

BRAY HEAD SPECIAL AMENITY AREA ORDER 2007



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BRAY HEAD SPECIAL AMENITY AREA ORDER, 2007

project team 2005-2007

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INTRODUCTION

The designation of Bray Head as a Special Amenity Area has been an objective of Bray Town Council and Wicklow County Council for many years. Our aim is to realise this objective within the life span of the Bray Development Plan 2005-2011 and Wicklow County Development Plan 2004-2010.

Bray Head is located approximately 14 miles south of Dublin City Centre, and at the northern extremity of County Wicklow between the towns of Bray and Greystones. The proposed Order covers a large area of land, the majority of which is in private ownership.

Bray Head has a relatively low building line with very little residential or commercial development. This is very unusual on the east coast, as both Howth Head and Killiney Hill have significantly high levels of development. Bray Head is one of the most important amenity areas in County Wicklow and therefore, it is an attractive site for future development. As a result there is a need to protect, enhance and sympathetically develop this natural resource.

A Special Amenity Area Order (SAAO) is designed to protect areas that are of particularly high amenity value, which are sensitive to intense development pressure and which cannot be adequately protected by existing planning controls. It is hoped that this Special Amenity Area Order for Bray Head will provide coherent policies to pilot sustainable use of the Head.

In putting together this Order, we looked at the history of Bray Head and its role as a recreational amenity in the lives of the local community and visitors alike. As a candidate Special Area of Conservation, flora and fauna are particularly significant. Many of the species found within this area are listed for protection under the EU Directives and the Wildlife Act, and these designations are upheld in the Order. In both the Bray and Wicklow Development Plans, important views and prospects of the Head are listed for protection. Altogether, this provides an essential foundation for formulating the necessary objectives and policies for the area.





WHY HAVE AN SAAO?

The main reason for implementing a Special Amenity Area Order is to ensure the protection of an area of local and national importance. Another effect of a SAAO is that it brings certain exempted developments within planning control. It provides more detailed information to potential development as to what is acceptable/unacceptable by stating in advance the special amenity value of the area and the clear policy of the Council with regard to the area. Such a clear statement of policy can help avoid needless enquiries, misunderstandings and conflicts.

A SAAO will enhance the protection of the area as one of outstanding natural beauty by promoting it as an important recreational and education resource. The order will also act as a stimulus to improve the environmental quality by enhancing environmental diversity and the natural and manmade heritage.

The strength of the Order as a conservation document is primarily derived from the statutory process. It involves a confirmation procedure at National level, therefore it is of national and not just local importance. The Order process also includes an independent and public evaluation procedure presided over by An Bord Pleanála. The Order is made operative by the Board and not by the Planning Authority responsible for making the Order. This double tier of responsibility affords a greater degree of certainty to Orders in comparison to Development Plans. Finally, given the status of a SAAO it would offer additional support to the Development Control process especially at appeal stage to An Bord Pleanála.





LEGISLATION

area of special amenity

Under the Planning and Development Act, 2000, PART XIII – AMENITIES, an area can be declared under *section 202* to be an area of special amenity by reason of 'its outstanding natural beauty, or its special recreational value, and having regard to any benefits for nature conservation'. To declare an area of special amenity value, a Planning Authority must make an order to do so. This order states the objective of the Authority regarding 'the preservation or enhancement of the character or special features of the area, and including objectives for the prevention or limitation of the development in the area'.

After an order has been made a planning authority must publish it in at least one local newspaper (circulating in the area to which the order relates). The order must also be placed on public display to allow for observation and objections to be made. The order is then sent to the Board, where it is either confirmed or rejected. The Board may decide to hold an oral hearing before making their decision.





CURRENT PROTECTION AFFORDED

eu designations

Bray Head has been designated under the EU Habitats directive as a 'Candidate Special Area of Conservation' (cSAC) and as a 'Proposed Natural Heritage Area' (pNHA). This means that this area is considered to be important on both a National and European level. Ireland is obliged to conserve the natural habitats of flora and fauna under the European Directive 92/43/EEC and the Natura 2000 network. Aspects of habitat protection are in the context of pollution, deterioration and disturbance of habitat.

bray development plan 2005-2011 & wicklow county development plan 2004-2010

The policies and objectives concerning the EU designations for Bray Head are transposed in both the Bray and Wicklow Development Plans. Proposals relating to any development in the vicinity of, or affecting in anyway Bray Head, are required to provide sufficient information detailing the possible impacts upon the area and appropriate measures for mitigation. Policies regarding the protection and enhancement of natural wildlife habitats, natural heritage and views and prospects, are outlined in detail in both development plans.

views and prospects

The views and prospects of Bray Head which are protected in the Bray and Wicklow Development Plans are as follows

views

- The view of Bray Head from Glenree Drive, Curtlestown
- The view of the foreground of Bray Head from the Cliff Road Windgates
- The view of Bray Head from the Coast Road, Windgates
- The view of Bray Head from the town generally
- The view of Loreto Convent and the spire of Christchurch from Fiddler's Bridge on Bray Head
- The view from below Fiddler's Bridge leading to Bray Head, back along the Esplanade, towards Martello Terrace and the Sailing Club, particularly of the houses along Strand Road

prospects

- The prospect of the western side of Bray Head from the Southern Cross route
- The prospect of sea and cliff from Bray/Greystones Cliff Walk
- The prospect of Bray Head from Long Hill, Kilmacanogue





BOUNDARY OF SPECIAL AMENITY AREA

We define the boundary of Bray Head, and the area to be included in the Order, to be the area shown in MAP 1 of this document.



