

# Wicklow County Development Plan 2021 - 2027 Issues Booklet

Review of the existing Wicklow  
County Development  
Plan 2016 and preparation  
of a new County  
Development Plan  
2021 - 2027



### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS ISSUES PAPER?

This Issues Paper is a consultation document that has been prepared in advance of drafting the Wicklow County Development Plan 2021. Consultation is a fundamental step in the preparation and drafting of the Development Plan. This Issues Paper is designed to inform the consultation process and encourage members of the public and all interested parties to make a submission.

### WHAT IS THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN?

The County Development Plan sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Wicklow. It consists of a written statement and plans and sets out policy and objectives to guide future development. The making of a County Development Plan is a reserved function i.e. adopted by the Elected Members.

### STATUTORY BASIS

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires the Planning Authority to make a development plan for the County every six years. The Development Plan must include mandatory objectives which are set out in Section 10 of the Act. These include objectives for the zoning of land, provision of infrastructure, the conservation and protection of the built and natural environment, the development and renewal of areas that are in need of regeneration, the preservation of the character of the landscape and the promotion of sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas. The County Development Plan must also contain a Core Strategy which will show that the development objectives in the development plan area consistent with the national and

regional development objectives set out in the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.

### COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROCESS & TIMEFRAME



STAGE	WEEK	ACTION
1	1 - 8	Issues Paper Public Consultation.
2	9 - 16	Chief Executive Report on submissions received during initial public consultation.
3	17 - 26	Elected Members issue directions regarding the preparation of the Draft Development Plan.
4	27 - 38	Preparation of the Proposed Draft Development Plan.
5	39 - 46	Elected Members consider the Proposed Draft Development Plan and make the Draft Plan.
6	47 - 48	Prepare the Draft Plan for public consultation

STAGE	WEEK	ACTION
7	49 - 58	Publish Draft Plan and commence Public Consultation.
8	59 - 70	Chief Executive Report on submissions received on the Draft Plan.
9	71 - 82	Elected Members consider the Chief Executive's Report and may make the Plan or propose amendments to the Draft Plan.
10	83 - 85	Prepare proposed amendments for public display.



11	86 - 89	Public consultation on the amendments to the Draft Development Plan.
12	90 - 93	Chief Executive Report on Submissions received on the proposed amendments to the Draft Plan.
13	94 - 99	Elected Members consider the Chief Executive's Report and make the plan with or without the proposed amendments.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING – WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE THE LAST COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN ?

### PROJECT IRELAND 2040: NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The National Planning Framework, published in February 2018, is a 20 year high level strategic plan to guide development and investment. The purpose of the NPF is to enable all parts of Ireland to accommodate growth and change by facilitating a shift towards Ireland’s regions and cities other than Dublin, while also recognising Dublin’s ongoing key role.

The NPF identifies ten National Strategic Outcomes. The companion to the NPF is the National Development Plan, a 10 year strategy for public capital investment.





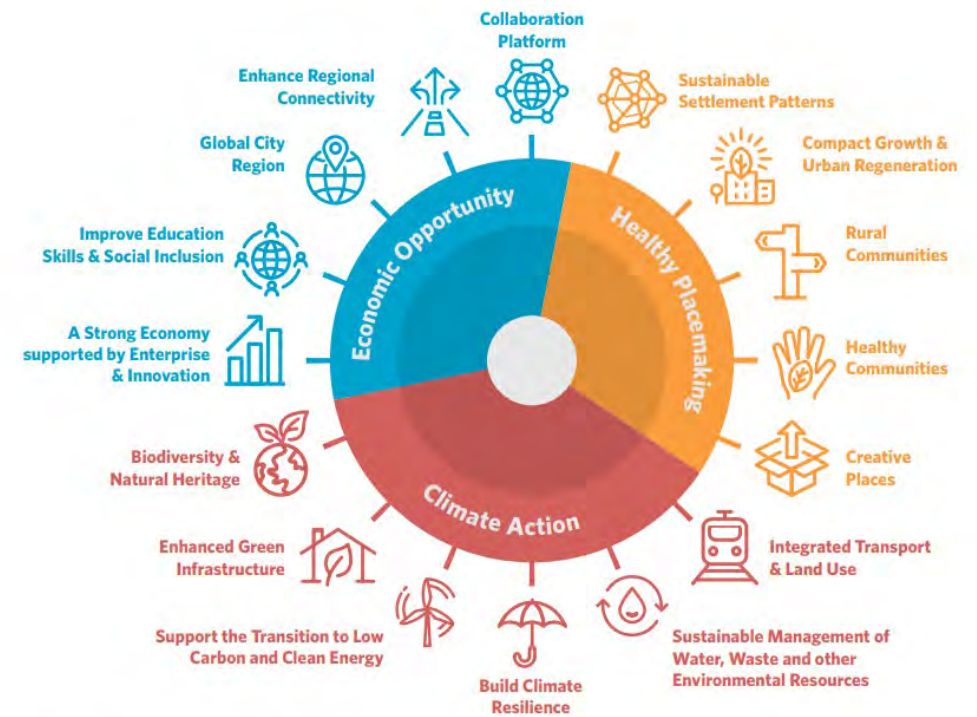
## REGIONAL SPATIAL AND ECONOMIC STRATEGY FOR THE EASTERN AND MIDLAND REGION

Wicklow forms part of the Eastern and Midlands Region. The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Region was adopted on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and is underpinned by three key principles – Healthy Placemaking, Climate Action and Economic Opportunity.

The RSES recognises that one of the key challenges facing the Region is the need for better alignment between population growth, location of residential development and employment to create healthy and attractive places. The transition to a low carbon society is also identified as a challenge for the Region. Achieving sustainable development patterns that promote compact growth, reduce transport demand and encourage low carbon transport modes is identified as one of the primary areas of transition for the Region. The other areas of transition include sustainable transport systems, carbon storing and sequestering land uses, energy efficient buildings and industry and renewable energy.

The RSES identifies 16 Regional Strategic outcomes which are aligned with the NPF National Strategic outcomes.

Wicklow County Council is required to review the County Development Plan following on from the adoption of the RSES. The RSES identifies Bray and Wicklow – Rathnew as Key Towns. This will inform the settlement hierarchy for the County Development Plan.



### KEY PRINCIPLES

#### Healthy Placemaking

To promote people's quality of life through the creation of healthy and attractive places to live, work, visit and study in.

#### Climate Action

The need to enhance climate resilience and to accelerate a transition to a low carbon economy recognising the role of natural capital and ecosystem services in achieving this.

#### Economic Opportunity

To create the right conditions and opportunities for the region to realise sustained economic growth and employment that ensures good living standards for all.

Source: EMRA Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (2019: 24).

## THE CORE STRATEGY & SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

### CORE STRATEGY

The County Development Plan must include a core strategy. This is a medium to longer term evidence based strategy for the spatial development of the County. The core strategy must demonstrate that the development plan is consistent with national and regional policy particularly in relation to the hierarchy of settlements and the setting of population targets. It must provide a transparent evidence-based rationale for the amount of land zoned for residential and mixed-use zonings.

This map shows the core strategy map included in the current County Development Plan 2016-2022. With the publication of the National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy the core strategy for County Wicklow will have to be reviewed.

