

WICKLOW TOWN - RATHNEW LOCAL AREA PLAN 2025

APPENDIX 2 SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE AUDIT



Foreword

This is the Social Infrastructure Audit (SIA) for the Wicklow Town – Rathnew Local Area Plan (LAP) 2025.

The assessment for the Social Infrastructure Audit for the draft Local Area Plan was carried out in 2024 in order to prepare the objectives and land use zonings of the draft Local Area Plan.

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PART 1 INTRODUCTION & POLICY CONTEXT

1.0 Introduction to the Wicklow Town – Rathnew Local Area Plan Social Infrastructure Audit

Social infrastructure, community facilities and community development are fundamental elements in the creation of sustainable communities and supporting a good quality of life. Land use planning can contribute to enhancement of social / community infrastructure and development through the following means:

1. Facilitating the delivery of community infrastructure through:
 - Identifying where possible community / social infrastructure deficiencies and needs of towns and villages including, for example, local community centres, schools, health facilities, broadband hubs, remote working facilities in community spaces, age-friendly facilities such as accessible internet spaces and increased post /delivery and collection facilities;
 - The reservation of land for the development of new or enhanced social and community infrastructure in County and local development plans where a need for new facilities is identified;
 - Managing the expansion of residential development commensurate with the community infrastructure available;
 - Requiring the delivery of new community infrastructure as part of development proposals; and
 - Cooperating with other service providers in the delivery of new community infrastructure.
2. Facilitating improved physical access to community infrastructure and services through:
 - Promoting a development pattern that maximises the accessibility of social / community facilities infrastructure by public transport, cycle or foot;
 - Requiring all new facilities to be accessible and useable by those with special needs, including mobility or other impairments; and
 - Facilitating enhancement of communications infrastructure.
3. Facilitating the maintenance, restoration and upgrading of the cultural and natural heritage of communities, environmental upgrading and general actions to enhance the environmental, amenity and physical attributes of communities.

The function of a Social Infrastructure Audit (SIA) is to examine and analyse the availability and capacity of existing social / community infrastructure facilities, and to determine future requirements, and make recommendations based on anticipated settlement growth. The following SIA was prepared by Wicklow County Council (WCC) for the purposes of informing the Wicklow Town - Rathnew Local Area Plan (LAP).

Social Infrastructure relates to the provision of services and facilities which are essential for health, well-being and social development of a town / place. Social infrastructure facilities include for example education, health, care, leisure, recreation and culture.

1.1 Methodology

The Wicklow Town – Rathnew Local Area Plan Social Infrastructure Audit (SIA) will examine and analyse the availability and capacity of existing social infrastructure facilities, to determine future requirements, and make recommendations based on settlement growth, making use of a range of both quantitative and qualitative indicators in analysing the provision of social infrastructure in the Wicklow Town - Rathnew area. The Audit will comprise of three stages, as follows:

- Audit of Existing Infrastructure: Data gathering and direct consultation with service providers will enable the construction of a baseline level of social infrastructure provision. This can be compared

with current known population figures to establish whether social infrastructure within the Wicklow Town - Rathnew area adequately serves the **current** population.

- Future Demand Analysis: Consideration of existing infrastructure provision relative to the existing and future population target and best practice provision¹.
- Social infrastructure Recommendations: The identification of shortfalls (or lack thereof) in the provision of social infrastructure will inform the draft Wicklow Town – Rathnew Local Area Plan. This would allow the identification of suitable sites (zoned or otherwise) and development of appropriate objectives for the provision of new social / community infrastructure in the plan.

With regard to the study area, the main focus of this audit is within the area of Wicklow Town - Rathnew Town Development Plan 2013 (as shown on Map 1). However it is acknowledged that given Wicklow Town's size and range of services, as well as being the county town, many of the catchments for the services / facilities will reach further than the study boundary into the countryside and neighbouring villages. Map 2 and Map 3 shows the areas reachable by car in approximately 15 and 30 minutes from Wicklow Town and Rathnew, respectively.

1.2 National Policy Context

National Planning Framework (NPF)

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of our country out to the year 2040. It addresses Social and Community development within its outlined National Strategic Outcomes (NSO):



NPF NSO Graphic

¹ Note that quantitative standards for the provision of social infrastructure may not exist in all cases. Furthermore, a range of figures for the population target may be required depending on the type of infrastructure and the expected catchment area of each facility

NSO 7 'Enhanced Amenity and Heritage' states the following:

'This will ensure that our cities, towns and villages are attractive and can offer a good quality of life. It will require investment in well-designed public realm, which includes public spaces, parks and streets, as well as recreational infrastructure. It also includes amenities in rural areas, such as national and forest parks, activity-based tourism and trails such as greenways, blueways and peatways. This is linked to and must integrate with our built, cultural and natural heritage, which has intrinsic value in defining the character of urban and rural areas and adding to their attractiveness and sense of place.'

NSO 10 'Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services' states the following:

'Good access to a range of quality education and health services, relative to the scale of a region, city, town, neighbourhood or community is a defining characteristic of attractive, successful and competitive places. Compact, smart growth in urban areas and strong and stable rural communities will enable the enhanced and effective provision of a range of accessible services.'

Chapter 4 'Making Stronger Urban Places', aims to enhance people's experience of living, working, learning and visiting urban places in Ireland by offering a quality of life that more people are willing to choose in the years ahead. In this context, NPO 4 states the following:

'Ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being.'

Chapter 6 'People, Homes and Communities' identifies, in broad terms, the elements supporting quality of life, several of which would generally fall into definitions of social infrastructure, e.g. health, education, and leisure and social interactions. This chapter also states that, among other elements, 'our ability to access services and amenities, such as education and healthcare, the leisure and social interactions available to us and the prospect of securing employment, all combine to make a real difference to people's lives. Figure 6.2 from the NPF comprises a broad indication of the level of service provision that applies to settlements of varying sizes, as envisioned by the NPF.

Though the settlement hierarchy under the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 does not sit exactly onto the levels shown in this figure, Wicklow Town - Rathnew may fall somewhere between the 'Cities and the 'Large Towns', based on its position as a large economically active service and/or county towns that provides employment to its surrounding areas; with high-quality transport links and the capacity to act as a growth driver.

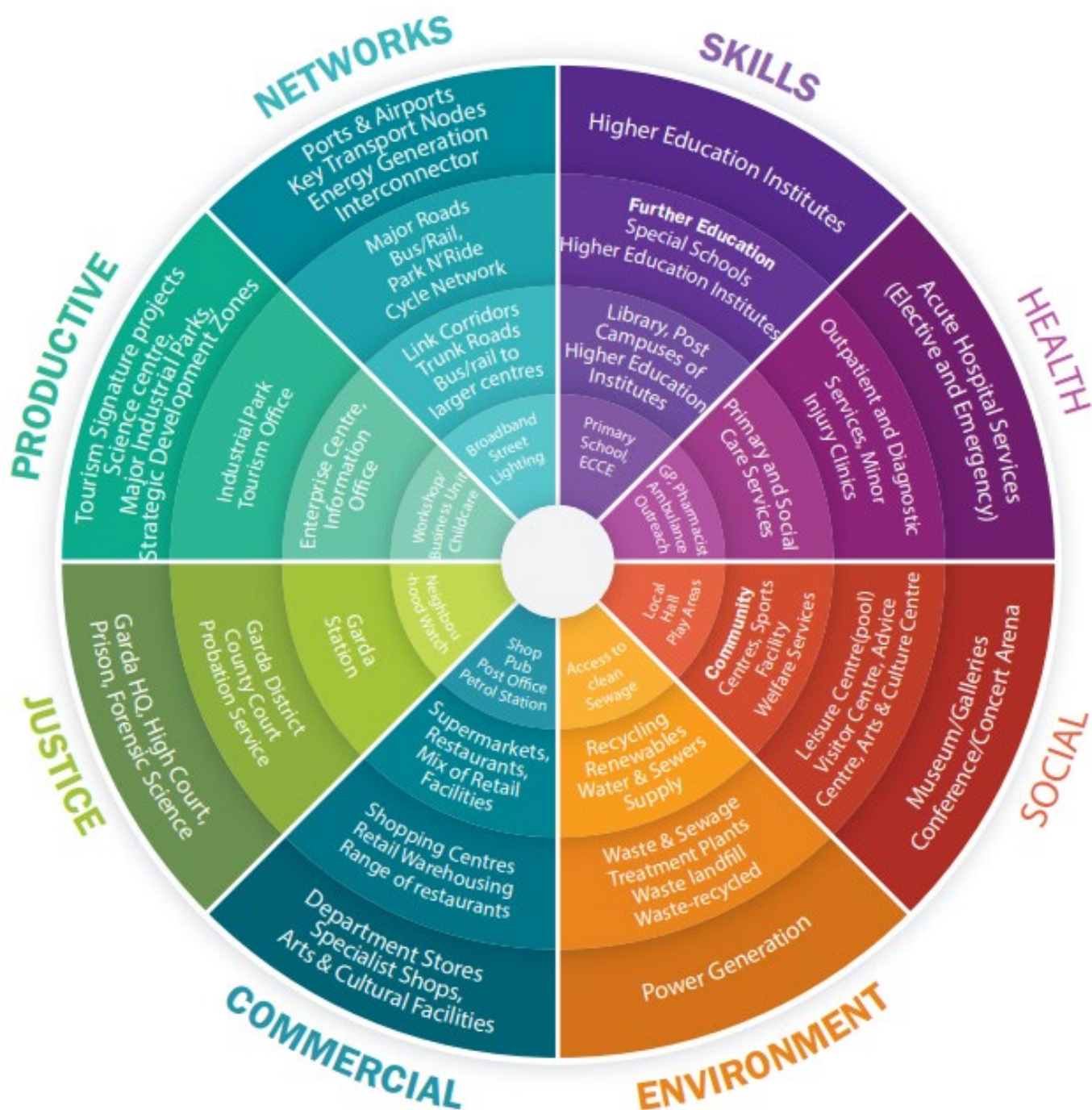
NPO 26 also has relevance to the provision of social infrastructure and states the following:

'Support the objectives of public health policy including Healthy Ireland and the National Physical Activity Plan, though integrating such policies, where appropriate and at the applicable scale, with planning policy.'

The NPF in multiple instances highlights that the provision of facilities and services must be tailored for use by a multitude of groups of differing interest and ability, as follows:

NPO 28 states:

'Plan for a more diverse and socially inclusive society that targets equality of opportunity and a better quality of life for all citizens, through improved integration and greater accessibility in the delivery of sustainable communities and the provision of associated services.'



Source: Derived from Strategic Investment Board Limited, 2008

Figure 1 – Level of service provision (Figure 6.2 of the National Planning Framework)

While, in relation to the elderly in particular, NPO 30 states:

'Local planning, housing, transport/ accessibility and leisure policies will be developed with a focus on meeting the needs and opportunities of an ageing population along with the inclusion of specific projections, supported by clear proposals in respect of ageing communities as part of the core strategy of city and county development plans.'

In relation to children and young people, the NPF states that *'the number of people aged 15 or under will continue to increase until the early 2020's and decline only slowly thereafter. This means that the continued provision and enhancement of facilities and amenities for children and young people, such as childcare, schools, playgrounds, parks and sportsgrounds, remains necessary and will need to be maintained at similar levels for the foreseeable future thereafter.'* Under this section the NPF makes reference to the support for national policy including *'Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures'*. Despite a predicted decline in the number of children in Ireland in the coming years, the NPF stresses that *'childcare provision in Ireland is reaching capacity and new planning approaches and sustained investment will be required, particularly in areas of disadvantage and population growth, to increase capacity and enable existing services to meet regulatory and quality requirements.'* It also infers that 'childcare' includes school-age childcare and early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).

The above discussion on childcare is summarised within NPO 31, which states the following:

'Prioritise the alignment of targeted and planned population and employment growth with investment in:

- A childcare/ECCE planning function, for monitoring, analysis and forecasting of investment needs, including identification of regional priorities;*
- The provision of childcare facilities and new and refurbished schools on well-located sites within or close to existing built-up areas, that meet the diverse needs of local populations;*
- The expansion and consolidation of Higher Education facilities, particularly where this will contribute to wider regional development, and*
- Programmes for life-long learning, especially in areas of higher education and further education and training where skills gaps are identified.'*

Section 6.6 of the NPF, in relation to housing, includes NPO 33, which states the following:

'Prioritise the provision of new homes at locations that can support sustainable development and at an appropriate scale of provision relative to location.'

Within this section it is clarified that 'sustainable development' in relation to the location of housing can be characterised as places *'which support growth, innovation and the efficient provision of infrastructure, are accessible to a range of local services, can encourage the use of public transport, walking and cycling, and help tackle climate change'*. On this basis it is clear that the NPF envisions that social infrastructure and services that would reasonably be expected to be a town such as Wicklow Town - Rathnew would be within walking or cycling distance.

National Guidelines

Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities 2007

Section 4.3 'Building Sustainable Communities' sets out that, in general, *'the availability of a school, shop and bus stop will usually be the minimum level of available services/facilities'* in housing areas outside mixed use centres.

Childcare Facilities - Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2001

The guidelines set out the following quantitative standards: *'For new housing areas, an average of one childcare facility for each 75 dwellings would be appropriate. The threshold for provision should be established having regard to the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of areas. Authorities could consider requiring the provision of larger units catering for up to 30/40 children in areas of major residential development on the basis that such a large facility might be able to offer a variety of services – sessional/drop in/after-school, etc.'* This figure can be altered based on assumption made in the number of proposed units which will need childcare, and on development plan/childcare committee identified gaps in provision.

Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines 2024

The guidelines focus on sustainable residential development and the creation of compact settlements. Good urban design and placemaking is an important element of compact settlements. The Guidelines seek that Development Plans, for larger settlements like Wicklow Town - Rathnew, the plan strategy should support the creation of strong and vibrant centres surrounded by an integrated network of well-designed mixed-use neighbourhoods.

The Provision of Schools and the Planning System - Code of Practice for Planning Authorities 2008

The guidelines set out that the Department of Education will forecast the likely demand for schooling and will provide this information to the Local Authority as part of the consultation process on development plans. The guidelines further set out design standards in relation to new schools and their locations.

National Sports Policy 2018-2027

In recognition of the influence and importance of sport across Irish society, the National Sports Policy sets out the Vision for Irish Sport in 2027 and defines the actions the Department of Transport, tourism and Sport will undertake to achieve the goals of the National Sports Policy.

1.3 Regional Policy Context

EMRA Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2019-2031 (RSES)

The Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly's Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy contains multiple objectives in relation to the provision of social infrastructure. Section 9.4 'Healthy Placemaking', includes objectives focusing on the multi-functionality, adaptability and inclusivity of social infrastructure for the purpose of social cohesion.



