



GOREY

Adopted by Wexford County Council
on 13th September 2010.

Gorey Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2010





**The Gorey Town and Environs Local Area Plan was adopted by
Wexford County Council on 13th September 2010.**

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2010

Local Area Plan

Gorey Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2010

The purpose of this Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Plan area. This strategy will manage change in the town's physical environment and provide for new development that contributes to, and enhances the existing qualities of the town. This shall be done by ensuring that development is planned in a comprehensive and co-ordinated manner. Though the development policies and objectives set out in this Plan are for the next six years, the Development Strategy provides the foundations that will shape the future development of the Gorey area beyond 2016.





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Gorey Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2010
Wexford County Council: Forward Planning



Gorey Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2010

Wexford County Council: Forward Planning



The Gorey Town & Environs Local Area Plan 2010 shall be read in conjunction with the Wexford County Development Plan 2007-2013. In particular, regard shall be had to Section 10 - Development Standards and Guidelines, which will be applied to any development proposal within the Local Area Plan boundary.

Introduction

1.1 Location and Background

Gorey is the principle town in north County Wexford situated 52 kilometres north of Wexford Town. It is linked to the towns of Wexford and Enniscorthy by the N11/M11 National Primary route, which also links the town with Dublin and other urban centres along the eastern coast. The town itself is 95 kilometres from Dublin. The Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area show the Greater Dublin Area extending as far south as Arklow, which is identified as a 'Large Growth Town II'. The completion of the Arklow by-pass has improved its accessibility to the capital and has put Gorey - only 16 kilometres south of Arklow - within commuting distance from the larger employment centres of the Dublin Region.



Above: Location of Gorey town in the south east

1.2 Legal Status

This Local Area Plan has been prepared in accordance with Sections 18, 19 and 20 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2007 and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2008. The plan is comprised of a written statement with policies and objectives which will guide the area's physical, environmental and social development in a sustainable manner for at least the next six years. This Local Area Plan is consistent with the objectives of the Wexford County Development Plan 2007-2013 and shall be read in conjunction with the aforementioned Plan. Particular regard shall be had to Section 10 Development Management Standards.

1.3 Purpose of this Local Area Plan

The purpose of this Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Plan area. This strategy will manage change in the town's physical environment and provide for new development that contributes to, and enhances the existing qualities of the town. This shall be done by ensuring that development is planned in a comprehensive and co-ordinated manner. Though the development policies and objectives set out in this Plan are for the next six years, the Development Strategy provides the foundations that will shape the future development of the Gorey area beyond 2016.

1.4 Plan Area

Wexford County Council established a development area boundary for Gorey in the Gorey Town & Environs Local Area Plan 2002. Following a careful examination of the remaining vacant zoned lands within the town boundary it was found that sufficient land has been zoned to allow for ample expansion of the settlement over the lifetime of the plan and therefore no additional lands have been zoned for residential development. The plan area is defined by the existing pattern of the urban area, the route of the N11 Gorey By-pass that lies to the east of the town and the projected land-use requirements for the Plan area.

1.5 Planning Context

Town Function

Gorey is County Wexford's fourth largest town¹. It is located in the north of the county 30 kilometres northeast of Enniscorthy Town and 95 kilometres south of Dublin.

Gorey is the best example in County Wexford of a seventeenth century plantation town. The urban morphology of the town centre has altered little over the years, consisting of one wide, straight arterial main street with minor streets feeding onto it in a grid-like fashion. A series of streets run north-west and south-east of Main Street, including Rafter Street, John Street, Thomas Street etc., these have a more secondary role to the town's commercial activity.

¹ Census 2006, Central Statistics Office.



The town remains an important urban centre serving the traditional north county hinterland which encompasses Courtown, Hollyfort, Ballygarrett, Carnew (Co. Wicklow) amongst others. The town also acts as a gateway to a large portion of the Wexford coastline, with its catchment including resorts on the coastline such as Courtown, Ballymoney, Ballygarrett and Cahore.

In recent years with the completion of the Arklow by-pass as well as the frequency of and improvement of rail services, Gorey has taken on a more important role as a residential base, with a substantial number of residents commuting to the Dublin Region to work on a daily basis.

Physical Setting and Appreciation

Regarding the town's relationship with the underlying topography, the town developed to the west of the river Banoge (running north-south) in a low lying area of land. The surrounding landscape is undulating with hills rising around the town - north-east at Clonattin and more significantly in the south-west at Gorey Hill. Noticeably, the landscape to the west of the town rises more significantly in the area known as Creagh. Any development in these areas is likely to result in more significant visual impacts. Rich agricultural landscape surrounds the town, within this landscape setting as a whole the town has remained relatively well contained.

The River Banoge flows through the eastern section of the town. This area is also dissected by the railway line which serves Dublin-Rosslare Harbour. The N11 Gorey by-pass lies to the east of the town traversing a region of relatively flat land.

This road is a strategic link in the national road network forming part of the southern road corridor between Dublin and Wexford and Euro-route E01. This route is designated as a Strategic Radial Corridor in the National Spatial Strategy.



Inset: River Banoge





1.6 Relationship with other Plans and Strategies

National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) is designed to achieve a better balance of social, economic, physical development and population growth between regions. Its focus is on people, places and on building communities. This will be achieved through closer matching of where people live and where they work.

The key to the successful implementation of the NSS in the South-East region is the formation of a strategic growth triangle with Waterford City as the Gateway supported by Wexford and Kilkenny as hubs. Enniscorthy, New Ross and Gorey are recognised as important urban centres providing a range of services and opportunities for employment whilst smaller towns and villages throughout the County will act as a focus for social and economic activity as well as housing.

South-East Regional Planning Guidelines 2010

The Regional Planning Guidelines provide a long-term strategic planning framework for the development of the South Eastern Region up to 2022. The South Eastern Region is divided into six smaller areas. Gorey is located within Sub-Area B (North County Wexford) and is defined as a larger town (population in excess of 5,000 persons). The principal issues associated within this area are:

- Strong population growth-influence of the Greater Dublin Area,
- Strong physical links to Dublin and the Mid-East Regions,
- Demographic implications for the rest of the County and the Hub at Wexford Town,
- Tourism development to be facilitated,
- Urban sprawl to be controlled and monitored, and
- Sensitive coastal landscape.