In particular, it will be necessary to alter the designation, place in the hierarchy and the development strategy for the previously designated 'growth towns' of Bray, Wicklow – Rathnew, Arklow, Greystones-Delgany, Newtownmountkennedy and Blessington to align with the new designations set out in the RSES. The RSES identifies Bray and Wicklow-Rathnew as key towns for the County; below this the County Development Plan will need to categorise towns into either 'Self-Sustaining Growth Towns' or 'Self Sustaining Towns' based on assessment criteria set out in the RSES.

Core Strategy Map



## POPULATION

The population of County Wicklow increased from 136,640 in 2011 to 142,425 in 2016. The following table shows the change in population between 2011 and 2016 for Wicklow's towns<sup>1</sup>.

The population profile and the population growth strategy adopted in the new plan will have implications for the types of services required now and in the future, for example childcare facilities, schools, health services and housing for the elderly. The Core Strategy will identify population targets for each of the settlements within the County and for the rural area.

The current population growth target for the county as set out in the 2016 County Development Plan is 176,000 in 2028. The NPF has set a revised target of 164,000 in 2031. Accordingly this will require a change in our population growth strategy going forward.



<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that these are the population figures for these towns based on how the CSO defined the town boundary in the 2016 Census. Wicklow County Council's boundaries for some of these towns differ quite significantly in some cases from the CSO's.

Settlement Population Change 2011 – 2016			
Wicklow Population	2016	2011	% Change
Bray	32,600	31,872	2.2
Wicklow - Rathnew	13,954	13,320	4.8
Greystones	18,140	17,468	3.8
Arklow	13,163	13,009	1.1
Blessington	5,520	5,010	10.2
Newtownmountkennedy	2,835	2,410	17.6
Ashford	1,425	1,449	-1.7
Aughrim	1,442	1,364	5.7
Baltinglass	2,137	2,061	3.7
Carnew	1,052	1,091	-3.6
Dunlavin	838	830	1
Enniskerry	1,889	1,811	4.3
Kilcoole	4,239	4,049	4.7
Rathdrum	1,663	1,586	4.9
Tinahely	937	970	-3.4
Avoca	771	753	2.4
Donard	196	187	4.8
Kilmacanogue	1,042	1,028	1.4
Newcastle	924	951	-2.8
Roundwood	948	833	13.8
Shillelagh	337	341	-1.2

**SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY**

The Core Strategy must include a settlement hierarchy. The following table sets out the existing settlement hierarchy for County Wicklow. The development plan will have a new settlement hierarchy which reflects the spatial framework set out in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.

**Settlement Hierarchy in Existing County Development Plan**

URBAN		
Level	Description	Town / Village
1	Consolidation Town	Bray
2	Large Growth Town I	Wicklow - Rathnew
3	Large Growth Towns II	Arklow Greystones-Delgany
4	Moderate Growth Towns	Blessington Newtownmountkennedy
5	Small Growth Towns	Ashford, Aughrim, Baltinglass, Carnew, Dunlavin, Enniskerry, Kilcoole, Rathdrum, Tinahely.

RURAL		
6	Rural Towns	Avoca, Donard, Kilmacanogue, Newcastle, Roundwood, Shillelagh.
7	Large Villages	Barndarrig, Ballinaclesh, Coolboy, Glenealy Hollywood, Kilpedder, Willowgrove, Kiltegan, Knockananna, Laragh, Manor- Kilbride, Redcross, Stratford-on- Slaney.

8	Small Villages	Annacurragh, Annamoe, Askanagap, Ballyconnell, Ballycoog, Ballyknockan, Ballynacarrig-Brittias Bay, Connary, Coolafancy, Coolattin, Coolkenno, Crossbridge, Donaghmore, Grangecon, Greenan, Johnstown, Kilquiggan, Kirikee, Knockanarrigan, Lackan, Moneystown, Rathdangan, Talbotstown, Thomastown, Valleymount
9	Rural Clusters	Ballinglen, Ballyduff, Ballyfolan Ballynultagh, Baltyboys, Boleynass, Barraniskey, Carrigacurra, Crab Lane, Croneyhorn, Davidstown, Glenmalure, Goldenhill, Gorteen, Kilamoat, Kilcarra, Killiskey, Kilmurray (NMKY), Kilmurray (Kilmacanogue), Kingston, Macreddin, Moyne, Mullinacluff, Oldcourt, Park Bridge, Rathmoon, Redwells, Stranakelly, Tomacork, Tomriland.
10	Rural Area	All rural areas outside of designated settlements.



The RSES includes a settlement hierarchy for the Region. The new settlement hierarchy for the County must be consistent with the RSES hierarchy and this will require changes to the current hierarchy that is in

place. Bray and Wicklow-Rathnew are identified as Key Towns. The new County Development Plan will identify Self-Sustaining Growth Towns, Self-Sustaining Towns and Towns and Villages.

RSES Settlement Hierarchy				
Settlement Typology	Description	Area		
		Metropolitan	Core Region	Gateway Region
<b>Dublin City and Suburbs</b>	International business core with a highly concentrated and diversified employment base and higher order retail, arts, culture and leisure offer. Acts as national transport hub with strong inter and intra-regional connections and an extensive commuter catchment.	Dublin City and suburbs		
<b>Regional Growth Centres</b>	Regional Growth Centres are large towns with a high level of self-sustaining employment and services that act as regional economic drivers and play a significant role for a wide catchment area.		Drogheda	Athlone Dundalk
<b>Key Towns</b>	Large economically active service and/or county towns that provide employment for their surrounding areas and with high-quality transport links and the capacity to act as growth drivers to complement the Regional Growth Centres.	Bray Maynooth Swords	Wicklow-Rathnew Navan Naas	Graigucullen (Carlow) Longford Mullingar Tullamore Portlaoise
<b>Self-Sustaining Growth Towns</b>	Self-Sustaining Growth Towns with a moderate level of jobs and services – includes sub-county market towns and commuter towns with good transport links and capacity for continued commensurate growth to become more self-sustaining.	To be defined by development plans		
<b>Self-Sustaining Towns</b>	ii) Self-Sustaining Towns with high levels of population growth and a weak employment base which are reliant on other areas for employment and/or services and which require targeted 'catch up' investment to become more self-sustaining.	To be defined by development plans		
<b>Towns and Villages</b>		To be defined by development plans		
<b>Rural</b>		To be defined by development plans		

## COMPACT GROWTH

An efficient use of land is essential for sustainable development. The National Planning Framework (NPF) acknowledges that the physical format of urban development is one of our greatest national development challenges and identified compact growth as one of the National Strategic Outcomes. This entails delivering a greater proportion of residential development and other development within existing built-up area of settlements and moving away from a reliance on greenfield development to meet our development needs. Creating more compact development has been traditionally more difficult to achieve than a continuous process of pushing development onto Greenfield locations.

Specifically the NPF requires that 30% of all new homes will be delivered within the existing built up footprint of settlements. This applies to all scales of settlements within the County, from large towns to villages. This will require making better use of underutilised land including infill and brownfield sites.

### What do you think?

- **What is the best designation for your town?**
- **What towns and villages should be promoted for population growth?**
- **Do you think your town has the capacity to sustain more housing growth? If so, why?**
- **Do you think that the level of housing development in your town has been matched by adequate infrastructure and services?**
- **What are the service shortfalls in your area?**
- **How should we deliver compact growth in each of the County's towns and villages?**
- **What is required to make our towns more self-sustaining?**

## CLIMATE CHANGE, FLOODING & COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT

Climate change is a cross cutting theme in the County Development Plan. Climate change refers to a significant change in global or regional climate change patterns such as temperature, rainfall or wind. The term climate change is now generally associated with changes in our climate due to the build up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere as a result of human activities.

