

A (ii) Settlement Types

22.1.4 Settlement Types

Introduction

The settlement structure in County Kildare has its own particular qualities, based on the landscape characteristics, the impact of history and the localised traditions of agriculture and rural activity. This report is concerned primarily with the legacy of several periods in the last millennium, in which a weak and dispersed settlement structure has developed. There is an opportunity to strengthen the fragile network of villages and to conserve the best qualities of the Kildare landscape.

Multi-functional, traditional building.

Pub, shop and house at cross roads, Kildoon



Medieval settlement patterns

The County's proximity to Dublin has exercised a major influence on settlement from as far back as medieval times, with the creation of the County at the end of the 13th century and its subsequent settlement. Kildare became the dominant town, but there were 22 boroughs in all created in the county, many of them small manorial villages, a good number of which are no longer in existence. However, the tradition of urban settlement and the market town was established by the Anglo-Normans, and the urban settlement structure was initiated.

Church and motte at Rathmore



Mediaeval Boroughs in County Kildare

Ardee, Ardscull, Athy, Ballymore Eustace, Carbury, Castledermot, Clane, Cloncurry, Dunfert, Glassely, Kildare, Kilkea, Leixlip, Moone, Mounmohenek, Naas, Narraghmoore, Oughterard, Rathangan, Rathmore, Straffan, Tipper

Narraghmore village centre



Plantation and Landlord Villages, 17th/18th Century

The impact of plantation settlement in Cromwellian times, in the mid-sixteen hundreds, was not as strong in Kildare, which already had an established urban infrastructure, as it was in the adjacent counties of Leix (Laois) and Offaly. However there are two late seventeenth century Quaker villages, at Ballitore; where there is a Quaker burial ground and meeting house, and at Timahoe where the triangular green is typical of the seventeenth century plantation villages.

Ballitore Village: a Quaker settlement first settled in the late seventeenth, early eighteenth century



Ballitore - Early eighteenth century house on the edge of the village



Restored Shaker store in Ballitore



Ballitore - Main square



Mary Leadbetter's House in Ballitore restored - market house



Example of a building in need of repair



The great estates of County Kildare supported and strengthened the associated towns - Castletown and Celbridge, Carton and Maynooth and Monasterevin and landlord villages such as Brannockstown, Narraghmore and Johnstown.

Industrial enterprise, also made an impact on the settlement structure. Robert Brooke created his own industrial village, for dyeing cottons from Manchester, at Prosperous. The canal brought with it the new village of Robertstown.

Prosperous - industrial village created in 1780 by Robert Brooke.



Robertstown: Grand Canal Village.



Chapel Villages

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the newly-constructed Catholic parish system introduced some sixteen chapels into the rural structure of County Kildare, generating new village nuclei, or strengthening existing centres. Allenwood developed as a coaching village along the road to Edenderry, and also benefited from the location of a chapel there. Similarly, the village of Prosperous found new heart with the construction of its church along the same route.

Prosperous - new focal point generated on the main road with the building of a Catholic chapel in 1830



Settlement in the 20th Century

A long period of population decline and stagnation in the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth is not associated with further development of the patterns of village growth. In County Kildare, there is a notable exception in the Bord na Móna settlement of Coill Dubh (Blackwood) which was built as an estate village with facilities such as shops to help to create a community in an area remote from urban facilities.

The location of creameries, dance halls, schools, pubs and shops, however, throughout this period helped to create or strengthen focal points for the rural communities. In Kildare, the pattern of development during this period outside the towns has left a dispersed structure of rural housing, especially in the bogland and low-lying areas. Local authority and Land Commission houses are dotted along the small roads, as large farms were divided and allocated to migrant farmer from the West, and labourer's cottages were built to serve the larger farms.

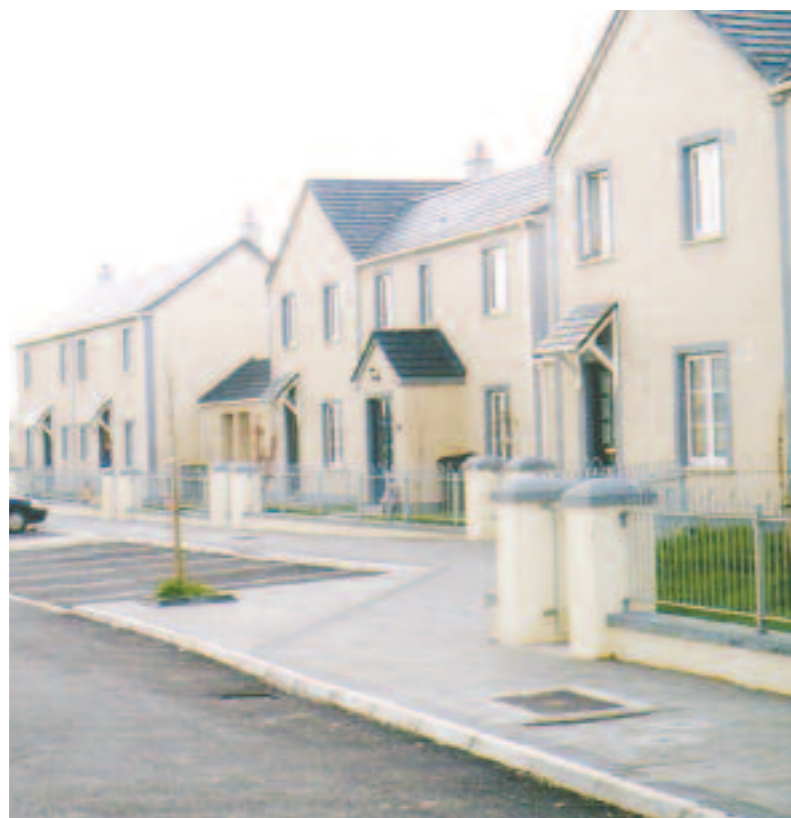
Coill Dubh, (Blackwood):Bord na Móna village



Sustained Growth over the Last Two Decades

The last phase of development in County Kildare, essentially in the last 20 years has seen substantial changes to the urban and rural settlement structures. The enormous growth in mobility through car ownership has opened the County for metropolitan-generated demand for housing, stretching over large areas of the County, outwards from the principal radial lines of communication linking Dublin with the west and south of the country. Growth has been controlled to a certain extent since the 1960s by planning policies, favouring locations in built-up areas, and more recently by clearly directing development towards towns and villages. Kildare was one of the fastest growing counties in Ireland in the last decade and the strong pattern of growth is expected to continue.

New local authority housing at Prosperous



Suncroft



New shop in Kilmeague



New houses inserted behind Main Street, Kilmeague



Coill Dubh, new Credit Union building: a fresh architectural approach in a rural context. (Architects; Hassett and Ducatez)



Calverstown - new village housing



The proposed settlement pattern to deal with this growth is the identification of primary (Naas - Newbridge - Kilcullen) and secondary growth centres (Kildare Monasterevin, and Athy). The rural areas are seen, not as the focus for growth, but rather in terms of dealing with essential local, rural needs for new housing. In this context, 11 villages were identified, where consolidation, not growth is preferred; another 17 villages where strengthening their sustainability through limited growth is proposed; a further eight villages where revitalisation through encouragement of population growth is proposed; and 14 rural nodes, where development limited to local need is proposed. The villages are listed in chapter 6, volume 1.

New isolated development near Ballyshannon, N78



New development at Calverstown



Advertising new development at Calverstown



Old pavement and new shop in Kilmeague

