



Variation No.6 to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report



December 2025
Wicklow County Council

SEA SCREENING REPORT
PROPOSED VARIATION NO. 6 TO
WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028 (AS VARIED)

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (AS AMENDED)
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT)
REGULATIONS 2004 (AS AMENDED)
REPORT PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 13K OF THE SEA REGULATIONS 2004 (AS AMENDED)

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1.0 Introduction

This is the Screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Report for Proposed Variation No. 6 to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied)¹. The purpose of this report is to inform whether or not to undertake SEA for the Proposed Variation No. 6. This report should be read in conjunction with the documents cited within, including the Proposed Variation and the Screening for AA Report.

SEA is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme, or a variation to a plan or programme, before a decision is made to adopt it.

Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers, of 27 June 2001, on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment, henceforth referred to as the 'SEA Directive', sets out the framework for the environmental assessment of land-use and other plans in Ireland.

The SEA Directive is transposed into national legislation under the following Acts:

- The Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004), as amended by Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 201 of 2011);
- The European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, as amended by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011.

In the preparation of this report, regard has been had to additional guidelines, including the following:

- Environmental Protection Agency Guidelines '*SEA of Local Authority Land-Use Plans – EPA Recommendations and Resources*', January 2023.
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage Section 28 Guidelines '*Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines for Regional Assemblies and Planning Authorities*', March 2022.
- Environmental Protection Agency Guidelines '*Good Practice Guidance on SEA Screening*', December 2021. (Note: These guidelines are not directed toward the preparation of land use plans but are referenced in the above Section 28 guidelines as further guidance.)

In accordance with the SEA Directive 2001/42/EC and Article 7 (13K) of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (as amended), prior to the giving of notice under Section 13 (2) of the Planning and Development Act of the proposal to make a variation to a development plan, the Planning Authority shall consider whether or not the Proposed Variation would be likely to have significant effects on the environment taking into account the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Regulations.

Where the Planning Authority, following this consideration, determines that the proposed variation would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, the proposed variation shall be accompanied by an Environmental Report which identifies, describes and evaluates the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the proposed variation.

However, where the Planning Authority considers that the proposed variation would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment, the Planning Authority shall give notice to the environmental authorities and shall allow the environmental authorities 3 weeks within which to make a submission or observation in relation to whether or not, in their opinion, the proposed variation would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

¹ Having regard to the nature of plan / programme (i.e. it is p/p prepared and/or adopted by an authority at national, regional or local level or prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government; it is a p/p required by legislative, regulatory, or administrative provisions; it is a p/p prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecoms, tourism, town and country planning or land use and sets the framework for future development consent of projects listed in the Annexes of the EIA Directive), it is determined that SEA is applicable to this plan / programme.

Following receipt of any submission or observation, the Planning Authority shall make a determination regarding whether or not the proposed variation would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, taking account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A and any submission or observation received from the environmental authorities.

As soon as practicable after making a determination the Planning Authority shall (a) make a copy of its decision, including, as appropriate, the reasons for not requiring an environmental assessment, available for public inspection at the offices of the planning authority during office hours, and (b) notify its decision to any environmental authorities.

2.0 Summary of Proposed Variation to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028

The Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied) provides for sustainable development and proper planning within the administrative area of Wicklow County Council. The Plan has already been varied in 2022 with Variation No. 1; and in 2025 with Variation No's. 2 and 3. Proposed Variation No's. 4 and 5 were published in 2025.

The aim of Proposed Variation No. 6 is:

To revise the Wicklow Core Strategy and associated housing targets, and a number of related housing objectives set out in the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 Written Statement.

The reason for the Proposed Variation is:

To take account of 'NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements' - Guidelines for Planning Authorities, issued under Section 28 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) (July 2025).

More specifically, the Proposed Variation proposes to increase the housing targets for a number of settlements in County Wicklow. As outlined in the Proposed Variation's written statement, the increase in housing can be accommodated on land that is already zoned for housing (both Phase 1 / Priority 1 and Phase 2 / Priority 2 lands, and mixed use zonings), or is proposed to be zoned as part of Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5. Therefore the targeted growth in housing can be accommodated within the County's existing settlement boundaries and on land that is already serviced, or is serviceable, by infrastructure.

To achieve the new targets, the Proposed Variation would alter a number of housing related objectives and specifically to:

- Provide policy support for the delivery of additional housing during the lifetime of the plan via support for the development of both Phase 1 / Priority 1 and Phase 2 / Priority 2 lands during the lifetime of this plan, subject to the sustainable development objectives set out in the plan.
- Provide policy support for the institution of new mechanisms and structures to support immediate term housing development including, but not limited, assisting in the unblocking of impediments where feasible and proactively working with infrastructure / utilities providers to ensure any service related impediments to the granting or permission for housing on zoned lands or to the delivery of permitted housing development are addressed.
- Provide policy support for increased densities on zoned and serviced lands, at appropriate locations, in accordance with the provisions of the 'Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities' DHLGH 2024.

Accordingly, the increase in housing as a result of the NPF Housing Growth Requirements will not require the zoning of new land or the extension of settlement boundaries in the Wicklow County Development Plan or subsidiary local plans.

The Proposed Variation will also update references to other national planning policies that have been published since the County Development Plan was made. These policies, such as the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements – Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2024), have been subject to SEA and are already in effect in the making and determination of planning applications.

It should be noted that the National Planning Framework, First Revision (April 2025) was itself subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

3.0 Screening Notice to Environmental Authorities

The Section 28 Guidelines 'Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines for Regional Assemblies and Planning Authorities' March 2022 state the following:

'Unless the regional assembly or planning authority has determined that SEA is mandatory for the plan concerned, it must issue a formal 'screening notice' to the relevant environmental authorities (including the adjacent planning authorities), consulting them on whether they consider significant effects on the environment are likely to arise. The detail of the content on the 'screening notice' is not set out in legislation, but as good practice it may include:

- The geographic area of the plan (a suitably scaled map should be included), where relevant;*
- The purpose and overall objectives of the plan, to the extent known at the time;*
- Its intended lifespan; and*
- Responses to the screening criteria in Schedule 2A addressing the potential interactions between the plan and the environment. Appendix B gives further advice on this.'*

The good practice information set out above is contained within this report as follows:

- A suitably scaled map is included in **Appendix 2** of this report; as the Proposed Variation relates to the whole area of County Wicklow, this is at County scale. Within this map, the settlements where it is proposed to increase the housing targets are clearly identified, being the Level 1-6 settlements in the County settlement hierarchy;
- The purpose and overall objectives of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 are as follows:

'The County Development Plan (CDP) sets out a strategic spatial framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Wicklow for the period between 2022 and 2028. While the CDP is in place for a six year period, it is framed having regard to the long term development objectives of the County beyond 2028.

The CDP in the main focuses on 'big picture' planning issues. The plan sets out the policies and objectives to guide the future development of the County. The plan is not a 'spending plan', however it sets a framework within which developments could be undertaken, in the event that the public or private sectors have the finance to develop.

The CDP provides for, and controls, the physical, economic and social development of the County, in the interests of the overall common good and in compliance with environmental controls. It includes a set of development objectives and standards, which set out where land is to be developed, and for what purposes (e.g. housing, shopping, schools, employment, open space, amenity, conservation etc). It informs decisions on where public services such as roads and water infrastructure are to be provided, and affects the type of buildings that can be constructed and the use to which land can be put. It affects many facets of daily economic and social life, in terms of where you can live, what services and facilities are available and where job opportunities are to be sited.'

Further information in relation to the 3 No. cross-cutting themes of the County Development Plan, and the Strategic County Outcomes, are found below in Table 1 under *'the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development'*.

- The lifespan of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 is a six-year period, having been made by the Elected Members on the 12th September 2022.
- Responses to the screening criteria in Schedule 2A are set out below.

4.0 SEA Screening

4.1 Introduction

This section examines whether Proposed Variation No. 6 would be likely to have significant environmental effects (and thus would warrant the undertaking of SEA).

This examination takes account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A '*Criteria for determining whether a plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment*' of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations, as amended.

This assessment takes into account the following:

- The provisions of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied), said plan including subsidiary local plans for the following settlements:
 - Baltinglass
 - Newtownmountkennedy
 - Rathdrum
 - Ashford
 - Aughrim
 - Carnew
 - Dunlavin
 - Tinahely
 - Avoca
 - Donard
 - Newcastle
 - Roundwood
 - Shillelagh
 - Laragh-Glendalough
- The Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied).
- Variation 1
 - The provisions of Variation No. 1 to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028
 - The Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Determination of Variation No. 1 to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028
- Variation 2
 - The provisions of Variation No. 2 to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028
 - The Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Determination of Variation No. 2 to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028
- Variation 3
 - The provisions of Variation No. 3 to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028
 - The Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Determination of Variation No. 3 to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028
- Proposed Variation 4:
 - The provisions of Proposed Variation No. 4 (including the draft Greystones-Delgany and Kilcoole Local Planning Framework) to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2025
 - The Strategic Environmental Assessment of Proposed Variation No. 4 (including the draft Greystones-Delgany and Kilcoole Local Planning Framework) to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2025

- Proposed Variation 5:
 - The provisions of Proposed Variation No. 5 (including the draft Arklow Local Planning Framework) to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2025
 - The Strategic Environmental Assessment of Proposed Variation No. 5 (including the draft Arklow Local Planning Framework) to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2025

and:

- The provisions of the Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan 2018
- The Strategic Environmental Assessment of Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan 2018
- The provisions of the Wicklow Town – Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025
- The Strategic Environmental Assessment of Wicklow Town – Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025
- The provisions of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2025
- The Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2025
- The provisions of the Greystones-Delgany and Kilcoole Local Area Plan 2013
- The Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Greystones-Delgany and Kilcoole Local Area Plan 2013
- The provisions of the Arklow and Environs Local Area Plan 2018
- The Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Arklow and Environs Local Area Plan 2018

4.2 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Appropriate Assessment (AA) is an impact assessment process concerning Natura 2000, or European, sites - these sites have been designated or proposed for designation by virtue of their ecological importance. The Habitats Directive and the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) provide the requirement to screen for likely significant effects on European Sites. If the effects are deemed to be significant, potentially significant or uncertain then Stage 2 AA must be undertaken.

SEA is directly linked to Appropriate Assessment under the EU Habitats Directive through Article 3.2b. In circumstances where screening for SEA is pointing toward screening out (i.e. SEA is determined not to be required), this determination cannot be concluded until such time as screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) has been concluded.