‘Climate Action’ includes the two approaches necessary to tackle climate change – **Mitigation** and **Adaptation**. Mitigation refers to efforts that will reduce current and future greenhouse gas emissions including reductions in energy use, switching to renewable energy sources and carbon sinks. Climate adaptation consists of actions that will reduce the impacts that are already happening and those that are projected to happen in the future. These include flood protection, reduced impact of rising sea levels, increased resilience of infrastructure and emergency response planning.

In 2014, the Government adopted the National Policy Position on Climate Action and Low Carbon Development which establishes the national objective of achieving transition to a competitive low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050. The NPF identifies planning as an established means to implement and integrate climate change objectives at local level and recognises that in order to meet this national target, it will be necessary to make choices about how we balance growth with more sustainable approaches to development and land use. Wicklow County Council under the guidance of the Climate Action Regional Office (CARO) have in 2019 adopted a Climate Adaptation Strategy for County Wicklow which is a response to the impacts that climate change is having and will continue to have on the County. The most immediate risks to Wicklow are those which are due to changes in extremes such as floods, precipitation, storms and higher sea levels.

In terms of climate change and land use planning the County Development Plan plays an important role in influencing a reduction in GHG emissions by guiding the sustainable growth of the County, encouraging more compact mixed-use development and greater use of sustainable transport options such as cycling, walking and public transport, restricting development in areas that are at risk of flooding and protecting the natural landscape and biodiversity. The current County Development includes a Climate Change Audit which outlines how the plan has integrated climate change mitigation and adaptation into its policies and objectives.



## FLOOD RISK

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) will be prepared as part of the new development plan. The purpose of the SFRA is to assess all types of flood risk within the County so as to inform landuse planning decisions in the development plan. The objective is to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and avoid new development increasing flood risk elsewhere. The Development Plan must include robust flood risk policies.

## COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT

Wicklow's coastline stretches for over 60km along the Irish Sea from Bray to Kilmichael, south of Arklow. The coastal areas of County Wicklow are amongst the most sensitive and valuable resources in the County, in terms of natural heritage, scenic beauty and recreation and tourism. Many of the County's settlements have developed along or near the coast. The current development plan identifies a range of objectives to protect the coastline and manage development. Since the adoption of the current development plan in 2016, the Glen Beach Cliff Walk on the outskirts of Wicklow town has been reopened.



### What do you think?

- How do you think the County Development Plan can address climate change?
- Are you aware of any areas that are liable to flooding that should be identified in the SFRA?
- How should the Council manage pressure for development in flood risk areas?
- Are the policies in the current development plan adequate to protect Wicklow's coastline?
- What type of developments should be allowed along the coastline outside of settlements?
- Are there any areas of coastline in need of protection in terms of conservation or physical defences?



## HOUSING

### HOUSING POLICY

Since the adoption of the current County Development Plan, the Government have published 'Rebuilding Ireland: An Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness'. The Action Plan acknowledges that ensuring sufficient stable and sustained provision of housing that is affordable, in the right locations, meets people's different needs and is of lasting quality, is one of the greatest challenges facing the country at present.

The County Development Plan must put in place provisions to ensure that there is enough zoned and serviced land, in the right locations, to meet the needs of the future population of the County. In this regard there are a number of 'town plans' included in the County Development Plan, which will contain zoning plans. For the larger towns, which have their own stand alone Local Area Plans, the County Development Plan will indicate how much zoned land is required in these towns. The NPF identifies national core principles to guide the delivery of housing.



### National Core Principles to Guide Housing

- Ensure a high standard quality of life to future residents as well as environmentally and socially sustainable housing and placemaking through integrated planning and consistently excellent design.
- Allow for choice in housing location, type, tenure and accommodation in responding to need.
- Prioritise the location of new housing provision in existing settlements as a means to maximising a better quality of life for people through accessing services, ensuring a more efficient use of land and allowing for greater integration with existing infrastructure.
- Tailor the scale and nature of future housing provision to the size and type of settlement where it is planned to be located.
- Integrate housing strategies where settlements straddle boundaries (county and/or regional).
- Utilise existing housing stock as a means to meeting future demand.

(Source: National Planning Framework, 2018)

### HOUSING STRATEGY

A new Housing Strategy will be prepared as part of the new County Development Plan. The Strategy will be informed by a 'Housing Need Demand Assessment' which will assist the Council in developing long term strategic assessment of housing need across all tenures and provide a robust evidence base to support decisions about new housing supply. The Strategy shall provide that as a general policy a specified percentage (not exceeding 10%) of the land zoned in the development plan for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be reserved for those in need of social housing in the area.

development on greenfield or edge of town locations must secure minimum densities of 35 to 50 units per hectare in accordance with the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas. Apart from Bray, Wicklow's town plans generally provide for densities between 10 and 28 units / hectare on greenfield lands; therefore a considerable shift will be required and new housing formats will have to be considered.

Wicklow Housing Stock and Vacancy Rate 1991 to 2016						
	1991	1996	2002	2006	2011	2016
<b>Total housing stock</b>	31,709	34,871	40,214	49,088	54,351	54,986
<b>Vacant</b>	2,958	2,779	2,905	5,577	5,377	4,454
<b>Vacancy rate (%)</b>	9.3	8.0	7.2	11.4	9.9	8.1

Source: [www.cso.ie](http://www.cso.ie)

### DENSITY

The National Planning Framework requires that increased residential densities are achieved in existing settlements through a range of measures including reductions in vacancy, re-use of existing buildings, infill development, area or site-based regeneration and increased building heights. The current development plan through its policies and objectives, its design standards and the use of town plans, identifies desired densities for lands zoned for housing. The same approach is followed through in the local area plans. The Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DHPLG 2018) require that future housing



## RURAL HOUSING

Rural housing requires to be managed to protect the County's scenic landscape and natural resources, to avoid urban generated housing and to ensure the needs of those with a bona fide necessity to live in the rural area are facilitated. The County Development Plan sets out the policy under which all applications for one off housing in the countryside are addressed. The NPF recognises that careful planning is required to manage demand for housing in the countryside and acknowledges that it will continue to be necessary to demonstrate a functional economic or social requirement for housing need in areas under urban influence i.e. the commuter catchment of cities and large towns and centres of employment.



### What do you think?

- **What types of houses are required to meet housing demand?**
- **Are there certain groups in society that find it difficult to access housing?**
- **Is there a need for a special type of housing in your area e.g. the elderly, those with special needs?**
- **Where and how should social housing be provided?**
- **Where can high density development be accommodated?**
- **How can increased densities be achieved in Wicklow's towns and villages?**
- **Is the rural housing policy working effectively to facilitate genuine rural housing needs while protecting the landscape from inappropriate urban generated development?**

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & EMPLOYMENT

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE ROLE OF THE COUNCIL

Economic development and employment underpins the vitality and viability of our towns, villages and rural areas. The Local Government Reform Act 2014 provides for a stronger role for local government in economic development. This includes the preparation of a Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). The LECP, a six-year evidence informed plan, is the Council’s overarching policy document for economic development. It identifies goals and includes measures necessary to promote and support community and economic development in the County. The LECP must be consistent with the objectives of the County Development Plan.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The County Development Plan includes a chapter on Economic Development which sets out the spatial framework for economic development. Sustainable economic development requires balance in terms of location and diversity of economic activity, as well as the protection of the environment and people’s quality of life. The County Development Plan has the following key functions in relation to economic development:

- To set out a planning framework for economic development that is in line with the provisions of the Core Strategy;
- Ensuring an adequate supply of zoned and serviced land for employment;
- Developing a strategy for retail;
- Promoting and facilitating an overall improvement in the quality of life in all parts of the County;
- Supporting education facilities and the knowledge economy;
- Facilitating and promoting entrepreneurial activity;

- Supporting employment growth around Wicklow’s natural resources;
- Supporting key sectors for growth.

