



# Pre Draft Bray LAP Submission - Report

Who are you:	Agent
Name:	Alva and Rory McGarry
Reference:	BRAYLAP-142958
Submission Made	December 18, 2024 2:55 PM

## Topic

Regeneration of Communities & Places - Healthy Placemaking - Urban Design - Opportunity Sites in Arklow  
**Submission**

Please see attached submission.

Our clients wish to highlight that Bray is a great place to live and are positive about the town's future development. The LAP is an important planning tool to balance the protection of the town's residential amenities and character while managing change in a sustainable manner.

Royal Marine Park was zoned 'SF' 'Bray Seafront', in the expired Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan 2018. This zoning is incongruous with the residential nature of the lane and it should be zoned 'RE'- 'Existing Residential'.

The character of the Harbour should be protected. The expired LAP included an objective to prepare a masterplan for the harbour area, which never materialised. It is important that the new LAP recognises the balance of uses in the harbour and encourages an appropriate scale of amenity building upon its existing heritage and use. High density mixed use regeneration would not be appropriate.

The Draft LAP should provide a strong policy base to ensure residential amenities of communities in and around the harbour area are protected including strong policies on night-time uses and noise controls.

## File

2219-BrayLAP-McGarryV1.pdf, 1.24MB

Our Ref: 2219 Bray LAP

'Bray MD LAP',  
Administrative Officer,  
Planning Department,  
Wicklow County Council,  
County Buildings,  
Station Road,  
Wicklow Town, A67 FW96  
Co. Wicklow.

18<sup>th</sup> December 2024

**Re: Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan 2025 - Pre-Draft Stage Submission by Alva and Rory McGarry**

Dear Sir/ Madam,

MacCabe Durney Barnes, of 20 Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2, D02YV58 has been instructed by our clients, Alva and Rory McGarry, [REDACTED] Co. Wicklow, to make this submission in relation the Draft Bray MD Local Area Plan.

Section 1 sets a brief overview of the locational context for our clients' locality in the Bray urban area and interest in the Draft LAP. Section 2 sets out the key issues we wish to bring to the planning authority's attention as it proceeds to the preparation of the Draft LAP next year.

Our clients wish to highlight that Bray is a great place to live and are positive about the town's future development. The LAP is an important planning tool to balance the protection of the town's residential amenities and character while managing change in a sustainable manner.

**Summary of Key issues:**

1. **Inappropriate Zoning of Royal Marine Park:** This street was zoned 'SF' 'Bray Seafront', in the expired Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan 2018. This zoning is incongruous with the residential nature of the lane and it should be zoned 'RE'- 'Existing Residential'.
2. **The character of the Harbour should be protected.** The expired LAP included an objective to prepare a masterplan for the harbour area, which never materialised. It is important that the new LAP recognises the balance of uses in the harbour and encourages an appropriate scale of amenity building upon its existing heritage and use. High density mixed use regeneration would not be appropriate.
3. **Protecting the residential amenities** The Draft LAP should provide a strong policy base to ensure residential **amenities** of communities in and around the harbour area are protected including strong policies on night-time uses and noise controls in the Harbour Area.
4. **Transport and movement:** Coastal walks/routes generally to be welcomed – but there are implications from the public transport bridge and future interchange to the area.



