridors as navigation and walking routes.

The Barrow has the second longest main river channel in Ireland. It runs for 192 kms. from source to sea. The river was made navigable between Athy and St. Mullins, some 68 kms., by the development of the *Barrow Navigation*. There are 23 locks, including the sea lock at St. Mullins. The *Barrow Line* connects the Barrow with the Grand Canal between Lowtown and Athy. Running westwards and eastwards from Lowtown is the main line of the Grand Canal, which can be cruised to the Shannon/Erne Waterway and Dublin respectively.

The waters of the Barrow are suitable for swimmers, while the tow path and woodlands offer a superb walking environment. Cyclists and walkers can explore the historic castles and ruins and the scenic countryside on the quiet roads each side of the river. The amenity and tourism potential (e.g. fishing and angling) of this waterway has significant scope for development. It is clearly recognised that the economic and social contribution of the waterway to sustainable tourism, both as an attraction in its own right and as a link to related local businesses, has considerable potential for expansion.

The River Suir is the third longest river in Ireland at 184 kms. from source to sea. The main channel and its tributaries flow through Counties Tipperary, Kilkenny and Waterford. A Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (CFRAMS) has been completed for the Suir by the OPW. In 2009, funding was awarded to South Tipperary County Council to develop a participatory approach to inland water management under the Interreg Programme over a 3-year period to 2012. The project aims to support suitable development of the River Suir for recreation and amenity by creating a mixed use of regional waterways, taking into account environmental considerations, the Water Framework Directive and the effects of climate change.

2.2.4 The State of the Environment

The state of the environment can be assessed by reference to fundamental indicators including the quality of water and conservation status of biodiversity. Since the preparation of the 2004 Regional Planning Guidelines a range of EU legislation has emerged to provide additional regulatory control for the environment with key legislation including the 2004 SEA and Environmental Liability Directives and the 2007 Floods Directive.

In accordance with the SEA Directive, an Environmental Report has been prepared to assess the environmental consequences of the Regional Planning Guidelines. The Environmental Report accompanying these Regional Planning Guidelines details the current status of the environment in the South-East Region in relation to the range of environmental issues and should be read in conjunction with the Guidelines.

Ireland's Environment 2008, the Environmental Protection Agency's fourth state of the environment report, provides an overall assessment of Ireland's environment. The overall conclusion of the report is that the quality of Ireland's environment is relatively good but there are some key environmental challenges facing Ireland and these include:

1. Limiting and adapting to Climate Change;
2. Reversing Environmental Degradation
 - preventing eutrophication and other water pollution
 - protecting natural habitats and species populations
 - remediation of contaminated land;

3. Complying with Environmental Legislation and Agreements;
4. Mainstreaming Environmental Considerations.

These issues are all relevant to the South-East Region. The Assessment reports that there are two primary areas where unsatisfactory conditions are extensive - eutrophication and other water pollution and the unsatisfactory conservation status of natural habitats and species. Ireland faces a difficult challenge in meeting many of its environmental protection obligations under both European legislation and other internationally binding legal agreements. Financial penalties are a potential consequence of failing to meet our environmental protection commitments.

A key challenge for the region is meeting the requirements of the Water Framework Directive which sets a target of achieving “good status” for all waters by 2015.¹ The Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) was transposed into Irish law in 2003 and is the most important piece of European water legislation. It aims to promote common approaches, standards and measures for water management on a systematic and comparable basis throughout the European Union. The Water Framework Directive marks a new approach for the protection and improvement of water resources. Commenced in 2009, a six-year cycle of river basin management plans will be implemented for the purpose of protecting and enhancing all waters - groundwater, rivers, lakes, transitional waters (estuaries) and coastal waters including protection for related terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands. The South-East is covered in the main by the South Eastern River Basin District and the South Western River Basin District which covers west County Waterford and the Blackwater River. A small area to the northwest of South Tipperary is covered by the Shannon River Basin District.

From the 2008 EPA *Water Quality in Ireland 2004-2006 Report* river water quality in Ireland between 2004 and 2006 showed some improvement over the 2001-2003 period with 71.4% unpolluted, 18.1% slightly polluted, 10.0% moderately polluted and 0.6% seriously polluted. According to this report, all levels of pollution within the South Eastern River Basin District decreased and there was an increase in the unpolluted Class A river channel length. Slight pollution/eutrophication continued to affect a significant length (26%) of river channel. The South Western River Basin District is the least polluted river basin district in the country.

According to the South Eastern River Basin District Management Plan the groundwater bodies in the South Eastern River Basin District were found to be achieving good chemical and quantitative status for the majority of the area. However, in order to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive all groundwater must achieve a good chemical and good quantitative status. There would need to be improvements in chemical status of almost 2% of the groundwater body area, and in quantitative status of almost 1% of the groundwater body area, to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. In the South Western River Basin District the groundwater status was almost completely classified as good for both chemical and quantitative parameters. In order for the South Western River Basin District to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive improvements are necessary in just 0.1% of the groundwater body area to achieve good chemical status and in just 0.3% of the groundwater body area to achieve good quantitative status.

In order to comply with the Directive remediation of unsatisfactory quality in groundwater, rivers, and estuaries is one of the main environmental challenges for the South-East Region. According to the EPA the most seriously eutrophic water bodies around the South-East Coast include the estuaries of the Rivers Slaney and Blackwater.

In order to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive a number of areas need to be restored to “good” status by 2015. These include coastal and estuarine waters containing unsatisfactory bathing waters at Tramore and Curracloe Beach, Bannow Bay, an estuary containing unsatisfactory shellfish waters, and six Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments designated as protected areas in the region. Restoration of surface water quality is also required at Dungarvan Bay, Waterford Estuary and Wexford Harbour and restoration of groundwater areas in the Rivers Nore and Suir. The River Blackwater in the South Western River Basin District is classified as having good groundwater status while its surface water requires ongoing protection.

The need to maintain water quality is key to conservation of biodiversity and water dependent habitats and species. Biodiversity loss is a serious threat to the quality of Ireland’s environment as habitat degradation and species loss are often irreversible. Many of Ireland’s most important habitats afforded protection under the EU Habitats Directive were assessed in 2008 as having bad conservation status. Certain species, particularly those of wetland and aquatic environments such as Atlantic Salmon, Otter and Freshwater Pearl Mussel, are

¹ Also informed by the EPA’s ‘Water Quality in Ireland 2007-2008: Key indicators of the Aquatic Environment’

considered to be of poor conservation status. Planning for the conservation and protection of these key habitats and species is necessary on a regional and catchment basis. The Water Framework Directive requires the protection of the ecological status of river catchments and not only water quality. This involves protection and maintenance of physical habitat and hydrological processes through incorporation of riparian buffer zones.

The provision and maintenance of sufficient infrastructure in the areas of wastewater treatment, adequate water supply, water conservation, flood prevention and control, renewable energy, sustainable transport and waste management are critical to ensure maintenance of a good quality environment.

Along with water quality and conservation of biodiversity, Climate Change impacts present real challenges to future land use and location of development in the region. Predicted impacts from projected temperature rises include more concentrated periods of higher rainfall, more exposure to flood risk and increasing coastal erosion pressure in Waterford and Wexford and lower river flows potentially affecting fish spawning and water supply. County Climate Change Strategies have been prepared or are underway for all counties in the South-East Region and will require ongoing collaboration between local authorities and local energy agencies to implement Climate Change Strategies at local level. Policies in these Guidelines have been drafted taking into account key environmental issues outlined above and informed by the SEA process.²

2.2.5 Heritage and Conservation

The National Heritage Plan and the National Bio-diversity Plan as published in 2002 state that it is the responsibility of local authorities to prepare and implement Heritage Plans and Bio-diversity Plans to achieve the better conservation and understanding of our architectural, archaeological and natural environment.

County Heritage Plans have been published for County Waterford, Waterford City, Kilkenny, Carlow and South Tipperary. These plans aim to maintain and enhance heritage through addressing information gaps and developing best practice through policy and work practices.

The South-East Region contains over 15,000 Recorded Monuments protected under the National Monuments Acts, 1930-2004. A significant number of archaeological sites and monuments have been added to the Record of Monuments and Places as a result of extensive excavations from roads programmes in the South-East since 2004. Archaeological inventories prepared by the National Monuments Service of the DoEHLG are available for Counties Carlow, Waterford and Wexford. The South-East contains over 150 sites of geological heritage interest which may be proposed either for NHA or County Geological Site designation.

The region contains a fine stock of architectural heritage including many large country houses and their associated demesne landscapes, ecclesiastical sites and other sites of industrial and vernacular heritage. Each local authority in the region maintains a record of protected structures for buildings of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest. The South-East is also noted for the great gardens located in the region including the world rated horticultural collection at Mount Congreve in Co. Waterford, Altamont in Co. Carlow, Woodstock in Co. Kilkenny and the J.F. Kennedy Arboretum, Co. Wexford.

The maintenance and conservation of the region's heritage is key in order to maintain an irreplaceable resource, sense of identity for the region and as a source of visitor interest and tourism revenue. Key issues include the conservation of built heritage, protection of archaeological sites and monuments and promotion and enhancement of access to these sites.

2.3 Planning and Provision of Physical and Social Infrastructure

2.3.1 Transportation

Roads

There are three Motorways, eight National Primary and seven National Secondary roads in the South-East Region linking major population centres within and outside the region. In addition, there are a number of Regional Roads linking the urban centres within the region. The National Roads Authority determined that the motorway between Waterford City and Dublin was a critical piece of enabling infrastructure to facilitate the development of Waterford City as a Regional Gateway and to deliver balanced regional development to the South-East. The project was completed in 2010.

² See Table 6.1 Section 6 of SEA Environmental Report

The NDP also lists the Atlantic Corridor N25 between Waterford and Cork, N24 (Limerick to Waterford), the N25 (Wexford/Rosslare), the N11 (Wexford/Rosslare to Dublin) and the N30 (Enniscorthy to New Ross) for further major improvements. The improvement of these roads to a suitable standard is essential for the sustainable development of the South-East Region.

In addition to the routes mentioned in the NDP, the links between Dungarvan and Clonmel (R672), the N80 Wexford/Enniscorthy/Carlow, the N76 Clonmel/Kilkenny and the Wexford/New Ross/Kilkenny routes are considered key intra-regional routes linking county towns and hubs that are in need of upgrading. Other routes which require upgrading are the R671 (Clonmel-Youghal) and R693 (Kilkenny-Urlingford).

In order to maximise the benefit of the region's ports and airport it is essential that access roads in their immediate vicinity and linkages to the wider region be improved.

Rail



The Waterford-Dublin rail route serves three of the region's five largest population centres: Waterford, Kilkenny and Carlow. There are eight trains daily on the route in each direction. Other rail links to Dublin include an additional daily service on Carlow-Dublin (distinct from the Waterford-Dublin service), an early morning commuter service. The Rosslare service operates three trains daily from Rosslare Europort to Dublin, serving Wexford, Enniscorthy and Gorey.

Non-radial connections in the region are not well served. The Rosslare-Waterford service operates one journey in each direction with a journey time of 75 minutes. The Waterford-Limerick Junction route operates three services in each direction. Journey time is approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes. Connections to Cork, Limerick and Dublin

can be made through Limerick Junction, with an approximate Rosslare-Cork journey time of 3 hours and 20 minutes. Long journey times, due to low speeds, ageing infrastructure and inconvenient and uncoordinated timetables have all resulted in very low passenger numbers and challenges to the future viability of this line.

Journey speed is a key factor in choosing rail travel over other modes of transport. Rail services in the South-East do not, however, offer significant time savings compared to travel by bus or private car. The Regional Authority is committed to working with Iarnród Éireann and with business and tourism bodies to support the upgrade of all rail routes within the region and to increase the use of rail for freight.

The region's railways also provide a limited range of freight services including bulk freight (e.g. forest products, cement and mineral ores), freight containers and a service to breweries for the distribution of their keg products. Freight services in the region have been progressively reduced in recent years. Transfer of freight from road to rail could significantly reduce the numbers of HGVs (and associated emissions) on certain roads and relieve communities affected by HGV traffic.

Bus Services

Bus Éireann operates an extensive Expressway network connecting the South-East Region with the rest of the country, i.e. an hourly service Waterford/Cork in both directions, ten services daily in both directions between Waterford/Dublin and seven services daily in both directions between Waterford/Limerick. It is planned to continue to grow the Expressway network within the region in line with the requirements of the demographics of the area. Rural and City services will be developed in line with population movements and availability of relevant funding. In addition to Bus Éireann a number of private companies operate services in the South-East Region.

Ports

Commercial port activity in the South-East is centred on Rosslare Europort, Waterford/Belview and New Ross. Rosslare Europort handles the largest volume of passenger traffic in the Republic of Ireland. It is the hub for all of the major Roll-on Roll-off (Ro-Ro) Passenger and Freight services operating the southern Irish Sea and

Continental routes. Waterford/Belview Port has three main freight terminals. Belview is now the focus of future port development having a fully serviced container terminal, a bulk handling facility and a dedicated cement importation facility. The third terminal is the oil berth at Great Island generating station. New Ross Port is Ireland's only inland port, some 32km from the sea on the River Barrow. The port specialises in handling dry and liquid bulk. The Regional Authority recognises the considerable potential that exists to develop existing commercial ports in terms of value-added shore based economic activity. This would contribute substantially to the economic development of the region.

Waterford Regional Airport

Waterford Regional Airport is located 9 kms. by road from Waterford city centre and is also close to Tramore. Aer Arann operates daily services linking the South-East with London Luton and some European destinations. The Irish Coast Guard operates an air/sea rescue service from the airport. The Regional Airport plays an important role as a Gateway to the South-East Region and passenger numbers at the Airport have grown significantly, from 54,432 in 2004 to 112,000 in 2009. There is potential for further expansion of the Airport and the Regional Authority supports the future expansion and upgrading of airport infrastructure together with improvements to the accessibility of the airport, including access by public transport, and the potential for development of economic and commercial business is also recognised.

2.3.2 Water Services

Water Supply

Local authorities in the South-East are committed to providing good quality potable water to all their domestic and non-domestic customers. Water is supplied and tested in accordance with the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations, 2000 and the European Communities (Drinking Water) (No. 2) Regulations, 2007. In order to comply with this legislation, local authorities will need to facilitate improvements to certain public and group water supply schemes. New water treatment facilities and the upgrading of existing facilities will be met through traditional procurement, Design and Build and Design, Build and Operate type contracts.

Requirements for increased capacity in water supply is slowing due to decreased development-led demand. Accordingly, there is a refocusing of expenditure from increasing water treatment capacity to water conservation, resolving issues highlighted in ECJ³ judgements and environmental and public health objectives. It is likely that in the short to mid-term the emphasis in water supply will be on managing existing resources and improving the overall quality of existing supplies.

Waste Water

Waste water collection, treatment and disposal are of major concern to all local authorities in the region. While increased capacity has been provided in many areas, there are still locations where development has been inhibited due to lack of capacity in some facilities. These deficits will be addressed by the Water Services Investment Programme, subject to availability of funding. Increased demand up to 2009 for such services placed an increased burden on waste water infrastructure with the result that inadequate waste water facilities began to inhibit economic growth as well as becoming potential sources of pollution of receiving waters.

However, the decline in development-led demand in the recent past for waste water facilities has refocused the need for expenditure on the management and upgrading of existing waste water assets with an emphasis on the quality of the effluent produced. Additional facilities will be considered where new projects can service the sustainable development of hubs and gateways, strategic developing areas and works to support employment creation.

Waste Management

The Joint Waste Management Plan for the South-East Region requires that maximum realistic reduction, reuse and recycling targets are achieved and that the balance of materials is treated or disposed of in accordance with the Joint Waste Management Plan and subject to the application of Best Available Technologies.

Regional capacity to accept municipal refuse at local authority landfills is approximately 2 years in the case of local authority landfills at Powerstown, Co. Carlow (Carlow County Council) and Donohill, Co. Tipperary (South Tipperary County Council). A new landfill at Holmestown, Co. Wexford was provided by Wexford County Council in 2008

³ See paragraph 5.2.1, Infrastructure Section.

with a capacity of 20 years.

It is envisaged that the major integrated facility, which will incorporate thermal and biological treatment, will be in place by 2013. In the shorter term, it is an objective of the Plan that local and central biological treatment, material recovery facilities, and construction and demolition (C&D) waste recovery facilities would be in place by 2011.

2.3.3 Energy and Telecommunications

The Electricity Grid Network is a vital infrastructure network for the region. Eirgrid have produced a Strategic Plan, *GRID 25*, which sets out the future requirements of the electricity network up to 2025. The Regional Authority supports the development and expansion of the *GRID* network and future connections to renewable sources of energy.

The South-East Region strongly supports national and international initiatives for limiting emissions of greenhouse gases and encouraging the development of the emerging Green Energy sector. The *Regional Bio-Energy Implementation Plan* (2008) provides a structured framework for the development and progress in the area of bio-energy.

The region has significant capacity to provide as much of its own energy through expansion of the existing Great Island power station and comprehensive provision of alternative energy sources such as wind.

Gas connectivity is a major boost to the industrial potential of an area and the Regional Authority recognises that the expansion of the gas pipeline network to centres of population throughout the region would provide a significant boost to the economic potential of those areas.

Telecommunications

Comprehensive access to information and communications technology is critical to the viability of the region as a whole. The provision of world class broadband infrastructure is required in the Regional Gateway, Hubs and County Towns. The Regional Authority will continue to work with local authorities, state agencies and service providers to ensure the swift and efficient roll-out of broadband telecommunications infrastructure to smaller towns and rural areas in the region. The provision of broadband telecommunications throughout the region will support the implementation of the South-East Information Society Strategy (SEISS).

The Regional Planning Guidelines should provide for the provision of the most effective broadband services to all communities in the region. In this context, each Planning Authority will co-operate in the roll out of the National Broadband Scheme and the provision of antennae and telecommunications equipment at appropriate locations.

2.3.4 Social Infrastructure

Social infrastructure covers a very wide range of areas, from third-level institutes to local library services. This section summarises the current position in relation to the development of social infrastructure focusing on those areas that are fundamental to the competitiveness of the region.

Education

There are two Institutes of Technology in the region, at Waterford and Carlow. In addition, the region has Carlow College, Tipperary Institute has a campus at Clonmel and there are third-level outreach centres at Wexford and Kilkenny. However, lower than average participation in third-level education and a high rate of graduate migration away from the region are inhibiting the further development of third and fourth-level education and the emergence of the knowledge economy in the region. The absence of a University in the South-East Region is an issue that has emerged time and again in studies and reports on the socio-economic development of the region.

Regional weaknesses such as lower than average participation in third and fourth-level education, under-developed linkages between industry and third and fourth-level educational institutions and a low level of Research and Development (R&D) activity would be addressed by the development of additional degree and post graduate places in the South-East.

A positive new development in the academic infrastructure of the South-East Region is the development of the Waterford Knowledge Campus, which will bring together academic research and business on the one site.

The Regional Authority will seek to develop the range of third and fourth-level educational options available in the South-East by utilising and building upon the existing network of higher education establishments at Waterford, Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford and Clonmel. The Regional Authority will work with existing third-level institutions to support the establishment of a University of the South-East. In addition, the Regional Authority will support the objectives of Adult and Further Education Programmes to provide additional access routes to higher education.

The development of a University of the South-East will continue to be a priority objective of the Regional Authority.

Primary and Secondary Education

Planning for primary and secondary education is now guided by Guidelines on school provision issued by the DoEHLG. The Guidelines seek to make schools provision an integral part of the evolution of compact sustainable urban development and the development of sustainable communities which requires an integrated approach between the planning authorities and the Department of Education and Science.

Section 10(2)(l) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 requires that a development plan shall include objectives for: "the provision, or facilitation of the provision, of services for the community including, in particular, schools, crèches and other education and childcare facilities."

The procedures to be adopted by planning authorities in integrating schools planning issues into their development planning processes are outlined in the *Planning Guidelines on Development Plans (DoEHLG, 2007)*. In the context of strengthening communities, the *draft Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (DoEHLG, February 2008)* draw particular attention to the need to plan for future schools needs and timely consultation with the Department of Education and Science. The Guidelines state that no substantial residential development should proceed without an assessment of existing schools capacity or the provision of new school facilities in tandem with the development. They also stress that planning authorities should strive to phase development in line with the availability of essential social and community infrastructure such as schools, amenities and other facilities. New and existing schools should provide an opportunity to develop high quality publicly owned education campus sites for multiple use by local communities, including further education, childcare, sports and recreation facilities.

Healthcare

The health service in the South-East is managed by the HSE. Issues in relation to Primary and Community care are common to other regions across the state. There is a regional hospital at Waterford City and acute hospitals at Wexford, Kilkenny and Clonmel.

There is a regional orthopaedic hospital based in Kilkenny City. These are supported by six district hospitals, five psychiatric hospitals and seven hospitals for the elderly. The provision of medical facilities throughout the region, on a hierarchical basis, which would provide the optimum level of service to all of the people of the region, will be promoted with the relevant agencies. Existing medical services such as Accident and Emergency, Maternity etc. should be maintained in local centres where appropriate and sustainable.

The region should offer specialised medical services through the Regional Hospital at Waterford. County and district hospitals should continue to offer non-specialised services at local level.

Whitfield Clinic is a significant new facility in Waterford City. It was built by the Irish health care company, Eurocare International, and officially opened in November 2006.

Cultural Facilities/Activities

The South-East has a wide variety of cultural activity aimed at the local population as well as visitors from the rest of Ireland and abroad. Street entertainment, Art, Comedy, Racing, Jazz, Mussel, Oyster, Drama, Light Opera and a host of other festivals all take place throughout the year. The Wexford Opera Festival, the Éigse Festival in Carlow, Kilkenny Arts Week and the Waterford Spraoi were all nominated as Irish Millennium Festivals in 2000. Carlow Town is the location for the National Centre for Contemporary Visual Arts and also hosts the Éigse Arts Festival. Cultural facilities, such as the Bru Boru Cultural Centre in Cashel, play a vital role in supporting and developing tourism activity throughout the region.

Community Facilities

Growth in urban populations has put some stress on the provision of community facilities in expanding housing areas. Local authorities are attempting to address this issue through the development of local area plans for areas likely to experience significant population growth.

The large number of settlements which exist across the region support a network of community facilities and services such as local shops, post offices, banking facilities, childcare facilities, youth clubs, sports clubs and meeting spaces. All of these services help to maintain and nurture a sense of community, particularly in the more rural parts of the region.

Existing community networks are well developed throughout the region. This development has been supported by local authorities through their Directors of Community and Enterprise and through the work of the County Development Boards. These existing networks should be strengthened and augmented to ensure continued community participation in local development initiatives.

Facilities provided for the purposes of recreation, amenity and culture should be provided on a hierarchical basis with good quality centres at county, city, town and local level.

2.4 Inter-Regional Issues



The South-East does not exist in isolation and there are matters which require a degree of inter-regional co-operation.

Issues to be addressed include the development of strategic proposals regarding the networking of adjacent cities in the Waterford - Cork - Limerick - Galway Corridor to achieve a critical mass of population. Complementary functions need to be identified so that these urban centres can develop as a networked counterbalance to the development of Dublin and the Mid-East. Communications linkages between Waterford City and the other gateways, including rail, road and telecommunications are central to the overall objective of achieving balanced regional development in a national context.

In relation to areas within the influence of the Greater Dublin Area it is particularly important to address the level of development that is occurring in the South-East driven by Dublin and effects on both the South-East towns and the Greater Dublin Area strategy.

The Waterford-Dublin economic corridor has a significant role in developing linkages not only between the Greater Dublin Area and the South-East, but also between the Mid-East Region and the South-East. Also, development within the Rosslare-Dublin corridor has significant potential for generating economic activity in the South-East Region.

There are areas at the periphery of the region which might not be as fully integrated and as well serviced as they might be and which are influenced by developments in more than one region, e.g. West Waterford and western parts of South Tipperary. On the other hand, there are urban areas, such as Carlow, located at the fringes of the region, which have a hinterland in more than one region. These can act as bridges between regions and can assist the development of inter-regional linkages and co-operation.

The fact that the South-East is the closest point from the southern part of Ireland to Britain has obvious implications for the development of strategic trans-boundary transport and economic links in this *Irish-Welsh Economic Corridor*. To this end, links have been established with the Welsh Assembly to allow co-ordination of spatial policy in both jurisdictions.

Table 2.4 Summary of Regional Strengths and Opportunities

| Among the major strengths of the region are: | Certain opportunities have also been identified: |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Well-developed urban network. 2. Higher than average population growth. 3. A range of third-level educational establishments throughout the region. 4. Access to seaports and deep-water berthage for freight and passenger transport to Britain and Europe. 5. Good agricultural land, strong agricultural production base and processing capabilities. 6. A wide range of renewable energy resources. 7. A strong tradition in engineering and recent success in moving to higher value-added services. 8. Well-developed tourism sector with a wealth of visitor attractions, a high quality environment and a wide range of activities (golf, equestrian, angling, walking, cycling, quality natural and built heritage etc.). 9. Recent improvements to regional infrastructure such as waste water treatment, water supplies, roads, energy transmission etc. 10. A diverse and good quality environment and landscape. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In-migration has established a local workforce which would welcome increased employment options within the region. 2. Development of third-level facilities and courses within the region and the establishment of a University of the South-East have the potential to significantly increase participation. 3. Improved linkages are being developed between industry and third-level educational institutions. 4. Strong indigenous industrial sector with opportunities for increased levels of Research and Development. 5. Improving road and rail infrastructure. 6. The Regional Airport has significant capacity for growth. 7. Innovative public transport systems are improving rural mobility. 8. A developing retail sector is reducing leakage of retail spending to urban centres outside the region. 9. Potential for development of the Green Economy and renewable energies. 10. Potential for sustainable development of heritage as an amenity and tourism resource. |

2.6 Spatial Components of the Region

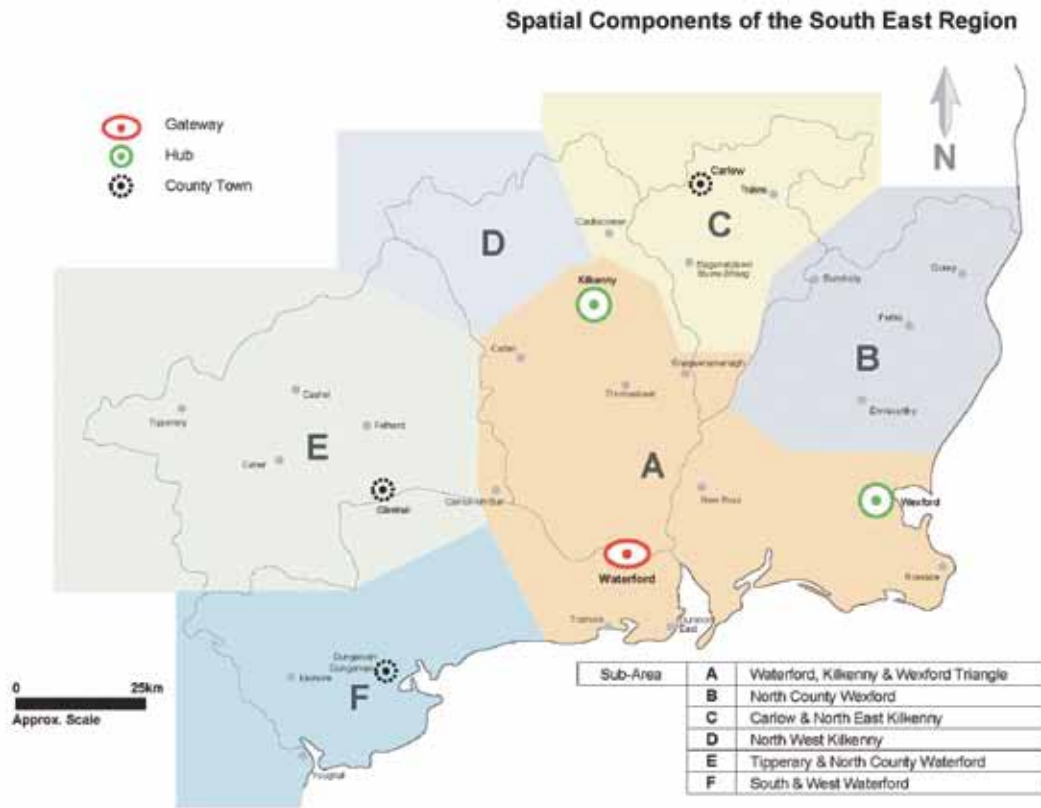
2.6.1 Sub-Regional Issues

Having regard to all of the foregoing developmental issues, demographic changes and the topography of the region, the following sub-regional analysis has been compiled: The region is divided into six smaller sub-areas and the principal issues associated with each are listed below. The geographical extent of these sub-areas is illustrated on Map 6 on the following page.

SUB-AREA A – Waterford-Kilkenny-Wexford Triangle

- ☐ Development of critical mass of Gateway and Hubs a priority
- ☐ Larger towns (i.e. Tramore, New Ross, Carrick-on-Suir) to be strengthened
- ☐ Smaller towns and villages to be strengthened
- ☐ Urban generated rural housing to be carefully monitored and controlled
- ☐ Transportation links between Gateway and Hubs to be improved
- ☐ Links to national Gateways and the regional Hubs/County Towns require improvement
- ☐ Internal roads network and public transport require improvement
- ☐ Economic, Social and Cultural infrastructure to be improved
- ☐ Exploit potential of location of Rosslare Europort
- ☐ Tourism development to be facilitated
- ☐ Sustainable Rural Development
- ☐ Scenic areas and sensitive coastal landscapes.

Map 6: Spatial Components of the South-East Region



SUB-AREA B – North County Wexford

- ☐ Strong population growth - Influence of Greater Dublin Area is present
- ☐ Strong physical links to Dublin and the Mid-East Regions
- ☐ Demographic implications for the rest of the County and the Hub at Wexford Town
- ☐ Tourism development to be facilitated
- ☐ Urban sprawl to be controlled and monitored
- ☐ Sensitive coastal landscapes.

SUB-AREA C – Carlow and North-East Kilkenny

- ☐ Strong physical links to Midland, Mid-East and Dublin Regions
- ☐ Strong population growth around Carlow Town - Influence of Greater Dublin Area is present
- ☐ Smaller towns and villages to be strengthened
- ☐ Urban generated rural housing to be carefully monitored and controlled
- ☐ Economic, Social and Cultural infrastructure to be improved.

SUB-AREA D – North-West Kilkenny

- ☐ Rolling topography
- ☐ Predominantly rural area with a poorly developed urban structure
- ☐ Declining population
- ☐ Sustainable Rural Development
- ☐ Internal roads network and public transport require improvement
- ☐ Pressure on landscape for development of sustainable energy resources (e.g. wind farm development)
- ☐ Pressure on local road infrastructure from heavy vehicle transport (e.g. agricultural, forestry and mining related traffic).

SUB-AREA E – South Tipperary and North County Waterford

- ☐ Functioning urban network
- ☐ Pivotal role of Clonmel on the Waterford – Limerick Atlantic Gateways Transport Corridor.
- ☐ Strong links to adjacent region - Influence of Limerick City - Strategic role of Tipperary Town to

- be developed
- ☐ Population growth area; however, declining population in upland and remote areas
- ☐ Internal roads network and public transport require improvement
- ☐ Economic, Social and Cultural infrastructure to be improved
- ☐ Sustainable Rural Development
- ☐ Sensitive landscapes
- ☐ Pressure on landscape for development of sustainable energy resources (e.g. wind farm development)
- ☐ Pressure on local road infrastructure from heavy vehicle transport (e.g. agricultural and forestry related traffic).

SUB-AREA F – South and West Waterford

- ☐ Links to adjacent region - Influence of Cork City is present
- ☐ Pivotal role of Dungarvan in the Waterford - Cork Atlantic Gateways Corridor Strategy
- ☐ Population growth
- ☐ Urban structure to be strengthened
- ☐ Urban generated rural housing to be carefully monitored and controlled
- ☐ Sustainable Rural Development
- ☐ Sensitive coastal and upland landscapes
- ☐ Economic, Social and Cultural infrastructure to be improved
- ☐ Linguistic Heritage.

SUMMARY / Development Plan Implications

Section 2 sets out National and Regional population figures from the 2006 Census and provides a profile of the region, looking at the cultural, social, economic and environmental issues across the region.

The section concludes with a spatial analysis of the different and diverse components of the South-East Region.





Section 3: Regional Development Strategy

3.1 Strategic Vision

This section outlines the strategic and high-level goals for the Guidelines from the perspectives of proper planning and sustainable development, promoting socio-economic and cultural development and sustaining and enhancing environmental qualities.

By 2022 the South-East will be recognised as a **distinct and cohesive region** that is **prosperous and competitive**, where the benefits of **economic success are shared equitably** throughout the region and throughout society and which offers **a good quality of life** in an environment rich in heritage and landscape value.

This vision will be realised through:

- Combining the strengths of the cities and towns in the region to achieve sufficient critical mass to compete with larger urban centres in other regions.
- Progress towards an accessible region with efficient and fully integrated transport systems.
- Broadening and strengthening the economic base of the region and seeking to achieve innovation and enterprise in indigenous and emerging industry sectors, such as green/renewable energy, and greater economic competitiveness and growth.
- Providing for world class higher education, research and development and links to the knowledge economy.
- Tackling inequality, educational disadvantage and social deprivation by providing improved public services and social and community infrastructure.
- Maintenance of the character and vitality of rural areas and conservation of the region's characteristic landscape and heritage assets.
- Promoting and supporting the creation of a more sustainable self-sufficient region with greater use of renewable energy resources and development of regional food supplies.

The population targets set out in these Guidelines provide for the South-East Region to grow to a population of 580,500 persons by the year 2022. Good spatial planning at regional and local levels is essential to implement the National Spatial Strategy by ensuring that population growth occurs in a manner that is consistent with the spatial framework in the National Spatial Strategy and particularly aimed at enhancing the critical mass in the Gateways, Hubs and County Towns.

Setting population targets is one measure of the Regional Strategy. However, good spatial planning at regional and local levels also needs to ensure that such growth occurs in tandem with the provision of affordable and good quality housing, education, health and social facilities, efficient transport networks and proper amenities. These are the defining issues for a better quality of life for all – the core objective of the NDP and of good planning. To achieve these objectives, the settlement strategy needs to provide for the sustainable growth of the region.

This Strategic Vision has been prepared in conjunction with a process of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), where alternative strategic options were considered. These are set out in Section 4 of the Environmental Report.

In order to implement the National Spatial Strategy at regional level, additional financial support from Government will be necessary. The Strategic Goals A, B, C and D below indicate where such investment should be targeted.

3.2 Strategic Goals

The strategic goals and objectives set out below are aimed at ensuring that the South-East will remain competitive in the national and international marketplace and that the economic success will be shared more equally at regional level and throughout society:

A. To broaden and strengthen the economic base of the region and seeking to achieve greater economic competitiveness and growth with associated social progress by:

- A1** Putting in place the conditions where 35,000 new jobs can be created over the next 20 years. Job creation needs to focus on the advanced sectors, the public sector, health and education, retail, tourism, green energy and e-business.
- A2** It is an objective of the Regional Authority to support the establishment of a University in the South-East by utilising and building upon the existing network of third and fourth-level educational establishments at Waterford, Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford and Clonmel.

- A3** Promotion of the Knowledge Economy through increasing high-level research and development in the Higher and Further Education Institutes and developing industry – academic co-operation and links.
- A4** Ensuring that supporting infrastructure such as telecommunications and energy supply networks are available and have sufficient capacity to ensure growth in enterprise activity.
- A5** Identifying and developing a small number of first class business locations with first class infrastructure capable of attracting Foreign Direct Investment and facilitating new indigenous start-ups in advanced sectors in competition with locations nationally and internationally.
- A6** Promoting and facilitating the decentralisation of services from the Dublin Metropolitan Area to the South-East.
- A7** Promoting tourism and attracting overseas and domestic visitors through promotion of diverse and well-developed tourism sectors and highlighting the facilities for the business sector.
- A8** Supporting the implementation of the Joint Waste Management Plan for the South-East Region.
- A9** Supporting the development and improvement of key economic infrastructure, such as energy generation and transmission networks, including renewable energies and telecommunications, all of which are essential for the continued development of the region.

