

CHAPTER 3

VISION & CORE STRATEGY

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to set out the vision for the future of the County and to provide a 'core strategy' for its spatial organisation over the plan period. This core strategy will be amplified and expanded upon in the ten strategic goals set out in this chapter and in the policies and objectives of the entire plan to follow.

3.2 Vision

For County Wicklow to be a cohesive community of people enjoying distinct but interrelated urban and rural environments; where natural surroundings and important resources are protected; where opportunities abound to live and work in a safe atmosphere, allowing people to enjoy the benefits of well paid jobs, a variety of housing choices, excellent public services, ample cultural and leisure opportunities, and a healthy environment.

3.3 Core Strategy

The purpose of the core strategy is to show that the development objectives in the Development Plan are consistent as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives as set out in the National Spatial Strategy 2002 – 2020 and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area, and to provide indicative populations for each settlement that will guide the amount of development and zoned land in the review of Local Plans for each settlement so that these Local Plans will be consistent with the County Development Plan and in turn with the higher level strategies.

3.3.1 Settlement Strategy

The population and settlement objectives for the County flow directly from the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area as described in Chapter 2 of this plan.

National Spatial Strategy & Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area

The National Spatial Strategy embodies a spatial structure of Gateways and Development Centre Hierarchy leading the development of the regions, including hubs, towns, villages and rural areas having complementary roles within the structure. The entirety of County Wicklow is located in the 'consolidation zone' around the 'gateway' of Dublin.

The Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area further expand on the spatial structure in this Dublin Region.

The Wicklow County Settlement Strategy accords with both the NSS and the RPGs, as shown in the following table and map. For the purposes of this table, the 2022 town populations (which is the planning horizon for this development plan) have been taken.

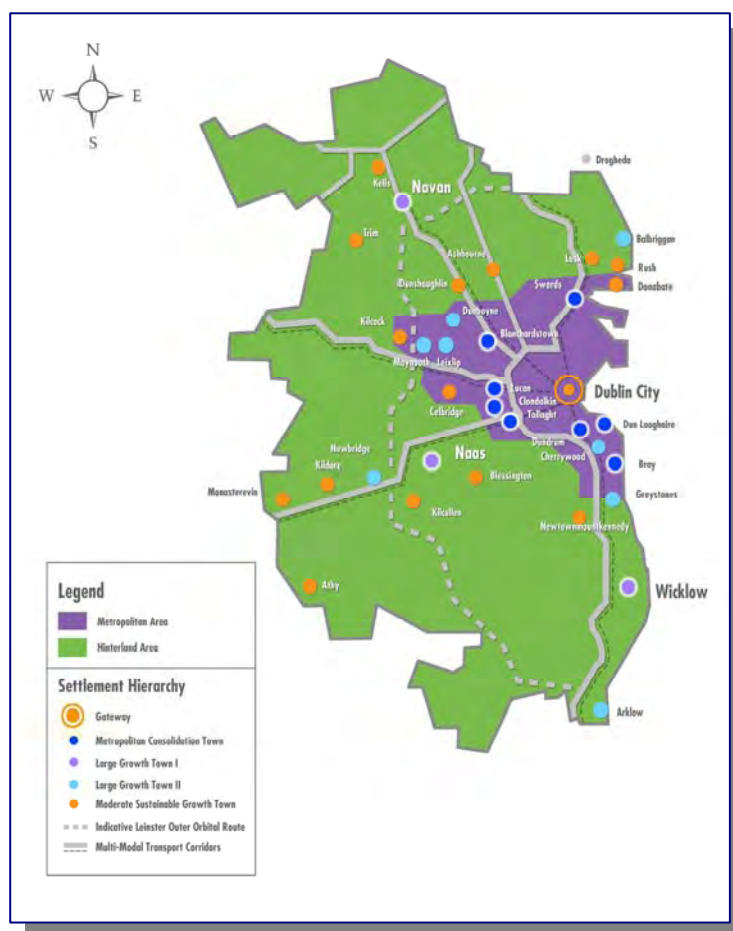
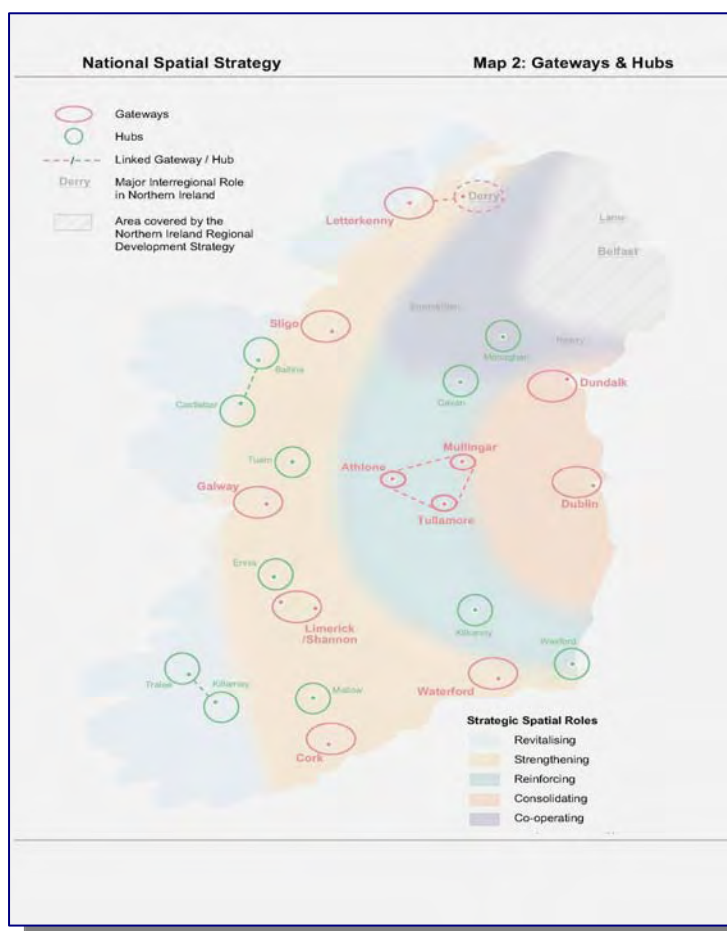


