

2. CORE STRATEGY



AIM

To respond in a coherent sustainable, spatial fashion to the challenges facing the county, while building on its strengths and providing a more focused approach to planning for future growth. The Core Strategy facilitates a more consolidated compact urban form, maintenance and improvement of a sustainable economic base, and the creation of sustainable and integrated communities, together with the balancing of our natural and built environment with sustainable and appropriate development.

2.1 STATUTORY CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 introduced a requirement for an evidence based “Core Strategy” to form part of all Development Plans. The purpose of the Core Strategy is to articulate a medium-to-longer term quantitatively based strategy for the spatial development of the area of the planning authority and in doing so to demonstrate that a development plan and its policies and objectives are consistent with national and regional development objectives set out in the National Spatial Strategy (2002) and the Regional Planning Guidelines (2010).

The Act requires a Core Strategy to include a settlement hierarchy; evidence based population and housing targets for all towns, villages and the open countryside; to demonstrate how future development supports public transport and services; and to demonstrate regard for the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DECLG (2012).

While the Act does not expressly require the Core Strategy to contain information concerning other land uses such as employment and commercial zones, the Guidance Note on Core Strategies, DECLG (2010) recommends that planning authorities undertake an appropriate level of analysis to ensure that sufficient lands are zoned at suitable locations, taking account of higher level planning policies and required physical infrastructure.

The Core Strategy should be represented in the written statement, by a diagrammatic map or other such visualisations, and in the Core Strategy tables.

2.2 STRATEGY

In accordance with the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010, the first Core Strategy for Kildare was set out in the 2011-2017 County Development Plan. The Core Strategy in this Plan builds on the principles of the previous Strategy. Chapter 2 Core Strategy and Chapter 3 Settlement Strategy set out an overarching strategy for the development of the county to 2023 and beyond and translate the strategic planning framework of the NSS and RPGs to county level. The Core Strategy addresses the period from Census 2011 to 2023 and incorporates preliminary population and household figures from Census 2016 (CSO July 2016).

It is recognised that, as Kildare is part of the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) it will be influenced by and have influence over future economic, social and environmental trends in the region. The RPGs (and forthcoming Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy) provide a broad planning framework giving an overall strategic context to the development plans of each local authority in the GDA.

This Development Plan seeks to encourage the focus of new development on:

- (i) Consolidation within the existing urban footprint with particular focus on the Metropolitan and Hinterland towns;
- (ii) Supporting the achievement of more sustainable towns and villages through residential and employment opportunities together with supporting social and community facilities;
- (iii) Supporting national investment in public transport services by focusing new development areas in key locations to achieve the integration of land uses and high quality public transport provision;
- (iv) Achieving economies of scale for services and infrastructure in identified growth towns;
- (v) Promoting economic development and employment opportunities within defined economic clusters;
- (vi) Facilitating development in the smaller towns and villages in line with the ability of local services to cater for growth that responds to local demand;
- (vii) Recognising the role of the rural countryside in supporting the rural economy and its role as a key resource for agriculture, equine, bloodstock, forestry, energy production, tourism, recreation, mineral extraction and rural based enterprises;
- (viii) Supporting, facilitating and promoting the sustainable development of renewable energy sources in the county;
- (ix) Protecting local assets by preserving the quality of the landscape, open space, recreational resources, natural, architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage and material assets of the county;
- (x) Promoting social inclusion and facilitating the delivery of objectives contained in the Kildare Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2021.

2.3 KILDARE IN CONTEXT

Kildare has an area of 169,426 hectares. Its topography consists of a large fertile plain broken only by a few hills such as Dunmurray Hill and the Hill of Allen, with upland areas mainly on the eastern boundary with County Wicklow. The fertile plain forms part of the central lowlands of Ireland and extends throughout most of the county including the unique landscape of the Curragh. Significant areas of bogland are located to the north west of the county. The uplands to the east separate the plains from the Wicklow Mountains and Blessington.

Kildare is one of the fastest growing counties in Ireland. It contains many vibrant towns including Maynooth, Leixlip, Celbridge and Kilcock within the north east and the strong growth cluster of Naas, Newbridge and Kilcullen within the centre of the county. The towns of Kildare, Monasterevin and Athy support south and west Kildare. Smaller towns, villages and settlements are located throughout the county supporting more rural populations together with large tracts of agricultural lands which have significant value, both as important agricultural enterprises, food sources or as open green areas between towns and the built up areas.

Many of the main transportation corridors linking the GDA to the rest of the country pass through Kildare. These include three motorway corridors, National Primary Routes and National Secondary Routes. Various regional and local routes also traverse the county together with four mainline railway passenger services (Refer to Map 2.6).

Over the last decade, the county has also witnessed an unprecedented growth in the quality and quantum of its retail offer. This plan seeks to continue to sustain and improve the retail profile and competitiveness of the county within the retail economy of the GDA. In this regard, the preparation of Chapter 9 Retail has been informed by the 2008-2016 Retail Strategy for the GDA

2.3.1 Population Growth Trends

The population of the county has increased from 186,335 in 2006 to 210,312 in 2011, representing a growth of 13%, the second highest in the State. Over a 20 year period (1991-2011), Kildare experienced a 71.5% increase in its population. The most recent increase in population can be explained by high levels of natural increase (birth rate) and a strong performance in net migration.

2.3.1.1 Population Change ED 2006-2011

Map 2.1 illustrates percentage population change between 2006-2011 per Electoral Division (ED). Growth in population has occurred within and around the central towns of Naas, Newbridge, Kildare, Clane and Kilcullen, resulting in a dense pattern of growth along the M7 and M9 motorways. Significant pockets of population growth have also occurred in the north of the county. Populations more than doubled in the rural hinterlands of urban centres like Athy, Naas, Newbridge, Clane and Kilcock and the village of Caragh. While the Athy area experienced significant population increase, the majority of the south of the county experienced lower levels of growth. Most areas of the county experienced an increase in population. In a small number of ED's e.g. north of Rathangan (Killinthomas), south of Ballymore Eustace (Gilltown), Newbridge town centre, Pollardstown, Ballysax, Athy West and south of Maganey (Ballaghmoon), population decreased slightly.



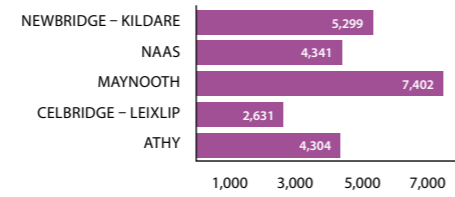
2.3.1.2 Population Density 2011

The distribution of population in County Kildare is outlined on Map 2.2. It varies significantly from concentrations of over 3,000 persons per square kilometre in major urban centres like Naas, Newbridge, Leixlip and Athy to more sparsely populated rural areas in the west and south of the county. In terms of density per square kilometre, Sallins, Celbridge and Kilcock are the most densely populated urban areas in Kildare.

