



4.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the population, housing and settlement strategies and policies for County Wicklow for the plan period and up to 2022. These strategies will seek to:-

- Set out a plan for the growth of the County's population growth over the plan period and beyond, in accordance with historical trends and targets set by the National Spatial Strategy 2002 - 2020 (NSS) and Spatial Policy Unit of the DoEHLG;
- Project the housing requirements of this growing population and evaluate issues arising with regard to housing supply and affordability;
- Set out a settlement strategy for this growing population, which will be consistent with the settlement and growth strategy of the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS) and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2004-2016 (RPGs). This strategy will identify the different types of the settlements in the County, outline their different roles and will set out indicative population targets for each settlement.

The County Wicklow Housing Strategy, which forms part of the draft plan and is a statutory requirement under the Planning Acts, provides the in-depth analysis on which these strategies are based (the complete Housing Strategy is set out in Volume 2 of this draft plan).

4.2 County population projections

County Wicklow is located in the most rapidly growing region in Ireland today (the 'Mid-East' region comprising the counties of Kildare, Meath & Wicklow). However, the rate of population growth in the County has not kept pace with other counties in the region. Its population has increased from 114,676 in 2002 to 126,196 in 2006, an increase of just under 11,520 people (Table 4.2A). This equates to a growth rate of 10.04%. This rate of growth is significantly below the growth rate in the other counties in the region as shown in Table 4.2B. Furthermore, Wicklow's share in the population of the region has been falling year on year, as shown in Table 4.2C below.

Table 4.2A: Wicklow population 1996-2006

| Year | Population | % change |
|------|------------|----------|
| 1996 | 102,683 | 5.6% |
| 2002 | 114,676 | 11.7% |
| 2006 | 126,196 | 10.04% |

Table 4.2B: Growth rates in Mid-East Region 2002-2006

| Year | 2002 | 2006 | % change |
|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| Region | 412,625 | 475,362 | 15.2% |
| Kildare | 163,944 | 186,335 | 13.7% |
| Meath | 134,005 | 162,831 | 21.5% |
| Wicklow | 114,676 | 126,196 | 10.04% |

Table 4.2C: Wicklow's share of Mid-East Region population 1996-2006

| Year | Mid-East | Wicklow | Share |
|------|----------|---------|-------|
| 1996 | 347,407 | 102,683 | 29.5% |
| 2002 | 412,625 | 114,676 | 27.8% |
| 2006 | 475,362 | 126,196 | 26.5% |

Source: CSO Census of population 1996, 2002 & 2006

The Central Statistics Office published new projections for national population growth in April 2008 and regional population growth in December 2008. These publications outline a number of growth scenarios up to 2026, making different assumption about fertility, mortality and international migration. A total of eight different scenarios are identified in the national projections and four scenarios for the regional projections, with the total population projected in the mid-east region up to 2021 ranging from 629,000 to 746,000 (from 475,362 in 2006).

These **projections** were evaluated by the Spatial Policy Unit of the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government, which published new regional targets in January 2009. It is important to note that the CSO projections do not take account of NSS policy, which aims to achieve more a more balanced growth across the



Country through coordinated implementation of NSS principles. Therefore the regional population targets set out in the DoEHLG's document are based on a view of future development trends which are significantly influenced and driven by the NSS and thus differ in concept and practice from the CSO projections. Furthermore, the DoEHLG regional targets differ from the CSO projections in that they set out population breakdowns at 2010, 2016 and 2022. These dates are in line with the 6-yearly cycle for the review of the RPGs.

Table 4.2D: DoEHLG Regional Population Targets 2010, 2016 and 2022

| | 2008 | 2010 | 2016 | 2022 (low / high range) |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------|
| Border | 492,500 | 511,000 | 552,700 | 595,000 - 611,400 |
| Dublin | 1,217,800 | 1,256,900 | 1,361,200 | 1,464,200 - 1,504,500 |
| Mid-east | 514,500 | 540,000 | 594,600 | 639,700 - 657,200 |
| Midland | 266,800 | 275,600 | 297,300 | 317,100 - 325,800 |
| Mid-west | 371,900 | 383,800 | 427,200 | 462,300 - 475,000 |
| South-east | 487,800 | 507,900 | 542,200 | 580,500 - 596,500 |
| South-west | 644,600 | 667,500 | 737,100 | 95,000 - 816,900 |
| West | 426,100 | 442,200 | 484,700 | 521,400 - 535,700 |
| State | 4,422,000 | 4,584,900 | 4,997,000 | 5,375,200 - 5,523,000 |

Source: Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009

The distribution of this population target across the three mid-east region counties will be determined in the new RPGs for the GDA, that will not be published until 2010. However the draft RPGs will be on display during 2009 and will give a strong indication of how this population will be distributed, but these figures are not available for this draft Plan.

This draft plan must therefore be framed in the absence of these final allocations. It is assumed however that the RPG strategy will endeavour to redress the population imbalance between Wicklow and the other counties in the mid-east region and attempt to increase Wicklow's share in the region's population. In this regard, population projections in this draft plan are based Wicklow's share in the region's population returning to 2002 levels by 2016 (27.8%) and increasing further to 28.8% by 2022.

As it is an overriding aim of the plan to be consistent with the RPGs, it is intended to update this plan during the adoption process to incorporate the RPG figures when they are available.

