



1. Introduction

This chapter deals with design and development. It covers urban development objectives and standards, urban residential development guidelines and rural residential development guidelines.

The appearance of the County is changing as the population of the county grows. It is important to control development in urban and rural locations and plan high quality urban and rural areas. The Planning and Development Act 2000 states that a Development Plan shall include objectives for the development and renewal of areas in need of regeneration. There are a number of ways of achieving these goals. Local Area Plans, Urban and Village Renewal Plans, Town Renewal Plans and Environmental Improvement Schemes together with the principles of urban design as detailed in this chapter all contribute to improving the quality of design and development of this county.

Industrial development standards can be found in Chapter 6. Employment and Industry. Tourism accommodation standards can be found in Chapter 11.

2. Vision.

To encourage and facilitate the development of a range of high quality and good design development in both urban and rural areas.

To promote the renewal and regeneration of urban areas with the use of good urban design to create consolidated urban areas that are attractive to live and work in.

3. Context

1. The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 People, Places and Potential, DOELG, November 2002
2. Architectural Heritage Protection – Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DOELG, December 2001.
3. Residential Density – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DOELG, September 1999.
4. Strategy 2000-2016 A Platform for Change – Final Report, Dublin Transportation Office, November 2001
5. Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area, March 1999 and Annual Review and Update for 2000, 2001 and 2002.
6. Wicklow County Development Plan 1999.
7. Urban Design Compendium, English Partnerships.
8. Planning Guidelines on Childcare Facilities.
9. Provision of cycle facilities – National manual for Urban Areas (DTO), Traffic Management Guidelines (2003) (DTO/DoEHLG/DoT).

4. Strategy

The strategy of Wicklow County Council is to ensure that development is built to a high standard of design, layout and finish. The Plan aims to deliver an improvement in the quality of towns and villages in the County by regenerating older towns and villages and using good urban design to create attractive settlements in new or growing areas.

Applications for development shall comply generally with the Council's Urban and Rural Development guidelines and standards as indicated in this chapter, which in particular encourage a high standard of contemporary design in all new buildings and the use of natural and local materials.

5. Policies

5.1 URBAN DESIGN

Urban design is about creating a vision for an area and then deploying the skills and resources to realise that vision.

It is the conscious manipulation of building form and the public realm/public spaces in order to create an attractive and efficient environment, suitable for a full range of activities – living, working, socialising and recreation. Good urban design enhances the environment and has many benefits such as – visual, social, economic and psychological. Run-down environments can be transformed, while new green-field development areas can be formed which function well, appear attractive and which stand the test of time.

Policy DI: The Council will ensure that sound urban design principles are fully utilised in the design and planning of new development areas.

The key aspects of urban design are:

- **Places for people:** Create vibrant, safe, comfortable, varied and attractive places that are pedestrian and cycle friendly to give people the opportunity to meet and socialize.
- **Enrich the existing environment** New development should enrich the qualities of existing urban places. This means encouraging a distinctive response that arises from and complements its settings.
- **Make connections** Places should be easily accessible and be integrated physically and visually with their surroundings.
- **Work with the landscape** Create a place that strikes a balance between the natural and man made environment and utilise each sites intrinsic resource.
- **Mix uses and forms** Allow for the widest possible range of users to create convenient and enjoyable meeting places with different building forms, uses and densities.
- **Manage the investment** Projects must be economically viable and well maintained.



- **Design for change**

New development must be able to respond to future changes and be designed with flexibility of use in mind.

- **Use of indigenous building materials**

It is council policy to promote and encourage the use of indigenous stone products for all new residential and commercial developments.

The Council will promote the principles of good urban design in any future urban development in the county as the amount of urban building land is rapidly decreasing and needs to be used to its maximum potential.

Policy D2 Energy Efficient Design: Developments shall incorporate energy efficient design and other green building practices in accordance with the Building Regulations to maximise energy efficiency by optimising benefits of sunlight, daylight and solar energy.

The Council will advise and encourage builders to use sustainable building methods beyond the standards demanded by building regulations.

Policy D3 Access for All: Developments shall eliminate access barriers for all through good layout and design practices especially for older people, the disabled and young families.

5.2 – TOWNS AND VILLAGES OF STREETScape VALUE

Streetscape is the making up of a collection of individual building facades along a street, where the character is formed by their massing scale, rhythm and proportions, such as vertical or horizontal emphasis. It is important that any new development or refurbishment of buildings do not render the building out of character with the streetscape. It is important to ensure that traditional features and characteristics are retained in existing buildings.

Policy D4: Special consideration will be given to the protection of the existing streetscapes and urban design qualities.

Policy D5: The Council will encourage new developments or refurbishments to be cognisant of existing character and streetscape in terms of massing, rhythm, vertical and or horizontal emphasis, materials and finishes.

5.3 – TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

It is important that town centres are inhabited, provide a mix of use and exhibit a high standard of urban design to ensure their vitality and viability.

Policy D6: The Council will promote good urban design, of buildings, paving, lighting and street furniture.

Policy D7: The Council will encourage the concept of “Living over the Shop” and standards may be relaxed where it is considered appropriate, where it meets a very high standard of

design which is sympathetic to the overall streetscape and where it does not adversely affect the amenities of adjoining units.

5.4 – SHOPFRONT DESIGN

An important part of good urban design is the provision of quality shopfront design. Many of the County’s urban areas are rich with buildings of architectural importance and the design of shopfronts and advertisements should compliment these buildings and improve the environment. Shopfronts are always designed to attract attention and have a vital role in contributing to the character of an urban area. Refer to Policy A6 in this Chapter.

Policy D8: The Council will encourage good shopfront design in the development of new and refurbishment of existing shopfronts in accordance with the following principles:-

- **The retention of existing shopfronts**

Where an existing shopfront enhances the character of a building or area, it should be retained where possible.

- **The Street**

The design of a new shopfront should always take into account the characteristics of the street and respect it whilst providing a contemporary solution.

- **The Building**

A shopfront should not separate the ground floor from the rest of a building and should take into account the age and design of a building.

- **Signage**

The Council will promote the use of shopfronts that are designed to compliment the building. Too many advertisement signs detract from a building.

- **Security Shutters**

Security shutters detract from the streetscape and are considered to be counteractive in themselves creating a sense of insecurity. The erection of shutters shall be controlled. In cases where they are considered necessary, they should be of a design and colour compatible to the character of the streetscape and where possible located on the inside of the shopfront.

- **Lighting**

The Council shall discourage the use of garish lighting.

5.5 – TRAFFIC CALMING

Policy D9: The Council will encourage drivers to drive with caution by introducing traffic calming measures, particularly in the vicinity of schools. Measures will include traffic calming, speed reduction, traffic suppression, landscaping, signage and facilities for cyclists and pedestrians and public transport priority measures, having regard to Traffic Management Guidelines.