It is acknowledged that Gorey has experienced high levels of population growth and continues to be an attractive location for new residential development. It is advised that care must be taken to ensure that the continued expansion of this urban area is regulated to allow community, social and retail development keep pace with the recent rapid phases of mainly residential development. Gorey should seek to support the role of the Gateway, Hubs and County Towns rather than try to compete with them for growth. The framework recommends that the following urban consolidation priorities be applied:

- Identify under-utilised, derelict or undeveloped lands within the built up area through the development plan process,
- Realise opportunities using, for example, the Derelict Sites Act and acquisition of key sites,
- Where sufficient development opportunities are not available within the urban area, consider appropriate extension options having regard to infrastructural constraints and the availability of community services².

National Planning Guidelines

Planning Authorities are required by the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2007 to have regard to Ministerial Guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. These guidelines include:

- Architectural Heritage Protection,
- Childcare Facilities,
- Sustainable Residential Developments in Urban Areas,
- Best Practice Urban Design Manual,
- Design Standards for New Apartments,
- Development Plans Guidelines -June 2007,
- Implementing Regional Planning Guidelines- Best Practice Guidance,
- Landscape and Landscape Assessment and Appendices,
- Provision of Schools and the Planning System,
- Retail Planning Guidelines, and
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management.

² Draft South-Eastern Regional Planning Guidelines, 2010 p.40

Wexford County Development Plan 2007-2013

In the context of the Settlement Strategy contained in the County Development Plan 2007, Gorey is designated as a secondary growth area alongside the towns of Enniscorthy and New Ross. Gorey is included in this layer because of the exponential population growth which it has experienced due to its proximity to Dublin. It is anticipated that as the population continues to grow, a critical mass will be achieved which will facilitate and sustain the provision of its own services and industry. This is supported by policies SS3 and SS4 which state that the Council will promote the necessary physical and social infrastructure to make the listed settlements more attractive places to live and to ensure that the secondary growth areas will be in so far as possible self-sufficient incorporating employment activities, retail services, social and community facilities.

Wexford County Housing Strategy 2007

The Housing Strategy 2007-2013 sets out current and future housing requirements within the County and the requirement for social and affordable housing. It also concentrates on the housing demand in the main towns in the county including Gorey.

1.7 Strategic Environmental Assessment

In accordance with the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC) a screening & scoping process and consultation with the designated environmental authorities has been carried out. Having assessed the proposed Plan against the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations, it is considered that the proposed Gorey Local Area Plan has the potential to have significant effects on the following elements of the receiving environment:

- Water quality,
- The architectural character of the Plan area,
- The archaeological heritage of the Plan area,
- The landscape character of the Plan area,
- The candidate Special Area of Conservation that lies to the west of the Plan area.

Furthermore, the proposed upgrade of the wastewater treatment system which will be completed within the lifetime of the Plan will facilitate a population of 10,000 or more persons within the Plan area. While it cannot be predicted with any certainty whether this population growth will occur, it is considered that the mandatory requirement to prepare an SEA for a local plan area with a population of 10,000 persons or more should be applied as a precautionary measure. Accordingly, based on the above conclusions, it was recommended that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment was warranted.

The Environmental Report was prepared in conjunction with the preparation of the Plan and the Plan has been informed by environmental considerations. The mitigation measures needed to offset the potential adverse effects of the Plan and future monitoring proposals have been transposed from the Environmental Report into the Plan.

1.8 Appropriate Assessment

An "Appropriate Assessment" (AA)³ means an assessment, based on best scientific knowledge, of the potential impact of a plan on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 sites and the development, where necessary, of measures to preclude negative effects.⁴

The Gorey Town & Environs Local Area Plan 2010 was screened for any potential impact on Natura 2000 sites. The screening exercise examines the likely effects of the plan, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, upon a Natura 2000 site; and through this process it has been determined that these effects will not be significant.

³ A report prepared having regard to the relevant EU Guidance, viz. "Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites" (Methodological guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC), EC2001.

⁴ Natura 2000 sites are sites subject to European designations, normally known as SAC (Special Area of Conservation) and SPA (Special Protection Area). These are protected under the Habitats Directive of 1992 (EU directive 92/43/EEC).

Strategic Assessment

2.1 Population

At the time of the last Census (2006) the population of the Gorey Town and Environs was 7,193 persons (as determined by the Central Statistics Office see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 - 2006 Census Breakdown for Gorey Town & Environs

Area	Population 2002	Population 2006	% Change (2002-2006)
Gorey Urban	3,090	3,479	+13%
Environs of Gorey – Gorey Rural	1,981	3,513	+77%
Environs of Gorey – Courtown	211	201	-5%
Environs of Gorey Total	2,192	3,714	69%
Total Population of Gorey Town & Environs	5,282	7,193	36%

The town of Gorey serves a much wider hinterland than the above figures suggest, with the town acting as a service centre for shopping and community facilities etc. Between 2002 and the most recent census of 2006 the population of the Gorey Town & Environs area grew by 36.2% to a population of 7,193. From an examination of the current population of the town and environs it can be seen that the area has grown by almost 83% since 1996 (CSO 1996: pop: 3,939). This significant increase in population can be attributed to many factors, most notably the proximity of Gorey town to major employment centres in the east such as Dublin. The opening of the Gorey/Arklow by-pass and the improvements on the national road network, the N11/M11, have also decreased travel times to these major urban areas, allowing people to work in the larger centres while living and enjoying their private lives in smaller urban conurbations such as Gorey town.

2.2 Population Projections

The projections below were calculated taking into account the predicted effects of planning permissions granted and expected to be built, current developments, and the demographic vitality of the area (existing population and estimated natural increase). Certain other factors were also included in the formulation of the population projections including the low sewerage capacity of the town and environs area, the fact that Gorey is a key commuting area within close proximity to the Greater Dublin Area, the improved transportation links between Gorey and other major urban centres and the predicted housing market improvement between 2009 and 2011.

Certain assumptions were made in compiling the population projections for the Local Area Plan period. It was assumed that Gorey would follow a 50% growth rate to the end of 2009, and that it will follow 25% of this growth rate to 2011 and follow national and local inner town decrease thereafter to 2016. It was assumed the Gorey Environs would follow 30% of the 2002-2006 growth rate from 2006 to 2009 (incorporating existing planning approvals) and Gorey Environs⁵ will follow 50% of projected County growth estimates thereafter.

