Rural Design Guide for Individual Houses in the Countryside

North Tipperary County Council

February 2009

Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann Thuaidh
North Tipperary County Council

Rural Design Guide for Individual Houses in the Countryside: North Tipperary County

February 2009

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How to use the Guide

The guidelines describe the various steps that need to be taken when considering rural house design.

Watchpoints

These give simple tips, hints, checklists or guidance for a particular topic. They are displayed in a box:

Main Objectives

- ❒ To stimulate debate about one-off house designs;
- ❒ To foster greater consistency in planning decision-making;
- ❒ To inform and inspire applicants, builders, designers and planners; and
- ❒ To help conserve and enhance the landscape and environment in County North Tipperary.

Ticks and Crosses

Comparisons are made and illustrated with a tick (good example) or a cross (bad example) :

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Guide

This Guide has been prepared to show the importance of good siting and sensitive design when considering a new house or extending an existing house in the countryside. It is intended to provide a common source of information and guidance for all those involved with building individual ('one-off') rural houses.

The main emphasis of the Guide is on reinforcing the distinctive local qualities of the County. It works on the basis that new development in the countryside should share some of the features in common with buildings and landscapes of a similar kind in the surrounding area.

The Guide also recognises that it is necessary to reinvent the country house and develop a new rural architecture for the 21st century, rather than simply remodelling or recreating the methods and manners of the past.

The examples shown in the Guide are not intended to provide 'ready-made' solutions, but instead are indicative of a range of general approaches and principles concerning the planning and design of one-off houses in rural areas of the County that the Council regard as necessary to consider in formulating specific design proposals. As importantly, applicants should always ensure that their final designs comply with the Building Regulations.

STEP 1: Assess your requirements — 1. Design Brief

- ❒ Draft a Design Brief.
- ❒ Appoint an Architect or suitably qualified designer.
- ❒ Start searching for a suitable site.

STEP 2: Select the Right Site — 2. Selecting the Site

- ❒ Consult with the County Council and assess relevant policies.
- ❒ Assess potential sites according to landscape; views; settlement pattern; climate; roads and service infrastructure.

STEP 3: Plan the Site — 3. Planning the Site

- ❒ Prepare a plan of your site showing all existing features and the proposed layout.
- ❒ Carefully consider topography; energy efficiency; building proportion and set-back; vehicle access; plot boundaries and garden design.

STEP 4: Design the House — 4. Designing the House

- ❒ Develop a design that is sensitive to its setting.
- ❒ Carefully consider building scale and form; elevational treatment; materials and colours; roofs and chimneys; windows and doors.

STEP 5: Make an Application — 5. Making an Application

- ❒ Ensure that all drawings and required information are submitted in the right format.
- ❒ Review your design against the Checklists provided at the back of this Guide.

STEP 1: Assess your requirements

- ❒ Draft a Design Brief.
- ❒ Appoint an Architect or suitably qualified designer.
- ❒ Start searching for a suitable site.

Landscape Analysis

Having identified a potential site which is likely to satisfy planning requirements, your Agent (e.g. Architect, Technician, Designer) should then undertake a thorough analysis of the landscape context prior to acquisition and development.

Refer to Step 5, Checklist 2, for Landscape Context Assessment guidelines.

The siting of a new dwelling needs to be compatible with the general principles set out in *Sustainable Rural Housing, Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (April 2005):

1. **The protection of water quality in the arrangements made for on site wastewater disposal facilities;**
2. **The provision and safe access in relation to road and public safety; and**
3. **The conservation of sensitive areas such as natural habitats, the environs of protected structures and other aspects of heritage.**

The Surrounding Landscape

Many rural houses in North Tipperary have developed over centuries, and traditional forms of building are often well integrated into their landscape setting. However, much new development has occurred without proper regard to the effect on the surrounding landscape and its wider visual impact, particularly when seen from public roads.

The careful siting of a new house in the countryside is essential to achieving acceptable development. Your agent will be able to interpret the landscape, identify the more likely locations and advise on alternative sites for potential development.

In starting your search for a site it is important to check with the County Development Plan and any Local Area Plans that may apply, especially in relation to:

- ❒ Policies for particular landscape areas;
- ❒ Land use zonings;
- ❒ Areas designated for heritage or amenity, such as Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs);
- ❒ Areas of Archaeological Interest, archaeology policies, Record of Protected Structures and the Record of Monuments and Places.

While the Planning Authorities recognise that applicants do not always have a choice in respect of site selection, if a potential site falls within or is located close to any such areas it will be necessary to take advice from the County Planning Section before proceeding.

Select the Right Site:

- ❒ Consult with the County Council and assess relevant policies.
- ❒ Assess potential sites according to landscape; views; settlement pattern; climate; roads and service infrastructure.

New dwellings that would detract from particularly scenic or vulnerable landscapes will not be permitted.

If a proper fit in the landscape is not achieved, then even a well-designed building can fail.

Traditional large house well set back from the road against a backdrop of trees.

New houses in the countryside need to be an integral part of their surroundings.

The key questions to be asked when looking for a site are:

- ❒ Would the new development detract from the quality of long distance views in the area?
- ❒ Can the local topography help absorb the new development into the landscape?
- ❒ Can existing vegetation in the vicinity of the site help integrate the new development with its surroundings?
- ❒ Would the new development intrude on views from public roads or public areas?
- ❒ Would new development be in keeping with the existing settlement pattern?
- ❒ Would new development result in the destruction of existing vegetation (e.g. roadside hedgerows)?
- ❒ Can the proposed site optimise the potential for renewable energy sources?
- ❒ Can suitable access be gained to the proposed site from existing roads?
- ❒ Is the proposed site in reasonable proximity to every-day needs (e.g. shops, schools, pubs, church, etc)?
- ❒ Is the site connected to or in reasonable proximity to essential services (e.g. water, electricity, telephone)?
- ❒ Are ground conditions suitable for a sewage treatment system?
- ❒ Is the site large enough to accommodate the type of development envisaged?

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

Assessing the Site

The landscape analysis will determine the suitability of a potential site in terms of its landscape character and the capacity of the wider area to absorb new development without spoiling that character.

