

Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028
Volume 2, Part 2
Small Town Plans (Type 1)

**ASHFORD
AUGHRIM
CARNEW
DUNLAVIN
TINAHELY**

LEVEL 5 PLANS

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LEVEL 5 SMALL TOWN (TYPE 1) PLANS

Ashford, Aughrim, Carnew, Dunlavin, Tinahely

This volume of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 comprises land use plans for Level 5 small towns in the County.

The purpose of these plans is to put in place a structure that will guide the future sustainable development of each settlement. These plans, in conjunction with the County Development Plan, will inform and manage the future development of the town.

The aim of these plans is to establish a framework for the planned, co-ordinated and sustainable development of each settlement, and to enhance and facilitate the balancing of economic, social and environmental infrastructure in order to maintain and develop a high quality of life without compromising the protection of the environment and the needs of future generations.

Level 5 settlements in County Wicklow are the smaller towns of the County that provide important economic and social services to their populations and immediate hinterland. Such towns normally have a good range of infrastructural services and are suited to accommodating urban generated housing demand.

In the past, Local Area Plans would have been adopted for Level 5 type towns. However, changes to the Planning Act in 2010 allow the Planning Authority to incorporate development plans for towns with a population of less 5,000 into the County Development Plan. This County Development Plan, therefore, includes the development plans for **Ashford, Aughrim, Carnew, Dunlavin and Tinahely**.

All efforts shall be made to minimise repetition of County Development Plan objectives in Town Plans, unless it is considered necessary to emphasise assets or restate objectives that have particular relevance and importance to that town. Development standards, retail strategies etc that are included in the County Development Plan shall not be repeated. Any specific policies/objectives or development standards required for a particular town will be stated as precisely that, and in all cases will be consistent with the County Development Plan. Thus development standards will be the same across the entire County, and any differences for specific settlements would be clear and transparent, to both those adopting the plans and the general public alike.

Furthermore, Town Plans shall only include objectives that are settlement specific and achievable, and avoid those that are aspirational or are best dealt within the annual budget, road works programme, etc. The role of land use plan is to put in place framework within which development can occur, but does not decide what works actually get done by either private individuals or public bodies. The delivery of objectives will be determined by the initiation of private development or by the allocation of public funding through the annual budgetary process, which is a separate process to any land use plan.

Therefore this volume shall take the following format:

Section 1: Sets out the high level strategies and objectives that are common to all Level 5 towns

Section 2: Sets out the common zoning objectives for all Level 5 towns

Section 3: Sets out detailed plans for Level 5 settlements (including a land use map, a heritage map and any other maps considered necessary for that town).

PART 1.1

1.1.1 Core Strategy

Level 5 plans exist in a hierarchy of plans flowing from national level (NPF) to regional level (RSES) to County level (Wicklow County Development Plan). It is through the County Development Plan that these higher order strategies, as well as other national and regional policies (e.g. relating to transportation and the environment) are translated to a 'local level'. The County Development Plan includes a 'Core Strategy' which sets out the 'direction' for the future growth of the County, in accordance with these higher level strategies, and in particular sets out the settlement and population growth strategy up to Q2 2028 (the lifetime of the plan) and beyond to 2031, evaluates the demand for housing and adequacy of zoned lands to meet those needs, as well as providing strategies for infrastructure, environmental protection and retail development.

Table 1 below sets out the key elements of the Wicklow County Development Plan 'Core Strategy', as it applies to Level 5 settlements.

