

# Settlement Hierarchy

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## Introduction

The Corporate Vision for Tipperary County Council enshrines the principle of Tipperary as a desirable place to live, with attractive towns and picturesque and vibrant villages, surrounded by beautiful countryside.

In line with this vision, it is planned that future population growth in the county will be accommodated in existing towns, villages in line with a county settlement hierarchy, and also through sensitive development in the countryside, with infrastructure delivered in a timely fashion to ensure sustainable and inclusive communities.

Tipperary County Council has at present two County Development Plans; as follows:

- South Tipperary County Development Plan 2009 (as varied)
- North Tipperary County Development Plan 2010 (as varied)

In 2015, the Council put in place a new strategic county-wide planning framework, which included the development of a new County Settlement Hierarchy to facilitate the development of sustainable communities throughout the county. The County Settlement Hierarchy was incorporated into both County Development Plans by way of a variation process.

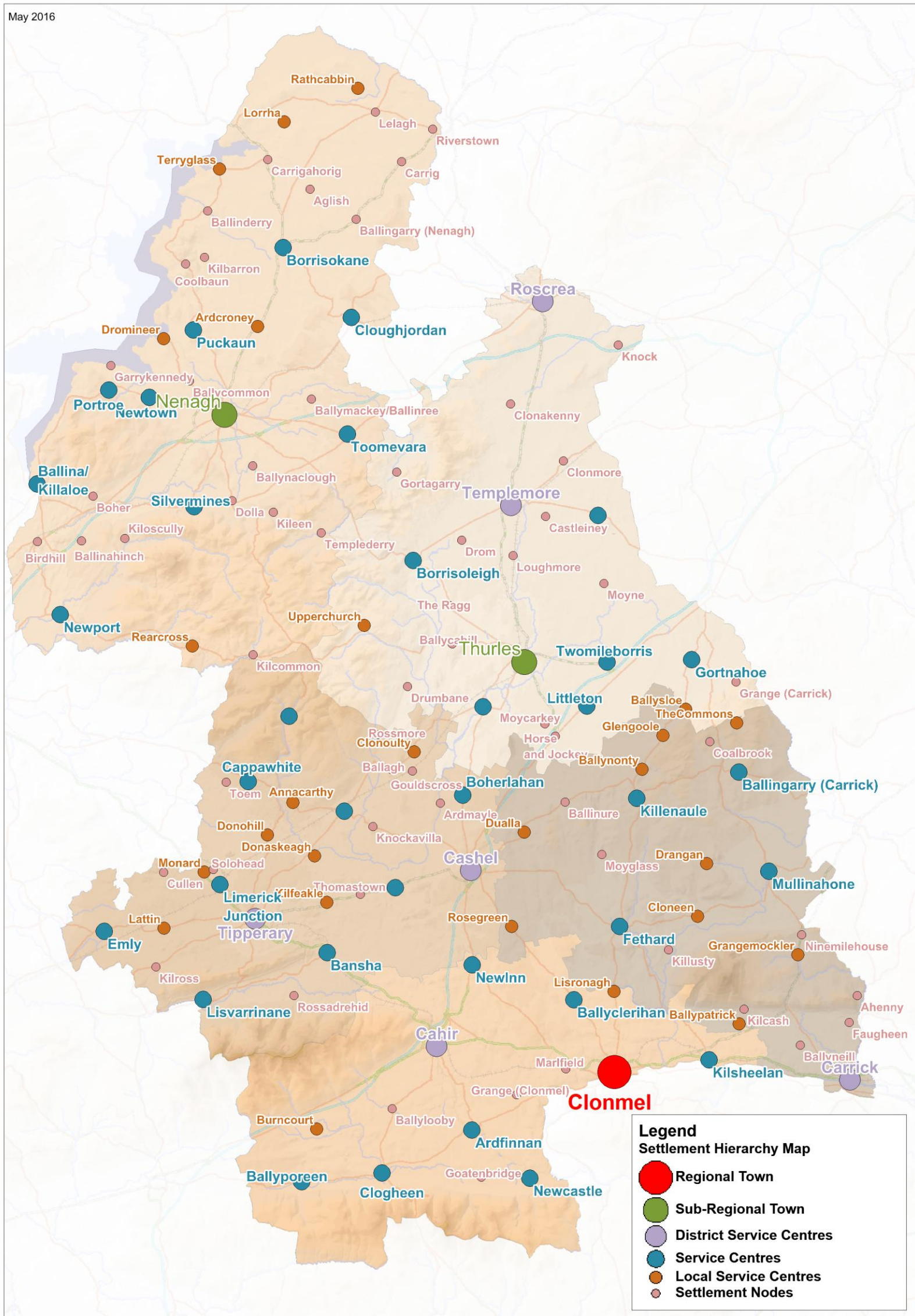
The Settlement Hierarchy is consistent with the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines, while recognising the diversity of scale, character of the county's towns and villages. Each settlement has a complementary role in achieving growth and prosperity in the county. It is recognised that rural villages, along with the large towns, play an essential role by acting as sustainable development centres within rural communities.