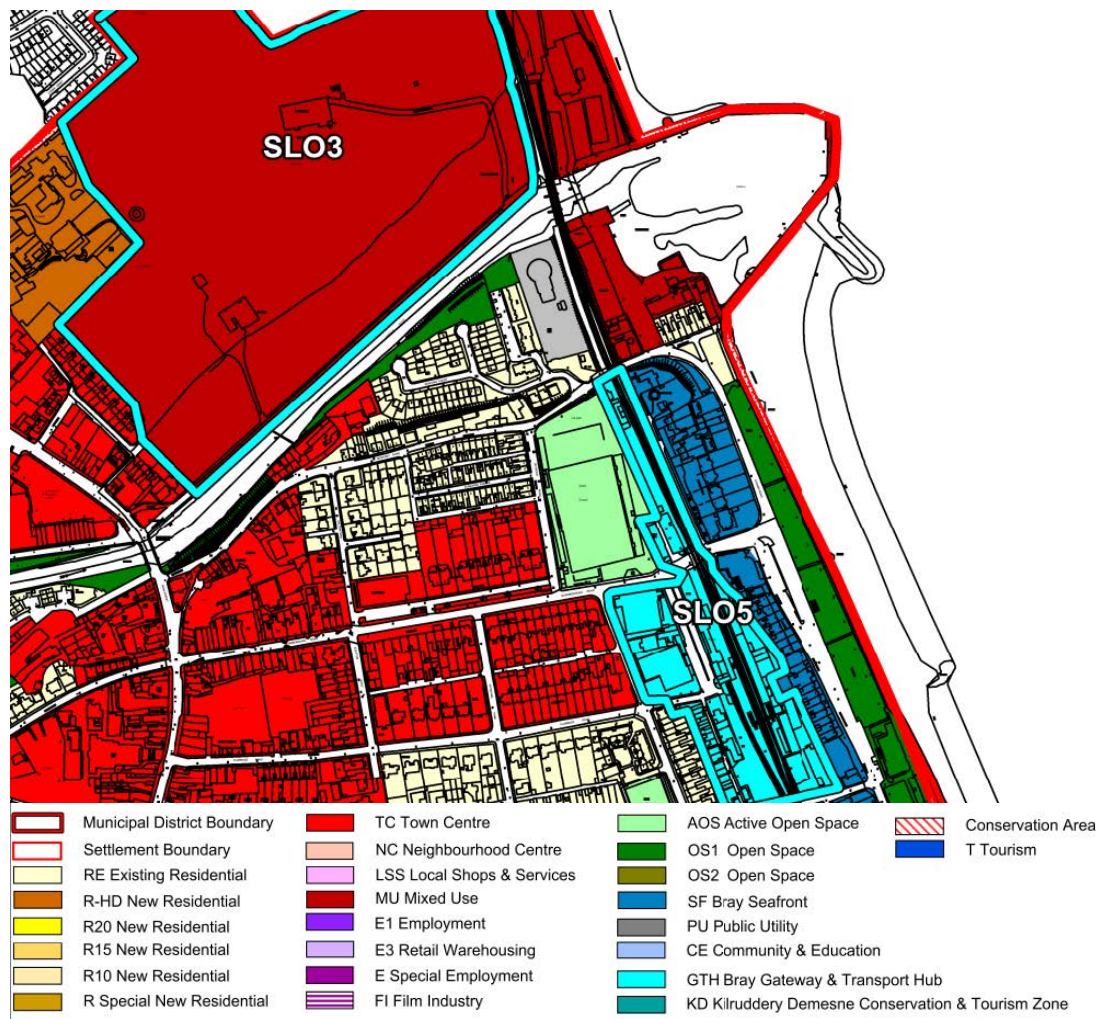


## 2 KEY ISSUES

### 2.1 Inappropriate Zoning of Royal Marine Park

Royal Marine Park was zoned 'SF' 'Bray Seafront', in the expired Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan 2018, with a description *'To provide for the development and improvement of appropriate seafront uses To protect and enhance the character of the seafront area and to provide for mixed-use development including appropriate tourism, retail, leisure, civic and residential uses. The Seafront area shall be promoted as the primary tourist, recreational and leisure centre of Bray'.*

This zoning is incongruous with the residential nature of our client's property and adjoining residential homes and it **should be zoned 'RE' - 'Existing Residential'** in accordance with the Zoning classifications Wicklow County Council is implementing in other recent LAPs in the county. We suggest that the 'Sea Front' zoning is a 'catch-all' policy that does not align with the Development Plan Guidelines (2022) Appendix B - Recommended Standardised Zoning Objectives. It is also inconsistent with the Council's approach to zoning on other emerging LAPs.



*Figure 2 Zoning map context for Royal Marine Park (Source: Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan 2018, Map 2)*

Royal Marine Park comprises Sancourt Lodge, The Martello Tower, Martello Cottage and then 5 houses that share the laneway with our clients.