RSES Healthy Placemaking Strategy Graphic

In relation to the provision of recreation and open space facilities, the RSES includes objectives focusing on the adequate provision of a variety of facilities and support for national sport and physical activity policies. Included in this section are guiding principles in planning for recreation and open space, which recommend the co-location of services between sports providers, education, and other facilities to maximise use; the integration of play provision and child-friendly neighbourhoods; and the provision of dedicated youth spaces in key urban areas and the development of multi-function spaces in smaller communities/rural areas.

Section 9.6 'Access to Childcare, Education and Health Services' states that there is currently a 'misalignment' in the Region across school provision, facilities and child friendly amenities and further states that it is through county development plan/local area plan policy that provision will be made on the location of new school facilities, in co-ordination with the Department of Education

Though Chapter 8 is not directly related to social infrastructure policy, Section 8.3 'Framework for the Integration of Transport Planning with Spatial Planning Policies' includes the following guiding principal of relevance; 'Support the '10 minute' settlement concept, whereby a range of community facilities and services are accessible in short walking and cycling timeframes from homes or accessible by high quality public transport to these services in larger settlements.'

1.4 County & Local Policy Context

Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028

Chapter 7 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 covers social and community development. This chapter sets out the Community Facilities Hierarchy Model for the county, which outlines the social and community facilities that are considered appropriate for settlements of varying sizes, as represented by four levels:

COMMUNITY FACILITIES HIERARCHY MODEL	
LEVEL 1 – SETTLEMENTS WITH POPULATION RANGE 15,000 – 30,000	
Multi-purpose Community Resource Centre Regional and Local Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities Swimming Pool/Leisure Centre Youth Centre Athletics Track and Field Facilities Arts and Cultural Centre Local Multi-Purpose Community Space/Meeting rooms	Outdoor Water Sports Facilities (where applicable) Neighbourhood Parks and Local Parks Outdoor (full size) Multi-Use Games Areas – Synthetic/ Hardcourt Playground(s) Playing Pitches Alternative/Minority Sports Facilities Open Space/Urban Woodlands/Nature Areas Library
<i>Acceptable rural catchment commuting time by car: 30 min</i>	
LEVEL 2 – SETTLEMENTS WITH POPULATION RANGE 7,000 – 15,000	
Multi-purpose Community Resource Centre Sport & Recreation Centre Swimming Pool/Leisure Centre Youth Resource Centre Local Multi-Purpose Community Space/Meeting Rooms Outdoor Water Sports Facilities (where applicable) Neighbourhood and Local Parks	Outdoor Multi-Use Games Areas – Synthetic/ Hardcourt Playground(s) Playing Pitches Alternative/Minority Sports Facilities Open Space/Urban Woodlands/Nature Areas Library Arts and Cultural Centre
<i>Acceptable rural catchment time by car: 15 mins</i>	
LEVEL 3 – SETTLEMENTS WITH POPULATION RANGE 2,000 – 7,000	
Community/Parish Hall Multi-purpose Community Space/Meeting Rooms Local /Town Park (s) and Open Spaces/Nature Areas Outdoor Multi-Use Games Area – Synthetic/ Hardcourt	Playgrounds Playing Pitches Library
<i>Acceptable rural catchment commuting time by car: 10-15 mins</i>	
LEVEL 4 – SETTLEMENTS WITH POPULATION RANGE < 2,000	
Community/Parish Hall Open Spaces/Play Areas	Outdoor Multi-Use Games Area – Synthetic/ Hardcourt Playing Pitches
<i>Acceptable rural catchment commuting time by car: 5-10 mins</i>	

Table 1.1 ; Community Facilities Hierarchy Model

There are a number of objectives set out in the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 in relation to social infrastructure. There are general objectives on community development, with **CPO 7.2** stating that *'During the local plan-making process for towns and villages, to seek to facilitate community development and socially inclusive communities, through proper land-use zoning and transportation planning, phasing and the setting out of high standards of design in both streets and buildings.'*

In addition, **CPO 7.5** addresses the need for a Social Infrastructure Audit to be carried out for certain housing development applications;

*"Housing development shall be managed and phased to ensure that infrastructure is adequate or is being provided to match the needs of new residents'. New significant residential or mixed use development proposals (of which residential development forms a component)³, shall be required to be accompanied by a **Social Infrastructure Audit**, to determine if social and community facilities in the area are sufficient to provide for the needs of the future residents. Where deficiencies are identified, proposals will be required to either rectify the deficiency, or suitably restrict or phase the development in accordance with the capacity of existing or planned services.*

*New significant residential or mixed use development proposals shall be required to be accompanied by a **'Accessibility Report'** that demonstrates that new residents / occupants / employees (including children and those with special mobility needs) will be able to safely access through means **other than** the private car*

- (a) local services including shops, schools, health care and recreational and sports facilities, and*
- (b) public transport services.*

Where deficiencies are identified, proposals will be required to either rectify the deficiency, or suitably restrict or phase the development in accordance with the capacity/quality of existing or planned linkages".

There are a number of specific objectives in relation to education and development in Chapter 7 that mainly focus on the zoning of suitable sites for schools.

This chapter also covers objectives on 'Health and Care', 'Residential & Day Care' developments, 'Childcare & Preschool', 'Leisure & Recreation', 'Open Space', Arts & Culture' and 'Social Enterprise'.

Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 - Development and Design Standards

Appendix 1 of the County Development Plan sets out Development and Design Standards in relation to social and community developments. Section 7 sets out the criteria for the requirement of a 'Social Infrastructure Audit' as well as childcare, education, nursing homes, care facilities and retirements villages. Section 8 sets out the development and design standards for Open Space. This includes active open space, neighbourhood parks, equipped play spaces, allotments, residential public open space and private open space

Wicklow Local Economic and Community Plan LECP

The Wicklow Local Economic & Community Plan 2024 is a six-year plan setting out measures necessary to promote and support community and economic development within the county. The LECP is not a land use plan. However, where any of the aims or objectives within the LECP have a spatial component, it may be necessary to integrate and facilitate such spatial components into Local Area Plans.

Those objectives within the LECP related to social infrastructure in Wicklow Town - Rathnew, and which have some degree of a spatial component that could be addressed in an LAP, are as follows:

- 1.4 Support protect and enhance biodiversity
- 1.5 Support the development of renewable energy opportunities
- 2.2 Promote sustainable tourism in the county having regard to environmental impact
- 2.6 Capitalise on natural resources such as the maritime economy ensuring nature-based solutions
- 3.1 Improve transport infrastructure in the county

- 3.2 Promote the development of sustainable transport infrastructure in the county
- 3.3 Support the roll out of quality broadband throughout the county
- 3.4 Increase facilities for remote working and co-working
- 5.1 Drive the environmental, economic and social regeneration of County Wicklow's towns and villages and their hinterlands
- 5.3 Support the provision of community, sport and recreational infrastructure for communities

County Wicklow Sports and Recreation Policy 2004. – (Section 4.1.3. Planning)

The Sports and Recreation Policy recognises the importance that sport and recreation contributes to the quality of life of individuals, communities and the county as a whole. This is the overarching policy document that guides Wicklow County Council in the provision and expansion of sport and recreation opportunities throughout the County.

Social infrastructure standards, as included within this policy document, include the following:

- 1.1 *'The Council will ensure where possible that proper provision of sport and recreation facilities is provided as part of new developments. As a guideline, the Council will in future aim to make provision for an average of 200m² multi-use community space per 1000 population, or where an identified need exists, which includes provision for sports and recreation activity.'*
- 1.2 *'The Council will provide for open space including provision for sport and recreation according to the minimum provision of 2.0Ha. per 1,000 population under Action 41 of Sustainable Communities in 'Outlook'.'*
- 1.3 *'The Council will ensure that within all Local Area Plans (LAPs) appropriate and sufficient land is clearly identified for amenity and sporting and recreation uses and provide protection for open space that is or has the potential to be of value to the community.'*
- 1.5 *'The Council will promote accessibility by locating local facilities within walking distance, cycling distance or on public transport routes and having regard to issues of security and personal safety'.*
- 1.6 *'The Council will seek to ensure that open spaces and recreation areas are located, designed and maintained so as to minimise the risk of crime and vandalism by: • Clustering facilities • Locating facilities in places which are overlooked, providing indirect supervision • Providing teenage facilities such as shelters, seating areas and MUGA facilities⁹ in accordance with County Wicklow Play Policy open space standards.'*

County Wicklow Play Policy 2004

Objective 3 of the County Wicklow Play Policy relates to the provision of playgrounds. Within this objective, the following aims, involving either a quantitative standard or spatial component, may be of relevance to a land use plan:

- *'Aim to provide adequate and appropriate hierarchies of open spaces for play as recommended in National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) standards.'* [the 'Six Acre Standard', i.e. 2.4 hectares per 1,000 persons]
- *'Ensure play areas will include enough space for equipment and general open spaces for games, tree planning and environmental enhancements'.*
- *'This Policy will be incorporated within the County Development Plan, Local Area Plans'.*

Objective 5 of the County Wicklow Play Policy highlights the provision of social inclusion and play. This objective aims to promote equality of access and participation for all children by:

- *'Ensure consideration will be given to rural issues regarding play provision in measures such as mobile play units'.*
- *'Ensure consideration will be given to the needs of children with disabilities, from a minority ethnic background, or from a disadvantaged background'.*

- *'Ensure all children will be respected and valued so that they can play free from exploitation, bullying, violence or discrimination'.*

The play policy states the quantitative standards in relation to equipped and informal play space; these standards are integrated into the County Development Plan Development and Design Standards.

Wicklow Town - Rathnew Town Development Plan 2013-2019

The previous plan for the settlement of Wicklow Town – Rathnew had a chapter on Social Infrastructure. This chapter contained a number of objectives with regard community development, education, residential and day care, childcare, children's play facilities, facilities for teenagers and young adults, Community Centres, Sport Facilities, Places of Worship and Burial, Open Space and Harbour Leisure Uses. The land use development objectives including the zoning provisions provide support, including adequate zoned undeveloped land, for the provision of new social and community facilities and infrastructure'.

Healthy Wicklow 2018

Wicklow County Council produced the 'Healthy Wicklow' strategy in line with the 'National Activity Plan' and the 'Healthy Ireland' framework. The document aims to assess the requirements and provides objectives with which to improve the overall health and well being of the people of Wicklow and is guided with the four following key goals:

- Goal 1 Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life
- Goal 2 Reduce health inequalities
- Goal 3 Protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing
- Goal 4 Create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland

Wicklow Age Friendly Strategy 2017

The Age-Friendly Strategy was developed with the aim of making Wicklow an age friendly County, a County in which all public service and private sector providers work in partnership to make Wicklow great. It gives commitments to improving infrastructure both physical and social as well as services and information provision to improve the quality of life of older people across the County. The strategy aims, in combination with other Government and County programmes and plans, including the County Development Plan, to make Wicklow a County that is more accessible and accommodating to people as they grow older. The document seeks to address existing issues and improve the conditions for the ageing population in Wicklow under the following 9 themes:

- Theme 1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Theme 2 Transportation
- Theme 3 Housing
- Theme 4 Social Participation
- Theme 5 Respect and Social Inclusion
- Theme 6 Civic Participation and Employment
- Theme 7 Communication and Information
- Theme 8 Community Support and Health Services
- Theme 9 Safety and Security

The policies and objectives contained in this chapter have been prepared with the aspirations and goals of these documents in mind.

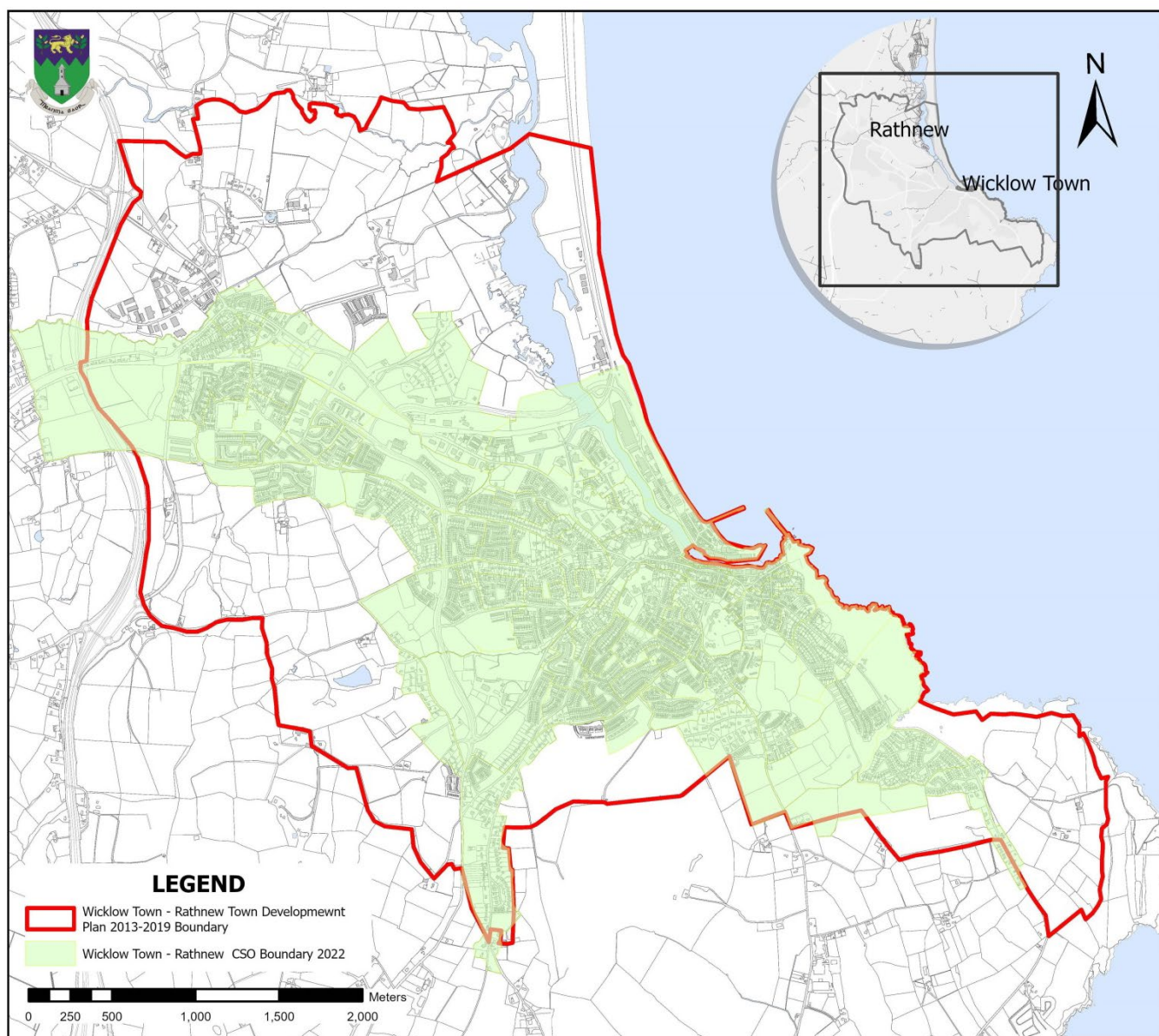
Wicklow Children and Young People Plan 2020

Wicklow Children and Young People's Services Committee [CYPSC] was formally established in April 2011. The purpose of the Children and Young People's Services Committees is to secure better outcomes for children and young people through more effective co-operation and collaboration by existing services and through interventions at local level. Between 2011 and to date, two action plans have been developed and implemented to address local needs as consistent with the national outcomes framework. The Wicklow CYPSC 2020 Plan will continue to progress necessary work to meet ongoing and emerging needs.

