

NEWCASTLE TOWN PLAN



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1. Purpose of this plan

The purpose of this plan is to put in place a structure that will guide the future sustainable development of Newcastle. This Plan, in conjunction with the County Development Plan, will inform and manage the future development of the town. While Newcastle is a small settlement, its proximity to the N11 national route and Dublin, as well as its charm, beautiful setting and its small size, puts it under severe development pressure.

The aim of this plan is to establish a framework for the planned, coordinated, and sustainable development of Newcastle, and to enhance and facilitate the balancing of economic, social and environmental infrastructure in the interests of the community.

This plan will ensure that residential development is located in a sustainable manner close to commercial development and amenities, that it will take place in tandem with physical, community and amenity infrastructure, and this plan will designate land for such usage.

Town Plan Status

As this plan is part of and forms a subset of the County Development Plan it is not proposed to include a repetition of the policies, objectives or strategies as set out in the CDP. Where standards or objectives for a particular development are not included in this plan the provisions of the CDP shall apply. The plan will however seek to formulate appropriate Newcastle specific development objectives and guidance, compatible with those of the CDP, to assist the Development Management process in managing sustainable progress for the town.

2. Location, population & context

Newcastle is situated in County Wicklow 2km to the east of the N11 route on the R761 Regional Road, approximately 4km south of Kilcoole, 4km from Newtownmountkennedy, approximately 12km north of Wicklow Town and south of Greystones/Delgany and approximately 2km from the coast.

Newcastle is classified in the County Development Plan 2010-2016 as a 'Rural Town' with a 2006 Census population of 938. The County Development Plan 2010-2016 envisages a population of 1,500 by 2016 and 1,750 by 2022. Land use designation in this plan will be based on a population of 1,500.

Newcastle contains a Church of Ireland national school, Church of Ireland church, a public house, local convenience shop, a car sales outlet and motor repair shop, GAA facility, soccer pitch, playground, tennis courts, community hall, garden centre, and religious centre. The topography in Newcastle Lower is predominately flat while the gradient to the west of the main street in Newcastle middle is steeper and increases from the 20m contour to the 40m contour line.

There are several well-established, medium density housing estates in the town of Newcastle including a new 32-house scheme that has commenced construction and of which 12 are built.

Historical Context

The name of the village has its origins from the first castle that was built close to the village between the years of 1177 and 1184 by Hugh De Lacey, then Governor of Ireland under Henry II. There were only two royal castles at that time, one in the city of Dublin and the other in Newcastle.

The Royal castle in Newcastle was known as Novum Castrum McKynegan. It was subsequently destroyed during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and rebuilt as a gatehouse. The ruins are on the edge of a motte with an unusually large and flat summit some 69m in diameter and 4.8m high. In 1606 Wicklow became a County arising from decisions taken at Newcastle and recommended to the Privy Council at Dublin castle.

Urban Form

Over the past hundred and fifty years, the village has developed around two poles: one around the church, rectory, national school and the ruined castle, and the other around the junctions on regional route R761, sea road and the link road back to the church and school. This pole contains the shops, public house, and post office for the village. In the 1970s the first large housing estates were built immediately south of the latter area, followed by the community centre, GAA club, a religious institution, and by several other residential estate developments up to the present. These have all been sited to the southern side of the R761 pole, and larger houses have been constructed to the north of this pole.

This is clearly the dominant development area of Newcastle, and the future land use designations will accordingly be concentrated around this development pole. Furthermore, Town Centre facilities will be centred around the bridge to reinforce and consolidate the existing commercial facilities. All other zonings are based on enabling access to these facilities by walking and cycling. The dominant physical attribute of Newcastle is the open spacious character of Main St, a rarity in terms of the spatial organisation of villages. This Plan will seek to reinforce this relaxed organic form.

The map defines the development boundary in red and defines the wider hinterland/ agricultural greenbelt. The map shows the environs boundary in green. The wider boundary encompasses assets and amenities that are particular to Newcastle, such as the immediate rural landscape, the beach at Sea Road, railway, the Kilcoole Marshes Special Protection Area and the BirdWatch Ireland reserve. It extends northwards to the junction of the R761 and Leabeg Lane, south to the junction of the R761 and Five Mile Point Road, westwards towards the N11, eastwards to the sea, and incorporates the townlands of Newcastle Lower, Middle, and Upper, Leamore Lower, and Upper, Blackditch, and part of Tiglin.

