

LEVEL 6 SETTLEMENT PLANS

Avoca, Donard, Newcastle, Roundwood, Shillelagh

This volume of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2016-2022 comprises Land Use Plans for Level 6 towns in the County (with the exception of Kilmacanogue).

Level 6 settlements in County Wicklow are the smallest 'towns' of the County, but still provide important economic and social services to their populations and rural hinterland. Such towns normally have a reasonable range of infrastructural services and are suited to accommodating some urban generated housing demand, with necessary controls in place to ensure that local demand can also be met. Level 6 'Rural Towns' are differentiated in the County Development Plan from Level 5 'Small Growth Towns' having regard to their more rural character, the rural nature of their catchments and the lower capacity for significant growth.

The plans for these settlements started being incorporated into the County Development Plan in 2002 and this plan format and adoption process has now been reinforced by changes to the Planning Act in 2010 which specifically allows for objectives for towns under the LAP threshold (5,000) to be included in the County Development Plan. The development plan for the town of Kilmacanogue previously formed part of the County Development Plan but has been subsumed into the Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan.

All efforts shall be made to minimise repetition of County Development Plan objectives in these Settlement Plans, unless it is considered necessary to emphasise assets or restate objectives that have particular relevance and importance to that settlement. Development standards, retail strategies etc that are included in the County Development Plan shall not be repeated. Any specific policies / objectives or development standards required for a particular town will be stated as precisely that, and in all cases will be consistent with the County Development Plan. Thus development standards will be the same across the entire County, and any differences for specific settlements would be clear and transparent, to both those adopting the plans, and the general public alike.

Furthermore, these Settlement Plans shall only include objectives that are settlement specific and achievable, and avoid those that are aspirational or are best dealt with in the annual budget, road works programme, etc. The role of land use plan is to put in place framework within which development can occur, but does not decide what works actually get done by either private individuals or public bodies. The delivery of objectives will be determined by the initiation of private development or by the allocation of public funding through the annual budgetary process, which is a separate process to any land use plan.

Therefore this volume shall take the following format:

Section 1: Sets out the high level strategies and objectives that are common to all Level 6 towns

Section 2: Sets out the common zoning objectives for all Level 6 towns

Section 3: Sets out detailed plans for Level 6 settlements:

- Avoca
- Donard
- Newcastle
- Roundwood
- Shillelagh

Each 'detailed plan' will include only those objectives that are relevant to that town and shall incorporate a land use map, a heritage map and any other maps considered necessary for that town.

SECTION 1

1.1 Core Strategy

Level 6 plans exist in a hierarchy of plans flowing from national level (National Spatial Strategy) to regional level (Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area) to County level (Wicklow County Development Plan). It is through the County Development Plan that these higher order strategies, as well as other national and regional policies (e.g. relating to transportation and the environment) are translated to a 'local level'. The County Development Plan includes a 'Core Strategy' which sets out the 'direction' for the future growth of the County, in accordance with these higher level strategies, and in particular sets out the settlement and population growth strategy up to 2022, evaluates the demand for housing and adequacy of zoned lands to meet those needs, as well as providing strategies for infrastructure, environmental protection and retail development.

Table 1 below sets out the key elements of the Wicklow County Development Plan 'Core Strategy', as it applies to Level 6 settlements.

Core Strategy of the CDP	Application to Level 6
Settlement, Population & Housing Strategies	Level 6 settlements are designated 'Rural Towns' and generally have population targets in the range 500 – 1,500 ¹
Economic Development Strategy	The economic function of 'Rural Towns' is to be an attractor for local investment and to target investment in the form of product intensive industries particularly those related to rural resources.
Retail Strategy	All Level 6 settlements are identified as 'Level 4' in the County retail hierarchy. Level 4 retail centres are defined as 'local centres / small towns' where the retail needs would be expected to include one supermarket / two medium sized convenience stores (up to 1,000sqm aggregate) and c. 10-20 smaller shops.
Social Development Strategy	In accordance with the County community facilities hierarchy, Level 6 settlements generally fall into the <2,000 population range and should ideally be served with: community / parish hall, open spaces/play areas, outdoor multi-use games area and playing pitches.
Infrastructure Strategy	In accordance with the County Development Plan: Sufficient wastewater treatment capacity is required to cater for the projected population within the plan area Sufficient water supply is required capable of meeting the demands of projected population within the plan area. Measures to improve the capacity and efficiency of local roads and connections to national routes in close proximity to the plan area are required.
Environmental Strategy	To ensure the objectives of the plan are consistent with the conservation and protection of the environment.

