

Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020
Incorporating Variation No. 1 made on the 13th July 2014

Volume 3
Interim Housing Strategy

Mayo County Council
Comhairle Contae Mahigheo
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Mayo County Development Plan 2014 – 2020

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Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This draft Mayo Housing Strategy has been prepared as a joint Strategy between Mayo County Council, Ballina Town Council, Castlebar Town Council and Westport Town Council in order to address the existing and future housing needs of Mayo for the period 2014 to 2020. Once adopted, it will replace the Mayo Housing Strategy 2008.

In view of significant changes that have occurred in the economy, the housing market and the construction industry, the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) published a Housing Policy Statement in June 2011, outlining significant changes to Government housing policy. This policy statement highlighted the need to review Part V of the Planning and Development Acts 2000–2011. This review has commenced.

It is anticipated that the review of Part V will change the nature and function of Housing Strategies and will include the standing down of all existing affordable housing programmes and focus more on the delivery of social housing supports. Therefore this Strategy is considered as an interim Housing Strategy until such a time as the revised Part V is enacted, at which time the Strategy will require revision or replacement.

This Strategy will become part of the Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020 when the plan is adopted and will also become part of the respective Town and Environs Development Plans of Ballina, Castlebar and Westport when those plans are adopted or varied to accommodate it.

1.2 Strategy Format

- The Strategy takes the format of a written statement with the following sections:
- Section 1 Is an introductory section outlining the status of the Strategy
- Section 2 Outlines the legislative context and sets out the aims and approach to the Strategy
- Section 3 Examines the housing demand and supply for the County
- Section 4 Examines the existing social and affordable housing demand and supply for the County
- Section 5 Outlines the main special needs categories
- Section 6 Estimates the social and affordable housing needs for the County for the period of the Strategy
- Section 7 Outlines the objectives to secure the delivery of the strategy.

Section 2: Legislative Context and Aims

2.1 Legislative Context

Part V of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2011 requires that all Planning Authorities prepare a housing strategy and incorporate it into their Development Plans. The Act also requires that Development Plans include a Core Strategy, which sets out an evidence based strategy for the spatial development of the County. This ensures that development plans are consistent, as far as practicable, with National and Regional policy as set out in the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines. Planning Authorities are required to demonstrate that the Housing Strategy is aligned with the population projections contained in the Core Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines.

Section 94(3) of the Act states that a housing strategy shall take into account:

- the existing need and the likely future need for housing for social and affordable housing
- the need to ensure that housing is available for persons who have different levels of income
- the need to ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of the different categories of households, as may be determined by the planning authority, and including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities
- the need to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds

Section 95 of the Act also requires that:

- the development plan shall ensure that sufficient land is zoned to accommodate the requirements of the housing strategy
- the planning authority includes objectives in the development plan to secure the implementation of the housing strategy, including the inclusion of objectives requiring that a percentage of land zoned for residential use be made available for social and affordable housing.

The Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 has resulted in a number of changes to the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2011. However these do not affect the substance of the Housing Strategy. The Act contains provision for the assessment of housing needs and for the preparation of a housing services plan. It also revises the management and control powers of the housing authority and introduces anti-social behaviour strategies. The Act also widens the scope of choices available for those seeking social housing by providing a more developed legislative basis for the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) and expands options for home ownership through the Incremental Purchase Scheme.

In June 2011, the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government issued a revised Housing Policy Statement. It outlines that the future of the housing sector in Ireland based on choice, fairness, and equity across tenures and on delivering quality outcomes for the resources invested. Its' overall strategic objective is to enable all households to have access to good quality housing appropriate to the household circumstances and in their particular community of choice. It also outlines the Department's view that there has been too much emphasis placed on home ownership in the past which has had a detrimental effect on the economy.

Other strategies to note are:

- The National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability (DECLG, 2011)
 - which outlines the Government strategy to address the housing needs of people with disabilities over the period 2011 to 2016.
- The Homeless Strategy Implementation Plan (DECLG 2008)

- states that the Strategy will be carried out primarily through the local Homeless Action Plan Process prepared under the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009.

2.2 The Aim of the Housing Strategy

The key housing objective is to enable every household to have available an affordable dwelling of good quality, suited to its needs, in a good environment and, as far as possible, at tenure of its choice. The aim of the Housing Strategy is to set out in the development plan policies and objectives to ensure that the housing needs of the existing and future population of Mayo are met.

In order to achieve this aim, the Strategy will:

- estimate the present and likely future demand for housing in the County and ensure that sufficient zoned and serviced land is available within the authority's development plan to meet existing and forecast needs for the Plan period
- estimate the amount of social and affordable housing required in the County for the Plan period 2014-2020
- provide that as a general policy, a specified percentage, of no more than 20%, of the land zoned in the development plan for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be reserved for social and/or affordable housing
- ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is provided to satisfy the requirements of various categories of households, including the requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities
- counteract undue segregation in housing between different persons of different social backgrounds.

Section 3: Housing Demand and Housing Supply

3.1 Housing Demand

This Section establishes the projected demand for housing units based on the population targets set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the West Region 2010-2022 and the Core Strategy section of the draft Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020.