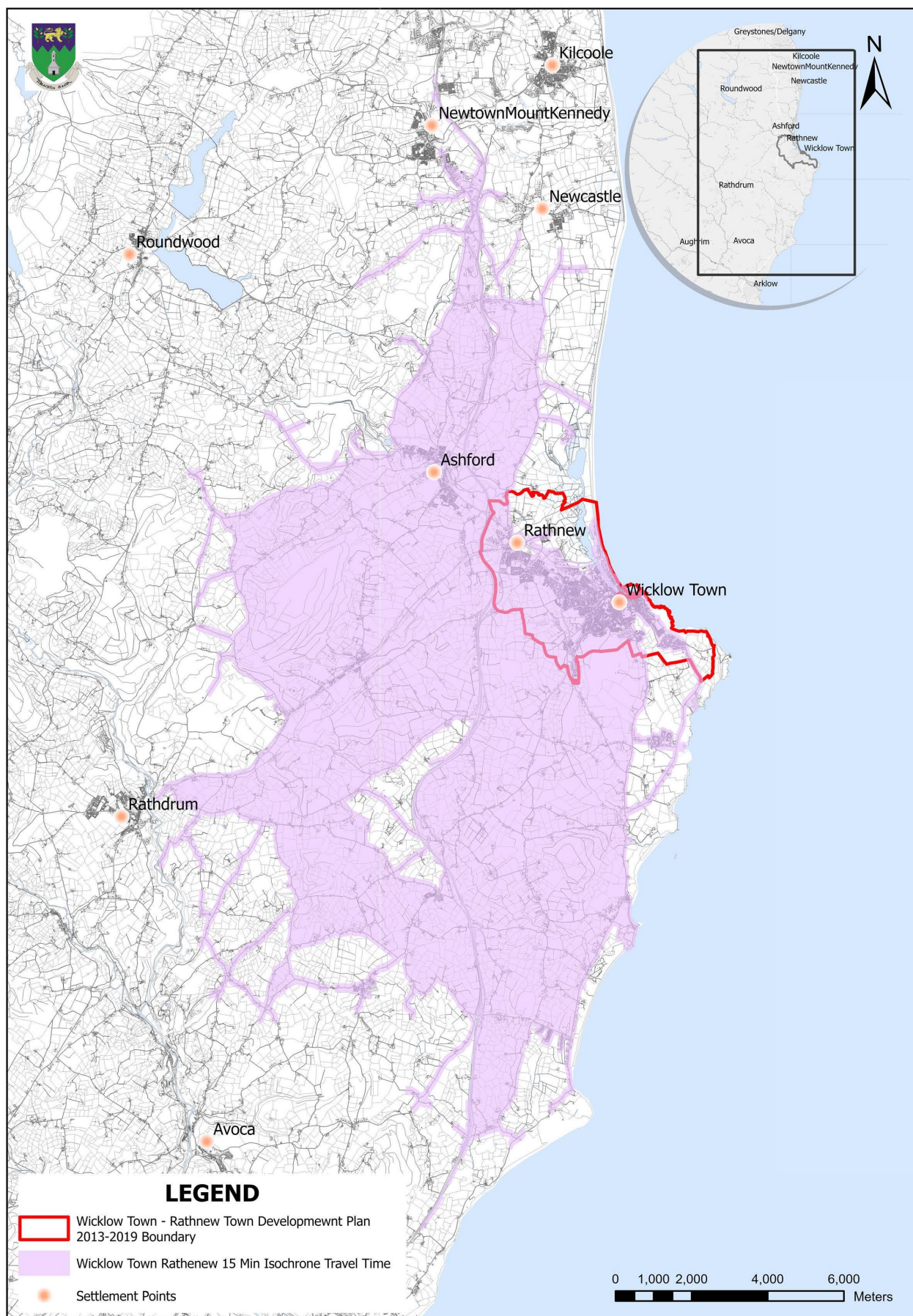
CYPSC's work towards the five national outcomes for children and young people in Ireland. These are that children and young people

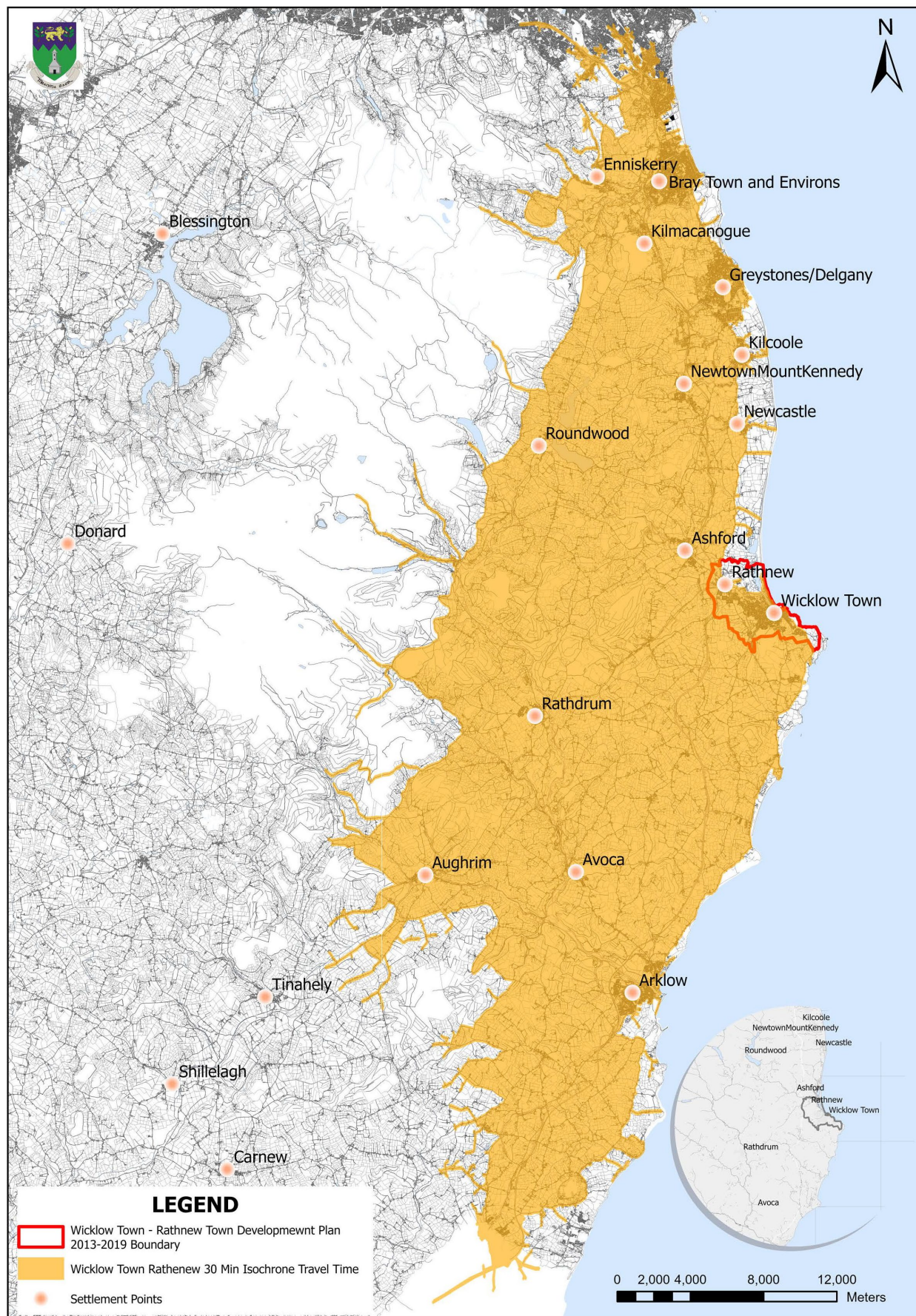
1. Are active and healthy, with positive physical and mental wellbeing
2. Are achieving full potential in all areas of learning and development
3. Are safe and protected from harm
4. Have economic security and opportunity
5. Are connected, respected and contributing to their world

The CYPP presents a coordinated interagency approach to the delivery of services to children and young people in Wicklow by all agencies in Wicklow. It reflects the priorities that have been identified from an analysis of the needs in the County and a commitment by members to address these needs over the three years of the plan. The voice of children and young people is represented and the CYPSC is committed to strengthening participation with children and young people further during the lifetime of this plan.



Map 1 - Administrative / Census boundaries within the Wicklow Town - Rathnew Area





PART 2 EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEMAND FORECAST ANALYSIS

2.0 Demographic Overview of Wicklow Town - Rathnew

Location

Wicklow Town – Rathnew is located on the east coast of Ireland at the mouth of the Leitrim River, which flows southwards from the scenic Broadlough estuary, and is on the main rail and road transport corridor to Dublin and Wexford / Waterford respectively. Neighbouring towns and villages include Newcastle, Newtownmountkennedy, Roundwood, Ashford, Barndarrig and Rathdrum.

Population and Administrative Boundaries

The 2022 Census enumerated a population of 16,439 persons in Wicklow Town – Rathnew, an increase of 2,485 persons from the 2016 Census (13,954).

As set out in the Core Strategy of the Wicklow County Development Plan, the population target for Wicklow Town – Rathnew up to Q2 2028 is 18,515 and up to 2031 is 19,400 which would require a new housing growth between 2016 and 2031 of 2,392 housing units.

It is important to note in recent years that there has been and is currently a considerable amount of new residential development being built in Wicklow Town – Rathnew. It is likely that through planning permissions for residential development that are both currently under construction and permissions that have not commenced yet, the 2031 population target will be fulfilled well before that date.

The 2031 population target of 19,400 will however be used in demand forecast analysis within the settlement.

Catchment

Wicklow Town caters for a large catchment from the surrounding rural villages and areas. For the purposes of this audit, the Electoral Division of Wicklow Urban, Wicklow Rural, Glenealy, Dunganstown East, West and South, Ballycullen, Moneystown, Killiskey are included in the catchment. This gives a settlement and catchment population of 24,886 persons in 2022. There is no 2031 target population for the catchment, however having regard to the target population of 19,400 for the settlement, there will be a minimum target of 27,300 persons for the settlement and catchment.

Household Size

The average household size in County Wicklow in the 2022 Census was 2.84 persons per household. This is slightly above the national average of 2.74 people. The predominant household size in the 'Wicklow Urban' Electoral Division area is 2 people and 4 people is the predominant household size in the 'Wicklow Rural' Electoral Division.

Age Profile

A review of the combined Wicklow Town and Rathnew Town age profile confirmed that the age profile weighted generally towards a younger and middle aged population. The settlements population is dominated by children aged 0 – 19 years and by people in the working age group (30 – 59 years).

Age Range	CSO Population 2022	% of Total 2022
0-9	2268	13.7%
10-19	2529	15.3%
20-29	1565	9.5%
30-39	2307	14%
40-49	2669	16.2%
50-59	2226	13.5%
60-69	1502	9.1%
70+	1373	8.3%

Table 2.1: Age structure within the Wicklow Town - Rathnew LAP area in 2022

2.1 Community Profile – Existing Infrastructure

Existing Infrastructure

Chapter 7 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022 - 2028 sets out the Community Facilities Hierarchy Model for the county, which sets out the social and community facilities that are considered necessary in settlements of varying sizes, as represented by four levels.

Having regard to the CSO population of 16,439 persons in 2022, the population target and the fact that Wicklow is the county town, it would have a larger catchment of persons travelling to the town from the nearby countryside and local villages for services; Wicklow Town - Rathnew would fall into Level 1 of the Community Facilities Hierarchy Model (Level 1 - 'Settlements with population range 15,000-30,000'). On this basis, Wicklow Town - Rathnew would ideally require the facilities listed here in Table 2.3 :

COMMUNITY FACILITIES HIERARCHY MODEL	
LEVEL 1 – SETTLEMENTS WITH POPULATION RANGE 15,000 – 30,000	
Multi-purpose Community Resource Centre Regional and Local Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities Swimming Pool/Leisure Centre Youth Centre Athletics Track and Field Facilities Arts and Cultural Centre Local Multi-Purpose Community Space/Meeting rooms	Outdoor Water Sports Facilities (where applicable) Neighbourhood Parks and Local Parks Outdoor (full size) Multi-Use Games Areas – Synthetic/Hardcourt Playground(s) Playing Pitches Alternative/Minority Sports Facilities Open Space/Urban Woodlands/Nature Areas Library
Acceptable rural catchment commuting time by car: 30 min	

Table 2.3 Extract of Community Facilities Hierarchy Model

Community Facility Hierarchy Level 1	Existing Community Facilities
Multi-purpose Community Resource Centre	St Brigid's Community Hall, Rathnew. Assembly Hall, Wicklow Town. Parochial Hall, Wicklow Town
Regional and Local Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities	Kidzone Wicklow Town Spotlight Studios, Wicklow Town
Swimming Pool/Leisure Centre	Coral Leisure Wicklow Town
Youth Centre	The Parochial Hall, Wicklow Town
Athletics Track and Field Facilities	No athletics track and field facilities
Arts and Cultural Centre	Wicklow Gaol, Wicklow Town Wicklow Library, Wicklow Town
Local Multi-Purpose Community Space/Meeting rooms	Hillview Community Centre, Wicklow Town
Outdoor Water Sports Facilities (where applicable)	Multiple clubs operate from Wicklow Town sea front (e.g. sailing, kayaking, swimming, sub aqua)
Neighbourhood Parks and Local Parks	Murrough skate park / outdoor gym / dog park Wicklow Town
Outdoor (full size) Multi-Use Games Areas – Synthetic/Hardcourt	Wicklow hockey club
Playground(s)	Ballynerrin Playground Wicklow Town, Rathnew Playground, The Murrough Playground
Playing Pitches	Wicklow Rugby Ground, Ashtown Lane St Patrick's GAA Club, Wicklow Town, Wicklow Town AFC, Finley Park, Wicklow Town Wicklow Rovers AFC, Wicklow Town Wicklow Rovers AFC Rocky Road Pitch Hockey Pitches (East Glendalough School, Dominican Convent Wicklow), Rathnew AFC ground, Rathnew GAA ground, Wicklow Golf Club, Wicklow Tennis Club
Alternative/Minority Sports Facilities	FYI Dance Club, Wicklow Town Wicklow school of Dance, Wicklow & Rathnew Polo Wicklow, Wicklow Town Wicklow Hand Ball Alley
Open Space/Urban Woodlands/Nature Areas	The Murrough (including Murrough dog park), Black Castle, Wicklow Outdoor Gym, Abbey grounds, Wicklow Head.
Library	Wicklow Library
Acceptable rural catchment commuting time by car: 30 min	

Table 2.4 Existing Community Facilities in Wicklow Town – Rathnew.

