

SECTION TWO
DEVELOPMENT

Chapter 3

Residential Development

3.0 Introduction

A population provision of 19,000 persons for the year 2016 and 24,000 persons for the year 2022 has been allocated to the settlement of Wicklow town, environs and Rathnew (as set out in the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016). This development plan is for the period 2013 to 2019 and a population provision of 21,500 persons for 2019 has been extrapolated from the 2016 and 2022 figures. In accordance with the 'Development Plan Guidelines' (DoEHLG, 2007), which recommends that development plans should make provision for zonings for at least 3 years beyond the lifespan of the plan, this plan shall aim to provide the necessary land use zoning and services for the 2022 population figure of 24,000¹.

It is estimated that the current (April 2011) population is 13,468 persons in the plan area².

Table 3.1 Existing population and allocations

Year	Population
2006	11,919
2011	13,468
2016	19,000
2019	21,500
2022	24,000

Source: CSO Census 2006 and Wicklow County Development Plan

3.1 Demand for new housing

It is estimated that there are 4,776 households and 5,399 housing units in the plan area as of April 2011. Current average household size is estimated at 2.8 persons.

It is predicted that by 2019 the average household size in County Wicklow will have declined to 2.43 persons per household (in accordance with the RPGs). Assuming the same household size for Wicklow-Rathnew, there would be a need for minimum of 8,848 dwelling units in the settlement by 2019.

Further household size declines to 2022 (a household size of 2.3 is projected for 2022 by the RPGs) will necessitate a minimum total housing stock within the plan area of 10,435 to meet the 2022 population allocation.

The plan must make provision for more than the minimum number to allow for housing that becomes obsolete during the lifetime of the plan, houses that are used as second homes in plan area and for normal market friction which means that some houses will be vacant due to market factors. This is known as the 'excess factor'. For the purposes of this plan an 'excess factor' of 6% will be utilised in accordance with the provisions of the RPGs and the Wicklow County Development Plan (which is considered reasonable given the 2011 'vacancy' rate of 10.24%). The projected figures here include this excess factor.

¹ Section 4.14: "Planning authorities should take all reasonable steps to ensure that sufficient zoned residential land is available throughout the lifetime of the development plan and beyond to meet anticipated needs and allow for an element of choice. In particular, to ensure continuity of supply of zoned residential land, planning authorities should ensure that at the time they make a development plan, enough land will be available to meet residential needs for the next nine years. In this way, development plans will provide for sufficient zoned land to meet not just the expected demand arising within the development plan period of six years, but will also provide for the equivalent of 3 years demand beyond the date on which the current plan ceases to have effect".

² Source: CSO Census 2011 (Small Area Population Statistics) supplemented with An Post GeoDirectory data

Table 3.2 Predicted housing need

Year	Population	Household size	No. 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	
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

3.2 Residential Zoning

Existing Developed Residential Areas (RE)

Within the existing developed residential areas potential development sites range from small gap infill, unused or derelict land and backland areas, side gardens of existing houses, up to larger vacant sites within established residential areas. While it is considered that higher residential densities are appropriate in the town/village cores, an appropriate balance is required in the protection of the amenities and privacy of adjoining properties, the protection of established character and the requirements for residential infill developments. Proposals for such infill development will generally be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that the proposal respects the existing character of the area and would not have an adverse impact on the amenity value of properties in the area. It is estimated that there is capacity on such sites for up to 200 new units.

Town / Village Centres (TC/ VC)

While the town centre of Wicklow (i.e. that area zoned TC) and the village centre of Rathnew (zoned VC) are densely developed, there are numerous opportunities for redevelopment and infill development, particularly backlands of Main Street properties and along South Quay in Wicklow. Having regard to the high density of development that could be considered on such sites, it is estimated that there is capacity for up to 50 new residential units in the town / village centres.

New Residential Zones

This plan will provide for c. 203 hectares of 'greenfield' zoned residential land. Taken in conjunction with potential infill development in the town / village centre and existing residential areas, the provisions of the plan provide for a residential development capacity of c. 5,759 units, with a range of densities as set out in Table 3.3 to follow. Some of these lands are located in designated 'Opportunity Areas' and 'Action Areas'.

All 'opportunity areas' and 'action areas' are to be the subject of comprehensive (not piecemeal) integrated schemes of development that allow for the sustainable, phased and managed development of the action area during the plan period.

Table 3.3 Residential / mixed use zoning

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
Church Lane	R4	0.72	7
Abbey School	TC	0.58	23
Marlton	R2	0.1527	6
AA3 Murrrough	R1	4.729	189
Whitegates	MU	3.4	136
Convent lands	R1	2.401	96
Convent lands	R2	9.892	277
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

3.3 Phasing

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

³ The discrepancy between the 5,662 units required as set out in Table 3.2 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.

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.

3.4 Housing Objectives

General

- H1** To ensure sufficient zoned land is available in appropriate locations capable of meeting the housing needs of the projected population of the plan area over the plan period in a sustainable manner.
- H2** Notwithstanding the zoning of land for residential purposes, the Development Management process shall monitor and implement the population targets and shall phase and restrict, where necessary, the granting of residential planning permissions to ensure these targets are not exceeded.
- H3** Housing development shall be managed and phased to ensure that infrastructure and in particular, community infrastructure, is provided to match the need of new residents.
- H4** The development of zoned land shall be phased to ensure lands closest to the centre (or to existing transport and / or community infrastructure) is developed prior to more outlying lands, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Residential development in Wicklow Town Centre & Rathnew Village Centre (TC & VC zones)

- TC1** Encourage town / village centre in-fill developments to include an element of residential use and to encourage the greater use of backland and other under-utilised and vacant sites / vacant upper floors for accommodation purposes, to allow for 24-hour activity and night-time supervision of the urban core
- TC2** To facilitate higher residential densities in the town / village centres, subject to a high standard of design, layout and finish.
- TC3** All new residential developments in the town and village centres shall comply with the development standards set out in this plan, unless otherwise agreed by the Planning Authority.

Residential development in existing housing areas (RE)

- RE1** In the RE zone, house improvements, alterations and extensions and appropriate infill / new residential development in accordance with principles of good design and protection of existing residential amenity will be permitted. While new developments shall have regard to the protection of the residential and architectural amenities of houses / buildings in the immediate environs, alternative and contemporary designs shall be encouraged (including alternative materials, heights and building forms), to provide for visual diversity.

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)

New Residential Development (R1/R2/R3/R4)

While a core aim of the plan is to utilise opportunities in the existing town / village core for new residential development, these areas are not sufficient in size and scope to accommodate the required growth of Wicklow-Rathnew up to 2022. In this regard, new residential development is also provided for on lands zoned:

R1: High density, up to 40 units per ha

R2: Medium density, up to 28 units per ha

R3: Low density, up to 20 units per ha

R4: Infill / rural fringe low density, up to 10 units per ha

NH1 All new residential developments shall comply with the development standards set out in this plan, unless otherwise agreed by the Planning Authority.

NH2 Zoned residential lands located within the identified Opportunity Area or Action Areas shall be developed as comprehensive (not piecemeal) integrated schemes that allow for the sustainable phased and managed development of each area during the plan period.

NH3 Unless otherwise specified by the Planning Authority, any development in excess of 200 residential units, or smaller developments that will accumulate to be part of larger future developments, will be required to carry out a 'social infrastructure' audit, to determine if social and community facilities in the area are sufficient to provide for the needs of the future residents. Where deficiencies are identified, proposals will be required to either rectify the deficiency, or suitably restrict or phase the development in accordance with the capacity of existing or planned services.

NH4 To provide for low density housing (maximum of 15 units) on lands zoned R4 at Ballyguile Beg (as identified on the zoning map) to be reserved for those living permanently for a period of at least 3 years in the area within 10km of the site prior to seeking of permission / purchase of a house on these lands

3.5 Social and Affordable Housing

The Local Authority has two principal functions with regard to housing supply – (a) to put in place a land-use planning framework to facilitate the delivery of appropriate housing in its functional area through the zoning of land, the provision of necessary services and appropriate control of the location and design of new housing and (b) to ensure the provision of social and affordable housing, either by direct construction or through Part V of the Planning Act.