Table 4.2E: Wicklow Population Targets 2016 and 2022

| Year | 2002 | 2006 | 2016 | 2022 (low / high range) |
|-----------------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------------|
| Mid-east | 412,625 | 475,362 | 594,600 | 639,700 - 657,200 |
| Wicklow | 114,676 | 126,196 | 165,299 | 184,234 - 189,274 |
| % share | 27.8% | 26.5% | 27.8% | 28.8% |

4.2.1 Population Objectives

POP1 To facilitate the growth of the population in County Wicklow, in accordance with the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS) and the (prospective) Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022.

POP2 To increase the rate of population growth in the County, to redress the imbalance in growth between County Wicklow and other counties in the mid-east region.

4.3 Housing Strategy

The draft Wicklow Housing Strategy sets out:-

- The demand for new housing that will arise out of the projected growth in County population over the life of the strategy and this development plan (i.e. up to 2016);
- An assessment of the availability of zoned and serviced land, to meet this housing demand;
- An evaluation of housing affordability over the life of the strategy based on projections of future income and house prices.



4.3.1 Demand for housing

The demand for housing is a result of the formation of new households. This can be either fuelled by indigenous growth e.g. young adults moving out of the family home and buying their first property, or the movement of new households into the County. There has been a strong rate of household growth in County Wicklow between 1996 and 2006, with both intercensal periods showing an increase of around 17%.

Table 4.3A: Number of households & household size, Co. Wicklow 1996-2006

| Year | 1996 | | 2002 | | 2006 | |
|------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| | Number of households | Average household size | Number of households | Average household size | Number of households | Average household size |
| | 31,134 | 3.22 | 36,572 | 3.06 | 42,870 | 2.89 |
| increase | | | +6,298 | | | +5,438 |
| % increase | | | +17.2% | | | +17.5% |

Source: CSO Census of population 1996, 2002 & 2006

On the basis of the County population target set out earlier in this chapter and assuming a decrease in household size to 2.56 by 2016, the following table sets out the number of new households that will be formed and the number of additional housing units that will be required over the plan period.

Table 4.3B: Population projections & projected growth in households 2006-2016

| Year | Population | Total population in private households ¹ | Average household size | Number of private households | % increase | Number of new households to be formed per annum | Number of additional housing units required ² |
|-------------|------------|---|------------------------|------------------------------|------------|---|--|
| 2006 | 126,194 | 123,670 | 2.89 | 42,870 | | | |
| 2007 | 128,693 | 126,119 | 2.86 | 44,098 | 2.9% | 1,228 | 1,301 |
| 2008 | 131,192 | 128,568 | 2.83 | 45,430 | 3.0% | 1,333 | 1,413 |
| 2009 | 133,691 | 131,017 | 2.79 | 46,960 | 3.4% | 1,529 | 1,621 |
| 2010 | 136,190 | 133,466 | 2.76 | 48,357 | 3.0% | 1,398 | 1,482 |
| 2011 | 138,691 | 135,917 | 2.73 | 49,787 | 3.0% | 1,429 | 1,515 |
| 2012 | 144,013 | 141,132 | 2.69 | 52,466 | 5.4% | 2,679 | 2,840 |
| 2013 | 149,334 | 146,348 | 2.66 | 55,018 | 4.9% | 2,552 | 2,705 |
| 2014 | 154,656 | 151,563 | 2.63 | 57,628 | 4.7% | 2,611 | 2,767 |
| 2015 | 159,977 | 156,778 | 2.59 | 60,532 | 5.0% | 2,904 | 3,078 |
| 2016 | 165,299 | 161,993 | 2.56 | 63,279 | 4.5% | 2,747 | 2,911 |

An analysis in the pattern of change in the age structure of the County since 1996 shows that there has been a decline of persons in the 0-24 age group in the County from 42% in 1996 to 36% in 2006. This is likely to have an impact on the rate of 'indigenous' household formation over the strategy. There is also a trend towards a greater proportion of the County's population in the older cohorts (55 years+).

Table 4.3C: Percentage of persons in each age group, 2006

| Year | 0-14 | 15-24 | 25-39 | 40-54 | 55-64 | 65+ |
|-------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| 2006 | 22% | 14% | 24% | 20% | 10% | 10% |
| 2002 | 23% | 15% | 23% | 20% | 9% | 10% |
| 1996 | 25% | 17% | 22% | 19% | 8% | 10% |

Source: CSO Census of population 2006

¹ The Census reveals that c. 2% of the enumerated population on the date of the census is not resident in a private household in the County. This allows for visitors, hotel guest, those in hospitals, nursing homes etc on the census date.

² The number of housing units required will be slightly above the number of new households formed due to the 'excess factor' which is a term describing the fact that demand for housing will exceed actual household formation due to some of the additional units being required to replace obsolete housing, some units being vacant at any one time due to market frictional factors or some units being second homes or piers & terre. An excess factor of 6% is used in this plan.



The breakdown of the household structure can be summarised as one person, two or more family units, non-family households, two or more non-related persons, couples with no children and couples with children, and lone parents with children.

In Wicklow the number of family units comprising couples (married / cohabitating) with children has remained constant at 41% - 42% between 2002 and 2006. Interestingly, while the proportion of households in the State with 3 or more persons has decreased between 2002 and 2006 (from 53% to 51%), the number of 3+ households in Wicklow has increase over the same period from 44% to 48%.

