

Ashford Town

Local Area Plan 2001

Comhairle Chontae Chill Mhantáin

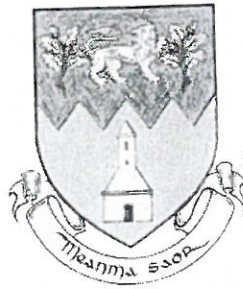


Ballinalea

Solomon

Ashford Town

Local Area Plan 2001



Wicklow County Council
County Buildings
Wicklow

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Plan Status

This Local Area Plan has been prepared under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to provide for the long-term development of Ashford. The Plan is intended to provide for the immediate development requirements of the area in the forthcoming 6 year period, in the context of providing for the population envisaged for the town in the County Development Plan to 2016. This Plan was adopted by Wicklow County Council at its meeting of the 8th October, 2001.

The Plan will be known officially as the *Ashford Local Area Plan 2001*. In the text it may be referred to as 'the Plan' or 'this Plan', save where the context requires otherwise 'The Council' or the 'Planning Authority' shall mean Wicklow County Council. It is intended that the majority of this Plan's objectives are, where feasible, to be implemented within 6 years from the date of its adoption by the Council.

1.1.1 The Plan Formulation Process

This plan has been prepared following a two-stage process. Firstly, survey and analysis of the development issues, land uses and underlying social, economic and industrial fabric of the area was carried out. Secondly, an extended consultation process intended to allow for local communities, individuals and organisations to make submissions to the Council concerning their objectives for the future development of the Ashford was carried out. A total of two public meetings were held in Ashford to publicise the plan preparation process and answer any questions that individuals may have had about the plan formulation process. Public advertisements were also issued inviting views and comments on the development potential of the village and the surrounding area and a number of submissions were received detailing views and objectives. This consultation process was also carried out simultaneously with a public consultation procedure for the preparation of the Wicklow Town Draft Development Plan (on behalf of Wicklow UDC) and the Wicklow Town Environs and Rathnew Local Area Plan.

1.1.2 Local Plan Structure

This Plan is divided into five parts: -

1. The introduction and non-statutory survey and analysis section.
2. The Development Strategy & Policy Objectives.
3. The Development Control objectives.
4. Works Objectives.
5. Assessment of the likely significant effects of implementing the Plan.

1.1.3 Development Control

The development control standards with which developments must comply are as per the County Development Plan 1999 and as set out in this Local Area Plan. In instances where development standards, policies and objectives differ between the County Development Plan 1999 and this Plan, the standards policies and objectives of the this Plan shall apply.

1.2 Survey And Analysis

The following sections of this Plan set out relevant information obtained as part of the survey and analysis of Ashford.

1.3 Ashford – A Local Role

Historically Ashford was a market town at the crossing of the River Vartry with development to date being primarily located to the south and west of the river crossing.

The town has progressively developed as a residential centre with a high proportion of commuter trips for employment purposes to outside the area (see Table 1 - below). Like the nearby settlement of Rathnew the recent development of the town has principally been focussed around the N11, which passes through the town. However the future realignment of the N11 has illustrated the potential for the improvement of the towns as an attractive settlement with local services and an improved environment.

Table 1: Travel to Work Distances – Nos. of Car Commuters (Drivers & Passengers) 1996¹

	10-14 miles	15-29 miles	30-49 miles	Total (persons at work by industry - Table 2)	Car commuters as a % of the total
Ashford	30	119	28	371	47%

1.4 Population Change, Residential Development and Future Residential Requirements

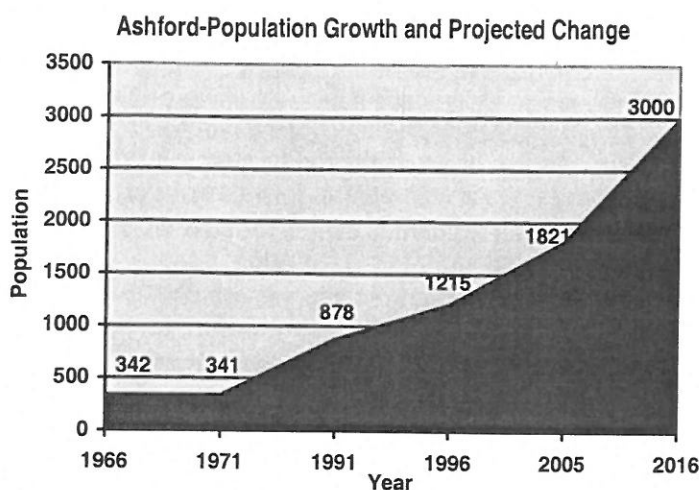
Tabled below are recent population figures for Ashford. Small Area Population Statistics for the town became available for the first time in 1996. Prior to this the population was below 1000 persons, the lower limit for compilation of detailed town statistics by the Central Statistics Office. The figures and chart (following) show that the population of the town has grown recently; growing by 38% in the period 1991-1996. The town is expected to continue to grow to its target population of 3,000 persons as specified in the 1999 County Development Plan over the forthcoming years.

Table 2: Population Change in Ashford

	Ashford
1981	N/a
1986	N/a
1991	881 ²
1996	1,215

¹ Census of Population 1996

² No 1986 data as available for Ashford as its population size at the time of that Census of Population was too small for it to be classified as a settlement for the purposes of the Central Statistics Office. 1000 persons is the lower limit for compilation of detailed town statistics by the Central Statistics Office. The population of the town at the time of the 1991 Census of Population was 881 persons (est. from Wicklow County Council figures).



The projected population for the year 2005-7 is circa 1821 persons (Table 3) but this plan shall allow for growth exceeding this, while remaining consistent with achieving the 2016 target population. This plan in fact allows for growth to a population of 3000 by the year 2016.

Table 3: Ashford Population Change and Projected vs Planned Growth.

Year	1971	1991	1996	Projected 2005-7	Planned 2005-7	Planned 2016 ³
Population	341	881	1215	1821	2500	3000

The absolute increase in population levels over recent years in the area reflects the increased attractiveness of not only Ashford but also Wicklow Town, its Environs, and Rathnew as a base to access the Dublin region. This development can principally be attributed to market pressures, the attractive environment in Wicklow and the relative ease of access to Dublin given the improved road infrastructure.

Residential Development

Within Ashford there has been an increase in the level of population in recent years. This has reflected an increased demand for housing with a number of housing estates developed in the Rosanna area and one off houses being also constructed in close proximity to the town.

Ashford is classified as *secondary growth centre* in the County Development Plan. These secondary growth centres are expected to grow to become significant towns with a broad range of facilities serving the town and its rural hinterland.

The residential development that has taken place in Ashford has generally been suburban in form and layout, involving both single and two storey detached and semi – detached dwellings while areas consisting of detached housing on large sites has also been developed.

The development of those lands to be zoned for residential development in this plan is expected to provide for the expected residential demands and local residential growth that will be necessary to ensure that local demands are not directed into rural unserved areas contrary to the County Development Plan policy.

³ Wicklow County Development Plan 1999

Future Residential Land Requirements

Having regard to the expected level of population increase in the town over the period to 2016, the development of additional residential properties will be necessary. In total approximately 50 hectares of residential development lands may be required depending on household size and density of development to the year 2016. In general the number of persons per household in the area has declined over recent years from 3.5-3.6 persons per household to less than 3.0 persons per household and the Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area have noted that the average number of persons per household will decline further. As a consequence it is considered reasonable for a figure of 2.75 persons per household to be used in calculating residential requirements to 2016. Given the difference in the 1996 population and the planned population for Ashford the additional volume of residential land to provide for the targeted population increase of 1,785 will be 48.7 hectares⁴.

1.5 Socio – Economic & Industrial Change, Economic & Industrial Development and Future Economic and Industrial Development

Socio Economic Change

The social and economic background of Ashford is an important element in its long-term development. The social / population trends evident in the area have been considered and are detailed below in Table 4.

Table 4: Socio Economic Change

Persons Aged 15 +

Ashford				
	1996		1986	
	No.	No. (Male / Female)	No.	No. (Male / Female)
At work	381	-	N/a	N/a
First Job	10	4 / 6	N/a	N/a
Unemployed	79	59 / 20	N/a	N/a
Student	99	51 / 48	N/a	N/a

⁴ Allowing for a 'market factor' (expecting that not all lands to be zoned are developed, 1.5 times the required lands are to be zoned). The population increase to 2016 will be 1,285. Assuming 2.75 persons per family this establishes a requirement for 649 residential units. Assuming a gross density of development of 20 units per ha. this establishes a need for 32.5 Ha. of residential lands. As not all land is likely to be developed a 'market factor' is applied (as above) to ensure that sufficient scope exists for the development of necessary lands. This indicates that at least 48.7 Ha. of zoned residential land will be necessary. This target has been met in this plan along with a small surplus of 6 ha. given the desirability of allowing the development of contiguous residential areas.