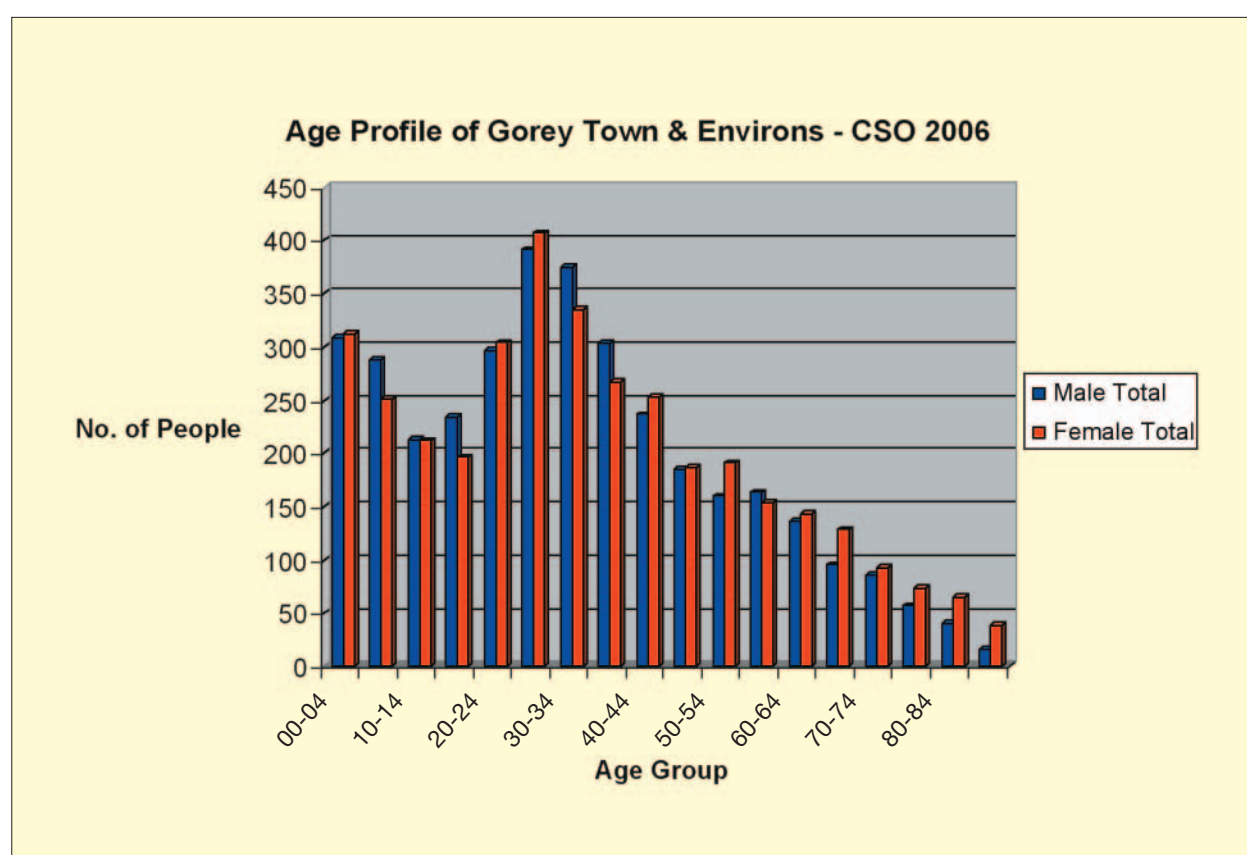
⁵ Environs includes Gorey Rural ED, Courtown ED and Ballinastragh ED, as according to 2010 Local Area Plan area.

Table 2.2 - Population Projections for LAP Area 2010-2016

Census Towns	2002	2006	2009	2011	2016
Gorey Town	3,090	3,479	3,688	3,799	3,685
Gorey Environs	2,192	3,714	4,457	4,586	4,719
Total Gorey Town & Environs	5,282	7,193	8,145	8,384	8,404

A breakdown study of the main findings of the CSO population figures was carried out in order to get a broad overview of the town and surrounding area. Age profile, employment and travel patterns were all examined and the findings are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

2.3 Age Profile

Table 2.3 – Age Profile of Gorey Town & Environs

The age profile of the Gorey Town and Environs area has a high representation of younger people, with the two highest age brackets being 25-29 and 30-34 at 20.96% of the total population. This has important implications in terms of housing provision with many in these brackets approaching first time buyer age. It also has important implications for community and educational facilities for families and employment generation. The third highest representation is that of the 0-4 year age bracket at 8.6% of the population. Due to the high proportion of children at this age, crèche and future educational needs will be a high priority in the town. These figures are based on the 2006 census, and judging by these the requirement for educational and childcare facilities will continue in the future.

2.4 Employment

In 2006 there were a total of 3,217 persons at work in the Gorey Town and Environs area. This represented 45% of the population of the town at the time. The unemployment rate at the time of the 2006 Census was approximately 9% in Gorey Town and Environs. Updated live register figures for the Gorey area from the end of January 2010 show that this number is now 4,035 persons. Table 2.4 below demonstrates the breakdown of the updated figures.

