



*Note: the full report and appendices of the housing strategy study are entitled 'Cork Planning Authorities Joint Housing Strategy' dated November 2001'. They are available in two volumes from the County Council Planning Department. This Appendix is in two parts: Housing Strategy: Principles and Policies and Housing Strategy: Implementation and Monitoring. (Click Here To View This Document)*

### **Housing Strategy - Principles and Policies**

*This section commences with a restatement of the aim of the housing strategy followed by the establishment of four key principles which underpin the Strategy. These are then expanded into detailed policies and programmes of action.*

#### Aim of the Strategy

*The overall aim of the Cork Housing Strategy for 2001 to 2010 is:*

*"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

*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 and Rural Environment.*

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

#### Policies and Programmes of Action

*Following the analysis carried out for this strategy and review of issues raised through the consultation process, a set of policies and programmes of action have been identified. The programmes of action identified are wide ranging: some are more general in nature and may already be contained in other policy documents of the Cork Local Authorities while others have been created to address specific issues, such as the reserved land policy. It is through the implementation of all of these actions together that we are likely to address existing and future housing needs in a comprehensive way.*

*The policies and programmes of action are presented below.*

*PRINCIPLE No. 1: To provide for a Diverse Range of Housing Needs*

**POLICY 1.1**

**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 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**

**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 DoELG, private developers, the voluntary and 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.*
- (e) Continue to promote the local authority shared ownership scheme.*
- (f) In partnership with the DoELG, continue to support and enhance the voluntary and co-operative 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.*

**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 1.3**

*Proposed Actions:*

- (a) Seek a suitable balance between social and affordable housing on the reserved lands in accordance with policy 2.1 below.*
- (b) Where it is proposed that a site be developed for student accommodation, the portion of the site relating to this shall be exempt from the reserved land policy. The proposed development must comply with the location and design criteria set out in the Guidelines on Residential Developments for third level students (see extracts in appendix 7).*

**POLICY 1.4** *The Cork Local Authorities will support the development of housing for people with special housing needs.*

**POLICY 1.4**

*Proposed Actions:*

- (a) Support the voluntary sector to develop housing for special needs.*
- (b) Work with the Homeless Forum in finding ways to prevent homelessness and finding housing solutions for homeless households.*
- (c) Provide appropriate accommodation for Travellers and / or halting site facilities through the implementation of the Traveller accommodation programmes.*
- (d) Work with the various Disability Organisations to ensure that wherever possible, housing (including Local Authority Housing) is built to barrier-free standards.*
- (e) Liaise with the Department of Justice to develop policy for the provision of short-term accommodation for refugees / asylum seekers in Cork and to develop policy on long-term provision for refugees.*
- (f) Liaise with representative organisations, the Southern Health Board and other stakeholders in undertaking a review of the need for accommodation for older people and people with a disability.*
- (g) Support the concept of independent living for older people and people with a disability and ensure where possible that housing for such groups is integrated with mainstream housing.*

PRINCIPLE No. 2: *To support the development of Balanced Communities*

**POLICY 2.1**

**POLICY 2.1** *The Cork Local Authorities will ensure that there is an appropriate balance between social, affordable and mainstream housing provision within communities.*

*Proposed Actions:*

- (a) *Within the Cork Metropolitan area, there will be a requirement that one-quarter of the reserved land be for social housing and the remainder for affordable housing, subject to the exceptions in b) below. This will be subject to review in future Development Plans.*
- (b) *In certain specified areas within the Cork Metropolitan housing market area, where there is an existing high concentration of social housing, there will be no requirement for social housing on reserved lands. In Cork City this exception applies to the selected City wards specified. In the County, such areas will be specified in future development plan objectives or local area plan objectives where appropriate.*
- (c) *In all other areas, the appropriate proportion of social housing on reserved lands will be agreed with the relevant planning authority, or specified in future development plan objectives or local plan objectives, based on the existing housing profile and needs of the area. This proportion is subject to a maximum of one-quarter of the reserved lands. This will be subject to review in future development plans.*
- (d) *The above actions do not preclude all of the reserved land from being used for social housing, if a developer wishes to make such an agreement.*
- (e) *The Local Authorities will investigate ways of developing multi-tenure developments on their own land.*

