



Wicklow Town - Rathnew LAP Submission - Report

Who are you:	Private Individual
Name:	John Hodgins
Email Address:	[REDACTED]
Reference:	WRLAP-105225
Submission Made	September 5, 2023 10:56 AM

File

Wicklow - Rathnew development plan review 2023.pdf, 0.59MB

HODGINS ARCHITECTS

Wicklow County Council
Planning Department
Station Road
Wicklow

5th September 2023

Wicklow Town & Rathnew Local Area Plan - Pre Draft submission

Dear Sirs,

I would like you to consider the nature and content of the upcoming development plan.

The pattern of development plans generally has been that they have become more and more verbose and as a consequence less accessible to those who are affected by the plan and so less engaging.

A picture tells a thousand words and Wicklow (Town) council has a history in visual town plans and the one dating from 1987 as I recall identified development projects around the town some of which remain outstanding.

The town has also produced visual guidance on streetscape and shopfronts and the Public Realm Plan of 2008.

These plans should be incorporated into the proposed plan for Wicklow and Rathnew and could be expanded and updated by the planning department allowing the planners to do just that – to plan and design the development of the plan area. A 3 dimensional visual plan for the future which can be phased on a generational timescale will give clarity to residents as to the environment in which they will be introducing the next generation. A 5 year plan is an uncertain timescale but a generational plan with a 5 review of the plan measured against the implementation of the plan to inform the review in a plan, implement, monitor, review, plan cycle could continually inform the plan.

With a visual context there will be clarity for all involved the objective of which should be a seamless planning process as compared to what is often seen to be a fraught process and planners can concentrate on master-planning and place making rather than writing reports assessed against policies.

As Wicklow Town centre is largely covered by and ACA, there seems to have been little positive action in improving the townscape and indeed it has been worsened by the haphazard addition of poles for signage (which obstruct the pavement for buggies and disabled users), unkempt and haphazard COVID planters, uncontrolled utilities; the introduction of dangerous junctions with the one-way system and misaligned dropped kerbs with their associated disabled parking

space. All actors involved with the public realm need to be instructed in townscape best practice and a good starting point is the “Manual for Historic Streets” so that all those involved have a baseline against which to measure their interventions.

Maintenance of the public realm is also a requirement, where art works, and street furniture have been installed in the past there has been little care given to their maintenance (seating at Market Square for example).

These are just some of a number of topics that should be addressed in the forthcoming plan.

Sincerely

John Hodgins