Table 3.1 County Wicklow Settlement Hierarchy

Settlement	National Spatial Strategy	Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area	County Development Plan	County Development Plan Level
Bray	Dublin CZ	Metropolitan Area Consolidation Town	Metropolitan Area Consolidation Town	1
Wicklow / Rathnew	Dublin CZ	Hinterland Area Large Growth Town I	Hinterland Area Large Growth Town I	2
Arklow	Dublin CZ	Hinterland Area Large Growth Town II	Hinterland Area Large Growth Town II	3
Greystones / Delgany	Dublin CZ	Metropolitan Area Large Growth Town II	Metropolitan Area Large Growth Town II	3
Blessington	Dublin CZ	Hinterland Area Moderate Growth Town	Hinterland Area Moderate Growth Town	4
Newtownmountkennedy	Dublin CZ	Hinterland Area Moderate Growth Town	Hinterland Area Moderate Growth Town	4
Ashford	Dublin CZ	Small Growth Town	Small Growth Town	5
Aughrim	Dublin CZ	Small Growth Town	Small Growth Town	5
Baltinglass	Dublin CZ	Small Growth Town	Small Growth Town	5
Carnew	Dublin CZ	Small Growth Town	Small Growth Town	5
Enniskerry	Dublin CZ	Small Growth Town	Small Growth Town	5
Kilcoole	Dublin CZ	Small Growth Town	Small Growth Town	5
Rathdrum	Dublin CZ	Small Growth Town	Small Growth Town	5
Tinahely	Dublin CZ	Small Growth Town	Small Growth Town	5
Avoca	Dublin CZ	Key Village	Rural Town	6
Donard	Dublin CZ	Key Village	Rural Town	6
Dunlavin	Dublin CZ	Small Growth Town	Rural Town	6
Kilmacanogue	Dublin CZ	Small Growth Town	Rural Town	6
Newcastle	Dublin CZ	Small Growth Town	Rural Town	6
Roundwood	Dublin CZ	Small Growth Town	Rural Town	6
Shillelagh	Dublin CZ	Key Village	Rural Town	6

The only deviations are the designation of Avoca, Donard and Shillelagh as ‘towns’ (albeit ‘rural towns’) rather than ‘villages’ as set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines. The only difference in planning ‘character’ between these three settlements and four other towns in the ‘rural town’ category is their lower population (projected to be less than 1,000 in 2022) but otherwise all seven towns defined as ‘rural towns’ share the same characteristics, that is, they are strong rural towns, with a substantial rural catchment, a strong urban form and good range of services, including shops, schools and community facilities, as well as mains water and sewerage. This is generally more consistent with the definition of a ‘key village’ in the RPGs than the definition of a ‘Small Town’.

3.3.2 Population

National Spatial Strategy & Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area

As the NSS was crafted 8 years ago, the population projections and targets contained therein are now outdated. The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS) projected a population in the Greater Dublin Area by 2022 of between 1.938m-2.2m persons, depending on economic growth scenarios.

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 assumptions 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 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.

The distribution of this population target across the three mid-east region counties is determined in the RPGs for the GDA 2010-2022. While in the original circular the DoEHLG published a low and a high range for 2022, for the RPGs the low range is only shown and applied in the settlement strategy as directed by the DoEHLG in their September 2009 Population and Hub Targets document.

The County population targets for 2016 and 2022 are in accordance with these higher order strategies.

Table 3.2: Population Targets 2016 and 2022

Population Targets	2016	2022
State (DoEHLG)	4,997,000	5,375,200 - 5,523,000
Mid-East Region (DoEHLG)	594,600	639,700 - 657,200
Mid-East Region (RPG)	594,600	639,700
Wicklow (RPG)	164,280	176,800
Wicklow County Development Plan	164,280	176,800

3.3.3 Population distribution

The National Spatial Strategy does not go to the detail of County level population allocation. This is set out in the RPGs. The RPGs allocate a total County population of 164,280 in 2016 and 176,800 in 2022.

- Between 2006 and 2016, this equates to a population growth of 38,084 persons
- Between 2006 and 2022, this equates to a population growth of 50,604 persons

The RPGs required that 42% of the total growth be allocated to the Metropolitan Area settlements and that the majority of the remainder to be allocated to the Growth Towns, weighted towards the Large Growth towns in the settlement hierarchy and also particularly towards towns with rail based public transport.

