

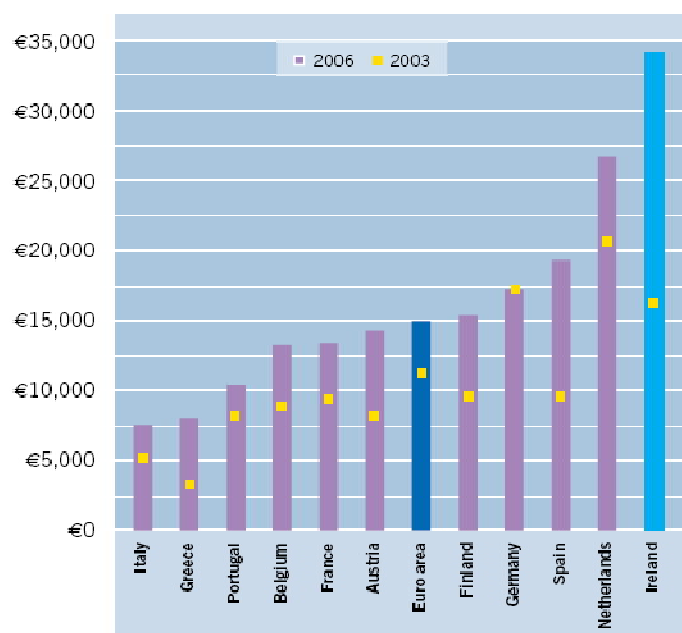
CHAPTER 5

Employment, Economic Activity and Retail

5.1 General

Ireland has experienced unprecedented economic growth in recent years. Between 2000 and 2006 GNP growth averaged an estimated 5.2% per annum over the period. This growth rate slowed slightly to 4.5% in 2007. Over the period of the current Development Plan the numbers in employment have risen from 1.827m in Nov 2003 to 2.146m during the last quarter of 2007. The nature of Ireland's economic growth, however, has changed in recent years, from export-led growth to a situation now where the domestic sector is the main source of growth. Construction and consumption, as a result of increased disposable incomes, have driven the economy in recent years. While this increase in construction output has addressed the housing and infrastructural deficit, the over-reliance on construction and consumption may make the economy vulnerable in coming years, particularly as personal debt has also increased significantly over this period. The CSO's *Index of Employment in Construction* release of 10th March 2008 indicates that Construction employment decreased by 10.3% year-on-year to January 2008.

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
GNP	5.7	3.7	4.9	6.5	4.5



Household debt per capita (€), selected countries, 2003 and 2006

Source: European Central Bank



Source of Jobs Growth in Ireland, (000's) 2000-2007

Source: Central Statistics Office

5.1.1 Figures indicate that there is significant regional disparity in growth throughout the Country with the South and East benefiting to a greater extent than the remainder of the Country. Rural areas are heavily dependent on agriculture and have been slower to benefit from economic growth while the larger urban centres have prospered to a greater extent. County Kerry remains second last in relation to 'Total Income per Person' and 'Disposable Income per Person' at 83% and 86% respectively of the National Average. (CSO Feb 2008) This may reflect the reliance on tourism employment with its seasonal nature and lower incomes.

Figures for the period 2002-2006, show that Kerry's economy is heavily dependant on construction, with 8216 or 13.5% of the work force working in construction related occupations. Wholesale and retail, again account for a further 8,087 people. Both sectors will face challenges if our economic growth begins to slow down, as much of the current demand is domestically led.

5.2 Employment Projections

Drawing on the population projection as outlined in Chapter 1 of the plan, Tables 5.0 and 5.1 present the annual projections of the labour force to 2015.

The rapid rise in the size of the Kerry workforce using the population projections in line with DoEHLG guidance, may be contrasted with the expected growth of employment on the basis of performance in 2002 and the macro-economic climate in the period ahead.

Only the broadest indications of future patterns of employment may be attempted, given the availability of data.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Labour force	66,576	67,673	68,787	69,920	71,072	72,243	73,831	75,454	77,113	78,809
Male	39,482	39,932	40,386	40,846	41,312	41,782	42,470	43,169	43,880	44,602
Female	27,094	27,736	28,394	29,066	29,755	30,461	31,355	32,276	33,225	34,201

Table 5.0

	2002	2006	2011	2015
Total at work	53,296	60,810	66,511	72,357
Total labour force	58,543	66,576	72,243	78,809
Unemployed	9.0%	8.7%	7.9%	8.2%

Table 5.1

Achieving this ambitious figure is reliant to a large degree on the provision of adequate infrastructure, creating an attractive business environment, promoting a culture of knowledge and innovation and the development of a focussed strategy to create the environment necessary for employment creation.

5.3 Strategy

5.3.1 The National strategy for economic development is to promote competitiveness, innovation and the fostering of an indigenous knowledge based economy. As competition for foreign investment continues to increase it will be necessary, not only to continue to compete in the global economy but to create an entrepreneurial society capable of generating indigenous enterprises some of which will be the major employers of the future. The emphasis on innovation is seen as a critical element of future economic strategy. This strategy is reflected in the policies of the agencies operating throughout the County. Enterprise Ireland has incorporated the National policies of Regional Development and Innovation in its own strategy documents.

Enterprise Ireland's strategy is designed to ensure that opportunities for Irish enterprises and entrepreneurs are maximised throughout all regions and that relevant support is provided to meet the increasing challenges faced in the global marketplace. Enterprise Ireland is focused on working with the city and county enterprise boards and business innovation centres to provide a seamless continuum of support for Irish business, matching their needs with the best resources available. In practice, this will introduce a greater degree of connectedness and flexibility in the enterprise support system.

Innovation will be the single greatest enabler of continued success for Irish industry. The pace of innovation is accelerating in the globalised economy. Continually evolving and diverse markets are subject to increasing global competition which is underpinned by the mobility of knowledge and capital, and the flexibility of competitor companies. Technological progress and new ways of doing business set new standards and make new demands of firms.