Table 4.3D: Percentage of Persons in each Age Group, Co. Wicklow 2006

| Household composition | 2002 | 2006 |
|---|-------|------|
| 1 person household | 18% | 19% |
| Husband & wife | 14% | 15% |
| Cohabiting couple | 4% | 5% |
| Husband & wife with children (any age) | 39% | 35% |
| Cohabiting couple with children (any age) | 3% | 6% |
| Lone mother | 9% | 10% |
| Lone father | 1.5% | 2% |
| Other | 11.5% | 8% |

Source: CSO Census of population 2002 & 2006

The demographic trends in the County have implications for housing demand. Clearly there is a requirement to ensure the provision of additional housing to meet the forecast demand and in Wicklow, given the high proportion in the 25-39 range and the high proportion of households with 3 or more persons, it would appear that the strongest demand will be from 1st time buyers, particularly those with young / expanding families. While household sizes overall will be falling over the plan period, this is largely attributed to 'empty nesters' rather than falling fertility amongst those in the 25-39 age group. This will require a policy approach that favours the development of medium sized units (2-4 bedrooms).

4.3.2 Supply of housing

The supply of new housing will clearly be dependent on market factors, but assuming a market in equilibrium, if there is a demand for housing, there will be housing supply. The role of a land use plan is therefore to ensure that there are no obstacles to the delivery of housing. In this regard, it will be necessary to ensure that there is zoned and serviced land available for housing development.

4.3.2.1 Development capacity

Table 4.3E details the town development plans in effect in County Wicklow and sets out the amount of existing zoned land available in each. Furthermore, an estimate of development capacity and number of residential units in construction or granted but awaiting construction is provided. This information is sourced from the 2008 Housing Land Availability Study, which the Council prepares annually for submission to the DoEHLG. However, it has been updated to take into account the adoption of new plans for Carnew, Kilcoole, Newtownmountkennedy, Tinahely and Wicklow Environs, Enniskerry and Bray Environs.

**Table 4.3E: Zoned land in County Wicklow & development capacity**

| Settlement | Period of plan | Amount of undeveloped | Amount of Local zoned land (hectare) zoned land | Development capacity(units) Authority undeveloped | No. of units in construction or awaiting commencement |
|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|---|---|---|
| Bray Town Plan | 2005-2011 | 23 | 0 | 1,094 | 227 |
| Bray Environs | 2009-2015 | 58 | 0 | 2,680 | 0 |
| Wicklow Town Plan | 2007-2013 | 28 | 8.5 | 679 | 262 |
| Wicklow Environs | | | | | |
| (incl Marlton LAP) | 2008-2014 | 280 | 0 | 7,700 | 1,400 |
| Arklow Town Plan | 2005-2011 | 79 | 15 | 2,300 | 180 |
| Arklow Environs | 2006-2012 | 65 | 0 | 1304 | 69 |
| Greystones/Delgany | 2006-2012 | 120 | 12.35 | 1333 | 242 |
| Newtownmountkennedy | 2008-2014 | 36 | 0 | 739 | 980 |
| Ashford | 2008-2014 | 50 | 0.4 | 1,010 | 183 |
| Aughrim | 2004-2010 | 24 | 0 | 459 | 36 |
| Baltinglass | 2008-2016 | 28 | 0.93 | 477 | 5 |
| Carnew | 2009-2016 | 16 | 2.4 | 313 | 261 |
| Enniskerry | 2009-2015 | 190 | 325 | 18 | |
| Kilcoole | 2008-2014 | 25 | 4.5 | 532 | 251 |
| Rathdrum | 2006-2012 | 23 | 1.2 | 463 | 290 |
| Dunlavin | 2008-2016 | 34 | 1.95 | 687 | 3 |
| Newcastle | 2007-2016 | 28 | 0 | 340 | 50 |
| Roundwood | 2007-2016 | 13 | 0 | 250 | 36 |
| Tinahely | 2009-2016 | 20 | 1.35 | 404 | 64 |
| Shillelagh | 2004-2010 | 17 | 2.5 | 359 | 53 |
| Total | | 986 | 51 | 23,488 | 4,610 |

This table shows that there is currently sufficient land zoned to meet Wicklow's housing needs up to 2016. Although there is clearly significant 'headroom', in that there is approximately 50% more land zoned than is required to meet the housing growth needs, some settlements will not have the necessary infrastructure to allow all zoned lands to be developed within the lifetime of the plan. It should also be noted that this table does not provide an estimate of the number of units that may be developed in smaller towns, villages and rural areas. The 2006 Census revealed that only 67% of the County's population resided in the 17 settlements included in this table.

4.3.2.2 Infrastructure

While there are restrictions in the County with regard to transport infrastructure (roads, rail, public transport etc), these do not in the main present a bottleneck to the release or development of zoned land. Similarly, deficiencies in social and economic infrastructure persist, but the County Development Plan and Local Area Plans will control the role out of new residential development such that it is commensurate with development of this necessary social and economic infrastructure. However, restrictions in sanitary services have and continue to present serious blockages to development. Table 4.3F below shows that amount of land in the principal County settlements up to 2014 that is serviceable by water supply and wastewater collection / treated systems, on the basis of investment planned over the period³.

³ Note that Blessington is not included in this table as there is no town plan in place for the settlement and therefore no zoned land.