As set out in Chapter 4 of this plan, the combined growth allowed in Bray and Greystones up to 2016 is 17,617 persons and up to 2022 is 25,617 persons. This equates to 46% of the growth allocated by the RPGs up to 2016 and 51% of the growth allocated up to 2022.

In both target years, the remaining growth allocated is distributed to the remainder of the settlements, weighted towards the designated growth towns.

It is never possible to manage growth in any particular settlement to come in at an exact population figure at a set time, which is 2022 for the purposes of this plan. As the four largest growth centres, representing towards two thirds of the projected county growth, are reliant on the cooperation and financing of the National Roads Authority and the Railway Procurement Agency (Bray), an extended waste water treatment plant (Greystones), augmented water supply (Wicklow Town) and a waste water treatment plant that has been tied up in, inter alia, the Courts for seventeen years (Arklow) it is not possible to predict this with any accuracy whatsoever. The town population allocations in this Plan have thus incorporated compensatory headroom of 23% to accommodate this uncertainty and to ensure that there will be sufficient capacity in other settlements if some growth towns are unable to deliver the necessary infrastructure to service their projected populations.

3.3.4 Housing & zoning

In accordance with the guidelines issued by the Minister on Development Plans, zoning should be made with a longer term vision that just the lifespan of the plan in question. In this regard, the evaluation of the adequacy of zoned housing land in County Wicklow is taken at the 2022 horizon.

The RPGs allocate housing growth in Wicklow from c. 49,088 units in 2006 to 82,012 units in 2022. Based on the assumptions used in the RPGs regarding 'household size' and 'excess factor', the actual growth in housing units required between 2006 and 2022 will be 28,000 units (this is detailed in Chapter 4 of this plan).

In accordance with the *Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, the plan must make provision for rural housing to those with a bona fide necessity for such housing. This plan allows for a growth in the total number of housing units in the rural area by c. 5,000 units up to 2022.

This plan allows for a total number of units in the 'urban' area i.e. the 21 towns in the County by c. 23,000 units. The table below set out where this housing growth is to be located. It should be noted that the 23,000 figure has been reduced to 20,809 for the period 2010-2022 to take account of new housing already delivered between 2006 and 2010. (Chapter 4 of this plan addresses this analysis in more detail).

Table 3.3 Housing demand & adequacy of zoned housing land in County Wicklow

Settlement	2006	2022	Number of new residential units required 2010-2022	Amount of undeveloped zoned land (Ha)	Capacity of zoned land (units)	Surplus / deficit of zoned land
Bray	28,814	45,000	4,540	74	4,178	-8%
Wicklow / Rathnew	11,919	24,000	3,481	392	8,154	134%
Arklow	11,759	23,000	3,166	135	4,886	54%
Greystones / Delgany	14,569	24,000	2,415	111	2,087	-14%
Blessington	4,018	7,500	915	n/a	n/a	n/a
Newtownmountkennedy	2,548	7,500	1,682	63	1,602	-5%
Ashford	1,494	3,000	480	63	1,248	160%
Aughrim	960	2,000	280	24	436	56%
Baltinglass	1,735	3,500	530	45	863	63%
Carnew	892	2,000	270	32.5	493	83%
Enniskerry	1,881	3,000	312	22	345	10%
Kilcoole	3,252	5,000	273	29	619	127%
Rathdrum	1,528	5,000	1,187	41	995	-16%
Tinahely	965	1,550	77	27	394	413%
Avoca	622	900	34	n/a	n/a	n/a
Donard	182	400	66	n/a	n/a	n/a
Dunlavin	897	2,500	552	34	512	-7%
Kilmacanogue	839	1,100	8	n/a	n/a	n/a
Newcastle	938	1,750	263	34	380	44%
Roundwood	571	1,300	191	14	194	1%
Shillelagh	311	750	87	19	228	161%
	90,694	164,750	20,809	1,158	27,614	33%

The final column of this table (surplus / deficit of zoned land) sets out the position with regard to the adequacy of existing zoned land to meet the growth needs of that town. Where the figure is negative, it means that there are insufficient zoned lands available to meet the population target and conversely, where the figure is positive, it means that there is excessive zoned land than required to meet the population target.

It is the recommendation of the Minister that there be more zoned land in any town than is strictly necessary to meet its population target – this is known as ‘market factor’. It is recommended that this factor be 50%, though in local plans in the north and east of the County, a figure of 30% is normally used based on the greater likelihood of zoned land being developed in this part of the County. Therefore any town with a surplus above 50% can be considered ‘over zoned’

As local plans require to be consistent with this ‘Core Strategy’ it will be necessary in the review of local plans that will follow the adoption of the County Development Plan, that any underprovision or overprovision of zoned land be addressed appropriately.

3.3.5 Infrastructure

Transport

The transportation strategy set out in the National Spatial Strategy, of the development of Strategic Radial Corridors, Strategic Linking Corridors and Strategic International Access Points are translated to the regional level through the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area.

(a) Roads

The NSS identifies the N11 - M11 as **Strategic Radial Corridor** from Dublin to the south-east of Ireland. The RPGs identify the N11 - M11 as a **Multi-Modal Transport Corridor**.

