

KILLUCAN RATHWIRE

Village Design Statement

This Village Design Statement, undertaken in partnership with the communities of Killucan and Rathwire, was initiated by Westmeath County Council in association with the Heritage Council.

Westmeath County Council and the Heritage Council would like to acknowledge the role of Manogue Architects and Soltys:Brewster Consulting in working with the communities of Killucan and Rathwire towards the realisation of this Village Design Statement.

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1.1 WHAT IS A VDS?

The villages of Killucan and Rathwire have distinctive and diverse characters, which are highly valued by their local residents. As both villages continue to evolve, this process of change needs to be positively managed so that the unique qualities that contribute to both village's distinctive identities can be protected and enhanced, whilst managing future growth and new development.

A 'Village Design Statement' (or VDS for short) is a good way to help all those involved with planning the future development of Killucan and Rathwire to understand the villages' distinctive characters and what makes them such a special place in which to live. A VDS describes the character of a village and provides broad design guidelines which address the qualities which local residents consider worthy of protection or improvement

1.2 WHY IS A VDS NEEDED?

The 'Westmeath County Development Plan (2002-2008)' has identified Killucan and Rathwire together as one of fifteen villages with the capacity to accommodate new development. With improved road networks and the villages proximity to Dublin there has been an unprecedented increase of commuters in recent years. This has increased the demand for development in the county. Killucan and Rathwire with their surrounding attractive agricultural land and wooded estates, and location convenience for commuters, have been recognised as an important site. The consequential new development should be carefully and sensitively managed to protect and enhance the character of the village.



Killucan and Rathwire have recently seen the start of new housing development on various scales. Although most local residents accept the decision for more development, some have voiced concerns about the quality and character of some recent modern housing developments within the vicinity of the village. Some of these new developments have used suburban density standards, monotonous road and building design, and inappropriate materials - which they consider have failed to complement the 'traditional' character of the village.

Design guidance is therefore needed to ensure that any new development within the village is based upon a considered understanding of the village's unique character. New development should be designed in such a way that sympathetically reflects and respects the qualities which local residents value within Killucan and Rathwire.



1.3 WHO IS THE VDS FOR?

This VDS is a valuable resource for individual householders and businesses, builders, developers, architects and statutory bodies. As every design solution will involve a compromise between competing ideas, the recommended approach is 'how can the best design be achieved within the bounds of meeting required standards, to the benefit of all involved?'

1.4 HOW WILL THE VDS WORK?

This VDS is not a masterplan of ready-made design solutions, and its recommendations should not be viewed as a barrier to modern design. Rather, the document highlights the unique qualities of architec-



tural, historical, archaeological, ecological and geographical importance that contribute to both villages' distinctive character, and provides broad design guidelines that reflect the views of Killucan and Rathwire residents.

These recommendations should be viewed as a stimulus for encouraging any new development to respect, rather than compete with, the valued character features that define the village. This will require careful consideration of how key elements inter-relate with each other, and how they contribute to the character of the village as a whole.

1.5 HOW HAS THE VDS BEEN PRODUCED?

This VDS has been produced through an extensive community consultation programme in partnership with the residents of Killucan and Rathwire, Westmeath County Council and the Heritage Council. A variety of consultation techniques were used to enable the residents of Killucan and Rathwire to participate in the process, and the response rate indicated a high degree of interest in the exercises.

2.1 A variety of community consultation techniques were used to ensure that a wide range of local residents participated in the production of this Village Design Statement. These techniques included:

- An introduction meeting in the village with the local residents, introducing the concept of Village Design Statements, and explaining the process that would follow.
- A 'Key Issues Leaflet' and 'Questionnaire Survey', which were produced and distributed to local residents. These highlighted important key issues arising from preliminary site visits and introductory meeting. Local residents were invited to comment and to confirm key issues for further debate at the VDS workshop.
- A 'Community Photo Survey' conducted by community members, highlighting likes, dislikes, and opportunities for improvement within the village.



All of the comments received from the 'Key Issues Leaflet', 'Questionnaire Survey' and workshops were catalogued and used to determine the guidelines in this VDS. Some of the workshop comments are shown throughout this document.

'Very worthwhile. I hope that it proves helpful in the future planning of Rathwire.'

'Very interesting and relaxed atmosphere, good meeting.'

'Opportunity to know what is taking place and have a say in the matter.'

'This is a really useful system to use & its great to be involved. As a 'newy' to the area its good for learning about the area.'

'Excellent.'

workshop comments

Photographs taken at the Killucan & Rathwire VDS community consultation workshop.

3.1 Location and Profile

Killucan and Rathwire are two small villages situated within a short distance of one another in a surrounding landscape of gently undulating hills and rich mature trees. They are located in the east lowlands of Westmeath County, 34 miles west of Dublin and 6.5 miles east of Mullingar. Killucan and Rathwire are relatively self-sufficient, with a number of shops, post office, pubs, butcher, garage, community centre, small park, primary and secondary school, and two churches.

