

PART 2:
PROPOSED CORE STRATEGY

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2.0 Introduction

The purpose of the Core Strategy is provide relevant information to show that the development plan and the housing, retail and transport strategies are consistent, as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives set out in the National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and with specific planning policy requirements specified under guidelines under sub-section (1) of Section 28 of the Planning Act.

In particular the Core Strategy shall address:

- any policies of the Minister in relation to national and regional population targets,
- provide details of land zoned for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses
- how the zoning proposals accord with national policy that development of land shall take place on a phased basis,
- provide relevant information to show that, in setting out objectives regarding retail development contained in the development plan, the planning authority has had regard to any guidelines that relate to retail development issued by the Minister under section 28,
- set out a settlement hierarchy and provide details of any policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or any Minister of the Government in relation to national and regional population targets that apply to towns and cities referred to in the hierarchy, and to the areas or classes of areas not included in the hierarchy,
- projected population growth of cities and towns in the hierarchy,
- aggregate projected population, in villages and smaller towns with a population of under 1,500 persons, and the open countryside outside of villages and towns,
- relevant roads that have been classified as national primary or secondary roads under section 10 of the Roads Act 1993 and relevant regional and local roads within the meaning of section 2 of that Act,
- relevant inter-urban and commuter rail routes, and
- where appropriate, rural areas in respect of which planning guidelines relating to sustainable rural housing issued by the Minister under section 28 apply,

Whether zoning objectives are outlined in this development plan or in subsidiary local area plans, the Core Strategy of the development plan must be sufficiently specific in setting population targets and housing requirements across the overall area of the planning authority and the elements of the settlement hierarchy outlined above thereby to act as a clear framework for amendments to existing zonings or new zonings in lower-level plans. In turn, the population targets and housing requirements of lower-level plans must be consistent with the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan and this will be achieved either in subsequent amendments to such plans or in the preparation of new local area plans.

2.1 Population

<p>NPF</p>	<p>While the NPF indicates that in setting overall targets for growth, it is the pattern of development that is being targeted, rather than precise numbers, it does provide a target for growth in the Eastern and Midlands Region of 490,000-540,000 additional people by 2040. The element of this that is to be targeted for Dublin and its suburbs is 235,000 – 293,000 (see tables below for summary figures).</p> <p>National Policy Objectives 68 of the NPF states:</p> <p><i>A Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan¹ may enable up to 20% of the phased population growth targeted in the principal city and suburban area, to be accommodated in the wider metropolitan area i.e. outside the city and suburbs or contiguous zoned area, in addition to growth identified for the Metropolitan area. This will be subject to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>any relocated growth being in the form of compact development, such as infill or a sustainable urban extension;</i> ▪ <i>any relocated growth being served by high capacity public transport and/or related to significant employment provision; and</i> ▪ <i>National Policy Objective 9, as set out in Chapter 4.</i>
<p>NPF Roadmap</p>	<p>The NPF does not specify targets for Counties or towns in the EMRA region outside of Dublin city and suburbs; however subsequent to the adoption of the NPF, the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government published the ‘Implementation Roadmap for the NPF’ in July 2018 which provided county level ‘transitional population projections’. The transitional population projections plot a growth trajectory set approximately mid-way between what is currently being planned for in statutory Development Plans if projected forward to 2031, and the more likely evidence based and nationally coherent projected scenario to 2031 and 2040. These ‘adjusted’ transitional figures will apply to 2026 and will also inform the period to 2031.</p> <p>For Wicklow the 2026 and 2031 projections are 155,000 - 157,500 and 160,500 – 164,000 respectively, from the 2016 base of 142,500.</p> <p>The ‘Roadmap’ specifies that scope for ‘headroom’, not exceeding 25%, can be considered to 2026 in those counties where projected population growth is projected to be at or above the national average baseline, including County Wicklow.</p>
<p>RSES</p>	<p>The RSES provides a further elaboration on foot of NPO 68 including a breakdown of population projections to county level, based on the NPF Implementation Roadmap, which shall be used by local authorities in the formulation of the core strategies of their development plans.</p> <p>It provides that a further allowance of transition population targets in NPO 68 by way of up to 20% of the targeted growth in the city being transferred to other settlements in the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) shall apply only to the three Metropolitan Key Towns in the MASP namely Bray, Maynooth and Swords, and only if they can demonstrate compact growth on high capacity planned or existing public transport corridors.</p>
<p>MASP</p>	<p>A proposal is before the Regional Assembly at this time to ‘transfer’ population growth of 13,000 from the city to the metropolitan area settlement of Bray, of which 9,500 would be to that part of Bray located in Co. Wicklow. <i>For the purpose of this draft Core Strategy, it is assumed that this proposal will be agreed.</i></p>

¹ As part of the RSES process, the NPF indicates that arrangements are to be put in place to enable the preparation of five coordinated metropolitan area strategic plans (MASPs) for the Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford Metropolitan areas. In line with the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies, the MASPs will be provided with statutory underpinning to act as 12-year strategic planning and investment frameworks for the city metropolitan areas, addressing high-level and long-term strategic development issues.