Table 1 Core Strategy for Level 5 Towns

Core Strategy of the CDP	Application to Level 5 Settlements
Settlement, Population & Housing Strategies	Level 5 settlements are designated 'Small Towns (Type 1)'. These towns range in size (as per the 2016 Census of population) from c. 800 to 1,450 persons. Population growth in Level 5 towns overall is targeted to be in the 15% – 25% range between 2016 and 2031.
Economic Development Strategy	The economic function of 'Small Towns (Type 1)' is to be attractors for local investment and to target investment in the form of product and some 'people' intensive industries.
Retail Strategy	Level 5 settlements are identified as 'Level 4' in the County retail hierarchy. Level 4 retail centres are defined as 'local centres / small towns' where the retail needs would be expected to include one supermarket / two medium sized convenience stores (up to 1,000sqm aggregate) and c. 10-20 smaller shops.
Community Development Strategy	In accordance with the County community facilities hierarchy, Level 5 settlements generally fall into the 2,000-7,000 population range and ideally should be serviced by the following community infrastructure: community/parish hall, multi-purpose community space and / or meeting rooms, local town park and open spaces/nature areas, outdoor multi-use games areas, playgrounds, playing pitches and a library. Although these settlements all have a current population below 2,000, they generally serve a wide rural catchment of between 2,000 and 7,000 persons.
Infrastructure Strategy	In accordance with the County Development Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Measures will be required to facilitate a modal shift to more sustainable transport options including promotion of development patterns and development of infrastructure to facilitate walking, cycling and increased use of public transport; - Only locations that are already served, or have committed investment to enhance water and wastewater infrastructure, shall be identified for new development.
Environmental Strategy	To ensure the objectives of the plan are consistent with the conservation and protection of the environment.

1.1.2 Population and Housing

The aggregate population targets and housing targets for Level 5 towns are provided in the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan.

Table 2 Level 5 Aggregate Population Target Q2 2028

Level	Settlement	Population 2016	Population Q2 2028
5	Ashford	5,710	6,695
	Aughrim		
	Carnew		
	Dunlavin		
	Tinahely		

Table 3 Level 5 Aggregate Housing Unit Targets to Q2 2028 and Q4 2031

Level	Settlement	Housing Stock 2016	Completions 2017-2020	Estimated completions 2021-Q2 2022	Housing Growth Q3 2022-Q2 2028	Housing Growth Q3 2028-Q4 2031	Total Housing Growth 2016-2031
5	Ashford	2,390	255	90	129	41	515
	Aughrim						
	Carnew						
	Dunlavin						
	Tinahely						

Population and Housing Objectives

- To adhere to the objectives of the Wicklow County Development Plan with regard to population and housing as are applicable to Level 5 towns and ensure that the provisions of each plan create a framework that allows for housing targets to be fulfilled.
- In the first instance, to promote and facilitate in-fill housing developments, the use of under-utilised / vacant sites and vacant upper floors for residential use and facilitate higher residential densities at appropriate locations, subject to a high standard of design, layout and finish.
- A minimum of 30% of the targeted housing growth shall be directed into the built up area of the settlement. In cognisance that the potential of town centre regeneration / infill / brownfield sites is difficult to predict, there shall be no quantitative restriction inferred from this plan and associated tables on the number of units that may be delivered within the built up envelope of the town.
- In order to ensure however that overall housing and population targets can be delivered, land may be zoned for new residential development outside of the existing built up envelope, subject to the amount of zoned land not exceeding 70% of the total housing target for that settlement.
- To require that new residential development represents an efficient use of land and achieves the highest density possible, having regard to minimum densities as set out in Table 6.1 (of Chapter 6 of the County Development Plan) subject to the reasonable protection of existing residential amenities and the established character of existing settlements.
- Housing occupancy controls: As 'Small Towns Type 1', these settlements should provide for the housing demands generated from people from across the County and region.

1.1.3 Economic Development & Employment

Depending on their degree of accessibility and their economic function, Level 5 towns have varying roles to play in acting as attractors for foreign and local investment. Level 5 and 6 settlements generally perform a lesser function in terms of attracting investment than Level 1-4 settlements, however, these settlements perform an important role in attracting local investment and should aim to target investment in the form of local services, 'product intensive' industries, particularly those linked to rural resources, such as food processing, agricultural services and tourist facilities/accommodation.

The factors that make a town economically viable and attractive to investors and visitors are numerous and often hard to predict and influence, but for the purpose of this land-use plan, the strategy for economic development will be based around:

- a) providing a land-use framework for each town, which makes the Council's requirements and expectations with respect to the location and type of new development abundantly clear;
- b) supporting and facilitating, to the highest degree possible (subject to environmental and other relevant planning considerations) all forms of employment generation appropriate to such small towns;
- c) a focus on 'placemaking' to create attractive and sustainable communities, with high quality services and public realm, to create attractive places to live, work, visit and invest;
- d) protecting and enhancing the heritage and environment of the town, including historic street pattern and buildings, features of heritage and environmental value; and
- e) encouraging a varied mix of uses in the town centre.