The Proposed Variation is being subject to a screening for AA process in order to establish whether or not AA must be undertaken. The accompanying Screening for AA Report identifies that Proposed Variation No. 6 is not likely to result in significant effects on European sites; consequently Stage 2 AA is demonstrated as not being required.

4.3 Screening for Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

The Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and all subsidiary local plans have all been subject to Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, ensuring the integration of flood risk management considerations as required by the Flood Risk Management Ministerial Guidelines. As outlined in Section 2.0, the Proposed Variation (No. 6) does not provide for changes to the zoning provisions of the Wicklow County Development Plan or subsidiary local plans. Therefore Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is not required to be undertaken on the Proposed Variation.

4.3 Assessment in terms of Schedule 2A

Under Article 13K of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (as amended), the Planning Authority shall consider whether or not the proposed variation would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, taking into account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A, as follows:

1. The characteristics of the plan or programme having regard, in particular, to:

— the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources:

The Wicklow County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028 (as varied) provides for sustainable development and proper planning within the administrative area of Wicklow County Council. The CDP has 3 adopted variations and 2 currently proposed variations underway. Subsidiary to the County Development Plan are the following current local plans - the Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan 2018, Wicklow Town – Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025, Arklow and Environs Local Area Plan 2018, Greystones – Delgany & Kilcoole Local Area Plan 2013 and the Blessington Local Area Plan 2025. The variations and Local Area Plans all provide for sustainable development and proper planning within their administrative area.

The aim of **Proposed Variation** No. 6 is to revise the Core Strategy and associated housing targets of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028. The reason for the **Proposed Variation** is to take account of '*NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements*' - Guidelines for Planning Authorities, issued under Section 28 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) (July 2025).

The CDP was subject to full Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the plan making and adoption process, which identified the likely significant environmental effects, if unmitigated, of implementing the County Development Plan, and facilitated the integration of measures into the County Development Plan to ensure the appropriate protection and management of the environment. All existing Local Area Plans were subject to full Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the plan making and adoption process. Adopted Variations No. 1, No. 2 and No. 3 were all subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5 are subject to full Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Taking into account the measures that have been integrated into the existing County Development Plan (as varied) and the existing Local Area Plans that provide for and contribute towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development, any potential effects arising from Proposed Variation No. 6, would either: be present already (beneficial) and would be further contributed towards, but not to a significant extent; and/or would be mitigated so as not to be significant (adverse).

Taking the above into account, arising from the degree to which Proposed Variation No. 6 to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied) sets a framework for projects and other activities, the Proposed Variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

— the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans, including those in a hierarchy:

The variation is proposed to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied). The County Development Plan is influenced by higher-level legislation, plans and programmes and influences lower-tier plans. Any future development under the County Development Plan (as varied), would have to comply with the various provisions and objectives of the existing County Development Plan (and subsidiary local plans) that relate to sustainable development and the protection and management of the environment.

Taking the above into account, arising from the degree to which Proposed Variation No. 6 and the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied) influence other plans, and taking into account the measures that have been integrated into the existing County Development Plan (as varied) and the existing Local Area Plans that provide for and contribute towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development, any potential effects arising from Proposed Variation No. 6, would either: be present already (beneficial) and would be further contributed towards, but not to a significant extent; and/or would be mitigated so as not to be significant (adverse).

— the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development:

The Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied) is primarily a framework for land use. However, in line with national and regional policy, environmental considerations and the promotion of sustainable development have been integrated throughout, including within the below sections.

Section 1.3 'Strategic Context' of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied) states that regard has been had to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The second of the three overarching themes and strategic principles of the County Development Plan is 'Climate Action'. Section 2.2.2 'Integration of climate considerations into the County Development Plan' sets out that the below sectors will be addressed as follows:

Built Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delivery of sustainable settlement patterns, with a focus on compact growth. ▪ Regeneration of town and village centres, with the prioritising of the development of underutilised and brownfield sites. ▪ Promotion of environmentally sustainable development in terms of location, layout, design and energy and water usage.
Sustainable Transport	<p>Provide policy, objectives and standards that promote and facilitate a sustainable approach to transportation with strategies and objectives in place to facilitate the necessary actions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ reduction in the need to use motorised vehicles, increased opportunities for walking and cycling ▪ reduction in journey length and times, reduction in congestion ▪ higher intensity of use of public transport ▪ development and increased usage of alternative vehicle fuel sources, such as electricity, hydrogen and biofuels
Energy & Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide policy, objectives and standards that promote and facilitate the development of alternative and renewable sources of electricity to meet the electricity demand with policy and objectives for reduction in electricity use, wind energy, solar energy, hydro energy, bio-energy and small scale renewable electricity generation. ▪ Support the development of enabling infrastructure, especially at the ports/harbours, for the off-shore wind energy sector. ▪ Support waste prevention, minimisation, reuse and recycling. ▪ Promote and support the circular economy and the 'just transition' to clean energy.
Flood resilience & water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Efficient and sustainable use and development of water resources and water services infrastructure. ▪ Conservation and enhancement of water resources including sea, rivers, lakes and groundwater. ▪ Effective and environmentally sound management of waste water. ▪ Reduction and management of flood risk. ▪ To build resilience to increased risks of extreme weather events, changes in sea level and patterns of coastal erosion to protect property, critical infrastructure and food security.
Natural Heritage & Green Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To conserve and enhance biodiversity, protected habitats and species. ▪ To identify, protect and enhance Green Infrastructure and ecosystem services and promote the sustainable management of strategic natural assets such as coastlines, farmlands, peatlands, uplands woodlands and wetlands. ▪ Promote and facilitate an environmentally sustainable approach to practicing agriculture and forestry.

These principles informed the Strategic County Outcomes, of which the most relevant to environmental considerations are as follows:

SCO1 Sustainable Settlement Patterns & Compact Growth: *'The delivery of compact growth in all towns and villages by capitalising on the potential for infill and brownfield development, moving away from a reliance on greenfield development and creating places that encourage active lifestyles is essential for the successful delivery of the development plan strategy.'*

SCO5 Sustainable Mobility: *'The County Development Plan plays an important role in influencing a reduction in GHG emissions by guiding the sustainable growth of the County. The integration of land use and transportation planning, in order to support sustainable mobility and encourage a shift away from the private car to active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport, will deliver improvements in terms of quality of life and climate change.'*

SCO6 Natural Heritage & Biodiversity: *'Natural heritage and biodiversity is the cornerstone of Wicklow's identity – 'The Garden of Ireland'. It is essential that we conserve and enhance the County's rich natural heritage and biodiversity for the benefit of current and future generations.'*

SCO7 Climate Resilience & the Transition to a Low Carbon Economy: *'Support the transition to low carbon clean energy by facilitating renewable energy use and generation at appropriate locations and supporting the development of off-shore renewable energy enabling infrastructure especially at ports and harbours. Facilitate the sustainable management of waste including the circular economy. Restrict development in areas that are at risk of flooding and protect the natural landscape and **biodiversity**.'*

Informed by the above, the County Development Plan (as varied) and its subsidiary local plans include a wide range of policies and objectives in relation to environmental considerations, as set out in **Appendix 1** to this document.

The Proposed Variation does not include changes to the above strategic principles or SCOs of the County Development Plan as adopted and which underwent Strategic Environmental Assessment. The Proposed Variation does not reduce or diminish the manner in which environmental considerations have been integrated into the County Development Plan.

With regard to the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,, and taking into account the measures that have been integrated into the existing County Development Plan (as varied) and the existing Local Area Plans that provide for and contribute towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development, any potential effects arising from Proposed Variation No. 6, would either: be present already (beneficial) and would be further contributed towards, but not to a significant extent; and/or would be mitigated so as not to be significant (adverse).

— environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme:

The Proposed Variation proposes to increase the housing targets for a number of settlements in County Wicklow to take account of the *'NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements'*.

As outlined in the Proposed Variation's written statement, the increase in housing development can be accommodated on land that is already zoned for housing (both Phase 1 / Priority 1 and Phase 2 / Priority 2 lands), or is proposed to be zoned as part of Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5. Therefore, the targeted growth in housing and population can be accommodated within the county's existing settlement boundaries and on land that is already serviced, or is serviceable, by infrastructure.

Accordingly, the increase in housing as a result of the NPF Housing Growth Requirements will not require the zoning of new land or the extension of settlement boundaries in the Wicklow County Development Plan or subsidiary local plans. The impact on the environment of the existing plans and their associated zoning provisions was fully considered and evaluated as part of the plan making process of these plans and their associated Strategic Environmental Assessments and Appropriate Assessments (where required).

Environmental problems arise where there is a conflict between current environmental conditions and legislative targets. Through its provisions relating to environmental protection and management, summarised in **Appendix 1**, the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied), to which the Proposed Variation relates, contributes towards ensuring that environmental conditions do not get worse and, where possible, it contributes towards their amelioration.

Taking the above and the other SEA commentary provided under Section 2.4 into account, arising from environmental problems relevant to Proposed Variation No. 6 and associated Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied), the Proposed Variation would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

— the relevance of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).

The Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied), to which Proposed Variation No. 6 relates, and as underwent Strategic Environmental Assessment, includes objectives towards the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment. The Proposed Variation does not vary these objectives and, as such, will likely have an imperceptible effect on this consideration.

Taking the above into account and taking into account the measures that have been integrated into the existing County Development Plan (as varied) and the existing Local Area Plans that provide for and contribute towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development, any potential effects arising from Proposed Variation No. 6, would either: be present already (beneficial) and would be further contributed towards, but not to a significant extent; and/or would be mitigated so as not to be significant (adverse).

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:

— the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects:

The purpose of Proposed Variation No. 6 is to revise the Wicklow Core Strategy and associated housing targets of the Wicklow County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028 (as varied) to take account of '*NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements*' - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (July 2025). These align with the provisions already in place as part of the County Development Plan; the new housing targets can be accommodated on land already zoned for residential use in the County Development Plan (as varied), adopted subsidiary local plans, and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5.

Thus, the potential probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects resulting from these updates and additional objectives are considered to have been fully considered, evaluated and mitigated via the plan making process for the existing County Development Plan (as varied) and associated subsidiary local plans, and their associated environmental assessments (i.e. SEA and AA).

Therefore, the Proposed Variation No. 6 would not be likely to result in, or introduce, potential significant environment effects.

— the cumulative nature of the effects:

The purpose of Proposed Variation No. 6 is to revise the Wicklow Core Strategy and associated housing targets of the Wicklow County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028 (as varied) to take account of '*NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements*' - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (July 2025). These align with the provisions already in place as part of the County Development Plan; the new housing targets can be accommodated on land already zoned for residential use in the County Development Plan (as varied), adopted subsidiary local plans, and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5 which have all already been subject to SEA.

