



# Wicklow County Development Plan 2010 - 2016

ISSUES BOOKLET

October 2008

# YOUR COUNTY PLAN - GETTING INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

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The review of the Wicklow County Development Plan (CDP) 2004-2010 is commencing. Wicklow County Council is inviting submissions or observations regarding the review of the existing County Development Plan and the preparation of the new Plan for the period 2010-2016.

Public input at the start of the Plan-making process is important to ensure that the final Development Plan both reflects public concerns and aspirations, as well as the national and regional strategies and guidelines required of us by legislation. The purpose of the Issues Booklet is to provide a consultation document that gives a broad overview of the main development issues facing the County and to stimulate public debate on what broad planning and development matters should be considered in the new Plan.

### WHAT IS A DEVELOPMENT PLAN?

The new Development Plan will set out the overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Wicklow for the six year period 2010-2016. The Plan provides for, and controls, the physical, economic and social development of the County, in the interests of the overall common good. It includes development policies and standards, which set out where and how land is to be developed, and for what purposes (e.g. housing, shopping, schools etc). It sets out where public services such as roads, water supplies and sewerage are to be provided, and affects the type of buildings that can be constructed and the use to which land can be put. It affects many facets of daily economic and social life, in terms of where you can live, what services are available and where job opportunities are to be sited. It is the County Council's overarching document that advises and establishes County policies for the Plan period. All policies and objectives set out in the CDP should be realistic, achievable and within the remit and power of the Council to attain.

### HAVE YOUR SAY...

The period for receiving submissions to inform this initial phase of the Plan-making process runs for an 8 week period from Wednesday 29th October 2008 until Tuesday 23rd December 2008. **You can make your views known by making a written submission to:**

**Sheila O'Leary**  
**Senior Executive Officer**  
**Planning Department**  
**Wicklow County Council**  
**County Buildings, Wicklow**  
or  
**e-mail to: [planreview@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:planreview@wicklowcoco.ie), marked 'County Development Plan'**

**We must receive your submission by 5.00p.m. on Tuesday 23rd December 2008.**

All submissions should include your name, address, a map (where appropriate) and details of any organisation, community group or company etc. that you represent. Submissions, at this stage should focus on strategic or 'big picture' issues. Submissions relating to the potential rezoning of particular parcels of land are discouraged at this stage. It should be noted that the following towns are covered by separate plans, and as such the Wicklow County Development Plan does not deal with zoning of land within these towns: Wicklow, Arklow, Bray, Greystones/ Delgany, Rathdrum, Dunlavin, Kilcoole, Newtownmountkennedy and Enniskerry.

### WATCH OUT FOR...

...ongoing advertisements in the newspapers and posts on the Council's website informing you of the relevant stages in the review process. The Draft Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016 is likely to be published in September/ October 2009.

# WICKLOW IN A NATIONAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

The County Development Plan must be consistent with national and regional policy, as set out in the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area, of which Wicklow forms part. These documents set out broad frameworks which inform decisions as to where development (and Government investment) should take place.

## NATIONAL POLICY - NATIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY (NSS)

The strategic role for the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) in delivering a more spatially balanced Ireland is to consolidate the GDA, i.e. physically consolidate the growth of the metropolitan area of Dublin City and suburbs. At the same time, development in the hinterland of the metropolitan area is to be concentrated in 'Primary Development Centres'. These development centres have a role in terms of enhancing sustainability and achieving a level of balance between Dublin City and its surrounding Counties.

## REGIONAL POLICY - REGIONAL PLANNING GUIDELINES (RPGs) FOR THE GREATER DUBLIN AREA (GDA) 2004-2016

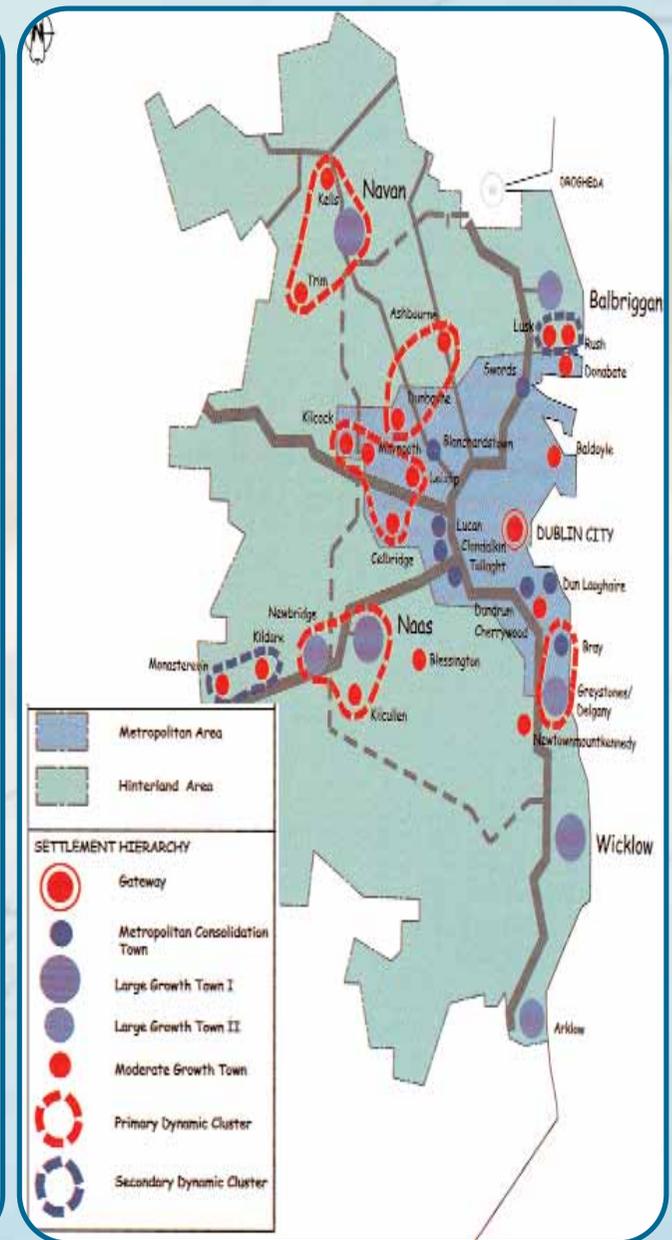
The settlement strategy for GDA is as follows:

- (i) Consolidate development within the Metropolitan Area.
- (ii) Concentrate development in the Hinterland Area into identified towns which will become self-sufficient, with limited commuting to the Metropolitan area.

