

# FERMOY

Development Plan 2009 - 2015



Fermoy  
Town  
Council

Mainistir Fhear Maighe

**Volume I - Survey & Analysis**

## VOLUME I: SURVEY AND ANALYSIS

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

The Fermoy Town Development Plan has been prepared in accordance with the steps set out in the Planning and Development Acts. The Draft Plan was approved by the members on 17 November 2009 and became effective on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2009.

The Survey and Analysis Volume attempts to set out the background data on the town and the context within which the Plan was prepared. The sequence of sections of Volume I, Survey and Analysis, largely follows that of the sections in Volume II, Policies and Objectives Volume.

## **1.1 Introduction.**

1.1.1. The Fermoy Development Plan 2009-2015 was approved by the Fermoy Town Council on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2009 and became effective on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2009.

1.1.2. The Draft Plan comprises four Volumes:

1. Volume I: Survey and Analysis
2. Volume 2: Policies and Objectives (Including Register of Protected Structures and the maps associated with the objectives of the Plan)
3. Volume 3: Housing Strategy
4. Volume 4: Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment.

Accompanying documents not comprising the statutory Draft Plan include the Section 11 and Section 12 Manager's Reports and the Register of Protected Structures Study. There is also an Strategic Environmental Statement that does not form part of the Plan.

1.1.3. . These documents are available for inspection at the Town Hall during normal business hours.

1.1.4. It is intended to make the Plan available on the Town Councils Website.

## **1.2 Statutory Obligation**

1.2.1. This Plan was written and made under Sections 9-17 of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

1.2.2. Section 9 obliges Fermoy Town Council to make a Plan every six years. The latest date for the completion of this Plan was February 2010 and it was completed at a slightly earlier date.

1.2.3. Section 10 obliges the Development Plan to set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. Section 10.2(a)-(m) requires the inclusion of 13 categories of objectives. Section 10.3 indicates additional categories of objective that may be included. Section 10.5 requires that information be provided on the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the Plan.

1.2.4. Section 11 details the procedure for preparing the draft Development Plan.

1.2.5. Section 12 details the procedure for making the Plan.

1.2.6. Section 13 details the procedure for varying the Development Plan.

1.2.7. Section 14 details the procedure for including the preservation of rights of way in the Plan.

1.2.8. Section 15 imposes a duty on the Planning authority to secure the objectives of the Development Plan.

1.2.9. Section 16 details how copies of the Plan and associated reports and drafts are to be made available to the public.

1.2.10. Section 17 addresses legal issues relating to evidence of a Development Plan.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Plan.**

1.3.1. The main function of the Plan is to provide a planning framework for the town so that Fermoy and its people can develop their potential within a sustainable context. It identifies the natural and man-made assets of the town and its amenities, while addressing the physical requirements for future growth. The aim is to secure a balance between employment, housing, services and amenities; thus enabling a basis for a stable well-integrated community. The Plan must be, as far as practicable, consistent with national plans, policies and strategies and with the County Development Plan. Other functions of the Plan include:

1.3.2. The identification of development demands likely to arise over the six years of the Plan and more generally over a period of approximately 20 years.

1.3.3. The facilitation of sustainable and balanced economic investment, taking into account these demands.

1.3.4. A dialogue with and informing of all stakeholders in the town of the likely extent, pattern and form of future development.

1.3.5. The protection, conservation and enhancement of the environmental quality of the town within a sustainable pattern of growth.

### **1.4 Functional Area of the Plan.**

1.4.1. The statutory functions of this Development Plan apply to all of the lands within Fermoy Town Council area. Cognisance will be taken of that area of the town that is located in the County area and of other relevant adjacent areas in the preparation of the Plan.

1.4.2. It is the intention of the Town Council to make available information on this Plan on the website for the Town.

### **1.5 *Monitoring and Review Process.***

1.5.1. It is a requirement under the Planning and Development Act 2000 for the Manager to prepare a report for the Members of the Council on the progress achieved in securing the objectives of the Development Plan, two years after the making of the new Plan. The Act also imposes a duty on the planning authority to take such steps as are in its powers and as may be necessary for achieving the objectives of the Development Plan.

### **1.6 *Format of the Plan.***

1.6.1. The Plan is divided into four volumes as follows:

1. Volume 1: Survey and Analysis: outlines the background and analysis providing the basis for the Plan.
2. Volume 2: Policies and Objectives (Including Register of Protected Structures and maps indicating the objectives). Contains the Objectives, Policies, Strategies, Zonings and Standards of the Plan along with relevant maps. This volume outlines that the Town Council proposes to do based on the Survey and Analysis in Volume 1.
3. Volume 3: Housing Strategy.
4. Volume 4: Strategic Environmental Assessment. This attempts to assess the environmental impact of the plans proposals on the environment.

### **1.7 *Period of the Plan.***

**2009 - 2015 (SIX YEARS)**

### **1.8 *Acknowledgements.***

1.8.1. The staff of the County Architect's Department would like to acknowledge the valuable assistance of the Town Manager, Mr. Tom Stritch, the members of the Town Council, the many people who made submissions and suggestions and the town's people of Fermoy.

1.8.2. We would also like to thank Mr. Ray Owens, Town Clerk, his staff and also to those not mentioned here whose contribution is gratefully appreciated.

1.8.3. We would also like to thank RPS, Environmental Consultants, for the preparation of the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment.

1.8.4. The Plan was drafted by the County Architects Department (County Architect; Denis Deasy, Dip. Arch., MRAI)

**1.8.5. Project Team:**

Town Manager: Mr. Tom Stritch.

Town Architect: Mr. Greg Collins.

Town Engineer: Mr. John O'Leary, Senior Executive Engineer,

Town Clerk: Mr. Ray Owens

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Photographs courtesy of Ms Catherine O'Callaghan, D/T.

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## Chapter 2

# Strategic Context

This section outlines the Strategic Context within which the Development Plan is set.

## **2.1 Introduction:**

2.1.1. The Fermoy Town Plan was conceived within the context of a variety of other plans and strategies addressing issues of relevance to Fermoy and at scales normally greater than that of the town. The following is a selected list:

1. National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020
2. South West Regional Planning Guidelines 2004
3. Cork Area Strategic Plan 2001-2020
4. Cork County Development Board 2002+2005
5. CSR Recreational Needs Report 1999
6. Cork County Draft Development Plan 2009-2015
7. Fermoy Socio-economic and Demographic Update.
8. Fermoy Local Area Plan.
9. Cork County Waste Management Strategy 2004.
10. Cork Planning Authorities – Draft Joint Retail Strategy 2008.
11. Cork Planning Authorities Draft Joint Housing Strategy 2009-2015
12. Conclusions

2.1.2. In the succeeding pages these documents are summarised and the main implications for the Fermoy Development Plan are indicated.

## **2.2 National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020**

2.2.1. The National Spatial Strategy 2002 – 2020 (NSS), is designed to co-ordinate future development and planning in Ireland over the next twenty years, in a sustainable way. The intention is to achieve a better balance of social, economic and physical development, and population growth between regions. The NSS is intended to open up new opportunities for everyone by bringing people, services and jobs closer together. In the southwest region, the Cork city area has been identified as a national Gateway or an engine of regional, national and international growth. Fermoy has been identified as a service town in the population range of 1,500-5,000 and as an urban strengthening opportunity.

2.2.2. The NSS endorses Cork Area Strategic Plan (CASP) as the basis for guiding development in Cork and the surrounding areas and sees its full implementation as an important contributory step in realising the Government's objective for balanced regional development.

2.2.3. The following is an extract from the NSS (p.87):

2.2.4. ***"Towns 1,500-5,000 population:*** *Within the South West region, there are medium sized towns that play important economic and service functions along remoter parts of the coastline, such as Dingle, Cahersiveen, Kenmare, Castletownbere, Bantry and Skibbereen.*

2.2.5. *Accessibility and effective local planning frameworks and initiatives to release capacity in terms of land and services for sustainable growth are critical factors in activating the potential of such centres in their important county roles.*

2.2.6. *In more inland parts, towns such as Listowel, Kanturk, Charleville, Mitchelstown and Fermoy have historically developed to serve strong rural and agricultural hinterlands. Capitalising on the location and attractions of such centres on or near important transport corridors, will become an important part of diversifying these towns as their reliance on traditional economic activities lessens."*

2.2.7. **Comment:** it will be desirable that the Fermoy Development Plan resonate with the objectives of the National Spatial Strategy.

### **2.3 The South West Regional Planning Guidelines 2004**

2.3.1. The South West Regional Guidelines 2004 support the National Spatial Strategy and Cork Area Strategic Plan objectives including the development of the hubs and gateways, an integrated transport system, educational, health, recreational and cultural facilities. It promotes the objectives of integrated land use and infrastructure provision and the development of selected towns and villages outside the gateways and hubs to achieve critical mass in population, employment and services so that they can act as service centres for their rural hinterland.

2.3.2. The following is an extract from the Guidelines;

2.3.3. ***"Other parts of Zone 1:*** *Other parts of this Zone include towns such as Youghal, Fermoy, Macroom, Bandon, and Kinsale, and their rural hinterlands. These towns play a dual role, in that they have a relationship with Cork, but also play an important role as employment and service centres for much of Zone 3 (see 2.2.3, below). These towns are in the CASP area and have accordingly*

*assigned roles. The Towns have the potential to attract FDI, as well as developing a stronger indigenous sector. It is envisaged that growth in these towns will be employment-led and that they will not merely become dormitory towns for the Metropolitan Area. Commuting to the Gateway will obviously continue, but should not become the prime basis of growth.*

*2.3.4. Many of the towns are under residential development pressures due to their proximity to Cork and the relative price differential of housing. This residential development can play an important role in the regeneration of the towns, increasing critical mass and, hence, service levels and employment.*

*2.3.5. Care needs to be taken that this growth is directed to the towns and villages to maximise the economic and social benefits, reduce infrastructural costs to avoid urban sprawl, and to protect the amenities of the Area for agriculture, amenity and tourism.*

2.3.6. Remainder of CASP Area: The strategy for the remainder of the CASP area is the reinforcement of the ring towns, as identified in CASP (Kinsale, Macroom, Bandon, Fermoy and Youghal) and the implementation of a complementary rural strategy that reflects the need to concentrate new development in compact sustainable forms, easily serviced by public transport, social, cultural and commercial facilities.

2.3.7. Each town's growth should, as far as possible, be employment-led, to avoid excessive commuting to the City and to build local viability and sustainability. CASP's town boundaries, for population purposes, differ from those used by the CSO, but Table 7.5 shows the scale of growth expected in each town.

2.3.8. The general strategy for each town is well stated in CASP and it is as follows:

2.3.9. "Fermoy is strategically situated on the road to Dublin and it has attracted substantial inward investment in the past. Construction of the bypass will allow Fermoy to accommodate substantial new growth to the north and the south without adversely affecting the town's attractive setting and historic townscape."

2.3.10. **Comment:** It is desirable that Fermoy have regard to the provisions of the South West Regional Planning Guidelines.

## **2.4 Cork Area Strategic Plan (CASP)**

2.4.1. In County Cork, the County Council and City Council jointly adopted the Cork Area Strategic Plan 2001 – 2020 (CASP), a 20 year

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strategic plan for the City and its suburbs, the surrounding satellite towns and the harbour area, and a wide rural area stretching out to the ring towns of Kinsale, Bandon, Macroom, Mallow, Fermoy and Youghal. The CASP also introduces the concept of 'Metropolitan Cork' (comprising the city and suburbs, satellite towns, strategic industrial areas and villages) to be promoted as a single unified growth and development entity. The southern section of the Fermoy Electoral Area is included within the CASP area. The strategy envisaged in CASP promotes a gradual, but steady shift in development towards the north and east rail corridor, with continued consolidation of the settlements to the south and west of Cork City. This has been reflected in the objectives of the Cork County Development Plan 2003 and 2009 and the Special Local Area Plans, which focus major growth in settlements such as Carrigtwohill, Midleton and along the rail corridor to the north of the City between Kilbarry and Blarney.

2.4.2. The following are strategic population targets for the CASP ring towns, including Fermoy:

<b>CASP Ring Strategic Planning Area Population 2006-2020</b>			
	Estimated		RPG* 04
Main towns	2002	2006	2020
Mallow	8,937	10,241	13,543
Bandon	5,161	5,822	7,355
Fermoy	4,804	5,822	7,355
Kinsale	3,554	4,099	4,036
Macroom	2,985	3,553	3,954
Youghal	6,597	6,785	7,499
Total Main towns	32,038	36,373	43,702
Villages and Rural	59,995	68,682	63,282
Total CASP Ring	92,033	105,055	106,984

2.4.3. The policy and objectives of the CASP Ring Strategic Planning Area are based on the following planning and sustainable goals:

2.4.4. **a.** *To recognise the importance of the role to be played by Mallow as a 'Hub' town in the implementation of the National Spatial Strategy and the Atlantic Gateways Initiative; to promote its development as a major centre of employment and population where there is a high standard access to educational and cultural facilities;*

2.4.5. **b.** *To establish an appropriate balance in the spatial distribution of future population growth, broadly in line with the Cork Area Strategic Plan, so that Bandon, Fermoy, Macroom and Youghal*

*can accelerate their rate of growth and achieve a critical mass of population to enable them to maximise their potential to attract new investment in employment, services and public transport;*

2.4.6. **Comment:** The bulk of the population growth will take place in the environs of the Town Council area due to the restricted availability of land within the town boundary.

