

Administrative Officer,
Planning Section,
Wicklow County Council,
Station Road,
Wicklow Town

17th August 2011

Re: Wicklow Town and Environs Development Plan 2013-19 – Issues Paper

To whom it may concern,

The National Transport Authority (“the Authority”) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Issues Paper for the Wicklow Town and Environs Development Plan 2013-19.

The Dublin Transport Authority Act 2008 provides that each planning authority within the GDA shall ensure that its Development Plans are consistent with the Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy for the period 2011-2030. The Authority has published a draft Transport Strategy and the consultation process is complete. The final document has been amended and has been submitted to the Minister for Transport, Sport and Tourism for his consideration. An integrated implementation plan, which will guide investment decisions over a six year period, will follow the adoption of the Transport Strategy.

While the Transport Strategy is currently a draft document, the Authority requests that Wicklow County Council reflect the policies, objectives and measures contained therein in the preparation of the Wicklow Town and Environs Development Plan.

Measures LU1, LU2, LU3 and LU4 of the draft Transport Strategy outline the land use measures that should be considered when preparing a Development Plan. In particular, the plan would be strengthened by taking account of the following principles/measures:

- A sequential approach to development whereby lands which are most accessible by public transport are prioritised for growth;
- The re-development of brownfield sites close to existing or proposed public transport corridors;
- General increase in densities in all areas where existing or planned public transport accessibility is good;
- Mixed use development will be the primary pattern of growth in all areas:
 - In Designated Town centres and in areas around rail interchange points there will be a greater emphasis on commercial development;
- Local services such as convenience stores, doctors’ surgeries and schools are located and provided in a manner which ensures that access for the local community by walking and cycling is direct, safe and convenient;

- Rail stations in District centres will be the focus of higher densities;
- The strategic transport function of national roads, including motorways, will be maintained by limiting the extent of development that would give rise to the generation of local car traffic on the national road network;
- The Authority will seek that all non-residential development proposals in the GDA should be subject to maximum parking standards. The table below shows a number of these land uses and sets out regional maximum standards which should apply to them;

Land Use	Maximum Parking Standards	Threshold for Application
Employment, including Offices	1 space per 50m ²	1,500m ²
Food Retail	1 space per 14m ²	1,000m ²
Non Food Retail	1 space per 20m ²	1,000m ²
Cinemas and Conference Facilities	1 space per 5 seats	1,000m ²
Higher and Further Education	1 space per 2 staff +1 space per 15 students	2,500m ²
Stadia	1 space per 15 seats	1,500 seats

- While the above table provides a regional maximum standard, significantly more restrictive provision should apply in Designated Towns centres and in areas of good public transport accessibility;

The draft Transport Strategy also outlines a number of specific transport measures which will impact directly on Wicklow Town and Environs, including:

- Local bus services in the Hinterland Designated Towns subject to anticipated population increases... As a guide, a minimum daytime service frequency of 20 minutes will be sought;
- Express or limited stop type bus service from the Hinterland Designated Towns to Dublin city centre at regular intervals;
- Additional track and other measures on the single rail track south of Bray to facilitate additional rail services to Greystones, Wicklow and Arklow;
- Heavy rail service between each of the Designated Towns in the Hinterland and Dublin city centre, operating, as a minimum, on an hourly basis in the peak hours and on a two hour basis in off-peak service periods;
- Park and Ride schemes in the Hinterland area, where they improve public transport accessibility without worsening road congestion, or increasing car travel distance.

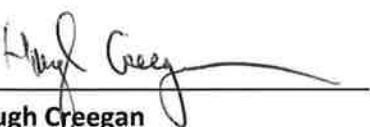
With the above measures in mind, the NTA would support an approach to the growth of Wicklow and Environs which aims to enhance accessibility to walking, cycling and public transport for trips to employment, education, retail and leisure.

The pattern of development most appropriate in achieving this aim would be one which emphasises the consolidation of development, insofar as is feasible, within the existing footprint of the built-up area. This would include retail development, which is a significant contributor to traffic on the local road network. As part of the Development Plan review, therefore, an evaluation of the extent of land zoned for development in the plan area should be undertaken, to ensure consistency with the above policies.

In terms of reducing the need for residents of Wicklow to travel long distances to work, the Authority would welcome a commitment to relate population growth to employment growth within the plan area. While a certain level of outward commuting to Dublin is inevitable, an evidence based approach to zoning for employment land would be supported which takes account of the Jobs / Labour Force ratio in the plan area.

I trust that the views of the Authority will be taken in to consideration and we look forward to assisting Wicklow County Council in the preparation of the Wicklow Town and Environs Development Plan.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hugh Creegan", is written over a horizontal line.

Hugh Creegan

Director of Transport Planning and Investment