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PART 1

1.0 Introduction

The Manager's Report is submitted under Section 20(3)(c) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended); it is part of the formal statutory process of the preparation of a Local Area Plan. This Report contains the following:

- (i) A list of the persons or bodies that made submissions,
- (ii) A summary of the issues raised by them,
- (iii) The response of the Manager to the issues raised taking into account the proper planning and sustainable development of the County and any relevant policies or objectives of the Government or Government Minister. The Report is now formally submitted to the Council for consideration. The Report will be on the agenda of the County Council meeting on the 3^d of December 2012.

1.1 European Legislation

European legislation is playing a larger part than ever before in the law and decision making process at both a national and local level in Ireland. Of particular importance to this Local Area Plan process are the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC) and the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Habitats Directive Assessment ('appropriate assessment') and Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)

An Environmental Report, Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and Flood Risk Assessment accompany the Draft Blessington Local Area Plan 2012-2018. The Environmental Report contains a detailed analysis of the Draft Blessington Local Area Plan 2012-2018 and how the implementation of the plan would impact on its receiving environment. The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report evaluates whether there is a necessity to carry out a full Appropriate Assessment of the draft plan, while the Flood Risk Assessment provides the plan making team with the information necessary to craft a plan that avoids encouraging development in areas at risk of flooding, and where development in floodplains cannot be avoided, a sequential approach is taken to flood risk management based on avoidance, reduction and mitigation of risk.

In the event that material amendments to the draft plan are proposed, the planning authority shall determine if a SEA/AA/FRA or all such assessments, as the case may be, is or are required to be carried out as respects one or more than one proposed material amendments to the draft Local Area Plan.

The Manager, not later than 2 weeks after a determination that SEA/AA/FRA¹ of a material amendment is required, shall specify such period as he or she considers necessary following the passing of the resolution, as being required to facilitate an assessment. The planning authority shall carry out an assessment required of the proposed material amendment of the draft local area plan within the period specified by the Manager.

The planning authority shall publish notice of the proposed material amendment, and where appropriate in the circumstances, the making of a determination that a SEA/AA/FRA is circulating in its area.

¹ It should be noted that while there is no specific requirement within the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) at present regarding the issue of Flood Risk and Material Amendments, given the potential implications that may arise and the timeframe that could possibly be required to carry out a flood risk assessment of a material amendment it is considered prudent to consider the issue of Flood Risk Assessment in the same manner as SEA and AA assessment of a material amendment.

The notice shall state –

- (i) that a copy of the proposed material amendment and of any determination by the authority that a SEA/AA/FRA is required may be inspected at a stated place or places and at stated times, and on the authority's website, during a stated period of not less than 4 weeks (and that copies will be kept for inspection accordingly), and
- (ii) that written submissions or observations with respect to the proposed material amendment or the SEA/AA/FRA made to the planning authority within a stated period shall be taken into account by the authority before the Local Area plan is made.

1.2 Draft Consultation Process

The Draft Blessington Local Area Plan was placed on display during the period the 20th of August 2012 to the 1st of October 2012. The aim of the consultation process was to enable the public and interested parties to give their observations on the Draft Local Area Plan.

A total of 23 submissions were received. The written submissions are held on file and are available for Council and public inspection. The list of persons or bodies who made submissions is contained in Part 2 of this Report.

1.3 Considering the Submissions

The written submissions have been analysed by the Forward Planning Unit of the County Council. The individual submissions are summarised and the opinion and recommendations of the County Manager is given in Part 4 (planning issues) while the 'Environmental Addendum' provided in Part 5 addresses any environmental issues raised in submissions.

This Report is submitted to the Members for consideration.

1.4 Next Steps – Draft Local Area Plan Timetable

Following the distribution of this Report, the Council will consider the Report and decide whether to make the Local Area Plan with or without modifications or not make the plan.

Formally making the Local Area Plan is done by resolution of the Council. During the entire plan-making process, the Council is restricted to considering the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. They must also take into account statutory obligations and any relevant Government policies and objectives in force.

Local Area Plan Timeframe:

Timeframe	Table 1.1 – Progress of statutory LAP process
Week 0	Draft Local Area Plan on display and submissions invited. Minimum 6 weeks
Week 6	Preparation of Manager's Report on submissions received. Maximum 6 weeks
Week 12	Manager's Report issued to Council Members for their consideration. Maximum 6 weeks
Week 18	Plan made unless Council Members decide not to make it, or to materially alter it, in which case the proposed alterations must be advertised within 3 weeks
Week 21	Material alterations on display and submission invited. Minimum 4 weeks
Week 25	Preparation of Manager's Report on submissions (alterations only) Maximum 4 weeks
Week 29	Manager's Report issued to Council Members for consideration Maximum 6 weeks
Week 35	Plan made by Council Members with all, some or none of the material alterations
Week 39	Plan shall have effect 4 weeks from day that it is made

Part 2 List of Bodies/Individual Submissions

Number	Name	Agent/Representative
Elected Representatives		
1	Billy Timmins TD	
Prescribed Bodies		
2	Department of Education and Skills	Lorraine Brennan
3	Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, Planning and Housing Policy	Patrick O'Sullivan
4	Dublin Airport Authority	
5	Electricity Supply Board Networks	Martin Hickey
6	Electricity Supply Board	Gerard Crowley
7	Environmental Protection Agency	David Galvin
8	National Roads Authority	Michael McCormack
9	National Transport Authority	Hugh Creegan/David Clements
10	Wicklow Town Council	Maire Halvey
11	Inland Fisheries Ireland IFI	Brian Beckett (Late Submission)
Wicklow County Council Submission		
12	Wicklow Community and Enterprise Section Not a prescribed body	Patricia Reilly and Deirdre Whitfield
Public Submissions		
13	Blessington and District Forum	Michael Sargent
14	Blessington Day Care Development Group	Gerry Staines
15	Blessington Football Club	Ivan Byrne/Vincent Balfe
16	Gaeilscoil Na Lochana	Sean O Cearnaigh
17	Jason Mulhall	N/A
18	Lakeshore Striders Blessington	Susan Boyce
19	Lidl Ireland	The Planning Partnership/ Mark Brindley
20	Murphy Surveys	Niall Murphy
21	Roadstone Wood	Darren Quaille
22	Ruairi O hAilin	N/A
23	Stephen Bray and Patrick Pidgeon	N/A

Part 3 Proposed changes to the Draft Plan/Environmental Report

The following sets out the Manager's recommended changes to the Draft Plan/Environmental Report. As will be seen from the content below none of the proposed changes are considered to be material.

Proposed Plan Amendments:

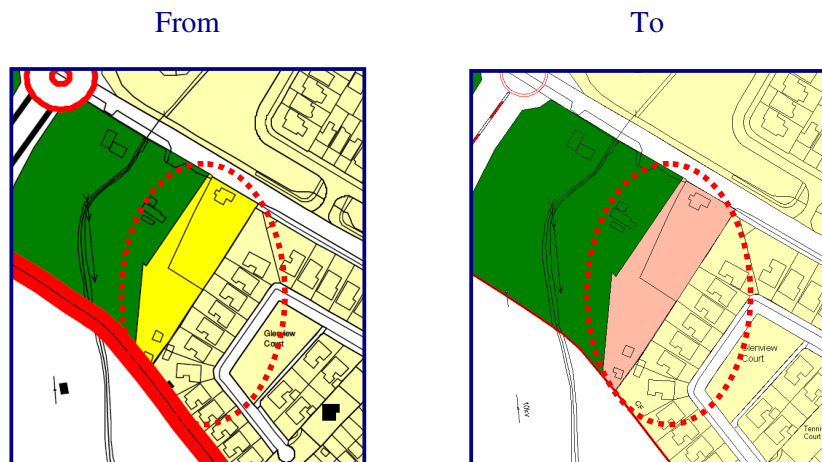
Submission No. 10 - Wicklow County Council Community and Enterprise Section

Insert the following wording highlighted red in relation to Opportunity Site 4:

To facilitate and promote in consultation with the Community and Enterprise Section of Wicklow County Council the re-development of the public park area providing for both passive and active recreational green and hard landscaped areas.