**Table 4.3F: Amount of undeveloped zoned land serviceable pre-2014**

| Settlement | Amount of undeveloped zoned land (hectare) | Amount of undeveloped zoned land serviceable pre-2010 | Development capacity 2008-2010 (units) | Amount of undeveloped zoned land serviceable pre-2014 | Development capacity 2008-2014 (units) |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|---|--|
| Bray Town Plan | 23 | 20 | 1,100 | 23 | 1,094 |
| Bray Environs | 58 | 0 | 0 | 58 | 2,680 |
| Wicklow Town Plan | 28 | 28 | 679 | 28 | 679 |
| Wicklow Environs (incl Marlton LAP) | 280 | 0 | 0 | 267 | 5,340 |
| Arklow Town Plan | 79 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Arklow Environs | 65 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Greystones/Delgany | 120 | 0 | 0 | 120 | 1,333 |
| Newtownmountkennedy | 36 | 0 | 0 | 36 | 739 |
| Ashford | 50 | 0 | 0 | 50 | 1,010 |
| Aughrim | 24 | 1 | 20 | 1 | 20 |
| Baltinglass | 28 | 4 | 80 | 4 | 80 |
| Carnew | 16 | 16 | 313 | 16 | 313 |
| Enniskerry | 19 | 19 | 325 | 19 | 325 |
| Kilcoole | 25 | 0 | 0 | 25 | 532 |
| Rathdrum | 23 | 0 | 0 | 23 | 463 |
| Dunlavin | 34 | 0 | 0 | 34 | 687 |
| Newcastle | 28 | 0 | 0 | 28 | 340 |
| Roundwood | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Tinahely | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Shillelagh | 17 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 986 | 88 | 2,517 | 743 | 16,901 |

Between 2006 and 2010, the projected growth of the County will give rise to the formation of 5,820 households (see Table 4.3B above). There have been approximately 4,900 new homes completed between 2006-2008. There is permission outstanding for 4,610 units and development capacity for 2,517 additional units (as per Table 4.3F above). Therefore while there are significant capacity constraints in sanitary infrastructure up to 2010, it is apparent that there is and will be no shortfall in potential development to meet the growing population.

In the medium term (up to 2014), there will be capacity for 21,511 new residential units (16,901 units on currently undeveloped zoned land plus the 4,610 units already permitted). However, only approximately 72% (15,644) of the 21,633 new households formed up to 2016 will be formed before 2014 and therefore it is clear that sanitary infrastructure will not impede the delivery of sufficient residential units to meet the projected growth in population.

It is however important to note the infrastructural difficulties being experienced in Arklow, which is designated a Large Growth Town II in the County Settlement hierarchy and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2004-2016. It is considered unlikely that wastewater collection and disposal infrastructural deficits will be resolved before 2014.

Furthermore, both of the major settlements in the west of the County (Baltinglass and Blessington) are experiencing short to medium term restrictions on development, while only the settlement in Carnew in the south of the County has development capacity. There are clear implications therefore for the spatial distribution of new residential units in the County, with the housing needs of those desiring or willing to live in the north and east of the County being met, but significant restrictions elsewhere in the County. This however generally correlates to the growth strategy for the County as set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2004-2016.



4.3.3 Housing affordability

The Housing Strategy sets out a detailed evaluation of housing affordability over the plan period and forms part of the County Development Plan. Even assuming a scenario where house prices continue to fall yet incomes recover, between 33%-46% of new households formed every year over the plan period will experience affordability difficulties. The Housing Strategy for County Wicklow is included in Volume 2 of this plan.

4.3.4 Housing Objectives

- HS1** To ensure adequate zoned and serviced land is available over the plan period to meet the housing needs of the growing population of the County and in particular, to allow the growth of the County to 165,299 persons in 2016.
- HS2** To ensure an equitable distribution of zoned land around the County, to ensure that new households are not overly restricted in their choice of location and can maintain a relationship with their own community.
- HS3** To ensure that development land is designated in a range of settlement types and sizes in order to provide for needs arising in all areas.
- HS4** To ensure that adequate infrastructure, in particular water infrastructure, is or will be made available to all zoned land.
- HS5** To require compliance with Part V of the Planning Act, in accordance with the County Housing Strategy, for all new residential or mixed use development (of which residential forms part), other than applications with the benefit of a certificate of exemption from Part V under Section 97 of the Planning Act.
- HS6** To require a 20% quota of social / affordable housing to be provided for in all new residential or mixed use developments (of which residential forms part) on zoned land through the transfer of either:
- (a) 20% of the land of the site, or
 - (b) Housing units, where the total value of the planning gain of the unserviced site(s) of such units is equivalent in monetary value to the planning gain to the Council on the transfer of 20% of the land of the site, or
 - (c) Fully or partially serviced housing sites where the total planning gain for the unserviced element of such sites are equivalent in monetary value to the planning gain on 20% of the land of the site, or
 - (d) A payment of such an amount, which is equivalent to the monetary value of the amount accruing to the Planning Authority, under the provisions of a, b or c above, (ie equal in monetary value to the planning gain to the Council on the transfer of 20% of the land of the site) or
 - (e) The provision of (a), (b), (c) or (d) above at another area within Wicklow.
- Planning gain means the difference between the open market value and the existing use value.
- HS7** To require a 20% quota of affordable housing to be provided for in all new residential or mixed use developments (of which residential forms part) on unzoned land, to be transferred in the same mechanism as set out in Objective HS6.
- HS8** To require all new social and / or affordable housing development (whether Local Authority / Voluntary or Part V schemes) to provide a minimum of 50% of the units at a size of 3 bedrooms or greater.
- HS9** To require all applicants for permission that will include social and / or affordable housing to engage in meaningful pre-planning discussions with both the Housing and Planning Authorities, in order to establish at the outset the location, house size and house design requirements of both Authorities.



