CHAPTER 6 - CENTRES AND RETAILING

6.1 Introduction

While the 'Core Strategy' and 'Settlement Strategy' of this plan (as set out in Chapters 2 and 3) set out the role and function, and overall development vision for each settlement or groups of settlements, the purpose of this chapter is to set out the strategies and objectives with regard to settlement centres, that is, the core central area of each settlement, normally identified as either the 'town centre' or the 'primary area' in Local Area Plans, towns plans and settlement plans or the historical centres of smaller settlements and villages.

The County's settlements are the lifeblood of the County, meeting most of the employment, retail, cultural and social needs of all residents. Investment in settlements gives the highest return to society, as economies of scale can be achieved and the highest standards of environmental protection attained. Fundamental to the future success of settlements and their centres is the maintenance and enhancement of uses that bring people into the settlement to live, work, shop and interact. In particular, a healthy and vibrant retail sector is considered the key driving force behind the activity level in any settlement. A strong retail sector has the multiple benefits of drawing people into centres to interact with their community (thereby reducing social isolation), supporting local employment, and obviating the need for people to travel long distances for essential shopping needs, thereby reducing car dependency.

6.2 County Wicklow Retail Strategy

The retail strategy for County Wicklow sets out the overall strategy for the future development of retailing within the County for the plan period up to 2022, and is framed within the longer term context of the period up to 2031.

6.2.1 Context

Retail Planning Guidelines (DoECLG, 2012)

The strategy and policies for retailing set out in this plan have been prepared having regard to the guidance set out in the 'Retail Planning Guidelines for planning authorities' (DoECLG, 2012). This development plan addresses the list of matters to be considered in a plan, as required by 'Section 3.3 Development Plans and Retailing' of the Guidelines.

Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016

The Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016 provides guidance and policies for retail development at a strategic level in the Greater Dublin Area.

The strategy was adopted in July 2008 and is now outdated as it does not account for the significant economic, demographic and policy changes experienced in the GDA since its adoption. Notwithstanding this, the core principles of the strategy remain of relevance. The strategy and policies for retailing as set out in this plan are in accordance with the core principles of the GDA Retail Strategy.

At the core of the Strategy is the retail hierarchy for the GDA, which is set out on Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1 Retail Hierarchy for the GDA (Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016)

Level 1	**METROPOLITAN CENTRE**
	Dublin City Centre
Level 2	**MAJOR TOWN CENTRES & COUNTY TOWN CENTRES**
	Fingal: Swords, Blanchardstown
	South Dublin: Tallaght, Liffey Valley
	Dun Laoghaire Rathdown: Dun Laoghaire, Dundrum
	Wicklow: **Bray, Wicklow**
	Meath: Navan
	Kildare: Naas / Newbridge, Leixlip (including Collinstown)
Level 3	**TOWN AND/OR DISTRICT CENTRES & SUB COUNTY TOWN CENTRES**
	Dublin City: Finglas, Northside Shopping Centre, Ballyfermot, Rathmines, Crumlin Shopping Centre, Donaghmede Shopping Centre, Omni, Ballymun, Point Village and Poolbeg
	Fingal: Malahide, Balbriggan, Skerries, Charlestown.
	South Dublin: Adamstown, Crumlin (Ashleaf), Clonburris/Balgaddy, Clondalkin, Fortunestown, Kilnamanagh, Lucan, Rathfarnham
	Dun Laoghaire Rathdown: Stillorgan, Blackrock, Cornelscourt, Nutgrove, Cherrywood.
	Wicklow: **Greystones, Arklow, Blessington, Baltinglass**
	Meath: Dunboyne, Ashbourne, Dunshaughlin, Kells, Trim, Laytown/Bettystown, Enfield.
	Kildare: Celbridge, Kilcock, Maynooth, Kilcullen, Athy, Kildare, Monasterevin, Clane.
Level 4	**NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES, LOCAL CENTRES – SMALL TOWNS & VILLAGES**
Level 5	**CORNER SHOPS / SMALL VILLAGES**

Specific policy objectives for Wicklow are as follows:

- To promote the development of strong, high quality expanded comparison floorspace in the metropolitan and major town centres, to address the high levels of leakage of retail expenditure from these centres and radically reduce the quantity and length of private car journeys for retail purposes.
- To support the development of strong, expanded retail provision within Wicklow County so that the quality and range of retail comparison, bulky goods and convenience shopping are developed and expanded to facilitate an active competitive and sustainable retail market in the County.
- To promote and encourage major enhancement and expansion of retail floorspace and town centre activities including linked leisure and other commercial activity within Bray town centre to sustain its competitiveness as a major town centre.
- To facilitate and encourage the major expansion of Wicklow town centre retail provision and quality and to enhance its role and importance as a County town centre in the GDA to meet the needs of both the town population and surrounding rural districts.
- To facilitate and encourage the consolidation and improvement of retailing and other town centre activities of the Level 3 centres of Arklow and Greystones and to ensure that there is an equitable, efficient, competitive and sustainable distribution of retail floorspace in the towns.
- To consolidate the retail status of Blessington and Baltinglass to ensure they can adapt to continue to service their extensive rural hinterlands.

The GDA Retail Strategy includes retail floorspace allocations which are now outdated. Wicklow County Planning Authority has undertaken an updated assessment of projected floorspace requirements up to 2031, which will inform the strategy for the County.

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES)

The forthcoming RSES for the Eastern and Midlands Region is likely to be produced in 2017-2018, and this will address the retail strategy for the region. The County Wicklow Retail Strategy will be updated if required by way of variation when the RSES is finalised.

6.2.2 Strategic Vision and Objectives

It is the **strategic vision** that every resident, visitor and worker within County Wicklow shall have access to a range of quality retail goods within County Wicklow, and that these goods shall be provided within town and village centre areas that are vibrant places to be in and viable places to do business.