The N11/M11 national primary route / motorway serves the eastern coast area of the County, while a second national route, national secondary route N81 serves the west of the County along the border with Kildare and Carlow.

The N11 / M11 is part of Euroroute 01 and has undergone significant investment in the last 20 years. The final section of dual carriageway between Bray to the north and the Wexford to the south is due to be completed within the lifetime of the plan – the Rathnew to Arklow Scheme. Having regard to the limitations of the mainline rail route in the County (see below), the N11/M11 will continue to be the principal access corridor in the eastern side on the County.

The RPGs also identify the Leinster Outer Orbital Route, traversing the region from Arklow in the south-east, to the Naas-Kilcullen area in the west via a route similar to the existing R747 – N81 corridor.

The second national route in Wicklow, National Secondary Route N81, is not identified in the NSS or the RPGs as being of strategic or regional significance. The N81 has been upgraded during the lifetime of the previous plan but not to the same extent as the N11. The NRA National Road Design Office has undertaken a constraints study of the N81 from Tallaght to Hollywood with a view to determining a range of possible improvements, including rerouting some of the existing road from the County boundary to the north to Hollywood Cross.

The County is served by a network of regional and local roads, which are essential for inter-County traffic and east-west connections and local movements.

- In light of the likely continuing car dependency to access the metropolitan region in the short to medium term, it is the strategy of this plan to facilitate and encourage measures to improve capacity and efficiency of the national routes and facilitate the improved use of the national routes by public transport;
- The priority for strategic road improvement will be with the upgrade of the N11 between Rathnew and Arklow, to render this entire route dual carriageway through the entirety of the County;
- The priority for regional road improvement will be with east-west connector routes i.e. Wicklow – Roundwood - Sally Gap - (R763/4 - R759), Wicklow – Laragh - Wicklow Gap – N81 (R763 - R756) and the R747 (Arklow – Tinahely – Baltinglass);

(b) Public Transport

The NSS identifies the Dublin – Rosslare rail line as a **Strategic Radial Corridor** from Dublin to the south-east of Ireland. The RPGs identify the rail line as a **Multi-Modal Transport Corridor**.

This is the only heavy rail line in the County, which is single track only from Bray and has only 6 functioning stations from Bray to Arklow. The settlement strategy exploits the towns along this route by allocating over two thirds of the population growth to these settlements.

It is proposed to extend the Luas light rail system to Bray – this extension is identified in the RPGs as a **critical strategic transport project** and the vast majority of the population growth for Bray is allocated for areas to be served by Luas. This will reinforce the role of Bray as the primary settlement in the County and will provide an option for removing car traffic from the N11/M11 north of Bray with the provision of park-and-ride facilities.

- It is the strategy of this plan to encourage and facilitate significant improvements to heavy and light rail infrastructure, including the provision of new lines and new stations.
- Improvements to the Dublin-Rosslare rail line, the extension of Luas to Bray – Fassaroe, the provision of car and bus park-and-ride facilities and improvement penetration of local bus services in designated growth towns are the priorities for public transport

Water

The County is deficient in water services in most areas. This lack of services is preventing the County from fulfilling its functions under the NSS and the RPGs. The provision of a settlement hierarchy in this plan will set a framework for the delivery of necessary strategic infrastructure, including water and wastewater services to the growth towns of Bray, Greystones, Wicklow and Arklow.

- It is the strategy of this plan to facilitate significant improvements to water infrastructure, with priority for investment being derived from the County Settlement Strategy

3.3.6 Retail

The development plan includes a retail strategy for the entire County, which is consistent with the GDA Regional Retail Strategy. In accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines, the retail strategy for Wicklow will include the following:-

- Confirmation of the retail hierarchy, the role of centres and the size of the main town centres;
- Definition in the development plan of the boundaries of the core shopping area of town centres;
- A broad assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace;
- Strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development;
- Preparation of policies and action initiatives to encourage the improvement of town centres;
- Identification of criteria for the assessment of retail developments.

Table 3.4 GDA and County Wicklow Retail Hierarchy

RETAIL STRATEGY FOR THE GREATER DUBLIN AREA	WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN	
	METROPOLITAN AREA	HINTERLAND AREA
LEVEL 1 METROPOLITAN CENTRE Dublin City Centre		
LEVEL 2 MAJOR TOWN CENTRES & COUNTY TOWN CENTRES Wicklow: Bray, Wicklow	Bray	Wicklow
LEVEL 3 TOWN AND/OR DISTRICT CENTRES & SUB COUNTY TOWN CENTRES Wicklow: Greystones, Arklow, Blessington, Baltinglass	Greystones	Tier 1 Towns serving a wide district Arklow, Blessington, Baltinglass Tier 2 Towns serving the immediate district Newtownmountkennedy, Rathdrum
LEVEL 4 NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES, LOCAL CENTRES – SMALL TOWNS & VILLAGES	Bray Area Boghall Road / Ballywaltrim, Vevay, Dargle Rd, Dublin Road / Little Bray, Albert Road & Walk, Fassaroe, Southern Cross Road Greystones Area Delgany, Blacklion, Charlesland, Killincarrig, Victoria Road	Ashford, Aughrim, Avoca, Carnew, Donard, Dunlavin, Enniskerry, Kilcoole, Kilmacanogue, Newcastle, Rathnew, Roundwood, Shillelagh, Tinahely
LEVEL 5 CORNER SHOPS / SMALL VILLAGES		Bardarrig, Ballinaclash, Coolboy, Glenealy, Hollywood, Johnstown / Thomastown, Kilpedder / Willowgrove, Kiltegan, Knockananna, Laragh – Glendalough, Manor Kilbride, Redcross, Stratford

