

Glossary

Affordable Housing:

Housing or lands made available by the planning authority to persons who need accommodation but whose income would not be adequate to meet the payments on a mortgage for the purchase of a house to meet his or her accommodation needs.

Architectural Conservation Area:

A place, area, group of structures or townscape, taking account of building lines and heights, which is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures.

Backland Development:

Development which takes place to the rear of existing structures fronting a street or roadway.

Biodiversity:

The variability among living organisms on the earth, including the variability within and between species and within and between ecosystems.

Geodiversity or geological diversity:

The diversity of minerals, rocks (whether 'solid' or 'drift'), fossils, soils, land forms and geological processes that constitute the topography, landscape and the underlying structure of the Earth.

Brownfield Sites:

An urban development site that has been previously built on.

Building Line:

A development line along a street or roadway behind or in front of which development is discouraged.

Building Regulations:

The Building Control Act 1990 and the Regulations made under it constitutes a system for regulating building works and lays down the minimum standards for design, construction, workmanship, materials etc. Different standards apply depending on the use of the building.

Carrying Capacity:

This is the largest volume of traffic that a particular road or route can carry.

Catchment Area:

An area from which a place draws its population (i.e. a town, hospital or school) or the area served by a water/sewerage scheme.

Comparison Goods:

Those goods that are required on an infrequent basis by individuals and households such as clothing and footwear, furniture and furnishings and household equipment (excluding non-durable household goods), medical and pharmaceutical products, therapeutic appliances and equipment, educational and recreation equipment and accessories, books, newspaper and magazines, goods for personal care and goods not elsewhere classified.

Convenience Goods:

Those goods that are required on a daily or weekly basis by individuals and households (such as food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, tobacco and non-durable household goods).

Demography (Demographics):

Statistical study of human populations.

Development Charges:

Charges or levies placed on developers relating to the cost of services and utilities, which are provided by Westmeath County Council.

District Centre:

Shopping or groups of shops, separate from the town centre, usually containing at least one food supermarket or superstore and non-retail services such as banks, building societies and restaurants serving suburban areas or smaller settlements.

Emissions

Carbon Dioxide, greenhouse gas or other noxious emissions.

Eskers

A long narrow ridge of sand and gravel deposited by glacial meltwaters

GIS Geographical Information Systems

Computer data system which holds data with reference to its geographical location and is capable of capturing, storing, analyzing, and displaying geographically referenced information.

Greenfield Sites:

A piece of open land that has not been previously built on.

Groundwater Protection:

Protection of underground source of water (groundwater aquifer). Certain developments are subject to special controls within defined areas close to aquifers.

Hedgerows:

A natural or semi-natural row of bushes, shrubs and/or trees forming a boundary. Hedgerows define places, act as shelterbelts, and add to biodiversity. They also offer significant wildlife habitat, including wildlife corridors which allow wild animals to move across open countryside, and provide food, nesting and roosting places.

Household:

One or more persons occupying a dwelling which has kitchen and bathroom facilities.

Housing Stock:

Houses that already exist.

Infill Development:

Refers to development taking place on a vacant or undeveloped site between other developments, i.e. an infill site.

Infill Site:

Small gap sites, unused or derelict land usually located in urban areas.

Infrastructure:

Drainage, water supplies, sewage treatment plants, sewerage networks, lighting, telephone lines, electricity supply, railways, roads, buildings, schools, community facilities and recreational facilities.

Landscape Plans:

A detailed plan prepared as part of a planning application, illustrating the steps the developer will take to provide hard and/or soft landscaping on the site.

Landscape Conservation Areas:

This is intended for the preservation of landscape through control of development, this may also include exempted development, within a designated area.

Local Agenda 21:

Agenda 21 is a comprehensive worldwide programme for sustainable development in the twenty-first century with Local Agenda 21 being the programme at local level.

Local Area Plan:

A Plan prepared and adopted in accordance with Section 10 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2006. These plans must be prepared for designated towns with a population in excess of 2,000 persons within the functional area of the Authority. They may also be prepared for areas which the Authority considers require economic, physical and social renewal and for areas likely to be subject to large scale development within the lifetime of the plan.

Manager's Report:

A document outlining the issues that were considered important in arriving at the policies to be contained in a development plan.