Transforming Irish Industry

5.3.2 The globalisation of the world's economy and the changing needs of new technology have presented opportunities for new investment for those who can meet the challenges of increased competition. Kerry has been successful in attracting foreign and inward investment in technology related industries.

5.3.3 The expanding role of the computer technology, knowledge intensive industries and research and development in the global economy coupled with the fact that such uses are not location specific and can therefore locate in peripheral areas makes technology an important opportunity for economic growth.

5.3.4 Shannon Development through the Shannon Development Knowledge Network incorporating the Kerry Technology Park and Tom Crean Centre provides a facility and environment where business, education and innovation combine. This clustering of knowledge based industries combined with the interaction of the Institute of Technology creates potential for knowledge transfer and interaction. This also facilitates the potential to develop convergence from different sectors combining to create new products and technologies. This model has been successful in recent years in developing a number of knowledge based industries.

In addition Shannon Development through the 'eTowns' initiative has developed a '21st century model' for the ongoing and future development of a number of smaller towns and villages in the Shannon Region. This initiative aims to enhance Knowledge based enterprise investment in smaller rural towns, which are often bypassed by economic development. The company has worked in partnership with the community, Kerry County Council and Key Education Service to deliver targeted supports including a town development plan, training and broadband connectivity in Tarbert.

The development of the knowledge economy is one of the key challenges and opportunities facing Ireland. The factors which contributed to our economic success to date will not be sufficient to achieve this vision. Competition is creating pressure for improvements in efficiency, quality and productivity and a growing need to innovate. These pressures are only going to increase. They are generating the need to take courageous forward looking steps that will achieve real strategic change, show tangible medium term results and shape the future.

The national 'Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation 2006-2013'

5.3.5 The Council will continue to support such initiatives to help counter the peripherality of the County and utilise the quality of life available in the county as an attraction for inward investment.

5.3.6 The development of a competitive knowledge based economy is dependent on a large number of sectors interacting in a focussed manner in order to achieve a final goal. This land use plan and the objectives and policies outlined will form only one element of this overall strategy. The National Competitiveness Council has outlined the model for the development of Sustainable Growth and the different conditions and policy inputs necessary. This is reflected in figure 5.3 below. At the top of the pyramid is sustainable growth in living standards. The bottom of the pyramid on policy input contains three elements:

- *Physical Infrastructure*

The level of infrastructure in a county affects competitiveness in a number of ways. Well developed infrastructure can reduce traffic congestion, increase productivity and reduce costs. This not only affects existing firms, but also affects a country's attractiveness as an investment location and general quality of life.

This is critical for Kerry as much of the population growth and employment creation necessary to grow the Hub is dependent on inward migration as the projections cannot be achieved through natural indigenous regeneration. Physical infrastructure includes physical infrastructure, transport and energy infrastructure, Information and communications technology infrastructure and housing.

- *Knowledge Infrastructure*

Education, training and research and development form key parts of infrastructure for generating knowledge.

- *Business Environment*

The business environment including taxation, regulation and competition, labour market regulations, finance and social capital can have a significant impact on economic performance and competitiveness



Source: National Competitiveness Council

Fig. 5.3

5.3.7 The Kerry County Development Plan constitutes one of the policy inputs outlining the policies and objectives of the Local Authority. The creation of stronger links between industry, educational and research facilities and the development of centres of knowledge and expertise, and locations for the convergence of expertise in different fields will facilitate an environment for the promotion of innovative technology, employment opportunities and wealth creation.

A well developed enterprise infrastructure will more readily allow new innovation based businesses to generate and emerge. We will drive the growth in the creation of innovation based start-ups to stimulate the emergence of new high potential growth companies at local level, providing a comprehensive range of supports to address their development needs. We will work closely with Ireland's universities and Institutes of Technology, which play a crucial role in developing and fostering these types of companies.

*Transforming Irish Industry
Enterprise Ireland strategy 2008 -,2010*

5.3.8 The overall economic strategy of this plan is to promote the provision of the necessary infrastructure and to liaise with the relevant bodies in creating the conditions necessary for the growth of the economy throughout the County and creation of employment opportunities.

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Overall Strategy
	It is an objective of the Council to:
ECO 5-1	Promote innovation and the development of a knowledge based economy throughout the County.
ECO 5-2	Promote the provision of the necessary infrastructure and to liaise with the relevant bodies in creating the conditions necessary for the growth of the economy throughout the County and creation of employment opportunities.
ECO 5-3	Encourage economic and employment growth in all sectors of the economy in a sustainable manner and in accordance with the principles and objectives of this development plan.
ECO 5-4	Support new sustainable and enduring forms of employment generation, encouraging innovative and entrepreneurial job creation that has the capacity to respond to the changing global economic climate.
ECO 5-5	Facilitate the development of the critical mass in population skills and linkages necessary to create an economic centre in the Tralee /Killarney linked hub capable of driving economic growth in the county.
ECO 5-6	Support the economic growth of existing towns and villages in accordance with the settlement strategy of this development plan and the objectives of local area plans.
ECO 5-7	Diversify the economy including that of rural areas by promoting knowledge-based industries, innovation, telecommunications, research and development, precision engineering and creative industries.
ECO 5-8	Promote new small and medium scale enterprises by facilitating the development of property solutions such as home work units, shared incubation facilities and home working.

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Overall Strategy
ECO 5-9	Protect lands zoned for employment uses in both this plan and all local area from inappropriate development that would prejudice its long-term development for these uses.
ECO 5-10	Ensure that economic growth benefits both urban and rural areas in a sustainable manner.
ECO 5-11	Seek a balanced approach to the provision of employment generating development where conflicts with environmental considerations arise while in compliance with relevant legislation and the objectives of this plan.

