

7. HOUSING

7.1 Introduction and Context

This section outlines the estimated population projections and provides details on past developments and anticipated requirements for housing over the plan period. Policy is set out to direct and control new housing provision in line with the statutory requirements and to give effect to the Strategic Objectives SO3 and SO4.

S03

Create balanced sustainable communities through balancing economic growth with quality of life and the protection of resources

S04

Encourage integrated community developments through state, local authority and voluntary sector partnerships, thus enabling the provision of co-ordinated community facilities and services - (education, recreation and social facilities.)

The need to create balanced sustainable communities with adequate social and community facilities is a key objective of this plan and it is through policy implementation and partnership working that this objective can be achieved.

7.1.1 Population Context

Over the period 1991 to 1996 the population of the Dundalk Urban District increased marginally from 25,483 to 25,762 representing a 1.1% increase in the population.

Table 7.1 Plan Area Population 1991 to 1996 & Estimated Population for 2001 and 2002

The Plan Area				
	1991	1996	2001 ¹	2002
Dundalk Town Council	25,843	25,762	28,682	29,275
Ballymacscanlon	1,893	1,927	2,223	2,269
Dundalk Rural	533	524	604	617
Castletown	1,241	1,305	1,505	1,536
Haggardstown	3,964	4,222	5,164	5,440
TOTAL	33,474	33,740	38,178	39,137

The previous plan predicted an overall increase of 4.2% between 1991 and 2001 for the Town Council area. While growth for the plan area was

¹ The figures for 2001 have been estimated utilising a similar method and sources to the Louth Housing Strategy - CSO Census of Population & household numbers and Projections, Strategic Planning Guidelines, DoELG data on house completions.

considerably slow between 1991 and 1996 at 0.8%, there was considerable growth during the period 1996 to 2001. It is estimated that growth throughout this time was in the region of 14%, with all areas experiencing growth especially the Blackrock area.

The previous plan zoned a total of 326 ha's (806 acres) for residential development, of which 157 ha's (389 acres) were unserviced. Almost 169 ha's (417 acres) was available for immediate development and the plan stated that this would allow for the provision of 3,336 dwellings at a gross density of 19 dwellings per ha (8 units per acre).

The number of dwellings granted permission during the plan period was 3088 and approximately two thirds of the land; 217 ha's (538 acres) was developed or granted permission for residential development. This would indicate as an average that there were in the region of 14 dwellings per ha (6 per acre), far below the predicted 19 dwellings per ha (8 dwellings per acre).

7.2 Population Projections

In ascertaining the future likely population for Dundalk and environs, past growth in the area and housing completions were utilised to compile projections. This is the methodology that was also adopted for the Louth County Housing Strategy. Between 1996 and 2000, it is estimated that there was an average overall increase of 11% in the plan area population, with areas such as Blackrock, experiencing considerable growth estimated at 36%.² To accommodate this additional residential development, a separate Development Plan was adopted in 2000 for the Blackrock area, setting out how the area should be developed.

Table 7.2 *Estimated Population Projections for Dundalk and Environs for the Plan Period*

	1991	1996	2000	2001 ³	2002	2008
Dundalk Town Council	25,843	25,762	28,100	28,682	29,275	33,105
Ballymacscanlon	1,893	1,927	2,178	2,223	2,269	2,565
Dundalk Rural	533	524	592	604	617	698
Castletown	1,241	1,305	1,475	1,505	1,536	1,737
Haggardstown	3,964	4,222	4,902	5,164	5,440	7,437
TOTAL	33,474	33,740	37,246	38,178	39,137	45,542

It is estimated that there will be an additional growth of 6,405 persons over the plan period 2002 to 2008. This represents an additional 2,287 households. In addition to the growth in population, the average household size is expected to reduce from 3.05 to 2.8. This is expected to lead to a requirement for an

² Refer to Addendum Section 1.15

³ The figures for 2001 have been estimated utilising a similar method and sources to the Louth Housing Strategy - CSO Census of Population & household numbers and Projections, Strategic Planning Guidelines, DoELG data on house completions

additional 980 dwellings from the existing population. There could therefore be an overall requirement for some 3,267 residential units between 2002 and 2008.

7.2.1 Spatial Distribution of Population

There is in the region of 500ha's of land zoned for residential development in the plan area without the need to zone additional land. Based on the population projections for the plan period 2002 - 2008, there is a requirement for only between 91 and 130 ha's of residential land to meet the projected future residential growth requirements. There is therefore considerable flexibility in terms of zoned land for accommodating future residential growth. However there is a strong requirement for this land to be developed in a phased sustainable and integrated way to meet the needs of the local community over the plan period and beyond. The current spatial distribution of zoned residential land is as follows;

Table 7.3 *Spatial Distribution of Residentially Zoned Land*

Areas of Zoned Residential Land	Area ha's
Dundalk Town Council	150
Blackrock	250
Mount Avenue	150
Approximate Total	550

7.3 **Objectives Achieved Over The Plan Period**

The majority of objectives set out for the previous plan period 1991 to 1996 have been achieved and include the development of housing schemes at O' Hanlon Park and at Barton Park has been developed and is now occupied.

In addition a number of sites have been secured for the provision of a housing scheme by the voluntary sector. Approximately 45 houses are occupied and 35 houses are at planning stage for the Farndreg rental subsidy scheme plus 9 units of accommodation for people with learning difficulties under the Capital Assistance Scheme.

Three schemes have been provided or are in the process of being provided for shared ownership; In Muirhevnemor 48 units are currently under construction under the rental subsidy scheme; in Toberna - under the North and Eastern Housing Association 44 units are to be provided. Construction is expected to commence shortly; In Cluid / St Pancreas - 35 houses have been built.

The Council has also provided a 15 Bay Halting Site in Woodland Park and a Traveller Accommodation Programme 2000 - 2004 has also been published.

The Council will continue to seek to protect and improve the residential amenity interest and ensure social inclusion through the Development Plan and through the provisions of the Louth Housing Strategy.

7.4 Public Sector Housing

The majority of housing construction in Dundalk over the period 1996 to 2000 was through private sector developments. The Council constructed or acquired 153 dwellings between 1996 and 2000. The majority of these schemes were located within or close to the town centre.

7.4.1 Demand for Social Housing

The demand for social housing in the Plan area has continued to rise and the Council has consistently built and acquired new housing to cater for this growing demand.

Table 7.4 *Numbers on Waiting List '98 - 2001*

Date	Number on waiting List
Jan '98	587
Jan '99	679
Jan '00	562
Jan '01	823

There has been a considerable rise in the numbers on the housing list in the past year. In January 2001 there were 823 persons on the housing list, which had grown to 900 by August. This reflects nation-wide trends.

Table 7.5 *Dundalk Town Council Housing List*

Household Type	August '01	October '99	March '99
Single	396	301	118
Single + 1 Child	218	124	63
Single +2	70	35	28
Single +3	28	6	9
Single +4	18	8	7
Single +5	6	4	4
Couple +0	34	24	16
Couple +1	59	32	27
Couple +2	29	7	21
Couple +3	20	6	12
Couple +4	8	8	6
Couple +5	14	2	5
Total	900	557	316

The number of single people seeking social housing has more than doubled since March 1999. While the numbers of single plus one child has risen threefold. In general there has been an overall rise in numbers on the housing list for all categories.