Economic Development & Employment Objectives

- Increase the quality and range of employment opportunities by facilitating developments that involve local investment in a variety of forms, including 'people' and 'product' intensive industries. The Council will particularly support the development of 'people' intensive employment generating developments that provide for the local convenience and social service needs of the area and that provide for the needs of tourists and visitors. The Council will support the development of smaller scale 'product' intensive industries, and will particularly support developments based on the use of a local rural resource.
- To encourage the redevelopment of town centres and brownfield sites for enterprise and employment creation throughout the settlements and to consider allowing 'relaxation' in normal development standards on such sites to promote their redevelopment, where it can be clearly demonstrated that a development of the highest quality, that does not create an adverse or unacceptable working environment or create unacceptable impacts on the built, natural or social environment, will be provided.
- Support a shift towards low carbon and climate change resilient economic and enterprise activity, reducing energy dependence, promoting the sustainable use of resources and leading in the Smart Green Economy.
- To encourage and facilitate remote working hubs and enterprise / innovation hubs in town centres and on lands that are appropriately zoned for economic development and employment.
- Promote tourist developments at suitable locations that are of an appropriate scale and design, particularly developments that are associated with the tourism products or themes associated with that settlement and maximise each town's location as a destination and gateway between the tourism assets.
- To ensure sufficient zoned land is available in appropriate locations capable of facilitating the development of appropriate employment opportunities in accordance with the provisions of the County Development Plan.
- To facilitate home-working and innovative forms of working which reduce the need to travel but are subordinate to the main residential use of the dwelling and do not result in a disamenity in an area.

1.1.4 Town Centre & Retail

Level 5 towns perform a variety of roles for their residents and the surrounding rural hinterland. Their vitality and vibrancy is dependent on the provision of a mix of residential, business, retail, social, leisure, entertainment and cultural uses. The priority shall be for the regeneration of under-utilised or derelict sites in the town cores, followed by the development of new streets and squares, visually and functionally linked to the historic centre.

The retail function of the Level 5 settlement is as set out in the County Retail Strategy (which is set out in Section 1.1 above). Retail is a key function of these towns, most of which provide retail and retail services to a wide rural hinterland, and a thriving retail sector is essential to maintain vitality and vibrancy in the core areas of these towns and to maintain the town as the focal point for the wider rural area in which it is located. The retail provision in these small towns would be expected to include one supermarket / two medium-sized convenience stores (up to 1,000sqm aggregate) and perhaps 10-20 smaller shops.

However it is recognised that the role and dominance of retail is changing, and cannot be relied on wholly to anchor the economic well being of a town centre. Towns and villages are continually evolving - this is essential for their survival. It is important that Wicklow's planning policy is flexible to allow town centres to change and diversify. The planning policy for Level 5 town centres will therefore be based on the following objectives:

Town Centre & Retail Objectives

- To support the continued enhancement of the existing town centres of Level 5 towns as the heart of the settlement;
- Ensure that the town centres are attractive places to live in, to work in and to visit, easy to get to, easy to walk and cycle within and are competitive places to conduct business;
- Facilitating a diverse mix of uses and particularly to encourage residential usage at appropriate town centre densities and the concept of 'living over the shop';
- Embrace the historic character and heritage attributes of each town centre and strengthen the strong sense of place;
- Support and enhance the potential of the towns as focal points for the local community, for tourism and culture;
- Create compact towns by reusing existing buildings and maximising the potential of infill and brownfield sites;
- Encourage the redevelopment and regeneration of vacant, underutilised and derelict sites;
- Use public realm improvements to stimulate investment and economic confidence;
- To encourage higher residential densities in the town centres;
- To allow a relaxation in certain development standards in the town centres in the interest of achieving the best development possible, both visually and functionally;
- Provide for an expansion in the variety of retail and retail services facilities so that the town includes a range of retail outlets that provide for the day to day needs of the local population and the needs of other businesses and tourists, in accordance with the provisions of the "*Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities*" (DoEHLG 2012), and any subsequent Ministerial Guidelines or directives and the Wicklow County Retail Strategy;
- The redevelopment of lands within the town core areas, particularly those sites with frontage onto the main streets and squares of the town, shall provide for a street fronting building of a high-quality design or for a high-quality urban space, including hard and soft landscaping, and appropriate street fixtures and furniture, in order to enhance and create a more attractive streetscape.