Aerial Photograph of Special Amenity Area





Left: looking through window of Raheen-na-Chluig. Below: grassland sloping towards the sea



PAST, PRESENT, & FUTURE



HISTORY

Bray Head is steeped in history and tradition. In this order we seek to conserve and protect the rich heritage of the Head, and maintain and enhance its long standing use as an area of special amenity value within the town and local environs.

raheen-a-cluig

The oldest known structure in Bray stands at the foot of the Head. The ancient church of Raheen-a-Cluig, 'The little Rath of the Bell', dates back to 1200AD and is thought to have been dedicated to St. Michael or St. Brendan. The ruins consist of a doorway in the Northeast wall and round headed windows in the east and west gables.



raheen-a-cluig

1200AD



railway line and cliff-walk

c1855



naylor's cove

1935

railway line

One of the most significant developments in the whole lifetime of the town was the building of the railway line between Dublin and Rosslare. The Dublin Bray connection was completed in 1856 and the Bray/Wicklow section was opened in 1855. The coming of the railway made Bray 'the Brighton of Ireland'.



the cross

1950





HISTORY

cliff-walk

The Cliff Walk between Bray and Greystones was built at the same time as the construction of the railway track. Today, this walkway remains a very important recreational amenity. There are many points of historical interest along the cliffwalk including Naylor's Cove, Fiddler's Bridge, the Brandy Hole, Cable Rock and the ruins of a cottage and gate which marked the boundary of Lord Meath estate. This gate used to be kept locked and a penny was charged for access, except on Friday when it was closed all day.

eagles nest

In 1932 the Eagles Nest ballroom and Café was built near the summit of the Head. The Eagles Nest was for many years the scene of popular dances and entertainment for locals and visitors alike. In 1946, Irish Holidays Limited bought the Eagles Nest and under the directions of Eamon Quinn built the Chairlift. The Chairlift ran from just above Fiddler's Bridge to the Eagles Nest a height of 450 feet above sea level. The carrying capacity was 300 people per hour each way.

naylor's cove

Before 1935, Naylor's Cove was a little rocky beach at the foot of the Head. Some swimmers and local men decided to form a committee and build a seawater pool with diving boards and dressing rooms. This was the beginning of Bray Cove Swimming Club. The aim of the club was to develop swimming and life saving in Bray. It became famous throughout Ireland and produced great champions. The Cove had the honour of hosting the American Olympic Gold Medal Springboard Diving Championships in 1936.

the cross

Unarguably the most prominent feature of Bray Head is the Cross. It was erected in 1950 to commemorate the Holy Year and is 30 feet high, with a span of 12 feet. The climb to the to the Cross is a 'must do' for all visitors to Bray.





PRESENT & FUTURE

at present

Bray Head is currently viewed as a passive recreational area with locals and tourists utilizing its many walkways and picnic areas. It is currently zoned as E3 'Solely Open Space' in the Bray Development Plan 2005-2011. Agriculture is the dominant use.

The cliff path between the towns of Bray and Greystones has recently been restored following the collapse of parts of the route way. This route is now well used by recreational walkers. Other established walk ways are to the summit of Bray Head and along the foot of the head. Recreational shore-fishing takes place from the rocks and lower cliffs in the the northeast of the area. The Bray Golf Club resides on the western slope.

The main Dublin to Rosslare railway line runs along the eastern side of Bray Head. The rail service along this line was extended in 2000 with the opening of the DART extension from Bray to Greystones.

the future

It is hoped that Bray Head will be preserved for future inhabitants of the town and the wider community. This SAAO is designed to manage future development of Bray Head.



