

	<h1>Greystones-Delgany &amp; Kilcoole LPF Variation No.4</h1>
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<b>Who are you:</b>	Agent
<b>Name:</b>	Peter Allan O'Connor
<b>Reference:</b>	GDKLPF-100730
<b>Submission Made</b>	June 20, 2025 10:09 AM

Choose one or more categories for your submission. Please also select which settlement you wish to make a submission / observation about.

- Proposed Changes to Volume 1 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028
- Proposed Changes to Volume 2 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028

## Local Planning Framework PART A Strategy

- A.4 Overall strategy

## Local Planning Framework PART B Settlement Specific Objectives.

- B.2 Residential Development
- B.5 Community development, including schools, and active open space
- B.8 Land Use Map and Zoning
- B.9 Specific local objectives (SLOs)

**Write your observations here:**

Please see our submission attached

**Please select which town you want to comment on:**

Kilcoole

**Observation relevant to the settlement:**

Site off Lott Lane

**Upload a File (optional)**

Site at Lott Lane- LPF Submission.pdf, 2.14MB



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**Report:**

**Topic:**

**Client:**

**Client Address:**

**Council:**

**Date:**

## **PLANNING SUBMISSION**

Draft Greystones, Delgany & Kilcoole Local Planning Framework 2025

Peter Allan O'Connor

c/o Armstrong Planning, 12 Clarinda Park North, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin

Wicklow County Council

19/06/2025

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## **ARMSTRONG PLANNING**



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## 1. INTRODUCTION & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Armstrong Planning – with offices at 12 Clarinda Park North, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, A96 V6F9 – have been retained by Peter Allan O'Connor (joint owner of the site with access off Lott Lane outlined in red in Fig. 1 below) to make this Submission in relation to the Draft Greystones, Delgany & Kilcoole Local Planning Framework which is being prepared as Variation No. 4 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028.

## 2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The submission relates to a family-owned landholding located (with access) off Lott Lane, Kilcoole. We indicate the site location in Figure 1 below.

*Fig 1. Subject site (outlined in red)*



## 3. GROUNDS OF SUBMISSION

In the current Greystones-Delgany & Kilcoole Local Area Plan (LAP) 2013-2019 the subject lands are covered by three separate land use zoning objectives. These are:

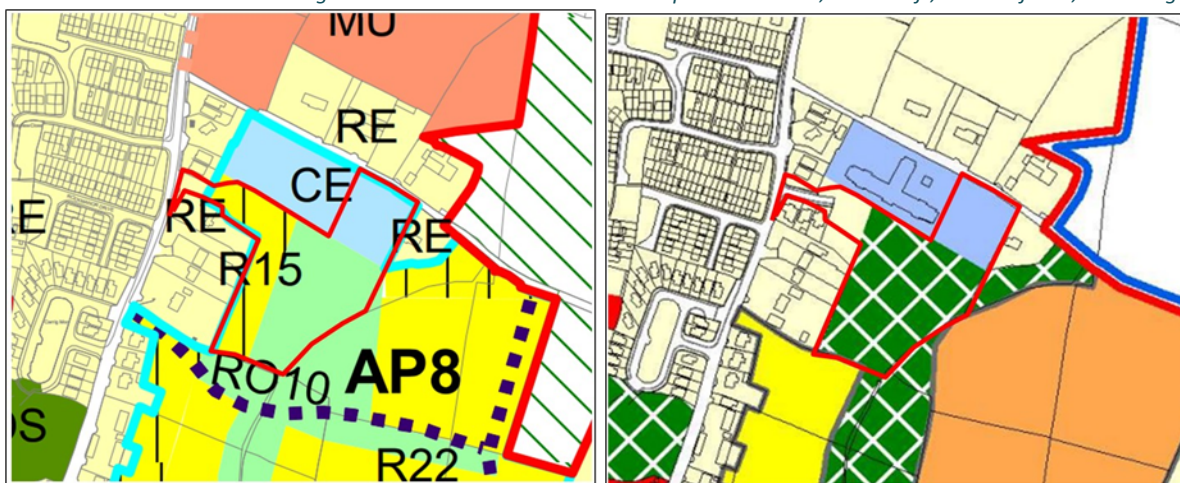
- R15 Residential 15/ha
- CE Community and Education, and
- AOS Active Open Space.

However, in the Draft Greystones / Delgany & Kilcoole Local Planning Framework (LPF) 2025 the residential component of the landholding has been omitted. In the Draft LPF the residential component of the lands is now indicated as being zoned 'OS2 Natural Area', as is the area previously indicated as AOS Active Open Space. Only the 'CE Community and Education' portion of the lands is to be retained.

Our client's primary concern is the unexpected and unexplained de-zoning of the residential component of their lands. We respectfully request that the Planning Authority maintain the existing residential land use zoning, or equivalent, on the relevant part of the landholding.