"I see Killucan Rathwire as one village"
"I like the separateness of the two villages"
"Newer residents feel that there is one village"

3.3 History and Evolution of the Villages

Both villages are medieval in origin and although they are quite separate have been linked throughout history because of their close proximity.

Killucan

Killucan lies at the meeting point of six roads. Some sources believe that Killucan derives its name from an abbey founded by Saint Lucien, which subsequently became the parish church. Certainly the remains of an old church, traditionally thought to have been destroyed by Cromwell, can be found near the Protestant church in the village. However other sources state that the name is a corruption of Cille Etchain (The Church of Etchain) who was bishop of Clonfad in the 6th century.

On 10 May 1414 was the Battle of Killucan as recorded in the Annals of the Four Masters.

Cromwell's army on its return from Drogheda burned down the monastery at Killucan and executed the monks. This



St Etchen's on the site of the old Monastery



One of the early streets leading to the centre of Killucan

monastery had been established in the 6th century and the old church remained an abbey until the 1300s when it was converted into the parish church of St Margaret. The present church of St Etchen was built in 1813 with the rectory and national school standing on the outskirts of the village. A Presbyterian Church was erected in 1844. Almost opposite are three wayside crosses dating from the 16th and 17th centuries.

Around 1785, Thomas and William Keegan, two stone masons, walked from Castlelost to Mullingar looking for work. After spending ten years working for Lord



The old Library building

Greville in Mullingar, Thomas left and walked to Killucan where Lord Longford's agent gave him the building of most of Killucan village as it stands today. The Market House was completed in 1838 and the date and name of Thomas Keegan is on a plaque on the southern gable.

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The Rath

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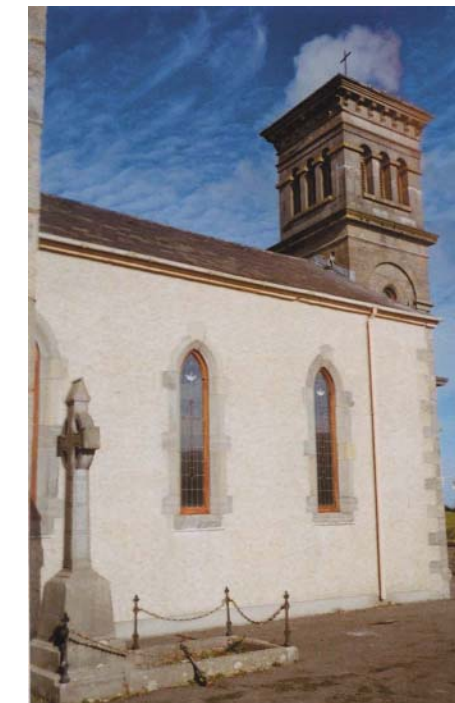
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By 1943 Killucan had a population of 109. Dances were held regularly in the Killucan Hall. There was a village post office, 3 banks (open 1 day each week), a monthly fair was held on the third Tuesday on each month, and the weekly market held each Tuesday.

Rathwire



St Joseph's Catholic Church



View of the original main street of Rathwire. This area was once covered in forests and has been populated since earliest times. A stone hatchet or battle-axe was found near The Downs dating from the earlier period of the Neolithic age (4000 - 5000 years ago). One of the finest stone axes ever found in Ireland was discovered at Clonmickilrail, near Killucan together with a chisel, bridle bits, spearhead and Celtic brooch, all dating from the Bronze Age.

There were many raths in the area including a great rath at Higginstown. The great rath at Rathwire is an earthwork fortification, probably the principal fortress of the district. Legend has it that the motte may be sepulchral, containing the casket of some pagan prince named Guaire, hence the name Rath-guaire. Tradition tells of the motte dog, with golden chain and collar, who guards his master and has even been known to chase intruders from

3.4 VILLAGE LIFE TODAY

Community

Killucan and Rathwire have a relatively good community spirit and have various committees who are very active in running both villages. They share a community centre and library in Rathwire.

The Elderly

There are a good percentage of elderly people in the village and there is a successful and energetic Golden Years club.

3.2 Demographic Trends

Killucan and Rathwire have a joint population of approximately 623, this is a dramatic increase on the 1996 count of 357. This is due to the addition of a new housing development of 47 houses in Rathwire and the influx of commuters to the area. There are also plans and current developments that total 89 dwellings which, when completed, according to WCC will give Killucan and Rathwire a total population of 899.

There is a good mix of old and young people in the area, with increasing numbers of young families and commuter couples moving to the villages.



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Killucan Community Park

Children and Teenagers

There are a large number of children in the area, which has increased considerably in recent years. The main primary school is in Rathwire and there is a secondary school in Killucan. There are many organised sports and arts groups for the younger children, however, there is a need for more activities for teenagers. There is a problem with teenagers hanging around the centre at night, and vandalism. A current shortage of suitable facilitators is preventing youth groups and other activity groups being successful.

Leisure

The current GAA pitch and buildings are situated in the next village, but a new pitch is to be located between Killucan and Rathwire, which should provide excellent sports potential for both villages. The

“Good village life, people here tend to get involved in community affairs”

community centre is also used for activities such as kick-boxing and dance classes.