B. To support the development of the Gateway and combine the strengths of the cities and towns in the region, as envisaged in the National Spatial Strategy, to achieve sufficient critical mass to compete with larger urban centres in other regions by:

- B1** Planning for a sustainable regional population of 580,500 by the year 2022.
- B2** Supporting the development and growth of the Waterford City Gateway as the Driver for the region.
- B3** Planning and providing for population growth in each of the two Hubs of Wexford and Kilkenny and the County Towns of Carlow, Clonmel and Dungarvan.
- B4** Developing the main urban settlements as attractive places for people to live in and want to move to, where efficient public transport and quality public services and a high quality environment make them attractive places to live, to work in and do business in. This is the key to building critical mass and achieving population targets.
- B5** Promoting strategies to prioritise urban regeneration in order to improve and revitalise cities, towns and neighbourhoods and support local economies.
- B6** Ensuring the availability and affordability of housing in cities, towns and villages, supported by clear rural settlement strategies, to achieve critical mass and a strong, competitive urban network.
- B7** Ensuring the provision of a full range of high quality, linked and complementary social and recreational facilities to develop and maintain a critical mass of population within the region.
- B8** Basing all settlement growth on sound principles of Water Management through implementation of the Water Framework Directive, as set out in the River Basin District Management Plans for the river catchments in the region.
- B9** Developing water services and other social infrastructure to a standard sufficient to support the sustainable development of critical mass at selected locations.

C. To progress towards an accessible region with efficient and fully integrated transport systems by:

- C1** Improving public transport and connectivity throughout the region by providing more flexible public transport services and reducing commuting times and distances.
- C2** Making settlements sustainable through the integration of land use and transport planning and creating meaningful jobs locally and facilitating e-working.
- C3** Delivering enhanced regional accessibility via air services, building particularly on the important regional asset of Waterford Airport and its associated infrastructure.
- C4** Enhancing access routes (road and rail) to the region's ports, recognising the important contribution of Rosslare Europort, Waterford Port and New Ross Port to the economic infrastructure of the region.
- C5** Supporting the sustainable development of effective public transport by bus and rail between Waterford City and Dublin and from Cork and Limerick to Waterford, including upgrading the Rosslare–Waterford–Limerick rail line.
- C6** Supporting the sustainable development of the internal road network between the Gateway, Hubs and County Towns and other larger settlements and the better integration of land use and transport planning throughout the region.
- C7** Securing the future balanced development of Waterford City through enhanced additional connectivity by means of development of a downstream river crossing.
- C8** Upgrading of the key N24 National Primary route linking the Gateways of Waterford and Limerick and

- C9** connecting them to the urban settlements of Carrick-on-Suir, Clonmel, Cahir and Tipperary in the region.
- C9** Upgrading of the N25 along the Atlantic Corridor linking Waterford with Cork and Rosslare and connecting them to the urban settlements of Dungarvan, Wexford, and New Ross within the region.
- C10** Improving transportation links between Rosslare Europort, Wexford and Dublin resulting from improvements to the N11/M11 and improved rail services.
- C11** Establishing a spatial policy framework through which development of the ports in the region can be co-ordinated to deliver a critical mass of services and facilities, boosting the national and international competitiveness of the region.
- C12** Promoting an increased frequency of rail services on the Waterford to Dublin line and a reduction in journey times between all centres of population along the line and supporting the upgrading and rescheduling of services on the Rosslare to Limerick Rail Line (via Waterford) to provide for high quality and frequent commuter services with onward connections to Limerick and the Western Rail Corridor.

D. To maintain the character and vitality of rural areas, promote rural sustainability and conserve the region's characteristic environment, landscape and heritage assets by:

- D1** Ensuring that agriculture continues to play an important role in the lives of the people of the South-East. The South-East will seek to ensure that it is one of the most efficient regions in Ireland effectively competing in both national and international markets.
- D2** Identifying the different rural area types in the region and devising rural development and settlement policies appropriate to local conditions and that build on existing potential so as to strengthen rural communities and underpin rural sustainability.
- D3** Identifying opportunities for land uses in rural areas other than those related to food production. There is scope to provide for energy crops, recreation, woodland and wildlife habitats. Rural diversification is needed to create employment and generate economic prosperity.
- D4** Developing a self-sustaining forest industry based on a variety of species and a wide range of post-felling services.
- D5** Development of the Green Economy in rural areas; actively promoting the exploitation of wind energy and other forms of renewable energy as valuable regional assets in appropriate locations.
- D6** Supporting implementation of the South-East Region Bio-Energy Implementation Plan and local climate change strategies.
- D7** Supporting the development of an Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy (ICZMS) for the region by each of the three coastal local authorities, having regard to the National ICZMS.
- D8** Encouraging the preservation of a high quality environment, and conservation of natural and built heritage assets, so that the South-East will continue to be a pleasant place in which to live, work or to visit.
- D9** Undertaking a co-ordinated approach to the protection of landscapes, in accordance with the European Landscape Convention.
- D10** Encouraging effective management of flood risk in the region in accordance with the *Assessment and Management of Flood Risk Regulations, 2010, Guidelines on the Planning System and Flood Risk Management, 2009* and promoting the co-ordination of flood risk management in conjunction with implementation of the Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Plans.
- D11** Promoting reduced reliance on fossil fuels and promoting the use of more sustainable energy sources.
- D12** Promoting the co-ordination and protection of biodiversity and enhancement of ecosystem services and green infrastructure.
- D13** Supporting implementation of the Water Framework Directive.
- D14** Supporting implementation of the National Climate Change Strategy and regional and local climate change strategies.

3.3 Settlement Strategy

This Settlement Strategy sets out the target population for the region and for each of the main settlements in the region. The population targets and methodology are based on the *National Population Projections and Regional Population Targets 2010-2022* issued by the DoEHLG in January 2009 and *Gateway and Hub Population Targets* issued by the DoEHLG in October 2009 (see appendix 1).

The Settlement Strategy also sets out the role of the Gateway, Hubs, County Towns and other settlements and rural settlement objectives. It also sets out the principles for Transport and Housing policy that will underpin the Settlement Strategy.

The future distribution of population within the region is fundamental to providing balanced regional development. The Core Strategy is consistent with the NSS and provides a key planning framework which County/City Development Plans and Local Area Plans must be consistent with. In parallel with the Regional Economic Strategy, it will guide future growth and investment.

The Regional Planning Guidelines sit within an overall national policy context of the National Spatial Strategy and the most recent population targets. The RPGs must now establish a framework for the co-ordination of constituent development plans and the proper planning and sustainable development of the region.

A key instrument for the development of this framework is the setting of population and housing growth targets. The population targets have been incorporated into Tables 3.1 and 3.2 which outline a framework for future population growth of the region. The target years are 2016 and 2022, with the first target year coinciding with the next review of these Guidelines and the latter, a horizon date which provides a long term target for population growth in the region.

Working within the DoEHLG population targets, these Guidelines also identify population targets for the regionally significant urban centres as well as breaking down the regional targets into county growth target figures. The population growth targets will apply to the prevailing development plan within respective counties.

Sustainable Settlements

The ability of people to move around and access work, education, shops and services is fundamental to the success of the settlement strategy. Improved public transport and reduced commuting times and distance are the key to providing improved quality of life. This settlement strategy is supported by an Infrastructure and Transport Strategy that seeks to provide alternatives to private transport through improved public transport and better, safer facilities for cycling and walking.

Employment Growth

The Settlement Strategy will be underpinned by economic development and employment growth. Employment growth should be located at main population centres so that employment growth and population growth are linked in support of sustainable patterns of development.

Implementation

Following the adoption of these Guidelines, it will be the function of each constituent city and county council to review its city/county development plan in line with these population targets and to develop a Core Strategy in Development Plans. The Core Strategy should include a section which details the mechanisms by which DoEHLG population targets will be achieved within each local authority. Each Core Strategy should develop rational population growth models, outline resulting housing demand and determine how this demand will be accommodated through an appropriate housing land zoning requirement which should be consistent with this framework.

The mechanisms for implementation of these principles in Development Plans and Local Area Plans should include the following steps/measures:

1. Land should be zoned on the basis of the population targets that are set for the settlement in question;
2. More land should be zoned for residential development than is required to meet these population targets. This is normally an additional 3 years' supply beyond the 6-year plan period or 50% over and above predicted zoning requirement (DoEHLG Guidelines to Planning Authorities on Development Plans);
3. The excess in zoned land over the amount needed should have regard to the history of population development in the area; the likelihood of any major development taking place that would increase the demand for housing; land ownership patterns in the area; the possibility of creating a coherent development pattern even if a second phase of development commences before the first phase is substantially used up;
4. Land that is zoned should, generally, either be serviced or about to be serviced with essential services;

5. Zoned land should be assigned to different phases of development with a proviso that, generally, a later phase should not commence until a given percentage of an earlier phase has been granted permission and another given percentage has been developed or is under development;
6. Zoned lands that are identified for first phase development should generally follow the sequential approach in order to maximise the utility of existing and future infrastructure provision and promote the achievement of sustainability.

The population targets for the region and for each local authority area are set out in Table 3.1

Table 3.1: Population Targets for each Local Authority Area

| TABLE 3.1 SOUTH-EAST REGION POPULATION TARGETS 2010-2022 | | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| LOCAL AUTHORITY AREA | 2006 | 2010 | 2016 | 2022 |
| WATERFORD CITY | 45,748 | 48,500 | 51,000 | 55,000 |
| KILKENNY | 87,558 | 96,872 | 105,598 | 111,903 |
| WEXFORD | 131,749 | 146,139 | 156,065 | 166,083 |
| CARLOW | 50,349 | 56,155 | 59,451 | 63,536 |
| SOUTH TIPPERARY | 83,221 | 91,302 | 96,863 | 104,483 |
| WATERFORD COUNTY | 62,213 | 68,932 | 73,223 | 79,495 |
| TOTAL | 460,838 | 507,900 | 542,200 | 580,500 |

The population targets for each of the main settlements in the region are set out in Table 3.2

Table 3.2: Population Targets for Main Settlements

| TABLE 3.2 SOUTH-EAST REGION POPULATION TARGETS 2010 - 2022 | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| MAIN SETTLEMENTS | 2006 | 2010 | 2016 | 2022 |
| WATERFORD CITY & ENVIRONS | 49,213 | 52,500 | 56,500 | 62,500 |
| KILKENNY CITY | 22,179 | 24,000 | 25,800 | 28,200 |
| WEXFORD TOWN | 18,163 | 21,000 | 23,500 | 26,700 |
| CARLOW TOWN | 20,724 | 22,126 | 23,768 | 25,000 |
| CLONMEL | 17,008 | 20,750 | 23,000 | 25,000 |
| DUNGARVAN | 8,362 | 10,000 | 11,600 | 13,400 |



WATERFORD
Port Láirge

The Waterford Gateway

Date produced: 20/06/2010

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Map
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The Waterford Gateway is defined in the Waterford Planning, Land Use and Transportation Strategy 2004-2020 (PLUTS). It comprises Waterford City itself and its environs in the Counties of Waterford and Kilkenny. A key element of the PLUTS is the achievement of critical mass to allow the City to reinforce and develop its role as the economic driver of the South-East Region. The PLUTS strategy provides guidance as to the general scale and location of growth in the Gateway and provided the strategic framework for the preparation of the statutory development plans by the three Planning Authorities. It may be opportune that a review of progress achieved in implementing the PLUTS strategy be carried out.

The PLUTS refers to a wider area than the Gateway City. There are a number of neighbouring towns in the immediate city hinterland which support the Gateway. These include Tramore, New Ross and Carrick-on-Suir. The growth and development of these towns are greatly influenced by the availability of services and employment opportunities in the city.

Three specific locations have been targeted for growth in Waterford:

- **City Centre:** In the city centre a number of key opportunity sites have been identified in the Waterford City Development Plan and development frameworks prepared with the aim of consolidating and regenerating the city centre.
- **Waterford Knowledge Campus:** A 163 ha. site under the ownership of Waterford Institute of Technology, IDA Ireland and the Private Sector. This campus will accommodate the knowledge economy by linking academia with entrepreneurship and foreign direct investment. This will complement additional IDA Ireland industrial lands to the east of the Knowledge Campus.
- **Belview:** The lands adjacent to the Port of Waterford at Belview have been designated as a strategic industrial development site, taking advantage of the port's strategic location.

These sites are supported by other strategic sites within the PLUTS Study area at Tramore, Kilmeaden and Carrick-on-Suir.

In recent years there have been a number of significant infrastructural investments which will position the Gateway to take advantage of an upturn in economic conditions. These include:

- The M9 motorway, the N25 Waterford City By-Pass and the Outer Ring Road
- Improved access to Waterford Regional Airport
- The East Waterford Water Supply Scheme will significantly increase the capacity and secure the city's water supply into the future
- The completion of the Waste Water Treatment Plant providing significant capacity for future industrial development and expanded sewerage infrastructure in the city and environs (Co. Kilkenny) under the main drainage scheme
- The provision of a broadband infrastructure MAN
- The delivery of major building programmes at Waterford Institute of Technology and Waterford Regional Hospital
- The carrying out of significant urban renewal and conservation projects in the city centre
- The provision of significant recreational, cultural and community facilities, including new parks, the redevelopment of the Regional Sports Centre, refurbishment of the Theatre Royal and Garter Lane Arts Centre and the provision of neighbourhood based childcare facilities
- The completion of the North-West and South City water supply schemes.

This public investment programme has been accompanied by extensive private investment in the enterprise development, residential, retail, commercial, leisure and healthcare sectors.

Access to the Gateway

The Ports and Airport are key infrastructure assets of the Gateway. The Regional Planning Guidelines will support the development of the Port of Waterford and Waterford Regional Airport as key access points to the Gateway.

3.5 Hubs and County Towns

Kilkenny, Wexford, Carlow, Clonmel and Dungarvan

Kilkenny City and Wexford Town have been designated in the National Spatial Strategy as Hubs. They are strategic urban centres that support and are supported by the Gateway and reach out to wider rural areas of the region that the RPGs are targeting for significant levels of growth. In addition, the County Towns are recognised as critical elements in the structure for realising balanced regional development, acting as a focus for strengthening their own areas.

The National Spatial Strategy suggests that Hubs with populations in excess of 10,000 persons would need to grow to a population of 30,000 persons or more in the years to 2020 and beyond. The two Hubs in the South-East, Kilkenny and Wexford, fall into this category.

Targeted investment in transport links and other socio-economic infrastructure such as water services, third-level education and serviced business locations will be required to facilitate the achievement of critical mass at the two hubs of Kilkenny and Wexford. Critical mass will only be achieved if populations of 30,000 or more are realised. Local authorities, government departments and semi-state agencies are encouraged to focus their activities and investment decisions in such a manner as to accomplish these targets.

Also, the County Towns have significant potential for growth and development and are critical to the achievement of critical mass and balanced development across the region.

In the case of Kilkenny, Wexford, Carlow, Clonmel and Dungarvan, there are Borough and Town Councils with responsibility for planning policy in the centre with County Councils responsible for the environs.

An immediate review of services capacities and the availability of zoned and serviced land by each planning authority will be required to assess the potential of these centres to accommodate anticipated and targeted levels of growth in the short to medium term.

The development of Land Use and Transportation Studies for the Hubs and County Towns would be of great benefit in co-coordinating the policies of a number of planning authorities that have a statutory role to play in the development of sustainable development objectives for these urban areas.

3.6 Larger Towns

Tramore, Enniscorthy, New Ross, Gorey, Carrick-on-Suir and Tipperary Town

Each of these towns has a population in excess of 5,000 people.

New Ross, Carrick-on-Suir and Tipperary Town have been targeted for growth having regard to their strategic locations, capacity for growth and potential to deliver on the core objectives of critical mass and balanced regional development.

Both New Ross and Carrick-on-Suir are located approximately 23 kilometres and 27 kilometres respectively from Waterford City and, as such, are ideally placed to support the strengthening of critical mass within the catchment of the Regional Gateway. Both towns are directly connected to Waterford City by National Primary Road and they provide a strategic link between the Gateway and the larger urban centres to the west and east of the city, i.e. Clonmel and Wexford.

Tipperary Town is located at the western extremity of the South-East Region. It is less than 40 kms. from Limerick City and provides a direct link between the South-East and Mid-West Regions. There are extensive rural areas in close proximity to the town that have experienced population decline or stagnation and a strong Tipperary Town would help to secure the future of this transitional rural area within the region. Good road and rail connections and the potential for development around Limerick Junction further reinforce the importance of this location.

Enniscorthy, Tramore and Gorey have recently experienced high levels of population growth. These three towns continue to be attractive locations for new residential development. However, care must be taken to ensure that the continued expansion of these urban areas is regulated to ensure that community, social and retail developments keep pace with recent rapid phases of mainly residential development.

Urban Consolidation Priorities for these larger towns include:

1. Identify under-utilised, derelict or undeveloped lands within the built-up area through the development plan process.
2. Realise opportunities using, for example, the Derelict Sites Act and acquisition of key sites.
3. Where sufficient development opportunities within the urban area are not available, consider appropriate extension options having regard to infrastructural constraints and the availability of community services.

3.7 District Towns - Expansion Opportunity

Cahir, Tullow, Cashel, Bagenalstown, Bunclody/Carrickduff, Thomastown, Callan, Castlebridge, Dunmore East and Castlecomer

The ten towns in this category have populations between 1,500 and 5,000. They are being targeted for growth as centres that can perform an important role in driving the development of a particular spatial component of the overall region.

Cashel has had relatively low levels of population growth in recent years despite having capacity in services and development lands. The town services a wide catchment from Hollyford to the Slieveardagh Hills and is at the centre of a functioning urban network comprising Thurles, Tipperary, Cahir, Cashel and Fethard. Cashel and Cahir are now located on the M8 and access to the towns has been greatly improved as well as providing new opportunities following the removal of through traffic.

Bagenalstown, Bunclody/Carrickduff, Castlecomer, Callan, Tullow and Thomastown are located in rural areas that have experienced varying degrees of population growth. Castlebridge is located 4 kms. from Wexford Town by which its growth is significantly influenced. These centres have well developed services and community facilities and have the capacity to accommodate additional growth (subject to certain physical infrastructural investments).

Cahir and Dunmore East have been identified as two towns where more measured growth is desirable in a manner that allows community, social and retail development to catch up with recent residential development.

3.8 Other Towns and Villages



There is an extensive network of smaller towns and villages across the region that play particularly important roles as service/retail/residential centres. These towns and villages need to be developed in a way that respects their existing character while at the same time strengthening their role as local service centres.

The key settlement challenge is how to explore ways of making the existing towns and villages more attractive locations to live in. This will in turn impact on the maintenance of services throughout the region. Achieving the right balance between encouraging development in towns and villages and the scale and nature of such development is critical. It is important to ensure that new residential development in smaller towns and villages is of a design, layout, character and scale which fit well with the town or village involved and presents a high quality living environment. Local authorities should en-

courage development of towns and villages through setting out clear policies in their development plans and in other local plans where appropriate. These plans should be supported where possible by measures such as the provision of appropriate services and sites. This would help to reduce the pressure for urban related development in the open countryside and will ensure that existing towns and villages become attractive settlement centres and assist in the long-term vitality and viability of the rural parts of the South-East.

3.9 Transport Policy

The Regional Authority will seek to create an accessible region with an efficient and fully integrated transport system. The completion of a high quality dual carriageway/motorway between Waterford City and Dublin will be a critical piece of enabling infrastructure to facilitate the development of Waterford City as a Regional Gateway and to deliver balanced regional development to the South-East.

The Department of Transport's Smarter Travel policy requires a shift to more sustainable transport policies and the South-East Region will pursue a strategy of improving public transport and reducing commuting by private car. This Strategy will require expanded urban, rural and intra-urban bus services and increased accessibility and use of the region's under-utilised railway network. The majority of the region's population lives in rural areas (as defined by the Central Statistics Office) and there is a large number of small to medium sized towns and villages spread across the region. This dispersed settlement pattern poses a challenge for effective public transportation delivery. 'Ring-a-Link' and similar services can play a significant role in addressing rural isolation and providing access to the services of the larger towns and cities.

Other investment priorities for the region include: the development of the internal road network between the Gateway and the Hubs, between the Hubs, County Towns and other larger settlements, enhanced additional connectivity plus better management of traffic and parking in towns and villages to ensure best and safe use of existing road networks.

3.10 Housing Policy and Objectives

Socially diverse local communities located in well-planned development can foster a sense of place, pride, security and neighbourliness. It is important that new housing development secures a good social mix and Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 provides mechanisms to assist the achievement of this objective.

Housing strategies are the prime vehicle for better integration at local level and in particular for:

1. assessing the range of housing needs;
2. matching housing needs with supply and identifying necessary measures such as aids to affordability where local circumstances require this;
3. meeting particular housing needs such as those of smaller households, vulnerable sections of society and the Traveller community.

These Guidelines confirm the settlement hierarchy and targets to be planned for through the development plan and local plan process.

Table 3.3 defines development roles for five different categories of urban centres. The cities and towns of the region are assigned places within this hierarchy in the following sections. The spatial distribution of these urban centres is illustrated on the Regional Spatial Settlement Strategy Map (page 59).

In the case of expanding urban areas, it will be critical to:

1. Provide for an adequate supply of land in line with assessments of housing land needs, through the development plan system. Such provision will require strategic reservation of land through the development plan process, coupled with ensuring timely and sequential release of land, to avoid delays in the availability and servicing of land on the one hand and premature release of zoned land on the other.
2. Ensure mixed-use and well-designed higher density development, particularly near town centres and public transport nodes like railway stations.
3. Maximise the efficient use of land by consolidating existing settlements, focusing in particular on development capacity within central urban areas through re-use of under-utilised land and buildings as a priority, rather than extending green field development.

Extensive Guidance from the DoEHLG is now available for local authorities and housing developers to plan and design for residential and mixed-use developments. The principal Guidelines are:-

1. Best Practice Urban Design Manual – Part 1;
2. Best Practice Urban Design Manual – Part 2;
3. Design Standard for new Apartments;
4. Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas;
5. Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities;
6. Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities.

3.11 Development Roles for Different Types of Urban Centres

In defining development roles for different types of urban centres, a typology has been developed which allows the development of a model that clearly describes the functioning of the urban hierarchy and the issues that need to be addressed to achieve the Regional Development Strategy. The typology that has been developed in consultation with adjacent authorities, in order to ensure consistency of approach and terminology, is set out below:

Table 3.3 Development Roles for Different Types of Urban Centres

| | | |
|----------------|--|--|
| Gateways | Waterford City | Strategically placed, national scale urban areas, which individually and in combination will be key elements for delivering a more spatially balanced Ireland and driving development in their own regions. |
| Hubs | Kilkenny, Wexford | Strategic urban centres, that support and are supported by the Gateway and reach out to wider rural areas of the region that the RPGs are targeting for significant levels of growth. |
| County Towns | Carlow, Clonmel Dungarvan | Critical elements in the structure for realising balanced regional development, acting as a focus for strengthening their own areas. |
| Large Towns | Tramore Enniscorthy New Ross Gorey Carrick-on-Suir Tipperary Town | Towns with a population in excess of 5,000 population (that are not gateways, hubs or county towns) that the RPGs: a) target for growth, or b) consider that, these towns having recently experienced high levels of population growth, the objective is that more measured growth is desirable in a manner that allows community, social and retail development to catch up with recent rapid phases of mainly residential development. c) consider to be good locations for economic development. |
| District Towns | Cahir, Tullow, Cashel, Bagenalstown, Buncloody/Carrickduff, Thomastown, Callan, Castlebridge, Dunmore East, Castlecomer | Towns with populations between 1,500 and 5,000 that perform an important role in driving the development of a particular spatial component of the overall region. |

3.12 Rural Settlement

Rural housing policy shall be guided by the following sections and by any guidance documents issued by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in accordance with Part II Chapter IV of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as may have been amended.

3.12.1 Rural Housing Demand Issues

Demands for housing in rural areas arise in different circumstances. In many cases, housing needs relate to people who are an established part of the rural community and who either work in rural areas or in nearby urban areas. In other cases, people living and working in towns and cities may seek to live in rural areas close to towns and commute daily to work. Some may have roots in these areas, others may have no connection with the land but seek a rural lifestyle. In recent years, increasing affluence, car ownership, improved building technology, personal mobility and urban house prices have extended the range of locations being targeted for residential development. In many cases, locations chosen are considerable distances from where people work, reinforcing travel patterns that are dependent on car based commuting.

3.12.2 Rural Settlement Policy

The region has a high proportion of its population living in rural areas. These Guidelines, in seeking to achieve balanced regional development, support sustainable rural settlement. Changing economic circumstances challenge local authorities to develop ways to maintain rural populations in the more remote parts of the region while at the same time managing urban-generated rural housing in a sustainable manner in the more accessible and prosperous areas. The sustainable rural settlement policy framework in the NSS has four broad objectives:

- (1) To sustain and renew established rural communities and the existing stock of investment in a way that responds to the various spatial, structural and economic changes taking place, while protecting the important assets that rural areas possess.
- (2) To strengthen the established structure of villages and smaller settlements both to support local economies and to accommodate additional population in a way that supports the viability of public transport and local infrastructure and services such as schools and water services.
- (3) To ensure that key assets in rural areas such as water quality and the natural and cultural heritage are protected to support quality of life and economic vitality.
- (4) To ensure that rural settlement policies take account of, and are appropriate to, local circumstances.

Development plan policies must be tailored to address the different development issues that arise in relation to rural housing and should adhere to the *Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Rural Housing*, issued by the DoEHLG (April 2005).

Rural-generated housing needs arise for people who are an intrinsic part of the rural community by way of background or the fact that they work full-time or part-time in rural areas. As a general principle, subject to good planning practice in matters of location, siting, design and the protection of environmentally sensitive areas and areas of high landscape value, rural-generated housing needs should be accommodated in the areas where they arise.

There are differing issues facing rural areas across the region and within counties. These issues relate to proximity to urban areas and transport networks, topography and agricultural activity. It would be appropriate for the five County Councils in the region to categorise different rural area types within their counties and to adopt housing policies specifically designed to address local issues rather than adopting a single policy for the county as a whole. In addition, measures should be adopted by planning authorities that ensure that the provision of new housing is targeted to meet rural housing needs. This might include permitting new housing in rural areas subject to conditions that such housing be occupied by established members of the rural community.

Development driven by urban areas should take place, as a general principle, within the built up areas and on lands identified through the development plan process for integrated, serviced and sustainable development. However, it is acknowledged that some persons from urban areas seek a rural lifestyle with the option of working in, and travelling to and from, nearby larger cities and towns. Smaller towns and villages have a role in catering for these

types of housing demand in surrounding areas in a sustainable manner. It is also important that housing in rural areas should not impede rural enterprise, e.g. mineral extraction or quarrying activity.

The fundamental challenge in supporting sustainable rural communities is how to make existing towns and villages more attractive locations to live in. This will in turn impact on the maintenance of services throughout their hinterlands. Measures such as the provision of appropriate services and development sites in smaller villages would help to ensure the long-term sustainability of rural areas.

3.12.3 Second Homes and Holiday Home Development

Some scenic areas of the region, particularly in coastal locations, are experiencing development pressures arising from the growing trend of building second homes and developing holiday home accommodation.

Well-located and appropriately scaled second-home and holiday home development can act as a revitalising force in economic terms, particularly in areas that are structurally weak, but an emphasis is needed on clustering such tourism driven development in or adjoining small towns and villages. Planning authorities need to capitalize on the economic potential of existing and proposed holiday home developments by facilitating the development of local retailing and services so that economic linkages are developed between holidaymakers and the local population. Second home and holiday home type development can raise concerns regarding long-term sustainability, effects on the affordability of housing in rural areas for permanent rural dwellers and the incremental effect on the character of some smaller towns and villages where large-scale holiday home type development has taken place. In addressing this issue, development plans need to seek a balance between supporting a well-diversified rural economy and the protection of the environmental assets that attract visitors to an area.



SUMMARY / Development Plan Implications

Section 3.1 sets out the Strategic Vision for the South-East Region. The Strategic Vision contains the goals and objectives for the future planning and development of the region.

Section 3.2 sets out the more detailed strategic goals for the region in the areas of economic development, spatial planning, transportation, rural life and the environment.

Section 3.3 sets out the Settlement Hierarchy for the region and the principles upon which it is based. The Settlement Strategy sets out the primary role of Waterford in the NSS as the Regional Gateway. The Settlement Strategy places the Gateway, Hubs and County Towns in the urban structure of the region and the role of these principal settlements in achieving critical mass and balanced regional development and as the focus for sustainable population growth and development.

The population targets set for each local authority and the main urban centres support the Settlement Strategy and provide a guide for population growth in the region.

For the Settlement Strategy to succeed increased use of sustainable modes of travel will be an important objective, to be met through the following actions:-

- More sustainable travel patterns through increased use of sustainable transport modes.
- Employment growth that is located in, or accessible to/from, the main centres of population.
- Improved public transport services and infrastructure.
- Improved facilities for cycling and walking.

In Development Plans these objectives should be expressed in the Core Strategy. Development Plans should ensure:-

- That the population targets are incorporated into the Core Strategy.
- That land is zoned on the basis of the land required to meet population targets.
- That zoned land be serviced or be about to be serviced.
- That excess zoning required in order to ensure that sufficient development lands are available is for the Development Plan period of 6 years plus 3 years or 50% over-zoning in line with DoEHLG Guide lines to Planning Authorities on Development Plans.
- That the Planning Authority exercise the options of phasing and down-zoning in order to achieve optimum amounts of zoned land in order to avoid provision of excessive amounts of zoned land.

This approach would prevent over-zoning; provide an incentive for those owning first-phase development land to dispose of it and an incentive for purchasers not to hoard it; permit the orderly development of land and the creation of a coherent urban form; and create either an actual or a virtual market for development land, particularly where a phasing is not guaranteed for the lifetime of the plan.

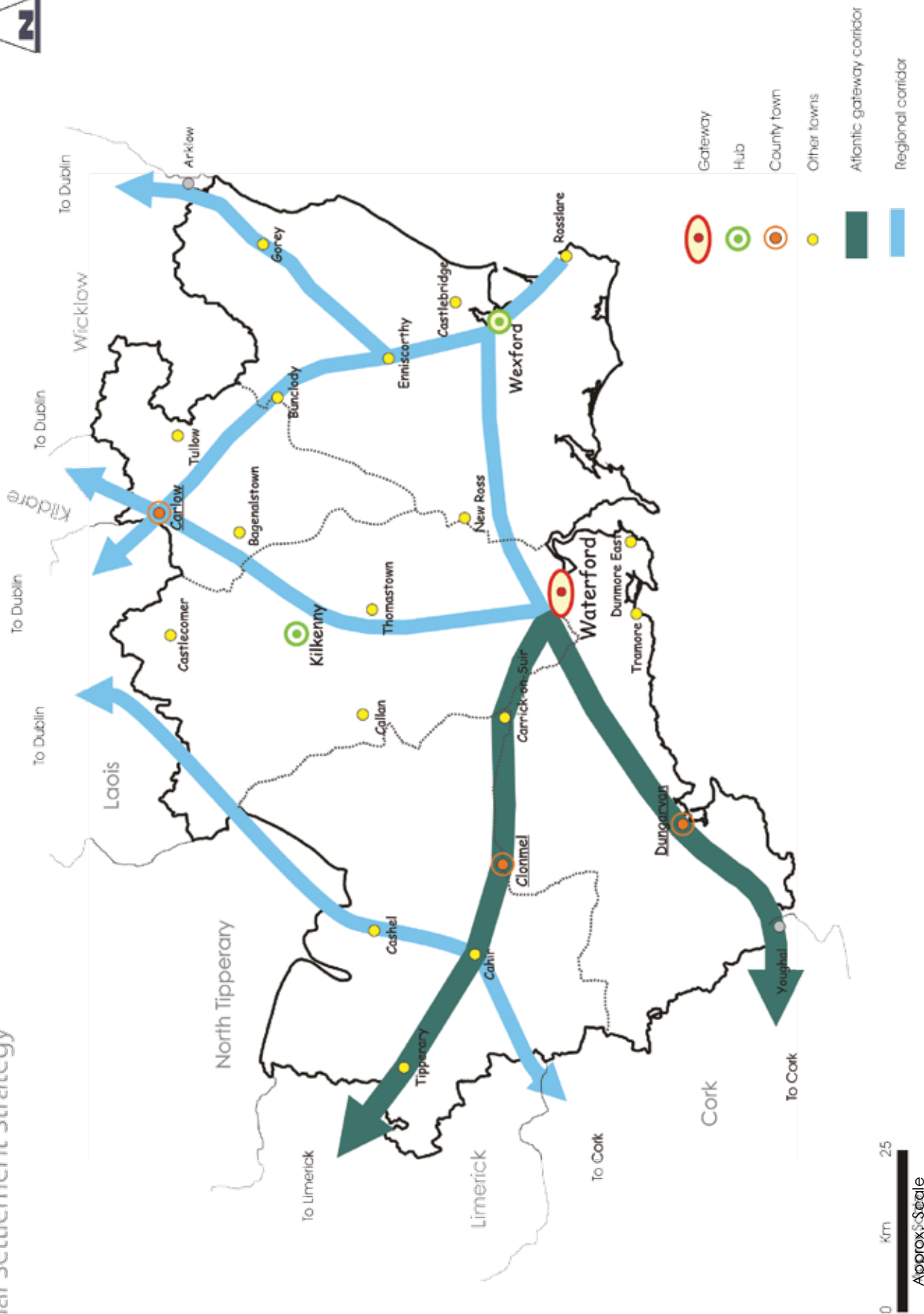
The amount of land zoned for development within each settlement should reflect the population assigned for that settlement in the Core Strategy with an additional amount for 'excess' zoning as provided for in the guidelines on zoning contained within the DoEHLG Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Development Plans. Approaches to zoning that incorporate development land coming on stream on a phased basis should be adopted, as they would facilitate a flexible response to population movements. Variations from this distribution will be regularly considered by the Monitoring and Review Committee of the Regional Authority and adjusted as necessary to respond to changing population trends.

