

Annex 3: Housing Strategy

EXECUTIVE and Non Technical SUMMARY

The Longford County Housing Strategy 2007-2016 clearly sets out the requirement for the existing and future housing needs of Longford County. This Housing Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the legislative requirements, using all relevant and up-to-date information and data.

Based on the undertaking of this strategy, which applies a clear and structured approach and methodology, the following are the **principal recommendations** to be adopted by Longford County Council and Longford Town Council:

- Based on the assessment of social and affordable housing need for Longford County from 2007 to 2016, as illustrated in the summary table below, Longford County Council and Longford Town Council will be justified in reserving 20% of all eligible housing developments in order to cater for social and affordable housing need.
- The breakdown of this 20% into Social and Affordable Housing will be determined by the existing concentration of social housing in the proposed development area.
- It is essential to provide an even spread of housing of all types and encourage social integration.
- There will be a need to provide an additional 6045 residential units during the period 2007-2016 to ensure that there is adequate housing supply to meet demand.
- Implementation of the objectives of this Housing Strategy for Longford County in relation to Social and Affordable Housing will be by means of conditions attached to planning permissions, as set out in Part V Section 96 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, amended 2002.
- The monitoring and review of the Housing Strategy will be in accordance with Part V Section 95 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000.

The table below provides a summary of the anticipated social and affordable housing need for County Longford.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
New Household Formations	660	474	504	535	563	594	626	661	696	731
Social and Affordable Housing Requirement	227	154	149	142	135	138	135	134	133	134
Housing Shortfall as a % of Total Households Required	34.47%	32.50%	29.64%	26.50%	23.97%	23.22%	21.57%	20.21%	19.13%	18.27%

Summary of Anticipated Social and Affordable Housing Need for Longford County from 2007 to 2016 (Source: Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *General Context*

This Housing Strategy has been prepared by the Planning Section of Longford County Council in accordance with the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended by the Planning and Development (amendment) Act, 2002. Under this section, each planning authority is legally required to review the Housing Strategy in order to cover the period of its Development Plan. This Housing Strategy covers jointly the County and Longford Town area. With regard to the preparation of this strategy the period of operation is from 2009 to 2015, in accordance with the lifetime of the County Development Plan. This Strategy has been prepared in 2007 in preparation for the County Development Plan 2009-2015, and accordingly the Strategy has taken into account the remaining years of the existing County Development Plan i.e. 2007-2009 and has also accounted for the year 2016 which will cover the lifetime of the future Town Development Plan. This is in order to achieve completeness and comprehensibility of content.

The following are the key issues upon which the Housing Strategy is based:

- Identification of housing need within County Longford;
- Identification of need for social and affordable housing within the County;
- Provision of housing to satisfy this need and the nature of this need through appropriate zoning arrangements, in accordance with good planning practice;
- Specific policy response to the above.

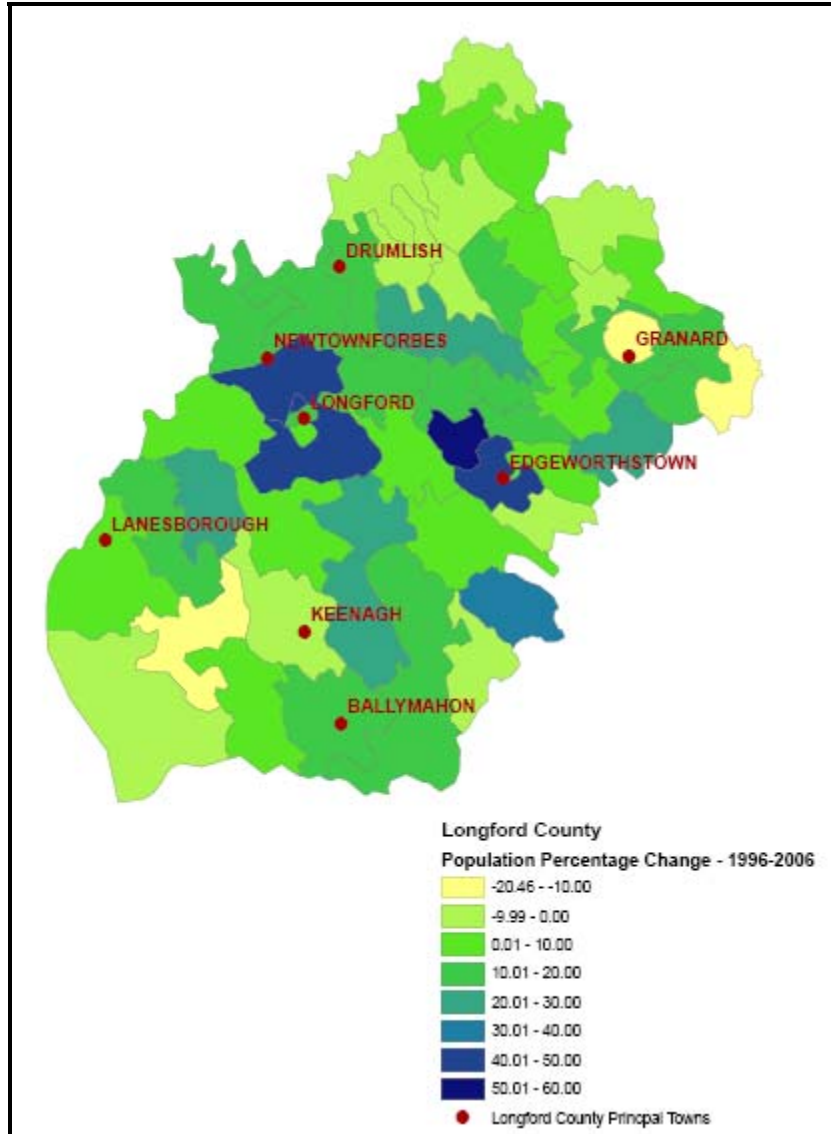
In undertaking the preparation of this strategy the following publications and data sources have been analysed:

- Publication of the full results of the Central Statistics Office (CSO) 2006 Census;
- Relevant CSO publications, namely, Population and Labour Force Projections 2006-2036 (December 2004), County Incomes and Regional GDP 2004 (February 2007) and Household Budget Survey 2004-05 (July, 2007);
- Longford County Council Draft Housing Strategy 2003-2009 (October 2003);
- DoEHLG - A Model Housing Strategy and Step-by-Step Guide (December 2000);

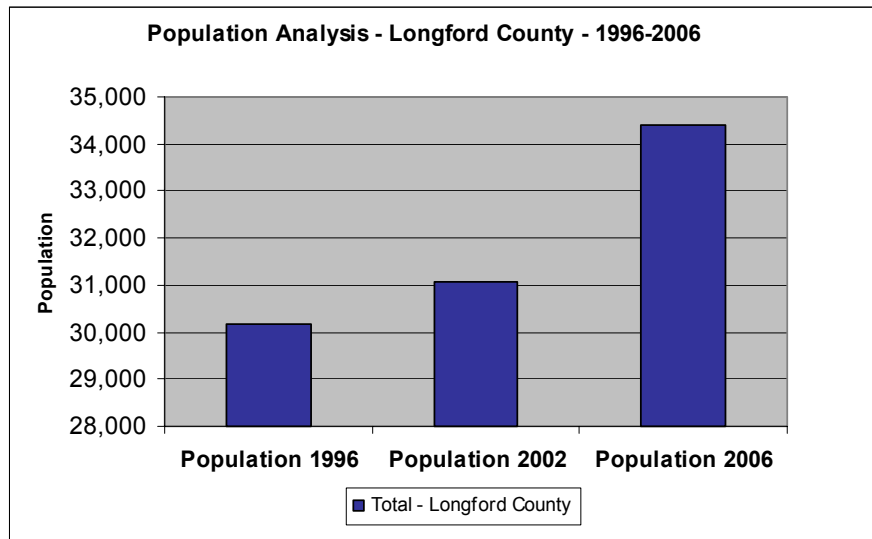
- Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) Medium Term Review 2005-2012 (December 2005);
- Permanent TSB/ESRI House Price Index (June 2007);
- Relevant Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government publications and data sources;
- National Spatial Strategy (2002);
- Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines (2004);
- Residential zonings and associated policies contained within the Longford County Development Plan, 2003-2009, the Longford Town Development Plan, 2003-2009 and the local area plans for towns and villages within the county.

1.2 Population Context

In setting the context for this housing strategy it is necessary to highlight the historic and current population of the county. There has been a significant population increase in County Longford in the last 10 years growing from 30,166 in 1996 to 34,391, an increase of approximately 14%. However this growth is primarily attributable to the growth in the County's population since 2002 which has almost been 11%, compared with the County's population growth between 1996 and 2002 which was just 3%. The County population analysis is clearly represented on Map 1.1 and Graph 1.1 below.



Map 1.1 Longford County Population Analysis 1996 to 2006
 (Source: Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

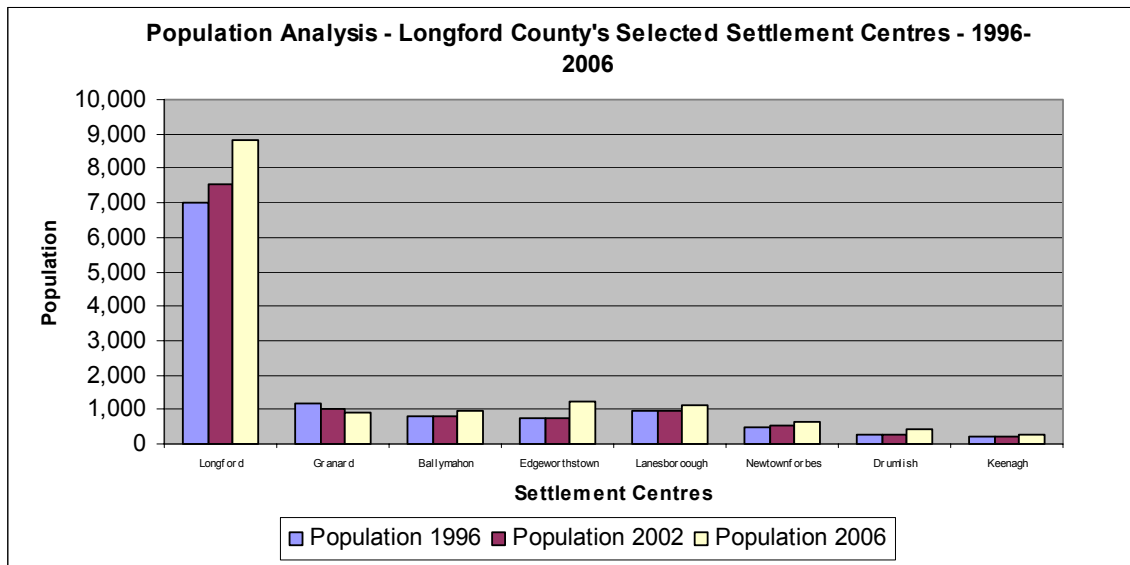


Graph 1.1 Longford County Population Analysis 1996 to 2006 (Source: Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

In addition, Table 1.1 and Graph 1.2 illustrate the population growth of the major settlement centres of Longford County from 1996 to 2006, which shows that with the exception of Granard all of the centres experienced significant growth ranging from approximately 8% up to almost 66%.