Killucan’s community park is an asset to the area and has the potential to be more of a focal point within the villages.

As well as sports, there are successful community classes always fully subscribed

The many walks around the area should be better signed and promoted.

Employment

There is little employment in Killucan and Rathwire, most people commute to work out of the village, or are retired. The village could cope with small light industrial development. The development of tourism in relation to the canal would also provide an employment opportunity for the village.

Services

Recycling Facilities – a few local residents

“Need a better sense of community, commuters not as much part of community, out of the village most of the day, not use to village life.”

currently organise the villages recycling. However, the villages would benefit from improved facilities and opportunities for more types of recycling.

A new crèche is to be built which will be a great asset for both villages.

Killucan and Rathwire overall have good existing services, however, they need to be better advertised. Village Information signage is suggested as an idea for tourists

“The village green has amenities for tennis, picnicking, and basketball. Perhaps when the development at the Glebe is finished we will see more open ground and tree development to enhance the village”

“Children will lead to consolidation of existing and new communities”

Public Transport

There are public transport links to the nearby towns, but these do not run frequently. There is, however, currently not a sufficient demand to sustain a more frequent service. The vast majority of residents rely on their own cars.

There is also the potential to improve transport links by reopening the station



Killucan Community Park

KEY POINTS SECTION 3

- Active core community
- More activities and groups needed for increasing young person numbers
- Potential for light industry for employment needs
- Good facilities for sports and clubs
- Potential for tourism

4.1 Shape of the Village

The two villages form an apparently large and irregular settlement, which has emerged from its historic development and because of the Church of Ireland’s land hold.



Rathwire developed opposite the castle, and essentially the original village only consists of two main streets. The Longford houses built near the mill (which is now the Cammillian Father’s Nursing Home) are at the southern most boundary of Rathwire. Newer development in general has not respected this pattern, and the village’s character is slowly being lost. The newest housing schemes have developed in the open fields along and off from the main road, at the eastern edge of the village. The road joins up with the road from Killucan, and new and planned housing developments are starting to progress along the road, almost joining the back of the two villages together.

Killucan grew up round the Abbey (now St Etchens), with dwellings situated mostly in a linear pattern along the six routes into an obvious centre. The small centre mostly consists of shops, pubs and other commercial uses. Residential use mainly lines the roads leading in to the village. There are also sporadically placed buildings of various natures surrounding the community park.

Whilst it is acknowledged that appropriate new development should be encouraged to stimulate the local economy and meet local needs within the district, it is important that any planned new development should be contained within the existing village as much as possible, in order to protect Killucan and Rathwire’s distinct character and attractive landscape setting without causing divisions.

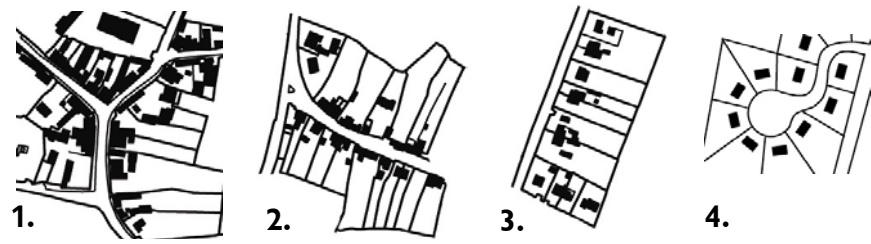


4.2 Street Pattern and Built Form:

Historical Parts of Killucan and Rathwire

Within the older parts of both villages, the streetscape is characterised by a dense arrangement of plots and buildings that have a close relationship with the road layout. Most of the buildings tend to be terraced, or closely placed, with little or no setback from the pavement. Their roof ridge, front wall and any front boundary treatments (such as a garden wall or pavement) all run along the edge of the road.

At the edges of Killucan village there is a less formal appearance, with houses having larger plots of land and setback from the road. In Rathwire, the Lord Longford detached cottages along Riverstown road are different from the main street and have a strong uniform appearance with small plots of land and a greater setback from the road.



1. Original Street Pattern of Killucan
- no set backs
- terraced and semi detached buildings
- irregular long narrow plots

2. Original Street Pattern of Rathwire
- no set backs
- mainly detached buildings
- irregular long narrow plots

4.3 Street Pattern and Built Form:

Recent Parts of Killucan and Rathwire

The streetscapes created within newer residential development on the edges of the villages contrast with those found in the historical, traditional parts of Rathwire and Killucan. This gives rise to a sense of fragmentation and separation that detracts from local distinctiveness.

The large new housing estates are a good example of the rigid application of standard housing design types and styles.

The majority of recent building plots tend to be uniformly rectangular in shape with detached or semi-detached properties, usually well set back from the road to provide space for front and side gardens as well as off-street car parking. Whilst this is responding to modern consumer demands, the effect is to greatly reduce the sense of enclosure along the streetscape, with little integration between the road and the building plots.