Submission No. 20 - Murphy Surveys

No change to plan however the zoning map must be amended in recognition of the wording set out in the plan and the mapping error as shown below:



Proposed Environmental Report Amendments:

The following additions to the Environmental Report of the Draft Plan are recommended:

- 1) Insert the following wording at the end of Section 10.5 Reporting:
Indicators, targets and corrective and remedial actions will be reviewed during the preparation of the preliminary monitoring evaluation report.
- 2) Insert the following wording at the end of the 1st paragraph of Section 7.2
The interactions between the SEOs and the alternatives determine the likely significant effects of implementing the Plan. These effects include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.
- 3) Insert the following wording in Section 8.1:
This section evaluates the Draft Plan provisions. Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are used for this purpose as outlined under Section 7.2 Use has also been made of the environmental baseline descriptions and the maps of the individual environmental components and the overlay of environmental sensitivities provided in Section 3. The interactions between the SEOs and the provisions of the Plan determine the likely significant effects of implementing the Plan. These effects include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

Part 4 Summary of submission and Manager's Response / Recommendations

No. 1
Billy Timmins TD
<p>This submission makes the following observations in relation to the Draft LAP:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Concern is raised that the Active Open Space designated at AA3 would be difficult to develop. It is also pointed out that it is imperative soccer playing fields be identified in the plan. 2) The plan should identify a number of possible locations capable of accommodating a primary care centre. The recommended size for such a facility would be c. 2 acres. 3) There is a need to improve the visual appearance of the entrance to the town from the southern access of the N81.
Manager's response
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The lands identified within Action Area 3 as active open space have not been allocated any specific use with a broad range of uses capable of being located on these lands. In terms of uses requiring relatively flat land, the lands to the east of this action area will require works to be carried out in order to make them feasible for playing fields as suggested. An assessment of these lands has been carried out in order to ascertain if these lands would be or are capable of being developed as playing fields. The findings of this survey indicate that the subject lands would be capable of being developed for playing fields; however as with all lands for such facilities they will require earthworks and drainage to be carried out. While the extent of works required may initially appear considerable, the survey carried out has indicated that playing fields could be accommodated by levelling of the site with perimeter banking and the use of materials from within the site only. 2) The plan has provided for numerous sites zoned 'town centre' and 'community / educational' that would be capable of accommodating such facilities, while the provision of such a facility may be open for consideration within certain employment lands depending on location and accessibility. It is considered that the zonings in the plan are sufficient. 3) The provision of signage/artwork is outside the remit of this plan.
Manager's recommendation
No change

No. 2
Department of Education and Skills
<p>This submission makes the following observations in relation to the Draft LAP:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Highlight the need for a site to be reserved for primary education in the region of 1.14ha. 2) It is considered that the site currently occupied by Blessington Educate Together National School at the Red Lane should be zoned for education use. 3) Acknowledges the identification of lands to the west of the town being reserved for Community and Educational usage and refers the plan to the department's technical guidance documents on site suitability for education provision.
Manager's response
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The plan has reserved c. 1.32ha within Action Area 1 for the future primary education needs of the projected population. These lands are located within an action area that is also required to provide for housing and active open space, while also being situated within a short walk of a number of existing residential developments. 2) These lands are situated in a rural area removed from the town and outside the plan boundary of this Draft LAP. It is therefore neither possible nor appropriate to zone these lands for educational purposes. 3) The guidance documents on site suitability for education provision have been considered in the preparation of the draft plan and allocations of land for an additional primary school. It is considered that the site meets the criteria set out.
Manager's recommendation
No change

No. 3
Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Planning and Housing Policy)
The department welcome the decision to prepare a Local Area Plan for Blessington and makes the following observations in relation to the plan:
1) Concern is raised regarding the existing WWTP capacity and the potential that population targets will not be achieved because of this lack of capacity. It is recommended that in the event that services will not be available to develop all lands that the plan should identify priority lands within the plan boundary for residential and employment uses.
Manager's response
<p>The existing limitations in the capacity of the Blessington WWTP have been noted in the plan. Objective S2 of the Draft LAP aims to improve and expand wastewater treatment facilities sufficiently to ensure that no barriers exist in Blessington fulfilling its role as a moderate growth town as set out in the 'Core Strategy' of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 and in line with the provisions of the Regional Planning Guidelines for the GDA 2010 – 2022.</p> <p>The majority of the lands zoned within the Draft LAP for residential and employment use are situated within 1,500m of the town centre. The lands located between 1,500m to 2,000m of the town centre require significant infrastructure to be put in place prior to any development taking place on these lands. For example, lands zoned for residential use under SLO-1 are reliant on lands within Action Area 3 being developed in order for access to be provided; a link road from the Naas Road to the roundabout at the existing GAA grounds must be provided prior to the development of lands within Action Area 1; similarly a new road must be provided prior to the development of AA4, while access to the employment lands to the north in particular lands under SLO-3 are reliant on the completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road.</p> <p>All other lands zoned for residential or employment developments are considered to be in the form of 'infill' type development. Having regard to the above it is not considered necessary to prioritise lands to be developed first as the configuration of the plan lends itself to a natural prioritisation of land should increased WWTP capacity be achieved.</p>
Manager's recommendation
No change
No. 4
Dublin Airport Authority
No comment to make on the Draft LAP
Manager's response
Noted
Manager's recommendation
No change
No. 5
Electricity Supply Board (ESB Networks) c/o Martin Hickey
Request that planning permissions for large scale development take into consideration the existing network capacity and consult with ESB Networks.
Manager's response
This submission has been noted however the existing network capacity of an area is not an issue which can be dealt with through the local area plan process. The zoning of lands within the local area plan set out the potential requirement for future demand in the area up to 2022 which in turn provide ESB networks with a long term timeframe in which to provide for the future potential network demand.
Manager's recommendation
No change

No. 6
Electricity Supply Board c/o Martin Crowley
<p>The submission outlines that the ESB are major landowners and operator stakeholders in the Blessington Area and are generally supportive of the proposals outlined in the Draft LAP.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The ESB are supportive of the 100m AG-RB buffer zone. 2) State that the ESB only allow access where appropriate by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A) Legal agreement which indemnifies ESB and controls the type of activity B) Providing access to responsible bodies or organisations which have a particular interest or knowledge of a specific activity C) Use of appropriate areas where activities can be carried out in a safe manner and do not impact on the operations of the Hydro Scheme 3) Supports objective BD7 of Section 7 Built and Natural Heritage "To protect those features that have been identified in the Architectural Conservation Area Appraisal as contributing to the town centre's overall appearance and heritage value and to ensure that new development contributes positively to the designated Architectural Conservation Area". 4) Supports the zoning objective AG-RB 5) Note that lands within the ownership of the ESB have been zoned for indicative pedestrian/cycle routes and once again point out the issues with legal access to these lands 6) Consider that a portion of ESB lands which form part of SLO1 zoned for Active Open Space are inappropriate and should be removed with the AG-RB zoning being applied to all lands currently in the ownership of the ESB and forestry use.
Manager's response
<p>1-5) The comments listed in items 1 – 5 above have been noted, however, the designation of any land use is to 'facilitate' but not 'authorise' such uses, which are a matter for the landowner.</p> <p>7) The concerns raised in this regard have been noted; however the AG-RB zoning has been provided as a 100m buffer from the lakeshore/Special Protection Area, that is, the Poulaphuca Reservoir and not as a buffer to ESB lands. It is not considered that this AOS zoning will have any adverse impact on the remaining lands owned by the ESB. Designation of any land use is to facilitate, but not authorise such uses which are a matter for the landowner</p>
Manager's recommendation
No change
No. 7
Environmental Protection Agency
<p>This submission outlines issues in regard to the SEA Environmental Report, AA screening and Flood Risk Assessment reports which accompanied the Draft Local Area Plan. The issues raised in this submission are dealt with in the Environmental Addendum located in Part 5 of this report</p>
Manager's response
Please refer to Environmental Addendum located in Part 5 of this report.
Manager's recommendation
As per recommendations of Part 5 Environmental Addendum
No. 8
National Roads Authority
<p>This submission makes the following observations on the Draft Local Area Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The NRA would welcome reference to the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines published in January 2012 in the plan. It is proposed that this reference be included in the plan under section 7.4.2. 2) Recommend that the plan include an access strategy where lands are outside the 50/60KPH speed zone in accordance with section 2.5 of the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines 3) N81 Tallaght to Hollywood Scheme: The NRA welcome the reservation of lands to facilitate this roads project in the plan however request that the employment zoning 'SLO3' be set back from the proposed route corridor of the N81 scheme. 4) Having regard to specific local objective 3 'SLO3' the authority requests that the Draft Plan include appropriate cross reference with the DoECLG Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning

<p>Authorities (2012) and specifically that there be a general assumption against large out of town retail centres.</p> <p>5) The authority raised concerns regarding the preparation of plans for SLO3 and AA4 as the plan does not specify how such processes will be carried out.</p>
<p>Manager's response</p> <p>1) The Draft Blessington LAP is a plan which falls under the hierarchy of the Wicklow County Development Plan (CDP) 2010-2016. As stated in section 1.1 of the plan where objectives are not listed within the plan the objectives of the CDP apply. Objective NR1 of Chapter 11 of the CDP is considered sufficient to address this issue. NR1 - <i>The Council will, in line with Government and National Roads Authority (NRA) policies, and in accordance with the "Roads Needs Study", published by the NRA and the National Development Plan, seek to bring national primary and secondary roads up to the appropriate standards.</i></p> <p>2) The contents of this document have been noted and the plan is considered to meet the requirements in regard to access as it is envisaged that lands both east and west of the National Road will be accessed by one main artery road linked to the proposed new roundabout following completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road.</p> <p>3) This zoning provides for a low density business and amenity park, it is not envisaged that development will take place within the area of land immediately adjoining the N81 route corridor with parkland/amenity areas bordering the proposed new road linking to Glending Wood. The detailed design of this area of land will be dealt with through the development management process.</p> <p>4) The provision of large out of town retail centres is clearly not envisaged within this zoning. The provisions of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016 will be applied in this regard.</p> <p>5) Section 9.1 of the plan outlines the Action Area Plan preparation process that will apply to the preparation of a detailed plan for Action Area 4. While SLO3 does not require the same procedure, the design, layout and phasing of any proposed development in this area will be carried out in consultation with the Development Management Section of Wicklow County Council, and is ultimately subject to the development management process which is governed by law.</p>
<p>Manager's recommendation</p> <p>No change</p>

<p>No. 9</p>
<p>National Transport Authority (NTA)</p> <p>The NTA make the following observations on the Draft Local Area Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The NTA support the provisions of the Draft Plan in relation to population and employment growth with the aim of reducing commuter patterns 2) Recommend that a phasing programme be implemented into the plan for residential development given the level of growth envisaged. This should provide for a sequential approach towards residential growth from the centre out. 3) The NTA broadly welcome the evidence based approach taken in calculating the extent of land required for employment however are concerned with the application of a 100% headroom to employment zoned lands and recommend that a phasing programme be introduced with first priority being given to existing extant permissions and the development of infill lands. 4) The NTA welcomes the plan led approach to the provision of schools however raise concern in relation to the location of both sites identified. The authority would encourage the development of schools at the centre of local neighbourhoods with post primary schools being located at the centre of the town or district. The submission further states that regardless of the location of school sites that it is recommended that access by walking and cycling is optimised to the sites from the residential areas of Blessington and that drop off facilities are provided.

Manager's response
<p>1) Noted</p> <p>2) The majority of the lands zoned within the Draft LAP for residential and employment use are situated within 1,500m of the town centre. The lands located between 1,500m and 2,000m of Town Centre require significant infrastructure to be put in place prior to any development taking place on these lands. For example, lands zoned for residential use under SLO-1 are reliant on lands within Action Area 3 being developed in order for access to be provided; a link road from the Naas Road to the roundabout at the existing GAA grounds must be provided prior to the development of lands within Action Area 1; similarly a new road must be provided prior to the development of AA4, while access to the employment lands to the north in particular lands under SLO-3 are reliant on the completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road.</p> <p>All other lands zoned for residential or employment developments are considered to be in the form of 'infill' type development. Having regard to the above it is not considered necessary to prioritise lands to be developed first as the configuration of the plan lends itself to a natural prioritisation of land should increased WWTP capacity be achieved.</p> <p>3) Following on from response to point 2 above it is the experience of Wicklow County Council over a number of years that the release of lands for employment development can be quite slow and therefore in order to ensure a sustainable balance of employment opportunities for the existing and future residents of Blessington a 100% market factor has been applied. While this should be noted the development management process will monitor and control employment development so that the target amount of employment development is not breached.</p> <p>4) The guidance documents on site suitability for education provision have been considered in the preparation of the draft plan and allocations of land for an additional primary school. It is considered that the site meets the criteria set out particularly as the majority of lands surrounding this area are zoned for or have existing permissions for a substantial amount of housing. At present there are existing primary schools serving the south east, central east and north west of the plan area. The proposed lands to be reserved for an additional primary school are situated to the west of the town centre in close proximity to large areas of existing and proposed residential development while also adjoining Active Open Space lands within Action Area 1.</p>
Manager's recommendation
No change

No. 10
Wicklow Town Council
No comment
Manager's response
Noted
Manager's recommendation
No change to plan.

No. 11 (Late Submission)
Inland Fisheries Ireland IFI
<p>1) Raise concern in relation to the capacity of the existing treatment plant given the extent of existing permissions and the proposed additional zoned lands in the Draft LAP. Contend that no permissions should be granted which would exceed the design capacity of the plant.</p> <p>2) State that the phosphorous loading on the system must be addressed immediately and absolutely minimised. Suggest that a tertiary level of treatment with further phosphorous removal may be required to ensure the sustainability of the discharge into the future.</p> <p>3) Consider that the LAP should address the need to meet the objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD)</p> <p>4) State that it is essential that the IFI be contacted in relation to all works that may have an impact on surface waters as per section 28 of the Planning and Development Regulations.</p> <p>5) The submission concludes by stating that infrastructural development should precede actual</p>

development at all times.
Manager's response
<p>1) This issue is noted. Current practice of Wicklow County Council's planning and environment sections is to resist development until such time as adequate waste water treatment can be provided in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>2) The EPA Wastewater Discharge Authorisation Licence D0063-01 for Blessington was issued on 12th June 2012. Schedule A of this licence includes limits for the discharges from the plant. There is an Orthophosphate limit of 1 mg/l. The Blessington WWTP is designed to meet this standard and is currently complying with these standards.</p> <p>3) While the plan does not directly refer to the objectives of the WFD, this plan is intended to sit below the County Development Plan in the hierarchy of plan and all of the provisions of the County Development Plan, being a higher level document, will also apply in Blessington. In this regard, the County Development Plan objectives with regard to the WFD, set out in Chapter 12 of the County Development Plan, will also apply in Blessington.</p> <p>4) Noted. This is an existing requirement of Section 28 of the Planning and Development Regulations.</p> <p>5) The Draft Plan sets out a number of objectives aimed at ensuring infrastructure development precedes all other types of development.</p>
Manager's recommendation
No change

No. 12
Wicklow County Council Community and Enterprise Section
Recommend the insertion of the following wording highlighted <i>red Italics</i> be inserted into the wording relating to Opportunity Site 4 -
<i>To facilitate and promote in consultation with the Community and Enterprise Section of Wicklow County Council the re-development of the public park area providing for both passive and active recreational green and hard landscaped areas.</i>
Manager's response
The insertion of this wording is considered acceptable and is not considered to materially alter the provisions of this objective.
Manager's recommendation
Insert the following wording highlighted Red in relation to Opportunity Site 4:
<i>To facilitate and promote in consultation with the Community and Enterprise Section of Wicklow County Council the re-development of the public park area providing for both passive and active recreational green and hard landscaped areas.</i>

No. 13
Blessington and District Forum
Observations were made on the Draft Plan under the following headings:
<p>A) Population and Housing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be no further apartment developments within the plan area • No additional housing should be provided in the Carrig Glen area • No developments should be located within the flood risk area identified by the flood risk assessment • Social and affordable housing should be provided within the Cookehill lands in a manner which provides for seamless integration with the private housing element. • A sheltered housing area should be considered for the plan area • No housing development should be included within Action Area 3 • The housing at Blessington Manor/Kilmalum should be included within the plan boundary. • Housing development should cater for local needs in the main and not cause any further impact

on the carrying capacity of the N81.

Managers Response – (A) Population and Housing:

- 1) Sufficient lands have been provided to meet the residential requirements of the projected population for Blessington up to 2022. The types of units to be developed within the plan area in the future will be dictated by market demand, something which is outside the control of this plan.
- 2) SLO-2 has provided for limited additional affordable housing in the Carrig Glen Area aimed at providing passive surveillance of the lands to the east where the former Scouts Club was located. The provisions of this objective also require the re-development of the open space areas within this estate which it is considered will benefit this area.
- 3) No lands have been zoned for development within the flood risk area
- 4) Noted; however, the Cookehill lands already have a grant of planning permission. Part V of the Planning and Development Act (as amended) provides for Social and Affordable housing on zoned lands only and once this plan is adopted all residentially zoned lands will be required to meet the requirements of this section of the Act.
- 5) Noted. Within the existing town centre zonings and C&E zonings, as well as all the residentially zoned lands, it is considered that there are a number of sites capable of accommodating such development.
- 6) Action Area 3 has provided for Residential, Employment, Community and AOS uses. Given the proximity of these lands to the town centre and existing residential areas it is considered that the provision of residential development in this area is appropriate.
- 7) These lands fall outside the remit of Wicklow County Council and therefore cannot be included in the plan.
- 8) Blessington is a moderate growth town where the following objectives of the Wicklow County Development Plan apply: A) In any new multi-house development, a minimum of 20% of new houses shall be sold to persons that have been living and/or working in County Wicklow for at least 1 year. There are no restrictions on the remaining 80%. B) Any new single house developments shall be restricted to those living and/or working in the County for 1 year. Given the location and level of the town within the settlement hierarchy it is considered that the above allocations are appropriate.