Bray and Greystones are located in the Metropolitan Area, whilst the remainder of the County is located in the Hinterland Area. Wicklow and Arklow are identified as Large Growth Towns, while Newtownmountkennedy and Blessington are designated Moderate Growth Towns.



Dublin and Mid East Regions (NSS)



Settlement Strategy for the GDA (Regional Planning Guidelines)

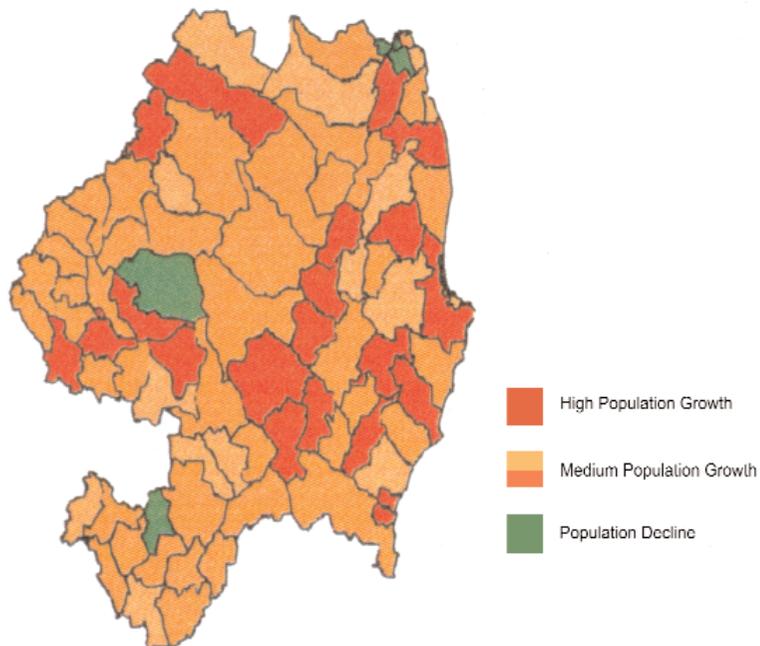
# WICKLOW'S POPULATION AND SETTLEMENT STRATEGY

## RECENT POPULATION CHANGE

In recent years, the population of Wicklow has increased from 102,683 in 1996 to 126,194 in 2006, representing a significant increase of 23%. The map below indicates that most growth has occurred in the east of the County, with pockets of growth in the west, centred around the Baltinglass and Blessington areas.

The population of the County is due to increase further, with the County required, under the Regional Planning Guidelines, to accommodate a further 28,331 households by 2016.

Population Change in County Wicklow 1996-2006



Population Trends 1996-2006

Population	1996	2002	2006	% Population Change 1996-2006
County Wicklow	102,683	114,676	126,194	23%
Bray & Environs	25,760	28,002	28,814	12%
Greystones & Environs	11,296	11,903	14,569	29%
Arklow & Environs	8,557	9,993	11,806	38%
Wicklow & Environs	7,290	9,355	10,070	38%

Source: Census (Population by ED)

## WICKLOW COUNTY SETTLEMENT STRATEGY

In an effort to appropriately locate population growth and channel development, the current CDP sets out a Settlement Strategy, which in line with the principles of the NSS and RPGs has promoted growth in the settlements of Bray, Greystones/Delgany, Wicklow/Rathnew, Arklow, Blessington and Newtownmountkennedy. Furthermore, it promotes the development of rural towns and villages in a manner which is appropriately scaled, and reinforces the character of these settlements, in addition to offering guidance to development in the wider rural area. In general, the more rural the settlement, the more restrictive the policies in terms of (i) restricting the number of houses permitted, and (ii) restricting the sale and occupation of houses, in the interests of proper planning and development, and providing for local rural need.

Although the Strategy has generally been successful in promoting growth in line with sustainable settlement patterns, the supply of housing in County Wicklow has been slower than in other Counties of the Mid-East Region due to a number of factors including a lack of services infrastructure, in terms of water, sewerage and roads, which enables the development of residentially zoned land.



Meeting the County's obligations with regard to achieving its required housing allocations so that affordable and good quality homes are provided for the existing residents of County Wicklow and new residents from outside the County, in a manner that directs growth into appropriate settlements, whilst also protecting the integrity of rural areas, is a challenge which is to be dealt with in the making of the new CDP.

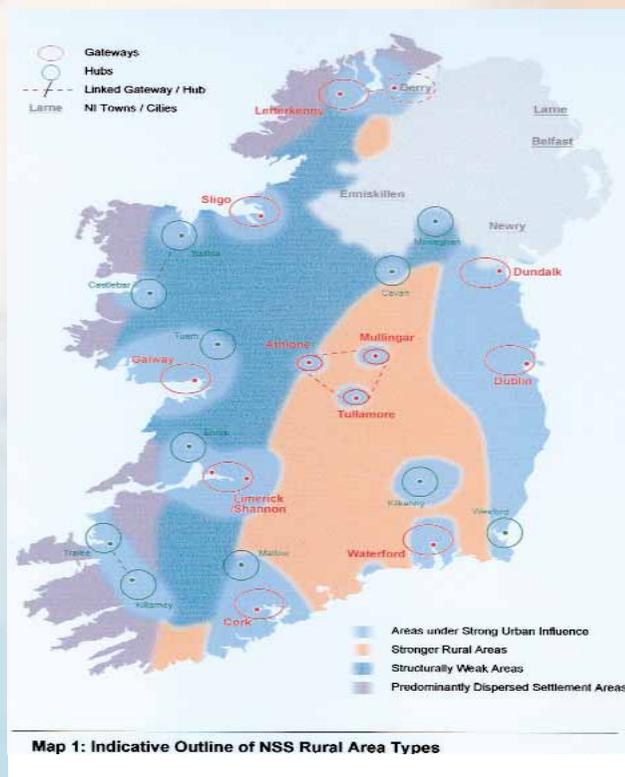
#### Have Your Say...