People enjoying the recreational amenity of Bray Head

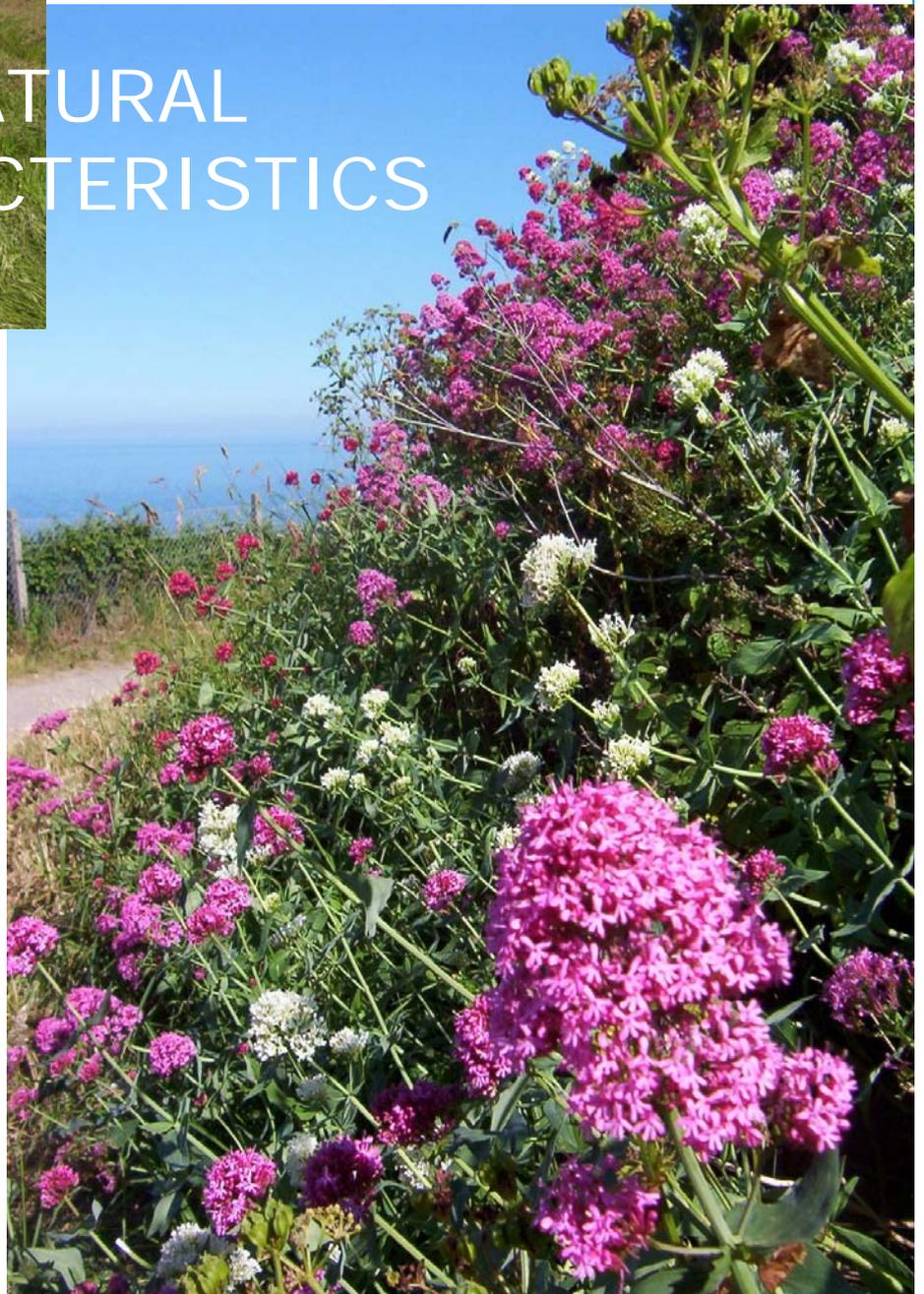




*Above: old par three
golf course*

NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS

Below: flora along Cliffwalk





GEOLOGY & SOIL

geology

This coastal site is situated in the north-east of Co. Wicklow between the towns of Bray and Greystones. Bedrock geology is Cambrian quartzites and shales (with mudstones and greywackes). Bray Head consists of a plateau of high ground, with five prominent quartzite knolls. The more exposed higher ground has a covering of shallow acidic soils, with protruding bedrock and scree. Elsewhere, deeper soils are formed by drift deposits, calcareous in character. On its sea-ward side, sea-cliffs of considerable height occur whilst inland its slopes slant in a south-westerly direction eventually linking with the two other conspicuous peaks of the Bray region, Little Sugar Loaf and Great Sugar Loaf. All three of these mountains consist of the same type of rocks, are the same geological age and belong to the same series as those strata forming Howth Head which lies north-east across Dublin Bay.

Due to the nature of their formation, these rocks rarely contain fossils. However the less disturbed origins of the sedimentary rocks and in particular the mudstones and greywackes have ensured the survival of several fossil tracings. The most significant fossil was found at the Brandy Hole on Bray Head. This fossil called *Oldhamia radiata*, shows a pattern of radiating lines for a centre, much as the spokes of a bicycle wheel do from a hub, and are said to represent the tracings of a small, marine organism. Other fossils found in the area are generally accepted as being the imprints of smaller seaweeds.

soils

The underlying geology has a profound effect on the soils of the region. The nature of the Bray Head rocks and the subsequent weathering have produced a very thin, light soil which is poor in nutrients and acid in reaction. This soil is mainly derived from broken-down quartzite and humus derived from decayed plant remains and where this mixture is of a suitable depth, a heath community is found. The upper slopes of Bray Head are of quartzite as seen on the peaks and knolls of the Head which carry little in the way of vegetation – a feature which further emphasises the bold, rugged nature of these peaks.





GEOLOGY & SOIL

erosion

The clay cliffs at the Southern end of the amenity area are subject to serious coastal erosion. This is caused by groundwater discharges and undercutting action by the waves. The groundwater discharges from the face that emerges above the till surface, which, during wet weather conditions, increases groundwater flow causing the granular drift overlying the till to be prone to saturation and flow. In addition, the made ground (fill) deposits exposed in the cliff are also vulnerable to erosion by surface water run-off. Cliff stability is also susceptible to the undercutting action of storm waves, leading to a reduction in slope stability and consequently increasing the risk of landslide, together with progressive retreat of the land margin. From 1937 to 2000 the mean retreat of the top of the cliff was 38m over the whole length of the Greystones North Beach.



