



## Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh

Halla an Chontae Sraid Eoin Cill Chainnigh  
R95 A39T

Pobail agus Áiteanna Inbhuanaithe a Chruthú

## Kilkenny County Council

County Hall John Street Kilkenny  
R95 A39T

Creating Sustainable Communities and Places



13<sup>th</sup> February, 2024.

**TO: AN CATHAOIRLEACH  
& EACH MEMBER OF KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**RE: THOMASTOWN LOCAL AREA PLAN**

Dear Elected Member,

I refer to the attached Report. The Thomastown Local Area Plan (LAP) is due to expire on 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2024. I hereby recommend that the Members extend the Thomastown LAP for a period of 3 years to 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2027, as provided under Section 19 of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended. This would allow for the alignment of the core strategies of the Thomastown LAP and the City and County Development Plan 2021-2027. The attached Report sets out the rationale for the proposed extension.

In summary:

- The objectives in the Thomastown LAP to achieve sustainable development remain valid and extending the LAP will provide the additional time needed for their completion.
- The level of population growth in Thomastown to date is in line with the projections, and there is sufficient land zoned and serviced to accommodate the target population growth of Thomastown to 2027, at which point the core strategy will be reviewed.

I recommend that the Elected Members extend the Thomastown LAP for a period of 3 years.

Yours sincerely,

**Lar Power,  
Chief Executive**

*Encl.*

**To:** Elected Members  
**Subject:** Extension of Thomastown Local Area Plan (2019)  
**Date:** 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024

I refer to the option under section 19 (1)(d) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (i.e. the Act), to extend the life of a Local Area Plan, by deferring publication of the notice stating the authority’s intention to review the Plan. The Act states that “A planning authority may, as they consider appropriate, by resolution defer...publishing a notice... for a further period not extending five years”. Such a resolution must be made not more than five years after the making of the previous Local Area Plan, i.e. by **25<sup>th</sup> March 2024**. Before the Members resolve to extend any LAP, the Chief Executive must give an opinion that the LAP remains consistent with the objectives and core strategy of the relevant development plan, and that the objectives of the Local Area Plan have not been substantially secured. This report is submitted to the Elected Members for consideration, in accordance with Section 19 (1)(d) of the Act.

**Report**

The Thomastown Local Area Plan was adopted on the 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2019, and it is due to expire in March 2025. This report examines the implications of extending the LAP for a further 3 years, to 2028. This would allow for the alignment of the Thomastown LAP with the City and County Development Plan.

A review of 2022 Census data and current permissions was undertaken in order to inform this report, and to confirm that the Local Area Plan is consistent with the Core Strategy of the Development Plan (2021) and that the objectives of the LAP have not been substantially secured.

**Commentary on consistency with Core Strategy**

In 2016, Thomastown had a population of 2,445 persons, which was 2.46% of County Kilkenny. For the purposes of the City and County Development Plan Core Strategy (2021), this proportion was used to project Thomastown’s population forward to 2027. This resulted in an allocation of 437 persons to Thomastown to 2027, with a population projection of 2,882 by 2027.

The 2022 Census (three years from the making of the LAP) recorded a population of 2,305 persons, which was a decrease of 140 persons from the 2016 Census. From our analysis, this is attributable to a significant change in the settlement boundary for Census purposes, between 2016 and 2022, see Appendix 1.

An interrogation of the Electoral Divisions (EDs) covering Thomastown offers a more accurate perspective. The two EDs, of Thomastown and Jerpoint Church, grew by 0.8% over the Census period, see Appendix 2 for the full breakdown.

The Core Strategy therefore projected an annual increase of approx. 40 persons per year, but the actual per annum growth was a reduction in 23 persons per year.