Table 2.1: Population targets Co. Wicklow 2026, 2031

	2016	2026	2031
County Wicklow	142,425	155,000-157,500	160,500 – 164,000
plus 25% headroom (2026 only)		158,144 – 161,269	
plus MASP allocation (2031)			170,000 – 173,500
of which Bray (min)	29,646		39,146

Source: NPF, NPF Roadmap, RSES, WCC

2.2 Housing

In order to translate the population targets to housing unit numbers and hence to zoning objectives, assumptions must be made about household size and vacancy.

While average household size nationally and in Co. Wicklow fell consistently to 2011, the 2016 Census saw the first increase in many decades, thought to be reflective of the impacts of the preceding recession, in particular housing supply issues and reduced income, resulting in lower new household formation and indeed return of adult children to family homes. While it is not possible to assume that past trends (from either the period prior to 2011 or the period 2011-2016) will continue into the future, both the NPF and the RSES assume that average household sizes will fall towards 2.5 by 2040. On the basis of a linear fall between 2016 and 2040, average household sizes for this plan are assumed to be:

Table 2.2 Past and assumed future household size in Co. Wicklow 1991-2040

	1991	2002	2006	2011	2016	2026	2031	2040
HH size	3.41	3.07	2.89	2.83	2.87	2.7	2.6	2.5

Source: CSO, WCC

Not all housing units are occupied at any time (natural vacancy rate), and therefore account must be taken that a certain proportion of housing units will not generate ‘population’. Therefore in order to achieve the targets set out above, more houses than the minimum needed to accommodate the population will be needed to take account natural vacancy in the market. In addition, cognisance must also be taken that a certain proportion of houses may be second homes or holiday homes and therefore do not generate permanent population. Having reviewed various market studies and data, for the purpose of this plan, a natural vacancy rate of 6% is assumed².

Table 2.3: Housing Unit targets Co. Wicklow 2026, 2031

	2016 ³	2026	2031
County Wicklow	54,986	60,852 – 61,833	65,435 – 66,862
plus headroom (2026 only)		62,086 – 63,313	
plus MASP allocation (2031)			69,308 – 70,735
of which Bray (min)	11,232		15,368

Source: CSO, NPF, NPF Roadmap, RSES, WCC

² Source: Various – research carried out by Regional Assembly for 2010 Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area (2010), Savills Research based on CSO data, Daft.ie as set out in ‘A Rent Forecasting Model for the Private Rented Sector in Ireland’, John McCarthy 2016

³ Source: CSP 2016 Census of population, as amended by Wicklow County Council to reflect housing units with County Wicklow only

2.3 Settlement hierarchy

National Planning Framework

The NPF sets out a national settlement hierarchy as follows:

- The five cities and their suburbs (Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway, Waterford)
- Regional centres of Athlone in the Midlands, Sligo and Letterkenny in the North-West
- Letterkenny-Derry North-West Gateway Initiative and Dublin – Belfast corridor Drogheda-Dundalk-Newry.

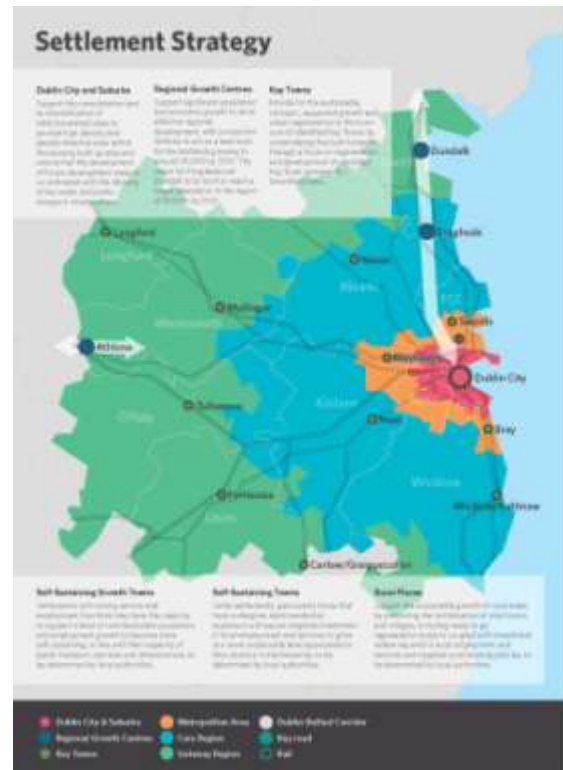


Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy

The RSES settlement hierarchy identifies 7 tiers of settlements in the region:

- Dublin City and suburbs
- Regional Growth Centres
- Key towns
- Self Sustaining Growth Towns
- Self Sustaining Towns
- Towns and Villages
- Rural

Having carried out an ‘Asset Based’ assessment⁴ of Wicklow settlements, the RSES identifies Bray and Wicklow Town as ‘Key Towns’. Other settlements are to be defined by the County Development Plan.