5.6 – TREE AND HEDGEROW PRESERVATION

Policy D10: The Council will encourage the protection of all mature trees and hedgerows which occur on development sites and roads, and as part of the application process may require the submission of tree and hedgerow surveys to accompany applications for development. A detailed tree survey shall include the following. All trees with a diameter of 75mm and above (measured at a height of 1.4m above ground level) should be included in the survey. Hedgerows should be surveyed by reference to species, branch canopy, spread, shape, height and condition. Remedial works should also be indicated where appropriate and trees should be identified on site with suitable tags. Provision should be made in the site layout for incorporating specimen trees that are in good condition.

5.7 – PREVENTION OF DAMAGE AND PROTECTION OF TREES/HEDGEROWS DURING SITE DEVELOPMENT.

Where trees or hedgerows are to be preserved on a development site, it is essential that the trees be protected by the erection of secure fencing prior to any site or engineering works commencing and that no materials be stored within the fenced area and that no vehicles have access to the fenced area. To ensure that trees and hedgerows are protected on a site which has been the subject of a grant of planning permission, a cash lodgement may be required, the amount of which shall be determined by the Planning Authority.

Policy D11: Development will not generally be permitted where there is likely damage or destruction either to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order or those which have particular a local amenity or nature conservation value. Development that requires the felling of mature trees of amenity value, conservation value or special interest, even though they may not be listed in the Development Plan, will be discouraged.

5.8 – TREE PLANTING IN URBAN AREAS

Policy D12: The Council will encourage the planting of trees in urban areas to soften urban spaces. Deciduous trees should be planted to provide shade for the summer and allow sunlight to filter through in winter. Native broadleaf trees with light foliage are favoured. Place trees away from southerly elevations to avoid excessive overshadowing. Incorporate hedges and trees as natural windbreaks from prevailing winds. When selecting trees consider their full mature height to determine if they will block out sunlight or overshadow solar panels. Tree pits should be used for street tree planting to prevent subsidence. Replacement planting should take place where trees are felled.

6. Urban Development Standards

6.1 – SITE COVERAGE

Site coverage standards are designed to both ensure a proper level of development on a site and to avoid the adverse effects of over-development. It also ensures that adequate space is available for circulation, car parking, etc. and to safeguard sunlight and daylight within the proposed layout of buildings. Initial site coverages are applied in order to allow for the future expansion of new facilities without compromising other requirements in relation to open space, car parking and landscaping.

The site coverage is determined by dividing the total area of ground covered by buildings by the total ground area within the site curtilage. The site coverage standards in Table 5.1 should be complied with. The Planning Authority may choose to relax the above requirements in circumstances such as within built-up urban areas or on derelict or obsolete sites.

Table 5.1 Site Coverage Standards

Use Classes	Maximum Site Coverage	Maximum Initial Site Coverage
Retail or Commercial	75%	60%
Industrial	60%	40%
Wholesale	60%	40%
Retail Warehousing	50%	30%
Distribution	50%	30%

6.2 – PLOT RATIO

Plot ratio standards express the relationship between the gross area of a site and the total gross floor area of a building. Plot ratio is obtained by dividing the gross floor area of a building by the gross site area. The purpose of plot ratio is to prevent the adverse effects of over-development on the layout and amenity of buildings on the one hand and to ensure a proper sense of enclosure with buildings on their sites, on the other hand. The following equation provides the plot ratio figure:

$$\text{Plot Ratio} = \frac{\text{Gross Floor Area Of Building}}{\text{Gross Site Area}}$$

The plot ratio standards in Table 5.2 will generally apply:

Table 5.2 Plot Ratio Permissible Table Indicative Plot Ratio

Use	Ratio
Residential:	
City/Town Centre/'Brownfield'	1.0 – 2.5
Inner Suburban/Infill	0.5 – 1.0
Outer Suburban/ "Greenfield" Sites	
• In close proximity to public transport	0.35 – 0.5
• Remote from public transport	0.25 – 0.35
Industrial or Wholesale	1
Retail or Commercial	1.5

6.3 – STORAGE REQUIREMENTS

In order to comply with the Packaging Waste Regulations 1998, all new or expanding commercial/industrial businesses shall provide for adequate covered storage space which will allow the storage of recyclable goods for at least one weeks duration.

6.4 – BUILDING LINES

Building lines are an important element of the urban fabric of a town. Generally, new development may not be carried out in front of an existing building line unless it would positively add to the urban space and form, or where it would conflict with a building line established by the Council. See chapter 9, table 9.1.

6.5 – BUILDING HEIGHT

The Planning Authority recommend that, in applying for development, due consideration shall be given to building height and rhythm and its setting amongst other buildings and/or urban form, ensuring that such buildings contribute positively to the streetscape character of the town/village.

6.6 – CAR-PARKING AND LOADING BAYS

The standards set out in Table 5.3 will apply to all new development, be it new construction or additions, or material changes in use of existing buildings. In implementing the standards the Council will reserve the right to alter the requirements having regard to each particular development.

Table 5.3 Car Parking Standards

Use Class	Parking spaces to be provided
Auditorium, Theatre, Cinema, Stadium	0.33 per seat
Church	0.33 per seat
Nursing Homes	0.5 per bed
Third Level Colleges	0.5 per student
Hotel (excluding function room)	1 per bedroom
School (primary)	1.2 per classroom
School (secondary)	2.0 per classroom
Hospital	1.5 per bed
Clinics & Group Medical Practices	2 per consultant
Dwelling	1-2 per unit
Warehousing	1 per 100 m ² gross floor area
Retail Warehousing	6 per 100 m ² gross floor area
Library	3 per 100 m ² gross floor area
Manufacturing	3 per 100 m ² gross floor area
Offices (ground floor)	5 per 100 m ² gross floor area
Offices (above ground floor)	4 per 100 m ² gross floor area
Take-aways	6 per 100 m ² gross floor area
Retailing	6 per 100 m ² gross floor area
Bank or Financial Institution	7 per 100 m ² gross floor area
Restaurant dining room	10 per 100 m ² gross floor area
Ballroom, Private dance Clubs	15 per 100 m ² gross floor area
Bar, Lounges, Function Rooms	20 per 100 m ² gross floor area

Car parking standards shall be adopted taking into account dual usage and location, in particular proximity to other parking facilities where appropriate. Any such deviation from the standards in Table 5.3 shall be appropriately justified and the information submitted as part of the planning application.

Where car-parking bays are provided, it will be necessary for the bays and aisles to be marked out on a permanent durable surface with 100mm wide lines in a durable material and to the required dimensions as set out in RT 181 published by An Foras Forbartha. Each new premises proposed for commercial or industrial use must include within the curtilage of the building one or more loading bays of a size adequate to cater for its specific needs and the requirements of the type of vehicle serving the premises. The location of these loading bays must be such as not to obstruct the circulation of vehicles on the site involved or other required parking space. See Table 5.4.