Coastal erosion south of Bray Head





FLORA & FAUNA

There are approximately 600 different species of flora found in the Bray area. Some of these are rare in the national context and the south side of Bray Head has long been regarded as a rich botanical hunting ground. This is surprising considering the relatively sterile nature of the Cambrian rocks, but the light sandy soils on the south-facing slopes contain a number of species which are not normally found on the east coast of Ireland. One of these, Birdsfoot trefoil is protected under the Wildlife Act (1976).

A large proportion of the area covered by the Order is designated as a Candidate Special Area of Conservation. This designation sets forth some criteria for conservation, preservation and enhancement of EU designated species. Objectives and policies in relation to flora and fauna will reflect the EU Directives and the National Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000.

heathland

Heath, a habitat listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive, is the principle habitat over much of the Head. It occurs over the light sandy soils found in the upper slopes of Bray Head. The heath community is frequently accidentally or deliberately burned and this assists its development rather than hinders it. Yellow Fumitory (*Corydalis claviolata*) is an unusual species that occurs abundantly after a fire. Surprisingly, heath is not the natural climax vegetation of the sandy soils of the Bray Head area. Under natural conditions woodland would follow heath if neither fire nor grazing were to occur.



Yellow Fumitory, abundant on Bray Head

common species

Ling, *Calluna vulgaris*
 Bell Heather, *Erica cinerea*
 Gorse, *Ulex europaeus* and *U. gallii*
 Broom, *Cytisus scoparius*
 Greater Broomrape,
Orobanche rapum-genistae
 Tormentil, *Potentilla erecta*
 Milkwort, *Polygala vulgaris*
 Heath Bedstraw, *Galium saxatile*
 Yellow Fumitory, *Corydalis claviculata*
 Birdsfoot, *Ornithopus perpusillus*
 Spring Vetch, *Vicia lathyroides*





FLORA & FAUNA

woodlands

A stand of mostly native woodland occurs in the northern part of the site. This is a fairly pure Sessile Oak woodland, with some Ash and Birch. Understorey trees which occur are Holly and Hawthorn. The wood is on shallow drift and the ground flora often has species more associated with Heath than woodlands.



Wooded walkways of Bray Head



common species

Sessile Oak, *Quercus petraea*
 Ash, *Fraxinus excelsior*
 Birch, *Betula pubescens*
 Holly, *Ilex aquifolium*
 Hawthorn, *Crataegus monogyna*

driftbanks

The largest deposit of glacial drift was brought to the Bray area by the last glaciation. This is clearly evident along the length of the cliff path between Bray and Greystones and at the southern end of the Esplanade. The deposits by the cliff path rest on top of the sea-cliffs and in parts they have been cut through by the railway, leaving some good exposed sections. The dominant vegetation of the drift is grassland of a rich and diverse nature. Calcareous dry grassland, typically species-rich, occurs on deposits of glacial till.



Salad Burnet, a common specie of glacial driftbanks

common species

Quaking Grass, *Briza media*
 Smooth Meadow-grass, *Poa pratensis*
 Red Fescue, *Festuca rubra*
 Pale Flax, *Linum bienne*
 Salad Burnet, *Sanguisorba minor*
 Burnet-saxifrage, *Pimpinella saxifrage*
 Carlina Thistle, *Carlina vulgaris*
 Kidney Vetch, *Anthyllis vulneraria*





FLORA & FAUNA

sea-cliffs

Rocky sea-cliffs, another Annex I habitat, form most of the seaward boundary at this site and extend for approximately 2km. Steep clay cliffs extend southwards for a further 1km, these are unstable in some areas and have little vegetation.

The plants of seacliffs are unique in that they are specially adapted to the effects of salt spray from the sea.



Sea Campion, a plant found on exposed sea-cliffs

common species

exposed rock: Thrift, *Armeria maritima*
Sea Campion, *Silene maritima*
Sea Samphire, *Crithmum maritimum*
Scurvy Grass, *Cochlearia officinalis*
Rock Spurrey, *Spergularia rupicola*

upper cliff: Kidney Vetch,
Anthyllis vulneraria
Red Fescue, *Festuca rubra*
Ivy, *Hedera helix*

other wildlife

Bray Head is home to a host of wildlife including foxes, badgers, rabbits, hares, hedgehogs, feral goats and stoats.



Feral goats found mainly on the South facing slopes of Bray Head





BIRDS

birds

From a bird perspective, Bray Head can be divided into two main habitats (1) the marine rocky cliffs, which are mostly located on the seaward side of the railwayline from Bray to Greystones and (2) the terrestrial habitats above the railwayline and extending over the summits of Bray Head.

marine rocky cliffs

The nationally important numbers of Black Guillemot and Kittiwakes on Bray Head are deemed to qualify the marine rocky cliffs for designation as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for birds under article 4. of the European Union Birds Directive (Directive No.79/409/EEC).