⁴ See Appendix 1 for more information on the ‘Asset Based’ assessment.

Asset Based Assessment of Wicklow Towns

In accordance with the methodology and criteria set out in the RSES, all Wicklow settlements over 1,500 population (Census 2016)⁵, have been evaluated in order to determine their appropriate categorisation in the new settlement hierarchy. A hierarchy of 10 tiers has been determined, which is consistent with the RSES but provided for sub-categories so as to provide a better fit for Wicklow, in particular better grouping of settlement types. In addition, this allows for the least amount of change from the previous development plan, which will generally aid in understating and implementation.

Table 2.4 Wicklow Settlement Hierarchy

Level	Settlement Typology	Description	Settlement
1	Metropolitan Area Key Town	Large economically active service and/or county towns that provide employment for their surrounding areas and with high-quality transport links and the capacity to act as growth drivers to complement the Regional Growth Centres.	Bray
2	Core Region Key Town	Large economically active service and/or county towns that provide employment for their surrounding areas and with high-quality transport links and the capacity to act as growth drivers to complement the Regional Growth Centres.	Wicklow - Rathnew
3	Core Region Self-Sustaining Towns Type 1 >5,000	Self-Sustaining Towns with high levels of population growth and a weak employment base which are reliant on other areas for employment and/or services and which require targeted ‘catch up’ investment to become more self-sustaining.	Arklow Greystones - Delgany Blessington
4	Core Region Self-Sustaining Towns Type 2 >1,500<5,000	Self-Sustaining Towns with high levels of population growth and a weak employment base which are reliant on other areas for employment and/or services and which require targeted ‘catch up’ investment to become more self-sustaining.	Baltinglass Enniskerry Kilcoole Newtownmountkennedy Rathdrum
5	Towns & Villages Small Towns Type 1 <1,500	Small towns with good local service and employment functions.	Ashford Aughrim Carnew Dunlavin Tinahely
6	Towns & Villages Small Towns Type 2 <1,000	Small Towns with moderate local service and employment functions.	Avoca Donard Kilmacanogue Newcastle Roundwood Shillelagh
7	Large Villages	Villages with moderate local service and employment functions	
8	Small Villages	Villages with limited local service and employment function	
9	Rural clusters	Rural settlements with limited / no local service and employment functions.	
10	Open countryside		

⁵ Other than Bray and Wicklow Town which have already been assessment via the RSES and deemed to be ‘Key Towns’ suitable for significant growth

2.4 Housing allocations

This development plan is for the period 2021-2027, and in order to ensure that it provides a robust long term framework, the population and housing targets up to 2031 for each settlement / tier in the settlement hierarchy are herewith identified. Local plans for each settlement⁶ as well as the application of the objectives of this plan, will provide for phasing to ensure that the 2026 target as set out in Section 2.0 above is not breached.

In allocating growth targets for each settlement / tier, cognisance must be taken of the housing units completed or under construction since the 2016 Census. As of 31 March 2020, this is estimated as 5,000 units. Therefore the housing allocations set out in the table to follow provide for additional growth in housing units to 2031 of c. 10,750 units⁷.

In determining appropriate growth rates for each settlement / tier, cognisance has been taken of the NPO 9 of the NPF which states:

National Policy Objective 9

In each Regional Assembly area, settlements not identified in Policy 2a or 2b of this Framework, may be identified for significant (i.e. 30% or more above 2016 population levels) rates of population growth at regional and local planning stages, provided this is subject to:

- *Agreement (regional assembly, metropolitan area and/or local authority as appropriate);*
- *Balance with strategies for other urban and rural areas (regional assembly, metropolitan area and/or local authority as appropriate), which means that the totality of planned population growth has to be in line with the overall growth target; and*
- *A co-ordinated strategy that ensures alignment with investment in infrastructure and the provision of employment, together with supporting amenities and services.*

While the above planning considerations will generally apply to all urban and rural areas, this specific provision is intended to ensure that in settlements identified for significant population growth, it is aligned with the provision of employment and/or infrastructure and supporting facilities, to ensure a good quality of life for both existing and future residents.

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies for each Regional Assembly area shall address the potential of towns and their catchments in conjunction with consideration of growth targets for cities and rural areas. In applying a tailored approach to urban development, that can be linked to the Rural and Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, key considerations further to NPO 7 will include:

- *The extent to which a settlement is located inside or outside one of the five defined City- Region catchments and may be characterised as commuter focused or as more self-contained;*
- *The scale of employment provision and net commuting flows;*
- *The extent of local services and amenities provision i.e. administration, education – particularly higher education institutes, health, leisure and retail;*
- *The extent to which trips may be made by sustainable modes of travel, i.e. walking, cycling or public transport, and the scale of planned investment in such;*
- *The rate and pace of development from 1996-2016 and the extent to which there are outstanding requirements for infrastructure and amenities;*
- *Accessibility and influence in a regional or sub-regional context;*
- *Particular sub-regional interdependencies, for example, where a settlement may be located in relation to a number of nearby settlements and scope for collaboration and complementarity;*
- *Track record of performance and delivery, as well as ambition and initiative and scope to leverage investment;*
- *Commitment to achieve compact growth*

⁶ Local Area Plans in the case of settlements in Levels 1-3 in the hierarchy; and Small Town Plans for settlements in Levels 4-5 (which are contained within this County Development Plan)

⁷ The upper limit of housing units for 2031, including the additional MASP allocation for Bray is 70,735 units as set out in table 3.1 above. This is a total growth in housing units from 2016 (54,986) of c. 15,750 units.