Students in 15 – 24 Age Group (Rathnew provided as Comparison)

	1996	1986 ⁵	% Increase
Ashford	98	N/a	N/a
Rathnew	98	59	66 %

Classification of Population at work By Industry

Census of Population 1996

		Agriculture	Mining	Manufacturing	Build. & Cons.	Elec. & Gas	Commerce	Transport	Public Admin.	Prof. Services	Other
Rathnew	Total	10	5	121	50	0	70	12	9	45	66
	(M/F Split)	9/1	5/0	75/46	48/2	0/0	44/26	9/3	6/3	12/33	15/51
Ashford	Total	11	1	76	24	6	87	15	21	64	66
	(M/F Split)	8/3	1/0	58/18	23/1	4/2	47/40	13/2	12/9	28/36	26/40

Highest Level of Education (Age 15 + who have ceased Full Time Education – 1996 Census of Population Figures available only)

		Upper Secondary	Third Level	Total
Rathnew	Male	79	24	103
	Female	109	30	139
Ashford	Male	106	84	190
	Female	122	82	204

In general the above survey information has confirmed a number of trends including the increase in the area's population and a decline in direct agricultural employment / activity.

Industry and Economic Development

There is a limited volume of light industrial / manufacturing space in Ashford. This is something confirmed by the predominance of commuters among the areas workforce (see Table 1) while the composition of the areas workforce also suggests that many would only find employment outside of the plan area given the nature of their employment which generally tends to be professional / commercial.

In a survey conducted by the Ashford Area Development Group in 1999, householders were asked to rank eleven local issues in order of priority, and the need for local jobs ranked second overall in the results. The need for additional limited size industrial units in Ashford has also been noted by the local development group. In this respect that are a number of potential locations within the area that could be developed for limited industrial / office employment opportunities.

⁵ No 1986 or 1991 data is available for Ashford as its population size at the time of that Census of Population was too small for it to be classified as a settlement for the purposes of the Central Statistics Office. 1000 persons is the lower limit for compilation of detailed town statistics by the Central Statistics Office.

The location of the N11 (and its realignment) also establishes an opportunity for the development of a larger scale business park. Demand for industrial lands in the area in recent years has been mainly for serviced sites adjoining the N11. The construction of the N11 by-pass shall reduce journey times and hence increase the desirability of the general area for industry, particularly close to interchanges. Having regard to this there is a need to provide opportunities for more local employment uses to restrain the commuting element.

Future Economic & Industrial Development Requirements

There are no zoned industrial / employment generating lands in Ashford at present. Current population figures (1996) demonstrate that 30 % of the population is generally employed; a high proportion of which (47 %) commutes out of the village to work. Allowing for the planned population target for Ashford it is considered reasonable that the provision of industrial lands to provide employment opportunities to limit commuting and meet potential needs of residents should be provided.

Guidance on land requirements for industrial activity is available through An Foras Forbartha's (AFF) Land Use Budgeting which notes that business operations generally require one hectare of land (gross area) per 40 employees. The population target for the plan period for this area (2,500) would if utilising the 1996 ratio of those employed by industry / overall population (30 %), suggest that employment lands to provide for approx. 750 employees will be required. Allowing 40 employees per hectare approx. 19 hectares will be required to meet future demands. Allowing for a market factor and taking into account the limited provision of employment lands at present in Ashford a total of 30 hectares is to be zoned.

1.6 Retail Change, Retail Development and Future Retail Requirements

The centre of Ashford also has a recognised retail function and it is important for the development of the area that this is supported and reinforced. It is important however, that any new retail development shall be in keeping with the character of the streetscape. Where sizeable areas of new housing are required, some local retailing may also be necessary to meet local need. At present, passing trade is important to the local economy, with the bulk of retailing being for convenience and craft type goods. A survey of retailing in the area sought to establish the extent of the retail areas provided in the town centre. The results are listed below. There was no significant element of vacancy in the retail sector.

Table 5: Floor Area (Gross Square M.)

Location	All Grocery	Public House and Off-Licence	Other Food	Tobacco, Sweets and Newspapers	Clothing and Footwear	Chemist	Durable Household Goods	Non-Food	Petrol Filling Stations	Restaurant, Café, Take Away	Post Office & Financial	Total
Ashford	193.3	108.1	21	-	-	32	157	352.4	15.4	265.9	11	1156.1

In general this level of retail provision is sufficient to provide for the immediate needs of the area although additional retailing will be required to provide for local needs as the town develops. Large-scale retailing has not been established within the plan area as much of this type of retail activity has been developed in Wicklow Town and other nearby urban centres. Such large-scale retail activity development is generally unnecessary and uneconomic in a town of limited size.

Future Retail Requirements

With respect to retail development regard must be had to national policy guidance on retailing. The development of retail schemes must therefore have full regard to the provisions of the Retail Planning Guidelines 2000 (DOELG). In summary this restricts the development of large scale retailing outside of developed areas with an established need for additional retailing. As Ashford is in the catchment area for Wicklow Town it is anticipated that its retailing needs for the "weekly shop"⁶ and comparison goods can be satisfied there while local shopping can be provided in Ashford itself to meet demands.

1.7 Educational Facilities and Future Requirements

Educational Facilities

There are two schools in Ashford at present. Nuns Cross School and Scoil Na Coroine Mhuire, both primary level schools. For secondary level education, students travel mainly to Wicklow town with a minority going to Bray (particularly for Irish language schooling). Nuns Cross School currently accommodates three classes. While an extension can accommodate needs for the immediate future there may be little scope for further development in the future.

Table 6: Educational Facilities

Area	School Type	School	No. Teachers	No. Pupils	No. Classrooms
Ashford	Primary	Scoil Na Coroine Mhuire	11	280	9
		Nuns Cross School	3	65	3

Future Educational Requirements

Lands adjoining existing education facilities that are in community use will be retained in community use in this plan to allow for the extension of primary facilities to meet future development needs. In the centre of Ashford the primary school is located on lands that effectively form a parcel of community buildings including the church and adjoining residential properties associated with the church.

Future Childcare Facilities

The provision of childcare facilities is an important element in the future development of the educational / community needs in the area as identified in the Draft Planning Guidance for Childcare Facilities (DoELG). This has been noted and the need to provide additional lands for such facilities recognised.

⁶ Main grocery shopping trip of the week

1.8 Natural Amenities, Conservation and Recreational Open Spaces & Future Provision

Natural Amenities

Ashford benefits significantly from its setting in a mature landscape. The town, with its surrounding upland areas, mature stands of trees, water resources such as the Vartry and the attractive Mount Usher Gardens⁷ has a range of amenities that are fundamental to its character. Demesne type houses set in attractive parkland include Inchanappa House and Bel Air Hotel. These are important aspects of local heritage, also contributing to the treed landscape that characterises much of Ashford.

The Devils Glen, to the west of Ashford Village is a second NHA in the area; the recognised habitat being a wooded gorge that surrounds the River Vartry.

The River Vartry which flows through the town is a scenic amenity, and designated a salmonid river under the EC Fresh Water Directive.

Conservation

Ashford contains a number of properties worthy of protected status. These are detailed in this Local Area Plan.

Recreational Open Spaces

Ensuring that sufficient amenity lands are provided in the town as it develops in the future is a priority for this plan. The retention of the established open spaces is also important along with the development of new and improved amenities such as cycleways and walks.

Existing amenity space where usable is generally associated with residential developments. The GAA grounds and hall are centrally located in the village by the river Vartry, and an additional football pitch is located at Ballinalea. The GAA grounds are not readily accessible to the general public for amenity purposes and are in the ownership of the County Board of the GAA. The other sports pitch south east of the village centre is accessible to the public and is approximately 1.4 ha. in area.

Future Requirements

The development of additional lands for amenity and recreational purposes and the protection of protected structures and other structures suitable for conservation is a key aim of this Plan. The level of open space for amenity purposes has been determined having regard to established guidance documents.⁸ These have indicated a need for 7.5 hectares of amenity open space.

⁷ Mount Usher gardens which flank the south-eastern side of the town, containing a wide variety of plant species. When considered in conjunction with the mature trees bounding the lands of Inchanappa House, there are a large number of trees on the eastern side of the town which add character to the area. The 1999 County Development Plan considers for preservation trees on the eastern side of the N11 at Inchanappa South.

