

Wicklow County Council  
*Chomairle Chontae Chill Mhantáin*



Traffic Calming Policy

*Adopted by Wicklow County Council on the 11th of June, 2012*

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## 1. Introduction

In recent years there has been an increasing demand for traffic calming measures to be introduced in new and existing housing estates, access roads and distributor roads in towns and villages in Co. Wicklow.

Speed is a factor in some road collisions (25% according to the Road Collision Fact for 2009) recorded in Ireland, where drivers exceeded the safe speed limit. Vehicles that exceed the safe speed limit affect the quality of life of residents and pedestrians that use the public road network.

This Policy intends to address the concerns, which the public and their elected representatives have regarding the negative impact of excessive or inappropriate traffic speed on public roads.

## 2. Legislation

The Roads Act 1993 confers upon the Roads Authority the responsibility of maintenance and the construction of public roads within Co. Wicklow. In addition, under Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act, 1994, "*A Road Authority may, in the interest of safety and convenience of road users, provide such traffic calming measures as they consider desirable in respect of public roads in their charge*". The provision of Traffic Calming measures under the Section of the Act is a reserved function.

The Council shall have regard to The Road Traffic (Bollards and Ramps) Regulations, 1988 (S.I. No.32 of 1988) when it is proposed to provide traffic calming measures. These regulations give details of the geometric specification for the construction of ramps, including restriction on the proximity to other road features.

## 3. Guidance Documentation

In 2003, the Department of the Environment and Local Government and the Dublin Transportation Office published the "Traffic Management Guidelines". This is a comprehensive manual that deals with all aspects of traffic management with emphasis on the safety of vulnerable road users.

This manual will be used by Wicklow County Council as the definitive guidance document for all traffic calming measures and schemes in Co. Wicklow.

## 4. Policy Objectives and Aims

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Improve Safety.
- Reduce and control vehicular speed.
- Improve driver awareness of vulnerable road users.

- Enhance the environment.
- Reduce noise, disturbances and anxiety in the area being assessed.

To achieve these objectives, Wicklow County Council's Traffic Calming Policy includes the following aims:

- Incorporate traffic-calming measures at planning and design stage of any new schemes.

*Wicklow County Council will adopt a pro-active approach to traffic calming at pre-planning/planning stage with developers. It is the intention that all planning applications for new residential or commercial development will be assessed from a speed perspective.*

- Introduction of an appraisal system for traffic calming on existing roads and estates.

*Wicklow County Council will introduce a standardised appraisal system, which will be used in the County.*

- The Introduction of a prioritising and scheme selection system for traffic calming schemes on existing roads and estates.

*Wicklow County Council will develop a scheme selection system, which will prioritise traffic calming schemes.*

- Introduction of a Central Database for Traffic Calming Schemes.

*Wicklow County Council will set up a central database that will hold all requests for traffic calming measures from the public and elected representatives*

## **5. Traffic Calming Procedures on New Schemes**

It is desirable that the layout of any new development is designed in such a way as to limit the speed of traffic to safe values without the use of vertical ramps. With good design and the application of design principles that encourage low speeds the speed reduction measures can be inherent within the development of any new schemes.

To facilitate this good design, Wicklow County Council will continue to adopt a pro-active approach with developers in the introduction of traffic calming features into new road layouts. Specifically Wicklow County Council will examine all planning applications for new residential or commercial developments and they shall be assessed from a speed and safety perspective.

To achieve good designs, which will limit vehicular speed, in new schemes the following should be adhered to:

- A requirement that all residential/commercial developments shall comply with the recommendations contained in the Traffic Management Guidelines.

- Where pre-planning discussions occur, traffic management and calming issues shall be addressed at those meetings.
- Wicklow County Council Roads Engineers shall be involved in any pre-planning discussions and shall be involved the assessment of planning applications.

## **6. Traffic Calming Procedures on Existing Roads**

With the increasing demands being put on Wicklow County Council to introduce traffic calming on public roads the following are procedures to be followed in gathering data, scheme assessment, scheme prioritising and scheme design.

### **6.1 Data Collection**

A central database will be set up and maintained for all requests from the public and elected representatives for traffic calming in the County. Potential projects can also be listed by Wicklow County Council own staff based on their judgement of a need for traffic calming at a particular location.

### **6.2 Scheme Appraisal/Assessment**

Once a request is received an initial appraisal of the scheme will be carried out. This appraisal will determine if the proposed scheme meets the basic criteria listed below. Any proposed scheme must meet the basic criteria before it received further consideration.

The Basic Criteria are as follows:

- The site must be inside a speed limit zone of 50kmph or less (unless otherwise agreed).
- That two-thirds majority of households who reside on the section of road under consideration must be in favour of the introduction of traffic calming.
- In the case of a through road, the minimum length of road shall be 300m.
- In the case of a cul-de-sac, the minimum length of road shall be 100m.

This traffic calming policy will only apply to Local Collector Roads and Access Roads as defined in the Traffic Management Guidelines.

### **6.3 Prioritising of Schemes**

Once a scheme has passed the basic criteria, further assessment of the proposed scheme will be carried out to establish where the request will be placed on a list of priority schemes.

The assessment of proposed scheme shall be examined under the following headings:

- Accident History/Data
- 85<sup>th</sup> Percentile Vehicular Speed
- Vulnerable Road Users
- Traffic Volumes
- Local Conditions

Marks shall be awarded for each heading in accordance with the Priority Assessment Form, which is included in Appendix A. The total marks awarded for each scheme will determine where a scheme will be on the priority list.

#### **6.4 Priority List Approval**

Once all schemes are assessed and marked, a priority list of schemes will be established and agreed with the Members of Wicklow County Council at Electoral Area level.