For analysis purposes, the Strategy will focus on the County as a whole and then through the three larger divisions of the County outlined below

- North East Region
 - includes Ballina Town Council, Ballina Electoral Area and Swinford Electoral Area
- South East Region
 - includes Castlebar Town Council, Castlebar Electoral Area and Claremorris Electoral Area
- West Region
 - includes Westport Town Council , Westport Electoral Area and Belmullet Area

3.1.1 Population

The Planning and Development Act 2000–2011 requires planning authorities to incorporate a Core Strategy into the development plan. The purpose of the Core Strategy is to set out an evidence based strategy for spatial development of the County and to indicate the proposed distribution of the population assigned to the County in the Regional Planning Guidelines. The population allocations for the County and for the linked hub towns of Ballina and Castlebar are set by the Regional Planning Guidelines, from which the population targets as set out in the Core Strategy tables of the County Development Plan were derived.

Table 3.1 Population Allocation for County Mayo¹

Settlement Name	Settlement Type	2011	2014	2020
Mayo	County	130,638	138,439	148,413
North East Region				
Ballina	Electoral Area	24,021	25,455	27,289
Ballina (Town Council)	Linked Hub	11,086	11,454	12,510
Killala	Key Town	574	608	652
Swinford	Electoral Area	17,065	18,084	19,387
Swinford	Key Town	1,435	1,521	1,630
Charlestown	Key Town	755	800	858
Kiltimagh	Key Town	1,127	1,194	1,280
South East Region				
Castlebar	Electoral Area	29,665	31,436	33,701
Castlebar (Town Council)	Linked Hub	12,318	13,507	15,290
Claremorris	Electoral Area	27,553	29,198	31,302
Claremorris	Key Town	3,412	3,616	3,877
Ballinrobe	Key Town	2,704	2,865	3,072

¹ Source: CSO and Draft Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020

Ballyhaunis	Key Town	2,312	2,450	2,627
Knock	Key Town	811	860	921
West Region				
Westport	Electoral Area	16,829	17,901	19,190
Westport (Town Council)	Key Town	6,063	6,425	6,888
Louisburgh	Key Town	422	447	479
Belmullet	Electoral Area	15,442	16,364	17,543
Belmullet	Key Town	1,089	1,154	1,237
Newport	Key Town	616	653	700

The population of the County as a whole is estimated to increase by 7% over the period of the Housing Strategy. Table 3.1 indicates how this targeted growth is distributed throughout the County and the hub/key towns in accordance with the Core Strategy.

Emerging Issue
population of county to increase by 7% between 2014 and 2020

Table 3.2 outlines the age profile of the population between the Planning Authorities in the County. It indicates that 65% of the County's population is in the working age cohort (15 to 64) whilst 35% of the population is in the dependent age cohort (0-14 and 65+)

Table 3.2 Age Profile of Housing Authority Areas¹

Area	0-14	15-24	25-44	55-64	65+
Mayo	21%	13%	27%	25%	14%
Ballina	22%	12%	31%	23%	12%
Castlebar	21%	13%	32%	22%	12%
Westport	16%	10%	34%	23%	18%

3.1.2 Housing Requirements

The Core Strategy also estimates the household requirements for the County. This is estimated based on the change in population divided by the average household size for the particular area. The following table outlines the housing requirements for the County:

Table 3.3 Housing Requirements for County Mayo from 2011 - 2020²

Settlement Name	Settlement Type	No. of Households Required (2011-2020)
Mayo	County	6,909
North East Region		
Ballina	Electoral Area	1,333
Ballina (Town Council)	Linked Hub	593
Killala	Key Town	33
Swinford	Electoral Area	666
Swinford	Key Town	78
Charlestown	Key Town	58
Kiltimagh	Key Town	70

¹ Source: CSO and Draft Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020

² Source: CSO

South East Region		
Castlebar	Electoral Area	1,666
Castlebar (Town Council)	Linked Hub	1,238
Claremorris	Electoral Area	1,507
Claremorris	Key Town	186
Ballinrobe	Key Town	142
Ballyhaunis	Key Town	121
Knock	Key Town	62
West Region		
Westport	Electoral Area	920
Westport (Town Council)	Key Town	330
Louisburgh	Key Town	23
Belmullet	Electoral Area	817
Belmullet	Key Town	62
Newport	Key Town	33

The estimated housing required for the period 2011 to 2020 for the County is 6,909 housing units. This figure should not be taken as a requirement for new build housing over the period of the Strategy as it is based only on the population increase and does not take the existing housing stock into consideration.

Emerging Issue
6,909 housing units required to accommodate targeted population increase for County

3.2 Housing Supply

This section examines the data available relating to housing supply in Mayo from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) and the Central Statistics Office (CSO).

3.2.1 House Completions

House completions have fluctuated in County Mayo since 1995. House completions peaked in 2006 with 3,079 built in that year. However, since 2007, there has been a significant decrease in house completions, probably due to the downturn in the economy. Table 3.4 reflects these changes.