Having regard to the ‘asset based’ assessment carried out for Wicklow settlements (as detailed in Appendix 1), it has been determined that no Wicklow settlement, other than Bray and Wicklow Town, should be targeted for growth in excess of 30% from 2016 population levels, and growth rates should be reflective of the respective position of each settlement or groups of settlement in the overall hierarchy.

Table 2.5 Wicklow Settlement / Aggregate Settlement Population Targets

Level	Settlement	Housing Stock 2016	Housing Units completed & commenced post 2016	Housing Units Growth Target up to 2031	Growth rate 2016-2031
1	Bray	11,232	207	5,000	46%
2	Wicklow - Rathnew	5,456	887	1,500	49%
3	Arklow	5,406	296	1,200	27%
	Greystones - Delgany	6,766	1,593	250	27%
	Blessington	1,914	2	500	26%
4	Baltinglass	903	60	150	23%
	Enniskerry	648	59	100	25%
	Kilcoole	1,451	105	200	21%
	Newtownmountkennedy	1,222	856	100	80%
	Rathdrum	669	193	100	45%
5	Ashford	2,390	279	400	29%
	Aughrim				
	Carnew				
	Dunlavin				
	Tinahely				
6	Avoca	1,534	45	200	15%
	Donard				
	Kilmacanogue				
	Newcastle				
	Roundwood				
	Shillelagh				
7	Villages / clusters	2,239	12	200	10%
10	Open countryside	13,156	428	800	10%
	Total	54,986	5,022	10,700	

Note 1

Note 2

As set out in the Planning Act, aggregate population projections / targets are provided for smaller towns and villages with a population of less than 1,500 persons, and the open countryside outside of villages and towns.

Note 1: Development completed or commenced since 2016 in Newtownmountkennedy will result in a growth rate from the 2016 population of 70%. Notwithstanding this breach of 30% cap, a small quantum of additional growth in housing is provided for in this plan to allow for infill in the town centre,

Note 2: Development completed or commenced since 2016 in Rathdrum will result in a growth rate from the 2016 population of 30%. Notwithstanding this reaching of the 30% cap, a small quantum of additional growth in housing is provided for in this plan to allow for infill in the town centre.

2.5 Zoning

This development plan sets the population and housing targets for all 21 settlements in the County up to 2031. However, it only provides plans for 13 settlements, the remainder of the settlements having their own stand-alone ‘Local Area Plans’, which will be reviewed after the adoption of this County Development Plan.

Local Area Plans (LAPs)

New Local Area Plans will be made for the following settlements in the period 2021-2023:

Bray Municipal District (including Enniskerry and Kilmacanogue)
 Wicklow Town – Rathnew
 Greystones - Delgany - Kilcoole
 Arklow and Environs
 Blessington

While each LAP will cover a period of 6 years, zoning will be provided on the basis of the land needed to meet the 2031 population target, with clear phasing controls to ensure 2026 targets are not breached.

Core Strategy Table 3.5 to follow shows the housing unit requirements for the LAP towns, up to the year 2031 and the housing unit capacity of lands zoned in current LAPs.

This table shows that the majority of current LAPs have a surplus of zoned land having regard to the revised 2031 targets set out in the NPF Roadmap and the RSES for the EMRA. Prior to the adoption of new LAPs reflecting the targets set out in this plan, in the assessment of applications for new housing development (or mixed use development of which housing forms a significant component) the Council will strictly adhere to the phasing principles set out in Chapter X (Housing) of this plan.

Until such a time as new LAPs are adopted, the current plans for these towns are herewith subsumed into this County Development Plan.

Small Town Plans (STPs)

With respect to the remaining towns and settlements, their plans form part of this County Development Plan (see Volume 2).

While each Small Town Plan will cover a period of 6 years, zoning / development objectives will be provided on the basis of the land needed to meet the 2031 population target, with clear phasing control to ensure 2026 targets are not breached so as to comply with the NPF and the RSES for the EMRA

Table 3.6 to follow shows the zoning requirements for towns in this category that have a population greater than 1,500 persons, up to the year 2031.

For Small Towns under 1,500 population, zoning requirements are not provided for individual settlements. Each of these plans will be crafted to ensure that the aggregate housing growth provided for in any small towns or village does not exceed 30% for Level 5 towns and 15% for Level 6 Towns.