3. Riverstown Road cottages
- set back
- detached
- larger regular plot sizes

4. Modern Housing Estate Rathwire
- set back
- regular large plot sizes
- cul-de-sac or grid pattern insensitive to original village pattern.

It is recognised that there is a need to embrace modern design, but it is also important to recognise the need to encourage new development to reflect and respect the existing characteristics of Rathwire and Killucan.

4.4 Scale and Dominance

While Killucan's new developments have been on a smaller, discreet scale, Rathwire has been subjected to the larger estate development. These estates can appear visually monotonous due to the lack of subtle variation. Furthermore, standard application of road standards and layouts can often appear to have taken precedence over all other design considerations – often at the expense of local character. Future development within the villages should be of a scale that respects the historic pattern and grain of Killucan and Rathwire.

KEY POINTS SECTION 4

- Character of Killucan and Rathwire has evolved over the years:
 - › Gradual expansion along roads into Killucan
 - › Rathwire traditionally a smaller linear settlement.
 - › Early parts are in dense, closely arranged plots, extending a considerable length back
 - › No setbacks in the older developments
- New Developments tend to visually and physically contrast with the historical parts of both villages:
 - › inappropriate local materials
 - › visual monotony
 - › rigid application of road and parking standards

5.1 Broad Landscape Setting

Killucan and Rathwire's underlying geology consists of mainly the carboniferous limestones that cover most of central Ireland. There are however, quite distinct landscape types within the area.

The glacial landforms of kames and eskers are abundant around the area and create the niches and the settlement pattern that we see today.

The broader area is also characterised by the bogland and moraine areas, although the nearest bogs to Killucan and Rathwire are several miles to the south west.

The main general soil type in the local area is grey-brown podzolic soils, which are capable of a wide range of land uses, as can be seen by the agricultural lands and mature vegetation around the village.

The river Deel runs to the east of the villages and the Royal Canal, is to the south.

5.2 Important Views and Vistas

Killucan's irregular street pattern creates many different vistas and niches amongst the village. The village tends to look inwards because of its pattern, and does not heavily rely on its surrounding landscape. The approach to Killucan from Riverstown road is an important entrance into the village. The road rises up gradually to the impressive St Etchens church, which is framed, by the mature trees and stone walls.

The Glebe, with its mature trees and traditional stone walls, opposite St Etchens, is an area which is considered to be an asset to the village, and is currently being sensitively developed. The stone walls are also an intrinsic part of Killucan's character, as in Rathwire also. There are also several derelict or rundown buildings within Killucan that are detrimental to the village's appearance. It is suggested that they should be sensitively restored.



Aerial view of the setting of Killucan (left) and Rathwire (right)

Rathwire has been developed quite extensively in recent years and there is concern that this has encroached on views and that Rathwire has lost its identity. The once compact, two street village has now over quadrupled in size. There is a strong historical streetscape on the Riverstown road down to the Cammillian nursing home which is valued by local residents and should be preserved.



St Etchens is a landmark at the edge of Killucan

"Open space provides place for relaxing and viewing"

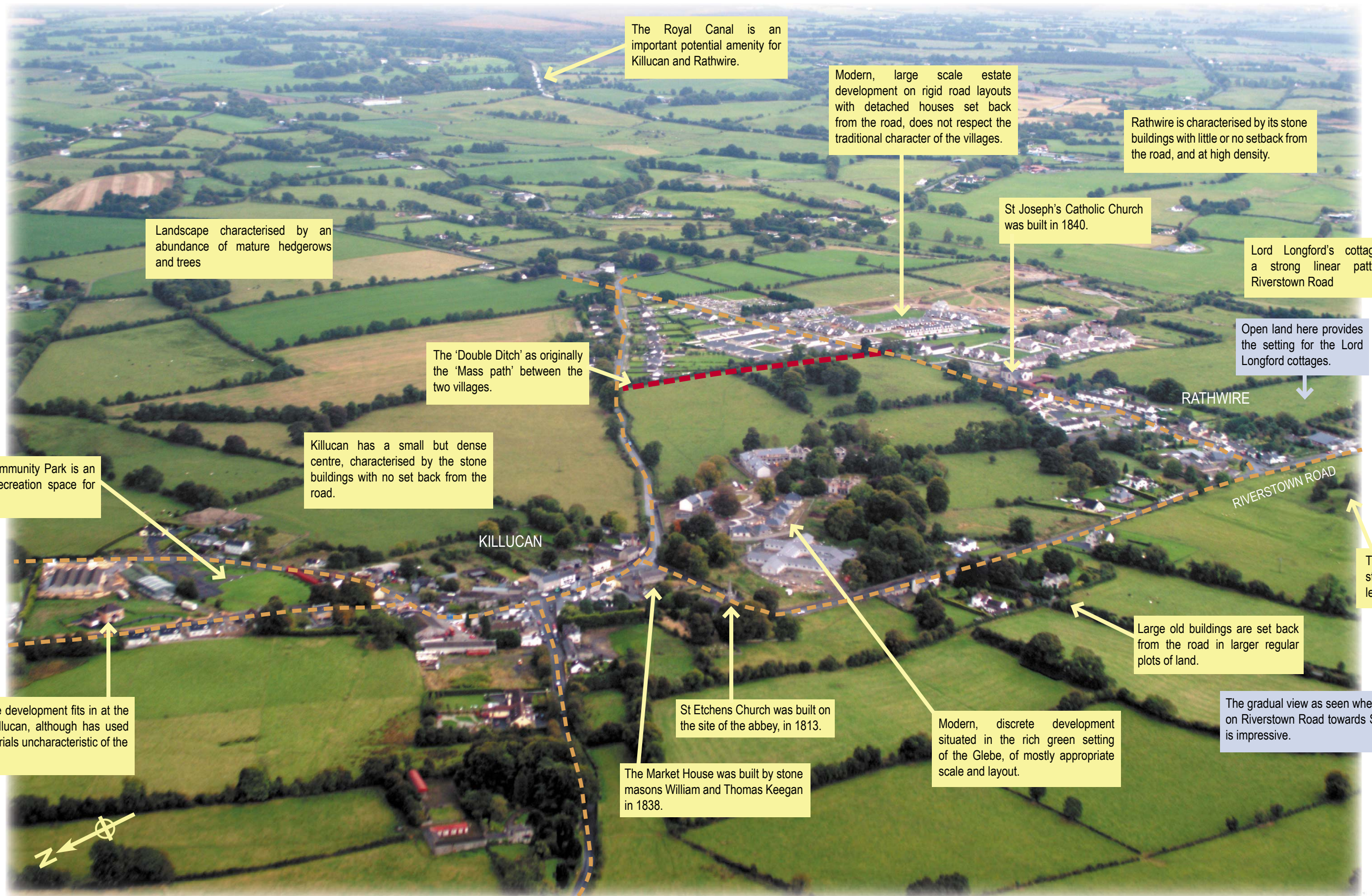
"Killucan needs more greenery. Old trees within the village need to be replaced and further trees could be planted"

