

6th October 2025

Wicklow County Council,
County Buildings,
Station Road,
Wicklow Town,
A67 FW96.

**Re: Adopted Wicklow Town-Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025-2031 and Variation No.
2 to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028**

A chara,

The Office of the Planning Regulator (Office) acknowledges the adoption of the Wicklow Town-Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025-2031 (Local Area Plan) and the related Variation No. 2 (Variation) to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (County Development Plan) by the members of Wicklow County Council (Planning Authority) on 12th May 2025.

The Office also acknowledges receipt of your correspondence dated 15th May 2025 regarding the adoption of the Local Area Plan and the Variation, further to sections 31AO(5) and 31AM(6) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (Act), respectively.

The Office acknowledges that the Variation was prepared to ensure consistency between the Local Area Plan and the County Development Plan. The Office has reviewed the adopted plans and notes the decision of the Planning Authority not to comply, in whole or in part, with one or more of the recommendations included in the Office's submissions at draft and material alterations stages.

Where the recommendations of the Office were not complied with, the Office gave careful consideration to the reasons of elected members and, with the exception of certain specific matters which are the subject of the recent recommendation to the Minister in respect to the proposed Directions, accepted that these reasons addressed the matters raised by the Office.

As you will be aware, the matter is now to be determined by the Minister under section 31 of the Act.

With the exception of the specific matters raised in the notice letters to the Minister under sections 31AO(7) and 31AM(8), the Office welcomes the making of the Local Area Plan and related Variation to provide for the planned development of Wicklow Town-Rathnew over the plan period in a manner that is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

In particular, the Office welcomes the positive approach taken by the Planning Authority focusing on the consolidation and regeneration of Wicklow Town and Rathnew village to enhance compact growth, public realm, and improve connectivity across the plan area.

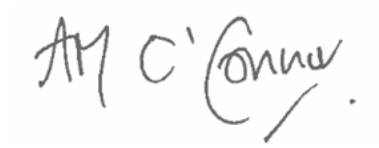
The Office commends the Planning Authority for the identification of strategic sites for regeneration, including the objectives for public realm improvements and active travel enhancements focused on Wicklow town centre, the Waterfront area and Rathnew village, and the provision of a clear development basis to facilitate land activation of these sites over the plan period.

With regard to the integration of land use and transport planning, the Office re-emphasises how critical it is for an evidence-based assessment in the form of a Local Transport Plan, particularly given Wicklow's role as a Key Town and the current constraints to safe and convenient movement through the town. The Office recognises objective WTR80 of the Local Area Plan commits to the preparation of a Local Transport Plan and on completion the Office strongly encourages the Planning Authority to incorporate the key provisions of the Local Transport Plan into the Local Area Plan as a Variation under section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (or any equivalent provision under the Planning and Development Act 2024).

With the exception of the specific matters raised in the 31AO(7) and 31AM(8) notices, the Office is generally satisfied with the manner in which its recommendations and observations have been addressed during the plan preparation process.

In conclusion, the Office generally welcomes the adoption of the Local Area Plan and Variation and looks forward to continued positive engagement with Wicklow County Council into the future.

Is mise le meas,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "AM C'Connor". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. The "AM" is at the top left, followed by "C'Connor". There is a small horizontal line under the "C" and a diagonal slash under the "Connor".

Anne Marie O'Connor

Deputy Regulator and Director of Plans Evaluation

Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015