The only minor deviation from the Regional Retail Strategy is the inclusion of Newtownmountkennedy and Rathdrum in Level 3. The County Development Plan makes a distinction between Tier 1 and Tier 2 centres in Level 3 to reflect this deviation. Newtownmountkennedy is selected as being appropriate for this position having regard to its designation as 'Moderate Growth Town' in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area, whereas Rathdrum is selected in the main because of the high level of growth planned in the settlement and its existing strong town centre.

3.3.7 Integration of environmental considerations into the plan

The development objectives of this development plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with the conservation and protection of the environment. This has been ensured through the continuous assessment of the elements that make up this plan at each stage of the plan making process, through Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive.

3.4 Key strategic goals

In order to implement this vision and core strategy, it is necessary to set out a number of strategic goals that will underpin all the policies and objectives of this plan.

GOAL 1 *To implement the overarching guidance offered by the National Spatial Strategy 2002 – 2020, the National Development Plan 2007 – 2013, the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area, and manage the spatial organisation of the County in an efficient sustainable manner.*

To achieve this goal, a County settlement strategy is put in place that will guide the location of new development during the plan period and beyond. This strategy will establish a hierarchy of settlements based on their role and capacity for growth and will determine what levels and type of future development shall be allowed to occur at each level in the hierarchy.

Strategic Policies

- To structure and manage the spatial organisation of the County, having regard to the principles of proper planning and sustainable development, and the guidance given by the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2004 – 2016;
- To manage the County's settlement in accordance with the settlement strategy hierarchy of settlements and population apportionment;
- To direct growth into the designated metropolitan growth centre and the large, moderate and small growth towns in the hinterland area, whilst recognising the settlement requirements of rural communities;
- That all water, transportation and community infrastructural investments shall be informed by and based upon the County settlement strategy and hierarchy of settlements;
- To ensure that the zoning of land is referenced by the County settlement strategy, that it is based upon rational planning grounds and a clear evidence based core strategy.

GOAL 2 *To facilitate and encourage the growth of employment, enterprise and economic activity in the County, across all economic sectors and in all areas.*

The promotion of economic activity is key to the future development of the County and may be facilitated through:

- encouraging a broad range of enterprise development within the County thereby avoiding dependence on a specific sector;
- adopting a cohesive and co-ordinated approach to the provision of incubation/start up units throughout the County;
- identifying key success traits of current development initiatives and highlight what is creating blockages to future development and addressing these blockages;
- promoting the provision of necessary infrastructure required for the development of industry e.g. broadband;
- creating linkages with third level education providers;
- addressing regional disparities to ensure the benefits of growth and development are evenly distributed and dispersed throughout the County;
- promoting economic growth and potential employment opportunities in the rural areas of the County in order to sustain vibrant and sustainable rural communities.

Strategic Policies

- To enhance the range and number of employment opportunities in the County, to increase the jobs ratio (i.e. the ratio of jobs available in the County compared to Wicklow labour force) from

- 0.65 in 2006 to 0.7 by 2016 and 0.75 by 2020 and to reduce the excessive commuting distances and trip times undertaken by the County's working population;
- To facilitate the development of high technology and high value employment, including the manufacturing sector, research and development and science, to create a knowledge based economy and to build strong linkages between education, research and employment, and promote the third level institute at Clermont as a centre of excellence;
 - To promote the development of the tourism sector in a sustainable and environmentally sensitive manner, to capitalise on the County's tourism and recreational assets and generate wealth and employment in the County through the provision and upgrading of tourism infrastructure that will extend the stay and spend of tourists in the County;
 - To protect and enhance key built and natural assets that are of integrity per se, and critical to the development of a sustainable economy;
 - To overcome the County's water infrastructural deficits and in particular wastewater infrastructure to ensure such under provision does not impede economic development and wealth creation;
 - To promote and facilitate the development and expansion of the electricity transmission and distribution grid and to encourage improved availability of a high quality, high-speed information, telecommunications and broadcasting networks.

GOAL 3 *To integrate land use planning with transportation planning, with the dual aim of reducing the distance that people need to travel to work, shops, schools and places of recreation and social interaction, and facilitating the delivery of improved public transport.*

The 2006 Census figures give an indication of commuting patterns in Wicklow. The figures indicate that the County has by far a greater percentage of people travelling for longer lengths of time than the national average, with the percentage of people travelling 1–1.5 hours to work, school or college at 10%, which is nearly double the national average of 6%. Similarly, County Wicklow residents have longer distances to travel, with significantly higher numbers of people travelling 25 kilometres and longer, at 20%, compared to the national average of 12%.

This level of commuting is unsustainable on many fronts, including socially, economically and environmentally, and is an important contributor to assessing the overall quality of life for the inhabitants of the County. Reducing the need to travel long distances by private car, and increasing the use of sustainable and healthy alternatives, can not only bring multiple benefits to both our environment and communities, but also to our own mental and physical wellbeing.

