



Wicklow Town



Development Plan 2007-2013



Wicklow Town Development Plan

2007-2013



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On behalf of Wicklow Town Council

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Wicklow Town
Development Plan 2007 - 2013



Chapter 1.

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The Wicklow Town Development Plan 2007 sets out the Town Council's proposed policies and objectives for the future development of the town in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000. The lifetime of the Plan is 2007 - 2013.

1.2 Plan Formulation Process

An extensive process of public consultation was undertaken over the periods 26th January to 23rd March 2006 and 19th April to 21st May 2007. Each period commenced with the publication of a public notice in local newspapers. Other methods of notice such as the distribution of flyers and a mail drop were also utilized. This process included the following key elements:

- Public Consultation Clinics
- Stakeholder Meetings
- Acceptance of Written Submissions

The Public Consultation Clinics were held over the dates of 2nd, 7th, 9th and 11th February 2006. These Clinics provided members of the public with the opportunity to give their views on the future development of Wicklow Town.

Stakeholder Meetings were held over the period 12th to 20th March 2006. These meetings gave stakeholder groups such as community groups, community representatives, local service providers and major land owners the opportunity to discuss the planning issues of relevance to them.

Written submissions were received throughout the periods of public consultation.

1.3 Structure of Plan

The Plan has been set out with reference to the recently published Draft Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities and in the interest of clarity and legibility. The first two chapters deal with the context and background of the Plan and set out a vision for the town. The remaining chapters are broken into specific headings dealing with landuse issues and the final chapter sets out the standards which will ensure a high standard of development within the lifetime of the Plan. The Appendices contain the Maps that indicate land-use zonings and location specific objectives.

The Plan is set out as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Strategic Context
3. Socio Economic Context
4. Employment and Enterprise
5. Retail

6. Traffic, Transport and Accessibility

7. Housing

8. Town Centre

9. Recreation and Amenity

10. Natural Environment

11. Tourism

12. Social Inclusion

13. Town Centre

14. The Port and Quayside

15. Opportunity Areas

16. Development Management

Appendix 1: Land Use Zoning Matrix

Appendix 2: Record of Protected Structures

Appendix 3: Land Use Zone Map

Appendix 4: Objectives Map

Appendix 5: County Retail Strategy

1.4 The Strategic Aims of the Plan

A number of aims have been set out to provide a context and governing principles for the policies of the Plan. These aims have been formulated to consolidate the town's strengths, build on its potential and address its weaknesses.

Strategic Aim 1: *Wicklow Town should become the employment, services and retail centre for a hinterland located outside the Dublin Metropolitan area as defined in the Regional Planning Guidelines.*

The Plan will promote the development of Wicklow Town as the county town and the fulfilment of its role identified in the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG).

Strategic Aim 2: *The town should provide for the social, educational, recreational and amenity needs of the inhabitants of the town, its Environs and its rural hinterland.*

The facilities required to meet these needs should be accessible to every sector of this population.

Strategic Aim 3: *The orderly redevelopment and regeneration of areas should contribute to the future growth of the town and ensure that new development integrates successfully with the existing urban fabric.*

There are a number of areas within the town that are likely to experience pressure for redevelopment in the lifetime of this Plan. The Plan should ensure that these areas be developed in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the town.

Strategic Aim 4: *The Town Centre should adequately serve the projected population for the town of between 25,000 and 40,000 by 2016 and provide a competitive and unique retail centre within the hinterland of the Greater Dublin Area.*

A comprehensive Town Centre strategy should take account of design, conservation of the built heritage, accessibility, environmental quality, vitality of the retail sector and safety.

Strategic Aim 5: *Protect and enhance the natural environment by implementing the legislative requirements in respect of Natural Heritage Areas (NHA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and other sites of ecological importance and by ensuring that potentially negative impacts upon the environment are mitigated.*

The natural heritage of the town is an important asset. The coast, the Leitrim River and the hills that frame the setting of the town to the west are examples of this heritage. They should continue to shape the development of the town and contribute to its attractiveness as a place to live, work in and visit.

Strategic Aim 6: *Protect the built and archaeological heritage of the town.*

This heritage should be recognised for its central contribution to the identity and attractiveness of the town and should inform its future development.

Strategic Aim 7: *The integration of land-use and transport within the town will be prioritised in order to promote sustainable forms of development.*

If the town is to become part of an expanded public transport network in the Greater Dublin Area and develop public transport within the town then it will be necessary to ensure appropriate residential densities close to transport corridors and their linkage with employment and retail uses in order to justify a more frequent public transport service. The town should also be developed in such a way that provides for a variety of transport modes and reduces reliance upon the private car.

Strategic Aim 8: *The Plan will ensure the highest standards of development through the application of appropriate development standards and design guidance.*

Given the quantum of development that could potentially occur in the town within the lifetime of the Plan, in order for it to fulfil its designation and meet its population projection it will be vital to ensure a high standard of design that responds to the built heritage and established pattern of development but also contributes to the evolution of the town as a modern and vibrant centre of an extensive hinterland.

Strategic Aim 9: *Integrate Wicklow Town with the tourist and heritage infrastructure of the county.*

The county has many tourist and heritage assets such as castles, demesnes, landscaped gardens and various historic structures. The links between the town and the county's profile as a tourist destination and the "Garden County" should be strengthened by promoting and developing the town's heritage assets and ensuring a synergy between its own and the entire county's tourism strategy.

Strategic Objective 1: It shall be an objective of the Town Council to seek an extension of the Town Boundary within the lifetime of the Plan.

Chapter 2.

Strategic Context

2.1 National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) is a 20 year planning framework to guide policies, programmes and investment in the interest of delivering balanced social, economic and physical development and population growth between the regions. The NSS sets out to achieve this in part by informing the content of regional and local planning policy and identifying key strategic locations that will form part of a national network. Local development plans are the key instruments for the implementation of the NSS and should provide for the investment priorities of the NSS through their constituent policies and objectives.

The NSS identifies 7 regions through which the national objectives of the NSS are disseminated to the local level. Wicklow Town is located within the Dublin and Mid East Region now known as the Greater Dublin Area. In order to enhance the role of the Greater Dublin Area as the driver of national development, the NSS has identified two priorities. Firstly, the physical growth of the metropolitan area needs to be consolidated. Secondly, development in the hinterland area needs to be concentrated in strategically placed, strong and dynamic urban centres. These centres are known as Primary Development Centres. Wicklow Town has been designated as a Primary Development Centre.

The Primary Development Centre is intended to play an important role in delivering balanced development between Dublin and its surrounding counties and aims to energise its catchment. As such, Wicklow Town is a key location within a national network of strategically important settlements that plays a significant role in delivering balanced growth within the timeframe of the NSS and beyond.

2.2 National Development Plan 2000-2006

The National Development Plan sets out the following key objectives:

- ▶ Continuing sustainable national economic and employment growth;
- ▶ Consolidating and improving Ireland's international competitiveness;
- ▶ Fostering balanced regional development and
- ▶ Promoting social inclusion.

The National Development Plan (NDP) provides a framework for expenditure on infrastructure over the period 2000 to 2006. The Plan aims to guide national development in a balanced manner and promote a counterbalance between Dublin and other major growth centres.

The NDP informs the NSS to achieve the vision of an internationally competitive economy comprised of socially balanced and environmentally sustainable communities.

A new National Development Plan is currently being prepared and regard will be had to the objectives of both the current NDP and the new document pending publication of this within the Town Development Plan Review period.

2.3 Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland 1997

This Strategy is a framework document that acts as a reference for the formulation of policy at all levels to promote sustainable patterns of development and living.

With regard to Development Plans for urban areas such as Wicklow Town, the Strategy promotes the following principles:

- Closer coordination between transport and land use planning;
- The promotion of higher residential densities in appropriate locations
- An emphasis in Development Plans on a clear demarcation between urban and rural land use; and
- The incorporation of Local Agenda 21 initiatives by local authorities.

2.4 Transport 21

The government announced Transport 21 in November 2005. Transport 21 is a programme of investment in the national transport infrastructure over the next 10 years. The elements of the programme that are of relevance to Wicklow Town include: the N11 dual carriageway being extended to Gorey and the maintenance of at least four rail services a day on other intercity routes including Rosslare.

2.5 Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2004

The objective of the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG) is to provide a long-term strategic planning framework for the development of the Greater Dublin Area for a period of 12 years.

The RPG states the following vision for the area:

“The City-Region is to excel as an international competitor where all areas located within the Greater Dublin Area collectively contribute to its success and in turn draw their individual strengths from the City-Region.” (p.70, RPG)

The RPG is intended to deliver upon the following priorities: a planning framework for the development plans within the area; a sustainable development strategy that promotes an efficient use of the area’s resources; a quality transport network; an attractive location to live and work in; and an internationally competitive regional economy.

The Greater Dublin Area is divided into the Metropolitan Area and the Hinterland Area. Wicklow Town is situated in the Hinterland Area. The policy in the RPG regarding the Hinterland Area requires that development be concentrated within identified towns that will, over the long term, become self-sufficient “with only limited commuting to the Metropolitan Area”. Consequently, these identified towns are required to host significant employment, social and higher order shopping facilities and increased residential densities.

Wicklow Town is designated as a Large Growth Town I by the RPG. This designation provides for a population of between 25,000 and 40,000 and requires that the town

* Local Agenda 21 is the document produced by the UN Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992

becomes an attractive location for investment with a strong profile in the international market.

There are three large towns identified in the RPG as being located on both the radial corridor and orbital route around the metropolis. Wicklow is named as one along with Navan and Naas. These three large towns are referred to as satellite towns. Wicklow town is highlighted as having a comparatively poor level of connectivity with the rest of the region due to the adjacent mountains. The RPG indicates a need to “explore ways of extending the orbital route from Navan-Maynooth-Naas to Wicklow”.

It is further proposed that the GDA be considered an authentic city-region and a single integrated local market. The aim should be to alter the perception that it comprises a metropolis plus a collection of small, scarcely accessible towns. This paradigm or idea is the heart of the strategy.

2.6 A Platform for Change 2000-2016

“A Platform for Change” is a strategy produced by the Dublin Transportation Office for the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) for the period 2000 to 2016. The strategy sets out to achieve the following for the GDA: a sustainable, competitive region that provides a high level of accessibility between its constituent parts and has, at its centre, the nation’s capital and a major European city.

Wicklow Town is located on a Transportation Corridor that has seen significant works carried out to the N11. This has resulted in a continuous dual carriageway between the Metropolitan Area and Wicklow Town. Also of relevance to Wicklow is the inclusion of the following works in this strategy’s implementation programme: additional buses for the Hinterland Area; and upgrade of the suburban rail line between Greystones and Arklow.

2.7 Wicklow County Development Plan 2004-2010

The Wicklow County Development Plan contains the planning policy for the administrative area of county Wicklow up to the year 2010. It is a requirement of the Planning Act that the Wicklow Town Development Plan should have regard to the objectives of the Wicklow County Development Plan. The administrative area of Wicklow County Council forms the major planning context for the town and contains the environs of Wicklow Town, which is the extension of development of Wicklow Town into the county administrative area.

The County Development Plan reflects and incorporates the national and regional objectives for Wicklow Town that are attached to its status as a Primary Development Centre and a Large Growth Town.

Of particular importance within the Strategic Policy of the County Development Plan is Policy SS2, which states that it will be County Council policy to concentrate development in the Hinterland Area of the Greater Dublin Area and in the designated Growth Town Centres of Wicklow Town, Arklow (and its environs), Blessington and Newtownmountkennedy in particular. It states that, where development is taking place adjacent to the Town Council boundary and specifically within the environs Local Area Plan, the County Council will liaise with the Town Council.

There are two areas in the town's environs that are the subject of specific County Council policy and that are important to the development of the town within the lifetime of this Plan. These areas are the Murrough, to the north of the town and the area known as Action Area 6 to the west of the town.

The Murrough extends from the port area of the town beyond the northern boundary of the Town Council along the coast. The area is subject to a number of environmental protection and heritage designations both within the Town Council boundary and within the County Council area. The policies and objectives of the Town Council toward this area are to accord it requisite protection and develop its amenity potential.

The area known as Action Area 6 in the western part of the town's environs is the subject of the Marlton Local Area Plan.

The proximity and importance of these two areas to the town will require consistency between the policies of the County Council and the Town Council.

2.8 Wicklow Town Environs Local Area Plan and Action Area 6

The Town Environs can be defined as that area outside of the Town Council boundary that comprises land contiguous to the town that is urban or will become urbanised in the future. The Wicklow Town Environs Local Area Plan 2001, prepared on behalf of Wicklow County Council, sets out the planning policy for this area. This Local Area Plan (LAP) provides for the expansion of Wicklow Town in an economic and orderly fashion and in a manner that provides good access to the range of social, educational and economic facilities of the town. The LAP identifies 9 Action Areas intended to be the subject of Action Area Plans or separate LAPs. The Wicklow Town Development Plan recognises the importance of the LAP and its associated Action Area Plans and the need to take account of the policies and objectives contained therein for the purpose of ensuring the orderly and coordinated expansion of the town. In particular, the Marlton Local Area Plan has been carefully considered due to the scale and nature of the uses it provides for.

2.9 Wicklow Town and Environs Land-Use and Transportation Study 2005

The Wicklow Town and Environs Land-Use and Transportation Study (IFPLUT) was carried out in response to the requirements of the Regional Planning Guidelines and the Dublin Transportation Office document "A Platform for Change 2000-2016". The IFPLUT sets out a strategy whereby Wicklow Town and its Environs can become better integrated with the rest of the Greater Dublin Area and the county in terms of public transport links and where reliance upon the private car within the town can be reduced through the integration of land-use and transport. The findings of the IFPLUT have been used as a basis for the policies and objectives of this Plan.

2.10 Outlook – The Ten Year Strategic Plan for County Wicklow

County Development Boards were established by the government in 2000 in order to formulate strategies for the social, economic and cultural development of each county. The Wicklow County Development Board is composed of members of four main community stakeholder groups, these being local government, local development, state agencies, and social partners. The Strategy produced by the Wicklow County Development Board covers a period of 10 years from 2002.

The county is divided into three sub-regions in the Strategy: North Wicklow; the Southeast;

and the South and West. North Wicklow, which includes Bray and Greystones, is highlighted as having a concentration of population and development pressure. The Southeast includes Wicklow Town and Arklow and is identified as having experienced an increasing level of development over the last number of years. The South and West of the county experienced the least amount of development.

The Strategy sets out to promote a greater balance between the sub-regions in terms of development and the delivery of services and a greater balance between meeting the social, cultural and economic needs of the county's population. The Strategy also contains a strong commitment to the principles of sustainable development. Regard has been had to the objectives of this Strategy in the making of the Plan where relevant. The Plan aims to guide development within Wicklow Town in a manner that fulfils the desires of its inhabitants and facilitates its growth in the context of a balanced and vibrant county.

Chapter 3.

Socio-Economic Context

3.1 Introduction

This Chapter sets out the broad Socio-Economic Profile of Wicklow Town. The policies and objectives adopted in this Plan have been informed by the local economic and social trends identified in this Chapter.

3.2 Population

The 2006 census results show that Wicklow Town recorded a 1.4% decrease in population since the 2002 census. The results also show that the town's environs (Wicklow Town Rural) experienced an increase in population of 35.1% since 2002. The combined total for Wicklow Town and Environs has increased from 9,355 persons in 2002 to 10,070 in 2006. The table below shows the change in population of the State, Province, County and Local Level since 1981.

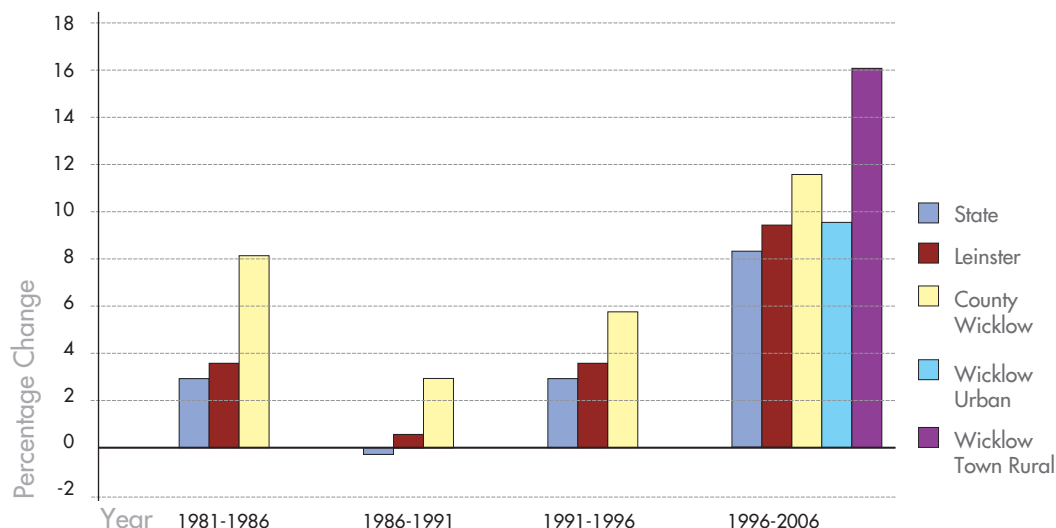
Figure 3.2.1 Population Change at State, Province, County and Local Level, 1981 to 2006

	1981	1986	1991	1996	2002	2006
State	3,443,401	3,540,604	3,525,702	3,626,001	3,917,203	4,239,848
Leinster	1,790,506	1,852,608	1,860,905	1,924,706	2,105,570	2,295,123
County Wicklow	87,450	94,540	97,270	102,680	114,676	126,194
Wicklow Urban	N/A	N/A	N/A	6,420	7,031	6,835
Wicklow Town Rural	N/A	N/A	N/A	870	2,324	3,140

Source: Census of Population 1981 to 1996, Results 2006

Figure 3.2.2 further illustrates the relative increase in Wicklow's population compared to the State, Province and County levels in the period 1981-2006. The most significant population increase for the county occurred between 1996 and 2006 with an increase of 11.7%. Since 1991 the State, Province and the County have experienced an increase in population.

Figure 3.2.2 Percentage Population Change Between 1981 and 2006



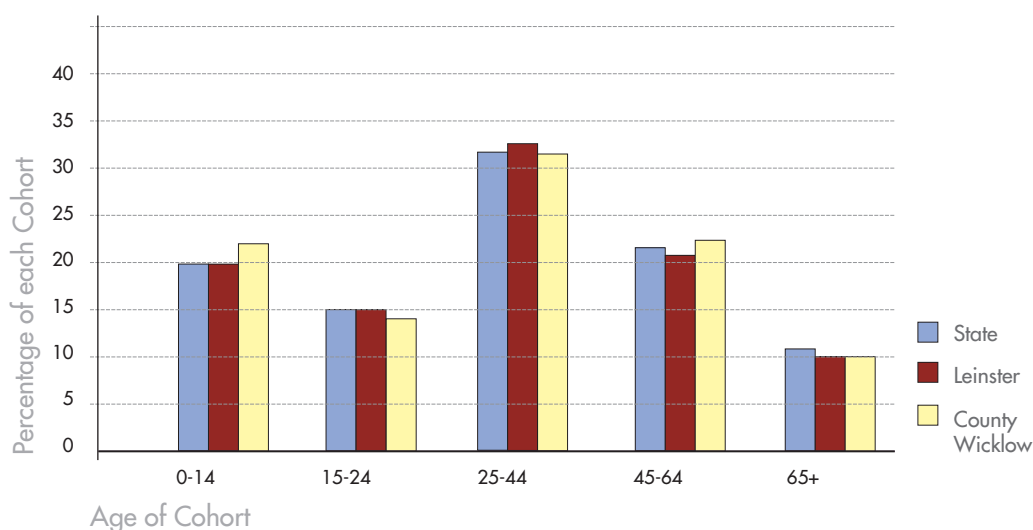
Source: Census of Population 1981 to 1996, Results 2006

The Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG) for the Greater Dublin Area predicts that the population of Dublin, Meath, Wicklow and Kildare will grow from 1.5 million to approximately 2.1 million persons by 2020. The RPG projects a catchment for services and employment in Wicklow Town and a population target of between 25,000 and 40,000 by 2016.

3.3 Age Profile

A comparison of various average age profiles relating to the area is shown in Figure 3.3.1.

Figure 3.3.1 Age Profile of the State, Province, County and Local Level, 2006



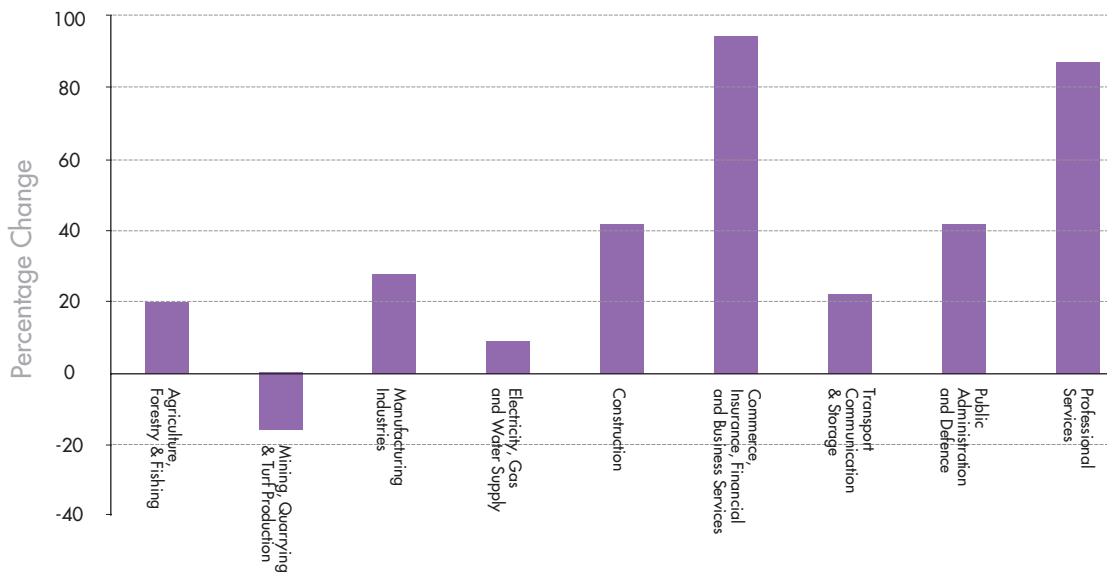
Source: Census of Population 2006

Figure 3.3.1 demonstrates that Wicklow Town and Environs has a large number of 0-14 year olds and 25-44 year olds. A relatively high number of persons within the 0-14 cohort indicate a relatively young and vibrant population. In considering the age cohort of 25-44 years olds it is evident that a relatively large labour force exists in the Town and its Environs reflective of its role as a county town. The size of this cohort can be partially attributed to the proximity of the town to Dublin and the consequent level of commuters living in the town.

3.4 Employment

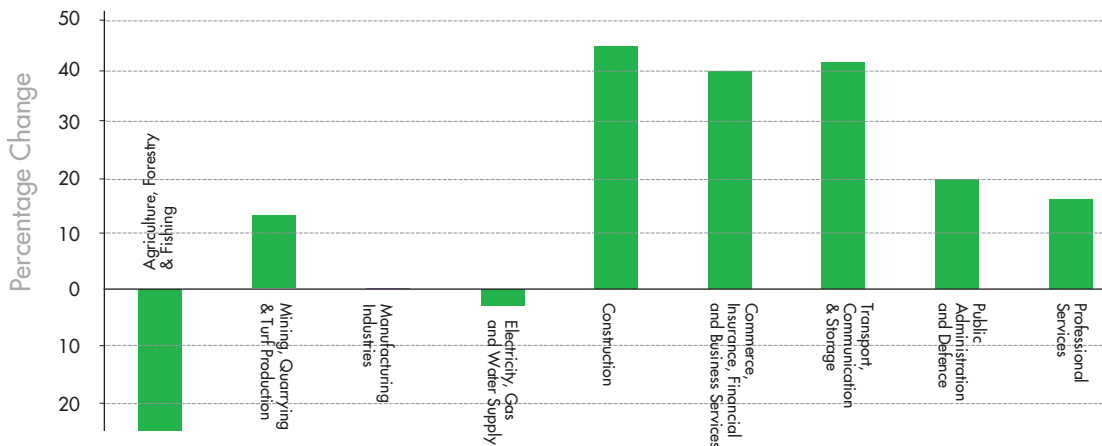
Since 1996, the employment trend in Wicklow Town has indicated a greater growth in business and professional services than in the traditional employment sources of manufacturing and fishing. Figure 3.4.1 suggests a comparative decline in the position of the traditional areas of economic activity. Taking figures 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 into account, it is evident that Wicklow Town is broadly in line with the national economic trend with regard to the growth in business and financial services.

Figure 3.4.1 Sectoral Employment Trends in Wicklow Town between 1996 and 2006



Source: CSO

Figure 3.4.2 Sectoral Employment Trend in the State between 1996 and 2006



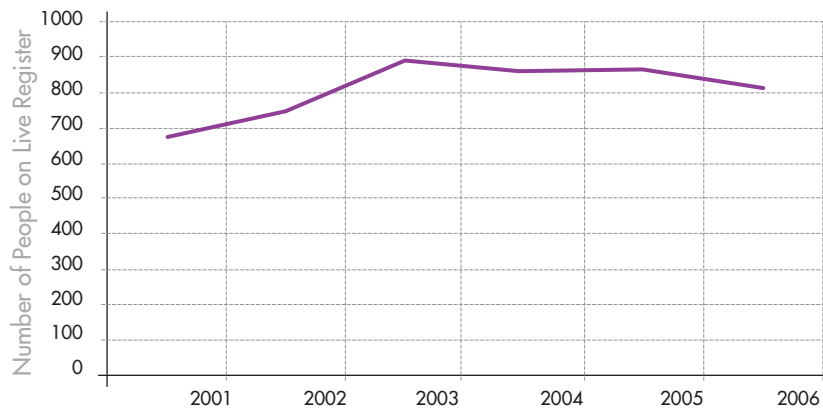
Source: CSO

3.5 Unemployment

Unemployment trends in the Wicklow Town area can be indicated by considering the Statistical Bulletin records of the Live Register. Figure 3.5.1 shows the percentage change of people on the Live Register for March 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006 in the local social welfare office.

Figure 3.5.1 shows a rapid increase in the numbers on the Live Register between 2001 and 2003 in the Wicklow Town Social Welfare Office Area. Unemployment levels remained relatively static between 2003 and 2004. Since May 2005 the Register showed a slight decrease in the number of unemployed persons in the Wicklow Town area and this trend has continued in 2006.

Figure 3.5.1 Live Register Figures



Source: Live Register

Chapter 4.

Employment and Enterprise

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter addresses the economic profile and performance of Wicklow Town. It is important that the planning policies in the Plan support the growth of the local economy in order for the town to fulfil its regional role and continue to meet the needs of its inhabitants in the future. The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG) provide for the growth of Wicklow Town as a self-sufficient settlement that provides a range of employment and service facilities for its inhabitants and the population of the surrounding hinterland. In general terms, planning policy can promote the growth of an increasingly self-sufficient local economy through the following means: facilitating the growth of the local labour force through the adequate supply of land for residential development; providing an adequate supply of land for business and enterprise; and facilitating the provision of appropriate infrastructure.

This Chapter is set out as follows: Enterprise and Employment Aims; Employment Profile; Business and Enterprise; Industry; Warehouse and Distribution; and Port activities.

4.2 Enterprise and Employment Aims

The following are the Aims for Enterprise and Employment in the town:

- ▶ Promote the growth of Wicklow Town and the Town Environs as a self-sufficient settlement that provides a range of employment opportunities for the population of the town and its hinterland as projected in the NSS.
- ▶ Provide for the development of Wicklow Town as a modern service and employment centre within the Greater Dublin Area.
- ▶ Provide for coordination between the relevant agencies and the Town Council in the promotion of Wicklow Town as a location for investment.

4.3 Economic Profile

The economic profile of Wicklow Town has been changing from one where a significant amount of employment was provided by manufacturing and transport/logistics to one where the overwhelming majority of employees belong to the professional services and business sectors (see Chapter 3 Socio-Economic Context). This is broadly in line with national economic trends.

The key differences between the local and national employment trends are in the extent of the growth in Professional Services in Wicklow Town and the growth in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing. The rate of growth in the Professional Services sector has been greater in Wicklow Town than in the State. This is an indicator of an ever maturing economy. The growth experienced by the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector is contrary to the national trend which has seen a decline in this sector. Growth in this sector can be attributed to the continued commercial success of the Port.

The decline of the Manufacturing Sector has been evident in the closure of certain facilities such as the Veba factory. The expansion of office and enterprise uses in the Murrough is evidence of the growth of Professional Services, Public Administration and various other office and small unit based enterprises.

The role of Wicklow Town as a focal point for a hinterland including the settlements of Rathnew, Ashford, Glenealy and Glendalough has resulted in the development of a range of retail, financial, entertainment and general services. Main Street hosts services such as: small, higher order retail; newsagents; travel agents; hairdressers; and office uses such as solicitors and accountants. The periphery of the town, close to the County Council buildings, contains supermarkets and retail warehouse uses. The growth of Wicklow Town as a Primary Development Centre in accordance with the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) requires that the economic profile of the town as a service and employment centre be enhanced. In order for the town to achieve the level of self sufficiency envisaged in the NSS and the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG), there will need to be an expansion of employment facilities, both in the Town itself and in the Town Environs.

Objective EE1: To promote Wicklow Town as a major employment and services centre in the Hinterland Area of the Greater Dublin Area.

4.4 Business and Enterprise

The local economy of Wicklow Town has developed to the point where the main source of employment is to be found in activities that can be classified under the heading of Business and Enterprise. These activities include the following CSO economic sector classifications:

- Commerce, Financial and Business Services (excluding retail)
- Public Administration
- Professional Services

Hi-tech/Information Technology activity is included under this heading as its land use implications are similar.

These sectors constitute a growth area of the national economy that must be encouraged if the town is to develop the level of self sufficiency provided for in the Regional Planning Guidelines and to compete effectively for resources and investment with other towns. The primary needs of these types of economic activities are land availability, high quality telecommunications infrastructure and the availability of highly skilled labour. Enhanced links between Wicklow Town and the rest of the Greater Dublin Area will also be necessary to encourage these activities.

Policy EE1: The Council shall provide an adequate supply of appropriately zoned land for commercial uses including: financial and business services; public administration; professional services; and information technology (see Land Use Zoning Matrix in Appendix 1)

Objective EE2: The Council shall promote the enhancement of the telecommunications infrastructure including broadband coverage, mobile telephony and wireless internet access.

Objective EE3: The Council shall work in conjunction with the County Enterprise Board and other appropriate agencies in order to encourage the development of a highly skilled workforce within the town.

4.5 Warehouse and Distribution

The warehouse and distribution industry in the town owes its existence primarily to the thriving commercial port. Although closely linked with the Port, much of this economic activity is situated in the Murrough, outside of the area zoned for Port Activities. Despite the fact that warehouse and distribution activities have experienced a relative decline, they continue to be a significant source of employment in Wicklow Town. The key to maintaining the viability of these activities is the provision of high quality links between the Port area and the transport network in the Greater Dublin Area. The Port Access Road will have a positive impact in this regard. It will improve the efficient operation of these activities by eliminating the need for Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) that serve them to pass through the Town Centre. The Town Relief and Port Access Roads will also provide opportunities for the location of warehouse and distribution facilities in the Town Environs.

Policy EE2: The Council will facilitate the development of warehouse and distribution facilities in appropriate locations in the Town Environs subject to satisfactory access being provided, compatibility of adjoining land uses and the preservation of residential amenity.

Objective EE4: The Council shall facilitate the delivery of the Port Access and Town Relief Roads.

4.6 Port Activities

Port activities include the transport of freight, fishing and an element of leisure boating. These activities have been a staple of the local economy historically. Freight activity continues to be commercially viable which is indicated by the projected throughput of over 200,000 tonnes for the year 2006 by the Port Company. As the socio economic profile of the town changes, it is anticipated that there will be an increasing demand for leisure boating. It will be important to nurture the economic potential of this activity with the established activities. As stated above, the Port Access Road will be important to the ongoing commercial success of the Port as a regionally important freight distribution centre and local source of employment.

Policy EE3: The Council shall support the commercial uses in the Port through appropriate zoning and development management requirements and performance criteria (see Land Use Zoning Matrix in Appendix 1).