3. Settlement function & role

The Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area (RPGs) put in place a broad planning framework for the development of the Greater Dublin Area of which Wicklow forms a part. The Guidelines are informed by and flow from the National Spatial Strategy 2002 – 2020. The RPG's provide an overall strategic context for the Development Plans of each Local Authority.

The RPG's make a distinction between the existing built up area and its environs where the built up area is the Metropolitan and the remainder the Hinterland with a range of settlement sizes that have the potential to attain an enhanced level of sustainability. Northeast Wicklow including Bray and Greystones/Delgany, and their environs, are within the Metropolitan area while the remainder of the County is Hinterland.

The County Development Plan 2010-2016 settlement strategy seeks to locate population growth and channel development in line with the principles of the RPGs. It promotes a hierarchy of settlements in recognition that the settlement role and function is a product of scale and spatial distribution and designates Newcastle a 'Rural Town'.

However, unlike most of the other towns in this category, Newcastle does not have a large hinterland and is very close to the settlements of Newtownmountkennedy and Kilcoole, that both have a higher designation in the CDP as 'Moderate Growth Town' and 'Small Growth Town' respectively. In addition it is within 12km of both Wicklow Town and Greystones/Delgany that have even higher designations again.

To fulfil its remit this plan shall not make provision for development of a scale that is commensurate with and appropriate for higher order settlements. Rather Newcastle's role is to sustain the local community and those of the town's environs through crafted land use policies and objectives scaled to meet the needs of the settlement.

4. Transportation, traffic & parking infrastructure

Newcastle, as defined within the development boundary of the map is principally situated around the pole defined by Regional Road R761 and Local Road L5050 that runs towards St Francis Primary School and Sea Road. Apart from a pinch point just north of the Town Centre, the R761 is reasonably aligned, though it lacks footpaths and public lighting to the north of the town centre and south of the community centre. The L5050 is very narrow in places and lacks pedestrian links between the Town Centre and St Francis School. While the construction of a footpath linking the school with the Town Centre has commenced, final land acquisition is not yet complete.

Sea Road is very narrow in places, especially at its junction with the R761, and requires footpaths for most of the distance to the GAA club. Further development along Sea Road will not be permitted until these shortcomings have been addressed. Parking to accommodate new developments shall be resolved through the Development Management process. Public transport frequency has improved in recent years and there are 15 buses per day serving the village connecting to Kilcoole, Greystones, Bray and Dublin. There is potential for a rail halt adjoining the beach at the end of Sea Road, similar to that at Kilcoole. There is a need to develop the permeability of the existing and emerging settlement by the provision of pedestrian and cycling links throughout the Town, and in particular a pedestrian link between the town centre and St Francis Primary School.

Objectives

- Improve the road and provide a footpath, along the L5050 between the village centre and St. Francis School;
- Improve the road and provide a footpath and cycleway adjoining the beech hedge, along the R761, at the south of the village at the Watchtower Centre;
- Improve the road where required and provide a footpath and cycleway, along the of the R761 from the L5050 to the north of the village;
- Improve the road and provide a footpath, along the L5550 (Sea Road), from Hunters Leap to the R761;
- Realign the junction of Sea Road/R761, in conjunction with the redevelopment of the adjacent site;
- Provide pedestrian and cycling linkages within and between existing and new housing/mixed use development throughout the village;
- Require any development taking place at Oaklawn to provide a linear park, cycleway and footpath, properly lit, along the Newcastle River to facilitate a link to the L5550. The link point shall make provision for a vehicular access from zoned low density housing land adjoining to the south;
- Make land use provision for a rail halt at the end of Sea Road as shown on the map within the agriculture/greenbelt;
- Complete the public lighting shortfall throughout the town in conjunction with the development of zoned land.

5. Water Services Infrastructure

Water Supply

Newcastle is currently supplied by the Vartry Scheme via a Reservoir to the west of Newcastle, which has capacity of approx 90 m³. It is intended to upgrade this reservoir to 450m³ as part of the Newtownmountkenedy Regional Water Scheme, and upgrade distribution mains accordingly. These works are expected to be completed by 2010. The existing supply is capable of servicing new development until the new scheme is commissioned.