7.4.2 Allocation and Provision of Social Housing

The following tables outline the progress to date regarding public housing allocations and provision.

Table 7.6 *Public Sector Housing Allocations and Provision*

Date	No. Housing Allocated by DOE	Provided By UDC	Areas * under construction	Total
1996	36	10 24 10	Purchased Hillview Cooley Park	44
1997	33	14 42	Barton Park Woodview Park	56
1998	30	6 16	P. Tierney Crescent Shields Field*	22
1999	45	14	Purchased	14
2000-03	250	90 28 11 7 3	Toberna* Castleross Garrybawn Barrack Street Woodview Park	45
	394	275		181

Furthermore Dundalk Town Council has recently acquired 2 parcels of land and plans are progressing for 2 schemes of houses of approximately 110/120 houses in each.

The Council has entered into public consultation for a turnkey development of 88 houses at Farndreg and plans are well advanced for a further turnkey development of 53 houses. In addition to the above, 12 no. 3 bedroom affordable houses are being built in association with the rental subsidy scheme in Farndreg (H04/05).

The Department of the Environment has required that the Council provide a further 250 houses between 2000 and 2003. This is to be provided along with the additional social and affordable housing, which is to be provided over the plan period in accordance with the requirements of the Louth Housing Strategy.

Table 7.7 *House Lettings 1996 - 2000*

Year	Council Housing Stock	Type of Housing	Total Provision
1996	Newly Built & Acquired Dwellings	Old People's Dwellings (OPD)	0
		Family Type Dwelling's(FTD)	16
	Casual Vacancy Lettings	OPD	15
		FTD	33 TOTAL 64
1997	Newly Built & Acquired Dwellings	OPD	5
		FTD	21
	Casual Vacancy Lettings	OPD	11
		FTD	40 TOTAL 77
1998	Newly Built & Acquired Dwellings	OPD	6
		FTD	36
	Casual Vacancy Lettings	OPD	15
		FTD	35 TOTAL 92
1999	Newly Built & Acquired Dwellings	OPD	7
		FTD	13
	Casual Vacancy Lettings	OPD	12
		FTD	16 TOTAL 48
2000	Newly Built & Acquired Dwellings	OPD	10
		FTD	
	Casual Vacancy Lettings	OPD	10
		FTD	23 TOTAL 43

There has been a consistent decline in the casual vacancy rate and demand remains high for both old people's dwellings and family type dwellings. Having regard to the demand and reduction in the Council housing stock through the use of the tenant purchase scheme, it is anticipated that the casual vacancy rate will remain low.

7.4.3 Shared Ownership and Tenant Purchase Schemes

With regard-shared ownership, there have been 14 applications with 6 loans redeemed since 1993. Also during this period, 546 applications for tenant purchase were received. Of these 48% were successful leading to the sale of 263 houses.

The underlying trend is that there is an increasing demand for public sector housing. In December 1999 there were 547 applications and in December 2000 there were 803 applications for social housing. This is a nation-wide trend, which is being addressed not only through Council social housing provision but also through the Housing Strategy.

7.5 The County Housing Strategy (2001 - 2007)

The County Louth Housing Strategy has been put in place to ensure that

- Sufficient land is zoned and serviced to meet the housing needs of all sectors of the population, both existing and proposed;

- Housing development is designed and located so as to make full use of the public transport and to give access to education, employment, health and other services and set out how this is to be achieved; and
- Specific objectives reflecting the needs of different areas assessed in the strategy are included to ensure that the necessary social and affordable housing will be provided for fully.

The Housing Strategy covers the majority of the period of the Development Plan (up to 2007). The Strategy can be reviewed within 2 years of the making of the Development Plan if not sooner, if there is a change in the housing requirements or in the housing market that could fundamentally affect the existing strategy. It can also be changed if Ministerial regulations require a review, in relation to the criteria determining affordability.

The County Housing Strategy forms an integral part of the Development Plan and also acts as a corner stone for further housing policy.

The main objectives of the Housing Development Strategy are as follows;

- A total of 7,400 new households are expected to be formed in Co Louth over the Plan period. It is predicted that there will be a requirement for approximately 2, 287 additional households for Dundalk
- The policy is that 20% of zoned residential lands be reserved for the provision of social and affordable housing purposes. The preference being for developers to provide dwellings rather than land. The amount of land already zoned for residential purposes in the development plans serving the new Plan area is considered more than sufficient to meet the residential requirements of the new households likely to be formed, notwithstanding that a proportion of such may not be available for development during the lifetime of the plan
- The provision of such residential accommodation should adhere to the principles of sustainable development in all proposals and ensure the promotion of social inclusion and that it would not result in an imbalance between the existing and proposed occupancy and would allow for housing mix.
- All housing development should have regard to the recommendations contained within those documents produced by the Government in the matter of National Sustainable Development; A Strategy for Ireland (1997) Social Housing Design Guidelines (1999) and Residential Density Guidelines for Planning Authorities (1999). In the case of the latter these guidelines should be incorporated into each of the Development Plans.

7.6 Residential Zoning

The development strategy sets out the broad policy framework for the location of development within the plan period. The majority of growth is to be directed to the urban area and the defined growth areas namely Blackrock, the South-west drainage area, the Mount Avenue Action Area and the new area of zoned land to the north of the Castletown River.

7.6.1 Zoned Residential Land

There are approximately 550ha's of zoned residential land within the plan area. In light of the extensive undeveloped areas, which have already been zoned, it is necessary that this plan incorporate *minimal new-zoned* residential areas. In this case, the main priority areas for development will include the existing zoned residential lands and a new residential zoned area to the north of Dundalk to promote a balanced approach to residential spatial development. In addition a Local Area Plan is currently being prepared for the South West Sector to provide a neighbourhood masterplan-phased approach to development for this area, over the plan period and beyond.

The South West Sector

It is an objective of the Dundalk Town and Louth County Council to prepare a Local Area Plan for the development of the South West Sector of Dundalk. The Plan will be based primarily on the neighbourhood masterplanning principles, to enable Dundalk to achieve balanced development and sustainable growth in line with it's status as a Gateway and anticipated city status.

In the interim, the development plan provides the framework and development strategy for the South West Sector, setting out the broad land use zoning objectives and general principles for development. The residentially zoned areas should be masterplanned in accordance with the neighbourhood principles. This requires the comprehensive integrated development of the identified parcels as new neighbourhoods, incorporating the necessary services and facilities. In addition areas are also identified for mixed uses as well as commercial and employment development.

The majority of the South West Sector is constrained in terms of development potential because of the lack of infrastructure; this includes drainage, water, sanitary services and roads infrastructure. The provision of adequate services and infrastructure is a prerequisite to enabling development in this area. In the interim, the development plan identifies the majority of the area as premature for development pending the provision of adequate infrastructure and services. This includes public mains drainage scheme as well as roads.

As part of the overall consideration for developing the area, the Council anticipate that there will be a requirement for co-operative working to deliver

the servicing of the area. The Council will therefore consider making a Section 49 Scheme to examine the long-term issues regarding need for infrastructure.