The marine cliffs also provide a nesting place for a pair of Peregrine Falcons, a rare species listed in Annex 1 of the EU Birds Directive.



Peregrine Falcon in flight, and two Razorbills



Kittiwake and Black Guillemot (below right), both found on the marine rocky cliffs of Bray Head





BIRDS

terrestrial habitats

the main terrestrial habitats of interest from a bird perspective is the heath and scrub which extends up the seaward slope of Bray Head. The bird communities associated with scrub and heathland have declined in the last fifty years or so due to agricultural intensification. The most significant species found breeding in this area are Skylarks, Meadow Pipits, scarce migrant Whitethroats and Linnets. The small areas of woodland and hedgerows support a variety of common passerines (songbirds), such as Wrens, Dunnocks, Robins and Song Thrushes. Much of the scrubland and heathland on Bray Head is included in the proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA), to be designated under the 2000 Wildlife Act, and also in the candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) under the EU Habitats Directive (Directive No. 92/43/EEC).



Meadow Pipit, found in the heath and scrub lands of Bray Head

common species

Shag, *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Manx Shearwater, *Puffinus puffinus*

Herring Gull, *Larus argentatus*

Black backed Gull, *Larus marinus*

Kittiwake, *Rissa tridactyla*

Meadow Pipit, *Anthus pratensis*

Stonechat, *Saxicola torquata*

Reed Bunting, *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Cuckoos, *Cuculus canorus*

Wheatear, *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Whitethroat, *Sylvia communis*

Linnet, *Acanthis cannabina*

Skylark, *Alauda arvensis*

Guillemot, *Uria aalge*

Black Guillemot, *Cephus grylle*

Razorbill, *Alca torda*

Wren, *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Dunnock, *Prunella modularis*

Robin, *Erithacus rubecula*

Peregrine Falcon, *Falco peregrinus*





BRAY HEAD
SPECIAL AMENITY AREA ORDER
2007



*To ensure that the natural beauty,
heritage and recreational
amenities of Bray Head are
preserved and maintained for
present and future inhabitants of
Bray and the wider community,
particularly in relation to future
pressure from development*





SPECIAL AMENITY AREA ORDER

Planning and Development Acts, 2000 – 2006

Bray Town Council

In conjunction with Wicklow County Council and Greystones Town Council

*Managers Order No: 154/07
Bray Head Special Amenity Area Order 2007*

CONSENT was received from the Members of Wicklow County Council at the monthly meeting on the 5th February 2007 in County Buildings, Wicklow, that Bray Town Council make an Order declaring Bray Head an area of special amenity under the Planning and Development Act, 2000, Section 202, Sub-Section 5. The Members of Bray Town Council agreed to an Order being made on the 13th February 2007.

WHEREAS it appears to us the Council of Bray Town, being the Planning Authority for the town of Bray, that the areas of Bray Head, as shown bounded by the inner edge of the green line on Map 1, should be declared to be an area of special amenity by reason of its outstanding natural beauty, its special recreational value and having regard to the benefits for nature conservation.

NOW we the Council of the Town of Bray, in exercise of the powers vested in us by virtue of Section 202 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, hereby declare that the area bounded by the green line as shown on Map 1 be an area of special amenity and that it is an objective of the Planning Authority to preserve and enhance the character or special features of the area, as more particularly set out in Schedule 1 attached to the Order and, in pursuance of this objective, that no development, other than development within the limitations more particularly set out in Schedule 2 attached to this Order, shall be permitted within the said area and save also that the Order shall not affect any subsisting planning permissions, outline permissions or approvals granted in relation to any part of the area affected by the Order.

AND we hereby direct that the necessary steps be taken in accordance with the requirements of Section 203 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000.

Town Manager

Date



Schedule 1 Objectives in relation to the Preservation or Enhancement of the Character or Special Features of the Area.

Objective 1.1

In order to facilitate social inclusion, it is an objective of the Council to increase public access on foot to coastal, heathland and woodland areas for informal recreation.

Policy 1.1.1

In order to clarify their status the Order designates the Cliff Walk and other existing rights of way on Bray Head as public footpaths. The Council will develop this footpath system in an appropriate manner with suitable signage, footpath surfaces, notice and maps.

Policy 1.1.2

It will be a policy of the Council to increase the accessibility of the area to the mobility impaired. The Council will aim to manage the environment so that it does not handicap or discriminate against disabled people.

Objective 1.2

To protect the special amenity area ensuring that its resources are used in an effective and sustainable manner.

Objective 1.3

To manage the area in order to conserve its natural and cultural assets and realise its exceptional potential as a place for informal recreation, tourism and environmental education.

Policy 1.3.1

The planning authorities shall jointly set up a management committee to manage the Special Amenity Area Order area, which shall be representative of the local authorities concerned, local community interests, including landowners and relevant environmental and conservation interests at the discretion of the local authorities. The committee shall be responsible for producing a five-year management plan for the area for monitoring environmental quality in the area and for monitoring implementation of the plan.

Policy 1.3.2

The Council will produce plans for the development of amenity areas in its ownership or control. It will also address some of the issues that effect the entire area covered by the SAAO.



Picnic areas on the north slope of Bray Head

Policy 1.3.3

The Council will focus on the integration of various statutory and non-statutory environmental management processes, for example the County Development Plan, Bray Town Council Development Plan, Coastal Zone Management Initiatives, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protected Areas, Natural Heritage Areas etc.

Policy 1.3.4

The Council, in accordance with the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000 and the National Parks and Wildlife Service shall promote a Heathland Management Programme consisting of controlled burning of the site on a ten year rotation, in small patches, during the legal burning season.

Policy 1.3.5

The Council will also look at the planting of amenity woodlands at suitable sites.

Policy 1.3.6

The Council, in consultation with local landowners, will improve and maintain existing footpaths and bridleways, develop a way-marked footpath system, and create additional public footpaths/walkways.

Policy 1.3.7

The Council, in accordance with the local landowners, will ensure that the viability of agricultural landholdings in the area is maintained by facilitating development in accordance with suitable development guidelines for the area and Development Plan objectives.

Policy 1.3.8

The Council will consider the making of Conservation Orders and Tree Preservation Orders in suitable areas of exceptional natural beauty.

Policy 1.3.9

It will be a policy of the Council to develop education and public information schemes, through additional signage in the area and education programmes. These will include information on sites and structures of special interest, details of the flora and fauna and a historical account of the area.



Objective 1.4

To improve recreational facilities at Naylor's Cove.



swimming area

Policy 1.4.1

The Council will carry out an amenity improvement plan for Naylor's Cove.

Objective 1.5

It will be an objective of the Council to preserve and enhance views and prospects of special amenity value and of special interest.

Policy 1.5.1

The Council will not permit development which significantly changes either the skyline or the rural character of the slopes of the Special Amenity Area. Applications for planning permission must take into account the visual impact of any proposals to these views. Applicants must state whether there would be

any impact to the visual amenity and describe and illustrate the impact, using a cross-sectional drawing. The Council will not permit development which it considers would have a significant negative impact on a view.

Objective 1.6

To preserve existing areas of heathland, maritime grassland and woodland areas.

Policy 1.6.1

Development, which would reduce existing areas of heathland, maritime grassland and wooded areas, will not normally be permitted except for reasons of overriding public interest.

Policy 1.6.2

A list of sustainability indicators shall be composed, relevant to the Bray Head area and environs, and measures put in place to monitor, assess and evaluate these to ensure a high quality environment.

Objective 1.7

To preserve the special character of the area.

Policy 1.7.1

The Council will require an Environmental Impact Assessment to be prepared in respect of any planning application which it considers would be likely to have significant effects on the environment of the area.



Objective 1.8

To finance implementation of the Special Amenity Area Order.

Policy 1.8.1

The Council will allocate funding from the development contribution scheme towards maintenance and improvement works on Bray Head. It is considered reasonable that developers of lands in the vicinity of Bray Head should contribute towards expenditure in respect of works which improve local amenities and facilitate sustainable development.

Policy 1.8.2

A draft capital works programme shall be prepared by the Council for amenity works within the special amenity area.

Objective 1.9

While the Council recognize that Bray Head is an area of recreational amenity, it is felt that certain restrictions are required in relation to mountain biking in order to ensure public safety and maximize accessibility along the walkways on the Head.

Policy 1.9.1

Under the Order it will be a policy of the Council to contain mountain biking to specific cycle trails by using effective sign posting.

Objective 1.10

It will be an objective of the Council to prohibit the use of quad biking and the use of other motorized vehicles on the Head.

Objective 1.11

It will be an objective of the Council to make the Head more attractive and accessible at night time by providing an appropriate lighting scheme at the foot of the Head.

Policy 1.11.1

The lighting shall conform with the character of the promenade. It shall not detract visually from the natural beauty of the Head.

Objective 1.12

It will be an objective of the Order to protect the coast and to prevent any works that could exacerbate, and promote works that would abate, coastal erosion.



Schedule 2 Objectives and Policies for the Prevention and Limitation of Development

Development shall be exercised in accordance with the zoning objectives set out in the Bray Town Council Development Plan 2005 - 2011, the Wicklow County Development Plan 2004 – 2010 and the Greystones/Delgany Local Area Plan 2006 - 2012.

Objective 2.1
To protect and enhance the attractive and distinctive character of the residential areas.

Policy 2.1.1
Specific design guidelines will be set out in relation to proposed alterations on existing residential areas. Proposed development in the vicinity of the special amenity area shall have regard to these guidelines in order to minimise the impact on protected views, prospects and visual amenities of the area.

Objective 2.2
To ensure that development does not reduce the landscape and environmental quality of adjacent natural, semi-natural and open areas.

Policy 2.2.1
The Order applies a development control policy, which restricts new development within an acceptable range of land use activities.

Objective 2.3
To preserve the beauty and distinctive character of the Head.

Policy 2.3.1
The Council will require an Environmental Impact Assessment to be prepared in respect of any planning application which it considers would be likely to have significant effects on the environment of the area.

Policy 2.3.3
The Council will seek to conserve the existing hedgerows as they are an attractive element of the landscape and a valuable wildlife habitat. In general, the Council will not allow development which involves significant hedgerow destruction.



View of Bray town from the summit of Bray Head



SPECIAL AMENITY AREA ORDER

Policy 2.3.3

The Council will aspire to retain existing stone walls on the Head as they are considered an important element contributing to the rural character of the area. If they are in poor structural condition, they shall be replaced by walls of similar construction and appearance.

Objective 2.4

To preserve the character of the landscape and to conserve nature by promoting habitat diversity and environmentally friendly farming practices.

Policy 2.4.1

Development consisting of the construction of farm buildings and the reclamation of land, which is not exempted development in the special amenity area, will be evaluated in accordance with the stated objectives of the Order.

Policy 2.4.2

The Council is opposed to commercial evergreen forestry projects in the Area. Such development is not compatible with the landscape character of the Area, which it is an objective of the Order to preserve.

Objective 2.5

Where possible, it will be an objective of the Council, to sustain the economic viability of working farms without compromising either landscape quality or habitat diversity.

Policy 2.5.2

The Council wishes to retain agriculture as a land use in the area. While landscape and nature conservation are the primary considerations in assessing planning applications, the Council aims to facilitate development directly related to the viability of working farms.



Aerial photograph of Special Amenity Area



REGULATIONS

One consequence of making a Special Area Amenity Order (SAAO) is that some development that previously did not require planning permission now requires permission.

Whether or not an application will receive planning permission will depend on its conformity with the policies and objectives which are set out in the schedules of the Order.

Some forms of development in the Special Amenity Area remain exempt from the requirement to secure planning permission. However, the exemption only applies if the proposed development would not conflict with other considerations. A development proposal, which would normally be exempt under the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, is not necessarily exempt if it is in the area covered by the SAAO.

The points from the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, listed below are considered to be the most relevant to Bray Head, however all statements relating to restricting exempted development mentioned in the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 should be taken into account. A development proposal which would otherwise be exempt is not exempt if it:

1. Affects a site, building or feature of special interest which it is an objective of the development plan to preserve.
2. Interferes with a view or a prospect that is an objective of the planning authority to preserve.
3. Consists of the fencing or enclosing of land habitually open to or used by the public for recreational purposes or as a means of access to the seashore or to any place of natural beauty or recreational utility.

4. Obstructs any public right of way.

DEVELOPMENT WHICH REQUIRES PLANNING PERMISSION

Development that was previously exempt from planning permission but now requires permission under the SAAO is listed as follows-

DEVELOPMENT OF A RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY

- Building an extension of any size, at any location
- Building a garage, awning, shed, greenhouse or any other structure on the property,
- Structures, works, plant or machinery placed on or adjoining the property in order to carry out development which has received planning permission.

DEVELOPMENT FOR INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES

- The provision, rearrangement, replacement or maintenance of private ways.

DEVELOPMENT BY AN ELECTRICITY UNDERTAKING

The construction of overhead transmission or distribution lines for conducting electricity, the construction of a substation.

DEVELOPMENT BY BORD TELECOM OR BY ANY PERSON LICENCED UNDER SECTION 111 OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT, 1983.



OVERHEAD LINES

- Telephone kiosks or any other telephone facilities in a public place,
- Equipment for transmitting or receiving telecommunications messages from satellites,
- Permanent telecommunications exchange and radio station containers,
- Antenna support structures, Cabinets forming part of a telecommunications system, Transportable radio links.

ADVERTISEMENTS

- Advertisements on business premises,
- Advertisements in the form of a flag,
- Advertisements relating to religious, educational or medical institutions,
- Advertisements relating to guesthouses and hostels,
- Advertisements relating to the carrying out of building or similar works,
- Advertisements announcing or relating to local events of a religious, cultural, educational, political, social, recreational or sporting character.

WORKS RELATING TO THE CONSTRUCTION OR MAINTENANCE OF ANY GULLY, DRAIN OR POND, THE WIDENING OR DEEPENING OF WATER COURSES, THE REMOVAL OF OBSTRUCTIONS FROM WATERCOURSES AND THE MAKING OR REPAIRING OF EMBANKMENTS TO PONDS AND WATER COURSES.

THE CARRYING OUT OF ANY WORKS FOR THE PURPOSE OF MINERAL PROSPECTING.

AGRICULTURAL STRUCTURES

- Provision of housing for livestock and of ancillary provision for effluent
- Provision of roofless cubicles, open loose yards, silage areas, feeding aprons, assembly yards, effluent storage facilities,
- Provision of any store, barn, shed, glasshouse or other structure.

LAND RECLAMATION

- Development consisting of the carrying out on land that is used only for the purposes of agriculture or forestry any of the following works-
- Field drainage,
- Land reclamation,
- Removal of fences,
- Improvement of existing fences,
- Improvement of hill grazing.

DEVELOPMENT CONSISTING OF THE USE OF LAND FOR ANY FAIR, FUNFAIR, BAZAAR OR CIRCUS OR ANY LOCAL EVENT OF A RELIGIOUS, CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL, POLITICAL, SOCIAL, RECREATIONAL OR SPORTING CHARACTER AND THE PLACING OF MAINTENANCE OF TENTS, VANS OR OTHER TEMPORARY OR MOVABLE STRUCTURES OR OBJECTS ON THE LAND IN CONNECTION WITH SUCH USE.



EXEMPTED DEVELOPMENT

Some types of development in the Bray Head Special Amenity Area are exempted development and therefore do not require planning permission. These are taken from Schedule 2 of Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations, 2001 and are outlined below as follows-

DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE CURTILAGE OF A HOUSE

- Provision, as part of a central heating system, of a chimney, boiler house or oil storage tank (with capacity less than 3,500 litres),
- Erection of a wireless or television aerial (less than 6 metres in height),
- Erection of a single satellite television dish to the rear of a dwelling,
- Construction of a gate, gateway, railing or wooden fence or wall provided that the structure is not higher than 2 metres, or 1.2 in the front of the house and provided that materials which are sympathetic with the landscape are used,
- Construction of a path, drain or pond or any other landscaping works within the curtilage of a house provided that the level of the ground is not altered by more than 1 metre above or below the level of the adjoining ground,
- The provision at the rear of a house of a hard surface for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling house,
- The provision at the front or side of a house of a hard surface for parking of not more than 2 motor vehicles used for a purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling house,

- Construction or erection of a porch outside any external door of a house provided that the structure is at least 2 metres from any road, its floor area is less than 2 square metres, and its height (if the roof is a tiled or slated pitch roof) less than 4 metres or, in any other case, 3 metres,

- The keeping or storing of not more than one caravan, camper van or boat within the curtilage of a house, provided that it is not used for storage, display, advertisement or sale of goods or for the purpose of any business.

SUNDRY MINOR WORKS

- Construction, erection, renewal or replacement of any gate or gateway provided the height does not exceed 2 metres,
- The plastering or capping of any wall of concrete blocks or mass concrete,
- Construction, erection, lowering, repair or replacement of any fence or wall provided that the height of the structure does not exceed 1.2 metres or the height of the structure being replaced, whichever is the greater, and in any event shall not exceed 2 metres, and every wall bounding a road, other than a dry stone wall, shall be capped and plastered,
- Painting the external walls of a building (but not as a mural) colours sympathetic to the landscape should be used,
- Colours currently used on structures on Bray Head are generally whites, off-white/cream colours and pale pastilles,
- The repair or any improvement of any private street, road or way, being works carried out on land within the boundary of the street, road or way, and the construction of any private footpath or paving.



CHANGE OF USE

- Change of use as two or more dwellings to use as a single dwelling, of any structure previously used as a single dwelling,
- Change of use from use as a house, to use as a residence for persons with an intellectual or physical disability or mental illness does not exceed 6 and the persons providing care for such persons does not exceed 2.

DEVELOPMENT BY STATUTORY UNDERTAKERS

- The carrying out by any railway undertaking of development required in connection with the movement of traffic by rail in, on over or under the operational land,
- The carrying out by any harbour authority of development authorised by a harbour works order,
- The carrying out by the Irish Gas Board of development consisting of the construction of underground pipelines for the transmission of gas and laying of mains pipes, cables or other apparatus underground for this purpose,
- The carrying out by any electricity undertaking of development consisting of the laying of underground mains, pipes, cables or other apparatus for the purposes of the undertaking,
- The carrying out by An Post of development consisting of the provision of pillar boxes or other forms of post box.

DEVELOPMENT FOR AMENITY OR RECREATIONAL PURPOSE

Development consisting of the laying out and use of land:

- As a park, private open space or ornamental garden,

- As a roadside shrine (provided that the area of the shrine does not exceed 2 square meters, the height should not exceed 2 meters above the centre of the road opposite the structure and it should not be illuminated,
- For athletics or sports (other than golf or pitch and putt or sports involving the use of firearms), where no charge is made for admission of the public to the land.

DEVELOPMENT CARRIED OUT BY OR ON BEHALF OF A STATE AUTHORITY OR OTHER PUBLIC BODY, ON LAND USED BY THE AUTHORITY AS A PUBLIC PARK OF WORKS INCIDENTAL TO THAT USE, PROVIDED THAT THE FLOOR AREA OF ANY BUILDING CONSTRUCTED DOES NOT EXCEED 40 SQUARE METERS, THE HEIGHT OF ANY BUILDING CONSTRUCTED DOES NOT EXCEED 6 METERS (WITH A PITCHED ROOF) OR IN ANY OTHER CASE 3 METERS AND ANY CARPARK PROVIDED OR CONSTRUCTED SHALL NOT HAVE SPACES FOR MORE THAN 40 CARS.

DEVELOPMENT CONSISTING OF THE CARRYING OUT BY OR ON BEHALF OF A STATE AUTHORITY OR ANY OTHER PUBLIC BODY ON A NATURE RESERVE ESTABLISHED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15 OF THE WILDLIFE ACT, 1976 AS AMENDED BY SECTIONS 26 AND 27 OF THE WILDLIFE (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2000, OF WORKS IN CONNECTION WITH OR FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE ENJOYMENT OF THE RESERVE OR WHICH ARE REQUIRED IN CONNECTION WITH THE MANAGEMENT OR OPERATION OF THE RESERVE.



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