Table 3.4 Housing Completions for County Mayo from 1994 - 2011¹

Year	Private	Social	Total	% Change	% Private	% Social
1994	787	169	956		82%	18%
1995	884	117	1,001	4.7%	88%	12%
1996	978	110	1,088	8.7%	90%	10%
1997	1,349	82	1,431	31.5%	94%	6%
1998	1,431	96	1,527	6.7%	94%	6%
1999	1,684	113	1,797	17.7%	94%	6%

¹ Source: Department of Environment, Community and Local Government

2000	2,021	216	2,237	24.5%	90%	10%
2001	1,654	136	1,790	-20%	92%	8%
2002	1,660	34	1,694	-5.4%	98%	2%
2003	1,942	80	2,022	19.4%	96%	4%
2004	2,115	120	2,235	10.5%	95%	5%
2005	2,224	177	2,401	7.4%	93%	7%
2006	3,000	79	3,079	28.2%	97%	3%
2007	2,225	214	2,439	-20.8%	91%	9%
2008	1,639	135	1,774	-27.3%	92%	8%
2009	881	151	1,032	-41.8%	85%	15%
2010	556	51	617	-40.2%	92%	8%
2011	427	43	470	-23.8%	91%	9%
2012	271	19	290	-57.2%	93%	7%

The 2008 Housing Strategy identified that 9,124 new households would be created over the life time of the Strategy. The data in Table 3.4 above highlights that over the period 2008-2012 4,156 new households were constructed, and assuming that the current rate of construction continues the demand identified in the 2008 Strategy will not be met by 2014.

Emerging Issue
significant decline in the number of house completions since 2006

3.2.2 Household Composition and Household Type

The social and demographic profile of Mayo in terms of household composition indicates the type of housing that may be required over the period of the Strategy. Table 3.5 shows the composition of private households in Mayo.

The number of private households in the County increased by 4,639 units between 2006 and 2011, from 43,431 to 48,070. Household composition has not significantly changed since 2006. In 2011, 32.2% of households comprised of married couples with children. 27.1% comprised of single households, whilst 16.1% are of married couples without children. 8.5% of households comprised of lone mothers with children. This indicates that there is still a significant demand for family type dwelling units in the County.

Emerging Issue
demand for family type units

Table 3.5 Private Households by Composition¹

Household Composition	2011		2006	
	Number Households	% of Households	Number Households	% of Households
All Private Households	48,070		43,431	
One Person	13,043	27.1%	11,365	26.2%
Husband and Wife	7,707	16.1%	6,715	15.5%
Cohabiting Couple	1,553	3.2%	1,228	2.8%
Husband and Wife with Children	15,544	32.3%	14,647	33.7%

¹ Source: CSO Census of Population 2011

Cohabiting Couple with Children	1,187	2.5%	815	1.95
Lone Mother with Children	4,062	8.5%	3,459	8.0%
Lone Father with Children	721	1.5%	612	1.4%
Husband and Wife with other persons	359	0.7%	412	0.9%
Husband and Wife with Children and other persons	748	1.6%	187	0.4%
Cohabiting Couple with other persons	123	0.3%	866	2.0%
Cohabiting Couples with Children and with other people	109	0.2%	71	0.2%
Lone Mother with Children and other persons	292	0.6%	270	0.6%
Lone Father with Children and other persons	86	0.2%	78	0.2%
Two Family units with/without other persons	328	0.7%	386	0.9%
Three or more family units with or without other persons	1	0.0%	6	0.0%
Non-family household containing related persons	1,219	2.5%	1,293	3.0%
Households comprised of unrelated persons	978	2.0%	1,021	2.4%
Total	48,070		43,431	

Table 3.6 below details the type of private accommodation by permanent housing units for the County. Almost 95% of all households are accommodated in detached, semi-detached or terraced housing, despite the fact that 27% of households are single person households. This highlights a continued preference for houses over apartments.

Table 3.6 Private Households in Permanent Housing Units by the Type of Private Accommodation¹

Accommodation Type	Number of Households	% of Total
All Households	47,932	
Detached House	33,599	70.1%

¹ Source: CSO Census of Population 2011

Semi-Detached House	8,624	18.0%
Terraced House	3,229	6.7%
Flat or Apartment in purpose built block	1,305	2.7%
Flat or Apartment in a converted house or commercial building	546	1.1%
Bed Sit	42	0.1%
Not Stated	587	1.2%

It is also notable from Table 3.7 below that the number of houses built over the last few years in 'Scheme Houses' has reduced since the peak in 2006. Also the construction of apartment type units has substantially reduced with four completions in 2012. While apartments accounted for only 1% of house completions in 2012, they represented nearly 12% in 2006. This would indicate that there is little demand for apartment type units in the County as a whole.

Emerging Issue
no demand for apartment type residential units throughout the County

Table 3.7 House Completions by Type¹

Year	Individual House		Scheme House		Apartments	Total
2012	253		33		4	290
2011	349		101		20	470
2010	467		126		24	617
2009	774		207		51	1,032
2008	980		552		242	1,774
2007	1,141		988		313	2,442
2006	1,391		1,310		378	3,079
2005	1,069		1,075		257	2,401
Year	Bungalow	House Detached	House Semi-Detached	House Terrace	Flat/ Apartment	Total
2004	453	823	798	8	153	2,235
2003	560	562	670	53	177	2,022
2002	506	613	378	70	127	1,694
2001	338	696	285	2	196	1,790
2000	388	1,008	651	2	188	2,237
1999	376	858	351	4	208	1,797
1998	335	690	340	11	151	1,527
1997	328	621	239	7	236	1,431
1996	419	436	65	14	163	1,097
1995	473	35	402	16	75	1,001
1994	450	21	354	18	113	956

3.2.3 Housing Stock and Vacant Units

The Census of Population 2011 indicated that 25% of all housing units in Mayo were vacant. Table 3.8 below gives a breakdown for all the key towns. A high percentage of vacant apartments are located in the larger urban areas of the County. In Ballina 20% of the vacant units are apartments, Castlebar and Westport indicates that 30% of vacant units are

Emerging Issue
high percentage of vacant residential units in County particularly in the larger urban areas

¹ Source: DECLG

apartments, whilst in Claremorris 40% of the vacant units are apartments.