Monument (Recorded Monument):

An archaeological monument protected under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendments) Act, 1994.

Neighbourhood Centre:

Small groups of shops, typically comprising a newsagent, small supermarket/general grocery store, sub post office and other small shops of a local nature serving a small, localised catchment population.

Natural Heritage Area (NHA):

These are the basic areas for wild life conservation in the country with over 800 in existence. These are chosen because they are considered by the Parks and Wildlife section of the DoEHLG to be of importance in an Irish context. As yet the formal process of designation of NHAs is not complete, as the process of consultation with property owners is not complete. It is possible for a landowner to object to the designation of property.

Note: responsibility for the designation of these sites lies with the Parks and Wildlife Section of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Population Density:

The number of people per unit area (hectare, square kilometre, acre, square mile) determined by dividing the number of people in an area by the size of the area.

Protected Structure:

A building, feature, site, or structure identified in the Development Plan as worthy of protection or preservation in accordance with Part IV of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2006.

Recycling Centre:

A centre that facilitates the recycling of plastics, glass, corrugated cardboard, newspapers and/or other recyclable goods.

REPS:

Rural Environment Protection Schemes.

Residential Densities:

The number of residential units per area. unit = (hectare, acre).

Rural Area

The rural area shall be defined as land located outside the development boundaries of the town and villages identified in the settlement hierarchy in Section 2.1.1.

Serviced Land Initiative:

A special fund, set up by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, to part – finance local authority water and sewerage schemes providing services to open up development land.

Service Sector:

This is the employment sector, which involves the provision of services, frequently referred to as the tertiary sector.

Set Backs:

This relates to the distance a building line, or a portion of a building line, should be set back from a street, roadway or watercourse.

Site Coverage:

Site coverage is the portion of the site, which is built on and is a ratio determined by dividing the total site area by the ground floor area of the building.

Social Housing:

This is housing provided for persons who are registered with the Local Authority on the Social Housing Waiting List, and assessed as being eligible for social housing. The broad categories of households who are eligible for social housing are set out in Section 9(2) of the 1988 Housing Act and include the homeless, travellers, persons living in unfit or overcrowded accommodation, the elderly, persons with disabilities, persons who cannot reasonable afford to provide their own accommodation.

Sustainable Development:

Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC):

Sites considered of importance at both Irish and European level, the EU habitat directive, transposed into Irish law is the legal basis for the designation of these sites. Site types can vary from bogs to woodlands to river systems/

Special Protection Areas (SPA):

These are primarily for the conservation of bird species, and the legal basis for their designation is the EU Birds directive. The designation is required for listed rare and vulnerable species, migratory species such as wildfowl, and for wetlands which attract large numbers of wildfowl every year.

Topography:

Features of a place or district, the position of its rivers, mountains, roads, buildings etc.

Town Centre/Village Centre:

Town, village and district centres that provide a broad range of facilities and services and serve as a focus for the community and for public transport. It excludes retail parks, local centres and small parades of shops of purely local significance.

Tree Preservation Orders:

An order made by the Council for the preservation of any tree, trees, group of trees or woodlands. The order may prohibit the cutting down, topping, lopping or wilful destruction of trees, except with the consent of the County Council, which may be granted subject to conditions.

Vernacular

The traditional architecture of a region, frequently developed in response to the climate, land conditions, or culture of a region.

Water Framework Directive (WFD)

The EU Water Framework Directive came into force in December 2000 and requires that stricter water quality regulations will have to be taken on board. It demands a more comprehensive and integrated approach to water management and will have significant implications for resources given its scope and ambitious targets. The WFD will govern all aspects of the aquatic environment including surface and groundwaters. A 16-year implementation time frame is envisaged to achieve at least 'good status' for all waters. The catchment-based approach to water quality is enshrined in the Directive and Member States are required to develop River Basin District Management Plans by 2009. Local authorities will have a key involvement in managing the RBD Projects and implementing the RBD Management Plans.

Westmeath is divided between two regions for the purposes of implementation of the Water Framework Directive. Most of the County is within the Shannon Region (ShRBD) but a portion to the east of the County; the Boyne Catchment is within the Eastern River Basin District Area (ERBD).