Location	Population 1996	Population 2002	Population 2006	% Population Change - 1996-2002	% Population Change - 2002-2006	% Population Change - 1996-2006
	Including Suburbs and Environs					
Total - Longford County	30,166	31,068	34,391	2.99	10.70	14.01
Longford	6,984	7,557	8,836	8.20	16.92	26.52
Granard	1,173	1,013	933	-13.64	-7.90	-20.46
Ballymahon	790	827	963	4.68	16.44	21.90
Edgeworthstown	737	726	1,221	-1.49	68.18	65.67
Lanesborough	984	943	1,112	-4.17	17.92	13.01
Newtownforbes	470	561	668	19.36	19.07	42.13
Drumlisk	274	277	429	1.09	54.87	56.57
Keenagh	223	225	241	0.90	7.11	8.07

Table 1.1 Population Analysis of Major Settlement Centres of Longford County from 1996 to 2006 (Source: Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)



Graph 1.2 Population Analysis of Major Settlement Centres of Longford County from 1996 to 2006 (Source: Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

1.3 Methodology

The overall aim of this strategy is to analyse the requirement for the existing and future housing needs of the county. In undertaking this strategy it is important to note the principal housing strategy requirements of a local authority as established and set out in Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000. These can be summarised as follows:

- Inclusion of housing strategy in development plan(s)
- Consideration given to existing and likely future need for housing, ensuring availability of housing for persons who have different levels of income, providing different types and sizes of housing, special needs of the elderly and those with disabilities, need to counteract social segregation;
- Preparation of an estimate of housing required having regard to:
 - Supply and demand of houses;
 - Price of houses;
 - Income of persons;
 - Rates of interest on mortgages for house purchase;
 - Provision of social and affordable housing.

This Housing Strategy has been prepared with reference to the Department of the Environment Guidelines on Housing Supply, published in December 2000 and Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended by the Planning and Development (amendment) Act, 2002.

The following is the methodology adopted for the undertaking of this strategy:

- Inception - commencement of the study, introduction of the consultant team members to the client steering group, recap on objectives and terms of reference, review of the overall approach, programme and timeframe.
- Baseline Analyses - consisting of detailed review and analyses of all relevant baseline information with particular reference to the following:
 - Review of existing published documents, studies, plans, housing legislation, government policy, local studies;
 - Detailed socio-economic analysis for the county;
 - In-depth analysis of the housing sector in the county.
- Analysis and Estimation of Housing Demand – this consists of the following:
 - Projection of the county population, household formations and sizes, up to 2016;

- Analysis of county income trends, house prices and housing affordability;
- Determination of proportions of households in income groups/ categories;
- House price distribution comparisons;
- Assessment of housing affordability and the number of new household formations likely to experience problems of affordability.
- Analysis and Estimation of Housing Supply – based on the following:
 - Assessment of undeveloped residential zonings in the county;
 - Numbers of residential planning applications and approvals;
 - Levels of house completions;
 - Residential development pressures within the county;
 - Physical and social infrastructure provision;
 - Future residential development capacity.
- Development of Housing Strategy for County Longford which will set out the analyses, policies and methods of implementation.

2. HOUSING DEMAND

2.1 Introduction

Central to the preparation of this housing strategy is the determination of the housing demand that will be required over the operational period to the strategy. In order to undertake this demand analysis it is essential that all relevant and available data is considered and applied where appropriate.

The housing demand requirement, once set against the housing types and prices available, and the amount of land zoned residential under the current plans, will inform future development throughout the County and town areas through the policies contained within the Strategy, and identify the demand for Social and affordable Housing.

The structure of the analysis is designed flexibly to allow for the introduction of updated information, which is crucial in order to provide for changing circumstances over the life of the relevant Development Plans.

2.2 Housing Demand Methodology

The methodology used to determine the housing demand for Longford County up to 2016 is set out in the following steps:

Step 1: Projection of Longford County population from 2007 to 2016 - based on the detailed application of the "*Demographic Component Method*", as illustrated in Diagram 2.1, which clearly integrates the dynamic components of population change, namely, mortality, fertility and migration, and enables age-specific cohort analysis and projection. The undertaking of this projection of population enables projected household formations and sizes to be determined.

Step 2: Calculation of average household size and additional households required to cater for the projected additional population from 2007 to 2016 - based on projected population and on the assumption that there will be a slight annual decrease in the average household size.

Step 3: Estimated distribution of household disposable incomes for 2006 - based on the 10 decile

income ranges set out in the CSO Household Budget Survey 2004-2005 (July 2007)¹, an adjusted average weekly disposable income for the State for 2006 and a Longford County deflator of 0.92².

Step 4: Calculation of household disposable income distribution from 2007 to 2016 – based on the ESRI Medium Term Review 2005-2012 (Dec 2005) high growth scenario up to 2012 and an assumed growth from 2013 to 2016.

Step 5: Assessment of average house prices in the State and Longford County from 1996 to 2006 – based on the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG) Database Direct for Housing Statistics (July 2007).

Step 6: Calculation of projected house price bands for Longford County for the years 2007 to 2016 – based on assumptions relating to average house price decreases and increases over the time period with reference to the Permanent TSB/ESRI House Price Index (June 2007) and the DoEHLG Annual Housing Statistics Bulletin 2006 (2007), the DoEHLG House Price Statistics System (July 2007), and assessment of current house price sales through the interviewing and surveying of local auctioneers.

Step 7: Determination of annual income distribution of total households in Longford County from 2007 to 2016 – based on the 10 decile income ranges, Longford County Council Draft Housing Strategy 2003-2009 (October 2003) and the DoELG's "*A Model Housing Strategy and Step-by-Step Guide*" (December 2000).

Step 8: Determination of income distribution of annual additional households required for Longford County from 2007 to 2016 – based on the 10 decile income ranges, Longford County Council Draft Housing Strategy 2003-2009 (October 2003) and the DoELG's "*A Model Housing Strategy and Step-by-Step Guide*".

Step 9: Calculation of house price affordability for Longford County from 2007 to 2016 – based on the calculated household disposable income distribution and the application of the annuity

¹ The CSO Household Budget Survey sets out 10 income deciles, or income groups, that incorporate all the household incomes earned by the working labour force at national level. These deciles are list as the 1st Decile (the lowest income group) to the 10th Decile (the highest income group). The household incomes are set out as distributions, i.e. proportions of households in certain income groups, as opposed to averages.

² An explanation of the Longford County deflator is contained within Section 2.4.

formula as set out in DoELG's "*A Model Housing Strategy and Step-by-Step Guide*", incorporating the following variables; an affordability threshold of 35%, a loan to value ratio of 0.90 (i.e. no mortgage obtained will exceed 90 per cent of the cost of the house), an annual percentage interest rate (APR) of 5% and an average loan term of 25 years³.

Step 10: Calculation of anticipated social and affordable housing⁴ need and associated shortfall for Longford County from 2007 to 2016 – based on the number of households required, housing affordability by each decile, household band position, house prices bands (upper value), number of houses required within each band, and percentage and number of housing units projected to be provided within each band.

³ These variables are central to the calculation of house price affordability. The affordability threshold of 35% is based on Section 93 subsection (1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000. The loan to value ratio of 0.90, the annual percentage interest rate (APR) of 5% and the average loan term of 25 years are those used within the Model Housing Strategy and Step-by-Step Guide (December 2000), and based on detailed discussions with economic experts Permanent TSB these variable are still currently applicable.

⁴ '*Social Housing*' refers to housing for persons as defined under section 9 (2) of the Housing Act, 1988. '*Affordable Housing*' as defined under section 93 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000

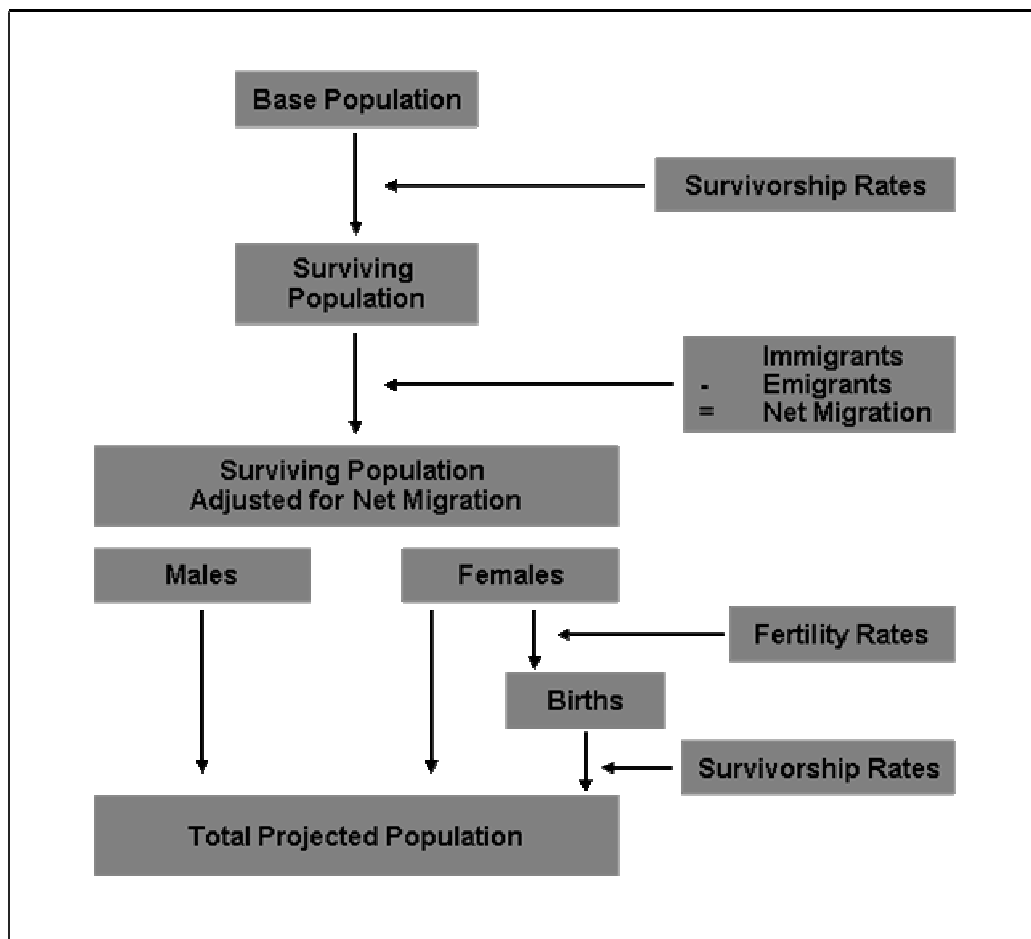


Diagram 2.1 Schematic of the "Demographic Component Method"
 (Source: CSO, 2004, and Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

The following sources and data were referenced and used when undertaking the analysis of housing demand for Longford County:

- CSO - 1996, 2002, and 2006 Census, Volume 3 - Household Composition, Family Units and Fertility;
- CSO - Household Budget Survey 2004-2005 (July 2007);
- CSO - County Incomes and Regional GDP 2004 (February 2007);
- CSO – Population and Labour Force Projections 2006-2036 (December 2004);
- Longford County Council Draft Housing Strategy 2003-2009 (October 2003);
- DoELG - A Model Housing Strategy and Step-by-Step Guide (December 2000);
- ESRI, Medium Term Review 2005-2012 (December 2005);
- Permanent TSB/ESRI House Price Index (June 2007);
- DoEHLG - Database Direct for Housing Statistics (September 2007);
- DoEHLG - Annual Housing Statistics Bulletin 2006 (2007);
- DoEHLG - House Price Statistics System (July 2007);

The following assumptions have been applied in the analysis of housing demand:

- Average household size will reduce from its current rate of 2.79 per unit to 2.44 per unit in 2016;
- The current rates of mortality and fertility will remain constant from now until 2016;
- The current migration rates will reduce slightly over the next ten years;
- Average house prices will decline by approximately 2.5% per annum from 2007 to 2010, after which there will be an annual increase on approximately 2.3% until 2016.