Strategic Policies

- Craft land use policies to produce settlements of such form and layout that facilitates and encourages sustainable forms of movement and transport, prioritising walking and cycling, and for larger settlements, bus transport;
- Promote the improvement of public transport services, in particular the upgrading of the Dublin – Rosslare train line, bringing the LUAS to Bray and the development of improved bus services.

GOAL 4 *To enhance existing housing areas and to provide for high quality new housing, at appropriate locations and to ensure the development of a range of house types, sizes and tenures in order to meet the differing needs of all in society and to promote balanced communities.*

The Housing Strategy, which forms part of this plan, sets out projected housing growth, the availability of zoned and serviced land to meet this demand, and the issue of housing affordability based upon, in the main, projections of income and housing unit prices.

While it is estimated that there is sufficient land to meet Wicklow's housing needs up to 2016, limitations in water and particularly wastewater capacities have and will continue to present serious blockages to development. Wastewater collection and treatment deficits may persist to 2014 and beyond. This key finding has implications for the spatial distribution of development within the County, with housing demand capable of being met in the north and east of the County and significant restrictions elsewhere.

In its appraisal of housing affordability, the Housing Strategy estimates that up to 40% of new households formed over the plan period will expect affordability challenges and 20% will clearly not be able to enter the housing market.

Strategic Policies

- To zone sufficient land in accordance with the County's Settlement Hierarchy, to accommodate the projected increase in population and households over the plan period;
- To promote the delivery of appropriately scaled and located employment, retail and social / community infrastructure in tandem with new residential development;
- To ensure that new retail, employment, education, community and recreational facilities are directed to the locations with the highest concentration of residents;
- To adequately service zoned land where housing demand exists and or is planned;
- To ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of the different categories of households including the range of social and affordable housing identified by The County Housing Strategy;
- To ensure new housing developments are designed and constructed to the highest of standards.

GOAL 5 *To maintain and enhance the viability and vibrancy of settlements, to ensure that towns and villages remain at the heart of the community and provide a wide range of retail, employment, social, recreational and infrastructural facilities.*

While a high proportion of the County's residents live outside towns, the settlements of the County provide a significant component of employment, retail, social and cultural needs for all of the County's people. While the proportion of the County's population living in towns and villages is gradually increasing, the future viability of our towns and villages is under threat, particularly because of the significant outflows of retail expenditure from the County.

Notwithstanding this, the County's towns and villages are best placed to absorb additional growth and in accordance with the County settlement strategy, new development is to be directed into settlements. With additional development comes the need for the implementation of appropriate development standards, that result in a good mix of development types, high quality development and places and improved viability of infrastructural services (including public transport). In these regards, the density of development requires to be appropriately managed.

Strategic Policies

- To promote the development of the County's urban settlements and in the interests of maintaining higher order economic development, social and cultural infrastructure, promote efficiencies in engineering services and transportation;

- To encourage higher residential densities in urban centres, and to reflect this in local area and town plans;
- To seek to address dereliction and urban decay by supporting urban regeneration projects;
- To ensure that businesses and services with a high potential for public transport utilisation by employees and visitors are sited in locations which are easily accessible or which can be made easily accessible by public transport;
- To direct new retail activities into existing urban centres, in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines for Local Authorities (2005), the Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area (2008) and the County Retail Strategy;
- To retain a greater percentage of retail expenditure in the County, to stem expenditure outflows and in particular the excessive leakage of comparison spend and to encourage the increased provision of both comparison and convenience retail opportunities in the County.

GOAL 6 To protect and enhance the County's rural assets and recognise the housing, employment, social and recreational needs of those in rural areas

Wicklow's proximity to Dublin, which allows for easy access to the main commercial and employment centres of the Metropolitan area, coupled with its beautiful landscape and amenities, has led to considerable urban generated pressure for housing in our rural area and smaller villages. This has resulted in competition for housing sites and difficulties for rural natives in securing suitable sites. In accordance with 'Sustainable Rural Housing – Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DoEHLG) 2005, this plan recognises that people who are part of the rural community should be facilitated by the planning system in all rural areas, including those under strong urban-based pressures.

Furthermore, the decline in the primary sectors of agriculture, forestry and fishing has resulted in the need to diversify the rural economy into alternative resource based industries as well as appropriate non-resource based activities.

These housing and employment activities require to be accommodated in such a way that does not diminish the County's rural assets, including our landscape, nature designations, water quality and the safety of all road users, including pedestrians and cyclists.

Strategic Policies

- Rural housing development shall be in accordance with the provisions of "Sustainable Rural Housing - Guidelines for Planning Authorities" (DoEHLG 2005), the sustainable settlement policy framework as articulated in the National Spatial Strategy and the rural housing strategy and objectives set out in this plan;
- That rural housing shall be accommodated where rural housing need has been established, where it strengthens the established structure of villages, smaller settlements and other rural areas, where it sustains and revitalises established rural communities and does not endanger key rural assets or the vitality and viability of the higher order County Settlements;
- To minimise the impacts of new rural housing, in terms of adverse effects on the landscape, water quality, natural and built heritage and road users;
- To address the changing nature of the rural economy by promoting the diversification of employment options and towards maximising the potential of resource based development in the areas of forestry, marine, rural enterprise and services, natural resources, renewable energy production, tourism and agri-tourism. To promote re-structuring and efficiencies.