5.4 Tralee Killarney Hub

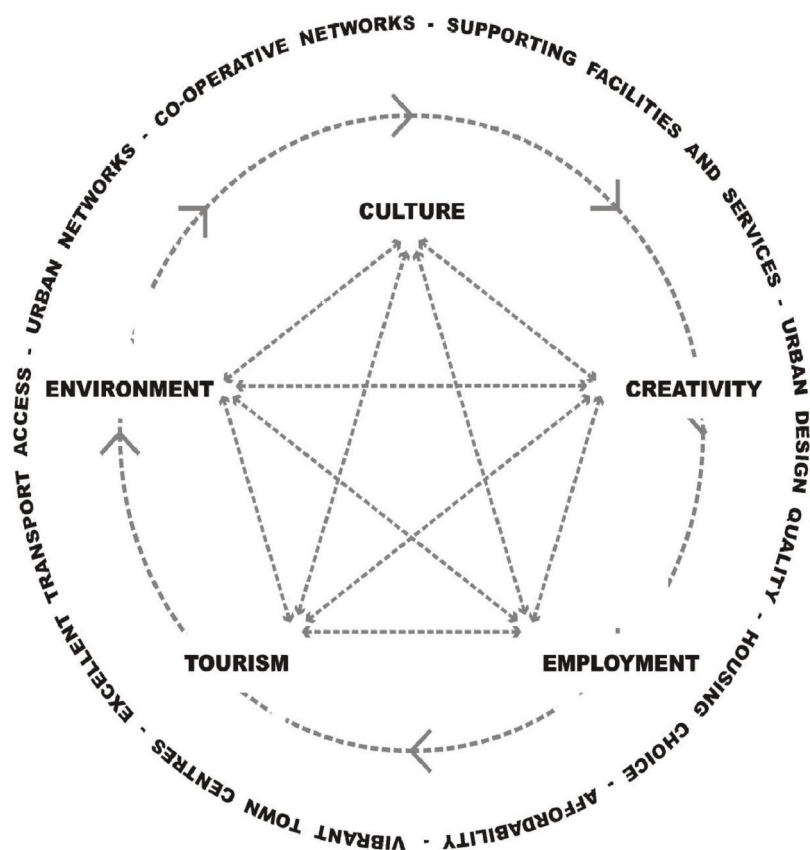
5.4.1 The importance of a spatial planning strategy has been recognised by the government in the publication of the National Development Plan and National Spatial Strategy. The National Spatial Strategy is based on the concept of *Functional Areas* i.e. areas that are defined in terms of the social, economic and spatial relationships between places, rather than their administrative boundaries. The Tralee / Killarney development corridor has been designated as a linked hub. The purpose of this hub is to create a critical mass in the size, concentration and characteristics of population, which are necessary to support a sufficient level of services and facilities for attracting higher levels of economic activity. The continued development of this corridor will be an objective of this development plan.

One of the overall goals of the plan is to *‘integrate regional development within the National Spatial Strategy framework of Gateway cities and Hub towns to achieve the goals of economic growth in the regions and provide for major investment in the rural economy’.*

National Development Plan 2007-2013 ‘Transforming Ireland’.

In order for the Kerry Hub to fulfill its population growth target of 11,000 persons between 2000 and 2020, the towns will need to generate approximately 289 jobs per year, or over 1734 over the course of the Plan. Therefore, a key element of the vision for the hub is economic and employment generation – to be specifically focused on the development of the creative economy and innovative knowledge based economies, while continuing with the development of a high quality tourism product. The context for this is outlined and developed hereunder.

5.4.2 The Council will promote the vision of the Kerry Hub as *‘a well connected urban network that is a source of creativity, economic generation, community involvement and cultural value, and is distinctive for its tourism attractions, lifestyle choice and unique quality of life’*, (see ‘The Kerry Hub, “A Development Strategy and Landuse Plan for the Environs of Tralee and Killarney”’,)



Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Hub Economic Strategy
	It is an objective of the Council to:
ECO 5-12	Encourage cooperative networks of Research and Development between the educational institutes in the region and with private enterprise in the Hub.
ECO 5-13	Engage with the education and training bodies in the area, including Enterprise Ireland and others so as to see how the Council might assist in the creation of 'Creative Clusters' in the hub towns.
ECO 5-14	Engage with Tralee Town Council to explore the potential development of an Arts Quarter or Cultural Quarter to the south side of the Town Centre in the vicinity of Siamse Tire (National Folk Centre/Arts Centre) and the Kerry County Museum.
ECO 5-15	Promote the Kerry Hub as a centre for creativity, with a particular focus on creative industries.
ECO 5-16	Promote the development of a robust tourism economy throughout the Hub and ensure that it develops as a centre of excellence in tourism.

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Hub Economic Strategy
ECO 5-17	Promote an interest in the local traditions and heritage of the hub region, in addition to new diverse cultural experiences, through festivals and the promotion of the arts.
ECO 5-18	Work with Failte Ireland, the County Enterprise Board, and Cork-Kerry Tourism and private enterprises to examine mechanisms for developing and promoting the tourism product on offer in the Hub towns, particularly having regard to the development of specialist and niche activity holidays and indoor/all weather centres of activity.
ECO 5-19	Engage with relevant bodies and organisations and various local community groups involved in the Arts so as to promote festivals, performances, events, workshops, exhibitions, etc. which would showcase the arts and enhance the hub's image and attractiveness.
ECO 5-20	Promote the provision of Incubator units in Killarney to facilitate emerging businesses and innovation.

5.4.3 Farranfore

Farranfore has the capacity to promote interurban accessibility which is of critically importance to the successful development of both the Hub and the county as a whole. Farranfore is served by an international airport, national primary routes and is on the national rail network. Given Kerry's peripheral location Farranfore will have a strategic and pivotal role in the efficient operation and functioning of the hub.

The development of land intensive low employment activities such as warehousing is not considered sustainable from a land-use perspective adjacent to the larger towns. The provision of such uses in Farranfore will ensure that it does not develop unsustainable commuting patterns generated from the larger settlements of Tralee and Killarney. Farranfore because of its central location within the County, its road, rail and air linkages and its undeveloped hinterlands is considered ideal for this use. The Farranfore Local Area Plan has made provision for zoning land for such uses. The Council will work with the Airport Authority and other relevant agencies to maximise the development potential of the area.