¹ Donard in Level 6 has population targets outside this range, reflecting its existing population and development capacity.

1.2 Population and Housing

The 2022, 2025 and 2028 population targets for Level 6 settlements are provided in the Core Strategy of this County Development Plan.

The duration of these plans is 2016-2022. Therefore housing needs are on the basis of facilitating the achievement of the 2022 target. The 2011 population and housing unit figures are derived from the 2011 Census. As the Census 'town boundaries' do not always necessarily match our plan boundaries, the Census figures have been amended where required, using additional data sources such as the CSO 'Small Area Population Statistics' and the An Post GeoDirectory.

The number of housing units required in 2022 is based on a predicted average household size of 2.41 in 2022 and the 'excess factor' of 6.5% as set out in the 'Core Strategy'.

Plan Type	Settlement	Population 2011	Housing Stock 2011	Core Strategy Population Target 2022	Total Housing Unit Requirement 2022	Housing Unit Growth Requirement 2011-2022	Housing Unit Growth Requirement +headroom
Level 6 Settlement Plan	Avoca	717	282	835	369	87	120
	Donard	179	92	257	114	22	37
	Newcastle	817	313	1,065	471	158	211
	Roundwood	780	326	1,052	465	139	195
	Shillelagh	426	200	571	252	52	83

Housing Occupancy Controls

The settlements in Level 6 shall be prioritized for moderate growth and investment and shall absorb demand for new housing from inside and outside the County subject to the following controls:

Multi-house development – 75% no restriction, 25% 'County Growth'²

Single house development – 100% 'County Growth'

Population and Housing Objectives

- To adhere to the Level 6 settlements' population and housing objectives of the Wicklow County Development Plan.
- No single application shall increase the existing housing stock in the settlement by more than 15% and the maximum size of development that will be considered will be 25% of the number of houses permissible over the life of the plan for that settlement.
- Notwithstanding the designation of land for residential purposes, the Planning Authority shall monitor and implement the population targets as set out in the County Development Plan and shall phase and restrict, where necessary, the granting of residential planning permissions to ensure these targets are not exceeded.

² **County Growth** is defined as: Housing demand from persons that have been permanently living and/or working in County Wicklow for at least 3 years prior to the application for planning permission/purchase of the house.

1.3 Economic Development

Depending on their degree of accessibility and their economic function, the hinterland towns (i.e. those outside the metropolitan area) have varying roles to play in acting as attractors for foreign and local investment. Level 5 and 6 settlements generally perform a lesser function in terms of attracting investment than Level 1-4 settlements, however these settlements perform an important role in attracting local investment and should aim to target investment in the form of local services, 'product intensive' industries, particularly those linked to rural resources, such as food processing, agricultural services and tourist facilities / accommodation.

The factors that make a town economically viable and attractive to investors and visitors are numerous and often hard to predict and influence, but for the purpose of this land use plan, the strategy for economic development will be based around (a) providing a land-use framework for each town, which makes the Council's requirements and expectations with respect to the location and type of new development abundantly clear, (a) supporting and facilitating, to the highest degree possible (subject to environmental and other relevant planning considerations) all forms of employment generation appropriate to such small settlements, (c) protecting and enhancing the heritage and environment of the town, including historic street pattern and buildings / features of heritage and environmental value and (d) encouraging a varied mix of uses in the core area.

An established measure of the employment 'health' of a settlement is a measure called the 'jobs ratio'. This is the relationship between the number of people in the labour force and the number of jobs in any defined area. A healthy area is considered to be one where the jobs ratio is around 70%. The County Development Plan sets out an objective to increase the average 'jobs ratio' in the County to c. 60% in 2028 (from a 2011 rate of 42%). Not all towns / areas will of course be able to reach this level and it is considered reasonable that the plan should aim to increase the jobs ratio proportionately in each area according to its characteristics and level in the County settlement / employment hierarchy.

For Level 6 towns, it is an objective to increase the jobs ratio by 25% by 2028.