Table 2.4 – Live Register Figures for the Gorey Office of Registration

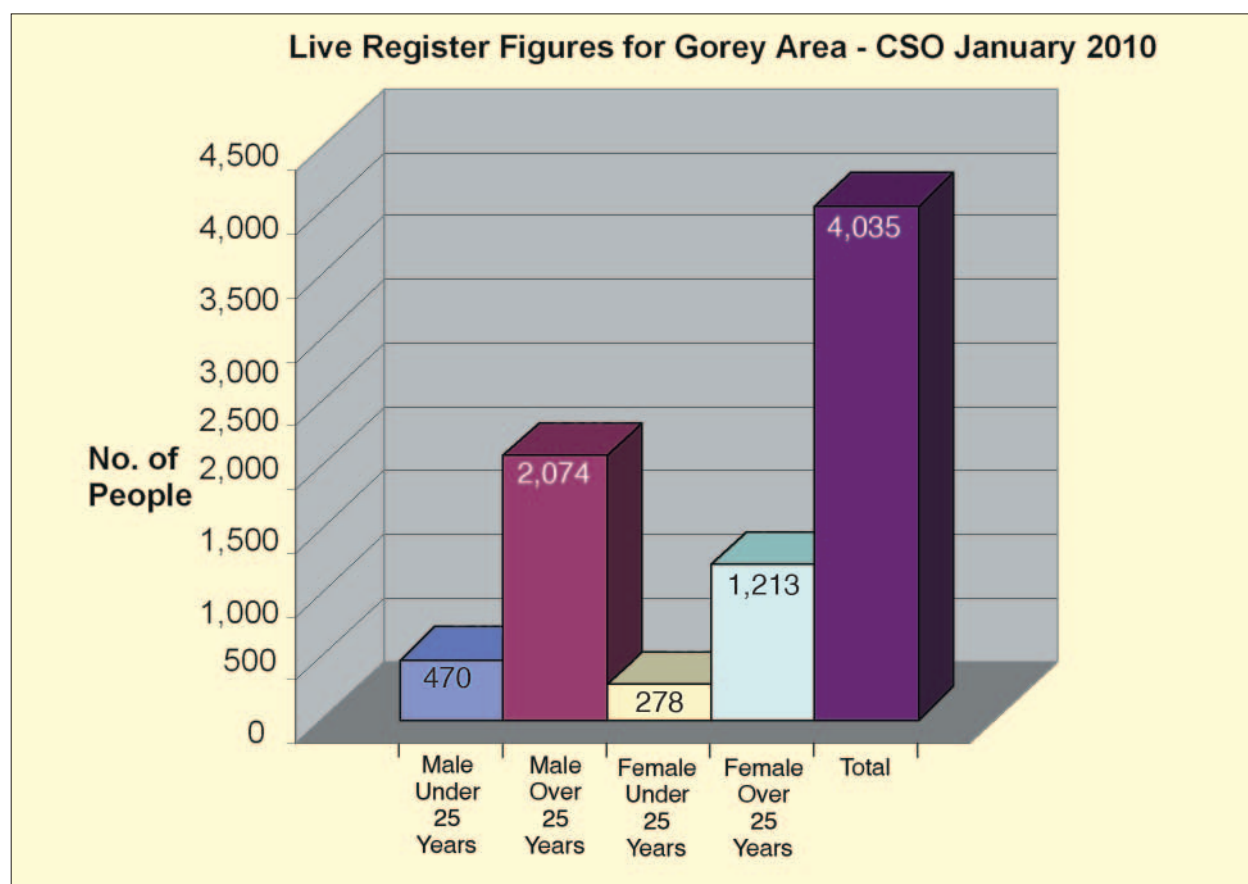
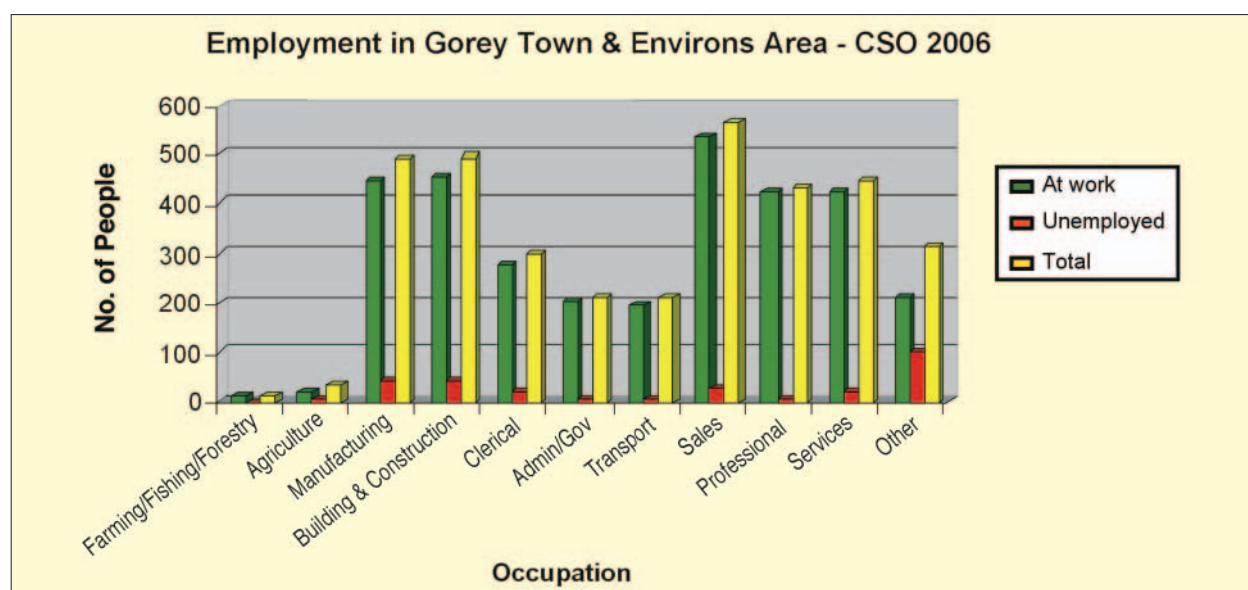


Table 2.5 – Employment in Gorey Town & Environs



Retail sales accounted for the highest percentage of the working population at 17.5%. The next highest sectors are Building and Construction (15.4%) and then Manufacturing (15.2%). However these figures reflect the construction industry at the time in 2006. The current live register figures indicate that the numbers employed in the construction industry has decreased since 2006. According to the Census 2006 there are quite low numbers employed in the Agriculture/Forestry, Transport and Administration sectors.

