



Draft Wicklow Town – Rathnew LAP Submission - Report

Who are you:	Group
Name:	Wicklow Town & District Chamber of Commerce
Reference:	DWTRLAP-120652
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Tuesday 19th November, 2024

RE: Proposed rezoning under the Draft Wicklow Town - Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025.

Dear Sir / Madam,

On behalf of Wicklow Town & District Chamber, I am writing to address a critical zoning issue under the proposed Draft Wicklow Town - Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025.

The Draft Plan proposes to rezone approximately 2.8 hectares of land used by R.F. Conway & Company Limited, located north of the Port Access Road Bridge, from Enterprise and Employment (E1) to Natural Areas (OS2). This proposed change raises serious concerns for local enterprise, employment, and economic growth, with repercussions which would undoubtedly extend well beyond Wicklow. It is of immeasurable concern to Wicklow Chamber.

The land in question is essential to the operations of R.F. Conway & Company Limited, one of Wicklow Town's most prominent employers. The company's timber terminal at the Murrough is the largest imported timber terminal in the Republic of Ireland, playing a pivotal role in supporting the national construction industry. Wicklow Port and the Murrough timber terminal are key to enabling the Government's target of building 300,000 new homes between 2025-2030. The facility is at capacity, and reclassifying this land to OS2 would prevent the company (and Wicklow Port) from meeting the growing national demand for construction materials, directly and tangibly threatening the Government's ability to achieve its housing objectives. This zoning issue could be a key focal point of negative local and national headlines.

Furthermore, this rezoning would have far-reaching negative effects on Wicklow's local economy. It would significantly impact employment, trade, and the long-term sustainability of Wicklow Port, which is a cornerstone of the town's economic framework. Supporting local enterprise and preserving employment opportunities are of paramount importance to the Chamber, particularly in a location as strategically important as the Murrough, which is ideally positioned off the Port Access Road in proximity to Wicklow Port.

The proposed rezoning disproportionately undermines Wicklow's role as a hub for enterprise and employment, particularly given the critical role it plays in the building of new homes across Ireland. We understand that R.F. Conway & Company Limited has proposed retaining 1.0 hectare of this land as Employment zoning as part of its submission during this consultation process. This would result in

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rezoning approximately 1.8 hectares to Natural Areas (OS2), which represents a very reasonable approach. The Chamber fully supports this position and believes it reflects a cooperative approach to achieving both economic and environmental objectives. Maintaining the existing zoning for the 1.0 hectare in question is crucially important to safeguard local and national economic interests.

We urge the Council to give serious reconsideration to this matter. The potential economic, employment, and housing-related consequences are too significant to overlook.

Thank you for considering this submission. Should you require further details or wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Delaney
President, Wicklow Town & District Chamber

Wicklow Town & District Chamber of Commerce
Wicklow Enterprise Park
The Murrough
Wicklow Town
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