

Kildare County Council



Pre-Planning Guidelines for Single Rural Houses



This is a non-statutory document

April 2018

The purpose of this document:

This document provides general guidance to those intending to apply for planning permission for a single dwelling within the rural areas of County Kildare (i.e. areas outside any designated town) by providing details relating to a number of key issues requiring consideration in preparing a planning application for a single rural dwelling.

Who should use the guide:

The guide is designed to assist applicants, architects and planning agents in the preparation of a planning application for a single rural dwelling in the countryside. In particular, it is designed to advise of the procedures involved in the assessment of a planning application and the issues that may have a bearing on the decision of the Planning Authority.

Note: This guide is not intended to be a complete or legal interpretation of all policies of the Council as set out in the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 or of the Planning and Development Acts and associated Regulations. Applicants should always seek the advice of a suitably qualified professional in the preparation of any planning application.

The 5 Step Guide to planning for a Rural House in County Kildare



Step 1: The Rural Housing Strategy for County Kildare

The focus of the rural housing strategy for County Kildare is to facilitate in a sustainable manner the genuine housing needs of those who are a native of the rural area by way of family links to the area and/or who work in a type of employment, intrinsic to the rural economy, which requires them to live in a rural area, to be close to their rural based employment.

The rural housing strategy as detailed in Chapter 4 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 seeks to:

- *Formulate policies which guide residential development to the most appropriate locations in rural areas, in the interests of protecting natural and manmade assets. Key assets in rural areas such as water quality, natural / cultural heritage and the quality of the landscape must be protected;*
- *Apply appropriate policy criteria to regulate the provision of rural housing in accordance with the relevant national and regional guidelines; and*
- *Ensure best practice is applied regarding site location, landscape and environmental sensitivities, design, layout, access, drainage and impacts on soils, flood risk assessment and management, water table and water quality.*

In order to facilitate the above, the County has been divided into two rural policy zones which have been identified on the basis of key considerations and challenges facing the County such as Environmental Sensitivities, Landscape Character Areas, the Kildare Rural Housing Study and the ability of the Rural Area to absorb further development.

The two rural policy zones identified are;

Rural Housing Policy Zone 1 (Beige): Northern, central and eastern areas of the county (along the border with Wicklow) – more populated areas with higher levels of environmental sensitivity and significant development pressure.

Rural Housing Policy Zone 2 (green) : South west of the county areas under pressure for development but with lower concentrations of population and lower levels of environmental sensitivity.



Rural Policy Zone Map. Please click on the Rural Policy Zone Map to identify the location of your proposed site.

Applicants must identify which policy zone applies to their particular planning application site. Click on the interactive Map above to identify which policy zone is applicable to your proposed site.

Step 2: Completing the Rural Housing Application Form and Demonstrating Local Need Compliance

Chapter 4 section 14.2.7 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2017 - 2023 sets out the policy for how rural generated housing demand will be managed having regard, *inter alia*, to the applicant's genuine local need. Within this section of the plan varying categories of local need are set out from which an applicant must demonstrate clearly how they comply with a particular category. To assist with this process a Rural Housing Application form has been developed which must be completed and submitted with any planning application for a rural dwelling. The Rural Housing Application form can be downloaded using the following link <http://kildare.ie/CountyCouncil/Forms/Planningforms/>

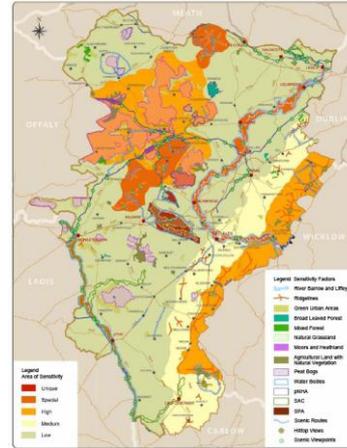
This document sets out clearly the information required and supporting documents to be submitted in order to demonstrate compliance with a certain category of Local Need as per the Rural Housing Policy Zones detailed above in Step 1.