Residential Zoning

The residential zoning category has been applied to both serviced and unserviced land and permits small-scale economic activity, which would not detract from the primary use of the dwelling as residential and would not detract from the residential amenity of the area. It also facilitates the provision of local facilities and services within the defined local neighbourhood centres. Within the unserviced areas, the Council will normally refuse permission until such time as the necessary services have been provided.

7.7 Creating Sustainable Neighbourhoods

While there is a considerable amount of zoned residential land available, the majority of it is unserviced - in the region of 360ha's is presently unserviced. Provision of adequate services and infrastructure is a prerequisite to any future development. There is also a need for a comprehensive masterplanned phased approach to the future development of these areas to avoid piecemeal development and ensure that sustainable communities can be built for the future.

In order to achieve orderly sustainable development over the plan period, it is proposed that a policy control mechanism be put in place to require that in the future, properly serviced and integrated communities can be developed. In order to achieve this, the Council may require the masterplanning of each of the defined neighbourhood parcels, which are partially developed and undeveloped. This will include lands within the Mount Avenue Action Area, the Blackrock/ Haynestown area, zoned land to the north of the Castletown River and the South West drainage area.

Map 6 shows the defined neighbourhood areas. This includes the partially developed and the undeveloped residential areas. New development should be masterplanned for each of these areas. While any new development within the existing built up areas will be required to conform to the infill and backland development policies.

EN1 The Council may require that new residential development makes proper provision for open space and community facilities, and that such facilities should be sited in an accessible location as a focal point within the new developments, in accordance with the neighbourhood masterplanning principles and other plan policies.

This policy applies in particular to the defined neighbourhood parcels, which are partially developed and undeveloped. New development within the infill neighbourhood areas will be required to accord with the general plan policies and provide sufficient open space and facilities where appropriate and in agreement with the local authority. In addition, there may also be a

requirement to provide for environmental measures such as bring banks /collection points within residential areas in accordance with the requirements of the waste management plan.

Developers and landowners should liaise closely with the Council to agree on the facilities likely to be required and the layout of the development. In some cases, this may involve making provision for a site for a local shop within the local neighbourhood or a crèche facility. Masterplanning requires that full details of design, layout, orientation, uses, roads, footpaths, open spaces, local services/ community facilities and materials are provided for the defined neighbourhood area (see Map 6). This will help to ensure that development will occur in a controlled and integrated manner and prevent adhoc developments, which have in some cases tended to be developed on a field-by-field basis without the provision of proper facilities or links. Section 7.7.4 defines the masterplanning principles that should be adhered to.

EN2 New development within the defined neighbourhood areas should be required to be masterplanned for each of the partially developed and the undeveloped neighbourhood areas in accordance with the neighbourhood masterplanning principles

Map 6 identifies the areas defined as neighbourhood parcels and the Council will seek to put in place policies to ensure that new neighbourhoods, should as far as possible be designed, developed and provided with the facilities necessary for an integrated sustainable community.

EN3 When undertaking a masterplan, discussions should be had with the local authority to identify the anticipated requirements for local facilities, which would be expected to be provided as part of the development of the neighbourhood, in the interest of proper planning and sustainable development

A neighbourhood should ideally contain a focal point or a heart which provides for the necessary mix of uses which could include – local shops/ services/ public house/ library/ crèche/ community centre/ school/ post office/ open space/ landscaped play areas. The Council will require that in most cases that a basic level of facilities be provided, however, depending on the extent of development and the level of existing local services, there may be a need for more facilities. Discussions should be had with the local authority regarding the types of facilities required and the location for such facilities.

7.7.1 Defining the Neighbourhood

A neighbourhood is a residential or mixed use area where people live, work and socialise. Ideally it is a safe, accessible, clean, integrated, healthy, democratic, intimate and liveable space. Over time neighbourhoods have given way to large scale dispersed developments primarily associated with one or more land uses. Today towns are divided between areas of residential, industrial and open space, which are poorly integrated and isolated.

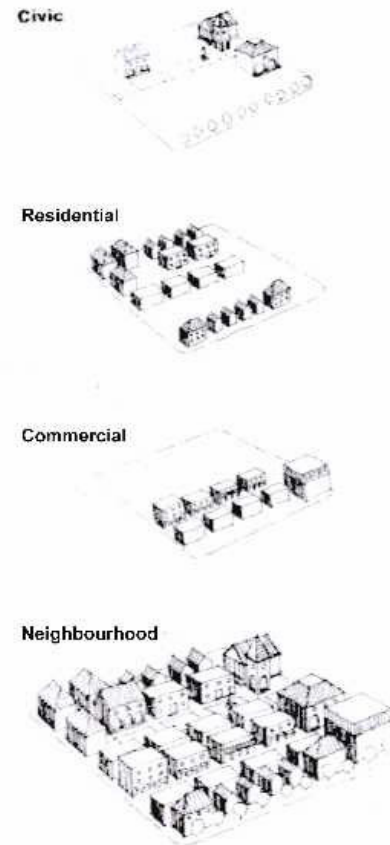
The unprecedented growth that Dundalk has experienced in recent times has created a basis for strong neighbourhoods where citizens can actively promote the growth and development of communities.

Sustainable neighbourhoods are neighbourhoods, which last from one generation to another without degrading the environment or limiting social and economic progress. In order to achieve sustainable neighbourhoods local authorities must work in conjunction with citizens and community groups to promote local sustainability and awareness.

Local Agenda 21 is the tool used by local authorities to promote sustainability within neighbourhoods and communities. The Council will seek to fulfil its role through adopting sustainable development principles to promote sustainability within neighbourhoods and communities.⁴

7.7.2 Enhancing the Existing Communities

A significant proportion of the new residential development, which has occurred in recent times, has been provided without proper provision for the necessary social and community facilities. Many of the new developments are not as well integrated into the local environment as they could be. There is potential to help create more integrated communities and identify opportunities to provide more services and links through the neighbourhood planning principles.



⁴ 'Towards Sustainable Local Communities; Guidelines on Local Agenda 21' these are contained within the Housing Appendix in Volume 2.

Through the local community and the Council working in partnership, there is potential to regenerate neighbourhoods in terms of integration, environmental improvements and access to services and facilities.

A preliminary investigation should establish opportunities for improving integration/linkage, providing environmental improvements and also verify the needs of the locale in terms of community facilities and services. A neighbourhood should where possible, contain a local level of services and facilities within walking distance. (See Volume 2, Appendix 3 - Case Studies 1& 2)

Objectives/Opportunities

The objectives for regenerating existing neighbourhood areas are:

- OBJ1** Identify opportunities to encourage the enhancement of the existing recreational areas to become more of a focal point for the local community.
- OBJ2** Identify and outline areas where there is the potential to provide basic community facilities and encourage their provision for the benefit of the neighbourhood
- OBJ3** Identify opportunities to improve integration and linkages between and within the community
- OBJ4** Identify opportunities to provide, enhance and protect open space within local communities. Where possible this should include a children's playground, as well as other amenity resources. These should be linked to surrounding parks and residential developments.
- OBJ5** Encourage co-working in alliance with local groups to promote awareness of local environmental issues i.e. recycling, waste management
- OBJ6** Investigate the potential for the establishment of a community action committee⁵, which works in partnership with the Council to promote and regenerate neighbourhoods

Policies for Regenerating Existing Neighbourhoods

EN 4 *The Council will encourage the regeneration of neighbourhoods where appropriate, in partnership with the community interests, through advocating the reuse of derelict buildings and promoting the use of environmentally sound building materials, and by supporting local community development and enhancement schemes.*

EN 5 *The Council will seek to enhance and protect existing open spaces with the assistance of available funding or through Public Private Partnerships.*

⁵ A community action committee can be made up of interested residents and local officials as well as council officials, all with the aim of achieving objectives within the community

EN 6 The Council will seek to encourage better integration between communities by requiring that improved connectivity and linkages be provided within and between residential areas and community facilities.