Table 3.8 Housing Stock and Vacant Units 2011¹

Settlement Name	Total Housing Stock	Occupied	Vacant Units		
			House	Apartment	Holiday Home
Mayo	65,732	49,562	10,194	1,582	4,454
North East Region	20,372	15,724	3,223	378	1,047
Ballina EA	11,210	9,038	1,459	231	482
Ballina (Town Council)	5,352	4,414	612	187	139
Killala	354	241	73	13	27
Swinford EA	9,162	6,686	1,764	147	565
Swinford	859	616	180	26	37
Charlestown	615	419	138	42	16
Kiltimagh	669	509	111	26	26
South East Region	27,503	21,612	4,192	770	929
Castlebar EA	13,746	11,163	1,818	321	444
Castlebar (Town Council)	6,009	5,073	636	274	26
Claremorris EA	13,757	10,449	2,374	449	485
Claremorris	1,866	1,377	277	193	19
Ballinrobe	1,382	1,041	221	103	17
Ballyhaunis	1,183	877	204	88	14
Knock	645	392	185	45	23
West Region	17,917	12,226	2,779	434	2,478
Westport EA	8,254	6,046	1,040	237	931
Westport (Town Council)	2,999	2,328	342	191	138
Louisburgh	379	192	46	8	133
Belmullet EA	9,663	6,180	1,739	197	1,547
Belmullet	634	450	101	58	25
Newport	452	286	80	64	22

3.2.4 House Prices

A comparison between 2008 and 2013 indicates that average house prices in Mayo have reduced significantly. Table 3.9 compares the average asking price for houses in Mayo for 2008 and 2013.

¹ Source: CSO and Draft Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020

Table 3.9 Average Asking Price for Houses in Mayo¹

	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	5 Bed
2008	€159,000	€184,000	€203,000	€269,000	€357,791
2013	€55,622	€57,161	€85,875	€160,897	€182,791

The average asking price for a 3 bed house has reduced by 42% between 2008 to 2013. It is clear that as property becomes cheaper, it also becomes more affordable and accessible. Therefore the conditions of the past which required government intervention to provide affordable housing have become redundant.

Emerging Issue
significant reduction in average house prices

House prices alone will not ensure access to the property market with a number of other factors such as funding, lending and the uncertainty of peoples' future income in the current economic climate dictating the future provision of housing for the people of Ireland. It is anticipated that the current review of Part V of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2011 will address these issues.

Emerging Issue
housing is more affordable therefore affordable housing programmes are becoming redundant

3.2.5 Rental Accommodation

The private rental sector has grown significantly due to a number of factors including, the price of housing, the economic downturn and the availability of funding to purchase housing in Ireland.

The Private Rental Tenancies Board (PRTB) was established in 2004 with the aim of dealing with disputes between tenants and landlords and also operates as a national registration for rental property.

Table 3.10 Rental Accommodation in Mayo 2011²

Settlement Name	Total Accommodation Units (Occupied)	Rented Accommodation	% of total
Mayo	49,562	10,953	22.1%
North East Region			
Ballina EA			
Ballina (Town Council)	4,414	1,562	35.4%
Killala	241	NA	NA
Swinford EA			
Swinford	616	208	33.8%
Charlestown	419	NA	NA
Kiltimagh	509	185	36.3%
South East Region			
Castlebar EA			
Castlebar (Town Council)	5,073	2,105	41.5%
Claremorris EA			
Claremorris	1,377	599	40.6%

¹ Source: Daft.ie quarterly reports

² Source: CSO (estimated from CSO data)

Ballinrobe	1,041	499	47.9%
Ballyhaunis	877	474	54.1%
Knock	392	NA	NA
West Region			
Westport EA			
Westport (Town Council)	2,328	1,049	45.1%
Louisburgh	192	NA	NA
Belmullet EA			
Belmullet	450	184	41.0%
Newport	286	NA	NA

The Census indicates that there are a total of 10,953 residential units rented in Mayo, this accounts for 22% of the total number of housing units occupied in the County. The table also indicates that the percentage of rented accommodation in the urban areas is substantially higher than the rural County.

Table 3.11 Average Monthly Rent for Houses in Region¹

	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	5 Bed
2008	€510	€619	€690	€763	€877
2013	€381	€461	€597	€644	€706

Table 3.10 indicates that rent in private accommodation has also fallen between 2008 to 2013. Private rental accommodation has an important function in the housing market, such as allowing new households to become familiar with the housing market; offering a temporary solution until individuals can enter the housing market; offering a location specific requirement and providing an alternative to home ownership.

Emerging Issue
one fifth of the total housing provision in Mayo is in rented accommodation

The rental market also allows Housing Authorities a more flexible approach in sourcing accommodation for particular needs, whilst ensuring a more social inclusion approach.

3.2.6 Housing Land Supply

The draft Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020 includes Area Plans for all the Key Towns of Mayo, with the exception of Westport which has its own Development Plan. A phasing approach for the release of lands for residential development has been integrated into all the Area Plans. This approach ensures that a certain percentage of lands zoned for residential development is fully developed before lands in future phases can be developed. Table 3.12 outlines the amount of lands zoned for residential purposes in the Area Plans. The table also highlights the potential housing yield from the zoned lands and also indicates the targeted housing requirement for each town.