Note: *It should be noted that failure to submit sufficient information/documentation to demonstrate that you qualify for consideration to build a house in the rural area may prolong the assessment of your application or may result in an unfavourable decision. Your Architect/Planner should ensure that such information is submitted with your planning application.*

Step 3: Finding the Right Site

When building a house in the rural countryside the assessment of a suitable and appropriate site requires careful consideration.

Develop an understanding of the landscape in which you wish to build by identifying which landscape character area the subject site falls within. You should also consider whether the lands are within or in close proximity to any local, national or European designated site or whether the subject site is within or has the potential to interfere with any designated protected views or prospects in the vicinity.



[Please click on the the landscape category map to help identify the landscape category your site falls within](#)

Once this has been established a layout should be developed which adheres to the following;

YOUR ARCHITECT/PLANNER SHOULD ENSURE YOUR PROPOSAL

- *Blends sympathetically with the topography/ contours of the site.*
- *Retains existing trees, hedgerows, buildings, slopes and other natural features to provide an appropriate setting.*
- *Has been positioned to exploit passive solar gain and shelter from the prevailing winds.*

YOUR ARCHITECT/PLANNER SHOULD AVOID

- *Excessively large dwellings on restricted sites.*
- *The use of road frontage sites, carved out of larger fields where buildings dominate the view and inappropriate suburban gardens, roadside boundary walls and gates are introduced into the landscape.*
- *Ribbon Development*
- *Sites which may impact on scenic views or detract from the visual appearance of the countryside.*
- *Buildings on prominent hillside locations or on ridges.*
- *Artificially altering the natural levels of the site.*
- *Excessive cutting and filling or locating a house on a 'platform'.*

It should be noted that in line with policy LA3 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 (refer to chapter 14) a Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is required to be submitted with proposals that are likely to have a significantly affect;

- On Landscape Sensitivity Factors i.e. environmentally sensitive sites, rivers etc
- On A class 4 or 5 sensitivity landscape (within 500m of the subject site),
- On A listed scenic route or view identified in maps 14.2 and 14.3.

In such circumstances your Agent/Designer should prepare a LVIA of the proposed dwelling as required which includes; an assessment of visual impacts focusing on the extent to which new development can be seen, the potential loss of existing site features and the introduction of new features and the impact on the character of the landscape, the changes the proposed development will bring to the landscape in general and the impact of those changes upon views from the surrounding areas.

Step 4: House Design

Within the rural countryside the key to good design is simplicity and responding appropriately to site conditions. A simple well proportioned and balanced design will be easier to assimilate into the landscape and will last the test of time. While innovation through design that is both contemporary and timeless is promoted within the county, it is important that architecture respects and acknowledges the characteristics that contribute to the rural character of Kildare.



Simple building forms reflecting the rural character

Note: Your Architect/Planner should ensure that poor design proposals are not replicated. Choosing an inappropriate design may result in a request for new or amended drawings which can cause significant delays and increased costs. In order to avoid such delays and costs greater attention should be given to selecting the most suitable site and preparing a well considered design to suit your site.



YOUR ARCHITECT/PLANNER SHOULD:

- Be aware of the rural setting of the site.
- Design buildings which are simple in form and well proportioned.
- Design buildings which are restrained and absent of fussy add-ons or frills e.g. bulky fascia and soffits
- Utilise a plan which will allow a good solid-to void relationship in its windows and doors.
- Break down the massing of the house through the use of different elements in order to reduce its bulk where necessary.
- Consider building orientation to maximise solar gain.
- Use quality local materials that are well detailed.



YOUR ARCHITECT/PLANNER SHOULD AVOID:

- Trying to retro fit a house design seen elsewhere into your site.
- Deep 'boxy' buildings.
- Log Cabins (completely finished timber buildings) are not vernacular typologies of the Kildare countryside
- Excessive ridge heights for single storey house designs
- Projections to the front elevation
- A mix of design styles or window styles and shapes
- Imitation detailing

Other Design Considerations:

Landscaping:

Landscaping should be used to soften the impact of the proposed development and aid its integration into the landscape in a natural manner.