- HS10** To require the highest standard of design in all new social / affordable development or development containing an element of social / affordable housing, in accordance with the development standards set out in the County Development Plan and the DoEHLG social housing guidelines.
- HS11** To encourage proposals from developers to satisfy Part V obligations which are directed toward special need categories - namely, elderly accommodation, travellers accommodation, specialised accommodation for the homeless and specially adapted accommodation for persons with disabilities - where the proposal is related to an identified local need and is consistent with other policies of the Development Plan.

4.4 Settlement Strategy

The purpose of a settlement strategy is to direct development to those locations that are the most suitable for growth. To achieve this aim, it is necessary to establish a hierarchy of settlements based on their role and capacity for growth and to determine what levels and type of future development shall be allowed to occur at each level in hierarchy.

4.4.1 Settlement hierarchy

The idea of a hierarchy of settlements is crucial to the achievement of regional dispersal and balanced growth in the County. As set out in the NSS, a settlement hierarchy will incorporate a range of settlements from small to large and concerns spatial distribution, service and economic functions as well as population. The idea of hierarchy suggests that several smaller settlements should be clustered around and readily accessible from the larger settlement next above it in the hierarchy. This is a principle which would maximise the accessibility of the full range of services and job opportunities from any location.

As with the 2004 County Development Plan, the hierarchy is divided into 'urban' settlements and 'rural' settlements. The positioning of the settlements in the 'urban' sector is relatively straight forward as the RPGs provide guidance and definitions of settlement types according to size and function. However, there is one significant departure to note:-

Baltinglass and Rathdrum are elevated to moderate growth towns, in the same category as Blessington and Newtownmountkennedy.

- Baltinglass is a strong settlement, has a long history as a population centre and it dominates an extensive geographical area, albeit an area of lesser population than similar sized catchments in the north or east of the County. It has a wide range of services including retail, second level education, industry, warehousing, utilities and amenity that could support increased growth. The south-west of the County is currently lacking in a strong growth pole, to act as an attractor of people and investment. Furthermore, obstacles to the expansion of wastewater treatment facilities in Blessington are likely to result in limited potential for expansion up to 2016. The designation of Baltinglass will therefore provide an alternative growth centre in the medium term for the west of the County.
- Rathdrum again is a strong town with a full range of infrastructural and social services, which services a wide rural area. In addition, Rathdrum is served by the mainline railway line from Dublin to Rosslare. It is considered wholly consistent with the spirit of the RPGs that Rathdrum be designated for population growth given this sustainable form of transport available to the Metropolitan area.

The 2004 County Development Plan divided the small town category (1,000-5,000 population) into two categories (Small Growth Town 1 and Small Growth Town 2), with the more rural of these settlements being placed in the 'rural' zone of the hierarchy, notwithstanding population targets. A similar differentiation is maintained in this plan, with Small Growth Towns Type 1 being renamed 'Small Growth Towns' and Small Growth Towns Type 2 being renamed 'Rural Towns'.

There were 73 'rural' settlements designated in the 2004 County Development Plan, across four levels in the hierarchy. While similar levels are maintained in this plan, the positioning of all towns has been reviewed. This entailed the undertaking of an 'audit' of all settlements in the 'rural' zone with regard to essential services available in each⁴ and an evaluation of the character and function of each settlement.

⁴Availability of mains water supply and mains sewerage, school, shop, pitch / sports club, church, Garda Station, public house, post office



Table 4.4A: County Wicklow Settlement Hierarchy 2010-2016
(See Maps 4.01 & 4.02 at the end of this chapter)

| Level | Settlement type | Settlement name | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| 1 | Metropolitan consolidation town | Bray | | |
| 2 | Large Growth Town 1 | Wicklow / Rathnew | | |
| 3 | Large Growth Town 2 | Arklow | Greystones / Delgany | |
| 4 | Moderate growth town | Baltinglass Blessington | Newtownmountkennedy Rathdrum | |
| 5 | Small Growth Town | Ashford Aughrim Carnew | Enniskerry Kilcoole Tinahely | |
| URBAN – RURAL DIVIDE | | | | |
| 6 | Rural Town | Avoca Donard Dunlavin | Kilmacanogue Newcastle | Roundwood Shillelagh |
| 7 | Large Villages | Barndarrig Ballinaclash Coolboy Glenealy Hollywood | Johnstown/ Thomastown Kilpedder / Willowgrove Kiltegan | Knockananna Laragh - Glendalough Manor Kilbride Redcross Stratford |
| 8 | Small Villages | Annacurragh Annamoe Askanagap Ballyconnell Ballycoog Ballyknockan Ballynacarrig (Brittas Bay) | Connary Coolafancy Coolkenno Donaghmore Grangecon Greenan | Kirikee Knockanarrigan Lackan Moneystown Rathdangan Valleymount |
| 9 | Rural Clusters | Ballingen Ballyduff Ballyfolan Ballynultagh Baltyboys Boleynass Barraniskey Carrigacurra Crab Lane Coolattin Croneyhorn | Crossbridge Davidstown Glenmalure Goldenhill Gorteen Kilamoat Kilcarra Killiskey Kilmurray (NMKY) Kilmurray (Kilmacanogue) Kilquiggan | Kingston Macreddin Moyne Mullinacluff Oldcourt Park Bridge Rathmoon Redwells Stranakelly Talbotstown Tomicork Tomriland |
| 10 | Rural Areas i.e. any location outside the development boundary of any settlement listed above | | | |



4.4.2 Population allocation

The 2006 Census revealed that approximately 72% of the County's population lived in one of the 21 settlements designated as towns in this draft County Development Plan (i.e. Levels 1- 6). This increased slightly from the 2002 (71%) and the 1996 (70%) Censuses.