The most populated areas in Kildare are within and close to the main urban settlements of Newbridge, Naas, Celbridge, Leixlip, Maynooth and Athy. At Municipal District level, the population breakdown is as follows: Newbridge and Kildare 50,106 persons; Naas 46,855 persons; Maynooth 46,037 persons; Celbridge and Leixlip 36,630 persons; and Athy 30,648 persons.

Maynooth MD (+ 19.2%) had the largest increase in population between 2006 and 2011. Celbridge - Leixlip MD had a modest increase of 7.7%, which is below the County average of 12.9%.

Population Change 2006-2011



% Population Change 2006-2011

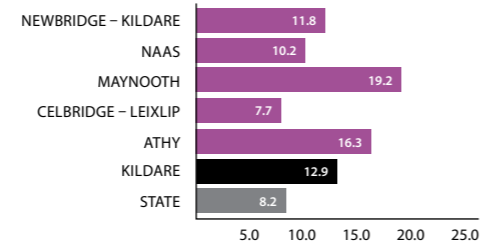
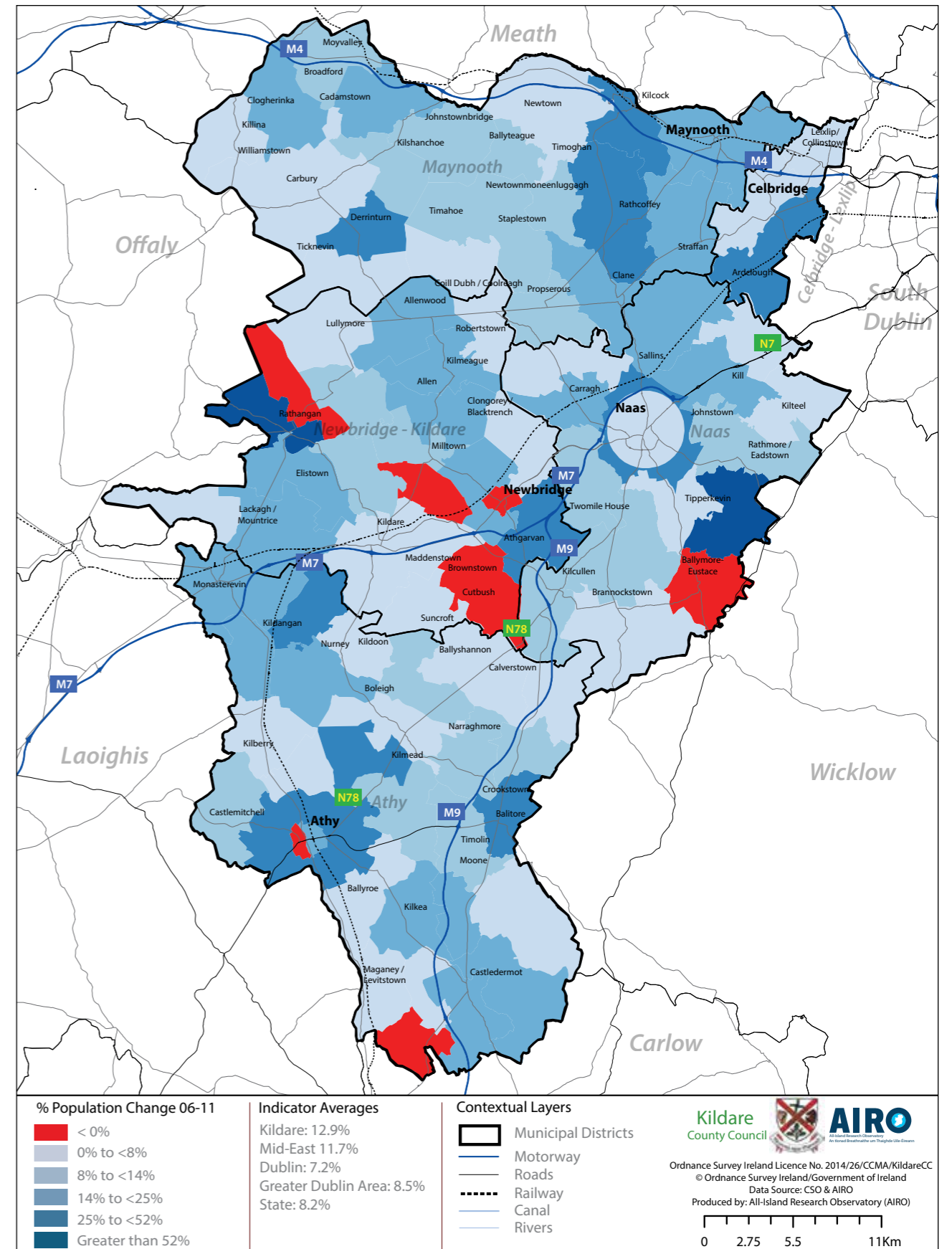