Objective EE5: The Council shall seek to promote the expansion of leisure uses in the Port area.

4.7 Small Scale Light Industry

Light Industry in this Plan refers to activities that involve the processing of goods or raw materials on a small scale. These would include, for example, car mechanics, craft workshops such as joiners, furniture repairs and glass cutters, etc. Taken together, such activities are an important source of employment in the town and provide a range of often specialised services to its inhabitants. These activities are not concentrated in any particular locations as they can take the form of home-based economic activity or can be in the form of workshops located in the Town Centre.

Policy EE4: The Council recognises the contribution to the local economy by Small Scale Light Industrial uses and will facilitate their development where such activities do not interfere with residential amenities.

4.8 Industry

Industry includes activities that involve the large scale manufacture of products. The Murrough and the Port Area have been the traditional locations for such activity within the Town. However, the town has experienced a contraction of this type of activity in line with the national trend. The closure of the Veha factory in the Murrough is the most recent example of the effects of this trend in the town. The appropriate location for future development in industry is likely to be outside of the Town Council area where the space needed for such activity is more readily available.

Policy EE5: The Council will facilitate continued existence of industrial activity within the Town Council area.

Chapter 5.

Retail

5.1 Introduction

This Chapter deals with Retail in the town. The Retail Planning Guidelines require that Development Plans include clear policies on retail. In order to provide a policy framework for this, the Retail Planning Guidelines require the following matters to be addressed:

- Health check appraisal of Town Centres.
- Confirmation of the retail hierarchy, the role of each Town Centre and the size of the main Town Centres.
- Definition in the Development Plan of the boundaries of the Core Shopping Area of Town Centres.
- Strategic guidance on the location of retail development.
- A broad assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace.
- Preparation of policies and action initiatives to encourage the improvement of Town Centres.
- Identification of criteria for the assessment of retail developments.

This Chapter follows these steps under their appropriate headings. It should be noted that policies and objectives dealing specifically with the management and improvement of the Town Centre are contained in Chapter 11 of the Plan. The Chapter is therefore set out as follows: Retail Aims; Town Centre Health Check; Role of the Town Centre; Core Shopping Area; Assessment of Need for Additional Floorspace; Guidance on the Location of Retail Floorspace; Criteria for the Assessment of Retail Planning Applications.

5.2 Retail Aims

The following are the Aims for Retail in the town:

- ▶ Promote the development of a competitive and healthy environment for the retail industry.
- ▶ Promote forms of retail development that are easily accessible, particularly by public transport.
- ▶ Support the continuing role of the Town Centre as the focus for a range of higher order comparison and niche retail facilities.

5.3 Health Check of the Town Centre

An appraisal of the Town Centre was carried out as part of the Wicklow Draft County Retail Strategy 2004. The Town Centre was found to be compact and vibrant. The shops included a range of small comparison stores, specialist shops catering for the tourist market and a choice of cafes and restaurants. There is a low incidence of vacancy and dereliction in the Town Centre and streets such as Main Street and Bridge Street experience a heavy footfall. However, it was found to be deficient in higher order comparison outlets (e.g. High street chains) and to be lacking in opportunities for expansion. There was also found to be a shortage of car parking spaces.

5.4 Role of Wicklow Town and the Town Centre

Wicklow Town has been designated as Level 2 in the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) retail hierarchy as defined by the Regional Planning Guidelines. This confers a County Town Centre classification within the Hinterland area of the GDA. The role provided for Level 2 County Town Centres is set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines as follows:

“They will tend to serve catchment areas well beyond their immediate locality, they should have potential for significant comparison floorspace and some already have, including higher order shopping and offer a high range of non-retail services.”

The Wicklow Draft County Retail Strategy 2004 states that, for Wicklow Town to fulfil its regional role, it will be necessary to provide for retail development on edge of and out of centre sites due to the compact nature of the Town Centre.

The Council will encourage higher order comparison retail uses in the Town Centre and provide for large scale retail uses at appropriately zoned locations outside of the Town Centre where they cannot be accommodated within it. The Council also recognises the capacity of the Marlton Road Action Area 6 in the Town Environs to provide retail facilities. Non retail policies and objectives for the Town Centre are contained in Chapter 13.

Policy R1: The Council will support the role of the Town Centre as a location for higher order comparison retail.

5.5 Core Shopping Area

The Core Shopping Area as defined in the Wicklow Draft County Retail Strategy extends along the middle of Main Street from Fitzwilliam Square to the end of its split level section close to Market Square. The Core Shopping Area experiences the highest level of footfall within the Town Centre and gives the highest rental yield. The Retail Planning Guidelines require that retail developments be located in the Town Centre as a matter of preference. The sequential approach to retail development control, as set out in these Guidelines, is intended to promote sustainable retail development. This means that, where appropriate, sites are unavailable within a reasonable timeframe in the Town Centre, the appropriate location for retail developments, in order of preference, is edge of centre followed by out of centre. The edge of centre is defined as being 300-400 metres from the Core Shopping Area. In line with Policy EE2, the Council will apply the sequential approach to planning applications for major retail development. The role of the Core Shopping Area is identified in Chapter 13 Town Centre.

Policy R2: The Council will promote retail development at edge of or out of centre locations. The Council will require the sequential approach to be applied to these locations.

5.6 Assessment of Need for Additional Floorspace

The assessment of the need for additional retail floorspace takes the following considerations into account:

- ▶ The Wicklow Draft County Retail Strategy 2004 found that Wicklow Town is under-provided for in terms of retail floorspace. Most of this deficit was found to be in comparison retail floorspace*.
- ▶ There has been an increase in the amount of floorspace since the survey for the County Retail Strategy due to the opening of Lidl and Heaton's on the R747 north of the Town Centre.
- ▶ Wicklow is the County Town and is designated as a Large Growth Town 1 in the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG). The RPG project a population catchment of between 25,000 and 40,000 for employment and services in Wicklow Town and Environs.
- ▶ The indicative net floorspace capacity in the County stated in the Wicklow Draft County Retail Strategy is 8,850m² convenience and 25,100m² comparison.

Figure 5.6.1

Type of Retail	Trading Floorspace
Convenience Retail Floorspace	4,799m ²
Comparison Retail Floorspace	4,539m ²
Warehouse Retail Floorspace	900m ²

Source: Draft Wicklow County Retail Strategy

Figure 5.6.1 indicates an assessment of the floorspace need of Wicklow Town and Environs proposed to be accommodated within the Town Council boundaries. The assessment contained in Figure 5.6.1 assumes a population catchment of 25,000 by 2016, which is the lower end of the range projected in the RPG for Wicklow Town. It is also assumed that this population will reside in the Town and Town Environs in accordance with the National Spatial Strategy (NSS), which requires that Primary Development Centres such as Wicklow Town become concentrations of population growth within the Greater Dublin Area. The delivery of the retail floorspace set out in Figure 5.6.2 within the Town will complement the future provision of retail floorspace in the Marlton Road Action Area 6 which will consist of higher order comparison goods in meeting the future needs of the area. The amount of land zoned as suitable for retail is determined by the potential availability of land located within the boundary.

Figure 5.6.2

Type of Retail	Projected Gross Retail Floorspace
Convenience	Between 500m and 1,500m *
Comparison	Between 5,000m and 10,000m *

Source: Draft Wicklow County Retail Strategy

Policy R3: The Council will facilitate additional retail floorspace within the Town Council boundary and shall facilitate the provision of retail floorspace in the Town Environs at the Marlton Road Action Area 6 where this complements the retail provision in the Town Centre and core shopping area in particular.

* Calculation of need based upon projected per capita expenditure in the Draft Wicklow County Retail Strategy 2004

5.7 Guidance on the Location of Retail Development

The Council will aim to promote higher order comparison and limited convenience retail development in the Town Centre. Large scale retail development will be accommodated at the edge of or out of centre. The Whitegates area, adjacent to the County Council buildings is the appropriate location for large scale, out of centre retail development within the Town.

Policy R4: The Mixed-Use zone of the Whitegates Site Regeneration Area within the Town Council area is the preferred location for large scale retail development.

5.8 Criteria for the Assessment of Retail Planning Applications

Policy R5: Planning applications for the development of new retail floorspace shall be determined by reference to the following criteria:

- ▶ **Location:** Location of development incorporating 500m² or more of comparison retail floorspace should be compliant with the sequential approach set out in the Retail Planning Guidelines.
- ▶ **Retail Impact Assessment:** Where it is proposed to develop 500m² or more of comparison floorspace at an out of centre location, i.e. greater than 400 metres from the Core Shopping Area, the Council may require that such a planning application be accompanied by a Retail Impact Assessment.
- ▶ **Accessibility:** Development should be accessible by variety of transport modes, particularly public transport, cycling and walking.
- ▶ **Traffic Impact:** Impact upon the local road network: Such planning applications shall be accompanied by a Traffic Impact Assessment demonstrating the impact upon the local road network and proposing appropriate mitigation.
- ▶ **Development Standards:** Developments shall comply with the minimum standards set out in Chapter 16 Development Management.

Chapter 6.

Traffic, Transport and Accessibility

6.1 Introduction

This Chapter deals with the issue of the movement of people and goods within Wicklow town and between the town and other settlements. Among the primary reasons for such movement are work, shopping, education/school, commerce (i.e. delivery of goods), tourism and social activity. The modes of transport used in Wicklow Town are mainly comprised of the private car, public transport such as bus and train, and walking and cycling. Sustainable provision within Wicklow Town involves balancing the often competing needs of the different modes and facilitating their efficient usage. It has also become increasingly necessary for transport networks to counteract the heavy reliance upon the private car by providing viable alternatives. This need has arisen due to the congestion and environmental pollution that current levels of car use have caused.

The topography of Wicklow Town and that of its surrounding hinterland has presented several challenges to accessibility within and to the town. This topography has given rise to a compact urban form and has resulted in an added level of separation between the town and the Greater Dublin Area. Its impact is evident in the traffic congestion experienced in the Town Centre, the location of the train station on the periphery of the town, the limited bus service and the relative difficulty of walking or cycling as a means of getting about. In addition to this, there is a high incidence of traffic passing through the Town Centre to either access the Port or to travel between the north of the town and the Marlton Road. In particular, the Port-bound Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV's) contribute to the congestion of the Town Centre and make it a less safe and attractive environment for pedestrians. The Town Council intends to address these issues through the policies and objectives set out in this Chapter.

The rest of this Chapter is laid out as follows: Traffic, Transport and Accessibility Aims; Town Relief and Port Access Road; Town Centre Traffic Management; Pedestrian and Cycle Access; and Public Transport; Land-use and Transport Integration.

6.2 Traffic, Transport and Accessibility Aims

The following are the aims that will govern the Transport and Traffic policies and objectives:

- ▶ Facilitate the development of a transport network that allows the town's inhabitants to move about the town without having to rely on private transport.
- ▶ Facilitate the delivery of the Town Relief and Port Access Roads.
- ▶ Create an attractive Town Centre with a range and close proximity of land-uses suited to pedestrian access.
- ▶ Ensure new developments are designed to integrate with and contribute to the town's transport network.
- ▶ Facilitate the provision of an improved public transport service between Wicklow Town and Dublin.

6.3 Integration of Land Use and Transport

The designation as a Primary Development Centre in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area (RPG/GDA) provides for the development of Wicklow Town as a self-sufficient settlement with a population of approximately 25,000. It is intended that Primary Development Centres become the focus for population growth within the Hinterland Area of the GDA in the interest of promoting sustainable settlement patterns. Enhanced public transport in these settlements is stated as being essential to this strategy. Apart from facilitating the enhancement of public transport links in the town, this Plan aims to achieve the integration of land-use and transport in order to support the vision for Wicklow Town as set out in the RPG/GDA. This will be achieved by ensuring that future development is informed by the twin goals of reducing the need to travel and reducing the reliance on the private car.

There are two primary patterns of development and land-use that can help reduce the necessities to travel long distances to work or to shop, for example. These patterns can also reduce the extent to which the private car is relied upon for such trips. Firstly, developments that comprise a mix of uses can reduce the need to travel. For example, the location of retail, employment, community and educational uses side by side can facilitate multi-purpose trips to a single location. Secondly, the concentration of development around public transport links can help reduce the reliance upon the private car as the commuter's mode of preference. For example, a rail line linking a high density residential development with large volume of employment and retail uses is likely to provide a reliable, frequent and economical service because of the ready demand from commuters looking to avoid traffic congestion and the high cost of car use.

Policy TTA1: Development in areas zoned Mixed-Use shall support the Council's Land-Use and Transportation Strategy. Where large sites come forward for development on lands zoned Mixed-Use, the Council shall require an appropriate mix of uses in accordance with any Action Area Plans and Site Regeneration Briefs.

Policy TTA2: The Council shall permit higher densities of development within 500 metres of the train station. Where residential development is proposed, densities of 50 to 90 units/ha shall be permitted.

6.4 Town Relief and Port Access Road

The proposed Port Access and Town Relief Roads will intersect with the R747 north of Wicklow town and will reroute traffic to and from the Port and the Marlton areas away from the Town Centre (see Planning Objectives map). The Port Access Road will connect with the Murrough Road at the northern end of the Murrough. The Town Relief Road will connect with the Marlton Road and intersect with Friarshill and the Rockey Road. It is proposed that this project will be completed early in the lifetime of this Plan. The opening of this relief road network will provide several key benefits for the town. The Town Centre will be relieved of Port-bound HGV's, which will ease traffic congestion and make the Town Centre more attractive and safe from a pedestrian perspective. In addition, lands north of the town such as at Bollorney North and Rathnew will be connected directly with the lands at the Marlton Road Action Area and locations further west of the town. This will further reduce traffic congestion in the Town Centre as through traffic from these directions will be reduced significantly. The proposed Port Access and Town Relief Roads will also allow the Port to function more effi-

ciently and will help realise the development potential of the Marlton Road Action Area, both of which should play important roles in enabling the town to fulfil its status as a Primary Development Centre.

The Town Relief and Port Access road network opens up opportunities for development to the north and west of the town. Within the Town Council boundary, the lands at Bollarney North and the Murrough, in the vicinity of the Train Station, will be made increasingly accessible by the Port Access Road. Much of this land is proposed to be zoned as Residential. However, it will be important to ensure that any development of land adjoining the proposed route of the Port Access Road be carried out in a manner that does not have a negative effect upon the Relief Road either in its construction or operational phase. The development of these lands should be phased to take place after the delivery of the Relief Road. Access openings to future development shall be kept to a minimum and such developments shall incorporate pedestrian and cycle access requirements into the design.

Policy TTA3: The Council shall facilitate the construction of the Town Relief and Port Access Roads and their completion in a timely manner.

Policy TTA4: Development of lands adjoining the proposed Port Access Road shall be phased to take place after the opening of the Port Access Road (see Chapter 15 Opportunity Areas in Appendix 4).

Policy TTA5: The Council shall restrict access points onto the Port Access Road to serve developments on lands adjoining it and these shall be designed to comply with national road design safety standards.

Policy TTA6: A Transport Impact Assessment shall be required by the Council to accompany planning applications for residential developments over 50 units.

6.5 Town Centre Traffic Management

The Town Centre is the area within Wicklow Town where competition between the different modes of transport for space and priority poses the greatest challenge. The concentration and variety of uses within a relatively constrained space combined with the use of Main Street as an access route to the Port and areas to the south and west of the town results in a confluence of cars, HGV's and pedestrians in the Town Centre in varying proportions depending on the time of the day. The effects of this congestion includes poor pedestrian amenities, lack of car parking spaces and associated negative environmental effects.

The construction of the Port Access and Town Relief Roads will be a key step towards reducing this congestion. Given that a Traffic Survey carried out by Colin Buchanan and Partners in 1999 found that 18,000 HGV's used Bridge Street and Abbey Street per annum, the benefits to the Town Centre from the opening of the Port Access Road are therefore likely to be significant. The rerouting of a significant proportion of traffic away from the Town Centre offers the opportunity to make the area a more attractive place to shop and do business in by prioritizing pedestrian movement and taking the emphasis off private vehicular traffic. This also presents an opportunity to develop a public transport infrastructure in the Town Centre through the provision of bus stops. The Council will support a bus stop network during the lifetime of the Plan.

The Wicklow and Environs Integrated Framework Plan for Land Use and Transportation 2005 (IFPLUT) stated that car parking capacity would be reached by 2006 based on 1999 levels of parking provision. The IFPLUT recommends that an additional 423 parking spaces need to be provided to cater for the extra demand up to 2016. Given that it is Council policy to promote the Town Centre as a retail and tourist destination, it will be increasingly important to meet this projected requirement. It is an objective of the Council to provide a multi-storey car park at Wentworth Place/Abbey Street.

This Plan introduces reduced car parking standards compared with previous plans in order to reduce car dependency and curtail traffic volume in the town. Furthermore, parking standards in the Town Centre are significantly reduced (see Chapter 16 Development Management, section 16.13).

Policy TTA7: Encourage traffic to use the Port Access and Town Relief Roads by introducing traffic calming measures in the Town Centre.

Policy TTA8: Facilitate the provision of a bus stop(s) and a taxi rank in the Town Centre.

Objective TTA1: Introduce a Pedestrian Priority zone in the Shopping Core (see Planning Objectives Map) after the opening of the Town Relief and Port Access Roads.

Objective TTA2: Provide a multi-storey car park at Wentworth Place / Abbey Street

6.6 Pedestrian and Cycle Access

The compact form of Wicklow Town lends itself to walking and cycling. The bulk of the town's population resides within a 1 kilometre radius of Main Street. However, the topography of much of the town and the volume of vehicular traffic in the town combine to undermine the potential of walking and cycling as popular transport modes. Many of the residential areas within the town are hilly and this acts as a deterrent to the use of pedestrian or cycle transport. The amount of cars and HGV's passing through the town makes cycling and walking a less attractive option due to safety concerns. Rerouting vehicles from the Town Centre via the relief roads would greatly enhance the pedestrians/cyclists environment.

Walking and cycling impose a low cost to the environment and to the user and allow public spaces to be designed on a human scale rather than around the needs of the car. In surveys carried out for the Wicklow and Environs IFPLUT, a significant number of respondents stated that they would consider walking or cycling to the Town Centre. It will therefore be important to take advantage of the delivery of the Town Relief and Port Access Roads and the introduction of added traffic calming measures to promote walking and cycling in the town. This can be achieved by providing facilities such as cycle lanes, cycle parking, widened foot paths, pedestrian crossings, rest benches, and effective lighting, etc. (see Chapter 13 for Policies and Objectives for the Town Centre). New development proposals will have to be designed to reflect the needs of walkers and cyclists and should ensure maximum linkages with the surrounding environment. It will also be Council policy to recognise and promote the walking and cycle networks identified in the Wicklow and Environs IFPLUT. These routes

include those that serve a leisure and recreational purpose and these are addressed in Chapter 9 - *Recreation and Amenity*.

Policy TTA9: Future large-scale development proposals outside of the Town Centre shall be designed to accommodate the requirements of pedestrian and cycle access. In particular, such developments should integrate with adjacent pedestrian and cycle networks (see Chapter 16 Development Management, Sections 16.11 and 16.12).

Policy TTA10: Facilitate pedestrian mobility and safety in the town by introducing traffic calming measures, pedestrian crossings and widening footpaths as part of road maintenance and improvement projects.

Policy TTA11: Provide cycle lanes to connect with the proposed cycle lanes on the Town Relief and Port Access Roads and provide advanced stop lines for cyclists at junctions as part of road works (see Chapter 16 Development Management, Section 16.11).

Objective TTA3: Provide public cycle parking at the following locations: the train station, Fitzwilliam Square, Market Square, the public library.

6.7 Public Transport

Wicklow Town is served by bus and rail. However, both services are generally limited in terms of their frequency and convenience. The rail connection to Dublin provides a service of 6 departures to and 5 arrivals from Dublin during the week with a travel time of approximately one hour. A Bus Eireann service linking Arklow, Wicklow and Dublin runs 11 times a day during the week with a travel time of approximately 90 minutes. There is a limited private service that runs within the town "on demand". Such a level of public transport service does not offer sufficient choice or provide a viable alternative to the private car and is inconsistent with the status of Wicklow Town as a Primary Development Centre and Satellite Town within the Greater Dublin Area (GDA). An expanded public transport service will be necessary if Wicklow Town is to fulfil its role within the GDA as a self sufficient employment and services centre supporting a population of circa 25,000.

6.7.1 Rail Service

There are a number of factors that limit the viability of the train as an alternative to the private car as a means of travel between Wicklow Town and the rest of the Greater Dublin Area apart from the relative infrequency of the rail service between Wicklow Town and Dublin. The train station is located to the north of the town and is relatively remote from the Town Centre. The station itself does not have the facilities to cater for a significant increase in the level of users in terms of its car parking spaces or pedestrian access. The expansion of the rail service is consistent with the programme for investment in and expansion of transport links set out in "A Platform for Change" by the DTO and in Transport 21.

Iarnród Éireann are expanding the train services for the town & hope to have a fleet of Inter-City trains delivered by mid-2007. As a result Wicklow will have a core 2-hourly frequency

of service to Dublin/Wexford. Additional commuter services will also run during morning & evening peak hours.

Policy TTA12: The Council will facilitate the expansion of the rail service between the town and the Greater Dublin Area including the upgrading of the train station.

Objective TTA4: The Council will work in association with Iarnróid Éireann to provide a car park adjacent to the railway station

Objective TTA5: To facilitate a shuttle bus between the train station and the Town Centre

6.7.2 Bus Service

Wicklow Town is located just outside the area served by Dublin Bus and consequently does not benefit from the frequent service that is provided within this area. The much smaller settlements of Kilpedder and Newcastle to the north of the town are served by Dublin Bus by contrast. The Wicklow and Environs IFPLUT identifies several opportunities for Bus Eireann to either link Wicklow Town with the Dublin Bus services or extend other Bus Eireann services linking Dublin as far as Wicklow Town. As the town develops further, cognizance should be taken of the need to accommodate buses, both public and private. This would entail designing out cul de sacs, providing bus shelters and facilitating the provision of signage.

Policy TTA13: The Council will promote and facilitate the expansion and extension of the bus service between Wicklow Town and the Greater Dublin Area.

Policy TTA14: The Council will require new residential developments to be designed in manner that facilitates integration with bus services. There will be a presumption against cul de sacs in such developments.

Objective TTA6: Provide for bus shelters and signage throughout the Town.

6.8 Transport Impact Assessments

The Council shall require a Transport Impact Assessment in the case of large developments or developments likely to either generate large levels of vehicular traffic or have the potential to provide enhancement of the use of slow modes i.e. walking and cycling.

Policy TTA15: A Transport Impact Assessment will be required by the Council to accompany all planning applications for developments that exceed the threshold set out in the NRA Draft Traffic Impact Assessment Guidelines and/or are considered likely to give rise to significant transport impact by the Council.

Policy TTA16: The Council shall require the submission of Mobility Management Plan in the case of large development proposals (see Chapter 16, Development Management Section 16.12)

Chapter 7. Housing

7.1 Introduction

Within Wicklow Town, it is expected that the demand for new dwellings will continue over this plan period as a result of natural increase, net in-migration and changes in the average size of households. The shortage of large building sites signals a change in the traditional approach to housing provision, both private and public. Within a relatively confined area such as Wicklow Town, it is no longer appropriate to provide new housing purely in the form of low density detached or semi-detached two storey dwellings. Housing will have to be developed in the town centre and close to existing public transport routes in order to reduce the need for commuting by car. This will mean that derelict or previously used "Brownfield" sites, such as old industrial areas, may have to be redeveloped for housing. Much greater use will have to be made of "Infill" sites particularly those close to the town centre, in order to provide additional dwellings in compact urban forms.

This chapter includes policies and objectives for the protection of existing residential areas and proposed new residential development within Wicklow Town

The Chapter is set out as follows: Housing Aims, Background Information, New Residential Areas, Housing Density and Mix, Social Housing, Existing Residential Areas, Infill Development, Extension and Refurbishment of dwellings, Loss of Residential Accommodation.

7.2 Housing Aims

The following are the aims that will govern the Housing policies and objectives:

- ▶ Ensure Wicklow Town Council zones sufficient and appropriate land for new residential development
- ▶ Take sufficient measures to counteract undue social segregation within new residential developments
- ▶ Improve design quality of residential areas and public spaces, both new and existing

7.3 Background Information

Household Trends Wicklow Town 1981 – 2002

The average mean household size (the number of persons occupying a dwelling) has dropped considerably over the past decade. The impact of population growth and social

Table 7.3.1 Average Household Size Within Town Environs

Average Household Size within Wicklow Town Environs	1981	1991	1996	2002
No. of Households	56	114	287	712
No. of Persons	194	368	874	2290
Household Size	3.46	3.22	3.04	3.21

change, including marital breakdown and more elderly people living alone, means that Irish household sizes are declining. The average household size in Wicklow Town declined from 3.57 in 1981 to 2.96 in 2002. At this rate Ireland will reach convergence with the EU average of 2.63 by 2011. The Wicklow Town average household size is 2.90 in 2006 whilst the size for County Wicklow overall is 2.98.

Table 7.3.2 Average Household Size

Average Household Size within Wicklow Town	1981	1991	1996	2002
No. of Households	1467	1703	2014	2372
No. of Persons	5239	5727	6416	7031
Household Size	3.57	3.36	3.12	2.96

Table 7.3.3 Family Units: Households and Children

	Wicklow County Family Units Area	Greater Dublin Family Units	Wicklow Town Family Units
Couples – No children	5056 (22%)	109906	628 (26%)
Couples and Children	14418 (62%)	454007	1390 (57%)
Father and Children	556 (2%)	12227	55 (2%)
Mother and Children	3363 (14%)	89937	(15%)

There is a marginally higher percentage of single parent family units in Wicklow Town, at 17%, than the County Wicklow average at 16%. In the county Wicklow area, the average household size has fallen from 3.68 persons to 3.22 persons during the 15 year period 1981 – 1996. It is expected that the average household size will continue to fall due to the increase in marital break ups and the greater independence of younger people.

Current and Existing Residential Developments

It is the function of this development plan to formulate a planning policy for housing and identify suitable locations for housing to be situated. An evaluation was carried out of the scale and scope of housing developments within Wicklow Town since 2001 and is useful in identifying likely patterns of demand and rate of construction. In total, planning permission has been sought for 220 units within the town boundary. Planning permission for 12 units are currently "in the system" as at May 2006.

Housing Development Locations

In terms of development within the Town Council boundary significant developments have been located at the following locations:

- Greenhills Road: to the southwest of the town boundary
- Bollarney: to the northwest of the Town Council boundary
- Wentworth Road: within the Town Centre.

Residentially Zoned Land

The Wicklow Town Development Plan 2002 zoned approximately 207 hectares of land for residential development. The overall total area of Wicklow Town is approximately 320 hectares. The lands that have been taken up for residential development within Wicklow Town since 2002 cover approximately 1.7 hectares of land or 184 persons. Approximately 42.7 hectares of residentially zoned land remains undeveloped within the Town. This land has a potential to accommodate 4,632 persons based upon current average household size and at average densities of approximately 30 residential units per hectare.

7.4 New Residential Areas

Any new residential areas proposed within Wicklow Town should be designed with their own character. The priority for Wicklow Town is to counteract the existing boundaries and provide more physical connections between new residential developments and their surroundings.

Policy H1: To encourage high quality and innovation in the location and design of new residential development that reflects the principles of environmental sustainability.

Policy H2: To promote residential layouts that reflect the principles of permeability and legibility.

Policy H3: The arrangement and hierarchy of public open space shall be a priority in the design and layout of new residential areas. Public spaces such as roads and paths should be naturally surveilled by the living spaces of residential dwellings.

Policy H4: Reduce the environmental impact from the design and construction process and reduce the reliance on finite natural resources.

Policy H5: Ensure all new residential developments provide for the incorporation of open space for the expansion and development of educational and community facilities.

Policy H6: Provide sufficient zoned land on suitable sites to ensure that the Town Council can contribute to the development of sufficient housing lands to meet potential demands.

Policy H7: Promote and encourage the supply (and quality) of private rented accommodation and to avail of the powers vested in the local authority by the Housing Acts where private rented accommodation is or becomes substandard.

Policy H8: Require the development of pedestrian and cycleway provision as part of all new residential developments.

Policy H9: Planning Permission will not be granted where there is insufficient capacity in the sewerage system.

Objective H1: Ensure the implementation of the Wicklow County Housing Strategy, in the interests of providing for the existing and future housing needs of Wicklow Town including the need for affordable housing and the needs of persons referred to in Section 9(2) of the Housing Act 1988.

Objective H2: Where significant open space is required, it is an objective of the Town Council to ensure that all new residential proposals, particularly at the Murrough and Whitegates, provide a detailed landscape plan to encourage areas for active and passive recreation.

Objective H3: To encourage the use of local place names for new residential developments

7.5 Housing Density and Mix

The Wicklow County Housing Strategy 2006– 2010 includes policies to control the mix and density of house types and sizes required to meet housing demand. The policies and objectives contained in this plan are consistent with the County Housing Strategy (a copy of the Strategy is contained in Appendix 5). Wicklow Town Council supports these policies through the development control process and will utilize conditions or agreements in order to secure an appropriate mix. The decrease in the average household size of Wicklow Town indicates that greater provision will be needed for smaller residential units. The Town Council will encourage therefore the provision of one and two bedroom dwellings.

Policy H10: Proposals for residential development shall include a mixture of house types and sizes to match the requirements of different categories of households within Wicklow Town.

Policy H11: Where possible the Council may allow for development to occur at higher densities in specified locations where good quality design and layout are employed.

Policy H12: Residential Development will not be permitted on open green spaces which are the subject of a deed of dedication (conditioned open spaces) or on areas which are formally identified as open spaces as part of a planning application.

Objective H4: The Town Council will encourage higher residential density developments, particularly at the Murrough, South Quay and Whitegates, within close proximity to the Town Centre (10 minute walking distance)

Objective H5: The Town Council will encourage lower residential developments in peripheral areas, such as the perimeter of the town boundary and in environmentally sensitive areas.

7.6 Social Housing

The Wicklow Town Council public housing stock and voluntary housing sector comprise a significant proportion of the overall housing stock in the Town Council area with a figure of 295 housing units as at 2004. A broad mix of house types have been provided for within these schemes by the Town Council and the Voluntary Sector. A breakdown of this mix is shown as follows:

Table 7.6.1 Town Council Housing

Town Council Housing Stock	Wicklow Town Council
Number of houses in estates	326
Number of houses in flats/apartments	10
Number of one off dwellings	1
Number of dwellings specifically designed for	
- Elderly	49
- Homeless	0
- People with disabilities	0
Traveller Specific Accommodation	
- Units of permanent accommodation	12
Total Housing Stock	326

Table 7.6.2 Voluntary and Cooperative Housing

Voluntary and Cooperative Housing Stock	Wicklow Town Council
Number of houses in estates	0
Number of houses in flats/apartments	0
Number of one off dwellings	0
Number of dwellings specifically designed for	
- Elderly	0
- Homeless	0
- People with disabilities	0
Total Housing Stock	0

As of May 2004 there were 334 housing applicants to Wicklow Town Council for council housing. There is a substantial rise in those persons deemed to be living in overcrowded conditions and those persons sharing accommodation involuntarily. Traveller accommodation is an issue for Wicklow Town Council with 6 families identified in 2000 as in need of accommodation. This figure has risen to 16 as at the end of May 2004.

Policy H13 In all housing developments of 5 or more residential units, and where the site is less than 0.1 hectares, Wicklow Town Council will require the equivalent of the land value of 20% of the permitted development to be made available for the provision of social and affordable housing in accordance with Wicklow County Housing Strategy.

Policy H14: It is a policy of Wicklow Town Council to implement the requirements of social and affordable housing through the use of conditions attached to planning permissions.

Policy H15: To encourage and assist Voluntary Housing Associations and other interested bodies in the provision of housing.

Policy H16: The Town Council will seek to identify and provide appropriate sites for non transient residential accommodation for the Traveller Community.

Objective H6: Proposals for special needs housing within Wicklow Town will be permitted if it is:

- Of an appropriate scale and character to the existing area
- Located within close proximity to existing services and facilities
- Complies with Part M of the building regulations in terms of wheelchair accessibility

- Makes appropriate provision of external amenities such as landscaped gardens.