## **2.5 Cork County Development Board (CDB) Strategy 2002 & 2005**

2.5.1. Cork County Development Board (2002) Integrated Strategy for the Economic, Social and Cultural Development of County Cork, 2002-2011 was prepared by the Cork County Development Board (CDB). The objective of the Cork County Development Board (CDB) Strategy is to provide a single template to guide the activities of the many public sector agencies operating in the country. The objective is to prepare and implement a 10-year strategy to attain this objective.

2.5.2. The key challenges facing Cork County include:

2.5.3. The uneven growth between different parts of the county.

2.5.4. The uneven distribution in educational attainment in many parts of the county.

2.5.5. Agriculture accounts for a very high proportion of employment in the county while the proportion engaged in service sectors is well below average.

2.5.6. While the manufacturing sector is strong there is an over reliance on a narrow range of manufacturing sectors including food and pharmaceuticals.

2.5.7. Serious deficiencies remain as regards infrastructure.

2.5.8. The specific goals to be achieved by the strategy are:

2.5.9. Provide an effective infrastructure that supports Sustainable Development throughout County Cork.

2.5.10. To achieve a wide spread distribution of employment opportunities and economic growth with adherence to sustainable development principles

2.5.11. To improve the quality of life for all.

2.5.12. To provide equal access and opportunity to education and training.

2.5.13. To raise education attainment levels.

2.5.14. The measures adopted to address these issues can be categorised under the headings of:

- Infrastructure
- Balanced sustainable development
- Quality of life
- Education and training.

2.5.15. The Strategy was reviewed in November 2005 and reframed its goals somewhat. The *Integrated Strategy for the Economic, Social & Cultural Development of County Cork 2002-2011* has four main themes each with its own main goal(s):

2.5.16. Theme: Infrastructure

2.5.17. Goal: “To provide an effective infrastructure which supports sustainable development throughout county Cork.”

2.5.18. Theme: Balanced Sustainable Development

2.5.19. Goal: “To achieve a widespread distribution of employment opportunities and economic growth with adherence to sustainable development principles.”

2.5.20. Theme: Quality of Life

2.5.21. Goal: “To improve the quality of life for all.”

2.5.22. Theme: Education and Training Goal: “To provide equal access and opportunity to education and training.”

2.5.23. Goal: “To raise education attainment levels.”

2.5.24. Each of these four themes has a number of sub-themes each with one or more goals. The total number of goals is 86.

2.5.25. **Comment**: These goals and strategies largely support the proposals contained in this Plan for transforming the town from that of a market town and rural/agricultural hub to a post industrial knowledge, tourist and service economy.

## **2.6 *Cunnane, Stratton Reynolds: Cork Recreational Needs Report. (1999) & Cork County Recreation and Amenity Policy (2006).***

2.6.1. The Cork Recreational Needs Report prepared by Cunnane, Stratton, Reynolds was produced in 1999. This report provided much valuable data on the extent of and requirements for Sporting facilities in the Land Use Transportation Study (LUTS) area. The report detailed existing (1999) provision and perceived demand for the following sports:

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Existing Provision in LUTS area</b>	<b>Recommended additional Provision</b>
GAA	93 pitches	14 Pitches
Soccer	97 Pitches	10 Pitches
Rugby	28 Pitches	1 Pitch on north side
Hockey	8 Pitches	5-8
Swimming Pools	8 Pools	1 Pool
Indoor Sports Halls	47 Halls	2-5 Halls
Fitness/Multi Gyms	21 Units	Upgrade existing
Golf	15 Courses (252 holes)	1 Course on North side
Pitch and Putt	19 courses	1 new course
Athletics Tracks	3 tracks	Upgrade existing
Tennis	128 courts	Upgrade existing

2.6.2. The report recommended the following objectives:

- That all existing land and facilities be retained in their present use.
- That provision be enhanced both qualitatively and quantitatively
- That means of implementation be identified.
- That all new developments make adequate provision for the full range of sport and recreational activities anticipated to arise.
- The report also included a recommended schedule of recreation and open space provision.

2.6.3. The report confined itself to the above sports and did not include: Water Sports: Sea sports, Outdoor Swimming, Beach, Sailing, windsurfing, cruising, motor boats, ski Jets, Angling etc., Cycling, Walking eg. Urban 1-3 mile walks, Rural long distance walks of 10-20 miles etc. In 2006 the County Council drew up the Cork County Council Recreation and Amenity Policy. This stated:

*“Cork County Council commits itself to the provision of Recreation and Amenity facilities, including sports and arts/culture facilities, to serve, so far as is possible, the recreational needs of the population it serves. This will include direct provision of facilities by the Council and the facilitation of other providers, whether community groups or sports clubs, in their efforts to provide recreation and amenity projects.*

*The Council will, in the first instance, ensure that all existing recreational land and facilities, irrespective of the current ownership, are retained in their present use. The Council will support the enhancement of existing facilities to encourage their better use through improved accessibility and capacity.*

*The Council will also ensure that all new developments make adequate provision for the full range of recreational and amenity activities, sufficient to meet the needs of the development, and that such facilities are maintained in perpetuity for the benefit of the development.*

*The Council will endeavour, so far as is practicable, to support the provision recreational facilities which serve the needs of the entire community.*

*The Council will promote and encourage local community involvement in Amenity and Recreational Facilities through community liaison and community partnership”*

2.6.4. **Comment:** The study offers a useful methodology and standards for assessing the present and future recreational requirements of Fermoy. A successor to the above document is currently being prepared by consultants. The Cork County Recreation and Amenity Policy (2006) is a useful guide to recreation policy.

## **2.7 County Development Plan 2009**

2.7.1. The Cork County Development Plan 2009 has made provision for the majority of population growth planned for North Cork to be located within the main towns. In the Fermoy Electoral Area these principal locations are Fermoy and Mitchelstown.

2.7.2. The following is an extract from the Draft Plan: (The paragraph numbers are those of the Plan)

2.7.3. **Fermoy:** SET 1-17 It is an objective of this Plan to promote urban renewal within the town centre particularly along the River Blackwater, expand its commercial base and strengthen its function as a district employment centre.

2.7.4. 3.3.8. The CASP Update Project will give guidance on the scale of future growth and the **Fermoy Electoral Area Plan** will make provision for enhanced services and social infrastructure. The completion of the bypass has reduced the volume of through traffic in Fermoy, which has created opportunities for rejuvenation of the town centre. The setting of Fermoy within the Blackwater Valley provides an attractive backdrop for the town and should be protected. Flood management issues also need to be addressed.

2.7.5. 5.2.3. The highest growth in employment has been experienced in Metropolitan Cork (including the City and Metropolitan Towns) as a single employment market. Outside of Metropolitan Cork, Macroom, Fermoy and Skibbereen have recorded the highest rate of growth in employment.

2.7.6. 5.2.23. Other towns in this strategic planning area are the Ring Towns of **Fermoy, Youghal, Macroom and Bandon**, all of which have been designated as District Employment Centres. It is

important for these strategic towns to retain a sufficient critical mass of population in order to attract new investment and employment and develop and modernise the range of services and facilities that they offer. In order to establish an appropriate balance in the spatial distribution of growth, these centres will provide additional employment for the population expected in the towns as well as providing an improved service for the large rural hinterlands in the area.

Development Plan Objectives: Employment in CASP Ring Strategic Planning Area	
ECON 2.4	<p><b>CASP Ring Strategic Planning Area</b></p> <p>(a) It is an objective to promote the development of Mallow Hub as an Integrated Employment Centre within the Atlantic Gateway Corridor.</p> <p>(b) It is an objective to promote the development of the ring towns of Fermoy, Youghal, Macroom and Bandon as District Employment Centres, which are major centres of population and employment growth of countywide significance.</p>

INF 5-3	<p><b>Water Services Infrastructure Provision – CASP Ring Strategic Planning Area</b></p> <p>It is an objective of this Plan to secure and prioritise the phased provision of water supply, wastewater disposal and drainage infrastructure for the main towns in this area so that they can achieve the following target populations by the year 2020:</p> <table style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Mallow</td> <td style="text-align: right;">20,000*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bandon</td> <td style="text-align: right;">7,335</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fermoy</td> <td style="text-align: right;">7,314</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kinsale</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4,036</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Macroom</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3,954</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Youghal</td> <td style="text-align: right;">7,499</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>N.B.</b> Revised population targets for this area will be included in this Plan at the amendment stage (summer 2008) following the updating of CASP to take account of the most recent population targets for the South West Region issued in February 2007. *Derived from Mallow Special Local Area Plan.</p>	Mallow	20,000*	Bandon	7,335	Fermoy	7,314	Kinsale	4,036	Macroom	3,954	Youghal	7,499
Mallow	20,000*												
Bandon	7,335												
Fermoy	7,314												
Kinsale	4,036												
Macroom	3,954												
Youghal	7,499												

2.7.7. 6.5.20. It is a major requirement to separate the surface water system from the foul water system and for improvements made to the networks. In addition, key needs identified include the following:

*Improvements to the drainage networks in all settlements;*

*Major Flood Relief Schemes for Fermoy, Mallow (Blackwater and Spa Rivers), Bantry, Fermoy, Dunmanway, Skibbereen, Ballincollig,*

*Bandon, Blarney, and Carrigtwohill.* {The responsibility for these schemes now rests with the Office of Public Works (OPW)};

**Table 8.2: Housing Land Supply – Cork County (Including Town Councils and City Council)\*\***

Local Authority	Gross Area Ha	Net housing Area	Number of Units Completed Summer 2006	Number of Units Under Construction Summer 2006	Number of Units not started but with permission Summer 2006	Estimated number of units on remainder of zoned land
Cork County	4405.96	3548.92	7563	8459	6248	54267
Clonakilty	42.38	42.38	44	59	95	173
Cobh	4.96	4.96	0	43	20	61
Fermoy	10.26	10.26	0	0	0	340
Kinsale	12.55	12.55	17	86	208	0
Macroom	36.3	36.3	45	396	129	164
Mallow	58.42	58.42	0	320	222	1031
Midleton	7.27	6.91	0	0	0	414
Skibbereen	59.87	59.87	328	0	229	627
Youghal	360	360	100	4	1053	4197
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4997.97</b>	<b>4140.57</b>	<b>8097</b>	<b>9367</b>	<b>8204</b>	<b>61274</b>

#### 2.7.8. Planning and Sustainable Development Issues for the [Fermoy] Local Area Plan

2.7.9. 9.5.29. The main issues to be addressed in the Local Area Plan for this electoral area include:

Encouraging balanced population growth so that both main towns can achieve more sustainable patterns of growth and also can achieve their full economic potential.

Develop Fermoy and Mitchelstown as main centres for population and economic growth.

Support the development of modern industry, at an appropriate scale, in the settlements serving rural areas so as to foster the development of a robust employment base.

Development in villages and rural areas will complement the planned growth in the towns at a scale that respects the setting and character of each village.

	2002 Census	2006 Census	Growth 2006 – 2020	2020 Forecast RPG 04
<b>Population</b>				
Fermoy	4,804	5,873	1,441	7,314
Mitchelstown	3,300	3,365	87	5,000
Villages and Rural	15,887	18,254	-	18,101
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>23,991</b>	<b>27,492</b>	<b>1,528</b>	<b>30,415</b>
<b>Households</b>				
Fermoy	1,565	1,998	976	2,973
Mitchelstown	1,107	1,189	262	1,451
Villages and Rural	5,293	6,436	817	7,253
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>7,965</b>	<b>9,623</b>	<b>2,054</b>	<b>11,677</b>
<b>New Dwellings Required</b>			<b>2,670</b>	

2.7.10. 9.5.30. Table 9.5 summarises the pattern of population and household growth in this electoral area for the 2002-2006 period. Generally, growth has been stronger than anticipated and, in some instances the forecasts for the area for the year 2020, based on the Regional Planning Guidelines for the South West Region (published in 2004), have already been exceeded. The latest population targets for the South West Region that were published by the Government in February 2007, envisage growth continuing broadly at similar rates to those of recent years.

2.7.11. 9.5.31. Chapter 2 of this plan sets out revised population targets for Mitchelstown, taking account of the new regional targets. It is the County Councils intention to revise Table 9.5 at the amendment stage of this plan to incorporate the revised targets for Mitchelstown and reflect the higher growth rates for Fermoy, the villages and rural areas, when the full spatial assessment of the new population targets, for the County as a whole, has been completed. The indication of the scale of new house building necessary given in this table will also be revised at that stage.

2.7.12. **Comment:** It will be desirable that the Fermoy Development Plan resonates with the objectives of the County Development Plan.

## **2.8 Fermoy Socio-Economic and Demographic Update – Goodbody Economic Cosultants – 2008.**

2.8.1. The update provided a socio-economic and demographic update largely based on the 2006 Census returns.

2.8.2. The study notes that the Fermoy Urban area has lower levels of owner-occupiers (58.1% compared with 74.7% nationally).

2.8.3. The study remarks that the built environment is a significant challenge for the Town and states:

“There is a need for the town to develop an ‘ambience’ that the residents will take pride in and that will enable it to compete effectively with nearby towns such as Blackpool and Mahon. The quality of the urban environment and streetscape in Fermoy is relatively poor with no significant areas of pedestrianisation, all of which would contribute to a vibrant, living town. Pedestrianised areas within any town, if developed well, not only bring increased general appearance and atmosphere of the town, but can also bring increased footfall to local businesses.” (p.26)

The study further notes:

“The relatively poor level of hotel and leisure amenities in the town and its failure to attract significant tourism contributes to the low level of service sector activity. The development of tourism facilities remains a key challenge for the town.....