⁸ A Parks Policy for Local Authorities (DoELG), 1987 & The Six Acre Standard: Minimum Standards for Outdoor Playing Space, National Playing Fields Association (UK)

Calculation Sequence – Example

Amenity Space Requirements:	1) Project 2016 population approx 3,000 2) Standard Require 2.5 hectares of amenity lands per 1,000 population 3) Divide 3,000 / 1000 = 3. 3 x 2.5 (ha) = 7.5 ha.
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In total approximately 9 hectares of open space is zoned to meet this requirement. The additional 1.5 ha. is to allow for the retention of trees that are of amenity value that adjoin the amenity areas.

1.9 Amenity Buildings and Space and Future Requirements

Amenity Buildings and Space

There is no community centre/hall or community amenity building located within Ashford. Many community meetings are carried out in one of a number of public houses / hotels located in the area. In a survey conducted by the Ashford Area Development Group, the establishment of a community centre was ranked top priority out of eleven options posed to the community in a household survey. In the same survey, the need for leisure facilities ranked fourth.

Future Requirements

The improvement of all amenity facilities in the area is a necessity and the desire for new leisure and amenity facilities has been expressed by local residents in surveys carried out as part of the plan preparation. At least one local community building for meeting purposes should be provided in the village. Ideally, this could be provided as part of any development promoted under AA1 on lands around Inchanappa House.

1.10 Piped Infrastructure

Sewerage Infrastructure

The existing sewage treatment plant at Ashford has a design capacity of 1,050 while the population of the area is 1,215 (1996). The long-term plan is to close this treatment plant and to pump the wastewater to a larger secondary treatment plant for the Wicklow town area.

Ultimately the secondary treatment system (capacity 37,000 PE⁹) for the Wicklow catchment area at the Murrough will serve Ashford. The immediate provision of this facility is a vital requirement in the fulfilment of the areas development requirements. At present, the outcome of an Environmental Impact Assessment by the Minister of the Environment and Local Government is awaited. Subject to funds, this scheme could be commenced within three years.

Water Supply

Existing water supply in the Ashford/Rathnew area is adequate in meeting existing needs. Both Ashford and Rathnew are supplied by water from the Vartry Reservoir in Roundwood, which also serves Wicklow Town. In 1994, usage was in the region of 275,000 l. per day – supplying both commercial and domestic users.

⁹ Population Equivalent.

Surface Water Drainage

The area is drained by the Vartry River. The Vartry flows via the Devils Glen, through Ashford and on to Broadlough. The ornamental gardens at Mount Usher are located on the Vartry riverbank at Ashford, and the river is a designated salmonid river. The rise in normal water level in the Vartry during times of severe flood is significant, and has been estimated at approximately 2.4 metres. This increase was found to be consistent between Ashford Bridge and Newrath Bridge at the time of the survey, following Hurricane Charlie in 1986¹⁰. A detailed analysis of the rivers flooding level has been prepared by J. B. Barry & Company, and considered in the preparation of zonings in the area.

1.11 Transportation Infrastructure and Future Provision

Transportation Infrastructure

A number of main roads meet in the Ashford area connecting surrounding towns to the N11 national primary route. The N11 realignment shall increase the attractiveness of the area as a result of reduction in through traffic. Two regional roads, the R763 and R764 coalesce at Ashford linking the town to Laragh and Roundwood to the west. Reliance on private transport (see Table 1) is high although a significant proportion travel by bus. Public transport is provided by a Bus Eireann service which travels the N11 route connecting Dublin with Wicklow town and locations further south.

Apart from vehicular access to the N 11 via the central roundabout, access from side roads to the N11 can be difficult due to the volume of traffic on this route. The by pass dual carriageway shall alleviate this situation to a large extent. In 1998, Average Annual Daily Traffic on the N11 between Ashford and Rathnew was estimated at over 17,000, and this should be reduced significantly by the road improvement scheme. At Nuns Cross there is a problem with children crossing a busy road on their way to school. In the survey conducted by Ashford Area Development Group, transportation ranked 5th in importance out of a total of eleven important local issues to be addressed.

Parking in the central area is limited, with a number of spaces serving the commercial area and a few spaces outside the church.

Recently completed road improvement schemes have included surface improvements on the Ashford –Glenealy Road, and also on the Nuns Cross –Killiskey road.

The area also suffers from a limited modal choice which is confirmed by looking at the travel to work patterns of commuters.

Future Requirements

The improvement of existing transportation infrastructure within the area is important to the sustainable development of the plan area. In this respect it is council policy to improve the inner regional ring – Blessington-Ashford-Wicklow, and to extend the bridge at Nuns Cross on the R763. Other improvements identified as part of a traffic study of the area carried out by Colin Buchanan & Partners on behalf of Wicklow County Council indicated a need to:

- Develop the new N11;
- Nun's Cross Bridge and R753 – re-alignment and localised widening of the road and upgrade of the bridge;
- Promote traffic management to provide additional capacity on the existing N11 from Tighes Avenue Interchange west to Ashford;

¹⁰ A flood such as that which followed Hurricane Charlie is estimated to have a re-occurrence interval of 300 years (Source; Roads Dept, Wicklow County Council)

2.0 Development Strategy and Objectives

All policy objectives stated in Section 2 of the adopted County Development Plan 1999 apply to this Local Area Plan as appropriate unless otherwise stated.

2.1 Development Strategy

In general the objectives are:

- To provide for the area's social, educational, and economic functions.
- To provide for the preservation and improvement of amenities.
- To encourage development in a sustainable, planned and contained fashion, considering the adverse visual impact of development in exposed locations, and avoiding urban sprawl.
- To provide necessary infrastructure for the required variety of land uses.
- To provide for necessary local (as opposed to regional) growth.

Goals and objectives are stated below and may be cross-referenced to appropriate maps where necessary. Objectives requiring the spending of public funds and are subject to subventions being forthcoming from the E.U., State, Semi-State and other sources, to support such objectives and the receipt of contributions towards such expenditure from developments benefiting from their works.

Specifically the plan will seek to:

(1) Promote Identity

Promote and facilitate development which will enhance the physical, economic and social fabric of Ashford including emphasising the need for all development proposals to promote and enhance the environment and physical appearance of the village.

(2) Conserve finite resources

Minimise the consumption of natural resources, including land and fuel.

(3) Protect Local Assets

Preserve the quality of the landscape, open space and material assets.

(4) Minimise the adverse impact of Development

Protect the integrity of the built and natural environments from damage caused by insensitive development proposals.

(5) Involve the Local community

Promote the involvement of the local community in decision making in environmental sustainability issues and decision making.

This strategy will be obtained through a series of objectives, which are set out below in general terms.

2.2 Urban Development Strategy Objectives

The town of Ashford will grow to the expected population target of 3,000 by 2016. The strategy therefore is to provide sufficient development lands and services to attain this objective while also encouraging the development of a range of facilities within the town that will cater for future local development requirements.

Development, and the effective implementation of the Development Plan policies and objectives, will be dependent upon sufficient resources being available in respect of infrastructure development. However in certain instances developments may be permitted to proceed should suitable effluent treatment plants be provided for new developments pending the completion of new and improved treatment facilities. In all instances regard will be had to the highest standards of effluent treatment. Similarly, all developments may be required to provide financial contributions to the development of proposed or developed infrastructure. In this respect the importance of the provisions of Sections 2.2.5 to 2.2.7 of the County Development Plan 1999 are confirmed.

2.3 Residential Development Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to provide sufficient zoned land on suitable sites to provide for local growth to ensure that the projected demand for housing in the area incorporating a variety of house sizes may be met and that all residential development is of a high quality and design.

2.4 Retail and Town Centre Strategy Objectives

The development of a wider range of higher order commercial services, i.e. leisure services and large retail outlets, is not immediately envisaged as many of these services can be most effectively located in the Wicklow Town / Rathnew area. The development of community facilities to provide for local needs shall be provided for. Detailed objectives addressing policies and objectives are outlined in the following sections.

2.5 Heritage Strategy Objectives

The area's heritage assets include buildings, structures and historical features. They are an important factor in both the development of a strong identity for the town and the continued strength of the area's tourism resources. It is an objective of this plan to protect the area's heritage assets.

2.6 Infrastructure Strategy Objectives

The Council will provide infrastructural support for the economic and social development of the plan area in an environmentally sustainable manner. In summary the Council will support infrastructural development of sanitary services, transportation and social & community infrastructure and all such objectives expressed in the County Development Plan. The Council will use its powers to support the opening up of lands zoned in this plan to provide for safe access and services provision.