2.3 Population and Household Projections

As illustrated in Table 2.1 the population of Longford County is projected to increase from 34,391 in 2006 to 44,300 in 2016, an approximate 9,900 person or almost a 29% increase. For the urban area Longford town the population is forecast to increase from 3,928 to 5,060, as shown in Table 2.2. Over the same time period the number of households in Longford County is forecast to increase from 12,111 to 18,156, an increase of 6,045 households, which equates to the approximate provision of 600 units per annum. As previously stated, it is assumed that the average household size will slightly decrease annually from a figure of 2.79⁵ in 2006 to 2.44 in 2016, which is in line with European and State assumptions.

Year	Longford County Population	Average Household Size	Annual Decrease in Average Household Size	Number of Households	Additional Households Required Per Annum	Total Additional Households Required - 2007-2016	Average Additional Households Required Per Annum - 2007-2016
1996	30,166	3.15	-	9,376	-	-	-
2002	31,068	2.93	0.04	10,375	-	-	-
2006	34,391	2.79	0.04	12,111	-	-	-
2007	35,183	2.76	0.04	12,771	660	-	-
2008	36,026	2.72	0.04	13,245	474	-	-
2009	36,916	2.69	0.04	13,749	504	-	-
2010	37,852	2.65	0.04	14,284	535	-	-
2011	38,824	2.62	0.04	14,847	563	-	-
2012	39,838	2.58	0.04	15,441	594	-	-
2013	40,891	2.55	0.04	16,067	626	-	-
2014	41,989	2.51	0.04	16,729	661	-	-
2015	43,126	2.48	0.04	17,424	696	-	-
2016	44,300	2.44	0.04	18,156	731	6,045	604

Table 2.1 Projection of Population and Households for Longford County from 2007 to 2016 (Source: Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

⁵ Source: Central Statistics Office, 2006 Census, Volume 3 – Household Composition, Family Units and Fertility, Table 19 - Average number of persons per private household in permanent housing units in the Aggregate Town and Aggregate Rural Areas of each Province, County and City, 1946 to 2006.

Year	Longford County Population - Total	Longford Urban Population - Total	Longford Urban as a % of Longford County
1996	30,166	3,698	12.26%
2002	31,068	3,552	11.43%
2006	34,391	3,928	11.42%
2007	35,183	4,018	11.42%
2008	36,026	4,115	11.42%
2009	36,916	4,216	11.42%
2010	37,852	4,323	11.42%
2011	38,824	4,434	11.42%
2012	39,838	4,550	11.42%
2013	40,891	4,670	11.42%
2014	41,989	4,796	11.42%
2015	43,126	4,926	11.42%
2016	44,300	5,060	11.42%

Table 2.2 *Projection of Population for Longford County and Longford Urban from 2006 to 2016 (Source: CSO, 2004, and Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)*

2.4 Household Disposable Incomes Analysis and Projection

The current 2006 estimated distribution of household disposable incomes as set out in Table 2.3 provides an analysis of estimated household disposable incomes in County Longford for 1999. These figures were derived from the national average household disposable income figures contained within the CSO Household Budget Survey 2004-2005. A deflator figure of 0.92 extracted from the CSO County Incomes and Regional GDP 2004 has been used for Longford County to reflect incomes differences between the County and National figures.

Through the development and application of the outputs of Table 2.3 in terms of annual county incomes, Table 2.4 puts forward the calculated average annual household disposable incomes for Longford County 2007-2016 based on 2006 estimated distribution of household disposable incomes and the ESRI, Medium Term Review 2005-2012. It is interesting to note the significant difference in the average annual disposable incomes across the county for the 10 decile income ranges for each of the projected years. These income ranges will obviously have a direct impact on the affordability position of the income ranges.

Income Range	Average Weekly Disposable Income (State) (€) (1999-2000)	Average Weekly Disposable Income (State) (€) (2004-05)	Percentage Change from 1999-2000 to 2004-2005	Assumed Annual Percentage Income Increase from 2005 to 2006	Adjusted Average Weekly Disposable Income (State) (€) (2006)	Percentage of Households in Each Category (State)	Average Annual Disposable Income (State) (€) (2006)	Londford County Deflator	Average Annual Disposable Income (Longford) (€) (2006)	Number of Households in Longford - 2006
1st Decile	106.23	157.70	48.5%	9.69%	172.98	11.57%	8,200.40	0.92	7,544.37	1,401
2nd Decile	174.42	244.53	40.2%	8.04%	264.19	10.54%	12,715.56	0.92	11,698.32	1,276
3rd Decile	249.38	359.06	44.0%	8.80%	390.64	9.48%	18,671.12	0.92	17,177.43	1,148
4th Decile	331.71	488.56	47.3%	9.46%	534.76	9.60%	25,405.12	0.92	23,372.71	1,163
5th Decile	423.00	626.69	48.2%	9.63%	687.04	9.74%	32,587.88	0.92	29,980.85	1,180
6th Decile	515.73	781.12	51.5%	10.29%	861.51	9.56%	40,618.24	0.92	37,368.78	1,158
7th Decile	617.61	950.20	53.9%	10.77%	1,052.54	9.81%	49,410.40	0.92	45,457.57	1,188
8th Decile	743.44	1,162.83	56.4%	11.28%	1,294.03	9.58%	60,467.16	0.92	55,629.79	1,160
9th Decile	925.52	1,419.89	53.4%	10.68%	1,571.58	9.78%	73,834.28	0.92	67,927.54	1,184
10th Decile	1,428.71	2,233.03	56.3%	11.26%	2,484.46	10.34%	116,117.56	0.92	106,828.16	1,252
Total						100.00%				12,111

Table 2.3 Estimated Distribution of Household Disposable Incomes for Longford County for 2006 (Source: CSO, 2007, and Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

Year	Average Annual Disposable Income - Longford County - 2006-2016 (€)										
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
% Growth	-	5.7%	5.6%	5.6%	8.2%	8.1%	8.0%	7.8%	7.6%	7.2%	7.0%
1st Decile	7,544	7,974	8,421	8,893	9,622	10,401	11,233	12,109	13,030	13,968	14,946
2nd Decile	11,698	12,365	13,058	13,789	14,919	16,128	17,418	18,777	20,204	21,659	23,175
3rd Decile	17,177	18,157	19,173	20,247	21,907	23,682	25,576	27,571	29,667	31,803	34,029
4th Decile	23,373	24,705	26,088	27,549	29,808	32,223	34,801	37,515	40,366	43,273	46,302
5th Decile	29,981	31,690	33,464	35,338	38,236	41,333	44,640	48,122	51,779	55,507	59,393
6th Decile	37,369	39,499	41,711	44,047	47,658	51,519	55,640	59,980	64,539	69,185	74,028
7th Decile	45,458	48,049	50,739	53,581	57,974	62,670	67,684	72,963	78,509	84,161	90,052
8th Decile	55,630	58,801	62,094	65,571	70,948	76,694	82,830	89,291	96,077	102,994	110,204
9th Decile	67,928	71,799	75,820	80,066	86,632	93,649	101,141	109,030	117,316	125,763	134,566
10th Decile	106,828	112,917	119,241	125,918	136,244	147,279	159,062	171,468	184,500	197,784	211,629

Table 2.4 Calculation of Household Disposable Incomes for Longford County from 2006 to 2016 (Source: ESRI, 2005, and Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

2.5 House Price Assessment and Projection

An assessment of the average house prices in the State and Longford County from 1996 to 2006, based on the DoEHLG Database Direct for Housing Statistics is contained within Table 2.5 which illustrates that there is considerable difference in the two sets of figures which has been steadily increasing year-on-year. For example, the average house price for the State in 2006 is approximately €338,500 compared to that for Longford County in 2006 which is €285,300, the State's price being almost 19% higher.

Table 2.6 displays the projected calculated house prices bands for Longford County from 2006 to 2016, which indicates that the percentage of house prices are positioned within the 2nd, 3rd and 4th bands. This table has been calculated based on the use of the Permanent TSB/ESRI House Price Index (June 2007) and on the DoEHLG's Annual Housing Statistics Bulletin 2006 and House Price Statistics System (July 2007).

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
State	86,416	102,467	129,916	155,919	179,871	194,490	212,943	244,733	271,929	303,310	338,542
Longford	78,173	90,506	114,234	136,033	156,246	169,019	186,119	210,593	231,943	258,830	285,296

Table 2.5 Assessment of Average House Prices for the State and Longford County from 1996 to 2006 (Source: DoEHLG, 2007, and Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

	Average Price Increase/ Decrease	1st Band - not exceeding X1	2nd Band - X1-X2		3rd Band - X2-X3		4th Band - X3-X4		5th Band - X4-X5		6th Band - exceeding X5
2006		150,000	150,000	200,000	200,000	250,000	250,000	300,000	300,000	350,000	350,000
2007	-4.00%	144,000	144,000	192,000	192,000	240,000	240,000	288,000	288,000	336,000	336,000
2008	-3.00%	139,680	139,680	186,240	186,240	232,800	232,800	279,360	279,360	325,920	325,920
2009	-2.00%	136,886	136,886	182,515	182,515	228,144	228,144	273,773	273,773	319,402	319,402
2010	-1.00%	135,518	135,518	180,690	180,690	225,863	225,863	271,035	271,035	316,208	316,208
2011	0.00%	135,518	135,518	180,690	180,690	225,863	225,863	271,035	271,035	316,208	316,208
2012	1.00%	136,873	136,873	182,497	182,497	228,121	228,121	273,745	273,745	319,370	319,370
2013	2.00%	139,610	139,610	186,147	186,147	232,684	232,684	279,220	279,220	325,757	325,757
2014	2.50%	143,100	143,100	190,801	190,801	238,501	238,501	286,201	286,201	333,901	333,901
2015	3.00%	147,393	147,393	196,525	196,525	245,656	245,656	294,787	294,787	343,918	343,918
2016	3.50%	152,552	152,552	203,403	203,403	254,254	254,254	305,104	305,104	355,955	355,955
% of Longford Housing Units within each Band (2006)		7.28%	35.60%		25.47%		18.04%		8.07%		5.54%

Table 2.6 Calculation of Projected House Price Bands for Longford County from 2006 to 2016 (Source: Permanent TSB/ESRI, 2007, DoEHLG, 2006 and 2007, and Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

As part of the house price assessment and projection for Longford County it is important to determine generally the current house price sales. This has been achieved through the undertaking of interviews and surveys with a number of local auctioneers. Table 2.7 provides an overall summary of the information received relating to house price sales in both Longford Town and the rest of the County for 2007 for the primary housing unit types. Considering only 3 and 4 bed semi- and detached housing units, the average purchase price in 2007 is approximately €240,000 and €234,000 for Longford Town and County, respectively. While these figures only consider 3 and 4 bed unit, they are below the average house price for the whole of Longford County in 2006 of €285,300, and this obviously reflects the current national house price decline.

Housing Unit Type	3 Bed-Semi Detached	3 Bed Detached	4 Bed-Semi Detached	4 Bed Detached	5 Bed-Semi Detached	5 Bed Detached	1 Bed Apartment	2 Bed Apartment
Longford Town	€186,000	€270,000	€215,000	€290,000	-	-	€145,000	€165,000
Rest of Longford County	€185,000	€241,667	€210,000	€297,400	-	-	-	-

Table 2.7 Summary of Longford Town and County House Price Sales for 2007 (Longford Auctioneers, 2007, and Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

2.6 Household Income Distribution

The determination of annual income distribution among the total households in Longford County from 2007 to 2016 is set out in Table 2.8. This table is based on the Longford County Council Draft Housing Strategy 2003-2009 (October 2003) in terms of the percentage of households in each of the deciles and the DoELG's "*A Model Housing Strategy and Step-by-Step Guide*" (December 2000). As is evident from the table there is somewhat of an even distribution of household income among the 10 decile income ranges.