“The Fermoy Bypass, mentioned above, has alleviated some of the traffic congestion that previously acted as a barrier to the successful development of retail in the town, impacting on parking and giving pedestrians low priority. This presents a significant opportunity that should be seized. There is a need to develop the townscape which already has a number of strong architectural attributes, as well as the river Blackwater as an attractive backdrop, to include more pedestrianised areas and improved parking facilities.

“Significant investment in the streetscape would also instil confidence in potential investors who may be concerned by the current socio-economic condition of the town and the impact that it might have on business potential. Local development and investment in the streetscape of an area can have a snowball effect on the level of potential investors who will be drawn to an area that is considered to be up and coming. There is a distinct need to target new business to invest in retail, revitalise the leisure economy and boost employment in the services sector in the area. The development of the Mart will again play a key role here.”

2.8.4. **Comment:** This is useful summary of some of the issues facing the town.

## **2.9 Fermoy Local Area Plan**

2.9.1. The following are extracts from the Fermoy Local Area Plan (LAP): (The paragraph numbers in bold refer to those in the LAP)

2.9.2. **3.2.4.** The Local Area Plan for the Fermoy Electoral Area will make provision to accommodate an appropriate proportion of [the CASP] population growth. This growth will be distributed between the small towns, villages and agricultural areas in accordance with the principles of the North and West Cork Strategic Plan, the Cork Area Strategic Plan and the Cork County Development Plan 2003 (as

varied), in addition to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area

### **2.9.3. Fermoy town environs:**

2.9.4. Fermoy is located at the crossing of the Cork-Dublin National route and the Blackwater River, and functions as a ring town. The overall strategy aims to promote Fermoy as a significant location for residential development to complement its important employment and commercial functions.

2.9.5. Most of Fermoy is located within the jurisdiction of the Town Council, a separate planning authority with its own development plan for the Town Council area. The objectives set out in this chapter should be read in conjunction with the zoning map for Fermoy Environs (P.35 of the Fermoy Local Area Plan)

### **2.9.6. Population Growth**

2.9.7. **1.1.3.** The 1996 census recorded a population of 4,469 persons, equivalent to 1,460 households, in the town of Fermoy (including the Town Council's area). By the year 2000, it is estimated that this had grown to 4,860 persons, equivalent to 1,670 households. According to the forecasts and strategy of the Cork County Development Plan 2003 (as varied), the town will accommodate a growth of 890 households approximately by 2011.

2.9.8. **1.1.4.** This would bring the 2011 population of the town to around 6,510, equivalent to 2,560 households.

### **2.9.9. 1.3 Specific Zoning Objectives: Fermoy Environs Residential Areas**

2.9.10. **1.3.1.** Eleven parcels of land for residential development have been reserved in two main areas to the north and south of the town, respectively.

2.9.11. **1.3.2.** Additionally, provision has been made in specific zoning objectives, recognising that certain areas of established open space may have capacity to accommodate limited forms of new housing. Objectives for these areas are set out with the specific objectives for open space, sports and recreation.

2.9.12. **1.3.3.** The housing strategy states that on zoned lands, 20% of new residential development be reserved for social and affordable housing. In Fermoy, the strategy states that up to one quarter of that reserved land will be used for the provision of social housing.

2.9.13. **1.3.4.** The specific residential zoning objectives for Fermoy Environs are set out in the [relevant] table: a total of 90.6 HA has been zoned for residential development.

2.9.14. **Industry and Enterprise 1.3.5.** Three parcels of land have been reserved for industry and enterprise development. To the north of the town a large area is reserved mainly for high technology development but, because of local demand, some flexibility has been included in the terms of the specific zoning objective to allow for limited non-retail commercial development.

2.9.15. **1.3.6.** To the south of the town an area has been reserved for a variety of industrial uses. The third area, to the west of the town, is intended to facilitate future expansion of an existing undertaking.

2.9.16. **1.3.7.** The specific industry and enterprise zoning objectives for Fermoy Environs are set out in the [relevant] table: A total of 41.6 HA has been zoned for industrial and employment use.

2.9.17. **Town Centre / Neighbourhood Centre 1.3.8.** The Cork County Development Plan 2003 (as varied) recognises the potential for some town centre expansion to the east, subject to new development not impinging on the flood plain of the Blackwater River.

2.9.18. **1.3.9.** The specific town centre / neighbourhood centre zoning objectives for Fermoy Environs are set out in the [relevant] table: a total of 5.1 HA has been zoned for town centre uses.

2.9.19. **Educational, Institutional and Civic 1.3.10.** The specific educational, institutional and civic zoning objective for Fermoy Environs is set out in the [relevant] table: a total of 0.2 HA has been zoned for educational, institutional and civic uses.

2.9.20. **Open Space, Sports, Recreation and Amenity 1.3.11.** Fermoy enjoys an attractive town park and other amenities including existing and proposed walks along the Blackwater.

2.9.21. **1.3.12.** There are also extensive GAA and soccer playing fields on the north side of the town, and other playing fields close to the centre of the town.

2.9.22. **1.3.13.** Some areas of established primarily open space have been made the subject of specific zoning objectives that do not preclude smallscale development. In some cases, this reflects their status in the 1996 County Development Plan. It is anticipated that any development in these areas will provide an alternative to the development of individual houses in the countryside beyond the town. It is important that any development should not compromise the objective for the area as a whole.

2.9.23. **1.3.14.** The specific open space, sports recreation and amenity zoning objectives for Fermoy Environs are set out in the [relevant] table: a total of 109.6 HA has been zoned for Open Space, Sports, Recreation and Amenity uses.

2.9.24. **Utilities and Infrastructure 1.3.15.** The specific utilities and infrastructure objectives for Fermoy Environs are set out in the following table:

Objective No.	Specific Zoning Objective	Approx. Area (Ha)
U-01	Proposed Fermoy Bypass.	-
U-02	Proposed slip road to bypass.	-
U-03	Local Access road.	-
U-04	Provide amenity walk along river bank through scenic area.	-
U-05	Provide amenity walk to connect to town centre.	-
U-06	Provide pedestrian access to river.	-
U-07	Provide amenity walk along river bank.	-
U-08	Provide circular amenity walk from town centre through open space and scenic area along bank of stream to Glenabo bridge.	-
U-09	Amenity walk through residential area to open space and amenity area.	-

## **2.10 Cork County Council (2004) Waste Management Plan for Cork County.**

2.10.1. The plan provides the following summary of waste produced in County Cork:

Sector	Total Arising 2002 (Tonnes)
Household	119,777
Commercial	96,018
Non-Hazardous Industrial	438,403
Hazardous Industrial	115,347
Municipal sludges	4,489
Construction and Demolition	500,000

2.10.2. The total quantity of waste deposited in Cork County landfills in 2003 was 169,393 tonnes. There are four landfill sites operated by Cork County Council, five civic amenity sites and 133 Bring sites in the county.

2.10.3. The Waste Management Plan proposes 10 objectives for waste prevention, 21 for waste collection, 12 for waste recovery, 11 for disposal, 7 for packaging, 6 for litter, 6 for Hazardous waste management and 5 for general waste management.

2.10.4. The Waste Management Plan proposes investment of c.€70M in the county in the period 2004-2009 and estimates operating costs by Cork County in addressing the waste issue at €53M per annum.

2.10.5. **Comment:** it is desirable that the Fermoy Development Plan take account of the provisions of the Cork County Council (2004) Waste Management Plan for Cork County

## **2.11 Cork Planning Authorities - Proposed Joint Retail Strategy 2008 - Preliminary Consultation Draft**

2.11.1. The following is an excerpt from the Cork Planning Authorities - Proposed Joint Retail Strategy 2008 - Preliminary Consultation Draft

2.11.2. "RETAIL HIERARCHY At the heart of this strategy is a hierarchy of retail locations that forms the basis for determining the quantum and location of new retail development.

2.11.3. In July 2007 there was a total of 384,625 sq m. of net retail floor space in Cork City and County. 74% of this was comparison floor space (including retail warehousing) and the remainder convenience goods space. Some 37% of retail floor space is in the city centre and suburbs and the remainder is distributed relatively evenly elsewhere in the county. The city centre is the main comparison goods shopping destination with 55% of pure comparison expenditure (excluding retail warehousing). Mahon has been developed since the last strategy was adopted and now has a 10% share of comparison expenditure. Other significant comparison goods centres are Douglas at 6% and Mallow at 5%.

2.11.4. The hierarchy [as it refers to Ring towns] is summarised in the [following table] .

<b>Description</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Overall strategy</b>
Ring towns	Mallow	Expansion in line with hub town status to provide large floor plates to attract more premium occupiers. Should be developed as one

		of the largest towns in the County
	Youghal, Macroom	Expansion in line with planned population growth
	Bandon, Fermoy	Expansion with potential for town centre regeneration
	Kinsale	Consolidation as local service and tourism centre

#### 2.11.5. THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL RETAIL FLOOR SPACE

2.11.6. In this strategy, the quantity of additional floor-space required by the market to the year 2020 is based on the findings of *The Cork Strategic Retail Study (CSRS)*. The quantum of new retail development is based on meeting the needs of the revised population targets for 2020 provided by the South West Regional Authority (SWRA)/Department of Environment, Heritage and Local government (DoEHLG) to meet the objectives of the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) for 2020.

2.11.7. The CSRS 2008 made forecasts of additional floorspace and this is summarised in Table 2 (Convenience and Comparison Shopping) below.

Table 2: Additional Retail Floorspace (Convenience and Comparison Shopping) 2006 – 2020 (net square meters)

Location	Convenience Shopping	Comparison Shopping	Total
Cork City Centre	12,040	77,610	116,280
Suburbs of Cork		26,630	
Metropolitan Cork Towns	27,440	22,130	49,570
Ring Towns	5,590	19,200	24,790
County Towns	5,860	20,500	26,360
Retail Warehousing			93,610
<b>TOTAL (Net Square Metres)</b>	<b>50,930</b>	<b>166,070</b>	<b>310,610</b>

2.11.8. **Comment:** It is desirable that the Town Council have regard to the provisions of the Joint Retail Strategy while taking cognisance of the particular needs of the town. The Joint Retail Strategy was subsequently adopted as Chapter 5 of the County Development Plan.

## **2.12 Cork Planning Authorities Joint Housing Strategy 2001.**

2.12.1. Joint Housing Strategy: Cork County Council, in conjunction with Cork City Council and the nine Town Councils in the county produced a Joint Housing Strategy to address the housing needs of the existing and future population of Cork to 2011. The policies and objectives of the strategy are enshrined in the Cork County Development Plan 2003 (as varied).

2.12.2. The Cork Planning Authorities Joint Housing Strategy 2001 has the following objectives:

- Ensure that sufficient land is zoned to meet housing requirements in the region for the lifetime of the plan
- Ensure there is a mixture of house types and sizes to meet the needs of various households.
- Ensure that housing is available for people on different income levels
- To provide for the need for both social and affordable housing.

The strategy had three key points:

1. Over the years 2001-2011 around 38,000 new households are expected to form in Cork City and County.
2. The distribution of households will be directed by strategic spatial planning policy
3. An estimated 5,000 residential units will have to be provided each year to 2006.(p.11)

Table 4, p.14 set the following targets for housing size and distribution:

Household size and distribution		Urban housing size distribution		Suburban housing size distribution	
1 person	27%	1 bed	15%	1 bed	5%
2 person	34%	2 bed	35%	2 bed	20%
3 person	16%	3 bed	35%	3 bed	40%
4 person	16%	4 bed	10%	4 bed	25%
5+ person	8%	5 bed	5%	5 bed	10%

Total	100%		100%		100%
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2.12.3. The strategy (p.29) estimated that by reserving 20% of residential zoned lands for social and affordable housing around 5-600 units per year may become available for these combined needs.

2.12.4. The strategy proposed 4 policy principles, 18 policies and over 60 policy actions to achieve the objectives outlined above.

2.12.5. **Comment:** The figures regarding household size are useful targets for inclusion in the Fermoy Plan. It will be desirable that the Town Council supports Cork County Council in its implementation of the Housing Strategy.