Table 5.4 Parking and Loading Dimensions

Bay Type	Dimensions
Car-Parking Bays	5.0m x 2.5m
Loading Bay	6.0m x 3.0m
Circulation Aisles	6.0m in width

Where parking is permitted in the view of the general public, adequate soft landscaping must be provided to soften the appearance of parking areas. When considering applications for parking spaces in front of existing premises, the planning authority will have regard to the desirability of retaining existing boundary walls or railings and retaining some green or planted areas between the street and the building line. All parking areas should be divided into groups of not more than twelve bays and delineated by soft landscaping including trees.

Parking areas shall be reserved solely for the parking of the vehicles and should not be used for the storage of materials or goods associated with the development, nor for the parking of goods or other heavy vehicles. Adequate turning area must be provided for within the site. Car parking facilities for visitors and for disabled drivers should be provided in all new commercial and institutional developments.

6.7 – ACCESS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

In considering access for the disabled, the Council will adhere to the criteria set out in the Building Regulations, 1997, (or as subsequently amended), and the documents “Access for the Disabled” (Nos. 1 to 3) published by the National Rehabilitation Board.

7. Urban Residential Development Guidelines

7.1 – VISION

The Council recognises the importance of high quality residential design in suitable locations and at appropriate densities.

Where residential development is permitted, such as in the villages and settlements covered by this Plan, it is an aim of the Council to improve the quality of residential areas through the implementation of new residential design guidelines and standards. This section of the Plan sets out these new guidelines and standards.

7.2 – HOUSING DENSITIES

All proposals for new greenfield residential development in Bray Environs, Wicklow Environs, Arklow Environs, Greystones and Blessington should ensure that there is a maximum gross density of 3500 m² of gross residential floorspace per hectare (no greater than the equivalent of 28 houses of 125m² per hectare).

There is limited amount of land zoned to accommodate the housing requirements in Wicklow, particularly given the accelerated rate of growth experienced in the past few years. Therefore, additional land will be required to be zoned to facilitate an increased output of housing and there will be a need for adequate zoned land for employment and community uses. The most appropriate location for additional zoned land will be those well-serviced by public transport in the designated developments.

It is an objective of the Development Plan to encourage increased densities town centre and brownfield sites. It is acknowledged that higher densities have negative connotations attached to poor urban quality and reduced space standards. This is not the case where density is treated as a product of design to generate a critical mass of people (threshold population) able to support urban services such as public transport, local shops and community facilities.

It is an objective of the Development Plan to encourage maximum provision of residential floorspace and encourage greater choice of accommodation types and sizes.

A mix of dwelling types and sizes including apartments and townhouses would be encouraged in the Mixed Use Zones. This should not preclude a mix of dwelling configurations and sizes.

All proposals for new residential development on green field sites in towns and large villages should ensure that there is a maximum gross density as follows;

- (a) 2500m² of gross residential floorspace per 1 hectare for detached and semi-detached dwellings (25 dwellings of 100 m² per hectare or 20 dwellings of 125m² per hectare).

- (b) 3125m² of gross residential floorspace per 1 hectare for terraced dwellings (25 dwellings of 125m² per hectare).

Developments providing smaller or larger houses shall correspondingly vary the number of houses so that the total floor area is consistent with the density zoning.

All densities will fundamentally depend upon compliance with various other criteria such as site topography, open space provision, front and rear garden sizes, separation between dwellings, road layouts, etc. Density standards shall take account of land that is steeply sloping in character and will accordingly be reduced. In addition, density will only be allowed to be generated from land that is capable of being built upon; land which is ultimately unsuitable for such purposes will not be considered to be part of the density equation even if it forms part of the overall site. In certain circumstances, (such as brown field sites in urban areas, sites in proximity to town centres adjacent to public transport nodes and access nodes), the maximum density standard can be relaxed, at the discretion of the planning authority, in the interests of good urban design and the proper planning and sustainable infilling within urban areas. In particular, a high quality of design and layout and a good living environment will be required where densities are proposed to be increased.

The development of purpose built apartments¹⁰ require that the mass of the building be controlled whilst encouraging flexibility of apartment size. Accordingly the following density standards will apply.

- a) A maximum gross floor area of 210 m² of flat may be permitted for each house permissible on the site.
- b) A maximum of four apartments may be permitted for each house permissible on the site.
- c) A minimum of 50% of apartments in a scheme shall be 70m² or greater. No more than 20% shall be under 50m². The minimum size apartment shall be 45m².
- d) Apartment development will only be considered on sites of adequate size for at least one house.
- e) Mixed flat and house developments may be permitted at a density between that of apartments and for houses in the relevant zone.

7.3 – ESTATE DESIGN AND LAYOUT

7.3.1 – HOUSING

It is a design objective of the Development Plan to encourage an architecturally diverse and vibrant district avoiding the featureless and homogenous quality of many existing suburbs. Where deemed necessary the Council will employ urban design expertise to consider new applications, particularly those of a larger scale, to ensure high quality design and layout. The use of varied building heights is a useful device in creating urban enclosure, forging a strong sense of place and highlighting the individual identity of locations.

¹⁰ An apartment development is considered to consist of a number of integrated individual self contained living units incorporated within one single block with access to their units being gained from within the block and only a minimal number of external accesses being associated with that apartment development.



The Council shall also encourage an appropriate mix of dwelling types, not just within the overall development, but throughout the development:

- i) to reduce the dominance of detached and semi-detached house types in suburban areas,
- ii) to provide for all aspects of the market.
- iii) To enable householders to move into a smaller house in the immediate proximity when circumstances reduce the household size, and thus release a larger house to the market, and
- iv) In the interests of visual and residential amenity.

Good natural light makes dwellings more attractive, pleasant and energy efficient. Housing layouts should be designed to maximise daylight and sunlight to dwellings as far as possible, but not to the exclusion of other considerations, such as privacy or achievement of an attractive streetscape. Therefore it is a design objective of the Development Plan to ensure that overlooking and overshadowing of buildings and private amenity spaces is minimised.

A comprehensive site survey indicating all existing site features, walls, trees, hedgerows, buildings, watercourses, etc. shall be submitted with all applications for housing estates. Developers will be expected to integrate the most interesting features of the site into the overall layout.

The Council shall encourage materially different house designs within an overall unified theme in all new housing estate developments where there is in excess of 40 dwellings being constructed, in order to allow for visual diversity and to help achieve a sense of place. The Council shall also encourage an appropriate mix of dwelling types, in order to reduce the dominance of detached and semi-detached house types in suburban areas, to provide for all aspects of the market and in the interests of visual and residential amenity.