B) Town Centre Strategy and Retail:

- A properly researched and detailed plan for car parking and traffic management in the town including park and ride and safe routes to school should be carried out.
- The proposed park and ride facility should be more convenient to the town, free to use and open to all bus operators.
- The plan should identify safe cycle routes between housing and schools
- Rumble strips or traffic calming measures should be provided at the Community College.
- Contend that a separate action plan be developed for market square increasing pedestrian accessibility to be agreed in consultation with the community.
- The service road from the Main Street past Dunnes Stores should be re-aligned in order to preserve the vista from the Church of Ireland to Glending.

Managers Response – (B) Town Centre Strategy and Retail:

1) The issues raised in relation to car parking/traffic movement and cycle and pedestrian routes have been noted. In regard to car parking and traffic movement, Chapter 3 of the draft LAP has identified a number of opportunity sites within the town centre aimed at connecting the Main Street to the large car parking areas within the new town centre development thereby providing greater legibility, reducing the walking distance between these areas and thus encouraging pedestrian movement rather than vehicular movement between these areas.

The above sets out a framework aimed at reducing the need for vehicular movements within and between the new town centre and the Main Street of Blessington. A further detailed study of traffic movement may be carried out at a future date however this type of study does not fall within the remit of this plan and would be required to be carried out by the Roads Section of Wicklow County Council in conjunction with the Blessington Area Office.

In regard to cycle and pedestrian routes the plan has identified a number of routes aimed at connecting all areas to the town centre and the surrounding amenities

2) The purpose of providing the park and ride facility to the south of the town is to reduce the need for unnecessary car based trips into the town centre area, particularly trips into the town centre for the purpose of availing of public transport originating in Market Square. While residential areas within the plan area are within walking distance of the main square, by providing a safe designated park and ride facility to the south of the town on lands close to the existing Texaco service station, traffic arising from areas to the south currently serviced by the N81 can avail of these parking facilities without the causing increased traffic congestion with the town centre area. Locating such a facility in this location also reduces the potential car parking demands within the town and Main Street facilitating greater access for retailing customers.

3) The plan has identified a number of indicative pedestrian and cycle routes aimed at connecting all areas to the town centre and the surrounding amenities.

4) The provision of rumble strips and a specific traffic management plan for the Market Square is outside the remit of this plan, which must be strategically focussed. As set out above in response to point 1 a further detailed study of traffic movement may be carried out at a future date however this type of study does not fall within the remit of this plan and would be required to be carried out by the Roads Section of Wicklow County Council in conjunction with the Blessington Area Office.

5) The existing service road from the Main Street past Dunnes Stores has been provided in accordance with the planning permissions granted for the new town centre developments. The vista that has been maintained has been provided from the church of Ireland to Glending along the existing pedestrian footpath adjoining this area.

C) Employment and Enterprise:

- The light industry within AA3 should be relocated to the Cookehill lands where transport access will be improved.

Managers Response – (C) Employment and Enterprise

Action Area 3 has provided for Residential, Employment, Community and AOS uses. Given the proximity of these lands to the town centre and existing residential/employment areas it is considered that the provision of employment development in this area is appropriate.

D) Tourism:

- The addition of a walking trail from the town centre to Glen Ding must be a positive objective.
- The Council should along with other parties incentivise the provision of a hotel in the town as a tourism catalyst.

Managers Response – (D) Tourism

The plan has identified a number of indicative pedestrian and cycle routes aimed at connecting all areas to the town centre and the surrounding amenities including Glen Ding Wood.

Included as part of the above routes is Objective T3 which forms part of the Tourism Strategy and aims to support and facilitate in co-operation with relevant bodies, the provision of amenity routes around Poulaphuca reservoir in an environmentally sustainable manner. The plan, through this tourism strategy, as set out in Section 5, aims to incentivise the development of tourism and its associated development within the plan area.

E) Social Infrastructure:

- Active Open Space lands within AA3 at Burgage should be reassessed in order to ascertain if they are actually suitable for playing fields.
- A portion of lands adjacent to Blessington GAA should be re-zoned for Active Open Space to allow for the expansion of the GAA facilities.
- The 30 acre heritage park off the relief road and on the Cookehill lands should be recognised and reinforced in the plan.

- A location for a skate board park should be considered
- A space for an outdoor gym should be considered.
- Provision should be made for a dog park. A suggested location for this site would be the slabland bordering the GAA grounds and Roadstone.
- Support must be given for the provision of day care facilities
- The council should encourage the provision, in conjunction with the ESB, of the development of a safe swimming area within the Blessington Lakes
- The Council should support the parish in developing St. Josephs Hall as a youth facility.

Managers Response – (E) Social Infrastructure

- 1) A detailed survey of the lands within Action Area 3 has been carried out and it is considered that these lands are suitable for the provision of playing fields. The development of these lands will however require levelling and drainage in order to be made suitable for such uses.
- 2) The Draft LAP has zoned numerous lands for the provision of AOS (in excess of the standards required in the County Development Plan) including a large amenity/park lands area to the north of the existing GAA ground which could potentially accommodate future public playing fields. The AOS lands provision is considered to be sufficient.
- 3) The plan has recognised the proposed heritage park in the plan by zoning this area as open space. The development and landscaping of this parkland area is dependent on the development of future housing in the area.
- 4) A skate board park could be located in any of the lands zoned 'Active Open Space', 'Community' and 'Town Centre', which would be capable of accommodating such a proposal.
- 5) Noted. It is envisaged that the potential redevelopment of the public open space at St. Joseph's road could accommodate such development.
- 6) The provision of such a facility could be accommodated as part of the redevelopment of lands at Roadstone subject to the provisions of SLO-3.
- 7) It is considered that the plan has zoned sufficient town centre and community lands that would be capable of accommodating such a facility.
- 8) It should be noted that the provision of such a facility would be outside the remit of the plan as these lands would be outside the plan's development boundary however, the Tourism Strategy as set out in Section 5 of the draft plan promotes and encourages improvements to tourism and recreation infrastructure within the Blessington Area.
- 9) The provision of such facilities is recognised. The objectives of Chapter 15 of the County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 support such facilities.

F) Service Infrastructure:

- The extension and increased capacity of the Waste Water Treatment Facility in Blessington should be prioritised.
- No further development within or adjoining the Flood Plain at Glen Ding should be permitted.
- The Council should ensure full broadband availability.

Managers Response – (F) Service Infrastructure

- 1) Objective S2 prioritises the expansion of waste water treatment within the plan area.
- 2) This is noted. No new development is proposed within the flood plain as identified by the flood risk assessment carried out within the plan area.
- 3) The provision of broadband is outside the remit of the plan however the objectives of Chapter 14 of the County Development Plan encourage the expansion of such telecommunications infrastructure.

G) Built and Natural Heritage:

- It should be an objective of the Council to ensure that all overhead cables on the Main Street are put underground and that the streetscape be enhanced with street and other furniture.

Managers Response – (G) Built and Natural Heritage

- 1) Wicklow County Council is supportive of routing existing over ground cabling underground however the actual processes involved in carrying this work out is outside the remit of this plan.
- 2) The provision of street furniture and hard and soft landscaping is encouraged in the Main Street. A particular emphasis has been placed on the redevelopment of the public open space at St. Josephs Road.