Waste Water

Newcastle is currently served by a Waste Water Treatment Plant located on Sea Road. The current capacity of the treatment plant is 1000 population equivalents (PE). However, while there are plans to carry out a limited upgrade of this plant, development will be constrained here until the new regional wastewater treatment plant proposed for Newcastle, Kilcoole, Kilpedder, Kilquade and Newtownmountkennedy at Leamore, Newcastle is commissioned. This is not expected to be in place before 2011. **No new significant development can take place until this infrastructure is in place.**

6. Community Infrastructure

Community infrastructure must be progressed in tandem with residential development, and the latter will only be permitted on the basis of satisfactory provision of land for the former.

Sport/Play/Community

For a village the size of Newcastle, there are relatively good community facilities including a community centre (multipurpose hall, meeting room, crèche), playground, tennis courts, GAA facility and an informal soccer pitch. However, to cater for the planned increased population of 663 further facilities will be required and at least 1.6 ha will be designated for such uses, half of which should be in the form of formal active playing areas for youths and adults, and a minimum of a third for children's play. A further 0.2ha will be apportioned for community use. Such lands will be bundled with newly apportioned residential lands in small action areas requiring provision of both land uses in tandem.

Objectives

- An area of at least 0.9ha shall be levelled, drained and developed for active play within Action Area 2 and shown on the map;
- 0.2ha shall be provided for children's play as part of the development of Action Area 3 land;
- The area adjoining and to the east of the tennis courts shall be developed as an all weather play area. The tennis courts area shall be upgraded;
- An area of 0.8ha shall be set out for community/recreational use as part of the land zoned for employment use to the east of Watchtower House.

Education

The current primary school site may not be capable of servicing the 2016 population of the village. In line with Department of Education requirements, 2ha is designated for educational use at a location proximate to residential and amenity lands. To enable the usage of the school to be as sustainable as possible, land will be designated for this use to the north of the town centre in the midst of newly zoned residential lands to enable the majority of the children to walk to school. The zoning of these lands provide an option in accommodating primary school needs in the event that the existing St Francis School is unable to do so.

Parks, Open Space & Green Amenity

Land is designated for a town park, leading to a linear park along the southern bank of the river and upstream of the bridge. The park shall provide a pedestrian link between Regional Route 761 and Local Road 5050 alongside the stream.

This town park shall adjoin the R761 and be in the form of a 'Village Green', in the order of 0.25ha, overlooked by the projected town centre development, and continue as a linear park incorporating a safe lit footpath between the town centre and the school for pedestrians. That portion of the linear

park linking the village green to local road 5050 shall also make provision for cyclists. Residential development adjoining the linear park shall be designed to give maximum passive surveillance.

Objectives

- To provide for an agricultural/greenbelt zone, as shown on the map, to accommodate agriculture and amenity uses in a manner that protects the physical and visual amenity of the area.
- To provide green buffer zones at least 5m deep between all new developments and the nearer edge of adjoining public roads.
- To ensure that all buffer zones shall be landscaped/tree planted and be kept free from development.
- To ensure that tree planted grass verges are included in the layout design of all developments including adjoining all public roads.

7. Residential development

To cater for the 2016 population of 1,500, to allow for the anticipated decrease in household sizes, provide for circa 30% 'headroom', and adopting an 'excess factor' of 6%, a total of circa 21.5ha of land has been designated for residential development, in a mixture of low and medium densities. The Town Centre lands adjoining the river can accommodate 30 further residential units while an additional 2.75ha of low density land shall be provided adjoining and to the North of AA2 lands.

Since the original adoption of this plan in 2007, through the review of the County Development Plan 2010-2016, the town boundary has been extended by a further 3.25ha and the residential zoning increased by 3ha on the Newtownmountkennedy Road. This extended RE zone shall be limited to the development of eight units.

Large-scale developments will not be permitted, and the maximum size of any one development will be limited to 40 units in the interests of legibility and, reflecting the scale of the village. Similarly the renovation or redevelopment of vacant or derelict buildings, as well as new build, must recognise the character of the village.