2.12.6. **Cork Planning Authorities Housing Strategy (2009):**

2.12.7. The following are relevant extracts from the Cork Planning Authorities Draft Housing Strategy published in 2007:

*“This Draft Housing Strategy has been developed by the eleven Planning Authorities in Cork: Cork County Council, Cork City Council, and the Town Councils of Fermoy, Cobh, Fermoy, Kinsale, Macroom, Mallow, Middleton, Skibbereen and Youghal in order to address the existing and future housing needs of the area. It is a review of the previous Joint Housing Strategy produced in 2001 and, once adopted, will replace the previous Strategy. - P.6*

**“LOCAL PLANS AND POLICIES**

*Town Council Plans*

*There are nine Town Councils within Cork County who prepare statutory development plans; Fermoy, Cobh, Fermoy, Kinsale, Macroom, Mallow, Middleton, Skibbereen and Youghal. Fermoy Development Plan 2003. The plan was adopted in 2003 and the main aims are identified as the maintaining of employment and the creation of greater awareness of the environment. The plan also endorses the main planning goals of the County Development Plan. - P.56*

**“6 PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES**

*6.1 This section has evolved from an analysis of housing issues, needs and supply. A restatement of the aim of the strategy sets the context for the four key principles that underpin the strategy. These principles are expanded into detailed policies and programmes of action.*

*Aim of the Strategy:*

*‘To help enable the people of Cork, now and in the future, to have a place to live, suited to their needs, at a price that they can afford’*

*Key Principles:*

*6.2 Four key principles guide the Housing Strategy.*

*Principle 1: To Provide for a Diverse Range of Housing Needs.*

*Principle 2: To Promote Balanced Communities.*

*Principle 3: To Promote Sustainable Development of the Urban & Rural Environment*

*Principle 4: To Promote a High Quality Living Environment*

*Policies and Programmes of Action*

*POLICY 1.1*

*The Cork Local Authorities will ensure a mix of house types and sizes within communities and where appropriate within individual developments.*

**PROPOSED ACTIONS:**

- (a) Assess housing variety and mix as a material consideration when considering individual planning applications for residential development.*
- (b) When developing their own housing stock, the Local Authorities will aim to achieve a mix of housing types and sizes.*
- (c) Seek to improve the quality of information exchanged between the local authorities, development industry and all other groups with an involvement or stake in the provision of social / affordable housing.*

**“POLICY 1.2**

*The Cork Local Authorities will ensure the delivery of a range of housing to suit varying income levels.*

**PROPOSED ACTIONS:**

- (a) Ensure that sufficient land is zoned at appropriate densities to meet housing requirements during the lifetime of the relevant Development Plans.*
- (b) Introduce suitable new development plan objectives and development control procedures, having specific regard to implementing policy 1.3 below.*
- (c) Work with educational and training institutions to support the development of student accommodation.*
- (d) In partnership with the DoEHLG, private developers, the voluntary & co-operative housing sector, and academic bodies, the Local Authorities will investigate other methods for providing housing which is affordable to low and middle income groups.*
- (f) In partnership with the DoEHLG, continue to support and enhance the voluntary & cooperative housing sector in the development of general and special needs housing.*
- (g) Facilitate and support the provision of a high quality and affordable private rented sector.*
- (h) Each Local authority, in its development plan, will give an indication of preference for discharge of development under Part V.*

**POLICY 1.3**

*The Cork Local Authorities will require 20% of all land zoned for residential uses (or for a mix of residential and other uses) to be reserved for the purpose of social and affordable housing.*

**POLICY 4.3**

*The Cork Local Authorities will seek to maximise the provision of social infrastructure for residential areas.*

**PROPOSED ACTIONS:**

- (a) Require future land zoning policies to make adequate provision for community facilities and essential services such as schools, shops, health centres and childcare services.*
- (b) Optimise use of existing facilities and services.*
- (c) Require applications for residential development to make provision for childcare facilities, as outlined in appropriate guidelines.*
- (d) Require applications for residential development to address the need for open space and recreational facilities. - p.33-40*

**2.12.8. Comment:** It will be desirable that the objectives and policies of the Plan resonate with those of the Joint Housing Strategy while taking cognisance of the particular housing residential needs of the town. The Joint Housing Strategy has been included as Volume III of this Plan.

## **2.13 Conclusions**

2.13.1. The above are the main plans and strategies that inform the strategic direction of the Fermoy Plan. The principal strategic objectives in the above documents that pertain to Fermoy are:

- Promote and develop Fermoy as a self sustaining town.
- It will be desirable to pay particular attention to the protection and enhancement of the environment including landscape, water quality, nature, archaeology and architecture which are vital components of a high quality of life.
- It is desirable that the Fermoy Plan harmonises with the Draft County Development Plan projections concerning population growth in the town.
- It is desirable that Fermoy transform itself into a post industrial, knowledge, tourist and service economy.
- It is desirable that Fermoy provide for the present and future recreational requirements of Fermoy
- It is desirable that Fermoy integrate the policies and objectives of the Town Council with those of the County Council.
- It is desirable that the Fermoy Town Council work with the County Council in zoning and regulating land use for waste management functions.
- It will be desirable that the Town Council supports Cork County Council in its implementation of the Housing Strategy while at the same time recognising the special aspirations that Fermoy has regarding the provision of housing.

2.13.2. In accordance with Section 10 of the 2000 Planning and Development Act it is necessary to include a statement of the overall strategy guiding the Plan, and this is included in Volume II: Policies and Objectives.

## Chapter 3

# Social and Economic & Landuse Context

This section outlines the social and Economic context of the Plan.

### 3.1 Population.

3.1.1. The following is a table of the Fermoy population from 2002 to 2006. As can be seen the total population of the town including the environs outside the town boundary has grown from 4,808 to 5,873, or an increase of 22% which is quite a substantial increase for a four year period. There has been no significant change in the population within the town boundary during this period.

<b>VOL 1: 07. Persons in each town of 1,500 population and over, distinguishing those within legally defined boundaries and in suburbs or environs, 2002 and 2006</b>			
Town Population	Total Population (including suburbs or environs) 2002	Total Population (including suburbs or environs) 2006	Population within legally defined boundary 2002
Fermoy	4,804	5,873	2,270
Population within legally defined boundary 2006	Population of suburbs or environs 2002	Population of suburbs or environs 2006	Percentage change in total population 2002-2006
2,275	2,534	3,598	22.3

3.1.2. The Cork Area Strategic Plan forecasts a population of 7,314 for the year 2020, or a population increase of 24% over the current population. This increase in population of 1441 would be expected to require some 20 HA of land. The bulk of this development will have to be located outside the town boundaries. Approximately 6 Ha of land is available for residential development within the town boundary and a total of c.90 Ha of land has been zoned outside in the environs. These 96 HA of residential zoned land have a capacity of an additional 6,912 persons. Therefore there is ample land zoned to meet the increase forecast in the CASP.

3.1.3. The age distribution for the past two censuses is as follows:

**VOL 2: 14. Persons, males and females in each town of 1,500 population and over classified by age group, 2006**

Age Group	Total	0-14 years	15-24 years	25-44 years	45-64 years	65 years and over
Fermoy	5,873	1,206	832	2,088	1,155	592

3.1.4. **Comment:** The 0-14 and 15-24 cohorts remains quite strong with an average of c.85 persons per year. This bodes well for the continued growth of the town in the long term.

3.1.5. The following table indicates the number of people who resided at a different address one year previously and the location of that previous address. This is a measure of the degree of mobility for the population in 2002 and also gives an indication of migration patterns for one year:

**VOL4: 18. Population aged one year and over usually resident (and present in their usual residence on census night) in each town of 1,500 population and over (including suburbs or environs, if any) classified by usual residence one year previously, 2006**

Usres last year 	Total	Same address	Different address - Total	Different address - Same county	Different address - Other county	Different address - Outside state
Fermoy	5,523	4,646	877	478	72	327

Source:CSO 2006: Vol 4 - Table 18

3.1.6. **Comment:** In 2006 there are some 877 new residents in the town of which 478 previously resided in the county, 72 outside the county and 327 overseas. There is no indication as to how many of the 327 overseas migrants were Fermoy people returned from overseas.

3.1.7. The following table indicates the country of birth:

<b>VOL4: 33. Persons usually resident (and present in their usual residence on Census Night) in each town of 1,500 population and over (including suburbs or environs, if any) classified by country of birth, 2006</b>				
Birthplace 	Total	County of usual residence in Ireland (Republic)	Other county in Ireland (Republic)	Northern Ireland
Fermoy	5,609	3852	632	20
England, Wales and Scotland	EU15 excluding Ireland and UK	EU15 to EU25 accession states	OTHER COUNTRIES	
262	92	543	208	
Source: Vol 4: Table 33				

3.1.8. **Comment:** The bulk of the resident population (69%) were born in Co. Cork with a further 11% born in Ireland. Some 5% were born in the UK and 15% were born elsewhere.

## 3.2 *Employment and Enterprise*

3.2.1. The principal employers in the town are:

- Quinn Insurance, the largest employer
- Semi-conductor Ireland (SCI) located on the Raheely Enterprise Estate employ 1,200 people.
- Micro Bio and Silver Pail represent the agri-food business.

3.2.2. The remainder of employment is in the service sector including:

- Blackwater Motors
- 4-Homes
- McMahons
- The Co-Op
- The Banks
- Other retail outlets and financial, personal and professional service employers.

3.2.3. The IDA have a ready-to-go enterprise site of some 10 acres on the north side of the town on the site of the old aerodrome

3.2.4. The following tables extracted from the 2006 CSO returns are relevant to the employment situation in Fermoy. It should be noted that the figures refer to the employment status of persons residing in Fermoy and not to the number of persons employed or otherwise in the town. For example, persons living in Fermoy and working in Cork City would be captured by the data but persons working in Fermoy and living in Cork City would not.

**Vol7:07. Persons, males and females aged 15 years and over in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by principal economic status, 2006**

<u>PES</u> ⓘ	<u>Total</u>	At work	Looking for first regular job	Unemployed having lost or given up previous job
Fermoy	4,667	2,769	40	231
Student	Looking after home/family	Retired	Unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability	Other
339	550	509	212	17

3.2.5. **Comment:** The total workforce is 4,667 and the labour participation rate is 59%

**Vol7:14. Persons, males and females aged 15 years and over at work in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by broad industrial group, 2006**

<u>Industry</u> ⓘ	<u>Total</u>	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	Mining, quarrying and turf production	Manufacturing industries	Electricity, gas and water supply
Fermoy	2,769	46	-	661	12
Construction	Wholesale and retail trade	Hotels and restaurants	Transport, storage and communications	Banking and financial services	Real estate, renting and business activities
318	424	127	123	90	212

3.2.6. **Comment:** Manufacturing, wholesale/retail and tourism are the principal occupations of persons residing in the town comprising 24%, 15% and 5% respectively.

**Vol7:21. Persons, males and females aged 15 years and over at work and unemployed (excluding first time job seekers) in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by employment status, 2006**

Emp. Status	Total at work and unemployed	Total	Employer or own account worker	Employee	Assisting relative	Unemployed having lost or given up previous job
Fermoy	3,000	2,769	287	2,476	6	231

3.2.7. **Comment:** The vast majority of employed persons are employees 83% with some 287 employers or own account workers.

**Vol7:27. Unemployed persons males and females (excluding first time job seekers) aged 15 years and over in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by age group, 2006**

Age Group	Total	15-19 years	20-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55 years and over
Fermoy	231	13	31	61	64	43	19

3.2.8. **Comment:** Some 27% of unemployed persons are under 45 years of age.

<b>Vol8:03. Persons, males and females aged 15 years and over in the labour force in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by broad occupational group, 2006</b>					
<u>Occ Group</u>	<u>Total in labour force</u>	Looking for first regular job	<u>All occupations</u>	Farming, fishing and forestry workers	Manufacturing workers
Fermoy	3,040	40	3,000	40	633
Building and construction workers	Clerical, managing and government workers	Communication and transport workers	Sales and commerce workers	Professional, technical and health workers	Services workers
318	367	171	348	409	368

3.2.9. **Comment:** The predominance of the service sector is noticeable with only 20% employed in the manufacturing sector and some 50% employed in what may be broadly classified as the service sector.

<b>Vol8:17. Persons, males and females aged 15 years and over in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by socio-economic group, 2006</b>						
<u>SEG</u>	<u>Total</u>	A. Employers and managers	B. Higher professional	C. Lower professional	D. Non-manual	E. Manual skilled
Fermoy	4,667	533	203	430	916	648
F. Semi-skilled	G. Unskilled	H. Own account workers	I. Farmers	J. Agricultural workers	Z. All others gainfully occupied and unknown	
721	223	147	37	52	757	

3.2.10. **Comment:** The ABC socio-economic groups comprise some 25% of the population.

<b>Vol8: 21A. Persons aged 15 years and over in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by social class, 2006</b>				
<u>Social Class</u>	<u>Total</u>	Professional workers	Managerial and technical	Non-manual
Fermoy	4,667	207	927	723
Skilled manual	Semi-skilled	Unskilled	All others gainfully occupied and unknown	
914	872	272	752	

3.2.11. **Comment:** The professional, managerial, technical and non manual component of the labour force comprises some 40%.

3.2.12. These figures are broken down further in the following tables between those in the labour force and those not.

<b>Vol8:21B. Persons aged 15 years and over in the labour force in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by social class, 2006</b>				
<u>Social Class</u>	<u>Total</u>	Professional workers	Managerial and technical	Non-manual
Fermoy	3,040	144	598	517
Skilled manual	Semi-skilled	Unskilled	All others gainfully occupied and unknown	
668	689	174	250	

<b>Vol8: 21C. Persons aged 15 years and over not in the labour force in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by social class, 2006</b>				
<u>Social Class</u>	<u>Total</u>	Professional workers	Managerial and technical	Non-manual
Fermoy	1,627	63	329	206
Skilled manual	Semi-skilled	Unskilled	All others gainfully occupied and unknown	
246	183	98	502	

### **3.3 Tourism and Leisure**

3.3.1. The town is located on the Rosslare-Kilarney tourist route, in the heart of the Blackwater Valley and with an immensely attractive built and natural environment but has failed, to date, to capitalise on its tourist potential. The town has only one hotel, the Grand Hotel. It has the Blackwater Valley Caravan Park and a number of Guest houses and B&B's. A major shortcoming of the town is the paucity of tourist accommodation.

3.3.2. The principal tourist attraction is fishing on the Blackwater and the town is also on the Blackwater Way.

3.3.3. On the question of heritage the town has a splendid natural setting on the Blackwater, a superb eighteenth and nineteenth century built environment, still in a quite good state of preservation, (albeit deteriorating due to insufficient awareness of its value and importance) and a fascinating military history coupled with the extant remains of two military barracks and a military hospital.

3.3.4. The town also had an early twentieth century aerodrome associated with Colonel Fitzmaurice who was the first to fly the Atlantic from East to West.