EN7 The Council will support agencies, community groups and individuals who work towards regenerating neighbourhoods and communities through education and training.

Map 6 identifies the existing built up neighbourhoods, which may have potential for improvement through regeneration and community development initiatives.

7.7.3 Creating New Neighbourhoods:

Future development of undeveloped and partially developed residential land is expected to require the submission of a masterplan, which will help to ensure the comprehensive development of each sector as a neighbourhood unit.

Limited infill may be permitted where such development is regarded as being in keeping with the principles of the masterplan concept and it would not affect the comprehensive development of the neighbourhood area in accordance with the principles set out.

The general neighbourhood masterplanning principles, which are set out within this section, will apply to the development of each of the defined partially developed and undeveloped neighbourhoods.

Phasing will be based upon the principle of containment (the need to make most efficient use of land and services and achieve a comprehensive development of each sector with proper links between areas and services) and the need to create sustainable balanced communities.

Each sector should be comprehensively developed, ensuring that the areas have a satisfactory supply of services and facilities to meet the needs of the communities living there.

Phasing is expected to follow the following format:

- social and physical infrastructure will need to be provided as a prerequisite
- priority will be given to the development of new neighbourhoods close to existing local centres to ensure the proper planning and sustainable development of the area (see Map 6)
- priority will be given for new neighbourhood developments which have adequate services and facilities including infrastructure provision
- development within all of the neighbourhood areas will not be permitted until adequate infrastructure has been provided.
- the phasing situation can be reviewed as part of the yearly monitoring review.

Each phase should be substantially completed, incorporating all the necessary infrastructure, services and facilities in place or coming on line, to the satisfaction of the Council.

Future neighbourhood areas are identified in Map 6. It is not anticipated that all of the outlined neighbourhood areas will be developed over the plan period. It is considered that those areas, which are closest to existing services and have adequate infrastructure could be partially developed over the plan period, this depends on the market for housing and other economic factors as well as choice of location. Dundalk has considerable flexibility in terms of locations for new housing development and as such it is a requirement for the new housing development to be provided in a phased comprehensive manner. This will help to ensure that such development contains all the adequate facilities and services to cater for the community and avoid ad hoc developments, which do not make adequate provision for the local community.

N1 The Council will require that the new neighbourhood areas are masterplanned in accordance with the guidance set out in the neighbourhood masterplanning principles to help achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Limited infill will be permitted where this would not affect the comprehensive development of the area (s) and where it is in accordance with the masterplanning principles set out.

7.7.4 Neighbourhood Masterplanning Principles for development of the Undeveloped /Partially Developed Neighbourhood Sectors

Layout Masterplans will be required for the identified partially developed and undeveloped neighbourhood sectors (Map 6) and will be required to include the following;

- A comprehensive survey setting out topographical information and also identifying trees, hedgerows, stone walls and other features to be retained where possible. This Plan should identify trees to be protected and identify features within the site, which could be maintained where possible to break up the building mass.
- A plan displaying infrastructure provision outlining the road layout for the neighbourhood, this should include details on public transport routes and links and should where possible /appropriate utilise the concept of 'Home Zones'⁶ to enable the differing types of traffic to be divided to ensure better environments for the new neighbourhood/

⁶ Homezones are about reclaiming the streets from a traditional domination by cars, it works through the physical alteration of streets and roads in the area forcing the motorist to take greater care - refer to Vol.2, Appendix 8 or <http://www.homezones.org/concept.html> for more details.

- A landuse zoning plan should set out the mix of uses for the neighbourhood. It should set out the focal point for the community and the uses to be accommodated. Uses should be on a par with neighbourhood centre provision. Including a diversity of local retail/ services and facilities - including health care and childcare provisions as well as a community centre, commensurate with the likely demand from the overall anticipated population. In line with guidance, a childcare facility with 20 spaces will be required to be provided for every 75 new residential units.
- The need for educational and institutional provision will be agreed on a sector-by-sector basis with the Council and the Educational Department. Given the anticipated level of population within the new areas it is anticipated that there may well be a need for new classrooms or indeed new schools. There will be a requirement to set aside an area of land to meet educational needs and it is expected that developer contributions may also be required to help provide the necessary facilities. The area of land to be set aside should be centrally located, adjacent to the recreational areas and close to the other community facilities with good pedestrian and public transport links.
- Each new neighbourhood area should provide links to which the local public transport system can connect with to help ensure that the new neighbourhood areas can be accessed by a choice of means of transport and help to increase the sustainability of this new community.
- Where appropriate and in agreement with the Council, provision should be made in future residential developments for recreational facilities such as sports fields, park areas, and community halls, bowling halls, playgrounds and pitch and putt.
- The plan should also identify where possible areas where there may be potential to provide local employment opportunities. In such cases the types of uses likely to be accommodated as well as details on design and setting should be provided.
- The house designs and layout features - these should not be overly suburban in character - where practicable traditional forms and materials should be used and in some cases sympathetic contemporary equivalents may be acceptable.
- Design should promote energy and water efficiency, the use of reused and local material and protect flora, fauna and natural habitats.⁷

⁷ DoELG, Towards Sustainable Local Communities – Guidelines on Local Agenda 21, 2001, pp.28

- Encourage design flexibility so that buildings are designed or adapted in ways which allow for as many uses and as much flexibility of use as practicable.⁸
- Details regarding the density, massing and height of development on the site as a whole and the provision of open space and landscaping, this should be appropriate to reflect the topography and the views into the site, and the relationship between the built up area with the open countryside
- A landscaping Plan to be included should also incorporate details for children's play facilities or additional community facilities in appropriate circumstances as well as links to other residential areas and services in the locale.
- The layout and orientation of the buildings should take into account the need to address roads - natural features and the topography of the landscape.
- Particular attention should be paid to boundary treatment and the need to separate differing uses and maintain views, where possible boundary treatment should provide planting to provide a softer edge between the built up areas and the countryside beyond.
- Much of the land for the new neighbourhood areas is currently in agricultural use at present. In the case of each neighbourhood, there is greater potential for the development to be moulded to fit the landscape. Diversity will be required to be utilised in each of the neighbourhoods, not alone in style but also in form layout and treatment. It is anticipated that each of the areas should incorporate landscaped parkland areas, which will help to create vistas and act as a means of pedestrian links and walkways between and throughout the neighbourhoods.