Objectives

- Notwithstanding the zoning of land for residential purposes, the Development Management process shall monitor and implement the 2016 population target and shall phase and restrict, where necessary, the granting of residential planning permissions to ensure this target is not exceeded;
- The maximum size of any one development will be limited to 40 units;
- Housing development shall be phased to ensure that infrastructure, and in particular land for community infrastructure, is provided to match the needs of new residents;
- 3 ha of land for low density, second phase residential development shall be provided adjoining and to the south of the GAA facility;
- Provision shall be made for sheltered housing as part of AA1 lands and detailed in the Action Area 1 zoning objectives;
- In the RE zone, house improvements, alterations and extensions and appropriate infill / new residential development in accordance with principles of good design, protection of existing residential amenity and consistency with the prevailing pattern and density of development in the vicinity will be permitted. While new developments shall have regard to the protection of the residential and architectural amenities of houses / buildings in the immediate environs, alternative and contemporary designs shall be encouraged (including alternative materials, heights and building forms), to provide for visual diversity.
- Lands measuring 3.48 ha at the Newtownmountkennedy Road (as identified on the plan map) shall be limited to the development of eight units.

Second phase residential shall be interpreted as being available for development when the majority of residential lands forming part of the Action Areas have been developed.

8. Employment

As the key role of Newcastle is to sustain the local community there is a need to provide for more local employment and service facilities in Newcastle. Having regard to its location, settlement function, socio-economic structure and environmental character, a total of 3.25ha is designated for mixed use employment at 2.45ha and 0.8ha for Community and Recreation use, at the southern end of the town adjoining and the east of Watchtower House. This will be for service type employment with a limited portion for local enterprise.

Local service type uses could include workshops and small incubator units for enterprise. Such land should be developed at a low plot ratio, to a high level of design quality, and incorporate extensive landscaping.

Future development should also seek to expand the amenity and leisure potential of the settlement. Employment opportunities will be enhanced by providing and expanding retailing, tourism and other services within the settlement.

Objectives

- The zoning of 3.25ha mixed use development where 2.45ha is for employment purposes and 0.8 Community and Recreation use;
- Development shall have a maximum plot ratio of 0.3;
- A minimum of 0.8ha shall be for local enterprise development;
- An overall plan for the entire employment land shall be submitted. This plan shall at least include:
 - Development to a high level of architectural design having an overall theme to ensure the development is visually cohesive
 - Detailed landscaping and tree planting proposals including overall, screen planting proposals and site boundary treatment.

9. Commercial / Town Centre

It is important that town centres are inhabited and provide a mix of uses and exhibit a high standard of urban design to ensure vitality and viability, and accordingly the concept of “Living over the Shop” will be encouraged generally, and required in new developments.

The retail profile of Newcastle needs to be enhanced and strengthened. The most appropriate location is close to the bridge on the R761 so that the existing commercial centre can be supported and enhanced, and land is designated here for ‘Town Centre’ purposes

The Council will promote the development of vital village shops providing an immediate convenience to local rural residents. Major retail development is not considered appropriate for a settlement the size of Newcastle.

New development, including the refurbishment of buildings, shall be cognisant of existing character and streetscape in terms of massing, rhythm, materials and finishes.

The new town centre development shall be laid out having consideration for the Parks and Open Spaces objectives above.

10. Heritage

The wider Newcastle area is rich in natural and built heritage assets. The coastal area that forms part of The Murrrough Wetlands candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC), Kilcoole Marshes proposed Special Protection Area (pSPA) and the Murrrough proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) is of national importance. The nucleus of the old town focused upon the church, graveyard and old castle is designated as an area of historical archaeological interest. In addition the town has a number of protected structures, while a number of Recorded Monuments are located within the town and its greenbelt.

Objectives

- Protect the natural, architectural and archaeological heritage of the town, in accordance with the provisions of the County Development Plan 2010-2016;
- Ensure that all proposals for development within the historic core of Newcastle and in the vicinity of recorded monuments shall submit an archaeological impact assessment as part of their application for development;
- All development shall have regard to the Eastern Regional Fisheries Board 'Requirements for the Protection of Fisheries Habitat during Construction and Development Works at River Sites';
- Protect trees, hedgerows, wooded area, watercourses and other features of the natural landscape that contribute to the biodiversity of Newcastle;
- To apply to the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government to fund a study to determine the resident Leislars bat habitat and formulate measures to ensure their protection.

11. Zoning

The purpose of zoning is to indicate the land use objectives for the lands within the town boundary and agricultural greenbelt. Zoning aspires to promoting the orderly development of the town by eliminating potential conflicts between incompatible land uses, and to establishing an efficient basis for investment in public infrastructure and facilities.

The basis for the zoning in this plan is to develop the town in a compact form so that housing and facilities are within easy reach of each other, encouraging sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling. All medium density residential, retail, and community infrastructure zonings are within 400m of the bridge around which most existing commercial facilities are sited.