- Q Is the existing Strategy effective in promoting balanced and sustainable development across the County?
- Q Do you agree with the structure of Wicklow's Settlement Strategy? In what ways does the Strategy work effectively and what parts of the Strategy require improvement?
- Q Which town and villages should be promoted for population growth? Should alternative settlements be included as 'growth towns'?
- Q How do we promote growth in the west and south of the County, whilst also having regard to the fact that the major employment opportunities and infrastructural provision, in terms of transportation, water and sewerage provision, are located in the east and north of the County?
- Q How can the Strategy best deal with individuals who wish to move between or within the tiers of the Strategy?
- Q Should there be restrictions on who can buy and build in Wicklow? What restrictions are appropriate, and in what areas?

# RURAL HOUSING

In 2006 63.8% of the population in County Wicklow lived in urban areas, whilst 36.2% lived in rural areas.

Under the NSS, a distinction was made between the different types of rural areas in the country. As shown on this map, the majority of Wicklow's rural areas are considered to be under strong urban influence, with some areas in the west of the County being considered to be areas with a traditionally strong agricultural base. Policy included in the NSS, and incorporated into the Planning Guidelines on Sustainable Rural Housing (2004), states that in areas under strong urban influence, development driven by cities and larger towns should generally take place within their built up areas. In stronger rural areas, villages and small towns should accommodate additional housing catering for persons working in larger cities and towns but desiring a rural lifestyle.



Demand for rural one-off housing generally arises from two different circumstances: (i) housing needed in rural areas within the established rural community by persons working in rural areas, and (ii) housing in rural locations sought by persons living and working in urban areas, including second homes.

Current policy, as set out in the current CDP, in dealing with one-off housing, has been developed so that it conforms with Government guidelines, as set out in the NSS and Planning Guidelines on Sustainable Rural Housing (2004). As a general principle, subject to satisfying good planning practice in matters of site location, positioning on sites, design, and the protection of environmentally sensitive areas and areas of high landscape value, rural generated housing needs are accommodated where they arise. With regard to urban generated housing, development driven by Dublin city and the larger towns of the County, is directed into existing settlements. It is generally considered that smaller towns and villages have potential in catering for persons working in larger settlements but desiring a rural lifestyle.

In an effort to define, 'rural generated housing', the current CDP, under 'Policy SS9', sets out a series of 15 categories of persons for whom applications for one-off housing will be considered.

While it is important to note that the Council is required to appropriately control rural housing, in order to ensure compliance with national policy, a number of questions arise with regard to the precise manner in which this control is dealt with.

## Have Your Say...

- Q Do you recognise the need for controls on rural housing?
- Q How do we tackle the challenge of enabling rural housing to be developed, whilst also effectively protecting the integrity of the rural environment?
- Q Does the current Plan, under Policy SS9, correctly define 'rural generated housing' needs?
- Q Should the current 15 categories be altered? Should new categories be added, and problematic categories removed?



The housing market in Wicklow has experienced significant increases in both demand and supply in recent years. A new Housing Strategy is currently being prepared which will estimate future need.

A key aspect of the Housing Strategy is to set out requirements for the provision of social and affordable housing. Under the current Strategy, the Council requires 20% of each housing development to be for social and affordable housing, with the ratio of social to affordable being assessed on a case by case basis.



Household Size in the County continues to decline, in line with the national trend. Household size has reduced from 3.06 in 2002 to 2.89 in 2006, and is forecasted to continue falling to 2.56 by 2016. Housing requirements will continue to change to reflect this and other socio-economic factors, with perhaps an increasing need for a greater mix of house types and sizes within housing developments.

#### Have Your Say...

- Q How should the Council cater for all the different housing needs in this County - first time buyers, families, students, homeless persons, mobility-impaired persons, the elderly and travellers?
- Q Where and how should social and affordable housing be provided?



# MATTERS FACING OUR COUNTY'S TOWNS

The CDP includes policies which aim to support the future vitality and viability of the County's town centres, and to facilitate a competitive and healthy environment for the retail industry.

The policies and standards of the County Development Plan must be in line with national and regional policy, including the 'Retail Planning Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area' and the 'Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2000). The new Plan will include a Wicklow County Retail Strategy, which will be a broad over-arching strategy, used to guide development in the County.

One of the main instruments used to guide retail planning decisions is the 'sequential test', which essentially means that the preferred location of new retail and commercial development, where practicable and viable, is within the town centre. If town centre locations are not readily available then edge of centre sites should be looked at. Only after these options are exhausted should out of centre locations be considered.

## PROVIDING HIGH QUALITY AND ATTRACTIVE TOWN CENTRES

A key aspect contributing to successful urban development is maintaining a quality urban environment within our towns and villages. In this respect, the following questions need to be raised:

### Have Your Say...

- Q Town centres and villages should have a mix of compatible and appropriate uses. What should these uses be? What uses should be promoted to breath life into town centres and what uses should be discouraged?
- Q Should Wicklow's towns and villages attempt to have different 'personalities' or 'functions', the aim of which would be to encourage the

development of a distinct 'branding' or image which would act as a draw for different types of locals, tourists and investors? How could the planning process be involved in this proposal?

