10.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the Retail Strategy for County Wicklow (including the towns of Bray, Wicklow and Arklow) for the plan period 2010-2016 and replaces the existing (draft) retail strategy drawn up in 2002. The purpose of a retail strategy is to

- establish the optimum location for new retail development which is accessible to all sections of society and is of a scale which allows the continued prosperity of traditional town centres and existing retail centres, without inhibiting competition, preserving existing commercial interests or preventing innovation;
- Set out the criteria for the assessment of new retail developments

Section A of this plan has set out a number of 'Strategic Goals' for the County during the plan period. The crafting and implementation of a robust Retail Strategy has the potential to positively contribute to the attainment of these goals, in particular:

- enhancement of the range of services available in the designated growth towns in the County;
- reduction in demand for travel, by providing retail at suitable locations where it is accessible by all in society and in particular, integrated with growth areas and public transport investment;
- protection of the County's infrastructure, in particular, the carrying capacity of regional and major roads and interchanges, by locating retail in existing town and district centres, served and accessed by the local road network;
- enhancement of employment and enterprise opportunities.

Strategy To promote the development of an exciting and competitive retail sector, whilst protecting and integrity, vibrancy and vitality of existing centres.

10.2 Context - policy influences on the County Retail Strategy

10.2.1 Retail Planning Guidelines for Local Authorities 2005

These guidelines provide a framework to assist local authorities in preparing Development Plans and assessing applications for planning permission and to guide retailers and developers in formulating development proposals. The Guidelines confirm that the key challenge to be faced is how to accommodate the additional development that is projected to be required, in a way which is efficient, equitable and sustainable. It is vital to establish the optimum location for new retail development which is accessible to all sections of society and is of a scale which allows the continued prosperity of traditional town centres and existing retail centres. This can only be achieved if strategic retail policies and proposals are incorporated into the development system.

The guidelines identify a number of key objectives:-

- to ensure that in future all Development Plans incorporate clear policies and proposals for retail development;
- to facilitate a competitive and healthy environment for the retail industry of the future;
- to promote forms of development which are easily accessible, particularly by public transport and in a location which encourages multi-purpose shopping, business and leisure trips on the same journey;
- to support the continuing role of town and district centres, with a presumption against large retail centres located adjacent, close to, or in any area primarily exploiting high speed direct links to existing, new or planned national roads/motorways.

Shopping provision is recognised as a key component of town centres. Retailing makes a major contribution to their vitality and viability and the Guidelines therefore recommend that they retain retailing as a core function.
The Guidelines confirm that the preferred location for new retail development, where practicable and viable, is within town centres (or district or major village centres). However, where it is not possible to provide the form and

scale of development that is required on a town centre site, consideration can be given to a site on the edge of a town centre, providing it is within an easy and convenient walking distance from the primary shopping core of a town centre.
A sequential approach should be applied to selecting sites for new retail development. Only where it has been determined that there are no sites within a town centre or an edge-of-centre location by virtue of size, availability, accessibility and feasibility, should an alternative out of centre site be considered.

The Guidelines set out the matters which are to be included in all future development plans:-

- Confirmation of the retail hierarchy, the role of centres and the size of the main town centres;
- Definition in the development plan of the boundaries of the core shopping area of town centres;
- A broad assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace;
- Strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development;
- Preparation of policies and action initiatives to encourage the improvement of town centres;
- Identification of criteria for the assessment of retail developments.

In addition to the general policies and objectives, the Guidelines provide provisions for specific types of development including regional and district shopping centres, large foodstores and discount stores, retail parks and retail warehouses and local shops in towns, villages and rural areas.

10.2.2 Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) 2008-2016

The purpose of the Retail Strategy for the GDA is to guide the activities and policies for retail planning across the seven local authorities in the GDA, including Wicklow. The 2008 strategy replaces the previous 2001 strategy, which was considered necessary to review because of the many policy, economic and population changes that have occurred in the GDA since 2001. The strategy aims to set out a co-ordinated, sustainable approach to the assessment and provision of retail within the GDA so that:-

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

The Strategy sets out a strategic vision and guidance for retail planning in the GDA, which draws on quantitative analysis undertaken as part of the review, examining existing market pattern expenditure and future growth projections. By setting out a strategic framework for retail, the Strategy gives guidance on where future retail should be provided and what issues need to be addressed.

At the core of the Strategy is the revised retail hierarchy for the GDA, which is set in Table 10.1 to follow. The Strategy also sets out a series of principles and recommendations for each Council to consider as part of preparing their individual retail strategies. These include:-

- Advice regarding function and scale of centres in the hierarchy;
- Suggested thresholds for the preparation of retail impact assessments for retail applications;
- Thresholds for sequential test in assessing the appropriateness of the location of a retail development are proposed;
- Individual recommendations for each Council on issues regarding the main towns/centres – particularly the importance of supporting high quality appropriately sized new retail to support competitiveness;
- The importance of qualitative assessment for retail schemes and the use of planning conditions to ensure a coordinated and suitable delivery of retail schemes.
- The conclusions reached with regard to retailing in Wicklow and the specific recommendations for policies in Wicklow are set out in Section 10.3 to follow.

Table 10.1 Retail hierarchy for the Greater Dublin Area

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: 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, and Maynooth, Kilcullen, Athy, Kildare, Monasterevin, Clane.
Level 4	**NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES, LOCAL CENTRES – SMALL TOWNS & VILLAGES**
Level 5	**CORNER SHOPS / SMALL VILLAGES**

The principle departure from the 2001 GDA Retail Strategy for Wicklow is upwards move of Blessington and Baltinglass from Level 4 to Level 3.

10.3 Retail Strategy for County Wicklow

In accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines, the retail strategy for Wicklow will include the following:-

- Confirmation of the retail hierarchy, the role of centres and the size of the main town centres;
- Definition in the development plan of the boundaries of the core shopping area of town centres;
- A broad assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace;
- Strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development;
- Preparation of policies and action initiatives to encourage the improvement of town centres;
- Identification of criteria for the assessment of retail developments.

Given the considerable research and analysis carried out for the GDA Regional Retail Strategy and the intention that the retail strategy for County Wicklow will be consistent with the Regional Retail Strategy, new local research has not been undertaken into existing retail floorspace, shopping patterns, expenditure estimates, turnover ratios etc. Instead quantitative analysis will generally be based on the findings of the research carried out for the Regional Retail Strategy.

10.3.1 Retail hierarchy & the role of centres

Retail hierarchy

The retail hierarchy for County Wicklow is set out in Table 10.2. This hierarchy is drawn from both the GDA Retail Strategy and the County settlement strategy.

Table 10.2 Retail hierarchy for County Wicklow

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 **Tier 2 Towns serving the immediate district** Newtownmountkennedy, Rathdrum
LEVEL 4	NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES	LOCAL CENTRES – SMALL TOWNS
	Bray Area Boghall Road / Ballywaltrim, Vevay, Dargle Rd, Dublin Road / Little Bray, Albert Road & Walk, Fassaroe **Greystones Area** Delgany, Blacklion, Charlesland, Killincarrig, Victoria Road	Ashford, Aughrim, Avoca, Carnew, Donard, Dunlavin, Enniskerry, Kilcoole, Kilmacanogue, Newcastle, Rathnew, Roundwood, Shillelagh, Tinahely
LEVEL 5	CORNER SHOPS	VILLAGES
		Barndarrig, Ballinaclash, Coolboy, Glenealy, Hollywood, Johnstown / Thomastown, Kilpedder / Willowgrove, Kiltegan, Knockananna, Laragh – Glendalough, Manor Kilbride, Redcross, Stratford

The role of centres

Table 10.3 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 10.3 Retail formats in hierarchy levels

	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			√		√

Level 2 Major & County Town Centres

These centres will have 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. Such centres should be well connected and served by high quality public transport, particularly with the metropolitan area. For well-established centres with population catchments in excess of 60,000 people it would be expected that the volume of lettable retail floorspace would exceed 40,000sqm.

Level 3 Town / District and Sub County Town Centres

These centres will vary both in the scale of provision and the size of catchment, due to proximity to a Major Town / County Town centre. 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 and Baltinglass, while being very different in size, are all similar in the sense that they serve a wide catchment and are sufficiently distant from major or county town so as to make them the principle shopping destination in their areas. These towns are somewhat different from Rathdrum and Newtownmountkennedy, which are both within reasonable distance of the County town and which serve more localised catchments, but due to their planned growth, require a high level of retail provision.

Level 4 Neighbourhood Centres & Small Towns

While the GDA Retail Strategy generally considers that these centres will normally provide for one supermarket or discount foodstore ranging in size from 1,000-2,500 sqm 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 or community facilities or health clinics, it is considered necessary to make a distinction in Wicklow between the type and quantum of retail envisaged in neighbourhoodcentres in the larger settlements and that envisaged for small towns.