Similar to the previous table, Table 2.9 illustrates the determination of annual income distribution among the calculated additional households required for Longford County from 2007 to 2016. This determination is based on the Longford County Council Draft Housing Strategy 2003-2009 again in terms of the percentage of households in each of the deciles and the DoELG's "*A Model Housing Strategy and Step-by-Step Guide*", and again shows quite an even distribution of household income among the decile income ranges.

	Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Range	Percentage of Households in Each Category (Longford)	Total Households - Longford County - 2007-2016									
1st Decile	11.57%	1,478	1,532	1,591	1,653	1,718	1,787	1,859	1,936	2,016	2,101
2nd Decile	10.54%	1,346	1,396	1,449	1,506	1,565	1,627	1,693	1,763	1,837	1,914
3rd Decile	9.48%	1,211	1,256	1,303	1,354	1,407	1,464	1,523	1,586	1,652	1,721
4th Decile	9.60%	1,226	1,272	1,320	1,371	1,425	1,482	1,542	1,606	1,673	1,743
5th Decile	9.74%	1,244	1,290	1,339	1,391	1,446	1,504	1,565	1,629	1,697	1,768
6th Decile	9.56%	1,221	1,266	1,314	1,366	1,419	1,476	1,536	1,599	1,666	1,736
7th Decile	9.81%	1,253	1,299	1,349	1,401	1,456	1,515	1,576	1,641	1,709	1,781
8th Decile	9.58%	1,223	1,269	1,317	1,368	1,422	1,479	1,539	1,603	1,669	1,739
9th Decile	9.78%	1,249	1,295	1,345	1,397	1,452	1,510	1,571	1,636	1,704	1,776
10th Decile	10.34%	1,320	1,370	1,422	1,477	1,535	1,597	1,661	1,730	1,802	1,877
	100.00%	12,771	13,245	13,749	14,284	14,847	15,441	16,067	16,729	17,424	18,156

Table 2.8 Determination of Annual Household Income Distribution of Total Households in Longford County from 2006 to 2016 (Source: Longford County Council, 2003, DoELG, 2000, and Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

	Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Income Range	Percentage of Households in Each Category (Longford)	Total Additional Households - Longford County - 2007-2016									
1st Decile	11.57%	76	55	58	62	65	69	72	77	81	85
2nd Decile	10.54%	70	50	53	56	59	63	66	70	73	77
3rd Decile	9.48%	63	45	48	51	53	56	59	63	66	69
4th Decile	9.60%	63	46	48	51	54	57	60	63	67	70
5th Decile	9.74%	64	46	49	52	55	58	61	64	68	71
6th Decile	9.56%	63	45	48	51	54	57	60	63	67	70
7th Decile	9.81%	65	47	49	52	55	58	61	65	68	72
8th Decile	9.58%	63	45	48	51	54	57	60	63	67	70
9th Decile	9.78%	65	46	49	52	55	58	61	65	68	72
10th Decile	10.34%	68	49	52	55	58	61	65	68	72	76
	100.00%	660	474	504	535	563	594	626	661	696	731

Table 2.9 Determination of Annual Household Income Distribution of Additional Required Households in Longford County from 2006 to 2016 (Source: Longford County Council, 2003, DoELG, 2000, and Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

2.7 Housing Affordability Analysis

The housing affordability analysis sets out the number of persons or households that will be identified as being eligible for social and affordable housing within Longford County from 2007 to 2016. The calculation of housing affordability for Longford County from 2007 to 2016 is based on Section 93 subsection (1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 which defines an eligible person for affordable housing as someone;

“who is in need of accommodation and 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 because the payments calculated over the course of a year would exceed 35 per cent of that persons annual income net of income tax and pay related social insurance”

The calculation of housing affordability is based on a comparison between the projected house prices for the county and the projected ranges of household disposable incomes.

To allow for this comparison to be made it is first necessary to determine the average monthly disposable incomes for Longford County from 2007 to 2016 and the associated house price affordability.

Table 2.10 sets out the projected average monthly disposable incomes for the 10 decile income ranges for the county, based on the reworking of Table 2.4, which illustrates the average annual household disposable incomes for the County from 2007 to 2016.

Based on Table 2.10 and the application of the annuity formula as set out in DoELG's *"A Model Housing Strategy and Step-by-Step Guide"*, it is possible to determine county-wide house price affordability for the 10 decile income ranges which is shown in Table 2.11. As previously stated, the annuity formula is based on an affordability threshold of 35%, a loan to value ratio of 0.90, an annual percentage interest rate (APR) of 5% and an average loan term of 25 years. It is clearly evident that there are inextricable linkages between income levels, house prices and interest rate variables.

When Tables' 2.9 and 2.11 are read in conjunction and taking 2007 as an illustrative example, there will be 76 additional households formed in the 1st decile and the maximum house price affordable to these households will be €44,207.

Range	Percentage of Households in Each Category (Longford)	Average Monthly Disposable Income - Longford County - 2007-2016 (€)									
1st Decile	11.57%	665	702	741	802	867	936	1,009	1,086	1,164	1,245
2nd Decile	10.54%	1,030	1,088	1,149	1,243	1,344	1,452	1,565	1,684	1,805	1,931
3rd Decile	9.48%	1,513	1,598	1,687	1,826	1,973	2,131	2,298	2,472	2,650	2,836
4th Decile	9.60%	2,059	2,174	2,296	2,484	2,685	2,900	3,126	3,364	3,606	3,858
5th Decile	9.74%	2,641	2,789	2,945	3,186	3,444	3,720	4,010	4,315	4,626	4,949
6th Decile	9.56%	3,292	3,476	3,671	3,972	4,293	4,637	4,998	5,378	5,765	6,169
7th Decile	9.81%	4,004	4,228	4,465	4,831	5,223	5,640	6,080	6,542	7,013	7,504
8th Decile	9.58%	4,900	5,174	5,464	5,912	6,391	6,902	7,441	8,006	8,583	9,184
9th Decile	9.78%	5,983	6,318	6,672	7,219	7,804	8,428	9,086	9,776	10,480	11,214
10th Decile	10.34%	9,410	9,937	10,493	11,354	12,273	13,255	14,289	15,375	16,482	17,636
	100.00%										

Table 2.10 Projected Average Monthly Disposable Incomes for Longford County from 2007 to 2016 (Source: DoELG, 2000, and Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

	Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Range	Percentage of Households in Each Category (Longford)	Approximate Affordable House Price - Longford County - 2007-2016									
1st Decile	11.57%	44,207	46,683	49,297	53,339	57,660	62,272	67,130	72,231	77,432	82,852
2nd Decile	10.54%	68,547	72,386	76,440	82,708	89,407	96,560	104,091	112,002	120,066	128,471
3rd Decile	9.48%	100,653	106,289	112,242	121,445	131,283	141,785	152,844	164,461	176,302	188,643
4th Decile	9.60%	136,955	144,624	152,723	165,246	178,631	192,922	207,970	223,775	239,887	256,679
5th Decile	9.74%	175,676	185,514	195,902	211,966	229,136	247,466	266,769	287,043	307,710	329,250
6th Decile	9.56%	218,966	231,228	244,177	264,199	285,600	308,448	332,506	357,777	383,537	410,384
7th Decile	9.81%	266,363	281,279	297,031	321,388	347,420	375,214	404,480	435,221	466,557	499,216
8th Decile	9.58%	325,968	344,222	363,499	393,306	425,164	459,177	494,992	532,612	570,960	610,927
9th Decile	9.78%	398,028	420,318	443,855	480,252	519,152	560,684	604,418	650,353	697,179	745,981
10th Decile	10.34%	625,970	661,024	698,042	755,281	816,459	881,776	950,554	1,022,796	1,096,438	1,173,188
	100.00%										

Table 2.11 Approximate House Price Affordability for Longford County from 2007 to 2016 (Source: DoELG, 2000, and Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

An essential requirement of this Housing Strategy is to identify as accurately as possible the number of households who can be classified as eligible persons for Social and Affordable Housing from 2007 to 2016 and the necessary provision of these units. Table 2.12 sets out in detail the determination of the anticipated social and affordable housing need and associated shortfall for Longford County from 2007 to 2016. This determination is based on the number of households required, housing affordability by each decile, household band position, house prices bands (upper value), number of houses required within each band, and percentage and number of housing units projected to be provided within each band.

Taking 2007 as an illustrative year, there are 660 number of households required in 2007 and of these 275 are required within the 1st Band that has an upper house price value of €144,000 and based on the DoEHLG House Price Statistics System (July 2007) it is expected that only 48 housing units will be provided within this band in 2007 (i.e. 7.28% of total provision). Therefore, there will be a housing shortage in this Band of 227 units and this equates to 34.47% of the overall total household required in 2007 (i.e. 660).

From Table 2.12 it is evident that the relationship of decile ranges to household bands changes over the ten-year period of analysis. Examining the 1st Band the following relationship has emerged; in 2007 the 1st band incorporates Deciles 1 to 4, from 2008 to 2011 the 1st band incorporates Deciles 1 to 3 and from 2012 to 2016 the 1st band incorporates Deciles 1 and 2 only. The principle reason for this occurrence is that the average annual disposable incomes are forecast to increase by approximately 7.1% per annum from 2007 to 2016, which will house-price affordability, and coupled with this is the assumption that average house prices will decrease by approximately 0.2% from 2007 to 2016⁶. Based on this the purchasing power of house buyers will be improved considerably while the average house price will slightly reduce.

Based on the outputs from Table 2.12 and given that the average house price in Longford County was approximately €285,300, based on the DoEHLG House Price Statistics System (July 2007), the following are the assumptions relating to the social and affordable requirements from 2017 to 2016 for Longford County:

⁶ As previously stated, it is projected that average house prices will decline by approximately 2.5% per annum from 2007 to 2010, after which there will be an annual increase of approximately 2.3% until 2016.

- Social Housing - the requirement will contain Deciles 1 to 3 (i.e. those who, in 2007, cannot afford a house above €100,653);
- Affordable Housing - requirement will contain Decile 4 (i.e. those who, in 2007, cannot afford a house above €136,955).