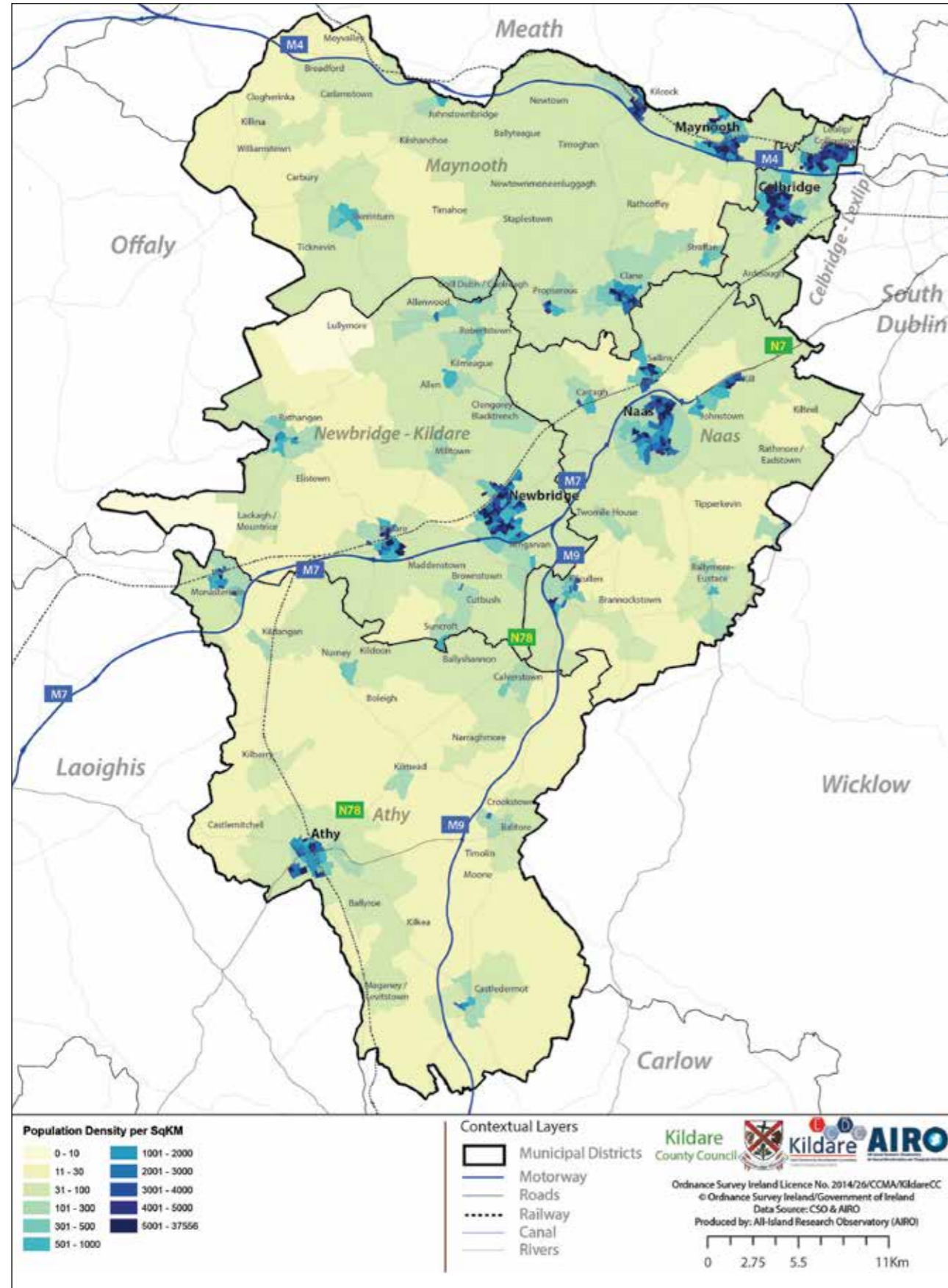
Figure 2.1
Population Change per Municipal District 2006-2011

Map 2.1

Population Change per ED 2006 - 2011



Map 2.2
Population Density per Sq. Km 2011



2.3.2 Population and Household Patterns

Changes in population and household patterns are important concepts in development plans in order to estimate land and services required for residential development, community facilities, employment, infrastructure etc. Table 2.1 and Figure 2.2 show the pattern of population and household change in the county from 1991- 2016. A total of 17,837 dwellings were built in Kildare between 2006 and 2011, with

most of these dwellings constructed in the 2006 – 2009 period. The Maynooth MD accommodated the highest proportion of these dwellings (30%), followed by Athy MD (24%), Kildare –Newbridge MD (23%), Naas MD (20%) and Celbridge –Leixlip MD (3%).

Although there was a significant increase in housing numbers, the average household size fell from 3.07 persons in 2006 to 2.67 persons in 2011.

Table 2.1
Patterns of Population and Household Change 1991-2016

Population and Households – Co. Kildare 1991-2016						
	1991	1996	2002	2006	2011	2016 ¹
Population	122,656	134,881	163,944	186,335	210,312	222,130
Households	32,589	39,041	50,914	60,957	78,794	80,746
Size	3.76	3.46	3.22	3.07	2.67	2.75

¹ Census 2016, Preliminary Results, CSO, July 2016

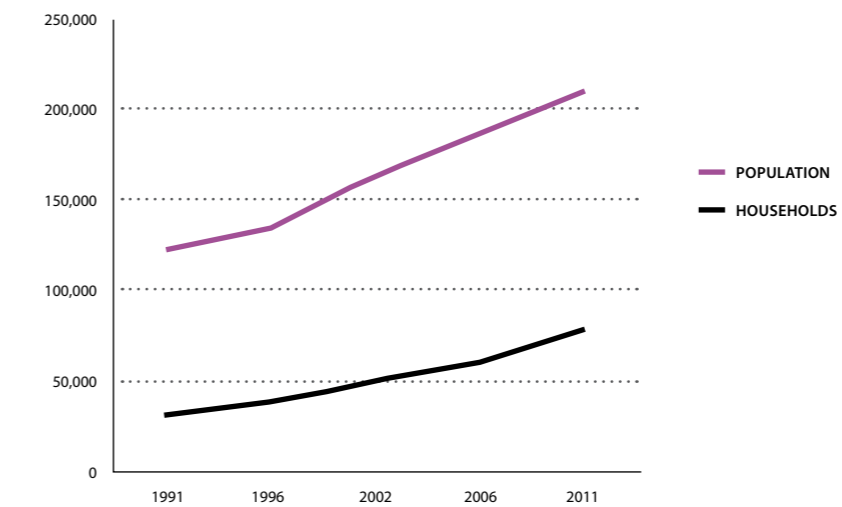


Figure 2.2
Patterns of Population and Household Change 1991-2011

2.4 PLANNING POLICY ZONES – REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022 (RPGs) identify two planning policy zones in the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) (Refer to Map 2.3). These comprise the Metropolitan Area which includes the north east Kildare towns of Maynooth, Leixlip, Celbridge and Kilcock in north-east Kildare and the Hinterland Area which includes the rest of Kildare.

- The key objective for the future development of the **Metropolitan Area** is to ensure consolidation of urban centres, development of brownfield sites especially along public transport corridors, the provision and facilitation of an integrated public transport system and the achievement of a greater use of sustainable transport modes through the integration of land use and transportation planning.
- Development in the **Hinterland Area** is to be concentrated in strategically placed, strong and dynamic urban centres absorbing most new population growth in the Hinterland Area and acting as key centres for the provision of services for surrounding smaller towns in rural areas, with all other towns and villages growing at a sustainable and self-sustaining scale.

These planning policy zones are supported by a settlement hierarchy with the identification of key growth towns to be consolidated, developed and supported within a sustainable urban form. Map 2.3 illustrates the RPG settlement strategy including the Metropolitan and Hinterland Areas.

2.5 SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY REGIONAL CONTEXT

The settlement strategy of the RPGs ranks settlements in the GDA from Large Growth Towns to Moderate Sustainable Growth Towns. At the lower level of the settlement hierarchy each local authority within the GDA should define small towns and villages as part of the development plan process.

2.5.1 Settlement Hierarchy – Defining Principles

The principles governing the categorisation of each settlement type are summarised in the following paragraphs followed by Table 2.2 which identifies the overall settlement hierarchy for County Kildare.

Large Growth Towns – are strategically positioned to make the most of their connectivity and high quality connections to Dublin City Centre, whilst also supporting and servicing a wider local economy. They are important centres for delivery of public services, alongside IDA promoted companies, high order retail businesses and supported enterprise centres providing a strong commercial hub.