Objective H7: It is an objective of Wicklow Town Council to provide a sustainable and mixed use urban quarter at the Murrough (subject to an Action Area Plan). This development should allow for an appropriate mix and tenure of residential units to include housing for the elderly and special needs.

7.7 Existing Residential Areas

The Wicklow Town Council jurisdiction contains a number of established large residential areas in close proximity to the town's boundary. The policies and objectives contained in this plan are consistent with the County Housing Strategy (a copy of the Strategy is contained in Appendix 5). These include Wicklow Heights, Friars Hill and St Mantans Park amongst others. Wicklow Town Council in an effort to promote safety within established residential areas will promote the principles that underly the concept of "homezones". Homezones are residential streets or a series of residential streets in which the living environment predominates over the provision of traffic. Spaces between lanes and the carriageway are shared to provide areas for children's play, planting and seating etc.

Policy H17 Proposals for increased safety, greater use of public open space and visual attractiveness in established residential developments should consider the concept of homezones.

Objective H8: It is an objective of Wicklow Town Council to pilot an existing residential area as a Homezone area.

7.8 Infill Development

Intensification or infill of a residential use within an existing residential area are considered suitable methods of promoting a sustainable use of land within built up areas such as Wicklow Town. The insertion of a new building into an older area, requires a very careful and sensitive approach to development. Proper attention must be given to its effect on its surroundings, in particular, the manner in which it relates to its adjacent buildings in the streetscape. In this regard, it is important that the building is 'contextually compatible' – this requires an examination of the context in terms of historical plot width, building height, established building lines, fenestration pattern, roof profile, materials, local features or other distinctive elements.

Policy H18: Proposals for development involving the intensification of residential uses within existing residential areas will be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that the proposal respects the existing character of the area and would not harm the amenity value of adjoining properties.

Objective H9: It is an objective of Wicklow Town to promote the intensification of higher density residential infill development primarily in the following areas: The

Murrrough, Whitegates and the Town Centre especially at South Quay.

7.9 Extension and Refurbishment of Dwellings

Extensions and refurbishments of existing residential dwellings within Wicklow Town are permitted as long as they protect the appearance, safety, access and parking and ensure that at all times residential amenity is protected.

Policy H19: Refurbishments and extensions are subject to the need to guarantee that the proposed works are in keeping with the character and scale of existing dwellings and its surroundings.

Objective H10: Proposed extensions and refurbishments to existing dwellings, especially in the Town Centre will be required to be integrated in a sensitive manner by matching existing building materials

Objective H11: Proposed extensions and refurbishments are required to provide sufficient space for vehicular access

Objective H12: Proposed extensions and refurbishments are required to preserve the amenity of adjoining dwellings by avoiding excessive overlooking and overshadowing

Chapter 8.

Cultural Heritage

8.1 Introduction

Cultural Heritage refers to the development history of the town since the earliest settlement of the area. This development history includes layers of past development that make a visible contribution to the identity of the town, i.e. the built heritage, and earlier layers of development that are less visible or concealed by subsequent layers, i.e. archaeological heritage. Wicklow Town's identity is founded upon this Cultural Heritage and the town relies upon it for much of its attractiveness as a place to live in and visit. The importance of this heritage is recognised and provided for by national legislation such as the Planning and Development Act 2000 and the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004, which provide protection for the built heritage and archaeological remains respectively.

This Chapter includes the policies and objectives for the protection of the town's Cultural Heritage and sets out how this element of the physical environment can contribute to the future development of the town.

The Chapter is set out as follows: Cultural Heritage Aims; Conservation of the Built Heritage; Protected Structures; Town Centre; Zone of Archaeological Potential.

8.2 Cultural Heritage Aims

The following are the aims that will govern the Cultural Heritage policies and objectives:

- Protect the built heritage
- Promote the sensitive reuse of protected structures
- Ensure that the future development of the town is informed by its built heritage
- Protect the archaeological heritage through the preservation and/or recording of archaeological remains

8.3 Conservation of the Built Heritage

There is a rich built heritage in Wicklow Town. This collection of buildings and spaces includes: three and four storey townhouses on Main Street; civic and institutional buildings such as the Town Hall and the Dominican Convent; and ecclesiastical buildings such as the Church of Ireland (Wicklow Parish Church at Church Hill) and Catholic Church (St. Patrick's Catholic Church). The Wicklow Gaol is the most prominent element of the built heritage. The town has also inherited a Town Centre street pattern that has informed the layout of the subsequent expansion of the town.

The architecture of these buildings and the spaces between them such as Market Square and Fitzwilliam Square lend attractiveness to the Town Centre. The institutional and civic buildings provide continuity with the past and contribute to the town's identity as the County Town and as an important centre for public services and administration.

Policy CH1: The Council will promote the conservation of the built heritage (see Chapter 16 Development Management, Section 16.18).

8.4 Protected Structures

The Development Plan is required by Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to include policy objectives to protect structures within its functional area. The primary means of achieving this is by compiling and maintaining a Record of Protected Structures (RPS) to be included in the Plan. The RPS should comprise structures that are of special, architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

The inclusion of a structure in the RPS confers certain responsibilities upon the owner of the structure and requires that planning permission be sought for any changes or alterations to the structure. The definition of a structure for the purpose of the RPS includes "the interior of the structure; the land lying within the curtilage of the structure; any other structures lying within the curtilage of that structure and their interiors; and all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of the structure." From the date of notification of an intention to include a structure in the RPS, the owner has a duty to protect that structure from endangerment. The Council may, on receipt of a written request from the owner or occupier of a protected structure, issue a declaration outlining certain works it considers would not materially affect the character of the protected structure and which are, therefore, exempted from the requirement for planning permission.

The proposed Record of Protected Structures (RPS) is set out in Appendix 2. It is proposed to include these structures on the RPS by reason of their recommendation for inclusion by the Minister for the Arts, Heritage Gaeltacht and the Islands as structures of regional importance.

Policy CH2: Maintain and review the Record of Protected Structures in accordance with Part IV of the Planning and Development Act.

8.5 Town Centre

Part IV of the Planning and Development Act also requires that the Development Plan includes an objective to preserve the character of a place, area, group of structures or townscape, taking account of building lines and heights.

The Town Centre has the following characteristics:

- Uniform Building Line
- Building Height range of between three and four storeys
- Buildings constructed in the period 1750 to 1900
- Its role as the historic commercial and civic core of the town
- Plot widths dating from the medieval period in the range 5 to 7.5 metres
- Existence of design features that contribute to a harmonious visual environment including: traditional shopfronts; timber sash windows; smooth render building finishes; vertical emphasis fenestration; wood/timber doors

The preservation of the character of the Town Centre is essential to safeguarding the identity of the town and maintaining continuity with its development history. The collection of build-

ings and spaces within the Town Centre represent a unique aspect of Wicklow Town's built heritage and contribute to its attractiveness. The Council will seek to preserve these as set out below.

It shall be Council policy:

Policy CH3: To not permit development in advance of the established building line.

Policy CH4: To not permit the removal of existing traditional shopfronts (see Chapter 16 Development Management, Section 16.24).

Policy CH5: To consider the amalgamation of buildings within the town centre only where it is proposed to retain the plot width in the façade.

Policy CH6: To not permit illuminated or unsympathetic signage (see Chapter 16 Development Management, 16.27).

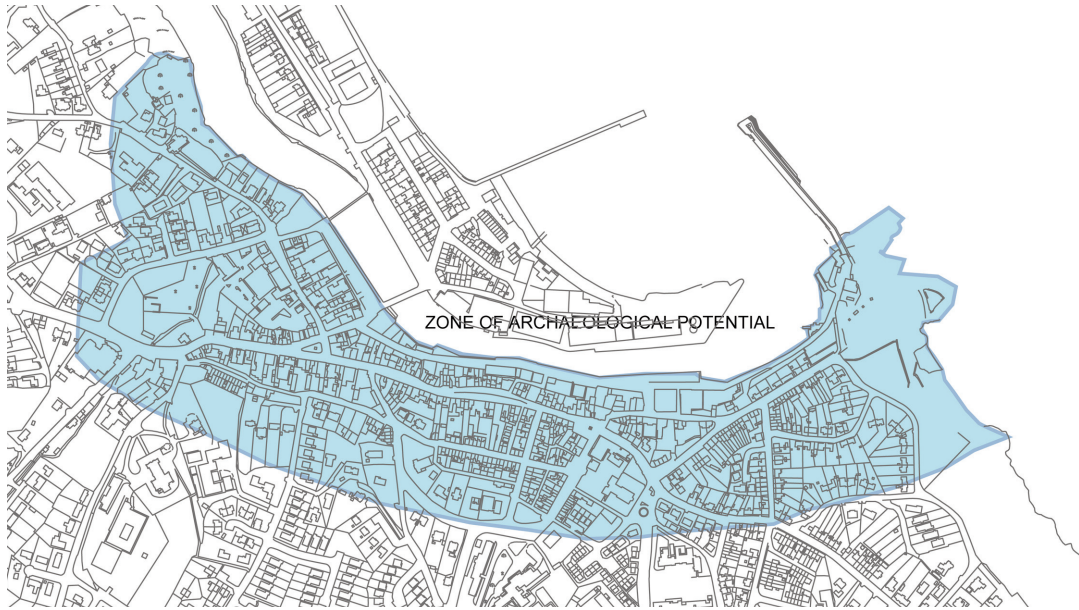
Policy CH7: To require planning permission for demolition of a building or part of a building. Where such a demolition is proposed, the Council will require a building survey of the building, or part thereof, proposed to be demolished to be submitted with the planning application.

The Council will consult specialist consultants to assess proposed developments in certain cases.

8.6 Zone of Archaeological Potential

The Zone of Archaeological Potential shown in Figure 8.6.1 corresponds with that indicated in the Record of Monuments and Places. Archaeological remains and deposits can advance the understanding of how Wicklow Town developed and increase the knowledge of its past. It will, therefore, be important to preserve the archaeological remains within this zone, either by protecting/preserving archaeological remains in situ or by removing and recording them. Certain types of development within the Zone of Archaeological Potential, such as the refurbishment of buildings, are unlikely to cause an impact upon either standing or buried archaeological remains. However, large scale development involving excavation for foundations may have an impact upon buried archaeological remains.

Figure 8.6.1 Zone of Archaeological Potential



Policy CH8: Planning applications for development likely to impact upon in situ archaeological deposits or structures shall be accompanied by archaeological surveys, test excavations and/or monitoring by an appropriately qualified archaeologist (see Chapter 16 Development Management, Section 16.28).

Policy CH9: The Council recognises that there may be important archaeological deposits located outside the Zone of Archaeological Potential. Where such deposits are uncovered through development, the Council will have regard to the recommendations of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in promoting their preservation and recording.

Objective CH1: The Council shall protect the following Recorded Monuments from development or alteration – The Black Castle; The “Round Mound” overlooking the Leitrim River; The Abbey at the northwest end of the town.

Objective CH2: The Council will promote awareness of the local Recorded Monuments through advertisement and the improvement of accessibility to these features.

Chapter 9.

Recreation and Amenity

9.1 Introduction

Recreation and Amenity refers to the range of facilities, venues and spaces that provides the town's population with the opportunity for recreational activities such as organized sport, walking and various other pastimes. The availability of such opportunities is essential to the development of balanced and sustainable communities and attractive living environments. Wicklow Town is relatively well served by recreational and amenity facilities including: sports facilities (providing for soccer, Gaelic, rugby, tennis and golf, etc.) and informal open spaces such as at the Murrough and the Ballyguile Hill area. However, the town is underprovided for in terms of formal open spaces such as parks and playgrounds. There is a significant unmet demand for such facilities and this is likely to increase as the population of the town and its Environs grow. Indeed, the population growth projected for Wicklow Town will increase the demand for a range of high quality recreational and amenity facilities that cater to the needs of, and are accessible to, all sectors of the community. The planning policies set out in this Chapter have been formulated in order to meet this demand.

This Chapter is set out as follows: Recreation and Amenity Aims; Loss of Open Space Hierarchy of Open Space; Design of Open Space; Children's Play Facilities; Intensive Sports Facilities; Port Recreational Uses.

9.2 Recreation and Amenity Aims

The Aims of the Plan for Recreation and Amenity are as follows:

- ▶ Seek the provision of adequate open space, amenities and recreational facilities to meet both the current population and the projected needs of the town.
- ▶ Promote the accessibility of recreational and amenity facilities to all sectors of the population.
- ▶ Promote the efficient use of resources in meeting the needs of the town.
- ▶ Ensure a high standard of design of all recreational and amenity facilities.

9.3 Loss of Open Space

Wicklow Town contains a significant amount of open space relative to its size and compact nature. These include formal spaces such as the sports pitches, tennis courts and golf course as well as informal spaces such as at the Murrough, the west bank of the Leirim river and the Ballyguile Hill area. The existence of so much centrally located open space is a unique quality of the town and is one that delivers a high level of accessibility to the residents of the town. Only in circumstances where the quality and size of a given open space facility stands to be enhanced through relocation shall the loss of open space be considered. In such circumstances, the relocated facility or amenity should retain a high level of accessibility to the entire town.

Policy RA 1: The Council will not normally permit development which would result in the loss of public or private playing fields, parks, children's place space, amenity open space or land zoned for recreational or open space purposes. Exceptions may include where compensatory provision is made in the Town Environs.

Objective RA 1: Co-operate with Wicklow County Council in assisting community groups, local sports clubs and organisations, schools and developers in relation to the development of open space, amenity and recreational facilities.

Objective RA 2: Encourage, with the co-operation of Wicklow County Council, the use of appropriate lands in the environs of the town for the provision of land intensive recreation facilities.

9.4 Hierarchy of Open Space

It is important that open space amenities be accessible by all sectors of the population in the interest of fairness and sustainable development. The establishment of a hierarchy of open space can help deliver a high level of accessibility. This entails promoting a situation whereby every resident in the town lives within a comfortable walking distance (i.e. 300/400 metres) of a range of open space types such as formal parks and children's play areas. This hierarchy will also ensure that larger open spaces, such as large parks and walks, should be accessible to a reasonable extent.

Objective RA 3: The Council will seek to ensure that all residents have reasonable access to a range of different types of open space.

9.5 Design of Open Space

The design of open space should reflect the need to develop spaces that are practical, safe and attractive. The Town Council will normally expect all open space provision to take account of the following principles as set out in Policy RA 2 below.

Policy RA 2: The Council shall require the following principles to be incorporated into any open space:

- (1) Open Space should be provided in a comprehensive and linked way designed as an integral part of development.
- (2) Open space areas should be of a demonstrated recreational or amenity value and small dysfunctional open spaces should be avoided.
- (3) Wherever possible the majority of open space should be multifunctional. Areas of informal amenity and children's play should be combined.
- (4) Areas should be easily and safely accessible from all dwellings which the space is designed to serve.
- (5) The design, location and appearance of open space areas should have regard to the amenities of nearby dwellings, for example, areas where chil-

dren may play should normally be overlooked by the fronts of nearby dwellings to provide for maximum surveillance and overlooking.

(6) Public open space should not be located so close to adjoining dwellings so as to cause undue noise or disturbance to existing or proposed residents.

(7) Attractive natural features should be protected and incorporated into open space areas.

9.6 Children's Play Facilities

As stated under Section 9.4 (Open Space Hierarchy), the Council seeks to ensure that every household is within a comfortable walking distance of children's play areas. This will be increasingly important as the town expands in size in accordance with the population projections.

Policy RA 3: It is the Town Council's intention to enhance the provision of children's play areas or developer contributions towards providing children's play facilities in association with new residential developments.

9.7 Intensive Sports Facilities

The intensive sports facilities in Wicklow Town are a significant source of amenity to the local community. There are several active sports clubs within the town covering sports such as soccer, GAA and rugby. As is the case with general open space, the relocation of such facilities is only justifiable where the facilities stand to be enhanced and expanded by relocation to an appropriate location in the Town Environs.

Policy RA 4: Developers will be required to make provision for sports and recreational infrastructure, if necessary in the environs of the town, commensurate with the needs generated by that development and the capacity of existing facilities in the area to cater for existing and future needs.

Policy RA 5: The Town Council will normally only permit development proposals for intensive sports facilities where all of the following criteria are met:

- (1) The proposal is compatible with development plan zonings.
- (2) There will be no detrimental impact on residential amenity.
- (3) It is located so as to be accessible to its catchment population and gives priority to walking, cycling, and public transport and does not generate unacceptable levels of traffic.
- (4) It is designed so as to minimise the impact of noise and light pollution.
- (5) There is no significant detrimental impact on the natural environment on features of the archaeologist or built heritage.
- (6) The proposal is of a high quality design and respects and contributes to the character of its location and townscape.

9.8 Port Leisure Uses

The potential of the Port as a recreation and amenity resource has remained largely unexplored to date. As the town fulfils its role as a regional services and employment centre and a concentration of population there will be a greater demand water based sports activities. Water based sports activities, such as sailing, also have the potential to attract more visitors to the town. The proximity of Wicklow Town to Dun Laoghaire Harbour underlines this potential.

Objective RA 4: The Town Council will encourage any recreational use of the Port, waterside or landside that does not compromise its commercial operation.

Objective RA 5: The Town Council support the provision of a pontoon to facilitate recreational or pleasure craft where this is also compatible with the commercial operation of the Port.

9.9 Natural Amenities

Much of the Recreation and Amenity resources in the town are to be found in its natural amenities. The coastline, the River Leitrim and Ballyguile Hill are the prime examples of this natural resource. These natural amenities provide the local community and visitors to the town with the opportunity to enjoy activities such as sailing, fishing and walking. The continued use of these amenities should be encouraged and facilitated and balanced against the need to protect their environmental and ecological values (see Chapter 10 Natural Environment for policies relating to the protection of these areas).

Objective RA 6: Enhance the attractiveness of the town for tourists by utilising to the maximum, but in an environmentally sustainable way, the potential of the Murrough and by providing attractive, civic areas and open spaces linked by an attractive network of pedestrian routes.

Objective RA 7: Maximise the amenity potential of natural features in the town such as the River Leitrim and Ballyguile Hill.

Objective RA8: The Council will consider providing a public realm strategy.

Chapter 10.

Natural Environment

10.1 Introduction

The Natural Environment includes those spaces outside of the built environment such as the coastal area, large open spaces, rivers and waterways and agricultural land. The Natural Environment provides a habitat for a variety of species and is a source of amenity for human settlements. Despite the fact that the Wicklow Town Council area is urban in character, the area includes several significant elements of the Natural Environment such as the Murrough/coastal area, the River Leitrim, the land attached to the Dominican convent and several groupings of trees. Apart from their intrinsic ecological value as habitats for a variety of animal species these elements of the environment provide direct and indirect benefits to the population of Wicklow Town and its surrounds. They are places where people can engage in recreational activities such as walking, swimming, sailing and playing formal and informal field sports. These also provide a visual amenity that enhances the attractiveness of the town as a place in which to live and work. These assets are therefore worth protecting.

Each of these elements of the Natural Environment are utilised in some way by the town's population. The coastal area and foreshore are used for the transport of goods by the Port; the River Leitrim is used for recreational purposes like fishing and for drainage; the Convent lands represent an excellent example of sustainable enterprise in the form of a permaculture farm and eco-centre; and the golf course is used for both passive and active recreation (i.e. golf and walking). In other cases they have come under pressure from development. For example, parts of the Convent lands have been taken up by residential development in recent times and developments at the Port and the Murrough have encroached upon the coastal and river environments respectively. However, it is not possible to say that all of these uses have had a negative impact upon the Natural Environment. The impact of developments and uses within the town upon its natural resources range from negative to neutral and in some cases they have been positive. It will therefore be important to recognise the following principles:

- There is a need to balance the protection of these natural resources against the need to allow the town to develop and grow based upon the value and sensitivity of these resources.
- The need to protect and the need to develop do not always compete against each other.
- The preservation of those areas with a national protection designation should be protected as an absolute.
- The rest of this Chapter is structured as follows: Natural Environment Aims; National Designations; The Murrough/coastline; River Leitrim; Green Spaces; and Tree Groupings.

10.2 Natural Environment Aims

The aims for the management and protection of the natural heritage in Wicklow Town are as follows:

- ▶ Protect the town's statutory protection designations such as the Natural Heritage Areas, the Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas.
- ▶ Implement the relevant objectives of the County Wicklow Heritage Plan 2004-2008 and the national sustainable development strategy, "Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland".
- ▶ Identify areas of potentially significant ecological value outside of the currently designated areas and adopt appropriate policies for their protection.
- ▶ Protect the amenity value of areas of natural beauty.
- ▶ Facilitate the protection of the Murrough coastal area from erosion.
- ▶ Achieve the status objectives as set out in the Water Framework Directive.

10.3 National Designations

Certain areas within the Wicklow Town Council area are covered by national and European protection designations.

Designated Area	Designation
Broadlough (Ref: IE0004128)	Special Protection Area (SPA)
The Murrough Wetlands (Site Code: IE0002249)	Special Area of Conservation Candidate (SACc)
The Murrough (Site Code: 000730)	Proposed Natural Heritage Area *(NHA)
Wicklow Town Sites (Site Code: 001929): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leitrim River sub-site • Black Castle sub-site 	Flora Protection Order

Source: Dept. of Environment, Heritage and Local Government
The areas listed above are shown on the Planning Objectives Map.

Special Protection Area

The Broadlough Special Protection Area (SPA) is situated at the Murrough at the northern town boundary and is the only such site so designated within the Wicklow Town boundary. This designation is the result of the EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) and is intended to protect habitats and the sites that comprise the migratory paths of bird species. This site has been designated as an SPA because it supports a number of waterfowl species and is of regional importance. The area in the vicinity of Broadlough is likely to come under sustained development pressure within the lifetime of the Plan.

Objective NE1: It is an objective of the Council to protect the Broadlough area from the negative impacts of adjacent development.

Objective NE2: To ensure that the effect of development upon the Broadlough SPA is properly assessed Wicklow Town Council will cooperate with Wicklow County Council in ensuring the role of Broadlough as a waterfowl habitat is maintained (see Chapter 16 Development Management, Section 16.17 and Chapter 15 Opportunity Areas, Section 15.3).

Special Area of Conservation

Special Areas of Conservation are prime wildlife conservation areas considered to be important in national and European terms. Special Areas of Conservation are selected according to the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). The Murrough Wetlands have been designated as an SAC part of which extends into the Wicklow Town Council area at the northern boundary. The site overlaps with the SPA and is designated for its value as a habitat for both flora and fauna species. As it is intended that this designation protects both natural and semi-natural habitats and given that the Murrough area within the Town Council boundary is zoned for industrial use and has experienced a certain amount development, the Council will seek to ensure its ongoing but sensitive development.

Objective NE3: To ensure that future development in the Murrough SAC incorporates measures to minimize impact upon the local flora and fauna habitats (see Chapter 16 Development Management, Section 16.17 and Chapter 15 Opportunity Areas, Section 15.3).

Natural Heritage Area

Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) are established under Irish law and are similar in general principle to the SACs. There is a proposed NHA in the Wicklow Town Council area at the Murrough. This proposed NHA overlaps with the SAC area and has been designated for protection because of its range of coastal and freshwater habitats, some of which contain threatened flora and fauna. The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government stipulates that the ecological value of proposed NHAs be recognized by Planning and Licensing Authorities. Under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000 NHAs will be legally protected from damage from the date they are formally proposed. The site is restricted to the banks of the River Leitrim and the coastal area of the Murrough.

Objective NE4: To ensure that future development does not have a material impact upon the Murrough NHA by requiring future development proposals to include a report on potential impacts and incorporate mitigation measures accordingly (see Chapter 16 Development Management, Section 16.17 and Chapter 15 Opportunity Areas, 15.3).

Flora Protection Orders

There are two sub-sites within the town that contain floral species protected under the Floral Protection Order 1987 as follows:

Leitrim River — Supports rare species on the gravelly river bank

Blackcastle — Supports rare species on the landward side of the cliffs

The area of the River Leitrim riverbank designated under the Flora Protection Order overlaps

with the proposed Murrough NHA. It is a planning objective to protect this area against potentially negative impacts from development at the Murrough. The area surrounding the Blackcastle is zoned as Open Space/Amenity. This zone designation is consistent with the aim of protecting the rare floral species supported in the Blackcastle area. A bufferzone along river bank is proposed in the Murrough and Bollarney North areas (see Chapter 16 Development Management, Section 16.17).

The Council when assessing all planning applications will consider the impact on the natural environment.

10.4 Coastal Management

The coastal area between the Town Council boundaries extends for approximately 3 kilometres. The coastal area is an important recreational, commercial and ecological resource for the town. For example, it supports uses such as: the Port; walking; bathing/swimming; sailing; fishing; habitat for a variety of marine species; and others. The coastal area is also an important visual amenity that adds to the attractiveness of Wicklow Town. It should be noted that the Port area is dealt with separately in Chapter 14.

Outside of the Town Council boundaries, the County Wicklow coast is subject to a Coastal Management Plan as incorporated in the Wicklow County Development Plan 2004-2010. The Wicklow Town Environs Plan 2001 has an objective to support this Coastal Management Plan. The County Council Coastal Management Plan states that it will provide for the land-use zoning provisions of the Wicklow Town Environs Plan as a Central Objective and that it will provide for the protection of the SPAs and NHA designated at the Murrough. The coastal area within the Town Environs Plan is zoned for a mixture of industrial and open space/amenity.

The Coastal Protection Section of the Dept. of Communications, Marine & Natural Resources may be contacted in relation to proposals near the coast.

The primary issues facing the coastal area of the town are: (i) erosion; (ii) pollution; and (iii) the general effects of development pressure at the Murrough.

(i) Erosion: The amenity walk, which extends beyond the town boundary, has come under the threat of erosion in recent years. Preventative measures are required to stop this process if this important local amenity is to be preserved.

(ii) Pollution: The coastal area experiences a certain level of pollution resulting from industrial and commercial Port activities and the foul and storm water drainage outfall from the River Leitrim. The development of the Sewage Treatment Plant on Wicklow County Council lands, proposed for completion within the lifetime of the Plan, will eliminate the outfall of foul water drainage into the River Leitrim and the coastal sea area. This Sewage Treatment Plant will serve the entire Town and its Environs

(iii) Development Pressure at the Murrough: The Murrough is likely to come under significant development pressure within the lifetime of this Plan. It is Town Council policy that the area be developed for mixed use (see Chapter 15 Opportunity Areas). Redevelopment of the Murrough should not negatively affect the amenity or ecological value of the Murrough coastal area. The land-use zoning policy of open space/amenity will protect the water's edge/walk area at the Murrough.

Policy NE1: Facilitate the protection of the Murrough from sea erosion.

Policy NE2: Facilitate the development and operation of the Sewage Treatment Plant at the Murrough.

Policy NE3: Ensure that development at the Murrough is consistent with the need to protect the coastal area as an amenity and ecological resource.

10.5 River Leitrim

As previously stated, much of the banks of the River Leitrim within the town boundaries are designated as an SAC and proposed NHA. These designations are supported by appropriate planning policies. The water quality of the River Leitrim will improve upon the opening of the Sewage Treatment Plant at the Murrough. The river should be protected as an important natural resource, which provides opportunities for recreational activities for the town's inhabitants such as riverside walk, fishing and swimming, etc. The river bank on the western/Town Centre side, which is zoned as Open Space/Amenity, has the potential for further development as a local amenity. The effects of future development proposal upon the river should be carefully assessed and monitored. In sensitive areas adjacent to the River Leitrim, the ERFB will be consulted in relation to the 10m buffer zone.

Policy NE4: Development proposals within 10 metres of the edge of the River Leitrim shall have to demonstrate their potential impact upon the river and propose appropriate mitigation measures (see Chapter 16 Development Management, Section 16.17).

Policy NE5: The Eastern Regional Fisheries Board will be consulted where the impact of development on watercourses is likely to be significant.

Policy NE6: The culverting of all open water channels will only be permitted where no other options are either viable or otherwise appropriate.

Objective NE5: The riverside walk on the western bank of the River Leitrim shall be improved.

10.6 Green Spaces

This section deals with significant areas of green open space that are a source of bio-diversity and visual amenity. The major sports spaces in the town are omitted from this section due to their main recreational purpose. The golf course is included due to its exceptional value as a source of bio-diversity and visual amenity. The Murrough coastal walk and the Leitrim river walk are omitted as they have been dealt with already. The spaces addressed in this section are as follows:

- Wicklow Golf Course
- Convent Lands
- Ballyguile Hill

Wicklow Golf Course is zoned as Open Space/Amenity, which supports its continued role as a valuable element of the natural heritage. All the green open space in the Convent lands is zoned as Mixed Use. The ecological value of these lands is enhanced by the use of part of it as an organic farm. Development of these lands within the lifetime of this Plan is unlikely. However, should circumstances change within this time period, the Council will seek to ensure the retention of open space in any development proposals. Ballyguile Hill forms a natural visual boundary to the town and is the location for impressive views over the town and the coastal surrounds. This area should be preserved from further development with the exception of works to improve its amenity value.

10.7 Views and Prospects

There are five Listed Views in the Plan. Three Views are from the Dunbur Road and two are from the edge of the Blackcastle area (see Planning Objectives Map). These Views provide an important amenity and showcase for the natural beauty of the town's setting.

Policy NE7: Protect the Listed Views from inappropriate development or obstruction from public access.

10.8 Trees

Trees, whether individually or in groups, make a valuable contribution to the bio-diversity and amenities of the town. Groups of trees in urban areas can act as an attractive visual relief to the built environment and as an absorber of carbon emissions. A Tree Preservation Order is proposed at the Church Hill and River Leitrim riverbank area (see Planning Objectives Map) in respect of the group of trees situated there. This group of trees is preserved from any cutting down, topping, lopping or wilful destruction pending the final decision of the Council.

Mature trees situated elsewhere in the town, whether in groups or individually, should be preserved where possible.

Any interference to hedges/trees during the breeding season (March 1st - August 31st) is now an offence under the Wildlife Act 2000

Policy NE8: There shall be a presumption against the felling, topping, lopping or wilful destruction of mature trees as part of development proposals. Where a development proposal involves the felling, topping, lopping or threatens the destruction of a mature tree or trees, a tree survey will need to be included in the submission, carried out by a qualified Tree Specialist to justify the exceptional circumstances for their interference. A mature tree for these purposes shall be defined as being 3 metres or more in height (see Chapter 16 Development Management, Section 16.5).

Objective NE6: To preserve the group of trees at Church Hill and the River Leitrim river bank in co-operation with the owner(s) and/or occupier(s) of the land.

Chapter 11. Tourism

11.1 Introduction

Wicklow Town is an attractive seaside resort on the lower slopes of the Ballyguile Hill about 26 kilometres south of Bray. A pebble beach runs for 19 kilometres north of the town. The street pattern is complemented by a number of well maintained attractive structures at key points throughout the Town Centre. The richness of the Town Centre is further enhanced by a broad range of retail/commercial and professional outlets providing a good range of goods and services.

Tourism has been a major industry for County Wicklow for many years. Wicklow Town has developed its own tourism and visitor economy capitalising on its qualities as a cultural destination and area of local distinctiveness. The town and its surroundings function as an important gateway and base for regional tourism, being in close reach of a number of important destinations such as Dublin Airport, Glendalough, Powerscourt etc.

The existing places of interest to visitors include: The Historic Gaol, Black Castle, Ruins of the Franciscan Friary, The Harbour and The Murrough Beach. Whilst there is an emphasis on increasing the quantity of visitors to the town, the development of a sustainable tourism product is needed to produce long term returns. This chapter includes policies and objectives for the protection and promotion of Tourism within Wicklow Town.

The chapter is set out as follows: Tourism Aims, Strengths and Weaknesses, Cultural Tourism, Recreational Tourism, Access and Promotion, Management.

11.2 Tourism Aims

The following are the Strategic Goals that govern the Tourism policies and objectives:

- To provide a friendly and welcoming first impression for visitors on all entrance roads.
- To develop a high quality tourism experience for the benefit and enjoyment of both visitors and residents.
- To support the growth of tourism in Wicklow Town by working together to increase marketing impact.
- Develop infrastructure and transport networks to improve visitors' experiences of Wicklow Town and the region and to bring added community and environmental benefits.