Neighbourhood centres (i.e. locations providing retail and other community services outside or the core town centre area) generally only occur in the larger settlements of the County (Bray, Wicklow, Arklow and Greystones). Such centres would usually include a medium sized convenience shopping outlet (up to 500sqm) and a number of smaller comparison and nonretail services premises e.g. Vevay in Bray and Charlesland in Greystones. 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.

In contrast, 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 and would not be considered suitable for discount foodstores.

Level 5 Corner Shops/Small Villages

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. Such centres will normally serve only an immediate catchment. 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 500 - 1,500sqm of lettable space.

10.3.2 Boundaries of the core shopping area of town centres

The core areas for each of the main centres in the County are illustrated in Maps 10.01 and 10.02 at the end of this chapter.

10.3.3 Assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace

Given the considerable research and analysis carried out for the GDA Regional Retail Strategy, new local research has not been undertaken into existing retail floorspace, shopping patterns, expenditure estimates, turnover ratios etc. Instead quantitative analysis will generally be based on the findings of the research carried out for the Regional Retail Strategy.

The GDA Strategy carried out the following research in arriving at its conclusions:-

Step 1 Population projections were made for each 'zone' in the GDA, which included three zones in Wicklow (north Wicklow, west Wicklow and south Wicklow);

Step 2 Spending growth patterns were modelled to derive the spending power in each zone and to estimate future retail spend by zone (the current slowdown in economic activity is reflected in the forecasts of consumer spending);

Step 3 These monetary figures were translated into floor space need and from this the future demand for retail floor space for both comparison and convenience shopping was calculated by deducting existing floorspace[1]. To reflect the impact of retail services (non retail uses such a beauticians / banks / coffee shops etc occupying retail units), the figures are increased by 20%. These figures were then adjusted upwards by another 20% to allow for flexibility in meeting future demand by catering for permissions granted during the life of the strategy but where they will not be full trading until after 2016.

Main findings

The total retail turnover of the Dublin Region at the base year of 2007 is €8,947m, of which 64% is in comparison goods shopping. In-flow spend accounts for €2,186m (of which €1,131m is visitor/tourist expenditure) or almost 25% of turnover, and therefore is crucial in underpinning current retail trading performance. With regard to comparison goods, very little consumer retail expenditure leaks outside the region (just 3%) and accordingly there is little material scope for clawback of monies to support additional retail floorspace provision.

For the Mid East Region (i.e. the counties of Wicklow, Kildare and Meath), €1,350m of comparison goods expenditure is generated within the region at the base year of 2007. Of this total, an estimated €651m 'leaks' out to competitor centres (which includes the Dublin Area). This comprises of €491m of flows into the Dublin Region and €160m flowing to centres outside of the GDA. Thus, the Mid East currently retains just €699 million or 52% of the comparison goods expenditure generated by its residents. In-flow spend adds €160 million to the Mid East's comparison goods sales (with 88% in-flowing from outside the GDA), producing a turnover of €859 million. This total equates to just 15% of the comparison goods turnover for the Dublin Region.

The residents of the Mid East generate €1,168m of convenience goods expenditure of which €234m leaks out of the region. Some €121m flows into the Dublin Region, whilst the balance of €113m goes to centres outside the GDA. 80% of convenience goods spend is retained by the Mid East, a lower proportion than for the Dublin Region (96%). Adding in an inflow spend of €64m, of which €48m is from the Dublin Region, gives an estimated aggregate convenience goods turnover for the Mid East of €998m, equivalent to 31% of that for the Dublin Region.

[1] In calculating the future need up to 2016, any inbuilt permissions were not included as floorspace provided due to the uncertainty whether or not all of the schemes will be built and the possibility that a number of the projects could be altered or replaced before works commenced.

The combined retail turnover for the Mid East in 2007 is therefore €1,857m, of which 54% is accounted for by convenience goods shopping. Unlike the Dublin Region, which is a significant net importer of consumer retail expenditure, the Mid East attracts in only €224m of spend, but leaks €885m. It is therefore a net exporter of consumer retail expenditure. Thus, unlike for the Dublin Region, there is scope for clawing back retail expenditure, both in comparison and convenience goods shopping.

Comparison goods

All three counties within the Mid East Region are major net exporters of comparison goods expenditure, mainly because monies flow into the Dublin Region. North Wicklow has seen in the intervening years since 2001, substantial increases in the levels of outflow. This is due to the combination of little development of new comparison retail space in North Wicklow, and the substantial new space provided mainly in Dundrum, which has had the effect of accelerating what was already a steady existing exodus of retail expenditure from Wicklow, most likely aided by improvements to the N11. South Wicklow saw some improvement in retention levels.
Wicklow is found in fact to be the worst performer in the region, retaining as little as 37% of available expenditure. Whilst retention of expenditure is a key parameter of sustainability, as it will assist in cutting down private car journeys, some expenditure outflows do make sense, such as to the city centre, or to major centres close to county boundaries where naturalcatchments cross boundary lines.

Convenience

Unlike for comparison goods, most available convenience goods expenditure is spent locally, with all Counties achieving retention levels of 71% or more. County Wicklow is found to retain approximately 82% of convenience spend. This confirms that convenience goods shopping provision is much more evenly spread around the GDA relative to population and available expenditure. Balanced provision of convenience floorspace ensures that most trips for food shopping are relatively short compared to trips for comparison shopping - a pattern reflected in the survey findings. All three Counties in the Mid East Region leak more convenience goods spend than they attract highlighting an immediate need for increased convenience shopping in the Mid East counties, so that adequate convenience shopping is provided locally to the populations in each area - reducing the need to travel long distances by car for essential shopping.

County Wicklow

The GDA Regional Retail Strategy projects that County Wicklow requires an increase gross lettable convenience floorspace by 15,000sqm (or 18,000sqm if an additional 20% is allowed to facilitate possible future demand) and gross lettable comparison floorspace by 50,000- 70,000sqm (or 61,000- 83,000sqm) by 2016[2].

While GDA Strategy warns that some caution needs to be attached to the retail floorspace need estimates (due to the potential inaccuracies that come into play when preparing projections over long time periods), it is considered that the length of the forecast period (through to 2016) does mean that the cyclical impacts of changing macro-economic trends tend to be evened out. For this reason, it is argued that the figures in the strategy provide a realistic indication of the quantum of ‘retail floorspace need’ over the next eight years.

These figures are inclusive of retail commitments as of September 2007 (i.e. existing grants have not been subtracted) and set a quantitative floorspace need based on projected population growth in the GDA as forecast by the RPGs and the NSS[3]. Increased population growth or increased economic activity will create higher levels of quantitative need; just as falling population and weak economic circumstances will reduce levels of need.

The calculation of need within each County is also based on existing market shares and flows from adjoining zones (both within and outside the GDA). Adjustments are made to these patterns of market shares to reflect the desired impacts of the delivery of the retail strategy up to 2016 such as promoting more localised retail provision, a reduction in travel distances, more sustainable transport modes, improvements in public transport and the

[2] This is on the basis on a number of assumptions including 20% of the floor area of developments built since 2001 being devoted to retail service uses and all existing retail floorspace continuing to trade viably even when additional space is built.
[3] The population forecast utilised in the GDA Retail Strategy is growth in the GDA to 1.967m persons in 2016. This is however higher than the recently published DoEHLG 2016 target of 1.955m, which it utilised in Chapter 4 of this plan.

delivery of the NSS and RPGs - within a reasonable framework. To this effect and given the high levels of expenditure leakage outwards from within some counties, the GDA Strategy considers that it will not be possible to fully redress this leakage within the timescale of the Strategy - particularly in light of the long lead-in times required to bring in well located, high quality comparison retail space. In the interests of sustainable development, and to cut down on the quantum and length of car based journeys, it is the aim of the Strategy that this leakage will be actively reduced during the lifetime of the Strategy through the improvement of key major town/county town centres. Achieving the long term goal in the Strategy of each Level 2 centre holding its own market requires a vision for retail in these towns that will extend beyond the life of this Strategy. For this reason planning permissions may need to be granted for floor areas in excess of those stated above within the timescale of this strategy, but where the latter phases or particular schemes will not necessarily to be completed and trading until the period beyond 2016.

The *Retail Planning - Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (DoEHLG 2005) guidance document advises that Retail Strategies should "*assess the broad requirement for additional development over the plan period… these assessments of future retail requirements are intended to provide* ***broad guidance*** *as to the additional quantum of convenience and comparison floorspace provision. They should not be treated in an* ***overly prescriptive*** *manner and should not seek to inhibit competition".* For this reason it is not the intention of the GDA Strategy to present the figures as some form of cap on retail permissions for each Council, but to guide the scale of overall provision of retail; whilst taking into account the need to provide more local retail to reduce long distance travel for lower order shopping and encourage local provision of regular shopping needs.