- Q What design standards can be introduced for the design of buildings, urban complexes and residential developments, which aim to (i) develop attractive public/civic spaces and streetscapes, (ii) improve connectivity and permeability between places, (iii) discourage anti-social behaviour, (iv) reduce congestion, (v) improve accessibility for people with disabilities, (vi) promote walking, cycling and use of public transport and (vii) promote ecologically friendly designs?

- Q What scale of development is appropriate for each of the County's towns and villages? Should certain towns, or certain areas within towns have specific height restrictions or design criteria?

- Q Should modern, innovative designs be allowed in urban areas or is it more desirable to restrict design to more traditional and conservative architecture?

- Q Should shopfronts be modern or traditional in design, or is a mixture of both acceptable?

- Q Are the car parking standards in the current Development Plan appropriate? If not, what alternative standards could be introduced?





## SHOPPING PATTERNS AND CHALLENGES FACING THE COUNTY'S RETAILING INDUSTRY

Not surprisingly, Arklow, Bray, Greystones and Wicklow Town account for the majority of retail floorspace in the County. These four centres contain over three-quarters of all convenience floorspace and over four-fifths of all comparison floorspace.

*Composition of Retail Floorspace in County Wicklow*

	Convenience Outlets	Comparison Outlets	Retail Warehousing
	41%	50%	9%
Terms explained	outlets for the sale of goods such as food and beverages, tobacco etc.	outlets for the sale of items such as clothing, footwear, household etc.	large single level store specialising in goods such as furniture, carpets, bulky household goods and DIY items



It is estimated that 82% of convenience expenditure and 37% of comparison expenditure by the resident population is spent in retail outlets located within the County. The lower comparison market share is generally attributed to the proximity of Dublin City Centre and other large scale shopping centres on the periphery of Dublin. Unless this matter is addressed, the quantum and quality of comparison retail floorspace will continue to lag behind with a resultant increasing leakage of expenditure.



In addition, the success of the County's retailing environment is also challenged by factors including (i) the limited opportunities for any major increase in retail floorspace within the existing town centres due to the tight nature of the built up area, (ii) traffic congestion, and (iii) a poor quality shopping environment.

### Have Your Say...

**Q** How can Wicklow deal with the challenges it is facing so that expenditure on comparison goods within the County is increased, so that spending from Wicklow residents is retained within the

County, and shoppers from outside the County are attracted in?

## OUT OF TOWN SHOPPING CENTRES

In recent years there has been a move towards the development of large retail centres at locations on the edges and outside of existing town centres. Although it is recognised that these centres are desirable in terms of enhancing the amount and quality of retail offer in the County, they tend to be problematic in terms of contributing to the demise of existing town centres, and in resulting in traffic congestion.

### Have Your Say...

- Q** Is there a role for traditional 'main street' shopping locations, in the context of changing shopping patterns, as indicated by an emerging preference to shop in large out of centre shopping complexes? What is this role?
- Q** Should the Council develop policy to encourage traditional 'main street shopping locations?
- Q** Should the Council limit the amount of out of centre shopping complexes being developed in the County? What towns are most appropriate for these centres? What sites are most appropriate?

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The County Development Plan must aim to build on the County's distinctive qualities so that it develops a dynamic, regionally competitive economy that creates wealth and provides sustainable work opportunities, whilst ensuring that environmental standards are not compromised.

## ECONOMIC INFORMATION

- Agriculture accounts for 5% of employment, Industry accounts for 29% and Services accounts for 66% of employment. Regional trends indicate that the service sector is continuing to grow in importance, whilst employment in the industrial sector is falling.
- The 2006 census recorded the County's unemployment rate as 8.08%, which was similar to the 2002 figure of 8.1%. This compares to a national rate of 8.5%.
- Labour Force participation rate is 63%, which compares favourably to the State figure of 62.5%.
- 31.5% of the population in the County has a Third Level educational qualification, which compares to the national figure of 29.1%.

## WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL'S ROLE

Wicklow County Council aims to encourage and facilitate economic development and employment generating opportunities throughout the County. This primarily requires:

- the provision of necessary infrastructure, in terms of good transportation links, and water and sewerage infrastructure;
- facilitating the implementation of both urban and rural economic development initiatives, as appropriate;
- zoning of land in a range of sizes and locations

as appropriate, for industrial and commercial activity;

- improving the quality of the built, social and cultural environment to act as a draw for investment.

## JOBS RATIO

Probably the best indicator of the imbalances that exist between the location of the labour force and the location of jobs in the GDA is the 'jobs ratio'. The jobs ratio has been used to measure the sustainability of settlements and comparative economic health. It is commonly accepted that the ratio should not fall below 0.7. The jobs ratio in Wicklow is 0.59. Considering that the pattern of commuting to Dublin City is so well established, the imbalance between jobs and labour force outside Dublin City is not unexpected.

### Have Your Say...

- Q What can be done to redress the jobs ratio imbalance?





## CHALLENGES WE FACE IN GENERATING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### Attracting Inward Investment

Inward investment, in the form of foreign firms, plays a significant role in the ongoing development of the economy of the GDA. Recent figures indicate that every County in the Dublin Region, with the exception of Wicklow, has experienced increases in employment in this sector. Wicklow's difficulty with regard to attracting inward investment is reflected in the fact that large portions of zoned employment land has remained undeveloped. This is notwithstanding the County's prime location, in proximity to Dublin.

#### Have Your Say...

- Q Why has zoned employment land remained undeveloped? How can we promote the development of these sites?
- Q Should the range of uses currently permitted in employment zonings be re-considered?

### Promoting Local Business

Local businesses which are involved in general industrial processes, such as carpentry, saw milling, recycling, panel beaters, car mechanics etc., can act as an important employment generator. Facilitating the expansion of these type of businesses, has however, proved problematic as this sector has been faced by challenges including the cost of zoned employment land, the re-development of many town centre industrial sites for residential use, and the difficulty in finding appropriate sites due to potential detrimental impacts on residential amenity in urban areas and environmental quality in rural areas.