1.1.5 Social & Community Development

The provision of accessible social and community infrastructure, including open space and leisure / recreational facilities, contributes to the quality of life for all and it is important that existing and future residents of the towns and their catchment areas are provided with such facilities. High quality social and community services in an area can also make a place more attractive for the establishment of new businesses and to encourage long-stay visitors. In particular, new community facilities will be required to be provided in tandem with the development of significant new residential developments and new neighbourhoods.

Community Infrastructure & Open Space Objectives

- To facilitate the development of a range of high-quality community and recreational facilities that meet the needs of the local population, and in particular to require that new community and recreational facilities are developed in tandem with new housing, through the implementation of the objectives of Chapter 7 of Volume 1 of this County Development Plan;
- To manage the pace of new housing developments commensurate with existing / planned community facilities;
- To support and facilitate existing clubs and sporting organisations in providing continued sports activities for those living in the settlement and the wider area, such facilities should where possible be served by adequate pedestrian and cyclist facilities;
- To support the creation of functional and healthy public spaces and pedestrian routes within the settlements and to other nearby settlements, in order to maximise opportunities for outdoor activity;
- To support the creation of Green Infrastructure and facilitate areas for enhanced biodiversity; and
- Where projects for new recreation projects (such as riverine parks, greenways, walking routes, trails etc) identified in these plans are not already provided for by existing plans / programmes or are not already permitted, then the feasibility of progressing these projects shall be examined, taking into account planning need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report and the objectives of the overall plan relating to sustainable development.

1.1.6 Service Infrastructure

The provision of transport and services infrastructure is essential to the development of any town, providing ease of movement within towns, connecting towns to surrounding areas and providing sufficient services infrastructure capable of meeting the demands of the resident, commercial and employment populations. The County Development Plan, and various programmes of the Council's Roads and Environmental Services Departments as well as outside agencies such as Irish Water and the National Transport Authority, provides detailed strategies and objectives for a whole range of service infrastructure. As these provisions apply directly to towns in Level 5 it is not considered necessary to restate all of these objectives; however, each plan will address specific local infrastructural issues where deficiencies are identified.

Service Infrastructure Objectives

- Promote a development pattern and the development of enhanced infrastructure to facilitate walking, cycling and increased use of public transport; in particular:
 - to support and facilitate the implementation of measures to improve walking / cycling opportunities within the towns and between the towns and other centres of population and activity in the wider area;
 - to support and encourage actions to address through traffic on the main streets and squares, in particular the provision of mechanisms to slow traffic through the centres and give priority to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport; where possible the development of alternative routes through the towns, particularly from existing or planned new residential areas that

- avoid the need to use the main streets and squares to access essential services and to enter / exit the towns; the development of alternative car parking arrangements around the town cores;
 - to promote the delivery of improved bus services in the towns by facilitating the needs of existing or new bus providers with regard to bus stops and garaging facilities (unnecessary duplication of bus stops on the same routes / roads will not be permitted);
 - the development of park and ride facilities, facilitating the provision of bus priority where a requirement for such is identified; requiring the developers of large-scale new employment and residential developments in the town to fund / provide high quality pedestrian and cycling facilities to public transport routes / nodes;
 - to support design solutions and innovative approaches in order to reduce car dependency; and
 - to cooperate with the NTA and other relevant transport planning bodies in the delivery of high quality, public transport systems.
- Facilitate and promote the delivery of reliable and effective water, drainage, energy, waste management and communications infrastructure to service the existing and future development needs of the settlement. In particular:
 - to support and facilitate the improvement and increased resilience of the water distribution, supply and storage systems;
 - to support and facilitate any necessary upgrades to the wastewater collection and pumping systems (where required);
 - to ensure the separation of foul and surface water discharges in new developments through the provision of separate networks; to ensure the implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and in particular, to ensure that all surface water generated in a new development is disposed of on-site or is attenuated and treated prior to discharge to an approved surface water system; and
 - to promote energy efficiency and the development of renewable energy projects.
 - To ensure that only appropriate land uses are provided on lands identified as being at risk of flooding.
 - Where projects for new infrastructure identified in these plans are not already provided for by existing plans / programmes or are not already permitted, then the feasibility of progressing these projects shall be examined, taking into account planning need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report and the objectives of the plan relating to sustainable development. A Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken where appropriate, for relevant new road infrastructure in two stages: Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection, and Stage 2 – Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection.