<p>H) Action Areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council should provide for a separate action plan for the lands at Doran's Pit to be completed in consultation with the community. • The Council should provide for a separate action plan for the lands at Market Square to be completed in consultation with the community. • The Council should provide for a separate action plan for the lands at Main Street to be completed in consultation with the community.
<p>Managers Response – (H) Action Areas</p> <p>1) The plan has provided for an action area plan to be developed for Doran's Pit. The processes involved in the preparation of a detailed design for this area are set out in Section 9 of the plan. The objectives of the Action Area set out the broad vision for the development of this area. An Action Area Plan must then be submitted by the developer including phasing plans etc for agreement with the planning section. This process will also involve consultation with the Community and Enterprise Section of Wicklow County Council in order to ascertain the specific requirements in regard to the community uses proposed. Prior to the submission of an action plan for agreement a developer/landowner is free to discuss/consult with the local communities in order to ascertain the local needs in the area at their discretion. Furthermore a planning application must be submitted in order for permission to be granted for the development of any Action Area Plan. This must be dealt with through the normal Development Management processes which includes the legal right to make public observations/objections. It is considered that the full process allows for and facilitates community participation in developing a comprehensive framework for the development of these lands.</p> <p>2) Section 3 sets out the strategy of the plan for the future development of the Main Street and New Town Centre areas. This strategy identifies opportunity sites aimed at facilitating increased pedestrian connectivity and legibility between these areas, reducing vehicular traffic, with the overall aim of increasing retail activity within these areas. While the proposals for an action plan for the Market Square and Main Street is noted this is an issue which must be addressed by the Roads Section/Area Engineering office for Blessington.</p>
<p>Manager's recommendation</p> <p>No change</p>

<p>No. 14</p>
<p>Blessington Day Care Development Group</p>
<p>This submission outlines the current situation with day care for the elderly within the plan area and outlines the extent of the catchment for such a facility in Blessington. It is requested that suitable lands be zoned to cater for such a facility within the plan area.</p>
<p>Manager's response</p>
<p>Noted. It is considered that the plan has zoned sufficient Community, Town Centre and Residential lands which would be capable of accommodating such a facility.</p>
<p>Manager's recommendation</p>
<p>No change</p>

<p>No. 15</p>
<p>Blessington Football Club</p>
<p>The submission makes the following observations on the Blessington Local Area Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The club welcomes the publication of the Draft Local Area Plan and are supportive of the Council's policies and objectives to provide for Active Open Spaces in Blessington. 2) The submission emphasises the strong need for such active space to be provided outlining the current demands for lands within the Soccer Club itself. 3) The submission raises concerns in regard to the feasibility of playing fields being located within the AOS lands designated within Action Area 3 while suggesting a survey be carried out on these lands in order to determine the suitability of these lands for Active Open Space. 4) The club highlight the potential of Active Open Space lands within Action Area 1 as having

the potential to meet the future needs of the club and request that consideration be given to the club for use of these lands.
Manager's response
<p>1) Noted</p> <p>2) Noted</p> <p>3) A survey has been carried out on these lands in order to ascertain their feasibility for playing fields. While it is acknowledged that ground works involving levelling and drainage will be required on these lands in order to make them suitable for playing fields or other active open space uses, it is considered that the subject lands are capable of providing playing fields and ancillary facilities.</p> <p>4) This is noted however it is not within the remit of this plan to allocate AOS lands to specific clubs or community groups. It is the responsibility of each club or organisation to engage with lands owners in order to ascertain if these lands could be used to meet their specific needs. The development of Action Area 1 in terms of the residential element is contingent on the developer providing a new access through road and providing lands levelled and drained suitable for Active Open Space purposes.</p>
Manager's recommendation
No change

No. 16
Gaeilscoil Na Lochanna
<p>The submission makes the following observations on the Blessington Local Area Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The submission highlights the need for increased pedestrian and cycle facilities throughout the plan area linking existing schools to residential areas thereby creating a safer environment for both parents and children using this mode of transport. 2) The submission also requests the development of public amenities on the west side of the town closer to the Gaeilscoil with the provision of a playground suggested in this area.
Manager's response
<p>1) Noted. The plan recognises the need for increased pedestrian and cycle facilities linking existing community facilities, residential areas and the town centre. Indicative pedestrian and cycle routes have been provided in the plan, with the developers of land required to provide such facilities when developing their lands.</p> <p>2) This is noted; however, this school is situated in a rural area in County Kildare outside the remit of this plan. The provision of such amenities in close proximity to this school cannot therefore be provided by Wicklow County Council and would be required to be provided by Kildare County Council on lands within their ownership or lands zoned for future development.</p>
Manager's recommendation
No change

No. 17
Jason Mulhall
<p>The submission makes the following observations on the Blessington Local Area Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) States that given the current economic climate, the existing unoccupied housing and employment developments in Blessington that it is unrealistic that there would be a need for the extent of further growth envisaged in the plan. 2) Emphasises that there is a strong need for a new plan for the Market Square be devised in order to alleviate the current vehicular and pedestrian movements in this area. 3) The area of car parking should be reviewed along the main street and the current layout of this car parking. Increased signage of existing car parking areas should be a priority. 4) Supports the provision of opportunity site 3 in the plan however raises serious concerns regarding the safety of the proposed linkages between the areas of Rocky Pool Villas, opportunity site 3 (OP3) and Dempsey's Lane. Suggest that the idea behind OP3 be reconfigured in a manner that links Dempsey's Lane and OP3 directly with the existing N81 Naas Road junction being re-aligned creating a more user friendly space. 5) Supports the provision of OP4 given the lack of parks and open spaces in the Blessington Area. 6) Emphasise the urgent need for some walking trails linking the Blessington Inner Relief Road

<p>to Glen Ding Wood.</p> <p>7) Propose that some of the bonds held as part of the new town centre and housing developments constructed by Cookhill be used to complete or at least start the development of this Heritage Park Area.</p> <p>8) Propose that the Blessington Local Biodiversity Study be available to the public.</p> <p>9) The lands along the Blessington Lakeshore should be utilised in order to provide a park area for community use.</p>
<p>Manager's response</p> <p>1) The plan sets out a framework for the future development of the town up to 2022 where a projected population of 7,500 is envisaged in the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016. While the current economic climate is noted the plan must conform to the provisions of the County Development Plan and as stated in Section 2.2 it is the intention that this plan will provide a robust, long term framework for the future development of the town which could be extended to a ten year duration if the objectives of the plan have not been secured during the initial 6 year lifespan of the plan.</p> <p>2, 3) Section 3 sets out the strategy of the plan for the future development of the Main Street and New Town Centre areas. This strategy identifies opportunity sites aimed at facilitating increased pedestrian connectivity and legibility between these areas, reducing vehicular traffic with the overall aim of increasing retail activity within these areas. While the proposals for a stand alone plan for the Market Square and Main Street is recognised, this is an issue which must be addressed by the Roads Section/Area Engineering office for Blessington, and is not a matter for a Local Area Plan which must have a strategic focus.</p> <p>4) The concerns raised have been noted and while the proposals put forward hold significant merit with the creation of a larger and more cohesive civic/park type area the actual development of such a proposal would, given the cost and level of works required in re-aligning the Naas Road, negate the potential future development of these lands. It is however envisaged that access between these areas will be provided via a future pedestrian crossing with the completion of the Blessington Inner Relief road further alleviating the level of traffic along the existing N81 road.</p> <p>5) Noted</p> <p>6) The plan has provided indicative pedestrian/cycle linkages between the town and Glen Ding wood in order to link this amenity area to the town. These are located adjoining Action Area 1 and through SLO-3.</p> <p>7) The development and landscaping of the Heritage Park is tied into the overall new town centre development. Phase 2 of the town centre development restricted the construction the Town Houses (between the existing Cocoon Creche and the entrance to the new primary school) and the development of Courtyard apartments opposite Dunnes Stores until such time as sections of the inner relief road and slip roads, the civic building and theatre originally proposed along the main street and the landscaping of the Heritage Park had been carried out to the satisfaction of the planning authority. These units have not commenced development and are unlikely to be carried out in the immediate future given the current economic climate. The use of bonds from existing housing developments are tied into those specific developments only and cannot be used for other purposes.</p> <p>8) Noted. This study was carried out in October 2006 and is available for public viewing in the Council offices.</p> <p>9) The plan has provided for a new woodland/park area to the east of Action Area 4 while also promoting and facilitating the development of amenity walks and cycle routes along the lakes shore.</p>
<p>Manager's recommendation</p> <p>No change</p>

<p>No. 18</p>
<p>Lakeshore Striders</p>
<p>The submission makes the following observations on the Blessington Local Area Plan:</p> <p>1) The submission outlines the background to the running club and the demand for running facilities within the town.</p> <p>2) Propose that lands be reserved for the provision of a running track and club house open to all of the local community.</p>

Manager's response
Numerous lands within the plan boundary have been designated for Active Open Space purposes which could be capable of accommodating such facilities for the town. In particular, lands within Action Area 2 adjoining the Avon Ri development would be considered to be ideally suited to accommodate such community facilities.
Manager's recommendation
No change