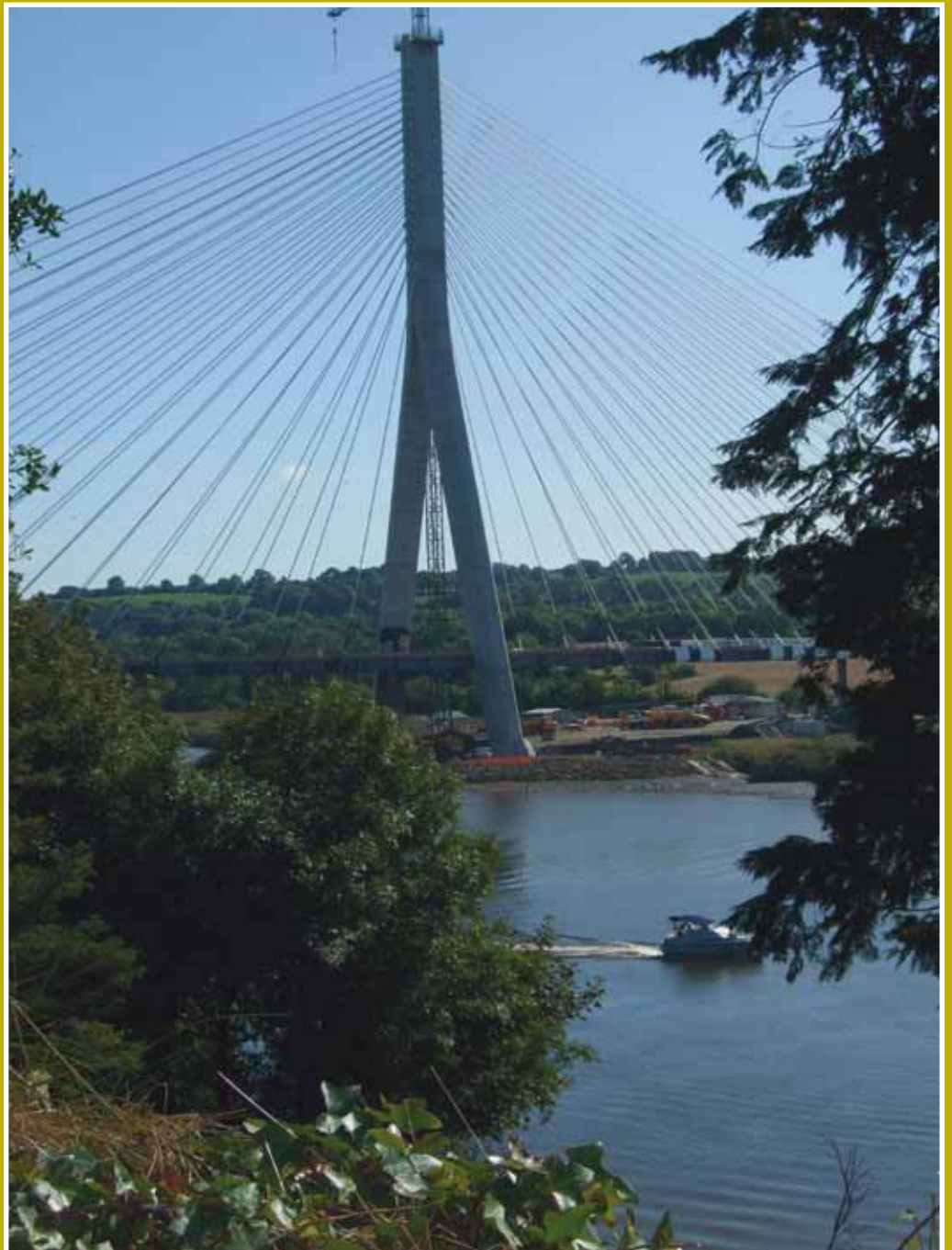
Precisely how overall population figures are allocated within each local authority area will generally be a matter for the local authority. However, development plans should include policies that will direct the greater part of the allocated population to locate within zoned and serviced residential land, while the precise allocation of the population in these zones should be decided through the mechanisms outlined below for the co-ordinated development of the area. In addition, within the main settlements, higher density developments should generally be required on development land along and in close proximity to transport corridors, such as existing/potential rail stations and existing/potential park and ride stations. In addition, the re-development of obsolete areas particularly within Waterford City, the Hubs and County Towns should be facilitated and specific strategies developed to maximise the likelihood of such re-development occurring.

Section 3 also sets out guidelines on transport, housing and rural settlement policy.



South - East Region
Spatial Settlement Strategy





Section 4 : Employment & Economic Development Strategy

The recent period from 2008 to 2010 has been dominated by the global economic downturn. It has had a serious impact on the lives of nearly all families as unemployment has grown and wages or working hours have been cut back in the public and private sectors. The downturn has resulted in reduced consumer spending and Government spending, which has impacted negatively on the regional economy.

The Regional Authority, together with public and private agencies in the region, is determined to address the circumstances and effects of the economic downturn and is planning for recovery and sustainable economic growth for the region. In conjunction with Forfás, the Regional Authority has developed a Regional Economic Strategy to build on the strengths which the region possesses, particularly in certain industry sectors. The Regional Authority and constituent local authorities have identified Priorities for investment in critical infrastructure to support this Economic Development Strategy.

The Regional Authority will work with Government to ensure that investment is targeted and effective. The RPGs, including the Economic Strategy demonstrate how the South-East Region can participate in *'Building Ireland's Smart Economy'* – the Government Strategy for Sustainable Economic Renewal.

The main economic drivers of the region include knowledge infrastructure and access points to the region. The economic strategy will be sustained by a renewed emphasis on the knowledge economy, high level research, enhanced access by road, rail, the Regional Airport and region's ports at Rosslare, Waterford and New Ross.

'Building Ireland's Smart Economy – A Framework for Sustainable Economic Renewal' sets out five priorities for action:

1. Securing the Enterprise Economy and Restoring Competitiveness;
2. Building the Ideas Economy – Creating 'The Innovation Island';
3. Enhancing the Environment and Securing Energy Supplies; Increasing the production and use of renewable energies;
4. Investing in Critical Infrastructure;
5. Providing Efficient and Effective Public Services and Smart Regulation.

The Industry Base of the South-East

The South-East has a strong base of indigenous industries. There are approximately 17,000 employees in Enterprise Ireland client companies across the region (*South-East Regional Competitiveness Agenda*, Forfás, 2009). This activity is spread throughout the region's small to medium sized towns as well as the larger urban centres. There are also many indigenous SMEs (Small to Medium Enterprises) that play a significant role in the regional economy, some of which are supported by City/County Enterprise Boards.

Overseas industry is concentrated mainly in electronics and precision engineering, pharmaceuticals and healthcare and in internationally traded services. IDA Ireland is contributing to the movement of jobs away from traditional low paid employment to higher value added employment in the region. There are a number of IDA client firms operating in the services sector in the South-East, in sectors such as ICT, Shared Services and Financially Traded Services. Foreign-owned enterprises are concentrated in Waterford City (Gateway), in the Hubs and the County Towns. This reflects the requirement of many IDA client companies across the country, that is, they are attracted to areas of critical mass in terms of population, skills, and infrastructure. At present there are 68 IDA client companies employing c.12,000 people in the South-East.

4.1 Guiding Principles

This strategy will focus on policies to help the region move out of the economic downturn. Existing policy initiatives taken in the region (such as the *South-East Region Bioenergy Implementation Plan 2008–2013* and the *'Spirit of Enterprise'* initiative) already demonstrate its commitment to the five priority areas for action set out above in the Government Strategy *'Building Ireland's Smart Economy – A Framework for Sustainable Economic Renewal'*.

Certain conditions must apply to support increased economic activity and regional competitiveness if more spatially balanced patterns of development are to evolve.

These conditions can be described as follows:

- There is a need for a critical mass of population, a range of skills, an innovation capacity, as well as business and transport linkages. There should be an environment which is attractive for people to live in. This provides a competitive, sustainable and strong platform for business development responsive to domestic and world economic forces.
- The potential for development of economic activity must be driven by advantages derived from exchange of information, collaboration, innovation, adoption of best practices and mobilisation of finance and skills. The establishment of a University in the South-East by utilising and building upon the existing network of third and fourth-level educational establishments at Waterford, Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford and Clonmel would be a key driver for the region. The Waterford Knowledge Campus has the potential to be a significant element in driving the knowledge economy in the region, offering a cluster for academia business and entrepreneurship.
- Strong cities and towns are needed to support a competitive business environment, working in partnership with strong rural areas and ensuring an effective supply of employment opportunities and services. This enables areas to hold on to existing population, both urban and rural, and to attract more people.

There are a number of specific elements required at strategic locations and in a targeted way, which are vital to foster a wide range of enterprise activity and employment creation. These include:-

- ☐ integrated strategies for physical, economic and social development and environmental protection, to guide and promote sustainable development, particularly with regard to planning, land use and transportation;
- ☐ development of Strategic Employment Locations within the region to act as ready-to-go economic gateway sites to the new industry. Targeted investment in the development of Strategic Employment Locations at the Gateway, Hubs and County Towns with first class infrastructure capable of facilitating new indigenous start-ups in advanced sectors and attracting Foreign Direct Investment;
- ☐ targeted urban regeneration of key sites;
- ☐ business incubation/start up space/units throughout the region to support new businesses;
- ☐ regional or national centres of learning through the establishment of a University of the South-East and development of existing third and fourth level capacity and resources;
- ☐ clustering of businesses and firms, including those involved in inter-related activities and in high growth, knowledge intensive and technology-based specialization;
- ☐ a focal point for national, regional and local road and public transport systems, with good access to the national road and rail network and access to airports, with a range of well-timed and appropriate services facilitating business activity, and deepwater ports;
- ☐ effective urban transport systems, including facilities for pedestrians and cyclists;
- ☐ reliable, secure and cost-competitive energy supply;
- ☐ effective telecommunications, including broadband;
- ☐ regional cultural venues such as theatres/galleries/arts and sports centres;
- ☐ a high quality built environment, including parks, green spaces and other amenities;
- ☐ adequate zoned and serviced land banks for uses such as residential and industrial development;
- ☐ water supply, wastewater disposal systems, an environment capable of accommodating current water services requirements and major additional requirements into the future;
- ☐ effective waste management structures and facilities.

The types of industries that now offer long-term prospects for generating revenues are in the new technologies and knowledge based areas such as Information and Communications Technology, Medical Devices, Biotechnology, Pharmaceuticals, the Green Economy and Renewable Energy. The South-East Region has a growing number of such industries, and for the future it will be necessary to create the conditions to attract and support expansion in these advanced sectors.

Services such as banking, administration and consultancy have significant potential for development as the critical mass of population in the South-East Region develops. Such an expansion is necessary if the region is to contribute towards the achievement of balanced regional development as envisaged in the National Spatial Strategy.

The expectations of people have changed considerably over the past decades, and now both visitors to an area or industrialists wishing to establish an enterprise in an area look to the quality of life, the education on offer and the infrastructure of that region before committing themselves to that region.

Development of Community and Social Infrastructure is critical to supporting economic development and to delivering a better quality of life for all. Community facilities, such as childcare, after-school care, elder care and other services should be provided at appropriate locations.

4.2 Regional Gateway

The availability of a critical mass of labour and skills, underpinned by high quality business infrastructure, is central to achieving competitiveness.

Growth of the Regional Gateway at Waterford City and its wider hinterland area within Counties Kilkenny and Waterford will facilitate the expansion of economic opportunities in the interest of achieving balanced regional development in accordance with the principles of the National Spatial Strategy. Expanded economic opportunities will strengthen economic networks and linkages through the region for the betterment of all of its citizens.

The creation of the idea of 'critical mass' of significant proportions needs support by the strengthening of infrastructural priorities both in planning at present and into the future. The idea of complementary industrial clustering and the sharing of resources, particularly in the research and development sector, are of considerable importance for the achievement of this concept. Waterford City as the Regional Gateway has been and is likely to continue attracting a significant level of Foreign Investment, particularly in the more knowledge based industries.

A critical mass of economic activity and opportunities will be facilitated by:

- ☐ Development of Waterford Regional Airport;
- ☐ Improved public transport services and facilities as recommended by the Waterford City Public Transport Feasibility Study 2010;
- ☐ Improved water services infrastructure in compliance with all environmental legislation and the River Basin Management Plans;
- ☐ Development of the capacity of Waterford Port for import/export cargos and for visiting cruise ships;
- ☐ Development of a large scale Business and Technology Park at Belview;
- ☐ Development of higher and further education and research and development capabilities;
- ☐ Development of high quality Business and Technology Parks capable of providing attractive locations for Foreign Direct Investment with links to third and fourth-level research and development activity – IDA Ireland;
- ☐ Development of Enterprise Parks to facilitate the development of indigenous industry and services also with links to third and fourth-level research and development activity – Enterprise Ireland;
- ☐ Development of first class office space that will serve as a centre for the development of the software and internationally traded services in the region – Enterprise Ireland;
- ☐ Development of quality industrial estates to accommodate small to medium enterprises – Local Authorities/ City and County Enterprise Boards/Private Developers;
- ☐ Development of the Waterford Knowledge Campus;
- ☐ Development of an Innovation Training Centre and locations for Economic Development Units;
- ☐ The identification of strategic employment sites;
- ☐ Urban regeneration and development of the city quays, including new links from the city centre to the North Quays;
- ☐ Development of the additional downstream river crossing at Waterford facilitating the extension of the Outer Ring Road northwards to the N25 and securing the future balanced development of the regional Gateway.

The region will continue to make provision for major investment. Such investment would have particular requirements of access, sanitation, energy, population, telecommunications, research etc.

Belview offers an ideal location for a strategic flagship development due to:

- Location within the environs of Waterford City;
- Proximity to Waterford Institute of Technology and the potential development of a University of the South-East in Waterford City;
- Developing access, telecommunications and energy supply infrastructure;
- Proximity to Belview Port and direct access to the railway line;
- Strong existing industrial base;
- Availability of suitable serviced land banks.

The priority in relation to strategic educational infrastructure must be the provision of a University for the South-East.

To attract foreign owned companies to the region and to assist our indigenous industries to grow, the region needs facilities for research and development and needs to develop linkages between third and fourth-level educational facilities and industry. Because of funding limitations and the rules governing institutes of technology, it is considered that a University has greater potential to satisfy the needs of industry.

4.3 Hubs and County Towns



The priority in terms of providing for new and expanded enterprises in Kilkenny and Wexford needs to be the provision of first class business/technology parks and industrial units that will meet the needs of foreign-owned and indigenous enterprises. The provision of first class infrastructure and facilities in these locations will help in development of 'critical mass' in the region and the achievement of the nationally strategic 'growth triangle' referred to in Section 4 of the National Spatial Strategy.

Complementing these hub locations, the IDA is currently active in the County Towns of Carlow, Clonmel and Dungarvan developing business/technology parks and industrial units that will meet the needs of foreign-owned and indigenous enterprises.

In each of the hubs and county towns care should be given to the provision of high quality infrastructure that is suited to the industries likely to be attracted to these locations. The development of these locations would help to reduce travel-to-work journey times.

Key Strategic Infrastructure to support development of the Hubs and County Towns are:

- ☐ Establishment of a University in the South-East Region and further development of Higher Education Institutes
- ☐ Improved links between HEIs and industry, particularly research and development
- ☐ Incubation centres
- ☐ Improved public transport within and between hubs and county towns and other settlements
- ☐ Improved water services infrastructure in compliance with all environmental legislation and the River Basin Management Plans
- ☐ Availability of serviced land banks and industrial estates
- ☐ Enhanced community and recreational facilities
- ☐ High quality telecommunications and energy supply and access (road and rail)
- ☐ First class office space
- ☐ Business and enterprise support services
- ☐ Development of innovation and training centres
- ☐ Improved public realm and public facilities in support of tourism development.

Enterprise Ireland recommends that community-owned enterprise centres for the future would need to be of a higher quality with better facilities and more expertise in business development. Enterprise Ireland will focus on the support of existing indigenous enterprise and the provision of enterprise centres for small industries in the Gateway, Hubs and County Towns.

Each of the elements mentioned in Section 4.1 will need to be assembled in these strategic locations to support the development of critical mass and to foster a wide range of enterprise activity and employment creation.

4.4 Other Urban Areas

The potential of larger towns and District Towns to support sustainable economic activity will need to be supported by the development of Industrial Estates, Enterprise Parks and District Enterprise Centres. This is compatible with promoting critical mass at nationally and internationally competitive urban areas, if these urban areas are linked to the smaller centres and rural areas through physical connections such as good communications, energy, roads or

public transport networks and through innovation, enterprise promotion and business links. These towns will also require investment in water services infrastructure in compliance with all environmental legislation and the River Basin Management Plans.

Smaller towns and villages have much potential that can be capitalised upon. The strengths of the smaller towns and villages lie in their capacity to accommodate employment, residential and other functions on the basis of their comparative advantage in terms of lower costs and a quality of life which is attractive to many people.

Local authorities, County Enterprise Boards, local development organisations and private developers should work in partnership to develop local business incubator units in Key Local Towns identified in the relevant County Development Plans. Additional incubator units might be required at other locations, having regard to local circumstances, and again a partnership approach towards the provision of such necessary facilities should be adopted.

4.5 Rural Areas

Rural areas have a vital contribution to make to the achievement of balanced regional development. This involves utilising and developing the economic resources of rural areas, particularly in agriculture and food, marine, tourism, forestry, renewable energy, enterprise and local services, while at the same time capitalising on and drawing strength from vibrant neighbouring urban areas. In this way rural and urban areas are seen as working in partnership, rather than competing with each other.

There are rural areas across the region with structural disadvantages that require strategic, targeted measures to support rural population growth. There is a need for local planning authorities, in reviewing their development plans, to identify stronger and weaker rural areas so that policies may be tailored to suit their needs. Targeted measures for areas with structural problems, specific to local circumstances, are compatible with the overall thrust of the Regional Development Strategy, given the role that the Strategy recognises for continuing rural settlement and development.

Key objectives in relation to rural development are:

- ☐ To provide a wider range of sustainable employment opportunities that would reflect both the current and future ranges of skills;
- ☐ Rural development in the areas of renewable energy and development of regional food production will support the regional economy and sustainable economic development;
- ☐ To increase access to education, training and lifelong learning possibilities to enhance social integration and inclusion through the development of skills to enable people to take advantage of higher value added employment;
- ☐ To improve infrastructure including roads, sanitary services, rural housing and information and communication networks;
- ☐ To improve water services infrastructure in compliance with all environmental legislation and the River Basin Management Plans;
- ☐ To improve rural services such as public transport, schools, childcare and sports facilities.

PPO 4.1 Planning Authorities should examine rural areas so that policies can be developed to suit the needs of different areas while supporting sustainable development and environmental protection. Local Area Plans, where appropriate, can be used to develop policies to strengthen smaller settlements in these areas.

4.5.1 Agriculture

It will be necessary to secure agriculture, where it has the capacity to remain strong and viable, by maintaining the maximum possible number of family farms. The Regional Authority recognises the importance of maintaining the Single Farm Payment for sustaining the income of farming families in the South-East Region.

Diversification of farm enterprise is considered essential for the maintenance of vibrant rural communities. Farmers' markets have the potential to bring added value to the producers of farm fresh produce, particularly having regard to trends in the consumption of organic produce and consumer interest in traceability. This is a form of retailing that is underprovided for in the region.

Agri/ecotourism has potential to be a viable form of farm diversification away from the traditional tourist areas. Through its mountain ranges and rivers the region offers opportunities for farmers in these areas to expand into self-catering farmhouse accommodation or bed and breakfast style accommodation. In terms of returns, the market has a tendency to be volatile and returns usually only provide a small proportion of the overall farm income.

Alternative farm enterprises outside of traditional areas of diversification would broaden the agricultural base of the region to prevent an over-reliance on specific markets and would enable the rural economy to be more robust and less sensitive to changes in outside markets. The presence of Teagasc and the National Crop and Plant Biotechnology Research Centre in Carlow, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government offices and the EPA Headquarters at Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford and Kildalton College in Co. Kilkenny provide important resources and expertise to the agricultural and environmental sectors in the region.

Villages play an important role in providing services to the rural population. The level of services provided by villages and smaller towns needs to be maintained if rural populations are to be supported at current levels. The lack of infrastructure in the villages and the non-release of suitable development lands into the market need to be addressed. The role of 'Ring-a-Link' type services in providing public transport to rural areas is recognised and expansion of the service should be encouraged.

The rural parts of the region are not all the same and it is important that different rural area types are identified and rural development and settlement policies devised that are appropriate to local conditions and that build on existing potential so as to strengthen rural communities.

4.5.2 Forestry

It is an objective of the Regional Authority that the economic potential of the land suitable for afforestation is maximised, offering alternative uses for land withdrawn from agriculture and to commercially exploit existing forest resources in the region in a sustainable manner.

Through positive and active promotion the region can create a self sustaining forest industry reliant on no one single species or wood type, but thriving on a variety of species and a wide range of postfelling services.

Planning Authorities need to work together, in conjunction with the Forest Service, to develop a Regional Indicative Forest Strategy by either preparing a new strategy or combining the strategies of the individual counties. Such a strategy is considered essential to ensure that the full potential of the region as a whole is realised in terms of forest cover and lands that are suitable for intensive agriculture remain in productive use.

PPO 4.2 Planning Authorities should work together, and in conjunction with the Forest Service, to develop a Regional Indicative Forest Strategy subject to SEA and AA screening. The adopted strategy, which should provide for the maintenance of public rights of way, traditional walking routes and protection of the landscape, should be incorporated into policies and objectives included in City and County Development Plans and Local Area Plans as appropriate.

4.5.3 The Marine

Integrated Coastal Zone Management is a key regional and inter-regional issue that needs to be addressed by Wexford and Waterford County Councils in consultation and co-operation with neighbouring authorities and the relevant state agencies.

The development of clusters of water-based facilities and infrastructure is in accordance with the principal recommendations of the National Spatial Strategy. The Marine Institute has identified the potential of Marine Leisure Development to generate significant incomes in Waterford Estuary and to support a significant number of sustainable jobs in services, maintenance and tourism. Cruise liner visits to Waterford Harbour should be encouraged through the development of facilities that would also facilitate other national or international events. The Regional Authority in partnership with key stakeholders will develop a Strategic Commercial and Leisure Development Framework for the Waterford Estuary that will guide the future development of the resource.

Coastal authorities should facilitate the provision of a modern, locally based fisheries industry, including fish farming in bays and inshore waters.

Alternate uses for declining fishing harbours should be promoted to sustain local communities. Opportunities in the area of tourism and recreation exist in this regard and feasibility reports for the development of marinas and harbours should be carried out, where appropriate, to determine spin-off effects and impacts for the local economy and tourist sectors.

There is a significant opportunity for planning authorities, the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Fáilte Ireland (South-East) and regional tourism interests to work together to promote the South-East as the 'Marine Centre of Ireland' by identifying and facilitating the development of marine tourism clusters along the South-East coastline. This policy would facilitate an integrated product development approach allowing major investment to develop high quality integrated marine leisure and recreation cluster facilities. These clusters could incorporate: marina (sailing, cruising, general boating), angling facilities, water sports facilities, facilities for nature tourism, pleasure cruise, island ferries, support services (e.g. water and fuel supplies). Nine indicative locations in the South-East Region have been identified with potential for clustering by the Marine Institute in its report '*Development Strategy for Marine and Leisure Infrastructure*' and the relevant authorities should actively pursue these opportunities.

PPO 4.3 It is an objective of the Regional Authority to work in partnership with key stakeholders to develop a sustainable Strategic Commercial and Leisure Development Framework for the Waterford Estuary that will guide the future development of the resource.

PPO 4.4 The Regional Authority will support local authorities and other agencies to work together to implement the objectives of the '*Development Strategy for Marine and Leisure Infrastructure*' subject to the findings of an appropriate assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

4.5.4 Mineral Exploitation

It is recognised that the managed exploitation of mineral and aggregate deposits is necessary for the continued economic development of the region. Local planning authorities should, through the development plan process, assess the potential of their functional areas with regard to the economic exploitation of mineral and aggregate deposits having regard to the environmental and social impact of such operations. Planning authorities should then adopt appropriate policies to safeguard viable unworked deposits for future extraction.

Control of existing operations and the assessment of new proposals should be carried out by local planning authorities having regard to any Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in accordance with Section 261 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as may be amended.

PPO 4.5 Planning Authorities should adopt policies to facilitate the economic exploitation of mineral and aggregate deposits, having regard to the environmental and social impact of such operations and to any affected public rights of way and traditional walking routes. Planning authorities are encouraged to adopt appropriate policies to safeguard viable unworked deposits for future extraction.

4.6 Higher Education, Research and Development and Training

4.6.1 Higher and Further Education

Building the knowledge economy is a long-term investment. It is imperative that the region is positioned to take advantage of that investment. The delivery of a University within the South-East remains the critical piece of knowledge infrastructure that is required within the region. This is strongly supported by key economic indicators including Government sponsored assessments such as the Port Report.⁴

Ireland is below the EU average in research and innovation performance but under the NDP the country is making a huge effort to close this gap. The Government has demonstrated a major commitment to investment in research and development (R&D). Sustained investment in R&D is an essential foundation to maintain the competitiveness of the enterprise base and to develop Ireland as a knowledge-based society, so as to increase productivity growth, provide a source of opportunity in new growth areas and to develop a basis for creating knowledge driven competitive advantage across all sectors of the economy.

⁴ Advice to the Minister for Education & Science on the application by Waterford Institute of Technology for designation as a University, JM Consulting, July 2007.

It is of critical importance for the region that it has the correct skills and knowledge that are necessary to attract R&D investment and high value jobs to the region.

Education plays a central role in the maintenance of a skilled workforce. Life-long learning will increasingly become a feature of an individual's life. This will have direct implications for the use and demands placed upon educational facilities and the need to improve access to such facilities for all. Access to education is also an important element of social inclusion.

Having a sufficient supply of graduates, especially in the Science, Engineering and Technology areas, is of paramount importance. The third and fourth-level colleges will have a key role to play in human resource development for the future through the provision of graduates from full-time courses in the areas of Engineering, Business, ICT and Life Sciences and through the provision of part-time and distance learning opportunities for those in employment. A strong third and fourth-level education sector in the region will be a strong driver of innovation and entrepreneurship.

The deficit arising from the limited fourth-level education opportunities in the region is resulting in a drain of knowledge workers and a lower capacity to generate research and development, stimulate private sector investment and innovation.

The regional knowledge needs can be satisfied through the location of a dedicated Campus which is empowered to build co-operation between all providers and at all levels within the region.

The Regional Authority recognises the critical role that third and fourth-level education plays in attracting, promoting and supporting economic development. Existing third and fourth-level facilities such as Waterford IT and IT Carlow have a significant role to play in the development of a linked network of outreach centres in the Hubs and County Towns, providing greater access to third and fourth-level educational facilities. Third and fourth-level education is well represented in the South-East Region. The main Institutions are:

- Carlow College
- IT Carlow
- NUI Maynooth Outreach Centre - St. Kieran's College, Kilkenny
- Tipperary Institute - Clonmel Campus
- Waterford IT
- IT Carlow - Wexford Campus.

PPO 4.6 The further development of the third and fourth-level sector is critical to the development of the Knowledge Economy in the South-East Region and the Regional Authority supports the following strategic objectives:

- 1. For Waterford IT to become the University of the South-East with links to existing third and fourth-level facilities at Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford and Clonmel, as per its submission to the Department of Education and Science.**
- 2. For IT Carlow to become part of the National Technological University as per the submission to the National Strategy for Higher Education Review Group.**
- 3. For the successful integration of Tipperary Institute and Limerick Institute of Technology as per the scoping document agreed by both institutions in March 2010.**
- 4. The Regional Authority will support the further expansion of the existing outreach facilities established by NUI Maynooth in Kilkenny, by establishment of a Multiplex Campus by IT Carlow in Wexford and the further strengthening of the collaborative links established between Trinity College, Dublin and Carlow College. The Regional Authority will support outreach of third and fourth-level academia to other centres throughout the region.**

PPO 4.7 The Regional Authority will work with third and fourth-level colleges, Foreign Direct investors and HPSU Principals in promoting and developing training/education models for workers in high value industrial activities.

4.6.2 Research & Development



Ireland's emphasis on the knowledge economy is a key target of future economic development. The Government's vision is that Ireland will be internationally renowned for the excellence of its research and be at the forefront in generating and using new knowledge for economic and social progress, within an innovation driven culture.

The target areas for investment are those of pharmaceuticals, bio-pharma, medical technologies, financial services and information and communications technology. Foreign Direct Investment, particularly in knowledge intensive industry, is an integral part of the Government's economic development strategy and can apply to food multinationals just as those in ICT and Pharma.

High level Research and Development is also becoming an important strategic priority, not just within existing enterprises, but as a sector in its own right, and one capable of significantly increasing its share of employment. This will require high-tech centres of excellence, facilities for R&D such as applied research institutions and science and enterprise parks with links to the existing third-level institutions.

The South-East Region has proved to be an attractive location for certain types of industry that have clustered within the region, such as the Food Industry and the pharmaceutical industry. The advantages and spin-offs of related business can further boost the economic benefits of such industries.

The national headquarters of the agricultural research body, Teagasc, is located at Oak Park, Carlow. Teagasc plays a pivotal role in innovation and research in the agri-food and energy sectors, which provide important resources to industry and enterprise in the region.

The existing employment base and infrastructure of such industries should be expanded through the promotion of similar and related activities and the installation of supporting educational links with third and fourth-level institutions and research and development facilities.

Research will yield important social and economic benefits across areas such as Agriculture and Food, Marine, Health, Environment and Energy, Life Sciences and ICT. An intensification of collaboration among institutions within the region will enhance the value of such activity.

PPO 4.8 It is an objective of the Regional Authority to maximise investment in, and development of, the South-East Region's ability to innovate in education, research and development through its third and fourth-level educational institutions and effective linkages with industry.

PPO 4.9 It is an objective of the Regional Authority to strengthen and enhance the R&D (Research and Development) capability in the region by maximising the synergies between third and fourth-level institutions and industry. To this end the Regional Authority supports the relocation and expansion of the Tipperary Institute Clonmel Campus from its current location to the Tipperary Science and Technology Park at Ballingarrane.

4.6.3 Training

All school leavers will not progress to third and fourth-level education, so it is important that training opportunities are afforded to such persons to achieve the skills that will assist them to gain employment. Similarly, unemployed workers in the region will need to gain the skills that can help them regain employment. Further education and training break the cycle of social disadvantage and contribute to economic and social development by providing opportunities for educational progression and enhancement of the skill levels of the workforce.

A key requirement for industry for the future will be the continuous development of their human resources. FÁS, through maximising the use of its own facilities and by use of community enterprise and community



centres, and Vocational Education Colleges (VECs) can provide the training facilities throughout the region that are needed. The implications of these needs are that training and development opportunities will have to be provided to a high standard in the region and in locations that are suited to the needs of the target groups to promote economic advancement, social integration and social inclusion.

Opportunities to develop Multiplex Adult and Further Education Centres would improve access to further education. The development of childcare and eldercare facilities and other supports would assist in improving access to Further Education. Special attention should be given to providing training and education opportunities in the areas of greatest economic disadvantage in the region. Distance learning is an area that offers considerable potential for vocational training and continued professional development.

PPO 4.10 The Regional Authority will support expansion in the Training and Skills sector of further education as a positive step towards advanced training and reskilling of the labour force. The development of Multiplex Further Education Centres in accessible locations would advance this objective.

PPO 4.11 The Regional Authority will support the VEC network and all existing education providers and support expansion in this sector of further education as a positive step towards advanced training and reskilling of the labour force.

4.7 Retail Strategy

The Regional Authority would encourage preparation of a Joint Retail Strategy for Waterford and its environs. A Joint Retail Planning Strategy's primary purpose is to support the statutory plan making process and the development management process to ensure that adequate provision is made for new retail development in the most appropriate locations and to ensure that excessive provision of retail space is avoided. The strategy should provide guidance on the need for new retail floor space and where, in accordance with the principles of sustainable planning, it should be allocated.

The central key objective of the Retail Strategy is to support the 'city centre first' approach in the context of the retail hierarchy and to promote the vitality and viability of existing centres. This would support the objective of providing sustainable transport and travel patterns.



PPO 4.12 The Regional Authority will encourage the preparation of a Joint Retail Strategy for Waterford and its environs, in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines issued by the DoEHLG.

The retail sector contributes significantly to regional employment figures and to the economic development of the region. The Regional Authority supports the continued growth of the sector and development of retail businesses (including retail warehousing) while protecting the retail function of the principal shopping streets of our cities and towns. New retail development should satisfy 'Smarter Travel' criteria in terms of its location and accessibility by sustainable modes of travel.

4.7.1 City/Town Centre Development

People are often attracted to cities and larger towns, where there is a vibrant social and cultural life, coupled with broad employment opportunities and a wide range of services including education, healthcare and childcare facilities, transport systems and ready access to entertainment and amenity facilities.

The elements that contribute to the attractiveness of such places include:

- a thriving, human-scale, cultural and social environment, concentrated around distinctive street patterns,

- mixes of restaurants, cafés, bars and attractive shops;
- a high quality physical setting in terms of sensitive conservation of structures of architectural heritage merit, contemporary architecture, street paving, formal and high quality public spaces and parks;
- pedestrian-friendly zones.

If balanced regional development is to work, the spatial structure must be supported by policies aimed at enhancing the attractiveness of areas for people to ensure that there is a combination of social and cultural facilities for both people and business.

In the case of Waterford City, proposals to consolidate the city around the River Suir with an emphasis on the possibilities for developing the city quays present exciting opportunities which should be supported by local planning authorities.

PPO 4.13 It is an objective for the Gateway that Waterford City should seek to consolidate the city around the River Suir in an environmentally sustainable manner⁵ with an emphasis on the possibilities for developing the city quays area.

The encouragement of the regeneration of the cities and towns of the region is critical to the continued economic success of inner urban locations.

PPO 4.14 Each local authority should seek to maximise the benefit of urban renewal schemes and incentives by:

- ☐ preparing urban redevelopment framework plans;
- ☐ pro-actively engaging with property owners and developers;
- ☐ becoming involved in site acquisition and assembly where the private sector is unwilling or unable to unlock the potential of key development lands in an environmentally sustainable manner;
- ☐ utilising to the full the provisions of the Derelict Sites legislation.

The retail sector contributes significantly to the growth in employment and to the economic growth of the region. There is a need to ensure that the development of the retail sector serves to protect and enhance the vibrancy and vitality of the city and town centres. This will help address the leakage of retail spending to larger centres outside the region such as Cork City, Limerick City, Dublin City and the larger sub-urban centres in the Greater Dublin Area.

4.8 Tourism

The role of tourism in the development of the economy of the South-East has very significant potential. In order to realise this potential there needs to be a regional approach to marketing and to the development of flagship attractions.

The provision of wider high quality accommodation options to support the tourism industry is needed in the region, particularly in the Gateway and County Towns. While some areas have good provision, serious deficiencies exist in others. The regional tourism authorities and local planning authorities need to identify opportunities for the development of a diversified and yet coherent range of quality tourist accommodation and tourist attractions and products of a type and scale appropriate to the surrounding environment and which are market driven. There needs to be greater investment in the significant attractors of the region so that the facilities and services associated with principal destinations within the region are recognised for their quality.

There is a need for a sub-regional focus to develop joint tourism projects between adjoining counties in relation to, for example, rivers and mountain ranges located within two or more counties.

Counties Kilkenny, Waterford and Wexford benefit much more from the tourism industry than do the counties of Carlow and South Tipperary. There is an opportunity for increased investment in the development of accommodation and tourism facilities in Carlow and South Tipperary to increase tourism incomes in these areas. There is significant potential for development across the region through the development of visitor attractions with a strong national profile linked to the high quality amenities of the region such as its heritage, river valleys, angling, walking, cycling and other outdoor pursuits, quality golf courses and equestrian facilities and the

⁵ In accordance with the Assessment and Management of Flood Risk Regulations, 2010 and River Suir CFRAMS

region's uplands, beaches and harbours. The potential for agri-tourism, eco-tourism, farmhouse accommodation, open-farms, pet farms and horse trekking centres should also be considered.

The South-East Region has a rich heritage of historic cities, towns and villages and there is significant potential for the development of urban heritage tourism. The various urban heritage attractions in the region's towns should be marketed as a network of destinations offering the visitor the opportunity to visit several locations per visit. The development of a 'city-break' market in these historic towns could also be linked to the development of Waterford Airport.

Innovation in the tourism industry is of high importance. The training of staff for the industry by the third and fourth-level colleges, by CERT and by the industry itself must develop and empower the workers within the industry to contribute to the development of that sector.

The rivers and coastal areas of the South-East and its historic towns are what set it apart from other regions and are essential to the development of tourism in the region. Local authorities should provide assistance to individuals and agencies providing appropriately located facilities and services to golfers, anglers, boat users, walkers and day-trippers. The development of the amenities and recreation potential of the Rivers Barrow, Nore, Suir, Slaney and Blackwater presents a significant opportunity for the relevant authorities. A current INTERREG project for tourism, sustainable transport and economic development along the River Suir is a lead initiative in this area. The development of such projects and programmes will require a joint approach with the DoEHLG/National Parks and Wildlife Service for development of the waterways, ensuring that all such development would be undertaken in compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

The South-East is rich in prehistoric field monuments, early Christian sites and historic houses and estates. Great Gardens and Landscape Demesnes are also a noted feature in the region, including the world-rated horticultural collection at Mount Congreve in Co. Waterford, Altamont in Co. Carlow, Woodstock in Co. Kilkenny and the J.F. Kennedy Arboretum in Co. Wexford. Great Garden Trails are promoted in Counties Carlow and Waterford. The implementation of Local Heritage Plans will assist the development of the tourism industry in a sustainable manner in harmony with the urban/rural, physical and human environment.