1.1.7 Built Heritage & Natural Environment

The protection and enhancement of heritage and environmental assets through these plans will help to safeguard the local character and distinctiveness of each town and its surroundings, providing local economic, social and environmental benefits. Each settlement is provided with a heritage map in this volume to indicate the key natural and built heritage features.

Heritage Objectives

- To protect natural, architectural and archaeological heritage, in accordance with the objectives set out in the County Development Plan, as are applicable to each town;

- To enhance the quality of the natural and built environment, to enhance the unique character of the town and environs as a place to live, visit and work;
- To promote greater appreciation of, and access to, local heritage assets;
- To ensure the protection and enhancement of natural habitats, cultural heritage, ecological resources and biodiversity and in particular, to safeguard the integrity of the watercourses and rivers in Level 5 towns.

1.1.8 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Each plan, in conjunction with the overall County Development Plan, has been subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The 'Environmental Report' accompanying the overall County Development Plan sets out the environmental consequences of making the plan, including the town plans and provides measures to address any potential adverse impacts.

1.1.9 Appropriate Assessment

These plans, as part of the overall County Development Plan, have been subject to Stage 2 'Appropriate Assessment' under the Habitats Directive. The findings of this assessment are provided in the Appropriate Assessment Natura Impact Report that accompanies the County Development Plan.

1.1.10 Flood Risk Assessment

As part of each plan, a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been carried out. The assessment is presented as part of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment of the County Plan and the flood risk map is provided along with the individual plan documents. All applications shall be assessed in accordance with the provisions of '*The Planning System and Flood Risk Management*' Guidelines (DoEHLG 2009) and the flood management objectives of the County Development Plan.

Where existing development is located within Flood Zones A or B, new development shall be limited to minor development only; any proposals for new development should be accompanied by an appropriately detailed FRA, undertaken in accordance with Section 4 of the SFRA and the relevant policies and objectives in the County Development Plan.

Any proposals for new development in Flood Zones A or B shall be accompanied by an appropriately detailed FRA, undertaken in accordance with Section 4 of this SFRA and the relevant policies and objectives in the County Development Plan, and in particular, where the lands at risk of flooding form part of a larger development site, the sequential approach shall be applied in the site planning, to ensure no encroachment onto, or loss of the flood plain, or that only water compatible development such as Open Space will be permitted for the lands which are identified as being at risk of flooding within the site.

PART 1.2 ZONING & LAND USE

Each plan map indicates the boundary of the town plan. All lands located outside the settlement boundary are considered to be within the rural area. Within these areas planning applications shall be assessed having regard to the objectives and standards for the rural area, as set out in Volume 1 of this Wicklow County Development Plan.

The purpose of land use zoning objectives is to indicate the Council's vision for land uses in the town.