No. 19
Lidl Ireland
<p>This submission relates to the retailing needs of Blessington and the background documents covering the area of retailing. This submission makes the following observations in relation to the Draft LAP:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The plan makes a notable omission to referencing discount food stores. Concern is raised in regard to the omission of wording contained in the Retail Strategy for County Wicklow with a particular emphasis on sections dealing with discount food stores. 2) Contend opportunity sites should be promoted but not to the detriment of other locations 3) Propose that the plan's policies should be closer aligned to those of the Retail Strategy for County Wicklow. 4) Propose the objectives TC1, TC2 and TC3 of the Draft LAP be replaced with the following objectives: Note Proposed additions marked <i>red</i>. <p><i>TC1 To promote and encourage enhancement of retail floorspace and town centre activities in Blessington, in accordance with the allocation set out in the Wicklow County Retail Strategy 2010 – 2016;</i></p> <p><i>TC2 To support and facilitate activities and developments that will improve the vitality, connectivity and vibrancy of the town centre areas;</i></p> <p><i>TC3 To direct larger scale new retail development into the identified core area and failing suitable sites being available, to edge of centre sites;</i></p> <p><i>TC4 To promote (but not restrict retail provision to) the development of opportunity sites within the town centre in accordance with the specific criteria set out for each identified area as set out in subsection 3.3.3. below; and</i></p> <p><i>TC5 To ensure that all new applications for retail development accord with the provisions of the "Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities" (DOECLG 2012), and any subsequent Ministerial Guidelines or directives and the Wicklow County Retail Strategy.</i></p>
Manager's response
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The plan has omitted the use of the term Discount Foodstore in line with the 2012 Retail Guidelines for Planning Authorities which has removed the distinction between this type of store and other convenience goods stores. 2) It is not envisaged that the opportunity sites identified within the core town centre, such as opportunity sites 1 and 2, would be developed for such uses with the visions for these sites being to create new streets lined with smaller shop units linking the existing Main Street and new town centre. The provision of a convenience store on opportunity site 3 would be considered more favourably, with a number of other lands within the plan area also capable of accommodating such development. 3) Section 1.7 of the Draft LAP states the following "As this Plan must conform to the policies and objectives of the County Development Plan it is not proposed to include a repetition of the policies, objectives or strategies as set out in the CDP. Where standards or objectives for a particular development are not included in this Plan, the provisions of the CDP shall apply". This includes the objectives of the Wicklow County Development Plan Retail Strategy 2010 - 2016. 4) In accordance with response 3 above it is not considered necessary to amend the Blessington Specific Objectives set out in Section 3.3.
Manager's recommendation
No change

No. 20**Murphy Surveys**

The submission makes the following observations on the draft Blessington LAP:

- 1) Lands located adjoining the existing Council Yard along the Naas Road to the west of Glenview are currently referred to as 'Neighbourhood Centre' on page 8 of the Draft LAP - however the land use zoning map shows these lands as 'proposed residential'.
- 2) Propose that these lands be given a NC zoning only.

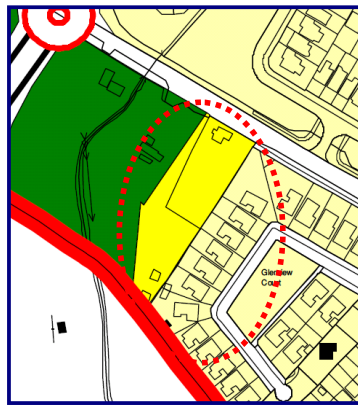
Manager's response

Noted. This was a mapping error on the land use zoning map. The text of the plan clearly indicates that it was intended that these lands would be zoned 'NC' neighbourhood centre.

Manager's recommendation

No change to plan however the zoning map must be amended in recognition of this mapping error.

From



To

**No. 21****Roadstone Wood Ltd**

The submission relates to lands in the ownership of Roadstone Wood Ltd, which is in two parcels – on the west side of the N81, from the existing Roadstone quarry operation up to Glending Hill and on the east side of the N81 encompassing lands known as Doran's Pit and lands to the rear of the Mart. Part of the western parcel is proposed for low density employment zoning, while the lands to the east of the N81 have two zonings – Doran's' Pit Action Area (AA4) and 'employment'.

1) Roadstone welcomes the overall approach to future development of the lands as indicated in the Draft LAP however require the following amendments.

A) Action Area 4 should be amended to include all lands currently in the ownership of Roadstone Wood Ltd (i.e. lands to the north of the action area proposed for employment zoning). The portion directly to the north of Action Area 4 and to the east/rear of the Mart site currently proposed for employment zoning should be included within the Action Area Plan for this area and rezoned for residential purposes.

B) While the provision of a neighbourhood centre within AA4 is welcomed it is contended that this centre should be moved to be located along the N81 where it can benefit from passing trade rather than within the proposed residential area.

Manager's response
<p>A) This proposal has been noted however given the population projections for the plan the current allocations of residential and employment lands within the Action Area are considered to be sufficient.</p> <p>B) The proposed Action Area provides for a new link road between the Blessington Bridge and the N81 where it is envisaged a significant number of traffic movements will be accommodated from the surrounding rural areas. In addition the layout of the action area plan aims to cluster the active open space, community uses and neighbourhood shops creating a more vibrant and active area within the overall residential development. While the Action Area Plan process does allow some flexibility in regard to the ultimate location of uses within the action area, it is considered that the clustering of these different types of uses provides for the optimum location of such facilities particularly for proposed residential units within this development area that will generate significant passing trade in addition to through traffic from the surrounding rural areas.</p> <p>In addition to the above it should be noted that the purpose of the retail/community hub is to firstly service the needs of the resident population of the action area and not the wider needs of the town and it is considered that to locate the retail element off the N81 would have the potential to draw business away from the historical core of the town, thus undermining the overall vision and strategy for the plan area.</p>
Manager's recommendation
No change

No. 22
Ruairi O'hAilin
<p>The submission makes the following observations on the draft Blessington LAP with a particular emphasis on pedestrian and cycle safety within the town:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) There is a need to provide for safe off road cycling along the Main Street for younger road users. 2) A shared path/cycleway should be provided on one side of the main street with the west side suggested as being suitable. This should also be provided adjoining the Beechdale Estate along the Naas Road. 3) A safe cycling route should be provided between the town and the Avon Ri linking this area to the main street while also providing access to the future greenway cycle route. 4) The section of the inner relief road leading up to the Maxol Garage past the Wicklow County Council offices should be provided with a cycle lane. 5) Welcome the provision of the proposed park and ride facility within the plan however raises concerns as it was not referred to in the text of the plan. 6) Clarification sought in regard to Action Area 1 and the access arrangements proposed for these lands. It is emphasised that the existing laneway serving a number of existing dwellings should not be used as an access point to these lands.
Manager's response
<p>1 – 4) These issues are noted however the physical development of such works is outside the remit of the plan falling within the remit of the Roads Section of Wicklow County Council / Blessington Area Engineering Office. Such developments are subject to assessment by the Area Engineer and proposals can be made during the annual road works programme. While the above should be noted indicative pedestrian and cycle routes have been provided for throughout the plan area aimed at providing greater connectivity between the town centre, community facilities and the surrounding residential areas while also facilitating tourism as set out in section 5 of the plan through linkages to the lakeshore and Avon Ri tourism resort. The provision of such infrastructure will be tied into the future development of these zoned lands.</p> <p>5) Objective S8 of the plan refers to the provision of a park and ride facility.</p> <p>6) As set out in the objectives for Action Area 1 no development shall be commenced until such time as a through road is provided linking the R420 to the adjoining lands and roadway currently serving the Blessington No. 1 School and KARE Centre. The design of this roadway is to be agreed with Wicklow County Council Planning and Roads sections.</p>
Manager's recommendation