GOAL 7 *To protect and improve the County's transport, water, waste, energy and communications infrastructure, whilst having regard to our responsibilities to respect areas protected for their important flora, fauna or other natural features*

Strategic Policies

- To continue to improve the County's transportation infrastructure, with the construction of new roads and the improvement of the existing road network and with a particular emphasis on delivering an improved public transport system;
- To promote and facilitate the improvement of the mainline train and DART services and to promote the linkage of the LUAS extension to Bray and Fassaroe and the linking of both DART and LUAS at Bray;
- To continue the County's investment in water services infrastructure and in particular investment in waste water infrastructure to ensure that existing barriers to growth, economic progress and the sustainable development of the County, are removed;
- To implement the provisions of the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management" Guidelines (2008), have regard to the guidelines, objectives formulated around flood management, avoidance of development in flood risk areas, reduction and mitigation of risk and flood risk management and assessment;
- To implement the Wicklow Waste Water Management Plan 2006 – 2011 and have regard to the National Waste Prevention Plan 2009, and the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan;
- It is policy to pursue best practice in accordance with the Waste Management Hierarchy and formulate guidance regarding solid waste management including green waste and waste to energy facilities, hazardous waste and emissions, emissions to air, noise and light pollution.

GOAL 8 *To promote and facilitate the development of sustainable communities through land use planning, by providing for land uses capable of accommodating community, leisure, recreational and cultural facilities, accessible to and meeting the needs of all individuals and local community groups, in tandem with the delivery of residential and physical infrastructure in order to create a quality built environment in which to live.*

The term "community development" refers to a complex and broad range of actions and measures involving a wide range of practitioners and bodies with the common aim of improving various aspects of local communities. There are however two key strands to the development of 'sustainable communities':

- (1) Facilitating communities in developing the skills, capacities and projects needed to enable them to have a greater say in the management of their own futures;
- (2) Facilitating access to the goods, services and structures within society for all, and particularly for those that are marginalised and powerless ('social inclusion').

Strategic Policies

- To ensure the provision of a comprehensive, integrated infrastructure of social and community facilities through out the County;
- To ensure the provision of social and community facilities as an essential part of the development of settlements where the scale and range of such infrastructure provided shall be in accordance with the Hierarchy Model of community facilities prepared under Strand 3 of County Development Levy scheme;
- That land use planning facilitate the delivery of social and community projects, the improved physical access to goods and services and the overall improvement in the quality of the built environment including the provision of open space.

GOAL 9 To protect and enhance the diversity of the County's natural and built heritage

Wicklow's built heritage wealth is reflected in its abundance of archaeological and historical sites and monuments ranging from the late bronze age right through Christian, Viking, Norman and medieval eras, large county houses, planned estate villages, Georgian houses and other vernacular structures as well as bridges, harbours, stone walls and structures and sites associated with mining, industrial, political and religious heritage. The County's natural heritage includes an excellent diversity of natural and semi-natural habitats such as marine, coastal, wetland, woodland, lake, river and upland habitats that in turn support a diverse and varied flora and fauna.

Our natural and built heritage is under threat and is being diminished by, in the main, the pressures wrought by population growth and economic change and development. The Council recognises heritage's intrinsic value, and the importance of protecting and conserving Wicklow's heritage potential to the economic, social, cultural and environmental development of the County.

Strategic Policies

- To protect, conserve and enhance buildings, areas, structures, sites and features of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest;
- To ensure the conservation, wise management of areas of natural heritage value, and of features of natural interest and value such as woodlands, wetlands, watercourses and areas of unspoilt uplands. To protect plant animal species and habitats which have been identified in the Habitats Directive, Birds Directive, Wildlife Act (1976) and the Flora Protection Order 1999, and in particular, to ensure that any programme, plan or project carried out on foot of this development plan, including an variation thereof, with the potential to impact upon a Natura 2000 site(s) shall be subject to an Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive 1992 and "*Appropriate Assessment of plans and projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities*" (DoEHLG 2009);
- To protect and promote the enhancement of the natural and built environment and the coastal zone as identified in the County Development Plan. Facilitate and strictly control appropriate development, prohibit development that is detrimental to coastal areas while minimising the adverse impacts of existing activities, promote the economic, social, cultural and environmental use of the coast, the bio-diversity of coastal cells and their critical support systems.

GOAL 10 To address the climate change challenge, as a plan dynamic, throughout the County Plan, directly in the areas of flooding and renewable energy, and indirectly by integrating climate change and sustainable development into statements of plan policy, strategies and objectives.

We predominately use fossil fuels, non-renewable resources, such as coal, oil and natural gas, to generate energy. We inevitably face the depletion of these resources in the future and the associated risk of security of fuel supply. Furthermore the combustion of such fuels results in greenhouse gas emissions. The development of renewable energy shall be to the forefront of Wicklow County Council's policy formulation to ensure that our use and dependence on fossil fuels be reduced.

Flooding is an area of special planning concern, in the main attributable to the noticeable increase in the severity and frequency of flooding, and because of failure to appropriately take account of flood risk and the subsequent wide ranging costs incurred.