This vision shall be realised through the implementation of the following **key strategic objectives**:

- To expand the level of convenience floorspace within the County, to meet the convenience shopping needs of existing and future residents up to 2031;
- to reduce leakage of expenditure from County Wicklow to other counties, through a significant expansion in the amount and range of comparison floorspace within the County, which will provide for a significant amount of the comparison shopping needs of existing and future residents up to 2031;
- to enable each centre to perform in accordance with its role and function as identified in the Retail Hierarchy and to allow a healthy level of competition between centres whilst ensuring that the role and function of each centre is not undermined;
- to promote and encourage the major enhancement of retail floorspace, primarily comparison goods and town centre functions in Bray, to sustain its competitiveness and importance as a Consolidation Town within the GDA;
- to promote the expansion of retail floorspace first and foremost within the core retail areas / existing town and village centre areas and thereafter in accordance with the sequential approach to retail development;
- to ensure that town and village centres are attractive places to live in, to work in and to visit, easy to get to, easy to walk and cycle within and are competitive places to conduct business; and
- to promote a high quality of design in all centres.

6.2.3 County Wicklow Retail Hierarchy

The retail hierarchy for County Wicklow is set out in Table 6.2. This hierarchy is based on the role and function of settlements as set out in the Wicklow County Settlement Hierarchy and the GDA Retail Strategy 2008-2016.

Table 6.2 County Wicklow Retail Hierarchy

LEVEL 1	METROPOLITAN AREA	HINTERLAND AREA
LEVEL 2	**MAJOR TOWN CENTRES**	**COUNTY TOWN CENTRES**
	Bray	Wicklow
LEVEL 3	**TOWN / DISTRICT CENTRES**	**SUB COUNTY TOWN CENTRES**
	Greystones	**Tier 1 Towns serving a wide district:** Arklow, Blessington, Baltinglass, Rathdrum **Tier 2 Towns serving the immediate district:** Newtownmountkennedy
LEVEL 4	**NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES**	**LOCAL CENTRES – SMALL TOWNS**
	Bray area: Boghall Road / Ballywaltrim, Vevay, Dargle Rd, Dublin Road / Little Bray, Albert Road & Walk, Fassaroe, Southern Cross Road **Greystones area:** Blacklion, Bellevue Road, Mill Road, Charlesland, Delgany **Wicklow area**: Broomhall, Rocky Road/Town Relief Junction **Arklow area**: Kilbride (AA3), Tinahask (AA2) The designation of neighbourhood centres within other towns is a matter for the relevant local plan.	Ashford, Aughrim, Avoca, Carnew, Donard, Dunlavin, Enniskerry, Kilcoole, Kilmacanogue, Newcastle, Rathnew, Roundwood, Shillelagh, Tinahely
LEVEL 5	**CORNER SHOPS/SMALL LOCAL CENTRE**	**VILLAGES**
	The identification of corner shops / small local centres is a matter for the relevant local plan.	Barndarrig, Ballinaclash, Coolboy, Glenealy, Hollywood, Kilpedder / Willowgrove, Kiltegan, Knockananna, Laragh, Manor Kilbride, Redcross, Stratford-on-Slaney

6.2.4 Assessment of the Requirement for Additional Retail Floorspace

An assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace in County Wicklow up to 2031 has been undertaken (based on baseline data on the amount of retail floorspace within the County, gathered in 2014). A summary of this assessment is set out in the following table. The assessment is based on a number of background assumptions. In considering the table, particular regard should be paid to the fact that the figures aim to give ***broad guidance*** and should not be treated in an ***overly prescriptive*** manner.

The allocations are inclusive of 'in the pipeline' floorspace, i.e. floorspace which has already been permitted in the County but not constructed at the time of the preparation of the strategy. A number of these permitted schemes are significant and if implemented, would take a significant proportion of floorspace allocations. A pragmatic approach must be taken to such extant permissions and it should be recognised that any implementation of such permissions could be altered from that originally approved. There is no guarantee that any retail projects already/previously granted will be granted again. A case by case consideration of the relevant pipeline floorspace will be necessary in considering any significant retail development. The key consideration in assessing future planning applications is the location of the proposed retail floorspace. The appropriate redevelopment and revitalization of town centre lands will continue to be promoted as a priority.

Table 6.3 Indicative additional retail floorspace requirements up to 2031

TOWN	Total convenience net m^2	Total comparison net m^2
Bray	7,000	30,000-35,000
Bray-Fassaroe	2,500	1,000
Wicklow-Rathnew	5,000	12,000-17,000
Greystones	2,000	7,000-10,000
Arklow	2,000	4,000-5,000
Blessington	2,000	1,500-2,000
Baltinglass	1,500	1,500-2,000
Newtownmountkennedy	1,500	1,500-2,000
Rathdrum	1,500	1,500-2,000
Total	**25,000**	**60,000-76,000**
Level 4 centres outside of towns listed above	**4,000**	**3,000**
Total	**29,000**	**63,000-79,000**

6.2.5 Retail Formats

Table 6.4 below outlines the retail formats expected in each level of the hierarchy, which gives guidance on the scale and levels of retail provision within each level.

Table 6.4 Retail formats for hierarchy levels (Retail Strategy for the GDA 2008-2016)

	HIGHER ORDER COMPARISON	MIDDLE ORDER COMPARISON	LOWER ORDER COMPARISON	SUPER-STORE	SUPER-MARKET
METROPOLITAN CENTRE	√	√	√	√	√
MAJOR TOWN CENTRES & COUNTY TOWN CENTRES	√	√	√	√	√
TOWN & SUB COUNTY TOWN CENTRES		√	√	√	√
LOCAL CENTRES – SMALL TOWNS & VILLAGES			√		√

6.2.6 Strategy for the County's Centres

The Planning Authority will aim to implement the following strategy for centres across the County. It should be noted that the following strategies only identify the key priorities for future change. There may be other priorities that apply generally to all forms of development within all centres, e.g. application of sequential approach, promotion of sustainable transportation and land use patterns, good design etc. The following strategies will not include a repetition of these general priorities, but will aim to particularly emphasise the key functions and priorities for the main centres of the County.

The core retail area of each of the Level 2 and 3 centres are set out in Maps 06.01 at the end of this chapter.

The identification of opportunity sites will be a matter for consideration during the process of preparing local area/town/settlement plans.

Strategy for Level 2 – Major Town Centres

BRAY

Role and function, including key priorities for change:

It is the vision that Bray will become a major destination for shopping and in particular for medium and higher quality comparison goods. Shoppers within the town shall have access to a range of quality leisure and cultural activities provided within the core retail area. This centre should provide a full range of all types of retail services from newsagents to specialist shops and boutiques, department stores, foodstores of all types, shopping centres and a high level of mixed uses including the arts and culture, to create a vibrant, living place. The centre should be well connected and served by high quality public transport.