Settlement	Population 2011	Labour Force 2011	Jobs in that settlement 2011	Jobs ratio 2011	Increase JR by 25%	Labour Force 2028	Jobs required 2028	Growth 2011-2028
Avoca	717	344	99	29%	36%	375	135	36
Donard	179	86	39	45%	57%	125	71	32
Kilmacanogue	799	383	362	94%	118%	417	492	130
Newcastle	817	392	234	60%	75%	500	373	139
Roundwood	780	374	126	34%	42%	500	210	84
Shillelagh	426	204	46	22%	28%	292	82	36

Economic Development Objectives

- Increase the quality and range of employment opportunities by facilitating developments that involve local investment in a variety of forms, including 'people' and 'product' intensive industries. The Council will allow for the development of 'people' intensive employment generating developments that provide for the local convenience and social service needs of the area and that provide for the needs of tourists and visitors. The Council will allow for the development of a limited amount of small scale

'product' intensive industries, and will particularly support developments based on the use of a local rural resource.

- Promote tourist developments at suitable locations that are of an appropriate scale and design, particularly developments that are associated with the tourism products or themes associated with that settlement and maximise each town's location as a destination and gateway between the tourism assets.
- To facilitate home-working and innovative forms of working which reduce the need to travel but are subordinate to the main residential use of the dwelling and do not result in a disamenity in an area.
- To encourage the provision of live-work units as part of mixed-use developments in appropriate locations.
- To improve the 'public realm' particularly in the designated primary zone, with particular regard to footpath width and design quality, hard and soft landscaping, open spaces, street furniture, signage, street lighting and the on-street car parking layout, and any other aspects of the local environment that effect the attractiveness and accessibility of the primary zone.
- Encourage the redevelopment and regeneration of vacant, underutilised and derelict sites.
- To protect features that contribute to the towns' overall appearance and heritage value.
- Provide for an expansion in the variety of retail and retail services facilities so that the town includes a range of retail outlets that provide for the day to day needs of the local population and the needs of other businesses and tourists, in accordance with the provisions of the "Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities" (DOEHLG 2012), and any subsequent Ministerial Guidelines or directives and the Wicklow County Retail Strategy.

1.4 Social and Community Development

The provision of accessible social and community infrastructure, including open space and leisure / recreational facilities, contributes to the quality of life for all and it is important that existing and future residents of the town and its catchment are provided with such facilities. High quality social and community services in an area can also make a place more attractive for the establishment of new businesses and to encourage long stay visitors. In particular, new community facilities will be required to be provided in tandem with the development of new dwellings and neighbourhoods.

Community Infrastructure and Open Space Objectives

- To facilitate the development of a range of high quality community and recreational facilities that meet the needs of the local population, and in particular to require that new community and open space/recreational facilities are developed in tandem with new housing, through the implementation of the objectives of Chapter 8 of Volume 1 of this County Development Plan.
- The Planning Authority will resist developments that entail the loss of existing community, education and open space/recreation lands or buildings unless it can be demonstrated that (a) adequate community, education and open space/recreation lands and buildings would be retained in the settlement having regard to the planned future population of the settlement or (b) the particular lands or buildings are not suitable or needed for current or future educational, community or open space / recreational usage. In particular, developments that would unduly constrain the ability of existing schools to expand will not be permitted.

1.5 Service infrastructure

The provision of transport and services infrastructure is essential to the development of any town, providing ease of movement within towns, connecting towns to surrounding areas and providing sufficient services infrastructure capable of meeting the demands of the resident, commercial and employment populations. The County Development Plan, and various programmes of the Council's Roads and Environmental Services Departments, provide detailed strategies and objectives for a whole range of service infrastructure. As these provisions apply directly to Level 6 towns it is not considered necessary to restate all of these objectives; however, each plan will address specific local infrastructural issues where deficiencies are identified.

Service Infrastructure Objectives

- Promote the development of a safe and accessible pedestrian, cycling and traffic routes.
- Where any proposed development is adjoining possible future development lands or provides the only possible access route to other lands, new roads will be required to be designed to ensure that future access to other lands can be facilitated.
- Facilitate and promote the delivery of reliable and effective water, drainage, energy, waste management and communications infrastructure to service the existing and future development needs of the settlement.
- To implement the objectives and development standards of Chapter 9 of the County Development Plan as applicable to each town.

1.6 Built Heritage and Natural Environment

The protection and enhancement of heritage and environmental assets through these plans will help to safeguard the local character and distinctiveness of each town and its surroundings, providing local economic, social and environmental benefits. Each settlement is provided with a heritage map in this volume to indicate the key natural and built heritage features.