2.5 Travel Patterns

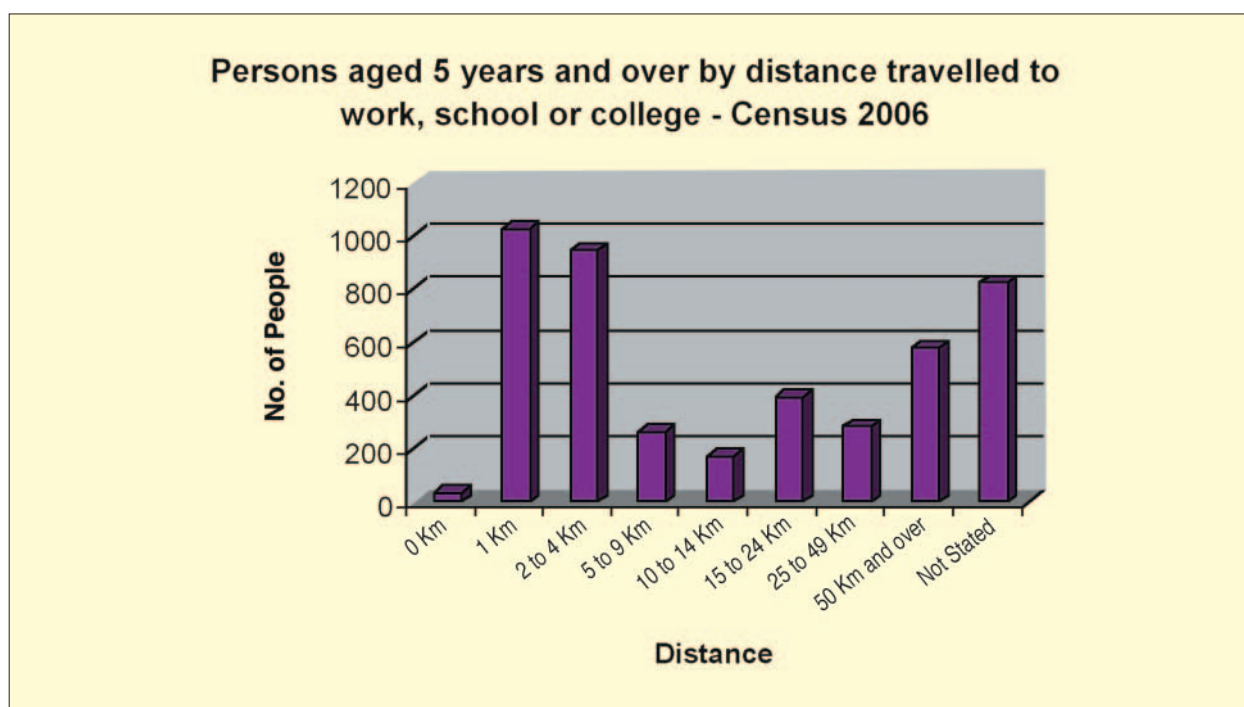
Table 2.6 – Means of Travel to Work/School/College in Gorey Town & Environs



A total of 4532 people in the Gorey Town and Environs area were surveyed on travel patterns by the CSO in 2006. The preferred mode of transport is the private car with 40.6% travelling as car driver and 17.5% as car passenger. This high level of car usage is probably due to good transportation links including the Gorey town bypass and the upgrade of the N11/M11 national route and also due to Gorey's geographical location as other major urban centres including Arklow (16km), Enniscorthy (29km), Wexford Town (52km) are located within easy commuting distance, with Dublin accessible in an hour and 20 minutes at 95 kilometres.

After car usage the next most popular mode of travel is foot with 28% of those surveyed choosing this mode. This would suggest a significant proportion of the population work or attend school close to their places of residence. The pattern of Gorey Town also does a lot to encourage walking given that the town has developed concentrically with the town centre located approximately 1km from most of the more peripheral locations in the town. This can be confirmed by the graph overleaf, in which it can be seen that 22.6% of the surveyed population travel up to 1km with 2 to 4 kilometres next most travelled. This suggests that a large number of residents travelling to work or school are within easy commuting distance, with the majority of these either working or attending school in Gorey. This 'distance travelled' figure illustrates the opportunity for further encouraging non car travel by the provision of improved pedestrian and cycle routes.

Table 2.7 – Distance travelled to Work/School/College in Gorey Town & Environs



2.6 Capacity Study

Before examining plans for the future development of the town it is important to examine the extent to which development has grown under the Gorey Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2002.

The aim of the capacity study is to highlight areas within the Gorey Town & Environs Local Area Plan 2002 boundary that have been developed and those lands that remain undeveloped. It provides an insight into the existing capacity of the plan area and provides a useful background to formulating an updated or new development strategy for the future expansion and growth of the town and environs.

A study of the existing and available residential lands was carried out for the Local Area Plan area and 482.43 acres of residential lands have been identified.

Table 2.8 – Undeveloped Zoned Lands within the 2002 Local Area Plan Boundary for Gorey Town & Environs

Zoning Type	Available Undeveloped Acres from Gorey LAP 2002
Concentrated Residential Density (Medium 14-18 dwellings per acre)	173.22
Intermediate Residential Density (Low-Medium 8-14 dwellings per acre)	154.05
Dispersed residential Density (Low 3-7 per acre)	155.16
Total	482.43 acres

From the above table it is clear that the existing Local Area Plan boundary has significant capacity for future development, with over 482 acres available for residential development.

By applying the population projections from the 2009 estimated population figures (8,145) onwards, the Gorey Town and Environs area is expected to grow by 259 people within the plan period up to 2016. Therefore, based on the national household size of 2.7⁶, approximately 96 new dwellings will be required over the lifetime of the Local Area Plan to cope with demand. By adding a supplementary 6-12% to allow for additional unexpected growth approximately 108 dwellings will be required.

Table 2.9 - Zoned Land Requirement for Gorey Town & Environs to 2016

Zoning Density Projections	Maximum Acres Required at this Density
Super Low Density (max 4 dwellings per acre) ⁷	27 acres
Low Density (max 7 dwellings per acre) ⁸	15 acres
Medium Density (max 10 dwellings per acre) ⁹	11 acres
High Density (14 dwellings per acre) ¹⁰	8 acres

As can be seen from Table 2.9 above, at an average medium density of 10 dwellings per acre, approximately 11 acres of residential lands would be required to accommodate this demand.

By applying this figure to the existing available zoning in the town it can be seen that there is already ample acreage zoned within the 2002 Local Area Plan boundary. Even by using the lowest density zoning at a maximum of 4 dwellings per acre, only 27 acres of zoned land will be required for the entire plan area.