10.3.4 Allocation

Convenience allocation - Convenience floorspace by its nature should be provided locally to meet the needs of communities. Provision of new convenience in a Council area may in particular circumstances exceed the figures projected by the GDA Strategy to reflect the needs of localised larger developments and/or qualitative revitalisation (incorporating the suitable and adequate provision of public facilities); whereas in other areas of population decline, such growth is often counterbalanced by either redevelopment of older declining centres to other uses or through reduced trading levels and changes of uses of units from retail to other services. Therefore, in the interests of proper sustainable planning, **due regard** shall be given to the estimates of need for convenience for each County; while the provision of new convenience shopping shall also be promoted and encouraged in areas of significant population growth, should that occur, or where there is a locally identified gap in provision and competition. Applications should detail, if justifiable, that their scheme(s) will meet local demand without damaging existing traders, and how it will promote more sustainable travel modes and shorter distances of travel.

Comparison allocation - In relation to comparison goods, reflecting the population growth expected and forecast for the GDA there is a material need for additional retail floorspace to be developed within both the Dublin and Mid East Regions. Provision of all future comparison retail floorspace should take place in accordance with the policy recommendations contained in the GDA Strategy so that new retail will support both the principles of sustainability and the settlement strategy of the Regional Planning Guidelines, as incorporated into the City, Town and County Developments Plans of the GDA. The figures presented are represented as a range - dependent on the volume (if any) of retail warehousing built during the period of the Strategy. Based on current predictions showing reduced demand for new retail warehouses over the coming years, it is expected that the actual figure will be within the higher end of the range shown.

In this context, the County Wicklow Retail Strategy allocates the calculated floorspace need from the GDA Strategy only to settlements in Levels 2 and 3 as levels below this are considered to only meet local shopping needs, the demand for which will be determined at a local level. Allocation is derived from both the data provided in the GDA Strategy and the County growth objectives for the various settlements, as set out in the County settlement strategy. In order to ensure that indicative floorspace need is not overly prescriptive, Table 10.4 below sets out a range of floorspace need for Levels 2 and 3. It is not expected that retail provision in all settlements will reach the upper end of the range and in fact, such a scenario would result in significant overprovision in the County. However, due to infrastructural constraints some settlements may not reach even the lower end of the range, and therefore it is considered appropriate to allow for the possibility of significant additional retail in the larger towns to make up for shortfall elsewhere.

Table 10.4 Indicative floorspace need in County Wicklow up to 2016 (gross)

Level	Town	Convenience sqm	Comparison sqm
Level 2	Bray	5,000-7,500sqm	25,000-35,000sqm
	Wicklow	3,000-5,000sqm	7,000-15,000sqm
Level 3	Greystones	2,000-2,500sqm	7,000-10,000sqm
	Arklow	2,000-2,500sqm	7,000-10,000sqm
	Blessington	2,000-2,500sqm	2,000-3,000sqm
	Baltinglass	1,000-1,500sqm	2,000-3,000sqm
	Newtownmountkennedy	1,000-1,500sqm	2,000-3,000sqm
	Rathdrum	1,000-1,500sqm	2,000-3,000sqm
Total		**17,000-24,500sqm**	**54,000-82,000sqm**

(a) Bray

The GDA Retail Strategy estimates that Bray has a comparison goods floor space requirement of c. 14,000sqm (assuming all non-bulky goods)[4] or c. 10,000sqm (assuming all bulky goods)[4]. This County Strategy allows for growth in comparison space of between 25,000-35,000sqm. While this range is above the need identified in the GDA Strategy, Bray is better positioned to expand its comparison retail offer than a number of settlements lower down in the hierarchy and is the major town of the County and therefore it is considered appropriate to allow for substantial growth. Since the survey date (September 2007), approximately 26,000sqm of comparison floor space has been constructed or is awaiting commencement / under construction. Assuming all permitted developments proceed, there will be limited further need for significant comparison retail expansion in Bray up to 2016, other than in the planned expansion area of Fassaroe. It should be noted that c. 95% of this 26,000sqm is accounted for by one development – the Pizzaro development on the former Bray Golf Club lands (which has been granted by Bray TC but is currently on appeal to An Bord Pleanala).

The GDA Retail Strategy estimates that Bray has a convenience goods floor space requirement of c. 3,500sqm and the County Strategy allows for growth in the range 5,000- 7,500sqm. Since the survey date, approximately 15,000sqm of convenience floor space has been granted or constructed (assuming up to 8,000sqm (25%) of the permitted Pizarro development is devoted to convenience use). Assuming all permitted developments proceed, there will be no further need for significant convenience retail expansion in Bray up to 2016 and it would in fact appear that significant over provision has already been allowed. It must however be borne in mind that (a) convenience shopping is generally ‘local’ in the sense that shoppers tend to favour the closest location for such shopping (subject to market choice in any area), (b) the Golf Club development again accounts for a large proportion of this space and this site is ideally located in the heart of the town and therefore its development would not undermine the overall goal of improved sustainability and (c) the expansion area of Fassaroe will adequate local convenience facilities and (d) a number of assumption have been made about the comparison-convenience breakdown in arriving at this figure.

The area of Fassaroe in west Bray is planned to be developed as an expansion of Bray and the Bray Environs LAP indicates a target of c. 6,000 permanent residents and up to 16,000 employees in the area by 2016. This will necessitate the provision of retail services that provide for the needs of the residents and employees, while not undermining the role of Bray town centre as the principle shopping area in this expanded settlement. In this regard, the Bray Environs LAP gives an indicative figure for retail floorspace of 4,000sqm, to be divided equally between convenience and comparison use.

Therefore the strategy for Bray is:

1. To promote and encourage major enhancement of expansion of retail floorspace and town centre activities in Bray to sustain its competitiveness as a Major Town Centre and leisure destination in the GDA;
2. In the event of the delivery of the Pizarro development within the strategy period, no further significant retail permission will be granted other than (i) conversion of non-retail premises in the core area to retail use, (ii) renovation and expansion of existing retail 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;
3. Expansion of the retail warehousing sector, either at existing retail warehousing or industrial estate locations, or on new sites to be determined through the local area or town plan process;

[4] This does not include 20% to be utilised for non-retail services

4. Rejuvenation of the seafront area through the expansion of retail and non-retail services, particularly targeted at the visitor market and tourism products;
5. To allow for the enhancement of existing neighbourhood retail facilities;
6. To provide for appropriately scaled retail provision in the expansion area of Fassaroe, 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.

(b) Wicklow Town

The GDA Retail Strategy estimates that Wicklow Town has a comparison goods floor space requirement of c. 10,500sqm (assuming all non-bulky goods)[5] or 7,500sqm (assuming all bulky goods)[5]. This County Strategy therefore allows for growth in comparison space of between 7,000-15,000sqm. Since the survey date (September 2007), no new comparison floor space has been granted planning permission or constructed. There is a notable absence of retail warehousing in Wicklow Town, given its designation as County Town and its role in the settlement hierarchy.

The GDA analysis suggests that Wicklow town is already oversupplied with convenience retail floorspace to the order of 500sqm. Since the survey date (September 2007), another c. 1,400sqm of convenience floor space has been granted planning permission (with only c. 220sqm constructed to date). The GDA figure is clearly anomalous given the projected growth of Wicklow town and its environs, its status as a Level 2 retail centre and the existing quantum of convenience floorspace provision utilised in the calculations (c. 3,500sqm). This may be due to the fact that the retail analysis for Wicklow town included Wicklow town in the same assessment zone as Bray and Greystones, the result being that the zone appeared relatively well served with some limited retail expansion over its entire area. This approach clearly did not take account of the geography of this large zone and the historical draw of certain towns.

In this regard, the County strategy diverges away from the quantitative analysis in the GDA Strategy in order to redress this deficiency; however, the overall assessment of new floorspace need for the County will remain relatively consistent with the GDA Strategy.

Based on the County settlement strategy and population targets for 2016 and taking a catchment zone around Wicklow town encompassing Rathnew, Ashford, Roundwood, Rathdrum and the rural areas in between, it is estimated there may be a future population of up to 35,000 that would be drawn to Wicklow town for shopping. Taking from the GDA Strategy projected spend per capita in 2016 on convenience goods of c. €3,288 and the assumed convenience sales density per sqm in 2016 of €12,551, it is estimated that there may be potential for c. 9,000sqm of convenience floorspace. Taking away the existing floorspace (c. 3,500sqm), results in a rough estimate of 5,500sqm. This clearly needs to be adjusted downwards for spending that will flow out of the catchment, and therefore 5,000sqm is considered the upper limit for convenience floorspace expansion in Wicklow town.

With regard to comparison floor space (including bulky goods), there is an extant permission for c. 13,000sqm of floorspace, in the form of retail warehousing on Marlton Road (Lusra Teornata). This development has not commenced to date (July 2009) and in the event that this permission is initiated, there will be limited scope for additional comparison space in the town. The residual growth allowed by this strategy will be required to be reserved for non bulky good floorspace in the centre or edge of the core retail area.