Since the adoption of the current County Development Plan, the economy has continued to improve. Census 2016 revealed that there are 59,134 persons at work, an increase of 12% from 2011 levels. Unemployment has continued to reduce with the total number on the live register amounting to 6,040 (July 2019) down from 9,459 in July 2016. According to the Census, the number of persons at work has risen since 2011 but is still below 2006 levels.

Census Year	Persons at Work
2016	59,134
2011	52,907
2006	57,356

Wicklow has many competitive advantages including its strategic location in the GDA with access to Dublin Airport and Dublin Port, strategic transport links including Euro Route E01 (M/N11) Belfast to Rosslare and the DART, highly skilled and educated workforce, proximity to a range of universities and third level institutes, strong and attractive towns and villages which have capacity to accommodate new economic development and expand employment opportunities, a thriving tourism industry and a strong creative and cultural industry sector.



## **JOBS RATIO**

The Jobs Ratio is the ratio between the number of jobs in the County to the number of people in the workforce resident in the County. The National Planning Framework used the Jobs Ratio as an indicator for analysing the employment strength settlements. The analysis showed that many of the towns within the Dublin city region function mainly as commuter towns with large resident populations and limited employment. The 2016 – 2022 County Development Plan aimed to increase the 'Jobs Ratio' from 42% in 2011 to 60% in 2028.

## **PLACE-MAKING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The National Planning Framework recognises that there are critical links between the quality of urban place-making and business investment / job creation. The ability to attract new business to an area is dependent on many factors, the obvious ones being land availability, infrastructure and accessibility. In addition to these elements, the attractiveness of an area and sense of place are increasingly being promoted with a view to realising economic potential and attracting new investment. Wicklow's towns have a strong sense of place and character which is largely based on their historic streetscapes and scenic settings. It is important to embrace the character of our towns and villages and promote them as locations for new economic development.

## **RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

The CEDRA Report 2014 – '*Energising Ireland's Rural Economy*', recognised that the changing nature of rural areas means that rural economic development is not amenable to single sector strategies but requires new integrated approaches to economic development. The report

acknowledges that 'there is an abundance of natural, physical, human and capital resources and a wide variety of high quality, including dormant assets in many rural communities that could be leveraged to support national economic growth and the development of these communities'.

*Realising our Rural Potential: The Action Plan for Rural Development 2017* aims to unlock the potential of rural areas through a framework of supports at national and local level which will ensure that people who live in rural areas have increased opportunities for employment locally, access to public services and social networks that support a high quality of life.

The County Development Plan will include policies and objectives to ensure that Wicklow's rural areas capitalise on their potential while protecting the environmental assets that define their character and value. Rural diversification opportunities are vital for sustaining a viable rural economy. However, a balance needs to be maintained between facilitating appropriate forms of rural development and protecting the rural environment.



## What do you think?

- What are your views on economic development in County Wicklow?
- What measures can be put in place to ensure Wicklow is viewed as a more attractive employment base?
- How can the Plan promote and facilitate new economic opportunities?
- Where should economic development be located?
- Do you think brownfield sites should be promoted for new economic development?
- Are there new ways of working that should be facilitated in the Plan e.g. co-working hubs, working from home, live-work units,
- How can the County's rural economy be diversified to sustain rural areas?
- Are there adequate policies in place to protect the countryside from commercial / industrial / economic development?
- What type of economic development is appropriate for rural areas?



## TOWN AND VILLAGE CENTRES & RETAIL

Wicklow has an extensive network of towns and villages which perform a variety of roles and functions for their residents and the wider rural hinterlands. These centres have evolved over long periods of time. The historic fabric of the streetscapes and variety of uses give these towns and villages their identity and define their character.

### TOWN CENTRE RENEWAL

Town and village centres have experienced significant challenges to retain vibrancy and vitality. The reasons vary but among them are competition from larger centres that are more accessible, the rise in out of town shopping centres and the changing nature of retail and consequent rise in online shopping. The challenges facing town and village centres are evident in the number of vacant units in some towns. It is a policy of the National Planning Framework to target the reversal of decline in the core of towns and villages through sustainable targeted measures that address vacant premises and deliver sustainable reuse and regeneration outcomes. Town and village centres throughout the county need to be dynamic and able to evolve to accommodate new uses. This is essential for their continued vitality. The reuse and regeneration of vacant buildings is an essential catalyst to transform the capacity and potential of our smaller towns and villages.



### RETAIL STRATEGY

Retail is a fundamental element of town vitality and it is important that town and village centres retain retailing as a core function. The Development Plan must outline the level and form of retail activity appropriate to the various level of settlement and define by way of a map the boundaries of the core shopping areas. In accordance with national policy guidance, the County Development Plan promotes a sequential approach to retail development. This means that the overall preferred location for retail development is within town centres. Only in exceptional circumstances, where it can be demonstrated that there are no available sites within the town or village centres, will edge of centre or out of town sites be considered. The Development Plan must include appropriate objectives to allow for the expansion of the retail sector in a manner which protects and improves the vitality and viability of the town centres. The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy identifies a retail hierarchy for the region and the new County Development Plan must be consistent with this.

<b>Retail Hierarchy</b>
<b>Level 1 Metropolitan Centre</b>
Dublin City Centre
<b>Level 2 Major Town Centre &amp; County Town Centres</b>
Bray, Wicklow Town
<b>Level 3 Town and/or District Centres &amp; Sub-County Town Centres</b>
Greystones, Arklow, Blessington, Baltinglass, Rathdrum & Newtownmountkennedy
<b>Level 4 Neighbourhood Centres, Local Centres &amp; Small Towns and Villages</b>
<b>Level 5 Corner Shops / Small Villages</b>

## What do you think?

- What measures are required to make our towns and villages more vibrant and attractive as places to live in, work in, shop and visit?
- How can the Plan improve retail vibrancy in Wicklow's towns and villages?
- What can we do about vacant units in our towns and village centres?
- What scale of retail development is appropriate for Wicklow's towns and villages?
- Is there a shortage of retail in the County?
- Have previous plans been successful in guiding retail development to the right locations?
- How can retail spend be retained in the County?





## TOURISM AND RECREATION

Wicklow’s scenic unspoilt landscape and rich cultural heritage including the Wicklow Mountains and Glendalough make it an obvious location for tourism and recreation. The County’s tourism attractions and recreational amenities are important for the social and economic well-being of the county. Attractions range from scenic uplands, beautiful coastline and extensive woodlands to historical sites, manor homes and gardens, attractive towns and villages.

