

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

22 AUG 2023

PLANNING DEPT.

Wicklow Town - Rathnew Local Area Plan.

Submissions and Ideas.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

CUSTOMER SERVICE

22 AUG 2023

Original Sighted

Introduction.

My name is Martin Walsh, and my wife and I are residing here in Wicklow Town since 1985. Our eldest daughter was 1½ at the time we located here. Our younger daughter was born in 1991. My wife and I received our Second Level education here in Wicklow Town between 1968/1973. So we both along with our children have a reasonable knowledge of Wicklow Town/Rathnew. I in particular can remember Seafield Est. ^{under} Friarshill est and where we reside St Mannans Park est. A lot of greenfields have been covered by housing construction since.

Forward.

Reading this Plan, I regret to have to say the following, and these are my personal opinions.

It is 'Aspirational', Wishful thinking, Vagueness, and Questionable Research. Why I say this is the figures around housing. Serious doubts about 30% of housing to be located within Urban/Village area. This is approx 450 units. Unless you obtain reasonable size sites and build up 4 to 5 storeys you are only going to create problems for other needed

Forward (Continued)

facilities. In Relation to the ^{other} 1050 units which some are already under construction since 2022 and the remainder construction, move on to Green-Field sites, there is no breakdown in figures of how many units are already built and if the target is met before 2031, will construction be stopped, and matters concerning needs, "Water", "Sewerage", and other Infrastructural upgrades be dealt with?

Housing

Housing has been the big dominating factor since the mid-1960s. It has been practically non-stop ever since. I can't remember many slowdowns. This obsession with no facilities or proper infra-structures. Badly planned Housing have lead to Missed opportunities

Like for instance of "Relief Road" from around the Marlton Rd, ~~was~~ Right across to the Summer-Mill, Dunbur Rd area, or even down into the Ball Alley area.

Another missed opportunity was in the Marlton West Area, where a shopping centre and units were proposed. Spurious excuses like it wasn't convenient to the Town Centre etc. My answer to this was the fact that driving to Dundrum in Dublin, Arklow / Gorey etc, was further to go stopping etc Leisure. I would ask the question Have you done any Research into the Monies spent out

Houseing (Continued)

out of Wicklow Town/Rathnew?

It obviously runs into the Millions, because of poor stopping choices for people, No Motel, No Cinema, No Theatre. An appalling deficit you would have to say.

The Murrrough.

Since we don't have or any provision made back in time, The Murrrough is our Phoenix Park.

Yet this beautiful area has suffered scandalous neglect over the past 80 years.

Constant Coastal Erosion not being dealt with properly with whatever Authority was responsible for it. No Groins or constant Rock Armour Defences.

Also a lot of Commercial Activity should never have been allowed in this area Past or Present.

This area should have been preserved for the pleasure of the Public in different ways.

Sport and Leisure "Walkway" for certain set fees. For eg "Camping", Caravanning, and Travelling Campers. I ask the Question of you Planners, Why is it, that there is Town and Villages that would put Wicklow Town to Shame and have been long ahead of the Game when it comes to things like this. Furthermore each side of the Murrrough should be linked by a Proper Foot/Pedestrian

The Murrrough (Continued)

Bridge over the Railway Line. Furthermore another Pedestrian Bridge across the Lough, from the Murrrough to where Tinakilly Lane meets the Lough. If you are really earnest about Walkways, Paths etc you ~~will~~ should give this some consideration.

Sprawl.

I was taken aback by what you referred on this. The ship has already sailed as regards the Sprawl. There is approx a $3\frac{1}{2}$ mile or slightly more of a sprawl from the Ribbon Houseing near the 'Silver' Strand, right to and beyond Rathnew.

There is a Sprawl way out Ballyguile Blainrose Junction. Also from the Abbey St Junction out the Marlton Rd.

At this stage you may have to infill with the cooperation of the Land/Properties owners on this.

Sport/Leisure (For all ages)

This is completely inadequate for so many decades.

No Cinema, No Theatre, No Outdoor Bowling Area, No Pitch, Putt or Par 3 Golf. I don't know what research you have done to prove that there is adequate enough sporting facilities etc etc for the present population of Wicklow/Rathnew.

Also the proper amount of playgrounds, the upkeep, maintenance and proper security of playgrounds, against vandalism and Anti-Social Behaviour.

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Sprawling (continued)

With what you are proposing, and what I have observed with high density and some poorly planned estates, with no stand alone shops or other Domestic Businesses, there is a strong danger in decades to come of Ghettoization.

The Port and Harbour.

These areas have 3 main functions at present Commercial Shipping, Importations and Exporting.

Fishing Fleet Moored and Depositing Fish Stocks on to the Quays for Transportation.

Pleasure Craft.

Port and Harbour/River.