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Farranfore
	It is an objective of the Council to:
ECO 5-21	Promote the development of Farranfore as a location for land extensive uses such as warehousing and logistics and smaller light industrial units.

5.5 Principal Towns

There are six Principal towns in the Primary Functional Areas throughout the County. These towns have sufficient critical mass in population and services to support economic growth and act as employment centres in the sub regions which make up their catchment area. The development of these centres therefore has a strategic role in providing improved access to employment to the villages and rural areas in their catchment. A local Area Plan has been prepared for each District Town which identifies the opportunities for economic growth and zones land accordingly. The employment strategies for these towns have been derived from an analysis of the economic opportunities particular to each town and the constraints that need to be addressed if their potential for economic growth is to be realised. Among these constraints is the need to create improved linkages between these towns, the development corridor and the major regional towns of Tralee and Killarney. This planned approach to the development of economic growth will facilitate the Local Authority in the future allocation of resources, and inform it with regard to policy decisions

5.6 Towns and Villages

The strengthening of rural communities is fundamental to the development plan. Many of these areas have experienced significant population loss in the past primarily to a lack of employment opportunities. The infrastructure and services needed to promote job creation cannot always be provided in the countryside but this network of settlements throughout the county has the potential to provide employment opportunities for their wider rural catchment. It is through this approach that employment opportunities can be brought to rural dwellers. This is a more sustainable approach both economically and socially. The potential for rural towns and villages to attract employment uses over the range of economic sectors is dependent on a range of factors such as peripherality, linkages to other economic centres, the size of the population and natural attributes. Where opportunities exist for economic growth the local area plan for each settlement identifies the opportunities for economic growth and zones land accordingly. It can be difficult due to their size and the lack of available land to identify suitable locations for light industrial development in all settlements. It is intended however that this can be addressed through the policy for light industry in rural areas.

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Towns and Villages
	It is an objective of the Council to:
ECO 5-22	Support the economic growth and industrial development of the larger towns to act as catalysts for development within their hinterlands.
ECO 5-23	Support the strategies for economic growth as set out in the local area plans for towns and villages and promote the provision of light industrial units where appropriate.

5.7 Tarbert/Ballylongford Land Bank

The Shannon Estuary constitutes one of the premier deepwater locations throughout the Country. This makes it an area of significant potential for future development and an asset for the County whose potential must be maximised. A large area of land comprising 188.8 ha are currently zoned for industrial development. Planning permission for a gas importation terminal has recently been granted on a portion of this land. This gas terminal constitutes a strategic national asset for the importation, storage and distribution of liquefied natural gas to the national gas grid. Its development will add significantly to the development potential of the area. One of the major attractions for the developer in choosing this location was the deepwater available. While other deepwater is available to the West of the LNG site, this would require longer jetty facilities. More accessible deepwater is available to the East of the LNG site. Aside from the deepwater asset it is hoped that the presence of the LNG plant, the availability of natural gas, the proximity to the national grid and the potential for refrigeration from the regasification process, combined with the additional physical infrastructure in terms of roads and water will make this a very attractive location for other industries to locate in the future. The development of this land which can accommodate a significant number of enterprises would on development, provide employment opportunities for north Kerry. It is the intention therefore, of Kerry County Council to zone additional lands in this area for industrial development.

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Ballylongford Landbank
	It is an objective of the Council to:
ECO 5-24	Facilitate the provision of the infrastructure necessary to cater for the need of industry in Ballylongford/ Tarbert and throughout the County.
ECO 5-25	Promote and facilitate the development of the lands zoned for industrial development.
ECO 5-26	Support the development of large scale industrial uses on zoned land within the Tarbert/ Ballylongford area including large scale marine-related industry and enterprise which require deep water access.

5.8 Rural Areas

While the Tralee Killarney Hub will act as the main focus for inward investment into the county, it is important also to recognise both the needs and the contribution of industry throughout the county. The provision of employment opportunities in rural areas close to rural communities is critical in maintaining sustainable vibrant rural communities. Land suitable for industrial development has been identified in local area plans where appropriate, generally adjacent to settlements in line with the principle of sustainable development and where infrastructure and linkages provide the optimum location. The extent of land within the development corridor zoned for industrial uses has been significantly increased. While it is desirable that small industry should be located as close as possible to the settlements where there is a larger available workforce and less need to travel, this is not always possible. It is the policy of the Council therefore to support proposals for rural development in a sustainable manner.

In this regard the council will look favourably on the development of smallscale enterprise and industrial units where it can be demonstrated that the visual impact is minimised and integration with the surrounding landscape maximised, where renewable energy potential is maximised, where traffic, natural amenity, residential amenity of proximate properties, and the natural environment are protected. Subject to proper planning criteria, particular emphasis will be placed on existing rural industries where expansion plans are required.

5.9 Agriculture

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Rural Areas
	It is an objective of the Council to:
ECO 5-27	Promote the economic growth of rural areas throughout the County in a sustainable manner.
ECO 5-28	Foster small scale indigenous enterprises as a means of directing employment in rural areas and to facilitate the development of an entrepreneurial culture that will contribute to the development of indigenous employment uses. It is envisaged however that larger enterprises will continue to be located in urban areas on land zoned for this purpose.
ECO 5-29	Facilitate the development of smallscale enterprise and industrial units in rural areas where:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it can be demonstrated that the visual impact is minimised and integration with the surrounding landscape maximised, • where renewable energy potential is maximised, • where traffic safety and carrying capacity impacts are satisfied, • where the natural amenity, the residential amenity of proximate properties, and the natural environment are protected.
ECO 5-30	Diversify the rural economy by promoting knowledge-based industries, innovation, telecommunications, research and development, and creative industries.

5.9.1 The number of people engaged in agriculture has been falling as farm incomes have declined. The economics of farming has changed, making smaller farms non-viable and leading to a move towards larger farm units. The decline in agriculture has been a key factor in the decline in population in many rural areas threatening the long-term viability of rural Ireland.