¹ Source: Daft.ie quarterly reports

Table 3.12 Housing Land Supply¹ (Land zoned for Residential Only)

Settlement Name	Area ² (Ha)	Potential Housing Yield (Housing units)	No. Of Household Required ³
Total	824.1	12,101	3,029
North East Region	222.8	3,289	832
Ballina EA	160.5	2,534	621
Ballina (Development Plan)	155.4	2,465	593
Phase 1	25.9	619	
Phase 2	66.5	197	
Killala (Area Plan)	6.5	69	33
Phase 1	0	0	
Phase 2	6.5	69	
Swinford EA	62.3	755	206
Swinford (Area Plan)	31	225	78
Phase 1	2.1	39	
Phase 2	28.9	186	
Charlestown (Area Plan)	7.7	58	58
Phase 1	1.3	26	
Phase 2	6.4	32	
Kiltimagh (Area Plan)	23.6	472	70
Phase 1	4.2	84	
Phase 2	19.4	388	
South East Region	431.7	6,419	1,749
Castlebar EA	253.7	3,881	1,238
Castlebar (Development Plan)	253.7	3,881	1,238
Phase 1	9.4	188	
Phase 2	86.6	1,573	
Phase 3	157.7	2,120	
Claremorris EA	178	2,538	551
Claremorris (Area Plan)	62.8	722	186
Phase 1	11.1	93	
Phase 2	21.7	629	
Ballinrobe (Area Plan)	55.9	803	142
Phase 1	7	140	
Phase 2	48.9	663	
Ballyhaunis (Area Plan)	44.8	640	121
Phase 1	2.2	28	
Phase 2	42.6	612	
Knock (Area Plan)	14.5	173	62
Phase 1	5.2	56	
Phase 2	9.3	117	

¹ Total of undeveloped residentially zoned lands.

² Area of undeveloped residentially zoned lands

³ See Table 3.2 above

West Region	169.6	2,593	448
Westport EA	146.1	2,266	353
Westport (Development Plan)	127.6	1,964	330
Phase 1	46	703	
Phase 2	34.9	504	
Phase 3	46.7	703	
Louisburgh (Area Plan)	18.5	302	23
Phase 1	1.1	16	
Phase 2	17.4	276	
Belmullet EA	23.5	327	95
Belmullet (Area Plan)	18.7	278	62
Phase 1	1.6	32	
Phase 2	17.1	246	
Newport (Area Plan)	4.8	49	33
Phase 1	0	0	
Phase 2	4.8	49	

The table demonstrates that there is a sufficient provision of land zoned for residential purposes to accommodate the future housing needs of Mayo for the period of the Strategy and beyond.

Emerging Issue
sufficient lands zoned for residential development

Section 4: Social and Affordable Housing

4.1 Social and Affordable Housing

This Section outlines the projected demand for Social and Affordable Housing for Mayo for the period of the Strategy.

4.2 Housing Needs Assessment

4.2.1 Numbers on Social Housing List

Every three years, housing authorities are required to undertake an assessment of housing need in their functional areas. The Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2009 provides for a new process of housing assessment from the 1st April 2011. The 2011 Housing Need Assessment gives a snap shot of the overall picture of housing need across the Country.

Table 4.1 outlines the results of the Housing Needs Assessments conducted in 2008 and 2011. The table also highlights the Housing Need at the start of 2013.

Table 4.1 Housing Needs Assessment

	2008 ¹	2011 ²	2013 ³	% Difference 2008-2011	% Difference 2011-2013	% Difference 2008-2013
Mayo	760	935	1,410	23%	50%	85%
Ballina TC	430	702	562	67%	-20%	30%
Castlebar TC	170	218	417	27%	91%	145%
Westport TC	115	201	195	75%	-3%	70%
Total	1,476	2,056	2,584	40%	25%	75%

The table highlights that there is a considerable increase in persons qualifying for social housing in Mayo between the years 2008 and 2013, with the largest increase in Castlebar. Some areas have shown a decrease between 2011 and 2013, possibly due to the current economic climate, emigration, the movement between the four different housing authorities or the qualifying criteria for social housing, which changed in 2011.

Emerging Issue
2,584 applications on the social housing list at the start of 2013

4.2.2 Social Housing by Area of Preference

Table 4.2 below identifies the preferred location of those eligible for Social Housing at the start of 2013. The percentage spread between the three regions correlates with the more populated areas of the County. The South East Region accounting for almost 50% of those on the Social Housing list. The West Region has the lowest percentage, but would be consistent with the less populated Towns in the County such as Louisburg and Newport.

Table 4.2 Social Housing by Area of Preference⁴

Settlement Name	2013 Households	% of Total
Mayo	2584	
North East Region	831	31%
Ballina EA	561	22%
Ballina (Town Council)	418	16%

¹ Housing Needs Assessment 2011

² Housing Needs Assessment 2011

³ Mayo County Council

⁴ Source Mayo County Council

Killala	27	1%
Swinford EA	270	10%
Swinford	63	2%
Charlestown	36	1%
Kiltimagh	46	2%
South East Region	1254	49%
Castlebar EA	897	35%
Castlebar (Town Council)	417	16%
Claremorris EA	357	14%
Claremorris	131	5%
Ballinrobe	92	4%
Ballyhaunis	51	2%
Knock	38	1%
West Region	499	19.0%
Westport EA	341	13%
Westport (Town Council)	195	8%
Louisburgh	27	1%
Belmullet EA	158	6%
Belmullet	48	2%
Newport	25	1%

4.2.3 Household Composition Trends

The 2011 Census of Population indicates that 27% of households in the County are single person households, whilst 68% are classified as family households. Table 4.3 outlines social housing applicants by household type. There is a slight reduction in single person houses from 2008 to 2011 but this percentage is substantially higher at 51% compared to the total percentage of all households in the County. This highlights the importance of providing a mix of house types to meet the specific needs of an area.