However, the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government Guidelines for Planning Authorities 'Development Plans' recommend that planning authorities should take all reasonable steps to ensure that sufficient zoned residential land is available throughout the lifetime of the development plan and beyond to meet anticipated needs and allow for an element of choice. In particular, to ensure continuity of supply of zoned residential land, planning authorities should ensure that at the time they make a development plan, enough land will be available to meet residential needs for the next nine years. In this way, development plans will provide for sufficient zoned land to meet not just the expected demand arising within the development plan period of six years, but will also provide for the equivalent of 3 years demand beyond the date on which the current plan ceases to have effect. This would suggest additional zoning of 50% or a total zoning of 1.5 times the original estimate. Based on these calculations Table 2.10 (overleaf) has been formulated.



⁶ Average household size for Gorey Area – Average Household Size – CSO 2006

⁷ $108(\text{dwellings}) / 4 (\text{dwellings per acre}) = 27\text{acres}$

⁸ $108(\text{dwellings}) / 7 (\text{dwellings per acre}) = 15\text{acres}$

⁹ $108(\text{dwellings}) / 10 (\text{dwellings per acre}) = 11\text{acres}$

¹⁰ $108(\text{dwellings}) / 14 (\text{dwellings per acre}) = 8\text{acres}$

The table below represents the maximum total zoning required at any one density. Realistically there will be a combination of zonings on the Plan lands. These tables are shown to give an indication of the maximum zonings required if only one zoning type (i.e. medium zoning) was applied to the Plan area. As can be seen from the tables below the highest requirement scenario would be in the case of the super low density residential zoning at 40.5 acres.

Table 2.10 - Zoned Land Requirement incorporating the additional 50%

Maximum Acres Required at Super Low Density (4 dwellings per acre)	Total Acreage required (including 50% additional zoning)
27 acres	40.5 acres
Maximum Acres Required at Low Density (7 dwellings per acre)	Total Acreage required (including 50% additional zoning)
15 acres	22.5 acres
Maximum Acres Required at Medium Density (10 dwellings per acre)	Total Acreage required (including 50% additional zoning)
11 acres	16.5 acres
Maximum Acres Required at High Density (14 dwellings per acre)	Total Acreage required (including 50% additional zoning)
8 acres	12 acres

Examination of Existing Vacant Residential Properties

A comprehensive survey was carried out in early August 2009¹¹ on the amount of vacant residential properties in the town. The reason for this assessment was to determine if the number of constructed dwellings still remaining vacant would have an effect of the required housing calculations.

From the results of this survey it was found that approximately 122 vacant residential properties are located in the town and environs area, this would suggest that approximately 112% of the required housing stock is already available for the population of the LAP area¹². Of course it would be presumptuous to assume all of these houses are for sale or available but based on existing and projected population figures, a large proportion of the projected increase in population may be accommodated in a proportion of these dwellings.

¹¹ 7th and 10th August 2009

¹² 122 dwellings vacant – 108 required = therefore when expressed as a percentage 112% of the required housing stock is currently available.

Section 3

Urban Character Assessment

3.1 Historical Development

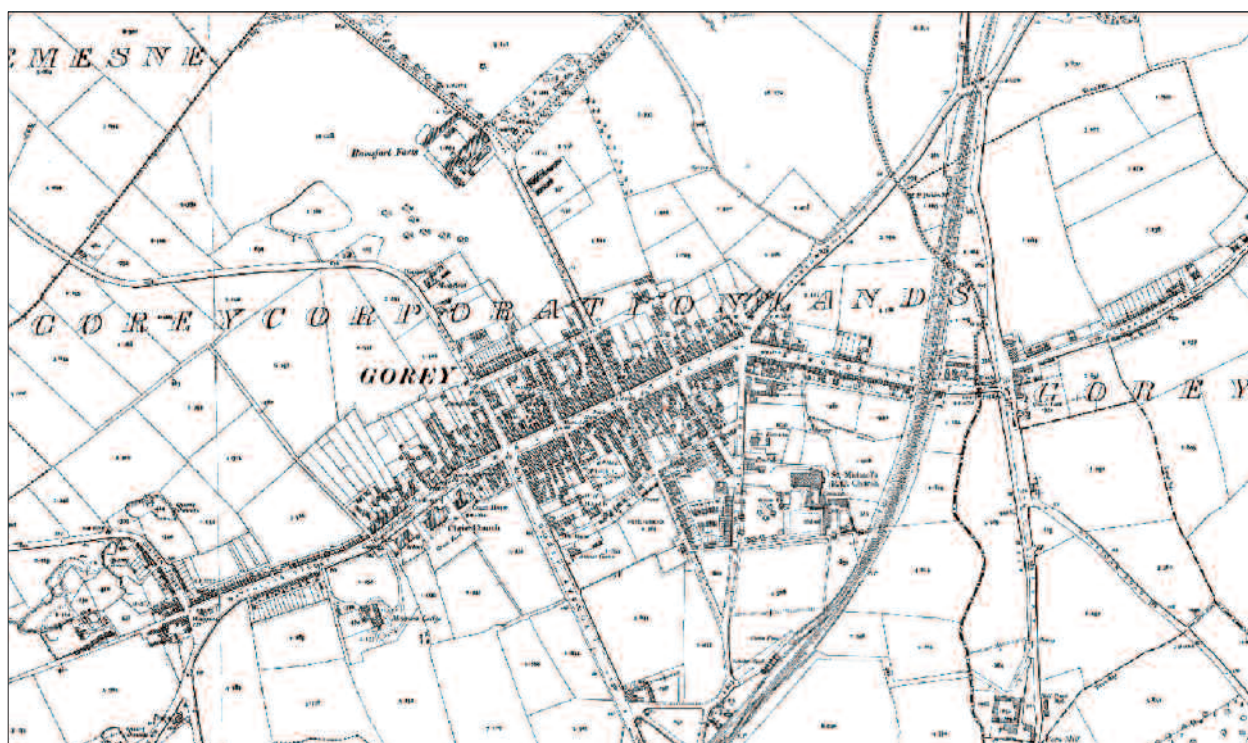
The early history of Gorey dates back to the 17th century. Gorey derived from a charter of incorporation obtained for its inhabitants by Dr. Thomas Ram, Bishop of Ferns. At that time Gorey was incorporated as Newborough, which never grew into general use as its name.



Above: Map of Gorey in 1841

Gorey has developed as a market town over the centuries since. In 1837, the town contained 548 houses. By 1851, the population of Gorey amounted to 3,044 people. The town consisted primarily of Main Street, McCurtain Street, Esmonde Street, The Coach Road, Clonattin and the Courtown Road. The main buildings in the town were Ramsfort House, the Church built c. 1775 and the Police Barracks which was built around the same time.