#### Have Your Say...

- Q How can we facilitate the expansion of general and local business?

- Q What locations are most appropriate for the setting up of such businesses?
- Q What type of buildings does this type of business require?

### Agriculture and the Rural Economy

The percentage of persons employed in the agricultural sector has declined from 5.1% in 2002 to 4.68% in 2006. This trend suggests that additional part-time employment is necessary in many cases. Farm diversification or Alternative Farm Enterprises (AFE's) provide a role in enhancing farm incomes.

#### Have Your Say...

- Q What role can the Council take in promoting and diversifying the rural economy?
- Q What alternatives to farming should be allowed in rural areas?
- Q Is there a problem developing unused agricultural buildings?



# TOURISM

Tourism makes a positive contribution to the economic and social wellbeing of the County. Wicklow's tourist attractions are therefore important assets for the development of the County. They are fundamental to the enjoyment of the County by both visitors and residents.

## WICKLOW'S TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

- The Wicklow and Dublin mountains form one of the greatest mountain masses in Ireland, and comprise granite peaks, wide valleys, rivers and lakes e.g. Wicklow Mountains National Park, Blessington Lakes, Djouce Mountain, Avoca mines
- The coastline comprises long stretches of sandy beaches and dunes, e.g. Brittas Bay.
- Woodlands, e.g. Crone Woods, Devil's Glen
- Archaeological sites and protected monuments, e.g. Glendalough, Baltinglass Abbey
- Built Heritage - Manor homes and gardens, protected structures, heritage towns and attractive small villages, e.g. Powerscourt House, Avondale House, Avoca village, Aughrim village
- Adventure Centres and Amusement Parks

## CHALLENGES FACING TOURISM IN WICKLOW

### Encouraging Long Stay Visitors

Although the County is ideally located to benefit from tourists travelling out from Dublin, the majority of tourists are day-trippers, and as such the County does not benefit from revenue that could be generated from longer stay visitors. This has implications for the

County's hotel and bed and breakfast industry, which has experienced a downfall in business.

### Have Your Say...

- Q How can tourists be encouraged to stay in the County longer?
- Q What type of accommodation should be provided to facilitate tourism?

### Environmental Effects

Tourism, if incorrectly managed, can have a detrimental effect on the character, quality and amenity of the natural and built environment.

### Have Your Say...

- Q How can the correct balance be achieved in terms of exploiting the County's assets through the promotion of tourism activity, whilst protecting the natural and built environment of the County?

### Integrated Tourist and Recreation Complexes

There has been a growing trend to develop large integrated tourist and recreation complexes, which incorporate a variety of tourist, commercial, recreational and residential uses. Examples include Brooklodge Macreddin Village and Druids Glen Golf Complex. In addition, craft/artisan villages are gaining in popularity throughout the country, whereby a complex of artisan/craft workshops are developed, often on the sites of tourist attractions, with an accompanying pub or restaurant.

### Have Your Say...

- Q Should large scale integrated tourism complexes be encouraged or should the focus be put on encouraging smaller domestic/agricultural tourism projects?





- Q Will the development of integrated tourism complexes address the tourism deficiencies in the County?
- Q Are there any existing tourism locations that may be suitable for expansion or for the development of craft/artisan villages?

### Developing Untapped Potential

Although the potential of the County's obvious tourist attractions are realised, there may be some valuable resources that are not being utilised to their full potential. These may include the County's waterways, coastal areas, walking routes or mining heritage.

### Have Your Say...

- Q Are any of the County's resources being under-utilised in terms of realising the County's full tourism potential? How can the Council facilitate the development of these resources?
- Q Are ancillary facilities, i.e. information centres, signage, parking facilities etc. adequately addressing the needs of the tourist within our County?
- Q Is access to the County's 'amenity routes' adequate?

### Spreading the Benefits of Tourism

Although there is rich heritage in all parts of the County, the majority of visitors tend to frequent the attractions in the north and east, with the effect that other parts of the County do not benefit from the injection of infrastructure and resources which is needed to attract visitors.

### Have Your Say...

- Q How can the Council facilitate in directing tourists to the south and west of the County, so that the economic benefits of tourism are spread more evenly throughout the County?



# TRANSPORTATION

## SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Wicklow County Council is committed to ensuring that travel and transport trends become sustainable. This means:

- promoting integrated land-use and transportation policies, whereby there is a mix of uses in one area, so that people live, work and access facilities in the same area, in order to reduce the need to travel;
- promoting sustainable modes of transport, such as walking, cycling and public transport;
- providing integrated transport systems, so that the different transport modes complement each other through improved interfacing of infrastructure, services and information;
- improving connectivity between areas;
- promoting higher residential densities along public transport routes;
- ensuring the provision of a good quality and efficient road network that aims to achieve connectivity between areas and quick travel times;
- minimising the adverse impact of transport activities on the environment.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

A well-functioning public transport system is of critical importance in meeting the transport needs of the County. In this regard, a number of initiatives in public transport have been undertaken:

- LUAS Line B2: Luas Line B2 is the proposed extension of the Luas Green Line from Cherrywood to the Bray area.
- Greystones and Arklow (South East) Rail Corridor: The 'Strategic Rail Review' (Department of Transport, 2003) evaluated the

long term rail requirements of the County from a national perspective and has set out options for increasing capacity along this rail corridor.

- Rathnew Transport Interchange: It is an objective of the Council to develop a Transport Interchange at Rathnew, which is to accommodate the construction of a station or depot with waiting areas, park and ride facilities, additional parking for buses and bicycles, and taxi ranks.