In this plan nearly all land use proposals are included in areas that are subject to Action Areas. The Action Areas contain performance criteria and designate precise areas for different land uses within their boundaries. These sub areas will be shown on the map, but will be indicative only, and the designer/developer has the option of laying out the overall area differently, provided such a layout being consistent with sustainable planning, and subject to the agreement of the Planning Authority. Grouping of the various land uses within these Action Areas ensures that each land use will be delivered, and that any developer providing for housing must provide for the other land uses in an integrated manner.

A supporting Vision has been included in support of each Zoning Objective. Only those uses that enhance, complement, are ancillary or neutral to the Zone Objective / Vision are acceptable. Uses that would be not normally permitted will be assessed in terms of their contribution towards the achievement of the Zoning Objective and Vision.

Residential (R1, RE)

Objective: To provide for residential development to provide new communities and to protect and improve residential amenity.

Vision: To ensure that any new development conforms to County Development Plan standards and that development in existing areas (e.g. extensions, additional houses in side gardens, childcare facility etc) reflects the prevailing density and character of its immediate surroundings, and shall have a minimal impact on existing residential amenity.

Such residential uses include houses, open space, community facilities, home based economic activity, utility installations and ancillary development and other residential uses in accordance with the County Development Plan.

Town Centre (TC)

Objective: To protect the special character of the town, concentrate commercial and cultural facilities, and to protect, provide for and/or improve the town centre facilities.

Vision: This rural town is located in an agricultural rural area, providing local services and limited employment opportunities to the surrounding rural areas, and also has a role as a dormitory town. There is also a strong built and natural heritage background in the town. This zoning objective seeks to consolidate the existing Town centre. The aim is to further develop the centre by extension of the area and provision of open space, parking, appropriate commercial and residential developments ensuring an opportunity mix of commercial, recreational, civic, cultural, leisure, residential uses, and urban streets, while delivering a quality rural town environment which will enhance the quality of life of resident, visitor and workers alike. The zone will strengthen retail provision, emphasise urban conservation, ensure priority for pedestrians and cyclists, and enhance and develop the existing town fabric.

Such town centre uses include retail, shops, health, restaurants, sufficient residential development to ensure the passive security of the zone, commercial, office, community, some tourism and recreational uses, community, including provision for Religious use as shown on the map, utility installations and ancillary developments for town centre uses in accordance with the County Development Plan.

Employment (E)

Objective: To facilitate opportunities for general employment and enterprise related development.

Vision: Employment areas are intended to create, preserve, and enhance areas containing a range of employment uses within a well-designed and attractive setting that would supply employment opportunities for the settlement and its hinterland. It is also envisaged that indigenous and local enterprise is facilitated in this zoning.

Such employment uses include general and light industry, office uses, recycling centre, enterprise units, appropriate warehousing, utility installations and ancillary developments for employment and industry uses in accordance with the County Development Plan.

Community, Educational & Social Infrastructure (CE)

Objective: To facilitate and provide community, educational, recreational, institutional and related land uses.

Vision: The zoning objective seeks to provide and enhance the existing social infrastructure for the town.

Such community, educational and institutional uses include burial grounds, places of worship, schools, training facilities, community hall, sports and recreational facilities, utility installations and ancillary developments for community, educational and institutional uses in accordance with the County Development Plan.

Open Space (OS)

Objective: To preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities.

Vision: This zoning objective seeks to provide recreational and amenity resources for urban and rural populations subject to strict development controls. Only community facilities and other recreational uses will be considered and encouraged by the Planning Authority.

Such open space uses include tourism and recreational uses, community facilities, open space, sports grounds, utility installations and ancillary developments for open space uses in accordance with the County Development Plan.

Active Open Space (AOS)

Objective: To provide for active recreational open space

Agricultural/Greenbelt (AGR/GB)

Objective: To protect and provide for an agricultural greenbelt to demarcate the urban and rural area and provide for agriculture and amenity in a manner that protects the physical and visual amenity of the area.

Vision: The zoning objective seeks to create a rural/urban fringe that is attractive, accessible, diverse and multi-functional. It will serve the needs of both urban and rural communities, strengthen the links between town and country and contribute fully towards sustainable development. The role of the agricultural greenbelt is to retain the open and rural character of lands between and adjacent to urban areas, and an area of step down control from the town development boundary to the greater rural hinterland. Social housing will be permitted provided it is located in accordance with firm planning principles especially with respect to proximity to services and connectivity to the town.