Adjoining Royal Marine Park there are then about 5 other houses that also overlook the Promenade that run in the direction of the Harbour which are effectively built at the back of the five houses that share the lane with Sancourt Lodge. All of these properties are residential.

## **2.2 The character of the Harbour should be protected**

The expired LAP included an objective to prepare a masterplan for the harbour area. This never materialised. The Pre-Draft LAP booklet has not indicated if it is intended to maintain this objective.

The harbour area sits in a highly sensitive location and is susceptible to inappropriate high density mixed use regeneration which would destroy the character of the vicinity. It is important that the new LAP recognises the balance of uses in the harbour and encourages an appropriate scale of amenity building upon its existing heritage and use.

In August 2024, An Bord Pleanála ( Ref. TA06D.314686) granted permission to Ballymore (Shankill Property Investments Limited) at the former Bray Golf Club Lands for construction of 586 no. residential units, a childcare facility, café, retail unit and 1 no. mixed use commercial unit (incorporating a gym and a juice bar). The potential for spill-over from this scheme must be considered carefully in the LAP.

The Harbour was zoned 'MU' 'Mixed Use' in the Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan 2018. The objective or description of this zoning objective was '*The nature of the mixed use development envisaged for any particular site is set out in the text of the plan.*'

Regard has to be taken of the historical and residential amenities of the area, including Martello Terrace, but also Sancourt Lodge and the Martello Tower.

The 2018 LAP described the setting very well at section 7.2:

*This mixed use area measures c. 3.3ha including the harbour walls. To the north side of the river, between the railway line and the beach there is a land block of c. 1.75ha currently occupied by a number of older industrial buildings in various states of usage; to the south of the river, there is a land parcel of c. 1.1ha (including public roads and open harbour areas) which is in variety of uses including a public house, café, Scouts den, Bray boxing club, a number of boat yards and services, sea anglers club and Bray sailing club. The two areas are joined by a single carriageway road bridge. Wicklow County Council owns land in this area as well as being the custodian of the harbour and the public roads in the area.*

*There is potential for redevelopment on both sides of the river, to create a more active, thriving harbour area that capitalises on its location adjoining the Bray promenade, the sea*

*and river, to become a destination for visitors in its own right, as well as a hub for water based sporting and community activities.*

It was an objective of the Council to prepare a masterplan for the area in consultation with property owners which addresses the following objectives:

- *To encourage and facilitate the redevelopment of vacant or underutilised properties / lands for a range of uses, serving to both harbour users and the wider public including shops (particularly those relating to recreational use of the area e.g. sailing / fishing equipment, boat / canoe hire etc), boat/marine services, restaurants / cafes, clubs, community facilities etc;*
- *To encourage the development of residential uses in the area above commercial / community ground floors;*
- ~~*Given the small land bank available, to encourage intensive and high density redevelopment and to encourage the development of higher buildings, with particular regard being taken of the historical and residential amenities of the area and especially Martello Terrace;*~~
- *To encourage more intensive use of the harbour for recreational use, to enhance harbour infrastructure and to consider the development of water-side marina infrastructure;*
- *To improve road and pedestrian / cyclist infrastructure in the area and in particular to improve / provide linkages to the north beach, the seafront, the Dargle River walk and the former golf course lands to the west. [strike-through text our emphasis]*

We submit that the 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet point should not be retained in the new draft LAP. Any creative ideas and proposals should be considered on their merits as part of a detailed design exercise for the harbour, but there should not be a predisposition to dictate the future form and character of the area before this is done.

Section 5 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-28 refers to **Regeneration & Renewal** and notes in respect of Bray Harbour:

*Regeneration of the harbour may include marine works, amenity and public realm improvements, provision of promenade board walk linking the promenade and the harbour, provision of a cycle bridge and relocation of boat storage to north of the harbour.*

It is submitted that the County Development Plan sets an appropriate tone for the future regeneration of the harbour that the Draft LAP should follow.