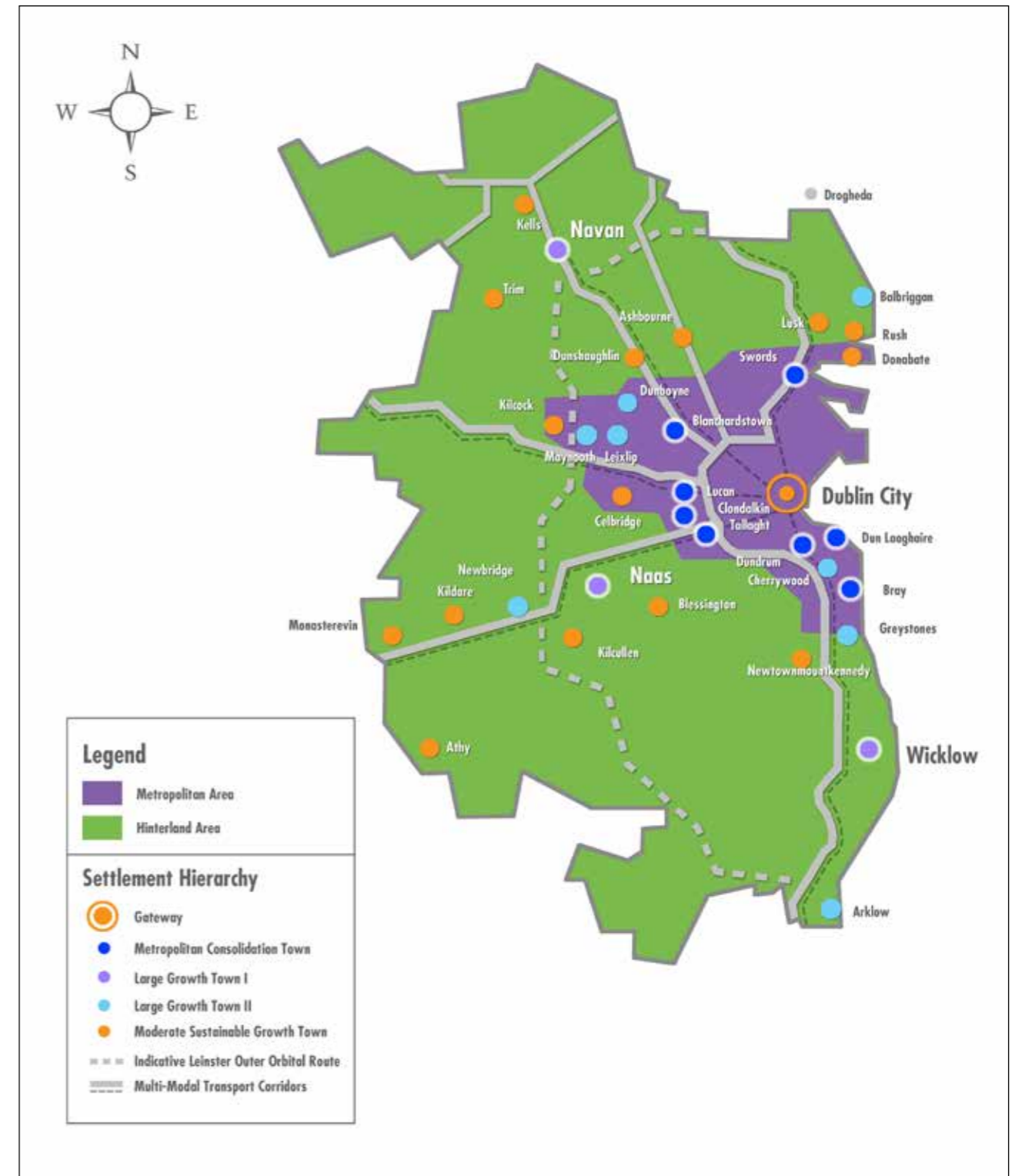
Large Growth Towns are divided into Levels I and II. This recognises the smaller population base and a lesser range of facilities provided within Level II towns. The division allows for growth in Level II towns in line with new facilities and services as these towns expand.

Moderate Sustainable Growth Towns – are located within both the Metropolitan and Hinterland Areas. They are at sub-county town level, with lesser levels of economic activity beyond that required to service the local population. Most of these towns are envisaged as having an interacting and supporting role to their adjacent higher order town in the Hinterland areas or as part of Dublin City within the Metropolitan area.

Small Towns within the Hinterland Area – are not listed under the RPGs. Such centres are to comprise populations of between 1,500 and 5,000, with relatively small and locally financed businesses. In terms of facilities, the RPGs recognise that small towns contain retail facilities mainly in the convenience category, and services such as primary schools, secondary schools, health clinics and sports facilities.

Villages comprise populations of circa 1,000 people, serving smaller rural catchment areas and providing local services with, in some cases, smaller scale rural enterprises.

Map 2.3:
RPG Settlement Strategy 2010 - 2022



2.5.2 Rural Settlements Countryside

It should also be noted that Kildare, as a diverse county, contains significant rural areas. This Plan therefore recognises the need to protect and support lower order rural settlements and the countryside by recognising the need to accommodate limited growth in accordance with requirements for local housing demands and the needs of genuine rural dwellers, while providing careful management of physical and environmental resources.

The *Sustainable Rural Housing - Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, DEHLG (2005) identify that Kildare falls within two areas i.e. 'areas under strong urban influence' and also 'stronger rural areas'.

The guidelines advise that only people who are part of the rural community are facilitated for one-off housing and that there is careful management of the rural environs of major urban areas to ensure their orderly development in the future. To facilitate the management of rural one off housing, rural policy zones have been identified on the basis of key considerations which are outlined in detail in Chapter 4.

The rural settlements and the countryside have a smaller proportion of the allocated overall growth for the county (1.6% in rural settlements and 8% in the rural countryside (Refer to Chapter 3).