<b>Census 2016</b>	<b>Core Strategy Allocation to 2027 (persons)</b>	<b>Per annum allocation (2016-2027)</b>	<b>Census 2022</b>	<b>Actual change in population from 2016 to 2022 (persons)</b>	<b>Per annum decrease during Census period</b>
2,445	437	39.7	2,305	-140	-23

It is clear that growth in Thomastown is falling well behind the projected figures of the Development Plan. However, the pace of growth in the County, at 5%, is also behind the projected figure of 6.5% growth as set out in the Core Strategy<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The Core Strategy projected a county wide growth of 11,842 to 2027, a per annum uplift of 1076.5. The actual increase to 2022 was 4,928, which is a per annum uplift of 821. The actual increase was 5%, whereas the projected growth (@1076.5 x 6) to 105,691 to 2022, was 6.5%.

The level of growth to date for the LAP therefore, is still consistent with the core strategy. For the purposes of the extension of the LAP by 3 years, it is important to assess can the remaining allocation, including the proposed additional years, be accommodated under the present zoning framework.

The Development Plan has assigned an allocation to 2027, which is an additional 577 persons over the actual 2022 population figure to 2027. These 577 persons could be accommodated with approx. 206 dwellings (using the average household size of 2.8 persons per household).

In accordance with the County Core strategy, theoretically at 30 units per ha, 206 units require approximately 6.8 Ha of appropriately zoned lands.

<b>Additional growth to 2027 (persons)</b>	<b>No. of housing units required to 2027 to facilitate growth (approx.)</b>	<b>Zoned Land required (@ 30 units per hectare)</b>
577	206	6.8 Ha

As at January 2024, there are 2 undeveloped sites zoned for New Residential, with approx. 5.5 hectares remaining undeveloped (Sites 1 and 5 on Map 1. There are also 2 sites zoned for Low Density Residential, (Sites 6 and 7 on Map 1) with 2.5 ha remaining undeveloped. This is a total of 8 ha of greenfield land.

Objective 3 of the National Planning Framework requires that 30% of all development in towns earmarked for development take place on infill sites. Several appropriately zoned infill sites exist in Thomastown.

There is therefore sufficient land zoned to accommodate the projected growth of Thomastown under the County Core Strategy to 2027, at which point the Core Strategy will be replaced.

In relation to the possibility for exceeding the projected population growth, the level of current permissions should be examined as one element in this. As at January 2024, there are 73 units with permission, and a further 56 units are the subject of further information requests, see Table below.

**Table: Extant permissions in Thomastown, as at January 2024**

<b>Map Ref</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>P/Ref</b>	<b>Size (ha)</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Zoning</b>	<b>Note</b>
1	Cloghabrody	2360088	1.9	54	New Res	Granted. Expiry 28/01/2029
2	Maudlin St, and Maudlin Court	2360104		19	Existing Res	Still in appeal period
3	Grennan	2360052		30	Existing Res	FI requested
4	Cloghabrody Heights	2360258		26	Mixed Use	FI requested
5	Ladyswell Street/Sheephouse Lane	N/A	3.6		New Res	Subject to Masterplan objective
6	Cloghabrody	N/A	1.7		Low density Res	Subject to Masterplan objective
7	Dublin Road	N/A	0.8		Low density Res	

Given the potential that not all sites will be fully developed by 2027, this level of extant permissions, in combination with remaining land zoned, is not considered excessive, and is consistent with the County Core Strategy.

### **Commentary on securing objectives of the LAP**

The LAP contains a range of objectives to achieve the sustainable development of Thomastown to 2025. These have been broadly examined to assess the progress on their implementation. This includes objectives for the production of Masterplans for two sites, Sites 5 and 6, at Ladyswell Street/Sheephouse Lane and Cloghabrody. Masterplans have not been produced to date for these sites.

In relation to other objectives, TCO1.3 of the LAP set out that it was an objective to encourage and facilitate the redevelopment of the Sessions House and Bridewell to accommodate a community arts centre which recognises the local artistic resource in Thomastown. A Part 8 process was carried out in 2020, and the regeneration project was completed in 2023.

