



Draft Wicklow Rathnew Draft LAP Amendment Stage Submission - Report

Who are you:	Private Individual
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%20Objection%20to%20Proposed%20amendment%201%20and%2026.pdf.pdf, 0.79MB

To Whom It May Concern,

Re: Objection to Proposed Material Amendments 1 & 26 to the Wicklow-Rathnew Local Area Plan – Glebe / Fernhill Lands

I wish to express my strong objection to Proposed Material Amendments 1 and 26 concerning SLO-9 and the Glebe/Fernhill lands. Below, I outline the key concerns I have regarding this proposal, referencing relevant policies from the Draft Wicklow Town-Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025.

1. Rezoning of Community/Education Lands to Residential Use

I firmly oppose the rezoning of land previously designated for Community/Education (CE) use, as outlined in the Draft Wicklow Town-Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025. These lands were intended to support crucial public services, including schools, healthcare, and other community infrastructure, to meet the needs of the growing population. Rezoning this land to residential use directly contradicts the plan's commitment to ensuring adequate community and educational facilities.

Allowing this rezoning would set a damaging precedent for the management of public land in Wicklow and reduce the availability of essential community infrastructure in the future. The original CE zoning must be preserved to ensure proper planning and sustainable development.

2. Inappropriate Scale and Density of Development – Opposition to Three-Storey Housing

The Draft Wicklow Town-Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025 emphasizes that new residential developments should respect the established character and scale of surrounding areas. The proposed high-density, three-storey development is entirely out of character with the existing low-density, two-storey homes and bungalows in Glebemount.

The proposed development would:

- Create an abrupt and inappropriate transition from low-density housing to high-density units, conflicting with the principles of sustainable residential development.
- Overlook and overshadow existing homes, reducing privacy and residential amenity.
- Strain local infrastructure, particularly roads, parking, and public services, which were not designed to accommodate high-density housing.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) requires developments to integrate with their surroundings. This proposal fails to do so and constitutes overdevelopment that is incompatible with the surrounding neighbourhood. Any future development should be limited in scale, height, and density, with a minimum 10-metre setback from existing homes.

3. Proposed Connectivity Between Friarshill and the R750 via Glebemount Estate

The Draft Wicklow Town-Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025 promotes sustainable transport but also highlights the need for careful planning to preserve the character and safety of existing residential areas. The proposal to introduce pedestrian and cycling access through Glebemount Estate has not undergone proper consultation, as required under Wicklow County Council's amendment no. 2.

A. Glebemount Is Not Designed for Through-Traffic

Glebemount is a well-established residential estate with cul-de-sacs and narrow roads designed for local access only. Creating a public route would:

- Increase non-residential footfall and cycling traffic past private homes.
- Disrupt the peaceful, family-oriented character of the estate.
- Lead to a loss of privacy and an increase in noise and disturbance.

B. Safety Concerns for Vulnerable Residents

The estate is home to young families and elderly residents. A public route would significantly increase safety risks, particularly at blind corners, driveways, and areas lacking pedestrian or cycling infrastructure. The Draft Wicklow Town-Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025 emphasizes the importance of safe and well-planned transport links, yet this proposal fails to consider these safety issues.

C. Parking and Traffic Issues

Glebemount already experiences parking congestion, and the addition of a public route would:

- Increase competition for limited road space.
- Displace parked vehicles and create conflicts between residents and pass-through users.
- Exacerbate existing traffic management challenges within the estate.

4. Protection of Natural Areas and Environmental Concerns

The Draft Wicklow Town-Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025 includes policies on preserving natural habitats and biodiversity corridors. However, the proposed development threatens a semi-mature woodland in the eastern corner of the site (closest corner to the Lidl supermarket) which serves as an important wildlife corridor [0]. This area is home to a variety of bird species, including robins, wood pigeons, blackbirds, chaffinches, chiffchaffs, wrens, dunnocks, thrushes, blue tits, blackcaps, cuckoos, goldcrests, long-tailed tits, sparrowhawks, kestrels. Additionally, the site provides a crucial habitat for badgers, foxes, hedgehogs, deer, pine martens, stoats, and red squirrels.

The proposed development contradicts the National Biodiversity Action Plan and EU Habitats Directive, which aim to protect and enhance biodiversity. To ensure ecological integrity, I urge the following measures:

- The semi-mature woodland area in the eastern section of the site should be fully protected.
- The site should be maintained as a wildlife corridor.
- A comprehensive environmental impact assessment must be conducted before any development proceeds.

Conclusion and Requests

Rezoning Community/Education lands and permitting high-density housing in this location contradicts national and local planning policies. The proposal fails to respect established neighbourhood character, community infrastructure needs, and environmental protection requirements. Wicklow County Council must uphold the principles of sustainable development and good planning practice.

I respectfully request that Wicklow County Council:

- Retain the Community/Education zoning and reject the proposed rezoning to residential use.
- Reject the three-storey, high-density housing proposal, ensuring any future development is compatible in scale and density with surrounding homes and set back at least 10 metres from Glebemount.
- Exclude Glebemount Estate from any proposed pedestrian or cycling routes, ensuring proper consultation before any such proposal is considered.

- Conduct a full environmental impact assessment to protect local wildlife and ensure compliance with national biodiversity commitments.

- Hold a public consultation process before any amendments are approved.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Yours sincerely,

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