



Wicklow Town - Rathnew LAP Submission - Report

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Topic

Regeneration of Communities & Places - Healthy Placemaking - Urban Design - Opportunity Sites in Wicklow Town - Rathnew

Submission

Urban Design Standards -

In identifying proven and progressive Best Practices, I strongly recommend you study the excellent, practical and ground-breaking work of the USA-based Project For Public Spaces (www.pps.org/category/placemaking). PPS is a leading, globally-recognised Placemaking NGO advocate and projects promotor, executor. For over 20 years, it has been active in many countries, including in Europe, and in Ireland (Dún Laoghaire, March 2012)

A practically-attainably Placemaking philosophy should be adopted with principles and standards that are preferential to pedestrians, cyclists, children and older people. Practices should be based on Universal Design principles.

Public spaces should have clearly 'legible' functions that meet users anticipated and analysed needs. Space should not exclusively or always only provide for activities and 'busyness', but also for quiet, sensitively places where people can retreat from adjacent, busy and noisy environments.

Designers should be encouraged and required to include recycled and sustainably-produced materials and elements, with low-Carbon footprints and low-maintenance requirements. Design Statements should be required that include an estimate of Carbon footprint of proposed developments.

Unique Features / Public Realm and Green Infrastructure

The Abbey Grounds, Wicklow Town

Acquisition by the Council, by negotiation with landowner or by C.P.O, should be an objective of the new LAP.

The lack of a town-centre public park, in public ownership, is a significant and longstanding, critical deficit in the Town. Merely zoning designation if evidently not enough. The provision of a vital, multi-functional recreational facility is essential and is a legal obligation under planning legislation. This is becoming more urgent as the town and hinterland continues to rapidly grow, and taking cognisance of the planned target population of 24,000, such provision is becoming more urgent. A robust case can be made for a C.P.O. A re-design would also offer opportunities for Climate Adaptation measures (e.g. Rain Gardens) and for increasing local Biodiversity.

Topic

Heritage - Biodiversity- Green infrastructure- Climate Action- Energy

Submission

How to develop, protect and enhance? :-

Apply innovative and progressive, Best Practices in Climate Adaption, especially Nature-based Solutions (NBS), in private, commercial and public developments and 'Grey' Infrastructure projects (e.g. roads, schools), through the Development Management and Planning Control processes.

NBS are not included or referenced in Wicklow Co. Council's Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019, or in the Wicklow Town LAP 2013-19, both surprising omissions. NBS are officially recognised and promoted by Dept. of Housing, Local Government, Heritage, and Dept. of Environment, Climate, Comms.,

Regional C.A.R.Os and the EPA as proven, essential Adaptation measures. Other planning authorities have committed to NBS in their respective forward planning documents (CDPs, LAPs) and corporate strategies.

Land Use - key actions on Climate Change impacts: -

Green Roofs insulate buildings (reducing Energy Consumption and Emissions), attenuate stormwater (reduced Grey Infrastructure demand) and promote Biodiversity (WCC has signed-up to All Ireland Pollinator Plan) and promoted Visual Amenity (departmental planning/design standards). Design Standards - require all developments, including Council building projects, to incorporate a mandatory 60% roof cover using multi-species (not just monocultural Sedum 'carpets'), planted Green Roofs where the roof space is 300sq.metres or more. Precedent: Dlr County Council has had this standard in its last two County Development Plans (Green Roof Development Standard). Accepted by Dept. of Education for school buildings; reinforced by An Bord Pleanála in various decisions (SHDs and on appeal).

How to address flood risk, weather events?: -

NBS are particularly relevant and applicable to Stormwater Management in context of extreme, more frequent storms, heavy rainfall. For example, Integrated Constructed Wetlands and Detention Basins, located upstream of Wicklow and Rathnew (edge of urban settlements, peri-urban landscapes) would mitigate excessive stormwater and reduced flooding in the town and village centres.

Topic

Infrastructure - Sustainable Movement – Transportation

Submission

Both Rathnew village and Wicklow Town suffer from very poor accessibility (quantity and quality) provision for pedestrians especially and for cyclists. Although primarily an operational issue, the planning system and the Draft LAP can play a role in optimising equity and quality of provision, through specific objectives and Development Control for both retrofitting (e.g. Part 8 road, street, public realm developments by WCC) and in new developments, including site renovations/regeneration projects that are contiguous to public footpaths.

Topic

Other topics for you to have your say on! - Environmental Assessment - Plan Implementation -Plan Delivery

Submission

Dev. Stds. Planning Control - Landscape Design, Retention/Protection of Vegetation:

Plans only by qualified Landscape Architect

BS5837 Trees in relation to Construction

Tree Bonds prior to start

Retain Arborist at constructn

Practical Certifications

Map



Site Description:

Institutionally-owned (St. Patrick's Catholic parish) private open space, zoned Passive Open Space in current Wicklow Local Area Plan 2013-2019

File