5.9.2 In order to combat this decline, farming has been diversifying into other areas such as energy production, increased forestry, food processing and agri-tourism. The Council will support small-scale development in rural areas in accordance with the objectives and standards of this plan. This will assist in the sustainable development of rural communities. In addition the Council will promote the provision of 'Farmers Markets' in appropriate locations, as outlets for quality local produce and to support the economic viability of local agriculture.

5.9.3 In this context rural areas are defined as areas in the county, which are located outside the development boundaries of towns and rural villages. Due to the changing nature of agriculture and the declining numbers of people able to achieve a viable living from the land, consideration will be given to farm families seeking to establish alternative and/or complementary enterprises to supplement their income from farming.

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Agricultural Diversification
	It is an objective of the Council to:
ECO 5-31	Facilitate farm development where it can be demonstrated that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The farmland available is of sufficient size to absorb any additional farm effluents arising. • That the proposed development will not impact negatively on the environment • That the proposed development will not have a negative impact on the residential amenity of adjoining dwellings.
ECO 5-32	Support the development and diversification of the agricultural sector. These uses may include small-scale developments consisting of food processing industries, small food production enterprises that support local produce, farm gate outlets, agri-tourism, farmers markets, and additional forestry development in appropriate areas. The conversion of redundant farm buildings for light industrial uses will be considered where it can be demonstrated that there is no adverse residential, environmental or traffic impacts. Proposals will be considered in the context of the objectives and development standards included within this development plan. In the context of agri-tourism, consideration will be given to units of holiday accommodation on agricultural holdings which will remain an integral part of the land holding. These units shall be sited within or adjacent to the existing farm complex.

5.10 Sectoral Policies

5.10.1 Offices

There are two main categories of office use:

- Those that provide services principally to visiting members of the public e.g. financial or professional services.
- The ‘office industry’ where the activity is one of producing an end product or providing telephone or web-based services but which does not serve members of the public directly. Examples include tele-sales, technology and knowledge based uses.

The majority of economic enterprises include office space as an ancillary use for operational purposes and these are considered in the context of the primary use and not within the office sector.

Traditionally offices serving the public have been located in town centres alongside retail uses and have contributed to the function and vibrancy of town centres. This allows for the clustering of uses serving the public thus reducing the number of unnecessary journeys. It is considered appropriate that such uses should continue to be located in town centres.

The ‘office industry’ generates significant employment and is an increasingly important economic sector as the county’s economic profile moves away from traditional manufacturing and towards hi-tech knowledge based and service industries. These uses are often clustered and located within office- business parks at strategic locations. Sufficient land has been zoned for these purposes in the provisions of the local area plans for towns and villages throughout the county and in particular, in the Tralee Killarney Environs Plan. The strategy for the Tralee Killarney Hub envisages that technology and knowledge based industries will cluster within the plan area and lands for high quality purpose built accommodation in proposed business/office parks have been identified.

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Office Use
	It is an objective of the Council to:
ECO 5-33	Encourage office development on zoned land in settlements at appropriate scales having regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The spatial strategy for the economic development of the county ▪ The need to promote the economic growth of the Tralee/Killarney Development Hub to support the Spatial Strategy for the economic development of the county. ` ▪ The objectives and development standards of this plan and those of the local area plan for the area in which the proposal is located.
ECO 5-34	Ensure that a high standard of design, layout and amenity is provided and maintained at locations selected for office development enterprise development.
ECO 5-35	Require where possible that office uses which serve the public directly should be located in or adjacent to town centres.

5.10.2 Home Working

Changes in technology and working practices have resulted in a change in working patterns. Increasingly more people are working from home. Also there has been an increase in small businesses being run from owners’ homes. This reduces the number of journeys and allows employment to be created in peripheral areas. In recognition of the advantages of home working, the Council will support this type of development where residential amenity will not be adversely affected. The development should not give rise to a nuisance by the generation of additional traffic movements, noise etc. Operation should be confined to accepted business hours. The scale should not be of a size / intensity sufficient to alter the character of the site from a primarily residential use to a commercial use. In general it is envisaged that home working uses will not involve in excess of two persons. Expansion beyond this scale will not be permitted.

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Home Working
	It is an objective of the Council to:
ECO 5-36	Support home working proposals of appropriate scale where residential amenity will not be adversely affected. Operation should be confined to accepted business hours, generally 9:00am to 6:00pm.

5.10.3 Retail

The retail sector is comprised primarily of businesses selling goods and services to members of the public. This sector provides significant employment throughout the county while providing access to goods and services. There are two broad categories of shopping facilities. Firstly, there are those that sell 'convenience goods' (i.e. food and drink and a variety of domestic items. Secondly, there are those that sell comparison goods (i.e. clothes, electrical equipment, house furniture, carpets and DIY equipment) for which the consumer generally expects to invest time and effort into visiting a range of shops before making a choice.

Due to economic growth in the last decade Irish retailing has grown at unprecedented levels. Continued growth in the retail sector is domestic-led and therefore dependent on the rate of economic growth, population increase and disposable income. Growth will be likely to generate a requirement for additions to the existing stock of retail floor space. The specific requirement for additional development will depend on the long-term performance of the economy, trends in consumer spending and the way in which retailers react to changing market conditions. The majority of any requirement is likely to be for comparison goods floor space, although there will be a continuing need to provide floor space for additional convenience goods.

Traditionally retail activities have been located in towns and village centres which, together with social and cultural uses form the core activities and which have been instrumental in shaping their form and function. However, the recent trend for larger units with significant parking provision is difficult to achieve in town centres. The demand for out of town locations and shopping centres which are almost entirely accessed by private car is undermining the prosperity, vitality and viability of town centre premises.

In order to provide for new retail development it is necessary to establish the optimum location which is accessible to all sections of society and is of a scale which allows the continued prosperity of traditional town centres and existing retail centres and this section outlines the retail hierarchy for the County.