Above: Map of Gorey in 1913

Historically, only New Ross, Wexford and Enniscorthy were listed as the towns of County Wexford. Gorey has claimed its place among these towns and is listed as a Secondary Growth Area, along with New Ross and Enniscorthy, under the Settlement Strategy for the county in the Wexford County Development Plan 2007-2013.



Above: Photograph of the Main Street in the early 1900s.



Left: Photograph of the Main Street in 2010.

3.2 Urban Character Assessment

Gorey is the best example in County Wexford of a seventeenth century plantation town. The urban morphology of the town centre has altered little over the years, consisting of one wide, straight arterial main street with minor streets feeding onto it in a grid-like fashion. A series of streets run north-west and south-east of Main Street, including Rafter Street, John Street, and Thomas Street. These have a more secondary role to the town's commercial activity.

The railway line runs through the town to the east of centre and much of the older established development of the town has occurred to the west of the tracks.



Above: Map of Gorey Town Centre in 1913. Below: Map of the Town Centre as it is today.



Regarding the town's relationship with the underlying topography, the town developed to the west of the river Banoge (running north-south) in a low lying area of land. The surrounding landscape is however, undulating with hills rising around the town - north-east at Clonattin and more significantly in the south-west at Gorey Hill. Noticeably, the landscape to the west of the town rises steeply in the area known as Creagh. Within this landscape setting, the town has remained relatively well contained.

The route of the by-pass is likely to impact significantly on the form of the town in the future, with future development likely to be drawn in the direction of the by-pass. This will be an important factor in determining the future land use pattern of the town.

The eastern portion of the town has seen a significant amount of development over recent years following the construction of a large convenient shopping facility (Tesco) and significant areas of new residential development, as the area linked more easily to the National Primary Route (N11/M11) running northwards to Dublin.

More recently, there has been significant residential development to the south and east of the town centre, as well as to the north. As a result, the general physical development of the town is well balanced and concentric. Further to this residential development has been the consolidation of the town centre and the continued growth of commercial activity on the Main Street, and into the streets and areas adjacent to the town centre.

The extent of the Plan boundary for Gorey has been determined by the pattern of the existing urban development and the need to further consolidate and enhance the existing urban structure and provide greater connectivity between component areas of the town.

3.2.1 The Town Centre

Gorey has an active and vibrant Main Street and Town Centre. The buildings along the Main Street are predominantly three and four storey in height, which help to enclose the wide main street that acted as a market place in the first half of the last century. The buildings on the Main Street have not changed significantly over the past decades.



Above: Examples of the buildings on the Main Street that have not changed significantly over the last century.

However, there have been some significant additions to the built environment in the town centre during the life span of the Gorey Town & Environs Local Area Plan 2002. These include a new Credit Union building on McDermot Street, replacement buildings and reinstatements on the Main Street, new medical centres on The Avenue and St. Michael's Road, new civic offices off The Avenue, and the Dunnes Stores development with other retail and residential development off The Avenue also.

Further additions to be built environment in the town centre may materialise, with planning permissions granted for new buildings on the Arklow Road and Market Square. These will further enhance the town centre, where contemporary architecture sits comfortably beside the traditional buildings in this market town.

The town centre, predominantly the Main Street, is being proposed as an Architectural Conservation Area (please refer to Chapter 6 – Conservation), as has been the case under the Gorey Town & Environs Local Area Plan 2002. It is evident that the town centre and Main Street can retain its special architectural character and simultaneously develop as a modern and vibrant town centre.

Right: New building on Main St.



Left: New Credit Union building on McDermot St.



Above: Medical Centre on St. Michael's Road



Above: New Civic Offices and library off The Avenue.



Above: Building permitted on Market Square.



Above: Building permitted on the Arklow Road, opposite The Coach House.

3.2.2 Buildings in the Town and Environs

The majority of the town's building stock is of nineteenth and early twentieth century origin. The town displays a number of notable buildings, including Christ Church, Ramsfort House, the former Loreto Convent, Christ Church Old School, the old Courthouse building and the Catholic Church¹³.

Christ Church to the west of the Main Street commands an elevated position, which makes it visible from several approach roads into the town and represents one of the more important townscape features.

