



Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council

Tipperary County Development Plan 2022 – 2028

Appendix 4 Rural Housing Design Guide



3

Volume 3 ~

August 2022



Shaping Our Future



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Introduction

This is the Tipperary County Council Design Manual (Manual) for one-off houses in the open countryside. It provides guidance on planning your new house, the importance and relevance of the site you may choose, and appropriate and sustainable design for one-off houses in rural areas.

This Manual should be read in conjunction with the policies and development management standards for rural housing as set out in the Tipperary County Development Plan 2022 - 2028 (the County Development Plan) Section 5.5 and the accompanying Development Management standards set out in Volume 3, and any variation thereof, to assist in the planning, location and design of rural one-off houses.

Purpose of the Manual

The purpose of this Manual is to aid the planning applicant and designer by:

- Identifying the key site planning and building design issues to be considered before applying for planning permission.
- Setting out design and layout features appropriate to one-off houses.
- Supporting the Planning Policy and Development Management Standards of the County Development Plan.

It is a requirement of the Council that new houses proposed to be located in the countryside should be sited in a manner to ensure that they respect the landscape, environment, road traffic safety and their surroundings. In all cases the Council will expect planning applications for one-off houses to demonstrate how this Manual has been considered when choosing both a site, and a new house design.

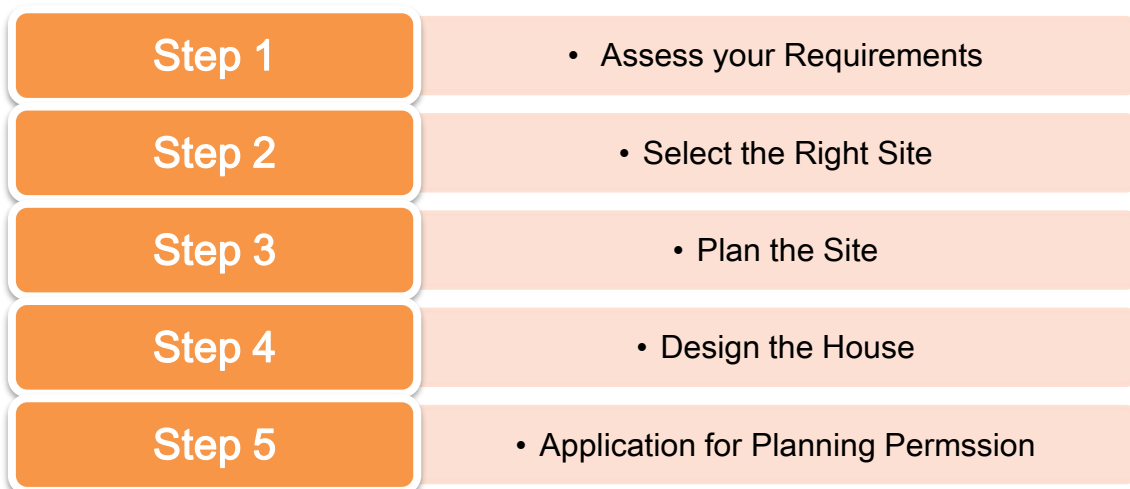
Key principles of the Council include:

- To foster greater consistency in planning decision-making
- To inform and inspire applicants, builders, designers and planners.
- To help conserve and enhance the landscape of Tipperary.
- To support the construction of Near Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) in Tipperary in compliance with the Building Regulations Part L.

A step by step approach to the design and planning for a new house is set out below.



Figure 1 Sensitive approach to sitting and design in an upland area



Step 1: Assess your Requirements

It is recommended that persons considering building their own home should consider employing a qualified designer/architect at the start who can certify that the building design and construction is compliant with the Building Regulations (The design and construction of buildings is regulated under the Building Control Acts 1990 to 2014, in order to ensure the safety of people within the built environment <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/95d00-building-standards/>), and ensure that the new dwelling will be

highly energy efficient. The same designer/architect should be qualified and experienced in the planning process, and thus be competent to prepare a planning application for submission to the planning authority.

1.1 Design Brief

The following considerations should inform your design and be considered by you at the start.

- Site Location and Planning Policy – Why the site?
- Proximity to amenities i.e. shops, schools, doctor, hospital etc.
- Budget – incorporate cost of certifier, landscaping and entrance, energy technologies and development contributions
- Orientation, Energy Efficiency & Solar Gain
- Adjoining dwellings and buildings and other uses
- Overall Size – Note that Development Contributions are based on floor area
- Disabled Access
- Type of Heating Systems
- Infrastructure and Services – Water, sewer, broadband, gas, bus service etc
- Entrance Safety
- Landscaping and Planting
- Rainwater harvesting and plumbing into house
- Storage of waste and recycling facilities
- Security - is the site house isolated or vulnerable?

1.2 Building Design Compliance Certificate

Since March 2014 it is a legal requirement of the Building Control (Amendment) Regulations 2013, for a new building to have a certificate of compliance. Assigned Certifiers, who can be registered architects, engineers or building surveyors, will inspect building works at key stages during construction. The Assigned Certifier and the builders must both certify that a finished building complies with the requirements of the building regulations. This has created a legal requirement for a suitably qualified designer (a registered Architect, building Surveyor or chartered Engineer) to be involved in the design

process. The Assigned Certifier must be contracted by the owner/developer. In summary, the new Building Control Amendment Regulations require:

- Submission of compliance drawings and documentation to the Council.
- The Assigned Certifier to set out and execute an inspection plan; and,
- Signing of certificates of compliance by the designer prior to construction and by the Assigned Certifier and the Builder when a building is complete.

It is important to note that:

- If anyone signs a statutory certificate for a building which subsequently proves to be non-compliant, they can be held legally liable for the consequences; and
- Greater onus is now placed on professionals to provide consumers with a more comprehensive service and failure to do so incurs the risk of being censured, suspended or ultimately removed from their professional body.

Queries in respect to building design compliance certification should be directed to the Building Control Section of Tipperary County Council or the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government at www.environ.ie

Step 2: Select the Right Site

This is an important step and a key determinant in whether or not your planning application is successful. In assessing your site, you should consider any specific planning policies of the Plan, noting that policies may differ depending on where your chosen site is located, see Figure 2. In this respect, you may also request a pre-planning meeting with the planning official for your area (free of charge, contact the planning office to make an appointment) to assist in the planning process. Assess potential sites having consideration to:

- Planning policy and objectives that may relate to the area (see below).
- Landscape character and context.
- Views into and out of the area.
- Adjoining Settlement Pattern i.e. consider your neighbours.
- Adjoining uses, i.e. do not consider a site adjacent to an active farmyard and farmyard activities may not be compatible with a residential dwelling unless you are the farmer of the land.

- Micro-climate, renewable energy technologies and sustainable materials and finishes.
- Flood risk, is there potential for the site to become flooded either from surface water, ground water or nearby river?
- Vehicle access requirements/Traffic safety.
- Service infrastructure i.e. is there a public water main, electricity, broadband?
- Drainage, can you safely dispose of your wastewater and sewage without potentially polluting the environment, such as ground water or surface waterbodies or protected areas?
- Future development proposals refer to the Plan to ensure that the site is not located in an area where new infrastructure or development is planned.

The siting of a new dwelling needs to be compatible with the general principles set out in the ‘*Sustainable Rural Housing, Guidelines for Planning Authorities*’ (April 2005) and any review thereof.

2.1 Designated Areas and Planning Policy

Check with the Plan, especially in relation to policies for one-off housing set out in Chapter 5, Section 5.5 Residential Development in the Open Countryside in particular areas including;

- Designated Areas that have **restrictions** on the development of new houses i.e. ‘Areas Under Urban Pressure’, Strategic Transport Routes, ribbon development areas, Primary Amenity Areas etc.
- Areas designated for heritage or amenity, such as Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
- Areas of Archaeological Interest, archaeology policies, Record of Protected Structures and the Record of Monuments and Places.
- Sensitive water bodies or abstraction points.