The Planning Act requires that each Planning Authority shall include in any development plan it makes a strategy for the purpose of ensuring that the proper planning and sustainable development of the area of the development plan provides for the housing of the existing and future population of the area in the manner set out in the strategy. The Housing Strategy must include an analysis of demand and supply for the different sectors of the housing market, forecasting future needs and shortfalls and propose objectives to balance demand with supply in a sustainable manner.

In accordance with Section 94(1)(e) of the Act, a Housing Strategy has been prepared as a joint strategy between Wicklow County Council, Bray Town Council, Wicklow Town Council and Arklow Town Council, and is in Chapter 4 of the County Development Plan 2010.

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 housing is available for persons who have different levels of income;
- Ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of the different categories of households, including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities;
- Counteract undue segregation between persons of different social backgrounds;

- 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.

The strategy found that sufficient zoned and serviced land is available across the County to meet the overall County housing demand.

The Council must continue to utilise all policy avenues open to it and any new schemes that become available to ensure the greatest delivery of social and affordable housing possible and to ensure a regionally equitable balance of housing delivery.

3.5.1 Social and Affordable Housing Objectives

- SH1** To implement the Wicklow Local Authorities Housing Strategy 2010-2016 and any subsequent revisions.
- SH2** To require that 20% of all zoned land developed for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be devoted to social and affordable housing, in a manner consistent with the detailed provisions of the current Housing Strategy, to be agreed with the Housing Authority.
- SH3** To require all new social and / or affordable housing development schemes (whether Local Authority /Voluntary or Part V schemes) to provide a mixture of residential unit sizes in accordance with the County Housing Strategy, which will be agreed with the Local Authority.
- SH4** To require the highest standard of design in all new social / affordable developments or developments containing an element of social / affordable housing, in accordance with the development standards set out in this Development Plan and the DoECLG social housing guidelines.
- SH5** To encourage proposals from developers to satisfy Part V obligations which are directed toward special need categories – namely, elderly accommodation, traveller accommodation, specialized accommodation for the homeless and specially adapted accommodation for persons with disabilities – where the proposal is related to an identified local need and is consistent with other policies of this Development Plan.

3.6 Housing and Urban Development Standards

Urban design considers the relationship of buildings to one another and to the spaces around them. This section sets out the principal standards that the Planning Authority will apply to all new developments in the plan area, but with particular emphasis on the standards applicable to developments that include residential use. There have been a number of guidance documents published by the Department of the Environment on urban design and all applicants for permission in urban areas are advised to consult these documents, as they will also be utilised as a tool in the assessment of planning applications. Any proposed development must consider both its site and its surroundings and respond to them in a positive way.

3.6.1 Town / Village Centre Areas

The core town / village centre areas, which are zoned TC and VC, allow for a wide range and mix of uses. New development in this zone will normally comprise infill or brownfield sites, or redevelopment sites put together through acquisition of a number of underperforming or derelict sites. Generally, the following standards shall apply to such developments:

- New developments will require to be ‘integrated’ with the existing built fabric, in the sense that it will knit together, both physically and visually with the surrounding buildings;
- New developments will be required to form new street frontage or to bridge existing gaps in the streetscape. Where an access point is required, this should be in the form of a tunnel or arch. Where appropriate or necessary, buildings may however be stepped backwards or forwards, to add

visual interest and variety to the town, subject always to this not undermining or interfering with an established streetscape;

- The development of new streets and squares will be encouraged, as well as the opening up of new links between sites or from backlands to the street front;
- Where the plot width of the site is considerably wider than the prevailing plot width along the street, the new building's facade will be required to be broken into visually distinguishable elements, to allow for a more seamless transition between existing and new;
- While intensification of development in town centres is encouraged, excessive height shall not be utilised as the principal mechanism for achieving this. Heights more than 1-storey above adjoining buildings will not normally be accepted, unless this will bring the height up to the prevailing height of the overall street. Any application for heights in excess of this shall submit detailed justification and visual assessment of the proposal, including rendered drawings / photomontages and day and sunlight analysis;
- As internal ceiling heights in older buildings may not meet modern needs, necessary deviations from the prevailing 'storey line' shall be mitigated by design for example, through the use of fenestration.

Additional development standards for Wicklow Town Centre and Rathnew Village Centre are set out in Chapter 4.

3.6.2 Greenfield developments

New developments on greenfield sites may need to establish their own identity, as some may be of such a scale and distance from the core town / village centre area as to render analysis of existing 'context' meaningless. In this regard, it is considered appropriate to consider two forms of greenfield development – the large-scale planned expansion area and small to medium scaled housing developments.

Large Scale Housing Developments

In large scale expansion areas (i.e. developments of **200 units or more**, or smaller developments that will accumulate to be part of larger future developments) such as the action areas of this plan, the following shall apply:

- At the outset, a vision for the area shall be established and agreed with the Planning Authority. This shall set out the 'type' of place that is envisaged, the design ethos and the influences on form and design emerging;
- An evaluation of the existing surroundings of the site, as well as future proposals / zoning for lands in proximity, shall be carried out to determine how the new development will integrate with the area and allow for maximum connectivity and permeability;
- The development shall include distinctive and / or landmark type buildings and a series of new spaces that allow for the development of a sense of place and identity;
- New roads / streets shall be laid out in a legible hierarchy from distributor to local roads.

Small – Medium Scale Housing Development

These developments would not normally be of scale that warrants the establishment of a new neighbourhood 'identity', but rather are intended to 'fit' into the existing built fabric of the settlement. These developments will normally be within or adjacent to existing developed areas or at the very edge of the settlement. At such locations, the following shall apply:-

- Visual integration and physical connectivity with the area surrounding the site will be required to be at the fore of any design model;
- While the format and design should complement the prevailing pattern of development in the area and should not degrade the residential or visual amenities already enjoyed in the area, new developments shall meet the highest standards of modern layout and design even if this means a development that is very different from its surroundings;

- Where such a small to medium scale development is to form part of a future larger development, the developer will be required to show possible future development zones / layouts in the area and compliance with the principles set out for large scale developments (above);
- Where such a small to medium scale development is adjoining future development lands or provides the only possible access route to other lands, new roads will be required to be designed to ensure that future access to other lands can be facilitated.

3.6.3 Intensity of development

The following maximum densities shall apply in the plan area:

Table 3.4 Maximum Plot Ratio / Density

Zone	Maximum Plot Ratio
Town / Village Centre	2.5 (25,000sqm of development / hectare)
R1	0.5 (equivalent of 40 units of 125sqm/ hectare)
R2	0.35 (equivalent of 28 units of 125sqm / hectare)
R3	0.25 (equivalent of 20 units of 125sqm / hectare)
R4	0.125 (equivalent of 10 units of 125sqm / hectare)

- All planning applications shall provide a table of data showing site area, development area, building footprint, total building floor area and a calculation of plot ratio;
- 'Density' will only be allowed to be generated from land that is capable of being built upon; land which is ultimately unsuitable for such purposes (e.g. due to excessive slope) will not be considered to be part of the density equation even if it forms part of the overall site. Any such areas should be clearly shown on planning applications drawings;
- The density that can be achieved on any site will ultimately depend on compliance with 'qualitative' standards such as fit with surroundings, height, open space provision, adequate privacy, car parking etc and the density ultimately proposed should be the outcome of the design process rather than the starting point;
- In certain circumstances, such as brownfield sites in urban areas or sites in very close proximity to a high quality, reliable public transport network, departures from the maximum density standards specified may be considered, subject to the highest quality of design;
- Where a new 'neighbourhood' centre forms part of a large-scale greenfield expansion area, plot ratio in the neighbourhood hub (i.e. only that area forming an integrated part of the shopping / community facilities provided) may be allowed to increase to a plot ratio of no greater than 1:1.

3.6.4 Suitability of the proposed use at that location

The uses allowable in any zone are set out in the land use matrix of this plan. However, while a particular use may be allowable, it does not imply that it is desirable or acceptable at all locations:

- In particular, in core town / village centre areas, active uses will normally be required at ground floor level i.e. retail, commercial, community or leisure uses. All non-residential floors will be required to be designed to be suitable to a range of users. The mix and balance of different type of uses (including retail and retail services) is important to attract people to core town / village centre areas and to ensure the town / village centres remain the main meeting point for the community. Too many of certain types of outlet can destroy the balance of the town / village centre, and accordingly the Planning Authority will control the number of bookmakers, off-licences (including off-licences in convenience stores), financial institutions, amusement centres and other uses that can adversely affect the character and vitality of the town / village centre;
- 'Living over the shop' i.e. residential use over ground or first level commercial use will be specifically encouraged by allowing a relaxation in development standards such as car parking and open space.