2.7 Employment and Industry Strategy Objectives

The Council will support and assist the development of a range of industrial and employment generating enterprise uses in the area through pursuing its industrial land purchasing policy, encouraging the development of industrial and employment generating activities close to the existing transportation infrastructure and zoning additional lands for development purposes to provide for local need. Environmentally friendly rural activities and alternative farm enterprises in the hinterland and small scale starter business will also be encouraged in the plan area.

The importance of tourism in the area has been noted. The 1999 County Development Plan also specifies tourism objectives. This plan confirms and supports these objectives and in particular the importance of tourism amenities in the Ashford area such as Mount Usher Gardens and the Devil's Glen.

2.8 Roads and Transport Strategy and Objectives

The development of an adequate roads and transportation infrastructure along with the retention of land free from development where they may be required for new roads or road improvements to meet both development needs and allow for the development of an improved modal choice is an overarching strategic objective of this plan.

2.9 Open Space Strategy and Community Facilities Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to ensure that sufficient open space of all types is available to meet the requirements of Ashford in the future.

The protection of agricultural lands adjoining and outside of the development zones identified is considered to be an important objective for the long-term sustainable development of the area. The County Development Plan 1999 specifies a range of rural development objectives and the continued application of these objectives in the rural areas surrounding the specified development zones is considered necessary.

A number of these objectives are specifically relevant to the Ashford area, particularly those concerning the maintenance of views and prospects (Section 2.4.4 County Development Plan), the importance of the legacy of demesne tree planting (Section 2.4.9 County Development Plan) and the contribution of stone walls to the character of the area. (Section 2.4.14 County Development Plan).

3.0 Development Control Objectives

3.1 General

The appendices of the 1999 County Development Plan (as varied) that apply where appropriate to this Local Area Plan include:

- Appendix 1: Residential Development Standards.
- Appendix 2: Urban Development Standards.
- Appendix 3: Tourist Accommodation Standards.
- Appendix 4: Industrial Development Standards.
- Appendix 6: Building Façade Advertising Control Guidelines.
- Appendix 7: Coastal Zone Management Plan.
- Appendix 8: Telecommunications Control Standards.

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all development is regulated through the statutory process in the public's interest by means of proven planning principles. The process will ensure that development takes place in suitable locations and enhances the physical environment of the plan area.

The Council is required to control development in accordance with the policies and objectives set out in the Local Area Plan. This section of the plan is concerned specifically with development control objectives. It is an aim of this Local Area Plan that the County Development Plan development control objectives will apply unless otherwise modified by the following objectives.

3.2 Urban Development Control

- 3.2.1. It is the objective of the Council to enhance the streetscape of Ashford and to ensure that all infill development reflects established building styles and formats. All commercial and residential development within centre Ashford should reflect established building lines and promote the development of high quality frontages¹¹.
- 3.2.2. It is the objective of the Council that high standards of building and urban design should be employed in all new developments and that all public open spaces developed should enjoy high standards of landscaping for both active and passive recreation areas.
- 3.2.3. Proposals for developments on large sites within the plan area should provide a masterplan detailing the development, urban design concept layout, design details such as landscaping and boundary treatments to ensure that the character of any development is consistent with the established built environment, is of high quality and can be incorporated into the surrounding topography and environment. The application of design approach utilised in the Department of the Environment Transportation and the Regions (UK) document Places Streets and Movement (1998)¹² should be considered by all applicants in developing high quality developments.
- 3.2.4. Where environmental improvements are necessary for the development of improved linkages from the established retail core to any new residential or commercial facilities it will be necessary for developers to provide for these as far as is possible. Environmental improvements are most likely to be necessary to promote improved pedestrian access and linkage from the town centre to the adjoining residential development areas such as Inchanappa and Rosanna.
- 3.2.5. Certain areas are considered suitable for higher density development. These are identified on the Development Plan Maps. High quality design, layout and orientation of properties as part of all residential developments will be a pre-requisite.

3.3 Residential Development

- 3.3.1. It is the objective of the Council to ensure that development in areas zoned for future development but currently located in areas that display a rural character is carefully managed to ensure that when developed they do not have an adverse impact on the amenities of the area, allow for effective linkages to the established urban area and do not lead to unnecessary pressures on services and amenities in the area.
- 3.3.2. It is the objective of the Council to acquire lands within the plan area where necessary to provide for housing and community facilities including local housing needs.
- 3.3.3. It is the objective of the Council to provide serviced sites for development by private individuals where possible.
- 3.3.4. The Council will seek to ensure the provision of a wide range of house types, designs and styles to cater for modern housing needs, family sizes and tenures. All new residential developments proposed should aim to develop a range of housing types and styles to meet demand.

¹¹Conservation Guidelines have been published by the Department of the Environment and Local Government detailing best practice and recommendations for typical Irish building and design features such as stone walls, settings and landscapes and shopfront design.

¹² Section 5.9.2, Residential Density: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, Department of the Environment and Local Government, 1999

- 3.3.5. Permission will not normally be given in residential areas for a change from residential use of any residential land or units to a non-residential use, which can still be used with or without adaptation for residential purposes of any kind.
- 3.3.6. It is the Council's policy to restrict the conversion of houses which would result in the loss of units for family accommodation due to the impact this would have on the amenities of existing residential areas with regard to in particular noise and traffic issues.
- 3.3.7. In areas that are in predominantly residential use, priority will be given to the provision of additional housing so long as this does not have an adverse effect on the character of the area. Non-residential uses will be allowed where they are on a limited scale, compatible with the residential environment and it can be demonstrated that they are of benefit to the local community and normally could not be more satisfactorily located outside a residential area.
- 3.3.8. To ensure that all new housing developments shall make provision for a re-cycling area within the estate, the location of which shall be delineated at the Planning Application stage.
- 3.3.9. Extensive sites zoned for residential development may be required to provide Action Plans to ensure the development of the site in a manner which integrates with the existing commercial, social and built environment of the town in a manner that will have a beneficial impact.

3.4 Retail and Village Centre Development

- 3.4.1. Shops may be permitted in residentially zoned areas but should service only immediate local needs with retail development no greater than 100 sq.m. of nett floorspace.
- 3.4.2. The Council will seek to encourage the development of retail spaces within the village core area to cater for retail demands. The consolidation and expansion of existing facilities will be encouraged to meet additional retail requirements. Areas that the Council considers suitable for an expansion of the town core include the Mart site in the village which has the potential to enjoy good linkages to the established retail facilities.
- 3.4.3. The Council will encourage mixed-use schemes that provide for both comparison and convenience retailing to meet any established local needs.

3.5 Heritage & Amenity

- 3.5.1. The Council will consider making tree preservation orders in respect of all trees or groups of trees that the Council believes are in danger of being destroyed or damaged and that their loss would be a serious injury to amenity, it will consider the making of tree preservation orders.
- 3.5.2. The Council will protect all trees which, are subject to tree preservation orders.

Table 9: Tree Preservation Orders

Location
Trees on the eastern side of the N11 at Inchanappa South, Inchanappa House, Ashford.

- 3.5.3 It is the Council's objective to promote the protection of trees of amenity value specified in Table 10 below.

Table 10 – Trees of Amenity Value.

Map Ref.	Trees & Groups of Trees	Location
TP1	Riverside trees associated with preserved view	Immediately north of and including part of GAA lands.
TP2	Line of conifers on northern boundary of Church Grounds in Ashford.	By existing N11 road in Ashford
TP3	Roadside mature trees	Western side of Inchanappa lands referred to in Action Plan 1, excluding area zoned for town centre uses
TP4	Line of trees at Inchanappa.	Western side of Inchanappa lands south of Garda Station.
TP5	Mature trees lining avenue	Eastern side of access road to Inchanappa House
TP6	Line of trees alongside stream	Lands at Inchanappa, close to Inchanappa House
TP7	Line of trees stretching northwest to southeast, except where future road developments require removal.	North of Vartry River near Mill Road
TP8	Trees at Usher House	East of the N11

- 3.5.4. Development that requires the felling of mature trees of amenity value or special interest, even though they may not be listed in this plan will be discouraged.

- 3.5.5. It is the Council's objective to promote the protection of views specified below.

Table 11: Listed Views

Map Ref	Description
V1	View of River Vartry and riverside trees, looking westwards from bridge in Ashford

- 3.5.6. It is the Council's objective to reserve sufficient lands for a river walk along the Vartry and in the vicinity of Nun's Cross. Such walks shall incorporate landscaping and safety features where required. This objective may extend beyond the life of this plan.

Table 12 River Walk Objectives.

Map Ref.	Route of river walk
RW1	From Ashford Bridge to Nuns Cross Bridge in Ashford.