"Should highlight the canal - beautiful walk along Riverstown River"

5.3 Landscape Features

The landscape features, setting and views of Killucan and Rathwire are shown on the aerial photo spread on the next two pages. This clearly shows how important the landscape setting is to the villages character.

THE VILLAGES IN THEIR LANDSCAPE SETTING



5.4 Important Open Spaces

There is a large area of land between the two villages, owned by the Church of Ireland, that presently is open and used for grazing. This is important land and should be kept open to preserve the boundaries and identity of Killucan and Rathwire. However, there are well-received plans for a new GAA pitch to be placed in one of these fields that would cater for both villages.

The Community Park is the one key area of open space within Killucan. This, together with the wider landscape setting, give Killucan its distinctive character. These open spaces also serve to reinforce important views into, out of and within the village, and contribute to the appearance and setting of the village.



The Royal Canal is an important asset to the area

On the southside of the old part of Rathwire there are three large fields that have been marked for housing development. This land is cited at the back of the old Lord Longfords cottages – important features of Rathwire. It is a concern that if the open space closest to the road were lost to new houses, the character and important views of this area would be lost too.

Within the new estate developments in Rathwire's there are some set-a-side 'green-space' but these are generally undefined small awkward spaces. It is suggested that new developments incorporate better-planned open areas that can be used.



View looking towards Killucan from the west

5.5 Established Planting

There are no extensive wooded areas in Killucan and Rathwire but their landscape is characterised by an abundance of mature trees and hedgerows.

The canopies and foliage provide important green backdrops to the village, as well as acting as important wildlife habitats. These existing mature trees and hedgerows should be retained and enhanced. A tree management plan was suggested by residents as an opportunity to maintain the rich greenness.

Other streetscape planting is very limited, comprising of low key ornamental planting at the edge of private gardens and window boxes. The narrow width of roads and pavements within the village make streetscape planting largely inappropriate. Whilst the majority of planting within the village and within gardens is of plants appropriate to the area, there are a few examples of inappropriate species (such as quick growing leylandii hedges), which do not reflect the character of the locality.

There is also concern about the lack of tree and shrub planting in the new

housing developments at Rathwire. The trees and hedges are an important part to the setting of the village and new development should take this into account.

KEY POINTS SECTION 5

- Undulating landscape with rich, mature trees and hedgerows are a character of both villages
- Open spaces at the edges of the villages are important to the setting and views of the villages.
- Essential to maintain the open space between the two villages to maintain identity of Killucan and Rathwire.
- Riverstown road provides good views of the old parts of both villages.
- New development needs to have better planned open/recreation space and more structure and ornamental planting.



6.1 Street Elements

Important focal features such as the original village centres, Market House, St Etchen's, and Community Park should continue to be subject to streetscape improvements. This could include improvements to paving, lighting, signage, and street furniture and the under grounding of all overhead cabling wherever possible, as well as the provision and reorganisation of parking spaces.

6.2 Parking – Killucan and Rathwire have few designated parking spaces due to the narrow roads, and traditional building and street design. Also the many sharing-commuters parking along the streets in the village all day, limit the space to park. The new housing developments all have provision for parking. All new development should include parking but in a sensitive manner. Buildings that incorporate parking behind the frontage, thus maintaining the traditional streetscape are preferable.