Sites with no landscape features or that would result in the destruction of existing features should be avoided.

Sites with existing landscape features that can help absorb new development should always be preferred.

Landform

North Tipperary is predominately a rural county with a strong agricultural base. The landscape types range from the rolling valleys and uplands of Silvermines and Devils Bit Mountains in the south, the prominent Arra Mountains in the west, and the flatter land and river valleys of the Borrisokane lowlands and Templemore Plains that cover much of the central and eastern areas.

New houses in lowland areas can be especially conspicuous. Sites with existing vegetation should be selected in preference to those that are devoid of planting. Setting a building against a backdrop of trees or behind an existing hedgerow can be one of the most successful ways for blending new development with the landscape, especially for flat or gently undulating areas.

When selecting a site, carefully appraise the general landform of the area and **aim to avoid**:

- ☒ Sites on exposed hilltops with lack of shelter and where buildings would be conspicuous.
- ☒ Sites within intensively farmed low-lying areas with little natural screening, unless substantial new planting can be achieved to help absorb the proposed dwelling.
- ☒ Areas of boggy ground subject to frost and flooding.

Instead **look for**:

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

Landscape Context

A well-designed house must be sensitive to the particular landscape in which it is set. It must be informed by and respond to it, in a way that reinforces the local character and distinctiveness of an area.

Within hilly and undulating landscapes, sites within established mid-slope zones can often be more successfully contained by landform and existing landscape features.

Site selection should avoid contributing to ribbon development. The Council will resist further development where there exist/permitted 5 houses along any continuous 250 metres of roadway which covers the proposed site.

Exceptions may be made to the above if the application conforms to other Rural Housing Policies of the current County Development Plan.

Site selection should respect the local settlement pattern.

Ribbon Development

In all cases new sites should not contribute to ribbon development along roads or within undeveloped areas between existing building clusters. Any prospective site that would exacerbate ribbon development, or lead to the coalescence of existing ribbon development or settlements, should be avoided.

It is undesirable because:

- It extends urban influences into the countryside;
- Results in numerous accesses onto rural roads;
- Leads to the loss of roadside features (hedgerows, sod-and-stone banks, ditches, etc.);
- Sterilises backlands and landlocks farmland;
- Creates servicing problems (e.g. water supply, drainage, footpaths, street lighting, etc.); and
- Intrudes on public views of the rural setting.

Settlement Pattern

Respecting the existing settlement pattern in the vicinity of a potential site is fundamental to how well a new house will integrate with the landscape.

The most intrusive form of new development is the suburban style plot that bears no resemblance to the rural character of the locality. The traditional rural settlement pattern is one of scattered development surrounded by land, with the buildings always subservient to the landscape; while the suburban pattern is of regular plots with buildings and their gardens forming the dominant image. Such development changes the countryside for the worse, and when repeated leads to ribbon development and a

Avoid sites that would contribute to a repetitive suburban pattern of houses.

Aim to select a site that is surrounded by natural features of essentially rural character.

Unacceptable ribbon development

Possible grouping for family members

Possible alternative grouping for family members

Existing farm

Provision for family members can take the form of a cluster of new buildings around the existing farm, or in suitable groupings elsewhere on the farmstead. Vehicle access should be via an existing internal track or lane, as opposed to frontage access onto the public road.

Traditional grouping of farmyard buildings.

Traditional forms can be well adapted for new uses.

Rural Clusters

In suitable locations possible sites could be located to consolidate small clusters of already well-sited buildings, thereby contributing to a more defined form and increasing the opportunity for sharing essential services.

Typical cluster adjoining existing community facility.

A new house that forms part of a group served by a single shared entrance may be effective in avoiding excessive development with individual entrances onto heavily trafficked roads. Any such clusters should be small in size (as per the policies for Rural Clusters in the County Development Plan and associated variations) and preferably located adjacent to an existing community facility (e.g. Church, school or sports ground). The groupings should not be suburban in appearance, but sympathetic in terms of orientation, scale, proportion and materials to other buildings in the locality.

Select a site that is sheltered by natural elements and close to existing facilities.

Likely travel patterns are another important factor when selecting a suitable site. Energy used in driving from place to place can amount to a significant proportion of a household's total energy consumption. By locating a new dwelling closer to every day needs, such as the workplace, existing schools, shops, church, public transport routes, etc. transport energy consumption can be greatly reduced.

Example of award-winning family home based on sustainable design principles, including sheltered location, use of a ground source heat recovery system, high levels of thermal insulation, maximum use of natural lighting, and maintenance-free materials.

In many rural locations it should also be possible to consider specific renewable energy installations, such as solar panels, wind turbines, ground (or air) heat pump systems, and 'grey-water' recycling facilities. A potential site needs to be assessed to determine whether it can support such sustainable energy objectives.

SERVE Project - Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy Grant Scheme

The SERVE Project aims to develop a sustainable region in North Tipperary through the implementation of actions in the field of sustainable energy.

Under the EU funded Sustainable Energy in the Rural Environment Project, North Tipperary County Council will be administering a grant-aid scheme supporting energy efficiency (cavity wall and attic insulation, heating controls) and renewable energy (solid wood stoves, wood pellet boilers and solar thermal systems) measures. Details of scheme available at a later date. **(Please note that this information is correct as of February 2009).**

Sustainable Energy Ireland promotes and assists the development of sustainable energy and can provide wide ranging advice on current technologies (refer www.sei.ie).

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

Sustainable Energy

Site selection should be strongly influenced by energy-saving objectives, including being able to maximise on passive solar heating gains through site orientation and selecting a location sheltered from the wind.

Prominent sites that are exposed to the elements are to be avoided.

Service Infrastructure

When selecting a site ensure that:

- ❒ The ground conditions are suitable, with adequate percolation for a sewage treatment system, in accordance with the EPA 'Waste Water Treatment Manuals'.
- ❒ It complies with the Council's current 'Ground Water Protection Scheme'.
- ❒ It is large enough to accommodate the requirements of a sewage treatment system.
- ❒ A maintenance agreement with an approved agent can be put in place to upkeep the system.
- ❒ That water supply from a public source is available - if joining a group water scheme, confirmation from the group secretary will be required.
- ❒ It is large enough to locate a well (if this is the only option) at least 10m from the septic tank or treatment system and 30–60m from the percolation area (depending on the percolation rate).
- ❒ It is connected or in reasonable proximity to existing telephone and electricity services.