Recreational and Amenity Provision

- Policy requires that public open space standards within residential areas provide at least 1 hectare per 150 dwellings or 10 % of the sites area, whichever is the greater. The minimum acceptable open space unit should be 200sqm with 10m as the minimum dimension on any one side.
- Public open space should where possible be maximised in terms of its location, size and use and where appropriate should be landscaped. It should be provided in accordance with the following principles;

⁸ DoELG, Towards Sustainable Local Communities – Guidelines on Local Agenda 21, 2001, pp.32

- Public open space should be provided as an integral part of the development and should not be located so as to cause a security problem for houses.
 - It should be overlooked by dwellings and should not be placed behind houses or in areas fronting onto major roads, as it is generally found that these areas are underused.
 - Open space should not be backland, or land on steep slopes or land incidental to roads such as grass margins or roundabouts etc.
- The more large-scale developments should take into account the need for a range of open spaces to meet both the active and the passive recreational needs of the residents, particularly children and elderly. There should also be sufficient variety in the layout and form of open space.

The council would like to encourage the provision of a range of safe play and recreational areas within the existing and new neighbourhoods.

Policies for the Creation of Sustainable Neighbourhoods

N2 New Residential Development within the Defined Growth Areas

New development within the defined growth areas of Blackrock, the South West sector, Mount Avenue and the zoned land to the north of the Castletown River will be required to be masterplanned in accordance with the defined neighbourhood principles

Masterplanning will require details on the cumulative impact of development including, phasing, density, form, design, scale, the need for services and facilities and the relationship with the existing built up area to ensure integration and connectivity, having due regard to the principles of good housing development and the masterplanning principles set out in section 7.7 of this plan

N3 Limited Infill within the defined Growth Areas,

Limited infill development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that such development

- a) would not prejudice the development of the wider area;***
- b) is properly integrated with the existing community & wider area and in keeping with the principles of neighbourhood masterplanning***
- c) provides adequate open space and play facilities and conforms to the principles of Good Housing Development.***

To help ensure the proper phased development of the plan area over the plan period and beyond, masterplans will be required for new development within

each of the defined neighbourhood areas. The masterplans will be required to set out how the areas could be developed and integrated on a phased sectoral basis. Limited infill development will be allowed where it is demonstrated that such development would not prejudice the future comprehensive development of the area in accordance with the requirements of the neighbourhood masterplanning principles.

Mount Avenue

Within the Mount Avenue Area Action Plan area particular regard should be paid to the need to provide appropriate road links and the need for phased sustainable development in the area. Priority should be given to the need to protect the heritage and amenity interest, in the area around the Castletown Motte and Bailey.

Rockview Farm

A Local Area Plan for the lands around Rockview Farm; to the east of the Blackrock Road and south of the Shore Road; is to be prepared by the Council which outlines the most appropriate means of developing these lands. A priority of the Local Area Plan will include be flood prevention and surface water attenuation as the land is liable to flooding and only protected by an embankment which is designed to cater for agricultural use. Any subsequent applications for planning permission must accord with the tenets of this Local Area Plan.

South West Local Area Plan

A Local Area Plan is currently being prepared for this area. In the interim land use zoning objectives have been set out. The priority will be strongly based on the need to create mixed sustainable integrated communities and the provision of a holistic framework for the future development of the wider area.

Zoned lands to the North of the Castletown River

New areas have been zoned to the north of the Castletown River to help ensure that future development within the plan period occurs in a balanced sustainable manner. It will also help to stimulate further investment to the North of the plan area. To ensure that adequate proper provision is made for community and social facilities, the Council will seek to explore options for the production of a Local Area Plan to guide the development of this area further.

N4 *As part of the Comprehensive development, the Council will require that the open space provision accords with the guidance set out in this masterplanning brief and the Development Plan.*

N5 *The Council will seek to work in partnership with the private sector to advance the sustainable development of the*

neighbourhood areas, in accordance with the Masterplanning principles.

- N6** *The Council recognises the role of community groups, agencies and individuals with respect to integrating the community and providing essential services, these groups will be supported and encouraged.*

7.8 The General Residential Policies

7.8.1 Protecting and Enhancing the residential Amenity

HP1 *Protecting the Residential Amenity*

In considering any proposal for development in established built-up areas, the Council will favourably consider granting permission where it can be demonstrated that the proposals will not harm the character of the surrounding area.

Applications should therefore take account of the main uses of land and buildings in the vicinity, the mix of such uses and the architectural character of the area and issues such as privacy, overlooking, overshadowing, overbearing and other potential negative impacts

It is a priority of the Council to ensure the protection of the residential amenity, while also permitting development, which complements the residential amenity, and neither conflicts or detracts from the character amenity and design of the area. The policy does not preclude appropriate new development nor does it seek to solely maintain the status quo. Residential amenity is generally defined as including the need to protect privacy, and minimise disturbance (by traffic, noise, and smells, fumes, vibrations or light pollution) and protect access to daylight.

HP2 *Protecting the Existing Residential Amenity*

The Council will seek to protect existing lawful residential developments within the plan area and will take into account the need to protect and enhance the residential amenity when considering proposals for extension or alteration.

The Council will seek to protect the existing lawful residential developments and uses within the plan area. In some cases, established homes have been found to be located within zoned employment areas or other similar land use zoning areas, which would not normally permit such uses. The plan policy will seek to protect such established lawful developments or uses.

HP3 New residential development

New residential development will generally be directed to existing settlements and communities within the urban areas and the defined growth areas, in line with the policy considerations of the Plan.

HP4

New residential development will be required to be properly integrated with the existing community and local centres, where possible and should make adequate provision for community facilities and services.

HP5 The Council will normally permit residential development providing it respects the surrounding amenity in character and scale and respects the principles of good housing development and;

- a) is within a residentially defined zone*
- b) provides adequate off street parking and satisfactory access for pedestrians and vehicles to the site*
- c) provides adequate landscaping including the retention of trees and hedgerows*
- d) provides adequate open space and play facilities*
- e) is in line with the other relevant policy requirements of the plan*

HP6 Residential development within the town centre

The Council will seek to protect existing residential areas and encourage new residential development in and adjacent to the town centre through;

- a) the adoption of appropriate land use zoning objectives,*
- b) identification of suitable sites and the use of compulsory land acquisition powers to assemble land where land tenure and or site assembly is proving difficult.*

The majority of development within the plan period will be directed to the urban area and the defined growth areas. In the interests of proper planning and sustainability, the Council will seek to restrict one off/ or sporadic housing and ad hoc developments within the countryside. New developments will be required to be properly integrated with the existing communities and make proper provision for recreation, community facilities and services.

HP7 Infill housing development, development of backland sites and redevelopment for housing

Proposals for the intensification of residential uses within established residential areas, through infill development, the use of backland sites and redevelopment, will be permitted where appropriate, provided that:



- a) *the proposal respects the existing prevalent character of the surrounding area;*
- b) *the proposal would not harm the amenity of adjoining properties and the surrounding area;*
- c) *the proposal ensures that an adequate supply of informal and formal public open space is retained within the immediate surrounding area;*
- d) *where appropriate, the proposal includes convenient off-street car parking that should be achieved without detracting from the amenity and character of the property itself or neighbouring properties;*
- e) *it can be demonstrated that any additional vehicular traffic generated by the proposal will not have an adverse effect on the amenity and character of the surrounding area;*
- f) *the proposal makes suitable provision for pedestrian/cycle access; and,*
- g) *the proposal is in accordance with the policies, requirements and guidance contained in this plan.*

Careful intensification of residential use within established residential areas, though development of gap and backland sites and redevelopment of existing properties is considered to be a suitable method of promoting a sustainable use of land within built-up areas. It is also an appropriate means of ensuring the continued viability and vitality of locally based services and community facilities. The Council considers that there may be appropriate locations within existing urban and built-up areas where further residential development could occur.