1.2.1 Zoning Objectives

With respect to **Level 5** plans, land use zoning objectives and the associated vision for each zone, are as follows:

ZONING	OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
RE: Existing Residential	To protect, provide and improve residential amenities of existing residential areas.	To provide for house improvements, alterations and extensions and appropriate infill residential development in accordance with principles of good design and protection of existing residential amenity. In existing residential areas, the areas of open space permitted, designated or dedicated solely to the use of the residents will normally be zoned 'RE' as they form an intrinsic part of the overall residential development; however, new housing or other non-community related uses will not normally be permitted.
RN: New residential	To provide for new residential development and supporting facilities.	To facilitate for the provision of high quality new residential developments at appropriate densities with excellent layout and design, well linked to the town centre and community facilities. To provide an appropriate mix of house sizes, types and tenures in order to meet household needs and to promote balanced communities.
TC: Town Centre	To provide for the development and improvement of appropriate town centre uses including residential, retail, commercial, office and civic use.	To develop and consolidate the existing town centre to improve its vibrancy and vitality with the densification of appropriate residential and commercial developments ensuring a mix of residential, commercial, recreational, civic, cultural and leisure uses while delivering a quality urban environment, with emphasis on regeneration, infill town and historic centre conservation, ensuring priority for public transport where applicable, pedestrians and cyclists, while minimising the impact of private car based traffic and enhance and develop the existing centre's fabric.
CE: Community & Education	To provide for civic, community and educational facilities	To facilitate the development of necessary community, health, religious, educational, social and civic infrastructure.
MU: Mixed-Use	To provide for mixed-use development.	The nature of the mixed-use development envisaged for any particular site will be set out in each individual town plan.

ZONING	OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
E: Employment	To provide for the development of enterprise and employment	To facilitate the further development and improvement of existing employment areas and to facilitate opportunities for the development of new high-quality employment and enterprise developments in a good quality physical environment.
T: Tourism	To provide for tourism-related development	To provide for the sustainable development of tourism-related structures, uses and infrastructure. To provide for the development of tourism facilities including accommodation of an excellent sustainable design and aesthetic quality. Tourism-related office, civic and cultural and commercial development will be facilitated.
AOS: Active Open Space	To protect and enhance existing and provide for new active open space.	To facilitate the further development and improvement of existing active open spaces, formal exercise areas, sports grounds, playing pitches, courts and other games areas and to facilitate opportunities for the development of new high quality active recreational areas.
OS1: Open Space	To protect and enhance existing and provide for recreational open space	To facilitate the further development and improvement of existing parks and casual play areas, to facilitate opportunities for the development of new high-quality amenity open areas and to restrict developments/activities (such as the use or development of such lands for formal sports grounds for organisations that are not available for a broad range of the public) that would reduce the opportunities for use by the wider public.
OS2: Passive Open Space	To protect and enhance existing open, undeveloped lands	To protect, enhance and manage existing open, undeveloped lands that comprise flood plains, buffer zones along rivers and EU protected sites, green and ecological corridors and areas of natural biodiversity.
PU: Public Utility	To maintain lands providing services infrastructure	To allow for lands to be designated for public utilities such as wastewater treatment plants, large ESB substations, gasworks etc.
SLB: Strategic Land Bank	To provide a land bank for future development of the settlement after the lifetime of this plan, if and when the need arises.	These are lands that are identified as being potentially suitable for new residential development having regard to proximity and accessibility to infrastructure. However, these lands are not necessary for development during the lifetime of this plan and may only be considered for detailed zoning and development after 2028. Any development proposals within the lifetime of the plan will be considered under the County Development Plan rural objectives.

A zoning use table is not included in these plans. The planning authority shall determine each proposal on its merits and shall only permit the development of uses that enhance, complement, are ancillary to, or neutral to the zoning objective. Uses that are materially inconsistent with and detrimental to the zoning objective shall not be permitted.

Uses generally appropriate for **residential** zoned areas include houses, apartments, residential open space, education, community facilities, retirement homes, nursing homes, childcare, health centres, guest house, bed and breakfast, places of public worship, home-based economic activity, utility installations and ancillary development and other residential uses in accordance with the CDP.

Uses generally appropriate for **town centres** include residential development, retail, retail services, health, restaurants, public house, public buildings, hotels, guest houses, nursing/care homes, parking, commercial, office, tourism and recreational uses, community, including provision for religious use, utility installations and ancillary developments for town centre uses in accordance with the CDP.

Uses generally appropriate for **employment** zoned land include general and light industry, office uses, enterprise units, appropriate warehousing, petrol filling stations (as deemed appropriate), public transport depots, open space, community facilities, utility installations and ancillary developments for employment and industry uses in accordance with the CDP.