Table 2.6 Future Zoning Requirements

Future Plan Type	Settlement	Core Strategy Housing Unit Allocation 2031	Housing Yield of existing zoned land ⁸	Shortfall/surplus (UNITS)	Method of addressing shortfall / surplus
LAP	Bray	5,000	6,200	+1,200	To be addressed in new LAP.
LAP	Wicklow – Rathnew	1,500	4,300	+2,800	To be addressed in new LAP.
LAP	Arklow	1,200	5,000	+3,800	To be addressed in new LAP.
LAP	Greystones – Delgany	250	2,500	+2,250	To be addressed in new LAP.
LAP	Blessington	500	1,400	+900	To be addressed in new LAP.
LAP	Kilcoole	200	560	+360	To be addressed in new LAP.
LAP	Enniskerry ⁹	100	450	+350	To be addressed in new LAP.
LAP	Kilmacanogue ⁹	40	200	+160	To be addressed in new LAP.
STP	Baltinglass	150	150	Balance	Small Town Plan forms part of this CDP
STP	Newtownmountkennedy	100	100	Balance	Small Town Plan forms part of this CDP
STP	Rathdrum	100	100	Balance	Small Town Plan forms part of this CDP

Zoning Principles

The zoning provisions of each Local Area Plan and Small Town Plan will be crafted on the basis of the population targets set out in Table 3.5 above.

The priority locations for new residential development will be:

- Priority 1 In the designated ‘town’ and ‘village’ / ‘neighbourhood centres’ or ‘primary zone’ through densification of the existing built up area, re-use of derelict or brownfield sites, infill and backland development. In doing so, cognisance will be taken of respecting the existing built fabric and residential amenities enjoyed by existing residents, and maintaining existing parks and other open areas within settlements.
- Priority 2 Strategic Sites as identified by the RSES and associated MASP
- Priority 3 Infill within the existing built envelope of the town, as defined by the CSO Town boundary
- Priority 4 Where a need for ‘greenfield’ residential development is identified, the ‘two-tier approach’ to land zoning as set out in the NPF will be taken i.e.

⁸ For LAP towns, estimated in accordance with current local plan zoning pervasions; zoned housing lands or lands zoned for a mix of housing and other uses, excluding lands already developed for housing (by March 2020) or where new housing development is currently underway (as of March 2020); disregarding extant permissions as yet to commence. For Small Towns, based on zoning provisions / development objectives set out in this plan.

⁹ as part of Bray MD LAP

Tier 1: Serviced Zoned Land

- This zoning comprises lands that are able to connect to existing development services, i.e. road and footpath access including public lighting, foul sewer drainage, surface water drainage and water supply, for which there is service capacity available, and can therefore accommodate new development.
- These lands will generally be positioned within the existing built-up footprint of a settlement or contiguous to existing developed lands. The location and geographical extent of such lands shall be determined by the planning authority at a settlement scale as an integral part of the plan-making process and shall include assessment of available development services.
- Inclusion in Tier 1 will generally require the lands to be within the footprint of or spatially sequential within the identified settlement.

Tier 2: Serviceable Zoned Land

- This zoning comprises lands that are not currently sufficiently serviced to support new development but have potential to become fully serviced within the life of the plan i.e. the lands are currently constrained due to the need to deliver some or all development services required to support new development, i.e. road or footpath access including lighting, foul sewer drainage, surface water drainage, water supply and/or additional service capacity.
- These lands may be positioned within the existing built-up footprint of a settlement, or contiguous to existing developed lands or to tier 1 zoned lands, where required to fulfil the spatially sequential approach to the location of the new development within the identified settlement.
- The potential for delivery of the required services and/or capacity to support new development must be identified and specific details provided by the planning authority at the time of publication of both the draft and final development or area plan.
This infrastructural assessment must be aligned with the approved infrastructural investment programme(s) of the relevant delivery agency(ies), for example, Irish Water, or be based on a written commitment by the relevant delivery agency to provide the identified infrastructure within a specified timescale (i.e. within the lifetime of the plan). The planning authority may also commit to the delivery of the required and identified infrastructure in its own infrastructural investment programme (i.e. Budgeted Capital Programme) in order to support certain lands for zoning.

As set out in the NPF, lands that cannot be serviced during the life of a development or area plan by reference to the infrastructural assessment of the planning authority cannot be categorised as either Tier 1 lands or Tier 2 lands per the above and therefore are not developable within the plan period. Such lands should not be zoned for development or included within a development plan core strategy for calculation purposes.

Addressing zoning surpluses

Where there is a surplus of land identified for residential development (or a mix of residential and other uses), one or a combination of the following options will be utilised:

Prioritising / phasing of development: by indicating on relevant tables and maps, where any surplus capacity of land and/or housing will be regarded as a strategic reserve and that proposals for the development of such lands or housing will not be considered for development purposes during the plan period;

Alternative Objectives: by indicating lands that will be considered for alternative appropriate uses within the plan period such as employment, amenity, community or other uses;

Discontinuing the Objective: by deletion of the zoning objective and related lands from the written statement and maps of the development plan.

Densities

It is an objective of the Council to encourage higher residential densities at suitable locations, particularly in existing town / village centres and close to existing or proposed major public transport corridors and nodes.