Therefore the strategy for Wicklow Town is:
1. To promote and encourage enhancement and expansion of retail floorspace and town centre activities in Wicklow to enhance its role and importance as a County Town Centre in the GDA;
2. To strictly control the growth of convenience floorspace to that set out in this strategy;
3. To direct new retail development in the first instance into the town centre and in particular to derelict or under-utilised sites;

[5] This does not include 20% to be utilised for non-retail services

4. Only when town centre sites have been discounted shall significant retail provision be considered at edge of centre locations. In this regard, priority will be given to the development of the Marlton Action Area;
5. In the event of the delivery of the Lusra Teoranta retail warehousing development within the strategy 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;
6. 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);
7. To allow for the development of small number of neighbourhood centres in the major growth areas of the settlement.

(c) Other towns

The GDA Retail Strategy provides an estimate of comparison and convenience requirements up to 2016 for the remainder of the County (outside of Bray and Wicklow), but has not broken this down by town. The comparison requirement up to 2016 for the remainder of the County is estimated at c. 33,500sqm (assuming all non-bulky goods) or c. 24,500sqm (assuming all bulky goods)[6] and the convenience requirement up to 2016 for the remainder of the County is estimated at c.12,000sqm.
This has been allocated by Wicklow County Council over the other major towns as set out in Table 10.4 above.

Greystones

This strategy allocates Greystones 7,000-10,000sqm growth on comparison floor space and 2,000-2,500sqm of convenience floorspace. Since the survey date, approximately 3,000sqm of new retail space has been constructed or is awaiting commencement / under construction.
It is estimated that c. 1,000sqm of this floorspace may be devoted to convenience use and the remainder to comparison usage. Therefore there is only a need for a further c. 1,500sqm convenience floorspace and 8,000sqm comparison floorspace up to 2016.

While there is a site zoned in Charlesland for a district retail centre of up to 20,000sqm (net) retail floorspace and 16,000sqm (net) retail warehousing, an application for development of this scale in 2007 was rejected by An Bord Pleanala on the grounds of
a) the out of centre location, distant form the core retail area
b) the potential adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the existing town centre,
c) the scale of the retail floor space would be excessive to the designation of Greystones as Level 3 town centre, to serve mainly local needs and would conflict with Retail Hierarchy for the Greater Dublin Area as set out in the Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016
d) the scale of the development would undermine the retail hierarchy and the designated role of Bray and Wicklow as Level 2 town centres.

In light of the above, the strategy for Greystones is:
1. To promote and encourage enhancement of retail floorspace and town centre activities in Greystones to enhance its role and importance as a Level 3 Town Centre in the GDA in accordance with the allocation set out in this strategy;
2. To direct larger scale new retail development into the identified core area and failing suitable sites being available, to edge of centre sites and identified village centres.

[6] This does not include 20% to be utilised for non-retail services

Arklow

This strategy allocates Arklow 7,000-10,000sqm growth in comparison floor space and 2,000- 2,500sqm of convenience floorspace. Since the survey date, approximately 16,500sqm of new retail space has been constructed or is awaiting commencement / under construction (c. 6,500sqm convenience and 10,000sqm comparison). There is a further application for c. 8,400sqm of retail floorspace currently being considered by An Bord Pleanala (The Alps site).

All of the new comparison retail delivered is in the form of non-bulky goods, particularly clothing stores. There is limited retail warehousing available in Arklow, mostly confined to hardware and electrical outlets, which is a notable deficiency given the distance from the Metropolitan Area.

Therefore the strategy for Arklow is:

1. To promote and encourage consolidation and improvement to retailing and other town centre activities in the core area; however, no further significant retail permission will be granted other than (i) conversion of non-retail premises in the core area to retail use, (ii) renovation and expansion of existing retail 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;
2. Expansion of the retail warehousing sector, either at existing retail warehousing or industrial estate locations, or on new sites to be determined through the town or local area plan process.

Blessington

This strategy allocates Blessington 2,000-3,000sqm growth in comparison floor space and 2,000-2,500sqm of convenience floorspace. There have been no significant retail developments since the survey date. There are two major convenience shops in Blessington – Supervalu and Dunnes Stores, with the comparison offer is mainly provided by small independent shops on the Main Street, a small number of new shops in the Cookehill development and the comparison element of the Dunnes unit. There are no discount retailers and limited retail warehousing in Blessington.

The strategy for Blessington is:

1. To promote and encourage enhancement of retail floorspace and town centre activities in Blessington, in accordance with the allocation set out in this strategy;
2. To direct larger scale new retail development into the identified core area and failing suitable sites being available, to edge of centre sites;
3. To reserve 50% of the growth allocated to the identified core retail area;
4. To facilitate the development on a discount food store in the town;
5. Expansion of the retail-warehousing sector, either at existing retail warehousing or industrial estate locations, or on new sites to be determined through the local area plan process.

Baltinglass

This strategy allocates Baltinglass 2,000-3,000sqm growth in comparison floor space and 1,000-1,500sqm of convenience floorspace.

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. There have been no significant retail developments since the survey date, although there is extant permission for c. 2,000sqm convenience floorspace and 900sqm of comparison floorspace, including a supermarket of c. 1,300sqm. There are no discount retailers or retail warehouses in Baltinglass and given its catchment and distance from a major town centre, it is considered that these formats of retailing should be supported, to scale commensurate with the catchment and at appropriate locations that do not undermine the core area.

The strategy for Baltinglass is:

1. To promote and encourage enhancement of retail floorspace and town centre activities in Baltinglass, in accordance with the allocation set out in this strategy and in particular, to facilitate considerable growth in the comparison offer;
2. To direct larger scale new retail development into the identified core area and failing suitable sites being available, to edge of centre sites;

3. To reserve 50% of the growth allocated to the identified core retail area;
4. To facilitate the development of a discount food store, on appropriately zoned land in the town;
5. Expansion of the retail-warehousing sector, either at existing retail warehousing or industrial estate locations, or on new sites to be determined through the local area plan process.

Newtownmountkennedy

This strategy allocates Newtownmountkennedy 2,000-3,000sqm growth in comparison floor space and 1,000-1,500sqm of convenience floorspace. A number of new retail units have been constructed since the survey date in the new town centre development, totalling c. 1,750sqm (1,500sqm convenience and 250sqm comparison). The bulk of the convenience space is taken up by a 1,350sqm supermarket constructed, but to date unoccupied. While there is another current permission for 750sqm retail space on a vacant site adjacent to the Kilcoole Road junction, this development does not appear to be proceeding.

There are no discount retailers or retail warehousing in Newtownmountkennedy and given its size, role in the hierarchy and proximity to the major centres of Greystones and Bray, it is not considered that the provision of this format of retail is necessary in this settlement.

The strategy for Newtownmountkennedy is:

1. To promote and encourage enhancement of retail floorspace and town centre activities in Newtownmountkennedy, in accordance with the allocation set out in this strategy and in particular, to facilitate considerable growth in the comparison offer;
2. To require any new retail development to be located in the core retail area and to support applications for conversion / rejuvenation of existing properties along the Main Street.

Rathdrum

There is one supermarket in Rathdrum (c. 350sqm) and a number of smaller shops on the Main Street, but overall the retail offer is very limited in scale and range and the large ‘weekly’ shop would be carried out elsewhere in the County, with Wicklow town being the nearest large settlement. This weak offer will not meet the needs of the population of Rathdrum, if it is to grow to its 2016 target of 3,000 persons. Therefore this strategy allocates Rathdrum 2,000-3,000sqm growth on comparison floor space and 1,000-1,500sqm of convenience floorspace.

There have been no significant retail developments since the survey date, although there is extant permission for c. 2,000sqm of retail floorspace in a single development (Market Square redevelopment), mostly made up of smaller retail units and one 300sqm unit. The design and location of the smaller units would however allow for merging into larger units.

There are no discount retailers or retail warehouses in Rathdrum and given its size, role in the hierarchy and proximity to the major centres of Wicklow, it is not considered that the provision of this format of retail is necessary in this settlement.

The strategy for Rathdrum is:

1. To promote and encourage enhancement of retail floorspace and town centre activities in Rathdrum in accordance with the allocation set out in this strategy and in particular, to facilitate considerable growth in the comparison offer;
2. To control the scale of retail development in Rathdrum in accordance with the allocation set out in this strategy and in particular, to facilitate considerable growth in the comparison offer;
3. To require any new retail development to be located in the core retail area and to support applications for conversion / rejuvenation of existing properties along the Main Street.

10.4 Retail Objectives

10.4.1 General

RT1 Applications for new retail development shall accord with 'Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities' , (DoEHLG 2005) and any subsequent Ministerial guidelines or directives.

RT2 Applications for new retail development shall accord with the County Retail Strategy and where necessary, shall be accompanied by a Retail Impact Assessment (refer to Section 10.5 of this chapter)

RT3 The preferred location for new retail development where practicable and viable, is within a town centre (or district or major village centre). Where it is not possible to provide the form and scale of development that is required on a site within the town centre, then consideration can be given to a site on the edge of the town centre so as to encourage the possibility of one journey serving several purposes. An edge of centre site is taken to be one which is within an easy and convenient walking distance from the primary shopping core of a town centre. The distance considered to be convenient will vary according to local circumstances but typically is unlikely to be much more than 300-400m from the edge of the prime shopping area and less in smaller settlements.