Emerging Issue
need to ensure that a suitable mix of house types are provided based on local need and circumstances.

Table 4.3 Household Composition on Social Housing List

Area	2011 ¹ One Person Household	2011 ² Family Household	2013 ³ One Person Household	2013 ⁴ Family Household
Mayo Co Co	455	480	712	838
Ballina TC	383	319	210	255
Castlebar TC	95	123	148	194

¹ Housing Needs Assessment 2011

² Housing Needs Assessment 2011

³ Mayo County Council

⁴ Mayo County Council

Westport TC	106	95	102	104
Total	1,039	1,017	1,172	1,391
% of Total	51%	49%	46%	54%

4.2.4 Category of Need

Table 4.4 below provides an overview of the main reasons that people applied for social housing in 2011. The most common reason for social housing need related to 'finance', with 63% stating that this was the reason they applied. This is followed by medical and compassionate reasons at 16%; traveller at 6%; leaving institutional care at 4%; Elderly at 4%.

Emerging Issue
finance is the main category of need for people applying for social housing

Table 4.4 Category of Housing Need¹

Category of Need	Mayo	Ballina	Castlebar	Westport	Total	%
Not able to meet cost of accommodation	433	582	130	160	1,305	63%
Medical or Compassion	231	21	67	23	342	16%
Traveller	74	40	8	1	123	6%
Leaving Care	55	14	0	3	72	4%
Overcrowded Accommodation	38	5	5	1	49	2%
Unfit Accommodation	34	1	1	3	39	2%
Elderly	32	19	2	6	59	3%
Disabled	18	13	3	2	36	2%
Involuntary Sharing	14	4	2	2	23	1%
Homeless	6	3	0	0	9	1%
Total	935	702	218	201	2,056	

4.3 Social Housing Stock

4.3.1 Existing Local Authority Housing Stock

Table 4.5 below outlines the percentage distribution of the existing local authority housing stock throughout the County. The higher percentages correspond with the higher populated areas of the County.

Table 4.5 Existing Local Authority Social housing Stock²

Settlement Name	Housing Units	% of Total
Mayo	2958	
North East Region	739	28%
Ballina EA	447	17%
Ballina (Town Council)	271	10%
Killala	41	2%
Swinford EA	292	11%
Swinford	54	2%
Charlestown	43	2%

¹ Housing Needs Assessment 2011

² Source Mayo County Council

Kiltimagh	24	1%
South East Region	928	36%
Castlebar EA	609	23%
Castlebar (Town Council)	435	17%
Claremorris EA	319	12%
Claremorris	60	2%
Ballinrobe	90	3%
Ballyhaunis	78	3%
Knock	10	1%
West Region	931	36%
Westport EA	439	17%
Westport (Town Council)	329	13%
Louisburgh	16	1%
Belmullet EA	492	19%
Belmullet	38	2%
Newport	30	1%

4.3.2 Voluntary Housing Sector

Voluntary Housing helps to achieve a balance between social housing options by widening the range of housing choices and options to meet differing housing needs. Such housing is made available to persons/families who are in need of housing but do not have resources to provide any accommodation of their own. Such developments are usually funded by Government. Since the previous Housing Strategy in 2008, 99 voluntary housing units have been provided throughout the County.

4.4 Affordable Housing

Since Part V affordable housing was introduced under the Planning and Development Act 2000, 816 persons applied for affordable housing in Mayo. Table 4.6 below outlines the allocation of affordable housing in Mayo.

It should be noted that in addition to Part V, other schemes were available to provide for affordable housing such as the Housing 1999 Scheme and the Incremental Purchase Scheme. Part V relates to areas that have land zoned for residential development

Emerging Issue
affordable housing schemes have become redundant as house prices have fallen below what can be offered for housing under such schemes.

Table 4.6 Affordable Housing in Mayo

Number of Applicants 816			
Area	Part V	Housing 1999 Scheme	Incremental Purchase Scheme
North East Region	49	0	5
Ballina EA	32	0	0
Ballina	32	0	0

Swinford EA	17	0	5
Charlestown	12		
Swinford	5		
Foxford			5
South East Region	95	91	
Castlebar EA	15	70	
Castlebar	15	68	
Glenisland		2	
Claremorris EA	80	21	0
Claremorris	35	9	0
Ballinrobe	21	0	0
Ballyhaunis	24	0	0
Irishtown		12	
West Region	38	0	0
Westport EA	38	0	0
Westport	38	0	0
Belmullet EA	0	0	0

Section 5: Specific Housing Needs

5.1 Housing needs of the elderly and people with a disability.

Three grants schemes are currently available from the Housing Authority to meet the need of the elderly and people with a disability. These are:

- **Mobility Aids Housing Grant**
This grant is available to cover basic works to address mobility problems, primarily, but not exclusively, associated with ageing.
- **Housing Adaption Grants**
This grant is intended for people with a disability and is available to assist in the carrying out of works which are reasonably necessary for the purposes of rendering a house more suitable for the accommodation of a person with a disability who has an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment.
- **Housing Aid for Older People**
This grant is available to assist older people living in poor housing conditions to have necessary repairs or improvements carried out.