Key outcomes from our strategic objectives should:

- Instill civic pride.
- Improve satisfaction for locals and visitors
- Upgrade quality of visit
- Encourage repeat visits by tourists
- Enhance the environment
- Promote a growing and prosperous economy

11.3 Strengths and Weaknesses

Wicklow Town recognises the following strengths/weaknesses/opportunities and threats of Wicklow Town

Table 11.3.1 SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An established evening culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor signage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A seaside resort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic circulation problems in Town Centre
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An attractive natural setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of research and information on tourism in Wicklow Town
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to Dublin 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dense concentration of built heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neglected areas within the town – e.g. The Murrough
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourist supporting infrastructure – retail/services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some evidence of dereliction and vacancy in Town Centre
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good range of outdoor activities 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good marketing 	

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve signage throughout the town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the image of Wicklow Town through physical improvements to the public realm/public spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited resources within Town Council • Development Pressure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An attractive natural setting 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the tourism product within Wicklow Town– festivals and events 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the promotion of Wicklow Town through information points 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce flexible parking arrangements for festivals/events – weekend parking tickets 	

11.4 Cultural Tourism

Cultural Tourism is a key component of urban tourism based upon the arts and heritage characteristics of towns and cities. One of the major attractions of Wicklow Town for the domestic and foreign tourist is the wealth of local culture. Key to the successful marketing and promotion of Wicklow Town is the creation of a place synonymous with culture generally rather than the promotion of the town based upon a single cultural product.

The existing places of cultural interest to visitors include: The Historic Gaol, Black Castle, Ruins of the Franciscan Friary, The Harbour, Wicklow Town Walk, Broadlough and the Murrough Beach. Wicklow holds an Arts Festival every May and has hosted the GAA National Feile Peil na n'og, Wicklow Regatta Festival and the Round Ireland Yacht Race. Wicklow Town enjoys a great reputation for the amateur arts being a home to a significant number of artists as well as musicians, both traditional and non-traditional. Whilst there is an emphasis on increasing the quantity of visitors to the town, the development of a sustainable tourism product is needed to produce long term returns.

Policy TS1: Improve the signposting of historic and cultural heritage facilities in an attractive and well designed manner.

Policy TS2: Support the provision of workshop space for artists in suitable buildings.

Policy TS3: Promote and develop interpretative signs and information boards at important sites of archaeological interest, heritage and nature conservation within Wicklow Town.

Policy TS4: Support and promote with the co-operation of private land owners public access to heritage sites and features of archaeological interest.

Policy TS5: Ensure Council-owned theatres, galleries, museums, leisure centres and open spaces provide a quality experience for local residents and visitors.

Policy TS6: Encourage improvements to the quality of accommodation, attractions and visitor services.

Objective TS1: Encourage the Franciscan Friary Gardens as a key tourist attraction in Wicklow Town and examine opportunities to open up physical connections between it and the Town Centre.

Objective TS2: Support the development of specialist tourist shops at ground floor level within Wicklow Town Centre.

Objective TS3: Support the upgrading of the Stone Bridge to highlight its importance as a key attraction in Wicklow Town.

Objective TS4: Improve gateways into Wicklow Town through the use of signage and appropriate planting/landscape works.

11.5 Recreational Tourism

Direct benefits of recreational spaces contribute to physical and physiological health by creating attractive surroundings and opportunities for leisure pursuits. Tourism opportunities arise out of this where the recreational experience is extended to an overnight stay or where a recreational facility or pursuit becomes an attraction.

There are a wide range of recreational tourism activities within Wicklow Town available, including fishing; horse riding and equestrian centres; golf; walking and cycling; as well as a growing number of bars, restaurants and night clubs. Major recreational facilities in the town include the Coral Leisure Centre as well as the Wicklow Golf Club.

Wicklow Town Council recognises that the further development of new and improved tourism and recreation facilities will assist in the sector's growth. Such developments will help make the town more attractive to both the local community and visitors alike. It also has the potential for economic development and employment generation.

Policy TS7: To harness the economic benefits of recreational tourism in Wicklow Town through sustainable means, including the protection and enhancement of sensitive landscapes and the minimisation of any adverse impacts of recreation and tourism infrastructure provision.

Policy TS8: Promote the development of recreational tourism activities such as bird watching, boat clubs and the golf course.

Policy TS9: To protect and enhance the character of the seafront area and to provide for the development and improvement of appropriate tourism and leisure uses, consistent with the protection of residential amenity (see Chapter 15 Opportunity Areas, 15.2).

Policy TS10: Improve the appearance, attraction and amenity of the area through Seafront Improvement Schemes and develop guidelines for this area.

Policy TS11: To ensure that all sections of the population have access to recreation tourism facilities in the town.

Objective TS5: Explore the provision for fishing stands at the Murrough so as to enhance the attraction of the shore for angling.

Objective TS6: Promote the development of natural tourism activities on the Leirim River such as bird watching, walkways and flora and fauna trails.

Objective TS7: Facilitate the improvement of the environmental quality and appearance of the seashore in the Murrough through the creation of a landscaped linear park with dedicated pedestrian and cycle ways, planting and picnic areas (see Chapter 15 Opportunity Areas, Section 15.3, and Chapter 16 Development Management, Section 16.17).

11.6 Access and Promotion

With so many destinations and products competing for consumers' attention it is becoming harder for Wicklow Town to promote itself as a unique tourist destination. A stronger Wicklow Town branding could add value to the destinations and products within the town that are meaningful to visitors. Parts of Wicklow Town already have a strong brand identity such as the Gaol and the Black Castle. However, areas such as the Murrough and the Franciscan Friary should be exploited more vigorously in marketing. All parts of the county, however, will benefit from being associated with Wicklow Town, and for the less well known areas it may make sense to lead with this.

Policy TS12: To support and assist in attracting investment for, and the development of, high quality tourism and leisure facilities, where these offer potential to attract additional visitors

Policy TS13: To support the development of a year-round programme of events and festivals.

Policy TS14: To aim for excellence in the provision of information for visitors and residents through Wicklow County Tourism and other appropriate access points.

Policy TS15: To support and positively encourage the provision of tourism facilities in keeping with the County Tourism Strategy.

11.7 Management

To achieve the changes required by the strategic objectives for tourism in Wicklow Town will require investment and commitment on the part of local, sub-regional, county and regional organisations. Wicklow Town Council will work in effective partnerships with appropriate stakeholders for the benefit of visitors, the tourism industry and residents in Wicklow Town to drive the management of policies and objectives from this Development Plan and from the County Tourism Strategy ensuring a long-term future for the industry and provide the evidence required to produce an accurate evaluation of tourism across Wicklow.

A Tourism Action Plan would be beneficial to identify key priorities, timescales, resources and the role of stakeholders, partnership mechanisms, management and monitoring. It should be updated and monitored for performance regularly.

Policy TS 16: To support the implementation of a Tourism Strategy in the development of a sustainable tourism product for Wicklow Town.

Chapter 12. Social Inclusion

12.1 Introduction

The Planning and Development Act 2000 requires that Development Plans include objectives for the integration of the planning and sustainable development of a respective area with the social and community needs of its population. This entails ensuring that the planning policies and objectives of this Plan are consistent with the goal of delivering equality of access to housing and employment opportunities and community services in Wicklow Town. The public consultation process involved in the formulation of this Plan has been central to identifying the barriers faced by the town's inhabitants in accessing these opportunities and services and the social and community needs of the area. The policies and objectives of the Plan will help reduce these barriers and guide the future development of the town in a manner that helps spread the benefits of growth across the entire population of the town. This purpose of this Chapter is not to repeat the policies and objectives relating to issues such as social housing, public transport or community facilities, etc.

This Chapter deals with how the policies and objectives of the Plan address the needs of groups that could be considered vulnerable to exclusion from the opportunities and services outlined previously. The Chapter is set out in accordance with this approach as follows: Unemployed; Travellers; Disabled People; Single Parents; Young People; Children; Elderly; Homeless; Migrants and Ethnic Minorities; and Education.

12.2 Unemployment

In the area covered by the Wicklow Town Social Welfare Area Office, the unemployment rate is approximately 10%, which is above the national level. Figure 12.2.1 shows an increase since 2001.

Figure 12.2.1 Unemployment Levels in Wicklow Town Area Office 2001-2006

2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
672	745	889	858	863	810

Source: Live Register

The Plan promotes a reduction in unemployment levels in the area through the following policies:

- ▶ Provide a sufficient amount of zoned and serviced land for employment uses.
- ▶ Promote Wicklow Town as an attractive location for investment through co-ordination with agencies such as the IDA.
- ▶ Encourage the development of national growth industries such as information technology in Wicklow Town.
- ▶ Ensure good transport links between residential areas and employment uses within and outside the town.

12.3 Travellers

The traveller population of Wicklow Town numbers approximately 20 families. It is a requirement of the Planning and Development Act 2000 that objectives be included in the Development Plan for the provision of accommodation for travellers, and the use of particular areas for that purpose. The provision of accommodation for travellers should be informed by the need to provide a high level of residential amenity and integration with existing and proposed residential areas. The Council will seek to provide permanent housing and a halting site for Travellers.

Policy SI1: The Council shall comply with the provisions of the Traveller Accommodation Act 1998.

Policy SI2: The Council will integrate the housing needs of travellers with programme for the provision of social housing.

Objective SI1: The Council shall facilitate the development of a halting site within the Town Council area.

12.4 Disabled People

According to the 2006 Census there were 642 disabled persons living in Wicklow Town at that time. The figure for the Wicklow Electoral Area was 1,830. Providing for the access needs of disabled people is essential to the delivery of social inclusion in Wicklow Town. In 2004, Wicklow Town Council adopted the Barcelona Declaration, which is the European Convention on accessibility. This Convention addresses a range of issues related to disabled access in the context of the built environment and housing design. The Council will ensure that new developments incorporate the requirements for disabled access for people with visual, hearing and mobility impairments in line with Part M of the Building Regulations, through the application of the development control standards in Chapter 16.

Policy SI3: Future works to public open space will address the requirements of those who are mobility impaired by provision of the following where appropriate:

- Designated parking spaces for mobility impaired
- Dished footpaths
- Provision of ramps

Policy SI4: All new public buildings and additions to existing buildings will be accessible to people with visual, hearing and mobility disabilities.

12.5 Single Parents

The Council will incorporate the needs of lone parents into the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. In order to enable the participation of single parents in the local economy, in further education and access to services and amenities of the town, the Council will facilitate the provision of childcare and further education services.

12.6 Young People

The public consultation process highlighted the gap in the provision of community services and facilities for young people. It was found that, where such facilities exist, they are, in most cases, oriented toward sports activities. The underprovision of social and multi-functional community venues for young people creates an environment which facilitates under-age drinking, vandalism and various other types of anti-social behaviour. The Council will promote and facilitate the provision of a multi-functional venue for young people in the town. It is recognised that the development of the Marlton Road Action Area has the potential to help close the gap in the provision of such facilities.

12.7 Children

The 0-4 and 5-9 age cohorts in Wicklow Town are relatively large. As previously stated, the Council will facilitate the provision of childcare facilities. Such facilities should take account of the Childcare Regulations 1997 and Childcare Facilities – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2001 and have a high level of accessibility. The Council will also provide another children's playground in order to cater for the existing and anticipated demand. Large scale residential or commercial schemes will be required to include childcare facilities.

12.8 Elderly

The Council will consider the needs of the elderly in the following areas:

- Social housing
- Accessibility
- Community Facilities

Policy SI5: The design of public spaces and buildings will reflect the potential mobility constraints of the elderly.

12.9 Homeless

The Social Housing Programme of the Council is aimed at meeting the housing needs of those who are not in a financial position to purchase their own home. Social infrastructure such as community centres that incorporate "drop in" centres and outreach facilities to homeless people can also help in alleviating this problem as it arises.

Policy SI6: The Council will support initiatives to address homelessness in Wicklow Town.

12.10 Multicultural Society and Ethnic Minorities

Wicklow Town Council acknowledges the benefits of a culturally diverse population to society in general and to the vitality of urban areas in particular. It will assist and encourage the full integration of all non-Irish born migrants currently residing in Wicklow Town, as well as that of future migrants who will arrive during the period of this Plan.

Policy SI7: The Council will facilitate the provision of relevant support services and cultural facilities for the migrants, ethnic minorities and cultural groups.

Objective SI2: The Council will endeavour to provide outline information on its services and functions in the native languages of the main cultural groups residing in Wicklow Town, and in the language of lesser cultural groups deemed at risk of social exclusion.

12.11 Education

Education is vital to the ongoing growth of the town as an employment and service sector. The growth in population of the town also demands a complementary growth in educational provision. This carries important implications with regard to social inclusion. For example, it will be important to ensure that obstacles to education, such as being required to commute long distances to school, are not put in the way of low income families. The Council will facilitate, under current proposed zonings, the provision of two new primary schools, one likely to the north and the other to the south.

Policy SI8: The Council will facilitate the provision of new educational facilities within the Town Council area.

The Council will consider on their merits proposals for educational facilities and schools within mixed use sites and within areas subject to Action Area Plans.

Policy SI9: The Council recognises the need for the amalgamation and relocation of the De La Salle and Abbey Community Schools. The Council will facilitate the relocation of this amalgamated educational facility in the Town Environs in the interests of providing a large and more efficient facility.

Chapter 13.

Town Centre

13.1 Introduction

The Town Centre acts as the focus for community life and economic activity of the town and its hinterland and is a major source of the town's identity. The concentration of shops, places of employment, leisure venues and meeting places characterizes Town Centres. The accommodation of these uses and functions and the management of the pressures they create is the key to a successful and vibrant Town Centre.

Wicklow Town Centre is approximately 391 ha in area. Its physical extent is largely defined by the length of Main Street with the inclusion of the surrounding area that enjoys direct access from Main Street. The Town Centre is linked with the Port area via the South Quay at its easternmost extent.

The shops and services of Wicklow Town Centre are located primarily along Main Street. The small plot sizes of Main Street limit the ability of the Town Centre to accommodate large individual floorspaces. The relatively constrained size of the Town Centre magnifies the negative effects of the traffic that is attracted into and through it. The foundation of the character of the Town Centre has been established by its historic layout and architectural heritage, which has informed and guided its continued development. It will be important that the design of future development within the Town Centre build upon this foundation in order to enhance its attractiveness and consolidate its identity in an increasingly competitive environment for Town Centres. It is a goal of this Plan to address the issues of space constraint and traffic congestion in Wicklow Town Centre. This chapter is divided into the following main headings: Town Centre Aims; Land-Uses; Urban Design; and Traffic Management and Transport. The specific planning policy and planning objectives for the Town Centre are inserted under these headings as appropriate.

13.2 Town Centre Aims

The following is the list of Aims, which form the framework for the policies and objectives for the Town Centre:

- (i) Promote the development of the Town Centre as an attractive venue for shopping, tourism and community life and preserve its historic character
- (ii) Encourage the development of the Town Centre as the primary location for retail and other commercial development in the town and its hinterland
- (iii) Future development in the Town Centre should be of a high quality design standard and should respond positively to the town's historic character
- (iv) The historic character of the Town Centre should be protected
- (v) Facilitate the reduction of traffic congestion in the Town Centre
- (vi) Provide for easy and safe pedestrian movement throughout the Town Centre
- (vii) Expand the Town Centre

13.3 Retail

The continued focus on the Town Centre for commerce, employment and various other services in Wicklow Town has heavily influenced its growth and contributed to its identity. However, in common with many other Town Centres, it has come under increasing pressure from out-of-centre and out-of-town shopping centres in recent years. Despite retail being the main use in the Town Centre, the size and range of shops has remained relatively static compared to what is on offer outside the town and this is reflected in the expenditure leakage from the Main Street shops especially, to centres in Dublin and Bray. Traffic congestion, lack of car parking space, small individual floor plate sizes and the generally constrained size of the Town Centre have affected its ability to compete for customers and retailers.

The following are key considerations:

- **Identity:** A vibrant Town Centre is key to the identity of Wicklow Town as it represents continuity with the past and can continue to inform the town's identity in a positive manner. A viable retail market is essential if the Town Centre is to continue to fulfil this role.
- **Sustainability:** The Town Centre has existing retail facilities, associated services such as restaurants and cafes and a supporting infrastructure of roads, footpaths and underground services. The principles of sustainable development dictate that this resource should be used, reused and redeveloped where necessary.
- **Location:** The Town Centre is, by definition, situated at more or less the centre of the town, although certain parts of the Wicklow Town Centre zoning are located at the periphery. With regard to that area around Main Street, this means that the shopping facilities are approximately equidistant to the peripheral residential areas, which delivers an equality of access opportunity to the greatest amount of people living in the town, particularly on foot.
- **Competition and Choice:** A strong retail market in the Town Centre will help to provide the optimum choice to the inhabitants of the town and its hinterland. This will be increasingly important given the population growth projected for the town.
- **Retail Planning Guidelines:** The Retail Planning Guidelines state that shopping makes a major contribution to the vitality and viability of Town Centres and that it is therefore important that they retain retailing as a core function.

The following table shows the amount of retail floorspace in Wicklow Town classified in terms of convenience (food/grocery), comparison (non-food) and retail warehouse (bulk goods).

Table 13.3.1

Type of Retail	Gross Floorspace
Convenience Retail Floorspace	4,799m ²
Comparison Retail Floorspace	4,539m ²
Warehouse Retail Floorspace	900m ²

Source: Draft Wicklow County Retail Strategy

Convenience Retail

With the development of Tesco and Lidl, the Town Centre zoning has seen its share of convenience retail floorspace fall. Apart from the Supervalu supermarket at Church street, convenience floorspace in the Town Centre is restricted to small-scale newsagents and specialised outlets such as butchers and delicatessens. The small plot widths that characterise the Town Centre and the limited availability of car parking space mean that it is unlikely to accommodate a significant expansion of convenience floorspace in the future. Consumers will generally require the use of a car for their weekly grocery shop and as car-parking is restricted in the Town Centre there is only a very limited capacity to provide additional convenience. Apart from the Supervalu, the role of the Town Centre in terms of convenience retail is likely to be restricted to “top-up” shopping and specialised operators.

Policy TC1: Facilitate the provision of small-scale convenience shops in the Town Centre for “top-up” shopping.

Objective TC1: Facilitate the expansion and redevelopment of the Supervalu site for convenience retail development.

Comparison Retail

The Town Centre retains the majority share of comparison retail floorspace in Wicklow town. These include clothes, electronic goods and hardware shops and are primarily located on Main Street though they are also to be found at the Supervalu site on Church Street. Niche comparison retail use is the most suitable and desirable type of retail for Wicklow Town Centre as it has the potential to give the Town Centre a competitive advantage over other retail centres and does not have the same level of dependency upon car borne custom. This would include, for example, high value clothes stores, antiques shops and art galleries, etc. This type of retail use does not require large floor plates to the same extent as other retail uses. In order to retain and strengthen its retail function, Wicklow Town Centre needs to expand its comparison retail offer.

Policy TC2: Facilitate the development of floorspace within the Town Centre for comparison or non-food retail use.

Shop Sizes

The relatively small plot widths of buildings, particularly on Main street, puts the Town Centre at a competitive disadvantage to other retail centres that can offer operators large floor plates. This makes it difficult to attract large high street chains that would boost the attractiveness and profile of the Town Centre and maintain its vitality and viability. The assembly of floorplates within the Town Centre, particularly along Main Street should be encouraged and facilitated in order to provide large comparison retail outlets.

Policy TC3: The Council will facilitate the creation of large floorplates for retail use in the Town Centre through the sensitive merging of two or more buildings. Where such a merging is proposed, regard should be had to the established streetscape and the need to preserve traditional shopfronts. (See Chapter 5, Section 5.4)

Ground Floor Retail

There will be a presumption in favour of retail floorspace at ground floor level to maintain its critical mass of shops. This will be particularly important in the Core Shopping Area (see Objectives Map, Appendix 4) as identified by the Draft County Retail Strategy.

Policy TC4: There will be a presumption in favour of retail use for the ground floor areas of buildings in the Core Shopping Area.

13.4 Professional Services

Office uses have a significant presence in Wicklow Town Centre. This use can often have a complementary relationship with that of retail. Whereas retail uses will generally occupy the ground floor, the upper floors of buildings in the Town Centre will often be suited to office uses that do not require ground floor presence, particularly professional services. Uses such as this provide important services and employment to the population of Wicklow Town and its surrounds. Office use is entirely consistent with the role of the Town Centre as the commercial and services focus for Wicklow Town consistent with its designation in the Regional Planning Guidelines. It will be important to facilitate the provision of the infrastructure necessary to retain and attract office use in the Town Centre.

Policy TC5: Facilitate the provision of office space particularly in the upper floors of buildings in the Town Centre.

13.5 Entertainment and Leisure

Entertainment and leisure uses include pubs, nightclubs, restaurants, cafes, theatres, cinemas and tourist attractions such as the Wicklow Gaol. These uses attract people into the Town Centre in large numbers sustaining activity within it after normal business hours in the evening and maintaining its position as the focal point for community life in the town. Most of these uses in Wicklow Town are concentrated in the Town Centre due to the size and relatively compact nature of the town. The demand for such uses will increase as the town expands in line with the projections in the national and regional planning strategies. Due to the competition between various other uses for limited space within the Town Centre, it is inevitable that a certain amount of this demand will be met outside of the Town Centre. In order to ensure that the Town Centre maintains its profile as the primary venue for such activities it will be important that planning policy encourages and facilitates the expansion of these essential Town Centre activities.

Policy TC6: Facilitate, where appropriate, the development of entertainment uses at locations with the Town Centre. The Town Centre shall be promoted as the most appropriate location for such uses.

13.6 Tourism

Wicklow Gaol is the major tourist attraction in Wicklow Town. It attracts 25,000 - 30,000 visitors to the town annually. The Gaol is promoted on a county-wide basis and benefits from the exposure the county receives to the national and international tourism market. There is significant potential to link the retail and entertainment/leisure uses in the Town Centre with visitors attracted to it by the Gaol and other tourist amenities and facilities. The Council shall promote the Town Centre as a tourist attraction in its own right.

Policy TC7: Promote linkages between Wicklow Gaol and other uses in the Town Centre such as retail, entertainment and leisure.

13.7 Residential

The percentage of the town's population living within the Town Centre is limited to a small number of townhouses on Main Street and its immediate surrounds. It is desirable to maintain an element of residential use in or close to the Town Centre as it provides night time activity. Significant residential presence in the Town Centre, adds vitality and viability to the Town Centre. However, it will be appropriate to limit residential development within the Town Centre to the upper floors of buildings given the pressure on land for commercial development. The Council shall ensure that any new residential developments within the Town Centre shall incorporate a non-residential, preferably retail use at the ground floor.

Policy TC8: Residential development within the Town Centre shall be limited to the upper floors of buildings.

Policy TC9: Where a new residential development is proposed, the ground floor shall be reserved for non-residential/retail use.

13.8 Urban Design

The urban fabric of the Town Centre is relatively intact, in so far as the medieval street pattern survives without significant alteration and the building fabric conforms, in the majority of cases, to the original plot sizes and building heights. Consequently, the streets within the Town Centre are of a uniform character resulting from similar street width to height ratios, street lengths and gradients.

The Town Centre has a compact footprint, arranged along the central spine of Main Street which terminates at each end in the focal points of Market Square and Fitzwilliam Square. The Mall occurs mid way along Main Street, adding a further focus. The steeply rising topography of the town away from the river and harbour has enabled this strong linear form and compact foot print to remain.

However, some areas of the Town Centre require significant environmental improvement, both in terms of building fabric and street materials and furniture, for example, the South Quay. In general terms, the Town Centre is lacking in trees and other soft landscaping including 'green' open spaces.

It is the intention of the Town Council to build on the strengths of the Town Centre's fabric and to improve the quality of the public realm, during the course of this Plan

The following policies and objectives will be implemented:

Streetscape and Layout:

Policy TC10: Implement the Cultural Heritage policies in chapter 8 attached to the Town Centre (see Chapter 16 Development Management)

Policy TC11: The existing streetscape will be protected and enhanced. New or redeveloped buildings shall respect the height of the existing streetscape, except in instances where the Town Council consider there are valid urban design reasons for increased height, for example, where a building would add definition to an urban space or key junction/corner site.

Policy TC12 The existing street pattern will be retained and enhanced. Proposals involving the construction of new streets or the widening of existing streets will not be accepted.

Policy TC13: The re-use of under utilised sites will be encouraged. The Town Council will utilise the provisions of the Derelict Sites Act 1990 to encourage the refurbishment of derelict properties.

Policy TC14: Encourage the retention and refurbishment of existing buildings of character in the Town Centre.

Policy TC15: New developments in the Town Centre will require the use of high quality materials which respect the existing streetscape.

Policy TC16 Encourage, strengthen and expand the pedestrian and cycle network in the Town Centre. Where feasible, encourage the construction of new pedestrian connections in the larger urban blocks between front and rear streets, provided the pedestrian connections are well overlooked for their entire length, at ground and upper levels.

Objective TC2: The Town Council will assist owners of protected structures in the maintenance and repair of their properties, through advice and grant aid under the Building Conservation Grant Scheme operated by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Public Realm:

Policy TC17: Ensure a high quality of design of all open spaces in the Town Centre to create vibrant civic spaces for a wide range of active and passive activities.

Policy TC18: Encourage the creation of new 'pocket parks' and public courtyard areas within the fabric of the Town Centre, provided they are well overlooked and surrounded by active ground floor uses.

Policy TC19: Enhance the environmental quality and physical appearance of the Town Centre through the use of street furniture, public art, tree planting and general landscaping, where feasible.

Objective TC3: The Town Council will consolidate and enhance Fitzwilliam Square as a key public open space, with hard and soft landscaping and high quality street furniture.

Objective TC4: The Town Council will implement Environmental Improvement works for the entire South Quay, involving improved paving, street furniture and tree planting.

Objective TC5: The Town Council will investigate the feasibility of increasing tree planting along the streets in the Town Centre.

13.9 Traffic and Transport

The construction of the Town Relief and Port Access Roads will be a key step toward addressing reducing traffic congestion. Given that a Traffic Survey carried out by Colin Buchanan Partners in 1999 found that 18,000 HGV's used Bridge Street and Abbey Street per annum, the benefits to the Town Centre from the opening of the Port Access Road is therefore likely to be significant in itself. The rerouting of a significant proportion of traffic away from the Town Centre offers the opportunity to make the area a more attractive place to shop and do business in by prioritising pedestrian movement and taking the emphasis off private vehicular traffic. This also presents an opportunity to develop a public transport infrastructure in the Town Centre through the provision of bus stop(s).

The Wicklow and Environs Integrated Framework Plan for Land Use and Transportation 2005 (IFPLUT) stated that car parking capacity would be reached by 2006 based on 1999 levels of parking provision. The IFPLUT recommends that an additional 423 parking spaces need to be provided to cater for the extra demand up to 2016. Given that it is Council policy to promote the Town Centre as a retail and tourist destination, it will be increasingly important to meet this projected requirement. It is an objective of the Council to provide a multi-storey car park at Wentworth Place (see Planning Objectives Map).

Chapter 14.

Port and Quayside

14.1 Introduction

The port and quayside are an important physical feature and source of economic activity associated with the town. The NSS identifies Wicklow Town as a Large Growth Town. The presence of the economic activity of the Port and associated quays provides opportunities for furthering this enhanced role.

The 1996 Harbour Act provides the necessary major legislative background to enable ports to compete with each other and to address their commercial, operational and market driven requirements.

Whilst it is important that the port remains competitive there may be opportunities for the re-development of port areas and associated nearby quays. The Council will continue to liaise with the Port on their future intentions.

Key considerations in the development of non port related activities in quayside locations include: improvement of traffic and access; the protection of habitats and areas of ecological importance; impact on existing commercial port activity and traffic; impact on marine leisure and amenity; and finally established residential amenity.

Where appropriate, detailed proposals may be brought forward in the context of forthcoming Action Area Plans.

This Chapter is set out as follows: Port and Quayside Aims; Commercial Activities; Marine Tourism; Environmental Improvement.

14.2 Port and Quayside Aims

The following are the Aims for the Port and Quayside:

- (i) To provide for ongoing commercial uses in the Port area and to promote the expansion of commercial activities within the port
- (ii) To promote the planned expansion of leisure and marine tourism uses in the Port and Quayside in a manner that is compatible with the existing commercial activities
- (iii) Protect the environmental and ecological value of the Port and Quayside

14.3 Commercial Activities

The Port has traditionally been a source of economic growth, employment and identity to Wicklow Town. It continues to be a commercially viable and important activity in the town with a secure position as one of the significant points of entry into the Greater Dublin Area for international trade. It is important that the commercial activities such as freight movement, storage and general trade supported by the Port be maintained in order that Wicklow Town fulfil its role as an employment and services centre. Any proposed development beyond the High Water Mark may be subject to licensing under the Foreshore Acts.

Policy PQ 1: Improve the harbour infrastructure in the town and safeguard lands in the vicinity of the port and harbour against inappropriate uses that could compromise the long-term economic potential (including access) of the port or harbour.

14.4 Marine Tourism

Marine tourism is a key growth area for coastal towns with a strong maritime tradition such as Wicklow Town. This includes activities such as sailing, angling and various other water sports. These activities are a source of recreation and amenity for the local community as well as being a potentially important tourist attraction. It will be essential to make use of the existing marine infrastructure to realise the potential of the town as a venue for these activities. See Chapter 9 Recreation and Amenity for policy on leisure activities in the Port area.

Objective PQ 1: Tourist activity will be promoted in the harbour area by maintaining existing facilities and assisting the redevelopment of tourist attractions, by increasing transport and access, by increasing the degree of interaction between attractions and facilities on the Harbour, and protecting the unique character and recreational and ecological value of these areas and the Murrough.

Objective PQ 2: Preserve established rights of ways, subject to consultation in advance with landowners, along the quayside.

14.5 Environmental Improvement

The seafront of Wicklow Town is a strong visual asset and source of amenity. However, the Port, as the primary point of interaction between the town and the sea, contains certain buildings that present a poor visual water frontage. The improvement of these buildings should be possible without interfering with the commercial activities of the Port. The expansion of recreation and amenity uses in the Port area will also contribute to the visual improvement of this area through the presence of sailing boats and pontoons, etc.

Objective PQ 3: Promote the improvement of visual appearance and condition of buildings in the Port area. Improvement of streetscape to be achieved through use of planting and street furniture on water edges and approach road.

Chapter 15.

Opportunity Areas

15.1 Introduction

A number of areas in Wicklow Town are expected to come under development pressure during the period of this Plan, namely The Murrough, the Convent Lands, Whitegates, Abbey Lands and Kilmantan House. As these areas are strategically important to Wicklow Town, the local authority consider it critical to ensure that the development potential of these areas is maximised to the social and economic benefit of the town, creating a high quality public realm with minimal adverse effects on the environment or the existing character of the town.

Site Regeneration Briefs are included in this Plan in order to guide the regeneration of Whitegates, Abbey Lands and Kilmantan House. Guiding principles are also set out for future Action Area Plans, to be prepared by the local authority, to guide the regeneration of the more extensive areas of the Murrough and Convent Lands.

The development of these areas presents the opportunity to accommodate the housing, employment and amenity demands required of Wicklow Town, for it to achieve the population base and self sufficiency of a Primary Growth Centre, in accordance with regional and national planning policy.