Thus, the cumulative nature of potential effects resulting from these updates and additional objectives are considered to have been fully considered, evaluated and mitigated via the plan making process for the existing County Development Plan (as varied) and associated subsidiary local plans, and their associated environmental assessments (i.e. SEA and AA).

Therefore, the Proposed Variation No. 6 would not be likely to result in, or introduce, potential significant cumulative environment effects.

— the transboundary nature of the effects:

The Proposed Variation No. 6 is limited in its remit to the area of County Wicklow. The Proposed Variation will not require the zoning of new land or the extension of settlement boundaries in the Wicklow County Development Plan or subsidiary local plans.

Thus, the potential transboundary effects resulting from these updates and additional objectives are considered to have been fully considered, evaluated and mitigated via the plan making process for the existing County Development Plan (as varied) and associated subsidiary local plans, and their associated environmental assessments (i.e. SEA and AA).

Therefore, the Proposed Variation No. 6 would not be likely to result in, or introduce, potential significant transboundary environment effects.

— the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents):

The purpose of Proposed Variation No. 6 is to revise the Core Strategy and associated housing targets of the Wicklow County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028 (as varied) to take account of '*NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements*' - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (July 2025). These align with the provisions already in place as part of the CDP; the new housing targets can be accommodated on land already zoned for residential development in the County Development Plan (as varied), adopted subsidiary local plans, and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5.

Thus, risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents) resulting from these updates and additional objectives are considered to have been fully considered, evaluated and mitigated via the plan making process for the existing County Development Plan (as varied) and associated subsidiary local plans, and their associated environmental assessments (i.e. SEA and AA).

Therefore, the Proposed Variation No. 6 would not be likely to result in, or introduce, potential significant effects on human health or the environment.

— the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)

The Proposed Variation No. 6 is limited in its remit to the area of County Wicklow.

The purpose of Proposed Variation No. 6 is to revise the Core Strategy and associated housing targets of the Wicklow County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028 (as varied) to take account of '*NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements*' - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (July 2025). These align with the provisions already in place as part of the CDP; the new housing targets can be accommodated on land already zoned for residential development in the County Development Plan (as varied), adopted subsidiary local plans, and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5.

Thus, the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected) resulting from these updates and additional objectives are considered to have been fully considered, evaluated and mitigated via the plan making process for the existing County Development Plan (as varied) and associated subsidiary local plans, and their associated environmental assessments (i.e. SEA and AA).

Therefore, the Proposed Variation No. 6 would not be likely to result in environment effects with a greater magnitude or significance than the existing County Development Plan (as varied), adopted subsidiary local plans, and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5.

— the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:

(a) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage:

(b) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values:

(c) intensive land-use:

The purpose of Proposed Variation No. 6 is to revise the Core Strategy and associated housing targets of the Wicklow County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028 (as varied) to take account of '*NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements*' - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (July 2025). These align with the provisions already in place as part of the CDP; the new housing targets can be accommodated on land already zoned for residential development in the County Development Plan (as varied), adopted subsidiary local plans, and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5.

Thus, the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: (a) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; (b) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values or (c) intensive land-use resulting from these updates and additional objectives are considered to have been fully considered, evaluated and mitigated via the plan making process for the existing County Development Plan (as varied) and associated subsidiary local plans, and their associated environmental assessments (i.e. SEA and AA).

Therefore, the Proposed Variation No. 6 would not be likely to result in, or introduce, potential significant environment effects taking into account the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected.

— the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status:

The purpose of Proposed Variation No. 6 is to revise the Core Strategy and associated housing targets of the Wicklow County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028 (as varied) to take account of '*NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements*' - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (July 2025). These align with the provisions already in place as part of the CDP; the new housing targets can be accommodated on land already zoned for residential development in the County Development Plan (as varied), adopted subsidiary local plans, and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5.

Thus, the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status resulting from these updates and additional objectives are considered to have been fully considered, evaluated and mitigated via the plan making process for the existing County Development Plan (as varied) and associated subsidiary local plans, and their associated environmental assessments (i.e. SEA and AA).

Therefore, the Proposed Variation No. 6 would not be likely to result in, or introduce, potential significant environment effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status.

5.0 Summary & Conclusion

The Proposed Variation proposes to increase the housing targets for a number of settlements in County Wicklow; these increases can be accommodated within lands **already zoned** for new housing development and already serviced, or serviceable, by infrastructure.

The Proposed Variation proposes to alter a number of housing related objectives and specifically to:

- Provide policy support for the delivery of additional housing during the lifetime of the plan via support for the development of both Phase 1 / Priority 1 and Phase 2 / Priority 2 lands during the lifetime of this plan, subject to the sustainable development objectives set out in the plan.
- Provide policy support for the institution of new mechanisms and structures to support immediate term housing development including, but not limited, assisting in the unblocking of impediments where feasible and proactively working with infrastructure / utilities providers to ensure any service related impediments to the granting or permission for housing on zoned lands or to the delivery of permitted housing development are addressed.
- Provide policy support for increased densities on zoned and serviced lands, at appropriate locations, in accordance with the provisions of the 'Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities' DHLGH 2024.

The Proposed Variation **does not provide for** changes to the zoning provisions of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 (as varied), adopted subsidiary local plans, and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5.

Screening is the process for deciding whether a particular plan - or variation to a plan - other than those for which SEA is mandatory, would be likely to have significant environmental effects, and would thus warrant SEA. The purpose of this report is to provide the findings of the evaluation of the requirement for SEA to be undertaken on Proposed Variation No. 6 to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied).

The Proposed Variation has been examined, including against relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A '*Criteria for determining whether a plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment*' of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004), as amended by the Planning and Development (SEA) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 201 of 2011). This SEA Screening Report provides the findings of this examination.

With reference to the foregoing information it has been concluded that:

The Proposed Variation to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 does not satisfy the conditions for mandatory SEA under S.I. 435/2004, as amended.

With reference to Article 9(2), 9(3) or 9(4) of S.I. 435/2004, as amended, the Proposed Variation to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied) has not been shown to be likely to give rise to significant effects on the environment with reference to the criteria laid out in Schedule 1 and therefore SEA is not required.

The Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied), adopted subsidiary local plans, and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5 have been subject to full SEA, which identified the likely significant environmental effects, if unmitigated, of implementing the County Development Plan (as varied), adopted subsidiary local plans, and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5. The carrying out of these SEAs facilitated the integration of measures into the County Development Plan (as varied), adopted subsidiary local plans, and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5 to ensure the appropriate protection and management of the environment, with which all lower tier plans/projects must comply.

Taking into account the measures that have been integrated into the existing County Development Plan (as varied), adopted subsidiary local plans, and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5 that provide for and contribute towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development, any potential effects arising from Proposed Variation No. 6, would either: be present already (beneficial) and would be further contributed towards, but not to a significant extent; and/or would be mitigated so as not to be significant (adverse).

Taking into account all of the above, Proposed Variation No. 6 would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects. Consequently, it is concluded that SEA is not required.

A final determination will be made by Wicklow County Council on the requirement for SEA. This determination will be based on the contents of this report and responses received by relevant environmental authorities in accordance with Section 13K(3) of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004 as amended, as set out in Section 6 to follow. Relevant environmental authorities shall be notified of this determination once finalised.

The Screening for SEA process will consider any future alterations to the Proposed Variation and such consideration may require a subsequent determination by the Council, where alterations are proposed.

6.0 Response of Environmental Authorities to Preliminary Screening Determination

Agency name	Submission text – issues raised	Response
EPA	<p>In our role as an SEA environmental authority under the SEA Regulations, we focus on promoting the full and transparent integration of the findings of the Environmental Assessment into plans and programmes and advocating that the key environmental challenges for Ireland are addressed as relevant and appropriate to the plan or programme. Our functions do not include approving or enforcing SEAs or plans or programmes.</p> <p>As a priority, we focus our efforts on reviewing and commenting on key sector plans. For land use plans at county and local level, we provide a 'self-service approach' via our guidance document 'SEA of Local Authority Land Use Plans – EPA Recommendations and Resources'. This document is updated regularly and sets out our key recommendations for integrating environmental considerations into Local Authority land use plans. In finalising your SEA screening determination, we suggest that you take this guidance document into account and incorporate the relevant recommendations as relevant and appropriate to the plan or programme.</p> <p>SEA Determination</p> <p>If a proposed SEA determination hasn't been made regarding the plan or programme, you should determine whether implementing the plan or programme would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.</p> <p>The SEA Regulations, Schedule 2A (S.I. No. 436 of 2004, as amended) set out the '<i>Criteria for determining whether a Plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment</i>' to use to determine whether the plan or programme would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.</p> <p>Guidance on the SEA process, including an SEA pack and checklist, is available on our website at: https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/assessment/strategic-environmental-assessment/sea-resources-and-guidance/.</p> <p>We recommend that you take the available guidance into account in making your SEA Screening Determination and incorporate the relevant recommendations as relevant and appropriate to the plan or programme.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted. The referenced guidance document has been taken into account in this screening exercise, in addition to the following document: '<i>Good Practice Guidance on SEA Screening</i>', EPA 2021.</p> <p>This determination is being made having regard to SEA Regulations, Schedule 2A (S.I. No. 436 of 2004, as amended).</p> <p>Noted. The referenced SEA pack and checklist have been taken into account in this screening.</p>