**POLICY 2.2**

**POLICY 2.2** *The Cork Local Authorities will ensure that multi-tenure developments are developed as cohesive developments.*

*Proposed Actions:*

- (a) *Planning applications, subject to the reserved land policy, will be required to demonstrate how the overall development will be perceived as a cohesive unit.*
- (b) *Promotion of integration through a high standard of property management for Local Authority properties and promotion and support of good estate management practices.*

**POLICY 2.3 The Cork Local Authorities will maintain and enhance existing residential areas.****POLICY 2.3***Proposed Actions:*

- (a) Support the development of high quality, higher-density residential units and 'living over the shop' within the city.
- (b) Identify opportunities for infill residential developments in the city centre, towns and villages.
- (c) Implement Urban / Village Renewal schemes to help upgrade the environment of city and town centres.
- (d) Prioritise the development of towns and villages with existing services, through land zoning policies.
- (e) Where appropriate, make use of powers under the Derelict Sites Act to acquire and secure the redevelopment of derelict sites.

**POLICY 2.4 The Cork Local Authorities will facilitate and support the development of a high quality private rented sector.****POLICY 2.4***Proposed Actions:*

- (a) Actively encourage registration of rental accommodation.
- (b) Investigate other ways in which the Local Authority can support the development of the private rented sector at local level.

**POLICY 2.5 The Cork Local Authorities will ensure that development of second / holiday homes does not have a detrimental effect on provision of mainstream housing development.****POLICY 2.5***Proposed Actions:*

- (a) Prioritise local demand in provision of housing in each area over provision of holiday / second homes.
- (b) Monitor the impact of second / holiday homes in Cork's rural areas.
- (c) Identify ways in which local housing needs can be met in areas of existing high second / holiday home pressure.

*PRINCIPLE No. 3: To promote sustainable development of the urban and rural environment*

**POLICY 3.1**

**POLICY 3.1** *The Cork Local Authorities will ensure that future residential development takes maximum advantage of existing and future services and transportation links.*

*Proposed Actions:*

- (a) Require higher density residential development in proximity to town centres.*
- (b) Require higher density residential development within a walking catchment area of public transport facilities, i.e. at points of access.*
- (c) Zone land for residential development, with other compatible uses, near existing or new railway stations in future development plans where appropriate.*
- (d) Promote enhanced accessibility in all new residential developments including provision of pedestrian routes and cycle ways.*

**POLICY 3.2**

**POLICY 3.2** *The Cork Local Authorities will encourage mixed use developments.*

*Proposed Actions:*

- (a) Adopt land zoning policies in future development plans for appropriate mixed-use developments (thereby reducing demands for commuting to work / education and social facilities).*
- (b) Look favourably on applications for home based economic activities where, by virtue of their nature and scale, they can be accommodated without detriment to the amenities of residential areas.*

**POLICY 3.3**

**POLICY 3.3** *The Cork Local Authorities will promote the development of sustainable design solutions for future residential development.*

*Proposed Actions:*

- (a) Encourage sensitive refurbishment of under-utilised or obsolete buildings.*
- (b) Issue design guidelines to promote skillful design at a range of appropriate densities and designs for adaptable housing units.*
- (c) Consider promoting architectural competitions for the design of residential developments, to encourage more sustainable designs for houses and residential neighbourhoods.*
- (d) Promote the concept of 'Lifetime Housing', i.e. that housing is adaptable for people's needs as they change over their lifetime.*

**POLICY 3.4 The Cork Local Authorities will maximise the use of existing local authority housing stock.****POLICY 3.4***Proposed Actions:*