5.2 Homelessness

A draft “West Regional Homeless Action Plan 2013-2016” has been prepared for all housing authorities within the West Region. The Plan has been developed in accordance with the national homeless strategy and is consistent with current Government Policy...

The Plan will provide a platform for the continued provision of high quality person focused devices with access to the appropriate supports to live independently. The Plan places an emphasis on strengthening preventative policies, procedures, working relationships and services to reduce the overall level of homelessness within the region.

5.3 Traveller Accommodation

The Traveller Accommodation Plan 2009-2013 was adopted by Mayo County Council in March 2009. The purpose was to estimate the number of units of accommodation required to meet the needs of the Traveller Community for the period 2009-2013.

A review of the plan was carried out in 2011; the following key points arising from this review are as follows:

- Annual targets of 18 units per annum were established, a total of 156 units were provided by the end of 2011
- The number of Traveller Families on the roadside reduced from 28 to 3
- The target set for accommodation in the private sector has also been exceeded, with 15 set and 119 achieved. This indicates that the private rented sector is available
- Local Authority Accommodation, the Voluntary Sector and the Rental Accommodation Scheme has played an important part in providing traveller accommodation needs.

The improved access to the private rented sector, together with the Rental Accommodation Scheme should be more than sufficient to meet the remaining overall targets of the Plan.

Section 6: Estimated Social and Affordable Housing Need

6.1 Estimated Affordable Housing Need

Due to the current economic climate and the collapse of the housing market, the Government has indicated their intention to review Part V of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2011, with the intention of stepping down all affordable housing schemes, as outlined in their Housing Policy Statement issued in June 2011. The Policy statement indicates that it is not intended to abolish Part V as there is a continued rationale for capturing planning gain for residential development through resourcing of social housing supports.

Section 94(4) of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2011 requires that a housing strategy shall include an estimate of the amount of:

- Housing for the purposes of the provision of social housing
- Affordable housing

Section 94(5)(a) details the items to which planning authorities must have regard to when assessing affordable housing. The methodology for carrying out an ‘Affordability Assessment’ is outlined in ‘Housing Supply – A Model Housing Strategy and Step by Step Guide’, (DECLG) 2000.

However, due to the changes in the economy and Government Housing Policy Statement in June 2011 indicating that Affordable Housing Schemes should be stepped down and having outlined the situation to the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, it was agreed that currently it cannot be considered that there is any need for affordable housing. Therefore it is considered that there is no need to conduct an ‘Affordability Assessment’

Emerging Issue

no need to conduct affordability assessment, as affordable housing schemes are no longer applicable as housing can be purchased at a lower price than can be offered under the schemes

6.2 Estimated Social Housing

Section 4.2.2 above identified that at the start of 2013, 2584 applications were received in relation to social housing. This figure will be updated following the 2013 housing need assessment. In order to calculate the amount of growth in social housing, the average household size was used. Therefore the estimated amount of people requiring social housing at the start of 2013 is 6,718 people. It is assumed, for the purposes of the strategy that the number of persons requiring social housing will grow at the same rate as the general population for the period of the Strategy. Therefore it is estimated that by 2020 there will be 2823 households in need of social support housing. Table 4.7 shows the estimated number of households in need of social housing by area.

Emerging Issue

estimated that 2,823 household will be in need of social housing support at the start of 2020

Table 4.7 Estimated number of Households in need of social housing by Area.

Settlement Name	Estimated 2020 Households	% of Total
Mayo	2,823	
North East Region	922	33%
Ballina EA	627	22%
Ballina (Town Council)	461	16%
Killala	29	1%

Swinford EA	296	11%
Swinford	69	2%
Charlestown	39	1%
Kiltimagh	50	2%
South East Region	1.364	48%
Castlebar EA	968	34%
Castlebar (Town Council)	486	17%
Claremorris EA	392	14%
Claremorris	143	5%
Ballinrobe	101	4%
Ballyhaunis	56	2%
Knock	42	1%
West Region	540	19%
Westport EA	371	13%
Westport (Town Council)	213	8%
Louisburgh	29	1%
Belmullet EA	170	6%
Belmullet	52	2%
Newport	25	1%

Section 3.1.2 above indicates that for the period of the Plan 6,909 households will be required to accommodate the target population of Mayo for 2020. It is estimated that 2,823 households will be in need of social housing. Therefore it is anticipated that social housing will equate for 41% of the total house provision for the period of the plan. Therefore it is considered reasonable to apply a requirement of 20% of all land or equivalent be reserved for the purposes of Part V.

Emerging Issue

20% of land zoned for residential development be reserved for social housing.

6.3 Housing Distribution

Section 94(4) states that in making an estimate of the requirement for lands for purposes of providing social housing, the council may specify different requirements for different areas of the development plan.

Table 4.8 below highlights the percentage distribution of population, total housing stock, existing social housing stock and total future social housing provision if all the targeted numbers were housed by 2020.

At the regional level, the percentage distributions differ slightly by 2% which indicates that there is an equal balance between social housing provision and the total housing stock in the Regions. There is a higher percentage of estimated social housing stock for the period of the Strategy than existing housing stock in the three towns of Ballina, Castlebar and Westport. This would need further analysis when providing social housing in these areas to ensure that the total percentage of social housing stock equates to the total housing stock in the particular area. This should be clearer with the Government's review of Part V and the changes anticipated in the method of supplying social housing.

