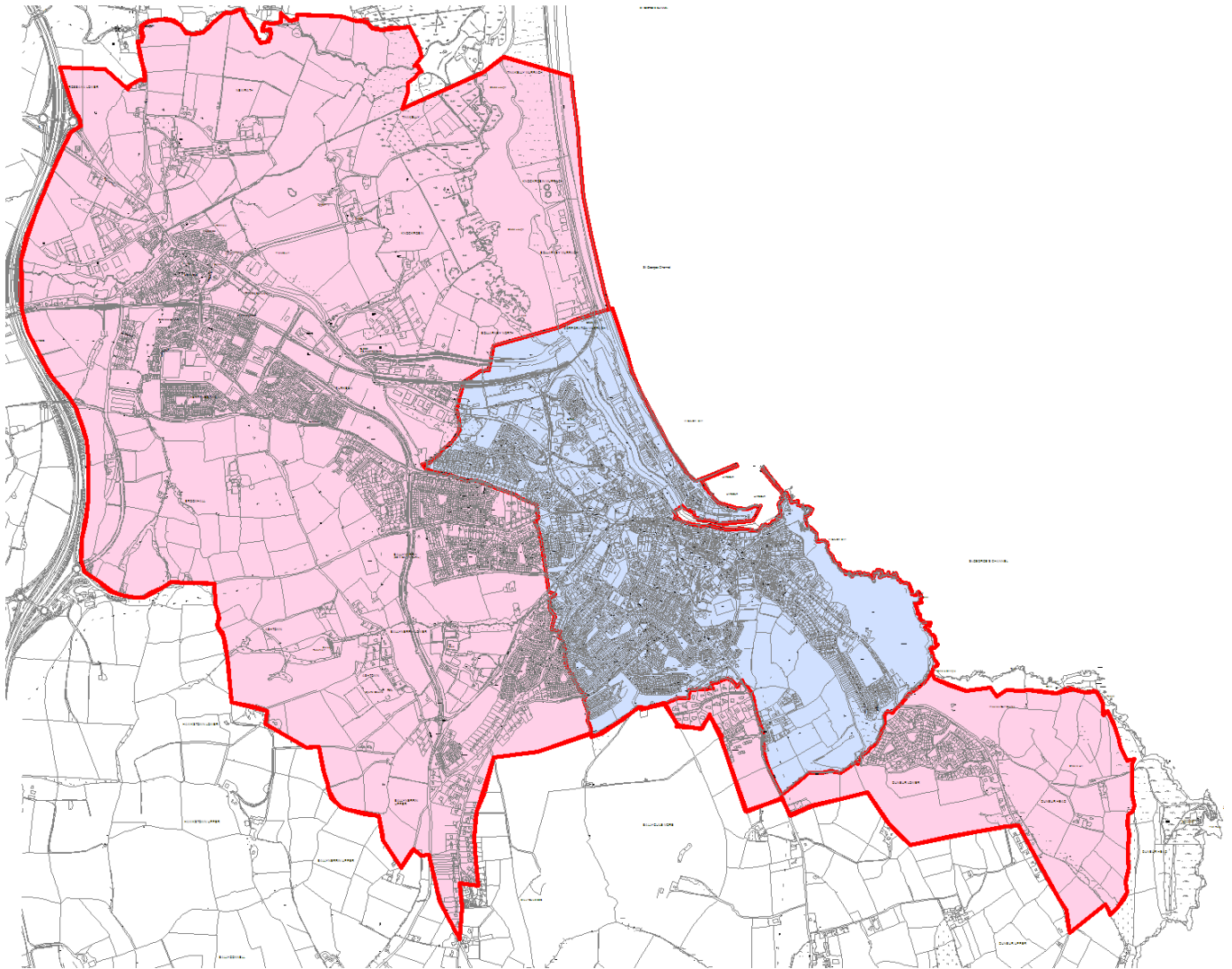




SECTION ONE
OVERALL STRATEGY



Map No.1.1 Wicklow Town and Environs Boundaries

-  Wicklow Town
-  Wicklow Environs including Rathnew



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This is the Development Plan for Wicklow Town, Rathnew and their environs, prepared by Wicklow Town Council in conjunction with Wicklow County Council, in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Pursuant to Section 9 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) every planning authority is required to prepare a development plan every six years and a planning authority that is a town (urban) council may with the agreement of one or more planning authorities, which are adjoining councils, make a single development plan for the area and environs of the town (urban) district.

1.1 Plan Title

The Wicklow-Rathnew Development Plan 2013 – 2019 will be the statutory development plan for Wicklow Town, Rathnew and their environs as defined on the maps associated with this plan. It will remain valid for six years from the date of adoption by both Wicklow Town Council and Wicklow County Council subject to any review, variations, extensions or alterations made in the future.

1.2 Plan Area

Wicklow Town is the county town for County Wicklow and the administrative capital of the County. The Wicklow-Rathnew Development Plan encompasses lands south of the Vartry River, east of the N11/M11 and north of Ballyguile. The area of the development plan includes the Wicklow Town Council's functional area and the townlands of Ashtown (Arklow), Ashtown (Newcastle), Ballybeg (Newcastle), Ballyguile Beg, Ballyguile More, Ballynabarny, Ballynerrin (Wicklow), Ballynerrin Upper, Ballynerrin Lower, Bollarney Murragh, Bollarney North, Bollarney South Broomhall, Burkeen, Commons, Coolawinnia, Corporation land (1st Division), Corporation Lands, Corporation Murragh, Dunbur Head, Dunbur Lower, Dunbur Upper, Friarshill, Glebe, Glebe (Rural), Glebe (Urban), Hawkstown Upper, Hawkstown Lower, Knockrobin, Knockrobin Murragh, Merrymeeting, Milltown North, Newrath, Rossana Lower, Tinakelly, Tinakelly Murragh, Wicklow. It covers the District Electoral Divisions of Wicklow Urban, Wicklow Rural (part) and Glenealy (part). The Plan area is identified on Map 1.1.

1.3 Legislative background

Part II of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) sets out the legislative foundation for development plans. A development plan must set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and shall consist of a written statement and a plan or plans indicating the development objectives for the area in question.

The written statement shall include a core strategy, which shows that the development objectives in the development plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives set out in the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines. The written statement shall also include a separate statement which shows that the development objectives in the development plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with the conservation and protection of the environment.

The plan must include a number of mandatory objectives for:

- The zoning of land
- The provision of infrastructure
- The conservation and protection of the environment
- The integration of social, community and cultural requirements
- The sustainable development of the area
- The preservation of the character of the landscape

- The protection of structures and preservation of Architectural Conservation Areas
- The renewal and development of areas in need of regeneration
- The provision of accommodation for travellers
- The preservation, improvement and extension of amenities and recreational amenities
- Major Accidents Directive (Seveso sites)
- The provision of community facilities
- The promotion of sustainable settlement and transportation strategies
- The preservation of public rights of way
- Providing a framework for identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes.