3.6.5 Transport Accessibility

Departures from the maximum density standards specified may be considered where the site is in very close proximity to an existing or future high quality, reliable public transport network (subject to the highest quality of design). New development may also be required to include services and formats that facilitate penetration of public transport into the development / site.

New entry / exit points off a 'main street' will be strictly controlled in order to maintain free movement of vehicles and pedestrians along the street. Where no other option is available, new / expanded entry / exit points will be allowed subject to no adverse traffic congestion or pedestrian safety problems being created. Where new entrances are allowed, they may be required to be so located and designed to allow for access to other sites.

At edge of centre or greenfield locations, good connectivity to the town centre area will be required and where access roads or pedestrian / cycle links do not exist, these will be required to be provided or financed by the developer.

New developments will be required to place a high emphasis on *permeability* and *legibility* of access routes. A permeable layout is one that is well connected and offers a choice of direct routes to all local destinations, thereby encouraging walking and cycling, facilitating public transport penetration and generating higher levels of pedestrian activity, casual social interaction, informal supervision and thus security. A legible development is one that is structured in a way that creates distinctive places and spaces that may be easily 'read' and that are easy to find one's way around. A legible layout is based on designing at a human scale in response to the positive features of a site and how it relates to the wider area, rather than technical demands of traffic or the internal logic of the individual site.

Relaxation in car parking standards in town centres may be considered where

- Good public transport is or is planned to become available;
- The applicant can provide a robust model of car parking usage to show that dual usage will occur and that peak car parking demand at any time of the day / week will always be met;
- The site is located within a parking enforcement zone - in such cases, only the needs of long-term users (e.g. employees, residents) will have to be addressed by the developer.

(Car parking standards are set out in Chapter 9 of this plan)

3.6.6 Design Quality

Layout

- New urban developments shall be so laid out to have a 'relationship' with the public realm, with windows / balconies overlooking existing or proposed streets / open spaces. Buildings backing onto public areas, whether they are streets or public open spaces, will not be permitted;
- A variety in set backs and building lines may be provided to provide for visual interest and to create interesting spaces except where this interferes with a streetscape;
- Notwithstanding established separation 'rules' that may be applied to maximise privacy for dwellings (see below), traditional back-to-back rows of 2-storey houses, exactly 22m apart should be avoided and more imaginative layouts and building forms provided, subject always to adequate privacy being provided;
- Layouts shall ensure adequate sunlight and daylight, in accordance with "*Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: a guide to best practice*", (BRE 1991);
- Roads should be designed in a hierarchical manner, so that the bulk of traffic moves around distributor roads, with the majority of residences located on lightly trafficked routes (this of course should be balanced with the need to maximise permeability within the development). Roads, footpaths and car parking areas shall be located and designed so that obstructive on street parking or parking on kerbs is not necessary;
- Greenfield developments shall be so laid out as to maximise retention and integration of natural features, such as mature trees, hedgerows, water courses etc into the site layout;
- The maximum size of any greenfield housing development shall not be greater than 100 units where only traditional houses are proposed or 200 units where there is a mix of houses and

apartments. Any development exceeding this number shall be broken up into a number of distinct 'estates', even if accessed from a shared road, with materially different architectural styles.

Building Design

New buildings shall be attractive, safe and secure and provide a high quality living environment. In particular, the design of new buildings shall accord with the following requirements:

(1) External Appearance

- Good modern architecture with a building language that is varied and forward-looking rather than repetitive and retrospective will be required; however, reference and 'clues' must be drawn from surroundings, particularly in the town / village centre area;
- Variation in external materials will be expected, again subject to 'fit' with surrounding buildings. Care shall be taken in excessive use of contrasting materials and generally no more than two contrasting materials shall be utilised on any façade;
- The possibility of providing roof mounted communal satellite dishes in town centre commercial and apartment developments will be required to be considered, to avoid demands for numerous individual dishes;
- Where a development takes the form of more than one structure (i.e. a number of apartment blocks or a multitude of individual houses), adequate variety in form, height, materials etc shall be employed, within an overall unified theme, to provide for visual diversity.

(2) Unit Size and Formats

- All planning applications shall be accompanied by a data table setting out number and floor area of all commercial and residential units;
- New apartment developments will be required to include a range of unit sizes to cater for different housing needs, while new greenfield housing areas shall also include a range of unit types including apartments, duplexes, townhouses, semi – detached and detached houses, including single storey dwellings;
- The minimum size apartment allowed will be 45sqm. No more than 20% of the units in any single development shall be under 50sqm. At least 50% of the units in any development shall be 73sqm or larger;
- The minimum room size and storage space standards set out in *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments*' (DoEHLG 2007) shall be adhered to;
- Single aspect residential units will only be permitted where the main living rooms face south, west or east;
- In the design of new residences, cognisance shall be had of the changing space demand of households over time. For example, apartment formats should allow for either the future subdivision of larger units or the merging of two or more smaller units (either horizontally or vertically) and houses should have attics capable of conversion to habitable rooms;
- In 'edge of centre' or 'out of centre' new residential development, the quantum of apartments allowable will be regulated, as this dense format of development is more suited to urban core locations, where direct access to services is available. In this regard the maximum quantum of floor space that may be devoted to apartments in 'edge-of-centre' locations shall be 40% of the development and 20% in 'out-of centre' locations.

(3) Privacy

- Residential developments shall be so designed and constructed to ensure maximum privacy for residents;
- Windows and balconies shall be positioned and designed such that direct intrusion into private living areas from other dwelling units or from the public realm is avoided. In this regard, the design

- of ground levels units with little or no separation from footpaths or other public areas shall be carefully considered and mitigation measures applied;
- A separation of 22m will normally be required at first floor level and above between opposing windows serving private living areas (particularly bedrooms and living rooms). However, this rule shall be applied flexibly: the careful positioning and detailed design of opposing windows can prevent invasion of privacy even with short back-to-back distances. Windows serving halls and landings do not require the same degree of privacy as say balconies and living rooms;
 - The degree of 'overlooking' afforded by different windows types shall be considered appropriately; for example, an angled roof light will not have the same impact as a traditional 'flat' window on the same elevation;
 - In 'traditional' housing developments, with side-to-side and back-to-back housing, the following standards will be applied for boundary walls:
 - All walls bounding the private (usually rear) garden shall be 2m in height;
 - Side boundaries between houses shall be provided at a height of 2m and shall extend from the front façade of the house to the rear wall of the house;
 - All boundaries shall be of solid construction i.e. they form a complete screen barrier with no gaps;
 - Walls bounding any public areas shall be of solid block construction, rendered and capped on the outside;
 - If timber boundaries are utilised, they must be bonded and supported by concrete posts. Concrete post and plank walls will not be permitted for any boundary visible from the public domain.

(4) Green Issues

- To require all new buildings during the design process to incorporate sustainable technologies capable of achieving a Building Energy Rating in accordance with the provisions S.I. No. 666 of 2006 European Communities (Energy Performance of Buildings) Regulations 2006;
- All new buildings will be required to incorporate water saving measures, as set out in Chapter 10. This may include rain water harvesting for internal service uses. In particular, all new dwellings with individual surface water collection systems will be required to be provided with water butts;
- All buildings will be required to be provided with a suitable area on site for the keeping of waste storage receptacles for mixed dry recyclables, organic waste (composters) and residual waste. In apartment developments, this may be in the form of grouped individual bins in car parking areas or a designated waste building; for individual houses with no side or rear lane from the garden to the public road (e.g. mid terrace houses), this may entail a designated, appropriately designed / screened / enclosed area to the front of the house;
- Consideration should be given in the design of new buildings to the provision of green roofs or walls (i.e. roof gardens / planted balconies etc), to aid in both water absorption but also to contribute positively to the environment and visual amenity.

