

[Redacted]

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**Sent:** 08 January 2020 07:58  
**To:** 'Cressida Knapp'  
**Cc:** Planning - Plan Review  
**Subject:** RE: Wicklow County Development Plan submission Cressida Lynch, Donard

A Chara,

I wish to acknowledge, with thanks, receipt of your submission regarding the County Development Plan review.

Regards

[Redacted]  
Administrative Officer  
Planning Control.

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**From:** Cressida Knapp [Redacted]  
**Sent:** 07 January 2020 21:20  
**To:** Planning - Plan Review  
**Subject:** Wicklow County Development Plan submission Cressida Lynch, [Redacted]

Please see attached.

Wicklow County Development Plan submission  
Cressida Lynch, [REDACTED]

What measures are required to make our towns and villages more vibrant and attractive as places to live in, work in, shop and visit?

In the dawn of this new decade, more people are waking up to the climate crisis and want to make changes in their day-to-day lives, but don't know where to start. Every town and village could have a café that serves organic plant based food. I think this type of place would thrive- you only have to look at the bustling trade in An Lar, Dunlavin for an example.

In general I'd like to see more money put into the arts culture, the Tinahely Courthouse is a well-used resource- more places like this in Wicklow would be a good investment.

What can we do about vacant units in our towns and village centres?

When I lived in London, the Brixton Arcade faced closure due to so many empty shops. The council came up with a free rental scheme. Entrepreneurs could have shops, rent free for x amount of time and open a pop up shop. If the shops were a success then rents were negotiated for the long term. I believe The Bakery in Dunlavin started as a pop up shop, and is now thriving some years later.

How can retail spend be retained in the County?

Have your own currency, the 'Wicklow Euro.' Different business' could sign up to the scheme, and if purchases are bought with the Wicklow Euro, a discount could be offered (maybe the council will have to make up the loss instead of small businesses). The currency could be sold by the tourist bus companies and the like.

How should tourism be developed throughout County Wicklow without compromising our valuable resources including our scenic landscape and rich heritage?

Improve the infrastructure of the trails. Improved maintenance, signage, interpretation. Educate local communities on dumping rubbish and leaving dog poo on trails.

Is there a need for more tourist facilities within the County? If so, what is needed and where should they be located?

A visitor centre and classroom, at the established BirdWatch Ireland site in Kilcoole.  
Make more of Lugnaquilla, Irelands second highest mountain. It's a well-used natural resource, yet the parking area is low standard and Fentons pub is very dark and dated.  
A café in Tomnifinogue woods.

How can County Wicklow capitalise on the potential associated with Ireland's Ancient East?

Have more events celebrating the Celtic festivals. This will connect people to the seasons and give organisations an opportunity to showcase local craft. I attended an Imbolc event run by BirdWatch, we simply made Bridgit's crosses from rushes cut on the site. It was very popular, lots of people felt a connection to their past as they'd have done this activity in School.

What aspects of Wicklow's heritage do you consider should be protected?

As a resident of Donard I spend a lot of time walking in the local woodland and mountain trails. I've been delighted to see; red squirrels, stoats, hares, hedgehogs, pine martins, frogs, swifts, and swallows. They have to survive in poor habitat conditions. I would like to see more deciduous woodland, which are better joined up with hedgerows and tree lines, so species can move about more freely and not get trapped in pockets. Agricultural land should be made to be more heterogeneous with long grass borders, exposed soil in areas and more trees. The water quality needs to be improved from agricultural runoff.  
Brusselstown Ringfort is a beautiful site, but no trail to it exists.

What transportation improvements are needed throughout the County?

An airport bus service running down the N81.

How would you like Donard to develop in the future?

Donard is missing a playground and a café (with the exception of the community café).  
It needs more accessible walking trails into the beautiful mountain areas.

What do you think are the main issues facing Donard and how should these be addressed in the development plan?

It feels quite run down and short of businesses on the main street. Healthy eating cafes, vintage clothes shops, and arts festivals could liven up the area.

Do you think Donard has capacity to accommodate new housing development? If so, what type of development?

Yes, it's close to the N81.  
Social houses, built by the council instead of developers.  
Fixed rent rates, rented directly from the council.  
Meet the German Passivhaus standards for a 70% reduction on fuel costs for tenants.  
A new Educate Together School.