Year	Range	No. of Households Required	Running Total	Affordability by each Decile	Household Band Position	House Prices Bands - Upper Value	No. of Houses Required within each Band	% of Housing Units Projected to be Provided within each Band	No. Housing Units Projected to be Provided within each Band	Housing Shortfall - i.e. No. of Households Meeting Affordability Criteria	Housing Shortfall as a % of Total Households Required
2007	1st Decile	76	76	44,207	1st Band	144,000	275	7.28%	48	227	34.47%
	2nd Decile	70	146	68,547	1st Band						
	3rd Decile	63	208	100,653	1st Band						
	4th Decile	63	272	136,955	1st Band						
	5th Decile	64	336	175,676	2nd Band	192,000	74	35.60%	235	-160	-
	6th Decile	63	399	218,966	3rd Band	240,000	-	25.47%	168	-	-
	7th Decile	65	464	266,363	4th Band	288,000	-	18.04%	119	-	-
	8th Decile	63	527	325,968	5th Band	336,000	-	8.07%	53	-	-
	9th Decile	65	591	398,028	6th Band	None	-	5.54%	37	-	-
	10th Decile	68	660	625,970	6th Band						
		660						100.00%	660		
2008	1st Decile	55	55	46,683	1st Band	139,680	189	7.28%	35	154	32.50%
	2nd Decile	50	105	72,386	1st Band						
	3rd Decile	45	150	106,289	1st Band						
	4th Decile	46	195	144,624	2nd Band						
	5th Decile	46	242	185,514	2nd Band	186,240	42	35.60%	169	-126	-
	6th Decile	45	287	231,228	3rd Band	232,800	-	25.47%	121	-	-
	7th Decile	47	333	281,279	4th & 5th Band	325,920	-	26.11%	124	-	-
	8th Decile	45	379	344,222	6th Band	None	-	5.54%	26	-	-
	9th Decile	46	425	420,318	6th Band						
	10th Decile	49	474	661,024	6th Band						
		474						100.00%	474		
2009	1st Decile	58	58	49,297	1st Band	136,886	186	7.28%	37	149	29.64%
	2nd Decile	53	111	76,440	1st Band						
	3rd Decile	48	159	112,242	1st Band						
	4th Decile	48	208	152,723	2nd Band						
	5th Decile	49	257	195,902	3rd Band	182,515	53	35.60%	179	-126	-
	6th Decile	48	305	244,177	4th Band	228,144	-	25.47%	128	-	-
	7th Decile	49	354	297,031	4th Band	273,773	-	18.04%	91	-	-
	8th Decile	48	403	363,499	5th Band	319,402	-	8.07%	-	-	-
	9th Decile	49	452	443,855	6th Band	None	-	5.54%	28	-	-
	10th Decile	52	504	698,042	6th Band						
		504						100.00%	463		
2010	1st Decile	62	62	53,339	1st Band	135,518	181	7.28%	39	142	26.50%
	2nd Decile	56	118	82,708	1st Band						
	3rd Decile	51	169	121,445	1st Band						
	4th Decile	51	220	165,246	2nd Band						
	5th Decile	52	272	211,966	3rd Band	180,690	52	35.60%	190	-139	-
	6th Decile	51	323	264,199	4th Band	225,863	-	25.47%	136	-	-
	7th Decile	52	376	321,388	4th Band	271,035	-	18.04%	96	-	-
	8th Decile	51	427	393,306	5th & 6th Band	None	-	13.61%	73	-	-
	9th Decile	52	479	480,252	5th & 6th Band						
	10th Decile	55	535	755,281	5th & 6th Band						
		535						100.00%	535		
2011	1st Decile	65	65	57,660	1st Band	135,518	176	7.28%	41	135	23.97%
	2nd Decile	59	124	89,407	1st Band						
	3rd Decile	53	178	131,283	1st Band						
	4th Decile	54	232	178,631	2nd Band						
	5th Decile	55	287	229,136	3rd Band	180,690	50	35.60%	200	-150	-
	6th Decile	54	341	285,600	3rd Band	225,863	-	25.47%	143	-	-
	7th Decile	55	396	347,420	4th & 5th Band	316,208	-	26.11%	147	-	-
	8th Decile	54	450	425,164	6th Band	None	-	5.54%	31	-	-
	9th Decile	55	505	519,152	6th Band						
	10th Decile	58	563	816,459	6th Band						
		563						100.00%	563		

Table 2.12 Determination of Anticipated Social and Affordable Housing Need and Associated Shortfall for Longford County from 2007 to 2016 (Source: Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

Year	Range	No. of Households Required	Running Total	Affordability by each Decile	Household Band Position	House Prices Bands - Upper Value	No. of Houses Required within each Band	% of Housing Units Projected to be Provided within each Band	No. Housing Units Projected to be Provided within each Band	Housing Shortfall - i.e. No. of Households Meeting Affordability Criteria	Housing Shortfall as a % of Total Households Required
2012	1st Decile	69	69	62,272	1st Band	136,873	181	7.28%	43	138	23.22%
	2nd Decile	63	131	96,560	1st Band						
	3rd Decile	56	188	141,785	2nd Band						
	4th Decile	57	245	192,922	3rd Band						
	5th Decile	58	303	247,466	4th Band						
	6th Decile	57	360	308,448	5th Band						
	7th Decile	58	418	375,214	6th Band						
	8th Decile	57	475	459,177	6th Band						
	9th Decile	58	533	560,684	6th Band						
	10th Decile	61	594	881,776	6th Band						
		594						100.00%	594		
2013	1st Decile	72	72	67,130	1st Band	139,610	181	7.28%	46	135	21.57%
	2nd Decile	66	139	104,091	1st Band						
	3rd Decile	59	198	152,844	2nd Band						
	4th Decile	60	258	207,970	3rd Band						
	5th Decile	61	319	266,769	4th Band						
	6th Decile	60	379	332,506	5th & 6th Band						
	7th Decile	61	440	404,480	5th & 6th Band						
	8th Decile	60	500	494,992	5th & 6th Band						
	9th Decile	61	562	604,418	5th & 6th Band						
	10th Decile	65	626	950,554	5th & 6th Band						
		626						100.00%	626		
2014	1st Decile	77	77	72,231	1st Band	143,100	182	7.28%	48	134	20.21%
	2nd Decile	70	146	112,002	1st Band						
	3rd Decile	63	209	164,461	2nd Band						
	4th Decile	63	272	223,775	3rd Band						
	5th Decile	64	337	287,043	4th & 5th Band						
	6th Decile	63	400	357,777	6th Band						
	7th Decile	65	465	435,221	6th Band						
	8th Decile	63	528	532,612	6th Band						
	9th Decile	65	593	650,353	6th Band						
	10th Decile	68	661	1,022,796	6th Band						
		661						100.00%	661		
2015	1st Decile	81	81	77,432	1st Band	147,393	184	7.28%	51	133	19.13%
	2nd Decile	73	154	120,066	1st Band						
	3rd Decile	66	220	176,302	2nd Band						
	4th Decile	67	287	239,887	3rd Band						
	5th Decile	68	354	307,710	4th & 5th Band						
	6th Decile	67	421	383,537	6th Band						
	7th Decile	68	489	466,557							
	8th Decile	67	556	570,960							
	9th Decile	68	624	697,179							
	10th Decile	72	696	1,096,438							
		696						100.00%	696		
2016	1st Decile	85	85	82,852	1st Band	152,552	187	7.28%	53	134	18.27%
	2nd Decile	77	162	128,471	1st Band						
	3rd Decile	69	231	188,643	2nd Band						
	4th Decile	70	301	256,679	3rd & 4th Band						
	5th Decile	71	372	329,250	5th Band						
	6th Decile	70	442	410,384	6th Band						
	7th Decile	72	514	499,216	6th Band						
	8th Decile	70	584	610,927	6th Band						
	9th Decile	72	656	745,981	6th Band						
	10th Decile	76	731	1,173,188	6th Band						
		731						100.00%	731		

Table 2.12 (Continued) Determination of Anticipated Social and Affordable Housing Need and Associated Shortfall for Longford County from 2007 to 2016 (Source: Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

A summary of the social and affordable Housing need for the county from 2007 to 2016 is illustrated in Table 2.13. As evident from the table, there is an anticipated annual social and affordable housing shortfall, or requirement, starting at approximately 34% in 2007 and dropping to just over 18% in 2016. **Based on these summary results it is considered that Longford County Council and Longford Town Council will be justified in reserving 20% of all eligible housing developments in order to cater for social and affordable housing need. This is the maximum percentage allowable under Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, Section 94, subsection 4(c), which states that a housing strategy must provide a specified percentage, though not more than 20%, of land zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, for the provision of social and affordable housing.**

The breakdown of this 20% determination into Social and Affordable Housing will be determined by the existing concentration of social housing in the proposed development area.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
New Household Formations	660	474	504	535	563	594	626	661	696	731
Social and Affordable Housing Requirement	227	154	149	142	135	138	135	134	133	134
Housing Shortfall as a % of Total Households Required	34.47%	32.50%	29.64%	26.50%	23.97%	23.22%	21.57%	20.21%	19.13%	18.27%

Table 2.13 Summary of Anticipated Social and Affordable Housing Need for Longford County from 2007 to 2016 (Source: Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

3. HOUSING SUPPLY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

3.1 Introduction

This section sets out the social and affordable housing provision for Longford Town and County, together with that provided by the co-operative and voluntary sector and the private rented sector. Closely linked with the supply of housing is the provision of essential infrastructure at county level, and therefore details of roads, services, social and economic infrastructure in terms of projects and schemes either provided, in progress or planned for Longford County are set out.

In analysing housing supply and infrastructure for Longford County, it is interesting to assess the level of overall granted housing applications and house completions for the county over the last number of years, as set out in Tables' 3.1 and 3.2, respectively. As illustrated in Table 3.1, there has been considerable fluctuation in the granting of permission for housing applications from 2001 to 2006⁷, with the annual cumulative increase being just above 50%. Over this time period, the annual average permissions granted was 365, and this equates to an annual average number of 1,353 units, split between multi-development houses, single houses and private flats/apartments. If this trend continues over the duration of this Housing Strategy there will be, on an overall level, an ample supply of housing units to cater for the projected demand (i.e. approximately 600 units per annum from 2007 to 2016, as set out in Section 2.3. previously).

Table 3.1 Summary of Annual Housing Applications Granted in Longford County from 2001 to July 2007 (Source: CSO, 2007, and Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

⁷ Note - Data relating to annual housing applications granted in Longford County could not be obtained prior to 2001.

	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005		2006		2007 (Jan-June)	
	Granted	No. of Units	Granted	No. of Units	Granted	No. of Units	Granted	No. of Units	Granted	No. of Units	Granted	No. of Units	Granted	No. of Units
Multi-Development Houses	50	894	24	368	17	175	40	597	129	2964	28	471	19	477
Single Houses	279	279	215	215	209	209	376	376	437	437	263	263	165	165
Private Flats/Apartments	32	303	19	145	13	90	8	23	39	264	11	44	4	10
Total	361	1476	258	728	239	474	424	996	605	3665	302	778	188	652
Annual % Increase/Decrease in Grants	-	-	-28.53%	-	-7.36%	-	77.41%	-	42.69%	-	-50.08%	-	-	-
Cumulative Annual % Increase/Decrease in Grants	-	-	-28.53%	-	-35.90%	-	41.51%	-	84.20%	-	34.12%	-	-	-

Table 3.2 shows that since 1996 the annual cumulative increase house completions is approximately 187%, and while remaining quite steady from 1996 to 2000 this overall increase is clearly linked to, and a reflection of, the significant population growth in the county over the 10-year period.

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007 (Jan - July)
Annual House Completions - Private	282	247	260	235	275	496	620	500	864	847	1,262	-
Annual House Completions - Social	34	45	50	58	36	118	115	159	45	126	66	-
Annual House Completions - Total	316	292	310	293	311	614	735	659	909	973	1,328	929
Annual % Increase/Decrease	-	-7.59%	6.16%	-5.48%	6.14%	97.43%	19.71%	-10.34%	37.94%	7.04%	36.49%	-
Cumulative Annual % Increase/Decrease	-	-7.59%	-1.43%	-6.91%	-0.77%	96.66%	116.36%	106.02%	143.96%	151.00%	187.49%	-

Table 3.2 Summary of Annual House Completions for Longford County from 1996 to July 2007 (Source: DoEHLG, 2007, and Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

3.2 Social and Affordable Housing Provision

The last assessment of housing need for Longford Town and County was carried out in 2005. This assessment determined that there was a need for 235 social housing units within the town and county. The housing needs assessment will be updated in 2008 and it is clearly expected that there will be a significant increase in the 2005 figure.