5.10.3.1 County Retail Hierarchy

The National Retail Guidelines outline the relative positions of urban centres within a national retail hierarchy. Dublin provides the highest level of comparison shopping. Together with the second tier comprising Cork Limerick Galway and Waterford these centres provide a range of high-order comparison shopping which is largely unmatched elsewhere. The third tier comprises the main shopping centres throughout the country which enjoy 18% of the national comparison turnover and are acknowledged to be attaining retail functions previously only found in higher order centres.

The following County Retail Hierarchy reflects the position of existing centres both within the plan area and the areas of the town councils. It has been prepared having regard to the function, retail context, settlement structure and population profile of the county.

The purpose of the hierarchy is to indicate the role and function of the various centres and to enable the Council to protect each centre's overall vitality and viability.

Kerry County Retail Hierarchy	
Retail Function	Centre
Primary Town Centre	Tralee
Secondary Town Centre	Killarney
County Town Centres	Ballybunion Caherciveen Castleisland An Daingean Kenmare Killorglin Listowel Rathmore
Local centres	Castlegregory Sneem Waterville

The hierarchy is dominated by Tralee, which is identified in the national retail hierarchy as a third tier retailing centre. It is the highest order retail town in the county having the greatest sphere of influence, catchment population and range of retail facilities, and as such, is the foremost centre for comparison goods. However the development of higher order retail functions in Tralee has been constrained by the proximity of Cork and Limerick which are amongst the primary retail centres in the country and second only to Dublin. The economic prosperity of recent years has served to redress to a significant extent the disparity in the level of retail functions offered by these higher centres and Tralee.

Killarney is the second highest order retail centre in the county. It is recognised in the national retail hierarchy as a low order third tier retailing centre with an important tourist retail function.

County Town Centres are fourth tier centres and comprise towns in the 1500 – 5000 population category. Each of these towns performs an important retail function for both their residents and catchment areas. Although they do not provide the range of goods that are found in the main towns they are self sufficient in term of food shopping and a limited range of comparison goods and compete to only a very limited extent with higher order centres. Generally they do not contain chain stores or major supermarkets. A number of these towns also have a tourist retail function.

Villages act as local service centres providing local retailing shops which serve the immediate daily needs of their resident populations. They have a small sphere of influence and do not compete with higher order retail locations. It would not be appropriate for these centres to undergo significant growth in their retail and shopping functions given their relative inaccessibility and the nature of their existing population catchments.

Neighbourhood centres have developed in response to the growth in residential development in the counties regional towns. These centres act as local service centres in expanded residential areas and offer local retail and business services to its urban catchment.

5.10.3.2 Location of Retail Uses

The Council shall apply a sequential locational approach to the location of new retail developments within towns. This approach is designed to ensure the vitality and viability of existing town centres is protected and enhanced. The preferred location where practicable and viable for new retail development other than small-scale convenience stores, is in town centres within Primary and Secondary centres and county towns. This will contribute to developing and maintaining a compact core where retail and commercial uses are close enough to each other to benefit from each other's pedestrian flows. Where it is not possible to provide the form and scale of development that is required on a site within the town centre then consideration will be given to a site on the edge of the town centre. This will encourage the possibility of one journey serving several purposes and promote a commercial synergy between the town centre and the proposed development.

An applicant for planning permission for a retail development which the planning authority considers to be large scale in relation to an existing town centre must demonstrate compliance with this development plan. There shall also be an onus on the applicant to demonstrate that the proposal will not have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of an existing town centre. In submitting evidence in relation to retail impact the applicant shall demonstrate whether or not the proposal would;

- Support the long term strategy for town centres as established in this development plan and not materially diminish the prospect of attracting private sector investment into one or more town centres.
- Cause an adverse impact on one or more town centres, whether singly or cumulatively with recent developments or other outstanding planning permissions, sufficient to undermine the quality of the centre or its role in the economic and social life of the community.
- Diminish the range of activities and services that a town centre can support.
- Cause an increase in the number of vacant properties in the primary retail area that is likely to persist in the long term
- Ensure a high standard of access both by the public transport, foot and private car so that the proposal is easily accessible by all sections of society.
- Link effectively with an existing town centre so that there is likely to be commercial synergy.

In instances where the Council is of the opinion that the scale or nature of the development is likely to have an adverse impact on traffic considerations the council will require a Traffic Impact Assessment to be submitted with any application for planning permission. Applicants are advised to ascertain if Traffic Impact Assessment is required before the application is submitted.

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Location of Retail Uses
	It is an objective of the Council to:
ECO 5-37	Ensure that new retail development other than small scale convenience shopping is located in town centres in Primary or Secondary Towns or on land zoned for the purpose of such development.
ECO 5-38	Require a feasibility study for large developments on the size, availability, accessibility of available sites and premises in the town centre and the edge of a town centre. Alternative out of centre sites will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that there is no town centre or edge of centre sites which are suitable, viable and available.
ECO 5-39	Ensure that proposals enhance the attractiveness of the area in which it is proposed to locate and must maximise the accessibility, of developments particularly for public transport, cyclists, pedestrians and persons with disabilities.
ECO 5-40	Ensure that an innovative and imaginative approach is adopted by developers and designers to overcome problems that can arise when the design and layout of older, sometimes historic buildings, in established town centres make them difficult to adapt to modern requirements.

5.10.3.3 Out of Town Shopping Centres

Out of Town Shopping centres generally consist of a large food-store anchor tenants with a range of smaller shops. These shopping centres tend to lack the range of uses, particularly residential accommodation, that helps town and neighbourhood centres remain attractive especially during the evenings. They also tend to be, necessarily, set in large areas of car parking that can sometimes become subject to pressure for development for other uses. Opportunities should be taken to ensure that these shopping centres remain attractive to the public by ensuring that a good range of shops and other retail services are available where it can be shown that there will be no adverse impact on the vitality of the town centre. Opportunities to introduce an element of residential accommodation, particularly at first floor level would increase their vitality during the evenings. Well designed landscaping proposals would help reduce the dominance of extensive car parking areas.