Table 2.2
Settlement Hierarchy and Typology County Kildare

Hierarchy	Description	Locations
Large Growth Towns I	Key destinations, economically active towns supporting surrounding areas.	Naas
Large Growth Towns II	Smaller in scale but strong active growth towns, economically vibrant with high quality transport links to larger towns/city.	Newbridge Maynooth Leixlip (inc. Collinstown)
Moderate Sustainable Growth Towns	In Metropolitan Area, strong edge of Metropolitan area district service centres, HQ linkages and increased densities at nodes on public transport corridors. In Hinterland Areas, circa 10km from large growth town on public transport corridor, serve rural hinterland as market town.	Celbridge Kilcock Kildare Monasterevin Kilcullen Athy
Small Towns	Good bus or rail links; circa 10km from large growth towns.	Clane Prosperous Rathangan Sallins Athgarvan Castledermot Derrinturn Kill

2.6 SEA AND THE SETTLEMENT STRATEGY

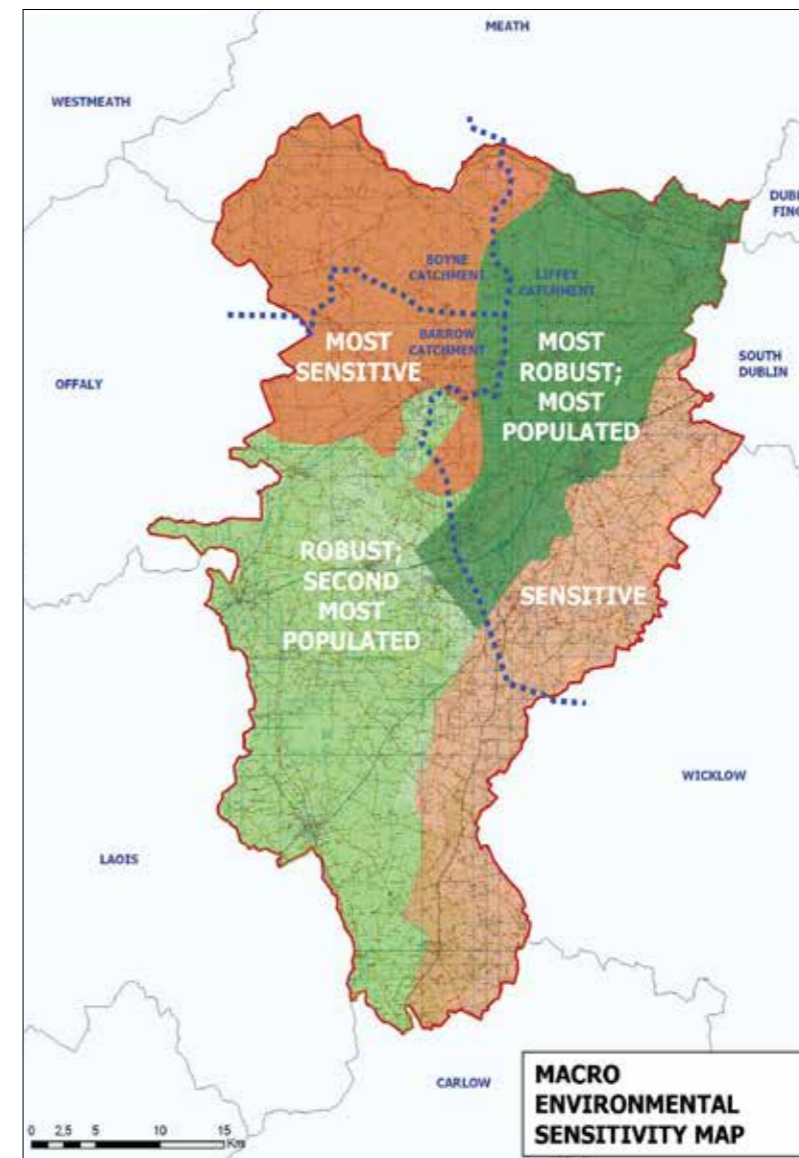
As part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of this Plan, a review of environmental sensitivities of the county has been undertaken. Map. 2.4 outlines at a macro level the environmental sensitivities of the county.

The Macro-Environmental Sensitivity Map illustrates environmental conditions at a very broad strategic level for the county as a whole. These considerations have informed the preferred development strategy for the county. It has been compiled having regard to a number of environmental factors including:

- Landscape character area boundaries;
- Ecological values;
- Land cover;
- Topography;
- Soils;

- Settlement patterns;
- Existing and planned waste water services;
- Infrastructure and capacity; and
- Existing and planned transport infrastructure and capacity.

The Macro-Environmental Sensitivity Map illustrates that at a broad strategic level there is a 'corridor' of more robust environmental conditions that follows the more fertile lowlands of the centre of the county. The north-east of the county has a concentration of high capacity public transport routes, a high density of serviced lands and a lower density of ecological and landscape designations. Environmental sensitivities increase to the south-east on account of uplands and increase towards the north-west on account of bogs and wetlands. In these areas there is a lower proximity and concentration of quality transport and high capacity water services.



Map 2.4
Environmental Sensitivities

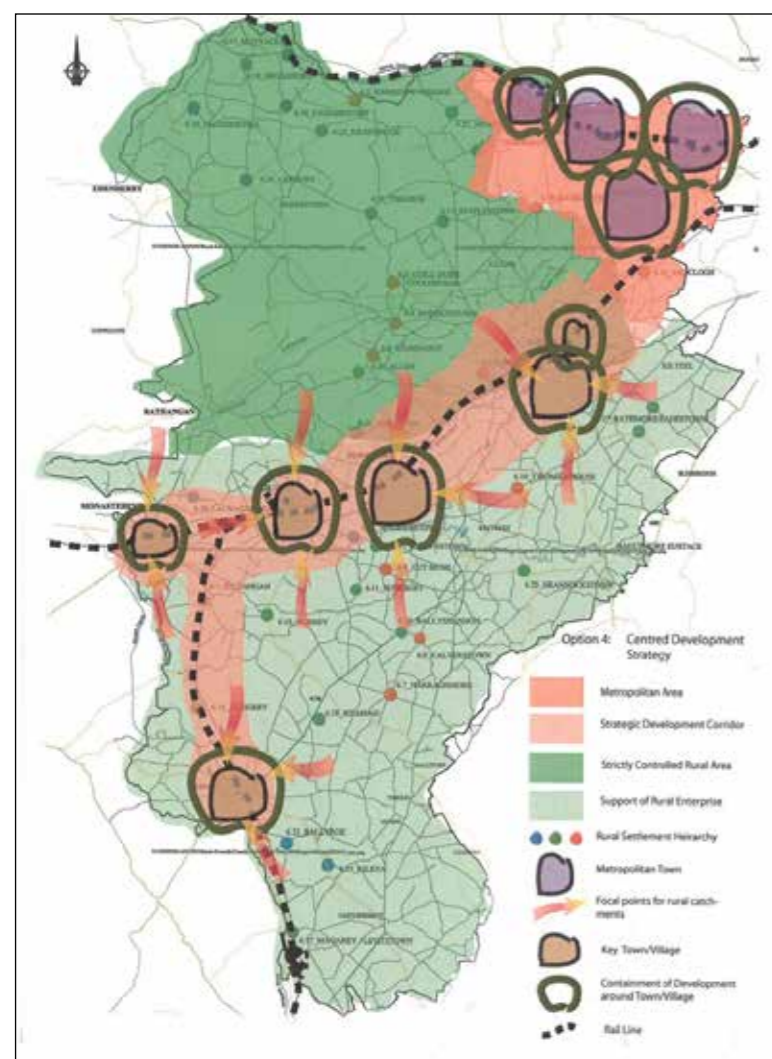
As the map illustrates a broad scale generalisation of sensitivities, all applications for development must be considered having regard to the individual environmental conditions of the subject site, including the availability of wastewater treatment infrastructure and services and the assimilative capacity of rivers into which treated effluent will be discharged.