RT4 There will be a presumption against large retail centres located adjacent, close to,or on a high speed route directly to existing, new or planned national roads/motorways. Such centres can lead to an inefficient use of costly and valuable infrastructure and may have the potential to undermine the regional/national transport role of the roads concerned. However, as a limited exception, large retail warehouses may be considered for locations close to such road networks where the proposed development would be situated where the road network has sufficient capacity to cater for the scale of development proposed.

RT5 The 'sequential approach' to the location of new retail development will be applied i.e. having assessed the size, availability, accessibility, and feasibility of developing both new sites and existing premises, firstly within a town centre and secondly on the edge of a town centre, alternative out of centre sites should be considered only where it can be demonstrated that there are no town centre or edge of centre sites which are suitable, viable and available.

RT6 Regard shall be taken of the indicative floorspace need set out in Table 10.4 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.

10.4.2 Town centres (Levels 2, 3 and 4 of the Wicklow retail hierarchy)

TR1 Shopping provision is a key component of town centres, and makes a major contribution to their vitality and viability. It is important therefore that they retain retailing as a core function. 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.

TR2 The mix and balance of different type of retail (including retail services) is important to attract people to these centres, and to ensure town centres remain the main meeting point for the community. Too many of certain types of outlet can destroy the balance of the town centre, and accordingly the Planning Authority will control the number of bookmakers, off-licences (including off-licences in convenience stores), financial institutions, and other uses that can adversely affect the character of a town centre.

TR3 In order to sustain and enhance the vitality of town centres, active 1st floor uses will be required in all new developments and particular encouragement will be given to 'living over the shop'. Where such use is proposed, a relaxation in density, car parking and open space standards will be considered, where the development meets very high quality of design and accommodation.

TR4 New retail developments in town centres will be required to provide proximate and easily accessible car parking or to make a financial contribution towards car parking where it has been or will be provided by the Local Authority. Access to public transport services (where available) shall be provided which may include the provision of new bus stops with the agreement of service providers and shelters / waiting areas.

TR5 Applications for new retail developments in town centres shall make every effort to integrate successfully new retail development, much of which will be of a scale larger than the existing urban grain, into the townscape of existing centres. Attention shall be given to the location of service yards and treatment of car parking areas so as to avoid unsightly views and special consideration shall be given to the detailing of extensive frontages and flank walls.

TR6 Where new retail development is considered 'large scale' in relation to the existing town centre, the onus is on the applicant to demonstrate compliance with the development plan and that there will not be a material adverse impact on the vitality and viability of any existing town centre. In submitting evidence in relation to retail impact the applicant shall address the following criteria and demonstrate whether or not the proposal would:

- support the overall strategy for town centres as set out in the development plan and not materially diminish the prospect of attracting private sector investment into one or more town centres;
- cause an adverse impact on one or more town centres, either singly or cumulatively with recent developments or other outstanding planning permissions, sufficient to undermine the quality of the centre or its role in the economic and social life of the community;
- diminish the range of activities and services that a town centre can support;
- cause an increase in the number of vacant properties in the primary retail area that is likely to persist in the long term;
- ensure a high standard of access both by public transport, foot and private car so that the proposal is easily accessible by all sections of society;
- link effectively with an existing town centre so that there is likely to be commercial synergy.

TR7 Where an application for new retail development is made within the defined core retail area of a **major** town or **County** town centre it will not always be necessary to demonstrate the quantitative need for retail proposals in assessing such proposed developments. In setting out the retail impact of the development the report should focus on how the scheme will add/detract from the quality of the town centre - both in relation to improving retail, urban design, integration with the built fabric and quality of life in the town/centre.

TR8 Positive consideration shall be given to the re-configuration of existing retail provision in Levels 2 and 3, to accommodate large modern retail units.

10.4.3 District centres

DC1 New district centres shall generally only be considered within the built up area of major conurbations or in the suburbs of large towns. At such locations, the applicant will be required to show that;

- the location of the development is sufficiently separated from the core retail area of the settlement as to warrant new retail facilities;
- the retail development is located and sized to meet the needs of the new development without impacting on the viability of the existing town centre;
- the range of retail and non-retail services to be provided is appropriate to the needs of the area;
- all efforts have been made to integrate the district centre with any new community facilities due to be provided as part of the scheme e.g. schools, childcare facilities, sports fields etc.

10.4.4 Large foodstores

Large foodstores comprising supermarkets, superstores or hypermarkets are an accepted component of the retail hierarchy. They serve mainly the large weekly convenience goods shopping requirements of families. They require large clear areas of floorspace together with adjacent car parking as the majority (but not all) of families undertake their weekly bulk convenience shopping by car.

LF1 Large foodstores shall be required to be located on suitably zoned lands in town centres or on the edge of the centre where public transport provision can be made available for shoppers.

LF2 Where a proposal for foodstore development involves the sale of a significant amount of non-food goods (as is common in hypermarkets) the application drawings accompanying a planning application shall delineate clearly the area to be devoted primarily for the sale of convenience goods. Floorspace caps set out in the Retail Planning Guidelines will apply to the total net retail sales space of superstores and the convenience goods net retail sales space of hypermarkets delineated on application drawings. To prevent any adverse impact on town centres, the proportion of comparison goods floorspace shall be limited to a maximum of 20% of retail floor area.

10.4.5 Neighbourhood centres

NC1 New neighbourhood centres shall generally only be considered in areas of significant residential expansion on the edges of settlements in Levels 2 and 3 of the retail hierarchy. At such locations, the applicant will be required to show that;

- the scale of the new residential development is such to sustain a neighbourhood centre;
- the retail development is located and sized to meet the needs of the new development without impacting on the viability of the existing town centre (total retail floorspace in excess of 500sqm shall not generally be considered);
- the location of the development is sufficiently separated from the core retail area of the settlement as to warrant new retail facilities;
- the range of retail and non-retail services to be provided is appropriate to the needs of the area;
- all efforts have been made to integrate the neighbourhood centre with any new community facilities due to be provided as part of the scheme e.g. schools, childcare facilities, sports fields etc.

10.4.6 Out of town shopping centres

This is defined as an out-of-centre development on a green field site, or on land not clearly within the current urban boundary.

OT1 There shall be general presumption against out of town shopping centres.

10.4.7 Village retail

VR1 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:-

- such shops shall be located in the core retail area of the village (if one exists) or the traditional historical village 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 village and prevailing village character, with particular regard to building form, height and materials and shall generally be required to incorporate a traditional shop front.

10.4.8 Rural retail

RR1 Rural shops, not connected (either functionally or spatially) to any settlement shall not be considered other than

- a small (not exceeding 100sqm) farm shop or shop ancillary to activities arising from farm diversification;

- a small (not exceeding 100sqm) shop ancillary to a craft workshop, retailing the product directly to the public;
- a small scale (not exceeding 100sqm) shop designed to serve a dispersed rural community, provided this does not undermine the viability of retail facilities in a nearby village or town.

10.4.9 Tourism retail

TR1 Tourism retail [7] 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 [8] and linkage of the tourism identity / product [9])
- 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.

10.4.10 Retail warehousing

A retail warehouse is defined as a large single-level store specialising in the sale of bulky household goods such as carpets, furniture and electrical goods, and bulky DIY items, catering mainly for carborne customers and often in out-of-centre locations. Retail parks comprise a single development of a least three retail warehouses with associated car parking.

RW1 New retail warehouse developments and retail parks shall be required to be located on suitably zoned lands in settlements. Where no such zoned lands are provided and a need can be shown for this form of retailing, the applicant must show through the application of the sequential approach that the site selected is suitable and optimal.

RW2 A recent trend in a number of parks has been a blurring of the division between bulky and non-bulky goods retailers, with some parks now containing major clothing chains and food retailers. Continuing to allow this mixing of uses such as fashion chains into retail parks is likely to result in a negative impact on adjoining town centres as the large size units readily available in retail parks are easily accessible by car, but not public transport, and divert trade away from the town core. Therefore where permission is granted for new retail warehouse development, the planning authority shall apply strict conditions on floor size (including restricting internal expansion by the construction of 1st floors or mezzanines), the type of goods to be sold or restricting the subdivision into smaller units.

RW3 Permission for retail warehouses shall generally only be considered as part of planned retail warehouse parks, which combine access arrangement and car parking.

RW4 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, the form of development is in keeping with good urban design and the development would not detract from local plan aspirations for the area.

[7] 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.
[8] For example footpaths / cycleways or shuttle bus / jaunting car connections from the retail facility to the tourism feature
[9] For example joint marketing strategies, co-ordinated signage etc

10.4.11 Discount foodstores

Discount food store generally comprise a single level, self service store normally of between 1,000sqm – 1,500sqm of gross floorspace selling a limited range of goods at competitive prices, often with adjacent car parking.

