

	Arklow LPF Variation No.5
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- Proposed Changes to Volume 2 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028

Local Planning Framework PART A Strategy

- A.2 County Development Plan Strategy for Arklow
- A.3 Factors Influencing Future Development Options

Local Planning Framework PART B Settlement Specific Objectives.

- B.1 Town Centre Regeneration
- B.2 Arklow Waterfront Zone
- B.3 Housing Development
- B.6 Social & Community Development
- B.8 Physical Infrastructure
- B.9 Zoning & Land Use

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Brian Brennan TD Submission.pdf, 1.54MB



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Variation No. 5 Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 Arklow Local Planning Framework

Tuesday 11 November 2025

A Chairde,

I welcome the opportunity to engage with Wicklow County Council on the development of the Arklow Local-Planning Framework (Variation No 5 to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028).

Arklow is a town with an incredibly rich heritage with a fiercely loyal and proud population. The location of the town at the delta of the Avoca River and flanked by the Irish Sea to the East and beautiful vale of Avoca to the West, with easy access North and South to our major cities, lends itself to opportunity.

Arklow has seen its fair share of difficulty over the last number of decades, with the departure of major industry and the decline in development and this is starkly reflected across the town, emanating from the Main Street outwards.

But Arklow retains its heartbeat – the people - and there remains huge opportunity and now is the time to ensure that Arklow develops and starts to thrive.

The commissioning of the new Wastewater Treatment plant has marked the commencement of a new era for Arklow and this plan must provide the roadmap to ensure that the town thrives long into the future.

With plans in place for upwards of 1,000 new homes in progress it is imperative that this growth is appropriately supported and all necessary infrastructure is put in place.

The potential housing development in Arklow is particularly welcome in the midst of the current housing crisis and due to this, **no land that is currently zoned as residential should be de-zoned** under this plan.

A:3.2 Sustainable Transportation.

Key to that is the delivery of a **second vehicular bridge** between the 19 Arches and the M11 bridge to the West, continuing onto the Western Distributor Road which would have a game-changing impact on the town centre, removing congestion, improving safety for cyclists and pedestrians and open huge possibility for a vibrant and active town centre.

This project has been re-evaluated as a long-term option in the Draft LPT due to the requirement of *“further feasibility and environmental / ecological studies (particularly as the Arklow town marsh is a pNHA and the principal wetland area in Arklow), as well as stakeholder and traffic / transport assessment would be required before such a project could be progressed”*.

I would urge that these studies and assessments be conducted as a matter of priority in order to allow for progression of this project at the very least in the medium term.

A:2.3 Town Centre Development

Facilitate the redevelopment of lands within the town core area, particularly those sites with frontage onto the main streets and squares of the town, which shall provide for a street fronting building of a **high quality design** or for a **high quality urban space**, including hard and soft landscaping, and appropriate street fixtures and furniture, in order to **enhance and create a more attractive streetscape**;

This plan must put the highest priority on the redevelopment of Arklow Main Street and the surrounding environs. For too many years the retailers on the street have worked tirelessly to keep their businesses open while surrounded on all sides by derelict, vacant and unsightly properties.

All available mechanisms, incentives, grants and deterrents must be utilised to ensure that Main Street is brought back to life, providing an appropriate blend of retail, hospitality, residential and recreational space.

B:6.6 Social, Community & Cultural Facilities

The plan outlines *“a need for at least one new multi-use community centre that would be of a sufficient size and format to cater for local community groups, classes and local small scale social events. Ideally such a facility should be located in the existing built up area where it is most accessible to existing and proposed residential areas”*.

While facilities such as this are absolutely needed, I do not believe this goes far enough.

Arklow has a vibrant and active Arts community and is crying out for a Multi-Purpose Entertainment Venue that is capable of holding medium to large scale events, shows. This would also double as training/rehearsal space for any of the many brilliant groups in the town and may open up further opportunity for growth, development and expansion.

Currently there is no theatre or entertainment space for any drama or musical group to put on a medium to large scale event in Arklow. This does not provide any space for the sector to thrive.

Additionally a multi-purpose entertainment space would offer the potential to attract artists and entertainers to the town, enlivening the night time economy and providing economic opportunity for adjacent hospitality businesses.

B:2.1 Northern Waterfront Zone

The development in the last 20 years of the Bridgewater Shopping Centre (with associated residential and office use), Aldi supermarket and the more recent completion of the Arklow Shipping building and Arklow Waste Water Treatment Plant, show that the potential of this area north of the River Avoca for non-industrial uses is starting to be realised.

The northern waterfront area now naturally lends itself to leisure and residential uses area noting its proximity to existing amenities such as the seafront, Kynoch Park and duck pond, Coral Leisure, the running track and MUGA, Arklow children's playground, pitch and putt, outdoor gym equipment, Arklow Sailing Club and leisure marina, and the Arklow Bay Hotel.

The further enhancement and regeneration of this area needs to be facilitated to ensure the full potential of the northern waterfront as an important town asset and amenity is released. In this regard there is potential for further residential development north of Marina Village and west of Arklow Shipping with a focus on improving the public realm, in particular enhancing pedestrian connectivity across this area and providing a better sense of personal security and enclosure by increasing passive surveillance over the AOS lands to the north.

In this regard, SLO1 Northern Waterfront Zone (refer to section B.9) has been identified to further encourage a clear development path for the next stage of the regeneration of this area.

Significant development is required urgently in the Northern Waterfront Zone with the purpose of delivery of a town park, fit to meet the purpose of a vibrant growing town. At present, there is a piecemeal assortment of facilities and amenities, many in poor repair with no sense of purpose or structure and without any defined boundary.

Accessibility and security must be a priority in line with the delivery of an amenity for all to use.

Consideration should also be given to facilitation of the various sports clubs that utilise and train on the sports amenities within this area, with provision of secure storage and equipment space and adequate lighting for year round use.

B:6.5 Open Space

The Council's 'Play' and 'Sports and Recreation' strategies provide methodologies for determining the quantum of open space needed by the resident population, for planning and future proofing purposes.

Our sports clubs need more space – as our town grows we will see more people participating in sports – more children, more women, more men and we need to support our clubs to ensure they have the space, the pitches, the facilities, the access to develop and thrive.

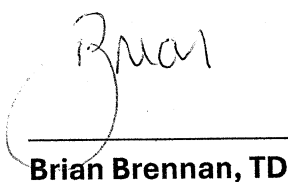
Future Provision

It is noted that there was no shortfall identified in casual play spaces/greenspaces in the SIA audit for both the current and future projected population but there is a need for the enhancement of the quality of public open spaces, particularly in the form of Active Open Space and equipped play spaces such as playgrounds and MUGAs (multi use games areas).

I welcome the consideration given to zoning of lands as Active Open Space (AOS) to facilitate the expansion of our existing sports clubs and want to ensure that this plan is tuned in to identify all available space for recreational and sports purposes.

This plan must deliver for Arklow and I look forward to working with all involved to ensure that the people of this town live in a vibrant, functioning town that offers a high quality of life and the housing, infrastructure, facilities and amenities to provide that.

Kind regards,



Brian Brennan, TD