2.7 PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The preferred development strategy has been informed by the RPGs and the environmental sensitivities of the county. It is based on building strong urban centres while protecting the rural hinterlands. The focus is on achieving:

- Critical mass in the Metropolitan urban areas (Maynooth, Leixlip, Celbridge, Kilcock) and in key towns and villages in the Hinterland (Naas, Newbridge, Athy, Kildare, Monasterevin and Kilcullen);

- Establishing a hierarchy of smaller rural settlements to develop rural centres capable of providing a range of services and employment to their local populations;
- Managing development in rural areas with a focus on agricultural diversification, appropriate rural enterprise (e.g. renewable energy production) and the strengthening of existing towns and villages;
- Protecting the environment by implementing an environmental protection policy which recognises the various environmentally sensitive zones within the county but not to mutually exclude appropriate and otherwise acceptable uses and development.



Map 2.5 Preferred Development Strategy

2.8 POPULATION AND HOUSING GROWTH

The RPGs translate the national and regional population and housing targets set by the NSS to county level. The Core Strategy legislation requires the County Development Plan to be consistent with the population allocations and housing targets set out in the RPGs.

The current RPG targets date from 2009 and are based on demographic data derived from Census 2006. Updated population and housing targets are likely to be published in 2017 as part of the preparation of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and Regional

Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES), the planned successors to the NSS and RPGs. The 2009 figures will continue to apply until such time as the updated figures are issued by the RPGs.

The population target for the Greater Dublin Area is 1,955,800 persons by 2016 and 2,103,900 persons by 2022. Within the GDA, the population target for the Mid East Region is 594,600 persons by 2016 and 639,700 persons by 2022¹ (Refer to Table 2.3).

Table 2.3 NSS/RPG Population Targets for Mid- East Region and GDA

	Census 2011	Census 2016 ²	Target 2016	Target 2022
Mid East Region	531,087	559,405	594,600	639,700
GDA	1,804,156	1,904,806	1,955,800	2,103,900

The RPGs population targets and housing allocations for County Kildare are set out in Table 2.4 with Census 2006, Census 2011 and Census 2016 housing and population figures included to allow for comparison.

Table 2.4 RPG Population and Housing Targets for County Kildare 2016 and 2022

County Kildare	Census 2006	Census 2011	Census 2016 [*]	Target 2016	Target 2022	Target end Q1 2023 [*]
Pop	186,335	210,312	222,130	234,422	252,640	253,600
Housing	68,840	78,794	80,746	93,748	112,477	113,243

^{*} Adjusted to end Q1 2023 based on the quarterly average 2011-2022.

¹ Regional Planning Guidelines Review, Gateway and Hubs Population Targets, October 2009.

² Census 2016, Preliminary Results, CSO, July 2016

Census 2016 indicates that population growth in the GDA was slower than anticipated by the RPGs. The 2016 population of Kildare is 12,292 persons below the RPG 2016 allocation for the County, while the number of households is 13,002 units below the RPG 2016 target.

The RPG population targets for Kildare (Table 2.4 refer) represent an increase of 30,510 persons on Census 2016 levels by 2022.

The RPG housing allocations for Kildare (Table 2.4 refers) represent an increase of 31,731 housing units on Census 2016 levels by 2022.

This leaves a remaining allocation of 31,731 units from April 2016 to the end of 2022. The RPG allocation adjusted to the end of the first quarter of 2023 (end of Plan period) results in a population allocation of 253,600 persons and a housing target of 113,243 units to the end of the plan period. This equates to a housing allocation of 32,497 additional units in Kildare between April 2016 and April 2023.

2.9 DISTRIBUTION OF GROWTH AND HOUSING LAND CAPACITY

Distribution of Growth

Growth targets have been allocated to towns, villages and settlements based on the RPG targets and RPG policy requirements. It is a requirement of the RPGs that a minimum of 35% of overall growth is directed into the Metropolitan area (Maynooth, Celbridge, Leixlip and Kilcock) and the remaining 65% to the Hinterland area (Figure 2.4 refers). Of the proportion allocated to the Hinterland, in line with national and regional policy to direct growth into designated growth centres, a minimum of 60% of the allocation is directed to the main urban centres (Naas, Newbridge, Kildare, Monasterevin, Athy and Kilcullen) with the remaining 40% to small towns/villages and the rural countryside.

Chapter 3 sets out the allocation of housing in more detail. Section 3.5, Table 3.3 sets out growth targets for towns, villages, rural settlements, rural nodes and the open countryside during the Plan period, based on a requirement for 32,497 housing units.

Housing Land Capacity

Section 3.6, Table 3.4 sets out the capacity of identified housing lands to accommodate RPG growth allocations during the Plan period. The capacity of housing lands identified in Local Area Plans (LAPs), Environs Plans, Village Plans and Settlement Plans is set out in addition to the capacity assigned to rural

areas. While sufficient land is identified to cater for the housing demands of the county up to 2023 and beyond some Towns, Villages and Settlements have surplus capacity relative to the Core Strategy allocation and some have a shortfall. The zoning surpluses and shortfalls that are identified in Table 3.4 will be addressed through the relevant land use plans, as appropriate.

Headroom

It is considered that the growth allocations for each Town, Village and Settlement, as set out in Table 3.3 incorporates an inbuilt headroom to meet anticipated need and to ensure continuity of supply of zoned lands over the 9 year period from 2017 to 2026 and beyond, in accordance with the requirements of the Development Plan Guidelines, DECLG, 2007. This approach is supported by the population growth forecasts published by the CSO in 2013 and preliminary Census results published in July 2016.

The RPG target of 32,497 completions to the end April 2023 necessitates an annual average output of c. 4,642 housing units over the seven year period from 2016-2023. This is very high when compared against historic completion rates in Kildare. Fig. 2.3 shows annual completions of 2,869 units per annum over the 10 year period from 2000 to 2009. Over a nine year period from 2017 to 2026 an annual average output of c. 3,250 units would be required. This is considered achievable based on historic outputs.

The capacity of settlements in Kildare to accommodate the level of growth envisaged by the RPGs and to deliver sustainable communities that are well served by social and physical infrastructure will need to be carefully considered as part of the Local Area Plan process for the Growth Towns.