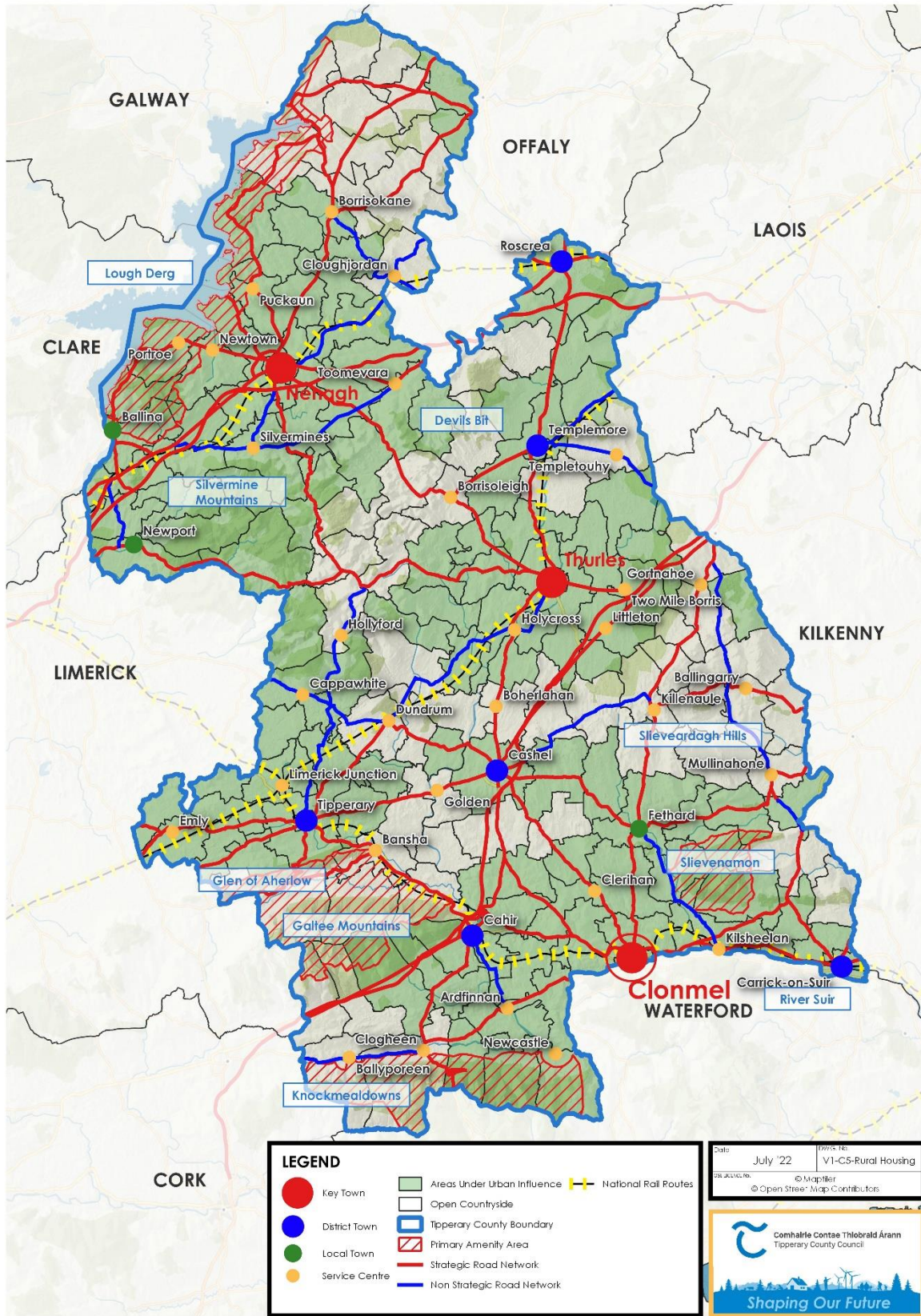


Figure 2: Rural Area Map – Please refer to Volume 1 Written Statement - Chapter 5 for details

Economic and Social Need

The policies of the County Development Plan (Volume 1, Chapter 5 Housing) will be considered by the planning officer assessing the planning application before any decision is made to refuse or grant planning permission, therefore you must make yourself aware of these. In particular, please note that in 'Areas under Urban Influence', your own 'Social and /or Economic' need will be a key consideration.

If a site falls within, or is located close to any such areas, it may be necessary to take advice from your planning agent and/or the Planning Department before proceeding. The key questions to be asked when looking for a site in all areas are:

- Is the site within a Designated Area?
- Can the local topography/trees and vegetation etc help absorb the new development into the landscape?
- Will the new development intrude on views from public roads or public areas?
- Will the new development be in keeping with the existing settlement pattern?
- Is significant removal of existing hedgerows required?
- Can the proposed site optimise the potential for renewable energy sources?
- Can safe access be gained to the proposed site from existing roads?
- Is the proposed site in reasonable proximity to everyday needs (e.g. shops, schools, pubs, church, etc)?
- Has the site ever become flooded for any reason?
- Is the site connected to or in reasonable proximity to essential services (e.g. water, electricity, telephone, broadband)?
- Are ground conditions suitable for a sewage treatment system?
- Is the site large enough to accommodate the type of development envisaged?
- Refer to the Plan to ensure that the site is not located in an area where new infrastructure or development is planned, for example, proposed route corridors.

If a potential site does not satisfy most of these essential criteria, then alternative locations should be sought.

2.2 Landform and Landscape

The landscape types of Tipperary range from the rolling valleys, uplands and lakelands in the north, the prominent Galtee Mountains and Slievenamon to the south, and the low-lying open landscapes and river valleys on much of the central area of the county. Details of landscape and listed scenic routes and views in the area, are set out in the County Landscape Character Assessment, Volume 3, Appendix 3 of the County Development Plan.

Aim to **Avoid**:

- Sites on exposed hilltops with lack of shelter and no screening.
- Sites within intensively farmed low lying areas with little natural screening, unless substantial new planting can be achieved to help absorb the proposed dwelling.
- Scenic lakeside sites that are obvious when viewed from the open water.
- Impacting excessively on the scenic value of listed views and routes.

Instead **look for**:

- Variations in landform that can help nestle the building into the local landscape;
- Established trees and boundary hedges to help absorb the new building.

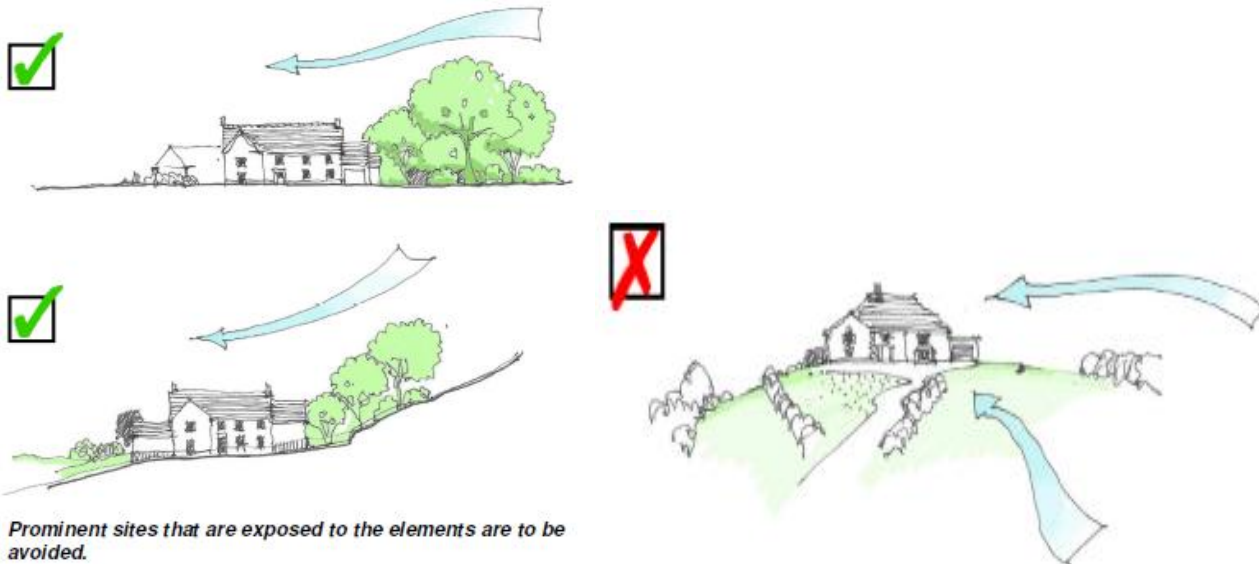


Figure 3: Appropriate Site Selection

2.3 Settlement Pattern

In cases where the site is in an area with nearby houses, aim to respect and reflect in scale and approach to siting, the existing pattern of development i.e. in an area where single-story houses are the predominant form, a large two-story house may not be appropriate.