The Settlement Hierarchy, associated location map, and an outline of the role and function of each settlement is set out below.

**Figure 1: Tipperary County Settlement Hierarchy**



Map 1: Location of Settlements in Tipperary<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Prepared by the GIS team in May 2016.

## **Regional Town - Clonmel**

As the largest town in Tipperary, Clonmel is designated as a regional level town with economic and social indicators operating in line with, or above designated 'Hub' town status. Clonmel is targeted for expansion with an important role in realising balanced regional development and providing regional level retailing as outlined in the Retail Planning Guidelines for Local Authorities (DECLG 2012). Clonmel has significant potential to attract large employers and regional services, amenities and infrastructure to Tipperary.

The Council will support the role of Clonmel as a location for large-scale and high-tech industry, third-level education and as a strong and attractive residential centre with a growing population.

## **Sub-Regional Towns - Nenagh and Thurles**

Nenagh and Thurles provide complementary roles to Clonmel as regional towns in the hinterland of the Limerick-Shannon Gateway. Both are strategically located in the centre and north of the county and are supported by national rail and road transport infrastructure. Both towns offer a range of service functions to attract and drive future growth in the county. The Council will support the role of Nenagh and Thurles recognising their favourable locations close to transport links and their capacity to accommodate new employment development and services.

## **District Service Centres**

Carrick on Suir, Tipperary Town, Cashel, Cahir, Roscrea and Templemore have been identified as District Towns due to their respective strategic locations and roles in Tipperary. Collectively the District Towns underpin and strengthen rural Tipperary.

It is envisaged that each of these towns will continue to grow as part of a balanced urban structure and in support of the higher tier settlements. The residential function of these centres will be strengthened and improved, and they will be promoted as desirable places in which to live and work. The District Centres will continue to perform an important role in the county by providing employment opportunities, high quality retail choice, regional transport services and community services for their hinterlands in line with their capacities for growth and expansion.

Large scale commercial and industrial development will be facilitated and promoted in Regional, Sub-Regional and District Towns which have a critical mass and service infrastructure to support such development

## **Service Centres**

Service Centres are robust settlements that have a capacity to accommodate new residential growth, employment and enterprise and other appropriate uses. The service centres are being targeted for growth at an appropriate scale to service their local hinterlands and to consolidate housing, local employment, public transport and a range of services. These towns and villages perform important roles as retail and service providers in their local economy and are targeted for continued growth.

## **Local Service Centres**

Local Service Centres are settlements which act as local residential and community centres and will accommodate an appropriate level of development, including housing and community services i.e. childcare, primary level education, recreation, convenience retailing etc. The Council will seek to maintain the existing range of rural services in place in these settlements in view of their role in reducing unnecessary travelling by rural communities in order to avail of basic services.

## **Settlement Nodes**

Villages designated as settlement nodes will provide for small-scale growth to meet the demand of their immediate hinterlands. New residential developments in settlements will be limited to cluster type residential schemes, serviced sites or single houses with a focus on residential and services development of a character suitable to settlements of this size.