We illustrate the existing and draft land use zoning arrangements in Figure 2 below:

*Fig. 2: O'Connor site outlined in red as per current LAP, on the left, and Draft LPF, on the right.*



The reasons that the existing residential component should be maintained are clear. We consider that the Planning Authority should not only maintain but increase the supply of serviced, zoned land within Kilcoole. The site is serviced and within 550m walking distance of Kilcoole town centre. Kilcoole is located on the main Dublin-Wexford railway line. The lack of housing supply and the unfolding pressured circumstances for young families across the Country is an issue of national importance, and the need to deliver housing is particularly acute in North Wicklow. We strongly urge the Planning Authority to retain, at minimum, the existing residential zoning of our client's landholding, and ideally to increase the proportion that is zoned residential as set out below.

### 3.1 Servicing

Regarding servicing, we would point out that the subject lands have access onto Lott Lane and are fully capable of being serviced, including direct access to public mains foul drainage, mains surface water drainage, mains water supply, electricity, and vehicular access to the public road. We would also respectfully remind the Planning Authority that the site is adjacent to existing residential development and is a short walk to a range of supporting services and facilities, including public transport.

We would further note that in considering previous planning applications on the site, the Planning Authority raised no issue as to the principle of housing development on the lands, with technical matters only remaining to be addressed.





Moreover, we would point out that our client was previously happy to give over 3 acres of the subject site to 'open space' (as r the existing zoning) but the zoning now proposed to sterilise the entire site seems excessive and unnecessary.

### 3.2 National Guidance

It is submitted that the intended de-zoning of residential lands is contrary to Ministerial Guidance in this regard; contrary to all National and Regional Planning Policy and Guidance; as well as being contrary to ongoing measures to solve the unfolding housing crisis. We urge the Planning Authority to reconsider their intention to de-zone these lands from residential. We consider that this approach is contrary to:

- The provisions of the National Planning Framework
- The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region; and
- The Compact Settlement Guidelines (and indeed flies in the face of the Government's policy for Compact Growth).

Furthermore, regarding the intended de-zoning, whilst we are aware that Section 10(8) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) indicates that there is no presumption in law that land zoned for any purpose in a development plan shall remain so zoned in any subsequent development plan, we would also highlight that Section 4.4.1 'Land/Sites Already Zoned' of the Section 28 'Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities' states that:

*"It is a policy and objective of these Guidelines that zoned housing land in an existing development plan, that is serviced and can be developed for housing within the life of the new development plan under preparation, should not be subject to de-zoning."*

This provision forms part of the Core Strategy of the above Ministerial Guidelines. Whilst we acknowledge that the current land use plan is an LAP and the proposed land use plan is an 'LPF', the Guidelines state that land and sites already zoned for residential purposes may be regarded as providing a baseline, or starting point, to meet projected population and housing targets. We consider that given the current housing crises and the legal position informing the above Ministerial Guidance, the substantive issue in this regard is a presumption on behalf of the Government against de-zoning. In our view, this is more relevant than ever - particularly in a settlement in North Wicklow located on a railway line - and that it should be applied in this case.

The subject site is the remnant of a larger landholding the balance of which was released in stages by our client in years past for separate developments. Our client is willing and able to make this site available for development. We confirm to the Planning Authority that the site can be developed within the period of the LPF and County Development Plan, and that it is ready and available for development.

We would further note that Section 6.2.1 'Zoning in the Development Plan' of the Guidelines states that: "... land-use zoning decisions should not be deferred to subsequent local area plan processes. This is to avoid a scenario whereby the development plan core strategy may be subject to challenge and effectively undermined in a separate statutory process." We consider that this is what appears to be occurring in the subject case, which is the bypassing of the intent of the Ministerial Guidelines by having delegated zoning to the existing Greystones-Delgany & Kilcoole LAP, de-zoning these lands through the 'LPF' process, and then importing that de-zoning into the current County Development Plan through Variation No. 4. It should be noted that this approach could leave the County Council exposed to legal challenge, judicial review, and OPR plans evaluation.



Finally in this regard, we would point out to the Planning Authority that the Guidelines also state that should it be the case there is a surplus of well-located zoned and fully serviced land to meet population and housing supply targets already zoned for development, it is recommended best practice that a phased approach be taken to prioritise the preferred sequence of development of such sites. Accordingly, we would urge the Planning Authority, should they see fit, to consider such an alternative approach, and retain the residential zoning of the subject lands for residential development potentially to be delivered in a later phase rather than being de-zoned.

On behalf of our client, we respectfully ask the Planning Authority to preserve the existing, low-density 'R15' residential zoning (or similar residential zoning) on the relevant part of the site as per the current LAP. The respective arrangements within the LAP and Draft LPF are set out in Figure 2 above.

We wish also to add that our client also has no issue with the continuation of the 'CE Community and Education' portion of the site, although we would point out that a change to residential zoning of this parcel of land could also be appropriate given the ample road frontage and the existing residential use to the north, northeast and east.