3.3.5. The main tourist organisation in the town is Avondhu Tourism.

3.3.6. **Comment:**The town needs to develop tourist orientated attractions and increase its tourist accommodation quotient. Similarly tourist orientated shopping, hospitality and entertainment facilities need to be enhanced and tourist transportation links need to be strengthened.

### **3.4 Consumer Retail and Commercial Services.**

3.4.1. Relevant excerpts from the Cork Planning Authorities Proposed Joint Retail Strategy 2008 – Preliminary consultation Draft have been included in the Strategic Context section above.

3.4.2. The town's retail centre is still concentrated in the town core and the development of the proposed mart site will be a major contribution to strengthening the town core.

3.4.3. There is a proposal for a smaller scale retail development on the "Barry's" site opposite the Courthouse/Town Hall. This will comprise some 10,000 square feet of retail floor space along with office and apartment accommodation.

3.4.4. The former Blackwater Motors site is currently being redeveloped as a neighbourhood retail centre. [Most of the site is outside the town boundary]. This will serve the expanding new

residential development in the area and will comprise some 30,000 square feet of development.

**3.4.5. Comment:** Fermoy has a large strategic opportunity site in the former mart site

### 3.5 Housing

<b>VOL6: 03. Private households in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by type of accommodation, 2006</b>				
<u>Accommodation</u>	<u>Total</u>	Detached house	Semi-detached house	Terraced house
Fermoy	2,135	498	611	770
%:		23%	29%	36%
Flat or apartment in a purpose built block	Flat or apartment in a converted house or commercial building	Bed-sit	Caravan mobile or other temporary structure	Not stated
109	70	17	2	58
5%	3%	> 1%	> 1%	2%

**3.5.1. Comment** This table does not indicate the numbers of detached, semi-detached houses etc., only the number of people living in such category of dwelling. However it does provide a useful proxy.

3.5.2. As can be seen the number of persons living in detached houses is 23% as against the national average of 43%.

3.5.3. The numbers living in semidetached houses at 29% is marginally higher than the national average of 27%.

3.5.4. The numbers living in terraced houses at 36% is substantially higher than the national average of 17%.

3.5.5. The numbers living in flats or apartments at 8% is a little lower than the national average of 10%.

3.5.6. These differences highlight the importance of ensuring a balanced mix of houses to suit all lifestyles and stages of life.

### 3.5.7. **Housing Strategy:**

3.5.8. Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 required each Planning Authority to prepare a strategy to provide for the housing of the existing and future population of their area, and to incorporate the strategy into their Development Plan.

3.5.9. Accordingly the 11 Planning Authorities in Cork (County Council, City Council, and 9 Town Councils) produced a Joint Housing strategy to address the housing needs of the existing and future population of Cork to 2011. Copies of the Strategy may be purchased or inspected in the Town Hall.

3.5.10. During the period of the last plan a Variation was adopted which incorporated the Joint Housing Strategy, (prepared by the 11 Planning Authorities in Cork), into Fermoy's Development Plan. This has a requirement that 20% of most land on which residential permissions are granted be transferred to the local authority for Social and Affordable housing. (As an alternative complete houses, or serviced sites may be transferred). The value of the land transferred will usually be at agricultural rates. (This is subject to very detailed legal conditions and requirements in the Act).

3.5.11. Table 4, page14 of the Cork Planning Authorities Joint Housing Strategy set the following targets for housing size and distribution:

Household size and distribution		Urban housing size distribution		Suburban housing size distribution	
1 person	27%	1 bed	15%	1 bed	5%
2 person	34%	2 bed	35%	2 bed	20%
3 person	16%	3 bed	35%	3 bed	40%
4 person	16%	4 bed	10%	4 bed	25%
5+ person	8%	5 bed	5%	5 bed	10%
Total	100%		100%		100%

3.5.12. A similar target has been set in the current Cork Planning Authorities Draft Joint Housing Strategy (2009).

3.5.13. **Social and Affordable Housing:** Cork County Council and Fermoy Town Council have provided some 179 social and affordable housing in the past five years of which some 76 are affordable. These have been provided mostly outside the town boundary.

3.5.14. **Comment:** A total of 90.6HA/217 Acres have been zoned for residential development in the town environs outside the Town Boundary and a further 6.3HA/15 Acres within the town boundary. Coupled with the proposed apartments in the town centre this is adequate for a population increase of some 7,000 persons.

### 3.6 Travellers.

3.6.1. The 2006 census estimates that there are some 44 travellers in Fermoy.

<b>Vol5; 14. Irish Travellers in each town (including suburbs and environs, if any) with population of 5,000 and over classified by sex, 2006</b>				
<u>Sex</u>	Persons	Males	Females	Travellers per 1,000 total population
Fermoy	44	23	21	7.5

3.6.2. **Comment:** All travellers in the town are satisfactorily accommodated and integrated with the settled community.

### 3.7 Community Facilities:

3.7.1. There is a community centre located in Ashe Quay which includes squash courts and a cinema.

3.7.2. There is a municipal swimming pool and leisure complex in the town park and includes a gym and fitness centre.

3.7.3. There is a community resource centre in Main Street which provides meals on wheels, active retirement group, chiropody and other services.

3.7.4. There is a very strong voluntary ethos in the town who provide a range of community facilities and services in the town and this is dealt with in the section on the Voluntary sector.

### 3.8 Civic Facilities

3.8.1. Town Hall and Courthouse: the recently completed Town Hall successfully blends a contemporary design and function with the refurbished neo classical Courthouse, which is a protected building.

3.8.2. Library: located in Connolly Street Car park and is approaching the end of its life span. The Town Council is open to proposals to develop the library and adjoining carpark in a public private partnership with a view to providing a new library and multi-storey carpark.

3.8.3. Fire Station: the fire station is located immediately beside the Courthouse/Town Hall.

3.8.4. Tourist Office: there used to be a tourist office located at the entrance to the Town Park and was open during the summer months.

3.8.5. Garda Station: The Garda Station is located in O'Neill/Crowley Quay and is the Divisional Head Quarters for North Cork.

3.8.6. Social Welfare Office: is located on McCurtain Street.

3.8.7. Citizens Advice Bureau: is located on Patrick Street.

3.8.8. Community Welfare Office: is located at the top of Chapel Hill in the HSE building.

3.8.9. Town Parks: the Town Park is located on the north side of the river and is a magnificent amenity for the town being located adjacent the town centre and river, beautifully laid out and well maintained.

3.8.10. Childrens Playground: there is one located in the Town Park and another in Clancy Street.

3.8.11. Landscaping: there is an ongoing program for the greening of the town in conjunction with the Fermoy Becoming a Tidier Town Committee

3.8.12. Fermoy has performed very well in the Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) Competition. Using the proceeds from winning the competition the Town Council proposes to introduce soft landscaping and new litter bins.

3.8.13. **Comment:**The town may wish to consider entering the Liv Com competition. This is an international competition that has supplanted the Entente Florale by attending to a wider range of issues other than solely the visual. These include:

- Landscape,
- Heritage Management
- Environmentally sensitive practice,
- Community sustainability
- Healthy lifestyles
- Planning for the Future.

Details are available at [www.livcom.org](http://www.livcom.org)

### **3.9 Religious**

The following tables have been extracted from the 2006 Census returns:

VOL 12: 08. Persons, males and females in each town with a population of 5,000 and over, classified by religion, 2006					
Religion	Total	Roman Catholic	Church of Ireland (incl. Protestant)	Muslim (Islamic)	Other Christian religion
Fermoy	5,873	5,285	84	13	30
Presbyterian	Orthodox	Methodist	Other stated religions	No religion	Not stated
32	31	14	77	223	84

3.9.1. **Comment:** As expected the vast majority of the population (90%) subscribe to the Catholic faith.

3.9.2. There are three churches in town:

1. **Catholic Church:** St Patricks Church is located in Chapel Square. The Queen of Peace Catholic Church is located to the north of the town outside the town boundary.
2. **Church of Ireland:** Christ Church is located in a visually prominent location on Barrack Hill.
3. **Presbyterian Church:** is located in Green Hill.

3.9.3. The former Methodist Church in Patrick Street has been deconsecrated and is now in alternative use.

### 3.10 Education

#### 3.10.1. Primary School:

- There is a Gaelscoil located in McCurtain St., Gaelscoil De Hide.
- Bishop Murphy Memorial School is located in Upper McCurtain St., and was formerly the Christian Brothers School.
- The Presentation National School is located in College Road.
- The Adair National School is located in Greenhill.
- St. Josephs National School is located in St. Bernards Place.

#### 3.10.2. Second Level Schools:

- The Loretto Secondary School for girls is located in College Road.
- The St. Colmans Secondary School for boys is located in Emmet St.

- The VEC Colaiste An Chaoimhin is located in Duntaheen.

### 3.10.3. Third level (out reach)

- At present there is no third level outreach facility in the town.

3.10.4. The following tables have been extracted from the 2006 CSO returns:

<b>Vol10: 06. Persons, males and females aged 15 years and over in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by highest level of education completed, 2006</b>					
<u>Education level</u>	Total	<u>Total whose full-time education has ceased</u>	Primary (incl. no formal education)	Lower secondary	Upper secondary
Fermoy	4,667	4,001	672	887	1,305
Third level, non-degree	Third level, degree or higher	Not stated	<u>Total whose full-time education not ceased</u>	Total at school, university, etc.	Other economic status
405	601	131	666	339	327

3.10.5. **Comment:** the number of persons with a post secondary qualification is 1006 or around 25% of persons who have completed their education.

<b>Vol10: 14. Persons, males and females aged 15 years and over in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by age at which full-time education ceased, 2006</b>						
<u>Age Educ Ceased</u> 	Total	<u>Total whose full-time education has ceased</u>	Under 15 years	15 years	16 years	17 years
Fermoy	4,667	4,001	371	247	482	427
18 years	19 years	20 years	21 years	22 years	23 years	24 years
712	247	198	183	180	107	89
25 years and over	Not stated	<u>Total whose full-time education not ceased</u>	Total at school, university, etc	Other economic status		
184	574	666	339	327		

3.10.6. **Comment:** The number of persons whose education was completed by 18 years of age or earlier was 2,239 or 56% of the total who had completed their education.

**Vol10: 26. Persons, males and females aged 15 years and over with a third level qualification attained after completing 2 or more years of study in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by main subject area, 2006**

<u>3rd Level Qual.</u>	<u>Total persons</u>	Education	Humanities and Arts	Social Sciences, Business and Law
Fermoy	998	82	81	166
Life Science, Physical Science, Mathematics and Statistics	Computing	Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction	Agriculture and Veterinary	Health
62	66	116	56	94
Social Services	Services	Not stated	Multiple subjects	
49	64	20	142	

3.10.7. **Comment:** The number of persons with a third level education was 998 or around 25% of those whose education was completed.

### **3.11 Childcare and the Child Perspective.**

3.11.1. There were some 1206 children between the ages of 0-14 recorded in the 2006 census for Fermoy and if we assume that the age distribution is even we would expect that some 402 children under the age of five years. Both these figures represent a substantial section of the population and a section that is often neglected in the provision of services and amenities. For this reason it is important that the child perspective is included in all development plan strategies, objectives and standards and that provision is made for adequate childcare facilities, play areas, sports amenities and child amenities. It is also important that the child perspective is included in the provision of infrastructure and accessibility facilities.

**3.11.2. Childcare:** The above figures also indicate a need for childcare and preschool facilities. In addition there is also a need for after-school child minding services.

3.11.3. The following is an extract from the County Development Plan 2003-2009 (pps. 97-98) relevant to childcare:

*National policy recognises childcare facilities as integral to economic and social well being. The National Anti-Poverty Strategy identifies child care provision as a means of alleviating poverty and social exclusion.*

*The Childcare Facility Guidelines for Planning Authorities published by the Department of the Environment and Local Government (June 2001) emphasise the role of planning in the promotion of increased childcare provision, ensure adequate standards of provision and protection of the local environment. The detailed regulation of childcare facilities is carried out in accordance with the Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations, 1996. The specific Zoning objective in the Plan contains specific objectives for the provision of Child Care Facilities as an integral part of new development.*

*From the Development Plan point of view it is important to ensure that provision is made for childcare facilities to be in appropriate locations including residential areas, town and neighbourhood centres and employment areas. One of the more important locations for childcare facilities will be larger new housing developments. Here normally, provision should be made for well-located, purpose built childcare facilities in developments of 75 dwellings or more. The size and number of the facilities should be determined in relation to local needs and likely future demand from the immediate locality. In existing housing developments, the establishment of small crèches will be considered, but the premises must remain primarily residential and traffic and access arrangements must not interfere with general residential amenity.*

*In town and neighbourhood centres and employment areas the provision of child care facilities will, normally, be encouraged. Facilities located in these areas should be able to provide open space, good access to public transport and any cycle routes, off street carparking and drop off and collections points.*

3.11.4. Reference may also be made to the Cork County Childcare Committees Strategic Plan 2007-2011 which states as its mission statement:

*“Cork County Childcare Committee aims to develop the provision of a range of integrated, high quality, accessible and affordable care and educational initiatives for children from birth to twelve years of age..... The development of childcare in County Cork will be achieved through partnership with all existing service providers and by the provision of a coordination mechanism at County level.”*

3.11.5. Fermoy is reasonably well served with child care facilities.

3.11.6. **Comment:**It will be desirable that the child perspective is included in all development plan strategies, objectives and standards and that provision is made for adequate childcare facilities, play areas, sports amenities and child amenities. It is also desirable that the child perspective is included in the provision of infrastructure and accessibility facilities.