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Out of Town Shopping Centres
	It is an objective of the Council to:
ECO 5-41	Ensure that retail proposals for sites outside town centre will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that there is no town centre or edge of centre sites that are suitable, viable and available. The onus shall be on the applicant to demonstrate this is the case.
ECO 5-42	Facilitate the development of public transport bus stopping areas and turning circles are required which are designed to meet the requirements for bus ramps to facilitate persons with disabilities to disembark from buses served by ramps. Pedestrian and cycle ways must be incorporated as appropriate.

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Out of Town Shopping Centres
ECO 5-43	That open spaces including parking areas should be designed to make these spaces attractive e.g. layout landscaping.
ECO 5-44	Consider residential development, particularly on the first floor, where appropriate
ECO 5-45	Ensure that new Out of Town retail development be of a high standard of architectural design and finishes and satisfy requirements regarding access, aesthetics, layout, tree planting and landscaping as set out in this plan.

5.10.3.4 Retail Warehousing

Retail warehousing is an increasingly important sector and, as such, is necessary to the development of the retail industry. Retail warehouses are generally large scale, single product line stores catering for the car-borne customer and specialising in bulk goods products such as furniture, carpets, tiles, DIY, electrical goods etc. Town centre locations are often unable to cater for these types of development in terms of size, servicing requirements, accessibility and goods sold. This is particularly the case where the central road network is congested and increased vehicle movement in central areas could not be accommodated without undermining other retailing uses. In order to provide the opportunity for this sector to develop and to accommodate existing retail warehouses where they are inappropriately located land has been zoned for retail warehousing development in local area plans.

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Retail Warehousing
	It is an objective of the Council that:
ECO 5-46	Proposals for retail warehousing will generally be permitted on land zoned for this purpose where proposals comply with the objectives of this plan
ECO 5-47	Public spaces including parking areas should be designed to make these spaces attractive e.g. layout and landscaping. Proposals must comply with the objectives and development standards of this plan.

5.10.3.5 Neighbourhood Centres

With the expansion of urban areas neighbourhood centres have come to play a substantial role in the lives of expanding urban communities. They are located near or adjacent to residential areas and may include an element of housing particularly at higher densities and generally above ground floor level. Neighbourhood Centres share many characteristics with town centres in terms of uses but such uses are on a much smaller local scale and with a greater emphasis on food and convenience goods. Residential uses are often located above retail units adding vitality and density to an urban area It is important to ensure that any new development always serves to reinforce the vitality of the neighbourhood centre and meet the needs of local areas served by it and accessibility (particularly for public transport, pedestrians and cyclists) should be enhanced.

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Neighbourhood Centres
	It is an objective of the Council that:
ECO 5-48	A range of mixed uses will be considered excluding office accommodation. The principal use shall be for convenience retailing with small scale service provision also accommodated.
ECO 5-49	Consideration will be given to proposals for appropriate residential accommodation including at first floor levels and at a higher densities, to enhance the vitality of these centres.
ECO 5-50	Development will be of a high standard of architectural design and finishes and satisfy requirements regarding access, aesthetics, layout, tree planting and landscaping as set out in this plan.

5.10.3.6 Village Shops

The village shop plays a vital economic and social role in rural areas and is important for essential day-to-day needs, particularly for the elderly, disabled and those with no access to a car or poorly served by public transport. They can comprise both food stores and important non-food outlets and community services, such as pharmacies and post-offices, and have significant social and economic functions. The council will consider proposals for retail outlets to serve the immediate environs of a village where they are of an appropriate scale relative to their catchment area and within a central location within the village.

The loss of an existing retail outlet can have an adverse impact on the social and economic life of the community. The council will therefore evaluate the impact on village shops when determining applications for new retail developments in nearby towns and where appropriate zone existing outlets for retail use within local and village plans.

Kerry County Council will facilitate the provision of small scale convenience shopping in villages where proposals;

- Are of an appropriate scale in relation to the size of the centre.
- Are located within village boundaries.
- Would not give rise to adverse environmental or traffic effects.
- Comply with the objectives and development standards of this development plan.
- Comply with any local plan for the area in which the development would be located.

5.10.3.7 Shops in Rural Areas

The appropriate location for retailing is within towns, villages and settlements and not in the open countryside. However in the interests of a sustainable rural environment the following exceptions will be considered subject to the objectives and development standards of this development plan:

- A shop which is ancillary to activities arising from farm diversification.
- A shop designed to serve tourist or recreational facilities, which is secondary to the main use.
- A small-scale shop attached to an existing or approved craft workshop retailing the product direct to the public.
- The development of a small scale shop in association with an existing post office.

5.10.3.8 Petrol Stations / Service Stations

Petrol filling stations can provide a wide range of retail goods in an associated shop. In rural areas, some function as the local shop or small supermarket. Whilst the Council recognise the importance of such provision in some locations, the preferred location for retailing is on the edge of towns and villages, not on an isolated site outside these preferred locations.

The maximum net retail floor space of a shop associated with a petrol filling station is 100 square metres. Where retail space greater than 100 square metres of net retail sales area is sought the retail element will be assessed on the basis of the same locational retail objectives, as would an application for retail development (without petrol filling facilities) in the same location.

5.10.3.9 Farm Shops

In the face of declining farm incomes farming enterprises are expanding the range of economic activities they engage in as a means of supplementing farm incomes. Farm shops are one such enterprise and are becoming an increasingly common feature of the rural landscape. Farm shops can serve a vital function in rural areas by helping to meet demand for fresh produce and providing new sources of employment and services, so contributing to the diversity and strength of the rural economy. The council recognises the value of this form of retailing and will consider such applications where they do not have an adverse impact on the visual, environmental, and traffic amenities of an area. In addition the proposal must not affect the viability of an existing retail centre and must comply with the objectives and development standards of this development plan.