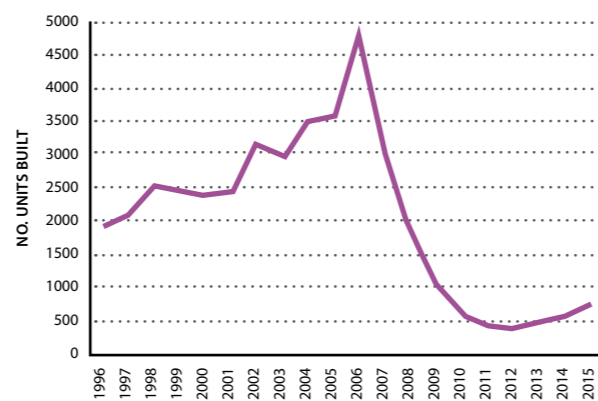


Figure 2.3
Housing Completions 1996 – 2015

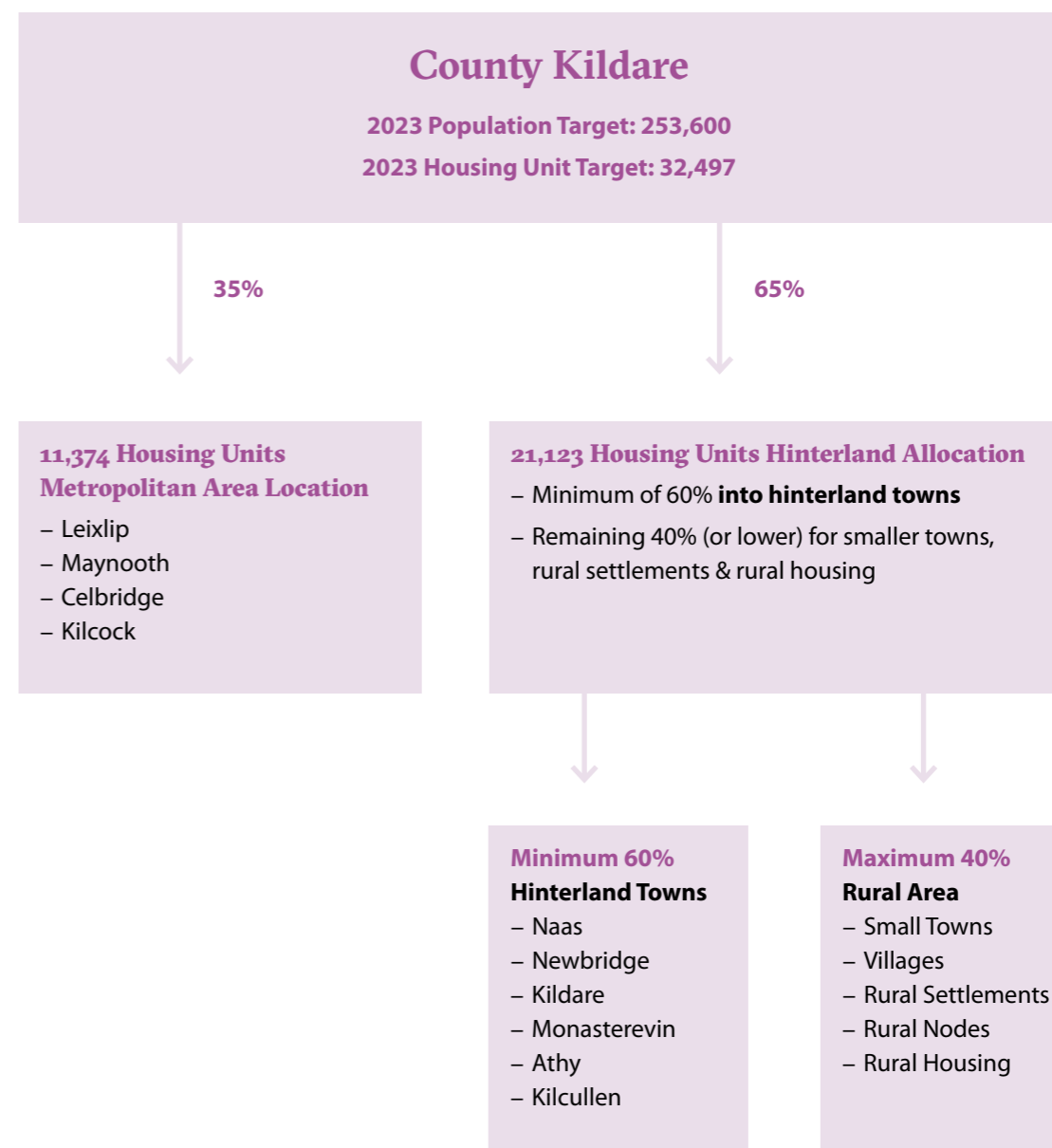


Figure 2.4
Population and Housing Unit Targets 2023

2.10 EMPLOYMENT IN KILDARE

The labour force in Kildare has expanded from a total of 97,719 in 2006 to 104,226 in 2011. Kildare now has the 5th highest labour force of all local authorities in Ireland, equating to 67.7% of the total population aged 15 years and over, the 3rd highest in the country (national rate of 61.9%). The labour force participation rate is varied across the Kildare urban hierarchy but generally rates are highest in the main employment centres and commuter towns where rates are well above the county average. Urban areas have a higher participation rate of 66.9% compared to 62.4% in the rural areas.

The economic down turn resulted in Kildare having an unemployment rate of 17.9% in 2011, compared to the national average of 19%. Developments in more recent times impacted on the numbers in the labour force with 13,918 people recorded on the live register in County Kildare in December 2015 (down from 34,458 in December 2009) while the national unemployment rate in December 2015 was at 8.8%. With an improving economic climate nationally, it is imperative that the necessary spatial strategy is put in place to support, maintain and improve a sustainable economic base, maintain existing jobs and create new employment opportunities.

2.11 OVERALL ECONOMIC STRATEGY

The strategy for the future economic development of the county is set out in Chapter 5 and is informed by the existing RPGs and the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) prepared by the Kildare Local Community and Development Committee in 2015. The focus will be on developing the strategic economic growth centres and supporting the sustainable economic growth towns. The economic growth centres are focused on multi-modal corridors. These connect the economic growth centres within the region with both the Dublin City-region gateway and beyond through adjoining regions to other key towns and NSS gateways, benefiting from national investment on these corridors.

2.11.1 Primary Economic Growth Towns

Naas, Maynooth and Leixlip are identified as primary economic growth towns to be promoted for regional enterprise. In these towns critical mass is a core objective for economies of scale to justify strategic infrastructure provision.

2.11.2 Economic Clusters

Economic clusters are also promoted as part of the overall economic strategy. Naas is clustered with Newbridge and Kilcullen while Maynooth and Leixlip are clustered with Celbridge and Kilcock. Clusters are to develop in a mutually dependent way, so that the amenities and economies of the whole cluster are greater than the sum of the individual parts.