Development within this zoning is controlled under the policies and objectives of the County Development Plan. Residential development shall be subject to the objectives for rural housing, as set out in the County Development Plan.

Public Utility (PU)

Objective: To protect and provide for public services. 'Public Services' include all service installations necessarily required by electricity, gas, telephone, radio, television, drainage and other statutory undertakers.

Action Areas

Action Areas have a list of objectives, as well as areas for each type of development. Any planning application prepared for these lands, while respecting all relevant development control standards and plan objectives, must provide for the phased and integrated delivery of each of these objectives. It will not be permissible to carry out only selective elements of the list of objectives.

Action Areas are identified in the map and outlined in blue. The precise location of each land use zone within each Action Area is illustrative only, and the different land uses may be located within other Action Areas if justified on planning grounds provided the same areas are provided for each land use. Before any planning application is made on any lands within an Action Area, an Action Area Plan must be agreed for the entire Action Area, showing how the landowners propose to comply with the objectives of the relevant Action Area. The Action Area Plan shall be agreed and signed by each landowner, and development thereafter must be in accordance that Plan once the proposed Action Area Plan has been approved by the Planning Authority. In the event of agreement not being reached by all the landowners, an Action Area Plan for a limited part of the area may be acceptable provided a broad and representative selection of the objectives can be achieved. Community infrastructure objectives shall be provided for in all such cases.

Objectives

- Green buffer zones of at least 6m deep shall be provided between Action Areas 2 and 3, adjoining public roads including the private road that runs in a North East direction between Sea Road and the R761. Only parapet walls shall separate the area of green buffer and the development lands.
- All Action Area Plans shall include traffic calming measures that shall underpin the design of plans.

Action Area 1

This Action Area is located immediately south of the stream and west of Regional Route R761. It shall comprise 1ha of Town Centre having a Town Park/passive Open Space across the whole frontage of the development. The park shall be at least 18m deep set back from the nearer edge of the R761. It shall have a maximum of 30 residential units. The Town Park shall be provided net of the 15% open space required within housing areas. Within the generality of the above the following shall be provided:

- Residential development within the residential and Town Centre parcels;
- Protection of established trees in the grounds of Oaklawn House and along the Newcastle River in the interest of visual amenity;
- Provision of a Village Green adjoining the R761 overlooked by a mixed use development including living over the shop retail units, and connected to a linear park adjoining the stream to link to Local Road L5050;
- Provision of a pedestrian and cycle link from R761 to the L5050 along the linear park;
- Carrying out of road improvements and provision of a footpath along the road frontage and residential development access point on the L5050;
- Provision of footpath on R761 along frontage of R761.
- Provision of sheltered housing located immediately adjoining the Town Centre zoned lands shall consist of 10 residential units. The density may be at the higher end of the density scale as permitted by the County Development Plan.

Action Area 2

This Action Area is located north of Sea Road and east of Regional Route R761. It comprises c. 0.9ha of AOS (net of the 15% open space required within housing areas), c. 1.7ha of CE and circa 4.7ha of Low Density Residential and 4ha of Medium Density Residential greenfield land. Within the generality of the above the following shall be provided:

- Residential development;

- Provision of team sports field;
- Provision of a Primary School site;
- Provision of a road, pedestrian and cycleway linking R761 to Sea Road for the purpose of serving all the lands within the Action Area in a manner that enables the land to be developed while restricting the size of any one housing development served from this road to less than 40 units;
- Provision of a footpath from the entrance of the Action Area access road to the bridge.

Action Area 3

This Action Area is located north of Local Road L5050 and west of Route R761. It comprises c. 0.2ha Open Space (net of the 15% open space required within housing areas), c. 2.1ha of Low Density Residential, and c. 1.6ha of Medium Density Residential.

Within the generality of the above the following shall be provided:

- Residential development;
- Provision of active play area;
- Provision of footpath from access road to the Action Area to the bridge.

12. Implementation

The Council is obliged to monitor the operation and implementation of the Plan. The successful implementation of the provisions of this Plan will require the combined involvement of the community, local business, statutory service providers as well as Wicklow County Council.