This centre provides for the 'big shop' convenience needs of its residents and other settlements in the vicinity including Kilmacanogue, Enniskerry and Shankill. The centre has the opportunity to provide for the comparison shopping needs of a much wider catchment beyond its more immediate environs, particularly extending south and north to other settlements along the N11.

Having regard to the above, it is the priority of the Planning Authority to:

- promote and encourage the major enhancement of retail floorspace, primarily comparison goods and town centre functions in Bray to sustain its competitiveness and importance as a Consolidation Town and leisure destination within the GDA;
- facilitate the significant expansion in the amount and range of comparison floorspace, particularly floorspace for middle and higher order comparison goods;
- to facilitate the delivery of a large scale retail development within the core retail area on the Florentine Development site;
- to facilitate the delivery of a large scale retail development on the former Golf Club Lands; and
- to facilitate the extension of the LUAS to Bray.

Bray seafront area shall be a vibrant and attractive seafront area, which functions as the primary tourist, recreational and leisure centre of the town. It is a priority to rejuvenate the seafront area through the expansion of retail and non-retail services, particularly targeted at the visitor market and tourism products. The town centre is located some distance from the seafront area and does not benefit from spin-off associated with the uptake of leisure activities on the seafront. Taking account of this, it is of major importance that the centre carves out a significant role for itself in the provision of quality shopping facilities which act as a draw for people into the centre.

Bray is well connected by a high quality public transport system, centred at the Bray DART Station. The town suffers severe traffic congestion at times. While improvements have been made to make the central area more pedestrian friendly, the town could benefit from further improvements. It is a priority of the Planning Authority to facilitate development that contributes to the improvement of the overall appearance of the area around Bray Railway Station, to increase the density and mix of uses in this area and to provide clear pedestrian/cyclist links between this area and the town centre and seafront area. This area is the gateway and transportation hub of this major town and the general appearance, aesthetic appeal and range of uses promoted in this area should be reflective of this significant role.

The quality of shopfronts within Bray Main Street and surrounding side streets is relatively poor. In addition, some parts of the centre have suffered from high degrees of vacancy. It is a priority of the Planning Authority to facilitate development that would contribute to the improvement of the overall appearance and aesthetic appeal of the streetscape, including for example shopfront improvements, regeneration of vacant sites and public realm improvement schemes.

Within the expansion area of Fassaroe, the Planning Authority will facilitate the provision for the development of appropriately scaled retail provision, which provides for the immediate needs of residents and employees of the area but does not undermine the role of Bray town centre as the principal shopping destination in the settlement.

The Planning Authority will allow for the development of a new appropriately scaled neighbourhood centre on the Southern Cross Road, to provide for the day to day needs of residents and employees of the area but does not undermine the role of Bray town centre as the principal shopping destination.

Indicative additional floorspace allocations (net m²):

Bray: Convenience 7,000m², Comparison 30,000-35,000m²
Fassaroe: Convenience 2,500m², Comparison 1,000m²

The RPG Retail Guidelines indicate that well established centres with population catchments in excess of 60,000 people would be expected to have a volume of retail floorspace in excess of 40,000m². Bray currently has approximately 35,000m² of net retail space (including vacant units). While the level of additional floorspace allocated to Bray is significant, Bray is better positioned to expand its comparison retail offer than a number of settlements lower down in the hierarchy and is the Metropolitan Consolidation Town in the County and therefore it is considered appropriate to allow for substantial growth. The above allocation aims to expand the volume of retail floorspace to c. 77,000m². This is reasonable, having regard to the size of other level 2 centres, e.g. Dundrum c. 82,000m², Blanchardstown c.78,000m²

The following large scale developments received planning permission but have not commenced at the time of drafting this strategy:

- c. 39,000m² net on former Golf Club Lands;
- c. 6,000m² net on the Florentine site;
- c. 3,500m² net convenience and c. 550m² net comparison at the Southern Cross NS1 site;
- c. 500m² net increase at Tesco, Vevay Road

Bray Environs LAP indicates that Fassaroe (population target c. 7,000) should have a role of a District Centre and gives an indicative figure for retail floorspace of 4,000m² gross, to be divided equally between convenience and comparison/retail services use. The RPG Retail Guidelines indicate that a District Centre is a Level 3 centre with a population catchment of c.5,000-15,000 people. While the target population of Fassaroe is akin to a Level 3 centre, it is envisaged that Fassaroe will provide the function more akin to a Level 4 Neighbourhood Centre. This is in order to ensure that the area does not undermine the role of Bray town centre as the principal shopping destination in the settlement.

WICKLOW TOWN

Role and function, including key priorities for change:

Having regard to the role and function of Wicklow as a 'Large Growth Town I' under the Core Strategy and to the significant population expansion planned for the future, there is a need for significant enhancement and expansion of retail floorspace and town centre activities to provide for the needs of the substantial resident and working population of the centre.

Wicklow Town provides for the 'big shop' convenience and comparison needs of a wide catchment including Rathnew, Ashford, Glenealy, Roundwood, Rathdrum and a significant rural population. This centre should provide a full range of all types of retail services from newsagents to specialist shops and boutiques, department stores, foodstores of all types, shopping centres and high level of mixed uses including the arts and culture to create a vibrant, living place.

While the town is located along the train route and benefits from a bus service, generally speaking, most trips to the town are made by car, with the exception of local residents within walking distance. Notwithstanding this, traffic congestion is not a significant issue and there is good provision of public parking facilities. In addition, the town is a relatively comfortable centre to walk around and benefits from a large number of pedestrian crossings. That said, it is a priority of the Council to facilitate improvements in public transport infrastructure.

The town centre has a strong, defined and attractive streetscape of heritage value. It is a priority to further improve the quality of the streetscape to ensure that it is sustained as an attractive centre.

It is an objective of the Planning Authority to develop the retail role of Rathnew at a 'local centre' scale, commensurate with its local catchment and its development as an employment and education hub (having regard to its role vis-à-vis Clermont Campus).

Indicative additional floorspace allocations (net m^2):

Convenience 5000m^2, Comparison 12,000-17,000m^2 (including Rathnew)

Wicklow-Rathnew currently has approximately 9,000m^2 of net retail space (including vacant units). The above allocation aims to expand the volume of retail floorspace to c. 31,000m^2. This is considered appropriate, having regard to the targeted population of the town's catchment and its position within the retail hierarchy.