In all large housing estate proposals, the Council shall encourage such development to respect existing field and hedge lines where feasible.

New housing estate's layout will allow for the inclusion of waste storage and collection facilities deemed appropriate for households and estates.

7.3.2 – ROAD DESIGN AND LAYOUT

The Council's road requirements will be based on:

- Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (NRA)
- Traffic Management Guidelines (DOEHLG)
- Cycleway manual (DTO)

Innovative housing layouts will be encouraged where a clear hierarchy of roads is established ranging from short narrow cul-de-sacs to wider distributor roads, which encourage the provision of clustered houses and where the safety of public is given due consideration.

In small cul-de-sac developments shared pedestrian and vehicular surfaces may be acceptable subject to suitable surfacing and design. Individual dwelling entrances will not be permitted access/egress off major distributor roads.

In all cases the layout of the residential area will be such that pedestrian and cycle movement is facilitated. Residential Layouts shall be designed around a direct pedestrian and cycle network, providing links through new residential areas to local facilities and amenities and to public transport nodes. Pedestrian networks to be open, capable of being easily monitored, well lit and designed to avoid anti social behaviour. Cul-de-sac arrangements which are not permeable will not be permitted. Extraneous traffic will be prevented from accessing these areas through the application of appropriate measures. Measures to facilitate public transport access will only be included. The maximum design speed of any residential roads will be 30kph. This will be achieved by means of design and residential layout such as: narrow carriageways, frequent junction spacing and small junction turning radii and appropriate bend radii and spacing.

7.3.3 – CYCLEWAYS

The Council will actively encourage the provision of cycle facilities where appropriate. All cycle facilities will be designated in accordance with the provision of Cycle Facilities – National Manual for Urban Areas.

7.3.4 – FOOTPATHS

Footpaths shall be provided on all residential roads to allow for permeability of residential district by pedestrians. In particular, all footpaths shall be designed to accommodate those with mobility difficulties or who are wheelchair bound. Road alignments should seek to minimise traffic speeds and give priority to safety and convenience of pedestrians and cyclists. Turning areas should be provided to facilitate the needs of emergency vehicles. All roads should incorporate 2m footpaths and 1.2m grassed or planted verges. Pedestrian crossing and footpath widths will be designed in accordance with the DTO Traffic Management Guidelines.

It is an objective to promote renewal of existing footpaths and the provision of new footpaths in line with the Footpath Programme of Wicklow County Council.

Footpaths shall be provided in urban areas, designated growth centres and where appropriate in villages and settlements, but not for one off rural houses.

7.3.5 – STREET LIGHTING AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

Street lighting should be in accordance with the recommendations made in the ESB publication “Public Lighting in Residential Estates”. All electrical, telephone, gas and television services shall be placed underground in housing areas and developers will be required to provide the necessary underground ducts to bring the services into each dwelling. The use of low pressure sodium lighting and full cut off lighting shall be encouraged for environmental, economic and road safety reasons.

7.3.6 – NAMING OF DEVELOPMENTS

It shall be a condition of a planning permission for new housing schemes that the developer will submit a scheme for the naming and numbering of the estate prior to the commencement of the development. The naming of housing estates shall reflect in as far as possible the local context in which it is located. The names of new estates in as far as possible should be in bilingual format or in Irish alone. On approval of the naming of the scheme, the developer will be required to provide nameplates and numbers, as required by the Council. Indicator plates will also be required to be erected to show the positions of water pipe fittings, hydrants etc.

In residential areas, the general building line should not be less than 6.0 m from the road boundary. In some instances, especially in new large scale residential estates, a greater or lesser building line can be accepted or required as part of the overall layout design. Where road gradients exceed 3% near junctions, interchanges, traffic lights or where the road is elevated or other abnormal conditions occur, building lines in excess of the above may be required. Such variations will be considered on their merits.

7.4. PLOT RATIO

For plot ratio information see Table 5.2 in Section 6.

7.5 – SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING ESTATE DESIGN AND LAYOUT

In particular, when considering social and affordable housing proposals, further regard shall be given to the standards and guidelines set out in the following section.

7.5.1 – DESIGN

The following criteria should be taken into account:

- Ensuring that the scheme creates a pleasant living environment, which will meet the needs and preferences of the residents. Schemes involving a significant number of dwellings shall create streets and spaces that provide a sense of identity and place and thus facilitate the development of community;

- Ensuring that the scheme makes a positive contribution to the overall environment of the locality. In this regard, care shall be taken in integrating the new housing into the existing built and natural environment so that it contributes to the social, environmental and economic sustainability of the area;
- The quality of the residential environment shall be paramount. Layouts should take account of energy demand. As many dwellings as possible should have access to sunlight.
- Generally higher densities shall be considered in respect of all sites but will be particularly appropriate for sites in excess of 0.5 hectares (approximately 1.23 acres).
- Ensuring a high level of safety and security for the residents. The scheme should be designed to discourage anti-social behaviour e.g. layouts should seek to ensure that all access ways and public areas are overlooked by dwellings or are otherwise open to surveillance by residents;
- Maximising amenity and energy efficiency by climate sensitive design which takes account of orientation, topography and surrounding features to control wind effects while optimising the benefits of sunlight, daylight and solar gain;
- Ensuring that, in so far as is practicable, the design minimises barriers to accessibility for all users, particularly the elderly and those with mobility impairment or other disability; and ensuring that the scheme can be constructed, managed and maintained at reasonable cost and in a way which is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. Materials should be chosen with this in mind. The design should aim to maximise the use of indigenous materials, optimise the areas of, roads and other hard surfaces and minimise the lengths of service runs. Small poorly defined or poorly integrated areas of public open space, which may be unusable, costly to maintain, and a source of nuisance to residents should be avoided.

7.5.2 – HOUSE TYPES

The choice of dwelling types should be determined primarily by the nature of housing need being addressed, the location and characteristics of the site, and the type and density of the scheme being proposed.

A particular design aim should be to avoid the monotony frequently associated with developments restricted to a single dwelling type or building height. Consideration should be given to varying the height of dwellings including the use of three storey dwellings, where appropriate.

The use of terraced dwellings affords advantages in terms of security, privacy, economic use of building land and economy with regard to construction and running costs while providing reasonable scope for architectural expression. The use of semi-detached dwellings may be warranted in certain circumstances, e.g. site characteristics, existing densities in the area and the need to integrate with the existing built environment. The provision of detached dwellings should only be considered in exceptional cases.



The provision of apartment schemes should be considered in appropriate locations. Apartment schemes should generally be similar in scale to surrounding developments. They can be particularly appropriate where there is a significant demand for smaller units of accommodation and where apartment building would be generally in harmony with the character of the area.