The Port obviously needs to be kept Dredged, Possibly better Handling Overloading equipment. The possibility of looking at means of facilitating bigger Cargo Vessels. Tidying up the Warehousing.

Fishing Boat ~~people~~ people should be made clean/Power Hoses around where fish stocks are collected to keep the odours down.

Pleasure Craft people are long overdue the installation of proper Pontoons on the River

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Pleasure Craft (Continued)

These to be facilitated with Electricity Points, Water Points, Shower/Toilets, and Waste Disposal. Set fees with Automated pay Machines. These facilities are on certain rivers all over the country. So why not Wicklow Harbour/River?

Wicklow Town Centre

Good things have happened here the Fitzwilliam Square project. Controlling Traffic and Creating the Realm, which is being enjoyed by many. The One-way system I personally find it an improvement. In particular areas it could do with better Signage. One area of concern is Speeding traffic coming down Bayview Rd through the Junction of High St/Fitzwilliam Rd. Physical system like Ramp etc need to be put in place to control this. Also Street cleaning of power Hosing or Steam cleaning on occasions.

Vacant Buildings

The Former Courthouse

This Building has Capacity for a Cinema/Theatre/Museum/Heritage/Art Gallery and a Small Cafe.

The Old Post Office

'Residential' or Part thereof of Bayview Hotel. In other words The Re opening of a much needed Hotel.

Infrastructure / Employment / Tourism

The above 3 are very important to any Town or Village.

Infrastructure can mean Business or Commercial units where there is a chance of Employment and money in the local Economy

Infrastructure like Hotels can entice Business People to stay and spend Money as well as Tourists likewise

Like I stated previously about the Murrumbidgee area Boilets Snack Kiosk for the Summer Season at least. All these things matter for full parttime Employment. Everything Hem mortgaged out of Wicklow Town in the Mid and Late 1990^s and not too many of the loss of these Jobs were ever Replaced. Yet the population of Wicklow Town is 10½ thousand people.

Another matter of Infrastructure is where the Road in from Junction 97 of the M11 to the Rocky Rd / Ash-Town-Rd Junction. This could bring in traffic as an alternative to Junction 16 and cause congestion through Rathnew Village. An up grade is needed on this Road.

Education

There is one particular Secondary School who will need a New Facility in a few Years time. So they will need help a Guidance towards obtaining a Greenfield Site to Construct their College.

Clermont Campus with a Capacity of around 500 students should be utilised a lot more, both in

Education (Continued)

the Daytime and Evening time.

An important thing for this College is proper Signage on the M11 ~~both~~ On the approach to Junction 16 Both North/South, appropriate college signs should be erected. These are able to be erected all over the country where colleges are based.

So why not for Wicklow County Campus?

General Opinions / Conclusion.

I have to pose the question as to why the Town and certain Areas along the coastline from Greystones down to Arklow are backward in "Infrastructure", and facilities to entice Tourists in to stay in these Areas. Why is there not the Mix and Variety like in other Coastal Towns/Countries? Its like a person who stated to me recently who is running a Business which depends on Tourists, and I quote him. They that's in Power meaning the different agencies, only want to develop along the Western Side of the Country along the Atlantic Way, and we are the "East".

A lot of the Questions that you posed in this Local Area Plan should have been dealt with 25 years, or even further back in time. Absolutely not excuse can be accepted for the Non Implementation of some of. The early warning signs were there from the Mid-1960's to 1980's.

Yet nobody in the organisation had any future vision for the Town/Rathnew.

Its came to my notice there was Business people

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General Opinions/Conclusions Continued.

Wanted to invest but were ~~not~~ totally put off by Bureaucracy, Procrastinations, etc etc.

That didn't surprise with what I seen for myself in very recent times. This type of Document seems like an old Rehashed document of 4/8/12 years back. Most of the General Public, are simply not interested in this No Grading of the Area of Wicklow Town/Rathnew.

The General Public want you as Planners and the Organisation you are in whether it Wicklow Municipal or Wicklow Co. Council to get on and start towards clearing the Serious Deficits the Area because of Housing, out of Control, Sheer Neglect of the Marrough, and Lack of Vision, and Foresight, in turning Down a Shopping Centre, in an Area that is now High Density Concrete Jungle. Also, in Relation to recent years allowing a Scrap Metal Company Blight a Beautiful Area. There wasn't even the Vision to have this activity located in a specially constructed Warehouse.

I may have been Repetitive, with some of Statements and Suggestions, but if I am around for another few years, I will be observing as to how you are going to make any progress or inroads, into these Issues and Problems I have clearly outlined to you.

From speaking to a cross Section of the General, People are deeply Angry and Frustrated and Helpless. They are Generally saying, Here we go again Nothing But Houses, Don't talk to me about the Council.

Kind, Regards
Martin Walsh