2.11.3 Secondary Economic Growth Towns

Kildare Town and Athy are identified as secondary economic growth centres, providing an important and complementary role in developing economic growth and sectoral interests in tandem with primary economic growth towns. Athy has close linkages and interactions with Carlow in the south east region.

2.11.4 Hinterland Towns

The town of Monasterevin within the Hinterland area will provide new employment opportunities at a district level for the urban areas as well as its large rural hinterland. Employment uses that build on the existing assets of the town (such as the quality of transportation infrastructure and equestrian

and heritage links) should be encouraged. This will assist in reducing long distance commuting patterns creating more sustainable communities.

2.11.5 Small Towns and Villages

The small towns of Athgarvan, Castledermot, Clane, Derrinturn, Kill, Prosperous, Rathangan and Sallins together with the villages of Johnstown, Straffan, Ballymore Eustace, Allenwood, Johnstownbridge, Coill Dubh/Coolearagh, Kilmeague, Caragh, Kildangan, Suncroft, Robertstown and Ballitore, Crookstown, Moone, Timolin will seek to supply new local employment opportunities.

2.11.6 Rural Areas

Within the rural areas there are clear locational requirements for employment generating uses including, but not limited to, green energy projects such as renewable energies and resource recovery, but also food production, agri-business, quarrying, forestry, bloodstock, horticulture and rural based tourism.

2.12 SECTORAL STRENGTHS

To realise the potential of the identified economic growth centres the Plan seeks to develop sectoral strengths around the growth centres as follows:

- Maynooth and Leixlip based on the presence of Maynooth University, Intel and Hewlett Packard, should brand itself as the knowledge valley, a centre of excellence in the knowledge based economy. The key focus is directed to hi tech/bio tech sectors, research and development, ICT and manufacturing.
- Sectoral opportunities within Naas are to focus on high tech manufacturing, ICT, food research and production, public administration, office based industry, tourism and bloodstock.
- Newbridge has established itself in the pharmaceutical, distribution, manufacturing, innovation, R&D sectors (e.g. Bord na Mona, Horse Racing Ireland and the Department of Defence). Development of Newbridge will seek to complement the sectoral strengths of the primary economic growth town of Naas.
- Celbridge and Kilcock are designated as supporting centres to Maynooth and Leixlip and will support the knowledge based economy focusing on manufacturing/office based industry, logistics, tourism and natural and built heritage.

- Within Kildare Town and Athy the development of high value-added manufacturing sectors and internationally traded sectors, in tandem with IDA support around transport corridors and routes, are also supported, in tandem with continued investment in education and skills development. Kildare Town and Athy have the opportunity to develop and promote their economic base through development as important tourism destinations.

2.13 CREATION OF SUSTAINABLE AND INTEGRATED COMMUNITIES

In parallel with the provision of a more consolidated and compact urban form, together with the provision of employment opportunities, is the need to create sustainable and more socially inclusive integrated communities.

The strategy will seek to provide quality homes, in mixed tenure neighbourhoods, catering for a wide range of family types. There is also a clear need to ensure that social and community facilities, including recreation and amenity facilities, are provided in tandem with residential development. The provision of infrastructure such as schools, retail and childcare facilities is necessary to complement and support increasing populations throughout the county. The creation of vibrant and bustling towns and villages is necessary, with a diverse mix of activities to facilitate the creation of sustainable and integrated communities.

2.14 BALANCING THE ENVIRONMENT WITH SUSTAINABLE AND APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT

Heritage is recognised as an important environmental and economic resource and its conservation and enhancement is a major objective of this Plan. A key challenge is to balance the protection of our natural and built environment with the pressure for development. An important mechanism to achieve this is to formulate appropriate policies and objectives for the protection, enhancement and management of our heritage. This will also be achieved through the actions of the County Kildare Heritage Plan and County Biodiversity Plan.

2.15 CLIMATE CHANGE

The National Climate Change Adaptation Framework 'Building Resilience to Climate Change' was published by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in 2012. Local authorities are obliged to prepare Local Adaptation Plans in consultation with all relevant internal and external stakeholders. Kildare County Council is committed to preparing a Local Adaptation Plan, which will inform policy making at a local level in the future.

The County Development Plan seeks to promote a series of policies and objectives throughout that will ameliorate the effects of climate change and introduce resilience to its effects to support the implementation of the National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012, DEHLG (2007) and the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework Building Resilience to Climate Change, DECLG (2012).

2.16 DELIVERING THE CORE STRATEGY

2.16.1 Policies: Settlement Strategy

It is the policy of the Council to:

- CS 1** Provide new housing provision in accordance with the County Settlement Hierarchy.
- CS 2** Direct appropriate levels of growth into the designated growth centres and moderate sustainable growth towns.
- CS 3** Support rural communities through the identification of lower order centres including small towns, villages and settlements to provide more sustainable development centres in the rural areas.
- CS 4** Deliver sustainable compact urban areas through a plan-led approach.

2.16.2 Policies: Economic Development

It is the policy of the Council to:

- CS 5** Support the development of the identified strategic growth centres of Naas, Maynooth, Leixlip and Newbridge as focal points for regional critical massing and employment growth.



CS 6 Encourage and facilitate new employment opportunities within economic clusters and the hinterland towns.

CS 7 Promote and attract economic activity at appropriate locations throughout the county.

CS 8 Address commuting patterns by building up the local economy to a more sustainable level.

2.16.3 Policies: Sustainable and Integrated Communities

It is the policy of the Council to:

CS 9 Promote and facilitate the development of sustainable communities through land use planning, by providing for land uses capable of accommodating employment, community, leisure, recreational and cultural facilities having regard to the quality of the environment, including the natural environment, landscape character and the archaeological and architectural heritage.

CS 10 Ensure that developments are accessible to and meet the needs of all individuals and local community groups.

CS 11 Seek the delivery of physical and community infrastructure including strategic open space and recreational areas in conjunction with high quality residential developments to create quality living environments.

2.16.4 Policies: Balancing the Environment with Sustainable and Appropriate Development

It is the policy of the Council to:

CS 12 Protect and conserve the natural environment.

CS 13 Protect and conserve nationally important and EU designated sites.

CS 14 Promote and enhance biodiversity throughout the county.

CS 15 Ensure that the built heritage is appropriately protected through the Record of Protected Structures with policies to support the sensitive reuse and integration of such structures into new development works.

2.14.5 Policies: National Climate Change Strategy

It is the policy of the Council to:

CS 16 Support the implementation of the National Climate Change Strategy and the National Climate Change Adaption Framework Building Resilience to Climate Change 2012 through the County Development Plan and through the preparation of a Climate Change Adaptation Plan in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders.

Map 2.6
Core Strategy Map