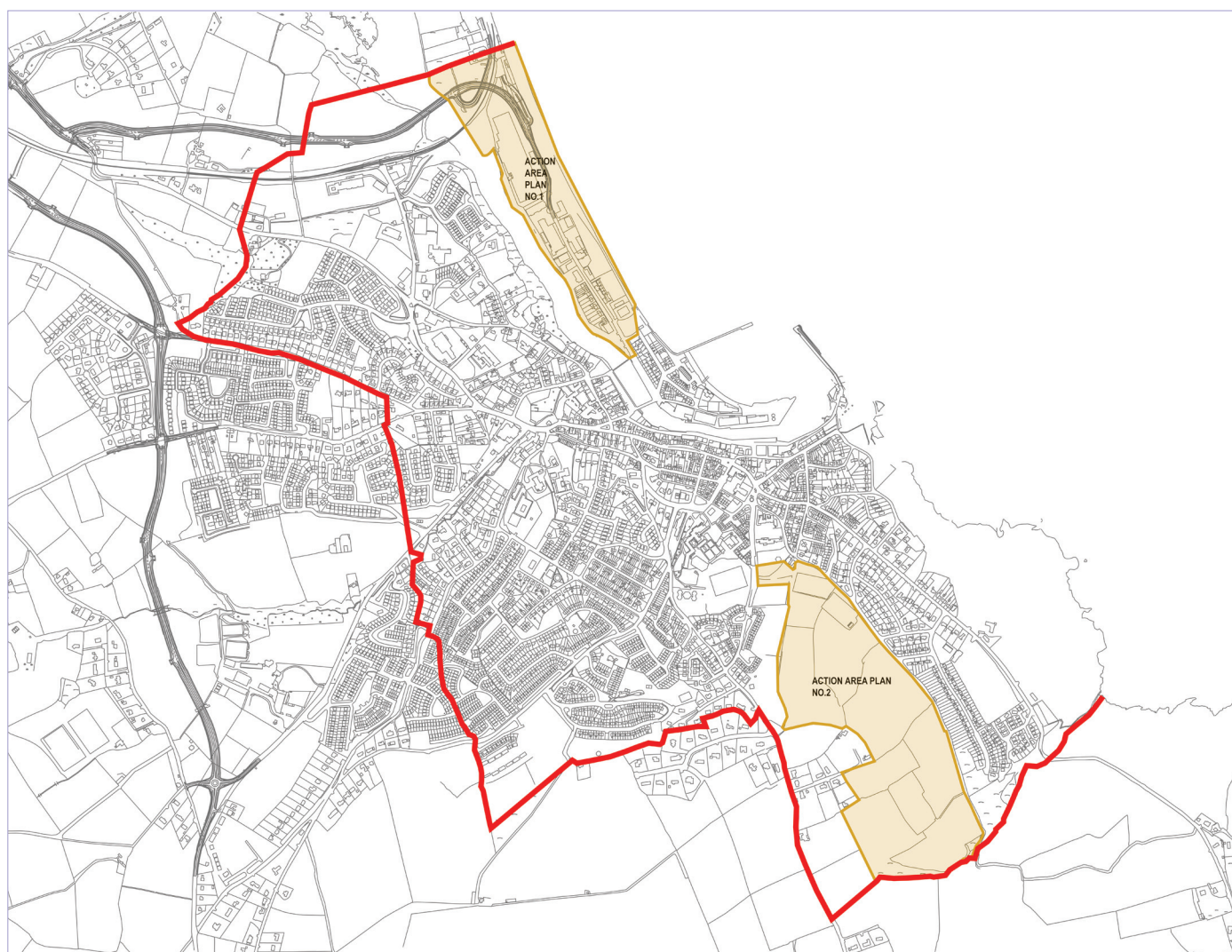
This chapter describes each of these areas and the key issues pertaining to each. It articulates a development strategy for the future development of the respective areas in terms of key guiding principles and associated policies and objectives.

This chapter should be read in conjunction with previous chapters and in particular with Chapter 16 Development Management.

15.2 Action Area Plans

There are two Action Areas Plans (AAP's) currently proposed. These are at the Murrough & Convent Lands. These AAP's will be prepared in consultation with the landowners in the respective areas. The preparation process will include a period during which the proposed AAP's will be placed on public display with submissions invited from the public. Planning applications in advance of the adoption of these AAP's shall be considered premature.

Figure 15.2.1 Location of Action Areas



15.3 The Murrough (Action Area Plan no.1)

The Murrough area comprises approximately 18 hectares in the form of a long narrow peninsula of land, approximately 150m wide and one kilometre long, separated from the remainder of the town by the River Leitrim. At its southern end it adjoins the residential terraces adjacent to the port (Leitrim Place, Strand and Upper Strand Street).

Connections between the town and the Murrough are through this residential area from either the Stone Bridge, which links to Bridge Street, or the pedestrian Parnell Bridge. To the north, the Dublin-Rosslare rail line crosses the Murrough close to the town boundary, beyond which the Murrough Wetlands/ Broadlough are located.

Future road access to the Murrough is planned at the northern end. The proposed Port Access Road will cross the rail line to connect it to the proposed Town Relief Road, to the west of the town. Construction of the proposed roads is due to commence at the end of 2006 and be completed within two years. The purpose of the Port Access Road is to free the town centre of port-related traffic.

Currently, the Murrough area contains a mix of light industrial, warehouses, small business, residential and a primary school, all of which are accessed from a single road running centrally between the Port and the rail line. A narrow band of vegetation runs uninterrupted along the river bank on the western edge, while to the east, a grassed area approximately 45m wide separates all buildings and activities from the seashore. Locally, this latter area is generally perceived as an extension of the designated Murrough Wetlands/ Broadlough north of the rail line.

15.4 Key Issues (Murrough)

The following key issues relating the Murrough were raised by the consultation process in the preparation of this Plan:

1. The potential of the Murrough as the major recreational and amenity space within the town centre is relatively unfulfilled. Further recreational facilities should be provided such as a playground, public toilets to support walking activities, improved pathways and new river-side uses, in association with general landscaping and other environmental improvements.
2. The Murrough area has the potential to become a vibrant mixed-use area and presents possibly the only area within the town capable of providing the employment and residential demands necessary for the town to become self-sufficient rather than a dormitory town for Dublin.
3. Wicklow Town currently does not present an attractive front to the sea. The Murrough has the potential to improve this town frontage by improving the architectural quality of buildings, landscaping and street furniture.
4. Land use in the Murrough should be diversified. It is currently dominated by industrial and commercial activities which are not complementary to its recreation and amenity use or most appropriate to its town, riverside and coastal location.
5. The Murrough area is under threat from coastal erosion, in particular the Murrough Wetlands north of the railway line outside the town boundary.
6. While the Port Access Road will address the physical disconnection of the Murrough from the town, it will also result in increased heavy goods vehicles in the area.

15.5 Development Strategy (Murrough)

The development strategy for the Murrough Action Area Plan comprises the guiding principles and associated policies and objectives outlined below, which will inform an Action Area Plan to be prepared by Wicklow Town Council in advance of the submission of planning applications for any lands contained within the Action Area Boundary.

MAAP Principle 1

Facilitate the emergence of a new urban quarter with a distinctive identity and character; that reinforces the coastal and riverside qualities of the Murrough, is complementary to its dominant amenity value, and builds on its cultural and civic importance that is valued by the residents of Wicklow Town.

MAAP Principle 2

Ensure that this urban quarter achieves a balance between living, working and leisure uses contained within a high quality architectural, landscape and streetscape environment.

MAAP Principle 3

Improve the accessibility of this urban quarter in terms of its physical connection to Wicklow Town, the quality of pedestrian access to the riverbank and seashore and the treatment of the main internal vehicular, cycle and pedestrian routes.

MAAP Principle 4

Ensure the sensitive integration of this urban quarter into its existing built and natural context.

15.6 Policies (Murrough)

It is the policy of the local authority to:

MAAP 1: Formulate an Action Area Plan for the Murrough which recognises the potential of the area as a coastal amenity area and location of a new mixed use urban quarter.

MAAP 2: Improve the physical connection and integration of the Murrough area with the town through the provision of additional safe and high quality pedestrian and cycle links.

MAAP 3: Ensure that future development does not adversely impact on the Murrough NHA, Broadlough SPA, Murrough SAC and River Leitrim riverbank Flora Protection Order areas.

MAAP 4: Ensure that the river edge and coastal edge are made secure, protected from erosion as necessary and are accessible to pedestrian and cyclists.

MAAP 5: Secure the future of the Murrough as a key recreation and amenity area for Wicklow Town, with appropriate landscape infrastructure and ancillary facilities.

MAAP 6 Ensure a broad mix of uses in the Murrough Action Area, with an emphasis on medium to higher density residential, small scale enterprise, hi-tech industries retail, recreation, cultural, civic facilities and marine related activities and tourism.

MAAP 7: Ensure future development is developed to a density and height sensitive and appropriate to its immediate built and natural context.

MAAP 8: Ensure the creation of a high quality urban realm through the provision of appropriately designed streets and open spaces, and the buildings contained within them.

MAAP 9: Ensure that the design of all buildings and open spaces reinforce the distinctive maritime setting of the Murrough.

MAAP 10: Ensure good interconnections and co-ordination between individual developments in order for a clear and legible urban grain to emerge.

MAAP 11: Ensure that active ground floor uses in all buildings fronting public spaces, walkways and streets.

MAAP 12: Ensure the provision of a range of residential unit types to cater for all age groups and households.

MAAP 13: Promote marine or port related industry that is compatible with and does not detract from other retail, commercial and residential uses.

MAAP 14: Promote the development of marine tourism through the provision of retail and tourist accommodation.

15.7 Objectives (Refer to Objectives Map included in Appendix 4)

It is an objective of the local authority to:

MAAO 1 Include an overall masterplan for the entire Murrough Area in the Action Area Plan.

MAAO 2 Develop a landscaped linear public park along the coastal edge of the Murrough connecting to the Murrough Wetlands/ Broadlough, complete with playground, designated walkways, toilet and washroom facilities, boardwalk areas, seating, fishing stands, signage and lighting.

MAAO 3 Seek the provision of a central civic space surrounded by retail, small enterprise and cultural or civic uses, with clear and legible connections to the surrounding development, the river edge and coastal edge.

MAAO 4 Traffic-calm the central access road wherever necessary to provide pedestrian connections between both sides of the Murrough.

MAAO 5 Enforce a speed limit of 50km/h on the central access road within the AAP boundary.

MAAO 6 Establish a buffer zone along the edge of the River Leitrim in accordance with the Floral Protection Order 1997 and the NHA designation.

MAAO 7 Facilitate the provision of a Tourist Information Centre for Wicklow Town at the Murrough.

15.8 Convent Lands (Action Area Plan no.2)

The Convent Lands comprise approximate 33 hectares of land to the south east of the town centre, stretching back approximately 1km from the convent buildings to the town boundary. The lands have continuous access to a minor road/ lane along the entire edge. For the most part, the lands are surrounded by low density residential areas, interspersed with green open spaces and playing pitches.

15.9 Key Issues (Convent Lands)

The following key issues relating to the Convent Lands were raised during the consultation process in the preparation of this Plan:

1. The lands are notable as they constitute the largest section of undeveloped lands in the town. The lands rise steeply southwards and because they have not been built upon to date, offer a pleasant backdrop to the town when viewed from the lower areas. However, the lands also have the effect of severing the residential areas located to the north and south of the lands, as no vehicular or pedestrian connections are provided across the lands.
2. The manner in which these lands are developed in the near or long-term future is critical to both the physical and socio-economic potential of the town, and should be undertaken in a careful, visionary manner, rather than be the result of haphazard, speculative, market-driven development.
3. Currently, the lands are partly used for organic farming, an activity the proprietors wish to continue.
4. Meeting the projected space demands for 3rd level education has been addressed by Wicklow County Council through the recent acquisition of lands in Rathnew. A similar safeguard should also be considered for second level and primary level education in the town, particularly in light of the identified growth of the population to a projected 25,000.

15.10 Development Strategy (Convent Lands)

The development strategy for the Convent Lands comprises the guiding principles and associated policies and objectives outlined below, which will inform an Action Area Plan to be prepared by Wicklow Town Council in advance of the submission of planning applications for any lands contained within the Action Area Boundary.

CLAAP Principle 1

To protect the function of the Convent Lands as a 'green lung' within the town, by formalising this role and incorporating into the future Action Area Plan, an assessment of its potential in terms of ecology, recreation, agriculture and horticulture and visual amenity.

CLAAP Principle 2

Improve accessibility between the residential areas currently divided by the convent lands, by enabling a series of safe pedestrian connections and occasional vehicular connections, and ensuring that at least one such connection is formed by means of a new higher density residential area.

CLAAP Principle 3

Consider the potential of the Convent Lands to provide for future secondary and primary level educational and vocational training needs for the growing population of Wicklow town.

15.11 Policies (Convent Lands)

It is the policy of the local authority to:

CLAAP 1 Formulate an Action Area Plan for the Convent Lands area which recognises the potential of the area as a 'green lung' in the town, while also accommodating a limited amount of other land uses necessary for the sustainable growth of the town.

CLAAP 2 Ensure that all future development on the Convent Lands is undertaken in a coordinated, integrated and phased manner, according to an over riding vision and masterplan as contained within the future AAP.

CLAAP 3 Encourage the visual enhancement and improvement of the upper slopes of the Convent Lands as a 'green' backdrop to the town when viewed from lower levels, approaches and the sea.

CLAAP 4 Support the expansion of the primary and secondary level educational and vocational training facilities within the Convent Lands.

15.12 Objectives (Refer to Objectives Map included in Appendix 4)

It is an objective of the local authority to:

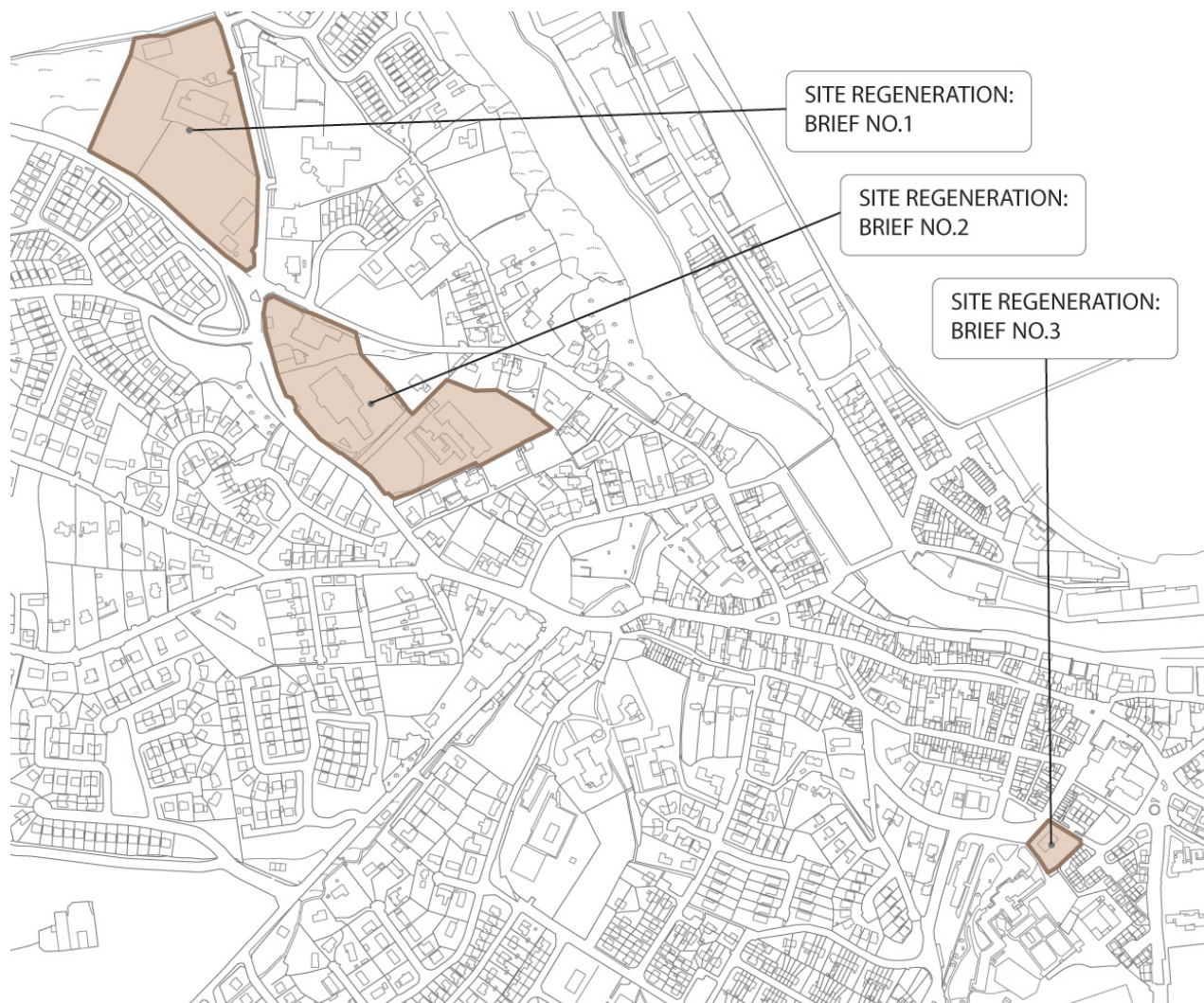
CLAAO 1 Include an overall masterplan for the entire Convent Lands in the Action Area Plan.

CLAAO 2 Prepare a masterplan for a higher density residential area on the lower slopes of the Convent Lands connecting the Belview and Dunbur residential areas.

CLAAO 3 Designate a pedestrian and cycle route between residential areas across the convent lands, incorporating the provision of active and passive amenity uses along the entire length, suitable for use by all age groups. Such uses could include playgrounds, running tracks, playing pitches and courts, picnic areas, viewing platforms, small garden areas, and boules or other popular activities for the elderly.

15.13 Site Regeneration Briefs

Figure 15.13.1



15.14 Whitegates (Site Regeneration Brief no.1)

This site is located to the north of Wicklow town centre, covering approximately 3.4 hectares of Town Council owned land at the edge of built up area of the town. To the north is the East Glendalough school, separated from the Council lands by a small stream running to the River Leitrim. The Rathnew Road forms the southern boundary (230m) and the Station Road forms the eastern boundary (280m). The recently constructed Lidl and Heaton stores are located to the west of the site. Wicklow railway station is located immediately adjacent to the north-east corner. South of the Rathnew Road is a low density residential area. The land rises gradually towards the north and west, and currently contain two playing pitches and the town's public swimming pool complex.

15.15 Key Issues (Whitegates)

The following key issues were raised during the consultation process in the preparation of this Plan:

1. The site occupies a strategic location immediately adjoining the railway station, with considerable frontage on a main approach road to the town. It offers the potential to improve this entrance to the town in a manner appropriate to a large, vibrant, maritime town.
2. Wicklow Town Centre is constrained in its capacity to accommodate the retail needs of the projected population of 25,000. The accessible and strategic location of this site makes it suitable as a secondary retail area complementary to the town core.
3. The existing swimming pool complex and sports pitches give the Whitegates area a community emphasis which could be reinforced in future development of the lands.

15.16 Regeneration Vision Statement (Whitegates)

The site regeneration vision for the Whitegates site is:

To ensure that the area becomes a vibrant and attractive secondary retail and commercial hub for the town, containing living, working and recreation uses, with good vehicular and pedestrian connections to the existing road network, a clear and legible internal circulation structure, and high quality architecture, landscape and streetscape, appropriate to its location adjoining the town centre.

15.17 Policies (Whitegates)

It is the policy of the local authority to:

WSR P1 Ensure a broad mix of uses in this regeneration area, with an emphasis on retail, commercial and entertainment uses, supported by medium to higher density residential and community uses.

WSR P2 Support the feasibility of an enhanced commuter rail service for the town by improving pedestrian linkages to the station and providing additional parking capacity.

WSR P3 Improve road access to the site by reducing dependency on the junction with Church Hill and Station Road.

WSR P4 Improve the Church Hill/ Rathnew Road junction.

WSR P5 Ensure the creation of a high quality urban realm through the provision of appropriately designed streets and open spaces. The buildings containing them should be developed to a density and height sensitive and appropriate to its immediate built and natural context.

WSR P6 Ensure active ground floor uses in all buildings fronting public spaces, walkways and streets.

WSR P7 Ensure the provision of a range of residential unit types to cater for all age groups and households.

WSR P8 Ensure the protection and enhancement of significant natural features on the lands, for aesthetic reasons and for the protection of habitats.

15.18 Objectives (Refer to Objectives Map included in Appendix 4)

It is an objective of the local authority to:

WSR O1 Require the design and layout of future development to incorporate all retail and commercial uses into a continuous streetscape with a consistent building line and street width, and screening all service yards and delivery areas behind the street.

WSR O2 Seek the highest architectural design standard in the design of any large footprint retail volume, incorporating significant mitigation measures against visual impact, in accordance with international best practice.

WSR O3 Ensure the provision of a public space fronting Station Road and bounded by the existing stream in order to provide a civic focus and reinforce the existing public and community uses.

WSR O4 Aim to retain and carefully incorporate all natural features of habitat and/or aesthetic value in the future development of the lands, including the stream, existing trees and hedgerows.

WSR O5 Ensure the provision of minimum surface car parking through the use of multi-storey car parking, incorporated into mixed-use developments displaying active frontages to streets and public spaces, at all levels.

15.19 Abbey Lands: Abbey School, Tesco and Cash n' Carry (Site Regeneration Brief no.2)

This site is located in close proximity to Wicklow town centre, covering approximately 3.3 hectares of land in separate land holdings; the Abbey Community school, the Tesco supermarket, the cash n' carry and private dwellings. At present, the lands are developed to a very low density for their central location and their regeneration presents significant potential for the town centre. Collectively, the lands have approximately 300m frontage to the Rathnew Road, and approximately 100m frontage to Church Hill.

15.20 Key Issues (Abbey Lands)

The following key issues were raised during the consultation process in the preparation of this Plan:

1. A considerable and growing proportion of residents of Wicklow work remotely from their homes on a full or part-time basis. Growing concerns about isolation and lack of contact during the working day have given rise to an increasing demand for the provision of small office spaces in the town centres.
2. Wicklow town centre is constrained in its capacity to accommodate the employment needs of the projected population of 25,000. The accessible and strategic location of this site makes it suitable as a town employment area containing a range of uses not provided in the Town Centre, due to the physical constraints of the narrow footprint, historic buildings.
3. The success of the Enterprise Centre is recognised together with a desire to provide further such facilities elsewhere in the town, to cater for new start-up small and medium sized businesses.
4. Provide for a mixed-use development to include up to a maximum of 60 residential units. These units shall be orientated to ensure overlooking of public areas and open spaces"

15.21 Regeneration Vision Statement (Abbey Lands)

The site regeneration vision for the Abbey Lands site is:

To ensure that the area becomes a key employment area for the town, containing a range of working and living environments, supported by services, retail and living uses and a public realm consisting of a network of pedestrian links to surrounding areas converging in a series of internal public spaces overlooked by residential development.

15.22 Policies (Abbey Lands)

It is the policy of the local authority to:

ALSR P1 Ensure that this regeneration has an emphasis on business and enterprise while also providing a secure and attractive living environment.

ALSR P2 Require the co-ordinated regeneration of the site in a phased and integrated manner.

ALSR P3 Ensure the creation of an urban grain appropriate to its location close to the town centre location with continuous built frontages to streets and spaces, and a legible network of vehicular and pedestrian connections to surrounding lands.

ALSR P4 Improve road safety at the Church Hill junction.

ALSR P5 Ensure the creation of a high quality urban realm through the provision of appropriately designed streets and open spaces. The buildings containing these spaces should be developed to a density and height sensitive and appropriate to its immediate built and natural context.

ALSR P6 Ensure the protection and enhancement of significant natural features on the lands, for the aesthetic reasons and for the protection of habitats.

15.23 Objectives (Refer to Objectives Map included in Appendix 4)

It is an objective of the local authority to:

ALSR O1 Require the preparation of a single urban design framework for the entire area, identifying the distribution and mix of land uses, building height and form, pedestrian and vehicular circulation, public realm hierarchy, phasing and implementation proposals.

ALSR O2 Seek the highest architectural design standard in the design of all office and workshop, retail and residential spaces, and ensure that they are incorporated into multiple use buildings, positioned so as to create continuous and active street frontages.

ALSR O3 Require the provision of a high quality public realm continuing an inter-connecting network of public spaces accessible to all residents of the town.

ALSR O4 Aim to retain and carefully incorporate all natural features of habitat and/or aesthetic value in the future development of the lands, including the stream, existing trees and hedgerows.

ALSR O5: Improve the junctions in the vicinity of the development at Abbeylands and Whitegates.

15.24 Kilmantan House (Site Regeneration Brief No. 3)

The site is located to the north of the town centre zoning adjoining the Wicklow Gaol and the Dominicans Convent. The site is approximately 2067sq.m. At present it is occupied by Kilmantan House, which houses Wicklow County Council offices (Road Design) and a HSE office. The building is in extremely poor condition and of no historical value.

15.25 Key Issues (Kilmantan House)

The following key issues relate to the site:

1. Potential for new public library
2. Potential for new upgraded Town Council Offices
3. The regeneration of this area

15.26 Regeneration Vision Statement (Kilmantan House)

The site regeneration vision for Kilmantan House site is:

To ensure that the area becomes a vibrant and attractive area providing a mix of high quality public buildings, offices and residential developments punctuated by public spaces and artistic features appropriate to its location adjoining the town centre.

15.27 Policies

It is the policy of the local authority to:

KHSR P1 Ensure that the regeneration area provides a new modern Library building and Town Council office, crèche for the people of Wicklow Town and its environs.

KHSR P2 Ensure the creation of an attractive urban space with the emphasis on public buildings and offices overlooked by residential development.

KHSR P3 Require the co-ordinated regeneration of the site in a phased and integrated manner.

KHSR P4 Ensure the creation of a high quality urban realm through the provision of appropriately designed buildings and spaces passively overlooked by a maximum of 12 residential units.

15.28 Objectives (Refer to Objectives Map included in Plan)

It is an objective of the local authority to:

KHSR O1 Seek the highest architectural design for all public buildings, offices and residential development with appropriate landscaping and artistic features.

KHSR O2 Require the provision of a high quality public realm continuing an inter-connecting network of public spaces accessible to all residents of the town.

Chapter 16.

Development Management

16.1 Introduction

All proposed developments will be assessed on individual merit, according to compliance with the qualitative standards, quantitative standards and specific development management guidelines outlined in this chapter.

Qualitative Standards

The Town Council will seek the creation of high quality, vibrant and attractive urban places in new developments, contributing to a townscape that is easy and safe to walk around. The relationship between buildings, their use and their surrounding public domain will be central to the consideration of all planning applications.

16.2 Qualitative Standards: Design

The Town Council will require sensitive and careful design of all buildings taking into account their site history and setting. The analysis of any proposal will assess the volumetric form, massing, aspect and orientation, shapes and details of roofs, solid to void ratios, materials and composition.

To achieve the quality of design expected, developers will be expected to employ experienced design teams which may, in addition to architects, include landscape architects, planners, urban designers, civil engineers and transport planners where necessary.

All external building finishes, on all development types including residential developments, must be of high quality material, appropriate to the particular location and the area in general. Wicklow Town has a maritime climate which causes the weathering and staining of materials which would not usually occur in other locations. This should be borne in mind when specifying building finishes.

16.3 Qualitative Standards: Layout

The pattern or arrangement of buildings, open spaces and circulation routes in all proposed developments must be designed to ensure that places are permeable, legible and safe for the pedestrian and cyclist as well as the driver, and must connect logically with the surrounding urban grain.

All proposed open space should be connected along a framework of circulation routes that are overlooked by active uses or the living spaces of residential units. Main routes should be articulated as such, with vistas towards landmarks buildings or spaces.

16.4 Qualitative Standards: Mix of Uses

In commercial developments in the Town Centre, key opportunity areas and neighbourhood centres, an appropriate mix of retail, residential, entertainment, cultural and employment

generating uses will normally be required. Residential developments in these locations will require active ground floor uses fronting streets and public spaces, to ensure overlooking and animation of the public realm.

16.5 Qualitative Standards: Landscaping

With the exception of individual dwellings and extensions to individual dwellings, planning applications for all other developments will require a full landscape plan describing all open spaces, hard and soft materials, street furniture, planting and boundary treatment, including details of all planting proposed. In the case of planning applications for individual dwellings and extensions to individual dwellings, a description of boundary treatment and boundary planting must be included on the architectural drawings. Planting design should propose primarily native trees and seek to achieve bio-diversity. Ornamental or exotic species should be used to enhance areas, provide colour and visual amenity and reflect characteristics of the local area e.g. maritime context, or Wicklow's horticultural heritage.

Generally, the retention and incorporation of all mature trees will be required in all proposed developments. Where a proposed development involves the felling, topping, lopping or destruction of mature trees, a tree survey will be required and must be carried out by a qualified arboriculturalist. A mature tree will be considered as anything greater than 3m in height.

Quantitative Standards

These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the Development Parameters Map at the rear of the chapter.

16.6 Quantitative Standards: Density

Density is a measure of the relationship between buildings and their surrounding space. As a standard it is used to achieve the optimum use of urban land appropriate to its location with respect to walking catchments to urban centres, public transport, employment centres and community services and facilities into account.

It can be expressed in terms of population, in terms of buildings or, as is common in Ireland, in terms of residential units. The latter measure is useful with respect to existing or proposed developments which are purely residential in use, but is flawed with respect to a mixed use area or Town Centre area, for which plot ratio is a more accurate measure.

Wicklow Town has a low population density at 22 persons per hectare (based on 2002 CSO census figures). Residential densities in the town range from approximately 70 per hectare at Bond Street, to 55 per hectare at Main Street (assuming one residential unit per building), to 25 units per hectare at Castle Avenue, Mountain View, Belvedere and Church Gate.

In assessing proposed developments, a particular density will be only be acceptable provided the quality of the internal unit, associated private open space, the shared public open space and daylight and sunlight provision within and adjoining the development is to an acceptable standard. Areas with a mix of apartments and single family houses will not achieve the same density as areas with apartments only, though densities can be increased by the use of terraces rather than detached and semi-detached units. As indicative guidance, the following densities are considered achievable subject to favourable site conditions and high quality design:

Indicative Residential Densities

Table 16.6.1

Location	Density (residential units per hectare)
Category A: Town Centre and Port	50 – 70/ha
Category B: AAP Areas: The Murrough & part Convent Lands	60 – 90/ha
Category C: Site Regeneration Areas: Whitegates, Abbey Lands, and Kilmantan House	60 – 90/ha
Category D: Lands within 600m of train station	50 – 90/ha
Category E: Inner Suburban	25 – 40 /ha

As substantial parts of the Action Areas (AAP) Areas and the Site Regeneration Areas are zoned for mixed use and high density residential, these will have a greater number of apartments (above retail and commercial) than in Zone E which is zoned residential only, where there will be a greater mix of apartments and larger houses.

16.7 Quantitative Standards: Plot Ratio

Plot ratio is a measure of the amount of floor space in a development in proportion to the site area and is expressed as a ratio. It is calculated by dividing the total gross floor area* of all buildings in a development by the site area.

$$\frac{\text{Total gross floor area of the buildings}}{\text{Site area}}$$

Plot ratio is used to determine the maximum building volume or floor space on a given site.

Indicative Plot Ratio Standards

Table 16.7.1

Location	Plot Ratio
Category A: Town Centre and Port	1.5 – 2.5
Category B: AAP Areas: The Murrough & part Convent Lands	1.5 – 2.5
Category C: Site Regeneration Areas: Whitegates, Abbey Lands and Kilmantan House	1.5 – 2.5
Category D: Lands within 600m of train station	1.0 – 2.0
Category E: Inner Suburban	0.5 – 1.0

The plot ratios shown will be applied flexibly with regard to the merits, location and circumstances of each case.

16.8 Quantitative Standards: Site Coverage

Site coverage is a measure of the quantity of the site occupied by buildings. It is expressed as a percentage and calculated by dividing the total area of ground covered by buildings by the total site area, excluding any land lying between the building line and the street.

$$\frac{\text{Total area of ground covered by buildings}}{\text{Site area}} \times 100$$

* This excludes external walls but includes all internal walls. It applies to all uses contained within a building on and above ground level, including plant rooms, tank rooms, storage areas, car parking.

Indicative Site Coverage Standards

Table 16.8.1

Location	Site Coverage
Category A: Town Centre and Port	70% - 80%
Category B: AAP Areas: The Murrough & part Convent Lands	35% - 70%
Category C: Site Regeneration Areas: Whitegates, Abbey Lands and Kilmantan House	35% - 70%
Category D: Lands within 600m of train station	40% - 70%
Category E: Inner Suburban	25% - 40%

16.9 Quantitative Standards: Building Heights

Appropriate building height depends on the prevailing and dominant building heights and on the grain and character of the surrounding area. Different character areas will require different approaches to the issues of buildings height. In general, there is a recognised need to protect historic or conservation areas and the architectural character of existing buildings, streets and spaces of artistic, civic or historic importance.

The height of a proposed development will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- The likely impact on surrounding structures (e.g. overshadowing and overlooking), spaces or vistas, or on landscape, skyline, streetscapes and landmarks.
- The purpose, civic importance and location of the building
- Whether any micro-climatic impacts will result and the possibility of their mitigation
- Whether the proposed height impacts adversely on vehicular or pedestrian traffic or access

16.10 Quantitative Standards: Access for All

Wicklow Town Council recognises the need for equality of access for everybody to all aspects of the built and external environment as an essential prerequisite of equal opportunities and the development of an inclusive society.