7.5.3 – HOUSING MIX

Major changes have taken place all over Europe and we are in the midst of those changes in our society: around 40% of all households in European cities are single person. The evidence that this is happening is shown in the strong demand for apartments, with students being priced out of the market. A survey in Greater London has shown that 80% of the additional 629,000 homes needed by 2016 are in the single person category, whilst 157,000 fewer family homes than at present will be required. Chapter 4, table 4.1 has indicated that similar trends are now evident in Wicklow.

In considering applications for housing development, or in developing the Council's own schemes, the following policies on housing mix will be applied.

All schemes on sites in excess of one hectare (approximately 2.47 acres) will normally be required to have a variety of dwelling types.

The mix of dwellings to be provided should be based primarily on the results of the most recent assessment of housing need and the characteristics of households likely to be accommodated in the scheme. Regard should also be had to current best estimates regarding the size and type of households likely to be seeking housing in the future, and to the need to ensure that a reasonable mix of dwelling types and sizes is maintained, both in the immediate locality and in the housing stock as a whole.

For larger schemes, a design aim should be to facilitate the accommodation of a range of household sizes and types through the provision of a variety of dwellings, while having due regard for the cost implications of an excessive number of dwelling types in anyone scheme.

In each case the Housing Authority must determine a housing mix having regard to the above criteria, the needs of sustainable planning and to avoid undue social segregation. In particular, the growth in housing need for one-parent families, the elderly and the disabled needs to be specifically addressed.

7.6 – PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

7.6.1 – INTRODUCTION

All public open spaces should be freely available for the use of the public. All local open spaces should be dedicated to the use of the residents for residential, amenity and maintenance purposes. The functions of public open space in housing areas are aesthetic and recreational.

The provision of public open space should respond to the needs established by the patterns of local economic, social and cultural life. To facilitate the provision of well-integrated linear open space networks providing pedestrian and cycle links to the town centre satisfying the passive and active recreational needs of the community and forming effective and attractive buffers between incompatible uses.

The Council will make provision for a hierarchy of parks, open spaces and outdoor recreational area within towns and villages so that the public can participate in a wide range of active and passive recreational pursuits.

The Council will consider establishing a Parks Department during the lifetime of the County Development Plan 2004–2010.

7.6.2 – PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN URBAN RESIDENTIAL ESTATES.

The primary functions of public open space in housing areas are aesthetic and recreational. Open space provides a visual break within the overall residential layout. This open space will be designed and located so as to complement the residential layout and will be visually as well as functionally accessible to the maximum number of dwellings within the housing area.

7.6.2.1 – PUBLIC OPEN SPACE STANDARDS IN URBAN RESIDENTIAL ESTATES

Local open space should be provided at a total of 80 m² per dwelling. A minimum of 40 m² shall be provided within the housing estate or within 400m of the population served, for childrens playlots, unorganised active recreation and for passive recreational purposes.

It should be attractively landscaped by contouring and planting with trees, shrubs and flowerbeds where appropriate. There should be a system of suitably located pedestrian paths. Open spaces should incorporate existing features, contain hard landscaping and encourage pedestrian use by suitable paving. Public Open Spaces shall be directly overlooked by the fronts of dwellings to reduce the risk of crime and informal surveillance can be provided by motorists and cycle tracks.

In assessing the open space requirement, regard will not be had to backlands, (land to rear of dwellings which is not accessible), land not suitable due to its gradient, sub-soil of other characteristic, nor to land incidental to roads, roundabout, footpaths, or river floodplains. Where, in the opinion of the Planning Authority, the provision of public open space to be retained is not considered suitable or desirable due to its size, configuration or location, the Council will consider the location of the remaining 40 m² of public open space as a neighbourhood park. Alternatively the Council may consider a contribution from the developer towards the cost of the provision of a neighbourhood park serving the proposed development. Where development is taking place in a linear or infill manner this form of contribution will be required.



In certain development circumstances, the open space requirements, as set out above are not appropriate to special housing needs categories, including the special needs requirements of certain social and affordable housing categories, such as the elderly and disabled. The open space requirements to be provided for certain special needs housing developments, including social and affordable housing shall have regard and be appropriate to, the special needs of those to be accommodated in any development.

7.6.3 – NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS

The Neighbourhood Park, as referred to in 7.6.2.1, should be located, where possible, within 800 metres of the population served. It should be capable of accommodating football pitches, tennis courts, netball or basketball courts, golf putting greens, children’s playlots, and athletic facility and car parking. The park may be provided as part of a single or of a number of housing developments and/or by the Council.

In addition the park should accommodate extensive tree and shrub planting, a system of pedestrian paths and general amenity areas with seating. The park should incorporate a site for indoor recreation facilities and a pavilion with dressing rooms related to the outdoor facilities. Buildings other than those that are required to service the facilities accommodated in the park should not be permitted within it.

7.6.4 – TREE PLANTING

Planting, paving materials and edge restraints can be used effectively for traffic calming in residential areas. Tree planting can be used to complement hard-landscapes in high density developments and re-inforce and enhance existing natural features and integrate development with surrounding landscape.

A landscaping plan shall be designed as an integral part of all new residential estates and shall be submitted with the planning application. This Plan should highlight existing landscape features to be retained and detail new landscaping including species, number, size and location. The plan should put an emphasis on the use of native species where possible.

7.7 – INDIVIDUAL HOUSE / DUPLEX SITE LAYOUT

Dwellings should be so constructed and orientated in order to ensure maximum privacy for residents. In housing developments, such space is usually provided in the rear garden.

Generally two usable off street car parking spaces per dwelling should be provided in all new residential developments.

In order to achieve adequate privacy and open space area between houses in new residential developments the following minimum requirements shall normally apply.

Table 5.5

Building line to front boundary	6m
Minimum rear garden size depth	11m
Minimum rear garden size	64 m ² per 100 m ² gross floor area e.g. 125m ² house = 80 m ² garden
	The absolute minimum size of rear garden shall be 48m ²
Separation between dwelling and site boundary	2.5 metres between flank wall of adjacent dwellings (to be kept in the case of extensions).
Back to Back separation	22 metres

Permanent screening to the height of two metres shall be provided between gardens of adjoining residential units for a minimum distance of 3 metres from the rear of each dwelling and along the entire length of the rear boundary where such adjoins another rear garden, in order to provided adequate privacy.

Two metre high screen walls should be provided between all areas of public open space and gardens to the rear of dwellings. Where concrete screen walls along the edge of public areas are proposed, they should be suitably rendered and capped in a manner acceptable to the Council.

Generally windows in the gable/side walls of dwellings will not be permitted where the windows would closely overlook the curtilage of an adjoining dwelling.