If a potential site does not satisfy roads and infrastructure requirements, it will be unsuitable for development.

Accessibility and Roads

Access to potential sites should be from existing entrance points on suitable existing roads, modified as appropriate to meet sightline requirements but avoiding excessive loss of existing roadside hedgerow.

In all cases, safety concerns are paramount and any proposals need to satisfy the requirements of the County Council's Road Section.

For further guidance on appropriate site boundary treatments refer to STEP 3 (Planning the Site).

Roadside boundary features should not be compromised by new development.

Roads and Infrastructure

When selecting a site vehicle access needs to be carefully considered in relation to category of the road, distance from the road, and existing roadside boundary features.

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

Development will not be permitted on sites with poor forward visibility to the road (e.g. on sharp corners), or with inadequate depth for set-back of buildings.

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Examples of contemporary houses sensitively located within the landscape.

Site Layout

Having found a location that satisfies the selection criteria set out in the previous section, the next step will be to examine more closely the existing features of the proposed site.

New dwellings are often placed to be seen, and conceived in a far too fussy and over-complicated manner, and with minimal new landscaping. The outcome is invariably suburban, with buildings that appear awkward within their surroundings, especially when adjacent properties vie for attention, rather than unobtrusively settling into the landscape.

The analysis should provide the basis for your agent to develop a site layout that is more sympathetic and integrated into the landscape.

Site Analysis

Show all existing features, including:

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

Understand the details of a proposed site:

- ❒ Prepare a plan of your site showing all existing features and then the proposed layout.
- ❒ Carefully consider topography; energy efficiency; building proportion and set-back; vehicle access; plot boundaries and garden design.

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Traditional house absorbed into the landscape setting.

Use natural slopes positively:

- The natural folds of the landform can help absorb the new house.
- Select naturally-occurring shelves or the gentlest part of a slope so as to minimise earth moving and to avoid excessive scarring of the landscape.
- For steeply sloping sites (e.g. in excess of 1:5) consider suitable split level (stepped) schemes that relate more closely to existing ground levels.
- Avoid the need for excessive cut and fill.
- Carefully shape the land around the building so that it blends more successfully with the surroundings while creating further shelter.
- Either remove excess fill or carefully grade it around the building to suit the natural slope of the land.

A new building should respond positively to a sloping site.

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Sloping sites can present the opportunity for creating an innovative solution to house design without detracting from the character of the hillside.

Topography

The position of a new house in undulating and hilly areas needs to be carefully considered to achieve a practical design which does not look out of place.

Avoid over-excavation or creating an artificial plateau.

Let the natural slope of the land dictate the building form.

Creating Shelter:

- ❒ Use existing natural features of the site to help protect the building from the elements.
- ❒ Arrange the site to guide the wind over and around the building.
- ❒ Use the house, out-buildings and garden walls to create a more enclosed micro-climate.
- ❒ Introduce shelter planting of native species to help dissipate the wind.
- ❒ Retain existing boundaries such as hedgerows, stone walls or earth and stone banks.

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

The total aperture of solar panels should not exceed 50% of the total roof area.

Building Form and Orientation

- ❒ A compact building form is best for reducing heat loss.
- ❒ A rectangular building with one of the longer facades facing south can allow for increased solar heating, day-lighting and natural ventilation.
- ❒ Pitched roofs should have one slope orientated south to allow for optimum performance of a roof-mounted or roof-integrated active solar heating system.
- ❒ Organise the internal layout of the house to make best use of sunshine and daylight - locate the most used rooms on the south side and least used rooms to the north side.
- ❒ Try to minimise projections such as bay and dormer windows, which can increase heat loss and are more difficult to insulate effectively.

The Greener Homes Scheme, administered by Sustainable Energy Ireland, is now available and provides assistance to homeowners who intend to purchase a new renewable energy heating system for either new or existing homes.

Scheme eligibility criteria and terms and conditions are available from www.sei.ie/greenerhomes.

Energy Performance

Considering energy efficiency at the site planning stage can have immediate benefits such as:

- ❒ Saving money on electricity and heating bills.
- ❒ Creating a more comfortable and convenient home.
- ❒ Making a vital contribution to reducing climate change.

Orientate the uses of the house to maximise on solar gain.

Water Recycling
Recent concerns over dwindling reserves of groundwater, increasing costs of domestic water supply, and costly sewage treatment plants has generated renewed interest in the recycling of domestic water. Techniques that need to be considered at the site planning stage for reducing domestic water consumption include:

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

Surface Water Drainage
All domestic buildings should be provided with a drainage system to remove surface water from the roof, or other surfaces where rainwater might accumulate (such as paved areas). Surface water discharge should be carried out to a point of disposal that will not endanger the building, environment or the heath and safety of people in the vicinity. The preferred method of discharge is the Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS).

Solar Energy
Solar Hot Water Heating Systems - comprise a solar collector (solar panel, flat plate or evacuated tube), hot water storage cylinder and a pump.
Solar Photovoltaic (PV) - involves generating electricity from the sun's energy that exists in daylight. PV systems can produce alternating current (AC) compatible with conventional appliances.

Wind Energy
Wind turbines - harness the wind to produce electrical power. The efficiency of a domestic system will depend on factors such as location and surrounding environment. A typical turbine needs to be mounted on a mast or tower. Siting can result in adverse visual impacts and needs to be carefully considered in relation to the context of the site.

Geothermal Energy
Geothermal heat pumps - transfer heat from the ground into a building to provide space heating and, in some cases, to pre-heat domestic hot water. A typical system can provide 95%-100% of a household's heating requirements.

