



Proposed Variation No. 7 to the Wicklow County Development Plan Submission Report

Submission Details

Ref	VAR7-143104
Who Are You?	Private Individual
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Proposed Variation Parts

Topic	Part 1: Proposed Variation to town / settlement zoning maps and, where relevant, proposed new or amended site specific policy objectives.
Submission	1. Level 3: Greystones-Delgany

Write your observations here:

Submission on Proposed Variation No. 7, Greystones

I am writing as a Greystones resident regarding the proposed rezoning of land for significant additional housing, including the Éire Óg and Charlesland Golf Club lands.

I understand Ireland has a housing crisis. But you cannot solve a housing crisis by looking at houses in isolation from the infrastructure needed to support the people who will live in them.

1. Schools

Our schools are already under pressure.

Wicklow County Council's own Social Infrastructure Audit estimates that the Greystones, Delgany and Kilcoole area requires approximately 4,972 school places, but when the area's actual demographics are taken into account, the estimated requirement could be approximately 6,635 places, 33% higher.

We have seen children in the area with no secondary school place at all over the last couple of years.

That is not acceptable now, never mind after adding potentially thousands more residents.

Before major new housing is allowed to proceed, I want to see a clear, funded and deliverable plan for the additional school places required.

2. Roads and transport

Anyone travelling out of or back into Greystones at peak times knows the current situation.

The roads are already heavily congested, particularly during commuting and school times.

Adding a substantial number of new homes means adding more journeys.

Where is the infrastructure plan to deal with that?

We need proper consideration of roads, public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure before increasing the population on this scale.

3. We need a major public recreation park

Greystones is a growing town, but where is the large public recreation space for the people who already live here, never mind the thousands of additional people being planned for?

I believe Greystones needs a large, free, publicly accessible recreation park where people can:

- Walk and run
- Cycle
- Play GAA and other sports
- Exercise
- Bring their children
- Spend time outdoors
- Enjoy green space

This isn't a luxury.

Access to outdoor space is vital for both our physical and mental wellbeing. In increasingly busy and demanding lives, people need accessible places where they can exercise, get outdoors, connect with others and take a break from everyday pressures.

The Government's Revised National Planning Framework specifically states that infrastructure must be coordinated with housing delivery and that this includes education, childcare, healthcare and recreational facilities.

4. So which is it?

This is the part I find particularly frustrating.

Wicklow County Council says Proposed Variation No. 7 is being progressed because of the Government's updated Housing Growth Requirements, with the

purpose of allowing additional lands to be zoned for housing.

At the same time, the Government's own Revised National Planning Framework says that infrastructure provision must be coordinated and prioritised so that it is in place to support and enable housing development, including schools, childcare, healthcare and recreation.

So which is it?

Are we all not part of the same public system, working towards the same goal?

Are we not all here to plan Ireland properly and in the best interests of the people who already live here as well as those who will live here in the future?

It cannot be acceptable for one part of Government to say "we need more housing", while another says "the infrastructure needs to be in place to support that housing", and then the housing gets prioritised while residents are left waiting for the schools, roads and facilities.

5. Infrastructure must come BEFORE the houses

And this is really important.

It is not enough to say that infrastructure will be provided as part of a development.

We have seen what happens when developers are required to provide facilities such as creches and those commitments are delayed, disputed or end up in lengthy legal processes.

I want guarantees that essential infrastructure is actually delivered before, or alongside, the occupation of the new homes, not promises that it will come later.

You cannot put thousands of people into a new development and then tell them that the school, road improvements, public transport or recreational facilities will come eventually.

Build the infrastructure first. Then build the houses.

Finally

I am not opposed to Greystones growing.

I am opposed to poor planning that puts additional pressure on an already stretched town.

The Government's own planning framework says that housing and infrastructure need to be coordinated.

So let's actually do that.

Plan the schools.

Plan the roads.

Plan the transport.

Plan the recreation.

Build the infrastructure.

Then build the homes.

Greystones deserves development that creates a better community, not simply a bigger population.