"Inappropriate cobble-lock paving used on footpaths, rights of way double ditch is..nearly decimated"

6.3 Pavements – The local roads for some of their length through the villages are unable to support footpaths on both sides of the road. Where footpaths are provided, these tend to be of varying quality and type of paving materials, and too narrow for wheelchairs or buggies etc. There is a need to maintain road safety provisions and aesthetic consistency in the materials used for paving, without detriment to the villages characters.

6.4 Lighting – Existing street lighting is of the typical highways variety and fairly unobtrusive. There is a need for street lighting to be extended to the perimeters of both the villages.

"Signage needs improved so that we are able to see them!"

"Stone wall outside the Glebe will be fantastic when it is finished"

6.5 Furniture – Killucan and Rathwire currently have very little street furniture like benches and litter bins for example. With the influx of new development, it is important for a coherent palette of street furniture for both villages so to avoid fragmentation of the area.

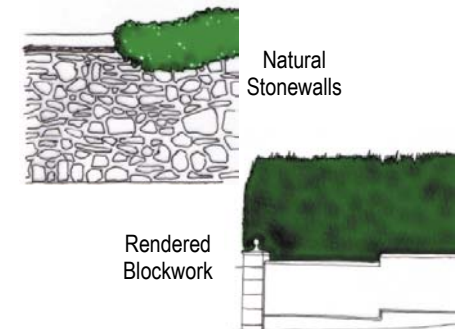


Stone walls and stone bench at corner of the Glebe

6.6 Signs – There should be better positioned and designed signage, differentiating the two villages. Also information and orientation signs would be of benefit to the villages.



6.7 Boundary features – The traditional stone walls are key to both Killucan and Rathwire's characters. Some newer development in Killucan has used red brick walls, which do not fit with the character of the village. Furthermore, the estate developments in Rathwire have used concrete blockwork walls that are considerably higher than the typical village wall. It is important new development considers the traditional styles and dimensions of existing boundary features.



KEY POINTS SECTION 6

- Street furniture, lighting, street planting and boundaries need to blend with the existing streetscape appearance
- Lack of car parking - call for sensitive parking provision in new developments
- Consistent wider pavements needed
- Provision of cohesive palette of street furniture to avoid fragmentation of the villages
- Improved and additional signage
- Stone walls are an intrinsic part of both villages characters



7.1 Buildings and Features of Interest

Killucan and Rathwire both have a number of buildings and sites in the area of architectural and historical interest that have played an important role in the evolution of the village's history. These buildings and sites of architectural and historical interest are highly valued by the local community and should be sensitively preserved and maintained as part of the local distinctive character and cultural heritage of Killucan and Rathwire for future generations.

Market House



St Etchen's



The Rath



The Old Library



Camillion Fathers Nursing Centre



7.2 Traditional Building Design

Distinctive character and sense of place are established by the predominant building design within the village. Apart from the larger architectural set pieces such as the churches and market house, which act as key location points, the majority of the buildings within Killucan and Rathwire fall into two general categories – the larger Georgian style buildings of which there are few, and the more common vernacular one and two storey buildings. Vernacular in that they are generally simpler in form and design, and typical of similar sized villages within the county. It is an extremely robust building design that can easily be adapted for modern new development designs.



Georgian style of house in Killucan

7.3 Variation and innovation in new development

The diverse and varied character of the built environment within Killucan and Rathwire has evolved over hundreds of years. The differing style and type of buildings would have been created at separate times when building trends, and choice of design and materials changed and developed. There are examples of various stone and masonry construction techniques within the village. The design of the buildings along the main streets differ in scale, density, design and materials in comparison to the design of some modern residential developments on the edge of the village.

"Develop the village while maintaining its integrity"
"Area turning into Dublin Suburbia in places"

Such variation of the design of buildings and their key elements is not necessarily detrimental. It can contribute towards creating an interesting and attractive streetscape in comparison to some places, which lack local distinctiveness due to the repeating of housing types and designs, with standard road layouts.

It is essential that such variation is based within limits, and careful consideration of a common design style that respects the strict relationship between types of construction (i.e. stone or blockwork) of buildings and the proportion of elements and materials used. Designers should be encouraged to use this approach within their creative interpretations for the design of new development, and as far as possible, should carry forward the predominant characteristics of traditional buildings within the area where the new development is to be located.



New house showing traditional and modern elements

"Rathwire has lost identity because of the influx of population and demolishing of old houses"

A typical terraced property illustrating the building elements that play a part in determining local distinctiveness and sense of place.

7.4 Stone Construction

7.6 External Render

7.7 Roof Features

7.5 Brick & Blockwork Design

7.8 Window & Door Openings

7.9 Window & Door Frames



7.4 Stone Construction

In the historical part of the villages, such as along the main street, stone building construction predominates, although most of the buildings do have external renders. Local limestone is probably the most predominant type of stone used. The hidden stone is often built in layers or courses and these can vary in depth. It is important to retain a render on buildings that, although constructed of stone, have always been rendered.