(5) Open Space

- Open space shall be provided in all new developments, the scale of which shall be dependent of the use of the building/site. In commercial developments, this may be limited to a small area utilised by employees for passive use, such as small courtyard area or roof garden. While the provision of such space may not always be possible in built up urban locations, new developments shall endeavour to provide a minimum area equivalent to 5% of the building gross floor area;
- All residential units shall be provided with private open space, either in the form of private balconies, terraces or rear / side gardens. Where necessary to make up for a shortfall in private open space, communal private space, for example, in the form of internal courtyards or roof gardens, shall be provided. Care shall be taken to ensure such spaces receive adequate sunlight and meet the highest safety standards;
- All apartments shall be provided with a minimum area of 30sqm private open space, which shall be at least partially made up of a private balcony or terrace. The front wall of balconies should be made from an opaque material and be at least 1m in height. The minimum balcony / terrace sizes shall be:

Table 3.5 Minimum balcony/terrace

Apartment Size	Minimum balcony/terrace size
One bedroom	5sqm
Two bedroom	7sqm
Three bedroom	9sqm

- Dwellings shall be provided with private open space at a rate of 0.64sqm per 1sqm house floor area (for the first 150sqm), with the minimum garden size allowable being 48sqm;
- Public open space shall be provided in accordance with the standards set out in Chapter 8. In particular:
 - Public open space will normally be required at a rate of 15% of the site area – areas within the site that are not suitable for development or for recreational use must be excluded before the calculation is made;
 - The need to provide public open space in town centre developments may be waived if the development specifically achieves other overriding aims of this Plan, particularly where public amenity space such as a town park or beach is in close proximity;
 - In greenfield developments, a hierarchy of open spaces shall be provided to allow for the different play needs of different age groups and all efforts shall be taken to ensure that all houses are in visual range of one open area;
 - Spaces less than 10m in width or 200sqm in area will not be counted as useable public open space; nor will space that is excessively sloping or otherwise unsuitable for usage.
- New organised sports areas shall be located in proximity to existing or planned community or neighbourhood facilities such as neighbourhood retail centres, schools etc.

(6) Car Parking

- 2 off street car parking spaces shall normally be required for all dwelling units over 2 bedrooms in size. For every 5 residential units provided with only 1 space, 1 visitor space shall be provided. Parking for non-residential uses shall be provided in accordance with the standards set out in Chapter 9 except where a deviation from the standard has been justified (in accordance with Chapter 9);
- Communal car parking areas shall be conveniently located for residents and suitably lit at night-time;
- Adequate provision shall be made for visitor and disabled car parking;
- Designated sheltered and secure bicycle parking will be required in apartment developments.

(7) Social and Community Facilities

In accordance with the Objective CD 3 (Chapter 8), all applications for large-scale residential expansion areas shall include a community facilities audit and where facilities are found to be inadequate, proposals to address these deficiencies will be required.

(8) Infill/backland development in existing areas

Many older housing areas were built at densities and in such formats that resulted in particularly large plot sizes. Where opportunities arise for infill or backland type development, the following standards shall apply:

- House improvements, alterations and extensions and appropriate infill residential development in accordance with principles of good design and protection of existing residential amenity will be permitted. While new developments shall have regard to the protection of the residential and architectural amenities of houses in the immediate environs, alternative and contemporary designs shall be encouraged (including alternative materials, heights and building forms), to provide for visual diversity;
- The design of a new house should complement the area. Where an area has an established unique or valuable character worthy of preservation, particular care should be taken to match the style and

- materials of the area; however, where an area is a 'mixed-bag' of styles and periods, more flexibility can be applied;
- Particular attention will be required to be paid to the design and location of new windows, in order to ensure that the privacy of either the existing house on the plot or adjacent houses is not diminished;
 - Gable walls abutting public areas (e.g. footpaths, car parking areas and open spaces) will not be permitted and a minimum separation of 0.9m will be required between the house gable and the side wall of the plot;
 - Where the access route to a proposed development site is proposed to run alongside the external walls of the existing dwelling on the development plot or the external walls of a dwelling on an adjoining plot, there must be adequate separation available to facilitate the required driveway (normally 3m) and allow a 0.5m 'buffer' area alongside any existing dwelling. Any deviation from this standard must be evaluated on traffic safety and residential amenity grounds;
 - The re-design of access and car parking arrangements for the existing dwelling on the plot must be clearly detailed, and permission included for same where required; developments accessed from a long narrow driveway must provide for the turning of vehicles within the site;
 - Cognisance will be required to be taken of the potential of adjacent rear / side plots to be developed in a similar manner and separation between site boundaries, location of windows etc must not prejudice development options on the adjacent plot;
 - New apartment developments dependent on access through existing established areas of predominantly single family homes will not be permitted.

(9) Sub-division of dwellings

In established areas of predominantly single family homes, the subdivision of a dwelling into apartments or bedsits will generally not be permitted, except in exceptional circumstances. Where sub-division is permissible, normal qualitative standards with regard to internal space, private open space, privacy and car parking will required to be complied with.

(10) House extensions

The construction of extensions to existing houses will be encouraged generally as it usually provides a less resource intensive method of expanding living space than building a new structure. Given the range of site layouts prevailing, it is not possible to set out a set of 'rules' that can be applied to all extensions, but the following basic principles shall be applied:

- The extension should be sensitive to the existing dwelling and should not adversely distort the scale or mass of the structure;
- The extension shall not provide for new overlooking of the private area of an adjacent residence where no such overlooking previously existed;
- In an existing developed area, where a degree of overlooking is already present, the new extension must not significantly increase overlooking possibilities. If for example a two-story dwelling already directly overlooks a neighbours rear garden, a third storey extension with the same view will normally be considered acceptable;
- New extensions should not overshadow adjacent dwellings to the degree that a significant decrease in day or sunlight entering into the house comes about. In this regard, extensions directly abutting property boundaries should be avoided;
- While the form, size and appearance of an extension should complement the area, unless the area has an established unique or valuable character worthy of preservation, a flexible approach will be taken to the assessment of alternative design concepts.

(11) Independent living units ('Granny Flats')

A 'granny flat' or 'family flat' is an independent living unit on an existing house site, used to accommodate a member of the immediate family, often an elderly parent, for a temporary period. The construction or conversion of part of an existing dwelling into a 'family flat' will only be permitted where the development complies with the following requirements:

- The need for the unit has been justified and is for the use of a close family member;
- The unit forms an integrated part of the structure of the main house – in exceptional circumstances, the conversion of an existing detached garage / store etc maybe considered subject to the structure being in very close proximity to the main house;
- The unit is modest in size and in particular, it shall not exceed 45sqm and shall not have more than 1 bedroom;
- The unit shall not be sold or let as an independent living unit and the existing garden shall not be subdivided;
- The structure must be capable of being functionally re-integrated into the main house when its usefulness has ceased. Permission for such units shall be restricted to a period of 7 years, after which it must revert to a use ancillary to the main house (e.g. garage, store, hobby room) unless permission has been secured for its continuation as an independent unit for another period.

(12) Temporary residential structures

Temporary residential structures (e.g. mobile homes, caravans, portacabins etc) form a haphazard and substandard form of residential accommodation and generally have poor aesthetic value and can detract from the overall appearance of an area. Therefore permission will generally not be granted for such structures.

(13) Naming of Developments

It shall be a condition of a planning permission for new housing schemes that the developer will submit a scheme for the naming and numbering of the estate prior to the commencement of the development. The naming of housing estates shall reflect in as far as possible the local context in which it is located. On approval of the naming of the scheme, the developer will be required to provide nameplates and numbers, as required by the Council.

(14) Entrance to Developments

The name of the development shall be clearly identified at the entrance. Measures shall be put in place to ensure parking is restricted for sufficient distance at the start of the development to eliminate potential traffic hazard on the public road. Gated developments will not be permitted, except in exceptional circumstances.

(15) Flood Routing

Flood risk assessment and the techniques to be applied to avoid or minimize the risk is dealt with specifically in Chapter 10 of this plan. One of these methods is the manipulation of the layout and design of a development to provide flood 'routes' i.e. in the event of surface water sewers, or a nearby culverted stream failing, the development shall be so laid out that the resultant flood waters can take a natural route through the site without having to flow through people's homes.