### **3.12 Health and Well Being**

3.12.1. Fermoy is served by the HSE and currently has the following facilities available in the town:

- The Community Hospital, operated by the HSE, is located in Tallaght Road and has recently commenced construction of a sheltered Housing Scheme in the grounds of the hospital.
- The School Dental Clinic is located in Quarry Lane.
- The Community Welfare Officer and Clinic is located in Chapel Square.
- Cluain Dara is a purpose built communal housing scheme and is located in Duntaheen.
- The Mary Potter Crescent was one of the first independent sheltered housing schemes built in Ireland and was assisted by the Little Company of Mary. It is located in Redmond St.
- St. Francis Welfare Home is located in Rathealy Road.

### **3.13 Social welfare office.**

3.13.1. The social Welfare Office is located at Court house Road.

3.13.2. The Community Welfare Office is located in the HSE Clinic in Chapel Hill.

### **3.14 People with disabilities**

3.14.1. The following tables have been extracted from the CSO returns for 2006:

<b>Vol 11: 03. Persons, males and females in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by type of disability, 2006</b>				
<u>Disability</u> ⓘ	Total persons	Total persons with a disability	Blindness, deafness, or a severe vision or hearing impairment	A condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities
Fermoy	5,873	544	123	235
Difficulty in learning, remembering or concentrating	Difficulty in dressing, bathing or getting around inside the home	Difficulty in going outside the home alone	Difficulty in working or attending school/college	Learning or intellectual disability
235	152	118	159	209
Psychological or emotional condition	Difficulty in participating in other activities	Other, including chronic illness	<u>Disability</u> ⓘ	
99	107	182	190	

3.14.2. **Comment:** The total number of persons with a disability in Fermoy is 544 or 9% of the population.

<b>Vol 11-43. Carers aged 15 years and over in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by number of hours per week of unpaid help provided, 2006</b>							
<u>Unpaid Help</u> ⓘ	Total	<u>Total Carers</u>	1 - 14 hours a week	15 - 28 hours a week	29 - 42 hours a week	43 or more hours a week	Carers as a % of total persons
Fermoy	4,667	207	130	20	8	49	4.4

3.14.3. **Comment:** The number carers in the town is 207 or around 4% of the population.

Certain elements of the public realm in Fermoy have been remodelled recently with a complement of facilities for people with disabilities.

Colaiste Caoimhin students recently compiled a survey of facilities for people with disabilities needed in the town in publicly accessible buildings and this survey has resulted in significant improvement in facilities for people with such requirements.

There is a purpose built boating facility for people with disabilities on the Blackwater west of the weir on the Barnane/Castle Hyde stretch.

3.14.4. However more needs to be done. Instead of “planning” for people with disabilities, as if they were passive recipients of planning expertise, one of the objectives of this Plan will be to encourage and enable participation by people with disabilities in the planning process.

3.14.5. The community with disabilities comprises some 544 persons or 9% of the population. There are also 1,206 persons under the age of 14 (children have special accessibility and other needs), 592 people in Fermoy over the age of 65. Out of a total population of 5,873 only 3,531 or 60% are not under 14 years of age, not over 65 years of age and do not have a disability. Forty percent of the population who have special accessibility needs is a very significant proportion of the population. (Census 2006: Vol 11: Table:03, Census 2006: Vol 2: Table: 14.)

3.14.6. The National Disability Authority (1999) Act defines disability as:

*“A substantial restriction to participate in economic, social and cultural life due to enduring Physical, Sensory, Learning, Mental Health or Emotional impairment”.*

3.14.7. Disability is an evolving concept. Some illustrations of the range and diversity of disability are:

- Physical: Wheel chair, Speech impaired etc.
- Sensory: Blind, Deaf etc.
- Learning: Autism, dyslexia, language difficulties
- Mental Health: Bipolar disorder, Schizophrenia etc.
- Emotional: Depression, Anxiety, Social Phobias etc.

3.14.8. Planning/Designing for people with disabilities is complex and technical due to

- The complexity of needs of people with disabilities.
- The range and diversity of disabilities.
- Contradictions (and Synergies) between the needs of the various categories of disability and the needs of the population without disabilities.

3.14.9. There is also a shortage of expertise on the subject. Until recently Planning/Architecture/Engineering etc. courses rarely included modules on designing for people with disabilities. Specific disability design expertise is rare and not always easy to source. There has been some work carried out but much more needs to be done.

3.14.10. A second area of concern is the predominant planning/design philosophy. This is generally the post-design, modification/bolt-on school of design. In this approach the town/building/bridge or whatever is designed to meet the requirements of an average twenty five year old fit male and then subsequently modified with some facilities to cater for some categories of disability.

3.14.11. A third aspect is the Planning and Development Act 2000. S.10 includes 13 categories of objective which must be included in the Plan. None of these 13 categories of objective refer to Disability

3.14.12. The First Schedule (p.256) of the 2000 Planning Act lists 55 categories of objective that may be included in a Development Plan. One category (Part III (c)) refers to facilities for people with disabilities. A Development Plan may include objectives for providing facilities for people with disabilities. There is no legal obligation to do so. There is of course a social and moral obligation in this regard.

3.14.13. It would be desirable therefore for this plan to take cognisance of these facts and to adopt a disability friendly planning/design philosophy. This would include:

- Disability Design ab initio – a pro-active positive attitude and consciousness of people with disabilities from the start.
- Needs of people with disabilities “Designed in” (not post design modifications)
- Range and Diversity of Disability recognised
- Technicality and Complexity of disability recognised.

3.14.14. The publication *Building for Everyone* (2002) by the National Disability Authority refers to the issue of personal ability and specifically mentions

1. Mobility
2. Hearing
3. Vision
4. Breathing
5. Grip

6. Height
7. Other considerations

3.14.15. and places responsibility for responding appropriately with:

1. The developer
2. The designer
3. The builder
4. The manager
5. Central government
6. Local authorities
7. National Disability Authority

3.14.16. The document distinguishes between the external environment and buildings. For the most part it is considered that the building regulations are best suited to ensuring that buildings are adapted to the full range of potential users.

3.14.17. On this basis it is felt that the Development plan might be more usefully orientated towards the external environment. “*Building for Everybody*” categorises the external environment as follows:

1. The natural landscape such as mountains, beaches, peat lands etc. (Checklist on p.41 of ‘*Building for Everybody*’)
2. The tempered landscape such as parks, golf courses, woodlands and arboreta etc. (Checklist on p.49 of ‘*Building for Everybody*’)
3. Tamed landscape such as parks, cemeteries, sports grounds, gardens pavements, parking areas, plazas, etc. (Checklists on p50-55 of ‘*Building for Everybody*’)

3.14.18. Fermoy town has a share of each of these different categories of external environment although being an urban area the bulk is represented by “tamed landscapes”.

3.14.19. The central issue relating to these categories of landscape is the importance of accessibility for everyone. From a town planning perspective there are no major implications for landuse per se. ie it is generally not necessary to introduce new or specific landuses to cater for people with disabilities. The focus is primarily on the issue of accessibility for everyone to and between landuses. Accessibility for everybody therefore needs to be designed into the development plan process.

3.14.20. It is desirable that the Plan addresses the needs of people with disabilities and includes appropriate objectives in the Plan.

3.14.21. The Town Council is a signee of the Barcelona Declaration and as such is uniting towards a town environment suitable for disabled access.

### **3.15 Voluntary Sector**

3.15.1. There is a strong community and voluntary ethos in Fermoy. The following table has been extracted from the 2006 CSO returns:

<b>VOL 11: 70. Persons aged 15 years and over in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by voluntary activity, 2006</b>				
<u>Voluntary Act.</u>	<u>Total</u>	Helping or voluntary work with a social or charitable organisation	Helping or voluntary work with a religious group or church	Helping or voluntary work with a sporting organisation
Fermoy	4,667	306	171	282
Helping or voluntary work with a political or cultural organisation	Any other voluntary activity	Total persons involved in one or more voluntary activity	Persons not involved in voluntary work (incl. not stated)	
62	198	820	3,847	

3.15.2. As can be seen some 18% of the population aged 15 or over is involved in some community or voluntary activity. There is a considerable participation rate among school goers in voluntary activities.

3.15.3. The principal voluntary organisations in Fermoy are:

**Focus Group:** is an umbrella organisation for the Residents Associations in the town.

**Fermoy Becoming a Tidier Town Committee:** began in 1991 with a view to riding the town of litter. The Irish Businesses Against Litter (IBAL) is a group of businesses who campaign for and promote tidier towns. IBAL promote competition between towns and Fermoy came first in 2006, second in 2007 and third in 2008 in these competitions. The town was also highly placed in the Cork County Council Litter Challenge.

**An Garda Siochana and Cloyne Dioscean Youth Federation:** are in the process of organising a youth café.

**Youth Reach:** looks after the needs of early school leavers and runs training courses for same.

**Other voluntary organisations** are listed in the Sports and Recreation Sections.

**Fermoy Post By Pass Forum:** is an umbrella voluntary organisation intended to co-ordinate the development of the town. It comprises

- An Executive Task Force,

- Business Group,
- Education Group,
- Community Group and
- Sports and Leisure Group.

3.15.4. **Comment:** The By Pass Forum range of groups is fairly comprehensive however it may be helpful to establish a Heritage, Tourism and Environment Group. C/f section on Tourism above.

3.15.5. As mentioned above the town may also wish to consider entering the Liv Com competition. This is an international competition that has supplanted the Entente Florale by attending to a wider range of issues other than solely the visual. These include:

- Landscape,
- Heritage Management
- Environmentally sensitive practice,
- Community sustainability
- Healthy lifestyles
- Planning for the Future.

Details are available at [www.livcom.org](http://www.livcom.org)

### **3.16 Sport**

3.16.1. The following is a list of Sporting organisations, activities and facilities in the town:

- Rowing Club: (Members include 1980 and 2008 Olympic rowing contenders)
- Boat Club
- Racquet Ball Club
- Martial Arts/Karate Club
- Boxing Club
- Soccer Club
- Gaelic Games: Football, Hurling, Handball
- Rugby Club
- Hockey Club
- Fermoy Cycling Club
- Grange/Fermoy Athletics Club
- Golf Club – 18 hole.
- Handball Club
- Salmon Anglers Club
- Trout Anglers Club
- Coarse Anglers Club
- Road Bowling Club

3.16.2. Loretto Community Complex have recently completed a modern indoor Sports Complex and propose to construct an all weather flood lit playing field.

3.16.3. The Fermoy Post By Pass Forum have a dedicated Sports and Leisure Group.

### **3.17 Recreation**

3.17.1. Fermoy enjoys an active community and recreational life. There are a variety of sporting and recreational activities listed in the Sports Section and Voluntary Section. This section is primarily concerned with those recreational activities that may not fit into these latter sections although inevitably there is bound to be a good deal of overlap.

3.17.2. The following recreational and social clubs are located in the town:

- Lions Club
- Rotary Club
- Macra Na Feirme
- Bridge Club
- Bingo Club
- Macra Na Feirme/Palace Players Drama Society
- Choral Society
- Ceoltas Ceolteoiri Eireann branch
- Senior Citizens Society
- Fermoy Enterprise Board
- Fermoy Business Association.
- Toastmasters
- Cope Foundation
- Fermoy Community Youth Club
- Fermoy Field Club

3.17.3. There is a cinema located in Community Centre on Ashe Quay.

3.17.4. The business Association organises three street parties every year. There is also a St. Patricks Day Parade.

### **3.18 Amenity**

3.18.1. Fermoy enjoys a naturally attractive topography nestling in the Blackwater Valley with the Town Centre located on the river banks. These natural amenities are enhanced by well located and designed heritage buildings.

**3.18.2.** The river is the principal amenity in the town. With the valley through which it flows It provides a context and setting for the superb square and set of heritage buildings on both sides of the river. Apart from the visual display that it provides it attracts a number of amenity

uses including riverside parks and walks, boating, rowing, swimming and fishing.

**3.18.3. Town Parks:** the Town Park is located on the north side of the river and is a magnificent amenity for the town being located adjacent the town centre and river, beautifully laid out and well maintained.

3.18.4. There is a park in Clancy Street maintained by the Town Council with a playground therein.

**3.18.5.** The Town Council maintain a small amenity space close to the Rowing Club on the South Bank of the river.

3.18.6. The **Barnane Walk** is a riverside path west of the Town Centre on the South Bank of the river.

3.18.7. **Knockananig** is an attractive bathing area and maintained by the Tidy Towns Committee/Town Council and is located some five miles from the town to the south west.

3.18.8. There is potential to develop a plot of land on the north river bank beside the Boat Club. It is intended to further enhance this south facing landscaped riverside park in due course.

3.18.9. The town is noted for its extensive tree cover and it is desirable that this arboreal feature is maintained into the future

3.18.10. The Munster Way passes through the town.

3.18.11. The town also enjoys the Special Area of Conservation which extends along the river and its environs as it passes through the town.

### **3.19 Culture**

3.19.1. There is an 'Art in the Park' exhibition/sale organised every Sunday in summer and for most of the year with artists exhibiting their work on the park railings.

3.19.2. The following table has been extracted from the CSO returns:

<b>Vol 5: 04. Persons usually resident (and present in their usual residence on Census Night) in each town (including suburbs and environs, if any) with a population of 5,000 and over, classified by ethnic or cultural background, 2006</b>					
<u>Ethnicity</u> 	<u>Total</u>	Irish	Irish Traveller	Any other White background	African
Fermoy	5,609	4,522	44	765	34
Any other Black background	Chinese	Any other Asian background	Other including mixed background	Not stated	
12	13	28	122	69	

3.19.3. **Comment:** As can be seen some 17% of the population is non Irish or New Irish which indicates a considerable ethnic and cultural diversity in the town.

3.19.4. The town is twinned with Nova Debra and Ploemeur

### **3.20 Irish Language**

3.20.1. The following tables have been extracted from the 2008 Census returns:

<b>Vol9: 05. Persons, males and females aged 3 years and over in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by ability to speak Irish, 2006</b>					
<u>Irish Ability</u> 	<u>Total</u>	Irish speakers	Non-Irish speakers	Not stated	Irish speakers as a percentage of total 
Fermoy	5,586	2,069	3,433	84	37.6

3.20.2. **Comment:** Some 37% of the population claim to have some proficiency in the Irish language.

Vol9: 34. Irish speakers aged 3 years and over in each town with a population of 1,500 or more, classified by frequency of speaking Irish, 2006				
Frequency	Total	Speakers Irish within education system only	Speakers Irish also outside education	Daily
Fermoy	2,069	612	41	54
Weekly	Less often	Never	Not stated	
112	676	531	43	

3.20.3. **Comment:**Some 116 claiming to speak the language daily or weekly on a daily or weekly basis. It is probable that the Gaelscoil and Comhaltas have a strong influence in promoting the language.

3.20.4. In recent years progress has been made in promoting the use of the Irish language in the everyday life of the community. This is evidenced on directional signs, street names, etc. All new housing estate names are in Irish and the Town Council is encouraging residential estate names to be solely Irish.

3.20.5. The Town Council has been to the fore in this movement and will continue this policy as directed by the Minister of the Environment, directive F.15/74 and F.2/86, which states

*"Local Authorities should use a bilingual format for name plates for new housing areas and for name plates in old housing areas when they are due for replacement if an English only format is used at present. In selecting a name for a housing scheme, established local names should be used in preference to names which have no local connection. In doing so, local authorities would ensure that historic placenames are preserved and not allowed fall into disuse".*

3.20.6. Local Authorities should make available the official version of names of streets, roads and residential areas to ensure that the Irish form of address can be used in the addressing and delivery of mail without causing undue difficulty to the postal services. Special care should be taken to ensure that the Irish versions of street and place-names are correct as regards spelling and grammar. The Minister has been assured by the Placenames Commission that their services are available to local authorities for advice as to the correct Irish version of placenames. Their address is:-

3.20.7. An Coimisiun Logainmneacha An tSuirbheireacht Ordsnais Pairc na Fhoinnuisce, Baile Athas Cliath 8.

3.20.8. RTE via its transmitter/transposer station at Mullaghanish, transmits Teilifis na Gaeilge; the main Irish Language Channel into the town and environs.



## Chapter 4

# Heritage and Conservation

**This section outlines the Heritage and Conservation aspects of the town that underlie the Plan.**

## 4.1 HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION

### **Heritage Council (2000) *Heritage Appraisal for Development Plans.***

4.1.1. Section 51 of the 2000 Planning Act refers to the need to protect structures of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest. Other heritage items of interest include:

1. Monuments
2. Archaeological objects
3. Architectural Heritage
4. Flora
5. Fauna
6. Wildlife Habitats
7. Landscapes
8. Seascapes
9. Wrecks
10. Geology
11. Heritage Gardens and parks
12. Inland waterways.

4.1.2. This clearly refers to physically extant structures but obviously cultural fabrications such as literature, music, folklore etc are also part of the towns heritage.

*"A "Heritage Appraisal" is a process used to assess systematically, comprehensively and impartially, the effects on the heritage of plans, programs or policies or any combination of these. A Heritage Appraisal helps to ensure that the full scope of heritage considerations is dealt with fully and consistently (although not necessarily in great detail) throughout the preparation of any plan or programme. It is an iterative process, intended to help modify a plan or programme as it is developed in order to ..... Maximise potential benefits for the heritage." – Heritage Council(2000) *Heritage Appraisal for Development Plans.**

4.1.3. **Comment:** During the past 20 years the definition of heritage has broadened considerably to include technological, scientific and vernacular artefacts. In 20 years time it is possible that our definitions will have broadened again.

4.1.4. An important aspect of heritage is the issue of conserving a representative sample of the heritage germane to an area. For example in a county that has only one thatched cottage left does that cottage have more heritage value than one in a county that still has many hundreds remaining? A town needs to adopt a portfolio approach to its heritage both in terms of diversity and balance.

4.1.5. The document offers the following benefits from carrying out a Heritage Appraisal:

*“The heritage is an integral part of the wider environment, interacting with all other aspects of the world around us. It is fundamentally important to the quality of life for people, to their education, culture, health and well-being, enjoyment and amenity, and to the economy and special identity of Ireland” (p.8-a.8).*

National Heritage Plan – Ireland

*“The increased focus on, and public support for, protecting our heritage is a reflection of the more self assured, prosperous and educated society which has emerged in Ireland in recent years. Heritage is valued by the people of Ireland not only for its intrinsic value but for its economic benefits through tourism; the educational benefits of studying monuments, archives, flora and fauna; and the cultural and recreational benefits of castles, museums, canals and parks”. – P.3 Foreword*

*“While our heritage is inextricably intertwined with our sense of identity, it also affirms the historic, cultural and natural inheritance which is shared on the island of Ireland. For present and future generations who will live in Ireland that inheritance has the ability to enhance and enrich the context of everyday existence. It has the capacity to vividly convey to visitors and those living in Ireland alike what it means to be Irish. In short, our heritage is a presence which physically expresses the essence and the heartbeat of our collective historical identity.” P.7*

4.1.6. **Comment:** The quality of scenery in Ireland has been identified as the single greatest attraction we have to offer overseas tourists, who in 2000 contributed almost €3.8 billion (£3 billion) to the economy. A 2000 survey demonstrated that over 50% of overseas tourists had engaged in cultural or other heritage activities during their holidays, while other surveys showed that in 1998 over 600,000 overseas visitors engaged in outdoor activities such as hill walking, cycling, angling, or cruising on our inland waterways. Ireland’s physical environment has also been identified as a major attraction for the international film industry, which in 1999 generated over €116.82 million (£92 million) for the economy through productions in Ireland as well as providing valuable work experience for those employed in the Irish film industry.

4.1.7. Our heritage plays an economically valuable, if unquantifiable, role in other areas of activity. For example, Ireland’s food and beverage exports, which were valued at over €6.35 billion (£5 billion) in 2000, are assisted greatly by the reputation of our unspoilt natural environment, while Ireland’s arts and craft sectors continue to draw inspiration from our natural and cultural heritage. Economic considerations primarily influence the choice of location to invest capital and create employment, but our quality of life, the richness of

our cultural heritage, and our local environment should not be underestimated in this respect. In this and in other regards, our heritage in all its manifestations is one of Ireland's key assets.

#### **4.2 Planning and Development Act 2000:**

4.2.1. The planning act 2000 refers to architectural heritage as structures

*"of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest".*

It also refers to Architectural Conservation Areas as

*"the character of a place, area, group of structures or townscape, taking account of building lines and heights that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures"*

4.2.2. The Town Council has prepared a Record of Protected Structures Study on which the Record of Protected Structures in the Plan has been based. The Study is available for inspection at the Town Hall. The Archaeological provisions in the Plan have been based on the OPW prepared Record of Monuments and Places and the Urban Archaeological Survey of Co. Cork. The Architectural Conservation Area, the Scenically attractive Landscape areas and the Natural heritage areas are based on various studies carried out over the years for previous plans.

4.2.3. Given Fermoy's wealth of heritage it will be desirable to include in the plan:

1. Items in the Archaeological record – these are indicated on Map 6
2. Record of Protected Structures - these are indicated on Map 5A - 5D
3. Architectural Conservation Areas - these are indicated on Map 4
4. Scenically attractive landscape areas - these are indicated on Map 2

## Chapter 5 Environment

**This section outlines the Environmental considerations underlying the Plan.**

## **5.1 Environment.**

5.1.1. A full review and assessment of the town and the policies and objectives of the Plan are contained in Volume III, Strategic Environmental Assessment.

5.1.2. As part of the preparation of this Plan, RPS Environmental Consultants carried out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). SEA is the process by which environmental considerations are required to be fully integrated into the preparation and adoption of Development Plans and other plans and programmes. The objective of the SEA process is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.

5.1.3. The SEA process was undertaken in parallel with each stage of the draft Plan making process and involved close consultation and meetings with the SEA Consultation Authorities, members of Cork County Council that drafted the Fermoy Town Development Plan 2009 - 2015, the SEA team and a number of specialists that focussed on the significant environmental issues of the plan as identified during the screening and scoping phases and assessment of baseline information for the area.

5.1.4. As part of the SEA Environmental Report, a matrix was developed and used to assess significant environmental effects of the key policies and objectives of the Fermoy Town Development Plan. This process enabled an overview of where potential environmental problems may arise from implementation of the Plan and allowed for additional policies/objectives to be generated and included in the Plan.

5.1.5. Where significant effects had been identified and had not been mitigated sufficiently by policies and objectives within the Fermoy Plan 2009 - 2015, additional mitigation measures were recommended in Chapter 9 of the environmental report and have been incorporated where possible into the Plan. Table 9.1 of the Environmental Report documents all significant effects as identified in this document and links them to the proposed mitigation measures as set out in the Plan. Overall it was considered that the proposed Plan would not have a negative impact on the environment.

5.1.6. A Monitoring programme of the identified significant effects is set out in chapter 10 of the SEA, which aims to prevent against deterioration of the environmental quality of the area during the lifetime of the plan.

**5.1.7. Influence of SEA on the Development Strategy of the Plan**

5.1.8. As part of the SEA process three development strategies for the Plan area were assessed in order to determine the preferred development strategy for the Plan area with the least environmental effects.

5.1.9. The three alternatives considered include a 'Do-nothing approach', an alternative to 'Rezone sufficient lands as a natural extension of the town centre'; and an alternative to 'Extend new development zonings on remaining undeveloped Greenfield lands within the town boundary'.

5.1.10. Based on the policy context, issues and needs facing the town it was considered that the preferred alternative as set out in the SEA was to rezone sufficient lands as a natural extension of the town centre in accordance with projected growth for the area and through the intensification and consolidation of the existing Town Centre. It was considered that this development strategy would allow for the intensification of the town centre and the consolidation and expansion of existing services to accessible lands. Accordingly this alternative is reflected in the priority objective of the draft plan, which is for the: '*promotion of a balanced and sustainable development that takes account of all stakeholders in the town*'. This alternative is also reflected in the development strategy of the plan, which seeks to rejuvenate and extend the retail and service function of the town and to maintain and enhance the vibrant town core and to improve the streetscape and public realm in the central area. It is also reflected in the zoning strategy of the Plan, which extends new town centre zoning from commercial lands to the TC – 03 north of the River Blackwater, providing new development opportunities north of the town.

5.1.11. The following is a lay persons over view of the environment in the town:

5.1.12. Fermoy benefits from a clean environment and it is the aim of the Town Council to preserve it for future generations. Candidate SAC designated Balckwater, clean rivers, large blocks of green areas and fertile agricultural land, surround it.

5.1.13. The Town Council has over recent years engaged the services of advisers to recommend best practice in the area of Conservation of Buildings, Protection of Wildlife Habitats, Maintenance of our Parks, Flood Control and Soft Landscaping.

5.1.14. All new developments have to provide the Town Council with a detailed landscaping scheme plan to include

- (a) Species, variety, number and location of trees, shrubs and other features to be provided

- (b) Proposal to retain and incorporate existing trees and hedgerows within the development
- (c) A programme of implementation of the landscaping scheme.

5.1.15. All new residential developments have to provide a minimum of 10% of the total site for public amenity open green area. Large scale developments of a residential nature shall provide benefits to the local community commensurate with the scale of the development, including sporting, recreational, social or community facilities.

5.1.16. The Town Council has indicated the location of the Candidate Special Area of Conservation in the river area. It desirable that the protection of these natural habitats is continued.

5.1.17. Fermoy Town Council and its residents have a strong ethos of preserving the heritage architectural character of the town centre. The previous Plan included an Architectural Conservation Area and Register of Protected Structures. It is desirable that these continue to be protected in the Plan.

5.1.18. Fermoy has a very active Tidy Towns Committee who works in partnership with the Town Council. This group is primarily concerned with environmental matters. The main activities include:

- Voluntary litter control
- Street sweeping
- Organising regular clean up nights
- Planting of flowers & shrubs and maintenance of same.
- Maintaining green areas
- Developing and protecting Wildlife and Natural Amenities

5.1.19. The Town Council encourages the establishment of Residents Association and provides advice for officers of these groups. These groups will then work with the Tidy Towns Association for the common good of the community.

5.1.20. The Town Council supports the national “Greener Homes” strategy. This programme will allow individual householders to obtain grants for the installation of renewable technologies including wood pellet stoves and boilers, solar panels and geothermal heat pumps. Grant aid of €1,100 to €6,500 may be provided depending on the individual technology used and is administered by Sustainable Energy Ireland.

5.1.21. The State has signed up to the Kyoto Protocol and has set a target of limiting its greenhouse gas emissions to 13% above 1990 levels nationally by the first commitment period 2008-2012. The achievement of the targets set will necessitate voluntary changes in behaviour by individual citizens in small ways through, for example increasing their use of low-energy light bulbs and by driving cars in a

more fuel efficient manner. Simple matters like (a) the planting of broadleaf trees and new hedgerows will contribute to carbon sequestration (b) improved farming practices resulting in better utilisation of nutrients (c) a more positive attitude to waste management reduce, reuse and recycle (d) compliance with Building Regulations are steadily enhancing the thermal performance standards of new and refurbished buildings. The Building Energy Rating certificate has now been introduced.