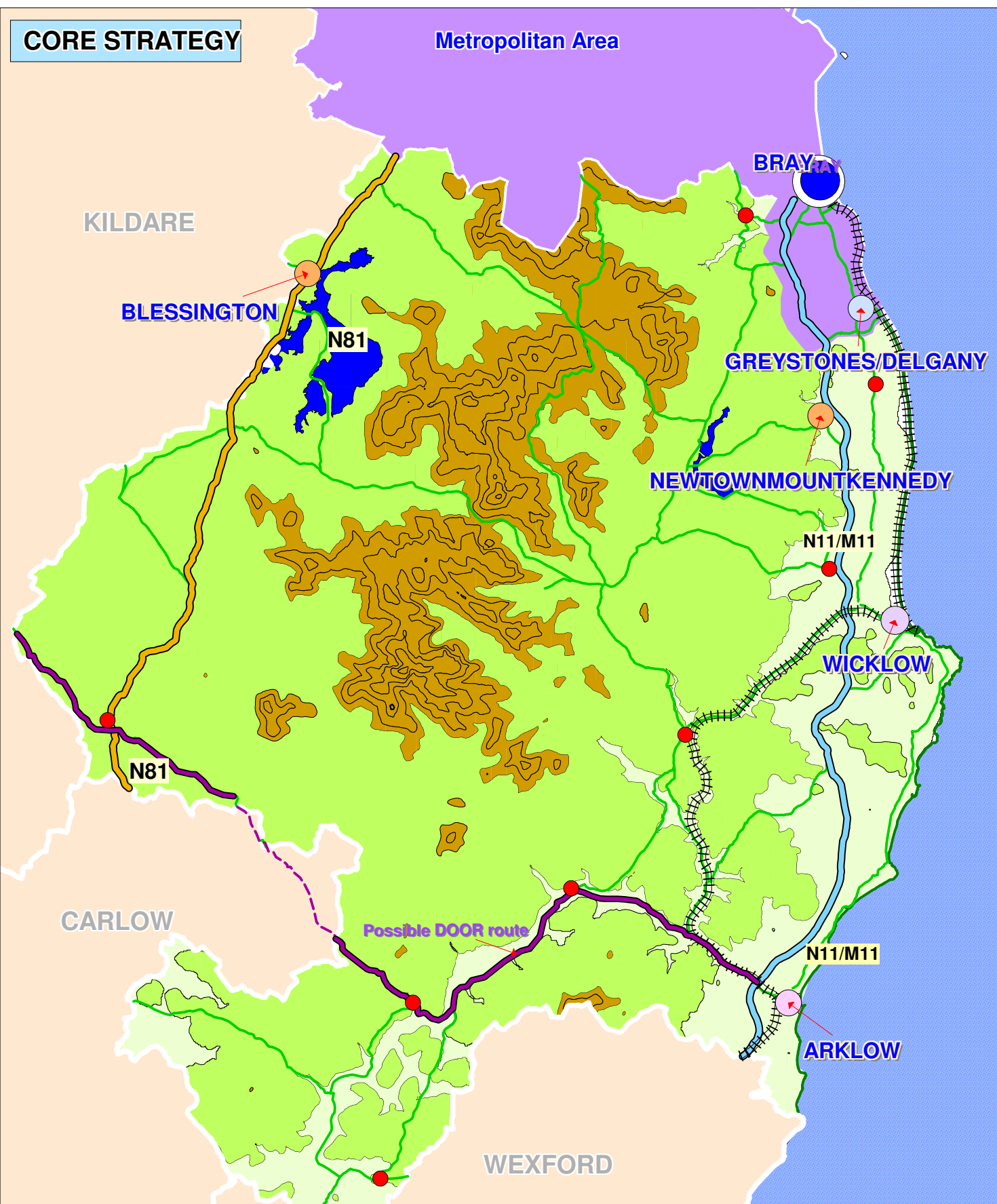
Strategic Policies





- To facilitate the minimisation of emissions to the air of greenhouse gases in accordance with international and European agreements and the National Climate Change Strategy. In this regard, the Council will support any appropriate initiatives taken to provide for more sustainable forms of energy use;
- To have regard to the National Climate Change Strategy (2007), the Government White Paper "Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland - The Energy Policy Framework" (2007), the Wind Energy Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2006) and the Planning & Development Acts




- 2000 – 2007 in the development of appropriate strategies and objectives for the development of alternative and renewable energy, in particular Wind Energy;
- To reduce energy demand in the areas of primary consumption being transport, electricity and heating, particularly through improved integration of land use and transportation planning and higher standards of building design;
 - To implement the provisions of the “Planning System and Flood Risk Management” Guidelines (2008), have regard to the guidelines, objectives formulated around flood management, avoidance of development in flood risk areas, reduction and mitigation of risk and flood risk management and assessment.

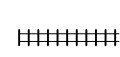



CORE STRATEGY

Metropolitan Area



-  Metropolitan Consolidation Town
-  Large Growth Town I
-  Large Growth Town II
-  Moderate Sustainable Growth Town

-  Metropolitan Area
-  Hinterland
-  Small Growth Town

-  Dublin to Rosslare Railway Line
-  N11/M11
-  N81
-  Possible DOOR route