	<p>EPA SEA Screening Guidance</p> <p>Our Good Practice Guidance for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening (EPA, 2021) provides specific stand-alone guidance to assist plan or programme makers and SEA practitioners. It focuses primarily on plans/programmes in the non-land use sector in Ireland and includes an elaboration of the steps needed for screening, the legislative landscape underpinning SEA screening, and step-by-step process and templates to assist in preparing the required documentation.</p> <p>Strategic Environmental Assessment: Guidelines for Planning Authorities</p> <p>The Strategic Environmental Assessment: Guidelines for Regional Assemblies and Planning Authorities (DHLGH, 2022) provides advice on carrying out SEA in the land-use planning sector for those plans listed in S.I. No.436 of 2004, as amended. These plans comprise regional, county and local plans, including Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies, County or City Development Plans, variations of Development Plans, Local Area Plans and Planning Schemes for Strategic Development Zones. The Guidelines replace previous guidance for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities published in 2004.</p> <p>Sustainable Development</p> <p>In proposing and in implementing the plan or programme, you should ensure that the plan or programme is consistent with the need for proper planning and sustainable development. Adequate and appropriate critical service infrastructure should be in place, or required to be put in place, to service any development proposed and authorised during the lifetime of the plan or programme.</p> <p>In considering the plan or programme, you should take into account the need to align with national commitments on climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as incorporating any relevant recommendations in sectoral, regional and local climate adaptation plans.</p> <p>You should also ensure that the plan or programme aligns with any key relevant higher-level plans and programmes and is consistent with the relevant objectives and policy commitments of the National Planning Framework and the relevant Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy. The Plan should also align with the OPW's ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ (OPW, 2009), as relevant and appropriate, in the zoning and development of lands.</p>	<p>Noted. The referenced guidance document has been taken into account in this screening.</p> <p>Noted. The referenced guidance document has been taken into account in this screening.</p> <p>Noted. The Proposed Variation, taking into account the measures that have been integrated into the existing County Development Plan (as varied), adopted subsidiary local plans, and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5 that provide for and contribute towards proper planning and sustainable development; the provision of adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and flood risk management, any potential effects arising from Proposed Variation No. 6, would either: be present already (beneficial) and would be further contributed towards, but not to a significant extent; and/or would be mitigated so as not to be significant (adverse).</p>
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	<p>Appropriate Assessment You should ensure that the plan or programme complies with the requirements of the Habitats Directive where relevant. Where an Appropriate Assessment is required, the key findings and recommendations should be incorporated into the SEA and the plan or programme.</p> <p>EPA AA GeoTool Our AA GeoTool application has been developed in partnership with the National Parks and Wildlife Service. It allows users to select a location, specify a search area and gather available information for each European Site within the area. It is available at: https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/AAGeoTool .</p> <p>Environmental Authorities Under the SEA Regulations, prior to making your SEA determination you should consult with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Protection Agency; • Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, • Minister for Climate, Energy and the Environment; and, • Minister for Agriculture, Food, and the Marine. <p>For land use plans covered under S.I. No. 436 of 2004, as amended, you should also consult with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any adjoining planning authority whose area is contiguous to the area of a planning authority which prepared a draft plan, proposed variation or local area plan. <p>SEA Determination As soon as practicable after making your determination as to whether SEA is required or not, you should make a copy of your decision, including, if appropriate, the reasons for not requiring an environmental assessment, available for public inspection in your offices and on your website. You should also send a copy of your determination to the relevant environmental authorities consulted.</p>	<p>Noted. The Proposed Variation has been screened for Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>
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Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage	No submission received	
Minister for Climate, Energy and the Environment	No submission received	
Minister for Agriculture, Food, and the Marine.	No submission received	
Adjoining Planning Authorities	No submissions received	

7.0 Screening Determination

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Determination

Under SEA Directive 2001/42/EC and the Planning & Development (SEA) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004) as amended by the Planning & Development (SEA) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 201 of 2011)

for

Proposed Variation No. 6 to the Wicklow County Development Plan (as varied)

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening determination as to whether Proposed Variation No. 6 to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied) is likely to have significant effects on the environment is being made by Wicklow County Council under Article 7 (13K) of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004) as amended by the Planning and Development (SEA) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 201 of 2011).

In making the determination, the information contained in the Screening for SEA Report (including information provided by environmental authorities and an examination of the need to undertake SEA against relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A '*Criteria for determining whether a plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment*' of the above Regulations) is being taken into account. That information has been carefully considered and its reasoning and conclusion agreed with and adopted – allowing a determination to be made that Proposed Variation No. 6 would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

The Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied), adopted subsidiary local plans, and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5 have been subject to full SEA, which identified the likely significant environmental effects, if unmitigated, of implementing the County Development Plan (as varied), adopted subsidiary local plans, and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5. The carrying out of these SEAs facilitated the integration of measures into the County Development Plan (as varied), adopted subsidiary local plans, and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5 to ensure the appropriate protection and management of the environment with which all lower tier plans/projects must comply.

Taking into account the measures that have been integrated into the existing County Development Plan (as varied); adopted subsidiary local plans, and Proposed Variations No. 4 and No. 5 that provide for and contribute towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development, any potential effects arising from Proposed Variation No. 6, would either: be present already (beneficial) and would be further contributed towards, but not to a significant extent; and/or would be mitigated so as not to be significant (adverse).

Taking into account all of the above: Proposed Variation No. 6 would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects; and it is determined that SEA is not required to be undertaken on the Proposed Variation.

The Screening for SEA process will consider any future amendments to the Proposed Variation and such consideration may require subsequent determination by the Council, where amendments are proposed.

Signatory:



Helena Dennehy

Director of Services, Planning, Economic and Rural Development.

Date:

01 December 2025

Appendix 1: County Development Plan (as varied) policies in relation to the environment

The following Appendix summarises existing Wicklow County Development Plan environmental mitigation measures, which would remain unaltered by Proposed Variation No. 6.

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the wider planning framework It should be noted that while the Proposed Variation will facilitate increased housing targets, in-acordance with the NPF, this increase will be accommodated on land already zoned for housing in the County Development Plan (as varied) and Local Area Plans. The environmental effects outlined below will therefore relate to lands previously subject to SEAs as part of the plan making process. Effects include in-combination effects that are planned for the wider planning framework including the NPF and associated NDP, the Eastern and Midland RSES, the Wicklow County Development Plan and adjacent Development Plans and lower-tiered land use plans.			Mitigation Measures
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potentially Significant Adverse Environmental Effects, if unmitigated	Likely Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	Existing Wicklow County Development Plan mitigation measures, including:
Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards protection of ecology (including designated sites, ecological connectivity, habitats) by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to Central/core locations within the County area) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well serviced lands elsewhere in the County. Contribution towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and associated ecosystem services, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats. Contribution towards protection and/or maintenance of biodiversity and flora and fauna by contributing towards the 	<p>Arising from both construction and operation of development and associated infrastructure:</p> <p>Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna;</p> <p>Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects; and</p> <p>Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors) and displacement of protected species such as birds and bats.</p>	<p>Loss of an extent of non-protected habitats and species arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces.</p> <p>Losses or damage to ecology (these would be in compliance with relevant legislation).</p>	<p>SCO6 Natural Heritage & Biodiversity Natural heritage and biodiversity is the cornerstone of Wicklow's identity – 'The Garden of Ireland'. It is essential that we conserve and enhance the County's rich natural heritage and biodiversity for the benefit or current and future generations. CPO 4.14 To ensure that key assets in rural areas such as water quality and natural and cultural heritage are protected to support quality of life and economic vitality. CPO 9.36 To facilitate the development of environmentally sustainable agricultural activities, whereby watercourses, wildlife habitats, areas of ecological importance and other environmental assets are protected from the threat of pollution, and where development does not impinge on the visual amenity of the countryside. Developments shall not be detrimental to archaeological and heritage features of importance.</p> <p>Tourism and Recreation CPO11.1 To promote, encourage and facilitate the development of the tourism and recreation sectors in a sustainable manner. CPO 11.4 To only permit the development of a tourism or recreational facility in a rural area in cases where the product or activity is dependent on its location in a rural situation and where it can be demonstrated that the proposed development does not adversely affect the character, environmental quality and amenity of the rural area or the vitality of any settlement and the provision of infrastructure therein. The natural resource / tourist product / tourist attraction that is essential to the activity shall be located at the site or in close proximity to the site, of the proposed development. The need to locate in a particular area must be balanced against the environmental impact of the development and benefits to the local community.</p> <p>Environmental Protection CPO 11.47 Where relevant, the Council and those receiving permission for development under the plan, shall manage any increase in visitor numbers and/or any change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant environmental effects, including loss of habitat and disturbance. Management measures may include ensuring that new projects and activities are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities; visitor/habitat management plans will be required for proposed projects as relevant and appropriate. CPO 11.48 Ensure the potential environmental effects of a likely increase in tourists/tourism-related traffic volumes in particular locations/along particular routes shall be considered and mitigated as appropriate. Such a consideration should include potential impacts on existing</p>