DISCLAIMER NOTE – This list presents an example of the facilities within the settlement and is not an exhaustive list.

The listing of existing infrastructure in the above table does not infer that further facilities of that type are not warranted, merely that a facility of each type is represented in Wicklow Town - Rathnew.

2.2 Education & Training

Facilities and services analysed under this section focus on both primary and secondary schools, with details of third level education facilities available within the settlement and other relevant training or evening courses available in the settlement.

The following analysis of current and projected education need is prepared in accordance with advice received from the Department of Education, which calculates the extent of primary and secondary need, based on the following assumptions:

- 12% of the population at any given time is of primary school going age.
- 8.5% of the population at any given time is of secondary school going age.

Census 2022 indicates a total population of 16,439 in Wicklow Town - Rathnew. Therefore school demand for the settlement in 2022 was:

- 1,972 primary school pupils (12%)
- 1,397 secondary school pupils (8.5%)

Detailed demographic breakdown from Census 2022 is not available as yet to determine the actual number of children in the 5-12 and 13-18 cohorts.

Primary and post primary schools in Wicklow Town – Rathnew have a wider rural catchment with the following pupils enrolled in 2024:

- 2,039 primary school pupils
- 2,067 secondary school pupils

The total population of the settlement in 2024 is not available, therefore it is not possible to calculate the accurate percentage of school going children, however it is clear that the schools, especially the post primary schools in the settlement cater for higher than the average 8.5% of the settlements population. There are a number of primary schools in the surrounding villages (Brittas Bay, Barndarrig, Glenealy, Ashford, Nun's Cross, Moneystown and Newcastle), however the surrounding post primary schools are only located in Kilcoole, Rathdrum and Arklow, hence the higher number of enrolments in secondary schools within Wicklow Town – Rathnew.

Taking into account the wider rural areas with a total 2022 population of 24,886², secondary school demand would of been in the order of:

- 2,115 secondary school pupils.

Therefore of the pupils attending secondary school, 33% are from the wider rural catchment.

The Core Strategy has a target population of 19,400 persons for Wicklow Town – Rathnew, therefore the school demand for the settlement in 2031 would be as follows:

- 2,328 primary school pupils (12%)
- 1,649 secondary school pupils (8.5%)

However, having regard to the wider rural catchment of pupils for secondary schools in Wicklow Town - Rathnew that are from outside the settlement (33%), it is necessary to accommodate a higher secondary school demand.

Primary Schools

Five of the seven primary schools within the settlement are located within Wicklow Town and two primary school are located close to Rathnew. The geographical location of primary schools is close to / within existing

² This includes the Electoral Divisions of Wicklow Urban, Wicklow Rural, Glenealy, Dunganstown, Ballycullen, Moneystown, Killiskey.

and new residential neighbourhoods (defined by the land-use zoning objectives of the 2013 Development Plan) and the location of these schools are illustrated in Map 5 (Greystones and Delgany) below.

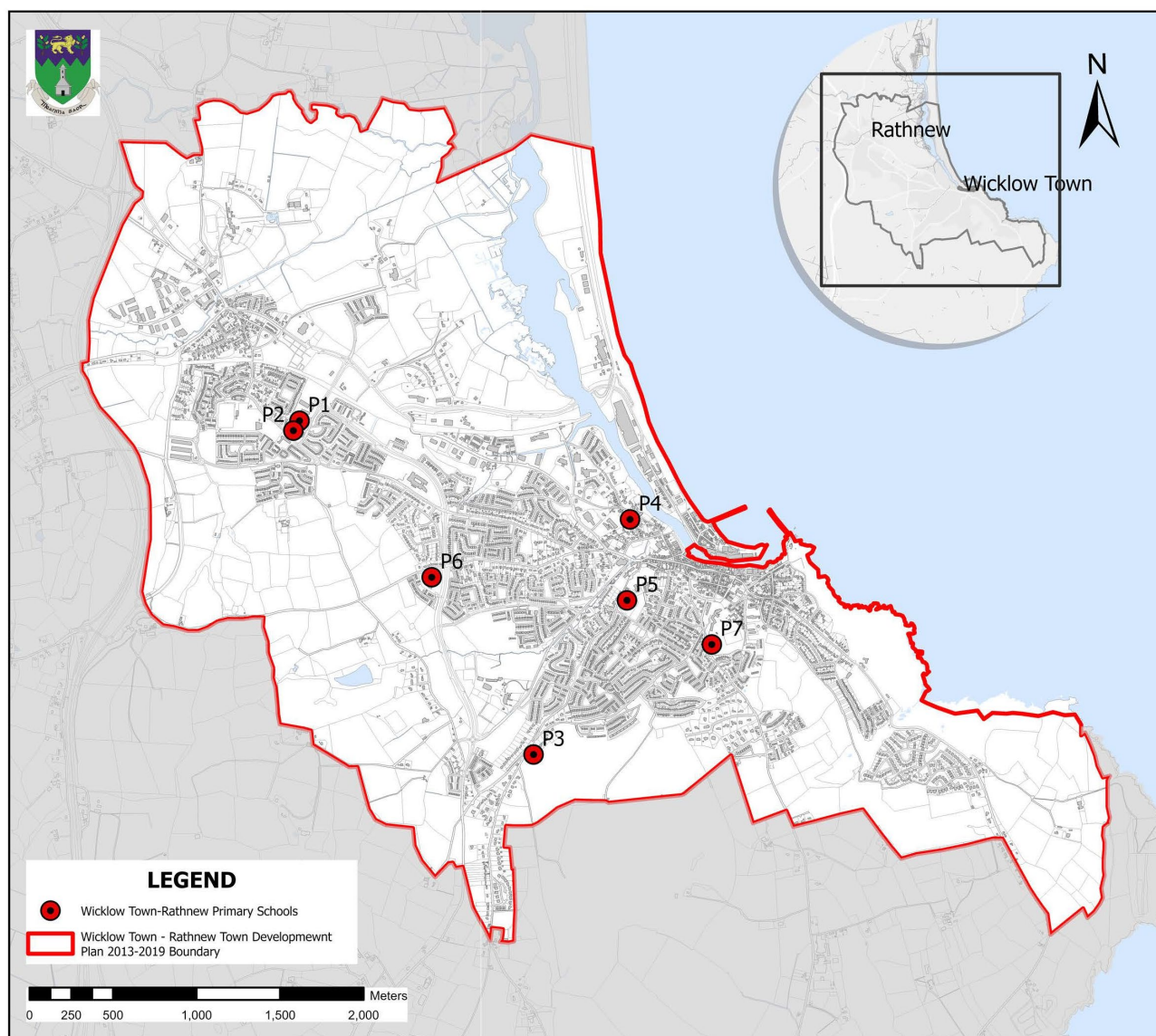
A capacity audit of the primary schools is presented in the table below

Map Ref	Name	Capacity	Enrolled	Operating Level	Places Available	Area Hectares
P1	Gaelscoil Chill Mhantain	280	240	85.71%	40	1.1
P2	St Coens Primary School	319	318	99.58%	1	2.1
P3	Wicklow Montessori Primary School	100	88	88%	11	6
P4	Glebe National School	214	212	99%	2	5.1
P5	St.Patrick National School	358	358	100%	0	4.8
P6	Wicklow Educate Together National School	389	389	100%	0	3.6
P7	Holy Rosary School Wicklow Town	434	434	100%	0	5.5
	Total	2094	2039	96.04%	54	28.2

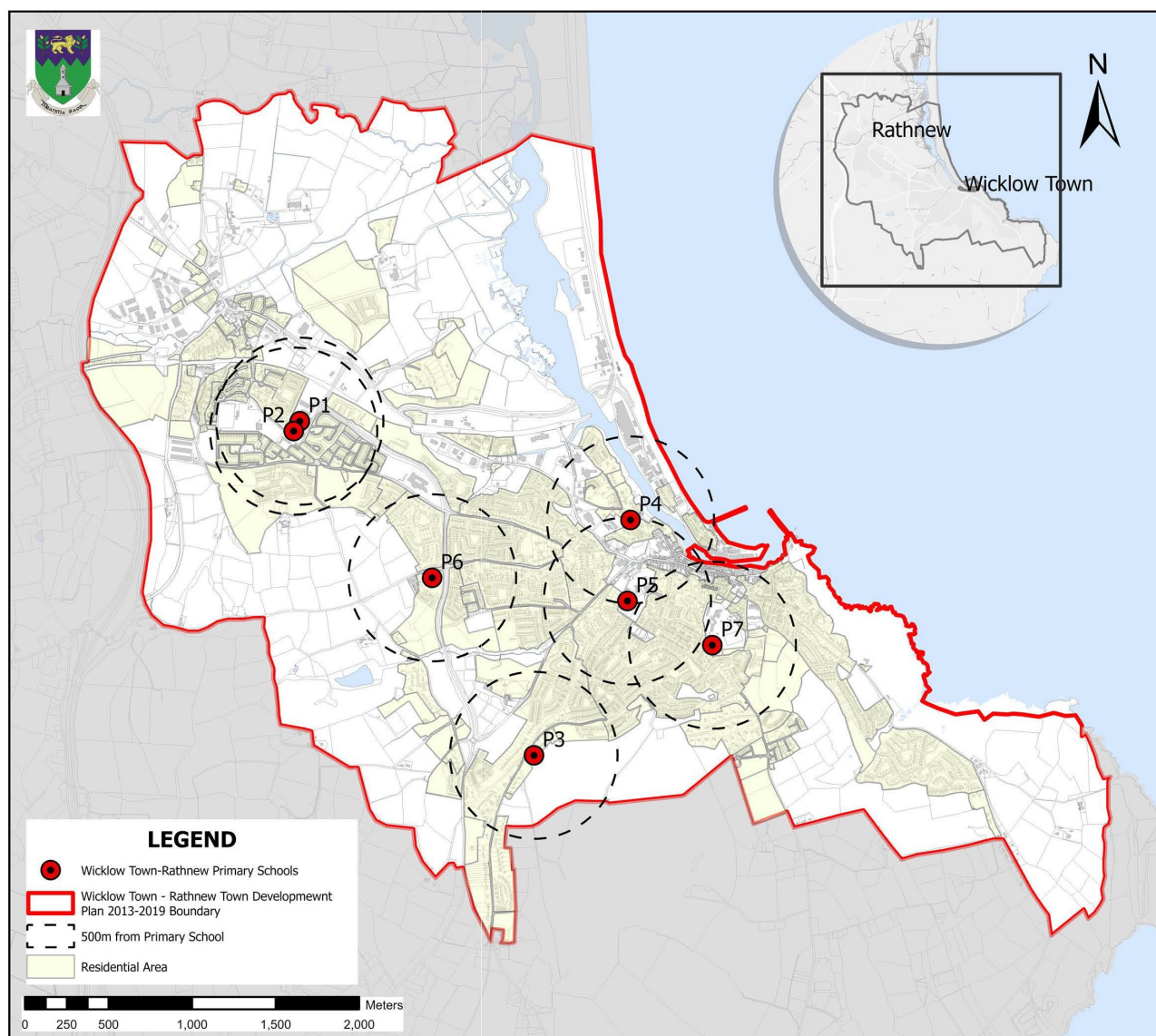
Table 2.5 Capacity of Primary Schools 2023 / 2024

Source: Schooldays.ie and direct consultation with schools.

The table above illustrates the total enrolment in existing primary schools in Wicklow Town – Rathnew. Direct consultation with each school confirmed that the primary school infrastructure can accommodate an additional 54 children. There is capacity for 2,094 pupils spaces available in the seven primary schools for the 2023/2024 academic year. The locations of these schools are shown in the map below:



Map 4 - Primary Schools in Wicklow Town – Rathnew area



Map 5 - Residential Zones (as per the Wicklow Town – Rathnew LAP 2013-2019) within 500m of a Primary School.

Primary Schools Synopsis / Demand Analysis

Guidance from the Department of Education indicates that 12% of a population would be in need of primary schooling at any one time. It is estimated that there will be 2,328 children attending primary school from the settlement of Wicklow Town - Rathnew in 2031.

Baseline Study Population	12% requiring primary education	Forecast Study Population	12% requiring primary education
16,439 persons (CSO 2022)	1,972 pupils (12%)	19,400 persons	2,328 pupils (12%)
	2,089 pupils enrolled (2024)		

Table 2.6 Primary School Demand

There is currently 2,164 primary school places within the primary schools in the settlement, hence it can cater for the current demand, however in order to ensure the demand in 2031 can be accommodated there may be the need for additional primary school places in the future.