No change
<p>No. 23</p> <p>Stephen Bray & Patrick Pidgeon</p> <p>The submission makes the following observations on the Blessington Local Area Plan under the following headings:</p> <p>Population and Housing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Contend that the plan takes no account of the existing development bordering the plan area in County Kildare. 2) Contend that the household size proposed for 2022 is unrealistic 3) Contend that the amount of lands zoned for residential purposes in the plan is excessive 4) Consider that all developments within the plan should contain social and affordable units and that these units should not be segregated along social/private housing lines. <p>Manager's response - Population and Housing:</p> <p>1) The Blessington Manor area is not included in the plan area as these lands fall within County Kildare. Wicklow County Council have no control over these lands as they do not fall within the Wicklow County boundary. These lands are zoned within the '<i>Blessington Environs Plan</i>' which forms part of the Kildare County Development Plan 2011 – 2017. This Environs Plan has zoned these lands for residential development only, forming part of the population projections for the overall County of Kildare as set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines.</p> <p>These lands cannot therefore be included in the population projections for the (Wicklow) Blessington Local Area Plan.</p> <p>However, it should be noted that the plan <i>has</i> factored in the existing and potential future housing within the Blessington Environs Plan (Kildare lands) in calculating allocations for future schools/community lands, employment and open spaces including Active Open Space. This is set out in the Appendix A, Sections 2, 3 and 4.</p> <p>Wicklow County Council therefore believes it is taking a responsible approach to planning for the services needed for all in Blessington town area.</p> <p>2) The household size applied has been taken from the County Development Plan which in turn has been derived from the Regional Planning Guidelines. This plan falls within a hierarchy of plans and must conform to the provisions of the Core Strategy of the Wicklow County Development Plan.</p> <p>3) The amount of lands zoned for residential development within the plan area have been designated in order to meet the projected population target of 7,500 by 2022. The breakdown of how the amount of lands to be zoned was calculated is clearly set out in Appendix A Section 1. The allocation of this amount of land is considered to be appropriate and aims to provide a long term and robust planning framework for the town of Blessington.</p> <p>4) This is a requirement of part V of the Planning and Development Act.</p> <p>Town Centre and Retailing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Support the proposals increasing permeability and connectivity between the Main Street and the new town centre shopping areas. 2) Consider there is a strong need to address the Market Square area in order for this area to become a more pedestrian friendly zone 3) Question the retail strategy of the plan aimed at increasing retail capacity, given the number of existing empty units within the town. Consider that a more in depth analysis is required. 4) Question the strategy of the Council regarding the encouragement of large scale retail development into the town. <p>Manager's response - Town Centre and Retailing:</p> <p>1) Noted</p> <p>2) This has been noted; however, the re-design of the Market Square and the provisions of a more pedestrian friendly area is outside the remit of this plan with such projects falling within the control of the Roads Section/Blessington Area Engineering Office. The requirement for such development is subject to assessment by the Area Engineer and proposals can be made during the annual road</p>

<p>works programme. The plan does however promote the development of increased pedestrian movements within the town centre area.</p> <p>3-4) As set out above local area plans fall within a hierarchy of plans and must conform to the provisions of the Core Strategy of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016. While the conditions of the current economic climate are noted this plan aims to set out a long term and robust planning framework for the future development of the town within the parameters set out by the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016 of which the Retail Strategy forms part of. It is therefore considered best practice to provide opportunities and promote the development of retailing within the town in accordance the allocations of the retail strategy.</p>
<p>Tourism/Social Infrastructure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Welcome the protection of Glen Ding Wood and the indicative amenity walks and cycleways 2) Supportive of the proposed Active Open Spaces surrounding the Avon Ri Resort
<p>Manager's response - Tourism/Social Infrastructure:</p>
<p>1-2) Noted</p>
<p>Schools:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Propose that the schools should be located as close as possible to the Town Centre with a longer term view of providing a school campus. 2) Consider the reservation of lands for a post primary school inappropriate and that funding would be used more appropriately to expand the existing school site. 3) Consider the reservation of lands for an additional primary school unrealistic given the current economic climate.
<p>Manager's response - Schools</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The proposed lands reserved for schools are within 1km of the town centre and are situated in areas where a large number of residential units exist or where lands have been zoned to accommodate future development. 2) As set out in Section 6.2.1 the draft plan makes provision for both the maintenance of CE zoning around the existing post primary school to allow for possible expansion as the need arises. In addition to this further lands have been reserved in the event that the existing school reaches its site capacity. 3) Noted, however this plan aims to provide a long term and robust planning framework for the future development of the educational needs of the town up to 2022 and therefore it is considered prudent to reserve such lands and indeed the Department of Education have been consulted in this regard and have no objection to the reservation of these lands for a future primary school.
<p>Circulation and Parking:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Welcome the proposed town centre strategy 2) Supportive of the park and ride facility 3) While supportive of the above, greater usage of the Council's car parking along the Kilbride Road should be encouraged. 4) Welcome the Council's commitment to facilitate the completion of the Inner Relief Road.
<p>Manager's response –Circulation and Parking</p>
<p>1-2) Noted</p> <p>3) This is outside the remit of the plan</p> <p>4) Noted</p>
<p>Employment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Welcome the council's encouragement of employment however questions the application of a 100% headroom. 2) Question the use of 2006 POWCAR DATA in light of the recent publication of the 2011 data for employment.

<i>Manager's response - Employment</i>
<p>1) It is the experience of Wicklow County Council over a number of years that the release of lands for employment development can be quite slow and therefore in order to ensure a sustainable balance of employment opportunities for the existing and future residents of Blessington a 100% market factor has been applied. While this should be noted the development management process will monitor and control employment development so that the target amount of employment development is not breached.</p> <p>2) As set out in Appendix A section 2 the 2006 POWCAR Data was used to calculate the projected employment requirements of the plan up to 2022 as it was felt that these figures provided a very strong indication of the optimum employment levels achieved within existing employment units at a time of economic prosperity. The projections for employment levels aim to maximise the potential of all lands and therefore the level of employment achieved within existing units during this time was considered to be a reasonable baseline from which to calculate how much land would be required to accommodate the future employment needs of the projected population.</p>
<i>Social Infrastructure: Primary Care Centre:</i>
<p>1) Consider the plan should preserve suitable lands for the use of a primary care centre given the catchment the town serves.</p>
<i>Manager's response – Social Infrastructure: Primary Care Centre</i>
<p>1) It is considered that the plan has zoned sufficient lands in the form of town centre and community and employment lands which would be capable of accommodating such a facility.</p>
<i>Sports Clubs:</i>
<p>1) Request that a specific allocation of Council land be reserved for the provision of soccer playing fields to meet the needs of Blessington FC.</p>
<i>Manager's response –Sports Clubs</i>
<p>1) This is noted; however, it is not within the remit of this plan to allocate AOS lands to specific clubs or community groups.</p>
<i>Service Infrastructure:</i>
<p>1) Contend that services infrastructure in particular the Blessington Waste Water Treatment Plant should be upgraded to a capacity capable of meeting the projected population of the town.</p> <p>The submission concludes by requesting that the future development of the town be made in a more measured and prudent way in the interests of the development of the community in the area.</p>
<i>Manager's response – Service Infrastructure</i>
<p>1) It is an objective of the plan to improve and expand wastewater treatment facilities sufficiently to ensure that no barriers exist in Blessington fulfilling its role as a moderate growth town as set out in the Wicklow 'Core Strategy' and Regional Planning Guidelines for the GDA 2010 – 2022.</p>
<i>Manager's recommendation</i>
<p>No change</p>

Part 5 Environmental Addendum

Introduction

This part responds to submissions which were made during the public display of the draft Blessington Local Area Plan 2012-2018 which related specifically to the Environmental Report on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), the Appropriate Assessment screening report (AA) and Flood Risk Assessment FRA).

It should be noted that consequent changes are not made to the original reports; this Addendum forms part of the documentation of the ongoing SEA/AA/FRA and plan-making processes. It supplements and should be read in conjunction with the original reports, which include information on likely significant environmental effects of implementing the draft plan.

The findings of this Addendum will be used to update the SEA 'Environmental Report', the AA screening report and the FRA report on adoption of the plan. The updated reports will be amended to take account of the Elected Members' decisions with regard to the Manager's Recommendations and will be made available to the public alongside the Blessington Local Area Plan as adopted.

Any proposed material alterations to the draft plan will be evaluated for their likely significant environmental consequences in a second Addendum (Addendum II) to the SEA 'Environmental Report', the AA screening report and the FRA report, which will be placed on public display alongside the proposed material alterations.

Responses to submissions on these reports are provided to supplement the Manager's Report on the submissions. These reports are being reviewed throughout the preparation of the draft Plan and will be finalised when the Plan has been adopted.

Submissions received:

Only one submission was received which raised issues in relation to the Environmental Reports prepared as part of the Draft Blessington Local Area Plan Process. The issues raised in this submission are summarised below with the response of the planning authority following. Recommendations for changes/additions to the environmental report documents are then recommended where required.