1.4 Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment

In accordance with Article 13A of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (as amended), a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been carried out and in turn informed the Plan. SEA is the formal systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the development plan, or amendments to the development plan during the preparation process, prior to any decision on its adoption. The Environmental Report has examined the likely significant environmental impacts of the strategies and objectives of the Development Plan. The SEA of the Development Plan is available as a separate document.

The EU Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, better known as 'The Habitats Directive', provides legal protection for habitats and species of European Importance, through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000. These are candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/EEC). Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment (AA) of plans and projects likely to affect Natura 2000 sites. This allows for the 'precautionary principle' to be applied; plans and projects can only be permitted having ascertained no adverse effect on the integrity of the site. Plans and projects may still be permitted if there are no alternatives, and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In such cases compensation measures will be necessary to ensure the overall integrity of the network of sites. A stage one Appropriate Assessment (screening) was carried out for this plan and is available as a separate document.

1.5 Purpose of plan

The Wicklow-Rathnew Development Plan 2013 – 2019 sets out Wicklow Town Council's and Wicklow County Council's strategies and objectives for the development of Wicklow Town, Rathnew and their environs over the Plan period. The Plan seeks to secure the development and improvement in a sustainable manner of the economic, environmental, cultural and social assets of the plan area. This plan replaces the Wicklow Town Development Plan 2007 –2013, Wicklow Environs and Rathnew Local Area Plan 2008 – 2014 and the Action Area Six Local Area Plan 2006 – 2012.

The purpose of the development plan is:

- To provide a blueprint for the sustainable development of the plan area in order to realize its full potential in the interests of the town and county;
- To provide a detailed framework for the management and regulation of development and use of land that will guide day to day planning decisions;
- To include proposals for the development and use of land and to zone lands for specific purposes which will provide guidance and information for developers and the public;
- To promote the economic, social and cultural development of the town and its environs;
- To give local communities the opportunity to participate in the planning process as it relates to their local area and their daily lives.

1.6 Format of the written statement

The development plan comprises this written statement with supporting land use zoning and objective maps. The written statement includes Wicklow Town Council's and Wicklow County Council's objectives, where applicable, and strategies for the development and use of land. In the event of any conflict or ambiguity between what is contained within the written statement and the supporting maps, the written statement will take precedence.

The Written Statement is set out as follows;

Chapter 1	Introduction
Chapter 2	Vision and Core Strategy
Chapter 3	Residential Development
Chapter 4	Key Areas
Chapter 5	Enterprise and Employment
Chapter 6	Retail
Chapter 7	Tourism and Recreation
Chapter 8	Social and Community Infrastructure
Chapter 9	Traffic, Transport and Accessibility
Chapter 10	Services Infrastructure - Water, Waste Energy and Telecommunications
Chapter 11	Built Heritage and Natural Environment
Chapter 12	Action Areas and Murrough Opportunity Area
Chapter 13	Land Use Zoning Objectives
Chapter 14	Implementation and Monitoring

The Appendices include the Flood Risk Assessment, Council's Housing Strategy, Retail Strategy, SEA Environmental Report and Appropriate Assessment Screening Report.

The maps provide a graphic representation of the proposals of the Plan indicating land use zoning and other objectives of the two Councils. They do not purport to be accurate survey maps from which site dimensions or other survey data can be determined.

1.7 Stages of the plan making process

There are 3 stages in the review and the making of a development plan which are detailed below:

Stage 1 – Pre-Draft

- Background work, data gathering
- Initial notification in a newspaper circulating in the area of the planning authorities' intention to prepare a new development plan
- Consultation with prescribed bodies, service providers, government agencies and departments and members of the public
- Report to members outlining the Manager's response on issues raised in public consultation and recommendations on policies to be included in the draft development plan
- Making of directions, that are strategic in nature and consistent with the draft core strategy, to the Manager by the members regarding the preparation of the draft plan and
- Scoping of environmental report (SEA)

Stage 2 – Preparation of the Draft Plan

- Submission by the Manager of a draft plan to members for their consideration
- Consideration by members of the draft plan, including the making of amendments by members
- Sending notice and a copy of the draft plan to prescribed bodies
- Public display of draft plan and environmental report and invitation for submissions

Stage 3 – Making of the Development Plan

- Preparation by the Manager of a report on submissions received
- Consideration by members of the draft plan and Manager's report
- Making of the development plan by accepting or amending the draft, except where an amendment represents a material alteration of the draft plan

- In this case, material amendments go on public display, including amending environmental reports if necessary, for a further period of 4 weeks
- Preparation of a Managers' report on submissions
- Consideration of the amendments and Managers' report by the members
- Making of the plan by the members of the Planning Authority.

1.8 Development Management

Development Management is the statutory process that manages development in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development having regard to the objectives set out in the Development Plan, and the policy of the Government, the Minister or any other Minister of the Government, in the interests of the common good. The plan, being a strategic document, sets out these broad policies and objectives the details of which are subject to best practice interpretation and analysis depending upon the nature and specifics of the development proposed.

The granting of planning permission does not per se enable development to be undertaken as such development will have a legal context outside the remit of the permission. It will also be required to conform to the requirements of legislation and regulations that are outside the scope of planning legislation and that will impact upon the specific development proposed.

The achievement of the objectives of the Plan will frequently be dependent on the availability of appropriate levels of finance. Accordingly, the Council will actively and innovatively strive to identify and secure resources from both public and private sectors, to implement the provisions of this Plan and facilitate private investment, in accordance with this Plan.

To facilitate the implementation of roads and transportation, water and drainage, and community facilities infrastructure, the Local Authority will require contributions from benefiting developers. Contributions shall be required in accordance with the Local Authority's Development Contribution Scheme, prepared under Section 48(1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

With regard to enforcement, it is the policy of the Planning Authority that development will be controlled in accordance with strategies and objectives set out in the Wicklow-Rathnew Development Plan and in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

With regard to the enforcement provisions of Part VIII of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the role of the Planning Authority is to undertake enforcement action where necessary with respect to the non-compliance with conditions attached to planning permissions and the carrying out of non exempted development without the benefit of planning permission. Furthermore the Planning Authority has special control powers under current legislation pertaining to such areas as protected structures and tree preservation orders.

1.9 Ministerial Guidelines, Directives and Directions

In accordance with Sections 28, 29 and 31 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the Minister may issue Guidelines, Policy Directives and Directions to local authorities regarding any of their functions under the 2000 Act. Section 28 stipulates that the Minister may issue guidelines to Planning Authorities and that they shall have regard to those Guidelines, while Section 29 provides that the Minister may issue policy directives and that Planning Authorities shall comply with such directives.