Wicklow Mountains National Park covers 20,000 hectares making it the largest national park in Ireland. The Park is an invaluable recreational space for locals and tourists. The most visited area is Glendalough, which attracted 732,824 visitors in 2018 and was third on Ireland’s top ten ‘free to enter’ attractions for 2018. Powerscourt House Gardens and Waterfall were ninth on the top ten fee-charging attractions during 2018 with 472,523 visitors. The Outdoor Recreation Strategy 2019 – 2024 is currently being prepared by the County Wicklow Outdoor Recreation Committee. This will inform the development and management of outdoor recreation in the county.



## IRELAND’S ANCIENT EAST

‘Ireland’s Ancient East’ has been developed by Fáilte Ireland as a branded visitor experience encompassing the rich heritage and cultural assets that the Mid-East has to offer. This presents a significant opportunity for Wicklow to tap into and harness the potential of cultural tourism. Wicklow Tourism Strategy and Marketing Plan 2018 – 2023 sets out the County’s vision for tourism and identifies priorities and actions to ensure the County is successful in realising its tourism potential. The Strategy recognises that Wicklow is performing well but has enormous untapped potential arising from its natural and built assets and proximity to large markets. The Strategy identifies five priority actions:

Tourism in Wicklow 2016		
	Number	Spend
Domestic Tourists	329,000	71 million
Overseas Tourists	272,000	86 million

- Develop new accommodation;
- Develop Wicklow, Bray, Greystones, Enniskerry, Blessington and Arklow as visitor hubs;
- Masterplan for Glendalough;
- Grow thematic experiences;
- Develop a common narrative.

### THE ROLE OF THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The County Development Plan is a land use plan and its role is therefore limited to supporting and facilitating appropriate tourism and recreation proposals and guiding them to the best locations. The Development Plan will aim to promote and facilitate the development of sustainable tourism and recreation and will set out objectives to deal with land use matters pertaining to the planning and development of the tourism and recreation sectors. This includes tourism related development and infrastructure such as tourist accommodation, facilities and interpretive centres, integrated tourism/leisure/recreational complexes and recreational infrastructure.

### AMENITY ROUTES

#### Public Rights-Of-Way

The County Development Plan is required to include objectives for the preservation of public rights of way (PROW). A PROW is a type of easement of way that is in legal terms distinct from other easements of way such as private rights of way and customary rights of way. A PROW or highway is a physically defined route over which the public have a right of passage which in legal terms is described as 'a user as of right'. The form of PROW here is the type that is normally used for recreational purposes rather than for regular daily vehicular/non vehicular access-transportation purposes.

A public right of way is an important amenity providing valuable access to natural amenities and areas of natural beauty including the seashore,

mountains, riverbanks and lakeshores. There are seven public rights of way identified in the current county development plan. The Council recognises the importance of maintaining established public rights of way.



## Greenways

Greenways are off-road routes for walkers and cyclists and are a valuable asset in terms of their tourism potential and as a recreational amenity for the local community. The Greenways Strategy 'Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways', launched in 2018, is a long term strategy with the aim of increasing the number, length and regional spread of greenways across the country. The Blessington Lake Loop, a 42km greenway around the Blessington Lakes incorporating Russborough House and the villages of Valleymount, Ballyknockan and Lacken, was awarded €5 million in funding in 2019. The Council have appointed consultants to examine the feasibility of building The East Coast Wicklow to Greystones Greenway. This Greenway will also be informed by the Irish Rail coastal erosion study. Wicklow County Council has consulted a number of agencies regarding the proposed Arklow to Shillelagh 35km Greenway which links in with Tinahely, Annacurra, Aughrim and Woodenbridge. The feasibility study and final route have yet to be finalised.



### What do you think?

- **How should tourism be developed throughout County Wicklow without compromising our valuable resources including our scenic landscape and rich heritage?**
- **Is there a need for more tourist facilities within the County? If so, what is needed and where should they be located?**
- **How can County Wicklow capitalise on the potential associated with Ireland's Ancient East?**
- **Are there any outdoor tourism and recreation facilities that the County lacks?**
- **Are you aware of any public rights of way that should be identified in the county development plan?**



## HERITAGE

Heritage permeates Wicklow's identity and sense of place and makes a significant contribution to the County's character and quality of life. The County has a rich and varied heritage encompassing natural and built heritage elements. These include landscapes, national parks, flora, fauna, seascapes, monuments, archaeology, architecture, geology, heritage gardens and waterways. The National Planning Framework identifies enhanced amenities and heritage as a national strategic outcome. Heritage is afforded a high degree of protection through national legislation and local policy. The County Development Plan has an important role in safeguarding our heritage so it can be enjoyed by future generations. The Development Plan must identify objectives to balance the needs of the built, archaeological, cultural and natural heritage with the need to continue to develop Wicklow in a positive and sustainable manner.

### COUNTY WICKLOW HERITAGE PLAN 2017 - 2022

The County Wicklow Heritage Plan 2017 – 2022 is the strategic approach to manage the County's heritage. The Plan's overall aim is to conserve the natural, built and cultural heritage of Wicklow and to foster a greater awareness, appreciation and enjoyment of this by all. The Heritage Plan provides one framework through which the Council works actively with other partner organisations on initiatives to further our understanding, protection and appreciation of Wicklow's natural heritage resource.



### BUILT HERITAGE

Built Heritage refers to all the man-made features, buildings and structures in the environment. This also includes a diverse archaeological and architectural heritage to be found throughout the countryside and in the County's historic towns and villages. Architectural and archaeological heritage contributes significantly to the distinctive character and sense of place of our towns and villages. The National Planning Framework recognises that *'Ireland's built heritage assets are a non-renewable resource that merit being nurtured in a manner appropriate to their significance as an aid to understanding the past, contributing to community well-being and quality of life as well as regional economic development'*.



The current County Development Plan identifies 17 Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) throughout the County. The County Development Plan also includes a Record of Protected Structures. This is a list of structures that are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest. There are approximately 698 protected structures in the County.

### NATURAL HERITAGE

Wicklow has an abundance of natural heritage including mountains, lakes, rivers, woodlands and coastal areas. These areas support a wide variety of plant and animal species. At a European level, certain habitats and species are legally protected within the Natura 2000 network<sup>2</sup>, incorporating Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). There are 14 SACs and 4 SPAs within or partly within the County. At a national level, there are 35 proposed Natural Heritage Areas. These areas include habitats that are in need of protection. In many cases the boundaries of the SACs, SPAs and NHAs overlap. The importance of our biodiversity is not restricted to Natura 2000 sites and proposed NHAs. The Council has an important role to play when it comes to promoting a reasonable balance between conservation measures and development needs, in order to avoid negative impacts on the natural environment, mitigate the effects of harm where it cannot be avoided and to promote the appropriate enhancement of the environment as an integral part of any development.

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<sup>2</sup> A network of sites protected under the EU European Habitats Directive and Birds Directive

### VIEWS AND PROSPECTS

The County Development Plan identifies views and prospects that are considered to be of the highest amenity value and therefore worthy of protection. Some views prospects form a cohesive set, such as coastal or lake drives, while some appear suddenly and provide the viewer with a new and interesting angle on a natural feature or place.



### TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS (TPO)

Trees, individually or in groups, make a valuable contribution to the landscape, to the visual appeal of the County and to biodiversity. In urban areas they absorb carbon emissions and provide a visual relief. A TPO can be made if it appears to the planning authority that it is expedient, in the

interests of amenity and the environment, to make provision for the preservation of any tree, trees, group of trees or woodlands. There are 64 TPOs identified in the current development plan.



### GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Green Infrastructure refers to a network of green spaces that help conserve natural ecosystems and provide associated benefits to people. It can include varying land uses such as woodlands, parks, formal and informal green spaces, waterways, wetland, and community/institutional lands. The Development Plan includes objectives to protect and enhance green infrastructure.

### What do you think?

- What aspects of Wicklow's heritage do you consider should be protected?
- How can we balance the need for new development against the protection of our natural environment?
- Are there any buildings that should be added/removed from the Record of Protected Structures?
- How can the County Development Plan encourage the reuse of historical buildings that have fallen into disuse?
- Are there any other assets such as views, trees or natural areas that should be afforded protection as part of the County Development Plan?
- How can we encourage the use of green buildings, green streets or other green infrastructure as part of the built environment to enhance quality of life and adapting to climate change?

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### WICKLOW LECP 2016 - 2022

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 provides a stronger role for local government in community development. One of the key provisions of the Act is the formulation by every local authority of a Local Economic and Community Plan. The LECP is a six-year plan containing the measures necessary to promote and support community and economic development in County Wicklow. The Community element of the plan seeks to ensure that the plan can be implemented in a collaborative manner with relevant existing and future community framework documents, to harness maximum synergy across the community planning framework for the County. The LECP is required to complement the County Development Plan which sets the spatial planning framework for the County. The LECP must be consistent with the broad spatial planning, settlement and land use policies of the development plan.

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE PLANNING

The County Development Plan plays the following roles in delivering the goals of the LECP:

- Facilitating the delivery of community infrastructure;
- Facilitating improved physical access to community infrastructure and services;
- Facilitating the maintenance, restoration and upgrading of cultural and natural heritage of communities, environmental upgrading and general actions to enhance the environmental, amenity and physical attributes of communities.

The current plan includes a list of social and community facilities that are considered necessary in settlements, according to their population range.

## SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

The provision of social infrastructure in the form of buildings, facilities, clubs and the means of accessing and using services, is necessary for the development of sustainable communities. A wide variety of facilities are required including:

- Education – Primary, Secondary, Third Level, Training Centres;
- Care Facilities – health care services, nursing homes, childcare, special needs care;
- Leisure and recreation – community / youth centres, indoor halls, dancing studios, playgrounds, playing pitches and courts;
- Cultural – arts centres, theatres, libraries, burial grounds and places of worship.

The County's population aged 65 and over is increasing (accounting for 11% in 2011 and 13% in 2016). The Government's recent publication '*Housing Options for Our Ageing Population*' recognises the need to plan for an ageing population particularly in terms of housing and health care.



## OPEN SPACE/RECREATION

The delivery of new sports and other outdoor community facilities and spaces is dependent on adequate 'open space' being reserved and developed. Open space includes active open space, passive open space, private open space and public open space for new residential development. It is important that the development of public open spaces and recreational facilities such as sports pitches and children's play areas are provided at the most suitable locations to support the development of sustainable communities. The current development plan requires that active open space shall be provided at a rate of 2.4ha per 1,000 population. This is divided into:

- 1.6ha outdoor recreation space (pitches, courts, sports grounds)
- 0.6ha casual play space (parks)
- 0.2ha equipped play space (playgrounds and MUGAs)



### What do you think?

- Are there adequate community facilities in your area? If not, what additional facilities are needed?
- Are there adequate facilities in the County to cater for an ageing population particularly in terms of residential and day care facilities?
- Are the educational needs of our population being met? What additional facilities are needed and where?
- Where do you think new open space facilities should be provided?
- Are the open space requirements set out in the current Development Plan adequate for new development?
- What methodology should be used to deliver active open space and recreational facilities?



## TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Land use planning, transportation and the provision of infrastructure are interdependent and require an integrated approach to deliver sustainable development.

### SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

The integration of good land-use planning with transportation is essential for delivering significant improvements in the quality of life of Wicklow's residents. Reducing the need to travel long distances by private car and increasing the use of sustainable and healthy alternatives can bring multiple benefits to the environment and our communities. The County Council recognises that the delivery of public transport has failed to keep pace with population growth reinforcing the already well established car based commuting patterns. While the County Council is not a public transport provider the County Development Plan can put in place the necessary policy framework to encourage and facilitate sustainable transport including public transport. The continued improvement of transport infrastructure including footpaths, pedestrian crossings, cycle lanes, traffic management proposals, car parking and new roads and improvements to existing roads are important considerations for the Development Plan.

### STRATEGIC ROAD CONNECTIONS

Wicklow is served by two national roads - the N11 and the N81, both of which connect to the M50 motorway, providing ease of access to and from the County. The national road network in the County provides an essential means of access to the metropolitan area. The capacity of these existing

roads has come under increasing pressure from the ever-increasing number of commuters to Dublin.

With regard to the M11/N11, the initial planning stages of the N11/M11 Junction 4 to Junction 14 Improvement Scheme, which is identified in the National Development Plan 2018-2027 as one of the 20 priority National Roads to be progressed in order to enable the continued economic development of the state, has commenced.

The TII have also identified sections of the N81 for upgrade works.

### DESIGN MANUAL FOR URBAN ROADS & STREETS (DMURS)

One of the legacies of residential layout design in the recent past has been that design considerations have often been dominated and driven by the need to make provision for motor vehicles – to the detriment of other road users. The Design Manual for Urban Roads & Streets (DMURS) recognises the importance of assigning higher priority to pedestrians and cyclists, without unduly compromising vehicle movement in order to create secure, connected places that work for everyone. It promotes a design approach which seeks to create self-enforcing low speed environments in settlements.



## **WATER & WASTEWATER**

The provision of an adequate supply of water and wastewater facilities is critical to facilitate and sustain the growth of the County. As of January 2014, Wicklow County Council no longer has any direct control in relation to the provision of such services. The delivery, integration and implementation of water and wastewater projects and infrastructural improvements are now the responsibility of Irish Water. The Council will work closely with Irish Water to ensure that there are adequate water and wastewater facilities to ensure that the Settlement strategy is implemented. An Bord Pleanála recently granted permission for a new wastewater treatment plant for Arklow which will not only bring environmental benefits to the existing settlement but also allow for the future expansion of the town.

## **SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS (SuDS)**

SuDS is an approach to drainage which tries to replicate as closely as possible the natural drainage from a site before development. The use of SuDS overcomes the problems associated with conventional drainage (collection and disposal). Water is either infiltrated or conveyed more slowly to the drainage system and ultimately to water courses via permeable paving, swales, green roofs, rain water harvesting, detention basins, ponds and wetlands. It is a greener, more environmentally effective approach to managing surface water and provides significant benefits in terms of flood risk management, water quality improvement, provision of amenity and biodiversity. The management of surface and storm water is important in order to remove pollutants from urban run-off and prevent an increased risk of flooding downstream. The Council requires all new development to adopt the SuDS approach. SuDS has the potential to become a vital part of the County's green infrastructure.

### **What do you think?**

- **What transportation improvements are needed throughout the County?**
- **How can we encourage more people to walk and cycle and use public transport?**
- **How can we reduce the reliance on the private car as the dominant means of travel?**
- **How can permeability in existing residential areas be improved?**
- **Where should major public transport facilities such as park and ride or transport interchanges be located to cater for journeys to Dublin and within County Wicklow?**
- **Are there any issues in relation to water or wastewater facilities in your area?**

## TOWN & VILLAGE PLANS

### ROLE OF TOWN AND SETTLEMENT PLANS

There are 21 towns in County Wicklow. The County Development Plan set the overall development strategies for each town (or groups of towns) and identifies population and housing growth targets for all of the towns. The role of land use plan is to put in place framework within which development can occur, but does not decide what works actually get done by either private individuals or public bodies. The delivery of objectives will be determined by private development or by the allocation of public funding through the annual budgetary process, which is a separate process to any land use plan.