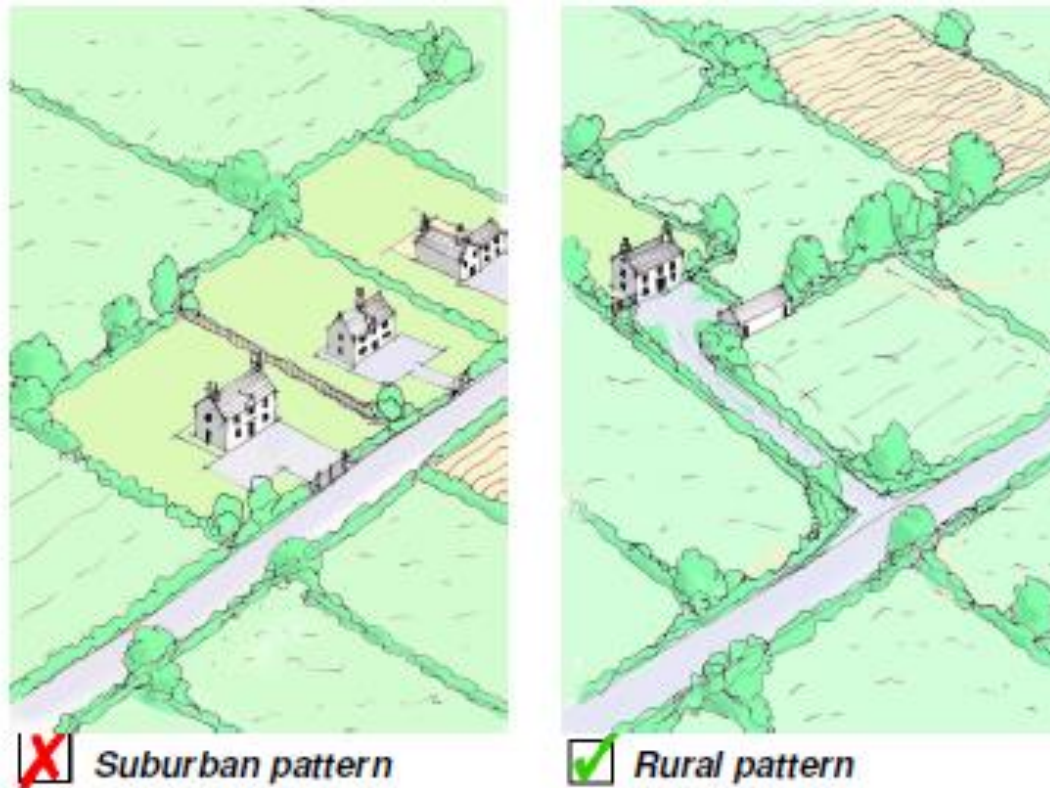


Figure 4: Take note of existing patterns of development in an area

2.4 Ribbon Development

New sites should avoid contributing to existing patterns of linear roadside ribbon development¹ along roads or within undeveloped areas between existing building clusters. Please refer to Chapter 5 of the Plan: Planning Policy 5 – 12 for further detail. Ribbon development is undesirable because:

- It extends urban influences into the countryside
- Results in numerous accesses onto rural roads

¹ 5 or more existing or permitted dwellings along any one side of a 250m stretch of road

- Leads to the loss of roadside features (hedgerows, earthen banks etc)
- Sterilises backlands and landlocks farmland
- Could impact negatively on ground or surface water quality
- Creates servicing problems (e.g. water supply, drainage, footpaths, street lighting, etc.) and
- Intrudes on public views of the rural setting.

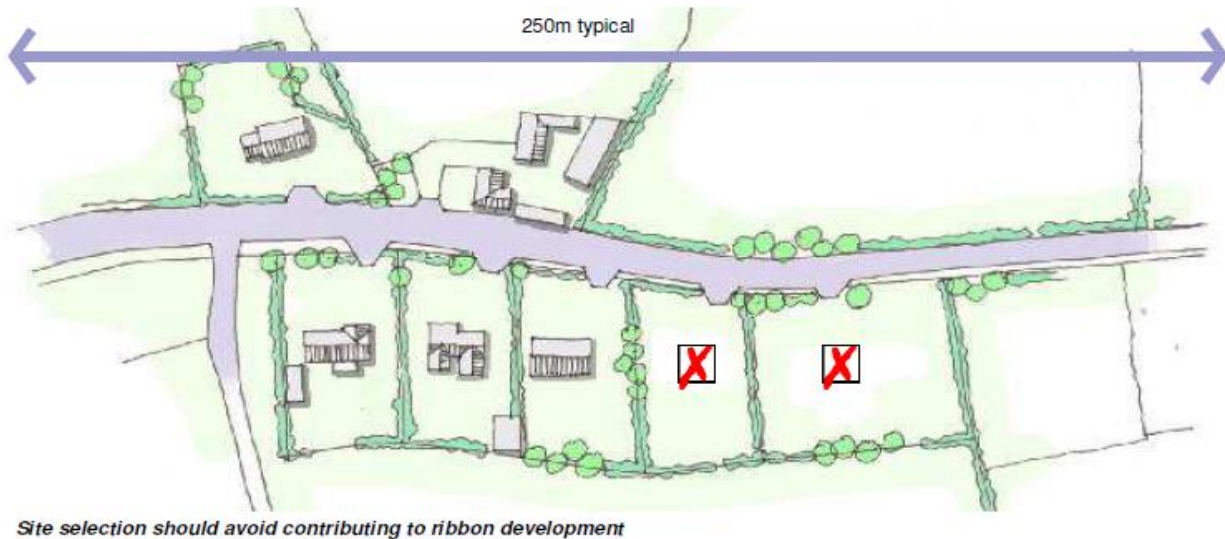


Figure 5: Aim to avoid extending an existing pattern of ribbon development

2.5 Sustainable Energy and Energy Conservation

Site selection should be strongly influenced by energy saving and generating objectives, including maximum passive solar heating gains through site orientation and the selection of a location sheltered from the wind.

In many rural locations it should also be possible to consider renewable energy installations, such as solar panels, wind turbines, ground (or air) heat pump systems, rainwater harvesting and 'grey-water' recycling facilities.

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) – (www.seai.ie) promotes and assists the development of sustainable energy and can provide wide ranging advice on current technologies.

Specific measures for increasing the energy efficiency of new buildings are also included in Step 3 (Planning the Site).

2.6 Part L of the Building Regulations

We all have a role to play in a move towards a low-carbon society. Consideration of the energy requirements of a new house at design stage, and the incorporation of renewable energy technologies, is an important way of reducing our long-term energy demands. Dwellings must be planned and designed to be Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB). A NZEB house has a very high energy performance, covered mostly by energy from renewable sources produced either on-site or nearby. In terms of Building Energy Rating (BER), new dwellings should be generally rated as A2 or higher which means they will be more energy efficient and will have a lower energy cost. The requirements regarding

conservation of fuel and energy for dwellings are laid out in Part L of the Building Regulations 1997 - 2019.

The energy efficiency of your new home should be a paramount concern at design stage and should be discussed in detail with your designer. For both new and existing dwellings all aspects of design, such as airtightness, continuous insulation, thermal bridging, controlled ventilation, renewable energy technologies and system thinking etc must be considered early in the design process, and ideally before applying for planning permission. Reference should be made to the Technical Guidance Document.

2.7 Accessibility and Roads

Vehicle access needs to be carefully considered in relation to category of the road, distance from the road, and existing roadside boundary features. Access to potential sites may be at or adjacent to existing entrance points on suitable existing roads, modified as appropriate to meet sightline requirements but avoiding excessive loss of existing roadside hedgerow. Noting that additional agricultural entrances may be required to be opened to replace the entrance being used for a new site (this in itself may require planning permission).



Please refer to Appendix 6: Development Management Standards, of the Plan for detailed design standards for new access to public roads. It should be noted that new entrances are not permitted onto motorways and there is planning restrictions for new entrances onto regional roads.

In all cases, safety concerns are paramount and any proposals need to satisfy the requirements of the County Council's Road Section. For further guidance on appropriate site boundary treatments refer to Step 3 (Planning the Site).

2.8 Service Infrastructure

The available services in the area should be assessed at an early stage. In particular, a public water supply and a site that can accommodate the safe disposal of wastewater and sewage effluent are essential requirements.

When selecting a site ensure that:

- The ground conditions are suitable for percolation for a sewage treatment system, in accordance with the 'Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (EPA, 2021). In this respect, an on-site suitability test will be required to support your planning application.
- It is large enough to accommodate a sewage treatment system.
- That water supply from a public source is available. If you intend joining a group water scheme, confirmation from the group secretary will be required at planning stage.
- It is large enough to locate a well (if this is the only option) at least 10m from the septic tank or treatment system and 30–60m from the percolation area (depending on the percolation rate). Note that where a public water supply is available, you will be required to connect to this.
- It is connected or in reasonable proximity to existing telephone and electricity services.

2.9 Site History and Planned Infrastructure

When selecting your new site check if there is any new development proposed or permitted on adjoining sites or in the adjoining area. It is prudent to carry out a planning history check on your own proposed site, neighboring sites and in the wider area. Ensure that no significant proposed infrastructure is planned i.e. wind energy developments, intensive agriculture, power lines, route corridors etc. See www.tipperarycoco.ie/planning for the map-based planning enquiry system to learn about planning permissions and histories in your area.