New dwellings which closely overlook the rear curtilage of existing dwellings will normally not be permitted. Houses located in a piecemeal fashion to the rear of existing houses and with inadequate road frontage represent sub-standard development and will normally not be permitted. Gable or side walls of house shall not form the boundary of an adjoining house. Gable ends of houses in prominent positions within housing schemes will be discouraged.

7.8 – APARTMENTS AND INFILL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision of additional dwellings within inner suburban areas, within the vicinity of public transport corridors has the potential for revitalising areas by utilising the existing social and physical infrastructure.

Design of any new infill development should have regard to the existing character, scale, massing, rhythm, existing prominent design features, existing density and height of existing buildings. Adjacent building lines, roof pitches and window proportions should be maintained.

Table 5.6

Development Standards for purpose built apartments or flats:

Private Open Space	
(exclusive of parking areas)	30 m ² per Flat
Communal Open Space include	Individual drying areas, bin storage area or fuel storage areas
Public Open Space	50 m ² per unit unless otherwise stated by Council

In the case of apartments, the Council may permit the private and public open space requirement to be combined (partially or otherwise) to provide for communal amenity areas serving the development. Such developments may be required to contribute, where appropriate, towards open space for active recreation being provided in the area in accordance with Development Plan standards. In some cases where sites for flat development may be relatively small and not capable of providing useable and meaningful public open space areas as identified in table 5.6, a contribution towards the provision of public open space may be acceptable. Drying areas, bin storage areas or fuel storage areas that are provided outside the structures may be included in the private open space.

7.9 – SUB-DIVISION OF DWELLINGS

The sub-division of existing dwellings into apartments or bedsits will not normally be acceptable in estates of houses suitable for single family accommodation. Where acceptable in principle, sub-division will not be subject to normal density controls provided the average size of the unit is at least 60 m² gross floor area. The maximum number of units to be permitted in a sub division will be decided upon having regard to the character of the area, the suitability of the dwelling for sub division, the availability of services, parking provision and other relevant factors.

7.10 – TAKING IN CHARGE OF HOUSING ESTATES

On completion, written certification including as constructed drawings is required from developers of housing estates to release cash deposits and/or take in charge part(s) of housing estates. This certification shall be from a competent independent Chartered Engineer with Professional Indemnity Insurance. It shall certify the standard of completion of the relevant works in relation to specifications, planning conditions and agreed phasing. The Council will endeavour to be pro-active in the process of taking in charge of private estates, as per the provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000.

7.11 – CHILDCARE FACILITIES

Childcare facilities shall be provided for on larger new residential developments unless there are significant reasons to the contrary. Generally one childcare facility with places for 20 children should be provided for each 75 dwellings more or less (unless it can be demonstrated that having regard to the existing geographic distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of the area that this level of childcare facilities is not required). Such facilities should be located and designed so that they will not cause a nuisance to existing or future residents, and that customers vehicles can turn without causing a hazard or congestion. Adequate parking for staff and customers should also be provided or available. See also Chapter 8 – Community.

8. Rural Residential Development Guidelines

8.1 – INTRODUCTION

The Rural Residential development Guidelines aim to assist those planning on building a house in rural County Wicklow, placing emphasis on the need for sensitive development in rural areas, in the siting and design of one off housing. The guidelines relate to new build one-off rural houses, proposed extensions or conversions to existing properties in the countryside.

“One Off Housing” refers to houses, which are to be built outside of any town or village boundary. Development in these rural areas must be properly planned, sited and designed, and yet retain local character, in order to protect and enhance the rural landscape.

8.2 – NEW BUILD

Design may either be in keeping with traditional design and construction techniques or may utilise new design, materials and techniques.

It is Council policy to promote and encourage the use of indigenous stone products for all new residential and commercial developments.

8.2.1 – LOCATION

The location of a rural dwelling should be considered taking into account the following:

8.2.2 – LANDSCAPE CATEGORISATIONS

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- Area of Special Amenity
- Rural Area
- Corridor Zone



8.2.3 – DESIGNATIONS

- Proposed Natural Heritage Areas
- Nature Reserves
- Special Protection Areas
- Proposed and Candidate Special Areas of Conservation
- Areas of Geological and Geomorphological Interest
- Views and Prospects of Special Amenity Value or Interest
- Amenity Trees and Woodlands
- Trees, Groups of Trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders
- Record of Protected Structures
- Vulnerable Aquifers

8.2.4 – ROAD ACCESS

The proposed site should be located taking account of an appropriate and safe access.

- Direct access off National Routes shall not be permitted in respect of new housing developments.
- Indirect access off national routes. i.e. where a structure is proposed off a regional or local road close to a junction of a national route will generally not be permitted.
- Minimum building lines shall generally conform to the following:

Table No. 5.7 Minimum Building Lines

Road Type	Building Line (metres)	Description
National Primary	137	Rathdown No.2 District Plan
National Primary No. District	100	County excluding Rathdown
National Secondary	100	Entire County
Regional Roads	40	Entire County
County Roads	20	Residences

- Sight line distances should be available or made available by the appropriate setting back of the site boundary, at the site entrance, at the junction with the public road so that safe access and exit to and from the site is achieved. Sight line distances should conform to appropriate standards agreed by the Planning Department.

8.2.5 – ENERGY

A determinant of location should be energy savings that are naturally inherent to the site. Using such on site features as the slope of the land, existing walls and vegetation for shelter from the prevailing winds. When cutting into a hillside, grade the excavated material gently and carefully, to blend in with contours.

8.2.6 – ORIENTATION

Houses should be positioned to collect the maximum amount of light throughout the day.

8.3 – SITING OF THE DWELLING

- Buildings should be nestled into the landscape and not be located above a ridgeline or in an elevated position on a site. New houses should be located sympathetically within their surroundings.
- Make use of local contours, avoid skylines where development interrupts the flow of the landform. Avoid open field or exposed locations that prevent the development being integrated within its surroundings.
- The type of landscape should be identified e.g. hilly, coastal, flat, inland, to determine the final location of the house.
- It is important to respect the existing landscape zones. Houses should be set back from the road and be staggered from surrounding dwellings to appear closer to traditional development. Avoid sites directly along the main roads where this would result in problems of public safety.
- Houses should complement local traditional building styles within close proximity including ridge orientation and pitch of roofs door and porch styles and the use of materials where appropriate.

8.3.1 – LOCATING DRIVEWAYS

- Off street car parking must be provided
- The entrance gate should announce the building suitably. Entrances shall be visibly unobtrusive.
- Gateways should be constructed using local materials and styles indigenous to the area.
- Access roads should cut across contours gently.
- The entrance to the road should provide safe access without having to remove large amounts of hedgerow or existing stone wall.
- An adequate surface water runoff system must be provided.