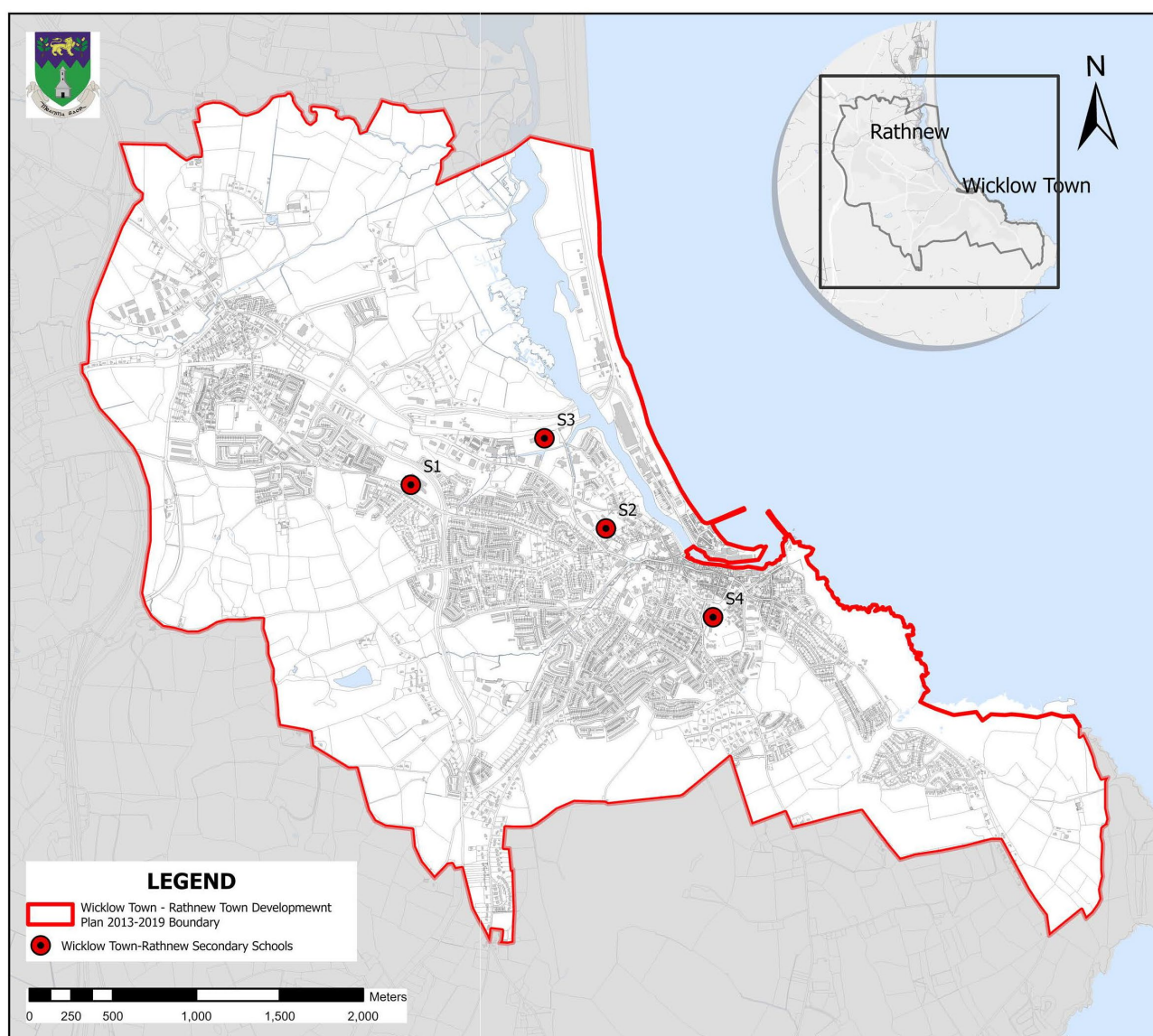
Capacity of Secondary School Facilities

The table below details the existing post primary schools and the enrolment figures within the catchment area. There are 4 secondary schools within the Wicklow Town - Rathnew area.

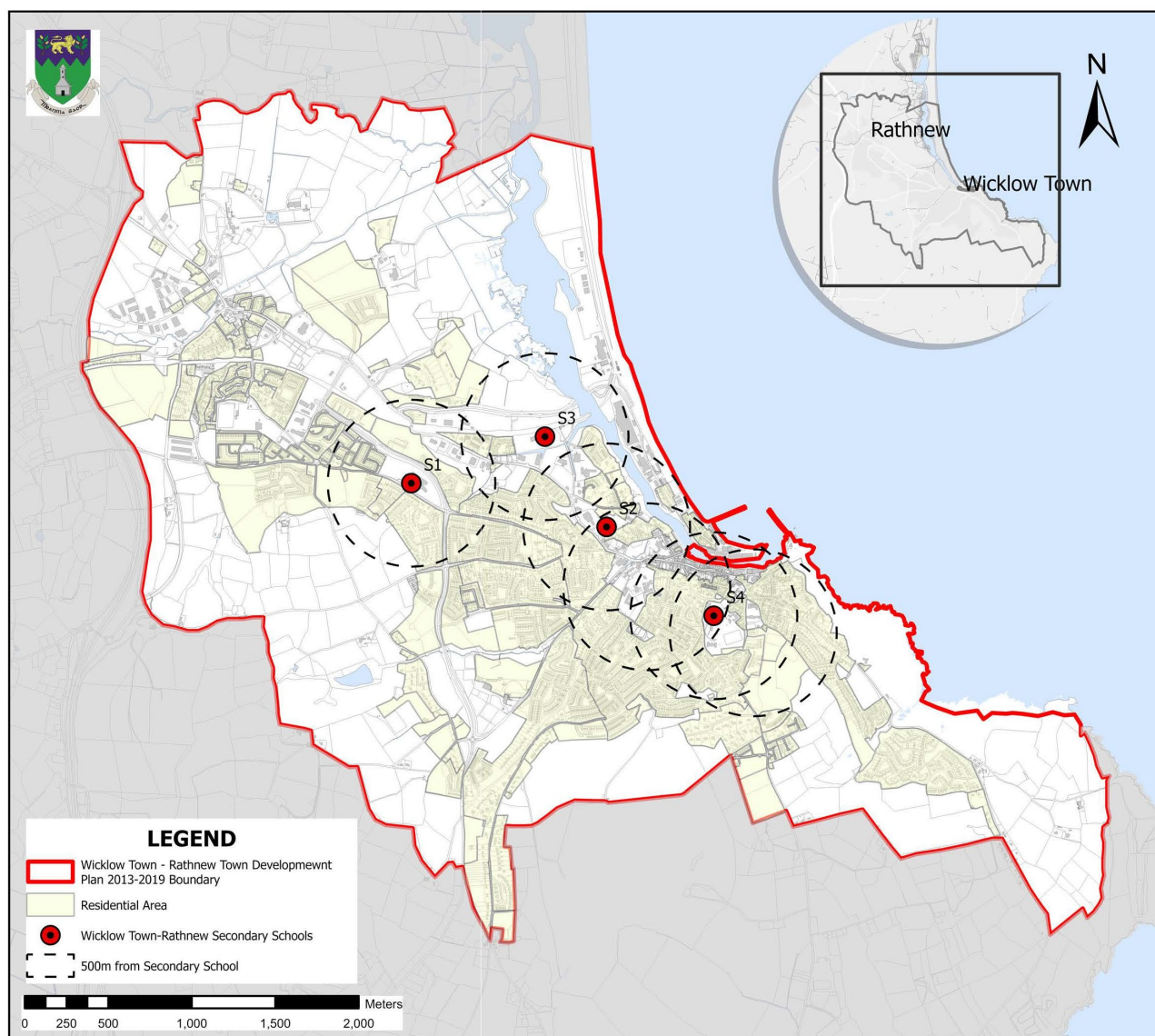
Map Ref	Name	Capacity	Enrolled	Operating Level	Area Hectares
S1	Colaiste Chill Mhantain Burkeen,	1000	912	91.2%	6.7
S2	Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School, Bollarney	303	303	100%	1.5
S3	East Glendalough School	364	364	100%	2.8
S4	Dominican College Wicklow	488	488	100%	5
	Total	2,155	2,067		

Table 2.7 Capacity of Secondary Schools 2023 / 2024

Source: Schooldays.ie and direct consultation with schools.



Map 6 - Secondary Schools in Wicklow Town – Rathnew area



Map 7 - Residential Zones (as per the Wicklow Town – Rathnew LAP 2013-2019) within 500m of a Secondary School.

Post Primary Schools Synopsis / Demand Analysis

Guidance from the Department of Education indicates that 8.5% of a population would be in need of post primary schooling at any one time. It is estimated that there will be 1,649 children attending post primary school from the settlement of Wicklow Town Rathnew in 2031. Notably, 2,067 pupils are enrolled in 2024 in the post primary schools within the settlement area.

Baseline Population	Study	8.5% requiring primary education	Forecast Population	Study	8.5% requiring primary education
16,439 persons, CSO 2022		1,397 pupils	19,400 persons		1,649 pupils (8.5%)
2024		2,067 pupils enrolled (2024)			

Table 2.8 Post Primary School Demand

There is currently 2,155 post primary school places within the secondary schools in the settlement, therefore the demand for places within the settlement in 2031 can be catered for, however given the large rural

catchment Wicklow town has and the higher enrolment figures (33% extra pupils from the rural area), there is a need for additional post primary school places/school in the future.

Third Level Education & Training Services

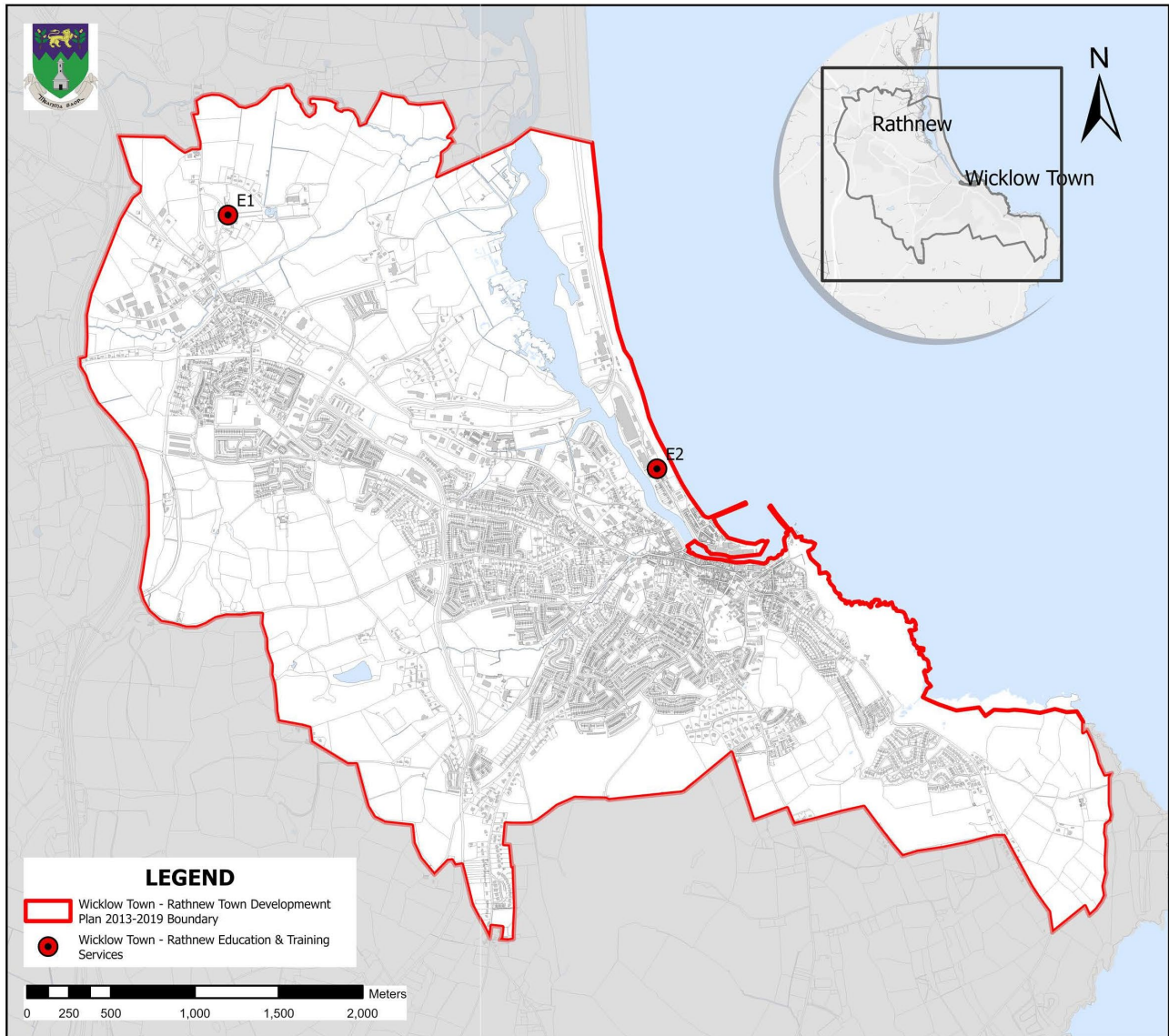
There are 3 Third Level Education & Training Services facilities within the Wicklow Town - Rathnew area. Table 2.9 below outlines the type of facility and type of courses available.

Map Ref	Name	Description of Courses	Level of Attainment
E1	Kildare Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB) Marine House, Wicklow Town	Full time and part time course in hospitality, sustainability.	QQI accredited courses levels 3-6
	Youth Reach, Kildare Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB) Marine House, Wicklow Town	Full time and part time course in Further Education & Training Centre	Level 3 - 6, Adult basic education
E2	South East Technology University, (SETU) Clermont House, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow	Part-time courses in the areas of Humanities, Business & Accounting, Engineering, PR & Media as well as postgraduate courses.	NFQ accredited courses levels 6-9

Table 2.9 Third Level Education & Training Services

Other Educational Facilities

Exam Focus Ireland, also provides extra study resources at 3 Wentworth Place, Wicklow Town.



Map 8 - Education & Training Services in Wicklow Town – Rathnew area

Demand Forecast Analysis for Education Facilities

The provision of primary and secondary school facilities in Ireland is determined on an area specific basis by the DoEd, having regard to available school capacity, demographic projections, an analysis of child benefit records, and local travel pattern modelling.

In accordance with objectives CPO 7.10, CPO 7.11 and CPO 7.12 of the County Development Plan, the Local Area Plan should zone a number of sites within the plan area for 'Community and Education' that have the potential for the future provision of primary and post primary schools.

The DoEd is monitoring the demand for and provision of schools in the LAP area on an ongoing basis and WCC will continue to consult and liaise with the DoEd in this regard.