	<p>protection of natural capital including the environmental vectors of air, water and soil. Biodiversity and flora and fauna includes biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species (including birds and bats), listed/protected species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats (including terrestrial and aquatic habitats), and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna – including terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity and flora and fauna.</p>			<p>infrastructure (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) resulting from tourism proposals.</p> <p>CPO 11.49 Where projects for new tourism projects identified in this chapter are not already provided for by existing plans / programmes or are not already permitted, then the feasibility of progressing these projects shall be examined, taking into account planning need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report and the objectives of the plan relating to sustainable development.</p> <p>Corridor and Route Selection</p> <p>CPO 12.10 Where projects for new infrastructure identified in this chapter are not already provided for by existing plans / programmes or are not already permitted, then the feasibility of progressing these projects shall be examined, taking into account planning need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report and the objectives of the plan relating to sustainable mobility. A Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken where appropriate, for relevant new road infrastructure in two stages: Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection and Stage 2 –Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection.</p> <p>CPO 18.17 Where projects for significant green infrastructure identified in this chapter are not already provided for by existing plans / programmes or are not already permitted, then the feasibility of progressing these projects shall be examined, taking into account planning need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report and the objectives of the plan relating to sustainable mobility. A Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken where appropriate, for relevant new green infrastructure in two stages: Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection and Stage 2 – Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection.</p> <p>Natural Heritage & Biodiversity Objectives</p> <p>General</p> <p>CPO 17.1 To protect, sustainably manage and enhance the natural heritage, biodiversity, geological heritage, landscape and environment of County Wicklow in recognition of its importance for nature conservation and biodiversity and as a non renewable resource.</p> <p>CPO 17.2 Ensure the protection of ecosystems and ecosystem services by integrating full consideration of these into all decision making.</p> <p>CPO 17.3 To support and promote the implementation of the County Wicklow Heritage Plan and the County Wicklow Biodiversity Action Plan.</p> <p>Protected sites and species</p> <p>CPO 17.4 To contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of designated ecological sites including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs); Wildlife Sites (including proposed Natural Heritage Areas); Salmonid Waters; Flora Protection Order sites; Wildfowl Sanctuaries (see S.I. 192 of 1979); Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments; and Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).</p> <p>To contribute towards compliance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines, including but not limited to the following and any updated/superseding documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EU Directives, including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) , the Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC) , the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (2011/92/EU, as amended), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), EU Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC) and the Strategic Environmental
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				<p>Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC); EU 'Guidance on integrating ecosystems and their services into decision-making' (European Commission 2019)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National legislation, including the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2010 (as amended), European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018, the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 477 of 2011), the European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations 2008 (as amended) and the Flora Protection order 2015. ▪ National policy guidelines (including any clarifying circulars or superseding versions of same), including 'Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment' (2018), 'Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development' (2003), 'Tree Preservation Guidelines', 'Landscape and Landscape Assessment' (draft 2000), 'Appropriate Assessment Guidance' (2010); ▪ Catchment and water resource management plans, including the National River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021 (including any superseding versions of same), ▪ Biodiversity plans and guidelines, including National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021 (including any superseding versions of same) and the County Wicklow Biodiversity Action Plan; ▪ Ireland's Environment – An Integrated Assessment 2020 (EPA), including any superseding versions of same), and to make provision where appropriate to address the report's goals and challenges. <p>CPO 17.5 Projects giving rise to adverse effects on the integrity of European sites (cumulatively, directly or indirectly) arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall not be permitted on the basis of this plan.</p> <p>CPO 17.6 Ensure that development proposals, contribute as appropriate towards the protection and where possible enhancement of the ecological coherence of the European Site network and encourage the retention and management of landscape features that are of major importance for wild fauna and flora as per Article 10 of the EU Habitats directive. All projects and plans arising from this Plan will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>CPO 17.7 To maintain the conservation value of all proposed and future Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and to protect other designated ecological sites in Wicklow.</p> <p>CPO 17.8 Ensure ecological impact assessment is carried out for any proposed development likely to have a significant impact on proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Statutory Nature Reserves, Refuges for Fauna, Annex I habitats, or rare and threatened species including those species protected by law and their habitats. Ensure appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are incorporated into development proposals as part of any ecological impact assessment.</p> <p>CPO 17.9 The Council recognises the natural heritage and amenity value of the Wicklow Mountains National Park and shall consult at all times with National Park management regarding any developments likely to impact upon the conservation value of the park, or on issues regarding visitor areas.</p>
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				<p>CPO 17.10 To support the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the National Parks and Wildlife Service in the development of site specific conservation objectives (SSCOs) for designated sites.</p> <p>Sites & Corridors of ecological & biodiversity value</p> <p>CPO 17.12 To protect non-designated sites from inappropriate development, ensuring that ecological impact assessment is carried out for any proposed development likely to have a significant impact on locally important natural habitats, species or wildlife corridors. Ensure appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are incorporated into development proposals as part of any ecological impact assessment.</p> <p>CPO 17.13 To facilitate, in co-operation with relevant stakeholders, the ongoing identification and recording of locally important biodiversity areas and species in County Wicklow, not otherwise protected by legislation and ensure that consideration is given to these in the development management process.</p> <p>CPO 17.14 Ensure that development proposals support the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity within the plan area in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, including linear landscape features like watercourses(rivers, streams, canals, ponds, drainage channels, etc), woodlands, trees, hedgerows, road and railway margins, semi-natural grasslands, natural springs, wetlands, stonewalls, geological and geo-morphological systems, features which act as stepping stones, such as marshes and woodlands, other landscape features and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping stones that taken as a whole help to improve the coherence of the European network in Wicklow.</p> <p>CPO 17.15 To protect and enhance wetland sites that are listed as being of C+ or higher importance in the County Wicklow wetlands survey and any subsequent updates or revisions thereof and to implement the recommendations of the County Wicklow wetlands survey.</p> <p>CPO 17.16 Require pollinator friendly landscape management and planting within new developments and on Council owned land.</p> <p>CPO 17.17 Work with statutory authorities to prevent and control the spread of invasive plant and animal species and require, where appropriate Invasive Species Management Plans to be prepared as part of the development management process where necessary.</p> <p>CPO 17.18 To promote the preservation of trees, groups of trees or woodlands in particular native tree species, and those trees associated with demesne planting, in the interest of long-term sustainability of a stable ecosystem amenity or the environment generally, as set out in Schedule 10.08 and Map 10.08 A, B & C of this plan.</p> <p>CPO 17.19 To consider the making of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) to protect trees and woodlands of high amenity value generally and in particular where it appears that they are in danger of being felled and in response to requests from local communities.</p> <p>CPO 17.20 Development that requires the felling of mature trees of environmental and/or amenity value, even though they may not have a TPO in place, will be discouraged.</p> <p>CPO 17.21 To strongly discourage the felling of mature trees to facilitate development and encourage tree surgery rather than felling if such is essential to enable development to proceed.</p> <p>CPO 17.22 To require and ensure the preservation and enhancement of native and seminatural woodlands, groups of trees and individual trees, as part of the development management process, and require the planting of native broad leaved species, and species of local provenance in all new developments.</p>
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Population and Human Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management. Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and 	<p>Potential adverse effects arising from flood events.</p> <p>Potential interactions with human health if effects arise from environmental vectors.</p>	<p>Potential interactions with residual effects on environmental vectors – please refer to residual adverse effects under “Soil”, “Water” and “Air and Climatic Factors” below.</p>	<p>Also refer to measures under other environmental components including Soil, Water and Air and Climatic Factors.</p> <p>Seveso Sites</p> <p>CPO 9.16 The Seveso Directive 96/82/EC as amended by Directive 2003/105/EC and more recently by Directive 2012/18/EU is concerned with the prevention of major accidents that involve dangerous substances and the limitation of their consequences for humans and the environment. It applies to establishments where dangerous substances are produced, used, handled or stored. This EU directive seeks to ensure the safety of people and the environment in relation to major industrial accidents involving dangerous substances.</p> <p>The European Communities (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) (the “COMAH Regulations”, (SI No. 209 of 2015) implement the Seveso III Directive (2012/18/EU) and are the main regulations that give effect to this Directive in Irish law. The National Authority for Occupational Safety Health (i.e. the Health and Safety Authority – HSA) has been designated as the central competent authority for enforcement of these regulations.</p> <p>There is one Seveso site in County Wicklow (as of July 2019), located at Sigma Aldrich Fine Chemicals, Arklow.</p>

	<p>adjacent to Central/core locations within the County area) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-serviced lands elsewhere in the County. Contribution towards the protection of human health by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to Central/core locations within the County area) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well serviced lands elsewhere in the County.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributes towards protection of human health as a result of contributing towards the protection of natural capital including environmental vectors, such as air and water. 			<p>In relation to the Prevention of Major Accidents (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) legislation, it is the objective of the Council to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> comply with the Seveso III Directive in reducing the risk and limiting the potential consequences of major industrial accidents; where proposals are being considered for the following: (i) new establishments at risk of causing major accidents, (ii) the expansion of existing establishments designated under the Directive, and (iii) other developments proposed near to existing establishments; the Council will require that applicants must demonstrate that the following considerations are taken into account: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) prevention of major accidents involving dangerous substances, b) public health and safeguarding of public health, and c) protection of the environment; ensure that land use objectives must take account of the need to maintain appropriate distances between future major accident hazard establishments and residential areas, areas of substantial public use and areas of particular natural sensitivity or interest; and have regard to the advice of the Health and Safety Authority when dealing with proposals relating to Seveso sites and land use plans in the vicinity of such sites.
Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the protection of soils and designated sites of geological heritage by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to Central/core locations within the County area) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and 	<p>Potential adverse effects on the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource, including as a result of development on contaminated lands.</p> <p>Potential for riverbank and coastal erosion.</p>	<p>Loss of an extent of soil function arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces. Coastal and riverbank erosion will continue to occur naturally over time and is likely to be enhanced by climate change.</p>	<p>Also refer to measures under other environmental components including Water.</p> <p>Soils & Geology</p> <p>CPO 17.27 Geological and soil mapping where available shall be considered in planning decisions relating to settlement, excavation, flooding, food production value and carbon sequestration, to identify prime agricultural lands (for food production), degraded/contaminated lands (which may have implications for water quality, health, fauna), lands with unstable soils / geology or at risk of landslides, and those which are essential for habitat protection, or have geological significance.</p> <p>CPO 17.28 Protect and enhance 'County Geological Sites' (Schedule 10.10 and Map 10.10 of this plan) from inappropriate development at or in the vicinity of a site, such that would adversely affect their existence, or value.</p> <p>CPO 17.29 To consult with the Geological Survey of Ireland as is deemed necessary, when dealing with any proposals for major developments, which will entail 'significant' ground excavation, such</p>

	<p>services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well serviced lands elsewhere in the County.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the protection of the environment from contamination. 			<p>as quarrying, road cuttings, tunnels, major drainage works, and foundations for industrial or large buildings and complexes.</p> <p>CPO 17.30 To facilitate public access to County Geological Heritage Sites, on the principle of “agreed access” subject to appropriate measures being put in place to ensure public health and safety and subject to the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>CPO 17.31 To facilitate the Geological Survey of Ireland, and other interested bodies with the interpretation of geological heritage in Wicklow, and to facilitate the development of a “Wicklow Rock Trail”, Geopark or other similar geo-tourism initiatives.</p> <p>CPO 17.32 To facilitate the exploitation of mineral resources, in an environmentally sensitive manner, in accordance with the objectives and control measures set out in Chapter 9 and in the Design & Development standards of this plan.</p>
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the protection of water by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to Central/core locations within the County area) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well serviced lands elsewhere in the County. Contributions towards the protection of water resources including the status of surface and groundwaters and water-based designations. Contribution towards flood risk management and appropriate drainage. 	<p>Potential adverse effects upon the status of water bodies and entries to the WFD Register of Protected Areas (ecological and human value), arising from changes in quality, flow and/or morphology. Increase in flood risk and associated effects associated with flood events.</p>	<p>Any increased loadings as a result of development to comply with the River Basin Management Plan.</p> <p>Flood related risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to extreme weather events – however such risks will be mitigated by measures that have been integrated into County Development Plan (as varied) and Local Area Plans.</p>	<p>Also refer to measures under other environmental components including Soil and Material Assets.</p> <p>CPO4.14 To ensure that key assets in rural areas such as water quality and natural and cultural heritage are protected to support quality of life and economic vitality. CPO 9.39 To ensure that agricultural developments do not cause increased pollution to watercourses. Developments will be required to adhere to the Nitrates Directive (91/676/EC), the Nitrates National Action Programme and the EC (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2009 (as amended), with regard to storage facilities, concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused or induced by nitrates from agricultural sources. Developments will be required to comply with relevant measures, which operate to protect water quality from pollution by agricultural sources. The disposal and storage of agricultural waste shall comply with the standards required by Council.</p> <p>Strategic Objective: To promote the development of the County’s sea and river fishing industry, to a scale and in a manner, which maximises its contribution to the County’s economic and social well-being on a sustainable basis and which is compatible with the protection of the environment.</p> <p>CPO 9.49 To support the sustainable development of the fisheries and aquaculture industry in co-operation with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Inland Fisheries Ireland. The Council will not permit development that has a detrimental impact on the environment. In particular, development that has a detrimental impact on the environmental/ ecological/ water quality of seas, rivers and streams, will not be permitted.</p> <p>CPO 9.50 To facilitate the provision of infrastructure, which is necessary for the development of the fishing and aquaculture industry. Infrastructure and buildings in coastal or riverbank locations should be located in proximity to existing landing facilities and shall be of a design that is compatible with the area. Any development, which by reason of its nature or scale is detrimental to the character or amenity of an area, will not be permitted.</p> <p>Any development in the coastal zone shall comply with the objectives of this plan, as set out in Chapter 19.</p> <p>Water Quality Objectives</p> <p>CPO 13.1 To ensure and support the implementation of the EU Groundwater Directive and the EU Water Framework Directive and associated River Basin and Sub-Basin Management Plans and Blue Dot Catchment Programme, to ensure the protection, improvement and sustainable use of all waters in the County, including rivers, lakes, ground water, coastal and estuarine waters, and to restrict development likely to lead to a deterioration in water quality. The Council will also have cognisance of, where relevant, the EU’s Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Document</p>