- 3.5.7. It is an objective of the Council to protect the following archaeological features and to control development in the vicinity of all archaeological sites which are listed below ensuring that where development is carried out that it is undertaken in accordance with the recommendations of the National Monuments Section of the Department of the Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, and in accordance with Sections 3.5.17 to 3.5.19 inclusive, of the County Development Plan 1999.

Table 13: National Monuments in the Area

Townland	Classification	Map Ref	National Monuments Record Number
Inchanappa South	Church and Graveyard	AO1	W1025- 02601
Inchanappa South	Font	AO1	W1025- 02602
Rosanna Upper	Ring Barrow	AO2	W1025- 036
Rosanna Upper	Mound	AO3	W1025-007

- 3.5.8. It is an objective to have regard to the list of sites and monuments contained in the Record of Monuments and Places for County Wicklow (1995) published by the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland National Monuments and Historic Properties Service, in dealing with all proposals for development in the vicinity of any item listed.

3.6 Services Infrastructure

- 3.6.1. It is an objective to provide a treatment plant to service Ashford, Wicklow Town and Rathnew on lands to the north of Wicklow town. It is also an objective of the Council to construct a pumping station at Ashford to be connected to a treatment plant to be constructed in Wicklow town. The existing treatment plant shall cease to operate when this is completed.
- 3.6.2. Having regard to the necessary capital funding required to upgrade the service infrastructure within the area, it is an objective of the Council to require contributions from developers towards the cost of carrying out such works. The level of contribution will be relative to the overall cost of the capital works and shall be adjusted annually having regard to rises in the Building Cost Index or the Consumer Price Index.
- 3.6.3. It is the policy of the Council to provide adequate piped infrastructural services to accommodate the expected expansion of Ashford. Pending the development of appropriate treatment facilities it may be necessary to limit development in the interests of environmental amenities.
- 3.6.4. All proposed developments on lands located below 3 metres OD, or in the vicinity of areas known to flood will not be permitted. Flood protection measure might be accepted where the Council is satisfied that they will not adversely affect the amenities of adjoining areas. It will be the responsibility of the any applicant to provide conclusive evidence that any flood protection measures will be successful and will not adversely affect the amenities of the adjoining lands.
- 3.6.5. It is an objective of the Council that developers, where appropriate, construct those portions of public services that facilitate their developments, to the design and specification required by the Council.
- 3.6.6. It is an objective of the Council to extend and improve the public infrastructural networks as required to facilitate development.
- 3.6.7. The Council will require that all surface water in excess of that flowing from the site under previous land use conditions will be required to be attenuated on site unless conclusive evidence can be produced that existing watercourses or surface water sewers can accommodate such increased flows, as well as increased flows from all possible developments within the relevant catchment area.

3.7 Employment Development Objectives

- 3.7.1 The Council will seek to encourage the development of high quality 'clean' industries so as to ensure the protection of the area's natural environment and the residential amenities. These activities include the development of 'office based industries'.
- 3.7.2 Any "office based industry" schemes and office parks must employ a low density of development, high quality design and layout and must be effectively assimilated into the surrounding environment.
- 3.7.3 Development of lands for enterprise activities will be encouraged at selected locations as per the zoning provisions of this plan. These uses will require the development of high quality environments that will not adversely affect the natural environment of the area and accordingly height and site development standard restrictions will be employed accordingly. These developments should employ a plot ratio in the region of 0.3 in the interests of encouraging low density development; small building units will be encouraged with high quality landscaping while any such development will require the planning and development of lands zoned for enterprise activity on the basis of an overall site masterplan that incorporate details such as phasing, planting, landscaping, the use and the visual impact of the development.
- 3.7.4 It is an objective of the Council to permit limited home-based employment in residential zones, provided it complies with the proper planning and development of the area and does not adversely effect residential amenity.
- 3.7.5 It is an objective of the Council to actively promote Ashford to prospective employers as an appropriate employment location, based on its infrastructure base, available workforce, and quality environment.
- 3.7.6 It is an objective of the Council to promote tourism activity in the town as an employment source.

3.8 Roads and Transportation Objectives

- 3.8.1 It is the Council's objective that all new roads development should provide for traffic calming measures in residential areas to ensure that hazards to pedestrians is minimised.
- 3.8.2. It is the objective of the Council to facilitate the development of public transport linkages in the area and the development of an improved range of modal choice. Particularly as regards the potential development of improved bus linkages to Wicklow Town.
- 3.8.3. It is the objective of the Council to promote the development of cycleway provisions linking emerging residential areas in Ashford with the established core.
- 3.8.4. It is the objective of the Council to promote traffic management to provide additional capacity on the existing N11 from Tighes Avenue Interchange west to Ashford.
- 3.8.5. It is the objective of the Council to investigate the provision of a cycleway from the north of the town to development areas along the line of the existing N11.
- 3.8.6. It is the objective of the Council to examine the need for traffic calming measures between Cronroe and Woodpecker Public House.

3.9 Open Space and Community Facilities

- 3.9.1 It is an objective of the Council to investigate, enable and pursue the provision of a local park for the residents of Ashford at lands adjoining the village centre.
- 3.9.2 The loss of existing public or private recreational open space will normally be resisted by the planning authority unless alternative recreational facilities are provided in a suitable location, or it can be demonstrated that there is no longer sufficient demand to sustain the facility.
- 3.9.3. The redevelopment of the Ashford GAA pitch as a well designed new town centre area with open space, commercial and community facilities may be considered by the Council should an alternative improved playing area and facility be provided at a convenient location close to Ashford beforehand. As part of this objective it is an aim of the Council to develop a public park in Ashford as a civic focus, which shall incorporate landscape features of lands to the east of the existing N11 in central Ashford.
- 3.9.4. The Council will investigate ways of improving the quality and capacity of existing sporting and recreational facilities through initiatives in both the public and private sector. Sources of funding will be investigated to achieve this at government level through the Lottery, with the governing bodies of the sports and through private development proposals.
- 3.9.5. Developers will be required to make provision for sport and recreational infrastructure commensurate with the needs of the development as an integral element of their proposals. Such provision should include direct provision on or off site or a development levy to enable the Council to make appropriate alternative provision.
- 3.9.6. To zone appropriate lands for the development of a community hall/centre in Ashford.
- 3.9.7. To zone sufficient lands to cater for the primary and secondary educational sectors within the Ashford area and taking due consideration of the lands zoned for educational use in the Wicklow Town / Rathnew area.

3.10 Land Use Objectives

- 3.10.1 The purpose of land use zoning objectives is to indicate the Council's intentions for all lands in the town. The various land use zones and their objectives are identified on Maps 1 and 2 of this Local Area Plan. Land use zoning objectives are listed hereunder in Table 15.

Table 15: Zoning Objectives

<i>Residential</i>	To protect, provide and improve residential amenities while allowing for increased residential densities at 28 houses of 125m ² (or equivalent) per hectare on the basis of high quality design, layout and orientation of properties and public spaces.
<i>Commercial</i>	To provide for commercial development and retail facilities that will not harm or detract from the commercial potential and primacy of the town centre areas.
<i>Town Centre Activities</i>	To consolidate and facilitate the development of the central area, and to identify, reinforce, strengthen and promote urban design concepts and linkages between town centre activity areas.
<i>Enterprise Development</i>	To promote the development of high quality business space and office space subject to high quality design, landscaping, layout and low-density development.
<i>Community and Educational</i>	To provide for necessary community and educational lands to cater for future population increases.
<i>Open Space / Amenity</i>	To preserve, provide and improve recreational amenity and open space.
<i>Open Space / Amenity / Greenbelt</i>	To preserve, provide and improve recreational amenity and open space, enable agricultural activity, support the preservation of amenities and enable the preservation of upland areas and greenbelt areas
<i>Agricultural</i>	To preserve, provide and improve agricultural developments.

3.10.2 The acceptability of certain uses particular zones is self evident, as is the unacceptability of others. Over a wide range of uses the degree of acceptability will be assessed on the basis of a specific planning applications where its nature, extent, intensity and its incidental effects can be evaluated properly.

3.10.3 For control purposes the plan area has been divided into zones. Zoning refers to the main land use occurring in each zone. The zones have been divided into six groups according to the main use in each. The Groups are:

Group		
R	Residential	Residential
E	Employment	Enterprise Development
C	Community	Community and Education
O	Open Space	Open Space 1, Open Space 2
A	Agriculture	Agriculture
RC	Retail / Commercial	Town Centre Activities / Commercial

Table 16 indicates the acceptability levels for any use in each of the 6 groups.