Wicklow Town – Rathnew Local Area Plan

The following undeveloped / brownfield lands have been zoned Community and Education (CE) for the potential development of new schools within the settlement in the future, and should be specifically reserved

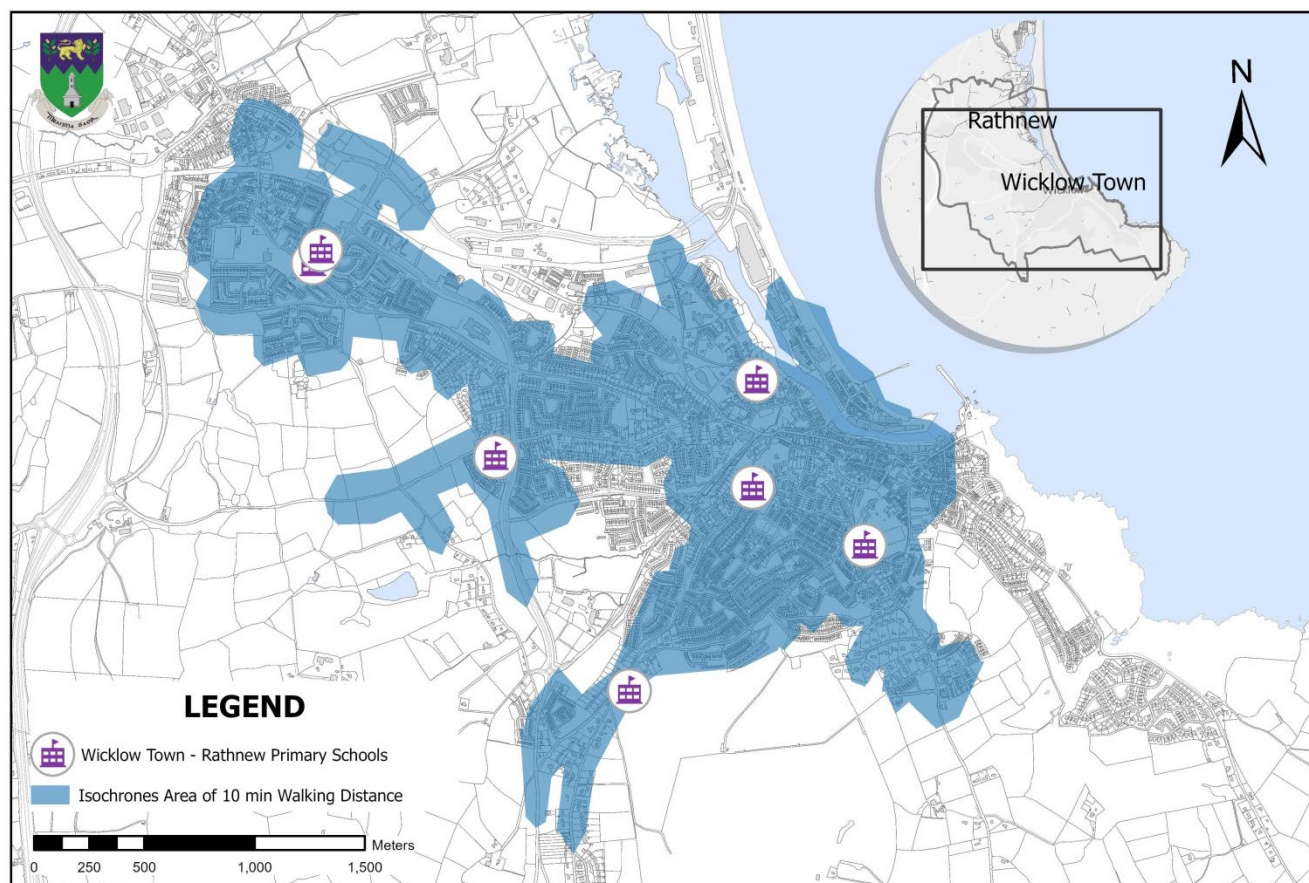
in the plan for school, development only. There are further smaller undeveloped/brownfield CE zonings within the settlement that may be suitable but are considered less optimal but could also accommodate a new school site if needed. Given the need to provide schools in the future within the built up area, schools are open for consideration in all land use zones that facilitate development.

School Site Selection

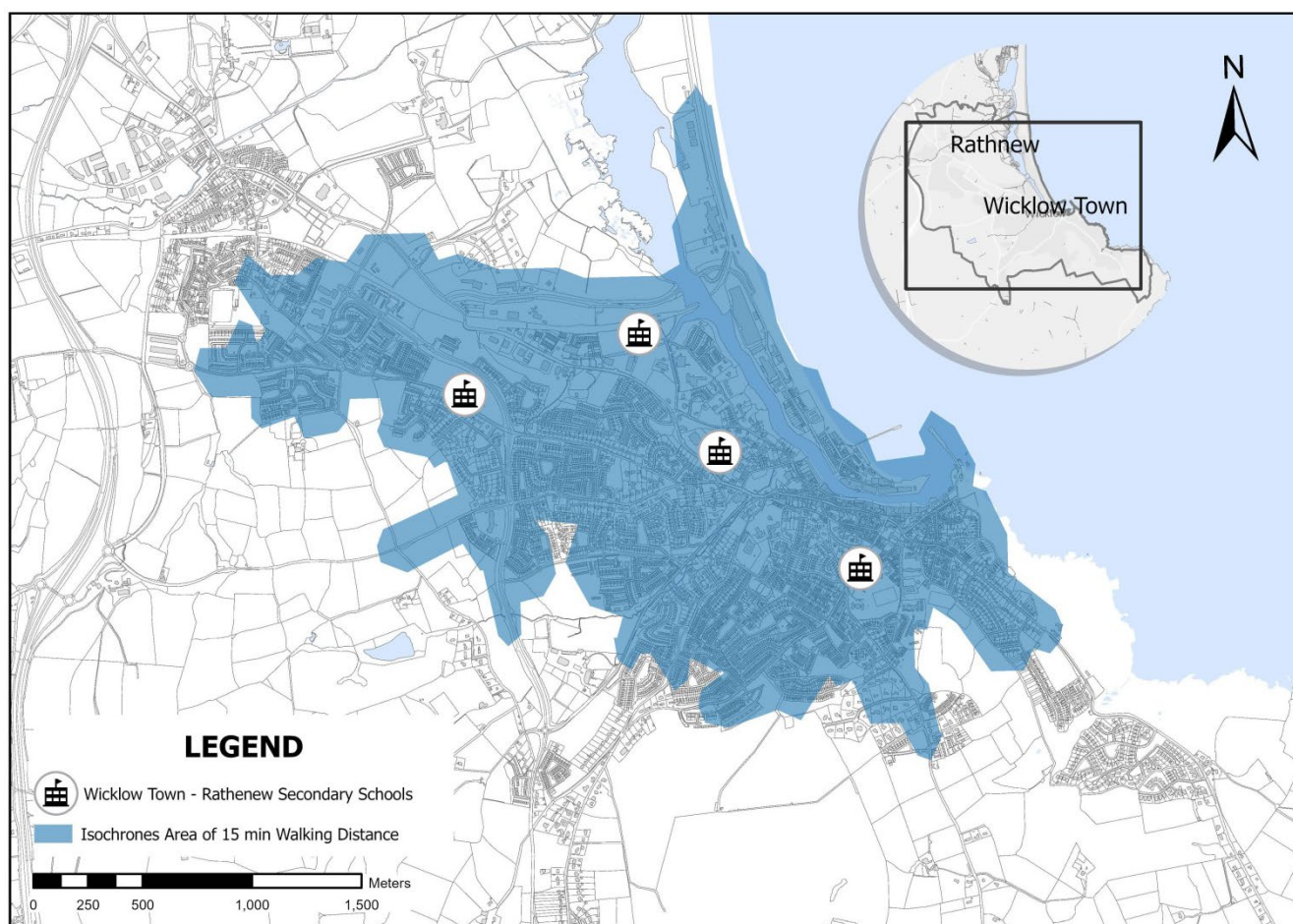
These 3 sites at Ballynerrin, Ballybeg and Rosanna have been selected following a detailed Transport Assessment. The following 2 maps present the areas that are within 15 minutes walking distance from the existing primary and secondary schools respectively. It is clear that there is a need for a primary / secondary school to the north east of Rathnew village (Rosanna) and to the south west of Wicklow Town (Ballynerrin). With regard to secondary schools it is clear that there is a need for a site in Rathnew, hence the lands at Ballybeg have been zoned for a secondary school site.

Zoned Undeveloped Land for a School		
Location	Zoning	Area (ha)
Marlton Road, Ballynerrin Lower	Community & Education	3.5
Ballybeg, Rathnew	Community & Education	5
Rosanna Lower	Community & Education	2
Other CE zoned lands		
Location	Zoning	Area (ha)
East of Rathnew Graveyard	Community & Education	2.7
Fernhill House	Community & Education	1.7
Drumkay Road	Community & Education	1.1
Dominican Convent	Community & Education	23

Table 2.10 Zoned Undeveloped Land for Schools



Map 9: Primary School 15minute Walking Time Isochrone



Map 10: Post Primary School 15minute Walking Time Isochrone

2.3 Childcare

In the Wicklow Town - Rathnew area, within or immediately adjacent to the built-up area, the following childcare facilities are available.

Map Ref	Name	Capacity	Services
C1	A Place To Grow Montessori	11	Montessori, Pre-school, Sessional
C2	Ashvale Creche	61 / SAC 12	Full daycare, Part-time, School age childcare (SAC, Sessional
C3	Balloons Pre-School	22	Pre-school, Sessional
C4	Buttons Preschool	36	Pre-school, Sessional / Parochial Hall, Saint Patrick's Road, Wicklow A67VF77
C5	Dees Montessori	22	Pre-school, Sessional
C6	Jelly Tots Pre-School, 16 St Patrick's Ave, Wicklow	20	Pre-school, Sessional
C7	Forever Friends	22	Part-time Pre-school, Sessional
C8	Little Explorers, Wicklow Town	95 / SAC 19	Full daycare, Part-time, School age childcare, Sessional
C9	Little Harvard Childcare	55 / SAC 56	Pre-school, School age childcare, Sessional

C10	Little Harvard	104 (max 94 FDC) CCSP, ECCE, NCS	Full daycare, Part-time, Sessional
C11	Little Monkeys Playschool	22	Part-time, Pre-school, Sessional
C12	Little Rascals Montessori (115 Wicklow Heights, Wicklow Town)	22	Montessori, Pre-school, Sessional
C13	Little Rose Montessori (93 Rosehill, Wicklow Town)	6	Montessori, Pre-school, Sessional
C14	Naoinra Chill Mhantain	Sessional 42 / Part-time 36	Montessori, Naoinra, Part-time, Pre-school, Sessional
C15	Postman Pats	20	Pre-school, Sessional
C16	Rainbows Pre-school	22	Pre-school, Sessional
C17	Ray of Sunshine – Hazelbrook Rise	FDC 32 / SAC 80	Full daycare, School age childcare
C18	Ray of Sunshine After School Service	140	School age childcare
C19	Ray of Sunshine Merrymeeting	60	School age childcare
C20	Shepa Kids		School age childcare
C21	Teddys Preschool	18	Part-time
C22	The Cave Montessori	22	Pre-school, Sessional
C23	Treasures Montessori	6	Montessori, Pre-school, Sessional
C24	Wicklow Montessori School	22	Montessori, Pre-school, Sessional
	Little Dino's		Pre-school/ 10, Bayview Grange, Wicklow,
	SMARTies		Pre-school
	A Place To Grow Montessori	Small Early Education service, ECCE scheme and private spaces offered.	43 Marlton Demesne, Marlton Road, Wicklow Town

Table 2.11 Childcare Facilities within the Settlement

Name	Capacity	Services
Ashford Montessori School	24	Montessori, Pre-school, Sessional
Stepping Stones Montessori	22	Montessori, Pre-school, Sessional
Early Days Montessori School	44	Montessori, Pre-school, Sessional

Table 2.12 Facilities outside 2013 LAP Boundary

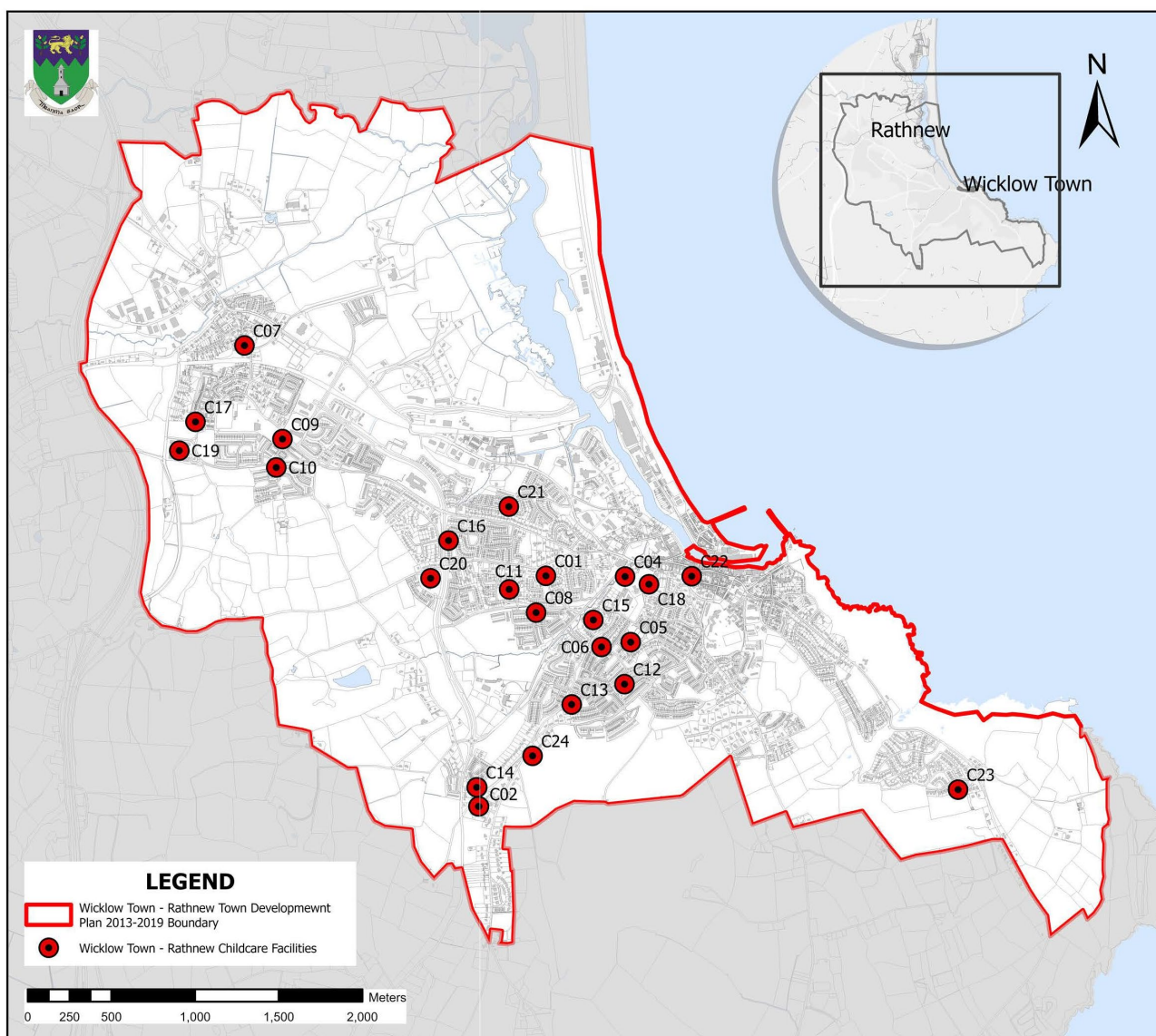
Name	Planning Ref.	Status
Broomhall Park Creche	19/853 & 22/590	Under construction
Brookfield Park	22 / 37	Permission granted
Burkeen Dales	22/3	Permission granted

Table 2.13 Extant Permission for Childcare Facilities / Constructed and Unoccupied / Under Construction

Demand Forecast Analysis for Childcare Facilities

Childcare facilities in Wicklow Town - Rathnew are at capacity with many operating waiting lists. The 'Childcare Facilities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001)' state that new housing development proposals may require a childcare facility to be also provided as part of the proposed development. The facility should provide for a minimum 20 childcare places per 75 dwellings. In line with objective CPO 7.5 of the WCDP a Social Infrastructure Audit would have to be carried out alongside any significant housing development planning application to determine the need / capacity of a childcare facility. It should be noted the Local Authority cannot control the type of childcare spaces (baby, toddler, pre-school) to be provided in each facility this is determined in terms of viability of a business for the end user. With respect to who is generally responsible for delivering childcare facilities, this is very much so developer led.

