



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

### Submission Details

|                 |                            |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Ref             | VAR7-164039                |
| Who Are You?    | Private Individual         |
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| Submitted Time: | September 24, 2026 5:11 PM |

### 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 4: Newtownmountkennedy                                                                                                           |

Write your observations here:

I am concerned that the proposed rezoning of land for further residential development around Season Park and Newtownmountkennedy is being considered without sufficient regard for the significant pressure already being placed on infrastructure and community facilities within the village.

I recognise that new housing is important and that Newtownmountkennedy is a growing community. However, further development needs to be properly planned alongside the services and infrastructure required to support both the people who already live here and those who will move into any new homes.

There are already significant shortcomings in a number of essential areas.

There is considerable pressure on primary school places in the area. Existing schools require additional capacity, and there are concerns regarding the suitability and condition of some existing school accommodation, including buildings that require upgrading. It is also concerning that one school is still operating from temporary buildings.

There is currently no secondary school in Newtownmountkennedy and no clear plan for one. This places additional pressure on families, students and transport infrastructure, particularly for pupils who need to travel to Kilcoole.

The village has limited retail capacity for the population it currently serves. The existing supermarket is frequently overcrowded and does not appear to provide sufficient capacity for the size of the population.

There are also significant gaps in essential local services. Residents have limited access to services including:

A local dentist.

A public library.

Accessible medical appointments.

Appropriate facilities and activities for older people.

Facilities and activities for teenagers and young adults.

Adequate facilities for young children and families.

Community and social facilities.

Public transport is not adequate for the existing population, never mind the additional population that further development would create.

There is no bus service between Newtownmountkennedy and Kilcoole, despite secondary-school pupils from the area needing to travel to Kilcoole. There have also been issues this year with students not receiving approval for their bus passes, leaving parents and relatives to provide transport.

The lack of adequate public transport increases dependence on private cars and places additional pressure on already congested roads. It is therefore important that public transport improvements are considered as an integral part of any further development rather than assuming that residents can simply change their mode of transport.

Traffic management within Newtownmountkennedy is already a major concern. There are significant delays, particularly during school and commuting periods, and congestion on the N11 can create substantial delays for residents trying to leave the village.

Parking is also an ongoing problem. Vehicles can occupy available spaces for long periods, making it more difficult for residents to access local shops and services and contributing to difficulties around school drop-off and collection times.

Many residents have little practical alternative to using a car because they need to travel directly from the village to work. Improving public transport therefore needs to be considered alongside proper traffic and parking management.

Clearer signage could also help visitors and through-traffic navigate the area more effectively and potentially reduce unnecessary congestion.

The condition of local roads is another concern. Construction activity and the repeated movement of heavy goods vehicles associated with building works are placing additional pressure on local roads and contributing to damage and

deterioration. The impact of construction traffic should be properly assessed and addressed as part of any further development proposals.

A growing population requires more than houses. Newtownmountkennedy needs appropriate facilities for different age groups and sections of the community, including:

Children and families.

Teenagers and young adults.

Older residents.

Community and social activities.

Healthcare and essential services.

Education.

Public transport.

Recreation and community facilities.

The existing infrastructure is already under significant pressure in many of these areas.

The concern is therefore not simply about whether new houses should be built. It is about whether development is being properly coordinated with the infrastructure required to make Newtownmountkennedy a sustainable and properly functioning place to live.

If significant additional housing is approved without adequate schools, public transport, healthcare access, retail capacity, traffic management, parking, roads and community facilities being delivered alongside it, the existing problems within Newtownmountkennedy are likely to become more difficult to manage.

Residents should not have to accept a situation where the number of homes increases significantly while essential infrastructure continues to lag behind.

I therefore believe that before further land is rezoned or substantial additional residential development is permitted, there should be a clear and transparent assessment of the capacity of existing:

Schools and educational facilities.

Roads and traffic infrastructure.

Public transport.

Healthcare and essential services.

Retail facilities.

Parking.

Community and recreational facilities.

There should also be a realistic, funded and deliverable plan for addressing any deficiencies identified, with appropriate infrastructure delivered in step with housing development rather than being left until after additional pressure has been placed on existing services.

Newtownmountkennedy is a growing community, but growth needs to be balanced with investment in the village itself. Housing development should contribute to creating a properly planned, sustainable community rather than simply increasing the number of houses while existing infrastructure remains inadequate.

The people who already live in Newtownmountkennedy should not be expected to absorb the consequences of continued development without the necessary infrastructure and community facilities being provided.

Further growth should therefore be properly sequenced and accompanied by clear commitments to the schools, roads, public transport, healthcare, retail, parking, recreation and community facilities required to support both existing residents and the additional population.

Newtownmountkennedy and its residents deserve investment and proper planning alongside development.