Part M of the Building Regulations (S 1 no.179 of 2000) sets out the standards to ensure that buildings are accessible and usable by everyone, including the aged, people with visual, hearing and mobility disabilities, and people with children. The Technical Guidance Document in relation to Part M and the NDA Manual "Buildings for Everyone" (2002) provide guidance on the access requirements for public buildings and residential buildings.

Car parks with a capacity of 200 spaces or less will require 5 percent of spaces to be allocated to disabled users, and those greater than 200 spaces will require a 3 percent allocation. Disabled parking spaces should be a minimum of 3.3m wide by 5m long, and should be located as close as possible to the entrances of the premises they are serving.

16.11 Quantitative Standards: Access for All Roads and Services

The design standards required for carriageways, gradients, footpaths, junctions, road drainage, cul-de-sacs, sight lines, boundary walls, vehicle access, service roads, bus lay-bys, drainage and other underground services, vary according to the scale, intensity, layout, design and location of proposed developments.

The standards required by Wicklow Town Council will be based on :

- ▶ Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (NRA)
- ▶ Traffic Management Guidelines (DoEHLG)
- ▶ Cycleway Manual (DTO)
- ▶ Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas (DoEHLG)

All services must be provided underground in the interests of amenity. Pipes, cables etc under roads shall be grouped together as far as possible for easier access and less disruption and to avoid disruptions from tree roots and to facilitate tree planting.

16.12 Quantitative Standards: Mobility Management Plans

A mobility management plan shall be required for employment-based developments which the Town Council consider may generate significant trip demands at peak and off peak hours. Such developments will include

- Office, including office-based industrial
- Industrial
- Retail- large one-off stores and town or distinct centres
- Warehousing and distribution
- Places of education

A mobility management plan is a mechanism for managing traffic demand which seeks to reducing demand for and use of cars by increasing the attractiveness and practicality of public transport, cycling, walking and other mechanisms such as car-pooling, company buses, flexible working hours and home offices.

16.13 Quantitative Standards: Parking Standards

The parking standards set out below apply to all new developments. The standards reflect contemporary planning policy which seeks to reduce traffic congestion and dependency on the private car.

Parking Standards

Table 16.13.1

Use Class	Maximum Parking Spaces Required	Minimum Parking Spaces Required	Minimum Cycle Spaces Required
Auditorium, Theatre, Cinema, Stadium	1 per 5 seats	1 per 10 seats	1 per 5 seats
Church	1 per 5 seats	1 per 10 seats	1 per 5 seats
Nursing Homes	1 per bed	0.5 per bed	1 per staff
Hotel (excluding Function Room)	1 per bedroom +plus 1 coach space per 100 bedrooms	0.5 per bedroom	1 per 3 staff plus 1 per 10 bedrooms
Third Level College	5 per classroom	2 per classroom	1 per 3 students
Primary School	1.5 per classroom	1 per classroom	1 per 4 children
Secondary School	1.5 per classroom	1 per classroom	1 per 2 children
Crèche	1 per staff	0.5 per staff	0.5 per staff
Hospital	2 per bed	1 per bed	1 per 4 staff plus 1 per 10 beds
Clinics & Group Medical Practices	2 per consultant	1 per consultant	1 per 4 staff plus 1 per 10 beds
Dwelling (House or Apartment)	1.5 per units plus 1visitor per 4 units	1.0 per unit	1 per unit (apartments only)
Warehousing	1 per 100m ² plus 1 lorry space per 400m ²	1 per 200m ² + 1 lorry space per 400m ²	1 per 200m ² gross floor area
Retail Warehousing	6 per 100m ²	3 per 100m ²	3 per 100m ² gross floor area
Library	3 per 100m ²	2 per 100m ²	1 per 4 staff plus 1 per 100m ² gross floor area
Manufacturing	3 per 100m ²	2 per 100m ²	2 per 100m ² gross floor area
Offices	5 per 100m ²	3 per 100m ²	2 per 100m ² gross floor area
Supermarkets and large stores	7 per 100m ²	4 per 100m ² plus 1 lorry space per 500m ²	4 per 100m ² gross floor area
Small Shop (< 500m ²)	4 per 100m ²	2 per 100m ²	4 per 100m ² gross floor area
Bank or Financial Institution	4 per 100m ²	2 per 100m ²	2 per 100m ²
Restaurant dining room	8 per 100m ²	4 per 100m ²	1 per 4 staff plus 4 per 100m ² gross floor area
Ballroom, Private Dance Club	5 per 100m ²	2 per 100m ²	1 per 4 staff plus 4 per 100m ² gross floor area
Bar, Lounges, Function Rooms	8 per 100m ²	4 per 100m ²	1 per 4 staff plus 4 per 100m ² gross floor area
Leisure Centres	4 per 100m ²	2 per 100m ²	1 per 4 staff
Playing Fields	40 per pitch	10 per pitch	10 per pitch
Showrooms	4 per 100m ²	2 per 100m ²	2 per 100m ² gross floor area
Cultural or Entertainment facility	7 per 100m ²	4 per 100m ²	1 per 4 staff plus 4 per 100m ² gross floor area
Garages	N/a	N/a	1 per 4 staff plus 4 per 100m ² gross floor area
Rail stations	N/a	N/a	5 per departing service in peak period
Bus stations	N/a	N/a	4 per bus bay
Bus stops	N/a	N/a	4 per stop

- Within the Town Centre, where the provision of all or some of the parking requirement is not possible on-site, the Town Council will consider a financial contribution towards the provision of parking elsewhere in lieu of parking provision on site, in accordance with the powers contained in the Planning and Development Act.
- Where a development incorporates dual usage, which operate at different times or where multiple activities are likely to be undertaken on the one trip, the Town Council will consider a reduction of the total car parking standards when accompanied by a clearly articulated trip demand assessment.
- When considering applications for development that are not classified above, the location and function of the development will be taken into consideration in determining the standards that should apply.
- Traffic Impact Assessments may be required where proposed developments meet the criteria set out in the Traffic Management Guidelines (DoEHLG and DTO) or at the specific request of the Town Council.
- The Design Manual for Cycle Facilities, issues by the DTO provides design criteria and guidelines for the design and construction of cycle routes and parking facilities.
- Car parking spaces should generally be sited within established building lines in such a manner as to ensure minimal injury to the amenity of adjoining premises. Where parking will be open to public view, adequate landscaping and tree planting must be provided to counteract the appearance of the parking area.
- Construction and layout standard for multi-storey and underground car parks are as set out in the document, Design Recommendation for Multi-storey and Underground Car Parks published by the Joint Committee of the Institute of Structural Engineers and the Institute of Highways and Transportation.
- Car parking spaces should be 2.5 metres by 5.0 metres minimum.

16.14 Development Control/ Management

Residential Development

Layout of Residential Developments

- Wicklow Town Council will require a high level of residential amenity conducive to a good quality living environment in new residential developments.
- All new residential development should take account of the characteristics of the natural and built environment of the site, i.e. views, vistas, vegetation, topography, landmarks, streams and other water features.
- Existing trees and hedgerows should be retained wherever possible and incorporated into the new residential development.
- A layout, which gives priority to the pedestrian, will be encouraged through the promotion of shared surfaces for pedestrians and vehicles and homezones (shared surface areas adjacent to clusters of residential units).

- Adequately lit pedestrian ways, separate from the main carriageways should be provided within new residential developments. These pedestrian ways should be overlooked by the living spaces of dwellings.
- Large residential areas shall be broken into small character areas, to promote a sense of identity and ease of navigation throughout the residential area.
- Provision should be made for cycle and pedestrian movement both within new residential areas and between new and existing residential areas, where appropriate.
- A detailed landscaping plan should be prepared as an integral part of the overall development and submitted as part of the planning application for the development.
- Structural planting should be used for privacy purposes and as an element of visual amenity.
- Garden walls to sides and rear of dwellings to be of solid construction of not more than 2 metres.
- A standard of 22 metres will normally be required between directly opposing first floor windows. However, where adequate levels of privacy are provided, this depth may be reduced.
- A minimum distance of 2 metres is required between buildings for the full length of the flanks in all development of detached, semi-detached and end of terraced house, and a minimum of 8m between the gables of apartment blocks.
- The provision of services and road layout of the development must have regard to 'Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas', Department of the Environment and Local Government.
- The development of innovative housing layouts based on a hierarchy of roads ranging from shared surface courtyards to wider distributor roads will be promoted. In all new residential developments, layouts should be prepared having regard to 'DTO/DoEHLG Traffic Management Guidelines.
- Residential layouts should facilitate the integration with existing and future bus services, within and between neighbouring residential developments.
- All residential developments shall incorporate the following minimum road standards:
 - 1.8m wide footpaths with wheelchair access ramps and dishing at all crossing points;
 - A minimum road width of 6 metres;
 - Each dwelling shall be provided with car parking and cycle requirements.
- The maximum design speed of distributor and access roads within residential areas is 30kph.

Mix in Residential Developments

To enhance the visual attractiveness of residential developments and to cater for the growing number of one to three person households, the Town Council will require:

- A mix of unit types and sizes in all residential developments
- Not more than 40% of units in a development to be 1-bedroom units.
- A minimum of 30% of units to be family sized units, i.e. minimum 80 sqm in area.

Size of Residential Units

The following table sets out the minimum floor area required for all residential developments.

Minimum Floor Area

Table 16.14.1

Dwelling Unit Size		Minimum Floor Area
1 bedroom		50 m ²
2 bedroom	Single storey	65 m ²
	Two storey	75 m ²
3 bed bedroom	Single storey	80 m ²
	Two storey	90 m ²
4 bedroom	Single storey	95 m ²
	Two storey	105 m ²

The minimum sizes of rooms required for new residential developments and conversions are set out below:

Minimum Internal Layout

Table 16.14.2

Room	Minimum Area
Living	11 m ²
Kitchen	5 m ²
Dining	4 m ²
Bathroom	4 m ²
Double bedroom	10.2 m ²
Single bedroom	6.5 m ²

- Entrance halls, corridors and all habitable rooms within proposed residential units should be well designed with provisions made for natural ventilation and lighting.
- In apartment development, long corridors should be discouraged.
- All new residential dwellings shall have at least one bedroom of 10.2 sqm in floor area.
- In the case of conversions, partition walls between and within residential units shall not cut across windows.
- Dual aspect dwellings will be standard for houses and apartment units.
- Where single aspect dwellings are deemed unavoidable, single aspect units with north-facing elevations will not be permitted.

Daylight and Sunlight

- The Town Council considers that all buildings should receive adequate daylight and sunlight.
- Careful design of residential buildings where the amount of incoming light is important, can ensure that sufficient can enter habital rooms to provide comfort and also reduce the need for artificial lighting.
- All habitable rooms must be naturally ventilated and lit, and living rooms and bedrooms shall not be lit solely by roof lights.
- Development shall be guided by the principles of Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice (British Research Establishment, 1991).

Individual Storage Facilities

Internal individual storage space provision, excluding wardrobe or hot press space is required in all residential units, including apartments, to the following standards:

Minimum Storage Space

Table 16.14.3

House Size	Minimum Floor Area
1 bedroom	2.0 sq. m
2 bedroom	3.0 sq. m
3 bedroom and larger	4.0 sq. m

Refuse Storage

New developments should provide easily managed communal waste facilities, composting areas and recyclables collection area. All such refuse facilities should be conveniently located, well ventilated and comply with Public Health and Fire Safety Requirements.

Private Open Space Provision

The following minimum standards for private open space apply for residential development:

Minimum Private Open Space

Table 16.14.4

Dwelling Unit	Minimum Private Open Space
House	
Minimum rear garden size depth	The minimum size of open space in general shall be 48m ² The minimum size of open space in the Town Centre is 20m ² .
Where parking is provided to front of dwelling	6m distance between building line and front boundary
Apartment/Duplex	
1 bedroom	10 sq. m
2 bedroom	15 sq. m
3 bedroom	20 sq. m

- In the interests of safety, rear gardens should be discouraged fronting onto public areas.
- Where on street parking is provided in lieu of front garden parking, a landscaped buffer strip with a minimum depth of 2.5m will be required to the front of each house.

In exceptional circumstances, the Council may consider a financial contribution toward the provision of public open space where there is a shortfall in the provision of private open space. Such circumstances may be allowed where the design and layout of a scheme is considered to be of a sufficiently high quality.

Public Open Space Provision

Wicklow Town Council will require the provision of public open space within residential developments in the order of 10-15% of the total site area.

The Town Council acknowledges that the provision of public open space in this order is not always possible in Town Centre sites and transitional or constrained sites elsewhere. Thus, in Town Centre and other locations deemed appropriate, the Town Council will consider a financial contribution towards the provision of local public spaces in lieu of public open space provision on site (refer to Section 16.32 at the end of this chapter for information on the Special Contribution Scheme).

In assessing the open space requirement, regard will not be had to land at the rear of dwellings which is not accessible, to land not suitable due to its gradient, sub-soil or other characteristics, nor to land incidental to roads, roundabouts, footpaths, or river floodplains.

Residential development will not be permitted on open spaces which are the subject of a deed of dedication (conditioned open spaces) or on areas formally identified as open spaces as part of a planning application.

Names of Residential Estates

The names of new residential developments shall reflect local and Irish place names in Wicklow Town as far as possible and the basic generic description e.g. quay, court, must be appropriate. No development work or advertising of housing schemes shall be allowed until the name has been agreed with the Wicklow Town Council. Signage for estate names and dwelling numbering shall be completed prior to occupation of the development.

Management Companies

In new residential developments that are not proposed to be taken in charge by Wicklow Town Council, evidence will be required that management companies are to be established at an early date and members of such shall be compulsory for all purchasers in the new development.

Back to Back Dwellings

Back to back dwellings will not be permitted due to their single aspect and restricted access to private open space.

Subdivision of Dwellings or Plots (corner or mid-street locations)

- Proposals for the subdivision of a single house or plot into more than one self contained dwelling will need to conform to the following:
- Off-street parking provision of 1-space per unit.
- A minimum distance of 22m between opposing first floor windows. However, this may be reduced where good design provides for privacy and especially in Town Centre locations.

- Not negatively impact on the existing character of the remainder of the street.
- Positively integrate with adjoining buildings in terms of building line, proportion, heights, parapet levels and materials.
- Not negatively impact on the residential amenity of existing adjoining buildings.
- Comply with private open space standards and refuse storage for both existing and proposed dwellings.
- Provide safe access to and escape from the site which does not result in the creation of a traffic hazard.

Backland Development (corner or mid-street locations)

- Backland development is defined as the provision of a multiple occupancy building or buildings on a single plot or land holding. The Town Council will consider backland development within the Town Centre, subject to the following criteria:
- New developments that closely overlook the rear curtilage of existing developments shall not normally be permitted.
- Development opportunities that do not have independent road access will generally be discouraged where this conflicts with the established pattern of the area. However, if an integrated plan is prepared where a number of landowners propose a shared road access to serve the backland development, the Town Council will facilitate such development subject to preserving the existing amenity value.
- Not negatively impact of the existing character of the remainder of the street.
- Positively integrate with adjoining buildings in terms of building line, proportion, heights, parapet levels and materials.
- Not negatively impact on the residential amenity of existing adjoining buildings.
- Comply with private open space standards and refuse storage for both existing and proposed dwellings.
- Provide safe access to and escape from the site which does not result in the creation of a traffic hazard.
- Comply with Fire Safety Standards

Infill Housing

The Town Council recognises the potential for infill development to allow for unique buildings to a high architectural design quality which without, replicating adjoining buildings, can be highly complementary and sensitive to the surrounding architectural context. Such development is encouraged provided that it:

- Maintains established building lines, rooflines and overall proportions.
- In the case of infill into terraces, takes cognisance of roof pitch, fascia level, parapet, eaves and cornice lines, the line of window heads and string courses.
- Displays a high standard of architectural design.
- Complies with minimum private open space and refuse storage standards.

Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings

- Proposed extensions and refurbishments to existing dwellings, especially in the Town Centre, will be required to integrate in a sensitive manner through the use of complementary building materials.
- Proposed extensions and refurbishments are required to provide sufficient space for vehicular access.
- Proposed extensions and refurbishments are required to preserve the amenity of adjoining dwellings by avoiding excessive overlooking and overshadowing.
- Proposed extensions and refurbishments should not reduce the private open space below minimum acceptable standards.
- In general, flat roof extensions shall not be permitted except where the design is considered to be of a sufficiently high standard.

Granny Flats

The development of ancillary accommodation to be occupied by a member of the occupant family will be considered acceptable, provided:

- It is not a separate detached unit and there is direct access to the remainder of the house.
- The flat shall not be let or sold, other than as part of the overall property and shall revert to being part of the original house when no longer occupied by a family member.
- The design ensures that the accommodation forms an integral part of the main dwelling unit.
- The design considers the potential lifecycle of the whole dwelling unit and its capability of reintegration for single family use.

Live-Work Units

Live work units are identified as residential units designed to accommodate a commercial element. It is recognised that the present of live-work units can lead to a more sustainable land use pattern in an area by providing for a mix of uses, ensuring daytime activity in otherwise residential areas and reducing commuting.

In considering applications for live work units the Wicklow Town Council shall have regard to the following considerations:

- Live work units should be grouped together in an appropriate part of the site where they would not draw unnecessary traffic into quieter parts of residential areas and, where appropriate, could provide a buffer between residential and commercial uses.
- Live Work units in residential areas and residential blocks shall be located at ground floor or street level.
- Live work units shall be fitted with services suitable for commercial uses, such as good ventilation, kitchenettes, storage and toilets.
- Live work units should be of a scale and design appropriate to surrounding residential developments and should be designed so as not to adversely impact on the residential amenities of adjoining occupiers.
- Signage should be kept to a minimum, for information purposes only and should not be illuminated
- The residential component of a live work unit shall have a minimum floor area of 45m² and comply with the private open space, storage and minimum room area standards for residential units.
- The commercial component shall have a minimum floor area equivalent to or greater than the residential floor area of the live work units, and must not be separated or divided from the residential element.
- The internal floor to ceiling height of live work units shall be in the range of 3 to 4 metres and the architectural design should be sufficiently open and transparent to allow the commercial use the street.
- Car parking requirements for each unit shall be assessed as the equivalent of one residential unit.

Mews Dwellings

Development of mews dwellings, either individually or as comprehensive scheme between adjoining property owners, will be encouraged by Wicklow Town Council subject to the following criteria:

- New buildings should complement the character of the mews lane and main building with regards to massing, height, scale, building depth, roof treatment and materials.
- New developments shall be confined to single family units of two storeys in height. In some circumstances 3 storey mews will be acceptable subject to respecting the existing height, scale and privacy of the main building.
- The amalgamation or subdivision of plots on mews lanes is discouraged.
- Parking provision in mews lanes is to be provided in off-street garages, forecourts or courtyards.
- Mews laneways must have a minimum carriageway of 4.8m in width or 5.5m where no verges or footpaths are provided.

- A consistent building line must be maintained by the front façade of adjoining mews developments along any given length of street or courtyard.

16.15 Retail & Commercial Development

The criteria to be considered in the assessment of proposed retail and commercial developments will include:

- Compliance with the relevant controls and standards, e.g. plot ratio, site coverage, parking, heights, etc;
- Testing the proposal against the sequential approach and other options have been considered;
- Compliance with relevant retail planning policy guidance;
- Its contribution to Town Centre vitality and mobility;
- Its contribution to site and or area regeneration;
- The quality of access by all modes of transport including by foot and bicycle;
- Its role in improving the competitiveness of the town and County;
- Its role in sustaining local communities;
- The extent to which the imposition of restrictions on the range of goods permitted for sales;
- The likely effects on the amenity of the shopping area and residents within it;
- The possibility of the proposal causing parking and/or difficulties with associated congestion and inconvenience, thereby jeopardising the safety of road users;
- The attractiveness of the proposed development;
- Impact on residential amenity and privacy.

16.16 Industry, Office, Warehousing and Business Park Development

Planning applications for an industrial, storage/distribution or business/office development should meet the following criteria:

- Compatibility with the relevant controls and standards, e.g. plot ratio, site coverage, parking etc
- Compatibility with the character of the surrounding area;
- High standards of design, finish, layout and landscaping;
- Compatibility with adjacent lands uses;

- Likely impact features of nature conservation interest or man made heritage;
- Likely noise nuisance;
- Degree of mitigation against any likely emissions or effluent;
- Appropriateness of boundary treatment and screening from public view;
- Likely impact on traffic flow and general road safety;
- Adequacy of access, parking and manoeuvring areas;
- Provision and content of a Mobility Management Plan is provided to shift the emphasis from car based commuting to increased use of sustainable transportation modes;
- Likely impact on residential amenity and privacy.

16.17 Development in Designated Opportunity Areas

Action Area Plan no.1: The Murrough

The Council will prepare an Action Area Plan for the Murrough. The development vision for this AAP is for the Murrough to become a new urban quarter in the town with a distinctive identity reflecting the coastal and riverside qualities of the Murrough, containing a living, working and leisure uses and building on the cultural and civic importance of the Murrough as valued by the residents of Wicklow Town.

To this end, land within the Action Area Plan boundary is zoned for Mixed Use Development. It is a priority of the Town Council to ensure that all development will be in accordance with the criteria to be contained within the future AAP for the area, will be to a high architectural standard and will contribute to the creation of a safe and legible public realm. The development control criteria to be contained within the future AAP will reflect the following:

- The layout of buildings, public open space and streets in all new developments will conform to an urban grain superimposed on the Murrough area reflecting that of the Town Centre.
- The urban grain will incorporate a number of cross pedestrian spines between the bank of the River Leitrim and the sea shore which will also serve to frame views between the sea and the town.
- A network of designated cycle lanes should traverse the AAP area and connect with those proposed parallel to the Port Access Road.
- The main road running through the centre of the Murrough will require a constant building line at ground to 2nd floor level to achieve the appropriate enclosure and will be tree-lined for its entire length. Traffic calming devices will slow traffic at crossing points of key pedestrian routes between the coastal edge and river edge.

- Traffic on this road will be restricted to 50km/h.
- A mix of uses should be achieved throughout the area including residential, retail, commercial and community.
- The public realm along the river edge and seafront will be significantly enhanced and extended pedestrian links will be provided north-westerly to the railway station and south-easterly to the quayside and Town Centre.
- A hierarchy of open spaces will be provided in the form of enclosed courtyards, linear parks and promenades and pocket gardens. Opportunities for the incorporation of public art in key public spaces will be provided throughout the Murrough Area.
- A 10m buffer zone will be provided along the bank of the River Leitrim in accordance with the SPA and NHA designations (see Chapter 10). Any development proposal within this 10m zone shall have to demonstrate the potential impact upon the river and propose appropriate mitigation measures.

Action Area Plan no.2: Convent Lands

The Council will prepare an Action Area Plan for the Convent Lands. The development vision for this AAP is to formalise the role of area as a 'green lung' in the town, in conjunction with a limited amount of other compatible uses necessary for the sustainable growth and self sufficiency of Wicklow Town.

To this end, land within the Action Area Plan boundary is zoned for Mixed Use Development, for High Density Residential, and Open Space and Amenity. The development control criteria to be contained within the future AAP will reflect the following:

- A network of designated pedestrian and cycle lanes should traverse the AAP area connecting existing residential areas and any new areas within the lands.
- Planning permission will not be granted for individual developments that are contrary to the masterplan contained within the Action Area Plan.
- Building heights will range from 2-storey to 5-storey, stepping down where necessary to respect the heights of buildings on adjoining lands.

Site Regeneration Areas: Whitegates, Abbey Lands and Kilmantan House

Site Regeneration Areas nos. 1, 2 and 3 concern the Whitegates, Abbey Lands and Kilmantan House areas respectively. The regeneration vision for the Whitegates area is for it to become a secondary retail and commercial hub for Wicklow Town, incorporating high density residential to ensure vibrancy and life throughout the day. The regeneration vision for the Abbey Lands area is for it to emerge as a predominantly business and employment area for the town centre, also incorporating residential and other vibrant town centre uses. The Regeneration vision for Kilmantan House is *To ensure that the area becomes a vibrant and attractive area providing a mix of high quality public buildings, offices and residential developments punctuated by public spaces and artistic features appropriate to its location adjoining the town centre.*

Both these sites are zoned for Town Centre and Mixed Use Development. As with the AAP areas, it is a priority of the Town Council to ensure that all development will be in accordance with the policies and objectives identified in the respective Site Regeneration Briefs (see chapter 14), will be to a high architectural standard and will contribute to the creation of a safe and legible public realm.

The following development control criteria will apply to both regeneration sites:

- The layout of buildings, public open space and streets in all new developments will conform to an urban grain superimposed on the Site Regeneration Areas area based on an urban block dimension of approximately 90 m deep by 90m to 120m long, where perimeter buildings enclose semi-public courtyard and garden spaces.
- The urban grain will reinforce pedestrian and cycle spines linking main access roads through the sites.
- Building heights will be in the order of three to five storeys throughout, stepping down where necessary to respect the heights of buildings on adjoining lands.
- Overlooking or overshadowing of adjoining lands from the upper floors of any proposed new buildings will not be considered acceptable.
- The Town Council will consider taller elements where they occur on key vistas or front onto significant public spaces, and subject to high quality design, may achieve heights of six storeys.
- All internal streets will require a constant building line at ground to 2nd floor level to achieve the appropriate enclosure and should be tree lined in all instances. Above this level, the building volume can be set back or punctured with terraces or roof garden spaces, provided there is a sufficient sense of an overall continuation of the building line.
- Traffic will be restricted to 30km/h on main vehicular routes and 5km/h on pedestrian dominated shared surfaced areas.
- A continuous frontage is required to the existing roads that define edges to the regeneration sites.
- A network of public open spaces must be provided, incorporating natural and manmade features, and reinforcing any views towards landmarks within the site or in the surrounding townscape.

Large footprint retail and office uses are to be integrated into a continuous streetscape with retail units screening any otherwise blank frontages.

- The possible relocation and upgrade of the existing Foul Pumping Station should be discussed with the Directorate of Water and Environmental Services, Wicklow County Council.

16.18 Bed and Breakfast, Guest house, Hotel and Hostel Development

In accordance with Article 10(4) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, planning permission is required for the conversion of more than four bedrooms in a dwelling house into a bed and breakfast establishment.

In determining planning applications for change of use to bed and breakfast, guest house, hotel or hostel in residential areas, the Town Council will have regard to the following:

- Size and nature of facility,
- The effect on the amenity of neighbouring residents,
- The standard of accommodation for the intended occupiers of the premises,
- The availability of adequate, safe and convenient arrangements for car parking and services,
- The type of advertising proposed,
- The effect on protected structures and/or conservation areas,

16.19 Community Facilities

The activities and services operating from community facilities are a valuable resource in helping to meet a wide range of needs within the population. Applications for community facilities in residential areas will be treated sympathetically, but having regard to a number of factors:

- Overall need in terms of necessity, deficiency, and opportunities to share/enhance existing facilities. Where such facilities are provided they should be designed in such a way as to allow for multi-functional use.
- Community facilities must be located so that they are conveniently accessible by both residents and others who may have reason to use the facility. They should be well integrated with pedestrian and cycle routes and where they serve a wider community, located on a quality public transport route.
- Community facilities must be accessible to all members of society, including those with disabilities.
- Facilities must conform with the requirements of appropriate legislative guidelines, for example childcare and education facilities.

16.20 Childcare facilities

The Town Council recognises the need for properly run and conveniently located childcare facilities in Wicklow Town that are affordable for all households. The Council will implement the Planning Guidelines on childcare Facilities 2001 and will also have regard to the Guidelines for Best Practice in the Design of Childcare Facilities.

Childcare facilities will be encouraged in new and existing residential areas, employment areas, the Town Centre, neighbourhood centres and educational facilities. Generally one childcare facility should be provided for each 75 dwellings unless it can be demonstrated that having regard to the emerging demographic profile of the area that this level of childcare facilities is not required.

16.21 Nursing Homes

The Town Council recognises the continuing and growing need for nursing homes in the town. In determining planning applications for a purpose designed, change of use of a residential dwelling or other buildings to nursing, elder care home, the planning authority will, subject to protecting residential amenity, consider the location of nursing homes in residential areas and on sites considered adequate in size to cater for all generated needs of the development. The development of nursing homes should not involve significant changes to the street scene involving the loss of trees, hedges, walls etc.

16.22 Restaurants, TakeAways, Amusement Centres, Night Clubs/Licensed Premises, Open Air Concerts, Charity Outlets, Discount Outlets and Internet Cafés

In order to maintain an appropriate mix of uses and protect night time activities in a particular area, it is the objective of the Town Council to prevent an excessive concentration of restaurants, takeaways, and amusement centres and to ensure that the size of any such use is in keeping with the scale of the building and the pattern of development in the area, where appropriate. The provision of such facilities will be strictly controlled and have regard to the following:

- The effects of noise, general disturbance, hours of operation, litter and fumes on the amenities of nearby residents.
- The need to safeguard the vitality and viability of shopping areas in the Town Centre and to maintain a suitable mix of retail uses.
Traffic considerations.
- The number and frequency of such facilities in the area.
- A satisfactory agreement between the operators and the Council in relation to litter control.
- With regard to takeaways, the need to integrate the design of the ventilation systems into the design of the building.

16.23 Shopfront Design

The Town Council will encourage good shopfront design in the development of new shopfronts and the refurbishment of existing shopfronts, in accordance with the following criteria. (see Chapter 8 Cultural Heritage)

- The design of the shopfront should be in keeping with the architectural characteristics of the building of which it forms a part. Such features as existing arches, stringcourses, plaster detailing, mullions, cornices, mouldings or existing fascias and brackets should be considered in the new design and new internal alterations or proposed advertising must not interfere with such details.
- Generally, the removal of existing, good quality shop fronts will not be permitted. Shopfront design must respect the scale and proportions of the streetscape by maintaining the existing grain of development along the street and respecting the appropriate plot width. It is important to relate the fascia heights of adjacent shops.
- The quality, texture and colour of materials used are of paramount importance. Materials must complement the architectural character of the building and integrate with the overall visual unity of the street. The painting of natural brick or stone is generally unacceptable as is the use of plastic and large amounts of metal. The use of raised plaster as the predominant material is encouraged.
- Illuminated plastic or neon signs are generally not considered appropriate.
- Projecting signs will be acceptable where they are not detrimental to the character of the building.
- Shopfronts must include well designed street numbers.
- Fascia panels should be provided as an integral part of the shopfront and should be of a depth appropriate to the size of the building and the proportion and length of the shopfront. The fascias should not extend above the level of the first floor window sill or obscure windows or other architectural details.
- Canopies and wings should be made of durable and traditional materials and should not cause a cluttered appearance.
- External roller shutters will generally not be permitted. Shutters recessed to provide for a window display area will be encouraged. Exact details of all roller shutters shall be agreed with the Town Council.
- In new shopfronts, appropriate access should be made for disabled, elderly and those with children in prams and pushchairs.

16.24 Automatic Teller Machines

The provision of automatic teller machines (ATMs) will require compliance with the following criteria:

- The need to protect the character of the building or shopfront in which the ATM is installed, in particular, where the building is a protected structure.
- The need to avoid disturbance to adjoining premises through queuing.
- The need to avoid any potential traffic hazards cause by cars setting down or double parking.
- The need to ensure that the design and location are accessible to all.

16.25 Petrol Filling Stations

The Town Council considers that in general, motor fuel filling stations are most appropriately located on the town periphery. It will have regard to the following factors:

- Impact on residential amenity;
- Safe access for customer and delivery vehicles, ensuring that all such vehicles using the facilities may be accommodated clear of the public road at all times;
- Proximity to existing retail developments in the area, particularly where retail floor spaces is also proposed ancillary to the use as a petrol filling station;
- Safety aspects of circulation and parking within the station forecourt;
- Suitable landscaping and screening to minimise visual impact may be required;
- The impact of canopies and advertising on surrounding amenity.
- The impact on the surrounding drainage - Drainage from car-wash facilities must not be via surface water drainage or watercourses;
- Petrol/hydrocarbon inceptors are required to deal with surface water drainage at all PFS's;
- All hydrocarbon/fuel storage facilities should be bund in accordance with requisite Environmental legislation'.

