



Pre Draft Bray LAP Submission - Report

Who are you:	State Body
Name:	Department of Education
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Planning Department,
Wicklow County Council,
Station Road,
Wicklow Town,
Co Wicklow

10th December 2024

Re: Issues Paper – Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

The Department of Education welcomes this opportunity to engage with Wicklow County Council in the preparation of the Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan 2025.

The department notes that Local Authorities, in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), are obliged to make all their statutory plans consistent with the core strategies and objectives of the NPF and the relevant RSES. The department welcomes the reference to this statement in the Issues Paper. It is noted that the current Wicklow CDP 2022-2028 designates Bray as a 'Key Town' and provides a population increase of 8,919 persons between 2016 and 2028. The current Wicklow CDP 2022-2028 designates Enniskerry as a 'Self Sustaining Town' and provides a population increase of 229 persons between 2016 and 2028. The current Wicklow CDP 2022-2028 designates Kilmacanogue as a 'Small Town' and provides a population increase of 5% between 2016 and 2028. If these projected population increases materialise, a requirement for additional education provision at both primary and post-primary level may emerge over the lifetime of the plan. The department is mindful of the current National Planning Framework review and the potential upwards amendment of population growth figures for settlements across the country. Projected growth figures out to 2031 and beyond for the settlements in the Bray MDLAP area could equally see a requirement for additional education provision at both primary and post-primary level within those settlements, should that projected growth materialise.

The department notes in the section titled Regeneration of Communities & Places – Healthy Placemaking – Urban Design – Opportunity Sites of the Issues Paper the reference to the potential regeneration of existing areas within the built up areas of Bray, Enniskerry and Kilmacanogue. The department notes that the MDLAP will consider the cumulative impacts of regeneration and redevelopment on existing community facilities. Population growth within the existing "built-up" footprint of the towns has the potential to upset the balance of use relative to education provision in the area. The absence of specific school site provision in such locations can significantly challenge the delivery of required school places associated with intensified residential development. It is, therefore, critical that explicit provision for school development to cater for such development be made in existing "built-up" areas, within Bray, Enniskerry and Kilmacanogue.



The department notes in the section titled Economic Opportunity – Tourism – Shops & Service – Community Facilities the reference to vital role of community infrastructure within the towns and their environs and in this regard requests that the draft plan would be explicit in its continued support for the provision of adequate and suitable school accommodation, including the development of new schools and the expansion or alteration of existing ones.

In terms of the identification of future school place requirement that necessitates the need for the reservation and acquisitions of sites for future new schools or the requirement of new sites to facilitate the relocation of existing schools, the department would like to highlight the following points.

1 - It is generally considered that schools are enabling infrastructure for housing and as such, schools should be positioned in the heart of new and expanding sustainable communities, allowing for the maximum benefit to the community inside and outside school hours. Further to this, other community facilities and amenities should also be positioned close to school facilities to allow for all community facilities be complimentary to each other for the benefit of the whole community.

2 - Sites for future schools or for the redevelopment of existing schools should be identified on appropriate and suitable land for development and zoned accordingly, with specific land use zonings. All enabling infrastructure required to develop and operate school facilities should be provided in advance of the need for such schools. This infrastructure includes road, electricity, water infrastructure, sustainable transport links, active travel networks, road safety measures and safe routes to school facilities. It should be noted that it is not within the remit of the Department of Education to develop or fund this enabling infrastructure.

The department also anticipates that additional Special Education Needs provision at both Primary and Post Primary level will be required in the future throughout the country and this may result in schools requiring additional accommodation or space to meet this growing need. The department will consult with the Council if and when additional SEN accommodation or sites for future special schools are required within specific locations. In the context of this LAP, explicit support within the plan for the provision of school accommodation for children and young people with special educational needs would be welcomed.

Finally, the department welcomes the continued engagement with the Council regarding the development of both new and existing schools, as appropriate, and emphasizes the critical importance of the ongoing work of the Council in ensuring sufficient land is zoned for this purpose.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'Mairead Garry', written over a horizontal line.

Mairead Garry
Statutory Plans,
Forward Planning Section