The following large scale development has received planning permission but has not commenced at the time of drafting this strategy: c. 13,000 gross for retail warehousing floor space on Marlton Road (Lusra Teoranta).

There is a notable absence of retail warehousing in Wicklow town. The residual growth allowed after accounting for the Lusra Teoranta development will be reserved for non bulky good floorspace in the centre or edge of core retail areas. In the event of the delivery of the Lusra Teoranta retail warehousing development within the plan period, no further significant retail warehousing permission will be granted other than: (i) conversion of non-retail premises in the core area to retail warehousing use, (ii) renovation and expansion of existing retail warehouse premises in the core retail area, (iii) redevelopment of derelict or brownfield sites in the core, and (iv) replacement of existing facilities within the town.

Strategy for Level 3 Centres

These centres will vary both in the scale of provision and the size of catchment, due to proximity to a Major or County Town Centre, i.e. Bray/Wicklow. Generally where the centre has a large catchment (e.g. market town in a rural area) and is not close to a larger centre, there will be a good range of comparison shopping, though no large department stores or centres, with a mix of retail types benefiting from lower rents away from larger urban sites, leisure / cultural facilities and a range of cafes and restaurants. At least one supermarket and smaller scale department store are required to meet local needs. It would be expected that financial and other services (banks and building societies) would be located alongside other retail services creating an active and busy centre. They should have high quality access from public transport where the centres are within the built up area; and also strong links to the built fabric so that walking and cycling to the centre from the immediate catchment is an attractive option. Where the centre is close to an existing major centre (as is the case with Greystones), the scale of retail and mixed provision is lower, with the town / centre range of shops meeting more basic day to day needs and only small scale range of comparison units trading.

Such towns / centres would generally range in size from 10-25,000sqm of lettable retail space catering for a population of 10,000- 40,000.

This level is broken into two tiers for the purpose of this strategy, as the five towns in this level are not uniform in their size or function, but yet all are appropriately located in Level 3. Arklow, Blessington, Baltinglass and Rathdrum, while being very different in size, are all similar in the sense that they serve a wide catchment and are sufficiently distant from Bray or Wicklow town, so as to make them the principal shopping destination in their areas. These towns are somewhat different from Greystones and Newtownmountkennedy, which are both within reasonable distance of Bray and which serve more localised catchments, but due to their planned growth, require a high level of retail provision.

ARKLOW

Arklow is the main centre located in the south of the County, removed from other large centres. The centre provides for the service needs of its residents and a large geographical catchment extending to Avoca, Aughrim, Redcross, a significant rural population, and to some extent to Tinahely/Shillelagh/Carnew area (although some expenditure is lost from these centres to Gorey and Carlow). It is the vision that Arklow will be the principal shopping and service destination for this wide catchment area. This traditional status as a strong market town has been reinforced by the development of the Bridgewater Centre. Under the 'Retail Planning Guidelines for planning authorities' (DECLG, 2012), Arklow is identified amongst the sub-regional settlements which perform important sub-regional retailing functions including the major national retailing chains.

It is a priority of the Planning Authority to facilitate new mixed use/retail developments particularly within the 'old' town centre / traditional Main Street area, which has suffered decline since the development of the Bridgewater Centre and concentration of convenience based supermarkets on the Wexford Road. The regeneration of vacant town centre sites is likely to improve the vitality and viability of the traditional town centre. In particular, the regeneration of the 'Alps' site and the strip including 'Kitty's Pub', 'Morgan Doyle' and 'Marine Hotel' sites, provide particular opportunity to improve the vitality of the main street.

Indicative additional floorspace allocations (net m^2):

Convenience 2,000m^2, Comparison 4,000-5,000m^2

The allocation of comparison floorspace reflects the fact that the town is relatively well provided for with c. 19,000m^2 of existing comparison space.

Arklow currently has approximately 32,000m^2 of net retail space (including vacant units). In the context of the current level of provision, the above allocations are relatively conservative and would expand the volume of retail floorspace to c. 40,000m^2. This level of allocation is reasonable having regard to its role and function within the County including high level of planned population growth.

GREYSTONES

Due to its proximity to the major town of Bray, the current scale of comparison retail provision is relatively low, with the town centre range of shops meeting more basic day to day needs and only a small scale range of comparison units trading. The catchment of Greystones extends to Kilcoole, Newcastle and Newtownmountkennedy. While there is scope for expansion of comparison space into the future, the level of provision should be mainly for more local needs, in order to ensure that the roles of Bray or Wicklow as Level 2 centres are not compromised. Due to its proximity to Bray, the scale of retail and mixed provision is likely to be lower than other Level 3 towns, for example Arklow.

There is particular scope for the centre to provide services for residents and visitors that tap into the leisure and recreation market, based on its coastal location and facilities including the harbour, beaches, coastal paths such as Cliff Walk and complementary service outlets including shops, restaurants, coffee shops etc.

The opportunity exists to expand retail uses onto lands earmarked for development in the South Beach Action Plan (Greystones-Delgany and Kilcoole LAP 2013-2019).

Indicative additional floorspace allocations (net m^2):

Convenience 2,000m^2, Comparison 7,000-10,000m^2

Greystones-Delgany currently has approximately 13,000m^2 of net retail space (including vacant units). The level allocated to this centre would expand the volume of floorspace to c. 25,000m^2 which is in accordance with the range identified in the Guidelines for Level 3 centres.

The following large scale developments have received planning permission but have not commenced at the time of drafting this strategy:

- c. 6,000m^2 commercial space at Harbour and Marina development, of which c. 2,000m^2 is earmarked for retail use
- c. 700m^2 comparison and c.700m^2 convenience space, Tesco, Bellevue Road
- Victoria Road up to c.1,000m^2
- c. 4,500m^2 net retail warehousing at Charlesland.

Given that c. 4,500sqm net retail warehousing at Charlesland has received planning permission, no further retail warehousing floor area shall be allowed in the Greystones town area.

BLESSINGTON

This town provides retail services to a wide rural catchment. The town is relatively well served by convenience shops including Supervalu, Aldi and Dunnes Stores. The comparison offer is more limited and provided by small independent shops on the Main Street, a small number of new shops in the new town centre development and the comparison element of the Dunnes unit. It is the vision that Blessington will be the principal shopping and service destination for its wide catchment area.

Indicative additional floorspace allocations (net m^2):

Convenience 2,000m^2, Comparison 4,000-5,000m^2

Blessington currently has approximately 7,000m^2 of net retail space (including vacant units). The above allocation aims to expand the volume of retail floorspace to c. 14,000m^2, which is reasonable having regard to its role, position within the retail hierarchy and planned population.

BALTINGLASS

Baltinglass is a strong rural market town with a large rural hinterland. It is the vision that Baltinglass will be the principal shopping and service destination for this wide catchment area.

There are a number of convenience shops in Baltinglass and a quite a significant number of comparison shops in the core town centre, giving the town a good retail offer.

Indicative additional floorspace allocations (net m^2):

Convenience 1,500^2, Comparison 1,500 -2,000m^2

RATHDRUM

Being located some distance from Wicklow and Arklow, Rathdrum provides for a relatively wide rural catchment. The town requires a relatively high level of retail provision to meet the needs of this rural population in addition to the needs of the current and future local population.

To provide for the growing population of Rathdrum additional retail facilities have to be provided. Both the offer of convenience and comparison goods has to be improved.

Indicative additional floorspace allocations (net m^2):

Convenience 1,500^2, Comparison 1,500 -2,000m^2

The following large scale development has received planning permission but has not commenced at the time of drafting this strategy: c. 2,900m^2 mixed use development at Market Square, Main Street.

NEWTOWNMOUNTKENNEDY

Having regard to its location within reasonable distance to Bray, Wicklow and Greystones, it is envisaged that Newtownmountkennedy will provide for a more localised catchment, but due to the level of planned population growth into the future, still requires a relatively high level of retail provision.

Indicative additional floorspace allocations (net m²):

Convenience 1,500², Comparison 1,500 -2,000m²

Strategy for Level 4 – Neighbourhood Centres and Small Towns

A neighbourhood centre comprises a small group of shops, typically comprising newsagent, small supermarket / general grocery store, sub-post office and other small shops of a local nature serving a small, localised catchment population. The function of a Neighbourhood Centre is to provide a range of convenient and easily accessible retail outlets and services within walking distance for the local catchment population. Neighbourhood centres generally only occur in the larger settlements of the County, e.g. Bray, Wicklow, Arklow and Greystones, at a location within the settlement boundary but remote from the core retail area.

While the GDA Retail Strategy generally considers that these centres will normally provide for one supermarket ranging in size from 1,000-2,500sqm with a limited range of supporting shops (one or two low range clothes shops with grocery, chemist etc.) and retail services (hairdressers, dry cleaners, DVD rental), cafes and possibly other services such as post offices, community facilities or health clinics, it is considered necessary to make a distinction in Wicklow between the type and quantum of retail envisaged in neighbourhood centres in the larger settlements and that envisaged for small towns.

Firstly, what are designated as Neighbourhood Centres in Greystones and Bray include established full-scale supermarkets at Bellevue Road and Vevay Road respectively. In addition there are smaller supermarkets at Blacklion, Mill Road and Charlesland in the 800m² to 1,200m² range. The Bray Town Development Plan has designated land for a 2,500m² supermarket at the Southern Cross Route in its last two plans, and planning permission has been granted for this, as well as a discount store at this site. So while such sites seem larger than neighbourhood centres, they do not fit into the definition of District Centres (the next category in the hierarchy), which are defined in the Retail Planning Guidelines as 10,000m² or 20,000m² in the Dublin Metropolitan Area. So in a limited number of sub town core sites in Bray, Greystones, Arklow and Wicklow-Rathnew (particularly in Rathnew), larger foodstores will be permitted, based on their historic use, and the need to service considerable tranches of new housing. The scale of the convenience outlet will be dictated by the overall size of the town, the catchment of the neighbourhood centre and its distance to the town core.

Lands identified for new neighbourhood centres will generally be identified in local plans which may include policies on the scale and nature of floorspace to be provided. New/expanded neighbourhood centres shall generally only be considered where the following requirements are satisfied:

- the scale of development allowed within a neighbourhood centres should not undermine the retail hierarchy and the designated role of town centres as the principal shopping areas.
- the location of the development is sufficiently separated from the core retail area of the settlement as to warrant new retail facilities;
- the scale of the existing/new residential development is such to sustain a neighbourhood centre;
- the range of retail and non-retail services to be provided is appropriate to the needs of the area; and
- all efforts have been made to integrate the neighbourhood centre with any existing / new community facilities due to be provided as part of the scheme e.g. schools, childcare facilities, sports fields etc.

The retail provision in small towns would be expected to be more extensive, including one supermarket / two medium sized convenience stores (up to 1,000sqm aggregate) and perhaps 10-20 smaller shops. These towns can be expected to provide a similar function in terms of providing for the day to day shopping and service needs of the local population. Small towns should be the main service centre in the rural area, providing a range of facilities, shops and services, at a scale appropriate to the needs and size of their catchment. Encouragement shall be given to uses which support the community and help solidify the role of the centre as an important local centre such as medical clinics, social services, pharmacies, cafes and post offices. They should where possible provide a focus for economic development and rural-based industries, including markets for locally-produced food and other products.

Strategy for Level 5 – Corner Shops/ Small Shops/ Small Local Centres/ Small Villages

These centres will normally serve only an immediate catchment. These shops meet the basic day to day needs of surrounding residents, whether as rural foci points close to other community facilities such as the local primary schools, post office and GAA club or as a terrace of shops within a suburb.

Expected are one or two small convenience stores, newsagents, and potentially other tertiary services such as butcher/vegetable shops with a public house, hairdressers and other similar basic retail services; with the retail element in total ranging approximately from 500sqm – 1,500sqm of lettable space.

Within urban areas these centres vary in scale from one corner shop to small local centres that provide a small number of retail/retail service units. The size of units within small local centres shall generally be limited to a maximum of c.150m^2 gross floor area.

These centres are not appropriate for the provision of a supermarket.

6.3 Objectives for Centres and Retail

Centres – General

RT1 To ensure the continued vibrancy and life of centres, to direct new development and investment into towns and villages in the first instance and to particularly prioritise actions that enhance business, retail, leisure, entertainment and cultural uses, as well as making town and villages centres an attractive place to live.