### LARGER TOWNS

#### **BRAY, GREYSTONES, WICKLOW – RATHNEW, ARKLOW, NEWTOWNMOUNTKENNEDY & BLESSINGTON**

The larger towns including Bray, Greystones, Wicklow – Rathnew, Arklow, Newtownmountkennedy and Blessington currently have their own stand-alone 'Local Area Plans', which will be reviewed after the adoption of County Development Plan 2021 – 2027.

The Core Strategy in the County Development Plan sets the framework for the future development of these towns and informs the Local Area Plan in terms of population growth and future land requirements. While these towns have separate land-use plans, the framework for growth will be established in the core strategy of the county development plan.

## SMALL GROWTH TOWNS

Ashford, Aughrim, Baltinglass, Carnew, Dunlavin, Enniskerry, Kilcoole, Rathdrum and Tinahely are identified as Small Growth Towns in the current development plan.

Enniskerry and Kilmacanogue are included in the Bray MD Local Area Plan, Kilcoole is included in the Greystones – Delgany – Kilcoole Local Area Plan and Rathdrum has a stand-alone LAP. The County Development Plan includes 'town plans' for all of the remaining small growth towns. The purpose of these plans is to put in place a structure that will guide the future sustainable development of each settlement. The town plans will be reviewed as part of the County Development Plan process. However, submissions in relation to zoning cannot be considered at this stage of the development plan review process.

These smaller towns provide important economic and social services to their populations and immediate hinterland. Such towns normally have a good range of infrastructural services and are suited to accommodating urban generated housing demand.



## ASHFORD

Historically the settlement of Ashford developed in two poles around Ballinalea and Nun's cross, avoiding the central valley along the river. During the 20th century, the town grew in three main areas – along the main road (N11), at Ballinalea (such that these two areas effectively combined) and around Nun's Cross. The current county development plan aimed to consolidate the existing built pattern in Ashford and create better connectivity by maximising the potential of large sites within the town core in order to create a distinct streetscape capable of meeting Ashford's function as a town serving its immediate and wider hinterland population. The land zoned had potential to accommodate approximately 858 residential units and a large housing estate is currently under construction. There are a number of vacant and underutilised sites in the town centre which are undermining the town's character. These sites are in need of regeneration.



### What do you think?

- How would you like Ashford to develop in the future?
- What do you think are the main issues facing Ashford and how should these be addressed in the development plan?
- How can the town centre be regenerated and the range of services enhanced?
- Has the town been able to absorb recent development or are there any problems arising?



## AUGHRIM

Aughrim is a small attractive town located on the R747 regional road between Arklow and Baltinglass. It lies in a scenic valley where the Ow and Derry rivers meet to form the Aughrim River. The current County Development Plan recognises that Aughrim’s accessibility to Dublin and to larger towns in the county, in combination with its charm, beautiful setting and small size, puts it under development pressure, which must be managed into the future.

The Plan includes zoning with the potential for 287 additional residential units. The Plan acknowledges that employment opportunities are limited in Aughrim but that there are opportunities for further expansion of the local economy through an expanded tourism offer.



### What do you think?

- How would you like Aughrim to develop in the future?
- What do you think are the main issues facing Aughrim and how should these be addressed in the development plan?
- Are there opportunities to enhance the town’s economic growth?

## BALTINGLASS

Historically the settlement of Baltinglass developed around the market square, with development spreading out to the east and west along the R747, forming the existing town centre. A particularly important landmark is Quinn’s Mart Site on Mill Street to the north of the town. The town contains a significant amount of natural, archaeological and built heritage; including the archaeological sites of the Baltinglass Hills, Baltinglass Abbey and St.Mary’s Church, the River Slaney Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and buildings of architectural and historical merit, many of which are located in the town centre. The town’s rich and historic heritage makes a significant contribution to its distinct character. The land zoned in the current County Development Plan has potential to

accommodate approximately 521 residential units. The Council recently made an application for funding under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund for Baltinglass rejuvenation project. The Fund was established to provide investment to support renewal, strengthen and build resilience in communities and assist in regeneration. If successful the funding will help address the decline of the town centre, improve the public realm, rationalise car parking, create an attractive environment, incentivise new business and ensure that the existing building stock is utilised thereby creating a vibrant town centre.

### What do you think?

- How would you like Baltinglass to develop in the future?
- What do you think are the main issues facing Baltinglass and how should these be addressed in the development plan?
- Are there opportunities for regeneration and infill?

### CARNEW

Carnew is a small rural town located on the R725 which connects Gorey and Carlow. The urban form of the town provides for an expansive Main Street, with wide footpaths, laid out in a linear format. In addition to the prominent location of the Church of Ireland, these features make up a conventional 'Landlord Town', built throughout Ireland during the 1800s. Development in Carnew has been limited over recent years and this is reflected in the population. The CSO revealed that the population of Carnew<sup>3</sup> had declined from 1,091 to 1,052 persons between 2011 and 2016. The land zoned in the current County Development Plan has potential to accommodate approximately 365 residential units. The economic development strategy of the current development plan is to take advantage of the existing economic assets in order to stimulate employment within the area and increase the jobs ratio by 50% by 2028.

### What do you think?

- How would you like Carnew to develop in the future?
- What do you think are the main issues facing Carnew and how should these be addressed in the development plan?
- Is there a demand for new housing? If so, what type?

<sup>3</sup> CSO town boundary

## DUNLAVIN

Dunlavin is a planned estate town, established in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and is laid out in a 'T' shape with wide streets, grand buildings and a prominent Market House located in the middle of Market Square. The town centre is designated an Architectural Conservation Area and there are nine protected structures within this area. The current County Development Plan recognised that more recent development has occurred at locations not contiguous with the old part of the town and as a result there are significant opportunities for infill and consolidation of the built patterns of development. The land zoned in the current County Development Plan has potential to accommodate approximately 840 residential units. The economic strategy of this town plan is to take advantage of the existing economic assets in order to stimulate employment within the area and increase the jobs ratio by 50% by 2028.



### What do you think?

- How would you like Dunlavin to develop in the future?
- What do you think are the main issues facing Dunlavin and how should these be addressed in the development plan?
- The current development plan targets significant growth – do you think this is appropriate for Dunlavin?
- Given the strong heritage and history Of Dunlavin, should more be done to harness the area's tourism potential?

## TINAHELY

Tinahely is a small, historic, thriving market town, with an important cluster of commercial and public service infrastructure that services both the town and its rural hinterland. The town has a strong but simple urban form, with a triangular market square dominated by the historic Market House that is now used as a library. To the south of the square is the former Courthouse, now used as an Arts Centre. The cultural role of this centre has important potential for the development of the town. The land zoned in the current County Development Plan has potential to accommodate approximately 236 residential units. The economic strategy of this town plan is to take advantage of the existing economic assets in order to stimulate employment within the area and increase the jobs ratio by 50% by 2028.