Uses generally appropriate for **community and educational** zoned land include community, educational and institutional uses, which include burial grounds, places of worship, schools, training facilities, community hall, nursing homes, health related developments, sports and recreational facilities, utility installations and ancillary developments for community, educational and institutional uses in accordance with the CDP.

Uses appropriate for **active open space** zoned land are sport and active recreational uses including infrastructure and buildings associated with same.

Uses appropriate for **open space (OS1)** zoned land recreational uses such as formal / informal landscaped parks with off-road walking / cycling paths, as well as playgrounds, skate parks, Mixed-Use Games Areas and outdoor gyms.

Uses appropriate for **open space (OS2)** zoned land are uses that protect and enhance the function of these areas as flood plains, buffer zones along watercourses and rivers, green breaks between built up areas, green corridors and areas of natural biodiversity. The development of these lands for recreational uses may only be considered where such use is shown to not undermine the purpose of this zoning.

Uses generally appropriate for **public utility** zoned land are for the provision of necessary infrastructure and services such as water and wastewater treatment plants, large ESB sub-stations, gasworks.

Uses generally appropriate for **tourism** zoned land are tourism accommodation and tourism / recreational uses such as Bed & Breakfast, cultural uses, holiday homes, hotels, recreational facilities.

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.

Whilst the land-use zoning will give an indication of the acceptability or otherwise of particular uses in particular areas, proposed development will also be assessed in terms of compatibility with the development

control guidelines and standards outlined in the Wicklow County Development Plan and the relevant town plan. 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.

1.2.2 Phasing

It is an objective of the Council that development is undertaken in an orderly and sustainable manner. The development of zoned land should generally be phased in accordance with the sequential approach:

- Development should extend outwards from centres with undeveloped land closest to the centres and public transport routes (if available) being given preference, i.e. 'leapfrogging' to peripheral areas shall be avoided;
- A strong emphasis should be placed on encouraging infill opportunities and better use of under-utilised lands; and
- Areas to be developed should be contiguous to existing developed areas.

Only in exceptional circumstances should the above principles be contravened, for example, where a barrier to development is involved. Any exceptions must be clearly justified by local circumstances and such justification must be set out in any planning application proposal.

The Council may, in certain cases, phase permitted development where this is considered necessary for the following:

- (i) The promotion of an appropriate balance of employment, residential and service facilities (schools, shopping, community facilities etc.) and other uses that are required to increase the self sufficiency of the settlement, or
- (ii) Ensuring the delivery of infrastructural services in tandem with development, including water, sewerage and road infrastructure that is required to safeguard the environmental quality and public safety of the area.

1.2.3 Action Areas & Specific Local Objectives

'Action Areas' have been identified in each plan where necessary. Action Areas are to be the subject of comprehensive (not piecemeal) integrated schemes of development that allow for the sustainable, phased and managed development of the Action Area during the plan period. Separate applications for sections of each Action Area will not be considered until an overall Action Area Plan has been agreed in writing with the Planning Authority unless it can be shown that any application will not undermine the achievement of the overall objectives for that Action Area. The position, location and size of the land use zonings shown on plan maps are indicative only and may be altered in light of eventual road and service layouts, detailed design and topography, subject to compliance with the criteria set out for the Action Areas.

Plans may also include 'Specific Local Objectives' (SLO) - the purpose of the SLO is to guide developers as to the aspirations of the plan regarding the development of certain lands where more than one land use is proposed, in a manner similar to Action Areas, but with the exception that no masterplan will be required to be agreed prior to the submission of a planning application.

By time-related conditions, agreements or otherwise, the Council will regulate the building programme to ensure that the needs of the population do not exceed the provision of essential support systems and the

Council will use its powers under the Planning & Development Acts to effect this control.

1.2.4 Strategic Land Bank

Having regard to the housing targets set out in this County Development Plan, the amount of land designated and zoned for the development of new housing has been reviewed and updated as set out in each plan. In order to be consistent with the provisions of the County Development Plan 'Core Strategy' and Ministerial guidelines with regard to the zoning of land, the plans herewith provided shall provide for sufficient zoned land to ensure growth targets as set out in the 'Core Strategy' can be achieved.