PPO 4.15 It is an objective of the Regional Authority to work with the relevant authorities including the DoEHLG/National Parks and Wildlife Service to support development of the amenities and recreation potential of the Rivers Barrow, Nore, Suir, Slaney and Blackwater. All such development should be undertaken in compliance with Articles 6 and Article 10 of the Habitats Directive and subject to an Appropriate Assessment.

PPO 4.16 The Regional Authority will work with the local authorities, Fáilte Ireland South-East and other organisations connected to tourism to promote and develop sustainable tourism projects in the region, subject to demonstrating that the environment will not be impacted negatively.

4.9 Summary of Appropriate Locations for Increased Enterprise Activity

A shift towards more balanced patterns of development will be achieved by meeting enterprise requirements at the appropriate standard and scale at a limited number of key strategic locations. The following Table sets out, in summary form, some of the key locational requirements of this economic development strategy. However, these designations can be adapted to accommodate a variety of enterprise, community and educational facilities to support local economic development.

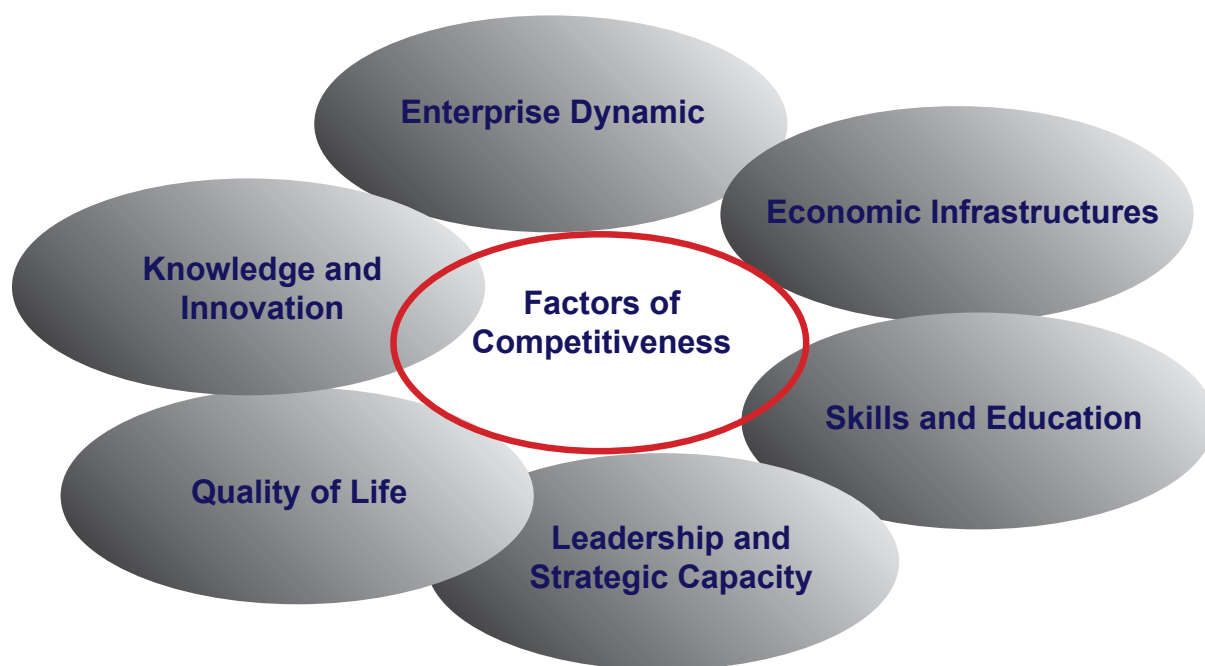


Table 4.1 Summary of Appropriate Locations for Increased Enterprise Activity

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Gateway | Business and Technology Parks - IDA Enterprise Parks – Enterprise Ireland Industrial Estates – Local Authorities/CEB/Private University standard third and fourth-level educational facilities |
| Hubs and County Towns | Business and Technology Parks - IDA County Enterprise Parks – Enterprise Ireland Industrial Estates – Local Authorities/CEB/Private Third and fourth-level educational facilities – ITs and outreach centres |
| Large Towns | Industrial Estates – Local Authorities/CEB/Private Enterprise Parks – Local Authorities/CEB/Private |
| District Towns | Industrial Estates - Local Authorities/CEB/Private District Enterprise Centres - Local Authorities/CEB/Private |
| Key Local Towns | Local Business Incubator Units - Local Authorities/CEB/Private |

4.10 Regional Competitiveness Agenda

The Regional Competitiveness Agenda for the South-East Region forms a key part of the overall Economic Strategy for the region. This section sets out the economic potential and opportunities of the region and is based on the work of Forfás, the national advisory body for enterprise and science.



4.10.1 Enterprise Dynamic

The South-East Region exhibited strong employment growth over the period 1998-2008 and, not unlike other regions in Ireland, this growth was driven by considerable expansion within the construction sector and also the public sector. Employment growth in construction activities has been particularly strong in the South-East and suggests that the recent and dramatic down-turn in this sector may have a greater overall impact here than in other parts of the country.

Manufacturing continues to make an important contribution within the economy of the South-East and represents a key competency for the region. New investments in recent years, particularly in the Life Sciences sector, have boosted manufacturing employment and have helped to offset decline in longer established manufacturing sectors. However, continuing cost pressures, particularly in more labour intensive activities, combined with the deteriorating economic conditions globally, sees the manufacturing sector facing serious challenges in the immediate future.

Contributing 9% to overall employment, the agricultural sector remains a significant part of the South-East economy. In addition, strong international players in the food processing industry have emerged from the region and are significant employers and exporters.

Although the performance of the region in terms of High-Potential Start-Up (HPSU) companies has been comparatively low, there are important initiatives being undertaken within the region in support of increased levels of entrepreneurship, for example, the collaborative regional '*Spirit of Enterprise*' initiative. The higher education institutes in the region have also adopted a proactive approach with industry in terms of applied research; while incubation and enterprise centres throughout the region are providing useful supports to small firms.

4.10.2 Skills & Regional Innovation Capacity

Educational attainment to leaving certificate and third and fourth-level has increased within the South-East, but the region continues to exhibit a relatively high level of early school leaving (below Leaving Certificate) and relatively lower levels of attainment to third and fourth-level. The profile of industry in the region, with a strong tradition of manufacturing and agriculture, has been a factor influencing this pattern of educational attainment. A particular challenge for the region will be to address skills development needs of those employees emerging from these sectors and from the construction sector as they experience contraction in the current difficult economic conditions.

The region benefits from a number of third and fourth-level education providers. These are IT Carlow, Waterford IT, Tipperary Institute, Carlow College and NUI Maynooth at St Kieran's College, Kilkenny. IT Carlow now has significant outreach facilities at its Wexford Campus.⁶ The Institutes of Technology have been proactive in terms of building relationships with industry, encompassing tailored delivery and development of courses, research collaborations and life-long learning. The South-East accounts for a very small portion of the total R&D spend in the higher education sector (HERD) (under 2 % in 2006). This underlines the importance of establishing linkages and networks with relevant HEIs and research institutes beyond the region. Significant developments such as the awarding of an SFI Strategic Research Cluster to WIT (the first of the ITs to establish such a cluster) represent a key step in enhancing research and innovative capacity within the region.

4.10.3 Economic Infrastructures: Access and Connectivity

Some major deficits in road infrastructure which have hampered economic development within the South-East for many years are now being addressed. The upgrade of the N9/M9 in particular will enhance inter-regional connectivity and reduce travel times to Dublin. The Waterford By-pass has reduced traffic congestion in the city and brings with it the strong visual impact of a new 'iconic' cable-stay bridge over the river Suir. The regional road and rail networks, however, need further development: the east-west links from Waterford to Limerick via Carrick-on-Suir, Clonmel, Cahir and Tipperary (N24, and the existing but under-used rail transport infrastructure), upgrading the N25 Rosslare – Cork route and completion of the N11/M11 upgrade as far as Wexford, upgrading the N80 from Enniscorthy to Carlow, the N76 Clonmel-Kilkenny, improvements to the N30 and N77 as well as regional roads such as the R693 and R700. Key investments in the electricity network are required to satisfy future demands and the broadband offering in the region needs to be improved to support future enterprise potential.

4.10.4 Quality of Life

Quality of Life can be discussed from many different perspectives and is in itself a subjective concept. However, from an enterprise development position there is recognition that a high quality of life that is inclusive and accommodating of diversity is a key component in regional competitiveness and is necessary to achieve the following:

- creating the conditions to foster and support innovation, creativity, and knowledge generation/transfer;
- attracting and retaining skilled people, particularly internationally mobile skilled labour;
- attracting knowledge intensive internationally mobile Foreign Direct Investment.

A variety of lifestyle choices can be accommodated in the diverse physical landscape and settlement patterns across the South-East region. Key developments in road infrastructure will enhance regional interconnectivity and ease of access to the main population and service centres and reduce traffic throughput in smaller settlements. A key challenge for the region is to ensure greater co-ordination in the promotion and preservation of the natural environment and landscape and development of cultural and recreational assets.

⁶ The absence of a university within the region has been cited as a key regional deficit and a formal application by WIT for upgrade to university status is currently with Government.

4.10.5 Leadership and Local Capacity

Local leadership plays an important role in driving regional development, from the planning and delivery of critical infrastructures and the development of concentrated and well planned urban development to the facilitation of enterprise development through stimulating networking, agency collaboration and targeted regional initiatives. The South-East region is characterised by a dispersed urban population and a regional Gateway with limited regional impact currently. This has resulted in diverging and competitive dynamics within the region and perhaps also a missed opportunity to work with this distinctive diversity through a more co-ordinated approach to regional development. The *Spirit of Enterprise Forum* is one example which demonstrates an ability within the region to act collaboratively and represents a strong base on which to build future initiatives in support of enterprise development.

4.10.6 Realising Future Potential: Sectoral Opportunities

This section considers the assets of the region and how they might be harnessed to further develop the existing enterprise base and to capture future sectoral opportunities. The challenge over the next decade (faced by the entire country) is to shift economic growth toward export oriented sectors and activities.

The outline demonstrates the suite of assets that provide a platform for growth; for attracting investment from foreign and indigenous companies, stimulating entrepreneurship and enabling companies based in Ireland to grow and target international markets. The sectors considered for the South-East are:

- Environmental Technologies;
- Agri-Food;
- Tourism (including Marine-based tourism);
- ICT Services;
- Internationally Traded Services (excluding ICT);
- Life Sciences.

While the listing above suggests discrete sectors with potential, a key characteristic of global enterprise trends is the increased blurring of sectoral boundaries - where advances in science, engineering and ICT drive previously separate sectors to collaborate and develop new and more valuable products and services. Key examples where the convergence momentum has been growing include: ICT and Healthcare (remote diagnostics, bioinformatics); Food and Pharmaceuticals (pharming, nutraceuticals, functional foods); Med Tech & Pharmaceuticals (combination products, regenerative medicine).

In the context of sectoral convergence, core skills become transferable across sectors, for example, biology, chemistry, engineering, electronics, logistics and software; and cross-sectoral strategic collaborations and networking (regionally, nationally & internationally) amongst firms and between firms and knowledge providers (HEIs, research institutes etc.) become critical.

As regards the South-East, core competencies in engineering, food production, and more recently, software development have provided a strong base to build strong enterprises (both indigenous and foreign in origin) within the region, particularly in Medical Technologies, Food Processing, Pharmaceuticals and International & Financial Services. These competencies will play a central role as these sectors continue to evolve and 'cross-fertilise'.

4.10.7 Priority Actions

Many of the suggested actions below will serve to address a number of the opportunities and challenges identified. There are many actions that can be taken at a regional level, with the relevant regional stakeholders acting collaboratively and others that require a national response.

However, it is incumbent upon the regional actors to also consider how they can best take advantage of national initiatives, and their delivery - locally.

Sectoral Opportunities

1. Further work will be required in all instances to advance specific actions to achieve the potential of opportunity sectors in the region. As a first step, there would be benefit in forming small, sectorally

focused teams under a regional umbrella - possibly the Spirit of Enterprise Forum - to further explore specific opportunities in identified sectors. Existing initiatives in the region and elsewhere should be considered by the sector teams to explore potential synergies and optimise knowledge sharing. **Action at a regional level.**

2. Stimulate interactions *between* sectors - particularly where there are opportunities for convergence (e.g. medical devices and ICT; agri-business and environment/life sciences), working with the relevant industry associations and the HEIs. **Action at a regional level.**
3. Promote interaction between indigenous SMEs and MNCs in the region - for example, include relevant indigenous companies as demonstration sites on itineraries for prospective overseas investors. **Action at a regional level.**
4. Provision for development of environmentally sustainable renewable energy resources. **Action at a regional level.**

Leadership

5. The enterprise development focus of the local authorities and City/County Development Boards is on leadership and a cohesive approach to supporting enterprise development in the region. These bodies provide the leadership at local level and can work collaboratively with the Regional Authority to develop dynamic enterprise policies at regional level. **Action at a regional level.**
6. Continued focus is required to accelerate the development of Waterford as the regional Gateway. It is important that a cohesive approach to planning and development of the Gateway is maintained. This should be a core priority of the regional enterprise forum, with support from a cross-regional Gateway Implementation Group. **Action at both regional and national levels.**

Infrastructure

7. High quality and pervasive broadband is a fundamental enterprise and quality of life requirement. National efforts will have to be made to overcome these issues in the main; however, regional broadband solutions are possible in the interim. Efforts should be made to publicise what technology is available to the region, and low cost connection solutions promoted to the public and small industry. **Action at both regional and national levels.**
8. Major progress will have been achieved in relation to road transport connectivity with the M8 Dublin-Cork motorway serving the western part of the region and the completion in 2010 of the N9/M9 major inter-urban route and the N25 Waterford By-pass. The current budgetary constraints will limit progress on any additional road infrastructure upgrades. However, the following routes should commence at the earliest opportunity:
 - N24 (various improvement schemes along the N24 route)⁷
 - N11/M11 (Arklow/Rathnew; Enniscorthy By-pass)
 - N25 (New Ross By-pass and Waterford - Cork)
 - N80 (Enniscorthy - Carlow)
9. High quality water service infrastructure needs to be provided in order to support planned population growth and economic development. **Action at a national level.**
10. To enhance connectivity between the main regional centres (Clonmel, Dungarvan, Kilkenny, Carlow, Wexford and Waterford) improvements in some secondary roads will be required, for example, the N76 and the R700/705. **Action at both regional and national levels.**
11. Continue with planned investments in water and waste water infrastructure to ensure forecast deficits in key centres do not arise. **Action at both regional and national levels.**
12. Waterford Regional Airport will continue to be a significant access point to the region. Proposals for extending the runway to accommodate larger aircraft and improving passenger and cargo facilities would greatly enhance the role which the airport could play in the economic life of the region. The Regional Authority is committed to supporting the airport in its future development. **Action at a regional level.**
13. To achieve optimum utilisation and advantage of the regional rail infrastructure (especially the under-utilised Waterford-Limerick service) a focussed review of time-tabling and service provision on all routes is required and the necessary improvements made. **Action at a regional level.**

⁷ The South-East Regional Authority has produced a report examining and prioritising the need for an upgrade of the N24, which is available at www.sera.ie

Innovation

14. Encourage an innovative mindset in the region through the promotion of examples of successful innovation from across the public and private sector. **Action at a regional level.**
15. Government bodies and agencies in the South-East could assess how they themselves can engage in innovation, improve performance, increase service efficiency and minimise costs. Innovation in the public sector can improve innovative capacity within its own workforce and stimulate innovative practices through business facing services (Development Agencies, local authorities). **Action at a regional level.**
16. Consider how best to enable companies to access technologies and research from HEIs, for example:
 - HEIs and research institutes to provide information on their websites from the perspective of the end-user (including industry interests in research) so that research capabilities are demonstrated and searchable in terms of technologies and their application to 'real' industry problems/potential (and not by research department). **Action at a regional level.**

Entrepreneurship

17. Provide clarity on the availability of business supports to potential entrepreneurs, the role of each regionally based agency and key contacts in order to avoid a 'pillar to post' scenario. Consider developing a regional web portal along the lines of the existing <http://www.waterfordbusinessinfo.ie> **Action at a regional level.**
18. Harness the capabilities of the 'new' highly skilled professional unemployed to identify potential business start-up opportunities and to further develop innovative and entrepreneurial capacity (e.g. IP negotiations, developing business plans, identification of sources of finance, mentoring). **Action at a regional level.**
19. Recognising the resources of potential entrepreneurs from the farming community, given the business opportunities that are arising in the agri-business/environmental sectors, ensure optimal co-ordination of supports from relevant agencies such as Teagasc, EI, LEADER and the CEBs. **Action at a regional level.**

Skills Development

20. Continued alignment of education provision with industry needs in the region - collaborative actions, course development. **Action at a regional level by education and training providers.**
21. Specific regional initiative on upskilling - focussing on people in the labour force with basic or redundant qualifications and innovative delivery/access. **Action at a regional level by education and training providers.**
22. Specific focus on the retention of highly skilled unemployed. **Action at a regional level.**



SUMMARY / Development Plan Implications

Section 4 sets out an Economic and Employment Strategy for the South-East Region which is consistent with the priorities of the Government Strategy *'Building Ireland's Smart Economy – A Framework for Sustainable Economic Renewal'*.

Local authorities should have regard to the Guiding Principles of the Regional Economic Strategy as they apply to each sector of the economy and to the Regional Competitiveness Agenda developed by Forfás (Section 4.10) and make provision for economic and employment developments that are appropriate to each sector within each county in the light of that analysis.

The large scale land and infrastructure needs required for major investment, including foreign direct investments, should be considered and provided for when development plans and the strategies for those areas requiring special co-ordinated approaches are being drawn up.

The sections on the Gateway, Hubs and County Towns and Other Towns highlight the key strategic infrastructure which local authorities should prioritise in support of economic development.

Development Plans should encourage the establishment of local, indigenous enterprise that is sustainable in terms of environmental impact, the location of markets relative to the physical volume of product produced and the extent to which use is being made of locally produced or existing resources.

Rural Enterprise

With the changing structure of agriculture, the need for alternative and complementary rural enterprise activities will be evident. Planning Authorities should make provision for small-scale on-farm rural enterprises and enterprise development in the smaller towns and villages, particularly to accommodate the different types of enterprise sectors and the significant potential of tourism to contribute to the rural economy.

Provision should also be made for new uses of agricultural land, including afforestation and alternative energy. To this end an inter-county and inter-regional policy for the provision of afforestation and wind energy would be of particular importance. Such a policy should outline common criteria that would be used by Planning Authorities in making decisions on such proposals and, ideally, would include a regional map of areas considered suitable for such developments, though any such designations in areas that are, or contain, European Sites should be subject to Habitats Directive Assessments being carried out.

Natural Resources

In addition, the creation of opportunities for the establishment of enterprises based on the processing of the natural produce of an area and development of renewable energies should be supported by the development plans and policies of local authorities, subject to environmental considerations.

Development Plan Implications (Higher Education and R&D)

Development Plans should include policies to ensure that adequate land is available for the provision of additional education and research facilities in the vicinity of the principal third and fourth-level institutes, that the infrastructures necessary to serve such developments are facilitated and that access by both public and private transport is facilitated.

Development Plans should support the Training, Skills and Further Education sectors which support economic and social development. Development Plans should support the multiple use of educational sites for further education, community and recreation uses.

Development Plan Implications (Retail)

The Retail Strategy for the region supports the development of a Joint Retail Strategy for Waterford City and its environs. Planning Authorities should expressly recognise the role of retailing as a key contributor to the vitality and viability of town and city centres.

In preparing their Development Plans local authorities should seek to:

- Promote town and city centres as primary locations within the context of a retail hierarchy.
- Identity a range of suitable sites on which the demand for development might best be met, with particular emphasis on improved public transport links.
- Assess the impact of significant proposed expansions of retail floor-space on movement taking into account the impact on road capacity and access to public transport.
- Improve access to town centres by facilitating opportunities for public transport, cycling and walking whilst also ensuring sufficient short-term parking is available to meet the needs of car borne shoppers.

Tourism

The significant role of tourism in the regional economy is recognised and its future development requires that local authorities, Fáilte Ireland South-East, business and other tourism interests work collaboratively to develop and promote tourism. Particular focus should be on projects to improve access to the regional attractions, including the coastline, mountains and rivers, and on improving the range of facilities and services for tourists and visitors.





Section 5: Infrastructure

5.1 Transportation

The South-East Regional Authority's long-term objective is to achieve balanced regional development through the development of an integrated sustainable transport system involving road, rail, air, sea, bus, cycling and walking delivered by a range of providers and operators, both public and private. This objective will require an improved level of physical connectivity within the region, between the region and the rest of the country, mainland Europe and beyond.

The South-East Regional Authority recognises that land-use planning and transport planning are inextricably linked and their proper integration is a key determinant to sustainable development. Appropriate land-use policy and practice is a necessary condition for successful transport planning management. Where development is properly integrated with transport, the people who travel to or from that development will have a range of transport choices. Where transport choices are available, management measures to encourage travel by means other than car become more acceptable.

It is recognised that the provision of roads infrastructure is an essential element of transport provision within the region. Therefore, close integration of transportation and land use is vital in order to ensure the provision of the most effective links, the minimisation of the demand for travel and the most efficient use of resources. The development of an efficient strategic transport system facilitating the movement of people, goods and services is essential to the future economic and social development of the South-East Region.

The Regional Planning Guidelines implement the transport policies as set out in '*Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future*' (Department of Transport).

The main objectives set out in the policy are:-

1. To encourage smarter travel, i.e. to reduce overall travel demand;
2. To maximise the efficiency of the transport network;
3. To reduce reliance on fossil fuels and therefore to reduce transport emissions;
4. To improve accessibility to transport.

5.1.1 Sustainable Transport

Until recently the planning of the built environment had being dictated primarily by the geometry of road design. This has had the effect of encouraging car use, even for journeys which would be better made by walking or cycling.

Reversing this trend entails planning with all forms of movement in mind, not just the design of road layouts. Movement on foot, by bicycle or by public transport should be as easy and convenient as using the car. This does not mean excluding the car; what is required is an appropriate balance between traffic and other uses to create attractive, lively, safe and interesting environments.

'*Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future*' seeks to achieve a shift to more sustainable means of transport by setting Targets for Modal Change. Nationally the target is for modal share of car commuting to drop from 65% to 45% by 2020 and for cycling to reach 10% of journeys made by 2020. The South-East Region can contribute to more sustainable travel patterns by putting in place policies to support public transport and measures to support a shift to more sustainable forms of travel. With reference to the national targets set out in Smarter Travel, each local authority should promote sustainable travel by setting its own Targets to increase the share of travel by sustainable modes. Trip intensive developments should be located close to population centres and/or at locations with good access to public transport and which are linked by good cycle and pedestrian access.

5.1.2 Transport Impact Assessment

When preparing Development Plans, Smarter Travel Policy states that a Local Transport Plan be prepared as part of the Development Plan process. In order to facilitate the integration of transport links and to successfully incorporate new developments into existing transport routes, local authorities should require Travel Plans and

Transport Impact Assessment for significant residential or mixed-use developments. These Transport Impact Assessments will focus in particular on design facilities for walking, cycling and public transport. Developers will be required to undertake consultations and prepare options for consideration by the individual Planning Authorities. This process should be undertaken prior to the submission of a planning application. Whilst varying levels of guidance exists on the threshold levels for requesting Traffic Impact Assessments, it is recommended that the need for a Traffic Impact Assessment be determined by the Planning Authorities on an individual basis.

Land Use and Transportation Studies (LUTS) provide an effective means of assessing transport and travel options in larger settlements. With a LUTS having already been developed in Waterford City, it is considered appropriate that Hubs and County Towns should also consider developing LUTS in support of sustainable transport objectives.

PPO 5.1 Planning Authorities should prepare Local Transport Plans as part of City or County Development Plans, in accordance with the Guidelines set out in 'Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future'. Local Transport Plans should include Targets for Modal Change to more sustainable means of travel over the Development Plan period. The plans should include a programme of measures to achieve the Targets within the timeframe.

PPO 5.2 For planning applications in respect of significant residential or mixed-use developments, Planning Authorities should require that they be accompanied by a Transport Impact Assessment.

PPO 5.3 The Regional Authority supports the development of LUTS for Hubs and County Towns.

5.1.3 Mobility Management Plans

Mobility Management Plans (MMP) consist of a package of measures put in place by an organisation to encourage and support more sustainable travel patterns among staff, clients and other visitors. The Regional Authority will support the use of Mobility Management Plans by local authorities. MMPs are an effective tool for land use planning and transport demand management and, as a result, are now viewed as an essential component for large scale commercial developments. Such a plan usually concentrates on staff commuting patterns but may also include business travel and fleet management. MMPs seek to encourage sustainable travel through:

- Home working.
- Increased use of public transport.
- Car sharing.
- Cycling and walking.

The plan is usually implemented as a planning condition and should take the form of a formally published document which outlines the organisation's proposed measures and achievable targets. A realistic plan with achievable targets can provide many benefits for employers, employees and to members of the wider community. Benefits include reduced congestion, improved accessibility and cost savings in terms of time and money. Plan guidance should be sought from 'The Route to Sustainable Commuting – An Employer's Guide to Mobility Management Plans' issued by the Dublin Transportation Office.

PPO 5.4 Planning Authorities should require MMPs for all new large scale developments or collection of smaller developments. MMPs may form part of a Transport Impact Assessment.

5.1.4 Public Transport

The development and improvement of public transport facilities and services within the region and increasing the appeal and use of public transport are critical factors in achieving more sustainable travel patterns and a reduced reliance on the car.

5.1.5 Regional Bus Services

A central objective of the Transport policy is to ensure that the gateway, hubs and principal towns are easily accessible and that efficient links are available for access to employment and for greater access to a range of complementary goods and services. The enhancement of regional transport links will provide economic advantages of business linkages and inter-relationships, shortened journey times and reduced CO₂ emissions, improving environmental sustainability.



Development of high frequency intra-regional bus services between all the main urban centres in the region that cater for commuter, business and leisure journeys are essential to the development of more sustainable travel in the region. Improved public transport services are also a key element to improving quality of life for citizens. There are five categories of bus transportation currently operating in the South-East Region:

- Long-distance and inter-urban services;
- Bus Éireann City Bus Services;
- Bus Éireann school bus services operated on behalf of the Department of Education and Science;
- Private mini-bus services;
- Community bus routes, provided in association with the Rural Transport Programme.

The Regional Authority will support the development of public transport projects which improve quality of life and encourage sustainable transport modes, including the provision of bus stops and shelters in rural settlements. The Regional Authority will actively support the better integration of existing services, including the Rural Transport Programme Initiative of the National Development Plan 2007–2013 which is also a community based approach to tackling social exclusion caused by lack of access to transport.

PPO 5.5 It is an objective of the Regional Authority to:

- ☐ **Support the provision of public transport services and preserving land in suitable locations for development of public transport infrastructure and ancillary facilities, such as QBCs, bus lanes, park and ride facilities, cycle & walkways, taxi ranks, and through public transport supportive parking and traffic management policies, bus lane and bus idle areas;**
- ☐ **Support local community transport services by co-operating with various public and private agencies which are transport providers within the region in the co-ordination and provision of new services and improvement of existing services and associated transport related infrastructure in the interest of reducing social isolation;**
- ☐ **Prioritise the planning of future public transport needs to the gateway, hubs and principal towns.**
- ☐ **Support the implementation of public transport policies recommended in the Waterford City Public Transport Feasibility Study 2010, subject to adherence with the principles of sustainable development and to projects being assessed in accordance with Article 6 and 10 of the Habitats Directive.**

5.1.6 Rural Transport

Bus services are particularly important in low-population density, dispersed, rural areas, where population mobility levels can be low. Rural transport projects, such as 'Ring-a-Link', have a key role to play in providing public transport services, particularly in peripheral areas, and in providing access to the services located in towns. Rural bus services play a vital social role in urban and rural communities, linking rural areas with settlements and essential services, such as schools and healthcare facilities. Bus services, both public and private, will continue to be the principal form of public transportation service in the region. To improve the effectiveness of rural transport services, the following measures are required:-

- (a) Improved connectivity to inter-regional bus services at connection points.
- (b) Development and use of new technology to support demand response services.

PPO 5.6 The Regional Authority will support the provision and sustainable expansion of rural transport services across the region. In particular, the Regional Authority supports the development of:-

- **Improved connectivity to inter-regional bus services at connection points.**
- **New technology to support demand response services.**

5.1.7 Park & Ride

Park & Ride facilities are viewed as an integral part of the provision of public transport in both urban and rural areas. Such facilities can attract users to the bus and rail and away from the car and in doing so help to relieve traffic congestion in the town centres, which in turn makes the service more attractive as traffic moves more freely. This increases the attractiveness of town centres as destinations for shoppers and visitors resulting in increased economic activity. For Park & Ride to operate successfully, facilities should be located:

- adjacent to railway stations;
- at the beginning / end of bus routes;
- at the beginning of traffic delays;
- at the finish of motorways / dual carriageways.

PPO 5.7 It is an objective of the Regional Authority that in the preparation of development plans local authorities should explore and support the provision of Park & Ride facilities for the main urban areas.

5.1.8 Parking Policy

To assist in the development of sustainable travel practices local authorities should apply appropriate parking standards in their areas. Parking standards will assist in the reduction of car use and car dependency in conjunction with improved land-use planning, development controls, traffic management and improved public transport.

5.1.9 Cycling and Walking

These Guidelines promote cycling and walking as environmentally friendly, fuel efficient and healthy modes of transport to work, school, shopping and for recreational purposes. Cycling and walking are considered an efficient, fast and relatively inexpensive form of transport and its promotion is in line with the principles of sustainable development and promotion of healthy lifestyles. This objective will be achieved through the prioritising of needs of pedestrians in the urban environment through the management of movement, including traffic calming. Major emphasis will be placed on creating and promoting a safe and pleasant walking environment for all, and this will include the identification of conflict points. The Regional Authority supports the development of dedicated walkways and cycleways such as 'Slí na Sláinte' and 'Greenways' in urban and rural areas, e.g. along the trackbeds of former railway lines. Emphasis will be given to provision of safer cycling and pedestrian routes to schools and a safer environment in the immediate vicinity of schools, where opportunities arise. School travel plans will be developed to promote use of sustainable modes. Planning Authorities should seek to implement the objectives of the Department of Transport's *National Cycle Policy Framework (NCPF)* in the development of cycling facilities.

5.1.10 Sustainable Neighbourhoods

In some cases Planning Authorities may wish to develop specific plans to 'retro-fit' areas with poor connectivity in order to create safer, more sustainable neighbourhoods and streets which encourage cycling and walking.

PPO 5.8 It is an objective of the Regional Authority:

- To support walking and cycling as the mode of first choice for journeys up to 7 kilometres;
- To promote and facilitate the sustainable development of cycling and walking facilities in the region, including development of 'Slí na Sláinte' and 'Greenways' in urban and rural areas;
- To promote the development of cycling by the construction and improvement of cycle links within the region. Where cycle links are proposed adjacent to designated Natura 2000 sites, Appropriate Assessment Screening will be required in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;
- To encourage the provision of secure bicycle parking facilities in towns, at neighbourhood centres, at public facilities such as schools and libraries and in all new developments;
- To support the sustainable development of the inter-urban National Cycle Network so that the majority of the network is off-road;
- To promote the objectives of the Department of Transport's National Cycle Policy Framework in the development of cycling facilities;
- To comply with the 'European Charter of Pedestrian Rights' in order to improve facilities for pedestrians and access to such facilities for people with disabilities.

All such projects will be required to comply with the principles of sustainable development and to be assessed in accordance with Articles 6 and 10 of the Habitats Directive.

PPO 5.9 The Regional Authority will support measures to prioritise improved pedestrian use and traffic calming and cycling facilities as part of an integrated approach to the sustainable management of movement.

5.1.11 Provision for the Mobility Impaired and Disabled

Planning has a significant role in promoting accessibility. Local authorities should address and support agencies addressing the transport/access/egress needs of mobility-impaired people and people with disabilities, including the elderly and parents with children. Policies should seek to develop networks inclusive of facilities for people with disabilities and/or mobility impairments which link key public buildings, shopping streets, public transport points and tourist and recreational attractions. When making plans, local authorities should have regard to the National Disability Authority guidance document *'Building for Everyone'* (2009) under the Disability Act, 2005 adopted by the Department of Transport and the DoEHLG.

PPO 5.10 Local planning authorities should develop specific measures to provide for:

- The provision of more disabled driver parking bays;
- The symmetrical alignment of street furniture so as to minimise obstruction to the visually impaired pedestrian;
- The introduction of more tactile paving at crossings, at the edges of rail platforms, bus stops etc;
- The further provision of ramps and kerb dishing at appropriate locations to improve the movement of disabled people;
- Implementation of Department of Transport and the DoEHLG policy in relation to the Disability Act, 2005.

5.1.12 Roads

Having regard to existing infrastructural bottlenecks, the heavy reliance on roads and the lack of realistic alternative transport networks, investment in roads development will continue to be a priority over the period covered by the Guidelines.

It is envisaged that investment funds will be made available through the National Development Plan 2007–2013 and Transport 21 for national roads development with an emphasis on the completion of the major inter-urban routes (MIU) routes in 2010 and the Trans-European Networks.

PP0 5.11 The Regional Authority will support, facilitate and enable the sustainable development and improvements to the National Road Network within the region, as guided by the NRA's National Roads Programme.



Table 5.1 NRA Road Schemes

| | | |
|---------|---|---|
| N25 | Waterford - Glenmore | Preparation of a feasibility study commenced in 2007. This scheme is currently at Route Selection Phase. |
| N25 | Dungarvan Outer Bypass | A Preferred Route has been identified. Further progression of the scheme through the planning phases is dependent on availability of funding. |
| N25 | Kilmacthomas Bypass Upgrade | Feasibility study completed. Further progression of the scheme through the planning phases is dependent on availability of funding. |
| N25 | Kinsalebeg to Youghal Bypass | Progression of the scheme through the planning phases is dependent on availability of funds. |
| N25/N11 | Oilgate - Rosslare Harbour | The original Rosslare Harbour Access Road scheme has now been extended to include the N25 and N11 from Rosslare Harbour to north of Oilgate. This scheme is currently at Route Selection Phase. |
| N11 | Gorey - Enniscorthy & N25 New Ross Bypass | Three schemes in the Wexford area have been amalgamated to be progressed following statutory approval as one PPP scheme. The M11/N25 PPP Scheme is currently at Tender Phase. |
| N30 | Clonroche - New Ross | The scheme is at Preliminary Design Phase. |
| N72 | Lismore - Cappoquin | Progression of the scheme through the planning phases is dependent on availability of funds. |
| N9/M9 | Kilcullen - Waterford | The project was completed in 2010. |
| N76 | Callan - Kilkenny | Progression of the scheme through the planning phases is dependent on availability of funds. |
| N24 | Clonmel - Cahir | Progression of the scheme through the planning phases is dependent on availability of funds. |
| N24 | Cahir - Pallasgreen | The scheme is at Preliminary Design Phase. |
| N24 | Carrick-on-Suir Bypass | The Route Selection Phase will be completed in 2010. Further progression of the scheme through the planning phases is dependent on availability of funds. |
| N24 | Mooncoin Bypass | Progression of the scheme through the planning phases is dependent on availability of funds. |
| N77 | Ballynaslee | Progression of the scheme through the planning phases is dependent on availability of funds. |

The above schemes outline the proposals of the National Roads Authority and central government to improve and construct National Roads in the South-East Region within the lifetime of the Guidelines subject to finance being provided. The Regional Authority will support the development of the key economic corridors in the region, namely the Dublin–Waterford M9 route, the Dublin–Wexford N11/M11 route, the Waterford–Limerick N24 Corridor and the Rosslare–Cork N25 route. The National Spatial Strategy refers to a Western/Southern Development (Atlantic) Corridor to rectify the imbalance now occurring between the East and the West of the country. For these development corridors to have a positive impact on the South-East Region, the road networks from Waterford to Cork and Waterford to Limerick need to be upgraded. This upgrading would facilitate the development of Clonmel, Dungarvan, Carrick-on-Suir, Tipperary Town and Cahir. The upgrading of the Waterford to Tullamore route will facilitate Kilkenny.