The quoins (larger square stones at the corners of the buildings) are generally larger than the rubble making up the wall, and the coursing runs through to the joints between the quoins.



7.5 Brick & Blockwork Construction

Blockwork is mostly confined to recently constructed residential estates and buildings towards the edge of the village. The use of exposed or contrasting brick or blockwork detail within building facades does not reflect the predominant traditional historical character of Killucan and Rathwire and as a result, can undermine local distinctiveness.

Some examples of modern housing designs have attempted to reflect the predominant traditional character of the locality with the use of external render and the incorporation of elements such as quoins and lintels to provide definition.

7.6 External Render

An external render provides a water-resisting surface and creates a unifying



finish to the buildings and can be smooth, patterned to imitate stone ashlar or textured. Traditionally these renders would be lime based, and painted with lime washes, often using soft and subtle characters. Rendered, coloured walls form one of the most characteristic qualities of Killucan and Rathwire, enlivening the street scene by providing variety and definition.



7.7 Roof Features

Most roofs in the villages have slate or dark coloured clay tiles which are visually recessive. The most common verge detail for roofs is a plain edge to the slate tiles and render, or stone-capped gables which are normally only used in stone construction.

Chimneys on village buildings are generally located at the main ridge of the roof and are frequently found on gable ends, often flush with the internal breast and usually capped with clay chimney pots.

7.8 Windows & Door Openings

In most buildings in the villages, the door and window openings are vertically aligned with first floor windows often set just below the roof eaves line, on smaller houses and cottages. Stone lintels are common in traditional buildings in the villages, and in some cases, flat arches or lintels are rendered or stuccoed to look like stone. Prominent window cills are a distinctive characteristic of older buildings in the villages being painted stone and typically of a deep profile and thickness.



7.9 Window & Door Frames

Window and doorframes are generally set back from the walls to provide protection from water and damp, giving a characteristic shadow to the openings.

Both traditional wooden sash and UPVC windows are prevalent in the villages and the design of glazing bars on windows in the village is diverse. Simple glazing bars that divide the window equally appear appropriate on older buildings, whatever the window material. Simple vertical plank doors are commonplace on smaller vernacular type buildings with moulded panel doors on larger houses.



KEY POINTS SECTION 7

- Buildings and features, which have been identified due to their historical, archaeological and architectural importance (such as the Market House and St Etchens) are highly valued and should be preserved and sensitively enhanced wherever possible
- Local materials and the prevailing 'traditional' architectural styles and building detailing contribute significantly towards local distinctiveness and sense of place.
- The design of new development should seek to visually and physically complement the character of the existing parts of Killucan and Rathwire by using the prevailing architectural detailing and appropriate local materials as a stimulus for creative interpretation.

The following Design Guidelines are based on a thorough analysis of the qualities and characteristics of Killucan and Rathwire which contribute to their distinct identities and which are appreciated and valued by local residents.

These Design Guidelines aim to preserve and enhance the important character features identified within the VDS, and seek to encourage proposals for new development to be based upon a considered understanding of the villages unique character.

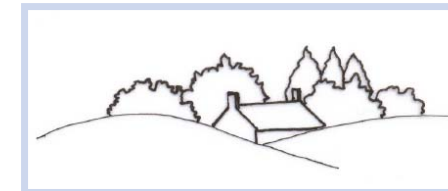
VILLAGE STRUCTURE

DG.01 Historically important open spaces and landscape features including 'The Rath' and 'Double Ditch', including views of these sites and their setting, should be preserved in perpetuity and respected with regard to the design and location of adjacent development.

DG.02 The historic buildings and open spaces of Killucan and Rathwire should be recognised as valuable resources within local tourism, economic and sustainable development strategies for the area.

DG.03 The existing structure and shape of Killucan and Rathwire should be respected as a product of their evolution. New development should be of a scale that does not overwhelm or engulf this historic settlement pattern but rather emphasises and respects the village's distinctive shape and pattern.

DG.04 Existing Public Rights of Way in and around the village should be retained and enhanced, and new Public Rights of Way established wherever possible to provide improved access into the countryside including the Royal Canal. Promotion of routes through improved signage and local tourism initiatives should be encouraged.



LANDSCAPE SETTING & OPEN SPACE

DG.05 New development, infrastructure and land management should respect the attractive, scenic "rural" character and distinctive landscape setting of the village and avoid visual intrusion into key views of the village.

DG.06 New development, infrastructure and land management should avoid direct or indirect damage to the delicate local ecologies surrounding the village including the hedgerows and trees.

DG.07 The 'green-space', owned by the Church of Ireland, between the two villages should be retained free from built development and kept as an open space to maintain both villages identities.

VILLAGE STREETSCAPE

DG.08 Existing established planted features, including the mature trees around the Glebe should be preserved and managed to maintain good health. New and replacement tree planting in the village should be of species appropriate to the location and scale of the space, with a preference towards native species where possible with avoidance of quick growing coniferous hedging.

