



Pre Draft Bray LAP Submission - Report

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Bray MD LAP, Planning Department, Wicklow County Council, (via Consultation Portal)

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I refer to the public consultation on the preparation of the Bray MD Local Area Plan 2025-2031.

I am writing on behalf of the Alliance of Bray Residents, comprising 27 residents' groups across Bray. One of our key concerns is the chronic traffic and congestion problems in Bray, leading to a diminished quality of life for the people of Bray and a serious brake on the cultural, commercial and enterprise development of the town. We are strongly of the view that a Traffic and Mobility Management Plan, developed with all key stakeholders, including residents, is now absolutely essential if Bray is to prosper as a vibrant town rather than become a dormitory suburb of the Dublin Metropolitan Area.

The Alliance has engaged extensively with the elected members of the Municipal District and our local TDs. There is unanimity across all the public representatives we have spoken to that such a Plan is necessary.

What are the key transport and movement issues affecting residents, workers and visitors? This is the question asked in the Pre-Draft Consultation booklet. It is set against a statement that "Bray is serviced by a broad range of strategic transport infrastructure". While this may be true in regard to movement of people from Bray and its hinterland into and out of Dublin, it is not the case in the context of sustainable transport in and around the town. 2 Data collected for the 2023 AECOM report on the Bray Bus Priority and Decongestion Scheme clearly demonstrates that on weekdays over 80% of Bray traffic is local, with vehicle journeys either starting, ending or both starting and ending in Bray. The resulting congestion is the key issue that negatively effects quality of everyday life for residents and workers in the town. While similar data is not available for weekends, residents and visitors alike can attest to the significant congestion experienced by those visiting the town at weekends, especially during the tourist season.

The Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-28 envisages the population of the part of Bray that is within Wicklow increasing from 29,646 in 2016 to 38,565 in 2028, an increase of 30% in 12 years. The population in the census town (including the areas in Little Bray in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown) in 2016 was 32,600, so the population in the census town in 2028 will be at least 42,000. The Woodbrook-Shanganagh Local Area Plan 2027-2023 envisages up to an additional 2,300 housing units (approx. 6,500 population at 2.8 persons per household). There will also be significant additional housing in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown along the Ballyman road axis to the north of the new development in Fassaroe. The population of the wider Bray area could therefore reach 50,000 by 2028, an increase of 53% on the 2016 population.

While the Bray Local Area Plan is constrained to the county boundary, people's lived lives are not. A planned increase in population of this magnitude demands a commensurate commitment to plan for sustainable transport infrastructure to cope with the increase. Without solutions to the considerable increase in traffic congestion that will ensue, the quality of life of residents, both old and new, will greatly suffer and the economic activity of the town will be severely damaged.

This includes damaging the existing commercial heart of the town, the employment base, and inhibiting revitalisation/ regeneration and future growth in the commercial and employment opportunities in Bray. Measures for improvements in these are identified in the pre-draft consultation document as key objectives for the town. Unfortunately, in the absence

of action to address traffic congestion, endeavours to reverse the decline in the economic vitality and attractiveness of the town will not succeed.

The Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028, and the Bray Local Area Plan 2018-2024 do not have a vision how the congestion in Bray will be addressed. There are broad-brush statements in the County Development Plan related to supporting and facilitating sustainable modes of transport and modal shift to these, but the only significant interventions in Bray are those required to develop the Fassaroe and Bray Golf Course lands. Without a 3 broader vision, shoehorning them into the existing road and sustainable transport networks risks further congestion in Bray.

The Alliance draws attention to Sustainable Mobility Objective CPO 12.3 (page 281 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028, viz “In collaboration and with the support of the relevant transport agencies, to prepare and / or update existing Area Based Transport Assessments and Local Transport Plans for all towns in Levels 1-4 of the County settlement hierarchy (namely Bray and environs, ...)”

The Bray and Environs Area Transport Study 2019 (NTA, Wicklow Co Council, DLR Co Council, TII) is premised on the extension of the LUAS to Bray, and has a focus also on the transport infrastructure needed to develop Fassaroe/ Ballyman. There are also expectations of bus services far in advance of what is envisaged in Bus Connects. The timelines for delivery of several key elements of the recommendations of the Study are well outside the 2031 horizon of the Local Area Plan. By this time, the already chronic traffic conditions in Bray will be way worse than the currently are.

Given the key need to develop a Traffic and Mobility Plan for Bray, the Alliance is firmly of the view that the preparation of an Area Based Transport Assessment (NTA Advice Note December 2018) should precede the finalisation of the Bray MD Local Area Plan 2025-31. In the absence of this, preparation of a Traffic and Mobility Plan for the town should be undertaken by the Council, in full consultation with key stakeholders.

Yours sincerely

Caoimhin McCann

Representative from the Wolfe Tone Square & O ‘Byrne Road Safety Group (Part of the Alliance of Bray Residents)