These revisions may entail a reduction in the amount of residentially zoned 'greenfield' lands outside of the existing built up envelope of each town. In accordance with the 'Core Strategy' guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, where a surplus of zoned housing land is identified, it will be necessary to select the most appropriate land to zone in the plan and then implement one of the following options:

1. Designate the surplus land as a 'strategic land reserve' for the future that will not be allowed to develop within the plan period, or
2. Change the zoning of the surplus residential land to some other land use that is required during the lifetime of the plan, or
3. Remove the zoning from the surplus land.

Strategic Land Bank Objective

These are lands that are identified as being potentially suitable for new residential development having regard to proximity and accessibility to infrastructure. However these lands are not necessary for development during the lifetime of this plan and may only be considered for detailed zoning and development after 2028, if the need arises. Any development proposals within the lifetime of the plan will be considered under the Wicklow County Development Plan rural objectives.

1.2.5 European Sites

There are a number of 'European Sites' (SACs / SPAs) located in or in close proximity to the settlements in Level 5. The sites themselves are protected from inappropriate development through the legal provisions of the Habitats and Birds Directives, as well as the Planning Act. Such sites, where they are located within the plan boundary of a Level 5 settlement, are shown on the heritage map associated with the plan as SAC / SPA as appropriate.

In a number of locations, there are lands adjoining European Sites, which while not being included in the legally designated site, are linked to the site in terms of similar or supporting habitats, water flows or other characteristics which render them important to protect from inappropriate development which may have a direct or indirect effect on the designated site itself¹. The extent of any such 'buffer zone' has been determined

¹ In accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, the aim is to protect and maintain linear landscape features which act as ecological corridors, such as watercourses (rivers, streams, canals, ponds, drainage channels, etc), woodlands, hedgerows and road and railway margins, and features which act as stepping stones, such as marshes and woodlands, which taken as a whole help to improve the coherence of the European network

through both desktop and field assessment by the plan team and a professional ecologist, as well as consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

The approach to zoning at / in European Sites and any associated 'buffer zone' has been as follows:

1. No lands within the actual European Site have been zoned;
2. Where the 'buffer zone' coincides with existing developed areas, the lands have been zoned for their existing use, which will essentially allow for the continuation of the existing use and its enhancement. In accordance with the provisions of the EU Habitats Directive 1992 and the Planning & Development Act, any proposed development with potential to impact upon the integrity of a European Site shall be subject to an Appropriate Assessment;
3. Where the 'buffer zone' coincides with existing undeveloped lands, the lands will only be zoned for new development where it can be justified that such zoning and development arising therefrom is essential for the town to achieve its development vision and strategic objectives. In accordance with the provisions of the EU Habitats Directive 1992 and the Planning & Development Act, any proposed development with potential to impact upon the integrity of a European Site shall be subject to an Appropriate Assessment;
4. Where the 'buffer zone' coincides with existing undeveloped lands, and the development of these lands is not essential for the achievement of the development vision and strategic objectives for the town, the land will be zoned 'OS2' – **passive open space**. The only developments that will be considered in such areas are those which contribute to the objective of the Passive Open Space zone (detailed in this plan) and that can be shown to not diminish the role and function of such areas, will not result in adverse impacts on the integrity of any EU protected site and will not diminish the biodiversity value of the lands or the ability of plants and animals to thrive and move through the area.

European Sites Objectives

To protect European Sites and a suitable buffer area from inappropriate development.

Projects giving rise to adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites (cumulatively, directly or indirectly) arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall not be permitted on the basis of this plan².

Ensure that development proposals, contribute as appropriate towards the protection and where possible enhancement of the ecological coherence of the European Site network and encourage the retention and management of landscape features that are of major importance for wild fauna and flora as per Article 10 of the EU Habitats directive. All projects and plans arising from this Plan will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

In order to ensure the protection of the integrity of European Sites, the planning authority is not limited to the implementation of the above objectives, and shall implement all other relevant objectives of the CDP as it sees fit.

² Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. there must be: a) no alternative solution available, b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project to proceed; and c) adequate compensatory measures in place.