In 2006, of the c. 35,500 persons resident outside the larger settlements, it is estimated (using GeoDiretcory data5) that approximately 5,200 of these lived in villages or rural clusters (i.e. Levels 7-9). Therefore approximately 30,300 persons were resident in the open countryside, outside of any designated settlement. This is approximately 24% of the total County population.

With the continued implementation of the NSS and the RPGs it is expected that the relative proportion of the County's population living in rural areas will decline further up to 2022 and population allocations for the larger 21 settlements therefore will aim to absorb up to 77% of the County's population by 2022 (i.e. 142,000 – 146,000 persons). While the relative proportion living in rural settlements and open countryside is planned to fall, the absolute numbers in such locations is expected to increase gradually along the same trends evident since 1996 i.e. growth in number of people living in rural areas by 500 per annum (of which 66% would be in the open countryside). This would mean that by 2022, the total number of people living in the open countryside would be in the order of 35,278 persons, compared to 30,328 in 2006.

Population has been allocated over the period of the plan 2010-2016 and up to 2022 in order to provide a longer term timeframe for the planning and delivery of services, in particular water infrastructure. The current availability or otherwise of such infrastructure will not therefore dictate the growth target for each town up to 2022, but where it is known (based on the water services investment programme) that services are likely to be unavailable within the period of this plan (i.e. up to 2016), more substantial growth will be targeted for the next plan period, up to 2022.

The 2011 figure is based on an estimate of actual and likely growth in the settlements between 2006 and 2011 having regard to known capacities and developments granted permission between 2006-2009.

The targets for 2016 are based on those set out in the 2004 County Development Plan (as varied), adjusted where it is clear that the target cannot be reached due to infrastructural constraints which are not expected to be addressed before 2016. Assuming a gradual move to a higher proportion residing in the County's towns (assuming 75% by 2016), the total population for these towns is actually 11% higher than required. This modest 'market factor' is considered necessary in order to ensure that the plan provides opportunities and options for development across the whole County (which will give people choice as to their housing location) and to recognise that it is inevitable that over time some settlements will not develop or develop at different stages, either slower or faster than others for a variety of reasons.

The target for 2022 is based on a further increase in the proportion living in the larger 21 settlements to 77% and again a market factor of 15%, given the long time line involved and the inability to predict what factors will determine the growth rates of individual settlements that far into the future.



Table 4.4: Historical population figures for County towns 1996-2006 and growth estimates and targets up to 2022

| Settlement type | Settlement | 1996 | 2002 | 2006 | 2011 | 2016 | 2022 |
|--|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Metropolitan Consolidation Town | Bray | 25,760 | 28,002 | 28,814 | 30,000 | 40,000 | 45,000 |
| Large Growth Town 1 | Wicklow / Rathnew | 8,727 | 10,776 | 11,919 | 14,000 | 19,000 | 24,000 |
| Large Growth Town 2 | Arklow | 8,557 | 9,993 | 11,759 | 13,000 | 19,000 | 23,000 |
| | Greystones/ Delgany | 11,296 | 11,913 | 14,569 | 16,000 | 21,000 | 24,000 |
| Moderate Growth Town | Baltinglass | 1,127 | 1,260 | 1,735 | 2,000 | 3,000 | 3,500 |
| | Blessington | 1,860 | 2,509 | 4,018 | 4,500 | 6,000 | 7,500 |
| | Newtown-mountkenedy | 2,528 | 2,521 | 2,548 | 3,500 | 6,000 | 7,500 |
| | Rathdrum | 1,234 | 1,387 | 1,528 | 2,000 | 3,000 | 5,000 |
| Small Growth Towns | Ashford | 1,215 | 1,356 | 1,494 | 1,600 | 2,500 | 3,000 |
| | Aughrim | 745 | 871 | 960 | 1,200 | 1,500 | 2,000 |
| | Carnew | 795 | 809 | 892 | 1,200 | 1,500 | 2,000 |
| | Enniskerry | 1,275 | 1,904 | 1,881 | 2,000 | 2,500 | 3,000 |
| | Kilcoole | 2,694 | 2,826 | 3,252 | 3,750 | 4,500 | 5,000 |
| | Tinahely | 630 | 692 | 965 | 1,050 | 1,250 | 1,550 |
| Rural Towns | Avoca | 490 | 564 | 622 | 700 | 800 | 900 |
| | Donard | 162 | 201 | 182 | 200 | 300 | 400 |
| | Dunlavin | 693 | 914 | 897 | 1,000 | 2,000 | 2,500 |
| | Kilmacanogue | 818 | 834 | 839 | 915 | 1,000 | 1,100 |
| | Newcastle | 763 | 851 | 938 | 1,000 | 1,500 | 1,750 |
| | Roundwood | 446 | 518 | 571 | 700 | 1,100 | 1,300 |
| | Shillelagh | 324 | 278 | 311 | 450 | 600 | 750 |
| Total town population | | 72,139 | 80,979 | 90,694 | 99,850 | 138,050 | 164,750 |
| % of County | | 70% | 71% | 72% | 73% | 75% | 77% |
| Headroom in towns | | | | | | 11% | 15% |
| | | | | | | | |
| Smaller settlements | | | | | | | |
| Large villages | | | | 3,135 | 3,635 | 4,135 | 4,635 |
| Small villages | | | | 1,059 | 1,309 | 1,559 | 1,809 |
| Rural clusters | | | | 980 | 1,080 | 1,180 | 1,280 |
| Total in villages/clusters | | | | 5,174 | 6,024 | 6,874 | 7,724 |
| | | | | | | | |
| No. of rural dwellers | | | | 30,328 | 31,978 | 33,628 | 35,278 |
| County total | | 102,683 | 114,676 | 126,196 | 138,691 | 165,299 | 186,754 |