A history of planning refusals on your site may have serious implications for the success for your own application as could a plan for significant infrastructure in the area in the event that your site would interfere with such a proposal.

2.10 Flood Risk

When selecting your new site, take great care in considering the potential for flooding to occur on the site. Flooding can occur from a nearby water course, however, can also occur as a result of surface water run-off from surrounding land. Review flood risk mapping produced by the OPW – www.floodmaps.ie

and old OSI maps for history of flooding in the area. It is also important to ask local people if they are aware of flooding on the site. If the site has ever been subject for full or partial flooding or is an area of flood risk it should be avoided. Note that climate change may bring about increased risk of flooding in the future.



Figure 6: Take great care to avoid a site that may flood in the future

Step 3: Plan the Site

3.1 Analysis of Site features

Before you plan your house, identify all existing features on your site including:

- The contours of the land;
- Vegetation cover including hedgerows and individual trees;
- Rock outcrops;
- Water courses, ditches and wetland areas;
- Location and type of boundaries;
- Existing buildings, including outbuildings;
- Other structures, such as wells, gate piers, historical or archaeological features;
- All pipes, culverts, septic tanks, storage tanks, percolation areas, and land drainage.



Figure 7: Avoid building close to farmyards

- Roads, rights of way, footpaths and access tracks.
- Neighboring houses and their septic tanks and percolation areas,
- Adjoining agricultural premises and operations.

These are important factors in setting out your site and will influence your planning application, site layout and house design. Carefully consider the effects of;

- Topography/slope
- Sustainable site planning/Energy efficiency capacity
- Building proportion and set-back
- Means of vehicle access
- Plot boundaries/Garden
- Neighboring amenity



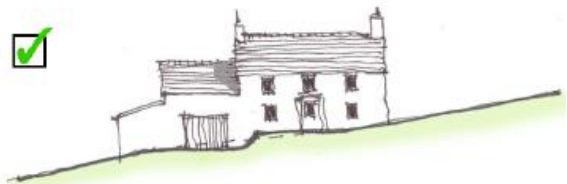
Figure 8: Complement the landscape where possible

3.2 Topography

- Use the natural folds of the landform to help absorb the new house.
- Select naturally-occurring shelves or the gentlest part of a slope so as to minimise earth moving and to avoid excessive scarring of the landscape.
- Avoid the need for excessive cut and fill.
- Carefully shape the land around the building so that it blends more successfully with the surroundings while creating further shelter.
- On elevated sites avoid houses of excessive height, consider single story design.



Avoid over-excitation or creating an artificial plateau.



3.3 Sustainable Site Planning

Energy Performance

The EU Directive on the Energy Performance of Buildings requires every home for sale or rent in Ireland to be rated

as to its energy performance, this must be a consideration in the initial design and planning of any house.

Building Form, Orientation and Solar gain

Solar radiation is transmitted indoors through windows and other glazing and is then converted into heat when it is absorbed by surfaces such as concrete, stone or brick walls and masonry. The surfaces then store and release this passive solar heat within the building.

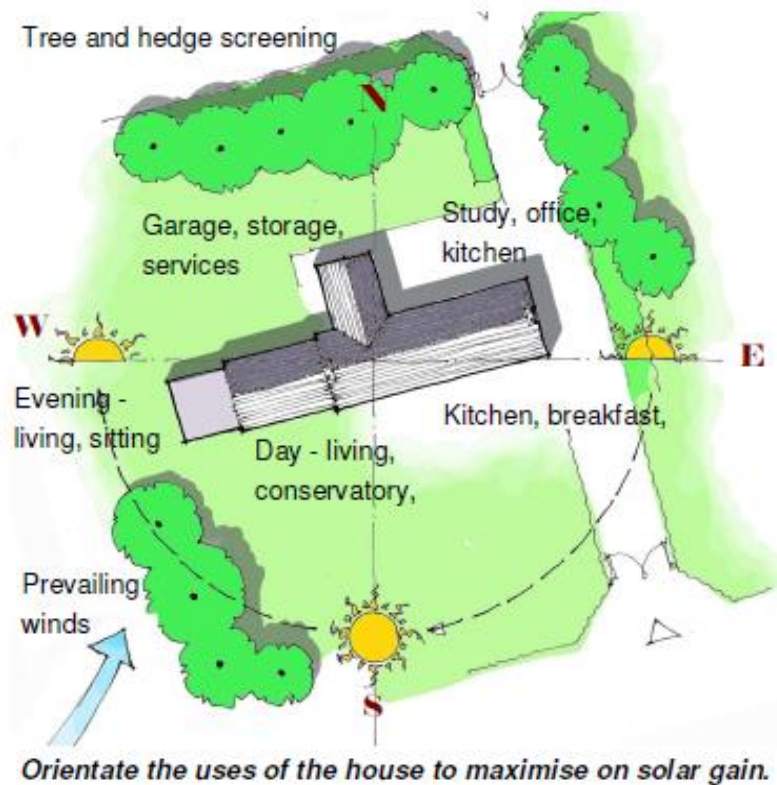


Figure 9: Make the best use of orientation and passive solar gain in designing your house

A building can then be designed to make maximum use of these gains, by optimising the room shape, room size, glazing size and type room position and orientation (south facing rooms take most solar heat energy). By maximising the use of this free solar energy for heating by simply designing the building correctly, the building requires less input from a primary heating source (e.g. a boiler).

Combined with high levels of insulation and airtightness, passive solar gains can provide more than 50% of a building's heat needs. For more information on designing for passive solar gain please refer to www.seai.ie and consider Figure 9.

3.4 Renewable Energy Resources

Renewable energy resources are abundantly available throughout Ireland. They offer sustainable alternatives to the dependency on imported fossil fuels as well as reducing harmful greenhouse emissions. Many decisions affecting the energy performance of a house need to be taken early in the site planning and design process - refer to the appendices for further details and to current SEAI publications (e.g. *Your Guide to Building an Energy-efficient Home*).

Certain renewable energy equipment can be installed without planning permission as exempted development (SI 83 of 2007 and SI 235 of 2008) subject to certain conditions; these include solar panels, heat pumps,



wind turbines and wood pellet burners. For further details, contact the Planning Section of the Council, the SEAI or refer to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended at www.environ.ie.

Solar Energy

Solar is a clean, renewable energy generated from the sun. The main domestic applications are:

Solar Hot Water Heating Systems - for domestic applications comprise of a solar collector (solar panel, flat plate or evacuated tube), hot water storage cylinder and a pump. Panels should ideally face south and mounted on the main property roof, or in some cases on a shed roof or floor/wall mounted. Flat plate collectors can be installed as an integral part of the roof construction, or retrofitted to existing buildings.

Solar Photovoltaic (PV) - involves generating electricity from the sun's energy that exists in daylight. Panels can be installed on or as an integral part of the roof. Check if your proposal for solar panels constitutes exempted development, if they are not planning permission will be required and you will need to make a planning application to the Council, or to submit details of the panels as part of your planning application for your new house.

Domestic Wind Energy

Wind turbines - harness the wind to produce electrical power. The efficiency of a domestic system will depend on factors such as location and surrounding environment. Careful siting of a domestic wind turbine is required to reduce visual impacts and impacts on neighbors. If considering the installation of a wind turbine, check if your proposal constitutes exempted development, if it does not planning permission will be required and you will need to make a planning application to the Council, or to submit details of the turbine as part of your planning application for your new house. The following detail will be required.

- Dimensions of the turbine (including rotor blades).
- Height above ground or building.
- Material type and finish.
- Plan showing position on the ground.
- Brief technical specifications such as power and noise output (as usually supplied by the manufacturer).

Geothermal Energy

Geothermal heat pumps - transfer heat from the ground into a building to provide space heating and, in some cases, to pre-heat domestic hot water. A typical system can provide 95%-100% of a household's heating requirements. Check if your proposal for a domestic heat pump constitutes exempted development, if it does not planning permission will be required and you will need to make a planning application to the Council, or to submit details of the heat pump system as part of your planning application for your new house.

If considering the installation of a ground heat pump system, you will need to provide (as a minimum) the following information to the Council:

- Existing and proposed ground levels in the vicinity of the system.
- The total area of the heat pump.
- Plans showing position on the ground.
- Brief technical specifications such as power and noise output (as usually supplied by the manufacturer).

Biomass Energy

Biomass energy is obtained from organic materials such as wood (chips or pellets) and the domestic stove is the most common example. A wood burner or pellet boiler is simple to install, and there is very little adjustment needed to existing plumbing if converting from a conventional system.

