



Wicklow County Council
COIR-HAILE CHONTAE CHILL KHANTAIN

Access Audit Summary Sheet

CAPITA SYMONDS

Subject: **Rathdrum**

Audited: **20 March 2008**

Details: **Co. Wicklow**

Accessibility Grade

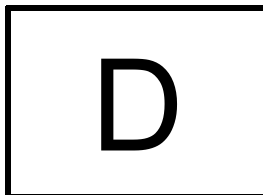
A - Wholly Compliant

B- Satisfactory, minor works needed

C - Poor. Major alterations required

D - Significant issues which severely restrict access and service operations. Major capital works required

Allocated Grading



Estimate of Totals	No of Alterations	Estimated Costs
Priority 1	3	€29,000
Priority 2	4	€14,240
Priority 3	3	€18,500
Priority 4	8	€18,600
All Costs	18	€80,340

Auditor:	J Lowe
Signed:	
Date:	

Summary Statement

Rathdrum Town Centre, Co. Wicklow

The area audited was found to have a number of common accessibility issues associated with smaller towns and villages. Access to the tourist information office was difficult but this is a temporary situation due to ongoing restoration works. Throughout the town, there are a number of parking issues and this is generally in the form of off road parking along each of the main roads leading to the town centre area. As the road area is limited and bordered in a majority of cases with shops or cottage residencies there is limited width of pedestrian paving, which off road parking uses in lieu of pedestrian needs. This is at best a nuisance for the general public but creates a hazard for vulnerable groups such as children and disabled persons. Compounding the access problem is that many residential buildings have stepped access and these steps are both visually inconspicuous and protruding into the pedestrian area. It appears that the Rathdrum town centre is poorly served by bus stop areas and a review of positioning and access to bus stops should be given. Traffic flows and pedestrian integration should be reviewed with road engineers to examine proposals such as pedestrian only areas or one way traffic flows, traffic parking alternatives, enforcement and education. Any review should aim to allow path widening, path access and safe controlled/ uncontrolled crossing points at strategic places or intervals. Certain areas of the town have no controlled crossing points or as a minimum uncontrolled crossing points which are non-evident. Parts of the paved pedestrian roads are cracked and of uneven surface, each area has been listed appropriately within the report. Particular priority has been paid to areas serving amenities such as colleges, health centres, libraries etc. and in this instance; pedestrian access and parking failings have been highlighted.

As with most of the towns audited, considerable parking problems exist with an inherent attitude to off road parking at the expense of pedestrians. This is particularly problematic and of safety concern for vulnerable groups including disabled persons or children. A consultation with road safety engineers should be implemented considering measures such as alternative parking, out of town parking, bollards and restricted parking road markings, public education. This was noticeable along the entrance to a petrol station on Main Street.

A common, historical building practice is for rain downpipes to filter water across paving areas. This creates a potential slip hazard particularly in combination with foliage or icing at times of extreme cold. A design element of including a "below surface channel" should be employed with any future pavement works. This has been employed in some instances and is a cheap design incorporation but should become common practice.

A common, historical building practice especially in smaller towns with cottage dwellings is for access in and out of the house via steps. These steps protrude out onto the public footpath and are a trip hazard especially as they are of very low visual contrast. Secondly the steps conflicts with the access provided along the footpath by taking away the available width making it extremely difficult for persons to traverse pass.

Regarding public transport, it is recommended that discussions with representatives of Bus Eirann should take place to provide supportive facilities such as wheelchair access. Most existing bus stops do not provide any shelter from the elements. It would be of good practice including general benefit for all the public to consider strategic placement of shelters. The access paths to the bus stop is restrictive in its width.