Kerry County council will encourage the introduction of a retail use on a farm in accordance with the criteria set out in Objective ECO. 5-51

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Farm Retail
	It is an objective of the Council to:
ECO 5-51	<p>Encourage the introduction of a retail use on a farm where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The products to be sold are primarily produce grown on the farm holding. ▪ The scale and scope of retailing proposed will not have an adverse impact on the retailing facilities in any nearby town or village and is ancillary to the continued agricultural uses of the farm. ▪ The scale, size, design, materials and siting of any new building or extension are in keeping with the existing farm buildings. ▪ The proposal does not have an adverse impact on the rural landscape, the natural environment and the amenities of the locality. ▪ The local road network has the capacity to accommodate the increase in traffic generated by the proposed development and access and parking standards comply with the objectives and standard of this plan development.

5.10.3.10 Factory Outlets

Factory shops selling goods manufactured on site are a popular form of retailing with both manufactures and the public. However they are located outside shopping centres and like any out of town retail facilities can have a significant impact on the vitality and viability of established shopping areas. To limit the impact of such shops it is important to ensure that the retailing element of industrial and commercial development is limited and remains ancillary to the main use of any industrial or commercial premises.

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Factory Outlets
	It is an objective of the Council to:
ECO 5-52	Ensure that the retail element of any industrial / commercial business is limited to 30% of the total floor area of the development and remains ancillary to the main use.

5.11 Fishing and Aquaculture

5.11.1 Fishing, fish processing, distribution, aquaculture and related activities generate significant employment. Currently 1,027 people are employed throughout the county. 460 of those employed are involved in the Catching sector with 371 and 196 employed in the Aquaculture and Processing sectors respectively. There are a total of 195 vessels currently registered in Kerry. The value of the landing in the main ports in the County in 2006 was approx €7.6m with Dingle accounting for €5.5m and Fenit €2.1m. Figures for the smaller fishing centres such as Ballydavid, Cromane, Portmagee and Renard are not available.

5.11.2 In recent years there has been a decline in the fishing industry due in part to EU quota restrictions. However there has been an expansion in aquaculture and the industry, as a whole, will remain an important and vital sector in the economy of the county. Aquaculture and food processing both have the potential to continue to expand, while opportunities for the development of a service industry exists in South Kerry with some 300 to 400 Irish and foreign fishing vessels operating off its coastline. The Council will support the consolidation and further development of the fishing industry encompassing both marine and fresh-water fishing including aquaculture.

Objective No.	Employment & Economic Activity Fisheries
	It is an objective of the Council to:
ECO 5-53	Support the use of existing port facilities for the catching and processing of fish as an economic activity that contributes to the food industry in the County.
ECO 5-54	Support and promote the sustainable development of the aquaculture sector in order to maximize its contribution to employment and growth in coastal communities and the economic well-being of the County.
ECO 5-55	Maintain and improve the network of piers and harbours for which it has responsibility.
ECO 5-56	Support added-value marine and fresh-water food and service industries where they comply with the general policies and development management standards of the development plan
ECO 5-57	Have regard to management and development strategies for the fishing industry undertaken by other relevant agencies, user groups and local communities.
ECO 5-58	Have regard to the advice of the South West Regional Fisheries Board, the Shannon Regional Fisheries Board and/or Southern Regional Fisheries Board, as appropriate, and recommendations of the Shannon Regional River Basin Authority, the South West Regional River Basin Authority and the Environmental Section of Kerry County Council in assessing the environmental impact of developments.
ECO 5-59	Prohibit maritime development on sites either on or adjacent to designated Blue Flag Beaches and where such developments would significantly interfere with recreational use of popular beach areas.

5.12 Economic Infrastructure

In order for the county to maximise its potential for economic growth the linkages between places or areas must be upgraded. Linkages are the means of moving people, goods, energy and information. They enable the complementary strengths of areas and places to be combined in order to create critical mass in relation to population, skills, services and facilities etc. They also allow access to critical markets for the economic output of these areas, and can address the problems that arise from Kerry's hitherto peripheral location. Refer to Chapter 8 of the Plan for a more detailed analysis of the infrastructural objectives throughout the County.

5.13 Environment

Although the technology and means are available to reduce the environmental impact of economic activity, commercial and industrial enterprises do not always maximise opportunities to contribute to a cleaner environment. For example buildings are not always designed to maximise energy conservation and operations to embrace clean technologies. Therefore the Council will encourage the integration of environmental considerations into the construction and design of buildings and the operational practices of the activity.

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Environment
	It is an objective of the Council to:
ECO 5-60	Maximise clean technology, waste minimisation and energy and water conservation in seeking the integration of environmental considerations into proposed new industrial and commercial developments and extensions or refurbishment of existing industry and operational practices.

5.14 Institutional Facilities

Objective No.	Employment and Economic Activity Factory Outlets
	It is an objective of the Council to:
ECO 5-61	Ensure where possible that courthouse facilities are located in town centres.

5.15 Prevention of Major Hazardous Accidents

The EU Seveso II Directive (96/082/EEC) seeks to prevent major industrial accidents involving dangerous substances and to limit the consequences of accidents on people and the environment. In this plan the focus is to ensure that:

- Proposals for new establishments at risk of causing major accidents;
 - Proposals for the expansion of existing establishments designated under the directive; and
 - Other developments proposed near to existing establishments,
- all take into account the need to prevent major accidents involving hazardous substances and safeguard both the public and the environment.

5.15.1 There are currently no industries in the County covered by the directive although planning permission has been granted to Shannon LNG for the construction of a gas importation terminal on the Tarbert Ballylongford landbank.

Objective No.	Prevention of Major Hazardous Accidents
	It is an objective of the council to:
ECO 5-62	Reduce the risk and limit the consequences of major industrial accidents by, where appropriate, taking into account the advice of the Health and Safety Authority when proposals for new development are considered.
ECO 5-63	Assess applications for new development or expansion of existing development involving hazardous substances, having regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Major Accidents Directive (Seveso II) (96/082/E EC), • Potential adverse impacts on public health and safety and • The need to maintain appropriate safe distance between residential areas, areas of public use and areas of particular natural sensitivity.
ECO 5-64	Ensure that proposed development within the established consultation distances surrounding establishments designated as containing hazardous substances complies with the requirements of the Major Accidents Directive (Seveso II). The Council will consult with the Health and Safety Authority regarding any such proposals.