Having regard to the projected growth, the capacity and number of childcare facilities needs to be increased to meet demand. The location of these facilities should follow in new residential areas or at appropriate locations near schools.



Map 11 - The location of existing Childcare Facilities

2.4 Health (including elderly care)

The following health services, as shown on Table no. 2.14 are within Wicklow Town - Rathnew.

Name	Location	Service Provided
Wicklow Local Health Office	Glenside, Wicklow Town.	Civil Registration Service. Administration.
Wicklow Primary Healthcare Centre	Knockrobin, Rathnew,	Caredoc Primary Care Mental Health Hospital Satellite Physiotherapy Tusla St. Catherine's
Salem Medical Centre Wicklow Primary Healthcare Centre	Wicklow Primary Healthcare Centre, Knockrobin, Rathnew, Wicklow Town	GP x11
Sheeran Purcell General Practice	Wicklow Primary Healthcare Centre, Knockrobin, Rathnew, Wicklow Town	GP x7
Dr. Truls Christiansen	Wicklow Primary Healthcare Centre, Knockrobin, Rathnew, Wicklow Town	GP
The Village Practice Church Street Clinic	Church Street, Wicklow Town	GP x3
Oakwell Clinic	9 The Mall, Wicklow Town	GP x3
Westmount Clinic	Church Hill, Wicklow Town	GP x7
Wilton Clinic	Merrymeting Shopping Centre, Merrymeting, Rathnew, Wicklow	GP x3
Wicklow Cancer Support	Unit 2 First Floor, Rear of Butlers Medical Hall, Pharmacy, Abbey Street, Wicklow Town.	Volunteer based cancer support service
Allcare Pharmacy	Westmount Clinic, Church Hill, Wicklow Town	Pharmacy
Knockrobin Pharmacy Limited	Wicklow Primary Care Centre Wicklow Town	Pharmacy
Michael Collins Pharmacy	Wentworth Villas Wicklow Town	Pharmacy
Wicklow Careplus Pharmacy	Units 5 & 6 Supervalu Centre Church Street Wicklow, Wicklow Town	Pharmacy
Boots	Butlers Medical Hall, Abbey Street Wicklow Town	Pharmacy
O'Dwyer's Pharmacy	Main Street Wicklow Town	Pharmacy
Rathnew Pharmacy	2 The Merry Meeting Centre, Rathnew	Pharmacy
Wicklow Dental	First Floor Unit, Butlers Medical Hall, Abbey Street, Wicklow Town	Dentist
Dr Danielle Doyle	1 Church Street Wicklow Town	Dentist
Delahunt & Foley	1 Church St, Wicklow Town	Dentist
Westmount Dental Practice	Church Hill, Bollarney South, Wicklow Town	Dentist
Sean Dunne Opticians	Unit 1 Supervalu Centre, Wicklow Town,	Optician
Wicklow Community Services CLG	Earlton House South Quay, Wicklow Town	

Table no. 2.14 Health Services

Elderly Care facilities

There is one residential care facility for elderly persons within the settlement, Knockrobin Hill Care Home, on the Drumkay Road, in Wicklow Town. It has a capacity of 99 persons. The HSE Health Centre, the former Wicklow District Hospital, on Glenside Road also offers a 18 bed short stay facility for older persons. Wicklow Hospice is also located in Magheramore (outside of the settlement). There are a number of home help / care companies operating in the area, including Bluebird Care, Comfort Keepers, Caremark, etc

Demand Forecast Analysis for Health Facilities

There are no national standards for health provision in Ireland relating to the provision of primary care facilities, residential care facilities or the number GPs practising per head of population. The Health Service Executive (HSE) estimates that a typical primary care centre can serve a population of between 10,000– 20,000. Wicklow Primary Care facility is located on the Drumkay Road, in Wicklow Town.

Provision of health facilities and GP surgeries are a matter for the Health Service Executive (HSE), however the LAP endeavours to facilitate the provision of such facilities through flexible zoning provisions and development objectives / standards; in particular the development of new health care facilities that is supported in a wide range of land use zone categories

2.5 Faith

The following religious facilities, places of worship / churches / cemeteries have been identified within the Wicklow Town - Rathnew settlement boundary. There is 1 active graveyard within the settlement at Rathnew Graveyard and the Church of Ireland Graveyard on Church Road is at capacity. (Note that inactive historic graveyards are not included e.g Rathnew Commons graveyard). There are also 2 funeral homes /undertakers operating within the settlement.

Places of worship / churches / facilities	Location
St. Patrick's Catholic Church	St Patrick's Road, Wicklow
Church of Ireland (Saint Livinius' Church, Church of the Vines and also known as St Thomas' Church)	Church Hill, Wicklow
Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses	Level 2, 6 Church St, Wicklow
Banner of Love Church	Wicklow House, Market Square, Wicklow
Wicklow Methodist Church	New Street, Wicklow Town
Wicklow Christian Assembly	6 Wentworth Place, Wicklow Town
Servants of Love	Quarantine Hill, Wicklow Town
De La Salle Pastoral Centre	Church Grounds, St. Patrick's Road, Wicklow
St. Joseph's Church Rathnew	Rathnew Village
Cemetery Name	Description
Wicklow and Rathnew Cemetery, Merrymeeting	Graveyard
Church of Ireland Cemetery, Church Hill	Graveyard
Rathnew Old Graveyard	Graveyard
Funeral Home / undertakers	
McCrea's Funeral Home, Dublin Road	Funeral home / undertakers services
Flannerys Funeral Home, Bachelors Walk	Funeral home / undertakers services

Table no. 2.15 Religious Facilities located within Wicklow Town - Rathnew

Faith Facilities Demand Forecast Analysis

There are no quantitative standards for the provision of churches, other faith-based facilities or graveyards. The Church of Ireland graveyard is at capacity and there is limited availability in Rathnew Cemetery.

Rathnew Cemetery provides burial plots for persons within the settlement as well as the surrounding rural areas and villages. Additional lands should be zoned accordingly to facilitate a future extension of the Rathnew Cemetery, ideally on lands adjoining the existing cemetery.

2.6 Sport, Recreation & Open Space

A variety of sport and recreation clubs and facilities have been identified within the area.

Name	Location	Description
Wicklow Tennis Club	Glebe, Wicklow Town	6 tennis courts
WRFC Wicklow Rugby Club	Ashtown Lane, Wicklow	3 playing pitches with 2 training areas and facilities
Wicklow Golf Club	Dunbur Road, Wicklow Town	18-hole golf course and clubhouse
Diamond Bowl & Kidzone	Dublin Rd, Wicklow Town	Indoor play centre
Coral Leisure Wicklow	Station Road, Wicklow Town	Swimming Pool, gym and rooms for various classes.
Wicklow Rovers AFC	Station Rd, Wicklow Town	1 grass pitch, 1 weather pitch and club house
Wicklow Town AFC	Finlay Park, Station Rd, Wicklow Town	1 grass pitch and club house
Rathnew AFC	Rathnew Village	1 pitch, 1 school boy pitch, 1 indoor pitch and facilities
St Patricks GAA Club	Dunbur Road, Wicklow Town	1 pitch
St Patricks GAA Club	Greenhills Road Wicklow	1 new pitch under construction
Rathnew GAA Club	Rathnew Village	2 pitches
Wicklow Hand Ball Alley	Rear of Wicklow Gaol, Wicklow Town	Outdoor Alley
Wicklow Hockey club,	East Glendalough School, Station Rd, Wicklow and Dominican College Wicklow	The club have the use of the hockey pitches on school grounds.
Wicklow Polo Club	Kilpoole Hill, Wicklow	Outdoor Polo Club
Wicklow Sailing Club	South Quay, Wicklow Town	Water Sports
Wicklow Sub Aqua Club	Wicklow Harbour	Water Sports
Wicklow Martial Arts / Karate Club Wicklow	St. Brigids Hall, Rathnew	Indoor sports club
Indoor Bowls,	St. Brigids Hall, Rathnew	Indoor sports club
Zumba	St. Brigids Hall, Rathnew	Indoor fitness club
Lind dancing	St. Brigids Hall, Rathnew	Indoor fitness club
Bingo	St. Brigids Hall, Rathnew	Indoor recreation
Wicklow Hunt Pony Club	Marlton Equestrian, Wicklow Town	Pony Club
Marlton Equestrian	Marlton Rd, Ballynerrin Lower, Wicklow	Horse riding
Wicklow Strength and Fitness,	South Quay, Wicklow Town	Indoor gym
Ananta Yoga Studio,	5 Wentworth Place, Wicklow Town	Yoga
Ballynerrin Playground Wicklow Town,	Children's play facilities	Playground
Murrough skate park,	Murrough, Wicklow Town	Skate Park
Glen beach cliff walk,	Wicklow Town	Amenity walk
Abbey grounds,	Wicklow Town	Cultural / Arts facility
Kick fitness, KickFit	Quarantine Hill, Wicklow Town	Indoor gym
Vartry Angling Club	Ashtown, Co. Wicklow	Angling club

Table 2.16 Sports Clubs & Facilities

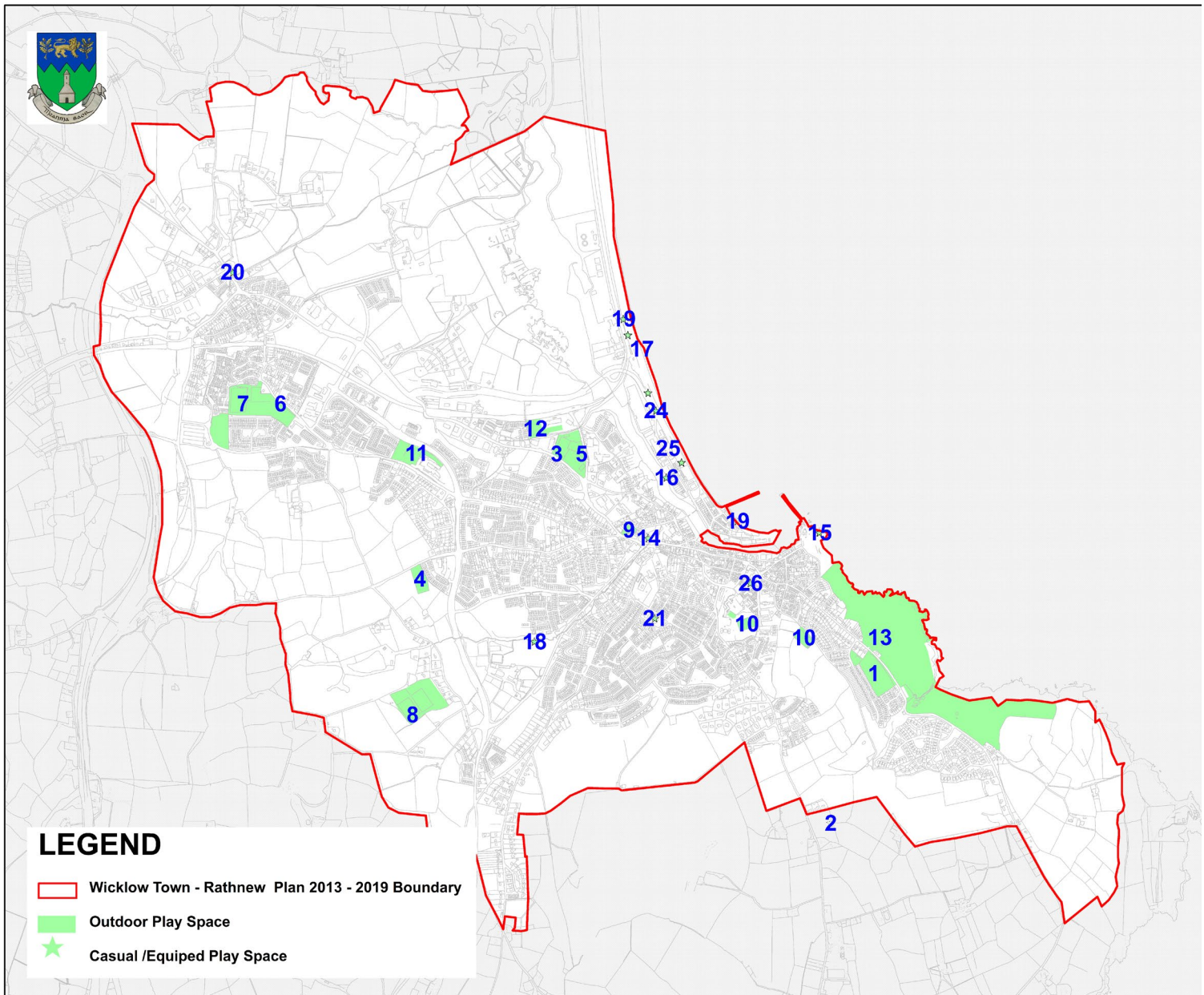
Active Open Space:

In accordance with WCC's Active Open Space Policy, active open space shall be provided at a rate of 2.4ha per 1,000 population divided into:

- 1.6ha outdoor play space (pitches, courts, sports grounds)
- 0.6ha casual play spaces (parks)
- 0.2ha equipped play space (playgrounds and MUGAs)