Table 16 Key	1	Permitted in Principle
	0	Open for Consideration
	X	Not Permitted

“Open for Consideration” means a use is not acceptable in principle and will only be permitted in special cases where the Council is satisfied that the use would not conflict with the general objective for the zone and could be permitted without undesirable consequences for the permitted uses and which can be allowed subject to compliance with pertinent control criteria consistent with the proper planning and development of the area, having regard to the Local Area Plan. Uses in the table which are not indicated as permitted in principle or open for consideration are material contraventions of the plan. Uses not recorded in Table 16 will be considered in relation to the general policies and of the plan and the zoning objectives of the particular area.

Many uses exist where they do not conform to the designated use zoning objectives. Generally such uses, where legally established, shall not be subject to proceedings under the Act in respect of their continuing use. When extensions to, or improvements of premises accommodating such uses are , each shall be considered on its merits and permission may be granted where the development does not adversely affect the amenities of properties in the vicinity and does not prejudice the proper planning and development of the area.

Table 16

	Land Use Group					
	R	E	C	O	A	RC
Abattoir	x	x	x	x	o	x
Advertising	o	1	x	x	x	o
Aerodrome / Airfield	x	x	x	x	o	x
Bed and Breakfast	1	o	x	x	1	1
Boarding Kennels	x	o	x	x	o	o
Car Parks	o	1	x	o	o	1
Caravan Park (holiday)	x	x	x	o	o	x
Caravan Park (residential)	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cash and Carry Outlet	x	o	x	x	x	1
Cemetery	1	o	1	1	1	x
Church	1	x	1	o	o	1
Commercial	o	o	x	x	x	1
Community Facility	o	o	1	o	o	1
Concrete Asphalt etc. plant	x	x	x	x	x	x
Crèche / Nursery School	1	1	1	x	x	1
Cultural Use	o	o	1	o	0	1
Halting Site	1	o	o	1	1	o
Dance hall / Discotheque	x	x	o	x	x	1
Doctor / Dentist etc.	o	o	o	x	x	1
Education	1	o	1	x	x	1
Civic Amenity	o	0	x	x	0	x
Extractive Industry	x	x	x	x	o	x
Garden Centre	o	o	o	x	o	1
Guest House	1	o	x	x	1	1
Health Centre	o	o	o	x	x	1
Heavy Vehicle Park	x	o	x	x	o	x
Home based Economic Activity	1	x	x	x	1	1
Hospital / Nursing Home	o	o	o	x	o	1
Hotel / Motel	o	o	x	x	x	1
Industry - General	x	o	x	x	x	o
Industry - Light	o	1	x	x	x	o
Motor Sales Outlet	x	o	x	x	x	1
Offices	x	1	x	x	x	1
Open Space	1	1	1	1	1	1
Petrol Station	x	1	x	x	o	1
Private Club	o	o	x	x	x	1
Public House	x	o	x	x	x	1
Public Services	1	1	1	1	1	1
Recreational Building	o	o	1	1	o	1
Residential	1	x	x	x	o	1
Residential Institution	1	x	x	x	o	1
Restaurant	o	o	x	x	x	1
Scrap Yard	x	o	x	x	x	x
Service Garage	x	o	x	x	x	1
Shops (Local)	1	o	x	x	x	1
Shops (Other)	x	x	x	x	x	1
Sports Club	o	o	1	1	1	1
Warehouse	x	o	x	x	0	x

3.11 Action Areas

3.11.1 Action Area 1

Lands surrounding Inchanappa House have been identified as suitable for development in this Local Area Plan. These lands while zoned for particular uses under which a range of developments are both permitted in principle and open for consideration by the Council should be developed on the basis of comprehensive development proposals that allow for the sustainable, phased and managed development of the environs area during the forthcoming plan period

Any Action Plan prepared or development proposed for these lands, while respecting all relevant development control standards and plan objectives, must provide for the phased and integrated:

- development of residential units at a range of residential densities with lands to the north of the site being developed at low densities and those lands to the south of the AP area being developed at a density of 28 equivalent houses of 125m² per hectare. All development proposed in this area must be of a high quality of design and layout and should respect its setting adjoining the grounds of Inchanappa House.
- retention of lands for access and linkage to the town core area.
- protection established trees in the grounds of Inchanappa House in the interests of visual amenity.
- protection of the amenities of adjoining properties.
- Provision for public amenity areas adjoining Ashford town centre and at the northern approach to the town.

3.11.2 Action Area 2

This is located on each side of the Vartry River from Main Street, Ashford to Nun's Cross.

IT IS PROPOSED TO PREPARE A SEPARATE LOCAL AREA PLAN FOR THIS AREA TO INCLUDE:

- A maximum of 85 residential units at a Max Density of 10 houses per Hectare including infill development along the road frontage at Mount Alto. Key areas for residential development would be adjacent to existing houses beside the Ashford – Nun's Cross Road.
- Provide a riverwalk on both sides of the River Vartry.
- Retain the GAA Pitch as a playing field.
- Provide for playing fields.
- Allow for generous setback of development from riverbank areas to ensure protection of the amenities of the River Vartry.

3.12 Phasing of Development

This Plan has zoned lands capable of accommodating development upto 2016. Specific areas of land to accommodate population upto 2007 have been designated in the Local Area Plan Maps. Development on zoned lands outside these designated areas will only be permitted if the designated lands are unavailable for development.

4.0 Works Objectives

4.1 Implementation

4.1.1

Objectives that require the carrying out of works and the expenditure of public funds are subject to:

1. All the necessary permissions and subventions being forthcoming from the EU, State, Semi – State and other sources, to support and finance the objectives.
2. Additional finances required by the Council being made available having regard to the overall commitments of the Council.
3. The Council receiving financial contributions towards expenditure on works (including the acquisition of land), from developments facilitated by its works.

4.1.2

Any locations of works objectives on Map Nos. 1 and 2 are illustrative only. The precise location will be subject to design and an in depth assessment of impacts and the requirements of due planning process under the *Planning and Development Act 2000*.

4.2 Road Works

- a) Nun's Cross Bridge and R753 – re-alignment and localised widening of the road and upgrade of the bridge.
- b) To provide Town Gateways at the northern and southern entries to Ashford that establishes the character of the town. The selection of an appropriate location for these will be determined following site surveys and the operation of all necessary consultation procedures. These gateway structures should be sensitively designed, employ native materials and be of a design that reflects the established design details such as stone walls within the town.
- c) To reserve sufficient land for access road from the R763 to land to the north and south of it. The reservation shown is diagrammatic only and subject to further investigation.
- d) To reserve sufficient land for an access road to lands zoned for housing east of existing N11 at Inchanappa, Ashford. The reservation shown is diagrammatic only and subject to further investigation.
- e) To provide a pedestrian crossing point at Nuns Cross on the R763, and to examine the need for traffic calming measures in the vicinity of the junction where the R763 meets the Killiskey Road.
- f) To develop a new footpath from Nuns cross to Bridge and also to school north of Killiskey Church; in the interests of pedestrian safety.
- g) New footpath from Woodpecker Pub Junction to existing path on road to Cronroe (eastern side of road) to serve local residents.

4.3 Sewerage Works

- a) It is an objective of the Council to extend the public sewerage network to serve the zoned lands, except for agricultural lands, in accordance with the Action Area Plans and development proposals for these areas.
- b) To connect the existing sewerage infrastructure network to the proposed treatment facility at the Murrough, Wicklow and to provide where appropriate engineering works (potentially including pumping stations) to allow connection to that facility at the Murrough.
- c) It is an objective of the Council to develop all necessary services infrastructure including any necessary pumping facilities at necessary locations subject to due process under the *Planning and Development Act 2000*.

4.4 Water Works

- a) It is an objective of the Council to develop an appropriate water distribution network to service the development lands subject to due process under the *Planning and Development Act 2000*.

4.5 Social and Community Infrastructure Works

- a) The Council will seek to develop and facilitate the provision of social and community infrastructure within the plan area to meet community needs subject to appropriate funding, siting and procedures under the Planning and Development Act 2000 and any other relevant statutory provisions.

5.0 Strategic Environmental Assessment

This element of the plan has been prepared having regard to the provisions of Section 10(5)(a) of the *Planning and Development Act 2000*, S.I. No. 93 of 1999, the EPA Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessment and EU Council Directive (96) 511 + (99) 73. It identifies the manner in which the potential environmental impact of the development choices identified in this plan have been considered in the interests of achieving a balance between location, volume and mix of land uses, the development needs of the town and the potential environmental impacts that could be expected.