YOUR ARCHITECT/PLANNER SHOULD AIM TO:

- *Develop a landscaping plan and planting schedule which identifies the location, species type and the number of species to be planted on the subject site.*
- *Plant only native species; they do not require a lot of maintenance to survive and provide enormous benefits for wildlife habitats*



[Click on image for details of native trees and shrubs.](#)



YOUR ARCHITECT/PLANNER SHOULD AVOID:

- *overambitious landscaping schemes that can be difficult and costly to implement*
- *Avoid planting non-native single species such as Leyland Cypress and Laurel Hedges*

Entrance and Boundary Details:

In order to successfully integrate your new dwelling into the landscape, existing roadside boundary ditches, hedging and stone walls where applicable should be retained in so far as possible.

The need for the removal of extensive roadside hedgerows may indicate that the site is unsuitable for development. Where the removal of existing boundaries are required to achieve the required line of sight at the proposed entrance such boundaries should be re-positioned and re-instated on site.



YOUR ARCHITECT/PLANNER SHOULD:

- *Ensure sightlines are provided in accordance with the standards set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges*
- *Include detailed drawings and specifications for entrance treatments*
- *Design an entrance to an appropriate scale reflecting the site size, rural character and dwelling design*



YOUR ARCHITECT/PLANNER SHOULD AVOID:

- *Avoid sites that require extensive hedgerow removal*
- *High roadside boundary walls, entrance gates and piers which appear incongruous and dominating in the Kildare landscape.*
- *Locating an entrance onto a Regional Road*

Garages/Outbuildings:

Where it is also proposed to construct a garage or ancillary outbuilding the design, scale and layout should be carefully considered in the overall design process



YOUR ARCHITECT/PLANNER SHOULD:

- *Sensitively locate the proposed garage/ancillary outbuilding on the site.*
- *Provide a roof design and external finishes that reflect the proposed dwelling design.*
- *Design a building that is modest in size and scale (Note as a general rule of thumb keeping a garage/outbuilding under 40sqm is acceptable – where a large building is proposed a detailed justification for same should be submitted with any planning application).*
- *Ensure the proposed use is incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling*



YOUR ARCHITECT/PLANNER SHOULD AVOID:

- *A design which detracts from the proposed dwelling due to its excessive size, height or location on the proposed site.*

Step 5: Services

Water Supply

All new developments will be required to connect to public water supplies where services are available or where there is a vulnerable aquifer. All connections to the public water supply are subject to agreement with Irish Water.

Where a connection to an existing public water supply is not possible, or the existing supply system does not have sufficient capacity, the provision of a private water supply will only be permitted where the applicant can demonstrate that the proposed water supply meets the standards set out in EU and national legislation and guidance, would not be prejudicial to public health or would not impact on the source or yield of an existing supply, particularly a public supply.

Wastewater Treatment

Proposals for on-site effluent disposal systems must comply with the EPA - Code of Practice for Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (2009). This Code of Practice establishes an overall framework of best practice in relation to the development of wastewater treatment and disposal systems in unserviced rural areas, for protection of the environment and specifically water quality. All planning applications for single rural houses will be assessed in relation to the EPA Code of Practice and must be accompanied by all necessary site tests including details of other systems/wells in the area.

Further notes:

- Details on making a planning application are available at <http://kildare.ie/CountyCouncil/Planning/makingaplanningapplication/>
- Applications must be made on the official planning application form. Copies of the form are available from the Planning Department and at <http://kildare.ie/CountyCouncil/Forms/Planningforms/>
- You will also need additional documents such as plans of your proposed house design and layout
- There will be a fee for making the application.

Before sending in your planning application you should ensure your Architect/Planner has:

- Followed all steps set out in these Pre-Planning Guidelines.
- Described the development in a manner which accurately reflects the type of house that you are applying for permission to build.
- Completed all sections of the Planning Application Form **and the** Rural Housing Application Form.
- Included all relevant documentation to adequately demonstrate compliance with the Rural Housing Policy.
- Included a site notice which accurately reflects the development and matches that set out in the newspaper notice, and that it is positioned correctly on site and legible.
- Included a newspaper notice, in an accepted newspaper and within the 2 week time limit.
- Signed the application form or ensured you have signed the application form.

Useful References: [Click on the image to access each document](#)

Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 Chapter 16 Rural Design – available to view at the Kildare County Council offices or online



House Design Guides