Section 31 facilitates the Minister in issuing directions regarding development plans. This includes where either a draft plan or a development plan fails to set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of their area or otherwise fails to comply with the provisions of the Planning Acts.

1.10 Monitoring, reviewing and implementation

The Town and County Councils will jointly ensure that this development plan is regularly monitored and reviewed as necessary. The development plan cannot foresee all future issues and circumstances that may arise and therefore, regular monitoring and review will be required. The plan will be implemented through the development management process.

1.11 Strategic Context

1.11.1 Hierarchy of Plans

The Wicklow - Rathnew Development Plan sits within a hierarchy of spatial strategies and plans. The hierarchy follows the format detailed in the diagram to follow with high level European, national, regional and local documents feeding progressively down into specific local plans and policies.

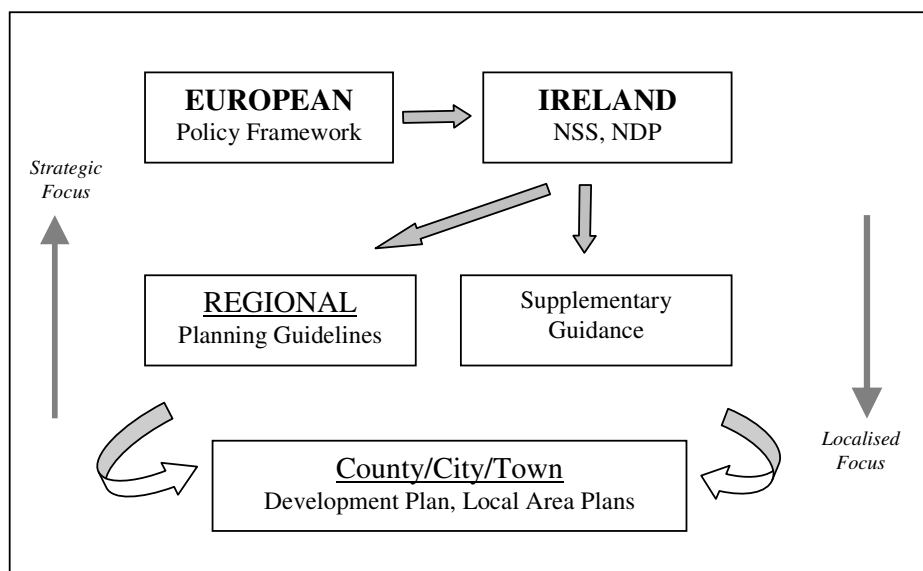


Image 1.1 Hierarchy of plans

1.11.2 European framework

While a wide range of EU policies and directives have bearing and influence on the crafting of this plan, the principal areas of relevance to this plan are those addressing water quality and protected habitats.

1.11.2.1 Water Framework Directive (2000) and Groundwater Directive (2006)

The EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) is an important piece of EU environmental legislation, which aims at improving our aquatic environment. It requires governments to take a new holistic approach to managing their waters. It applies to rivers, lakes, groundwater, estuaries and coastal waters. The Groundwater Directive complements the WFD by establishing environmental objectives for groundwater chemical status and ensuring continuity with previous Groundwater Directives. These directives aim to achieve good ecological status in all waters by 2015, protect high ecological status in our pristine waters and authorities must ensure that this status does not deteriorate in any waters. Local Authorities are charged with implementing the Water Framework and Groundwater Directive objectives.

For the purpose of implementing the WFD, Ireland has been divided into eight river basin districts or areas of land that are drained by a large river or number of rivers and the adjacent estuarine / coastal areas. The management of water resources will be based on these river basin districts. Within each River Basin District - for the purpose of assessment, reporting and management - water has been divided into

groundwater, rivers, lakes, estuarine waters and coastal waters which are in turn divided into specific, clearly defined water bodies. River Basin Management Plans list the current status of our waters and detail the measures required to bring those failing back to good status and maintain the high status of our pristine sites.

1.11.3 Habitats Directive (1992)

Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna and Flora – the ‘Habitats Directive’ - provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Article 2 of the Directive requires the maintenance or restoration of habitats and species of European Community interest, at a favourable conservation status. Articles 3 - 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as *Natura 2000*. Natura 2000 sites are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/EEC).

1.12 National Strategies

1.12.1 National Spatial Strategy

The NSS is a plan that takes a longer and more strategic view over a twenty-year period than the six-year life span of a Development Plan. It’s focus is on balanced regional development throughout the regions in Ireland. Balanced regional development is defined as “developing the full potential of each area to contribute to the optimal performance of the state as a whole – economically, socially and environmentally”. The Dublin and Mid East Region being the Greater Dublin Area, of which Wicklow is a part, includes the remaining two counties of the Mid East, Kildare and Meath and the four Dublin authorities. The eastern part of the County forms part of the Dundalk – Dublin – Waterford strategic corridor. Wicklow is strategically located along this corridor and as a result benefits from good linkages to air, sea and international transport connections.

1.12.2 The National Development Plan 2007-2013 (NDP)

The ‘National Development Plan - Transforming Ireland - A better quality of life for all’ sets out strategic development frameworks for regional development, for rural communities, for all-island co-operation and for the protection of the environment with common economic and social goals. In acknowledging the importance of the spatial management of the Country, the NDP focuses upon regional development and environmental sustainability as being central to the investment structure of the plan. The NDP recognises the Dublin Metropolitan Area as the gateway within the Greater Dublin Area (of which Wicklow forms part) and the main catalyst of regional and national growth. Investment plans and priority spending areas have been identified. The integration of National Development Goals and Investment Strategies are highlighted, as are the challenges and general goals that are to be met during the term of this NDP.

1.12.3 Smarter Travel (2009 - 2020) and Transport (National Transport Authority)

Transport 21 forms part of the NDP and comprises a ten-year investment programme for the development of the national road network, public transport and airports. It aims to expand capacity, increase public transport use, increase accessibility and integration, enhance quality and ensure sustainability. Smarter Travel is a policy document, which sets out a broad vision for the future and establishes objectives and targets for transportation. The document examines past trends in population and economic growth and transportation and concludes that these trends are unsustainable into the future. The main objectives are to reduce dependency on car travel and long distance commuting, increase public transport modal share and encourage walking and cycling, improve quality of life and accessibility for all, improve economic competitiveness through maximising the efficiency of the transport system, alleviating congestion and infrastructural bottlenecks, minimising the environmental impact by reducing localised air pollutants and greenhouse gasses and improving security of energy supply by reducing dependency on imported fossil fuels.

The aim is that by 2020 future population and economic growth will have to predominately take place in sustainable compact urban and rural areas, which discourage dispersed development and long commuting. The document outlines ambitious targets, which involve a complete turnaround on current trends. It is envisaged that these targets will be achieved through a number of key actions, which can be grouped into four main areas:

- Actions to reduce travel by private car and encourage smarter travel
- Actions to provide alternatives to the private car
- Actions aimed at improving fuel efficiency
- Actions aimed strengthening institutional arrangements to deliver the targets.