Other examples of completed objectives include objective MTO1.11: To upgrade and rebrand the car park on the Quay and provide footpath link to same. The Quay car park was completed in 2021.

Although it is clear progress has been made, extending the LAP would provide the additional time needed to complete the longer term objectives, such as the preparation of the Masterplans.

### **Conclusion**

The current LAP provides sufficient serviced and zoned land to provide for the projected growth to 2027. Therefore, having regard to:

- the provisions of the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021, including its Core Strategy,
- the long standing and clear vision for development that Kilkenny County Council has had for this area,

I consider the Plan should be extended.

I consider that the Local Area Plan is consistent with the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan (2021) and the objectives of the LAP have not been substantially secured.

I can confirm therefore that the sending and publishing of the notices may be deferred and the period for which they may be deferred is 3 years.



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**Denis Malone**  
**Senior Planner**

I concur with the rationale set out above and recommend that the Thomastown LAP be extended for a period of 3 years.



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**Sean McKeown,**  
**Director of Services**

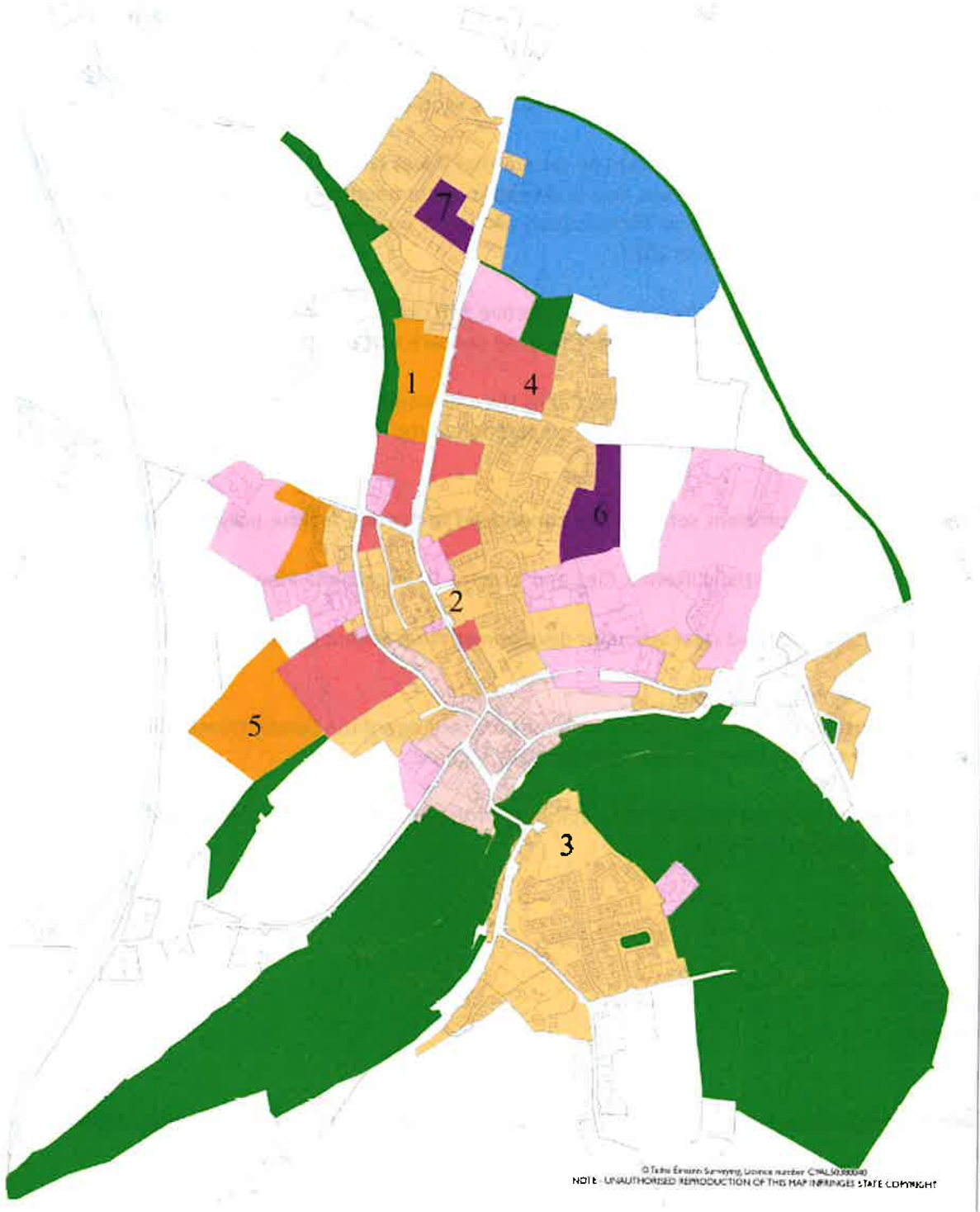
I recommend that the Thomastown LAP be extended as outlined above, and that this item be placed on the Agenda of the next County Council meeting, to take place on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2024.