#### **6.5 Scheme Design and Consultation**

A detailed examination of a proposed scheme on the agreed priority list will be undertaken to determine the best measures to be installed to control vehicular speeds. The measures that will be considered are those measures recommended in the Traffic Management Guidelines and other technical documents that are referred to in the Traffic Management Guidelines.

The Council will then prepare a design and cost the scheme.

When this detailed examination/design is being carried out consultation should take place with Residents Groups, An Garda Síochána, Fire, Ambulance and Bus Services where relevant.

### **7. Additional Policies**

Traffic calming schemes will be installed in their entirety. Individual items such as ramps shall not be installed on a piecemeal basis.

Having regard to the fact that:

- The Traffic Management Guidelines emphasise that vertical deflections (ramps, speed cushions and tables) should only be used as a last resort and that all other measures should be considered first
- Ramps and/or rumble strips do have unwelcome side effects such as additional noise, vehicle damage and possible personal injury

- The Ambulance Service, generally, are not in favour of ramps and have concerns about the effect of ramps on people with spinal injuries travelling over ramps
- The Fire Services are also concerned that ramps delay the response time of their fire tenders

As a result of the above, it is the policy of the Council that:

- No vertical deflections (ramps) shall be used in 60kmph zone (must be in 50 kmph zone).
- Vertical deflections (ramps) shall only be used on:
  - Local Collector Roads
  - Access Roads

And they shall not be installed on:

- National Roads
- Regional Road
- District Distributor Roads
- No vertical deflections (ramps) shall be used on Bus Routes.
- No rumble strips shall be used in Residential Areas.
- Ramps should only be used when all other methods of Traffic Calming have been ruled out.

## **8. Financial Considerations**

A decision to proceed with any developed scheme will be subject to funding being made available.

## **9. Formal Process**

Once a scheme has being designed, costed and is assigned a position on the priority list for construction the formal process should take place. This shall be carried out in accordance with the requirements listed in Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act, 1994.

## **10. Monitoring**

It is important that the scheme is monitored post construction to ensure that the objectives of the policy are achieved and the problems originally identified are addressed.

## **11. References**

- Road Traffic Act, 1994
- Road Traffic (Bollard and Ramps) regulations (S.I. No. 32 of 1988)
- Traffic Management Guidelines
- NRA Design Manual for Roads & Bridges (NRA DMRB)

## 12. Definitions

- **Primary Distributor Roads:** The function of this type of road is to serve long distance traffic. Most existing primary distributor roads have to cater for mixed-use traffic. In new designs segregation between vehicles and pedestrians is provided and no frontage access is allowed. In many cases these new roads are designed as Urban Motorways.
- **District Distributor Roads:** These roads provide links between local districts within urban areas. Whilst they are important traffic routes they can have significant movements of buses and cyclists along them and pedestrians crossing them.
- **Local Collector Roads:** These roads provide for local journeys and provide links to major roads. Many will have residential and limited commercial access / frontage and there will be significant movements of pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Access Roads:** As the name suggests these roads provide access to properties of all types – residential, limited commercial, social and community. Vehicular access is allowed and speeds should be kept low. In some circumstances shared pedestrian/vehicular areas are allowed.



**Appendix A**

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>Wicklow County Council</b></p> <p><b>Traffic Calming Priority Assessment Form</b></p> |
|---|

| Scheme Description  |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Scheme Name:        |  |
| Road Number:        |  |
| Engineering Area:   |  |
| Current Speed Limit |  |
| Brief Description   |  |

| <b>Qualification (<i>Meeting the Basic Criteria as set out in Section 6.2</i>)</b>                      |     |    |     |        |
|---|-----|----|-----|--------|
| Description   | Yes | No | N/A | Remark |
| Site inside 50kmph Speed Limit (Unless otherwise agreed)  |     |    |     |        |
| Agreement Obtained from the Majority of Residents on the Road under consideration (two thirds majority) |     |    |     |        |
| Length of Through Road 300m or greater  |     |    |     |        |
| Length of Cul-De-Sac Road 100m or greater   |     |    |     |        |

If the proposed scheme has meet the basic criteria please proceed to page 2 of this form.

| <b>Prioritising Scheme (Ranking of Scheme in accordance with Section 6.3)</b>                       |                                    |  |    |                      |
|---|------------------------------------|--|----|----------------------|
| <b>Description</b>  |                                    |  |    | <b>Marks Awarded</b> |
| Accident History/Data<br>(Due to Excessive Speed)   | No                                 |  | 0  |                      |
|   | Yes                                |  | 30 |                      |
| 85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile Vehicular Speed<br>(Due to Excessive Speed)                             | Less than 30kmph                   |  | 0  |                      |
|   | Between 30kmph and 40kmph          |  | 10 |                      |
|   | Between 40kmph and 50kmph          |  | 20 |                      |
|   | Greater than 50kmph                |  | 30 |                      |
| Vulnerable Road users<br>(Play Areas, Shops, Schools in Area)                                       | No                                 |  | 0  |                      |
|   | Yes                                |  | 15 |                      |
| Traffic Volumes <sup>(1)</sup>  | Less than "x" vehicle per hour     |  | 0  |                      |
|   | Greater than "x" Vehicles per hour |  | 5  |                      |
| Local Conditions<br>(Take into consideration parking, footpaths, houses on one side, scheme length) |                                    |  | 0  |                      |
|   |                                    |  | 10 |                      |
|   |                                    |  | 20 |                      |
| <b>TOTAL MARKS AWARDED (OUT OF 100)</b>   |                                    |  |    |                      |
| <b>ESTIMATED COST OF PROPOSED SCHEME</b>  |                                    |  |    | €                    |

Note (1) - The "x" figure will be dependent on the number of residential/commercial units.

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date:**

\_\_\_\_\_