Planning Authorities should ensure that Development Plan policies and Development Management do not compromise route options where road scheme planning is underway or where routes/alignments have been identified.

5.1.13 Motorway Services and Facilities

The Regional Authority supports the development of services and facilities on motorways and national roads. Development of such facilities should be in accordance with NRA policies on services and the environmental considerations of each location.

PPO 5.12 The Regional Authority will:

- ☐ Work with all the relevant agencies and local authorities to implement the upgrading of the N24 as set out in the *N24 Prioritisation Study* (South-East Regional Authority, 2008).
- ☐ Support the development of the internal road network between the Gateway, Hubs and County Towns and other larger settlements and the better integration of land use and transport planning throughout the region. In this regard, Planning Authorities should protect future road alignments and routes through appropriate zoning and development management practice.
- ☐ Seek to secure the future balanced development of Waterford City through enhanced additional connectivity through the development of a downstream river crossing.
- ☐ Support the provision of a second river crossing in New Ross as part of the N25 improvement.
- ☐ Support the upgrade of the N80 Enniscorthy – Carlow road and improvements to linkages from the South-East Region to the Midlands.
- ☐ Support the upgrading of the R693 and R700, which provide important links to the M7/M8 and between the two Hubs of Wexford and Kilkenny.
- ☐ Support the completion of the Kilkenny Ring Road.
- ☐ Support the upgrading of the R671 Clonmel – Youghal and R672 Clonmel – Dungravan roads.

All such projects will be required to comply with the principles of sustainable development and to be assessed in accordance with Articles 6 and 10 of the Habitats Directive.

Also important is the east coast route from Dublin to the South-East. This route is important for the development of Wexford and key projects that are required include the Enniscorthy Bypass, N30 realignment and the New Ross Bypass. These projects are essential to the development of the eastern section of the region and would significantly improve access to the Rosslare Europort from the region and from the country as a whole.

5.1.14 Protection of Road Infrastructure

During the period 1997–2008, the Exchequer made an investment in excess of €16 billion in the South-East Region. In order to achieve the maximum return on such a large investment it is vitally important to safeguard the strategic role of the national network in catering for the safe and efficient movement of major inter-urban and inter-regional traffic to allow effective delivery and service of the investment made as advocated by national policy objectives. In order to achieve this, Planning Authorities should have regard to the National Roads Authority 'Policy on Development Management and Access to National Roads' (May 2006) when assessing planning applications where direct access onto the national road network is proposed or in the vicinity of existing and proposed junctions.

PPO 5.13 Planning Authorities should adhere to the National Roads Authority 'Policy on Development Management and Access to National Roads' (May 2006) when assessing planning applications where direct access onto the national road network is proposed or in the vicinity of existing and proposed junctions.

5.1.15 Rail

Journey speed is a key factor in choosing rail travel over other modes of transport. Rail services in the South-East do not, however, offer significant time savings compared to travel by bus or private car.

There is a requirement that services between Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow and Dublin and between County Wexford towns and Dublin be upgraded and redesigned to include additional services throughout the day coupled with early morning and late evening trains so as to facilitate business users. In the longer term, services should extend to provision of direct commuter service between Waterford and Wexford.

The Rosslare Europort-Waterford-Limerick service runs at very low speeds for safety reasons due to ageing infrastructure. Inconvenient and infrequent passenger services result in very low passenger numbers. The infrastructure along this line and services all need significant improvement to realise the potential of this line as an inter-regional commuter and inter-urban route.

Additional passing loops along the Rosslare-Waterford-Limerick rail corridor would improve reliability and facilitate improved frequencies and convenience on the route, and allow for development of significantly improved commuter services along the line.

PPO 5.14 The Regional Authority will support the development of a sustainable Rail and Land-Use Plan for the Rosslare-Waterford-Limerick Railway Corridor taking account of the recommendations of the Rail Corridor Study 2010.

5.1.16 Rail Freight

The region's railways are vastly under-utilised for freight. At present there are a limited range of freight services, including bulk freight (e.g. cement and mineral ores), freight containers and a service to breweries for the distribution of their keg products. There is significant scope for the transfer of freight from road to rail. Rail cargo depots at Belview (close to Waterford City), Maddockstown (Co. Kilkenny), Rosslare, Carlow and Limerick Junction would facilitate the development of logistics business at these locations and would help to divert some heavy commercial traffic from the public road network. The re-opening of the Waterford – New Ross railway would provide further opportunity for transfer of freight to rail. Where new stations are planned or new industrial sites located adjacent to railway lines or where rail upgrade works are proposed, provision should be made for rail freight facilities including freight handling equipment.



Table 5.2 contains a list of priority rail improvements required throughout the South-East Region:

Table 5.2 Priority Rail Improvements for the South-East Region

| | Objective | Time-frame |
|------|--|-------------|
| RP1 | Increased frequency of services and reduced journey times between Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow and Dublin. | Short-term |
| RP2 | Increased frequency of services and reduced journey times between Wexford, Enniscorthy, Gorey and Dublin. | Short-term |
| RP3 | The immediate introduction of better rolling stock that would be of a similar standard to that on other sub-urban and inter-city commuter services (particularly between Rosslare and Limerick Junction). | Short-term |
| RP4 | Rescheduling of passenger services to match potential demand patterns, e.g. commuters, ferry passengers, students etc. | Short-term |
| RP5 | Infrastructural investment along the Rosslare Europort-Waterford-Limerick Junction line including; signalling, new passing loops, track improvements and realignment to provide for increased frequency of services and reduced journey times. | Short-term |
| RP6 | Development of new passenger services along the Rosslare-Waterford-Limerick rail corridor based on the recommendations of the Rosslare-Waterford-Limerick Rail Corridor Study, 2010. | Short-term |
| RP7 | Rail freight facilities should be provided where new stations or industries beside railways are proposed and where upgrade works are planned. | Short-term |
| RP8 | Provision of a new rail-passenger platform on the North Quays in Waterford City as part of a new Public Transport Interchange. | Medium-term |
| RP9 | Development of the full potential of Limerick Junction as a key strategic asset linking the South-East to the Western Rail Corridor. | Medium-term |
| RP10 | Development of new passing loops to facilitate greater frequency of inter-urban services and the development of new commuter services. | Medium-term |
| RP11 | Development of rail cargo depots at Belview, Maddockstown, Rosslare, Carlow and Limerick Junction. | Longer Term |
| RP12 | Preserve track-bed of disused railway lines for future re-opening and use by passenger and freight trains by restricting inappropriate development or encroachment on all existing and disused rail lines. | Longer Term |

PPO 5.15 The Regional Authority will support and promote:

- ☐ **Implementation of the priority rail improvements required for the region.**
- ☐ **Sustainable high density development in urban rail corridors/public transport nodes where appropriate (e.g. not warehousing or other activities with low employment intensity).**
- ☐ **Infrastructure improvements to be carried out in accordance with the best environmental engineering practice and appropriate site restoration.**
- ☐ **Transfer of freight from road to rail through increased use of freight sidings (or creation of new rail connections) at the ports and other locations throughout the region.**

All such projects will be required to comply with principles of sustainable development and to be assessed in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

5.1.17 Ports

The ports of Belview, New Ross and Rosslare are of strategic importance to the region for both the development of industry, commerce and tourism. These ports must continue to be developed to meet the needs of the Marine, Freight and Cruise sectors. There is considerable potential to develop the region's port infrastructure in terms of value-added shore based economic activity. This would contribute substantially to the economic development of the region. A Spatial Policy Framework for co-ordinated development of the ports in the region could assist future port development.

PPO 5.16 Planning authorities whose functional areas include the larger commercial ports should consider the need to develop Local Area Plans for the ports through which their development can be coordinated. In this regard, future Development Plan policy should identify and reserve key strategic sites for the further development of the ports. All such projects and Local Area Plans will be required to comply with the principles of sustainable development and to be assessed in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

Rosslare Europort

As the major port in the region for passenger and Ro-Ro freight services, Rosslare requires a top quality rail service to Dublin and to Limerick that meets the needs of those using the ferry port. The port's logistics business is identified by Forfás as having great potential and there is an objective of establishing Ireland as a European Centre for Logistics. Given its strategic location and with good and continuously improving road links with Dublin, Cork and other major economic centres, Rosslare is well placed to develop a presence in this growth sector. Rosslare will need to be serviced by an efficient rail freight service if it is to develop its full potential. The Port provides a strategic international access from Britain and continental Europe to the Waterford Gateway and South-East Region.

Waterford/Belview Port

Belview Port is a significant access point to the region and it is of regional and national importance for import and export trade. The potential that exists at Belview for the development of an industrial park of regional and national importance should be exploited by developing it as a flagship location for regional industrial development initiatives. To achieve this objective, the development of a rail cargo depot with freight and container handling equipment would facilitate the continued growth and improvement of this important regional asset.

Waterford Port

It is envisaged that the wharfage at the inner port of Waterford City will be redeveloped as part of a major urban redevelopment project, as detailed in the *Waterford Planning, Land Use and Transportation Study (PLUTS)* and the *North Quays Urban Design Framework LAP*. This redevelopment will facilitate the continued use of the river for recreational marine purposes. It is considered that a secure berthing area in Waterford Harbour is required for the growth of the lucrative cruise business. The port authority, local authorities and the Department of Transport should co-operate to identify and develop a suitable sustainable location for such a facility, subject to consideration of environmental considerations required by Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

New Ross Port

New Ross Port specialises in handling both dry and liquid bulk. The port continues to offer a choice of public and private jetties. Local planning authorities should where possible facilitate the future development of the portal estate at Marshmeadows, to consist of an additional wharf upstream of the existing wharf and construction of warehousing and open storage.

PPO 5.17 The Regional Authority will support the appropriate future development of the portal estate at Marshmeadows subject to the findings of an Appropriate Assessment in compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

Other Ports

Duncannon, Kilmore Quay and Dunmore East are among the top 20 fishing ports in the country. In addition to these, there are significant levels of fishing activity at Helvick and Courtown. Extensive shellfish farming is carried out at Wexford Harbour, Carne/Ballytrant, Bannow Bay, Waterford Harbour and Dungarvan Bay. Dunmore East is one of six state run fisheries harbours in Ireland and also enjoys visits by cruise liners. The economic potential of the harbour has been set out in a Business Plan, which would provide for enhanced capacity at the port.

PPO 5.18 The Regional Authority will support the sustainable development of a modern, locally based fisheries industry to sustain local communities.

5.1.18 South-East Regional Airport

The South-East Regional Airport is located to the south of Waterford City and has a critical role to play in the economic development of the South-East Region in terms of attracting industry and generating increased economic activity. The regional airport has potential for expansion and an increased role in access to Ireland and to the South-East Region. Industry and commerce, tourism, sporting life can all benefit from further improvements to the Airport, subject to consideration of environmental considerations required by Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

PPO 5.19 The Regional Authority will support the further development of the South-East Regional Airport and, in particular, the development of:

- an extension of the existing runway to accommodate larger aircraft, subject to an Appropriate Assessment of the impact on Tramore Back Strand SPA and to ensure avoidance of adverse impacts on the integrity of this SPA
- improved transport linkages and services between the airport, Waterford City and the entire South-East Region, i.e. roads and public transport
- measures to encourage additional operators offering services from this location
- the expansion and development of aviation-related industries at the airport.

PPO 5.20 Development Plans should incorporate policies to protect longer-term flight path public safety zones and to control uses which could adversely impact on the airport's operations or the potential for new runway development and extensions sufficient to handle larger aircraft to a wider variety of destinations.

All such projects at 5.19 and 5.20 will be required to comply with the principles of sustainable development and to be assessed in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

5.2 Water Services

5.2.1 Water Supply

Local authorities in the South-East are committed to providing good quality potable water to all its domestic and non-domestic customers. Water is supplied and tested in accordance with the *European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations, 2000* and the *European Communities (Drinking Water) (No. 2) Regulations, 2007*. In order to comply with this legislation, local authorities will need to facilitate improvements to certain public and group water supply schemes, particularly those listed on the EPA's Remedial Action List. New water treatment facilities and the upgrading of existing facilities will be met through traditional procurement, Design and Build and Design, Build and Operate type contracts.

The adoption of RBMPs to comply with the Water Framework Directive and other environmental legislation, such as Drinking Water Regulations, Shellfish Water Regulations and Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations (2007), place specific obligations on local authorities and on other bodies to comply with quality standards for water services.

Requirements for increased capacity in water supply is slowing due to decreased development-led demand. Accordingly, there is a refocusing of expenditure from increasing water treatment capacity to water conservation, resolving issues highlighted in European Court of Justice Judgements⁸ and environmental and public health objectives. It is likely that in the short to mid-term the emphasis in water supply will be on managing existing resources and improving the overall quality of existing supplies. The DoEHLG Water Services Investment Programme sets out the fundamental framework for delivery of water services infrastructure.

Projects with a demonstrable impact on the sustainable development of hubs and gateways under the NSS, strategic developing areas and works to support employment creation will also be prioritised.

5.2.2 Water Conservation

Treated water is a valuable and limited resource, the demand for which must be met in a sustainable way. Treated water is costly to produce and wasting it, in whatever manner, means expense to the consumer and

⁸ Guidance on Implementation of the Drinking Water Regulations is available on www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/water/drinking.
ECJ Judgements referred to in Appendix 3 to Circular L6/09, Water Services Investment Programme 2010-2012, Assessment of Needs 2009.

greater demands on the environment.

The National Water Conservation Programme is designed to identify and substantially reduce the levels of unaccounted for water in Ireland's water supply network. Water Conservation objectives include:

- ☐ A reduction in overall Unaccounted For Water
- ☐ Maximisation of the value of capital investment
- ☐ Improve network management
- ☐ Improve customer service
- ☐ Improve management of water resources and general environmental protection.

Implementation of the Water Conservation Programme by each local authority in the region will provide additional capacity throughout the region. It is likely in the near to mid-term that focus on water conservation will increase as the emphasis moves away from the construction of water treatment facilities to the management of the water assets. Water conservation will be managed in stages with the collection of data and the modelling of networks in Stage 1, the setting up of district metering areas and leak detection and repair in stage 2 with stage 3 being used for watermain rehabilitation and replacement.

The enactment of the Water Conservation Regulations, 2008 will assist local authorities in the reduction of water loss in private properties.

PPO 5.21 The Regional Authority will support the progressive introduction of policies aimed at achieving effective water conservation and minimisation of wastage.

5.2.3 Water Pricing

In line with government policy local authorities are obliged to apply the Polluter Pays Principle to the Non-Domestic Sector to recover the cost for the provision and operation of Water Services. A water pricing framework has been developed to comprehensively apply the Polluter Pays Principle and provides for:

- ☐ Collection of capital contributions by local authorities from non-domestic users in a structured and uniform manner and in accordance with the polluter pays principle;
- ☐ Operational costs in respect of the non-domestic water and wastewater services to users to be recovered in full;
- ☐ Continued funding in a transparent way of the cost of providing water and wastewater services to domestic users through the capital budget and in a manner consistent with efficiency and environmental sustainability.

PPO 5.22 The Regional Authority will support the adoption of water pricing plans by each local authority in the region.

5.2.4 Waste Water

Waste water collection, treatment and disposal infrastructure is fundamental to the future development of the region. The provision of such infrastructure is a major concern for local authorities. While increased capacity has been provided in many areas, there are locations where development has been inhibited due to lack of capacity in some facilities.

Waterford is now well served by a new Waste Water Treatment Plant which has capacity to serve existing and substantial future expansion in the Gateway and its environs. However, the decline in development-led demand in the recent past for waste water facilities has refocused the need for expenditure on the management and upgrading of existing wastewater assets with an emphasis on the quality of the effluent produced. Additional facilities will be considered where new projects can service the sustainable development of gateways and hubs, county towns, strategic developing areas and works to support employment creation.

The need to focus on the quality of effluent produced is underlined by the *Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations, 2007* which make the EPA the Competent Authority for the issuing of licences authorising discharges from waste water treatment facilities. Such licences will set the emission limits for pollutants discharged from waste water treatment plants and networks as well as outlining standards to be reached within specified timeframes for individual plants. Such licences may impact on the timing and priority of funding for a project.

The EPA Code of Practice: *Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses* (CoP) establishes

an overall framework of best practice in relation to the development of wastewater treatment and disposal systems in unsewered rural areas for protection of our environment and specifically water quality. The code replaces previous guidance issued by the EPA on wastewater treatment systems for single houses (EPA 2000) and incorporates the requirements of new European guidelines.

5.2.5 Water Quality and Aquifers

The Water Framework Directive has imposed significant requirements for the protection of water bodies. This will require a considerable amount of co-ordination of the activities of local planning authorities. The introduction of the *European Communities Environmental Objective (Groundwater) Regulations, 2010* establishes the environmental objectives to be achieved for all groundwater bodies, criteria and procedures for classifying groundwater quantitative status and chemical status, and procedures for identifying significant and sustained upward trends in groundwater pollution. This legislation will impact on planning policy as areas of groundwater vulnerable to pollution may be deemed unsuitable for the disposal of effluent.

Groundwater Protection Schemes undertaken by the Geological Survey of Ireland⁹ in conjunction with local authorities aim to preserve the quality of groundwater, particularly for drinking water purposes. Groundwater Protection Schemes are in place for Kilkenny, South Tipperary and Waterford and preparation of schemes is underway for Carlow and Wexford.

PPO 5.23 The Regional Authority will support the full implementation of the Water Framework Directive, River Basin Management Plans and associated Programme of Measures in conjunction with each local authority.

PPO 5.24 The Regional Authority will support implementation of the Water Services Investment Programme in the South-East Region, recognising the strong urban structure of the region.

5.3 Waste Management¹⁰



The Joint Waste Management Plan for the South-East Region covers the period 2006-2011. The Plan addresses all of the issues relevant to waste management, including prevention, reduction, reuse, recycling, recovery and safe disposal. It is an objective of the Regional Authority to support the implementation of the Joint Waste Management Plan.

A statutory review of the plan must be undertaken within 5 years of its adoption. The review will check progress and take corrective action where necessary. The Regional Authority will seek to play an active part in the review of the Plan to ensure that its recommendations and objectives comply with the Regional Development Strategy for the South- East.

It is necessary that the majority of the recycling and recovery infrastructure recommended in the Joint Waste Management Plan be provided before 2013.

It is necessary that an integrated waste facility, which will include thermal treatment, be operational in 2013.

In order to ensure the effective implementation of the Plan, it is necessary that:

- ☐ The collection framework is provided
- ☐ Recovery/recycling framework is provided
- ☐ The main public awareness and education initiative is provided
- ☐ Procurement of an integrated facility is provided
- ☐ During 2010-2011 the construction and commissioning of the integrated facility which includes thermal treatment and associated ancillary waste infrastructure is undertaken.

⁹ www.gsi.ie/Programmes/Groundwater/Projects/Protection+Scheme+Status.htm

¹⁰ Reports and action plans on national waste management are available on www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/waste

Local authorities will respond to applications for waste to energy projects, in the context of a sustainable energy policy.

Where practicable, local authorities in the South-East Region will incorporate energy from waste into the overall local authority waste management strategy. This will be carried out in the context of the hierarchy of waste management solutions adopted by the local authorities in the region and detailed in the Joint Waste Management Plan for the South-East.

PPO 5.25 It is an objective of the Regional Authority to support the implementation of the Joint Waste Management Plan and it will support the review of the Plan to ensure that its recommendations and objectives comply with the Regional Development Strategy for the South-East.

PPO 5.26 Local authorities in the region should ensure that the majority of the recycling and recovery infrastructure recommended in the Joint Waste Management Plan be provided before 2013.

PPO 5.27 Local authorities in the South-East Region should incorporate energy from waste into the overall local authority waste management strategy.

All waste projects should comply with the principles of sustainable development.



SUMMARY / Development Plan Implications

Section 5 sets out regional policy in relation to the three main areas of transportation infrastructure at 5.1, water services infrastructure at 5.2 and waste management at 5.3.

Government Policy '*Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future*' sets out key objectives that will form the basis for transport policy in the South-East Region. The main objectives, which should be translated into Development Plan policies and Local Area Plans, are:-

- 1.To encourage smarter travel, i.e. to reduce overall travel demand;
- 2.To maximise the efficiency of the transport network;
- 3.To reduce reliance on fossil fuels and therefore to reduce transport emissions;
- 4.To improve accessibility to transport.

Section 5 sets out sustainable transport policies in relation to Transport Impact Assessment, where local authorities will be required to prepare Local Transport Plans in accordance with the guidelines set out in '*Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future*', Mobility Management Plans and Public Transport. Land Use and Transportation Studies (LUTS) should be considered for Hubs, County Towns or other large towns.

Development Plan Implications (Rail)

Where the rail network passes through towns of significant size the areas in the vicinity of existing stations should be protected and retained for the provision of infrastructure associated with the rail line. Provision of Park & Ride facilities should be an objective for all existing and new railway stations. Where this is not possible a location for a new station and/or for the provision of parking within close proximity of the existing station that would facilitate its use by commuter and other similar short journey traffic should be a plan objective.

No development should be permitted that would compromise the provision, retention or improvement of any existing intact rail lines and existing stations on such lines should be retained even if disused unless and until a location for a replacement station has been identified and reserved.

Where feasibility studies indicate that the development of a new line or the re-instatement of an old line is feasible in the medium term, the route for such provision should be protected and locations for the provision of halts or stations identified.

Development Plan Implications (Rail Freight)

Where new stations are planned or where new industrial sites are being located adjacent to railway lines or where rail upgrade works are proposed, provision should be made for rail freight facilities including freight handling equipment.

Development Plan Implications (Bus)

Development plans should make provision for bus corridors and the provision of bus facilities, particularly within the Waterford Gateway and the other main urban areas. Such provision should also be included in new road design. In major residential areas planning permissions should make allowance for the accommodation of bus services along major distributor routes. This should include the identification of Park & Ride facilities, bus stopping and turning areas, as well as carriageway capacity and through routes.

In order to accommodate such services in all the major settlements, areas should be identified in those centres for the accommodation of bus parking, the provision of waiting facilities for passengers, and short-term accommodation for bus parking. It is also important that such facilities are provided in areas that are convenient to the areas of the centres that accommodate social, community and commercial services.

Development Plan Implications (Mode Integration)

Development plans should reflect the objectives and actions of the integrated Local Transport Plan referred to above and should facilitate its implementation through their own policies and objectives.

Development Plan Implications (Roads)

Development plans should make provision for the routes identified and, where necessary, they should coordinate design and land reservations to ensure such provision. Integration of routes with other transport modes is crucial as part of a balanced transportation strategy. Design criteria for principal access routes should also be reviewed in order to ensure that the criteria adopted will ensure (minimum/optimum) journey times between the Gateway, Hubs and County Towns. Development plans should also provide for the protection of the safety and capacity of the region's road network as identified in this document. The degree of protection afforded to any route should reflect its role and function, and not merely its designation. In this regard, Planning Authorities should adhere to the National Roads Authority '*Policy on Development Management and Access to National Roads*' (May 2006) when assessing planning applications.

Development Plan Implications (Pedestrians & Cyclists)

Throughout the region, a cycle and pedestrian network should form a major part of Smarter Travel policy. Local authorities should seek to make walking and cycling more attractive and safer by implementation of traffic calming measures in urban areas, sustainable neighbourhood design and the pedestrianisation of core urban areas.

Development Plan Implications (Ports)

Planning authorities whose functional areas include the larger commercial ports should consider the need to develop Local Area Plans for the ports through which their development can be coordinated. In this regard, future Development Plan policy should identify and reserve key strategic sites for the further development of the ports.

Requirements Emerging from SEA/HDA (Transport)

In considering all transport and infrastructure proposals, regard must be had to the requirements of the Habitats Directive including the carrying out of an assessment of the implications for any Natura 2000 site that might be at risk from the proposed development. While all Natura 2000 sites are of key importance, a number have particular importance as they contain species that are of particular relevance as indicators of environmental quality.

Development Plan Implications (Water Services)

The provision of water and sewerage facilities in the settlements of the region and the provision of water supplies in its rural areas must be considered in the context of the Core Strategy and must be related to prioritisation and phasing. Sustainable Drainage Principles should apply to all development including major transport infrastructure proposals.

Local authorities should take appropriate measures to upgrade treatment facilities and to improve drinking water standards of water supplies listed on the EPA's Remedial Action List.

Local authorities should take appropriate measures to implement Water Conservation Programmes and to redress water leakage rates in local water supplies.

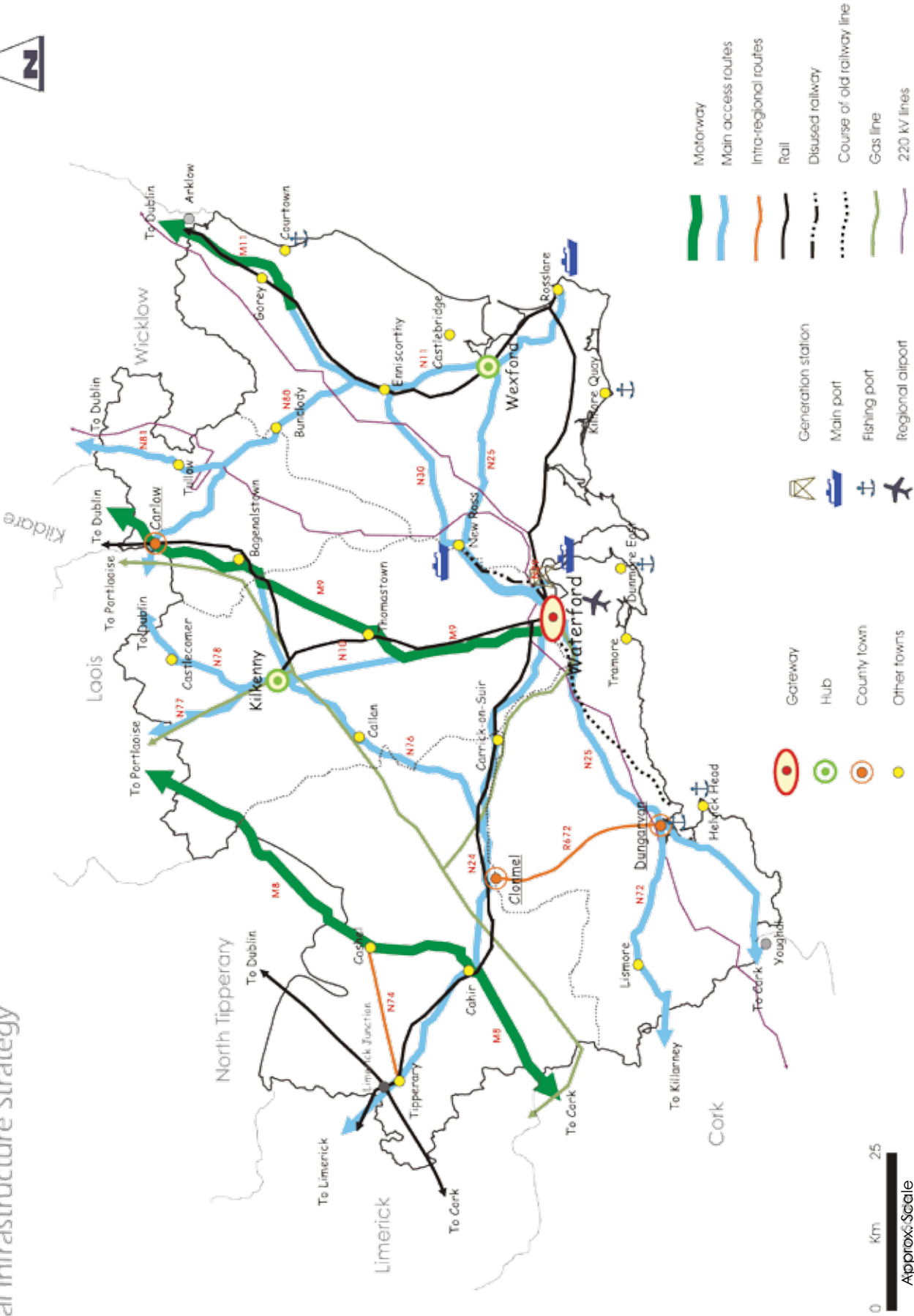
The adoption of RBMPs to comply with the Water Framework Directive and other environmental legislation, such as Shellfish Water Regulations and Waste Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations, place specific obligations on local authorities and other bodies to comply with quality standards for water services.

Development Plan Implications (Waste Management)

Development plans must take account of the Joint Waste Management Plan for the region, and the policies and objectives of plans should facilitate the provision of the waste facilities that the Plan envisages. Development plans should make provision for changes in technology and approaches to waste management.



South - East Region
Spatial Infrastructure Strategy





Section 6: Communications/ Energy/Regional Climate Change Strategy

6.1 Communications

The Regional Authority recognises:

- ☐ The importance of advanced communications infrastructure for an information-based society in terms of regional accessibility and as a key support for business, education and research.
- ☐ The need for clustering of potential customers of information technology infrastructure to provide a basis on which market providers of such infrastructure can respond to demand resulting from effective spatial policies.

Comprehensive access to information and communications technology is critical to the viability of the region as a whole. The provision of world class broadband infrastructure is required in the Regional Gateway, Hubs and across the region to towns, villages and rural areas. The Regional Authority will continue to work with local authorities, state agencies and service providers to ensure the swift and efficient rollout of broadband telecommunications infrastructure to smaller towns and rural areas in the region. The provision of broadband telecommunications throughout the region will support the implementation of the South-East Information Society Strategy (SEISS).

PPO 6.1 The Regional Authority will support the provision of telecommunications infrastructure in the following respects:

- ☐ **Installation of carrier neutral ducting with all significant civil works such as roads, water and sewerage infrastructure.**
- ☐ **Promote best practice in line with the EU 2020 Digital Agenda with regard to interoperability, security, speedy access to Broadband, R&D and e-Skills – which underpin the single digital market.**
- ☐ **Provision of open access fibre-optic cables to within 10 km of every citizen.**
- ☐ **Support the provision of dark fibre on a regional and inter-regional basis at price levels closely related to costs.**
- ☐ **Provision of wireless broadband at quality signal strength and speed.**
- ☐ **Facilitate the deployment of competitive broadband access technologies.**
- ☐ **Ensure that all local telephone exchanges are equipped with fibre to facilitate DSL rollout.**
- ☐ **Encourage measures to stimulate demand for, and take-up of, broadband services.**

Regional broadband and business internet costs could be reduced by ensuring the establishment of internet hubs in the region with direct international links without the need to connect via Dublin.

PPO 6.2 The Regional Planning Guidelines will support the provision of the most effective broadband services to all communities in the region. In this context, each Planning Authority should co-operate in the rollout of the National Broadband Scheme, the Rural Broadband Reach Scheme and in the provision of antennae and telecommunications equipment at appropriate locations.

6.2 Energy

6.2.1 Introduction



The South-East Regional Authority actively and strongly supports the sourcing and generation of energy from within the South-East. Security of energy supply at a competitive price is a cornerstone of future sustainable development within the region. As part of this commitment, the Regional Authority will support the target set by Government for 40% of energy output to be from renewable energy sources by 2020 (EU Directive 2009/28/EC – Renewable energy targets). Energy from renewable sources is an essential part of this sustainable development strategy.

PPO 6.3 It is an objective of the Regional Authority that local authorities, the private sector, energy production and supply companies are encouraged to formulate sustainable energy policies and practices which seek to:

- ☐ Ensure security of energy supply in order to support economic and social development;
- ☐ Source energy at a price that does not adversely affect competitiveness;
- ☐ Develop variable and alternative sources of energy generation;
- ☐ Maximise the use of renewable energy technologies;
- ☐ Promote a culture of energy conservation by all users;
- ☐ Assist the development of indigenous sustainable energy enterprises;
- ☐ Support and promote sustainable indigenous Bio-energy industries including the Bio-ethanol industry.

6.2.2 Wind Energy

The South-East Regional Authority is supportive of wind farm developments at appropriate locations throughout the region.

The Regional Authority endorses the Eirgrid document 'GRID 25' for National Electrical Grid Development from 2008–2025. This recognises the future capacity for wind farm development within the South-East to be in the region of 545 MW for on-shore wind farms and 445 MW for off-shore wind farms.

PPO 6.4 The Regional Authority supports the development of Joint Wind Energy and Environmental Strategies¹¹.

6.2.3 Electrical Generation and the National Transmission/Distribution Network

6.2.3.1 Electrical Generation

The South-East Regional Authority supports the upgrading of the Great Island generation plant from oil fired to a gas powered combined cycle generation plant, with increased generation capacity up to 400 MW, and which provides security of generation capacity within the South-East. The building of appropriately located gas fired peaking plants with a capacity of between 50-100 MW, will be supported and will provide flexibility to balance the electrical grid.

6.2.3.2 National Transmission/Distribution Network

The South-East Regional Authority recognises the need to increase electrical infrastructure which will be required within the region, including development of new 'main' 400 KV lines and strengthening of 220 KV, 110 KV transmission lines and equipment. The potential of a new interconnector to the UK or mainland Europe will strengthen the security of supply and provide opportunities to export and/or import electricity. The electrical distribution network will be upgraded/maintained as required in order to ensure quality of power supply and minimise electrical faults. Early consultation by transmission system operators with Planning Authorities and other relevant bodies is encouraged.

Gate 3 Projects

Gate 3 projects provide connections for small renewable and low carbon projects to the electricity transmission network and associated infrastructure. The Regional Authority recognises the role of Gate 3 projects in promoting the use of renewable and sustainable forms of energy.

GRID 25

Eirgrid have produced a Strategic Plan 'GRID 25' which sets out the future requirements of the electricity network up to 2025.

PPO 6.5 The Regional Authority supports the sustainable development and expansion of the GRID network and future connections to renewable sources of energy (including Gate 3 projects), subject to appropriate assessment of all necessary environmental considerations.

¹¹ In accordance with SEA and AA Screening

6.2.4 Gas

The Regional Authority will support the extension of the natural gas network to the centres of industry and commerce that will be an extra boost to the economic growth of the region.

PPO 6.6 It is an objective of the Regional Authority to support the extension of the Bord Gáis network to Belview, to County Wexford and to other centres of industry. All such projects will be required to comply with the principles of sustainable development and to be assessed in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

6.2.5 Hydro Energy

The Regional Authority is supportive of the generation of electricity from suitable streams and rivers through gravity or tidal forces. Hydro-energy initiatives including sampling stations, modeling projects and assessments will be supported, provided they meet the appropriate Planning and Environmental criteria.

PPO 6.7 The Regional Authority will support the sustainable development of hydro-energy generation initiatives.

6.2.6 Renewable Energy Technology

6.2.6.1 Renewable Energy Technology for Thermal Heat Generation

The Regional Authority will encourage the use of renewable energy technology, such as solar water heating, heat pumps and biomass boilers for the generation of thermal energy for use in heating systems including in the development of District Heating Systems. The enforcement of current and future Building Regulations Standards will support the installation of renewable energy technology in houses and building developments.

PPO 6.8 The Regional Authority will support the sustainable development and deployment of renewable energy technology and the development of District Heating Systems.

6.2.6.2 Energy Self-Sufficiency

The development of on-site electricity generation and energy self-sufficiency schemes, for example, individual wind turbines on industrial premises, will be encouraged. The development of such schemes will be required to safeguard the amenities of nearby residential properties and ensure the protection of Natura 2000 sites.

6.2.6.3 Micro-Renewable Energy Technology

The Regional Authority will encourage the development of micro-renewable electrical generation technology such as Wind Turbines, Photo Voltaic, Micro-Combined Heat and Power Plants. The ESB and the Commission for Energy Regulation have developed standards and a process for electrical generating micro-renewables to sell electricity to the national grid (Planning and Development Regulations, S.I. No. 235 of 2008 and S.I. No. 83 of 2007, provide guidance on planning exemptions for micro-renewable energy projects).

PPO 6.9 The Regional Authority will support the development of micro-renewable electrical generation technology.