Water Recycling and Rainwater Harvesting

Techniques for harvesting rainwater to be considered at the site planning stage for reducing domestic water consumption include:

- *Water butt* - a simple, low cost method for collecting rainwater from the roof and storing it for use in the garden (e.g. instead of a mains-water hosepipe for lawns, etc).
- *Rainwater harvesting* - provides an efficient and economic means for utilising the rainwater coming from roofs to supply toilets, washing machines and irrigation systems.
- *Greywater recycling* - enables slightly polluted water from the bath, shower and washbasin to be reused in the house (e.g. for toilet flushing, washing machine, watering or for cleaning).

For rainwater collection, the external drainage of the roof needs to be designed to bring the water to a central point. If designing a rainwater recycling system, you should consider:

- Access for an underground storage tank and excavation is required.
- A pumping system with electrical supply and housing may be required.
- Internal plumbing should separate out the drinking (including bathing) water from the nondrinking water (WC, washing machine, outside tap).

Sustainable Surface Water Drainage

All domestic buildings and sites should be designed with sustainable surface water drainage considerations to manage surface water from the roof and other surfaces. Run-off must be managed on the site to avoid it entering public roads and adjoining properties and surface water discharge should be managed in a way that will not endanger the building or environment. Consider measures to reduce runoff, for example reduce to a minimum the use of hard surface and paved areas. Instead use permeable and natural surfaces i.e. gravel, permeable paving, green/planted areas on your site, sustainable infiltration

systems can also be used for example planted soak aways, cattle grids etc. The discharge of storm-water from roofed and paved areas to a foul water sewer or onto the public road is not permitted.

3.5 Site Proportion and Set-Back

At an early stage it is essential to consider the proportion of the proposed house in relation to both the size of the available plot and the size of existing buildings in the vicinity. The new house will also need to be set-back an acceptable distance from the public road to provide adequate frontage for planting and to reduce the visual impact of development. The set-back distance will vary according to plot size, adjacent building line and the natural features of the site generally, the larger the house the greater the required setback from the road. A general guide to house sizes and appropriate plot sizes and setback from the public road is set out below.

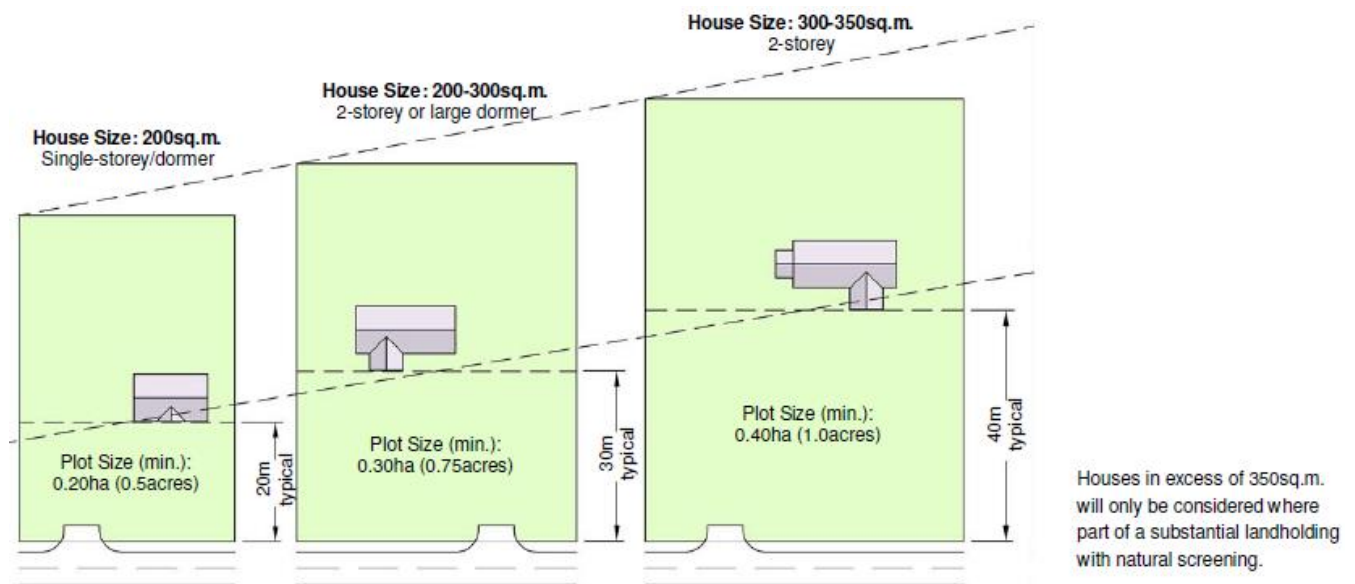
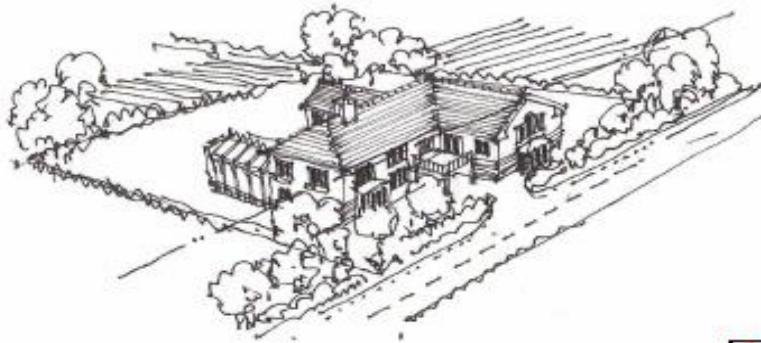


Figure 10: Illustrative guide to appropriate setback



Over-scaled in relation to plot and distance from road.



Adequately set-back from road and absorbed by planting.

Figure 11: In general, the bigger the house the greater the required setback

3.6 Vehicle Access and Parking

The space around the new building should be considered as an integral part of the site layout, not as an afterthought. In particular, vehicles need to be carefully provided for:

- All parking requirements should be met on site and off the road.
- The driveway should preferably be indirect, gently crossing the natural contours of the site or curving subtly around existing site features, as opposed to taking a harsh straight line from the road.
- Surface materials should be sympathetic to the rural character of the site (such as gravel with soft edges as opposed to tarmac with pre-cast concrete kerbs).
- The garage should be subservient to the scale of the building.



Figure 12: Plot Boundaries, Entrances and Garden Design

Destruction of existing roadside boundaries should be avoided, except to the extent necessary to create a safe entrance to the new house and where required by the roads section of the Council. New road boundaries and entrances need to be designed sympathetically, especially where several different frontages are adjacent to one another:

- Entrance sight lines must be designed according to standards set out in the Appendix 6 Development Management Standards of the Plan and clearly illustrated on the site layout plan submitted with the planning application.
- New front boundaries should be restricted to a simple range of materials that are already common to the area, such as hedgerows, sod and stone banks and stone/rendered walls.
- Gateways should also be simple, constructed from timber or metal and defined by restrained piers of stone or rendered block.
- For side boundaries, existing hedgerows are preferable or simple timber fencing with new hedge and tree planting may be provided.



Figure 13: Existing Natural Features should be used to integrate the new house.

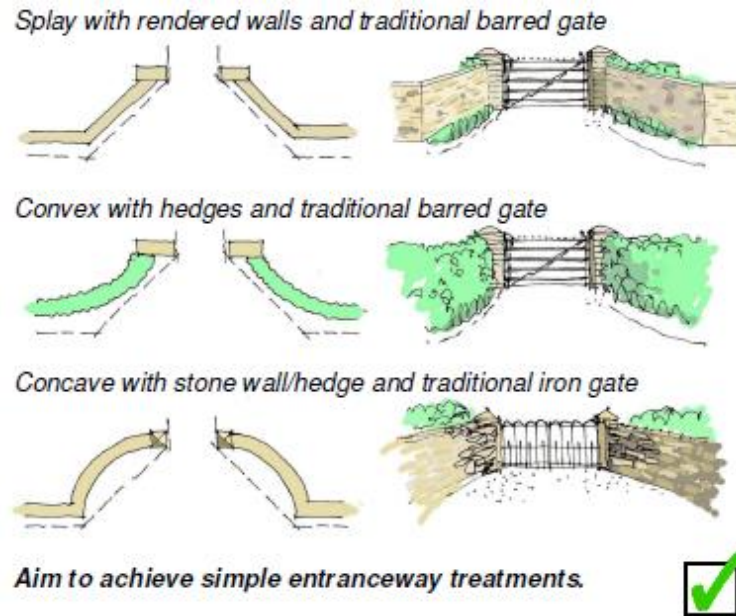


Figure 14: Entrance suggestions

In setting out your site boundaries consider the following:

- Retain trees, hedgerows and other existing features (e.g. streams, rock outcrops) to provide a framework for the garden.
- Consider planting the space between the house and front boundary with trees.
- Create new hedgerows of mixed native species (see appendix for suggested species).
- Trees and shrubs which are locally native will be easier to establish, and in keeping with the character of the area.
- On exposed sites, consider more substantial shelter planting of native trees to help reduce the effects climate.