### **2.3 Residential Amenity and protection**

The 2018 Bray MD LAP mischaracterised our client's property and surrounding homes in a 'Seafront Bray' zoning. As highlighted above, it is important that the new draft LAP distinguishes the area on Royal Marine Park from the promenade area to the south. This is particularly important in the context of Policy proposals in other LAPs to push development to regeneration and brownfield

sites, as a first-preference location. If 30% of development is to occur within the existing built envelope of the town (in accordance with National Planning Framework Objectives), the implications for the residential amenity of existing communities must be fully considered.

The Martello tower (adjoining Sancourt) is a National Monument. 1-8 Martello Terrace are protected structures. The Battery, Strand Road is also a protected structure. In this context, any development within the harbour area, including material, fixtures and fittings must be carefully considered in terms of use, character and built form.

The 2018 LAP noted that *Many uses exist where they do not conform to the designated zoning objective. When extensions to, or improvements of premises accommodating such uses are proposed, each shall be considered on its merits and permission may be granted where the development does not adversely affect the amenities of properties in the vicinity and does not prejudice the proper planning and development of the area.*

*..... Factors such as density, height, massing, traffic generation, public health regulations, design criteria, visual amenity, availability of services and **potential nuisance by way of noise, odour and air pollution are also of importance in establishing whether or not a development proposal conforms to the proper planning and sustainable development of an area.***

The designation of lands at Royal Marine Park as 'RE' 'Existing Residential' would discourage inappropriate or incremental uses that may be more appropriately directed to the town centre.

Our client's have engaged with Wicklow County Council in recent years in respect of planning applications at The Harbour Bar on Strand Road. This case highlights that when uses outside the established town centre area, become more intensely used (i.e. outdoor bar areas) there are potentially significant implications for the residential amenity of the resident population.

The draft LAP must provide a framework to steer investment back towards the town centre. The Bray Town Health Check 2019 Report was built on extensive consultation and engagement and provides an excellent base for the LAP to develop.

## **2.4 Impact of Strategic Transport Proposals**

The new coastal walks/routes at the Harbour are welcomed – but there are implications of the public transport bridge introducing new noise and vehicular traffic to the area. There are 2 significant transport objectives in the vicinity of Royal Marine Park which have potential to affect the character of this part of the town; namely the Bray Sustainable Transport Bridge and Bray Transport Hub proposal.

The proposed bridge and link road is proposed to consist of a two-lane public transport road 3.25m wide and variable width pedestrian, cyclist and shared path facilities. A new pedestrian boardwalk is proposed along the southern bank wall to link the existing walkway to the bridge crossing. This Part 8 Scheme has been referred to An Bord Pleanála.







## 2.5 Carlisle Grounds

The Carlisle Grounds to the west of Royal Marine Park is an important recreational and sporting focus for the town centre, appropriately and historically located beside the railway station. The Carlisle Grounds were zoned AOS (Active Open Space) under the 2018 LAP. It is important that the new draft LAP continues to protect the zoning of this site.

## 3 CONCLUSIONS

The 'Pre-Draft' documentation on Wicklow County Council's Consultation Portal outlines high level 'Key Topics' which will be developed in significant further detail as the LAP progresses to the Draft Stage.


Our clients wish to highlight that Bray is a great place to live and are positive about the town's future development. The key point of this submission is that the LAP needs to find an appropriate balance, protecting residential amenity and carefully managing sustainable development. The land use of our clients' property on Royal Marine Park should be designated as 'RE' 'Existing Residential' reflecting use of the existing houses on the lane way.

The Harbour area is very much an edge of town centre location. Consistent with the County Development Plan, the LAP should recognise its amenity and character as its primary value to the town. Overall, the LAP must provide a framework that balances the amenities and quality of life of existing residents with town centre regeneration. This can be done with a robust set of planning tools that protects residents from overt noise and degradation of their quality of life.

We hope the draft LAP provides a positive framework for Bray to keep building on its potential, exploit its amenities and assets and to steer investment back towards the town centre. Our client look forward to further detailed engagement with the Planning Authority as the LAP progresses to the Draft Consultation stage.

We trust all is in order and should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Hamilton', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

**Richard Hamilton MIPI MRTPI**  
**Director**  
**MACCABE DURNEY BARNES**