Biomass Energy
Biomass energy is obtained from burning organic materials such as wood (chips or pellets) or natural oils (e.g. from crops such as rapeseed). Unlike fossil fuels the equivalent amount of CO^2 released during burning is reabsorbed by the new crops and forests replanted after harvesting, resulting in a zero-emission rating. Biofuels are currently 50% cheaper than fossil fuels to run.

Renewable Energy Resources

Renewable energy resources are abundantly available throughout Ireland. They offer sustainable alternatives to the dependency on imported fossil fuels as well as reducing harmful greenhouse emissions.

Many decisions affecting the energy performance of a house need to be taken early in the site planning and design process.

Refer to current Sustainable Energy Ireland publications (e.g. '*Your Guide to Building an Energy-efficient Home*').

There are specific planning requirements for the installation or erection of solar panels, wind turbines and ground heat pump systems - refer to STEP 5 Checklists for further details.

Proportion and Set-back

At an early stage it is essential to consider the proportion of the proposed house in relation to both the size of the available plot and the size of existing buildings in the vicinity.

The new house will also need to be set-back an acceptable distance from the public road to provide adequate frontage for planting and to reduce the visual impact of development.

Typical house proportion in relation to plot size and set-back.

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

Adequately set-back from road and absorbed by planting.

The set-back distance will vary according to plot size, adjacent building line and the natural features of the site.

The height of a new building further affects the suitable set-back distance - a single-storey or small dormer house may require less separation from the road than a large dormer or 2-storey house. In areas of existing housing, the set-back distance should be varied from that of its neighbours so as to avoid the repetition that may otherwise occur from a linear series of buildings.

The set-back on sites that are elevated, exposed or in sensitive locations will need to be determined according to individual visual assessment.

The size of a new dwelling should be suitably proportioned to its plot and of a similar scale as any existing houses in the area. The new building should be arranged to respect the privacy of neighbours and to avoid any over-looking.

Vehicle access and parking

Vehicles need to be carefully provided for:

- ❒ All parking requirements should be met on site and off road.
- ❒ Vehicle access and provision for parking should not dominate the site.
- ❒ The driveway should preferably be indirect, gently crossing the natural contours of the site or curving subtly around existing site features, as opposed to taking a harsh straight line from the road.
- ❒ Surface materials should be sympathetic to the rural character of the site (such as gravel with soft edges as opposed to tarmac with pre-cast concrete kerbs).
- ❒ Frontage parking should be avoided and instead provided to the side or rear of the house.
- ❒ Where the garage is attached, it should be subservient to the scale of the building.

Vehicle access and parking should be treated as an integral part of the site layout.

Boundaries

Boundary features are highly important to the landscape - their removal may also lead to potential traffic hazard by inviting parking directly on the roadside. New road boundaries and entrances need to be designed sympathetically, especially where several different frontages are adjacent to one another:

- ❒ Entranceways should be kept to a minimum width - with sight lines designed according to standards set out in the County Development Plan.
- ❒ New front boundaries should be restricted to a simple range of materials that are already common to the area, such as hedgerows, sod and stone banks and stone walls.
- ❒ Gateways should also be simple, constructed from timber or metal and defined by restrained piers of stone or painted render.
- ❒ For large houses constructed on substantial plots, higher standards for piers, splay walls and gates may be appropriate.
- ❒ For side boundaries, existing hedgerows are preferable, or simple timber fencing with new hedge planting.
- ❒ Suburban ranch-type fences, concrete block walls, and the regimented use of fast-growing conifers should be avoided.

Vehicle Access and Boundaries

The space around the new building should be considered as an integral part of the site layout, not as an afterthought.

Destruction of existing roadside boundaries should be avoided, except to the limited extent necessary, if not excessive, to create an entrance to the new house.

Aim to achieve simple entranceway treatments.

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Use existing site features to help absorb the building and/ or undertake new planting of mostly native species to provide a strong landscape structure.

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Use garden walls and naturalistic planting to help tie the building into the landscape.

Principles to be considered include:

- ❒ Retain all trees, hedgerows and other existing features (e.g. streams, rock outcrops) to provide a framework for the garden.
- ❒ Adopt a 'naturalistic' approach which is usually most appropriate in a countryside context.
- ❒ Avoid large expanses of manicured lawns and suburban style gardens with exotic species - these usually appear alien to their surroundings and do not provide habitats for wildlife.
- ❒ Plant the space between the house and the front boundary with trees in informal clumps.
- ❒ Create new hedgerows of mixed native species.
- ❒ Trees and shrubs which are locally native will be easier to establish than more exotic species, and in keeping with the character of the area.
- ❒ On exposed sites, consider more substantial shelter planting of native trees to help reduce the effects of cold winds and driving rain, whilst also increasing privacy.
- ❒ Use hard elements (paths and walls) to sensitively sub-divide the garden and to link it with the landscape setting.
- ❒ Incorporate practical needs sensitively into the overall design of the site, such as fuel and refuse storage areas, a compost/recycling area, clothes drying area, and a safe place for children to play.

Garden Design

Step 2 of the Guide stressed the importance of respecting the landscape context and the need to link the new house with its surroundings. This can best be achieved by retaining existing vegetation on the plot, appropriate boundary treatments, and new garden design.

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All applications for a new house in the countryside should be accompanied by a comprehensive landscape plan as part of any application, showing existing features to be retained and landscaping proposals (both hard and soft elements).

The use of standard house types that take no, or little, account of the context of the site or the traditional style of County North Tipperary is to be strongly avoided.

General Approach

A sensitively designed house is a subtle blend of materials, scale, proportions and traditional details, producing a composition of unsophisticated simplicity. Houses are often designed in a far too 'fussy' and over complicated manner, using imitation detailing and materials under the misconception that such adornment will create an appropriate 'Olde Worlde' effect.

In many cases, such designs are selected from pattern books, or else comprise a collection of random design elements chosen from a range of different sources. The result is usually confused building forms that frequently lack visual repose and appear alien to their rural setting - particularly when adjacent properties vie for attention, rather than sitting unobtrusively in the landscape.

It is necessary to take a fresh approach that is contemporary while being respectful of the past.