16.26 Outdoor Advertising

The Town Council will assess applications for advertising and signage under the following criteria:

- Signs on freestanding hoardings that interfere with the safety and free flow of traffic will not be permitted;
- Signs should be in scale and harmony with the existing building and surrounding envi-

ronment and should not project above the skyline;
Signs must not obscure traffic signs;

- Signs should be so designed as to impair the amenities of the area.

16.27 Conservation and Archaeology

In assessing planning applications for works to the exterior or interior of a protected structures, or for proposed developments that may have an impact on protected structures, the Town Council will have regard to:

- Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, 2005)
- Part IV, Planning and Development Act, 2000
- National Monuments Acts 1930-1994
- Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1999.

An Architectural Assessment Report, and comprehensive schedule of proposed work, as per the Architectural Heritage Protection guidelines above, must be submitted with any planning application for a protected structure, proposed protected structure or other building of significant heritage.

Applications for developments located within the Zone of Archaeological Potential should include an archaeological assessment, method for construction procedures and, if deemed necessary by the Town Council, a report on test excavations, undertaken by a licensed archaeologists. The Town Council will insert archaeological a monitoring and investigation conditions on all grants of permission in this Zone.

The Town Council recognises that archaeological deposits can also be located outside the Zone of Archaeological Potential and may also request a desk top assessment and/or test excavations to be included in the planning application.

In assessing applications within and outside the ZAP, the Town Council will have regard to the National Monuments Act 1930-1994 and the Sites and monuments Record (SMR), compiled by Dúchas- The Heritage Society for Ireland.

16.28 Noise Emissions and Pollution

The Town Council will have regard to the proposed EU Directive on Environmental Noise when issued, and to the recommendations and requirements of the Environmental Protection Agency.

In general, on sites where noise generated by building operations would seriously affect residential amenity, building operations will required to be carried out according to the hours stipulated in the planning decision, and no work shall be carried out on Sundays or Bank Holidays. This does not apply to works on public roadways.

16.29 Utilities and Services Provision

Public utility (electricity, gas, telephone, television/ telecommunications) services must be ducted underground. Where an exceptional and demonstrable need exists, the Council will permit the development of overhead transmission lines in locations where they do not significantly detract from visual or residential amenity.

ESB substations, pump houses and other public service installations, public light standards and other street furniture should be carefully located in unobtrusive locations.

They must not cause unnecessary obstruction for the visually or mobility impaired. Trees must not be planted directly over underground services.

The Town Council will co-operate in the delivery of the proposed water supply scheme and main drainage scheme for the town.

16.30 Development in Flood Prone Areas

All proposed developments located within the flood risk area identified on the Objectives Map to be accompanied by a flooding risk assessment.

16.31 Development Close to Railway Lines

Development in close proximity to railways should be in accordance with 'Guidance on Iarnród Éireann Requirements for Potential Developments adjacent, over and under the railway with respect to Local Authority Development Plans and Local Area Plans' produced by Iarnród Éireann.

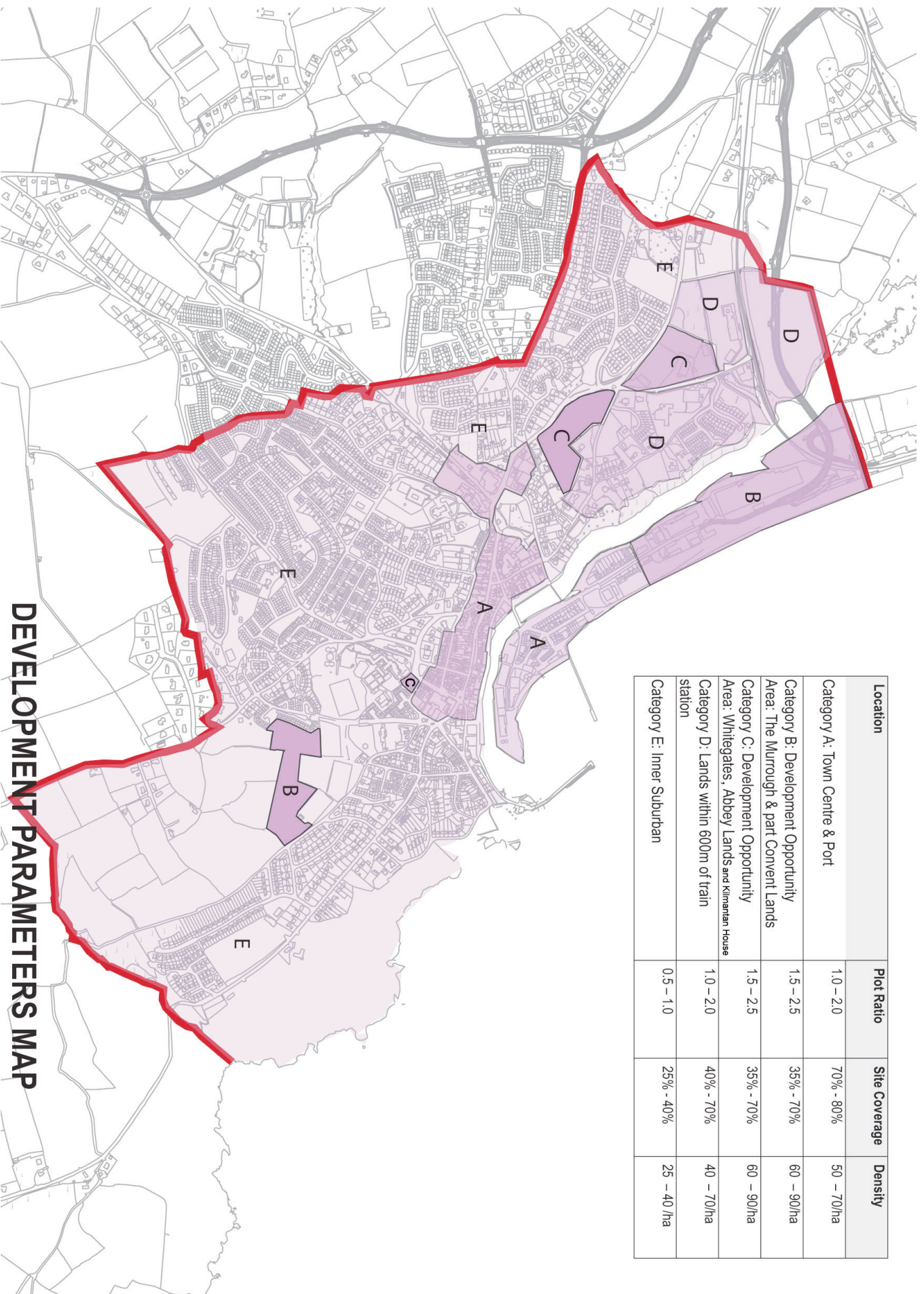
16.32 General Development Levy Contribution Scheme

Development levies will be sought from developers for necessary enabling works and infrastructure consistent with Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 and consistent with the Town Council's Levy Contribution Scheme.

16.33 Special Development Levy Contribution Scheme

The Council will seek contributions from developers where appropriate, consistent with the various Town Council Special Contributions Schemes.

Location	Plot Ratio	Site Coverage	Density
Category A: Town Centre & Port	1.0 – 2.0	70% - 80%	50 – 70/ha
Category B: Development Opportunity Area: The Murrrough & part Convent Lands	1.5 – 2.5	35% - 70%	60 – 90/ha
Category C: Development Opportunity Area: Whitegates, Abbey Lands and Kilmannan House	1.5 – 2.5	35% - 70%	60 – 90/ha
Category D: Lands within 600m of train station	1.0 – 2.0	40% - 70%	40 – 70/ha
Category E: Inner Suburban	0.5 – 1.0	25% - 40%	25 – 40 /ha



DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS MAP

Appendix 1.
Land Use Zoning Matrix

Zoning Matrix

Development Zone	Residential	Community Facilities / Educational	Town Centre	Business and Enterprise	Industrial	Port Use	Open Space / Amenity	Mixed Use
Dwelling	Y	N	O	N	N	N	N	O
Flat	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N	O
Guesthouse	O	N	Y	O	N	N	N	O
Hotel	O	N	Y	O	N	N	N	O
Retail: Small Shop/Corner Shop	O	O	Y	O	N	N	N	Y
Retail: Large Shops / Supermarket	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y
Retail Warehouse / Warehouse	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	O
Wholesale	N	N	N	Y	O	O	N	N
Take Away	N	N	O	N	N	N	N	O
Pub/Nightclub	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	O
Restaurant	O	N	Y	N	N	N	N	O
Cinema	N	O	Y	N	N	N	N	O
Open Space/Recreation Facilities	O	Y	O	N	N	O	Y	Y
Sports Facilities / Pitches	O	Y	N	N	N	O	Y	O
Community Facility	O	Y	O	N	N	N	Y	Y
Nursing Home	O	O	O	N	N	N	N	O
Health Centre	O	O	O	O	N	N	N	O
Hospital	N	O	N	O	N	N	N	N
School	O	Y	N	N	N	N	O	Y
Office	N	N	Y	Y	O	O	N	O
Port Related Use and Activity	N	N	N	O	O	Y	N	N
Car repair / Sales	N	N	O	Y	Y	N	N	N
Workshops	N	N	O	O	Y	O	N	N
Industry	N	N	N	O	Y	O	N	N
Petrol Station	N	N	N	O	Y	N	N	O
Garden Centre	O	Y	N	Y	O	N	N	O
Bank	N	N	Y	O	N	N	N	O
Amusement Arcade	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Advertising Panel	N	O	O	O	O	N	N	O
Hair dressing salon	O	N	Y	N	N	N	N	O
Group Housing Permanent Halting & Transient Sites for Travellers	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	O
Office Based Industry	N	N	O	Y	O	N	N	O
Enterprise Centre	N	N	O	Y	O	O	N	O
Car Park	O	O	Y	Y	Y	O	N	O

KEY

Y = Will Normally be Acceptable

A use, which will normally be acceptable, is one, that the Local Authority accepts in principle in the relevant zoning. However, it is still subject to the normal planning process including policies and objectives outlined in the Plan.

O = Are Open for Consideration

A use, which is open for consideration, means that the use is generally acceptable except where indicated otherwise and where specific considerations associated with a given proposal (i.e. scale) would be unacceptable, or where the development would be contrary to an objective for a given area.

N = Will Not Normally be Acceptable

Development, which is classified as not normally being acceptable in a particular zoning, is one, which will not be considered acceptable by the Local Authority except in exceptional circumstances. This may be due to its perceived effect on existing and permitted uses, its incompatibility with the policies and objectives contained in this Plan or the fact that it may be inconsistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. The expansion of established and approved uses not conforming to use zoning objectives will be considered on their merits.

Schedule of Zoning Objectives

Residential:

To protect and provide for residential uses and residential amenity with other uses open for consideration.

Community Facilities/Educational:

To provide for the community and educational uses

Town Centre:

To provide for commercial, retail and community services as the primary uses. There will be a presumption in favour of higher order retail rather than convenience retail. Residential uses are open for consideration where they complement the primary function of the Town Centre. The role of the Town Centre as the service centre of the town and its environs will be supported.

Business and Enterprise:

To provide for office based and high technology industry. Such uses will include professional services, software engineering, tele-marketing and various other commercial activities excluding large scale retail.

Industrial:

To provide for general industry. Such uses will involve the large scale processing of goods and raw materials and will generally not be compatible with residential uses.

Port Use:

To protect and provide for commercial and industrial Port-related uses

Open Space/Amenity:

To protect and provide for open space, recreational uses and amenity facilities

Mixed Use:

To provide for a range of uses and activities consistent with the policies and objectives of the designated Action Area Plans and Site Regeneration Areas.

Appendix 2.

Record of Protected Structures

(Extracted from the Wicklow Inventory Study 1997, Volume 2, Map Database.

Produced by Duchas, the Heritage Service)

Appendix 2

Record of Protected Structures

Unique identity number:	RPS 1
Address:	Brickfield Lane
Description:	Semi detached three bay two storey late Victorian house, c. 1897, with projected gabled end bay, canted bay window, glazed porch and single storey return to rear.
Ordnance Survey Map:	1:1,000 scale, 4020:14:56
Special Interest:	Architectural, historical, artistic
Unique identity number:	RPS 2
Address:	Brickfield Lane
Description:	Square cut concrete capped granite piers and cast iron gates, c. 1895.
Ordnance Survey Map:	1:1,000 scale, 4020:14:109
Special Interest:	Architectural, historical, artistic
Unique identity number:	RPS 3
Address:	Wicklow Parish Church of Ireland Graveyard, Church Hill
Description:	Church of Ireland Graveyard, in use from 1650, with slab and carved gravestones and funerary monuments, some enclosed with cast iron railings; probable site of medieval church; east end consolidated c.1965.
Ordnance Survey Map:	1:1,000 scale, 4020:15:6
Special Interest:	Architectural, historical, artistic
Unique identity number:	RPS 4
Address:	Wicklow Parish Church of Ireland, Church Hill
Description:	Anglican auditory church, c.1700, comprising square tower having ogee cupola.
Ordnance Survey Map:	1:1,000 scale, 4020:15:7
Special Interest:	Architectural, historical, artistic
Unique identity number:	RPS 5
Address:	Saint Nathi's/Round Mount
Description:	Early Christian or Norman works, now heavily planted
Ordnance Survey Map:	1:1,000 scale, 4020:15:55
Special Interest:	Archaeological, historical

Unique identity number: RPS 6
Address: Wicklow Parish Church of Ireland, Church Hill
Description: Hiberno-Roman arched carved granite doorcase
Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:15:56
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 7
Address: Leitrim River (Bridge)
Description: Eight arched stone bridge spanning Leitrim river, c.1690
Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:20:87
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 8
Address: Bridge Street
Description: End of terrace five bay two storey house, built 1869
Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:20:133
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 9
Address: Saint Patrick's Church, Saint Patrick's Road
Description: Detached Gothic Catholic Church, c.1840.
Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:20:197
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 10
Address: Courthouse, Market Square
Description: Detached nine bay two storey over raised basement late Georgian courthouse, built 1824.
Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:20:259
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 11
Address: Main Street
Description: Laneway with granite steps having concrete landings, c.1820
Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:20:291
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 12
Address: Kilmantin Hill
Description: Detached ten bay three storey over basement gaol, c.1843.
Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:20:358
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 13
Address: Methodist Chapel, Bay View Road
Description: Detached four bay Wesleyan Methodist chapel, built 1866.
Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:20:457
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 14
Address: Dominican Convent, Convent Road
Description: Semi detached six bay three storey over basement extension with dormer attic.
Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:20:470
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 15
Address: Saint Dominic's Convent and Chapel, Dominican Convent, Convent Road.
Description: Terraced seven bay Victorian convent chapel, c.1895.
Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:20:471
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 16
Address: Saint Dominic's Wing, Dominican Convent, Convent Road.
Description: Terraced five bay three storey over basement mid-Victorian secondary school with dormer attic, built 1928.
Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:20:472
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 17
Address: Saint Joseph's Wing, Dominican Convent, Convent Road.
Description: Terraced eight bay three storey basement dormitory extension, built 1887.

Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:20:473
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 18
Address: Saint Theresa's Wing, Dominican Convent, Convent Road.
Description: Semi detached six bay three storey over basement extension to convent secondary school, built 1928.

Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:20:474
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 19
Address: Saint Catherine's Wing, Dominican Convent, Convent Road.
Description: Semi detached six bay four storey over basement late Victorian extension, built 1998.

Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:20:476
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 20
Address: The Mall.
Description: Retaining wall, c.1875.
Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:20:548
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 21
Address: Dunbur Road.
Description: Cast iron wall mounted letter box, c.1925.
Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:16:120
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 22
Address: Black Castle
Description: Ruins of cliff-top castle and fort, c.1660.
Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:20:152
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 23
Address: Castle Street
Description: Remains of former stone and earth defensive ramparts to Black castle, c.1660.
Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:20:176
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Unique identity number: RPS 24
Address: The Abbey, Abbey Street
Description: Preserved remains of sections of ruined Franciscan friary including thirteenth century window and fifteenth century tower.
Ordnance Survey Map: 1:1,000 scale, 4020:20:179
Special Interest: Architectural, historical, artistic

Appendix 3.
Land Use Zone Map

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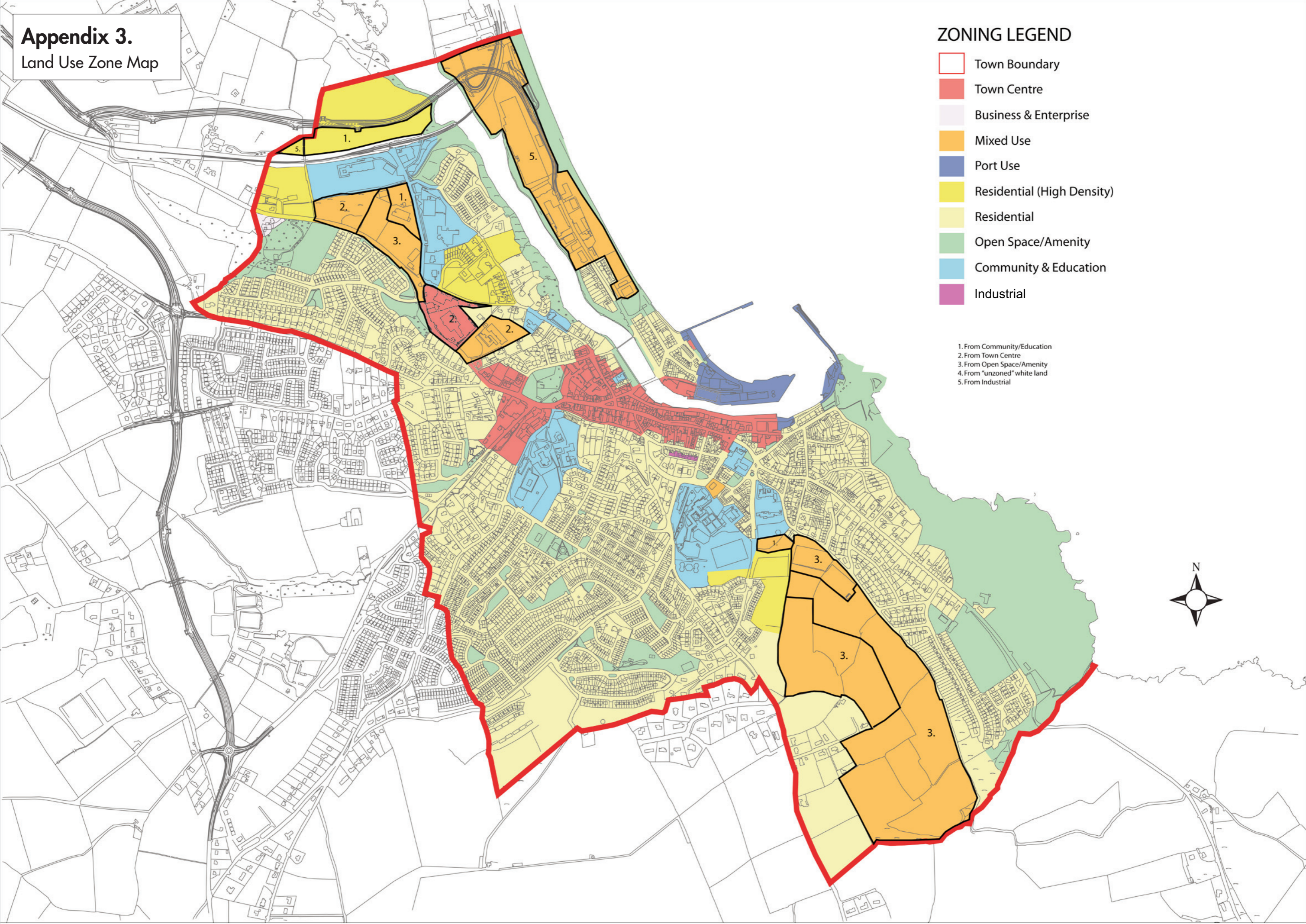
Appendix 4.
Objectives Map
(Both contained in pouch at back of plan)

Appendix 3.
Land Use Zone Map




















ZONING LEGEND

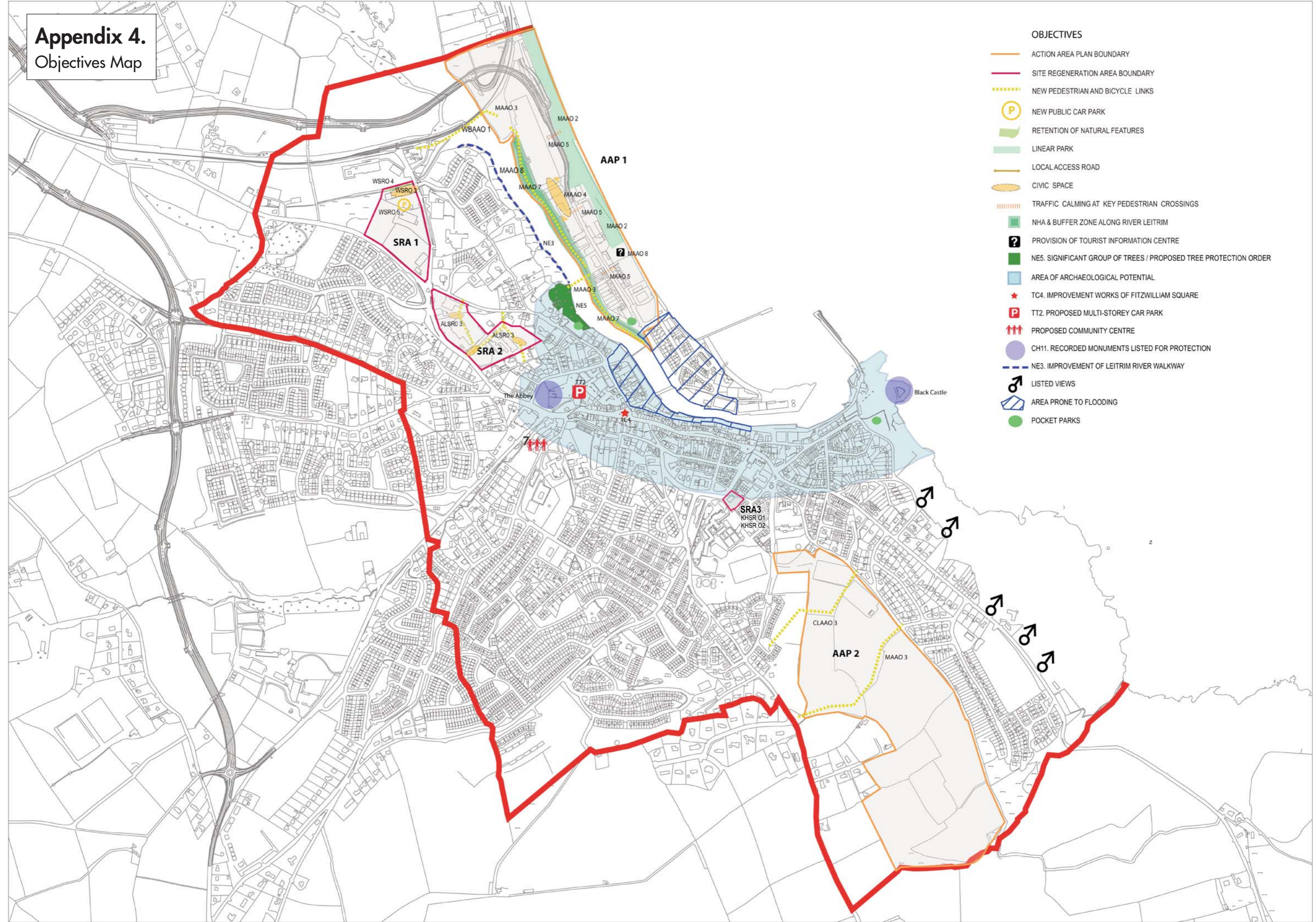
- Town Boundary
- Town Centre
- Business & Enterprise
- Mixed Use
- Port Use
- Residential (High Density)
- Residential
- Open Space/Amenity
- Community & Education
- Industrial

- 1. From Community/Education
- 2. From Town Centre
- 3. From Open Space/Amenity
- 4. From "unzoned" white land
- 5. From Industrial



Appendix 4. Objectives Map

- OBJECTIVES**
-  ACTION AREA PLAN BOUNDARY
 -  SITE REGENERATION AREA BOUNDARY
 -  NEW PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE LINKS
 -  NEW PUBLIC CAR PARK
 -  RETENTION OF NATURAL FEATURES
 -  LINEAR PARK
 -  LOCAL ACCESS ROAD
 -  CIVIC SPACE
 -  TRAFFIC CALMING AT KEY PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS
 -  NHA & BUFFER ZONE ALONG RIVER LEITRIM
 -  PROVISION OF TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE
 -  NE5. SIGNIFICANT GROUP OF TREES / PROPOSED TREE PROTECTION ORDER
 -  AREA OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL
 -  TC4. IMPROVEMENT WORKS OF FITZWILLIAM SQUARE
 -  TT2. PROPOSED MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK
 -  PROPOSED COMMUNITY CENTRE
 -  CH11. RECORDED MONUMENTS LISTED FOR PROTECTION
 -  NE3. IMPROVEMENT OF LEITRIM RIVER WALKWAY
 -  LISTED VIEWS
 -  AREA PRONE TO FLOODING
 -  POCKET PARKS



Appendix 5.

County Housing Strategy

(Taken from Chapter 4 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2004-2010)

1. Introduction

This chapter sets out the strategies and policies which the Council* intends to follow over the period of this Development Plan, in order to realise the vision and corporate aims of the Council in the area of housing provision and to fulfil its statutory obligations.

The Chapter firstly establishes the context of housing in Wicklow, in terms of:

- The Council's established Corporate Housing Plan, which determines its own housing activities;
- The broader land use settlement and zoning strategies which have been set out in Chapter 3, and;
- Linking these two, the framework for the County Housing Strategy.

Secondly, the Chapter summarises calculations of housing demand and supply, including the supply of serviced zoned land, which have been made in a detailed Working Paper which supports this Plan. The overall requirement for social and affordable housing is presented.

Thirdly, strategies to ensure the supply of adequate land for housing and necessary construction of social and affordable housing, are set out .

Finally, policies which the Council will apply in pursuit of this strategy and other relevant housing aims, are stated.

This Chapter, together with supporting documents, forms The Council's Housing Strategy under Section V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, for the period 2004-2010, and replaces the existing Strategy adopted for the period 2001-2005. The statutory Housing Strategy under Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, shall be adopted by all Local Authorities within the County of Wicklow, and must form part of their Development Plan. The strategies and policies set out in this Chapter therefore effectively relate to the functional areas of all Local Authorities within the County of Wicklow.

2. Vision

To ensure that, insofar as the resources and the remit of the Council permit, suitable accommodation is available for each household within the County, in an appropriate location and at a price or rent that they can afford; and to promote the development of stable and sustainable communities through policies relating to the location, scale, character and tenure of dwellings built.

* In accordance with Section 94 (1) of the Act, this Housing Strategy has been prepared as a joint collective strategy between Wicklow County Council, Wicklow Town Council, Arklow Town Council and Bray Town Council. Reference to "The Council" throughout this Chapter should be read as reference to the four Planning Authorities in the County unless otherwise stated.

3. Context

3.1 – CORPORATE PLAN FOR HOUSING

In accordance with its statutory requirements, the Council will endeavour to meet the needs of those requiring accommodation through its own house building programme and a range of social housing options. The general strategy for realising the overall objective is that those who can afford to do so should provide housing for themselves, through the range of options available to them, and that those unable to do so would have access to social housing provided by the Local Authority.

In order to meet this challenge, strategies have been identified and enshrined in the Council's Corporate Plan which effectively charts the direction the programme will take. These strategies are to:

1. Implement the Housing Strategy formulated under Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000.
2. Promote Social Housing Options
3. Promote the role of the voluntary Housing Sector
4. Maintain all Council housing stock
5. Regulate the private rented accommodation sector
6. Adopt and implement the Action Plan for Homelessness
7. Implement the Traveller Accommodation Plan
8. Promote Good Estate Management Practices.

Further details of these are set out in the Corporate Plan and are referenced where relevant in this Chapter. Strategies and policies adopted in this Chapter are consistent with the provisions of the Corporate Plan for Housing.

3.2 – COUNTY SETTLEMENT STRATEGY

The overall pattern of growth in the number of persons resident in the County of Wicklow and its constituent authorities, has been set out in Chapter 3, which also provides a projection of the likely population in 2010. Chapter 3 also sets out the settlement strategy for the County, within the parameters of the Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area, and the National Spatial Strategy.

Housing strategy and policy will undergird the vision and strategies presented in Chapter 3, aiming in particular to ensure that sufficient land and houses are available to facilitate the integrated expansion of Development Centres, that these settlements are balanced in their social composition and that they are grown in accordance with available infrastructure.

3.3 – COUNTY HOUSING STRATEGY

Statutory Requirements: The preparation of a Housing Strategy is a requirement under the Planning and Development Act 2000, Part V and Part II of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2002. This chapter of the Development Plan sets out Wicklow's Housing Strategy for the period 2004 – 2010,

which is the lifetime of the Development Plan.

The Housing Strategy must include an analysis of demand and supply for the different sectors of the housing market, forecast future needs and shortfalls, and propose objectives to balance demand with supply in a sustainable manner. The procedures for the preparation of a Housing Strategy are set down in the Act.

In particular, the Act specifies that the Housing Strategy will:-

- Estimate the existing and likely future need for housing in the area, and ensure that sufficient zoned and serviced land is made available to meet such needs.
- Ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is provided to meet the needs of different categories of households, including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities.
- Counteract undue segregation between persons of different social background.
- Provide that as a general policy a specific % (not exceeding 20%) of the land zoned in the Development Plan for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be reserved for those in need of social or affordable housing in the area.

Thus the Housing Strategy encompasses both the role of the Authority as the provider of social and special housing and its broader land use planning responsibilities.

The Council adopted its previous Housing Strategy in 2001. The Planning and Development Act 2000 requires that a report on progress achieved be given to the Council two years after the making of the housing strategy and:

“Where the report indicates that new or revised housing needs have been identified, the Manager may recommend that the housing strategy be varied accordingly”.

This Housing Strategy replaces the previous strategy which was prepared for the period 2001 to 2005 and its provisions have been framed in the light of the review of the previous Strategy, which is summarised below.

REVIEW OF THE 2001-2005 HOUSING STRATEGY AND PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Elements of the 2001 Strategy: The 2001 Strategy set out the quantum of housing to be provided in County Wicklow, taking into consideration the population and household size projections of the Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area.

- It estimated that 1371 units per annum would be required in the period to 2005.
- If required private developers, with certain exceptions, to set aside 20% of sites for social/affordable housing.
- It proposed a programme of social housing by which the housing authorities would facilitate the provision of a total of 1,238 dwellings directly over the period 2001 to 2005. The voluntary and co-operative sector would provide a further 268 dwellings.

- It further provided that all social housing provided under Part V of the Planning & Development Act 2000 in accordance with this strategy should be allocated to persons on the Waiting List for that allocation area in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Letting Priorities.
- Moreover, it provided that affordable housing provided under Part V of the Act in accordance with the terms of The Housing Strategy all should be allocated in accordance with a Scheme of Priorities for affordable housing as adopted by the Council.

PROGRESS TO DATE

- House completions in the County have averaged nearly 2,000 units per annum since the adoption of the 2001 Strategy.
- The programme of social housing has provided 309 new units per annum to the end of March 2003. There have been 70 acquisitions. There are 150 Local Authority and 30 voluntary and co-operative sector dwellings in progress.
- Seventeen social and six affordable houses have so far been agreed in principle under Part V. While this number might seem small it is attributable to a large extent, to the lead in time required between development inception and build.

VARIATIONS PROPOSED: SUMMARY

In the light of the above, and using updated analysis of requirements, the Housing Strategy 2004-2010:

- Increases the required overall level of housing delivery for the period to 2005 and beyond.
- Varies the mechanisms for affordable housing delivery in accordance with the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2002
- Maintains the 20% rule for affordable housing within new housing developments, based on the calculations contained in the Housing Working Paper which supports this Plan.

4. Housing Demand and Supply

In framing a Housing Strategy, the Authority is required to establish both the level of social housing need which exists at the commencement of the strategy period and the overall and particular housing requirements which are likely to arise during the currency of the Strategy.