				<p>No. 20 and 36 which provide guidance on exemptions to the environmental objectives of the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>CPO 13.2 To prevent development that would pollute water bodies and in particular, to regulate the installation of effluent storage and disposal systems in the vicinity of natural water bodies or development that would exacerbate existing underlying water contamination.</p> <p>CPO 13.3 To minimise alterations or interference with river / stream beds, banks and channels, except for reasons of overriding public health and safety (e.g. to reduce risk of flooding); a buffer of generally 25m along watercourses should be provided (or other width, as determined by the Planning Authority having particular regard to 'Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment' by Inland Fisheries Ireland for urban location) free from inappropriate development, with undeveloped riparian vegetation strips, wetlands and floodplains generally being retained in as natural a state as possible.</p> <p>CPO 13.4 To ensure that any development or activity with the potential to impact on ground water has regard to the GSI Groundwater Protection Scheme.</p> <p>CPO 13.5 To ensure compliance with and to implement the provisions of the Nitrates Directive in so far as it falls within the remit of the Council to do so.</p> <p>CPO 13.6 To encourage and promote the use of catchment-sensitive farming practices, in order to meet Water Framework Directive targets and comply with the River Basin Management Plan.</p> <p>CPO 13.7 To support and facilitate projects and programmes that aim to improve scientific knowledge and public awareness of the importance of natural water quality, and in particular to support the LAWPRO programme in County Wicklow and adjoining counties as appropriate.</p> <p>Water Quality, Water Quantity, Amenity and Biodiversity.</p> <p>CPO 13.22 To promote the use of green infrastructure, such as swales and wetlands, where feasible as landscape features in new development to provide storm / surface runoff storage and reduce pollutants, as well as habitat, recreation and aesthetic functions.</p> <p>Flood Management Objectives</p> <p>CPO 14.01 To support the implementation of recommendations in the OPW Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs), including planned investment measures for managing and reducing flood risk.</p> <p>CPO14.02 To support and facilitate flood management activities, projects or programmes as may arise, including but not limited to those relating to the management of upstream catchments and the use of 'natural water retention' measures , and ensure each flood risk management activity is examined to determine actions required to embed and provide for effective climate change adaptation as set out in the Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for Flood Risk Management applicable at the time.</p> <p>CPO14.03 To recognise the concept of coastal evolution and fluvial flooding as part of our dynamic physical environment, and adopt an adaptive approach to working with these natural processes. The focus of a flood management strategy should not solely be driven by conservation of existing lands; it should recognise that marshes, mud flats and other associated eco-systems evolve and degenerate, and appropriate consideration should be given to the realignment of defences and use of managed retreat and sacrificial flood protection lands to maintain such habitats as part of an overall strategy.</p> <p>CPO 14.04 To ensure the County's natural coastal defences (beaches, sand dunes, salt marshes and estuary lands) are protected and to ensure that their flood defence/management function is not put at risk by inappropriate works or development.</p>
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<p>Material Assets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to Central/core locations within the County area) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County. ▪ Contribution towards compliance with national and regional water services and waste management policies. ▪ Contribution towards increase in renewable energy use by facilitating renewable energy and electricity transmission infrastructure developments. ▪ Contributions towards limits in increases in energy demand from the transport sector by facilitating sustainable compact growth. ▪ Contribution towards reductions in average energy consumption per capita including promoting sustainable compact growth, sustainable mobility, sustainable design and energy efficiency. 	<p>Failure to provide adequate and appropriate waste water treatment (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).</p> <p>Failure to adequately treat surface water run-off that is discharged to water bodies (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).</p> <p>Failure to comply with drinking water regulations and serve new development with adequate drinking water (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).</p> <p>Increases in waste levels.</p> <p>Potential impacts upon public assets and infrastructure.</p>	<p>Exceedance of capacity in critical Infrastructure risks remain, including due to uncertainty with regard to climate – however, such risks will be mitigated by: measures, including those requiring the timely provision of critical infrastructure, and compliance with the Water Framework Directive and associated River Basin Management Plan.</p> <p>Residual wastes to be disposed of in line with higher-level waste management policies.</p> <p>Any impacts upon public assets and infrastructure to comply with statutory planning/consent-granting framework.</p>	<p>Human Health, Cultural Heritage, Soil, Water, Air and various Land Use and Phasing provisions. Strategic Objective: To support and facilitate the exploitation of County Wicklow's natural aggregate resources in a manner, which does not unduly impinge on the environmental quality, and the visual and residential amenity of an area.</p> <p>CPO 9.54 To have regard to the following guidance documents (as may be amended, replaced or supplemented) in the assessment of planning applications for quarries and ancillary facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'Quarries and Ancillary Activities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2004, DoEHLG); ▪ 'Environmental Management Guidelines – Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry (Non Scheduled Minerals)', EPA 2006; ▪ 'Archaeological Code of Practice between the DoEHLG and the Irish Concrete Federation' 2009; ▪ 'Geological Heritage Guidelines for the Extractive Industry', 2008; and ▪ 'Wildlife, Habitats and the Extractive Industry – Guidelines for the protection of biodiversity within the extractive industry', NPWS 2009. <p>Strategic Objective: To support and facilitate the exploitation of County Wicklow's natural aggregate resources in a manner, which does not unduly impinge on the environmental quality, and the visual and residential amenity of an area.</p> <p>Water Infrastructure Objectives</p> <p>Water Supply Objectives</p> <p>CPO 13.8 In order to fulfil the objectives of the Core Strategy and settlement strategy, Wicklow County Council will work alongside and facilitate the delivery of Irish Water's Water Services Investment Programme, to ensure the provision of sufficient storage, supply and pressure of potable water to serve all lands zoned for development and in particular, to endeavour to secure the delivery of regional and strategic water supply schemes and any other smaller, localised water improvement schemes required during the lifetime of the plan, as well as programmes to consolidate, and improve supply and resilience under the National Water Resource Plan. In particular, to support and facilitate the delivery of new / improved water treatment supplies and storage infrastructure in the following settlements/areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Newtownmountkennedy - Rathdrum - Dunlavin - The areas and settlements covered by the Mid Wicklow Water Supply Scheme <p>CPO 13.9 To protect existing and potential water resources of the County, in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive, the River Basin Management Plans, the Groundwater Protection Scheme and source protection plans for public water supplies.</p> <p>CPO 13.10 To require new developments to connect to public water supplies where services are adequate or where they will be provided in the near future, or where extension of an adjacent water supply system is technically and environmentally feasible.</p> <p>CPO 13.11 Where connection to an existing public water supply is not possible, or the existing supply system does not have sufficient capacity, the provision of a private water supply will be only permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposed water supply meets the standards set out in EU and national legislation and guidance, would not be prejudicial to public health, would not impact on the source or yield of an existing supply, particularly a public supply or would not adversely affect the ability of water bodies to meet the objectives of the Water Framework Directive. Private water supplies for multi-house developments will not be permitted.</p>
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irish Water has confirmed the site is due to be connected to a future public system in the area or Irish Water has confirmed there are no plans for a public system in the area; It can clearly demonstrated that the proposed system can meet all EPA / Local Authority environmental criteria; and An annually renewed contract for the management and maintenance of the system is contracted with a reputable company / person, details of which shall be provided to the Local Authority. <p>CPO 13.19 Where any application for a private treatment plant would require a discharge licence under the Water Pollution Acts, a simultaneous application for same shall be required to be made when submitting the planning application.</p> <p>Storm & Surface Water Infrastructure Objectives</p> <p>CPO 13.20 Ensure the separation of foul and surface water discharges in new developments through the provision of separate networks.</p> <p>CPO 13.21 Ensure the implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) in accordance with the Wicklow County Council SuDS Policy to ensure surface water runoff is managed for maximum benefit. In particular to require proposed developments to meet the design criteria of each of the four pillars of SuDS design;</p> <p>CPO 15.1 To require all developments likely to give rise to significant quantities of waste, either by virtue of the scale of the development or the nature of the development (e.g. one that involves demolition) to submit a construction management plan, which will outline, amongst other things, the plan to minimise waste generation and the plan to protect the environment with the safe and efficient disposal of waste from the site.</p> <p>CPO 15.2 To require all new developments, whether residential, community, agricultural or commercial to make provision for storage and recycling facilities (in accordance with the standards set out in Development & Design Standards of this plan).</p> <p>CPO 15.3 To facilitate the development of existing and new waste prevention and recovery facilities and in particular, to facilitate the development of 'green waste' recovery sites.</p> <p>CPO 15.4 To facilitate the development of waste-to-energy facilities, particularly the use of landfill gas and biological waste.</p> <p>CPO 15.5 To have regard to the Council's duty under the 1996 Waste Management Act (as amended), to provide and operate, or arrange for the provision and operation of, such facilities as may be necessary to promote reuse or for the recovery and disposal of household waste arising within its functional area.</p> <p>CPO 15.6 To facilitate the development of sites, services and facilities necessary to achieve implementation of the objectives of the Regional Waste Management Plan.</p> <p>Hazardous Waste Objectives</p> <p>CPO 15.7 To facilitate the development of sites, services and facilities for the disposal of hazardous household wastes in accordance with the objectives of the Regional Waste Management Plan.</p> <p>CPO 15.8 In relation to the Prevention of Major Accidents (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) legislation, it is an objective to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> comply with the Seveso III Directive in reducing the risk and limiting the potential consequences of major industrial accidents; where proposals are being considered for the following: (i) new establishments at risk of causing major accidents, (ii) the expansion of existing establishments designated under the Directive, and (iii) other developments proposed near to existing establishments; the Council
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				<p>will require that applicants must demonstrate that the following considerations are taken into account: (i) prevention of major accidents involving dangerous substances, (ii) public health and safeguarding of public health, and (iii) protection of the environment;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ensure that land use objectives must take account of the need to maintain appropriate distances between future major accident hazard establishments and residential areas, areas of substantial public use and areas of particular natural sensitivity or interest; and ▪ have regard to the advice of the Health and Safety Authority when dealing with proposals relating to Seveso sites and land use plans in the vicinity of such sites. <p>CPO 18.2 To protect existing green infrastructure resources and to facilitate, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, the development of green infrastructure that recognises the benefits that can be achieved with regard to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ provision of open space amenities, ▪ sustainable management of water, ▪ protection and management of biodiversity, ▪ protection of cultural heritage, and ▪ protection of protected landscape sensitivities. <p>CPO 19.1 To review and update the County Development Plan if necessary to ensure that it is consistent with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the National Marine Planning Framework following its adoption, and ▪ the Marine Planning and Development Management Act (following its enactment) CPO 19.2 To work with the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and other relevant government departments and bodies on marine planning with particular reference to the following areas; ▪ the implementation of the National Marine Planning Framework (following its adoption), ▪ the implementation of any future Marine Planning and Development Management Act in so far as it relates to the duties and functions of the Planning Authority, ▪ the designation of the nearshore area for County Wicklow, ▪ the preparation of any sub-regional plans for the maritime area and nearshore area, <p>CPO 19.12 To facilitate the provision of new or the reinforcement of existing coastal defences and protection measures where necessary along the full coastline of the County and in particular to consider the implementation of the measures identified in the Murrough Coastal Protection Study, the draft East Coast Erosion Study and any other similar studies that are produced during the lifetime of the plan. To employ soft engineering techniques or natural solutions as an alternative to hard coastal defence works, wherever feasible.</p>
Air and Climatic Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contribution towards climate mitigation and adaptation by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to Central/core locations within the settlements areas) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to 	<p>Potential conflict between development under the Variation and aiming to reduce carbon emissions in line with local, national and European environmental objectives.</p> <p>Potential conflicts between transport emissions,</p>	<p>An extent of travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air. This has been mitigated by provisions that have been integrated into the County Development Plan (as varied) and Local Area Plans.</p>	<p>Air Pollution Objectives</p> <p>CPO 15.9 To regulate and control activities likely to give rise to emissions to air (other than those activities which are regulated by the EPA).</p> <p>CPO 15.10 To require proposals for new developments with the potential for the accidental release of chemicals or dust generation, to submit and have approved by the Local Authority construction and/or operation management plans to control such emissions.</p> <p>CPO 15.11 To require activities likely to give rise to air emissions to implement measures to control such emissions, to undertake air quality monitoring and to provide an annual air quality audit.</p> <p>Noise Pollution Objectives</p>