In certain other locations, such as the area of land fronting the length of the Ramparts River along the Ramparts Road. This area is considered unsuitable for infill residential development as it is a sensitive location adjacent to the Cathedral and fronting the Ramparts River, it also covers quite an extensive amount of area, running from Williamson's Mall to the Badminton Club. The potential for the development of this area should be first of all considered by means of the undertaking of an Development Brief setting out the options for the future development of this area, including uses, design density, height massing and access. It will then need to be masterplanned in accordance with the requirements of the Development Brief.



7.8.2 Monitoring

HP8 Monitoring of Housing Land

The availability and take up of land for residential development will be monitored to ensure the maintenance of supply. Monitoring will be

undertaken in conjunction with, and to inform the preparation of future Louth County Housing Strategies.

The Council will adopt a monitoring and management approach to the provision of new housing land. In accordance with the requirements of the Housing Strategy (2002-2007) the Council will ensure that there is effective monitoring of the supply of housing land throughout the plan period in order to meet demand. This work will also help to provide the necessary baseline information for the review of the County Housing Strategy.

7.8.3 Principles of Good Housing Development

HP9 Housing Layout

The Council will be minded to grant planning permission for new residential proposals where it can be demonstrated that such proposals will contribute to a quality and sustainable residential community and providing that the proposal:

- a) respects the character and features of the site, integrating appropriately any natural features or built heritage into the overall design and layout of the development and***
- b) makes adequate provision for open space and for landscaping retaining as much of the existing vegetation as possible***
- c) respects the existing scale and character of the surroundings, and the amenities of neighbouring properties;***
- d) provides for a variety of modes of transport, integrating where appropriate footpaths, cycle paths and access for public transport and an adequate level of on street parking;***
- e) respects local traditions of form materials and architectural detailing or is a high quality, sympathetic contemporary equivalent and is in accordance with the policies, requirements and guidance contained in the plan.***

All new housing developments will be required to provide a high standard of layout and design for the benefit of current and future generations. Policy HP20 and HP21 sets out the development standards and details regarding boundary treatment. Regard must be shown for the natural and built features and characteristics of each site as well as context and setting.

7.8.4 Housing Density and Mix

HP10 Housing Densities

In considering proposals for new housing development, the Council will seek to maximise the use of land, in an appropriate manner, in order to encourage a more sustainable pattern of development.

In Dundalk town centre area a housing density of between 35 to 50 units per ha will be required or a higher density in the most central locations and along the defined public transport routes.

In order for developers to achieve a higher density in new housing developments within town centre, the requirements for car parking and open space provision on each site may be reviewed in consultation with the Council.

Outside of the town centre area and within the defined growth areas of Dundalk a housing density of at least 25 dwellings per hectare (net) will be required unless it can be demonstrated that there are exceptional circumstances why a lower density is appropriate.

The Council will pursue as far as possible the approach to housing densities set out in the DoELG publication Guidelines on Residential Density, 1999.

Studies have indicated that whilst the land take of the ancillary facilities remains relatively constant, the greatest efficiency in land usage on such lands will be achieved by providing net residential densities in the general range of 35 – 50 dwellings per hectare (14-20 per acre) and such densities should be encouraged generally⁹

This recommends that all new residential development proposals should achieve a minimum of 35 dwellings per hectare (net) and a maximum of 50 dwellings per hectare (net), in order to maximise use of land and encourage greater sustainability in new developments.

However, the Council is mindful that such high-density levels are neither always achievable nor desirable in certain locations and recognises the need for greater flexibility in density of housing development.

The Council will consider reducing the requirements for car parking and open space provision in order to encourage higher density development and will treat each development proposal on its individual merits. Circumstances under which the car parking and open space standards may be relaxed include proposals for the provision of housing for the elderly, students and nurses, residential units for those with special needs and proposals for new housing development in town centre locations.

HP11 Mix & Types of Dwellings

The Council will require a mixture of house types and sizes to be provided in order to reasonably match the requirements of different household categories within the County, including those groups with particular special needs.

The Council will control the mixture of house types and sizes through individual planning applications and will utilise conditions or agreements under

⁹ DoELG (1999) Guidelines on Residential Density, p11

Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 in order to secure the appropriate mix.

The projected decrease in average household size from 3.05 to 2.8 indicates that greater provision will need to be made for small dwellings. The Council will therefore seek to encourage the development of one and two bedroom dwellings as part of the overall residential mix on individual sites. Further to an analysis of projected housing need of those on the waiting list and in accordance with the requirements of the County Louth Housing Strategy, it is recommended that where possible the following breakdown of social housing be achieved;

- 37% of all social housing should be one bedroom units,
- 39% should be two bedroom units
- 14% should be three bedroom units while
- 10% should be given over to four bedrooms.

The strategy requires that a minimum of 35% of new housing be provided as one and two bedroom units with approximately 30% being reserved for dwellings with four or more bedrooms.

For apartment type dwellings not more than 50% should be one bedroom type. In larger developments with fifty or more units there should be a requirement for the inclusion of a minimum of 25% of family sized units. These standards are in accordance with those recommended within the Housing Strategy for County Louth, adopted July 2001.

The adopted *County Housing Strategy* includes policies to control the mix of house types and sizes required to meet housing demand and it is appropriate for the Plan to support this position. The Council will therefore consider the appropriate mix of types and sizes of dwellings on an individual site by site basis as and when planning applications are received and will use conditions and agreements as appropriate to secure the preferred mix of housing types and sizes.

HP12 Social & Affordable Housing

On all housing developments of five or more units the Council will require 20% of zoned residential lands to be reserved for the provision of social and affordable housing purposes, with the preference being for the provision of dwellings rather than land.

The Council will utilise the full range of appropriate mechanisms for the provision of social and affordable housing in the plan area as identified in the Louth County Housing Strategy. The Council considers it appropriate to ensure that a range of mechanisms to secure social and affordable housing provision are available and will negotiate with developers on an individual site by site basis.

HP13 Special Needs Housing

The Council will normally grant permission for development of special needs housing providing the proposal:

- a) is appropriate to the existing scale and character of the area;***
- b) provides adequate parking, vehicular and pedestrian access and does not generate unacceptable levels of traffic;***
- c) makes appropriate provision for wheelchair access and external amenities such as landscaped gardens;***
- d) is located in close proximity to a range of local services;***
- e) would not result in an over provision of similar accommodation within the immediate area: and,***
- f) the proposal is in accordance with the policies, requirements and guidance contained in this plan.***

The *County Housing Strategy* establishes the importance of ensuring an adequate supply of housing suitable for people with particular or special needs. This includes the elderly and people who are visually/ mentally or physically impaired. Where appropriate, the Council will negotiate with private sector developers and voluntary housing providers to ensure that there is a suitable supply of such dwellings to meet identified need in the area.

HP14 Traveller Accommodation

The Council will seek to make appropriate non-transient residential accommodation available to the Travelling Community

The Council will seek to implement the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2000 - 2004, which has identified the requirements over this period.

The Council has undertaken a traveller accommodation programme, which sets out the requirements and means of meeting traveller's needs within the Plan area until 2004. The Council will continue to work with the community to monitor and address needs.

HP15 Private Accommodation for the Elderly

The Council will be minded to grant permission for the provision of a self-contained unit of accommodation for an elderly family relative attached to the family residence of a younger family member, provided that the proposals comply with the other policies in the plan to protect the residential amenity and character of the area but also provided that

- a) the proposed unit is physically attached to the main residential unit on the site***
- b) there is only one main entrance to both units of accommodation***
- c) the unit is designed to allow for re-assimilation into the main residence***
- d) a condition will be attached to limit occupation of the unit to immediate family members***
- e) the unit should not be leased, sold or otherwise disposed of other than as part of the main residential unit on the site***
- f) the unit will not normally exceed a gross floor area of 35sqm***

The demand for such accommodation is recognised by the Council and in general there will be a presumption in favour of such proposals. The consideration of these proposals will be the subject of the other plan policies and the normal planning matters such as the ability of the site to accommodate the unit, drainage, water and amenity.

HP16 Nursing and Residential Care Homes

Care homes which are low, medium and high dependency should ideally be located close to or within built up areas, or within areas close to a range of community and commercial services with adequate public transport links.

The Councils are committed to making provision for lifelong neighbourhoods. As such care homes (especially for the low to medium dependency category) should ideally be located close to or within existing centres of population.

7.9 Development Control Policies

7.9.1 General standards

When a developer is considering proposals for residential development, particular attention should be paid to the layout and design guidelines. Particular principles for garden sizes, open space provision and car parking are also set out which need to be adhered to in achieving a quality residential community. The following list covers a number of the areas;

- in general development should have regard to the character of the area
- Garden sizes should comply with the minimum requirements unless there are exceptional reasons why they should not i.e. they are within the town centre defined area and innovative layouts are proposed possibly incorporating smaller gardens with open space also being provided for the overall development. This does not apply to single infill.
- The concept of minimum eye-to-eye distances from front rooms has been abandoned in the Development Plan. Such a concept tends to result in very regular patterns of residential development leading to excessive uniformity and standardisation of layouts.

7.9.2 Apartments, Flats and Bed-sit Rooms

There shall be a general presumption against granting planning permission for apartment developments (including flats and bed sits) where the gross floor area of the unit would be less than 30sqm. All habitable rooms shall be well proportioned, well lighted and ventilated. Each flat bed sits room shall be self-

contained i.e. there shall be only one door to each unit from the communal passageway and each unit shall be provided with its own WC and bathroom.

HP17 New Apartment Type Dwellings

Proposals for new apartment type dwellings should encompass a gross floor area in excess of 30sqm, with a designated accessible refuse area, in accordance with the other plan policies

Refuse disposal facilities will be required to be provided in a designated area with ease of access for service purposes. Refuse disposal areas should be designed and located to take account of public health and the amenities of the occupiers of the residential units.

HP18 Conversion of Dwellings to Flats

Proposals for the conversion of a dwelling into flats will normally be permitted, provided that

- a) the building is suitable for residential amenity and the proposal avoids over-development***
- b) the proposal would not hinder traffic movement or prejudice the safety of road users or pedestrians***
- c) the proposals includes amenities comprising refuse disposal facilities, drying areas and access to private outdoor amenity space***
- d) the proposal is for self contained flats***
- e) where appropriate the proposals should include convenient off-street car parking without detracting from the amenity and character of the property itself or neighbouring properties; and,***
- f) the proposals is in accordance with the guidance and other policies set out within this plan***

The conversion of existing dwellings into flats can assist in contributing to overall housing stock and widen the choice available and provide an opportunity for the provision of lower cost and affordable housing units in particular.

HP19 Extension to a Residential Dwelling

Permission for an extension to a residential dwelling will be granted when all of the following criteria are satisfied

- a) the proposal does not detrimentally affect the scale, appearance and character of the dwelling to be extended and its wider settlement***
- b) the proposal would not harm the amenity of neighbouring residents and,***
- c) provision is made for safe access and sufficient parking***
- d) the new development does not lead to a reduction of the minimum garden size, where applicable***
- e) the proposals is in accordance with the policies and guidance contained within this plan***

7.9.3 Residential Gardens

Front garden lengths will generally be determined within the context of the overall proposals as well as taking account of existing building lines and off streetcar parking.

Table 7.8 Minimum Garden Sizes

Minimum Garden Sizes for Houses	Greenfield/ Suburban	Brownfield/ Town centre
Terraced House	90sqm	35*sqm
Semi-Detached	110sqm	35*sqm
Detached House	130sqm	35*sqm
Infill /Old Established Housing Areas	25sqm	25sqm

**subject to being a size similar to exiting established garden sizes*

In certain innovative housing layouts the developer may choose to provide a combination of private and semi-private spaces such as courtyard type layouts. One example of this could be the setting out of small private terraces for each dwelling opening directly onto a semi-private enclosed landscaped space solely for the use of the residents.

It is a policy of the Council that new development proposals shall adhere to the minimum garden sizes for houses as set out in table 7.8 in the Development Plan.

Garden sizes will relate to either the front or back and will depend on the context of the overall proposals. Table 7.8 outlines the minimum garden requirement, and cannot be made up of a combination of front and back garden space.

HP20 Height Restriction;

A three storey maximum height restriction, including roofspace shall be imposed in relation to residential buildings within the Blackrock/Haggardstown area..

HP21 Boundary Treatment;

The Council will require that proper provision is made with regard boundary treatment of new housing estates and will also seek to ensure that new housing areas are properly integrated with the existing areas,

In development proposals where boundaries abut existing gardens, a wall of 2 meters should be provided

HP22 Development Standards;

The Council requires that all new residential developments comply with the minimum garden size, car parking and open space standards. Only in exceptional circumstances such as brownfield redevelopment and town centre infill will the Council consider alternatives in relation to open space provision such as roof gardens and balconies

HP23 Apartment Type Dwellings Open Space Requirements;

Private balconies, roof terraces or winter gardens will be required for all apartments above ground floor level with a minimum provision of 5 square meters per apartment.

Where possible, roof gardens should be incorporated to provide communal open space

In new developments, outside of the town centre locations, there may be more potential to provide increased useable open space

The provision of some private open space associated with apartments considerably adds to its amenity value. The council therefore requires that in most new apartment and duplex style schemes, in addition to provision of public areas, there will also be a requirement for semi-private zones such as secluded retreats and sitting out areas, in order to provide for an adequate level of residential amenity.

7.9.4 Public Open Space

In the calculation of public open space areas within residential areas, the areas of roads, footpaths and grass margins will be excluded.

Proposals must ensure that the open space adheres to the following criteria;

- the open space is not located so as to cause a security problem for households
- is not less than 200sqm with 10m as a minimum dimension for any side
- is overlooked by dwellings (open space should not be placed behind houses or fronting on to major roads as these are generally found to be underused)
- it is properly landscaped making maximum use of natural features on the site and creates variety

Open space should not be backland, land on steep slopes or land incidental to roads such as grass margins, roundabouts, etc.

More larger scale developments should take into account the need for a range of open spaces to meet both the active and the passive recreational needs of the residents, particularly children and elderly and that there is sufficient variety in the layout and form of open space.

HP24 Public Open Space Standards;

Public open space standards within residential areas are as follows;

***1heactare per 150 dwellings /1 acre per 60 dwellings or
10% of the sites area, whichever is the greater.***

***The minimum acceptable usable open space unit 200sqm with 10m as
the minimum dimension on any one side.***

7.9.5 Car Parking and Cycle Parking

Car and cycle parking standards are contained within the Transportation Section of the plan and it should be taken into account that these represent the maximum standards.

7.9.6 Layout of Residential Areas

In the interests of ensuring a good and safe housing scheme layout, the following issues will need to be incorporated;

- The division of the estate into groups of houses, integrated with open space, creating a sense of spatial enclosure
- Houses situated in order to ensure that overlooking is avoided and privacy is maximised
- Pedestrian routes and links are provided to connect with local services/ adjacent estates and bus stops
- The orientation is in accordance with sustainable development concepts, taking account of existing views
- There is a separation of through traffic from local housing traffic.
- Curves and changes in surface colour and texture of the road layout which discourages speeding and promotes pedestrian priority
- Road widths should be commensurate with the numbers of houses being provided and are not out of scale and comply with road and safety standards

In general the site development works in residential developments shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the Department of the Environment guidance 'Building and Construction Manual' for such areas. House types should vary in design and size within an overall design concept. Consideration should be given to providing staggered building lines and quality external finishes elevations, roof profiles and proportions.

The landscaping of open space areas contributes greatly to its value both aesthetically and as a recreation or amenity resource. Positive consideration needs to be given to the topography of the site features within the site such as views of the surrounding areas from the site, landmark buildings, stands of trees and views of surrounding mountains, as well as landscape features within the site.

Landscaping schemes will be required to be submitted for new residential proposals to ensure that proper consideration is given to the incorporation of existing natural features and topography of the site. Achieving a good quality aesthetically pleasing space, which can be enjoyed by all, is the overall aim.

7.9.7 Utility Services in Residential Areas

All service cables including ESB, Telecom Eireann and television shall be laid underground throughout residential areas. Service facilities such as transformer stations shall be sited in an unobtrusive manner.

Meter boxes shall not be positioned on the front elevation of dwellings so as to be visible from the adjoining public road.

Public lighting in residential areas and along pedestrian walkways shall be provided in accordance with the latest ESB requirements at the time of the commencement of development and should where possible be the most energy efficient model.

It shall be the responsibility of the developer to provide public lighting in accordance with the ESB requirements. In considering whether to take lighting in charge the Council will have regard to whether the lighting in any particular area serves the wider general public.

All individual water and drainage pipelines serving individual dwellings shall be connected to the mains system in the public areas and in general no mains systems shall be provided on what are intended to be private areas such as front gardens of dwellings. In addition, all stopcocks, sluice valves and hydrants shall be placed in public areas.

7.9.8 Naming of Residential Developments

All roads in residential areas shall be named and all houses numbered. There is an aspiration to where possible to provide the names in dual language - Irish and the English version. Road nameplates shall be provided in a prominent location to the Council's specification and should generally reflect local or Irish place names. Estate road names shall be approved by the Council so as to avoid confusion in the identification of Developments.

In selecting a name for a housing scheme, established local names should be used in preference to names, which have no local connotation. In doing so, local authorities would ensure that historic place names are preserved and not allowed to fall into disuse. The Council will seek to make available the official Irish version of streets, roads, and residential areas to ensure that the Irish form of address can be used.

HP25 Names of new housing developments should be agreed with the Council in accordance with the Department of the Environment circular

entitled 'Naming of Streets and Roads, Numbering of houses and the use of Irish';

The Department of the Environment issued a circular entitled "Naming of Streets and Roads, Numbering of Houses and use of Irish" (F;2/86, 3 Feabhra 1986). The recommendations of this are that builders, local historians, place names experts and public representatives should all be participants in the creation of new names. The place names environment is too important to all the public. Place names are the most salient contemporary evidence of the community's Irish speaking past and the Irish version should be displayed to the best possible effect.

In naming streets and places, careful consideration should be given to the following;

- The elements in local names which themselves represent place names (these should be listed and their location identified)
- Appropriate information regarding local surnames e.g. in cases such as Green Street, it is not clear whether this refers to an open space, a green/ fairgreen, the colour or indeed a sir name and this would have a bearing on the Irish translation as to whether it would be: O'h`Uaithne, O' h Uaithnin, O Glaisne An Griannach or even O' Fathaidh.
- Knowledge not readily available outside of the area in question, e.g. unusual words and phrases, historical incidences, local traditions etc..

7.10 Zoning

The list of normally permitted uses within the various residential zones is not exhaustive and uses and developments not contained in the various schedules shall be considered on their merits. Principles to be considered in assessing such proposals shall include preserving and improving residential amenities and the impact of any particular proposal on the residential amenities of the area.

The locations of the Residential Use Zones are shown on the Land Use Development Plan Plan1A and 1B and the uses generally permitted within the zones are as follows;

To protect, provide and improve residential amenities

Colour Code: Yellow

Houses, apartments, flats, community and public service facilities, including schools, places of worship, halls, community and health centres, open space, playgrounds, crèche facilities, car parks and private garages and to allow for improved local / neighbourhood centres in the areas identified for such uses, local and neighbourhood centres should be small scale local facilities to cater for daily needs of local community and can include one or more of the following uses: local shops – from

corner shop/ newsagents to a small-scale local supermarket, Grocery/ Butchers, Post Office/ Bank, Public house/ restaurant, Pharmacy, Health centre/ GP Facilities/ Dentist, Professional Services – Solicitors/ Estate Agents, Childcare Facilities, Educational Facilities – Primary/ Secondary Schools, Community Hall/ Training Centre, office space for professional services etc. Recreational /open space areas

These local centres can provide a mix of uses to serve everyday needs such as a shop/ public house or post office and possibly surgery. The size and diversity of uses will depend on the area in question, its proximity to other centres and the size of the local population and the demand for such services.

Premature for Residential

Colour Code: *Hatched Yellow*

This zoning also includes substantial areas, which are premature for residential development pending the satisfactory provision of a public mains drainage scheme.

Small scale Economic Activity

These categories would also enable the use by the owner or occupier of his/her primary residence for a small scale economic activity where the proposed use would not result in the residential element of the dwelling being reduced to such an extent that it could no longer reasonably be used as the primary residential accommodation of the owner and occupier of the dwelling and where such development would not detract from the residential amenities of the area.

In exceptional circumstances, a general convenience shop not exceeding 100sqm gross floor area in areas where the Planning Authority considers there to be a definite lack of such a facility in the area, and such provision would not undermine the local centre or neighbourhood facilities or have a negative impact on the commercial core of the Town, may be considered acceptable in principle.