Environmental Protection Agency c/o David Galvin
Section A provides a summary of the more general issues raised in the EPA submission. Section B contains details of the more specific issues in relation to the Environmental Report on the Draft Local Area Plan.
Section A: General Issues raised: 1) The submission makes reference to Annex 1 of Directive 2001/42/EC (SEA Directive) and schedule 2B of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004) for "information to be contained in the Environmental Report". 2) Welcome the inclusion of a number of issues raised from there previous submission. 3) State that consideration should be given to the inclusion of specific commitment to water conservation measures in the Plan, as well as aligning with the ERBD Management Plan and its associated Programme of Measures and the Eastern CFRAMS and associated Plan. 4) Consider that the development of the proposed Action Areas should be developed in a coherent and consistent manner to ensure that a coordinated approach is adopted and the Policies and Objectives of the Plan are fully integrated into each area as relevant. The development of these areas should be carried out in a sustainable manner compliant with the requirement and objectives of environmental legislation. 5) Highlight the requirement to prepare an SEA statement in accordance with Article 141 of the Planning and Development Regulations as amended by Article 8 of the SEA regulations. 6) Consider that provisions should be made in the plan to ensure that any proposed land use zoning

or development associated with the plan is not in breach of the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

7) Clarification required in regard to which strategic environmental objectives specifically mortgage for the potential for groundwater and surface water contamination from the abstraction of sand and gravel.

8) Consider that the plan should seek agreement on an appropriate buffer zone to the Poulaphuca Reservoir with the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

9) Contend that consideration should be given to clarification of the requirements of the EIA and AA for the proposed completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road.

10) Consider the plan should include a specific commitment to energy conservation.

11) Consider the plan should include policies/objectives in relation to green infrastructure.

12) Consider that there would be merit in the inclusion of a traffic management plan and Noise Action Plan.

Manager's response - Section A: General Issues raised:

1) Noted

2) Noted

3) The provisions of Section D in particular chapter 12 of the Wicklow County Development Plan are applicable in this regard.

4) Details relating to Action Areas within the plan are set out in Section 9 of the plan and require the phased and integrated development of these areas. It is considered that the objectives and processes required to be carried out in the development of these areas are sufficient.

5) Noted. This shall be carried out once the final plan has been adopted.

6) As set out above the provisions of Section D in particular chapter 12 of the Wicklow County Development Plan are applicable in this regard.

7) Strategic Environmental Objectives W-S and W-G as detailed in page 48 of the Environmental Report are considered to sufficiently cover this area.

8) A minimum 100m buffer has been provided to the Poulaphuca Reservoir SAC/SPA. In addition to this the plan aims to further mitigate against any impacts on this area by providing for lower order/impact uses such as Active Open Space undeveloped lands adjoining this buffer. It is considered that the proposed zonings within the plan are appropriate and provide a high level of protection to this designated site. In addition the NPWS as a prescribed body were consulted on the draft plan and during the preparation of the Appropriate Assessment for the plan.

9-12) As stated in section 1.7 as this Plan must conform to the policies and objectives of the County Development Plan it is not proposed to include a repetition of the policies, objectives or strategies as set out in the CDP. It is considered that the provisions of the Wicklow County Development Plan are sufficient in this regard.

Section B: Specific Issues raised in relation to the Draft Blessington Local Area Plan and the Environmental Report:

1) Highlight a typing error in the plan in relation to the objective codes used for population and housing and services infrastructure

2) Consider a stronger commitment to flood risk mitigation is required and propose a wording change to objective S3 from "To have Regard" to "To Fully Implement" as appropriate the provisions of "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management" Guidelines (DoEHLG 2009) and the Flood Risk Assessment carried out as part of the plan.

3) Monitoring: Consideration should be given to the inclusion of monitoring frequencies and monitoring for both positive and negative effects of the plan where they occur. This should also include the actual departments responsible for collecting, collating and analysing the data.

4) It should be clarified how the full range of environmental effects of the implementation of the plan, as set out in the SEA Directive and Regulations, (i.e. "secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects"), have been assessed and documented. In particular, you are referred to potential cumulative effects / in-combination effects in relation to other plans / programmes / strategies / projects.

5) Waste Water and Infrastructure: The plan should promote as appropriate specific provisions for the implementation of the relevant recommendations set out in the recent Focus on Urban Waste Water Discharges in Ireland report (EPA 2012)

Zoning within the plan should be linked to the availability of and adequacy of water supply and waste water infrastructure.

6) Waste Management: The plan should promote the integration of land use zoning and development to existing and planned availability of waste infrastructure and capacity.

7) The plan should provide for adequate buffers between designated sites and areas zoned for development. This should be carried out in consultation with the NPWS.

8) The plan should make reference to and promote the implementation of the Noise Directive

9) The plan should include objectives in relation to the preparation of an Energy Conservation Strategy.

10) The plan should promote and as appropriate provide the provision of sustainable modes of transport.

11) The plan should highlight that under EIA and Planning and Development Regulations certain projects that may arise during the implementation of the plan may require EIA.

12) The plan should ensure relevant policies and objectives are included to address where appropriate the "Environmental Challenges and Priorities" for Ireland as set out in Chapter 10 of the EPA Irelands Environment 2012.

Manager's response - Section B: Specific Issues raised in relation to the Draft Blessington Local Area Plan and the Environmental Report:

1) Noted this typing error shall be amended and the population and housing objectives shall be labelled PH1 and PH2.

2) It is considered that this wording is sufficient. Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires planning authorities to have regard to the Guidelines in carrying out their functions under the Planning Acts.

3) Thresholds, frequency of reporting, responsibility and indicators for monitoring positive, negative and cumulative effects are detailed under Section 10 of the Environmental Report. Indicators and targets will be reviewed during the preparation of the preliminary monitoring evaluation report.

The Council is responsible for collating existing relevant monitored data, the preparation of a monitoring report, the publication of this report and, if necessary, the carrying out of corrective action.

Having regard to the above it is considered that the following sentence should be inserted at the end of Section 10.5 Reporting: ***Indicators, targets and corrective and remedial actions will be reviewed during the preparation of the preliminary monitoring evaluation report.***

4) The SEA Directive and the SEA Regulations require that the Environmental Report includes information on the 'likely significant effects on the environment' of implementing the plan/programme. Neither the SEA Directive nor the SEA Regulations require that the likely significant effects of implementing plans/programmes on the environment are characterised.

For clarity however it is recommended that the ER is updated to include:

At the end of the 1st paragraph of Section 7.2

The interactions between the SEOs and the alternatives determine the likely significant effects of implementing the Plan. These effects include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

Under Section 8.1:

This section evaluates the Draft Plan provisions. Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are used for this purpose as outlined under Section 7.2 Use has also been made of the environmental baseline descriptions and the maps of the individual environmental components and the overlay of environmental sensitivities provided in Section 3.

The interactions between the SEOs and the provisions of the Plan determine the likely significant effects of implementing the Plan. These effects include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative

effects.

- 5) The provisions of Chapter 12 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 are considered to be sufficient in relation to this issue. No developments will be permitted within the plan area unless adequate water or wastewater infrastructure is in place or in line to be upgraded.
- 6) The provisions of Chapter 13 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 are considered to be sufficient in relation to this issue.
- 7) The plan has provided a 100m buffer zone from the Poulaphuca Reservoir SAC with lower order uses adjoining this zone in the form of Active Open Spaces. It is considered that these measures will adequately protect this area.
- 8) The provisions of Chapter 13 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 are considered to be sufficient in relation to this issue.
- 9) The provisions of Chapter 14 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 are considered to be sufficient in relation to this issue.
- 10) The plan has designated numerous pedestrian and cycle routes aimed at linking the town centre to surrounding plan area while also designating lands along the N81 for a park and Ride facility. The town centre strategy further aims to reduce car dependency for shorter trips by providing greater connectivity between the main street and new town centre areas through the promotion of the development of opportunity sites. The provisions of the Roads and Transportation Strategy of Chapter 11 of the Wicklow County Development Plan are also applicable to this plan. Having regard to the above it is considered that the plan provides appropriately for the provision of sustainable modes of transport.
- 11) Noted however it is considered that the objectives of section 8 of the plan and the provisions of chapters 16 and 17 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016 are sufficient.
- 12) It is considered that the provisions of the Draft Plan alongside the objectives of the Wicklow County Development Plan adequately address the environmental challenges and priorities for Ireland as set out in Chapter 10 of the EPA Ireland Environment 2012.

Manager's recommendation

The following additions to the Environmental Report of the Draft Plan are recommended:

- 1) Insert the following wording at the end of Section 10.5 Reporting:

Indicators, targets and corrective and remedial actions will be reviewed during the preparation of the preliminary monitoring evaluation report.

- 2) Insert the following wording at the end of the 1st paragraph of Section 7.2

The interactions between the SEOs and the alternatives determine the likely significant effects of implementing the Plan. These effects include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

- 3) Insert the following wording in Section 8.1:

This section evaluates the Draft Plan provisions. Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are used for this purpose as outlined under Section 7.2 Use has also been made of the environmental baseline descriptions and the maps of the individual environmental components and the overlay of environmental sensitivities provided in Section 3.

The interactions between the SEOs and the provisions of the Plan determine the likely significant effects of implementing the Plan. These effects include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.