Table 3.3 draws together a summary of the social and affordable housing provided by Longford County from 2004 to 2006⁸ based on the DoEHLG's Database Direct for Housing Statistics, September 2007. This table provides a clear summary of the housing units provided under the various social housing categories. It is evident that 2005 was the peak year with a total of 269 units being provided. In addition, it is interesting to note that no voluntary, co-operative or affordable housing units have been provided by Longford Town Council over this time period while the population of Longford Town and Environs increased by almost 17% between 2002 and 2006.

Planning Authority	Year	(1) Completions and Acquisitions	(2) Voluntary and Co-operative Housing	(3) Rental Accommodation Scheme; Extensions/Improvement Works; New and Rebuilt Traveller Units	(4) Houses Available For Rent From Existing Stock	(5) Total Social Rented Accommodation Provision - sum of (1) to (4)	(6) Affordable Housing	(7) Total Social and Affordable Housing provision - (5) plus (6)
Longford County Council	2004	50	4	2	71	127	22	149
	2005	155	4	3	48	210	8	218
	2006	88	5	36	74	203	5	208
Longford Town Council	2004	18	0	0	26	44	0	44
	2005	18	0	1	32	51	0	51
	2006	24	0	6	17	47	0	47
Total - Longford County Council and Longford Town Council	2004	68	4	2	97	171	22	193
	2005	173	4	4	80	261	8	269
	2006	112	5	42	91	250	5	255

Table 3.3 Summary of Social and Affordable Housing Provision for Longford County from 2004 to 2006 (Source: DoEHLG, 2007, CSO, 2007, and Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

⁸ Table 3.1 makes reference to the provision of social housing by voluntary/co-operative and rental accommodation schemes, which are defined as follows:

The Voluntary/Co-operative Housing Scheme consists of voluntary/co-operative housing bodies provide housing for families who must be approved applicants on the local authority housing list and whose household income meets certain defined criteria.

The Rental Accommodation Scheme is for people who have been receiving long-term rent supplement (in excess of 18 months) and who need long-term housing provision.

In terms of social housing, the total number of applicants on the Longford County Council waiting list in 2007 for all areas of the County is 1,422⁹.

The following is a summary of the social and affordable housing provision by Longford County Council and Longford Town Council since 2003:

Longford County Council

Social Housing

Table 3.4 sets out the social housing schemes carried out in the County since 2003:

Location	No. of Units	Type of Unit
Kenagh	31	16no. Three-Bed Two-Storey, 15no. O.P.D.'s
Newtownforbes	42	30no. Three-Bed Two-Storey, 12no. O.P.D.'s
Ballymahon	20	18no. Three-Bed Two-Storey, 2no. O.P.D.'s
Edgeworthstown	6	3no. Two-Bed Two-Storey, 1no. Three-Bed Two-Storey, 2no. O.P.D.'s
Aughnaclyffe	14	2no. Three-Bed Two-Storey, 12no. O.P.D.'s
Church View, Drumlish	8	8no. O.P.D.'s
Kelleher Court, Drumlish	5	5no. 2 O.P.D.'s
Corrabawn, Drumlish	12	12no. Three-Bed Two-Storey
Farnagh, Longford	38	2no. Four-Bed Two-Storey, 20no. Three-Bed Two-Storey, 16no. Two-Bed Two-Storey
Foxhall, Legan	7	3no. Two-Bed Two-Storey, 4no. Two-Bed Two-Storey
Knock, Lanesboro	3	3no. O.P.D.'s
Total	186	

⁹ The areas that have applied to be on the waiting list, together with the number of applicants for each area shown in brackets, are as follows: Abbeylara (11), Abbeyshrule (4), Ardagh (14), Aughnaclyffe (15), Ballinalee (75), Ballinamuck (13), Ballymahon (139), Carrickboy (4), Clondra (6), Colehill (28), Drumlish (78), Edgeworthstown (198), Granard (80), Kenagh (77), Kilashee (18), Killoe (26), Lanesborough (62), Legan (29), Longford (354), Moydow (9), Newtowncashel (6) and Newtownforbes (176).

Table 3.4 Longford County Council Social Housing Provision from 2003 to 2007 (Source: Longford County Council, 2003, and Keith Simpson and Associates, 2007)

In addition 47 second hand houses have been purchased and 43 rural cottages have been provided since 2003.

Table 3.5 sets out the social housing schemes in progress in the County in 2007.

Location	No. of Units
Streamstown, Colehill	20
Church Quarter, Granard	21
Ballinamuck	16
Kenagh	22
Ballinalee	25
Killashee	23
Total	127

Table 3.5 Longford County Council Social Housing Schemes in Progress – 2007 (Source: Longford County Council, 2007.)

Table 3.6 sets out the social housing schemes at development stage in the County in 2007.

Location	No. of Units
Townsparks, Longford	50
Edgeworthstown Road, Ballymahon	6
Ardnacassa, Longford	6
Total	62

Table 3.6 Longford County Council Social Housing Schemes at Development Stage – 2007 (Source: Longford County Council, 2007.)

Affordable Housing

Ten affordable houses have been provided at Corry Park, Newtownforbes. In addition, 10 houses have been acquired under Part V at Stonepark, Longford. Five houses have also been acquired under Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended in 2002, at White Linen Woods, Longford.

Longford Town Council

Social housing

Table 3.7 sets out the social housing schemes carried out in the Longford Town Council Area since 2003:

Location	No. of Units	Type of Unit
Campbells Lane	15	15no. Two-Bed Two-Storey
Ardan Aileann	14	14no. Three/Four-Bed Two-Storey Family Units
Total	29	

Table 3.7 Longford Town Council Social Housing Provision from 2003 to 2007 (Source: Longford County Council, 2007.)

In addition to the above, 57 three/four-bed two-storey second-hand family units have been purchased into stock for the Town Council area.

Table 3.8 sets out the social housing schemes at development stage in the Longford Town Council Area in 2007.

Location	No. of Units	
Fondermans	72	32no. Three/Four-Bed Two-Storey Family Units, 1no. Three-Bed Two-Storey, 24no. O.P.D.'s, 6no. DPOL, 10no. St. Vincent de Paul Units
Total	72	

Table 3.8 Longford Town Council Social Housing Provision from 2003 to 2007 (Source: Longford County Council, 2007.)

3.3 Co-operative and Voluntary Sector

The importance of the role of this sector is recognised by the local authority. Respond Voluntary Housing Agency is providing 89 voluntary units at Townsparks, Longford. The DoELG have approved this scheme. It is expected that this scheme will commence shortly.

In accordance with the measures outlined by the DoEHLG under the National Development Plan 2007-2013, the output of the sector is 2,000 units per annum, and the Local Authority will assist the co-operative, voluntary and community sector, where appropriate and achievable.

3.4 Private Rented Sector

This sector has, and will continue to provide assistance in dealing with accommodation demands. The rural renewal tax incentive scheme increased the availability of accommodation in the private rented sector.

Many of the applicants on the social housing lists of Longford County Council and Longford Town Council are availing of the rent allowance scheme, administered by the Community Welfare Office. At present, there are 455 people in receipt of rent supplement. Any person in receipt of Rent Supplement for a period exceeding eighteen months must transfer over to the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS).

The RAS is being operated by Longford County Council and Longford Town Council and at present 87 people are availing of this scheme in the County.

3.5 Infrastructure

With the supply of housing comes the need for infrastructure development. It is essential that there is clear integration between housing and infrastructure demand and supply to ensure the successful implementation of the county housing strategy, and ultimately the development plan, thus ensuring the delivery of proper planning and sustainable development.

With this as a prerequisite, the following is a summary of roads, services, social and economic infrastructure provided, in progress or planned for Longford County:

Road Infrastructure:

Table 3.9 and 3.10 provide a summary of the county road improvement schemes and traffic calming and safety measure schemes.

Road Improvement Schemes			
Project	Completion of design	Contract Award	Completion of Construction
N4/N55 Edgeworthstown Inner Relief Road	Complete	2005	June 2006
N4 Dromod Rooskey By-Pass	Complete	2006	Winter 2007
N5 Longford Town By-Pass	2007	NRA Dependant	NRA Dependant
N4 Rooskey to Longford Road Improvement Scheme	Mid 2012	NRA Dependant	NRA Dependant
N4 Longford to Mullingar Road Improvement Scheme	Mid 2012	NRA Dependant	NRA Dependant
N55 Granard By-Pass	Development	Driven	
Granard Inner Relief Road (Area Plan)	Development	Driven	
N55 Restoration/Improvement	Ongoing	NRA Dependant	NRA Dependant
N55 Edgeworthstown By-Pass	Ongoing	NRA Dependant	NRA Dependant
N63 Restoration/Improvement	Ongoing	NRA Dependant	NRA Dependant
N63 Killashee By-Pass	Ongoing	NRA Dependant	NRA Dependant
Longford Streets Restoration/Improvement	Ongoing	NRA Dependant	NRA Dependant
Ballymahon Streets Restoration / Improvement	Ongoing	NRA Dependant	NRA Dependant
Granard Streets Restoration/Improvement	Ongoing	NRA Dependant	NRA Dependant

Table 3.9 Summary of Longford County Road Improvement Schemes (Source: Longford County Council, 2007)

Traffic Calming and Low Cost Safety Measures			
Project	Completion of design	Contract Award	Completion of Construction
N5 – Longford	Ongoing	NRA Dependant	NRA Dependant
N55 – Ballymahon	Ongoing	NRA Dependant	NRA Dependant
N63 – Longford	Ongoing	NRA Dependant	NRA Dependant
N63 – Killashee	Ongoing	NRA Dependant	NRA Dependant

Table 3.10 Summary of Longford County Traffic Calming and Safety Measure Schemes (Source: Longford County Council, 2007)

Services Infrastructure:

Table 3.11 and 3.12 provide a summary of the water supply and sewerage schemes for the county.

Water Supply Schemes		
No.	Scheme Name	Project Status
1	Longford Central Regional Water Scheme Stage 6 – reservoir and pipelines (Longford Town).	Project approved to go to construction in August 2007
2	Longford Central Regional Water Scheme – strategic review incorporates groundwater source augmentation/replacement, network extension and rehabilitation.	Preliminary report completed Approved to go contract document stage for phase 1. First phase of groundwater augmentation to commence construction October 2007.
3	Granard Regional Water Supply Scheme – strategic review.	Preliminary report completed.
4	Ballymahon Regional Water Supply – strategic review.	Preliminary report completed.
5	Lanesborough Regional Water Supply Scheme	Contract Document preparation stage.
6	Lough Gowna Regional Water Supply Scheme – strategic review.	Adoption to WSIP 2007-2009 for Preliminary Report
7	Water Conservation Stage 2 and Network Rehabilitation Stage 3.	Approved by Department for Water Conservation Report and network rehabilitation of key defective distribution mains in Longford Central and Lanesborough. DMA's to commence in 2007.