6.2.7 South-East Region Bio-Energy Implementation Plan

The Regional Authority will support the implementation of the South-East Region *Bioenergy Implementation Plan*, which has targets of 5% of total energy supply from biomass by 2010 and increasing to 17% by 2020. Future development within the bio-energy sector is regarded as an area that has significant employment and import substitution potential. In this regard the Regional Authority supports the investigation of the potential for using wheat, barley and sugar beet for biofuel, which could lead to the return of sugar beet cultivation in the region.

PPO 6.10 The Regional Authority will implement the 'South-East Region Bioenergy Implementation Plan 2008-2013' in partnership with Teagasc, Institutes of Technology, local authorities and other agencies.

6.2.8 Energy Efficiency

6.2.8.1 Building Energy Directive

The Regional Authority will support the implementation of aspects of the Building Energy Directive and Energy Labeling where applicable within its own building portfolio and through obligations under Planning and Building Control.

PPO 6.11 The Regional Authority will support the implementation of aspects of the Building Energy Directive and Energy Labeling.

6.2.8.2 National Energy Efficiency Action Plan

The Regional Authority will implement aspects of the 'National Energy Efficiency Action Plan' where applicable and will take action to reduce energy consumption from current levels by 33% by 2020.

PPO 6.12 The Regional Authority will support the implementation of the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan.

6.2.8.3 Energy Agencies

There are four Local Energy Agencies in the region whose aim is to promote renewable energy and the rational use of energy, to improve the quality of the environment and to contribute to sustainable development. The Energy Agencies located in the region are:

- Carlow/Kilkenny Energy Agency
- Tipperary Energy Agency
- Waterford Energy Bureau
- Wexford Energy Management Agency Ltd.

PPO 6.13 The Regional Authority will continue to support the objectives of the four Local Energy Agencies within the South-East Region.

6.3 Climate Change

6.3.1 Introduction

Scientific evidence is growing that man-made greenhouse gas emissions are having a significant effect on the earth's climate. Climate change scientists predict that temperatures in Ireland will increase by 1.25-1.5°C by 2040. Winter rainfall is expected to increase by about 15% and Summer projections range from no change to a 20% decrease. Extreme rainfall events may occur more frequently in Autumn and a 20% increase may be experienced in 2-day extreme rain amounts.

There is scientific consensus that global warming is caused directly by man-made greenhouse gas emissions and that the time has arrived to stabilise and reduce these emissions. Consensus has also been reached that the costs of inaction will greatly outweigh the costs of action and that progressive climate change policies based on innovation and investment in low-carbon technology are consistent with global economic growth.

6.3.2 National Obligations

As part of EU targets under the Kyoto Protocol, Ireland agreed to limit the growth of greenhouse gas emissions to 13% above 1990 levels by 2008. Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions in 2007 were 24.6% above the 1990 committed levels. Failure for breaching levels will result in financial penalties. In 2008 fossil fuel combustion in the Energy, Transport and Industrial sectors accounted for up to 60% of total emissions in Ireland. Ireland has committed to generate 40% of electricity from renewable energy sources by 2020.

The National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012 was developed to:

- Show clearly the measures by which Ireland will meet its 2008-2012 Kyoto commitments.
- Show how these measures position Ireland for the post-2012 period.
- Identify priority areas for research into new policies and measures to help us meet Ireland's 2020 commitment.

The principal measures in the National Climate Change Strategy include:

- 15% of electricity to be generated from renewable sources by 2010 and 40% by 2020.
- Biomass to contribute up to 30% of energy input at Peat Stations by 2015.
- Preparation of a National Ocean Energy Strategy.
- Modal Shift to public transport as a result of *Transport 21* investment.
- Support for combined Heat and Power projects.

The proposed Climate Change Bill to be published by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in 2010 will set out the broad policy approach to be pursued in combating climate change in the years to come. The framework confirms targets for CO₂ emission reductions by 33% by 2020 and at least 80% by 2050.

6.3.3 South-East Region

The South-East Regional Authority will develop a Climate Change Action Plan for the South-East Region in partnership with local authorities and other stakeholders.

Local authorities should also develop Climate Change Strategies, which will have significant influence over greenhouse gas emissions in the South-East, in relation to reducing emissions through the following:

- Energy Use – use of renewable energy sources.
- Procurement Activities.
- Raising Awareness.
- Reducing Reliance on Fossil Fuels.
- Housing/Building Projects.
- Planning Policies.
- Transport.
- Waste Management.
- Other Statutory Functions.

PPO 6.14 It is an objective of the Regional Authority to develop a Climate Change Action Plan for the South-East Region in partnership with local authorities, Local Energy Agencies and other stakeholders.

PPO 6.15 It is an objective of the Regional Authority to support the development of Local Climate Change Strategies by the local authorities.

SUMMARY / Development Plan Implications

Communications

Development Plan Policy should make provision for:

- ☐ Installation of carrier neutral ducting in conjunction with all significant civil works such as roads, water and sewerage infrastructure.
- ☐ Provision of dark fibre on a regional and inter-regional basis at price levels closely related to costs.
- ☐ Promote best practice in line with the EU 2020 Digital Agenda with regard to interoperability, security, speedy access to Broadband, R&D and e-Skills – which underpin the single digital market.
- ☐ Facilitate the deployment of competitive broadband access technologies, including support for the National Broadband Scheme and the Rural Broadband Reach Scheme.

Energy

Development plans should facilitate the provision of energy networks in principle, provided that it can be demonstrated that –

- The development is required in order to facilitate the provision or retention of significant economic or social infrastructure;
- The route proposed has been identified with due consideration for social, environmental and cultural impacts;
- The design is such that will achieve least environmental impact consistent with not incurring excessive cost;
- Where impacts are inevitable mitigation features have been included.
- Proposals for energy infrastructure should be assessed in accordance with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

In considering facilities of this nature that traverse a number of counties or that traverse one county in order to serve another, Planning Authorities should consider the proposal in the light of the criteria outlined above. They should also treat the proposal as if it were required to service a development within the Planning Authority's own area of jurisdiction.

Policies should be adopted that take into account existing gas infrastructure and its safety requirements when development proposals are being considered and that ensure that this infrastructure is not compromised by proposed developments. Where over-riding considerations of public benefit require the relocation of gas infrastructure, the cost of such relocation should be borne by the developer.

Renewable Energy

The region has a substantial renewable energy resource potential. This includes wave power, wind power, anaerobic digestion, biofuel and bio-ethanol based systems. The development of wind power requires that a consistent approach be taken to the management of such provision at a regional and inter-regional level.

It is not the function of these guidelines to set precise requirements for this provision. However, in general, favourable consideration should be given to such proposals provided that –

- Consideration has been given to the environmental and social impacts of the proposed development through the processes of SEA and AA and development is not permitted if such assessments indicate a negative impact on a European Site;
- The impact of the development on the landscape has been given due consideration in accordance with the national guidelines on wind energy development or other such guidelines for other forms of renewable energy development;
- Connection to the National Grid has been taken into account and appropriate consent acquired or likely to be acquired.

In addition, all development plans should identify the areas within which renewable energy proposals of a particular type will be given favourable consideration or otherwise. In this regard, reference should be made to the DoEHLG Guidelines to Planning Authorities on Wind Energy. Where adjoining Planning Authorities control a specific geographical unit jointly, such identification should include active consultation with other such authorities. Development Plans should incorporate targets for renewable energy in line with the 40% target set by Government and supported by these Guidelines.

Guidelines setting out the basis on which such areas are identified should be developed in consultation with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland and adjacent counties in other regions, as renewable energy developments may often traverse county and regional boundaries.

Climate Change

The Regional Authority will work in partnership with local authorities and Energy Agencies to develop a Regional Climate Change Strategy and Local Climate Change Strategies that aim to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and promote renewable energy sources.



Section 7: Community & Social

People are often attracted to cities and larger towns where there is a vibrant social and cultural life, coupled with a wide range of services including education, healthcare and childcare facilities and ready access to entertainment and amenity facilities.

Social infrastructure includes facilities such as health, education, recreation and childcare. These elements are overseen by many different Government Departments and are delivered by a large number of local agencies. The role of the City & County Development Boards is crucial to their coordination and prioritisation within boundaries. At regional level, a fundamental challenge is to create formal or informal institutional structures to co-ordinate and optimise planning and delivery.

7.1 Health Care

The health service in the South-East is managed by the Health Service Executive, established in 2004 with four Regional Health Offices. The maintenance and development of a regional centre of excellence in healthcare provision at the Regional Hospital, Ardkeen, Waterford, is key to ensuring that the higher level health needs of the region are provided for. Services in the areas of Medicine, Surgery, Oncology, Neurology, Radiography and Radiotherapy, Cardiology, Gynaecology, Obstetrics, Paediatrics, Orthopaedics, Dermatology and other higher level services should be developed and provided for at this regional centre of excellence. Acute mental health/psychiatric services should be retained in locations where they currently exist and where they meet the needs of, and are easily accessible to, local service users.

In addition to public facilities, there are a number of private operators providing healthcare facilities, such as the Whitfield Clinic in Waterford City. This facility, which is the first of its kind in the South-East, was built by the Irish health care company, Eurocare International, and officially opened in November 2006.

Acute hospitals at Wexford, Kilkenny and Clonmel, as well as the regional orthopaedic hospital in Kilkenny City, play an important role in regional health provision and should be maintained. The acute hospitals have already benefited from significant investment in recent years to raise the standard of care. In this regard, local authority development plans should provide for their continuing development needs. These general hospitals should continue to be supported by district hospitals, psychiatric hospitals and services for older citizens in the County Towns and larger urban areas throughout the region. Local Area Plans should have regard to the needs of existing and developing communities in relation to primary and community care. Applications for planning permission for the development of surgeries and local health centres should be favourably considered subject to appropriate development control considerations.

PPO 7.1 Planning Authorities should provide policy support for the retention and continuing development needs of Hospitals and Healthcare facilities.

7.2 Community Facilities

Community development growth in urban populations has put some stress on the provision of community facilities in expanding housing areas. Local authorities need to address this issue through the development of local area plans for areas likely to experience significant population growth. The large number of settlements which exist across the region support a network of community facilities and services such as local shops, post offices, banking facilities, childcare facilities, youth clubs, sports clubs and meeting spaces. All of these services help to maintain and nurture a sense of community, particularly in the more rural parts of the region. Achievement of the objectives of the Regional Settlement Strategy as it relates to smaller towns and villages will help to maintain these local services. It is important, therefore, that local communities take a proactive part in Local Area Plan formulation for their areas.

The City/County Development Boards have an important role to play in the co-ordination and prioritisation of community infrastructure. The range of community facilities and services in such facilities play an important part in tackling social inclusion. This can be best done through close cooperation with local community groups, which can best identify their own needs and can participate in innovative delivery solutions. The Community & Enterprise Section of the local authorities plays a key role in supporting the development of communities by giving direct support and also by working with other agencies to deliver services and community supports on an inter-agency basis.

PPO 7.2 Planning Authorities should provide for the provision of community facilities through Local Area Plans.

7.3 Primary and Secondary Education

Investment decisions in relation to the Schools Building Programme should be made having regard to the Regional Settlement Strategy and all expanding urban areas should be planned having regard to access to primary and secondary schools and the capacity of existing schools to absorb additional pupil numbers. Development Plans and Local Area Plans should have regard to the needs of existing and developing communities in relation to the reservation of lands for school building and extension projects. Sites for new schools should be reserved as close as possible to community facilities and, where appropriate, the identification of multi-school campus locations should be considered. The size of sites to be reserved for new schools will be dependent on the level of education and on the population to be served and in accordance with standards set out by the Department of Education and Science Circular SP3/08 – *'The Provision of Schools and the Planning System'*.

It is recognised that smaller rural schools play an important role in the life of the rural communities that they serve. This role extends well beyond the education of younger people, as the school buildings often serve as local community and sports centres. Local authorities should seek to assist in the retention of rural schools through implementation of the Regional Settlement Strategy of these Guidelines.

PPO 7.3 Development Plans and Local Area Plans should have regard to the needs of existing and developing communities in relation to the reservation of lands for school building and extension projects. Sites for new schools should be reserved as close as possible to community facilities and, where appropriate, the identification of multi-school campus locations should be considered. The size of sites to be reserved for new schools will be dependent on the level of education and on the population to be served and in accordance with standards set out by the Department of Education and Science Circular SP3/08 – *'The Provision of Schools and the Planning System'*.

PPO 7.4 Local authorities should seek to assist in the retention of rural schools through implementation of the Regional Planning Guidelines' Regional Settlement Strategy.

7.4 Library Facilities

The library services provided by each local authority provide an invaluable service to the community and offer access to books, information and the internet. An accessible library service for local communities is an important base for the knowledge economy.

PPO 7.5 The Regional Authority supports the development of improved public library services throughout the South-East Region.

7.5 Leisure Facilities

People are attracted to areas where there is a vibrant social and cultural life with ready access to entertainment and amenity facilities. For the South-East Region to be successful in achieving critical mass, it is important that these aspects of the life of the region are not neglected. Local authorities need to address the availability of appropriate leisure facilities through the city, county and local area plan process. The availability of leisure facilities is a quality of life issue that needs to be addressed if the region is to achieve its full potential as a place where people will choose to live. There should be agreement between local authorities on the definition and location of major sports facilities so as to avoid any unnecessary duplication of facilities.

PPO 7.6 Development Plans and Local Area Plans should have regard to the needs of existing and developing communities in relation to the reservation of lands for leisure facilities. Sites for new leisure facilities should be reserved as close as possible to community facilities and, where appropriate, the identification of shared facility locations should be considered.

7.6 Cultural Facilities

The South-East has a wide variety of cultural activity aimed at the local population as well as at visitors from the rest of Ireland and abroad. Street entertainment, Art, Comedy, Opera, Racing, Jazz, Music, Oyster, Drama, Light Opera and a host of other festivals all take place throughout the year. Local authorities play an important



role in facilitating these events and should continue to do so through the involvement of staff such as Arts Officers and the provision of sites and facilities.

The development of cultural facilities such as museums, exhibition spaces, workshops and theatres has been supported by local authorities in the past and these authorities are encouraged to continue this very practical and tangible support for culture and the arts.

Examples include the Wexford Opera House and Visual - the National Centre for Contemporary Visual Arts in Carlow. These are projects of national significance, supported by the respective local authorities, and making a significant contribution to the cultural life of the region. The Viking Quarter in Waterford is a significant historical and cultural attraction in the region.

The Regional Authority, with assistance from the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism, will seek to further develop regional cultural facilities in all main centres of the South-East Region so that the region is seen nationally and overseas as a destination for cultural, civic, educational and economic life, in accordance with the principal recommendations of the National Spatial Strategy for balanced regional development.

7.7 Social Inclusion

It would be incorrect to judge Ireland's recent success on the basis of economic measures alone, as significant social deficits still remain. Addressing these is one of the major challenges facing Irish society over the next decade. Poverty and social exclusion in Ireland have multiple aspects and are the end products of processes that undermine the well being of individuals, families, social groups and communities. Social exclusion results from a combination of deprivations. Exclusion is experienced when people live in poverty, cannot access employment and do not have a say in the decisions that affect their lives. The Social Inclusion Measures Working Groups in each local authority should be proactively involved in the formulation of development plan policies vis-à-vis these marginalised groups.

A core objective of the current Social Partnership Agreement is "to build a fair and inclusive society and to ensure that people have the resources and opportunities to live life with dignity and have access to the quality public services that underpin life chances and experiences". The National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS) was extensively reviewed in 2002. It identified several groups that it considered to be at an unacceptable incidence of social risk and where levels of need still arise.

The overall approach of the National Anti-Poverty Strategy is to:

- > Sustain economic growth and employment.
- > Provide levels of income support to those relying on social welfare sufficient to sustain dignity and avoid poverty, while facilitating employment and escape from welfare dependency.
- > Address the requirements of groups with specific needs at high risk of poverty.
- > Provide high-quality public services to all.
- > Tackle the causes of inter-generational transmission of poverty and support disadvantaged communities.

Planning Authorities should:

- o Adopt as an objective that social, community and cultural needs of all persons and communities be catered for through the provision of well dispersed and easily accessible social and community infrastructure contributing to and ensuring the delivery of a high quality of life.
- o Have regard to the policies and recommendations of the National Anti-Poverty Strategy to safeguard and protect the most vulnerable in Irish society, including the facilitation of sheltered housing for older citizens.

Areas designated as RAPID areas should continue to be supported by all agencies. Regeneration of those areas is essential if we are to build a fair and inclusive society. Local authorities play an important role in facilitating and supporting the RAPID projects and other projects such as CLÁR and should continue to do so through the involvement of all relevant staff, in particular RAPID coordinators.

PPO 7.7 The City and County Development Boards and also all marginalised groups should be proactively involved in the formulation of Development Plan policies.

7.8 Social Infrastructure Policy

It is an objective of the Regional Authority that provision is made for the development and maintenance of community facilities appropriate in scale and location to the populations that use and depend upon these facilities. In general, it is recommended that planning authorities identify and reserve such facilities in population growth areas. Local authority audits of such facilities have been carried out throughout the region to identify deficiencies in community facilities which can then be made good as opportunities arise, within the budgetary constraints of the local authorities. It is recommended that community facilities be grouped in or adjoining residential areas, general business areas or town centres, dependent on the support population required to warrant the provision of a particular facility.

As well as providing community facilities from their own resources, local authorities should encourage, in appropriate locations, the commercial provision of recreational and cultural facilities and facilitate local clubs and societies in cases where it is in the public interest to do so. The Rural Development Programme should also be a significant support to development of social and community infrastructure.

The NSS broadly sets out a range of services and facilities contributing to the attractiveness of various cities, towns and the rural area within the country and acknowledges the strong relationship between settlement size and the levels of service that can be supported.

This can be summarised as follows:

- Within larger urban areas, internationally mobile labour with 'in-demand' skills are often attracted to cities and larger towns where there is a vibrant social and cultural life coupled with broad employment opportunities and a wide range of services including education, healthcare, childcare facilities, transport systems and ready access to entertainment and amenity facilities.
- People are often attracted to medium sized towns by the more rural way of life with its emphasis on the importance of community. Places that offer a good range of services, such as a choice of primary and secondary schooling, retailing, employment, social and sporting facilities and access to the national transport network, contribute to the attractiveness of a town.
- People are attracted to rural areas by the strong sense of community, which is often preferred to the immediate availability of the facilities provided in larger towns, and the high quality natural environment. However, the NSS emphasises the importance of establishing and supporting a viable network of rural services.

PPO 7.8 Planning Authorities should plan and provide for the development and maintenance of community facilities appropriate in scale and location to the populations that use and depend upon these facilities.

PPO 7.9 Planning Authorities should identify and reserve locations for community facilities and such facilities should be grouped in or adjoining residential areas, general business areas or town centres, dependent on the support population required to warrant provision of a particular facility.

SUMMARY / Development Plan Implications

Where considered appropriate within the context of healthcare structures, provision should be made and land reserved for medical centres within the principal settlements in the region. Such provision should be made only after consultation with the Health Authority and if suitable as a mechanism for supporting the delivery of primary healthcare.

In addition, the land needs of the regional and county facilities should be taken into account when land use allocations are being considered in its vicinity.

Provision should be made and land reserved for primary and secondary educational needs within the principal settlements of the region in accordance with the standards set out by the Department of Education and Science Circular SP3/08 – *'The Provision of Schools and the Planning System'*.

Childcare and Community Facilities

Development plans are obliged to include policies for childcare and community facilities and for incorporating such facilities into major enterprise and other employment generating developments.

Social Inclusion

The local authorities have been identified as having a role in social inclusion and, in particular, in the delivery of the NAPS. These need to be considered when development plan policies are being devised. In particular, regard should be had to the impacts of development plan policies on vulnerable groups in society.

Poverty Proofing of Plans

When development plans are being prepared, they should be proofed for their impact on poverty in both urban and rural areas and for their impact on the quality of life of other marginalised groups in society. Where significant negative impacts are identified policies should be amended or mitigation measures included.





Section 8: Heritage & Environment

8.1 Introduction

A sustainable approach to development and regional planning means ensuring the provision of a high quality of life for this and future generations. A key factor in this is protecting and enhancing the region's heritage and environment which include natural habitats and wildlife, landscapes and seascapes, the built character of villages, towns and cities, including Zones of Archaeological Potential, Architectural Conservation Areas, Protected Structures, Recorded Monuments, National Monuments and their settings.

PPO 8.1 Planning Authorities should develop policies that identify clearly:

- ☐ **Environmental and Heritage resources that are to be maintained, conserved and enhanced and integrated into any development proposals involving these sites.**
- ☐ **Proposals for environmental enhancement in towns and villages and in rural areas.**
- ☐ **The means by which potential impacts on environmental resources are to be avoided or mitigated (for example, through design, compensation and phasing).**

The environment comprises the natural and built environment. Each has its own specific protective legislation. The role of the Regional Authority and the Regional Planning Guidelines in addressing these issues is to support existing national policies such as the National Heritage Plan, the National Biodiversity Plan, the National Climate Change Strategy and the relevant legislation regulating standards of environmental quality and heritage protection.

Along with the requirements of legislation, it should be a policy of all development plans to take a holistic and integrated approach to heritage and protect all relevant aspects of national heritage, including archaeological, built, cultural, natural and linguistic heritage. Provision should be made to encourage and support development without conflicting with this policy.

PPO 8.2 Planning Authorities should ensure that all development plans take a holistic and integrated approach to heritage and protect all relevant aspects of national heritage, including archaeological, built, cultural, natural and linguistic heritage.

It is recommended that each local authority in the region liaise closely with neighbouring authorities with regard to the preparation and delivery of County Heritage Plans and Local Biodiversity Plans to ensure consistency in emphasis and approach across administrative boundaries. The principles contained therein should be fully integrated into subsequent development plans.

PPO 8.3 Local authorities in the region should liaise closely with neighbouring authorities with regard to the preparation and delivery of County Heritage Plans and Local Biodiversity Plans to ensure consistency in emphasis and approach across administrative boundaries.

8.2 Natural Heritage

The natural environment refers to landscape, water resources, biodiversity, designated sites of nature conservation interest, protected species (flora and fauna), soils, geological heritage and forestry.

8.2.1 Landscape

It has long been recognised that landscape is a precious asset. The European Landscape Convention (ELC) which was signed and ratified by Ireland in March 2002¹² defines Landscape as *'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.'*

The Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2006¹³ require that development plans *'include objectives for the preservation of the character of the landscape where, and to the extent that, in the opinion of the planning authority, the proper planning and sustainable development of the area requires it, including the preservation of views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest.'*

The ELC promotes the protection, management and planning of all landscapes. Landscape and spatial planning is interdependent and, as such, landscape should play a crucial role in informing and providing a sound basis for the spatial planning framework of the region, in accordance with the ELC.

¹² The ELC came into force in Ireland in March 2004.

¹³ Section 10(2)(e) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000.

Article 5 of the ELC is set out in Table 8.1 below.

Table 8.1 European Landscape Convention: Article 5 – General Measures

Each Party undertakes:

- a to recognise landscapes in law as an essential component of people's surroundings, an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity;
- b to establish and implement landscape policies aimed at landscape protection, management and planning through the adoption of the specific measures set out in Article 6;
- c to establish procedures for the participation of the general public, local and regional authorities, and other parties with an interest in the definition and implementation of the landscape policies mentioned in paragraph b above; and
- d to integrate landscape into its regional and town planning policies and in its cultural, environmental, agricultural, social and economic policies, as well as in any other policies with possible direct or indirect impact on landscape.



The concept of landscape character assessment (LCA), and hence *landscape capacity*, provides a purpose of direction for co-joining spatial planning and landscape management. The Draft Planning Guidelines on Landscape and Landscape Assessment (issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, June 2000), though not finalised, heighten awareness of the importance of landscape in all aspects of physical planning and identify a systematic approach to landscape appraisal.

Changes in the landscape brought about by development are inevitable. Landscapes are not meant to be fossilised; they must however be respected. Landscape

Character Assessment allows for a much more proactive approach to landscape protection. It allows us to view landscape for its ability to accommodate developments, gives indicators as to which developments might be most suited, under what conditions and using what design criteria.

In October 2009 the DoEHLG announced its intention to publish a National Landscape Strategy (NLS) for Ireland. This will provide strategic guidance to local authorities and assist in developing common inter-county landscape policies.

PPO 8.4 Planning Authorities should include objectives in Development Plans for the preservation of the character of the landscape in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Acts and should take cognisance of the 2005 EU Report from the European Landscape Character Assessment Initiative¹⁴.

8.2.2 Water Quality

The Water Framework Directive¹⁵ (WFD) represents a major revision of EU water policy and establishes a framework for the protection of inland surface waters, transitional waters and groundwater. The WFD sets out that Member States shall implement the necessary measures to prevent deterioration of the status of all bodies of surface water, and shall protect, enhance and restore all bodies of surface water with the aim of achieving good status by 2015. One of the main requirements of the Water Framework Directive is the development of 'River Basin Management Plans' and the designation of a competent authority for each river basin district (RBD). The South-East Regional Authority functional area is covered by three RBDs: most of the region is within the South Eastern River Basin District (SERBD), west Waterford is within the South Western River Basin District (SWRBD) while a small area of South Tipperary is included in the Shannon River Basin District¹⁶. Management plans for all districts include a programme of measures which require planning authorities to take cognisance of the impacts of development on the river basin.

¹⁴ European Landscape Character Areas – Typologies, Cartography and Indicators for the Assessment of Sustainable Landscapes, Landscape Europe. Wascher D.M. (ed). 2005

¹⁵ The European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations, 2003 (S.I. No. 722 of 2003) transposed Directive 2000/60/EC (the Water Framework Directive, WFD) into Irish law.

¹⁶ www.wfdireland.ie/maps

Key issues identified during the RPG review process included water quality and sustainability of many surface water abstractions, given predictions of significant decreases in flow in rivers in the South-East and the impact of waste water discharges on inland waters. This highlights the need for management of drinking water resources and River Management. The Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations, 2009 provide for the protection of surface waters.

PPO 8.5 Planning Authorities should devise strategies for managing development and other activities in order to achieve the objectives of the South East and South West River Basin Management Plans and associated Programme of Measures. Local authorities should ensure that common approaches are taken to the protection of surface, ground, coastal and estuarine water bodies. These approaches should, *inter alia*, ensure that –

- **The impact of developments on water bodies outside as well as inside the jurisdiction of the individual authorities is considered when decisions on discharges and water extraction are being made;**
- **Developments do not interfere with the attainment of the standards required by the Water Framework Directive; and**
- **Joint actions are taken to positively address the attainment of the standards required by the Water Framework Directive.**

Estuarine and Coastal Water Quality

The waters surrounding Ireland support a rich diversity of marine life. The extensive offshore areas are generally not affected by pollution, while inshore, water quality in most estuarine and coastal waters remains high. A number of estuaries, however, mainly in the south-east and south of the country, continue to display symptoms of nutrient enrichment and have been classed as eutrophic. The quality of bathing waters is high and while the bacteriological quality of shellfish in shellfish growing waters is reasonably good, it is likely that additional measures will be required to prevent further deterioration in certain areas.

The Bathing Water Quality Regulations, 2008 provide for the protection of human health in our coastal recreational waters. EPA reports on Bathing Water Quality in Ireland indicate that overall bathing water quality in the South-East is good. Analysis of bathing water quality in the context of national regulations is separate from, though complementary to, the European Blue Flag Scheme, a voluntary public information and advice scheme administered by An Taisce. To receive a Blue Flag a bathing site must, in addition to maintaining a high standard of water quality, meet specified objectives with regard to provision of safety services and facilities, environmental management of the beach area and environmental education. Blue Flag beaches in the South-East include Courtown, Curracloe, Rosslare, Morriscastle, Clonea East and Bunmahon.

The challenge of implementing an ecosystem-based approach to ensure the sustainable management of Ireland's marine environment as envisaged by the new EU Marine Strategy Directive will be made even more difficult by climate change which is likely to add further complexity to the task of understanding how these systems function.

8.2.3 Biodiversity

Biodiversity, natural capital and the benefits that we derive from nature, now commonly referred to as Ecosystem Services, are increasingly recognised as essential resources that sustain our economy, society and individual well being. Woodlands and forests store carbon, wetlands and coastal zones provide buffers against flooding, while a host of species provide pollination and maintain soil structure and fertility. A pre-requisite for biodiversity conservation is the identification of the region's ecological infrastructure, maintaining the favourable conservation status of protected areas and restoring and enhancing degraded areas of biodiversity value.

The *National Biodiversity Plan* sets out a 5-year action plan, which calls for the full and effective integration of the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity into all sectors. It should be a policy of all development plans to enhance all sectors of Biodiversity in the region.

PPO 8.6 Planning Authorities should provide for the following biodiversity objectives through County and City Development Plans and Local Area Plans:

- Protect natural heritage sites designated or proposed for designation in National and European legislation, and in other relevant International Conventions, Agreements and Processes (e.g. Ramsar sites, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Natural Heritage Areas, statutory nature reserves).
- Ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact, incapable of satisfactory mitigation, on plant, animal and bird species and habitats protected by law and that developments affecting Natura 2000 sites are assessed in compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.
- Encourage and promote sustainable access where appropriate to natural heritage, geological and geomorphological systems, sites and features.
- Implement the actions as set out in the *National Biodiversity Plan* and *Ireland's Strategy for Plant Conservation*.
- Maintenance and restoration of water quality in areas listed on the Register of Protected Areas under the Water Framework Directive including Freshwater Pearl Mussel Catchments.
- Protection of Fisheries and Shellfisheries.
- Support the application of Habitat Mapping in the region and integrate this information into land use policies and planning.
- Identify and protect sites of local biodiversity interest that act as ecological corridors linking sites of conservation importance.
- Adopt and implement Biodiversity Action Plans at local level.
- Initiate local campaigns for biodiversity promotion such as native tree planting schemes, creation of wildlife corridors and wetlands creation across the region.
- Protect geological sites of national and international interest.

8.2.4 Wetlands and Watercourses

Wetlands are areas of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing. Wetlands are of value for biodiversity and also contribute to flood relief. The Water Framework Directive and the Ramsar Convention provide for the protection and wise use of wetlands.

PPO 8.7 It is an objective of the Regional Authority to encourage and support a co-ordinated approach for protection and enhancement of the region's flood plains, wetlands and watercourses for their biodiversity and flood protection values.

In addition to being a potential source of water, watercourses bring together many aspects of heritage. They may be designated sites under the *Birds and Habitats Directives* and the *Wildlife Act, 2000*, and may provide recreational space, both on water and land. In urban settings, they may also be of significance in terms of a town's traditional and social history and an invaluable amenity resource.

A watercourse should be considered as the focus of a "corridor" wider than the waterway, taking in the physical landscape, the towns and villages and their associated activities from farming, factories, tourism etc. Waterways should be managed in an integrated way, linking the water with economic and social activities which take place in its vicinity, as well as the people and heritage through which it passes. Application of a Waterway Corridor approach as piloted by the Heritage Council may usefully be applied to waterways within the South-East Region.

PPO 8.8 It is an objective of the Regional Authority to prepare a Waterway Corridor Study for the Barrow, Nore and Suir in conjunction with the relevant public bodies.

To ensure that development impacts (including flood plain development and change of land use) on water quality and aquatic habitats are minimised, it is essential that those areas adjacent to the waterways (riparian/buffer zones) are managed in a manner which will lessen impacts which can cause physical changes to these habitats.

It is essential that watercourses be maintained in an environmentally and aesthetically sensitive manner for future generations. The Guidelines support the maintenance and preservation of all watercourses and associ-

ated riparian habitats in urban areas, the integration and improvement of natural watercourses in urban renewal and development proposals and the protection of the amenity potential of watercourses in rural areas.

PPO 8.9 Planning Authorities should ensure that River Management Policies should be an integral part of Development Plans and cover all waterways considered as a natural resource requiring protection and sustainable development. The following mechanisms for protection of the aquatic environment could be considered for inclusion in development plans:

- **River Corridor Management Areas which provide for the protection and sustainable development of the aquatic environment (particularly within towns and cities).**
- **The identification and creation of linear parks along waterways incorporating preservation of the Riparian Zone along waterways and subject to compliance with Articles 6 and 10 of the EU Habitats Directive.**

8.2.5 Heritage and the Impact of Climate Change

Natural and built heritage will be affected by climate change, in particular by rising sea levels, coastal erosion, increased rainfall and flooding. The Heritage Council and Fáilte Ireland published a review in 2009 of the potential impacts of climate change on the national heritage and related tourism of coasts and inland waterways entitled, *'Climate Change, Heritage and Tourism: Implications for Ireland's Coasts and Inland Waterways'* (2009).

It is recommended that local authorities through the preparation and delivery of County Climate Change Strategies take into account natural heritage for the value and services that may be provided in mitigation and adaptation, e.g. the use of sand dunes and salt-marshes in coastal protection. Local Authority Heritage Plans and Biodiversity Plans should have regard to climate change and impacts on archaeological, built and natural heritage. This may involve identifying projects involving collection of baseline data and raising awareness that can inform Climate Change Strategies and other strategic land use plans. Climate change is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 6.

8.2.6 Invasive Species

Many species of alien flora and fauna have been introduced to Ireland and pose a serious threat to native vegetation, wildlife and their ecosystems. The control and promotion of awareness on invasive species is being driven by the All-Ireland Invasive Species Initiative www.invasivespeciesireland.com. A useful guidance document relating to the management of invasive species is the NRA's *Guidance on The Management of Noxious Weeds and Non-Native Invasive Plant Species on National Roads*.

PPO 8.10 Local authorities should, where possible, promote awareness of invasive species in collaboration with other relevant agencies and take appropriate measures for their management and control.

8.3 Built Heritage



Our built heritage is part of the environment we live and work in and refers to structures built by man, physical alterations of the landscape and archaeology. The South-East's built heritage is a physical reminder of the culture, ideals and history of previous generations. It is a significant asset to the region and particularly to the tourism industry.

8.3.1 Architectural Heritage

The South-East has a rich and varied architectural heritage which includes castles, country houses and demesnes, churches and civic buildings, which were constructed according to designs prepared by renowned architects. However, the vernacular architecture is also a very strong component of the character of the region. The South-East also has a rich industrial and maritime heritage which includes

structures such as mills, canals, bridges, lighthouses and quays.

Planning Authorities are obliged under Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 to include objectives in their development plans in relation to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas. Part IV of the Act deals specifically with protection of the architectural heritage.

Vernacular architecture is the term used to describe local and/or regional traditional building forms and types which were generally constructed without the input of an architect and which used local materials and labour. The majority of vernacular structures are rural and urban domestic dwellings such as thatched houses, terraced townhouses and workers' cottages. Other features of the vernacular heritage include farm complexes, shop fronts, limekilns, bridges, rubblestone walls and street furniture such as water pumps, milestones, wrought iron gates and railings.

It is acknowledged that the built heritage can and will change over time, but elements that give a special character should be retained. Planning Authorities should strive to identify features of the vernacular heritage and settlement patterns within their functional areas and seek to protect the unique character of the vernacular heritage and to encourage the sympathetic re-use and/or development thereof.

It is vital that particular attention needs to be paid to the smaller settlements within the South-East Region, as recent development including the expanding Dublin commuter belt has led, in certain cases, to the erosion of the unique and distinctive character and fabric of the region's smaller settlements. Local authorities should seek to preserve, protect and retain the local historical settlement patterns, which include street patterns, public spaces, existing plot sizes and historic street furniture in-situ.

The Guidelines support the development of quality public realm and urban design for our villages and small towns and encourage the use of non-statutory plans such as village design statements and public realm plans prepared in partnership with the local community in achieving this outcome. These should also ensure that new developments enhance the local distinctiveness of our towns and villages. In this regard, local authorities should have regard to the recent publication – *Enhancing Local Distinctiveness in Irish Villages – Village Design Statements: The Way Forward?* (The Heritage Council, 2008).