Chapter 4 KEY AREAS

Wicklow Town Centre Strategy Rathnew Village Strategy Wicklow Port and Harbour Strategy

4.1 Introduction

The viability and vitality of any town centre is a barometer of the overall health and well being of the entire town. Traditionally, town centres consisted of a wide range of uses that included residential, retail, services, social and cultural activities. Given Wicklow's proximity to the metropolitan area of Dublin and the high speed road connections that are now available between Wicklow and south Dublin / M50 ring / Dublin City there has been a significant decline in many of the traditional town centre uses, particularly retailing, which is having a direct impact on the economy of the town centre and on the quality of the built environment as vacancy rates increase and property prices fall, resulting in many buildings falling into disrepair. Wicklow Town and Rathnew Village are not immune to these changing circumstances with the result that there are many areas within the town and village centres that are in need of renewal and redevelopment.

Wicklow Port and Harbour are important physical features, recreational and tourism amenities and an important source of economic activity associated with the town. Pursuing an enhanced role for this area would benefit the town as a whole. Whilst it is important that the port remains commercially competitive there may be opportunities for the enhancement of the area alongside the sustainable regeneration and re-development of the port, harbour and quay areas.

4.2 Wicklow Town Centre

4.2.1 Strategy

A strategy for the sustainable development and reinvigoration of Wicklow Town centre is now vital to counteract the trade draw that has occurred from the change in the economy and to revitalise the tourism potential of the town. The retail, tourism and commercial functions of the main street require to be reinforced by appropriate strategies and objectives.

The factors that make a town centre economically viable and attractive to visitors are numerous and often hard to predict and influence, but for the purpose of this land use plan, the strategy for Wicklow Town centre will comprise the following elements:

- Addressing vehicular, pedestrian and cycling traffic circulation;
- Addressing car parking and bicycle parking;
- Enhancing access to public transport
- Enhancing the 'public realm';
- Addressing dereliction and vacant sites;
- Protecting the buildings, features and places of heritage value;
- Ensuring high quality of urban design and form;
- Encouraging a varied mix of uses in the core area;
- Reinvigorating the retail role of the retail core through application of an appropriate retail strategy.

4.2.2 Vehicular, Pedestrian and Cyclist Circulation

Vehicular Access

Wicklow's traditional town centre thoroughfare starts at the Marlton Road junction with Abbey Street and includes Main Street, Fitzwilliam Square, The Mall, Market Street, Market Square and ends at the Courthouse / Gaol with a large number of small side streets that allow for, albeit restricted and circuitous, alternative routes between these two points.

While there is a looped route available between the Courthouse and the Grand Hotel via Ballynerrin – Marlton Road, this road is too long to be convenient to most car users from the south / southeast of the town centre travelling north – therefore the Main Street remains the principal distributor road in the settlement of Wicklow. Notwithstanding the recent opening of the Port Access Road, which has removed HGV traffic from the town centre, traffic flows are still therefore relatively high.

The principal vehicular link from the Main Street to the Quays, Port and Murrough areas is from Bridge Street and over the stone bridge. The use of this route results in some traffic congestion at Fitzwilliam Square; however there are two other vehicular routes to the South Quay at Salt House Lane and Quarantine Hill. Although both of these roads are one-way to the Quay and are restricted in width, they help alleviate some of the congestion from traffic accessing the South Quay.

Pedestrians

Wicklow Main Street and associated link / side streets are generally provided with public footpaths. However, many of these footpaths are quite narrow and are often impeded by signage / other items placed on the footpath. The existence of on-street car parking at many locations also diminishes the pedestrian experience.

Pedestrian crossings are available at a number of locations between the Grand Hotel and the Main Street and these allow for good linkages between the two sides of the street in the western side of the town. A pedestrian crossing in the vicinity of Market Square is however needed to improve pedestrian movement in the eastern side of the town.

Pedestrian linkages to the South Quay are good with Bridge Street, Salt House Lane and Quarantine Hill providing links, along with the 'Doctor's Steps' from Main Street. A number of the properties along the main street back onto South Quay also and have internal links to both sides. These sites provide an opportunity for increased pedestrian linkages from the main street to the South Quay to be incorporated into any redevelopment of sites/areas. While there is a significant fall in ground level from the main street to the south quay this can be overcome through appropriate design.

With a key objective of this plan being the redevelopment and enhancement of the Port and Murrough areas, improved linkages from the town centre across the Leitrim River will be required, particularly over the Leitrim River stone bridge itself.

It is important that the public realm is as inclusive as possible to all users. Some of the town footpaths and streets are at present unsuitable for wheel or push chair users. Rectifying this should be part of a broader redesign of these areas. The safety and ease of pedestrian movement must be considered in relation to vehicular movement and parking around the town, particularly along walking routes to and from car parks, schools, sports facilities and other public facilities.

Cycling

There are no cycle lanes within the Town Centre due to lack of width; however given the relatively slow movement of traffic within the town centre, the area lends itself to relatively safe cyclist movement. There are cycle parking facilities within the town at a number of convenient locations.

Vehicular, Pedestrian and Cycling Objectives

- WT1** To maintain the Main Street as the principal vehicular route through the town centre and to exploit any opportunities that arise to improve safety for both vehicles and pedestrians/ cyclists.
- WT2** To promote ease of movement of pedestrians throughout the town centre and avail of any opportunities to improve footpaths, pedestrian routes and road crossings.
- WT3** To promote ease of movement of cyclists throughout the town centre and avail of any opportunities to improve the quality of service for cyclists and improve cycle parking.

- WT 4** To facilitate the improvement of existing and the development of new linkages from the town centre to car/bike parks, amenity areas, to south quay and to the port / Murrough areas. Any new development proposals with frontage onto both Main Street and the south quay shall incorporate new pedestrian linkages between the two where feasible.

4.2.3 Car Parking

There are over 1,000 paid parking spaces available in and around the town centre of Wicklow, at reasonable rates. These car parks are well located and convenient to the main town centre area and its side roads. There are also a number of smaller customer car parks located within the premises of a number of shops and services buildings within the town. The provision of car parking in the town centre is important for the functioning of the town centre however the location of parking should be considered more closely. It is important to strike a balance between adequate parking provision and retaining the environmental quality and historic character of the town centre.

Car Parking Objectives

- CP1** To maintain existing and provide new car parking options as funding allows, in proximity to the town centre.
- CP2** To avail of opportunities to remove public car parking on the Main Street and at amenity areas, subject to due consideration of the commercial needs of Main Street, including loading parking.
- CP3** To require new development on the Main Street to incorporate pedestrian links where feasible to existing or new public car parks.
- CP4** Deviations from the minimum car parking requirement set out in Chapter 9 of this plan shall be considered in the town centre strategy area where a public car park is within 200m walking distance to the site. In such cases and where the site allows; only the needs of long-term users (e.g. employees and residents of the development) shall be addressed by the developer.
- CP5** To facilitate the development of a multi-storey car park in Wicklow town centre at a suitable location, subject to the protection of the built heritage.

4.2.4 Enhancing access to public transport

The number 133 Bus Eireann bus services Wicklow town centre with a set down stop at the rear of Wicklow Gaol and a collection/drop off point at the Grand Hotel Junction. Improved access to and facilities at these locations would encourage the use of public transport, in particular, these areas should be designated locations for the development of new / enhanced waiting, information and bicycle parking facilities and facilities for taxis. The improvement or provision of new footpaths and cycleways to these locations should also be a priority.

Objectives

- PT1** To facilitate the improvement of public transport user facilities including, inter alia, shelters, covered bicycle parking, information points with maps, routes, timetables, real-time information and designated taxi ranks at / near the bus stop at the rear of Wicklow Gaol and the Grand Hotel
- PT2** To avail of opportunities to provide new or enhance existing foot and cycleways to and from these public transport pick up locations, as funding allows
- PT3** To facilitate improved access to bus stops particularly crossing points for passengers.

4.2.5 Enhancing the 'Public Realm'

The 'Public Realm' can be best described as the form and use of outdoor areas and spaces that are accessible to the public. This includes many familiar types of place, such as streets, squares, parks, car parks and beaches, as well as the physical and visual connections between them, and with buildings. Quality public realm can provide the venue for multiple activities, including commerce, recreation, education and of course, fun and enjoyment for residents and visitors alike.