- (a) *Review the utilisation of the existing housing stock and assess the numbers of tenants willing to transfer to smaller units and under what conditions.*
- (b) *Consider regeneration programmes involving the re-design of existing Local Authority housing units and housing estate layouts such as those already pioneered by Cork City Council.*

**POLICY 3.5 The Cork Local Authorities will ensure clear demarcation between urban and rural land uses.****POLICY 3.5***Proposed Actions:*

- (a) *Promote housing development in existing towns and villages, at appropriate densities.*
- (b) *Make optimum use of existing infrastructure and serviced land, by requiring appropriate density levels.*

**POLICY 3.6 The Cork Local Authorities will protect and enhance the Natural Environment.****POLICY 3.6***Proposed Actions:*

- (a) *Require applications for new developments to demonstrate that they are sensitive to the surrounding environment.*
- (b) *Require new developments to maintain vegetation and existing environmental features.*
- (c) *Promote the use of environmentally friendly / energy efficient construction materials and techniques.*
- (d) *Require the incorporation of parks into the overall design of new developments.*
- (e) *Promote Local Agenda 21 initiatives in new and existing residential developments.*

*PRINCIPLE No. 4: To promote a high quality living environment*

**POLICY 4.1**

**POLICY 4.1** *The Cork Local Authorities will seek to ensure a safe residential environment.*

*Proposed Actions:*

- (a) Liaise with the Garda Crime Prevention Unit in the design of new local authority estates and in developing design guidelines for new public and private housing developments.*
- (b) Require applications for new developments to incorporate traffic calming methods within the development.*
- (c) Promote residents' participation in estate management programmes targeted at enhancing the safety of housing areas.*

**POLICY 4.2**

**POLICY 4.2** *The Cork Local Authorities will ensure the attractive design and layout of residential developments.*

*Proposed Actions:*

- (a) Require applications for new residential developments to ensure adequate provision of well designed public and private open space, including provision of family-oriented recreation facilities.*
- (b) Require applications for higher-density residential developments to provide appropriate laundry facilities and adequate storage space for domestic waste, including provision of 'user friendly' recycling facilities as part of the scheme.*

**POLICY 4.3**

**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.*

### **Housing Strategy: Implementation and Monitoring**

#### New approaches needed

The Joint Housing Strategy becomes operational when it has been adopted into the relevant Development Plans, following the completion of procedures set out under the Planning & Development Act 2000.

The implementation of the housing strategy will present challenges to all those involved, including the Local Authorities, Developers, Voluntary Housing Agencies and future housing residents. The strategy presents an opportunity to deliver quality housing to the people of Cork.

The Housing Strategy is a new approach towards the planing and development of housing. In particular there is a need for:

- closer inter-departmental working within Local Authorities;
- closer liaison between the Local Authorities within Cork;
- enhanced consultation and co-operation between Local Authorities, Developers, Voluntary and Co-operative Housing Sector and other relevant agencies;
- the development of Partnerships to deliver multi-tenure developments;
- the development of imaginative design solutions to deliver multi-tenure developments; and
- closer liaison with City and County Development Boards, Community and special needs Forums.

#### The role of the Cork Local Authorities

Cork Local Authorities play an important role in influencing housing outcomes in our city and county. The key roles of the local authority include:

- An integrated planning role: setting broad policy directions and land use development strategies and policies and, where appropriate, implementing these policies;
- A regulatory role: regulating land use development, building quality, the private rented sector and environmental health in accordance with national and local planning frameworks;
- A promoting role: promoting development and working with community agencies and other levels of government for housing outcomes that best address the social, cultural and economic needs of residents;
- An amenity role: developing, maintaining and preserving open space, parklands, recreational areas and physical infrastructure so that the residential amenity of local areas is improved;
- A facilitating role: Assisting in the leverage of funds and facilitating development opportunities that create affordable and social housing opportunities; and
- A landowner role: using the local authority's role as landowner to directly influence the market for housing to achieve established objectives.