### **3.3 Misapplication of 'OS2 Natural Area' Zoning**

Further to the above, the Draft LPF provides no rationale for the change from 'AOS Active Open Space' to 'OS2 Natural Area' within and adjacent to our client's site. As set out below, we consider that this zoning is not appropriate for the subject site or adjacent lands, and that the existing 'AOS' zoning should be maintained and adjusted.

The Draft LPF 'Green Infrastructure Audit' demonstrates no basis for the change, nor any grounds for the 'Natural Area' designation being applied to the lands. We would emphasise to the Planning Authority that the site is by no means a 'natural area' but instead was previously an agricultural field that is now overgrown with scrub vegetation.

As a comparison, we would draw the Planning Authority's attention to the use of the OS2 zoning within Greystones along the Three Trouts Stream. In that case the OS2 Natural Area is correctly used to protect an existing natural heritage feature, whereas in our client's case the lands do not amount to a significant natural heritage asset and have minimal 'natural area' value.

It is submitted that the OS2 zoning is being misapplied in this location. The purpose of the OS2 zoning is stated in the draft LPF as being "*To protect, enhance and manage existing open, undeveloped lands that comprise flood plains, buffer zones along watercourses and rivers, steep banks, green breaks between built up areas, green corridors*". Our question to the Planning Authority is why this zoning would be applied for a site that has no watercourse, river, or steep banks, or built up areas either side. We would also ask why this zoning is being used as a green break or green corridor between envisioned future built up areas inside such a small settlement as Kilcoole, and within the settlement boundary. We consider that this is wholly contrary to the sustainable development of a town located on the railway line, particularly in the context of national and regional policy in support of Compact Growth as set out above.





### 3.4 Proposed Alternative Approach

Rather than pursuing an outright de-zoning of the subject lands, we urge the Planning Authority to adopt a more nuanced and constructive approach that balances policy objectives with development potential.

The previous (existing) 'AOS – Active Open Space' zoning provided a coherent and pragmatic framework, supporting active recreational uses adjacent to existing and proposed residential and community facilities. This zoning arrangement enabled integration of open space within a broader pattern of compact urban growth, aligning with national policy directives on placemaking, walkability, and sustainable settlement expansion.

In contrast, the proposed 'OS2 – Natural Area' zoning lacks justification and would sterilise accessible serviced, well-located lands within the Kilcoole settlement boundary. If the Planning Authority's intention is to preserve visual separation or green infrastructure continuity, this objective could be achieved more effectively through a **Specific Local Objective (SLO)** applied in conjunction with residential or mixed-use zoning. Such an SLO could mandate the provision of a green break or corridor, strategically designed as part of a coordinated masterplan for the site.

This approach would:

1. Facilitate the efficient use of zoned and serviced land
2. Support delivery of much-needed housing stock
3. Preserve connectivity with the wider green infrastructure network, and
4. Provide the Planning Authority with control over the form, timing and function of open space delivery.

Critically, the subject site falls between two parcels of land that are proposed in the LPF to be zoned for residential use – directly to the southwest and to the east/southeast. Rezoning the subject site as 'OS2 natural Area' risks creating fragmented, piecemeal development and would undermine the potential for cohesive, plan-led delivery. By contrast, maintaining a residential zoning on the subject site would enable the strategic assembly of a unified, deliverable development site. This would support a masterplanned approach capable of integrating housing, community & sporting uses, and green infrastructure - thereby improving both feasibility and development quality.

We therefore respectfully request that the Planning Authority zone the subject lands for **Residential**, or **Residential / Community and Education** use, and apply a **Specific Local Objective (SLO)** requiring the delivery of integrated green infrastructure – such as a green break or green corridor – designed as part of a masterplan for the lands. This approach would support compact growth, align with national and regional planning policy, make best use of serviced land, and preserve both functional and ecological value in a sustainable, deliverable manner.

## 4. SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

In summary, our client's primary concern is the unexpected and unexplained de-zoning of the residential component of their lands:

- We respectfully request the Planning Authority to maintain the existing low-density 'R15' residential zoning (or equivalent) on the relevant part of the site as per the current LAP.



Our clients have no issue with the continuation of the 'CE Community and Education' zoning on a portion of the site as per the existing LAP and as proposed within the Draft LPF, and support the continued provision of much-needed community and education uses in Kilcoole.

In relation to the current proposal for 'OS2 Natural Area' zoning on our client's land, we consider that this proposal is inappropriate. Rather than reverting to open space zoning, the appropriate approach is to apply residential or residential/community zoning with a Specific Local Objective requiring the delivery of high-quality green infrastructure as part of a coordinated masterplan

In summary, we set out above the Planning & Development issues arising from the Draft LPF that are of concern to our client and suggested measures to address the same. Armstrong Planning respectfully asks the Planning Authority to have due regard to these considerations in preparing the LPF, and we would welcome the opportunity to engage further on this matter. We trust the above is clear and informative. We request that all correspondence on these matters be directed to Armstrong Planning at 12 Clarinda Park North, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, A96 V6F9.

Prepared by

**DAVID ARMSTRONG** BA MRUP MIPI MRTPI

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