The elements in and around Wicklow's Main Street that contribute mostly to the quality of the public realm are:

- The streetscape;
- Landmark buildings and appearance of principal junctions / gateways;
- Building frontages, in particular materials, colours and shop fronts;
- The relationship of the Main Street to the river and South Quay;
- Urban open spaces and parks, and the juxtaposition of structures to spaces;
- Footpaths, lighting, seating and other 'street furniture'.

The Wicklow Town Public Realm Plan 2008 provides a number of enhancement initiatives that provides guidance on the implementation of the public realm objectives of this plan.

Public Realm Objectives

- PR1** To protect and enhance the streetscape of Wicklow's main street through the appropriate control of alterations to existing buildings and the development of new structures; in particular building lines and heights which diverge from the established form will require to be justified.
- PR2** To strive to improve the appearance of junctions and gateway areas into the main street of the Town centre, particularly the Marlton Road – Abbey Street junction.
- PR3** To appropriately control the design and appearance on building frontages, particularly shopfronts; 'dead' frontages, i.e. those with no goods on display to the street or those where views of the interior are completely blocked by non-transparent materials etc will not be considered.
- PR4** New or extended / refurbished units shall, at all times that the unit is not in active use, provide an attractive temporary display or professionally designed artwork affixed to the glass frontage. The temporary use of the space during such times for creative, cultural or community purposes will be encouraged; however, such change of use may require planning permission, and advice will be provided by the Council on a case by case basis in this regard.
- PR5** To support opportunities to create better linkages between the main street and the south quay and Church Street, in particular access routes and views between the two.
- PR6** To maintain and enhance Fitzwilliam Square and Market Square and support other possibilities for the development of new urban spaces, with hard and soft landscaping and high quality street furniture.
- PR7** To improve footpaths, lighting, seating and other street 'furniture' as funding allows, and require private developments providing such features to meet the highest standards of design and siting.

4.2.6 Dereliction and Vacant Sites

While the Main Street is substantially intact with no gap sites, a number of properties are vacant and are suitable for appropriate redevelopment. As important is the potential of side streets to be redeveloped, to draw users to these areas. A significant number of backland areas are currently used for car parking associated with the main buildings fronting onto Main Street.

In this regard, it is important that flexibility be applied with regard to car parking provision for any proposed new developments at such locations. In particular, given the proximity of such sites to public car parks, carparking requirements should be limited to the needs of the residential elements of any development with commercial needs being met by the public car parking area.

Dereliction and Vacant Sites Objectives

- VS1** To facilitate substantial redevelopment of under-utilised or vacant properties on the Main Street.
- VS2** To facilitate appropriate infill development of vacant backland.

4.2.7 Buildings, Items and Places of Heritage Value

Wicklow's main thoroughfare is the location of a number of structures / features listed for protection on the Record of Protected Structures, and the central area is also designated an 'Architectural Conservation Area' (ACA) which is designed to preserve the overall character and setting as a whole. The structures, features and character play an important part in adding to the overall attractiveness of the main street and contribute to the traditional town centre appeal of the street.

Objectives

- HV1** To positively consider proposals to improve, alter, extend or change the use of protected structures within the town centre so as to render them viable for modern use, subject to retention of their features of special interest by the application of suitable design, materials and construction methods.
- HV2** Proposals to demolish Protected Structures, or special features which contribute to the character of an ACA, only be allowed in exceptional circumstances.

4.2.8 Mix of Uses in the Core Area

In order for the Main Street to remain vibrant, it will be necessary to ensure an appropriate mix of uses. In particular, ground floors will be encouraged in all locations to incorporate commercial uses, particularly uses with active frontage such as shops and restaurants / cafés. Furthermore, in order to ensure activity at night, specific encouragement will be given to residential use of upper floors.

Objectives

- MU1** To support and facilitate activities and developments that will improve the vitality and vibrancy of the Main Street area.
- MU2** Redevelopment proposals in the town centre shall generally be required to provide commercial use at ground floor / street level.
- MU3** All non-residential floors will be required to be designed to be suitable to a range of users.
- MU4** To control and restrict where necessary uses at ground / street level to prevent an excessive concentration of single outlet types / formats e.g. bookmakers, off-licences (including off-licences in convenience stores), charity shops, fast-food takeaways, amusement centres and financial institutions.
- MU5** Active 1st floor uses will be required in all new developments and particular encouragement will be given to 'living over the shop'. Where such use is proposed, a relaxation in density, car parking requirements and open space standards will be considered, where the development meets very high quality of design and accommodation.

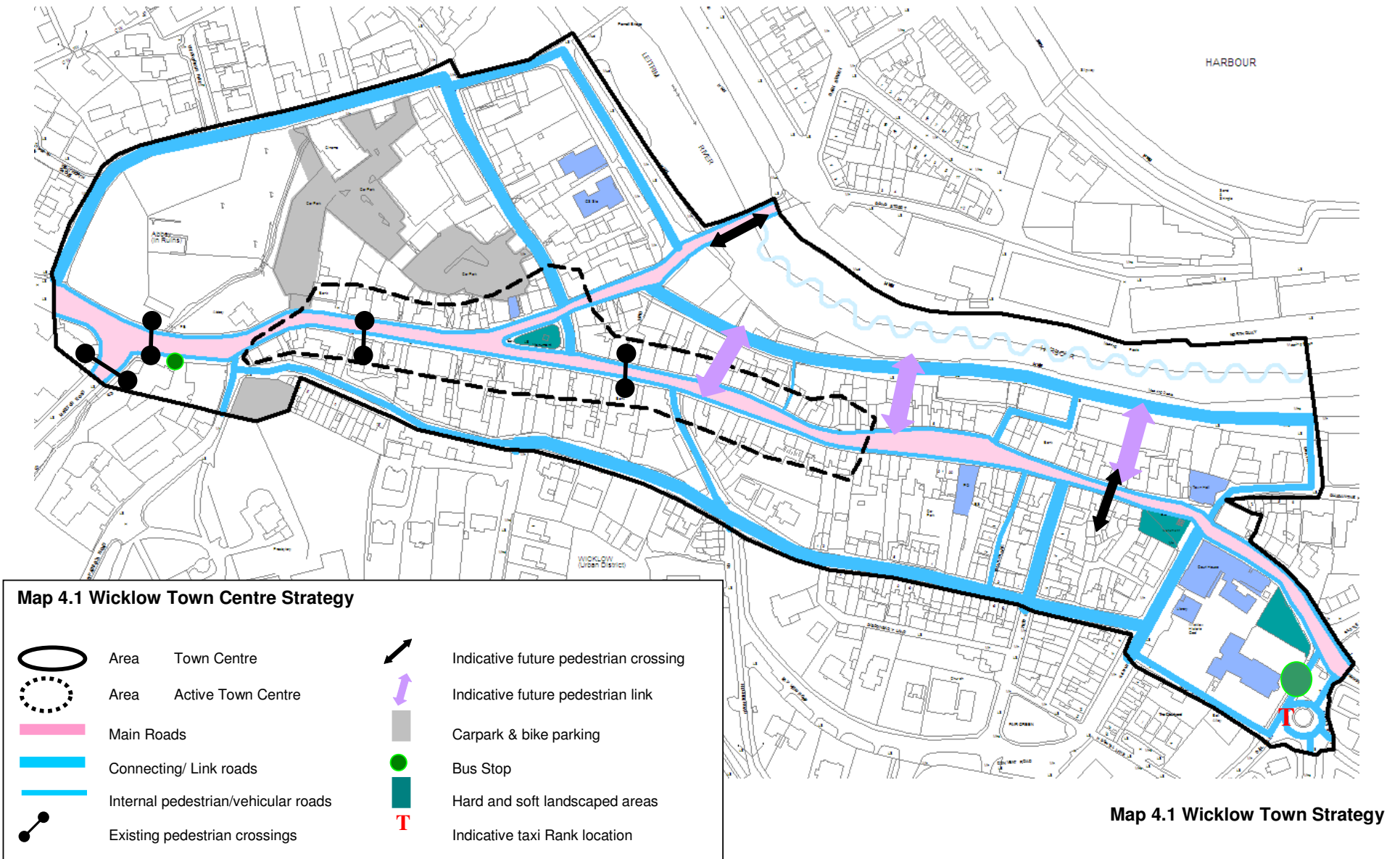
4.2.9 Retail Role of the Core

The continuation of the retail function of the Main Street is key to its future viability. A main street requires the passing trade of shoppers to maintain both the pure retail offer and other retail services such as banks, cafes, hairdressers etc. The Main Street is the traditional retail area of the town and should remain the main area - however there is the potential for further retail development on the South Quay which is within the retail core area. In this regard, it is the stated policy of the County Retail Strategy to promote and encourage improvements to retailing and other town centre activities in the core area of Wicklow and to generally control further retail development to:

- Conversion of non-retail premises in the core area to retail use,
- Renovation and expansion of existing retail premises in the core retail area,
- Redevelopment of derelict or brownfield sites in the core, and
- Replacement of existing facilities within the town.