RT2 To improve the 'public realm' of centres through the encouragement of high quality civic design, including but not limited to the provision of attractive street paving, furniture, lighting and seating etc.

RT3 To facilitate measures to improve the accessibility of centres by developing a pedestrian and cyclist friendly environment, which improves safety and limits traffic congestion where possible. It is the objective of the Council to promote accessibility to public transport. Development with a high potential for public transport utilisation by employees and visitors should be sited with ease of access to public transport facilities.

Retail – General

RT4 To promote and facilitate the development of retail developments in a sustainable manner. Retail related development shall be located on suitably zoned land within settlement boundaries. There shall be a general presumption against the development of retail uses within the rural area, except as otherwise provided for by a particular objective of this plan.

RT5 To ensure that all retail development is generally in accordance with the Wicklow County Retail Strategy for the period up to 2022 and beyond to 2031. All development proposals shall be assessed having regard to the Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016.

RT6 To assess all planning applications having regard to the 'Retail Planning Authorities for Planning Authorities' (DoECLG, 2012), unless otherwise stated herewith.

RT7 To permit the nature and scale of retail development appropriate to enable each centre to perform its role and function as defined within the County Retail Strategy. The nature and scale of a development proposed (either by themselves or cumulatively in conjunction with other developments) in a centre shall not compromise the role or function of any other centre within the hierarchy, in particular the role and function of a centre that is of a higher level in the hierarchy above that which is being considered.

RT8 Regard shall be taken of the indicative floorspace need set out in Table 6.3 in the assessment of new retail applications in Levels 2 and 3 of the retail hierarchy. No single application shall be allowed to absorb more than 75% of the indicative allocation for that settlement.

RT9 To require the submission of a Retail Impact Assessment and Traffic and Transport Assessment in any circumstance where the information is required to enable the proper assessment of a development proposal vis-à-vis the objectives of the development plan. In particular, these assessments are likely to be required for significant retail development which, due to their nature, scale and location, may impact on the vitality and viability of centres.
Retail Impact Assessments / Traffic and Transport Assessments shall be in accordance with the requirements set out in the Retail Planning Guidelines, 2012 and relevant Traffic Management Guidelines[1].

Retail – Town Centres

RT10 To vigorously protect and promote the vitality and viability of town centres. Development proposals not according with the fundamental objective to support the vitality and viability of town centre sites must demonstrate compliance with the 'sequential approach' before they can be approved. The 'sequential approach' shall be applied and assessed in accordance with the 'Retail Planning Guidelines, (DoECLG, 2012)'[2]. The Planning Authority will discourage new retail development if they would either by themselves or cumulatively in conjunction with other developments seriously damage the vitality and viability of existing retail centres within the County.
In the application of the 'sequential approach' due regard shall be paid to RT11 below which prioritises the 'core retail area' for new retail development.

RT11 To promote developments which reinforce the role and function of the 'core retail area' as the prime shopping area of town centres. The 'core retail area' shall be promoted as the area of first priority for new retail development. In settlements where no 'core retail area' is defined, regard shall be paid to the designated 'town centre' area, the location of the traditional/historical centre and the location of other retail units. Where an application is made for a new development with street frontage either in the defined retail core of a larger settlement or on the 'main street' of a smaller town, retail or commercial use will normally be required at street level.

[1] Traffic Management Guidelines (DECLG, DoELG, DoT and DTO, 2003); Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines (National Roads Authority, 2007); Planning Guidelines on Spatial Planning and National Roads (DECLG, 2012)

[2] In short, the order of priority for the sequential approach is to locate retail development in the city/town centre and only to allow retail development in edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations where all other options have been exhausted. Refer to guidelines for full description.

RT12 New retail developments in town centres will be required to provide proximate and easily accessible car and cycle parking or to make a financial contribution towards car parking where it has been or will be provided by the Local Authority.

Retail – Uses

RT13 To promote the revitalisation of vacant / derelict properties / shop units. Where no viable retail use can be sustained, alternative uses will be assessed on their own merits against the requirements of the proper planning and sustainable development of the areas within which they are located.
This objective will be used to ensure that all proposals for the reuse of existing retail floorspace can be evaluated against the proportion of overall vacancy and to reduce the possibility of dereliction.

RT14 To control the provision of non retail uses at ground floor level in the principal shopping streets of centres, in order to protect the retail viability of centres and to maintain the visual character of streets.
This objective aims to prevent the proliferation of 'dead frontages' on key streets. In particular, active use of corner sites, particularly within larger centres, is considered pivotal in creating a sense of vibrancy.

RT15 To promote the 'active' use of above ground floor levels, and in particular to promote the concept of 'living over the shop' in centres. Where a 'living over the shop' use is proposed, a relaxation in density, car parking and open space standards will be considered, where the development meets very high quality of design and accommodation.

RT16 To promote an appropriate mix and balance of different types and styles of retail within centres and to control the number of bookmakers, off-licences (including off-licences in convenience stores), take-aways, 'cash for gold' and 'Pound' type shops, and other uses that can adversely affect the character of a centre.
The mix and balance of different type of retail (including retail services) is important to attract people to centres, and to ensure centres remain the main meeting point for the community. Too many of certain types of outlet can destroy the balance of a centre.

RT17 Conscious of the fact that planning has an important role to play in promoting and facilitating active and healthy living patterns for local communities, the following criteria will be taken into account in the assessment of development proposals for fastfood/takeaway outlets[3], including those with a drive through facility:

- Exclude any new fast-food / takeaway outlets from being built or from operating within 400m of the gates or site boundary of schools or playgrounds, excluding premises zoned town centre;
- Fast food outlets/takeaways with proposed drive through facilities will generally only be acceptable within Major Town Centres or District Centres and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis;
- Location of vents and other external services and their impact on adjoining amenities in terms of noise/smell/visual impact.

Retail – Opportunity Sites

RT18 To facilitate the identification, promotion and development of key town centre opportunity sites.

[3] For the purposes of RT17, "fast food/takeaway outlet" shall mean any <u>outlet</u> whose business will <u>primarily</u> be the sale of hot or otherwise prepared food that is high in fat, salt or sugar (such food being heated or prepared on the premises comprising of the outlet) for consumption on or off the premises comprising of the outlet.