This section of the Guide is concerned with issues such as proportion, form, scale and massing (illustrated with examples of indicative approaches to the design of houses of various sizes and types), as well as the more detailed elements of house design that need to be considered in order to achieve appropriate and good-mannered rural buildings.

STEP 4: House Design

- Develop a design that is sensitive to its setting.
- Carefully consider building scale and form; elevational treatment; materials and colours; roofs and chimneys; windows and doors.

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Successful interpretation of traditional forms.

Scale and Form

It is important to firstly consider how the scale and form of a proposed new house will affect the setting, its visibility in the landscape, and its relationship to nearby buildings. It is essential the new building is designed to fit the site.

Traditional rectangular building form.

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

A dwelling with a large deep plan usually results in an over-scaled 'boxy' building with an expansive roof of shallow pitch. This is one of the reasons why bungalows often appear to be an inappropriate building design - they almost invariably are out of scale and incongruous to the countryside context.

Plan depths that exceed 7 metres create poorly proportioned boxy buildings with expansive shallow roof pitches that usually appear alien to the countryside.

Simple dominant form with additions.

Continuous eaves accentuate the linear form.

Accommodation can be achieved by breaking-down the floor plan into smaller rectangular units, creating a more sensitive composition. Diminishing ridge heights emphasise the single dominant form and look satisfactory.

Aim to achieve:

- ✔ Simplicity in design
- ✔ Rectangular, narrow plan forms
- ✔ Consistent roof slopes
- ✔ Limited variation to front elevation
- ✔ Well proportioned windows and doors
- ✔ Quality, predominantly natural materials
- ✔ Minimal ornate decoration

Try to avoid:

- ✕ Complexity in design
- ✕ Boxy, irregular plan forms
- ✕ Shallow pitched roofs
- ✕ Complex elevations
- ✕ Horizontally proportioned or arched windows
- ✕ Over-use of artificial materials
- ✕ Overhanging roof verges and barge boards

Key Principles

- ❒ Aim for Simplicity
- ❒ Avoid Complexity

Unsympathetic approach

Sympathetic approach

Colours

The colour of a new building should aim to blend with the local landscape. Bold, vivid colours should be avoided, especially on walls and roofs. Generally the use of 'earthy' colours that complement the natural hues of the countryside will be most appropriate for large surfaces (walls).

Roofs should appear darker than the walls. Whites, off-whites, light greys and ochres were often the dominant colours for walls of traditional buildings, and can effectively off-set more brightly painted elements such as doors. Windows and their surrounds should preferably also be muted in colour.

Contemporary building forms and materials.

Materials

Wherever possible, building materials that are more sustainable should be used, including:

Natural raw materials - such as unfired earth/clay blocks, clay tiles, slates and wooden fibreboard, as a more sustainable alternative to concrete based products.
Insulation - sheep's wool, flax and hemp which can be used as a natural fibre insulation material.
Timber - sourced from well managed forests.
Lime-Based Mortar and Render **-** which gives flexibility and allows the masonry to 'breathe'. Render can be self-coloured.
Natural Paints - based on plant oils and extracts and simple minerals.
Glazing - double glazed 'E glass' has an invisible metallic coating that reflects the heat back into the room.

Contemporary materials such as copper and zinc can be successfully combined with timber, glass, slate, rendered and painted blockwork to create attractive houses.

Stone should be used in a restrained manner to provide contrast and, in suitable locations, to help integrate the building with the landscape. In contemporary houses, the skilful use of stone can provide an attractive interplay of 'solid' and 'light' materials.

Natural stone garden and boundary walls can be especially effective in linking the new house with the landscape. In all cases where stone is used it should be sourced from the locality.

Detailed Design Considerations

Great care and attention to detail is needed to ensure that new buildings enhance rather than detract from the landscape. Generally:

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

Where dormer windows are to be used they should preferably take the form of traditional wall-plate (eaves) types.

The use of uPVC cladding, box fascias and soffits should be avoided.

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Rooflights of vertical proportions can be a preferred alternative to dormers, but need to be considered as an integral part of the roof design. They should be set flush to the roof profile.

Protruding, randomly placed and different sized rooflights should be avoided.

General Principles

- Roofs on new houses should aim to be simple and consistently pitched.
- Roofs that oversail the external walls should be avoided, unless an integral part of a contemporary design.
- Natural roofing materials should be used, such as flat dark tiles and natural slate (which are slightly textured and weather readily), sized to suit the scale of the roof and laid in diminishing courses from the eaves.
- Rainwater goods should be as discrete as practicable, rounded and of cast iron or plastic.

Chimneys are an important characteristic of traditional rural housing, either located on gable ends and breaching the ridgeline of the roof to avoid long slender stacks exposed to the weather, or arranged symmetrically towards the centre of the roof above an internal hallway.

Roofs

Roofs can be the most dominant element of a building when seen in the landscape, especially from elevated view points. The roof form, chimneys, dormers and rooflights should all be carefully considered as part of the overall composition of the house.

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Simple roof forms of contemporary house.

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New door construction should be simple, and preferably of painted timber.

Porches are a fairly recent addition to traditional rural houses. Where required, they should be designed as an integral part of the elevation. Good quality materials that match those of the house should be used.

General Principles

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

Windows, Doors and Porches

The elevational appearance of a building is determined more than anything else by the positioning, size and design of door and window openings.

STEP 4 - Designing the House

Inappropriate building extensions.

- The scale and detail of additions, garages in particular, should match the balance of the house and be subservient to it.
- With larger houses, detached garages may be more suitable, located discreetly to the rear or side of the main building.
- Over-scaled garage doors and the use of artificial materials should be avoided.

Extending an existing house.

- Extensions and garages should generally be built with similar materials to the existing house.
- Flat roof extensions should always be avoided.

Building Extensions and Garages

The addition of outbuildings or extensions can be one of the most controversial parts in the design of a house. The key objective is ensuring that the main house is clearly seen as the dominant element.

Appropriate building extensions.