In accordance with **Specific Planning Policy Requirement 4** of the Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DHPLG 2018), in planning the future development of greenfield or edge of city/town locations for housing purposes, planning authorities must secure:

1. *the minimum densities for such locations set out in the Guidelines issued by the Minister under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), titled “Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2007)” or any amending or replacement Guidelines;*
2. *a greater mix of building heights and typologies in planning for the future development of suburban locations; and*
3. *avoid mono-type building typologies (e.g. two storey or own-door houses only), particularly, but not exclusively so in any one development of 100 units or more.*

Minimum densities will normally be ascribed to each parcel of zoned / designated residential land in the relevant local plan. Densities are crafted following an assessment of the capacity and characteristics of the land in question, in the interests of providing the most compact and sustainable form of development. In order to achieve the housing growth targets set out in the Core Strategy, it is important that minimum densities are achieved and exceeded where local conditions allow, except where insurmountable impediments arise.

In existing residential areas, infill development shall generally be at a density that respects the established character of the area in which it is located, subject to the protection of the residential amenity of adjoining properties.

2.6 Rural Housing

As set out in **National Policy Objective 19** of the National Planning Framework, Planning Authorities are to *‘ensure, in providing for the development of rural housing, that a distinction is made between areas under urban influence, i.e. within the commuter catchment of cities and large towns and centres of employment, and elsewhere:*

- *In rural areas under urban influence, facilitate the provision of single housing in the countryside based on the core consideration of demonstrable economic or social need to live in a rural area and siting and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans, having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements;*
- *In rural areas elsewhere, facilitate the provision of single housing in the countryside based on siting and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans, having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements’.*

In order to determine to what extent an area is under ‘urban influence’, the NPF guides Planning Authorities to utilisation of EU / OECD guidance. This methodology indicates that where 15% or more

of the workforce in any defined geographical area is employed in the principal city, or a large town of more than 10,000 in population, or a town with more than 2,500 jobs, that area is under ‘urban influence’.

The data for Wicklow in this regard shows that only one electoral division (Aghowle in south-west Wicklow) exhibited less than 15% of its workforce travelling to the principal city / any town over 10,000 population / any town with more than 2,500 jobs¹⁰. Therefore the entire county is under ‘urban influence’ and the rural housing strategy for the County, as set out in Chapter X of this plan, is based on the core considerations of:

- demonstrable economic or social need to live in a rural area,
- siting and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans,
- regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements.



Map 2.1 % of Wicklow resident workforce travelling to the principal city / any town over 10,000 population / any town with more than 2,500 jobs

¹⁰ Source: Census 2016, extracted and provided to Wicklow County Council by the NTA and collated / evaluated by AIRO on behalf of Wicklow County Council.

2.7 Transport and Accessibility

The **National Planning Framework** is focused on policies, actions and investment to deliver 10 National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs). With respect to transport and accessibility, the key objectives relevant to Wicklow and the Dublin Metropolitan Area are:

Inter-Urban Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintaining the strategic capacity and safety of the national roads network including planning for future capacity enhancements; ▪ Improving average journey times targeting an average inter-urban speed of 90kph; ▪ Enabling more effective traffic management within and around cities and re-allocation of inner city road-space in favour of bus-based public transport services and walking/cycling facilities
Public Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To strengthen public transport connectivity between cities and large growth towns in Ireland and Northern Ireland with improved services and reliable journey times. ▪ Expand attractive public transport alternatives to car transport to reduce congestion and emissions and enable the transport sector to cater for the demands associated with longer term population and employment growth in a sustainable manner through the following measures; ▪ Deliver the key public transport objectives of the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035 by investing in projects such as New Metro Link, DART Expansion Programme, BusConnects in Dublin and key bus-based projects in the other cities and towns; ▪ Provide public transport infrastructure and services to meet the needs of smaller towns, villages and rural areas; and ▪ Develop a comprehensive network of safe cycling routes in metropolitan areas to address travel needs and to provide similar facilities in towns and villages where appropriate.
Rural Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide a quality nationwide community based public transport system in rural Ireland which responds to local needs under the Rural Transport Network and similar initiatives; ▪ Invest maintaining regional and local roads and strategic road improvement projects in rural areas to ensure access to critical services such as education, healthcare and employment.