## RURAL TRANSPORT INITIATIVE (RTI) - CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

Although travel from the County to Dublin is served relatively well, there is a lack of cross County links, which means that connectivity between the east and west of the County is poor. The RTI is an initiative aimed at people in rural areas where transport is not available, accessible or affordable to them locally. In Wicklow, the initiative has been successful in providing bus services which connects settlements in west and south Wicklow, such as Dunlavin, Rathdangan, Tinahely and Shillelagh with adjoining service centres.





## ROADS

- The road network must provide for the safe, efficient and cost effective movement of persons and goods by road. The Council is aiming to achieve a balance between road building, road improvement and facilitating the development of public transport. Investment in the County's roads is essential to improve accessibility and connectivity, to support competitiveness and balanced development across the County.
- The Council will continue to work closely with the National Roads Authority, which has responsibility for delivery of the national roads programme. Road improvement is undertaken within the framework of Transport 21 and the National Development Plan 2007-2013.
- Major future projects include the completion of the upgrading of the N11 from the Beehive to Arklow, the improvement of the N81 from Hollywood Cross to Tallaght, the Port Access and Town Relief Road in Wicklow town, Greystones Southern Access Route and the Blessington Town Centre Relief Road.

### Have Your Say...

- Q How can the new Plan facilitate better co-ordination between land use and transportation facilities?
- Q How can commuters be encouraged to walk, cycle and use public transport so as to reduce reliance on private cars?
- Q How can permeability in established residential areas be improved to encourage walking and cycling?
- Q What can be done to improve connectivity within the County?

# COMMUNITY, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Wicklow County Council recognises the need to develop strong, vibrant, sustainable and socially inclusive communities, whereby individuals have equal opportunity to citizenship rights, such as education, employment, health, housing, leisure and social services.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community facilities include community halls, sport and recreation facilities, safe walkways, local and community services, libraries, schools, playgrounds and crèches. It can also include post-offices, Garda stations, health centres etc.

### Have Your Say...

- Q Are there enough community facilities in your area?
- Q What community facilities are required for what types of areas (e.g. small villages, larger towns, rural areas)?
- Q In terms of new developments, as a standard, what community facilities should be provided?

## CHILDCARE

Increasing numbers of people in the workforce and changing lifestyles have increased the demand for childcare facilities in our communities. The County Development Plan will have regard to the Government's policy on childcare - 'Childcare Facilities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2001), which provides for an increase in the availability of childcare facilities, coupled with guidance on their location. To date, the majority of childcare facilities have been developed in urban areas, however there is still a shortfall in availability.

### Have Your Say...

- Q How can the Council facilitate the development of more childcare facilities?
- Q What locations are most appropriate for their development? Should they be permitted in rural areas?

## EDUCATION AND HEALTH FACILITIES

Future development pressures along with an increasing population means that there will be a need for an increased amount of good quality education and health facilities.

### Schools

The County Development Plan will create an overall strategy to provide for the County's future educational needs. In preparing the Strategy, the following questions are relevant:

### Have Your Say...

- Q Is there adequate provision of Primary and Secondary School facilities within the County to meet the needs of the current and future population?
- Q What settlements should be provided with a Primary and a Secondary school?
- Q What area of land is required to accommodate each type of new school (including recreation space)?

## Retirement/Nursing/Convalescent Homes

In light of Ireland's ageing population, there is a growing requirement to provide an increased amount of facilities which cater for the needs of older people.

### Have Your Say...

- Q What locations are most suitable for these facilities?
- Q What types of facilities are required, e.g. nursing homes, independent units, supervised units etc?



## SOCIAL INCLUSION

Social inclusion is about ensuring participation by all in our society, regardless of economic or social status. Wicklow County Council's Social Inclusion Unit strengthens the social inclusion agenda across the work of Wicklow Local Authorities.

### Have Your Say...

- Q Are the needs of everyone in your community being met? If not, tell us how the County Development Plan might address these needs?
- Q Are there other essential community facilities required for these groups?

## ACCESS AND DISABILITY

The new County Development Plan could play a crucial role in the promotion of social inclusion and universal accessibility by encouraging the creation (by means of good design) of a safe and barrier-free environment, which is easily negotiable by all members of society.

Part M of the Building Regulations provides for the needs of persons with disabilities. The Regulations have to be taken into consideration in the design of new and existing structures that allow public access, for example schools, libraries, shops etc. In the context of planned development, the needs of persons with disabilities relate in particular, to access, internal circulation, parking and sanitary facilities.

### Have Your Say...

- Q What policies and standards can be included in the next Plan to assist with the needs of people with disabilities?

## OPEN SPACE

- Open space is essential for active and passive recreation. In addition, it contributes to the character of towns, and provides valuable green areas for wildlife corridors and habitats. Use of land as open space is therefore no less important than other uses.
- Open space in residential schemes is provided as public space, generally in the form of parks / green areas; and private open space, generally in the form of gardens and balconies. The Development

Plan sets out standards for the provision of these spaces.

- Wicklow County Council has adopted an Active Open Space Policy, which requires that 2.4 hectares /6 acres of active open space must be provided for every 1000 population. This open space can be provided for outdoor sport and for play space.

### Have Your Say...

- Q In terms of the provision of parks and larger public open spaces, what deficiencies exist and where should new parks be located?
- Q Are current standards for public and private open space associated with residential schemes appropriate? What standards should be applied?
- Q Are there enough sport and recreation facilities in your area? What types of facilities are needed in your area?

## PLAY

The Council aims to create a child friendly environment through the provision of safe, attractive, accessible and enjoyable play areas that are available to all children. The provision of a child friendly environment will be promoted in accordance with the Wicklow County Play Policy.

### Have Your Say...

- Q Is the provision of play areas throughout the County adequate? What type of play facilities are needed in your area?