While the Census does not generally provide population surveys for smaller settlements, populations can be estimated based on the recorded number of houses in the GeoDirectory in each as of April 2006 (the time of the 2006 Census) multiplied by the County average household size in 2006 (2.89). Growth targets for settlements below Level 6 are set out in Chapter 6 (Rural Development).

⁵ GeoDirectory is the complete database of buildings in the Republic of Ireland. It assigns each property its own individual fingerprint – a unique, verified address in a standardised format, together with a precise Geocode.



4.4.3 Settlement Objectives

- SS1** To implement the County Wicklow settlement strategy having regard to the availability of services and in particular, to direct growth into the designated metropolitan growth centre and the large, moderate and small growth towns in the Greater Dublin hinterland area.
- SS2** To ensure that the designated large growth towns will insofar as is practical, be self sufficient, incorporating necessary employment, retail, social and services infrastructure.
- SS3** To require new housing development to locate on designated housing land within the boundaries of settlements, in accordance with the development policies for the settlement.
- SS4** To implement the population growth targets as set out in Table 4.4, to monitor development and the delivery of services on an ongoing basis and to review population allocations where service delivery is impeded.



Settlement Hierarchy - Levels 1 to 5

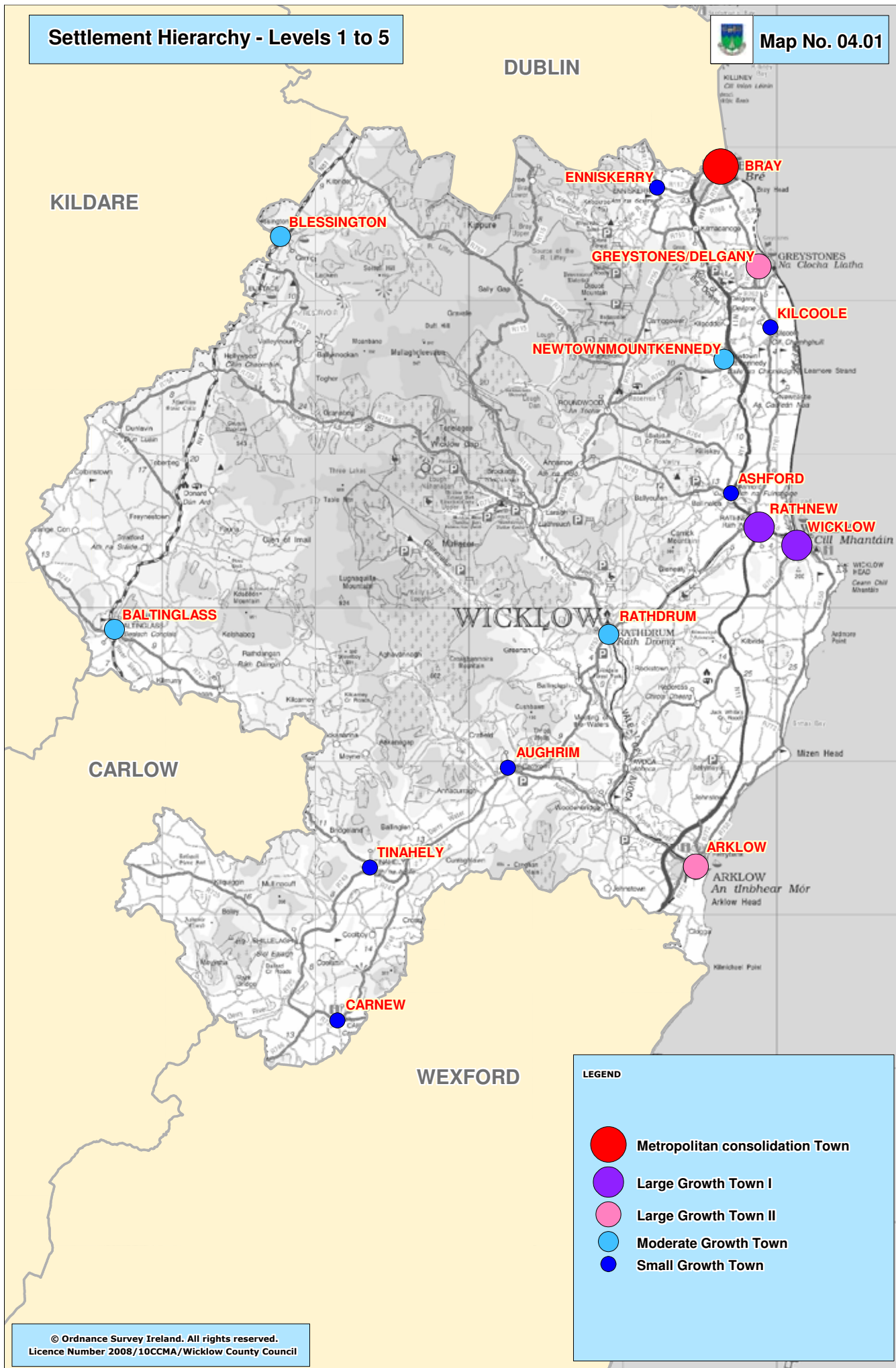
Map No. 04.01

DUBLIN

KILDARE

CARLOW

WEXFORD



LEGEND

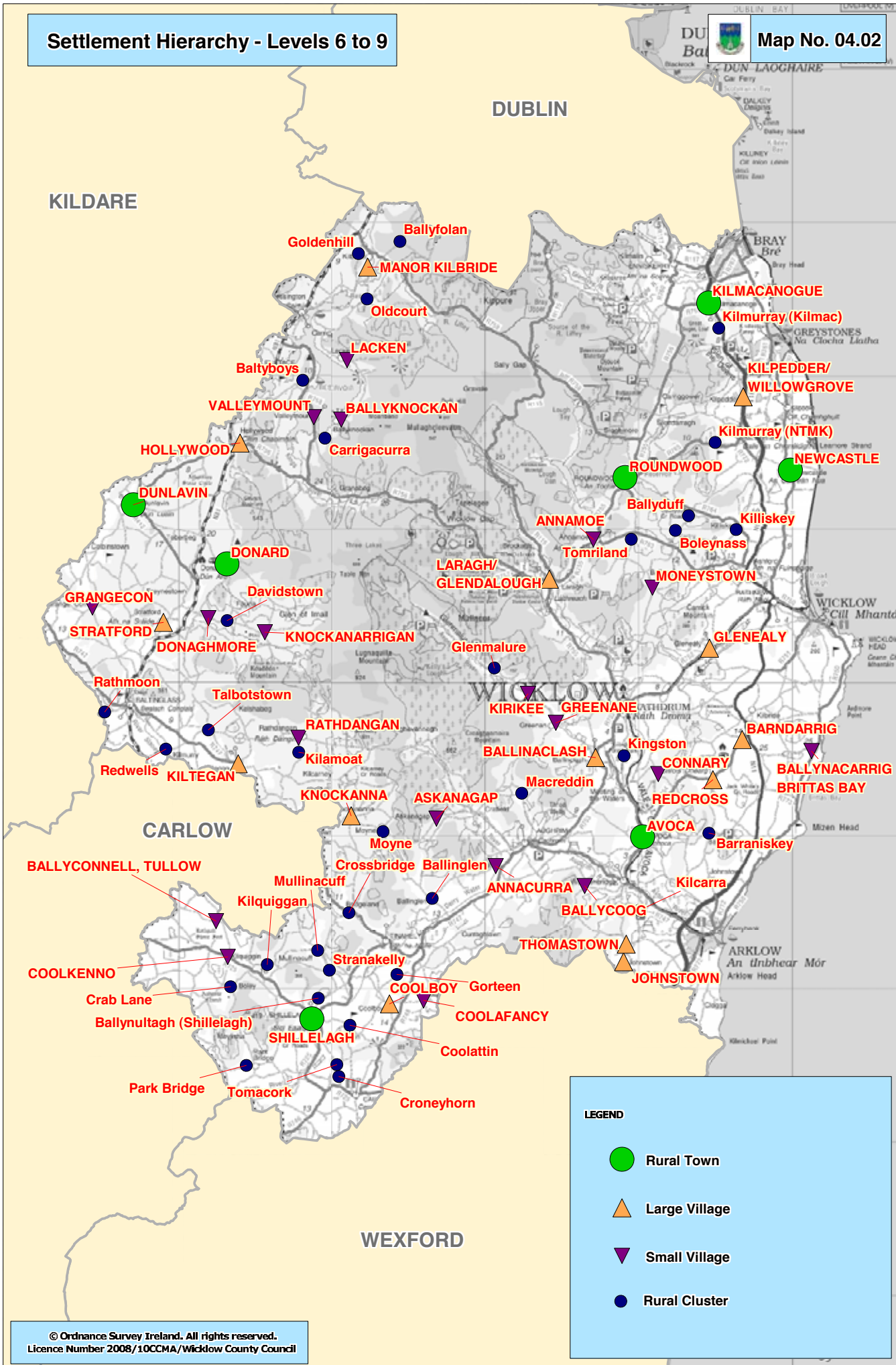
- Metropolitan consolidation Town
- Large Growth Town I
- Large Growth Town II
- Moderate Growth Town
- Small Growth Town

© Ordnance Survey Ireland. All rights reserved. Licence Number 2008/10CCMA/Wicklow County Council



Settlement Hierarchy - Levels 6 to 9

Map No. 04.02



© Ordnance Survey Ireland. All rights reserved.
Licence Number 2008/10CCMA/Wicklow County Council