Planning Authorities should include policies in their development plans to:

- Promote sustainable and sympathetic reuse, regeneration and/or development of the built environment whilst retaining and protecting the distinctive character of a structure or an area.
- Identify and protect all Protected Structures, Architectural Conservation Areas, in accordance with the legislative provisions of Part IV of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 and *Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Architectural Heritage Protection*.
- Adopt policies that will protect and enhance the architectural character, historic streetscapes, public spaces and landscape settings of settlements in their area.
- Preserve and safeguard elements of the vernacular built heritage such as rubblestone walls and street furniture, which may not have statutory protection, yet contribute to the character of an area.
- Give consideration to identifying areas of townscape character and develop urban design frameworks for these areas which reinforce the distinctive character whilst allowing necessary change.
- Secure the regeneration of historic urban areas in accordance with agreed urban design frameworks.

The DoEHLG Policy on Architectural Heritage is now set out in: '*Government Policy on Architecture 2009-2015 Towards a Sustainable Future: Delivering Quality within the Built Environment*'. It is intended that the implementation of the Policy on Architecture should lead to a greater emphasis on the role of architectural and urban-design quality in the design of the built environment.

PPO 8.11 Planning Authorities should comply with the obligations under Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 to include objectives in their development plans in relation to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas.

PPO 8.12 Development Plans should implement in full the policies set out in: *Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Architectural Heritage Protection*.

PPO 8.13 Development Plans should implement in full the policies set out in: '*Government Policy on Architecture 2009-2015 Towards a Sustainable Future: Delivering Quality within the Built Environment*.'

8.3.2 Archaeological Heritage

The archaeological heritage of the South-East begins with evidence of human settlement from about 7,000 years ago. Upstanding archaeological remains include megalithic tombs, standing stones, medieval settlements, ecclesiastical sites, tower houses and castles.

Ireland has over 120,000 known archaeological monuments and only a very small number of these monuments are in State care or ownership. All archaeological monuments which are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places are protected by law under the National Monuments Acts, 1930-2004, but the care and preservation of these features depends upon the interest and co-operation of landowners and planning authorities. Accordingly, the Regional Planning Guidelines provides an important framework for promoting conservation of this important resource. Means by which to promote the sustainable management of our archaeological heritage include:

- Recognition of the value of Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) as an element of a Landscape Character Assessment and as a means to identify areas of significant archaeological landscape value;
- Acknowledging the need to strike a balance between conserving and protecting heritage alongside with accommodating development pressure by promoting the need for research frameworks at a regional and county level. Such regional frameworks will assist in making decisions about the likely knowledge dividend resulting from archaeological interventions, thus ensuring a knowledge return to society from archaeological fieldwork.

PPO 8.14 Planning Authorities should have regard to the emerging DoEHLG consolidated *National Monuments Bill*, in particular to the provisions of a new system for the identification, registration and conservation of historic landscapes.

PPO 8.15 Planning Authorities should adopt policies that:

- **Preserve and protect all protected archaeological sites and monuments and their settings to a degree appropriate to the need to safeguard their historic integrity.**
- **Take cognisance of the fact that many other sites may remain beneath the surface (or underwater) and possibly may become uncovered following development/excavation work.**
- **Promote access to, and public awareness of, archaeological sites and National Monuments.**

8.4 Linguistic Heritage & Promotion of An Ghaeltacht

Gaeltacht areas are considered to have unique cultural and environmental attractions, such as the use of the Irish language as a first language and their often unspoilt landscapes and scenery. There is one Gaeltacht area in the region: An Rinn/Sean Phobal in County Waterford.

Analysis carried out as part of the '*Comprehensive Linguistic Study of the Use of Irish in the Gaeltacht*'¹⁷ suggests that the proportion of active, integrated Irish speakers in a Gaeltacht Area needs to be maintained above 67% for the use of Irish in a community to be sustainable. Evidence indicates that Irish speaking communities yield to the pressures of a language shift when the proportion of active speakers in a community falls below this threshold. The Linguistic Study classifies An Rinn having 44-67% of its total population (aged over three years) as daily Irish speakers¹⁸. However, the 2006 Census identifies An Rinn as having experienced an increase in the proportion of Irish speakers between 2002 and 2006 and having the highest proportion of Irish speakers in a Gaeltacht area (79.5%).

The granting of aspirant bi-lingual status for Carlow opens up the prospect for the re-emergence of Gaeilge as a spoken language in the wider region, bringing with it opportunities for social, cultural and economic development.

PPO 8.16 It is an objective of the Regional Authority that the linguistic and cultural heritage of the area be promoted through the following policies:

- **Promote the use of Irish in the Gaeltacht area in the home, schools and in the workplace.**
- **Develop specific language planning objectives to establish and strengthen Irish speaking social networks and Irish-medium institutions.**
- **Undertake linguistic impact studies where necessary to mitigate possible negative impacts of medium/large scale development proposals being brought forward within or immediately abutting the established Gaeltacht areas.**
- **Priorities should focus on accommodating the natural growth of the indigenous populations, protecting the linguistic and distinct cultural heritage of the area and promoting appropriate economic development which would sustain the area.**
- **Planning Authorities across the region should take cognisance of the need to preserve placenames at local level through appropriate policies to guide the naming of streets, estates and other developments.**

¹⁷ Comprehensive Linguistic Study of the Use of Irish in the Gaeltacht; Principal findings and Recommendations, A research report prepared for the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs by NUI Galway, 2007.

¹⁸ Based on 2002 Census and surveys.

8.5 Amenities

The South-East Region has a wealth and diversity of amenities and attractions including features of national and international renown. The dispersed urban structure through several centres has facilitated and preserved distinct identities within the region and offers a range of lifestyle choices. A key challenge for the region is to realise the potential to be gained from considering this range of attractions in a collective and mutually reinforcing way.

8.5.1 Natural Amenity Areas

The Heritage Council's study, *Valuing Heritage in Ireland* (2007), shows that people place high value on those aspects of our heritage that they experience primarily through recreational activities, e.g. canals, rivers and coastal areas. The quality of life enjoyed by the resident population of the South-East Region, as well as its attractiveness for tourists, can be preserved and enhanced through the sustainable development of coastal and upland areas of the region for recreational and amenity purposes. Access to the rivers, canals, uplands, coastal areas and other areas of natural amenity should be promoted by local authorities and other partner agencies. Provision of access should include development of looped walks, long distance walks, mountain bike trails, bridle paths and associated facilities such as parking areas. Each local authority should prepare an inventory of significant recreational and amenity assets within their functional areas as part of the Development Plan process. This inventory should be supported by proposals regarding the preservation and improvement of these amenities.

PPO 8.17 Each local authority should prepare an inventory of significant recreational and amenity assets within its functional area as part of the Development Plan process.

PPO 8.18 Local authorities should include policies in their development plans to:

- **Protect and enhance the natural heritage and landscape character of river and stream corridors and valleys to maintain them free from inappropriate development and to provide public access where feasible and appropriate.**
- **Preserve and improve access where environmentally appropriate for the public to riverside, lakeside, upland and other areas that have traditionally been used for outdoor recreation.**
- **Promote the development of 'Greenways' along former railway alignments and along canals and rivers where environmentally appropriate.**
- **Maintain and promote access (including public walkways) to beaches and the seashore where environmentally appropriate as an essential component of recreational and tourist amenity.**
- **Investigate and promote, where environmentally appropriate, the leisure and amenity potential of the inland waterways of the region particularly in line with the tourism industry.**
- **Co-operate with other regions to develop the heritage and amenity potential of inland waterways as a common objective.**

PPO 8.19 The Regional Authority will promote the development of a way-marked Coastal Walkway along the full length of the South-East Region's extensive coastline in conjunction with local authorities, landowners and other partner agencies. All programmes and works to develop the coastal walkway will be required to comply with the principles of sustainable development and all stages of the development being assessed in accordance with Article 6 and 10 of the Habitats Directive.

The development of integrated river or inland waterway plans as outlined in Section 8.2.4 would address opportunities for leisure and tourism. The application of a Waterway Corridor Study approach (as developed by The Heritage Council) to the Suir, Nore, Barrow and Slaney and other waterways within the region could provide an informed strategy for developing these water corridors in terms of their heritage and tourism potential.

PPO 8.20 The Regional Authority will support the examination and consideration by local authorities of ways to improve access to the countryside for informal recreational purposes such as walking, cycling and horse riding and promote the development of walkways and access to upland areas. Areas like the Blackstairs, Comeragh, Knockmealdown and Galtee Mountains and Slievenamon should be managed and promoted as a national amenity and should be the subject of Integrated Management Planning. Amenity developments in European Sites should be subject to Appropriate Assessment to determine their impacts on SACs and SPAs.

8.5.2 Open Space

Due to increasing population levels and significant housing demand and supply in recent years, a growing emphasis has been placed on the requirement for quality designed open space and recreational opportunities for residents, especially those living in urban areas. There are generally two categories of open space provision – public and private open space.

Public open space is a vital element in the creation of a quality urban environment, offering opportunities for passive and active recreation, contributing to the quality of life of communities and the identity of towns or villages, whilst also offering real environmental and ecological benefits.

Private open space provision is a fundamental tenet of residential amenity, offering the resident an opportunity for safe and private recreation.

It is envisaged that policies relating to the consolidation of the existing built-up areas through increased residential densities and maximising the potential of under-developed lands will place increased importance on the provision of quality open spaces.

PPO 8.21 Planning Authorities should:

- **Ensure that the future provision of residential developments, or mixed use schemes with a residential element, should be consistent with the policies and recommendations of the *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas - Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (DoEHLG, 2008) and the *Best Practice Urban Design Manual* (DoEHLG, 2008) with regard to the quantity and quality of public and private open space provision.**
- **Have a presumption in favour of the retention and enhancement of existing sports and recreation facilities.**
- **Retain historic open spaces such as squares/riverside walks.**
- **Identify areas within urban centres, particularly those selected for future development in the settlement strategy, for the provision of public open spaces for both passive and active recreation.**
- **Where appropriate, in association with relevant Government Departments, ensure the provision of an adequate range of both outdoor and indoor recreational facilities in centres to cater for expected population demand.**
- **Locate areas of open spaces, recreation and sports facilities, especially such facilities in urban locations, within easy access by walking and cycling.**
- **Locate larger facilities, likely to attract significant numbers of people and to be intensive trip generators, on routes well served by public transport.**

It is envisaged that the creation of recreational opportunities and the provision of open space in rural areas will contribute to the rural economy and, importantly, further contribute to the social and community infrastructure in rural towns and villages, thus enhancing the quality of life of the residents and other rural dwellers.

There is a need for a strategic policy approach to the provision of additional open spaces. There should be a recognition of the intrinsic value that these areas bring to the region. However, the further development of natural recreational resources throughout the region, such as parks, walkways, etc. should be accompanied by active management plans.

As climate change will present increasing challenges to society in the years ahead, it is imperative that we maximise the use of our open areas as efficiently and environmentally sensitive as possible so that they fulfil their multitude of roles, not only in storm water alleviation but their usefulness as green wedges and corridors between rural and urban, thereby increasing the level and quality of biodiversity in our built-up areas.

The issue of green infrastructure is one that has been growing in prominence and importance in recent years. Green Infrastructure is now recognised as an important concept in land use planning and environmental protection. It relates to the network of open spaces, parks, gardens, green corridors, woodlands, waterways, and open countryside. The quality of green infrastructure affects general quality of life and health, biodiversity/natural heritage, sustainable residential development and flood risk management. Local authorities should take into account the policies contained in the *Green City Guidelines* (DoEHLG, 2008). The Guidelines seek to place an emphasis on the importance of natural heritage within our built-up areas. However, such issues are also important in rural areas. Practices such as the SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems), as outlined in the Green City Guidelines, should be encouraged as they offer innovative measures that can be used to mitigate some of the effects of flooding.

8.6 Coastal Zone Management



Human impacts coupled with global climate change issues (rising sea level, increased coastal erosion and coastal flooding) are placing continuous pressure on coastal environments. In addition, conflicts of interest arise from the demand for coastal uses and resources. Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) aims to reduce or eliminate such problems resulting in ethical, environmental and economic benefits.

PPO 8.22 It is recommended that the coastal authorities (Counties Wexford and Waterford) and the South-East Regional Authority co-operate to develop an ICZM plan in consultation with government departments, stakeholders and other interested parties having regard to the development of a National Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy. Such a plan should seek to co-ordinate and encourage co-operation between all agencies and authorities using the coastal zone in the region. The 'Review on ICZM and Principles of Best Practice' produced by The Heritage Council in 2004 may assist in this regard.

PPO 8.23 Local Authority Development Plans should then, as appropriate, include the relevant policies and objectives of a Regional Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan.

Within the defined coastal zone, the emphasis will be on the need to:

- ☐ Respect the changing physical nature of the coastline, for example, the risks of erosion and land instability and changes to the inter-tidal zone.
- ☐ Take into account the risk of flooding and protect sea defences.
- ☐ Ensure the conservation and enhancement of the landscape and seascape; biodiversity; the cultural, historic and architectural heritage and archaeological features.
- ☐ Restrict the development of undeveloped sections of the coastal zone, except where this is required to support the operation of existing ports and harbours or the development of tourism facilities appropriate to a coastal location and where such operations and development would not compromise environmental protection objectives.

8.7 Environmental Awareness

A key component of environmental protection is environmental awareness. Significant improvements in environmental awareness and education should be pursued. Local authorities should encourage the promotion of architectural, cultural and natural heritage assets for the purpose of education and tourism. This should in return provide funding for their protection and maintenance.

The introduction of Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Directive Assessment allows for informed decision-making and an awareness of environmental impacts with regard to development policy and spatial planning.

PPO 8.24 Local authorities should ensure that elements of archaeological, architectural and other cultural significance are identified, retained and interpreted and, whenever possible and subject to resources, the knowledge is placed in the public domain. The employment of Conservation Officers and Heritage Officers in the region to provide expert advice and professional guidance to local authorities and the public can play an important role in this regard.

8.8 Strategic Environmental Assessment of Regional Development Strategy

Section 15 (6) of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004 requires that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is carried out on the Regional Planning Guidelines. The aim of a SEA is to enable better-informed decisions to be made by enabling the structured assessment of environmental impacts of actions that might arise as a result of the implementation of the Guidelines.

An Environmental report was compiled in tandem with the Guidelines and should be read in conjunction with this document. Key environmental pressures in the region relate to water quality with the need to meet requirements set out by the Water Framework Directive, i.e. for all rivers to achieve “good status” by 2015. The need to maintain water quality is key to conservation of biodiversity and water dependent habitats and species, with many of these species identified by the NPWS as having poor conservation status. Climate change impacts involving flood risk and coastal erosion will also require to be considered in future land use and development patterns in the region.

All Plans and Projects should comply with the requirements of the SEA Directive and associated Planning & Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004 and carry out SEA screening of all land use and non-land use plans as required under the regulations.

8.9 Appropriate Assessment

Appropriate Assessment is a requirement of Article 6 (3) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) as transposed into Irish law through the European Communities (Natural Habitat) Regulations, 1997 (S.I. No. 94 of 1997). The purpose of Appropriate Assessment is to determine whether these Guidelines will impact on Natura 2000 sites (Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas) in the South- East Region and to ascertain whether there will be adverse impacts on the integrity of these sites. An Appropriate Assessment Screening report has been compiled in tandem with the Guidelines and should be read in conjunction with this document.

Due to the regional scale of the projects identified within this document, many of which have yet to undergo detailed route/site selection and options, it is considered that an Appropriate Assessment should take place at each stage of the development process from County Development Plan, Local Area Plan and at the individual plan or project level to ensure that there is no negative impact on the integrity (defined by the structure and function and conservation objectives) of the Natura 2000 site and that the requirements of Articles 6 (3) and (4) of the EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC are fully satisfied. Support of policies contained in other policy/strategy and guidelines documents shall be subject to AA screening where required prior to implementation and adoption by local authorities in the region.

The Habitats Directive promotes a hierarchy of avoidance/protection, mitigation and compensatory measures and this method should be adopted in the development of all individual plans and projects and at each stage in the development process. Each individual plan or project should therefore seek to achieve the following:

- Avoid any negative impacts on Natura 2000 sites by identifying possible impacts early in the plan/project making, and designing the plan/project in order to avoid such impacts.
- Mitigation measures should be applied during the appropriate assessment process to ensure that there are no adverse impacts on the sites.
- If the proposal is still likely to result in adverse effects, and no further practicable mitigation is possible, then it is rejected. If no alternative solutions are identified and the plan is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI test) under Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, then compensation measures are required for any remaining adverse effect.

Due to the regional scale of investment and the impact of development and delivery of the settlement and economic strategies it is critical to the protection of Natura 2000 sites that development takes place in tandem with the

provision of appropriate services - be it transport, water supply or treatment. Any development in the absence of appropriate infrastructure would have negative consequences on the environment and should be avoided. The Regional Authority is committed to the promotion of sustainable development.

All Plans and Projects should comply with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive to ensure that there are no significant adverse impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites and that the requirements of Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive are fully satisfied and in accordance with '*Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities*' issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2009).

SUMMARY / Development Plan Implications

A common approach to landscape management should be adopted throughout the region which should –

- Ensure that the quality and character of landscape areas are identified;
- Ensure a common landscape classification and description of landscape character types;
- Ensure that common policies are applied to landscape character types across county boundaries.

Landscape protection policies should also take account of the need to manage the provision of forestry and renewable energy development and of the particular vulnerability of certain features such as uplands and peatlands.

Development plans should include common approaches to the conservation of built heritage and the implementation of the Protected Structure elements of the Planning and Development Act, 2000.

Local authorities should ensure that common approaches are taken to the protection of surface, ground, coastal and estuarine water bodies. These approaches should, *inter alia*, ensure that –

- Joint actions are taken to positively address the attainment of the standards required by the Water Framework Directive, South East and South West River Basin District Management Plans and associated Programme of Measures;
- Developments do not interfere with attainment of the standards required by the Water Framework Directive;
- City/County Development and Local Area Plans should incorporate relevant specific policies, objectives and measures for individual water bodies and the range of protected areas set out in the South East and South West River Basin Management Plans including for the protection of waters used for bathing within the South-East Region and promotion and protection of the status of Blue Flag Beaches;
- Measures in Pollution Reduction Programmes for Bannow Bay, Dungarvan Harbour and Waterford Estuary are incorporated into objectives and policies in City/County Development Plans and Local Area Plans;
- The impact of developments on water bodies outside as well as inside the jurisdiction of the individual authorities is considered when decisions on discharges and water extraction are being made;
- Common approaches to the management of the impacts of land drainage are adopted.

Development plans should include policies regarding the protection of aquifers in general, and should undertake to consider the impacts on aquifers outside their functional areas of developments that may occur within those areas.

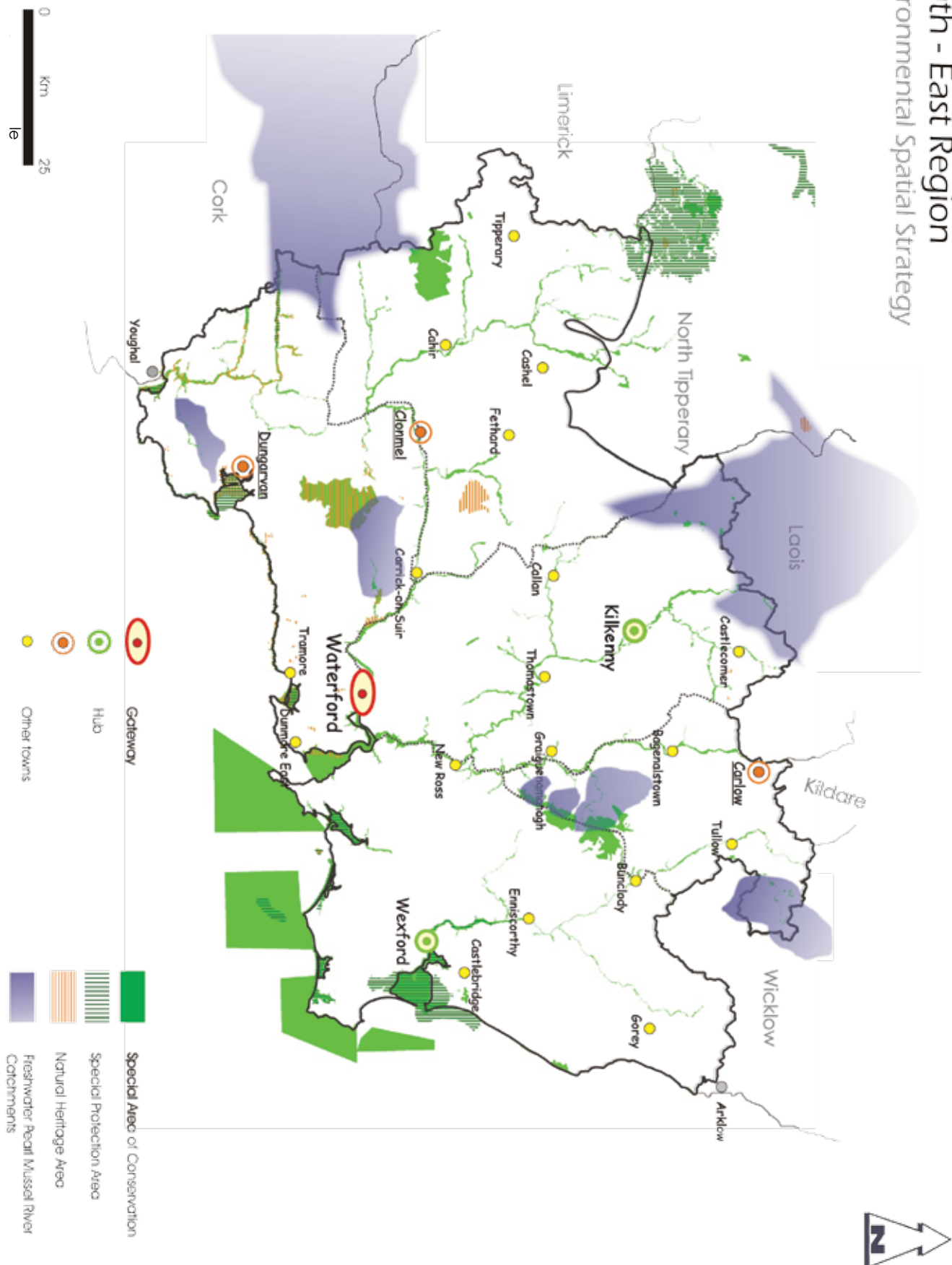
Section 8 sets out policies to support and develop the Gaeltacht and to support and develop use of Irish and Irish speaking social networks throughout the region. Planning Authorities should take cognisance of the need to preserve place names at local level through appropriate policies on naming streets and other developments.

Section 8 also sets out policies to promote provision of open space in urban areas and access to open space and facilities for recreation including cycling and walking. The objective to develop a Coastal Walkway should be provided for in Development Plans and Local Area Plans.

Local authorities should continue to deliver a strategic and comprehensive approach to the conservation and enhancement of heritage through the preparation and implementation of Local Heritage and Biodiversity Action Plans.

Local authorities should ensure protection of the Natura 2000 network of SACs and SPAs and compliance with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive by carrying out screening for Appropriate Assessment at all levels in the planning process where required.

South - East Region
Environmental Spatial Strategy





Section 9: Flood Risk Assessment

9.1 Introduction

Flooding is a natural process that can happen at any time in a wide variety of locations and it plays a role in shaping the natural environment. Flooding from the sea and from rivers is probably best known, but prolonged and intense rainfall can also cause sewer flooding, overland flow and flooding from groundwater. Where it impacts upon human activities, it can threaten people, their property and the environment. Of increasing concern are the consequences of climate change which are impacting on sea levels, the nature and pattern of rainfall events and general weather patterns. While the exact impacts of change are not known, it is widely agreed that climate change will result in higher risk of flooding of both inland and coastal locations. It is important, therefore, that this issue is addressed within the Regional Planning Guidelines as decisions on the direction of future growth within the South-East Region can impact on flood risk. It is also important that the Regional Planning Guidelines highlight the need for developing policy and actions, and encourage cooperation across local authorities as the impact of flood and water movement in many places traverses local authority boundaries.

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Office of Public Works published *Guidelines on The Planning System and Flood Risk Management* in 2009. Those Guidelines recommend a clear and transparent assessment of flood risk at all stages in the planning process and state that regional flood risk appraisal and management policy recommendations are necessary to set a policy framework for Development Plans and Local Area Plans at the local level.

Key guiding principles for Flood Risk Assessment are as follows:

- Avoid risk where possible.
- Substitute less vulnerable uses where avoidance is not possible.
- Mitigate and manage the risk where avoidance and substitution are not possible.

This chapter sets out the key policy recommendations regarding avoidance and management of flood risk within the South-East Region with the objective of promoting:

1. The identification of appropriate policy responses for priority areas, including areas that transcend administrative boundaries and where there appears to be significant flood risk.
2. Requirements on foot of the guidelines for co-operation, implementation and co-ordination of more detailed area level strategic flood risk assessment in City and County Development Plans and Local Area Plans. A Regional Flood Risk Appraisal is contained within the Environment Report prepared as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Regional Planning Guidelines.

9.2 Development within Flood Risk Areas

As a topographically diverse area traversed by a number of rivers and with a large coastline the South-East Region contains a number of risk areas for flooding. A review of the various local flood studies completed in recent years shows that a significant section of the built-up area in the South-East Region is vulnerable to flooding along the coast and from proximity to rivers flowing through the area. Within the context of planning for future growth the general areas known to have flood risk were overlaid on locations identified for growth and locations and towns already developed. The general risk areas are based on the historical flood maps and existing reports and maps available from the OPW and the Geological Survey of Ireland.

The settlement hierarchy selected by these Guidelines takes account of the fact that while Waterford, Kilkenny and a number of county towns such as Carlow, Clonmel, Dungarvan and Wexford are vulnerable to fluvial and coastal flooding, wider, effective management of flood risk coupled with wider environmental, sustainability and economic considerations mean that it is possible to facilitate the continued consolidation of the development of the existing urban structure of the region. In line with the sequential and justification criteria set out in the Department's Guidelines on the Planning System and Flood Risk Management it is considered that these locations should be encouraged to continue to consolidate and to grow in order to bring about a more compact and sustainable urban development form while at the same time managing flood risk appropriately. Due to the landscape within which most of the South-East's urban settlements are located, large areas are within a natural flood plain and are not avoidable. These guidelines outline measures through which both the flood risk and the continued development of the Waterford Gateway, hubs and county towns can be reconciled.

Towns in the hinterland areas have also been identified as vulnerable to flooding, based on the current information available. Within these towns, implementation of the 2009 planning guidelines on flood risk establishes the mechanism to reconcile development and flood risk issues.

In the region, the pattern of fluvial risk follows for many areas the flow and catchments of existing rivers. Of these rivers, the largest cross in many cases two and three local authority areas, as in the case of the Barrow, Nore, Suir, Slaney and Blackwater. An integrated approach to catchment management is essential for the management of increasing flood risk. Co-operation already exists in the River Suir Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (CFRAMS) with South Tipperary, Kilkenny and Waterford City and County represented on the committee.

The main aim of the Suir CFRAMS is to assess the spatial extent and degree of flood hazard and risk within the Suir Catchment, to examine future pressures that could impact on flood risk and to develop a long-term strategy for managing flood risk that is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. The study will focus primarily on developed areas subject to significant development pressure known to have experienced flooding in the past or believed to be at risk from flooding in the future. The OPW is involved in preparing the catchment-based flood risk management plans with the relevant local authorities, the Environmental Protection Agency and other key agencies providing an integrated and pro-active approach to flood risk management. It is recommended that this collaborative approach and shared management of river catchments should continue and that the local authorities should fully support the completion of CFRAM studies and jointly implement any actions identified, recognising their important role of shared caretakers of both the land, resources and communities that live within the river catchments.

The Regional Planning Guidelines recognise the need to protect, across the South-East Region, the natural flood plains and riparian corridors of all rivers in the region that have not already been built on, and seek that this is explicitly stated and spatially designated in all future Development Plans and Local Area Plans following the completion of CFRAMS for the River Suir and the South-East and South-West River Basins. In the absence of such data, local authorities should identify these areas using other data from the OPW and existing studies and historical information available and, where necessary, through additional studies or investigation. Land required for current and future floods management should be safeguarded from development. Allocation of future areas for development as extensions to existing built up areas, villages or towns should follow a sequential approach and be in the lowest risk sites appropriate for the development, and should include adequate provision for adaptation to, or protection against, the projected impacts of climate change.



The coastline of Counties Waterford and Wexford is experiencing both erosion and deposition and some flooding through normal coastal processes and is also at risk in the future from increased storm activity and sea level rise. Large parts of the coast in Wexford and Waterford are low lying and vulnerable to flooding in the long-term from sea level rise and it is essential that current and future plans and development now do not create significant problems in the future. Continued investment needs to be made in research on long-term options for the protection of coastal towns from long-term sea level rise and increased storm activity.

9.3 Role of Local Authorities

Local authorities must take account of the issues raised in the Regional Flood Risk Assessment and undertake Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for future plans in line with the Department's Guidance on the Planning System and Flood Risk Management. Local authorities should ensure that they adhere to the principles of avoiding risks where possible in preparing future plans.

PPO 9.1 It is an objective of the Regional Planning Guidelines that in the preparation and review of future Development Plans and Local Area Plans local authorities will:

- Identify and consider at the earliest stages in the planning process flood hazard and potential risk.
- Identify flood risk areas on Development Plan and Local Area Plan maps.
- Review existing Development Plans and Local Area Plans to ensure that the issue of Flood Risk has been addressed in a manner consistent with the 2009 Planning and Flood Risk Management Guidelines.
- Where lands are already zoned for housing or other vulnerable development in the flood risk areas, local authorities should undertake a re-examination of the zoning in accordance with the sequential approach.
- Include policies which ensure that flood risk areas targeted for development following the sequential approach are planned, designed and constructed to reduce and manage flood risk and be adaptable to changes in climate.
- Include policies to ensure that flood risk and impact are considered as a key element in the assessment of future waste and mineral planning strategies and developments.
- Include policies that ensure that the location of key infrastructures will be subject to Flood Risk Assessment.
- Include policies for the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in future developments in accordance with the 2009 Department Guidelines on Planning and Flood Risk Management.

9.4 Infrastructure and Flood Risk

In a flooding event, whether widespread or localised, damage to key infrastructure (e.g. power stations or significant sub-stations, communication hubs, wastewater treatment plants etc.) has major implications both for those in the area and across the region. The cost of such disruption is significant to business and can also place people in at-risk situations. For this reason, it is advised that key infrastructure suppliers should assess current elements and stress test future projects against flood risk, where this has not been previously undertaken. The completion of CFRAMS for the region will assist these stakeholders in examining flood risk within their own specific areas of responsibility.

9.5 Regional Flood Risk Policy

The Regional Flood Risk Appraisal is set out in Appendix 3 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report in respect of the RPGs. The recommendations of the Appraisal contain best practice advice relating to dealing with flood risk. Planning Authorities should implement the following policies with regard to flood risk:

PPO 9.2 Flood risk should be managed pro-actively at all stages in the planning process by avoiding development in flood risk areas where possible and by reducing the causes of flooding to and from existing and future development.

PPO 9.3 New development should be avoided in areas at risk from flooding. Alongside this, the Regional Flood Risk Appraisal recognises the need for continuing investment and development within the urban centres of flood vulnerable designated growth towns and Waterford City and for this to take place in tandem with the completion of CFRAM studies and investment in sustainable and comprehensive flood protection and management.

PPO 9.4 Development Plans and Local Area Plans should include a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and all future zoning of land for development in areas at risk of flooding should follow the sequential approach set out in the 2009 Department Guidelines on Planning and Flood Risk Management.

PPO 9.5 Local authorities should take the opportunities presented when including policies and actions in Development Plans/LAPs (such as flood plain protection and SuDS) to optimise improvements in biodiversity and amenity for existing and future developments.

PPO 9.6 Key infrastructure suppliers should assess current elements and stress test future projects against flood risk, where this has not been previously undertaken.

9.6 Delivery Actions, Indicators and Monitoring

Actions to deliver the Regional Planning Guidelines with respect to flood risk assessment are listed below. The delivery of these actions will be used as an indicator of the scale of implementation of the Regional Planning Guidelines by the local authorities, OPW and other stakeholders. In assessing the delivery of the Regional Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the South-East Region the following indicators will be used:

PPO 9.7 Local authorities should pursue the following actions/indicators required for Regional Flood Risk Appraisal in their area:

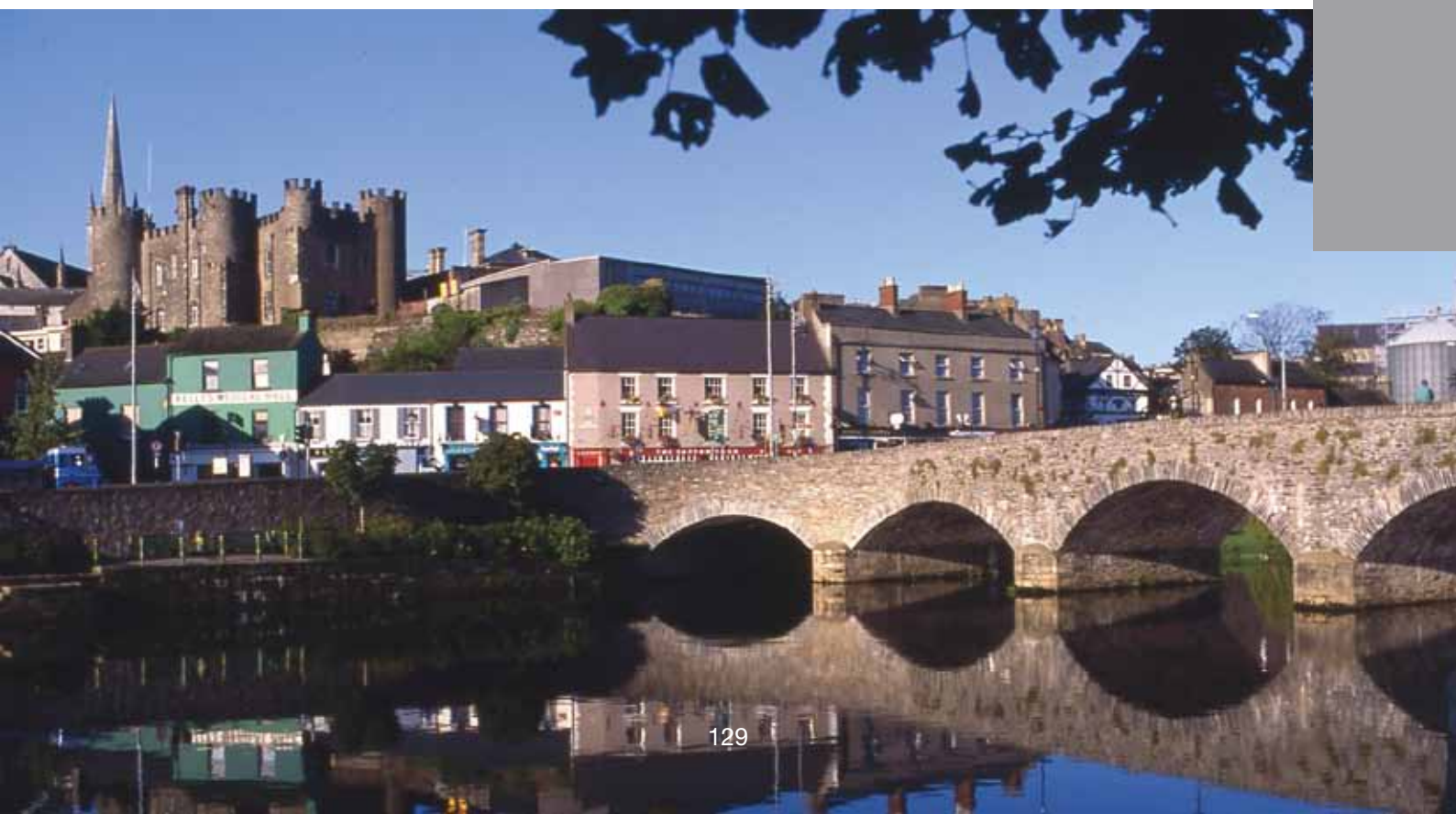
1. **100% completion, in co-operation with all local authorities in the South-East, of CFRAM studies covering the region by 2016, including a review of long term flood risk management options and consideration of appropriate land use policies.**
2. **All local authorities should have completed SFRAs for all Development Plans and Local Area Plans by 2016.**
3. **The proportion of new housing land located in lands classified as Flood Zone A or B should decrease to a minimal level during the lifetime of the Regional Planning Guidelines.**
4. **Inclusion in Development Plans of policies and objectives that require non-sensitive uses and designs which provide flood protection for ground floors of buildings in flood vulnerable locations within existing urban centres.**

SUMMARY / Development Plan Implications

An integrated approach to river catchment management is essential to manage and avoid increasing flood risk. Local authorities should fully support the completion of CFRAM studies and jointly implement any actions identified.