These transportation and accessibility objectives are translated to the regional level through the **Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy**; the Transport Investment Priorities for the region that are relevant to Wicklow are as follows:

Rail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DART Expansion Programme - new infrastructure and electrification of existing lines ... while continuing to provide DART services on the South-Eastern Line as far south as Greystones ▪ Provide for an appropriate level of commuter rail service in the Midlands and South-East ▪ Complete the construction of the National Train Control Centre. ▪ New stations to provide interchange with bus, LUAS and Metro network including Kishoge, Heuston West, Cabra, Glasnevin, Pelletstown and Woodbrook. ▪ LUAS Green Line Capacity Enhancement in advance of Metrolink. ▪ Undertake appraisal, planning and design of LUAS network expansion to Bray, Finglas, Lucan and Poolbeg ▪ In principle there is a need to carry out an evaluation of underground metro routes within the M50
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Bus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Core Bus Corridors comprising 16 radial routes and 3 orbital routes in Dublin ▪ Regional Bus Corridors connecting the major regional settlements to Dublin ▪ Dublin Metropolitan Bus Network Review ▪ Network reviews for the largest settlements across EMRA, with a view to providing local bus services ▪ Review of bus services between settlements ▪ Review of local bus services throughout EMRA, including services to small towns and villages and the rural transport programme ▪ New interchange and bus hub facilities ▪ New fare structures ▪ Enhanced passenger information ▪ Improvements to bus waiting facilities ▪ Integrated timetabling of bus and rail into a coherent national and regional network.
Strategic Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ M11 from Jn 4 M50 to Kilmacanogue N3 ▪ In addition, long term protection shall remain for the Eastern Bypass and the Leinster Outer Orbital Route.

Of key importance to County Wicklow’s transportation and accessibility strategy, is the NTA’s **Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035**

This transport strategy provides a framework for the planning and delivery of transport infrastructure and services in the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) over the next two decades. It also provides a transport planning policy around which other agencies involved in land use planning, environmental protection, and delivery of other infrastructure such as housing, water and power, can align their investment priorities. It is, therefore, an essential component, along with investment programmes in other sectors, for the orderly development of the Greater Dublin Area over the next 20 years.

The transportation assessment and proposals to meet demand provided in the strategy are based around 6 ‘radial corridors’ emanating out from the city centre and for County Wicklow, the following strategy is set out:

Corridor F – Arklow – Wicklow – Greystones – Bray – Cherrywood – Dundrum – Dun Laoghaire – Dublin City Centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Corridor F stretches from the south east business districts to Wicklow, based around the N/M11 route and containing both the DART and Luas Green Line. The Strategic Development Zone of Cherrywood is in this corridor. ▪ During the preparation of the Strategy, the Authority prepared a report on the South East corridor. This study primarily aimed to identify public transport options that could effectively meet the growth in travel demand to year 2035, between the South East Study Area and Dublin City Centre. A number of options to cater for transport growth were examined. This included the upgrading of the Green line to Metro standard all the way to a point in Bray. Other options included focusing on the DART and a combination of BRT and bus priority to service growth, including a BRT network linking to the upgraded Metro at Bride’s Glen or Sandyford. ▪ Given the need to accommodate expected growth in demand between segments along Corridor F, as well as from these segments to the city centre, a number of schemes are proposed. The capacity of the South Eastern rail line will be increased through enhancements to the existing rail line, incorporating city centre signalling and extra rolling stock. DART Underground will also enable increases in capacity along this corridor. This will facilitate faster and more frequent intercity, regional and DART services to be provided on this line. ▪ While these schemes focus on the coastal areas, the western parts of the corridor, including Cherrywood and other potential development areas, will require high capacity public transport. It is, therefore, proposed to upgrade the Luas Green Line to Metro standard from the city centre, where it will link into the new Metro North,
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	<p>as far as its current terminus at Bride’s Glen. From this point to Bray, a new Luas line is proposed. This will provide a new north-south inland rail axis from Swords to Bray. These rail services will be supplemented by the proposed BRT on the N11 from UCD to Blanchardstown, and the core radial bus corridors on the N11, south of UCD, and on the Rock Road.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To provide for growth in vehicular trip demand and improve road safety, the N11 and M50 between Newtownmountkennedy and Sandyford (including the M11/M50 junction) will be upgraded. Additionally, Loughlinstown roundabout will be improved, while a distributor road network will be developed to service development lands at Kiltiernan / Glenamuck.
<p>Corridor E – N81 Settlements – South Tallaght – Rathfarnham – to Dublin City Centre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Corridor E is made up of generally suburban residential development and is not defined on the basis of a major transport route, road or public transport service. It presents a challenge in that respect as it is more difficult to serve with high capacity public transport than other corridors, which are defined by multi-lane roads and / or dual carriageways, and contain existing or proposed rail lines. ▪ As limited growth in radial trips along Corridor E outside of the Metropolitan Area is anticipated, it is not proposed to implement significant public transport infrastructure improvements. Bus capacity will be increased to meet demand along the N81. ▪ For the Metropolitan parts of this corridor, the performance of the Rathfarnham Quality Bus Corridor is poor relative to others and requires enhancement. As such, a number of options, including Light Rail, have been examined. However, due to the land use constraints in the corridor and owing to the pressure on the existing road network, a Luas line was not deemed feasible. Instead, the emerging solution comprises a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to Tallaght via Rathfarnham and Terenure. This will result in a significant increase in capacity and reliability compared to existing public transport services and will balance public transport requirements with those of the private car. The BRT will be supplemented by a core radial bus corridor between Rathfarnham, Rathmines and the City Centre. ▪ Two new roads are to be built within this corridor, a South Tallaght link road from Oldcourt Road to Kiltipper Road, and a public transport bridge over the Dodder to the east of Tallaght from Firhouse Road to the N81 to address localised access and congestion issues.