Figure 15: New Hedgerow of native species

- Incorporate practical needs sensitively into the overall design of the site, such as fuel and refuse storage areas, a compost/recycling area, clothes drying area, and a safe place for children to play.

3.8 Neighboring Amenity

When choosing your new site, be conscious of your neighbors. Avoid building close to farmyard both active and disused. The normal day to day operation of farmyards generates noise and smells from machinery, slurry and animals which are not compatible with residential amenity.

Be conscious of the privacy and amenity of others who are already resident in the area when selecting a new site. Seek to avoid disrupting established views or vistas from existing houses in as much as is reasonable. Ensure that any new development does not overlook or overshadow existing property.

Step 4: Design the House

4.1 Traditional Building Forms

The traditional buildings of the County tend to be simple, with little or no decorative detailing and built of a limited range of locally available natural materials. Many were only one room deep, giving a narrow rectangular plan form, which could be extended sequentially, and with consistent roof pitches. Aspects of traditional design can be incorporated into modern dwellings.



Figure 16: Examples of good contemporary design incorporating traditional principles

4.2 Contemporary Approach

The Council promotes the contemporary design of new houses and particularly passive houses in the countryside where the principles set out in this Manual are satisfied and where the proposed house is appropriate to the site, the existing character of the location and its neighbors.

4.3 Scale and Form

Consider how the scale and form of a proposed dwelling will complement its setting, its visibility in the landscape, and its relationship to nearby buildings, this applies to both modern and traditional designs.



The traditional linear plan form provides a versatile shape that is equally applicable to contemporary buildings. Rectangular narrow forms can adapt to most plot sizes and different landforms - running along a slope, stepping down a slope, or enclosing spaces such as courtyards.

Aim to Achieve:

- I. Simplicity in design, particularly in the front elevation
- II. Rectangular, narrow plan forms with excellent passive solar gain
- III. Consistent roof slopes
- IV. Well-proportioned windows and doors
- V. Quality, predominantly natural materials
- VI. Minimal ornate decoration

Try to Avoid:

- I. Complicated and fussy designs and finishes
- II. Boxy, irregular plan forms, shallow pitched roofs
- III. Horizontally proportioned or arched windows
- IV. Over-use of artificial materials
- V. Large overhanging roof verges and barge boards



Figure 17: Examples of inappropriate suburban design features

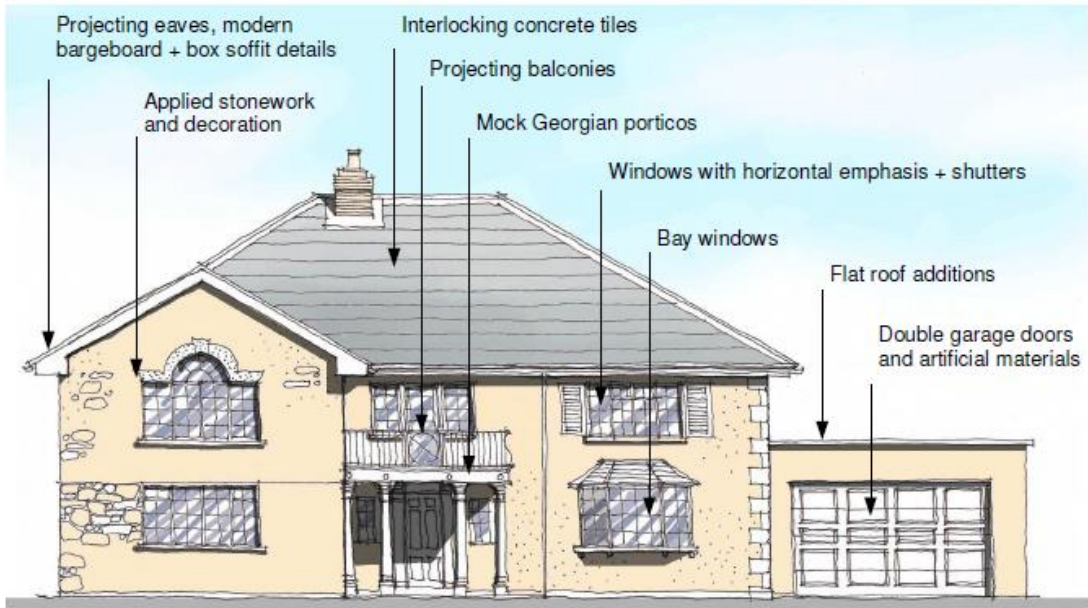
Refer to Figure 18 below for a general guide to features and finishes appropriate to a rural house.

4.4 Development Contributions

Development Contributions will be required by condition as part of any planning permission granted. These are calculated based on the floor area of the proposed dwelling, therefore, the bigger the dwelling the higher the development contributions that will apply. Charges may apply for the following:

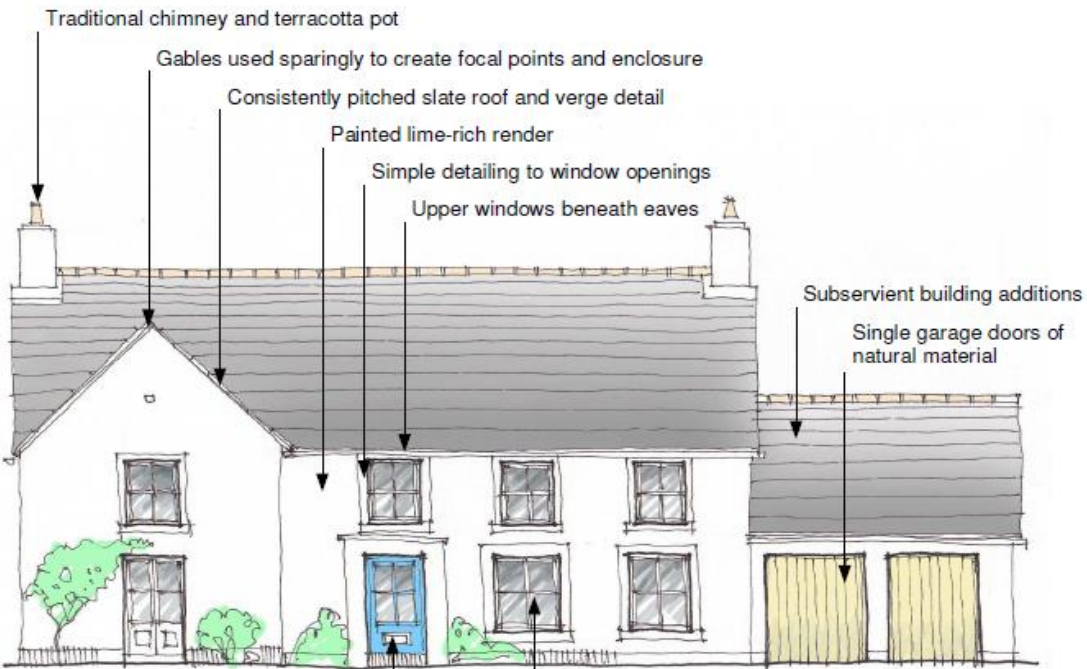
- Roads and Amenity – due to Tipperary County Council
- Water supply and Wastewater services – due to Irish Water.

For further information of development contributions refer to www.tipperarycoco.ie



Complexity

Unsympathetic



Climbers and shrubs to soften appearance of building and create established setting

Well-proportioned windows with vertical emphasis
 Simple porch with suitable door



Simplicity

Sympathetic

Figure 18: General Guidance to scale, form and finish

4.5 Detailed Design Considerations appropriate for Tipperary.

Take care that new buildings enhance rather than detract from rural Tipperary. Consider the following recommendations:

- Avoid 'off-the-shelf' designs and use of inappropriate standard materials.
- Avoid using 'images' of past architectural styles, such as medieval leaded lights, mock Georgian porticos and doors, ornamental barge boards and half timbering.
- Take care not to overuse ornamental detailing such as coloured brick banding, applied quoins and unusual window shapes.

Materials

Consider the use of contemporary materials such as copper and zinc that can be successfully combined with timber, glass, slate, rendered and painted blockwork to create attractive houses. If these are out of your price range aim for a simple design that can support simple finishes.

Tipperary houses usually have a painted plaster or plaster dash finish and this is often the best finish to use. If you need to use stone, use it sparingly to provide contrast and in suitable locations to help integrate the building with the landscape.