DF1 Discount foodstores shall be required to locate on suitably zoned lands and shall only be considered in settlements in Levels 2 and 3 in the County retail hierarchy. Where no such zoned lands are provided and a need can be shown for this form of retailing, the applicant must show through the application of the sequential approach that the site selected is suitable and optimal. To prevent any adverse impact on town centres, the proportion of comparison goods floorspace shall be limited to a maximum of 20% of retail floor area.

10.4.12 Regional shopping centres

These are out-of-town retail malls generally of 50,000sqm gross retail floorspace or more, typically enclosing a wide range of clothing and other comparison goods with extensive dedicated car parking. Regional shopping centres have not normally in the past incorporated retail warehouses, but this is not exclusively the case.

RS1 There shall be general presumption against out of town regional shopping centres

10.4.13 Outlet centres

This is defined as a group of shops, usually in out-of centre locations, specialising in selling seconds and end-of-line goods at discounted prices. Such centres generally have a regional market and draw customers from a wide catchment. The specialist nature of these outlets differentiates them from the more general regional shopping centres described in Section 10.4.12 above.

OC1 There shall be a general presumption against out-of-town regional shopping facilities; however, specialist outlet centres may be considered where the following criteria are met:

- 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 synergy with the local economy in terms of providing for links to local businesses or tourism in the area.

10.4.14 Factory shops

FS1 Factory shops (i.e. as a shop adjacent to the production unit and specialising in the sale of manufacturers' products direct to the public) shall be positively considered where the following criteria are met:

- the zoning of the site specifically allows for this use or in the case where the relevant local plan does not make reference to factory shops, the shop is strictly ancillary to the main production activity on the site;
- additional car parking (over and above that required by the manufacturing facility alone) is available or can be provided for shoppers.

10.4.15 Garden centres / nurseries

GC1 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 principle activity is the cultivation of plants and the retail activity is purely ancilliary 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.

10.4.16 Petrol filling stations

PF1 Notwithstanding the sequential approach, a shop of up to 100sqm of net retail sales area may be allowed when associated with a petrol filling station. Where retail space in excess of 100sqm of net retail sales area associated with petrol filling facilities is sought the sequential approach to retail development will apply, i.e. the retail element of the development shall be assessed by the planning authority in the same way as would an application for retail development (without petrol filling facilities) in the same location.

10.4.17 Farmer's Markets

These are generally temporary short term (e.g. of single day or weekend duration) public markets at which farmers and often other vendors sell produce directly to consumers. In Ireland this has evolved to include fish, processed meats and foodstuffs, clothing products and crafts, and hot food for immediate consumption.

FM1 Positive consideration will be given to applications for farmer's markets in towns and villages where the development accords with good planning principles, in particular:

- suitable access and car parking arrangements being made for sellers and purchasers;
- suitable pedestrian and vehicular circulation being maintained in the town/village for the duration of the market;
- a suitable degree of visual amenity being provided with regard to positioning and design of stalls and ancillary facilities including waste storage;
- any impacts on residential amenity being minimal and short term.

10.5 Criteria for the assessment of retail developments

Applications for new retail development shall be assessed against a range of criteria, as set out to follow. All applications for retail development will be required to show how the development complies with these criteria. Where

- the development exceeds 5,000sqm in a Level 1 or 2 centre
- the development exceeds 2,500sqm in a Level 3 centre
- the development exceeds 1,000sqm in a Level 4 centre
- the development exceeds 500sqm elsewhere

this information will be required to be provided by the applicant in the form of a Retail Impact Assessment (in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines and emerging best practice).
The Planning Authority may however require full or partial RIA as may be specified at preplanning stage for any development below these thresholds where it is perceived that local circumstances require an assessment to be carried out.

10.5.1 The need for the development

The need for additional retail will be evaluated against the population of the catchment area to be served by the proposed new retail development and the availability of existing retail within that zone.

All applications for new retail in excess of the following limits (**other than sites within the defined core retail area**) will be required to submit an assessment[10] setting out (a) the catchment area for the new development (generally based on proximity and travel time, given the nature of the retailing proposed), (b) an estimate of the catchment population, (c) an estimate of available expenditure for that type of retailing within the catchment, (d) the quantum of similar retail floor space within that catchment.

[10] Which may or may not form part of a full Retail Impact Assessment, depending on the scale and location of the proposal

Hierarchy level	Convenience	Comparison
2	1,000sqm	2,000sqm
3	1,000sqm	2,000sqm
4	500sqm	1,000sqm
5	200sqm	500sqm
Outside Levels 1-5	200sqm	500sqm

10.5.2 The sequential approach

Having evaluated the size, availability, accessibility, and feasibility of developing both sites and premises, firstly within a town centre and secondly on the edge of a town centre, alternative out of centre sites shall be considered **only** where it can be demonstrated that there are no town centre or edge of centre sites which are suitable, viable and available.

When making planning applications, retail developers must be adaptable and flexible in appraising potential sites and buildings and should be prepared to make reasonable compromises and, if possible, adapt standard development formats in order to accommodate retail schemes on sites, which are well located in relation to the sequential approach to retail development.

In this regard, all applications for new retail **in excess of** the limits set out in Section 10.5.1 (**other than sites within the defined core retail area**) will be required to submit an assessment [11] detailing

a) the location of the proposed development vis-a-vis the core retail area of the town or settlement (as set out in this retail strategy) or other lands in that settlement zoned for retail or other commercial / mixed use,
b) where the application is for development in a town / settlement for which no core retail area has been identified or where no local plan exists showing the designated 'town centre' area, the location of the traditional / historical centre of the settlement and the location of other retail units
c) where the proposed development is not located in a suitable centre, edge of centre or zoned site, full explanation of the reasons why such sites are not suitable, viable or available and an assessment of trade draw away from the established core that would occur were the development to proceed

10.5.3 Impact on existing centres

New retail developments can have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of established town centres. This is a consequence of the competitive environment in which retailing operates. Though it is not the purpose of the planning system to prevent competition, proper planning and development includes promoting healthy town centres, in the public interest. Where new developments compromise this planning goal, permission shall not be considered.

In this regard, applications for new retail **in excess of** the limits set out in Section 10.5.1 (**other than sites within the defined core retail area**) will be required to submit an assessment of the likelihood of a material adverse impact on the vitality and viability of existing town centres, which shall address

a) any impact the development would have on the overall strategy for economic development, settlement growth and town centres as set out in the development plan (including any impact on the wider economy and rural areas)
b) the physical and functional links between the proposed development and the existing town centre; in particular vehicular and pedestrian linkage and commercial synergy
c) any cumulative impact the proposed development would have on an existing town centre, taken in conjunction with recent developments or outstanding permissions and whether any impact would be sufficient to undermine the quality of the centre or its role in the economic and social life of the community
d) any impact resulting from the development on the range of activities and services that a town centre can support, including any increase in vacancy in the primary retail area that may result.

[11] Which may or may not form part of a full Retail Impact Assessment, depending on the scale and location of the proposal

10.5.4 Availability of transport

Retail development is most accessible to customers where it is well located within its catchment area and is accessed both by public transport and the private car and ideally, also by foot. Retail development should also be in such location that allow for multi-purpose shopping, business and leisure trips on the same journey.
In line with the principle of sustainability, it is desirable that 'daily shopping' which encompasses convenience, specialty and retail service shopping such as supermarket, chemist, florist, news agency, dry cleaner, off-licence/ wine store and hairdresser, should be 'walk to' or accessible by public transport. The reality is, however, that most shoppers, especially families, do not have the luxury of daily shopping and will do one or two big shopping trips per week, necessitating the use of private transport, especially in more rural areas and in urban areas where there is a lack of competitive food stores.

In this regard, all applications for new retail **in excess of** the limits set out in Section 10.5.1 will be required to submit an assessment [12] detailing

a) the location of the proposed development vis-a-vis existing transport networks (road, rail, cycleways etc)
b) the scale and type of retail proposed, the principal transport method likely to be required to avail of the service and the facilities required to be provided as part of the development to facilitate the suitable transport of people and goods
c) how the development can be considered sustainable (both environmentally and socially) given the proposed location and likely principal transport method and what actions are to be put in place by the developer to improve accessibility by sustainable means

Applications for out of town retail developments shall be accompanied by a transport assessment showing how trips to and from the proposed development might affect the road network and public transport links. If the proposed development warrants an environmental impact assessment, the transport assessment shall form part of the EIS.

10.5.5 The qualitative aspects of the proposal, including scale

Chapter 5 of this plan sets out the requirements of the Council with regard to urban form, building scale, height and other qualitative parameters.