1.12.4 National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2009-2020

The National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2009-2020 outlines a strategy to reduce the Country's dependence on imported fossil fuels and improve efficiency across a number of sectors as a key step in a sustainable energy policy. Energy efficiency is internationally recognised as the most cost-effective means of reducing dependence on fossil fuels. The Government's energy policy framework for the period 2009-2020 incorporates this goal and is designed to direct Ireland towards a new and sustainable energy future; one that increases security of supply, makes energy more affordable, improves national competitiveness and reduces green house gas emissions.

1.12.5 National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012

This document outlines the measures that Ireland will take in order to meet its commitment to limit its greenhouse gas emissions over the 2008-2012 period to 13% above 1990 levels, which include the following policy mechanisms:

- The need to take long-term view having regard to likely future commitments and the economic imperative for early action
- The promotion of sustainable development, including integration of climate change considerations into all policy areas
- The protection of economic development and competitiveness, utilising market-based instruments with the exploitation of new markets and opportunities
- The maximisation of economic efficiency both on a macro-economic basis and within sectors
- An equitable approach to all sectors, having regard to the relative costs of mitigation between sectors.

1.12.6 National Heritage and Biodiversity Plans

A key objective of the National Heritage Plan (2002) is to "place heritage at the heart of public life". The plan recognises that heritage is communal and we all share a responsibility to protect it. Protection of heritage must begin at local level enabling citizens to become actively involved in preserving and enhancing that which belongs to us all. While this plan sets out a vision nationally for heritage management, it emphasises the needs to manage heritage locally, through the preparation of Local Heritage Plans. The current Wicklow Heritage Plan was adopted in 2009 and is reviewed / updated every 5 years.

The current National Biodiversity Action Plan 2011 – 2016 sets out actions for the promotion and delivery of biodiversity conservation at both national and local levels. The plan calls on each Local Authority to prepare a Local Biodiversity Action Plan, and emphasises the important role of local authorities in promoting and delivering biodiversity conservation through local plans and programmes. Wicklow County Council has prepared a County Biodiversity Plan.

1.13 Regional Strategies

1.13.1 Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022 (RPGs)

The Greater Dublin Area incorporates the Dublin Regional Authority and the Mid East Regional Authority, being the geographical and administrative areas of Dublin City, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal, South Dublin, Wicklow, Meath and Kildare. The Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) is a policy document, which aims to inform and guide the future growth of the Greater Dublin Area over the medium to long term and works to implement the strategic planning framework as set out in the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) published in 2002. The Guidelines inform and guide the City and County Development Plans for each of the Councils in the Greater Dublin Area. They provide the clear policy link between national policies - the National Development Plan and the National Spatial Strategy and other national policy documents and guidance - and Local Authority planning policies and decisions. The Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) make a distinction between the existing built up metropolitan area and its environs, where the built up area is the “metropolitan” and the remainder the “hinterland” with a wide range of settlement sizes that have the potential to attain an enhanced level of sustainability. In this regard Wicklow Town is defined as Large Growth Town I in the hinterland area.

1.13.2 Greater Dublin Area Retail Strategy 2008 - 2016

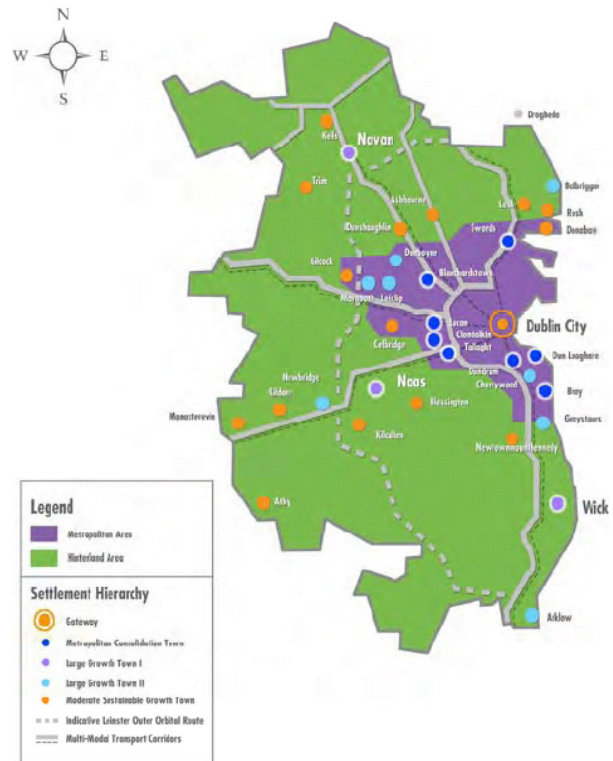
The Greater Dublin Area Retail Strategy 2008 - 2016 sets out a co-ordinated and sustainable approach to the assessment and provision of retailing within the Greater Dublin Area so that:

- Adequate and suitable provision is made to meet the needs of changing population patterns and provide for healthy competition and consumer choice;
- Retail in suitable locations is provided and integrated within existing growth areas and public transport investment;
- Significant overprovision, which would place more marginal locations under severe pressure and undermine sustainability driven policies aimed at revitalising town centres, is avoided.

By setting out a strategic framework for retailing, the strategy seeks to give guidance on where future retail should be provided and what issues need to be addressed. To this end, the strategy



National Strategy



Regional Strategy

Image 1.2 (a) Hierarchy of Plan Strategies

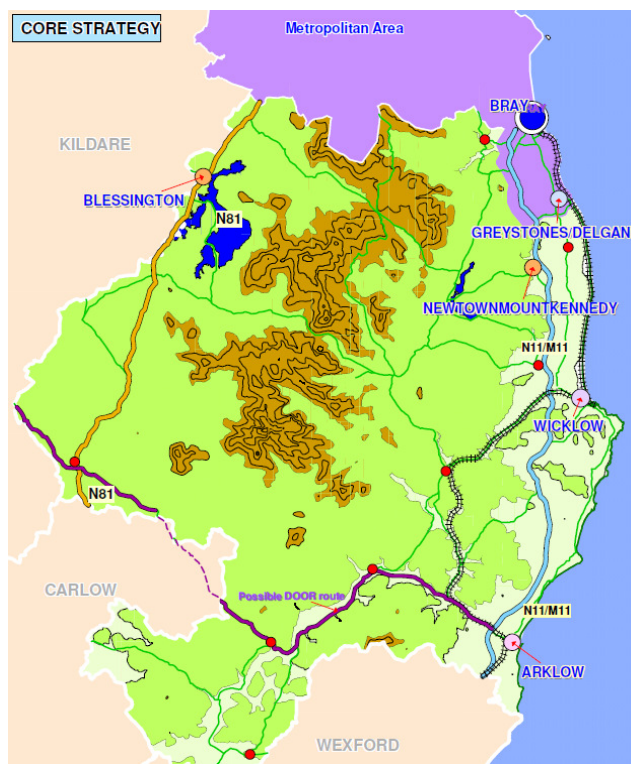
proposes a retail hierarchy as a core spatial policy around which future growth, rejuvenation and expansion in the retail sector needs to be focused. The Retail Strategy for County Wicklow is set within the context of the Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area. In the regional retail strategy Wicklow is identified as a Level 2 county town centre in the hinterland.