✗ Flat roof

✗ Front elevation

✗ Over-elaborate

General Principles

- ❒ Conservatories or sun rooms should not be added to front elevations, or appear too suburban or elaborate in style.
- ❒ Additions to gable ends or rear elevations are usually most appropriate.
- ❒ Artificial materials (e.g. UPVc) should be avoided.
- ❒ Generally painted timber is preferred, finished in muted tones such as grey-green.
- ❒ Whites and bright colours can be over-conspicuous, detracting from the appearance of the house.

✓ Gable end

✓ Simple, to rear

Conservatories

Conservatories or sun rooms can form attractive additions to the house if well-located, as well as a means for achieving solar gain. Considerations of scale, proportion and spatial layout of the house are all important to ensure that a conservatory is an appropriate addition.

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Applying the Principles

The following examples apply the general principles of design to a variety of one-off housing types. They are indicative of the preferred approach to designing houses in the countryside and are not intended as patterns to be followed. In all cases it is necessary to firstly consider the context and then an individual house design that achieves a contemporary and good-mannered building.

In most cases it is recommended that the services of a qualified agent are sought to assess the potential of a site and to interpret the principles described in this Guide in a creative and appropriate manner.

- ☒ Shallow pitched, over-sailing roof
- ☒ Over-scaled dormers with artificial box fascia and cladding
- ☒ Chimney on pitch of roof
- ☒ Randomly applied quoins, stonework and decoration
- ☒ Ornate portico and over-elaborate door
- ☒ Projecting 'fussy' bay windows
- ☒ Windows with horizontal emphasis and mixed detailing
- ☒ Multi-paned windows flush with façade
- ☒ Inconsistent detailing around window openings
- ☒ Dominant garage addition or extensions of artificial materials

- ☑ Uninterrupted, consistently pitched roof
- ☑ Minimal eaves and verge over-hangs
- ☑ Chimneys flush with gables
- ☑ Well-proportioned arrangement of recessed openings
- ☑ Vertical window emphasis with plaster surround and sill
- ☑ Simple porch and door detailing
- ☑ Subservient additions (garage/workshop) with similar detailing as main building
- ☑ Simply proportioned dormers

Single-storey and small Dormer Houses

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1½ -storey and 2-storey Houses

- ☒ Use of breakfront elevation, giving unbalanced arrangement of main elements
- ☒ Complex hipped roof patterns
- ☒ Use of UPVc boxed eaves and barges
- ☒ Elaborate projecting bay windows
- ☒ Artificial stonework and unnecessary decoration
- ☒ Poorly divided windows with horizontal emphasis
- ☒ Sun room with hipped roof and ill-proportioned openings
- ☒ Addition of protruding elements to main elevation (e.g. turrets and double bay windows)
- ☒ Over-emphasised door
- ☒ Unnecessary quoinage and lintel detailing
- ☒ Dominant garage with 'up and over' door of artificial material

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

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Houses on Sloping Sites and Large Houses

- ☒ Siting on north-facing slopes
- ☒ Over-excavation and artificial plateaus
- ☒ Building form unrelated to sloping context
- ☒ Boxy floor plan requiring substantial platform
- ☒ Main elevation facing down the slope (requiring additional cut + fill)
- ☒ Barren cut slopes and artificial earth mounding
- ☒ Exaggerated scale of principal façade
- ☒ Wide plan building form with shallow hipped roofs
- ☒ Over-complex plan and roof forms
- ☒ Wide gable and turret add-ons
- ☒ Inconsistent window openings

- ☑ Siting on south or west-facing slopes
- ☑ Use of naturally-occurring shelves or gentlest part of slope
- ☑ Natural stone plinth to link house with site
- ☑ Minimal excavation by orientating the building with the contours
- ☑ Linear floor plan that extends across the natural contours, with internal floor levels to suit
- ☑ Narrowest elevation facing down the slope
- ☑ Sensitive earth mounding to surrounds
- ☑ A reduction in apparent building size
- ☑ Narrow plan form with projections to rear or side
- ☑ Consistently pitched roofs
- ☑ Well-balanced window and door openings with vertical emphasis

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Considering an Application

The local planning authority is committed to securing high quality design in the County and the need to engage effectively with applicants. The Council has a duty to communicate to applicants the particular issues that need to be considered before making an application, and to explain to them what is required. Pre-planning consultations are therefore encouraged.

Likewise applicants will be expected to demonstrate from the outset that careful consideration has been given to the location, siting and design of new housing and extensions to existing housing in the countryside. In most cases the assistance of skilled agents should be sought for preparing the application, especially for sensitive locations. This will not only help achieve good quality design, but may also speed-up the planning management process.

Applicants, and their agents, should familiarise themselves with the relevant policies of the County Development Plan, as well as the principles and advice contained in this Guide and other relevant Council documents.

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Submitting an Application

Applicants should note that, with effect from 31st March 2007, the mandatory requirements for making a planning application are set out in the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2002 as amended by the Planning and Development Regulations 2006.

Guidance notes for completing a planning application are obtainable from the County Council. Failure to fully meet the requirements may result in an application being rejected as invalid and returned for correction. It is in your interest to make sure that all required information and documentation is submitted to avoid unnecessary delay in processing the application.

In most cases, preparation of the planning application will require the services of an agent at some point in the planning process. It is recommended that a qualified agent is employed where a house is large or in a sensitive location.

An agent can act on your behalf in terms of planning advice, particularly for smaller developments such as one-off houses, as well as preparing the drawings necessary for the application to be considered by the planning authority. Alternatively, it is possible to have someone prepare the plans/drawings for you to submit with the application.

In either instance, it is essential that whoever prepares the application is familiar with this Guide as well as other specific requirements of the Council such as siting, traffic safety, public health, design standards, etc. as contained in the current County Development Plan.

STEP 5: The Application

- ❒ Ensure that all drawings and required information are submitted in the right format.
- ❒ Review your design against the Checklists provided in this section of the Guide.

With applications for one-off houses in the countryside, the omissions that commonly occur include:

- ❒ Lack of sufficient site level information. Indicate existing and proposed site levels, and finished floor levels for all new houses. Many sites in the County are sloping and housing must be designed accordingly.
- ❒ Indicate in as much detail as possible proposed building materials for all building elements - including their colour and texture, and if possible their manufacturer/supplier.
- ❒ Remember to consider the scale and orientation of any adjoining buildings. Contiguous elevations and cross sections may be especially important in assessing the interrelationship of new house types, and may be required as part of the application for certain schemes.
- ❒ Consider the spaces between buildings, their landscaping, planting and materials at the earliest stage in the design. A qualified Landscape Architect will have special expertise in these matters and should be involved in scheme design wherever possible, especially for sensitive or conspicuous sites.

Have you…

- ☐ Assessed the suitability of a site in terms of its landscape character and the sensitivity and capacity of the area to absorb development?
- ☐ Consulted with North Tipperary County Council if a site falls within or is located close to sensitive landscape areas or other environmental designation?
- ☐ Prepared a written brief of your requirements for the house?
- ☐ Considered the early appointment of a skilled agent to steer you through the planning process?
- ☐ Appraised the form of existing buildings before selecting a site to ensure that new development will be compatible with the existing character of the area?
- ☐ Considered a site where natural features such as trees and hedgerows can help assimilate new development with the surroundings?
- ☐ Avoided hilly sites where development may break the skyline when viewed from a distance, or would result in excessive cutting or filling of the local topography?
- ☐ Avoided elevated and exposed locations such as hilltops and ridgelines, which would increase energy consumption and fuel costs?
- ☐ Avoided sites that are subject to flooding, boggy, or in a frost pocket?
- ☐ Ensured that a site will not contribute to ribbon development or other inappropriate development form?
- ☐ Considered the micro-climate and the benefits of sustainable energy?
- ☐ Considered the proximity of a site to existing facilities, such as schools, shops, church, pub?
- ☐ Ensured that the site is accessible from the public road and can achieve adequate sight lines at the entrance without excessive loss of the existing roadside boundary?
- ☐ Considered the availability of existing service infrastructure, including water supply, telephone and electricity?
- ☐ Undertaken a Site Suitability Assessment (Percolation tests) to determine whether ground conditions are suitable for effluent disposal?

Checklist 1: SITE SELECTION

Further Details/Information to be considered:

The County has many designated areas for environmental protection, e.g. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), as well as designations for heritage protection such as Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) and Protected Structures. There are also numerous archaeological sites listed as Recorded Monuments for protection.

Lists of suitably experienced Architects are available from the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland (RIAI).

Undertake a detailed assessment of the landscape context - refer next page.

Refer to the requirements of: '*Sustainable Rural Housing - Guidelines for Planning Authorities'*, DoEHLG April 2005
and
The National Roads Authority (NRA) '*Policy Statement on Development Management and Access to National Roads'*, May 2006.

Consult with the Roads Section of the Local Authority if in doubt on vehicular access and road safety issues.

Any Planning Application for a new single dwelling (where not served by public sewer mains) must be accompanied by a Site Suitability Assessment Report, in accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency 'Wastewater Treatment Manuals' (2000) for 'Single Houses'.

A new Code of Practice on wastewater treatment and disposal systems serving single houses (p.e.10) is due to replace EPA (2000) in October 2009. Following its completion the Planning Authority will have regard to this new Code of Practice.

Landscape Context

On a suitable scale map of your site assess:

- The local topography (hills, valleys, ridges, contours).
- Surrounding villages, farmsteads and other one-off houses.
- Long distance views of the site from roads, lanes, public footpaths and other properties.

Landform

Prepare:

- A contour plan showing the general shape of the landform.
- A slope analysis diagram showing aspect, angle of slope and indicative areas suitable for development.
- Cross sections demonstrating an understanding of visibility to and from the site (noting the effects of existing vegetation, roads and other vantage points).

Vegetation

Note:

- Different types of cover around the site, e.g. woodlands, hedgerows and sod banks.
- Opportunities for extending existing vegetation patterns into or around the site.
- Locally occurring tree and shrub species.

Landscape Character

Assess the visual and subjective qualities of the site and its environs, including:

- Quality of views to and from the site.
- Definition of surrounding landscape character, e.g. moorland, pasture, arable, hedgerow pattern, etc.
- Presence of rivers, streams and other water features.
- Definition of field size and pattern, e.g. small scale, large, regular, fragmented, etc.

Climate

Identify:

- South facing slopes and orientation to benefit from solar gain.
- Potential frost and mist hollows.
- Existing tree belts providing shelter.
- Prevailing winds and potential areas of shelter provided by topography.

A thorough photographic record is essential for use during the site assessment process. Panoramic views are very useful for assessing the impact of potential development on the landscape setting.

Checklist 2: SITE SELECTION Landscape Context Assessment

In most cases, particularly in sensitive or vulnerable landscapes, North Tipperary County Council may require evidence that a thorough analysis has been undertaken as part of the planning and design process.

Have you…

- ☐ Prepared a detailed analysis of your site showing all existing features?
- ☐ Considered the detailed effects of topography in terms of building form and avoiding excessive cut and fill?
- ☐ Identified south facing slopes and orientation to benefit from solar gain, and noted potential frost and mist hollows, prevailing winds and potential areas of shelter afforded by topography?
- ☐ Examined the requirements for incorporating renewable energy sources?
- ☐ Considered the proportion of the house in relation to the size of the plot and scale of any existing buildings in the locality?
- ☐ Ensured that the building can be positioned to avoid overlooking or loss of light/privacy to neighbouring properties?
- ☐ Ensured that the site has sufficient depth to be able to locate the building back from the road edge?
- ☐ Carefully considered the means of vehicle access to the site?
- ☐ Ensured that sufficient front boundary vegetation can be retained while accommodating vehicle access requirements?
- ☐ Established means for protecting existing trees, hedgerows and banks, and noted opportunities for extending existing vegetation patterns into, or around, the site to help absorb or screen the new development into its setting?
- ☐ Considered appropriate boundary treatments?
- ☐ Prepared a landscaping plan showing all existing features to be retained and new planting and hard surfaces?

Checklist 3: SITE PLANNING

Further Details/Information to be considered:

Obtain a detailed survey of the site and its immediate surroundings showing contours; vegetation; boundaries; existing structures; historical or archaeological features; all pipes, septic tanks, wells, percolation areas, etc.; roads, rights of way and access tracks; water courses and wetlands; soil types and land drainage characteristics.

The Planning and Development Regulations 2007 make specific provision for renewable energy installations.

Checklist 4: BUILDING FORM

Have you tried to avoid...

- ☐ An over-scaling of traditional form and altering roof pitch to suit?
- ☐ A complex design solution?
- ☐ A cumbersome, boxy and near-square floor plan?
- ☐ Unusual and elaborate forms, complicated roof shapes, exaggerated and random changes in ridge line?
- ☐ Imitation styles, such as haciendas, chalets, log cabins and pattern book designs?
- ☐ 'Façade' architecture and randomly applied external finishes?
- ☐ Predominant use of artificial materials?
- ☐ Arbitrary changes in materials?
- ☐ Bright garish colours, especially in structural elements such as roofs and walls?
- ☐ Over-sailing roofs and boxed verges?
- ☐ Irregularly placed or over-large roof lights?
- ☐ Protruding bay windows and elaborate porches?
- ☐ Ill-proportioned openings and dormers?
- ☐ Over-scaled or contrasting additions (garages, conservatories, sun rooms)?

Have you aimed to achieve...

- ☐ A contemporary design that reflects modern lifestyles while being respectful of the past?
- ☐ A simple design solution?
- ☐ A wide frontage and narrow depth plan form, with additive elements where required/suitable?
- ☐ An external appearance that reflects the internal plan arrangement?
- ☐ A main elevation that is generally flat-fronted, except for porches, with subtle breaks in the building line used to add interest and to create and define external spaces?
- ☐ A limited range of building materials and, wherever possible, locally available?
- ☐ The use of natural materials - stone, timber, slate - in preference to artificial ones?
- ☐ Limited colours, and muted in hues?
- ☐ Consistently pitched roofs, dark tiled and with neat eaves detailing?
- ☐ Carefully located and detailed windows, doors and chimneys?
- ☐ Extensions or additions that are subservient to the main building and of similar scale/style?

Checklist 5: PLANNING APPLICATION

Have you…

- ☐ Fully complied with the guidance notes for completing a Planning Application, obtainable from North Tipperary County Council?
- ☐ Copy of the site notice and plan showing its position on site?
- ☐ Submitted a landscape context assessment?
- ☐ Submitted sufficient site survey details?
- ☐ Submitted a site analysis plan?
- ☐ Copies of the Site Layout Plan at not less than 1:500 scale?
- ☐ Copies of drawings of floor plans at not less than 1:200 scale?
- ☐ Copies of drawings of all elevations at not less than 1:200 scale?
- ☐ Submitted sufficient information to demonstrate the scale and orientation of the building in relation to any neighbours (including contiguous elevations as appropriate)?
- ☐ Submitted sufficient details of proposed building materials?
- ☐ Submitted required information for renewable energy applications?
- ☐ Submitted results of a Site Suitability Assessment Report, including test hole layout plan?
- ☐ Submitted a schedule listing all plans, maps and drawings?
- ☐ Submitted a letter regarding your connection to a Group Water Scheme (as appropriate)?
- ☐ Submitted the appropriate fee?

1. House at Littleton Raised Bog, North Tipperary - photo by author
2. Farmhouse in North Tipperary - photo courtesy of AJ Murphy, Architect
3. Cedar House, Cingleford, UK - Crispin Lamber Architecture (South Norfolk Design Award 2007)
4. The S House - photo by Ros Kavanagh.ie
5. House at Caherdaniel, Co. Kerry - PLM Architects
6. Traditional Farmhouse, Co. North Tipperary - photo courtesy of North Tipperary Council
7. The In Between House - photo by Ros Kavanagh.ie
8. Garden at Fedany, Co. Down - photo by author
9. Garden at Ballinterry, Co. Cork - photo by author
10. Garden in South Tipperary - photo by author
11. House at Patrickswell, Co. Limerick - photo by author
12. House in North Tipperary - photo courtesy of AJ Murphy, Architect
13. Westlake House, Peterborough - Spacelab UK Architects
14. Poustinia, Kilsheelan - Bates + Maher Architects (RIBA European Award Winner 2006)
15. Cavegn House, Vorarlberg, Austria - Ivan Cavegn Architect
16. Westlake House, Peterborough - Spacelab UK Architects
17. Seafield, Coney Island - Robinson Patterson Partnership (IAI Award 2004)
18. House at Lough Gur, Co. Limerick - photo by author
19. House at Borrisokane, Co. North Tipperary - photo by author
20. House at Patrickswell, Co. Limerick - photo by author
21. Cottage on Puckaun Road, Co. North Tipperary - photo by author
22. House at Grange, Co. Limerick - photo by author
23. Conservatory - photo by author
24. Conservatory - photo by author
25. House at Kenmare, Co. Kerry - PLM Architects
26. House at Barna, Co. Galway - Kiosk Architects
27. House at Grange, Co. Limerick - photo by author
28. Ardvey House, Isle of Harris - Graphite Studio Architects
29. The Dovecote, Co. Galway - Simon J Kelly + Partners
30. Drom Woods, Castletownbere, Co. Cork - PLM Architects
31. Carton Le Vert House - Antoin MacGabhan Architect (IAI Award 2003 'Best Building in the Landscape')
32. Bungalow at Fedamore, Co. Limerick - photo by author
33. Seafield, Coney Island - Robinson Patterson Partnership (IAI Award 2004)
34. House at Kilfeacle, Co. South Tipperary - photo by author
35. House at Dromkeen, Co. Limerick - photo by author
36. House in Limerick County - Murray O'Laoire Architects
37. House at Adrahan, Co. Galway - Simon J Kelly + Partners
38. House in South Tipperary - photo by author
39. The In Between House - photo by Ros Kavanagh.ie
40. House at Adare, Co. Limerick - Healy & Partners Architects
41. House at Borrisokane, Co. North Tipperary - photo by author
42. Drom Woods, Castletownbere, Co. Cork - PLM Architects

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