Heritage Objective

To protect the natural, architectural and archaeological heritage of each town, in accordance with the objectives and development standards set out in Chapter 10 of the County Development Plan as are applicable to each town.

1.7 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Each plan, in conjunction with the overall County Development Plan, has been subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The 'Environmental Report' accompanying the overall County Development Plan sets out the environmental consequences of making the plan, including settlement plan and provides measures to address any potential adverse impacts.

1.8 Appropriate Assessment

Each plan, in conjunction with the overall County Development Plan, has been screened for the need to carry out an 'Appropriate Assessment' under the Habitats Directive. Where Appropriate Assessment cannot be screened out, each plan is accompanied by a 'Habitats Directive Assessment'.

1.9 Flood Risk Assessment

As part of each plan, a Flood Risk Identification Assessment (FRIA) has been carried out and a flood risk map is provided for each settlement. The FRIA is presented as part of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment appendices of the County Plan and the flood risk map is provided along with the individual plan documents. All applications shall be assessed in accordance with the provisions of *'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management'* Guidelines (DoEHLG 2009) and the flood management objectives of the County Development Plan.

Flood Risk Assessment 'Level 6 Mitigation Objective'

To restrict the types of development permitted in Flood Zone A and Flood Zone B to the uses that are 'appropriate' to each flood zone, as set out in Table 3.2 of the Guidelines for Flood Risk Management (DoEHLG, 2009). The planning authority may consider proposals for development that may be vulnerable to flooding, and that would generally be inappropriate as set out in Table 3.2 of the Guidelines, subject to all of the following criteria being satisfied:

- The planning authority is satisfied that all of the criteria set out in the justification test as it applies to development management (Box 5.1 of the Guidelines) are complied with.
- The development of lands for the particular use is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the settlement, and complies with at least one of the following:
 - (i) The development is located within the 'primary lands' and is essential for the achievement of the 'vision' or for the achievement of a specific objective for these lands.
 - (ii) The development comprises previously developed and/or under-utilised lands/sites,
 - (iii) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use, in areas at lower risk of flooding.

SECTION 2 ZONING AND LAND USE

Each plan map indicates the boundary of the settlement plan. All lands located outside the settlement boundary are considered to be within the rural area. Within these areas planning applications shall be assessed having regard to the objectives and standards for the rural area, as set out in Volume 1 of the Wicklow County Development Plan.

The purpose of land use zoning objectives is to indicate the Council's intentions for land uses in the town.

With respect to **Level 6** plans, a simple zoning format is provided, which includes only three zones – the primary, secondary and tertiary zones. This is in recognition of the smaller scale of these settlements and the less well defined distinction between different land uses evident in these towns. The land use zoning objectives and the associated vision for each zone are as follows:

PRIMARY ZONE

Vision: To create a consolidated and vibrant mixed use settlement centre that is the focal point for the delivery of the retail, commercial, community and activity needs of the local population and its hinterland, and to promote this area for tourist uses and for residential use, with an animated and high quality streetscape, whilst ensuring the protection of the special character and heritage of this area.

Objectives:

- To support existing uses and facilitate the development of new uses that will improve the vitality, connectivity and vibrancy of the primary lands.
- To promote the development of a range of retail outlets, including a variety of small scale convenience and comparison outlets in accordance with the County Retail Strategy and shops to provide for the tourist market (i.e. 'tourist retail').
- To promote these lands for the development of 'people' intensive employment generating developments, including retail, tertiary services, commercial developments, office, civic, institutional and tourist uses.
- To allow for the development of small scale light industrial or manufacturing developments at suitable locations that do not undermine the attractiveness of the main street or traditional town centre.
- All shopfronts shall be of traditional design with strict adherence to the use of traditional materials.
- To encourage residential development that contributes to the vitality of the primary area and provide for passive / night-time supervision of the primary area, although loss of active commercial or retail floorspace to residential use will be discouraged.
- To promote the use of upper floors for 'Living over the Shop' and office accommodation.
- To allow residential development at a suitable density, and not to provide residential density limits, but to assess proposals on the basis of qualitative standards such as layout, design, amenity and impacts on adjacent properties, transportation infrastructure and environmental quality.

SECONDARY ZONE

Vision: To provide for the sustainable development of a mix of uses including residential, employment, community and recreational uses that provide for the needs of the existing settlement and that allows for the future growth of the settlement.