Table 4.8 Percentage distribution of population, housing stock and social housing.

Settlement Name	% Population ²⁵ (2011,2020)	% Households ²⁶ (2011)	% Existing Social Housing ²⁷	% Estimated Social Housing 2020 ²⁸
Mayo				
North East Region	31%	31%	28%	29%
Ballina EA	18%	17%	17%	19%
Ballina (Town Council)	8%	8%	10%	13%
Killala	>1%	>1%	2%	1%
Swinford EA	13%	14%	11%	10%
Swinford	1%	1%	2%	2%
Charlestown	1%	1%	2%	1%
Kiltimagh	1%	1%	1%	1%
South East Region	44%	42%	36%	39%
Castlebar EA	23%	21%	23%	27%
Castlebar (Town Council)	9%	9%	17%	16%
Claremorris EA	21%	21%	12%	12%
Claremorris	3%	3%	2%	4%
Ballinrobe	2%	2%	3%	3%
Ballyhaunis	2%	2%	3%	3%
Knock	1%	1%	1%	1%
West Region	25%	27%	36%	27%
Westport EA	13%	13%	17%	14%
Westport (Town Council)	5%	5%	13%	9%
Louisburgh	>1%	>1%	1%	1%
Belmullet EA	12%	15%	19%	12%
Belmullet	1%	1%	2%	2%
Newport	>1%	1%	1%	1%

²⁵ Percentage distribution of the 2011 and target 2020 population of Mayo.

²⁶ Percentage distribution total House stock Mayo 2011 Census

²⁷ Percentage distribution of the Existing Social Housing Stock in Mayo

²⁸ Percentage distribution of existing social housing stock + estimated social housing stock in 2020, if all are housed.

Section 7: Issues and Objectives to Secure Delivery of the Strategy.

The emerging issues identified throughout the strategy are as follows:

- population of county to increase by 7% between 2014 and 2020
- 6,909 housing units required to accommodate targeted population increase for County
- significant decline in the number of house completions since 2006
- demand for family type units
- no demand for apartment type residential units through out the County
- high percentage of vacant residential units in County particularly in the larger urban areas
- significant reduction in average house prices
- housing is more affordable therefore affordable housing programmes are becoming redundant
- one fifth of the total housing provision in Mayo is in rented accommodation
- sufficient lands zoned for residential development
- 2,584 applications on the social housing list at the start of 2013
- need to ensure that a suitable mix of house types is provided based on local need and circumstances.
- finance is the main category of need for people applying for social housing
- affordable housing schemes have become redundant as house prices have fallen below what can be offered for housing under such schemes
- no need to conduct affordability assessment, as affordable housing schemes are no longer applicable as housing can be purchased at a lower price than can be offered under the schemes
- estimated that 2,823 household will be in need of social housing support at the start of 2020
- 20% of land zoned for residential development be reserved for social housing.

In order to address the above issues and to secure the aims of the Housing Strategy, the following objectives should be included in the Draft County Development Plan 2014-2020.

Objective 1

It is an objective of the Council to review the Interim Mayo Housing Strategy 2014-2020 when Part V of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2012 is revised to take account of the new economic and policy context as outlined in the Housing Policy Statement issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government on June 2011 or subsequent guidance.

Objective 2

It is an Objective of the Council to secure the implementation of the Interim Mayo Housing Strategy 2014-2020 by:

- a) Ensuring that adequate lands are zoned for residential development in accordance with the Core Strategy
- b) Requiring that a maximum of 20% of all zoned land developed for residential use, or for a mixture of residential or other uses shall be reserved for the purposes of Section 94(4)(a)(i) of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2012
- c) Requiring a mix of house types in all new residential developments to meet the categories of social housing need identified for the particular area

- d) To ensure that the existing housing stock throughout the County is not under-utilised by exploring the viability of utilising existing vacant housing stock as an alternative to new build
- e) Encouraging social integration of minority groups.

Objective 3

It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the provision of suitable housing including type, size, design and tenure, in the County in accordance with the Core Strategy Tables (Table 1(A-C)), the Mayo Housing Strategy and the Development Guidance Document.

Objective 4

It is an objective of the Council to ensure that those with specific housing needs, such as the elderly, persons with a disability, homeless people and Travellers are accommodated in a manner which is appropriate to their specific needs

Objective 5

It is an Objective of the Council to take reasonable steps to secure the implementation of the Traveller Accommodation Plan 2009-2013, and any subsequent adopted plans

Objective 6

It is an Objective of the Council to take reasonable steps to secure the implementation of the West Regional Homeless Action Plan 2012-2016, and any subsequent adopted plans

Objective 7

It is an objective of the Council to support the development of housing for specific housing needs, including the concept of independent living for older people and people with a disability and to ensure where possible that housing for such groups is integrated with mainstream housing.

Objective 8

It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the provision of appropriate accommodation for older/dependent relatives within close proximity to the existing family home.

Objective 9

It is an objective of the Council to encourage the development of sustainable residential communities through the promotion of innovation, high quality building design and appropriate layouts , that prioritise walking, cycling and public transport options and provide for a high level of permeability, accessibility and connectivity to the existing built environment, services and facilities. In this regards all new residential developments shall comply with the recommendations outlined in the Guidance for Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and the Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide (DoEHLG 2009)