The achievement of the objectives of the Plan will be dependent on the availability of appropriate levels of finance. The Council will actively and innovatively strive to identify and secure resources from both public and private sectors, to implement the provisions of this plan and facilitate private investment in the town, in accordance with this Town Plan.

To facilitate the implementation of Roads and Transportation, Water and Drainage and Community Facilities Infrastructure the Council will require contributions from benefiting developers. Contributions shall be made in accordance with Wicklow County Council's Development Contribution Scheme, adopted in 2007, and crafted by virtue of its powers under Section 48 (1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000.

In addition Wicklow County Council will continue the practice of granting Planning Permission with the inclusion of conditions requiring levies and bonds to be paid, or works undertaken, to facilitate developments in the interests of the common good.

APPENDIX

This appendix forms part of the Newcastle Town Plan. It includes the background analysis for the zoning the plan¹.

1. Housing

This plan will form part of the County Development Plan 2010-2016 and zoning will therefore be in the context of the proposed County Development Plan population projections up to 2016. While the amount of land to be zoned for housing is based on the number of people to be accommodated, *Household Size*, *'Excess Factor'*, *'Headroom'*, and *'Housing Density'* are all factors in this equation.

Household Size

The average household size has been steadily falling in Co. Wicklow, from 3.23 in 1996 to 2.9 in 2006, a fall of 0.033 per annum over the 10 year period, but this accelerated to over 0.04 over the past 4 years. The Regional Planning Guidelines review group for the Greater Dublin Area estimates that the average household size by 2016 will be in the region of **2.56 persons per household**.

There was a population of 938 persons in Newcastle in 2006 (or 325 houses assuming an average household size of 2.89). The 2016 target population of 1,500 persons will comprise 585 households (assuming household decline to 2.56). Therefore this plan shall make provision for **260 new households**.

Excess Factor

This term describes the fact that demand for housing will exceed actual household formation due to:

- Some of the additional units being required to replace obsolete housing;
- Some units being vacant at any one time due to market frictional factors;
- Some units being second homes or *pieds à terre*.

This essentially means that not all new houses in the town will result in the formation of a new *"household"* as (a) the new occupants may have previously resided in the town, in now obsolete housing (b) the house may be vacant or (c) the house may be a second home for someone who resides permanently elsewhere.

The excess factor can vary over time, between regions, within counties, and between urban and rural areas. The Regional Planning Guidelines have assumed that by 2010 the *"excess factor"* will be 20% for the Greater Dublin Area, and in the Mid-East region it will be circa 13%. Given that the *"excess factor"* is greater in urban than in rural areas, that Carnew is in the *"Hinterland"* and that a considerable proportion of households in the town are commuter households, **an excess factor of 6% will be used in this Plan**.

Due to the excess factor, more houses require to be built than the number of new households required; therefore the number of new houses / residential units required is **260 + 6% = 275 new houses**.

Headroom

This is the amount of extra land that should be zoned over and above the minimum amount needed to accommodate population targets. It is also known as *"market factor"* and is intended to allow for that element of zoned land that may not be released to the market for housing purposes during the Plan period. Headroom is normally in the 30% - 50% range; and a figure of *30% will be applied in this Plan* given the proximity of the town to the N11 and Dublin, and the resulting greater likelihood that development will take place. In this context, the town plan must zone sufficient land for **358 additional houses**.

¹ It should be noted that the current Newcastle Town Plan, as set out in this County Development Plan 2010-2016, has been carried forward from the previous County Development Plan 2004-2010. The Newcastle Town Plan was adopted in 2007, as a variation of 2004 plan. At the time of adoption of the variation, a number of modifications to the Town Plan were made and as such, the calculations with regard to zonings contained in this appendix may not be fully consistent with those contained in the final Town Plan adopted. However, this appendix will still enable an understanding of the basis of the assumptions and recommendations made in the plan.

Housing Density

The density in the County Development Plan will apply to lands nearest the core of the town, and for calculation purposes a figure of 20 houses per hectare will apply to such land. Lands zoned on the periphery will be calculated using a figure of 10 units per hectare. These densities reflect the small size and semi rural character of the town.

Amount of New Zoned Housing Land

This plan makes provision for

- Circa 10ha of medium density residential zoning (R1 MD) which will accommodate c. 200 units
- Circa 12ha of low density residential zoning (R1 LD) which will accommodate c. 120 units
- Circa 30 units in the town centre zone of AA1
- Circa 3ha of low density residential zoning, not designated for development until 'Phase 2'.