# HERITAGE

County Wicklow has a rich and diverse natural and built heritage, comprising archaeological objects, buildings of distinct architectural merit, inland waterways, landscapes, seascapes, geology, flora, fauna and wildlife habitats. This heritage provides the County with a resource of tremendous social, educational, recreational and aesthetic value. In economic terms, it is of fundamental importance to the maintenance and development of the County's tourism industry.

## RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES

Protected Structures are heritage structures of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest. The Council must preserve and protect structures included in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS). This includes protecting the character and setting of the protected structure itself through the control of alterations to it, and through the control of the design of adjacent buildings and surroundings.

### Have Your Say...

- Q Is there a need to review the RPS? Do all structures in the list merit protection?
- Q Is the RPS representative of the range of built heritage structures in the County?

## ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREAS

The Council can designate a place, area, group of structures or townscape, that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, or that contributes to the appreciation of a protected structure, as an Architectural Conservation Area (A.C.A.). A.C.A.'s have been established in the following towns: Enniskerry, Tinahely, Dunlavin, Rathdrum and Greystones/Delgany.

### Have Your Say...

- Q Are there any areas located within the County which you feel should be designated as A.C.A.'s?

## ARCHAEOLOGY

Wicklow has a rich and varied archaeological heritage. Whilst all archaeological monuments which are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places are protected by law under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004, it is also Council policy to protect archaeological heritage from damage.

### Have Your Say...

- Q How do we strike the right balance between protecting potential archaeology and the active use of agricultural land/ development of land?
- Q Do we want to promote greater access to archaeological sites? Which sites in particular would benefit from greater access?

## PROTECTION OF THE COUNTY'S TREES

The Council aims to protect trees, which are of conservation and amenity value. There are 46 trees or groups of trees with existing Tree Preservation Orders, and an additional 56 trees or groups of trees which are identified as worthy for preservation.

### Have Your Say...

- Q Should we remove or add any trees from the above mentioned lists in the CDP?
- Q Is the TPO mechanism an effective way to protect trees of amenity value?
- Q How do we achieve a balance between the appropriate protection of trees and factors such as their potential positioning in the line of major infrastructural projects, such as road or power line alignments, or public safety issues where trees are unsafe?



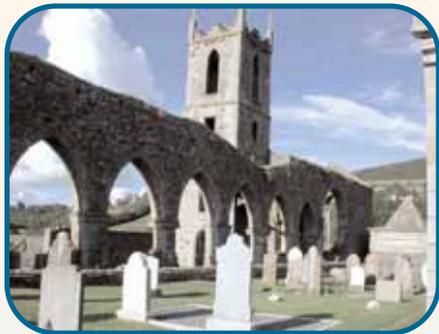


## VIEWS

Under the CDP, the Council preserves views and prospects that are of special amenity value. In cases where development potentially impacts on protected views and prospects, the current Plan requires a Visual Impact Assessment and mitigation measures.

### Have Your Say...

- Q Is there a need to review the existing list of views and prospects?
- Q How important is the preservation of views and prospects?
- Q How can the appropriate balance be achieved between protecting the County's special views, whilst enabling appropriate development?



## BIODIVERSITY

The Council is currently in the process of preparing the County's first Biodiversity Plan. This will spell out a range of measures for the conservation and enhancement of biological diversity in the County.

### Have Your Say...

- Q Does the existing CDP adequately protect biodiversity?
- Q What measures can be introduced for the enhancement of bio-diversity in large development proposals?



## LANDSCAPE CATEGORISATIONS

The current Plan categorises the County by 4 different landscape types: (i) Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, (ii) Special Amenity Zone, (iii) Rural Area Zone, and (iv) Access Corridors Zone.

### Have Your Say...

- Q Are you content with the existing landscape categories and if not, how should we categorise the different landscapes?
- Q What policies and objectives should be attached to the different landscapes?

# PUBLIC SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The CDP must facilitate the provision of necessary infrastructural services to support development, whilst also protecting the quality of the environment.

## DRINKING WATER AND WASTEWATER

County Wicklow has experienced very significant development pressures over the period of the current Plan. In particular, housing demand has placed serious strain on the capacity of existing water supply and waste treatment infrastructure. Future development is contingent on the provision of adequate water supply and sewage treatment facilities.

### Water Supply

Wicklow's water is sourced from a variety of means. In general, the north and east of the County is served by the Vartry Waterworks, (Roundwood), Blessington and environs will shortly be served by Ballymore Eustace Waterworks in Co. Kildare, and other areas are served by a variety of sources, including rivers and wells.

The water supply situation for the Greater Dublin Area is critical and will become even more so in the forthcoming period. It is expected that the provision of an adequate supply of water to the towns of Bray, Greystones, Kilcoole and Newtownmountkennedy will be particularly problematic in future years, as demand for water from the Vartry Reservoir in Roundwood increases. Other towns and villages will face similar problems, however the Council is pro-active in this matter and is currently investigating potential new water sources.

It should be noted that the curtailment of development may be unavoidable unless major new water sources becomes available.

### Water Conservation

Water conservation is critical to the sustainable use of our water resources. It is a practical, realistic and economic way of meeting much of the extra demand for water generated by the Dublin Region. In this regard, Wicklow County Council is involved in the Dublin Region Water Conservation Project, which is a venture which aims to reduce wastage of water.

### Water Quality

In recent years there have been concerns over the quality of drinking water. The Council, in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency, has been undertaking substantial work to improve the County's drinking water to ensure that it is clean and complies with the relevant quality standards.

### Wastewater

Major infrastructural projects that will cater for the future development of the County include the following:

- A new wastewater treatment plant at Shanganagh, Bray is expected to be operational within 2 years, with capacity for 60,000 people.
- A new wastewater treatment plant at the Murrough in Wicklow will cater for the towns of Ashford, Rathnew and Wicklow, and is to be completed by 2009, with capacity for 35,000 people.
- The Blessington plant has recently been upgraded to accommodate greater population.
- There are plans to provide additional/ expanded wastewater treatment plants at Greystones and Arklow.