8.3.2 – DESIGN

- Include safe, less formal and unobtrusive forms of access and kerbing.
- Good, modern and innovative house design is encouraged provided it is in sympathy with the surrounding landscape and does not dominate nor clash with surrounding buildings and conforms to policy D11,WS7 and Section 6.1.6 table 9.1, Chapter 9 Building Lines. House designs more suitable to suburban areas are not acceptable in rural areas.
- Ensure outbuildings, garages, liquid gas tanks are designed or appropriately located or screened so as not to detract from the overall appearance of the development.
- Incorporate boundary treatments integral to the development and its setting, with preference given to stonewalling, and the use of hedging plants which are indigenous or characteristic of the area, and the avoidance of ranch or palisade fencing, concrete block walls and fast growing conifers.



8.4 – CONVERSION AND EXTENSION DESIGN

Extensions and conversions shall be designed in such a way as to be sensitive to the structures existing character and scale.

8.4.1 – CONVERSIONS

Proposals for the conversion or re-use of existing buildings of substance in the countryside that are deemed worthy of retention by the Council, will be considered favourably, providing they satisfy the following criteria:

- The original walls must be substantially intact. Buildings of a ruinous nature will not be appropriate.
- Buildings should be of local, visual or historical interest and be constructed in traditional materials to justify retention and conservation;
- Buildings must be physically capable of undergoing conversion and their original appearance must be substantially retained. A structural survey by a qualified engineer must be submitted as part of a planning application;
- Access must be appropriate in scale and height to a rural context;
- Works must be executed in a sensitive manner and retain architecturally important features whenever possible and make use of existing buildings and traditional and complementary building materials, techniques and specifications;
- There is a specific locational need for the use and that there are no available and more suitable alternative and less sensitive sites.

8.4.2 – EXTENSIONS

Extensions to existing dwellings should be unobtrusive, for example an extension to a single storey cottage would be best designed to incorporate a single storey extension in such a way which does not distort the existing scale and mass of the development.

Extensions to conversion schemes will only be accepted when deemed necessary to secure the restoration of the existing building(s) and where they would not alter the character of the building(s).

8.5 – PLANTING AND LANDSCAPING

Planting and landscaping can be used to harmonise new buildings with their surroundings and provide privacy between dwellings. New planting should consist of local plant types indigenous to the area and be incorporated in an organic pattern throughout the entire site. Under no circumstances are leylandii to be planted.

8.6 – WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS

Where it is proposed to build a new house in an area that is not served by a public sewer, but is otherwise acceptable, the Council will require an effluent treatment system that is in compliance with the E.P.A. Wastewater Treatment Manual for Single Houses 2000 and the Wicklow Groundwater Protection Scheme 2003, and the system chosen shall:

- Protect public health
- Protect the environment
- Be economical
- Operate without minimal maintenance from the owner; and
- Have a life span of over 20 years.

8.7 – LIGHT POLLUTION

Developments can have a negative impact upon the quality of rural areas at night-time through excessive lighting, leading to light pollution. The Council shall discourage such excessive and unsustainable use of lighting.

The Council may request submission of details of external lighting scheme as part of the development control process where developments are likely to cause light pollution. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that the lighting scheme proposed is the minimum required for security, safety and working purposes.

9. Local Area Plans and Interim Zoning Plans

In accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 Wicklow County Council is committed to making local area plans in respect of any areas which are-

- (i) designated as a town in the most recent census of population, other than a town designated as a suburb or environs in that census,
- (ii) has a population in excess of 2,000 and
- (iii) is situated within the functional area of a Planning Authority

It is the intention of the Council in the lifetime of this Development Plan to make a number of Local Area Plans, in accordance with the above.

The emphasis of a new Local Area Plan will be to design places and roads, establishing a sense of place and community. The Local Area Plan will define the principles of the layout of spaces, streets, squares, and how movement relates to them. The Plan should be flexible enough to accommodate change as the development progresses, yet robust enough to ensure that these principles are implemented without changing the original framework.

The Local Area Plan will set out the overall form of development, it will create a place of distinction and will harness particular site characteristics – river valleys, high viewpoints, public transport nodes. Attention will be paid to the physical form of development – routes, spaces, the urban grain, density, mix of uses, height and massing, the public realm, landscape, etc. The Local Area Plan will contain specific objectives, including detailed zonings in particular to ensure sufficient lands are available for residential, employment, commercial, educational, community and town centre development.

Over the lifetime of the previous County Development Plan Local Area Plans have been adopted for:

- **Enniskerry**
- **Dunlavin**
- **Kilcoole**
- **Newtownmountkennedy**
- **Carnew**
- **Wicklow Environs**
- **Ashford**
- **Tinahely**

Additional lands have been zoned around the County outside of these defined local area plan boundaries to allow for development of specific use within the area. These are identified in Map 16A–16F, and Maps 22–34.

The policies and objectives that exist in the Rathdown No. 2 District Plan will remain in the County Development Plan and will be reviewed at the preparation of a Local Area Plan and consequent variation to the County Development Plan, at such a time that is considered appropriate during the lifetime of the County Development Plan. The two scheduled towns of Greystones/Delgany and Rathdrum will be produced as Local Area Plans within two years of the adoption of the County Development Plan 2004.

The two existing Interim Zoning Objective Plans, at Aughrim and Shillelagh were adopted as a variation of the County Development Plan 1999.

The objective of the Interim Zoning Plan is to establish a framework for the planned co-ordinated and sustainable development of their functional area. The life of the two Interim Zoning Plans is three years from the date of adoption or until any such time that Local Area Plan is made. It is intended to prepare Local Area Plans during the lifetime of this County Development Plan. See Appendix 3 and 4.

LAPI: That Wicklow County Council should prepare a Local Area Action Plan for the lake area at Blessington incorporating Manor Kilbride, Lacken, Ballyknockan and Vallemount and including rural areas in between, to include the provision of sewerage, water, road improvement and provision of local housing. Newcastle will have its own local area plan, which will also include a greenbelt between Kilcoole and Newcastle.

10. Town Renewal Scheme

The Town Renewal Scheme 2000-2003 was promoted by Wicklow County Council under the auspices of the Department of Environment and Local Government.

The central aim of the Town Renewal Scheme is to bring about the restoration, consolidation and improvement of the built fabric of Irish towns, to promote a sensitive infill and, in the course of this, to revitalise the centres of small towns in a manner that encompasses environmental, social and economic attributes.

11. Urban and Village Renewal Schemes

The Urban and Village Renewal Programme has been set up by the Government to improve the physical environment of our urban areas and to make these areas more attractive to live and work in while increasing tourism potential. It forms part of the National Development Plan and the bulk of the funding is provided by the E.U. and the State, with the remainder provided by Local Authorities.