2. Social and Community Infrastructure

Newcastle has the following social and community assets:

- Church of Ireland church;
- Primary school - 4 classrooms, with an average of 95-100 pupils per annum;
- Multipurpose Community Centre including tennis courts and children's playground;
- GAA pitch and large clubhouse (in ownership);
- Association football pitch (leased);
- Watch Tower Religious Centre.

Education

The existing St. Francis Primary School is a four-classroom school having approximately 25 pupils per classroom. As between 11- 12% of the population is composed of primary school children, allowing for population increase, the ultimate requirement will be for an 8-room school. The Department of Education have indicated that they require a 1.2 ha site located close to the new areas of housing and the town centre while the existing schools expressed preference is that land be designated to the west of the existing school for this purpose.

Thus there are two competing positions for what is a single requirement. To ensure that the projected expansion in primary pupil numbers can be accommodated in a sustainable manner, land will be designated for this use to the north of the town centre and in the midst of newly zoned residential lands to enable the majority of the children to walk to school. The zoning of these lands provides an option in accommodating primary school expansion in the event that the existing St. Francis School is unable to do so.

As the estimated number of second level pupils is based on 8.5% of the population, this indicates 128 pupils would need to be catered for. This is too small a number to sustain a second level school and thus the plan will make no allowance for this.

Community and Play

This plan will allow for 2.4ha of land per 1,000 added population to be designated for these purposes, and thus 1.6ha extra land will be designated, to cater for the increased population of 663 people.

3. Employment & Enterprise Infrastructure

The appropriate scale of employment to be provided for such a 'Rural Town' as Newcastle is guided principally by the RPGs for the Greater Dublin Area, and the County Development Plan. The relatively modest level of employment in the town, and its limited catchment, is a reflection of its proximity to the higher order settlements of Newtownmountkennedy, Kilcoole, Wicklow, and Greystones/Delgany.

While the comparative measurement of the economic health of settlements by the application of statistical indicators is of importance to the understanding of medium to large settlements, such detailed analysis of the economic status of smaller towns and villages is not warranted or accurate. Analysis of Newcastle indicates that it is a commuter town and that outflows for employment are considerably greater than inflows. While the 'planning role' of Newcastle, a small settlement amidst higher order towns, is to sustain the local community, this plan seeks to enhance Newcastle's role as a nucleus for local enterprise. The public consultation process and Wicklow County Council Enterprise and Corporate Services Directorate have identified that demand exists for a local enterprise park. This employment zone will facilitate enterprise that is typically of a service nature, that is not location specific and has a large catchment. This employment zone shall make limited provision for local enterprise development.

Local enterprise type uses could include workshops and small incubator units for enterprise. Such land shall be developed at a low plot ratio, to a high level of design and incorporate extensive planting.

This employment zone shall allow for the following:

- The zoning of a 2.75 ha employment use;
- A minimum of 0.8 ha shall be for local enterprise development;
- A low density plot ratio of 0.3 to reflect this rural area and the preferred quality of service based employment or small enterprise units;
- A gross employment density of 25m² per employee.

4. Retail

The analysis in the 'Employment and Enterprise' section above applies to retail as well. Newcastle is close to the higher order towns of Wicklow, Greystones/Delgany, and particularly Newtownmountkennedy with its recently provided extensive shopping infrastructure. This plan will thus allow for shops predominantly providing an immediate convenience to local residents, and thus 0.5ha will be provided for these purposes.



Newcastle Town Plan

Legend

- RE - Existing Residential
- RE - Existing Residential Limited to 8 units
- R1 - Proposed Residential
- MU - Mixed Use
- TC - Town Centre
- PU - Public Utility
- CE - Community & Educational
- E - Employment
- AOS - Active Open Space
- OS - Open Space
- AGR/GB - Agriculture/Greenbelt
- AAP - Action Area Plan Boundary
- Road objective
- Pedestrian/Cycling
- Plan Boundary
- Monument - Hillfort

R1MD - New Residential Medium Density

R1LD - New Residential Low Density

ph2 - Phase Two

SH - Sheltered Housing

R - Religious Purpose

Wicklow CDP 2010 - 2016

Director of Services: Desmond O' Brien

Scale: 1:7,500@A3

Date: 04/10/10

Drawn By: SW

Checked By: AM

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