Table 3.11 Summary of Longford County Traffic Calming and Safety Measure Schemes (Source: Longford County Council, 2007)

Sewerage Schemes		
No.	Scheme Name	Project Status
1	5 Villages Sewerage Scheme DBO Bundle – Ardagh, Aghnaclyff, Ballinalee, Drumlish and Newtownforbes. Scheme to include operation and maintenance of existing plants – Granard, Ballymahon, Edgeworthstown, Clondra and Abbeyshrule.	Tender Document Stage. Traditional form Network Contracts. Construction to commence 2007 and Treatment Plants construction 2008.
2	Longford Sewerage Scheme Phase 2 - network extensions to Longford foul and storm drainage catchments.	To be incorporated into Development Plan for Area.
3	Longford Town Sewerage Scheme – network and treatment plant. Project to incorporate surface water drainage, network analysis, stormwater separation and collection, network rehabilitation.	Approved Contract Documentation Stage for Treatment Plant and Preliminary report Stage for Networks.
4	Longford Sludge Management Plan.	Approved Contract Documentation Stage for development of Sludge Hub Centre at Longford WWTP.
5	Edgeworthstown Sewerage Scheme - refurbishment works and nutrient removal facilities.	Construction to commence in 2007.
6	Lanesborough Sewerage Scheme.	Approved to go to Construction amalgamated with Roscommon 16 Villages Sewerage Scheme Project.
7	Legan and Kenagh Sewerage Scheme.	Preliminary Report completed.
8	12 Villages Sewerage Scheme - Abbeylara, Abbeyshrule, Ballinamuck, Barry, Ennybegs, Killashee, Stonepark, Legga, Moydow, Moyne, Newtowncashel, Taghshinny.	Feasibility Study completed. Serviced Land Initiative and Public Private Partnership Funding Strategies to be implemented for delivery of infrastructure.

Table 3.12 Summary of Longford County Traffic Calming and Safety Measure Schemes (Source: Longford County Council, 2007)

Social and Economic Infrastructure:

There has been a significant level of activity within Longford County with regard to social and economic infrastructure provision. The following is a summary of the major social and economic infrastructure provision:

- In terms of civic amenity development, a new mall complex has opened in Longford Town, which consists of a swimming pool, gymnasium, and all-weather pitches. The provision of this complex has also contributed to new employment creation.*
- With reference to heritage and recreation, works on the Royal Canal in Longford County by Waterways Ireland have recently been finalised, thus eventually allowing the Royal Canal to be fully navigable to its terminus in Clondra.*
- Regarding economic activity, the national Prison Service Headquarters has been decentralised to Longford Town that will potentially result in an increase in labour force and employment.*

The above set of tables (i.e. Tables 3.9 to 3.12) clearly illustrates a substantial level of activity and investment in the essential infrastructure throughout the County. The completion of the in-

progress and planned projects and schemes will result in the overall delivery of a real improved level of infrastructure that will support the additional projected growth in population and housing. It is clearly necessary for Longford County to ensure the continued linkage between housing supply and infrastructure development.

4. RESIDENTIAL Zoning and Settlement Strategy

4.1 Residential Zoning

In general, Longford County Council and Longford Town Council have adopted two specific types of zonings in terms of residential development. These zonings are defined as follows:

- Residential
To primarily provide for residential development; to preserve and improve residential amenity, dwellings and compatible uses including social and community facilities, open spaces and local shopping facilities. In certain instances low density and medium density residential zonings have been applied.
- Commercial/Residential
To primarily provide for residential development with a possible element of commercial/retail development.

Based on the Annual Housing Statistics Bulletin 2006 (2007) prepared by the DoEHLG, the survey of housing zoned serviced land availability states that Longford County has 140 hectares available of undeveloped serviced zoned residential land. This includes the settlements of Longford Town, Granard and Ballymahon. In addition to the aforementioned settlements, there is also 822 hectares of undeveloped zoned residential land throughout the County.

The Housing demand for County Longford established that a total of 6045 residential units will be required from 2007-2016. The undeveloped serviced zoned residential land of 140 hectares within the settlements of Longford Town, Ballymahon and Granard has the capacity to cater for the provision of 3,500 housing units when a density of 25 units per hectare is applied. This leaves a shortfall of 2545 units to be provided in the remaining 822 hectares of undeveloped residentially zoned lands throughout the County. However, it should be noted that these estimates for the capacity of the zoned land, do not take into account factors including lands that may not be released for development during the period of the housing strategy or lands within settlements that are dependent on servicing prior to any development occurring.

The majority of the remaining 2545 housing units will be provided within the residentially zoned lands in the settlements of Drumlish, Edgeworthstown, Ballinalee, Lanesboro, Kenagh, Ardagh, Carrigalss, Clondra and Newtownforbes, with a smaller remainder of the housing units being

provided in the town/village areas that are to be covered by village policy statements¹⁰.

In supporting the settlement strategy for the County, the residential density within these settlements to be covered by village policy statements will be significantly less than the larger settlements throughout the County. Although it is recognised that this is not the most efficient use of land, particularly by urban standards, it is considered that in ensuring provision of adequate land for housing to meet the needs of the County's population, it is necessary to recognise the rural and dispersed nature of settlement distribution within Longford and balance sustainable development with the social, community and cultural requirements of the County (Section 10 (2) (d) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000). This approach offers a more secure future for the rural population of Longford where a network of rural settlements is built upon to sustain a range of viable services and community facilities.

Based on the provision of the undeveloped residentially zoned land, it is considered that there is sufficient capacity to cater for the projected housing needs for County Longford from 2007-2016 as set out within this housing strategy. The provision of land has taken account of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, including those factors outlined in the document *Housing Supply-Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (DoELG, 2000) such as existing or proposed shopping and community facilities, public transport routes, utility services, adjoining uses including amenities, land demand for other uses and land availability.

An important element of zoning provision within Co. Longford is the factor of land availability which refers to the likelihood of the land actually being developed in the short term. Although levels of workers dependent on the agricultural sector has reduced in the County during the last intercensile period, 2002-2006, Longford still remains to have a larger percentage of the labour force employed in the agricultural sector than the state average (Source: Vol. 8 Census 2006, CSO). This has a direct impact on residentially zoned landholdings within settlement boundaries, including Longford Town, which are still used for agriculture and therefore the likelihood of the land being developed is reduced which must be considered in determining residential zoning provision.

¹⁰ Namely, Abbeylara, Abbeyshrule, Aughnacliffe, Ballinamuck, Ballycloghan, Ballywilliam, Barry, Bunlahy, Carrickboy, Colehill, Coolarty, Cullyfad, Derraghan, Dring, Ennybegs, Forgney, Kilashee, Kilnatruan, Knockawalky, Legan, Leggagh, Lisryan, Moydow, Moyne, Mullinaghta, Newtowncashel, Ratharney, Stonepark and Taghshinny.

In addition, development within an area of Longford Town is currently restricted as there is no immediate availability of services and therefore the short term likelihood of these lands being developed is compromised. This is an important factor to consider in ensuring that there is adequate land available for housing provision within the town and to support its role of 'principal town' in the functional hierarchy of the settlement strategy and ensure its sustainability. However, it is expected that the land will come on stream in the latter half of the lifespan of this strategy.

Accordingly in considering the above factors, land availability, immediate availability of services and the need to ensure a choice of location even at the end of the housing strategy period, have become dominant in shaping the pattern of residential zonings within the county.

As the above mentioned issues have come to the forefront in determining the level of zoning provision, it is also necessary to ensure that wasteful over provision of zoned land is avoided. This issue has been faced through ensuring the provision of an appropriate level of residentially zoned land in accordance with the functional hierarchy outlined within the settlement strategy i.e. ensuring that the majority of housing units are provided in the key settlements through the provision of residentially zoned lands accordingly. This has been further strengthened through ensuring that cognisance has also been taken of the short, medium and long term programme of works for infrastructure provision [outlined in Section 3.5 of this document] which, in turn, has aided the formation of the functional hierarchy of the settlement strategy, thus limiting the possibility of wasteful over provision of zoned land.

The encouragement of the spatial distribution of future population in accordance with the settlement strategy also promotes the provision of housing units in areas where greater employment opportunities and facilities exist, and in locations that have greater access to public transport links. This reduces the need to travel and increases and improves the sustainability of the settlement distribution within the County, which is still influenced by rural settlement trends and patterns.

4.2 Settlement Strategy

The successful delivery of the County Housing Strategy is very closely linked to the positive implementation of the County Settlement Strategy. In establishing a settlement strategy for Longford County it is important to encourage housing development in existing settlement centres

while also recognising the need to sustain the rural areas of the County given its rural nature. It is essential that areas experiencing population decline between 1996 and 2006 (as illustrated in Map 1.1 previously) receive attention in order to ensure future population growth, thus creating more balanced sustainable development.

In order to achieve the above, the following are the key settlement strategy objectives put forward by Longford County Council:

- Continue to support the strengthening of the urban and village network throughout the County in accordance with a settlement hierarchy and supported by the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Midlands;
- Functional roles of the larger towns shall be maintained and supported by the promotion of appropriate development in these areas and through the development control process;
- Create vibrant and thriving urban and rural communities, firmly rooted in the concepts of sustainability and maintaining a high quality of life. The extensive village network shall be used to support rural communities through the provision of neighbourhood level facilities, community services and social functions;
- Create attractive urban and village environments with unique identities and an appropriate mix of uses to attract and retain population within the County.

Based on the above objectives, the County Settlement Strategy is as follows:

- **Longford** - remains the County town of regional importance. Major growth centre with a high level of access and existing services where majority of industrial, commercial, business and retail development will be channelled.
- **Granard, Ballymahon, Newtownforbes, Drumlish, Lanesboro and Edgeworthstown** - County growth centres with a regional element. These towns serve a wide hinterland in terms of service provision and accommodation where major transport nodes are present. These towns will continue to act as County service centres and Local Area Plans have been prepared where provision has been made for the orderly and sustainable expansion of these centres.
- **Carrickglass, Keenagh, Clondra and Ardagh** - Local growth centres. These settlements will continue to provide settlement centres for the population and local-level goods and services provision. The potential for tourism and amenity development is recognised and has been promoted and encouraged where appropriate in the Local Area Plans which have been prepared for these locations.

- **Areas Covered By Village Policy Statements** - These are areas which are designated for the primary purpose of fulfilling local housing need and absorbing demand from the rural hinterland. These areas will also provide limited local level services. Consideration will also be given to the provision of childcare facilities at these locations. There shall be a strong emphasis on the creation and maintenance of a sense of identity and local character at these locations.

These settlements have been divided into two tiers in order to enhance the sustainability of the settlement strategy while maintaining and supporting the social, cultural and economic needs of the rural areas of the County.

- Tier 1 - To cater for local need and act as strategically important satellite areas that provide an important function of absorbing demand for development from the surrounding rural hinterland. These settlements are as follows; Abbeylara, Cullyfad, Legan, Aughnacliffe, Kilashee, Newtowncashel, Ballinalee, Kilnatruan and Stonepark.
- Tier 2 - To cater for local need, and in general developments of an intensive nature will not be permitted in these locations. These settlements are as follows; Abbeyshrule, Colehill, Lisryan, Ballinamuck, Derraghan, Melview, Ballycloughan, Dring, Moydow, Ballywillin, Enybegs, Moyne, Barry, Forgney, Mullinalaghta, Bunlahy, Legga, Ratharney, Coolarty, Leitrim and Taghshinny.

All the above settlements centres contained within the County Settlement Strategy have been chosen on the basis of their strategic location within the County, their current level of growth and their capacity to absorb further development through the existing physical, social and economic infrastructure. Local Area Plans and Village Policy Statements, which have been prepared, are in progress or are being planned, will ensure the successful implementation of the County Settlement Strategy.

5. Development Plan housing Objectives

5.1 Introduction

The Planning and Development Act, 2000, sets out clear requirements for the monitoring and review of local authority housing strategies. Section 95 subsection (1)(b) requires that a planning authority's development plan should include objectives to ensure that the housing strategy is implemented. These objectives should relate to the following:

- The existing and likely future need for social and affordable housing;
- The need to ensure the availability of housing for persons who have different levels of income;
- The need to provide different types and sizes of housing, to match, in so far as possible, the different types of households to be provided for;
- The special needs of the elderly and those with disabilities must be provided for; and
- The need to counteract social segregation in the provision of housing.

