



# Variation No.6

Who are you:	Private Individual
Name:	Craig Bishop
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- Chapter 3 – Proposed Variation No. 6

**Write your observations here:**

Variation 6 of CDP  
Admin Officer  
Wicklow County Council

RE: Core Strategy

These proposals respond to the minister's demand for additional houses in Wicklow by allocating them to existing towns according to various criteria. Some centres are faced with having their populations increased proportionally more, some less.

What has been missed is not the fact that new houses are required but that Wicklow is the place to put them. It isn't.

The original Spatial Planning Guidelines for Ireland concentrated on balancing growth with resources - taking a strategic planned approach for the good of the country not simply relying on 'the market' and developer led development. Since then, with the growing realisation that we face a climate emergency, the focus of spatial planning has changed. What's good for the country in the long term requires us to work within environmental limits.

Good spatial planning is based on the principal that

1. Housing growth should be focused on specific, densely populated, well serviced centers and
2. 'Growth' in the hinterland should be controlled in such a way that it allows life there to 'tick over'. Obsolescence replaced with sustainable, environmentally clean activities. Expansion and 'growth' restricted to the cities.

Dublin City has been allowed to expand its diameter beyond 60km. The wider it gets, the more difficult it is to service as diseconomies of scale impact. It is to counteract this imbalance that the National Planning Framework specifies that 50% of growth needs to be in the other cities

How that translates in the case of Wicklow is this:

Allowing Dublin to expand even more is counterproductive. The environmental footprint of someone living in Ashford and driving to and from work is likely to be significantly higher than if they commuted to work from a densely populated, intensively resourced core of Dublin, closer to work.

'The place to build Wicklow's next 20,000 houses is in Dublin.

The next best place to build Wicklow's allocation is in Bray but only if you are prepared to invest in making it work, as in, build a modern new town with fast, frequent transit to Dublin and some of its suburbs.

The environmental cost of building outside this growth centre cannot be justified; not in Enniskerry, Kilcoole, Blessington or Greystones.

Wicklow Town and Arklow were designated as growth centres but they work like satellites of Dublin. Until they too get a rapid transport service they should not receive any more houses.

Craig Bishop



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