



**WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028**  
**DRAFT MINISTERIAL DIRECTION**  
**WICKLOW TOWN - RATHNEW LOCAL AREA PLAN 2025**

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 31 (7) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) that the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage has issued a **Draft Ministerial Direction** regarding the Wicklow Town – Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025 – 2031 to Wicklow County Council as follows:

“Local Area Plan” means the Wicklow Town-Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025-2031 (as made).

“Development Plan” means the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028.

“Planning Authority” means Wicklow County Council.

“RSES” means the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region.

The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage in exercise of the powers conferred on him by section 31 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (No.30 of 2000) (“the Act”) and consequent to a recommendation made to him by the Office of the Planning Regulator, hereby directs as follows:

- (1) This Direction may be cited as the Planning and Development (Wicklow Town-Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025-2031) Direction 2025.
- (2) The Planning Authority is hereby directed to take the following steps with regard to the Local Area Plan:
  - (a) Delete the following Material Alterations from the adopted Local Area Plan such that the subject lands revert to as indicated in the draft Local Area Plan:
    - (i) **MA 20B (Glenealy Road)** - i.e. the subject lands revert to Open Space (OS1), from New Residential – Priority 2 (RN2).
    - (ii) **MA 38 (Charvey Court)** - i.e. the subject lands revert to Open Space (OS1), from New Residential – Priority 1 (RN1).
    - (iii) **MA 41 (The Murrough North)** - i.e. the subject lands revert to Natural Areas (OS2), from Employment (E).
  - (b) and apply all necessary consequential updates to the text of the plan consistent with the foregoing.

**STATEMENT OF REASONS**

- I. The Local Area Plan includes material alterations to the draft Local Area Plan to change the zoning of the land from Open Space (OS1) to New Residential – Priority 1 (RN1) (MA 38), and from Natural Areas (OS2) to Employment (E) (MA 41) located in Flood Zone A and B where the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) (“Flood Guidelines”), issued under section 28 of the Act, indicate that such uses are not appropriate unless a Justification Test is passed. The material alterations are therefore inconsistent with RPO 7.12 of the RSES to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding in accordance with the Flood Guidelines, and Policy Objective CPO 14.06 of the County Development Plan to implement the Flood Guidelines.
- II. The Local Area Plan includes material alterations to the draft Local Area Plan to zone land for residential and employment development in areas of environmental and biodiversity sensitivity (MA 20B, MA 38 and MA 41), including land within the floodplain and in close proximity to a watercourse (MA 38 and MA 41), and adjacent to The Murrough SPA and The Murrough Wetlands SAC and the Broad Lough (MA 41).

Furthermore, a complete, precise and definitive finding and conclusion has not been reached that there would be no risk of adverse effects on the integrity of The Murrough SPA and The Murrough Wetlands SAC, and reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the potential adverse effects of development facilitated under the Employment (E) zoning objective on the European sites in question (MA 41).

The material alterations are therefore inconsistent with RPO 7.16 of the RSES, and Policy Objectives CPO 13.3, CPO 17.1, CPO 17.2, CPO 17.4, CPO 17.7, and CPO 17.26 of the County Development Plan.
- III. The Local Area Plan has not been made in a manner consistent with, and has failed to implement, recommendations of the Office of the Planning Regulator made under section 31AO of the Act.
- IV. The Minister is of the opinion that the Local Area Plan as made is inconsistent with the objectives of the Development Plan of the area contrary to the requirements of section 19(2) and section 20(5)(a) of the Act.
- V. The Local Area Plan as made is not consistent with the objectives of the RSES contrary to section 19(2) and section 27(1) of the Act.
- VI. The Minister is of the opinion that the Local Area Plan as made is not consistent with National Policy Objectives 52, 78, 85 and 87 of the National Planning Framework First Revision (2025).
- VII. The Minister is of the opinion that the Local Area Plan fails to set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- VIII. The Local Area Plan is not in compliance with the requirements of the Act.

**DISPLAY OF DRAFT DIRECTION**

A copy of the Draft Direction may be inspected at the following locations from **Thursday 3rd July 2025 to Wednesday 16th July 2025** inclusive:

- Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Station Road, Wicklow Town, A67 FW96 (during normal opening hours) and
- The Council’s website [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie) through an **online consultation portal**. Scan the QR code on this notice to access the portal.

**SUBMISSIONS / OBSERVATIONS**

Written submissions or observations in respect of the Draft Direction may be made from **Thursday 3rd July 2025 to Wednesday 16th July 2025 (23:59)** inclusive and shall be taken into consideration by the Minister before he directs the Planning Authority.

- Write to ‘**Draft Direction LAP**’, Administrative Officer, Planning Section, Wicklow County Council, Station Road, Wicklow Town, A67 FW96.
- Through the online consultation portal at [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie) or scan the QR code on this notice.

**NOTE**

- YOU ARE STRONGLY ADVISED TO MAKE YOUR SUBMISSION AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.
- All submissions are to be clearly marked with ‘**Draft Direction LAP**’.
- All submissions should include your name, a map (where appropriate) and, where relevant, details of any organisation, community group or company etc., which you represent.
- Please make your submission by one medium only, i.e. hard copy or through the portal.
- All valid submissions will form a part of the statutory Chief Executive’s report to be submitted to the Minister and the Office of the Planning Regulator.
- The planning process is an open and public one; therefore all submissions/observations are a matter of public record and will be available for public viewing. They may also be placed on the County Council’s website and therefore should not include any personal information.
- LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

*Wicklow County Council is committed to Access For All. All of the above documents are available in alternative format on request. Please contact Wicklow County Council on 0404-20100 should you have any specific access requirements.*