Objectives:

- Allow for the limited extension or 'spill-over' of the primary lands onto the secondary lands which immediately adjoin the boundary of the primary lands. New development of this type should be compatible with or reinforce the function of the primary lands and shall be visually and physically linked with the primary core. No development will be permitted that prejudices the viability and function of the primary lands.
- Retail developments will generally not be permitted on these lands; however consideration will be given to the improvement / expansion of existing retail facilities or small scale retail facilities ancillary to tourist facilities.
- In existing residential areas, it shall be an objective of the Council to protect existing residential amenity and to provide for infill residential development at a density and design that reflects the established character of the area in which it is located.
- Allow for new residential developments, including a mix of residential options within an attractive and accessible setting, at appropriate locations which have safe access to the public road network, which have pedestrian links to the primary lands, and which are served by appropriate water and sewerage infrastructure, and which, if possible are in proximity to community and public services.
- A full range of unit sizes, including smaller 2 and 3 bedroomed units shall be provided in all new housing developments (i.e. developments exceeding 4 units). Generally, no more than 50% of the units in any new development shall exceed 3 bedrooms or 120sqm in size.
- Promote densities in the order of 15 dwelling units per hectare. A higher or lower density may be considered appropriate, having regard to the context of the site and the prevailing density in the vicinity of the site.
- Protect and enhance existing employment areas to reach their full employment potential.
- Promote these lands for employment generating developments including 'product' intensive lower order industrial developments, small scale enterprise units, tourist developments, general business uses and home based economic activity.
- Protect and allow for the improvement of public and private open space and recreational facilities.
- Allow for the development of new and improved community services, for health, welfare, community, education, civic and institutional uses including schools, childcare, nursing homes, community buildings, churches etc. in close proximity to existing and planned residential communities as well as other ancillary services such as public services and recycling facilities.

TERTIARY LANDS: PERIPHERAL ZONE

Vision: To protect and provide for agriculture and amenity in a manner that protects the physical and visual amenity of the area and demarcates the urban and rural boundary.

Objectives:

- Allow for agricultural development and other rural uses and amenity uses such as playing fields and parks.
- To allow for new and improved community facilities and service infrastructure.
- To allow for the development of existing and new tourism developments, particularly those of a recreational nature and that are of a low buildings density format.
- To restrict the residential development in this area to low density (max 5/ha) single house developments and multi house developments not exceeding 4 units (other than social housing developments). Multi-house development shall only be considered where they share a single road entrance, are sufficiently clustered together and are sufficiently set back from the public road.
- To allow for social housing provided it is located in accordance with firm planning principles especially with respect to proximity to services and connectivity to the settlement core.
- Prohibit development that would create an uneconomical or premature demand for infrastructural services.

Notwithstanding the fact that all areas are designated for mixed use development, at locations where different types of land uses adjoin, the Council shall ensure that the amenity and visual integrity of these areas are protected. At these locations, developments shall be designed in order to avoid abrupt transitions in scale and use, through incorporating design solutions including landscaping, screening and appropriate layout of site, that provide buffer areas between different land uses. This is particularly important where there are adjoining residential and employment uses.

Phasing

It is an objective of the Council that development is undertaken in an orderly and sustainable manner. The development of zoned land should generally be phased in accordance with the sequential approach:

- Development should extend outwards from the primary area with undeveloped land closest to the core and public transport routes (where applicable) being given preference; this will normally correspond to the 'secondary area'. 'Leapfrogging' to peripheral areas, such as the outer edge of the secondary area or the tertiary zone should be avoided.
- A strong emphasis should be placed on encouraging infill opportunities and better use of under-utilised lands.
- Areas to be developed should be contiguous to existing developed areas.

Only in exceptional circumstances should the above principles be contravened, for example, where a barrier to development is involved. Any exceptions must be clearly justified by local circumstances and such justification must be set out in any planning application proposal.

The Council may, in certain cases, phase permitted development where this is considered necessary for the following:

- (i) the promotion of an appropriate balance of employment, residential and service facilities (schools, shopping, community facilities etc.) and other uses that are required to increase the self sufficiency of the settlement, or
- (ii) ensuring the delivery of infrastructural services in tandem with development, including water, sewerage and road infrastructure, that is required to safeguard the environmental quality and public safety of the area.