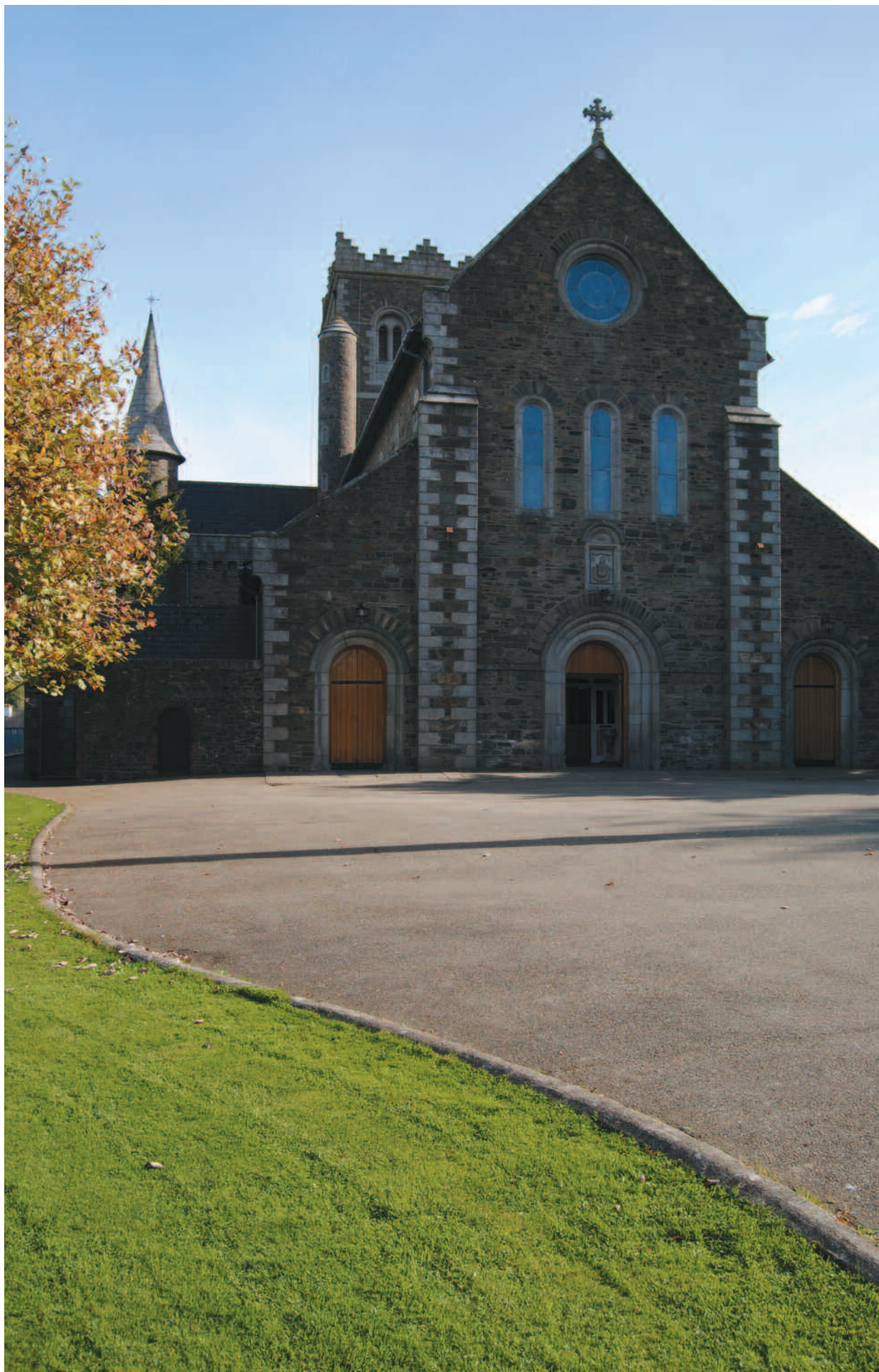


Above: View of Main St. with the Market House in the foreground and, in particular, Christ Church as a feature on the townscape.



Above: View of town from Gorey Hill with Christ Church featuring prominently in the foreground.

¹³ The Catholic Church is one of the most notable buildings in the town and was designed by the famous English Architect, A.W.N Pugin. Unusually, the style followed was Romanesque, his only Irish example of that formula, whereas all other churches were designed in the 'Gothic-Revival Style'.



Off the Main Street, the side streets have a distinctive character, which is mainly the typical two-storey town house. The best examples of these buildings are to be found on Wexford Street, Church Street, Pearse Street, McDermot Street and Grattan Terrace.

Other side streets have developed a commercial character. The best examples of these are Thomas Street, John Street and Esmonde Street.



Grattan Terrace

These 4 photographs demonstrate typical side streets in Gorey Town Centre. These were all originally residential streets but commercial and retail activity has increasingly spread onto the side streets in the last decade.



Church Street



Wexford Street



Esmonde Street

On the edge of the town there are notable buildings, most of which are contemporary. In particular, two new primary schools have been constructed by the Department of Education and Science and the Amber Springs Hotel is a notable landmark building at the entry point to the town on the Wexford Road.

Right: Amber Springs Hotel on the Wexford Road
Below: Dunnes Stores retail development off
The Avenue



Similarly, there are buildings that have been granted planning permission within the lifespan of the Gorey Town & Environs Local Area Plan 2002 in the environs of the town, which may add significantly to the built environment, if constructed, e.g. on the Courtown Road and on the Fort Road.



Above: The recently completed cinema on the Courtown Road.

3.2.3 Urban Form and Plot Dimensions

The narrow plots that are found along the Main Street date back to the early 19th century. These plots can also be found on Esmonde Street, Pearse Street and McCurtain Street, as well as on each of side streets off the Main Street e.g. McDermot Street, Thomas Street, Wexford Street and John Street.

These narrow plots provide for a tight and narrow urban form with the facades having a vertical emphasis of two and three storey buildings. These long narrow plots would have been typical of how planned towns developed in the 19th Century.

3.2.4 Other Urban Design Elements

A uniform design approach or some element of continuity is required to create harmony. In a traditional streetscape this can be achieved through similar building heights, façade widths, materials, building lines etc.

Over the life of the Gorey Town & Environs Local Area Plan 2002, it has become clear that the old and the new can sit in total harmony with one another. More than often, proposals for contemporary buildings for Gorey Town and Environs have emanated from architects from around the entire country. The architects assemble design teams consisting of conservation architects (where necessary for Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas), technicians, structural engineers and, importantly, good building contractors.

On the edge of the town where this continuity of design and sense of place is easily lost it can be counteracted by simple design elements such as common boundary treatment, for example, standard stone wall treatment.



This photograph demonstrates how the 'old' and the 'new' can sit comfortably together. This is the rear elevation of the new Credit Union building on McDermot Street viewed from the Market Square over St. Michael's Cemetery.

3.3 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

From a review of the existing available data, literature and consultation with the public the main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are identified as follows:

Strengths

- Historic Core
- Vibrant Town Centre
- Town is traditional centre of rural hinterland
- Good range of local services (i.e. pubs, shops, post office, etc.)
- Accessibility to Dublin and Rosslare via M11/N11
- By-pass has enabled the town to 'breathe' again
- Recent new developments
- Quality town park

Weaknesses

- Pedestrian safety on wide Main Street
- Parking availability in town centre
- Road connectivity between different routes
- Lack of post primary education facilities
- Connectivity of housing estates to centre of town
- Water Supply
- Wastewater treatment facilities
- Flooding

Opportunities

- Consolidate expansion of town
- Backland development opportunities
- Attractive townscape that could be improved further
- Conserve and enhance the built environment
- Linkages in the town centre
- New road connections and the opportunity for development on same
- Provide physical and social infrastructure linked to development
- Banoge River enhancement

Threats

- Incoherent growth of town
- Development on the periphery of the town with poor connectivity
- Inaccessibility to back lands
- Problematic circulation of traffic
- Flooding

To ensure the sustainable development of Gorey Town and Environs, the strengths and opportunities outlined above need to be encouraged, protected and developed. The threats and weaknesses need to be addressed and monitored. Therefore the above SWOT analysis has been used to help formulate the policies and objectives within the Local Area Plan.