Objectives

- RC1** To support the function of the main street and associated side streets as the principal retail area in Wicklow.
- RC2** To support proposals to merge or assemble buildings / sites in order to develop modern retailing formats, including department stores or malls, having due regard to the protection of architectural heritage.
- RC3** To promote and facilitate the conversion of non-retail premises to retail/retail service use and to strongly resist the conversion of existing retail/retail service premises to alternative, less active uses that would diminish vibrancy and daytime activity in the area.



Map 4.1 Wicklow Town Strategy

4.3 Rathnew Village Centre

4.3.1 Strategy

The overall development strategy of this Plan is to allow for the development of the settlement around two poles – Wicklow town and Rathnew village. The strategy for Rathnew village centre is:

- to retain the unique identity of Rathnew with its own level of retail and other services appropriate to a village of its size and not allow it be absorbed as a 'suburb' of Wicklow town
- to reinforce the commercial and retail role of the village by encouraging and facilitating new development in the identified village core
- to resist the development of any new retail or commercial facilities outside of the village centre activities zone and within 1km of the retail core and
- to improve accessibility to the centre, and in particular, to improve the pedestrian experience

While historically the village developed in the area around the Commons, the 'centre' is now considered to be the intersection of the R772 (old N11) with the R750 (Rathnew – Wicklow Road). For the purpose of developing a strategy, it is considered that the village can be divided into three distinct areas namely:

- the 'old village'
- the area east of the main road from Clermont to Tinakilly and
- the area to the north and west of the Glenealy Road

The Old Village

This area is the original, historic centre of the village which developed around the 'commons' and is the location of much of the village's built and cultural heritage, and social / community buildings. Of particular importance to the fabric of this area are the educational and community facilities namely St. Ernan's BNS, SN Naomh Iosef, St. Joseph's church RC, Rathnew graveyard and two community centres. The ruins of the old medieval church and former graveyard are of archaeological significance, while the Old Band Hall and the Grotto are of local cultural interest, contributing to the identity of this area.

To the west of the Commons, the area is mostly residential, in the main consisting of semi-detached former Council houses with large rear gardens, a number of which have been developed with infill housing.

There are a number of retail units in this area, as well as a public house and this section of the village is well connected to the east side of the village by pedestrian crossings; however, linkages to the north across the Glenealy Road require improvement.

Pedestrian and cyclist movements and linkages are quite good in this area given the scattered layout. A one-way system is in place around much of the historic Commons area, which is necessary given the narrow streets.

Objectives

- Rathnew 1** To enhance and protect the built and natural heritage and to facilitate improved access to these amenities.
- Rathnew 2** To improve the public realm by facilitating road and footpath improvement works
- Rathnew 3** To facilitate improved signage and interpretation of local heritage assets.

Clermont Campus to Tinakelly

This area is also part of the historical development of Rathnew with the c.18th century estate houses of Clermont House to the northwest and Tinakilly House to the east, with the Rathnew Stream dividing the two estate grounds. In the central area (i.e. around the roundabout) the village centre has developed with

strong 2-storey streetscape of retail and commercial developments that provide for some of the everyday retail and services needs of the residents of the village. The linkages between this area and the rest of the village are important given the services available here.

To the north of Rathnew Stream, the lands that historically formed part of Clermont House are designated for new village centre development and in particular, this is considered the most suitable location in the village for significant new retail development, including the provision of a supermarket, in accordance with the provisions of the Clermont Action Area. Development in this area would allow for the creation of a new streetscape that would greatly enhance the overall appearance of the village and linkages up to the Clermont College.

The area along both sides of the stream is considered suitable for the development of a riverine public park / greenway with links down to the Murrough to the east. Some lands along the south bank of the stream have also been identified in the Flood Risk Assessment as being in the high flood risk zone and therefore an 'open space' zoning is the most appropriate for this area.

There are good footpaths in the area of the village but no cycleways. Pedestrian crossings are also available towards the old village, but not to the west side of the village. The pedestrian and cyclist experience is somewhat diminished by the existence of on-street parking in front of the shops, but until an alternative off street car parking can be developed, it is considered essential that this car parking remain for the convenience of shoppers and vitality of the village centre.

It is considered appropriate that the location around the existing bus stop / car park be identified as a suitable location for further transport improvements such as additional / enhanced bicycle parking, bus shelters, information signs etc

Objectives

- Rathnew 4** To encourage and facilitate improvements to the existing retail / services area along the main street, including the provision of new / expanded retail and retail services developments, including the provision of a new supermarket, and improved shops fronts
- Rathnew 5** To enhance the amenity value of the Rathnew Stream and to facilitate improved access, subject to objective Water Systems Objective WS4 to this area, subject to the protection of its environmental and ecological value.
- Rathnew 6** To improve pedestrian movement by facilitating the provision of pedestrian crossings to the western area from Clermont Campus to Charvey Lane
- Rathnew 7** To improve existing and provide new footways and cycleways as funding allows
- Rathnew 8** To encourage the development of a transport hub around the existing bus stops at the Woodside estate and St Ernan's School, including improved accessibility, car-parking, bus stop facilities, shelters and covered bicycle parking
- Rathnew 9** To facilitate the delivery of the Rathnew Inner Relief Road

North of the Glenealy Road

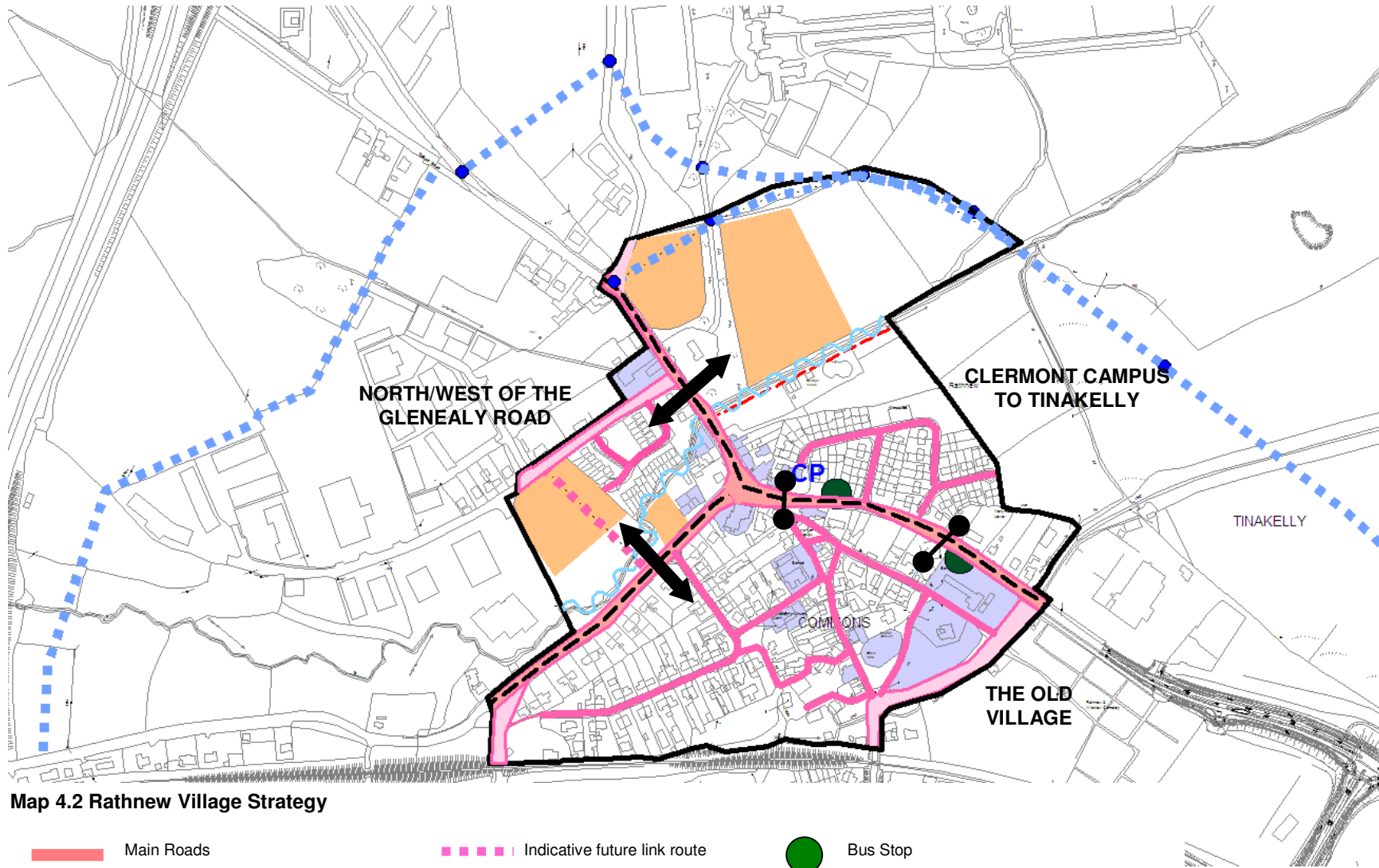
Up until the year 2000, only a very small part of this area was developed – that area with frontage onto the main road, where there are a small number of dwellings / commercial properties. A new housing estate has developed over the last 10 years on the lands to the north of the stream, while the remaining lands on the west part of this sector are still undeveloped.