Strategic Roads

- In light of the above higher order strategies, the priority for strategic (national) road improvement is the upgrade of the M/N11 in the north of the County, from the Dublin border as far as Kilpedder, in particular improvements to the M50 / M11 merge which is deficient in capacity, and all interchanges serving Bray.
- While the N81 is not identified in these strategies for significant investment / improvement, having regard to the significance of this strategic route to west Wicklow, the upgrade of the N81 between the Dublin border and Hollywood is a key priority of this plan for investment / improvement.
- The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy also identifies the Leinster Outer Orbital Route as a longer term objective, and this potentially traverses the region from Arklow in the south-east, to the Naas-Kilcullen area in the west via a route similar to the existing R747 – N81 corridor. This will form an element of the long term road investment strategy of this plan.
- In light of the likely continuing car dependency to access the metropolitan region in the short to medium term, it is the strategy of this plan to facilitate and encourage measures to improve capacity and efficiency of the national and regional routes, and facilitate the improved use of the national and regional routes by public transport, including the development of bus park-rides.

- The priority for regional road improvement will be with east-west connector routes i.e. Wicklow – Roundwood – Sally Gap - (R763/4 – R759), Wicklow – Laragh – Wicklow Gap – N81 (R763 – R756) and the R747 (Arklow – Tinahely – Baltinglass).

Public Transport

In light of the above higher order strategies, the priority for strategic public transport improvements are:

- Improvements to the DART service in north-east Wicklow, serving the metropolitan area Key Town of Bray and Greystones, the location of an identified key strategic employment site in the RSES;
- LUAS extension to the metropolitan area Key Town of Bray;
- Rail improvement to the Dublin – Rosslare rail line; this is the only heavy rail line in the County, which is single track only from Bray and has only six functioning stations from Bray to Arklow. The settlement strategy exploits the connectivity provided by this route by allocating over 75% of the future population growth to settlements along this line;
- Major improvements to bus services, including rural services.

2.8 Retail

The development plan includes a retail strategy, which is consistent with the ‘Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ (2012) and includes the following:

- Confirmation of the retail hierarchy, the role of centres and the size of the main town centres;
- Definition in the development plan of the boundaries of the core shopping area of town centres;
- A broad assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace;
- Strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development;
- Preparation of policies and action initiatives to encourage the improvement of town centres;
- Identification of criteria for the assessment of retail developments.

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy presents a retail hierarchy for the region, based on the 2008 Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008, and the provisions of this development plan are consistent with same. It is however flagged in the RSES that the floorspace thresholds detailed in the GDA strategy were prepared in a different economic climate and in many cases are still to be reached. In this regard, the RSES indicates that there will be a drive towards the preparation of a new retail strategy for the region under the requirements of the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012, or any subsequent update, to update this hierarchy and apply floorspace requirements for the Region.

Table 2.7 GDA and County Wicklow Retail Hierarchy

RETAIL STRATEGY FOR THE GREATER DUBLIN AREA	WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN	
	METROPOLITAN AREA	HINTERLAND AREA
LEVEL 1 METROPOLITAN CENTRE DUBLIN CITY CENTRE		
LEVEL 2 MAJOR TOWN CENTRES & COUNTY TOWN CENTRES BRAY, WICKLOW	Bray	Wicklow
LEVEL 3 TOWN AND/OR DISTRICT CENTRES & SUB COUNTY TOWN CENTRES GREYSTONES, ARKLOW, BLESSINGTON, BALTINGLASS, RATHDRUM, NEWTOWNMOUNTKENNEDY	Greystones	Tier 1 Towns serving a wide district: Arklow, Blessington Tier 2 Towns serving the immediate district: Baltinglass, Rathdrum Newtownmountkennedy,
LEVEL 4 NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES, LOCAL CENTRES – SMALL TOWNS & VILLAGES	Bray Area: Boghall Road / Ballywaltrim, Vevay, Dargle Rd, Dublin Road / Little Bray, Albert Road & Walk, Fassaroe, Southern Cross Road Greystones Area: Delgany, Blacklion, Charlesland, Killincarrig, Victoria Road	Ashford, Aughrim, Avoca, Carnew, Donard, Dunlavin, Enniskerry, Kilcoole, Kilmacanogue, Newcastle, Rathnew, Roundwood, Shillelagh, Tinahely
LEVEL 5 CORNER SHOPS / SMALL VILLAGES		Barndarrig, Ballinaclesh, Coolboy, Glenealy, Hollywood, Johnstown / Thomastown, Kilpedder / Willowgrove, Kiltegan, Knockananna, Laragh – Glendalough, Manor Kilbride, Redcross, Stratford

2.9 Integration of environmental considerations into the plan

The development objectives of this development plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with the conservation and protection of the environment. This has been ensured through the continuous assessment of the elements that make up this plan at each stage of the plan making process, through Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive.

CORE STRATEGY MAP (to be produced on finalisation of core strategy)