## Chapter 6 Infrastructure

This section outlines the infrastructural considerations underlying the Plan.

## 6.1 Introduction.

6.1.1. This section addresses the infrastructure requirements of the town and covers:

- Accessibility,
- Water Supply,
- Drainage,
- Electricity,
- Telecommunications,
- Waste Recovery, treatment and disposal
- Derelict sites.

## 6.2 Accessibility: Introduction and Summary.

The following table has been extracted from the 2006 CSO returns:

<b>VOL 12: 38. Persons, males and females at work aged 15 years and over usually resident in the State and present in their usual residence on Census Night, distinguishing towns of 5,000 population and over, classified by means of travel to work, 2006</b>				
<u>Means of Travel</u>	<u>Total</u>	On foot	Bicycle	Bus, minibus or coach
Fermoy	2,596	493	15	144
Train, DART or LUAS	Motor cycle or scooter	Motor car: Driver	Motor car: Passenger	Lorry or van
1	12	1,441	237	160
Other means	Work mainly at or from home	Not stated		
7	66	20		

Source: **VOL 12: 38.**

6.2.1. **Comment:** as can be seen the majority means of transport is by car although walking makes a significant contribution.

6.2.2. The Fermoy tolled By Pass has been open since early 2007 and is located to the East of the town with access to the M8 Cork-Dublin motorway located to the north and south of the town. The toll has resulted in continued use by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) to avoid toll payment. The town's proximity to this route enhances its attractiveness for new industry and enterprise.

6.2.3. A traffic management study has been completed recently by Malachy Walsh and Partners and it is a traffic study for the town as a whole including the environs. It is proposed to locate two roundabouts to the north of the bridge, one at Christ Church and one at the former Blackwater Motors site. It also makes a number of proposals regarding the one way system and parking facilities. It is intended that this will produce improved accessibility for pedestrians. c/f summary below.

6.2.4. The Cork-Dublin Bus Eireann and 'Aircoach' stops in the town. There is no intra-urban bus service in the town.

6.2.5. It is proposed that a Taxi rank be located at Ashe Quay

6.2.6. Major traffic calming measures are proposed for Patrick St.

6.2.7. There are some problems with heavy goods vehicles driving through the town to avoid tolls however this should be alleviated when the Mitchellstown By Pass is completed.

6.2.8. There is some congestion in the vicinity of schools during peak hours. This may be due to lack of parking space rather than traffic volumes. Needless to say it is more desirable that school children walk rather than be driven to school.

6.2.9. The proposed Mart site has the potential to provide some 900-1,000 spaces.

6.2.10. **Comment:** The provision of parking spaces, an improvement in accessibility and the enhancement of pedestrian facilities are the main mobility issues facing the town centre.

### **6.3 The Fermoy By Pass:**

6.3.1. "The Fermoy bypass route is located 800meters east of the town and forms a link in the chain of motorway sections that form the Cork - Dublin M8. This bypass

opened in early 2007 and significantly reduced the quantity HGV's using the town centre to cross the Blackwater river.

6.3.2. A Traffic Management Study has been carried out for the present and future needs of the town. Among the many recommendations are traffic calming measures on the main arterial route ( R639 ) from Dublin to Cork

6.3.3. These measures include roundabouts at Christ Church and Beechfield north of the bridge, a traffic calming gate at Carrignagrohera north of the bridge and various signal lights and pedestrian crossings around the town.

6.3.4. The intent of all these measures is to make the town shopping and services more accessible to pedestrians and townspeople generally.

6.3.5. Bus links include Bus Eireann normal and expressway services along with an Aircoach service that runs everyday between Cork and Dublin and major settlements en route.

6.3.6. The new Town Traffic Management plan stipulates a proper TAXI rank to be established at Ashe Quay opposite the Grand Hotel at a scenic location on the riverside.

6.3.7. It is a salient fact that almost 20% of the traffic going through the shopping centre of Fermoy are only doing so to avoid the toll on the M8 by-pass. It is hoped that many of these will decide to pay the toll when better value is offered once a new section of the M8 connecting Fermoy to Cashel is opened in 2009.

## **6.4 Fermoy Traffic Management Study**

6.4.1. The Fermoy Traffic Management Study commenced in April 2007 with the appointment of Malachy Walsh and Partners to carry out a traffic management study for Fermoy.

6.4.2. The brief included "a review of the road network and associated traffic demands, with particular attention on the town centre area, with the objective of determining the traffic management improvements needed to cope with the continued expansion of the town that will result in growth in vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist volumes".

6.4.3. The draft recommended Traffic Management Plan proposed measures under the following headings:

6.4.4. M8 Fermoy Bypass with the aim of improving the attractiveness of the M8 and reducing the number of vehicles using the town to avoid tolls.

6.4.5. Fermoy Bridge/New River Crossing: enhanced lane provision on the Fermoy Bridge and a new river crossing located east (downstream) of the bridge is considered desirable.

6.4.6. Traffic Circulation Modifications: modifications to O'Neill-Crowley Quay and Connolly Street are recommended.

6.4.7. Speed Limits and Entrance gateways: The extension of the 50Kmh speed limit is recommended for some areas.

6.4.8. Road Network Urbanisation: reconfiguration of footpaths and removal of hard shoulder markings is recommended.

6.4.9. Junction Improvements: a number of road network junction improvements are recommended.

6.4.10. Traffic Calming Measures: a number of traffic calming measures throughout the town are recommended.

6.4.11. Parking Management and Supply: a reduction of on street parking at a number of locations including at all junction footpath build-outs. A designated taxi rank is recommended on Ashe Quay. There is a total of over 1,100 on street and off street parking spaces in the town which is considered ample for the demand. A total of 536 additional off street parking spaces have been provided since 1998. The study considered that the development of the Mart site which envisaged an additional c.1,000 off street spaces 'would reduce any warrant for additional town centre car parking and feasibility of a multi-storey car park at the Library Car Park Site'.

6.4.12. Pedestrians, Cyclists and Vulnerable users: the study recommended the widening of a number of footpaths and other enhanced pedestrian environment proposals and facilities.

6.4.13. Delivery Vehicles and Heavy Goods Vehicles Management: the study recommended the provision of defined loading bays on both sides of Pearse Square and additional on-street loading bays should be provided.

## **6.5 Water supply.**

6.5.1. The following table has been extracted from the CSO returns for 2006:

FERMOY Water Supply	
Total	2,133
Type of water supply : Public mains	1,911
Type of water supply : Local Authority groupscheme	113
Type of water supply : Private group scheme	14
Type of water supply : Other private scheme	13
Type of water supply : No piped water	0
Type of water supply : Not stated	82
Source: CSO:2008: VOL 6: 14.	

6.5.2. As can be seen there is no house reported as being without a water supply and 93% take a supply from the public main.

6.5.3. The source of water for the Fermoy Water Supply Scheme is an infiltration gallery on the south bank of the River Blackwater at Deerpark 4 km upstream of Fermoy Bridge. The supply is augmented by an adjacent bored well. Raw water is pumped to the Coolroe reservoir 1 km to the south via a rising main.

6.5.4. At Coolroe the water is chlorinated and fluoridated prior to distribution. This reservoir serves the bulk of Fermoy town, the environs north of the River Blackwater and the village of Clondulane 4 km to the east of the town. An adjacent water tower serves the high area locally around Uplands.

6.5.5. According to the Cork Strategic Water Plan there is sufficient water supply to cater for projected growth within the town. However the existing Fermoy supplies can be vulnerable during periods of flooding, therefore it is recommended that a new source that is not vulnerable to flooding should be considered in the plan.

6.5.6. According to the Cork Strategic Water Plan, in strategic terms, the Conna Regional Water Supply Scheme has the capacity to provide supplies to an expanded regional area and to augment the supply to Fermoy. Given that the existing Fermoy supplies can be vulnerable during periods of Blackwater River flooding, a strategic link between the Conna Regional Scheme and the Fermoy system would offer significant security of supply benefits. Leakage has also been identified as a major problem in the town. A Water Conservation project has been implemented in the

area including district metering and leak detection in order to mitigate against leakage.

6.5.7. At present the town and environs consumes some 4,000 cubic metres per day and has spare capacity of some 1-1,200 cubic metres per day. This is the population equivalent of c.1,500 persons.

## 6.6 Drainage: Sewerage System:

6.6.1. The following table has been extracted from the CSO returns for 2006:

FERMOY Sewerage	
Total:	2,133
Type of sewerage facility : Public scheme	1,979
Type of sewerage facility : Individual septic tank	64
Type of sewerage facility : Individual treatment not septic tank	2
Type of sewerage facility : Other	5
Type of sewerage facility : No sewerage facility	1
Type of sewerage facility : Not stated	82
Source: CSO:2008: <b>VOL 6: 14.</b>	

6.6.2. As can be seen from the table 97% of households who have responded are connected to the public sewer. Some 71 dwellings have a septic tank or other means of sewage disposal.

**6.6.3. Comment:** It is desirable that all dwellings in the Town Council area are connected to the public sewer.

6.6.4. The towns sewage drains eastward to a new treatment plant located at Carrigabric which is half mile east of the town. It was constructed in the 1980's. The treatment plant is highly effective with a discharge quality of 30/20 (BOD/SS).

6.6.5. The system in the old town centre is still a combined system for the most part. All new developments are required to provide separate system and the intention is to convert the entirety of the system to a separate system over time.

6.6.6. The existing plant, located east of the town on the south bank of the river Blackwater has a design capacity of 20, 000 people equivalent units. The sewage plant is currently running at roughly 50% of it's rated capacity.

## **6.7 Drainage: Fermoy North Flood Alleviation Scheme**

6.7.1. The town of Fermoy has a long history of flooding from the River blackwater, which flows through the town. In 2002 the Office of Public Works (OPW) commissioned a consortium to carry out a feasibility study to assess the flood risk in the town and to develop a flood alleviation scheme. An engineering report has been produced in which the preferred solution for a 1 in 100 year flood event has been advanced to outline design. The proposed works propose the construction of both permanent and temporary demountable walls as well as certain embankments on both north and south banks of the river.

6.7.2. To optimise the benefits that can be delivered within the restricted budget available the OPW sought to phase the works associated the flood works scheme. The objective is to provide some degree of protection and damage mitigation at limited cost at an early stage. Further works and the full scheme could follow at a later stage as funding becomes available. The phasing of the works also presented an opportunity to reconsider the potential contribution of non-structural flood management measures. The Public Exhibition of the Munster Blackwater (Fermoy) Drainage Schemes was held in Fermoy during November and December 2005. The scheme was officially launched on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2005.

6.7.3. It is expected that work will commence in the near future.

## **6.8 Electricity Supply.**

6.8.1. The principal substation for the town is located on the Castlehyde road and is 38KV.

6.8.2. The long term intention is to underground the street cables serving the public lighting. All new footpaths are equipped with ducting for power, telecoms etc.

## **6.9 Geothermal Energy Resources:**

6.9.1. Fermoy lies at the boundary between the upland area to the south underlain by Devonian Old Red Sandstone and the relatively narrow Lismore Syncline to the north underlain by karstified Carboniferous limestone.

The Blackwater Buried Valley has exploited the contact between these geological units and it is believed that it may take the form of a low angle thrust fault. The Blackwater does not completely overlie the buried valley as post glacial processes may have modified the course of the Blackwater during the late Pleistocene / Holocene.

Geophysical investigations undertaken in March 2007 by Fermoy Town Council and UCC's Geothermal Research Group revealed the extent of the shallow buried valley gravel aquifer which was used as a source of geothermal energy for the recently retro-fitted Fermoy Swimming Pool. The aquifer is 60 meters deep and 350-400 meters wide and underlies the floodplain of the Blackwater. Developments overlying the buried valley can take advantage of this geothermal source using a shallow borehole of less than 15 meters depth, a heat pump and underfloor heating. Heat pumps have a 20 year lifespan and a coefficient of performance of 3 or 4. At current fossil fuel tariffs payback periods as short as 4 years are possible.

6.9.2. It is desirable that the Town Council encourage the use of this resource for energy efficiency and tourist purposes.

## **6.10 Telecommunications:**

6.10.1. The town has a modern Digital Exchange

6.10.2. A Municipal Area network (MAN) has been installed in 2007 and serves the principal businesses of the town centre and schools. It is intended to have the network 'lit' in the near future.

6.10.3. The following table has been extracted from the CSO 2006 returns:

<b>PC OWNERSHIP AND INTERNET ACCESS</b>	
Total households	2,133
PC ownership	1,001
No PC ownership	1,087
Not stated	45
Broadband Internet Access	375
Other Internet Access	404
No Internet Access	1,227
Not stated	127
Source: CSO: 2006 : Vol 6: <b>31.</b>	

6.10.4. **Comment:** Approximately half the households have PC ownership but only around 40% have internet access. Approximately 20% of households have broadband internet access.

6.10.5. Fermoy is served via Eircom, by digital exchanges, optic fibre links, full international direct dial facilities and high speed digital data links. Mobile phone transmissions stations are placed in various locations in and around the town's environs.

## **6.11 Refuse Disposal**

6.11.1. Waste collection is carried out by Cork County Council and private collectors with dry recyclables segregated from general and organic waste. There is an active Tidy Towns Committee in Fermoy..

## **6.12 Derelict Sites**

6.12.1. The Town council maintains a Derelict Sites register. There has been considerable progress made due to the Town Renewal Scheme and a substantial number of formerly derelict sites have been redeveloped. Development of derelict sites is ongoing.