The undeveloped lands present an important opportunity site as the lands have potential frontage onto both the village 'main street' and to the rear from Charvey Lane. However any significant development would be contingent on access being only from the Glenealy Road due to the deficiencies of the Charvey Lane – R752 junction unless substantial improvements / reduction in traffic flows at this junction arise. This site is considered suitable for mixed use development, including residential and retail use.












Pedestrian and cyclist movement in this area is quite restricted as there are no dedicated cycle lanes and no pedestrian crossing to the east or to the south to access other village areas / services.

Objectives

- Rathnew 10** To facilitate improved pedestrian movement and safety with the provision of additional pedestrian crossings across the Glenealy Road to the 'Old Village' and across to the Clermont Campus.
- Rathnew 11** To require the vacant lands between the R752 and Charvey Lane to be developed as a single comprehensive development, with a masterplan, that provides for new frontage on the R752 and Charvey Lane, and which addresses all traffic movement issues arising from any development.
- Rathnew 12** To enhance the amenity value of the Rathnew Stream and to facilitate improved access, subject to objective Water Systems Objective WS4 to this area, subject to the protection of its environmental and ecological value.



Map 4.2 Rathnew Village Strategy

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---|--|
|  | Main Roads |  | Indicative future link route |  | Bus Stop |
|  | Connect/ Link roads |  | Indicative future pedestrian route |  | Opportunity Area |
|  | Internal pedestrian/vehicular roads |  | Future relief road route |  | Village Centre facilities and Services |
|  | Existing pedestrian crossings |  | CP | | Carpark & bike parking |

4.4 Wicklow Port and Harbour

4.4.1 Strategy

Wicklow port, harbour and quays are an important asset in the settlement and to County Wicklow as a whole. In infrastructure terms, the port is an important economic asset with daily shipping and cargo activities. From a heritage perspective, the harbour is central to the town's maritime history and is located in an environmentally sensitive setting with The Murrough, and the Leitrim river to the north and the Black Castle and Wicklow Head to the south. Wicklow Port manages the operations of the Port and the Council will continue to liaise with the Port on their future intentions.

In the past the town developed with its back towards the port, harbour and quay with the focus of development on the main town centre. The port area developed as an industrial area with the port traffic travelling through the town centre. With the recent changes in the port activity with less cargo activity, the provision of the port access road and the redevelopment of the area with some new residential and town centre uses around the harbour and quays, the potential of this area is starting to be realised. Whilst it is important that the port remains competitive, the regeneration of this area needs to be facilitated to ensure the full potential of the port, harbour and quays as an important town asset and amenity can be achieved.

The **vision** for the port, harbour and quay area is for it to continue to sustainably develop as an international cargo port alongside the development of the recreational potential of the harbour and to encourage the redevelopment of the quays as an extension of the existing town centre. It is important for the town to connect with the port, harbour and quays to exploit their assets without compromising their historical and environmental amenity.

The **strategy** for Wicklow Port, Harbour and Quays is therefore to facilitate the existing and future sustainable economic development of the port and associated activity, whilst allowing for expansion and improvement of amenity and recreational opportunities, for the development of a wider mix of uses including residential, retail / commercial and community uses, and providing for the highest level of protection of sensitive / vulnerable environmental / ecological assets such as the beach, river and sea.

The port and quays

The port is an important employment area within the town and has traditionally always 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 fulfils its role as an employment and services centre.

The north quay is the main hub of shipping, cargo and commercial fishing related activity and has a deep draft which allows for the docking of large vessels and there are a number of yards and warehouses associated with this activity in this area. It is considered important that the north quay retains this commercial function and does not become targeted for redevelopment for residential / leisure activities which would undermine the important asset that the deep water berth provides and the more recent investment in the Port Access Road. However given the location of this commercial area adjoining the shingle beach and pleasure harbour area, it will be important that any new activities or structures are appropriately controlled / designed.

While commercial vessels (mainly fishing vessels) can also dock on the south key, this area is more utilised for the docking of pleasure craft and smaller vessels due to the shallower draft. Significant investment has been undertaken in recent years to the overall public realm along the south quay in the form of footpath and parking improvements which greatly enhance the overall appearance and recreational utility of the area. While it is an objective of the plan to support continued commercial maritime activity in this area, the fact that the area has a less commercial focus in terms of shipping / cargo etc and a number of quayside buildings are not in residential / retail use, it is considered that this quay should be allowed to continue to develop as a mixed use and amenity area.

Objectives

- Port 1** To support and facilitate existing and future commercial port activities on the north quay and to resist developments that would undermine the commercial potential of the area.
- Port 2** To support and facilitate maritime activity on the south quay and to encourage new developments that provide for an improved mix of uses including commercial, retail and residential uses and to particularly encourage tourism and leisure related developments.
- Port 3** To ensure that all proposals for development have cognisance of Natura 2000 sites in the area and that no development is allowed which would have a significant adverse effect on the conservation interests of these sites.
- Port 4** To require any new developments in the port area to meet a high standard of design that respects the unique historical, environmental, visual and recreational amenities of the area.
- Port 5** To support and facilitate the development of new infrastructure necessary for the continued operation and development of the port.

The harbour

'Wicklow Harbour' for the purpose of this strategy is considered to be the area located within the two piers beyond the river quays. While the deep water berth for the port is located centrally in this area, in the main the harbour is utilised for leisure activities such as sailing, leisure fishing and swimming. The harbour has a small pebble beach area that mainly attracts local people and is also the location for the RNLI boat and station. These activities are an important 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 8 Recreation and Amenity for policy on leisure activities in the port area).

Objectives

- Harbour 1** To facilitate the enhancement of the public realm around the harbour area and to facilitate the provision of appropriate information signage in the harbour area.
- Harbour 2** To facilitate the improvement of pedestrian/cyclist/transport movement and access to the Harbour area, by facilitating the provision of appropriate directional and information signage that increases access to and the legibility of the routes between attractions and facilities on the port, harbour and quays.
- Harbour 3** To facilitate appropriate tourism and leisure development in the harbour area including the provision of new clubhouses, pontoons / marinas, shops, cafes and other leisure and tourism related developments subject to a higher quality of design, having regard to the protection of Natura 2000 sites, as well as the existing environmental, visual and residential amenities in the area.
- Harbour 4** To protect the unique historical character and recreational value of the harbour.