Natural stone garden and boundary walls can be especially effective in linking the new house with the landscape. Where stone is used it is best to be natural stone.

Roof and Chimneys

For your roof form and finish consider the following:

- Simple and consistent pitched roof form works best on standard designs.
- Limit use of oversailing roofs unless as integral part of a contemporary design.
- Simple roofing materials are best, such as flat dark tiles and natural slate.
- Rainwater goods should be as discrete as practicable.
- Chimneys proportion and location appropriate to the size and style of house.



Figure 19: Simple and appropriate approach to finish

Windows and Doors

Consider the following for windows and doors:

- The total area of window and door openings needs to be in proportion to the scale and style of the house.
- Gable end and north facing walls will usually benefit from a lower ratio of opening to wall.
- Windows should usually line-up over each other - although a carefully considered contemporary design may deviate from this rule.
- The size of opening should reflect the function of the room - very small bathroom; cloakroom or landing windows can contribute to the composition of a façade by contrasting with more expansive openings to principal living areas.
- Irregularly-sized windows and elaborate bay windows should be avoided.



Figure 20: Traditional simplicity and vertical emphasis

4.6 Single Story Houses

Single story dwellings lend their selves to innovative designs which can be highly energy efficiency and respect the local character of the countryside. Consider simplicity in form and passive solar gain as key design influences.



Modern bungalow type to be avoided.



Simple interpretation of traditional building form.

4.7 Dormer Houses

The dormer house can provide an alternative to two-story house; however, the design needs to be carefully considered so as to avoid over-complicated roof planes and eaves lines.

Traditional eaves dormers are the preferred form, simply detailed to suit the style of the house. Rooflights should be considered to avoid a proliferation of dormers and in preference to mid-roof dormers. Consider roof space for solar panels.



Dormer house type to be avoided.



Simple interpretation of dormer building form.

4.8 Two-Story Houses

Two story houses should reflect the site size, neighboring houses and the sensitivity of the landscape.

A narrow rectangular plan is appropriate as it does not result in overly high or shallow pitched roofs, and allows subservient additions and extensions to the main structure. On hilly and undulating sites, the narrow plan form reduces the need for an excavated platform and enables the building to more fully respond to the natural contours of the site.



- × Excessive use of projecting front elevations
- × Complex hipped roof patterns
- × Use of uPVC boxed eaves and barges
- × Elaborate projecting bay windows
- × Artificial stonework and unnecessary decoration
- × Poorly divided windows with horizontal emphasis
- × Sun room with hipped roof and ill-proportioned openings
- × Addition of protruding elements to main elevation (e.g. turrets and double bay windows)
- × Over-emphasised door
- × Unnecessary quoinage and lintel detailing
- × Dominant garage with 'up and over' door.

This combination of features results in a suburban design and finish, and the overall appearance may not be appropriate in rural Tipperary.



- ✓ Uninterrupted ridge lines with consistently pitched roofs
- ✓ Simple plan with extensions in proportion to the main building
- ✓ Balanced door and window openings with simple detailing
- ✓ Simple porch and door detailing.
- ✓ Conservatory/Sun room of appropriate scale and natural materials.
- ✓ Well-proportioned arrangement of recessed openings.
- ✓ Vertical window emphasis with plaster surrounds and sills.

4.9 Houses on Sloping Sites



Avoid:

- × Siting on north-facing slopes
- × Over-excavation and artificial plateaus
- × Building form unrelated to sloping context
- × Boxy floor plan requiring substantial platform
- × Main elevation facing down the slope (requiring cut + fill)

Consider:

- ✓ Minimal excavation by orientating the building with the contours
- ✓ Linear floor plan that extends across the natural contours, with internal floor levels to suit

- ✓ Sensitive earth mounding
- ✓ Narrowest elevation facing down the slope
- ✓ Use of naturally-occurring shelves or gentlest part of slope

4.10 Large Houses

Very large houses can complement and add interest to the countryside where they are located on very large sites with significant landscaping and space to complement them. Very large houses on small sites are not appropriate and therefore you house size should respect your site size.

Avoid:

- × Wide plan building form with shallow hipped roofs
- × Over-complex plan and roof forms
- × Wide gable and turret add-ons
- × Inconsistent window openings

Aim for:

- ✓ Narrow plan form with projections to rear or side
- ✓ Consistently pitched roofs
- ✓ Well-balanced window and door openings with vertical emphasis.

Figure 21: Large houses are a feature of Tipperary



4.11 Building Extensions and Garages

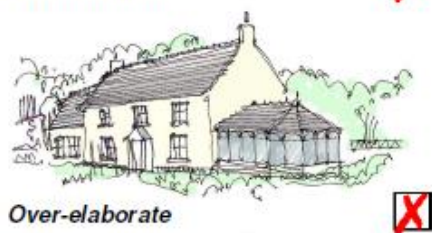
When planning an extension or garage seek to ensure that the main house is dominant in scale. With larger houses, detached garages may be more suitable, located discreetly to the rear or side of the main building. Extensions and garages should generally be built with similar materials to the existing house



Appropriate extension, subservient to main house and of same materials

4.12 Conservatories / Sun Rooms

Considerations of scale, proportion and spatial layout of the house are all important to ensure that a conservatory is an appropriate addition. Additions to gable ends or rear elevations are usually most appropriate. See below for design suggestions.



4.13 Renovation of Derelict Dwellings

There are numerous disused houses throughout Tipperary, often located on good sized plots with road access and within mature landscape settings. The sympathetic restoration of dwellings which are structurally sound, reasonably intact, safely accessible and capable of being connected to water and other services is encouraged as an alternative to building new houses in the countryside. Planning permission will be required for significant renovation work if the dwelling is listed or if it is proposed to make significant changes that do not come within planning exemptions.

Factors to be considered include:

- The structure must have been last used as a dwelling house.
- Ensure that safe access can be obtained to the dwelling.
- Ensure that the site attached to the dwelling is of sufficient size to accommodate a wastewater treatment system/septic tank to the standards of the EPA Guidelines for domestic wastewater treatment systems.
- High quality design and finish will be required in Primary Amenity Areas.

Step 5: Making a Planning Application

5.1 Considering an Application

The Council is committed engaging with planning applicants. Pre-planning meetings with the Planning Officer for the area are facilitated to discuss a planning application before it is submitted. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate from the outset that careful consideration has been given to the location, siting and design of new housing in the countryside.

Applicants, and their planning agents, should familiarize themselves with the relevant policies of the Plan, as well as the principles and advice contained in this Manual and other relevant Council documents before they submit a planning application.

5.2 Submitting a Planning Application

Applicants should note that guidance notes for completing a Planning Application are obtainable from the Council. Failure to fully meet the requirements may result in an application being rejected as invalid

or in a request for further information. Applicants should make sure that all required information and documentation is submitted to avoid unnecessary delay in processing the planning application. With applications for one-off houses in the countryside consider the following:

On the site layout plan:

- Indicate the location, scale and orientation of any adjoining buildings and features in line with the requirements of the Planning and Development Regulations. Contiguous elevations and cross sections may be required.
- Ensure that sufficient details are enclosed showing how the house will be serviced by public water supply and how waste water can be safely disposed
- The means for achieving safe access must be clearly demonstrated and indicated on the drawings (sightlines).
- High quality design and layout in accordance with this Manual.

On Plans and Elevations:

- Indicate in as much detail as possible proposed building materials for all building elements.
- Demonstrate Compliance with the requirements of the Building Regulations, including how you aim to enhance ensure that your dwelling will be an NZEB dwelling.