10.6 Retail and shopfront design standards

These shopfront design standards are drawn from the 'Guidelines for Shopfront Design in Bray' (Bray Town Council / Colm O'Broin & Partners 2007), and although this document was drawn up for the Bray, for the most part its guidance is relevant to all settlements in the County and reference should be made to this document in the designing of any new shopfronts. The function of the shopfront is two-fold; to identify a retail premises within a street by way of name, signage and window display and to express the architectural character of a building at ground floor level.

Elements of shopfront design

10.6.1 Shopfront style

The shopfront is part of the building and the building is part of the street. Where a shopfront is to be installed, it should normally be of materials or finishes appropriate to the age, style and character of the building and its surrounding area.
While contemporary design is generally encouraged, in settlements or areas with very traditional shopfront formats, a traditional style shopfront may be the most appropriate solution. However, at locations where there are a range of shop front styles, and no common vernacular, a modern solution is preferred over inaccurate historical representations.

[12] Which may or may not form part of a full Retail Impact Assessment, depending on the scale and location of the proposal

10.6.2 Fascia

The primary function of the fascia is to advertise the name of the shop. The fascia also gives visual support to the upper floors and helps frame the shop window.
The fascia should be of an appropriate height, in scale with the overall height of the shopfront and other elements of the building. A failing of many modern shopfronts is the application of overlarge and inappropriate fascias, superimposed on the front of originals and obscuring such detailed elements as consoles and cornices. The fascia should not encroach on or above first floor level or extend uninterrupted across a number of buildings.

10.6.3 Signage

- Signage shall generally be limited to the fascia, but may also be considered on or behind glazing and on columns or doorways.
- Lettering is to be in proper proportion to the size of the fascia and to the scale of the building. As a general rule, the lettering should be restricted to half the fascia width, taking care to leave sufficient space at top, bottom and sides. Shop lettering should convey the essential message of the retailer. The shop name alone will generally have most effect.
- Each shop should have its street number displayed. This could be included as part of the fascia, on glazing above the door, or on the door itself.
- Generally, individually mounted lettering or handpainted lettering will be required.
- Sandwich boards will not be permitted as they can give the appearance of clutter in the townscape and can be a hazard to the disabled and visually impaired if not carefully designed and positioned.
- The illumination of shopfronts and signage is generally considered unnecessary. In certain circumstances, for example where the business is open in the evening, modest levels of discreet lighting (the purpose of which is to light the lettering and not bathe the whole façade and pavement in a pool of light) may be permitted.

10.6.4 Doors & windows

- Shop windows should be set in the same plane as the building front with any recessed areas being confined to the entrance door.
- Frosted glazing rather that solid signage should be used where the use requires a degree of privacy (e.g. non-retail services such as solicitors, surgeries etc) or where the layout of the shop requires functional elements or shelves to be located directly behind the window;
- Access should be made easy for everybody including those in wheelchairs or with other aids to mobility; the visually impaired; parents with pushchairs and young children; the elderly and those carrying heavy bags. Shopfronts should be designed with level access at pavement level. Where this is impossible, a ramp rather than steps must be provided.

10.6.5 Canopies

- The use of awnings will be considered provided these are not installed principally as a means of increasing advertisement space.
- New awnings are most effectively positioned below the fascia and between the pilasters as this means the shop name will not be hidden. Awnings should always be retractable and ideally made of canvas or similar materials.
- Generally the colour chosen should be subdued as bright or gaudy colours will often jar with neighbouring shops and undermine the quality of the street scene.

10.6.6 Materials

- Materials used in shopfront construction should be of good quality, durable, and should respect the age and character of the building and adjoining street.
- Timber is an appropriate material for shopfront construction, it is versatile, durable, easily and cheaply maintained or altered. Modern materials such as aluminium and plastic may be considered for contemporary shopfronts. Other high quality materials such as marble, terrazzo, bronze or chrome might also be suitable for use in such locations.
- The number of different materials shall be minimised, as too wide a range can result in a confused or chaotic appearance.
- The integration of existing materials with modern materials is recommended, creating a balance of finish and texture and establishing a sense of permanence in contemporary design. Historic robust materials such as granite, limestone, brick, timber, cast iron, brass and copper can be integrated with lightweight contemporary materials such as stainless steel and glass.

10.6.7 Colour

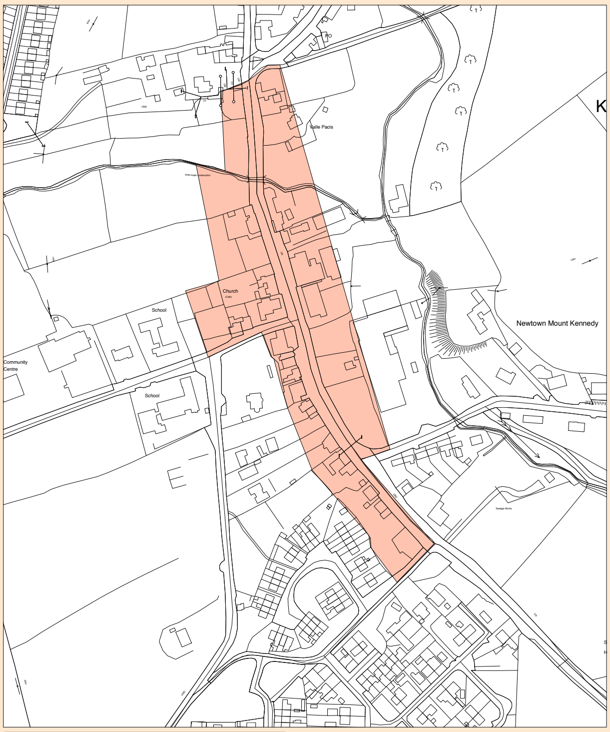
- When considering the colour of new or replacement shopfronts it is important that the selected colour scheme complements the character and style of the building, rather than conflicting with it. Shopfronts are traditionally painted in strong colours, which are slow to fade. The use of rich colours, such as dark shades of green, blue, red and black is recommended.
- Corporate colours should be restricted to the main signage of the shopfront and not the entire shopfront.

10.6.8 Security

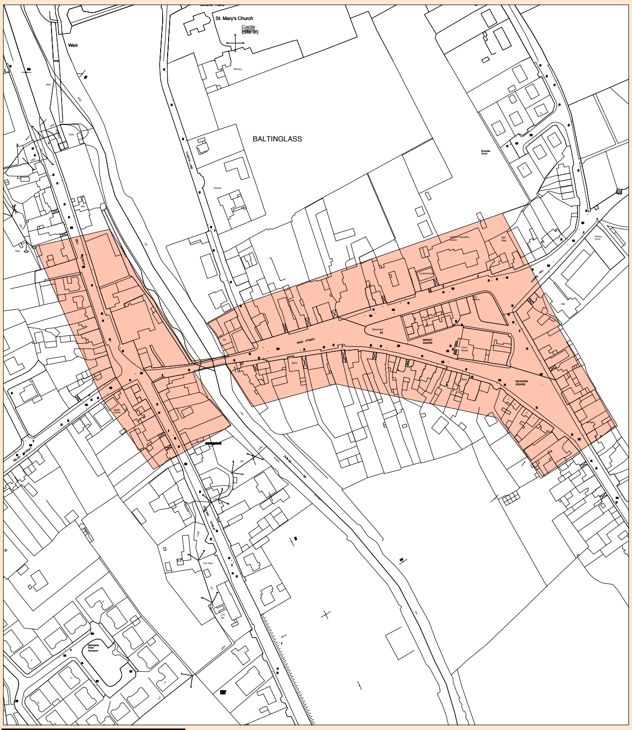
- Solid external shutters which completely cover the shopfront when closed have a major impact on the street scene and therefore will not be permitted;
- Where there is an obvious need for enhanced security, the use of alternative methods of protection should be considered, for example:
  - toughened / laminated glass, which incorporates a plastic interlayer and can remain intact even when broken;
  - additional glazing bars reduce glazing size, thus strengthening glass area and reducing opportunities for theft;
  - internal open-mesh window grilles, fixed inside shop windows behind glass, allow views into the shop even after hours and give a less fortified appearance than external grilles.
- Alarm boxes should be as unobtrusive as possible. If the box is to be positioned on the shopfront, then aesthetically the best position is usually at a corner of the fascia. The box must be painted to suit the shop colour scheme. Wiring should be integrated and redundant wiring removed.
- Appropriate use of lighting may reduce the likelihood of a break in. The lighting should generally not be so strong as to illuminate the area outside the shop, as this might affect the character of the area.
- The use of upper floor for residential use is an effective way of improving security. Having a constant presence over the premises is one of the most efficient ways of reducing crime and vandalism and often involves little alteration which might affect the character of the building.