DG.09 Attractive, safe and comfortable outdoor spaces should be created within the public realm, which are easy to access and move through and easy to understand. This should include provision for pushchair users and those with mobility impairments. Such spaces should have appropriate paving, lighting, seating and signage features, which complement the characters of Killucan and Rathwire.

DG.10 Within the new 'estate' developments extensive planting schemes to soften the rigidity and starkness would be of benefit to the villages overall characters.



DG.11 "Streetscape" improvements, including paving, lighting, signage and street furniture, the under-grounding of all overhead cabling and re-organisation of parking space, should be undertaken within the village, with priority given to central public spaces and along the main road corridors.

DG.12 Improvements to the visual appearance of buildings should also be encouraged, with the continued provision of floral displays (such as window boxes and wall mounted baskets) to provide seasonal interest and enliven village "streetscapes".

DG. 13 Opportunities for appropriate public art relating to both village's cultural heritage should be identified alongside "streetscape" improvement projects within the villages. References to historically significant people of Killucan and Rathwire such as Father Farrelly, or the Keegan brothers, should be considered.



MAINTAINING THE EXISTING BUILT FABRIC

DG. 14 Buildings and features identified as being of historical, archaeological, or architectural importance, including the Market House, the Rath, the churches and the traditional building frontages along the main street should be preserved and maintained as key assets of the villages.

DG. 15 Property owners should be encouraged to retain and maintain existing architectural details (such as decorated chimney stacks, ornate window frames and stonework, date plaques, estate owners' insignias, rendered wall finishes etc.) as important "character features" of the village.



DG. 16 Shop fronts, signs and advertisements should be restrained in design and work within the overall form and structure of a building and should be subservient to it. The buildings and activities themselves should be the principle visual attraction and not the advertisements and signs. They should remain less dominant to the building and appear as a component part of it.

DG. 17 External lighting of buildings and signs should normally be avoided, but careful, selective lighting of key buildings or of particular architectural features such as the Market House, should be encouraged. Lighting should not be a feature in itself, and fittings should be as small and unobtrusive as possible.

DG. 18 Replacement windows and doors should be of a style and appearance that respects the building's age and character.



DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

DG. 19 Design proposals for new development should respect the local characteristics of the site and its wider landscape context, by working with rather than against key features including the existing contours of the slope and established boundaries. Development should be adapted to the site, and not the site adapted to the development.

DG. 20 New development should be phased in pace with improvements to



local infrastructure, village facilities and services.

DG. 21 The established traditional patterns of development within the villages, including levels and road layout, should be used to guide the design of new development proposals. Careful consideration should be paid to complementing the original patterns of plot arrangements, building lines, setback levels, plot enclosure, building scale and massing, proportion of architectural features and the height/pitch/ridge of roofs.

DG. 22 Established "traditional" methods of construction and architectural detailing should be respected and used as appropriate for new development within or near the historical parts of Killucan and Rathwire, including the design of quoins and lintels, windows, doors, chimneys, and boundary features (such as stone walls), and the use of appropriate local materials. Development should aim to visually and physically complement the established "traditional" character of these areas.

DG. 23 Materials used in any proposed new development should fit in with the prevailing character of the villages, and be designed to reflect and respect nearby colours, textures, shapes, styles and proportions.

DG. 24 Provision should be made within new development proposals to use any existing but redundant buildings that contribute significantly to the village's character. Such buildings and features should be sympathetically restored back into active use.

DG. 25 Monotonous repetition of standard housing types and designs should be avoided. Variation in new building design should be encouraged within defined limits and based upon a common design "theme" appropriate to the location. All new development should complement the character of Killucan and Rathwire and contribute towards both village's distinctive sense of place.

DG. 26 Combining different architectural styles and materials should be avoided, to prevent creating visually disharmonious "hybrid" designs, which fail to reflect and respect the characters of Killucan and Rathwire. For example, half-hipped dormer roofs, wooden or steel boundary fences, and contrasting exposed brick detail are not common in Rathwire or Killucan, and should not be encouraged. The removal of original shop-front features and "render stripping" should be discouraged.

DG. 27 Proposed extensions to buildings and boundary features, such as front,

rear and side walls, should use matching materials in a style to complement the original building and adjacent boundaries.

DG. 28 Any new agricultural or industrial buildings should be carefully sited, and designed to reduce their apparent mass so as to minimise impact upon the wider landscape setting of the village and should be of appropriate height and scale to blend into the wider landscape setting. Large "shed" structures should be discouraged as being of an inappropriate scale within the village context and setting of Killucan and Rathwire.

DG. 29 The total energy used in development should be minimised as far as possible to encourage sustainable development practices in line with government initiatives and current legislation. This should encourage the use of locally-sourced, environmentally-friendly and energy efficient materials for construction as well as to minimise running costs.



PROVIDING FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

DG. 30 Community facilities for all age groups should be developed in line with future growth and development of the village, including provision of services for the elderly, and space and facilities for children and teenagers.

DG. 31 Facilities for re-cycling within Killucan and Rathwire should be improved alongside future growth of the village.