### What do you think?

- **How would you like Tinahely develop in the future?**
- **What do you think are the main issues facing Tinahely and how should these be addressed in the development plan?**
- **Are there adequate services and community facilities?**
- **Having regard to the town's location and proximity to amenity routes, are there opportunities to capitalise on the town's tourism potential?**



## RURAL TOWNS

Avoca, Donard, Newcastle, Roundwood and Shillelagh are identified as Rural Towns in the current county development plan. These are the smallest ‘towns’ of the County, but still provide important economic and social services to their populations and rural hinterland. Such towns normally have a reasonable range of infrastructural services and are suited to accommodating some urban generated housing demand, with necessary controls in place to ensure that local demand can also be met. ‘Rural Towns’ are differentiated in the County Development Plan from ‘Small Growth Towns’ having regard to their more rural character, the rural nature of their catchments and the lower capacity for significant growth.

The Development Plan includes settlement plans for the rural towns. The purpose of these plans is to put in place a structure that will guide the future sustainable development of each settlement. The boundaries of the settlement plans will be reviewed as part of the County Development Plan process. However, submissions in relation to zoning cannot be considered at this stage of the development plan review process.

## AVOCA

Avoca is an attractive rural town with a distinct character and sense of place. The town is situated on the banks of the Avoca River and probably owes its origins to the mining industry of the Avoca Valley. Avoca and the surrounding area has considerable potential to develop as a tourism hotspot. The development of sustainable tourism and service related industries could yield significant economic benefits in terms of job creation and investment. The land zoned in the current County

Development Plan has potential to accommodate approximately 120 residential units.

### What do you think?

- How would you like Avoca to develop in the future?
- What do you think are the main issues facing Avoca and how should these be addressed in the development plan?



## DONARD

Donard is a historic settlement located in West Wicklow. Its identity and sense of place is very much informed by its strong heritage. The historic centre includes the remains of a monastic site, parts of a motte-and-bailey, the triangular green and nineteenth century architecture. It has a range of commercial and community facilities and provides services to a wider rural catchment than the town itself and it is therefore important that it remains viable. The land zoned in the current County Development Plan has potential to accommodate approximately 37 residential units.

### What do you think?

- How would you like Donard to develop in the future?
- What do you think are the main issues facing Donard and how should these be addressed in the development plan?
- Do you think Donard has capacity to accommodate new housing development? If so, what type of development?

## NEWCASTLE

Newcastle is a small coastal settlement situated 2km east of the N11 and on the R761. Historically the town centre developed around the Church of Ireland but in the nineteenth century the town developed further east, on the R761. The latter area contains the commercial element of the settlement. The land zoned in the current County Development Plan has potential to accommodate approximately 211 residential units.

### What do you think?

- How would you like Newcastle to develop in the future?
- What do you think are the main issues facing Newcastle and how should these be addressed in the development plan?
- Do you think the town has capacity for more development?

## ROUNDWOOD

Roundwood is generally regarded as being one of the highest villages in Ireland, at approximately 230 metres above sea level. Along with Laragh, it serves as the principal gateway to the Wicklow mountains. The village has a range of local retail and community facilities to serve the local population and tourists. The land zoned in the current County Development Plan has potential to accommodate approximately 195 residential units.



### What do you think?

- How would you like Roundwood to develop in the future?
- What do you think are the main issues facing Roundwood and how should these be addressed in the development plan?
- How do you think the village's economic potential can be harnessed having regard to the town's proximity to the reservoir, amenity routes and the Wicklow Mountains?
- Is there opportunity to improve visitor management especially during peak tourist times?

## SHILLELAGH

Shillelagh is a small rural town located in southwest Wicklow. It was planned as part of the Fitzwilliam estate in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The town provides a small range of retail and community facilities for the local population. Kerry Foods and Cheshire homes are the main source of employment in the town. The current County Development Plan considers that there is opportunity within the town to facilitate additional employment opportunities. The land zoned in the current County Development Plan has potential to accommodate approximately 83 residential units.

### What do you think?

- How would you like Shillelagh to develop in the future?
- What do you think are the main issues facing Shillelagh and how should these be addressed in the development plan?
- What features of the town do you think should be protected?

## VILLAGES AND RURAL CLUSTERS

The County Development Plan also identifies settlement boundaries for the villages and rural clusters. The large villages provide a range of community services and facilities and are an important social point for the local community. The current Development Plan recognises that in order to safeguard their future, it is important that growth is encouraged and facilitated in a sustainable manner. The boundaries of the villages and rural clusters will be reviewed as part of the County Development Plan process.

### What do you think?

- How would you like your village to develop in the future?
- Are there adequate facilities in your village to serve the local population and the surrounding rural area?
- Do you think there is potential for more development in your village?
- What objectives would you like the Plan to include to guide the future development of your area?



## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

As part of the Development Plan review the Council is required to carry out a number of environmental assessments.

### STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA)

SEA is required to be carried out under EU Directive 2001/42/EC. The objective of the Directive is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans. Accordingly, an evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the County Development Plan will be carried out in tandem with the preparation of the Plan. This process, known as SEA, ensures a high level of protection for the environment.

### APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT (AA)

The Plan will also be subject to Appropriate Assessment as is required by the European Habitats Directive. AA is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of the Plan, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites in view of the conservation objectives of these sites. Natura 2000 sites include Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). SPAs are identified to safeguard the habitats of migratory birds and certain threatened bird species. SACs are wildlife conservation areas, identified to protect certain habitats and species.

## STRATEGIC FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT (SFRA)

The Council is required to integrate flood risk management into the County Development Plan. This is achieved through the preparation of a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). The purpose of the SFRA is to provide an assessment of all types of flood risk to inform land-use planning decisions in the County Development Plan.

### What do you think?

- **What environmental considerations should be taken into account in the Strategic Environmental Assessment?**
- **Have you any information that would assist in the assessment of the implications of the Plan on Natura 2000 sites?**
- **Are you aware of any areas that are liable to flooding that should be identified in the SFRA?**



# Have Your Say!

The Planning Authority would like to know your views and opinions on the issues affecting planning in County Wicklow. This stage of the Plan review process is strategic in nature. Therefore submissions or observations may be made regarding the overall strategy for the County but requests for zoning of land will not be considered at this stage. Please make your submission by one medium only i.e. in hard copy or by email.

Submissions should be marked '**County Development Plan Review**' and can be made to the Planning Authority from **Wednesday 6th November 2019 to 5pm Friday 10th January 2020**.

- **By Post** to: Forward Planning Section, Planning and Environment, Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow Town.
- **By Email** to: [planreview@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:planreview@wicklowcoco.ie)
- **Online**: Log on to [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie) and follow the link to Wicklow CDP 2021 - 2027

**Please note submissions will be published on the Council's website.**

## Public Consultation Evenings – Please Come Along!

Date	Location	Time
<b>13<sup>th</sup> November</b>	Greystones Municipal District Office	4 – 7.30
<b>14<sup>th</sup> November</b>	Baltinglass Library	4 – 7.30
<b>20<sup>th</sup> November</b>	Bray Municipal District Office	4 – 7.30
<b>21<sup>st</sup> November</b>	County Hall Wicklow	4 – 7.30
<b>27<sup>th</sup> November</b>	Arklow Municipal District Office	4 – 7.30
<b>28<sup>th</sup> November</b>	Blessington Library	4 – 7.30
<b>4<sup>th</sup> December</b>	Tinahely Courthouse Arts Centre	4 – 7.30