Appendix 1: Planting and Landscaping

Recommended Planting Types

The main planting types to be considered when planning a new garden comprise:

- Shelter Belts
- Hedgerows
- Specimen Trees
- Shrubs

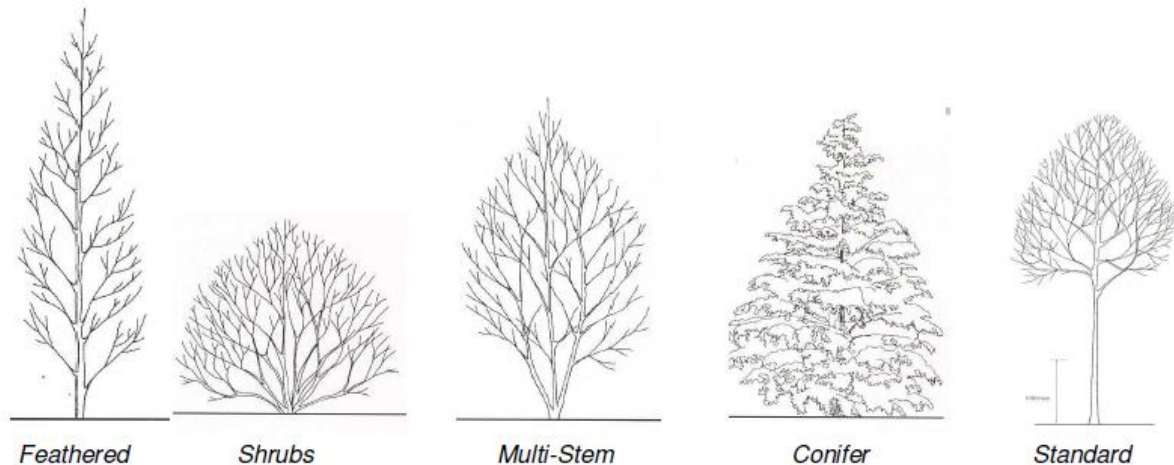
Shelter belt

Shelter planting can be used to help the new house integrate more effectively with the surroundings. Such planting should contain a large percentage of small trees (feathered or whips) interspersed with larger trees (clear stem) to provide a more immediate effect

Typical recommended species/mix:

- Common Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* 20%
- European Beech *Fagus sylvatica* 20%
- Alder *Alnus glutinosa* 15%
- English Oak *Quercus robur* 5%
- Durmast Oak *Quercus petraea* 5%
- Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia* 15%
- Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* 10%
- Larch *Larix decidua* 5%
- Scot's Pine *Pinus sylvestris* 5%

Typically plants are available from the nursery in the following forms:



Hedgerows

New hedgerows should consist of a combination of native tree species with under-storey planting of multistemmed shrubs. Shrubs should be planted in a double staggered row, around 0.9m apart (2-3 plants/sq.m.), with trees (species as per Woodland) randomly interspersed. Shrubs should comprise bare-root whips (min. 60-90cm height). Typical recommended species/mix:

- Whitethorn *Crataegus laevigata* 10%
- Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* 60%
- Holly *Ilex aquifolium* 5%
- Hazel *Corylus avellana* 10%
- Guelder Rose *Viburnum Opulus* 5%
- Spindle *Euonymus europeaus* 5%
- Dog Rose *Rosa rugosa* 5%

Specimen Trees

Trees planted singly or in small groups (3-5) should be of a large size, Advanced Heavy Standard Trees (16 – 18cm girth), to make an immediate impression. Typical/ecomended species include:

- Common Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*
- European Beech *Fagus sylvatica*
- English Oak *Quercus robur*
- Durmast Oak *Quercus petraea*
- Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*
- Larch *Larix deciduas*

Shrubs

Shrub species can be planted in bold groups to the edges of Woodland/Shelter Belts to provide added interest and a lower layer of vegetation. They should be planted as bare-root whips (min. 60-90cm girth) or in 2-5 litre containers, at around 2 plants/sq.m. Typical/recommended species:

- Whitethorn *Crataegus laevigata*
- Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*
- Holly *Ilex aquifolium*
- Hazel *Corylus avellana*
- Guelder Rose *Viburnum Opulus*
- Buckthorn *Rhamnus frangula*
- Spindle *Euonymus europeaus*

➤ Dog Rose *Rosa rugos*



Hazel

Spindle

Dog Rose



Cornus

C. 'Sibirica'

Ivy



Blackthorn

Guelder Rose

Holly



Blackthorn

Beech (hedge)



Rowan

Scots Pine

Larch

Hawthorn

Appendix 2 Checklists – before you submit your planning application

Site Selection

Have you...

- Checked the rural housing policy of the Plan as set out in **Section 5.4 Residential Development in the Open Countryside**, Chapter 5: Housing.
- Assessed the suitability of your chosen site in terms of its impact on landscape character and the capacity of the area to absorb a house?
- Consulted with the Council if a site falls within or is located close to primary amenity areas or other environmental or archeological designation?
- Considered a site where natural features such as trees and hedgerows can help assimilate new development with the surroundings?
- Avoided hilly sites where development may break the skyline when viewed from a distance, or would result in excessive cutting or filling of the local topography?
- Avoided elevated and exposed locations such as hilltops and ridgelines, which would increase energy consumption and fuel costs?
- Avoided sites that are subject to flooding, boggy, or in a frost pocket?
- Ensured that a site will not contribute to ribbon development or other inappropriate development form?
- Considered the micro-climate and the benefits of sustainable energy?
- Considered the proximity of a site to existing facilities, such as schools, shops, church, pub?
- Ensured that the site is accessible from the public road and can achieve adequate sight lines at the entrance without excessive loss of the existing roadside boundary?
- Considered the availability of existing service infrastructure, including water supply, telephone, broadband and electricity?

- Undertaken a Site Suitability Assessment (Percolation tests) to determine whether ground conditions are suitable for effluent disposal?
- Avoided sites in close proximity to active farmyards, commercial uses etc.
- Considered the proportion of the house in relation to the size of the plot and scale of any existing buildings in the locality?
- Ensured that the building can be positioned to avoid overlooking or loss of light/privacy to neighbouring properties?
- Ensured that the site has sufficient depth to be able to locate the building back from the road edge?

Building Form and Design

Have you aimed to achieve...?

- Your design does not impinge on the privacy of your neighbors or result in overshadowing?
- A limited range of building materials and, wherever possible, locally available?
- The use of natural materials - stone, timber, slate – as much as possible?
- Consistently pitched roofs, dark tiled and with neat eaves detailing?
- Carefully located and detailed windows, doors and chimneys?
- Extensions or additions that are subservient to the main building and of similar scale/style?
- Renewable energy technologies and passive solar gain to contribute to a near zero building energy rating
- Rainwater harvesting and internal plumbing arrangements to suit.

Planning Application

Have you...

- Fully complied with the guidance notes for completing a Planning Application, obtainable from the Council?
- Fully complied with the technical requirements of the planning and development regulations as they refer to planning applications.
- Fully completed the planning application?
- Copy of the site notice and plan showing its position on site?
- Submitted sufficient site survey details?
- Calculated the cost of your development contributions that will be due?
- Copies of the Site Layout Plan at not less than 1:500 scale?
- Copies of drawings of floor plans at not less than 1:200 scale?
- Copies of drawings of all elevations at not less than 1:200 scale?
- Submitted sufficient information to demonstrate the scale and orientation of the building in relation to any neighbours (including contiguous elevations as appropriate)?
- Submitted sufficient details of proposed building materials?
- Submitted required information for renewable energy applications?
- Submitted an EPA Site Suitability Assessment Report, including trial hole layout plan and proposed wastewater treatment layout plan?
- A schedule listing all plans, maps and drawings?
- The appropriate planning fee?

Further Details/Information

1. Obtain a planning pack from the county council offices - Civic Offices, Clonmel or Civic Offices, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary. Telephone: +353(0)761 065000 9.30 - 4.30 Mon-Fri.
2. Make an appointment for a pre-planning consultation at the main planning office if you consider it necessary. Telephone: +353(0)761 065000 9.30 - 4.30 Mon-Fri.

3. The County has many designated areas for environmental protection, e.g. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), as well as designations for heritage protection such as Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) and Protected Structures. There are also numerous archaeological sites listed as Recorded Monuments for protection. Refer to the County Development plan for further detail at www.tipperarycoco.ie.
4. Lists of suitably experienced Architects are available from the RIAI www.riai.ie
5. Refer to the requirements of:
 6. *Sustainable Rural Housing – Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, DoEHLG April 2005,
 7. The National Roads Authority (NRA) ‘*Policy Statement on Development Management and Access to National Roads*’ May 2006.
8. Any Planning Application for a new single dwelling (where not served by public sewer mains) must be accompanied by a Site Suitability Assessment Report, in accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency Wastewater Treatment Manuals. The site assessments are carried out by private operators who are screened by the Council’s Environment Department - an up-to-date list of approved assessors is available from Tipperary County Council Planning Department.
9. Refer to the Sustainable Authority of Ireland (SEAI) for information on sustainable building design and technologies – www.seai.ie, details on planning exemptions for renewable energy technologies are available at www.seai.ie/Renewables/Microgeneration/Conditional_Planning_Exemptions/
10. Obtain a detailed survey of the site and its immediate surroundings showing contours; vegetation; boundaries; existing structures; historical or archaeological features; all pipes, septic tanks, wells, percolation areas, etc.; roads, rights of way and access tracks; water courses and wetlands; soil types and land drainage characteristics.
11. The OSI provides detailed mapping for planning applications.
12. See OPW flood risk data at www.floodrisk.ie.
13. The Planning and Development Regulations 2007 (as amended) make specific provision for exemptions from planning for renewable energy installations.
14. In the event that you need to appeal a decision on your planning application or on a planning application that directly affects you, please refer to An Bord Pleanála at www.pleanala.ie.



Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council

Contact

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