	<p>avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In combination with other plans, programmes etc., contribution towards the objectives of the wide policy framework relating to climate mitigation and adaptation, and associated contribution towards maintaining and improving air quality and managing noise levels, including through measures relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sustainable compact growth; ○ Sustainable mobility, including walking, cycling and public transport; ○ Sustainable design, energy efficiency and green infrastructure. 	<p>including those from cars, and air quality.</p> <p>Potential conflicts between increased frequency of noise emissions and protection of sensitive receptors.</p> <p>Potential conflicts with climate adaptation measures including those relating to flood risk management.</p>	<p>Interactions between noise emissions and sensitive receptors.</p> <p>Various provisions have been integrated into the County Development Plan (as varied) and Local Area Plans to ensure that noise levels at sensitive receptors will be minimised.</p>	<p>CPO 15.12 To implement the Wicklow County Council Noise Action Plan 2018-2023 (and any subsequent Plan) in order to avoid, prevent and reduce the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to environmental noise exposure</p> <p>CPO 15.13 To enforce, where applicable, the provisions of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Acts 1992 and 2003, and EPA Noise Regulations 2006.</p> <p>CPO 15.14 To regulate and control activities likely to give rise to excessive noise (other than those activities which are regulated by the EPA).</p> <p>CPO 15.15 To require proposals for new developments with the potential to create excessive noise to prepare a construction and/or operation management plans to control such emissions.</p> <p>CPO 15.16 To require activities likely to give rise to excessive noise to install noise mitigation measures to undertake noise monitoring and to provide an annual monitoring audit.</p> <p>Climatic Factors</p> <p>Climate change action is one of three cross-cutting key principles of the Plan and has been integrated into the Plan in a proactive way with the inclusion of relevant policies and objectives; strategic policy outcomes incorporating climate change mitigation and adaptation into land-use planning, supported by land-use policies and objectives that where relevant incorporate objectives that both mitigate against the source of the causes of climate change and adapt to reduce the impacts of climate change. Climate change action informs objectives in relation to all chapters of the Plan, including the town and settlement plans and the Plan appendices.</p> <p>Given the Plan's remit as a land use framework not all sources and impacts are addressed in the Plan objectives (e.g. impact on insurance costs). The Plan's role in addressing climate change is part of a combined overall effort by Wicklow County Council to fulfil its role in addressing the climate change challenge. Climate change poses a real threat to ecosystems, however these ecosystems including wetlands and woodlands, are important for their role as carbon sinks, water attenuation and flooding protection. As it noted in the RSES, careful land management is needed to ensure that land use changes do not impact on the ability of the natural environment to absorb climate impacts. The Strategic Environmental Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment also have a key role to play in addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation.</p> <p>The approach taken in crafting the Plan is to identify what are the impacts and sources of climate change, identify the key sectors of the sources of impacts that are relevant to the County Plan as a land use plan and to ensure that these are considered in the crafting of all policies and objectives. Under the provisions of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, Local Authorities are required to prepare local Climate Action Plans outlining how they are implementing their adopted Climate Action Adaptation and Mitigation strategies.</p> <p>Wicklow's Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 is adopted and being implemented. Building on existing climate action policies, the RSES identifies the following five areas where Climate Change Action should be targeted in the region namely Built Environment, Sustainable Transport, Energy and Waste, Flood Resilience and Water, and Green Infrastructure and Eco-system services. Provisions relating to these areas have been integrated throughout the County Development Plan.</p>
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contributes towards protection of cultural heritage elsewhere by facilitating development within the settlement areas. 	<p>Potential effects on protected and unknown archaeology and protected architecture arising from construction and operation activities.</p>	<p>Potential effects on known architectural and archaeological heritage and unknown archaeology however, these will occur in</p>	<p>CPO 4.14 To ensure that key assets in rural areas such as water quality and natural and cultural heritage are protected to support quality of life and economic vitality.</p> <p>CPO 5.17 To harness and integrate the special physical, social, economic and cultural value of built heritage assets through appropriate and sensitive reuse, recognising its important contribution to placemaking. New development should respect and complement the historic fabric of existing</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributes towards protection of cultural heritage within the settlement areas by facilitating brownfield development and regeneration. 		compliance with legislation.	<p>towns and villages – the traditional street patterns, plot sizes, mix of building types, distinctive paving and attractive street furniture.</p> <p>CPO 5.18 To protect, integrate and enhance heritage assets, including attractive streetscapes and historic buildings, through appropriate reuse and regeneration and restrict inappropriate development that would undermine the settlement's identity, heritage and sense of place.</p> <p>Archaeology Objectives</p> <p>CPO 8.1 To secure the preservation of all archaeological monuments included in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994, and of sites, features and objects of archaeological interest generally. In the development management process, there will be a presumption of favour of preservation in-situ or, as a minimum, preservation by record. In securing such preservation the planning authority will have regard to the advice and recommendations of the National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p> <p>CPO 8.2 No development in the vicinity of a feature included in the Record of Monuments & Places (RMP) or any other site of archaeological interest will be permitted which seriously detracts from the setting of the feature or which is seriously injurious to its cultural or educational value.</p> <p>CPO 8.3 Any development that may, due to its size, location or nature, have implications for archaeological heritage (including both sites and areas of archaeological potential / significance as identified in Schedules 08.01 & 08.02 and Maps 8.01 & 8.02 of this plan) shall be subject to an archaeological assessment.</p> <p>CPO 8.4 To require archaeological assessment for all developments with the potential to impact on the archaeological heritage of riverine, intertidal or sub tidal environments.</p> <p>CPO 8.5 To facilitate new or improved public access to and erection of appropriate interpretive signage at National Monuments, archaeological sites, castles, sites of historic interest and archaeological landscapes in State or private ownership, as identified in Schedule 08.02 and Map 8.02 of this plan, in co-operation with landowners.</p> <p>CPO 8.6 To protect the integrity of Baltinglass Hills archaeological landscape including identified monuments and their wider setting by resisting development that may adversely impact upon the significance and understanding of this important landscape.</p> <p>CPO 8.7 To support the inscription of Glendalough to Ireland's tentative UNESCO World Heritage Site list and promote a conservation led approach to facilitating visitor access and enjoyment of this internationally significant landscape.</p> <p>CPO 8.8 To protect and promote the characteristics of historic towns in County Wicklow identified as zones of archaeological potential in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), ensuring that cognisance is given in relevant development proposals to retaining existing street layout, historic building lines and traditional plot widths where these derive from medieval or earlier origins.</p> <p>CPO 8.9 To protect and promote the conservation of historic burial grounds (those that are generally no longer in use but which may contain sites and features on the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and/or RPS) and support greater public access to these where possible.</p> <p>Architectural Heritage Objectives</p> <p>CPO 8.10 To protect, conserve and manage the built heritage of Wicklow and to encourage sensitive and sustainable development to ensure its preservation for future generations.</p> <p>CPO 8.11 To support the work of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) in collecting data relating to the architectural heritage, including the historic gardens and designed</p>
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				<p>landscapes, of the County, and in the making of this information widely accessible to the public, and property owners.</p> <p>CPO 8.12 To have regard to 'Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, 2011) in the assessment of proposals affecting architectural heritage.</p> <p>Record of Protected Structures Objectives</p> <p>CPO 8.13 To ensure the protection of all structures, items and features contained in the Record of Protected Structures.</p> <p>CPO 8.14 To positively consider proposals to alter or change the use of protected structures so as to render them viable for modern use, subject to architectural heritage assessment and to demonstration by a suitably qualified Conservation Architect / or other relevant expertise that the structure, character, appearance and setting will not be adversely affected and suitable design, materials and construction methods will be utilised.</p> <p>CPO 8.15 All development works on or at the sites of protected structures, including any site works necessary, shall be carried out using best heritage practice for the protection and preservation of those aspects or features of the structures / site that render it worthy of protection.</p> <p>CPO 8.16 To support the re-introduction of traditional features on protected structures where there is evidence that such features (e.g. window styles, finishes etc) previously existed.</p> <p>CPO 8.17 To strongly resist the demolition of protected structures or features of special interest unless it can be demonstrated that exceptional circumstances exist. All such cases will be subject to full heritage impact assessment and mitigation.</p> <p>Other Structures & Vernacular Architecture Objectives</p> <p>CPO 8.18 To seek (through the development management process) the retention, conservation, appropriate repair and reuse of vernacular buildings and features such as traditional dwellings and outbuildings, historic shopfronts, thatched roofs and historic features such as stone walls and milestones. The demolition of vernacular buildings will be discouraged.</p> <p>CPO 8.19 Development proposals affecting vernacular buildings and structures will be required to submit a detailed, true measured survey, photographic records and written analysis as part of the planning application process.</p> <p>CPO 8.20 Where an item or a structure (or any feature of a structure) is considered to be of heritage merit (where not identified in the RPS), the Planning Authority reserves the right to refuse permission to remove or alter that structure / item, in the interests of the protection of the County's architectural heritage.</p> <p>Architectural Conservation Area Objectives</p> <p>CPO 8.21 Within Architectural Conservation Areas, all those buildings, spaces, archaeological sites, trees, street furniture, views and other aspects of the environment which form an essential part of their character, as set out in their character appraisals, shall be considered for protection. The repair and refurbishment of existing buildings within the ACA will be favoured over demolition/new build in so far as practicable.</p> <p>CPO 8.22 The design of any development in Architectural Conservation Areas, including any changes of use of an existing building, should preserve and / or enhance the character and appearance of the Architectural Conservation Area as a whole. Schemes for the conservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of Architectural Conservation Areas will be promoted. In consideration of applications for new buildings, alterations and extensions affecting Architectural Conservation Areas, the following principles will apply:</p>
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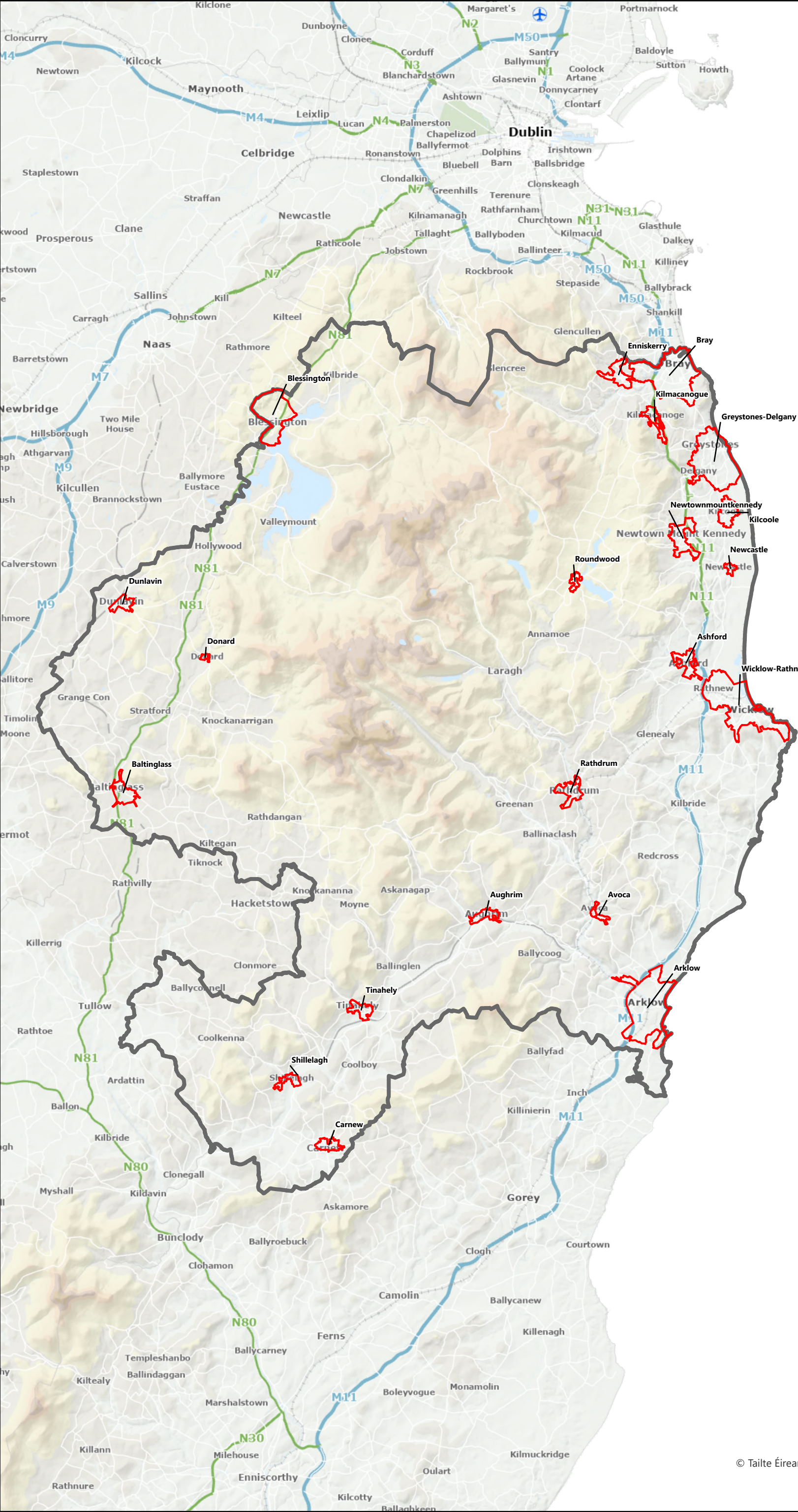
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposals will only be considered where they positively enhance the character of the ACA. The siting of new buildings should, where appropriate retain the existing street building line. The mass of the new building should be in scale and harmony with the adjoining buildings, and the area as a whole, and the proportions of its parts should relate to each other, and to the adjoining buildings. Architectural details on buildings of high architectural value should be retained wherever possible. Original features, which are important to a building's character such as window type, materials, detailing, chimneys, entrances and boundary walls, both within and outside the architectural conservation area should be retained where possible. A high standard of shopfront design relating sympathetically to the character of the building and the surrounding area will be required. The materials used should be appropriate to the character of the area. Planning applications in ACAs should be in the form of detailed proposals, incorporating full elevational treatment and colours and materials to be used. Where modern architecture is proposed within an ACA, the application should provide details (drawings and/or written detail) on how the proposal contributes to, or does not detract from the attributes of the ACA. <p>CPO 8.23 To consider the designation of further ACAs for towns and villages in County Wicklow, when preparing future local plans, and as deemed appropriate.</p> <p>CPO 8.24 To establish, where it is considered appropriate, "Areas of Special Planning Control", if it is considered that all or part of an Architectural Conservation Area is of special importance to the civic life or the architectural, historical, cultural or social character of a town or village in which it is situated.</p> <p>Historical & Cultural Heritage Objectives</p> <p>CPO 8.25 To protect and facilitate the conservation of structures, sites and objects which are part of the County's distinct local historical and cultural heritage, whether or not such structures, sites and objects are included on the RPS.</p> <p>CPO 8.26 To facilitate access to and appreciation of areas of historical and cultural heritage, through the development of appropriate trails and heritage interpretation, in association with local stakeholders and site landowners, having regard to the public safety issues associated with such sites.</p> <p>CPO 8.27 To facilitate future community initiatives to increase access to and appreciation of railway heritage, through preserving the routes of former lines free from development.</p>
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributes towards protection of wider landscape and landscape designations by facilitating development within the settlement areas. 	Occurrence of adverse visual impacts and conflicts with the appropriate protection of designations relating to the landscape.	Landscapes will change overtime as a result of natural changes in vegetation cover combined with new Developments that will occur in compliance with the Development Plan's landscape protection measures.	<p>Also refer to measures under Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna and Cultural Heritage.</p> <p>CPO 4.15 To protect and promote the quality, character and distinctiveness of the rural landscape.</p> <p>Landscape, Views & Prospects</p> <p>CPO 17.35 All development proposals shall have regard to the County landscape classification hierarchy in particular the key landscape features and characteristics identified in the Wicklow Landscape Assessment (set in Volume 3 of the 2016 County Development Plan) and the 'Key Development Considerations' set out for each landscape area set out in Section 5 of the Wicklow Landscape Assessment</p> <p>CPO 17.36 Any application for permission in the AONB which may have the potential to significantly adversely impact the landscape area shall be accompanied by a Landscape / Visual Impact Assessment, which shall include, inter alia, an evaluation of visibility and prominence of the proposed development in its immediate environs and in the wider landscape, a series of photos</p>

