



7th October 2025

For the Attention of: Ms Emer O’Gorman, Chief Executive

Wicklow County Council
County Buildings
Whitegates
Wicklow Town
County Wicklow
A67 FW96

**Section 31 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 –
Decision to Issue a Direction to Wicklow County Council regarding the
Wicklow Town-Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025-2031**

Dear Emer,

I am writing to inform you of the following in relation to the section 31 draft Direction that issued to Wicklow County Council on 19th June 2025, and the subsequent consideration by the Office of the Planning Regulator (‘the Office’) of your report in connection with the *Wicklow Town-Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025-2031*, as adopted by the elected members of Wicklow County Council on 12th May 2025.

The draft Direction, as issued in June, can be summarised as follows:

- Part 2(a) – Delete three identified material alterations from the adopted Local Area Plan, such that the subject lands revert to as indicated in the draft Local Area Plan.

The Office notified the Minister pursuant to section 31AP(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (‘the Act’) on 27th August 2025 and recommended that I, as Minister, issue the Direction.

A copy of the notice letter and proposed final Direction was submitted to me, as Minister, by the Office along with a copy of your Chief Executive’s Report on the draft Direction, prepared under section 31(8) of the Act.



Accordingly, having reviewed and considered the Office of the Planning Regulator's notice letter, your report of 7th August 2025 on the draft Direction and submissions received, I am of the opinion that the Direction should be issued in line with the recommendations of the Office and your report. In the above regard, I refer you to the Statement of Reasons set out in the enclosed Direction.

The Direction as issued incorporates minor descriptive amendments which are not material in nature and do not alter the substance of the Office's recommended direction but provide additional clarity in order to aid its interpretation.

For the avoidance of doubt, I also wish to confirm that at the time of my decision I was cognisant of the following matters:

- Part of the "MA 20B" lands were outside the SLO 3 boundary as delineated at draft stage.
- The "MA 38" lands were wholly outside the SLO 3 boundary as delineated at draft stage.
- OS2 zoning is titled "Natural Areas".
- Proposed MA No.42 to the Local Area Plan amended certain zoned lands from OS1 to OS2 zoning.

In reaching my decision to issue the Direction, I have noted your recommendations as Chief Executive under section 31(9) of the Act. I further note the Office's consideration of, and response to, those matters in its subsequent recommendation to me, as Minister, under section 31AP(4) of the Act.

Accordingly, Wicklow County Council should **TAKE NOTICE** that on 7th October 2025 I have issued a Direction pursuant to section 31 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Pursuant to section 31(17) of the Act this Direction is deemed to have immediate effect and its terms are considered to be incorporated into the plan. A copy of this Direction is enclosed.

In light of the foregoing, Wicklow County Council is required, pursuant to section 31(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to comply with this Direction so as to rectify the matter in a manner that, in my opinion, will ensure that *Wicklow Town-Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025-2031* sets out an overall strategy for proper planning and sustainable development and meets the requirements of the Act.



The Council should ensure that the Direction is available for inspection at its offices and on its website.

My officials remain available to assist you, as necessary, in complying with the foregoing process.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'John Cummins', is written over a horizontal line.

John Cummins TD

Minister of State for Local Government and Planning

Copied to:

- Cathaoirleach, Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Whitegates, Wicklow Town, County Wicklow, A67 FW96.
- Director, Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly, 3rd Floor North, Ballymun Civic Centre, Main Street, Ballymun, Dublin 9, D09 C8P5.
- Office of the Planning Regulator, Park House, Grangegorman, 191-193A North Circular Road, Dublin 7, D07 EWW4.