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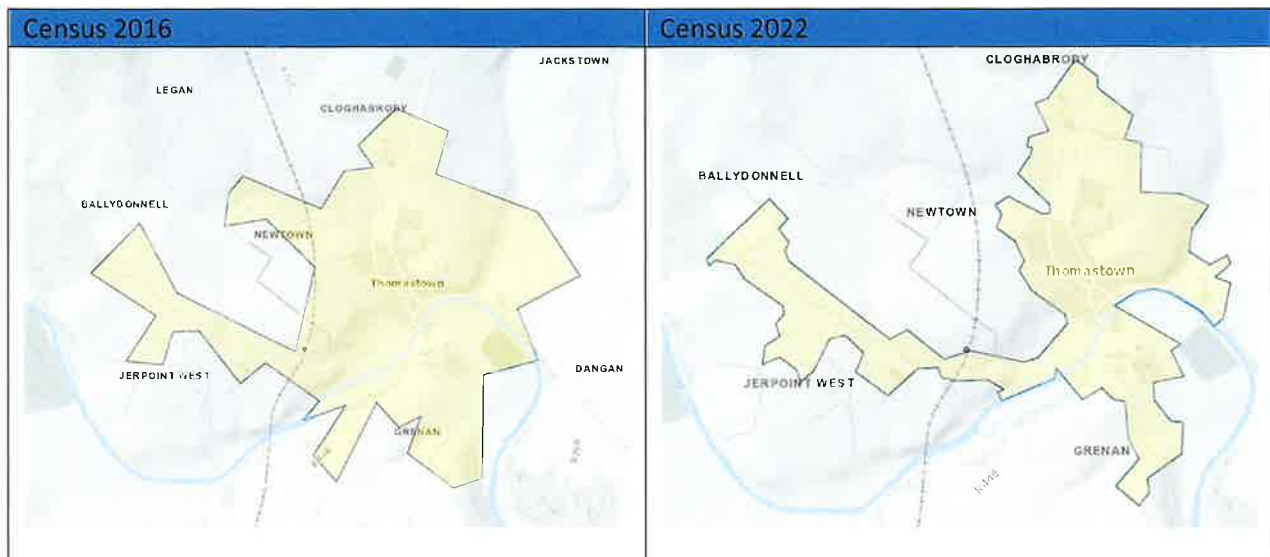
**Lar Power,**  
**Chief Executive**

**Map 1: Sites in Thomastown**



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## Appendix 1: Census settlement boundaries



## Appendix 2: Electoral Divisions Census results

	Census 2016	Census 2022	% growth
Thomastown	2347	2342	-0.2%
Jerpoint Church	923	955	3.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,270</b>	<b>3,297</b>	<b>0.8%</b>