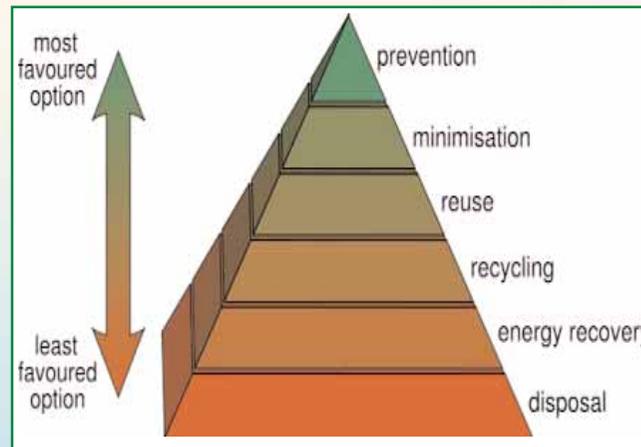


### Have Your Say...

- Q Considering that water is a scarce and valuable resource, what role can the planning process have in (i) protecting water supplies, i.e. wells, rivers, aquifers, (ii) improving the quality of drinking water, and (iii) reducing wastage?
- Q How can we ensure that we have enough water and sewerage facilities to provide for the County's growth (commercial development, housing, industry, farming), whilst also protecting the County's resources?

### WASTE MANAGEMENT

The County Wicklow Waste Management Plan for the period 2006-2011 sets out a strategy for the recovery, recycling and disposal of waste arising in County Wicklow. The Plan promotes a hierarchy of preferential modes of waste management such as, prevention, minimisation, reuse and recycling, disposal with energy recovery and disposal of residual waste.



Waste Management Hierarchy

### Recycling

The County is currently served by 5 Recycling Centres at Bray, Wicklow, Arklow, Avoca and Baltinglass. There are plans to develop additional facilities at Greystones and Blessington. There are currently 53 'bring centres', which are centres for recyclables which are available for public use.

### Landfill

The County has 2 landfill sites - one at Rampere, Baltinglass which has capacity for an additional 3 years, and the second, a Greenstar operated facility at Ballynagran, Wicklow, which has capacity for a further 12 years. In addition, there is a garden waste facility at Coolbeg.

### Have Your Say...

- Q What can the Council do to promote and facilitate recycling and the reduction of waste?
- Q How can the Council promote recycling in apartment schemes, where, having regard to the management of waste by management scheme companies, there is often a limited incentive for recycling of personal waste?
- Q How should we deal with waste that cannot be prevented, reused or recycled?
- Q Should additional landfill sites be opened?
- Q What other options should we consider for waste disposal, apart from landfill?
- Q How should we deal with the matter of construction and demolition waste?

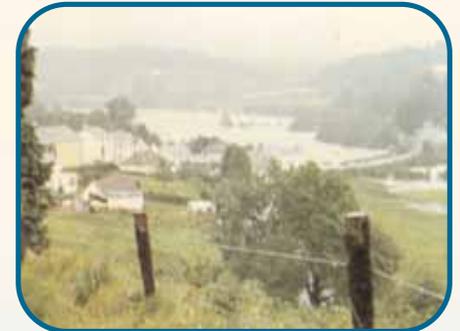
## FLOODING

In recent years, flood risk and flooding has become an issue of concern, particularly in low lying coastal areas and along rivers. The Government has recently published Draft Guidelines 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management' (2008) which will ensure that flood risk issues are properly integrated into the Development Plan preparation and adoption process. In addition, the Office of Public Works (OPW) has a role in identifying flood risk and formulating national policies.

Development itself can present adverse impacts on the extent and severity of flooding. For example, a development itself might be at direct risk of flooding or, development can increase the risk of runoff and can reduce the area of flood plains which may cause other areas to flood. This is an important planning issue which will inform land use decisions.

### Have Your Say...

- Q How do we reconcile pressure for development and flooding/surface water considerations?
- Q How should flood risk be addressed and what further mitigation measures need to be introduced to minimise potential flooding in the County?



# CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY



Climate change is among the greatest challenges of our time. It threatens not only our environment but also our economic activity and quality of life. In this respect, planning and development has an important role in meeting Ireland's emission target under the Kyoto Protocol, as detailed in the National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012.

## SUSTAINABLE AND ENERGY EFFICIENT BUILDING DESIGN

- In recent years there has been a strong push to promote sustainable building designs and materials that optimise the energy efficiency of buildings. Improvements in the design and construction of modern developments can, through the utilisation of available technologies, lead to significant energy savings. Appropriate design decisions in relation to layout, levels of insulation, amount and orientation of glazing, utilisation of solar energy heating systems and fuel type, construction materials and measures to limit the use of potable water can therefore contribute greatly towards ensuring sustainability.
- Recent changes to Part L of the Building Regulations will have the effect of making homes and buildings more energy efficient and save consumers money.

### Have Your Say...

- Q What policies and standards can be included in the next CDP to promote sustainable building designs in residential and non-residential developments?
- Q How do we promote the principles of energy efficiency for older buildings, including Protected Structures, while maintaining their integrity?



## Renewable Energy

- Renewable energy is becoming an increasingly important issue. Wind energy is one form of renewable energy which the County has the potential to develop. However site suitability is an important consideration in determining the location of wind farms, having regard to possible adverse impacts such as visual impacts, noise, shadow and habitat disturbance.
- In 2007 the Government introduced new Planning and Development Regulations (2007) which provide exemptions on the provision of certain small scale micro-renewable energy technologies, such as wind turbines and solar panels.

### Have Your Say...

- Q How best can alternative forms of energy be promoted and developed in County Wicklow?
- Q Should the Council permit the development of wind farms in the County? What areas of the County are suitable for wind farms and what areas are not?



Photographs courtesy of Wicklow Film Commission