Core Retail Area

Map No. 10.01



NewtownMountKennedy



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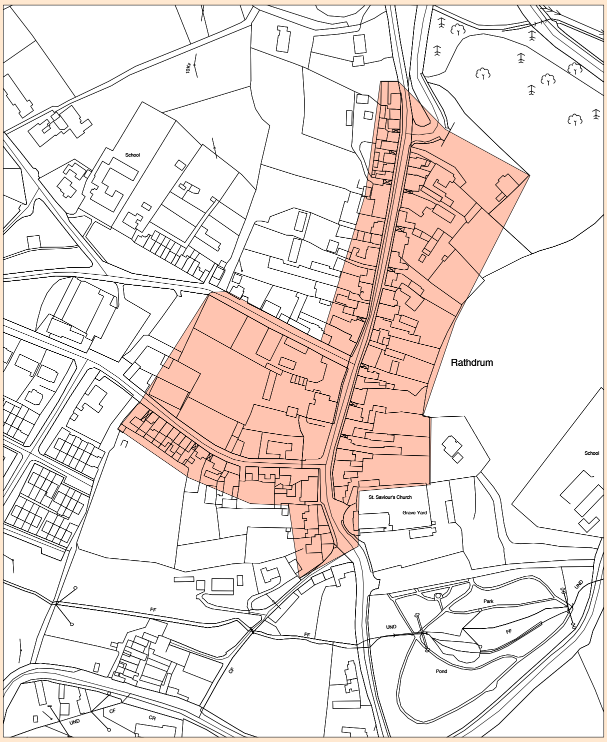
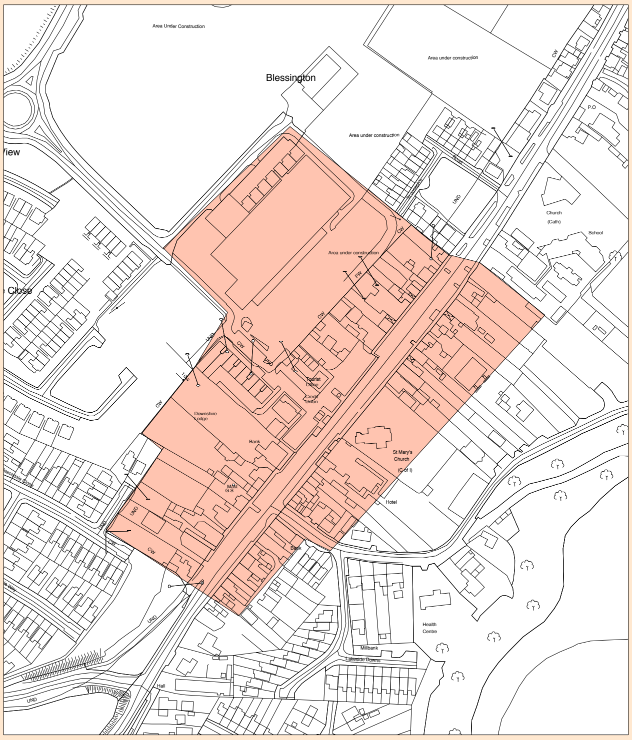


Rathdrum



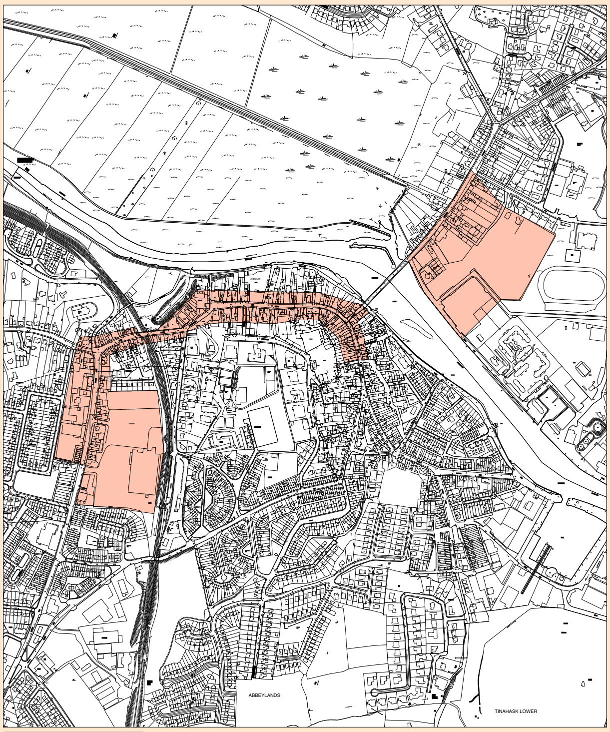
Blessington

LEGEND

Core Retail Area

Core Retail Area

Map No. 10.02



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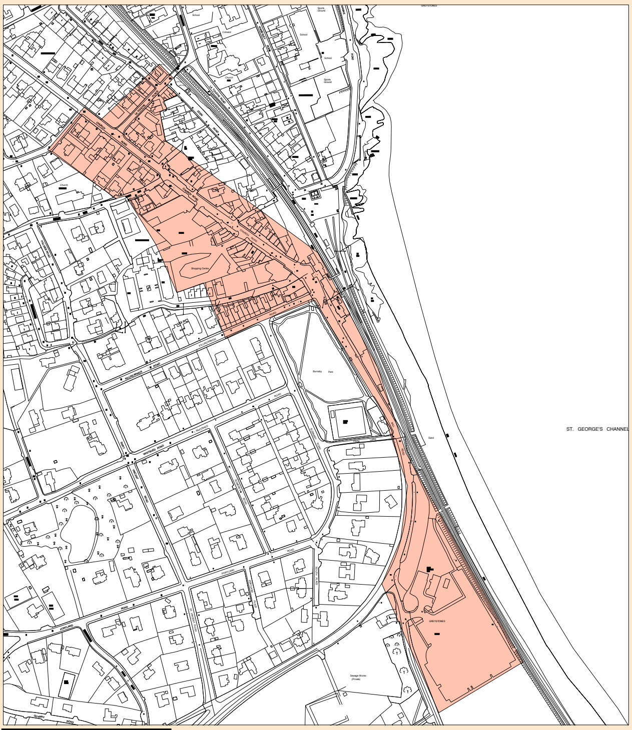
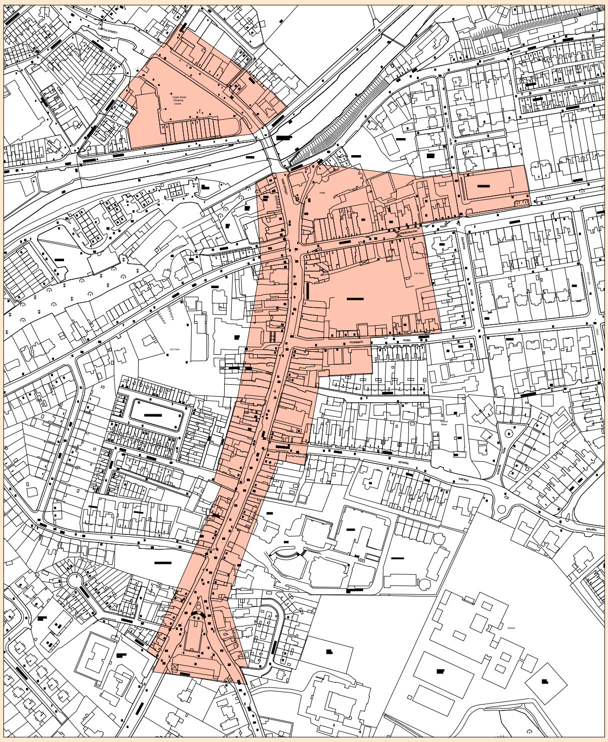
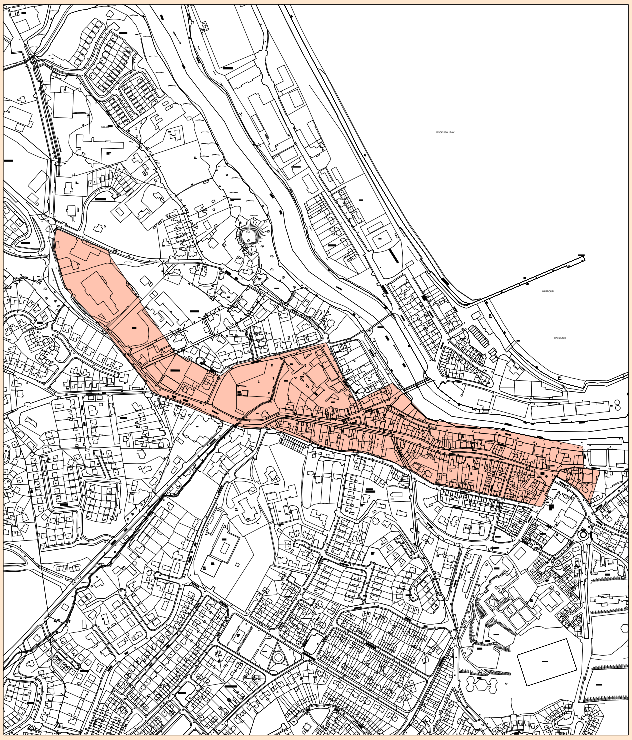


Greystones



Bray



Wicklow

LEGEND

Core Retail Area