The housing objectives for Longford County Council particular to this Housing Strategy are set out below, and are for inclusion into the Longford County Development Plan (2009-2015) and Longford Town Development Plan (2010-2016). These objectives are related to both general housing and to social and affordable housing.

5.2 General Housing Objectives

The following are the general housing objectives of Longford County Council:

- It is the policy of the Council to normally provide such housing within existing defined settlements in order to realise the economics of providing infrastructure and services in towns and villages, and to facilitate the expansion of existing settlements in a planned and orderly fashion with the benefit of a broad range of services and infrastructure;
- Without prejudice to the above, housing shall be provided in rural areas where it promotes the role, and combats isolation of, the farming community, and promotes social inclusion;
- The Council will promote and encourage the provision of a broad mix of housing types in towns and villages in order to cater for the changing demographic outline of the County.

This will include the provision of housing for the elderly, persons with disability, lone parents and travelling families;

- The Council will give due consideration to DoEHLG's publications of "*Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities - Policy Statement*" (2007) and "*Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities- Design Guidelines*" (2007)¹¹.

5.3 General Objectives Relating to Social and Affordable Housing

An overall general objective of Longford County Council is to facilitate and promote, where possible, the provision of housing for those who cannot provide housing for themselves, in an appropriate location and at an affordable cost.

In addition to this, the following are the general social and affordable housing objectives and these applicable to both the Longford County Development Plan (2009-2015) and Longford Town Development Plan (2009-2015):

¹¹ "*Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities - Policy Statement*" (February, 2007), is a new policy statement for housing aimed at building sustainable communities, responding to housing need and ensuring effective delivery of housing programmes. Focus is placed on transforming Irish housing services, providing for special housing needs, creating paths to home ownership through affordable housing, etc, and expanding social housing output.

"*Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities- Design Guidelines*" (February, 2007), these guidelines will assist in the implementation of the policies set out in previous publication.

- **Social and Affordable Housing** - It is the policy of the planning authority to facilitate the provision of housing units to sufficiently cater for Social and Affordable Housing need - as established in this County Housing Strategy - over the Plan period;
- **Housing Provision** - Provision of Social and affordable Housing shall be forwarded through the ongoing purchase programme of turnkey developments, co-operation with voluntary housing organisations, the Health Service Executive and consultation, discussion and agreement with private developers as well as the Local Authority's own house building programme;
- Housing developments will be located in areas appropriately zoned under the Development Plan and Local Area Plans. Additional residential developments where the required infrastructure is present (or readily available) and areas close to social and community facilities, and that are in accordance with the principles of sustainable development, may also be considered;
- The specifics of these requirements shall be dealt with by the planning authority in pre-planning consultations and by condition and agreement as part of a planning permission for residential development.
- It will be necessary for the planning authority to reserve 20% of applications for private housing developments to provide an element of Social and Affordable Housing, in order to provide an even spread of housing of all types and encourage social integration.

5.4 Specific Objectives Relating to Social and Affordable Housing

The following are the specific social and affordable housing objectives and these are applicable to both the Longford County Development Plan (2010-2016) and Longford Town Development Plan (2010-2016):

- ***It is the policy of the planning authority to reserve 20% of all lands being developed in the Urban Area for residential use over the Plan period for the provision of Social and Affordable Housing.***
- ***Percentage reservation shall be decided on the basis of each individual site. Criteria to be taken into account will include the following:***
 - ***The type and location of the housing units required by the planning authority at a given time, as defined by the priority housing list by the Housing Section;***
 - ***The existing mix of housing classes in the area - as a general rule, in areas with an existing high level of social housing present, a lower reservation of lands will be required for social housing purposes.***
- ***Measures will be taken to provide a satisfactory mix of housing classes and types in each development in order to avoid undue social segregation. Depending on the existing mix of housing types in the area, a specified percentage of the reservation shall be utilised for Social Housing, and a specified percentage utilised for Affordable Housing provision, the details of which should be discussed at pre-application stage.***
- ***It is an objective of the planning authority to ensure that there is an adequate mix of housing types and sizes in order to cater for the requirements of all households in need of Social and Affordable Housing in its functional area. Depending on the existing mix of housing types in the area, a specified percentage of the reservation shall be utilised for Social Housing, while the remainder shall be utilised for Affordable Housing provision.***
- ***Longford County Council will continue to maximise the potential of the various social housing options, including voluntary housing, affordable housing, shared ownership, improvement of existing housing stock in lieu of Local Authority Housing and extensions to Local Authority Houses.***
- ***New developments will be required to be in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations Amendment, 2000 (Access for People with Disabilities) Where time constraints permit, in the case of housing provision for the***

disabled, direct and on-going consultations will be entered into with the prospective tenants in order to assess individual requirements.

- *Open spaces, entrances, pathways and parking areas in new residential developments shall be designed with reference to "Buildings for Everyone – Access and use for all Citizens" National Rehabilitation Board (NRB), 1998. The planning authority will have cognisance of the needs of the elderly with regard to accessibility, security and social interaction.*
- *Regard shall be had in the assessment of new developments to the social inclusion of all sectors of society, including the needs of the travelling community and ethnic minorities. Traveller accommodation shall be provided in accordance with the current, and any future, traveller accommodation plan.*
- *It is the policy of the planning authority to continue to assist Voluntary Housing Organisations insofar as is possible in line with government objectives on increasing output from Voluntary Housing Organisations.*
- *Any application for planning permission relating to a residential development under this Strategy which may impact on the integrity and/or setting of any monuments, sites, objects or areas of archaeological, cultural, architectural, historical or heritage importance under the protection of the DoEHLG, shall be referred to the Heritage and Planning Division of the DoEHLG for observations/comment prior to a grant of permission/approval being obtained.*

6 IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the objectives of this Housing Strategy for Longford County in relation to Social and Affordable Housing will be by means of the housing objectives set out in the Development Plan and by conditions attached to planning permissions, as provided for by Part V Section 96 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended by the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act, 2002.

Section 96 subsection (1) provides that where a development plan objective requires that a specified percentage of zoned residential land, or zoned mixed residential and other uses, be made available for social and affordable housing, a planning application for permission for housing must incorporate the provisions of the objective.

Under Section 96 subsection (2) a planning authority shall require as a condition of a grant of permission that the applicant enter into an agreement with the planning authority, in order that the development of land for housing fulfils the general objective relating to social and affordable housing contained within this strategy¹². Agreements shall be made in accordance with the requirements and methods framework provided within a general housing implementation plan established by planning authority's Housing Section. This implementation plan sets out the general details regarding the delivery, in terms of requirements and methods, of social and affordable housing over the operational life of the housing strategy.

The applicant for permission shall, when making an application to which this strategy applies, specify the manner in which it is intended to comply with the requirements of the planning authority's Housing Section as defined under the implementation plan. Pre-planning meetings with potential developers and the Housing Section will provide an opportunity to discuss such conditions and are encouraged by the planning authority.

¹² The general objective relating to Social and Affordable Housing contained within this strategy is that it will be necessary for the Planning Authority to reserve 20% of applications for private housing developments to provide an element of Social and Affordable Housing, in order to provide an even spread of housing of all types and encourage social integration

The agreement shall identify method of compliance with the social and affordable housing objective, which can be as follows, as set out in Section 96 subsection (3)(a) and (b) as amended:

1. The transfer to the planning authority of the ownership of such part or parts of the land which is subject to the application for permission;
2. The building and transfer, on completion, to the ownership of the planning authority, or to the ownership of persons nominated by the authority, of houses on the land which is subject to the application for permission;
3. The transfer of such number of fully or partially serviced sites on the land which is subject to the application for permission as the agreement may specify to the ownership of the planning authority, or to the ownership of persons nominated by the authority;
4. The transfer to the planning authority of the ownership of any other land within the functional area of the planning authority;
5. The building and transfer, on completion, to the ownership of the planning authority, or to the ownership of persons nominated by the authority, of houses on land to which compliance method 4 above applies of such number and description as may be specified in the agreement;
6. The transfer of such number of fully or partially serviced sites on land to which compliance method 4 above applies as the agreement may specify to the ownership of the planning authority, or to the ownership of persons nominated by the authority;
7. A payment of such an amount as specified in the agreement to the planning authority;
8. A combination of a transfer of land referred to in compliance method 1 above (but involving a lesser amount of such land than if the agreement solely provided for a transfer under that method) and the doing of one or more of the things referred to in compliance methods' 2 to 7 above;
9. A combination of the doing of 2 or more of the things referred to in compliance methods' 2 to 7 above.

Where the agreement relates to land or sites, the planning authority shall indicate to the applicant, insofar as it is known at the time of the agreement, its intention in relation to the provision of housing including a description of the proposed housing, on the land or sites to which the agreement relates.

In the making of the agreement, and as set out in Section 96 subsection (3)(e), the following shall be taken into account by the planning authority:

- The proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which the planning application relates and the need to avoid social exclusion;
- This Housing Strategy, its objectives and the objectives of the current Development Plan;
- The overall coherence of the development to which the application relates;
- The views of the applicant in relation to the impact of agreement on the development.

7. MONITORING AND REVIEW

THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT, 2000, SETS OUT CLEAR REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MONITORING AND REVIEW OF LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING STRATEGIES. SECTION 95 SUBSECTION (3)(A) REQUIRES THE LOCAL AUTHORITY MANAGER TO PREPARE A PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE ELECTED MEMBERS UNDER SECTION 15(2) WITHIN TWO YEARS OF THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN BEING MADE AND WITHIN THIS REPORT IS IT NECESSARY TO SET OUT THE PROGRESS MADE IN IMPLEMENTING THE HOUSING STRATEGY. WHERE THE MANAGER IDENTIFIES NEW OR REVISED HOUSING NEEDS, THE MANAGER MAY RECOMMEND AN ADJUSTMENT TO THE HOUSING STRATEGY AND A CONSEQUENT VARIATION TO THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

SECTION 95 SUBSECTION (3)(B) PROVIDES THAT WHERE THE LOCAL AUTHORITY MANAGER CONSIDERS THAT, AT ANY TIME DURING THE LIFETIME OF THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN, THERE HAS BEEN A CHANGE IN EITHER THE HOUSING MARKET OR IN THE REGULATIONS MADE BY THE MINISTER UNDER SECTION 100 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT, 2000, THAT SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECTS THE HOUSING STRATEGY, THE MANAGER MAY PREPARE A REPORT FOR THE ELECTED MEMBERS. IN THIS REPORT THE MANAGER MAY RECOMMEND THAT THE HOUSING STRATEGY BE ADJUSTED AND THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN VARIED ACCORDINGLY.

8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This Housing Strategy has been prepared by the Planning Section of Longford County Council in accordance with the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended by the Planning and Development (amendment) Act, 2002.

This strategy is based on the following key issues:

- Identification of housing need within County Longford;
- Identification of need for social and affordable housing within the County;
- Provision of housing to satisfy this need and the nature of this need through appropriate zoning arrangements, in accordance with good planning practice;
- Specific policy response to the above.

In undertaking this strategy all the relevant and most up-to-date publications and data sources have been used and analysed in detailed resulting in the preparation of a very robust strategy that clearly set out the analyses, policies and methods of implementation. A structured methodology has been applied throughout the strategy.

The strategy sets out the projected housing needs of Longford County over the period 2007-2016. The strategy provides for a mix of dwelling types and sizes to cater for the range of housing needs, in order to encourage mixed and balanced communities and promote social inclusion.

It is envisaged that through the objectives contained within this strategy and the measures included within, and through the implementation, monitoring and review process outlined, that the housing demand required for the county over the strategy's timeframe can be successfully provided through consultation, discussion and agreement with individuals, community, voluntary and business interests.

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