1.14 County Strategies

1.14.1 Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016

The County Development Plan addresses the issues set out in Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act 2000. In the settlement hierarchy of County Wicklow, Wicklow-Rathnew is designated a 'Large Growth Town I'. The following settlement objectives are relevant to this plan area:

- SS1** To implement the County Wicklow settlement strategy having regard to the availability of services and in particular, to direct growth into the designated metropolitan growth centre and the large, moderate and small growth towns in the Greater Dublin hinterland area.
- SS2** To ensure that the designated large growth towns will insofar as is practical, be self sufficient, incorporating necessary employment, retail, social and services infrastructure.
- SS3** To require new housing development to locate on designated housing land within the boundaries of settlements, in accordance with the development policies for the settlement.
- SS4** To implement the population growth targets as set out in Table 4.3 (see Table 1.1 below), to monitor development and the delivery of services on an ongoing basis and to review population allocations where service delivery is impeded.



County Strategy

Image 1.2 (b) Hierarchy of Plan Strategies

Table 1.1 County Development Plan Table 4.3 Growth Estimates and Targets up to 2022

Settlement Type	Settlement	2011	2016	2022
Large Growth Town 1	Wicklow-Rathnew	14,000	19,000	24,000

Large Growth Towns 1 are defined as the most likely to be successful in attracting concentration of employment generating investment and these areas should have the greatest accessibility/connectivity to public transport. These centres should be economically self-sustaining, with population, including its catchments, which are able to support a wide range of facilities.

1.14.2 County Development Board (CDB) 'Outlook – a 10 year strategic plan for County Wicklow'

The main function of the County Development Board is to co-ordinate the plans and activities of all the main players in County Wicklow. This will ensure that the people of Wicklow will benefit from a more efficient and effective service delivery. It is important that any overlaps or gaps in this delivery are identified and addressed, in an integrated way. In order to achieve this, the CDB has drawn up a ten year

Strategy for the Social, Economic and Cultural Development of County Wicklow. In addition, the strategies and operational plans of agencies and groups in the County will be proofed against the CDB strategy. This plan can be seen as a framework for decision-making, a look into the future, a problem-solving initiative and a shared values document. The strategy will be delivered by the member organisations of the CDB through their own operational plans. Both CDB strategies and development plans are required to formulate strategies for the development of counties and consider the socio-economic and physical issues. They exist as parallel statements on the future development of the area. The focus of the CDB Strategy is on economic, social and cultural development, while the focus of the development plan is on physical development and land-use and how this can serve wider social, economic and environmental objectives. Land-use decisions must be informed by socio-economic considerations, while the spatial dimensions of the CDB strategy will reflect the land-use policies and objectives of the development plan.

1.14.3 IFPLUTS

An Integrated Framework Plan for Land Use and Transportation (IFPLUT) was prepared for Wicklow in 2005. The purpose of an integrated land use and transport plan is to review the planning, development and transportation context of a settlement and its environs, and to provide land use and transportation guidance for future development. While the principal role of such studies is to inform local planning strategies, transport has a regional dimension and therefore these plans were considered in the crafting of the town and environs plan.

1.14.4 Wicklow Outdoor Recreation, Sports and Play Strategies

Strategies have been adopted by Wicklow Local Authorities for 'outdoor recreation', 'sports and recreation' and 'play'. All of these strategies set out policies and objectives with the ultimate goal of improving quality and life and wellbeing of Wicklow residents and visitors, and making maximum use of the County's resources, in a sustainable and sensitive manner. These strategies particularly influence the new Development Plan in the areas of tourism and recreation and community development.

1.14.5 Wicklow Waste Management Plan 2006

The County Waste Management Plan, which is prepared by Wicklow County Council Environmental Services Section, covers the management of waste in the County with the overriding aim to reduce and manage waste pervading all aspects of land use and development planning and therefore is influential in the formulation of the Development Plan.

1.14.6 County Wicklow Biodiversity Action Plan 2010 - 2012

The County Wicklow Biodiversity Action Plan 2010 - 2015 takes biodiversity action to a county level. Primarily a Local Authority-led Action Plan, it is intended to provide a focussed approach for the county, identifying priority habitats and species in need of attention and the action required to secure their future. It also identifies opportunities and needs for partnership work and, essentially, is the start of a targeted and coordinated approach to biodiversity conservation in the county. It turns the aims and agreements of the 1992 Earth Summit to action at a local level.

1.14.7 County Wicklow Heritage Plan 2009 - 2014

The County Heritage Plan is a five-year strategy and work plan, with the current plan for the period 2009–2014. Wicklow County Council has overall responsibility for delivery of the Plan in partnership with the Wicklow Heritage Forum and with support from The Heritage Council. The overall aim of the County Wicklow Heritage Plan is "To conserve the natural, built and cultural heritage of the county, and to increase awareness and enjoyment of it among all in Wicklow". Implementation of the Plan involves the co-ordination of an annual work programme in association with relevant stakeholders.

1.14.8 Ministerial Guidelines

Ministerial Guidelines have been prepared on a wide range of topics, and regard has been taken of all such guidelines in the preparation of this plan. Of particular relevance however are the following:

Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas: These guidelines set out the manner in which development plans should contain policies and objectives underpinning the creation of sustainable developments. They also include clear guidance on implementation measures, particularly with regard to the phased and co-ordinated provision of physical infrastructure, public transport and community facilities.

Guidelines on Flood Risk Management: These guidelines contain advice to local authorities to incorporate measures to manage the risk of flooding from climate change and rising sea levels in their development plans and development management systems. Advice is also given to developers and architects on designing for flood risk including sustainable urban drainage systems. In the case of Wicklow, as per these guidelines, a justification test has been carried out in the preparation of the Development Plan, which relates to the zoning of lands.

Chapter 2

Vision and Core Strategy

2.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to set out the vision for the future of the plan area and to provide a 'core strategy' for its spatial organisation over the plan period. This core strategy will be amplified and expanded upon in the strategic objectives set out in this chapter and in the objectives of the entire plan to follow.

2.1 Vision

For Wicklow Town, Environs and Rathnew to be a prosperous and growing community in the garden County of Wicklow, offering a unique and high quality of life by providing for a sustainable and local work/life balance within a quality environment for all who live, work and visit the area.