Map Ref	Name	Open Space Type	Approximate Area (ha)
1	St Patricks GAA Club Wicklow Town	Outdoor Play Space	3.99
2	St Patricks GAA Club Wicklow Town second pitch (under construction)	Outdoor Play Space	4.5
3	Wicklow Rovers AFC	Outdoor Play Space	1.7
4	Wicklow Rovers AFC pitch 2 (Rocky Road)	Outdoor Play Space	1.1
5	Wicklow Town AFC	Outdoor Play Space	1.9
6	Rathnew AFC	Outdoor Play Space	3.5
7	Rathnew GAA Club	Outdoor Play Space	4.5
8	Wicklow Rugby Club	Outdoor Play Space	5.3
9	Wicklow Tennis Club	Outdoor Play Space	0.25
10	Pitches at Dominican Convent	Outdoor Play Space	2.4
11	Pitches at Colaiste Chill Mhantáin	Outdoor Play Space	1.25
12	Pitches at East Glendalough School	Outdoor Play Space	0.6
13	Wicklow Golf Club (Members only club, therefore area not included)	Outdoor Play Space	38.5
		TOTAL	30.9 (excluding golf club)
14	Abbey grounds	Casual Play Space	1.2
15	Black Castle	Casual Play Space	2.2
16	Leitrim River riverwalks	Casual Play Space	1
17	Murrough casual spaces	Casual Play Space	3.2
18	Marlton Riverine Park	Casual Play Space	5
19	Wicklow Town Beaches		
20	Rathnew Village Square (Clermont Grove)		1
		TOTAL	12.6
21	Ballynerrin Playground	Equipped Play Space	0.9
22	Rathnew Playground	Equipped Play Space	0.4
23	Murrough Playground	Equipped Play Space	0.1
24	Murrough Skate Park & Outdoor Gym	Equipped Play Space	0.5
25	The Murrough dog Park	Equipped Play Space	0.2
26	Ball Alley	Equipped Play Space	0.023
		TOTAL	2.2
	Total		44 hectares

Table 2.17 Active Open Space



Map 12 - The location of existing sports, recreation and open space

Sport, Recreation & Open Space Demand Forecast Analysis

Based on the above rates, considering the 2031 population target of 19,400 persons for Wicklow Town - Rathnew, the following areas of active open space are required at a minimum:

- 46.4ha overall
- 31ha outdoor play space
- 11.6ha casual play spaces
- 3.8ha equipped play space

However, the sports and recreational facilities in the settlement cater for the population within the settlement as well as the population of the surrounding rural areas. The facilities provide sports and recreation for a large

catchment. The 2022 population of the settlement and its catchment was 24,886³, including the settlements targeted growth up to 2019, the 2031 population of the settlement and catchment is c.27,900 persons, the following areas of active open space are required at a minimum:

- 66.8ha overall
- 44.6ha outdoor play space
- 16.7ha casual play spaces
- 5.5ha equipped play space

In addition, it was identified through the pre draft plan public consultation that there are additional / specific needs as follows:

- Athletics club grounds / running track
- Sports and community centre
- Indoor amenity facilities
- Indoor sports facilities
- Walking and cycling trails

With respect to organised sports grounds, outdoor / casual play spaces and equipped play spaces, there is currently a total of c.45ha in open space use in the settlement⁴. Therefore at a minimum there appears to be a need to zone a total of c.66.8ha of open space in the settlement to cater for the settlement and its catchment. In addition to existing facilities, the following undeveloped open space zonings provide for additional open space to meet the needs of the future population.

In addition to considering the quantum of open space that is required, there is a need to ensure a suitable spatial distribution of spaces, so that all developed areas, particularly residential areas (existing and planned) can access amenity and sports grounds by active and sustainable means (walking / cycling / public transport). Having considered the catchment of existing sports clubs, there are clearly existing areas where there are deficiencies.

Therefore it is recommended that the plan zones for additional open space as follows:

Zoned Undeveloped Land		
Location	Zoning	Area (ha)
Hawkstown Road / Ashtown Lane	Active Open Space	4.7
Rocky Road	Active Open Space	5.6
Brides Head	Active Open Space	4
Wicklow Rugby Club	Active Open Space	7
Tinakilly	Active Open Space	2.45
Ballynabarney, Rathnew	Active Open Space	3.7
Bollarney	Open Space	3
	Total new open space lands	30.6 hectares
	Total existing open space lands	45 hectares
	Overall Total	75.6 hectares

Table 2.18 Zoned Undeveloped Land

³ This includes the Electoral Divisions of Wicklow Urban, Wicklow Rural, Glenealy, Dunganstown, Ballycullen, Moneytown, Killiskey.

⁴ These figures do not include Wicklow Golf Club, it is an important sports grounds for Wicklow, however the golf club is for fee paying members only.

2.7 Arts and Culture

Within the study area, there are a number of arts and culture facilities most of which are related to music, dance, and drama. Facilities are dispersed in various locations across the settlement with a concentration of facilities in the town centres.

Name	Location	Facilities / Services
Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann	The Boathouse CCE, The Murrough, Wicklow Town	Music classes
Village Players	Rathnew Community Centre, Rathnew	Local drama group
WLD Dance Studios	Unit 10 Merrymeeting Shopping Centre, Wilton Manor, Rathnew	Dance school
FYI Dance Club,	Parochial Hall, St. Patrick's Road, Wicklow Town	dance classes
Wicklow School of Dance	Unit 10 Merrymeeting Shopping Centre, Wilton Manor, Rathnew Parochial Hall, Saint Patrick's Road, Wicklow Town	Childrens dance classes
Wicklow Singers	Ecology Centre An Tairseach, The Dominican College Convent Road Wicklow Town	Choir
Wicklow Male Voice Choir	De la Salle Pastoral Centre, St. Patrick's Road, Wicklow Town	Choir
Wicklow Choral Society	Educate Together National School, Hawkestown Road, Wicklow Town	Choir
Wicklow School of Music and Drama	East Glendalough School, Station Road, Wicklow Town, Co. Wicklow	Music classes & drama

Table 2.19 Arts and Culture Facilities in Wicklow Town - Rathnew

2.8 Other Local Services

Within the study area, there are a number of other local services dispersed in various locations across the settlement with a concentration of facilities in the centre of Wicklow Town.

Name	Location
Wicklow Garda Station	Wicklow Garda Station, Bachelor's Walk, Wicklow Town
Fire Services	1 Church Hill, Westmount Ct, Bollarney South, Wicklow Town
Wicklow County Council	Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Whitegates, Wicklow Town
Wicklow Municipal District	Town Hall, Market Square, Wicklow Town
National Driver Licence Service	The Murrough, Wicklow Town
Public Services Card Centre	The Murrough, Wicklow Town
An Post	SuperValu Shopping Centre, Church St, Wicklow Town
Wicklow Cancer Support	Unit 2 First Floor, Rear of Butlers Medical Hall, Pharmacy, Abbey Street, Wicklow Town.
Wicklow Community Services	Office 2, Earlton House, S Quay, Wicklow Town
Wicklow Child and Family Project	Educate Together National School, Hawkestown Road, Wicklow Town
The WAY Project	Foróige, Earlton House, South Quay, Wicklow Town
Wicklow Arts, Heritage, and Archives	Wicklow Library. Wicklow Town
Motor Tax	County Buildings Motor Tax Office, County Buildings, Whitegates, Wicklow Town
Revenue	Government Offices Wicklow, The Murrough, Corporation Land, Wicklow Town
Wicklow Recycling Centre	14 The Murrough, Corporation Land, Wicklow Town

Table 2.20 Other Local Services Wicklow Town - Rathnew

PART 3 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.0 Conclusion and recommendations

This Social Infrastructure Audit has identified certain specific requirements for future provision of social infrastructure facilities for the settlement of Wicklow Town - Rathnew. These requirements are based on the current population and the population target, as provided for in the Core Strategy of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028, and make provision for the wider rural catchment. The recommendations are based on the population of Wicklow Town – Rathnew growing to 19,400 persons by 2031 and the wider catchment growing to c. 27,900. This assessment informs the future spatial development objectives for the settlement for the Local Area Plan period and beyond.

Education & Training

With regard to primary school places, it has been assessed that there is currently 2,164 primary school places within the schools in the settlement, having regard to the future primary school demand, there is a need for additional primary school places in the future.

With regard to post primary school places, it has been assessed that there is currently 2,155 post primary school places within the secondary schools in the settlement, therefore the demand for places within the settlement in 2031 can be catered for, however given the large catchment Wicklow town has, there is a need for additional post primary school in the future.

In accordance with the County Development Plan, the Local Area Plan has zoned a number of sites within the plan area for 'Community and Education' that have the potential for the future provision of primary and post primary schools.

The Department of Education is monitoring the demand for and provision of schools in the LAP area on an ongoing basis and Wicklow County Council will continue to consult and liaise with the Department of Education in this regard.

The locational decisions for new school infrastructure, and future land use zoning objectives, should seek to complement existing school provision by addressing the identified deficiency of existing school 'coverage' particularly within the west and north-eastern side of the settlement. The preferred location should have regard to the 10-minute walk time from existing residential areas identified for future and urban/neighbourhood expansion.

The following undeveloped / brownfield lands have been zoned Community and Education (CE) for the potential development of new schools within the settlement in the future, and should be specifically reserved in the plan for school, development only. There are further smaller undeveloped/brownfield CE zonings within the settlement that may be suitable but are considered less optimal but could also accommodate a new school site if needed. Given the need to provide schools in the future within the built up area, schools are open for consideration in all land use zones that facilitate development.

These 3 sites at Ballynerrin, Ballybeg and Rosanna have been selected following a detailed Transport Assessment. The following 2 maps present the areas that are within 15 minutes walking distance from the existing primary and secondary schools respectively. It is clear that there is a need for a primary / secondary school to the north east of Rathnew village (Rosanna) and to the south west of Wicklow Town (Ballynerrin). With regard to secondary schools it is clear that there is a need for a site in Rathnew, hence the lands at Ballybeg have been zoned for a secondary school site.

Zoned Undeveloped Land		
Location	Zoning	Area (ha)
Marlton Road, Ballynerrin Lower	Community & Education	3.5
Ballybeg, Rathnew	Community & Education	5
Rosanna Lower	Community & Education	2

Table 3.1 Zoned Undeveloped Land for Schools

Childcare

The 'Childcare Facilities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001)' require that in new housing areas, a standard of one childcare facility providing for a minimum 20 childcare places per 75 dwellings may be required. Further to this, in line with the objectives of the County Development Plan, a Social Infrastructure Audit would be required alongside any significant housing development planning application to determine the need / capacity of a childcare facility.

It is important to note that the Local Authority cannot control the type of childcare spaces (baby, toddler, pre-school) to be provided in each facility, this is determined in terms of viability of a business for the end user. With respect to who is generally responsible for delivering childcare facilities, this is very much so developer led.

Childcare facilities in Wicklow Town - Rathnew are at capacity with many operating waiting lists. It is noted that planning permission has been granted for 2 new childcare facilities, however having regard to the projected growth, the capacity and number of childcare facilities needs to be increased to meet demand. The location of these facilities should follow in new residential areas or at appropriate locations near schools.

Health

It is considered that there are reasonable health services in place for the lifetime of the plan, however it is noted that some GP practices are at capacity with waiting lists for patients. Further to this, having regard to the long term growth of the settlement, additional GP's and health services may be required.

Health services and facilities with planning permission can locate on appropriate sites zoned town centre / village centre/ neighbourhood centre, mixed use and community & education. The Local Authority has no official role in controlling the delivery of a health service at a particular location. Therefore, the LAP endeavours to facilitate the provision of such facilities through flexible zoning provisions and development objectives / standards; in particular the development of new health care facilities is supported in a wide range of land use zone categories.

Faith

The plan area is well served with faith facilities and there are currently no plans for future facilities. The plan supports the existing faith facilities and it also supports the delivery of new faith facilities at appropriate locations.

Sport, Recreation & Open Space

With respect to organised sports grounds, outdoor / casual play spaces and equipped play spaces, there is currently a total of c.44ha in open space use in the settlement⁵. Therefore at a minimum, to meet the needs of the target population within the settlement and its catchment there is a need to zone a total of **c.66.8ha** (22.8ha additional) of open space in the settlement.

Therefore in order to meet the needs of the targeted population as well as future growth beyond the life of the plan, the following additional undeveloped open space zonings have been zoned to provide for additional open space to meet the needs of the future population.

Zoned Undeveloped Land		
Location	Zoning	Area (ha)
Hawkstown Road / Ashtown Lane	Active Open Space	4.7
Rocky Road	Active Open Space	5.6
Brides Head	Active Open Space	4
Wicklow Rugby Club	Active Open Space	7
Tinakilly / Knockrobin	Active Open Space	4
Ballynabarney, Rathnew	Active Open Space	3.7
Bollarney	Open Space	3
Total		32

Table 3.2 Zoned Undeveloped Land for Active Open Space

Arts and Culture

The plan supports the existing arts and cultural facilities within the settlement. The plan also supports the delivery of new arts and cultural facilities at appropriate locations.

⁵ These figures do not include Wicklow Golf Club, it is an important sports ground for Wicklow, however the golf club is for fee paying members only.

Provision of Social infrastructure in general

In addition to the above specific social infrastructure requirements, this study recommends the following practices in the provision of social infrastructure to ensure consistency with best practice and the sustainable and effective use of resources:

Co-location:

Co-location and clustering of complementary community services thus facilitating coordination, convenience and access for service users;

Multi-purpose and multi-function:

Facilities and spaces should offer flexible and diverse space and uses over a range of times to maximise efficiency, utilisation and adaptability of physical assets;

Place making and community identity:

Promotion and encouragement of community facilities that create a sense of place and identity that have a civic quality, and level of amenity that can foster community ownership and offer a focus to support community engagement;

Connectivity and linkages:

Opportunities to enhance the existing cycle and pedestrian infrastructure network and routes should be incorporated into any development proposal. To facilitate access to and through amenities, for the purpose of improving connectivity/permeability and the quality of this amenity.

Partnership:

Encourage delivery of infrastructure services and facilities through partnerships between different bodies for maximum efficiency and coordination; and

Community asset management:

For the local authority to maintain and enhance their strategic role in co-ordination and engagement between different service providers to ascertain up-to-date information on community infrastructure and facilities for the benefit of the community and service providers.

Concluding Remarks

Social and community infrastructure is essential to achieving a balanced approach to sustainable local communities and it is of critical importance to the economic and social development of Wicklow Town - Rathnew.

The role of social infrastructure in integrating new and existing communities in the plan area is critical. A mix of uses will provide opportunities for community activity and places for people to meet and connect. Local facilities within easy walking distance are supported to facilitate community cohesion as well as to reduce transport requirements. Continuity of public realm and interconnected neighbourhoods ensure people can easily access facilities and services they need by walking or cycling. With high density living in urban areas there is much greater demand for highly flexible, multi-use facilities within communities. A flexible approach to developed floorspace, as well as the capacity to retrofit existing community facilities is also important to address changing demographics and evolving community needs.

The provision of social infrastructure in an area is fundamentally about making the most of and developing the local network of assets, be they facilities, services or the programmes that bring this all together.



W I C K L O W

ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES