

Settlement planning

From a sustainability perspective, there is much to commend policies that encourage people to live in towns and villages. Service provision and service access by the citizen at all stages of life are much easier. Although the public policy environment specifies strong support for the development of settlements, the reality is that many intending house owners cannot or do not want to opt for that choice. Culturally, Irish people seem to prefer to live in individual (and ideally detached) houses. This option is rarely provided in towns and villages despite the serviced land initiative. Wastewater infrastructure is also problematic. There are more than 40 settlements in South Tipperary with no public wastewater scheme.

The most realistic option for the single detached house is to persuade a farmer to sell them a site and to seek planning permission to build on it. As more and more opt for this option especially adjacent to the main towns, the impact on groundwater of septic tank sewage systems has become a major concern. The Planning Authority (Tipperary SR Co Council) has had to restrict planning permissions (to indigenous applicants) in these town environs.