- Opportunity sites are prime sites within a town, which are under-utilised in terms of their development potential, and as such they should be revitalised.
- The sites can be located at critical gateways or entry points to the town, and as such can be highly visible and may be suitable for 'landmark' type buildings. As the development of these sites will help set the tone for the town and influence the public perception of it, a high quality of urban design and innovation will be required at these locations.
- Opportunity sites are to be the subject of comprehensive (not piecemeal) integrated schemes of development that allow for sustainable, phased and managed development.
- Opportunity sites are identified within local area/town/settlement plans.

Retail - Design

RT19 To promote quality design in all retail development, in accordance with the design principles set out in the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012 and companion document 'Retail Design Manual' (DoAHG, 2012), including the guidance set out in the 'Development and Design Standards' appended to this plan.

RT20 To give positive consideration to the re-configuration of existing retail provision in Levels 2 and 3, to accommodate the demands of modern retailing.

RT21 In certain circumstances, the Planning Authority may allow for a relaxation in certain development standards within centres, in the interest of achieving the best development possible, both visually and functionally.

RT22 To promote quality design and materials in the development of shopfronts.

Retail – 'Out of Town' Centres

RT23 There shall be a general presumption against large out-of-town retail centres in particular those located adjacent or close to existing, new or planned national roads/motorways.

Retail Warehousing[4]

RT24 To strictly control and limit additional new retail warehousing / retail park floorspace in the County for the duration of the plan. Retail warehouse developments shall be required to be located on suitably zoned lands and where determined acceptable may be considered in the following settlements only: Bray, Wicklow, Arklow and Greystones. The Planning Authority will adopt a precautionary approach in the determination of proposals for retail warehousing. Any application for retail warehousing will be carefully assessed in view of the significant levels of recent provision across the region and will only be permitted where it is proven that the proposal will not impact adversely on the vitality and viability of established town centres. All applications shall be determined having regard to the 'Retail Planning Guidelines for planning authorities' (DoECLG, 2012).

Local area plans for these towns shall identify land and include policies relating to the development of retail warehousing.

[4] A retail warehouse is a large single level store specializing in the sale of bulky household goods such as carpets, furniture and electrical goods, and bulky DIY items, catering mainly for car-borne customers. A retail park is a single development of at least three retail warehouses with associated car parking.

The Planning Authority will strictly control the size of units and type of goods sold in Retail Warehouses in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2012). This may by controlled through the application of conditions. The Guidelines apply a cap of 6,000m^2 gross (including any ancillary garden centre) on large-scale single retail warehouse units, except in exceptional circumstances. Conditions may be attached restricting internal expansion by the construction of 1st floors or mezzanines. Conditions may be attached preventing the subdivision of retail warehouse units, e.g. preventing the subdivision of retail warehouse units into stores less than 700m^2 in out of centre locations, or coalescence of two or more stores.

Retail warehouses shall generally only be considered as part of planned retail warehouse parks, which combine access arrangements and car parking. Single retail warehouse units may be considered on infill sites in built up areas and flexibility with regard to the type of goods sold may be considered where the location is easily accessible by foot from the core retail area.

Retail – Large Convenience Goods Stores

RT25 To allow for the development of large convenience goods stores on suitably zoned land and to determine proposals having regard to the 'Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DoECLG, 2012).

Convenience retail floorspace caps shall be applied in accordance with 'Section 2.4.1 Convenience retail floorspace caps' of the Retail Planning Guidelines (DoECLG, 2012). The guidelines indicate a cap of 3,000m^2 net for County Wicklow.

The planning application drawings should clearly delineate the floorspace to be devoted primarily for the sale of convenience goods. To prevent any adverse impact on town centres, the Planning Authority will generally limit the proportion of comparison goods floorspace within large convenience goods stores that are located outside of Core Retail Areas, to a maximum of 20% of the retail floor area. Any proposal in excess of the 20% limit shall be considered on its merits and in particular having careful regard to the impact of a proposal on the vitality and viability of the town centre.

Retail – Neighbourhood Centres

RT26 Within neighbourhood centres, it is the objective of the Planning Authority to protect, provide for, and improve the mix of neighbourhood centre services and facilities, which provide for the day-to-day needs of the local community, to a degree that is akin to their role and function as outlined in the Retail Strategy.

Retail – Local Convenience Shops

RT27 To facilitate the provision of local retail units in residential areas where there is a clear deficiency of retail provision, subject to protecting residential amenity.

Retail – Small Towns and Villages

RT28 Small scale retail development appropriate to the scale and needs of the settlement and its catchment will be positively considered subject to the following control criteria:

- there shall be a clear presumption in favour of central or edge of centre locations for new development, i.e. the traditional historical centre; out of centre locations will not be considered suitable for new retail;

- new development shall be designed with the utmost regard to the historical pattern of development in the centre and the prevailing character, with particular regard to building form, height and materials and shall generally be required to incorporate a traditional shop front.

Rural Retail

RT29 Rural shops, not connected (either functionally or spatially) to any settlement shall not be considered other than:

- a retail unit which is ancillary to activities arising from farm diversification;
- a retail unit designed to serve tourist or recreational facilities, and secondary to the main use;
- a small scale retail unit attached to an existing or approved craft workshop retailing the product direct to the public; and/or
- a small scale retail unit designed to serve a dispersed rural community.

Retail – Tourism

RT30 Tourism retail[5] shall be encouraged at appropriate and established tourist locations, subject to the following criteria:

- the applicant must show that the tourism attraction concerned is well established and has a suitable existing flow of visitors sufficient to make a retail facility viable;
- the retail facility shall be sufficiently proximate to the tourism facility but shall be suitably located so as to not detract from the feature;
- in order to ensure that the retail unit in itself does not supersede the existing tourist attraction as the main tourism feature of an area, any application for tourism retail in excess of 200sqm shall be required to justify the need for a larger retail unit and to include proposals (to be fully implemented by the retail developer) to effectively link the retail facility to the tourist attraction (both in terms of physical links [6] and linkage to the tourism identity / product [7]);
- the retail facility shall include significant links with the local tourism community in terms of providing a tourist office or tourism information and space for the sale of locally produced goods / crafts.