This will be achieved through the following Key Strategic Objectives:

- Strengthening and consolidating Wicklow Town as the County town to ensure that it remains the economic and social hub of the community by making the town a more attractive place to live and do business, by improving the public realm, by encouraging infill development and brownfield regeneration, by protecting the built and natural heritage and by improving movement throughout the town
- Re-enforcing and protecting the identity of Rathnew as a separate stand alone entity in the wider settlement; by providing local services in an attractive, thriving village and to facilitate the educational potential of Clermont Campus for the benefit of the local and regional community
- Integrating land use planning and transport planning, with the dual aim of reducing the distance that people need to travel to work, shops, schools and places of recreation and social interaction and facilitating the delivery of improved public transport
- To enhance existing housing areas and to provide for high quality new housing at appropriate locations and to ensure the development of a range of house types, sizes and tenures in order to meet the differing needs of all in society and to promote balanced communities
- Cultivating the port and manufacturing employment tradition in the settlement while facilitating a broad range of enterprise development thereby avoiding dependence on a specific sector
- To recognise and protect through policies of the Plan, the unique character, built heritage, seaside location, maritime history, natural environment of the area, ensuring that this heritage can continue to contribute positively to the overall quality of life, recreation and tourism role of the settlement and by developing existing traditional coastal and estuarine walks.
- Ensuring that the quality and setting of the natural environment is protected and strengthened through the Plan so that maximum associated ecosystem services in terms of flood attenuation, biodiversity, quality of life, tourism and recreation may be realised for the benefit of the local and wider community.
- Supporting social and community development and in particular, to link the development of new housing to the delivery of necessary community facilities, including schools, playing pitches, health facilities and other community services
- To recognise the needs of all society and ensure that all strategies, policies and objectives do not inhibit or exclude any individuals or groups from being part of their community's development

- Maximising the use of existing infrastructure and targeting new investment in infrastructure to that which can generate the highest returns to the community
- To address the climate change challenge as a plan dynamic, directly in the areas of flooding and renewable energy and indirectly through integrating climate change and sustainable development into all aspects of plan policy and objectives.

2.2 Core Strategy

2.2.1 Introduction

The purpose of the 'Core Strategy' is to articulate a medium to longer term quantitatively based strategy for the spatial development of Wicklow-Rathnew and to demonstrate that the development objectives in the development plan are consistent as far as practicable, with national, regional and county development objectives as set out in the National Spatial Strategy 2002 – 2020, the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010 - 2022 and the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010 – 2016.

2.2.2 Settlement and population

The settlement and population objectives for the plan flow directly from the National Spatial Strategy 2002 – 2020, the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022 and the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016. Wicklow-Rathnew is within the 'Dublin Consolidation Zone' of the NSS and is a 'Large Growth Town 1' in the hinterland of the Greater Dublin Area in the RPGs and the County Development Plan.

The 2011 population for the plan area is estimated at 13,468¹ and the County Development Plan provides for a 2016 target population of 19,000 increasing to 24,000 in 2022.

2.2.3 Housing & Phasing

In order to accommodate this potential growth in population, the plan must make provision for growth in the housing stock. This will entail ensuring that there is sufficient zoned and serviced land available for the construction of new housing. While the duration of this plan is only until 2019, in accordance with current guidance from the DoECLG and RPGs, this plan will make provision for adequate zoned and serviced land to meet residential needs for the next nine years i.e. up to 2022.

Household size: Clearly it is necessary to predict future household size in determining how much new housing is required. These predictions have been provided for Wicklow by the RPGs as shown on the table below.

Excess factor: More housing units are always required to be provided over and above the minimum amount as some houses may be used as second / holiday homes and some units may be vacant at any time for example due to normal market friction. An excess factor of 6% is utilised in this plan.

Table 2.1 Number of new housing units required in the plan area from 2011 to 2022

Year	Population	Household size (projected)	Number of households	Housing stock (existing / required)	Growth in housing units required (over current stock)
2006	11,919				
2011	13,468	2.8	4,776	5,399 ²	
2016	19,000	2.56	7,422	7,867	+ 2,468
2019	21,500	2.43	8,848	9,379	+ 3,980
2022	24,000	2.3	10,435	11,061	+ 5,662

¹ Source: CSO Census 2011, supplemented by An Post GeoDirectory data

² Source: CSO Census 2011, supplemented by An Post GeoDirectory data

In order to ensure that the 2019 target is not reached before that year, the new plan makes provision for the zoning of land for 5,759³ new units in two phases:

Phase 1	2013-2019	3,980 units
Phase 2	Post 2019	1,779 units

It is the development strategy of this plan that lands closest to the core of Wicklow Town and Rathnew Village shall be considered first for development⁴. Where permission is sought for residential development on other lands designated for significant development (as shown on Map 2.1 Core Strategy), permission will only be considered during the lifetime of this plan if:

- Lands closer to the core area have been substantially developed and have not delivered the number of housing units envisaged, or
- Some barrier is impeding the development of lands closest to the core areas, or
- Lands closer to the core areas are not being released to the market.

Existing housing land

The existing three plans for this new plan area provide for 384 hectares of zoned, undeveloped housing and mixed use (which includes housing) land (see Table 2.2 below) with a potential capacity of up to c. 9,600 units.

Given the housing requirement of an additional 5,662 units up to 2022, the three existing plans provide for a significant surplus of zoned housing land.

As set out in the 'Core Strategy' guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, where a surplus of zoned land is identified, it will be necessary to select the most appropriate land to zone in the plan and then:

- designate the surplus land as a 'strategic land reserve' for the future that will not be allowed to develop within the plan period, or
- change the zoning of the surplus residential land to some other land use that is required during the lifetime of the plan, or
- remove the zoning from the surplus land.

This plan provides for a combination of the first two options.

³ The discrepancy between the 5,662 units required as set out in Table 2.1 and the capacity of the land zoned in this plan (5,759 units) is due to amendments made to the draft plan at adoption stage.

⁴ These are lands generally located within 750m (as the crow flies) of the centre of Rathnew Village and 1,500m of the centre of Wicklow Town – Fitzwilliam Square (as shown on Map 2.1 Core Strategy)

Table 2.2 Existing zoned undeveloped land and housing capacities

Plan	Location	Area	Zoning	Capacity (units) ⁵
Wicklow Town Development Plan 2007	Bollarney north	2.9	High Density	116
	Bollarney south	2.44	High Density	98
	Bollarney Dublin Rd	2.31	High Density	92
	Broadlough	2.57	High Density	103
	Ballyguile	5.26	High Density	147
	Greenhills Rd	7.42	Residential	208
	Church Lane	0.73	Residential	20
	Murrough	18	Town Opp Area	252
	Convent	33	Town Opp Area	462
	Whitegates	3.4	Town Opp Area	48
	Abbey	3.3	Town Opp Area	46
Kilmantin	0.02	Town Opp Area	1	
Wicklow Environs & Rathnew LAP 2008	Newrath	3.2	AA1 (a)	45
	Rathnew south	21.3	AA1 (b)	596
	Rathnew north	11.41	AA1 (c)	456
	Broomhall	2.85	AA2	80
	Bollarney	13.72	AA3	384
	Ashtown Lane	70.89	AA4	1985
	Ashtown	6.9	AA4	138
	Keatingstown	25	AA5	700
	Marlton (Dev Centre)	9.6	AA6	134
	Marlton	7.2	AA7	144
	Dunbur	27.66	AA8	774
	Merrymeeting	30.85	AA9	864
	Ballybeg	18.8	AA10	263
	Newrath north	0.81	AA11	16
	Greenhills Rd	9.29	Residential	260
	Bollarney	5.58	Residential	156
	Marlton/St Patrick's Rd	10.75	Residential	215
Rathnew	6.63	Residential	177	
Rathnew	1.4	Town Centre	20	
Marlton AA6 LAP 2006	Marlton	20.92	AA6	586
Total		384.41		9,587

2.2.4 Economy and Employment

The RPGs indicate that outside of the core Dublin employment zone, Bray and Wicklow Town should act as anchors for regional enterprise. It is the strategy of this plan to put in place a framework to facilitate substantial growth in employment, in particular to allow Wicklow – Rathnew to develop as the major employment hub in this sub-region of the County.

In particular, the amount of zoned employment land must be align with this strategic goal. There has been a tendency in the past to zone an abundance of lands for employment uses in the hope that this will bring so many options to prospective employers that jobs would flow rapidly into the town. However, there is no evidence that this has been the case, even during the boom years and indeed the spread out nature of employment zoned lands has also lead to a number of new employment developments being located at the very edges of the settlement. This has obvious negative impacts such as:

- inefficient use of resources in bringing services to such sites;
- the need to rely on the private car to access such sites given their distance away from residential areas;

⁵ Based on densities allowed in the three existing plans

- the haphazard growth of the settlement, at the edges first, rather than from the centre out.

There is currently sufficient land zoned in the three plans for theoretically provide for **31,000 new jobs**, not including jobs that might be provided on 'town centre' zoned land or land zoned for education, community or residential uses, as shown on the table below.

Table 2.3 Existing employment zoned land

Location	Zoning	Action Area	Area	Amount developed	Amount free	Jobs potential
Rosanna Lower 1	E	AA1	15.67	0	15.67	3,761
Newrath 1	E	AA1	10.04	0	10.04	2,410
Newrath 2	E	AA11	3.56	0	3.56	854
Newrath 3	CC	AA11	3.54	0	3.54	850
Newrath 4	CC	AA1	48.08	0	48.08	11,539
Rosanna Lower 2	E1	AA1	3.24	0.4	2.84	114
Merrymeeing 1	E1	AA1	3.74	2.34	1.4	56
Milltown North	E		29.9	11.9	18	720
Ballybeg 1	E		1.88	0	1.88	75
Ballybeg 2	E		2.9	2.9	0	0
Ballynabarny / Broomhall	E		31.65	0	31.65	1,266
Ballybeg 3	E1		4	0	4	160
Ballynabarny	E1		11.5	0	11.5	460
Merrymeeing	E	AA2	8	1.08	6.92	1,661
Bollarney North	E	AA3	7.8	4.2	3.6	864
Hawkstown Lower	E	AA4	3	0	3	720
Ballynabarny	E	AA9	4	0	4	160
Knockrobin / Bollarney Murrough	E		16.7	11	5.7	228
Ballybeg 4		AA10	19.3	7.3	12	2,880
Ballynerrin Lower	E1	AA6	7.9	0	7.9	316
The Murrough	MU	AAP1	18	10	8	1,920
Total						31,013

For the new plan, given:

- the growth target for the settlement of Wicklow – Rathnew and its employment catchment area for 2022
- the role of the settlement as a major employment pole in the County
- an assumption that the labour force participation rate will remain around 50%
- the desire to significantly increase the number of jobs in the settlement such that the 'jobs ratio'⁶ increases from 45% in 2006 to 80% by 2022
- a total of c. **9,400 jobs** would be required to be available in the settlement in 2022.

In line with sound planning principles, it is the aim of the strategy that a significant proportion of new jobs created will be located in existing built up areas, through redevelopment of brownfield sites, infill, change of use to employment generating uses and intensification of activities on existing employment sites.

The employment strategy is particularly focussed on the development of the following areas:

- Wicklow town centre and Rathnew village centre;
- The Murrough and other lands serviced by the new Port Access Road; and
- Clermont Campus.

⁶ This is the ratio of the number of jobs in the town to the number of people in the labour force

2.2.5 Retail

The 'Core Strategy' requirements as set out in Section 10(2a)(e) of the Planning Act require a demonstration that the retail strategy set out in the plan is consistent with 'higher level' retail strategies, namely the Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016, the County Retail Strategy 2010-2016 and the statutory Retail Planning Guidelines.

Table 2.4: Retail Hierarchy in County Wicklow

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

The retail policies and objectives set out in the (draft) Plan re-inforce Wicklow Town's status as a 'Level 2' County Town retail centre and Rathnew's status as a 'Level 4' local centre.

The retail policies and zoning in the new plan also reflect the floorspace growth allocations set out in the County Retail Strategy which indicate that growth in convenience floorspace⁷ of the order of 3,000-5,000sqm is required, along with growth of 7,000-15,000sqm of comparison floor space⁸ up to 2016. Retail objectives and zoning provisions will however reflect that this plan extends beyond 2016.

⁷ Convenience goods comprise food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, tobacco and non-durable household goods

⁸ Comparison goods comprise clothing and footwear, furniture, furnishing and household equipment, medicines, educational and recreational equipment, books and magazines, other personal goods.

2.2.6 Infrastructure

Transport

The settlement is serviced throughout by the regional and local road network. Footpaths are in place in the built up urban areas with limited cycle-lanes in place. The Wicklow Port Access and Town Relief Road was constructed in 2010 providing improved vehicular and cycling access to the lands around Knockrobin, Bollarney, the Murrough and the port and to the lands to the west of the settlement. Wicklow's Train Station and Port are two transport hubs that also contribute to the infrastructure assets of the settlement. Maximisation of the investment made in new and existing transport infrastructure is a key factor in the crafting of the most appropriate spatial layout of the settlement.

Roads

The N11/M11 is the National Route that provides the main access and connecting link for the settlement to the north and south of the region. This road is located to the west of the plan boundary. Wicklow town centre is connected to the N11 by two major regional roads – the R750 which links the town to the N11 Rathnew-Ashford interchange via Rathnew (4km journey) and the R751, which links the town centre to the N11 at the Beehive (5.5km journey). Wicklow town centre is also linked via local road L509 (Rocky Road) to the N11 Ballinabarney interchange (4km journey). All of these routes from and to Wicklow town centre connect to the new Town Relief Road, which allows for circulation around the town from any entry point from the N11.