- (a) The development of Ashford will have a significant environmental impact as a result the change of use of extensive areas from agricultural use to residential use. The development of extensive areas of land locally must however be seen in the context of providing for local development demands, particularly allowing for local residential needs and ensuring that realistic alternatives exists to the development of one-off houses in the Countryside. The development of lands locally and in centralised locations has less of an environmental impact than the development of many individual houses in the countryside where access, services and the environmental capacity of the area to cater for such housing is limited.
- (b) In all instances the adverse impacts of the planned land uses and potential development that is likely to occur as a result have been considered. However, in certain instances the development of some lands will result in significant changes in the appearance of the area and may result in the loss of some environmental amenity. These suggested land uses must be viewed in the interests of the overall land use mix not only in Ashford but also in Wicklow Town and its environs while also providing for the shelter and housing necessary for the local population.

5.1 Limitation of Impacts

A number of approaches have been adopted in order to limit the adverse environmental impacts of the extensive development. These are identified below.

- (a) The land requirements for the immediate development of the town has been provided. In this respect excessive volumes of land have not been zoned.
- (b) Land uses have been identified to provide for appropriate types of development at appropriate locations, e.g. local retail development has been identified in certain locations in and around existing urban centres and new residential areas. In this respect the unsustainable and often negative environmental impact of introducing incompatible land uses into an area have been avoided where such development is considered unlikely to be sufficiently mitigated through the detailed design and planning application process or into the existing environment.
- (c) Development in areas of significant environmental amenity has been resisted while the potential risk to established amenity areas as a result of development has also been taken into consideration in the development of lands.

5.2 Impact on the Environment

Should the areas so zoned be developed as identified (or developed for the possible range of uses within those zones) and the appropriate transportation, services and development objectives put in place to accommodate these objectives the likely environmental impacts are as follows.

Human Beings

The effect of development on existing human beings within the plan area will be significant. The development of additional housing, commercial and industrial lands will result in an increase in the built area of the town and its environs. In this respect the manner in which existing residents experience Ashford and its environs will alter significantly although this will change over time as development areas mature. In total however, approximately 600+ residential units of varying designs and formats can be developed in the area to meet possible population increases. This will lead to a significant impact with increases in population and the necessity to invest in the additional community facilities and amenities to meet needs and ameliorate the impact. There will be a positive impact of providing housing and services to meet the shelter and other needs of new families.

The negative impact often associated with additional residential development can be limited however through the identification of lands for development that are located in areas screened from established areas, i.e. surrounding Inchanappa and in the Rosanna area.

Flora

The principal impacts on flora in the area will occur as a result of the development of the built up areas in previously rural / agricultural environments. However, development will occur in areas that are not unique in flora terms.

Fauna

The principal impacts on flora in the area will occur as a result of the development of the built up areas in previously rural / agricultural environments. However, much of the development will occur in areas that are not unique in fauna terms.

Soils

No significant impact will occur to soil resources in the area as a result of the development. Impacts will occur to soil in the area as a result of re-profiling and excavation associated with the development; this is unavoidable. The impact will not however be significant and the primary impact on areas where soil re-profiling takes place will be change in the areas visual character.

Water

The principal impacts on the area's water resources will occur as a result of an increase in demand for water resources and an impact due to surface water run-offs and foul water discharges from new development areas. These impacts will be addressed through engineering solutions and through the development of proposed treatment facilities to cater for increased development. In certain areas water quality may improve as a result of the improved treatment facilities and in this respect the progressive development of the area and the provision of necessary water treatment facilities will be important.

Air

The development of the area will result in changes in air quality as a result of the emissions that can be expected from properties and vehicles. This may result in an increase in emissions although over the longer term the development of more energy efficient houses, properties and vehicles may not result in a significant increase in emissions over current levels.

Landscape

Significant and lasting changes will occur to the landscape of the area as a result of development. This change cannot be avoided as development lands will have to be developed in order to accommodate demands (primarily residential development demands). However, much of the development area identified in the Plan are located in areas where they can be screened from the existing road network and housing areas. In this respect visual amenity can be protected. Further significant change in the appearance of the area can be addressed through the planning application process through the requirement to provide high quality landscaping and through restricting development on elevated areas.

Material Assets

The material assets of the area will be improved through the development of additional and improved facilities as a result of development in the area. The area will also benefit through the development of lands in the Wicklow Town / Wicklow Town Environs and Rathnew area which is located close by.

Cultural Heritage

The protection of the area's cultural heritage and assets can be achieved through sensitive development. Buildings of note and character along with other archaeological features are protected in this plan and all developments in their vicinity will be considered accordingly.

Traffic Impacts

The potential impact of the potential development of the lands identified in the attached maps has been considered. Through the development of remedial works to specific locations such as the R753 and the development of 'new' N11, the impact of development will not have significant impacts on the road system.

Appendix A – Land Use Definitions

Definition of Use Classes Related Zoning Objectives

The definition of the various uses given below are provided only as a general guide to the interpretation of the uses listed above in Table 16. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list of use classes 'permitted in principle' or 'open for consideration' in each zoning objective.

Abattoir

A building or part thereof or land used for the slaughter of animals for food. This includes facilities for meat processing and storage and also lairage.

Advertisements and Advertising Structures

Any word, letter, model, balloon, kite, poster, device or representation employed for the purpose of advertisement, announcement or direction and any structure such as hoarding, scaffold, framework, pole, standard, device or sign (whether illuminated or not) and which is used or intended for use for exhibiting advertisements.

Agriculture

Use of land or the purposes set out in section 2 (1) 'agriculture' of the *Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 1963* or as otherwise revised by the *Planning and Development Act 2000*.

Agricultural Buildings / Farm Dwellings

A building or part thereof used for the purpose of agriculture as set out in the Planning Acts and a dwelling used by a farmer or members of his immediate family.

Amusement Arcade

A premises used for the playing of gaming machines, video games or other amusement games.

Betting Office

Premises for the time being registered in the register of bookmaking offices kept by the Revenue Commissioners under the *Betting Act, 1931* (No.27 of 1931).

Car Park

The use of a building or part thereof or land (not being part of the public roadway) for the parking of mechanically propelled vehicles, excluding heavy commercial vehicles. Car parks may, if ancillary to a use such as recreation, be included in the principal definition.

Cash and Carry / Wholesale Warehouse

A building or part thereof or land used for the bulk wholesale of goods. A cash and carry use is regarded as a 'wholesale warehouse', where business principally of a wholesale nature is transacted and goods are stored or displayed but only incidentally to the transaction of that business.

Cemetery

Land used as burial ground.

Community Facility

A building or part thereof used for community activities organised primarily by the local community which may be open to the public on or without payment of a charge.

Crèche / Nursery

The use of a building or part thereof for the provision of day care facilities for the minding and training of children below primary school entry age. 'Care' means personal care, including help with physical or social needs.

Cultural or Recreational Facility

The use of a building or part thereof where the primary function is the provision of dancing facilities.

Dance Hall / Discotheque

The use of a building or part thereof where the primary function is the provision of dancing facilities.

Dwelling House

Is as defined in the *Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations 1994 (as amended)*.

Educational Facility

The use of a building or part thereof or land as a school, college, technical institute, academy, lecture hall or other educational use. Such activities may be controlled in particular land use zonings regarding hours of operation. Where a building or part thereof, on the same site as an educational use or on an adjoining site, is designed for use or is used as a residence for staff or pupils, such a use is regarded as educational.

Enterprise Centre

The use of a building or part thereof or land for small scale, 'incubation type' industries and services usually sharing grouped service facilities.

Extractive Industry

The winning of all minerals and substances in or under land of a kind ordinarily worked by underground or open cast mining.

Funeral Home

The use of a building or part thereof for the preparation and laying out of human remains, the holding of burial services and the assembling of funerals. An undertaker's premises where the functions of a funeral home are not carried out is regarded as a shop.

Car Repair / Sales

The use of a building or part thereof for the repair and sale of vehicles. It may also be used for the supply of fuel, washing facilities and the sale of vehicles or spare parts.

Garden Centre

The use of land and buildings for the cultivation, storage, display and sale of horticultural produce and the display and sale of related equipment.

Guest House

The use of a building or part thereof where sleeping accommodation, meals and other refreshments are available to residents and non-residents and which has a minimum of five bedrooms and contains no licence to sell intoxicating liquor.

Health Centre

A building or part thereof for the provision of local medical, dental, veterinary, prophylactic or social assistance services for the local community.

Hospital

The use of a building or part thereof or land for general medical treatment. This excludes nursing homes and residential buildings for staff if not adjoining the hospital.

Home Based Economic Activity

Service type activities carried on for profit by the occupier of a dwelling, such use being subordinate to the use of the dwelling as a residence.

Hotel

The use of a building or part thereof where sleeping accommodation, meals and other refreshments and entertainment, conference facilities, etc., are available for residential and non-residents and where there is a minimum of twenty rooms en suite.

Industry:**(i) General Industry**

The use of a building or part thereof or land for any industry other than a light industry and includes a service garage but not a petrol station.

(ii) Light Industry

The use of a building or part thereof or land for industry in which the processes carried on or the machinery installed are such as could be carried on or installed in any residential area within detriment to the amenity of that area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit and may include a service garage but not a petrol station.

'Industrial Process' means any process which is carried on in the course of trade or business other than agriculture and which is for or incidental to the making of any article or part of an article (including a vehicle, aircraft, ship or vessel, or a film, video or sound recording), or the altering, repairing, ornamenting, finishing, cleaning, washing, packing, canning, adapting for sale, breaking up or demolition of any article, including the getting, dressing or treatment of minerals.

Motor Sales Outlet

The use of a building or part thereof or land for the display and sale of motor vehicles, agricultural machinery and implements. 'Motor Vehicle' means a mechanically propelled vehicle for the purposes of the Road Traffic Act, 1961 (No.24 of 1961)

Nursing Home and Other Residential Institutions:

The use of a building or part thereof or land as a residential institution and includes a convent, hostel and old peoples' home.

Office

A building in which the sole or principal use is the handling and processing of information and research or the undertaking of professional, administrative, financial, marketing or clerical work and include a bank or building society but not a post office or betting office.

Office Based Industry

A building displaying high quality design and layout whose bulk and form is in keeping with the surrounding area and provides for a use such as Data processing, Software development, Telemarketing, Research & Development, Information Technology, Technical Consultancy, Commercial Laboratories / Healthcare, Media Recording, General Media Associated Uses and Publishing.

Restaurant

The use of a building where the primary function is the sale of meals and refreshments for consumption on the premises.

Shop

The use of a building or part thereof used for any or all of the following purposes, where the sale, display or service is principally to visiting members of the public –

- (a) for the sale of goods,
- (b) as a post office,
- (c) for the sale of tickets or as travel agency,
- (d) for the sale of sandwiches or other cold food for consumption off the premises,
- (e) for hairdressing,
- (f) for the display of goods for sale,
- (g) for the hiring out of domestic or personal goods in articles,
- (h) as a launderette or dry cleaner,
- (i) for the reception of goods to be washed, cleaned or repaired,

or for any other purpose appropriate to a shopping area but does not include use for the direction of funerals or as a funeral home, or as a hotel, a restaurant or a public house, or for the sale of hot food for consumption off the premises, or any use to which class 2 or 3 of Part IV of the Second Schedule of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations 1994, applies.

A neighbourhood shop is one that primarily serves a local community and does not generally attract business from outside that community.

Warehouse / Storage Depot

The use of a building or part thereof for the storage of goods before transport for processing or sale elsewhere.

Take-Away – Hot Food

The use of a building or part thereof for sale of hot food for consumption off the premises.

**Ashford Local Area Plan
Map 1**

Wicklow County Council
Date: October 2001

M.Looby - County Engineer



Ashford Local Area Plan Boundary



Ashford Development Zones Boundary
(See Map 2)



Agricultural Zone

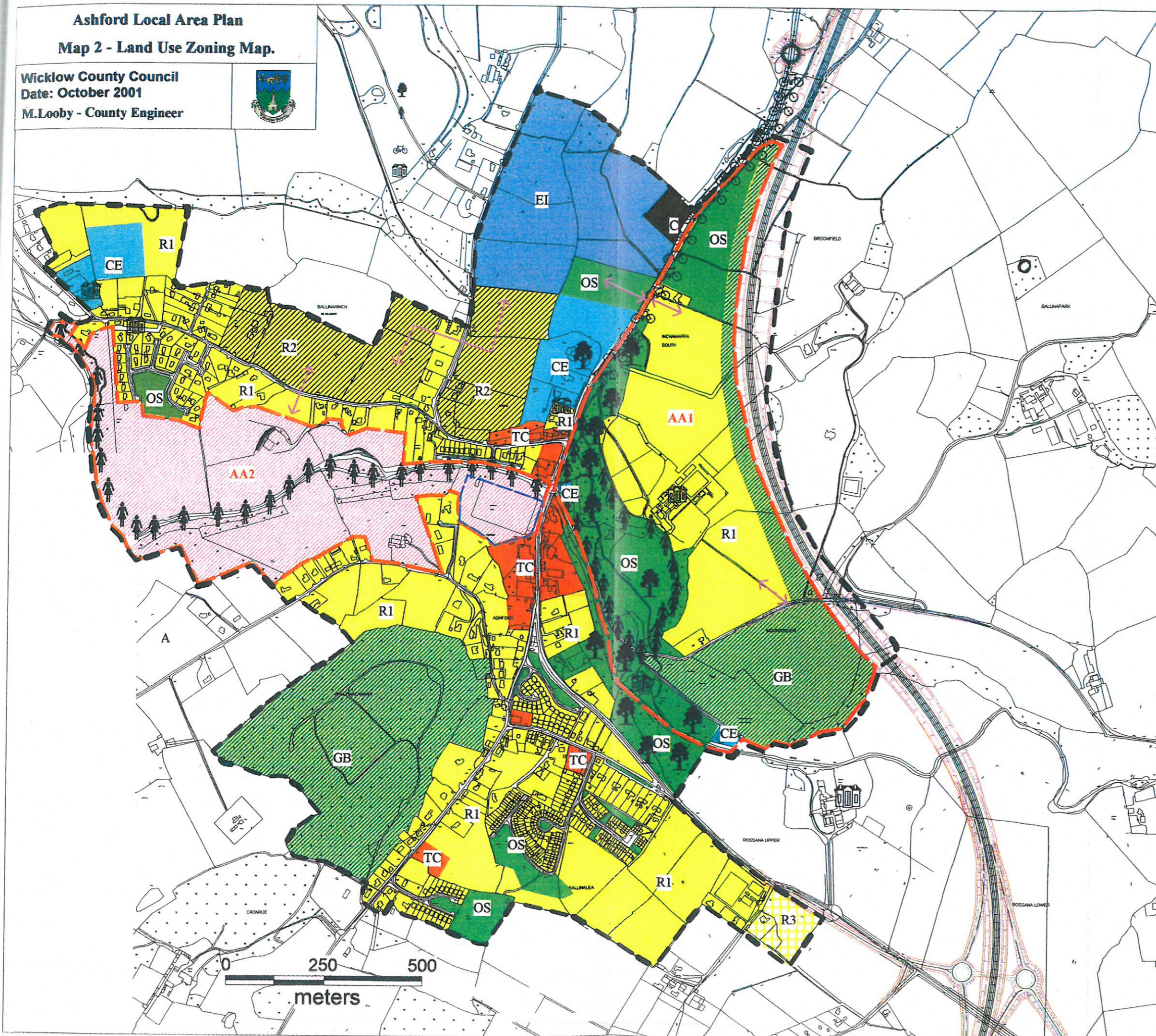
Ashford



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Ashford Local Area Plan
Map 2 - Land Use Zoning Map.

Wicklow County Council
 Date: October 2001
 M.Looby - County Engineer



Zoning Legend

Residential

- R1** To protect and improve residential amenities and provide for local growth.
- R2** Phase 2 Development Lands
- R3** To provide for one house on this overall site
- TC** **Town Centre Activities**
To consolidate and facilitate the development of the central area, and to identify, reinforce, strengthen and promote urban design concepts and linkages between town centre activity areas.
- CE** **Community & Educational**
To provide for necessary community and educational lands to cater for future population increases.
- EI** **General Employment / Industry**
To promote the development of local employment opportunities and ancillary development to a high standard of architectural design with extensive landscaping, appropriate building finishes and colours.
- OS** **Open Space / Amenity**
To preserve, provide and improve public and /or private recreational amenity space.
- GB** **Greenbelt**
To preserve, provide and improve recreational amenity and open space, enable agricultural activity, support the preservation of amenities and enable the preservation of upland areas and greenbelt areas.
- C** **Commercial**
To provide space for commercial developments and local retail facilities that will not harm or detract from the commercial potential and primacy of the town centre zoned areas.

A **Agricultural**

AA2 A separate Local Area Plan will be prepared for this area.

Specific Objectives Key

- Action Area Plan Boundary**
- Development Plan Boundary**
- Trees of Amenity Value**
- Improved Pedestrian Access**
- Reserve for Access**
- Cycleway Proposal**
- Listed Building**
- Possible Town Centre Facility**
An alternative site for playing facility of comparable standard be development as a replacement prior to any change in use.

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