Development Plans shall include Strategic Flood Risk Assessments and all future zoning of land for development in areas at risk of flooding should follow the sequential approach set out in the 2009 Department Guidelines on Planning and Flood Risk Management.

Development Plans should include policies on the requirement for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in future developments as a major component of flood management and prevention.





Section 10: Implementation

Implementation of the spatial development vision for the South-East Region as set out in these Regional Planning Guidelines will be achieved by:

- ☐ Putting in place measures to support growth of the Gateways, Hubs and County Towns in order of priority.
- ☐ Putting in place the types of investment needed to underpin the strategic development of the region;
- ☐ Putting in place the types of structures that will implement the planning, local development, transport, rural development and other policies at local level that make the best use of investment.
- ☐ Monitoring the implementation process and identifying any need for adjustment of policies in future reviews of the guidelines.

These areas are addressed in further detail below.

10.1 Investment Priorities

The Regional Planning Guidelines represent an important spatial or locational framework for the South-East Region for local authorities, government departments and their agencies, as well as the private sector, to co-ordinate and pool their investments to gain greater synergies and spin-offs for themselves and the region. For example, a concerted and integrated approach to matters such as access, servicing of land for housing and commercial purposes, and urban renewal in a targeted set of locations, can have dramatic effects in boosting local economic activity and wider regional benefits.

A key step in the implementation of the Regional Planning Guidelines will, therefore, be represented by various public bodies and private interests working together to support progress on investment priorities defined in the guidelines.

The investment priorities referred to above can be divided into two main groups:

- Critical enabling investment priorities: These are the types of limited, key interventions necessary to underpin central elements of the approach of the guidelines.
- Matching regional and local level priorities: This refers to prioritisation by the local authorities in the region to match the critical national level investments.

10.1.1 Critical Enabling Investment Priorities

Under the National Spatial Strategy, it is envisaged that critical mass in the South-East Region will be enhanced through Waterford, Kilkenny and Wexford developing their role as a nationally strategic 'growth triangle'. This growth triangle, supported and complemented by growth in the three County Towns of Carlow, Clonmel and Dungarvan, will drive regional growth by providing a large and skilled population base, substantial capacity for additional residential and employment related functions and an improving transport network.

The South-East Region will develop its identity and critical mass through better connections between the principal towns in the region and their associated rural areas. To implement the NSS and achieve the potential of the south-eastern 'growth triangle', a critical priority for the region in the future is to improve inter-regional and inter-urban connections and connections between this developing heart of the region with more peripheral areas. Other critical enabling investment priorities for the region include supporting the accelerated servicing of land in the key urban centres in the region.

In the area of social infrastructure, such as education, health, social services, recreation, cultural and amenity facilities, the Regional Planning Guidelines are an important signal to the providers of such infrastructure to begin the process of planning for future facilities such as schools in newly developing residential areas or health and recreational facilities.

CRITICAL ENABLING INVESTMENT PRIORITIES FOR THE SOUTH-EAST REGION

The South-East Region is a dynamic region with an attractive quality of life for its half-million people and a first class infrastructure and communications network for new and existing industries and businesses.

The Regional Authority has identified five areas where targeted investment in education, high level research and development, key employment locations and in roads and transport infrastructure would support and attract new economic development in the region. These five areas are:

1. TO DEVELOP THE SMART ECONOMY

- A. Developing the innovation potential in the region through development of a University of the South-East by utilising and building upon the existing network of third and fourth-level educational establishments at Waterford, Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford and Clonmel focusing on strengthening academic-industrial linkages and the further development of educational outreach facilities throughout the region.
- B. Supporting Knowledge Transfer from academia, Foreign Direct Investment and Entrepreneurship throughout the region by the development of the Waterford Knowledge Campus and outreach third and fourth-level education to key centres throughout the region, and also supporting the development of high level research and development through the HEIs.
- C. Developing Strategic Employment Locations within the region to act as ready-to-go economic gateway sites to the new industry. Targeted investment in the development of Strategic Employment Locations at the Gateway, Hubs and County Towns with first class infrastructure capable of facilitating new indigenous start-ups in advanced sectors and attracting Foreign Direct Investment against competing locations nationally and internationally. Strategic Employment Locations will be identified by each local authority in City and County Development Plans.
- D. Targeted land servicing measure, in terms of water services and access investments to release serviced land for residential and commercial purposes in the Gateway, Hubs and County Towns.
- E. Implementation of the Regional Tourism Development Plan for improved visitor facilities and promotion of diverse and well-developed tourism sectors.

2. TO IMPROVE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

- A. Development of high quality, faster and more frequent public transport services (bus and rail) along the main transportation corridors and linking the major urban centres of the region along with development of Park and Ride facilities adjacent to rail stations and bus termini to serve commuters.
- B. Developing the Rosslare–Limerick railway line so that it provides a fast and frequent commuter service within the region and links onwards along the Western Rail Corridor towards Ennis and Galway with modern facilities at all stations.
- C. Transfer of freight from road to rail: The opportunities for increased use of the rail network for freight traffic should be developed in co-operation with Iarnród Éireann, the ports and the industrial sector.
- D. Continued investment in major road infrastructure:-
 - Upgrading of the M11/N11 route.
 - Upgrading of the N24 route in accordance with the N24 Prioritisation Study.
 - Further upgrading of the N25 route with a new crossing of the River Barrow at New Ross.
 - Upgrading of the N80 route from Enniscorthy to Carlow and the N76 route from Kilkenny to Clonmel.
 - Development of the additional downstream river crossing at Waterford facilitating the extension of the Outer Ring Road northwards to the N25 and securing the future balanced development of the regional Gateway.
- E. Investment in cycle and pedestrian facilities to improve sustainable transport options.
- F. Improve international freight and passenger access to the region by supporting the development of the sea ports at Belview, Rosslare and New Ross and air access at Waterford Regional Airport.
- G. Development of the full potential of the Waterford Regional Airport, through extension of the existing runway, improved transport linkages between the airport, Waterford City and the region and facilities for additional operators offering services from this location.
- H. Improvement of Water Services infrastructure in compliance with all environmental legislation and the River Basin Management Plans.

3. TO DELIVER FIRST CLASS ENERGY AND COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Continued development of broadband technologies (including broadband loop unbundling) with provision of dark fibre on a regional and inter-regional basis and establishment of internet hubs in the region with direct international links. Enhance use of eWorking, pilot innovations with commercial application and develop the eCommerce capabilities of business and high quality cost effective wireless or other broadband solutions for rural areas.
- B. Development and expansion of the GRID electricity network and future connections to renewable sources of energy.

- C. Development of Renewable and Green Energy sources including bio-energy and wind energy.
- D. Extension of the Bord Gáis network to Belview and to County Wexford and other centres of industry.

4. TO FOSTER URBAN REGENERATION AND IMPROVED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL

- A. Significant expansion of the commercial, cultural and civic centre of Waterford City through investment in, and support for, the re-development of the city quays with a new pedestrian/cycle/public transport bridge to provide a direct link from the south side of the River Suir across to the North Quays.
- B. Investment in key strategic sites in and the public realm of town and city centres.
- C. Investment in primary and post-primary education, community and recreational facilities.

5. FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE JOINT WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE SOUTH-EAST REGION.

10.1.2 Matching Local Investment Priorities

The Guidelines envisage the balanced development of the region through a focus on six distinct but complementary development areas as set out in Section 2.

Within each development area, a process of strengthening the hierarchy of towns and villages and their wider rural catchments is envisaged. The critical enabling national level investments will address strategic investment deficiencies in the Gateway in the region as well as in the principal towns.

To promote balanced development within the region such investment needs to be matched by the prioritisation of investment by local authorities in order to support the development of other areas, notably the service towns and villages identified in each development area. Key areas for better investment prioritisation in the future include:

- (1) Identifying investment priorities in the non-national road networks so that service towns and key villages identified in the strategic spatial framework for the region are effectively linked with the Gateway and principal towns in the region.
- (2) Identifying investment priorities in the water services infrastructure of service towns and key villages identified in the guidelines so as to position them in sustaining balanced growth in residential, commercial and other areas.

It will be a matter for the local authorities in the region, through their annual and any multi-annual capital works programmes, to identify the best way forward in implementing the Regional Planning Guidelines. The local authorities in the region will prepare a framework for investment prioritisation to implement the guidelines.

Section 27 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 requires planning authorities, following the making of regional planning guidelines for their area, to review the existing development plan and consider whether any variation is necessary in order to achieve the objectives of the Regional Planning Guidelines. It will be important that local planning authorities consult closely with the Regional Authority in the review of their development plans.

Following a detailed review of all City, County and Local Area Plans, local authorities are requested to prepare annual implementation reports detailing the extent to which the objectives of the NSS and the Regional Planning Guidelines are being met and pursued within their functional areas.

10.1.3 Role of Private Sector

The Regional Planning Guidelines are an important signal to the private sector that the Regional Authority and its constituent local authorities are implementing the National Spatial Strategy in the South-East Region. Development opportunities will arise in the various areas and places identified in the guidelines for various types of development.

At such locations, the guidelines are also a signal to the development sector to bring development proposals forward that integrate with national, regional and local level policies both in a private and public-private partnership sense. An example in this regard is the area of servicing initiatives for smaller towns and villages in rural areas where the guidelines, together with local planning policies, wish to see additional sensitively scaled residential proposals with a high degree of quality in terms of design and layout.

10.2 Implementation Structures

The successful implementation of these guidelines will depend on support from a number of different agencies and the Regional Authority will act to achieve that support through the maintenance and development of close working relations with these agencies. The Regional Authority will also put management structures in place to co-ordinate implementation and to facilitate ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Guidelines. The implementation of regional planning guidelines for the South- East Region will require the co-ordinated efforts of:

- The Regional and Local Authorities;
- Government Departments and their agencies;
- Providers of physical and social infrastructure;
- The private sector;
- The wider public.

Most responsibility for implementation of the guidelines rests with the various public and semi-state bodies charged with the provision of social, economic and physical infrastructure and the protection and enhancement of our natural and human resources.

10.2.1 Implementation Committee

Implementation structures will continue through the Regional Authority and its Committees, local authorities and County Development Boards.

The Steering Committee that has overseen the production of these Guidelines will be retained as the RPG Implementation Committee to monitor implementation of the Guidelines, and also to prepare the ground for subsequent reviews of the guidelines.

The Regional Authority will prepare annual updates and implementation programmes for consideration by the Implementation Committee and by the Regional Authority. Annual implementation programmes will identify clear targets and result areas including identifying, in partnership with the local authorities and other agencies such as providers of public transport or promoters of economic development, who is responsible for progressing these targets and when.

It will be the function of the overall RPG Implementation Committee to set and oversee the overall programme for implementation including key milestones. The work of the Implementation Committee will, however, need to be supported by a number of other implementation groups dealing with more specific areas such as planning issues that traverse administrative boundaries.

10.2.2 Investment Prioritisation Group

Delivery of critical enabling investment priorities as well as local investment priorities are very important steps in implementing the guidelines. It is recognised that the priority for national level investment in the region over the short term (i.e. 3-5 years) is the delivery of the National Development Plan commitments such as investment in the national roads programme. However, under the auspices of the Regional Authority Implementation Committee, a group will be constituted to liaise with key national level organisations and agencies such as the Department of Transport, IDA, Enterprise Ireland, National Roads Authority and CIÉ, receive regular updates on progress and advance the case for future investment priorities after current priorities have been delivered.

The investment co-ordination group referred to above will also be responsible for bringing forward proposals at local authority level, for investment prioritisation to develop the spatial structure of the region and the development areas within the region as set out in the Regional Development Strategy. An early focus on the areas of non-national roads and serviced land initiatives are recommended at this stage.

10.2.3 Waterford PLUTS Study Area Implementation Group

The strategic planning of Waterford City and its hinterland across administrative boundaries is critical to implementation of the guidelines.

It is recommended that the implementation group for the *Waterford PLUTS* Study Area continue in operation. This

area includes Waterford City as well as parts of Counties Waterford, Kilkenny and Wexford. This implementation group would drive the process of developing the full potential of the Regional Gateway as envisaged in the NSS taking account of the need to deliver a consistent approach across administrative boundaries and would advance detailed proposals for future incorporation into the development plan process.

Reports, including recommendations, will be prepared by the above group aimed at supporting the process of aligning local planning policies with the Regional Planning Guidelines and the NSS.

Other groups may be composed as necessary.

10.2.4 Policy and Operational Co-ordination Groups

The development of policy and the operational implementation of the guidelines will be supported through the co-operation of a range of executive agencies throughout the region. From time to time, implementation will also require the co-operation of more nationally based organisations such as the NRA, a range of Government Departments responsible for funding and other bodies responsible for national investment decisions.

To implement the guidelines, local authorities will be working to ensure that their development plans are consistent with these guidelines. However, it is important to note that other bodies do not necessarily fall within the control of any of the structures that might be used to oversee the implementation of the guidelines. However, the Regional Planning Guidelines perform an important role for other bodies such as Government Departments and their agencies, given that this document represents the considered views of the main actors responsible for the region's continued sustainable development. It is important that such bodies take full and proper account of the Regional Planning Guidelines in, for example, the area of determining investment priorities.

A small number of groups dealing with specific policy areas are envisaged dealing with:

- The development of an Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy (ICZMS) for the region.
- Progressing the development of a University of the South-East.
- Development of the potential of the region's river valleys and navigable waterways in their contribution to urban renewal, recreational facility provision and tourism promotion.
- The development of the renewable energy potential of the region by bringing forward supportive development plan policies.
- Working with the providers of key social infrastructure elements such as education and healthcare to ensure that future plans in these areas are taking account of emerging land use and development scenarios particularly in rapidly growing parts of the region.

These groups will examine current practices and suggested future priorities for the policies and proposals of local authorities and other relevant agencies and other bodies.

10.3 Monitoring Implementation

The implementation process will be monitored to assess progress and identify blockages. Monitoring will be aimed at a number of levels:

- The monitoring of inputs or actions
- The monitoring of outputs or achievements
- The monitoring of outcomes or the extent to which actions, policies and programmes are effective.

The setting of targets and indicators will support monitoring of the implementation of the strategy and guidelines. Targets are precise quantitative achievements that are sought while indicators are proxy measures of the extent to which goals or objectives are being met.

This document sets few quantitative targets. In a complex environment it is difficult to set precise targets with a reasonable expectation of them being achieved. However, the more qualitative objectives that have been set will provide a mechanism through which the achievements that are being sought can be measured.

With regard to the objectives for which targets have not been set in this document it is suggested that such targets would be set by the various implementation structures that are outlined above.

Targets and indicators can be of three types:

- Input targets that refer to the extent that the actions that are identified in this document have been implemented
- Output targets or the extent to which the direct intended effects of actions have been achieved, and
- Outcome targets or the extent to which the goals of the actions are being achieved.

10.3.1 Input Targets

These refer to the extent that the actions that are outlined in this document have been implemented. These input targets include the establishment of mechanisms for co-coordinated action, the adoption of appropriate policies in development plans of local authorities and the recognition of the approach of the Regional Development Strategy and Planning Guidelines in the plans and programmes of other agencies and organisations.

10.3.2 Output Targets

These refer to the extent to which infrastructure is being put in place in accordance with the needs identified in this document, the extent to which facilities are being developed and the extent to which cross-regional networks, marketing, special supports and other softer development elements are being established.

10.3.3 Outcome Indicators

These refer to the degree to which the objectives that are the focus of the actions are being achieved. Outcomes which might be used include:

- The level and distribution of population growth in the region
- The extent of housing development in the region
- The stability of the rural population
- The availability of serviced land
- The extent and distribution of new enterprise within the region
- Changes in unemployment and participation rates relative to national averages
- Changes in average household incomes relative to national averages
- The amount of research resources attracted by the region's third and fourth-level institutes
- The use of public transport networks including the rail service
- The number of services provided on each rail line
- The number of new rail connections/sidings provided for freight per year
- Access time between key towns – by car and public transport
- The level of unaccounted for water used in Public Water Supply schemes
- The level of compliance with drinking water regulations, as per EPA annual reports
- The level of compliance with Waste Water effluent standards, as per EPA bi-annual reports.

These indicators are suggested as examples only and are not intended to be exhaustive. They do have the characteristics of being directly associated with the goals outlined in the earlier parts of this document, of being based on data that are capable of being collected without undue difficulty and of providing overall guidance to the various bodies that will be charged with the operational implementation of the strategy.

10.3.4 Environmental Indicators

In addition to the above, as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment process, measures for monitoring the likely significant effects of implementing the Regional Planning Guidelines must be included in the Environmental Report. Monitoring is based on indicators which measure changes in the environment, especially changes which are critical in terms of environmental quality. A range of indicators are proposed as part of the SEA process, to monitor the effects on the environment of implementing the Regional Planning Guidelines, presented in terms of the achievement of the environmental protection objectives and the impact on the environmental factors that the SEA legislation requires to be considered. The Review of the Regional Planning Guidelines will include monitoring of any significant environmental effects and reporting on compliance with environmental targets and indicators set out in the Environmental Report accompanying these guidelines. Where new or improved monitoring measures come to light during the course of the Guidelines review they will inform monitoring for SEA, to ensure that monitoring of effects during the course of implementing the guidelines can be meaningful and effective.

10.4 Future Review of Regional Planning Guidelines

In accordance with Section 23 of the *Planning and Development Act, 2000*, the Regional Authority will review these Regional Planning Guidelines within 6 years of their adoption and will again review them at least every 6 years after that. In carrying out this review, the Regional Authority may revoke the guidelines or make new ones. Planning authorities are obliged to have regard to Regional Planning Guidelines for a period of six years after their adoption when preparing their statutory Development Plans.

In the process of monitoring the implementation of the Regional Planning Guidelines, consideration will be given to undertaking an interim review of the Regional Planning Guidelines every 2 years. The scope of this review is to be decided by the Regional Authority but will include a review of the population targets for the settlements and each local authority area within the region.

The Monitoring and Review process would also provide for an interim evaluation of indicators and targets by the Regional Authority such as the ones above to determine:

- The degree to which overall goals and aims of the guidelines are being achieved;
- The degree to which implementation of the NSS is being achieved;
- The degree of fit between local planning policies and the regional guidelines and the need for any adjustment that will also support implementation of the NSS.

The review process will be conducted by the Regional Authority Planning Guidelines Implementation Committee on a yearly basis. These guidelines, therefore, have an inbuilt review mechanism that, over the next six years, will closely monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the guidelines, conduct data gathering and report regularly on review issues aimed at preparing the way for a full review of the guidelines by 2016.

Before revoking Regional Planning Guidelines, the Regional Authority must consult with the planning authorities in its area, unless those guidelines are being revoked to make new ones. Where the South-East Regional Authority makes new guidelines, it will follow the procedures laid down in the relevant legislation and regulations.

SUMMARY / Development Plan Implications

The Critical Enabling Investment Priorities are fundamental elements to the Regional Development Strategy. Planning Authorities should ensure that policies across different areas in the Development Plan are aimed at implementation and achievement of these Investment Priorities.

The Outcome Indicators can provide an assessment of how effective the Regional Planning Guidelines are in realising the Vision for the Region, the Strategic Goals and the Critical Enabling Investment Priorities. If the evaluation indicates barriers to achieving the goals set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines, appropriate measures will be taken to examine and improve the performance of the RPGs.





APPENDIX 1

Table 1. Projected Housing/Zoning Requirements for Settlements

| Settlement | Population increase 2010-2016 (Based on Minimum Pop Targets) | Total Number of Residential Units required over period 2010-2016 | Total zoned housing land required over period 2010-2016 (incorporating 50% over zoning in ac- cordance with DoEHLG Development Plan Guidelines. Figure for over-zoning could be up to 150%) |
|--|---|---|---|
| Carlow Town | 1,642 | 566 | 42 ha |
| Clonmel | 2,250 | 803 | 60 ha |
| Dungarvan | 1,600 | 571 | 43 ha |
| Kilkenny City | 1,800* | 642 | 48 ha |
| Waterford City | 2,500* | 961 | 72 ha |
| Waterford City environs (Co. Kilkenny) | 1,000* | 357 | 27 ha |
| Waterford City environs Co. Waterford) | 500* | 179 | 13 ha |
| Wexford Town | 2,500* | 892 | 67 ha |
| TOTAL | 13,792 | 4,971 units | 372 ha |

* Based on DoEHLG Minimum Population Targets, October 2009

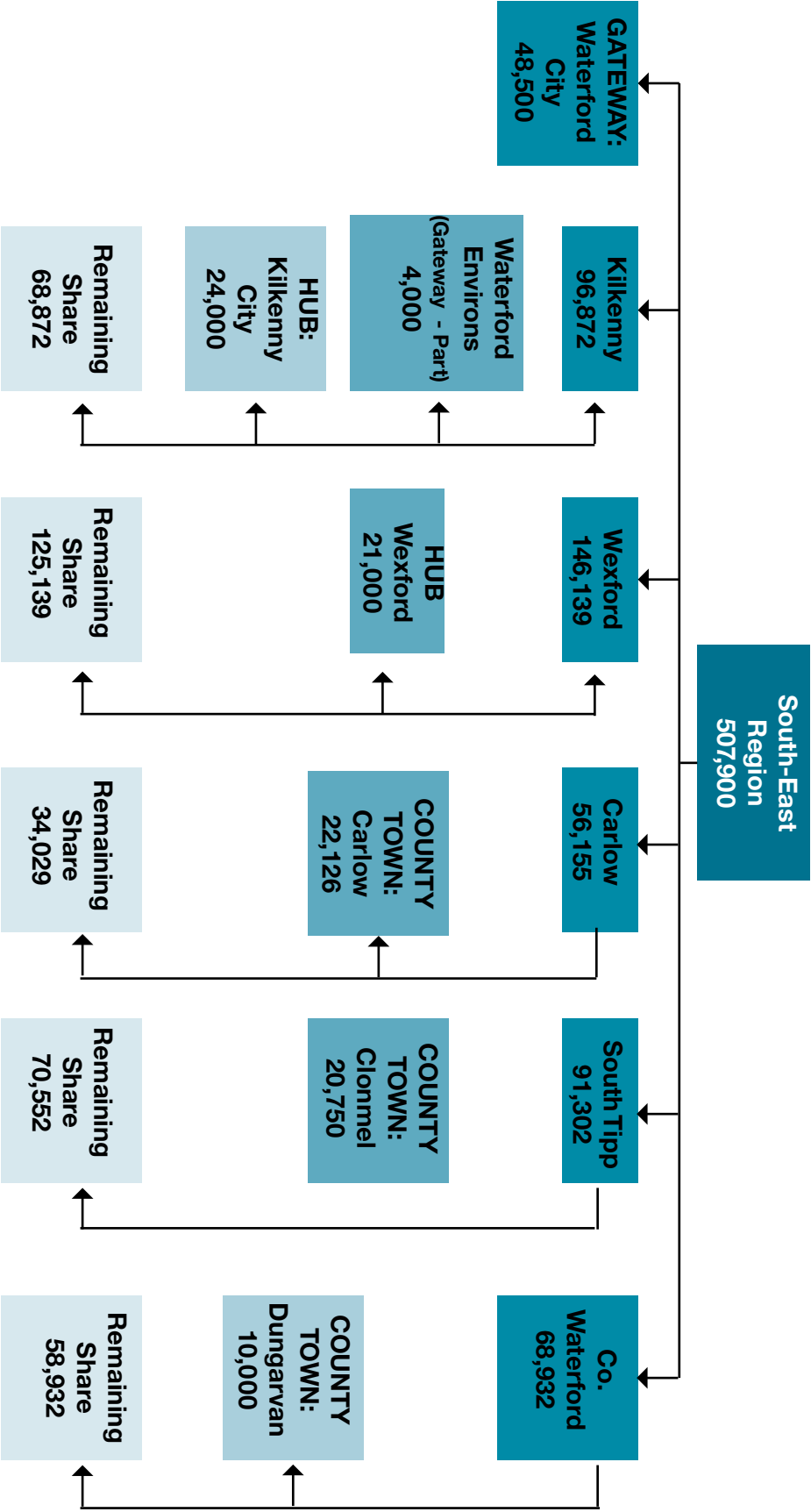
Table 2. Remaining Share of Population Growth/Projected Housing/Zoning Requirements for South-East Region Counties for period 2010-2016

| County | Population increase (Remaining Share*) 2010-2016 | Total Number of Residential Units required over period 2010-2016** | Total zoned housing land required over period 2010-2016 (incorporating 75% over zoning) |
|--|--|---|--|
| Co. Carlow | 1,654 | 570 | 50 ha |
| Co. Kilkenny (excl. Kilkenny City & Waterford environs) | 5,926 | 2,041 | 179 ha |
| South Tipperary | 3,311 | 1,183 | 103 ha |
| Co. Waterford | 2,191 | 783 | 85 ha |
| Co. Wexford | 7,426 | 2,652 | 232 ha |
| TOTAL | 20,508 | 7,229 units | 649 ha |

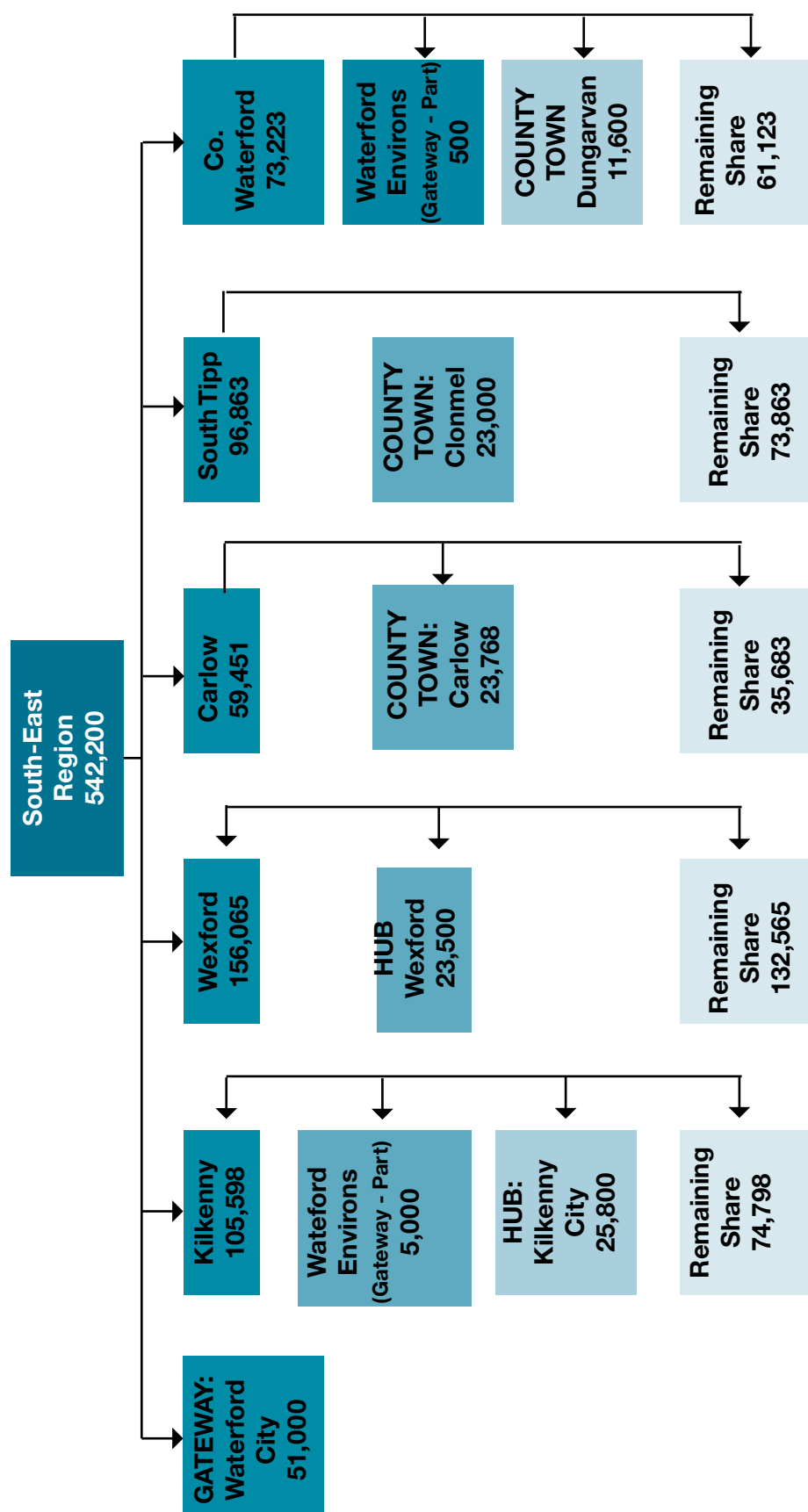
* Other Areas are all areas excluding Gateways, Hubs and County Towns.

** Based on average household size for each county.

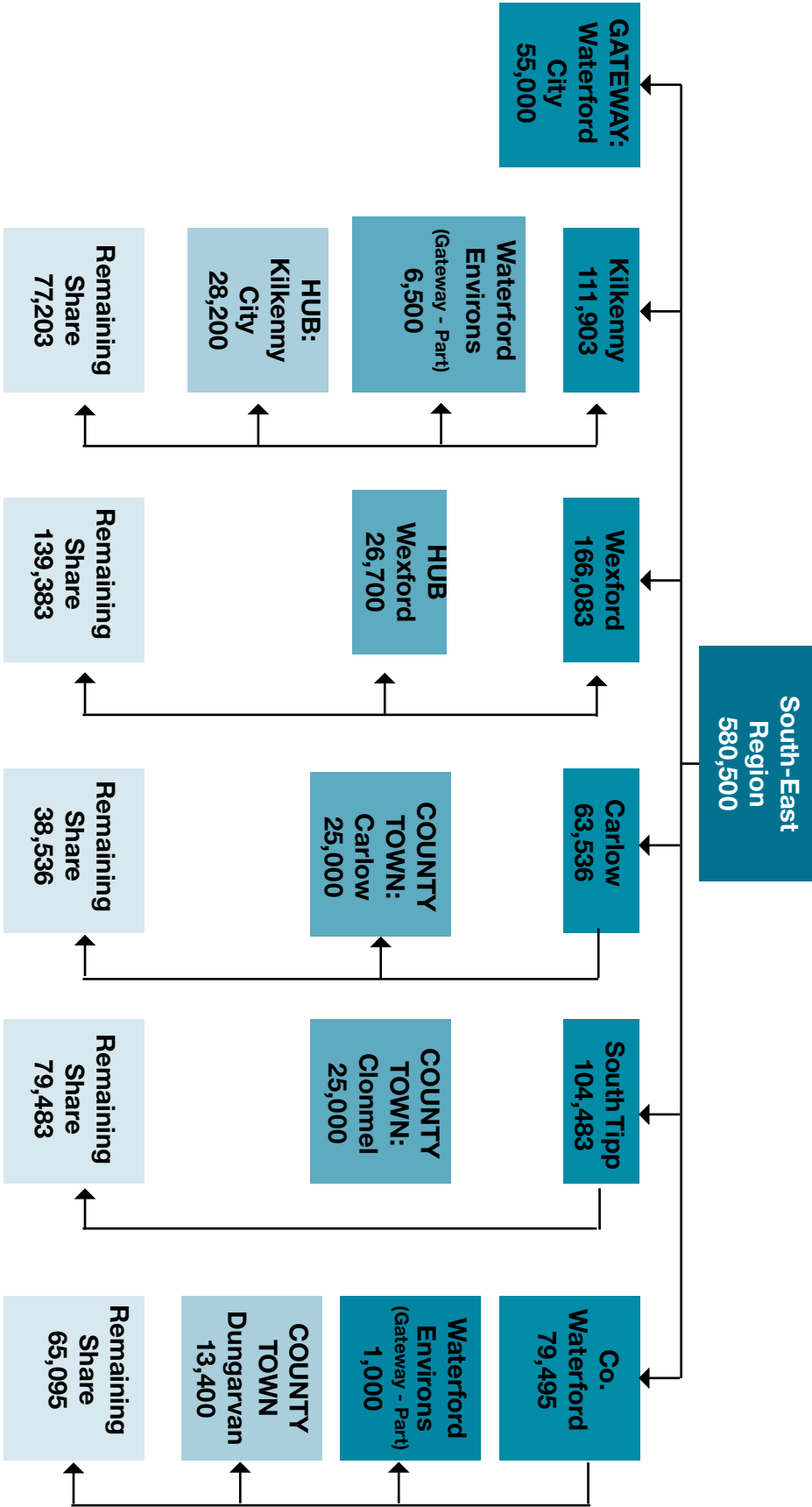
South-East Region Population Figures for 2010



South-East Region Population Figures for 2016



South-East Region Population Figures for 2022



APPENDIX 2

RPG STEERING COMMITTEE

| Name | Title | Organisation |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Mr. Joe Crockett (Chair) | County Manager | Kilkenny County Council |
| Mr. Tom Barry | County Manager | Carlow County Council |
| Mr. Edmond O'Connor | County Manager | South Tipperary County Council |
| Mr. Ray O'Dwyer | County Manager | Waterford County Council |
| Mr. Michael Walsh | City Manager | Waterford City Council |
| Mr. Edward Breen | County Manager | Wexford County Council |
| Cllr. Denis Foley | Elected Member | Carlow County Council |
| Cllr. Martin Brett | Elected Member | Kilkenny County Council |
| Cllr. Denis Landy | Elected Member | South Tipperary County Council |
| Cllr. Paddy O'Callaghan | Elected Member | Waterford County Council |
| Cllr. Jack Walsh | Elected Member | Waterford City Council |
| Cllr. Declan McPartlin | Elected Member | Wexford County Council |
| Ms. Siobhán McEvoy | Regional Manager | IDA Ireland |
| Mr. Martin Doyle | Regional Manager | Enterprise Ireland |
| Ms. Aileen Doyle | Senior Planning Advisor | Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government |
| Mr. Jim Ellis | Asst. Principal Officer | Department of Transport |
| Mr. Thomas Byrne | Director | South-East Regional Authority |
| Mr. Dominic Walsh | RPG Officer | South-East Regional Authority |
| Ms. Bernadette Guest | SEA Officer | South-East Regional Authority |

RPG TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP

| Name | Organisation |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Mr. Joe Crockett (Chair) | Kilkenny County Council |
| Mr. Séamus O'Connor | Carlow County Council |
| Ms. Arlene O'Connor | Carlow County Council |
| Mr. John McCormack | Kilkenny County Council |
| Mr. Denis Malone | Kilkenny County Council |
| Ms. Sinéad Carr | South Tipperary County Council |
| Mr. Jim O'Mahoney | South Tipperary County Council |
| Mr. Brian White | Waterford County Council |
| Ms. Valerie Conway | Waterford County Council |
| Ms. Aisling Gleeson | Waterford County Council |
| Mr. Fearghal Reidy | Waterford County Council |
| Ms. Colette Byrne | Waterford City Council |
| Mr. John Andrews | Waterford City Council |
| Mr. Eamonn Hore | Wexford County Council |
| Mr. Diarmuid Houston | Wexford County Council |
| Mr. James Lavin | Wexford County Council |
| Mr. Thomas Byrne | South-East Regional Authority |
| Mr. Dominic Walsh | South-East Regional Authority |
| Ms. Bernadette Guest | South-East Regional Authority |



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