Overall Strategy

*The effective implementation of the Joint Housing Strategy will primarily be achieved through its adoption in the relevant Development Plans and, where applicable, subsequently into Local Area Plans. This will ensure that housing development is integrated with essential services, such as transport, social and community facilities and employment opportunities.*

*In addition to the translation of the Housing Strategy into the appropriate plans there may be a need to establish internal working groups or external consultation Forums, to ensure the effective implementation of all aspects of the strategy, including the reserved land policy. There will be a need for an on-going liaison group between the City and County Councils to monitor the implementation of the joint strategy. Regular liaison should also be held between the County and Urban District Councils.*

Reserved Land Policy

*All aspects of the Housing Strategy will require specific implementation procedures to ensure that the policies are achieved. The policy of reserving zoned land for social and affordable housing requires particular attention, especially with regard to social integration and achieving attractive designs.*

Exempted Developments

*The principles of the Housing Strategy apply to all residential developments. The following categories of development are, however, exempt from the reserved land policy:*

- *Conversion of an existing structure (subject to the retention of 50% of the external fabric);*
- *Works to an existing house;*
- *Developments of 4 houses or less;*
- *Developments on 0.2 hectares (1/2 acre), or less.*

*Planning applications for developments, on land zoned for residential (or a mix of residential or other uses), and which fall within categories 3) & 4), must apply to the relevant Planning Authority for an 'exemption certificate'. The applicant must provide all relevant information and declare that the application is exempt from the reserved land policy of the Housing Strategy. The Planning Authority must provide the certificate within 4 weeks of receiving all the required information.*

Transfer of Reserved Land

*For residential developments that will be affected by the reserved land policy the following procedures apply:*

*In making an application to the Planning Authority the applicant must make a proposal, which states how the provisions of the reserved land policy will be met.*

*It will often be necessary for the applicant to meet with the Local Authority in advance of making an application, to discuss proposals regarding the reserved land. The Planning Authorities will provide broad guidelines on the type and size of social and affordable housing required, for the various local planning control areas.*

*The final decision of whether to transfer land or housing units is that of the applicant. In an attempt to maximise the cohesion of developments and the speed at which developments are completed, the Cork Planning Authorities will normally seek agreements for the transfer of completed units. In appropriate areas the transfer of serviced sites may be deemed to be more suitable.*

*Regardless of whether it is land or houses that are transferred, the social and affordable units must ultimately be seen as an integrated part of the overall development. Imaginative and flexible design options, which provide for an overall sense of cohesion to the development, are encouraged.*

*Agreements on transfers under the reserved land policy must be complete within 8 weeks of planning permission. Normal planning procedures will apply to permissions and the design, layout and number of units proposed must be finalised at permission stage.*

*If agreement cannot be reached between the developer and the Planning Authority, either party can refer to an *Bórd Pleanála*. In the case of a dispute over the price to be paid for transferred lands, referral can be made to the Property Arbitrator.*

#### Estate Management

*The Cork Local Authorities are committed to raising the quality of estate management on all their housing estates. It is recognised that the development of multi-tenure estates may present particular challenges in terms of estate management. The Local Authorities will work with developers and residents associations to ensure that a high standard of property management is maintained in multi-tenure estates.*

#### Monitoring

*The Housing Strategy is to be reviewed every two years or more quickly if there is a significant change in the housing market or in National Spatial Planning Policy. To facilitate this review and to assess if the policies of the housing strategy are being achieved, monitoring of the strategy will be essential. Systems will be put in place to monitor the following:*

- *The housing market, including housing starts and completions, house prices and the prevailing interest rate.*
- *The general outputs of the housing strategy policies, such as ensuring a mix of housing types and sizes.*
- *Implementation of agreements under the reserved land policy.*