Garden Centres/ Nurseries

RT31 Garden centres (i.e. the use of land, including buildings, for the cultivation, storage and/or the display and sale of horticultural products and the display and sale of related goods and equipment) shall generally be required to locate on zoned land in settlements. Garden centres shall only be considered outside settlements where it can be shown that the principal activity is the cultivation of plants and the retail activity is purely ancillary to the main use. In such cases, retail space shall not be expected to exceed 500sqm (indoor and outdoor retail sales area) and car parking shall be restricted to that strictly required to serve the permitted retail area.

[5] Tourism retail is defined in this plan as retail space to be utilised principally for the sale of goods to visitors and tourists to an area, mainly craft or luxury items and which would not offer goods associated with normal convenience and comparison shopping and would not be expected to have a large draw / attraction from the local population.
[6] For example footpaths / cycleways or shuttle bus / jaunting car connections from the retail facility to the tourism feature
[7] For example joint marketing strategies, coordinated signage etc

Outlet Centres

RT32 There shall be a general presumption against out-of-town regional shopping facilities, in particular those located adjacent or close to existing, new or planned national roads/motorways; however, specialist outlet centres may be considered where the following criteria are met:

- due regard shall be paid to the Retail Strategy and Retail Planning guidelines;
- the developer can show through rigorous retail impact assessment that the proposed centre will not divert trade from either the City centre or major / County towns and that the centre will not absorb such a quantum of retail floorspace in the County so as to undermine the continued growth and viability of existing County settlements;
- the site is located contiguous to a higher order town (i.e. Levels 1-3) and is not located in an isolated rural area, distant from major centres of population;
- the site is located where existing frequent public transport is available or where a short shuttle type connection can be made to rail or light rail system (to be funded by the developer);
- the retail facility shall be designed, developed and managed to provide opportunities for commercial synergy between an outlet centre and urban centre which would lead to economic benefits for the overall area.

Factory Shops

RT33 Proposals for factory shops shall be considered in accordance with the 'Retail Planning Guidelines for planning authorities' (DoECLG, 2012).

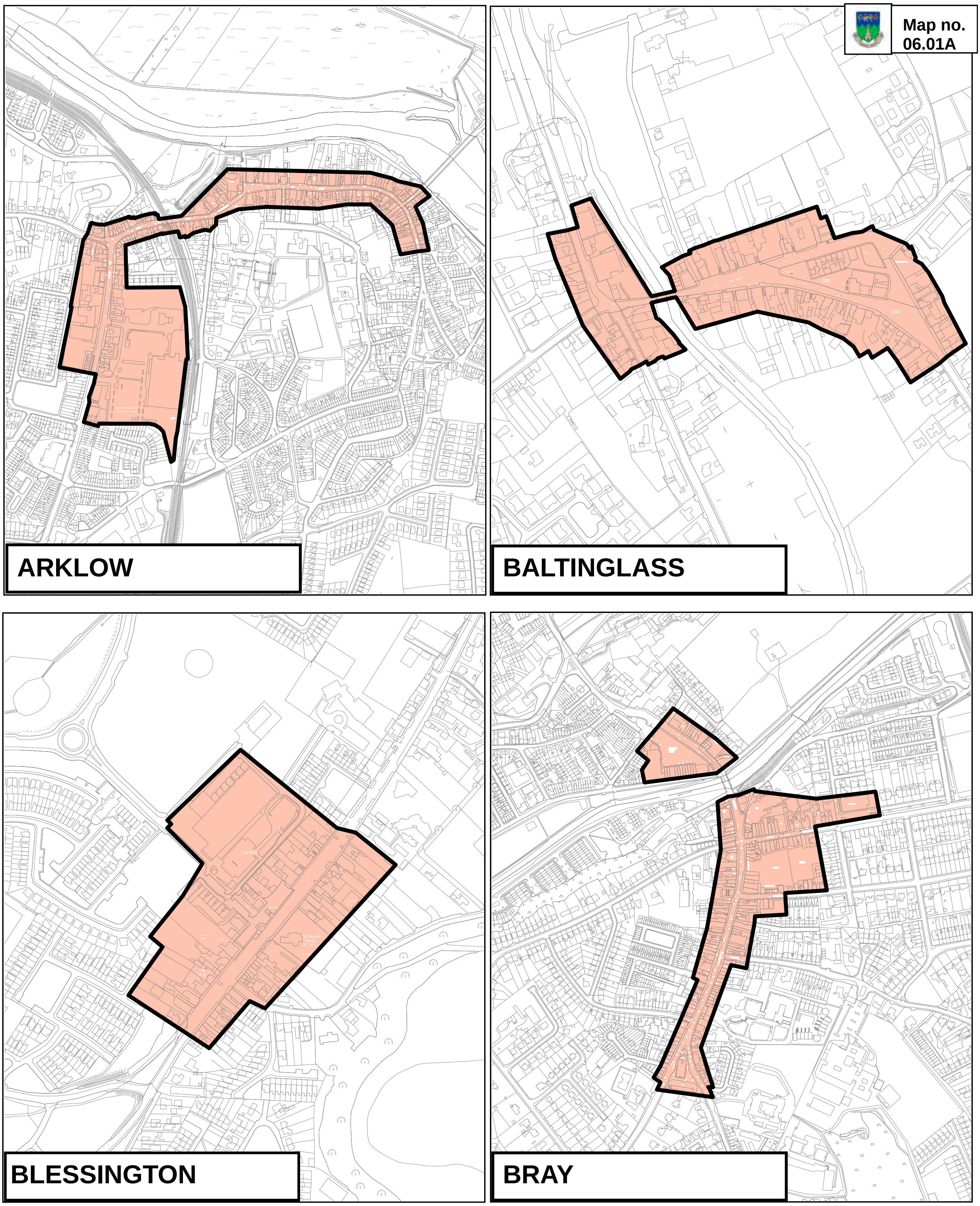
Retailing and Motor Fuel Stations

RT34 Proposals for retailing use at motor fuel stations shall be considered in accordance with the 'Retail Planning Guidelines for planning authorities' (DoECLG, 2012).

Proposals for online and off line motorway service areas shall be considered in accordance with the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG, 2012) and the TII Policy on Service Areas (2014).

Casual Trading

RT35 Proposals for casual trading developments such as farmers' markets, Christmas markets, car boot sales etc., shall be considered in accordance with the 'Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DoECLG, 2012).



Core Retail Area

WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2016-2022

Core Retail Area

Wicklow County Council
Planning Department

Maps Not To Scale

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