4.1 – ACCUMULATED SOCIAL HOUSING NEED

Table 4.1 sets out the assessed overall social housing need within the County in 2002, as measured by housing waiting lists. This need may arise from: inability to pay for alternative accommodation, unfitness of the existing dwelling; overcrowding; involuntary sharing; homelessness; and other special needs (including the needs of the elderly, disabled and persons with

learning disability), as well as homelessness and housing needs of the Traveller community.

Table 4.1: Social Housing need by type, 2002

Category of applicant	Authority					% breakdown
	Wicklow Co Co	Arklow	Bray	Wicklow	County Total	
Grounds of application						
• Cannot meet costs of suitable accommodation	332	187	196	49	764	46%
• Overcrowded/unfit accommodation or involuntary sharing	189	32	205	38	464	28%
• Special needs	64	22	119	153	358	22%
• Travellers	25	1	6	9	41	2%
• Homeless	6	-	32	-	38	2%
Household Composition						100%
• Single parent and children	227	92	253	18	590	35%
• Two person families with children	169	17	98	147	431	26%
• Single person households	126	106	166	11	409	25%
• Two person families without children	94	27	41	73	235	14%
Total	616	242	558	249	1,665	100%

Source: Wicklow Housing Authorities' Returns to the DoEHLG, March 2002

Grounds of application:

- The largest single category of need arises from inability to pay for alternative accommodation – 46% of the total in the County as a whole, but 54% in the functional area of Wicklow County Council. About a quarter of all needs relate to dwelling fitness and occupancy issues and another quarter from special needs – though this amounts to just 10% in the functional area of Wicklow County Council.

Household Composition

- In terms of household composition, approximately a third of all applicants are single parents and two person families with children. Single persons each account for a quarter.
- Measured social housing need in the County now therefore relates to a major extent to inability to pay and/or single parenthood
- Thirty-nine % of need involves households without children (one person or two person households)
- Special needs account for approaching a quarter of all need, (including 16% medical and compassionate grounds and 4% elderly persons)

4.2 – HOUSING REQUIREMENTS IN THE PERIOD 2004-2010

Housing need over the period 2004 to 2010 will arise from:

1. Increase in the number of households³
2. Obsolescence of the existing stock (including existing habitable dwellings that become second homes)
3. Additional houses required to facilitate movement of persons within the stock of housing⁴

Of these, the first is the most significant in Wicklow, where the number of households is rising rapidly. Population projections are set out elsewhere in Chapter 3. The expected increase in the number of persons in the County will give rise to changes in the numbers of households as indicated in Tables 4.2 and 4.3.

In addition, calculations for the period 1996 to 2002, for the County of Wicklow, show that there were, on average, some 440 houses completed each year, whose construction could not be related directly to the growth in the number of households. If these houses were accounted for entirely by obsolescence of the existing stock of housing, it would indicate an annual attrition to the housing stock of about 1.3%. This is a high figure, given the vintage of the stock, and indicates that, in fact, a significant proportion of this figure of 440 houses is accounted for, not by structural or locational obsolescence, road widening and other demolitions, but conversion of existing habitable dwellings to second and holiday homes and the construction of new such homes. Up to half of the total figure may be accounted for in this way.

Table 4.2: Projected population and households 2002 to 2010: Low Growth Scenario (Projected County Population of 134,095 in 2010)

Year	Population	Household Numbers	Average Household Size (*ratio of total population to private households)
2002	114,676	36,975	3.10
2003	117,103	38,046	3.08
2004	119,531	39,116	3.06
2005	121,958	40,187	3.03
2006	124,386	41,257	3.01
2007	126,813	42,328	3.00
2008	129,240	43,515	2.97
2009	131,668	44,633	2.95
2010	134,095	45,766	2.93

Source: Wicklow County Council

³ This embraces the overlapping concepts of housing need and housing demand

⁴ This refers to houses that are between occupiers at a given point in time, typically for a short period of time.

Table 4.3: Projected population and households 2002 to 2010: High Growth Scenario (Projected County Population of 146,202 in 2010)

Year	Population	Household Numbers	Average Household Size (*ratio of total population to private households)
2002	114,676	36,975	3.10
2003	118,617	38,498	3.08
2004	122,558	40,022	3.06
2005	126,498	41,545	3.04
2006	130,439	43,069	3.03
2007	134,380	44,592	3.01
2008	138,321	46,573	2.97
2009	142,261	48,224	2.95
2010	146,202	49,898	2.93

Source: Wicklow County Council

Additional dwellings to facilitate movement within the stock (see 4.2 above), may be factored into the overall requirement by adding between 3 and 5% to the growth in the number of households

4.3 – LAND AND HOUSING SUPPLY

Housing Supply: The extent of housing requirements set out above, may be compared to the pattern of housing delivery observed in the recent past (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Housing completions, County Wicklow

1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
1,168	1,147	1,335	1,294	1,484	1,914	2,002

Source: DoEHLG: Quarterly Bulletin of Housing Statistics

Housing completions in the County as a whole have averaged in the region of 1,500 over the last five years and 1,800 over the last three.

Assuming that obsolescence and second home construction remain at prevailing levels, and allowing for the required increase in dwellings to facilitate movement within the stock, it may be expected that a continuation of the present housing delivery performance would provide for an annual increase in the net number of households of between 1,000 and 1,250 – sufficient for the low, but not the high, growth scenario for the County.

Land Availability: Table 4.5 summarises the land availability position within the County as at September 2003. Detailed tabulations of land availability by settlement are contained in the working paper prepared in support of the Housing Strategy.

Table 4.5: Capacity of Housing Lands in County Wicklow

Type of Settlement and services status	Hectares	Assumed average density	Housing capacity
Major Growth Centres			
Zoned lands to be serviced			
in plan period	828.2	24.7	20,383
Other zoned lands	50.0	2.5	125
Secondary Growth Centres			
Zoned lands to be serviced			
in plan period	189.7	20.0	3,794
Other zoned lands	41.7	20.0	834
Land in villages	129.0	2.5	323
Total	1,238.6	20.5	25,458

Source: Wicklow County Council Planning Section

Detailed tabulations of land availability, when compared with anticipated population growth in each settlement (Chapter 3) show that there is sufficient land zoned and serviced (or planned to be serviced) in all major growth centres with the exception of *Bray, Blessington and Baltinglass. Local Area Plans will be prepared for these towns in order to zone required lands and make provision for servicing. A plan will also be prepared for Rathdrum. There are also small shortfalls in the secondary centres of Aughrim, Avoca, Newcastle and Shillelagh. In Aughrim, the water supply scheme is at the design stage and wastewater was recently upgraded. Shillelagh is served by Tinahely Regional Water Supply Scheme and wastewater treatment has now been upgraded. It should be noted that the 2010 populations for the towns are indicative populations; it is not expected that all the towns will reach these indicative populations. Also the density assumption that has been made is a modest one – 30 in Bray and Arklow, 25 in Wicklow and Greystones, and 20 elsewhere.

4.4 – HOUSING MARKET TRENDS

Nationally, the market for housing remains buoyant, with the ESRI⁵ projecting required annual house completions nationally at 49,000 to 2006 and 42,000 thereafter. However, new house prices relative to personal disposable income, peaked in the year 2000. The ESRI suggest that new house prices are likely to fall moderately in real terms over the period of the Strategy.

Nevertheless, there are special factors which are likely to impact on the County. Chief amongst these is the demand arising from the growth of the Dublin region and the associated growth centres within the County. A further factor is the growth of second homes.

For the purpose of this Strategy, therefore, a survey was conducted of house price change expectations amongst auctioneers in County Wicklow, in order to supplement data on anticipated national house price changes.

Taken together, national and local data indicate that a moderation of price increases is expected, with annual rates of increase in the County taken as a whole falling to 4% by 2007.

⁵ Bergin et al. *Medium Term Review 2003-2010*, ESRI, July 2003

*Given the shortfall in available land within the confines of Bray TC

A Local Area Plan will be prepared for the Environs of Bray to accommodate the needs of the settlement

The background working paper uses these data, together with locally adjusted data on projected national per capita income changes, to calculate housing affordability for Wicklow residents in each year to year 2010.

The following section summarises the results of these calculations and sets out the implications for the provision of social and affordable housing within the County.

4.5 – SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

Table 4.6 below summarises the position with regard to the annual rate of household formation and the numbers of households from these new formations who will meet the affordability criteria set out in Section 93(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, based on projections of changes in house prices and personal incomes.

Table 4.6:

Measure	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
LOW							
Household formations (1)	1070	1071	1070	1071	1187	1118	1133
Number of households meeting affordability criteria							
S 93(1) (2)	477	479	473	459	491	450	441
(2) as a % of (1)	44%	44%	44%	43%	41%	40%	39%
HIGH							
Household formations (1)	1524	1523	1524	1523	1981	1651	1674
Number of households meeting affordability criteria							
S 93(1) (2)	679	682	675	654	823	663	652
(2) as a % of (1)	44%	44%	44%	42%	41%	40%	38%

Source: Wicklow County Council

Requirement for social and affordable housing in private developments:

In order to calculate the total requirement for social and affordable housing, the data presented in Table 4.6 must be adjusted and supplemented in ways which are set out below.

Firstly, the absolute numeric target for provision of social and affordable housing by private developers, is derived as follows:

ADD

- Number of new households requiring affordable or social housing (Table 4.6)
- Special needs cases not included in the social housing register ⁶
- All other cases being catered for by the voluntary sector

DEDUCT

- Affordable housing freed-up by waiting list clearance ⁷
- Surplus (if any) of programme of direct social and affordable housing provision by housing authorities, over accumulated need measured by the waiting list, available to meet prospective social housing need (see section 4.3)
- Provision of subsidised sites by the Housing Authority to facilitate single affordable housing

Next, In order to fix the % allocation on each private sector site, the net amount derived above is DIVIDED BY:

ADD

- Total number of new households to be formed over the period (including those requiring social and affordable housing)
- Housing association projected completions – total

LESS (optional)

- All houses constructed on unzoned lands or on sites which fall below the threshold set by the Act

This equation may be established on a year-to-year basis, but for the purposes of this strategy, an average has been derived for the whole period of the Plan and is to be applied in every year of the Plan.

The calculations are set out in the Working Paper prepared in support of this Strategy.

Two options are used to calculate the relevant % to be applied⁸. The average requirements over the life of the strategy under each of the options are set out below.

Table 4.7 % Requirement for Social Affordable Housing

Option Used	Population growth assumption	
	Low	High
Option 1	44.2	43.6
Option 2	53.1	52.2

⁶ It should be noted that the accumulated social housing need which will not be dealt with by the voluntary sector is excluded from the overall calculation of need, since it is assumed to be dealt with by the Local Authority on sites already acquired, through its own building or acquisition programme.

⁷ Privately rented housing relinquished by those taking up social housing may be available for social housing purposes

⁸ Option 1 is the basic calculation as set out in the text. In Option 2, the figures are amended to take account of construction on non-zoned land and sites below the threshold. These are deducted from the denominator, since they reduce the base to which the number of affordable houses must be added. At the same time, the number of local authority free or subsidised sites provided at such locations is deducted from the numerator, since this is a reduction in the required affordable housing solutions on zoned land above the threshold of affordable provision.

5. The Housing Strategy

The housing strategy to be employed by the Council over the period of this Plan comprises three elements:

1. To ensure that sufficient zoned and serviced land is available in designated development centres and other settlements within the County to accommodate the estimated housing requirements of such settlements during the currency of the Plan.
2. To further provide for social and affordable housing through Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000.
3. To provide directly for social and affordable housing solutions through its own house building programme, assistance to other agencies and individuals, acquisition of dwellings and other special programmes.

5.1 – PROVISION OF ZONED AND SERVICED LAND IN DEVELOPMENT CENTRES

The overall settlement strategy for the County has been set out in Chapter 3 of the Plan.

- Policy SS1 states that within the Metropolitan area of the County, the Council will encourage housing, industry and other development to locate on suitably zoned lands or in existing towns and villages that have a basic social, community and physical infrastructure.
- Policy SS2 states that in the Hinterland area, the Council will concentrate development in the designated Primary Development Centre of Wicklow Town & Environs and the Secondary Development Centre of Arklow & Environs.

In Chapter 9 of this Plan, the Council commits itself to encourage and facilitate the provision of necessary infrastructure to fully accommodate this population and achieve a balanced economy, social and sustained environment. In particular, the Plan aims to deliver and promote a high quality and efficient water supply, drainage and waste management facilities during the Plan period, which will ensure the long term environmental, social and economic development of the County.

- Policy W1 states that the Council will provide public water supply to towns, villages and rural areas in accordance with the Council's "Water Services Investment Programme" and those identified in Schedule 9.1 in Chapter 9.
- Policy WSI states that the Council will provide satisfactory wastewater treatment and ancillary works to all towns and villages in the county to serve existing and future populations in accordance with the Wicklow Settlement Strategy and Hierarchy, in accordance with the Water Framework Directive 2000, Water Services Investment Programme and those identified in Schedule 9.3 in Chapter 9.
- Section 6.2.2 of Chapter 9 indicates that the Council will require developments to connect to public piped infrastructure where public infrastructure services are adequate or where they will be improved in the future, but that where public treatment capacity is currently not adequate and where upgraded capacity is proposed, the Council will consider the provision of suitable wastewater

treatment plants for housing developments prior to the upgrade.

Calculations made in the Housing Working Paper indicates that the existing zoned serviced land, proposed zoning provisions and associated servicing commitments of the Council are sufficient to cater for housing requirements in each of the designated settlement centres with the exceptions of in particular Baltinglass, Blessington, Bray (environs) where Local Area Plans will be prepared to remedy the position.

5.2 – DIRECT PROVISION OF SOCIAL HOUSING INCLUDING SPECIAL NEEDS

It is recognised that there will continue to be a need for social and affordable housing irrespective of the level of overall housing output. Wicklow Housing Authorities will continue to endeavour to meet the needs of households through a range of social housing options, including its own direct house building programme and assistance to other agencies.

The Council's Strategic Statement identified the following in relation to its housing responsibility:

"To provide and assist in the provision of suitable, quality and cost-effective accommodation to satisfy the needs of people who are unable to provide housing accommodation for themselves".

The challenge is to ensure delivery of this programme and achievement of the maximum amount of social and affordable housing, thereby providing a quicker and more affordable access to housing for people on limited means. Achieving this will require the Local Authorities to play a wider promotional role, which will also necessitate an enhanced contribution from the voluntary sector.

The Council is committed to promoting and facilitating the use of the full range of social housing options, as set out below.

Provision of New Social Housing by Wicklow Housing Authorities

In the absence of a rolling multi-annual housing programme, and given the dependence of the Local Authority on central government funding for housing provision, it is not feasible to set out with confidence the future programme of social housing within Wicklow. There are currently 150 Local Authority dwellings in progress, and 30 being provided by the voluntary and co-operative sector. Starts for 2004 are projected to be 520. Completions are assumed to average 130 dwellings, annually, over the period of the Plan. Within the functional area of the County Council, housing schemes have recently been completed or are in progress in Aughrim, Avoca, Ballinaclesh, Baltinglass, Bardarrig, Blessington, Carnew, Dunlavin, Kilcoole, Newtownmountkenedy, Rathnew, Rathnew, Roundwood, Stratford and Tinahely.

The land bank for social housing comprises some 52 hectares. Based on the likely number of starts in the period 2005 to 2008, additional lands may be sought to accommodate social housing development in North, East and West Wicklow.

Housing Acquisition Programme: Each year as part of its Housing Programme, and where it proves economical to do so, the Council acquires dwellings at various locations throughout the County. To date only former Council houses have been acquired. Acquisitions are expected to be capped at 10 per annum over the duration of the Plan.

Private Sites Programme: To meet the growing demand and to supplement the traditional housing construction programme, the Wicklow Housing Authorities have continued to operate a scheme for the provision of subsidised sites. Bray Town Council has provided sites at Ballywaltrim. Wicklow Town Council has provided sites on Greenhill Road. Wicklow County Council has provided sites at Ashford, Auhrim, Dunlavin, Enniskerry, Greystones, Kilcoole, Kilmacanogue, Rathdrum, Shillelagh and Tinahely. It is now Council policy to provide private sites only in the south and west of the county, having regard to the cost and availability of lands, most economical and sustainable use of lands and the current housing list. It is anticipated that the annual number of dwellings assisted by this scheme will average 50 over the lifetime of this Plan (in all the housing authorities together). In areas other than the south and west, the Council will continue to provide a mix of social and affordable housing to ensure the best use of lands available while at the same time promoting and encouraging social integration.

Affordable Housing Schemes⁹: One such vehicle for the achievement of this aim is the Council's own affordable housing schemes.

Within the County Council area, under this scheme the Council provides new houses, at cost price and low interest rates, on land owned by them, to persons qualifying under the terms of the scheme. Some 147 such houses were provided in 2003 and a further 61 are being developed. Schemes completed or currently being developed are at Auhrim; Avoca; Ballinaclesh; Ballyhara; Baltinglass; Blessington; Kilcoole; Rathnew and Tinahely. Wicklow Town Council presently has proposals to develop a scheme for social and affordable housing for up to 202 units at Ballyguile on the western edge of the town. Arklow Town Council also has proposals for three affordable housing schemes in their area. Bray is unlikely to develop much affordable housing because of the extremely high price of land in the town. This often renders the provision of affordable housing too expensive for those in housing need.

Wicklow County Council will also continue to advance its house acquisitions from new private developments as part of the policy objective of this Plan that 20% of proposed residential units on unzoned land are dedicated as social/affordable housing. Houses acquired by the Council under this objective are sold to eligible applicants using the criteria of the Affordable housing Scheme. Site subsidies are sought from the Department of the

Environment and Local Government in order to make the sale price of the dwelling more affordable. Ten such dwellings have been acquired to date.

It is anticipated that an annual average of 50 dwellings will be provided under these schemes between 2004 and 2010 (all Authorities combined).

Policy HI: To ensure that 20% of any land developed for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be made available for the provision of social/affordable housing on unzoned lands.

Other Social Housing Options: A number of other schemes are available to eligible candidates, including:

- Shared Ownership Scheme
- Traditional housing loans
- Mortgage Allowance Scheme.
- Extensions to council houses
- Essential Repairs Grants
- Improvement Works in Lieu of Local Authority Housing
- Tenant Purchase Scheme

A contribution to the stock of available social housing is also made through returns to stock, where a vacancy has arisen because the previous occupant is now housed in a dwelling obtained on the open purchase or rental market.

An annual contribution of 20 is estimated for all Authorities combined over the lifetime of the plan, covering the net returns to stock as defined above as well as the budgetary impact of tenant purchase.

The Role of the Voluntary Housing and Co-operative Sector: There are nine groups currently active in the Voluntary Housing Sector in Wicklow: Bray Womens Refuge, Sunbeam House Service, St. Vincent de Paul, Ardee Cheshire Homes, Peacehaven Trust, Newgrove Housing Association, Kare, Suaimhneas and Respond. There are various schemes at different stages from planning to consideration, to Department of Environment & Local Government approval received, to under-construction.

The role of the voluntary housing sector (voluntary housing associations, co-operative associations, and community associations) will be actively promoted by the Council and is expected to feature strongly over the course of the Development Plan. This Housing Strategy has been based on the expectation that through the implementation of Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, Planning Authorities can work more closely with the voluntary housing sector to expand significantly their contribution to construction capacity across the country. This expectation of an enhanced role for the voluntary housing sector is in turn based on a belief that the sector has remained somewhat under-developed to date.

Specifically, voluntary housing bodies are assisted under the Capital Assistance Scheme with non repayment capital funding

⁹ The Affordable Housing Scheme should not be confused with the term "Affordable Housing" as used in Part V of the Planning & Development Act 2000.

and Rental Subsidy Scheme to provide accommodation to meet the special housing needs such as those of the elderly, people with disabilities, homeless persons or small families. Wicklow Local Authorities recognise the potential role of the voluntary sector in the provision of housing for the special needs categories. Wicklow County Council will continue to play a key “enabling” and administrative role in the operation of the Capital Funding Schemes in order to assist approved Voluntary Housing Bodies.

Completions are anticipated to average 30 units per annum over the duration of the Plan. This figure is included as part of the 20% Part V target.

Revitalisation of existing areas of social housing:

- Housing Estate Management. To date 15 Residents Associations have been established or re-organised through the office of the Council's Estate Development Officer.
- The R.A.P.I.D. Programme (Revitalise Areas by Planning Investment & Development) has been in operation since late 2001 and 45 areas nationally have been designated under this programme. Wicklow County Council have responsibility for the implementation of the RAPID Programme and have employed a local Co-ordinator. Bray is the only town in County Wicklow that has been designated under this programme. In Bray five local authority housing estates have been included in the RAPID Programme, they include the following, Fassaroe, Oldcourt, Ballywaltrim Heights, Kilbride Grove and Ard Na Greine/Heatherwood/White Oaks/Deerpark/Cois Sleibhe. An Area Implementation Team (AIT) was established, it draws its membership from statutory agencies, community representatives and community organisations. The AIT has responsibility to implement the RAPID strategy at local level. The AIT has produced the Bray RAPID Programme Baseline Action Plan which was submitted to central Government in December 2001

Special needs Accommodation: This includes the needs of the elderly, the physically disabled and persons with learning disabilities.

Purpose built dwellings will continue to be provided for these persons in accordance with need, either as part of the local authority housing programme or through the voluntary and co-operative sector. This objective will also be pursued in respect of private house developments.

Homeless Persons: The most recent data indicate 29 homeless persons in need of housing in County Wicklow. These figures are based on the homeless that have presented themselves to the Council. The true figure is higher, but unknown. The hidden homeless include those sleeping rough or accommodated in hostels or hospitals.

The needs of homeless persons are wide ranging. Services required include initial accommodation, but also settlement and outreach services, health, education and training and social welfare services.

A Wicklow Homeless Strategy has been adopted. Under it, the local authority is responsible for the accommodation needs of the homeless, and the Health Board is responsible for care and welfare needs of these people.

The role of the Homeless Forum, established as part of the strategy, is to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan in the County. This Forum reports to the Housing and Corporate Estate Strategic Policy Committee.

Traveller Accommodation: The Traveller Accommodation Act, 1998 requires housing authorities in consultation with Travellers and the general public to prepare and adopt a five year construction programme to meet the existing and projected accommodation needs of Travellers in their area. The Council is committed to implementing the above programme.

Wicklow County Council adopted the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2000 – 2004 in February 2000. This was reviewed in 2002. The Programme addresses the accommodation needs of existing roadside families and prospective needs over a five-year period.

In order to deal adequately with illegal camping throughout the County, the Council will have an ongoing programme of providing suitable accommodation for Travellers through the following measures:

- Standard Housing: A number of travelling families presently camped on the roadside are suitable for standard type housing. This option has to date provided the most units of accommodation for Travellers throughout the County.
- Single-Site House/Halt: While it may not be feasible to provide a single site house at a particular location it may be possible to provide a single halt. The Single-site House/Halt is the preferred option of most roadside families in the County. Many of them look upon this as the ideal type of accommodation but it is difficult to find and is an expensive option. Single-Site Housing/Halt is better suited to families who have spent a long time on the roadside and who would find it difficult to make the transition to standard housing.
- Permanent Halting Sites: There are two permanent halting sites in the County at Silverbridge and Ballintreskin. Silverbridge can accommodate five families while Ballintreskin can accommodate eight. There are no vacancies in either halting site at present. Halting site accommodation is considered to be transitional accommodation by most families with group housing or standard housing their ultimate ambition.
- Transient Halting Sites: There are currently no transient sites in County Wicklow. As a result many families of a semi-indigenous nature, some of whom are related to County Wicklow indigenous families, move into the County temporarily. Such families generally end up parking illegally on public or private property and due to the unsuitable location and lack of sanitary facilities; traffic and health hazards are created. The Council will continue to seek a suitable site for such a facility.

- Social rented houses for members of the settled community, for whom it is considered the only appropriate housing situation, but not to exceed 5% of new social rented housing in any area.
- Group Housing Schemes: This is a housing scheme of two or more housing units built together for Traveller families. Work has been completed on a Group Housing Scheme for Travellers in Kilcoole. This comprises six units as part of an overall housing development on a site adjacent to the temporary halting site. A four-unit scheme has also been completed at Rathnew.
- Loan Scheme for Purchase of Caravans: Some twenty families have been assisted under this scheme since 2001 and the Council will continue to make payments available to suitable applicants.
- Social rented houses for members of the traveller community for whom it is considered the only appropriate housing solution, but not to exceed 10% of new traveller social rented housing in any year.

In total, the 2002 review identified a current need for 54 units of accommodation with a projected future need of over 20 over the remaining lifetime of the Plan.

A building programme with an initial target of 20 units per year will be embarked upon and will be subject to annual review in light of progress made in the preceding year.

Asylum Seekers: The Local Authority has facilitated the provision of emergency accommodation for asylum seekers as part of the process of reception, dispersal and direct provision for asylum seekers in Ireland. There are currently three properties in which asylum seekers are housed – in Wicklow, Baltinglass and Rathdrum. Expenditure under this heading is 100% recoupable from the Department of the Environment and Local Government

5.3 – PROVISION OF SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGH PART V OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000

In addition to the direct provision of social and affordable housing, and assistance to voluntary housing agencies for such direct provision, the Council proposes vigorously to pursue the provisions of Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, in order to facilitate the provision of such housing alongside private sector developments throughout the County. The policy for implementation of the Part V provisions is set out in Section 6.1 below.

6. Housing Policy

In pursuit of its Housing Strategy, Wicklow County Council will, in the execution of its own programmes as well as in considering the planning applications and programmes of other agencies, developers and individuals, apply the policies and guidelines set out in this section.

6.1 – PLANNING PERMISSIONS AND PART V OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT, 2000

Section 96 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 provides that the objectives of the Housing Strategy in relation to social and affordable housing shall be implemented by means of conditions attached to planning permissions for residential development.

Policy H2: The Council will require a 20% quota of social/affordable housing to be provided from each housing development within the County, on zoned lands for residential use or mixture of residential and other uses. This requirement will be included as a condition of development, with the exception of an application for development of 4 or less houses, or for housing on land of 0.1 hectares or less.

The Council will operate Part V of the Act in a way that encourages and facilitates a level of supply, which will meet the demands of all sectors of the market. It would frustrate the objectives of the Housing Strategy if its implementation were to result in any undue slow-down, interruption of housing supply, or disruption of the housing market.

Conditions attached to planning permissions for residential development to which the 20% social/affordable quota applies will require developers to enter into an agreement with the Council to transfer to the Council either:

- a) Twenty per cent of the land of the site, or
- b) Twenty per cent of the floor area of the housing units, or
- c) A number of fully or partially serviced housing sites to the Council at an agreed cost, or
- d) The provision of (a), (b) or (c) above at another area within Wicklow

The ratio of social to affordable houses to be provided, shall be assessed on a case by case basis, having regard to local housing needs, but at all times the 20% requirement shall be met.

In so far as it is known at the time of the agreement, the Council will indicate to the developer its intentions in relation to the provision of social/affordable housing, including a description of the proposed houses, on the land or sites to be transferred, where such lands form part or parts of the lands which are subject to the application for permission as is, or are specified by the agreement as being parts required to be reserved for the provision of housing.

The Council, in making such agreements, will have regard to:

1. The Development Plan and any relevant local area plan
2. The need to ensure the overall coherence of the development to which the planning application relates
3. The views of the developer in relation to the impact of the agreement on the proposed development, and
4. The need for social integration.

The Council's Planning & Housing Sections will encourage housing developers to whom the 20% quota will apply to discuss the likely terms of the Part V agreements at such consultations. Both the Council and the developer shall thus have a common understanding of the nature of the likely agreement before a decision to grant planning permission is made.

It will be the Council's objective to finalise the agreement within two months at the latest of the grant of permission, in order to avoid delaying the start of Housing Development. All social housing provided under Part V of the Planning & Development Act 2000 in accordance with this strategy shall be allocated to persons on the Waiting List for that allocation area in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Letting Priorities. All Affordable housing provided under Part V of the Act in accordance with the terms of this Housing Strategy shall be allocated in accordance with a Scheme of Priorities for affordable housing as adopted by the Council.

6.2 – MEETING THE NEEDS OF PERSONS WITH SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

In implementing the strategies for meeting special housing need set out in section 4.5, the following policies and guidelines will be applied:

Housing Provision for the Elderly: The main emphasis in the Council's housing policy for the elderly should be to enable elderly people to choose between adapting their homes for the increasing disabilities of old age or to move to accommodation more suited to their needs.

Policy H3: Priority will be given to improving the accommodation of the elderly who lack the basic amenities of indoor sanitary facilities and to provide for increasing disability.

Policy H4: Special attention will be given to the elderly on low incomes in substandard, privately rented accommodation when planning and allocating accommodation for the elderly.

Policy H5: Wherever possible, elderly people will be housed in the vicinity of their own area. Where this is not practicable dependent elderly people in isolated rural areas shall be housed in more suitable accommodation in nearby villages and towns.

The Council will examine the possibility of introducing a scheme that would facilitate elderly people transferring their homes to the Council in exchange for more suitable accommodation.

The Housing Needs of People with Disabilities: Social and affordable housing, for people with disabilities, is required with respect to appropriate crisis units, sheltered and supported housing, and independent living options. A range of housing options are required to facilitate this category of need. Such housing should not be segregated from the general population; rather it should be integrated within housing estates and between estates and in towns and villages.

Importantly, where possible, such housing should meet the following requirements:

- Location – be accessible to public transport
- Access – pedestrian safety and ease of access should be catered for by ensuring that pavements are dished and best access practice is adhered to.
- Accessible design – should suit the requirements of individual tenants and therefore requires direct and on-going consultation with the prospective tenant (with respect to size, design and accessories).

Policy H6: An annual review of social housing waiting lists and consultation with local disability groups and organisations will be undertaken to determine the % of such housing required, and in order to research individual housing requirements.

With regards to private housing, at present, the Council has a Disabled Persons Grant in place to assist private homeowners and enable any necessary/reasonable adaptations to a house to accommodate the specific needs and requirements of a disabled person resident.

Policy H7: The Council will seek ways to streamline the processing of all Disabled Persons Grants in partnership with the relevant Health Authority.

Elderly Persons: It is estimated that the number of people over the age of 65 will increase from the current 11.1% of the national population to 18.2% by 2016. This reflects the ageing population of the State, which is also a worldwide phenomenon.

Key housing issues that should be taken into consideration in the provision of housing for older persons are:

- Location – accessible to local retail facilities and public transport, and not be located on steep gradients.
- Accessible design – should meet the requirements of both the disabled elderly and the non-disabled elderly i.e. single storey and double storey housing appropriate on a case-by-case basis. Part M of the Building Regulations, 2001 provides mandatory instructions that all new housing (private, affordable and social) greater than 45m² must be designed to enable adaptable/lifelong housing at a later date if necessary. The ground floor of all homes must contain a bathroom and be designed such that it is adaptable to accommodate a person with a physical disability.

Such measures will result in older persons being able to adapt their home if required and avoid the disruption of a move.

Refugees: Persons who have been granted refugee status have automatic rights to apply and be assessed for local authority housing.

Policy H8: Consideration will be given, in the provision of housing for refugees, to household size and structure and the need for access to social supports in terms of language, education, employment.

6.3 – COUNTERING SOCIAL SEGREGATION

Section 94 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 states that a Housing Strategy shall take into account the need, inter alia, to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds.

Policy H9: It will be the Council's policy to encourage the development of mixed and balanced communities so as to avoid areas of social exclusion.

6.4 – PROMOTING THE ROLE OF HOUSING AGENCIES

The voluntary housing sector represents a potentially valuable resource within the County.

Policy H10: Wicklow County Council will consult comprehensively with the voluntary housing sector through the life of their Development Plans in order to identify and agree opportunities for their participation in the construction of social and affordable houses. This consultation will initially focus on the voluntary housing associations that are currently working in Wicklow or which have expressed an interest in working in the area.

6.5 – HOUSING ESTATE DESIGN, HOUSING MIX & HOUSING TYPES

The nature of social housing has changed considerably in recent years. This has occurred in a context of rapid economic, social and demographic change. The pattern of need has become more diverse and is characterised by different household types with specific housing requirements. These include not only the traditional family unit but lone parents, homeless persons, elderly persons, travellers, and the Disabled. It is therefore felt that the design of social/affordable housing is paramount and specific design features, requirements and standards have been highlighted in Section 7.5 of Chapter 5 of this Plan.





Wicklow Town Council