Rathnew village centre is located in close proximity (1km) to the N11 Rathnew-Ashford interchange and is also connected to the Ballinabarney interchange (2km) via the old N11 (now a regional road).

The R750 is the principal local distributor road through the settlement from the N11 to the north, through Rathnew, through the Main Street of Wicklow town and onto Dunbur and the coast road to the south. The Regional Road R752 connects Rathnew to Rathdrum and on to the west of the County.

The new Port Access Road connects both centres to the Murrough area obviating the need to travel through Wicklow town centre.

Cycling / Walking

Cycle lanes have been provided on the Port Access and Town Relief Roads and throughout the settlement where feasible. The upgrading and provision of footpaths/cycleways is a continuous scheme to ensure ease of pedestrian and cyclist movement throughout the town and environs.

Public transport

Wicklow Town is serviced by the main Dublin to Rosslare rail line, which is operated by Iarnrod Eireann, with Bus Eireann providing a regular public bus service to the town to Dublin City and Airport. There are a number of private, school and rural link buses operating throughout the town but there is no fixed route timetabled service for local journeys within the settlement.

Port

Wicklow Port is an active international cargo port that operates throughout the whole year. It is located in the centre of Wicklow Town with good road access links to the N11/M11 along the Port Access Road. This port is operated by the Wicklow Port Company.

Water and Sanitary Services

The Cronroe Reservoir currently serves the majority of the plan area by gravity, up to the 80m contour line in the south west of the plan area, including the Broomhall Reservoir and its supply area. In the southern area of the town water is pumped a number of storage tanks that service a limited amount of lands up to the 103m contour and 130m contour line.

The entire plan area is serviceable by the Wastewater Treatment Plant constructed in 2010 at Knockrobin Murrrough which has a capacity of 34,000 p.e⁹. This plant is supported by two pumping stations and storm water handling facilities at the Murrrough and Rathnew

2.2.7 Land zoning principles

Based on the above analysis of population, housing, employment, retail and transport infrastructure, and in accordance with best practice and ministerial guidelines, zoning is proposed based on the following principles:

- All land zoning shall have the principle of reinforcing Wicklow town's role as the County Town with the highest designation in the RPGs while protecting Rathnew as an individual community with its own history and identity
- Land in the existing centres of Wicklow town and Rathnew village shall be considered first for mixed use, housing, retail and employment development
- Housing and community development shall be located as close as possible to existing town and village centres, with growth being facilitated in an incremental way starting from the centres, to allow for good connectivity for services and maximise potential for walking and cycling for short local journeys
- New employment development shall be located where it can maximise efficiency and synergy through linkages to existing employment areas / services or educational establishments and where the best transport infrastructure is available
- Retail development shall be located in the Core Retail Area as defined by the County Retail Strategy, with smaller localised neighbourhood centres being provided for in housing areas separated from the existing centres of Wicklow Town and Rathnew Village
- Maximum utilisation of existing infrastructure, particularly new roads, water and social infrastructure
- Environmental, tourism and recreational assets shall be protected from inappropriate zoning and development. All land zonings will have cognisance of the Habitats Directive in terms of avoiding adverse impacts on Natura 2000 sites (Article 6), and ensuring connectivity between habitats in the interests of conserving biodiversity (Article 10).
- Lands in high risk flood zones only designated for suitable land uses as per the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (Nov 2009 DEHLG & OPW)

Proposed housing land

Having regard to the inherited surplus of zoned housing land from previous plans, this plan has reduced that amount of zoned housing land to 203ha as set out in Table 2.5 below.

⁹ This also serves the village of Ashford

Table 2.5: Proposed housing land for the Wicklow - Rathnew DP 2013-2019

Location	Zoning	Area (ha)	Theoretical Maximum Capacity
Bollarney	R2	1.549	62
Broadlough Estate	R1	2.25	90
Broadlough Estate	R2	0.32	9
Ballyguile	R2	0.9	25
Greenhills Road	R2	1.724	48
Abbey School	TC	0.72	23
Church Lane	R2	0.58	7
Marlton	R2	0.1527	6
AA3 Murrough	R1	4.729	189
Convent lands	R1	3.4	96
Convent lands	R2	2.401	277
Whitegates	MU	9.892	136
Kilmantin House	R1	0.2072	8
AA1 Clermont	R2	3.881	109
AA1 Clermont	TC	3	127
AA1 Rathnew	R2	16	448
AA1 Rathnew	R1	5.716	229
AA2 Marlton	R1	9.61	384
AA2 Marlton	R2	32	655
Knockrobin & Bollarney	R2	10	274
Burkeen & Merrymeeting	R2	13	353
Keatingstown & Broomhall	R2	29	822
Ashtown	R3	8	158
Marlton Road	R4	2.438	24
Ballyguile	R3	2.95	59
Ballyguile	R4	1.327	13
Ballybeg	R2	18	497
Rathnew	TC	2	61
Rathnew	R2	8	227
Greenhills Road (Mariner's Point)	R4	5.2	52
Ballyguile Beg	R4 (NH4)	2	15 (max)
Ashtown (WRFC)	R4	2.6	26
Infill	RE, TC & VC		250
	Total	203.07	5,759
Phase 1 (2013-2019)			3,980
Phase 2 (post 2019)			5,759

Proposed employment land

Having regard to the inherited surplus of zoned employment land from previous plans, this plan has reduced that amount of zoned employment land to 86.3ha as set out in Table 2.6 below.

Table 2.6: Proposed employment land for the Wicklow - Rathnew DP 2013-2019

Location	Zoning	Undeveloped land (ha)	Employment type
Rosanna Lower 1	E1	9.74	Business Park / Manufacturing
Newrath	E1	13.91	Business Park / Manufacturing
Rosanna Lower 2	E3	2.97	Retail warehousing
Milltown North	E1	10.67	Business Park / Manufacturing
Merrymeeting 1	E3	1.46	Retail warehousing
Merrymeeting 2	E1	5.42	Business Park / Manufacturing
Ballynabarny 1	E1	12.63	Business Park / Manufacturing
Ballynabarny 2	E2	4.36	Warehousing
Ballybeg	E2	4.12	Warehousing
Ballynerrin Lower	E3	7.88	Retail warehousing
Along PAR	E2	10.5	Warehousing
Along PAR (CZ Zone)	E2	2.64	Warehousing
Total		86.3	

2.2.8 Core Strategy Map

Section 10 (2B) of the Act requires the key elements of the 'Core Strategy' to be depicted on a diagrammatic map; this is a schematic map depicting how Wicklow Town Council and Wicklow County Council anticipates that its area will develop out over the plan period in line with the availability of infrastructure, services and amenities.