The current Urban and Village Renewal Scheme is under operation in the County and will run until 2006. The recommended areas under the current scheme are:

1. Kilcoole
2. Ballinaclesh
3. Kiltegan
4. Newtownmountkenedy
5. Coolboy
6. Stratford
7. Glenealy
8. Hollywood
9. Roundwood
10. Enniskerry
11. Carnew

Acceptable projects in the existing programme include,

- Upgrading the centres and approach roads to towns and villages or other key locations
- Upgrade public spaces, squares, parks and footpaths.
- Increase soft landscaping, this includes planting native species of trees and shrubs.
- Enhancement of riverside walks and linear parks.
- Undergrounding of wirescapes.
- Improve and upgrade street furniture and lighting.



12. Environmental Improvement Schemes

Environmental Improvement Schemes are to be carried out in a number of locations throughout the county. These works are carried out with the aid of the Community Employment Programme in relation to FAS.

13. Advertising and Signage

13.1 – INTRODUCTION

Advertising notifies the public of businesses, industries and tourist facilities/attractions. It can take three different forms:

- a) Signs: these are signs advertising premises/products/services located on private property/roadside verges or on footpaths. Advertising signs may be in advance of the premises advertised or may be on the site of the premises.
- b) Advertising hoardings: these are large advertising signs on which space is let to advertisers. Hoardings are typically 6 metres wide by 3 metres high. The contents of the hoardings change regularly. They are located normally on private lands on the outskirts of towns or on the gables of buildings in towns.
- c) Fingerpost signs: these are directional signs of standard dimensions attached to signposts located on roadside margins or on footpaths. They are used to show the locations of tourist accommodation and businesses especially in rural areas.

There are two distinctive ways in which consent can be applied for advertising or signposting structures. Firstly, planning permission is required for the erection of signs located on private property (except those exempted under Schedule 2 Part 2 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001). Secondly, the erection of advertising signs on, over or along the public road are licensable under Section 254 of the Planning and Development Act 2000. Such licences are granted on a temporary basis.

The Council acknowledges the need for advertising and accepts that it is a necessary part of commercial life. However, it is also aware of its responsibility to protect the visual amenity in urban and rural areas and for the elimination of traffic hazards. A conglomeration of signs or a sign of inappropriate size can detract considerably from the character and visual amenity of a settlement, result in visual clutter and conflict with the interests of road safety.

13.2. – POLICY

Policy A1 Control, Siting and Design of Advertising: The Council will exercise strict control on advertising signs and related materials in order to avoid visual clutter, to protect and preserve the amenity and/or special interest of the area, to ensure traffic safety and where applicable, to preserve the integrity of buildings, particularly those listed for preservation.

Policy A2 Roadside Advertising Structures: Signs will be only licensed where premises are located away from main traffic routes in rural areas and where they meet the following criteria:

- A. The advertising sign is related to a premises located in the rural area within 5 km of the proposed advertisement.
- B. Only advertising where an advertising “need” is identified will be considered. In this context the term “need” relates to the requirements of the travelling public, not the desire of the commercial operators to advertise as widely as possible. Each such need should be assessed on its merits.
- C. The design and requirements of signage in rural areas should contain information in relation to the particular facility or establishment, directional information and distance in km. It shall not exceed 1.4 m²

The Council will generally refuse licence applications for the location of advance advertising structures along approach roads into towns and villages and along National Primary and Secondary Routes save for tourist attractions of national or regional importance.

Policy A3 Fingerpost Signs: The Council will only consider the licensing of fingerpost signs for businesses in isolated urban or rural locations. Such signs, where licensed shall comply with the criteria as outlined at (a) – (c) above and if more than one industry is located in the same area, a general sign post indicating the direction of the industrial location may be provided. No trade name or other identification mark will be allowed.

Policy A4 Tourist Signage: The Council will encourage the more effective location of tourist signage in a manner that will help the user identify tourist attractions of national or regional importance, yet does not lead to visual clutter, disamenity or traffic hazard (refer to policy T&R 2, Tourist Infrastructure – Chapter 11).

Policy A5 Advertising in Towns and Villages: The Council will not permit the erection of advertising hoardings and advertising structures within the built up area of towns and villages and in particular in residential areas and on buildings or structures listed for preservation. The Council will prevent the location of such structures where they compete with traffic signs, sight lines or distract attention at a junction so as to create a traffic hazard.



The Council will only consider permitting the location of advertising hoardings within towns in exceptional circumstances where they improve the neighbourhood by screening unsightly features. Permission for such hoardings will be granted only for limited periods.

Policy A6 Building Facade Advertising Control

Guidelines: The following guidelines shall apply to building facade advertising especially in towns and villages.

- a) Signs should relate to the building on which they are displayed and their numbers and position should not unduly clutter the building facade or streetscene. Where fascia signs are permitted, they will be subject to strict controls in relation to size, design, materials, and number of letters, logos and illumination.
- b) Signs should be positioned at or below ground floor fascia level unless there are extenuating circumstances that require a position above fascia level. Signs should not mask interesting architectural nor historic details.
- c) Advertising signs will not be permitted where they are located above eaves' level, obtrude the skyline, or are outside the general bulk of the building.
- d) The size, scale and number of flagpoles, awnings, canopies, globe lights and other decorative structures and logos or advertising thereon will be controlled in the interests of amenity and the preservation of the character of the area.
- e) The use of traditional painted signwriting or solid block individual lettering, affixed directly to fascia boards or facades is encouraged. The provision of traditional timber or wrought iron hanging signs, with painted or enamelled finishes will also be viewed favourably. Such signs should be of a limited size and projection and should be limited to one sign for each building facade. Other advertising sign types will be acceptable where they comply with good design standards and practice and where they respect the building or streetscene on which they are located.
- f) The use of neon, plastic, PVC, perspex, flashing, reflectorised or glitter type on the exterior of buildings or so located within the interior as to be viewed from the exterior will be prohibited. Internally illuminated box fascia signs and projecting signs whether fixed or hanging will also be prohibited.
- g) The use of corporate and/or brand advertising where it is not appropriate to the external appearance of a building will be discouraged. Where corporate advertising is permitted, it will be expected to be in a form that is compatible with the elements of the streetscape.
- h) The erection of plastic or fabric canopies will be prohibited. Where shading of a window display is required, the use of traditional rectangular sunblinds or awnings of the retractable type may be permitted.
- i) Signs will not be permitted where they compete with road signs or otherwise endanger traffic safety.
- j) Sandwich boards and other freestanding signs should be discouraged in order to protect pedestrian and traffic safety, conflict with access for the disabled and the visual amenity of the area.

Policy A7 Advertising in Rural Areas: The Council will discourage the erection of advertising hoardings and advance advertising in rural areas and in particular where they are adjacent to or affect buildings, structures, areas, views or prospects that are listed for preservation.