				<p>or photomontages of the site / development from clearly identified vantage points, an evaluation of impacts on any listed views / prospects and an assessment of vegetation / land cover type in the area (with particular regard to commercial forestry plantations which may be felled thus altering character / visibility). The Assessment shall demonstrate that landscape impacts have been anticipated and avoided to a level consistent with the sensitivity of the landscape and the nature of the designation.</p> <p>CPO 17.37 To resist development that would significantly or unnecessarily alter the natural landscape and topography, including land infilling / reclamation projects or projects involving significant landscape remodelling, unless it can be demonstrated that the development would enhance the landscape and / or not give rise to adverse impacts CPO 17.38 To protect listed views and prospects from development that would either obstruct the view / prospect from the identified vantage point or form an obtrusive or incongruous feature in that view / prospect. Due regard will be paid in assessing development applications to the span and scope of the view / prospect and the location of the development within that view / prospect.</p> <p>CPO 19.8 To protect the character and visual potential of the coast and conserve the character and quality of seascapes.</p>
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Appendix 2: Map No. 1, Settlements targeted for increased growth

The Section 28 Guidelines '*Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines for Regional Assemblies and Planning Authorities*' March 2022 outlines that a 'screening notice' to the relevant environmental authorities may include the geographic area of the plan (suitable-scaled map).

Accordingly, a suitably scaled map is included here; as the Proposed Variation relates to the whole area of County Wicklow, it is at County scale. Within this map, the settlements where it is proposed to increase the population and housing targets are clearly identified, being the Level 1-6 settlements in the County settlement hierarchy;



Variation No. 6

Strategic Environmental
Assessment Screening

Map No. 1
Settlements targeted for
increased growth



- LEGEND
- Settlements at Levels 1-6 of the Wicklow Settlement Hierarchy
 - Wicklow County Boundary